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CORRUPTION OFFENCES IN THE LABOUR SECTOR IN UKRAINE: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPING A SOLUTION

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ABSTRACT

In the wake of the full-scale invasion in Ukraine, there has been a sharp increase in corruption in all areas of society. As a consequence of recent developments, this increase has been accompanied by new manifestations and forms of corruption violations. Corruption can have a negative impact on all administrative processes, including the basic indicators of economic development. Combined with active hostilities, corruption has had a detrimental impact on all processes in Ukraine. To be specific, there has been a consistent increase in corruption in the labour market that is penetrating new areas and spheres, including the activities of both state and local authorities, as well as businesses. These alarming trends highlight the importance and relevance of this research.

The purpose of the study is to analyse the forms and manifestations of corruption in the labour market and the impact of this phenomenon on all participants of labour relations, as well as to identify the most common types of corruption offences in the labour sphere and the main challenges encountered in combating corruption in the labour sphere. Based on the findings, it is important to explore the prospects for solving the existing problems and identify the principles that should

guide the implementation of certain anti-corruption actions. In order to achieve this goal, the study used the following methods of scientific knowledge, such as the general philosophical method, the method of system analysis, synthesis, dialectical method, formal legal method, as well as methods of deduction and induction. As a result of the study, we have formed conclusions in accordance with the objective regarding the peculiarities of corruption violations in the labour sector, as well as the main challenges faced when combating corruption in the labour market. We have drawn conclusions about the basic principles that should be followed in order to combat corruption more effectively and provided our own assumptions about the possibilities of counteracting the spread of corruption violations.

Keywords: labour market, corruption, corruption violations, bribery, kickbacks, anti-corruption

INTRODUCTION

The complex nature of the labour market has a direct impact on the economic situation of the state and its stability. In recent years, Ukraine's labour sector and economy have struggled under difficult situations – first, in the face of quarantine restrictions and the spread of coronavirus, and then in the face of armed aggression from the Russian Federation. As a result, a significant territory of Ukraine was occupied. These factors have had a negative impact on the labour market, shifting the main labour force to regions where the number of jobs is many times lower than the number of workers. However, the country's economic system is also affected by long-term systemic problems: the primary issue being corruption at all levels of government regulation, including the labour market, both in the public and private sector (Yaroshenko & Lutsenko, 2022).

The Economic Security Strategy of Ukraine until 2025 identifies corruption as one of the key threats to Ukraine's economic security (Decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, 2021). Moreover, in the context of armed aggression by the Russian Federation, corruption is even more destructive, as it not only hinders the economic development of the state and delays the receipt of financial assistance from other states, but also poses a direct threat to Ukraine's defence capabilities.

As noted above, Ukraine has adopted the Economic Security Strategy of Ukraine until 2025, and in parallel, a state anti-corruption programme was developed for 2023-2025 in order to implement the Strategy. Ukraine has been fighting corruption for many years, but the problem remains as urgent as ever, as corruption continues to penetrate a growing number of areas in society and affects every single citizen. The labour market sector is no exception. In recent years, more than one case of abuse of position and authority has been revealed, which ultimately leads to corruption (Parfentii, 2023).

As for the labour sector, corruption continues to permeate this sector at all stages, starting from the hiring process to the performance of certain duties by an individual. Corruption risks in this area can legitimately include bribery in employment centres or at the stage of interaction with clients, fraud in tenders and procurement, undue influence at the stage of labour policy development, and much more. Corruption in labour relations reduces the efficiency of the labour market, instigates the growth of the shadow economy, increases social inequality, reduces confidence in state institutions, and slows down the pace of economic growth. In conditions of martial law, when the state needs the effective use of human resources, corruption takes on new forms and complicates the solution of strategic tasks of state policy.

Therefore, the main aim of this article is to analyse the forms and manifestations of corruption in the workplace and identify the key challenges in the fight against this phenomenon. This research explores how corruption offenses affect all participants in labour relations (i.e., workers, employers, state institutions, and trade unions) and suggests possible ways to overcome these problems. The article focuses on the aspect of corruption that is associated with abuse of office, bribery, favouritism, inspections, and dishonest activities in the field of public and private management of labour relations. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of shadow practices that affect the labour market and provoke a decrease in its transparency.

The article is structured into several main sections. The first section presents a description of the forms and manifestations of corruption in the labour sphere, in particular, bribery during employment, abuse in the activities of trade unions, kickbacks, trading in insider information, and so on. The second section focuses on the key challenges faced by the system that aims to prevent corruption in the workplace such as legislative gaps, insufficient protection of whistleblowers, and difficulties in law enforcement. The third section considers the prospects for overcoming corruption such as reforming labour legislation, introducing digital technologies, developing the institutional potential of regulatory authorities, and strengthening social dialogue. Thus, the article not only outlines the scale and complexity of the problem, but also offers a comprehensive approach to solving it, taking into account both the normative context and the realities of modern Ukraine.

Literature review

For the purpose of our study, it is important to note that the theoretical foundations of corruption were established in the late twentieth century. In general, they are reflected in the works of Vyshnia, Kaufmann, Wilde, Klitgaard, and others and relate to the issues of shadow economic relations and their connection with corruption (Kirzhetska & Kirzhetsky, 2021). Moreover, the works of Friedrich Schneider and Andreas Bühn have drawn conclusions on the relationship between the degree of corruption and the size of the shadow economy. The key argument was that corruption is exacerbated by weak legal systems and unstable economic conditions (Schneider & Williams, 2013).

In his work, Mauro (1997) also came to the conclusion that corruption, by its very nature, has a negative impact on the economic situation of the state, including education and employment. He notes that, in general, corruption affects the reduction of private investment and, ultimately, the deterioration of public spending. Moreover, Cooray and Dzhumashev (2018) understood the relationship between labour supply and corruption. According to their conclusions, this relationship is manifested in the fact that corruption has a negative impact on employment in the form of a decrease in labour productivity, changes in labour supply in the shadow economy, and, as a result, changes in the tax burden. Taken together, this creates a distorted trade-off between consumption and savings. The authors' work indeed shows that corruption has a powerful direct negative impact on employment, as well as an indirect impact on the development of the shadow economy.

The above-mentioned studies and the conclusions drawn from them directly emphasise the destructive impact of corruption on various aspects and areas of activity, including the labour market and the shadow labour market. Therefore, for the purpose of our study and in view of the above-mentioned findings, it is necessary to define the concepts of corruption and corruption

offence. According to Article 1 of the Law of Ukraine “On Prevention of Corruption”, corruption refers to the means by which a person uses his/her official powers (or opportunities and benefits associated with holding a particular position) to obtain an unlawful benefit for himself/herself or to directly accept a certain offer for himself/herself or for another person or persons; or to provide, at the request of a third party, opportunities to persuade another person to unlawfully use his/her official powers or opportunities. In turn, a corruption offence is an act (action or inaction) that directly contains signs of corruption and is committed by a person (the main characteristics of which are provided for by this Law). The current legislation provides for civil, disciplinary, or criminal liability for such offences (Law of Ukraine No. 1700-VII., 2014).

All alliances that arise and develop in the area of preventing and combating corruption are regulated by the Constitution of Ukraine, ratified international treaties, as well as the above-mentioned law, and other special laws and bylaws adopted in accordance with the existing needs of the state and society.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was conducted in accordance with the stated purpose using of methods of scientific knowledge such as, first of all, the general philosophical method, methods of system analysis and synthesis, dialectical and formal legal methods, as well as methods of deduction and induction. At all stages of the study, we used the general philosophical method, the application of which actively contributed to the formation of comprehensive conclusions and achievement of the ultimate goal of this study.

Based on the systematic analysis, we conducted a detailed study of the forms and manifestations of corruption in the labour market and examined the impact of this phenomenon on all participants in labour relations, as well as aimed to identify the types of the most common corruption offences in the labour sphere. In addition, this method was also used to analyse legislative provisions in terms of their incomplete implementation by the authorised bodies.

In turn, the synthesis method was used to identify the main challenges in the fight against corruption in the labour sector. Through the use of systematic analysis and synthesis, we were able to derive practically applicable conclusions regarding corruption violations in the labour sphere and the negative impact of their consequences for all subjects of labour relations, as well as the prospects for solving existing problems and the principles that should be followed when taking certain actions to combat corruption.

The formal legal method of scientific cognition was used to define the specific features of the concepts of corruption and corruption-related offences. Using the method of deduction, we conclude that, despite the existence of comprehensive legislation and its adaptation to the realities of today, Ukraine needs to take a number of steps, including in the direction of a more effective response to corruption in the labour sphere. The method of induction was used to draw conclusions about the problematic issues and challenges caused by corruption. Taken together, these methods of

scientific knowledge helped formulate scientifically significant conclusions, as well as specific and promising proposals for effective anti-corruption.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Forms and manifestations of corruption in the labour market: types of corruption offences

The impact of warfare on the labour market in Ukraine is marked by several main characteristics (Olmos Giupponi & Hong-Lin, 2022). The inequitable distribution of labour resources and vacancies is a consequence of the migration of the population and the relocation of many enterprises from the war zone. This is why the central and western regions of the country have a relatively higher level of job offers and motivated workers than the frontline areas. Moreover, due to the armed aggression from the Russian Federation, many talented personnel were forced to leave the country and still remain abroad. In addition, the mobilisation makes it more difficult to find a suitable candidate for positions requiring certain work experience and relevant skills.

Furthermore, there is an increased demand for adaptability and flexibility. Employers prefer employees who can work and adapt to different conditions and time frames. This is especially true when there are constant air raids, but the tasks have to be completed on time. It presents ample opportunities to work remotely, even when abroad. In addition, the increased corruption hinders the development of the labour market and its recovery. One of the biggest manifestations of corruption is bribery, which makes it increasingly difficult for businesses to obtain appropriate licences or permits to operate or to simply compete in the market.

Understanding the characteristics of the modern labour market is crucial for identifying the factors that contribute to corruption at various levels within enterprises and government agencies. Corruption in the labour market manifests in several forms, each of which undermines fairness, efficiency, and ethical standards. One of the most common forms of corruption is extortion, which occurs when job seekers are required to make illegal payments to secure employment (Shokouhifard et al., 2022). Closely related is bribery for employment, where payments are made to employees not only to obtain a job but also to secure career advancement (Olmos Giupponi & Hong-Lin, 2022). Another widespread issue is nepotism and favouritism, which involve granting preferential treatment to certain individuals based on personal connections rather than merit. This unethical practice extends beyond hiring and promotions, and are often seen when contracts are allocated, where preferred suppliers or contractors bypass competitive procedures, leading to inefficiencies and a decline in work quality.

Bribery to avoid inspections is another serious issue, as employers may pay off labour inspectors to overlook violations, thereby endangering workers and undermining regulatory enforcement (Forms and manifestations of private sector corruption, 2014). Corruption is also evident within trade unions, where embezzlement and bribery result in the misuse of union funds for personal gain. A study by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in 2025 revealed that over 40% of surveyed trade union members in Ukraine questioned the transparency of membership fee expenditures. The study

showed that some union leaders had colluded with employers in ways that contradicted workers' interests, thus institutionalising corruption and fostering a conspiracy of silence regarding labour rights violations.

Fraudulent practices further compromise the labour market, with individuals providing false information to claim benefits such as workers compensation or unemployment assistance (Forms and manifestations of private sector corruption, 2014). Similarly, kickbacks and commercial bribery involve illicit payments in exchange for contract allocation, often disguised as gifts or incentives, leading to legal and reputational risks for all parties involved (Shokouhifard et al., 2022). Other corrupt practices include incitement or extortion, where employees demand payments for performing their lawful duties, and disguising fees as bribes, where excessive fees or commissions are used to manipulate business decisions (Forms and manifestations of private sector corruption, 2014). Information trading is another unethical practice that occurs when employees exchange confidential data for bribes. When such information is used for stock trading, it constitutes insider trading, which damages corporate trust and financial stability (Amirapu & Gechter, 2020).

Influence peddling is particularly problematic when public officials receive undue benefits from business representatives in exchange for favourable decisions. Similarly, employees may appropriate benefits entrusted to them due to their position, further eroding workplace integrity. In addition, the use of expensive gifts as bribes can be sophisticated and difficult to detect, yet it remains a powerful tool for manipulating business decisions (Camacho, 2022).

The National Agency for the Prevention of Corruption (2025) reported more than 170 violations related to corruption in the labour sector. According to Transparency International Ukraine (2025), more than 37% of the public sector employees surveyed faced situations where their employment or career advancements took place not due to their competence, but due to personal connections or a bribe. A particularly high risk of corruption was found in the field of public procurement of labour, where more than 22% of the verified tenders were associated with signs of conspiracy or bias, according to the State Audit Service of Ukraine for 2023. These data confirm the systemic presence of corruption risk in the workplace, both at the level of employers and regulatory authorities.

Hence, the types of corruption violations in the labour sector are quite diverse, where even bribery takes on new forms and manifestations in each individual situation. Moreover, the manifestations of corruption that have been identified in this article demonstrate in great detail that corruption in business and the labour market, in general, is not restricted to gifts and bribes, and it includes several grey areas where business practices may be legal, but are subject to the risk of abuse. It is also worth noting that, in this aspect, sponsorship and certain types of political donations can also be seen as a way to obtain personal gain (Shokouhifard et al., 2022). Kickbacks and small bribes are generally common in some countries and therefore are often perceived as a normal approach to solving certain issues. Corruption in business takes many forms, but it can also occur at different levels of corporate activity or spheres of influence: within the company, in the supply chain, within wider business operations, and in the public environment.

Challenges in combating corruption in the labour sector

It is not enough to be aware of the fact that corruption has now reached all branches of government and business, without exception. Most people tend to use their positions to achieve their own goals, without thinking about the consequences of their actions for the future.

It is important to note that corruption is widespread among mid- and lower-level civil servants, who generally work in various regulatory bodies. One of the potential solutions to reduce corruption among such individuals is to reduce their permissive and administrative functions. Moreover, simplification of various types of control agencies, such as border, customs, sanitary, and so on, remains a necessary step. As practice shows, the creation of non-governmental institutions that perform some functions of state bodies in a much shorter time provokes the spread of even greater levels of corruption and collusion between public officials and such non-governmental structures. This creates a number of challenges and necessitates significant improvement of the current legislation on these issues (Kirzhetska & Kirzhetsky, 2021).

In the course of performing their duties, civil servants do not use anti-corruption measures such as regulation of the conditions and procedure for receiving gifts, fees, remuneration, services, as well as their use of transportation, communications, and so on. Moreover, the recent years have been characterised by the covert involvement of civil servants in business activities. It is also worth noting that high-ranking officials with a wide range of powers, often involved in making many important decisions, have a major negative impact on the labour market in terms of corruption (Ostapenko, 2022).

Corruption remains a persistent challenge, often exacerbated by conflicts in legislation that create loopholes and ambiguities. The elimination of such conflicts could significantly reduce corruption-related violations. These legislative inconsistencies contribute to various systemic problems that society must ultimately address. Among the most problematic areas are the regulation of entrepreneurship, financial and economic activities, as well as the banking sector (Yaroshenko et al., 2023).

Beyond corruption among civil servants, unethical practices have increasingly infiltrated the labour sector, leading to numerous adverse consequences. One major issue is the lack of employee awareness, as many workers are unaware of their rights and responsibilities, making them vulnerable to exploitation and corrupt practices by employers. Deficiencies in legislation further exacerbate the problem, as imperfect or poorly enforced laws create opportunities for corruption to persist. Limited law enforcement capacity due to insufficient financial resources, inadequate staffing, and lack of training hinders the ability of authorities to detect, investigate, and prosecute complex corruption cases in the labour sector (Lazarenko & Babenko, 2014).

Moreover, the inadequate protection of whistleblowers is another critical challenge. Despite legal provisions guaranteeing whistleblower protection in Ukraine, retaliation remains a common issue, discouraging individuals from reporting corruption, especially out of fear of repercussions (Kirzhetska & Kirzhetsky, 2021). Apart from that, the complexity of global supply chains can make the monitoring and regulation of labour relations more difficult, providing fertile ground for corrupt activities. Corruption within state institutions and supervisory bodies responsible for labour sector oversight leads to inefficiencies and further entrenches corruption (Lazarenko & Babenko, 2014).

The prevalence of informal labour arrangements complicates efforts to enforce labour laws and combat corruption effectively (Kirzhetska & Kirzhetsky, 2021). Cultural and social norms can also play a role: as observed in some societies, bribery and nepotism are deeply ingrained, making anti-corruption efforts more challenging. Furthermore, political interference over labour policy and law enforcement can compromise investigations and obstruct the prosecution of corruption offences. Moreover, economic pressures on companies often drive them to cut costs, which may lead to exploitative labour practices and the use of corruption as a cost-saving mechanism.

Apart from that, a lack of awareness at the global level regarding labour practices and corruption hampers the development and implementation of effective anti-corruption policies (Ostapenko, 2022). High unemployment rates create a workforce vulnerable to corruption, particularly in hiring processes, thus fostering complex corruption networks involving employers, recruiters, and officials. Furthermore, a lack of transparency and accountability manifests in non-transparent recruitment processes, hidden financial transactions, and restricted access to information, all of which hinder the detection and prosecution of corrupt practices (Ostapenko, 2022).

In addition, protracted legal proceedings discourage individuals from pursuing legal action against corruption, reducing the deterrent effect of legal consequences (Lazarenko & Babenko, 2014). Additionally, legal gaps and ambiguities allow corrupt officials to exploit vague labour laws to evade accountability and continue unethical practices. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach involving policymakers, law enforcement, businesses, and civil society. Only through systematic reforms, enhanced enforcement, and increased public awareness can corruption in the labour sector be effectively mitigated.

Prospects for addressing the problem of corruption in the labour sector

The prospects of solving the problems associated with corruption and the challenges arising from the spread of corruption requires a multifaceted approach with systemic solutions. These include, first and foremost, the active implementation of a number of anti-corruption measures, such as enhanced law enforcement. This measure is an enhanced control over compliance with the current labour legislation, while comprehensively ensuring consistent investigation of offences and effective application of punishment for corruption offences (Pylypenko, 2022).

An important step in this regard is to provide special training and education for law enforcement agencies, labour inspectors, and other relevant authorities to increase their capacity to detect, investigate, and prosecute corruption. In order to avoid future inconsistencies in anti-corruption legislation, the first step is to eliminate gaps in the law and resolve issues that remain unresolved. It is also advisable to eliminate different kinds of discrepancies in the interpretation of legal norms and introduce mandatory anti-corruption expertise of draft laws (Maksymenko, 2018).

Although Ukraine has a sufficient legal framework regulating issues related to combating corruption, the actual problem is quite different. The problem is not the lack of a proper legal framework, but its ineffective application. This does not mean, however, that the current legislation on liability for corruption offences is perfect. At the same time, it is important to note that one of the main drawbacks of combating corruption currently is the fact that law enforcement agencies generally

focus their efforts solely on neutralising the actual perpetrators of an unlawful act of corruption, while those who develop plans and schemes usually remain outside the scope of law enforcement. Therefore, we emphasise that it is necessary to investigate the entire range of details and the entire chain of criminal connections (Protsenko, 2021). In this regard, it is equally important to respond quickly to reports from employees or other citizens about corruption, as well as to opinion polls and media reports. Another very important factor on which the success of the fight against corruption largely depends is the professional staffing of units directly involved in the fight against organised crime and corruption. In order to recruit such individuals, it is necessary to develop appropriate qualification requirements for employees and establish new methods of personnel selection based on certain criteria (Protsenko, 2021).

In current conditions, civil society plays a key role in overcoming corruption in labour relations. Although the Ukrainian legislation is considered sufficient to respond to corruption, it is not perfect. For this reason, it is advisable to reform labour legislation so that it is comprehensive, clear, and adapted to the changing dynamics of the labour market. This can help eliminate any gaps that could be used for corrupt practices (Pylypenko, 2022).

The activity of public initiatives, think tanks, and non-governmental organisations (for example, Labor Initiatives or the Anti-Corruption Action Centre) can monitor compliance with the law, thus helping to form a culture of intolerance to abuse. Moreover, the media often provides an impetus for a change. High-profile journalistic investigations expose employment schemes “by agreement” and indicate the absence of real competition, for example, the series of publications “Our Money” on opaque appointments in state-owned enterprises. Such materials stimulate public reaction, encourage the creation of petitions, and the opening of proceedings. Digital platforms for reporting corruption anonymously motivate whistleblowers. Successful cases, such as the initiative “Map of corruption in education and labour” from the National Agency on Corruption Prevention, show that public control can be an effective lever of influence.

Ensuring fair employment is also important, while ensuring that hiring, promotion, and other employment decisions are based on merit and transparency (Getman et al., 2023). An effective step to combat corruption in the labour market is to strengthen the monitoring and oversight systems of labour inspectorates so that they conduct regular inspections to ensure compliance with labour laws and identify any corrupt practices. The active use of new technologies and digital platforms can also help detect corruption in the workplace.

Cooperation with international organisations is also an important area of anti-corruption efforts in order to adopt their effective practices to address the problems of cross-border labour corruption, or to use their advice to improve the internal situation in the country (Vyshnevetska & Vyshnevetskyi, 2021). It should also be noted that encouraging companies to adopt and implement strong corporate social responsibility initiatives that prioritise fair labour practices and anti-corruption measures can also be an effective mechanism. At the same time, the priority of fighting corruption should be actively communicated at the state level.

During the implementation of these measures, it is essential to uphold the role of civil society institutions and adhere to several fundamental principles. The principle of honesty is the most critical one, which necessitates that authorities provide open and truthful information regarding efforts to

combat corruption and the decision-making processes associated with these initiatives. Transparency remains a cornerstone of effective governance, particularly given the challenges associated with ensuring equitable access to information (Maksymenko, 2018).

The principle of equality is also important since it stipulates that all media outlets must respect and uphold the right to information. Although this right is enshrined in the Constitution of Ukraine, its rigorous enforcement remains imperative. According to the International Freedom of Expression Association (IFEX), selective dissemination of information represents one of the most prevalent violations of the legal rights and interests of journalists (Vyshnevetska & Vyshnevetskyi, 2021).

Moreover, social orientation prioritises the allocation of funding to socially significant information projects. This approach ensures that media resources are directed toward initiatives that serve the public interest. In many developed countries, the media functions as a crucial mechanism for exposing corruption and holding those in positions of power accountable. In addition, the principle of legality is crucial for establishing a system that guarantees political and ideological freedom of thought and expression, while safeguarding media independence. The necessary legal frameworks to uphold this principle are embedded in the current legislation of Ukraine (Pylypenko, 2022). Adherence to these principles is essential for fostering effective collaboration with the media.

CONCLUSION

According to Article 1 of the Law of Ukraine “On Prevention of Corruption”, corruption refers to the means by which a person uses his/her official powers (or opportunities and benefits associated with holding a particular position) to obtain an unlawful benefit for himself/herself or to directly accept a certain offer for himself/herself or for another person or persons; or to provide, at the request of a third party, opportunities to persuade another person to unlawfully use his/her official powers or opportunities. In turn, a corruption offence is an act (action or inaction) that directly contains signs of corruption and is committed by a person (whose main characteristics are provided for by this Law). The current legislation provides for civil, disciplinary, or criminal liability for such offences. Corruption has permeated the labour sphere at all stages, from the hiring process to the performance of certain duties.

In general, the most common forms and manifestations of corruption, and as a result, corruption violations in the labour market, include extortion; bribery for employment; nepotism and favouritism; bribery to avoid certain inspections at the enterprise; embezzlement and bribery in trade unions; fraudulent and corrupt practices in which false information is provided in order to obtain benefits; kickbacks and commercial bribery; incitement or extortion, which is generally manifested when an employee demands payment of a certain amount, a gift, or various services in exchange for the lawful performance of his or her duties; disguising fees as bribes; information trading; influence peddling; misappropriation by employees of certain benefits entrusted to them on the basis of holding a particular position; as well as the acceptance of expensive gifts.

As of today, corruption has encroached into all branches of government and areas of business, without exception. Most people take advantage of their positions in order to achieve their own

goals, without thinking about the consequences of their actions for the future. In turn, this creates a number of challenges that society faces today, which include lack of awareness among employees regarding the limits and scope of their rights; imperfect legislation or legislation that is not actually implemented; the presence of limited opportunities for law enforcement; insufficient protection of whistleblowers; presence of complex supply chains; corruption in state institutions and supervisory bodies that are directly responsible for regulating the labour sector or have internal problems related to the performance of labour duties by their employees; building informal labour relations; cultural norms and social approval of certain corrupt practices; the influence of political forces on the formation of labour policy and the activities of law enforcement agencies; economic pressure on companies to reduce costs; lack of awareness of labour practices and corruption in the labour market at the global level that negatively affects the formation and implementation of the general policy of combating corruption; the presence of a high level of unemployment; lack of transparency and accountability; protracted court processes for consideration of cases of corruption offenses; as well as the presence of significant gaps in the law.

Important steps in the direction of solving the problems related to combating corruption in the labour market are, first of all, the active implementation of a number of anti-corruption measures, such as strengthening law enforcement. An important step in this regard is conducting special trainings and education for law enforcement agencies, labour inspectors, and other relevant authorities in order to increase their ability to detect, investigate, and prosecute cases of corruption. In order to avoid various kinds of contradictions in the anti-corruption legislation in the future, the first step is to remove the gaps in the laws and settle issues that remain unresolved. It is also important to eliminate all kinds of disagreements in the interpretation of legal norms and to introduce a mandatory anti-corruption examination of draft laws.

In this aspect, the presence of a quick response to the reports of employees or other citizens about the occurrence of corruption, as well as to the data collected through sociological surveys or media materials can also play an equally important role. Another very important factor on which the success of the fight against corruption depends to a large extent is the professional staff in the units directly engaged in the fight against organised crime and corruption. In order to be effective, it is necessary to develop appropriate qualification requirements for employees in these agencies and establish new personnel selection methods based on certain criteria. Equally important remains the issue of ensuring fair employment, while ensuring that hiring, promotion, and other employment decisions are based on merit and transparency. An effective step in combating corruption in the labour market is strengthening monitoring and supervision systems by labour inspectorates, as well as active cooperation with international organisations. We cannot fail to note that encouraging companies to adopt and implement powerful corporate social responsibility initiatives can be an effective mechanism.

At the stage of implementation of these steps, it is important for the institutions of civil society to observe and adhere to the following key principles: the principle of honesty of the authorities before the population, the principle of equality, the principle of social orientation, and the principle of legality.

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