

Integrity and Legal Ideology: A Question of Correlation

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Abstract: *The article is devoted to the theoretical and legal analysis of the correlation between integrity and legal ideology in a modern democratic society. The methodology combines a general theoretical analysis of legal doctrine with a comparative review of domestic and foreign scholarship on the moral-legal nature of integrity, complemented by a formal-legal examination of Ukrainian anti-corruption legislation. The starting premise is that integrity functions simultaneously as a moral principle and a legal category that provides the ethical foundation on which fundamental legal values, justice, equality, and legality, are built, and through which legal ideology, understood as the system of ideas reflecting society's attitude toward law, is itself formed. The article examines competing scholarly approaches to defining integrity, from R. Schramm's ethically neutral reading of the bona fides/mala fides distinction to multidimensional models that treat integrity as encompassing moral-ethical, socio-psychological, socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic dimensions, as well as narrower, applied conceptions tied to honesty, transparency, and accountability of public officials. It further analyses how these theoretical constructs are operationalised in Ukraine's civil service system through the Law of Ukraine "On Prevention of Corruption", the National Agency on Corruption Prevention, electronic asset declaration, lifestyle monitoring, and conflict-of-interest procedures. The article concludes that integrity operates both as a preventive anti-corruption mechanism and as a determinant of public trust in state institutions, and that its practical implementation in Ukraine relies on a comprehensive combination of legislative, institutional, and ethical instruments. Strengthening this framework further will require the integration of new technological tools, enhanced public oversight, and international cooperation in countering corruption.*

Keywords: *integrity, legal ideology, public service, anti-corruption regulation, rule of law.*

Introduction

Integrity, as a moral category and a fundamental principle of law, plays a key role in shaping the legal ideology of a modern democratic society.

It functions as a distinctive ethical foundation on which the system of legal values and norms governing the interaction between citizens and the state is built.

Legal ideology, understood as a system of legal ideas, principles, and concepts reflecting people's attitude toward existing or desired law, is directly connected to integrity through the shared nature of their underlying values. It is precisely through the prism of integrity that basic conceptions of justice, equality, legality, and other legal values forming the core of legal ideology are shaped.

The relevance of studying the correlation between integrity and legal ideology stems from the need to build effective mechanisms for ensuring the rule of law and developing a law-governed state. Under contemporary conditions, it becomes particularly important to understand how the moral imperatives of integrity are transformed into legal norms and principles, thereby forming the ideological foundation of the legal system.

The correlation between integrity and legal ideology has been examined by Ukrainian scholars such as S.V. Pohrebniak, O.O. Bandura, and S.P. Pohrebniak, whose works reveal the theoretical foundations of integrity as a legal category. Foreign researchers R. Dworkin, L. Fuller, and J. Rawls have focused on analysing the influence of moral values on the formation of legal ideology. Particular attention to judicial integrity has been paid by S.V. Prylutskyi and O.M. Ovcharenko. Representatives of the natural-law school, H.L.A. Hart and J. Finnis, have made an important contribution to under-

standing the relationship between law and morality by examining the role of moral principles in the legal system. Contemporary approaches to understanding integrity as a component of legal culture are developed by M.I. Koziubra and P.M. Rabinovych.

The aim of the study is a theoretical-legal analysis of certain aspects of the correlation between integrity and legal ideology, the identification of their mutual influence, and the determination of the mechanisms for the practical implementation of the principles of integrity in the context of shaping contemporary legal ideology.

Integrity as an Ethical-Legal Category: The Interaction of Morality and Law

Legal ideology, as a system of legal ideas and concepts, includes integrity among its core elements. In this context, integrity functions both as an ethical standard for representatives of public authority and as a legal principle regulating the activity of state bodies. It contributes to building public trust in authority and ensuring the rule of law by establishing clear ethical requirements for the conduct of officials and directing their activity toward the protection of public interests.

Within legal ideology, integrity emerges as a system of principles forming the value foundations of the work of state bodies. It acts as a key component directing the activity of public authority toward ensuring

public interests and observing the rule of law. Through legal ideology, which unites legal theories and concepts, integrity influences the formation of legal consciousness and models of lawful behaviour¹.

Analysing integrity through the prism of the interaction between morality and law is key to understanding its essence. Discussions on the relationship between morality and law take place across various social sciences - jurisprudence, philosophy, sociology, and ethics. The ambiguity of this relationship is likewise reflected in the understanding of the category of "integrity", where the question of the degree of its moral-legal nature arises.

A significant contribution to the discussion on the nature of integrity was made by the legal scholar R. Schramm. He denied any moral content to the concept of *bona fides* (good faith/integrity), arguing that it cannot be equated with honesty or moral qualities. According to his conception, *bona fides* simply denotes ignorance or error, while *mala fides* (bad faith) denotes knowledge. He thus treated these categories as ethically neutral, devoid of moral colouring².

In the context of the interaction between morality and law, integrity acts as an important ethical-legal category that the legislator employs in normative acts to give legal relations a moral dimension. When analysing integrity as a legal category, it is necessary to focus specifically on its technical-legal consolidation in

legal norms, in particular, to consider it as an evaluative concept.

In studying integrity, scholars define it as an evaluative category that is interpreted differently depending on the subject, situation, and social and legal context. This, in turn, confirms the abstract character of integrity and the existence of diverse approaches to its understanding.

The Multicomponent Nature and Dimensions of Integrity in Legal Doctrine

According to researcher M. Prylipko, integrity as a social institution embodies in public consciousness ideas about the values and personal qualities necessary for the exercise of the functions of the state and local self-government, in particular in the sphere of legislative and executive power and justice. These qualities manifest themselves in the conduct of an official both during and outside the performance of official duties. The scholar considers that integrity should be analysed along six dimensions: moral-ethical (the spiritual qualities of the official), socio-psychological (value orientations), socio-cultural (the level of development of society), political (the foundation of citizens' trust), legal (normative requirements of conduct), and economic (rational consumption). Integrity may additionally be examined from other perspectives – sociological, philosophical, pedagogical, and so on – depending on the aim and objectives of a particular study³.

P. Kyrylenko emphasises precisely the multicomponent nature of the phenomenon of integrity and considers that it encompasses such components as the honesty of officials, transparency, accountability, and compliance with codes of ethics and the law. Maintaining the integrity of civil servants and local self-government officials is of decisive importance for fostering trust, confidence, and legitimacy in public institutions and for ensuring the proper functioning of a democratic society⁴.

Integrity may be considered in two key aspects. In a broad sense, it is a complex category combining moral-ethical principles, legal norms, and philosophical concepts, reflecting general conceptions of proper conduct and high standards of integrity in society. In a narrower sense, integrity acquires a more applied character - it manifests itself in specific spheres of human and social activity, where it has a clear practical orientation and application. This may concern professional activity, civil service, education, or other fields where integrity is embodied in concrete rules of conduct and standards⁵.

Examining integrity in the context of preventing conflicts of interest in public service, O. Tokar-Ostapenko defines it as an important element of anti-corruption legislation. The integrity of officials, manifested through their moral-ethical and psychological qualities, serves as a safeguard against the emergence of conflicts of interest in the performance of official duties, underscoring its important

role as a preventive anti-corruption mechanism⁶.

In her research on integrity as a principle of state power, O. Tomkina emphasises that the concept of “integrity” is a basic ethical category. In her view, integrity reflects the subjective manifestation of moral norms and is expressed through stable positive moral and psychological characteristics of the personality. In a broad sense, integrity characterises the high moral level of representatives of public authority, whose activity is oriented toward achieving the public good and ensuring the interests of both individual citizens and society as a whole⁷.

Practical Implementation of Integrity in Ukraine’s Civil Service System

The Law of Ukraine “On Prevention of Corruption” became an important step in reforming the civil service system and combating corruption. One of the most significant achievements of this law was the creation of a specialised body – the National Agency on Corruption Prevention (NACP), which was granted the authority to shape and implement the state’s anti-corruption policy.

The legislation introduced a comprehensive approach to ensuring the integrity of public servants through several key mechanisms. In particular, detailed procedures were developed for identifying and managing conflicts of interest. An innovative system of financial control over offi-

cials was introduced, based on electronic declaration of assets and income, their thorough verification at various levels, and public access to this information. Additionally, monitoring of the correspondence between officials' lifestyle and their official income is carried out.

The law also established fundamental ethical principles for civil servants, including the rule of law, protection of human rights, impartiality in political matters, and objectivity in decision-making. In addition, a number of restrictions were introduced regarding additional employment, working with relatives, employment after the end of civil service, and the receipt of gifts. Together, all these innovations form an integral system aimed at preventing corruption through a combination of preventive measures with clear rules and restrictions for public servants⁸.

Civil servants play a decisive role in state-building processes, performing the direct functions of public authorities in accordance with legislation and official duties. Their effectiveness depends on two equally important components. The first is professional competence: proper professional training, specialised knowledge, and the ability to apply it in practice. The second, no less important, component consists of personal moral-ethical qualities, since a civil servant is a public figure subject to particular requirements regarding integrity and ethical conduct. Although integrity was not singled out as a separate principle of civil service

in historical documents, its components, honesty and virtue, were important requirements for representatives of authority on Ukrainian lands. These moral-ethical norms, recorded in historical sources on public administration, may be regarded as precursors of the modern concept of civil-service integrity⁹.

The formation of a system of honest and professional civil service extends beyond purely organisational and legal issues. The system encompasses ensuring impartiality in political and administrative decision-making, identifying potential threats to the integrity of officials, preventing unacceptable conflicts of interest, and implementing mechanisms for managing and resolving conflict situations¹⁰.

Conclusions

Integrity constitutes a fundamental principle of law and a moral category that shapes the legal ideology of a democratic society through a system of values, norms, and principles governing the interaction between citizens and the state. In the scholarly literature, integrity is treated as a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing moral-ethical, socio-psychological, legal, and economic dimensions. It functions both as an ethical standard for representatives of public authority and as a legal principle regulating the activity of state bodies.

The practical implementation of the principle of integrity in Ukraine is

ensured through a comprehensive system of mechanisms, including anti-corruption legislation, codes of ethics, electronic declaration, and monitoring of the lifestyle of civil servants, which contributes to increasing public trust in state institutions.

The correlation between integrity and legal ideology manifests itself through the formation of value orientations in society that influence the development of legal culture and legal consciousness of citizens. Integrity functions not only as a theoretical concept but also as a practical instrument for ensuring the proper

functioning of state institutions and the development of civil society.

In the context of contemporary challenges, further improvement of the mechanisms for ensuring integrity is of particular relevance, in particular through the introduction of innovative technologies, the strengthening of public oversight, and international cooperation in countering corruption. This will contribute to strengthening the democratic foundations of public administration and increasing the effectiveness of the functioning of Ukraine's legal system.

Notes

- ¹ Dmytro Bielov, Myroslava Bielova, "Integrity in Public Authorities as an Element of the Legal Ideology of Modern Society", *Naukovyi Visnyk Uzhhorodskoho Natsionalnoho Universytetu, Seriya Pravo*, Issue 86, Part 5, 2025, p. 213.
- ² Thomas Schramm, "Treu und Glauben im deutschen Rechtssystem: Eine ethische Perspektive", *Zeitschrift für Rechtsphilosophie*, Band 17, 2019, S. 46.
- ³ Mykola Prylipko, "The Institute of Integrity as a Condition for Establishing the Rule of Law in a Legal Democratic State", *Naukovyi Visnyk Mizhnarodnoho Humanitarnoho Universytetu*, Ser.: Yurysprudentsiia, Nr. 54, Vol. 1, 2021, p. 90.
- ⁴ Petro Kyrilenko, "Integrity in Public Administration: From Ideal to an Instrument for Preventing Corruption", *Efektivnist derzhavnoho upravlinnia*, Issue 1/2 (74/75), 2023, p. 31.

- ⁵ Nataliia Kaminska, "Integrity: Socio-Legal Content and Significance for Contemporary Reforms", *Filosofski ta metodolohichni problemy prava*, Nr. 2 (26), 2023, p. 33.
- ⁶ Olha Tokar-Ostapenko, "Peculiarities of Exercising Public Control over Integrity and the Prevention of Conflicts of Interest in Public Service", *Stratehichni priorytety*, Nr. 4 (33), 2014, p. 40.
- ⁷ Olha Tomkina, "The Principle of Integrity of State Power: Statement of the Problem", *Visnyk Natsionalnoi akademii pravovykh nauk Ukrainy*, Nr. 1 (76), 2014, pp. 65-70.
- ⁸ National Integrity System Assessment, Transparency International Ukraine, 2016, https://ti-ukraine.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/nis_assessment_ukr_0.pdf, (accessed 2.09.2026).
- ⁹ Kateryna Chechenko, "The Principle of Integrity of Civil Service: Etymology and Genesis of the Moral-Ethical Norm", *Kyivskyi chasopys prava*, Nr. 1, 2022, p. 144.

- ¹⁰ Nataliia Korchak, Oksana Parkhomenko-Kutsevil, “Integrity of a Civil Servant: Ethical and Legal

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