

Based on the results of an online survey

# CUSTOMS SERVICE RELOADING: PRO et CONTRA



## 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 "**State Customs Service reloading: pro et contra**" is an attempt to evaluate the main provisions of draft law No. 6490d dated 06.04.2023 "On amendments to the Customs Code of Ukraine regarding the establishing of specifics of service in customs authorities and certification of officials of customs authorities" (hereinafter - the draft law).*

The draft law is aimed at restarting the activities of the State Customs Service of Ukraine. For example, it is proposed to introduce a transparent competitive selection of the Head of the State Customs Service by a highly qualified competitive committee created with the participation of international and foreign donors. In addition, an annual assessment of the activities of the head of customs is implemented with the participation of international and foreign donors. To strengthen his powers, it is proposed to allow personnel appointments in the customs office without the approval of the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine. An increase in the customs officers' salaries and their re-certification, is also foreseen.

These measures, according to their initiators, should contribute to increasing the stability and efficiency of the customs authorities' activities, the development of customs affairs and economic growth, and the formation of an effective basis for reducing corruption and pressure on business.

**The survey is aimed** at studying the expectations and attitudes of interested persons to the provisions of the draft law No. 6490-d dated 04/06/2023, aimed at restarting the State Customs Service of Ukraine.

# METHODOLOGY RESPONDENTS

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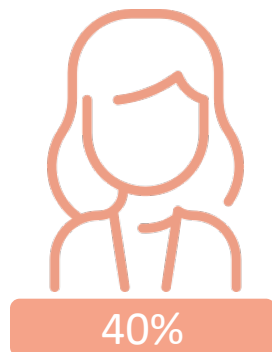
## METHODOLOGY

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

The field stage was held from July 24 to August 11, 2023.

## RESPONDENTS

104 respondents from 20 regions of Ukraine took part in the online survey (Vinnytsya, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zhytomyr, Zakarpattia, Zaporizhzhya, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kyiv, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Odessa, Poltava, Rivne, Sumy, Ternopil, Kharkiv, Khmelnytsky, Cherkasy, Chernivtsi, Chernihiv) and Kyiv city.



Середній вік опитаних – 45.



## TYPE OF RESPONDENTS ACTIVITIES

What is your activity?

- *Public authorities*
- *Customs*
- *Scientific and teaching activities*
- *Entrepreneurship*



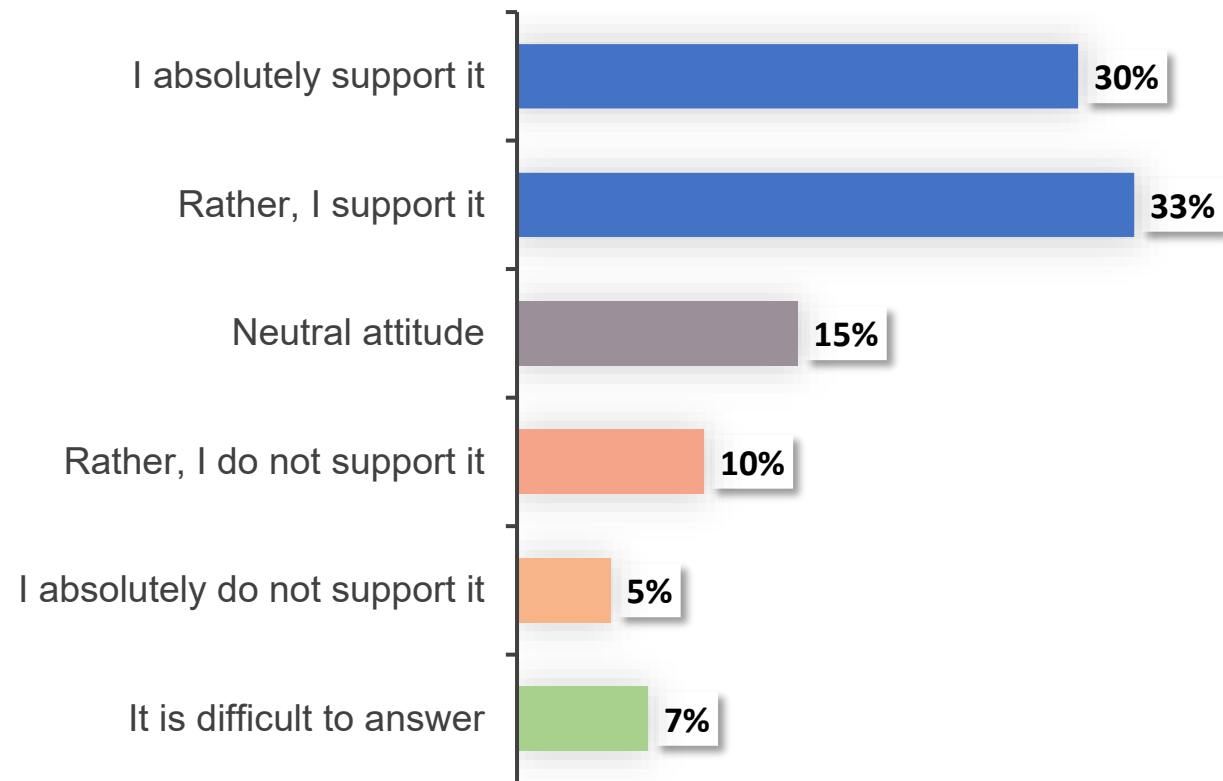
# Assessment of provisions aimed at reloading customs

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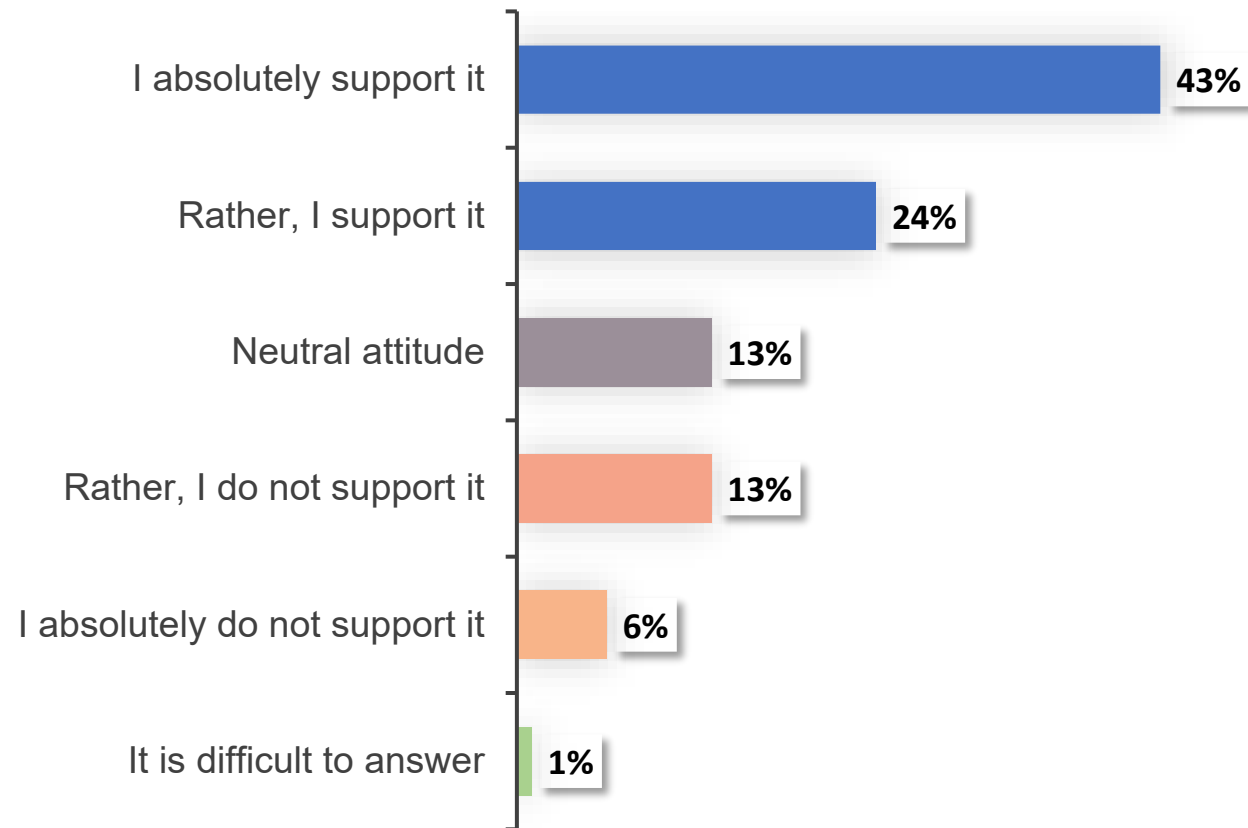
## CUSTOMS SERVICE RELOADING: PRO et CONTRA

Do you agree with the proposal that the appointment and dismissal of heads and deputy heads of territorial bodies and independent structural subdivisions of the central apparatus of the State Customs Service should be carried out without the approval of the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine?



## CUSTOMS SERVICE RELOADING: PRO et CONTRA

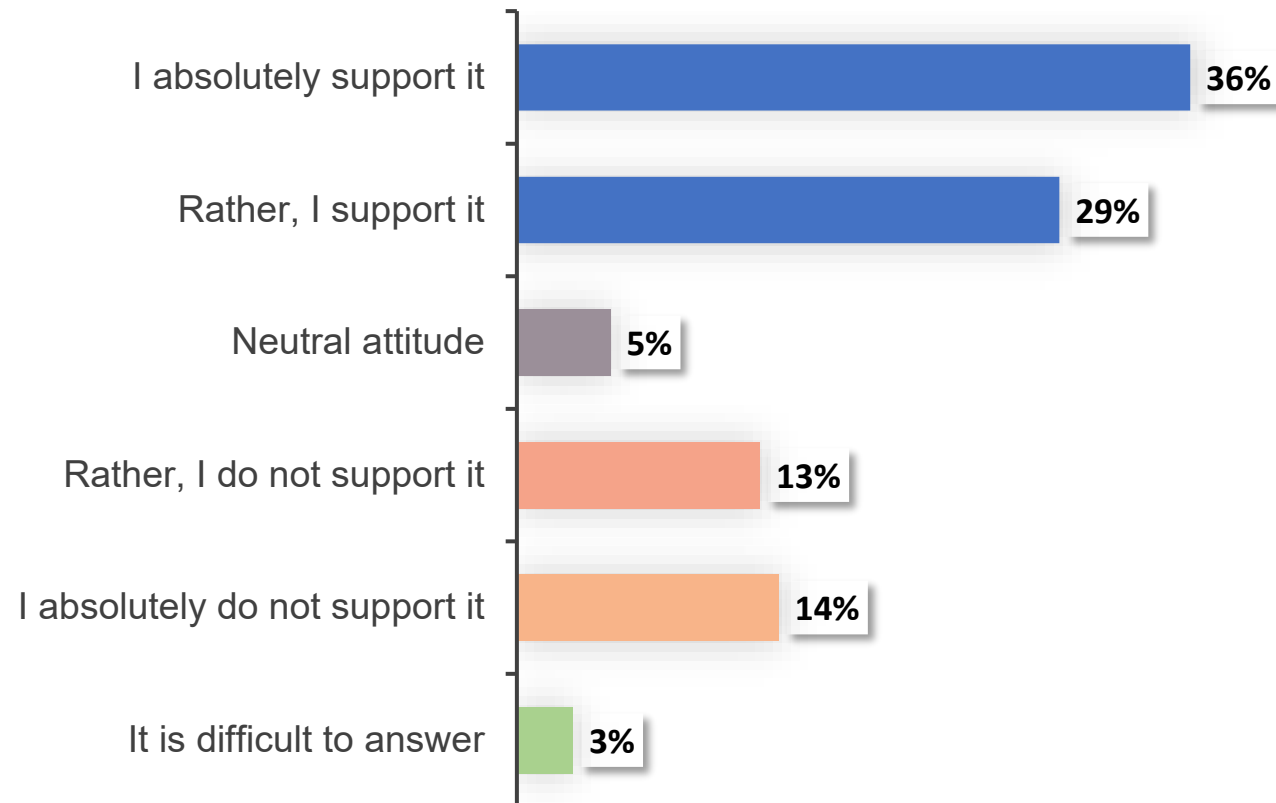
Do you support the proposal that the same person cannot hold the position of Head of the State Customs Service for more than two terms in a row?





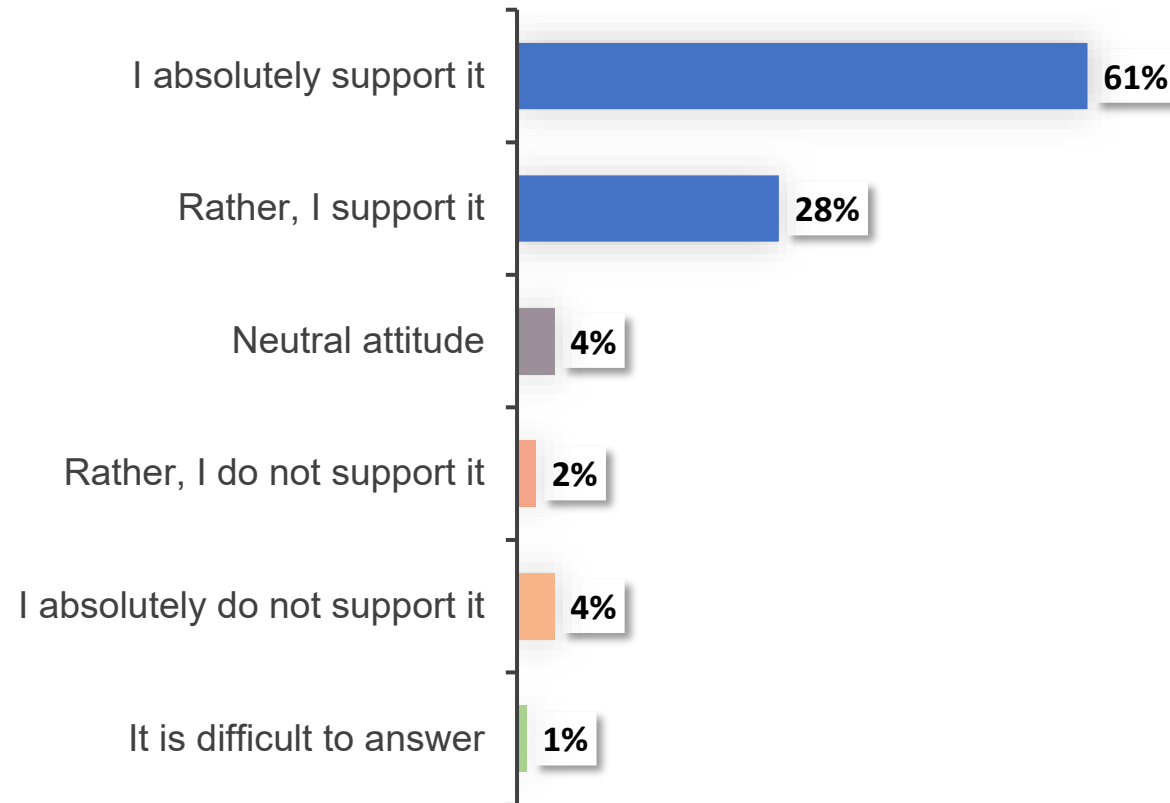
## CUSTOMS SERVICE RELOADING: PRO et CONTRA

Do you support the proposal that representatives of international and foreign organizations that have provided Ukraine with international technical assistance in structural reforms, financial and technical support, prevention, and countering corruption should play a key role in the selection of candidates for the position of the Head of the State Customs Service?



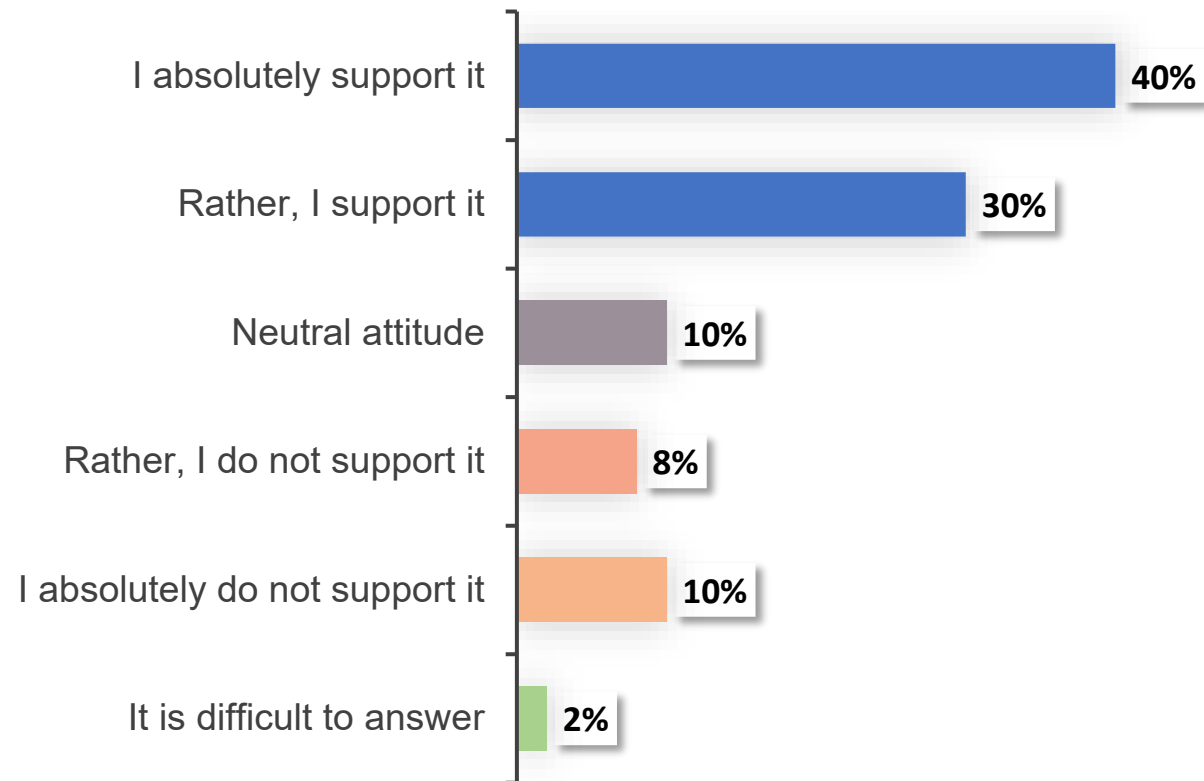
## CUSTOMS SERVICE RELOADING: PRO et CONTRA

Do you agree with the proposal that it is necessary to conduct an annual external independent assessment of the effectiveness of the Head of the State Customs Service?



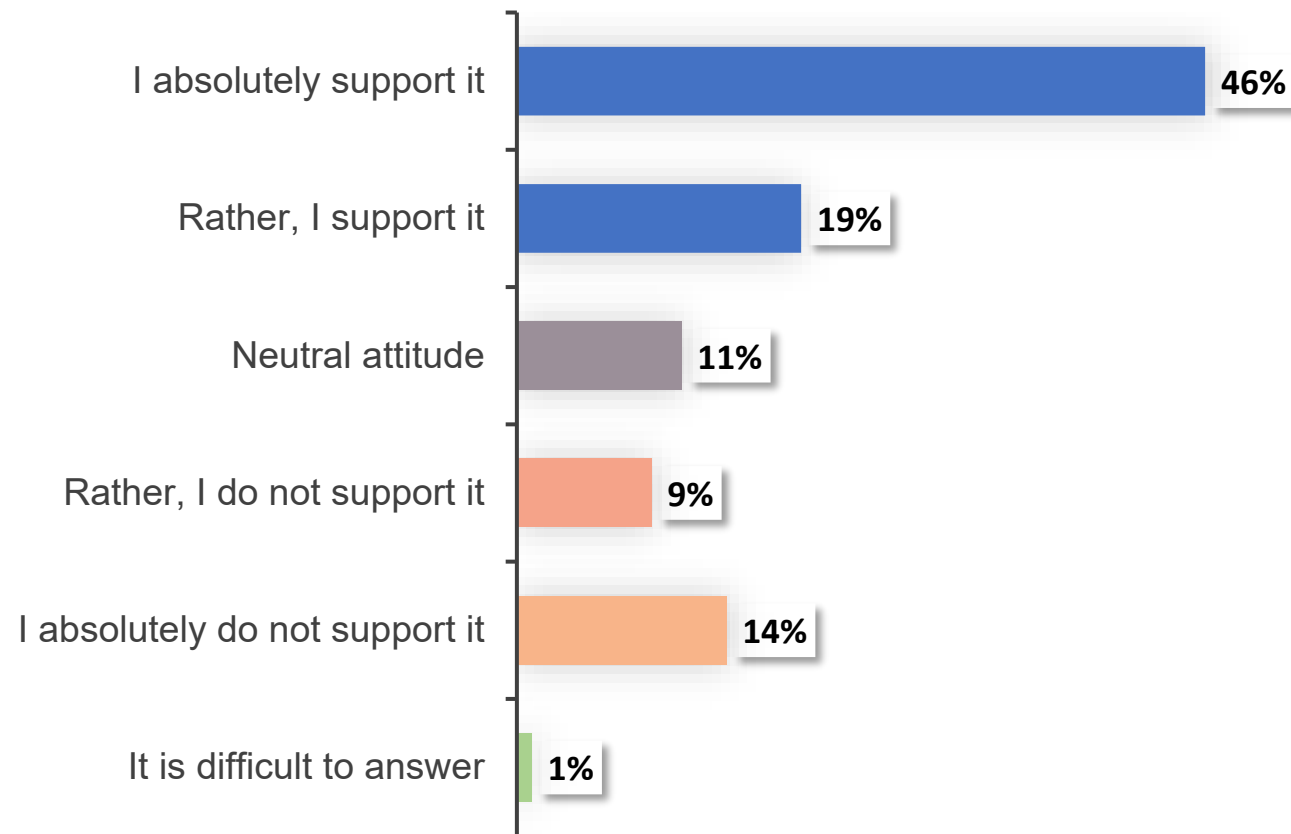
## CUSTOMS SERVICE RELOADING: PRO et CONTRA

Do you agree with the proposal that representatives of international and foreign organizations that provided Ukraine with international technical assistance in structural reforms, financial and technical support, prevention, and countering corruption should play a key role in the annual external independent assessment of the effectiveness of the activities of the Head of the State Customs Service?



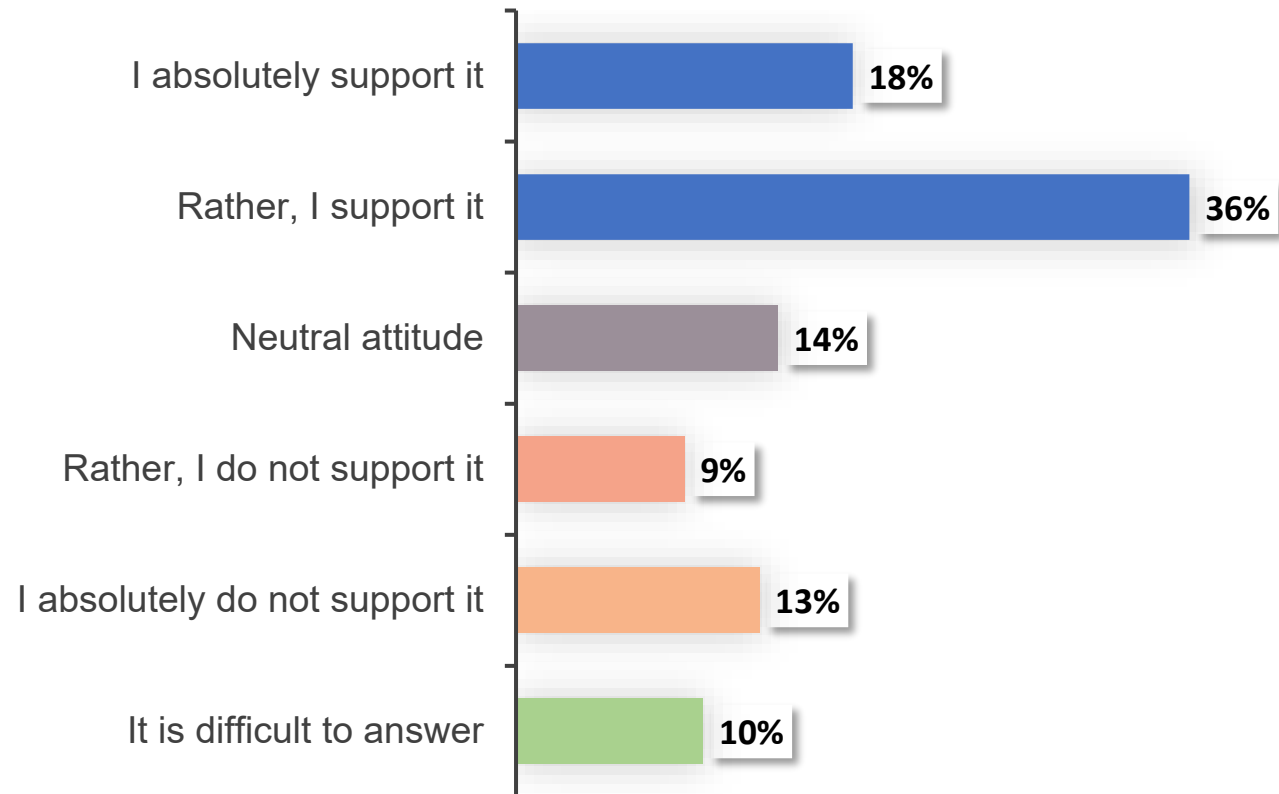
## CUSTOMS SERVICE RELOADING: PRO et CONTRA

Do you agree with the proposal regarding the need to conduct attestation of customs authorities' officials to confirm the appropriate level of qualification, professional competence, and compliance with the position held?



## CUSTOMS SERVICE RELOADING: PRO et CONTRA

Do you support the thesis that the adoption and implementation of the draft Law of Ukraine No. 6490-д dated 04/06/2023 "On Amendments to the Customs Code of Ukraine Regarding the Establishment of Features of Service in Customs Authorities and Certification of Officials of Customs Authorities" will increase the stability and efficiency of the State Customs Service of Ukraine work and reduce corruption in customs?



# RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS

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## RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS

1. A large number of respondents' comments indicate the relevance of the issue of "customs reload"
2. A significant number of comments refer to the re-certification of customs officials and indicate a negative attitude of customs officials to such proposals
3. In the comments, respondents support measures to "reload customs" but do not expect quick changes
4. A significant number of comments support the restoration of wealth declaration



## SOME COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS

### ***Regarding the election of heads of state authorities by representatives of international organizations:***

- "The experience of the competitive election of heads of executive service bodies with the participation of international organizations did not increase the efficiency of the work of such bodies. The election of one manager according to any procedure without the possibility of forming the authority from competent people does not provide an opportunity to carry out qualitative changes"
- "In my opinion, representatives of public organizations of Ukraine, not only foreign ones, should also be involved in the control. Although their presence is certainly important"

### ***Regarding certification of customs workers***

- "Conducting annual/periodic attestation does not provide an assessment of the level of competence of workers (everyone always passes attestation)"
- "I am a customs officer. I've already been through all the circles of certification, re-certification, and training hell. Where else can I re-certify? In the draft law, it should be noted that citizens who enter the customs service for the first time or who have not worked at the customs for a long time pass such attestations. Why do you go through everything again if you have already gone through it? The team of customs workers who passed such a procedure should not face exams again under the banner of another law. It creates tension in the team and leads to understandable indignation. I express the opinion of many people"
- "How much can you mock the customs officers. There was already a reboot in 2021!"
- "Attestation is ineffective given the low salary level of customs officers; people currently lack motivation. A competitive salary increase is only promised from year to year, but the certification of knowledge of the law and integrity was already passed a couple of years ago, and where is the salary increase for ordinary inspectors??? There are people who got nervous during these tests, and an ambulance was called for them - for people of pre-retirement age, this is generally bullying."



## SOME COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS

### ***Regarding the fight against corruption:***

- "Restoration of declaration will help reduce corruption at customs"
- "To overcome corruption in customs, it is necessary to introduce a legally established algorithm of responsibility of officials in case of committing illegal actions and making illegal decisions. This responsibility should occur automatically and not depend on the decision of the management of the customs authority."
- "It is necessary to submit property declarations for the heads of customs authorities before receiving a position, and then to prove the origin of all assets; this also applies to relatives (and not only close relatives, but all of them)"

### ***Regarding "customs reload":***

- "I consider it advisable to completely reboot customs"
- "First of all, it is necessary to significantly improve the working conditions and determine the responsibility for the implementation of the current legal acts by the workers of the State Migration Service of Ukraine. At the same time, the personnel composition of customs bodies should be changed based on the results of practical work. A total reboot will have a negative result"
- "For the "reboot" to be successful, it must be accompanied by a radical reduction of the discretion of customs officials (in particular, but not only, in the matter of determining the customs value) and an equally radical increase in transparency with independent external control of the work of customs posts through means of video surveillance, duplication of all documentation, and images from scanners in real-time. All cargo for which there is no information from the customs authorities of the country of origin must be scanned. The advantages provided by the status of AEO should be minimized. Instead, a simplified procedure should be applied to imports from countries that provide customs information in the framework of the exchange"

# CONCLUSIONS

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## CONCLUSIONS

1. The vast majority of respondents supported all proposals aimed at reloading the State Customs Service of Ukraine, set out in the draft law
2. The proposal to conduct an annual external independent assessment of the effectiveness of the Head of the State Customs Service work gathered the greatest support from the respondents - 89%
3. A significant number of respondents (70%) supported the participation of representatives of international and foreign organizations in the annual external independent assessment of the effectiveness of the Head of the State Customs Service work
4. 67% of respondents supported the proposal regarding the impossibility of holding the position of Head of the State Customs Service by one person for more than two terms in a row
5. 63% of respondents supported the appointment and dismissal of the heads of the structural divisions of the State Customs Service without the approval of the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine

## CONCLUSIONS

6. 65% of respondents believe that representatives of international and foreign organizations should play a key role in the selection of candidates for the position of the head
7. 65% of respondents supported the need to conduct attestation of customs authorities' officials in to confirm the appropriate level of qualification
8. Despite the significant support for all the innovations of the draft law, the statement that the adoption and implementation of its norms will increase the stability and efficiency of customs work and reduce the level of corruption was supported by only 54% of respondents, which is less than the support for individual norms of the draft law

**The vast majority of respondents supports the measures of the draft law and spoke FOR the reload of the State Customs Service of Ukraine**

**At the same time, slightly more than half of the respondents believe in the success of such measures**

# 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.

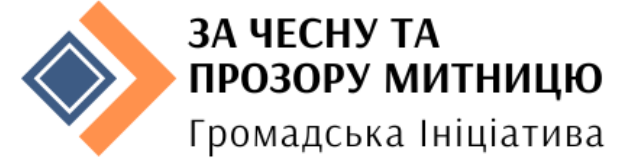
The work of the Institute in the analysis of the problems of economic development of Ukraine, business climate, and international trade is widely used in the development of policy documents at the national and regional level, in particular in preparing Ukraine for accession to the WTO and the conclusion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