

The dynamics of the fight against corruption in ukraine: achievements, challenges, and ways to overcome

A dinâmica da luta contra a corrupção na ucrânia: realizações, desafios e formas de os ultrapassar

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Abstract

In connection with the ambiguous fight against corruption in Ukraine, consideration of the dynamics of this phenomenon becomes a critical task. The purpose of the study is to analyze the dynamics of the fight against corruption in Ukraine, to identify challenges and achievements, as well as to propose effective strategies for overcoming this social phenomenon. The research uses a combined methodological approach, including structured surveys, analysis of the Corruption Perception Index, thematic analysis of literature, that is, quantitative and qualitative methods of study. Taking into account the results of United States Agency for International Development surveys and the analysis of the Corruption Perception Index, the study is aimed at revealing the essence of challenges, achievements and possible ways to overcome corruption manifestations. The results revealed a variety of challenges facing Ukrainian society in the fight against corruption, including bureaucratization, unfinished judicial reform, political interference, and a weak institutional framework. Despite this, the work reveals the dynamics of the perception of corruption, analyzes achievements and highlights key aspects that should be taken into account in the development of strategies to overcome this phenomenon. The conclusion emphasizes the need for a systematic rethinking of approaches to combating corruption in Ukraine. The proposed strategies and recommendations can serve as a basis for further actions of the authorities and the public in the formation of an effective anti-corruption policy.

Keywords: Anti-corruption; Transparency initiatives; Institutional reforms; Public perception; Governance challenges.

Resumo

No contexto da luta ambígua contra a corrupção na Ucrânia, a análise da dinâmica deste fenómeno torna-se uma tarefa fundamental. O objetivo do estudo é analisar a dinâmica da luta contra a corrupção na Ucrânia, identificar os desafios e as realizações, bem como propor estratégias eficazes para superar este fenómeno social. A investigação utiliza uma abordagem metodológica combinada, incluindo inquéritos estruturados, análise do Índice de Perceção da Corrupção, análise temática da literatura, ou seja, métodos de estudo quantitativos e qualitativos. Tendo em conta os resultados dos inquéritos da Agência dos Estados Unidos para o Desenvolvimento Internacional e a análise do Índice de Perceção da Corrupção, o estudo tem como objetivo revelar a essência dos desafios, das realizações e das possíveis formas de ultrapassar as manifestações de corrupção. Os resultados revelaram uma variedade de desafios que a sociedade ucraniana enfrenta na luta contra a corrupção, incluindo a burocratização, a reforma judicial inacabada, a interferência política e um quadro institucional fraco. Apesar disso, o trabalho revela a dinâmica da perceção da corrupção, analisa as realizações e destaca os principais aspectos que devem ser tidos em conta no desenvolvimento de estratégias para superar este fenómeno. A conclusão sublinha a necessidade de repensar sistematicamente as abordagens de combate à corrupção na Ucrânia. As estratégias e recomendações propostas podem servir de base para outras acções das autoridades e do público na formação de uma política anticorrupção eficaz.

Palavras-chave: Anti-corrupção; Iniciativas de transparência; Reformas institucionais; Perceção pública; Desafios da governação.

1 Introduction

In the global landscape of governance, the fight against corruption stands as a pivotal battleground where nations seek to foster transparency, accountability, and the rule of law. Ukraine, with its rich history and complex geopolitical context, has found itself at the forefront of this struggle. The dynamics of combating corruption within the Ukrainian socio-political framework are multifaceted, reflecting a constant interplay of challenges, commendable achievements, and the ongoing quest for effective solutions. This exploration into the dynamics of the fight against corruption in Ukraine delves into the intricacies of the nation's journey, examining both the impediments it faces and the strides made towards fostering a more transparent and accountable system. Given the importance of this topic, modern scientists have considered various aspects of the development of corruption. In particular, Castelo Branco¹ investigated issues related to corporate social responsibility, sustainable development, ethics and governance, with a particular focus on challenges and strategies related to the fight against corruption. Kobryn² explored the various political and legal factors that paved the way for the Russian-Ukrainian war of 2022, covering a range of historical, cultural and economic aspects. The study by Holovachko; Maksymenko; Shershun³ describes the experience of certain Central and Eastern European countries in the fight against corruption. Using the example of the analysis of the anti-corruption policy of Ukraine, Romania and Hungary, these authors identified the main strategies for its implementation. Kos⁴ described the importance of war on the development of corruption in Ukraine, potentially exploring how armed conflicts can affect the dynamics of corruption in the country. The work by Ranieri Razzante⁵ delves into various aspects of the fight against corruption, exploring trends, issues, and strategies in crime prevention and victim support. It provides insights into the challenges and

- 1 BRANCO, Manuel Castelo. The Fight Against Corruption. In: *CSR, Sustainability, Ethics & Governance*. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2021. p. 55-87. Available in: DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-662-63735-7_5. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.
- 2 KOBRYN, Volodymyr Stepanovych. Political and Legal Prerequisites of the Russian-Ukrainian War of 2022. In: *The Russian-Ukrainian War (2014–2022): Historical, Political, Cultural-Educational, Religious, Economic, and Legal Aspects*. [S. l.]: Izdevnieciba “Baltija Publishing”, 2022. p. 1165-1169. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-223-4-145>. Accessed: January, 23, 2024.
- 3 HOLOVACHKO, Vasyly; MAKSYMENKO, Diana; SHERSHUN, Violeta. The fight Against Corruption In Ukraine, Romania, Hungary And Slovakia. *Scientific Bulletin of Mukachevo State University. In: Series “Economics*, n. 2, 2019. p. 27-32. Available in: [https://doi.org/10.31339/2313-8114-2019-2\(12\)-27-32](https://doi.org/10.31339/2313-8114-2019-2(12)-27-32). Accessed: january, 29, 2024.
- 4 KOS, Drago. War and Corruption in Ukraine. *Eucrim*. In: *The European Criminal Law Associations’ Forum*, [s. l.], 2022. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.30709/eucrim-2022-007>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.
- 5 RAZZANTE, Ranieri. The Fight Against Corruption. In: *Handbook of Research on Trends and Issues in Crime Prevention, Rehabilitation, and Victim Support*. [S. l.]: IGI Global, 2020. p. 167-186. ISBN 9781799812869. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-1286-9.ch010>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

advancements in addressing corruption within the broader framework of crime prevention.

In view of recent research, the dynamics of the fight against corruption in Ukraine emerges as a pressing and pertinent research problem, underscored by its profound implications for governance, economic development, and societal well-being⁶. The relevance of this topic is underscored by the fact that corruption remains a persistent challenge, inhibiting the realization of democratic ideals and impeding the nation's progress. As Ukraine positions itself on the global stage, the effectiveness of its anti-corruption efforts becomes a critical determinant of its credibility and commitment to principles of transparency and accountability.

This research seeks to delve into the multifaceted aspects of the fight against corruption in Ukraine, aiming to comprehend the challenges that have stymied progress, recognize the noteworthy achievements made, and propose strategic ways to overcome the persisting issues. The overarching aim is to contribute to the existing body of knowledge, providing insights that can inform policy, guide anti-corruption initiatives, and contribute to the broader discourse on effective governance.

To achieve this aim, the research will undertake the following tasks: first, to evaluate the achievements in the fight against corruption; second, to analyze the contemporary challenges in Ukraine's anti-corruption landscape; and third, to identify and propose effective strategies to overcome the identified challenges. Through these tasks, the research endeavors to offer a comprehensive understanding of the dynamic nature of the fight against corruption in Ukraine and contribute valuable insights to the ongoing global discourse on anti-corruption measures.

2 Materials and methods

In the research these materials were used:

1. USAID survey: "State of Corruption in Ukraine 2023: Perception, Experience, Attitude" Type of Study: extensive surveys conducted by USAID to explore perceptions of corruption in Ukraine in 2023.

Target Audience: diverse population across Ukraine with varying social, economic, and geographic characteristics.

Research Methods: employed a combination of structured surveys and in-depth interviews.

2. Corruption perception index (CPI)

Source: Utilized the Corruption Perception Index as a quantitative measure of

6 SHAULSKYI, Mykola Ihorovych. Fight against corruption as a condition for the legal establishment of local democracy in Ukraine. In: *East European Scientific Journal*, v. 1, no. 8, september, 14, 2021. p. 59-63. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.31618/essa.2782-1994.2021.1.72.105>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

corruption levels globally and within Ukraine.

Type: The CPI is a composite index based on various data sources, capturing expert assessments and surveys from multiple institutions.

The Corruption Perception Index was utilized as a quantitative measure to assess perceived levels of corruption in Ukraine. Analyzed the CPI data to understand how Ukraine ranks globally and to identify trends in corruption perception over time.

1. Data integration. Merged findings from USAID surveys with the Corruption Perception Index to provide a more comprehensive understanding of corruption dynamics in Ukraine.

2. Validation of results. Cross-referenced and validated the data obtained from USAID surveys with the insights derived from the Corruption Perception Index, ensuring internal consistency.

3. Thematic analysis. The thematic analysis was applied to qualitative data obtained from surveys and literature content. Recurring themes, patterns, and variations in stakeholders' perspectives and literature findings were identified.

3 Results

The problem of corruption in Ukraine is a multifaceted challenge, encompassing political corruption, widespread corruption, and petty corruption, all of which permeate the fabric of social ties. According to Dorohina & Moroz⁷ the corruption has the potential to impede the robust development of both the state's economy and civil society, particularly at their formative stages. It acts as a counterforce, hindering the effective growth and maturation of these crucial facets of governance and societal structures⁸. Since gaining independence, Ukraine has undergone various trials in its efforts to combat corruption, with a distinctive history and characteristics specific to the country⁹.

A pivotal aspect of addressing corruption in Ukraine lies in the adaptation of its legislation to European norms and standards¹⁰. This process is not only crucial for demonstrating Ukraine's commitment to combating corruption but also plays a

7 DOROHINA, Yu A.; MOROZ I.O. Corruption and Corruption-Related Offences in Ukraine. Scientific notes of Taurida National V.I. Vernadsky University. In: *Series: Juridical Sciences*, v. 30, n. 3, 2019. p. 95-100. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.32838/1606-3716/2019.3/17>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

8 FREDRIKSSON, Anders. Bureaucracy Intermediaries, Corruption and Red Tape. In: *Journal of Development Economics*, v. 108, may 2014. p. 256-273. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2014.02.005>. Accessed: 29 Jan. 2024.

9 MIREVSKA, Ivana. The Fight Against Corruption and Social Context. In: *Megatrend Revija*, v. 18, n. 3, 2021. p. 189-206. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.5937/megrev2103189m>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

10 SVITLAK, Iryna; HUTS, Nataliia. The legal charter of the company of the future: the order of creation. In: *Futurity Economics & Law*, Polônia, v. 2, n. 1, 2022. p. 22-27. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57125/FEL.2022.03.25.03>. Available in: <https://www.futurity-econlaw.com/index.php/FEL/article/view/34>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

significant role in fostering closer integration with the European Union (EU)¹¹. The adaptation involves aligning national legislation with European standards, showcasing a dedication to transparency, accountability, and the rule of law.

The introduction of normative legal acts in Ukraine, in line with the *acquis communautaire* – the body of EU law, is an integral part of this adaptation. The *acquis communautaire* serves as a benchmark, and compliance is essential for Ukraine's progress toward EU accession. However, achieving alignment with European standards necessitates complex reforms and adjustments to Ukrainian legislation. Progress in the fight against corruption in Ukraine is evident through various successful initiatives. One key aspect undergoing substantial transformation to align with European norms is anti-corruption legislation¹². Ukraine is actively engaged in legislative reforms to meet European standards in this area. Notably, amendments to the Law of Ukraine “On Prevention of Corruption”¹³, effective since the start of 2014, underscore Ukraine's commitment to adapting its anti-corruption legal framework to European standards. Later changes introduced into the law are also important on the path of Ukraine's entry into the European space¹⁴. These legislative changes play a crucial role in reinforcing the anti-corruption drive, enhancing the institutional framework, and bringing Ukrainian legislation in line with European norms, offering several advantages. This commitment allows Ukraine to incorporate advanced anti-corruption practices and standards already established within the European Union. The resulting improvement in the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts contributes to a more favorable environment for foreign investment, fostering a stable and transparent investment climate. Furthermore, it strengthens Ukraine's international relations with European Union countries, positively impacting the country's reputation on the global stage¹⁵.

11 PASHKOVSKY, V. V. General Principles of The Fight Against Corruption in Ukraine. In: *Law and Innovative Society*, v. 11, n. 2, 2018. p. 11-14. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.31359/2309-9275-2018-11-2-7-11>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

12 FLIADZHYNSKA, Olha; PRYTYCHENKO, Anastasiya. *Anti-corruption Disclosers and Their Role in Combating Against Corruption in Ukraine*. In: Public Communication in Science: Philosophical, Cultural, Political, Economic and it Aontext. Public Communication in Science: Philosophical, Cultural, Political, Economic and it Context. [S. l.]: European Scientific Platform, 2020. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.36074/15.05.2020.v5.01>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

13 UKRAINE. *Law of Uktaine no. 49, of october, 14, 2014*. Law of Ukraine “On Prevention of Corruption”. Kiev: Adopted in a republican referendum, 2014. Available in: [chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-REF\(2020\)079-e](chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-REF(2020)079-e).

14 UKRAINE. *Law of Ukraine no. 3511-IX, of december, 9, 2023*. On Amendments to the Law of Ukraine “On the Judiciary and the Status of Judges” and some legislative acts of Ukraine regarding the improvement of judicial career procedures. Kiev: Adopted in a republican referendum, 2023. Available in: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://vkksu.gov.ua/sites/default/files/field/file/lu_jst.pdf.

15 PASHKOVSKY, V. V. General Principles of The Fight Against Corruption in Ukraine. In: *Law and*

The adaptation of Ukrainian legislation to European norms is pivotal for Ukraine's integration into the European Union, facilitating alignment with fundamental principles like the rule of law, democracy, and human rights as outlined in agreements between Ukraine and the EU.

In addition to the implementation of specific European laws, the establishment of anti-corruption institutions stands out as another significant achievement¹⁶ the fight against corruption, measures are being taken to enhance the capabilities of law enforcement agencies. This includes upgrading the skills of law enforcement personnel, incorporating modern technologies into their operations, implementing specialized training programs, and strengthening collaboration with European partners. Authors believe that, the introduction of electronic procurement systems, such as ProZorro, has notably increased transparency in government procurement processes, thereby reducing opportunities for corruption in state expenditures and procurement. Equally crucial is the heightened awareness and engagement of the public. Public awareness of the detrimental impact of corruption on society is on the rise, with over 90% of the population considering corruption a serious problem. According to the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology and USAID, corruption is perceived as the most serious problem for Ukraine, with political corruption being the main concern¹⁷. Recent sociological research indicates a decrease in the percentage of citizens with direct experience of corruption, while trust in specialized anti-corruption agencies has notably increased. A significant achievement is the increased trust in institutions like the Security Service of Ukraine and the National Police. Trust levels in the Security Service of Ukraine surged from 12% in 2021 to 40% in 2023, and trust in the National Police increased from 11% in 2021 to 31% in 2023¹⁸. While awareness of anti-corruption measures, reforms, and informational campaigns by government institutions and civil organizations has decreased since 2018, there is a notable increase in the perception of their effectiveness. Almost 80% of citizens express a willingness to participate in protests and public demonstrations, with preferences for passive engagement, such as reporting corruption cases in the media and social networks (31%) and initiating/signing electronic petitions (27%)¹⁹. Figure 1 briefly summarizes the main achievements in the fight against corruption in Ukraine.

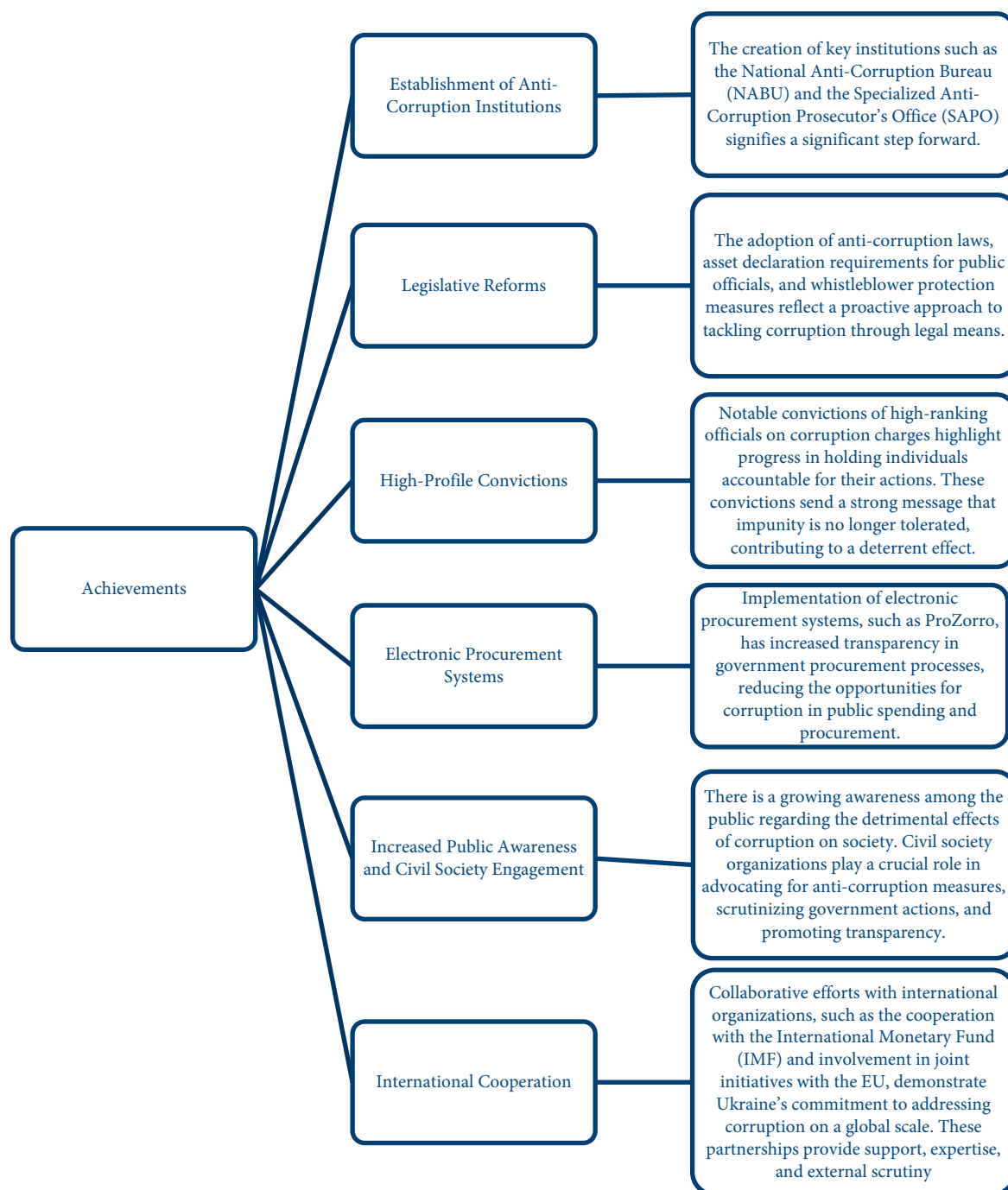
Innovative Society, v. 11, n. 2, 2018. p. 11-14. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.31359/2309-9275-2018-11-2-7-11>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

16 BURIK, Ievgen; SKALETSKA, Zoryana; REZVOROVYCH, Krystyna; GIGIN, Oleksiy. *Future Legal Culture as an Element of the Legal System*. *Futurity Economics&Law*, [S. l.], v. 3, n. 2, 2023. p. 39-47. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57125/FEL.2023.06.25.03>. Available in: <https://www.futurity-econlaw.com/index.php/FEL/article/view/115>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

17 USAID. *State of Corruption in Ukraine 2023: Perception, Experience, Attitude*. Kiev, 2023. Available in: <https://engage.org.ua/stan-koruptsii-v-ukraini-2023-spryjniattia-dosvid-stavlennia/>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

18 Ibidem, 2023

19 Ibidem, 2023

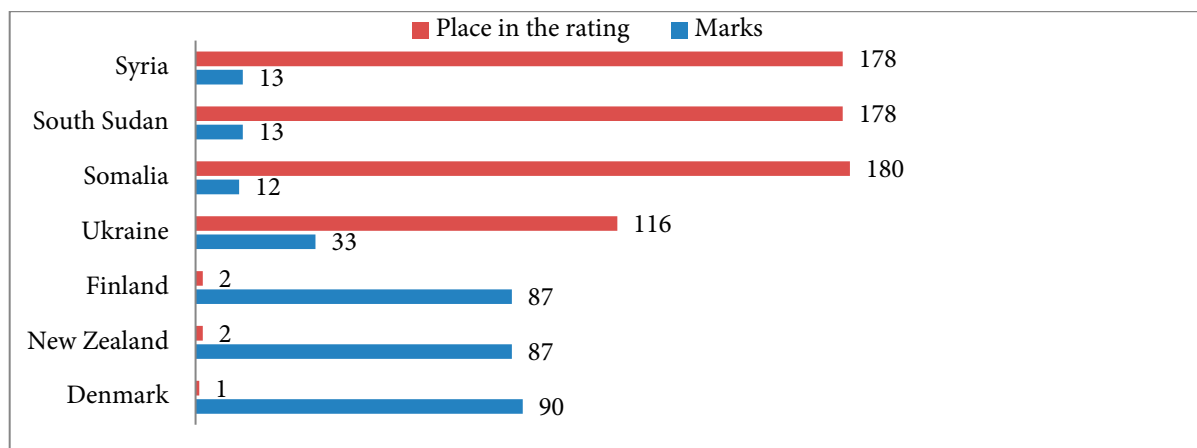
Figure 1. Key achievements in the fight against corruption in Ukraine

According to the Corruption Perception Index for 2022, Ukraine garnered a score of 33 out of a possible 100. This marks a marginal increase of one point compared to the previous assessment. Currently, Ukraine is positioned at the 116th rank out of 180 countries in the Corruption Perception Index. Notably, this places Ukraine alongside Algeria, Angola, Zambia, Mongolia, El Salvador, and the Philippines, all sharing the same score of 33. Slightly ahead are Bosnia and Herzegovina, Gambia, Indonesia, Malawi, Nepal, and Sierra Leone, each securing 34 points. In comparison with neighboring countries, Ukraine outperforms Russia, which, with a score of 28, has dropped by 1 point and now stands at the 137th position on the list. Additionally,

Hungary and Belarus experienced a decline in scores, with both countries losing 1 point, resulting in Hungary ranking 77th and Belarus ranking 78th²⁰.

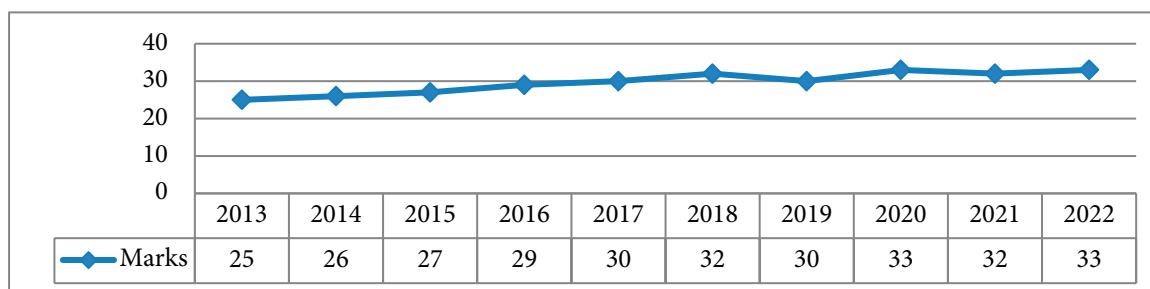
Figure 2 illustrates Ukraine's position in the Corruption Perception Index, depicting its standing between the leading nations, including Denmark, Finland, and New Zealand, and the countries with lower scores, such as Somalia, South Sudan, and Syria. This positioning underscores the need for continuous efforts to improve transparency and combat corruption in Ukraine, while also highlighting the relative progress when compared to certain neighbors in the region.

Figure 2. Ukraine's position in the Corruption Perception Index



Ukraine's attainment of 33 points in the Corruption Perception Index for 2022 marks a significant milestone, representing the highest score since the adoption of the updated methodology for the index. This noteworthy achievement underscores a substantial improvement in Ukraine's anti-corruption efforts over the past decade, with the indicator having increased by a notable 8 points during this period (See Figure 3).

Figure 3. Growth dynamics of Ukraine's results of the Corruption Perceptions Index



The challenges posed by Russia's aggression have served as a litmus test for various Ukrainian state institutions, including those within the anti-corruption framework established after the Revolution of Dignity²¹. Despite the constraints

20 BOROVYK, Andriy. Index of Perception of Corruption. In: *Transparence international*, 2022. Available in: <https://cpi.ti-ukraine.org/>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

21 DOLZHENKO, Alexander. Ukrainian-Russian dimension of hybrid war: prerequisites and features.

imposed by wartime conditions, the anti-corruption bodies have persevered, producing tangible results that have not gone unnoticed. Among the notable accomplishments of the previous year, the adoption of the state Anti-Corruption Strategy stands out as a significant positive development. This strategic framework provides a comprehensive approach to tackling corruption, setting the stage for coordinated and effective anti-corruption initiatives. Another pivotal success was the long-awaited appointment of the head of the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office (SAP). This appointment served as a catalyst for the intensification of investigations into high-profile corruption cases, showcasing a commitment to holding individuals accountable for corrupt practices. The efficacy of the High Anti-Corruption Court was also evident in 2022. Over the course of the year, the court deliberated on 49 cases, resulting in verdicts in 37 of them²². This demonstrates the court's efficiency in adjudicating corruption cases and delivering justice.

On the other hand, recent surveys indicate a notable shift in Ukrainians' perception of corruption prevalence within the country. A mere 5% of respondents found it challenging to formulate an opinion on the matter, with a staggering 94% expressing the belief that corruption exists to some extent. Despite a significant 20% reduction in the portion of respondents characterizing corruption as "very widespread" compared to 2018 and 2021, the overarching perception of its prevalence remains largely unaltered. Focus group discussions further affirmed this perspective, with participants unanimously viewing corruption as pervasive across all regions of Ukraine. Attention was particularly drawn to the perceived existence of a "corruption vertical" and a complex "branched system of corruption". While acknowledging the widespread nature of corruption, there has been a remarkable uptick in the general population's intolerance towards bribery, gifts, or unofficial favors to resolve personal issues. A substantial 53% of respondents firmly believe that such actions can never be justified, marking a significant increase from 42% in both 2018 and 2021. Notably, internally displaced persons (IDPs) exhibit the least tolerance, with 58% asserting that corruption-driven solutions are never justifiable, contrasting with less than 40% among the general population. Examining personal experiences with corruption, 14% of both the general population and IDPs reported encounters with various forms of corruption, encompassing informal payments in the form of money, gifts, or favors within the past 12 months. Notably, IDPs were more inclined to acknowledge instances of corruption in the preceding year (18%), although their willingness to openly discuss this matter was comparatively lower (16% of IDPs declined or were unable to respond, in contrast to 5% of the general population and 2% among IDPs). This data indicates a complex

In: European Political and Law Discourse, v. 9, n. 6, 2022. p. 81-88. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.46340/eppd.2022.9.6.5>. Accessed: January, 29, 2024.

- 22 BOROVYK, Andriy. Index of Perception of Corruption. *In: Transparency international*, 2022. Available in: <https://cpi.ti-ukraine.org/>. Accessed: January, 29, 2024.

and evolving relationship between Ukrainians and corruption, reflecting both an increased awareness of its prevalence and a growing unwillingness to accept corrupt practices in personal affairs²³.

Although the level of awareness of corruption among the population has increased in Ukraine, there are a number of challenges and difficulties on the way to fight against it, which complicate the effective implementation of reforms.

Political corruption remains a persistent challenge, where the intertwining of political interests with corrupt practices can impede the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures. Widespread corruption, extending to various sectors of society, creates systemic challenges, influencing decision-making processes and hindering equitable development²⁴. Additionally, petty corruption, occurring in everyday interactions, poses a pervasive threat to the integrity of public services and erodes public trust. While progress has been made in legislative adaptation, the ongoing challenges underscore the need for continuous vigilance and commitment to building transparent and accountable governance²⁵. As Ukraine strives for closer integration with the EU, addressing corruption remains not only a national imperative but also a critical factor in its journey toward European accession. Table 1 describes the main challenges that should be taken into account when fighting corruption in Ukraine. These challenges include both political interference in the anti-corruption process and complex bureaucratic mechanisms that also hinder the effective fight against corruption (See Table 1).

23 BOROVYK, Andriy. Index of Perception of Corruption. In: *Transparence international*, 2022. Available in: <https://cpi.ti-ukraine.org/>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

24 MALACHYNSKA, Mariia; SHEVCHUK, Roman; PLISH, Bohdan; YAREMKO, Iryna; TOLCHIEVA, Hanna. The Influence Of Public Administration On Demographic Changes In The Perinatal Sphere And Healthcar. In: *Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, [s. l.], v. 12/02-XXXI, 2022. p. 122-127. Available in: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368662510_THE_INFLUENCE_OF_PUBLIC_ADMINISTRATION_ON_DEMOGRAPHIC_CHANGES_IN_THE_PERINATAL_SPHERE_AND_HEALTHCARE/figures?lo=1. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

LITUHAYU, Dyah *et al.* Bureaucracy in a corruption circle. In: *Proceedings of the 1st Tidar International Conference on Advancing Local Wisdom Towards Global Megatrends, ICT 2020, 21-22 October 2020, Magelang, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia*. [S. l.]: EAI, 2021. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.21-10-2020.2311836>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

25 MANSUROV, Vugar Shamistan Oglu. Modern Methods of Criminological Study of the Personality of Selfish Criminals: A Critical Review and Comparative Analysis. In: *Futurity Economics&Law*, [S. l.], v. 3, n. 4, 2023. p. 67-85. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.57125/FEL.2023.12.25.5>. Available in: <https://www.futurity-econlaw.com/index.php/FEL/article/view/166>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

Table 1. The contemporary challenges in Ukraine's anti-corruption landscape

Challenges	Description
Weak institutional frameworks	Despite the establishment of anti-corruption bodies such as the National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NABU) and the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office (SAPO), the overall institutional framework is still evolving. There are concerns about the independence, effectiveness, and capacity of these institutions, which may hinder their ability to investigate and prosecute high-profile corruption cases.
Political Interference	The intertwining of political interests with the anti-corruption agenda remains a significant challenge. Political interference can impede investigations, dilute the impact of reforms, and undermine the autonomy of anti-corruption institutions. Shifting political landscapes and changes in leadership may impact the consistency and commitment to anti-corruption measures.
Legal reforms and implementation	While there have been legislative reforms aimed at combating corruption, the effective implementation of these reforms is often slow and faces obstacles. Gaps and inconsistencies in the legal framework may create loopholes, allowing corrupt practices to persist. The judicial system, in particular, requires further strengthening to ensure fair and timely adjudication.
Incomplete judicial reforms	The judiciary continues to face challenges in terms of independence and efficiency. The judiciary's ability to fairly adjudicate corruption cases is crucial, and ongoing reforms are necessary for ensuring a reliable legal system ²⁶ .
Public awareness and engagement	Despite efforts to raise public awareness, there is still a need for greater engagement and support from the general population. Civil society's role in holding institutions accountable and advocating for anti-corruption measures need to be further empowered. A lack of public trust in the effectiveness of anti-corruption initiatives can undermine their impact ²⁷ .
Economic factors and oligarchic influence	Oligarchic structures and vested economic interests can perpetuate corruption, influencing decision-making processes and regulatory frameworks to favor specific individuals or groups. Addressing corruption requires not only legal and institutional reforms but also economic measures that reduce the concentration of power and wealth.
Whistleblower Protection	Despite efforts to introduce whistleblower protection mechanisms, there are concerns about the safety and security of individuals exposing corruption. Strengthening whistleblower protection is essential to encourage more people to come forward.

26 SMIRNOVA, Sofia. Judicial reform and the fight against corruption in Ukraine. In: Law Review of Kyiv University of Law, Kiev, n. 2, august, 10, 2020. p. 502-506. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.36695/2219-5521.2.2020.99>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

27 FILIPOVA, Milena; ILIEV, Kiril; CHUCHULAYN, Radostina Yuleva. Transhumanist Legal Worldview: Responding to the Challenges of Time (Requirement, or Necessity?). In: Futurity Economics&Law, [S. l.], v. 1, n. 1, 2021. p. 28-37. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57125/FEL.2021.03.25.5>. Available in: <https://www.futurity-econlaw.com/index.php/FEL/article/view/67>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

Authors believe that, addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive and sustained effort, encompassing legal, institutional, economic, and societal dimensions. It also necessitates a commitment to transparency, accountability, and the rule of law at all levels of governance. Certainly, addressing the identified challenges in the fight against corruption in Ukraine requires a comprehensive and multi-pronged strategy. Authors suggest taking into account the following aspects

1. Strengthening institutional independence

It is necessary to ensure the independence of anti-corruption institutions, such as the National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NABU) and the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office (SAP). Protect them from political interference to improve their effectiveness in investigating and prosecuting corruption cases.

2. Continued legislative reforms

Authors consist that pursue ongoing legislative reforms to address gaps and inconsistencies in the legal framework. Ensure that anti-corruption laws are comprehensive, enforceable, and aligned with international standards. Strengthen whistleblower protection and enhance legal mechanisms for asset recovery.

3. Judicial reforms and capacity building

It is important to prioritize reforms within the judicial system to enhance its independence, efficiency, and capacity to handle corruption cases. Invest in training judges and legal professionals specialized in anti-corruption matters to ensure fair and expeditious trials.

4. Public awareness and engagement

Authors believe that facilitating information and educational campaigns to inform citizens about the harmful effects of corruption is an important part of reporting corruption. Civic participation and engagement should be fostered through initiatives that empower communities to demand transparency and accountability.

5. International cooperation and monitoring

Authors believe that cooperation with international organizations such as the European Union, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations should be strengthened for expertise, resources and oversight. International monitoring can provide an additional level of control and support in the fight against corruption.

6. Technological solutions and electronic governance

Ukraine should implement and improve technological solutions, such as e-government platforms, to reduce opportunities for corruption in public services and procurement. Use blockchain and other advanced technologies for transparent and accountable transactions.

7. Effective protection of whistleblowers

The authors of the article believe that it is worth strengthening mechanisms to protect whistleblowers from retaliation, guarantee their safety, and encourage

individuals to provide information about corrupt practices. Create a special body to consider whistleblower complaints.

8. Public anti-corruption initiatives

In Ukraine, it is worth promoting initiatives at the community level that involve local residents, civil society and grassroots organizations in monitoring and reporting on corruption. Give communities the opportunity to play an active role in holding officials accountable for corrupt practices.

9. Strategic prosecution of high-profile cases

The authors believe that there is a need to prioritize and strategically prosecute high-profile corruption cases to demonstrate that those who engage in corrupt practices will face consequences. This not only serves as a deterrent, but also strengthens public confidence in anti-corruption efforts.

10. Regular monitoring and evaluation

At the same time, it is necessary to create a reliable system of monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures. Regularly review progress, identify bottlenecks and adjust strategies based on the changing nature of corruption challenges.

Implementing this strategy in a coordinated and sustained manner will contribute to the strengthening of Ukraine's anti-corruption framework and foster a more transparent and accountable governance system. Success will hinge on the commitment of both governmental and non-governmental entities to the shared goal of eradicating corruption.

Effectively combating corruption necessitates a consistent, planned, and coordinated approach guided by a unified conceptual framework. Addressing systemic issues requires a systemic strategy for overcoming them. Anti-corruption policies should be dynamic, incorporating continuous monitoring across various dimensions, including branch-specific, regional, and functional aspects²⁸. Integrating new insights gained through in-depth research into the nature and root causes of corruption is crucial. This involves a comprehensive examination of the sectors and public bodies most vulnerable to corruption, as well as an understanding of the motivations driving corrupt behavior.

Despite the expansive scope of activities and the formulation of anti-corruption policies within law enforcement bodies of state authorities in Ukraine, achieving success remains elusive without active citizenship support. Advancements in the fight against corruption should be interlinked with a multifaceted approach, combining legal, political, organizational, technical, and financial measures. This comprehensive strategy aims to develop the necessary mechanisms, fostering an environment

28 PAK, Nataliia; TITARCHUK, Alina; KOBETS, Kateryna. Prevention Of Corruption In Ukraine. *In: Young Scientist*, v. 6, n. 70, June 2019. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.32839/2304-5809/2019-6-70-25>. Accessed: January, 29, 2024.

conducive to substantial changes in countering widespread manifestations of corruption.

4 Discussion

The study on the dynamics of the fight against corruption in Ukraine yielded several key findings. Notably, the country achieved its highest Corruption Perception Index (CPI) score. The establishment of anti-corruption institutions, legislative reforms, and increased public awareness emerged as positive factors contributing to this progress. However, challenges such as weak institutional frameworks and political interference persist. Other modern authors also emphasize positive developments in the field of fighting corruption²⁹. In particular, Kos, Drago³⁰ also highlights Ukraine's establishment of specialized anti-corruption institutions dedicated to investigating, prosecuting, and adjudicating high-level corruption cases. Noteworthy among these are the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU), the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office (SAP), and the Higher Anti-Corruption Court (HCC).

At the same time, the results of this study contradict the idea that Ukraine belongs to the group of countries in which corruption has deeply become an organic element of social relations³¹. This study, on the contrary, demonstrated that Ukrainians are clearly aware of the negativity of corruption at all levels. Therefore, this statement tends to reinterpret reality and may have an overly pessimistic effect on the possibilities of fighting corruption.

Although the results emphasize the importance of Electronic Procurement Systems, however, this system is not always effective and perfect, so this study contradicts the idea of Silenko³² regarding the universal development of the information society and the introduction of electronic government in Ukraine for

29 KUMAR, Amit. Analysis of the Principle of Subsidiarity as a Principle of EU Law: Future Perspectives. In: *Futurity Economics&Law*, [S. l.], v. 1, n. 4, 2021. p. 18–27. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57125/FEL.2021.12.25.03>. Available in: <https://www.futurity-econlaw.com/index.php/FEL/article/view/68>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

SHAULSKYI, Mykola Ihorovych. Fight against corruption as a condition for the legal establishment of local democracy in Ukraine. In: *East European Scientific Journal*, v. 1, no. 8, september, 14, 2021. p. 59–63. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.31618/essa.2782-1994.2021.1.72.105>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

30 KOS, Drago. War and Corruption in Ukraine. Eucrim. In: *The European Criminal Law Associations' Forum*, [s. l.], 2022. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.30709/eucrim-2022-007>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

31 HOLOVACHKO, Vasyly; MAKSYMENKO, Diana; SHERSHUN, Violeta. The fight Against Corruption In Ukraine, Romania, Hungary And Slovakia. Scientific Bulletin of Mukachevo State University. In: *Series "Economics"*, n. 2, 2019. p. 27–32. Available in: [https://doi.org/10.31339/2313-8114-2019-2\(12\)-27-32](https://doi.org/10.31339/2313-8114-2019-2(12)-27-32). Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

32 SILENKO, Alla. Digitalization in the fight against corruption in ukraine. In: *Man, society, politics: topical challenges of the modernity*. [S. l.]: Liha-Pres, 2019. p. 147–159. ISBN 9789663971834. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.36059/978-966-397-183-4/147-159>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

several reasons. In this system, the specificity of the Ukrainian context is important. Ukraine has its own socio-cultural and institutional characteristics that can create unique challenges for e-government implementation. This may include peculiarities in the degree of citizens' trust in electronic services and the propensity to use new technologies. The assertion that the provision of as many public services as possible in electronic form is a key aspect of e-government may also cause discussion³³. A multi-channel approach that takes into account different ways of accessing services (including offline options) may also be necessary to ensure real inclusivity and accessibility.

Authors of the paper identified possible obstacles to combating corruption. Authors agree with findings by Drago³⁴ (2022) and Zaloznaya & Lynn³⁵ that despite initial expectations of effective operation, anticorruption institutions faced a counterproductive response from a significant portion of the political establishment in the country. Contrary to what many decision-makers anticipated; attempts were made to impede the functioning of these anti-corruption bodies. The countermeasures adopted by the political establishment ranged from ambiguous decisions by the Constitutional Court to the involvement of other state entities, particularly the SBU (Security Service of Ukraine) and the State Special Intelligence Service, against anti-corruption structures. Additionally, in 2022 smear campaigns were orchestrated against these institutions and their leaders, further complicating their efforts to combat high-level corruption effectively. Thus, this study opens up a wide range of possibilities for discussion. However, it is important that despite unfavorable circumstances, Ukraine still achieved some results in the long-term fight against corruption³⁶.

The study's implications are significant for understanding the evolving landscape of anti-corruption efforts in Ukraine. The positive trends suggest that strategic measures, including the creation of institutions and legislative reforms, can yield tangible improvements. The findings contribute to the broader field of corruption studies by highlighting the importance of both institutional and societal factors in shaping anti-corruption outcomes.

33 DAANOV, Canpolad. Ali oglu. Aspects of the Use of Forensic Methods and Techniques in the Investigation of Acts of Theft of Property Committed by Minors. In: *Futurity Economics & Law*, [S. l.], v. 3, n. 4, 2023. p. 103–116. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57125/FEL.2023.12.25.07>. Available in: <https://www.futurity-econlaw.com/index.php/FEL/article/view/168>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

34 KOS, Drago. War and Corruption in Ukraine. Eucrim. In: *The European Criminal Law Associations' Forum*, [s. l.], 2022. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.30709/eucrim-2022-007>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

35 ZALOZNAYA, Marina; LYNN, Freda B. A Smarter Fight Against Corruption Contexts. In: *Sage Journals*, Thousand Oaks, v. 20, n. 2, may 2021. p. 63–65. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.1177/15365042211012074>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

36 FLIADZHYNSKA, Olha; PRYTYCHENKO, Anastasiya. *Anti-corruption Disclosers and Their Role in Combating Against Corruption in Ukraine*. In: Public Communication in Science: Philosophical, Cultural, Political, Economic and it Aontext. Public Communication in Science: Philosophical, Cultural, Political, Economic and it Context. [S. l.]: European Scientific Platform, 2020. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.36074/15.05.2020.v5.01>. Accessed: january, 29, 2024.

One strength of the study lies in its comprehensive examination of various aspects of the fight against corruption, encompassing institutional, legislative, and societal dimensions. The inclusion of historical context enhances the depth of understanding. However, limitations include the potential for subjective biases in survey responses and the inherent challenge of quantifying complex phenomena like corruption. Additionally, the study's reliance on available data up to a certain cutoff date may not capture the most recent developments.

Future research in this area could explore the nuanced impact of specific legislative reforms on corruption indices. Comparative studies with other countries undergoing similar anti-corruption initiatives might provide valuable insights. Additionally, an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of public awareness campaigns and their role in shaping societal attitudes toward corruption could be a fruitful avenue for exploration. Continuous monitoring of the evolving dynamics and the influence of geopolitical factors on corruption trends in Ukraine could also be an area of interest for future research.

5 Conclusion

Ukraine is actively implementing measures to combat corruption, and while there have been successes, significant challenges are also evident. The establishment of anti-corruption institutions and legislative reforms are positive steps that stand out. It is an achievement for Ukraine that in 2022, the country scored 33 points, marking the highest indicator since the introduction of the updated Corruption Perception Index. This signifies a noteworthy improvement, with the indicator having increased by 8 points over the past decade. At the same time, challenges persist in weak institutional frameworks and political interference.

The targeted strategy to strengthen institutional independence, improve legislative acts, and reform the judicial system aims to overcome these challenges. Important components include increasing public awareness, international cooperation, and utilizing technological solutions for transparency.

The research identifies positive changes in citizen awareness and a high level of intolerance towards bribery or gifts for personal needs. The consistent implementation of strategic directions in the fight against corruption will allow Ukraine not only to maintain the achieved progress but also to overcome challenges in establishing a transparent and accountable governance system.

In conclusion, while progress has been made, the fight against corruption in Ukraine requires sustained efforts, ongoing reforms, and a collaborative approach to build a transparent and accountable governance system. Success hinges on a commitment to these strategies from both governmental and non-governmental entities.

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Conflict of Interest. Authors, the undersigned, hereby declare that there is no conflict of interest associated with the USAID survey on the State of Corruption in Ukraine 2023: Perception, Experience, Attitude. The researchers, administrators, and any other parties involved in the planning, execution, and analysis of this survey affirm their commitment to transparency and unbiased research. Any potential conflicts that could compromise the objectivity of the study have been identified and appropriately managed to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.

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