

## **Corruption in Ukraine 2020: Understanding, Perception, Prevalence** — EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The research agency Info Sapiens conducted the second wave of sociological survey on the level and perception of corruption. Research took place from 4 March till 8 April 2020 according to the 2017 Standard Methodology on Corruption Level in Ukraine adopted by the National Agency on Corruption Prevention. The survey was funded by the EU Anti-Corruption Initiative in Ukraine (EUACI), the programme is financed by the European Union and co-financed and implemented by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Fieldworks were conducted during the quarantine period of COVID-19 pandemic in Ukraine, which could influence both corruption experience and perception of respondents. The COVID -2019 may have affected the immediate significance of corruption problem in the public agenda.

The survey results are compared with the first wave, which was conducted from 29 May till 14 July 2017 by the GfK Ukraine with the support of OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine, within the implementation of the “Support for Diagnosis, Monitoring and Prosecution of Corruption in Ukraine” Project.

Both waves include three components:

- Nationally and regionally representative population survey (face-to-face interviews: in 2017 - 2585 interviews conducted, in 2020 — 2516 interviews conducted).
- Nationally and regionally representative business survey (telephone interviews: 2017 — 1005 interviews conducted, 2020 — 1093 interviews conducted).
- Expert survey (2017 — 118 interviews, 2020 — 98 interviews).

Survey results demonstrated that corruption ranks the second among major problems in Ukraine, after war in Donbas. Notably, population perception of corruption in main state institutions is higher than the one of experts and business and stands at 3.98 out of 5-points (where 1 means the absence of corruption, and 5 its prevalence), while the score of business respondents is 3.47, and of experts - 3.36 out of 5.

Population most often attributes corruption to institutions that they rarely face in real life like **customs, courts, Verkhovna Rada, prosecution office**, while hospitals (most people have first-hand contacts with them) are ranked fifth among 23 institutions suggested for the evaluation. At the same time, business and experts, that are more experienced in cooperation with state institutions and are better informed about their work, also give the worst scores to the same institutions (besides experts gave the worst scores to **police** (patrol police was evaluated separately and received better score). Also, business and experts list **land issues, urban development, and large construction projects** as spheres with higher level of corruption.

According to the population survey, **corruption scores have increased for customs, healthcare, tax service, central executive bodies, patrol police, local authorities, NACP, NABU, and armed forces, in comparison with 2017**. The only institution, with significant improvement is the President of Ukraine, the perception of corruption in relation to which has decreased from 4.05 to 3.2 because probably of high personal trust level to Volodymyr Zelensky. Along with that, the business has better ranked the Verkhovna Rada, courts, prosecution office, healthcare, and central executive bodies in 2020. That may be related to a lower level of corruption experienced while contacting state bodies (see below).

*Top institutions with the highest estimated corruptness level using 5-point scale, where 1 means the absence of corruption, and 5 - its prevalence*

	<b>Population</b>	<b>Business</b>	<b>Experts</b>
Customs	4.50 ↑	4.19	4.16
Courts	4.43	3.97 ↓	3.98
Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (Parliament)	4.37	4.08 ↓	3.90
Prosecution office	4.33	3.84 ↓	3.92
Healthcare	4.32 ↑	3.65 ↓	3.91
Police (except the Patrol/traffic police)	4.08	3.45 ↑	3.98

Statistically significant changes (p=0,05) in evaluation of the institutions in 2017 and 2020 are marked with arrows

*Top sectors with the highest estimated corruptness level using 5-point scale, where 1 means the absence of corruption, and 5 - its prevalence*

	<b>Business</b>	<b>Experts</b>
Construction of large infrastructure objects	4.07	3.99
Privatization of enterprises	4.04	3.63
Land relations	4.01	4.28
Urban planning	3.98	4.22
Government procurement	3.78	3.37
Energetics	3.38	3.74

Empirical indicators of the success of anti-corruption policy implementation within the sociological survey are the following:

1. **Share of population/business that deliberately abstains from behavioral corruption patterns.** 42.5% of population and 42.6% of business show readiness for corruption in 2020, which is similar to the results in 2017.
2. **Share of population/business that have experienced corruption during the last 12 months.** Overall, 41.7% of population and 12% of business have faced corruption in at least one of the fields that are mentioned below during the last 12 months.

*Corruption experience during the last 12 months\**

<b>Corruption experience by fields and institutions</b>	<b>The share of respondents with corruption experience from those who have contacted respective institutions</b>	
	<b>Population</b>	<b>Business**</b>
Healthcare organizations	57.0%	x
Education	↓ 57.0%	x
Law-enforcement	↑ 38.3%	↑ 32.9%
Judiciary	↑ 36.8%	courts: 15.3% execution of court decisions: 28.4%
Patrol police	↑ 26.0%	x
Energy company services	↑ 19.8%	↓ 29.9%
Administrative services provided by state and local bodies	↑ 13.7%	↓ 19.1%

\* In 2020, the list of the situations of corruption experience (bribery, nepotism, etc.) was expanded and therefore the total corruption experience figures are not comparable with 2017. Statistically significant changes (p=0,05) in prevalence of separate situations related to correspondent institutions which were measured both in 2017 and 2020 are marked with arrows.

\*\* Experts were not surveyed on personal corruption experience

X — the business representatives were asked only about corruption experience within their work, but not within personal life

3. **Share of population/business that can expose corruption.** 10.1% of population and 20.1% of business answered that they are ready to report corruption requests — these figures decreased from 14,5% and 24.7% respectively in 2017. However, only 3.3% of population and 11.7% of business, who have faced corruption, actually reported it — so the real weight of the exposers is 2-3 times smaller.
4. **Share of population that is aware about and trust anti-corruption bodies.** In 2017, the share of population that has a sufficient level of awareness about the work of anti-corruption institutions was 28.9%, but it decreased almost twice to 16.6% in 2020. The share of population that has a sufficient level of awareness about the results of anti-corruption bodies efforts has also dropped twice from 23.2% in 2017 to 11.7% in 2020. That may be caused by ousting of the corruption topic by COVID-19, or by the fact that these bodies were a novelty in 2017, substantially covered by media, while now we observe the lower interest.

Effectiveness scores have remained at a low level of 2017:

- National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU) — 2.15 points out of 5-point scale, where 1 means that the fight against corruption is completely ineffective, and 5 — very effective (no changes since 2017);
- National Agency on Corruption Prevention (NACP) — 2.09 points (no changes since 2017);
- Specialized Anti-corruption Prosecution Office (SAPO) — 2.09 points (it has not been scored in 2017);
- The High Anti-Corruption Court of Ukraine (HACC) - 2.04 points (it has not been scored in 2017).

These results show that population feels disappointed in anti-corruption bodies (SAPO, NACP) as key elements of the anti-corruption system, which is demonstrated by lowering the interest and awareness of the population. At the same time experts give high scores to HACC (3.92) and NABU (3.5).

*Estimation of the effectiveness of anti-corruption bodies using 5-point scale, where 1 means that the fight against corruption is completely ineffective, and 5 — very effective*

	<b>Population</b>	<b>Business</b>	<b>Experts</b>
National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU)	2.15	2.44↓	3.50
Specialized Anti-corruption Prosecution Office (SAPO)	2.09	2.44	3.08
National Agency on Corruption Prevention (NACP)	2.09	2.36↓	2.87
High Anti-Corruption Court of Ukraine	2.04	2.34	3.92

Statistically significant changes (p=0,05) in evaluation of the organizations in 2017 and 2020 are marked with arrows