

Survey brief

Background

- Three-group corruption survey has been conducted using similar method since 2004 and this survey is the fourth.¹ It is called a three-group survey because 500 Estonian residents, 500 entrepreneurs and 1,037 public sector employees, i.e. officials (incl. politicians) are interviewed separately. Similar questions are asked from all the groups so the results could be compared. The survey was conducted by Norstat in September and October of 2016.²
- The survey results show the ethical views of the respondents, comprehension and spreading of corruption and immediate contact with the so-called street corruption (as opposed to high-level corruption). It is nearly impossible to conduct a quantitative study in impact with complicated corruption schemes. On the other hand, people are usually also reluctant to admit a personal corruption experience which is why the indicator is often underdeclared – to compensate this, corruption comprehension is measured, which provides valuable additional information about this phenomenon. However, the spreading of corruption is usually perceived more intensively because comprehension includes in addition to personal experience also the experiences of friends

and family and what is broadcasted in the media, as well as the experienced or comprehended injustice. At the same time, comprehension reflects the image of the most dangerous, that is, business and political corruption.

As a whole, corruption awareness of people has improved but there is nonetheless some regression visible among the residents

- The skill to recognise corruption is mainly based on its form: bribery is considered corruption by the majority of the respondents (88-98%), less people realise that conflict of interest can also present itself in the form of corruption (63-88%). It is surprising that although corruption awareness is in general greater among officials, still 7% of them do not consider it corruption if an official working with procurements orders computers for the company from a company in which their son owns a share (in 2010 the amount of such respondents was 10%). When it comes to gifts, the opinion spectrum is extremely wide: the number of residents who consider gift giving corruption is lower compared to the previous study. 46% of residents consider it corruption if an official accepts a gift as a thank-you after providing a service (in 2010 54%). Regression in recognising corruption

is visible among the residents also in case of other corruption types, and corruption recognition is a bit poorer than it was previously.

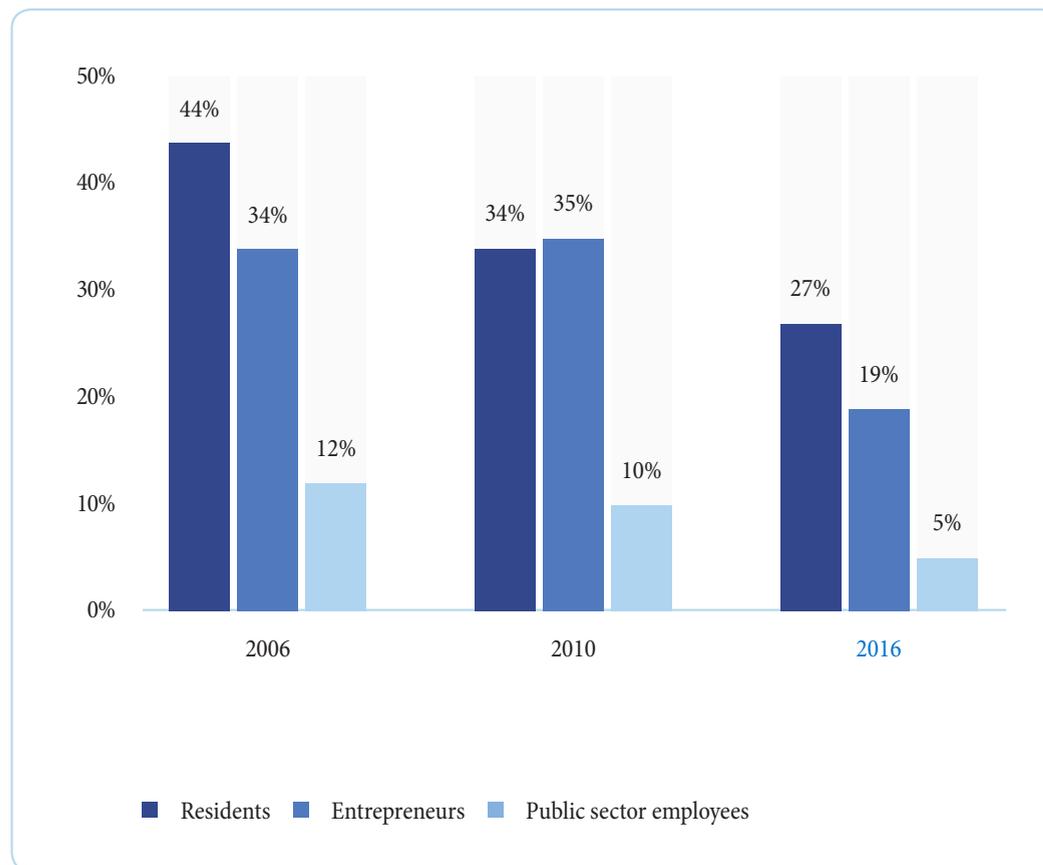
- In addition to recognising corruption, its acceptance is also surveyed. Again, the level of acceptance depends on corruption type. Regardless of the target group, bribery and influence trading are least tolerated by all groups. Officials are the least tolerating and residents the most tolerating towards corruption. Attitude towards wrongful use of work car has the most diverse range of responses compared to other ethical questions: 86% of officials do not accept this situation, also 58% of entrepreneurs and 62% residents. With certain exceptions among the residents and entrepreneurs, it can be concluded that corruption is now tolerated less than six years ago.
- In a made-up situation, somewhat over a quarter of residents, about a fourth of entrepreneurs and 5% of officials would be ready to behave corruptively. The number of people ready for corruptive behaviour has decreased significantly since 2010: the relevant rates were then 34%, 35% and 10%.

¹ Comparisons are possible from 2006 because then the questionnaire was changed significantly.

² See the detailed technical survey report.

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Ratio of respondents who would behave corruptively in a hypothetical situation



Corruption is not considered the main social concern but it is regarded as widespread. The frequency of purchasing laws and public tender corruption is believed to be increasing.

- It would be wrong to say that Estonian residents do not consider corruption important, because 57% of people see it as a worrying phenomenon, but compared to several other areas, corruption concerns our people less. The amount of people considering it a problem has decreased in six years: in 2010 it was 68%. Entrepreneurs do not consider corruption the main issue either, because approximately a quarter of them sees it as a setback in doing business. Entrepreneurs think that it has become easier to “buy” the politicians: 25% of the respondents believe so (20% in 2010).
- Bribe is considered quite common in Estonia but compared to six years ago, the general picture has cleaned up a bit according to all three groups. Both residents and officials think that bribe is mostly handed out to speed up processes (49% of residents and 34% of officials) and avoid punishments (46% of residents and 31% of officials). Entrepreneurs believe that bribe is most common in public tenders (ca 40%), moreover, the state is considered

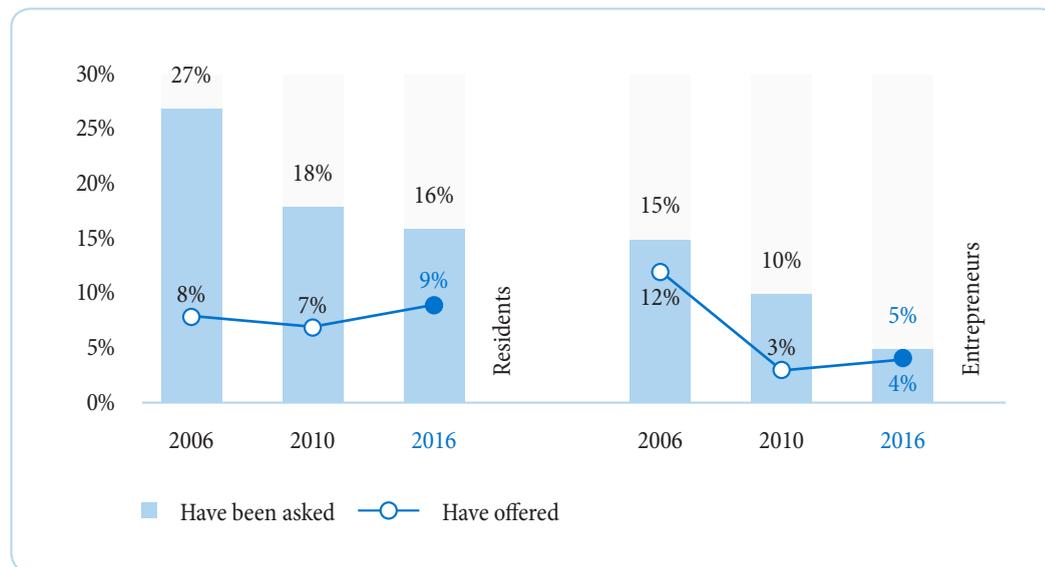
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more corrupt than the local governments. In general, it is believed that purchasing of laws has become more frequent – this refers to the increase in comprehension of high-level corruption (residents 23% in 2016, 19% in 2010; public sector 7% in 2016, 4% in 2010). Officials believe that bribe has become more common also in public tenders (27% in 2016 and 21% in 2010).

Compared to 2010, bribes are requested less, but the payments are now larger. The number of bribes has considerably reduced in vehicle inspection and driving permit obtaining, whereas contact with bribes in health care have remained overall on the same level.

- 16% of residents and 5% of entrepreneurs claim that when using public services, they have been asked for bribe, gifts and return favours. These numbers have reduced compared to six years ago (in 2010 respectively 18% and 10%). Bribe, return favours and gifts are mostly presumed, according to residents, in relation with doctors, where contact with bribe request has remained overall on the same level as in 2010: 8% and 9% respectively. The number of people who claim that they have been asked for a bribe during vehicle inspection, has

Experience with good deeds of residents and business managers



reduced more than twice: 5% and 11% respectively. The number of people who have been asked for a bribe when obtaining a driving permit has also decreased significantly (from 6% to 2%).

- 9% of residents and 4% of entrepreneurs admit to offering bribe themselves – these numbers have

increased compared to earlier (in 2010 7% and 3%). The increase is mostly due to gifts, although the number of people who believe that a gift could affect the provision of a service, has decreased. Nevertheless, the majority of residents – 64% – believes that paying extra or giving gifts does affect the provision of a service (in 2010 72%).

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Experience with other types of corruption has decreased for entrepreneurs and officials, but increased somewhat for residents. People are reluctant to discuss corruption.

- 12% of residents, 9% of entrepreneurs and 2% of officials have had contact with other types of corruption. There has been a noticeable decrease among entrepreneurs compared to earlier (19% in 2010), small increase among residents (11% in 2010) and a slight decrease among officials (3% in 2010). Gift giving as a thank-you is somewhat more common (9% of residents) than gift giving for influence (7% of residents). In addition to gift giving, another common form of corruption is taking advantage of acquaintances when running errands and obtaining information from public sector.
- 7% of entrepreneurs have had experience with corruption within their own company, e.g. used their authority, made unacceptable discounts, etc. Thus, entrepreneurs have more contact with corruption in their own company (7%) than with bribery in the public sector (4-5%). But considering other types of corruption in public sector, this still seems to be the prominent one (9%).

- When coming to contact with corruption, residents or entrepreneurs do not wish to talk about it. If they will speak to anyone then it is either friends or colleagues, not legal authorities. Officials are traditionally more open to notify the authorities: 42% of officials will alert the authorities, while similar indicator for others is only 1%.

Young people are still standing out

- Younger people (generally people under 25) have a harder time recognising corruption – both among residents and officials (up to 35-year-olds), they are also more accepting towards it. Younger people consider corruption more common and younger company managers are more open to corruption. Older people are more concerned for corruption, at the same time, older people employed in the public sector are also more threatened by corruption.

In Estonia, corruption does not differentiate between nationalities

- Non-native Estonians are more concerned about corruption (62% of non-native Estonians and 55% of Estonians see corruption as a problem) and they also have more contact with bribery (23% of

non-native Estonians vs 12% of Estonians), but Estonians have more contact with other corruption types (15% of Estonians and 6% of non-natives), also, Estonians, incl. Estonian entrepreneurs, are more accepting of but also more open to corruption. Although native Estonian residents and entrepreneurs consider corruption more widespread than non-natives, the latter consider corruption common when getting a job: 46% of non-natives and 38% of Estonians.

People with lower education stand out

- People with lower education (basic education) are less good at recognising corruption but at the same time they consider it a larger problem than others. Entrepreneurs with lower education also see the corruptive traits in officials and politicians as a greater setback in business.

Geographical picture is diverse

- Tartu region stands out because that and Northern Estonia see corruption as more widespread. An interesting exception is buying a place in queue to the doctor, where in Northern Estonia the problem is perceived as the largest and in Tartu as the smallest: respectively 61% and 37%. Residents of Tartu County are more open to corruption.

Viru counties stand out because over there, people are more worried about corruption, the entrepreneurs there do not recognise corruption and are more open to corruption. Compared to other regions, it is commonly believed there that bribe is common for getting a job. In Viru counties 50% of residents believe that bribe is paid for getting a job while in Tallinn the same number is 35%.

Cities and smaller settlements stand out in their own way

- If in the cities corruption is thought to be more widespread and it is also a larger concern, then in smaller places and rural areas corruption is more accepted. For instance, the officials working in rural areas are more open to corruption: 8% would agree to accept bribe, while in Tallinn the rate is 6% and elsewhere 4%.

Small business managers stand out

- The managers of smaller businesses (regarding number of employees) are less good at recognising corruption, they also consider it a larger setback for business. At the same time, the managers of larger companies are the ones who have experienced corruption in their own companies.

Social and personal services sector managers stand out

- Social and personal services sector companies include information and communications, insurance, real estate, and other similar activities. Managers of such companies consider corruption more widespread and they have also experienced more corruption in their own companies. Additionally, they are also more ready to behave corruptively. Representatives of commercial and economy sector, on the other hand, see corruption as a setback for business and have also experienced more corruption in their own company. In the previous study, too, the commercial and service sector company managers stood out the most.

Politicians stand out in the public sector

- Although the public sector employees are more aware of corruption, are more intolerant towards it and are less open to it, the politicians (members of the parliament and councils) stand out among them. For example, politicians have less intense reaction to corruption: they consider using work cars for personal use and taking advantage of relationships much more acceptable than others.

They are also more open to corruption. 12% of politicians would agree to behave corruptively, while in ministries the rate is 6%, in legal protection and state agencies it is 5% and local governments 4%. Similarly to the representatives of the legal protection agencies, the politicians also believe that more bribe is paid to their institutions. 25% of politicians believe this, as do 26% of legal protection officials, but for example only 13% of local governments. Politicians along with local governments and legal protection officials also have more experience with other types of corruption.