

# Gorilla at the Corrupt Tour

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Martin Ehl

**Třetí dekáda**

O životě, politice a lidech mezi Bruselem a Gazpromem

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- **What do you understand as corruption?**



**n 1: lack of integrity or honesty; esp susceptibility to bribery; use of position of trust for dishonest gain**

- **Synonyms:** decay, baseness, meanness, depravity, degradation, infamy, sinfulness, criminality, guilt
- **Antonyms:** cleanness, purity, virtue, chastity, innocence, integrity, soudness, morality

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- **What do you understand as corruption?**
- Corruption as SYMBOL of all flaws postcommunism has
- Popular political and media TOPIC
- Part of a SYSTEM

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• **When did you meet corruption last time?**

- Daily petty deals
- Deals on important personal life issues like permit to new house
- Deals on important business issues like getting new contract
- Public procurement as source of giant systemic corruption



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- **Corruption and postcommunism:  
Is there any special relation?**
- Destruction of morality during communism
- No systemic faith in justice (systems)
- Modus operandi for survival in daily, business and political life
- Corruption has become a part of life

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- **Corruption as part of political system**
- Public procurement as source of illegal finance for individuals as well as parties and political cronies
- Majority of politicians feel that corruption is a natural part of their business – *look back on how you understand corruption*

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- **Fight against corruption as part of political propaganda or programme**
- In CZ, HU, SK, PL there are examples of new populist political parties gaining votes on the anticorruption programme
- Public Affairs in CZ example on how empty/populist such promises are
- Whole CZ gov is now

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- **Which postcommunist countries has put their top politicians (prime ministers) on trial for corruption?**
- Justice systems and police are usually weak, dependent on political class and in many cases *corrupted*



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- **Croatia**
- **Romania**



- What happened in these two countries?
- Under immense pressure of EU they were forced to act
- Once you are EU member, your drive to reform (whatever) weakens dramatically

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- **Gorilla (SK)**

- Secret service document on deals between business and politicians, after it emerged on web, protests in the streets

- **The Corrupt Tour (CZ)**

- Travel agency organising tours on places, houses, companies tied with famous corruption cases

- Symptoms of disease in Slovakia and The Czech Republic
- Both cases are examples of internal pressure, which is not considered by political elites as significant

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## Gorilla (SK)

- scandal about things which many people suspect
- Slovakia has some institutional tools: special court and law about all public sphere purchases being published on web

## The Corrupt Tour (CZ)

- Czech irony of important problem
- Many suspected cases published: important role of media, but police and state prosecution still under political influence

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## The common SK+ CZ denominator:

People hear and read about more and more cases in media, but there are no real big fish prosecuted → anger of public, higher perception of corruption in society → public pressure on politicians → growing popularity of populists offering quick and easy solutions, hard to find systemic, longterm solutions

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- **Perception of corruption in V4 countries (Index of Transparency International)**

- **PL up**

- 2007 – 61./2011 – 41.
- All others down
- **CZ:** 41. → 57.
- **SK:** 49. → 66.
- **HU:** 39. → 54.

Effect of crisis? More interest of public (media) in where all the money from public budgets goes plus more open media and public discussions?

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## • What is missing?



Symbols:

politician (without fear) caught with money and (too) independent prosecutor

- In case of corruption political system, there is lack of FEAR among politicians to be punished for wrongdoings
- Weak POLICE and not independent JUDICIARY: recent struggle over director of public prosecutions in C7 as example

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- **What might be solution?**

- In case of corruption political system, to change the way how political parties are financed (positive Polish example)
- Radical overhaul of police and judiciary
- Public support NOT for the populists



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- **What might be solution II.?**



- More active and independent media (which is hard in crisis)
- Morality (values) as category in politics and everyday life – only now we recognise how deep destruction of values during socialism and numerous occupations went + other global factors like material society



# **Gorilla at the Corrupt Tour**

**What is recent politics in the V4 about?**

**Corruption in the broader sense as *main destructive element*. At stake there is *future nature of state*, judiciary, *sense of justice* among citizens - young ones not influenced by socialism directly, but *accepting old flaws* as reality**

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**Thank you!**

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