

# PREVENTING AND COMBATING CORRUPTION IN UKRAINE

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## STATE ANTI-CORRUPTION POLICY

**President Volodymyr Zelensky signed Law 12414, which fundamentally alters the distribution of powers between the National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NABU), the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office (SAPO), and the Prosecutor General.** Specifically, the law empowers the Prosecutor General to unilaterally determine the jurisdiction of cases investigated by NABU, reassign investigations to other bodies in instances of "ineffective investigation", make decisions to close cases involving the highest-ranking state officials, and hold exclusive authority to approve and sign notices of suspicion against top officials. Furthermore, the law strips SAPO of its autonomy. According to its provisions, SAPO prosecutors will be subordinate to the Prosecutor General, whose directives will be binding on all levels of the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office.

As [noted](#) by the NGO "**Anti-Corruption Action Centre**" (AntAC), the Prosecutor General, who is politically appointed without any competition, will gain monopoly control over all sensitive anti-corruption proceedings in the country, which poses a direct threat to the anti-corruption infrastructure. A similar assessment was given by **NABU** Director Semen Kryvonos and **SAPO** Head Oleksandr Klymenko. During a [briefing](#) on July 22, they called on the president to veto the law and stated that with their vote, MPs had destroyed the anti-corruption infrastructure that was created at the demand of the Revolution of Dignity in 2014. In response to the law's passage by the Parliament, thousands of people in Kyiv took to the streets in protest, chanting "Veto the law," "Bring back Europe," and "Shame!". [Media report](#) that protests also took place in several other cities, including Lviv, Dnipro, and Odesa.

As of July 23, the law has been signed by the President, [published](#), and has already taken effect. The NGO **Transparency International Ukraine** [stated](#) that they will closely monitor every step of the Prosecutor General's Office, especially in cases concerning the highest state officials.

On the morning of July 23, President Zelensky [gathered](#) law enforcement and anti-corruption agencies chiefs, announcing afterward that all had agreed to work "exclusively constructively." Following this, NABU and SAPO [published](#) a joint statement calling for the restoration of their guarantees to resume full and independent work. Meanwhile, the National Agency on Corruption Prevention (**NACP**) will [join](#) the drafting of legislative changes to preserve the independence of anti-corruption and law enforcement systems, the principle of the inevitability of punishment, and public trust.

The international community expressed concern regarding the situation. Notably, **EU** Commissioner for Enlargement Marta Kos previously [stated](#) that the independence of NABU and SAPO is key to Ukraine's European integration. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (**OECD**) [warned](#) that the attack on anti-corruption bodies would negatively impact defense investments in Ukraine and funding for its reconstruction. The **foreign ministries** of **Germany**, **Sweden**, and other countries also expressed concern about the independence of Ukraine's anti-corruption institutions and called for continued progress in the fight against corruption.

## UKRAINE'S INTEGRATION INTO THE EU AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Ukraine's [newly appointed](#) Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, Taras Kachka, assured that commitments to the EU concerning NABU **"will be fully met."** He [noted](#) Ukraine's responsible approach to strengthening the rule of law, ensuring effective anti-corruption policies, and dedication to fulfilling international commitments. "Let me emphasize again," Kachka said, "all obligations within the EU accession talks, especially those in the Transformation Roadmaps, are valid and will be fulfilled completely."

## WORK OF THE ANTI-CORRUPTION SYSTEM

**The National Agency on Corruption Prevention (NACP) continues to strengthen the effectiveness of lifestyle monitoring: results for the first half of 2025.** During this period, the Agency conducted 95 lifestyle monitoring checks of declarants and transferred 36 case files to law enforcement. Based on these findings, the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office (SAPO) filed 20 lawsuits with the High Anti-Corruption Court (HACC) to declare assets worth over UAH 134M as unjustified. Some of these assets, including real estate, vehicles, and cash belonging to several officials and their families, have already been confiscated. In total, over the first six months of 2025, the NACP sent 12 substantiated findings to law enforcement agencies, identifying signs of illicit enrichment totaling over UAH 366M. As a result of their review, six officials were notified of suspicion for illicit enrichment, and in two of these cases, law enforcement sent the cases to court.

For comparison: in 2022, the NACP transferred 18 case files to SAPO worth UAH 44M; in 2023, it was 33 files worth UAH 97M; in 2024, 20 files worth UAH 90M; and in just the first six months of 2025, it was 24 files worth UAH 130M.

**Civil forfeiture: apartment of a Senior National Police Official's family [seized for the state budget.](#)** Following an appeal, the High Anti-Corruption Court (HACC) ruled to confiscate a Kyiv apartment, deemed as an unjustified asset belonging to the family of a Deputy Head of a National Police department. The decision was based on findings from a lifestyle monitoring report by the National Agency on Corruption Prevention (NACP). The report uncovered the questionable origin of over UAH 2.4M, which was allegedly a gift from the

official's mother, who had "borrowed" the money from a third party. An analysis of the family's finances confirmed they lacked the legitimate income for such a purchase. The court's decision is now in effect.

**Investigation completed in \$300,000 extortion case involving SSU officer.** The investigation has been concluded against a head of the Security Service of Ukraine's (SSU) Department for the Protection of National Statehood and two accomplices. They are accused of extorting a bribe from a suspect in a case involving the illegal transport of military-age men across the border. In exchange for the money, the official promised to destroy the case files and reveal the evidence that had already been gathered. If the suspect refused to pay, he threatened to take measures to ensure prosecution on more severe charges. Following the receipt of a partial unlawful benefit totaling \$72,000, the perpetrators were formally notified of suspicion.

**Based on materials from the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI), a court seized UAH 1.5B belonging to a former Member of Parliament and transferred the assets to the Asset Recovery and Management Agency (ARMA).** The owner of the assets is a former MP who served several terms, and was previously the deputy head of the Party of Regions faction and the head of the Kyiv City State Administration. According to the investigation, for years, he ran a hidden business abroad, controlling offshore companies registered in Panama, Hong Kong, Cyprus, and the British Virgin Islands. These companies generated significant annual profits for him, but he failed to pay taxes on them to the Ukrainian budget. The funds and securities were held in bank accounts in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and seized as part of the criminal proceedings.

## PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS AND COMPETITIONS

**The commission for selecting the Director of the Economic Security Bureau (ESBU) returned the nomination of Oleksandr Tsyvinskyi to the Cabinet of Ministers.** In a comment to Forbes Ukraine, Donatas Malaskevičius, a commission member representing international partners, [stated](#) that the decision in favor of Tsyvinskyi remains valid and there are no grounds for a new candidate. According to him, the government did not formally initiate a re-selection process, but only [disseminated](#) related information via a press release. Therefore, the Cabinet must now act in accordance with the law and appoint the winner of the competition.

It should be noted that the appointment of a Director for the Economic Security Bureau (ESBU) is one of the IMF's requirements for providing financial support to Ukraine.

## MEDIA ABOUT CORRUPTION

**"Did Parliament limit the powers of NABU and SAPO as 'payback' for the Oleksiy Chernyshov case, or was it a convergence of many factors and interests?"** The publication "Babel" [released](#) a detailed analysis of the situation.

According to the media outlet, July 2025 saw an unprecedented conflict between Ukraine's anti-corruption bodies (NABU, SAPO) on one side, and the traditional security services controlled by the President's Office on the other. Following more than 70 searches conducted on July 21 by the SSU, SBI, and the Prosecutor General's Office against NABU and SAPO employees for alleged pro-Russian ties, the Parliament quickly passed legislative amendments that significantly limit the powers of these agencies. Experts and sources cited by the publication believe the attack could be revenge for the case against Minister Oleksiy Chernyshov, an ally of the President who has recently been served with suspicion. At the same time, other sources suggest the plan to neutralize the anti-corruption bodies was prepared long in advance. The move to limit the powers of NABU and SAPO has drawn sharp criticism from the EU and G7, calling the independence of Ukraine's anti-corruption system into question.

**"Zelensky's government takes aim at corruption fighters":** The New York Times [reports](#) that Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers, which came to power on anti-corruption promises, is now being accused of attacking independent anti-corruption institutions and activists. The accusations stem from the case against anti-corruption activist Vitaliy Shabunin, searches at NABU and SAPO, and the passage of a law that strengthens the Prosecutor General's control over these bodies. Critics see these actions as politically motivated, an attempt to shield officials from investigations and roll back democratic reforms. The article notes that while the international community is concerned, its reaction was restrained, which activists say the government perceives as a "green light" for further pressure.

Overall, international media are closely monitoring the situation, publishing articles with headlines such as: ["Outrage in Ukraine as the government attacks anti-corruption watchdogs"](#) (The Economist), ["Anger builds in Ukraine as Zelenskyy signs law targeting corruption watchdogs"](#) (Politico), ["Zelenskiy weakens anti-graft agencies, sparking Ukraine protests"](#) (Bloomberg).

**"ESBU Director rejected by Cabinet of Ministers: "We work against everyone".** The Ukrainian outlet Ekonomichna Pravda published an [interview](#) with Oleksandr Tsyvynskiy, the winner of the competition for Director of the Economic Security Bureau (ESB), whose candidacy the Cabinet of Ministers failed to approve. He stated that he has still not received an explanation for the "security risks" cited as the reason for his non-appointment and considers the government's actions illegal. Tsyvynskiy noted that he has worked in law enforcement since 2003 and first gained access to classified information while serving in the police. Consequently, he has repeatedly and successfully passed special background checks, including from the SSU. He also stated that the story about his father's alleged Russian citizenship, a man he has long had no contact with, used to cast doubt on his candidacy, is purely manipulative and intended to discredit him.

**"Four conclusions about the new Ukrainian government":** BBC Ukraine [published](#) an analytical article on the topic. According to the article, Yulia Svyrydenko's new government is the smallest one in Ukraine's history, but it is formed mainly from already

familiar faces, suggesting that the government's personnel reserve has been exhausted. Key changes include the creation of a "mega-Ministry" of Economy, which will merge the "old" Ministries of Economy, Agrarian Policy, and Ecology, and the appointment of former Prime Minister Shmyhal as Minister of Defense. Overall, the Cabinet of Ministers has seen little renewal and maintains the managerial continuity of the Shmyhal government, which, as the BBC writes, calls into question its capacity for new reforms. The media outlet notes that it is currently unclear what strategy lies behind this personnel reshuffle, creating the impression of political improvisation without a clear goal.