

Jolanta Aleknevičienė*

The General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania

Lithuania's "Fight" against Corruption: why can't We See Any Progress?

The purpose of this article is to discuss and analyze the efforts being made to reduce corruption in Lithuania in the framework of a social constructionism tradition. Under examination are the European Union's anti-corruption interests, the emergence of corruption in Lithuania, corruption objectivisation elements and anti-corruption practices in Lithuania. It is claimed that Lithuania's efforts to reduce corruption can be likened to an anti-corruption industry. The article's findings state that expressions of this anti-corruption industry serve to increase the visibility of corruption in Lithuanian society; international corruption research in Lithuania is afforded undeserved prominence, and the "reality" it purports to describe as well as the resulting anti-corruption initiatives are created ignoring national particularities; assessment of the effectiveness of anti-corruption initiatives requires more time; the negative information concerning efforts to reduce corruption strongly overwhelms the positive information released. All these listed factors determine that any progress in the field of corruption reduction in Lithuania often goes by unnoticed.

Introduction

Although the "fight"¹ launched against corruption worldwide has been going on for almost three decades, somewhat less in Lithuania, the results, and especially those that are stressed in the public space, are similar – the problem of corruption is not getting any smaller and continues to raise ever new international and national threats.

The participants in this "fight" are actors harbouring different interests

*Dr. Jolanta Aleknevičienė – Senior Research Fellow at the Strategic Research Centre of the General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania. Address for correspondence: Šilo 5a., LT-10322 Vilnius, Lithuania; tel. +370- 5-2103571, e-mail – jolanta.aleknevičienė@gmail.com

¹ The term "fight" in the context of corruption issues or the word combination "fight against corruption" are used rather often in various Lithuanian, and EU, legal documents, programs, etc. In the article author's view, using the term "fight" in the corruption context only denotes a strict tone, but fails to convey the content of the activities being undertaken, which is why "fight against corruption" or simply "fight" are written in this article in quotation marks and are to be understood as a metaphor describing anti-corruption activities. As the formulation and application of qualifiers in the constructionism tradition comprises an important aspect of this analysis, the word "fight" and word combination "fight against corruption" remain in this article.

with always new measures: country governments enforce stricter punishments and obligate anti-corruption agencies to engage in a more active “fight” against this phenomenon, the European Union (EU) boosts its monitoring of efforts made in the “fight against corruption”, the World Bank intends to harness the latest technologies, the international transparency organization Transparency International seeks to harness every member of society, the International Anti-corruption Academy hopes to bring science into play.

In 2012 the leader of the 15th Government of Lithuania, participating in an event to mark International Anti-corruption Day announced that “the fight against corruption should start at home and at school”.² That same year the Lithuanian Students’ Union and the Special Investigation Service (SIS) of the Republic of Lithuania invited school students to participate in a poetry competition titled “Lithuania without corruption”. Thus, in both the international and national public discourse we hear that just about everyone is participating in this “fight” using a variety of measures. However, why then is the threat of corruption not growing any smaller and why do we not notice any improvements in the reduction of corruption in Lithuania?

An analysis of these questions demands a critical approach be taken to the corruption phenomenon. Before expanding on it, it is worth mentioning that traditional interpretations of the corruption phenomenon and analytical approaches (moral, functionalist and political economic), as well as the resolution methods created and applied based on these approaches, are ineffective. This article aims to take a critical approach to corruption. The social constructionism tradition³ that shall be applied in this context reveals rarely accentuated or even new aspects of this phenomenon. It should be noted that a fragmented critical approach in studies of the corruption phenomenon have been made by Frank Anechiaric, Peter Brats, Alan Doig, Aleksandras Dobryninas, Angelos Giannakopoulos, Mark Granovetter, James B. Jacobs, Christopher Kayes, Stephen Kotkin, Ivan Krastev, Konstadinos Maras, Heather Marquette, Bryan Michael, Quentin Reed, Andras Sajo, Dirk Tanzler and others.

According to the social constructionism tradition, where the reality of

² Lithuanian Government, *Premjeras: kovą su korupcija turėtume pradėti nuo šeimos ir mokyklos* [Prime Minister: the fight against corruption should begin in the family and at school], <http://www.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/aktualijos/?nid=11498>, 2012 11 21.

³ Please note that some authors stress the divide between social constructionism and social constructivism. The author of this article agrees with George Hruby, who asks that these two concepts not be confused with one another and states that social constructionism is associated with the description of sociological knowledge whereas social constructivism refers to the psychological equivalent. Hruby G., “Sociological, postmodern, and new realism perspectives in social constructionism: Implications for literacy research”, *Reading Research Quarterly*, 36, 2001, p. 48–62.

society and separate individuals is an expression of their and related groups' social interaction, the potentials for examining and explaining social problems, among them, corruption, are expanded. Within the framework of this tradition, special attention is drawn to groups and/or institutions that hold power within society, i.e., those that can influence people's opinions and the concepts of social problems. The theoretical model used in this article encompasses sociology of knowledge and critical criminology theory perspectives.⁴

By applying the theoretical research instruments suggested by critical criminologist Richard Quinney and sociology of knowledge representatives Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, we can take a broader view over the potentials for the analysis and explanation of the corruption phenomenon.

Berger and Luckmann developed the phenomenological sociology principle where reality is said to be socially constructed. The basis of social reality construction is institutionalization. Berger and Luckmann speak about reality not in the material objective sense, but about certain pieces of knowledge about the social world as a whole. The authors themselves raise the question "In what way do subjective meanings become objective facts?"⁵ The answer can be found by analyzing society as an objective and a subjective reality along with its dialectical processes. Society, according to the authors, is understood as a dialectical process comprising of three stages: externalization, objectivation and internalization.

Quinney's social reality of crime theory⁶ begins from the precondition that crime does not depend on the nature of innate behaviour. Crime is more likely to be a particular definition of human behaviour that is created and enforced by the empowered political agents (the police, the courts, correctional institutions) in a politically organized society. Crime is an artificial construct, created by those segments of society that wield power in order to satisfy their own interests. Individuals become criminals when others define their behaviour as criminal.

Thus, application of the treatment of the construction of the corruption problem as suggested by Berger and Luckmann, i.e., looking at the internalization (origins of the corruption concept, raising the corruption issue),

⁴ This theoretical model is widely described and presented in the doctoral dissertation of this article's author, J. Piliponytė, "Korupcijos konstravimas: pokomunistinių šalių praktika" [The construction of corruption in post-Communist countries], Vilnius, 2006.

⁵ Berger P., Luckmann T., *Socialinės tikrovės konstravimas. Žinojimo sociologijos traktatas* [The social construction of reality: a treatise in the sociology of knowledge], Vilnius: Pradai, 1999, p. 31.

⁶ Quinney R., *The Social Reality of Crime* (Second edition), New Brunswick (U.S.A.) and London (U.K.): Transaction Publishers, 2004.

objectivization (when during the intersubjective interaction process the problem is “objectivized” and becomes an expression of definitions, diagnostic instruments and research reports) and externalization (when this kind of surrounding “criminal” reality is absorbed and becomes a part of practices meant to combat the problem – anti-corruption strategies, programs, training) aspects, along with Quinney’s social reality of crime construction model, which accentuates institutional powers and interests, allows us to examine the Lithuanian case.

In the first part of the article the EU’s anti-corruption interests are examined. The second part presents an analysis of the appearance and explanation of the corruption problem in Lithuania. In the third, the objectivization of corruption is discussed: definitions and diagnostic instruments. While in the fourth part the focus is on the externalization of corruption: anti-corruption practices in Lithuania. Essential insights are presented in the conclusion.

1. Lithuania in the Context of the European Union’s Anti-Corruption Interests

Lithuania, much like the other Central and East European post-Communist countries following the collapse of Communism, sought to enter global economic and security organizations such as the EU and NATO and in doing so had to implement integration conditions and requirements. The anti-corruption criteria were among the most important as part of the process of joining the EU. Western organizations such as the EU and NATO „could find they have serious problems, including security – related ones, if they admit countries in which there is widespread corruption and little respect for the rule of law“.⁷ International inter-state and international non-government organizations played a primary role in drawing attention to the corruption problem in Central and Eastern Europe’s post-Communist countries, Lithuania among them. Compared to other international organizations such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the European Council, the EU contributed most raising the topic of corruption in Central and Eastern Europe’s post-

⁷Holmes L., “Corruption and the Crisis of the Post-Communist State”, *Crime, Law & Change* 27, 1997, p. 287.

Communist countries.⁸ This is why most attention shall focus on the analysis of the anti-corruption practices of the European Union's institutions.

The efforts made to criminalize corruption, and to give it criminal justice referents, allow us to look at the corruption phenomenon taking Quinney's suggested constructionist approach.⁹ That is why Quinney's social reality of crime construction model structure shall be applied as part of the analysis. Most attention shall be drawn to the formulation and application of definitions of the corruption phenomenon as well as the examination of institutional powers and interests.

The EU embarked on its anti-corruption campaign relatively late compared to other international organizations. However, being one of the main concerns of the EU in candidate countries, including Lithuania, corruption was mentioned in all of the European Commission's (henceforth – the EC) Regular Reports from 1997 onwards. The 2001 strategy paper stressed that corruption remained a serious problem (if not a potential barrier) to accession into the EU.¹⁰

The EU's concern over corruption was marked as corruption was widely acknowledged to be a major problem in post-Communist countries.¹¹ In addition, a majority of political scientists were in agreement that corruption weakened democracy, and keeping in mind the distortive effect of corruption on markets and the EU's primary goal of creating a common market, the corruption issue became a necessary condition for entry into the EU.¹² It should also be noted that the scale of corruption in many countries could interfere with the implementation of *acquis communautaire* and impede the quality of democratic institutions.

An Open Society Institute report claims that the EC's concerns over corruption in Lithuania were very important in developing Lithuania's anti-corruption policy. The EC granted a great deal of assistance in creating this

⁸ Grigorescu A., "The Corruption Eruption in East-Central Europe: The Increased Salience of Corruption and the Role of Intergovernmental Organizations", *East European Politics and Societies*, Vol. 20., No. 3., 2006, p. 516-549.

⁹ The paper by A. Dobryninas and L. Žilinskienė "Socialinis korupcijos konstravimas: viešojo diskurso atvejus" [The social construction of corruption: the public discourse case] presented at the National Conference of Lithuanian Sociologists "Ar gali sociologija pakeisti Lietuvos visuomenę" [Can sociology change Lithuania's society], 2010 11 26.

¹⁰ European Commission, *Making a success of enlargement: Strategy Paper and Report of the European Commission on the progress towards Accession by each of the candidate countries*, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/2001/strategy_en.pdf, 2012 11 20.

¹¹ World Bank, *Anticorruption in Transition. A contribution to the policy debate*, Washington DC: World Bank, 2000, xv-xviii.

¹² Open Society Institute, *Stojimo į ES stebėsenos procesas: korupcija ir antikorupcinė politika* [Monitoring the EU accession process. Corruption and Anticorruption Policy], Budapest: Open Society Institute, 2002. p. 16.

anti-corruption policy, especially regarding the creation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy.¹³ Thus Lithuania was quite prominent in the EU's sphere of anti-corruption interests. That is why it is important to discuss the EU's anti-corruption practices in order to understand and explain Lithuania's corruption problems and the origins of its anti-corruption activities.

The EU's first anti-corruption instruments appeared almost 20 years ago:¹⁴ (1) the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests (1995); (2) the Protocol to the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests (1996); (3) the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union (1997); (4) the Second Protocol to the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests (1997) where the concepts of active and passive corruption are mentioned for the first time; (5) the European Council and EU joint programs OCTOPUS I and OCTOPUS II that advised candidate countries what measures should be taken to fight against organized crime and corruption; (6) the establishment of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) in 1999 whose mission was to protect the EU's interests, fight against fraud, corruption and other illegal activities, including illegal activities amongst European institutions; (7) a joint agreement was reached: the European Council, European Commission, European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee prepared a paper on cooperation in EU policies in the fight against corruption (2003).

It is obvious that the earlier EU anti-corruption efforts were related to safeguarding financial and political interests in the candidate countries. Most attention was given to the creation and implementation of criminal anti-corruption laws. The EC's recommendations to candidate countries were usually aimed at the control paradigm. In its anti-corruption practices, the EU gives priority to the creation of anti-corruption rules and procedures. Greatest attention focused on bribery, which in itself points to a relatively narrow definition of and field in the corruption problem as a whole in the early period. Similarly noteworthy is the fact that the corruption problem was usually attributed only to the state sector.

Later (from 2004) the EU's anti-corruption practices changed somewhat –

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 78.

¹⁴ The EC based its anti-corruption policy on the OECD's Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions, the UN's Convention Against Corruption, and cooperated with GRECO, the group of states fighting against corruption that was created by the European Council.

corruption was understood in a wider context, the concept of political corruption was introduced, corruption in the private sector was highlighted, special attention was drawn to transparency in allocation of EU funds and assistance, in addition, transparency started being stressed as a common value.

In the latest EU anti-corruption stage, now over ten years since anti-corruption initiatives began, the EC notes that corruption is one of the most serious crimes on the inter-state plane and is associated with other serious crimes such as illicit drug trading and human-trafficking. That is why, approving the Stockholm program¹⁵ in 2009, the European Leaders' Council granted the EC a political mandate to measure the effectiveness of the fight against corruption, and, cooperating with GRECO, to form a comprehensive EU anti-corruption policy. In the Stockholm program, corruption is understood in the economic crime context. Corruption in the private sector and the fight against corruption in *acquis* spheres, such as public procurement, financial control, etc., are of greatest attention.

Based on the findings of the Stockholm program and other documents related to the fight against corruption,¹⁶ in 2011 the EC released a document, *Fighting Corruption in the EU*.¹⁷ The need for such a document at all was based on the harm corruption causes to all EU Member states. The economic interest is stressed as a priority: "It inflicts financial damage by lowering investment levels, hampering the fair operation of the internal market and reducing public finances".¹⁸ It is stressed that existing mechanisms for monitoring and assessing the fight against corruption are insufficient and that the legal systems in place to fight against corruption are applied unequally in EU Member states, and unsatisfactorily in general. Therefore EU anti-corruption reports shall aim¹⁹ to give Member states an additional impulse to effectively fight against corruption, first of all by accepting and applying international standards for

¹⁵ European Council, *The Stockholm programme – an open and secure Europe serving and protecting citizens*, *Official journal of the European Union*, 2010/C.

¹⁶ *The EU Internal Security Strategy in Action: Five steps towards a more secure Europe*, 2010. *Written Declaration No 2/2010 of the European Parliament on the Union's efforts in combating corruption*, 2010. *European Council Resolution 6902/05 on a comprehensive EU policy against corruption*, 2005. *The European Parliament Resolution on the Commission Communication on a comprehensive EU policy against Corruption*, 2003.

¹⁷ European Commission, *Fighting Corruption in the EU*, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/news/intro/docs/110606/308/1_en_act_part1_v121.pdf, 2012 11 02.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 3

¹⁹ European Commission, *Establishing an EU Anti-corruption reporting mechanism for periodic assessment ("EU Anti-corruption Report")*, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/pdf/com_decision_2011_3673_final_en.pdf, 2012 11 02.

the fight against corruption <...>.²⁰ The Commission also urges EU Member states to ensure that all the related legal measures be transferred into its jurisdiction and, most importantly, that these measures continue to be monitored and implemented <...>. Finally, the EC notes that it is necessary to take action throughout the entire EU and that the political will in all EU Member states be strengthened in fighting against corruption.²¹

So, it appears that Lithuania's anti-corruption policy is to a large degree determined by the EU's anti-corruption practices and its specific anti-corruption actions. The EU's anti-corruption practices are not systemic, consistent or comparative (comparison is possible only between candidate countries over a certain period). The EU's competency in the anti-corruption sphere is concentrated mostly on protecting the EU's financial interests, whereas Member states (especially the older states) are not at all interested in the EC acquiring greater competency in the anti-corruption sphere.²² From a constructionist approach, the fact that of late the EU is striving towards assessment of the efforts in the "fight" against corruption in all EU countries, not only in the new Member states, could in effect significantly change discussions on corruption both in Lithuania and in the whole EU. These discussions could be combined with the acceptance and application of international-scale anti-corruption standards in all EU states, as urged by the EU.

2. The Emergence of Corruption

In Lithuania, the "fight" against corruption began almost two decades ago: the Fight Against Organized Crime Department was established in 1993, the title of which was changed after two months to the Organized Crime and Corruption Research Department, while in 1996 the Government of the Republic of Lithuania passed a resolution outlining a plan of anti-corruption measures.²³ In 1997 the Special Investigation Service (SIS) under the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania was founded, whose mission was to reduce the impact of corruption in the state. The SIS became an independent

²⁰ Lithuania has still not ratified the OECD's Convention on Combating Bribery. The EC insists that Member states that have still not ratified these measures do so immediately.

²¹ European Commission, (note 14).

²² The Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania, *Korupcijos prevencijos įstatymo poveikio vertinimo galutinė ataskaita* [Final report on the assessment of the effect of the Law on Corruption Prevention], 2011, p. 17.

²³ Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės nutarimas Nr. 356 „Dėl priemonių nusikaltimų, susijusių su korupcija, kontrolei ir prevencijai gerinti“. Žin., 1996, Nr. 27-660.

institution in 2000 and its scope of functions was expanded – it was charged with organizing and implementing corruption prevention measures. A branch of the international non-government transparency organization Transparency International was established in Lithuania in 2000.

Fifteen years ago, there was still relatively little being said about corruption problems in Lithuania. In the country's strategic documents corruption was mentioned only in the context of economic and organized crime.²⁴ None of the influential political parties of the time dedicated any special attention to the “fight” against corruption, i.e., “the fight against corruption was not considered a priority task upon entering government”.²⁵ According to corruption researcher Dobryninas, political parties did not take a systemic approach to corruption and lacked a specific anti-corruption strategy.²⁶ You could say that until 2000, corruption did not figure as a special issue that saw fit to be included in Lithuania's political task schedule. However Lithuania's aspirations to become a member of the European Union and NATO, and the economic interests of these as well as other international organizations, such as the World Bank, changed this situation.

As negotiations with the EU gained ground, so too did the number of initiatives and measures designed for the “fight” against corruption increase. The effect of the process of entering the EU on the appearance of anti-corruption instruments and measures, as well as the active discussion of corruption in Lithuania, was obvious. Corruption as an obligation to entering into a partnership with the EU was mentioned in 1999, 2000 and in 2001. For example, in 2001 an EU commission obligated Lithuania to undertake and implement an anti-corruption strategy, pass the Law on the Prevention of Corruption and introduce a state public servants ethical code, and ratify the appropriate international conventions. The EC also offered support in forming Lithuania's anti-corruption policy and contributed to the National Anti-Corruption Program and its constituent parts – a strategy and implementation plan. In 2002 Lithuania received assistance for the creation of financial and human resources intended for the implementation of anti-corruption activities from the Euro-

²⁴ Lietuvos Vyriausybė, “Organizuoto nusikalstamumo ir korupcijos prevencijos programa”, <http://tar.tic.lt/Default.aspx?id=2&item=results&aktoid=6812F764-BCD3-4113-A7CA-03D742ACB6E0>, 2012 11 23.

²⁵ Transparency International Lithuanian Chapter, *Ar Lietuva nori politinio skaidrumo? Įtakingiausių Lietuvos politinių partijų antikorpucinių rinkiminių programinių nuostatų ir Lietuvos gyventojų nuomonės apie korupciją apžvalga* [Does Lithuania want political transparency?], Vilnius. 2001, p. 14.

²⁶ BNS, *Korupcijai skiriama per mažai dėmesio* [Corruption receives too little attention], January 22, 2001 <http://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/korupcijai-skiriama-per-mazai-demesio.d?id=174441#ixzz2HHiwrD13>, 2012 11 19.

pean Council, the European Commission, the OECD, the World Bank and other international institutions.

The above-mentioned factors to a large degree determined that the topic of corruption was made relevant in Lithuania's political task schedule. For example, in 2001 the Prime Minister released an instruction whereby every draft of legal norms regulating economic relations be put before government deliberation only after the comments and recommendations of the adviser on corruption and customs issues were included.²⁷

Other expressions of the actualization of the problem of corruption can be found in various national documents – in laws, resolutions, strategies, Government programs,²⁸ as well as in research. It is important to note that the actualization of corruption as a problem and threat has not ceased, rather it is constantly in action at different levels and takes different forms. Corruption and its control occupy one of the most important positions amid other social problems in Lithuania's political task schedule to this day.

3. The Objectivization of Corruption

One of the main objectivization elements of the corruption phenomenon is the *definition* of corruption. According to Quinney, the definition of crime and its broader concept are very important elements in the crime construction process. Definitions of corruption reflect the essential directions of anti-corruption policy, as well as the interests of the actors participating in the origins of the definition.

In Latin the word *corruptio* means defacement, putrescence and bribery. It was long before a specific corruption definition was reached in Lithuania. There have been numerous single attempts at defining corruption. In the 1997 Law on the Special Investigation Service of the Republic of Lithuania²⁹ corruption is understood as corrupt infringements taking place whilst in state service. The full description of corruption is rather broad and lengthy and difficult to understand without additional explanatory documentation. The Organized Crime and Corruption Program of 1999 notes, that corruption is associated with professional misconduct and organized crime. Organized crime

²⁷ Open Society Institute, (note 7) p. 91.

²⁸ For example, in the LR Government Program for 2006–2008, corruption control was identified as a priority.

²⁹ LR Seimas, *Specialiuju tyrimu tarnybos įstatymas*, http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=302323&p_query=&p_tr2=, 2012 12 01.

and corruption are rather obviously contrasted in this program, which points at the inter-relation of these crimes (problems).³⁰ In various Lithuanian legal documents³¹ it was only separate corruption-like criminal activities that were defined. The lack of a succinct definition of corruption in Lithuania is a problem that has been stressed on many occasions.³² In the National Anti-Corruption Program of 2002 a corruption conception was not presented but there were recommendations to prepare a precise, legal definition of corruption that would encompass the private sector as well. This recommendation was later actively supported by the non-government transparency organization Transparency International Lithuanian Chapter and urged by the European Council, though it has not been implemented to this day. Attempts have been made: in the LR Government Program for 2006–2008 it was noted that it is very important “to put a stop to corruption in government institutions, to dishonest competition in business, and to improve public procurement practices, to enforce stricter punishment of corrupt officials and boost financial crime prevention”.³³ Corruption in this document is understood in the wider context – existing in the state and in the business sector. The 15th Government distinguished corruption as a priority in its program, where the problem of corruption is used in the context of good state management and economic development.

In the latest Lithuanian National Anti-Corruption Program for 2011–2014, the corruption concept continues to focus on state service and the individuals employed therein, where those coming under the corruption definition are described in detail.

In the National Security Strategies (for 2002, 2005 and 2012) corruption is understood as a threat, a danger and a challenge. In the earlier strategies, it was noted that corruption control and reduction are important to meet the state’s political and economic interests, whereas in the last strategy civilians’ interests are also mentioned.

In the Lithuanian President’s annual announcements (2010–2012) corruption has been called a disturbance, a malaise and a frenzy. Only separate forms of corruption were mentioned: bribery, misfeasance and corrupt activities (2011).

³⁰ LR Government, (note 22).

³¹ LR Seimas, *Korupcijos prevencijos įstatymas*, http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=436086, 2013 01 02.

³² LR užsienio reikalų ministerija, LR Valstybės saugumo departamentas, *Korupcinės situacijos Lietuvoje preliminarinis įvertinimas bei kovos su korupcija strategijos metmenų parengimas*, Vilnius, 1999, p.4.

³³ Keturioliktosios LR Vyriausybės 2006-2008 metų programa, <http://www.lrv.lt/bylos/vyriausybes/14-vyr-dok/14-programa.pdf>, 2012 11 14.

Ever since its founding in 2000, the publicly active non-government organization Transparency International Lithuanian Chapter has used probably the broadest definition of corruption in Lithuania: abuse of public powers in seeking personal gains. The crux of this definition is public interest. This definition of the corruption phenomenon encompasses all sectors: state, business and non-government.

The SIS currently denotes the following priorities in its activities – prevention of corrupt activities related to public procurement conducted from state and municipality budgets and EU funds; prevention of corrupt activities related to administrative supervision and control, especially in the fields of construction and environmental protection. These priorities are important so as to understand Lithuania's efforts in reducing corruption.

So it appears that the first anti-corruption measures in Lithuania were created and implemented without even having a clear definition of corruption. Up until now, corruption has been and is defined in a rather narrow context in Lithuania's legal documents. The problem of corruption is related to the state sector and individuals employed in state service jobs. Corruption in business does not have a suitable definition to this day which would make it possible to criminalize corruption in Lithuania's private sector. According to experts, problems lie in the quite unclear concept of who is a public servant or an individual comparable to a public servant.³⁴ However, it should be noted that in recent years the procedural recognition of the corruption problem has become broader in scope. Corruption is being mentioned more and more often in economic and social contexts, whilst the leitmotif of corruption as a threat is being used not just in security policy, but in a wider context as well.

During examination of another element of the objectivization of corruption – corruption *diagnostics* – it should be noted that introduction of the corruption situation in Lithuania has relied on information gained from research conducted by international organizations such as Transparency International, the World Bank, and the European Commission's Eurobarometer, Freedom House reports, as well as national corruption studies, many of which have been carried out by Transparency International Lithuanian Chapter and the Special Investigation Service (SIS). As corruption has been constructed as a measurable phenomenon, corruption research instruments and results have served as a kind of proof for this phenomenon and may be analyzed as part of its objectivization. There are various ways of conducting corruption diagnos-

³⁴Zaksaitė S., "Korupcijos privačiame sektoriuje kriminalizavimo problemos" [Private sector corruption criminalization problems], *Verslo ir teisės aktualijos*, 2012, 7 (2), p. 333-350.

tics. In probably the broadest sense, corruption research can include research on the understanding of corruption and of personal experiences, the monitoring of public spending and criminal statistics.³⁵ It is research on the understanding of corruption and of personal experiences that is conducted most often in Lithuania, where different social groups are surveyed: public servants, business representatives, and representatives of society at large or of specific sectors (medical, pharmaceutical, forestry, media, EU funding, etc.).

When discussing national corruption research, one of the earliest representative public surveys on bribery should be mentioned. It was conducted in 1999.³⁶ Four percent of the Lithuanian population admitted that they often offered a bribe to a public servant, and 73 percent claimed that they have never offered a bribe. Only bribery in the public service context was studied. These indicators had already markedly grown only 2–3 years later, which should be assessed in the context of not only a worsening situation, but also in the context of the growing momentum of the anti-corruption industry.³⁷ Over the last twelve years, over 30 studies of the understanding of corruption and of people's experiences have been conducted in Lithuania, that have been based on representative surveys of the Lithuanian population or of separate professional or social groups.³⁸

One of the largest and most well-known national corruption research studies, the Lithuanian Map of Corruption (LMC), has been conducted since 2001.³⁹ In the period from 2001 – 2011, a total of seven corruption map research studies have been performed. The basis of the Map of Corruption comprises of national sociological surveys and expert assessments. This research aims to determine the attitudes of various social groups towards the spreading ins-

³⁵ Holmes L., *Rotten States?: Corruption, Postcommunism, And Neoliberalism*. Duke University Press, 2006, p. 1-16.

³⁶ The survey was conducted by the public opinion and market research centre "Vilmorus".

³⁷ The anti-corruption industry is characterized by the overstated prominence given to the problem of corruption in political task schedules: numerous international initiatives, a great deal of attention given to corruption in government programs, strong civil society involvement in resolving the problem and the large resources these initiatives attract. The institutionalization of this industry in the political arena takes place through the activities of anti-corruption organizations, conferences, conventions, while also utilizing the academic discourse, diagnostic instruments, progress reports, etc. As a result, standardized products are produced: knowledge, measurement tools, various activities.

³⁸ A majority of the corruption research was conducted by the Transparency International Lithuanian Chapter. The research may be found on their website: http://www.transparency.lt/new/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogsection&id=2&Itemid=9 and SIS - <http://www.stt.lt/lt/menu/sociologiniai-tyrimai/>

³⁹ The methodology for this complex sociological corruption research was created by scientists from Vilnius University: Prof. Aleksandras Dobryninas, Dr. Laimutė Žilinskienė and Dr. Rasa Ališauskienė. It is described in their book *Lietuvos korupcijos žemėlapis 2001-2004, 2005* [Lithuanian Map of Corruption], Vilnius: Eugrimas.

titutional and geographical corruption in Lithuania, looks at their experiences in dealing with cases of corruption, and seeks to assess the anti-corruption potential of Lithuanian society. From 2008 not only the Lithuanian population and business leaders have participated in these sociological surveys, but also state and municipality public servants. The analysis of results from the first six mentioned research studies revealed that Lithuania's corruption map was barely changing. Although the anti-corruption potential was strengthening gradually, people's attitudes and experiences point at a persistent tolerance of corruption.⁴⁰ Yet the seventh LMC from 2011 revealed more positive trends than in earlier years:

- Compared to results of research conducted in 2001 and later, 2011 has the largest number of people claiming that the scale of corruption was smaller.
- There was a consistent decline (albeit minimal) in the number of Lithuanian citizens and business people who had offered bribes.
- In practically all of the state institutions where Lithuanian citizens have had to deal with public servants relatively frequently (no less than 100 respondents), bribe extortion and bribe offering indexes for specific institutions have fallen compared to 2008.
- From 2004 there have been more respondents who have claimed not to have offered a bribe because it goes against their beliefs.
- The number of business people wanting to participate in anti-corruption activities has increased. From the Lithuanian population, the number of active participants in anti-corruption activities has remained practically the same.⁴¹

Lithuania's National Integrity System Assessment was performed in 2011 following Transparency International methodology, the aim of which was to assess the level of immunity to corruption of Lithuania's state institutions, the private and non-government sectors. In the study, the period 2009–2011 was researched. The research was performed by 15 researchers and a group of assistants headed by the Institute of Law. The research conclusions revealed that Lithuania's National Integrity System was working rather well.⁴²

⁴⁰ Aleknevičienė J., "Kaip keičiasi Lietuvos korupcijos žemėlapis?" [How is Lithuania's Map of Corruption changing?] see Muravjov S., compiler, *Korupcijos mįslės*, Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2009, p. 29.

⁴¹ LR Specialiųjų tyrimų tarnyba, *Lietuvos korupcijos žemėlapis 2011*, http://www.stt.lt/documents/soc_tyrimai/Korupcijos_zemelapis.pdf, 2012 11 08.

⁴² Transparency International Lithuanian Chapter, *Lietuvos nacionalinės atsparumo korupcijai sistemos tyrimas*, http://www.transparency.lt/new/images/lietuvos_nacionalines_atsparumo_korupcijai_sistemos_tyrimas.pdf, 2012 12 01.

Regardless of the small, albeit positive, trends that have been found to exist during some of the largest corruption research studies in Lithuania, there were still contradictory assessments of the situation in the public space, for example, at the same time the results were revealed the Lithuanian president claimed that corruption in Lithuania was starting to paralyze the state's development.⁴³

One of the most well-known studies of the understanding of corruption in the world is the Transparency International Perceptions of Corruption Index (henceforth, the CPI), that is determined based on surveys of business representatives and other expert research studies. The results of this and other bodies of research are understood as an illustration through which the corruption phenomenon is objectivized in a certain country. The CPI is greatly popular in Lithuania, receiving wide-scale attention and discussion, and is included as an indicator in state office action plans and national programs. Lithuania's CPI has been calculated since 1999. The public sector is at the heart of this research, along with public servants and politicians. Until 2011 the CPI ranked countries on a ten-point scale, but from 2012 the current situation started being valued on a hundred-point scale where 0 denotes an absolutely corrupt country and 100 – a very transparent country. Assessments of the corruption situation are made by experts and business leaders both from in the country being assessed and from abroad. The 2012 CPI is calculated according to a new methodology which uses only one year's worth of data for every country's CPI source. It should be noted that despite the fact that this, one of the most well known studies of the perception of corruption in the world, was constantly exposed to ideological fluctuations and thus brought upon itself methodological doubts, it was still a keystone and indeed significant study on a national scale.⁴⁴ Also noteworthy is that from 2009–2010 Lithuania's CPI increased, i.e., Lithuania was viewed as a more transparent country, before dropping in 2011 down to its 2005–2007 position, while in 2012 Lithuania moved two positions up on the Perceptions of Corruption Index. However, Lithuania's public commentary on the CPI was usually associated with a negative assessment of Lithuania; for example, in 2012 the director of the Transparency International Lithuanian Chapter exclaimed that “over the last few years I have tried to glean

⁴³ Veidas, D. *Grybauskaitė: „nereikėtų savęs apgaudinėti, kad tuoj turėsime atominę elektrinę“* [“we needn't kid ourselves that we will soon have an atomic energy plant”], <http://www.veidas.lt/d-grybauskaitė-nereikėtų-savęs-apgaudinėti-kad-tuoj-turėsime-atominę-elektinę>, 2012 11 16.

⁴⁴ Delfi, *Korupcijos suvokimo indeksas Lietuvoje nesumažėjo, bet G. Kirkilas atsistatydinti nežada* [Lithuania's Perceptions of Corruption Index did not fall, but G. Kirkilas does not intend to stand down], <http://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/korupcijos-suvokimo-indeksas-lietuvoje-nesumazejo-bet-gkirkilas-atsistatydinti-nezada.d>, 2012 11 08.

something positive from Lithuania's results in the CPI, however, admittedly, that is difficult to do".⁴⁵

The positive signs of corruption control and reduction discovered in national research studies have not been reflected in the Freedom House report "Nations in Transit" either, where countries are ranked according to democratic practices. The annual assessment conducted since 1997 takes in 28 countries in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe. Countries are ranked on a seven-point scale where 1 denotes the highest development of democracy, and 7 – the lowest. The fact that corruption is one of the seven Freedom House assessment criteria shows that already from 1999 attempts started being made to "search for" this phenomenon in all the nations in transition, including Lithuania. In terms of its corruption situation, Lithuania appears amongst the worst ranked countries (its assessment did not fall below 3.5 points, but in 2006–2009 it was worse). The 2012 assessment which takes in the 2011 period was 3.5 points. What is noteworthy is that in 2012 the report on Lithuania's corruption situation was prepared by one expert from Lithuania. A majority of the sources used in the report were from the media. Even though Freedom House reports have received some criticism,⁴⁶ they have been and continue to be one of the tools used to construct "Lithuania's reality" in the international space.

Data from the 2012 Eurobarometer research⁴⁷ indicated that at least eight in ten Lithuanian citizens believed that corruption was one of the country's biggest problems. Compared to other countries, according to this indicator Lithuania is ninth. Lithuania, together with Slovakia and Romania are also leaders in the context of this research among countries whose respondents claimed that they were asked to give bribes or that bribes were expected of them. In responding to the Eurobarometer data, an EC member claimed that "practical results of the fight against corruption in all of Europe remain unsatisfactory. How many times have we said that it is necessary to take action? Europeans trust that national governments shall take determinative steps. The time has come to do so".⁴⁸

In summary, we should notice that Lithuania's map of corruption is

⁴⁵ Transparency International Lithuanian Chapter, *Lietuva per metus pakilo dviem vietomis*, *Transparency International* "Korupcijos suvokimo indekse [In one year, Lithuania jumped two positions in the Transparency International Perceptions of Corruption Index], http://www.transparency.lt/new/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=11277&Itemid=25, 2012 12 05.

⁴⁶ Bernardinai.lt, K. Girnius. *Lietuvos demokratijos įvertinimas priklauso nuo vertintojų* [Assessment of Lithuania's democracy depends on the assessors], <http://www.bernardinai.lt/straipsnis/2007-09-27-k-girnius-lietuvos-demokratijos-ivertinimas-priklauso-nuo-vertintoju/27468>, 2012 11 08.

Aleknevičienė J., "Kalbėjimo apie korupciją žala" [The harm in talking about corruption], 2007.

⁴⁷ European Commission, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_374_en.pdf, 2012 12 05.

⁴⁸ EurActiv.lt, *Eurobarometras. Korupcija didėja?* [The Eurobarometer. Is corruption growing?], <http://www.euractiv.lt/lt/straipsnis/4799/eurobarometras-korupcija-dideja>, 2012 11 10.

changing slowly; time is needed to record changes in people's attitudes and values. The main conception of the complex research of Lithuanian corruption, the Lithuanian Map of Corruption, changed, however the methodological foundation has remained stable and allows us to take away reliable comparable results. However, we should ask ourselves, to what degree is this research study used to create anti-corruption practices in Lithuania or to spread news of Lithuania's efforts to reduce corruption in the international space? Even though national corruption research results testify to the appearance of positive trends in Lithuania, the results of international standardized corruption research are disadvantageous to Lithuania. Based on these results, international and national activists use uncontrollable, insurmountable and all-defeating corruption rhetoric, inviting us to "fight" against corruption even more. International research is further backed by the public, uncritical comments made by influential Lithuanian political figures: in 2006 prime minister Gediminas Kirkilas offered to stand down on a "Žinių radijas" [News Radio] program if Lithuania's corruption index did not take a positive turn, and in 2008 the leader of one of the most influential parties, Andrius Kubilius, stated that his party promised to implement new public management principles to that in the next four years, according to the Transparency International Corruption Index, Lithuania would appear among the top ten least corrupt countries.⁴⁹ This uncritical approach to standardized anti-corruption instruments simply empowers international "players" to act and continue to construct instruments and effectiveness standards in the "fight" against corruption that are orientated at general inter-cultural, rather than national particularities, and to realize their interests.

4. The Externalization of Corruption

Several important elements of the externalization of corruption may be distinguished: anti-corruption strategies, programs, anti-corruption projects, training, and the like. We shall look at the main elements that are part of the corruption phenomenon's construction process.

In 2002 the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, guided by the Law on the Basics of National Security, confirmed the National Anti-Corruption Program and its plan of measures. The aim of the program was to reduce corruption in Lithuania, seeking that it would have less of a disruptive impact

⁴⁹ Veidas, *Seimas mojuoja nauju popieriniu antikorupcijos kardus* [The Seimas waves a new, paper anti-corruption sword], <http://www.veidas.lt/seimas-mojuoja-nauju-popieriniu-antikorupcijos-kardus> 2012 11 08.

on development of the economy and democracy, and to aspire towards social welfare and strengthen national security. On the one hand, this program was recognized as an example of good practice,⁵⁰ but on the other, it received criticism for its intersecting “Western” and “Eastern” anti-corruption practices.⁵¹ The program made use of both national and international corruption research data and indicators, plus there was a considerable accent on the input of international organizations and the goal of tuning the national anti-corruption legal base in line with international, especially EU, documents. The World Bank’s concepts of “political” and “administrative” corruption were especially reflected in the program. Special attention was aimed at administrative corruption and its prevention. The use of fighting rhetoric in all national corruption reduction programs has also been noted.

The most recent and still valid 2011 National Anti-Corruption Program aims to ensure an effective and directed corruption prevention system in Lithuania, along with the strengthening of national security. As part of the program’s analysis of the general environment, criminal statistics and international research data was used, which, as was mentioned earlier, is given undeserved prominence in Lithuania, whereas the analysis of separate fields saw the combination of international and national indicators. This most recent program, like the others preceding it, are mostly orientated at the state public service and individuals employed therein. Little attention is given to the private sector. The opinions of different social groups, that include public servants, business people and citizens, are incorporated into the assessment of the program’s expected results. When analyzing the structure of the 2011–2014 program, what is noteworthy is that taking an anti-corruption approach, it is political and legal actions that are assessed first of all, which we could relatively speaking term as political interests, whereas the second priority is economic interests, followed by social and technological interests.⁵²

The problem of corruption also receives a mention in all National Security Strategies. In the 2002 Strategy, corruption was mentioned alongside twelve other challenges, dangers and threats. The fight against organized crime and corruption was highlighted as one of the main priorities in ensuring Li-

⁵⁰ Steves Fr., Rousso A., “Anti-corruption programs in post-communist transition countries and changes in the business environment, 1999-2002”, *European Bank for Reconstruction and Development*. Working Paper No. 85, 2003.

⁵¹ Dobryninas A., “Lithuania’s Anti-corruption policy: Between the “West” and the “East”?”, *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, Vol. 11, 2005, p. 77-95.

⁵² LR Seimas, *Lietuvos respublikos Nacionalinė kovos su korupcija 2011-2014 metų programa*, http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=402714, 2012 11 02.

thuania's national security. In the Strategy corruption is reflected in the political context, i.e., in terms of Lithuania's aim to become a member of the EU. In the 2005 Strategy corruption is also mentioned as one the threats to national security and is described in the context of political and economic interests (ensuring the transparency of EU fund allocation, prevention and control of financial crimes). In the 2012 Strategy corruption ended up alongside other social and economic problems demanding particular attention – unequal social and economic development and large numbers of the population emigrates. In this Strategy we can see both political and economic and now also civil aspects in the “fight” against corruption.

Lithuania's president, in her mentioned speeches, talks about “rampant corruption” and “a merciless war on corruption” using strong combatant rhetoric. In her 2010 speech she stressed the regulation of the Code of Conduct of Civil Servants and the Law on Lobbying Activities, the importance of society's input and the role of the courts in the “fight” against corruption. In the 2011 speech it was claimed that corruption was “the most deep-rooted and most difficult to cure of our ills”, and that “bribe-giving, misconduct in office and corrupt activities are allowed to exist so long as we – as a society – tolerate it”.⁵³ Despite there being separate distinction of three elements of corruption, understanding them to be critical or priority areas, alone they offer no further specific or accurate information. In the 2012 speech corruption is mentioned in the context of the courts and a successful start to the fight against corruption having been made, as well as corruption as a disruption, with the aim of “stopping corruption from poking into the wheel spokes”. Corruption clearly has found its space in the President's mentioned speeches, yet they contain a great deal of generalizations, plus a strict tone which testifies that the problem of corruption is not an ordinary one, and is alive and well despite all the efforts and measures being taken.

The corruption problem is similarly brought to light in Government programs as well.⁵⁴ When analyzing the program of the latest 16th Government, we note that the “fight” against corruption is mentioned along with other unpostponable activity priorities in the context of economic interests. In addition, there is a whole separate section dedicated to the fight against corruption

⁵³ LR Prezidentė, *LR Prezidentės Dalios Grybauskaitės metinis pranešimas 2011 m. birželio 7 d.* [Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė's annual speech, June 7, 2011], http://www.president.lt/lt/prezidento_veikla/metinis_pranesimas/2011_m..html, 2012 11 08.

⁵⁴ For example, in 2012 the Government named the fight against corruption in the government sector as one of its most important goals (to ensure the publicity of state and municipality institutions' and offices' activities, i.e., their decisions, the use of public finances, documents issued, services offered). (*Žin.*, 2011, Nr. 126-5592).

which stresses the cooperation of all possible actors – the government, society, the media, business, religious and other organizations – involving them in the disclosure of cases of corruption. Accentuation of “the psychological and civilians’ public consciousness anti-corruption breakthrough and the intolerance of corruption” points to the expected changes in values and attitudes that shall be sought after, not via education, but rather by applying punitive measures (suggesting to criminalize the tolerance of corruption). It was noted that the program lacks any correlation between its mentioned anti-corruption activities and the values declared in the very same program.

Thus, these programs and strategies in the “fight” against corruption have served as the foundation for other anti-corruption programs that have been and continue to be implemented by state institutions. Similar examples are created and implemented by businesses, education institutions and international organizations. According to experts, “eastern Europe was a valuable niche for the anti-corruption “industry””,⁵⁵ and Lithuania was not an exception in this respect. We should note that particularly the first strategies and programs were very declarational, with unobligatory and abstract aims, lacking in comprehensive content. The main and initial target of the “fight” against corruption strategies, programs and speeches was state public servants, even though the aims of these strategies and programs were aimed at almost every member of society. Somewhat later the business sector also started being mentioned. Corruption and bribery prevention or reduction was noted as separate problems, even though bribery itself is one of the forms of corruption. So, despite all the “strategies, plans, projects, reports, commissions, work-groups, discussions and meetings... <...> much like many of the country’s problems, so too does this one appear to drown in a quagmire of paper bureaucracy”, commented the former director of the State Security Department back in 2006.⁵⁶

Other anti-corruption initiatives have also been noticed: for example, in 2007 the Fight against Corruption Front was established, becoming known as an opponent to one specific theme – the building of the atomic power plant. In 2009 the Anti-Corruption Education Centre was founded, which carries out project activities without any particular specialization. These examples testify to the politicization and economic benefits to be gained from the “fight” against corruption.

⁵⁵ Michael B., “The Rise and Fall of the Anti-Corruption Industry: Toward Second Generation Anti-Corruption Reforms in Central and Eastern Europe?” *Local Governance Brief. Policy Journal of the Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative*, 2003, p. 1.

⁵⁶ Bernardinai.lt, Jurgis Jurgelis, *Kovos su korupcija fronte* [The fight-against-corruption frontlines], <http://www.bernardinai.lt/straipsnis/-/29891>, 2012 11 08.

In summary, three stages in the “fight” against corruption drive in Lithuania can be distinguished:

- *The active*, spanning 1998–2004. The main driving force of this stage was Lithuania’s integration into the EU.
- *The subdued* (2004–2008), which can be relatively termed as the wait for results in the “fight” against corruption. Attempts by non-government organizations to create a Civil Alliance against corruption can be observed, as they pose critical questions such as “how many more laws to halt corruption are needed?”⁵⁷ In October, 2006 an agreement “On Strengthening the Fight against Corruption” was signed between parliamentary party factions. It outlines acknowledgement that the scale of corruption in the country is intolerable, and that the existing anti-corruption measures are inadequate, also stressing the prioritized importance of strengthening the fight against corruption.
- *The desperate* stage from 2008. This is the situation where “nothing works” while the relevance of the corruption problem continues to grow. A conference was held at the Presidential Palace called “Korupcijos pažabojimo vizijos 2008” [Visions for Stopping Corruption 2008]. The 15th Government distinguished the fight against corruption as a priority field in its program. In April, 2009, the Prime Minister formed a work-group to present recommendations for how the emergence of corruption could be minimized. In the Parliament’s 2010 autumn session the “fight” against corruption was again identified as a priority, while eleven legislative drafts regarding the reduction of corruption were drawn into the earliest stages of the parliamentary program. In 2011 the President of Lithuania stated that “corruption was spreading like cancer”⁵⁸ and that Lithuania’s citizens were not aware of the fight against corruption.⁵⁹ Thus, the signs of improvement in the corruption situation noted in 2011 that were mentioned in the second part of this article could have signified the start of the success stage, yet that was not the case. The visibility of the “fight” against corruption and the need for its existence increased via the spread of anti-corruption rhetoric as

⁵⁷ Human Rights’ Monitoring Institute, *Pilietinis aljansas prieš korupciją ieško būdų pažaboti korupciją Lietuvoje* [A civil alliance against corruption seeks out ways of stopping corruption in Lithuania], <http://www.hrmi.lt/naujiena/157/>, 2012 11 08.

⁵⁸ Delfi, D. *Grybauskaitė: korupcija plinta kaip vėžys* [D. Grybauskaitė: Corruption is spreading like cancer], <http://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/dgrybauskaite-korupcija-plinta-kaip-vezys.d?id=47479985>, 2012 11 08.

⁵⁹ Veidas, *Žmonės nepastebi kovos su korupcija* [People don’t notice the fight against corruption], <http://www.veidas.lt/zmones-nepastebi-kovos-su-korupcija>, 2012 11 08.

well – alongside good management, public administration and ethics, things like transparency, integrity, credibility, honesty and other related themes appeared. International Anti-corruption Day was and is being marked in ever a more obvious fashion. To mark this occasion, Government events are organized,⁶⁰ as well as in municipalities and education institutions. Anti-corruption courses are offered at universities, seminars are held, and training is conducted. Lithuania is hoping to become a member of the International Anti-Corruption Academy,⁶¹ an institution that has been established in Vienna as an innovative center for independent anti-corruption training and scientific research. It is quite apparent that the inertia-driven, desperate “fight” against “insurmountable” corruption is continuing and does not intend to stop.

Quite obviously, the efforts to reduce corruption in Lithuania have become prioritized, projectivized and are well-financed. However, equally obvious is that fact that Eastern and Central European countries, Lithuania among them, that are implementing the greatest number of good management/administration reforms and anti-corruption programs, are still considered the most corrupt in the EU. Already in 2000, anti-corruption researchers and experts noted that “there is a boom in anti-corruption strategy and agency creation which does not take into account any effectiveness or expected impact criteria”⁶². One decade on – the same trends remain.

⁶⁰ LR Government, *Výriausybės rūmuose bus apdovanotos geriausias antikorupcinės iniciatyvos* [Government to hand out awards for the best anti-corruption initiatives], <http://www.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/aktualijos/?nid=11490>, 2012 11 20.

⁶¹ The International Anti-Corruption Academy, <http://www.iaca-info.org/>, 2012 11 08.

⁶² Hellman J. S., Jones G., Kaufmann D., and Schankermann M.. *Measuring Governance, Corruption, and State Capture*, <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un-dpadm/unpan044602.pdf>, 2012 11 08.

Conclusions

Lithuania, like the other new EU members, finds itself in the field of international, foremost EU, anti-corruption interests. The role of the EU in implementing anti-corruption measures in Lithuania in recent years has not decreased at all.

The constructionist analysis of provisions for the construction of the corruption phenomenon in Lithuania revealed that Lithuania's "fight" against corruption has turned into an anti-corruption *industry*:

- Corruption has become a universal topic among different interest groups: state institutions, international organizations, market participants and civil society representatives. Corruption minimization and control features in national political work schedules.
- Global standardized anti-corruption products – anti-corruption packages incorporating knowledge about corruption, measurement instruments and activities – are applied in Lithuania. It should be noted that international corruption diagnostic instruments are abstract, complex and do not take into account national socio-cultural particularities.
- The corruption actualization field has expanded. Corruption is highlighted in the contexts of security, crime, social problems, etc. The narrow legal definition of corruption, where the primary focus was bribery, has broadened. In addition to the main target of corruption – the state sector, gradually the business and non-government sectors are also drawing attention. Corruption has become an inter-sector problem – legislation drafts, their amendments, resolutions and programs are all viewed taking an anti-corruption approach. Strong combatant rhetoric is being used to minimize corruption.
- The number of institutionalization elements employed in the "fight" against corruption have increased: anti-corruption agreements, conferences, discussions, conventions, programs and diagnostic instruments.
- Specialists with a broad qualification field have become prominent in anti-corruption activities – universal project and program managers and executives who are able to deal with corruption as well as with other social problems. For such individuals, actually resolving the problem is less of a concern than their personal career aspirations. These specialists tend to change their work theme depending on the latest project they have been appointed to head.

- The rhetoric used in the “fight” against corruption has also changed and expanded. Alongside good management/public administration themes there are now themes including the issues of social responsibility, transparency, integrity, accountability, trust, honesty and fairness. This rhetoric is employed not only by the state sector, but by the private and non-government sectors also, as well as education institutions.

But then why cannot we see any progress in the corruption minimization field?

Firstly, expressions of the mentioned global and national anti-corruption industry increase the visibility of corruption in Lithuanian society.

Secondly, international corruption research receives undeserved prominence in Lithuania. Corruption research conducted by certain international institutions does not stand up to stronger criticism, while reports on the assessment of the corruption situation, for example the 2012 Freedom House report, are prepared by one individual using media reports as their main source. As a result, Lithuania’s aim to all-out improve its standing in the Corruption Perception Index or in terms of other difficult-to-explain international anti-corruption indicators and thereby record noticeable progress may not be achieved, even before 2030 as has been projected in the planned aims in Lithuania’s Progress Strategy.⁶³ Observation and measurement of the local situation and changes should be done not from a distance, but by locally created and tested instruments. One possibility is the Lithuanian Map of Corruption that has already been tried seven times.

Thirdly, changes in the fields of social values, attitudes and good management are slow to appear. That is why, in order to assess the effectiveness of anti-corruption initiatives and their results, more time is needed. Corruption research often reveals a barely changing situation.

And *fourthly*, how many people are there in Lithuania actually searching for progress in the “fight” against corruption? Famous success stories, such as the State Tax Inspectorate’s, which managed to reduce its bribery index rating in 2006, are few and far between, whereas those relating failures number in the hundreds.

Vilnius, November 2012–January, 2013

⁶³ In Lithuania’s Progress Strategy “Lietuva 2030”, one aim is that in the CPI, Lithuania should be no lower than in 10th place among EU countries.