



# **The OECD Working Group on Bribery in International Business Transactions**

2021 Annual Report

---

The Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions (the Anti-Bribery Convention) is the first and only international anti-corruption instrument focused on the “supply side” of the bribery transaction. By monitoring countries' implementation of the Anti-Bribery Convention and ensuring they uphold their obligations, the OECD Working Group on Bribery is leading global efforts to fight bribery of foreign public officials in international trade and investment. This report serves as an annual update from the OECD Working Group on Bribery that highlights its 2021 activities and achievements.

---

This work is published on the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD.

This document, as well as any data and map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

**Please cite this publication as:** OECD (2022), The OECD Working Group on Bribery in International Business Transactions: 2021 Annual Report, OECD Publishing, Paris.

# Message from the Chair

The fight against foreign bribery is an uphill battle that can only be won with collective action. This underscores the important role the OECD Working Group on Bribery plays in ensuring that its forty-four member countries undertake the measures and reforms necessary to stop the flow of bribes in cross-border business transactions.

Despite differing degrees of implementation amongst its members, the Working Group made considerable progress in 2021. Four countries underwent Phase 4 monitoring reviews, which assessed the effectiveness of legal and institutional frameworks for combating foreign bribery, and eight countries provided written follow-up reports on progress made in implementing recommendations. The reviews showed that members have made significant headway in key areas like whistle-blower protection, with numerous countries reinforcing their legal frameworks for protecting reporting persons and promoting a whistleblowing culture. Some countries continue to lag behind in areas like corporate liability, and the Working Group made recommendations to help overcome these obstacles. For countries that still have not implemented key recommendations, the Working Group undertook High-Level Missions and released targeted public statements, illustrating its determination for results.

The Working Group's enforcement data is evidence that, over time, law enforcement authorities in member countries have significantly increased efforts to investigate, prosecute and sanction the supply of bribes in international business dealings. By the end of 2020, 923 individuals and 695 entities had been sanctioned for foreign bribery and related offences.

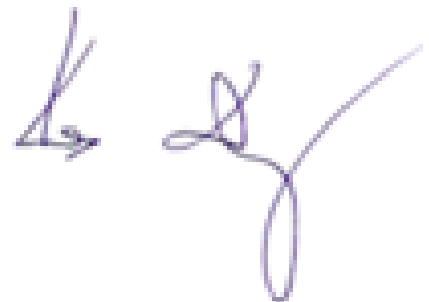
A recent major milestone for the Working Group has been the launch of the 2021 Anti-Bribery Recommendation on International Anti-Corruption Day, which came at a critical time in our efforts to step up members' collective commitment to combat global corruption. The result of a rigorous process involving not only Working Group members but the private sector and civil society, the Recommendation strengthens the Convention and ensures that it continues to respond to the evolving challenges of the fight against foreign bribery.

The Group pursued its outreach efforts by continuing its engagement with the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group, and hosting its first Global Dialogue to foster non-member engagement and build global anti-bribery partnerships. It held the inaugural Business Integrity Roundtable Series, which acted as a forum to promote good practices and catalyse trust in business, with both regional and thematic focuses.

Despite the challenges wrought by the pandemic, the Working Group demonstrated its commitment to its mandate by pursuing its monitoring work virtually, conducting on-site visits by evaluation teams and Working Group on Bribery meetings remotely, via video conference.

The Group also launched the designation process for a new Chair. As my eight-year term as Chair nears its close, I know we can rely on the Working Group to continue paving the way toward a more equitable future, and to continue its rigorous monitoring that has earned its name as the 'gold standard'.

Drago Kos  
Chair of the Working Group on Bribery in International Business  
Transactions



# Message from the OECD Secretary-General

The OECD Working Group on Bribery is leading global efforts to fight a key source of corruption from the bribery of foreign public officials in international business transactions. It is custodian of the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions – a catalyst for policy change since its signature almost twenty-five years ago, and the implementation of which has been at the heart of global efforts to tackle corruption and establish a fair and level playing field for businesses and citizens.

Of course, there is more work to do. Times of crisis can create environments ripe for corruption. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw the effectiveness of some governments' crisis response threatened by risks from bribery relating to the procurement of medical equipment and the provision of economic support measures. Looking forward, the strength and the quality of the economic recovery will depend not only on a collective, coordinated response to these foreign bribery risks, but also efforts to support stronger, more resilient rules and institutions.

The launch of the 2021 Anti-Bribery Recommendation last year is a major achievement for the Working Group in this regard to update and expand on the provisions of the 2009 Recommendation. These changes will ensure that standards continue to reflect good practices, trends and challenges that have emerged in the global anti-corruption landscape. Key revisions relate to strengthening enforcement, addressing the demand side of foreign bribery, enhancing international co-operation, introducing the use of non-trial resolutions, incentivising compliance and providing comprehensive protection for reporting persons. In this way, the revised Recommendation can contribute towards the recovery by avoiding delays in the delivery of public services to citizens, the misallocation of resources and unnecessary additional costs.

To ensure a fully collaborative effort, the Working Group continues to engage with major emerging economies not yet Party to the Convention, including China, India and Indonesia, as well as Saudi Arabia which joined the Working Group as a participant in 2021. The Group also continues to raise awareness through its regional initiatives in Africa, the Asia-Pacific, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East and North Africa about the negative impacts of corruption on sustainable growth.

Corruption undermines trust, distorts competition, slows development and often hits the poorest and most vulnerable hardest. With its steadfast commitment to eradicating foreign bribery, I am confident the Working Group will continue to make the Convention and the new Recommendation the most effective instruments possible to help countries continuously improve their domestic anti-corruption systems and to promote international co-operation.

Mathias Cormann  
Secretary-General of the OECD



# Table of contents

<b>1 The Anti-Bribery Convention and the OECD Working Group on Bribery</b>	<b>6</b>
The Anti-Bribery Convention	6
The OECD Working Group on Bribery	7
<b>2 Monitoring the Anti-Bribery Convention and the Revised Recommendation</b>	<b>10</b>
2021 evaluations and reports	10
Phase 4 monitoring	11
High-Level Mission for Monitoring of Türkiye	11
<b>3 Enforcement data</b>	<b>15</b>
Concluded cases	16
Pending matters	16
<b>4 Summaries of Working Group on Bribery Meetings and Related Events</b>	<b>17</b>
Meeting of the Working Group on Bribery, March 2021	17
Meeting of the Working Group on Bribery, June 2021	17
Meeting of the Working Group on Bribery, October 2021	18
Meeting of the Working Group on Bribery, December 2021	18
Meetings of Law Enforcement Officials in 2021	18
Joint Meeting of the Working Group on Bribery and G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group in 2021	18
Global Dialogue	18
<b>5 Global relations activities</b>	<b>20</b>
Global programmes in 2021	20
The OECD Business Integrity Roundtable Series	20
Webinar: Detecting Corruption Related to COVID-19 and other Crises	20
Regional programmes	21
Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia	21
Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific	21
Joint OECD/AfDB Initiative to Support Business Integrity and Anti-Bribery Efforts in Africa	22
OECD-Latin America and Caribbean Anti-Corruption Initiative	22
Anti-Corruption and Promotion of Business Integrity in the Middle East and North Africa	22
<b>Figures</b>	
Figure 1. Key dates	6
Figure 2. Parties to the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention	7
Figure 3. Timeline for the Working Group on Bribery Negotiation of the 2021 Anti-Bribery Recommendation	8
Figure 4. Highlights from the 2020 enforcement data	15

## Boxes

Box 1. In focus: The 2021 Anti-Bribery Recommendation	8
Box 2. Bulgaria Phase 4 Report	11
Box 3. France Phase 4 Report	12
Box 4. Slovenia Phase 4 Report	12
Box 5. Peru Phase 2 Report	13

# 1 The Anti-Bribery Convention and the OECD Working Group on Bribery

## The Anti-Bribery Convention

Bribery undermines economic development, distorts markets and raises the cost of doing business. [The Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions \(Anti-Bribery Convention or Convention\)](#) establishes legally binding obligations on Parties to criminalise the bribery of foreign public officials in international business transactions, and provides for a host of related measures that make this effective. These include requiring Parties to hold their companies liable, to impose effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions, and to provide mutual legal assistance in foreign bribery cases. The Convention is the first and only international anti-corruption instrument focused on the ‘supply side’ of the bribery transaction.

In addition to OECD member countries, the Convention is open to accession by any country that becomes a full participant in the OECD Working Group on Bribery, under the Working Group on Bribery’s accession procedures. To date, forty-four countries - the thirty-eight OECD member countries and six non-member countries - have [ratified or acceded to the Convention](#).

### Figure 1. Key dates

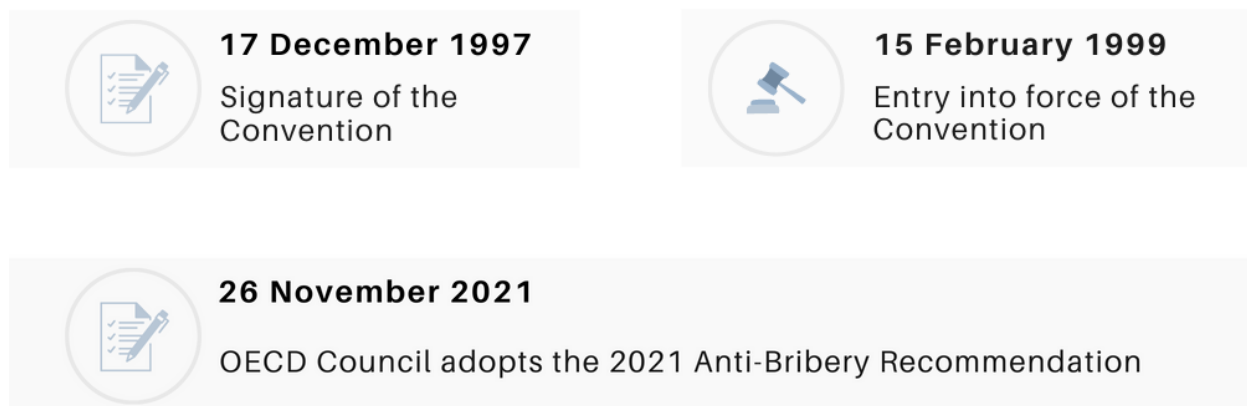


Figure 2. Parties to the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention



Note: In response to Russia's 2022 large-scale aggression against Ukraine, the OECD Council has decided to suspend the participation of Russia in OECD bodies.

## The OECD Working Group on Bribery

[The OECD Working Group on Bribery](#), an active group that meets quarterly and is made up of representatives of the Parties to the Convention, monitors Parties' efforts to implement the Convention, the [2021 Anti-Bribery Recommendation](#) and related instruments, focusing on the prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution and sanction of the bribery of foreign public officials in international business transactions.

The Working Group conducts a peer-review monitoring system in successive phases (described in more detail in Chapter 2), with experts from the Working Group serving as examiners of each evaluated country. The Working Group on Bribery's monitoring mechanism has been recognised as "the gold standard of monitoring", and has established the Convention among the most rigorously enforced international anti-corruption instruments.

The Working Group works hard to maintain high standards, and develops good practices for preventing and detecting foreign bribery and enforcing foreign bribery laws. It works with non-members, other OECD bodies, international organisations, businesses and civil society. Its strong network of Law Enforcement Officials meets twice a year on the margins of Working Group meetings to share and develop good practices and examine issues related to the investigation and prosecution of foreign bribery.



The Working Group frequently meets with civil society representatives and publishes all of its [country monitoring reports](#). It also publishes [public minutes of its meetings](#) and sponsors several outreach events at the OECD. In 2021, for the second consecutive year, despite restrictions due to the pandemic, the Working Group was able to implement its programme of work, including concluding negotiations on a Revised Recommendation for Further Combating Bribery in International Business Transactions, by holding both remote and hybrid meetings (see Box 1).

### Box 1. In focus: The 2021 Anti-Bribery Recommendation

The [2021 Anti-Bribery Recommendation](#) complements the Convention with a view to strengthening and supporting its implementation. In particular, the new instrument reflects recent anti-corruption challenges, good practices and crosscutting issues identified by the Working Group on Bribery in its monitoring reports on countries' implementation of the Anti-Bribery Convention and 2009 Recommendation, and in the context of its thematic studies on topics such as [international co-operation](#), [liability of legal persons](#), [detection of foreign bribery](#) and [non-trial resolutions](#).

Following a rigorous three-year process that included two rounds of consultations with external partners, stocktaking of ten years of implementation of the 2009 Recommendation, multiple written procedures and eight Working Group meetings, on the proposal of the Working Group, the OECD Council adopted the 2021 Recommendation on 26 November 2021 and launched on 9 December, International Anti-Corruption Day.

Figure 3. Timeline for the Working Group on Bribery Negotiation of the 2021 Anti-Bribery Recommendation



In addition to enhancing the provisions of the 2009 Recommendation, the 2021 Recommendation covers topics that have emerged or significantly evolved in the anti-corruption area. Key elements include:

- A holistic approach to fighting foreign bribery through new measures to increase awareness-raising and training of, as well as detection by, key government agencies, including foreign representations, financial intelligence units, tax authorities and official development assistance agencies.
- Provisions for improved enforcement of foreign bribery laws, including through proactive detection and investigation of foreign bribery, more effective international co-operation among law enforcement authorities and co-operation in multi-jurisdictional cases.
- Recommendations addressing the demand side of foreign bribery cases calling on countries to address the solicitation and acceptance of bribes and better support companies facing bribe solicitation risks.

- Key principles and features of non-trial resolutions.
- New provisions on sanctions and confiscation, government procurement, and data protection.
- Provisions on reporting and effective protection of whistle-blowers in the public and private sectors.
- Recommendations encouraging countries to incentivise enterprises to develop internal controls, ethics and compliance programmes or measures to prevent and detect foreign bribery.

The 2021 Recommendation also covers tax, official development assistance, export credits and state-owned enterprises and references several other anti-corruption related OECD Recommendations on these topics.

As noted in the [High Level Statement by the Parties to the Anti-bribery Convention on the 2021 Recommendation](#), by expanding upon existing recommendations and adopting new ones, the 2021 Anti-Bribery Recommendation contributes further to fulfilling the commitment expressed by Parties in the [2016 Ministerial Declaration](#) to advance the fight against foreign bribery into a new era of enforcement. As such, the 2021 Anti-Bribery Recommendation reflects Parties' commitment to carrying out their obligations under the Anti-Bribery Convention and to continuing to lead in the fight against bribery of foreign public officials in international business transactions.

# 2 Monitoring the Anti-Bribery Convention and the Revised Recommendation

The Working Group on Bribery conducts a rigorous monitoring process of Parties' implementation of the Convention and enforcement of foreign bribery and related laws.

[Monitoring of members' implementation of the Convention and the Revised Recommendation](#) is undertaken by lead examiners from two Working Group member countries and the Secretariat, subject to specific agreed-upon evaluation procedures. These include post-Phase 1 mandatory on-site visits to the country under evaluation, as well as panels with civil society and the private sector.

Country monitoring involves a four-phase process:

- [Phase 1](#) evaluates the adequacy of a country's legal framework to fight foreign bribery and implement the Convention
- [Phase 2](#) assesses whether a country is applying this legislation in practice
- [Phase 3](#) focuses on enforcement and cross-cutting issues, and unimplemented recommendations from Phase 2
- [Phase 4](#) focuses on enforcement and crosscutting issues tailored to country-specific needs and unimplemented recommendations from Phase 3.

Phase 4 began in 2016. Countries that joined the Convention at a later date, however, may be at an earlier phase of monitoring (consult the [Working Group on Bribery's Monitoring Schedule 2016-26](#)).

The monitoring process is compulsory for all Parties. A country under evaluation cannot veto the findings and recommendations of the final report and all [country monitoring reports](#) containing the Working Group's evaluation and recommendations to the country under review are made public, along with a press release.

Following the adoption of a country monitoring report, the Working Group monitors the evaluated country's efforts to implement its recommendations. In the event that the country has not taken adequate action to implement recommendations, the Working Group can employ [additional measures](#) to address this. The Working Group has developed new tools to track countries' fulfilment of their recommendations and implementation of the Convention and enforcement of their foreign bribery and related laws. The Working Group also frequently publishes public statements on relevant anticorruption developments that may affect a Party's implementation of the Convention.

## 2021 evaluations and reports

In 2021, four countries underwent evaluations: Peru (Phase 2), Bulgaria, France and Slovenia (Phase 4). The Phase 3 evaluation of the Russian Federation was suspended due to its lack of progress in implementing key recommendations. Despite the challenges wrought by the pandemic, the Working Group

pursued its monitoring work virtually. On-site visits were conducted by the evaluation teams remotely, via video conference.

Chile, Germany, Japan, Korea, Mexico and the Netherlands provided Phase 4 written follow-up reports. Colombia and Latvia provided Phase 3 written follow-up reports, and Poland provided a Phase 3 oral follow-up report. The Czech Republic and the United Kingdom provided addenda to the follow-up to Phase 4.

### **Phase 4 monitoring**

The countries that underwent a Phase 4 evaluation in 2021 - Bulgaria, France and Slovenia - will provide a written follow-up report in 2023. France and Slovenia will also provide a written follow-up report in 2022. Boxes 1 to 4 below provide an overview of the findings and recommendations from each of these evaluations.

Evaluations were based on legislation, data and other materials provided by the country under evaluation, as well as research conducted by the evaluation team. Information is also obtained during on-site visits, when the evaluation team meets representatives of the country's public and private sectors, media, civil society, and – depending on the country – law enforcement, parliamentarians and academics.

### **High-Level Mission for Monitoring of Türkiye**

In June 2021, the Working Group on Bribery undertook a virtual High-Level Mission to Ankara to discuss Türkiye's implementation of long-standing recommendations regarding legal persons liability for foreign bribery, whistle-blower protection and prosecutorial independence, as well as Türkiye's enforcement of its foreign bribery laws. The mission welcomed steps taken to address the Working Group's concerns but continues to urge Türkiye to implement key reforms to fight foreign bribery.

#### **Box 2. Bulgaria Phase 4 Report**

The Working Group welcomed Bulgaria's efforts to implement the Convention and related instruments, but remains concerned that detection, enforcement and awareness raising of foreign bribery are severely lacking and must be significantly improved.

The Working Group made a range of recommendations to improve Bulgaria's capacity to combat foreign bribery, including to:

- Raise awareness of foreign bribery risks among all relevant public and private sector stakeholders;
- Ensure that all foreign bribery allegations are properly assessed by the competent authorities and, where appropriate, pre-trial proceedings are commenced and draw to the attention of prosecutors the importance of taking proceedings against legal persons;
- Address some key elements of its legal framework, particularly in relation to the liability of legal persons; and
- Enact legislation that provides clear and comprehensive protections from retaliation to whistle-blowers in the public and private sectors who report suspected acts of foreign bribery.

The report also highlights positive developments, such as the adoption of new or amended legislation, efforts in training and awareness-raising for law enforcement, interagency coordination, and the co-

operation of the financial intelligence unit with the financial sector. The Working Group will follow up on these issues and how they work in practice.

Bulgaria will provide an oral update within one year (October 2022) on the liability of legal persons and whistle-blower protection. Within two years (October 2023), Bulgaria will submit a written report to the Working Group on the implementation of all recommendations and its enforcement efforts.

[Read the Report](#)

[Read the Press Release](#)

### Box 3. France Phase 4 Report

The Working Group found that France has undertaken major legislative and institutional reforms and made significant progress in enforcing the foreign bribery offence. These achievements, however, must be safeguarded through further legislative reforms and a substantial reinforcement of resources.

The Working Group made a range of recommendations, in particular to:

- Take legislative measures to extend the duration of preliminary investigations in foreign bribery cases to allow for the prompt and effective enforcement of the foreign bribery offence;
- Preserve the role and expertise of the National Financial Prosecutor's Office (PNF) in the investigation, prosecution and resolution of foreign bribery cases;
- Ensure sufficient resources for fighting white-collar crime;
- Clarify the conditions for triggering corporate liability and continue efforts to develop effective and coordinated non-trial resolutions for natural and legal persons; and
- Preserve the role, mandates, and resources currently assigned to the French Anti-Corruption Agency (AFA) in developing and monitoring compliance measures by businesses.

Numerous positive developments are welcomed in the report, such as the overhaul of France's anti-bribery legislative framework by passing the 2016 Sapin 2 Act, legislative reforms that have made France a credible counterpart in combating foreign bribery, and the reinforcement of France's legal framework to protect whistle-blowers.

France will submit an oral report within one year (December 2022) on its implementation of some recommendations that are essential to preserving the progress made since Phase 3 in 2012. Within two years (December 2023), France will submit a written report to the Working Group on the implementation of all recommendations and its enforcement efforts.

[Read the Report](#)

[Read the Press Release](#)

### Box 4. Slovenia Phase 4 Report

The Working Group noted Slovenia's lack of enforcement of foreign bribery, as worrying allegations of political interference in criminal investigations and prosecutions escalate. No cases of foreign bribery

have been detected by government agencies other than law enforcement authorities, and while several investigations have been opened following media reports, there are serious concerns that media in Slovenia may not operate in an environment conducive to independent reporting of potential foreign bribery allegations.

The Working Group made a range of recommendations to improve Slovenia's capacity to combat foreign bribery, including to:

- Prioritise improving detection and step up its enforcement of the foreign bribery offence;
- Safeguard the independence of law enforcement agencies;
- Ensure specialised training is provided to law enforcement authorities and judges on detecting, investigating and sanctioning foreign bribery;
- Take all measures necessary to ensure that the definition of foreign public official is consistent with the Convention and amend relevant legislation to ensure that the defence of effective regret does not apply to foreign bribery cases.

The report highlights positive developments, such as increased detection of suspected foreign bribery, Slovenia's strong legal framework for the protection of whistle-blowers and its introduction of a beneficial ownership register. The Working Group also welcomed the adoption of long-awaited amendments to the Integrity and Prevention of Corruption Act.

Slovenia submitted a written follow-up report to the Working Group in June 2022 on steps taken to ensure that the definition of foreign public officials is consistent with the Convention; to ensure the defence of effective regret does not apply in foreign bribery cases; and progress to ensure that investigations and prosecutions are not subject to considerations prohibited under Article 5 of the Convention. Within two years (March 2023), Slovenia will submit a written report to the Working Group on the implementation of all recommendations and its enforcement efforts.

[Read the Report](#)

[Read the Press Release](#)

### Box 5. Peru Phase 2 Report

The Working Group found that Peru has improved its efforts to fight domestic corruption, and must now sustain these efforts, extend them to combating foreign bribery, and raise awareness of the foreign bribery offence.

The Group made recommendations to improve Peru's fight against foreign bribery, including:

- Protect prosecutors from unjustified removals from cases
- Reduce the number of provisional and supernumerary judges and prosecutors
- Protect whistle-blowers in the public and private sectors, and promote a whistleblowing culture
- Enhance coordination and oversight of mutual legal assistance requests to foreign countries

The report highlights positive aspects of Peru's efforts to fight foreign bribery. The Lava Jato Special Team has begun prosecuting many Peruvian politicians and officials at the highest levels. Successful conclusion of these cases will require Peru to maintain its resources and support to the Special Team. Also encouraging are recent reforms of the system for the appointment, discipline and dismissal of judges and prosecutors, though the impact of these efforts will be felt only in years to come.

Peru reported to the Working Group orally in June 2022 on steps taken to implement key recommendations, and will report in writing in June 2023 on its implementation of all recommendations.

[Read the Report](#)

[Read the Press Release](#)

# 3 Enforcement data

The Working Group collects data from its members on the number of criminal, administrative and civil foreign bribery cases that have resulted in a final decision, such as a conviction, an acquittal, or a non-trial resolution (e.g. non-prosecution, deferred prosecution, and plea agreements). Working Group members may voluntarily provide additional data on investigations, ongoing proceedings and sanctions imposed. They may also report data on criminal, administrative and civil proceedings for other offences related to foreign bribery, such as false accounting and money laundering.

The Working Group has published [enforcement data](#) annually since 2010. These publications show that, over time, Working Group members' law enforcement authorities have significantly increased efforts to investigate, prosecute and sanction foreign bribery. As part of this enforcement, certain members have resolved increasingly complex foreign bribery cases, for instance, involving legal persons or coordinated multijurisdictional resolutions with other countries. Even when resolutions in a particular case are not coordinated, countries typically receive significant co-operation from other Working Group members.

For more on the Working Group's views on enforcement, see its publication entitled [Enforcement is the Key!](#) Submitted to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for the U.N. Special session of the General Assembly against corruption (UNGASS).

Figure 4. Highlights from the 2020 enforcement data





## Concluded cases

From the entry into force of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention on 15 February 1999 through 31 December 2020:

- 25 Parties reported having convicted or sanctioned, collectively, at least 684 natural and 245 legal persons for foreign bribery through criminal proceedings.
- 7 Parties reported having sanctioned, collectively, at least 87 natural and 119 legal persons for foreign bribery through administrative or civil proceedings.
- 10 Parties reported having convicted or sanctioned, collectively, at least 77 natural and 107 legal persons for related offences (e.g. false accounting, money laundering, embezzlement, tax evasion) through criminal proceedings.
- 3 Parties reported having sanctioned, collectively, at least 75 natural and 188 legal persons for related offences through administrative or civil proceedings.
- 3 Parties – Colombia, Latvia and the Russian Federation – reported having imposed sanctions for the first time for foreign bribery (each sanctioning one legal person) either through criminal or non-criminal proceedings.

## Pending matters

As of 31 December 2020:

- 32 Parties reported having had, collectively, 485 ongoing investigations for foreign bribery.
- 13 Parties reported having had, collectively, ongoing criminal proceedings for foreign bribery against 167 natural and 14 legal persons.
- 2 Parties reported having had, collectively, ongoing administrative or civil proceedings for foreign bribery against 6 natural and 10 legal persons.

# **4**

## **Summaries of Working Group on Bribery Meetings and Related Events**

The Working Group on Bribery meets quarterly and is responsible for monitoring the implementation and enforcement of the Convention, the Revised Recommendation and related instruments. The Group's focus on the monitoring process and on ensuring additional measures are taken in cases of non-compliance translates into a particularly rigorous programme of work. In what follows are brief summaries of the Working Group's 2021 meetings.

### **Meeting of the Working Group on Bribery, March 2021**

The Working Group adopted the Phase 4 report of Slovenia and evaluation follow-up reports from Chile, Costa Rica, Germany and Mexico, and discussed the first report of the monitoring Sub-Group on substantive and procedural issues discussed with Brazilian authorities during the High-Level Mission.

The Working Group also discussed the impact of data protection regulations on its work; the different courses of action should it decide to undertake further work on corruption in sport; proposals for next steps on dealing with the lack of implementation of the Convention; and its contribution to the UNGASS 2021. The Working Group adopted its Global Relations Strategy 2021-22, agreed to a process for the designation of a new Chair, agreed to launch a review on the designation and functioning of the Management Group and took stock of the ongoing review of the 2009 OECD Anti-Bribery Recommendation. The UNODC provided updates on the second cycle of UNCAC reviews, the development of a knowledge product on bribery and on the 2021 UNGASS. The World Bank expressed its commitment to enhance its co-operation with the WGB.

### **Meeting of the Working Group on Bribery, June 2021**

The Working Group adopted the Phase 2 evaluation of Peru; discussed the High-Level Missions to Poland and Türkiye as well as the Technical Mission to Greece; and heard evaluation follow-up reporting from Argentina, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Israel, Korea and the United Kingdom.

The Working Group also discussed ongoing work in the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group, including the organisation of a joint WGB/ACWG session; agreed to launch the designation of a new Chair; moved ahead with plans to develop a dashboard on implementation of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention; and decided on final steps for consulting on and revising the 2009 Anti-Bribery Recommendation.

## Meeting of the Working Group on Bribery, October 2021

The Working Group adopted the Phase 4 evaluation of Bulgaria; discussed the High-Level Mission to Türkiye that took place in June 2021; discussed the follow-up to the High-Level Mission to Poland that took place in November 2020; heard the additional follow-up reports on the Phase 4 evaluation of the Netherlands, the Phase 3bis evaluation of Argentina and the Phase 2 evaluation of the Russian Federation; heard the additional oral report on the Phase 4 evaluation of Norway and two-year written reports on the Phase 4 evaluation of Japan and the Phase 3 evaluation of Latvia. It also approved the draft revised 2009 Anti-Bribery Recommendation.

## Meeting of the Working Group on Bribery, December 2021

The Working Group adopted the Phase 4 evaluation of France; discussed Colombia's Phase 3 two-year written follow-up report; heard a report from Australia on measures taken to implement seven Phase 4 recommendations; considered Argentina's written report on pending legislation; discussed the follow-up report from the High-Level Mission to Poland; and heard the Russian Federation report on the content and procedural status of two draft laws.

On 9 December, International Anti-Corruption Day, the Working Group heard the OECD Secretary-General deliver opening remarks to launch the 2021 Anti-Bribery Recommendation, and continued discussions on the impact of data protection regulations on the Group's work.

## Meetings of Law Enforcement Officials in 2021

Since 2010, an informal law enforcement officials meeting has been held twice a year on the margins of the Working Group's plenary meetings. It is open only to Working Group members directly involved in the prosecution and investigation of foreign bribery offences and is a unique forum for them to: discuss best practices, foreign bribery enforcement topics and the enforcement of specific cases; and establish professional networks. Law enforcement officials also contribute via these meetings to the thematic work of the WGB to whom its Chair reports back orally. The informal, voluntary meetings of Law Enforcement Officials are part of the Working Group follow-up and institutional arrangements. Two meetings were held in 2021 in which themes under discussion focused on the investigation, prosecution and resolution of multijurisdictional cases, and developing a strategic approach to detecting foreign bribery offences.

## Joint Meeting of the Working Group on Bribery and G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group in 2021

The Working Group and G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group held their fourth annual joint meeting in July 2021. The meeting focused on: 1) promoting integrity and transparency in the corporate sector, with a view to engaging business actors in the fight against corruption; and 2) implementation of the foreign bribery offence, including how to ensure a strong legislative framework and enforce transnational bribery cases across multiple jurisdictions.

## Global Dialogue

The Working Group hosted its first Global Dialogue during International Anti-Corruption on 9 December 2021. This specific session was organised on a pilot basis, and gathered over 150 participants from 17

non-member countries and 3 international organisation observers. It provided an opportunity to discuss cooperation between Working Group members and non-members as well as common challenges and opportunities in detecting, investigating and prosecuting foreign bribery, with a view to foster non-member engagement and to build global anti-bribery partnerships. Of the non-members, Indonesia, Mauritius, Romania and Saudi Arabia delivered presentations on their frameworks and cases relating to foreign bribery.

# 5 Global relations activities

The Working Group's global relations strategy identifies countries not only for potential accession to the Convention, but with which establishing working relations would be mutually beneficial. The Working Group aims to convey to countries that are not Party to the Convention the benefits of working with the Working Group and learning more about the Convention and related instruments. Countries that qualify under the Working Group's accession criteria as Participants are invited to attend Working Group meetings.

## Global programmes in 2021

### ***The OECD Business Integrity Roundtable Series***

The pilot [OECD Business Integrity Roundtable Series](#) acted as a forum to promote good practices and catalyse trust in business. Held from 24 March to 12 May, and bringing together over nineteen hundred participants across seven virtual events, topics covered included business integrity trends, incentives, challenges and innovative approaches to implementation.

The Series included a two-part global roundtable, which focused on the importance of business integrity standards set by governments, and how the private sector can amplify these efforts, in addition to corporate policies, incentives and collective action to promote cultures of integrity. A third session discussed what drives corporate compliance, and how to level the global playing field for companies to promote integrity. A fourth session explored when and where non-judicial mechanisms can help address corruption challenges, and how they can be better designed to improve business climates. A fifth session reviewed actions taken by African companies to promote corporate anti-bribery policies and related compliance measures. A sixth session discussed trends and good practices in business integrity in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, with a focus on the role of ombudsman offices. The seventh session explored innovative anti-corruption initiatives in Asia-Pacific to help companies big and small weather the damage of the pandemic.

### ***Webinar: Detecting Corruption Related to COVID-19 and other Crises***

This webinar was organised under the project entitled "Global Law Enforcement Response to Corruption in Crisis Situations", which aims to support law enforcement practitioners and public prosecutors to detect, investigate and prosecute corruption in crisis situations. It will be followed by a series of peer-learning activities for practitioners from around the world on detecting corruption in emergency situations.

## Regional programmes

### ***Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia***

Established in 1998, [the Anti-Corruption Network](#) is a regional outreach programme of the Working Group on Bribery. The Network supports its member countries<sup>1</sup> in their efforts to prevent and fight corruption and provides a forum for promoting anti-corruption reforms and exchanging best practices. Within the framework of the [Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan](#) (IAP) launched in 2003, the Network conducts comprehensive peer reviews of its member countries. To facilitate engagement and experience sharing on good anti-corruption practices in the region, the Network has created thematic peer learning programmes, the Law-Enforcement Network and Business Integrity Group. The Network also assists member countries in enhancing their national anti-corruption systems through country projects.

Meetings and events held in 2021 include the Network's Plenary and Steering Group Meeting, in which five pilot country [reports](#) (for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) developed through a new indicator-based methodology and which assess efforts to advance anti-corruption policy reforms were presented. A webinar organised by the Network's Law Enforcement Network focused on the detection, investigation and prosecution of corruption in the health sector and emergency procurement in Eastern Europe. The Network held the eleventh meeting of its Law Enforcement Network, in which participants discussed the findings of the report [The Independence of Prosecutors in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Asia Pacific](#), and a draft methodology for a Matrix of High-Level Corruption Cases. A webinar on anti-corruption reforms in Eastern Europe and Central Asia brought together anti-corruption practitioners to discuss the main findings of [Anti-Corruption Reforms in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Progress and Challenges, 2016-19](#) and [The Independence of Prosecutors in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Asia Pacific](#). The Network also held a high-level event "Fighting Transnational Bribery in Croatia", which discussed the importance of fighting bribery in business, the impact of the Anti-Bribery Convention in this area, and how joining the Convention could strengthen Croatia's fight against corruption.

### ***Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific***

Established in 1999 with the Asian Development Bank, and with the support and participation of the UN Development Programme, the [Initiative](#) brings together thirty-three economies of the region.<sup>2</sup> The Initiative carries out the Anti-Corruption Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific through three main workstreams, which include the Law Enforcement Network (LEN) and the Business Integrity Network (BIN). The LEN provides a forum for enhancing capacity amongst anti-corruption law enforcement practitioners through building expertise, acquiring new tools, and developing professional networks and contacts. The BIN enables the collection and sharing of information on business integrity issues, connecting interested stakeholders and facilitating collective action.

The Initiative supports countries' efforts to build effective and sustainable anti-corruption mechanisms through fostering policy dialogue, policy analysis, capacity building and donor coordination. In addition to engagement through the Initiative, the Secretariat also seeks opportunities to engage with key partner

---

<sup>1</sup> The Network's member countries include Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo\*, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. OECD countries also take part in the Anti-Corruption Network.

<sup>2</sup> They include: Afghanistan; Australia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; the People's Republic of China; Cook Islands; Fiji Islands; Georgia; Hong Kong, China; India; Indonesia; Japan; Kazakhstan; Korea; Kyrgyz Republic; Macao, China; Malaysia; Mongolia; Nepal; Pakistan; Palau; Papua New Guinea; the Philippines; Samoa; Singapore; the Solomon Islands; Sri Lanka; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam.

countries in the region through other relevant fora, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

In 2021, the Initiative held a workshop organised with the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and the Asian Development Bank, that explored preventing, detecting and investigating corruption in crisis settings, interagency co-operation in combating corruption in crisis situations, and reinforcing businesses' capacity to prevent, detect and reduce risks of corruption during a crisis.

### ***Joint OECD/AfDB Initiative to Support Business Integrity and Anti-Bribery Efforts in Africa***

In 2008, the OECD and the African Development Bank (AfDB) launched a partnership to support African governments in their efforts to combat bribery and corruption. The [Joint Initiative](#) supports its twenty one member countries<sup>3</sup> in improving corporate integrity and accountability, while promoting growth through an environment conducive to attracting foreign investment.

In 2021, the Joint Initiative held a webinar that focused on operational practices and challenges that countries face in detecting, investigating and prosecuting corruption in emergency public procurement procedures and relief packages, as well as a peer-learning webinar that focused on how to strengthen whistle-blower reporting in Africa.

### ***OECD-Latin America and Caribbean Anti-Corruption Initiative***

The [OECD-Latin America and Caribbean Anti-Corruption Initiative](#) was established in 2007, with the support of the Inter-American Development Bank and the Organization of American States, to promote the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention in the region and strengthen the Convention's implementation. The Initiative provides a platform for OECD Working Group on Bribery countries from the region<sup>4</sup> to compare experiences, share best practices and discuss challenges in the fight against corruption.

In 2021, the Latin America and Caribbean Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Network organised an event to discuss the challenges law enforcement practitioners face in fighting corruption, with a focus on managing whistle-blower reports.

### ***Anti-Corruption and Promotion of Business Integrity in the Middle East and North Africa***

Since 2015, the principal framework for regional and bilateral co-operation on [anti-corruption and business integrity reform in the Middle East and North Africa](#) (MENA) has been the MENA-OECD Initiative on Governance and Competitiveness for Development.<sup>5</sup> The initiative facilitates co-operation between the OECD and the MENA region and brings together governments, the international community, civil society and the private sector to address regional needs and development priorities, including the fight against bribery. As part of this initiative, the MENA-OECD Business Integrity Network (MOBIN) promotes business integrity in the region. It brings together regional businesses and public anti-corruption officials to build awareness about the need to fight corruption and develop a culture of integrity. In 2021, the OECD

---

<sup>3</sup> These include Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

<sup>4</sup> These include Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico and Peru.

<sup>5</sup> The MENA-OECD Initiative covers Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, the Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

enhanced its engagement with the region by developing new bilateral projects and initiating their implementation.

#### *OECD - Morocco Country Programme*

In March 2021, the second phase of the OECD-Morocco Country Programme was launched. One of its primary components focuses on analysing Morocco's legal and policy framework against the criteria for accession to the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions and identifying areas for improvement. An anti-corruption project in Algeria, focused on raising awareness of OECD standards and good anti-corruption practices with governments, business and civil society and strengthening capacity of law enforcement authorities, was also launched.