CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2018
Transparency International is a global movement with one vision: a world in which government, business, civil society and the daily lives of people are free of corruption. Through more than 100 chapters worldwide and an international secretariat in Berlin, we are leading the fight against corruption to turn this vision into reality.

#cpi2018
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The 2018 Corruption Perceptions Index, published by Transparency International, measures the perceived levels of public sector corruption in 180 countries and territories. Drawing on 13 surveys of businesspeople and expert assessments, the index scores on a scale of zero (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).

The results paint a sadly familiar picture: more than **two-thirds of countries score below 50**, while the average score is just 43. Perhaps most disturbing is that **the vast majority of countries assessed have made little to no progress**. Only 20 have made significant progress in recent years.

**As long as corruption continues to go largely unchecked, democracy is under threat around the world.**

“Corruption chips away at democracy to produce a vicious cycle, where corruption undermines democratic institutions and, in turn, weak institutions are less able to control corruption,” said Patricia Moreira, managing director of Transparency International. “With many democratic institutions under threat across the globe – often by leaders with authoritarian or populist tendencies – we need to do more to **strengthen checks and balances and protect citizens’ rights.**”

**Citizens demand transparency.**

Recent anti-corruption protests from Mongolia to Romania to Guatemala have made clear the public's outrage with politicians’ abuse of office and attempts to limit their own accountability. Voters’ frustration with corruption has also reshaped the politics of several countries in the past few years. The leaders riding waves of discontent to positions of power must pay more than lip-service to anti-corruption; **it should enter the DNA of their policies and reforms.**

“Our research makes a clear link between having a healthy democracy and successfully fighting public sector corruption,” said Delia Ferreira Rubio, chair of Transparency International. “Corruption is much more likely to flourish where democratic foundations are weak and, as we have seen in many countries, where undemocratic and populist politicians capture democratic institutions and use them to their advantage.”
180 COUNTRIES. 180 SCORES.

HOW DOES YOUR COUNTRY MEASURE UP?

The perceived levels of public sector corruption in 180 countries/territories around the world.
**TOP COUNTRIES**

- **DENMARK** 88/100
- **NEW ZEALAND** 87/100
- **FINLAND** 85/100
- **SINGAPORE** 85/100
- **SWEDEN** 85/100
- **SWITZERLAND** 85/100

**LOWEST SCORING REGION**

- **WESTERN EUROPE & EUROPEAN UNION**
  - **HIGHEST SCORING REGION**
  - **SOUTH SUDAN** 13/100
  - **SYRIA** 13/100
  - **NORTH KOREA** 14/100
  - **YEMEN** 14/100
  - **SOMALIA** 10/100

**BOTTOM COUNTRIES**

- **SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**
  - **AVERAGE REGIONAL SCORE**
  - **SINCE 2017**
  - **2/3 OF COUNTRIES SCORE BELOW**

- **GLOBAL AVERAGE**
- **TOP COUNTRIES**
- **BOTTOM COUNTRIES**

**AVERAGE REGIONAL SCORE**

- **SINCE 2017**
- **THE AVERAGE COUNTRY SCORE IS**

- **SWEDEN** 85/100
- **SWITZERLAND** 85/100
- **SOUTH SUDAN** 13/100
- **SYRIA** 13/100
- **NORTH KOREA** 14/100
- **YEMEN** 14/100
- **SOMALIA** 10/100

**GLOBAL AVERAGE**

- **DENMARK** 88/100
- **NEW ZEALAND** 87/100
- **FINLAND** 85/100
- **SINGAPORE** 85/100
- **SWEDEN** 85/100
- **SWITZERLAND** 85/100
- **NORTH KOREA** 14/100
- **YEMEN** 14/100
- **SOUTH SUDAN** 13/100
- **SYRIA** 13/100
- **SOMALIA** 10/100
WITHIN THE LAST 7 YEARS:

20 Countries Improved*
Including:

- **ARGENTINA**
  - Since 2015
  - Top: 8

- **CÔTE D’IVOIRE**
  - Since 2013
  - Top: 8

- **GUYANA**
  - Since 2012
  - Top: 9

16 Countries Decreased*
Including:

- **HUNGARY**
  - Since 2012
  - Top: 9

- **MEXICO**
  - Since 2013
  - Top: 7

- **MALTA**
  - Since 2015
  - Top: 6

THE REMAINING COUNTRIES MADE LITTLE OR NO PROGRESS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION IN RECENT YEARS

*In these six examples, we report the year between 2012 and 2018 from which the score change is statistically significant.

RESULTS BY REGION

- **AMERICAS**
  - Average score
  - Top: Canada (81/100)
  - Bottom: Venezuela (18/100)
  - Countries Improved: 44

- **MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA**
  - Average score
  - Top: United Arab Emirates (70/100)
  - Bottom: Syria (13/100)
  - Countries Improved: 39

- **SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**
  - Average score
  - Top: Seychelles (66/100)
  - Bottom: Somalia (10/100)
  - Countries Improved: 32

- **WESTERN EUROPE & EU**
  - Average score
  - Top: Denmark (88/100)
  - Bottom: Bulgaria (42/100)
  - Countries Improved: 66

- **EASTERN EUROPE & CENTRAL ASIA**
  - Average score
  - Top: Georgia (58/100)
  - Bottom: Turkmenistan (20/100)
  - Countries Improved: 35
CORRUPTION AND THE CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY

“Our research makes a clear link between having a healthy democracy and successfully fighting public sector corruption. Corruption is much more likely to flourish where democratic foundations are weak and, as we have seen in many countries, where undemocratic and populist politicians capture democratic institutions and use them to their advantage.”

Delia Ferreira Rubio, chair of Transparency International

Beating corruption is crucial to healthy democracy. There are no full democracies that score below 50 on the CPI. Similarly, very few countries that have autocratic characteristics score higher than 50.

The following countries have experienced a decline in both the health of their democracies* and control of corruption:

**TURKEY**

- **CPI SCORE**: 41/100
- **CHANGE IN DEMOCRACY RATING 2012-2018**: -29

**HUNGARY**

- **CPI SCORE**: 46/100
- **CHANGE IN CPI SCORE 2012-2018**: -9

*From Freedom House

Every dot in this graphic represents a country’s CPI score. The numbers in the circles represent the average CPI score for that political system.
AMERICAS

The Americas region continues to fail in making any serious inroads against corruption. Populist leaders are transforming politics across the region, raising red flags through their treatment of the media, civil society and democratic institutions, all of which risk becoming less able to act as checks and balances against corruption.

44/100

The United States (US) dropped four points since last year to earn its lowest score on the CPI in seven years. This decline comes at a time when the US is experiencing threats to its system of checks and balances as well as an erosion of ethical norms at the highest levels of power.
ASIA PACIFIC

44/100

The Asia Pacific region is stagnating in the fight against corruption. A lack of progress is unsurprising given the prevalence of weak democratic institutions, and a lack of laws and enforcement mechanisms, all of which typically contribute to higher rates of corruption. However, with two countries in the top 10, and two in the bottom 10, the region is highly diverse in its anti-corruption approach.

Massive public mobilisation against corruption and voter turnout resulted in new governments and anti-corruption reforms in India, Malaysia, the Maldives, and Pakistan. Despite these encouraging developments, we are yet to see how they translate into solid action, especially when it comes to combatting elusive forms of grand corruption.
Eastern Europe and Central Asia is the second lowest scoring region in the index, head of Sub-Saharan Africa. With nearly every country scoring 45 or less out of 100, there has been very little progress in combatting corruption. A general lack of political will, weak institutions and few political rights create an environment where corruption flourishes with little opposition.

**Countries to Watch**

Armenia is expected to begin enacting anti-corruption reforms in 2019. Judicial reform should be at the top of the priority list; a proper separation of powers, as well as the appropriate checks and balances, will go a long way to ensuring these reforms are a success. The role of civil society is also crucial.
The fight against corruption in the Middle East and Northern Africa remains grim. In a region where civil liberties continue to be under repressive state control and the social contract between states and their citizens has been broken for decades, it is no surprise that corruption remains stubbornly high. Leaders need to strengthen checks and balances, support citizens’ rights and deliver on anti-corruption commitments.

In Jordan, citizen protests helped unseat the prime minister, but the new government has yet to fulfil its anti-corruption commitments. Another challenge is the presence of influential actors blocking government attempts to advance anti-corruption. Looking ahead, the government should ensure financial and administrative independence of public institutions, and protect civil society and free speech.
Sub-Saharan Africa is the lowest scoring region on the index, and has failed to translate its anti-corruption commitments into any real progress. A region with stark political and socio-economic contrasts and longstanding challenges, many of its countries struggle with ineffective institutions and weak democratic values, which threaten anti-corruption efforts.

Despite stagnation across the region, there are some promising political developments, particularly in Angola, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa. In South Africa, citizen engagement and various official inquiries into corruption abuses are positive steps, while new leadership in Angola provides hope for anti-corruption reforms.
While Western Europe and the European Union are doing better than other parts of the globe, they still have a long way to go to tackle corruption effectively. A lack of prioritising anti-corruption reforms alongside rising populist rhetoric combine with weakening democratic institutions in many countries to make a strong case for renewed efforts.

The Czech Republic has been steadily improving its CPI score since 2014, but events in the past year suggest gains may be fragile. The prime minister has been found guilty of conflict of interest in relation to his media holdings. He has also been accused of conflict of interest over connections to a company which has received millions of euros in EU subsidies.
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