

**CORRUPTION IN THE SLOVAK LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT:
ANTI-CORRUPTION MEASURES IN THE TOWN OF MARTIN
AND THEIR APPLICABILITY ON A NATIONAL SCALE**

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DISSERTATION DETAILS

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ABSTRACT

Corruption in the Slovak local self-government: anti-corruption measures in the town of Martin and their applicability on a national scale

The research was carried out in the small Slovak town of Martin in order to examine a case study of an anti-corruption policy-making process set in local self-government. Public sphere in Slovakia is still suffering from the remnants of the previous Communist regime, one of them being endemic corruption affecting all spheres of life. The Martin anti-corruption project is, however, a unique and unprecedented example of a local, internally funded but externally delivered, and multi-faceted scheme which if successful is bound to be recognised and possibly applied nationwide and perhaps even outside the Slovak borders. Hence the second aim of the research was to see whether and how the scheme could be applied on a national scale in Slovakia. Five factors were identified as determinants of successful anti-corruption project implementation: political will, level of corruption, financial resources, incrementalism, and external circumstances. All three levels of government and 13 models have been considered for the application of the anti-corruption project and its measures in Slovakia. Local government was considered by the interviewees as the most suitable environment for similar and future anti-corruption projects.

Officially, the Martin project had been aimed at limiting corruption, saving public resources and engaging the public in the town of Martin. However, unofficial reasons for the policy initiation were also examined due to their possible effects on the project's success and sustainability.

Primary research was based on documents published by Transparency International Slovakia (TIS) which had been an inextricable part of the scheme. The author interviewed a sample of all those directly involved with the project and also other experts in the field, including the Martin town Mayor, the TIS President, and the Vice-President of the Supreme Audit Office. Secondary research discussed both Slovak and international literature covering topics relevant to the policy-making process discussion.

DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in the dissertation has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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THE AUTHOR

Tomas Jacko took his undergraduate degree at the University of Manchester in Politics and International Relations. He worked for Transparency International Slovakia and has been involved in student representation. He has done research on the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, political influence in media and most recently examined a pilot anti-corruption project in Slovakia and tested its nationwide applicability.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author acknowledges that he had worked for the Slovak branch of Transparency International during summer 2007 as a student intern and since then has been in contact with his former colleagues, most of whom also participated in the Martin anti-corruption project and in this research as interviewees. However, the author made every effort to behave in the most professional manner. His contacts and relations with his former colleagues did not affect his judgement, research or results in any way. The author had contacted all the interviewees through official channels and was provided with the same information as any other researcher would have been. Apart from the TIS employees, the author had neither personally known, nor contacted any other interviewees before. For the aforementioned reasons, the author rules out any conflict of interests or presence of bias in the following dissertation.

DEDICATION

To my mother, who has always meant so much in my life and without whom I would never get a chance to write this dissertation and live in a world full of opportunities.

Corruption in the Slovak local self-government: anti-corruption measures in the town of Martin and their applicability on a national scale

1. INTRODUCTION

*And thou shall take no bribe for the bribe blinds the wise,
and perverts the words of the righteous.*

Exodus 23.8

Corruption indeed “blinds the wise” and it often takes a great deal of effort to initiate and implement effective and sustainable anti-corruption reforms. The extract proves that corruption as a phenomenon has been present in the society as early as the Bible was written. Unfortunately, effective anti-corruption measures are still considerably younger and ‘less experienced’. Most world countries and particularly countries of Eastern Europe still suffer from corruption which is often described as being almost institutionally present, systemic or structural (Sajo 2002, Stefes 2006). Arguably, at the 52nd position on the Transparency International’s (TI) Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), Slovakia too belongs to the group.¹ Public sphere in Slovakia is still dominated by the remnants of the previous Communist regime which suffered from endemic corruption. 20 years since the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia, the ills of the previous regime are only very slowly fading away.

The Martin Town Hall belongs to a small but increasing group of public institutions in Slovakia which chose to fight these remnants. Martin, a district town of approximately 60,000 inhabitants located in northern Slovakia, and its representatives chose to carry out a pioneer anti-corruption scheme in spring 2008. The main purpose of the scheme was to curb and limit corruption and its various forms such as clientelism and nepotism in the town. Two governing bodies in Martin - the Martin Town Council (the legislature) and the Martin Town Hall (the executive and administration) were involved not only as the subjects of the anti-corruption project but also as the main objects of the various measures. The project was designed and delivered by Transparency International Slovakia (TIS), a national branch of the renowned and leading international non-

governmental organisation fighting and providing solutions to deal with corruption. The project was immediately seen and portrayed as unique and a pioneer in the field (SME 2008, Hrnčiar 2008a, Vrazda 2008).

1.1 Research purpose

The author decided to examine and analyse this case study of an anti-corruption policy-making process which is set in local self-government and based in the Eastern European and former Communist context. Hence, the purpose of this dissertation is to examine the anti-corruption project from its initial to implementation stage including its first outcomes, limitations, future adjustments and sustainability. This will include a discussion of topics such as windows of opportunity, policy learning and transfer, paradigm shift, etc which will show the reader the extent of the scheme's uniqueness. The Martin anti-corruption project is indeed a unique and unprecedented example of a local initiative in Slovakia which if successful is bound to be recognised and possibly applied nationwide and perhaps even in other Eastern European countries. Hence the second aim of the research is to see whether the scheme and its measures could be applied on a national scale in Slovakia. Three levels of government (i.e. local, regional and national) and 13 alternatives in total will be considered with some theoretical and practical implications. Local government will be considered to be the most suitable and likely environment for similar anti-corruption projects in the future.

Officially, the Martin project had been aimed at limiting corruption, saving public resources and engaging the public in the town of Martin (Hrnčiar 2009a). However, unofficial reasons for the policy initiation will also be examined due to their possible effects on the project's success and sustainability. Primary research was based on documents published mainly by TIS which had been an inextricable part of the scheme. The author also interviewed a sample of all those directly involved with the project and also other experts in the field, including the Vice-President of the Supreme Audit Office. Secondary research discussed both Slovak and international literature covering the relevant topics.

The anti-corruption project had been implemented only a couple of months before this research fully commenced in June 2009. The research conducted will hence

be very topical but also valuable to Martin town officials, TIS and perhaps the national authorities, some of whom have already showed interest in the author's results.

1.2 Synopsis

- Theoretical and contextual background
Covers and explains the Slovak terminology, historical and contextual background to corruption in Slovakia and brings the discussion of relevant literature. It also identifies some world and Slovak anti-corruption measures.
- Methodology
Sets out the methods employed throughout the research. It covers the topics of data collection, interviews, data analysis, challenges and question of ethics.
- Project analysis
Goes over the individual project stages and provides a thorough analysis of each employing various public administration topics such as windows of opportunity, policy learning and transfer, paradigm shift, etc. Also discusses project outcomes, limitations, future adjustments and its sustainability.
- Applicability of the project on a national scale
Discusses applicability of the project through five factors of project implementation. Considers project application through 13 combinations of project delivery with alternatives in funding, coordination and the three levels of governance in Slovakia. Based on the primary research, their prospect for delivery is also examined.
- Conclusion and summary
Summarises the main points from the project analysis and applicability, and draws general conclusions. Includes limitations and recommendations for further research.

2. THEORETICAL AND CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Terminology

Due to the project being applied in Slovakia, most of the terminology used will be translated from the Slovak language. Some of the terms might have alternative equivalents and therefore a glossary is included to this dissertation (see Appendix A). By *national scale* the author does not refer to the national government level only but considers the whole country and Slovakia's three tiers of government including local, regional and national level.²

Territorial self-government

The research is primarily concerned with territorial self-government or self-administration. Article 64 of the Slovak Constitution states that: "A municipality is the basic element of territorial self-administration. Territorial self-administration comprises a municipality and superior territorial unit."

Municipality (i.e. local self-government)

Local government, local self-government or a municipality in the Slovak context refers to the smallest unit of settlement (i.e. village, town or city), their representative bodies (i.e. municipal councils and mayors) and their administration (i.e. village, town or city halls). There are around 2,900 such units in Slovakia with the smallest comprising less than ten inhabitants and Bratislava being the largest with a population of more than 400,000.

Superior territorial unit (i.e. regional self-government)

Superior territorial unit is the unit comprising the regional government in Slovakia. There are eight such units of similar size and population.

National government

The national government of Slovakia is a unitary parliamentary democracy with the prime minister being in charge of the government and its cabinet of ministers.

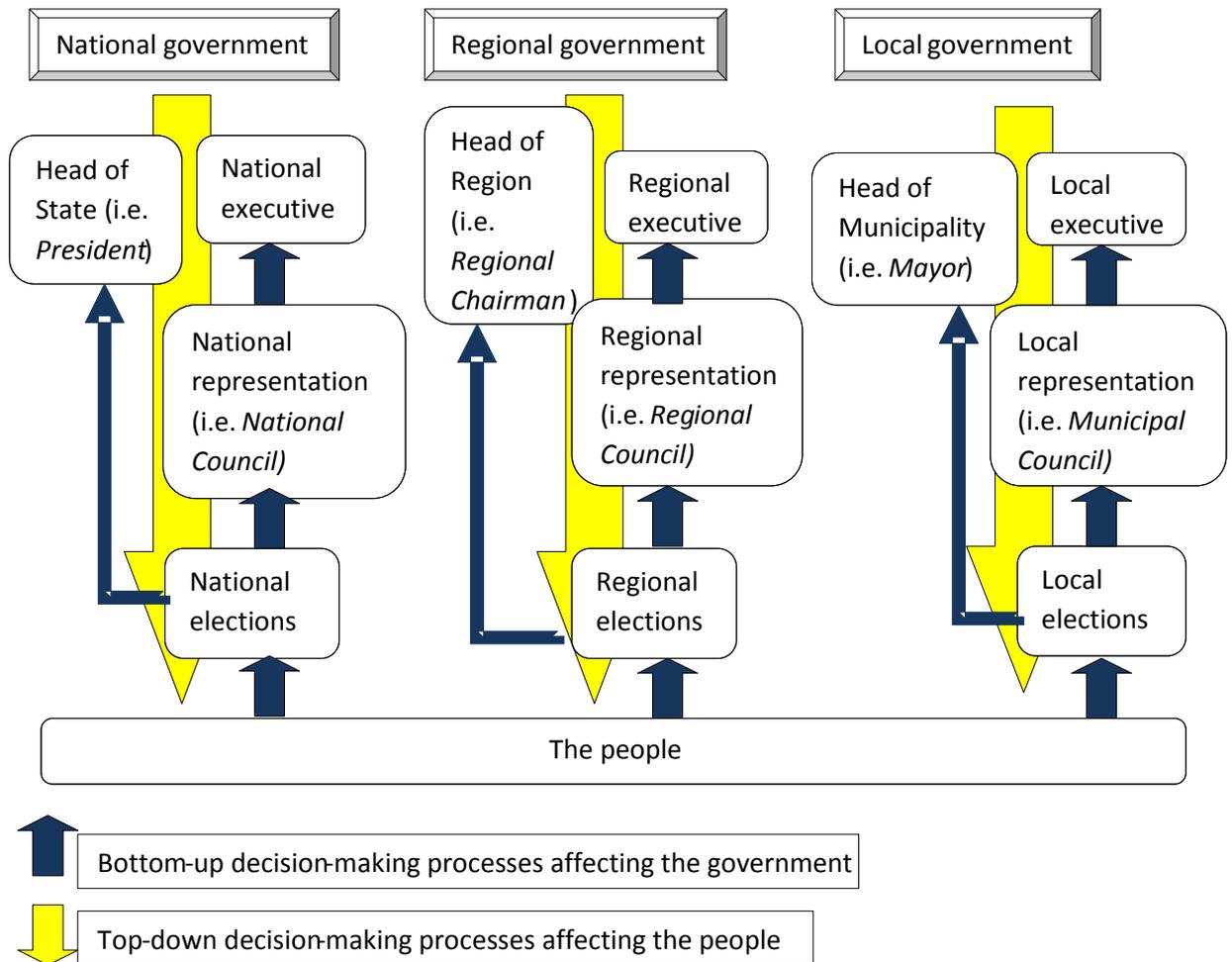
Decentralisation in Slovakia

The Communist regime retained a highly centralised model of government and public administration. Therefore the first stage of decentralisation (1990) occurred shortly after the fall of Communism with municipalities receiving specific roles, responsibilities and privileges, and the introduction of mayors. The second stage³ (2001) meant a creation of a new tier of regional government which since then comprises eight superior territorial units.

Jozef Meciár, the Vice-mayor of Sala, commented on the recent decentralisation and the state of corruption in municipalities:

*“Decentralisation has also led to decentralisation of corruption. Towns and municipalities [now] experience decisions involving significant amount of money and property. This has increased attention of various individuals and groups who want to benefit from it. Unfortunately, [Slovak] decentralisation has not so far experienced **decentralisation of public interest in politics**, in other words decentralisation of control. Much more time is spent on following national politics and particularly its folk part, instead of observing politics which lies at our doorstep.”*

Source: Meciár 2007

Fig. 1: Structure and logic of governance in Slovakia⁴

Source: Jacko 2008a

2.2 Corruption

Public sector and government corruption is generally seen as the behaviour conducted by either elected or unelected public officials who do not behave according to the law but instead take a personal or any other immoral advantage of their position. More generally, corruption could also be seen as a “symptom of something gone wrong in the management of the state” (UNDP 1997, xi). Nepotism and clientelism are also considered as types or forms of corruption: *nepotism* is concerned with giving favours and preference to friends or relatives of the public officials, whereas *clientelism* is usually based on a patron-client relationship which includes favouritism, personal preferences based on ‘old school ties’, friendship, business and political transactions (Sicakova-Beblava 2008b). Despite these being rather basic definitions, the research is concerned with concrete management procedures rather than social science-based phenomena⁵ and hence such definitions will serve the purposes of the dissertation.

Fig. 2 Corruption and smoking analogy

Corruption could be by analogy seen as smoking tobacco. They both give relative pleasure to the consumers or recipients even though they usually realise that it is extremely dangerous and could be mortal. What is more, they both affect not only those directly involved but also passive users or passive smokers and in the case of corruption often the whole population is affected. Finally, it is possible and there are various well publicised ways of both quitting smoking and getting rid of corruption. However, those who corrupt and those who smoke find it in most cases extremely hard to stop.

2.3 Historical and contextual background

The purpose of the reviewed literature is to provide an informed debate of various anti-corruption approaches, measures and policies preferably used at a local government level. These will then be together with the primary data used both, for the examination of the Martin project, and as an inspiration for the improvements and future adjustments. Most of the consulted sources on corruption and anti-corruption measures include case studies and/or chapters of individual country profiles (e.g. Stefes 2006, Roniger and Gunes-Ayata 1994). These proved to be very useful for identifying specific anti-corruption measures, their fate and learning lessons from them and their applicability (e.g. Piattoni 2001, Neild 2002). What is more, despite not being as complex as the Martin project, a number of authors also discuss other specific policies affecting local government in Slovakia (Pirosik 2004 and 2005, Sicakova-Beblava and Beblavy 2008).

However, a significant part of the theoretical aspects of the research will be based on the public policy process literature (e.g. Moran 2006, Lindblom 1979, Parsons 1995, Hill 2005). These sources will assist with examining and justifying the project's specific initiation, delivery, outcomes, sustainability and its further applicability. The author also searched for further specialised sources and especially research papers which deal with local policy initiatives and local anti-corruption schemes in particular (e.g. UN-HABITAT 2004, Fischer 2008, Vasilache and Rata 2008, Klitgaard 2000). Policy issues such as agenda setting, policy framing, learning, transfer (Minogue 2001) and policy change will be taken

into consideration together with incrementalism (Lindblom 1959, 1979), paradigm shift, and windows of opportunity (Kingdon 1995). The next section will now provide a short historical narrative of the post-communist transition in Slovakia and the approaches used to tackle corruption since 1989.

2.3.1 Slovakia and corruption before 1989

Similarly to any other countries of Eastern Europe, the four decades of Communist regime in Czechoslovakia until 1989 did more than enough damage not only to the economy but especially to the people's perception of their rights, democracy, private property and last but not least, the role of the state (Sajo 2002). Czechoslovak citizens did not have a right to any effective means of government scrutiny and as a result, the long period of the autocratic regime led to appalling levels of corruption and nepotism at all levels of public and private life. Local government was no exception to this situation (Gov. official C 2009).

2.3.2 Slovakia and corruption after 1989

The fall of Communism in Czechoslovakia in 1989 meant that most of the people got a chance to restart their lives and that the government was once again at least in theory accountable to the general public. In 1993, Czechoslovakia separated into the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic. Corruption still at record high meant that the two countries faced among many other a significant challenge of dealing with endemic corruption. Until 1998, the governments in Slovakia have either been ignorant or unsuccessful at dealing with the phenomenon (Miller 2001). The 1998 administration which more or less remained the same after 2002 made a number of attempts to deal with government and public sector corruption. However, while some of them were more successful than others, only few policies had been both designed to target local government corruption specifically and achieved positive results (TIS 2006).

2.3.3 Slovakia and corruption today

An official document adopted by the Government's Office, openly talks about corruption being present in daily life in Slovakia and admits that more than 25% of resources used in the public sector end up in the circle of corruption (Sikula 2008). However, the current administration that won the 2006 general election

halted the anti-corruption efforts of the previous and pro-reform oriented national government (TIS 2009, Sicakova-Beblava 2008a) despite promising in its 2006 post-election manifesto modernisation, economisation and informatisation of public administration and improvement of its management and public scrutiny (Slovak Government 2006).

Regarding the local government level, Pirošik argues that it is only one of the “popular myths“ in Slovakia that corruption at the local government level is either low or does not exist (2004). However, it is hard to exactly assess the level of corruption in general. Police statistics and criminal records only give numbers of convicted criminals while others who have been tried, accused, or mentioned in the media in connection with corruption scandals are officially *innocent until proven guilty*. Fortunately, both in 2007 and 2003, TIS ordered a representative survey of local government corruption perception. Various aspects of local government corruption were considered and their levels were considerably high and similar in the two respective years.⁶

2.4 Anti-corruption measures and policies

Policies and projects aimed at eliminating corruption have been implemented all around the world with various levels of success and there is also a corresponding plethora of literature both assessing these anti-corruption measures, and providing guidance as to which measures to implement at the various levels of government (e.g. UN-HABITAT and TI 2004, Fischer 2008, Vasilache and Rata 2008, Zemanovicova and Pirošik 2003, Holmes 2006). Whether it is decentralisation, public shaming, blacklisting, strengthening or establishing bodies to combat corruption, promotion and protection of whistleblowers, rotation of offices, improving officials’ conditions, changing practices, changing the gender balance, increased use of technology, anti-corruption campaigns, ethical education, increased public participation or improving legislation; they can all have their downsides and pitfalls (Holmes 2006, Niznansky and Tomanova 2001, Pirošik 2005, Turcan 2008). For example, just legislation and legal reforms⁷ can often be flexible, easily bent and “in the absence of a strong concept and a strong legislative will – lobby groups are able to build into the final text too many exemptions, special treatments, loopholes” (Hankiss 2002, 252).

However, the purpose of the research is not to find the universal cure to corruption or to argue which strategy is the most effective. Instead, the author will refer to a number of other anti-corruption measures preferably applied in local government in order to first, examine a specific local government anti-corruption scheme and particularly its policy making process and second, to provide possible alternatives of its application in other municipalities and at other government levels in Slovakia.

2.5 Research objectives

Main research objectives will be:

- Examination of the policy-making process behind the project
- Finding possible adjustments and recommendations for the project
- Assessment of applicability of the scheme in other settings nationwide

3. METHODOLOGY

The author had to revise and adjust some of the research objectives and the research strategy included in the original proposal due to an unexpected delay of the Martin project schedule. Fig. 4 below shows that the implementation process was postponed by at least three months. As a result, the author was not provided with enough data and results in order to construct a thorough, fair and reliable evaluation and/or audit of the whole project including the assessment of its outcomes. The author was nevertheless able to conduct a qualitative analysis of the policy-making process in great detail. The research also benefited from the interviews being conducted only a couple of months after the end of the implementation stage. What is more, a number of initial outcomes have already been identified. The assessment of results which are yet to be seen could be considered for further research (see section 6.2).

Fig. 3 Original and revised Martin project schedule

Stage/ date	7/08	8/08	9/08	10/08	11/08	12/08	1/09	2/09	3/09	4/09
1	Original	Original								
2			Overlap	Overlap	Overlap	Revised	Revised	Revised		
3					Original	Original		Revised	Revised	Revised

Source: Hrnčiar (2008a), Katinova (2009)

Original schedule
Revised schedule
Overlap

Stages:

- 1 Audit
- 2 Policy formulation
- 3 Implementation

3.1 Research strategy

Similarly to the main research objectives, the research strategy had to be revised.

The following are its separate stages:

- ~~To find reliable data and criteria to evaluate the success of the anti-corruption project.~~
- To analyse the policy-making process and the various project stages.
- To find out the opinions of a representative sample of stakeholders (including key officials and those taking part in the project directly) and policy experts about the policy changes and the potential benefits or limitations of the project's policy process and its likely outcomes.
- To identify possible adjustments and provide recommendations to the scheme in order to make it (more) successful.
- To assess project's sustainability.
- To identify generalisable factors influencing application and implementation of the scheme in various environments.
- To provide recommendations and alternatives of the scheme to be implemented on a national scale or in a different setting in Slovakia.
- To find out opinions of the project stakeholders, national senior civil servants and policy experts dealing with corruption about the project's applicability.

3.2 Research schedule

The original research schedule also had to be revised mainly due to primary research which naturally affected nearly all other research stages. Despite having contacted most interviewees on time, the interviews could not fully commence until the author received the Ethical Committee approval. Fig. 5 below shows that the collection of primary data and its analysis and interpretation occurred simultaneously. The author benefited from the ongoing research while he could use the new information during interviews scheduled for later.

Fig. 4: Original and revised research schedule

Activity/month	April 2009	May 2009	June 2009	July 2009	August 2009	September 2009
TIS seminar in Bratislava*	Original schedule					
Contact interviewees	Original schedule	Revised schedule	Revised schedule			
Literature and other material review	Original schedule	Overlap	Revised schedule			
Collect primary research data incl. interviews		Original schedule	Overlap	Revised schedule	Revised schedule	
Analyse and interpret research data			Original schedule	Revised schedule	Revised schedule	
First draft of dissertation			Original schedule	Overlap	Revised schedule	
Holiday (2 weeks max.)				Holiday		
Revision of dissertation and final draft				Original schedule	Overlap	
Submission						Overlap
Executive summary (optional)						Optional exec. summary

*Transparency International Slovakia organised a seminar on tendering on 8th and 9th April.

Original schedule
Revised schedule
Overlap
Holiday
Optional exec. summary

3.3 Data collection

Primary research was conducted mostly through semi-structured interviews with people either being directly involved with the project or who had the expertise to judge its effectiveness and especially its nationwide applicability. Appendix B shows the four sets of questions designed to suit each of the respective groups of interviewees, and to attain useful and reliable data. Research locations included Martin, Bratislava, Sala, Svit and Banska Bystrica (all Slovakia). Secondary research was conducted through the analysis of both primary and secondary

sources. The author discussed relevant documents published mainly by TIS and the Martin Town Hall. All the necessary primary sources had been published online and hence the author did encounter any problem with acquiring them.⁸ The author has also discussed various secondary sources, both Slovak and international, covering the topics of corruption, anti-corruption measures, policy-making process, etc. All information was readily available and accessible.

3.3.1 Interviews

Interviews, having a semi-structured layout, were the key part of the primary research which also proved to be the most significant source of material for the later analysis and determination of the applicability of the project. An attempt was made to interview as many people as possible who were present at the workshop organised by TIS on 22 July 2008 in Martin⁹ which included all those directly shaping the project's delivery. The list hence includes the researchers from TIS (5), key employees of the town (6), town councillors (4), town's leaders and policy initiators (5), the US Ambassador to Slovakia and one guest. The minimum requirement was set to two interviewees from each of these four groups. This was successfully met while the author personally interviewed 11 of the 22 people present at the workshop. Also, a significant number of people were interviewed despite not being directly involved with the project. These included various national government senior civil servants and public officials responsible for anti-corruption strategy and/or local government agenda. The following institutions were contacted: the Office for Public Procurement, the Supreme Audit Office, the Ministry of Interior, the Government Office, and the Union of Chief Controllers of Towns and Municipalities. Vice-Mayor of Sala, well-known for his original anti-corruption measures and the former Chairman of the now no longer existent Civil Service Office¹⁰ were also interviewed. In total, 21 people had been contacted; 17 personally interviewed, 1 via telephone and the author also received two email responses. Only one interviewee refused to take part in the research.¹¹

Interviews were designed to last around 30 minutes. However, some of the interviews lasted considerably more due to the interest that the interviewees showed in the topic and willingness to provide the author with more information usually regarding their personal experience. The author decided that such

information could be very valuable to the research and hence allowed the interviews to last more than originally planned. Questions asked had been designed to provide answers regarding the initiation, cost, delivery, implementation, benefits, limitations, sustainability and applicability of the project. However, some of them have been more open and asked the interviewees about their experience, decisions and measures taken in the fight against corruption.¹² Interviewees were contacted through official means. Apart from the TIS employees, the author had not known the interviewees personally before.¹³

All but two personal interviews were voice-recorded and hence the author did not encounter any difficulties with later transcribing, selecting and using relevant data material. The remaining two together with two telephone interviews were recorded in a note form. Most of the interviewees also granted the use of their replies both verbatim and paraphrased. The rest required prior authorisation to their replies being used. Also, see section 3.6 for a discussion of other ethical issues. The fact that the author offered interviewees to carry out a short executive summary in the Slovak language after the research was over (i.e. September 2009) proved to be very well received.

3.4 Data analysis

Both inductive and deductive reasoning were applied throughout the research. Deduction was applied while working with the various theories and literature on fighting corruption. By conducting primary and secondary research, the author examined the separate stages of the policy-making process and applied the theories, policies and approaches recommended by some of the interviewees and other international and home (i.e. Slovak) authors. This resulted in a number of recommendations to the project and to its future form. On the other hand, induction was employed while looking at the project's applicability. The research looked at possible generalisation of the project, its measures and their applicability in other towns, municipalities and other levels of governance in Slovakia.

In order to secure the reliability of interviews and primary data, the author interviewed several people who were asked exactly same questions and were

supposed to provide similar information. No significant discrepancies occurred which could have affected the results of the research. Reliability of data was also one of the reasons why interviews with the ordinary public were not carried out. The data would not lead to a reliable and informed source of information. The topic is arguably still rather scientific in nature and what is more, the relatively short period of time of the project being implemented decreases the chances of an informed public opinion. In terms of the project findings being generalisable, it is very likely that the research conducted will become one of the first official and detailed reviews of the project. However, one case study even if proving very successful and its first examination are very unlikely going to provide enough evidence to be able to generalise and recommend the same policy procedure in all other 2,900 Slovak municipalities. While the research will come to a number of conclusions, recommendations and generalisable findings, it is crucial to consider various local conditions and specific context under which the project was carried out in Martin.

3.5 Challenges

The author has dealt with and had to resolve a number of challenges and risks such as the topicality of research, project delay, and research schedule adjustment. Firstly, it was necessary to get familiar with the whole project by using solely TIS's and Martin Town Hall's primary sources since any printed and electronic secondary sources are still very limited or provide just a general account of the scheme (Hrnciar 2008a and 2008b, SME 2008, Vrazda 2008, SITA 2008). Secondly, an unexpected delay in the project implementation led to a revision of the research aims and strategy. Thirdly, the original research schedule also had to be altered due to the ethical considerations and later start of the interviews. Apart from these, the author has not encountered any other particular difficulties while working or writing up the dissertation.

3.6 Ethical issues

The research has raised a number of ethical issues primarily due to the topic of corruption which is very delicate and could cause mistrust, lack of openness, and even perceived employment-related problems for the interviewees. All research participants who took part in the semi-structured interviews were first asked to

read the *Information sheet* and fill in the *Consent form*,¹⁴ both designed by the author and approved by the MBS Ethics Committee. Both the author and the participant retained a signed copy of the Consent form. An approval was required for any use of data and information collected from the participants, including their names and positions held. The majority of interviewees did not require authorisation prior to publication of their replies and personal information. Nevertheless, the author decided not to mention most of the interviewees by their personal names in order to make the research more comprehensible. Instead, they will be related to as Councillors (A-C), Town officials (A-D), Government officials (A-D), and TIS staff (A-C).¹⁵ All information acquired through interviews has been kept and considered as strictly confidential. Only the author has kept a secure and password protected record of the replies.

The issue of author's potential conflict of interest due to his former work for TIS has been addressed in the *Acknowledgement* section of the dissertation.

4. PROJECT ANALYSIS

It took more than a year for the Martin project to pass all of its various stages, i.e. from initiation to project implementation. Some took longer than originally anticipated but nevertheless resulted in a project first of its kind in Slovakia. Once agreed, the project was divided into 3 delivery stages: audit of selected town policies that were most likely to suffer from and/or be most prone to corruption; preparation and formulation of the selected town policies; and training of staff and implementation of the measures.¹⁶ The project was carried out between July 2008 and April 2009 and hence it is still very topical. The author will analyse the project through the following sections: project initiation, project delivery, project outcomes, project limitations, and project's sustainability. The chapter will provide a thorough analysis of each employing various public administration topics such as windows of opportunity, policy learning and transfer, paradigm shift, etc.

4.1 Project initiation

It was February 2008 when Martin Town Mayor, Andrej Hrnčiar, contacted the President of TIS and showed interest in anti-corruption measures being applied in his town. Following an advice from TIS, Hrnčiar decided to implement a complex project, covering all areas of local government prone to corruption. Public procurement was announced and carried out properly in order to choose the external provider in a transparent, fair and economic way. TIS won it as the most experienced provider in the field (Sicakova-Beblava 2009a, Hrnčiar 2009a). In May 2008, the Martin Town Council granted the project an equivalent of € 23,300 (700,000 SKK at the time) from the town's budget. The initiation stage is rather extraordinary regarding its timing. The project was initiated despite not being included in Hrnčiar's 2006 election manifesto and further, it was more than a year after Hrnčiar had taken office that he contacted the TIS President (Hrnčiar 2009a). This could be explained by applying Kingdon's *windows of opportunity* concept (1995). He argues that these windows open in policy systems but stay open only for short periods of time and hence a policy initiator must make use of the advantage while it is there to be taken. Arguably, Martin Mayor made use of such a window which opened soon after his election in December 2006. Since he was a

newcomer, he took time to get familiar with the occupation (Hrnciar 2009a, Councillor C 2009) but once in full understanding, he took a full advantage of the open window. His politically neutral background, largely supportive Town Council at the time, and his superior communication and persuasion skills (Councillor B 2009, Councillor C 2009),¹⁷ and last but not least the then absence of the economic crisis, allowed him to introduce such a radical measure. Interestingly, most of the interviewees pointed out his relatively young age (36) as a factor which also played role in the policy process and particularly its initiation. He might have been inspired by TIS and similar NGOs fighting for good causes but it was nevertheless him who initiated and set the agenda into the frame.

4.2 Project delivery

There are at least three features of the Martin project and its delivery which make it a unique scheme: external, complex and international project delivery. Firstly, the project was fully externally delivered by TIS. It is important to stress the *external* side of the project delivery since most if not all of the previous anti-corruption activities in Slovak municipalities had been conducted internally (Meciar 2009b). The Martin Mayor was looking for a renowned project provider (i.e. contractor) who would secure expert knowledge and good quality delivery (Hrnciar 2009a). Regarding external delivery and the influence of NGOs, Majone argues that agenda setting has become significantly influenced by transnational NGOs (2006, 247). However, the Martin project was clearly initiated by the Mayor himself and TIS or any other NGO or external body had not played part in the initiation process (Hrnciar 2009a, Sicakova-Beblava 2009a) despite later outsourcing. Secondly, Hrnciar asked for a *complex* project covering all areas of local self-government and its administration that are prone to corruption. Until then, other similar anti-corruption projects in Slovakia had targeted only a particular policy area (Meciar 2009b). Thirdly, there was also a noteworthy *international* aspect of the project, since TI is a renowned NGO active in most of the world countries. Furthermore, the US ambassador to Slovakia, V. Obsitnik, was also personally involved in the project promotion which also secured the Martin town project an international recognition and considerable media attention (see Fig. 10). The three aforementioned delivery aspects of the project made it a pioneer scheme not only in Slovakia but perhaps also outside the Slovak borders.

Despite the uniqueness of the project in Slovakia, it is still useful to compare the Martin project to other Slovak initiatives meant to deliver similar goals although at a smaller scale and with less glamour. From the few Slovak municipalities in Slovakia which have showed intentions to fight corruption and bring more transparency to their local government, the towns of Sala and Levice usually stand out due to their successful anti-corruption measures. However, compared to Martin, Sala for instance, introduced policies which were delivered internally and considered one at the time rather than implementing complex and multi-faceted projects. Furthermore, anti-corruption policies have usually been implemented only after local anti-corruption champions won elections and were able to deliver their promises (Meciar 2009b). Fig. 3 below clearly shows that the Martin project is very different to a typical Slovak local anti-corruption scheme.

Fig. 5 Sala and Martin anti-corruption project compared

Town/project feature	Included in the election manifesto?	Delivery	Structure
Martin	No	External	Complex
Sala	Yes	Internal	Basic

As a result, with the lack of anti-corruption measures at the local government level, the Martin anti-corruption scheme could be considered as the beginning of a new *paradigm shift* in dealing with corruption in Slovakia. One of the questions asked was thus aimed at finding out whether the Martin project is indeed a beginning of a large scale anti-corruption wave taking place across the whole country. The respondents were rather sceptical and all thought that the project would remain a one-off even if proving successful (e.g. Sicakova-Beblava 2009a, TIS staff B 2009, Hrneciar 2009a).

4.2.1 Audit

The research will now examine the three distinct project stages. During the audit stage, 17 town policy areas most prone to corruption were analysed by TIS. Examples include the policy on local media, policy on grants, and policy on public participation in decision making.¹⁸ The external audit was carried out from July to August 2008. Once finished, TIS submitted an audit report in the form of an assessment of each of the policies. This included their then state of affairs and

weaknesses (Sicakova-Beblava 2008b). According to TIS employees, the audit was carried out without any significant difficulties. Most of the Town Hall staff and Town Council officials were cooperating with TIS. Nevertheless, there had been few individual cases of lack of cooperation which had to be resolved by the Mayor himself (TIS staff A 2009, TIS staff B 2009).

4.2.2 Policy formulation

The originally designated end date for the formulation stage was extended by three months. As a result, it took longest of the three stages. Regarding the Martin project delivery and particularly its formulation, the concepts of *policy learning* and *policy transfer* could be applied. TIS first learned and then clearly and deliberately tried to transfer a number of policies from other international environments and models to Slovak local government setting (Sicakova-Beblava 2009a, Town official B 2009). Internationalisation of policy knowledge and policy transfer has clear benefits but there is, however, also the danger of uncritical acceptance of foreign models which Minogue describes as “disturbing” (2001, 39). According to some of the interviewees, TIS was not critical enough and did not sufficiently consider the local context in which the pilot anti-corruption policies were supposed to be implemented (Councillor A 2009, Councillor C 2009, Town official B 2009). As a result, there have been a number of “professional disagreements” between what TIS was proposing¹⁹ and what the Martin Town Hall was willing or able to do (Town official B 2009). According to the Office Manager of the Martin Town Hall, the delay was caused by the amount of detail and work which the individual 17 policy areas needed. What is more, the Town Hall often had to find working compromises with TIS so that all the new measures and policies were both according to the Slovak legislation and as much open and corruption-free as possible (Town official B 2009). Arguably, some of the proposed measures went too far and were indeed legally impossible to implement whereas others were politically unacceptable such as some of the proposed measures concerning media policy (TIS staff C 2009).²⁰ Nevertheless, apart from the media policy and a number of other issues, the majority of policies formulated by TIS were agreed upon and passed to the implementation stage by the Town Hall almost intact (TIS staff B 2009, TIS staff C 2009).

4.2.3 Training and implementation

The implementation process accompanied by TIS training was carried out between February and April 2009 which was four months later compared to the original end date. This was caused by the delay of the previous stage. Training was still conducted by TIS whereas the Martin Town Hall was solely in charge of implementation. This was partly due to TIS running out of its project resources. Sicakova-Beblava believes that presence of TIS would have been beneficial even at this last stage of the project delivery and that future projects should consider it (2009a). Some of the measures were implemented as soon as possible because they did not require to be passed through the Town Council. However, despite the Mayor being able to pass the majority of the measures by himself as a matter of new Town Hall regulation, he purposely left most of them to be passed by the Council. According to Hrnčiar, he wanted the measures to have “greater strength” and hence be more sustainable even after he finishes his mandate (2009a).

Importantly, *policy framing* (Vickers, 1995) also played its indispensable role throughout the implementation process of the project. Martin Mayor had been aware of the initial financial burden and also a psychological block (Klitgaard 2000) and hence had to persuade the Councillors to accept the cost and also the fact that their powers and privileges will become under more scrutiny. Hence, policy framing took place which promoted and framed the project not only as a means to stop corruption but also as a means to save public resources and attract investment (Hrnčiar 2009a) and as a scheme which would put the town of Martin on the spotlight of anti-corruption efforts in Slovakia (TIS staff B 2009).

4.3 Project outcomes

It has been mentioned before that it is too early to fairly judge the project according to its outcomes. Representatives of all the involved groups in the scheme were in generally unable to express their view or mention its concrete results. Nevertheless, there are a few outputs that can already be identified. For example, the Martin town spokesman mentioned that the amount of foreign direct investment (FDI) had significantly increased in the Martin town district mostly because of the anti-corruption status that the town had gained (2009). Other initial outputs will now be examined under the five headings of expected outcomes:

greater transparency, greater public engagement and accountability, the three Es, increased town prestige, and influencing the wider society.

4.3.1 Transparency

Most importantly, the project was designed and implemented in order to secure more transparency at the local government level. There have already been a number of improvements done in this field. So far, the most obvious and effective has been the creation of a new website called “Transparent Town”. The site is run by the Martin Town Hall and is already fully operational. Everyone is now able to see how the public money is spent, when all the job interviews at the Town Hall take place, when and where the individual Council Committees meet, etc. What is more, one of the anti-corruption measures also led to a creation of a new post – Town Hall’s Ethics Plenipotentiary. The Town Hall has already employed the winning candidate whose main responsibility is to uphold impartiality and transparency in the municipality (Sicakova-Beblava 2009b).

4.3.2 Public engagement and accountability

According to Hrnčiar, one of the aims of the project was also to “give people a chance to participate in the public life and decision-making processes of the town” (2009a). As a result, one of the 17 audited policies also looked at increasing public participation and through that delivering greater accountability and public scrutiny of the elected and unelected officials. Thanks to the project, the Town Hall uses its and also the newly created website to effectively inform, invite and engage the public on an unprecedented scale. For example, the public has had a chance to vote for a new official town logo. Other new engaging features include open invitations to Town Hall and Council committee meetings and other municipal activities, provision of detailed information on public procurement and various other reports; all of which are easily accessible.

4.3.3 The three Es

Economy, efficiency and effectiveness nearly always play a significant part in any public sector reform or public management discussion (e.g. Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004). While still difficult to see concrete evidence of efficiency and effectiveness, economically the project has already delivered some noticeable

results. Despite this being not the main motivation behind the Martin project, one could consider it as a positive and well timed²¹ by-product. For example, just the first two e-auctions done as a new method of public procurement in order to limit corruption, saved already at least €128,000²² (anonymous 2009). This by far exceeds the initial project cost and hence makes it from an economic point of view a worthwhile investment.

4.3.4 Prestige

Also, thanks to the anti-corruption efforts and particularly the project itself, the town has gained a status of a transparent and corruption-free town recognised even internationally (Hrnciar 2009a). A number of international companies chose to invest in the Martin district area deliberately because of the widely publicised anti-corruption status that the town has recently gained (Town spokesman 2009). Such investment could by far exceed not only the initial cost of the project but also the town's budget.

4.3.5 Wider society

The project is very likely to affect even the wider Slovak society. A number of towns have already contacted both Martin officials and TIS employees to ask for advice and their experience with the anti-corruption project (Town official B 2009, Sicakova-Beblava 2009a). What is more, the project could be applied in other local and regional self-governments and potentially even at the national government level (see chapter 5). Martin Mayor has been openly promoting his initiative,²³ and whether for honest or political reasons, he has managed to effectively inform both the public and officials at local and national level about the project's benefits (see Fig. 10 and 11). For example, despite being unsuccessful, the Slovak town of Povazska Bystrica had been already inspired by Martin's efforts and attempted to introduce a similar project (TASR 2009).

4.4 Project limitations and future adjustments

When asked about limitations, the interviewees mentioned a number of downsides from which the author selected the following as being the most relevant and possible to be adjusted: insufficient funding and time, top-down initiation, adaptability of officials to new rules, and political aspect.

4.4.1 Insufficient funding and time

Due to the originality of the project, it is difficult to judge whether the resources used were sufficient. Some of the TIS employees argued that the price was set too low compared to the market price of such a project delivered by private consulting companies (TIS staff C 2009, Sicakova-Beblava 2009a). What is more, had it been for more funding, the project would have arguably been delivered in even better quality and more depth (Sicakova-Beblava 2009a). TIS was struggling with finances in the last stage of the project delivery and hence had to limit and adjust the number of visits of its experts accordingly. On the other hand, others and especially some of the town councillors argue that the amount of resources spent on the project was excessive (Councillor A 2009, Councillor C 2009). The rest of the interviewees were either indifferent or thought that the funding was sufficient.

4.4.2 Initiation process

The Vice-mayor of Sala argues that the top-down initiation process of the Martin anti-corruption project “lacks a strong base” (Meciar 2009b) which could affect not only the project’s immediate success but also its sustainability in the future. Meciar, an anti-corruption project initiator himself, points out that his project is an example of a bottom-up, self-made approach and adds that it is more spontaneous than the “imported” project in Martin (2009b). On the other hand, it could be argued that the Martin project is even more spontaneous than the measures in Sala because compared to Sala, it was not included in the Martin Mayor’s election manifesto and what is more, Hrnčiar initiated the project himself too and more than a year after he had been elected. The role of spontaneity and honesty will be considered in greater detail in section 4.5. However, apart from fighting corruption, one of the aims behind the Martin project was also the increase of public engagement (Hrnčiar 2009a). Despite not being anti-corruption oriented in essence, the 2002 ‘Listening to the City’ project based in the New York City could be seen as an alternative way of local project delivery. It included significant participatory features (Fung 2006) which invited local citizens to take part in a chain of public meetings carried out in the form of small group tutorials. By contrast, the Martin project was largely institutionally based, top-down initiated, and so far lacking any form of *direct* public involvement.

4.4.3 Teaching old dogs new tricks

Budzak expresses doubt over the adaptability of the Martin Town Hall's and the Martin Council's officials and staff to the new rules and regulations (2009b). He argues that an employee is able to adjust his or her working habits only to a limited extent. Also naturally, the older the worker gets, the harder it becomes for him to adapt. Human resources management is also one of the crucial parts of modern and *new public management* (Osborne and Gaebler 1992). Whether it is motivational schemes such as pay per performance or special training programmes designed for local civil servants and officials, these could have been considered much more and should have been included also in the Town Hall's expenses even after the official end of the project delivery.

4.4.4 Politics

TIS staff B mentions the "politics aspect" as one of the most likely downsides of the project (2009). Arguably, the scheme was not only meant to bring more transparency but also a political benefit from being unique, well publicised and publicly well received. However, one could argue that politics is an inextricable part of such projects and that it is natural for a local politician like Hrnčiar to make use of such a potentially successful scheme that was after all initiated by him. Politics does indeed play its significant part in the success or failure of similar projects and also in their long-term sustainability. This will be discussed in the next section in greater detail.

4.5 Project sustainability

Project sustainability will be crucial for the Martin project when assessing its overall success. Despite the most likely short-term success and vast media publicity, it is still possible that the project would in the long-term prove to be a failure particularly due to its lack of sustainability. International and humanitarian aid which can bring immediate relief but often fails to provide long-term solutions could be used as a warning to Martin. It is hence crucial for the project to be considered seriously even after the current Mayor leaves the office. Politicians often exchange but if the current Martin Mayor decides to stand again and gets re-elected, it will be very important not to become complacent as so many politicians and public figures have done before.

Easton, while commenting on policymaking and its *inputs*, mentions the need for both policy demand and support (1969). He argues that “without [a steady flow of support] a system will not absorb sufficient energy from its members to be able to convert demands to decisions“ (1969, 40). Easton’s claim could also be applied on Martin project’s sustainability. Since it was not for a bottom-up or citizens’ demand and pressure, which put the policy on the Martin Mayor’s policy agenda, it will be very important to get the public behind this project and indeed “absorb sufficient energy” in order to make it sustainable in the long run. Furthermore, project’s sustainability could also be affected by the sincerity of the project initiator. Regarding the timing of the initiation in February 2008, Hrnčiar argues that it was his new experience as a Mayor but also serious corruption allegations made against him soon after he was elected in December 2006, which led to a mosaic of reasons to initiate such a project (2009a). On the other hand, critics could argue that Hrnčiar planned to use the anti-corruption project as a cover-up for the corruption allegations made against him. Others argue that it could all be part of a clever marketing plan to get re-elected and later to reach the top levels of Slovak politics (Councillor B 2009). Whether one way or another, Sicakova-Beblava argues that the motivation and sincerity behind such a project is “irrelevant” as long as it is successful and delivers positive results for the citizens of Martin (2009a).

5. APPLICABILITY OF THE PROJECT ON A NATIONAL SCALE

This chapter will discuss applicability of the project based on the primary research data and experience from similar anti-corruption schemes elsewhere. It will identify factors working as determinants of successful anti-corruption project implementation. Then, it will consider the Martin project application through 13 combinations of project delivery with alternatives in funding, coordination and the three levels of governance in Slovakia. Based on the primary research only, their prospect for delivery will also be examined. It is important to note that by applicability of the Martin project and/or anti-corruption projects in general, the author refers to an implementation of a complex, multi-faceted anti-corruption scheme covering most if not all areas prone to corruption in the respective government or public body. That is the reason why individual anti-corruption measures will not be considered as one of the application alternatives.²⁴

5.1 Applicability of anti-corruption projects

In order to consider applicability of the Martin project, it is necessary to also consider application of anti-corruption schemes elsewhere in the world. Similarly to policy transfers, project applicability still needs to take into consideration the context under which the original policy was carried out and hence one has to be careful with applicability generalisations. Due to the project's complexity and *holistic* approach, there are only a limited number of schemes which could be considered as being equivalent or similar to it. Interestingly, the Martin anti-corruption project took inspiration from other world anti-corruption schemes and mainly the anti-corruption policies introduced in the Bolivian city of La Paz in the late 1980s by its then Mayor and today's world famous anti-corruption expert Ronald MacLean-Abaroa (Hrnciar 2009a). However, La Paz of 1980s could be only very hardly compared to Martin of today. A South American vibrant city suffering from endemic corruption, mafia and staggering crime rates (Klitgaard 2000) compared to the small East-Central European town of Martin experiencing public life to any other Slovak settlement of similar size. What is more, whereas MacLean-Abaroa was required and promised to deliver the anti-corruption measures also due to the appalling levels of local government corruption (Klitgaard 2000), Hrnciar was under no pressure and had the freedom to carry out

the project (Hrnciar 2009a). Hence, Martin's anti-corruption measures could also be described as being not only *preventative*²⁵ but also as a *voluntary policy transfer*.

5.2 Five factors of anti-corruption project implementation

Similarly to any other public policy implementation in different environments, there are a number of factors which need to be addressed in order to implement a successful anti-corruption policy project. Through literature review of the secondary sources and also considering the answers on applicability and its obstacles obtained through the primary research, the author selected five factors which ought to be considered in order to increase the chances to successfully implement a similar anti-corruption scheme in the same or different Slovak setting. The minimum to consider is: political will, financial resources, level of corruption, incrementalism, and external circumstances. Despite being primarily relevant to the project application in Slovakia, the five factors could be generalisable for any anti-corruption projects of a similar scale.

5.2.1 Political will

In order for an anti-corruption project to be implemented and successful, "the chief executive has to be committed to zero tolerance" (Jacobs 2002, 84) According to Martin Mayor, "great and successful ideas are not as hard as they seem" (Hrnciar 2009a) and it is indeed the political will of one decision maker in charge that often makes all the difference (Meciar 2009a). However, the Martin project would not have been able to even start its first stage, had it not been for an approval received from the 30 Martin Councillors. Klitgaard argues that "fighting corruption somehow implies that one is corrupt, and this in turn offers ammunition to one's opponents" (2000, 8) and hence voting for anti-corruption measures could be perceived by some politicians or in this case Councillors as 'shooting oneself in the foot'. Thus, more than just the decision maker's political will is required. Arguably, this is the area of public policy process where political and management skills come in useful (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004). Section 4.1 (*Project initiation*) argues that Martin Mayor's political background, supportive Town Council, communication and persuasion skills, together with his relatively young age all played a role in the successful project delivery.

5.2.2 Financial resources

Projects or policies also have a certain initial cost attached to them. This in most cases takes the form of financial expenses. The Martin project officially cost € 23,300 which all went to TIS which in return delivered policy audit, policy formulation and training. It is usually the policy maker who negotiates and agrees to the cost of such a project but he must nevertheless seek an approval by the body in charge of financial resources. Almost by definition, it is the role of the legislature as the direct representative of the people to decide and vote on financial matters in government. As a result, complex and externally delivered anti-corruption schemes which are dependent upon initial but nevertheless considerable financial resources must be approved first by those usually not proposing them. This is where problems might arise as has been the case with some of the potentially successful projects which have been called off particularly because of the initial financial investment which the legislatures were not willing to grant (TIS staff B 2009, TASR 2009). Sajo argues that “while transparency is widely recognised as a preventive remedy to corruption, it is also seen, sometimes, as a burdensome transaction cost that impedes the region’s economic development” (2002, 2). Therefore, political will must be accompanied by enough financial resources or at least enough political power to attain those resources.

5.2.3 Level of corruption

Perhaps paradoxically, a successfully delivered project despite having the aim of fighting corruption is very unlikely to be implemented in an environment suffering from high levels of corruption. As a result, governments whether at local, regional or national level which suffer from endemic corruption are very unlikely going to push such reforms voluntarily or as preventative measures. For example, Hrnčiar argues that “lobbying and [government’s] business ties could be seen as an obstacle to such a project” (2009a). In other words, corruption in the form of clientelism could hinder anti-corruption processes. Nevertheless, there are circumstances which lead even the most corrupt governments and officials to willingly implement tough anti-corruption schemes. For example, the EU funds motivate governments to pass various measures in order to qualify and meet the criteria to enter the competition for numerous grant schemes. What is more, in case of Bulgaria and Romania, their respective national governments are forced to

fight corruption under the threat of losing significant amounts of EU funding (Miller 2008). Therefore, the level of corruption preceding successful project implementation is crucial but could nevertheless be under certain conditions irrelevant.

5.2.4 Incrementalism

In order to be able to fully implement a Martin project-type scheme, it is necessary to consider the extent to which the environment, in which the application is about to take place, is *path dependent* or in other words is ready or willing to change. Incrementalism is according to Lindblom an inextricable part of public policy process and for a radical change to occur, it is necessary to take gradual steps (1959, also 1979). Also, instead of a rational model, incrementalism requires “careful politics” (Hague 2007, 380) and in case of incremental policy-making, “policy emerges from, rather than precedes, negotiation with interested groups” (Hague 2007, 381). Martin Mayor, too, had to take part in a number of negotiations before he managed to persuade the Council to approve of the changes (Councillor B 2009, Councillor C 2009). Furthermore, the Vice-President of the Supreme Audit Office argues that it will take an equivalent of at least two generations of people in Slovakia for the corruption habits learnt during the Communist era to fade away (Gov. official C 2009). In other words, the *paradigm shift* is still beyond reach despite the first signs of it. The Martin project case study could also be classified as an example of an incremental change despite Obsitnik, the then US Ambassador to Slovakia, calling it a “revolution” (Hrnciar 2009b). Others argue that Martin had had a positive anti-corruption record even before Hrnciar took office in 2006 and that it played a significant role in the successful project implementation (TIS staff C 2009, Councillor C 2009, Plai 2009). Possibly, the Martin project could be considered as a fast policy change but with incremental steps taken over a short period of time. Therefore, it is also the state at which the object of the future policy is, which ought to be considered as one of the factors before choosing to implement such a far-reaching project.

5.2.5 External circumstances

Financial and economic crisis could be considered as an epitome of an external and unexpected circumstance. A number of municipalities which had been

interested in a similar anti-corruption scheme to the Martin project suddenly called off their intentions officially due to the crisis (Sicakova-Beblava 2009a). In such cases it might not be just a matter of spending extra financial resources in the time of financial shortage but also spending resources on a project which is not yet guaranteed to succeed. In the unstable times of economic and other crises, governments choose not to implement ‘unnecessary’ projects (Budzak 2009b). Instead, money, time and other resources are diverted towards more conservative government goals such as upholding employment, provision of basic goods and services, etc. As a result, one could say that the *windows of opportunity* for such a scheme closed for the time being. However, various external circumstances such as the economic crisis could also be used as an argument for implementation of anti-corruption measures. Arguably, they are not only designed and implemented to limit corruption and bring transparency, but also to bring more prosperity through attracting investment (Hrnciar 2009b).

5.3 Application models

Interestingly, the majority of interviewees considered the project as being applicable not only in a similar local government setting but also at higher tiers of government. The author has hence considered all 3 governance levels in Slovakia as being able to address the five aforementioned project implementation factors. While some are able to address them better than others, there are at least 13 various models of applying the project or its measures on a national scale. Whether it is other municipalities and towns similar to Martin, or the 8 regional governments, or the national government in Bratislava and its numerous Ministries, Offices and other public bodies; they could all be considered as objects of complex anti-corruption project implementation. Some of the following project application alternatives are by and large similar except the source of their funding (i.e. internal, external, mixture), their coordination or lack of it; and lastly, their optionality. However, these distinctions are crucial as a number of the interviewed experts expressed their support for a similar scheme only under the condition of optionality and/or external funding provision (e.g. Gov. official C 2009). The following figure is a brief summary of the 13 alternatives which will now be looked at in some detail.

Fig. 6: Applicability of the anti-corruption project in Slovakia

Government level	Application alternatives
Local	Local uncoordinated self-funded project Local coordinated self-funded project Local externally funded project Local co-funded project New legislation & regulation
Regional	Regional uncoordinated self-funded project Regional coordinated self-funded project Regional externally funded project Regional co-funded project New legislation & regulation
National	National self-funded project National internationally-funded project New legislation & regulation

5.4 Application at a local government level

The section will examine the first five possible application models of the project at a local government level.

5.4.1 Local uncoordinated self-funded project

This model is already put in practice in Martin and hence it has all of Martin project's characteristics. The Martin scheme also works as a proof that such a model could be implemented and is most likely going to function effectively since it has already brought the first outcomes. All five factors had been successfully addressed and dealt with.²⁶ Theoretical aspects of the project and the know-how has been openly publicised through the Martin town and TIS websites. Hence policy learning and policy transfer ought to be much easier. Most of the interviewees expressed their positive opinion about this particular scheme (e.g. Gov. official C 2009) although neither of the TIS staff, nor anyone else expected a sudden wave of interest in a similar project model implementation in Slovakia (Sicakova-Beblava 2009a, TIS staff A-C 2009, Hrciar 2009a).

5.4.2 Local coordinated self-funded project

The second model is almost the same as the first alternative apart from the *coordinated* status. The project would also remain self-funded and based at a local government level. This means that similarly to the Martin scheme, it would not cost the national or regional government anything which in return could act as coordinators and encourage such projects on a national scale. Also, different

models of cooperation are possible such as regional clusters of towns and municipalities assisting and sharing their experience with project implementation. Although several towns and municipalities including Martin have already implemented various anti-corruption measures, these still remain uncoordinated. Neither the national government nor the local authorities have attempted to fight corruption through passing such extensive anti-corruption measures in a nationally or at least regionally coordinated approach. What is more, Hrnčiar argues that the national government is very unlikely to promote local anti-corruption schemes unless it is willing to deal with corruption at the top levels first (2009a).

5.4.3 Local externally funded project

An *externally* funded project should also necessarily be *coordinated*. Whether the cost of the project would be paid for by the national government, the EU or other regional and/or government body, it ought to make sure that funding is not only available to certain municipalities but to all of them in a coordinated fashion and under the same and fair conditions. However, conditions such as a balanced budget or certain minimum size of municipality should be omitted because such a project would be more beneficial for municipalities struggling with their finances and it is arguably the smallest municipalities which suffer or are most prone to corruption and nepotism (Pirosik 2004). What is more, if all the financial resources were provided by an external body, this would lead into a more likely implementation. The Martin project could be used as a case study to encourage external bodies to finance similar projects. For example, both the national government and the EU already provide numerous grants and subsidies through various programmes (European Commission 2009). These could also include preventative anti-corruption measures (Hrnčiar 2009a).

5.4.4 Local co-funded project

This scheme would have the same characteristics as a *Local externally funded project* (5.4.3) but with a *co-funded* status. Similarly to most of the EU and national grants, such a project would have to be at least partly financed by the recipient. EU funds usually have a minimum requirement of 5% co-funding which could be considered. However, the national government or any other external

funding provider wanting to fight local government corruption ought to pay attention to those municipalities using the co-funding rule as a financial constraint also leading to a lack of political will to implement such measures. On the other hand, co-funding could work as an incentive for municipalities to consider the scheme even more seriously while it is own resources that local officials feel arguably more accountable for.

5.4.5 New national government legislation affecting local government

The current state of public life, public perception of corruption and the slow speed at which these variables are improving in Slovakia would not only make this model politically acceptable but would also add weight for *mandatory* implementation through new or amended *legislation* affecting all municipalities. It would set specific rules, regulations and measures similar or same as in the Martin project but designed to be generally applied in all local governments. New legislation and/or regulation could be put in place relatively easily despite being seen both by the national government and those targeted by the legislation as being very unpopular and often difficult to enforce (Sicakova-Beblava 2009a, Budzak 2009b). In case such mandatory legislation model went ahead, it would be advisable to pass the new legislation in parts and amend the already existing legislation regulating the various aspects of local government. Most of the interviewees argued that implementing complex measures similar to the Martin scheme in the form of a single act of parliament would be technically impossible (e.g. TIS staff B 2009).

Fig. 7: Applicability of the anti-corruption project: local government level

	Funding	Coordinated?	Optional or Mandatory
5.4.1 Local uncoordinated self-funded project	Internal	NO	Optional
5.4.2 Local coordinated self-funded project	Internal	YES	Optional
5.4.3 Local externally funded project	External	YES	Optional
5.4.4 Local co-funded project	Internal + external	YES	Optional
5.4.5 New legislation & regulation	N/A	YES	Mandatory

5.5 Application at a regional government level

This section will also examine five potential application models of the project but this time at a regional government level.

5.5.1 Regional uncoordinated self-funded project

There are only 8 regional units (i.e. Superior Territorial Units) of similar size and population which were all established only recently in 2001. Compared to nearly 2,900 Slovak municipalities, they do not only share similar size and population, but are also much more likely to have similar characteristics needed for a successful anti-corruption project implementation (TIS staff B 2009). Arguably, this makes the project relatively easy to implement on a national scale and even in an *uncoordinated* and *self-funded* approach.

5.5.2 Regional coordinated self-funded project

The 8 regions should at least in theory find it easier to *coordinate* anti-corruption effort than the 2,900 municipalities. Similarly to the local model (5.4.2), the project would remain *self-funded* which could encourage the national government to act as the coordinator of the effort without any extra cost inflicted on the tax payer. Furthermore, the number of inhabitants effected by a single project and without any extra cost to the national government's budget also makes this an alternative likely to become implemented (TIS staff B 2009).

5.5.3 Regional externally funded project

Compared to the local model (5.4.3), implementing anti-corruption measures in only 8 units with the effect of covering the whole country would potentially mean a positive change or at least a change in the corruption perception in the whole country. Even if implemented in only one unit, the scheme would have an effect on at least hundreds of thousands of citizens which could lead into more political will and external funding for its implementation. For example, a single anti-corruption project in the Bratislava Region would potentially affect at least its 600,000 people compared to only 60,000 in Martin.

5.5.4 Regional co-funded project

The model is almost equally to the regional externally funded counterpart (5.5.3) very likely to be seen as being politically attractive due to the number of inhabitants and potential voters in the regions taking benefit from the project. What is more, the project is co-funded which means that the national government or any other likely external funding provider would not have to pay all the costs. Co-financing would also arguably lead to better awareness and higher motivation of regional authorities to genuinely implement the project. By contrast, full external funding could lead into complacency and the lack of sustainability despite initial and greater political will.

5.5.5 New national government legislation affecting regional government

The fact that there are only 8 regional units instead of nearly 2,900 at the local level should arguably make the passing of the new or amended mandatory legislation less problematic in terms of negotiation and finding political will which is necessary for successful implementation of anti-corruption projects. Otherwise, apart from the regional scope, same applies as in 5.4.5.

Fig. 8: Applicability of the anti-corruption project: regional gov. level

	Funding	Coordinated?	Optional or Mandatory
5.5.1 Regional uncoordinated self-funded project	Internal	NO	Optional
5.5.2 Regional coordinated self-funded project	Internal	YES	Optional
5.5.3 Regional externally funded project	External	YES	Optional
5.5.4 Regional co-funded project	Internal + external	YES	Optional
5.5.5 New legislation & regulation	N/A	YES	Mandatory

5.6 Application at a national government level

The last section will examine the last three possible application models of the project likely to be implemented at a national government level.

5.6.1 National self-funded project

National governments ought to be fighting corruption at any time but they should also realise that fighting corruption is a long-term challenge and any measures need to be sustainable. In a country like Slovakia, which still experiences numerous cases of national government corruption (Todova 2009, TIS 2009), anti-corruption measures should be made one of the national government's top priorities. Hence, *national self-funded* anti-corruption project aimed at the government's Ministries and other national Offices or public bodies is one of the approaches how it can be done.

5.6.2 National internationally-funded project

Similarly to EU accession funds, such anti-corruption schemes could be financed or at least co-financed by the EU or other *international* bodies. In case the negotiations do not result in funding assistance, the Slovak government could nevertheless ask for help and advice from its many international partners and governments having sufficient experience with anti-corruption efforts. Alternatively, the EU could similarly to Bulgaria and Romania (Miller 2008), at least in theory require the Slovak government to implement various anti-corruption measures which could work as a precondition for receiving EU funding and subsidies. The EU had already set a number of conditions that Slovakia had to meet; for instance, before the country could have been fully accepted into the Union.²⁷

5.6.3 National government's new legislation and regulation affecting itself

Arguably, this is a model that could have the greatest anti-corruption impact on the whole country. The Slovak government could pass such legislation or internal regulation relatively easily and without any significant financial constraints (Sicakova-Beblava 2009a). The Prime Minister concentrates a considerable amount of political power that could also be used for various necessary but often internally²⁸ unpopular decisions. One of the by-products of fighting corruption at the national government level could be the improvement of Slovakia's corruption image which could also be one of the ways of how to attract more foreign investment and increase economic growth (e.g. Burnett 2001, UNDP 1997, UN-HABITAT and TI 2004, Hutchcroft 2002, Stefes 2006).

Fig. 9: Applicability of the anti-corruption project: national gov. level

	Funding	Coordinated?	Optional or Mandatory
5.6.1 National self-funded project	Internal	N/A	Optional
5.6.2 National internationally-funded project	External	YES	Optional
5.6.3 New legislation & regulation	N/A	YES	Mandatory

6. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens.

Exodus 18.21

Sometimes it is perhaps better to choose those who “hate a bribe” and listen to what Weber says about the ideal civil service, instead of investing heavily in various anti-corruption projects, codes of ethics and training, which are meant to deliver transparent and corruption-free public services. Arguably, it is more a matter of human nature and psychology that leads people into corrupted behaviour which is even harder to eradicate than just ‘bad habits’. Corruption in Slovakia is often connected with the word *endemic*. It is hence not enough to just rely on projects and hope for more local anti-corruption champions to arise soon. Ideally, a more far-reaching and nationally coordinated approach is needed. However, until then the Martin project is a more realistic alternative which despite being able to affect only a fraction of Slovakia’s population, does meet most of the requirements and preconditions for a successful anti-corruption policy which could later be applied nationwide.

6.1 Summary

6.1.1 Project analysis

The author has discussed the various stages of the Martin project and mentioned some of its early outcomes: increased transparency and public engagement in governance, saving significant financial resources, prestige leading to more investment, and also benefits to the wider society. Its long-term sustainability has also been considered which will to a certain extent depend on the level of policy initiator’s sincerity. A number of limitations and future improvements have been identified. First, in case of more funding and time, there could have been a better quality project delivered under more TIS supervision. Second, the initiation process could have involved more bottom-up approaches and public engagement.

Third, a new well-written and well-presented project does not secure its adherence by the staff used to the previous methods. Last, some of the replies received through the interviews claimed that the initiator also had political reasons for implementation. These could potentially hinder the overall image of the project, its effectiveness and chances for applicability elsewhere despite its true uniqueness.

6.1.2 Project applicability

The research has demonstrated that there are multiple ways how to apply the Martin project and its measures in other levels of government in Slovakia. However, there are five factors which have to be addressed before applying and implementing such a scheme. Lack of political will, high levels of corruption, lack of financial resources, conservative environment, and unexpected negative circumstances could all hinder project's prospects for successful implementation and its future effectiveness. The following 13 scenarios have been indentified and considered for future application, from which the *Local uncoordinated self-funded project* was regarded as the most suitable model for project implementation now and in the future:

- **Local uncoordinated self-funded project**
- Local coordinated self-funded project
- Local externally funded project
- Local co-funded project
- New legislation & regulation affecting local government
- Regional uncoordinated self-funded project
- Regional coordinated self-funded project
- Regional externally funded project
- Regional co-funded project
- New legislation & regulation affecting regional government
- National self-funded project
- National internationally-funded project
- New legislation & regulation affecting national government

6.2 Limitations and recommendations for further research

Contrary to the author's original proposal, it was not possible to fully assess the project's success and evaluate its outcomes due to the delay in project delivery by four months. However, even if it had not been for the delay, the project evaluation would have been most likely questioned for its reliability and accuracy due to the sheer complexity of the project and the limited amount of time during which the project has been put in practice. Furthermore, had the author had more time and financial resources for the research, the gathered data could have been even more representative, reliable and beneficial for the research. For example, a quantitative study could have been employed.

The following areas could be considered for further research:

- Complex evaluation of the project including individual evaluation of the 17 separate anti-corruption policies.
- Political aspects of the Martin scheme and other anti-corruption projects.
- Sustainability of anti-corruption projects.

6.3 Conclusion

The Martin anti-corruption project needs time until it bears fully grown fruits. It will take at a minimum of six months to a year for the first project audit and official evaluation to be conducted by the Martin Town Hall and TIS independently of each other. However, such a vast project will need at least three to four years to provide results which could then be vigorously assessed and compared in a reliable study.

Eliminating corruption in the public sector is the "basic and necessary premise for making it more effective" (Sikula 2008, 184). Governments wishing to deliver modern, effective, efficient, economical and quality, customer-oriented public services in line with the *new public management* could consider the Martin project as an epitome of such effort. What makes this project extraordinary in Slovak conditions is not only its complexity, external delivery and international recognition. It is also the ideal combination of factors supported by open windows of opportunity which led into a successful anti-corruption policy implementation.

The Martin project would not have been successfully implemented, had it not been for Martin Mayor's political will accompanied by persuasion skills, enough financial resources, limited Town Hall and Town Council corruption, reform-friendly environment and a piece of luck in the form of an absence of negative external circumstances. Nevertheless, successful implementation (i.e. the end of implementation process) does not necessarily have to lead to project's success and sustainability.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Glossary²⁹

Civil service = štátna služba, verejná správa

Civil Service Office = Úrad pre štátnu službu

Civil Service Section = Sekcia verejnej správy

Department of Coordination and Modernisation of Civil Service = Odbor koordinácie a modernizácie verejnej správy

Division of Local Self-government and Education = Oddelenie územnej samosprávy a vzdelávania

Fight Against Corruption and Control Section = Sekcia kontroly a boja proti korupcii

Local government, Local self-government = miestna samospráva

Municipality = obec, (miestna) samospráva

Municipal council = obecné zastupiteľstvo

Regional council, Council of the territorial self-administration unit = regionálne zastupiteľstvo, zastupiteľstvo samosprávneho kraja, zastupiteľstvo vyššieho územného celku

Office manager (Martin town) = prednosta mestského úradu Martin

Office for Public Procurement = Úrad pre verejné obstarávanie (ÚVO)

Organisational and Legal Department = Organizačno-právny odbor

Organisational and Personal Division = Organizačno-personálne oddelenie

Public administration = verejná správa

Regional government, regional self-government = regionálna samospráva

Self-government = samospráva

Supreme Audit Office = Najvyšší kontrolný úrad (NKÚ)

Superior territorial unit = vyšší územný celok (VÚC), samosprávny kraj, župa

Territorial self-administration, Territorial self-government = územná samospráva

Town council = mestské zastupiteľstvo

Town hall = mestský úrad

Union of Chief Controllers of Towns and Municipalities = Združenie hlavných kontrolórov miest a obcí Slovenskej republiky (ZHR SR)

Appendix B: Interview questions

Interview questions A (Martin town officials):

1. Who initiated the scheme?
2. What were the intentions behind the anti-corruption scheme?
3. Why and how did you choose Transparency International Slovakia (TIS) to carry out the scheme?
4. How much public funding went on the project?
5. Was the funding appropriate and enough?
6. How much of that funding went to TIS?
7. Were you satisfied with TIS services? Any limitations?
8. Do you consider the Martin anti-corruption project (so far) as a success? Why?
9. Do you think that the Martin anti-corruption measures are sustainable?
10. Do you think that other towns will follow and take inspiration from your initiative? What obstacles do you perceive?
11. Do you think that the national authorities should consider your project as a pilot scheme in the national fight against corruption?
12. Would you like to say anything else regarding the project?

Interview questions B (Slovak government officials):

1. How would you describe the current situation in Slovakia regarding corruption in local authorities and the efforts to tackle this problem?
2. What is the role of your office in the fight against corruption in Slovakia?
3. What are in your opinion the most effective anti-corruption measures in local gov.?
4. How successful have you been so far?
5. What do you think of the Martin initiative and their anti-corruption project?
6. Do you consider the Martin anti-corruption project (so far) as a success? Why?
7. What have been its limitations? Why?
8. Do you think that the Martin anti-corruption measures are sustainable?
9. What would your recommendations be for a similar project in the future?
10. Is the Martin project applicable on a national scale? Why?
11. Is the Martin project a one off or a beginning of a large scale anti-corruption wave taking place across the country?
12. Do you think that more local authorities will follow the Martin example?
13. Would you like to say anything else regarding the Martin project?

Interview questions C (TIS employees):

1. Why do you think that officials in Martin decided to carry out such an initiative?
2. Were their intentions genuine?
3. How was TIS approached by Martin town's officials?
4. Why do you think that TIS was chosen to carry out the project?
5. How much money did TIS get for the project? Was it enough?
6. How did the Martin town's officials respond to the audit, advice, recommendations and training provided by TIS?
7. Do you consider the Martin anti-corruption project (so far) as a success? Why?
8. What have been its limitations? Why?
9. Do you think that the Martin anti-corruption measures are sustainable?
10. Is the Martin project applicable on a national scale? Why?
11. Is the Martin project a one off or a beginning of a large scale anti-corruption wave taking place across the country?
12. Do you think that the national authorities should consider your project as a pilot scheme in the national fight against corruption?
13. Do you think that more local authorities will follow the Martin example?
14. Would you like to say anything else regarding the project?

Interview questions D (other):

1. How would you describe the current situation in Slovakia regarding corruption in local authorities and the efforts to tackle this problem?
2. What is the role of your office in the fight against corruption in Slovakia/your area?
3. What are in your opinion the most effective anti-corruption measures in local gov.?
4. How successful have you been so far?
5. What do you think of the Martin initiative and their anti-corruption project?
6. Do you consider the Martin anti-corruption project (so far) as a success? Why?
7. What have been its limitations? Why?
8. Do you think that the Martin anti-corruption measures are sustainable?
9. What would your recommendations be for a similar project in the future?
10. Is the Martin project applicable on a national scale? Why and how?
11. Is the Martin project a one off or a beginning of a large scale anti-corruption wave taking place across the country?
12. Do you think that more local authorities will follow the Martin example?
13. Would you like to say anything else regarding the Martin project?

Appendix C: Information sheet and Consent form³⁰

Dear participant,

My name is Tomas Jacko and I am postgraduate student reading public administration at the University of Manchester. I am conducting research on corruption in the Slovak local government and particularly the various ways of how to stop this phenomenon. I am hoping to assess anti-corruption measures in the town of Martin and see whether they could be used on a national scale and by other local authorities. The following interview will be thus conducted for the purposes of writing a student project - a Master's level dissertation in the field of public administration. The institution which supervises and regulates the research is Manchester Business School, University of Manchester.

The following interview questions and answers will be strictly confidential and will be kept securely. This research will not put you into any risk as all personal information (i.e. name, occupation), answers, comments and opinions will be kept confidential, private and will be referenced only if your prior consent is given (as stated on the consent form below). No information will be used or passed to your employer, superiors, colleagues or any third parties. Participation at this research is entirely voluntary. Your refusal will cause no sanction, and you will not be required to give reasons for your refusal. If you agree to participate in the study, you are free to leave the study at any time without being required to give reasons for leaving.

The interview will take around 30 minutes. It will be a semi-structured interview which means that I will ask you some specific questions but you may answer them in your own way. You may wish to express your opinion or provide comments on any other issues that you might find significant and relevant to you or the research. Please be open and feel free to express yourself. The interview will be audio-taped only if you agree to this. The reasons for recording it are to make it easier for me to follow your answers, to conduct better quality research and to take notice of all your answers and comments. If you choose the interview not to be recorded then please indicate your answer on the following consent form. If you have any doubts regarding the questions, your answers, or any other issues please let me know. Unfortunately, there will be no compensation provided for your time and inconvenience except for my deep gratitude.

Consent form (2 copies)

Please indicate your consent regarding the interview and the data used. Please fill in both copies of the consent form. One copy is for your own record.

I agree to the interview being audio-taped.

I agree that any of my comments or information mentioned may be used in the author's dissertation.

I agree that my name may be mentioned in the author's dissertation.

I agree that my occupation may be mentioned in the author's dissertation.

I agree that my words may be quoted in the author's dissertation.

I request to be contacted and be asked for consent in case being either mentioned by name or by my occupation in the author's dissertation. My prior consent is also required in case any of my comments, information given and direct quotations are used in the written work.

I do not wish to be either quoted or mentioned by name or by occupation in the author's dissertation. None of my comments or information given may be used in the written work.

Date:

Participant

Researcher

..... (name)

..... (name)

..... (signature)

..... (signature)

Appendix D: List of interviewees³¹

Martin town officials:

Elected:

Andrej Hrnčiar (Mayor) *personal interview*

Councillor A *personal interview*

Councillor B *personal interview*

Councillor C *personal interview*

Unelected:

Town official A (Lawyer, Organisational and Personal Division) *personal interview*

Town official B (Office Manager of the Martin Town Hall) *personal interview*

Town official C (Head of the Organisational and Legal Department) *personal interview*

Town official D (Head of the Organisational and Personal Division) *personal interview*

Town Spokesman *personal interview*

TIS employees:

Emília Sičáková–Beblavá (TIS President) *personal interview*

TIS staff A (TIS Project Assistant) *personal interview*

TIS staff B (TIS Lawyer and Councillor in the town of Banska Bystrica) *personal interview*

TIS staff C (TIS Programme Coordinator) *personal interview*

Slovak government officials:

Government official A (Head of Division; Ministry of Interior, Civil Service Section, Department of Coordination and Modernisation of Civil Service, Division of Territorial Self-government and Education) *email reaction*

Government official B (Spokesperson of the Office for Public Procurement) *email reaction*

Government official C (Vice-President of the Supreme Audit Office) *personal interview*

Government official D (Acting Head of Section, The Slovak Government Office, The Fight Against Corruption and Control Section) *telephone interview*

Other:

Ludovít Budzák – President of the Union of Chief Controllers of Towns and Municipalities, Chief Controller of the town of Svit (*personal interview*)

Jozef Mečiar – Vice-mayor of the town of Šaľa (*personal interview*)

Lubomír Plai – former Civil Service Office Chairman (*personal interview*)

Appendix E: 17 TIS-reviewed town policies

1. Policy on sales of movable and immovable property
2. Policy on leasing movable and immovable property
3. Policy on recruitment for town's vacancies and organisations run by the town (budgetary organisations, contributory organisations, town firms)
4. Policy on public participation in the municipal decision-making
5. Policy on access to information about functioning of the municipality: allowing access v. publicising, internal directives regulating information provision
6. Ethics policy – ethical infrastructure and conflict of interests of town's elected representatives
7. Ethics policy – ethical infrastructure and conflict of interests of town's employees
8. Ethics policy – ethical infrastructure and conflict of interests of workers in town's organisations
9. Media policy
10. Policy of land use planning and construction office policy
11. Grants policy
12. Policy on transparency of legal entities formed and founded by the town
13. Public procurement policy
14. Public-private partnership policy
15. Policy on allocation of flats
16. Policy on allocation of places in social care facilities run by the town
17. Budgetary policy and informing the public about it

Source: *translated from* Sicakova-Beblava (2008b, 15)

Appendix F: Photos

Fig. 10 Media interest in the project



On the photo: press conference, 22 July 2008. From right, V. Obsitnik (former US ambassador to Slovakia), E. Sicakova-Beblava (TIS president), A. Hrcniar (Martin town Mayor).

Source: TIS 2008

Fig. 11: Spreading the message to wider society



On the photo: 5 town mayors of the Zilina region in Slovakia at an anti-corruption meeting organised by the Martin Town Hall, 13 January 2009.

Source: www.martin.sk

NOTES

¹ According to Transparency International's 2008 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), Slovakia is at the 52nd position in the world with a score of 5.0 (TI 2009).

² For the structure and logic of governance in Slovakia, see Fig. 1 below.

³ Implemented as a part of the 2001 administrative reform.

⁴ The terms "local government" and "municipality," and the words "local" and "municipal" are used interchangeably.

⁵ For further discussion of the topic of corruption, see Piattoni (2001), Kawata (2006), , Roniger and Gunes-Ayata (1994), Neild (2002); and particularly in Eastern European setting, see Kotkin and Sajo (2002), Karklins (2005), Stefes (2006), Holmes (2006), Miller (2001), Kornai and Rose-Ackerman (2004).

⁶ To illustrate, 51% (46% in 2003) of respondents thought that corruption was present in their municipality in the form of clientelism and 42% (44% in 2003) thought corruption was present in the form of nepotism (Roncak 2007).

⁷ Legislation will also be considered as one of the applications of the Martin project (see chapter 5).

⁸ See the *Websites* section for the correct URLs of the individual websites.

⁹ For the list of people present at the workshop, see Sicakova-Beblava 2008a, 58.

¹⁰ The Civil Service Office is no longer existent. Mr Plai was the only Chairman of this Office throughout its duration (2002-2006). The Office which held a similar status to a Ministry was established as one of the preconditions behind the accession into the European Union. Its role as a central state administration body was to ensure professional, politically neutral and efficient performance of the state's tasks. Once in the EU, the Slovak government decided the Office is too costly and no longer needed.

¹¹ See Appendix D for the list of interviewees.

¹² See Appendix B for questions asked.

¹³ See the Acknowledgement section for clarification of a potential author's conflict of interests.

¹⁴ See Appendix C for both the *Information sheet* and the *Consent form*.

¹⁵ The full list of interviewees and their posts is included in Appendix D.

¹⁶ Fig. 3 shows the 3 separate stages and dates of the Martin project delivery.

¹⁷ Hrnčiar's former occupation was a theatrical actor and a theatre director.

¹⁸ See Appendix E for the full list of the 17 town policies.

¹⁹ For the proposal suggesting changes to the 17 town policies, see Sicakova-Beblava (2009b).

²⁰ The fact that TV Turiec, a local medium, was owned by the town but run by one of the Town Councillors made it a politically sensitive issue. As a result, the proposed measures which were meant to bring more regulation and set clear and transparent rules to the conduct of the TV were not implemented. Arguably, the Mayor was in this case more lenient than in any other policy formulation put forward by TIS. This was because he needed the particular Councillor's vote and more importantly, the votes of the Councillor's party fraction in order to implement the various other measures of the anti-corruption project (Councillor C 2009, TIS staff C 2009).

²¹ The research was carried out during scientifically fascinating time of a financial and economic crisis of a scale that the world has not experienced since the 1930s. Similarly to other developed countries, the crisis has also affected virtually all

aspects of life in Slovakia including public and local self-government expenditure.

²² The amount of money saved compared to the originally designated cost in the town's budget.

²³ For example, Hrnčiar has been publishing and promoting the project himself also through his own website and blog (2008a, 2008b, 2008c).

²⁴ There have been a number of towns and municipalities in Slovakia that have already and successfully implemented various anti-corruption schemes (see section 2.4.2). However, none of these have been similar or close to the Martin town project particularly due to its sheer scale.

²⁵ Regarding preventative measures, Jacobs claims that "because the political costs of corruption can be so high, there is a great deal of attention paid to prevention or at least the appearance of prevention" (2002, 85).

²⁶ Chapter 4 and section 5.2 give a detailed account of the various stages and also the five factors which were considered throughout the Martin project delivery.

²⁷ For instance, the Civil Service Office was also set up as one of these accession requirements or coercive policy transfers.

²⁸ Legislation and regulation concerning transparency and the fight against corruption at the national government level (i.e. Ministries, Offices, etc.) is arguably one of the least popular measures internally (i.e. among government officials and employees) (Plai 2009).

²⁹ The author felt that it would be helpful for readers to see Slovak/English equivalents in case of wrong translation, alternative or multiple translations, misunderstanding and/or for the purposes of further research.

³⁰ The entire form was translated into and provided in the Slovak language as all the interviews were conducted in this language.

³¹ All the interviews were conducted in Slovakia and hence all the ministries and offices relate to the Slovak Republic.

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