

Supplement to Reconstruction of the State's Report: Reactions and Frequently Asked Questions

Reconstruction of the State, a platform of non-governmental organizations, on Tuesday released a summary evaluation of the political parties' record on meeting their commitment to promote nine anti-corruption bills. Many parties have responded to our calls and commented on our assessment. Reconstruction of the State also reacts to some incorrect reports and criticisms appearing in the media.

The Reconstruction of the State coordinating team regrets an inaccuracy appearing in the printed version of its evaluation report. The used logo of the political party TOP 09 with omission of the supplementary clause, "With the support of the Mayors", may have led to the wrong impression that Deputy Jan Farský is a member of TOP 09, and not only an MP for TOP 09 and a member of the movement Mayors and Independents (STAN).

Before its publication, the text of the assessment was provided to parliamentary parties so they could comment on the summarization of their steps in the past year and possibly also to offer their point of view to readers. We have thus far received reactions from representatives of four parties. Further reactions will be gradually incorporated in the online version of the evaluation report, available on www.rekonstrukcestatu.cz/rokpote.

ANO 2011's position is available on the Reconstruction of the State website [here](#). **ČSSD** sent us a timeline of government proposals, and had no reservations against the facts included in the report. **KDU-ČSL** also noted in its response it had no comments. **KSČM** offered a comment concerning the text on the Civil Service Act, which was incorporated in the evaluation before its release. The party did not send us any other statements. **ODS** declared it had no reservations about the facts included in the report. **TOP 09 with the support of STAN** and the **Úsvit** movement did not send in any reactions.

Reconstruction of the State hereby reacts to a series of questions and inaccuracies appearing in the media in connection with our evaluation report:

Is it not misleading to evaluate the behaviour of parties and politicians in the Chamber of Deputies, when local elections are the issue? What about the other political parties?

Within the limits of our project we can evaluate only parties represented in parliament. Its timing came shortly before the local elections also because we evaluated the project after one year of progress, waited for voting on amendments to the Code of Procedures of the Chamber of Deputies, and wished to announce the names of the Senate candidates who expressed their support to Reconstruction of the State before the elections. This evaluation is also largely relevant in terms of communal politics. Indeed, many reconstruction bills are closely associated with local politics, including the publication of contracts, independent economic audit, declaration of personal assets, or the composition of supervisory bodies of municipal enterprises. If parties block these bills on the national level, it is quite telling also about their conduct on the municipal level. We do not expect this evaluation to be the main guideline for the informed voter's decisions.

Why do you assess four bills with some parties and seven with others?

The conduct of all parties on the bills discussed in the Chamber of Deputies is evaluated. In case of bills still in the ministry pipeline, we evaluate the party in charge of the respective ministry. There is little to evaluate if opposition parties or coalition partners wait for a bill in the absence of a suitable alternative parliamentary draft.

Why does the abridged print version address only three bills while preference is given to the publication of contracts?

The leaflet is only a “sample”, meant not to bring complete information but whet the reader’s appetite for the complete evaluation report. It cites bills discussed or nearing discussion in the Chamber of Deputies, where the activity of all parties can be evaluated. The leaflet does not include the fourth bill discussed in Parliament, namely amendments to the Chamber’s Code of Procedures, because it was approved in third reading after 22 September, when the leaflet had already been in print. It highlights the bill on the registry of contracts as an example of verbal assessment, since this is an issue of paramount importance to local politics, and at the same time a very simple bill, whose protracted gestation, we believe, amply illustrates the approach of various parties.

Úsvit, KDU-ČSL and TOP 09 received the highest average grades. Are you suggesting people should vote for these particular parties?

This leaflet does not recommend voting for any specific party. That’s why we did not cite summary or average grades in our evaluation. We expect the competent voter to use the verbal information on what the party or parties he or she wants to vote for have done to curb corruption, and to decide if they can still be trusted. We do not really expect that, say, a liberal voter will rejoice, after reading the leaflet, that it is a guideline and sets out to vote for some intolerant movement.

The grades are above all a concise summation for those not versed in the intricacies of the parliamentary process. Grade 1 means that deputies have actively drawn up and supported the bill. Grade 2: voting in accordance with commitments but no active steps taken to promote the bill. Grade 3: party split, some MPs support the bill while others undermine it. Grade 4: voting for proposals that weaken the bill, or attempts for delay or blockage. Grade 5: party works to block the bill or puts forward a proposal against it. It is quite tricky to average these grades.

Why don’t you run for parliament seats?

Our coalition and its nine anti-corruption bills is a non-partisan project of 20 non-governmental organizations, whose role is quite different from that of the political parties. It is a plan of concrete steps to improve Czech politics without a broader ideological basis. This coalition is united by nine proposed anti-corruption measures as a reaction to recurrent party programmes and promises. We do not and cannot address other issues. We have no other common themes; we associate rightist and leftist voters, liberals and conservatives, and we harbour different views on many other issues.

Isn’t your evaluation misleading when you promote only your versions of legislation?

We do not have any versions “of our own”. With each bill, we have clearly formulated fundamental [principles](#), without which we don’t think it makes sense and which were upheld by most deputies before the elections. Individual proposals and draft amendments are evaluated on the basis of their conformity to these principles. Thus, in case of draft amendments to the bill on the register of contracts we did not say if such a register should be managed by the Ministry of Interior or the Ministry of Finance, but instead we examined if the draft tallies with the key principle that an unpublished contract is not valid. Individual points are not interpreted rigidly but are judged by their meaning, and if a draft amendment renders an unpublished contract null and void but does not require filling in compulsory information—so it basically legalizes publication of a completely blackened contract—it is rated negatively. Each version of the very complex Civil Service Act was evaluated on the basis of 38 parameters precisely declared in our statement.

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About Reconstruction of the State

The anti-corruption project, Reconstruction of the State was launched in March 2013 with the aim to promote nine key legislations, which would dramatically reduce room for corruption and prevent the ongoing state capture. Commitment to promote the legislation was confirmed in writing before the elections by more than 160 incumbent members of parliament, including the leaders of the main political parties. **Members of the platform:** Oživení, Transparency International, Frank Bold (formerly Environmental Law Service), Otakar Motejl Fund, zIndex, Open Society, Brnění, Pražské fórum, Zaostřeno, Zelený kruh, Anticorruption Endowment (NFPK), Inventura demokracie, Glopolis, Good Governance, Naši politici, Iuridicum Remedium, ProAlt, Kohovolit.eu and PragueWatch. The platform receives financial support from scores of small donors, companies and foundations, the list of whom can be found on our website.

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