

Methodology

1. Why is the CPI based on perceptions?

- Corruption is notoriously difficult to measure objectively. There are a lack of reliable official statistics on corruption, and a variety of legal and administrative frameworks – based on differing levels of quality and digitalisation of government information across countries and regions – making their comparison time consuming, expensive and technically challenging. Furthermore, while some types of corruption, such as bribery or the use of personal connections, can be measured through household surveys such as the Global Corruption Barometer, other manifestations of the problem, particularly grand corruption, are much more difficult to capture through experience data. We thus rely on expert perceptions to provide a holistic picture of public sector corruption across countries.

2. Why doesn't the CPI include public perceptions of corruption?

- The purpose of the CPI is to produce an indicator of corruption that can be replicated every year to measure progress over time and across countries. Representing public opinion is incredibly valuable but also requires extensive surveying – which is costly, time consuming and especially difficult given that people in some countries do not feel they can speak freely about corruption for fear of retaliation. Transparency International therefore conducts more in-depth surveys into public perceptions of corruption through our Global Corruption Barometers, which we produce for one region at a time, and we use these results to further interpret CPI results. This is however, not possible on an annual basis for the whole world. The CPI is thus based on expert measurements that are regularly updated.

3. Why doesn't the CPI include private sector corruption?

- Transparency International looked into the possibility of including private sector corruption variables in the CPI in coordination with the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, an independent scientific body. Ultimately, they advised us not to include such measures because they are often inversely correlated with those that estimate public sector corruption and would undermine the coherence of the index.

4. Does the CPI have external validation?

- The European Commission Joint Research Centre unit on composite indicators reviewed the CPI twice – in 2014 and 2017. Both times it certified the index methodology that we continue to use as statistically and conceptually coherent and rigorous.

5. How does the CPI address significant differences between its sources?

- The CPI averages 13 different sources, all of which are given equal weight in the score. We publish the standard error showing the range of differences for each country, so the public can understand the level of agreement between the sources. We also indicate when score changes are statistically significant, meaning that sources agree on the shift, as opposed to a change that comes from just one or two sources.

The CPI has mostly relied on the same set of sources since 2012. Only one source, the Bribe Payers Index, was dropped since it was discontinued and VDEM was incorporated into the assessment in 2016.

6. How do you ensure the reliability of the CPI results?

- We have developed a robust process of quality control to ensure neither mistakes in calculation nor manipulation of the data. The index is independently calculated by four researchers: two at Transparency International and two external experts with no ties to the movement. After there is agreement between these researchers, no score can be changed. The CPI scores are then shared for additional quality checks from our regional advisors and chapters, but this is only for interpretation not calculation.

7. Why does the CPI differ in scores from [X] index?

- The CPI uses 13 different sources to measure perceptions of public sector corruption so that it provides a comprehensive result that provides more balance than any one single source. It is based on surveys of businesspeople and experts. The CPI does NOT take into account public perceptions of corruption, and it only measures public sector corruption – not the private sector.

8. How does Transparency International determine which countries are making progress in controlling corruption?

- With 13 different inputs, CPI scores can fluctuate slightly year to year due to changes in a small number of sources, so we conduct statistical analysis to determine whether changes in the index are more outliers or a consensus among experts on the direction of change and overall levels of corruption in the country. We then identify which countries have made statistically significant changes both within a given year and over time. Transparency International interprets this movement in CPI scores in the context of what's happened in the country and region over the year, along with other inputs like the Global Corruption Barometer surveys of public opinion. With all of this information together, chapters and the secretariat share a picture of corruption in the country each year – and its progress over time.

9. Why does Transparency International focus on score and not rank?

- The CPI score is the actual measurement of a country's level of corruption on a scale of 0-100 (where 0 means highly corrupt and 100 means very clean). Rank is just its position relative to other countries in the index, so it can change for reasons that are totally unrelated to what is happening within the country. For example, if Country A loses points, it might drop below Country B in the rankings. Country B will then see their ranking go up, even though corruption levels in Country B have not changed. We focus on score to assess what has changed within one country as opposed to comparing it to others.

10. How is the CPI financed?

- Transparency International does not receive any specific funding for the CPI, so it comes from non-earmarked funds from our general donors. None have a say in how the results are produced. Until 2018 Transparency International received funding from Ernst & Young (EY) to sponsor the production of the index.

11. Does Transparency International review individual sources by country for possible inaccuracies?

- Transparency International aggregates the results of 13 other sources to produce the CPI; we do not gather any data ourselves and do not make any value judgements in terms of what to include or exclude from the CPI calculation. These 13 sources are all well respected organisations with their own rigorous methodologies for calculating their indices. We therefore believe that the best approach is to continue to use all available sources for each country to give the most holistic picture and the

widest breadth of perspectives, and to ensure the results are comparable year to year and across countries.

On occasion, the CPI results might be at odds with our chapters' or our own assessments of the situations in a specific country, but we will not alter results unless there is specific documentation of criminality or fraud in their calculation. This underlines our commitment to upholding the CPI methodology and keeping Transparency International's positions and opinions separate from the calculation process to ensure objectivity.

12. Why do Transparency International maps look different this year?

- Transparency International updated its maps to the Winkel Tripel projection. This is a projection created in 1921 and later adopted by National Geographic to better identify the globe in its entirety. It gives a good overall view of continents' shapes and sizes, and land areas are not as distorted near the poles as in other projections. The Mercator projection, our former projection, was distorted and areas closer to the poles appeared larger, lacking their true shapes – for example: Greenland is as big as Africa, and Alaska looks bigger than Brazil.

13. Why are you now including disputed borders when you did not do so in the past?

- Disputed borders represent disagreements over an area of land claimed by two or more political entities. Transparency International recognises the importance of names, borders and descriptions to different national, ethnic, cultural or linguistic groups, including in the way they are depicted in maps. Transparency International remains neutral on issues of disputed borders and regions, and displays the disputed areas in our maps following the UN practice.

13a. Why is Kosovo not shown as a disputed territory?

- Kosovo's designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Countries

Generic

1. Why is [X country] not included?

- For a country or territory to be ranked in the Index, it must be featured in at least 3 of the CPI's 13 data sources. A country's absence from the list does not mean that country is corruption-free, only that there is not enough data available to accurately measure levels of corruption. 180 countries and territories are included in the index this year.

2. [X country] has faced [corruption/scandal] this year but has still improved on the CPI. How is this possible?

- Corruption scandals do not necessarily mean that corruption in a country is on the rise. In some ways, scandals can be a sign that anti-corruption watchdogs and institutions are active and doing their jobs. When corruption is being reported, this points to the existence of either an independent media or a strong judiciary to prosecute allegations. Because the CPI is based on the assessments of experts and business executives who have advanced knowledge and do not exclusively rely on media reporting to develop their views, it is also less volatile to the immediate news environment.

Furthermore, the CPI is based on many different factors, so one scandal may not significantly impact the score. If the scandal is not involving public sector corruption it would not be reflected in the CPI.

Finally, the timing of the scandal could also be a factor: the CPI is made up of 13 data sources, many of which have a data collection period that may end before more recent events occurred.

3. [X country] has faced [corruption/scandal] this year but still ranks toward the top of the CPI. How is this possible?

- If a country scores highly, it already has strong protections against corruption in place. One scandal does not change that, and oftentimes a corruption scandal can mean the system is working because allegations are brought to light by an independent judiciary or media. Individual corruption cases can occur, but if institutions are still strong, then we do not expect to see a significant drop in the score.

4. [X country] has implemented new measures to protect against corruption but has still declined on the Index. How is that possible?

- No country has achieved a perfect 100 score on the CPI, so everywhere has room to improve. A score may have dropped because developments have happened too recently to be incorporated into data collection periods for this year's sources or because that country still has significant work to do in another area. It is also important to remember that passing new laws, regulations or creating new agencies does not automatically translate into better control of corruption. In many countries there is still a big gap in what the law says and their implementation, including how politics work or services are provided.

5. Why has Afghanistan increased so much despite its ongoing struggles with corruption and violence?

- The latest change in score for Afghanistan (+8 since last year) is driven by a change in the number of sources and a marked improvement in the assessment conducted by VDEM. All other sources show either stagnation or very small changes vis-à-vis last year. The change in score is therefore not statistically significant and should not be interpreted as an improvement of the situation on the ground.

Furthermore, obtaining reliable information on what is going on in the country is particularly challenging at the moment. Although there are multiple anecdotes of the demand for bribes being reduced and the Taliban consolidating their revenue collection, we do not have enough verified evidence of a systemic reduction in corruption in the country.