

## Is Corruption Prevention in a State of Crisis?

### Workshop 2: Think globally — act locally: Preventing corruption in German municipalities

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#### Abstract:

The word "crisis" refers to a problematic situation that calls for decision-making and is associated with a turning point. But only something that was previously a success can experience a crisis. However, one must question whether it can honestly be said that effective corruption prevention in German municipalities throughout the country is such a routine part of life that it could experience a crisis.

In a general sense and with a view to the entire municipal sector, there is still a need for the introduction of a process that involves all municipalities and at some point in the future leads to a highly qualified countrywide system for preventing corruption in municipalities.

There are numerous problems that must be solved if we are to prevent corruption at the municipal level.

<b>The top leadership problem</b>	The significance ascribed to anti-corruption efforts in the municipality depends to a large extent on the attitude and approach taken by the top-level officials.
<b>The relevance problem</b>	The significance of anti-corruption efforts and the ways in which the problem of corruption affects one's own municipality are not recognized.
<b>The urgency problem, or: where to begin?</b>	The need to carry out anti-corruption measures in one's own municipality is linked with the question of whether individual cases of corruption have occurred locally (awareness of individual cases of corruption is erroneously equated with the occurrence of corruption). This means that anti-corruption measures are equated with repressive measures, and that the need for prevention is, at most, only recognized when the municipality is shocked by individual cases of corruption as a result of the revelation of these cases.
<b>The image/publicity problem</b>	Because officials are afraid that the public could mistakenly interpret the introduction of prevention measures as an indication that cases of corruption exist, they implement such measures only partially or not at all.
<b>The effectiveness or adjustment problem</b>	Anti-corruption measures are implemented without adequately determining whether they are effective or precisely adjusted to meet the situation's requirements.
<b>The cost-effectiveness problem</b>	Corruption prevention requires money, time and effort that are regarded as unnecessary. As a result, such measures are not

	carried out.
<b>The problem of specialist tasks</b>	Officials reject activities that could make it difficult for them to carry out the specialist tasks assigned to them. As a result, they dismiss prevention measures because they claim the measures are useless.
<b>The attitude problem</b>	Corruption prevention as such, and the possibilities for preventing or exposing certain individual cases, are often primarily regarded from the perspective of repression. This leads to a focus that is less than optimal and results in loss of focus on legitimate issues.
<b>The localization problem</b>	In many cases, the prevention measures are aimed only, or in terms of their clear focus, at preventing corruption by civil servants who are motivated to commit acts of corruption. What is lacking is a suitable effort to protect civil servants who have no such motivation and have high standards of personal integrity from committing acts of corruption.
<b>The problem of an insufficiently systematic approach</b>	An active implementation of measures without having first checked their appropriateness or adjusting them to match the situation on the ground. Lack of an overall concept, for example because one has not sufficiently taken into account the corruption components "motivation, potential for corruption, and opportunities for acts of corruption". Inadequate analysis of weak points and inadequate projection of the risk situation.

#### Approaches to a solution and tasks:

- Be aware of the importance of basic decisions and ensure that these basic decisions are made.
- Define and communicate the requirements for a basic attitude that can and does promote the prevention of corruption.
- Create the appropriate framework conditions.
- Set up and continuously maintain effective and efficient corruption prevention measures in practice and conduct training programs as needed.
- Overcome prejudices, obstructions and resistance.
- Establish the corruption components "motivation, potential for corruption, and opportunities for acts of corruption" as key assessment and evaluation criteria for strategic and operational decisions.
- Recognize and establish compliance — the key to corruption prevention, which is generally still overlooked or underestimated in administrative bodies — as a guideline.
- Realize that the officials' personal standard of integrity is a factor in the effort to reduce opportunities for acts of corruption, and make this the central element of prevention.
- Make it clear that the acceptance of gaps in one's knowledge is counterproductive, and make sure such gaps do not occur/are not accepted.
- Define and compile a list of the areas where measures must be taken and of the individual measures. Update this list after its effectiveness has been put to the test.
- Select the most appropriate measures and balance their usefulness against their risks and disadvantages.
- Take into account the aspects of repression and monitoring.
- Establish an overall concept and act in accordance with it.