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**Crime as a Cultural Problem. The Relevance of Perceptions of Corruption to Crime Prevention. A Comparative Cultural Study in the EU-Accession States Bulgaria and Romania, the EU-Candidate States Turkey and Croatia and the EU-States Germany, Greece and United Kingdom**

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**Perceptions of Corruption in Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Croatia, Greece, Germany and the United Kingdom**

**A Content Analysis of Interviews from Target Group Politics**



## BULGARIA

### Target Group Politics

#### *Definitions*

At present, politicians in Bulgaria – both from the government and the opposition – “recognise” the “widespread character” of corruption and are generally ready to discuss the phenomenon in public. It has to be noted that this has not always been so. In the period 1998-2001 when the issue of corruption emerged for the first time as a public priority, there was a clear cut division between the discourse of the opposition on corruption and the discourse of the ruling parties. As described above, the latter stuck much more to the “legalistic” definitions of corruption, while the former resorted to inflated, “public interest-based” definitions. This initial division could be explained by the fear of the governing parties to “recognise” or “admit” the existence of corruption “unless proven in judicial proceedings”; such admittance would amount to recognising certain complicity in corrupt activities. Today this fear is gone, and the question is why?

What has changed since the end of the 1990ies is that governing politicians now seem to believe that they could also “score points” in a debate over corruption. That is why the corruption discourse has become not an exclusive theme for the propaganda of the opposition, but also a mobilisational, electoral tool of the governing parties as well. When somebody opens a debate about corruption, they could take part in this debate on an equal footing by pointing out “measures taken” against the phenomenon, “strategies”, “action plans”, “anti-corruption commissions and bodies”, etc.

Thus, we conclude that governing politicians no longer stick exclusively to a “legalistic” definition of corruption (as defined in the law books), but also engage in debates using inflated, public interest-based ones. In any event, in contrast to the opposition, they insist on a certain “depoliticising” of the phenomenon. They accept that corruption is “abuse of power”, but “power” in their view is diffused in many centres at different levels, and is not concentrated in the government. Thus, corruption could be encountered in the judiciary, the local self-government bodies, the lower levels of the public administration, the opposition parties, and in the private sector (including the NGOs). The “diffusion” of power is related to a concept of “diffused responsibility” for corruption as well: it is not the government which is essentially responsible, but a plurality of actors.

The opposition politicians, in contrast, try to concentrate the responsibility for corruption in government. So, they both use an inflated and all-inclusive concepts of corruption: the specificity is that the government is playing a role in one way or another in all these forms of corruption, either as a direct perpetrator as well, or as a conduit. At the very least, the government is responsible for a given form of corruption indirectly, by providing conditions which favour its emergence.

A particularly interesting conceptual debate about corruption took place in Bulgaria in the autumn of 2007 in relation to the numerous allegations of vote-buying in the recent local elections. The allegedly wide-spread vote-buying scandalised the public. In response, the leader Ahmed Dogan of the politicians from the ruling coalition party Movement for Rights and Freedoms stated in public that “The buying of votes is a European phenomenon. If the



business feels uncomfortable and wants to get in the power, it will use this technology. Democracy will survive the vote-buying”. Many were additionally scandalised by these words, and read them (properly in our view) as an attempt to “normalise” corrupt forms of electioneering. The surprising fact was, however, that there was no concerted reaction on behalf of the rest of the political establishment against this attempt, however. In our previous report we pointed out how the same politician attempted to “normalise” another corrupt practice – clientelistic links between parties and companies (so called “circles of firms”). Then, however, there was a much more serious public reaction and lack of tolerance to his ideas. In the autumn of 2007, our interviews and informal conversations with members of the political elite encountered a higher level of tolerance to vote-buying. One of the reasons for this tolerance could be the cross-party usage of this dubious electoral tool. Another, more surprising reason, which emerged, was the fact that vote buying introduces “market” relationships in politics. In current Bulgarian political language and thinking, the “market forces” generally produce good and efficient results. Ergo, marketisation of politics might not be that reproachable phenomenon after all.

Finally, something which is worth noting at the conceptual level, the process of “depoliticisation” of corruption (which is best seen in the parlance of governing parties) goes on along with a process of “ethnicisation” of the phenomenon. The recent local elections, as well as the European Parliament elections earlier in the year, demonstrated that increasingly the party of the ethnic Turks in the country is seen as a the hot-bed of corrupt practices. This party is seen as “clientelistic”, “patronage-prone”, “feudal” in its attempts to control its electorate economically. In elections, it is seen as one of the primary perpetrators of corrupt practices – from vote rigging and buying, to the “bussing” of people (emigrants) from abroad to take part in the elections. Although part of these allegations might be founded in facts, the excessive emphasis on the irregular practices in a specific party cannot be explained otherwise than through its “ethnic”, “Turkish” character.

### *Causes and Origin*

The “depoliticisation” of the concept of corruption is best seen in the perceptions of the causes and origins of the phenomenon. The governing parties and politicians seem to have won this debate, since the causes of corruption are not looked for in the character and individual morality of specific politicians, but in institutional, structural factors which shape the incentives in specific ways, so that individual cannot act in corrupt ways. Simply put, the roots of corruption are deep, the phenomenon is here to stay, and all we could do is to engage in serious, long-term oriented reforms, which should go in the following direction: downsizing of the state, lowering taxes, taking out the state from the economy, deregulating the economy, diminishing the licensing procedure, etc. This programme seems to be a cross party consensus.

On top of this programme the opposition parties and politicians are of course more insistent on personnel reforms, as far as they see these as a possible tool leading to pre-term elections.

A decreasing minority of politicians seem to be ready to blame the “communist past “ for corruption. Seventeen years after the start of the transition “anticommunism” has largely lost its mobilisational force. A telling fact for this trend is the relatively low interest which the opening of the secret services files of the former communist regime sparked in Bulgaria in



2007. A small group of right-of-the-centre parties and politicians attempted to draw public attention to the fact that important present-day politicians – including President Georgi Parvanov – were active secret service collaborators. The interpretation of these right-of-the-centre parties was related to corruption: they were essentially arguing that the network of former secret police agents has managed to “infiltrate” the state as a whole, which raised not only moral problems, but also issues of lack of transparency, possible manipulation, hidden influences, etc. Their conclusion was that because of such reasons, people who had for seventeen years not disclosed their “true identity” had no right to continue occupying public office. This argument, which would strike many as reasonable, remained largely unpopular, however: it drew support from very small quarters.

### *Effects*

Politicians no longer diminish the importance of corruption as a problem. At present, they – both governing and opposition parties – admit that corruption is a serious public concern and that it has negative effects on the economy, democracy, and the general prosperity of society.

Apart from the above-mentioned attempts to “normalise” corruption, no one has ventured to come out in public to defend the functionality of corruption. Our interviews confirm this statement – ideas that actually corruption could be good for the economy in one way or another are not popular.

### *Size and Scope*

As to the size and scope of corruption, the opposition and the governing parties seem to differ. Representatives of both of these express the view of the wide-spread character of the phenomenon, but they tend to look for it at different places. Respondents from governing parties tend to stick to the “diffusion” theory of corruption: corruption takes place at many levels and in different centres of power in society: the government is not the primary site of corrupt activities. The opposition representatives tend to stick more to the “concentrated” model of corruption, which in one way or another is centred around the government.

As to the measurement of corruption, politicians rarely believe that these measures reflect objective realities. Still, such measurements are to be taken seriously. Opposition parties are interested in “independent” assessments and measures. “monitoring” by external actors, etc. Governments are increasingly interested in the production of their own data.

### *Anti-corruption Measures*

This is the point where the opposition and the government differ mostly. The former see the most important measures in terms of political changes: personnel changes, and eventually government changes. They stress the “lack of political will” argument a lot. Governing parties, not surprisingly, stress more long-term institutional reforms, the setting up of commissions and other anti-corruption bodies. Other anti-corruption measures, as awareness raising, public education, etc, are also popular among governing elites. Finally, co-operation with civil society on the issue of corruption becomes of crucial importance both for the



governing and the opposition. This paradoxically brings these two together, because both of them look for cooperation with one and the same actors. Paradoxically, cooperation with the same actors from civil society leads to a certain “depoliticisation” of anti-corruption, despite the attempts of the opposition to “politicise” the issue.



## **ROMANIA**

In the Romanian report analysis was based in a comparison between perceptions of corruption regarding different fields of the problem without distinguishing in different target groups. For more information please see the Romanian report in “Scientific Report Romania 2007” in this web site.



## TURKEY

### Perceptions of Corruption

#### *Analysis of the Target Group Politics*

Corruption is defined as a set of nontransparent, inexplicit, and uncompetitive behavior contrary to the legal regulations and moral principles in a society. It causes unfair competition which hinders development and justice. There are cases; however, that corruption takes place in accordance with the law so it is not so blatantly obvious. The existence of such cases requires the definition of the term to be revised.

Corruption is a global issue. Despite being a highly recorded economy, there is significant corruption in the USA as well. The bribery process is legalized; it is accepted as a component in accounts. Thus, developing or non-western countries are continually blamed for corruption by Western countries. However, the most extensive corruption in the history was committed by these very same countries and their international institutions. During 1970s and 1980s, the World Bank resources were granted to dictatorial regimes in developing countries and the “pickings” of the West were transferred to Western banks and financial institutions. By huge amounts of interest that cannot be paid, the natural resources and the geostrategic values of the country were acquired. In this sense, the invasion of Iraq, by the USA is also an example of corruption.

In Turkey, the thought that it would not become apparent somehow and the fact that both parties are content in corrupt exchange relations are the main reasons why it is so widespread and inured socially. People’s main complaint related to corruption lies in the fact that they somehow do not have the opportunity to access to certain networks in which they can receive advantages.

The majority of Turkish society is not against corruption. On the contrary, corruption is even presented as something natural in Turkey’s cultural codes through several idioms and proverbs. Turkish people are loyal to each other rather than the principles. The proverb, “A cup of coffee commits one to forty years of friendship” is a part of people behavioral pattern. This cultural code therefore makes patronage system a natural notion.

Moreover, an additional cause that triggers corruption and the ignorance towards it at the social level is the unfair distribution of income. In a social body where certain groups are more privileged than the others; where there is inequality, corruption becomes a natural practice and people become inured to it easily.

The proportion of those involved in grand corruption is one in myriad and yet, a big part of petty corruption is related to the distribution of income. As long as politics does not correct this distribution, it will loose its legitimacy and power. And, this lays the grounds for corruption. Corruption has increased in the Ozal period thanks to a perverse liberal transformation. It is increasing at a faster pace during the AKP government. This is again a problem that deepens hand in hand with the legitimacy paradigm of politics.



Regarding the responsibility of the State for corruption issue, two basic approaches are identified:

- The State institutions that have the responsibility to serve to public operate quite poorly and their cadres are formed improperly, almost to a point to hide unemployment. In addition, government officials and almost all those in charge have no respect to the public they serve. This reality can not be changed by laws. The reasons for bribery should be sought in this mindset. Large-scale and small-scale bribery should be considered different in extent but not in definition. Bribery stems from the disrespect of the State towards its citizens. Citizens always fear the State in this country and especially its tax mechanism. These mutual perceptions must be changed in order to fight against corruption.
- Proprietorship appeared in Turkish society much later than the Western counterparts. Therefore, this ongoing process (of proprietorship) generates an important basis for corruption. In Turkey, land is still a source of great profit. Its allocation is a way of making politics and there is an absolute consensus on this matter. Following example among many others could be given to support this view: In a meeting of Istanbul Municipality Zoning Committee, both the government and the opposition parties, which go up against each other on almost every topic, come to terms on 118 plans in less than twenty minutes. Theoretically, if these plans had been discussed comprehensively, it would have at least taken several hours for one plan only, and therefore, the meeting would have lasted 3-4 days at least. This is nothing more than a corrupt act. However, the majority of people are not in opposition, let alone supportive to this course of action. Right before the General Elections of 2007, the current Prime Minister expressed overtly that he was residing in an illegal building and obtained a reasonable amount of votes through this discourse. This is because the number of people who dwell in illegal buildings is twice as many of those living in legal buildings.

Politics, media, jurisdiction, police, NGOs and business world are all involved in corruption in the same proportion. It would be unfair to blame one, and disregard others since corruption is not something single-sided. So far, politicians are perceived as the chief responsible of corrupt behavior. They serve as a convenient scapegoat for the dishonesty and corruption of the system. It is undisputable that politicians are primarily responsible to find ways to fight against corruption and their efforts are far from enough. Turkbank case was not opened because the parliament wanted to fight against corruption; it was rather a means of a completely different political fight. Yet still, in terms of getting involved with corrupt acts, they may even be the least guilty ones with respect to other groups. It is also true that politicians are not fulfilling their responsibilities to fight against corruption

It is true that governments, when they need votes of confidence or want to make laws enter into certain contracts with the MPs to gain their support. Yet still the excessive centralization of the system makes it difficult for governments to inspect their own decisions on transfer of resources. It is usually politicians who pay a price for the weak inspection body due to excessive centralized state structure. And, the public opinion, at this point, is manipulated by certain interest groups.



But still certain relation patterns in politics lay the foundations of corrupt administration and favoritism:

- Political parties are formed in a chain of command. Who is going to be an MP is in the leading cadre's initiative. It is natural to expect less democratic behavior from MPs who are under the command of one center. Once you are elected, you start getting directions from the party leaders; you are expected to behave according to their instructions. In such a structure an MP feels more indebted to the cadres that make him elected rather than to the electors.
- Last but not least, it can be stated that the agenda of Turkey and of the parliament is not generally parallel to each other. In other words, MPs and politicians from different political parties can easily make friends with one another. This automatically generates another form of loyalty. One can easily monitor these bonds in commissions, meetings, etc. In such a communitarian/solidarist structure of politics, the political leaders in Turkey, can easily overlook corruption, though they themselves are not directly involved in it.

To understand the systematic nature of corruption in the realm of politics in Turkey, the construction industry must be examined closely. Currently, the construction industry has the highest power within the last 20 years. The growth rate of the debts of Turkey and the growth rate of this industry go hand in hand. The constructing industry has many supporters in politics. When those supporters become members of the parliament or become ministers, they have impact upon investment decisions. And there emerges the trivet of businessman – bureaucrat and politician. If one side of the trivet is broken, the system does not function properly. Constructors expand their business by using public resources and they become more powerful within the system. Then they get involved in politics. In consequence of all these, Turkish public has to pay a huge price to close budget deficits with tax and high inflation. But no one seems to stand up against this fact. In a country where people are silent against corruption, the struggle with it becomes utopian.

It is not also wise to expect state officials to give a fight against corruption. Yet, many of them at important positions are closely involved with criminal groups one way or another. A politician for example, wants to close down illegal casinos. He would see senior government or state officials such as judges, chief police officers, gendarmerie commanders, district revenue officers and even some members of the parliament gamble there. He would see their names recorded in the account books of the casino owners. There is always an immense potential of criminal acts in such places. It would be naïve to expect a police chief who gambles in such an illegal casino to place its owner under arrest.

*Party financing:* Although the financing of politics is perceived as a disastrous issue in Turkey by both interviewees, two conflicting approaches are presented:

- The law related to party financing limits the amount of donations significantly. This leads to corruption in the financing of political parties especially through the relationship of media and political parties. A political party wants to advertise in a media organization. They bargain and they get a great discount for the advertisement. The amount of discount is not in vain. It is the discount of corruption. No proposition for the transparency of the financing of politics has ever been taken into account so



far. If transparency was attained, many unfair competition issues would thus be eliminated.

- Political parties do have sufficient financial resources for their campaigns and other expenses and even more than they need. The state also provides financial aid. Therefore, it is not possible to state that political parties are in financial difficulties. In the past, the central administration of a political party did not provide financial aid for their local offices. The condition is different now. Thus, they receive money from local offices; from the offices they share the profit. The organization, the political party, does not receive the fund for itself. This could be defined in the context of “loyalty culture” and this type of loyalty consists of the financing of the party. That is to say, there is enough money for the financing and the state provides this fund and it is legal. However, this condition does not mean that there is no corruption and illicit money. The Mercimek case is an example for this.

#### *Conclusion (on prevention)*

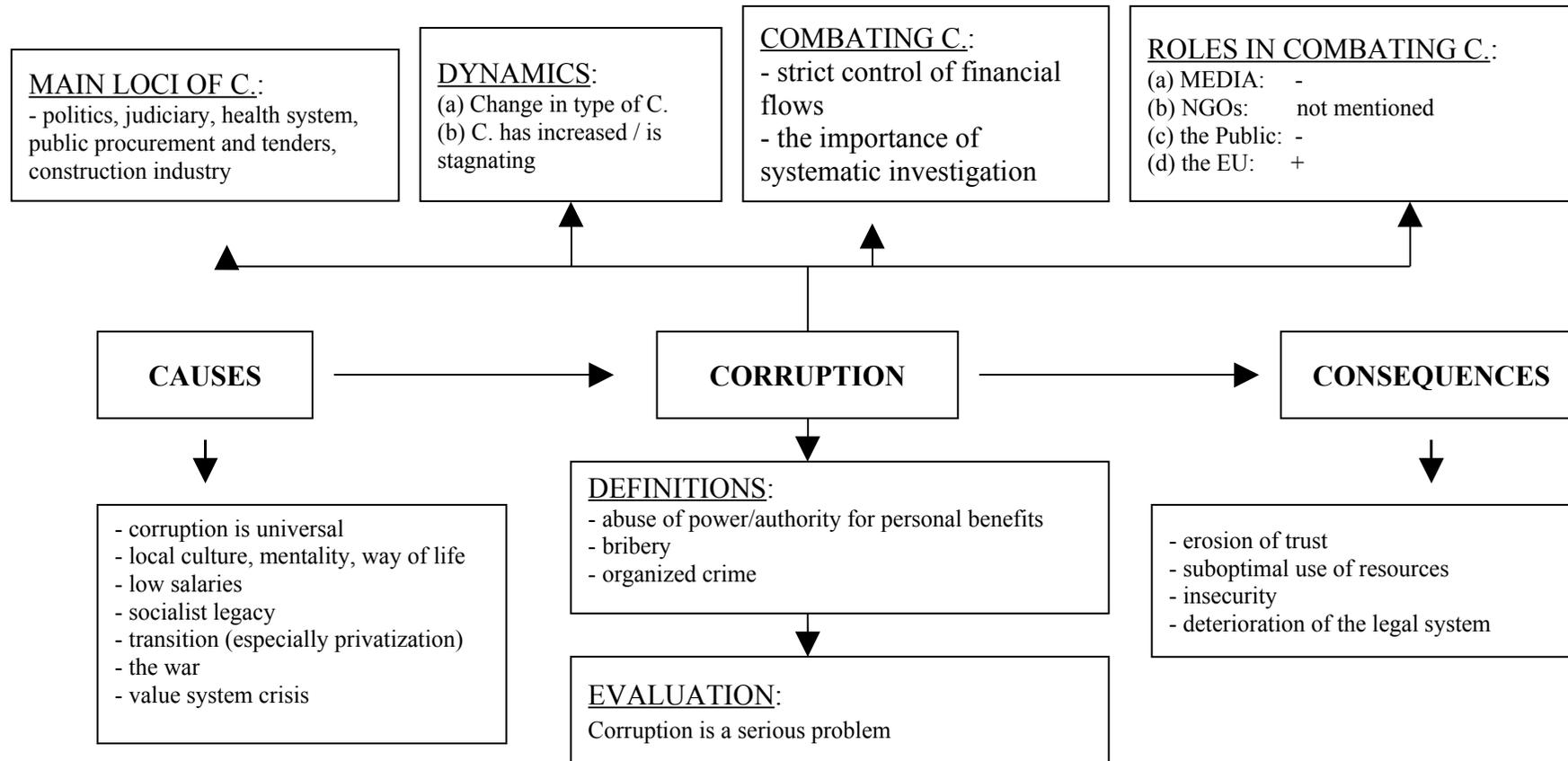
The parliamentary immunity must be limited to political acts and freedom of speech, and all members of parliament must be liable and equal before law for crimes of corruption and other types of crimes as ordinary people.

However, limiting the immunities of MPs is not enough. All government officials must be completely liable and equal before law, as well.

EU integration process will contribute to Turkey in terms of fighting against corruption in almost every field. It will certainly have a positive legal impact on immunity and transparency since EU norms are more advanced than the ones in Turkey. In case of full integration, the whole picture will change radically.



# CROATIA TARGET GROUP POLITICS





## GERMANY

### Perceptions of Corruption

#### Target Group Politics

##### *Outline*

The evaluation of the interviews from the target group *politics* does not focus on corruption as a criminal act. Following the belief that the phenomenon is much wider than what penal law foresees it to be rather draws attention to those areas of illegitimate action that are (perceived to be) or can give rise to corrupt conduct. The general interrelations between politics and economics, but also the narrow domain of party financing are considered to be such areas. Under the assumption of these interrelations being exchange relations the analysis delineates fields of exchange actions that can be considered as spaces of illegitimate conduct. On the basis of certain recurring types of exchange relations taking the form of granting/receiving advantages the notion of political corruption can be extended to include illegitimate action consisting in the transfer of knowledge/experience resources from the public to the private domain. As far as economy in its exchange relations with politics is concerned illegitimate conduct should be seen embedded in the context of those strategies with which the economic sphere tries to influence state politics to comply with private interests. In the political parties illegitimate conduct can among other things take the forms of violating inner-party democracy or financial issues.

##### *Analysis*

In order to explain the systemic nature of corrupt conduct in the realm of politics one has to take one step back and identify the nature of the action involved. Undoubtedly, what every act of political corruption originates in is *granting advantages* [P2: 272-273], which need not necessarily be of monetary nature. The nature of the action of granting advantages can in turn be traced back to the social relations of exchange. Taking this for granted means that exchange relations taking place between the social spheres of economy and politics may prove the grounds of corrupt conduct. This is particularly true in the case of political actors that become involved as managers or consultant experts for the private economy after quitting politics. As such this type of employment change does not suffice to qualify the relation between politics and economy as an exchange one with corruption implications. Nevertheless, if one takes into account the numerous cases of politicians instrumentalising knowledge and know-how from public administration for the advancement of private career purposes, it can function as an indicator of the existence of exchange relations that violate certain rules. Now, regardless of what form these rules may have, it is certain that corrupt conduct as a type of exchange relation cannot be confounded with that segment of rule-violating exchange relations that is explicitly sanctioned by the penal law. For it pertains to exchange practices that despite being perceived as *illegitimate* do not as such fall under penal jurisdiction [P2: 1496-1501]. Therefore

- (1) (political) corrupt conduct includes both the dimensions of prosecutable in a penal sense and what is perceived as (social-ethical) illegitimate action.



Of course the question arises to what extent this (social-ethical) illegitimacy can be grasped more concretely by narrowing the range of exchange relations exclusively to those suspected of obeying to or complying with the logic of granting/receiving advantages, but falling short of being downright criminal in judicial sense. One way to do this is to analyse the rationality or types of rationality underlying the exchange relations between state/politics and the economy from the perspective of the actors involved. Taking politics/politicians as the starting point (perceived of as) illegitimate, but not yet sanctionably granting advantages, e. g. political corruption in a wide sense of the term, may take three forms:

- There is a transfer of knowledge and administrative know-how from the public to the private sector. Politicians switching to managerial functions in private corporations [P2: 274-280] help accrue the relative advantages needed for both in terms of sectoral business competition or public contracting. Viewed the other way around, switching to the private sector means that the politician receives advantages (i.e. often very well remunerated posts) on the grounds of bringing in knowledge or public relations capital. Seen from this perspective, the difference between illegality/illegitimacy regarding corrupt conduct is obvious: whereas the former is rent-seeking in office, the latter is private employment that draws upon the prior advantages from having been in office.
- If the politician changes to a public stock corporation he sometimes does not even need to deliver any knowledge capital: it suffices that in his previous ministerial function he took a ‘friendly attitude’ to the company in question [P2: 317-319]. Particularly evident is this type of “ex post” political corruption in which politicians act strategically, that is design their political career in such a way they already meet some indispensable qualifications for getting the future job in the private sector prior to their withdrawal from politics [P2: 287-291].
- Except for these types of state-private sector exchange relations where jobs are exchanged for advantages through transfer of insider knowledge there is an other kind of interlinkage between politics and business, which raises suspicion of illegitimate action. Although in this case no such transfer seems to take place at first sight, the phenomenon of members of parliament exercising a profession in addition to their parliamentary function permits certain doubts regarding the nature of remuneration flowing from private business activities [P3: 1014-1017; P4: 567-574]. What raises mistrust is the obvious contradiction in this case of double occupation: Either is the MP fully busy exercising his parliamentary mandate – which normally should be the case – and consequently has no time and energy for other (business) activities. Or the two can be made compatible in the sense that additional jobs by no means interfere with the political function – as they require neither time nor energy. But if this holds true, it is not easy to legitimately account for the additional income resources. Ergo: it is more than justified to ask what purpose the latter serves. Usually they are for all sorts of consulting services [P2: 1236-1241] and the crucial thing to know is not so much the amount of money received, but what kind of firms paid for these services. An unmistakable indicator of political corruption in the sense of illegitimate interweavement of political and economic activities is the commitment certain MPs show in the law-making process regarding for example private insurance policies: more often than not they function as mouthpieces of the insurance companies; i.e. they act as the missionaries of capital in the centre of the legislative process [P2: 753-782].

The issue of MPs splitting up working life between parliamentary functions and private interests has in the meantime initiated legislative action purporting to *expose dependencies*.



These laws require politicians to declare additional income. Nevertheless the intention to curb illegitimate (e. g. political corrupt) conduct and curtail the possibility of dependencies as a source of indirect influence raises some questions:

- For one thing it is not sufficiently clear whether declaring this income leads to the desired transparency. The reason for this is that declaring additional incomes does not necessarily mean exposing illegitimate incomes [P2: 679-682].
- Some dependencies just result from the previous job of the politician and should not be considered illegitimate as such. Demanding transparency at all costs disregards sometimes certain habitualised practices that are not illegitimate action, although it appears that dependency relations are transferred [P2: 687-694].
- Certain difficulties are also associated with the modalities of declaring incomes not originating in the political sphere. Notwithstanding these problems, one should consider not so much the amount of extra revenues received as their source [P2: 708]. This is all the more important in such cases where the amount of money MPs are paid for delivering speeches is such that the suspicion arises whether it is not an 'ex-post' remuneration for future consulting services, that is granting advantages [P4: 583-585].
- Every legislative initiative that targets dependencies of MPs resulting from donations is confronted with the difficult situation of the need of sanctions on the one hand and the independence of political function on the other. The fact that the latter includes the right to receive donations either for the party or parliamentary activity blurs distinctions between the legitimate and the sanctionable [P4: 397-404].
- Last but not least, the aim to curtail the dependencies politicians come into as they exercise private professions can prove to be counterproductive. This is the case when the politician or MP, cut off from his previous profession, becomes more dependent on politics [P3: 1009-1014; 1024-1027] – or, worse still, on the will of the party leadership [P2: 654-662]. For example, this might be because the way young politicians are recruited only serves to secure the control of the party over them. The replacement of one dependency with another by these means will not do.

Drawing a tentative conclusion from the aforementioned three forms of exchange relations between politics and economy, the perception of political corruption in the broader sense of the term can be defined as

- (2) illegitimate action based on the misuse of knowledge/experience resources pertaining to public administration for private gain.

Taking the second part of this exchange relation, e. g. the economy, as starting point, we also observe a realm of what is perceived of as illegitimate action, although it is either more diffuse than that of private sector politics, or it constitutes an institutionalised sphere (e. g. lobbying) that cannot immediately raise suspicions of feeding corrupt conduct. This - so to speak - asymmetry in regard to corrupt liabilities is of course a consequence of the difference between the interests motivating action: whereas the public perceptions of politics are guided by the notion that the interests motivating political action serve the public, the economy is in a trivial way bound to the realisation of private interests in capitalist societies. What is by no means trivial though are the ways the pursuit of private interests is embedded in or made to fit into the overall framework of advancing the national public good.



Thus looking at how business interests are integrated into public governance helps us pinpoint certain types of action that - in analogy to what obtains regarding illegitimate political action - can prove to be the nourishing grounds for illegitimate conduct. For one thing and prior to any concrete acts involving political actors, the overall conditions enabling exchange relations must be “positive”. To this end certain segments of the economy develop strategies to optimise the means of *tending to the political landscape* [P2: 355-358]. To begin with, this means creating a favourable ‘climate’ in which no direct exercise of influence is aimed at, rather politics is motivated to take a generally favourable stance to potential large-scale projects planned by big business. Motivating such a favourable stance normally takes the form of donations. The fact that all major governing or oppositional parties are (or have been) the recipients of such ‘diversified’ donations is evidence of the fact that no particular aims need be associated with them initially [P2: 332-335].

Given this systemic *interweavement* of economics and politics that as such is normally not thought of as excessive exercise of influence [P3: 1387-1393] the question arises at what point donating or any other art of manifestation of ‘good will’ should start to be perceived as illegitimate, let alone illegal.

- An indicator of such illegitimacy – as in the case in Germany – the political landscape is tended to in a one-dimensional manner, e.g. a particular, normally governing political party is disproportionately favoured. This is perceived as a violation of the independence of the political parties or political party competition [P4: 135-143]. The perceptions concerning when donation activities start to become dangerous for political life vary of course from country to country, but also in historical terms. In Germany for instance it was well into the 80s common practice and therefore not considered illegitimate for all major parties to be catered to by businesses [P2: 372-377]. And only when this practice became one sided did awareness increase that certain unwritten laws had been exceeded. This case substantiates among others the claim that corruption perceptions often depend upon and originate in the awareness that one’s own position in a competitive game is disadvantaged.
- Another form of interweavement of economy and politics that more often than not fosters corruption is that of lobbyism. The various business associations and lobbies have naturally their own methods of “tending” to the political landscape, the most important of which regarding the issue of illegitimate conduct being public relations and information campaigns. As such, part of the democratic rights of collective articulation of interests the PR events the various lobbies organise are nevertheless often the social space in which economic interests exercise direct influence on political will, e.g. potential legislative action [P4: 729-735]. This exercise of influence takes, among other things, the apparently harmless form of all sorts of presents [P2: 1700-1715]. Now, given the *escalation logic* [P2: 1463-1470] that characterises all such ex-post thank-giving activities, i.e. the recipients at first accepting seemingly innocent invitations only to end up admitting that receiving presents has become a habit, it is not surprising to find here the seeds of illegitimate (or potentially downright criminal) action.
- Except for the recent strange development of ministries sponsored by business associations, one observes nowadays a transfer of know-how analogous to the aforementioned one, albeit the other way around this time, that is ministries hiring experts from the private sector. The ministerial bureaucracy strives to back this curious practice with the argument that it does not dispose of the qualified personnel needed to carry out the task of formulating law drafts that demand a high level of expertise [P3: 871-882]. Under the pretence of objectivity, that is deploying expert knowledge [P3: 909-914], the state apparatus by these means creates a

basis of illegitimate intrusion of private interests in the very sphere of law-making processes. For one can reasonably surmise that certain business interests seep into the apparent objective expertise and the professionalism of formulating law paragraphs.

- Although not directly a component of the interweavement of politics and economy one more aspect of illegitimate action should be mentioned: bribes made abroad. But why are they only (perceived as) illegitimate and not just simply and downright criminal? The reason for this lies in two interdependent facts: For one thing illegitimate conduct can appeal to certain practices in foreign countries that should objectively and without doubt be castigated as corrupt. Nevertheless they represent habitualised regularities that every businessman must take account of if he wants to see his interests realised [P2: 108-115]. Moreover illegitimacy need not be perceived as such at all: after all it is unwarranted to transfer corruption perceptions from one country to another in view of different *penal law cultures* [P4: 440-448].

Thus if one leaves aside the last and most probably overt method of directly influencing legislation and under the perspective of exchange relations in democratic societies it is clear that taking the economy as a starting point

- (3) illegitimate action can (or more poignantly: is bound to) arise since the way private interests insert themselves in the state management of public affairs is not possible without *systematically tending to the political landscape* conducive of corrupt conduct.

Looking now at illegitimate action that is situated in political party life one form exchange relations can take in this domain is that of *party financial management as control over the party apparatus* [P2: 585-586] – financial resources being exchanged for loyalty. This represents a typical case of political corrupt conduct in the sense of distortion of inner party democracy for the sake of maintaining power over the party [P2: 1225-1226; 1249-1252; P3: 375-380]. The latter is of course not per se illegitimate, but the way of canalising financial resources is sometimes deployed to secure a hegemonic position in the party hierarchy surely is. Seen from this perspective the argument that the corruption and violation of inner party democracy should be kept apart [P3: 371-373] is to be sure flawless on formal, judicial grounds – nevertheless it tends to willingly ignore the fact that corrupt conduct is double-sided (1). Besides, the argument loses every credibility once it is clear that the awareness of illegitimate conduct having taken place has raised the sensibility for violations of democratic rules in party life [P3: 399-403].

Power-money-control: This art of exchange relations inside the party organisations is not the only or by far the most important space in which illegitimate conduct occurs. More often than not it revolves around issues of party financing in the context of what the political parties perceive as being permanently underfinanced. One way to illustrate this is to look at the practices of financing electoral campaigns or party conferences. As far as the former is concerned one observes a kind of *financial speculation* [P2: 528-532]: In the expectation that the state will reimburse them a certain percentage of the electoral costs, political parties are at pains to raise that level – speculating on these future inflows spurs the propensity to spend more than an electoral campaign normally demands for [P3: 285-286]. This attitude underlies campaigns modelled on the advertising practices of private business: the stronger the presence in the media landscape [P4: 474-478], the better the product, e.g. the results of the elections. Politics that slavishly follow the dictates of media presence can also be observed in the organisation of party conventions.



### *Conclusions (regarding prevention)*

Granting/receiving advantages, either in the illegitimate forms discussed above, or in the sense of prosecutable criminal action, is rooted in the exchange relations that make up the fabric of societies based on market economy. Therefore and according to (1) there will unavoidably always be spaces of exchanges that cannot be covered by the regulating instruments of law and penal sanction. Nevertheless the fact that there are more or less clear societal perceptions and claims of what can reasonably be considered illegitimate helps sharpen the sensibilities about wrong-doing, thus providing a workable basis for prevention policies in the sense of rendering the illegitimate either illegal or very difficult to be carried on with. Now, if one looks at the exchanges with the economy politicians are willing to become involved in and keeping in mind (2), some suggestions could be made regarding how things considered illegitimate can be avoided and prevention made more effective.

- For one thing politicians switching to private business immediately after quitting or retiring from politics should not be taken for something normal. A possible approach would be to prolong the transition time up to two years [P3: 327-329], although that would probably go against certain human rights.
- The plan to set up an anti corruption register again can be put on the agenda of legislative action [P4: 263-268; 292-299]. Given that certain requirements of data (privacy) protection are met there are no excuses delaying its introduction to parliament.
- There should be a better coordination regarding the prosecution process between politics and the judiciary. Deficiencies in prosecution often result from the unwillingness of the courts to follow the line of and sanction corrupt conduct all the way up to the top, for example of big business, lest the economic damage for the region involved or the country's economy at large proves too high [P2: 230-235].
- Raising the awareness that corruption means damage: once it is certain that the image damage for the company involved is high, this could function as a deterrent [P2: 196-203].
- Transparency: It is the principle par excellence of preventing corrupt conduct. Though under all circumstances, e.g. whether relevant to criminal prosecution or not, required [P2: 602-606], transparency by itself does not mean that it does not need specification. Some of the areas in which it is absolutely necessary to be observed are:
  - Shuffling with jobs and posts in the party apparatus [P2: 592-602]. This is more often than not a sign of favouritism, power machinations, granting advantages and corruption.
  - All those cases in which forms of interlinkages of politics and private interests are perceived to be illegitimate. This also holds true for the communal management of public affairs [P3: 1141-1143].
  - When the ministerial bureaucracy makes use of external experts in formulating legislative proposals [P4: 679-691; 707-711]. It is no surprise then that the suspicion of illegitimate intrusion of private interests in state legislation is more than reasonable.
- Overspending during elections campaigns.
- Exposing all additional revenues the MPs draw from other occupations. The exposure does not target primarily the level of income, but rather where it comes from.
- Donations to MPs.

Last but not least: Since almost all of the cases discussed belong to that space of corrupt conduct that is perceived to be merely illegitimate, not immediately criminal, and therefore



exactly the field of habits, perceptions, attitudes and actions prevention is supposed to aim at, it is worth mentioning that ultimately prevention means and is based on a certain human quality: decency [P2: 1617].



## GREECE

### TG I POLITICS

#### General Comments

In the interviews of the Greek politicians who participated in our research the term, as well as the concept of corruption, is dealt with very different ways. The common broad elements for all political parties seem to be the role of the state and of profit seeking behaviour as significant characteristics of corruption<sup>1</sup>. Nevertheless, each party uses, defines or approaches those elements differently.

All interviewees agree that corruption is a serious problem in Greece. What differentiates Greece from other (especially developed countries) is the widespread phenomenon of ‘petty’, ‘everyday’ corruption<sup>2</sup>. Some views support the idea that Greek society is ‘pathogenic’ as it is addicted to corruption due to lack of appropriate education, proper values and other historical reasons<sup>3</sup>.

Regarding the main causes of corruption and corrupt behaviour we could identify two lines of argument. The first line supports that the main cause of corruption is the lack of moral standards due to a series of reasons. Thus some interviewees give emphasis on individual responsibility and personal ethical values as the most important drive towards corrupt behaviour. This line of argument views corruption as an issue which is produced because of lack of personal responsibility and the associated moral commitment towards society. We can define this approach as ‘individualistic-ethicist’. The basic characteristics of this approach are in brief the following<sup>4</sup>:

- The main cause of corruption lies on individual values and behaviour.
- Moral standards and values are eroded because of the drop of educational standards and the quality of education, as well as because of the proliferation of a ‘regime of non punishment’.
- The basic solutions of the problem lies to the effort to alter personal ethical values through the educational system accompanied to the strengthening of institutional and law mechanisms against the phenomenon. The idea of ‘zero tolerance’ to corrupt behaviour at the individual level is strongly supported.

The second line of argument views corruption as a phenomenon with primarily systemic-structural characteristics. These refer either to the Greek socio-economic and political structure, development and history or to broader structures which are related to the functions of the global capitalist system. The basic characteristics of this approach are the following<sup>5</sup>:

- Corruption is produced dialectically through relations of individuals with institutions, socio-economic and political forces, as well as broader structures.

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<sup>1</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 3); P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODES 80-83; P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR: CODES 60, 61.

<sup>2</sup> P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODES 10, 11 ; P23 TG POLITICS\_PASOK GN: CODE 68.

<sup>3</sup> P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODE 57 ; P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODES 99, 108, 109.

<sup>4</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODES 2, 3, 5, 59, 65, 108, 109; P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODES 57, 59 ; P23 TG POLITICS\_PASOK GN: CODES 67, 73.

<sup>5</sup> P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR: CODES 28-31, 50-52, 57-60, 77, 80, 81, 95-97; P16 POLITICS\_KKE\_NIB: CODES 13-15, 30-32, 114, 116; P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODES 15-24, 31, 51-52, 210-215, 227.



- Corruption lies inherently within the capitalist system of production and it is constantly produced and reproduced through market and commodity relations.
- Corruption is interpreted as the various specific relations between modern state and capitalist interests. Thus the definition of corruption adopted within this approach is a broad one and distinguishes between official, conventional definitions and interpretations, as for example petty corruption, from other forms of state-capital relations which are not characterized officially as corrupt (e.g. the activities of various lobbies, the role of off shore companies etc.).
- For this approach, personal values are related to broader dominant social norms such as for example individualism and commodification.
- Especially for Greece, this approach links corruption to the specific way of capitalist development through the proliferation of patron-client relations.
- The solutions according to this approach lie in greater state intervention in market relations and strong institutions building.

It is worth mentioning, that one interviewee linked corruption in Greece and other less developed countries of Europe, with the notion and process of ‘primary accumulation’<sup>6</sup>. There is a vast international bibliography about ‘primary or primitive accumulation’ and it is not our intention to analyze it here in depth. Primary accumulation is considered to be a stage of development of capitalist relations of production which in many circumstances entail violent and ‘corrupt’ ways of appropriation of value and income (for example theft, deceit, use of position power to extract value etc.) which later on is converted into capital. All capitalist countries, from the oldest (for example UK) to the newest (for example Russia) passed through the stage of primary accumulation. This is why high level of some forms of corruption in modern-days characterizes the less or the least developed countries of the world. According to this way of thinking, corruption is not an ‘anomaly’ caused by immoral state bureaucrats but an unavoidable stage of capitalist evolution and a stable characteristic of latecomers to the capitalist mode of production.

In respect to other ideas expressed by the interviewees, the obstacles that the citizens meet because of bureaucracy are an alibi for them to justify their activity, thus there should be more strict law enforcement towards the citizen as well.

The vast majority of interviewees, and especially those affiliated with the two largest parties, aim to defend the political system and to pass the main responsibility of corruption to other target groups, such as the media, justice and NGOs.

On account of media, and according to the dominant line of discourse in our interviews with politicians, they usually over inform and in many cases cause disillusionment to the public, without contributing in the overall debate in a substantial and effective way. Their discourse aims to impress as well as to reproduce ‘everyday theories’. Some interviewees point out that many media operate illegally and sometimes they either enforce corruption or are the centre of corruption themselves. Moreover, they stress that media’s use of ‘corruption’, as well as the place of the issue in their agenda is characterized by overstatement and it is one of the most important reasons for the spreading of the ‘*culture of corruption*’ in the public and society. This culture means that citizens view corruption as a normal way of getting things done and that this way of thinking and practice is becoming deeply embedded into the

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<sup>6</sup> P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR: CODES 55, 56.



conceptual, moral and practical attitudes of everyday life. Therefore it is extremely difficult to mitigate the phenomenon.

In relation to the role of the judicial system, some interviewees expressed the opinion according to which it is manipulated by the government and thus it is impossible to play a key role in the fight against it.

Similar concerns are expressed by some of the interviewees, about the independence of NGOs as they are funded by the state and their ability or will to become a major actor for mitigating such practices are limited. Almost all interviewees acknowledge that there is limited or no political desire in order to eliminate corruption. This belief contradicts in a certain extent with the 'individualistic-ethicist' discourses as it underlines a structural element of the reproduction of corruption and notably to the unwillingness of the political system to fight it effectively.

It is strongly supported that there are no positive outcomes from corruption because the system operates through dysfunction. Corruption is harmful for the state and for the citizen in the long-term ('Zero tolerance to corruption').

Finally the two big parties (PASOK and ND) are quite optimistic for the future, whereas the other two are pessimistic and believe that corruption will never be eliminated under the present socio-economic system and structures.

## Evaluation Units

P16 TG POLITICS\_KKE\_NIB  
P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK  
P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP  
P19 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_CL  
P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR  
P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK  
P23 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_GN  
P24 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_PASV

## Interviews' Analysis

### PASOK (PANHELLENIC SOCIALIST PARTY)

We carried out four interviews with MPs from PASOK. Concerning the definition of corruption there was a variation in interpretations and concepts. Each interviewer described 'corruption' in his/her own terms. One definition is related to persons who are connected to the state and exploit this connection in order to gain illegal profit for themselves or for someone else, at the expense of the system which is supposed to serve<sup>7</sup>. It reflects the legal definition of Greek Criminal Law on 'corruption' which has to do with offences on duty<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> P23 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_GN: CODE 7.

<sup>8</sup> P23 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_GN: CODE 8.



A different view states that the term ‘corruption’ is strongly related to the Greek social reality, exaggerates and brought the structures on disrepute<sup>9</sup>, although exaggeration is left vague. ‘Corruption’ in Greece is not only political, economic or social, whereas it is ‘multifarious’<sup>10</sup> and it is related with the state mechanisms. ‘Corruption’ is embedded in the system<sup>11</sup>. This standpoint entails the idea that corruption is a structural phenomenon, closely related to the means the state operates in Greece.

An aspect of corruption that it is obvious in all interviews is the moral one. Corruption is a strong moral issue<sup>12</sup> and consequently an unethical law violation<sup>13</sup>. When the interviewees refer to the ‘corruption’ of politicians, this becomes a matter of *ethos* and the *quality* of the person’s character<sup>14</sup>. As a result they all try to defend the political system and the politicians in particular by intensively asserting that not all of them are ‘corrupt’. The majority of the politicians are honest, ‘sterling’<sup>15</sup> and they are just doing their job, but there is a whole system around them who is corrupt and has profits, not politicians themselves<sup>16</sup>. They emphasize that the less corrupt institution in Greek society is the Parliament<sup>17</sup>, and assert that political corruption is only one of its various aspects<sup>18</sup>.

All PASOK representatives stand at the same position that ‘corruption’ is not only a ‘Greek’ phenomenon but a global one, giving examples of relevant cases in Europe and USA<sup>19</sup>. Since corruption is extended, they see the thorough discussion in recent years absolutely justified<sup>20</sup>. Corruption is evident in the economic transactions which result in long-term profit<sup>21</sup>. They account corruption of party financing as the outcome of the voting system and the corresponding law. Law is inadequate, inefficient and rather only for show off<sup>22</sup>. The MPs are forced by the law to look for other sources of funding as the money that the state grants them for this purpose is not enough: in this context they repeat that ‘*Democracy costs*’<sup>23</sup>. They believe that the voting system law should change because the smaller electoral constituency, the less the dependency of MPs on entrepreneurs for financing<sup>24</sup>. They also refer to Local Government, a service where corruption is ‘visible’. They accuse it of irresponsibility and

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<sup>9</sup> P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODES 2, 3.

<sup>10</sup> P24 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_PASV: CODE 65.

<sup>11</sup> P24 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_PASV: CODE 53.

<sup>12</sup> P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODE 30.

<sup>13</sup> P23 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_GN: CODE 70.

<sup>14</sup> P19 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_CL: CODE 24; P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODE 13.

<sup>15</sup> P24 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_PASV: CODE 49.

<sup>16</sup> P24 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_PASV: CODES 48, 50.

<sup>17</sup> P23 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_GN: CODE 184.

<sup>18</sup> P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODE 11.

<sup>19</sup> P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODE 4.

<sup>20</sup> P23 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_GN: CODE 3.

<sup>21</sup> P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODE 4.

<sup>22</sup> P23 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_GN: CODE 137.

<sup>23</sup> P19 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_CL: CODE 42.

<sup>24</sup> P24 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_PASV: CODE 36.



wire-pulling practices<sup>25</sup>. They also refer to examples of ‘petty corruption’ and believe that this form is the most worrying because it emerges the ‘pathogen’ of Greek society<sup>26</sup>.

Their attitudes towards media are discrediting. They reject the discourse which the media use about corruption. They characterize it as inane<sup>27</sup>, they assert that corruption is media’s favourite subject and the discussion is just for the impressions<sup>28</sup>. They also underlined that the media are the ‘*most corrupt institution of the country*’ and ‘*the bigger their businesses the more the products of corruption*’<sup>29</sup>. For them corruption in media is bigger than corruption in politics<sup>30</sup>.

Although most of the interviewees appreciate EU’s efforts to control the problem, they are sceptical about its efficiency, as it cannot operate as a prototype because cases of corruption in its administration and leadership have been occasionally come to light<sup>31</sup>.

All the interviewers noticed to complicated legislation as one of the most important factors for corruption<sup>32</sup>. In addition, culture, education and social awareness are reckoned equally crucial for the development of the phenomenon<sup>33</sup>. Finally, the erosion of the value system<sup>34</sup> and that personal interest comes before the collective one contributes also to political corruption<sup>35</sup>.

It is generally accepted that in order to restrict corruption, radical measures are needed<sup>36</sup>, often characterized as ‘revolution’<sup>37</sup>. Apart from prevention<sup>38</sup> they promote tougher legislation and more severe sentences because the phenomenon so far has been dealt with carelessness and tolerance<sup>39</sup>.

#### **ND (NEW DEMOCRACY - NEA DIMOKRATIA)**

We carried out only one interview with the governmental party. Corruption is defined as a damaging situation for the morals, which tends to occupy a dominant position in society<sup>40</sup>. The interviewee refers to corruption as closely related to disregard and rejection of the social

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<sup>25</sup> P23 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_GN: CODE 186.

<sup>26</sup> P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODE 33.

<sup>27</sup> P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODE 49.

<sup>28</sup> P24 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_PASV: CODE 81.

<sup>29</sup> P24 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_PASV: CODES 84, 85.

<sup>30</sup> P23 TG POLITICS\_PASOK NIOTIS: CODE 96.

<sup>31</sup> P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODES 21, 22; P TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_CL: CODE 57.

<sup>32</sup> P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODE 18.

<sup>33</sup> P23 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_GN: CODES 52, 53, 147.

<sup>34</sup> P24 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_PASV: CODE 16.

<sup>35</sup> P24 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_PASV: CODE 37.

<sup>36</sup> P24 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_PASV: CODE 61.

<sup>37</sup> P18 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_MAP: CODE 44.

<sup>38</sup> P23 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_GN: CODE18.

<sup>39</sup> P23 TG POLITICS\_PASOK\_GN: CODES 20, 21.

<sup>40</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODE 3.



and individual value system of modern societies<sup>41</sup>. This is the reason why in the interview the words ‘morals’ and ‘values’ were repeated.

The responsibility is put on both sides, not only on the person who accepts the bribe<sup>42</sup>. It is an exchange in which two people take part. The interviewee was swinging between the individual responsibility<sup>43</sup> and the responsibility of the ‘system’, as well as the state. Finally she decided for the responsibility of the individual, because the citizen does not only react but reproduces it by participating.

For the representative of ND media favour corruption for they sponsor the easy profit and moral lenience<sup>44</sup>. Their discourse on corruption is meaningless as they themselves operate out of the law<sup>45</sup> (she refers to the licences for operating private radio stations and television channels). Media do not inform but scandalize, they create issues, overstate and distort the reality<sup>46</sup>, ‘turning facts upside down’. Corruption is multi-factorial and media make the most of it in order to answer their own interests<sup>47</sup>.

Concerning party financing the interviewee supports state funding and to be in public in order to be really independent<sup>48</sup>. Corruption can be fought only by common efforts<sup>49</sup>. For ND representative<sup>50</sup> one serious reason for corruption is the complex legislation and inadequate law enforcement; the last was regularly stressed in this target group.

EU is insufficient, enforces corruption<sup>51</sup> and its bureaucratic structure cannot operate as a good example<sup>52</sup>. Change in the mentality with an educational campaign in the society<sup>53</sup> is necessary as well. According to the interviewee, all these policy measures must be carried out, otherwise ‘*we are going to be drawn into corruption*’<sup>54</sup>. Finally, society is addicted to corruption and in relation to the past people is more tolerant to deceit<sup>55</sup>.

### **KKE (COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREECE)**

We interviewed only one MP from the Communist Party of Greece. KKE has a different approach to corruption in relation with the other two parties. First of all corruption is a

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<sup>41</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODE 5.

<sup>42</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODE 14.

<sup>43</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODE 15.

<sup>44</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODES 26, 27.

<sup>45</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODES 29, 30.

<sup>46</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODES 31, 32, 33.

<sup>47</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODES 34, 35.

<sup>48</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODE 39, 40.

<sup>49</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODE 56, 57.

<sup>50</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODE 58.

<sup>51</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODE 73.

<sup>52</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODE 74.

<sup>53</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODES 79, 80.

<sup>54</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODE 86.

<sup>55</sup> P17 TG POLITICS\_ND\_PAPK: CODES 88, 89.



‘political issue’<sup>56</sup> and a newsreel. Thus, the communist Party is opposed to the common definition of corruption as for them it is the exploitation of the employees and the structures of the existent capitalist system that produces corruption<sup>57</sup>. The interviewee underlines that although the discussion on corruption is very rich, there is no considerable success against it<sup>58</sup>.

One of the main factors of corruption is the structure of the political system and particularly capitalism along with the free competition<sup>59</sup>.

Petty corruption (e.g. bribery in order to speed up the administrative procedures) is not an issue of serious concern<sup>60</sup> for the representative of KKE. Grand corruption instead is the issue, remaining outside the possibilities of law enforcement and state control. Privatisation<sup>61</sup> of education system, of national health system etc., as well as commissions in public works are examples of real, ‘organised’ corruption<sup>62</sup>. Moreover, the new electoral law described as ‘robbery of votes’<sup>63</sup> is another case of ‘legal’ corruption.

The media for their own good reasons promote the view and reproduce in public opinion the feeling that ‘*everybody is a crook, everybody steals*’<sup>64</sup>, discrediting political life.

The interviewee shows also reservations about the NGOs; ‘*they are not so innocent stories*’, because they are not only funded by the governments but also from foreign power centres<sup>65</sup>.

In general, the interviewee sounds very pessimistic. Corruption rises and although legislation exists, it cannot fight the erosion of citizens’ conscience<sup>66</sup>. Therefore the education of society reckoned for the time-being the most important way to confront corruption<sup>67</sup>.

### SYNASPISMOS (LEFT’S COALITION)

The two interviewees of Left’s Coalition are together with the interviewee of the Greek Communist Party the main representatives having a compact approach to corruption with some differentiations in their analysis, eventually because of their different background; one is jurist the other one is economist. The one attributes corruption to economic mechanisms influencing society through the political system, the other one to the structure of political system<sup>68</sup>, the clientelism<sup>69</sup>, collusion of economic with political interests and submission of political system to the first. Corruption follows the defilement of legislative power and

<sup>56</sup> P16 TG POLITICS\_KKE\_NIB: CODE 1.

<sup>57</sup> P16 TG POLITICS\_KKE\_NIB: CODES 10, 11, 13.

<sup>58</sup> P16 TG POLITICS\_KKE\_NIB: CODE 29.

<sup>59</sup> P16 TG POLITICS\_KKE\_NIB: CODE 114.

<sup>60</sup> P16 TG POLITICS\_KKE\_NIB: CODE 38.

<sup>61</sup> P16 TG POLITICS\_KKE\_NIB: CODE 56.

<sup>62</sup> P16 TG POLITICS\_KKE\_NIB: CODE 39.

<sup>63</sup> P16 TG POLITICS\_KKE\_NIB: CODE 63.

<sup>64</sup> P16 TG POLITICS\_KKE\_NIB: CODE 75.

<sup>65</sup> P16 TG POLITICS\_KKE\_NIB: CODE 50.

<sup>66</sup> P16 TG POLITICS\_KKE\_NIB: CODE 110.

<sup>67</sup> P16 TG POLITICS\_KKE\_NIB: CODE 113.

<sup>68</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 3.

<sup>69</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 3.



parliamentarian control by party-political patronage over the MPs,<sup>70</sup> as well as over the public administration, which turns to serve the interests of governmental party, and thus, its public (service's) role is being decayed<sup>71</sup>.

Both interviewees refer to commercialisation of politics and public goods. In somehow similar context with KKE, the interviewees agree that public rights are granted by the governments to the private sector for retaining party-political support<sup>72</sup>. Hence, public goods revert from rights to commodities and to objects for negotiation and exchange<sup>73</sup>. According to them, corruption evolves mainly in the interface between public and private sector (see also TG NGOs). Private sector is criticized so much as politics, for producing corrupt practices, since most Greek companies are not competitive but rely on public procurement. Political corruption is explained by synchronising of interests between politics and private enterprises<sup>74</sup>.

Corruption is also related to overregulation<sup>75</sup>, such as the taxation system<sup>76</sup> which results in a 'corruption greenhouse'<sup>77</sup>. Moreover, to the missing political will to tackle corruption<sup>78</sup> and consequently 'corruption guffaws'<sup>79</sup>. Structural corruption becomes a regime<sup>80</sup>, whose mechanisms make the citizens to be dependent to bribery<sup>81</sup> as if there would be no other way<sup>82</sup>.

The overstatement of mass media to corruption makes citizens habituated to it, reproduces complicity, values' erosion, while the real issue and their role is obfuscated<sup>83</sup>. It results in the enhancement of distrust and disillusionment with democracy itself, and all its institutions<sup>84</sup>. Justice is unqualified and powerless for investigating such interests, so the political and economical system uses it as 'Siloam pool'<sup>85</sup>, for legitimating their decisions and preferences. Thus, it plays in turn indirectly the game of the political system. In the same position are the control authorities, lacking in power and efficiency.

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<sup>70</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 14.

<sup>71</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODES 18, 22.

<sup>72</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 52.

<sup>73</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODES 15, 52.

<sup>74</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODES 209-213.

<sup>75</sup> P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR: CODE 48.

<sup>76</sup> P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR: CODE 54.

<sup>77</sup> P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR: CODE 49; P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 114.

<sup>78</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 184.

<sup>79</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 206.

<sup>80</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 232.

<sup>81</sup> P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR CODE: 59.

<sup>82</sup> P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR CODE: 63.

<sup>83</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 65.

<sup>84</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODES 120-124.

<sup>85</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 182.



Although NGOs can play a significant role and are generally appreciated for having the potentiality to organise and give voice to civil society<sup>86</sup>, they are usually either ‘governmental armies’<sup>87</sup> or ‘mouthpieces of extra-institutional centres’.<sup>88</sup>

Finally, for confronting corruption the main forms approved are the strengthening and support of democratic institutions, while the need for larger socioeconomic changes is rather downplayed<sup>89</sup>.

According to the interviewees, corruption is an international phenomenon<sup>90</sup> associating with the globalisation<sup>91</sup> of economical interests, the modern competitive economic system<sup>92</sup>, cyber-economy<sup>93</sup> and promiscuous operation of stock market<sup>94</sup>. The strong interest of EU derives from these developments and the following risks democracy stop being the governance model. This is an interesting difference between the two left parties, whereby KKE shows its scorn and Synaspismos its (critical) support<sup>95</sup>, since they note that EU also, suffers from corruption<sup>96</sup>. Furthermore, there are some reservations on the effects of OECD’s ranking, because they create positive or negative view towards a country<sup>97</sup>; especially for Greece it is justified not because of the extend of corruption but because the country does not correspond to basic obligations to transparency.

Another interesting difference is the one with the police, which identify corruption with organised crime, eventually because it is a challenging form of illegal activities in the corps. For our interview of Synaspismos, the legalisation of corruption proceeds uses the same ways, methods and techniques followed by the organised criminal networks, thus corruption transcends established national boundaries and is reproduced worldwide<sup>98</sup>.

From the one side, the term corruption is regarded wider than in criminal law (same with KKE) in terms of social, entrepreneurial, and media ethics; furthermore justice is considered social justice, in terms of ‘redistribution of wealth’ (see also TG Mass Media), taxation justice and decrease of regional inequalities. From the other side, corruption exists only if coercion is exercised<sup>99</sup>; therefore, corruption is not only related with money, but also with compromise to pressure<sup>100</sup>.

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<sup>86</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 198.

<sup>87</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 196.

<sup>88</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODES 199-202.

<sup>89</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 80.

<sup>90</sup> P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR: CODE 3.

<sup>91</sup> P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR: CODE 26.

<sup>92</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 10.

<sup>93</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 31.

<sup>94</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 246.

<sup>95</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 173.

<sup>96</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODES 88, 173; P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR: CODES 41, 42.

<sup>97</sup> P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR: CODE 34.

<sup>98</sup> P21 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_NK: CODE 166, 176, 179.

<sup>99</sup> P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR: CODES 13, 14.

<sup>100</sup> P20 TG POLITICS\_SYN\_MDR: CODES 18, 22.



## TG I POLITICS-PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

### General Comments

Our meeting with the office of GIPA, as well as himself, was easily approved and welcomed. His feelings about the situation in PA were painted with dark colours. He expresses his views rather free being protected by his extended institutional authority and independence.

### Evaluation Units

P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA

### Interview's Analysis

The General Inspector stresses that corruption is not only a Greek issue but a global one which needs the international cooperation<sup>101</sup> in order to be confronted<sup>102</sup>. Generally, EU, international cooperation and joint actions for the reduction of corruption rates are accounted having positive effects for Greece's mobilization<sup>103</sup>. Especially the country's participation in GRECO motivated the Greek Parliament for institutional reforms (Law 3074/2002) in order to promote transparency<sup>104</sup>, such as the Office of General Inspector of Public Administration<sup>105</sup>. However, the General Inspector questions *Corruption Perception Indexes*<sup>106</sup> of Transparency International and the consequent countries' ranking because they are based on perceptions of the interviewees and not on hard facts<sup>107</sup>. In this way the General Inspector justifies the peculiarities of the 'Greek case'<sup>108</sup>. Nevertheless the peculiarities remain undefined. He notes also, that EU policies give more emphasis on 'grand' than on 'petty corruption' which remains a local problem<sup>109</sup>.

The General Inspector refers to the difficulties of his Office due to 1) failing data, 2) reluctance (direct or indirect) of Public Administration to conform to the recommendations of the General Inspector, 3) the numerous control mechanisms which his Office can not overview<sup>110</sup>.

The working term for the General Inspector is that of the World Bank (abuse of public power for private benefit). He uses this definition as an 'umbrella' which incorporates some of its derivatives (opacity, synchronizing of interests etc.)<sup>111</sup>. Based on this definition he argues that

<sup>101</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 4.

<sup>102</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODES 5, 6.

<sup>103</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODES 14, 26, 40, 41.

<sup>104</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 42.

<sup>105</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODES 7-9.

<sup>106</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 45.

<sup>107</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODES 46, 47.

<sup>108</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODES 43, 44.

<sup>109</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 28.

<sup>110</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODES 33-35, 37, 38, 181.

<sup>111</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODES 83-85.



this kind of corruption can only be seen in Public Administration<sup>112</sup> and not to the private sector<sup>113</sup>.

According to the General Inspector the extent of corruption in Greece and its social tolerance is high. This situation is explained with the overused argument of socialization and historical residues from the Ottoman occupation<sup>114</sup>, but mainly to the collapse of traditional values<sup>115</sup> and social attitudes due to the consumerism<sup>116</sup> promoted by the private TV<sup>117</sup>. A change was taken place in the social structure<sup>118</sup> and the only stable value of social behaviour is now money ('only money counts')<sup>119</sup>. Related to that, the General Inspector concerns about the expansion of corruption, because it produces an unknown social situation to some decades ago.

We can see a clear distinction between high level (national government) and low level (local government) politics when the General Inspector distinguishes corrupt practices of MPs and the local government. Although the General Inspector referred once to grand corruption and criticized the governments for their strategies against corruption as insufficient if not hypocritical<sup>120</sup>, his main criticism is on the servants of local authorities. For him local administration along with the trade unionism and mass media are the three 'wounds' of the modern Greek society<sup>121</sup>. Furthermore the lack of moral standards<sup>122</sup> for serving citizens' interests in local communities is a unique development of the last decades. The reliance of local authorities on the communities and clientism are the main reasons for corrupt practices and exchanges in local administration<sup>123</sup>.

For the General Inspector, public administration is a closed system having its own rules and codes (slow, highly bureaucratic)<sup>124</sup>. Corruption takes place mainly in lower ranges of public administration and only<sup>125</sup> in services where is (big) money ('where is money, is also corruption')<sup>126</sup>. For him there is a 'critical percentage', which if the service jumps, then corruption is an issue of concern in the service<sup>127</sup>. What is the critical percentage still is not defined.

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<sup>112</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODES 88, 89.

<sup>113</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 87.

<sup>114</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 95.

<sup>115</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 98.

<sup>116</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODES 101-104, 106.

<sup>117</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODES 98, 174.

<sup>118</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 99.

<sup>119</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 101.

<sup>120</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODES 118, 123, 125-127, 130, 13.

<sup>121</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 146.

<sup>122</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 148.

<sup>123</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 151.

<sup>124</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 187.

<sup>125</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODES 132, 133, 161.

<sup>126</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODES 186, 138.

<sup>127</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 134.



Three main factors produce corruption in Public Administration. The first is administration's reliance on governments and party politics<sup>128</sup>, the second is money transactions between citizens and public services<sup>129</sup> and the third is overregulation, complex legislation, as well as ambiguities in legislation, contradiction in terms and content of legislation ('grey zone') offering high discretionary power to public administration.

He suggests 1) regulatory reform (recasting<sup>130</sup>, consolidation of legislation<sup>131</sup>, simplification<sup>132</sup>), as well as 2) administrative reform: simplification of procedures and full computerization in order to avoid 'contacts points' between citizens and public servants<sup>133</sup>. Yet, he notes that none of the measures will be effective if the involvement of politics in public administration will continue<sup>134</sup>.

Finally, the General Inspector expresses a rather optimistic view for the future<sup>135</sup>, unlike to his initial criticism to Greek society in general and public administration is specific. Moreover, despite his previous criticism to politicians, he admits the support of the government on his Office, a rather diplomatic answer in favour of his own image and service.

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<sup>128</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODES 159, 169.

<sup>129</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 135.

<sup>130</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 141.

<sup>131</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 152.

<sup>132</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 165.

<sup>133</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 163.

<sup>134</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 178.

<sup>135</sup> P22 TG POLITICS\_PAD\_GIPA: CODE 170.



## UNITED KINGDOM

### Target Group Politics

*Interviewee: A senior civil servant*

The interviewee emphasised that it was important to distinguish ‘corruption’ as a legal category from behaviour considered inappropriate in public life; ‘standards in public life’ was a phrase to ensure the wider issue of inappropriate public behaviour was treated, and should not be regarded as a devious means of shying away from using the term ‘corruption’.

The interviewee also voiced the opinion that some standards are harder for politicians to uphold than for other members of public, however, and that this is indeed positively expected of them (i.e. with regard to telling the truth: “its part of your role, maybe, not to all the time if its not in the public interest”).

The interviewee took a contradictory position on whether corruption was increasing or decreasing in British public life. On the one hand, it was posited that before the 1960s there was an intuitive consensus about appropriate behaviour in public life, “people call it the ‘good chaps’ theory of public life” (see code family 4). Breakdown of the harmony in public life emerged as there was a decline in deference from the general public to authority, at the same time as public life (i.e. working for the State) “became more porous”, no longer guaranteeing that members would share the same attitudes, practices and expectations.

On the other hand, it was argued “things have improved” over the last 10-15, and 30-40 years, mainly due to the codification of standards and establishment of independent scrutiny (code family 4), in addition to that of public pressure via the internet and of NGOs (code family 2), which is helping to “flush out some of these anomalous areas that have been accepted as custom and practice”. It was then posited by the interviewee that “actually standards are very, very good”, and that publicly raising questions about standards of behaviour of public officials can create an unfairly negative portrayal of such to the general citizenry.

The interviewee placed the blame for corrupt practices on individuals rather than systemic level causes, but stated that in light of the party funding scandals, political parties were also partly responsible for public cynicism about their standards (code family 7). Ironically, the interviewee also acknowledged that the public were much likely to hold favourable views of individual politicians with which they are familiar, rather than the political class per se, and this was blamed on negative media portrayals of the political class. Interestingly, the interviewee commented that the media too often ignored the fact that many of the problems facing Britain also faced other countries (e.g. party financing problems afflicting other Western democracies), again painting an unfairly negative picture of the British political class to its public.

Despite initially giving a favourable impression of the impact of codification, the interviewee closely identified a lack of codification with British culture and claimed that there are many benefits from this approach, as well as limits and even dangers inherent in the changes that could be brought about by codification. It was posited that early under-regulation led to a



detrimental over-regulation (in areas such as local government). In sum, the interviewee was unsure as to how useful the British model was (in terms of under-codification or codification itself), both in the UK and being proposed as a model for other countries in combating corruption (code family 4).

The interviewee was one of the few to emphasise the importance of public opinion to the strength of public institutions, arguing that those who took a cynical view of corruption (that it has always happened) underestimated the importance of tackling it, particularly with respect to public confidence in the state's institutions (damage to the public's trust and consent towards them).