

Map of **ANTICORRUPTION** **CONDITIONALITIES**

Made up figures, harassment of business and failed cases: the SBU which Zelenskyi wants to strengthen

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In March, the President Volodymyr Zelenskyi submitted urgent [draft law](#) regarding the reform of the Security Service of Ukraine. The reform is overstatement, because the SBU, according to the President, keeps all unusual functions and gets even more.

Proposals regarding cementing the recall of the Soviet Union [have been criticized](#) by the International Advisory Group, which includes the EU Advisory Mission, the [NATO](#) Liaison Office and the US Embassy in addition to the [public](#).

In his draft law Zelenskyi wants to give the SBU opportunity to investigate any crimes they want under the guise of state security.

What is the danger? For instance, it will be easier for the head of the Service Ivan Bakanov to solve problems of the oligarch Igor Kolomoyskyi at the National Anti-Corruption Bureau. All Bakanov can and is doing now is [blocking](#) the key expertise in the NABU case against Privatbank.

However, according to the president's initiative on pseudo-reform, the head of the SBU will be able to take Kolomoyskyi's cases from the NABU and close them. And before that he would be able to organize investigation with the "masquerade" and high-profile arrests with the "happy end" for subjects of cases.

After that Bakanov will again [report](#) in the Verkhovna Rada on non-existent achievements of the Service with made up figures of compensation to the budget.

Does Zelenskyi understand to which Security Service he wants to give more powers? And why after loud election promises he is turning the reform on 360 degrees? Back in January 2019, Zelenskyi [promised](#) that the Security Service of Ukraine would be deprived of unusual functions.

It seems that the President is not aware of danger to which he puts the whole country. It was decided to spell out some "achievements" of the SBU to understand which monster Zelenskyi wants to strengthen together with his Members of Parliament. After all, the decision on the reform will be made by Members of Parliament and they will decide with which Service the country will live in future.

Artificial PR

The official website of the Security Service of Ukraine is full of reports about their achievements. At first glance it is impressive, but then it becomes clear that these are just made up figures for the PR.

It became clear from answers of the SBU that they do not keep records and cannot confirm any figure on their website or from Bakanov's speeches.

Accordingly there is the question. How can they make reports without statistics?

Meanwhile, Zelenskyi [states](#) about Bakanov that “we have never had such honest head of the SBU”.

The SBU [report](#) in 2019 shows very serious indicators. For instance, it is stated that, according to materials of special departments “K”, **472 people** were convicted for various crimes. We asked the SBU who these hundreds of convicts were and what they were convicted for?

The Service [assured](#) that people are in prison indeed, but they did not answer **who they are exactly and for what crimes**: such data is not recorded.

It turns out that the Service gathers statistics without statistics, doesn't it? After all, the Service, in fact, has only the number that is impossible to check, and they do not provide any other information.

In 2019-2020, the SBU allegedly [did not allow](#) to cause damage to the state in the amount of more than **25 billion UAH**. However, at our request **the SBU did not write what was exactly the role of the Special Service in preventing such damage**.

Moreover, the answer refers to cooperation with other bodies. That means that the SBU could play only formal role in preventing damage and take the credit to itself.

The SBU also reported that when they conducted counterintelligence protection of the economy, state property rights to financial and material values worth **4.3 billion UAH** were restored. However, there were no clarity [again](#).

The logical conclusion is that the SBU is making up its own performance indicators, which do not really exist.

Traditional harassment of business

Judging by the president's initiative, the [department “K”](#), known for its harassment of business, will be kept. That means business with schemes, extortions and rollbacks for a long time.

And Ukraine will wait for a long time for investments, because who needs such a “friend” who can come one day with the “*masquerade*”, searches and confiscation of property.

The standard raid scheme is that the SBU opens the criminal proceeding, after which the search is conducted in the office, documents, computers and laptops are seized, the company's work is blocked.

Such actions make the business owner “understand” that he has serious problems. If these problems are not “solved” after searches, then the second phase of the raid begins. Employees of the SBU are constantly bothering the company's business partners and contractors in order they presented their claims.

The SBU publicly denies such actions and [states](#) that illegal proceedings and cases are violated by other bodies of pre-trial investigation. And the SBU is at the center of scandals only because their field investigators must be involved in such investigative actions.

But this is at least manipulation, because we found many examples of suspicious cases where the investigation was conducted by the SBU.

For instance, last year the SBU [visited](#) several times ArcelorMittal, large company with foreign investments. Even Ivan Bakanov [stated](#) that he had complaints against the company's management that they allegedly were not working well. But bad management of any company can not be the subject of attention of the SBU.

After this puppet show the company even began to [withdraw](#) currency from Ukraine. However, this did not

prevent the SBU to [continue](#) its “investigation”. As the result, no one was presented the suspicion.

The SBU can offer such ineffective “result” for the country.

In April this year, the SBU [reported](#) on the detection of embezzlement of 110.000 UAH allocated to combat coronavirus. The department emphasizes that they have established “mechanism of appropriation of money”, namely, the scheme according to which someone stole money from the budget.

Instead, the case is being investigated under the article “official negligence”. That means that someone did his job improperly. The SBU contradicts itself because they say one thing and do another.

Failed cases on exposing corruption

The anti-corruption direction is the great resource for “earning” money by the SBU officials. There have been many journalistic investigations regarding luxury life of heads of anti-corruption and economic departments in the SBU.

There is blank similarity in all these stories: all employees of the SBU have rich retired parents or successful businesswomen-wives. At the same time, successes and wealth increase exponentially after they start working in the SBU.

The effectiveness of “fighting against corruption” can be assessed by specific examples. Simple executors are “caught” on bribes, but even such cases fall apart in the court. The SBU probably boasts of such disclosures in its statistics?

The elementary case regarding the bribe in the amount of 600 USD. There were 5 people on the prisoner’s dock who [were acquitted](#) in the court. The court rejected all evidence gathered by employees of the SBU because they did not confirm fact of extortion and receipt of money.

The court also [acquitted](#) two border guards, who were exposed by the SBU on the bribe in the amount of 2.000 USD for transporting tobacco products abroad. The court found that they were not involved in transportation of tobacco products and it was the legend invented by employees of the SBU.

In another case regarding the bribe in the amount of 30.000 UAH, employees of the Tax Inspection [were acquitted](#). As it turned out, accusation of employees of the Tax Inspection was based on testimony of witnesses who had acted according to instructions of employees of the SBU.

The court also [took the side](#) of the head of the village council in Kyiv region, who was exposed on the bribe in the amount of 12.000 UAH. Employees of the SBU did not find evidence of extortion, so the court believed that money was simply planted.

The interesting fact appeared in the court. Namely: during the search the SBU investigator accidentally forgot prepared in advance protocols of searches and interrogations at the office of the head of the village council. This testifies of invention of the case: how can you know what testimony the witness will give you, or write the search report in advance without conducting it.

The SBU’s anti-corruption departments are also often used as the tool to prosecute certain officials, which is by no means the fight against corruption.

In April, there were news that the SBU [had caught](#) deputy of Klychko Mykola Povoroznyk on one million-dollar bribe. The building of Kyiv City State Administration was searched and the mediator, who was carrying the bribe was detained.

However, no one detained Povoroznyk and handed over the suspicion. Such statements by the SBU are nothing without announcement of suspicion, because they have no result. Its only the use of powerful

resources of the SBU in political games.

Already in May, the SBU [visited](#) former head of the Tax Inspection Sergiy Verlanov. The case of corruption in the Tax Inspection is being investigated by Zhytomyr SBU regarding heads, who [were complained](#) about by one of judges for interference into his work. The judge stated about self-disqualification in order not to consider the seizure of property and money in this case.

At the same time, department K is currently involved in organized crime in addition to corruption. They want to strengthen this functionality in the SBU, which is reflected in the presidential draft law. After all, it is very convenient to add any activities under the auspices of the fight against crime.

In [August](#) last year, employees of the department under Bakanov's leadership became famous for banally releasing the world-class drug lord from the airport.

And although the criminal was later caught again, the inaction of the SBU employees during his escape shocked society then. And it is possible that he was caught only because the story became widely known.

Will Zelenskyi be satisfied with such results with top-level corruption cases, which employees of the SBU will be able to take from the NABU? After all, even ordinary clerks are not punished, and high-profile searches and detentions end in nothing.

The Kremlin's mouthpieces have no problems

During the trip to Poltava region in March the President Zelenskyi [stated](#) that the SBU had better results when comparing the head of the SBU and former prosecutor Ruslan Ryaboshapka. Apparently, the President makes such assessments based not on objective assessment of statistics, but on personal attitude to people who head these bodies.

But for some reason no one resembled the interesting case, which was publicly mentioned by the President himself. Zelenskyi [announced](#) "very loud story that will end badly". This was about the Member of Parliament from Opposition Platform For Life Viktor Medvedchuk (the godfather of the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin).

*"Mr. Medvedchuk's party. There are still big questions whether this is his party. Or is it temporary association. And who are they? There are big questions where do they get money to finance the party, to finance channels. **We have answers, the amount of cash, where and from which country they get it all...**"*, - Zelenskyi was indignant in August last year.

However, no Ukrainian has heard answers of the President and head of the SBU Bakanov so far. The issue of Russian influence through Medvedchuk's [TV channels](#) has repeatedly become the epicenter of scandals. So we are very curious for whom this story will end badly: for Kremlin's mouthpieces or for Ukrainians?

Herewith, the head of the SBU Bakanov "with better results" doesn't neglect to [accept](#) gifts from the Member of Parliament from Opposition Platform For Life Grygoriy Surkis when the latter had [visited his anniversary](#). In turn, Members of Parliament from Opposition Platform For Life submitted their version of the [draft law](#) on the reform of the SBU, which also proposes instead of the reform to increase powers of the Service and keeping infamous department "K".

The only chance to correct somehow the draft law and save the reform is the Parliament. Now, all trump cards are in hands of Members of Parliament, who can either significantly strengthen the monster of the SBU, or limit its appetites, and fulfill election promises and promises to Western partners. After all, the visa-free travel [was given](#) to Ukraine in advance, because they believed in intentions to reform the SBU.