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Thematic evaluation on IPA support to the fight against corruption

Abstract

The aim of the thematic evaluation is to generate comprehensive, updated knowledge about the performance of EU IPA I in the anti-corruption area in Turkey and the Western Balkans during 2007-2013 and improve the quality of the budget expenditures and policy dialogue under the IPA II framework 2014-2020.

While the situation and dynamics in the seven Western Balkan states and Turkey are quite different, IPA funding has supported important improvements in the institutional frameworks resulting in better laws, establishment of anti-corruption agencies and special prosecutor's offices, development of strategies, action plans for prevention and repression of corruption, addressing conflict of interest issues in public administration, etc. In some countries law enforcement systems are performing better by tackling more and more high-level corruption. The role of CSOs as "bureaucratic watchdog" is considered crucial.

The big challenge is genuine implementation and results. While corruption ratings have improved somewhat in some of the countries, as a whole they remain among those with the poorest ratings in Europe. EU Progress reports and other corruption monitoring reports over the period 2007-2014 do not indicate substantial progress. In most countries corruption is seen as deeply embedded in national and local politics. To fight corruption effectively the EU should do more at the political level. As long as this cornerstone is not adequately addressed, no significant progress is expected.

The evaluation includes recommendations for more attention to the prevention of corruption in the (semi-) private sector, for assisting anti-corruption bodies of national governments with the practical implementation of the anti-corruption strategies and policies they have developed, and building-in of the maximum amount of flexibility allowed in programming documents.