EU Network against Corruption Workshop on Asset Declaration Systems

The declaration of assets of designated politicians, public officials, and politically exposed persons, has been one of the pillars of anti-corruption policies for years.[1] A well-functioning asset declaration mechanism is seen as a means to improve transparency and the trust of the public in the political establishment and public institutions, to help public sector leaders prevent and address conflicts of interest in their organisations, and to provide oversight of the finances of politicians and public officials alike. It gained wider recognition and prominence as a corruption prevention tool in the late 1990's and solidified its position as part of the accession requirements for new European Union (EU) Member States in 2004 and 2007[2].

According to World Bank research, currently over 160 countries have some sort of asset/interest declaration framework in place.[3] However, discussions surrounding the rationale, efficiency and effectiveness persist and are further accentuated by recent advances in technology.[4]

This workshop aims to offer an opportunity for the exchange of experiences on the functioning of, challenges facing and effectiveness of asset declaration frameworks in EU Member States. There are international standards that set out the elements of effective asset declaration systems. However, there is not necessarily one ideal system of asset declarations, because each system has to be seen in its national context where it operates within a given culture of integrity and alongside other measures to prevent corruption.

The workshop is structured as follows: we begin with 1) an appraisal of the different models of asset declaration systems in the EU and its Member States; followed by discussing 2) the challenges in monitoring and verifying asset declarations, in particular abroad, 3) the possibilities for technology to help with monitoring asset declarations; and 4) the effectiveness of current asset declaration policies and systems and ways to measure success.

---

[1] World Bank (2012). Using Asset Disclosure for Identifying Politically Exposed Persons (Rossi, Pop, Clementucci, and Sawaqed), from link.

[2] Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (2011). Asset Declarations for Public Officials. A Tool to Prevent Corruption. Retrieved on 16 February 2024, from link.

[3] World Bank (2019). E-filing Asset Declarations. Benefits and Challenges. Retrieved on 16 February 2024, from link.

[4] See, for instance: Mineva, D. et al (2023). Rolling Back State Capture in Southeastern Europe: Implementing Effective Instruments for Asset Declaration and Politically Exposed Companies, Retrieved on 16 February 2024, from link.

EU Network against Corruption

Workshop on Asset Declaration Systems - Final Agenda

25.06.2024 – Brussels

Venue: Borschette building, room AB-2C.

09:00 – 09:30	REGISTRATION AND WELCOME COFFEE

OPENING REMARKS

09:30 – 09:45

Stephen Curzon*, Head of Unit Legal affairs & Anti-corruption, DG HOME

1. ASSET DECLARATION SYSTEMS IN THE EU

Valts Kalnins, Assistant professor at the University of Latvia
An overview of the developments in the field of asset declaration

Korneel De Schamp and Heiðrún Sigurðardóttir,
Integrity and Anti-corruption sector at DG HOME
Insights into the 2024 Justice Scoreboard statistics on Asset Declaration

09:45 – 11:15

Raphaël Kergueno, Transparency International EU
Asset Declarations through the Public Eye: Lessons from the European Parliament

Jeanne Ollivier, High Authority for Transparency in Public Life, France and European Network for Public Ethics
An institutional perspective on asset declaration dos and don'ts and the role of monitoring institutions

Moderator: **Mike Beke**, Principal Consultant at Ecorys

Questions and answers

11:15 – 11:45	COFFEE BREAK

2. FOLLOW THE ASSETS: HOW TO VERIFY PROPERTIES HELD ABROAD

11:45 – 13:00

Ute Stiegel, Deputy Head of Unit, Legal affairs & Anti-corruption, DG HOME
Insights into relevant EU instruments to follow assets

Marijana Križančić, Commission of Conflict of Interest, Croatia
Collaboration with foreign peer-agencies, in order to obtain information on asset registered/owned abroad

Ilze Znotina, former head of FIU, Latvia
How can financial intelligence units (FIUs) help with detecting asset declaration irregularities, also for foreign politically exposed persons?

Desislava Gotskova, Head of Secretariat of Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative
The International Treaty for Exchange of Data for Verification of Asset Declaration

Moderator: **Petra Jeney**, Principal Consultant at Ecorys

Questions and answers

13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH

3. THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGIES ON ASSET DECLARATION MONITORING

14:00 – 15:15

Martynas Endrijaitis, State Tax Inspectorate, Lithuania
An institutional perspective - tactical and strategic aspects of going online

Tilman Hoppe, Independent anti-corruption expert
What to expect from e-declarations and e-monitoring?

Vitezslav Titl, Assistant Professor of Law & Economics at Utrecht University
Identifying Politically Connected Firms: A Machine Learning Approach

Moderator: **Axelle Devaux**, Principal Consultant, Ecorys

Questions and answers

15:15 – 15:30	COFFEE BREAK

4. DEFINING SUCCESS AND EVALUATING THE PERFORMANCE OF ASSET DECLARATION FRAMEWORKS

15:30 – 16:45

Jean-Francois Leruste, OECD
Asset declarations as a pillar of a successful anti-corruption strategy

Andrea Di Nicola, Joint Research Centre of the University of Trento and the University of Verona on Security and Crime Sciences

How to measure the anti-corruption effect of asset declarations and to know that you've succeeded?

Moderator: **Sergejus Muravjovas**, anti-corruption expert

Questions and answers

16:45 – 17:00

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Jeroen Blomsma, Head of Sector Integrity and Anti-corruption at DG HOME