

Methodological Framework: Qualitative Assessment Segment – Expert Panel

Purpose of the panel:

The expert panel provides an in-depth qualitative evaluation of the phenomenon of state capture across the dimensions defined by the methodology. Its purpose is to contextualise quantitative results, identify the causal linkages and illuminate patterns of clientelism and political control that cannot be fully captured in statistical indicators.

Panel composition:

- 7–12 members with proven expertise in the fields of rule of law, anti-corruption policies, economic and political analysis, public administration, civil society and the media.
- The panel operates independently, and the selection of experts must ensure an appropriate balance of perspectives.

Method of Work:

1. **Preparatory Phase:** Panel members are supplied with quantitative datasets, preliminary analyses and the relevant indicators prepared beforehand.
2. **Individual Assessment:** Each expert provides preliminary scores and comments for each dimension (Democratic Process, Decision-making Process, Accountability System, Resource Distribution).
3. **Joint Discussion – Workshop:** The panel convenes to discuss discrepancies in scores and to align interpretations and contextual understanding.
4. **Consolidated Score:** A consensus-based or averaged score is established for each dimension, accompanied by a rationale outlining key causes and trends.
5. **Final Report:** The assessments provided by panel members are presented anonymously to ensure experts have full freedom to express their perspectives.

Panel's Outputs:

- A **qualitative narrative report** that contextualises the quantitative indicators and explains the causes and consequences of capture within each dimension.
- **Reform recommendations** targeted at priority areas where the greatest risks and obstacles to the liberation of institutions have been identified.

Advantages of Including a Panel:

- It adds analytical depth, enables appropriate balancing where individual indicators and/or dimensions carry different specific weights and substantiates the validity of the findings.
- It places quantitative results within a broader political and societal context.
- It helps identify trends and informal practices that are not detectable through statistical data alone.

Responsibilities and Remuneration of the Members of the Expert Panel:

- Panel members are expected to prepare for the one-day workshop by reviewing the methodology and all preparatory materials, which will be provided to them in a timely manner before the session.

- Members are expected to actively participate in the workshop; however, members may abstain from discussions in topics where they lack the necessary expertise to offer a credible opinion.