The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Corruption Convictions Fall to Lowest Level Since 2012

Prosecutions for large-scale bribery surge, while petty corruption charges decline.

April 22, 2021



Former anti-corruption official Dmitry Zakharchenko was sentenced to 13 years in prison in 2019 on large-scale bribery charges. **Moscow Court Press Service**

The number of Russian officials convicted on corruption charges sank to an eight-year low during 2020, data collated by the independent Open Media news site has shown.

Some 6,948 convictions were handed out for corruption last year — the lowest level since 2012, the site found. It marks a continued decline from a high of 11,499 convictions in 2015.

However, the number of convictions related to large-scale bribes — in excess of one million rubles ($13,000) — has surged 12-fold since 2012, hitting almost 1,000 last year.

Related article: The Kitsch of Corruption

Under one in six of those convicted served jail time, Open Media said. One in three were handed a suspended sentence and half were issued fines, totalling a combined 1.7 billion rubles ($22 million).

President Vladimir Putin has rolled out various anti-corruption measures during his two decades in office, yet corruption has remained a major issue.

The share of Russians who say corruption and bribery are an "acute problem" has grown under his presidency and is hovering near record high levels, polling from the independent Levada Center shows. Russians rank it as the country's third most serious problem — ahead of issues including unemployment, inequality and poor healthcare.

Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny has built his following on challenging the alleged corruption of Russia's top officials, showcasing their luxury lifestyles in video investigations which rack up tens of millions of views.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2021/04/22/corruption-convictions-fall-to-lowest-level-since-2012-a73683