

# Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Dedicated to preventing and  
fighting corruption since 1998



# The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

The mission of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is to promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world. It is a global forum that allows countries to work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems.

## OECD Working Group on Bribery

The OECD Working Group on Bribery (WGB) is leading global efforts to fight bribery of foreign public officials in international trade and investment. Monitoring by the WGB has established the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions as the most rigorously enforced international anti-corruption instrument. Guided by the principle of dissemination and promotion of the values contained in the Convention, the WGB engages in an ongoing dialogue with a wide range of non-members around the world both bilaterally and through regional anti-corruption initiatives.

# Welcome Letter

Countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia have made progress in the fight against corruption over the past several years. Almost all countries have anti-corruption strategies and bodies. Anti-corruption legislation was largely reformed in line with international standards.

The OECD Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (OECD/ACN) started in 1998, in the middle of a transition process that has opened up this region to the world. Many countries have achieved remarkable progress on their way to developing functioning democracies and successful market economies. Several OECD/ACN countries have become OECD members.

The OECD/ACN has also grown remarkably since its inception. From an awareness raising initiative, it evolved into a strong programme that has a real impact on anti-corruption policies of its members through the monitoring programme, known as the Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan, and through its capacity building activities.

As one of the most dynamic outreach programmes of the Working Group on Bribery, the OECD/ACN transfers know-how and best practices from the OECD countries to its members, and in this way fosters the implementation of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention as well as other international anti-corruption and integrity instruments. The ownership of this initiative by the countries in the region, together with active involvement of non-governmental and international partners, and continuous support from the donors made OECD/ACN a real driver of anti-corruption reforms in the region. The new OECD/ACN Work Programme for 2020-2024 focuses on strengthening country peer pressure, developing regional policy dialogue, regional peer learning and tackling high-level corruption by taking stock of regional reforms.



**Mathilde Mesnard**  
Deputy Director, OECD Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs



# Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Established in 1998, the Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ACN) is one of WGB's global relations programmes. It brings together 25 countries from the region and provides a regional forum for the promotion of anti-corruption reforms, exchange of information and elaboration of good practices. The Network is open to: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo\* Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, FYR of Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. OECD countries also take part in the ACN.

\*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244/99 and the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on Kosovo's declaration of independence.

## OECD/ACN recent facts and activities:

- In 2021, the EU for Integrity Programme for the Eastern Partnership was launched. The anti-corruption component of this programme will provide assistance to the Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) by strengthening evidence-based anti-corruption policy development and enhanced implementation of anti-corruption reforms, reinforcing law enforcement action against high-level and complex corruption and strengthening specific corruption-prone sectors in education and business;
- During the 4th round of monitoring under the Istanbul Action Plan, at least 71% of recommendations were partially, largely or fully implemented from 2016 to 2019;
- In March 2021, the pilot OECD Business Integrity Roundtable Series was launched. If successful, the Roundtable will become a regular forum for exchange of experience, promotion of good practices, and a place to catalyse trust in business globally by advancing business integrity through



Funded by the  
European Union

## innovative project implementation;

- In 2020 the OECD/ACN launched the Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia Webinar Series which brings together prominent practitioners in order to exchange insight on challenging subjects;
- The Law Enforcement Network marked its 11th meeting in 2021, which provides a forum to share experiences and discuss practical tools for detecting, investigating, and prosecuting corruption crimes.

## Partners:

European Union (EU), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Council of Europe Group of States Against Corruption (GRECO), Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB), the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Regional Anti-corruption Initiative (RAI), Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA), Transparency International, United States Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (US INL) and other international, non-governmental, business and academic organisations.





OECD/ACN family photo at the 19th Plenary Meeting, 20-22 March 2019, OECD Conference Centre, Paris France

The OECD/ACN publishes several types of material, including monitoring reports, thematic studies and summary reports. Recent examples include:



### The Independence of Prosecutors in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Asia Pacific

This study examines the state of play in the area of prosecutor independence, to identify good practices and challenges in jurisdictions in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Asia Pacific. It then proposes recommendations on ways to address or avoid these challenges.



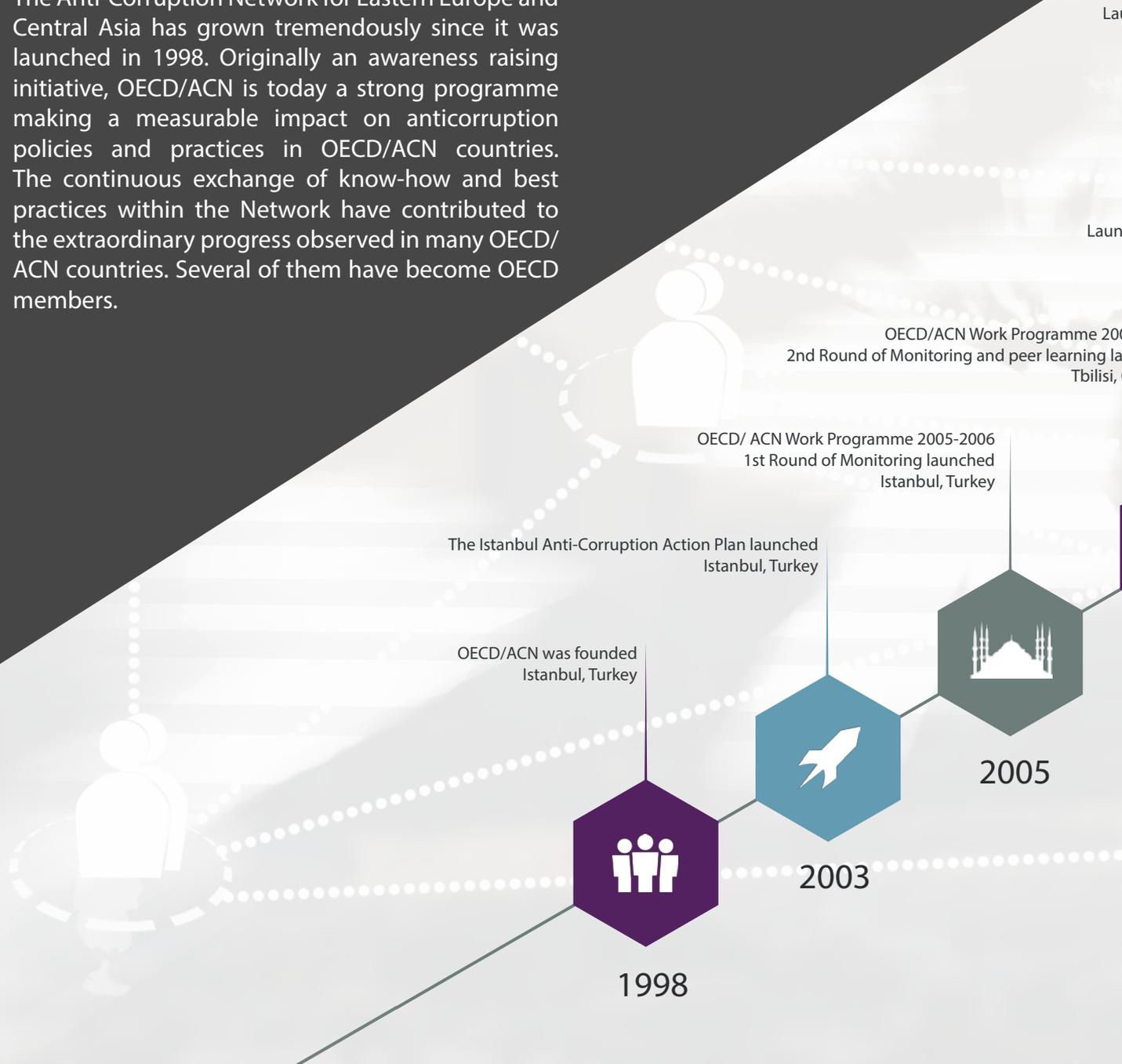
### Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia Annual Report 2019

This report summarises the implementation of the OECD/ACN Work Programme for 2019.



## 1998 to 2021

The Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia has grown tremendously since it was launched in 1998. Originally an awareness raising initiative, OECD/ACN is today a strong programme making a measurable impact on anticorruption policies and practices in OECD/ACN countries. The continuous exchange of know-how and best practices within the Network have contributed to the extraordinary progress observed in many OECD/ACN countries. Several of them have become OECD members.



Launch of the Anti-Corruption Review of the Energy Sector in Ukraine  
Launch of the OECD Business Integrity Roundtable Series  
Launch of the EU for Integrity Programme for the Eastern Partnership

Launch of the 5th Round of Monitoring under the Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan  
OECD/ACN Work Programme 2020-2024  
Launch of the OECD/ACN Webinar Series

OECD/ACN Work Programme 2016-2019  
Launch of the Anti-Corruption Project for Uzbekistan

Launch of Law-Enforcement Network  
Bucharest, Romania

2008-2012  
Launched  
Georgia



2008



2010



2018



2020



2021

#### OECD/ACN Publications

- 2015 Prevention of Corruption in the Public Sector  
Foreign Bribery Offence and its Enforcement in Eastern Europe and Central Asia  
Liability of Legal Persons for Corruption in Eastern Europe and Central Asia  
Fighting Corruption in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Progress and Challenges, 2014-2016  
International Cooperation and Mutual Legal Assistance in Corruption Cases in Eastern Europe and Central Asia & Business Integrity in Eastern Europe and Central Asia
- 2016 Business Integrity in Eastern Europe and Central Asia
- 2018 Corruption Prevention at Local Level in Eastern Europe and Central Asia
- 2020 Fighting Corruption in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Progress and Challenges, 2016-2019  
The Dependence of Prosecutors in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Asia Pacific

# The fight against corruption in Eastern Europe & Central Asia

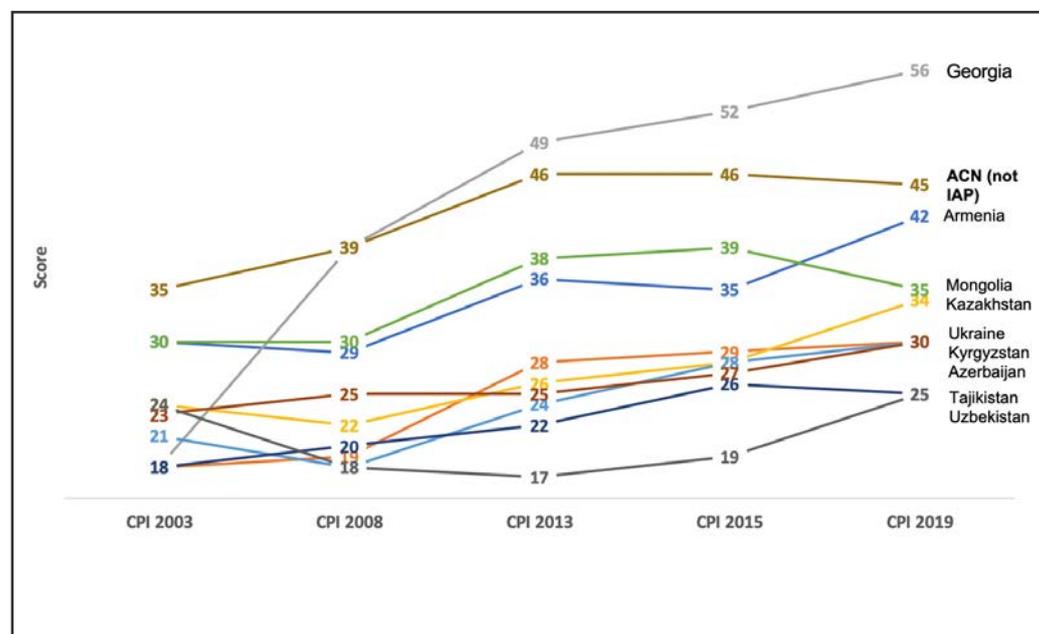
There have been several important achievements in the anti-corruption efforts in the region:

- Most OECD/ACN countries have adopted a new generation of anti-corruption strategies and action plans, and made these policy documents more concrete and effective;
- Most countries have established and are strengthening their anti-corruption bodies;
- OECD/ACN countries bring their anti-corruption legislation in compliance with international standards;
- All OECD/ACN countries take an active part in international anti-corruption initiatives;

- OECD/ACN countries are taking measures to prevent corruption in the public and business sectors;
- Civil society has become more engaged in anti-corruption policies and measures.

Many OECD/ACN countries are witnessing lower levels of corruption according to Transparency International. New or aspiring EU member states are more effective in their efforts to reduce corruption. Yet, corruption remains a serious problem for all countries in the region, compared to the OECD members, enforcement remaining the main challenge.

## Rank in TI corruption perception (2003 - 2019)



IAP countries in the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI Score)

Source: Transparency International, CPI



## ACN Country Projects

Tailored country projects include The Anti-Corruption Project for Ukraine that is funded by the US Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), Supporting Energy Sector Reform in Ukraine with financial support from the Norwegian Government and the Anti-Corruption Project for Uzbekistan also funded by INL.

Photo taken at the Global Law Enforcement Network Meeting, 10-11 December 2019, OECD Conference Centre, Paris, France

# The Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan (IAP)



“The Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan was launched in 2003, and it is the flagship project of the ACN. Under the Action Plan, participating states commit to having their progress in implementing

anti-corruption reforms periodically reviewed by other OECD/ACN countries. The review methodology is based on that of the OECD Working Group on Bribery. This methodology gives the participating states full ownership of the process, allowing for the development of practical recommendations based on international standards and national experiences. The objective of the periodic reviews is to provide independent assessment of how well Action Plan countries are living up to their obligations. The successful fight against corruption can only be to the benefit of the lives of people in Eastern Europe and Central Asia” (Enery Quinones, OECD/ACN Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan).

Development of the IAP:

- 2006 - 2007 – 1st Round of Monitoring
- 2008 - 2012 – 2nd Round of Monitoring
- 2013 - 2015 – 3rd Round of Monitoring
- 2016 - 2019 – 4th Round of Monitoring
- 2020 - 2024 – 5th Round of Monitoring

The 5th round of the Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan will feature 13 Performance Areas (PAs) with Performance Indicators (PIs) with clear benchmarks, as a basis for standardised, consistent and transparent assessment across IAP countries. This will mark a major change from the previous rounds of monitoring where performance was measured individually for each country against its own earlier performance. The PIs will allow comparing the performance of countries and thus will further increase the peer pressure for the implementation of anti-corruption reforms.

## Pilot 5th Round of Monitoring: Main novelties and key principles

Key Novelties	Main Principles
13 Performance Areas	Peer review
Performance Indicators (PIs), benchmarks, guide	Comprehensive
New scoring system	Transparency
Annual monitoring	Inclusive
Review of selected PAs after the baseline review in 2022	Consensus-based

# The Network's future

The Work Programme 2020-2024 is aimed to support OECD/ACN countries in the implementation of evidence-based anti-corruption reforms and enforcing anti-corruption legislation in practice.

- Country monitoring under Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan;
- Regional policy dialogue in the Steering Group;
- Regional peer learning;
- Country capacity building;
- Taking stock of regional anti-corruption reforms.

The Steering Group, which is composed of OECD/ACN National Coordinators and Contact Points, will advise the Secretariat on all issues related to OECD/ACN activities. It will also provide a regional framework for regular exchange of experience among participating countries and stakeholder consultations.



“Corruption crimes become ever more complex, they often involve high-level public officials and businessmen. Corrupt persons and their fortunes cross borders to hide from justice. To

allow for effective enforcement of corruption crimes, law-enforcement practitioners need modern anti-corruption legislation. They need to learn continuously from each other about the most effective investigative methods. Law enforcement practitioners from different countries should work closely together to exchange information and support investigations if we want to succeed in the global fight against corruption.” (Anca Jurma, Chief Prosecutor for International Cooperation, DNA, Romania and Chair of the OECD/ACN Law-Enforcement Network).

The Law Enforcement Network (LEN) annual meetings with the focus on high-level cases will provide capacity building and network opportunities for the practitioners from the region. The LEN will also provide a framework for several thematic studies on new and complex corruption crimes.

Thematic activities will also focus on practical implementation and enforcement of corruption prevention measures, including:

- Expert seminars on prevention of corruption in the public sector, at both sectoral and local level, and new thematic studies on best practices in this area;
- Expert seminars on business integrity to promote recommendations for governments, business associations and companies, and a study to review progress in their implementation.

Country-specific activities will include The Anti-Corruption Project for Ukraine, Supporting Energy Sector Reform in Ukraine and Anti-Corruption Project for Uzbekistan in an aim to provide tailored solutions. Other country-specific projects will be undertaken based on demand and the availability of resources.



“High-level corruption remains a serious threat to the stability of many countries. Practice shows that high-level corruption is particularly prevalent in countries where prosecutors and

the judiciary are lacking real independence, and the new specialised anti-corruption institutions are still in the process of institutional development. Therefore, supporting the new anti-corruption institutions and country efforts to combat high-level corruption will remain the key priorities for the OECD/ACN Law-Enforcement Network.” (Former Deputy Prosecutor General of Ukraine and Deputy Chair of the OECD/ACN Law-Enforcement Network).



[www.oecd.org/daf/anti-bribery/acn](http://www.oecd.org/daf/anti-bribery/acn)

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