


One third of students have encountered cases of corruption in higher educational institutions

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Education Program

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33 per cent of students of Ukraine's higher educational institutions have encountered cases of corruption in their institutions. Such are the results of a poll, conducted by [Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation](#) and Ukrainian Sociology Service Co. under the support of [the Education Program of the International Renaissance Foundation](#). The results were presented at a press conference called "Corruption in higher educational institutions: why, for what and how much?". The event took place in Kyiv on April 12, 2011.

Presenting the results of the poll, Director of Education Program Georgiy Kasianov noted: "The International Renaissance Foundation has supported a research on corruption as far back as in 2002. Comparing the results (of the two researches), we have to admit the worsening of the situation. Corruption and bribery are becoming a part of the culture of our society."

29 per cent of the respondents heard about cases of corruption from other students. 38 per cent of the polled students have not encountered such cases in their higher educational institutions at all.

Students, who are studying law, encounter such cases most often. 29.3 per cent of the polled students do not have any experience in corruption and 39.1 per cent have such an experience. Educational programs in social sciences and humanities are the least corrupt: 45.6 per cent of the students do not have any experience in corruption in this group of programs, while 25.4 per cent of the respondents have encountered such situations personally.

Corruption is "one of the possible ways for resolving problems" - most students share such a view (35 per cent), while 31 per cent consider corruption a crime and corruption is a norm of modern life for 21 per cent of the students.

Students primarily identify corruption with bribery - 75 per cent of the polled students think so. At the same time, 43 per cent of them consider cases of

extortion as corruption, while corruption for 40 per cent of the polled students is abuse of one's official position for his or her personal benefit. Only 14 per cent of the students consider presenting gifts as corruption.

In general, 32 per cent of all students responded that they used to present gifts to teachers and lecturers, 27 per cent provided them with various services, 24 per cent paid them money for giving good grades and 21 per cent of the polled students bought essay papers, term papers and graduate theses. Only 34 per cent of the students were not involved in corrupt activities. The main reason for getting involved into different types of corrupt practices is students' strive to receive a necessary grade: 52 per cent of the polled students mentioned this as a reason. A lot less students noted a teacher's pressure as a reason – 15 per cent.

Taking pass-fail examinations and examinations is the period when most situations involving corruption take place. Such is the opinion of 75 per cent of the polled students. In general, 36 per cent said they paid money for passing examinations. The average amount of a bribe amounts to 376 UAH. Among those who paid money for getting necessary grades for examinations, 16 per cent of the respondents paid 100 UAH, 26 per cent – from 100 to 200 UAH, 38 per cent – from 200 to 400 UAH, 15 per cent – from 400 to 1,000 UAH and 4 per cent of the polled students paid more than 1,000 UAH.

Students primarily find out about possibilities for 'buying a grade' from students of senior years (52 per cent), another 36 per cent – from their fellow students, 29 per cent – from teachers and lecturers, 28 per cent – from the leader of their student group and 14 per cent – from educational supervisors and laboratory assistants.

Students consider that the main reason for occurrence of cases of corruption in higher educational institutions is students' laziness and their absence of desire to study (46 per cent). 37 per cent of the students noted that the value of the higher education has declined ("students need only a diploma") and 23.8 per cent of the respondents think that students, who also have employment, do not have enough time for studying. Consequently, while determining the reasons that induce the students to engage into 'buying of grades', most respondents stated their own desire (61.7 per cent), motivated by that "it is easier to pay than to learn something".

Only 44 per cent of the respondents think that one should combat corruption and only 5 per cent are ready to do this personally. At the same time, 36 per cent of the polled students do not consider that fighting corruption is necessary: 24 per cent think that it is impossible to fight it and 13 per cent consider that one should not combat corruption since it is a natural occurrence.

Only 10 per cent of students have personal experience in fighting corruption. Most of them think that this is a matter for law-enforcement bodies to deal with (58 per cent). The following entities were also named as such that can fight corruption: bodies of student self-governance (33 per cent), student trade unions (18 per cent), youth non-governmental organizations (13 per cent).

The following measures for combating corruption are considered by students as the most effective ones: telephone hot line (35 per cent); cooperation with law-enforcement bodies (29 per cent); explaining the students their rights and mechanisms they can use to protect themselves from corruption (27 per cent).

The nationwide poll of the students was conducted from 23 March till 3 April 2011. In total, 1,008 students were polled according to a sample that is representative for the total student community per location of higher educational institutions, their form of ownership and years of studying. The error of the sample does not exceed 3.2 per cent.

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The goal of the Education program is to contribute to systemic changes in Ukraine's educational sphere, with these changes to be directed on bringing it closer to the best European practices, raising the quality of the education and its transformation into means for shaping of civil society.