

Corruption Perceptions Index 2009

Regional Highlights: European Union and Western Europe

Countries/Territories included: 30

Among the *2009 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)* top scorers are several European Union (EU) members and other Western European states. However, the index also demonstrates that the region is far from corruption-free and many achievements are still precarious. Sustained anti-corruption efforts are required to improve integrity and accountability and to ensure that both individual states and the European Union live up to the anti-corruption expectations and aspirations of their citizens.

While **Bulgaria** struggled to prove it had reformed its management of EU funds in order to obtain the release of pre-accession and post-accession monies blocked by the EU, parliamentary elections in July 2009 brought a new government to power which campaigned on an anti-corruption platform. During its first months in office many corruption cases were brought to court. As a result, the EU announced the unblocking of hundreds of millions of Euros. Reforms were also introduced in the customs and border police with the aim of freeing an additional € 600 million in blocked funds. However, reforms to curb political corruption and address organised crime have yet to be introduced.

Low priority for reform coupled with political instability following the fall of the government in early 2009, may have a negative impact on anti-corruption efforts in the **Czech Republic**. Recent public statements by the government meant to undermine judicial independence (particularly in connection with high profile cases) along with ongoing staff changes in specialist police units, have further eroded the effectiveness of the anti-corruption fight. The Czech Republic is one of the few signatories that have yet to ratify the UN Convention against Corruption.

Greece which registered a substantial drop in score from 4.7 in 2008 to 3.8 this year, is a particularly concerning case. The 2009 score reflects insufficient levels of anti-corruption enforcement, lengthy delays in the judicial process and a string of corporate corruption scandals which point to systemic weaknesses. Greece's poor score shows that joining the EU does not automatically translate into a reduction in corruption. Immediate and sustained efforts are required to ensure the country lives up to acceptable levels of transparency and accountability.

Latvia has suffered from high profile corruption scandals and the previous government's attempt to undermine the national anti-corruption agency in 2008. Perhaps the single most damaging corruption case concerned the previous government's bailout of a locally-owned bank at the end of 2008, which benefitted the bank's owners, large investors and possibly, political decision-makers. The bailout eventually contributed to the collapse of the Latvian economy, which has badly affected government operations, including its ability to fight corruption.

Romania failed to advance its anti-corruption efforts. A series of policy decisions undermined its political institutions and contributed to the perception that the risk of corruption in the country has increased since the start of negotiations for EU accession. Being in the EU ironically appears to reduce pressure for anti-corruption reforms. As a consequence, Romania is facing a degradation of its public integrity climate, marked by the lack of strategic coordination of legislative and institutional anti-corruption measures.

Persistent procurement scandals and delayed responses by the government, as well as problematic asset declarations from leading politicians, have contributed to **Slovakia's** slide from 5.0 in 2008 to 4.5 in 2009. The relative weakness of a number of oversight institutions, stricter press laws and frequent government restrictions of the media and NGOs are also areas of concern.

Rank	Regional Rank	Country / Territory	CPI 2009 Score	Confidence Interval		Surveys Used
				Lower bound	Upper bound	
2	1	Denmark	9.3	9.1	9.5	6
3	2	Sweden	9.2	9.0	9.3	6
5	3	Switzerland	9.0	8.9	9.1	6
6	4	Finland	8.9	8.4	9.4	6
6	4	Netherlands	8.9	8.7	9.0	6
8	6	Iceland	8.7	7.5	9.4	4
11	7	Norway	8.6	8.2	9.1	6
12	8	Luxembourg	8.2	7.6	8.8	6
14	9	Germany	8.0	7.7	8.3	6
14	9	Ireland	8.0	7.8	8.4	6
16	11	Austria	7.9	7.4	8.3	6
17	12	United Kingdom	7.7	7.3	8.2	6
21	13	Belgium	7.1	6.9	7.3	6
24	14	France	6.9	6.5	7.3	6
27	15	Cyprus	6.6	6.1	7.1	4
27	15	Estonia	6.6	6.1	6.9	8
27	15	Slovenia	6.6	6.3	6.9	8
32	18	Spain	6.1	5.5	6.6	6
35	19	Portugal	5.8	5.5	6.2	6
45	20	Malta	5.2	4.0	6.2	4
46	21	Hungary	5.1	4.6	5.7	8
49	22	Poland	5.0	4.5	5.5	8
52	23	Czech Republic	4.9	4.3	5.6	8
52	23	Lithuania	4.9	4.4	5.4	8
56	25	Latvia	4.5	4.1	4.9	6
56	25	Slovakia	4.5	4.1	4.9	8
63	27	Italy	4.3	3.8	4.9	6
71	28	Bulgaria	3.8	3.2	4.5	8
71	28	Greece	3.8	3.2	4.3	6
71	28	Romania	3.8	3.2	4.3	8