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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. With 113 independent chapters and partners around the world and an international secretariat in Berlin, we are leading the fight against corruption to turn this vision into reality.

www.transparency.org

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Young activists preparing their booth to showcase their work during a three-day training in Ampefy, Madagascar, as part of the Malagasy Youth Against Corruption project.

Photo: Manoa Raoeliarisoa / TI Madagascar

Every effort has been made to verify the accuracy of the information contained in this report. All information was believed to be correct as of July 2024. Nevertheless, Transparency International cannot accept responsibility for the consequences of its use for other purposes or in other contexts.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

4

Shaping a better world 2023 highlights

6

2023 in numbers

8

Raising democratic voices against corruption Message from our CEO

10

Wins for integrity around the world From national wins to global impact

12

Shielding resources for the benefit of all Strategic objective 1: Protect the public's resources

20

Tackling cross-border corruption Strategic objective 2: Stop the flows of dirty money

26

Making politics clean and accountable Strategic objective 3: Secure integrity in politics

30

Promoting fair play in the private sector Strategic objective 4: Drive integrity in business

34

Bringing corrupt actors to justice Strategic objective 5: Pursue enforcement and justice

38

Standing up to corruption together Strategic objective 6: Expand civic space for accountability

44

Inspiring future integrity champions Strategic objective 7: Build community leadership against corruption

50

Our commitments to driving change

54

Core principles and methods

58 Governance and organisation

59

Income and expenditure

62 Thank you to our supporters

SHAPING A BETTER WORLD 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

The Transparency International Secretariat convenes, supports and works alongside our movement to create a united, global force for change. This year:

We guided global resolutions to effectively address key corruption issues. Our joint advocacy strengthened commitments by states parties to the UN Convention against Corruption on cleaning up business, revealing the secretive owners of companies, protecting the public's resources, whistleblowing and gender. For the first time at the global level, this resolution recognises sexual corruption – "sextortion" – as a form of corruption, one that mostly affects women and girls. See pages 21, 29, 36, 39, 55

We prepared communities for the largest election year in history. With countries covering more than half the world's population going to the polls in 2024, we nearly doubled the amount of publicly accessible data on politicians' financing, activities and interests in the EU, to give advocates and journalists the crucial information they need to drive reforms and enable voters to hold their representatives accountable. We also secured stronger legislative frameworks against political corruption in the Caribbean, Africa and Europe. See page 26

We strengthened anti-money laundering proposals

in Europe. In the lead-up to the EU's 6th Anti-Money Laundering Directive, we successfully persuaded the European Parliament to adopt our proposals on beneficial ownership transparency, among other key issues, mitigating the setbacks brought by the Court of Justice of the European Union's 2022 decision to prevent public access to beneficial ownership information. Now that the directive has been finalised, it represents a huge step forward in the global fight against dirty money. See page 20 I There are strong signs of hope. In many countries, we obtain laws and judgements against corruption. And the more the corrupt leaders fight against us, the more they show their weakness.

François Valérian Chair of Transparency International



We helped people on every continent to safely report corruption and create change. Providing safe reporting mechanisms and legal advice, our Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres worked with 7,480 victims and witnesses of corruption to help them speak up and create systemic change through our case-based advocacy. We also significantly strengthened whistleblower protection in Austria, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Czechia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. **See page 38**

We used the world's best-known anti-corruption tool to expose the connections between corruption and conflict. Our Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)



drew the attention of millions to the vicious cycle of corruption and conflict. We also took this opportunity to highlight the "trouble at the top", pointing out the role of corruption enablers – largely based in countries that score well on the index – who launder dirty money and provide other services necessary for corruption to flourish. **See page 34**

We pushed justice systems to start proceedings against perpetrators and enablers of corruption. With our partners in the Global Anti-Corruption Consortium, we filed 19 legal submissions on cross-border corruption in 13 different jurisdictions. As a result, authorities opened at least five official investigations and sanctioned five individuals. Investigations included those implicating the former President of Senegal and his associates. **See page 34**

We made it riskier for officials to accept bribes from foreign companies. Following our campaigning and coalition building, US lawmakers passed the Foreign Extortion Prevention Act, the largest expansion of the country's foreign bribery laws in almost 50 years. In addition to pursuing companies that pay bribes abroad, the US will now pursue foreign officials who accept them, so that public resources are better protected.



2023 IN NUMBERS

Transparency International's 113 independent chapters and partners around the world create and implement their own national strategies, while also joining forces on critical issues to form the leading movement in the fight against corruption. This report showcases the work of the Transparency International Secretariat, which coordinates the broader movement worldwide, spearheads global and joint advocacy, gathers best practices, conducts world-class research, and provides financial and technical support to our chapters.

41,000,000+

People reached by worldwide media coverage on the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), covering stories on corruption and conflict.

7,480

People supported through our ALACs.

93,000+

Media articles highlighting our movement and emphasising to millions worldwide the need to fight corruption.

65

Countries where our Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs) provided free, confidential advice to victims and witnesses of corruption.

264

Corruption-related legal submissions, made to hold wrongdoers accountable.

81,477

Unique users of Integrity Watch platforms on political integrity data in 15 EU countries.

RAISING DEMOCRATIC VOICES AGAINST CORRUPTION

MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO In 2023, unsettling events around the world confirmed what we have known all along: corruption is devastating to democracy. Where those at the top rig the system to stay in power and enrich themselves, civic space shrinks, rule of law deteriorates and democracy falters. It is a growing trend, and it is not confined to a single country or region; it exists everywhere, from Europe to the Americas to Africa to Asia.

Fortunately, so do we: the world's largest and strongest movement against corruption. In more than 100 countries, our chapters fight tirelessly every day to make corruption harder, riskier and less profitable. We tackle corruption at every stage, making it more difficult for actors to engage in this type of crime, more difficult for them to hide, and more difficult for them to enjoy ill-gotten gains.

2023 marked the beginning of our second strategic cycle, covering 2023-26, a period in which we have committed to focus on the intersection between corruption and democratic decline. It also marked a doubling down on our advocacy efforts to brace ourselves for the largest election year in human history in 2024, with roughly half the world's population living in countries that will head to the polls. With so much on the line, the stakes for the anti-corruption movement have never been higher.

In December 2023, the biennial Conference of States Parties for the UN Convention against Corruption took place in Atlanta, Georgia. We convinced governments to increase transparency in critical areas like public procurement and beneficial ownership. We also spearheaded a coalition of more than 100 organisations calling on the states parties to adopt a resolution on the integrity of political finance, notoriously the weakest area in election integrity. Unfortunately, most states parties were not ready or willing to make this commitment. However, we are not deterred, and are setting our sights on building a critical mass to fight for priorities like this at future opportunities.

In some of the world's major democracies, we secured big legislative wins in favour of transparency and accountability. Our advocacy was instrumental in getting the Foreign Extortion Prevention Act passed this year in the US. On the other side of the Atlantic, we secured stronger whistleblower protection laws in 10 EU countries, while convincing members of the European Parliament to address key cross-border corruption issues ahead of the landmark EU money laundering reform, which they passed in 2024.





Fighting for a world free of corruption has never been this critical. Global democracy depends on it. Across the globe, we also strengthened the prerequisites for fighting corruption, such as civic space, human rights and the rule of law.

Our chapters are on the front lines of the fight against democratic backsliding, and have exposed kleptocratic regimes and setbacks in countries as diverse as Brazil, Hungary, Serbia, Sri Lanka and Tunisia. Where our chapters themselves faced severe threats, as in Georgia and Venezuela, we stepped up to protect our people. We used our global influence to defend their space in the national discourse, helping them to keep operating and fighting precisely when and where it matters most.

Our experience is clear: only a fully international movement can tackle a fundamentally international issue like corruption. Dirty money does not stop at the border, and corruption is not a "Global South" problem – it is a global problem.

Autocracy and corruption are spreading worldwide, but so is the momentum behind our movement. This is our time. It is clear that corruption is an existential threat to democracy and a roadblock to dealing effectively – or at all – with humanity's greatest global challenges, like climate change, sustainable development and conflict. To make a lasting global difference for the good of us all, we must expose those who abuse their power for the benefit of a few, work in coalitions to push for meaningful reforms and support those in power invested in making decisions for the common good.

Fighting for a world free of corruption has never been this critical. Global democracy depends on it. With your support, we continue to advocate at every level of society and strengthen communities around the world every day. I encourage you to share our stories, support our chapters and donate to keep the fight going.

Together we are curbing corruption, making a more equal, stable and democratic world.



Daniel Eriksson Chief Executive Officer, Transparency International

WINS FOR INTEGRITY **AROUND THE WORLD**

FROM NATIONAL WINS TO GLOBAL IMPACT

Americas

- · Following our US chapter's advocacy, the US Treasury Department finalised the Corporate Treasury Act, introducing the first US requirement to collect beneficial ownership information. The department also announced its intention to end the decades-long "temporary" exemptions from anti-money laundering rules for the real estate and private investment sectors.
- Transparency International engaged in regional advocacy surrounding the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean (EU-LAC) Summit. We ensured that national and cross-border corruption and civic space were discussed on the summit day for civil society and addressed in the summit's final declaration.
- Our chapters built the capacity of 35 young people from 15 Latin American and Caribbean countries, better equipping them to conduct social audits and corruption investigations. See page 46

Europe and **Central Asia**

- A preliminary report by a European Parliament Committee substantially incorporated our recommendations on the proposed Directive on Combatting Corruption, including our key priorities on integrity in politics, grand corruption, victims' compensation and non-trial resolution. If these provisions remain in the final directive, they will represent a massive step forward for the anti-corruption agenda in the EU. See page 29
- Ireland and the Netherlands abolished their golden visa schemes and Portugal introduced new restrictions that banned acquisition of a golden visa through real estate. These steps are in line with the 2023 European Parliament report on golden visas, to which we heavily contributed. See page 23



Middle East and North Africa

- Through our extensive capacity building, networking support and seed funding, Iraqi civil society organisations are now better connected to each other, with a stronger grasp on essential anticorruption diagnostics and closer working relationships with the private and public sectors. We also strengthened civil society in Lebanon by bringing together 109 diverse organisations for cross-sectoral advocacy initiatives, structured dialogues with the EU, and assessment of Lebanon's Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework. See pages 40, 52
- At COP28 in Dubai, our collective advocacy led the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to take steps towards regulating undue influence in climate policy, through introducing transparency requirements for COP participants. See page 18

113 INDEPENDENT NATIONAL CHAPTERS AND PARTNERS AROUND THE WORLD

Sub-Saharan Africa

- Following our advocacy for transparency and accountability, the African Union recognised and addressed corruption in its Land Governance Strategy. We also collaborated with our chapters in Uganda and Kenya to develop anti-corruption proposals for national land policy. The results were particularly promising in Kenya, where our chapter's recommendations were incorporated into the National Land Commission's recommended national land policy. See page 16
- We helped protect vulnerable Sahel communities from the impacts of climate change, through our recommendations on the governance of the Great Green Wall (GGW) regarding transparency, participation, integrity and accountability. These influenced the new African Union GGW strategy 2024-2034. **See page 19**

Asia Pacific

- We published a landmark report on gender and sextortion, Corruption Through a Gendered Lens, and remain the only organisation with a comprehensive dataset on sexual corruption in the region. We researched the report through consulting communities in Cambodia, Fiji and Indonesia, and also in Sri Lanka, where our chapter secured the criminalisation of sextortion. See page 55
- We partnered with our chapters in Sri Lanka and the US to build pressure on the International Monetary Fund to include governance reforms in its debt restructuring agreement with Sri Lanka, which had previously been denied.
- Our Mongolian chapter helped ensure greater transparency in political finance, and less domination of political parties by a few individuals, by guiding a new law on political parties.

SHIELDING RESOURCES FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

PROTECT THE PUBLIC'S RESOURCES

Governments and international bodies are increasingly mobilising public finances and other resources to confront multiple crises, from economic instability to conflict, to the runaway impacts of climate change. Protecting those resources from corruption and waste has never been more critical. Transparency International fights for integrity in the use of public resources by pushing for greater transparency and accountability in public financial management, increasing citizens' opportunities to monitor public procurement, and promoting greater integrity in land and climate governance.

SAFEGUARDING PUBLIC FUNDS

States require robust systems for managing public finances – i.e., for collecting revenue, budgeting public funds and making sure that these are allocated and spent wisely at all levels of government. This is essential to safeguard public resources, ensure equitable access to good-quality public services and achieve policy goals. However, corruption in the form of embezzlement, misallocation or bribery remains a serious threat.

In 2023, we continued to lead the push for disclosure of financial data on COVID-19 emergency funds in 11 countries, so that citizens can know how these public funds were spent. This data is actively being used to hold governments to account and to draw lessons for the management of public funds in future crises, ensuring that corrupt actors are unable to exploit emergencies for financial gain.

To this end, we published a report assessing the management of emergency funds during the pandemic, and compiling lessons and recommendations. In Europe, we prompted the disclosure of open data on the use of EU Recovery and Reconstruction Funds to help countries increase transparency beyond EU compliance. Our Lithuanian chapter and the Open Spending EU Coalition created an interactive self-assessment tool for governments to evaluate and publish detailed spending data, increasing their accountability to the public.

As the largest global anti-corruption movement, we both led and strengthened a critical mass of civil society organisations advocating for transparency in public financial management. We gave civil society actors around the world essential tools and expertise to engage with their own governments, turning insights from our global movement into concrete advocacy at the national level. Our practical handbook on Public Financial Management: A Guide for Civil Society Actors was published at the end of 2023, and we expect to see further impact as civil society actors make use of it in 2024.

A key tool in this guide is participatory auditing. We persuaded authorities in Guadalajara, Mexico, to make consulting citizens a standard part of budgeting processes, resulting in a more transparent and inclusive system for monitoring public funds. This reform is now being prepared for replication in other local governments.

CIVIC MONITORING FOR OPEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

Public procurement is crucial in public financial management, accounting for an average of between 13 and 20 per cent of a country's annual gross domestic product or an estimated US\$13 trillion globally. It is also highly susceptible to corruption – 57 per cent of foreign bribery cases are linked to public contracts. Given the amount of money at stake, addressing corruption in this area is essential for safeguarding the integrity of public spending and ensuring that taxpayers see their funds used fairly.

In 2023, Transparency International continued to be a fierce advocate for civic monitoring in public procurement, setting and improving the standard for essential tools like **integrity pacts**, which civil society actors use to bring transparency to procurement projects around the world, and hold both governments and private actors to account.

In order to ensure that integrity pacts remain up to date and fit for purpose, we conducted an extensive international consultation in 2023, which we are now using to develop the new global standard on such pacts. The initial results are already being incorporated into integrity training we provide for contracting authorities. These include over 40 representatives from EU contracting authorities across 15 countries at the European Institute of Public Administration, who are now in a stronger position to protect their projects from corruption.

Our integrity pacts have direct, concrete results that affect people's lives, with numerous successes in transparency and monitoring of public procurement



Photo: Ghana Integrity Initiative

at the national level. These include in Argentina, where our chapter participated as an external observer in a waste management contracting project in the municipality of Esteban Echeverría, and in Romania, where TI Romania acts as lead implementer and monitor for an integrity pact on a river transport project in the Danube Delta Region.

INTEGRITY PACTS

Integrity pacts are collaborative accountability agreements for use in public procurement. They consist of a written commitment to integrity between government authorities and private actors, with civil society (often a Transparency International chapter) acting as a monitor. They have protected over US\$1 billion worth of public projects around the world.



Photo: Ghana Integrity Initiative

Advocacy by the Transparency International Secretariat and our chapters also resulted in multiple governments making their procurement practices more transparent. Examples include Indonesia and Zimbabwe, where governments advanced reforms in e-procurement making it harder for wrongdoers to hide corrupt acts.

SAFEGUARDING PUBLIC RESOURCES FOR BETTER PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Corruption is particularly harmful where it creates barriers and denies access to critical services such as health and education, as well as assets like land. This is especially true for marginalised and disadvantaged populations, including women and girls. Corruption directs resources away from their intended use and obstructs service delivery, deepening inequalities and hindering the achievement of development goals. Our work in 2023 filled a crucial gap by providing evidence on the specific impact of corruption for women, girls and other groups at risk of discrimination in accessing health and education services in Africa. Notably, the research identified sexual corruption – or "sextortion" – as a significant issue, disproportionally affecting women and girls accessing public services. This evidence is being used by our chapters to advocate for specific gender-sensitive policy improvements across Africa, to better protect women and girls, provide them with greater access to services and safe reporting mechanisms, and punish those who abuse their power for sexual gain.

We also contributed to closing loopholes for corruption in the health sector. In the Maldives, the president established a working group to implement recommendations from our chapter's study on the health sector's vulnerabilities to corruption. However, a new government meant that this has not yet led to change. In Mongolia, our chapter's collaboration with local NGOs led to significant improvements in the quality of health care goods procured by the Regional Diagnosis and Treatment Centres. Findings from the chapter's health sector procurement monitoring in the country are also being used to advocate for the adoption of a draft law on medicine and medical equipment.

Land corruption threatens the lives and livelihoods of people and communities, environments, the climate, food security and political stability. Our advocacy raised the profile of corruption as a significant issue in land service delivery at the global level, as well as regionally within the African Union's Land Governance Strategy. We also achieved anti-corruption breakthroughs in national land policy in collaboration with our chapters in Uganda and Kenya. In Uganda, Transparency International's joint advocacy campaign with the National Land Coalition led to a directive by the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and the Attorney General's Office resulting in enhanced land governance. In Kenya, our chapter's recommendations were incorporated into the National Land Commission's draft land policy, including several anti-corruption measures.

DEMANDING INTEGRITY IN CLIMATE GOVERNANCE

As the climate crisis worsens, it has never been more critical to ensure that decision makers are free from corrupt influence when determining climate policy, and

EMPOWERING WOMEN AND COUNTERING LAND CORRUPTION

Women and girls are disproportionately harmed by corruption, as their disadvantaged social status in many communities makes them especially vulnerable to exploitation. In Zambia's Choma district, for example, one woman nearly lost her family's land in 2023, until Transparency International Zambia received word of her case through a mobile Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC) working in the area.

She had been deceived by a male member of the community. He had falsely claimed to the woman that sharing her land documentation would enable him to receive church funds for an orphanage that would be built on his land. He convinced her to give him her documentation, but used it to obtain a fraudulent loan from a microfinance institution. He gave her 1,000 Zambian Kwacha (approximately US\$39) in exchange, as "appreciation", which she used to pay her bills. After the man ran off with the loan, the lender attempted to collect the repayment from the woman and moved to seize her land . The police were unable to help, leaving the woman in a deeply vulnerable position.

After receiving word from the local ALAC, TI Zambia's Transparency Action Group responded immediately, involving local authorities and other key stakeholders in the district. Following their intervention, the authorities issued a directive for surveyors to verify the site and the documents provided to the lender. The issue was clarified and ownership was rightfully restored to the woman and her family.



that massive investments in climate projects are made transparently and efficiently. When decision makers are swayed or dollars diverted for corrupt purposes, we all pay the price.

In 2023, Transparency International renewed and solidified our approach under the Climate Governance Integrity Programme, expanding its reach to 20 countries. We continued to demonstrate our strength in bridging the gap between the climate action and anti-corruption communities by building the Climate and Corruption Atlas, which has so far logged 80 cases of climate corruption worldwide. We also drove collaboration by coordinating the Countering Environmental Corruption Forum, which connects conservationists and anticorruption actors to jointly address corruption as a driver of environmental degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change. These efforts are vital in building an evidence base on different forms of climate corruption, highlighting their environmental and social impacts, and creating a public database that can be used by civil society organisations, academics, journalists and others.

At the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28), Transparency International and our chapters continued to push against undue influence and conflict of interest in climate decision-making processes. Our collective advocacy with partners led to the convention finally introducing new transparency requirements for COP participants – including public disclosure of their professional or institutional affiliations – so that people seeking to undermine climate action to serve private interests can be stopped.

We also supported the work of the UN Human Rights Council with inputs to its Advisory Committee on Human Rights Implications of Geoengineering Technologies, which were reflected in the Council's final report. This includes a recommendation to states – echoing our proposed language – about conducting impact assessments in an open, independent and impartial way, "paying particular attention to avoid conflicts of interest".

We continued building capacity of climate finance organisations to understand relevant corruption risks and develop strong integrity mechanisms. In 2023, in collaboration with the Green Climate Fund and the



German Development Agency (GIZ), we coordinated and supported the Peer-to-Peer Learning Alliance to share challenges, experiences and knowledge on integrity in managing climate funds. Among other outputs, we developed a series of thematic knowledge products on integrity issues, including case studies and a set of key lessons directed at national climate entities to provide guidance on how they can improve their integrity



performance, ultimately ensuring that their funds are protected and spent effectively for the common good.

We also persuaded the African Union to include findings and recommendations from our research in its new strategy on the Great Green Wall, an international land restoration project to combat desertification in Sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, our Latin American chapters led coalitions in multiple countries around the Escazú Agreement to protect both the environment and those who defend it from corrupt actors, while European chapters initiated collaborative efforts on climate-related lobbying, leveraging promising national results. These include two bills in France that enhance legislative transparency and will contribute to ensuring integrity in climate-related decision-making processes.

TACKLING CROSS-BORDER CORRUPTION

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

STOP THE FLOWS OF DIRTY MONEY

Corruption schemes involving large amounts of money and high-level officials almost always cross multiple borders. Failures to prevent and confront cross-border flows of dirty money damage democracies and contribute to rising inequalities around the world.

Transparency International puts the most urgent crossborder corruption issues on the global agenda and works to convince decision makers to close the global financial system's loopholes. By accelerating reforms to tackle dirty money, we also support countries' ability to protect democratic institutions, and to mobilise much-needed resources to tackle inequalities and promote sustainable development.

PUSHING FOR TRANSPARENCY ON BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP

Complex corporate and legal arrangements often obscure the true owners of an asset, making it easier for criminals to launder money and evade laws or sanctions. Transparency International is a strong advocate for transparency over the real – or "beneficial" – owners of companies, trusts and assets. This makes it more difficult for perpetrators and enablers of corrupt financial flows to hide.

Transparency International played an essential role in pressing the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to adopt a revised global standard on beneficial ownership transparency for companies in 2022, and these reforms continued to make waves in 2023 – for example, with South Africa adopting a beneficial ownership register and such registers under proposal in Australia and Switzerland. Other key countries, like Canada and the US, also took important steps to implement their first central beneficial ownership registers.

Following our intensive advocacy work, the European Parliament adopted an agreement on the rules of access for beneficial ownership registers and other anti-corruption measures, as part of the EU's 6th Anti-Money Laundering Directive. The parliament's proposal largely reflected our concerns on backsliding following the 2022 decision by the Court of Justice of the European Union, which closed access to beneficial ownership registers across the EU. The European Parliament's proposal recognised that civil society organisations and journalists should have access on the basis of legitimate interest, and supported their having generalised access, as recommended by Transparency International. Later in 2023, we engaged heavily with the European Council and the European Commission to keep these provisions in the final language of the directive, which was passed in 2024.

We also worked with the UNCAC Coalition and other partners throughout 2023 to ensure that a resolution on beneficial ownership transparency tabled at the 10th Conference of States Parties included robust new commitments. However, some of the provisions faced strong resistance at the December conference in Atlanta, Georgia. While the final text did not go as far as we had hoped, our advocacy kept the issue on the table and was partially reflected in the resolution, particularly in relation to verification of information and interoperability of the data.

In July 2023, working with our chapter in France and the Anti-Corruption Data Collective, and in coordination

with the Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project and Le Monde, Transparency International released Behind a Wall: Investigating Company and Real Estate Ownership in France. The report uncovered significant loopholes through which criminals launder and invest their money in French real estate, despite the country's public beneficial ownership register. Its findings led the French authorities to open investigations into suspicious property owners, and to the government addressing loopholes.



22

We also engaged with the FATF on secretive trusts, submitting a letter to members advocating for a stronger global standard on trust ownership. FATF adopted recommendations containing a number of our proposals – for example, making it mandatory to identify all parties of a trust or similar arrangement.

HOLDING ENABLERS OF CORRUPTION TO ACCOUNT

Money laundering requires enablers like bankers, accountants and other professionals to play along, either by actively cooperating or simply looking the other way. Many of these enablers are based in high-income countries not typically considered hotbeds of corruption, and they help dirty money flow into some of the world's largest economies. Transparency International has long fought to hold these enablers to account and close the avenues by which corrupt actors are able to launder and enjoy their dirty money abroad.

Our work in 2023 focused on closing gaps in regulation, especially for those in the non-financial sector such as real estate agents, lawyers and accountants. These actors often play an essential role in laundering dirty money, but are not subject to the same scrutiny and regulation as financial institutions. As part of our advocacy concerning the EU's 6th Anti-Money Laundering Directive, we successfully engaged with EU co-legislators to broaden the list of activities and professionals covered by anti-money laundering rules.

GOLDEN VISAS AND GOLDEN PASSPORTS

Golden visas are visas or residency permits offered by countries to wealthy investors in exchange for a certain level of personal investment, typically in real estate, a national development fund or an existing company. Golden passports provide the investor with citizenship in exchange for this investment. In December, we published Loophole Masters: How Enablers Facilitate Illicit Financial Flows From Africa, the first study on the non-financial enablers used by African political elites to hide, launder and invest their ill-gotten gains. We are using the report to expose the role that enablers play in cross-border corruption, particularly how they facilitate illicit financial flows, the high-risk services they provide, and the loopholes they abuse. We are also drawing on evidence the report provides on these loopholes, as we push for meaningful reforms.

Together with our liaison office in Brussels, we pushed for a strong new Anti-Money Laundering Authority at the EU. This authority would directly oversee high-risk financial institutions, as well as national-level supervisors, adding a necessary layer of supranational accountability to crack down on cross-border money laundering. The final agreement creating the new authority was made in December 2023, and Transparency International will continue to monitor its implementation.

ADVOCATING FOR REFORMS ON GOLDEN VISAS

Golden visa and passport schemes, which allow investors to buy their way into residency and citizenship, are particularly ripe for abuses like corruption and money laundering. They can also give wanted criminals a safe haven in other countries.

Transparency International has long campaigned for EU-wide reforms on such programmes, calling for harmonised rules and stricter due diligence requirements. Ireland and the Netherlands shut down their schemes in 2023. However, Hungary appears poised to reintroduce its previously cancelled scheme in 2024, underlining the need for regulation across the EU.

November 2023 saw a step toward globally mitigating risks, when many of Transparency International's recommendations were echoed in a report released by the FATF and the OECD on the misuse of golden visa and passport schemes. The report also referenced our earlier findings on abuse of such schemes.

TAKING ACTION AGAINST CORRUPT ASSETS INTERNATIONALLY

The Russian invasion of Ukraine drew mainstream attention to issues of asset transparency about which Transparency International has long been raising the alarm. As the US and the EU introduced large-scale sanctions against Russia and individual oligarchs, governments scrambled to locate Russian-owned assets subject to seizure, which were often hidden behind complex ownership structures.

We put additional pressure on decision makers worldwide to take the necessary steps to locate such assets. In 2023, we kept the topic of corrupt assets on the agenda and held governments accountable for locating, freezing and seizing these assets, as required.

Ahead of the one-year anniversary of Russia's fullscale invasion of Ukraine in February, we submitted freedom of information requests to 19 Western countries and the European Commission seeking data on frozen Russia-linked assets and the number of investigations launched into these. When governments did not provide meaningful responses, we drew attention to this on International Right to Know Day and published a summary of the disappointing results. We also reiterated our call for Western governments to strengthen information sharing between relevant authorities.



FIGHTING FOR THE RETURN OF BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP TRANSPARENCY IN THE EU

In late 2022, the global anti-corruption agenda suffered a significant setback. The EU's highest court invalidated an anti-money laundering provision which had guaranteed public access to beneficial ownership registers. Instead, judges ruled that access to this information should only be given to those with a "legitimate interest". However, the court did acknowledge that journalists and civil society organisations have a role to play in detecting and combatting money laundering and have a legitimate interest in accessing information on the real individuals behind EU companies.

Transparency International's real-time monitoring

showed that immediately after the ruling, eight countries suspended public access to their registers. As a result, beneficial ownership registers which had made information available to everyone interested – including civil society activists, journalists and authorities from other countries – started to shut down access to the data, creating enormous difficulties, especially for investigative journalists and civil society.

Considering the prominence in major transnational corruption cases of anonymous companies and vehicles registered across the European Union from Cyprus to Luxembourg, this ruling has had serious implications far beyond the EU. The decision also had a deeply harmful effect in other countries undergoing beneficial ownership reforms, including British Overseas Territories, where some jurisdictions decided to postpone the implementation of public beneficial ownership registers.

As the court ruling acknowledged the legitimate interest of journalists and civil society actors to retain access to the registers, Transparency International focused on ensuring that a good definition of legitimate interest is included in the EU's 6th Anti-Money Laundering Directive, to ensure easy access for civil society and journalists to these registers. Our Secretariat and EU office engaged with the members of the European Parliament on the design of the directive's provisions. A priority was ensuring that legitimate-interest access to beneficial ownership information is not prone to abuse, the risks of which we explained in our **position paper**. We made the case for providing full access to civil society organisations (CSOs) and journalists, on the presumption of such an interest, as opposed to access on a case-by-case basis. We provided support to journalists to ensure that those working in the media are fully aware of the implications of the ruling and potential solutions.

Our team also identified and helped to expose a loophole in the current regulatory framework that enables EU Member States to share information on journalists and CSOs consulting beneficial ownership registers with the beneficial owner or company in question. We pushed for this provision to be deleted from the new EU anti-money laundering package.

At the end of March, the European Parliament reached agreement on the rules of access to beneficial ownership registers that strongly reflected our position. We **commended the parliament's efforts** and called on the European Council and the European Commission to retain key provisions.

At the beginning of May, ahead of the trialogue negotiations, Transparency International's Secretariat and EU office sent and published a letter to the Commissioner in charge of the anti-money laundering package. The letter had 200 signatories from across civil society and academia, and called on the Commission to explicitly support the European Parliament's progressive positions on corporate transparency. On 1 June, we received a response from the Commission which acknowledged our letter and the important role civil society and the media play in the fight against money laundering.

We also actively engaged with the European Council, including through member states' permanent representatives, as well as with beneficial ownership registry authorities across the EU.

In November 2023, on the anniversary of the European Court ruling, Transparency International reviewed the state of affairs across the bloc. Our research revealed that, in 13 of 27 member states, journalists and civil society representatives can either not access information or have to go through often complex processes to prove their legitimate interest. We used this evidence to press again for a harmonised approach under the new anti-money laundering directive, that allows these key corruption investigators to expose wrongdoers and their illicit wealth.

MAKING POLITICS CLEAN AND ACCOUNTABLE

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

SECURE INTEGRITY IN POLITICS

When politicians abuse their positions for private gain, the resulting weakened democracy, misuse of resources and rights violations can have catastrophic effects on society. Development goals go unreached, discontent grows and mistrust in politics spreads. Transparency International helps to clean up money in elections, make lobbying more transparent and provide oversight of elected officials, so that politics can withstand the undue influence of the moneyed and powerful.

MOVING THE NEEDLE ON TRANSPARENCY IN POLITICAL FINANCE AND LOBBYING

More than half the global population lives in countries that will go to the polls in 2024, making it the biggest election year in history. In preparation, over the course of 2023, Transparency International stepped up its advocacy to tackle the undue influence of money in elections.

In 2023, we started work towards countering the opacity of political finance and the financial barriers women face when running for office. This work will help voters make informed choices at the ballot box in Indonesia, Madagascar, Panama, Sri Lanka, Venezuela and Zambia, where more than 246 million voters will be called to the polls between 2024 and 2026. Transparency International chapters achieved this by designing tools and legal reforms to enhance transparency.

Across Europe, our chapters in 15 EU countries – with 300 million people of voting age – launched Integrity Watch web platforms that compiled information on the financing, assets, interests and contacts of people in office. Our Integrity Watch platforms are already helping the relevant authorities, civil society and the media to identify signs of wrongdoing and weak spots in regulations. The platforms are also inspiring users to push for changes to address political corruption risks – for example, in Lithuania and France. Almost 81,500 visitors accessed the Integrity Watch platforms over the course of 2023.

Chapters from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye also completed their first steps towards implementing a similar Integrity Watch approach to data-driven advocacy. This is much needed in these countries, where poor disclosure practices and lack of engagement by institutions stand in the way of uncovering risks and processing corruption cases.

In September 2023, in an important development regarding lobbying in the EU, the European Parliament finally adopted mandatory publication of lobbying meetings for all Members of Parliament and their assistants. This followed Transparency International's persistent post-"Qatargate " advocacy, after allegations emerged in 2022 that European Parliament officials had been unduly influenced by the governments of Qatar and other countries.

ASSESSING NATIONAL INTEGRITY SYSTEMS

Our national integrity system assessments in the Western Balkans and Türkiye have helped identify the strengths and weaknesses of countries' legal frameworks and integrity practices, and set an ambitious reform agenda. As chapters in six Western Balkan countries and Türkiye concluded overarching assessments of the countries' integrity systems, they identified critical areas warranting further anti-corruption efforts and are using these assessments to advance reforms on a range of issues.

Our **Bringing the Receipts** report made a strong case for 10 reforms to step up transparency in election financing in the region.

In December, following our chapter's presentation of the recommendations, the Montenegrin Assembly formed a Committee for Comprehensive Electoral Reform. Previously, the Kosovan Assembly adopted a new electoral law that reflected some of our recommendations on candidate integrity, preferential voting rules and the independence of the electoral oversight body.

Our advocacy is also shaping reforms in other areas of integrity, such as the proposed amendments to Montenegro's Law on Free Access to Information, which was endorsed by the government, but still awaited a vote in parliament when the year ended.

MONITORING AND ADVANCING PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT

Oversight is a core function of parliaments, allowing lawmakers to hold the executive to account. Strong parliamentary oversight helps democracy by ensuring that governments act in the public interest.

In 2023, Transparency International's Strengthening

Parliamentary Oversight report examined parliamentary mandates and practices in 11 countries, and concluded that most do not use their robust legal mandates effectively. In four of these countries, our chapters and partners are already securing progress against such obstacles. For instance:

- In Gambia, our chapter successfully lobbied for a constitutional extension of the timeframe for parliamentary scrutiny of the national budget.
- In Jamaica, our joint advocacy resulted in the establishment of a joint select committee for the adoption of a code of conduct and job descriptions for MPs.
- In Morocco, our chapter persuaded the education and finance parliamentary committees to publish a breakdown of the education sector budget.
- In Kenya, the Justice and Legal Affairs Committee is considering our proposals to adopt post-legislative scrutiny and impact assessments.

We also introduced our parliamentary oversight assessment tool to 17 chapters from Europe and Central Asia, former MPs, and officials from the Office for Democratic



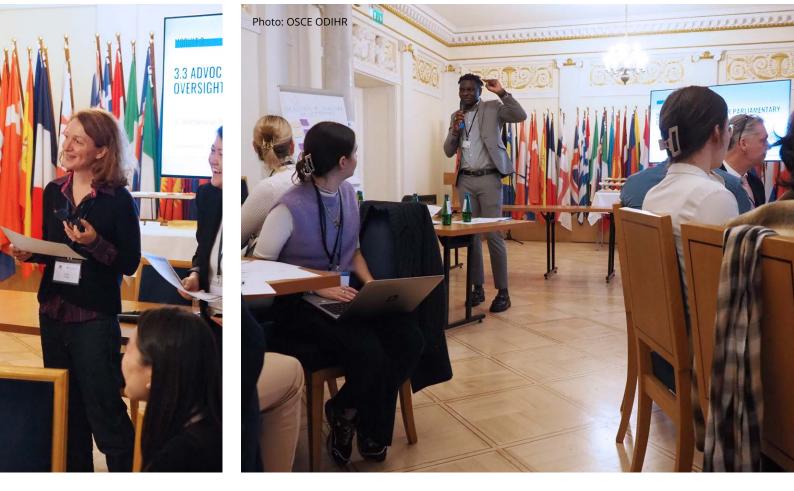
Institutions and Human Rights of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. The findings informed regional discussions on gathering credible evidence, best practices for parliamentary monitoring, and ways to use parliamentary oversight tools effectively to advance anti-corruption advocacy.

PUSHING FOR INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND COMMITMENTS ON POLITICAL INTEGRITY

Governments remained largely hesitant to commit to higher integrity standards against undue influence, but we persisted in keeping the issue on the agenda.

The European Parliament incorporated many of Transparency International's recommendations in its draft report on the EU Directive on Combatting Corruption, including measures on illicit political finance, lobbying transparency and asset disclosures. If retained after negotiations, these provisions will lead to significant changes in political integrity regulations across EU member states. At the UNCAC Conference of States Parties (CoSP), we spearheaded a coalition of more than 100 organisations that called on the 190 states parties to adopt a resolution on the integrity of political finance, the weakest area of integrity in elections globally. Despite securing commitments from more than a dozen countries to support relevant language in the Atlanta Declaration, states parties were unable to find consensus over the issue. However, our work has opened the door for a more robust discussion at the next CoSP in 2025, where we will present our standard on transparency and gender equality in political finance.

Meanwhile, political finance and lobbying still rank low in the Open Government Partnership (OGP) priorities, but we are fighting to change that. Along with our chapters and the OGP, we tracked the co-creation of national action plans in 10 countries. None adopted a political integrity commitment, so at the OGP Summit in Tallinn, we sought to persuade officials in person, continuing to push for change.



PROMOTING FAIR PLAY IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

DRIVE INTEGRITY IN BUSINESS

Business integrity is crucial in the fight against corruption, ensuring transparency and fair competition, as well as reducing opportunities for corrupt practices to take root in the private and public sectors.

Businesses that commit to integrity also set a powerful example, contributing to a culture of accountability and fairness. Transparency International works to rapidly increase the number of corporate leaders driving up integrity, and provides them with expertise, standards and resources to help them deliver.

LEVERAGING A COLLECTIVE ACTION APPROACH: DEVELOPING A GLOBAL BLUEPRINT FOR INTEGRITY PACTS

In 2023, we created a new global standard on integrity pacts (**see page 14)** to guide businesses, governments and civil society members who wish to use this tool to tackle corruption in public projects. Developed with more than 20 experts, this is a comprehensive framework for implementing integrity pacts that will help create a level playing field for business and ensure better use of public resources. We brought innovations in business integrity into the global blueprint, such as how to leverage environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting through the integrity pact process.

By adopting integrity pacts, companies can signal their commitment to transparency and accountability, while enhancing their reputation, which builds trust with all stakeholders involved in the public procurement process. This collective action approach fosters a collaborative environment where good practices and innovative solutions are shared, driving continuous improvement in procurement processes. The widespread adoption of this blueprint, especially in the high-value, high-risk contracts necessary for delivering the Sustainable Development Goals, would offer a chance for a fairer competitive environment and more efficient resource allocation, benefitting businesses and contributing to healthier procurement markets.



BUILDING STRONGER STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Transparency International worked in 2023 to further increase collaboration with influential organisations, amplifying our voice in promoting responsible business conduct. Our strategic partnerships with the UN Global Compact, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Basel Institute on Governance, among others, have positioned Transparency International as a key influencer in shaping global anti-corruption efforts.

In 2023, we contributed to a number of international initiatives on boosting and guiding business integrity. These included the OECD's Global Anti-Corruption and Integrity Forum, where we participated in a workshop on incentives for corporate compliance. Later, we contributed to the update of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. This included calling for cross-functional collaboration within companies' operations – for example, synergising anti-corruption compliance and human rights due diligence. We also recommended that companies' anti-corruption policies include steps to counter sexual corruption or "sextortion". We were a partner organisation at the ISO TC 309 13th Global Governance and Compliance Forum, as well as the UN Global Compact's Private Sector Forum, where we highlighted synergies between ESG and anti-corruption. We also participated in various business integrity workshops, such as the Basel Institute's workshop on collective action, where we offered a preview of the business integrity innovations of the forthcoming integrity pact blueprint, building appetite for corporate use of the tool.

Our advocacy and participation in key working groups also allowed us to strengthen the integration of anti-corruption measures into ESG reporting standards. This includes, for example, our ongoing advocacy with EFRAG's Sustainability Reporting Board on including beneficial ownership transparency in the European Sustainability Reporting Standards. We are also a liaison organisation for ISO TC 309 that works on governance of organisations' standards. Finally, we are part of the Global Reporting Initiative working group tasked with the update of economic impact standards, notably the one covering anti-corruption. This work positions integrity as a central characteristic of good business.

ENHANCING EFFECTIVENESS OF ESG REPORTING

ESG reporting is a key tool to provide transparency and accountability on a company's environmental, social and governance practices, enabling investors and stakeholders to make informed decisions. In 2023, Transparency International conducted groundbreaking research on how ESG practices can strengthen business integrity.

This research investigates the impact of ESG on businesses' behaviour, as well as the incentives and disincentives for ESG reporting. It provides valuable insights for companies seeking to improve their anti-corruption practices, and maps mandatory ESG reporting frameworks, especially the ESRS G1 on Business Conduct. It will inform our future advocacy efforts to ensure that robust anti-corruption measures are embedded within these frameworks.

HARNESSING OUR COLLECTIVE FORCE FOR BUSINESS INTEGRITY

Launched at the Transparency International Movement Summit in 2023, the Business Integrity Working Group brings together more than 24 chapters to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing, creating a powerful platform for collective action within our movement. Regularly exchanging on topics such as ESG reporting, business integrity in public procurement, and private-sector engagement, this group enables us to stay ahead of the curve in tackling business integrity challenges and sharing good practices. It will strengthen the collaborative global impact of the Transparency International movement as a leader in fighting for a clean and accountable business environment.

Photo: Kaunain Rahman / Transparency International



BRINGING CORRUPT ACTORS TO JUSTICE

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5

PURSUE ENFORCEMENT AND JUSTICE

Corruption undermines public trust, fosters inequalities and bends policymaking to the interests of the few and powerful. However, criminals often go unpunished, especially in the most serious cases of grand corruption involving highlevel officials, which often have significant human rights implications. Transparency International works to hold perpetrators to account by filing legal submissions, building capacity for legal accountability work among civil society, and strengthening global standards around enforcement and justice – notably in the area of grand corruption.

BUILDING LEGAL CASES FOR ENFORCEMENT

Civil society actors play a critical role in pressuring public authorities to enforce anti-corruption norms and bring corrupt actors to justice. Corruption is fundamentally a cross-border problem and, as the largest global anti-corruption movement, Transparency International plays a critical role in identifying and investigating cross-border cases, and filing legal submissions against perpetrators.

Through our partnerships with investigative journalists in the Global Anti-Corruption Consortium, we pushed for better enforcement by filing 19 legal submissions on cross-border corruption to 14 authorities in 13 jurisdictions. These activities – and similar work carried out in 2021 – resulted in at least five official investigations and the designation of five individuals under sanctions regimes in 2023.

Following submissions by Transparency International and the Daphne Caruana Galizia Foundation, the European Commission and the European Public Prosecutor's Office opened two investigations into cases of suspected corruption in Malta involving a significant amount of EU funds. Four judges and a former chief prosecutor were sanctioned by the US. Also in 2023, following previous submissions, Switzerland, the UK and the US also **opened investigations** into suspicious deals on two major oil blocks off the coast of Senegal, **implicating the country's former president**, Macky Sall, and his associates.

STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES IN CIVIL SOCIETY

Strengthening civil society's ability to pursue accountability for corruption is core to our strategy to bolster enforcement and justice. The Secretariat regularly provides resources, expertise and training to our national chapters and other partners.

In 2023, we strengthened the capacity of 31 chapters and external partners across the globe through in-person training based on Transparency International's strategic approach to cross-border casework. We also fostered a community of practice across Sub-Saharan Africa, supporting 38 civil society groups with capacity development on the use of international accountability mechanisms. Thirty-three groups across the globe also received tailored advice and support from Transparency International to develop concrete legal cases.

In Africa, we also strengthened civil society capacities to conduct evidence-based advocacy for improvements in enforcement. Eleven national chapters compiled a web database on high-level corruption cases for national and regional anti-corruption reform. This exercise will inform further evidence-based advocacy and policy recommendations on anti-corruption efforts across the region.

BOLSTERING LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS FOR JUSTICE

At the UNCAC Conference of States Parties in Atlanta, Georgia, in December, Transparency International pressed for action to improve remediation for victims of corruption, including increased standing for civil society organisations to represent victims and improved use of strategic litigation tools. Our efforts helped to ensure recognition of victims in two of the conference resolutions. Transparency International also pressed for increased recognition of the links between corruption and organised crime, especially in grand corruption cases, and successfully advocated for an UNCAC conference resolution on this issue.

We invested significantly in strengthening the EU anti-corruption framework, which will have repercussions far beyond Europe, as it affects other countries that do business within the Union. We advocated for improvements to the EU's proposal for a directive on combatting corruption. The European Parliament took on several of our proposed policy recommendations, including in areas establishing corruption victims' rights, non-trial resolutions and non-governmental organisations' standing rights. If maintained in the final version of the directive, some of these policy changes will set precedents and significantly increase the obligations on law enforcement, governments and companies to prevent and prosecute grand corruption – and opportunities for them to do so.

TACKLING IMPUNITY IN GRAND CORRUPTION

Grand corruption is the abuse of high-level power that benefits the few at the expense of the many. It involves high-level officials, is carried out on a large scale, and causes serious and widespread suffering in societies. Despite the gravity of the crimes, the power exercised by the perpetrators often enables them to escape accountability.

With the aim of strengthening the international anti-corruption framework to address grand corruption more effectively, we launched our working paper on tackling impunity for grand corruption in Vienna in September, to an audience of UN country delegations. The paper included Transparency International's legal definition of grand corruption and elaborated proposals for national and international measures to improve enforcement and remedies against such corruption. It will inform next steps on joint advocacy with national chapters and our external expert partners to push for action against these most destructive perpetrators of corruption.



CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX

Our flagship Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) is the world's most widely cited global ranking for public-sector corruption. It rates 180 countries and territories around the world according to perceived levels of public-sector corruption, on a scale running from 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).

Our 2022 CPI, released in January 2023, reflected a global context of increasing conflict and instability in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, growing authoritarianism and the ongoing climate crisis. It revealed to millions of people around the world that corruption levels remained stagnant in 124 countries, with an increasing number of countries in decline.

Corruption is not just a consequence but also a fuel of conflict: it creates or exacerbates existing grievances, while eroding state institutions and social trust. Alongside our analysis, we provided cases studies showing, for example, how corruption fuelled the consolidation of autocracy in Russia, and contributed to instability in countries dealing with internal conflict, like Afghanistan or Myanmar.

However, our analysis emphasised that the CPI's high scorers should not be let off the hook. The fight against corruption stagnated or even declined in a number of countries near the top of the scale, such as Canada and the UK. Additionally, Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the resulting scramble to sanction Russian assets further exposed the broad industry of financial and non-financial enablers – often based in the CPI's top-performing countries – who assist corrupt actors in laundering dirty money through the world's most advanced economies. These countries have a responsibility not to coast on their "clean" reputations, but to address their own role in global corruption.

STANDING UP TO CORRUPTION TOGETHER

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6

EXPAND CIVIC SPACE FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

A vibrant, independent civil society and public participation in decision making are key pillars of democracy. Civil society organisations and citizens must be safe and unhindered in calling out corruption and demanding accountability. By protecting and expanding civic space, Transparency International strengthens democracy and contributes to society's ability to hold powers to account.

PROTECTING CIVIC SPACE AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL

Around the world, civil society actors promoting transparency and anti-corruption are increasingly facing challenges to their ability to operate safely and freely. At the global level, Transparency International advocated for a strong resolution on corruption and human rights at the UN Human Rights Council, calling on states to ensure a safe and enabling environment for civil society, whistleblowers and other relevant actors.

At the UNCAC Conference of States Parties, we advocated for more robust participation of civil society in UNCAC processes, better monitoring of the implementation of provisions guaranteeing civil society participation at national level, and stronger whistleblower protection. These efforts resulted in the first ever UNCAC resolution on whistleblower protection. With the UNCAC Coalition, we also launched an initiative to foster collaboration between the anti-corruption and human rights communities within the UN system, in order to jointly advocate for change.

PROTECTING CIVIC SPACE AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Transparency International used its voice to protect civic space in many countries, assisting our chapters in defending their place in the national discourse in the face of worsening situations for civil society and, in some cases, attacks. In Venezuela, we spoke out against a proposed bill on the supervision and financing of NGOs, which would further restrict an already limited civic space.

With support from the Transparency International Secretariat, our chapters significantly strengthened national whistleblower protection in Belgium, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Czechia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain, where our recommendations were included in new laws and policies. In Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy and Slovenia, our chapters contributed to the effective implementation of such laws. To support ongoing advocacy, we assessed whistleblower protection legislation in 20 EU countries and provided recommendations for legislative change.

SPEAKING UP AND CREATING SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Through our network of Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs), we empowered people around the world to safely report corruption by providing free and confidential advice and support to victims and witnesses. Of our 65 chapters with such centres, the 29 supported by the Secretariat worked with 7,480 victims and witnesses of corruption through their ALACs. New ALACs were established in Estonia and Sweden, and other chapters were also able to extend their ALAC presence within their countries.

In 2023, we supported better use of ALAC data to identify trends, systemic weaknesses or vulnerabilities that allow corruption to flourish, through training on data analysis and the development of the handbook ALAC Data for Advocacy: Guidance on Generating Impact by Using ALAC Data in Advocacy Initiatives.

ENHANCING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation is the foundation of a robust civic space. In budget processes in particular, it is an essential anti-corruption tool, allowing the public to monitor finances and give direct input on where they would like to see public funds spent in their communities.

In 2023, we piloted our Assessment Toolkit on Public Participation in Budget Processes in 14 public institutions in Chile, The Gambia, Honduras, Madagascar, Morocco, Lebanon, Palestine, Peru, Rwanda and Sri Lanka. The toolkit was well received and has already been tagged for adoption by other organisations, such as the International Budget Partnership and the Delhibased Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability. Data from the pilot projects fed into our multi-country overview of The State of Public Participation in Budget Processes, and has been supporting our chapters' advocacy. For example, officials at the local municipal council of Kanifing in The Gambia responded to the findings by not only strengthening public participation and providing a platform to discuss and prioritise development needs with citizens, but also by encouraging other municipalities to initiate similar assessments.

Transparency International also bolstered citizens' mobilisation to hold governments accountable through social accountability tools. In the Maldives, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Vanuatu, we promoted use of the right to information, resulting in people filing at least 410 freedom of information requests across the four countries, to increase the transparency and accountability of authorities.

We also promoted citizen mobilisation and public participation through targeted programmes in countries including Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon and Nepal. For example, in Kyrgyzstan, in partnership with academic institutions, we enabled stronger public participation through the creation of digital platforms to ensure citizen oversight of public procurement, legislative initiatives, and road construction and repair. Through programmes like this, we continue to accelerate the fight against corruption, ensuring the protection and active participation of civil society globally.

MAINSTREAMING INCLUSION IN OUR ADVOCACY AND LEGAL ADVICE CENTRES

The inclusion of women, youth, people with disabilities and other marginalised groups is a priority in our ALAC work. We aim to make our ALAC reporting mechanisms more gender-responsive and accessible to all, including through analysing and addressing barriers to reporting, and supporting victims and witnesses of corruption to access appropriate legal advice and other support services, such as health care. We also disaggregate ALAC data by gender and risk of discrimination, if service users belong to marginalised groups, to better understand the types of ALAC clients and their cases. This in turn assists Transparency International in planning ALAC interventions and informing our priorities for advocacy.

We also use our knowledge and experience from ALAC work to share good practices and advocate for improved laws, reporting mechanisms and support services for victims of corruption, including sexual corruption.





Photos: Djanyzakova Jyldyz Maksutovna / Transparency International Kyrgyzstan





Photos: Vatsy Rakotonarivo / Transparency International Initiative Madagascar





PROTECTING OUR CHAPTERS UNDER THREAT

As autocracies and other anti-democratic forces gathered strength during 2023, Transparency International chapters in vulnerable countries found themselves increasingly under threat from hostile government rhetoric and laws aimed at hindering anti-corruption work. The Secretariat stepped up to provide threatened chapters with vital support to keep them operating, and used our platform as the world's largest anti-corruption movement to call out these attacks and put international pressure on governments to protect our people.

In **Russia**, Transparency International was declared an "undesirable organisation" in March 2023, making further anti-corruption work within the country dangerous under an already-oppressive regime. Our national chapter, Transparency International Russia, was forced to disband. With support from our international movement, TI Russia was able to reform itself "in exile" by October and continue many of its operations.

In **Georgia**, however, our national chapter faced government attacks after calling out state capture and high-level corruption linked to the ruling Georgian Dream party, which is widely believed to be controlled by Georgia's richest man and former prime minister, **Bidzina Ivanishvili**. Transparency International Georgia also faced being classified as a "foreign agent" under a draft law introduced in 2023, which was based on a similar law used to target Transparency International in Russia. We provided TI Georgia with support that increased international pressure on the Georgian government to abandon its attacks against civil society. Despite the subsequent passage of the foreign agent law in May 2024, we continue to support our national chapter as it fights corruption at a decisive time for the country.

Across the globe in **Venezuela**, a draft law was introduced in 2023 to further scrutinise and restrict the activities of non-governmental and civil society organisations in an already narrow civic space. As in Russia and Georgia, we provided Transparency International Venezuela with the backing needed to keep working, and used our platform to put pressure on the Venezuelan government to abandon the draft law.

INSPIRING FUTURE INTEGRITY CHAMPIONS

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 7

BUILD COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AGAINST CORRUPTION

As the fight against corruption continues, it is crucial to identify and support the next generation of civic, public and business leaders. Transparency International chapters pay particular attention to young people, of whom there are currently 1.8 billion worldwide. Fostering youth potential in driving social and political change, particularly in combatting corruption, is crucial to inspire the next generation of leaders and to empower young people – a group vulnerable to corruption – to stand up for integrity.

INCORPORATING YOUNG PEOPLE'S PERSPECTIVES INTO ANTI-CORRUPTION

Transparency International works to highlight young voices on the global stage. In March 2023, we organised a youth side event during the US-hosted Summit for Democracy, attended by young activists and government representatives, to showcase young people's perspectives on combatting corruption. Our event highlighted the role and potential of technology and social media in creating change. We also held a special youth session during the Transparency International Movement Summit in September and generated proposals that informed the design of future work in Asia and the Pacific.

During the year, we launched specific initiatives aimed at engaging young people's interest in anti-corruption. In Kyrgyzstan, for example, we organised four hackathons to develop interactive online platforms to support public accountability, attracting 509 young participants. In South Korea, Transparency International partnered with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to launch a global youth arts and video competition on anti-corruption, attracting a total of 450 entries from 65 countries. It was viewed over 75,000 times on social media, and the ideas conveyed through the winning pieces ranged from inspiring – how small initiatives can have a butterfly effect and lead to big impact – to practical – how new technology can increase accountability and enable citizens to participate in the fight against corruption.

BUILDING YOUNG PEOPLE'S CAPACITY FOR CREATING CHANGE

Many of our chapters actively work to engage young people in the fight against corruption and to help build local youth capacity through initiatives that create real change in their communities. Our chapter in Cambodia, for example, conducted extensive capacity-building training for young people in multiple cities, leading to regular dialogues with local authorities, which have resulted in better understanding of young people's points of view, and in some cases, incorporation of their perspectives into local decision making. In Indonesia, the chapter's youth network monitored 12 procurement processes across diverse sectors and offered recommendations to enhance future transparency. In Latin America and the Caribbean, our chapters built the social auditing capacities of 35 young people from 15 countries. At meetings in Bolivia in December, we trained attendees on citizen investigation routes to detect cases of corruption, and tools they could use to confront it. We also equipped participants with tools to train their peers in their home countries in the skills they had learned.

In partnership with the Seek Initiative, Transparency International also contributed to the 2023 United World Colleges Summer School. This trained 90 young people from around the world, in person and online, in various social auditing techniques and tools. From identifying problems to tracing their origins, students were given the tools to operate as monitors in their own communities using maps, searchable databases and social media monitoring, among other approaches.

Under the Inclusive Service Delivery Africa programme, we also organised a three-day regional training session for 18 investigative journalists from 10 countries, to strengthen their capacity to investigate, produce and disseminate reports on gendered corruption in the education and health care sectors, and how it affects access to services by women, girls and other groups at risk of discrimination.



Photos: Kazi Mahdi Amin / Transparency International Bangladesh

JOURNALISTS FOR TRANSPARENCY

Transparency International's collective of over 125 young investigative journalists and storytellers from around the world – enabled a multi-part reporting collaboration entitled "Sleepwalking into the deep sea?" The report calls for scrutiny of the Global South's share of deep-sea mining profits and pushes for better policymaking to protect the oceans' precious minerals from undue influence distorting mining policies. The reporting was by Gabriela Ramirez of Venezuela and Patrick Egwu of Nigeria.

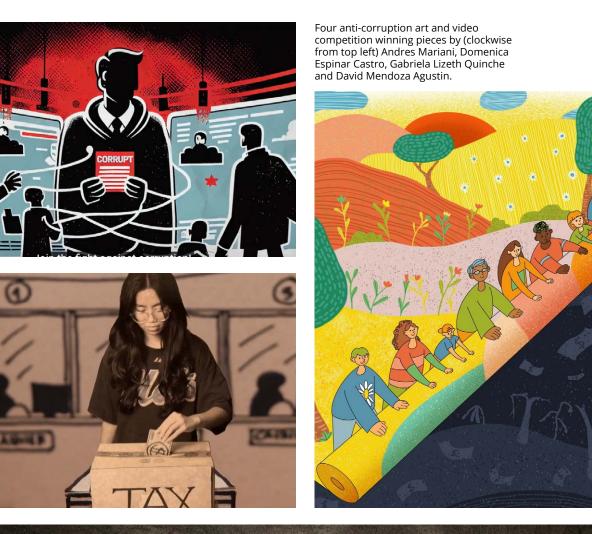


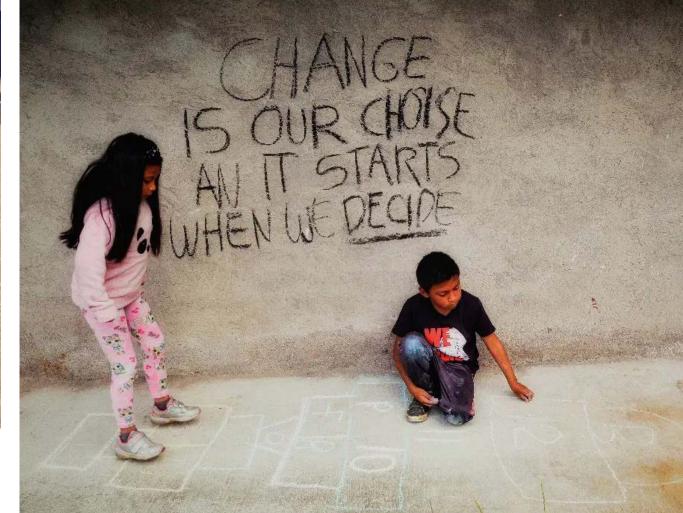
















OUR COMMITMENTS TO DRIVING CHANGE

The Transparency International movement is committed to creating change. As the strategic hub for more than 113 independent chapters and partners across the globe, our Secretariat drives that change by coordinating the whole movement and ensuring that we can act together as one.

Our Strategy 2030: Holding Power to Account is underpinned by a set of core commitments that allow us to stay flexible, innovative and adaptable in the fight

against corruption - wherever and whenever it occurs.

AGILE TIMEFRAMES

The Transparency International Strategy 2030 is

divided into three strategic cycles, allowing our movement to adjust as needed, and to remain flexible and adaptable. The Secretariat's strategic plans follow these same cycles, the first of which concluded in 2022. The new cycle will run from 2023 until 2026. In 2024, we will execute an internal learning review of the Secretariat's progress so far, before a movement-wide strategic evaluation in 2025.

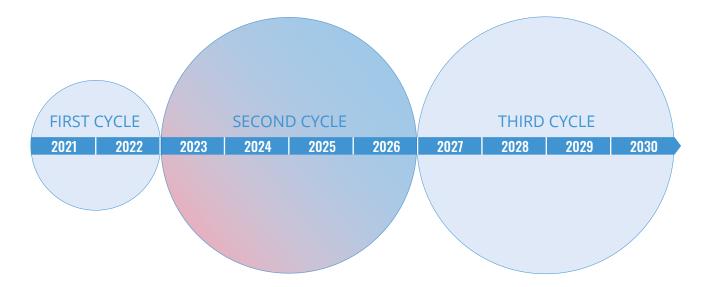
CONNECTED GLOBAL AND NATIONAL STRATEGIES

The Secretariat began to implement its Strategic Plan 2023-26 with goals that focus on strengthening political integrity, and driving justice, equality and democracy by raising voices for the common good. The Strategy Reference Group – made up of two chapter representatives from each region worldwide – met regularly to advise the Secretariat CEO on the implementation of our 2030 strategy.

In 2023, many chapters finalised new country-level strategies in line with the global strategy, including Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Portugal, the UK, Zambia and Zimbabwe. We provided chapters with one-to-one support in their strategic planning and worked with them to agree regional advocacy priorities and align their work with these.

Movement meetings have taken place in all five global regions in which we operate, to define areas of shared interest and collective action. From gender mainstreaming in Asia Pacific to organised crime and corruption in the Americas, and the EU anti-corruption directive in Europe and Central Asia, our chapters and Secretariat strengthened how they work together to address crucial topics and opportunities. For example,

OUR 10-YEAR STRATEGY LONG-TERM AGENDA IN CYCLES INCLUDING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES



in Europe and Central Asia, 36 countries gathered to discuss priorities in line with the movement's global strategy, resulting in the development of a regional strategy brief for 2024-2026.

Globally, our movement collaborated through communities of practice on various issues covered under our strategic objectives to share solutions-focused knowledge and coordinate action. The Secretariat also advocated alongside our chapters during the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) Conference of States Parties, Open Government Partnership Summit, the UN COP climate talks, and World Bank and International Monetary Fund meetings, securing a number of successes that progressed our mission. (**See pages 11, 18 & 29** for some examples.)

EFFECTIVE COORDINATION, ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT

Our annual online Movement Summit consolidated its position in 2023 as the most important space for

members of our movement to discuss thematic issues, explore innovative ideas and advance agendas for coordinated action. This year, we transferred the lead role in the summit's thematic and workshop design from the Board and Secretariat to our network of chapters, making the event a gathering "for the movement, by the movement".

A three-day agenda of 32 sessions covering nearly 40 hours brought together 150 speakers from 70 countries – nearly half of whom were female or gender-diverse. Eight hundred people participated.

In 2023, we also advanced our presence in influential regional spaces. This included our Latin American chapters' engagement with the EU-Latin America and Caribbean Initiative (EU-LAC) and the Middle East-North Africa region's partnership with the Arab League and UN Development Programme to organise the first Arab Forum for Enhancing Transparency and Good Governance. We maintained our solid partnership with the African Union to ensure that it addressed corruption in its Land Governance Strategy and to raise awareness together through African Anti-Corruption Day. We also convinced the European Parliament Committee leading the negotiating position on the EU Anti-Corruption Directive to adopt our recommendations.

STRONGER PARTNERSHIPS AND PRESENCE

2023 was an important year for developing a framework to ensure the strength and sustainability of our chapters, which is fundamental to our collective success. We launched an eighth strategic objective, "A Stronger Transparency International Network", focusing on how the Secretariat can support our chapters in developing their capacity to be more sustainable, collaborative and impactful, as they work to achieve our shared aspirations.

We coordinated the movement in a successful application for the EU ECHO Action Grant, which will focus on network strengthening for the next four years, with 66 chapters included as partners.

We also started to develop a needs assessment tool that will allow us to systematically collect the capacity gaps identified by the national chapters. The tool, which will be rolled out every two years, will help us to better guide our investments and to identify economies of scale to support chapters with similar needs across the world. The tool will also collect information on those areas where chapters are particularly strong and able to share their expertise with peers. It will constitute a valuable place of dialogue to identify demand and supply for capacity building.

With renewed leadership in the Global Presence Committee of the Transparency International Board after the 2023 board elections, the Global Movement and Governance Teams became the committee's executive arm to advance two focus areas: enhanced support for chapters operating in challenging civic spaces and strategic expansion in key countries. The Secretariat also continued to strengthen our national chapter in formation in the US, to help it become sustainable. To maximise the chapter's impact, we also worked together to shape a strategic approach in which it will capitalise on the US' influential global position to enhance our advocacy worldwide, in addition to tackling national issues.

We also consolidated our leadership position in Iraq, building capacities in civil society and government actors.

IMPACT AND LEARNING

In 2023, we continued to strengthen our tools and standards to empower teams in the Secretariat and in our national chapters to improve monitoring, evaluation and learning. We compiled an indicator database mapped against our impact matrix, and developed gender- and context-sensitive monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks for new projects.

Our work underwent 11 external evaluations and impact reviews to improve accountability and extract lessons learned. The findings have been used to inform decision making at both project and strategic levels. Our focus on learning was also evident throughout our annual planning and reporting, which provided opportunities to reflect on progress made against the Secretariat's Strategic Plan 2023-2026.



CORE PRINCIPLES AND METHODS

In 2023, we further strengthened our main principles and practices.





INCLUSIVE AND INTERSECTIONAL

Transparency International is committed to being inclusive and intersectional in everything we do. In 2023, we made significant progress towards meeting this strategic commitment in our operations, communications and programmes, with a special emphasis on understanding and raising awareness on the multi-layered factors that affect the vulnerability of certain groups to corruption, such as age, origin, religion, gender, ethnicity, education and sexual orientation.

Our research and publications in 2023 continued to generate ground-breaking evidence, knowledge and awareness on the links between gender, corruption and discrimination, including through reports such as **This Beautiful Land and Corruption through a Gender Lens – Asia Pacific.** Corruption risk assessments conducted in Africa have shed light on how corruption affects women and girls' access to health care and education. We are also exploring how corruption is experienced by a broader range of groups at risk of discrimination, including people with disabilities, the LGBTQI+ community and ethnic minorities.

Our global advocacy efforts in partnerships with organisations such as the UNCAC Coalition culminated in the first ever UNCAC Conference of States Parties resolution on the "societal impact of corruption". This resolution addresses the gender dimensions of corruption, based on evidence thzat Transparency International was instrumental in generating, which shows how corruption often impacts people differently depending on their gender. In particular, the resolution recognises sexual corruption – or "sextortion" – as a form of corruption, and calls on governments to take necessary measures to prevent and prosecute it effectively, in line with Transparency International's recommendations. As a result of our global advocacy, countries such as Sri Lanka and Palestine took important steps in this direction in 2023.

Through stronger partnerships, exchanging knowledge and pooling resources from academic institutions and other anti-discrimination organisations, we made progress towards breaking down the silos between the gender equality and anti-corruption agendas.

Internally, we also made significant progress toward mainstreaming gender, equality and social inclusion concerns in our projects, programmes and operations, and becoming a truly inclusive organisation. An increasing number of projects systematically address the gendered impact of corruption, with 10 projects in 2023 having a strong gender component. We developed guidelines to mainstream gender and inclusion issues throughout the project cycle, from design to evaluation. Most of our organisational processes and activities now routinely collect and monitor disaggregated data to promote equitable participation and representation of all groups in our work, ranging from human resources to participation in global forums.

CLIMATE CONSCIOUS

After an external strategic review, we conducted internal and external consultations to renew our Climate Governance Integrity Programme's theory of change and strategic ambition. We developed a more comprehensive and inclusive results framework, setting solid foundations for a new phase of climate work. By the end of 2023, 21 chapters were included in this global programme, in line with the new framework. We will add five more chapters in 2024 and a further six will implement a special innovation component.

At the same time, we made initial efforts to build a more systematic approach to mainstreaming environmental considerations in our projects. We drafted guidelines to integrate climate and environment dimensions into Secretariat-led projects across the project lifecycle, to be piloted from 2024. Our overarching goal is to minimise our climate and environmental footprint, while maximising the potential impact and sustainability of our climate advocacy initiatives.

EVIDENCE-BASED

In the context of growing global instability and insecurity in 2023, we leveraged the Corruption Perceptions Index, our flagship tool, in order to contribute to the debate on conflict and security. (**See page 37** for more details.) Our research also generated new evidence in lesserstudied areas of corruption. For example, we conducted research to assess illicit financial flows in Africa and compiled a database of cross-border corruption cases in the region that helped advance our understanding of how professionals such as lawyers, accountants and corporate service providers play a critical role in dirty money schemes implicating African officials.

Transparency International contributed to the debate on democratic accountability with a series of publications on parliamentary oversight and participatory budgeting, aiming to help protect public resources and empower citizens to hold governments accountable. We also strengthened our research partnerships with key academic institutions and others, to maximise our impact. This includes joining a new consortium of 16 academic institutions to explore the effectiveness of anti-corruption policies.

Additionally, we provided research support and capacity building to our movement through delivering training on research methods and providing helpdesk services to 45 chapters. Our helpdesk answered 75 queries in 2023, resulting in 39 fully developed answers published on the Transparency International Anti-Corruption Knowledge Hub, on issues as diverse as corruption risks in judicial appointments, lobbying regulations and cryptocurrencies.

We also drafted a code of research ethics to ensure that our research upholds the highest ethical standards. This will be rolled out in 2024.

TECH SAVVY

During 2023, we further positioned ourselves as a movement to formalise and elevate our efforts on artificial intelligence in relation to corruption, given its rapid development and clear relevance.

We promoted our earlier working paper on "Corruption Risks of Artificial Intelligence" at the Movement Summit and successfully formed a working group on artificial intelligence and corruption, which will develop our movement policy on artificial intelligence in 2024.

PROTECTIVE OF OUR PEOPLE

This year, our Safeguarding Anti-Corruption Fighters' Efforts (SAFE) team provided guidance and support to 20 national chapters across all five regions where we operate, reacting to security incidents, threats or heightened safety concerns. Strengthening preventative security was a key area of focus and we provided one-to-one training to five chapters in Asia and Africa.

Our Secretariat also enhanced capacity to act against digital threats through providing online digital security training to all chapters in the Asia Pacific region.

We supported chapters around the world with guidance on introducing or updating their plans on home and office security, and on relocation and risk assessments. We expanded to 40 chapters using the movement's security threat case management system. In addition, 28 chapters now use our safe reporting platform for their Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres, to better protect sensitive information.

The Secretariat also provided strategic communications support and published 12 media statements, using our international influence and high-profile social media presence to support national chapters and partners under threat or facing civic space restrictions.

ETHICAL AND ACCOUNTABLE

We achieved good progress this year on our goal to further embed excellent integrity and accountability practices in the day-to-day work of the Secretariat. We implemented better training with all teams, increased awareness around controls and risk management, and fostered ethics-oriented discussions that led to the development of new tools and the strengthening of processes.

To support the wider movement, we achieved a major milestone by successfully piloting a capacity-building programme on ethics, integrity and risk with one of our chapters. This has enabled us to establish a programme - for which we can now seek funding - to integrate into future project implementation wherever possible. We are already planning its adoption by at least one more chapter in 2024.



GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATION

Transparency International is a German-based non-profit association with 102 members, comprised of 97 national chapters and five individual members. Seven national chapters in formation are on the way to becoming national chapters and nine national partner organisations support Transparency International's mission in their countries.

Our Annual Membership Meeting is the highest organ of Transparency International. The Annual Membership Meeting elects and controls our Chair, Vice-Chair and Board of Directors. It also passes resolutions and discusses critical issues.

Our Board of Directors is the supervisory body of the association, while our Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the operations of Transparency International. Our International Council is a body of experts providing advice to the whole Transparency International movement. Members of the International Council are appointed by the Board of Directors and can run for chair, vice-chair and board elections.

In 2023, the Annual Membership Meeting elected a new Chair and a new Vice-Chair to the executive body. François Valérian and Ketakandriana Rafitoson were elected as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, for three years. In addition, three new Board Members were elected: Silvina Bacigalupo, Bruno Brandao and Peter van Veen. The Annual Membership Meeting adopted two new resolutions, asking for enhanced accessibility in Transparency International's consultation processes. Furthermore, the Annual Membership Meeting demanded enhanced transparency in the financing of political parties and election campaigns to be advocated for in the UNCAC Conference of States Parties.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

In 2023, we further streamlined our processes and policies to ensure we comply with current best practice in the sector by automating our internal processes and workflows. We overhauled our overhead recovery policy and our time-keeping process, resulting in a substantial increase in timely and accurate tracking of staff time allocated to projects. Work to advance our budgeting techniques and strengthen our capacitybuilding offer remains ongoing, to match developments in donor demands and opportunities presented by new technologies. Below we present a summary of our income and expenditure for 2023.

INCOME

Our operating income in 2023 reached €21.3 million, with a €0.8 million or 4 per cent increase compared to 2022. The increase mostly comprises restricted income, which increased by €1.4 million or 8 per cent as our project portfolio increased. This was partially offset by a decrease in other income, which fell by €0.7 million or 73 per cent, due to the end of one large commercial contract. We expect further growth in our project portfolio and development in our implementation of restricted grants in 2024. Unrestricted income increased moderately by €0.1 million or 4 per cent compared to 2022. While not large in absolute value, this increase is reassuring as it interrupts the negative trend of the previous two years, which saw large reductions in available unrestricted income.

EXPENDITURE

Our operating expenditure totalled €21.4 million, with an increase of €0.4 million or 2 per cent, reflecting the changes in income. Transfers to partners increased by €0.8 million, to €9.3 million, increasing their share of total expenditure from 40 per cent to 43 per cent. Other expenses decreased by €1.5 million or 33 per cent compared to 2022. The 2022 figure was exceptionally high, as it included all expenses associated with the International Anti-Corruption Conference in the US, which was entirely organised by the Secretariat. Staff costs increased by €1.1 million or 15 per cent, as a result of increased headcount over the past two years, due to the greater size and number of projects.

INCOME

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Unrestricted	4.288	5.400	4.681	3.059	3.172
Restricted	20.573	16.969	12.681	16.501	17.873
Other	0.1	<0.1	<0.1	0.9	0.235
Total	24.954	22.390	17.386	20.454	21.280

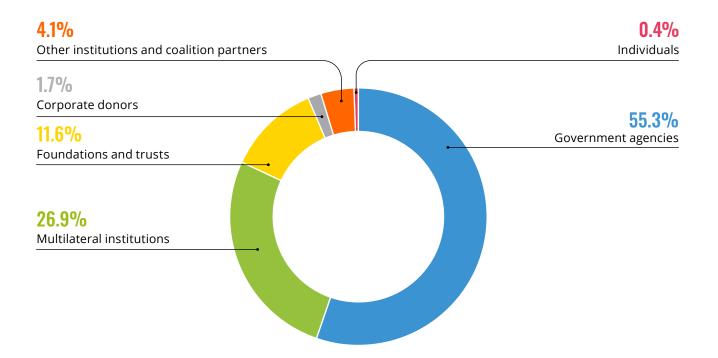
Figures in millions of euro

EXPENDITURE

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Staff	31%	34%	41%	36%	41%
National chapters	49%	41%	43%	40%	43%
Other	20%	25%	16%	23%	16%
Total	24.954	22.390	17.386	20.454	21.280

Figures in millions of euro

INCOME



THANK YOU To our supporters

Transparency International relies on the generosity of our supporters and partners so we can continue to spearhead the fight against corruption worldwide. As a non-profit organisation, we could not have achieved the vital progress outlined in this report without your contributions.

From donating to campaigning, there are many ways you can support our work. To find out more, please contact us at fundraising@transparency.org or visit:

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INDIVIDUALS

We would also like to warmly recognise all our individual contributors and other donors, who support our work in the fight against corruption.

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