

Corruption Perceptions Index 2010

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What is the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)?

The CPI ranks countries/territories based on how corrupt a country's public sector is perceived to be. It is a composite index, a combination of polls, drawing on corruption-related data from expert and business surveys carried out by a variety of independent and reputable institutions. The CPI reflects views from around the world, including those of experts living and working in the countries/territories evaluated. For a country/territory to be included in the ranking, it must be included in a minimum of three of the CPI's source surveys. Thus, inclusion in the index is not an indication of the existence of corruption but rather dependent solely on the availability of information.

What is corruption and how does the CPI measure it?

Corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. This is the working definition used by TI, applying to both the public and private sectors. The CPI focuses on corruption in the public sector, or corruption which involves public officials, civil servants or politicians. The surveys used to compile the index include questions relating to the abuse of public power and focus on: bribery of public officials, kickbacks in public procurement, embezzlement of public funds, and on questions that probe the strength and effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts in the public sector. As such, it covers both the administrative and political aspects of corruption.

In producing the index, the scores of countries/territories in source surveys and assessments derived from the specific corruption-related questions, are combined to calculate a single score for each country.

Why is the CPI based only on perceptions?

Corruption generally comprises illegal activities, which mainly come to light only through scandals, investigations or prosecutions. It is thus difficult to assess absolute levels of corruption in countries or territories on the basis of hard empirical data. Possible attempts to do so such as by comparing bribes reported, the number of prosecutions brought or court cases directly linked to corruption cannot be taken as definitive indicators of corruption levels. Rather they show how effective prosecutors, the courts or the media are in investigating and exposing corruption. One reliable method of compiling comparable country data is to capture perceptions of those in a position to offer expert assessments of public sector corruption in a given country.

Whose opinion is polled for the surveys used in the CPI?

The expertise reflected in the CPI scores draws on the understanding of corrupt practices held by country analysts and business people based in both industrialised and developing countries. Sources providing data for the CPI rely on these experts living in and outside of the country being assessed. It is important to note that the viewpoints of in-country experts correlate well with those of non-resident experts.

What are the sources of data for the CPI?

The 2010 CPI draws on 13 source surveys from 10 independent institutions. The sources of information used for the 2010 CPI were published between January 2009 and September 2010. Except for surveys that include corruption as one of several issues measured, the CPI includes only sources that provide a ranking of countries/territories and measure some aspect of corruption levels. TI ensures that the sources used are of the highest quality and that source surveys are carried out with complete integrity. To qualify, survey data must be well documented and the methodology published to enable an assessment of its reliability and must provide a ranking of countries/territories and measure the overall extent of corruption.

For a full list of data sources, questions asked, and the number and type of respondents for each country, please see the CPI sources [here](#).

Why are countries/territories removed from the index, and why are new countries/territories added?

Countries/territories are only included in the index when three or more of the sources of information TI relies upon for the CPI assess the country/territory in question. When less than three source surveys are available, countries cannot be included in the index.

The 2010 index scores two fewer countries than last year, because of a reduction in the number of surveys available. Kosovo has been added to the index but St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname have dropped off.

Can country/territory scores in the 2010 CPI be compared to those in past indexes?

The index is based on rankings of countries/territories calculated using a changing set of source surveys. The CPI is therefore not the appropriate tool for comparisons over time. Additionally, the number of sources and countries included has varied over time since the CPI's inception in 1995. Certain source surveys have been added or discontinued. In an effort to improve the index over the last 15 years, TI has also made slight modifications to the methodology. As a consequence, the CPI cannot be used for accurate trend analysis.

Individual data sources can be used to identify whether compared to the previous year's CPI score there has been a change in perceived levels of corruption in a particular country. TI has used this approach in 2010 to assess country progress and identify what can be considered as changes in perceptions of corruption, using the two criteria that:

- (a) a change of at least 0.3 points in the CPI score is present, and;
- (b) the direction of this change is confirmed by more than half of the data sources evaluating the country.

Based on these criteria, the following countries showed an improvement from 2009 to 2010: Bhutan, Chile, Ecuador, FYR Macedonia, the Gambia, Haiti, Jamaica, Kuwait, and Qatar. The following countries showed deterioration from 2009 to 2010: the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Madagascar, Niger and the United States.

Which matters more, a country/territory's rank or its score?

A country/territory's score (0 to 10) indicates the perceived level of public sector corruption in a country while a country's rank indicates its position relative to the other countries/territories included in the index. It is important to keep in mind that a country's rank can change simply because new countries enter the index or others drop out.

Is the country/territory with the lowest score the world's most corrupt nation?

No. The country/territory with the lowest score is the one where public sector corruption is perceived to be greatest *among those included in the list*. There are more than 200 sovereign nations in the world, and the 2010 CPI ranks 178 of them. The CPI provides no information about countries/territories that are not included. Moreover, the CPI is mostly an assessment of perception of administrative and political corruption. It is not a verdict on the levels of corruption of entire nations or societies or of their international policies and activities. Citizens of those countries/territories that score at the lower end of the CPI have shown the same concern about and condemnation of corruption as the public in countries that perform strongly. For more information, see TI's [Global Corruption Barometer](#).

What other research does TI produce to analyse corruption?

TI produces independent empirical research on corruption. Our global research portfolio combines qualitative approaches with quantitative ones, macro-level indicators with in-depth diagnostics, expert analysis with experience, as well as perceptions-based survey work. This body of research provides a comprehensive picture of the scale, spread and dynamics of corruption around the world. It also serves to mobilise and support evidence-based, effectively-tailored policy reform. In addition to the Corruption Perceptions Index, TI's portfolio of global research includes:

- **Global Corruption Barometer (GCB):** a representative survey of more than 70,000 households in more than 65 countries on people's perceptions and experiences of corruption. The most recent Global Corruption Barometer can be found at:
http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/gcb.
- **Bribe Payers Index (BPI):** a ranking of leading, exporting countries according to the perceived likelihood of their firms to bribe abroad. It is based on a survey of executives focusing on the business practices of foreign firms in their country. The most recent Bribe Payers Index can be found at:
http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/bpi.
- **Global Corruption Report (GCR):** a thematic report that explores corruption with regard to a specific sector or governance issue. The report provides expert research and analysis as well as case studies. The most recent Global Corruption Report was published on 23 September 2009 and can be found at: <http://www.transparency.org/publications/gcr>
- **National Integrity System assessments (NIS):** a series of in-country studies providing an extensive assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the key institutions that enable good governance and integrity in a country (the executive, legislature, the judiciary, anti-corruption agencies and other similar areas). For a full list of reports and more information on the National Integrity System model, please see:
http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/nis