Corruption is the main challenge to the democratic development of post-Soviet states. Baltic States were able to combat corruption after joining the European Union. However, Georgia did not join the EU and still performs almost as good as the Baltic States. What is puzzling is that Georgia and Ukraine had almost identical frameworks of cooperation with the EU but currently have extremely different levels of corruption. The question, therefore, is: was the EU successful in promoting democratic standards in the Eastern Partnership states? This paper tries to give an answer to this question by applying the theoretical framework of the socialisation theory of Goodman and Jinks to EU conditionality in Georgia and Ukraine. With the two case studies, this paper tries to argue that international conditionality alone is not sufficient for effective reform implementation, nor does it depend on the amount on financial assistance that the states receive. It depends on internal conditions of both countries such as rule of law and political will to implement reforms.

**Key words:** EU conditionality, anti-corruption, rule of law, Georgia, Ukraine.
The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the OECD or of its member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

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**Research problem**

Corruption is the central topic of concerns when it comes to Post-Soviet states (Transparency International 2015). According to citizens’ views in Armenia, Lithuania, Moldova, and Ukraine, their countries are the worst performing countries with regards to corruption in Europe and Central Asia (Transparency International Barometer 2016). It is considered as a major threat to societies all around the globe: it excludes citizens from enjoying the benefits of economic development, and also undermines their political and social liberties. It complicates doing business in countries and impedes engaging in mutually beneficial economic or social partnerships. Furthermore, any type of international cooperation and transfer of funds can be endangered in corrupted environments.

Although post-Soviet states share the history of a complex communist regime, they developed standards of democratisation and good governance at very different levels. Currently, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia and Georgia rank much better in corruption perception indexes than Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Ukraine and Russia. In the case of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia there has been a drastic increase of anti-corruption promotion along with the negotiations of EU membership and post-accession. Yet, two of the Eastern Partnership countries have very different corruption levels. Georgia developed anti-corruption more efficiently than Ukraine – while not having a prospect of EU membership as the Baltic States did. Georgia ranks 48th in the Corruption Perception Index while Ukraine ranks 130th. I decided to focus on these two countries because their cooperation with EU is similar, therefore EU conditionality is similar, but their outcomes on the fight against corruption are different.

This phenomenon raises questions such as: *What factors and actors shape the success of anti-corruption policies and practices in Ukraine and Georgia that lack the prospect of EU membership?*

In order to research this phenomenon, I focus on the EU conditionality aspect that is present in Ukraine and Georgia. This new conditionality is defined in terms of the benefits that Georgia and Ukraine get from EU: cooperation agreements, association agreements, deep and comprehensive free trade agreements and Visa Liberalisation process. This conditionality is the same in both cases. But the way it is implemented and the contexts in which it is implemented differ.

While EU conditionality has been defined in terms of membership conditionality, I will define it in this project in terms of non-membership conditionality. In the last two decades the EU has established programmes of external governance for its neighbouring countries, such as the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the Eastern Partnership (EaP). Both of them focus on working with neighbouring states on the promotion of institutional change, which are monitored through action plans and annual progress results which are published by the European External Action Service and the European Commission. Scholars refer to this cooperation as a “unique strategy of transfer of democratic governance provisions through functional cooperation in the neighbouring states” (Freyburg et al 2015, 63). Today, both Ukraine and Georgia cooperate with the EU at numerous levels: they have established Association Agreements, Action Plans, Deep and Comprehensive Free
Trade Agreements and many cooperation agreements on different topics. As anti-corruption is one of them, it can be argued that EU conditionality induces Georgia and Ukraine to reform this sector. However, findings show that there are drastically different levels of corruption in the countries, which raises the question whether the EU conditionality affected them in unbalanced ways or if it affected them at all. In this way, the research question of this paper is:

Did EU conditionality shape the anti-corruption policies and their practices in Georgia and Ukraine? If not, what was the cause of success and failure of anti-corruption in both cases?

2- Literature review

Strategies that analyse anti-corruption in post-Soviet states and their dimensions are poorly conceptualised and there is a lack of empirical research (Schmidt 2007). While scholars argued that the fall of the Soviet Union was a unique chance for a democratic institutional redesign (Malová and Haughton 2002) the research on corruption in post-Soviet states is varied. Batory (2012) and Schmidt (2007), for example, focus on principal-agent theory to argue why anti-corruption fails in post-Soviet states. Some scholars studied the Baltic States’ anti-corruption policies (Johannsen and Pedersen 2011). And others tried to provide an explanation to Georgia’s anti-corruption effectiveness (Di Puppo 2014, Kupatadze 2012) while compared to Ukrainian case based on the theory of decentralisation of states (Nasuti 2016). Yet, while all the above-mentioned scholars provided arguments on persistence of corruption in post-Soviet states, none of them addressed it from the perspective of EU conditionality.

To this date, the topic of anti-corruption in Eastern Partnership states has not been approached from the EU conditionality perspective. This is why I think it is relevant to scholarly discourse to consider this perspective because EU’s influence on its neighbours is imminent (Vachudova 2009, Vachudova 2013, Grabbe 2006).


3- Theory and hypotheses

Goodman and Jinks argue that there are three specific mechanisms for influencing state practice: coercion, persuasion and acculturation (Goodman and Jinks 2013). The first one, coercion, implies that states and institutions influence the behaviour of other states by manipulating the benefits
of conformity or the cost/punishment of non-conformity (Goodman and Jinks 2004, 9). In the case of EU conditionality in Georgia and Ukraine, the manipulation of the costs of non-compliance and the benefits of compliance can be viewed in the allocation of financial aid. This type of EU conditionality is sometimes referred as “sticks” and “carrots” which the EU gives to other states when they are non-compliant or compliant with their expectations (Börzel and Hackenesch 2013). The sticks and carrots in the case of EU cooperation are the millions of micro-financial assistance as well as grants that are allocated to Georgia and Ukraine.

The second mechanism of socialisation, persuasion, is considered to be a strategic process where “norm entrepreneurs” act as agents of change (Risse 2000, Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). This process requires argument and deliberation in order to convince and persuade that these are the rules of appropriate behaviour. Additionally, the mechanism of acculturation is defined as a general process by which actors adopt the beliefs and behavioural patterns of the surrounding culture (Goodman and Jinks 2004, 5). In fact, this mechanism includes processes such as mimicry that can be related to the theory of isomorphism because it implies that states copy the good practices of other states for increasing their reputation (DiMaggio and Powell 1991). In this case it will be expected that countries, which experience a similar level of EU conditionality, will acquire good practices in a similar manner.

Because the influence of the EU seems to be different in Georgia and Ukraine while they have similar cooperation, additional explanations on how state practice on anti-corruption can be influenced by other type of variables will be considered. Such variables include, for example, strong domestic civil society or rule of law. Scholars argue that compliance with international law is more likely in states which are democracies with strong domestic civil society (Goodman and Jinks 2013). However, indicators on civil society demonstrate that civil society is stronger in Ukraine and weaker in Georgia, that is why I do not focus on this variable.

With all of the abovementioned, I decided to focus on the rule of law of Georgia and Ukraine. In this way I argue that domestic conditions of the country, such as the rule of law, can make international pressures of various types (coercion, persuasion and/or acculturation) effective. This approach leads to formulation of the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 1** (Financial assistance): EU conditionality together with a high amount of financial assistance provides success in anti-corruption.

**Hypothesis 2** (Institutional assistance): EU conditionality complemented with extensive/specific agreements provides success in anti-corruption.

**Hypothesis 3** (Domestic determinants): EU conditionality promotes anti-corruption policies and practices when the rule of law and the political will of the receiving country are effective.
4 - Research design

The selection of the countries was based on their similarity and their difference: Georgia and Ukraine have similar post-Soviet legacy and similar cooperation with the EU but they rank differently in corruption perception indexes and various other governance indexes. For this reason, I have centred my research results in three parts: a short review of cooperation of Georgia and Ukraine with the EU, a review of the differences of governance performance on rule of law and corruption in both countries and finally a process-tracing of anti-corruption in both cases.

Most studies on corruption use corruption levels as their dependent variable (Wolf 2010). In this paper, I used corruption levels as an indicator of a success or failure of anti-corruption strategies in the countries but not as the dependent variable. Therefore, the main dependent variable of the analysis is the anti-corruption policy and practice in Georgia and Ukraine. This variable is estimated with the amount of existing laws, national anti-corruption programmes and the external obligations with regards to anti-corruption that the country has signed/ratified.

The independent variable of this analysis is the EU cooperation with Georgia and Ukraine. This variable is estimated by the amount of existing agreements, and the financial assistance that both countries received and the specificity of the Association Agreements. However, the independent variable is quite constant for both cases. That is why I decided to focus on additional control variables. I decided to focus on one of them due to the scope of this paper. Therefore, the first control variable is estimated in this case by the rule of law and political will. The second control variable is determined by the financial assistance provided to both Georgia and Ukraine by the EU. And the last control variable refers to the specificity of anti-corruption/good governance provisions in the Association Agreements in both cases of Georgia and Ukraine.

5 - Results

5.1. EU conditionality in Georgia and Ukraine: the contested impact of financial assistance and specificity of Association Agreements.

EU cooperation with Georgia started in 1996, years after the fall of the Soviet Union. Ukraine signed the cooperation agreement with the EU on 1994 and it entered into force in 1998. Georgia signed the same agreement in 1996, and it entered into force in 1999. This was followed by a Common Strategy for cooperation of EU-Ukraine that was drafted since 1999 and signed in 2003. After that, the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan for Ukraine was adopted in 2005, a year earlier than the Georgian European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan, which was signed in 2006.

The most recent developments of EU-Georgia and EU-Ukraine cooperation are focused on
the Association Agreement and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement. The negotiations for such framework of cooperation started in 2011 for Ukraine but were blocked by the former president in November 2013. His decision led to the Euromaidan Revolution in Ukraine and an establishment of a new pro-European and anti-Russian government (Samokhvalov 2015). Georgia did not have such political resistance to EU cooperation, thus the negotiations of the Association Agreement were faster than in Ukraine. After the Euromaidan revolution it can be argued that the EU conditionality leverage pushed Ukraine to develop anti-corruption standards because the Association Agreement had to be put in place. An extensive number of anti-corruption requirements, such as the e-declarations for civil servants, had to take place before the Visa Liberalisation with the EU. This is one of the many recent examples of how EU conditionality helped to implement anti-corruption reforms in Ukraine.

Ukraine started the cooperation with the EU earlier than Georgia but in general the framework for cooperation is almost identical in the two cases. The main difference can be seen in the amount of financial assistance provided to Ukraine. From 2007 to 2015 EU financial assistance to Ukraine amounted to 1.6 billion EUR and up to 3.4 billion EUR of loans. Georgia received less than half a billion EUR within the same timeframe. Such a difference in the amount of micro-financial assistance received can be explained by the differences in size of population and territory between the two countries. But at the same time it does raise questions on whether Ukraine has effectively used this financial assistance to combat corruption. In fact, a very recent report of the European Court of Auditors on “EU assistance to Ukraine” concluded that EU assistance to Ukraine has been only partially effectively allocated (European Court of Auditors 2016, 41). This is just a small indication of the need to study how the EU funds were allocated and whether this could have an impact on corruption in the country. Therefore, this fact gives a reason to reject the hypothesis 1. The amount of financial assistance does not seem to play a role in the fight against corruption in Georgia and Ukraine. Whether the financial assistance was effectively allocated in both cases is another question that requires an answer.

With regards to hypothesis 2, it is worth mentioning that there are small differences in the specificity of anti-corruption provisions in Georgian and Ukrainian Association Agreements. A first look at the Preamble of both agreements demonstrates that the Georgian Association Agreement is more focused on good governance reforms than the Ukrainian one. The Preamble of the Georgian Association Agreement mentions:

“Willing to contribute to the political, socio-economic and institutional development of civil society, good governance... institution building, public administration and civil service reform and fight against corruption... and noting the EU readiness to support relevant reforms in Georgia” (EU Georgia Association Agreement)

Such specific mention of readiness of the EU to support all the above-mentioned reforms is lacking in the case of the Ukrainian association agreement. Furthermore, Article 2.4 of the agreement
focuses on the domestic reform of Georgia, and specifies:

“The Parties shall cooperate on developing, consolidating and increasing the stability and effectiveness of democratic institutions and the rule of law” (EU Georgia Association Agreement).

Such specific mentions are absent in the Ukrainian Association Agreement. Additionally, the term “corruption” was mentioned 20 times in the Ukrainian agreement and 23 times in the Georgian one. As for “good governance”, it was mentioned 7 and 10 times respectively. These examples can be too small to provide a solid answer as to whether the specificity of agreements can increase the efficiency of international conditionality. Therefore, in order to determine whether these findings are applicable to other cases, an additional study of the content of all the EU documents focusing on cooperation with Georgia and Ukraine is needed.

5.2. EU conditionality, rule of law and political will

The first hypothesis focuses on the interaction of EU conditionality with the national rule of law and political will. In order to understand whether there are differences in rule of law systems in Georgia and Ukraine, it is important to compare the governance indicators for both countries. Therefore, the main indicators to show the difference of rule of law in both countries are presented in the Table 1.

Table 1 – Governance indicators for Georgia and Ukraine (2015-2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
<th>Ukraine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*<em>WGI</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control of corruption</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>-0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule of law</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>-0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*<em>Nations in Transit</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judicial framework and independence</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*<em>World Justice</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory enforcement</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil justice</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal justice</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: World Bank Governance Indicator estimate gives the country's score on the aggregate indicator ranging from -2.5 (worst) to 2.5 (best) (World Bank, 2016). Nations in Transit Index ranks from 1 to 7, 1 representing the highest level of democratic progress and 7 represents lowest (Freedom House, 2016). World Justice Project indicators rank 113 countries, from 1 for the best performance and 113 for the worst (World Justice Project, 2016).
The indicators presented above suggest that rule of law is the main difference in the cases of Georgia’s and Ukraine’s governance. This shows that independence of judicial sector and the strength of rule of law is much stronger in the case of Georgia. Additionally, civil society, quite interestingly, is much stronger in the case of Ukraine than in Georgia. This confirms that the choice of process tracing of rule of law in Georgia and Ukraine was correct. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that indicators play a useful role in simplifying and translating social phenomena but they can sometimes be not neutral and show a different reality (Sarfaty 2015). Therefore, the next section tries to confirm whether such differences really exist and shortly describes the main findings of the anti-corruption developments from rule of law and political will perspectives in Georgia and Ukraine.

5.3. Process tracing for main anti-corruption developments in Georgia

In just a decade, Georgia had a very effective transition from being one of the most corrupt states in the post-USSR to being an example of anti-corruption. Before the fall of the Soviet Union, Georgia’s unregistered economy exceeded 25% of the GDP, which persisted for a decade after Georgia’s independence (Presidential Decree on Approval of National Anticorruption Strategy 2005, 2010). In such a context, Georgia moved from a failed state with high corruption rates and highly organised criminal activity to one of the less corrupt states in the post-Soviet area (Kupatadze 2012). The fight against corruption was sparked and reinforced by the Rose Revolution in 2003. It is argued that before 2003 no radical steps were taken in order to eradicate corruption (Presidential Decree on Approval of National Anticorruption Strategy 2005, 2010).

Firstly, it is worth mentioning that the framework of anti-corruption started to develop quite late. The first national anti-corruption programme was initiated in 2000 and was followed by the establishment of a National Anti-Corruption Bureau in 2001. Different reforms and establishment of working groups on anti-corruption followed these acts. The Rose Revolution served as fuel to the fight against corruption, and the new government started office with a political determination to eradicate corruption. The fact that the government focused on reinforcing rule of law and reforming the civil service at the same time was one of the main determinants of success in the fight against corruption. This was achieved by the gradual establishment of a sound rule of law system and effective prosecution of the criminal perpetrators. However, such prosecutions were possible only after reinforcing the criminal law on corruption.

Secondly, strengthening of criminal law on corruption was potentiated by many reforms of governmental institutions. The reform of the national police is one of the most important ones. With this reform petty corruption was combated by the creation of a new body for national police. This was followed by a reform of the civil service, which was achieved by firing 75000 employees (Transparency International Georgia 2014).

In this way, development of the legal framework on anti-corruption and implementation of
sound reforms helped Georgia to move from 124th to 66th place in the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index from 2003 until 2009. During this time over 1000 public officials faced charges of corruption including high-ranking politicians such as members of parliament, deputy ministers and chairpersons of city councils (Kupatadze 2011).

![Figure 1 – Main anti-corruption developments in Georgia](image)

Interestingly enough, the EU micro-financial assistance for Georgia was allocated after the implementation of the main efforts against corruption. This can suggest that EU conditionality was defined by anti-corruption efforts of the state. Additionally, Georgia worked on increasing the ease of business implementation. It gradually became one of the top countries for ease of business implementation, which attracted international investment and increased the requirements to provide a sound public procurement free from corruption. In this manner, the government cut taxes from 21 to six and the number of required permits from 600 to 50 (Kupatadze 2011). Most recently, a new anti-corruption strategy was implemented from 2010 until 2016.

These significant efforts to combat corruption were recognised and complemented by international actors. International organisations’ reports on anti-corruption compliance state that Georgia achieved a remarkable progress in fighting corruption over the past decade. They attribute this success mainly to a strong law-enforcement and reform of public administration (OECD 2016). Efforts were made to expand the legal capacity of the institutions that play a role in fighting corruption. Corruption was further combated with public administration reform, which was carried out by cutting unnecessary bureaucracy and increasing salaries for public servants (Transparency International 2015).

However, while Georgia developed a sound legal framework, its practice is not as sound
(Transparency International 2015). Transparency International Integrity Assessment of Georgia argues that there are some main challenges in the law enforcement agencies that have yet to be overcome. One of them is the fact that there is a big political influence on law enforcement agencies, which leads to lack of independence. In addition, such agencies do not operate transparently and their ability to investigate and prosecute high-level corruption is questioned (Transparency International NIS Georgia 2015).

5.4. Process tracing for main anti-corruption developments in Ukraine

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Ukrainian citizens believed that corruption – in the form of bribes, corrupt lobbying, trading influence, nepotism and abuse of power – was a common practice in the everyday life of a Ukrainian citizen (TACIS Action Programme 2006). It still is, in fact, a major threat to the country’s integrity in a complex context of political/economic instability and war in the East of Ukraine. However, not much has been done to combat corruption until the Revolution of Dignity – the Euromaidan revolution of 2014 – happened. I would like to shortly describe the major attempts of the Ukrainian government to establish a legal system to combat corruption since the early 1990s.

In Ukraine, the fight against corruption began quite earlier than in Georgia. Already in 1994 a “Commission for prevention of organised crime and corruption” was created. It was followed by a “Law on combat corruption” that was passed in 1995. In 1997, a “National programme on combating corruption” was established but it was considered as not successful due to lack of political will. These measures, however, were perceived as insufficient and were not fully implemented due to their general terms and the lack of an implementation mechanism (TACIS Action Programme 2006).

There were also attempts to provide reforms against corruption in Ukraine, such as the Strategy of Civil Service Reform in Ukraine that was approved in 2000. In December 2003, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine discussed the results of implementing the Strategy of Civil Service Reform in Ukraine during 2000 – 2003 but it was not successful (TACIS Action Programme 2006). In the meantime, Ukraine participated in many programmes from the EU that focused on anti-corruption, such as the TACIS programme. This was implemented to improve the strategic and institutional framework against corruption in Ukraine and to strengthen the anti-corruption legal framework and effective and impartial enforcement of the criminal legislation on corruption (TACIS Action Programme 2006). But its impact was not sufficient to combat corruption in the country.

The most recent and probably most determined anti-corruption efforts happened after the Euromaidan revolution in 2014. Since then, political will to implement reforms increased partially due to the Euromaidan revolution and partially due to the expectations of the EU. As part of the pre-conditions to the Association Agreement, necessary legislative amendments and necessary anti-corruption institutions were established. This allowed Ukraine to achieve further progress in aligning
its anti-corruption legislation with international standards and recommendations (OECD 2015). The National Bureau on Anti-Corruption was created as an independent body to fight corruption. The government also implemented an Anti-corruption Strategy from 2014 until 2017 and established the National Agency for Corruption Prevention. However, these institutions lack coordination among them and face significant obstacles to their work both inside and outside the institutions.

The following figure represents all the main anti-corruption developments in Ukraine since the fall of the Soviet Union. The two red lines represent the two revolutions: the Orange revolution from 2004 and the Euromaidan revolution from 2013-2014. The blue lines represent the signature and ratification of the main EU-Ukraine agreements.

![Ukraine’s anti-corruption / EU relation timeline](image)

**Figure 2 – Main anti-corruption developments of Ukraine**

An interesting fact is that the time of the main anti-corruption developments and the time when micro-financial assistance from EU was issued coincide. Ukraine received micro-financial assistance from EU each year from 1994 until 1999, then 2002, 2010, 2014 and 2015 (according to the data presented in the Commission’s report on implementation of micro-financial assistance to third countries, EU Commission 2015). These dates coincide with the major anti-corruption efforts of the Ukrainian government. Further research could explicitly study how the EU conditionality was dependent on anti-corruption developments in Ukraine. But for now it clearly suggests that the “carrots” of EU conditionality were given after Ukraine and Georgia implemented some new anti-corruption policies/laws. Nevertheless, financial assistance does not explain why conditionality worked in Georgia and failed in Ukraine. Therefore, as some scholars argue, the EU should make its conditionality in Ukraine less reliant on technical benchmarks and more based on real progress in the fight against corruption (De Waal 2016).
As I attempted to argue in this research paper, the main problem in the Ukrainian fight against corruption was not only lack of commitment, but also the fact that part of the ruling elite decided to turn their backs on the EU during the most crucial time of EU-Ukraine cooperation (Samokhvalov 2015). Such development made the geopolitical context of the country extremely complex, and led to a second revolution in ten years of Ukrainian history. The Euromaidan revolution got rid of a part of the corrupted elite, but it did not get rid of the corrupted system, famous for its kleptocracy and nepotism.

In such context, even the Georgian reformists who joined the Ukrainian government after the 2014 revolution (the former Georgian President among them) quit their reformist tasks in Ukraine due to the government’s lack of real progress in fighting corruption (Reuters, 2016, Kyivpost 2016). While Georgian reformists aimed to apply their experience in post-revolutionary democratic reforms, they soon discovered that the corruption in Ukraine turned out to be more difficult to eradicate than expected (Eurasianet 2016). This is the main difference in the political cultures of Georgia and Ukraine, which led to different outcomes in the fight against corruption. Georgia was able to find political will after the Rose Revolution of 2003 and act immediately by providing justice and necessary reforms. But this was not the case in Ukraine, where the impact of the drafted legal documents and anti-corruption plans just vanished in the Ukrainian political landscape.

6 - Conclusion and discussion

This short paper has tried to argue that international conditionality could be a panacea for anti-corruption if it is complemented with national political will to implement reforms. It can be argued that the Association Agreements and the Action Plans that had to be implemented before being eligible for Visa Liberalisation played a role in the anti-corruption reforms both in Ukraine and Georgia. But was the role of the EU sufficient in promoting good governance standards in these cases? It seems like they had to be complemented with political will leading to major reforms.

The cases of Georgia and Ukraine demonstrate that rule of law played an important role in establishing a corruption-free society but legal reforms alone are not sufficient to guarantee it (Transparency International 2015). It is an important condition to ensure that laws are being implemented and enforced. But it is equally important to complement the rule of law with necessary reforms to the country’s governance. The analysis of Georgia demonstrates that it succeeded in anti-corruption because it managed to implement such reforms on time, which then helped to implement the anti-corruption policies and practices. Ukraine failed to do so, and as a consequence is now lagging behind.

However, it is not very clear whether the EU had a direct influence on anti-corruption policies. Since the cooperation was practically identical in both cases, I consider that the hypothesis on EU conditionality and rule of law + political will (hypothesis 3) can be confirmed but requires further research. The rule of law really played a role in the implementation of the anti-corruption
commitments that Georgia and Ukraine made to the EU. Therefore, this study suggests that EU conditionality can have a bigger impact in a context of sound rule of law and political will to implement reforms. However, this needs to be confirmed through the study of similar cases in other Eastern Partnership countries such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and Moldova. Therefore, further research can account for a wider scope and provide a more solid answer to the question. The hypothesis 1 on financial assistance is clearly rejected, because Georgia received significantly less financial assistance than Ukraine and still managed to have a more successful fight against corruption.

The hypothesis 2 on the specificity of EU-Ukraine and EU-Georgia agreements is confirmed, but can be easily refuted. It is true that the Georgian Association Agreement focuses more on the provisions against corruption and explicitly mentions the intention of EU to assist Georgian governance reforms, while this is not mentioned in the Ukrainian Association Agreement. But the differences are quite small, and the provisions in both cases are quite general. Therefore, further research with more examples should be made to confirm whether the specificity of agreements plays a role in the success of international conditionality.

In sum, the cases of Georgia and Ukraine demonstrated that reform-minded leadership is key to bringing long-lasting change in societal attitudes. However, while the judicial framework and civil/criminal justice remains underdeveloped it is extremely difficult for citizens to stand against corruption. In such an environment, the efforts of international conditionality, aimed to develop sound anti-corruption policies and practices, are very complicated. For this reason, there are a number of steps that have to complement the efforts of international conditionality at the national level:

1) It is important to create realistic action plans and involve many stakeholders for their implementation.

2) It is very important to improve the independence of the judicial branch and the effectiveness of the law enforcement agencies.

3) It is crucial to establish oversight and accountability mechanisms that will provide an independent assessment of the efforts to combat corruption.

4) It is crucial to implement reforms of civil service based on ethical conduct.

5) It is essential not to reinvent the wheel, but to adopt the best practices of anti-corruption and improve the existing frameworks. Creating countless anti-corruption agencies will not help to fight corruption if they keep being poorly managed and badly coordinated.
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