

Based on the results of an online survey

# DOES THE AMOUNT OF OFFICIALS' SALARY AFFECT THE LEVEL OF CORRUPTION IN STATE AUTHORITIES



## DESCRIPTION

*The project "Support for the Public Initiative "For Fair and Transparent Customs" (the Initiative) conducts regular online surveys on various economic issues aimed at promptly receiving feedback (reactions) from interested parties on various events, initiatives of the Government, other stakeholders in customs, and related areas. The results of the relevant surveys are published and sent to the interested state authorities.*

### **The survey "Does the officials' salary affect the level of corruption in state authorities"**

*In the context of the recent events related to the suspicions of corruption of the highest officials of the judicial branch of power, the discussion on the extremely high salaries of top officials, which, in theory, should ensure and guarantee their independence and non-corruption, has intensified in society.*

*The question arose again: does the high salary of an employee of a state authority reduce the level of corruption in the implementation of state functions by such officials?*

*And where is the "golden mean" of sufficient salaries for top and other government officials?*

**The survey is aimed at studying the opinion of interested parties regarding the presence or absence of a relationship between the amount of officials' salaries and manifestations of corruption in state authorities, and also regarding the attitude towards salary increases for civil servants aimed to reduce corruption risks.**

# METHODOLOGY RESPONDENTS

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## METHODOLOGY

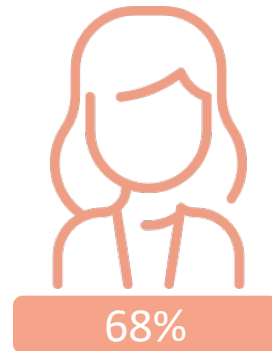
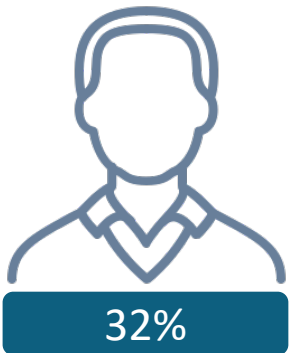
The survey was conducted in an online format. Qualitative and quantitative approaches were used for data collection.

The field stage was held from June 2 to 11, 2023.

## RESPONDENTS

178 respondents from 22 regions of Ukraine took part in the online survey (Vinnytsya, Volyn, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zhytomyr, Zakarpattia, Zaporizhzhya, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Luhansk, Lviv, Odesa, Poltava, Rivne, Sumy, Ternopil, Kharkiv, Kherson, Khmelnytsky, Chernivtsi, Chernihiv) and Kyiv city.

The average age of the respondents is 47.



# PROFILE OF THE ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED BY THE RESPONDENTS

State and local authorities

Public organizations and business associations

Mass media

Medical activity

Education, science, and culture

Research activity

Provision of services

Industry and production

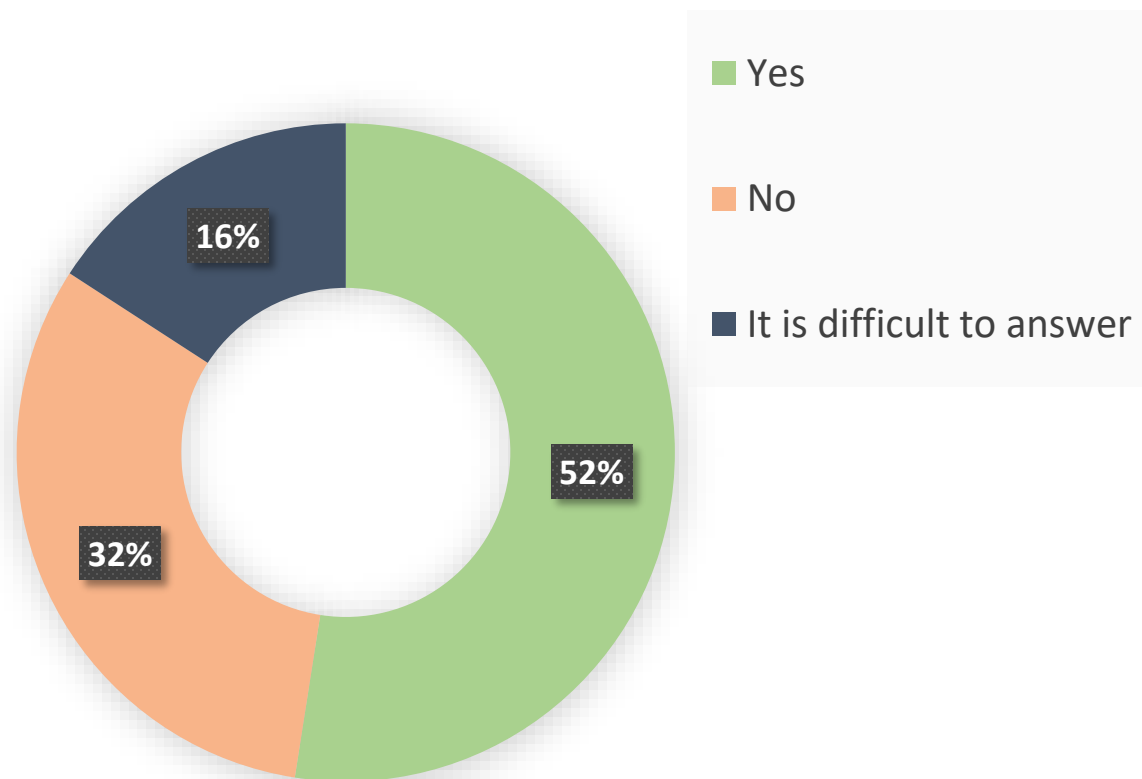
Trade

**DOES THE AMOUNT OF  
OFFICIALS' SALARY AFFECT  
THE LEVEL OF CORRUPTION IN  
STATE BODIES**

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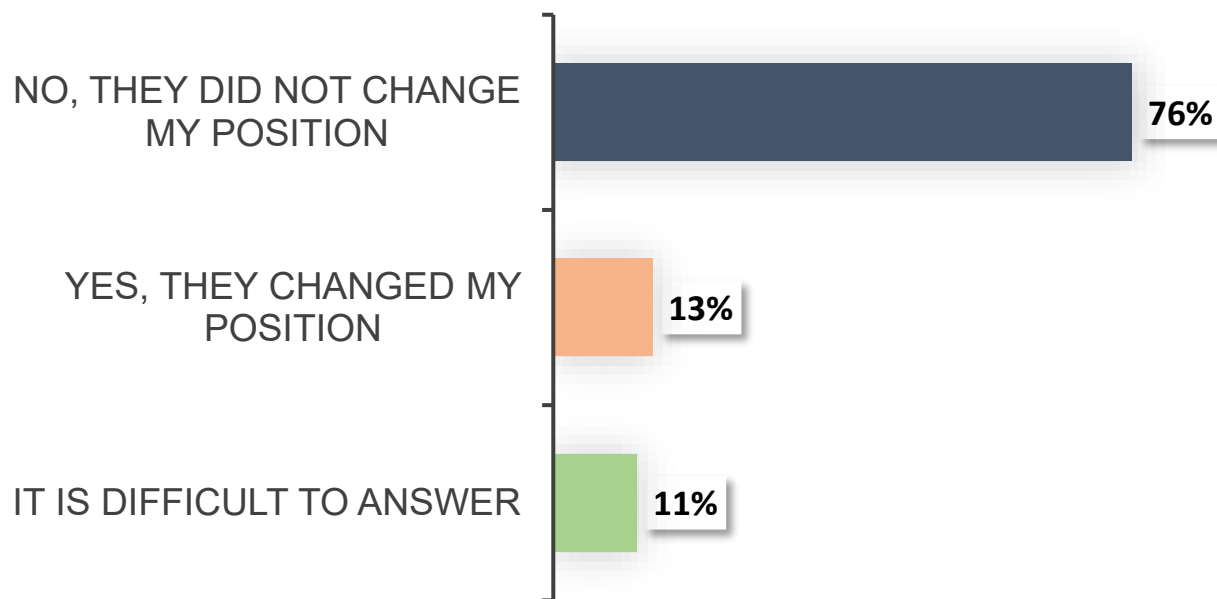
Do you agree with the statement that it is necessary to increase the salaries of state authorities' officials to reduce corruption risks when they exercise their powers?



- **The majority of respondents (52%) agree with the statement about the need to increase the salaries of civil servants to reduce corruption risks during the exercise of their powers**
- **A third of respondents (32%) do not agree with this statement**
- **16% of respondents could not decide on their position, which may indicate the presence of other approaches they consider more effective in fighting corruption**



Did the recent events related to suspicions of corruption of top officials of judicial power affect your answer to the previous question?



- **The majority of respondents (76%)** said that recent events related to suspicions of corruption of top officials **did not affect** their position regarding the salary of civil servants
- It may indicate **that such corruption scandals mostly do not affect** the respondents' attitude to the officials' salaries issue
- **Only 13% of respondents changed their opinion due to recent events**

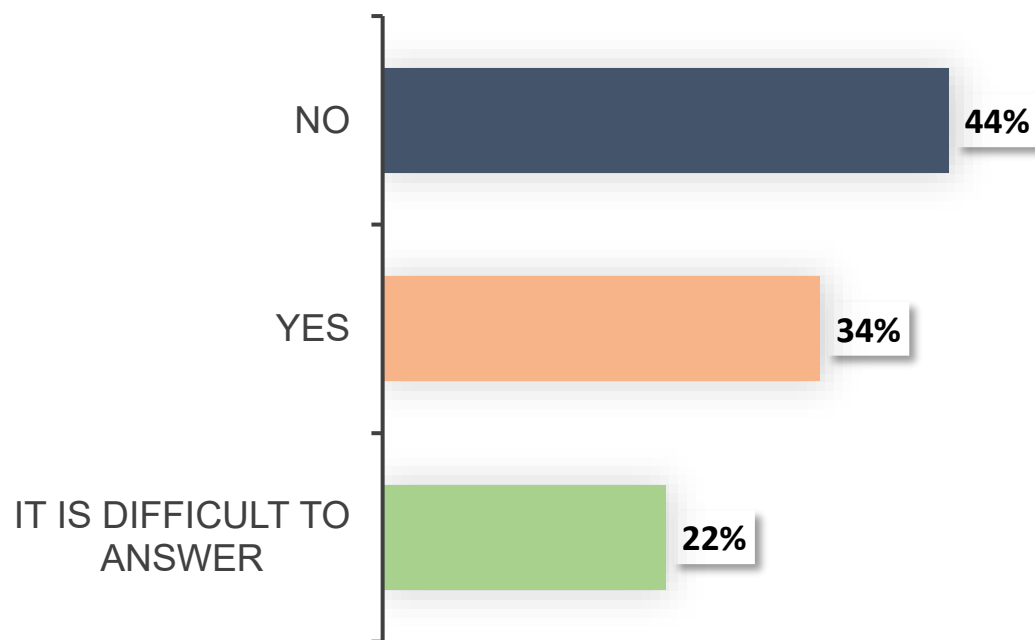


# ATTITUDE REGARDING THE SALARY OF CUSTOMS WORKERS

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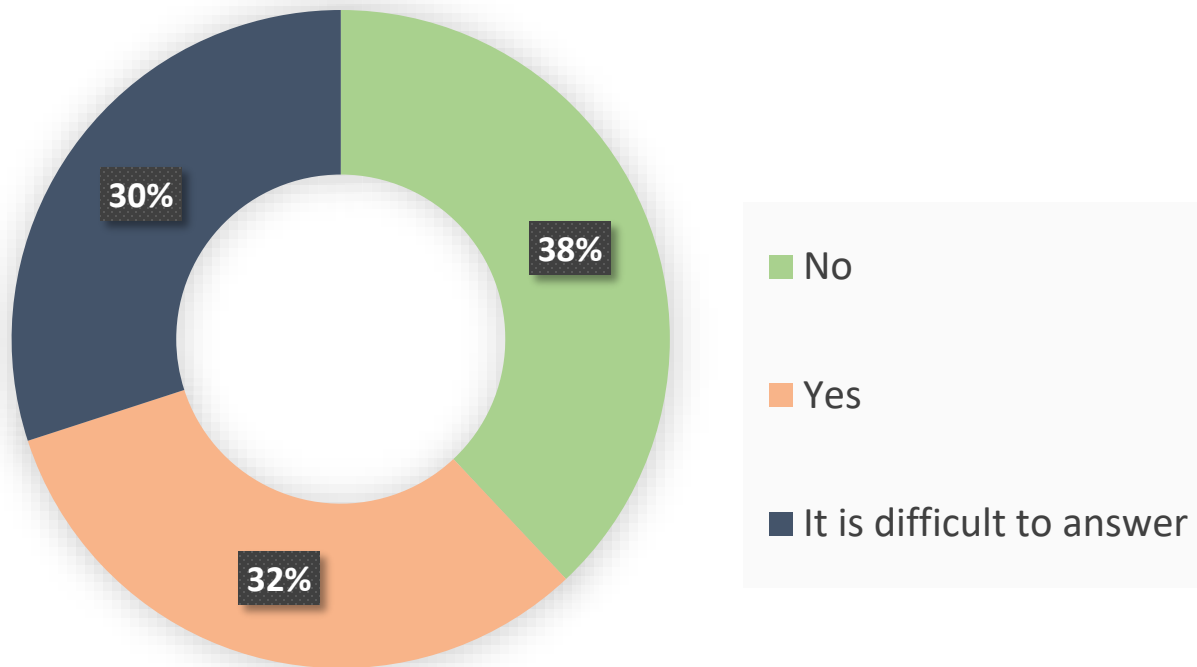
Do you support the proposal to allocate a certain share of the revenues to the state budget, provided, inter alia, by the activities of the State Customs Service, for the needs of customs?



- **The majority of 44% do NOT support the idea of allocating a share of secured revenues to the state budget for customs needs**
- **At the same time, more than a third of respondents support this idea.**
- **It is difficult** for a fifth of the respondents **to define** their position

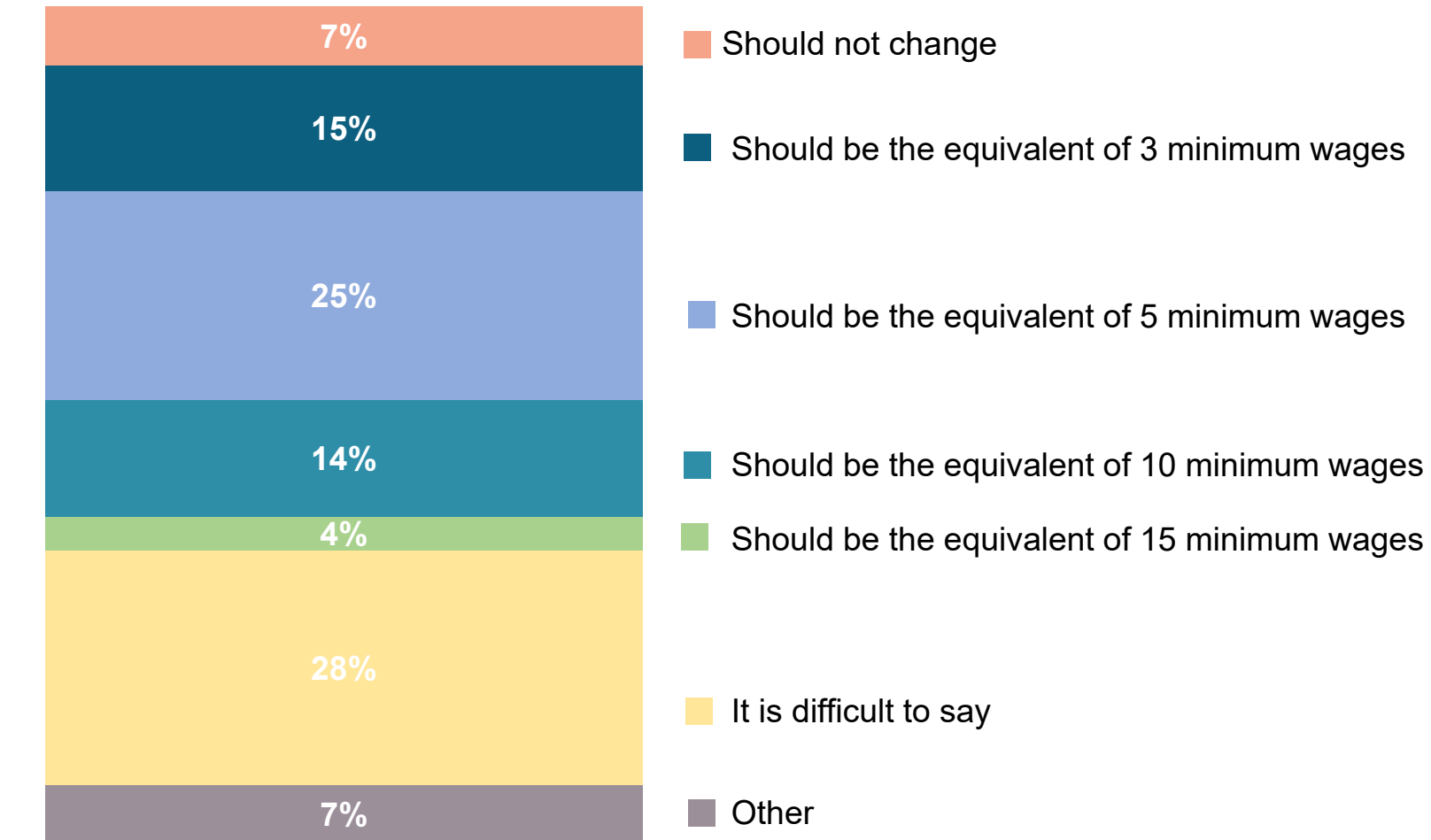
Considering the constant initiation of this idea, it is necessary to discuss it among the main interested parties.

## Do you think it is necessary to increase the salary of customs workers?



- **More than a third (38%) of respondents have a negative attitude to the increase in salaries for customs officers**
- A third of the respondents believe that the salary should be increased
- 30% of respondents find it difficult to decide on their position, which is a high level of uncertainty and may indicate a lack of information about the work of customs and salary levels.

# What, in your opinion, should be the minimum salary level of a customs inspector?



# RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS

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## SOME GENERAL RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS

The respondents' comments mainly related to two views on the problem of the relationship between the level of salaries of civil servants and corrupt practices.

1. The first part of the respondents argued the position that the salary does not affect the level of corruption in the authorities and it is necessary to increase responsibility, including for acts of corruption. High salaries do not guarantee the absence of corruption.
2. Another part of the respondents proved the need to increase the salary of civil servants because of its low level and significant workload and responsibility. A high salary will encourage conscientious performance of one's duties and appreciation of one's work.

# RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS

## Some comments:

- Strengthening criminal liability for corrupt acts of civil servants and the inevitability of punishment.
- Raising the salaries of civil servants will not affect their corrupt practices.
- The salary of a civil servant, including a customs officer, must correspond to the average salary (of Ukraine or the region in which he works).
- Introduction of benefits for civil servants as a partial replacement for a sufficient salary.
- Salary depending on revenue is a mechanism for stimulating business, not state bodies (especially control, judicial, and law enforcement bodies).
- The money a person earns is not always enough. The higher the salary, the higher the needs. And so without restrictions. Yes, the salary should be decent. Today, the minimum wage is a decent wage for an official. Because the majority of Ukrainians live on a lower salary.
- Customs officers are the same people as all other civil servants. No level of salary will reduce corruption if corrupt practices "thrive" and are encouraged in the structure.
- Whatever the salary, "environment" and "opportunity" will contribute to receiving a bribe - the example of judges speaks for itself.



## ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF FIGHTING CORRUPTION IN THE RESPONDENTS' OPINION

1. Strengthening of responsibility, including criminal responsibility for corruption crimes.
2. Introduction of personal responsibility of civil servants for their actions.
3. Ensuring the inevitability of punishment.
4. Improvement of the system of declaration of incomes of civil servants and their family members, including confirmation of received wealth.
5. Introduction of benefits and other incentives for civil servants.

# CONCLUSIONS

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# CONCLUSIONS I

1. The majority of respondents (52%) agreed with the statement about the need to increase the salaries of state authorities' officials to reduce corruption risks during their work.
2. When answering the previous question, the vast majority of respondents (76%) were not affected by recent events related to suspicions of corruption of officials of judicial power.
3. It is interesting that, even though the majority supported an increase in the salary of civil servants, only 38% supported the need to increase the customs inspectors' salary. Only 7% of respondents suggested leaving the current salary level.

## CONCLUSIONS II

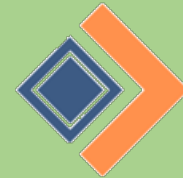
4. The proposal to allocate a certain share of revenues to the state budget for customs needs divided the respondents. But a relative majority of 44% spoke against such an idea. It may indicate the need for a public discussion on this issue.
5. The issue of increasing the salary of customs workers also divided the respondents' opinions. A relatively larger share of 38% has a negative attitude to the increase in salary for customs officers. It may indicate the presence of other views on the causes and means of combating corruption in the state authorities.
6. According to 40% (25% and 15%) of the respondents, a customs inspector should receive the equivalent of 5 or 3 minimum wages established by the state. Almost a third found it difficult to decide on their position.

# WHO ARE WE?

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**ІНСТИТУТ  
ЕКОНОМІЧНИХ ДОСЛІДЖЕНЬ  
ТА ПОЛІТИЧНИХ КОНСУЛЬТАЦІЙ**



**ЗА ЧЕСНУ ТА  
ПРОЗОРУ МИТНИЦЮ**  
Громадська Ініціатива

**The Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting (IER)** is an internationally recognized Ukrainian independent think tank specializing in economic analysis and working out recommendations and development of civil society in Ukraine. Since 2019, IER has been a strategic partner of the European Union for civil society development.



Founded in 1999, the Institute actively cooperates with the Government in determining the priority directions and mechanisms of reforms and conducts an active dialogue with all parties interested in changes for the better.

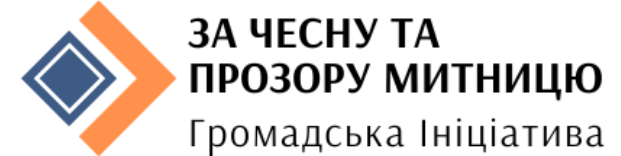
The work of the Institute in the analysis of the problems of economic development of Ukraine, business climate, and international trade is widely used in the development of policy documents at the national and regional level, in particular in preparing Ukraine for accession to the WTO and the conclusion of the Association Agreement, National and regional strategies for the development of SMEs, and the National Export strategy.

**Our mission is to develop an alternative view of Ukraine's key problems of social and economic development.**

The key tasks of our mission at this stage are:

- Developing a professional expert assessment of economics and economic policy, development of strategic and instrumental components of economic policy
- Formation of public opinion through the organization of public dialogue and dissemination of knowledge
- Promoting the development of economic and social sciences, stimulating the development of the research community in Ukraine.

The project "Support of the Public Initiative "For Fair and Transparent Customs" (the Initiative) aims at increasing the capacity of civil society to participate in the development of economic policy in Ukraine. It focuses on the Public Initiative created by IER in 2018.



**The Initiative** is an informal network of CSOs from different regions of Ukraine that care about improving the business climate. The Initiative's activities are aimed at monitoring the implementation of the customs reform and promoting dialogue between the authorities, business and other interested parties regarding the implementation of the institutional reform of the customs in accordance with the principles of good governance and the principles of free trade.

**The overall goal:** to strengthen the capacity of civil society to participate in the development of economic policy in Ukraine through a network of civil society organizations by promoting the activities of the Public Initiative "For Fair and Transparent Customs."

*The publication content is the responsibility of the Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting and does not necessarily represent the position of the European Union, the Renaissance Foundation, or the ATLAS Network.*



# CONTACTS

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*The project "Support to the Civil Society 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 Renaissance Foundation, and the Atlas Network.*

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