



**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 review cycle 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 Convention for its consideration and approval.

^a The present document provides an update to the information contained in document CAC/COSP/IRG/2014/4 and conference room paper CAC/COSP/IRG/2015/CRP.15.

* CAC/COSP/IRG/2016/1.



I. Organization and conduct of country reviews from the first to fourth years of the first review cycle

A. Statistical overview

1. The following statistical information provides an overview of the progress achieved in the conduct of the country reviews from the first to fourth years of the first cycle of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. During the first cycle, reviews of 177 States parties were to take place. As at the time of writing the present report, 165 responses to the self-assessment checklist had been received and 152 direct dialogues (140 country visits and 12 joint meetings) had been held. Furthermore, 125 executive summaries and 113 country review reports had been completed and 57 States parties had made their country review report available on the website of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

B. Drawing of lots

2. 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.

3. In accordance with these 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 and resumed sixth sessions of the Group. Twelve additional States are under review in the fourth year; the review of one of those States (New Zealand) will start following the seventh session of the Group.¹

C. Schedule and conduct of country reviews

4. In its resolution 4/1, the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption 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 subsection is to provide updated information on

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

the schedule of country reviews conducted from the first to fourth years of the first cycle of the Implementation Review Mechanism.

5. There were 27 country reviews in the first year, 41 in the second year and 35 in the third year. In the fourth year, 74 States parties are under review; the review of one of those States parties will begin following the drawing of lots at the seventh session of the Implementation Review Group.

Initial steps of country reviews

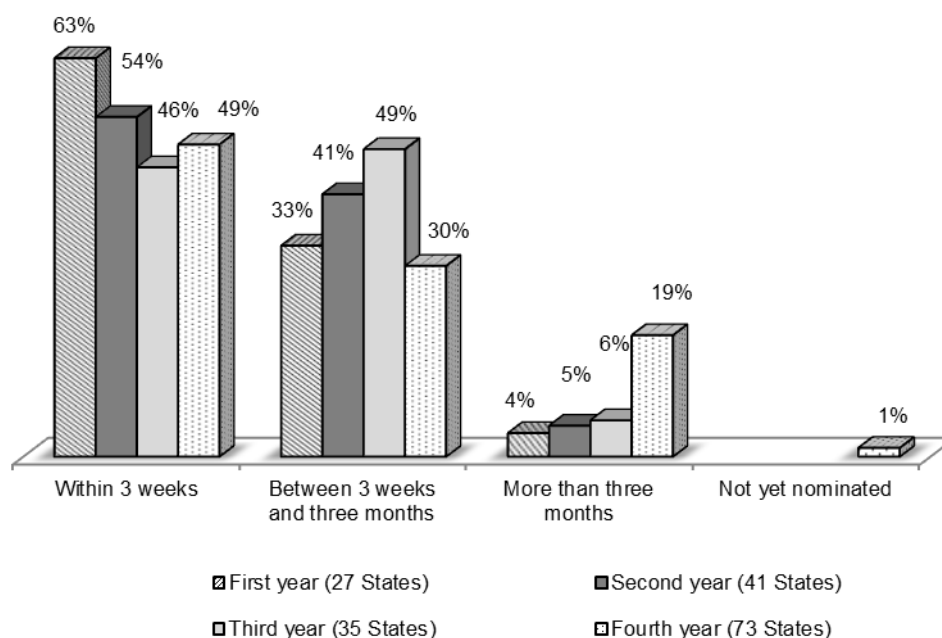
Appointment of a focal point to coordinate the participation of a State party under review

6. 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.

7. At the time of writing, one State under review in the fourth year had not yet nominated its focal point (see figure I, which excludes the State whose review will start after the seventh session of the Implementation Review Group), and several States parties had changed their focal points during the course of the review.

Figure I

Time taken to nominate focal points



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

8. 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.

9. 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.

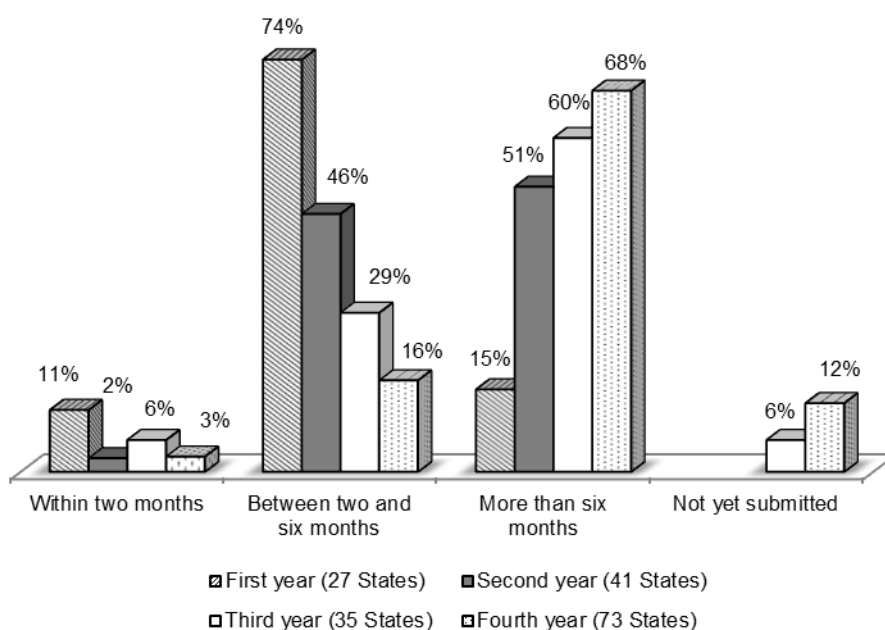
Self-assessment

10. 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 (see figure II for an overview of the time taken to submit the responses).

11. 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. For the 35 reviews initiated in the third year of the cycle, 2 responses to the self-assessment checklist were pending at the time of writing the present report, and 10 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 at the seventh session of the Implementation Review Group).

12. 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 II
Time taken to submit self-assessment checklist



Note: With regard to States parties under review during the fourth year, 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 year, for instance in the case of new States parties.

13. With regard to consultations with national stakeholders and the publication of responses to the comprehensive self-assessment checklist, several States parties under review in the first to fourth years informed the secretariat of such consultations. Several more had circulated their responses to relevant stakeholders and/or posted the responses on national websites for comment.

Desk review

14. 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.

Further means of direct dialogue

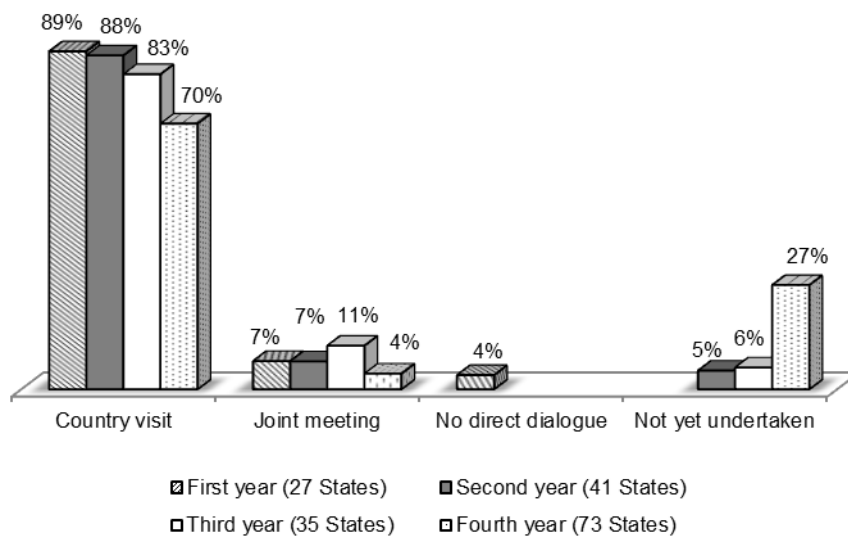
15. Pursuant to paragraph 24 of the guidelines and paragraph 29 of the terms of reference, if requested by the State party under review, the desk review should be

complemented by any further means of direct dialogue, such as a country visit or a joint meeting at the United Nations Office at Vienna.

16. Out of 177 countries under review, 152 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, 36 country visits and three joint meetings took place. For the 35 States parties under review in the third year, 29 country visits and four joint meetings took place. For States under review in the fourth year, 51 country visits and three joint meetings took place (see figure III). Several other States had agreed to further means of dialogue, which were in various stages of planning. Only one State party, thus far, has opted to complete its country review without a joint meeting or country visit.

Figure III

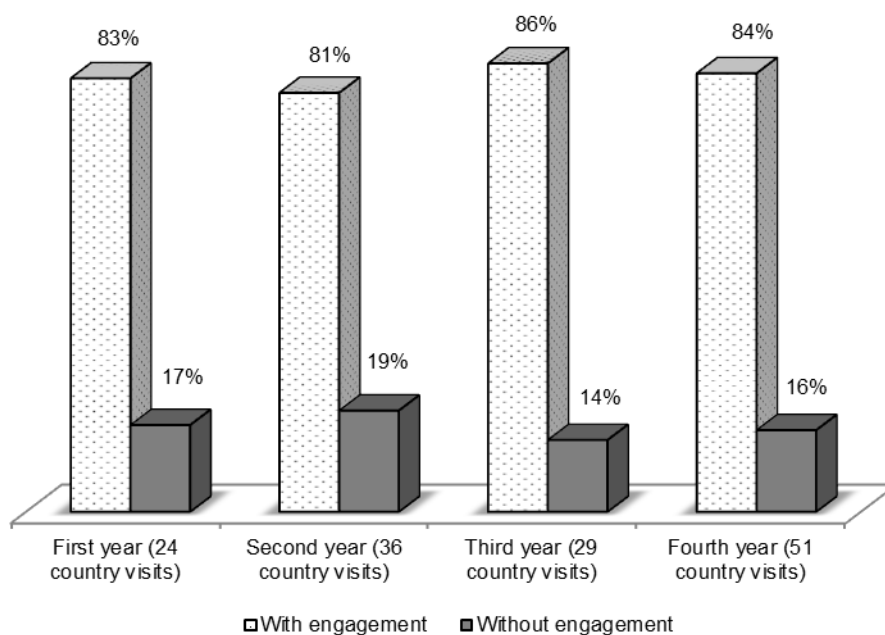
Further means of direct dialogue between countries undertaken as part of a country review



17. 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.

18. Out of all the country visits conducted, 84 per cent included sessions with other stakeholders (see figure IV), 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 IV
Engagement with stakeholders during country visits



Outcome of the country review process

19. 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.

20. A total of 125 executive summaries and 113 country reports had been completed at the time of writing the present report: of those, 26 executive summaries had been completed and made available to the Implementation Review Group for the reviews in the first year and the remaining one was being finalized. For reviews in the second year, 35 executive summaries had been completed and made available to the Group, and 1 was in the final stages of completion. For the third year, 26 executive summaries had been completed and made available to the Group and 3 were in the final stages of completion. For the fourth year, 38 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. In many cases, States parties indicated that reaching an agreement on the executive summary first had facilitated reaching an agreement on the full country review report.

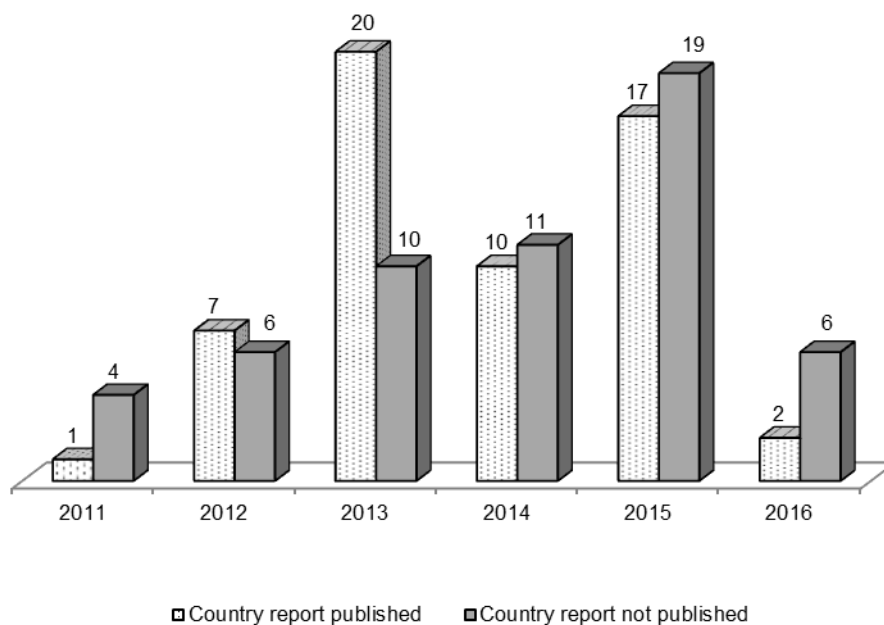
21. The executive summaries of the country review reports are placed online, both as part of the documentation of the Implementation Review Group and on the country profile page (www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CAC/country-profile/index.html).

Publication of the country review report

22. At the time of writing, 57 States parties had requested publication of the full country review reports on the UNODC website (see figure V for a breakdown of the reports by year of completion, taking into account only the completed country review reports).

Figure V

Publication of full country review reports, by year of completion



23. 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 177 reviews, 62 reviews were carried out in one official language, 96 reviews were carried out in two official languages and 14 reviews were carried out in three official languages. In five cases, the decision on the language or languages to be used in the review was yet to be taken (see figure VI).

² Details on the costs of translation are available in CAC/COSP/IRG/2016/3.

Figure VI
Number of official languages of the United Nations used per country review

