

GRECO: Fourth Round Evaluation Report on the Russian Federation



András Csúri

News

On 22 March 2018 GRECO published its [fourth round evaluation report on the Russian Federation](#). The fourth evaluation round was launched in 2012 in order to assess how Member States address corruption prevention in respect of Members of Parliament (MPs), judges, and prosecutors (for more recent reports, see [eucriM 4/2016](#), pp. 168-169; [1/2017](#), pp. 22-23; [2/2017](#), pp. 76-77; [3/2017](#), pp. 121-123; [4/2017](#), pp. 179-181).

With corruption being a serious and pervasive problem in the country, [GRECO observed](#) that the Russian authorities have themselves recognised the need to tackle the phenomenon. They have already taken a number of measures to this end, including regular National Anti-Corruption Action Plans, the setting up of the Presidential Council for Countering Corruption, and a number of legislative reforms. There is also growing awareness and expectation among the general public surrounding this issue.

Regarding MPs, there are a number of strong safeguards in place, but GRECO lists some critical issues that need urgent attention. Codes of ethics applying to MPs need to be established in order to provide a compass for avoiding conflicts of interest. The transparency of the legislative process should be strengthened by generalizing the practice of public consultations and by facilitating media accreditation. The transparency of declarations of assets needs to be increased together with stronger monitoring mechanisms and a wide range of sanctions for the different types of breaches. Further guidance should also be drawn up regarding the acceptance of gifts in a professional or private capacity.

Significant efforts have been made to address corrupt behaviour within the judiciary. That said, the independence of the judiciary, including from other state bodies, remains a general concern. GRECO recommends tightening the prevention of corruption for judges, especially in the recruitment procedure, by putting stronger emphasis on the ethical qualities and integrity of candidate judges. Selection, recruitment, and promotion of judges should take place on the basis of objective criteria and by reducing the influence of the executive. The report also recommends putting the issue of conflicts of interest back at the heart of the Judicial Code of Ethics and providing further guidance for situations in which judges are offered gifts and other advantages.

The prosecution service plays a central role in fighting corruption in the Russian Federation, and a wide range of internal regulations have been adopted for this purpose. That said, there are potential weaknesses in the system, which GRECO recommends addressing. Accession to the profession could be more transparent, especially regarding candidates not coming from within the ranks of the prosecutor's office. The allocation of cases needs improvement, including a fair and equitable distribution of workload and by protecting case assignment from undue influence. Once again, practical guidance is important regarding the reporting of

AUTHOR

András Csúri

Vienna University of Economics and Business

ISSN: 1862-6947

<https://eucriM.eu>



gifts. Ultimately, the reactively closed prosecutorial system, based on a strict hierarchical structure and lines of command, needs to be subject to public accountability.

About eucrim

eucrim is the leading journal which regularly informs about current developments in European criminal and “criministrative” law.

All news items are freely accessible at: <https://eucrim.eu/news/>

Stay informed by emailing to eucrim-subscribe@csl.mpg.de to receive alerts for new releases of issues.

The project is co-financed by the Union Anti-Fraud Programme (UAFB), managed by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).



**Co-funded by
the European Union**