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 PRINCETON UNIVERSITY



INNOVATIONS FOR
SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

Building Institutions, Escaping Development Traps

Rooting Out High-Level Corruption in the Former Yugoslavia

After the break-up of Yugoslavia in 1991, newly independent Croatia and Slovenia sought to combat public corruption as a precondition for joining the European Union. Two new ISS cases detail how these countries established anti-corruption commissions that prosecuted high-level leaders in [Croatia](#) and sparked a nationwide movement in [Slovenia](#).

[Prosecuting High-Level Corruption in Croatia](#)

Conflict, cronyism, and a flawed privatization process damaged Croatia's international image following independence from Yugoslavia. In 2000, a parliamentary consensus formed around the pursuit of European integration, and the European Union demanded progress in tackling corruption, echoing citizen concerns. The Croatian government created a specialized prosecution service called USKOK, the Bureau for the Suppression of Corruption and Organized Crime, to work in concert with other anti-corruption institutions. At first under-resourced and ineffective, USKOK grew in authority and stature after 2005, aided by new legal powers and new leadership. By building capacity and institutional partnerships at home and abroad, USKOK became one of Croatia's most-trusted government institutions. By 2012, it had achieved a conviction rate surpassing 95%, successfully prosecuting a former prime minister, a former vice president, a former top-level general, and other high-level officials. USKOK's work strengthened the rule of law and cleared a key obstacle from Croatia's path to European Union accession. Croatia will join the European Union in July of 2013.

[Exposing Systemic Graft in Slovenia](#)

After Slovenia became independent from Yugoslavia, the country rapidly transitioned to free-market democracy, with strong institutions and low levels of graft. In 2004, the government established the

Featured Interviews

[Erry Riyana Hardjapamekas](#), one of the first commissioners of Indonesia's Corruption Eradication Commission, highlights the importance of carefully recruited investigators, a solid internal affairs system, and preventative reforms such as standard operating procedures.

[Frances Johnson-Allison](#) (formerly Frances Johnson-Morris) recounts the creation and limitations of the Liberian Anti-Corruption Commission.

In the News

As Croatia prepares for EU accession in July, [BBC News](#) has published a series of articles, videos, and photos, exploring the country's recent history and current political and cultural landscape.

On February 27, 2013, the Slovenian Parliament voted to oust Prime Minister Janez Jansa, following public outcry over charges by the country's anti-corruption commission. [Alenka Bratusek](#) is the new prime minister, Slovenia's first female head of government.

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Commission for the Prevention of Corruption to demonstrate its commitment to good governance during the application process for European Union membership. The new watchdog body, which had no official enforcement powers, soon faced deeper challenges than it was equipped to handle. Political and business leaders had colluded to profit from Slovenia's prolonged and under-regulated privatization process, undermining the economy and the public's trust in government. Leveraging its moral authority and limited powers, the commission undertook investigations and released advisory opinions that spotlighted public corruption and the systemic flaws that enabled it. By outfoxing political and legal attackers and developing innovative uses for its investigative powers, the commission and its partner institutions helped spark a nationwide anti-corruption movement. In early 2013, public protests toppled a prime minister whose violation of campaign finance rules the commission had exposed, and Slovenia's struggle against corruption reached a turning point.

Improving Government Accountability and Leading Reform

Innovations for Successful Societies (ISS) helps public servants, policy makers, and scholars share institution-building strategies that work in especially challenging contexts. Interview-based case studies facilitate these exchanges and provide a basis for scholarly research. To date, ISS has published 107 reformer-focused case studies and 357 interviews, all of which are available for free on a web repository. Thousands of people around the globe access these web resources each month. Governments use the materials to learn from each other, inspire discussion in their ranks, and recall the steps they took to implement a reform. Universities and training programs use the cases in the classroom to engage students in the operational and strategic aspects of public sector reform.

ISS Readers Respond

"What I like about the [ISS] materials is that they don't just present a 'best practice' idea or heroic story of success. They provide enough information to enable readers in theorizing about these practices and innovations: you can listen to the protagonists describing why the innovation emerged, what process it emerged from, how people came on board to make it happen, what kinds of political and operational demands it posed, and so forth."

- Harvard professor of public policy

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