



Corruption is a tool of the Kremlin's
internal policy: successes and
problems of Ukraine



The international human rights organization Transparency International, in its [Index of Corruption Perceptions](#) for 2022, pays special attention to a relatively new phenomenon - the increasingly active use of corruption by authoritarian countries to achieve their strategic foreign policy goals.

Published on January 31, the Index assesses the level of perception of corruption in 180 countries based on surveys conducted among experts and business circles. The order in the list is determined by the number of points, where zero points is the maximum level of corruption, and 100 is its complete absence.





As in previous years, countries with established democratic structures and a strong rule of law lead the list. Denmark got 90 points and first place, Finland and New Zealand share the second place, Norway is in the fourth place, and Singapore is in the fifth place. Germany has 9th place. The surveyed experts gave it 79 points, the same as 10 years ago and one less than in 2021.

Closing the Corruption Perception Index are countries engulfed in armed conflicts and in which the erosion of state structures is observed - Libya, Yemen, Syria, South Sudan and Somalia.





Turkey and Hungary are among the countries that have lost the most points (minus 13 each) over the past 10 years. Transparency International examines this circumstance in the context of measures taken by the authorities of these countries to limit the independence of the judicial system, media and civil society structures, which, according to human rights defenders, complicates the fight against corruption and abuse of office.

Of all the post-Soviet countries, the most prosperous situation is in Estonia, which took 14th place in the Index, receiving 74 points. In the first quarter of the list, besides her, Lithuania and Latvia, as well as Georgia (56 points and 41st place).





Last year, Armenia (63rd place) scored three points less than in 2021, but 12 points more than 10 years ago. The situation in Belarus is equally ambivalent (91st place) - worse than last year, but better than in 2012.

Ukraine (116th place) improved its rating both in the previous year (plus 1 point) and in 10 years (plus 7). Russia remained practically unchanged. It shares 137th place with Paraguay and Mali, having received, as 10 years ago, 28 points. Corruption is perceived as an even more acute problem in Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan.





Transparency International drew attention to the latest series of corruption scandals in Ukraine.

The head of the German section of Transparency International, Alexandra Herzog, commented on the situation in Ukraine as follows: "Since 2014, Ukraine has implemented a number of anti-corruption reforms, and this is reflected in the Corruption Perceptions Index.

The fact that new cases of corruption have now become known is a good sign. So, despite the war, anti-corruption institutions work, facts are investigated, and not swept under the carpet.





But it is clear that much remains to be done. And it is not for nothing that the European Union demanded additional efforts and measures from Kyiv to fight corruption."

When it comes to financial assistance, she explained, about funds for post-war reconstruction, about big money in general, in such cases, of course, the risk of corruption increases.

Among the positive anti-corruption cases implemented in Ukraine, it should be noted the dismissal of several deputy ministers in the Government of Ukraine, heads of departments, the deputy head of the President's office, etc..





Many of them were exposed thanks to the work of journalists who substantiated various facts of abuses by Ukrainian high-ranking officials. The reaction of anti-corruption law enforcement agencies was corresponding - criminal proceedings have been opened, investigative actions are being carried out.



This once again confirms the extreme need to promote the development of civil initiatives, support the journalistic community, and public organizations in Ukraine. Since it is precisely such tools that open the eyes of society and law enforcement agencies to various violations that cause great damage to the entire civilized world.



It would be fair to note the fundamental contribution to the fight against corruption in Ukraine by such organizations as: the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine, the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office, the Security Service of Ukraine, State Bureau of Investigation, the publishing house "Ukrainian Pravda", the public organization "Anti-Corruption Center", journalist Mykhailo Tkach, etc..

But, along with the successes, there are still many problems. Among them, a large amount of unrealized information, leakage of confidential data, problems in reforming the judicial system should be noted.





Attention should be paid to the existing problems in the fight against corruption in Ukraine.

So, in our opinion and guided by the developed practice of the Ukrainian Anti-Corruption Center, one of the urgent problems is the parallel initiation of criminal cases by different law enforcement agencies of Ukraine for the same crime event.

The essence of this legal abuse makes it possible to create grounds and conditions for the acquittal of suspected persons and the closure of the relevant criminal proceedings.





In particular, a similar legal scheme is used by the Security Service of Ukraine, the State Bureau of Investigation in criminal events that fall under the exclusive jurisdiction of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine. Thus, the officials of the said law enforcement agencies, knowing that the criminal event belongs to the exclusive jurisdiction of NABU, still enter information about it into the crime register and start an investigation. Thus, investigative actions are purposefully carried out, evidence is collected, which will later be recognized as illegal due to violations of the rules of investigation. And, accordingly, they will allow the criminal to avoid criminal liability for corruption crimes.





Such a practice is mainly used in crimes involving influential public officials and causes significant damage to both the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine and the interests of society as a whole.

The second, but no less important, problem in the fight against corruption in Ukraine is the abolition of the need to declare property by relevant subjects who hold particularly important positions, civil servants, deputies, etc. This decision was taken in connection with the beginning of active military operations of Russia against Ukraine.





It is really relevant and accepted in the conditions of hostilities. However, the facts indicate that many of the officials began to abuse their right not to declare their earned wealth.

And in this case, the public and the journalistic community, which needs our comprehensive support, is the only effective mechanism for controlling the property assets of high-ranking officials.

An active part of society, journalists, anti-corruption activists need our general support in financing, training, access to primary sources of information, practical help based on already developed cases.





To understand the difficulties that anti-corruption fighters face in Ukraine, let's give just one example: Mykhailo Tkach's journalistic investigation into the enrichment of a family member of the deputy head of the Office of the President of Ukraine **Andrii Smirnov**.



[Active link to journalistic investigation](#)



The journalistic case of the deputy head of the office of the President Andrii Smirnov is interesting in that it concerns the family of an official who occupies a particularly responsible position, is admitted to state secrets, represents the state in relations with foreign partners, is responsible for legal policy and judicial reform in Ukraine.

In accordance with international practice, a crystal clear person with an impeccable reputation, without dubious contacts and with excellent characteristics should be in this position. A person who has the appropriate education, work experience and deep understanding of the basic principles of building a democratic society.





Family members of such an official must meet similar criteria. Since, the special responsibility of his position implies personal responsibility for the integrity of all those around him. These are the requirements of international practice. However, in the case of Mr. Smirnov, we see a completely different situation.

In particular, according to information published by [journalist Mykhailo Tkach](#), Mr. Smirnov's brother - Igor Smirnov made expensive purchases worth 250,000 US dollars. At the same time, he does not work anywhere officially and has no official taxable income.





According to the materials of the journalistic investigation, during the war, the brother of the deputy head of the President's office, Igor Smirnov, acquired:

- Apartment in Lviv with an area of 100m², plot of land in the Carpathians, parking space in Kyiv, BMW 530D, VW Multivan of 2021, BMW R-Ninet motorcycle.

The apartment, plot and parking space are recorded in the sales contract with a discount several times.

Apartment in a new building in the center of Lviv - 1,160,000 hryvnias.

A plot in the Carpathians - ten thousand hryvnias

Parking space - 60 thousand hryvnias.





Acting within the requirements of journalistic ethics, the investigators asked the opinion of both the deputy head of the President's office and his brother on this matter. However, they could not answer anything concrete. The origin of the funds for the purchase of all the above-mentioned property from the unemployed Ihor Smirnov has not been established, the fact of deliberate underestimation of the value of the purchased property is reflected in the investigation materials.





In addition, instead of giving the public answers to the questions raised in the journalistic investigation, the high-ranking official **Andriy Smirnov** did not even apologize for the actions of his family member, but on the contrary accused the authoritative journalist-investigator of incompetence and working for a former official of the Yanukovich government - **Andriy Portnov**.

We believe that such behavior of the highest-ranking official responsible for the legal policy of the state, the introduction of sanctions, communication with foreign partners of Ukraine is unacceptable.





In accordance with the generally recognized norms of democratic state administration, such a person should be thoroughly checked by law enforcement agencies and an appropriate conclusion drawn up.

In addition, according to this journalistic case, it should be noted that the only state body that paid attention to the information published by journalists about Andriy Smirnov is the National Agency for the Prevention of Corruption in Ukraine, which started a corresponding investigation. All other state law enforcement agencies, which are tasked with fighting corruption, decided not to respond to the information published by journalists.





Taking into account the above, as well as the established facts of corrupt acts of a number of high-ranking officials of the government of Ukraine, which were discovered in the last month, we must state significant risks of inaction in the fight against corruption at the highest levels of the Ukrainian government, which is tangibly confirmed by the inaction of law enforcement agencies in the case of Andrii Smirnov.

In this regard, we recommend combining efforts to support the public and journalistic community in Ukraine and pay special attention to the gaps in the fight against corruption, which are indicated in this conclusion.





Appendices and useful links:



**Andriy Smirnov and an official of Yanukovych's government -
Andriy Portnov**





Appendices and useful links:



**Andriy Smirnov and an official of the Yanukovych government -
Olena Lukash**





Appendices and useful links:



**Andriy Smirnov and Ihor Kolomoisky's lawyer –
Andriy Bohdan**



Democracy Development Platform LTD, company number: 14576371, registered as Company Limited by Guarantee in England and Wales. Address: 71-75 Shelton Street, Covent Garden, London WC2H 9JQ, www.ddpuk.com, mail to: info@ddpuk.com



Appendices and useful links:

- 1) <https://www.bagnet.org/news/society/1344415/zamglavy-opu-andrey-smirnov-vmesto-sozdaniya-mezhdunarodnogo-tribunala-zashchishchal-umku-i-pavelko-ekspert>
- 2) <https://www.pravda.com.ua/cdn/cd1/chaus/>
- 3) <https://helsinki.org.ua/articles/zashcho-iak-popry-tysk-ta-zaliakuvannia-aktyvisty-vidstoialy-v-sudi-protasiv-yar/>
- 4) <https://sudreporter.org/chaus-v-antykorsudi-rozpoviv-pro-advokativ-vid-korbana-i-pobyttya-sytnyka/>
- 5) <https://zmina.info/news/apelyacziyu-ratushnogo-perenesly-na-dva-tyzhni-cherez-zatrymku-dokumentiv-pecherskym-sudom/>
- 6) <https://zmina.info/news/ya-ne-hochu-strilyanyny-aktyvisty-protasovogo-yaru-oprylyudnyly-audio-pogroz-vid-zastupnyka-golovy-ofisu-prezydenta/>
- 7) <https://nv.ua/ukr/ukraine/politics/slidchiy-u-spravi-poroshenka-oleg-koreckiy-zayaviv-pro-tisk-na-slidstvo-dbr-novini-ukrajini-50098903.html>
- 8) <https://novynarnia.com/2022/07/05/roma-ne-hotiv-by-shhob-my-plakaly-vin-hotiv-by-shhob-my-peremogly-pysmennyczya-svitlana-povalyayeva-pro-svogo-syna-romana-ratushnogo/>
- 9) <https://molbuk.ua/news/187801-yak-dyректор-dbr-obslugovuye-ofis-prezydenta-blog-politologa.html>
- 10) <https://www.slovoidilo.ua/2021/09/20/novyna/polityka/intervyu-holovy-nazk-novikova-suddi-pryamo-pyshut-rishennyax-vony-ne-rozumiyut-zakon>



Appendices and useful links:

- 1) <https://suspilne.media/282530-sud-u-spravi-sternenka-prokuror-zaaviv-pro-tisk-na-slidstvo/>
- 2) <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-skhemy-smyrnov-portnov/32137167.html>
- 3) <https://delo.ua/uk/business/u-citrusi-zvinuvatili-zastupnika-golovi-vp-smirnova-v-tisku-na-sudi-na-korist-korbana-392780/>
- 4) <https://argumentua.com/novini/derzhavna-zrada-zastupnik-golovi-op-andr-i-sm-rnov-sabotuvav-vikonannya-r-shen-snbo-shchodo-s>
- 5) https://censor.net/ua/resonance/3250904/zastupnyk_golovy_op_andriyi_smyrnov_u_mene_nemaye_vidpovidi_chomu_venediktova_zabrala_spravu_tatarova
- 6) https://24tv.ua/andriy-smirnov-upovilnyuvav-zaprovadzhennya-sanktsiy-proti-rosiyan_n2216146
- 7) <https://ua.interfax.com.ua/news/press-release/768502.html>
- 8) <https://litsa.com.ua/korban-pozivayetsya-do-dvox-gromadskix-organizacij-ta-pidozryuvanogo-a/>
- 9) <https://vinnytsyanews.com.ua/analitic/realna-versiya-slugy-narodu-ne-shozha-na-teleserial-ce-proval-forbes>
- 10) <https://www.slovoidilo.ua/persony/smyrnov-andrii-oleksandrovych>





Appendices and useful links:

- 1) <https://babel.ua/texts/36061-andriy-smirnov-zahisnik-yevromaydanu-radnik-vladislava-kaskiva-y-advokat-golovnih-regionaliv-profayl-novogo-zastupnika-golovi-ofisu-prezidenta>
- 2) https://texty.org.ua/fragments/98799/Prezydent_zminyvs_a_chomu_jogo_tak_dovgo_trymajut-98799/
- 3) https://censor.net/ru/resonance/3153915/zamglavy_op_andreyi_smirnov_inogda_pi_shu_bogdanu_vtorye_sutki_ne_poluchal_perejivayu_i_tut_je_nahoditsya
- 4) https://censor.net/ru/resonance/3153915/zamglavy_op_andreyi_smirnov_inogda_pi_shu_bogdanu_vtorye_sutki_ne_poluchal_perejivayu_i_tut_je_nahoditsya
- 5) <https://www.rbc.ua/ukr/news/zamestitel-bogdana-poseshchal-ofis-horoshkovskogo-1573201435.html>
- 6) <https://from-ua.com/news/637007-andriya-smirnova-zvilnyat-z-posadi-zastupnika-golovi-op-za-lobiyuvannya-interesiv-pavelka-i-petrovskogo.html>
- 7) <https://poshtar.info/2021/09/15/andrii-smyrnov-cherez-shcho-vtrachaie-posadu-kolys-vsesylnyi-kurator-sudovoi-vertykali/>
- 8) <https://www.5.ua/polityka/vin-utik-a-spravy-ioho-lyshylys-iaak-poplichnyk-ianukovycha-portnov-prodovzhuie-antyukrainsku-diialnist-iz-za-kordonu-282986.html>
- 9) <https://zbruc.eu/node/94434>
- 10) <https://from-ua.com/obzor-pressi/620736-troyanskii-kon-ofisa-zelenskogo-kto-takoi-andrei-smirnov-i-pri-chem-zdes-sudy-i-delo-o-gosizmene-porosenko.html>





Appendices and useful links:

- 1) <https://enigma.ua/articles/advokat-prorossiyskikh-dyavolov-iz-ofisa-prezidenta>
- 2) <https://www.capital.ua/ru/news/155152-zamglavy-op-smirnova-otpravlyayut-v-otstavku-za-pomosch-lyudyam-granovskogo-smi>
- 3) <https://www.5.ua/ru/polytyka/kak-andrei-smyrnov-stal-nehlasnim-smotriashchym-za-deiatelnosti-ukraynskykh-sudov-nabliudatel-205996.html>
- 4) <https://from-ua.info/andrey-smyrnov-prodazhnost-bespryntsypnost-y-predatelstvo-podzashchytn-kh-zama-ermaka/>
- 5) <https://for-ua.com/article/1226656>

