DETERMINING THE LEVEL OF CORRUPTION OF THE STATE IN MODERN CONDITIONS

ВИЗНАЧЕННЯ РІВНЯ КОРУМПОВАНОСТІ ДЕРЖАВИ В СУЧАСНИХ УМОВАХ

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The article provides a definitional analysis of the concepts "measurement of corruption" and "assessment of corruption" and proves the need to separate these definitions when studying the level of corruption in the state. The factors of the emergence and existence of corruption are identified and categorized into groups. It is established that the studied factors of corruption development are a complex phenomenon that has an impact on all spheres of public relations. The influence of corruption factors on the formation of corruption trends in the field of public administration at all levels is considered. It is established that the source of data for determining the factors and trends in the development of corruption is regular research on the scale of corruption. Information on modern methods of measuring corruption is studied and summarized, namely: integral assessment; expert assessment; sociological surveys. Each of the methods of measuring corruption, its content and peculiarities of use are considered.

Depending on the purpose of using each of the methods, it is determined which organizations / institutions / companies implement the selected measures. The author proves the necessity of integrated use of quantitative and qualitative indicators of corruption level to obtain the most objective results. A special methods of determining the level of corruption – integrated expert indices of corruption measurement – are considered in detail, namely: Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), Global Corruption Barometer (GCB); Index of Economic Freedom (IEF); Nations in Transit (NIT). The use of integrated expert corruption measurement indices has a significant impact on the growth or decline of a country's rating in the civilized world. Based on the results of the study and using a comparative approach, a system of criteria has been formed by which it is possible to assess and measure the state of the fight against corruption in the state.

Key words: measurement of corruption, definition of corruption, corruption-generating factors, methods of measuring corruption, criteria for defining corruption, anti-corruption policy, global level of corruption.

У статті проведено дефінітивний аналіз понять «вимірювання корупції» та «оцінювання корупції» і доведено необхідність розведення цих дефініцій під час дослідження рівня корупції в державі. Визначено фактори виникнення та існування корупції, а також розподілено їх за групами. Встановлено, що досліджені фактори розвитку корупції виступають комплексним явищем, що має вплив на усі сфери суспільних відносин. Розглянуто вплив корупціогенних факторів на формування тенденцій розвитку корупції в сфері державного управління усіх рівнів. Встановлено, що джерелом даних для визначення факторів і тенденцій розвитку корупції виступають регулярні дослідження масштабів корупції. Досліджено та узагальнено інформацію щодо сучасних методів вимірювання корупції, а саме: інтегральне оцінювання; експертне оцінювання; соціологічні опитування. Розглянуто кожен з методів вимірювання корупції, його зміст та особливості використання. В залежності від мети використання кожного з методів установлено які організації / установи / компанії проводять реалізацію обраних заходів. Доведено необхідність комплексного використання кількісних та якісних показників визначення рівня корупції для отримання найбільш об'єктивних результатів. Детально розглянуто спеціальний методи визначення рівня корупції – інтегровані експертні індекси вимірювання корупції, а саме: Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), Global Corruption Barometer (GCB); Index of Economic Freedom (IEF); Nations in Transit (NIT). Використання інтегрованих експертних індексів вимірювання корупції суттєво впливає на зростання або зниження рейтингу країни в цивілізованому світі. За результатами проведеного дослідження та із використанням компаративістського підходу, було сформовано систему критеріїв, за якими можливо оцінити та виміряти стан боротьби із корупцією в державі.

Ключові слова: вимірювання корупції, визначення корупції, корупціогенні фактори, методи вимірювання корупції, критерії визначення корупції, антикорупційна політика, світовий рівень корупції.

General statement of the problem. During the years of independence, Ukraine has adopted a significant number of legal acts related to the formation of the state's anti-corruption policy and the fight against corruption. The effectiveness of anti-corruption activities depends on the scientific understanding of the essence of corruption, the correct definition of the content, the main corruption processes, the patterns of their development, as well as the adequacy of the chosen methods of studying corruption. That is why identifying factors and trends in corruption is important for the development and implementation of an effective anti-corruption policy.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Many scholars have focused on highlighting certain aspects of the problems of corruption in Ukraine and defining social perceptions of corruption, in particular, the following: N. Akhtyrska, I. Basantsov, O. Zubareva, A. Kopystyra, G. Kokhan, M. Melnyk. Such scholars as A. Novak, O. Novikov, H. Shvedova, I. Chemeris, S. Rogulski study the improvement of measures to combat corruption processes, as well as determine the impact of corruption on the socio-economic and political standard of living of the population. The problem of anti-corruption policy and ways of its implementation are studied by such scholars as:

V. Bakumenko, N. Dragomyretska, Y. Kalnysh, M. Karmazina, T. Kachkina, A. Mikhnenko, E. Nevmerzhytskyi, J. Pope, V. Solovyov and others.

Identification of previously unresolved parts of the overall problem. The impossibility of overcoming corruption prompts a comprehensive study of it as a social phenomenon, identification of factors of its occurrence and development trends, special methods of determining its level, etc. Well-founded research results are the basis of anti-corruption practice. The level of corruption in a country determines the socio-economic, political and legal level of development of society. The higher the level of corruption, the lower the level of trust in the state. This is because the inability to influence negative processes indicates the ineffectiveness of actions taken by public authorities. In the last decade, there have been qualitative changes in the signs of corruption, according to which an occasional corrupt act is being replaced by systematic actions. Corruption is being institutionalized, which indicates that corruption processes are becoming entrenched in established forms.

The purpose of the article. To study the methods of determining the level of corruption and the formation of a system of criteria by which it is possible to assess and measure the state of the fight against corruption in the state.

Presentation of the main materials. According to S. Klimova and T. Kovaleva there are general factors of the emergence and existence of corruption: political, economic, legal, organizational, managerial, social and psychological [7, p. 25–26].

A. Kopystyra summarized the results of scientific research on the factors of corruption development in Western and Eastern Europe and identified the following groups: factors of temporal invariance: the period of independence of the country, religious affiliation of the population; factors of economic development: inflation, public spending and investment, average wages, income inequality; factors of institutional development: development of market relations, political and legal development, growing importance of civil society, quality of public administration.

S. Dremov, Y. Kalnysh, D. Klymenko, H. Usatyi, L. Usachenko, studying how corruption-generating factors are formed, noted that in addition to general factors, it is necessary to take into account the peculiarities of the socio-economic and political state of society. Scientists have identified the following areas of corruption factors: economic, organizational and managerial, political and legal, ideological, moral and psychological. [5].

The division of corruption factors into groups indicates that corruption is a complex phenomenon that affects all spheres of social relations. It is impossible for a corrupt act to be isolated from its impact on a particular area of life. The situation with detecting and combating corruption is further complicated by the fact that society has stereotypes of tolerance to corruption.

A. Mikhnenko and S. Kravchenko have formed a classification of factors of corruption development in the following areas: political, economic, social, legal, managerial, psychological, cultural and ethical factors [10, P. 82-95].

The dynamism of the processes taking place in society requires constant research and systematization of newly identified factors, taking into account the peculiarities of social relations. The analysis of the proposed classifications of corruption-generating factors provides a basis for forecasting corruption trends. It is worth noting that their identification may affect the development of anti-corruption policy. Therefore, having analyzed the corruption-generating factors, it is worth identifying the following main trends in the development of corruption:

1. Institutionalization of corruption processes. Corrupt practices become regular and are separated into informal institutions.

2. Rooting of corruption as a «corruption culture" of society. The spread of corruption in society and subsequent perception of corruption as a forced way of solving problems. Corrupt acts become sustainable and turn into a system of social norms of behavior.

3. Internationalization of corruption, which is manifested in obtaining illegal advantages, benefits, signing agreements in cooperation with international organizations, transnational companies, etc.

The source of data for determining the factors and trends of corruption is regular research on the scale of corruption. According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, measuring the level of corruption is a powerful tool for formulating and implementing anti-corruption policy. Research results increase public awareness, the formation of negative opinions and intolerance to corruption processes [14].

D. Nikiforchuk and O. Busol emphasize the need to distinguish between the definitions of "measurement" and "assessment" when studying the level of corruption. Corruption is measured using quantitative indicators – indices that serve as social indicators. Assessment of corruption is defined as the next stage, where the measurement results are summarized and conclusions about the level of corruption are drawn. Assessment is a qualitative indicator [11, p. 177].

Instead, M. Fomina and E. Begen consider it impossible to measure corruption, since corrup-

tion is a voluminous multidimensional phenomenon. Scientists note that it is advisable to conduct empirical research and generate statistics, based on the results of which it is possible to model the situation [16; 2].

J. G. Lambsdorf, considering and using various methods of measuring corruption in his own research, notes that it is impossible to determine the level of corruption objectively, since it is measured through the perception of corruption by respondents. It is crucial to categorize respondents into groups based on certain characteristics and features. In the final part of the study, when formulating conclusions and recommendations, it is also necessary to take into account the characteristics of these groups [20, p. 22].

S. Onyshchenko, B. Ivaniuk, D. Holozubova summarized the research on modern methods of measuring corruption and identified the following groups:

1. Integral assessment. The essence of this method is that the level of corruption is assessed by accumulating corruption ratings offered by various organizations. One of the most well-known ratings in the world is the Corruption Perceptions Index and the Global Corruption Barometer, both of which are established by the international non-governmental organization Transparency International. This group also includes the Index of Economic Freedom [27].

2. Expert assessment. Corruption is measured by experts, using comparative research methods in different countries and at different times. International organizations create special projects for peer review to determine the level of corruption. One of the most famous existing projects is Nations in Transit (NIT) [19], implemented by the American public organization Freedom House.

3. Sociological surveys. Depending on the purpose and program of the study, it is possible to calculate the parameters of corruption, including quantitative and qualitative indicators. As a tool for determining the level of corruption, this method consists of surveys of respondents in the following categories: citizens, private entrepreneurs, and public officials [12, P. 19].

The use of quantitative and qualitative indicators to determine the level of corruption ensures the most objective research results. This significantly affects the growth or decline of a country's rating on the world stage, depending on the method used. Let us consider in more detail the special methods of determining the level of corruption, which are used to formulate the respective country rankings annually.

The most popular in the world are integrated expert indices of corruption measurement. One of them is the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), an annual ranking that covers most coun-

tries and has been used on a regular basis since 1995 [24]. The Corruption Perceptions Index, as a general indicator, ranks countries according to the public perception of the degree of corruption among politicians and public officials. The ranking of countries in the ranking is based on the level of corruption [10, p. 14–16]. The data for the Index are collected by independent non-governmental organizations trusted by Transparency International, including the World Bank, the World Economic Forum, the Asian Development Bank, the International Institute for Management Development, and others. Independent experts in the field of finance and law are involved in the surveys, and the opinion of professional analysts and entrepreneurs doing business in the country whose index is being determined is also taken into account. Two groups of respondents are surveyed: those living in the country and foreigners. According to the methodology used until 2011, the index was calculated on a ten-point scale: 10 – the lowest possible level of corruption; 0 – the highest. After 2011, the calculation is based on a 100-point scale. The level of corruption of countries is determined by the following gradation: from 0 to 49 points – perceived as more corrupt; from 50 to 100 points – as less corrupt [11, P. 174]. The official website of Transparency International annually publishes the rankings with the scores assigned to countries, as well as interactive infographics that facilitate quick access to information and allow for an overall assessment of the situation [6].

The Index helps to determine the level of corruption in a country and to track the success or failure of anti-corruption policy and the dynamics of corruption processes [24].

Analyzing Ukraine's data, it should be noted that there have been no significant improvements and the country is still at risk. However, it should be remembered that the ratings do not take into account changes and reforms that may be taking place in the country at the time of the survey. Therefore, the results of an active anti-corruption fight can be seen in a few years.

As noted by D. Nikiforchuk and O. Busol, foreign investors, grantors, politicians and others pay attention to the ratings formed by the Corruption Perceptions Index to determine the likely corruption risks when conducting business in a particular country [11, p. 173].

At the same time, G. Derlugyan draws attention to the relative importance of such ratings, noting that in most cases they are formal and do not reflect the whole picture. The scientist cites Iceland as an example, which, according to Transparency International's research, was one of the most uncorrupted countries in the ranking, but then it turned out that the banking network in

this country functioned through interaction with influential families in politics and two pro-government political parties [4].

In fact, representatives of Transparency International do not deny the possibility of situations similar to the one described above and call for careful use of the research results to identify the dynamics of corruption [12].

I. Rusnak emphasizes that the Index is comprehensive and is formed by combining the results of surveys of respondents and assessments of the level of corruption, taking into account the position of the experts involved. In order to maintain the quality standards of Transparency International, the research methodology provides for detailed information on each source used [13, p. 37].

In general, it can be noted that Transparency International for the first time refuted the perception of corruption as a classic phenomenon that is not characterized by quantitative indicators by introducing the Corruption Perceptions Index. This method of measuring corruption is still actively used and remains one of the most well-known to the general public, despite certain drawbacks.

The next method developed by Transparency International is the Global Corruption Barometer (GCB). To form a holistic picture of the level of corruption in the country under study, this indicator is a component of the Corruption Perceptions Index. As an independent study, the Barometer is aimed at identifying the processes of institutionalization of corruption, identifying the most corrupt state and public institutions, as well as the level of government's fight against corruption. The study has been conducted since 2003 by the Gallup International Association and covers 60 to 120 countries in different periods [22]. The study is conducted in the form of individual interviews and allows to establish whether the interviewees are involved in corrupt practices and how they feel about the state's fight against corruption.

The distinguishing feature of the Barometer from the Index is the research methodology, which is based on surveys of ordinary citizens, not experts. The Barometer provides for determining the general state of corruption in the country both by economic sectors and by areas of public life. This breakdown allows for forecasting results and planning activities, taking into account corruption risks [26].

The use of the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) and the Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) to determine the level of corruption helps to form a complete picture of the state of corruption both on the part of ordinary citizens and on the part of entrepreneurs and experts. A country's CPI score may not be the same as its GCB score, which means that the opinions of experts and ordinary citizens may be different. Taking into account the

two above-mentioned indices in research affects the objectivity of the results.

T. Kovaleva draws attention to the fact that the level of corruption in a country is significantly influenced by the standard of living of the population [25]. That is why it is worth paying attention to the Index of Economic Freedom (IEF), which reflects the relationship between the level of corruption in a country and the welfare of the population. The IEF study determines the impact of institutionalization on economic freedom in a country and the approval of corruption. The results of the research also allow us to determine how economic freedom in a country affects political rights and freedoms and social well-being of citizens. The higher the index of economic freedom, the better the situation in various spheres of public life and the lower the level of corruption (this can be seen by comparing the data of the Corruption Perceptions Index, the Global Corruption Barometer and the Index of Economic Freedom).

The IEF has been calculated annually by the Wall Street Journal and the Heritage Foundation since 1995. As of 2024, the Index of Economic Freedom is calculated for 186 countries. The Index of Economic Freedom is similar to the Corruption Perceptions Index in terms of its scoring scale, as each component of the Index is also rated on a scale from 0 to 100. However, the difference is that the Index of Economic Freedom is composed of 12 quantitative and qualitative components grouped into 4 main categories:

1. Rule of law (property rights, government integrity, judicial efficiency);
2. Government spending (public expenditures, tax burden, public healthcare);
3. Regulatory efficiency (business freedom, labor freedom, monetary freedom);
4. Open markets (freedom of trade, freedom of investment, financial freedom).

The overall score for a country is established by averaging these twelve components, which are equally important [23].

According to the Index of Economic Freedom, countries are divided into the following levels: oppressive (0–49.9 points); mostly unfree (50–59.9) points; moderately free (60–69.9 points); mostly free (70–79.9 points); free (80–100 points) [21]. For example, until 2017, the Index of Economic Freedom for Ukraine did not rise above 49.9, which means that the country was included in the list of oppressive countries. However, since 2018, the index has risen above 50, which means that the country has moved up a notch and is now in the group of mostly unfree countries [23].

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Another way to measure corruption is the Nations in Transit (NIT) project, implemented by the American NGO Freedom House. The comparative analysis of corruption processes is conducted in 29 former communist countries from Central Europe to Central Asia. Researchers annually rate countries on a scale of 1 to 7 in the following categories: national democratic governance, local democratic governance, electoral process, media independence, civil society development, judicial independence, and corruption. The scores are calculated on a scale from 1 to 7. Scores in this category reflect the country's «democracy score», with 1 being the most democratic and 7 being the least democratic.

An important difference of this index is that the respondents are experts in a particular field, unlike the previous indices, where the respondents are ordinary citizens. This allows us to form the most objective opinion on the level of corruption in the country.

Freedom House cooperates with independent researchers from academic institutions, journalists and civil society representatives for each country separately. All this is done to make an objective initial assessment of the state of affairs in the country under study. After the reports are created, it is mandatory to have them reviewed by peer reviewers with the possibility of making corrections. After the researchers have a chance to respond to the comments, the Nations in Transit board meets to approve the final results of the assessment [28].

When researching the level of corruption using the above methods, well-known international organizations and academic institutions are involved in cooperation: World Economic Forum, Gallup International Association, Geneva Center for Security Policy, EU-GRECO, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, World Bank, African Union, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation on Anti-Corruption, and others.

Since corruption contributes to social instability in society and destabilizes economic and political development of countries, it is necessary to use the most effective methods of measuring corruption to determine its scale. It should be emphasized that the above-mentioned corruption measurement indices are not exhaustive, but if used in a comprehensive manner, they are among the most effective sources for establishing corruption indicators in the countries under study.

None of the existing methods is perfect, so it is advisable to use different ways of obtaining information to ensure the objectivity of the research results. T. Kovaleva advises a systematic approach to measuring and assessing corruption. A systematic approach should consist of corruption measurement indices, surveys and statistics. Statistical information, depending on the purpose of the study, may include the number of court "corruption" cases, citizens' appeals to the relevant institutions about the facts of corruption, the amount of funds recovered as a result of the fight against corruption, growth / decline in macroeconomic indicators, etc.

The presence of a significant number of indices and criteria characterizing the development indicators and positions of different countries of the world indicates the interest of the international community in managing the processes taking place in society and reducing the level of corruption.

Corruption is characterized by political and economic aspects. Political corruption primarily affects the country's democratic institutions and disrupts the work of the main branches of government. Economic corruption is characterized by a decrease in the effectiveness of market institutions and regulatory activities of the state. Given the multidimensional nature of corruption, I. Ternova draws attention to the fact that for the effectiveness of the study, it is necessary to use criteria formed in accordance with the purpose and objectives of the study [15].

Based on the above analysis of the factors, trends and methods of determining corruption, we have formed a system of criteria by which it is possible to assess and measure the state of the fight against corruption in the country as qualitatively as possible, taking into account the availability of quantitative and qualitative indicators for further practical use, namely:

1. Activities of the system of anti-corruption bodies.

2. The role of civil society (attitude of organizations to the fight against corruption and the level of their involvement in this process)

3. Perfection of the legal framework.

4. Public attitude to the fight against corruption (based on the results of a public opinion poll).

5. Assessment of the fight against corruption according to EU reports.

6. Judicial practice in corruption cases.

7. Amounts of funds returned to the budget [3, p. 70–74].

The level of institutionalization of the fight against corruption is determined by examining the indicators for each of the criteria. From the statistical point of view, quantitative indicators

are only estimates and their value is relative. Therefore, they need to be used in combination with qualitative indicators, which was taken into account when formulating the criteria for measuring the level of corruption.

Taken together, the above criteria should reflect the level of institutionalization of the anti-corruption policy, and their determination on an annual basis allows us to trace the dynamics of growth or decline in the level of corruption in the country.

Conclusions. The formation of the country's anti-corruption policy should be based on the corruption monitoring system, which consists of the indicators and methods described in detail above. Countries in which the state interacts with society, having information about the real situation with corruption in the country, form a successful anti-corruption policy and get positive changes in the scale of corruption [11, P. 177]. It should be noted that the formation of anti-corruption policy without applying the principle of consistency, considering the need for change and updating, will not lead to quality results [1].

The unified use of the above methods and criteria, in compliance with the principles of consistency and systematicity, allows to determine the level of institutionalization of the fight against corruption in the country. This will make it possible to compare both the disadvantages and advantages of the fight against corruption, and to highlight the positive aspects for further application. Implementation of effective anti-corruption measures will help to reduce the level of corruption and prevent corruption processes.

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