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Summary of the report

Corruption in Europe **An analysis of the quality of government** **at the national and regional level** **within the EU member states**

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This report is a summary in Swedish of a report produced for the European Commission Directorate-General for Regional Policy titled *Measuring the Quality of Government and Sub-National Variation*¹ that has been produced by The Quality of Government Institute at University of Gothenburg and which was made public in January 2011.

The background for this report is the following: There is much variation with respect to social and economic development as seen in standard measures of human well-being in the European Union. This variation is not only apparent between countries within the EU but there are also huge regional variations within countries. Many possible explanations have been suggested for such variation, ranging from cumulative social causation and macro-economic conditions to “brain drain”.

One additional explanation for faltering economic and social development in some parts of Europe is that the

‘Quality of Government’ (QoG) is not sufficiently strong. This concept contains issues such as control of corruption, the rule of law, government effectiveness and the degree to which citizens are treated fairly and impartially by government agencies. Although a recent proliferation of QoG data for national estimates has emerged, no quantitative study of the quality of government has been created in this process for the regional level for EU member states. The primary task of this report has been to create such data.

Based on the combination of national level international expert assessments from the World Bank Research Institute and a survey of about 34 000 people in 172 regions in Europe that we have conducted within this project, we constructed a complete quantitative estimate of variation in the Quality of Government for all 27 EU countries. We show that our estimates of the Quality of Government within the 172 so called NUTS 1 and NUTS 2 regions are highly robust to a wide array of sensitivity tests.

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¹ This report, which in total is about 400 pages, also contains a shorter and a longer “executive summary”. The report’s official EU number is 2009CE160AT025 and it can be downloaded from www.qog.pol.gu.se (go to EU project 2010). All the survey data is also available from this website.

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Our results show that there is huge variation in Europe regarding the Quality of Government, whether measured by expert surveys or surveys to “ordinary people”. Another result is that, at the national level, expert evaluations and citizens’ perceptions and experiences correlate at a surprisingly high level, thus indicating that experts and ordinary citizens have similar understandings of the situation regarding the Quality of Government in their respective countries. Moreover, we show that in some countries (notably Italy, Romania, Portugal, Belgium, Bulgaria and Spain) there is huge variation in the Quality of Government between regions within the countries. We also show that QoG measures correlate with a number of measures of human well-being such as economic prosperity, population health and social trust.

These quantitative findings are complemented with ten in-depth case studies of regions in order to elucidate common characteristics in high – and low – QoG regions throughout the EU to provide insights into possible causal trajectories and policy measures for increasing the Quality of Government. We find that independent media, transparency and openness and an active civil society – among several other factors – are important in explaining variance in the Quality of Government on the regional level.

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