

# CONFERENCE ON “GENDER DIMENSIONS OF CORRUPTION”

Concept  
Prague, 13 December 2013

[www.coe.int/greco](http://www.coe.int/greco)

organised by  
the Group of States against Corruption  
under the auspices of the President of the Senate  
and the Ministry of Justice  
of the Czech Republic



## CONTEXT

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The Council of Europe views corruption as a serious threat to furthering and upholding the core values of pluralist democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Europe. It takes a **multidisciplinary approach** to the fight against corruption and has adopted multi-faceted legal instruments to address it.<sup>1</sup> These instruments are designed to strengthen member States' democratic, legal, and institutional capacity to withstand corruption as well as to detect and sanction it effectively when it occurs. They cover inter alia the criminalisation of corruption in the public and private sectors, liability and compensation for the damage caused by corruption, the conduct of public officials, the financing of political parties and electoral campaigns and include twenty guiding principles for the fight against corruption.

Since 1999, the **Group of States against Corruption (GRECO)**<sup>2</sup> has monitored the implementation of these standards and promoted effective anti-corruption prevention measures among member States. Over the years, it has become Europe's core multilateral anti-corruption review mechanism, with a reputation for scrupulous assessments and constructive recommendations. Yet, since the Council of Europe's anti-corruption legal instruments have been conceived as gender neutral, up until recently, GRECO has not been an active participant in the debates on the relationship between gender and corruption.

Meanwhile, the **nexus between gender and corruption** has been a topic of serious interest to global international organisations, civil society and academics. The two main themes that have consistently emerged from research have been:

- the differentiated impact of corruption on women and men, and
- the relationship between levels of corruption and increasing women's participation/representation (i.e. gender parity).

The **preliminary research** conducted by GRECO in respect of its members in 2012 has shown that, in countries where advances in gender equality have or are being made, and where the fight against corruption is firmly established, the two issues start to converge. For example, the Chair of the Independent Police Complaints Commission of England was recently quoted as stating that sexual harassment and abuse by police officers in England needs to be recognised "as a distinct area of corruption" and that the police service has a responsibility to identify it and reduce its occurrence.<sup>3</sup> In Iceland, a Special Investigative Commission was established by Parliament to analyse the causes of the collapse of three main banks in 2008. A study on the gender dimensions of the parliamentary findings was then commissioned which looked at the causes from both the perspective of women and men<sup>4</sup>. In Ukraine, a study has looked at the gender aspects of corruption in higher education, while in Austria an anti-corruption strategy is currently being developed, which is expected to include dimensions of gender within it.

The relationship between gender and corruption is thus being explored in a number of contexts in GRECO member States, and it is the basis upon which GRECO will launch its first multilateral debate on the issue. The fact that less attention has been paid to gender and corruption in the framework of the Council of Europe and in more developed and established

democracies generally, means that any review of this kind is timely and relevant. The vast majority of the GRECO member States support the exploration of a gender perspective as potentially **adding value** to GRECO's work.

## GENDER MAINSTREAMING AT THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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The Council of Europe defines gender equality as meaning the equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life. Gender equality is the opposite of gender inequality, not of gender difference<sup>5</sup>. The concept of gender equality has thus evolved and while gender neutrality or "blindness" may well have served a useful purpose in the past, the importance of gender difference is now clearly accepted. The Council of Europe believes that "**gender mainstreaming**", the process whereby a gender perspective is included from the earliest planning stages to final decisions on policy or implementation in a specific field, needs to be integrated into all of its sectorial activities. This approach is meant to ensure that as work is developed, it is examined from the perspectives of different population groups - specifically women and men - so that the decisions made benefit the whole population. It is seen as a method towards achieving gender equality but that is not in itself a goal.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE

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The conference will pursue a number of objectives, namely:

- to raise GRECO member States' awareness of the direct and negative impact of corruption on individuals and groups in different national/local contexts, with a particular emphasis on women as more vulnerable members of society;
- to exchange information on the existing national research focusing on gender-specific experiences of corruption and gender-specific measures taken to prevent and eradicate it;
- to promote the collection of national gender disaggregated data and foster research, in order to better identify and evaluate potential risk areas;
- to support the wider inclusion of a gender perspective into the national anti-corruption policies/strategies and sensitise national oversight bodies to the need to become more responsive to gender-specific manifestations of corruption;
- to provide a forum for key stakeholders involved in the prevention and fight against corruption at the national level;
- to discuss possible gender responsive anti-corruption initiatives to be carried out by GRECO and its member States beyond 2013.

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1. [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/greco/documents/instruments\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/greco/documents/instruments_en.asp).

2. [www.coe.int/greco](http://www.coe.int/greco).

3. Sexual Predators in police 'must be rooted out.' Guardian Newspaper, 20 September 2012 (online edition: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2012/sep/20/sexual-predators-police-rooted-out>)

4. Einarsdóttir, T. and G.M. Pétursdóttir (2010) *An analysis of the report of Althing's Special Investigation Commission from a gender perspective* (English excerpts), Faculty of Political Science, University of Iceland.

5. Information Document Council of Europe action in the field of gender equality CM/Inf(2008)41 20 October 2008.

## WORKING METHODS

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The conference will take the form of a plenary discussion lasting **one day**. Session I will examine gender dimensions of corruption at the national level in GRECO member States, followed by Session II where global and regional approaches to identifying gender-specific impacts of corruption and developing gender responsive solutions will be analysed. Session III will then return to the effective prevention and responses to corruption at the national and sub-national levels, building on the individual and cumulative strength of relevant stakeholders. At the end, the conclusions of the conference will be presented by the General Rapporteur.

The working languages of the conference will be **English, French and Czech**.

## PARTICIPANTS

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The conference will bring together around **80 participants** from the GRECO member States, including:

- Government representatives
- Members of Parliament
- Representatives of the judiciary
- Local and regional authorities
- Civil society, academics and media representatives
- International organisations

## EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE CONFERENCE

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The conference is expected to achieve the following results:

- various stakeholders in the GRECO member States will better understand and evaluate existing gender dimensions of corruption;
- gender will be more deliberately considered when examining the typology and effects of corruption in the different national and local contexts;
- gender dimensions of corruption will be more accurately identified and more consistently included in the design of national anti-corruption policies/strategies;
- an agreement will be reached on a number of key initiatives to be pursued by GRECO and its member States in order to assess and address gender-specific manifestations of corruption.

## VENUE

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Wallenstein Palace

The Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic

Valdštejnské náměstí 17/4

Praha 1, 118 01

[http://senat.cz/informace/z\\_historie/palace/videogalerie/index.php?ke\\_dni=12.08.2013&O=9#hlavni\\_sal](http://senat.cz/informace/z_historie/palace/videogalerie/index.php?ke_dni=12.08.2013&O=9#hlavni_sal)

[http://www.mapy.cz/#!d=addr\\_8938201\\_1&x=14.407167&y=50.090142&z=16&t=s](http://www.mapy.cz/#!d=addr_8938201_1&x=14.407167&y=50.090142&z=16&t=s)

## ORGANISERS' CONTACTS

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