

GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON HARNESSING DATA TO IMPROVE CORRUPTION MEASUREMENT

📍 VIENNA, AUSTRIA. HYBRID FORMAT 📅 31 AUGUST – 1 SEPTEMBER 2023

1. Thank you Chair

Excellences, distinguished Participants, dear Colleagues,

I am very glad to be here with you, and to intervene in this “*Global Conference*”.

The presence today of so many Authorities, Institutions and Actors shows the strength of our shared commitment and the importance that we attribute to measuring corruption.

2. For this reason, I want to really thank UNODC, IACA and OECD for promoting this event, that I’m sure will help us to identify the best strategies in this field, in full spirit of the inspiring principles of the *United Nation Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC)*.

3. There are several reasons why we need to promote more effective ways in measuring corruption. Indeed, it is important

To understand the complex phenomenon of corruption,

its different forms,

To explain its changes over the time,

To better address our activity

To identify effective counter-measures,

and also I will come back on this point to estimate the impact of anti-corruption initiatives in which we are working on.

And we all know how sensitive is this exercise

– for economic growth (lets think of influence on foreign investment)

– and, more in general, **for the development of democracy and human rights.**

4. Because of the essential role of measurement, since its establishment, the **Italian National Anti-Corruption Authority** (ANAC), which I have the honor of presiding, has worked to identify best practices in this field.

After a long process of researches and works, last year, ANAC launched a Web-Portal with studies, data, indicators and dashboards concerning the risk of corruption at the subnational/local level.

With the EU funding support, working together with experts from public sector, academia, and civil society, ANAC developed objective risk indicators, in order to overcome some limits of subjective indicators and to have a broad picture of corruption risks at national and local level.

The indicators we find are related

- to public procurement, whose data ANAC manages directly, through the *National public procurement register*,
- and also to the characteristics of the local contexts, based on a sets of socio-economic factors, for which there is empirical evidence that the factors are linked to an increased risk of corruption.

5. These indicators **today can be used**

- a. by the authorities and institutions that work on preventing and fighting against corruption, to better target oversight activities,
- b. but also by all other public bodies to develop their integrity_plans and develop appropriate mitigation strategies,
- c. by Academia for research and studies,
- d. and by NGOs and citizens to perform social control.

6. **I don't' want to take more time in describing** our project: you all can find all the information in our dedicated portal

I want only to underline that the project managed by ANAC is perfectly in line with the "UNODC's statistical framework to measure corruption", that of course represents today the fundamental point of reference at global level. And it is fully coherent with the efforts of the IACA Global Program on Measuring Corruption.

7. Also for this reason, from the ANAC side, I want to express our commitment to keep on participating to initiatives such as the “UNODC's statistical framework to measure corruption”, the IACA Global Program [on Measuring Corruption] and the OECD Public Integrity Indicators, giving our contribution, learning from other experiences and promoting the use of shared and reliable indicators and tools to measure corruption.

8. Let me use the few minutes that I still have to be more concrete, and so to highlight the lessons learnt from ANAC experience.

To be simple, I want to resume them in four fundamental characteristics that a robust strategy in measuring corruption would have today, and that I hope our common strategy will have:

- a. It would be more concrete
- b. more analytical
- c. more transparent
- d. more participated

a. First: More concrete

That means that from today, for all of us, it is necessary to move-on to concrete actions. It will be not more enough to announce or to identify good practices, but also to concretely use these tools in our everyday action. The measurement of corruption have to be recognized as an essential pre-réquisite of prevention of corruption, not only as a matter of scientific debates. It have to become an essential element in the anticorruption plans, and we have to dedicate some of our human and financial resources to implement it.

b. Second: Measuring has to be more analytical

9. To build up a strong strategy, we need to be clear identifying what and how we intend to measure, assuming that corruption is a hidden phenomenon, often unpredictable and with characteristics that vary over time, place and context.

Then, first of all, we must distinguish the measurement of corruption, which pursues the aim of quantifying the extent of that phenomenon, from the measurement of anti-corruption, that means the impact that the anti-corruption measures have produced.

These two form of measurement are both important and we need to implement them, but require different methods and strategies, that we have to develop taking in account those differences. Otherwise, we would not be understood, and we would not be in the position to achieve our objectives.

c. Third: Our strategy has to be more transparent

Corruption measurement must always be transparent, clear, open.

For objective indicators it is not enough to list them, but it is necessary to explain how we identified them, which is the reasoning at their basis and of course, which are the data the we used to implement the measurement. Also, providing, as far as possible, not only aggregated data but also microdata, to allow more in-depth analyses.

For subjective indicators, it is not enough to make public a simple ranking and a short description of the philosophy of the survey. On the contrary, it is important making public the questionnaires used for the surveys, as well as offering precise information on the composition and size of the samples.

Only doing that, measurement will be effective, comparable and a recognized instrument.

Only doing that, we will have cooperation at global level, identifying the best practices and sharing them.

d. Fourth: Our strategy/Measuring has to be more participated

- b) Producing data and indicators on corruption, also if they are objectives, is not enough. We have to work, all together, to ensure that this data and tools are used properly not only by our institutions, but also by civil society organizations (*of course, after having made them really transparent*).

In this way, Measurement of corruption can -and has to become- an instrument to promote participation and engagement by civil society.

Only if these data and indicators are widely exploited, they can really support prevention of corruption, promotion of transparency and integrity policies.

CONCLUSION

I want to conclude saying that to really achieve the ambitious objectives, which are at the basis of this *Global conference*, we have to find strategies that are –as I said- more concrete, more analytical, more transparent and more participated.

If we will be able to do so, from this Conference, and in the months that we have before the COPS of Atlanta, we will have a real possibility to make concrete progress and to make measuring corruption a real, global instrument to prevent and combat corruption, reinforce our institution and, at the end, make stronger our democracy and human rights.

This is our share responsibility,

We have to take it, and transform it in action.

Thank you very much