

The Parliament came up with an alternative plan to return SBU “KGB’s” powers in anti-corruption and economic spheres

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Today, during the extraordinary meeting the Verkhovna Rada adopted [draft law](#) No.5219 “On Critical Infrastructure” in the first reading . The latter amends the current law “On the Security Service of Ukraine” and gives the SBU power to protect critical infrastructure. The proposed amendments to the wording before the first reading, in fact, return in veiled form the possibility of the SBU interfering in investigation in the field of economics and anti-corruption.

In particular, the draft law aims to “create the system of protection of critical infrastructure, which should interact with various government-wide and national systems of protection of information, facilities, etc.” At the same time, the Security Service is empowered to protect critical infrastructure. Amendments are proposed to the Article 2 of the current Law of Ukraine “On the Security Service of Ukraine”, which defines tasks of the SBU. It is from this article powers of the SBU regarding economics and anti-corruption were recently removed. These amendments should come into force since establishment of the Bureau of Economic Security.

“Such amendments to articles of current law “On the SBU” may in fact be the attempt to roll back the already made decisions by the Parliament to deprive the SBU of powers in the field of anti-corruption and economics. We are convinced that this is the SBU’s plan: to prevent voting on the reform and at the same time to regain lost powers in the current law”, stated Deputy Executive Director of the AntAC Olena Shcherban.

The actual definition of critical infrastructure in the draft law does not provide clear understanding of the list of such facilities, which may further allow actual interference in activities of any enterprise.

Moreover, amendments are also proposed to the current Law of Ukraine “On Operational and Investigative Activities”, where all departments of the Security Service (without exception) are authorized to conduct operational and investigative activities. And these are measures of wiretapping, control over individuals. That means that there is interference in private lives of individuals. Such approach is inconsistent with the concept of the SBU’s reform and directly contradicts it, expanding possibilities of the Service in this area.

Such broad powers are not typical to similar intelligence services of the NATO countries. Instead, they are increasingly bringing current SBU closer to the Soviet KGB.