



## Measuring corruption

A mix of experiential, perception based and value flow tracking methods can be deployed to measure specific aspects of corruption. Novel experimental techniques and big data approaches can also help, yet due to the hidden nature of corruption a careful interpretation of results is required. There are also a growing number of collective action initiatives that seek to advance anti-corruption commitments in specific sectors such as extractives or fisheries. These initiatives offer businesses, governments and NGOs a platform to raise transparency and integrity standards in very contextualized and effective ways.

## Preventing corruption

**Tackling corruption requires a systemic approach. Different checks, incentive systems and norms need to be assessed and aligned to build a resilient system of integrity.** During the course, we have explored different measures including the use of codes of conduct and accountability. Moreover, it is very important to enhance **transparency** through access to information, **e-government**, or **open data portals** for the fight against corruption. Best practices must be adopted in accordance with good governance principles.

## Legal framework

International anti-corruption legal instruments frame a comprehensive set of standards. However, it is of great importance to further **harmonize legislation, enhance its enforcement** as well **strengthening institutions**. If we want to create a level-playing field, it is not (that much) about the instrument, it is about how it works. No effective tools without effective implementation, hence the importance of monitoring systems to oversee the effectiveness of the implementation of each instrument.

## EU institutions and bodies

### EPPO

The creation of EPPO has been an important step in combatting crimes affecting the financial interests of the Union, such as corruption. Cross-border investigations in EPPO member states have become more efficient whereas, the use of various Union legal instruments and international MLA conventions enhance cooperation with non-participating in EPPO member states and with third countries.

### OLAF

OLAF (European Anti-Fraud Office) plays an important role in fighting corruption, and it is a privilege partner of EPPO, to whom it reports when finding indications of criminal conduct.

It executes administrative investigations for fraud and corruption related to EU funding, including internal investigations concerning EU staff.

## **EUROPOL**

From Europol's perspective, tackling corruption effectively requires a combination of well-designed prevention and repressive measures. It also requires a clearly defined and harmonized legal framework across the EU and a robust operational response by specialized law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders active in this field. Last, but not least, it is paramount to maximize the exchange of information amongst national public authorities and internationally and boost financial investigations aimed at identifying, tracing and confiscating ill-gotten funds that are the proceed of corruption.

### **Detecting - Investigating corruption**

We have learned about the methods for detecting corruption, such as risk assessments, data analysis, and investigations. There are various tools and mechanisms for detecting, reporting and investigating corruption. The application of **financial investigation techniques** plays a critical role in combatting corruption. **Intelligence analysis** against corruption is crucial to uncover corruption. We have studied the investigation of corruption, including the importance of **evidence-gathering and interviewing techniques**. However, interviewing literature does not really address the specifics of interviewing in fraud and corruption cases. The profile of its perpetrators and their behaviour during interviews typically raise the stakes for the preparation and conduct of the interview. A new approach to interviewing in corruption investigations, based on behavioural science and including influence and persuasion was presented during the course.

### **Coordination - Cooperation**

We have highlighted the significance of **cooperation and information exchange** between law enforcement agencies. The co-ordination among the international organizations active in the anti-corruption field is necessary. We should make good use of the available **networks** of exchange of information in corruption investigations.

### **Asset recovery**

We have discussed the importance of asset recovery as a tool for deterring corruption and ensuring that stolen funds are returned to their owners. We need to **enhance tracing, freezing, and returning** of proceedings of corruption.

## **Human rights**

Corruption undermines human rights and the rule of law. By addressing corruption through a human rights framework, the social impact of corruption is made visible. This generates awareness in society about the consequences of this problem and creates new alliances in the fight against corruption.

## **Whistle-blowers**

The protection and support of whistleblowers who play a crucial role in detecting and reporting corruption should be a priority. It is an important way in which wrongdoing is brought to light. There is no doubt that more needs to be done to encourage whistle-blowing and related reports of corruption, and to provide appropriate protection for whistle-blowers.

## **Evaluation of Anti-corruption strategies and policies**

Corruption is a complex phenomenon. Conventional anti-corruption approaches centered on law enforcement and compliance are critical elements yet for full impact need to be complemented by a wide range of other integrity and transparency measures, for example to protect investigative journalism and strengthen the role of civil society. Evaluations can contribute to filling the anti-corruption evidence gap.

In other words, new policies and regulations do not make a difference just by existing - regular monitoring of their **enforcement, effectiveness and impact** is needed at the level of public organizations.

Cooperation with CSOs, independent assessment of anti-corruption policies at the level of public institutions and publicly available reports from the assessments are essential steps to improving efforts on anti-corruption.

## **Take-home message**

With corruption widespread and systemic, eliminating a specific corrupt practice is not enough. The root causes of corruption need to be addressed, to combat corruption.

Overall, by working collaboratively, we can strengthen our efforts to combat corruption and build a more transparent society.

## **Fighting against corruption must remain a priority!**