

OECD recognises Finland's commitment to combat corruption, but is concerned about lack of foreign bribery enforcement

20/10/2020 – The OECD Working Group on Bribery remains seriously concerned about the lack of foreign bribery enforcement in Finland following a series of acquittals, between 2013 and 2016, and as discussed in the country's 2017 [Phase 4 evaluation report](#). No foreign bribery case has been detected, investigated or prosecuted since the Phase 4 report. In particular, the Working Group is concerned that Finland's high acquittal rate in foreign bribery cases may have discouraged law enforcement authorities and prosecutors to continue to take all necessary steps to detect, investigate and prosecute this offence.

The Working Group thus calls on Finland to urgently step up its enforcement efforts. As part of these efforts, Finland should urgently provide additional detailed written information and training to investigators, prosecutors and judges on the requirements of the foreign bribery offence under the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention, as recommended by the Working Group in the Phase 4 report (recommendations 3a and 3b). These recommendations aim to address the Working Group's concerns about the courts' interpretation of the foreign bribery offence and, to a lesser extent, investigators' and prosecutors' understanding of the evidence required to prove the offence, in the foreign bribery cases that resulted in acquittals. The Working Group notes that Finland has taken an important number of initiatives aimed at implementing these recommendations. However, while acknowledging the complexity of the issue, and the need to protect the fundamental principle of judiciary independence, the Working Group regrets that Finland has not been able to provide sufficiently detailed and comprehensive information on the foreign bribery offence to the whole range of relevant practitioners, including judges.

The Working Group on Bribery stands ready to support the sharing of experiences between Finland and other member countries that have faced similar challenges.

Finland will report back to the OECD Working Group on Bribery in October 2021 on further efforts made to address these issues (enforcement efforts, and implementation of recommendations 3a and 3b), as well as on steps taken to implement the longstanding recommendation on amending legislation to provide clear, comprehensive protections for whistleblowers (recommendation 1b).

For further information, journalists are invited to contact [Daisy Pelham](#) of the OECD Anti-Corruption Division (+33 (0) 1 45 24 90 81) or the [OECD Media Division](#) (+33 (0)1 45 24 97 00).

For more information on the implementation of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention in Finland, please visit: <http://www.oecd.org/corruption/anti-bribery/finland-oecdanti-briberyconvention.htm>.

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