Croatia commits to fighting bribery in business and strengthening integrity in the private sector

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Croatia recognises the importance of fighting bribery in international business and looks forward to working closely with the OECD to continue tackling foreign bribery.

A high-level event on “Fighting transnational bribery in Croatia” took place today at Zagreb’s National and University Library. Experts from OECD countries and stakeholders from Croatia came together to discuss the importance of fighting bribery in business and the impact of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention in this area. Their focus: To engage, together, in combating bribery.

The event was organised within the framework of the project on “Raising Awareness and Standards of Fighting Bribery in International Business Transactions” which is financed by the EU Structural Reform Support Programme and jointly conducted by Croatia’s Ministry of Justice and Public Administration, the European Commission and the OECD.

Bribery requires participation of two parties. A public official cannot commit this crime alone. Companies that bribe officials to obtain undue advantages in Croatia or abroad must also shoulder responsibility. Addressing bribery in business is therefore crucial to the fight against corruption. Strengthening integrity in the private sector will also help to make Croatian companies more competitive in both domestic and international markets.

“Croatia remains committed to fight against corruption. Recently, special efforts have been put into enhancing the legal framework for the prevention of corruption. In this context Croatia has adopted the new anti-corruption strategy for the next 10 years”, said Mr. Ivan Malenica, Croatia’s Minister of Justice and Public Administration. “The fight against international bribery is one of the preconditions for securing a safe environment for foreign investments and boosting international trade and economy. Croatia is dedicated to aligning its national legal and institutional frameworks in a way that will provide even more efficient anti-bribery system with international standards.”

“The OECD is well-placed to support Croatia in this endeavour”, said Mathilde Mesnard, Acting Director, OECD Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs. “The OECD Anti-Bribery Convention is the only international treaty that specifically targets transnational business bribery. An imminent update to the Anti-Bribery Recommendation will further strengthen the Convention’s capacity to prevent and detect this crime. Having worked with these legal instruments for almost 25 years, the OECD stands ready to share its experience and expertise with Croatia.”

“Corruption and bribery are eroding the very foundations of our democratic societies, undermining the sustainable economic development and distorting the competition”, said Nathalie Berger, Director for Support to Member State Reforms, European Commission’s Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support. “The European Commission is strongly committed to support the fight against corruption and bribery in the EU, by the means of anti-corruption legislation, monitoring anti-corruption developments in the EU Member States, as well as by providing financial and technical assistance to EU Member States in their efforts to curb corruption.”

For further information, journalists are invited to contact Croatia’s Ministry of Justice and Public Administration (press@mpu.hr, +385 (1) 3714 274 or +385 (1) 3714 515) or the OECD Anti-Corruption Division (Jennifer.Allain@oecd.org).