

Public governance

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The public governance work of the Institute addresses the conditions under which corruption arises in the state. It covers public financial management, procurement, the management of public assets, the functioning of oversight institutions and the political economy of reform. The Institute has emphasised that technical reforms often fail because they ignore informal norms and networks of power. Its research on informal governance, conducted in part with academic partners, has examined how practices of reciprocity and patronage shape the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures in different countries. This approach reflects a broader shift in the international anti-corruption debate since the 2000s, away from the export of model laws and towards an analysis of local conditions.¹

For the financial centre, this work has an indirect significance. The quality of public governance in a country determines the risk that assets held abroad by its officials or business people are the proceeds of corruption. Banks in Basel and elsewhere rely on country risk assessments for their dealings with politically exposed persons and clients from high-risk jurisdictions. The research of the Institute feeds into these assessments through the Basel AML Index, which includes indicators of public transparency and accountability, and through publications that explain the mechanisms of corruption in particular sectors. Part E, Chapter III discussed the handling of politically exposed persons under Swiss law.²

1 Notes

1. On the public governance programme of the Basel Institute on Governance and its research on informal networks and the political economy of anti-corruption reform, see the working paper series of the Basel Institute on Governance and the publications of its public governance division. To be verified. ↩

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2. On the indicators of public transparency and accountability within the Basel AML Index and their use in country risk assessments for politically exposed persons, see the methodology documents of the Basel AML Index and Part E, Chapter III. To be verified. ↩

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