

OECD ACN Thematic Study “Prevention of Corruption in the Public Sector in Eastern Europe and Central Asia”

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Objectives of the study

- Identify effective and successful policies and tools to prevent corruption, common trends and challenges;
- Describe innovative and well-designed approaches to prevention of corruption;
- Develop regional policy recommendations; and
- Build capacity and promote exchange of good practice and useful tools among ACN countries and with OECD countries through a series of seminars.

Countries

- Questionnaires received from **governments** and non-governmental parties in 20 countries:

Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, FYR of Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan.

- Additional examples from other countries:

Austria, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Korea, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, etc.

Structure of the report

- (1) Research (2) Expertise of legal acts
- (3) Risk assessment (4) Integrity plans
- (5) Monitoring of implementation
- (6) Engagement of NGOs (7) Training and education
- (8) Awareness raising
- (9) Innovative measures to prevent conflicts of interest
- (10) Responsible persons / units within agencies
- (11) Coordination (12) Public finances
- (13) Role of state audit institutions (14) Public services
- (15) Publication of information
- (16) Tools for reporting and whistleblower protection

Some commonalities and trends

Many common measures and practices.

- ✦ Mandatory or optional screening of (draft) laws/ reg-s.
- ✦ Some new sophisticated risk assessment methodologies.
- ✦ Monitoring of output, not outcome/ impact.
- ✦ Institutionalized NGO involvement, monitoring by NGOs.
- ✦ A lot of training and awareness-raising campaigns (impact often unclear).
- ✦ Authorized AC (confidence) persons not common.
- ✦ The role of SAIs underappreciated.
- ✦ E-procurement with limited functionality and use.
- ✦ Proactive publication and information materials (open budget data in some countries – new “gold standard”).
- ✦ Whistleblower protection – fragmented and limited.

Examples of innovative measures

- ✔ Verification of the implementation of integrity plans with the help of client surveys
(Serbia)
- ✔ Systematic review and “guillotine” of regulations
(Armenia)
- ✔ Web-based platforms for the elaboration of AC plans
(Montenegro, Serbia)
- ✔ Thematic evaluation missions by expert teams
(Romania)
- ✔ Ex-ante verification of conflicts of interest and online application for checking incompatibilities
(respectively Romania and Slovenia)
- ✔ Open budget data
(Estonia, Kyrgyzstan)

Examples of well-designed measures

- ❖ Values-focused, extensive supply of ethics training
(Estonia)
- ❖ E-procurement with wide functionality
(Georgia, Kazakhstan)
- ❖ Single “space” to render public services
(Azerbaijan, Georgia)
- ❖ Monitoring by civil society
(judicial appointments in Bulgaria, tax services in Kazakhstan, election candidates in Latvia)
- ❖ The AC Forum of state bodies and NGOs
(Kyrgyzstan)
- ❖ Risk-management in the Road Traffic Safety Dept.
(Latvia)

Selected policy recommendations

- Ensure that the AC assessment of legal acts covers all major risk areas by defining criteria for selecting drafts, laws and regulations that are subject to review.
- Conduct corruption risk analysis, use its findings for adopting measures and report publicly about improvements it helped to create.
- Raise senior management awareness and accountability for AC (integrity) plans.
- Develop indicators demonstrating changes achieved with AC measures, include these indicators in AC policies and measure progress using them.
- Further engage civil society and business organizations in AC policies.
- Designate ethics officials or confidence persons with counseling and preventive tasks.

Selected policy recommendations (cont.)

- Ensure working and transparent inter-institutional coordination in the AC area.
- Publish budget data online in such detail and form that is relevant and useful for citizens.
- Strengthen the role of the SAIs in prevention of corruption.
- Extend the use of e-procurement in practice and beyond publication.
- Consider unifying public service provision.
- Ensure possibilities to effectively request and obtain information alongside increasing publication.
- Introduce legal measures to protect whistle-blowers and take steps to ensure this protection is actually provided.