

Many national and international governmental and non-governmental organizations are increasingly involved in topics that concern the quality of governance and its foundations. Among them are many initiatives concerning ethics and integrity including the struggle against corruption; programs aimed towards other valued aspects of governance such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law; and initiatives focused in the effectiveness and efficiency of public policies and services. This involvement coincides with the research agendas of several fields of study in academic disciplines including public administration.

The new Study Group on *Quality of Governance* aims at relating, connecting and synergizing these fields of study in a global context. In doing so, the Study Group shall strengthen existing initiatives through the creation of a new global forum in this challenging and important area.

Our leading question is:

*What is quality of governance and how can quality be advanced in multi-faceted national and international governance processes and structures?*

A set of themes were developed at the 2012 launching seminar in Amsterdam. These include:

1. *Quality of Governance: Good and Bad Governance in Context*

What is quality of governance given the manifold public values? What values matter in governance (processes) and what is their impact in decision-making and policy-implementation? How do the values relate to 'relevant publics' (e.g., citizens, politics and administration, elite and street-level)? How do we understand 'good governance' from the top down and bottom up and internationally?

2. *Quality of Governance policies, systems, instruments, leadership (process)*

Many initiatives to improve the quality of governance exist. These are apparent in, for example, the literature on 'integrity systems', including actors involved in protecting public values (e.g., anti-corruption agencies, civil society involvement, judicial actors, ombudsmen, auditing and oversight divisions, etc.). But how do these actors relate and work, and what really works in what context?

3. *Quality of Governance and Quality of Outcomes*

How do characteristics of (the) governance (process and organization) relate to the 'quality' of resulting policies and results? This is important to reflect upon in (sub)national contexts, but the (un)intended effects in a broader (international) context are relevant as well.

4. *Quality of Governance and Governance Studies: theory and methodology*

What is the state of the art in this field, paying attention to theoretical development (and its relationship to political theory/philosophy), and methodological advancement (quantitative, qualitative, ethnographic etc.)?

These serve as a starting point for our initial and ongoing work. The themes will be explored further in a series of sessions at IIAS and other conferences, in initiatives to connect the manifold groups in this field, and through publications and cooperative comparative research.

### Governance

In accordance with IIAS requirements, Study Group IV has three co-chairs from different continents:

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