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United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Annex I

Guidance Note

Guidance note for States parties and signatories on sharing information and experiences on:

- **the participation of society in the prevention of and fight against corruption;**
- **the negative effects of corruption on women and youth; and,**
- **the role played by women and youth in preventing and combating corruption.**

In its resolution 10/1, entitled “Atlanta 2023: promoting integrity, accountability and transparency in the fight against corruption”, the Conference reiterated that:

“the active participation of society is integral to complementing States’ efforts in the prevention of and the fight against corruption and promoting transparency, integrity and accountability”,

and urged States parties to:

“put in place and effectively implement policies and practices, within their means and in accordance with the fundamental principles of their domestic laws, that allow individuals and groups outside the public sector, such as civil society, non-governmental and community-based organizations, the private sector, academia and media, to be able to contribute in this regard also thereby promoting accountability, including through the full and effective implementation of article 13 of the Convention”.

The resolution also emphasized the importance of engaging young people in the prevention of and fight against corruption.

Corruption affects all members of society – women and men, boys and girls - in different ways. It often results in the exclusion of vulnerable groups from decision-making processes and access to basic public services, reproducing negative stereotypes and limiting economic power and educational opportunities.

In its resolution 10/3, entitled “Follow-up to the Marrakech declaration on the prevention of corruption”, the Conference requested the Working Group to consider including, as a topic for discussion at its fifteenth meeting *“the negative effects of corruption on women and youth and the role played by women and youth in preventing and combating corruption”*.

The secretariat has prepared the attached questionnaire as guidance on information sought on the above topics. Should sufficient information be received, a report will be prepared in view of facilitating the

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discussion at the fifteenth Working Group on Prevention to be held from 28 August to 6 September 2024. Unless otherwise indicated in the submissions, the input will be published online and may be used for the development of knowledge products. The information sought includes descriptions of good practices and challenges faced in adopting and/or implementing these measures. The submission of supporting documentation, if any, is encouraged, including but not limited to legislation, regulations, reports, policy documents and evaluations.

Participation of society in preventing and fighting corruption, inclusive decision-making processes; role of non-governmental stakeholders, journalists and media

1. Has your country promoted the participation of society, including non-governmental stakeholders, journalists and the media, in anti-corruption activities, programmes and initiatives, including in relation to anti-corruption strategies? If yes, please specify how.

The Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau (hereinafter – the Bureau) promotes participation in anti-corruption activities in various ways. One of the main functions of the Bureau is prevention which includes dialogue with the society as a whole and specific target audiences. On a daily basis, the Bureau informs society via media and social media platforms about anti-corruption matters, as well as calls both general public and targeted groups such as NGO's, entrepreneurs, students, etc. for action.

NGOs are regularly involved in anti-corruption activities. The Law on Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau requires the Bureau to have Public Consultative Council, and currently it consists of 17 NGOs. The aim of the Council is to ensure participation of the representatives of the public in the drafting, policy implementation and education of the public. Council meetings are held quarterly, and its decisions are of recommendatory nature.

Furthermore, the NGOs are involved in anti-corruption policy planning and other topics that involves public participation. The Bureau also co-hosts with NGO public events such as conferences dedicated to the International Anti-Corruption Day celebrated on 9 December.

Additionally, the development of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Action Plan (national anti-corruption strategy) involves the direct public administration institutions, their subordinate or supervisory institutions, the judiciary, the State Audit Office, the Ombudsman and Latvian non-governmental organisations (The Civic Alliance – Latvia”, Transparency International LATVIA/ “Sabiedrība par atklātību – Delna”, Centre for Public Policy Providus, Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments, Association of Large Cities of Latvia, Finance Latvia Association, The Public Consultative Council of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau, which consist of 17 different NGOs), providing in writing their proposals and recommendations based on their competences and professional experience on improvements to be introduced to successfully prevent and combat corruption in Latvia.

Results of opinion polls (ordered by the Bureau), as well as results of international surveys/research were used in the planning of anti-corruption measures and predicting performance indicators.

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As regards the development specifically of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Action Plan 2023-2025, the project was published on the website of the Bureau for public participation on 30 March 2021. During this period, the Bureau received and took fully or partially into account over 50 suggestions from non-governmental organizations and one political party (summary sheet, updated draft and annex (only available in Latvian) - <https://www.knab.gov.lv/lv/jaunums/knab-apkopojis-sabiedribas-lidzdalibas-gaita-izteiktos-priekslikumus-par-korupcijas-noversanas-un-apkarosanas-pasakumu-plana-2021-2024-gadam-projektu>).

All information (including objections and proposals from institutions) related to the development of the anti-corruption action plan, as well as the institutions involved, is publicly available on the [Unified Portal for the Development and Agreement of Draft Legal Acts](#).

It should be noted that on 21 June 2024, the portal was recognized as the winner in the United Nations Public Service Awards. The portal was recognized as the best in its category "Innovation in Public Institutions", thereby obtaining an assessment of its positive contribution to the work of public administration, promoting the availability of information to citizens and their involvement in public participation.

The portal is an extensive information database, where it is possible to track future and already adopted decisions of the government, thus ensuring greater transparency and openness in the processes of creating legal framework. All draft legal acts and information related to their development are available in one place on the portal - annotations, appendices, opinions, statements, etc. The "Public Participation" section of the portal shows currently published draft legal acts, which are still in the process of development and on which non-governmental organizations or any public representative can express their opinion, proposals.

2. Has your country identified any barriers to the participation of society in the prevention of and fight against corruption? If yes, have any programmes been designed and implemented to address such barriers?

The Bureau has not identified any barriers to the participation of society in the prevention of and fight against corruption.

The negative effects of corruption on youth and the role played by youth in preventing and combating corruption. For each reply, we would be grateful for hyperlinks to relevant supporting documentation or websites, or any other supporting documents.

While the official definition of youth provided by the United Nations refers to persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years (and indeed, all United Nations statistics on youth are based on this definition), the United Nations recognizes that “the operational definition and nuances of the term ‘youth’ vary from

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country to country”¹ as it relates to sociocultural, institutional, economic and political factors, and adapts to the countries where it operates.² UNODC uses the age range of 15 to 30 when referring to engaging young people outside the UN as partners and leaders in their shared objective to prevent and counter corruption. In line with this flexible definition of youth, we encourage Member States to decide which definition they would like to refer to and specify it in their answers to the questionnaire.

1. Does your country collect data disaggregated by age on the experience of young people as victims of corruption? Please provide the findings of any studies you may have carried out on the impact of corruption on young people. An example could be the impact of corruption on access to economic opportunities for businesses owned by young people.

The Bureau carried out public opinion polls in 2021, 2022, and 2023³. The aim of the polls was to disclose society’s (over 18 years of age) and entrepreneurs’ attitude towards corruption. The polls show that the younger audience between 18 to 29 years are more tolerant towards corruption than inhabitants aged between 30 to 39, and their attitude is more similar to those who are aged between 40 to 59. During the three-year period, every fifth youth between 18 to 29 admitted that they would be ready to bribe a public official in order to gain a preferable outcome. Every fourth youth at the relevant age category admitted that they have used informal solutions over the period of two years. Such methods were used while solving various issues, and overall, the most common informal solution is using personal contacts.

Each year, youths between 18 to 29 were those who used informal solutions most often. The Bureau has no information on the age distribution for those who have been victims of corruption.

2. Does your country have education for young people on integrity, ethics and anti-corruption at the primary, secondary, tertiary or informal level? If yes, please describe and provide any supporting documents.

In Latvia, there is developed and implemented standard of education, and topics for ethics, integrity, conflicts of interest and anti-corruption are included within it. Pupils of secondary schools may learn in depth about these topics in lessons that are dedicated to social sciences and economics.

Such topics are included in university programmes, e.g. for the future policemen, customs officers, doctors, etc.

The Bureau also raises society’s awareness, and youngsters are among those groups. To improve learning on integrity, ethics, anti-corruption, conflict of interest, the Bureau has developed the methodical material for teachers “Anti-corruption lesson for students” in 2013

¹ United Nations, “Global Issues: Youth”, <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/youth>.

² General Assembly resolution 36/81; and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Meaningfully engaging with youth (Paris, 2019).

³ Presentations only available in Latvian at: <https://www.knab.gov.lv/lv/pe-tijumi>



(please, see in Latvian only: <https://www.knab.gov.lv/lv/media/79/download?attachment>). While working with teachers, they have admitted to use this material during their lessons.

Furthermore, the Corruption Prevention and Combating Action Plan 2023-2025 stipulates several tasks to be implemented to target the younger audience. Thus, in 2022 the Bureau developed an interactive anti-corruption game for 7th to 9th grade pupils. The game has three levels, and players must choose actions while solving issues related to integrity and ethics. As the target audience is young and corruption evolves from failure to act in accordance with standards of ethics and integrity, corruption situations are examined in the third level.

Together with the game, a methodical material for teachers was developed, and its aim is to promote using the game in lessons and bring fruitful discussions among pupils. The game is available in Latvian only: <https://info.knab.gov.lv/ergla-izaicinajums/>.

The Corruption Prevention and Combating Action Plan 2023-2025 stipulates to develop such game for pupils of next grades – 10th to 12th.

The Bureau also provides free of charge anti-corruption lessons for pupils and students by offering these groups to visit the Bureau and visiting their respective schools/universities. The Bureau also participates in activities for youngsters organized by other institutions. Over the past years, such activities have been “Back to School/Back to university” organized by the European Union House in Riga where the Bureau has provided anti-corruption lessons, business conference organized by the Junior Achievement Latvia, etc.

Furthermore, the Bureau carries out social campaigns to raise awareness on anti-corruption topics. The latest was in 2023. Although the target audience of the campaign was general society, the messenger and face of the campaign was an on-air personality that is popular among younger audience. This way, the Bureau ensured promotion of anti-corruption matters for youths.

3. How does your country meaningfully include young people in the development, implementation and monitoring of anti-corruption efforts, including in relation to national anti-corruption strategies?

The Bureau carries out different activities to promote anti-corruption topics, please see the answer for the question No. 2. The Bureau has observed NGO's efforts to promote involvement of young people in anti-corruption matters. For example, *Transparency International Latvia* has its own platform for young people (please, see more information <https://delna.lv/en/about-delna/projects/>).

The negative effects of corruption on women and the role played by women in preventing and combating corruption

1. Have any studies (quantitative or qualitative) been undertaken or has information been gathered in view of discerning the negative effects of corruption on women in your country? If available, please provide the findings of any such studies or information collection efforts.



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No studies have been undertaken by the Bureau on the negative effects of corruption on women in Latvia.

However, the Corruption Prevention and Combating Action Plan 2023-2025 requests to perform analysis on the role of a person's gender and its potential impact on corrupt behaviours. The analysis has been made by concluding that men in Latvia are twice as likely to engage in corrupt activities, although women more often take public official positions that are exposed to higher risks of corruption. Over the past three years, gender distribution for those who have acted in a conflict of interest situation has changed. If the gender distribution was equal in 2020, the data shows that 68 % men were acting in a conflict of interest in 2023. Furthermore, the majority or 88 % of convicted persons for corruption in Latvia were men. Full findings of analysis will be published later in June, 2024, on the Bureau's website.

2. Has your country promoted the role of women in preventing and combating corruption? Has this included efforts to promote the meaningful participation and engagement of, and cooperation with, women's and community-based organizations that support women in the policy development, planning, implementation and monitoring of your anti-corruption programmes? Please enclose any supporting documentation or hyperlinks, if available.

According to the information available to the Bureau, there have been no gender specific efforts implemented.

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