

THE ANTI-BRIBERY AND ANTI-CORRUPTION REVIEW - 9TH EDITION: RUSSIA CHAPTER

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Legal Briefings - By **Alexei Panich and Sergei Eremin**

Although Russia was ranked 137 out of 198 countries on Transparency International's 2019 Corruption Perceptions Index, sharing the spot with such countries as Mexico, Papua New Guinea and Paraguay, in its Third Round Evaluation Report published on 21 November 2016, the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) considered Russian anti-corruption law to be fairly robust, as anti-bribery legislation has undergone significant development over the past years and continues to improve. However, levels of corruption and financial abuse remain abnormally high. GRECO in its fourth evaluation report acknowledged that 'there are a number of strong safeguards already in place, but, at the same time, some critical issues need urgent attention'.

Russia is a member of all the main international organisations and conventions on countering corruption and makes efforts to implement all recommendations and comply with international standards. For instance, significant amendments are being introduced into national legislation aimed at combating bribery and corruption. The Supreme Court (the highest criminal justice body in Russia) redrafted its binding commentary on public and commercial bribery. Even the president and other state officials stipulate that combating corruption is the core goal of the government in the coming years: in June 2018 President Putin approved a National Plan to Counter Corruption for 2018-2020, providing a list of measures aimed at further improving the institutional framework for countering corruption in Russian subjects.

However, actual enforcement levels do not indicate a strong trend of the government cracking down on corruption. Separately, information on particular criminal cases is only available to a limited extent. Unlike the rulings of arbitrazh courts, which consider commercial disputes, the rulings of general jurisdiction courts dealing with criminal proceedings are not generally available on legal databases, which makes researching this topic somewhat more difficult.

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