

Olena Halushka for EU Observer: Ukraine's fight against corruption has started to work

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Ukraine's anti-corruption reform seems to be a struggle of "two steps forward, one step back."

Ukrainian society and the international community were outraged by the severe pressure exerted over Ukraine's newly established National Anti-corruption Bureau (NABU) in late autumn/early winter.

Attacks intensified right after detectives from NABU served a few notices of suspicion in politically sensitive cases on defence-sector corruption.

Pressure appeared almost simultaneously on different fronts - from legislative initiatives watering down the subject legislation to direct counteracting of the ongoing investigations. This may have created an illusion that Ukraine is following the post-Orange Revolution path, where resistance to change from Kyiv's political class led to the failure of reforms.

However, this narrative ignores the fact that Ukraine is now showing the greatest progress in fighting political corruption since its independence. Indeed, the old guard's tireless efforts to undermine anti-corruption reform is actually the strongest evidence that, this time, Ukraine's fight against corruption is for real.

An electronic procurement system that boosts competition, the outsourcing of medicines procurement to the international organisations, the decentralisation of powers and funds to local communities, the streamlining of public services provision, cleansing the banking system, electronic asset declarations of more than a million public officials - all of these things, to differing extents, are working towards eliminating corruption in Ukraine today.

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