

An Anti-Corruption Agenda for Post-Communist Societies: Focus on Conflict of Interest (COI)

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Main Issues Today . . .

- What is COI?
- How can the causes of it be reduced or prevented?

COI Definition

“A conflict of interest arises when a person, as a public sector employee or official, is influenced by personal considerations when doing his or her job.”

Transparency International (TI) Source Book

Common Forms of COI. . .

- Direct or indirect financial benefit through involvement in a government matter (policy-making, enforcement, service delivery, etc.)
- Lack of impartiality or undue influence in government decision-making through connections with personal/business associates
- Receipt of gifts from external or internal sources
- Post-employment actions and representation
- Outside activities and supplementation of salary

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: WHAT TO DO?

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Causes of COI in Post-Communist States and Latin America

- “Politicized” and unprofessional bureaucracy
- Lack of transparency and access to information

More Causes . . .

- Incomplete legal frameworks and bad implementation
- Weak enforcement regimes
- Role of the media
- Underdeveloped democratic values

4 BASIC ELEMENTS

Preventing/Reducing COI

- 1). COI policy and processes:
 - Establish law and regulations
 - Include COI avoidance procedures (e.g. screening, recusal, divesting, trusts)
 - Develop structures to enforce and carry out
 - Provide training

Preventing/Reducing COI

2) Asset/financial declaration systems:

- Form and procedures
- Tracking system
- Investigation and monitoring
- Sanction
- Awareness
- Media and civil society

Preventing/Reducing COI

3) Overarching civil service reforms:

- Merit-based hiring and promotion
- Position classification and grading
- Pay for performance and “living wages”
- Limited political appointments

Preventing/Reducing COI

4) Modern ethics office or function:

- Advisory opinions and clarification
- Policy and procedure setting/codes of conduct
- Enforcement, sanction, and follow-up

THANK YOU!

