



WORKSHOP

«Strengthen integrity in the public sector amidst COVID-19 crisis»

Acting according to public ethical standards is part of good governance. Thus, supporting and assessing the integrity-based management of the public sector falls within the SAI's role. Moreover, measuring the prevalence of corruption and the design and effectiveness of protection mechanisms against it can be a strong added contribution for effective anti-corruption strategies.

In this framework, the topics of the workshop «*STRENGTHEN INTEGRITY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR AMIDST COVID-19 CRISIS*» covered the role and tasks of SAIs in preventing corruption and promoting and disseminating integrity culture in the public sector, considering the new integrity risks caused by the COVID 19 epidemic and the increasing use of digital technologies.

The workshop provided an opportunity for the participant SAIs to:

- Share good practices in promoting integrity and preventing or fighting corruption
- Become familiar with the experiences and methods used by other SAIs
- Be encouraged to include integrity or anti corruption topics in their audit plan, enhancing their contribution to promote ethical conduct in public sector organisations and to strengthen anticorruption strategies in their countries
- Raise their awareness about international recommendations and guidelines that they can use
- Identify further and value adding cooperation activities on the subject

During a part devoted to «*Promoting integrity in the public sector*», participants discussed previously defined issues such as:

- Have the participants' SAIs included an integrity/anti-corruption approach in their activities- examples?
- Have the SAIs undertaken or planned audits related to integrity/corruption risks raised by the COVID-19 pandemic or by the digital transformation- in which topics?
- Guidelines for integrity/anti-corruption audits

Jesper Johnson, from OECD, made a presentation about «*Pillars, Guidance and Measurement of Public Sector Integrity*», based on the OECD Recommendation for Integrity in the Public Sector and the respective guidelines.

Participants also discussed the possible «*Cooperation among SAIs/Regions in the field of promoting integrity and fighting corruption*», enlightened by the activities undertaken by the OLACEFS' Working Group on the Fight Against Transnational Corruption and the EUROSAI Task Force on Audit & Ethics.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE WORKSHOP

Corruption is one of the main concerns of citizens and causes severe losses to public resources. SAIs have an active role to play in fighting corruption, mainly by contributing for its prevention.

The prevention of corruption is strongly strengthened by promoting the integrity of public officials and public organisations. Acting according to public ethical standards is part of good governance. Thus, supporting and assessing the integrity-based management of the public sector falls within the SAI's role.

SAIs can reinforce their role in promoting integrity by adding integrity focused work to their ordinary activities. This can be done in several ways, notably by working with other anti-corruption bodies, by reinforcing the internal audit's role in overseeing the management of ethics or by auditing the national systems and strategies to fight corruption or any other ethics related topics.

SAIs benefit from cooperating with each other and several options for cooperative work in this subject were identified. These ideas can be incorporated as a reinforcement of the collaboration between the OLACEFS and EUROSAI's groups dealing with integrity and anti-corruption.

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