

PERCEPCION OF CORRUPTION

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ON CORRUPTION

The corruption is not exactly the new phenomenon in our society. During the former socialist Yugoslavia, different forms of corruption were as widely spread as today. Some essential preconditions for appearance of corruption existed in former system. The state and the economy were highly bureaucratized, the juridical system was not independent, and the social control and individual responsibility were insufficient.

The existence of "social" property in economy was one of the factors that helped the growth of corruption in former system. Socially owned property is nobody's property and therefore nobody is responsible if it is stolen or destroyed. The bureaucratization of the state and economy was somehow preserved during the war. Present Bosnia and Herzegovina is highly bureaucratized society, too. Besides inherited socially owned enterprises and state administration, there is the international administration that governs the semi-protectorate of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bureaucratic system implies special form of responsibility – reversed responsibility. Administrative workers in economy or state apparatus are not responsible for the outcomes – the result on the market, the increase of votes, or the profit. Their main responsibility is to obey implicit or explicit rules and procedures. Thus, bureaucratic referential frame leaves space for manipulation and corruption. Bureaucrats are regularly more interested in their own interests and it is difficult to control them. Moreover, corruption is generally connected with the misuse of public positions. The World Bank defined corruption as the misuse of public position for personal benefit. Therefore, the more bureaucratic, the more spots where corruption can occur, and per definition the larger the corruption is.

On the other side, the social control was and still is weak and the individual responsibility hardly exists. In order to illustrate these theses, let us consider the following example. Let us imagine that the representative of a large company offer us the sum of ten million KM to provide him with state reconstruction tender. Moreover, let us imagine that he or she put a large suitcase full of money on our desk. What would we do? Obviously, majority of us would estimate costs and benefits, the chances of getting arrested on one side, and the compensation for the risk on the other. This practically means that our individual morality depends on the efficiency of the police and courts. The more they are efficient, the more moral citizens are. Furthermore, it means that individual responsibility cannot be the basis of social values, that is, whether there will be the corruption in the society doesn't depend on my, my neighbor's, colleague's or friend's honesty, but on the efficiency of the state.

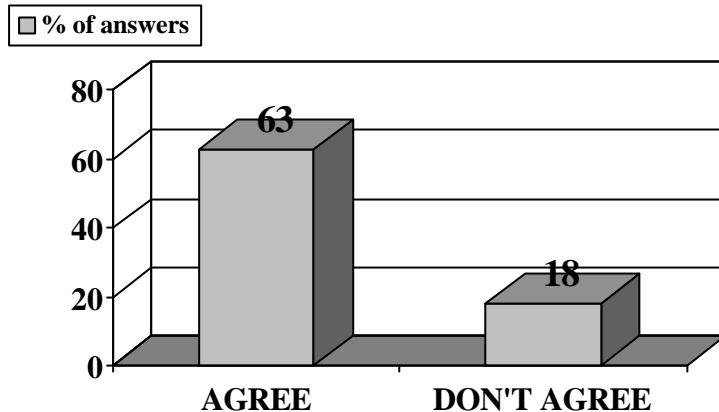
These determinants and the lack of the rule of law tradition introduced the corruption as something like the part of the tradition of nations that inhabit the territory of former Yugoslavia. The citizens or republic of Srpska agree: 72% claims that we are such people that there will always be corruption among us. When they were asked what was the main source of corruption, 48% claimed that it was the lack of the rule of law, 17% claimed that we were such kind of people, and 12% claimed that law salaries of clerks and officials were the main source of corruption¹.

¹ The results were obtained in a series of polls conducted by PARTNER Marketing Consulting Agency from Banja Luka on the territory of Republic of Srpska during the second half of 2000. The samples ranged from 850 to 1100 respondents.

WHAT IS CORRUPTION?

So, we have a long tradition of corruption, today the corruption is largely spread and one cannot finish a job without bribing someone, today we are forced, wanting it or not, to bribe someone in order to accomplish our rights. But, do we know what is corruption, whatsoever?

A bottle of wine or a candy bar is not bribe, but only a small courtesy towards people doing us a favor



Some forms of small-scale bribery are almost institutions of our society. The bottle of brandy, for instance. The bottle of brandy helps us reach the manager or get the information or the receipt. In other cultures, the bottle of brandy or a candy bar would represent a major problem, for the doctor or clerk as well as for one offering it. We do not, however, consider it a bribe, but a small courtesy!

This sort of corruption evolved in a form of "good manners". If one finishes a job, in a court or a municipal, and does not offer a present to clerks, one shows bad manner and a lack of respect for their efforts, too. There is even a saying that "it is good to" give a present to doctor, nurse, clerk, priest, etc.

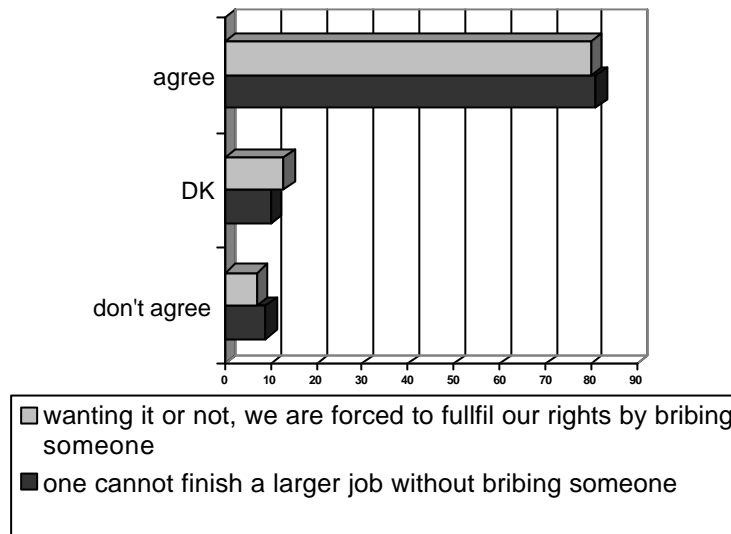
WHEN DOES IT APPEAR AND WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

The fact that individual immorality is often the consequence of lack of objective norms, moral and legal, does not abolish individual from the moral responsibility. It is just an explanation of the nature and the role of moral norms. On the other side, our judgment about moral responsibility of individual does not depend on whether moral norms of society are in a decline. The fact that we are living in a world of layers and robbers does not mean that we are not responsible for lies and robberies – morally and legally as well.

Our respondents showed similar moral intuitions. The majority agrees that one giving a bribe is not better from one taking it. It is a fact that majority of jobs including realization of legal rights cannot be finished without bribery, but this fact doesn't abolish from the responsibility the one giving the bribe as well as one taking it.

The respondents believe that corruption occurs not only in the cases of misuse of public position or in the cases of corruption in order to get illegal service, but in the cases of legal claims and civil rights:

Attitudes regarding corruption

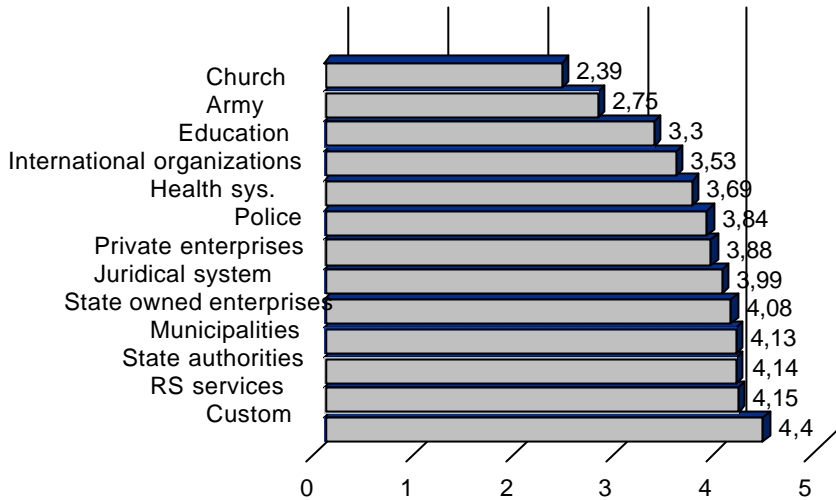


WHERE DOES IT APPEAR?

In last two years, corruption became one of the major political and media issues, not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but in the region, too. Foreign and domestic media, *The New York Times* and *Reporter*, for instance, reported on corruption in public services and international organization in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Articles that appeared in *Reporter* magazine emphasized the corruption in custom service. Our respondents share similar opinion. They perceive custom service as highly corrupted institution. Those attitudes are most probably the consequence of active media coverage.

The Church, the Army and education are perceived as the least corrupted. In the case of the Church *index of perception of corruption* is lowest. On the scale from 1 (the lowest level of corruption as perceived by respondents) to 5 (the highest level of corruption as perceived by respondents) it is 2.39. While the Church and the Army are perceived as the least corrupted, education system and international organization are perceived as slightly more corrupted, while the highest level of corruption is perceived in most public services - the police, courts, social enterprises, municipal services and state authorities. The division between low, medium and high level corrupted fields is somehow PROIZVOLJAN. However, it is obvious that the majority of state functions is on the higher end of the scale and is perceived as highly corrupted, while the Church and the Army distinguish with low level of corruption.

Index of perception of corruption



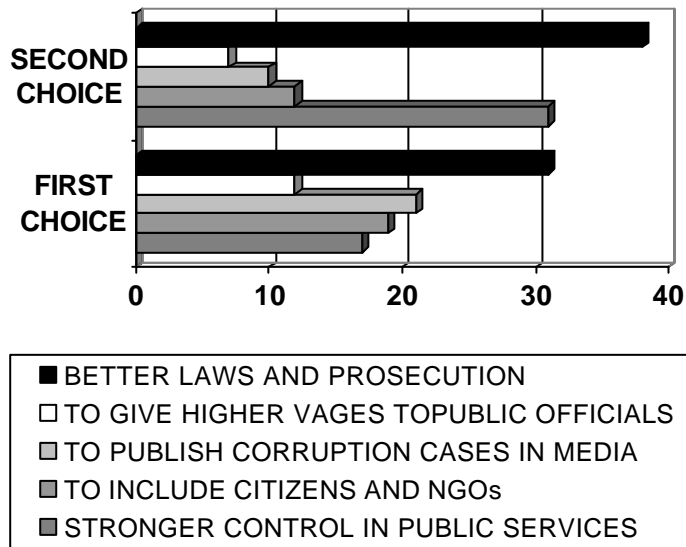
Attitudes regarding the level of corruption are influenced by the values, party affiliations, ages, educations level and other individual characteristics. Those attitudes are closely connected to general opinion and the way media cover it. The last causal relation is visible in the case of customs that has been the issue of detailed media coverage in past months. TO GIBBF

HOW TO FIGHT IT?

The issue of fight against corruption is the corruption issue itself. The acknowledgement of the existence of corruption in a society implies discussion about the ways of fight against corruption. However, this issue hasn't become a subject of public interest regardless of strong anticorruption campaigns, extensive political debates, and numerous public affairs.

Citizens of Republic of Srpska favor system anti-corruption measures. The first choice favorites are stronger control in public services, better laws and prosecution. When they were asked to give their second choice, better laws and prosecution are the most popular measures again, while publishing corruption cases in media comes to the third place.

Attitudes regarding anti-corruption



methods