



# Attitude to the sanctions of the National Security and Defense Council against persons associated with the smuggling of goods

According to the results of an online survey

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## ABOUT THE SURVEY

The survey "Attitude to the sanctions of the National Security and Defense Council against persons associated with the smuggling of goods" was conducted by the Public Initiative "For Fair and Transparent Customs" (hereinafter the Initiative) online from 13 to 21 May 2021.

This is the tenth survey in a series of online surveys conducted regularly by the Initiative.

The purpose of the survey: to find out the attitude to the applied sanctions of the National Security and Defense Council, assessment of their effectiveness and the reasons for the appropriate attitude.

In April this year, the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine decided to apply personal special economic and other restrictive measures (sanctions) to individuals and legal entities associated with smuggling.

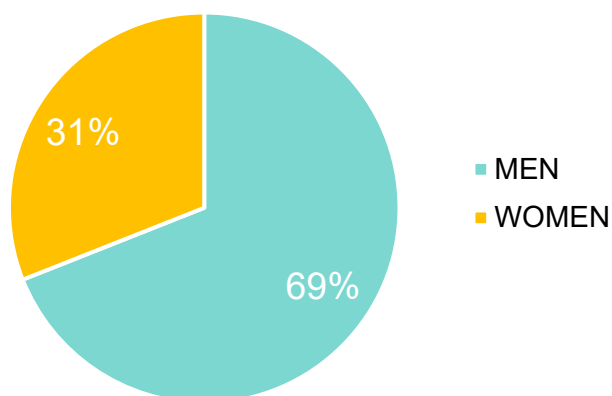
These decisions of the National Security and Defense Council were introduced by the relevant decrees of the President of Ukraine "Decree of the President of Ukraine of April 3, 2021 № 140" On decisions of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine of April 2, 2021 " Of the President of Ukraine of April 21, 2021 № 169/2021 "On the decision of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine of April 15, 2021" On the application of personal special economic and other restrictive measures (sanctions) ")

Respondents expressed their attitude to the sanctions imposed by the relevant decrees of the President of Ukraine on persons involved in smuggling and explained their position.

The project Support to the Public Initiative "For Fair and Transparent Customs" is implemented by the Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting with the financial support of the European Union, the International Vidrozhennia Foundation and AtlasNetwork.

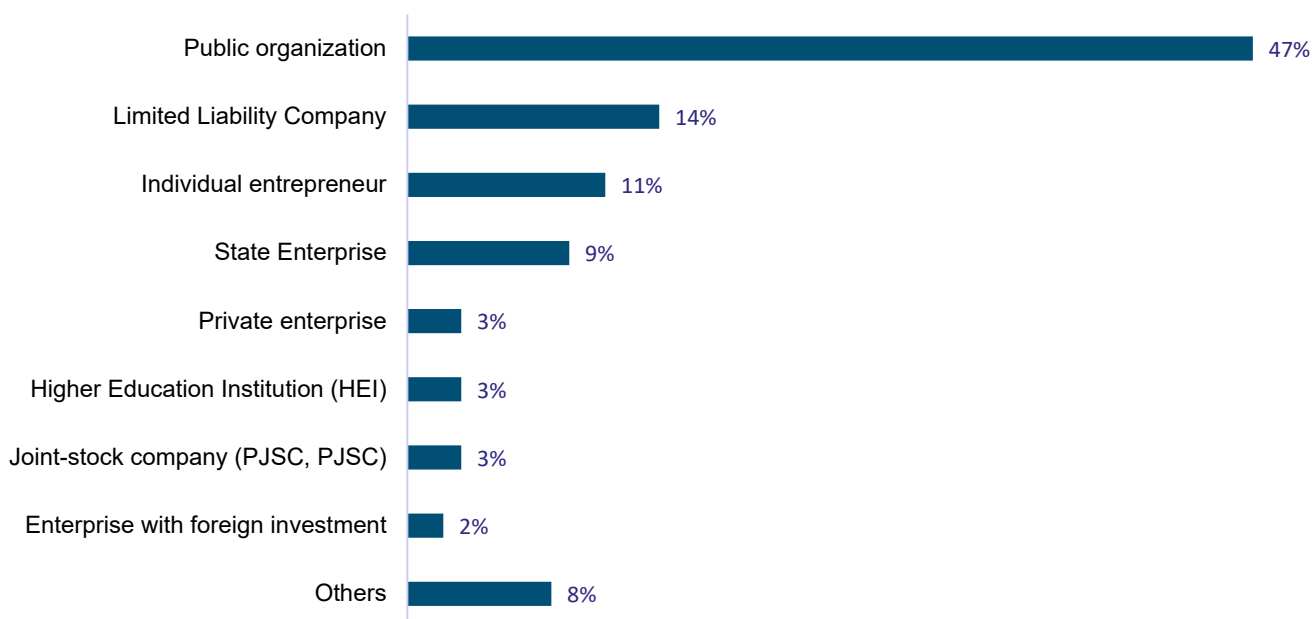
## RESPONDENTS

- 64 respondents from 18 regions of Ukraine (Vinnytsia, Volyn, Dnipropetrovsk, Zhytomyr, Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Luhansk, Lviv, Odesa, Poltava, Rivne, Sumy, Kharkiv, Cherkasy, Chernivtsi, Chernihiv) and the city of Kyiv took part in the online survey.
- Age of respondents - from 19 to 74 years, average age - 47 years.



## ORGANIZATIONAL FORM

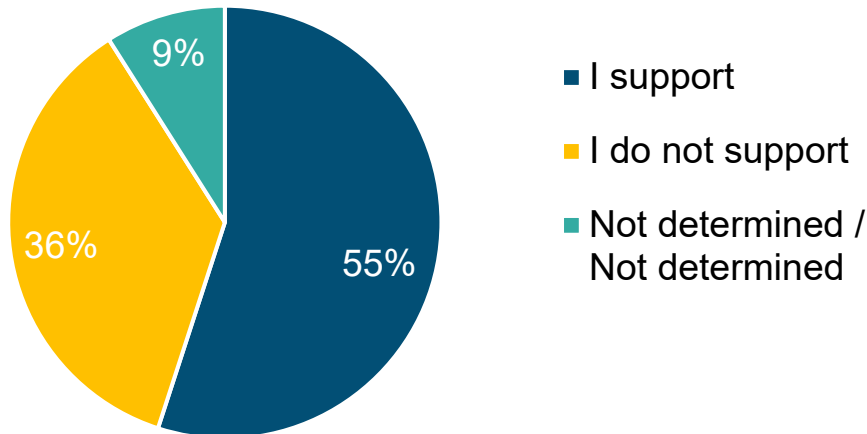
The vast majority of respondents represent public organizations (47%).



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## WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS THESE DECISIONS OF THE NSDC OF UKRAINE?

55% of respondents supported the decision of the National Security and Defense Council on sanctions against persons involved in smuggling. At the same time, a significant part of 36% did not support these decisions.



### Why do you support or do you not support these decisions? (Please provide up to three arguments)

**Proponents** of the sanctions argue that the fight against smuggling requires decisive action and the state's inaction in this direction is dangerous. They acknowledge that this is an unprecedented action by the authorities and that part of the electorate will like it.

Proponents of the sanctions also acknowledge that "their imposition is a sign of the weakness and inefficiency of state institutions that have to fight such crimes in the manner prescribed by law." The position of "well, at least something" against the background of complete inaction of law enforcement agencies in this direction is a clear example of the tone of their responses.

**And most importantly: a significant part of the polled supporters of these sanctions understand all the shortcomings and weaknesses of such a step by the President of Ukraine.**

Among the arguments put forward by supporters of sanctions:

- justice must be restored;
- evil must be punished, and in the conditions of an incompetent law enforcement system, the President did what he could;
- it is necessary to finally bring order to the state and start an effective fight against smuggling in the 30 years of independent Ukraine's existence;
- a positive attempt to limit the "unlimited" activities of the biggest smugglers;
- such solutions are needed to combat smuggling;
- long overdue;
- better than nothing, I doubt the effectiveness;

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- I support it, because previous measures and inaction have not yielded results.

**Opponents** of sanctions, arguing their position, refer to the inconsistency of such actions with current legislation, their futility and ill-considered. They also expressed concerns about the use of selectivity and the lack of clear criteria for the election of sanctioned persons.

Some of the arguments of opponents of sanctions:

- do not solve problems;
- contradict the law;
- the issue belongs to the competence of other bodies;
- extrajudicial way of imposing sanctions is a dangerous precedent.
- The National Security and Defense Council cannot take over the powers of other branches of government, and political expediency cannot become the main motivation for decision-making;
- sanctions are perceived as a redistribution of control over smuggling.

## DO YOU THINK SUCH MEASURES (SANCTIONS, DEPRIVATION OF CITIZENSHIP) ARE EFFECTIVE?

38% of respondents said that such measures are ineffective or not very effective.

At the same time, 20% mentioned the effectiveness of the relevant sanctions, and 6% of respondents found it difficult to say.

36% provided various general answers-reflections, which did not allow to clearly define the position of the respondent.

## CONCLUSIONS

In general, the sanctions of the National Security and Defense Council were supported by the majority of respondents. Respondents believe that this is "at least something" against the background of ineffective work of law enforcement agencies in this area. Such frequent explanations indicate the fatigue of the respondents from the current situation and the willingness to support the extraordinary steps of the authorities in order to obtain the promised result. This is indicated by the large number of supporters of these sanctions, who said they were aware of their "limitations and legislative imperfections."

Against this background, a significant number of respondents who did not support the actions of the National Security and Defense Council are quite significant, precisely for legal reasons and the lack of sufficient efficiency and tangible impact of these decisions.

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*The project "Support to the Public Initiative" For Fair and Transparent Customs " is implemented by the NGO " Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting " with the financial support of the European Union, the Renaissance Foundation and the Atlas Network*

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