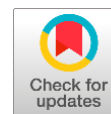


Addressing corruption through legal reform: Exploring connections and pathways for change



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Abstract This article explores how corruption and the legal system interact, focusing on possible ways to reform anti-corruption efforts. The authors analyse the impact of corruption on the effectiveness of legal institutions and processes. They also evaluate various strategies and measures to mitigate corruption in the legal sector. The study examines internal and external factors affecting corruption in the legal system. It offers practical recommendations for developing effective mechanisms for controlling and curbing corruption in law enforcement and judicial bodies. The article aims to analyse the interrelationships and find possible ways to reform and prevent corruption in the legal system. The paper presents a structural scheme for determining how corruption and the legal system interact and describes possible ways of reform. Such methods as observation and analysis of practices and experimental research were employed in the study. The authors analyse various aspects of corruption in the legal sector, including its causes, consequences, and methods of counteraction. The paper also discusses the mechanisms of legislative, administrative, and institutional reforms aimed at strengthening the legal system and preventing corruption. The authors offer a set of practical recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the legal system and fighting corruption, taking into account the specifics of different legal traditions and contexts. The authors present a model of the interrelation between the legal system and corruption and ways of reforms to address it. A study was conducted to assess the adequacy of the model linking the legal system and corruption, as well as reform pathways, through a survey of 62 legal system representatives. The research was carried out in three stages, during which the causes of corruption, approaches to reforming the legal system, and methods for combating corruption were identified. Subsequently, the most effective methods for combating corruption were highlighted according to the outlined evaluation criteria.

Keywords: corruption, law enforcement, judicial bodies, justice system, control mechanism, prevention of corruption

1. Introduction

Corruption and the legal system are two integral components of modern society. Their interconnection and impact on countries' economic, social, and political development are the subject of in-depth analysis and research. The phenomenon of corruption negatively affects the effectiveness of the legal system. It undermines public confidence in government institutions and violates the principles of justice and equality in the face of the law. The legal system's effectiveness is crucial in preventing and curbing corruption and ensuring fairness, transparency, and legitimacy in society.

Considering the interconnection between corruption and the legal system, it is important to explore possible ways to reform and improve both areas to increase the effectiveness of public administration and the rule of law. By analysing the effects of corruption on the legal system and vice versa and identifying the factors contributing to the spread of corruption within legal institutions, our study aims to develop strategies and recommendations to overcome such a negative phenomenon and strengthen society's legal status.

Cooperation between analytical research and practical measures in the justice and anti-corruption policy helps strengthen democratic institutions, protect citizens' rights, and increase trust in the legal system. Effective reform strategies must be developed and implemented to create a transparent, responsible, and reliable legal system capable of effectively counteracting corruption and ensuring justice for all society members.

The study aims to identify the interrelation between corruption and the legal system and possible reform options. The main goal is to specify the most effective reform strategies to reduce legal system corruption.



The problem of fighting corruption is the insufficient effectiveness of legal measures to overcome it and the lack of a comprehensive approach to legal reforms, which is why the measures already implemented have a temporary effect. This study explores ways to overcome corruption through legal reform by identifying the key factors that facilitate or impede the successful implementation of anti-corruption measures.

Research goals:

1. To analyse the existing literature and research on the interrelation between corruption and the legal system.
2. To offer possible ways of reforming to curb corruption in the context of the legal system.
3. To present a model of the interaction between the legal system and corruption and possible ways of reforms.
4. To assess the effectiveness of possible ways of reforming the anti-corruption measures.

One task in researching ways to combat corruption through legal reform was to analyse the literature based on legislative acts and scholarly publications indexed in databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar.

The fight against corruption intertwines with political and economic issues. From an economic and political perspective, it is crucial to consider the costs of anti-corruption oversight and corruption as governments seek to expand their managerial capabilities. The paper presents a model that includes supervision levels and related costs to address this issue (Zhang et al., 2023). There is increasing evidence that anti-corruption investigations create negative perceptions in the short term and lead to a reduction in the level of corruption in the long term. However, there is a lack of research on the impact of anti-corruption investigations on the perception of corruption in the context of ongoing anti-corruption campaigns (Pan et al., 2023). The fight against corruption requires centralised and institutionalised strategies and decentralised efforts supported by large volumes of data and technological advancements. This article discusses the issue of decentralised corruption fighting by describing a heuristic analysis method based on extensive corruption data (Nurlina et al., 2019).

Over the past few decades, corruption in the public sector has attracted increased attention due to its widespread prevalence worldwide. Corruption in the public sector should be detected as early as possible to enable preventive and corrective measures to be taken (Pramanik et al., 2020). Anti-corruption initiatives can reduce corruption. This study aims to improve the electronic procurement system to make it more transparent, accountable, and effective in preventing corruption and support the Commission for Corruption Prevention (Delima & Dachyar, 2020).

Scholars analysed the UN E-Government Development Index (EGDI) and the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of Transparency International (TI) worldwide. The results showed a moderate global correlation (high correlation) between the EGDI and CPI indexes at 0.79. Such results indicate that e-government development reduces corruption (Tintin et al., 2018).

The percentage of deputies actively opposing corruption, compared to those unwilling to do so, correlates with the increase or decrease in the number of deputies addressing the issue of corruption. According to the study, if the percentage of deputies actively opposing corruption exceeds 60%, the likelihood of preventing corruption is more than half (Juhana et al., 2020).

Today, the relevant task is to assess corruption and search for ways to combat it amidst global financial and economic challenges. This work identifies the main problems of the corruption epidemic in Ukraine and examines the factors directly influencing it. Corruption at the local level significantly restrains the distribution of financial dividends. Further research shows that state corruption has a more apparent impact on the financial dividends of non-state enterprises (Kopytko et al., 2019). The report discusses opportunities to reduce corruption in public procurement in electric distribution companies. This report aims to analyse various possibilities for using information and communication technologies to implement norms enshrined in legislation and propose a model for preventing potential corruption based on this (Lu & Zhang, 2020).

Corruption poses a significant challenge to Indonesia's economic and social development. The Indonesian government has established the Corruption Eradication Commission to overcome this threat. Therefore, this article proposes a tool to assist the Commission's staff in real-time arrest operations (Anguelov, 2019). In September 2019, demonstrations occurred regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the 2019 amendments to the Law on the Corruption Eradication Commission in Indonesia (Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi, KPK). Some Indonesians also expressed their opinions on the changes to the 2019 KPK Law through social media platforms such as Twitter. This study analysed public opinion regarding the amendments to the 2019 KPK Law (Ida et al., 2021).

This study outlines the problem of potential corruption based on auction data for the procurement of goods/services in the government. With the help of Big Data technologies, the corruption eradication commission will be able to immediately implement the process of detecting potential corruption in auctions for the procurement of goods/services (Wang & Huang, 2022).

An Anti-Corruption IoT (Internet of Things) system, which consists of technological and organisational models, allows for the monitoring and analysing corruption. Sensors, data transmission, cloud technologies, and IoT application architecture make up the technical model of the anti-corruption system. The organisational model includes technical, administrative, and institutional reforms (Utomo et al., 2021). Based on the predictive power of machine learning, feature selection methods can select factors that are more important for a company's anti-corruption policy than statistical analysis (Khurniawan & Ruldeviyani, 2020).

The study uses multiple regression models to determine whether and how incentivising executive compensation improves companies' management of hidden corruption (Purwanto & Emanuel, 2020).

The article formalises the conditions under which citizens exchange competence for corruption. First, the system must be democratic enough for corrupt politicians to be accepted by a coalition of citizens in numbers sufficient to stay in power. Second, the system must be arranged in such a way as to make it easier for politicians to extract rents by taking bribes instead of spending the revenues on public goods rather than outright stealing revenues. The former can create more public goods than the latter. Under these two conditions, competence supports corruption and vice versa (Gao & Zhang, 2020). Countries have developed and implemented AI-based anti-corruption tools and expect them to be effective. However, there is still a lack of empirical analysis of these automated systems designed to detect and stop corruption (Khoury & Harik, 2021).

By identifying the shortcomings of current anti-corruption approaches from a conceptual and empirical perspective, this study argues for a rethinking of anti-corruption efforts to make them more comprehensive and helpful in developing countries (Desierto, 2023). Corruption among international contractors poses a significant threat to the transparency and sustainability of the construction industry. This study aims to identify the key drivers of international contractor corruption and examine their interrelationships (Odilla, 2023). The paper analyses the impact of corruption on economic growth by testing the hypothesis that the relationship between these two variables is non-linear. It also assesses whether the idea that corruption always hurts the economy is correct (Perumal, 2023).

The paper endogenises entrepreneurship support policies in a model where voters choose the strength of the policy, and entrepreneurs generate social returns that benefit the average voter. In this model, existing companies affected by the increased competition caused by the policy can resist it in two ways: corruption and persuasion (Luo et al., 2023).

Again, higher levels of corruption have been found in loss versus gain conditions (Modesto & Pilati, 2023). This result indicates that loss avoidance is an essential bias in corrupt decision-making and points to the limitations of cost-benefit models in explaining corrupt decision-making (Trabelsi, 2024). Using a large firm-level dataset covering more than 80 countries, this study examines the impact of firm size, city size, and government size on perceptions and experiences of corruption (Parker, 2024). The impact of incompetence and corruption on procurement is analysed (Goel et al., 2022). It shows that the higher the level of the corruption parameter, the more pronounced the decline in the quality of the actual product and the expected welfare (Dastidar & Jain, 2023).

The mechanisms underlying the emergence of corruption and the factors influencing it, precisely the extent and maximum volume of corruption, were studied. It was determined that the main channels include reducing the cost of social norms associated with corrupt behaviour and the belief in an increased likelihood of finding a partner to engage in corruption (Chen et al., 2024). While analysing legislative acts combating corruption, their impact on the socio-legal space was examined. It was found that the activities of anti-corruption institutions positively affect the fight against corruption and enhance transparency in the country. To update legislation and introduce relevant legal norms, it is necessary to investigate the social determinants of corruption (Duisenbayeva et al., 2024). The analysis emphasises the need for political measures that promote sustainable economic development and support institutional quality, including anti-corruption efforts (Ndjokou et al., 2024).

A significant challenge for Ukraine's legal system is the adaptation of its legislation to EU law. The legislation is adopted based on the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union (Petrović, 2022). The distinction between the processes of implementation and adaptation of legislation was highlighted. The difference lies in the former involving the transfer of EU norms into national legislation. In contrast, the latter involves aligning national legislation with EU law (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 451-2023-p, Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine No. 2298-IX). The adaptation process should be based on compliance with EU directives, voluntariness, clarity, and completeness of terminology. Factors hindering the implementation of EU legislation in Ukraine were identified, with a high level of corruption being one of the most damaging influences on this process (Parkhomenko et al., 2024).

The current information support for combating corruption in the state's economic security management system was investigated. A model of information support for combating corruption within the economic security management system was developed. This model enhances the effectiveness of information support for anti-corruption measures within the state's economic security management system (Sylkin & Kopytko, 2023).

Thus, the literature review confirms the importance and effectiveness of legal system reforms in curbing corruption. Implementing such reforms requires a comprehensive approach and consideration of various factors to achieve optimal results. However, the research issue on the interrelation and possible ways of reforming corruption and the legal system has not been sufficiently studied.

2. Materials and Methods

This study focuses on the interrelation between corruption and the legal system and employs the following methods and approaches:

- *Literature analysis.* A review of scientific articles, books, and other publications on the research topic. This will provide an overview of strategies to prevent corruption in the legal system.

- *Observation and analysis of practices.* Observing the interrelation between corruption and the legal system and analysing practical cases and experience will help identify successful ways to introduce reforms to prevent corruption.
- *Experimental research* is necessary to find possible reforms to combat corruption in the legal system and assess their effectiveness.

A combination of various research methods will give a comprehensive picture of how reforms to curb corruption in the legal system can be implemented.

The experiment was conducted in two stages: a survey among specialists to identify evaluation criteria, followed by a selection of anti-corruption measures based on the outlined criteria and another survey among specialists and civil society representatives to assess these measures' effectiveness.

The study involved 62 representatives of the legal system. In the first stage, they identified the causes of corruption, preventive measures within the legal system, and methods of combating corruption. In the second stage, the identified methods of combating corruption were evaluated according to the developed criteria and presented as a percentage. In the third stage, an additional adequacy check of the proposed methods for combating corruption was conducted using the same methodology.

Based on the survey of lawyers, judges, law enforcement officers, and researchers, criteria were established to assess anti-corruption measures for a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of legal reforms. These criteria include transparency and accountability, the effectiveness of law enforcement, the reduction of corruption incidents, and the sustainability of reforms.

Criterion 1: Transparency and accountability, which includes open access to public information, quality reporting by authorities on resource use and decision-making, and the ability to audit the activities of state institutions.

Criterion 2: Effectiveness of law enforcement, encompassing the number of corruption cases investigated and their outcomes, the independence of the judicial system and anti-corruption bodies, and the enforcement of court rulings in corruption cases.

Criterion 3: Reduction in corruption incidents, highlighting a decrease in the number of reported corruption cases, reduced instances of abuse of office, and a lowered perception of corruption among the public and businesses.

Criterion 4: Sustainability of reforms, which refers to the longevity of anti-corruption initiatives after their implementation, mechanisms for reviewing and improving anti-corruption measures, and the durability of these initiatives.

Based on these criteria, anti-corruption measures were selected. To identify the most effective legal reforms to combat corruption, a survey was conducted among civil society representatives, businesses, and legal experts, who were asked to rate various anti-corruption measures on a scale of 1 to 10. These measures included strengthening legislation and the legal framework, ensuring judicial independence, enhancing anti-corruption culture, promoting professional conduct among law enforcement officials, fostering international cooperation in accountability, implementing monitoring measures, and developing technological solutions.

3. Results and Discussion

The legal system is a complex of laws, institutions, rules, and procedures that determine how society is governed and regulated. It encompasses a set of legal norms and institutions aimed at regulating social relations, ensuring justice, and protecting the rights and freedoms of individuals. It forms the basis of the rule of law and provides a framework for interaction among citizens, organisations, and the state. The model of interrelation between the legal system and corruption and the ways of reforming is presented in Figure 1. The legal system includes the following elements:

- Laws and regulations.
- The judicial system.
- Law enforcement agencies.
- Legal culture and education.
- Legal and civil society organisations.

The legal system ensures stability, justice, and societal development by establishing the game's rules and mechanisms for responding to violations. In turn, the legal system's effectiveness and reliability depend directly on its participants' adherence to the principles of legality, the independence of the judiciary, and accountability before the law.

Corruption is the abuse of power entrusted for personal gain. It can manifest in various forms, including bribery, nepotism, fraud, and obstruction of justice. Corruption and the legal system are intricately related, as corruption can thrive in weak legal systems and further weaken them. Figure 1 illustrates the model of the relationship between the legal system and corruption and potential ways for reforms.

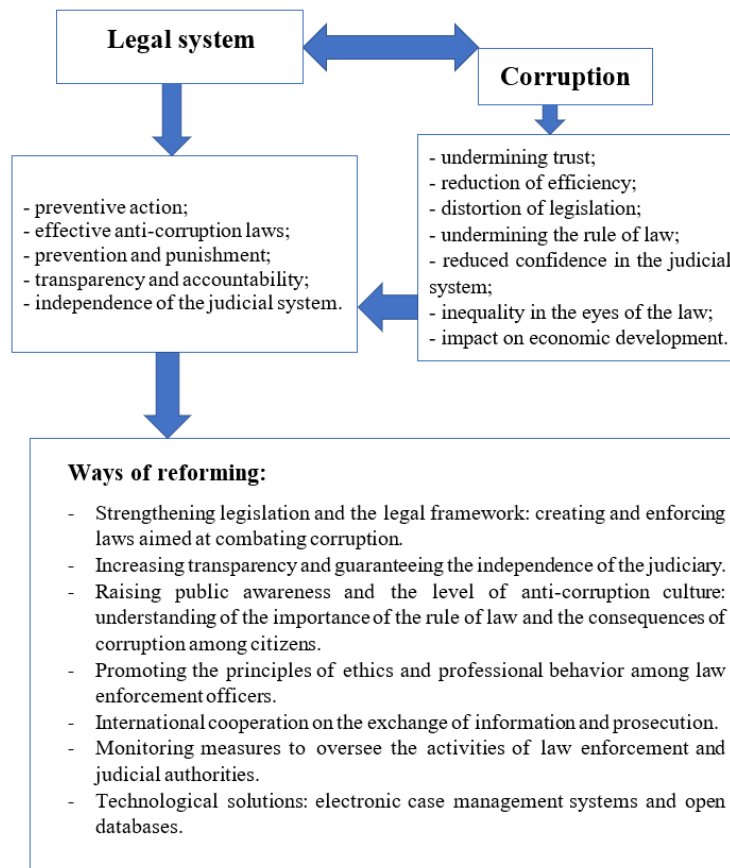


Figure 1 The model of interrelation between the legal system and corruption and the ways of reforming.

Corruption hurts the legal system, undermining public trust in it, reducing the effectiveness of the legal system, and distorting legislation. It undermines the rule of law and diminishes trust in justice due to inequality before the law. When citizens see corruption distorting justice, it diminishes their trust in the legal system and convinces them that justice is not accessible to all. It creates conditions where those with resources can avoid punishment for their actions while the poor and vulnerable suffer from injustice. Corruption undermines public trust in the legal system, weakening government legitimacy and laws' effectiveness.

Corruption in the judicial system and law enforcement agencies leads to unfair trials, delays in the judicial process, and wrongful acquittals. It violates the principle of the rule of law when decisions are made based on bribes or personal connections rather than laws and evidence. This can lead to laws that serve the interests of corrupt individuals rather than society. When judges, prosecutors, or police are involved in corrupt schemes, it undermines society's trust in justice. Citizens may feel that their rights will not be protected and that access to fair trials depends not on the law but on their ability to pay bribes. Corruption in law enforcement agencies can result in unsolved crimes or perpetrators avoiding accountability through bribes or abuse of power. It weakens the rule of law and creates conditions for the spread of criminality. Corruption becoming part of the legal system leads to inequality before the law. People with resources can "buy" their freedom or lighter punishment, while the poor and marginalised face discrimination and injustice. Corruption in the legal system can deter foreign investment and slow economic development.

Corruption and the legal system are closely linked, as corruption undermines the foundations of the rule of law, while an effective legal system is vital to combating corruption. Reducing corruption in law enforcement and judicial bodies directly affects the efficiency, fairness, and accessibility of justice. This connection can manifest in various forms and have numerous consequences for citizens and the state. Measures to influence the legal system's impact on corruption include preventive action, anti-corruption laws, independence of the judicial system, transparency and accountability, preventive methods, and punishment systems.

A strong and independent legal system can be a powerful deterrent to corruption by creating a high probability of detection and punishment. Effective anti-corruption laws and regulations can limit the opportunities for corrupt practices (Melnyk et al., 2022). They can act as a deterrent to corrupt practices by establishing severe penalties and their unavoidable application. Legislation aimed at increasing the transparency of public officials and strengthening accountability mechanisms can significantly reduce opportunities for corruption.

The independence of judges and prosecutors from political and economic influence is critical to curbing corruption. An independent judiciary, free from external influence, is a critical element in the fight against corruption, as it guarantees a fair hearing of cases, including corruption cases.

The correlation between corruption and the legal system is complex and multifaceted. Corruption can seriously undermine confidence in the legal system, weakening its effectiveness and reliability. Drawbacks in law enforcement, including bribery, can lead to violations of citizens' rights, distortions of justice, and general undermining of the rule of law. Countering corruption requires a comprehensive approach, which includes:

- a series of reforms to strengthen legislation and the legal system;
- increased transparency and guarantees of judicial independence;
- awareness and enhancement of anti-corruption culture;
- promotion of ethics and professional conduct among law enforcement officials;
- international cooperation and monitoring measures and technological solutions.

Strengthening the legal framework can include a range of actions to create and enforce anti-corruption laws. This may include laws on asset declarations, conflicts of interest, and political campaign finance. Adopting and improving anti-corruption laws, including laws on asset declarations, conflicts of interest, and political party financing, increasing penalties for corrupt practices, and establishing tough sanctions for violators are practical tools to strengthen the legislation.

One way to increase the transparency of the legal system is to establish an open data system on the budget, procurement of public services, and law enforcement activities to ensure public control and mandatory public discussion and consultation in decision-making on legislation and policies related to law enforcement and judicial proceedings. Strengthening the judicial system's independence can be based on reforms designed to make the courts more independent from political and economic interests and to create mechanisms to protect judges from pressure and threats.

The development of an understanding of the importance of the rule of law and the consequences of corruption among citizens and public officials, as well as the development of an anti-corruption culture, can be based on educational programs about corruption and its implications for citizens, officials and law enforcement agencies and anti-corruption campaigns aimed at raising awareness and public pressure to fight corruption. Another important aspect of countering corruption is promoting ethics and professional behaviour among law enforcement officers and lawyers. An increase in salaries and social security for officials would reduce the motivation to accept bribes (Bondarenko et al., 2022).

Corruption is often cross-border. Therefore, international cooperation in information exchange and prosecution is vital in the fight against it. Participation in global anti-corruption initiatives, exchange of experience with other countries in anti-corruption efforts, and cooperation with international organisations such as the UN and the IMF will positively impact implementing anti-corruption programs and initiatives.

Reforms to strengthen transparency, openness, and accountability may include strict measures to prevent corruption among law enforcement and judicial officials. This includes the introduction of effective monitoring and control mechanisms. Establishing an effective control system over the income and assets of public officials and improving access to justice for all segments of the population, including mechanisms to provide free legal aid for low-income citizens, can help improve trust in the legal system.

Strengthening the independence of courts and prosecutors to ensure objectivity and fairness in the legal process and introducing technological solutions, such as electronic case management systems and open databases, will increase transparency and reduce opportunities for corruption (Kussainov et al., 2023). The involvement of the public and civil society organisations in monitoring and controlling the activities of law enforcement and judicial bodies will increase the effectiveness of law enforcement and reduce corruption, ultimately leading to a more just and stable society (Omelchuk et al., 2022). Such reforms can help strengthen the legal system and reduce corruption in law enforcement and the judiciary. However, active public participation, political will, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of these measures are necessary to achieve accurate results.

Based on the surveys and the collection and processing of statistical data, the study assessed the effectiveness of possible reforms to combat corruption. Figure 2 shows a diagram of the distribution of and assessment of the efficacy of potential reforms to curb corruption.

The research is based on a survey, which involves human participation; therefore, certain ethical considerations were adhered to during its conduct. The results of the study should be objective and transparent, thus excluding bias and the personal influence of particular groups on the outcome. To this end, various groups of specialists participated to eliminate any conflict of interest. Respondents had the right to refuse participation in the survey, ensuring adherence to the principle of voluntary involvement and excluding coercion or manipulation. Furthermore, principles of confidentiality and the protection of respondents' personal data were upheld to prevent any risk of persecution or discrimination.

The research assessing the effectiveness of potential reform paths in combating corruption consisted of three stages that helped systematise and interpret the information obtained about respondents' opinions, beliefs, and behaviour. The first stage involved selecting reform ways to overcome corruption within the context of the legal system and conducting preliminary

surveys. Respondents' answers were coded for ease of analysis. Among legal experts, a survey was conducted regarding the causes of corruption, preventive measures, and reform paths. The survey included 62 representatives from the legal field, including lawyers, law enforcement officers, and academics. During the first block of the survey, the most influential causes of corruption identified were undermining trust, reduced efficiency, distortion of legislation, undermining the rule of law, decreased trust in the judiciary, inequality before the law, and impact on economic development. In the second block of the survey, the most effective reform paths for the legal system were highlighted: preventive action, effective anti-corruption laws, prevention and punishment, transparency and accountability, and independence of the judicial system. The third block of the survey required evaluating the methods of combating corruption on a 100-point scale according to the criteria outlined in the methodology, namely: strengthening legislation and the legal framework: creating and applying laws aimed at combating corruption; enhancing transparency and guaranteeing judicial independence; increasing public awareness and anti-corruption culture: understanding the importance of the rule of law and the consequences of corruption among citizens; promoting ethics and professional conduct among law enforcement officers; international cooperation in information exchange and accountability; monitoring measures for overseeing the activities of law enforcement and judicial bodies; technological solutions: electronic case management systems and open databases. After the first stage, data correction and re-surveys were conducted to ensure the adequacy of the chosen criteria. The third, final stage involved:

- Checking the adequacy of the proposed model.
- Ranking reform paths in the context of the study.
- Selecting the most effective ones.

The most effective reform ways for overcoming corruption in the legal system were identified during the research, with growth observed at each stage. These ways included:

- technological solutions - from 89% to 95%;
- monitoring measures - from 84% to 86%;
- guarantees of independent judicial power - from 88% to 92%;
- strengthening legislation and the legal framework - from 85% to 91%.

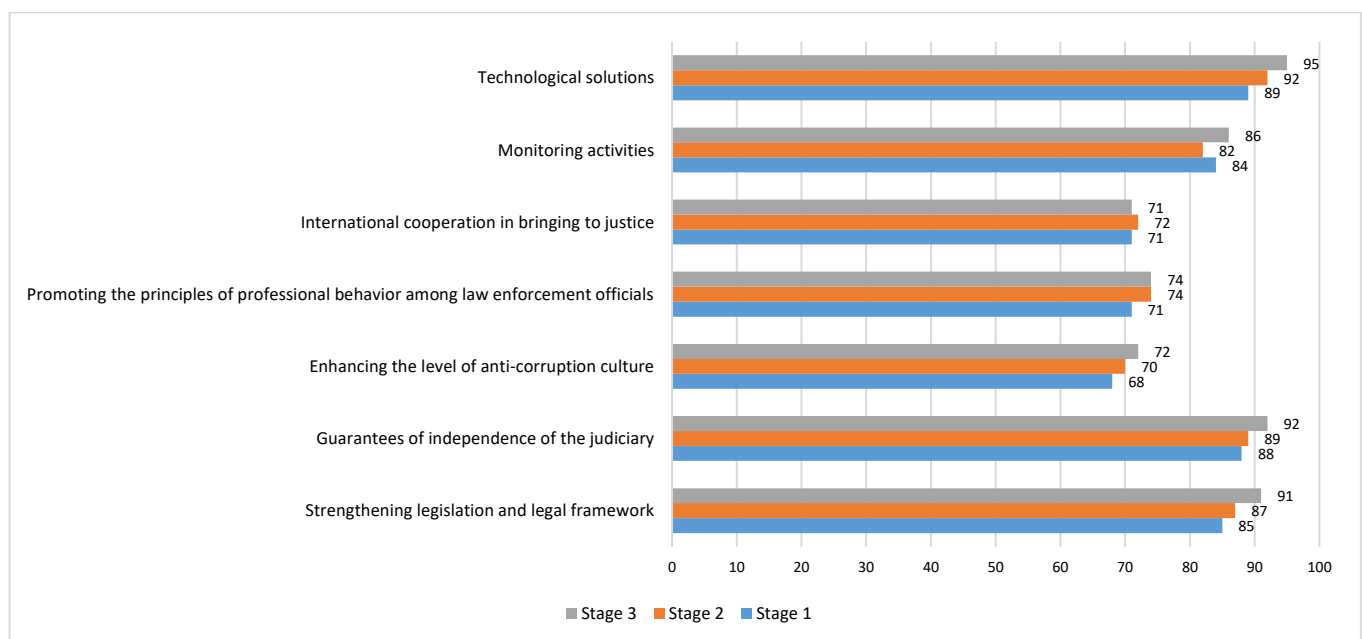


Figure 2 Evaluation of the effectiveness of possible reforms to curb corruption.

Less popularity growth was observed in reforms promoting professional behaviour principles among law enforcement personnel, from 71% to 74%, increasing the level of anti-corruption culture - from 68% to 72%, and international cooperation in holding accountable - remaining at 71%. Each stage of the study aimed to systematise and structure the process of analysing the selection of the most effective paths for reforming the phenomenon of corruption in the legal system and to provide information that could be used for decision-making and formulating further strategies.

The issue of corruption and its impact on the legal system is a subject of broad discussion both in the scientific community and at the political level. The interconnection between corruption and the legal system is often examined from various perspectives and is accompanied by proposals for possible reform paths.

Research dedicated to providing legal protection for criminal witnesses willing to cooperate with law enforcement agencies in investigating corruption crimes highlights the danger of mitigating sentences for law enforcement officers in exchange for their testimony assisting officials. However, these testimonies are used by judges merely as considerations without any binding powers that require judges to show leniency (Asgar et al., 2021). Corruption can negatively affect all aspects of the legal system, ranging from weakening legislation and undermining legal practices to distorting judicial institutions. Corruption can lead to injustice in legal proceedings, hinder access to justice for ordinary citizens, and suppress rights and freedoms. Corruption can slow down the development of the legal system by creating barriers to necessary reforms and the modernisation of legal institutions. In turn, poorly conceived or ineffective legal mechanisms can contribute to the spread of corruption.

Regulatory-legal studies based on a conceptual approach have shown that measures involving financial audits of systems based on decentralising powers to regional auditors are necessary. This accelerates the reporting process on audit results in the fight against corruption to implement the constructivism concept of the legal system (Mondosiyoko et al., 2024). Various reform measures are typically proposed to combat corruption and strengthen the legal system. These include improving anti-corruption legislation, strengthening judicial independence, increasing transparency and openness in the work of law enforcement agencies, and enhancing mechanisms for punishing corruption crimes.

The study outlines the advantages of redundancy across different branches of law (administrative, civil, and criminal) and at the institutional level (among bodies performing monitoring, investigation, prosecution, and judicial functions within the same and different jurisdictions). The researchers formulate a hypothesis regarding the use of anti-corruption strategies; however, this topic warrants further exploration (Prado, 2024). Broad public participation and active civic engagement play a crucial role in the fight against corruption and the reform of the legal system. Public pressure on authorities can contribute to improving legislation, monitoring its implementation, and holding corrupt officials accountable.

The greatest threat of corruption lies in its impact on state institutions—primarily legislative, executive, and judicial bodies. Implementing an EU legal framework in the context of national legislation, considering the characteristics of national legal systems, can yield positive outcomes in the fight against corruption (Mladenov, 2024). Based on a sample of 82 countries from 2006–2014, key anti-corruption policy principles were outlined, as results indicate that more transparent fiscal practices positively affect the perception of corruption. It was found that a strong legal system (characterised by robust rule of law, integrity of the legal system, and impartial and effective courts ensuring law enforcement) enhances the perception of control over corruption (Montes & Paulo, 2021). The problem of corruption and the reform of the legal system is international, and international cooperation plays a vital role in this field. Exchange of experience, technical support, and joint initiatives can contribute to more effective resistance to corruption and support for reforms. Discussing the interconnection between corruption and the legal system and possible reform paths is crucial for ensuring justice, transparency, and legality in society. It requires attention from both governmental and civil structures, as well as active citizen participation in the process of change.

4. Conclusions

Corruption seriously threatens the legal system, undermining its credibility and public trust in justice. Bribery of judges, prosecutors, and other legal system representatives leads to distortion of justice and violation of the rule of law. Various aspects of interrelation between these phenomena and possible ways of reforms are considered. It is necessary to introduce effective control, transparency, and accountability mechanisms to curb corruption in the legal sector. This includes stricter penalties for corruption offences, anti-corruption training programs for law enforcement and judicial officials, and the establishment of independent anti-corruption bodies. Broad public support for the fight against corruption plays a vital role in overcoming it. Public support can be expressed through active participation in anti-corruption initiatives, awareness of their rights and responsibilities, and proper reporting of corruption cases.

An effective response to corruption requires isolating specific corrupt individuals and systemic reforms to strengthen institutional mechanisms and the rule of law. This may include improving law enforcement officers' working conditions and salaries, increasing judicial processes' transparency, and strengthening accountability mechanisms. An essential aspect of fighting corruption in the legal system is international cooperation and exchanging experiences between countries. Successful practices and innovations in this area can be adapted and applied in different contexts to fight corruption more effectively. In general, effectively countering corruption in the legal system requires a comprehensive approach that includes legislative measures and punishment of corrupt individuals, systemic reforms, active participation of society, and international cooperation.

Ethical Considerations

We confirm that we have obtained all consent required by applicable law to publish any personal details of research participants. We agree to provide Multidisciplinary Reviews with copies of the consent or evidence that such consent was obtained if requested.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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