

2022 Corruption Perceptions Index reveals scant progress against corruption as world becomes more violent

Corruption levels remain at a standstill for eleventh year straight

Berlin, 31 January 2023 – The [2022 Corruption Perceptions Index \(CPI\)](#) released today by Transparency International shows that most of the world continues to fail to fight corruption: 95 per cent of countries have made little to no progress since 2017.

The [Global Peace Index](#) shows the world continues to become a less peaceful place. There is a clear connection between this violence and corruption, with countries that score lowest in this index also scoring very low on the CPI. Governments hampered by corruption lack the capacity to protect the people, while public discontent is more likely to turn into violence. This vicious cycle is impacting countries everywhere from **South Sudan** (13) to **Brazil** (38).

Delia Ferreira Rubio, Chair of Transparency International said:

“Corruption has made our world a more dangerous place. As governments have collectively failed to make progress against it, they fuel the current rise in violence and conflict – and endanger people everywhere. The only way out is for states to do the hard work, rooting out corruption at all levels to ensure governments work for all people, not just an elite few.”

GLOBAL HIGHLIGHTS

The CPI ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption on a scale of zero (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).

The CPI global average remains unchanged at 43 for the eleventh year in a row, and more than two-thirds of countries have a serious problem with corruption, scoring below 50.

- **Denmark** (90) tops the index this year, with **Finland** and **New Zealand** following closely, both at 87. Strong democratic institutions and regard for human rights also make these countries some of the most peaceful in the world according to the [Global Peace Index](#).
- **South Sudan** (13), **Syria** (13) and **Somalia** (12), all of which are embroiled in protracted conflict, remain at the bottom of the CPI.
- 26 countries – among them **Qatar** (58), **Guatemala** (24) and the **United Kingdom** (73) – are all at historic lows this year.

Since 2017, ten countries significantly declined on their CPI scores.

- The significant decliners are: **Luxembourg** (77), **Canada** (74), the **United Kingdom** (73), **Austria** (71), **Malaysia** (47), **Mongolia** (33), **Pakistan** (27), **Honduras** (23), **Nicaragua** (19) and **Haiti** (17).
- Eight countries improved on the CPI during that same period: **Ireland** (77), **South Korea** (63), **Armenia** (46), **Vietnam** (42), the **Maldives** (40), **Moldova** (39), **Angola** (33) and **Uzbekistan** (31).

For each country's individual score and changes over time, as well as analysis for each region, see the [2022 CPI page](#).

CORRUPTION, CONFLICT AND SECURITY

Corruption, conflict and security are profoundly intertwined. The misuse, embezzlement or theft of public funds can deprive the very institutions in charge of protecting citizens, enforcing the rule of law and guarding the peace of the resources they need to fulfil that mandate. Criminal and terrorist groups are often aided by the complicity of corrupt public officials, law enforcement authorities, judges and politicians, which allows them to thrive and operate with impunity.

- The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 was a stark reminder of the threat that corruption and the absence of government accountability pose for global peace and security: kleptocrats in **Russia** (28) have amassed great fortunes by pledging loyalty to President Vladimir Putin in exchange for profitable government contracts and protection of their economic interests. The absence of any checks on Putin's power allowed him to pursue his geopolitical ambitions with impunity. This attack destabilised the European continent, threatening democracy and killing tens of thousands.
- After decades of conflict, **South Sudan** (13) is in a major humanitarian crisis with more than half of the population facing acute food insecurity – and corruption is exacerbating the situation. A Sentry report from last year revealed that a massive fraud scheme by a network of corrupt politicians with ties to the president's family siphoned off aid for food, fuel and medicine.
- The combination of corruption, authoritarianism and an economic downturn has proved especially volatile in **Brazil** (38), where President Jair Bolsonaro's term was marked by the dismantling of anti-corruption frameworks, the use of corrupt schemes to favour political allies and amass political support in the legislature, disinformation and attacks on civic space. In January, after Bolsonaro lost his re-election bid, his supporters launched a violent attack against the parliament, supreme court and presidential palace, threatening the lives of police officers and journalists and vandalising buildings, with the goal of disrupting the peaceful transition of power to newly elected President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

- Complaints of corruption helped spark civil war in **Yemen** (16) eight years ago. Now, the state has collapsed, leaving two-thirds of the population without sufficient food – one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world.
- Even in countries with relatively strong measures against corruption, the defence sector often remains secretive – opening the door for undue influence and other forms of corruption. According to the [Government Defence Integrity Index](#), only nine countries out of the 85 assessed have a low or a very low risk of corruption. This is particularly troubling as many governments prepare to ramp up their military spending in response to emerging threats and in response to the war in Ukraine. In **Germany** (79), for example, the government has set up a new 100 billion euro fund to revamp its military, but such simplified procurement opens up significant risks for corruption. However, a new national security strategy currently being debated within the government could help to strengthen integrity and transparency mechanisms if adopted.

Transparency International calls on governments to prioritise anti-corruption commitments, reinforcing checks and balances, upholding rights to information and limiting private influence to finally rid the world of corruption – and the violence it brings.

Daniel Eriksson, CEO of Transparency International, said:

“The good news is that leaders can fight corruption and promote peace all at once. Governments must open up space to include the public in decision-making – from activists and business owners to marginalised communities and young people. In democratic societies, the people can raise their voices to help root out corruption and demand a safer world for us all.”

NOTE TO EDITORS

- The media page includes the CPI 2022 report in five languages, as well as the full dataset and methodology and additional analysis by six regions that features countries identified as important to watch, including **Brazil** (38), **Sri Lanka** (36), **Ukraine** (33) and the **United Kingdom** (73). See here: <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2022/media-kit>

ABOUT THE CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX

Since its inception in 1995, the Corruption Perceptions Index has become the leading global indicator of public sector corruption. The index scores 180 countries and territories around the world based on perceptions of public sector corruption, using data from 13 external sources, including the World Bank, World Economic Forum, private risk and consulting companies, think tanks and others. The scores reflect the views of experts and business people.

The process for calculating the CPI is regularly reviewed to make sure it is as robust and coherent as possible, most recently by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre in 2017. All the CPI scores since 2012 are comparable from one year to the next. For more information, see this article: [The ABCs of the CPI: How the Corruption Perceptions Index is calculated](#).

INTERVIEW REQUESTS

In case of country-specific queries, please contact [Transparency International's national chapters](#).

In case of queries around regional and global findings, please contact the Transparency International Secretariat: press@transparency.org.