

It is now widely recognized that corruption is harmful for economic growth, that it decreases enormously the effectiveness of aid and that it increases poverty. Corruption is a fundamental obstacle for economic development. In Eastern Europe, the radical shift in economic and political systems that occurred after 1989 made existing forms of corruption more visible and opened opportunities for new forms of corrupt practices. Bulgaria is a striking example of a country which was on the edge of economic and political collapse in the mid nineties because of the skyrocketing corruption practices in particular spheres of economic political and social life. Nowadays, ten years after the big crisis Bulgaria is a full fledged member of the European Union (EU) but even in this new reality the struggle against corruption remains the main challenge before the new governments.

This thesis will outline and analyze the genesis and uncontrolled growth of corruption processes in Bulgaria during the transition period. It will provide a vast theoretical framework of the issue with definitions spheres and forms of corruption as well as a view on the corruption as a phenomenon of the transition countries. Anticorruption strategies and measures to tackle and overcome corruption in Bulgaria will be examined together with institutional and legislative initiatives during the transition. And finally it will analyze the role of the European Union accession period and the new momentum it gave to the fight against corruption as well as the future challenges and perspective as a full fledged member of the Union.