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AUTHOR OR EDITOR

[Volker Nitsch](#)

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This paper studies the allocation of the functions and responsibilities of prudential supervision on public authorities, including the central bank. In particular, it is argued that there are interdependencies in the design of institutions; political decisions on the supervisory structure are not taken in isolation. Analyzing a panel data set of prudential supervision regimes in 98 countries over the period from 1999 to 2010, I find that central banks play a smaller role in supervision and tasks are more decentralized if the central bank is independent and transparent. Measures of firm and fiscal decentralization are typically associated with a greater centralization of supervisory functions outside of the central bank.

