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## An empirical study of the level of corruption intolerance among the employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs

Original article

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A – Research concept and design, B – Collection and/or assembly of data, C – Data analysis and interpretation, D – Writing the article, E – Critical revision of the article, F – Final approval of article

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### Abstract

**Objectives:** The report presents the objective need to measure the level of corruption intolerance in the public sector and its importance for the formation of specific behavior aimed at the observance of important value principles in the performance of official duties in the public sector. The activity of the state administration should justify society's expectations of professional competence, legality, loyalty, correctness and responsibility. That is why corruption intolerance can be accepted as a factor for measuring the quality of activity in the public sector. The empirical research on the corruption intolerance in the Ministry of the Internal Affairs is an important indicator for the efficiency of the system.

**Methods:** The scientific methodology used is a combination of a theoretical review of the issue, a critical scientific review and the presentation of new scientific advances in the measurement of corruption intolerance.

**Results:** The rates of corruption intolerance in the Ministry of Internal Affairs are satisfactory.

**Conclusions:** There is an objective need to maintain a high level of motivation and effectiveness of training to achieve high-quality professional performance of official duties among the employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Therefore, Dynamic socio-economic changes necessitate a new approach to the problems of measuring the corruption intolerance.

## **Introduction**

The public sector in any country is largely related to its security system. That is why the corruption intolerance is a key factor for the formation of correct behavior and certain values: legality, preservation and protection of human life, respect for the dignity and rights of citizens, honesty, correctness, competence and responsibility. Following these value orientations in behavior is an important prerequisite for preventing corrupt behavior among civil servants in the public sector and in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in particular.

### **1. Corruption as a negative social phenomenon in the public sector.**

Corruption is a negative social phenomenon with its own specific characteristics and forms of manifestation. An example definition of the corruption is contained in Bulgarian language dictionary (online) (Bulgarian language dictionary (online), 2024 ): "A social phenomenon expressed in the corruption of officials or political sowers as a result of bribes and material benefits."

Relative to the functioning of the public sector, the phenomenon of corruption is marked by a particularly high degree of public sensitivity and reprehensibility. Violations of official duties or criminal acts committed by civil servants, who by law should be an example of professionalism, correctness and integrity, reduce the public's trust in the institutions, undermine the authority of the state administration as a whole and give rise to a feeling of anxiety and uncertainty in the state at all. Therefore, an effective set of corruption intolerance measures is needed in order to prevent any possible manifestations of corrupt behavior on the part of public sector employees at all stages of development of the personnel process.

### **2. Empirical study**

The empirical research on the corruption intolerance in the Ministry of the Internal Affairs consists of several stages: a diagnostic stage, in which a methodology is prepared for researching the corruption intolerance; the main stage of conducting the empirical research on the corruption intolerance and the final stage, in which the problems are analyzed and possible solutions are sought.

The empirical study was conducted through a survey card distributed between 62 police officers in the Ministry of the Internal Affairs. The survey was conducted in the period April - June 2022. It aims to establish the policy undertaken in the field of motivation and the level of corruption intolerance among the employees in the Ministry of Internal affairs.

A questionnaire survey was conducted in writing and individually by each participant. It is explained to the participants in advance that the survey is of a research nature and will not lead to negative consequences for them and their work. The classical method used for conducting sociological research, namely an interview in the form of a questionnaire survey, also allows to take into account the attitude towards conducting such research among the respondents. The analysis of the results is supported by the application of a package of mathematical and statistical methods and programs. The specifics of police work, responsibility and motivation for work are reported.

The sample was analyzed using SPSS 21.0 for Windows. The results of the diagnostic experiment are formed and presented both tabularly and graphically. Such an approach supports the analysis by making it possible to make and derive guidelines for improving the corruption intolerance of employees in the Ministry of the Internal Affairs.

**3. Statistical processing of the experimental data.**

Question 1: *Would you tolerate any type of corruption scheme or other type of illegal action?*

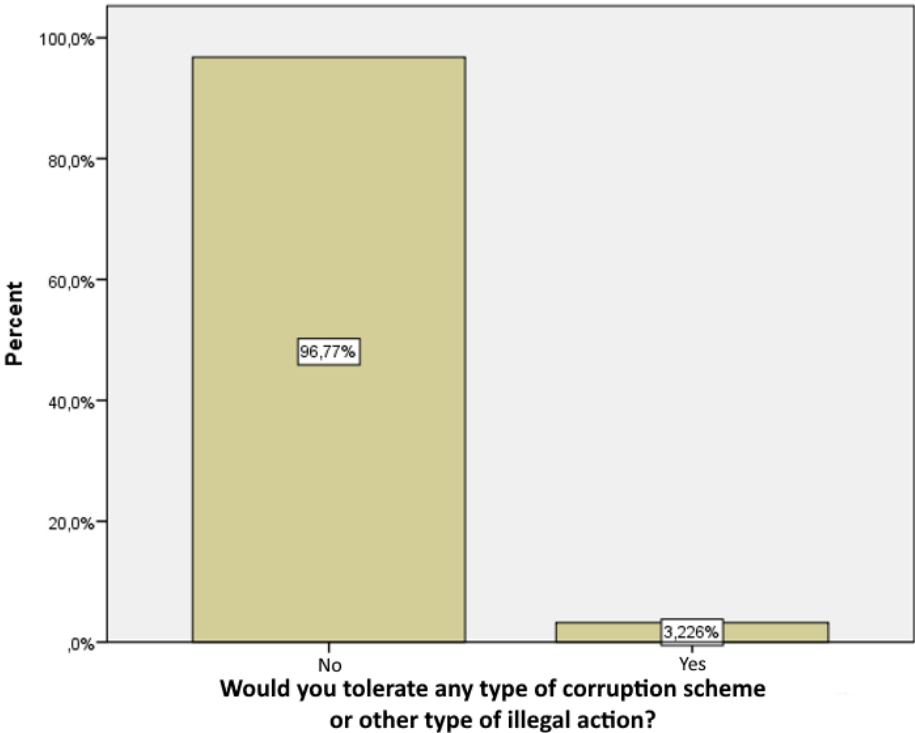


Fig. 1: Would you tolerate any type of corruption scheme or orther type of illegal activity?  
Source: Own processing.

96.77% of the surveyed employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs give a negative answer to this question, which represents a good starting point for analyzing the correlation "motivation and training - countering corruption". 3, 226% answered the question positively.

Question 2: *Do you think that when you are not well prepared to deal with a given professional situation, it is better not to take a stand on the case than to do wrong and then be punished?*

62.9% of police officers give a negative answer, i.e. they would fulfill their obligations, exercise their authority, initiate the administrative-penal procedure against the possible violator, although they may have hesitations. 35, 48% of the respondents answered positively, and one of the respondents did not answer the question, representing 1.613% of the sample.

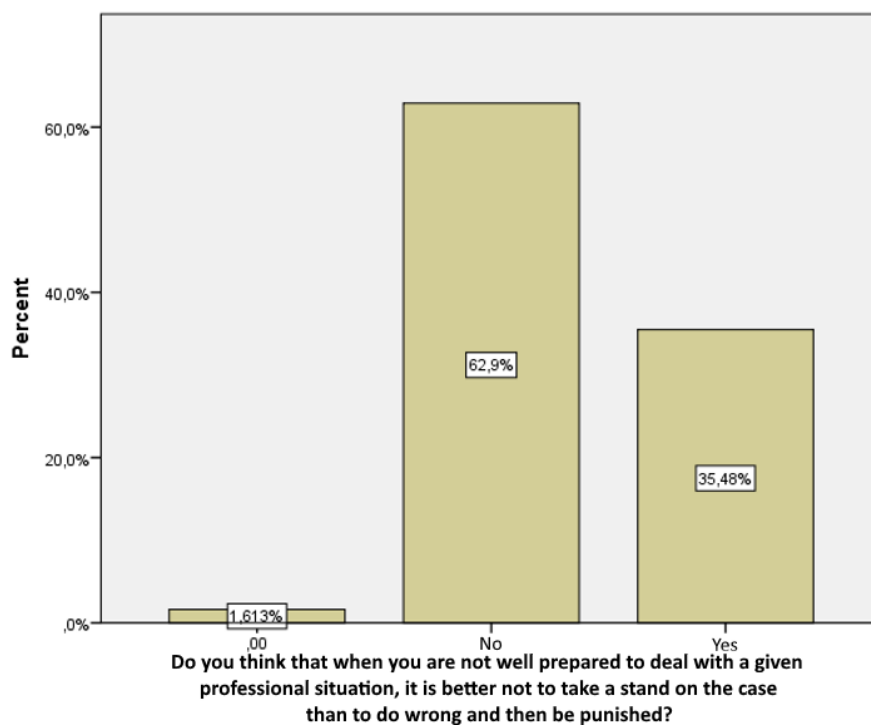


Fig. 2: Do you think it is better not to take a stand in a given situation than to do wrong and be punished?  
Source: Own processing.

Question 3: *Do you think that when you are not well prepared to deal with a given professional situation, it is better not to take a stand on the case than to do wrong and then be punished?*

Gaps in the regulatory framework with which one works create uncertainty in the performance of official duties, since in the administrative-penal activity, the correct documentation of the violation is a guarantee of the stability of the sanction. Therefore, 80.65% of the respondents gave a positive answer to the question, and 9.677% answered that they could not judge.

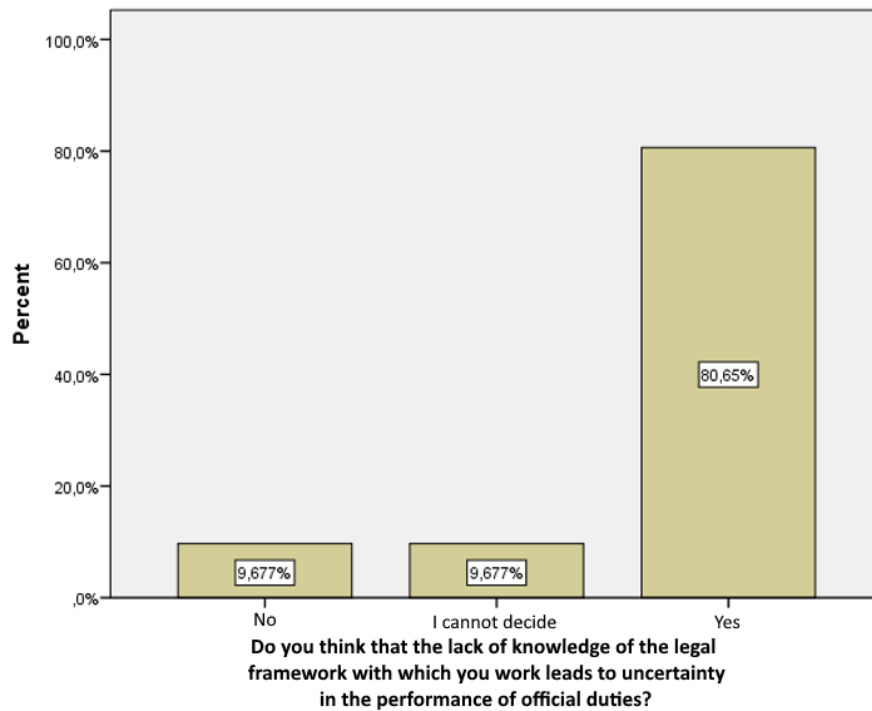


Fig. 3: Do you think that poor knowledge of the legal framework leads to uncertainty in the performance of official duties?

Source: Own processing.

Question 4: *In the event that you or one of your colleagues commits a violation in the official activity, are sanctions applied?*

Disciplinary methods have, in addition to sanctioning, a preventive function. In this sense, they are a factor in countering corruption. 48.39% of the surveyed MIA employees gave a positive answer, 30.65% indicated "Sometimes, depending on the subjective judgment of the management", 16.13% answered "Other" and 4.839% indicated "No" as the answer.

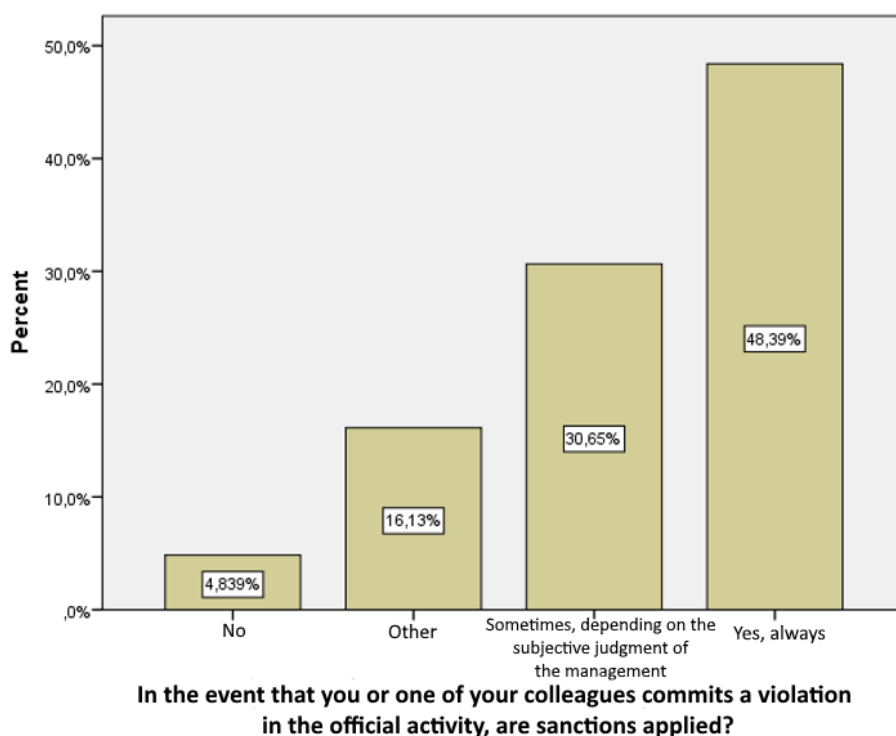


Fig. 4: If you or one of your colleagues commits a violation in the official activity, are sanctions applied?  
Source: Own processing.

## Conclusion

The prevention of corruption acts is a purposeful process of finding, selecting, appointing, training and retaining motivated employees, whose subsequent motivation in the work process is the result of daily efforts on the part of the management team to form a suitable environment and working conditions and to achieve of adequate and lawful results in the activity. In order for these mechanisms to be maximally adequate and adaptable according to the dynamic and changing socio-economic reality, they must be applied by motivated and professionally trained management personnel. The existing prevention mechanisms work well but they need to be permanently updated.

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