

CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2019: Short Methodology Note

The Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) aggregates data from a number of different sources that provide perceptions by business people and country experts of the level of corruption in the public sector.

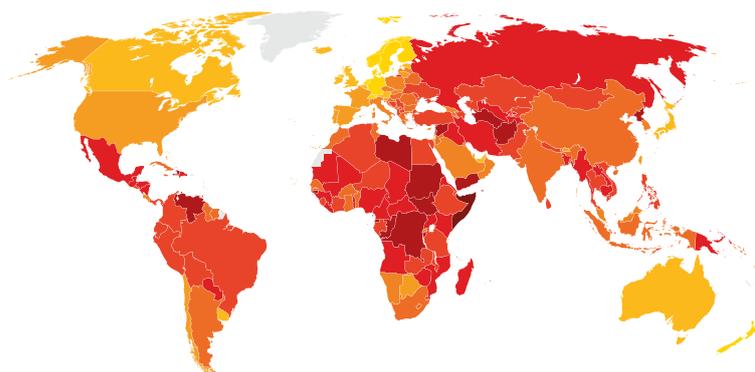
The following steps are followed to calculate the CPI:

1. Select data sources:

Each data source that is used to construct the CPI must fulfil the following criteria to qualify as a valid source:

- Quantifies perceptions of corruption in the public sector
- Be based on a reliable and valid methodology, which scores and ranks multiple countries on the same scale
- Performed by a credible institution
- Allow for sufficient variation of scores to distinguish between countries
- Gives ratings to a substantial number of countries
- The rating is given by a country expert or business person
- The institution repeats their assessment at least every two years

The CPI 2019 is calculated using 13 different data sources from 12 different institutions that capture perceptions of corruption within the past two years. These sources are described in detail in the accompanying source description document.



2. Standardise data sources

to a scale of 0-100 where a 0 equals the highest level of perceived corruption and 100 equals the lowest level of perceived corruption. This standardisation is done by subtracting the mean of each source in the baseline year from each country score and 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 with the value of the CPI standard deviation in 2012 (20) and adding the mean of CPI in 2012 (45), so that the data set 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 a measure of uncertainty:

The CPI is accompanied by a standard error and confidence interval associated with the score, which captures the variation in scores of the data sources available for that country/territory.

CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2019: Full Source Description



13 data sources were used to construct the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2019:

1. African Development Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment 2018
2. Bertelsmann Stiftung Sustainable Governance Indicators 2018
3. Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index 2020
4. Economist Intelligence Unit Country Risk Service 2019
5. Freedom House Nations in Transit 2018
6. Global Insight Country Risk Ratings 2018
7. IMD World Competitiveness Center World Competitiveness Yearbook Executive Opinion Survey 2019
8. Political and Economic Risk Consultancy Asian Intelligence 2019
9. The PRS Group International Country Risk Guide 2019
10. World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment 2018
11. World Economic Forum Executive Opinion Survey 2019
12. World Justice Project Rule of Law Index Expert Survey 2019
13. Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) 2019

13

data sources

BERTELSMANN STIFTUNG TRANSFORMATION INDEX 2020

Code: BF (TI)

Year of publication: 2020 (forthcoming)

Type of assessment: Qualitative expert survey

Data provider: Bertelsmann Stiftung

The Bertelsmann Stiftung (BF) was founded in 1977 as a private foundation. As a think tank they work toward improved education, a just and efficient economic system, a preventative healthcare system, a vibrant civil society and greater international understanding. The Bertelsmann Stiftung is independent and nonpartisan. It designs, launches and runs its own projects.

The Transformation Index provides the framework for an exchange of good practice among agents of reform. Within this framework, the Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index (BTI) publishes two rankings, the Status Index and the Management Index, both of which are based on in-depth assessments of 129 countries. The scores are based on detailed country reports which assess 52 questions divided into 17 criteria.

Assessments are provided by two experts per country. Country assessments consist of two sections: the written assessment of the state of transformation and management performance in a country (country report) and the numerical assessment of the state of transformation and management performance (country ratings). Scores are given by a country expert, which are then reviewed blind by a second country expert who also provides a second independent rating of the country. These scores by experts are then verified and discussed by regional coordinators to ensure intra and inter-regional comparability in ratings. In addition, BF has also instituted an extra layer of verification to ensure the scores provided match the qualitative descriptions for each country.

Corruption question(s)

Experts are asked to assess:

“Q3.3 To what extent are public officeholders who abuse their positions prosecuted or penalized?” Assessments range from:

- a low of 1, where “Officeholders who break the law and engage in corruption can do so without fear of legal consequences or adverse publicity.”
- to a high of 10, where “Officeholders who break the law and engage in corruption are prosecuted rigorously under established laws and always attract adverse publicity.”

“Q15.3 To what extent does the government successfully contain corruption?” Assessments range from:

- from a low of 1, where “The government fails to contain corruption, and there are no integrity mechanisms in place.”
- to a high of 10, where “The government is successful in containing corruption, and all integrity mechanisms are in place and effective.”

Scores

Scores are assigned on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the lowest level of corruption and 1 being the highest. The score for each country is an average of the two questions. The BTI 2018 (previous edition) codebook is accessible here edition: www.bti-project.org/fileadmin/files/BTI/Downloads/Zusaetzliche_Downloads/BTI2018_Codebook.pdf

The BTI is based on a qualitative expert survey in which written assessments are translated into numerical ratings and examined in a multi-stage review process so as to make them comparable both within and across regions. The process of country assessment has both a qualitative and quantitative component, in each case performed by two country experts. As a rule, one foreign and one local expert are involved in the evaluation process; this ensures that both external and internal perspectives are taken into account in the course of assessment and helps counteract subjective influence. In total, 248 experts from leading research institutions around the world contribute to the production of the country reports.

In order to ensure the validity, reliability and comparability of the assessment, each individual score undergoes a multi-step process of review by the country experts, the regional coordinators, the project team and the BTI board. The scores and responses provided by the experts for each of the 49 indicators are initially reviewed by regional coordinators, who examine the content to ensure it is both complete and consistent.

Country scores pass through an intra-regional review stage followed by an inter-regional review and ratings aggregation.

Country coverage

137 countries and territories are scored.

Data availability

The BTI was first published in 2003, and has been published every two years since then. The data for the CPI 2019 was kindly provided by the Bertelsmann Stiftung ahead of the publication of the

ECONOMIST INTELLIGENCE UNIT COUNTRY RISK SERVICE 2019

Code: EIU

Year of publication: 2019

Type of assessment: Risk evaluations based on qualitative and quantitative indicators

Data provider: Economist Intelligence Unit

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) was established in 1946 as the research body for The Economist newspaper. Since then, it has grown into a global research and advisory firm that produces business intelligence for policy makers worldwide. 650 full-time and contributing analysts work in and on over 200 countries/territories.

Country Risk Ratings are designed to provide in-depth and timely analysis of the risks of financial exposure in more than 140 countries.

The EIU relies on teams of experts based primarily in London (but also in New York, Hong Kong, Beijing and Shanghai) who are supported by a global network of in-country specialists. Each country analyst covers a maximum of two or three countries/territories. The economic and political reports produced by EIU analysts are subjected to a rigorous review process before publication.

Corruption question(s)

Specific guiding questions include:

- Are there clear procedures and accountability governing the allocation and use of public funds?
- Are public funds misappropriated by ministers/public officials for private or party political purposes?
- Are there special funds for which there is no accountability?
- Are there general abuses of public resources?
- Is there a professional civil service or are large numbers of officials directly appointed by the government?
- Is there an independent body auditing the management of public finances?
- Is there an independent judiciary with the power to try ministers/public officials for abuses?
- Is there a tradition of a payment of bribes to secure contracts and gain favours?

Scores

Scores are given as integers on a scale from 0 (very low incidence of corruption) to 4 (very high incidence of corruption).

The score is a generalised composite measure of corruption that includes an assessment of all areas covered by the indicative questions.

Country coverage

131 countries/territories were scored in 2019.

Data availability

Country risk assessments have been produced by the EIU since the early 1980s. Updated summaries are provided monthly for 100 countries and quarterly for the rest. The CPI draws on risk rating data available as of October 2019.

Data is available to subscribers of EIU Country Risk Service www.eiu.com

FREEDOM HOUSE NATIONS IN TRANSIT 2018

Code: FH

Year of publication: 2018

Type of assessment: Qualitative expert assessment

Data provider: Freedom House

Founded in 1941, Freedom House is an independent watchdog organisation that supports the expansion of freedom around the world. Freedom House supports democratic change, monitors freedom and advocates for democracy and human rights.

The Nations in Transit (NIT) measures democratisation in 29 nations and administrative areas throughout Central Europe and the Newly Independent States (NIS). The reports focus on democratic progress and setbacks. Each report focuses on the following thematic areas: national democratic governance; electoral process; civil society; independent media; local democratic governance; judicial framework and independence; and corruption.

The NIT surveys were produced by Freedom House staff and consultants. The latter were recommended by relevant authorities and are regional or country specialists. A range of sources were used in compiling the report, including: multilateral lending institutions; non-governmental organisations; and other international organisations; local newspapers and magazines; and select government data.

Corruption question(s)

The Freedom House experts are asked to explore a range of indicative questions, including:

- Has the government implemented effective anti-corruption initiatives?
- Is the country's economy free of excessive state involvement?
- Is the government free from excessive bureaucratic regulations, registration requirements, and other controls that increase opportunities for corruption?
- Are there significant limitations on the participation of government officials in economic life?
- Are there adequate laws requiring financial disclosure and disallowing conflict of interest?
- Does the government advertise jobs and contracts?
- Does the state enforce an effective legislative or administrative process—particularly one that is free of prejudice against one's political opponents—to prevent, investigate, and prosecute the corruption of government officials and civil servants?
- Do whistleblowers, anti-corruption activists, investigators, and journalists enjoy legal protections that make them feel secure about reporting cases of bribery and corruption?
- Are allegations of corruption given wide and extensive airing in the media?
- Does the public display a high intolerance for official corruption?

Scores

Ratings run from 1 (lowest level of corruption) to 7 (highest level of corruption) and allow for half-point and quarter-point intermediate scores (e.g. 3.25).

The score is a generalised composite measure of corruption that includes an assessment of all areas covered by the indicative questions.

For all 29 countries in NIT, Freedom House—in consultation with the report authors, a panel of academic advisers, and a group of regional expert reviewers—has provided numerical ratings in the seven categories listed above. The ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the highest and 7 the lowest level of democratic progress.

Authors of individual country reports suggest preliminary ratings in all seven categories covered by the study, ensuring that substantial evidence is provided where a score change is proposed. Each draft report is then sent to several regional expert reviewers, who provide comment on both the score change and the quality of its justification in the report's text. Over the course of a two-day meeting, Freedom House's academic advisory board discusses and evaluates all ratings. Report authors are given the opportunity to dispute any revised rating that differs from the original by more than 0.50 points.

More information can be found here:

freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit-methodology

Country coverage

29 countries/territories were ranked in 2018.

Data availability

The report has been published annually since 2003.

The 2017 NIT data coverage is from 1 January through 31 December 2017.

The data is publicly available online at:

freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2018

GLOBAL INSIGHTS BUSINESS CONDITIONS AND RISK INDICATORS 2018

Code: GI

Year of publication: 2018

Type of assessment: Commercial business expert assessment

Data provider: IHS Global Insight Global Risk Service

Founded in 1959, IHS Global Insight is a global information company employing more than 5,100 people in more than 30 countries around the world. It provides a wide range of online services covering macroeconomics, country risk and individual sector analysis.

The Global Insight Country Risk Rating System has been in operation since 1999 and provides a six-factor analysis of the risk environment in over 200 countries/territories. The six factors are political, economic, legal, tax operational and security risk. The corruption risk score used in the CPI is drawn from Global Insight Business Conditions and Risk Indicators.

The assessments are made by over 100 in-house country specialists, who also draw on the expert opinions of in-country freelancers, clients and other contacts. The ratings reflect IHS Global Insights expert perceptions of the comparative level of the problem in each country/territory. The ratings assess the broad range of corruption, from petty bribe-paying to higher-level political corruption and the scores assigned to each country are based on a qualitative assessment of corruption in each country/territory.

Corruption question(s)

Experts are asked to assess:

The risk that individuals/companies will face bribery or other corrupt practices to carry out business, from securing major contracts to being allowed to import/export a small product or obtain everyday paperwork. This threatens a company's ability to operate in a country, or opens it up to legal or regulatory penalties and reputational damage.

Scores

The ratings range from a minimum of 1.0 (maximum corruption) to 5.0 (minimum corruption) and allow for half-point intermediate scores (e.g. 3.5).

Country coverage

204 countries/territories worldwide are scored.

Scores provided by country analysts are reviewed and benchmarked by IHS Global Insight's risk specialists at both the regional and global level.

Data availability

The Country Risk Rating System has been available since 1999 and is continuously maintained.

The data for CPI 2019 from IHS Global Insight was accessed through the World Bank World Governance Indicators portal, as IHS Global Insight stopped providing data to Transparency International in 2015. The data used for the CPI can be accessed through:

info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/Home/Documents#wgiDataSources

Detailed data is also available to customers of IHS' Country Intelligence:

www.ihs.com/products/global-insight/country-analysis/

IMD WORLD COMPETITIVENESS YEARBOOK 2019

Code: IMD

Year of publication: 2018

Type of assessment: Executive opinion survey

Data provider: IMD World Competitiveness Center

IMD is a top-ranked business school with expertise in developing global leaders through high-impact executive education. 100 per cent focused on real-world executive development, offering Swiss excellence with a global perspective, IMD has a flexible, customized and effective approach.

IMD (www.imd.org) is ranked first in open programs worldwide (Financial Times 2012 & 2013) and first in executive education outside the US (Financial Times 2008 - 2013).

The World Competitiveness Yearbook (WCY) measures the competitiveness of nations and, in doing so, both ranks and examines how a nation's socio-political and economic climate affects corporate competitiveness. The study uses 333 criteria in order to obtain a multifaceted image of the competitiveness of nations, which IMD defines as: "a field of economic knowledge, which analyses the facts and policies that shape the ability of a nation to create and maintain an environment that sustains more value creation for its enterprises and more prosperity for its people."

The WCY largely includes hard data but also a survey of senior business leaders who, together, reflect a cross-section of a nation's corporate community. IMD calls upon local and foreign enterprises operating in a given economy, and surveys both nationals and expatriates, so as to add an international perspective on local environments. In 2019, more than 6,000 business executives responded. The IMD World Competitiveness Centre works in collaboration with 54 partner institutes around the world to assure the validity and relevance of data.

www.imd.org/wcc/research-methodology/

Corruption question

Survey respondents were asked:

“Bribery and corruption: Exist or do not exist”.

Scores

Answers are given on a 1 to 6 scale which is then converted to a 0 to 10 scale where 0 is the highest level of perceived corruption and 10 is the lowest.

www.imd.org/uupload/imd.website/wcc/Survey_Explanation.pdf

Country coverage

63 countries/territories around the world were scored in 2019.

Data availability

The IMD WCY has been published annually since 1989. The data was collected from February to April 2019.

Data is available to customers of IMD WCY, package of online services.

worldcompetitiveness.imd.org/

THE PRS GROUP INTERNATIONAL COUNTRY RISK GUIDE 2019

Code: PRS

Year of publication: 2019

Type of assessment: Risk assessment

Data provider: PRS Group

Based in the vicinity of Syracuse, New York, since its founding in 1979, the PRS Group has consistently focused on political risk analysis.

On a monthly basis since 1980, their International Country Risk Guide (ICRG) has produced political, economic and financial risk ratings for countries/territories important to international business. The ICRG now monitors 140 countries/territories. ICRG ratings form the basis of an early warning system for opportunities and pitfalls, country-by-country.

ICRG staff collect political information and convert it to risk points on the basis of a consistent pattern of evaluation. Political risk assessments and other political information form the basis of ICRG risk ratings. It is therefore possible for the user to check through the information and data so as to assess the ratings against their own assessments, or against some other risk ratings system.

Corruption question(s)

This is an assessment of corruption within the political system. The most common form of corruption met directly by businesses is financial corruption in the form of demands for special payments and bribes connected with import and export licenses, exchange controls, tax assessments, police protection, or loans. The measure is most concerned with actual or potential corruption in the form of excessive patronage, nepotism, job reservations, exchange of favours, secret party funding and suspiciously close ties between politics and business.

Scores

The corruption scores are given on a scale of 0 (highest potential risk) to 6 (lowest potential risk) on a monthly basis. Half points are given. The monthly ratings are then aggregated using a simple average to create a single country score.

Country coverage

The ICRG provides ratings for 140 countries on a monthly basis.

To ensure consistency both between countries/territories and over time, points are assigned by ICRG editors on the basis of a series of pre-set questions for each risk component.

Data availability

The ICRG model was created in 1980 and the data is made available on a monthly basis.

The CPI 2019 data is an aggregate of quarterly assessments covering the period of September 2018 to August 2019.

Data is available to customers of the PRS International Country Risk Guide at www.prsgroup.com

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM EXECUTIVE OPINION SURVEY 2019

Code: WEF

Year of publication: 2019

Type of assessment: Business executive survey

Data provider: World Economic Forum

The World Economic Forum is an independent international organisation committed to improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas. Incorporated as a not-for-profit foundation in 1971, and headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, the Forum is not tied to political, partisan or national interests.

The Executive Opinion Survey (EOS) is the World Economic Forum's annual survey of business executives. The survey has evolved over time to capture new data points essential to the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) and other Forum indexes.

The Forum's Global Competitiveness and Benchmarking Network works closely with over 160 partner institutes that administer the survey in their respective countries/territories. They are selected because of their capacity to reach out to leading business executives as well as their understanding of the national business environment and their commitment to the Forum's research on competitiveness. The partner institutes are, for the most part, well-respected economics departments of national universities, independent research institutes or business organisations. The surveys are conducted according to detailed guidelines aiming at collecting a sample stratified by sector of activity and company size. The EOS administration process is reviewed on a yearly basis and underwent an external review in 2008 and 2012 by a renowned survey expert consultancy. See chapter 1.3 of the Global Competitiveness Report 2013-2014 for further details www.weforum.org/gcr.

Corruption question(s)

Survey respondents were asked:

(On a scale of 1 - 7 where 1 means very common and 7 means never)

“In your country, how common is it for firms to make undocumented extra payments or bribes connected with the following:

- a) Imports and exports
- b) Public utilities
- c) Annual tax payments
- d) Awarding of public contracts and licenses
- e) Obtaining favourable judicial decisions”

(on a scale of 1 - 7 where 1 means very common and 7 means never)

“In your country, how common is diversion of public funds to companies, individuals or groups due to corruption?”

Scores

Each question is scored by respondents on a scale of 1 - 7.

The results of parts a) to e) of the first question were averaged to create a single score. The results of the first and second question were then averaged together to give a score per country/territory.

Country coverage

The 2019 edition of the survey captured the views of 12,987 business executives in 139 economies between January and April 2019. Three additional countries were surveyed in 2019 compared to the previous edition (Barbados, Gabon, Madagascar) and two countries are not covered this year (Liberia and Sierra Leone). More details on the Executive Opinion Survey can be found online under: www.weforum.org/docs/WEF_TheGlobalCompetitivenessReport2019.pdf

The survey is conducted in each country/territory according to the sampling guidelines and therefore in a consistent manner across the globe during the same time of year.

Data availability

The Forum has conducted its annual survey for more than 30 years. The data was gathered in a survey conducted between January and April 2018. Some aggregated data is available in the appendix of the Global Competitiveness Report. For the CPI calculations, disaggregated micro level data from the EOS is provided to Transparency International by the Forum. The Global Competitiveness Report 2018 is available online under:

www.weforum.org/docs/GCR2018/05FullReport/TheGlobalCompetitivenessReport2018.pdf.

WORLD JUSTICE PROJECT RULE OF LAW INDEX 2019

Code: WJP

Year of publication: 2019

Type of assessment: Expert survey

Data provider: World Justice Project

The World Justice Project (WJP) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to advance the rule of law for the development of communities of opportunity and equity. The WJP's multi-national, multi-disciplinary efforts are dedicated to developing practical programmes in support of the rule of law around the world. The work of the WJP is based on two complementary premises: the rule of law is the foundation for communities of opportunity and equity, and multi-disciplinary collaboration is the most effective way to advance the rule of law.

The WJP Rule of Law Index is an assessment tool designed by The WJP to offer a detailed and comprehensive picture of the extent to which countries/territories adhere to the rule of law in practice. The Index provides detailed information and original data regarding a variety of dimensions of the rule of law, which enables stakeholders to assess a nation's adherence to the rule of law in practice, identify a nation's strengths and weaknesses in comparison to similarly situated countries, and track changes over time.

The Index's rankings and scores are the product of a rigorous data collection and aggregation process. Data comes from a global poll of the general public and detailed questionnaires administered to local experts (in-country practitioners and academics with expertise in civil and commercial law, criminal justice, labour law, and public health).

Corruption question(s)

Index 2: Absence of corruption

A total of 53 questions are asked of experts on the extent to which government officials use public office for private gain. These questions touch on a variety of sectors within government including the public health system, regulatory agencies, the police, and the courts.

Individual questions are aggregated into four sub-indices:

- 2.1 Government officials in the executive branch do not use public office for private gain
- 2.2 Government officials in the judicial branch do not use public office for private gain
- 2.3 Government officials in the police and the military do not use public office for private gain
- 2.4 Government officials in the legislature do not use public office for private gain

Only the scores provided by the experts were considered for the CPI calculations. The four sub-indices are then averaged to create a single score.

Scores

Scores are given on a continuous scale from a low of 0 to a high of 1.

Country coverage

126 countries were scored in the 2018 Rule of Law Index.

The Index is deliberately intended to be applied in countries with vastly differing social, cultural, economic and political systems.

Data availability

The first edition was published in 2010, with slight variation in methodology and country coverage. The data for computing this index was collected between May and November 2018 via a survey of more than 3,800 experts.

The data aggregated data for the index is publicly available online under data.worldjusticeproject.org. For CPI calculations, however, the disaggregated expert survey data is provided exclusively for Transparency International by the WJP.

VARIETIES OF DEMOCRACY PROJECT 2019

Code: VDEM

Year of publication: 2019

Type of assessment: Expert survey

Data provider: University of Gothenburg, V-Dem Institute and University of Notre Dame

Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) is a new approach to conceptualising and measuring democracy. V-Dem provides a multidimensional and disaggregated dataset that reflects the complexity of the concept of democracy as a system of rule that goes beyond the simple presence of elections. The V-Dem project distinguishes between seven high-level principles of democracy: electoral, liberal, participatory, deliberative, egalitarian, majoritarian and consensual, and collects data to measure these principles.

It is a collaboration among more than 3,000 scholars worldwide which is co-hosted by the Department of Political Science at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden and the Kellogg Institute at the University of Notre Dame, USA. With four principal investigators, fifteen project managers with special responsibility for issue areas, more than thirty regional managers, 170 country coordinators, research assistants, and 2,500 country experts, the V-Dem project is one of the largest social science data collection projects focusing on research.

As of April 2019, V-Dem's database contains database containing over 27 million data points. Since 2019, the dataset covers 202 countries from 1789-2018 with annual updates to follow around April of each year.

Corruption question(s)

Question: How pervasive is political corruption? (v2x_corr)

The directionality of the V-Dem corruption index runs from less corrupt to more corrupt (unlike the other V-Dem variables that generally run from less democratic to more democratic situation). The corruption index includes measures of six distinct types of corruption that cover both different areas and levels of the political realm, distinguishing between executive, legislative and judicial corruption. Within the executive realm, the measures also distinguish between corruption mostly pertaining to bribery, and corruption due to embezzlement. Finally, they differentiate between corruption in the highest echelons of the executive (at the level of the rulers/cabinet) and in the public sector at large. The measures thus tap into several distinguishable types of corruption: both petty and grand; both bribery and theft; both corruption aimed at influencing law making and that affects implementation.

Aggregation: The index is arrived at by taking the average of (a) public sector corruption index (b) executive corruption index (c) the indicator for legislative corruption and (d) the indicator for judicial corruption. In other words, these four different government spheres are weighted equally in the resulting index.

Scores

Scores are given on a continuous scale from 0 (lowest level of corruption) to 1 (highest level of corruption).

Country coverage

179 countries were scored for the year 2018 in the 2019 update of the index used for the CPI calculation.

V-Dem draws on theoretical and methodological expertise from its worldwide team to produce data in the most objective and reliable way possible. Approximately half of the indicators in the V-Dem dataset are based on factual information obtainable from official documents such as constitutions and government records. The remainder consists of more subjective assessments on topics like democratic and governing practices and compliance with de jure rules. On such issues, typically five experts provide ratings for the country, thematic area and time period for which they have information.

To address variation in coder ratings, V-Dem works closely with leading social science research methodologists and has developed a state of the art Bayesian measurement model that, to the extent possible, addresses coder error and issues of comparability across countries and over time. V-Dem also provides upper and lower point estimates, which represent a range of probable values for a given observation. When the ranges of two observations do not overlap, there is relative confidence that difference between them is significant. V-Dem is continually experimenting with

new techniques and soliciting feedback from experts throughout the field. In this sense, V-Dem is at the cutting edge of developing new and improved methods to increase both the reliability and comparability of expert survey data. V-Dem also draws on the team's academic expertise to develop theoretically informed techniques for aggregating indicators into mid- and high-level indices.

Data availability

V-Dem data can be publicly accessed through www.v-dem.net/en/data/data-version-9/

The codebook is available at www.v-dem.net/media/filer_public/e6/d2/e6d27595-9d69-4312-b09f-63d2a0a65df2/v-dem_codebook_v9.pdf