

Transparency International EU

The global coalition against corruption

Skipping another semester on anti-corruption

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In 2014 the European Commission committed itself to take action against corruption by publishing the first EU Anti-Corruption report. However, only two years later the Commission scrapped the report in an exchange of letters between [Commissioner Frans Timmermans](#) and [the European Parliament](#).

The decision was a political one, as it can be seen from the [meeting note](#) of European Commission. The decision was criticized by [56 civil society organisations](#), including Transparency International EU, who called for the EU to live up to its commitments in the fight against corruption.

The European Commission said that their efforts would continue within the European Semester process. The recommendations that are made to member states however [speak a different language](#).

The [recommendations](#) do not show any additional ambition on anti-corruption, despite promises of taking the fight seriously. Corruption issues are only mentioned in recommendations for 7 out of 28 member states, namely Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Romania and Slovakia. The scope of anti-corruption recommendations also remains narrow.

As the current draft recommendations for 2018 show, the European Commission has again not live up to its promises on making anti-corruption a high priority issue. The European Semester process remains an inadequate replacement for the Anti-Corruption report. Transparency International EU has [identified multiple recommendations](#) on how to improve the credibility and effectiveness of European Semester as a vehicle for delivering anti-corruption reforms.

After another modest European Commission proposal, it remains to be seen how the final semester recommendations will address corruption after Council review. It is unlikely that member states will come up with a more ambitious anti-corruption agenda. The Commission must address the key challenges in making the European Semester a credible and effective tool in the fight against corruption across the EU.

European Semester country-specific recommendations 2018

Country	Corruption mentions	Anti-corruption recommendations
Austria	X	X
Belgium	X	X
Bulgaria	?	X
Croatia	?	X
Cyprus	?	X
Czech Republic	?	?
Denmark	X	X
Estonia	X	X
Finland	X	X
France	X	X
Germany	X	X
Hungary	?	?
Ireland	X	X
Italy	?	?
Latvia	?	?
Lithuania	?	X
Luxembourg	X	X
Malta	?	?
The Netherlands	X	X
Poland	X	X
Portugal	?	X
Romania	?	?
Slovakia	?	?
Slovenia	?	X
Spain	X	X
Sweden	X	X
United Kingdom	X	X

The detailed list of corruption mentions can be accessed [here](#).

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