



Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption

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Implementation Review Group

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Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

Review of implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption

Progress report on the implementation of the mandates of the Implementation Review Group

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present document contains updated information^a on the conduct of country reviews during the first and second review cycles of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and on activities of the Implementation Review Group in the context of its function of overseeing the review process and submitting policy recommendations to the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption for its consideration and approval.

^a The present document provides an update to the information contained in documents [CAC/COSP/IRG/2014/4](#) and [CAC/COSP/IRG/2016/2](#) and conference room paper [CAC/COSP/IRG/2015/CRP.15](#).

* [CAC/COSP/IRG/2017/1](#).



I. Organization and conduct of country reviews during the first review cycle and the first year of the second review cycle

A. Statistical overview

1. The following statistical information provides an overview of the progress achieved in the conduct of the country reviews during the first cycle and the first year of the second cycle of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

2. During the first cycle, reviews of 179 States parties were to take place. At the time of writing the present report, 173 responses to the self-assessment checklist had been received and 166 direct dialogues (152 country visits and 12 joint meetings) had been held. Furthermore, 152 executive summaries and 123 country review reports had been completed and 70 States parties had made their country review report available on the website of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

3. During the first year of the second cycle, 29 States parties were to be reviewed. At the time of writing the present report, 19 responses to the self-assessment checklist had been received and five country visits had been held.

B. Drawing of lots

4. In accordance with paragraph 14 of the terms of reference of the Implementation Review Mechanism, the selection of States parties participating in the review process in a given year of a review cycle is carried out by the drawing of lots at the beginning of each cycle. Paragraph 19 of the terms of reference provides that the selection of the reviewing States parties shall be carried out by the drawing of lots at the beginning of each year of the cycle, with the understanding that States parties shall not undertake mutual reviews.

First review cycle

5. In accordance with those provisions, the reviewing States parties for the fourth year of the first cycle of the Mechanism were selected through a drawing of lots held at the fourth session of the Implementation Review Group. Sixty-two country reviews began on 1 July 2013, and further drawings of lots were held to select the reviewing States parties for the States parties that had ratified or acceded to the Convention thereafter. Those additional drawings of lots took place at the resumed fourth, fifth, resumed fifth, sixth, resumed sixth, seventh and resumed seventh sessions of the Group. Fourteen additional States are under review in the fourth year; the review of one of those States (Belize) will start following the eighth session of the Group.¹

Second review cycle

6. In its resolution 6/1, the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption requested the Implementation Review Group to proceed, at the beginning of its seventh session, to the selection of reviewed and reviewing States parties for the second review cycle by the drawing of lots in accordance with paragraphs 14 and 19 of the terms of reference of the Mechanism. The Conference also requested the Group to hold intersessional meetings open to all States parties for the purpose of the drawing of lots in accordance with paragraph 19 of the terms of reference of the Mechanism and without prejudice to the right of a

¹ Other States may become party to the Convention by the time of the eighth session.

State party to request that the drawing of lots be repeated at the Group's subsequent intersessional meeting or regular session.

7. Accordingly, the reviewing States parties for the first year of the second cycle of the Mechanism were selected through a drawing of lots held at an intersessional meeting of the Implementation Review Group. Twenty-nine country reviews began on 4 July 2016, and redraws were carried out at the request of States parties under review at the resumed seventh session of the Group.

C. Schedule and conduct of country reviews

8. In its resolution 4/1, the Conference of the States Parties endorsed the guidelines for governmental experts and the secretariat in the conduct of country reviews, which had been finalized by the Implementation Review Group. The guidelines set out indicative timelines for country reviews in order to ensure the consistency and efficiency of the review process. The purpose of the present section is to provide updated information on the schedule of country reviews conducted from the first to the fourth years of the first cycle of the Implementation Review Mechanism.

9. There were 27 country reviews in the first year, 41 in the second year and 35 in the third year. In the fourth year, 76 States parties were under review; as mentioned above, the review of one of those States parties will begin following the drawing of lots at the eighth session of the Implementation Review Group.

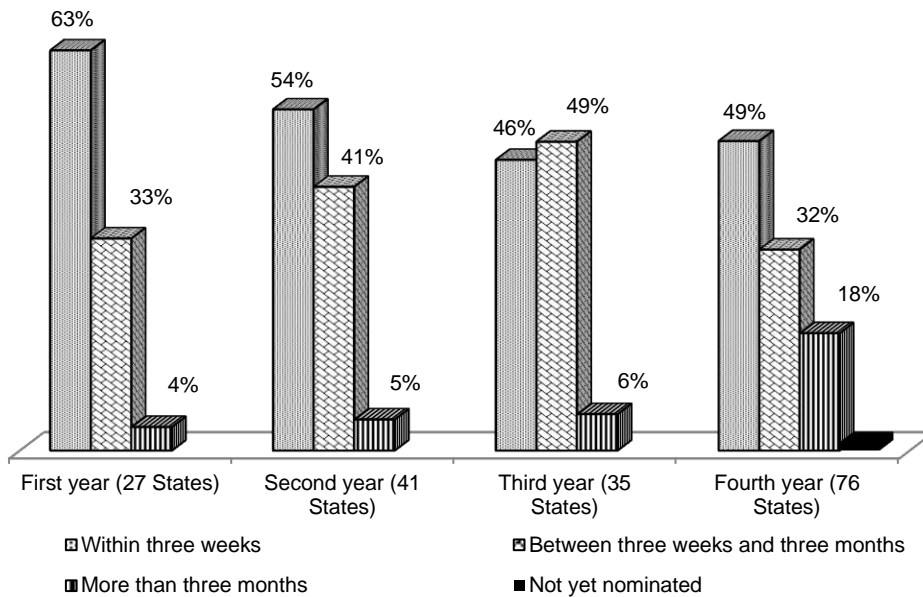
Appointment of a focal point to coordinate the participation of a State party under review

First review cycle

10. In accordance with paragraph 17 of the terms of reference and paragraph 13 of the guidelines, a State party under review should appoint a focal point, to coordinate its participation in the review, within three weeks of officially being informed of the beginning of the conduct of the country review, and should inform the secretariat accordingly. Most States that have recently become party to the Convention nominated their focal points between three weeks and three months after being officially informed of the start of the review. However, late nominations of focal points have caused considerable delays in country reviews in the past. In its resolution 4/1, the Conference urged States parties under review to ensure the timely nomination of their focal points in accordance with the guidelines.

11. At the time of writing, one State under review in the fourth year had not yet officially nominated its focal point (see figure I), and several States parties had changed their focal points during the course of the review. Some States whose reviews had recently started or were about to begin nominated their focal points prior to the start of the review, which allowed for more preparation time for the review.

Figure I
First review cycle: time taken to nominate focal points

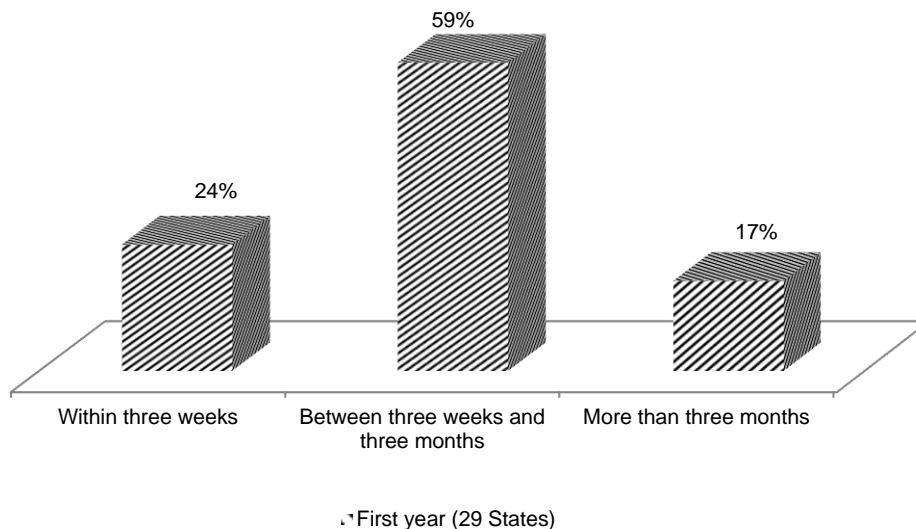


Second review cycle

12. Most States nominated their focal points within three months after being officially informed of the start of the review. However, late nominations of focal points have caused considerable delays in country reviews (see figure II).

13. It is worth noting that, while the reviews of the 49 States parties under review in the second year of the second cycle had not yet started at the time of writing the present report, 27 of those States had already officially nominated their focal point, which is likely due to the offer of an early training course targeting focal points of States parties under review in the second year of the second cycle, to be held in Moscow from 25 to 27 April 2017. The early nomination of the focal point is commended, in particular with a view to the preparation of the review and the drafting of the responses to the self-assessment checklist.

Figure II
First year of the second review cycle: time taken to nominate focal points



Communication of contact details of governmental experts by reviewing States parties and organization of the initial teleconference

First review cycle

14. Paragraph 16 of the guidelines provides that a telephone conference or videoconference should be held within one month of the State party under review officially being informed of the beginning of the conduct of the country review. The teleconference involves the State party under review, the reviewing States parties and the secretariat staff assigned to the country review. With a view to organizing the initial teleconference, the secretariat requests reviewing States parties to designate contact persons among their governmental experts and to communicate the contact details of those persons to it.

15. In most reviews, the organization of the initial teleconference continues to suffer delays as a result of, *inter alia*, the late communication of the contact details of governmental experts or changes in reviewing experts after the beginning of the review. In some cases, the teleconference has been delayed because of redraws of reviewing States parties. Where feasible, the secretariat continues to arrange introductions on the margins of the sessions of the Implementation Review Group and the Conference of the States Parties. In some reviews where time differences between the States did not enable direct contact, the teleconferences were replaced by an exchange of e-mails.

Second review cycle

16. At the time of writing, 23 first teleconferences had taken place for the 29 reviews being carried out in the first year of the second cycle. However, several reviewing States had not yet designated their reviewing experts, thus delaying the organization of the first teleconference.

Self-assessment

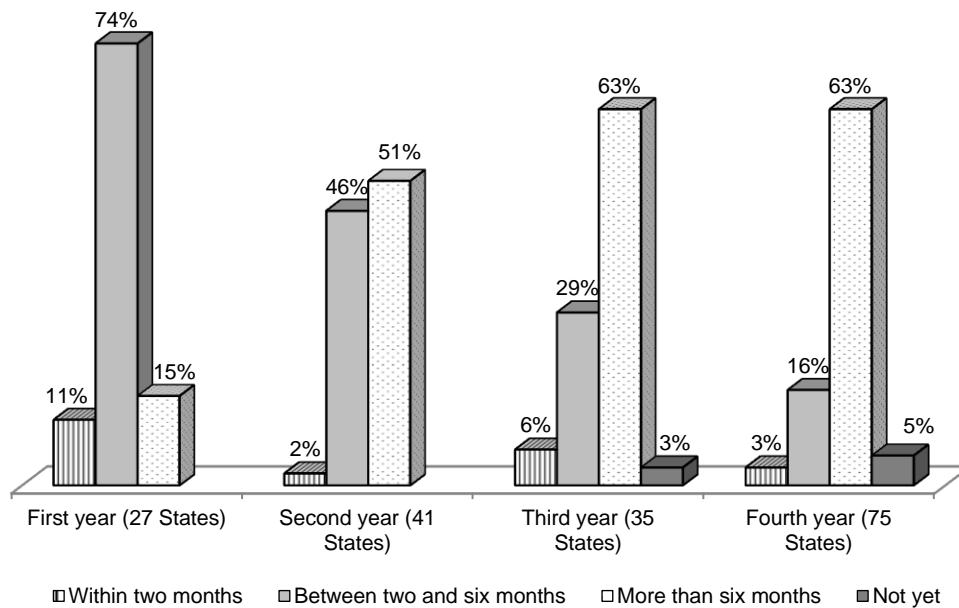
17. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the guidelines, the State party under review is to provide the secretariat with its response to the comprehensive self-assessment checklist within two months of being officially informed of the beginning of the conduct of the review.

First review cycle

18. All responses to the self-assessment checklist for the reviews initiated in the first and second year of the first review cycle have been received (see figure III for an overview of the time taken to submit the responses). For the 35 reviews initiated in the third year of the cycle, one response to the self-assessment checklist was pending at the time of writing the present report, and four responses were pending for the reviews taking place in the fourth year of the cycle (excluding the State party whose review will start after the drawing of lots on the margins of the eighth session of the Implementation Review Group).

19. Upon request, UNODC provides assistance in the completion of the self-assessment checklist, including through its anti-corruption advisers and its field office network. Partner organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank also provide such assistance. Several States parties decided to avail themselves of that assistance in order to complete their responses and, in accordance with paragraph 16 of the terms of reference, UNODC provided training and organized workshops to assist States parties in finalizing their responses.

Figure III
First review cycle: time taken to submit self-assessment checklist



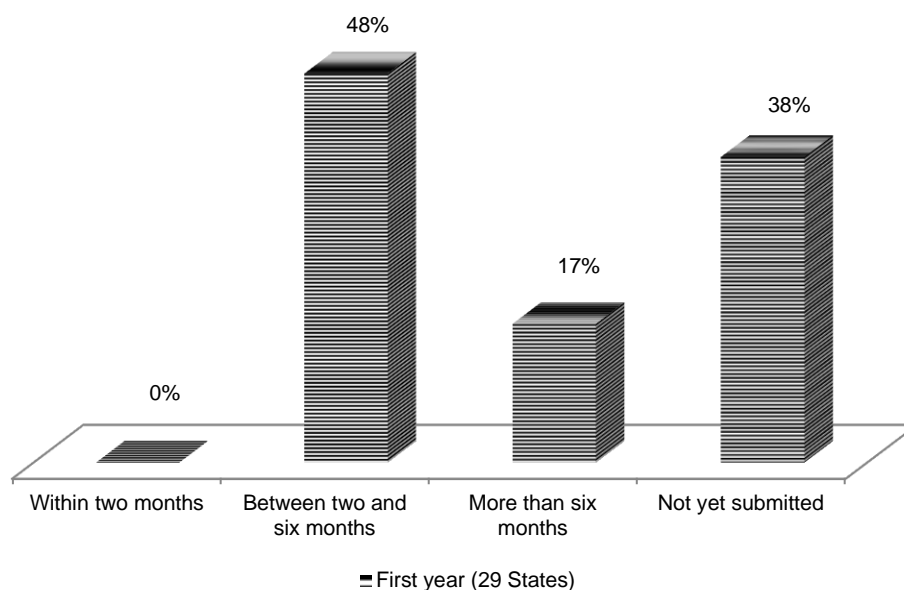
Note: With regard to States parties under review during the fourth year of the first cycle, the higher percentage of States parties that submitted their responses to the self-assessment checklist more than six months after being officially informed of the review is partially a result of the fact that substantive work on some reviews started in the second half of the review year (i.e., in 2014 instead of in 2013), for instance in the case of new States parties.

20. Several States informed the secretariat of consultations with national stakeholders and the publication of responses to the comprehensive self-assessment checklist, while others had circulated their responses to relevant stakeholders and/or posted the responses on national websites for comment.

Second review cycle

21. Out of 29 States parties under review, at the time of writing, only 19 had submitted their responses to the self-assessment checklist (see figure IV for an overview of the time taken to submit the responses). No State party under review had submitted its response to the self-assessment checklist within the two-month time frame foreseen by the guidelines for governmental experts and the secretariat in the conduct of country reviews.

Figure IV
First year of the second review cycle: time taken to submit self-assessment checklist



Desk review

First review cycle

22. In accordance with paragraph 21 of the guidelines, governmental experts should submit to the secretariat the outcome of the desk review within one month of the receipt of the response to the comprehensive self-assessment checklist and any supplementary information provided by the State party under review. At the time of writing, a small number of desk reviews of the responses to the self-assessments for the fourth year were pending as a result, inter alia, of the late submission of information and translation difficulties.

Second review cycle

23. At the time of writing, a significant number of desk reviews of the responses to the self-assessment checklist were pending as a result, inter alia, of the late submission of the responses.

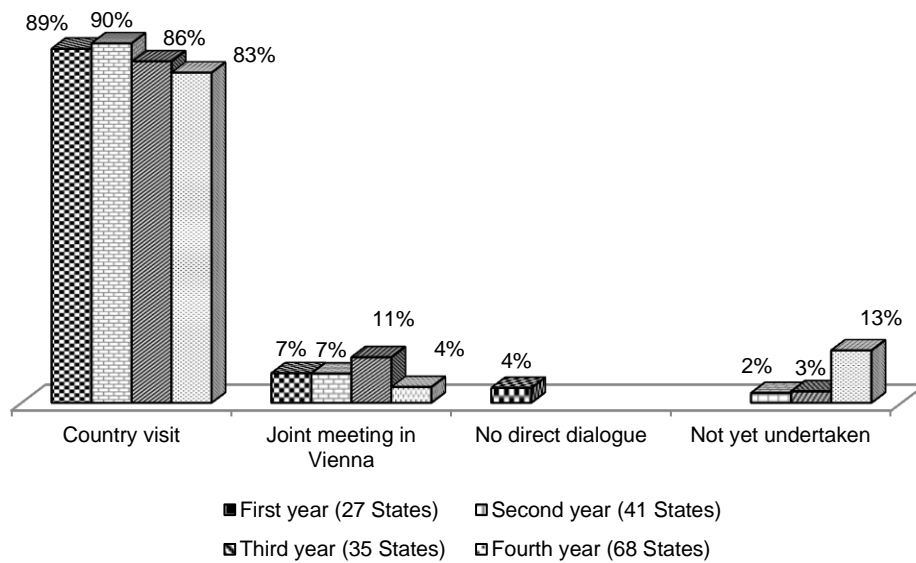
Further means of direct dialogue

24. Pursuant to paragraph 24 of the guidelines and paragraph 29 of the terms of reference, if requested by the State party under review, the desk review should be complemented by any further means of direct dialogue, such as a country visit or a joint meeting at the United Nations Office at Vienna.

First review cycle

25. Out of 179 countries under review, 166 countries have already availed themselves of further means of direct dialogue in the form of either a country visit or a joint meeting. For the 27 States parties under review in the first year, 24 country visits and two joint meetings took place. For the 41 States parties under review in the second year, 37 country visits and three joint meetings took place. For the 35 States parties under review in the third year, 30 country visits and four joint meetings took place. For States under review in the fourth year, 63 country visits and three joint meetings took place (see figure V). Several other States had agreed to further means of dialogue, which were in various stages of planning, and in other reviews, no decision had been taken yet. Only one State party, thus far, has opted to complete its country review without a joint meeting or country visit.

Figure V
First review cycle: further means of direct dialogue between countries undertaken as part of a country review



Second review cycle

26. Out of 29 countries under review, at the time of writing, 5 had hosted a country visit as a further means of direct dialogue, with the first country visit taking place in January 2017. A large number of country visits and some joint meetings are scheduled to take place between the time of writing and the eighth session of the Implementation Review Group.

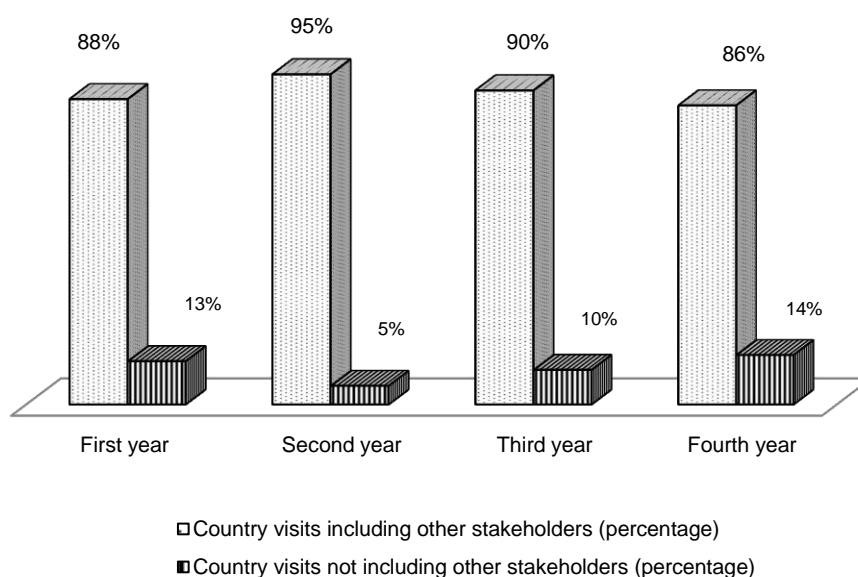
Preparation of the agenda for further means of direct dialogue

27. In accordance with paragraph 24 of the guidelines, the country visit is planned and organized by the State party under review. Focal points draft the agenda and submit it to the reviewers and the secretariat prior to the visit.

First review cycle

28. Out of all the country visits conducted, 88 per cent included sessions with other stakeholders (see figure VI), in accordance with paragraph 30 of the terms of reference. In some cases, those sessions were organized in the form of panels that included representatives of civil society, the private sector, academia, trade associations and other national stakeholders. In other cases, States included national stakeholders such as representatives of academia, civil society and the private sector in the committees set up to coordinate and oversee the review process.

Figure VI
First review cycle: engagement with stakeholders during country visits, by review year



Note: These data have been updated to reflect additional information received concerning country visits that took place throughout the first review cycle. Therefore, the percentage of country visits including other stakeholders is higher than previously reported.

Second review cycle

29. All five country visits conducted at the time of writing included sessions with other stakeholders in accordance with paragraph 30 of the terms of reference.

Outcome of the country review process and publication of the country review report

30. Pursuant to paragraph 33 of the terms of reference and paragraph 30 of the guidelines, the reviewing governmental experts are to prepare a country review report and an executive summary of that report, in close cooperation and coordination with the State party under review and assisted by the secretariat. Successes, good practices and challenges should be identified in the report, and it should contain observations on the implementation of the Convention. Where appropriate, technical assistance needs for the purpose of improving the implementation of the Convention should also be identified in the report.

First review cycle

31. A total of 152 executive summaries and 123 country reports had been completed at the time of writing the present report: of those, 27 executive summaries had been completed and made available to the Implementation Review Group for the reviews in the first year. For reviews in the second year, 38 executive summaries had been completed and made available to the Group and 1 was in the final stages of completion. For the third year, 32 executive summaries had been completed and made available to the Group and 1 was in the final stages of completion. For the fourth year, 55 executive summaries had been completed and made available and several more were being finalized. In several cases, agreement had been reached on the findings contained in the draft executive summary before the full country review report was finalized, and many States parties indicated that this had facilitated reaching an agreement on the full country review report.

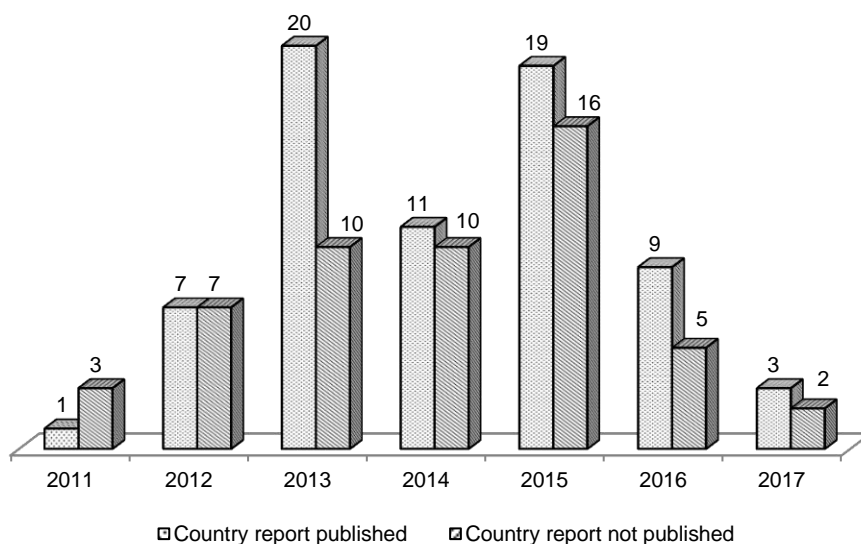
32. The executive summaries of the country review reports are placed online, both as part of the documentation of the Implementation Review Group and

on the country profile page (www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CAC/country-profile/index.html).

33. At the time of writing, 70 States parties had requested publication of the full country review reports on the UNODC website (see figure VII for a breakdown of the reports by year of completion, taking into account only the completed country review reports).

Figure VII

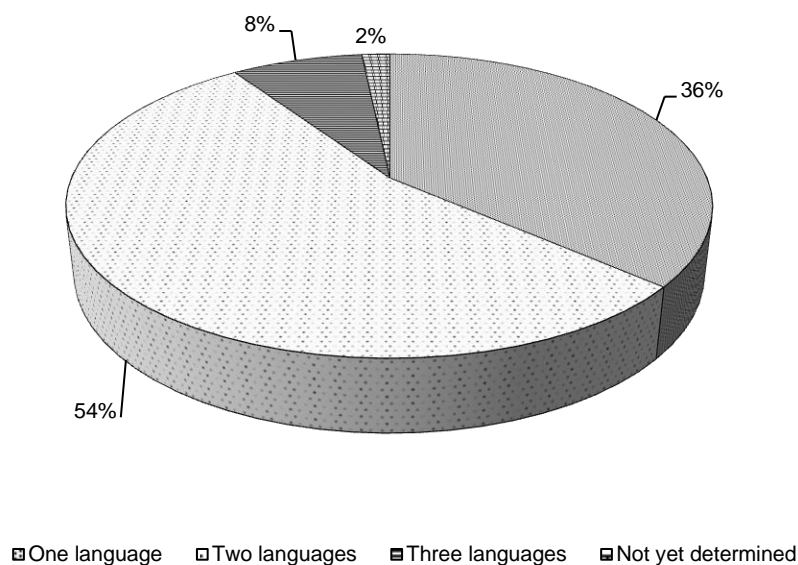
First review cycle: publication of full country review reports, by year of completion



34. The length of the country review reports, depending on the language and number of annexes, ranged from approximately 100 pages to over 500 pages.² While in some cases governmental experts agreed to conduct the review in a language other than their preferred one, most reviews were conducted in more than one official language of the United Nations: out of 179 reviews, 65 reviews were carried out in one official language, 97 reviews were carried out in two official languages and 14 reviews were carried out in three official languages. In three cases, the decision on the language or languages to be used in the review was yet to be taken (see figure VIII).

² Details on the costs of translation are available in [CAC/COSP/IRG/2016/3](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CAC/COSP/IRG/2016/3).

Figure VIII
First review cycle: number of official languages of the United Nations used per country review

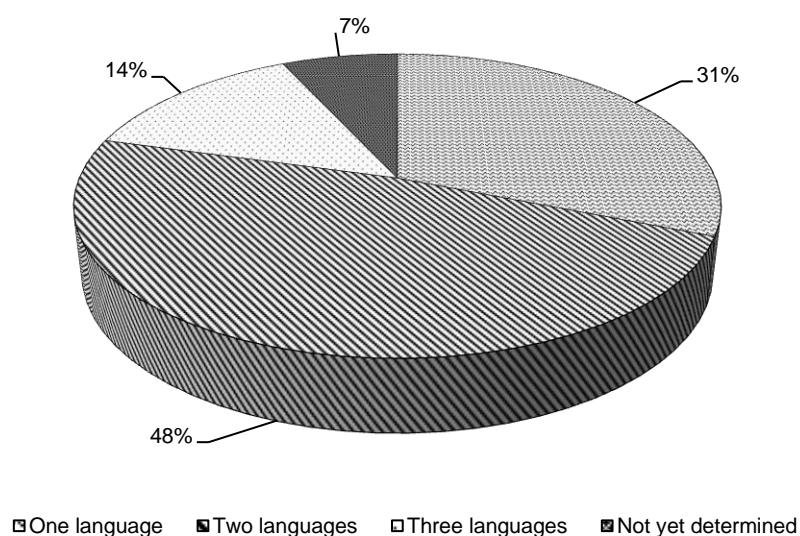


Second review cycle

35. In the first year of the second review cycle, 9 reviews were being carried out in one official language of the United Nations, 14 reviews were being carried out in two official languages, 4 reviews were being carried out in three official languages, and for 2 reviews, the decision on the language of the review was still pending (see figure IX).

36. At the time of writing, no executive summary or country review reports had been concluded, partially due to the delays incurred in the submission of the self-assessment checklist and the organization of the country visits.

Figure IX
First year of the second review cycle: number of official languages of the United Nations used per country review



D. Training courses for focal points and governmental experts participating in the Implementation Review Mechanism

37. In accordance with paragraph 32 of the terms of reference of the Mechanism, and paragraph 11 of the guidelines for governmental experts and the secretariat in the conduct of country reviews, the secretariat organizes periodic training courses for focal points and governmental experts participating in the reviews. The training courses are aimed at familiarizing the focal points and experts with the guidelines in order to increase their capacity to participate in the review process.

First review cycle

38. To date, over 1,700 experts have been trained within the framework of the first review cycle, thus contributing to the creation of a global community of anti-corruption experts. National training courses and ad hoc assistance were provided to over 40 countries, and since June 2013, seven regional training courses have been organized.

Second review cycle

39. At the time of writing, four regional training sessions and two global training sessions had been organized for the second review cycle. In particular, training sessions were being organized back to back with sessions of the Implementation Review Group to save costs for both the States parties under review and the secretariat. In addition, eight countries had received support in piloting the revised self-assessment checklist, and targeted assistance was available to States parties under review in support of their reviews.

40. At the time of writing, over 200 focal points and experts had participated in the regional and global training sessions.

41. With a view to the anticipated nominations of focal points for the second year of the second review cycle, two additional global training courses for focal points were being organized at the time of writing the present report: one was to be held in Moscow from 25 to 27 April 2017, and one in Vienna from 14 to 16 June 2017, the latter to be held back to back with the eighth session of the Implementation Review Group. It was anticipated that, through those courses, approximately 50 per cent of the focal points of States parties under review in the second year of the second review cycle would have received training prior to the start of their review.