

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 7:01 CET/01:01 EST TUESDAY, 30 JANUARY 2024**

## **2023 CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX REVEALS HOW CORRUPTION UNDERMINES PROGRESS WITH RIGHTS & GOVERNANCE IN MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA**

*Loss of momentum in anti-corruption efforts also decreases public trust*

Berlin, 30 January 2024 – The [2023 Corruption Perceptions Index \(CPI\)](#) released today by Transparency International shows that widespread corruption in Arab States significantly undermines progress in the region. Despite countries making commitments to combat corruption, governments often renounce these pledges, ultimately jeopardising fundamental rights such as health and education. In many instances, this poses a threat even to people's right to life.

Most Arab States have failed to improve their positions on the CPI in the last ten years. Seven Arab States are included in the bottom ten CPI scorers, and 80 per cent of the countries live in conflict and witness both social and political instability. The Arab States have an average score of 34 out of 100, demonstrating the long road ahead in assuring integrity and justice throughout the region.

**Kinda Hattar, Middle East and North Africa Regional Advisor of Transparency International said:**

“Across the region, pervasive corruption impedes progress, while deepening social and structural injustices. Despite a desire to address these issues, a lack of consistent commitment to anti-corruption measures fosters distrust between governments and citizens, fuelling political instability, reinforcing inequalities and escalating conflicts.”

### **MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA HIGHLIGHTS**

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

The Arab States' average dropped this year to an all-time low of 34.

- The top scorers among the Arab States are the **United Arab Emirates** (68) and **Qatar** (58).
- War-torn **Libya** (18), **Yemen** (16) and **Syria** (13) score the worst.
- **Qatar** (58) and **Egypt** (35) have hit their lowest scores since different years' CPI results became comparable in 2012.

For each country's individual score and changes over time, see the [global 2023 CPI page](#). For in-depth analysis on trends and countries, see the region's feature article: [CPI 2023 for Middle East & North Africa: Dysfunctional approach to fighting corruption undermines progress](#).

## **CORRUPTION AND INJUSTICE**

With only seven years to go in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), countries in the Middle East and North Africa struggle to fulfil their commitments to justice and human rights. According to the [2023 Global Peace Index](#), they also remain the least peaceful in the world for the eighth year in a row.

- In the midst of various conflicts in the region, including the ongoing Gaza war, reports have emerged of corrupt practices, such as demanding "fees" at the border for those escaping the war. This not only significantly affects the most vulnerable, but adds another layer of injustice, reinforcing existing power imbalances.
- **Lebanon** (24) continues to be a significant decliner in the CPI, dropping six points since 2013. The lack of a functioning government and the aftermath of the Beirut port explosion in 2020, continue to leave the country without a clear path forward to establish a robust national integrity system.
- This year, **Kuwait** (46) had its highest score on the CPI since 2015. In September, the National Assembly voted on a new government roadmap which focuses on enhancing transparency and good governance as a means to achieve economic reform and advance development.
- **Tunisia** (40) continues to backslide due to its deepening political crisis. The closing of the Anti-Corruption Commission is a severe blow to accountability and transparency, and endangers the safety of whistleblowers and anti-corruption activists.

Building on systems that are deeply corrupt will not bring about change. Transparency International calls on governments to give justice systems the independence, resources and transparency needed to effectively punish all corruption offences and keep power in check. Where necessary, they must also introduce better procedures and laws to help justice institutions shield themselves from and target corrupt acts.

### **Daniel Eriksson, Chief Executive Officer of Transparency International said:**

"Corruption worsens social injustice and disproportionately affects the most vulnerable. In many countries, obstacles to justice for victims of corruption persist. It is time to break the barriers and ensure people can access justice effectively. Everyone deserves fair and inclusive legal systems where victims' voices are heard at every stage. Anything else is an affront to justice."

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

The media page includes the CPI 2023 report, as well as the full dataset and methodology, international press release and additional analysis for the Middle East and North Africa in English and Arabic. See here:

<https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023/media-kit>.

## **INTERVIEW REQUESTS**

In case of country-specific queries, please contact [Transparency International's national chapters](#). In case of queries around regional and global findings, please contact the Transparency International Secretariat: [press@transparency.org](mailto:press@transparency.org).

## **ABOUT THE CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX**

Since its inception in 1995, the Corruption Perceptions Index has become the leading global indicator of public sector corruption. The index scores 180 countries and territories around the world based on perceptions of public sector corruption, using data from 13 external sources, including the World Bank, World Economic Forum, private risk and consulting companies, think tanks and others. The scores reflect the views of experts and business people, not the public.

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