

The role and responsibilities of global institutions in tackling fraud and corruption

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Abstract

Corruption and fraud are global problems that occur every day around the world. Corruption and fraud are economic crimes that deprive governments of valuable resources and harm society as a whole. The global community recognizes that corruption and fraud can be effectively tackled through cooperation, common policies and a shared will to fight. International organisations have been set up to deal with the phenomenon and the fight against fraud. The purpose of this article is to present these organisations and to draw conclusions from their results. The research methodology is the literature review. Specifically, the websites of international organisations dealing with fraud and corruption are studied, as well as reputable articles from international scientific journals dealing with the functioning of these international organisations. Many international and national organizations combat corruption by setting standards, cooperating with judicial authorities, evaluating member states' progress, raising awareness, and collecting data. While they cannot prosecute officials directly, they provide reports to relevant authorities for action. Strong cooperation with prosecutors and judicial independence are crucial for effective anti-corruption efforts.

Article History

Received 23.12.2025

Accepted 09.04.2025

Keywords

Fraud; corruption; global institutions; FATF; United Nations

Introduction

International Transparency defines corruption as the abuse of trust for financial gain (Kimeu, 2014). Corruption and its consequences are a phenomenon that has serious social as well as economic consequences. Bribery and corruption in public procurement can lead to non-state infrastructure such as roads and unsafe products such as medicines. In addition, illegal funding of political parties and mass media can distort democracy (OECD, 2025). From all of the above, we can conclude the seriousness of tackling corruption as it affects our daily lives and the quality of our lives. The ways of money laundering are constantly evolving and therefore the authorities involved will have to adapt (Kontogeorgis, 2025e). A characteristic and current example is the laundering that takes place through cryptocurrencies (Kontogeorgis, 2025d).

The article consists of three sections. The Methodology section outlines the process of conducting the literature review. The Literature Review section focuses on international organizations working to combat corruption and the effectiveness of their activities. The

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Conclusion section underscores the importance of cooperation and independence in the effective fight against corruption and the other conclusions of the article.

Method

The research methodology involves a literature review. It will focus on examining the websites of international organizations that address fraud and corruption, as well as analyzing reputable articles from international scientific journals that discuss the operations of these organizations.

Literature Review

Global Institutions in Tackling Fraud and Corruption

Some well-known European and global bodies dealing with corruption issues are:



Figure 1. Number of well-known European institutions

The above figure shows that there are a number of institutions that deal with and study the phenomenon of corruption. In the context of this article, the mission of some of the most well-known international organisations dealing closely with corruption and fraud will be analysed.

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is one of the best known organisations dealing with corruption. In particular, its responsibilities are (FATF, 2025):

- Combating money laundering and illicit financing, including for terrorist purposes.

- The issue of standards for the coordination of efforts to combat organised crime. Its role is to assist national authorities in dealing with crimes such as drugs, human trafficking, weapons of mass destruction and financial crime.
- Monitoring the rate of adoption of standards by the organisation's member states.
- Identifying and compiling a list of high-risk procedures.

The core missions of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime are to create a world with less drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism. It is made up of 150 member states and each year trains officials to better control borders. Its activities include the publication of anti-corruption performance reports, anti-corruption publicity campaigns and the publication of relevant books and reports (United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes, 2025). Transparency International aims to reduce corruption in the more than 100 countries where it works. It does this through publicity campaigns, research projects and surveys of corruption levels (Transparency International, 2025).

The Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) was established in 1999 by the Council of Europe to oversee the compliance of states with the organization's anti-corruption standards (Council of Europe, 2025). GRECO's mission is to improve the capacity of member states to fight corruption. It does this by issuing anti-corruption standards to be implemented by member states and by regularly evaluating members on their adoption and implementation. It also organises anti-corruption events, provides a platform for the exchange of best practices and publishes anti-corruption performance reports. OECD has been involved in anti-corruption policies for over 40 years. Specifically, it regularly publishes anti-corruption reports and conducts anti-corruption campaigns highlighting the effects of corruption (OECD, 2025).

Emphasis will be placed on analyzing the mission of European organizations that have the mission of combating fraud and corruption. Specifically, European organizations that deal with fraud such as OLAF, European Public Prosecutor's Office, Europol and Eurojust are analyzed. OLAF's mission is to carry out independent investigations into corruption and fraud involving funds originating from the Member States of the European Union. It also investigates cases of abuse and corruption by European Union officials in order to protect the money of European citizens (OLAF, 2025). European Public Prosecutor's Office is an independent judicial body that investigates, prosecutes and brings to justice those who commit financial crimes against the interests of the European Union. Fraud and corruption include VAT and money laundering. (European Public Prosecutor's Office, 2025). Europol deals with issues of terrorism, organized crime, counterfeiting of euro banknotes, human trafficking, drugs and money laundering (Europol, 2025). The European Union Agency for Criminal Justice (Eurojust) is an instrument of the European Union's judiciary with the aim of coordinating judicial authorities and anti-fraud agencies in the European Union (Eurojust, 2025).

Results of the Activities of the Global Organisations

The main conclusion is that, despite the efforts of international anti-fraud organisations, the fight against fraud is an international phenomenon and countries need to make major efforts to combat corruption. In particular, they need to adopt procedures and policies such as legislative frameworks and cooperation in the exchange of information (Kimeu, 2014). Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda are countries with existing and functioning anti-corruption institutions,

but the results are not encouraging. The reason for the failure is that there is interference by members of parliament and the government in cases of corruption, and as a result justice is not done (Open Society Foundations, 2016). Often, economic crimes are also classified as economic crimes because the economic or social status of the perpetrators makes them unlikely to be prosecuted (Kontogeorgis, 2025b).

Some suggestions that could improve national organisations dealing with corruption are (Open Society Foundations, 2016):

- Strengthen the national anti-corruption framework to make it effective.
- Strengthening the anti-corruption institutes with vital issues such as independence, meritocratic staffing of its members, effective external audit of the institutes, adequate budget and autonomy.
- Strengthening the cooperation of institutes with other institutes and national or international governmental bodies for the effective exchange of information and best practices.
- Strengthen financial independence, sustainability and funding. The budget should be sufficient to meet the needs of the projects to be undertaken. A lack of budget will result in the Institute's objectives not being met.
- Strengthening the management, staff capacity and infrastructure of the organisation. Staffing with people from various disciplines such as law, information systems and sociology is essential. Moreover, forensic accountants are often needed to solve financial crimes because of their expertise (Kontogeorgis, 2025c). Tackling corruption requires multi-level knowledge. Finally, artificial intelligence and the use of internal audit in the organisations themselves could increase their effectiveness (Kontogeorgis, 2025a).

Successful implementation of the anti-corruption policy will be achieved by establishing offices of government agencies dealing with anti-corruption in localities with a branch office. Each branch according to research of transparency international to work effectively should have the following (Pope and Vogl, 2000):

- Political support from the headquarters of the organisation and from the national authorities where the branch is established.
- Political and operational independence needed to investigate senior government officials. Some agencies set up in Zambia or Tanzania have failed to assist in the fight against corruption because they were based in presidential offices and subject to political interference.
- Access to documents and the possibility to question witnesses.
- Leadership characterised by integrity and transparency.

Anti-corruption agencies should focus on public procurement, where high levels of corruption have been observed. In this area, Transparency International's survey of emerging markets found a corruption score of 1.5 for public works and 2 for public spending. The index was on a scale of 1-10, with 10 representing a complete absence of corruption (Pope and Vogl, 2000).

Conclusion

Several international and national organisations have been set up to combat corruption. The main purposes of these organisations are to issue anti-corruption standards, cooperate with judicial authorities, evaluate the adoption of standards by member states, conduct awareness-raising campaigns on the consequences of corruption and collect data on corruption cases. Anti-corruption organisations make an important contribution at national and global level to the fight against corruption. International organisations cannot prosecute presidents or other government officials in cases of corruption. However, it may submit its reports to the competent judicial authorities, which may take appropriate action (Pope and Vogl, 2000). It is important that anti-corruption agencies have direct access to and good cooperation with prosecutors. Good cooperation with the judicial authorities and the independence of the judiciary are essential for the effective functioning of anti-corruption agencies (Pope and Vogl, 2000).

Declarations

Competing interests: The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Publisher's note: Advanced Research Journal remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

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