**Corruption practices in Ukraine:   
perception VS real experience of citizens**

*How extensive is the corruption problem in Ukraine? What percentage of the population is involved in corrupt dealings? Which institution is the most corrupt, and which ones have decreasing levels of corruption? Who is responsible for combating corruption, and how active are the citizens themselves? Answers to these and a number of other questions related to a research into corruption issues were presented on 27 January at a public discussion titled “Corruption practices in Ukraine: perception VS real experience of citizens”. Representatives of the Kiev International Institute of Sociology have presented at the event the results of a nationwide public opinion poll covering corruption in Ukraine in 2015 compared to polls made in 2007-2009, 2011*.

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is not based in real experience***

The citizens consider **corruption in daily life to be one of the most topical issues in Ukraine** (94.4%), and the problem of corrupt state authorities is at the same level of topicality (93.8%). The following data ascertained by the research proves this fact. Firstly, almost **2/3 of respondents experienced or witnessed corruption in 2015,** and every fifth of them experienced or witnessed corruption at least once a month. Secondly, according to the poll results, 85% of Ukrainian adults consider the **corruption level to be above average**. Only 1.8% of the inquired consider the corruption either hardly present or even absent.

The **public perceives 40.7% of all major institutions in Ukraine to be too corrupt**. Besides that, five the most corrupt institutions remain the same. Thus, two thirds (66.0%) of inquired citizens said that State Auto Inspection and judiciary are the most corrupt. The next most corrupt institutions are prosecutor's agencies and health care. According to the last wave of 2015 poll, the population perceives corruption in public sector to be increasing. This conclusion, however, is not based in actual experience. We may explain it by increased number of disclosures on corruption incidents in the media.

**However, the real percentage of citizens experiencing corruption has decreased over the last four years**. In 2015, 70.7% of respondents were requested to pay a bribe, offered a bribe themselves, or used personal connections (in 2011, the percentage was 72.4% – what is a statistically significant difference at *p=0.01*). Such slight decrease became possible because many consumers of public services stopped offering bribes.

However, **the most corrupt institutions have remained the same – there is no statistically significant difference in the level of bribery**. The percentage of respondents who were requested to pay a bribe during a year before this poll, was 56.8%, and it hasn't changed since 2011. Unofficial payments are usually requested by health care institutions, militsiya, State Auto Inspection, secondary schools, universities, and local authorities providing permits. The level of corruption, particularly bribe requests, in regards to customs clearance and customs control, communal services connection or repair, drafting into army bodies, registration or receiving social assistance has decreased in comparison to 2011. However, it has increased in situations involving giving credits or loans, receiving applications for land privatization, ownership and use, and applying to the judicial system or public notaries.

The percentage of Ukrainians who offer bribes has decreased (35.6% if compared to 40.5% in 2011). The citizens offer bribes the most often in secondary educational establishments, public health care institutions, and State Auto Inspection. The percentage of offered bribes has decreased in majority of institutions. The citizens are offering bribes less frequently when applying for government subsidized housing or a position in state institutions, negotiating with representatives of universities, tax and customs authorities, drafting into army bodies, and communal services providers. The percentage of bribes offered by citizens has increased only in one field – receiving a credit in a state institution.

There is another form of "mild" corruption in between of requested and offered bribes – the use of personal connections. People usually tend to use personal connections when applying for a job at a state institution; resolving entrepreneurial regulations issues; receiving permits at state institutions; applying for registration or privatization of real estate; privatization, ownership and use of land; and applying for government subsidized housing.

According to the research results, a half of adult citizens of Ukraine assume that they would give a bribe if it helped to resolve personal problems. However, 37.4% respondents said that bribe giving is inadmissible for them.

***In general, citizens became more active and more responsible about combating corruption.***

The public has low trust in **government institutions** and thinks it is corrupt, but, however, it is convinced that these higher bodies are **the most responsible for fighting against corruption**. These bodies are: the President of Ukraine (60.6%), Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (41.7%), and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (37.7%). At the same time, only 14% of population have noticed that representatives of government structures have political will to overcome the corruption. Thus, according to the citizens, local governments and the President show the will to fighting against corruption the most often (13.2% and 12.3% respectively). As for government bodies, the public have especially noticed anti-corruption activities of the Lustration Committee (citizens have heard of the certain efforts 32%) and the President (32%). However, **the most efficient in fighting against corruption are mass media (27%) and NGOs (28%), according to the citizens.**

The **public became more active in 2015.** The percentage of citizens who think that **ordinary people are responsible for fighting against corruption** is increasingly growing (15.8% in 2007, 18.0% in 2011, and 24.0% in 2015), and the third part of population (37%) says it is ready to resist corruption. However, **only 2% of citizens have lodged a complaint about corruption** to government bodies or law-enforcement to protect their rights. **Thus, although there are some changes in people's mind, they have not been realized in practice yet.**

*Reference: Research “Corruption in Ukraine. Comparative analysis of nationwide studies for 2007, 2009, 2011 and 2015" was prepared by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology in coordination with Lake Research Partners and Karakoyun Strategies under The Ukraine National Initiatives to Enhance Reforms (UNITER), funded by USAID and implemented by Pact Inc in Ukraine. National survey of public opinion on corruption in Ukraine was conducted in July-October 2015. The sample is representative for adult citizens (18 years and older) in national and regional scales. The research is based on multi-stage sampling with quotes on the last stage.*