The culture of corruption in public administration

A comparison between Sweden and Italy

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Introduction
What to expect from this presentation

The project
The observation
The report
The framework
The countries
The lenses
The cases
The impact
The project

A study on corruption in Sweden by comparing it to Italy by some guys in the UK
TROUBLE AT THE TOP: JOINT STATEMENT
BY THE NORDIC CHAPTERS OF
TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL

Issued by national chapters in Denmark, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden at the 26th Annual Membership Meeting

Issued by Transparency International Iceland
In 2014 the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention published the report "Corruption in government agencies".

The report presents a study that focuses on corruption that seeks to influence the core domain of the work of public sector agencies – the exercise of public authority.

The results and conclusions of the report can be summarised as follows:

Research on corruption remains limited.

The Swedish Anti-Corruption Institute emphasised the importance of the four cultures that increase the risk for corruption.
The methodological framework

The four cultures conducive to corruption

Blindness
[Blindhet]
“Corruption cannot occur here.”

Silence
[Tystnad]
“Mind your own business.”

Informal rules
[Informella regler]
“Rationalisations favourable to deviance.”

Efficiency
[Effektivitet]
“Choosing and creating shortcuts.”
For the third year running, the top seven countries in the Corruption Perceptions Index 2018 consist of the four Nordic nations – Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway. All score between 84 and 88 points out of 100 on the index.

Points: 85/100
Rank: 3/180

Points: 52/100
Rank: 53/180

Do not use the CPI as a time-series!
Theoretical lens
Bourdieu’s (1989) micro-macro theory

**Habitus - Blindness**
Humans naively learn about the world and its axioms in a pre-reflective unconscious way.

**Fields - Silence**
A network or configuration of objective relations between positions occupied by social actors.

**Capitals – Efficiency**
Each field has dominant (and dominated) actors ranked in the order of power they possess.

**Doxa (logic) – Informal rules**
A product of a tacit agreement representing what seems obvious and normal in a field.
Criminological lens

General Strain Theory (Agnew, 1992)

Institutionalised means

Accept  Reject

Conformity  Innovation

Ritualism  Retreatism
Case studies welcome
An Italian stem with Swedish branches

- Coverage
- Discoveries
- Other…?!
- Outcomes
- Life-cycle
- Levels

Tangentopoli

- Multilevel
- Progressive
- Context
- Impact
Impact on perceptions

Educated guesses

Level
(Sub-)Culture seem more relevant on regional/local than on national level.

Occurrence
A culture of truth, trust and transparency?
A culture of integrity?

Reach
Frequency of discovering irregularities has increased. (Reduced strain)

Silence
Compartmentalisation insulate wider recognition. (Unchanged strain)

Informal rules
NPM reforms drives results based performance indicators. (Increased strain)

Efficiency
Progressive acceptance of current state of affairs. (Reduced strain*)

Blindness
NPM reforms drives results based performance indicators. (Increased strain)

Solutions
NPM reforms drives results based performance indicators. (Increased strain)

Solutions
Blindness
Attrition
Management

Thank you for listening!