

The world has entered the 21st century with a great number of global political and economic issues. One of them is impeachment although this term is familiar to some countries.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, impeachment is ‘the action of formally accusing a public official of a serious offence in connection with his job.’[2] In the USA, impeachment is ‘the process by which federal officials, including the president and federal judges, can be prosecuted and removed from office.’[1] Therefore, it includes a series of actions ‘undertaken by the legislative body in order to remove a public official from office.’ [5]

Impeachment exists under the Constitutions of many countries (Brazil, India, Lithuania Russia, South Korea, the United States of America, etc.), ‘... though the particulars may differ. For example, who may be impeached, the body allowed to initiate the proceedings, and the amount of votes required to convict the impeached official may vary. Usually, only a constitutional body has the right to initiate impeachment, and in most cases it is the legislative entity. The process is typically used only in the case of crimes committed by the official in question, not for simple mismanagement or unpopularity.’ [7] (Table 1)

Table 1

Country	Procedure of Impeachment	Examples of Impeachment
Czech Republic	President of the Czech Republic could be impeached only for an act of high treason. The process starts in the Senate of the Czech Republic. It only has the right to impeach the president. The Constitutional Court of the Czech Republic has to decide whether the President is guilty or not.	In the Czech Republic president has never been impeached. Although in 2013, the Senate sought to attract President Vaclav Klaus but the court rejected this case because his term expired.
Lithuania	‘Lithuania’s parliament is	Rolandas Paksas was removed

	<p>launching an impeachment procedure against a lawmaker who was found to have financially benefited from a business be protected as a legislator.’ [8]</p>	<p>from office by impeachment on April 6, 2004 after the Constitutional Court of Lithuania found him guilty of having violated his oath and the constitution. He was the first European head of state to have been impeached.</p>
Russia	<p>Article 93 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation:</p> <p>1. The President of the Russian Federation may be impeached by the Council of the Federation only on the basis of the charges of high treason or another grave crime, advanced by the State Duma and confirmed by the conclusion of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation on the presence of the elements of crime in the actions of the President of the Russian Federation and by the conclusion of the Constitution Court of the Russian Federation confirming that the rules of advancing the charges were observed.</p>	<p>The impeachment procedure was held against President Boris Yeltsin</p> <p>‘Five counts of impeachment: instigating the 1991 Soviet collapse, improperly using force against hard-line lawmakers in 1993, launching the botched 1994-96 war in Chechnya, ruining Russia's military, and waging genocide against Russians with economic policies that impoverished the country.’ [6]</p>

	<p>2. The decision of the State Duma on advancing charges and the decision of the Council of the Federation on impeaching the President shall be adopted by two thirds of the votes of the total number of members of each chamber and on the initiative of not less than one third of the deputies of the State Duma and with the conclusion of a special commission set up by the State Duma.</p> <p>3. The decision of the Council of the Federation on impeaching the President of the Russian Federation shall be adopted not later than three months after the State Duma advanced the charges against the President. If a decision of the Council of the Federation is not adopted during this time, the charges against the President shall be regarded as rejected.[9]</p>	
United States	The United States Constitution states in Article II, Section 4: ‘The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the	‘Thus far in the history of the United States there been three Presidential impeachment proceedings -- in 1868 against

	<p>United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.’[3]</p>	<p>President Andrew Johnson for his removal of Secretary of War Edwin Stanton in violation of the Tenure of Office Act - 1974 against President Richard Richard Nixon for the Watergate cover up (106 years after Johnson) - 1998-99 against President Bill Clinton for concealing an extramarital affair (24 years after Nixon).’ [4]</p>
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Thus we one can see, that each nation has its rules and laws about impeachment. Moreover, though impeachment is rare, many historians and political analysts argue that most cases are politically driven and even frivolous in retrospect. Nevertheless, it remains a powerful tool to keep the conduct of elected officials above board, even if it is rarely exercised. The mere existence of an impeachment clause in a country's constitution can have an effect on the conduct of its leaders.

To conclude, we would like to underline that the procedure for early dismissal of the head of state is always initiated by the parliament, which charges. Then the matter is resolved by the parliament, the body of constitutional justice or a judicial body formed from the parliament, or through a referendum. In some cases, the bodies considering the case, if necessary, may implement measures of constitutional and / or criminal liability.

References:

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