

CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2023



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#cpi2023

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CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2023

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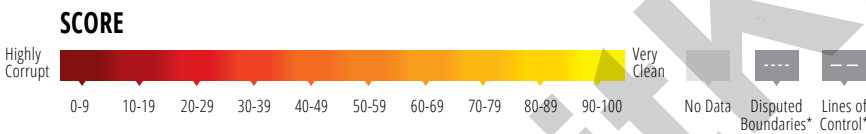
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180 COUNTRIES. 180 SCORES.

HOW DOES YOUR COUNTRY MEASURE UP?



The perceived levels of public sector corruption in 180 countries and territories around the world.



*The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map follow the UN practice to the best of our knowledge and as of January 2024. They do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of Transparency International concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

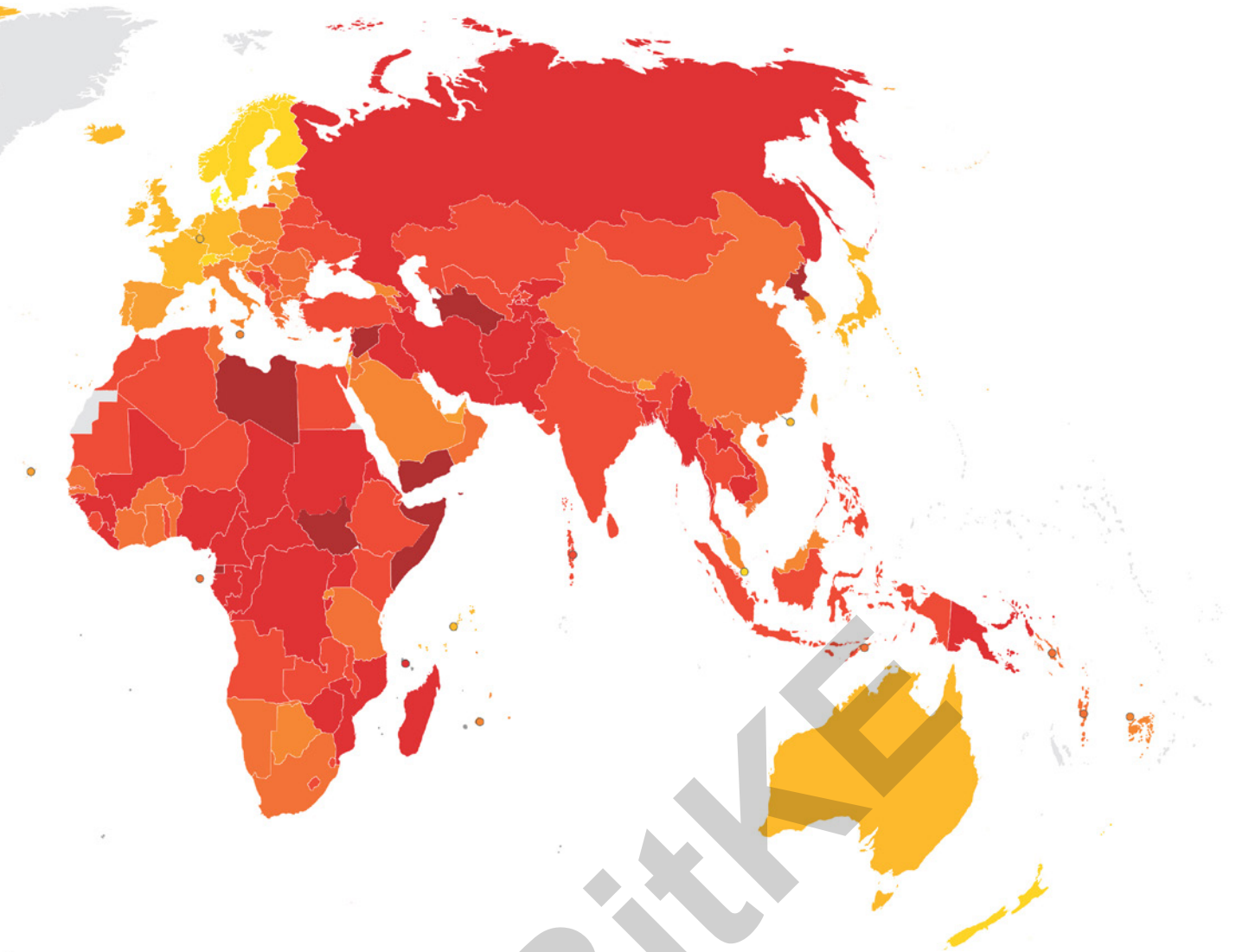
SCORE COUNTRY/TERRITORY

90	Denmark
87	Finland
85	New Zealand
84	Norway
83	Singapore
82	Sweden
82	Switzerland
79	Netherlands
78	Germany
78	Luxembourg
77	Ireland
76	Canada
76	Estonia
75	Australia
75	Hong Kong
73	Belgium
73	Japan
73	Uruguay
72	Iceland
71	Austria
71	France
71	Seychelles
71	United Kingdom

69	Barbados
69	United States
68	Bhutan
68	United Arab Emirates
67	Taiwan
66	Chile
64	Bahamas
64	Cabo Verde
63	Korea, South
62	Israel
61	Lithuania
61	Portugal
60	Latvia
60	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
60	Spain
59	Botswana
58	Qatar
57	Czechia
56	Dominica
56	Italy
56	Slovenia
55	Costa Rica
55	Saint Lucia

54	Poland
54	Slovakia
53	Cyprus
53	Georgia
53	Grenada
53	Rwanda
52	Fiji
52	Saudi Arabia
51	Malta
51	Mauritius
50	Croatia
50	Malaysia
49	Greece
49	Namibia
48	Vanuatu
47	Armenia
46	Jordan
46	Kuwait
46	Montenegro
46	Romania
45	Bulgaria
45	São Tomé and Príncipe
44	Jamaica

43	Benin
43	Ghana
43	Oman
43	Senegal
43	Solomon Islands
43	Timor-Leste
42	Bahrain
42	China
42	Cuba
42	Hungary
42	Moldova
42	North Macedonia
42	Trinidad and Tobago
41	Burkina Faso
41	Kosovo
41	South Africa
41	Vietnam
40	Colombia
40	Côte d'Ivoire
40	Guyana
40	Suriname
40	Tanzania
40	Tunisia



39	India
39	Kazakhstan
39	Lesotho
39	Maldives
38	Morocco
37	Argentina
37	Albania
37	Belarus
37	Ethiopia
37	Gambia
37	Zambia
36	Algeria
36	Brazil
36	Serbia
36	Ukraine
35	Bosnia and Herzegovina
35	Dominican Republic
35	Egypt
35	Nepal
35	Panama
35	Sierra Leone
35	Thailand
34	Ecuador
34	Indonesia
34	Malawi
34	Philippines
34	Sri Lanka
34	Turkey
33	Angola
33	Mongolia
33	Peru
33	Uzbekistan
32	Niger
31	El Salvador
31	Kenya
31	Mexico
31	Togo
30	Djibouti
30	Eswatini
30	Mauritania
29	Bolivia
29	Pakistan
29	Papua New Guinea
28	Gabon
28	Laos
28	Mali
28	Paraguay
27	Cameroon
26	Guinea
26	Kyrgyzstan
26	Russia
26	Uganda
25	Liberia
25	Madagascar
25	Mozambique
25	Nigeria
24	Bangladesh
24	Central African Republic
24	Iran
24	Lebanon
24	Zimbabwe
23	Azerbaijan
23	Guatemala
23	Honduras
23	Iraq
22	Cambodia
22	Congo
22	Guinea-Bissau
21	Eritrea
20	Afghanistan
20	Burundi
20	Chad
20	Comoros
20	Democratic Republic of the Congo
20	Myanmar
20	Sudan
20	Tajikistan
18	Libya
18	Turkmenistan
17	Equatorial Guinea
17	Haiti
17	Korea, North
17	Nicaragua
16	Yemen
13	South Sudan
13	Syria
13	Venezuela
11	Somalia

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Justice and the effective rule of law are essential for preventing and stopping corruption at both the national and international levels. Both are cornerstones of democracy and embody notions of fairness and accountability. Impunity for corruption – where people who abuse their power do not face consequences for the harm they cause – is the essence of injustice and failure of the rule of law.

There has been a global decline in justice and the rule of law since 2016.¹ The rise of authoritarianism in some countries contributes to this trend, and even in democratic contexts, the mechanisms that keep governments in check have weakened. Governments across the political spectrum have undermined justice systems,²

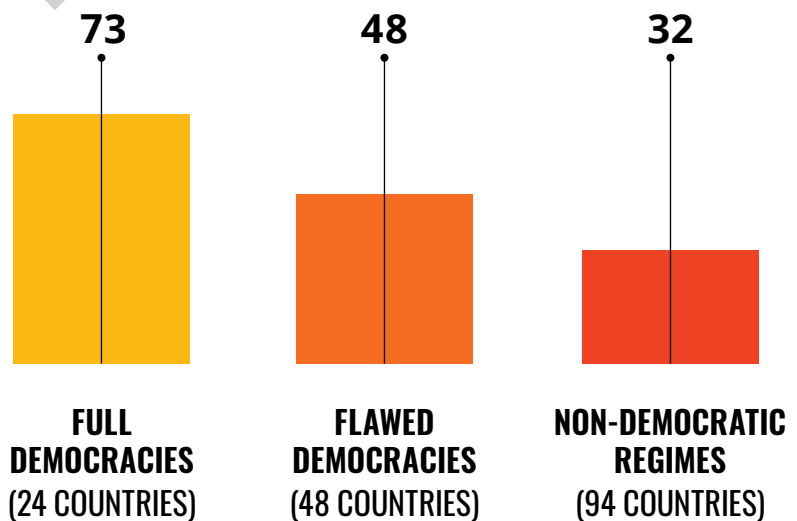
restricted civic freedoms³ and relied on non-democratic strategies to address recent challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴

Against this backdrop, this year's *Corruption Perceptions Index* (CPI) shows that only 28 of the 180 countries measured by this index have improved their corruption

levels over the last twelve years, and 34 countries have significantly worsened. Despite progress made across the planet in criminalising corruption and establishing specialised institutions to address it, corruption levels remain stagnant globally.⁵

AVERAGE CPI 2023 SCORE FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF GOVERNMENT*

Strong democracies vastly outperform flawed ones and authoritarian regimes in control of corruption.



* Based on the Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU) democracy classification for the year 2022. The total number of countries covered here is lower than the number covered by the CPI, as the EIU does not provide data for 13 of the countries in our sample. Data available at: <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/political-regime-eiu>.

This is hardly surprising considering the chronic weaknesses of justice systems meant to detect, investigate, prosecute and adjudicate corruption cases. Ongoing under-resourcing of the judiciary, police and other justice institutions, combined with insufficient levels of independence from other branches of government mean that corruption often goes unpunished. In turn, extensive impunity incentivises further wrongdoing at all levels. This ranges from bribery to embezzlement to the organised, complex schemes of grand corruption, which is the abuse of high-level power that causes serious and widespread suffering in societies.

The grave societal harm caused by grand corruption makes it a matter of international concern. Grand corruption perpetrators too often benefit from impunity, due to domestic justice systems

being “unable or unwilling” to pursue them, whether because of capture, interference or lack of powers, resources and capacity. Those abusing power escape accountability and the widespread harm to victims goes unremedied.

The fight for justice and the fight against corruption go hand in hand: where the justice system is unable to uphold the rule of law, corruption thrives. At the same time, where corruption is the norm, access to justice is often hindered for the most vulnerable, and justice institutions may be captured by political, economic or special interest groups. In the most extreme cases, patronage and clientelist networks, many of which transcend national borders, can also use their influence to create impunity for themselves by manipulating legal processes, pushing for selective enforcement, and even altering laws to ensure they are in line with their interests.⁶

**2/3 OF COUNTRIES
SCORE BELOW**

50/100

When justice can be bought by some, others must bear the burden of injustice. Victims of corruption are denied redress for the harm done to them and the government’s ability to fight crime is significantly hindered.⁷ Hence, efforts to improve the independence, transparency and effectiveness of justice systems are an investment in human rights and a corruption-free world. At the same time, anti-corruption interventions are key in the global quest for justice.

“Corruption will continue to thrive until justice systems can punish wrongdoing and keep governments in check. When justice is bought or politically interfered with, it is the people that suffer. Leaders should fully invest in and guarantee the independence of institutions that uphold the law and tackle corruption. It is time to end impunity for corruption.”

François Valérian
Chair, Transparency International



Photo: Transparency International

Recommendations

Our research and work with partners in over 100 countries suggests that governments seeking to tackle corruption, promote justice and strengthen the rule of law should:



STRENGTHEN THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Shielding the justice system from interference is paramount for its functioning. Promote merit-based rather than political appointments and ensure that the system has qualified personnel and is properly resourced.



INTRODUCE INTEGRITY AND MONITORING MECHANISMS

Ensure that the special protections required by members of the justice system to perform their functions are not abused. Abuse may be prevented through dedicated whistleblowing and reporting channels, as well as requirements for judges, prosecutors and other relevant actors to disclose their assets and interests, and ensure that salaries are commensurate to their work.



IMPROVE ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Protecting people's right to access justice is a first step against impunity and corruption. Strategies to pursue this goal include simplifying complex procedures, making legal procedures accessible to all, widening the definition of victims of corruption to include non-state victims and granting qualified civil society organisations (CSOs) the right to initiate and bring forward cases of corruption – whether criminal, civil or administrative – and represent the interests of victims of corruption.



MAKE JUSTICE MORE TRANSPARENT

Transparency can help shed light on the functioning of the justice system and make it more accountable. Ensure that relevant data on judgments, out-of-court settlements and enforcement as well as legal procedure and administrative rules are openly available and can be scrutinised by members of the public. This could help discourage corruption and ensure that laws against corruption are properly applied and administered.



PROMOTE COOPERATION WITHIN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Justice systems are complex, but ensuring that their different components can effectively collaborate is essential. Defining clear and complementary responsibilities is critical to achieve this objective. Given the widespread use of informal justice systems in some regions, reflecting on potential synergies between formal and informal systems could also prove beneficial.



EXPAND AVENUES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY IN GRAND CORRUPTION CASES

Where [grand corruption schemes](#) are carried out in countries with justice systems that are “unwilling or unable” to enforce against the offenders, justice institutions in foreign jurisdictions with stronger rule of law can play a crucial role in countering impunity by handling the grand corruption proceedings. This calls for those foreign countries to have in place key procedural measures, such as extensive jurisdiction, minimal immunities for foreign state officials, standing for qualified public interest CSOs to pursue those cases and represent victims, and a broad definition of justiciable harm that encompasses widespread harm to a large number of victims.

GLOBAL HIGHLIGHTS

In the 20 years since the adoption of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), 190 countries have united under it to stop corruption. However, they are largely failing to achieve this – over 80 per cent of the world’s population lives in countries with CPI scores below the global average of 43.

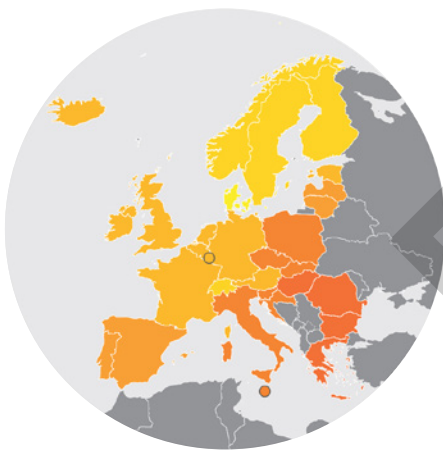
In addition, the top 25 countries in the index make up just over 10 per cent of all people. Corruption therefore remains a challenge that directly or indirectly harms most people.

The CPI ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public-sector corruption

according to experts and businesspeople. It relies on 13 independent data sources and uses a scale of zero to 100, where zero is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.

Countries with strong rule of law and well-functioning democratic institutions often sit at the top of

the index. Democratic countries tend to greatly outperform authoritarian regimes when controlling corruption – full democracies have a CPI average of 73, flawed democracies have one of 48 and non-democratic regimes just 32.

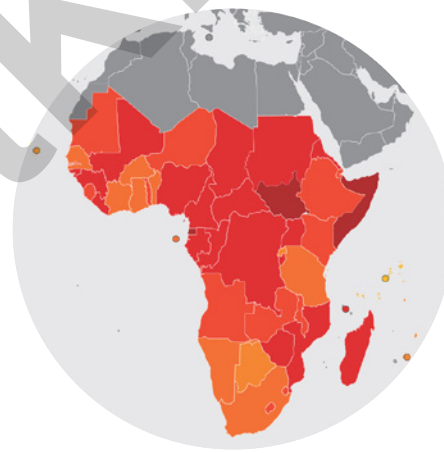


HIGHEST SCORING REGION

WESTERN EUROPE & EUROPEAN UNION

65/100

AVERAGE REGIONAL SCORE



LOWEST SCORING REGION

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

33/100

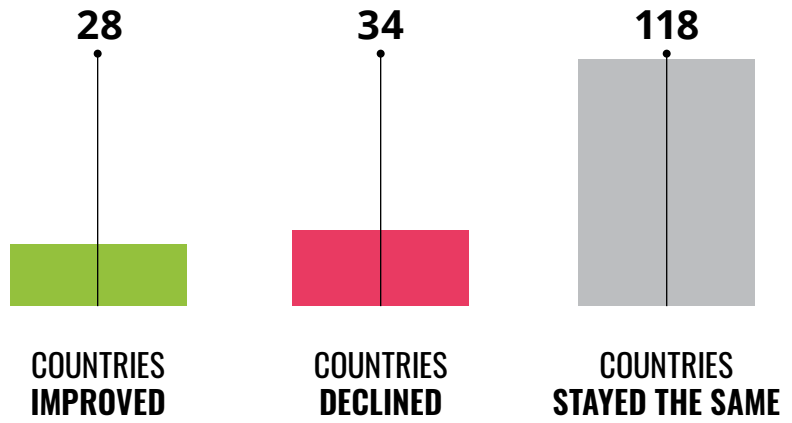
AVERAGE REGIONAL SCORE

For the sixth year in a row, Denmark heads the ranking, with a score of 90. Finland and New Zealand follow closely with scores of 87 and 85, respectively. Norway (84), Singapore (83), Sweden (82), Switzerland (82), the Netherlands (79), Germany (78) and Luxembourg (78) complete the top 10 this year.

Meanwhile, countries experiencing conflict or with highly restricted freedoms and weak democratic institutions tend to score worst. This year, Somalia (11), Venezuela (13), Syria (13) and South Sudan (13) are at the bottom of the index. Yemen (16), Nicaragua (17), North Korea (17), Haiti (17), Equatorial Guinea (17), Turkmenistan (18) and Libya (18) are the next lowest performers.

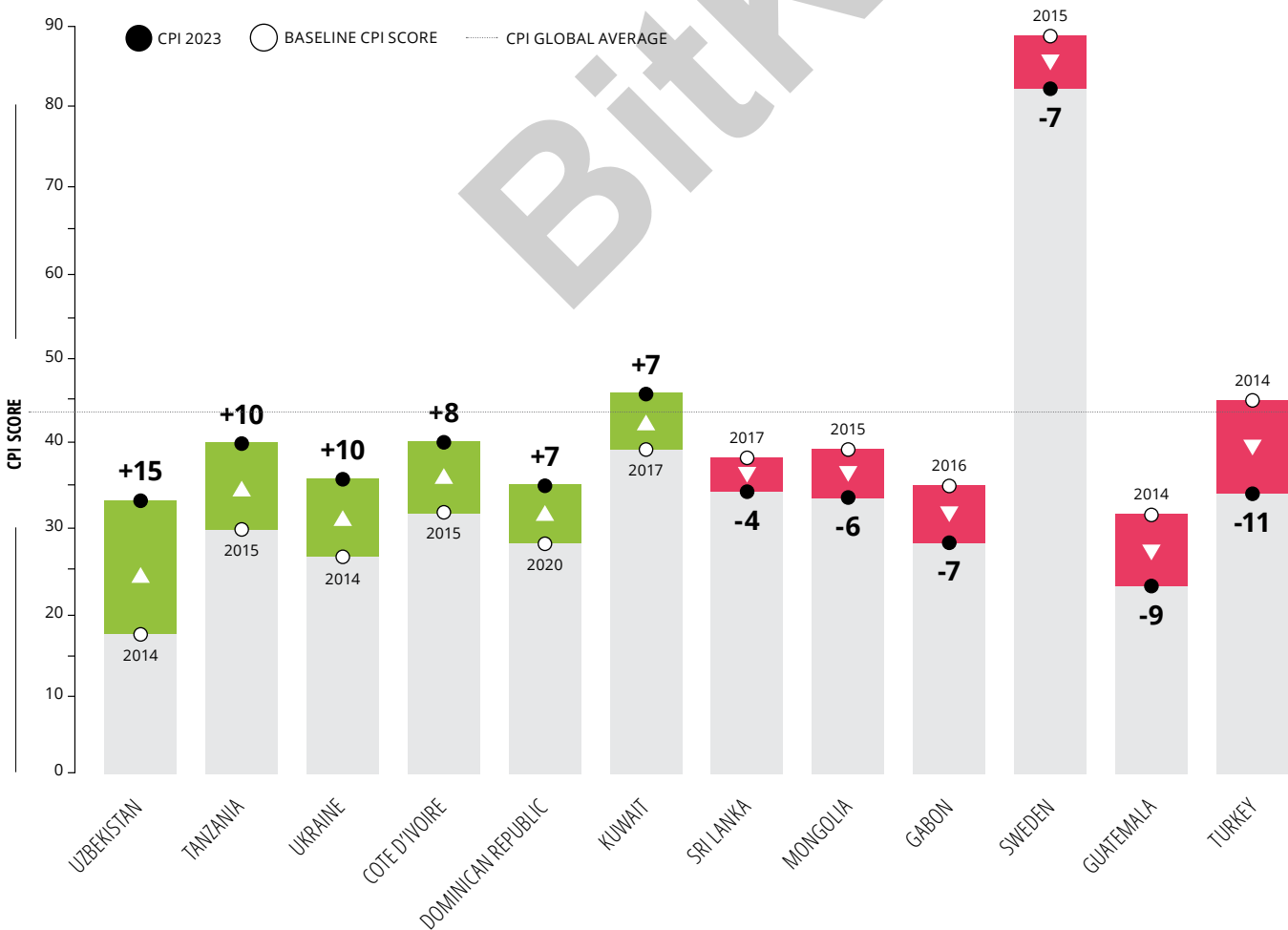
CPI SCORE CHANGES, 2012-2023

Number of countries that the underlying data sources largely agree improved or declined over the period 2012 to 2023, for all 180 countries with data available.



MOST SIGNIFICANT MOVERS

Countries that the underlying data sources largely agree improved or declined over the period 2014 to 2023. A full list of all statistically significant changes is available in the CPI 2023 dataset.



CORRUPTION AND INJUSTICE

The United Nations Convention against Corruption requires governments to strengthen integrity and prevent opportunities for corruption among members of the judiciary and prosecution services,⁸ while maintaining their independence.⁹ This explicit focus on the justice system is not surprising, given that it plays a vital role in applying anti-corruption legislation, protecting rights and guaranteeing the rule of law.

Well-functioning justice systems are a precondition and a catalyst for addressing corruption effectively.¹⁰ When the justice system is weak, dysfunctional or lacks independence to shield itself against external pressures, it cannot uphold the law and ensure that it is applied equally to all. Under these circumstances, legal frameworks tend to lose their power to dissuade people from engaging in corruption and other criminal activities,¹¹ and impunity thrives.¹² It is not surprising that countries where public officials and private actors are unlikely to be sanctioned for misconduct also score poorly on the CPI. A low likelihood of punishment sends the message that corrupt people can get away with their crimes and

may be a sign that corruption is tolerated and protected.

The relationship between corruption and justice, however, is more than one-directional. While the declining levels of rule of law worldwide affect efforts to counter corruption, corruption also contributes to the erosion of justice by restricting access and threatening the basic principle of equality before the law.¹³ When corruption takes hold of the justice system, the powerful and wealthy can escape prosecution and conviction.

At the same time, large segments of society may be excluded from accessing justice or face additional costs to do so.^{14,15} Research shows

that the effects of corruption on access to justice are not felt equally across societies. It is often poor and marginalised groups that suffer most from corruption when seeking justice.¹⁶ Vulnerable people also find themselves at a disadvantage when bribes or political connections sway legal outcomes.

Recent studies also show that there is a mutually reinforcing relationship between corruption and social injustice. Corruption often results in discrimination, as favours or privileges the government grants to specific groups, individuals or companies tend to result in the deprivation of others with similar merit.¹⁷



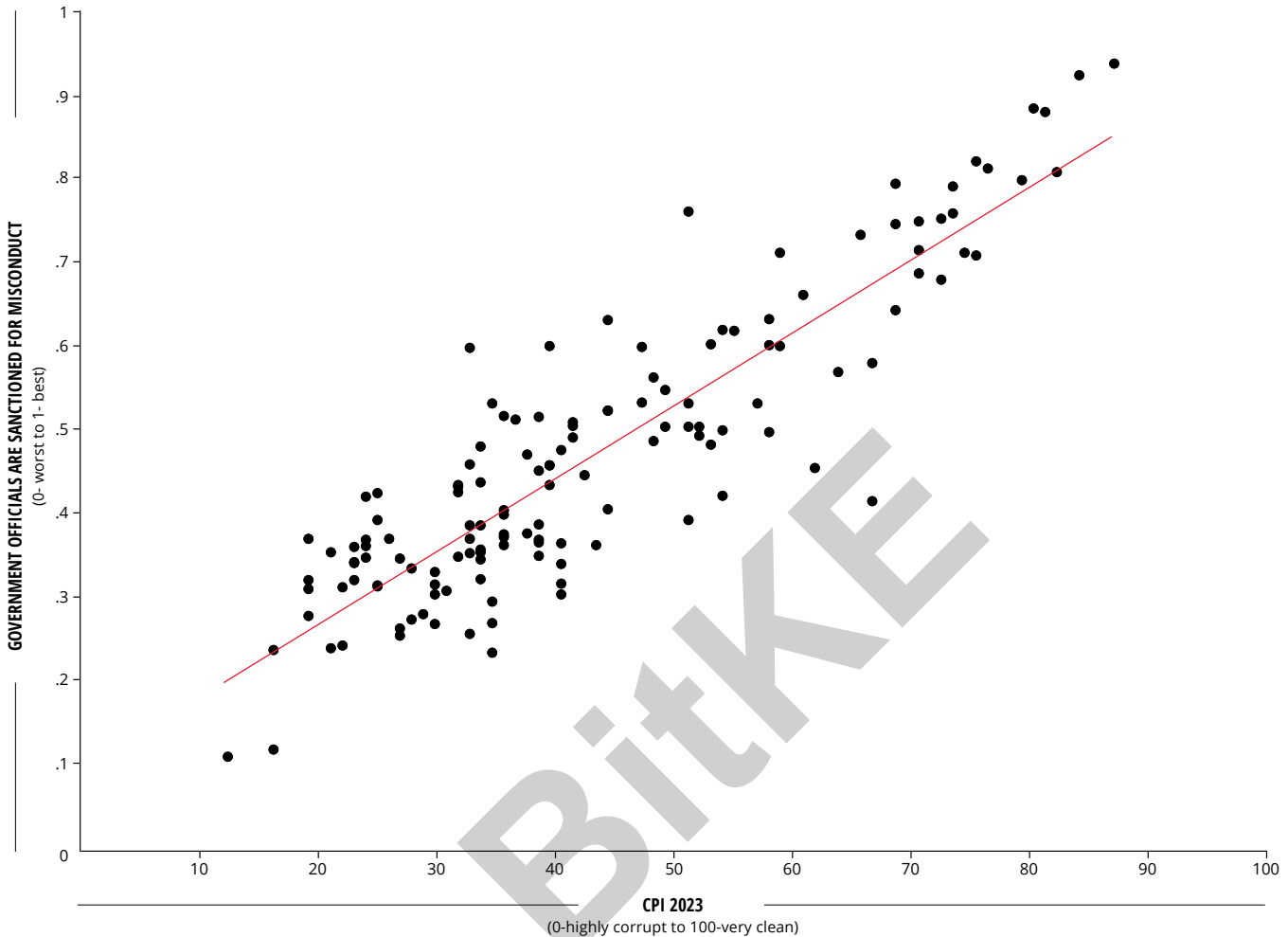
Corruption worsens social injustice and disproportionately affects the most vulnerable. In many countries, obstacles to justice for victims of corruption persist. It is time to break the barriers and ensure people can access justice effectively. Everyone deserves fair and inclusive legal systems where victims' voices are heard at every stage. Anything else is an affront to justice.

Daniel Eriksson
Chief Executive Officer, Transparency International



FIGURE 1: CORRUPTION AND IMPUNITY

Countries with higher levels of corruption are less likely to sanction public officials for failing to adhere to existing rules and fulfil their responsibilities. The low likelihood of sanctions can also serve as an incentive to engage in corruption.



Source: Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index and World Justice Project Rule of Law Index.

North Macedonia

In September 2023, North Macedonia’s (42) parliament significantly undermined its judiciary. In a non-transparent and fast-tracked procedure, MPs amended the criminal code to reduce prison sentences and shorten the statute of limitations for the abuse of official positions. This will cause roughly 200 suspected corruption cases to be dismissed, many of which involve former high-level officials.

Venezuela

Venezuela (13) is an example of grand corruption, where billions of dollars of public money have been systematically embezzled, benefiting a few powerful individuals and exacerbating poverty and inequality. The grand corruption schemes go hand with high-level officials’ capturing legislative, regulatory, and justice systems to build power and evade punishment.

Poland

The previous Polish (54) government, led by the Law and Order party, disempowered the judiciary and eroded the rule of law. Reducing checks on the government’s power, their reforms allowed them to appoint court officials as well as investigate and punish judges. The EU imposing fines and restricting access to funds made them reverse some of their actions, such as cancelling the mechanism for disciplining judges.

Existing patterns of discrimination can increase some people's exposure to corruption and the harm they suffer as a result.¹⁸ Gender inequality and power imbalances, for example, make women and girls more vulnerable to certain types of corruption, such as sextortion – the abuse of power for sexual benefits.¹⁹ Marginalised groups are more likely to be preyed on by corrupt actors and find that the authorities are neither protecting them nor punishing the perpetrators.

Corruption also gives political, economic or other special interest groups the means to influence or completely capture justice institutions, rendering them ineffective and using them to bend the law to protect their interests. In the most extreme cases, grand corruption and state capture can turn justice systems into tools of oppression. Corrupt elites may deploy their influence on the justice system to bolster their hold on power and deprive the people of their rights, freedom and ability to raise their voices against abuses.

Some governments make use of justice systems to suppress opposition or other critical voices. These regimes often co-opt police forces, prosecutors and courts, and use them to silence, disadvantage and jail those who raise their voices against them.

FIGURE 2: CORRUPTION AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Under most corrupt justice systems, the powerful and wealthy can escape prosecution and conviction, while large segments of society are excluded from their rightful access to fair and effective judicial services.

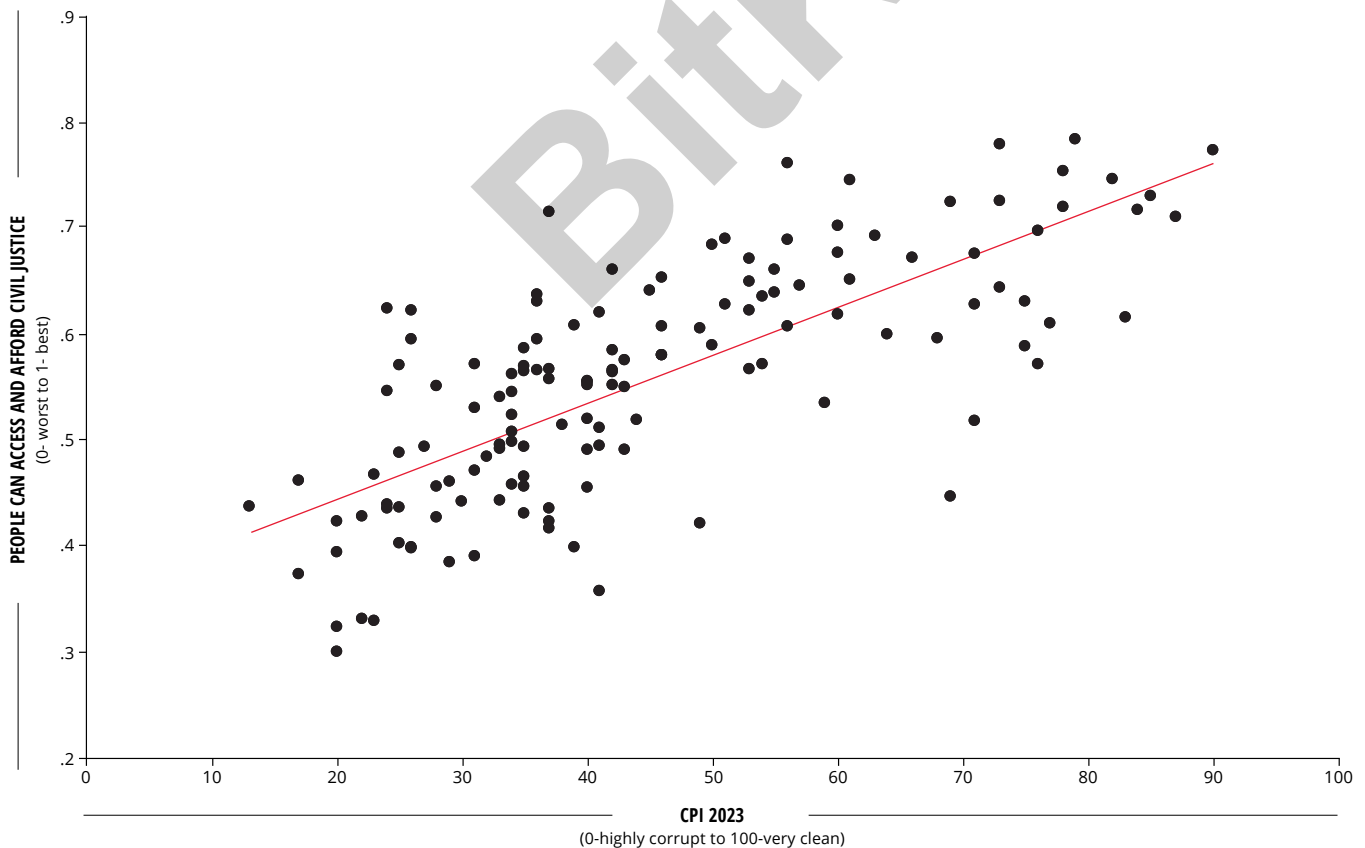
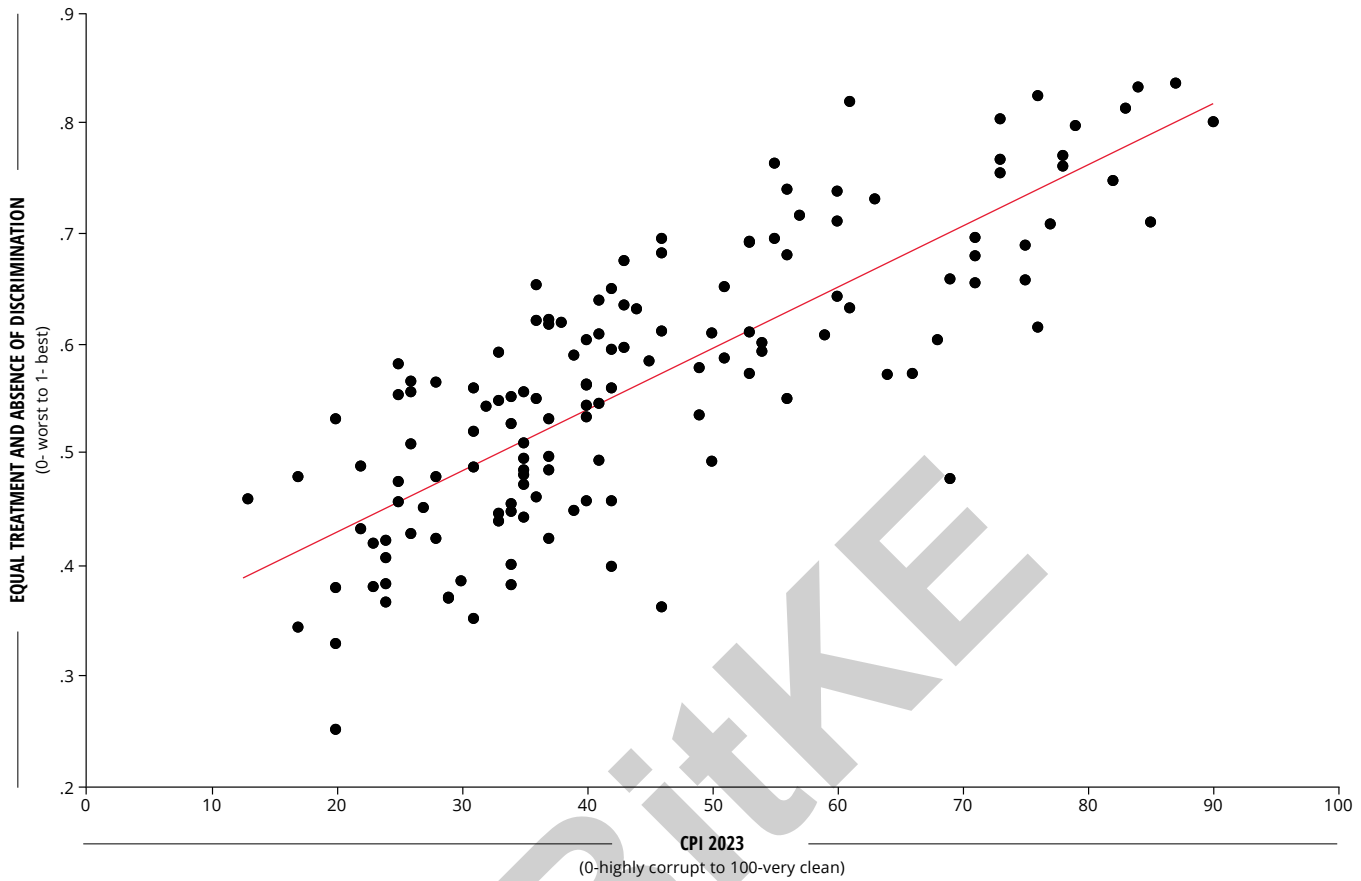


FIGURE 3: CORRUPTION AND ABSENCE OF DISCRIMINATION

Where corruption is high, equal treatment before the law is not guaranteed and there is more space to discriminate against specific groups.



Tunisia

In July 2021, President Saïed seized control of Tunisia’s (40) judiciary and suspended parliament. He continued to consolidate his power in 2022 through the election of a new parliament which constitutionally remains under his control, further undermining the checks and balances needed to effectively limit government powers. Other concerning measures include the weakening of the anti-corruption commission and the closing of civic space for those willing to speak up.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (20) faces serious challenges in advancing equal access to justice. In many instances, little progress is made with investigating, prosecuting and convicting the powerful and wealthy, while already marginalised groups of Congolese people are excluded from their rightful access to fair and effective judicial services.

Cambodia

Cambodia (22) has one of the worst scores in the world for both public sector corruption – at its grand and petty scales – and for equal treatment and absence of discrimination. Marginalised groups are more likely to be neglected or mistreated when interacting with public officials, trying to access public services or seeking justice.

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Among many other challenges, every region is struggling with weakening justice systems and diminishing accountability for public officials. This is enabling corruption to thrive with impunity, and regions are either stagnant in their corruption efforts or showing signs of decline.

Countries have improved their scores throughout the world, showing that progress is possible in any environment. However, regions with more countries that are improving than are declining are in a minority.

Western Europe and the European Union (EU), while remaining the top-scoring region, experienced a drop in its average score to 65 out of 100, as checks and balances weaken and political integrity

erodes. Eastern Europe and Central Asia grapples with the dysfunctional rule of law, rising authoritarianism and systemic corruption, reflected in an average score of 35.

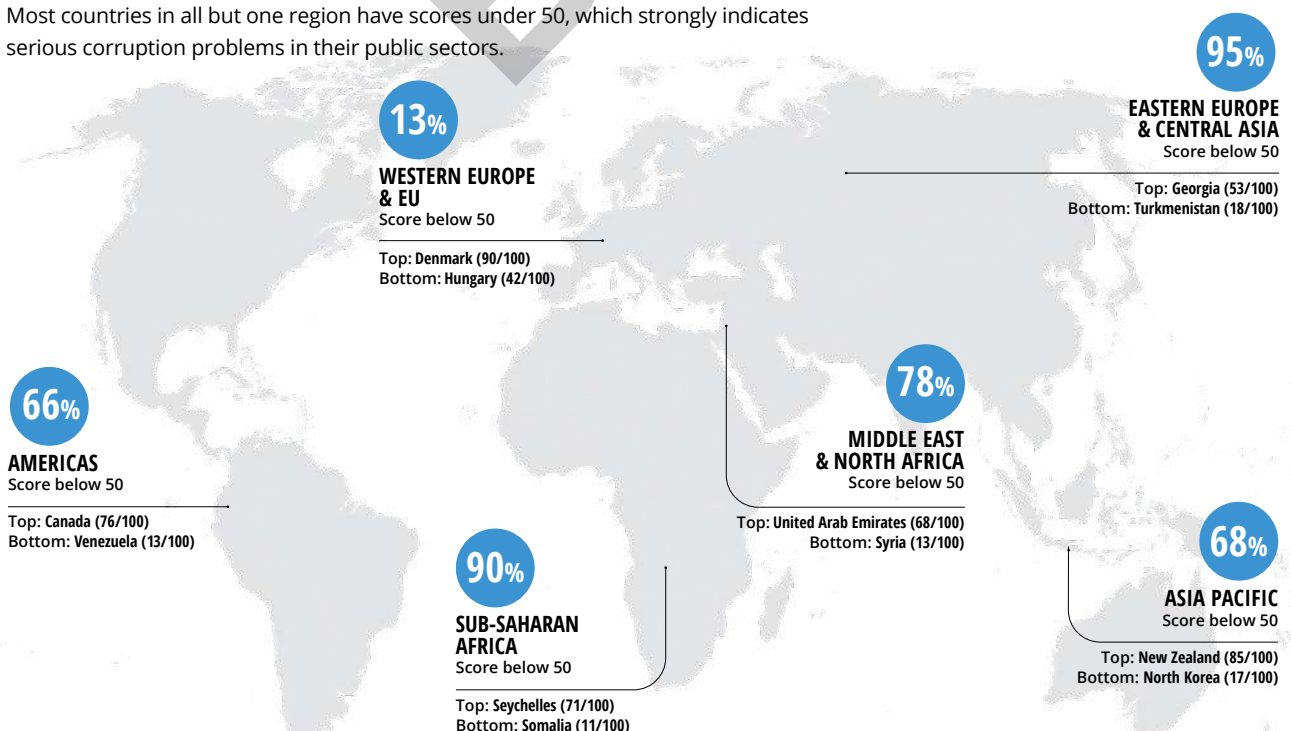
In Sub-Saharan Africa, despite improvement in some countries, most maintain a low score. The regional average is 33, the world's lowest. Scores in the Middle East and North Africa region show little improvement with an

average of 38, reflecting ongoing struggles with political corruption and conflict. Asia Pacific shows a long stagnant average score of 45 and countries historically at the top are backsliding.

Lack of judicial independence and weak rule of law are enabling widespread impunity in the Americas, which has an average of 43.

PERCENTAGE OF COUNTRIES WITH SCORES BELOW 50 (BY REGION)

Most countries in all but one region have scores under 50, which strongly indicates serious corruption problems in their public sectors.



AMERICAS

With two-thirds of the countries in the region having a score under 50 out of 100 on the CPI, the Americas shows considerable challenges in the fight against corruption. The lack of independence of the judiciary in the region is one of the main problems. It undermines the rule of law and promotes impunity for the powerful and criminals, to the detriment of the people and the common good.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, [opacity and undue influence](#) renders many justice systems across the region incapable of applying the law effectively in an impartial manner or exercising their function as a check on other branches of government, which is fundamental for all well-functioning democracies.

The sense of impunity and the inability of prosecutors and judges to proceed impartially and guarantee fair trials and equality before the law significantly impacts [public trust](#) in the judiciary. This, in turn, discourages reporting, as the institution is perceived as corrupt, unreliable and unsafe. The most severely affected are the poorest and most vulnerable groups, such as women, indigenous people, Afro-descendants, sexual minorities and migrants. These groups often experience discrimination when seeking justice.

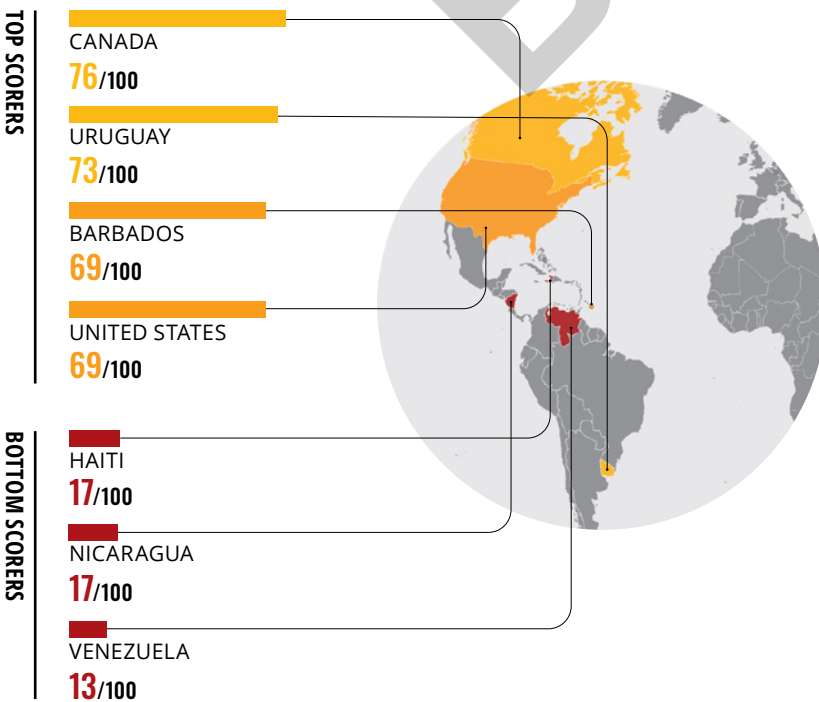
The Americas urgently needs more robust and independent judiciaries to enhance justice, tackle impunity and face the growth of transnational corruption networks. Also, judicial and prosecutorial appointments and dismissals must be transparent and based on experience and performance to prevent interference.

32

COUNTRIES

43

AVERAGE SCORE



LATEST IMPROVERS

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
35/100 (+7 points since 2020)

LATEST DECLINERS

ARGENTINA
37/100 (-8 points since 2019)

HONDURAS
23/100 (-6 points since 2018)

NICARAGUA
17/100 (-8 points since 2018)

VENEZUELA
13/100 (-5 points since 2018)

NEW MAXIMUM SCORES

COLOMBIA **40** and
 DOMINICAN REPUBLIC **35**

NEW MINIMUM SCORES

CUBA **42**, EL SALVADOR **31**,
 GUATEMALA **23**, NICARAGUA **17**,
 PERU **33** and VENEZUELA **17**

ASIA PACIFIC

As the Asia Pacific region faces a big 2024 election year, the 2023 CPI reveals another year of little to no meaningful progress towards curbing corruption. For five years in a row, the average CPI score for the region stagnates stubbornly at 45 out of a possible 100. Very few countries show sustained turnarounds that indicate significant changes in corruption levels. Several historically at the top are slowly declining.

Sixty-eight per cent of the countries across Asia and the Pacific have a CPI score below 50. These weak scores reflect the lack of delivery by elected officials on anti-corruption agendas, together with crackdowns on civil society and attacks on freedoms of press, assembly and association.

The Pacific continues to grapple with the impact of climate change and remains a focal point for geopolitical tensions between China and the West. While there's a steady influx of economic, military or financial incentives to support its development and climate goals, many Pacific countries have weak governance systems, which some donors overlook, exposing these substantial investments to [high risk of corruption](#).

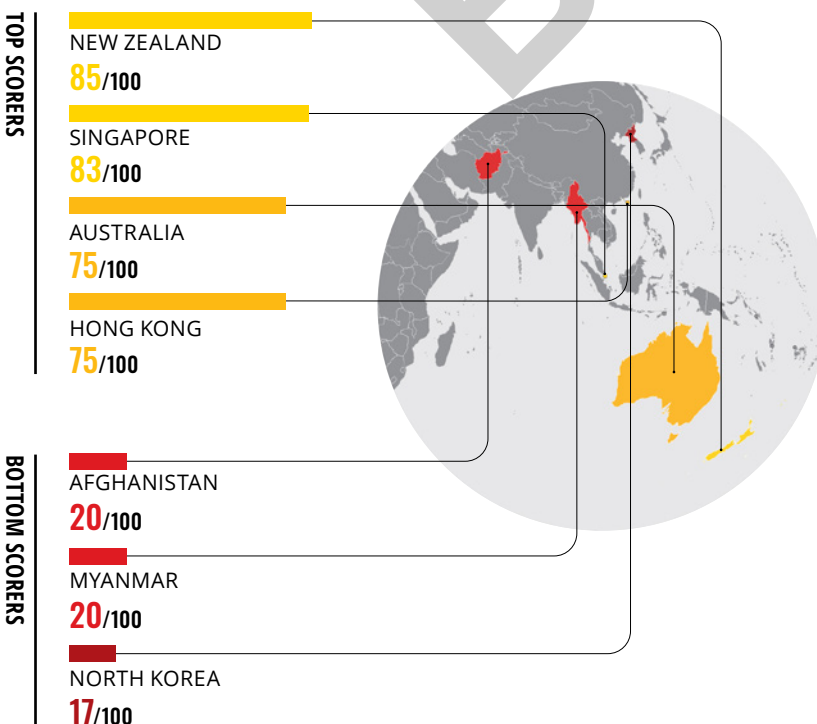
Transparency International's [Global Corruption Barometer](#) revealed the prevalence of corruption around election processes in Asia and the Pacific. These findings show the serious implications for the ability of elections to bring in governments that can be trusted to effectively control and curb corruption.

31

COUNTRIES

45

AVERAGE SCORE



LATEST IMPROVERS

MALDIVES
39/100 (+10 points since 2019)

NEPAL
35/100 (+4 points since 2018)

VIETNAM
41/100 (+8 points since 2018)

LATEST DECLINERS

MYANMAR
20/100 (-9 points since 2018)

SRI LANKA
34/100 (-4 points since 2018)

NEW MAXIMUM SCORES

NEPAL **35** and TIMOR-LESTE **43**

NEW MINIMUM SCORES

BANGLADESH **24**, FIJI **52**,
NEW ZEALAND **85** and SRI LANKA **34**

EASTERN EUROPE & CENTRAL ASIA

The CPI paints a troubling picture of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, an area struggling with dysfunctional rule of law, rising authoritarianism and systemic corruption. The average score of 35 out of 100 makes it the second lowest-scoring region in the world.

Widespread democratic backsliding and weakening justice systems are undermining control of corruption, as institutions like the police, prosecutors and the courts are often unable to investigate and punish those who abuse their power. In a region where war and inflation are increasing poverty levels, it is crucial that leaders act for the common good. There are, however, countless examples of public officials systematically influencing policies and institutions to increase their power and steal public funds.

Leaders urgently need to strengthen the rule of law, rights and democracy, but many are systematically attacking them.

The 2023 CPI shows that while most countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia are not making progress against corruption, five countries have significantly improved their CPI scores over the last 10 years. This shows that despite the substantial challenges faced in much of the region, change is possible.

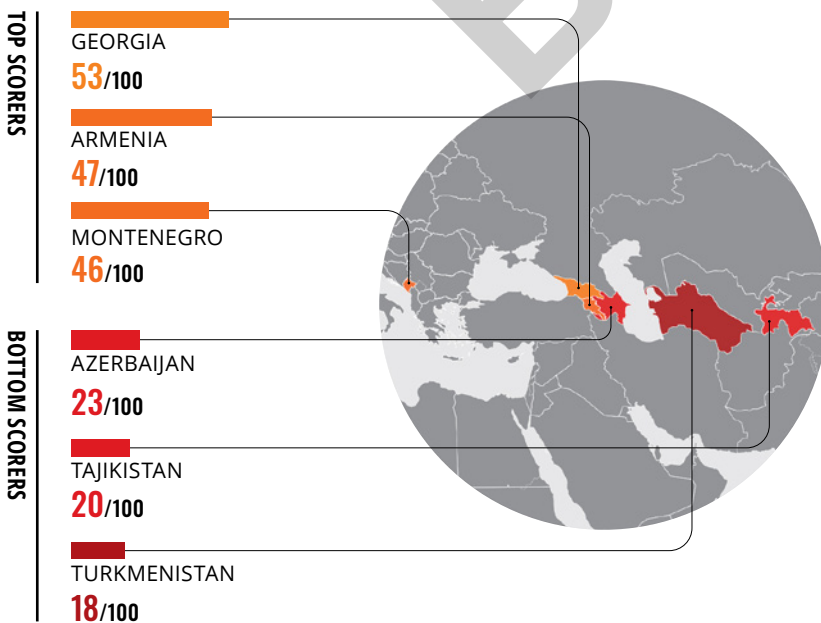
The rest have stagnated in their anti-corruption efforts, except for Bosnia and Herzegovina (35), Turkey (34) and Turkmenistan (18), which have declined. Turkey also reached its lowest score to date on the CPI this year, as did Serbia (36), Russia (26) and Tajikistan (20).

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COUNTRIES

35

AVERAGE SCORE



LATEST IMPROVERS

- ARMENIA **47/100** (+12 points since 2018)
- MOLDOVA **42/100** (+10 points since 2019)
- UZBEKISTAN **33/100** (+8 points since 2019)

LATEST DECLINERS

- TURKEY **34/100** (-7 points since 2018)

NEW MAXIMUM SCORES

- KAZAKHSTAN **39**, MOLDOVA **42**, UKRAINE **36** and UZBEKISTAN **33**

NEW MINIMUM SCORES

- RUSSIA **26**, TAJIKISTAN **20** and TURKEY **34**

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA

The loss of momentum in anti-corruption efforts across the MENA region is diminishing public trust. At the same time, adopting a reactive, rather than preventative, approach to fighting corruption impairs good governance.

For over a decade, most countries in the region have failed to improve their positions on the CPI, and 2023 is no exception. This trend is attributed to high levels of political corruption that undermine anti-corruption efforts across the region. Corruption continues to hinder citizens' access to essential services, including health and education, and in many cases, even threatens their right to life.

With only seven years to go to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Arab States struggle to fulfil their

commitments to justice and human rights. This is due to the absence of proper infrastructure and national integrity systems. The combined CPI 2023 scores of the Arab States amount to an average of 34 out of 100, demonstrating the long road ahead in assuring integrity and justice throughout the region.

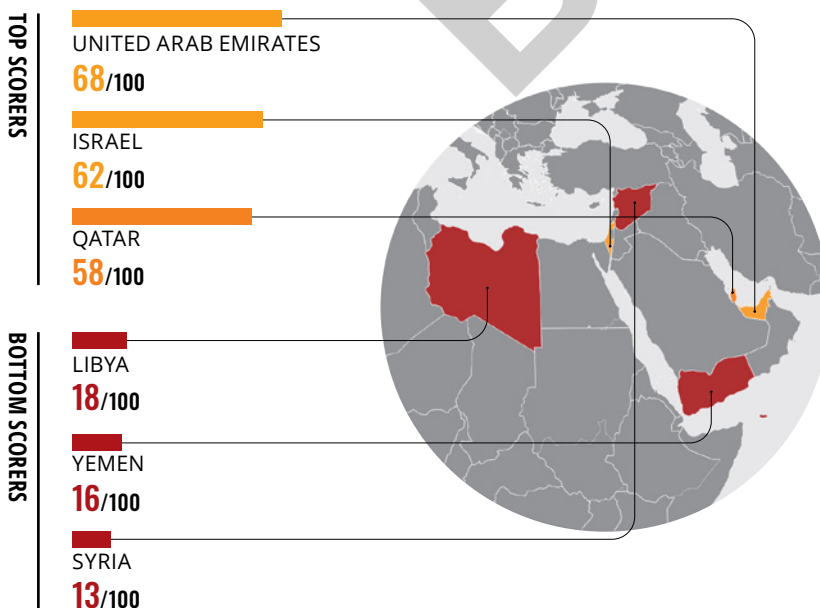
Across the region, widespread corruption significantly undermines progress and many states grapple with deeply rooted social and structural injustices. These prevailing conditions perpetuate various forms of inequality, including disparate access to essential services and resources. This not only exacerbates social inequalities but also severely impedes the pursuit of the SDGs.

18

COUNTRIES

38

AVERAGE SCORE



LATEST IMPROVERS

KUWAIT
46/100 (+6 points since 2019)

LATEST DECLINERS

LEBANON
24/100 (-6 points since 2012)

SYRIA
13/100 (-13 points since 2012)

YEMEN
16/100 (-7 points since 2012)

NEW MAXIMUM SCORES

(No new maximum scores)

NEW MINIMUM SCORES

IRAN **24**, and OMAN **43**

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

This year's CPI shows mixed results in Africa, with significant improvements in a few countries. However, most African countries experienced stagnation, maintaining the region's consistently poor performance, with an unaltered regional average score of 33 out of 100. Ninety per cent of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa scored under 50.

Despite a [regional survey](#) ranking corruption among the most important problems that Africans want their governments to address, the 2023 CPI shows that countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have a long way to go in their fight against corruption.

The region's persistent challenges stem from decades of severe underfunding in public sectors, exacerbated by corruption and illicit financial flows siphoning resources away from basic public services. Addressing

social and economic issues remains ineffective, often at the expense of the most vulnerable population. Corruption in justice delivery mechanisms disproportionately affects the poorest citizens and those who depend primarily on public services, such as people living with disabilities or women and children, hindering the realisation of global and regional development goals.

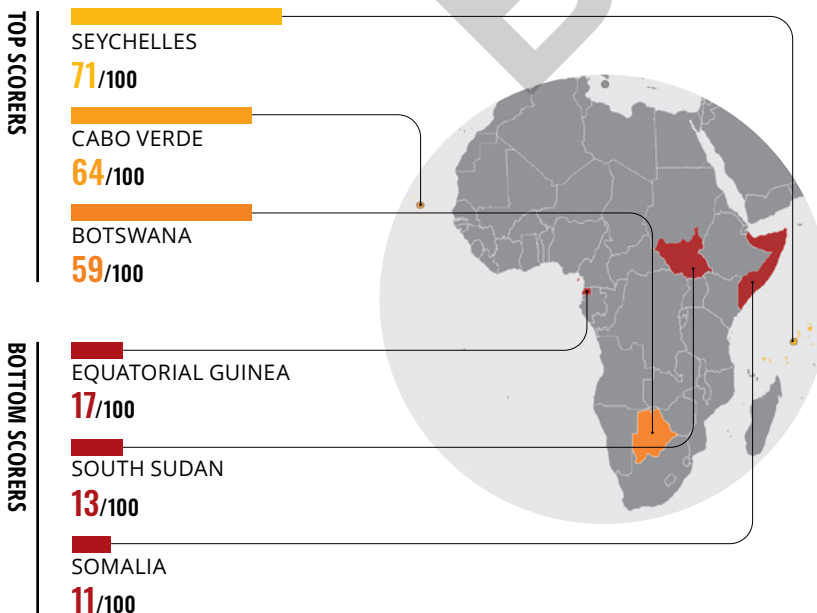
Despite adopting the African Union Convention on Prevention and Combatting Corruption (AUCPCC) two decades ago, impunity of public actors, a weakened civic space and public access to justice and information continue to be critical issues that threaten the rule of law in the region. Anti-corruption efforts are therefore necessary at all levels and by multiple stakeholders within the justice network.

49

COUNTRIES

33

AVERAGE SCORE



LATEST IMPROVERS

ANGOLA
33/100 (+14 points since 2018)

LATEST DECLINERS

LIBERIA
25/100 (-7 points since 2018)

NEW MAXIMUM SCORES

CABO VERDE **64**, COTE D'IVOIRE **40**, SEYCHELLES **71**, SIERRA LEONE **35** and TANZANIA **40**

NEW MINIMUM SCORES

GABON **28**, LIBERIA **25** and SOUTH AFRICA **41**

WESTERN EUROPE & EUROPEAN UNION

The average CPI score of 65 out of 100 has dropped for the first time in almost a decade in Western Europe and the EU. Despite remaining the top-scoring region in the CPI, robust anti-corruption measures continue to be undermined by the weakening of checks and balances. The erosion of political integrity contributes to diminishing public trust in countries' ability to tackle the region's ongoing challenges.

The 2023 CPI reveals that anti-corruption efforts have stagnated or declined in more than three-quarters of the countries in the region. Among the 31 countries assessed, only six have improved their score, while eight have declined since 2012.

Several high-ranking democracies, including Sweden (82), Netherlands (79), Iceland

(72) and the United Kingdom (71), have recorded their lowest-ever scores. Notably, the UK has experienced a six-point decrease over the past five years. Denmark (90), Finland (87) and Norway (84) top the CPI ranking, while the lowest-performing countries—reflecting substantial weaknesses in the rule of law—include Hungary (42), Romania (46) and Bulgaria (45).

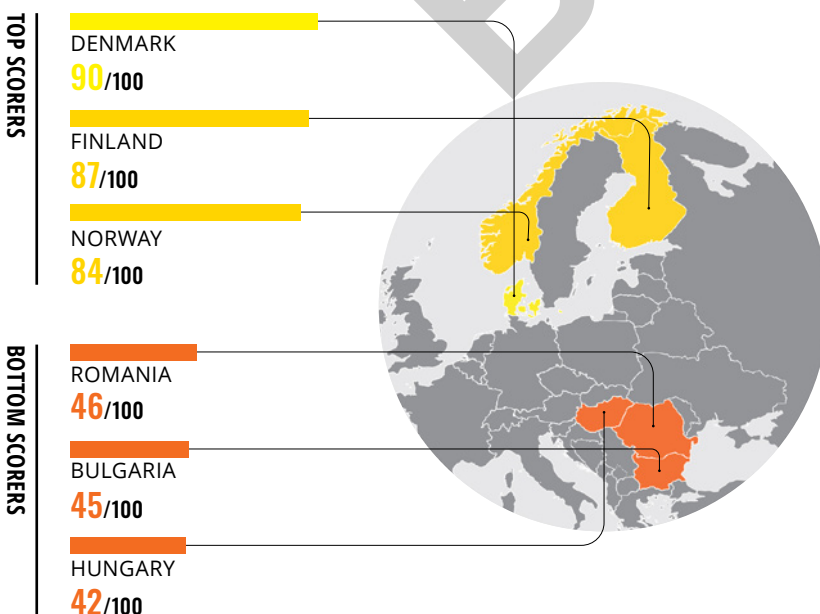
Weak accountability and political corruption are undermining the rule of law in a region where people are losing trust in their institutions. In the most alarming cases, narrow interest groups have too much control over political decision making. In others, governments are targeting journalists, whistleblowers and other watchdogs.

31

COUNTRIES

65

AVERAGE SCORE



LATEST IMPROVERS

ESTONIA
76/100 (+6 points since 2016)

ITALY
56/100 (+9 points since 2016)

LATEST DECLINERS

AUSTRIA
71/100 (-6 points since 2019)

POLAND
54/100 (-6 points since 2018)

UNITED KINGDOM
71/100 (-9 points since 2018)

NEW MAXIMUM SCORES

BULGARIA 45, ESTONIA 76, LATVIA 60 and SLOVAKIA 54

NEW MINIMUM SCORES

ICELAND 72, NETHERLANDS 79, POLAND 54, SWEDEN 82 and UNITED KINGDOM 71

METHODOLOGY

The CPI aggregates data from several different sources that capture perceptions among businesspeople and country experts of the level of corruption in the public sector. Transparency International takes the following steps to calculate the CPI:

1. Select data sources. Each data source used to construct the CPI must fulfil the following criteria to qualify as a valid source:

- + Quantifies risks or perceptions of corruption in the public sector
- + Is based on a reliable and valid methodology
- + Comes from a reputable organisation
- + Allows for sufficient variation of scores to distinguish between countries
- + Ranks a substantial number of countries across more than one region

- + Considers only the assessments of country experts or businesspeople
- + Is updated regularly (at least every two years).

The CPI is calculated using 13 different data sources from 12 different institutions that have captured perceptions of corruption within the past two years.

2. Standardise data sources to a scale of 0-100. This standardisation is achieved by subtracting the mean of each source in the baseline year from each country score, then dividing by the standard deviation, of that source in the baseline year. This subtraction and division using the baseline year parameters, ensures that the CPI scores are comparable year on year since 2012. After this procedure, the standardised scores are transformed to the CPI scale by multiplying them with the value of the CPI standard deviation in 2012 (20) and adding the mean of the CPI in 2012 (45), so that the dataset fits the CPI's 0-100 scale.

3. Calculate the average. For a country or territory to be included in the CPI, a minimum of three sources must assess that country. A country's CPI score is then calculated as the average of all standardised scores available for that country. Scores are rounded to whole numbers.

4. Report the measure of uncertainty. The CPI score is accompanied by a standard error and confidence interval. This captures the variation across the data sources available for a country or territory.

ENDNOTES

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