

Perceptions, Experiences, and Meanings of Young People about the Phenomenon of Corruption in Chile



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Youth, as a historical agent of social change in Chile, has improved democracy (Chiroma, 2018). Corruption is a real threat against democracy, (Transparency International, 2021). Corruption can be defined as an abuse of power for one's personal gain (Transparency International, 2009). A latent threat to democracy is corruption, which weakens it, destroys public trust in institutions, skews policymaking to the benefit of the few, and leads to the capture of accountability mechanisms (Transparency International, 2021). Corruption is defined as the abuse of power for one's own benefit (Transparency International, 2009).

For the purposes of this study, the problem of corruption will focus on acts of *petty corruption*, which are those acts of daily abuse of power by officials and/or collaborators of low and medium rank when interacting with ordinary citizens, who often try to access basic goods and services in areas such as hospitals, schools, police and other agencies that provide public goods or services.

Usually, the government's attention is focused on large-scale corruption because of its harmful effects on democracy and the development of countries, which can lead to the collapse of social structures (Durand, 2005; Pastrana, 2019) and the legitimacy of institutions (Gamboa and Segovia, 2016). However, minor acts of corruption are often underestimated by governments (Clarke, 2011), so it is necessary to understand that this type of corruption is equally important given the negative effects it can have on citizens

from developing feelings of disaffection, the deterioration of the reputation of institutions, to the impediment of access to services for the most vulnerable groups of society (Parramón and Roca, 2013). The intention is to gather the meanings, experiences, and perceptions of young Chilean people between 18 and 29 years old. This study is composed of two phases. In order to better understand the perceptions of young people on corruption. The objective of the first phase was to conduct a nationwide telephone survey to analyze the general perspectives of young people on the problem of corruption in the country. The second phase, which seeks to gather complementary information to the results of the first phase, aims to analyze the different views on corruption held by young people, through discussion groups implemented in the country's regions: north, central, south, and also in the Metropolitan region.

Main Results

Telephone Survey

- Young people associate corruption with concepts of politics and institutional policy, such as "politicians".
- The institutions perceived with "very high" or "high" levels of corruption by young people are: The National Congress of Chile (86.1%), Chilean uniformed police (80.7%) and municipalities (87.3%).
- Young people relate corruption with negative connotation concepts, such as: "dishonest", "crime", "abuse", and "steal".
- Most of the interviewees (85.4%) said that corruption levels in Chile are "high" or "very high".
- More than half of young people consider that corruption affects them "... in their daily lives (52.1%).".
- Regarding the statement that in Chile those who committed corrupt acts are punished, 66.3% stated that they "strongly disagreed" or "disagreed".

Discussion Groups

- Although the young people who participated in the discussion groups reported having experienced small-scale corruption situations (such as access to services), in general, they associate "corruption" with political activity (e.g., municipalities); this means their first thought about corruption is related to large-scale corruption (for example: with Congress and politicians).
- Some of the discussion group participants consider that there are "acceptable" or "tolerable" corruption situations when the damage is minor or has less serious consequences, on the other hand, when the repercussions are greater, they are not justifiable. They also indicate that in general, any situation of corruption is unfair.
- Young people state that when an act of corruption is carried out to benefit a third party in an "altruistic" way, it is still unjust, but it is more "tolerable" or understandable than when corruption is used for personal gain. In the latter case, it is rejected.
- Regarding the role of young people in the fight against corruption, those who participated in the discussion groups consider that it is important to teach the younger generations to prevent these situations.



INTRODUCTION

Generally, the youth population is a mobilizing agent for social change around the world, especially in those countries where the youth population is larger than other age groups (Chiroma, 2018). When a country with a high number of young people has high rates of corruption, young people are more likely to organize to fight it through demonstrations and protests, in addition to other forms of activism, a product of the fact that they can identify that corruption not only generates social injustice but also directly impacts their opportunities for work and personal development (Reza and Witthuhn, 2017).

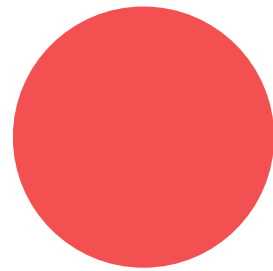
The phenomenon of corruption is a problem in Chile due to the small number of studies focused on political and public institutions. Related to this problem, the potential of youth as a mobilizing agent of social change with respect has not been properly addressed. Another factor is the context of young people and their relationship with politics. According to data from the 10th National Youth Survey, there is the highest percentage of young people interested in politics in 10 years. (National Institute of Youth). In addition, there is evidence of an increase of the interesting being part of participatory instances, such as helping the community and volunteering.

For this reason, the objective of this study is to gather the meanings, experiences and/or perceptions of corruption held by young people between 18 and 29 years of age.

This information seeks to know opinions on a crucial issue and to be considered for public decision-making, such as programs that promote public and private integrity and the participation of young people, or even for young people to have ethical and citizenship training.

For the purposes of this study, the definition of corruption postulated by Transparency International will be used, which defines it as the abuse of delegated power for private gain (Transparency International, 2009). According to this definition, corruption happens when an individual in a situation of asymmetric power prefers his or her own well-being to the detriment of a third party - or society as a whole - either directly or indirectly.

CORRUPTION AND ITS EFFECTS



Corruption can take many forms and be committed by different actors within and outside the public sector. It can take place in the private sector and in civil society. Depending on the person who commits it, there are two different types of corruption. *Grand corruption* or large-scale corruption occurs when corrupt acts are committed at the highest levels of government that involve the distortion of policies or central functions of the State, allowing leaders to benefit at the expense of the common good (Transparency International, 2009). In contrast, *petty corruption* are everyday abuse acts of entrusted power by public officials in their interactions with ordinary citizens, who often are trying to access basic goods or services in places like hospitals, schools, police departments and other agencies. (Transparency International, 2009).

Grand corruption is less frequent, and involves large amounts of money obtained through illegal actions by high-level government officials. On the other hand, *petty corruption* is more frequent, involves smaller amounts of money and is seen daily. (Stålgren, 2006).

How can *petty corruption* be observed in everyday life? This can take numerous forms, for example, it can involve the giving of gifts and services by citizens towards low or middle authorities, as well as their relatives (Vasilievich, Ivanovich, & Gennadievna, 2018).

This delivery is carried out with the aim of obtaining a public service, obtaining documentation, and personal safety, among others.

According to data from Transparency International (Pring & Vrushi, 2019), citizens from Latin American and Caribbean countries consider bribery as a normal act and estimate that 1 of 5 citizens have had to bribe an authority in order to gain access to medical care, education or some public service. The same study indicates that, In Chile, this same study indicates that 17% of users of public services have had to pay bribes in the last 12 months (2019) in order to access them, as well as 15% of users of health centers and 10% of applicants for identity documents have had to incur in these payments in order to fulfill their needs.

The corruption that could most directly affect citizens is that which attacks their daily needs. Even worse, low-income people are prone to suffer this type of corruption and are also the most disadvantaged when reporting it.

Citizens associate acts of *petty corruption* as "acts of exchange". Acts of *petty corruption* are observed by citizens as "acts of exchange" where the person gives something to the official in exchange for a service. The official delivers this service after receiving the requested goods. In countries with high levels of corruption, there is a certain normalization of these practices because they make it possible to obtain something necessary for life.

YOUTH AND THE CORRUPTION PROBLEM



The role of young people tends to be underestimated because they are associated with inexperience and immaturity. However, they have a clear vision of corruption and the need to fight it (Chiroma, 2018; Kahuthia, 2018). In addition, young people have a future-oriented vision, which implies that they will have to live in a world that their predecessors built and that future generations depend on the world that they and they will build (McEvoy, 2011). Likewise, the vision of the following generations about accepting this inescapable phenomenon or if they decide to confront it. (Chiroma, 2018).

As mentioned above, youth is an agent that mobilizes social change around the world. Examples of these are the Millennial Bicara Anti-Korupsi social movement in Indonesia, where young people decided to demand the government to take action against corruption. In Guatemala, the youth was protagonist in massive protests to demand the resignation of the executive power under the slogan #RenunciaYa (Torres, 2015). Corruption also emerged as one of the triggers that originated the social outburst in Chile in 2019, which had a series of demonstrations initiated by young people against the traditional political class considered as "corrupt, thieving and cheating" (Jiménez-Yañez, 2020).

The experience gained from studies of similar characteristics in other countries indicates that young people consider that the origin of corruption is in the public sector, in their governments and authorities, who have privileges and carry out all kinds of actions in order to have more. Because of this, young people believe that corruption is an act of greed and selfishness. (Sihombing, 2018). In addition, they not only think that corruption is a big problem in their respective countries, but also generates a threat to institutionality and governance (Durif, 2020), generating problems in access to basic and public services, such as health, education, sanitation, among others (Saef, Mulyasari and Oemardhi, 2022).

In general terms, young people consider corruption as an everyday occurrence. In some countries, it is considered cultural, in order to access services, obtain documents and avoid sanctions. (Saef, Mulyasari and Oemardhi, 2022). The future may seem daunting, however, among the challenges there are also possibilities for change. Youth have the capacity and skills for change, generating innovative ideas to combat problems (Chiroma, 2018), which would eventually lead to the approach and generation of new anti-corruption practices.

Anti-corruption practices are all those actions that seek to prevent, oppose and eradicate corruption in all its forms; in that sense, the promotion of anti-corruption in education and in the general culture of society becomes relevant, not only from schools, but promoting integrity as part of the civic education of the population. This step towards a cultural paradigm shift needs to bring together the private sector, civil organizations, and government to pursue the common good and respect for integrity (Saef, Mulyasari and Oemardhi, 2022) of society becomes relevant, not only from schools but promoting integrity as part of the civic education of the population. This step towards a cultural paradigm shift needs to bring together the private sector, civil organizations, and government to pursue the common good and respect for integrity. (Saef, Mulyasari and Oemardhi, 2022).

From these international experiences, it is possible to identify certain characteristics related to corruption and anti-corruption from the imaginary of young people: corruption is unfair, selfish and dirty, while integrity is associated with honesty, kindness and altruism (Sihombing, 2018). Corruption is a relevant problem which has not been properly addressed and/or fought, however, it is possible the new generations have the solution.



METHODOLOGY

The general objective of this research is to investigate the perception of the phenomenon of corruption among young people between 18 and 29 years old in the country. While the specific objectives are:

- To know what young people understand by corruption.
- To explore the acts that young people qualify as corrupt.
- To understand the role of society from the perspective of young people in terms of corruption, revealing the presence of tensions and conflicts.

Approach

This study considered a mixed approach to gathering the perceptions of young people from different regions of the country. First, the quantitative phase considered the execution of a telephone survey with a sample of 1.653 cases, with an error of ± 2.37 percentage points, under simple random sampling in all its phases and under the assumption of maximum variance.

The sample design of this survey is probabilistic and stratified by region in order to obtain statistically representative results. The respondents were chosen based on 4 categories of representation:

Gender Representation

Gender	Non-weighted	Weighted
Male	44.2%	50.6%
Female	55.8%	49.4%

Socio-economic Status Representation

Socio-economic status	Non-weighted	Weighted
ABC 1 (High)	17.4 %	16.4 %
C2 + C3 (Medium)	72.3 %	72.6 %
D + E (Low)	10.3 %	11 %

Regional Representation

Zone	Non-weighted	Weighted
North	25 %	12.8 %
Central	25 %	22.6 %
South	25 %	21.8 %
MR	25 %	42.9 %

Age Range Representation

Age range	Non-weighted	Weighted
18 - 24	53.1%	56.3%
25 - 29	46.9%	43.7%

This survey was made by ClioDinamica Consulting, under the direct supervision of the National Youth Institute of Chile (INJUV) From November 16 to November 27, 2022.

Four discussion groups were conducted for the second phase of the study, distributed at the regional level as follows: one in the Northern region (from Arica to Coquimbo, virtual modality), one in the Central region (from Valparaíso to Ñuble, virtual modality), one in the Southern region (from Biobío to Magallanes, virtual modality) and one in the Metropolitan region (face-to-face modality).

These sessions took place between October 12 and November 2, 2022. There were six participants in each session, a moderator, and the team in charge of carrying out the study. This characteristic was fullfill in all groups except for the one conducted in the Central region.

Discussion Group Sample

The characteristics of the sample and the number of attendees who finally participated in each discussion group are presented below:

Call by Region (North)

Gender	Female	Male	Total
Age range			
18 to 21 years	1	1	2
22 to 25 years	2	1	3
26 to 29 years	1	1	2
Total	4	3	7

Call by Region (Central)

Gender	Female	Male	Total
Age range			
18 to 21 years	0	1	1
22 to 25 years	0	3	3
26 to 29 years	1	0	1
Total	1	4	5

Call by Region (South)

Gender	Female	Male	Total
Age range			
18 to 21 years	0	2	2
22 to 25 years	2	0	2
26 to 29 years	2	0	2
Total	4	2	6

Gender	Female	Male	Total
Age range			
18 to 21 years	1	1	2
22 to 25 years	1	2	3
26 to 29 years	1	2	3
Total	3	5	8

RESULTS

Quantitative Analysis

The telephone survey was divided into three sub-themes. The first focused on definitions of probity, transparency, and corruption in Chile; the second subtopic focused on corruption in institutions and individuals; and the third analyzed tensions, projections and expectations regarding corruption.

Definitions of Probity, Transparency and Corruption in Chile

When asked about the meaning of corruption, young people lean towards two meanings. The most shared is to relate corruption with concepts of politics and political institutions, for example: words such as "politicians", being this the most recurrent concept used by young people, "government", and "Chilean uniformed police", among others. There is a strong linkage of the term corruption with the figure of politicians, evidencing the distrust that young people feel towards the political class, which could have negative effects on political participation.

The second definition is related to negative connotation concepts, such as "dishonest", "crime", "abuse" and "stealing". This negative connotation of corruption and the relationship between politics and corruption, provides further indications of a possible political disaffection.

Figure 1: ¿What is the first word that comes to your mind when hearing the Corruption concept?



Chart elaborated by ClioDinamica, in Survey on corruption perception among young people in Chile (INJUV, 2022).
DK/NA values are omitted, and weighted data are used.

In contrast to the previous question, when young people are asked about their definition of "probity", there is a clear trend regarding the positive connotation of the word, given that it is mostly associated with the concept of "honesty", in other words, it is related to integrity in people's actions. Other concepts associated with probity are "honesty", "correctness", "ethics" and other similar concepts. On the other hand, in general, young people do not relate this concept to public institutions, such as the congress or the courts of justice.

**Figure 4: On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “Very low” and 5 means “Very high”
In your opinion, how are the levels of corruption?**

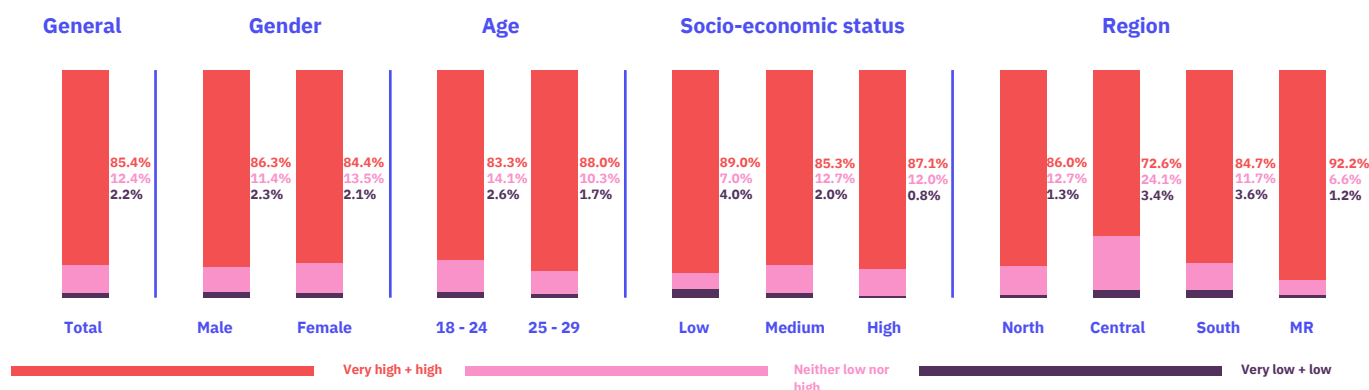


Chart elaborated by ClíoDinámica, in Survey on corruption perception among young people in Chile (INJUV, 2022).
DK/NA values are omitted, and weighted data are used.

When analyzing the different responses according to the young people’s gender, age range, socio-economic level and the region where they live, it is observed that there are no major differences between the different groups. However, it is striking the equality between the responses of men and women, where practically similar percentages of perception of "high" or "very high" levels of corruption in the country are identified, being 86.3% and 84.4%, respectively. In addition, according to socio-economic level, the group with the worst perception of corruption in the country are those young people of low socio-economic level, with 89% of responses indicating "high" or "very high" levels of corruption, versus young people of medium socio-economic level (85.3%)

and high socioeconomic level (87.1%) who indicated the same.

It is also important to highlight the differences obtained in all the regions, specifically in the Metropolitan Region, where 92.2% of young people stated that corruption in Chile is "high" or "very high", as opposed to young people from the Central region who stated the same (72.6%).

As for how the interviewees project corruption 5 years from now, almost half of the young people believe that corruption in Chile will remain the same, while 39% believe that it will increase and 12.9% believe that it will decrease.

Figure 5: How do you project corruption 5 years from now?

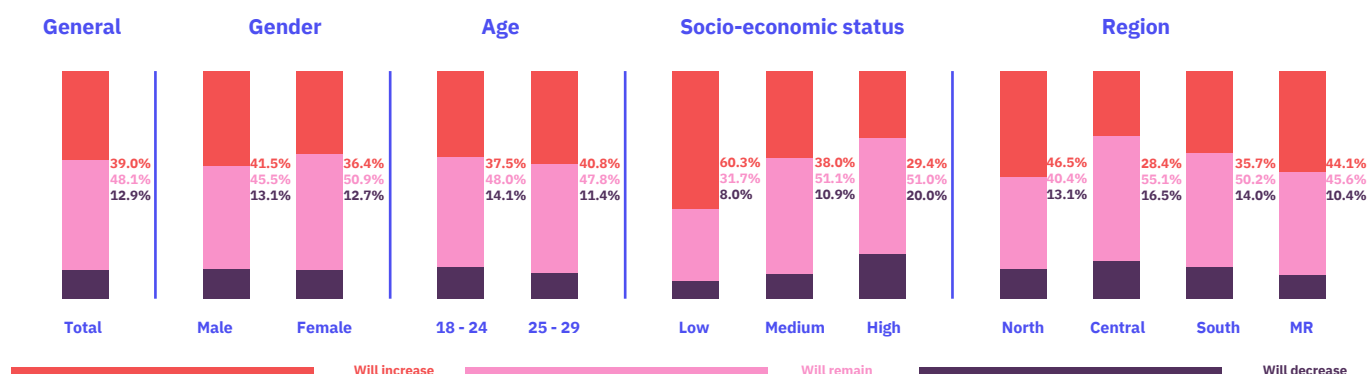


Chart elaborated by ClíoDinámica, in Survey on corruption perception among young people in Chile (INJUV, 2022).
DK/NA values are omitted, and weighted data are used.

According to gender, young women have a less negative view of corruption than men, with 36.4% believing that corruption will increase and 50.9% believing that it will remain the same as now. In contrast, 41.5% of young men say corruption will increase, and 45.5% say it will remain the same.

In addition, a significant gap in socioeconomic level can be observed. Those with a low socioeconomic level have a negative view of corruption, as more than 60% believe that corruption will increase, in contrast to those with a medium (38%) and high (29.4%) socioeconomic level. These results could explain the impact of the corruption problem on lower-income sectors in Chile.

Finally, 44.1% of young people in the Metropolitan Region indicate that corruption will increase. However, young people in the Northern region are the ones who most declare that corruption in Chile will increase in the next 5 years (46.5%).

Institutional Corruption and People

This section will show the results of the perception of corruption in public and private institutions. In the first question, young interviewees were asked to indicate how corrupt certain institutions are, with 1 being a "very low" level and 5 a "very high" level.

The institutions most perceived as having high levels of corruption are municipalities (87.3% respond "high" and "very high" levels of corruption), The National Congress of Chile (86.1% consider a "high" and "very high" level) and the Chilean uniformed police (with 80.7% declaring "high" and "very high" levels). Regarding the corruption levels in municipalities, this could be explained by the fact that this level of government is closer and in direct contact with citizens.

Figure 6: On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “Very low” and 5 means “Very high”
In your opinion, how are the levels of corruption in the following institutions and organizations?

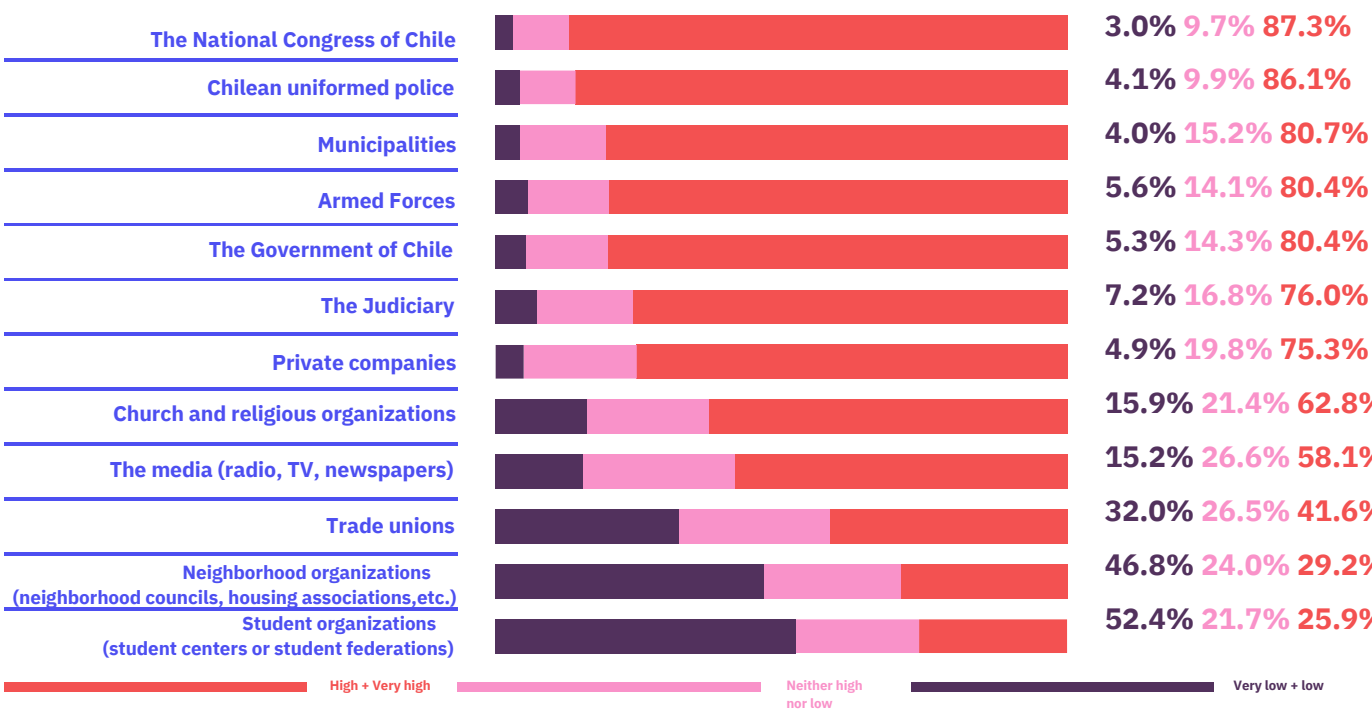


Chart elaborated by ClíoDinámica, in Survey on corruption perception among young people in Chile (INJUV, 2022).
DK/NA values are omitted, and weighted data are used.

In contrast, a lower percentage of young people declare "very high" and "high" levels of corruption in student organizations (25.9%) and neighborhood organizations (29.2%), which could eventually be related to their familiarity with these institutions. Similar to the previous response, when young people

are asked about the levels of corruption of certain people, members of Congress (87.7%), mayors (84.7%) and Chilean uniformed police, are the figures in which most young people declare "very high" and "high" levels of corruption.

Figure 7: On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "Very low" and 5 means "Very high"
According to you, how are the levels of corruption in the following people?

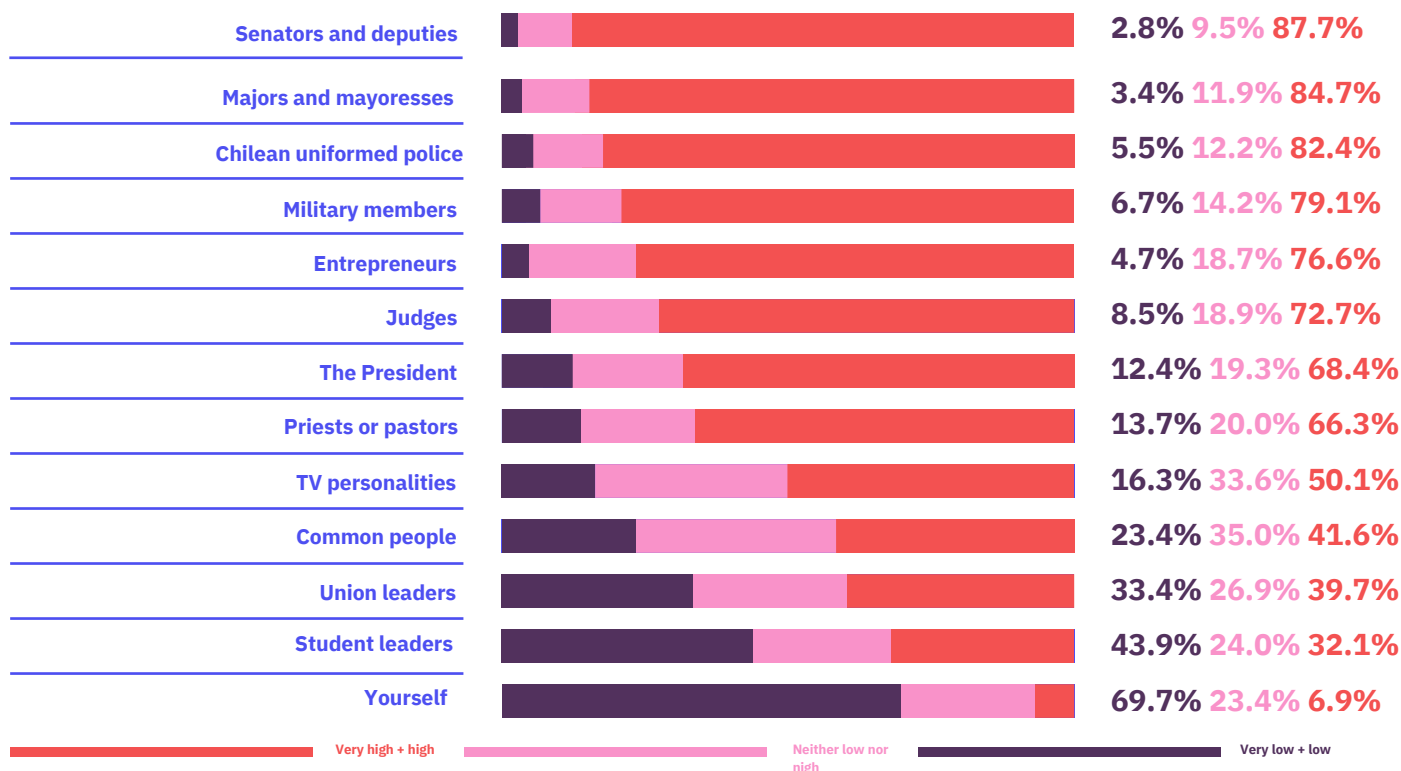


Chart elaborated by ClioDinamica, in Survey on corruption perception among young people in Chile (INJUV, 2022).
DK/NA values are omitted, and weighted data are used.

On the other hand, 7 out of 10 young people consider that the levels of corruption of themselves are "very low" and "low" (69.7%); 43.9% believe that the levels of corruption of student leaders are also "low" and "very low", and the same is stated with respect to the level of corruption of union leaders (33.4% indicate that they are "very low" and "low").

Tensions, Projections and Expectations about Corruption

When young people were asked to what extent corruption affects their lives, a negative view was observed.

The respondents consider that corruption affects them "pretty much" and "a lot" (52.1%).

Regarding young people's gender, more men than women say that corruption affects them "pretty much" and "a lot" (50.8% vs. 53.4%, respectively). On the other hand, according to the socioeconomic level of young people, low socioeconomic level are the ones who most declare that they feel "not very" and "not at all" affectedly corruption (31.3%), in contrast to the statements of young people of high socioeconomic level (19.2%).

Figure 8: On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “Not at all” and 5 means “Very much”
In your opinion, how does corruption affect your daily life?

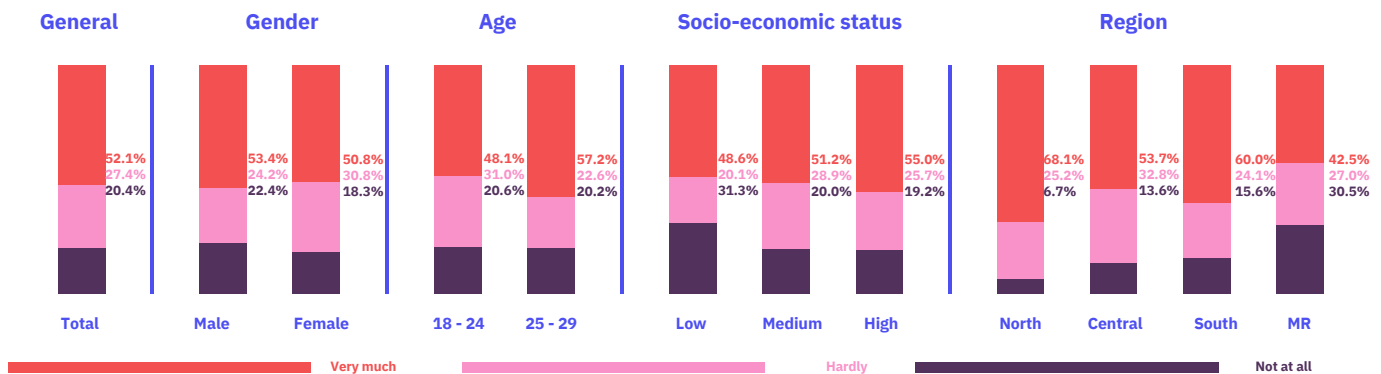


Chart elaborated by ClíoDinamica, in Survey on corruption perception among young people in Chile (INJUV, 2022).
 DK/NA values are omitted, and weighted data are used.

Finally, in terms of the region, a 68.1 % of young people in the northern region

are those who most indicate that corruption affects them “quite a lot” and “very much”.

Figure 9: On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “Strongly disagree” and 5 means “Strongly agree”
How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

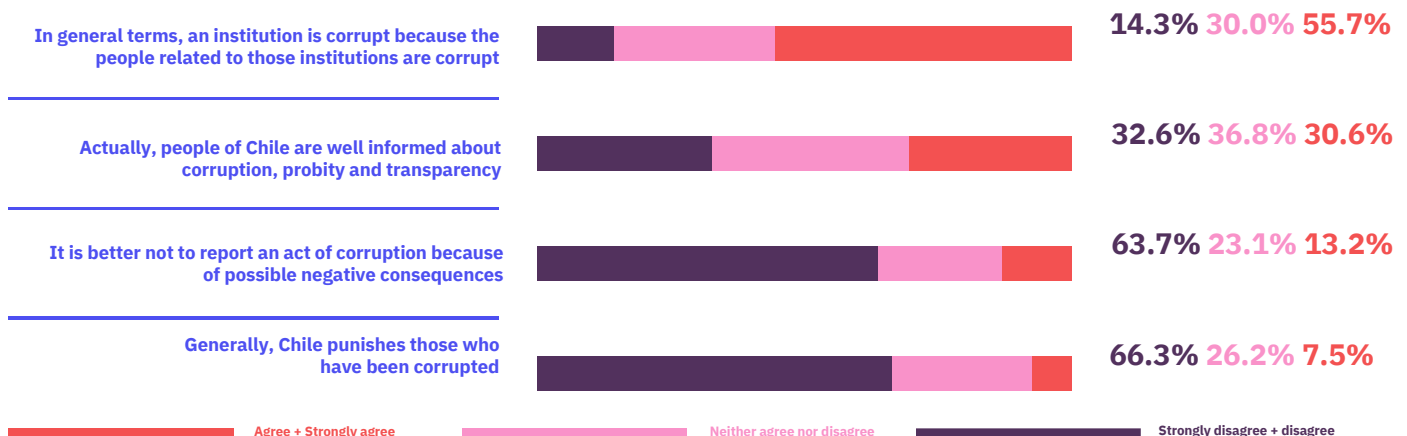


Chart elaborated by ClíoDinamica, in Survey on corruption perception among young people in Chile (INJUV, 2022).
 DK/NA values are omitted, and weighted data are used.

Based on the analysis of a set of statements related to the problem of corruption, in the first place 55.7% of young people “agree” or “strongly agree” with the phrase: “An institution is corrupt because the people in those institutions are corrupt”, referring to the behavior of officials or collaborators that could affect institutional integrity, which could be related to responses to corruption scandals

of individuals, that produce distrust in institutions and their members.

One of the statements in which young people were most divided was the fact that Chileans are more informed about corruption, probity and transparency.

About 40% of young people said that they "neither agree nor disagree" (36.8). Corruption is a complex issue, which would also have an impact on the level of citizens' knowledge. Regarding the statement: "It is preferable not to report an act of corruption because of the negative consequences this could have", most of the respondents are against this statement (63.7% indicated to be "strongly disagree" or "disagree"), for example: facing any circumstance related to a corruption issue young people consider that it is preferable to make a report.

Regarding the statement: "In Chile, in general, those who commit acts of corruption are punished", the response is mostly contrary to this idea. 66.3% stated that they "strongly disagree or disagree". Although there is a negative view of the levels of corruption of the institutions and their people, in general, the interviewees would be willing to denounce not only if it could have negative effects, but also if they were not confident that the act would in itself be punished.

Figure 10: Of the following situations and attitudes, which do you consider to be acts of corruption or not?

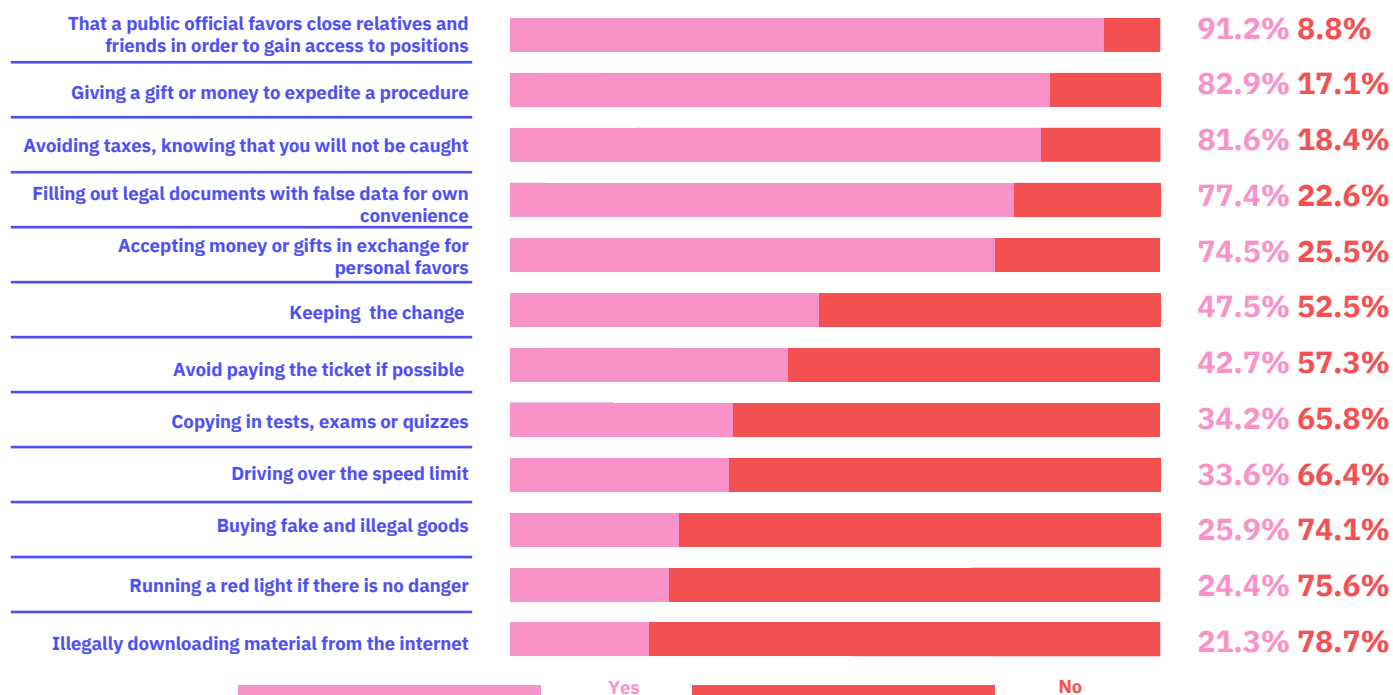


Chart elaborated by ClioDinamica, in Survey on corruption perception among young people in Chile (INJUV, 2022). DK/NA values are omitted, and weighted data are used.

Finally, the young people had to indicate if they were facing or not a situation of corruption from a set of hypothetical attitudes and situations. Young people think it is corrupt for a public official to favor a friend in order to gain access to public office (91.2%), followed by giving gifts to expedite a procedure (82.9% consider it a corrupt act) and evading taxes (81.6% think it is corruption).

Other actions such as illegally downloading material from the Internet (21.3%), running a red light if there is no danger of an accident (24.4%) and buying counterfeit products (25.9%) are the least identified as corrupt acts.

Eventually, the differences observed between the different actions could be explained by the normalization felt by the respondents with some situations, for example, the three actions considered as less corrupt are more likely to have been performed by people on a daily basis at some point in their lives.

Qualitative Analysis

After the discussion group's implementation, it was possible to analyze the vision of the youth facing the problem of corruption, which is perceived as a factor that generates inequality and social injustice. Abuse of power, taking advantage of personal connections, or the lack of interest in people are the most common ideas among the participants.

Corruption Characterization

This section identifies young people's initial perceptions of corruption and integrity in the face of corruption.

- **What do you understand about corruption? Do you have any feelings or emotions? Why?**

Young people consider that corruption is mostly related to injustice and taking advantage of certain individuals. The idea of corruption is closely related to the abuse of power, the use of influence and causing harm to others:

“Disappointment, anger, public funds are not properly used” (Northern region).

“The use of state resources for personal benefits produces a feeling of injustice” (Central region).

The action of appropriating public resources for their own benefit is clearly rejected by young people. There's a reflection on what could have been done with those resources. The idea of social injustice is closely related to corruption, producing disappointment, frustration and indignation among young people. Corruption is observed as something negative both in the focus groups and in the telephone survey, for example: disappointment and frustration being mostly related to the political sphere.

- **Have you or anyone close to you experienced a situation of corruption?**

Related to this question, young people can easily identify corruption situations they experienced. Most of them correspond to situations of petty corruption in municipalities and municipal schools. Only in a few cases, situations related to civil society organizations are experienced. (Specifically in neighborhood groups):

“I worked in a municipality. It is normal to see situations of cronyism and bidding” (Southern region).

In most of the discussion groups, corruption was identified in the schools, where there is a lack of supervision and resources. The deficiency of transparency in the use of resources is compounded by difficulty and lack of knowledge of teachers to denounce, as well as the fear of reprisals.

“Resources earmarked for schools do not arrive, and that affects the infrastructure” (Northern region).

In this sense, it is striking that the first thought of young people with respect to corruption is related to the high spheres of power, without associating it, in this case, to daily situations occurring in schools, which several of the participants have experienced directly. Furthermore, it is striking that the experience of corruption of young people in Chile is fundamentally related to access to services.

What do you understand about probity and transparency related to corruption? Who is responsible for promoting them in the country? Do you think it is necessary to learn more about this?

Young people think probity and transparency are public officials' and politicians' responsibility, who should set an example and implement good practices and integrity, because they are perceived as having high levels of corruption, according to the telephone survey.

"Probity is the clear and respectful exercise of our functions. Transparency is keeping information not only available but also clear about a procedure. The general comptroller's office is an important part of the follow-up of these corruption cases and of the Council for Transparency" (Southern region).

In general, the participants who were able to correctly identify these concepts pointed out that it was information that they had learned thanks to higher education, and that they would have had great difficulty in acquiring in basic and secondary education. This raises a question about the development of civic education on issues such as integrity and the fight against corruption, since from the young people's point of view, there is not a good approval of the schools' management in this regard.

"Public officials, The President, Senators, Deputies, health system, politicians; they should be the example for others" (Northern region).

In general, in all the discussion groups, the idea of corruption in the public sector is present, leaving aside the private sector and civil society organizations; for this reason, when asked about who should promote probity, the majority indicated that it should come mainly from the public sector. In addition, the presence of deputies, senators, and the president in relation to the need to promote integrity was also a transversal position of the young participants.

In your opinion, which people could be involved in an act of corruption? Why?

In response to this question, it is noted that acts of corruption are linked to people with power; among them, politicians and the armed forces are repeatedly highlighted, and other powerful figures such as businessmen are also considered.

"Politicians, entrepreneurs, and armed forces are people who have power and a lot of money" (Southern region).

In general, young people affirm that corruption is an act that will be committed by any person in a position of power, so there is distrust towards these figures due to their selfishness and exploitation. In addition, there is also distrust in the role that people in representative positions can play, because they could be eventually involved in acts of corruption.

"People with more power and influence" (Metropolitan region).

● Which institutions could be more involved in an act of corruption? Why?

Generally, there are two positions: on the one hand, some participants believe that institutions are corrupt, and on the other hand, there are those who believe that it is a person who corrupts institutions. In the first group, it is considered that law enforcement institutions could become more involved in acts of corruption:

"Chilean uniformed police, Chilean plain-clothes police, and the armed Forces, the more power, the more corruption"

On the other hand, it is observed that young people have a positive point of view on the eradication of corruption within an institution, even if it is made up of corrupt or decent people. This is different from what was observed in the telephone survey results.

"[It's not about institutions being corrupt] it's people, how much can a person dishonor an institution? There are corrupt people who affect institutions" (Metropolitan region).

It was not observed that young people think of companies or other private organizations as institutions that could be involved in acts of corruption.

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Where does Corruption Begin?

This section seeks to investigate what is considered corrupt, and how corruption differs from an action that is simply wrong. In general, Young people consider that corruption depends on external agents, the number of people it affects and the magnitude of its consequences. In that sense, it is possible to appreciate that people think corruption does not generate huge effects, and they do not try to combat it because it is normalized (Sihombing, 2018).

● In your opinion, what is the difference between an act of grand corruption and an act of petty corruption? Can you give us an example?

There was a tendency to identify *grand corruption* based on the consequences it could generate, so if it affects many people, then it can be considered an act of *grand corruption*. Besides, this kind of corruption is unacceptable.

In contrast, *petty corruption* involves small amounts of money and is rather tolerable among the participants, according to the discussion groups.

"Petty corruption is not felt as corruption and is overlooked, it doesn't affect much. It is bigger when it affects a lot of people, as in the case of comfort" (Northern region).

It is possible to detect a feeling of resignation among young people in relation to petty corruption that could be related to social relations and therefore impossible to avoid. Interest in preventing corruption is more focused on major corruption cases, which produce indignation and disappointment.

"On a larger scale it would be at the municipal level, since it can have an impact on the population of the commune, and on a smaller scale it has to do with smaller target audiences" (Southern region).

It is common for certain situations of petty corruption to be associated as less serious, since the name itself seems to make it less relevant and its effects are certainly not as considerable as large-scale corruption; but among the interviewees there seems to be a level of acceptance of this type of corruption, to the point that its threat is not questioned.

Only in one instance, a participant related the position of the person involved to definitions of *petty* or *grand corruption*.

In the other testimonies, corruption was mainly related to the amounts lost. In general, people associate *petty* and *grand corruption* based on the economic amounts involved (Chiroma, 2018).

● A loved one needs urgent surgery. However, it is not a priority in the operation list. This person knows someone who selects who can be operated on. Do you think this person should find out about the possibility of having their loved one taken care of sooner? / What if it were a loved one of yours?

In front of an ethical dilemma, young people were divided in their opinions. The vast majority of them showed that they did not consider it right to use influence to gain access to medical treatment, but they understood that, under certain conditions, it is "tolerable" or the person who decided to do so could not be judged.

The first condition is that the person who requires the treatment must need it more urgently than the person who is in the first preference for the operation, because by interfering with the list, a person could die. For this reason, they only choose to interfere when the condition of the patient who requires surgery is life-threatening.

"You have to evaluate the situation, if it is an urgency it is valid, but if it is not urgent it is not valid" (Northern region).

"It depends on each person's values and emotional capacity. For me, all lives have the same value. I would trust the person who is in charge of deciding the gravity of the lists, but I would also not judge someone who would do it [use their influence to help a family member]" (Southern region).

The second condition is that there must be no other alternative available, such as the possibility of having access to private health. The use of influence would be "caused" by the deficiencies of the health system, specifically public health.

"On the one hand, I feel that there is no problem because it is something that is needed in the public system, and it can cost one's life. If you don't know the right people, you may die" (Northern region).

However, most of the young people agree that it is not fair to the person who is waiting at the top of the list that someone else can gain immediate access just because he or she has certain contacts. Although some participants commented that, if they were in the situation, they would use their influence to benefit a family member over others, this was not the majority view.

● A person is standing at the line bank and needs to do so some paperwork quickly. Suddenly, the person realizes that he/she knows the guard who gives the attention number. Should the person wait his turn or talk to the guard with the possibility of getting her attended quickly? What if you were the person standing at the line of the bank?

In this case, young people agree that they would not skip the line because even when it is an urgent procedure, this does not represent the life or death of a person, unlike what they said about the family member waiting for an operation. There is awareness that, in this situation, taking advantage of their influence directly affects all the people in line.

"You have to be empathetic, not because you have some urgency you are more important, the other people are also in a hurry" (Metropolitan region).

However, they might consider it tolerable that another person in line can move ahead if this person is in an unfavorable situation, such as when it is the elderly, pregnant women or people with disabilities.

"It depends, if it is a young person and he/she is only late and knows the guard, no [it is not correct], but if it is a pregnant person or an older adult, it would be more understandable; but in another context it is totally repudiatory" (Southern region).

It is striking that young people perceive doing the right thing or being "upright" with the idea of being empathetic. And at the same time, in situations where they consider an incorrect situation "tolerable", they also take an empathetic position. The youth recognize that the battle against corruption is the task of each individual. In this sense, as Sihombing points out, corruption can be avoided if people intend to act correctly, and this responsibility falls mainly on the current generation since older people are more difficult to re-educate (2018).

● What causes a person to be corrupt? Do you agree or disagree?

Generally, young people consider that corruption is associated with positions of power in the exercise of politics.

"People we should trust become corrupt" (e.g., politicians, the Chilean uniformed police)" (Northern region).

Similarly, corruption is considered to be an act where an individual takes advantage of others to benefit; what would allow corrupt people to be corrupt, according to young people, is the lack of empathy and respect for others.

"The benefits, corruption occurs when there are greater personal benefits" (Metropolitan region).

"The power and benefits that come from doing corrupt acts; selfishness makes it all the same" (Central region).

According to the testimonies of young people, while corruption is an act of selfishness and lack of interest in the welfare of others, integrity is an act of empathy, of respect for others. These responses confirm what was previously pointed out by the young people, that is, interfering in the list of urgent operations to help an acquaintance or a relative is not an act that can be considered strictly as corruption, therefore, they do not relate this type of examples as an action that could lead another person to be corrupt.

● Do you think there is any situation in which corruption can be accepted?

There is consensus that corruption in general is not acceptable and that any act related to it should not be tolerated; however, the idea is reiterated that when the corrupt act is not for one's own benefit, but in favor of helping a third party in case of extreme urgency, it may be more justifiable.

"A situation [of corruption that could potentially be accepted] could be when someone corrupt steals from another corrupt person, although it is not acceptable in the government or in public institutions" (Central region).

"I believe a little in the example of emergency health, knowing the health context in Chile, there it is a little more acceptable, in another context, I doubt it" (Southern region).

However, in spite of the fact that the young people consider that it is more "acceptable" or that they would not be able to judge the person who performs this act to save a family member or close relative, it is also true that the number of young people who indicate that they would be willing to perform this act is low. Most of them agree with the idea of waiting their turn, despite the fact that they do not have full confidence in the effectiveness of the health system, especially the public one. In this sense, although the idea of benefiting someone in need through corrupt actions -if the urgency requires it- could be justified, young people stay away from committing them on their own.

The Fight Against Corruption: The Role of Youth

We analyze the magnitude of the corruption problem in the country and the solutions to it put forward by the young participants. In summary, it is possible to identify that young people share a generalized vision of the consequences produced by corruption. On the other hand, citizen demonstrations are not seen as an effective mechanism to generate change, but rather civic education plays a preponderant role in the fight against corruption.

● Do you think corruption is a problem in the country? Why?

The answers to this question were similar in all the discussion groups. This is a problem that has been present for many years in the country, generating inequality, loss of confidence and disaffection towards the political system and its institutions.

"It affects democracy, people don't want to vote, they think: what's the point?" (Central region).

"Yes, it is a problem in Chile. When people talk about political disaffection, about the lack of credibility of politicians, the first thing that comes out is that they are corrupt. Until we overcome this institutional crisis, corruption is important and urgent to intervene" (Southern region).

It is important to highlight the value that young people place on democracy and the democratic system. However, the disappointment they express towards the political class and, in itself, bad practices, could eventually diminish their motivation to actively fight corruption.

● About corruption, what is the role of people? Do you think young people have anything to say or do about it?

In general, young people take an active position. They consider that their role, in addition to breaking bad practices, is focused on educating the next generations to prevent them.

"The generation can fight it, it is difficult to change the elders, and you can teach them about corruption. But it is not only in the public sector, it is in the private sector, there should be more spaces for citizen participation" (Central region).
"To be able to contribute from what we study; I feel that we young people get disappointed quickly and do nothing, we remain resigned" (Southern region).

Regarding the problem of resignation, there is a recognition and self-criticism that, although young people propose ideas, they face many difficulties at the time of executing them and become demotivated quickly when they do not produce quick results or do not perceive an improvement.

"Teaching people, educating and showing empathy" (Metropolitan region).

One of the greatest challenges is related to the feeling of disappointment that corruption produces in citizens. Young people recognize that they have feelings of helplessness and hopelessness when they learn about corruption cases, which could eventually demotivate them to confront it. In this case, empathy with people and education on corruption itself are fundamental elements in the fight against bad practices.

● What would you do to fight corruption?

The vast majority of the young people agreed on two points: first, it is necessary to raise awareness about corruption and its effects; and second, it is necessary to educate citizens to provide them with tools to combat corruption.

"Raise awareness about corruption, talk about it in neighborhood councils, go to an organization, form networks with other organizations, generate teachings, demonstrations" (Central region).

Young people recognize that they do not think about corruption in their daily lives, and this causes them not to feel involved with concepts such as probity or transparency.

"Put more word of mouth, comment on the mechanisms of denunciation, talk more about what transparency is, have a sense of belonging to this [of the fight against corruption], do honest work" (Southern region).

It is important to highlight that, despite the fact that young people recognize that high levels of corruption can generate a loss of commitment to integrity, in all the discussion groups implemented, ideas on how to fight corruption were expressed. Only in the group from the northern macro zone was it evident that the participants had no hope of being able to do anything against corruption in the country.

CONCLUSIONS



Young people are concerned about and reject corruption. Corruption is perceived as a permanent problem that has generated visible consequences for society, such as inequality, loss of trust, and disaffection towards the political system.

While corruption is understood as a sign of selfishness and abuse, integrity is a virtue, empathy, and respect. While corruption is considered an intolerable attitude, it becomes understandable or difficult to judge when the corrupt act is done for "altruistic" reasons, such as helping a loved one to treat a medical emergency. However, large-scale corruption is not tolerated in any case because of the unjustifiable harm it would cause to others. Besides, it is also important to highlight the relevance that young people give to education and awareness about the effects of the corruption problem.

In general, young people consider themselves less corrupt, and this sense of integrity also drives them to act against those situations they consider corrupt. In that sense, in order to tackle corruption, it is necessary to stop normalizing it, since constant exposure to corruption, especially small-scale corruption, could generate a certain resignation that would prevent taking an active role in confronting bad practices, as well as a negative effect on the electoral participation of young people.

This is why it is essential to emphasize the consequences of this problem in Chile and the effects it has on the lives of young people.

The strengthening of local spaces for citizen participation, such as student associations, neighborhood councils, local clubs or unions, are key to the need to inform citizens more about corruption issues, providing the tools to recognize, prevent and denounce it. Likewise, it is also important to expand the spaces for participation that young people have, strengthen civil society organizations and get involved in demands for greater integrity, probity and transparency. Finally, civic education on the problem of corruption is a central link in relation to the full and healthy development of democracy, as well as the contribution of youth in actively combating bad practices.

CHALLENGES

Awareness

One of the aspects recognized by young people is the low identification they have with corruption. They do not feel that it is related to them. For this reason, one of the first challenges is to make citizens aware of the existence of corruption and how it affects their daily lives, in order to generate an active stance against malpractice. It is also important to raise awareness not only about the phenomenon of *grand corruption* or political corruption, but also about *petty corruption*, administrative corruption and private corruption, in which we can all be participants.

Education

In addition to raising awareness of the existence of corruption, there is a general lack of civic education on this issue, especially among the younger generations. For this reason, it is essential to provide tools, broaden spaces for participation and discussion, as well as provide resources that not only allow us to identify corruption but also to grant instruments that allow us to confront it.

Agenda

With all of the above, this represents an opportunity to broaden and deepen the existing agenda on corruption at the national level, where young people are protagonists and active agents in the fight against corruption.

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ANNEX 1:

TELEPHONE SURVEY

QUESTIONNAIRE

Module 1: Definitions of Probity, Transparency, and Corruption in Chile

1. What is the first word that comes to mind when hearing about the *corruption* concept?
2. What is the first word that comes to your mind when hearing the *probity* concept?
3. What is the first word that comes to your mind when hearing the *transparency* concept?
4. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “very low” and 5 means “very high”
In your opinion, how are the levels of corruption?
5. How do you project corruption 5 years from now?

Module 2: Institutional Corruption and People

6. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “Very low” and 5 means “Very high”
In your opinion, how are the levels of corruption in the following institutions and organizations?

- a. The National Congress of Chile
- b. Chilean uniformed police
- c. Municipalities
- d. Armed Forces
- e. The Government of Chile
- f. The Judiciary
- g. Private Companies
- h. Church and religious organizations
- i. The media (radio, TV, newspapers)
- j. Trade unions
- k. Neighborhood organizations (neighborhood councils, housing associations, etc.)
- l. Student organizations (student centers or student federations)

7. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “Very low” and 5 means “Very high”
According to you, how are the levels of corruption in the following people?

- a. Senators and deputies
- b. Mayors and mayoresses
- c. Chilean uniformed police
- d. Military members
- e. Entrepreneurs
- f. Judges
- g. The President
- h. Priests or pastors

- a. TV personalities
- b. Common people
- c. Union leaders
- d. Student leaders
- e. Yourself

Module 3: Tensions, Projections, and Expectations about Corruption

8. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "Not at all" and 5 means "Very much"

In your opinion, how does corruption affect your daily life?

9. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "Strongly disagree" and 5 means "Strongly agree" How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- a. In general terms, an institution is corrupt because the people related to those institutions are corrupt.
- b. Actually, the people of Chile are well-informed about corruption, probity, and transparency.
- c. It is better not to report an act of corruption because of possible negative consequences.
- d. Generally, Chile punishes those who have been corrupted.

10. Of the following situations and attitudes, which do you consider to be acts of corruption or not?

- a. That a public official favors close relatives and friends in order to gain access to positions.
- b. Giving a gift or money to expedite a procedure.
- c. Avoiding taxes knowing that you will not be caught.
- d. Filling out legal documents with false data for own convenience.
- e. Accepting money or gifts in exchange for personal favors.
- f. Keeping the change.
- g. Avoid paying the ticket if possible.
- h. Copying in tests, exams, or quizzes.
- i. Driving over the speed limit.
- j. Buying fake and illegal goods.
- k. Running a red light if there is no danger.
- l. Illegally downloading material from the Internet (music, books, movies or series, video games, etc.)

ANNEX 2:

DISCUSSION GROUP

GUIDELINES

INITIATION/INTRODUCTION

This *youth and corruption* discussion group is carried out by professionals from the National Youth Institute and Chile Transparente. Its purpose is to know the meanings of the phenomenon of corruption held by the youth of the country, so in this instance, we want to know their perceptions on this issue, which will allow us to deepen the objective of promoting values of citizenship and probity through education, research, and outreach.

Please feel free to share your ideas and experiences, there are no right or wrong answers here, your honest opinion is what matters. Also, this discussion group is completely confidential, the information will only be used for research purposes and your answers will be added to other anonymous opinions in complete confidentiality.

It will be very useful to record this. Is there any inconvenience in recording this conversation? The use of the recording is for the purpose of further analysis only.

Thank you very much for your willingness and time.

Before we begin, we want to get to know you a little bit, so we are going to ask for a brief introduction of each one, including your name, age, what you do and where are you from.

[Definition of corruption]

1. What do you understand by corruption? Related to corruption, do you have any feeling or emotions? Why?
2. Have you or anyone close to you experienced a situation of corruption? How did you deal with that situation? Would you have done something different? What would you have done differently?

[Different forms of corruption]

3. In your opinion, what is the difference between an act of *grand corruption* and an act of *petty corruption*? Can you give us an example?

4. A loved one needs urgent surgery. However, it is not a priority in the operation list. This person knows someone who selects who can be operated on. Do you think this person should find out about the possibility of having their loved one taken care of sooner?

5. What if it were a loved one of yours?

6. A person is standing at the line bank and needs to do some paperwork quickly. Suddenly, the person realizes that he/she knows the guard who gives the attention number. Should this person wait his turn or talk to the guard with the possibility of getting her attended quickly?

7. What if you were the person standing at the line of the bank?

[Tensions and conflicts about corruption]

8. What causes a person to be corrupt? Do you agree or disagree with that?

9. Do you think there is any situation in which corruption can be accepted?

10. In your opinion, which people could be involved in an act of corruption? Why?

11. Which institutions could be more involved in an act of corruption? Why?

[Corruption in Chile]

12. Do you think corruption is a problem in the country? Why?

13. About corruption, what is the role of people? Do you think young people have anything to say about it?

14. What would you do to fight corruption?

15. Finally, related to corruption, what do you understand by probity and transparency? Who is responsible for promoting them in the country? Do you think it is necessary to learn more about this?

SUMMARIZATION/CONCLUSION

We would like to know if there are any other comments you would like to add (...)

From the team of Chile Transparente and INJUV (National Youth Institute) thank you for your time and participation in this discussion group on *"Youth and Corruption: Meanings about the phenomenon of corruption among young people between 18 and 29 years old in Chile"*. Please contact us in case of doubts or comments.

