

## THE LITHUANIAN MAP OF CORRUPTION 2020

During November 2020 – January 2021 Public opinion and market research centre “Vilmorus“ conducted a study "The Lithuanian Map of Corruption 2020“, initiated by the Special Investigation Service of the Republic of Lithuania.

Three target groups were researched: Lithuanian residents (general public), business executives and civil servants. A total of 1,006 residents of Lithuania, 510 business executives, and 554 civil servants were surveyed.

Aim of the research - to assess the corruption situation in Lithuania and compare it with the results from previous years. The research objectives: to assess approach of the target groups towards corruption, the incidence of corruption in various institutions, to identify corruption practices of the respondents and to evaluate the anti-corruption potential. A special block of questions about corruption was devoted for openness of decision-making as well.

Lithuanians place corruption on the 5th place among the most acute problems (in a list of 18 problems), after low-wages, health care system, rising prices, and unemployment as 35% of the residents indicated corruption as a very serious problem. This percentage is the lowest since 2007. Business executives mentioned corruption as a very serious problem in the 5th place as well – 30% (in 2019 – 32%) and civil servants – in the 4th place – 33% (in 2019 – 23%). So, general public, business leaders and civil servants mentioned corruption more or less on the same level. Executives were also asked about the problems impeding business. Corruption was mentioned on the 6-7th place following economic instability, tax rate and other problems. Perception of corruption as a very serious problem practically did not change in 2020, in the year of Covid-19 pandemic.

19% of Lithuanians think that the extent of corruption has grown during the past 5 years, 36% think that it remained unchanged, and 33% think that it has decreased. In 2008, the percentage of those who believe that the extent of corruption during the past 5 years has increased was 77%, in 2011 – 53%, in 2014 – 35%, in 2016 – 42%, in 2018 – 25%, 2019 – 20%, i.e. from year 2008 till year 2020 the tendency of improving assessment was observed (exception in year 2016 – a worsening of evaluations). The best assessment was established in 2020. A similar tendency of evaluation of the past 12 months dynamics was observed, as well. In 2007, those who believe that the extent of corruption within 12 months increased made up – 54%, in 2008 - 66%, in 2014 – 26%, in 2016 – 36%, in 2018 – 20%, in 2019 – 15%. In 2020, the corresponding percentage was only 14%. Regarding the future, there are more optimists (32%) than the pessimists (14%). This is also the best result during many years. The responses of business executives are more negative compared to the last year but optimistic evaluations prevail (for example, 38% of the respondents believe that corruption will decrease in Lithuania during 3 years, and 12% give pessimistic prognosis). Civil servants give the most positive assessments since 2011 (the beginning of measurements). 77% of civil servants mentioned the decreasing of corruption during 5 years, 51% – decreasing during 12 month, and 75% decreasing of corruption in 3 years (only 2% of pessimistic prognosis).

The most widespread situation of corruption mentioned by the residents – payment after successful surgery – 37%, a civil servant uses the official car for personal purposes (37%), employment into state institution – 35%. Such forms of corruption as nepotism and political favouritism were mentioned frequently as well. Almost in all cases widespread corruption situations were mentioned more frequently compared to 2019.

In an open-ended question about the most corrupt institutions, the residents most frequently mentioned the healthcare institutions – 51%, the courts of law – 37%, the Seimas – 33% and the municipalities – 22%. Compared to 2019 the differences are not significant. Business executives most often mentioned the courts of law – 32% (35% in 2019), healthcare institutions – 31% (26% in 2019), municipalities – 29% (16% in 2019). Seimas – 27% (23% in 2019). Civil servants mentioned healthcare institutions 47% (45% in 2019), municipalities – 39% (31% in 2019) and courts of law – 30% (31% in 2019). Therefore, all target groups mentioned the same four institutions as the most corrupted: healthcare institutions, courts of law, Seimas and municipalities.

The residents assessed level of corruption at particular ministries and institutions. The following institutions received the majority of assessments as "highly corrupt" (over 20%): district courts 34% (20% in 2019), administrative courts – 25% (18% in 2019), district prosecutor's offices – 25% (15% in 2019), municipal public procurement departments – 45% (20% in 2019), municipal construction departments – 32% (12% in 2019), the Public Procurement Office – 37% (21% in 2019), the Customs Department – 23% (22% in 2019), Health ministry and depending institutions – 32% (17% in 2019). There are more negative ("very corrupted") assessments of many institutions compare to 2019. On the other hand there are better assessments of Disability and Incapacity for Work Service – 28% (32% in 2019), the Prison Department and its subsidiaries – 24% (36% in 2019), urban and regional hospitals - 23% (30% in 2019), the national hospitals – 26% (32% in 2019), State Child Rights Protection and Adoption Service – 8% (21% in 2019).

Most of the respondents (71%) believe that a bribe helps to solve problems. This is higher compared to 2019 (61%). 18% of the population are apt to give bribes in order to solve their problems while 42% of respondents stated they would give a bribe depending on the circumstances. 44% of CEOs agree that bribes facilitate solving the problems (which is more than in 2019 - 36%) while 5% of CEOs would give a bribe, 20% - would give it depending on the circumstances. 24% of civil servants stated that bribes help problem solving; the percentage is similar as in 2019 (25%).

Over 12 months period 9% of the population has given a bribe (in 2007 – 28%, in 2008 – 24%, in 2011 – 22%, in 2014 – 24%, in 2016 – 16%, in 2018 – 12%, in 2019 – 10%), and over 5 years period - 23% (in 2007 – 47%, in 2008 – 44%, in 2011 – 41%, in 2014 – 45%, in 2016 – 33%, in 2018 – 24%, 2019 – 23%). This is the lowest result since 2007. 4% of company representatives have given bribes over 12 months period and 6% - over the 5 years. The figures are the lowest since 2007 (over 12 months: 2007 m. – 16%, 2008 m. – 12%, 2011 m. – 17%, 2014 m. – 6%, 2016 m. – 5%, 2018 – 8%, 2019 – 4%, over the 5 years: 2007 m. – 33%, 2008 m. – 23%, 2011 m. – 34%, 2014 m. – 14%, 2016 m. – 15%, 2018 – 13%, 2019 – 9%). 1% of civil servants stated that over 12 months period they have given a bribe, which is less than earlier (2019 – 2%, 2018 – 4%, 2016 – 6%). There is a decline in bribery over the 5 years period, as well – 9% (2019 – 9%, 2018 – 12%, 2016 – 19%). 17% of civil servants indicated that their institution more or less often felts pressure from politicians because of their private interests (15% in 2019, 19% in 2018). 15% civil servants indicated that their institution

experienced pressure from politicians because of their parties interests (11% in 2019, 16% in 2018).

The bribe extortion indexes (part of respondents extorted to give a bribe) and bribe giving indexes (part of respondents gave bribe) were measured as in previous surveys. Among the more frequently visited institutions by residents, the highest bribe extortion and giving indexes are recorded in the national hospitals (bribe extortion index – 0.16, bribe giving index – 0.13) in the city/ districts hospitals (bribe extortion index 0.15, bribe giving index 0.10). These indexes are lower compare to previous years. The decrease of bribe giving indexes has also been recorded in municipalities, outpatient clinics, and hospitals.

Among the general public the highest indexes of using connections are in the fields of surgery (0.08), getting a job in a private sector (0.14). The highest indexes of bribe extortions are in the field of surgery (0.17), nursing in the hospitals (0.15). The bribe giving indexes are highest in these fields as well.

Business executives did not mention bribe extortion and giving indexes higher than 0.1 (with sample size being at least N=100).

According to civil servants who visited these institutions or used the procedures during 5 years, the biggest bribe extortion indexes are in the field of surgery (0.17), urban/ regional hospitals (0.26), national hospitals (0.23), municipalities administrations (0.16), outpatient clinics (0.1) (with sample size being at least N=100).

General public believes the responsible for the extent of corruption for corruption primarily are politicians 80%, judges 79% and prosecutors 79%, the result is similar to 2019. Executives see as the most responsible judges 78%, politicians 77%. Civil servants list as responsible politicians 79%, judges 69%, executives 68%.

Responding to the question, which institutions and social groups could contribute to the reduction of corruption, the residents most often mentioned Special Investigation Service (STT) – 56% (was 57%), Seimas – 54% (was 44%) and the Government – 52% (was 49%). Civil servants mentioned Seimas – 66% (was 51%), the law enforcement institutions – 66% (was 58%), the Government – 63% (was 45%).

50% of the population know where the cases of corruption should be reported (maintaining the upward trend since 2011: in 2005 – 22%, in 2007 – 18%, in 2011 –

24%, in 2014 - 27%, in 2016 – 39%,2018 – 46%, 2019 – 48%); 22% of them would reported such cases, 8% would like to participate in anti-corruption activities. Company executives' indicators are higher in this respect: 66% know where to report the cases of corruption (35% in 2007, 60% in 2011, 37% in 2014, 61% in 2016, 62% in 2018, 61% in 2019), 28% of them would do so, 8% would like to participate in anti-corruption activities. Civil servants have strong awareness on where to report the cases of corruption - 88%, 53% of them would report on corruption, 28% - would like to participate in anti-corruption activities.

Television remains the most important source of information about the corruption for general public (50%), but its role is decreasing and internet media is increasing (30%). The internet media is on the first place for business executives 47% (TV on the second place – 31%). The internet media is the most important for civil servants as well – 38% and TV is second – 31%.

According to general public, decision making process in Lithuania is rather opaque – 43% then open/transparent – 9%. Similar opinion was expressed by business executives – 40% believe decision process is rather opaque while 12% - open/transparent enough. Civil servants assessed decision-making process less critically: 21% believe process is open/transparent enough, 22% - not transparent enough.

According to business executives and civil servants the most common ways interest groups seek to influence decision-making are use of connections (59% executives, 65% servants) and unofficial meetings (49% executives, 66% servants). The sectors where interest groups seek influence are pharmaceutical (57% and 63% accordingly), construction (55% and 64%) and health care (53% in both target groups). Most often, according to respondents, actors trying to influence decisions are the registered lobbyists (52% executives, 53% servants), enterprises (35% and 46% accordingly) and associations (33% and 52%). 46% of business executives have heard about the situations when civil servants get positions in the private sector because of accepted decisions.

In conclusion, perception of the corruption as the acute problem has not changed significantly in comparison to 2019, but is diminishing in a long-term perspective. In addition, there are more optimists compare to pessimists in the assessment of the dynamics of the corruption. Among general public and civil servants these assessments

are the best since the beginning of monitoring. Among the all target groups the same four institutions were listed as the most corrupt in open ended question: health care institutions, courts, Seimas and municipalities. The bribes extortion and bribes giving indexes are lower in majority of institutions compared to previous years. On the other hand, subjective perception of corruption is higher towards many institutions. All target groups see the politicians and judges as the most responsible for extent of corruption in Lithuania. When evaluating decision-making process in Lithuania, the larger part of general public and business executives state that it is not transparent and open enough.