

2008 Corruption Perceptions Index

Regional Highlights: EU and Western Europe

Countries/Territories ranked: 31

Although the European Union and other Western European countries rank at the top of Transparency International's (TI) 2008 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), this year's results show that there is no corruption-free zone in and around the EU.

The overarching critical perception displayed in the broad decline of CPI scores among EU countries and other Western European nations can be seen as a sign that anti-corruption reforms should not stop with EU membership and that there is a heightened awareness about corruption throughout the region. Recent high-profile scandals in the public and private sectors have also put a spotlight on the supply-side of corruption and contributed to a better understanding of how governments tolerate or react to such activity.

Serious scandals that have surfaced over the last few years in **Norway** and a CPI score of 7.9 in 2008, down from 8.7 in 2007, reflect a deeper problem in the private and public sectors though a growing number of cases are being investigated and prosecuted..

The **United Kingdom's** anti-corruption credentials within the OECD and other major international groups has clearly suffered a setback following the December 2006 decision to discontinue a criminal investigation of British Aerospace Systems (BAES) in relation to the Al Yamamah contract in Saudi Arabia. The decision to stop the criminal investigation raised acute concerns over the UK's international obligation to combat corruption.

Joining the European Union is not an automatic remedy for corruption, as the worsening of **Bulgaria's** CPI score clearly shows at 3.6 in 2008, down from 4.1 in 2007. Despite its accession to the EU, the country is still wary of tackling political corruption, which is closely linked to a very high level of organised crime. During the past two years, corruption in public procurement and strategic concession deals, a judiciary paralysed by corrupt structures and the misuse of EU funds dedicated to the country's development –for which it faced recent sanctions- have countered Bulgaria's success, heavily damaged its international image and reduced trust in national institutions.

A lack of transparency in election campaign finance has shaken faith in **Finland's** politicians, many of whom were embroiled in a scandal related to campaign financing for elections held in 2007. The investigations focused on a group of influential entrepreneurs who contributed to the campaigns of prominent leaders from the government and the opposition. A discussion on political corruption, unprecedented in its extent, was consequently triggered. Finland's CPI score decreased from 9.4 in 2007 to 9.0 in 2008.

Italy, also a decliner in the 2008 CPI with 4.8 from a score of 5.2 in 2007, has faced cases of acute fraud and corruption in its public health system resulting in the arrest of prominent politicians and public officials in the Abruzzo region. Civil society has recently been concerned by the independence of Italy's High Commissioner against Corruption.

In **France**, several cases of high-level public officials connected to corrupt activities surfaced during the past two years, including those of former Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin and the indictment of former French president Jacques Chirac, who faces additional investigations. On the private sector front, a scandal regarding slush funds connected to the main federation of French companies also erupted in late 2007. Such scandals may have contributed to an increased perception of public sector corruption and a decline in the country's CPI score from 7.3 in 2007 to 6.9 in 2008.

Investigations of corruption involving prominent sports figures captured public attention in **Portugal** during 2008. The country, with a CPI score of 6.1 in 2008 down from 6.5 in 2007, also

had its first-ever successful investigation of an illicit campaign donation. Extensive public discussions of proposals for a new approach to anti-corruption along with a failed plan, dominated public discussions in Portugal and may have affected perceptions.

Poland's score of 4.6 in 2008 a step up from 4.2 in 2007, may be tied to a special anti-corruption body to address public and private sector corruption which has shown some promising results since its establishment in 2006. Its investigations have led to the arrest of various high level officials accused of bribery including an ex-minister, an ex-member of the Parliament and other public officials.

Country Rank	Regional Country Rank	Country /Territory	CPI Score 2008	Confidence Intervals	Surveys Used
1	1	Denmark	9.3	9.1 - 9.4	6
1	1	Sweden	9.3	9.2 - 9.4	6
5	3	Switzerland	9.0	8.7 - 9.2	6
5	3	Finland	9.0	8.4 - 9.4	6
7	5	Netherlands	8.9	8.5 - 9.1	6
7	5	Iceland	8.9	8.1 - 9.4	5
11	7	Luxembourg	8.3	7.8 - 8.8	6
12	8	Austria	8.1	7.6 - 8.6	6
14	9	Norway	7.9	7.5 - 8.3	6
14	9	Germany	7.9	7.5 - 8.2	6
16	11	Ireland	7.7	7.5 - 7.9	6
16	11	United Kingdom	7.7	7.2 - 8.1	6
18	13	Belgium	7.3	7.2 - 7.4	6
23	14	France	6.9	6.5 - 7.3	6
26	15	Slovenia	6.7	6.5 - 7.0	8
27	16	Estonia	6.6	6.2 - 6.9	8
28	17	Spain	6.5	5.7 - 6.9	6
31	18	Cyprus	6.4	5.9 - 6.8	3
32	19	Portugal	6.1	5.6 - 6.7	6
33	20	Israel	6.0	5.6 - 6.3	6
36	21	Malta	5.8	5.3 - 6.3	4
45	22	Czech Republic	5.2	4.8 - 5.9	8
47	23	Hungary	5.1	4.8 - 5.4	8
52	24	Latvia	5.0	4.8 - 5.2	6
52	24	Slovakia	5.0	4.5 - 5.3	8
55	26	Italy	4.8	4.0 - 5.5	6
57	27	Greece	4.7	4.2 - 5.0	6
58	28	Lithuania	4.6	4.1 - 5.2	8
58	28	Poland	4.6	4.0 - 5.2	8
70	30	Romania	3.8	3.4 - 4.2	8
72	31	Bulgaria	3.6	3.0 - 4.3	8