

Varieties of corruption control: introduction to special issue

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For the past three decades the question of how corruption can be controlled transnationally has been moving up on the agendas of policy makers, NGOs and businesses. Whatever the forms, contextual meanings and short-term benefits from corrupt transactions, it has become the dominant perception that corruption destroys the legitimacy of political institutions including the rule of law, discredits private business, misallocates resources and human skills, enhances social and economic inequalities, just as it is believed to serve as an impediment to long term economic growth.

This consensus has evolved alongside the proliferation of a transnational *anti-corruption industry* [23, 49]. Similar to the politicization of other transnational public issues like environmental degradation and human rights abuse [48], the fight against corruption has come to have its own formal and informal institutions with commercial as well as non-commercial activities addressing various aspects of the problem at hand. The transnational anti-corruption industry thus rests on the activities and resources of a plethora of state and non-state actors, mobilizing people and professions, institutions and technologies, as well as money, for the conduct of corruption control. More than anything, it comprises legislative work in national and supranational fora, the creation of anti-corruption standards and guidelines to be deployed in organizations, as well as legal and forensic investigations of suspicious cases. It also involves consultancy in development aid such as advisory for organizations in search of knowledge and expertise about compliance programs, including whistle-blowing systems and other reporting mechanisms. The anti-corruption industry produces rankings and assessment tools that help to measure and compare the corruption risk of regions, industries, transactions and individuals, and it plays an important role in creating databases and surveillance technologies that can assist preventive work, including due diligence of agents in foreign markets and with respect to corporate mergers and acquisitions. And, not least, the anti-corruption industry also spearheads capacity and training programs devoted to moral

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