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More than two thirds of countries score below 50 on corruption scale

18 December 2014 by Pooja Kondhia



More than two thirds of the 175 countries around the world included in the 2014 Corruption Perceptions Index scored below 50 on the corruption scale in terms of public sector corruption.

The scale is from 0 (perceived as highly corrupt) to 100 (perceived to be very clean). Of the 175 countries within the corruption index, 123 countries scored less than 50, with a further third of those countries scoring below 30. The two countries to score the lowest were North Korea and Somalia with an equal score of eight.

Denmark came out at the most clean country with a score of 92, with New Zealand and Finland in close second and third at 91 and 89 respectively. The UK came in 14th with a score of 78.

According to Transparency International, the global civil society behind the index, scores for China (36 out of 100), Turkey (45) and Angola (19) were among the biggest fallers with a drop of 4 or 5 points, despite average economic growth of more than 4% over the last four years.

The biggest improvers were Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (+5), Afghanistan, Jordan, Mali and Swaziland (+4).

Corruption in emerging economies

China's score fell to 36 in 2014 from 40 in 2013. The score matches a poor performance by Chinese companies in Transparency International's recent report on corporate disclosure practices where all eight Chinese companies scored less than three out of ten.

Corruption and money laundering are also problems for the other BRIC countries. This year has seen questions raised related to a major oil company using secret companies to bribe politicians in Brazil (which scores 43), questions about Indians (38) using bank accounts in Mauritius (54) and Russians (27) doing the same in

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Cyprus (63).

Leo Martin, Founder of GoodCorporation, said: 'Our recent evaluation of adequate procedures found that over a third of the anti-corruption controls assessed were graded inadequate.'

He added that '[even] more worrying, particularly for companies working in emerging and challenging markets, is that almost two thirds of the controls for agents, intermediaries and third parties were found to be inadequate. This makes businesses extremely vulnerable as a significant proportion of corruption cases result from the corrupt activities of third parties. What the 2014 Corruption Perceptions Index shows us is that there are some parts of the world where companies should not do business because the risk is simply too great. Some companies do walk away from high-risk parts of the world, but possibly not enough.'

'Grand corruption in big economies not only blocks basic human rights for the poorest but also creates governance problems and instability. Fast-growing economies whose governments refuse to be transparent and tolerate corruption, create a culture of impunity in which corruption thrives,' said José Ugaz, the chair of Transparency International.

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