

2026 Rule of Law Report - targeted stakeholder consultation

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

The annual Rule of Law Report lies at the centre of the Annual Rule of Law Cycle, which acts as a preventive tool, deepening multilateral dialogue and joint awareness of rule of law issues. So far, six editions of the Rule of Law Report have been published since 2020.

As every year, the Commission would like to invite the stakeholders to provide contributions to the 2026 Rule of Law Report. On the basis of these contributions and on-going developments, further targeted questions may be shared at a later stage of preparation of the 2026 Rule of Law Report, in particular in the context of country visits, or bilateral contacts.

The Commission invites stakeholders to provide contributions which include:

- (1) developments and measures taken in relation to the recommendations in the 2025 report,**
- (2) developments related to topics covered in the 2025 country chapters, as well as any other new developments related to the rule of law.**

The input should consist of a short summary, if possible in English, covering the areas referred to below. Legislation or other documents may be referenced with a link. Contributions should focus on significant developments since the last Rule of Law Report both as regards the legal framework and its implementation in practice.

This questionnaire also integrates the separate questionnaire on the single market from last year. In addition to these specific questions, respondents to the questionnaire are invited to consider the Single Market dimension, including any relevant cross-border issues, in all their answers.

Where questions of particular relevance under the single market dimension, this is indicated before the relevant question.

[1] Unless the information was already submitted in the input for the previous Rule of Law Reports.

Type of information to be included:

Under each of the four pillars, the replies should include references to the following types of information:

A) Legislative developments

- Newly adopted legislation
- legislative drafts currently discussed in Parliament
- legislative plans envisaged by the Government

B) Policy developments

- Implementation and enforcement of legislation
- evaluations, impact assessment, surveys
- white papers/strategies/actions plans/consultation processes
- follow-up to reports/recommendations of Council of Europe bodies or other international organisations
- important administrative measures
- generalised practices

C) Developments related to the judiciary / independent authorities

- important case law by national courts
- important decision/opinions from independent bodies/authorities
- state of play on terms, nominations and expired mandates for high-level positions (e.g. Supreme Court, Constitutional Court, Council for the Judiciary, Prosecutor General, heads of independent authorities included in the scope of the request for input[2])

D) Any other relevant developments

- National authorities are free to add any further information, which they deem relevant; however, this should be short and to the point.

Where relevant, please also indicate whether the developments reported are linked to the implementation of reforms and investments under the national Recovery Resilience Plan. To simplify your answers to the questionnaire, if there are no developments, it is sufficient to indicate this and the information covered in the contributions for the previous Rule of Law Reports does not need not be repeated.

[2] Such as: media regulatory authorities and bodies, national human rights institutions, equality bodies, ombudsman institutions, supreme audit institutions and, where they exist, transparency authorities.

* I am giving my contribution as

- ☐ Academic/research institution
- ☐ Business association
- ☐ Civil society organisation/NGO
- ☐ International organisation
- ☒ Judicial association or network
- ☐ Media organisation or association
- ☐ Public authority or network of public authorities
- ☐ Other

* Organisation name

250 character(s) maximum

AMJE Asociación de Mujeres Juezas de España

Main Areas of Work

- ☒ Justice System
- ☐ Anti-corruption
- ☐ Media Pluralism and Freedom
- ☐ Checks and Balances
- ☒ Other

If "Other", please specify

Gender and Equality

Please insert an URL towards your organisation's main online presence or describe your organisation briefly:

500 character(s) maximum

Transparency register number

Check if your organisation is in the transparency register. It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making

* Country of origin

Please indicate the country of origin of your organisation

- ☐ Austria
- ☐ Belgium
- ☐ Bulgaria
- ☐ Croatia
- ☐ Cyprus
- ☐ Czechia
- ☐ Denmark
- ☐ Estonia
- ☐ Finland
- ☐ France
- ☐ Germany
- ☐ Greece
- ☐ Hungary
- ☐ Ireland
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Latvia
- ☐ Lithuania
- ☐ Luxembourg
- ☐ Malta
- ☐ Netherlands
- ☐ Poland
- ☐ Portugal
- ☐ Romania
- ☐ Slovak Republic
- ☐ Slovenia
- ☒ Spain
- ☐ Sweden
- ☐ Other - please specify

First name

Marta Altea

Surname

Diaz Galindo

Email Address of the organisation

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* Publication of your contribution and privacy settings

You can choose whether you wish for your contribution to be published and whether you wish your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

- ☐ Anonymous - Only your type of respondent, country of origin and contribution will be published. Organisation name, URL, transparency register number, first name and surname given above will not be published. **To maintain anonymity, please refrain from mentioning the name of your organisation and any details from which your organisation can be identified in the rest of your contribution as we will not be able to guarantee anonymisation of these elements.**
- ☒ Public - Your personal details (name, organisation name, transparency register number, country of origin will be published with your contribution).
- ☐ No publication - Your contribution will not be published. Elements of your contribution may be referred to anonymously in documents produced by the Commission based on this consultation.

☒ I agree with the personal data protection provisions.

[Specific privacy statement targeted stakeholder consultation 2026 rule of law report.pdf](#)

Questions on horizontal developments

In this section, you are invited to provide information on general horizontal developments or trends, both positive and negative, covering all or several Member States. In particular, you could mention issues that are common to several Member States, as well as best practices identified in one Member State that could be replicated. Moreover, you could refer to your activities in the area of the four pillars and sub-topics (an overview of all sub-topics can be found below), and, if you represent a Network of national organisations, to the support you might have provided to one of your national members.

Overview topics for contribution

[List of topics for contribution.docx](#)

Please provide any relevant information on horizontal developments here

5000 character(s) maximum

The function falls to the General Council of the Judiciary (CGPJ). However, its democratic and functional legitimacy is called into question when its appointment decisions do not reflect the actual composition of the judicial career (where 58.2% are women). International standards demand that these councils operate with objective criteria and representativeness. Evidence suggests that the lack of effective controls over the results of discretionary appointments allows for the persistence of structural biases and risks of capture, moving away from a plural and balanced composition.

Although numerous States have managed to protect judicial appointment systems from direct political interference, experience demonstrates that formal independence does not, by itself, guarantee effective independence.

Comparative experience demonstrates that formal judicial independence, understood as the absence of direct political interference, is a necessary but insufficient condition. Formally independent judicial systems can reproduce internal dynamics that condition, de facto, professional autonomy and decisional plurality.

In many legal systems, judicial councils play a central role in appointments. Their legitimacy depends not only on their protection from political pressures but also on their representativeness, transparency, and public accountability.

Despite the majority feminization of the judicial career, the presence of women in bodies and positions whose access depends directly or indirectly on the CGPJ remains systematically below 30%, and in some cases below 20%. This sustained divergence over time poses a problem of functional and democratic legitimacy for the judicial government system, insofar as appointment decisions do not reflect the composition or plurality of the judicial body they govern.

International standards do not impose a single model of judicial council, but they do require that these bodies operate with objective criteria, transparency, accountability, and sufficient representativeness. Models based exclusively on corporate self-selection do not, by themselves, offer guarantees against the internal reproduction of structural biases, while models with political intervention require strict safeguards against partisan capture. Spanish empirical evidence suggests that the absence of effective controls over the results of appointments is a determining factor in the persistence of structural imbalances, with the consequent negative impact on the women members of the judiciary.

The lack of transparency and arbitrariness in the designation of high judicial positions are grounds for challenge. The questioning of certain judicial decisions, which point to a lack of impartiality of the court due to its appointment origin, is a symptom of dysfunction. It is imperative that review mechanisms exist to evaluate whether the process respected the principle of substantive equality. International standards endorse special temporary measures (parity objectives) as legitimate instruments to correct persistent underrepresentation.

Questions for contribution

Under each pillar, you are invited to provide information on measures taken to implement the recommendations addressed to the Member State in the 2025 Rule of Law report, as well as developments with regard to the points raised in the respective country chapter of the 2025 Rule of Law Report and any other significant developments since January 2025 and up to the date of submission[3]. Please always include a link to and reference relevant legislation/documents (in the national language and/or where available, in English). **Significant developments** can include challenges, positive developments and best practices, covering both

legislative developments or implementation and practices.

Information provided in reply to the first question under each pillar, related to the follow-up to the recommendations, does not need to be repeated in subsequent parts of the questionnaire, but can be cross-referenced in the subsequent questions, where relevant. All other questions are not limited to the recommendations, but as in previous years, cover the entire scope of the Report.

[3] Unless already covered in the input for the previous Rule of Law Reports.

Member State/enlargement country covered in contribution [only one choice possible]

If you wish to submit information concerning several Member States/enlargement countries, please fill in the questionnaire separately for each country. There is no limit to the number of contributions submitted by a single participant.

- ☐ Albania
- ☐ Austria
- ☐ Belgium
- ☐ Bulgaria
- ☐ Croatia
- ☐ Cyprus
- ☐ Czechia
- ☐ Denmark
- ☐ Estonia
- ☐ Finland
- ☐ France
- ☐ Germany
- ☐ Greece
- ☐ Hungary
- ☐ Ireland
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Latvia
- ☐ Lithuania
- ☐ Luxembourg
- ☐ Malta

- ☐ Montenegro
- ☐ Netherlands
- ☐ North Macedonia
- ☐ Poland
- ☐ Portugal
- ☐ Romania
- ☐ Serbia
- ☐ Slovakia
- ☐ Slovenia
- ☒ Spain
- ☐ Sweden

I. Justice System

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2025 Report regarding the justice system (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

A. Independence

Appointment and selection of judges, prosecutors and court presidents (incl. judicial review)

(The reference to 'judges' concerns judges at all level and types of courts as well as judges at constitutional courts)

5000 character(s) maximum

Nomination of Judges.

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Comparative experience demonstrates that formal judicial independence, understood as the absence of direct political interference, is a necessary but insufficient condition. Formally independent judicial systems can reproduce internal dynamics that condition, *de facto*, professional autonomy and decisional plurality.

In many legal systems, judicial councils play a central role in appointments. Their legitimacy depends not only on their protection from political pressures but also on their representativeness, transparency, and public accountability.

Despite the majority feminization of the judicial career, the presence of women in bodies and positions whose access depends directly or indirectly on the CGPJ remains systematically below 30%, and in some cases below 20%. This sustained divergence over time poses a problem of functional and democratic legitimacy for the judicial government system, insofar as appointment decisions do not reflect the composition or plurality of the judicial body they govern.

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The lack of transparency and arbitrariness in the designation of high judicial positions are grounds for challenge. The questioning of certain judicial decisions, which point to a lack of impartiality of the court due to its appointment origin, is a symptom of dysfunction. It is imperative that review mechanisms exist to evaluate whether the process respected the principle of substantive equality. International standards endorse special temporary measures (parity objectives) as legitimate instruments to correct persistent underrepresentation. Appointment procedures that lack transparency, that rely excessively on discretion, or that reproduce informal professional networks can undermine judicial impartiality in practice, even in the absence of explicit political interference. This risk intensifies when the most relevant judicial positions and the governing bodies of the judiciary remain structurally homogeneous and disconnected from the actual composition of the judicial career. International standards do not endorse a purely corporate conception of judicial independence. On the contrary, they demand transparent appointment procedures based on merit and subject to accountability mechanisms, capable of preventing both political capture and the internal self-reproduction of power. When there is no effective policy for compliance with these standards, Justice begins to be perceived as alien by the citizenry, even as an instrument at the service of specific spheres of power.

This distrust has been accentuated in the Spanish case as a consequence of some specific judicial procedures where readings alien to the purpose of administering justice have been made, which seem to reproduce the conflicts of highly polarized institutions.

The increasing questioning of certain judicial decisions—which goes beyond agreeing or not with the legal reasoning and points to the lack of impartiality of the court itself—is one more symptom of the dysfunctions existing in the current system for designating judicial positions that remain uncorrected, despite the approved regulations and the legislative will to overcome arbitrariness in said appointments.

Irremovability of judges, including transfers, (incl. as part of judicial map reform), dismissal and retirement regime of judges, court presidents and prosecutors (incl. judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

Official data from the CGPJ allows for the clear identification of a structural gap between access to the judicial career and the distribution of judicial power. As of January 1, 2025, the Spanish judicial career has 5,431 active judges and magistrates, of whom 3,161 are women (58.2%). This female majority intensifies in the initial brackets: women represent 69.4% between ages 25 and 30, 65.7% between 31 and 40, and 60.3% between 41 and 50. In the most recent entry, 74.4% of the 2024 class were women, with average ages identical to those of men.

However, this feminization does not translate to the higher levels. Women represent only 19.6% of the Supreme Court, 19.4% of the presidencies of Provincial Courts (Audiencias Provinciales), and 34% of the Chamber presidencies of the High Courts of Justice (Tribunales Superiores de Justicia), a percentage that drops to 15.8% in the Civil and Criminal Chambers. In central bodies, female presence stands at around 32.6%. Segregation is also horizontal. Women are mostly concentrated in base-level bodies and specific jurisdictions: 76.9% in Courts of Violence Against Women, 70.5% in Courts of First Instance and Instruction, 69.6% in Juvenile Courts, and 67.4% in Criminal Courts, while their presence systematically decreases in Provincial Courts, High Courts of Justice, and central bodies.

These data show that the structure of judicial power does not reflect the actual composition of the career, and that promotion and appointment mechanisms produce results systematically misaligned with formal equality in access.

Spain has specific regulations such as Organic Law 3/2007, of March 22, for the effective equality of women and men, which obliges Public Powers to guarantee a balanced presence of both sexes in all decision-making and power spaces. Several subsequent regulations have insisted on the need to guarantee parity in the so-called discretionary positions of the Judiciary, culminating in Organic Law 2/2024, of August 1, on paritarian representation and balanced presence of women and men, by virtue of which the principle of balanced presence of women and men will be guaranteed in all appointments and promotions involving any margin of discretion or assessment of merits.

The General Council of the Judiciary has had the possibility to integrate these regulations and the material principle of effective equality through the regulation of the procedure for designating high judicial positions. Said regulation was recently approved through the Agreement of December 17 of the General Council of the Judiciary, which approves Regulation 1/2025 on the provision of discretionary appointment positions in judicial bodies.

However, the approved Regulation does not contain provisions that guarantee real and effective gender equality in access to these positions, beyond a generic mention made in Article 28 to compliance with the Law. There is also no truly regulated system with specific scoring and weighting of merits that avoids or limits discretion. It lacks objective rules of direct application of a mandatory nature, opting instead for a generic list of possible preferential merits lacking all specificity and without any specific grading system.

This leads to the approved regulation departing from the spirit and purpose of the principle of effective equality between men and women to have a merely nominal character, which not only will not prevent arbitrariness in the designation of judicial positions but will encourage it.

The analysis of official data from the General Council of the Judiciary regarding permits and leaves for the year 2022 highlights that permits linked to maternity, breastfeeding, the care of minors or relatives, and work-hour modulations associated with reconciliation present a significant aggregate impact in terms of effective service time for women.

These permits do not constitute isolated episodes, but rather patterns concentrated temporally in central phases of the professional trajectory, coinciding with the years in which transfer competitions, seniority consolidation, access to collegial bodies, and merit assessment for discretionary appointments occur. Their aggregate impact is not neutralized through specific institutional mechanisms in the promotion and appointment systems.

In a hierarchically structured judicial career, in which access to higher levels depends largely on continuous trajectories, functional availability, and institutional visibility, these uncorrected modulations generate objectively verifiable cumulative effects that structurally affect promotion possibilities. A judiciary whose composition and leadership reflect social diversity is better prepared to guarantee impartial justice and to effectively protect human rights, particularly in matters related to discrimination, gender violence, and social rights.

Promotion of judges and prosecutors (incl. judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

Allocation of cases in courts

5000 character(s) maximum

Gender Based Violence Court. In Spain, the judicial landscape for the protection of women has undergone a radical shift with the entry into force of the Organic Law 1/2025 on the Efficiency of the Public Justice Service in order to adapt the Spanish legislation to the Istanbul Convention.

This reform does not just change the names of certain bodies; it drastically expands the catalog of crimes that Violence Against Women Court must manage.

A) New Competencies: Beyond the partner.

Traditionally, these courts only handled cases where an affective relationship existed (partner or ex-partner).

With the new law, the focus shifts toward sexual and gender-based violence in a broad sense.

Comprehensive Sexual Violence: They now take on all crimes against sexual freedom (assault, abuse, sexual harassment) regardless of whether the aggressor is a partner, an acquaintance, or a stranger.

Trafficking and Exploitation: They have jurisdiction over human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation when the victim is a woman. However, there is a problem in cases of prostitution and human trafficking, as quite often are complex cases that involving trafficking, forced prostitution, crimes against public health, money laundering, and counterfeiting.

Crimes Against Privacy and Honor: Investigation of crimes such as sexting (revelation of secrets) and insults linked to gender.

Vicarious Violence: This is in process of being specifically codified, reinforcing the court's power to protect minors used as instruments to harm the mother.

Civil Sphere: Increased capacity to issue urgent measures regarding guardianship, custody, and child support at the same time the criminal complaint is filed.

B) Critical difficulties and challenges

The implementation of these competencies has sparked a strong reaction within the judicial career due to the gap between the workload and available resources. Main challenges are as follows:

1) The threat of operational collapse.

Workload: An increase in the volume of cases is estimated between 12.9% and 20%. Although the Government has approved the creation of approximately 50 judge positions and 42 prosecutor positions, many will not be operational until late 2026.

Saturation in Mixed/District Courts: In smaller cities, investigative courts that also handle gender violence are "overwhelmed," as they must prioritize urgent protection orders, delaying the rest of the judicial agenda.

2) Infrastructure deficiencies

Spatial "Tetris": Many courts lack enough separate rooms. This causes victims and aggressors to coincide in hallways or entrances, leading to secondary victimization and unnecessary tension. There is a risk of visual confrontation between victim and aggressor that could be solved with architectural reforms and "friendly rooms".

Lack of Assessment Units: Institutes of Legal Medicine (IML) often do not have enough Comprehensive Forensic Assessment Units (UVI/USMI) to issue the psychological and social reports that a judge needs to decide on a protection order in less than 72 hours.

3) The Specialization Challenge

Continuous Training: Changing the law is not enough; judges and staff must be trained in the Ley Orgánica 10/2022 ("Only Yes Means Yes" Law) and the new dynamics of digital sexual aggression, which require complex technological expertise for which specialized personnel are not always available.

4) Territorial jurisdiction:

In this cases is determined by the victim's domicile (according to Article 15 bis of the Criminal Procedure Law)

In these cases, involving human trafficking and sexual exploitation , it's difficult because implies organized crime operating in different locations, with victims who, in some cases, don't even have a fixed address.

Another interesting point is that the connection between offenses is limited by Article 15 bis of the Criminal Procedure Law regarding jurisdictional issues. The dynamics of violence are linked to the medial connection and the connection used to achieve impunity. In all these cases, the crimes of human trafficking and illegal immigration are not considered medial concurrence, but rather real concurrence due to the very phenomenon of trafficking.

New Courts specialised on Violence against Children and Juveniles .

This is combated in Spain with the Organic Law on Comprehensive Protection of Children and Adolescents against Violence (LOPVI) (2021), which seeks to prevent it and protect victims through a comprehensive approach. The criteria for jurisdiction have changed, and there is currently a broad debate regarding jurisdiction to hear these crimes when the victim is a girl. There is a broad debate if it should only apply to those cases that originally fall under the jurisdiction of the violence courts, that is, cases of vicarious violence when they are assigned to Violence Against Women Court , and also when the minor and the perpetrator have a relationship.

Independence (including composition and nomination and dismissal of its members), and powers of the body tasked with safeguarding the independence of the judiciary (e. g. Council for the Judiciary)

5000 character(s) maximum

Accountability of judges and prosecutors, including disciplinary regime and bodies and ethical rules, judicial immunity and criminal/civil (where applicable) liability of judges (incl. judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

Independence/autonomy of the prosecution service

5000 character(s) maximum

Independence of the Bar (chamber/association of lawyers) and of lawyers

5000 character(s) maximum

Significant developments capable of affecting the perception that the general public has of the independence of the judiciary

5000 character(s) maximum

B. Quality of justice

(Under this topic, you are not required to give statistical information but should provide input on the type of information outlined in the introduction)

[single market relevance] Accessibility of courts (e.g. court/legal fees, legal aid, language)

5000 character(s) maximum

Resources of the judiciary (human/financial/material), remuneration/bonuses/rewards for judges and prosecutors, including observed changes (significant and targeted increase or decrease over the past year)

(Material resources refer e.g. to court buildings and other facilities. Financial resources include salaries of staff in courts and prosecution offices.)

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Training of justice professionals (including judges, prosecutors, lawyers, court staff, clerks/trainees)

5000 character(s) maximum

Digitalisation (e.g. use of digital technology, including electronic communication and AI tools, within the justice system and with court users, procedural rules, access to judgments online)

5000 character(s) maximum

Use of assessment tools and standards (e.g. ICT systems, including AI-based systems, for case management, court statistics and their transparency, monitoring, evaluation, surveys among court users or legal professionals)

5000 character(s) maximum

Geographical distribution and number of courts/jurisdictions (“judicial map”) and their specialisation, in particular specific courts or chambers within courts to deal with fraud and corruption cases.

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Specialisation (of judges/specific courts/chambers within courts) and training for the judiciary to deal with commercial cases, as well as alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and mediation as regards commercial cases.

5000 character(s) maximum

C. Efficiency of the justice system

(Under this topic, you are not required to give statistical information but should provide input on the type of information outlined in the introduction)

[single market relevance] Developments related to efforts to improve the efficiency of the justice system (e.g. as regards length of proceedings, to address backlogs)

5000 character(s) maximum

Any other developments related to the justice system - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

The new reform implemented under Organic Law 1/2025 aims to modify, among others, access to the judiciary. Of particular interest is the situation of temporary judges (justicia interina) 80% of whom are women, who have been affected by the stabilization system and must now take an exam to be declared permanent staff members of the Justice Administration. This reform has generated clear opposition from the judiciary, which even called a strike in June 2025. However, this strike was not supported by all members of the judiciary, demonstrating that it is a highly controversial issue.

II. Anti-Corruption Framework

Where previous specific reports, published in the framework of the review under the UN Convention against Corruption, of GRECO, and of the OECD address the issues below, please make a reference to the points

you wish to bring to the Commission's attention in these documents, indicating any relevant updates, changes or measures introduced that have occurred since these documents were published.

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2025 Report regarding the anti-corruption framework (if applicable):

5000 character(s) maximum

A. The institutional framework capacity to fight against corruption (prevention and investigation / prosecution)

List any **changes** as regards relevant authorities (e.g. national agencies, bodies) in charge of prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of corruption and the resources allocated to each of these authorities (the human, financial, legal, and technical/specialised resources as relevant), including the cooperation among domestic and with foreign authorities. Indicate any relevant measures taken to effectively and timely cooperate with OLAF and EPPO

5000 character(s) maximum

Safeguards for the functional independence of the authorities tasked with the prevention and detection of corruption

5000 character(s) maximum

Information on the implementation of measures foreseen in the strategic anti-corruption framework (if applicable). If available, please provide relevant objectives and indicators

5000 character(s) maximum

B. Prevention

Measures to enhance integrity in the public sector in particular as regards high-level officials (including as regards incompatibility rules, revolving doors, codes of conduct, ethics)

5000 character(s) maximum

Measures to enhance general transparency of public decision-making (including rules on lobbying, asset and interest disclosure rules, gifts policy, transparency of political party, financing)

5000 character(s) maximum

Measures to prevent conflicts of interest in the public sector. Please specify the features and scope of their application (e.g. categories of officials concerned, types of checks and corrective measures depending on the category of officials concerned)

5000 character(s) maximum

--> For the three previous points, **please also provide information and figures on their application/enforcement if available to you**, such as number of detected breaches/irregularities of the various rules in place and the follow-up given (investigations, sanctions, etc.)

Measures to ensure whistleblower protection and encourage reporting of corruption, including their application (i.e. number of reports received, and the follow-up given)

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Specific measures to enhance transparency, integrity and accountability in sectors with high risks of corruption, with a view to monitor and prevent corruption and conflict of interests, and where applicable measures to prevent and address corruption committed by organised crime groups.

- *Such high-risk sectors could include: public procurement, including construction, transport/infrastructure, defence, cohesion, agriculture, environment, healthcare, investor residence schemes, large-scale investments of national interest and the spending of EU funds, urban planning.*
- *In particular, measures to mitigate high risks of corruption in the area of public procurement, such as enhancing transparency and oversight (for example through digital technologies) and promoting fair competition and accountability in public procurement (e.g. targeted actions to address the high share of*

single bids) and measures to guarantee the effective and independent functioning of the public procurement review bodies.

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Measures for the prevention of corruption in relation to the issuing of official permits (e.g. related to environment, energy, service provision and various types of construction)

5000 character(s) maximum

C. Repression

The legal framework on the criminalisation and sanctions for corruption and related offences, including foreign bribery

5000 character(s) maximum

Official data on the number of investigations, prosecutions, final judgments and the application of sanctions for corruption offences (differentiated by offence if possible). Please indicate whether the cases: involve legal persons; are related to the implementation of EU or national funds; involve high level corruption. Please indicate which data is publicly available and how policy-making is informed by the data

5000 character(s) maximum

Potential obstacles identified in law or in practice to the investigation and prosecution of high-level and complex corruption cases (e.g. political immunity regulation, procedural rules, statute of limitations, cross-border cooperation, pardoning)

5000 character(s) maximum

Information on effectiveness of criminal and non-criminal measures and of sanctions (e.g. recovery measures and administrative sanctions) on both public and private offenders

5000 character(s) maximum

Any other developments related to the anti-corruption framework - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

III. Media pluralism and media freedom

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2025 Report regarding media pluralism and media freedom (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

A. Media authorities and bodies

(Cf. Article 30 of Directive 2018/1808)

Measures taken to ensure the independence, enforcement powers and adequacy of resources (financial, human and technical) of media regulatory authorities and bodies

5000 character(s) maximum

Conditions and procedures for the appointment and dismissal of the head / members of the collegiate body of media regulatory authorities and bodies

5000 character(s) maximum

Existence and functions of media councils or other self-regulatory bodies

5000 character(s) maximum

B. Safeguards against government or political interference and transparency and concentration of media ownership

[single market relevance] Measures taken to ensure the fair and transparent allocation of state advertising

5000 character(s) maximum

Safeguards against state / political interference, in particular:

- safeguards to ensure editorial independence of media (private and public)
- specific safeguards for the independence of heads of management and members of the governing boards of public service media (e.g. related to appointment, dismissal), safeguards for their financial and operational independence (e.g. related to reporting obligations and the allocation of resources) and safeguards for plurality of information and opinions
- **[single market relevance]** information on specific legal provisions and procedures applying to media service providers, including as regards granting /renewal/termination of licenses, company operation, capital entry requirements, concentration and corporate governance

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Transparency of media ownership and public availability of media ownership information, including on direct, indirect and beneficial owners

5000 character(s) maximum

C. Framework for journalists' protection, transparency and access to documents

Rules and practices guaranteeing journalists' independence and safety, including as regards protection of journalistic sources and communications, referring also, if applicable, to follow-up given to alerts lodged with the Council of Europe's Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists

5000 character(s) maximum

Law enforcement capacity, including during protests and demonstrations, to ensure journalists' safety and to investigate attacks on journalists

5000 character(s) maximum

Access to information and public documents by public at large and journalists (incl. transparency authorities where they exist, procedures, costs/fees, timeframes, administrative/judicial review of decisions, execution of decisions by public authorities, possible obstacles related to the classification of information)

5000 character(s) maximum

Lawsuits (incl. SLAPPs - strategic lawsuits against public participation) and convictions against journalists (incl. defamation cases) and measures taken to safeguard against manifestly unfounded and abusive lawsuits

5000 character(s) maximum

Any other developments related to media pluralism and freedom - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

IV. Other institutional issues related to checks and balances

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2025 Report regarding the system of checks and balances (if applicable)

5000 character(s) maximum

A. The process for preparing, enacting and implementing laws

[single market relevance] Framework, policy and use of impact assessments and evidence based policy-making, stakeholders'*/public consultations (including rules and practices on the transparent participation of civil society to policy development and decision-making processes), and transparency and quality of the legislative process in the preparatory, the parliamentary and implementation phase (including guidance on how to implement legislation)

** This includes also the consultation of social partners*

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Rules and use of fast-track procedures and emergency procedures (for example, the percentage of decisions adopted through emergency /urgent procedure compared to the total number of adopted decisions)

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Safeguards to ensure legal certainty, the stability of the legal framework and non-discrimination.

5000 character(s) maximum

Rules and application of states of emergency (or analogous regimes), including judicial review and parliamentary oversight

5000 character(s) maximum

Regime for constitutional review of laws

5000 character(s) maximum

B. Independent authorities

Independence, resources, capacity and powers (including effective access to relevant data) of national human rights institutions ('NHRIs'), of ombudsman institutions if different from NHRIs, of equality bodies if different from NHRIs and of

supreme audit institutions

(Cf. the website of the European Court of Auditors: <https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/Pages/SupremeAuditInstitutions.aspx#>)

5000 character(s) maximum

Statistics/reports concerning the follow-up to recommendations by National Human Rights Institutions, ombudsman institutions, equality bodies and supreme audit institutions in the past year

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Safeguards to ensure the effective independence of supervisory and regulatory authorities with a direct impact on economic operators such as national economic oversight, enforcement and competition authorities

C. Accessibility and judicial review of administrative decisions

[single market relevance] Transparency of administrative decisions and sanctions (incl. their publication and rules on collection of related data) and respect of the good administration principle (including the obligation of the administration to give reasons for decisions)

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Judicial review of administrative decisions: short description of the general regime (in particular competent court, scope, suspensive effect, interim measures, and any applicable specific rules or derogations from the general regime of judicial review)

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Safeguards (other than judicial review) regarding decisions or inaction of administrative authorities, including remedies (e.g. administrative review)

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Rules and practices related to the application by all courts, including constitutional jurisdictions, of the preliminary ruling procedure (Art. 267 TFEU)

5000 character(s) maximum

[single market relevance] Implementation of final judgments by the public administration and State institutions and follow-up given to supranational judgments, including decisions from the European Court of Human Rights, as well as available remedies in case of non-implementation

5000 character(s) maximum

Oversight, including by courts, of the use of intrusive surveillance software by national authorities

5000 character(s) maximum

D. The enabling framework for civil society

Measures regarding the framework for civil society organisations and human rights defenders (e.g. legal framework and its application in practice incl. registration, transparency and dissolution rules)

5000 character(s) maximum

Rules and practices having an impact on the effective operation and safety of civil society organisations and human rights defenders. This includes measures to protect them from attacks – verbal, physical or on-line –, intimidation, legal threats incl. SLAPPs, negative narratives or smear campaigns, measures capable of affecting the

public perception of civil society organisations, etc. It also includes measures to monitor threats or attacks and dedicated support services, as well as available remedies

5000 character(s) maximum

Organisation of financial support for civil society organisations and human rights defenders (e.g. framework to ensure access to funding, and for financial viability, taxation/incentive/donation systems, measures to ensure a fair distribution of funding)

5000 character(s) maximum

E. Initiatives to foster a rule of law culture

If there have been developments related to initiatives to foster a rule of law culture, please specify, which (e.g. debates in national parliaments on the rule of law, public information campaigns on rule of law issues, contributions from civil society, education initiatives, etc.)

5000 character(s) maximum

Any other developments related to the system of checks and balances - please specify

5000 character(s) maximum

Cross-pillar elements: cross-border rule of law issues related to the Single Market

If there are any significant challenges concerning the Single Market you have been facing in a cross-border context relating to any of the four pillars of the report, including for example issues with market access and the conditions for economic activities, that you would like to highlight, please do so here.

Given the cross-cutting nature of this question, it is included as a separate section in the questionnaire. Information collected under this question will however be integrated under the relevant existing pillar(s) of the Report.

5000 character(s) maximum

Supporting document upload

If you would like to submit any supporting document(s) to your contribution, please upload your file(s) here

Contact

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