

GRECO Annual Report 2022



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News

On 15 June 2023, GRECO published its [annual report for 2022](#). It provides insight into the most important findings of the fourth and fifth evaluation rounds and gives selected good practice examples.

Although there has been progress in implementing GRECO's recommendations to prevent corruption and promote integrity, slightly less than half of GRECO's recommendations on central governments' top officials and just under two thirds of those concerning the police had been (either fully or partly) implemented by the end of 2022.

States continued to make progress in implementing recommendations made in GRECO's 4th evaluation round concerning members of parliament, judges, and prosecutors: Half of those recommendations (49.5%) had been fully implemented at the end of 2022, up from 45% the previous year. States had partly implemented a third of the outstanding recommendations, while 17% remained not implemented.

In the context of the fifth evaluation round, the report highlights the need for transparency and oversight of the executive activities of central governments. It is particularly the right to access information that ensures public transparency and, conversely, facilitates the pursuit of corrupt behavior. In exposing shortcomings, the report expresses concerns about the restrictive application of this right in some European states; there are broad margins of discretion for determining what is in the public domain and whether to exclude certain documents from free access. Government entities often appear reluctant to disclose information and prefer to apply exceptions enabling them to withhold all or parts of information requested. In addition, the application of laws on freedom of access to information is all too often inconsistent across government entities, which shows the need for training to create a common understanding and application of national freedom-of-information laws.

GRECO calls on authorities to respect international standards in this field and reiterated that, in line with the principles of the [Committee of Ministers recommendation on access to official documents](#) and the [Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents](#), any limitation of the right of access to official documents in a democratic society must be necessary and proportionate and only applied if there is no overriding interest in disclosure.

The report also notes that GRECO identified a number of shortcomings concerning access to information in the law-making process. Of particular concern here is the lack of respect for consultation timeframes, which prevents substantive contributions that could influence the legislative process.

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