In recent years, Kazakhstan has been actively involved in the fight against corruption. Starting from 2015, a new anti-corruption strategy of Kazakhstan was formed. Despite the various measures taken by the state, the country still fails to achieve the desired results.

According to the documents of the 34th session of the UN General Assembly in 1979, the term “corruption” was given the following definition – this is the performance by an official of any action or inaction in the field of his official powers for remuneration in any form in the interests of parties providing such a remuneration, as in violation of job descriptions, and without violating them. Currently, the most accurate and concise explanation of corruption has been proposed by Transparency International as an abuse of public authority for individual gain.

Depending on the type of interaction between entities/persons, the main types of corruption can be distinguished:

- Petty corruption, that is, the interaction of citizens and civil servants. Its essence lies in the receipt by officials of various gifts and other benefits in return for a public service. This type of corruption can also include nepotism. This is when an official, using his authority, provides close relatives, spouses or kinsfolks with a highly paid job or service for gaining profit.
- Business corruption – in this type of corruption, illegal cooperation is considered between a government official and business. In most cases, this is observed when concluding contracts and receiving “cuts”.
- Political corruption is the interaction of management of the first order and supreme courts. This type of corruption refers to higher groups of people whose illegal behavior leads to the implementation of state policy to the detriment of the interests of citizens of the country.
Legislative development of anti-corruption activities in Kazakhstan

History of the fight against corruption in Kazakhstan can be divided into two main stages, which to one degree or another characterize the evolution of anti-corruption activities in Kazakhstan.

**First step** considers the period from 1998 to 2015, when the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated July 2, 1998 No. 267-I “On Combating Corruption” was in force in the country. During this period of time, special attention was paid to measures to eliminate the conditions conducive to perpetration of petty corruption, with which citizens meet most often when receiving public services at a given site. Most of all, Kazakhstanis were faced with corruption while receiving various information memos and for accelerating the receipt of public services in educational and medical institutions, as well as in law enforcement agencies. In order to prevent bribery among public servants and eliminate human contacts, the country began to actively introduce the principles of “one window”, where citizens could get the service they needed in a matter of minutes. After the lapse of time, other types of government services (obtaining an address certificate, an identity card, a passport, registering a business and much more) were also transferred to the online format as part of the e-government program. Today, more than 80% of public services are provided through the egov.kz portal and through public service centers.

Most of all, Kazakhstanis were faced with corruption while receiving various information memos and for accelerating the receipt of public services in educational and medical institutions, as well as in law enforcement agencies.

With the beginning of the **second stage** (from 2015 up to the present day), the basic principles and methods of combating corruption in Kazakhstan were revised, and the main regulatory document of which has been the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated November 18, 2015 No. 410-V “On Combating Corruption”. The new law allowed to move from a fight strategy, which inevitably leads to the dominance of repressive methods and punitive measures, to a comprehensive strategy to eliminate the causes and conditions of corruption. The main object of the confrontation is petty corruption among the population, but at the same time, a start was made to counteract business corruption in Kazakhstan: facts of bribery and receiving cuts by officials while performing public procurement. Particular attention was drawn to the quasi-public sector, where during the period of the conclusion of contracts the money turnover is estimated in billions of US dollars.

It should be noted that previously the functions of detecting, combating, preventing
corruption offenses belonged to the responsibility, within their competence, to the bodies of the prosecutor’s office, national security, internal affairs, state revenues, the military police, the anti-corruption service, and the border service of the National Security Committee. Whereas, with the entry into force of the new Law, the single purpose authorized body, the anti-corruption service, was assigned to the main subject of anti-corruption. At present, the Agency for Combating Corruption (hereinafter referred to as the Agency), directly subordinate and accountable to the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, is engaged in cases of bribery. In almost all regional centers of the country, Agency- ANTIKOR divisions are represented.

Currently, the Agency’s key priorities are such concepts as integrity, partnerships and prevention. Such changes will have to contribute, firstly, to rid the state and society of the criminological aspect of corruption, and secondly, the formation of an anti-corruption culture and the widespread involvement of citizens in the fight against corruption in the country.

Anti-corruption in Kazakhstan: who steals more?

In order to analyze and evaluate anti-corruption activities in the country over the past 10 years, we suggest to study the statistical data of the Committee on Legal Statistics and special accounts of the General Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan (hereinafter the Committee).

In this vein, according to the Committee for the period from 2009 to 2019, one can observe a gradual decrease in the number of corruption crimes in Kazakhstan. For the analyzed period, the most corruption cases were recorded in 2009, while the smallest number of bribery cases was recorded in 2015. With a high probability, it can be said that the sharp decrease in the number of corruption facts in 2015 is associated with fundamental changes in approaches and methods of combating corruption in Kazakhstan. The decision to create an independent anti-corruption body in the country was made exactly this year. As it is seen, the results were not long in coming, but the effect was short-lived. Indicators of 2015 could only be achieved in 2019.

In general, in the field of the fight against corruption, the past year was marked as the “Tokayev effect”, since it was with the advent of the new president that the work to combat corruption in Kazakhstan intensified. The results of the measures taken at the head of the second president are also indicated by the data for 2019. Meanwhile, there is a risk of a repeat of the 2015 case, when the state failed to achieve a long-term effect. It remains to be seen whether the administration of the new president will be able to
How is the Fight Against Corruption in Kazakhstan Taken Place?

The number of corruption crimes in Kazakhstan for 2009-2019 (According to the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the Prosecutor-General’s Office of Kazakhstan, http://pravstat.prokuror.gov.kz/kaz)

The most widespread forms of corruption among society are the receipt and giving of bribes, and the abuse of official powers. Despite the decrease in the number of facts of taking bribes over the past three years, this crime remains topical for Kazakhstani society. No less acute is the question of giving bribes by citizens of the country. In recent years, the number of such crimes varies up to 260 cases, which indicates the widespread prevalence of this type of corruption among the population. The issue of abuse of power among civil servants remains a pressing issue as well.
How is the Fight Against Corruption in Kazakhstan Taken Place?

As statistics show, mainly corruption crimes in Kazakhstan are committed by university employees, government officials and employees of the Ministry of the Interior Affairs, that is, police officers. It should be noted that data on “higher education” are available only from 2015. Analyzing the indicators, one can see that the most corrupt acts are observed among employees of higher educational institutions. Most likely, such high rates are directly related to the passing of the semester session/examination, admission to the grant of postgraduate studies and various types of theft and corruption in universities. The popularity of corrupt acts among public servants is also alarming, which once again proves the need to take the most severe measures to combat business corruption in the country. Meanwhile, a sharp decrease in the number of corruption cases among Kazakhstani police officers is noteworthy. This may be the result of ongoing reforms in the Ministry of Internal Affairs and growing criticism from the population regarding the activities of law enforcement agencies in Kazakhstan. Today, in the short term, one can observe positive trends in this area.
How is the Fight Against Corruption in Kazakhstan Taken Place?

Annually committed corruption crimes also lead to a multibillion-dollar loss for the country’s national economy. Over the past 10 years, the total material damage from corruption in the country amounted to more than 160 billion tenge (387 million US dollars). Most of the damage to the Kazakh economy from corruption crimes was noted in 2013, amounting to more than 80 billion tenge (193 million US dollars). At the same time, the fact of annual growth of material damage from corruption in the country is alarming. So, there is an increase in the amount of losses by almost one and a half times in 2019 compared to 2015 indicators. It is important to note the fact that despite the decrease in the number of corruption crimes in Kazakhstan, the damage from it does not reduce, but rather increases. This may indicate an increase in business corruption among high-ranking officials and the scale of the stolen funds.
How is the Fight Against Corruption in Kazakhstan Taken Place?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Damage (billion tenge)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>80.1</td>
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<td>2017</td>
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<td>2019</td>
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<td>2020</td>
<td>15.8</td>
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The amount of material damage from corruption crimes in Kazakhstan for 2009-2019, billion tenge

A significant part of the material damage is attributable to the abuse of official powers, as well as to the abuse of power or official powers by civil servants. It should be noted that for these types of corruption crimes there is an annual increase in damage over the past three years. Also noteworthy is the increase in the amount of damage from official forgery, that is, the facts that civil servants made knowingly false information in official documents. Whereas, according to the articles of receiving and giving bribes, a different picture is observed, that is, the amount of damage is reducing.
How is the Fight Against Corruption in Kazakhstan Taken Place?

According to the analysis, the following main points can be distinguished:

- A gradual decrease in the number of corruption crimes in Kazakhstan in the analyzed period should be noted.
- Traditionally, the facts of receiving and giving bribes to an official are most widespread among the population, but the damage to the economy from such crimes is relatively lower.
- There is an increase in the level of threat from corruption of this kind, such as abuse of power among public servants, causing maximum material damage to the country.
- There is a high level of corruption among employees of higher educational institutions, as well as government officials.
- Despite the decrease in the number of bribery facts among Kazakhstani police officers, the eradication of corruption in law enforcement ranks remains relevant.
- There is a large-scale struggle by the authorized bodies with petty corruption, but it is being carried out unevenly. While the opposition to business corruption did not receive due attention from the state.
- Today in the country there is no strategy to combat political corruption due to unwillingness or lack of political will in the highest echelons of the state.

Findings
How is the Fight Against Corruption in Kazakhstan Taken Place?

It should be understood that the fight against corruption is not limited to the facts of bribery among officials, civil servants, and the creation of a new body to counter it. This “war” requires drastic measures and changes in various spheres of the state’s life, from teaching a child in kindergarten the principles of “zero tolerance” to corruption to developing and implementing an effective legislative framework. Of course, the readiness of the country’s top officials to counteract corruption and start this “battle”, primarily from their environment, will play a big role in this entire system.

Considering the results of the analysis of anti-corruption activities in Kazakhstan, it is recommended that the relevant authorities of the country immediately take the following main measures:

1. It is recommended that a comprehensive plan to combat political corruption in the country be developed. At present, there is an uneven fight against corruption, that is, only a partial fight against its various types is noted. The country is actively opposing petty and business corruption, while virtually no action is taken against political corruption in the country. In this regard, first of all, officials should turn their attention to the fact that the time has ripened for the creation of an independent and impartial judicial system, which will fundamentally change the outcome of the “battle”.

2. One of the main cores of the entire system of corruption in the country is the widespread phenomenon of nepotism and tribalism among public servants. In order to combat this problem, it is necessary to consider the possibility of carrying out preventive measures to avoid the facts of being appointed to senior positions by officials of their relatives or friends on a “call”. It is also important to oblige public servants to declare property and income, both personal and belonging to family members. It should be said that this issue is painful and still the country cannot show due political and moral will in the implementation of the most important anti-corruption project. Kazakhstan has once again postponed the introduction of a new system.

3. It is recommended to activate and tighten the anti-corruption struggle in the field of “team movements” of high-ranking officials when appointing them to other government posts. In recent years, the facts of the “wandering” of akims, ministers and other public servants with their team to other positions have been observed more and more often and subsequently criminal cases have been instituted against their team members for corruption.

4. Fourth, we need to take a close look at the development of an active civil position of the public in opposing the facts of bribery and corrupt practices in Kazakhstan. As
world experience shows, one of the most important elements of the fight against corruption is the indifferent attitude of the local population to the ongoing corruption events in the country. At the same time, it is important to provide, at the legislative level, mass media representatives with the opportunity to freely investigate corruption facts among government officials.

Last but not least, given the above-mentioned facts, it is recommended that the authorized bodies study the methodology and list of statistics collected in the field of corruption crimes and consider the possibility of introducing such fundamental indicators as the facts of an official’s employment of his/her offspring or acquaintances in senior positions. Additionally, the provision of services by civil servants to their relatives or folks (for example, to help shell companies of their friends with winning tenders and/or public procurements), tribalism and “team movements” in personnel policy. It is important to understand that until the principle of fair minded meritocracy really works, there will be no trust in the state as a whole.

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