
ANTI-CORRUPTION BODY VISITS ROMANIA TO CONDUCT URGENT EVALUATION OF REFORM OF THE JUDICIARY

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A delegation from the Group of States against Corruption of the Council of Europe (GRECO) visited Romania on 21 and 22 February as part of an ad hoc urgent evaluation concerning the recently proposed or adopted legislation in the area of the judiciary from the perspective of the fight against corruption and of the compliance of Romania with earlier recommendations by GRECO on this topic.

GRECOs delegation met with government representatives, parliamentarians, legal and judicial professionals, NGOs, representatives of international institutions present in Romania and other relevant actors.

GRECOs delegation underlines that those in charge of investigating, prosecuting and adjudicating corruption offenses should enjoy the independence and autonomy appropriate to their functions and should be free from improper influence. This also applies to disciplinary mechanisms, whilst judges and prosecutors are expected to comply with the highest standards of integrity. This is one of the Council of Europe's fundamental anti-corruption standards. The delegation also recalls GRECOs recent recommendation that the transparency of the legislative process be improved, including by ensuring that urgent procedure be applied as an exception in a limited number of circumstances.

GRECOs team stresses the importance for all state institutions to work with and respect each other, in line with the principles of the separation of powers, of the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, and of equality before the law.

The delegation will now prepare a report, with specific recommendations, for discussion at GRECOs next plenary meeting. The delegation stresses the importance of the authorities taking GRECOs report into account, once adopted, as they continue working on their proposed or adopted legislation. At the same time, the GRECO delegation invites the authorities, once again, to consider requesting the opinion of the Venice Commission on the broader judicial reform package.

In a report adopted in December 2017 GRECO determined that Romanias current performance in the implementation of its recommendations in the area of corruption prevention in respect of members of Parliament, judges and prosecutors is globally unsatisfactory. GRECO called for improvements in a number of areas, including the legislative process, which should be more transparent and limit the use of expedited procedures. The report also stressed the need for the Supreme Council of Magistracy and the Judicial Inspectorate to be more active in terms of

analyses, information and advice, and for the Supreme Council of Magistracy to be given a greater say in the appointment and dismissal of the most senior prosecutorial functions.

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/council-of-europe-anti-corruption-body-visits-romania>

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