UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL OCTOBER 21, 2026 9AM EDT

Dominican Republic Ranks 77 out of 143 in the WJP Rule of Law Index

- *2026 WJP Rule of Law Index®* finds authoritarian practices have become entrenched
- Rising government interference and rollbacks in freedom of speech and participation demand urgent attention
- The Dominican Republic's score decreased, ranks 17 out of 32 regionally

WASHINGTON (October 21, 2026) – The **global rule of law recession persists**, according to the new ***WJP Rule of Law Index® 2026***, released today by the World Justice Project (WJP). While fewer countries declined this year compared to last, the global balance remains deeply uneven—with a 62% decline continuing to outnumber improvements—including the Dominican Republic.

The Dominican Republic's overall rule of law score decreased by less than 1% in this year's Index. It ranks 77th out of 143 countries worldwide.

Regionally, the Dominican Republic ranks 17th out of 32 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.* The region's top performer is Uruguay (ranked 22nd out of 143 globally), followed by Costa Rica and Barbados. The three countries with the lowest scores in the region are Nicaragua, Haiti, and Venezuela (143rd globally).

In the last year, 19 out of 32 countries declined in Latin America and the Caribbean. Of those 19 countries, 13 had also declined in the previous year.

Latin America and the Caribbean represent a significant bright spot, with half of the top ten global improvers (2025 to 2026) in the WJP Rule of Law Index originating from the region.

Brazil achieved the second-largest improvement (3.17%) globally over a three-year span (2023-2026), reinforcing that institutional momentum can shift following periods of strain.

Among upper-middle income countries, the Dominican Republic ranks 23rd out of 44.**

Dominican Republic and Global trends

Authoritarianism is no longer an emerging trend—it has become entrenched: over 86% of countries have suffered a sustained five-year decline in at least one safeguard against authoritarian rule: **constraints on government powers, open government**, or **fundamental rights**. This includes the Dominican Republic.

Freedoms essential to civic space, public debate and government oversight are shrinking across most countries:

- **"Freedom of opinion and expression"** declined in **64%** of countries, including the Dominican Republic.
- **"Freedom of assembly and association"** declined in **67%** of countries, including the Dominican Republic.
- **"Civic participation"** declined in **65%** of countries, including the Dominican Republic.

Across criminal and civil systems alike, **undue executive pressure and interference** have become the leading drivers of institutional decay. **Civil justice** weakened in **64%** of countries and **criminal justice** in **58%**, with **improper government influence** emerging as a central factor in both areas. Judiciaries are also losing ground to executive overreach more broadly: **government powers limited by the judiciary** fell in **63%** of countries. This includes the Dominican Republic.

However, **civil justice is becoming more accessible, affordable, and equal:**

- **"Access and afford civil justice** improved in **54%"** of countries, but not in the Dominican Republic.
- **"Civil justice is free of discrimination"** improved in **52%** of countries, including the Dominican Republic.

Index data shows that **economic prosperity, price stability, and low credit risk cluster** in countries with robust rule of law:

- **GDP per capita**: Countries with a GDP per capita above the world's average ($14,406) score 0.68 or higher in the *WJP Rule of Law Index*.
- **Inflation**: Countries with inflation rates lower than the median (3.23%) have an Index score of 0.60 or above.
- **Sovereign credit ratings**: Countries with an investment-grade sovereign credit rating (AAA to BBB) maintain Index scores of 0.66 or higher.

In 2026, the Dominican Republic's overall score is 0.50.

Global rankings

Globally, the top-ranked country in the 2026 *WJP Rule of Law Index* is Denmark, followed by Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Luxembourg. The country with the lowest score is Venezuela, followed by Afghanistan, Haiti, Cambodia, and Nicaragua.

The Dominican Republic's WJP Rule of Law Index rankings

Overall score global rank: 77/143
Overall score regional rank: 17/32

Factor score rankings:

FACTOR	GLOBAL RANK	REGIONAL RANK*	INCOME RANK**
Constraints on Government Powers	75/143	19/32	19/44
Absence of Corruption	95/143	20/32	31/44
Open Government	44/143	7/32	5/44
Fundamental Rights	61/143	16/32	15/44
Order and Security	102/143	18/32	33/44
Regulatory Enforcement	97/143	22/32	32/44
Civil Justice	102/143	22/32	34/44
Criminal Justice	86/143	16/32	27/44

(1 is best in WJP Rule of Law Index *rankings)*

To see the Dominican Republic's performance across all 44 sub-factors the Index measures, visit: www.worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/country/2026/Dominican%20Republic/

***Explore the full rankings and findings of the 2026* World Justice Project (WJP) Rule of Law Index *at: www.worldjusticeproject.org/index/*.**
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- Find graphics (regional rankings, global rankings, and comparative maps) **here.**
- Find 143 country press releases organized by region **here.**

About the WJP Rule of Law Index:
The ***World Justice Project (WJP) Rule of Law Index®*** is the world's leading source for original, independent rule of law data. Its rigorous methodology draws on expert and household surveys to measure the rule of law in 143 countries and jurisdictions, covering 95% of the world's population.

The Index relies on more than 215,000 household surveys and 3,400 practitioner and expert surveys to measure how the rule of law is experienced and perceived worldwide. Published annually since 2009, the Index is used by governments, multilateral organizations, businesses, academia, media, and civil society organizations.

About the World Justice Project:
The World Justice Project (WJP) is an independent, nonpartisan, multidisciplinary organization working to create knowledge, build awareness, and stimulate action to advance the rule of law worldwide.

*Countries and jurisdictions measured in the Latin America and Caribbean region: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela

**Upper-middle income countries and jurisdictions: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Belarus, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, China, Colombia, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Gabon, Georgia, Grenada, Guatemala, Indonesia, Iran, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Serbia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, Vietnam