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THE PHENOMENON OF CORRUPTION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Abstract

Corruption threatens the rule of law and the people's trust in the most important public institutions, it threatens political stability and social peace. Corruption lies at the core of organized crime, it spreads inequality, reduces trust in public institutions, undermines the principles of democracy and affects state fragility. Corruption is also the opposite of democracy, which represents freedom, equality, and the rule of law. Corruption affects the citizens' political and economic behaviour as well as elections and the investors' investment decisions. Corruption hinders the use of objective democratic criteria, which causes permanent damage in every society. The key cornerstones of preventing corruption are to establish monitoring mechanisms and to strengthen the cooperation within civil society by raising public awareness of corruption as well as by developing and pursuing anti-corruption policies.

Still, in the European Union an effective mechanism has yet to be established, which would allow a coherent monitoring of the situation and the assessment of the progress of anti-corruption policies.

Key words: corruption, history of corruption, causes and consequences of corruption

Introduction

The World Bank estimates that the annual cost of corruption amounts to more than 5% of the world's GDP, or US\$2.6 trillion, while the European Commission estimates that the cost of corruption amounts to 5% of GDP (€120 billion) in Member States (International Chamber of Commerce et al. 2016).

Corruption is unevenly distributed around the world. According to the Corruption Perceptions Index 2016 (an annual survey carried out by Transparency International - Transparency International 2016), corruption is more common in countries located in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, South America, and Eastern Europe; while countries located in the Nordic region, Western Europe, and North America are generally considered "clean" (Transparency International 2006).

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Nonetheless, the European Commission estimates that the cost of corruption amounts to 5% of GDP (€120 billion) in Member States (International Chamber of Commerce et al. 2016).

According to the European Commission (2014), the citizens of Denmark, Finland, Luxembourg, and Sweden rarely encounter bribery (less than 1% of cases) but still perceive corruption in their countries (the EU average is 76%). 91% of the population of Slovenia believes that corruption is extremely common.

The History of Corruption

Corruption is as old as human civilization and its forms have been constantly evolving and improving. It is difficult to determine the meaning and gravity of an act of corruption. The term is derived from Latin (*corruptus*: perversion, debauchery, bribery, distortion, decay + *rumpere*: to break, to crack, to interrupt, to cut off). Understandably, corruption is a phenomenon as old as the state formation of human communities, it is historically an international problem. However, there is still no general agreement on the definition of the present meaning of corruption. The essential features of this definition mainly stem from illegal forms of influence of an individual or an interested group of people on decision-makers that perform state, public, economic, as well as other duties and tasks. The goal of corruption is predictable, to achieve certain personal, material, or other benefits for oneself or for other people. Such acts usually harm the public interest by threatening the foundations of the rule of law.

The traditional meaning of corruption from Aristotle onwards, especially according to Machiavelli, is understood as the fall of moral standards in society or the decay of political virtues. Corruption undermines political values – this, in time and space, seems to be the only common and universal definition. It progressed through all periods of history, persisted during almost all regimes and in almost all regions of the world: in Ancient Rome, in modern-day Italy, in Old and in Communist China, in the capitalistic United States, but also in the former Republics of the Soviet Union, Prussia, and even during German National Socialism as well as in the exemplary Swiss system of direct democracy (Alemann 1995). Corruption is present in all democracies and dictatorships, in countries which adhere to the rule of law and in authoritarian regimes. It only changes its form and range.

Even more than two thousand years before Christ, Hammurabi prescribed liable fair practices to the judges in Babylon (Kusha 2004, 112), a city symbol of chaos and corruption, so they could not

change their decisions during trials. However, no evidence was found in written sources regarding the judges' intentions or acts of corruption.

The name ROMA (Radix Omnium Malorum Avaritia – the root of all evil is greed) probably originated in the 4th century A.D., but greed had encouraged corruption even in Ancient Rome, where it was uncontrollably seeping through every aspect of political and social life. Ancient Rome's foreign policy was not guided by diplomatic and trade relations only, the desire for foreign gold had always been an excuse for the spread of the Pax Romana across the globe (Brioschi 2007). Corruption as a common concept in Western culture assumed a central role already during the politico-philosophical debates among Aristotle, Plato, and Polybius. In the second half of the fifteenth century, bribery took over all aspects of public and private life in the Ottoman Empire, the spread of corruption was influenced by the financial crisis and the high rates of inflation at the time. Under the Sharia law, receiving bribes or gifts was not illegal, so it contributed to a widespread approval of corruption. Bribes became inevitable during legal proceedings, for senior officials, and while running for and holding public office (Matuz 1992, 96-101).

In the sixteenth century, the Italian wrote about the predominance of corruption, and in the seventeenth century, the English writers known as the Commonwealthmen¹ (Wallis 2004) defined corruption as the decay of national virtues, masculinity, and patriotism. It was extremely prevalent even at the time, considered to be a poor general situation in need of structural reforms, as well as more fairness and justice. Corruption was described by using medical terminology, such as the metaphor of deterioration and disease, and so it is still common today to consider it a disease of modern society (Knights 2015, 29).

Between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the notion of financial or territorial interest became the main paradigm of collective customs and one of the central ways of political legitimacy. The most prominent writers, philosophers, and politicians of this era had conflicting opinions: they either approved of or were strongly opposed to such governance and social procedures (Knights 2015, 30), for example Machiavelli, La Rochefoucauld, Guicciardi, Hobbes, Spinoza, Rousseau, Montaigne, and Voltaire. Corruption was not only linked to morality (Heršak 2007), but especially to the

¹ British political writers of the late 17th and 18th centuries who advocated limited government, individual freedom, and religious tolerance.

governance of each society and the implementation of legal procedures. Therefore, it is not possible to discuss corruption in the Early Middle Ages. In the feudal system social relations were determined by the mechanisms of reciprocity, it was a time of no legal protection and submission to the feudal lord in exchange for a safer life, which had had been characteristic of social relations in the feudal system across the old continent for centuries. The most common form of corruption in the Middle Ages, also described by Brioschi (2007), refers to the bribery within the Church. Noonan (1987) defined corruption as a mutual connection between members of society, from Ancient Rome to the spread of the Roman Catholic Church during the Middle Ages. The conflict between the ideals of Christian morality and the actual use of ecclesiastical power greatly influenced the positive habit of bribery. One such form of corruption was simony, generally approved by the Church. It stated that sins can be washed away by paying the church or by buying indulgencies for all sins. Martin Luther strongly opposed this controversial ecclesiastical custom with his Ninety-five Theses against indulgencies (*Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum*). One of the causes for corruption can be thus attributed also to traditional religion (Treisman 2000). Religion can influence the perception of corruption, especially through various connections between church and state. In religious traditions such as Protestantism, religious institutions serve a role in monitoring the abuse of power by civil servants. In other traditional religions, such as Islam, where church and state hierarchy are closely intertwined, the role of religious institutions in monitoring the abuse of state power is less frequent. Research has shown that our behaviour is influenced by our perception of behavioural norms. The norms we accept, and the norms adopted by the people around us. If the environment accepts corruption, corruption is acceptable. Until the end of the nineteenth century, corruption had not been just a synonym for bribery. The usage of the word bribery spread in the sixteenth century with the translations of the Bible from Latin into English, especially in connection with giving bribes to judges in the Old Testament, when corruption had a wide range of meanings. Today's understanding of the concept of corruption was affected by the great economic changes in Europe at the time and the economic rise of the British Empire in the eighteenth century. The number of civil servants increased, and with it the craving for side hustles that

stemmed from colonial trade. The East India Company¹ presented an opportunity for a substantial profit on trading only with private companies, the British Empire had been deprived of these earnings, so the possibilities of corruption at the expense of the Empire tried to be stopped. Legal prosecution against bribery and corruption became customary only at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Due to cultural differences and undetermined briberies, corruption was difficult to identify. The process of strengthening values in the Empire lasted for almost 300 years, from Queen Victoria, through a succession of corruption scandals, to the present day (Knights 2015, 30-33).

The Causes and Consequences of Corruption

Research on the factors and causes that cause favourable circumstances for the development of corruption has confirmed that there is no single common denominator. They are related to the absence of the rule of law and a dysfunctional justice system (Andvig et al. 2000, 72) and are determined by the social, cultural, and political characteristics of each state. Researchers agree on the three most important factors: a decades-long absence of democracy, a low-income economy, and a legal system inherited from former colonial powers with the absence of democracy. McCusker (2006, 4) attributes the first factor to the low values of politicians and civil servants, the second to the lack of control, and the third factor to the influential interconnections between economy and politics. Treisman (2000, 5) also lists other factors related to corruption: the first factor that partially prevents corruption is the wrongdoer's fear of being caught and punished. The second is an effective rule of law and the third factor is the influence of religion. The rule of law is effective when it operates in an orderly manner under all state authorities according to the laws that determine the content which provides a certain security of one's person.² However, in corrupt environments, the rule of law differs not only in wording and original purpose, but also in the predominant negative expectations and illicit practices of procedural law. The ideal interpretation of the rule of law derives from each individual (Simič 2009, 14) because from a theoretical perspective each state has a legal basis and constantly exists with

¹ A trading company formed in 1600 to develop trade in the newly colonized areas of Southeast Asia and India. In the 18th century it assumed direct administration of Bengal and other areas in India, until the takeover of the Kingdom of England in 1858.

² Source: <https://www.kpk-rs.si/sl/korupcija-integriteta-in-etika/pravna-drzava-in-korupcija>.

the law, which over time adapts the state to societal needs and international requirements (Vuković 2005, 9). The current rule of law determines that the power of the state is limited to the protection of civil rights against arbitrary interventions in the public sphere by the authorities. The rule of law must ensure that all state authorities operate according to the laws that regulate the content and manner of their decision-making, which provides a certain security of one's person. When individuals violate the rules of law that are supposed to apply equally to everyone, they put themselves in a better position (and consequently others in a worse position). These behaviours are corruption, which in turn harms the rule of law (KPK 2016). The third factor, according to Treisman (2000, 5), is the historical influence of Christianity, Islam, and the Orthodox Church (except for Protestantism). Religious traditions influence cultural relations and social hierarchies as well as condition an individual's loyalty to family. Cultural relations (Paldam 2002; Lambsdorff 2007), which spread across each society through historical influences, can also be understood as influences on corruption norms. They derive from cultural traditions and customs, cocreated by institutions and behavioural norms.

However, the links between historical causes and corruption are not easily provable (Lambsdorff 2007), further research would thus be needed. Political stability and economic freedom are crucial for the fight against corruption. The effect of history is neutral, but when closely connected with legislation and political freedom it significantly explains corruption in each state.

Corruption undermines the citizens' fundamental trust in the state and lowers the respect of the law. Social acceptance of corruption is increasing with its expansion, especially in countries where there is a positive attitude towards corrupt environments, and more and more people believe that corruption is inevitable (Amundsen 1999, 5). The introduction to the Civil Law Convention on Corruption (2003) states that corruption represents a major threat to the rule of law, democracy and human rights, fairness and social justice, hinders economic development and endangers the proper and fair functioning of market economies and has adverse financial consequences for individuals, companies and States, as well as international institutions.

Corruption threatens social values because:

it undermines the law, the rules, and the public institutions as well as the fundamental democratic social rules, which derive from the norms of equality, transparency, and fairness (Korunić et al. 2011).

Corruption influences society's so-called rules of the game (Lambsdorff 2005), so the institutional frameworks shift from promoting excellence, professionalism, honesty, knowledge, and other societal values to new value systems. Thus, potential advantages are not promoted through knowledge and the know-how, but through the know-who, the public good becomes interesting to stakeholders, wild privatization rises because it negatively affects social and economic development;

it threatens democracy and the rule of law, the independence and impartiality of the judiciary or affects the rule of law as a cultural achievement and a justification of the democratic state. After various surveys on corruption a general finding is that the higher the level of democracy, the lower the predominance of corruption (Lanšćak 2014, 155);

it questions the legitimacy of authority and negatively affects the citizens' trust in public institutions because it creates uncertainty about the recognition of rights by law (Korunić et al. 2011), which affects the economic development of the state and legitimately endangers businesses (Lanšćak 2014, 155);

it undermines state sovereignty, reduces tax revenues and causes poor budget management (Lanšćak 2014, 156), especially in the area of public procurement for large investment projects - e.g., roads, railways, public health (Rose-Ackerman 2002);

it is detrimental to all states in terms of form, type, and range. This is mainly noticeable in a lower interest in investments from foreign investors, it hinders the economic and economical functioning of the internal market and reduces the amount of public finances, thus causing financial loss. Consequently, it causes social problems and the rise of criminal organizations.

Corruption is not only a problem for developing countries, but it is also widespread in the so-called rich countries (Hellman et al. 2000), where it appears in various forms and types, it can be "legal" and supported by politics, since according to the latest Eurobarometer survey (20171) more than two thirds of the respondents in Member States claim that corruption is common in their countries.

The Definition of Corruption

¹ Source: file:///C:/Users/DKOM/Downloads/ebs_470_en%20(1).pdf.

The definitions of corruption are not consistent but have common denominators: accepting or giving bribes to civil servants, bribing foreign public officials, illegally giving and receiving gifts, money laundering, abusing official positions or functions, fraud, unjust enrichment and abusing accounting standards. According to Dobovšek and Minič (2005, 45), corruption is a covert mutual activity based on a network of links that must be disputed in cooperation with formal institutions (court, police, prosecution, anti-corruption institutions) and informal institutions (non-governmental and other civil organizations). The international criminal standard for the definition of corruption (OECD 2007¹) stems from the analysis of the following conventions: the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions, the Council of Europe Criminal Law Convention on Corruption, and the Council of Europe Civil Law Convention on Corruption. Corruption is defined as giving bribes to civil servants, it also includes money laundering, the abuse of an official position, embezzlement, illicit trafficking, fraud, unjust enrichment, and the criminal offence of abusing accounting standards.

The research on corruption conducted by Stroligo (1996, 240) indicates that there are differences between each definition of corruption, which significantly influence the basic understanding of the term, especially when countries join a shared fight against corruption. According to the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption², an inconsistent definition of corruption without a precise description of its content signals that the meaning of corruption is not accurately and clearly defined. Consequently, it is unclear which forms are being fought against and which actions need to be prevented. Therefore, it is difficult to establish a consistent social acceptance of some acts of corruption, which would then ensure that the same or similar acts of corruption not only among individuals, but among entire social groups are treated equally. An accurate definition is crucial also for a concrete and precise professional discussion on corruption. Dobovšek (2008) explains corruption in a narrower sense as actual actions defined by criminal law (individual acts of taking or giving bribes in various forms) and in a broader sense (socially, sociologically) as various forms of morally questionable and unacceptable behaviour of an individual or group.

1 OECD. Corruption. A glossary of international criminal standards. 2007.

Source: <http://www.oecd.org/corruption/anti-bribery/39532693.pdf>.

2 KPK. Kaj je korupcija? <http://www.kpk-rs.si/index.php?id=49>.

Table 1 presents the definition of corruption according to various organizations.

Table no. 1: Global definitions of corruption.

Source	The Definition of Corruption
World Bank	The use of public office for private gain.
Transparency International	Corruption is unlawful conduct in the public sector involving anyone from politicians to public servants. It is defined as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain.
OECD	The giving or promising of rewards, gifts, or other benefits to civil servants and thereby influencing their decisions.
Council of Europe	The direct or indirect offering or accepting of bribes or other illicit benefits that breach the performance of lawful duties.
UN	The evasion of responsibility by civil servants who abuse their position to serve their own or someone else's interests.

Source: Halpern et al. (2008, 4).

The first definition of corruption was provided by the Obligations Code,¹ which summarized the definition from Article 2 of the Civil Law Convention on Corruption:² corruption means requesting, offering, giving or accepting, directly or indirectly, a bribe or any other undue advantage or prospect thereof, which distorts the proper performance of any duty or behaviour required of the recipient of the bribe, the undue advantage or the prospect thereof. In addition to this definition, the Dictionary of the Slovene Standard Literary Language

¹ Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 97/07 – official consolidated text, and 64/16 – Constitutional Court Decision). Article 354: If the damage was inflicted by an act on which the offering, provision, acceptance or demanding of a bribe or any other benefit or the promise thereof had a direct or indirect influence, or by the omission of action that would have prevented an act of corruption, or by any other act that according to law or international treaty entails corruption, the claim shall become statute-barred five years after the injured party learnt of the damage and of the person that inflicted it; in any case it shall become statute-barred fifteen years after the act was committed.

² Strasbourg, 04. 11. 1999. Official ratification: 17. 03. 2003. Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Justice 8/2003, 11. 04. 2003.

also defines corruption as: to give or accept prizes for a faster, more favourable, and usually unlawful resolution of official matters; bribe, bribery. The gain can be promised, offered, or given to another person, with "corrupt intent" being an essential part to any act we recognize as corruption. Corrupt intent is expressed when a gain is promised or given with the intent to encourage or reward a violation of a mandatory conduct and when it is accepted to repay a mandatory conduct. At least two people are involved in corruption, at least one is employed in the public sector, and it is difficult to determine its content because its meaning changes in the temporal and socio-political context. Both parties participating in an act of corruption (Dobovšek and Minič 2005, 45), the recipient and the bribe-giver, have a positive relationship, while the arrangement is based on an invisible network of relationships that must be fought against by a system of formal institutions (court, police, prosecution, anti-corruption institutions), a system of informal institutions (non-governmental and other civil organizations) and prevention mechanisms (integrity plan, conflict of interests, business restrictions, control over taxpayer assets, reporting gifts, reporting lobbying activities, witness protection...).

The Integrity and Prevention of Corruption Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 45/2010 with later amendments) defines corruption as: "Any violation of due conduct by officials and responsible persons in the public or private sector, as well as the conduct of persons initiating such violations or of persons benefiting from it, for the purpose of undue benefit promised, offered or given directly or indirectly, or for the purpose of undue benefit demanded, accepted or expected for one's own advantage or to the advantage of any other person."

Given the findings that corruption does not have a generally accepted definition, there is no universal typology of corruption, the definitions differ from each other.

The Typologies of Corruption

The typologies of corruption fundamentally differ from each other in terms of the evaluated amount of benefit and the degree of harm caused by an act of corruption (Stapenhurst 2000). The early typologies of corruption divided it into different levels. Through research it is possible to better understand the typologies of corruption, as it can be divided into big and small (macro and micro), both can be further classified into administrative or political, sporadic, systemic, or systematic (Kpundeh 1998), passive or active, as a way

of life or as a fact of life (Quah 2013), as well-organized or chaotic (Mauro 1998, 13), as administrative or state capture (Hellman et al. 2000). Heidenheimer et al. (1989) distinguish three typologies of social corruption: white, which is tolerated by society the most - e.g., nepotism; grey, which is typical of microcorruption - e.g., giving bribes to the police to remove a traffic offense or to bring forward an examination in the health care system; and black corruption, which is perceived by society as a serious violation of the moral and legal norms of the community and is common in current democratic media. Pedersen and Johannsen (2008) divide the typology into petty corruption, which is classified at the micro level, and grand corruption, which belongs to the middle and upper levels, so at the decision-making and political levels. Rose - Ackerman (2010) divides corruption into only two main parts, into lower administrative and service levels (low-level corruption) and into high decision-making levels (high-level corruption), which manage high state levels with a wide range of influential social networks. According to Vargas-Hernández (2009), the basic typology of corruption includes political corruption, economic corruption and public administration corruption, which contains: bribery, collusion, defraud of public funds, abuse of discretion, favouritism, clientelism, nepotism, cronyism, sale of state assets by civil servants, patronage.

Corruption usually takes place between two people who are aware of the unlawful act by which they both make an illegal gain. Therefore, according to their role, there is also a distinction between the division into the public sector, the private sector, and the political sector, which operate at all levels, all the while corruption can be found in the internal or international environment. The micro level is mostly related to civil servants, who issue approvals or permits and receive small gifts or favours for activities and tasks that are otherwise required just by their profession. This type of microcorruption is more widely accepted in society and the population tolerates it, mainly because they get advantages from it (for example, for waiting lists in health care) or jobs positions that would not have been available without having connections. The middle level of corruption takes place locally and is typical of small communities in which informal social networks (acquaintances, people's connections to family, friends, and other personal social relationships) often disregard the rules of law that should apply to everyone without exception. The local community is one of the essential parts of the autonomy of public life, the informal connections of political parties and the involvement of interests from smaller circles affect the possibility of

the development of corruption. Grand corruption takes place at the macro level because it involves high-level civil servants and politicians, i.e., those who draft and approve legislation and consequently benefit the most from it (Andvig et al. 2000, 11).

Endemic or systemic corruption is an integral and essential part of the economic, social, and political system, it is embedded in the wider social environment and is a key factor in the perpetuation of corruption. Systemic corruption is not a special category of the acts of corruption, but a situation in which the main institutions and processes of the country routinely manage individuals and groups and in which most people have no alternative when it comes to bribing officials. Systemic corruption is characterized by the spread of corruption and its acts across political elites who work in harmony with economic elites, all the while creating conditions which limit and control the entry of new factors into the political and economic sphere (KPK 2012). Since the Late Middle Ages, the leverage with which stakeholders affect politicians has always been presented as a mechanism of political and economic influence pursuing financial goals. Based on research (Gajić 2014), systemic corruption is a planned recurrence of acts of corruption in public institutions for the purpose of buying and selling favours and positions, realised based on the existing legislation. Therefore, it is an "expected" action of the state, which occurs with the permission and knowledge of the highest state officials and expects financial and reliable sources of income for certain influential groups (political, economic...). Systemic corruption embodies the idea of political actors (Wallis 2004) who manipulate and manage the economic system with the goal of creating economic rents. Systemic corruption is a form of behaviour that deliberately creates a state of economic privileges through political means and then utilizes them to direct and manage the political system. Gajić (2014) researched the frameworks of systemic corruption that are allowed by politics through the legislative framework, since it allows the use of public financial resources. Sporadic corruption is the opposite of systemic corruption, it occurs irregularly and therefore does not threaten the development of the economy, however, it can seriously jeopardize the morale and strength of economic assets.

Besides systemic corruption, also the notion of political corruption is important. It is reflected in the acquisition of political power. Political corruption is understood as the adjustment of a political decision through the use and abuse of power, which means that private interests overpower public and common interests. This is

geographically the most widespread form of corruption, where political decision-makers are bribed with the aim of applying special provisions in laws. Ribeiro et al. (2018) narrows down corruption to small groups, which rarely involve more than eight people, periodical four-year media connections that correspond to a four-year term of office.

The connection between political and systemic corruption is not clearly delimited, it is actually closely intertwined (Andvig et al. 2000, 19). Political corruption shows the abuse of the rules of law when the government adapts the law to its own needs or adapts laws and regulations to its own private interests. This can be linked to economic corruption, which is in fact a combination of all forms of corruption. In addition, it is also characteristic of corrupt relations between contracting authorities and providers. Personal economic interest or economic corruption is involved in all levels of social structure and affects the operation of the entire social system.

The fundamental classifications of corruption include (Amudsen 2000, 15) bribery, embezzlement, fraud, and extortion, which essentially define the forms of corruption and nepotism, cronyism, and favouritism. A form of corruption is also nepotism, the unjustified offering of good jobs and social positions to relatives. Someone in an official position abuses their power and authority to provide a job or favour to a family member or friend.¹ Cronyism, however, can be comprehended more broadly than nepotism, since it is an unjustified aid to assigning good jobs to political supporters, friends, or acquaintances. Pungerčič (2005) claims that nepotism and cronyism are related to the cultural and historical determination of national nature or also the small size of a specific country where people have connections through family or friends. Individuals are expected to help family members or friends and also have more social support.

Conclusion

The predominance of corruption is unevenly distributed around the world and is a phenomenon as old as the state formation of human communities, it is historically an international problem that unlawfully influences decision-makers in the performance of state, public, economic, as well as other other duties and tasks. The most important factors of corruption are a decades-long absence of democracy, a low-income economy, and a legal system inherited from former colonial powers with the absence of democracy. The

¹ Source: <https://www.transparency.si/nepotizem>.

goal of corruption is predictable, to achieve certain personal, material, or other benefits for oneself or for other people. The inconsistent definition of corruption without a precise definition of its meaning affects the citizens' fundamental trust in the state and lowers the respect of the law, while the traditional classification of corruption includes bribery, embezzlement, fraud, and extortion, nepotism, cronyism, and favouritism. As for the most common forms of corruption in the public sector, bribery is the most frequent form, difficult to uncover due to relations. Bribery also presumably influences over-regulation in legislation and excessive bureaucratic procedures.

Therefore, corruption is not just a problem for the time being, even in the future it will not be possible to eradicate it completely, despite good intentions, precautions, preventive anti-corruption mechanisms and international agreements, corruption scandals are unsettling all European countries. The developed countries of the European Union very often lack the political will and strategy to fight corruption, to implement its independent prevention or to reform the judicial system.

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