

The change of Parliament's composition must not change the commitment to fight against corruption

The Parliament should be the core institution in the fight against corruption. The factual setup of national legislation is in support of this claim, as the Parliament by law is the institution selecting and appointing persons in key institutions fighting against corruption. That is why it is important for Parliament to strengthen its role and exercise regular and in-depth oversight of the work of these institutions.

It is essential that the Parliament does everything it has jurisdiction over in line with its powers. The Parliament has a key role in continuously initiating strengthening of regulations and thereby narrowing the space for corrupt activities. The adoption of the relevant legal framework should be carried out in a transparent way and in consultation with stakeholders.

The last parliamentary composition gave its contribution to the fight against corruption. This was demonstrated on several occasions by adopting the Law on Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interest, by selecting the current composition of the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption (SCPC), as well as by allocating increased budget funds for continuous operation of SCPC. In this sense, what is expected of the next parliamentary composition is to continue and further enhance the role of Parliament and contribute towards additional proactivity.

The next parliamentary composition will be facing several challenges in this direction. First and foremost, it shall have to proceed with the reform processes that the previous parliamentary composition failed to implement, such as the adoption of the law on senior management service and the adoption of a high quality text of the National Strategy on Fight against Corruption and Conflict of Interest for the period 2020-2024. The adoption should be inevitably preceded by a public hearing which shall offer space to all stakeholders, in particular to the institutions for whom obligations are arising from the Strategy. In fact, public hearings should become a practice instead of an exception to the operation of the Parliament.

The Parliament will need to work on establishing continuity in holding oversight hearings on fight against corruption. The practice of continuity of oversight hearings will develop a habit of regular provision of information by institutions. Regular accountability of institutions will contribute to their increased preparedness to report and will send out a signal to other stakeholders that fight against corruption is a continuous process in which the Parliament is interested in results. Such practice will ensure preparedness of all stakeholders to cooperate with the Parliament and to give their contribution in this process.

The start of accession negotiations with the European Union will create additional expectations of the Parliament to impose itself as a key player in the fight against corruption, in particular in the oversight of reform processes which are of key importance for progress in negotiations.

The project "Anti-Corruption Talk in Parliament (ACT in Parliament)" involves investigative and advocacy activities with the primary goal of supporting the reform process in North Macedonia by strengthening the oversight role of the Parliament with regard to the fight against corruption.

The project is supported by the National Endowment for Democracy – NED from the United States of America. IDSCS bears responsibility for the contents and in no way reflects the positions of the National Endowment for Democracy – NED.