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Germany Ranks 5th out of 142 in Rule of Law Index

- ***2023 WJP Rule of Law Index*® finds rule of law fell globally for 6th consecutive year**
- **Human rights declined in 3 out of 4 countries since 2016**
- **Germany's score increased, ranks 5th out of 31 regionally**

WASHINGTON (25 October 2023) – The rule of law has once again eroded in a majority of countries this year, according to the *World Justice Project (WJP) Rule of Law Index 2023*.

This is the sixth consecutive Index marking global declines in the rule of law. This year alone, the rule of law declined in 59% of countries surveyed.

However, Germany is among the minority of countries to see its Rule of Law Index score increase this year.

Since 2016, rule of law has fallen in 78% of countries studied. The rule of law factor to decline most between 2016 and 2023 is Fundamental Rights—down in 77% of countries, but not in Germany.

Over the past seven years, Index scores for Constraints on Government Powers have fallen in 74% of countries—but not in Germany. Around the world, legislatures, judiciaries, and civil society—including the media—have all lost ground on checking executive power, the Index shows.

These and other authoritarian trends continued in 2023, but they are slowing, with fewer countries declining in 2022 and 2023 than in earlier years.

Constraints on Government Powers fell in 56% of countries, compared to 58% in 2022 and 70% in 2021. Likewise, a smaller majority of countries saw overall rule of law declines in this year (59%) as compared to the last two (61% and 74%).

A smaller majority of countries (56%) also experienced a decline in Fundamental Rights again this year, compared to 2022 (66%).

On the other hand, declines in the functioning of justice systems are now expanding.

Two thirds of countries (66%) saw their Index scores for Civil Justice fall this year, up from 61% of countries last year—including Germany. Greater justice delays and weaker

enforcement are largely to blame. Meanwhile, scores for Criminal Justice also fell in slightly more countries this year (56%) than last year (55%).

“The world remains gripped by a rule of law recession characterized by executive overreach, curtailing of human rights, and justice systems that are failing to meet people’s needs,” said **WJP co-founder and president William H. Neukom**. “People around the world are paying the price.”

Rule of law in Germany

Germany ranks 5th out of 142 countries worldwide.

Regionally, Germany ranks 5th out of 31 countries in European Union, European Free Trade Association, and North America.* The region’s top performer is Denmark (ranked 1st out of 142 globally), followed by Norway and Finland. The three countries with the lowest scores in the region are Greece, Bulgaria, and Hungary (73rd globally).

In the last year, 16 out of 31 countries declined in the European Union, European Free Trade Association, and North America. Of those 16 countries, seven had also declined in the previous year.

Among high income countries, Germany ranks 5th out of 46.**

Global rankings and trends

Globally, the top-ranked country in the 2023 *WJP Rule of Law Index* is Denmark, followed by Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Germany. The country with the lowest score is Venezuela, then Cambodia, Afghanistan, Haiti, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Germany’s WJP Rule of Law Index rankings

Overall score global rank: 5 / 142
Overall score regional rank: 5 / 31

Factor score rankings:

FACTOR	GLOBAL RANK	REGIONAL RANK*	INCOME RANK**
Constraints on Government Powers	4/142	4/31	4/46
Absence of Corruption	12/142	9/31	12/46
Open Government	13/142	11/31	13/46
Fundamental Rights	5/142	5/31	5/46
Order and Security	21/142	16/31	20/46

Regulatory Enforcement	8/142	6/31	8/46
Civil Justice	4/142	4/31	4/46
Criminal Justice	6/142	6/31	6/46

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

To see Germany's performance across all 44 subfactors the Index measures, visit: https://www.worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/country/2023/Germany

*Explore the full rankings and findings of the 2023 World Justice Project (WJP) Rule of Law Index at: **www.worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/**.*

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- Find the global press release and all 142 country press releases by region here.
- Access the complete 2023 *WJP Rule of Law Index* and "Insights" booklet here.
- See graphics (regional rankings, global rankings, and comparative maps) here.

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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 data on the rule of law. Now covering 142 countries and jurisdictions, the Index relies on more than 149,000 household surveys and 3,400 legal practitioner and expert surveys to measure how the rule of law is experienced and perceived worldwide. Published annually since 2009 and subject to a rigorous methodology, the Index is used by governments, multilateral organizations, businesses, academia, media, and civil society organizations around the world to assess and address gaps in the rule of law.

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.

Effective rule of law reduces corruption, combats poverty and disease, and protects people from injustices large and small. It underpins development, accountable government, and respect for fundamental rights, and it is the foundation for communities of justice, health, opportunity, and peace.

The World Justice Project defines the rule of law as a durable system of laws, institutions, norms, and community commitment that delivers: accountability, just laws, open government, and accessible justice. Learn more about these four universal principles and our work at: **www.worldjusticeproject.org**.

*Countries and jurisdictions measured in the European Union, European Free Trade Association, and North America region: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States

**High income countries and jurisdictions: Antigua and Barbuda; Australia; Austria; The Bahamas; Barbados; Belgium; Canada; Chile; Croatia; Cyprus; Czechia; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Hong Kong SAR, China; Hungary; Ireland; Italy; Japan; Republic of Korea; Kuwait; Latvia; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Malta; Netherlands; New Zealand; Norway; Panama; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Singapore; Slovak Republic; Slovenia; Spain; St. Kitts and Nevis; Sweden; Trinidad and Tobago; United Arab Emirates; United Kingdom; United States; Uruguay