



World Justice
Project

World Justice Project
Rule of Law Index®

2021 Insights

Highlights and data trends from
the WJP Rule of Law Index® 2021



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The *World Justice Project (WJP) Rule of Law Index*® 2021 is the latest report in an annual series measuring the rule of law based on global surveys of more than 138,000 households and 4,200 legal practitioners and experts. It is the world's leading source for original, independent data on the rule of law.

The Index presents a portrait of the rule of law in 139 countries and jurisdictions by providing scores and rankings based on eight factors: Constraints on Government Powers, Absence of Corruption, Open Government, Fundamental Rights, Order and Security, Regulatory Enforcement, Civil Justice, and Criminal Justice.

The Index is intended for a broad audience that includes policy makers, civil society organizations, businesses, legal professionals, academics, the media, and citizens. It is our hope that this diagnostic tool will help identify strengths and weaknesses and encourage policy choices, guide program development, shape public and private investments, and inform research to strengthen the rule of law.

The following pages contain a selection of key insights and data trends from the *WJP Rule of Law*

Index® 2021. The complete 2021 report—including country profiles, interactive data visualizations, methodology, and questionnaires—is available at our website: worldjusticeproject.org.

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Key Findings – WJP Rule of Law Index 2021

Introduction

The *World Justice Project (WJP) Rule of Law Index® 2021* is the latest report in an annual series measuring people's perceptions of and experiences with the rule of law in 139 countries and jurisdictions. The Index data is based on global surveys of more than 138,000 households and 4,200 legal practitioners and experts. The Index is the world's leading source for original, independent data on the rule of law.

This year, the WJP added 11 new countries to the Index (seven countries in the European Union (EU), two countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, and two countries in Sub-Saharan Africa). The Index now covers all 27 members of the European Union. The new countries are:

Congo, Rep., Cyprus, Haiti, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Paraguay, Slovak Republic, and Sudan.

The data included in this Insights report comes from the *WJP Rule of Law Index 2021*. The period of data collection was October 2020 through May 2021, during the global COVID-19 pandemic. This allows for comparative analysis of the rule of law prior to and during the pandemic.

Rule of Law Trends Around the World

The 2021 edition of the *WJP Rule of Law Index* shows that more countries declined than improved in overall rule of law performance for the fourth consecutive year. This trend has become more widespread over the last three years.

Over the last year, 74.2% of countries covered by the Index experienced declines in rule of law performance and 25.8% improved. The countries that experienced declines (74.2%) account for 84.7% of the world's population, or approximately 6.5 billion people.

For the second consecutive year, the declines were widespread and seen in all corners of the world. In every region, a majority of countries slipped backward or remained unchanged in their overall rule of law performance.

The top three performers this year were Denmark, Norway, and Finland. Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cambodia, and Venezuela, RB had the lowest overall rule of law scores.

The countries with the biggest improvement in rule of law in the past year were Uzbekistan (4.1%), Moldova (3.2%), and Mongolia (2.0%). The countries with the biggest decline in rule of law in the past year were Belarus (-7.5%) and Myanmar (-6.3%). Nigeria, Nicaragua, Kyrgyz Republic, and Argentina tie for the third biggest decline (-3.7%).

Rule of Law During COVID-19

Significant Declines: In a year dominated by the global COVID-19 pandemic, more than half of countries covered by the Index have experienced declines in constraints on government powers, civic space, timeliness of justice, and absence of discrimination.

Constraints on Government Power: During the last year, 70% of countries covered by the Index declined in Constraints on Government Powers. This decline was the most prevalent in South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and EU, EFTA, and North America.

Civic Space: Over the past year, 82% of countries in the Index experienced a decline in at least one dimension of civic space (civic participation, freedom of opinion and expression, and freedom of assembly and association).

Justice Delays: Over the past year, 94% of countries in the Index experienced increased delays in administrative, civil, or criminal proceedings. Civil justice was particularly affected, with two-thirds of countries exhibiting increased delays.

Discrimination: During 2020, 67% of countries covered by the Index experienced declines in equal treatment and absence of discrimination. This decline was the most prevalent in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East and North Africa.

Conceptual Framework of the WJP Rule of Law Index

The conceptual framework of the *WJP Rule of Law Index* is comprised of eight factors further disaggregated into 44 sub-factors. These factors and sub-factors are presented below and described in detail in the section that follows.

Factor One
*Constraints on
Government
Powers*



- 1.1 Government powers are effectively limited by the legislature
- 1.2 Government powers are effectively limited by the judiciary
- 1.3 Government powers are effectively limited by independent auditing and review
- 1.4 Government officials are sanctioned for misconduct
- 1.5 Government powers are subject to non-governmental checks
- 1.6 Transition of power is subject to the law

Factor Two
*Absence of
Corruption*



- 2.1 Government officials in the executive branch do not use public office for private gain
- 2.2 Government officials in the judicial branch do not use public office for private gain
- 2.3 Government officials in the police and the military do not use public office for private gain
- 2.4 Government officials in the legislative branch do not use public office for private gain

Factor Three
*Open
Government*



- 3.1 Publicized laws and government data
- 3.2 Right to information
- 3.3 Civic participation
- 3.4 Complaint mechanisms

Factor Four
*Fundamental
Rights*



- 4.1 Equal treatment and absence of discrimination
- 4.2 The right to life and security of the person is effectively guaranteed
- 4.3 Due process of the law and rights of the accused
- 4.4 Freedom of opinion and expression is effectively guaranteed
- 4.5 Freedom of belief and religion is effectively guaranteed
- 4.6 Freedom from arbitrary interference with privacy is effectively guaranteed
- 4.7 Freedom of assembly and association is effectively guaranteed
- 4.8 Fundamental labor rights are effectively guaranteed

Conceptual Framework of the WJP Rule of Law Index

The conceptual framework of the *WJP Rule of Law Index* is comprised of eight factors further disaggregated into 44 sub-factors. These factors and sub-factors are presented below and described in detail in the section that follows.

Factor Five

Order and Security



- 5.1 Crime is effectively controlled
- 5.2 Civil conflict is effectively limited
- 5.3 People do not resort to violence to redress personal grievances

Factor Six

Regulatory Enforcement



- 6.1 Government regulations are effectively enforced
- 6.2 Government regulations are applied and enforced without improper influence
- 6.3 Administrative proceedings are conducted without unreasonable delay
- 6.4 Due process is respected in administrative proceedings
- 6.5 The government does not expropriate without lawful process and adequate compensation

Factor Seven

Civil Justice



- 7.1 People can access and afford civil justice
- 7.2 Civil justice is free of discrimination
- 7.3 Civil justice is free of corruption
- 7.4 Civil justice is free of improper government influence
- 7.5 Civil justice is not subject to unreasonable delay
- 7.6 Civil justice is effectively enforced
- 7.7 Alternative dispute resolution mechanisms are accessible, impartial, and effective

Factor Eight

Criminal Justice



- 8.1 Criminal investigation system is effective
- 8.2 Criminal adjudication system is timely and effective
- 8.3 Correctional system is effective in reducing criminal behavior
- 8.4 Criminal justice system is impartial
- 8.5 Criminal justice system is free of corruption
- 8.6 Criminal justice system is free of improper government influence
- 8.7 Due process of the law and rights of the accused

Section 1

Rule of Law Trends Around the World



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Figure 1. Overall Rule of Law Scores and Rankings

This table presents the scores, rankings, and changes for the 139 countries and jurisdictions included in the *WJP Rule of Law Index 2021* in alphabetical order. Scores range from 0 to 1, where 1 signifies the highest score (strong adherence to the rule of law) and 0 signifies the lowest possible score (weak adherence to the rule of law).





















Country/Jurisdiction	Overall Score*	Change in Overall Score*	% Change in Overall Score*	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank†
 Afghanistan	0.35	-0.01	-2.7%	134	1 ▼
 Albania	0.49	-0.01	-1.7%	83	2 ▲
 Algeria	0.49	0.00	-0.5%	82	8 ▲
 Angola	0.43	0.00	0.5%	114	4 ▲
 Antigua and Barbuda	0.63	0.00	0.4%	39	2 ▲
 Argentina	0.56	-0.02	-3.7%	56	1 ▼
 Australia	0.79	-0.01	-1.2%	13	0
 Austria	0.81	0.00	-0.6%	9	0
 The Bahamas	0.61	0.00	0.5%	47	1 ▲
 Bangladesh	0.40	-0.01	-2.8%	124	1 ▲
 Barbados	0.65	0.00	0.7%	35	1 ▲
 Belarus	0.48	-0.04	-7.5%	97	21 ▼
 Belgium	0.79	0.00	0.6%	14	2 ▲
 Belize	0.48	0.00	0.0%	93	3 ▲
 Benin	0.49	-0.01	-2.3%	91	3 ▼
 Bolivia	0.39	0.00	0.9%	129	2 ▲
 Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.52	0.00	-0.8%	72	1 ▼
 Botswana	0.59	-0.01	-1.5%	51	1 ▼
 Brazil	0.50	-0.01	-2.9%	77	3 ▼
 Bulgaria	0.54	-0.01	-1.0%	62	2 ▼
 Burkina Faso	0.50	0.00	-0.9%	75	2 ▲
 Cambodia	0.32	-0.01	-2.3%	138	0
Country/Jurisdiction	Overall Score*	Change in Overall Score*	% Change in Overall Score*	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank†
 Cameroon	0.35	-0.01	-2.1%	135	0
 Canada	0.80	-0.01	-1.0%	12	1 ▼
 Chile	0.66	-0.01	-0.8%	32	0
 China	0.47	-0.01	-1.9%	98	2 ▼
 Colombia	0.49	-0.01	-2.2%	86	2 ▼
 Congo, Dem. Rep.	0.35	0.00	1.2%	137	0
 Congo, Rep.	0.42	-	-	118	-
 Costa Rica	0.68	-0.01	-0.8%	31	0
 Côte d'Ivoire	0.45	-0.02	-3.4%	105	2 ▼
 Croatia	0.61	-0.01	-1.0%	46	0
 Cyprus	0.68	-	-	28	-
 Czech Republic	0.73	0.00	-0.4%	22	1 ▼
 Denmark	0.90	0.00	0.0%	1	0
 Dominica	0.58	0.00	-0.6%	53	0
 Dominican Republic	0.48	0.00	0.0%	94	3 ▲
 Ecuador	0.48	0.00	-0.1%	92	1 ▲
 Egypt, Arab Rep.	0.35	-0.01	-2.8%	136	0
 El Salvador	0.48	-0.02	-3.3%	95	4 ▼
 Estonia	0.81	0.00	-0.1%	11	1 ▲
 Ethiopia	0.41	0.00	-1.0%	122	2 ▲
 Finland	0.88	0.00	0.4%	3	0
 France	0.72	-0.01	-0.9%	23	0
Country/Jurisdiction	Overall Score*	Change in Overall Score*	% Change in Overall Score*	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank†
 The Gambia	0.49	-0.02	-3.1%	89	8 ▼
 Georgia	0.61	0.00	0.5%	49	0
 Germany	0.84	0.00	0.4%	5	1 ▲
 Ghana	0.55	-0.01	-2.2%	58	0
 Greece	0.61	0.00	-0.5%	48	1 ▼
 Grenada	0.59	0.00	0.1%	50	1 ▲
 Guatemala	0.44	-0.01	-1.2%	109	0
 Guinea	0.41	-0.01	-1.4%	120	1 ▲
 Guyana	0.50	0.00	-0.7%	78	2 ▲
 Haiti	0.38	-	-	132	-
 Honduras	0.39	-0.01	-2.2%	126	0
 Hong Kong SAR, China	0.75	-0.02	-2.0%	19	0
 Hungary	0.52	-0.01	-1.4%	69	2 ▼
 India	0.50	-0.01	-1.9%	79	3 ▼
 Indonesia	0.52	-0.01	-1.0%	68	2 ▼
 Iran, Islamic Rep.	0.42	-0.01	-2.3%	119	0
 Ireland	0.81	-	-	10	-
 Italy	0.66	0.00	0.2%	34	0
 Jamaica	0.57	0.00	0.4%	55	1 ▲
 Japan	0.79	0.01	0.8%	15	2 ▲
 Jordan	0.55	-0.02	-3.0%	59	2 ▼
 Kazakhstan	0.52	0.00	0.3%	66	3 ▲

* Scores and change in scores are rounded to two decimal places. Annual percentage change in score is rounded to one decimal place.

† The change in rankings was calculated by comparing the positions of the 128 countries and jurisdictions measured in the 2020 Index with the rankings of the same 128 countries and jurisdictions in 2021, exclusive of the 11 new additions to the 2021 Index. The 11 new countries and jurisdictions added to the Index this year are: Congo, Rep., Cyprus, Haiti, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Paraguay, Slovak Republic, and Sudan.

Country/Jurisdiction	Overall Score*	Change in Overall Score*	% Change in Overall Score*	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank†
 Kenya	0.44	0.00	-0.9%	106	4 ▲
 Korea, Rep.	0.74	0.00	0.4%	20	0
 Kosovo	0.55	0.00	0.6%	60	1 ▲
 Kyrgyz Republic	0.47	-0.02	-3.7%	99	4 ▼
 Latvia	0.71	-	-	24	-
 Lebanon	0.45	0.00	-0.9%	104	0
 Liberia	0.44	-0.01	-2.6%	110	4 ▼
 Lithuania	0.75	-	-	18	-
 Luxembourg	0.83	-	-	8	-
 Madagascar	0.44	0.00	-0.6%	112	1 ▲
 Malawi	0.52	0.01	1.0%	67	5 ▲
 Malaysia	0.57	-0.01	-1.4%	54	0
 Mali	0.43	-0.01	-2.9%	115	1 ▼
 Malta	0.68	-	-	30	-
 Mauritania	0.36	0.00	0.9%	133	1 ▲
 Mauritius	0.61	-0.01	-0.9%	45	0
 Mexico	0.43	-0.01	-2.9%	113	1 ▼
 Moldova	0.51	0.02	3.2%	73	16 ▲
 Mongolia	0.54	0.01	2.0%	61	3 ▲
 Morocco	0.49	-0.01	-2.6%	90	4 ▼
 Mozambique	0.40	-0.01	-2.9%	123	0
 Myanmar	0.39	-0.03	-6.3%	128	6 ▼
 Namibia	0.62	-0.01	-1.2%	44	2 ▼
 Nepal	0.52	-0.01	-1.1%	70	2 ▼
 Netherlands	0.83	0.00	-0.5%	6	1 ▼
 New Zealand	0.83	0.01	0.7%	7	0
 Nicaragua	0.38	-0.01	-3.7%	131	3 ▼

Country/Jurisdiction	Overall Score*	Change in Overall Score*	% Change in Overall Score*	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank†
 Niger	0.44	-0.01	-1.5%	111	0
 Nigeria	0.41	-0.02	-3.7%	121	3 ▼
 North Macedonia	0.53	0.00	-0.3%	64	1 ▲
 Norway	0.90	0.00	0.5%	2	0
 Pakistan	0.39	0.00	-0.4%	130	0
 Panama	0.52	0.00	-0.7%	71	1 ▼
 Paraguay	0.48	-	-	96	-
 Peru	0.49	-0.01	-2.0%	87	0
 Philippines	0.46	-0.01	-2.9%	102	3 ▼
 Poland	0.64	-0.02	-2.4%	36	1 ▼
 Portugal	0.70	0.00	-0.6%	26	1 ▲
 Romania	0.63	-0.01	-0.8%	41	2 ▼
 Russian Federation	0.46	0.00	-0.7%	101	1 ▲
 Rwanda	0.62	0.00	0.5%	42	2 ▲
 Senegal	0.55	0.00	0.5%	57	2 ▲
 Serbia	0.49	-0.01	-1.8%	81	1 ▲
 Sierra Leone	0.44	-0.01	-1.5%	108	0
 Singapore	0.78	-0.01	-1.0%	17	3 ▼
 Slovak Republic	0.66	-	-	33	-
 Slovenia	0.68	0.00	-0.4%	29	0
 South Africa	0.58	0.00	-0.4%	52	0
 Spain	0.73	0.00	0.1%	21	1 ▲
 Sri Lanka	0.50	-0.02	-3.0%	76	3 ▼
 St. Kitts and Nevis	0.63	0.00	-0.2%	40	0
 St. Lucia	0.62	0.00	-0.1%	43	0

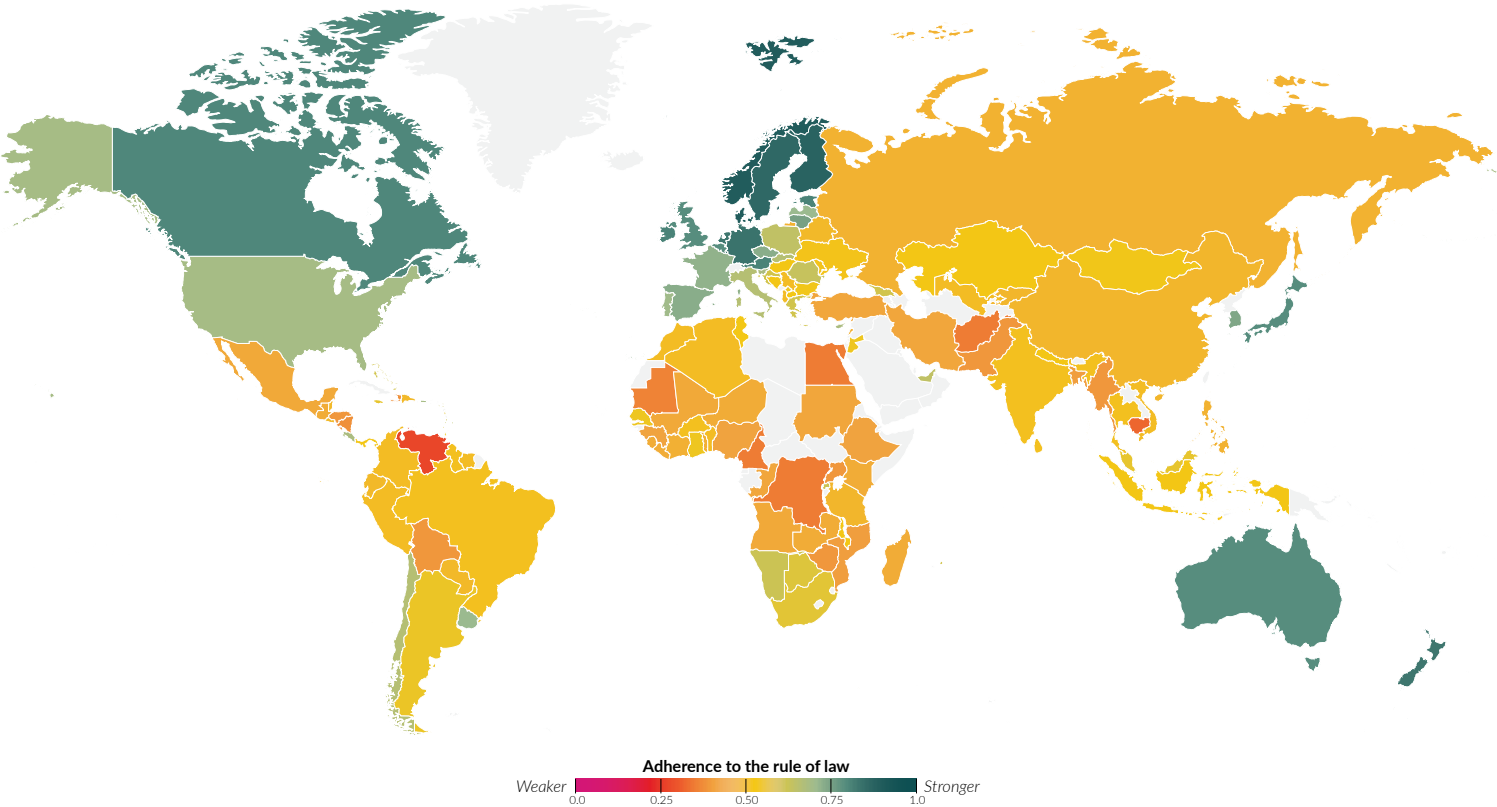
Country/Jurisdiction	Overall Score*	Change in Overall Score*	% Change in Overall Score*	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank†
 St. Vincent and the Grenadines	0.64	0.00	-0.2%	38	0
 Sudan	0.42	-	-	116	-
 Suriname	0.49	-0.01	-1.9%	84	1 ▼
 Sweden	0.86	0.00	0.0%	4	0
 Tanzania	0.47	-0.01	-1.1%	100	1 ▲
 Thailand	0.50	-0.01	-2.2%	80	2 ▼
 Togo	0.45	0.00	0.9%	103	4 ▲
 Trinidad and Tobago	0.53	0.00	-0.5%	63	1 ▼
 Tunisia	0.53	-0.01	-1.5%	65	2 ▼
 Turkey	0.42	-0.01	-2.5%	117	1 ▼
 Uganda	0.39	0.00	-0.9%	125	2 ▲
 Ukraine	0.51	0.00	0.6%	74	5 ▲
 United Arab Emirates	0.64	-0.01	-0.9%	37	0
 United Kingdom	0.79	0.00	-0.4%	16	1 ▼
 United States	0.69	-0.02	-2.9%	27	2 ▼
 Uruguay	0.71	0.00	0.6%	25	1 ▲
 Uzbekistan	0.49	0.02	4.1%	85	14 ▲
 Venezuela, RB	0.27	0.00	-1.5%	139	0
 Vietnam	0.49	0.00	-0.6%	88	4 ▲
 Zambia	0.44	-0.01	-2.3%	107	2 ▼
 Zimbabwe	0.39	0.00	0.0%	127	2 ▲

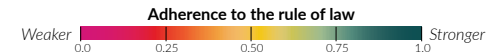
* Scores and change in scores are rounded to two decimal places. Annual percentage change in score is rounded to one decimal place.

† The change in rankings was calculated by comparing the positions of the 128 countries and jurisdictions measured in the 2020 Index with the rankings of the same 128 countries and jurisdictions in 2021, exclusive of the 11 new additions to the 2021 Index. The 11 new countries and jurisdictions added to the Index this year are: Congo, Rep., Cyprus, Haiti, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Paraguay, Slovak Republic, and Sudan.

Figure 2. Rule of Law Around the World

Scores and rankings of the 139 countries and jurisdictions included in the *WJP Rule of Law Index 2021* in order of score. Scores range from 0 to 1, where 1 signifies the highest score (strong adherence to the rule of law) and 0 signifies the lowest possible score (weak adherence to the rule of law).





Country/Jurisdiction	Overall Score*	Global Rank
Denmark	0.90	1
Norway	0.90	2
Finland	0.88	3
Sweden	0.86	4
Germany	0.84	5
Netherlands	0.83	6
New Zealand	0.83	7
Luxembourg	0.83	8
Austria	0.81	9
Ireland	0.81	10
Estonia	0.81	11
Canada	0.80	12
Australia	0.79	13
Belgium	0.79	14
Japan	0.79	15
United Kingdom	0.79	16
Singapore	0.78	17
Lithuania	0.75	18
Hong Kong SAR, China	0.75	19
Korea, Rep.	0.74	20
Spain	0.73	21
Czech Republic	0.73	22
France	0.72	23
Latvia	0.71	24
Uruguay	0.71	25
Portugal	0.70	26
United States	0.69	27
Cyprus	0.68	28
Slovenia	0.68	29
Malta	0.68	30
Costa Rica	0.68	31
Chile	0.66	32
Slovak Republic	0.66	33
Italy	0.66	34
Barbados	0.65	35

Country/Jurisdiction	Overall Score*	Global Rank
Poland	0.64	36
United Arab Emirates	0.64	37
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	0.64	38
Antigua and Barbuda	0.63	39
St. Kitts and Nevis	0.63	40
Romania	0.63	41
Rwanda	0.62	42
St. Lucia	0.62	43
Namibia	0.62	44
Mauritius	0.61	45
Croatia	0.61	46
The Bahamas	0.61	47
Greece	0.61	48
Georgia	0.61	49
Grenada	0.59	50
Botswana	0.59	51
South Africa	0.58	52
Dominica	0.58	53
Malaysia	0.57	54
Jamaica	0.57	55
Argentina	0.56	56
Senegal	0.55	57
Ghana	0.55	58
Jordan	0.55	59
Kosovo	0.55	60
Mongolia	0.54	61
Bulgaria	0.54	62
Trinidad and Tobago	0.53	63
North Macedonia	0.53	64
Tunisia	0.53	65
Kazakhstan	0.52	66
Malawi	0.52	67
Indonesia	0.52	68
Hungary	0.52	69

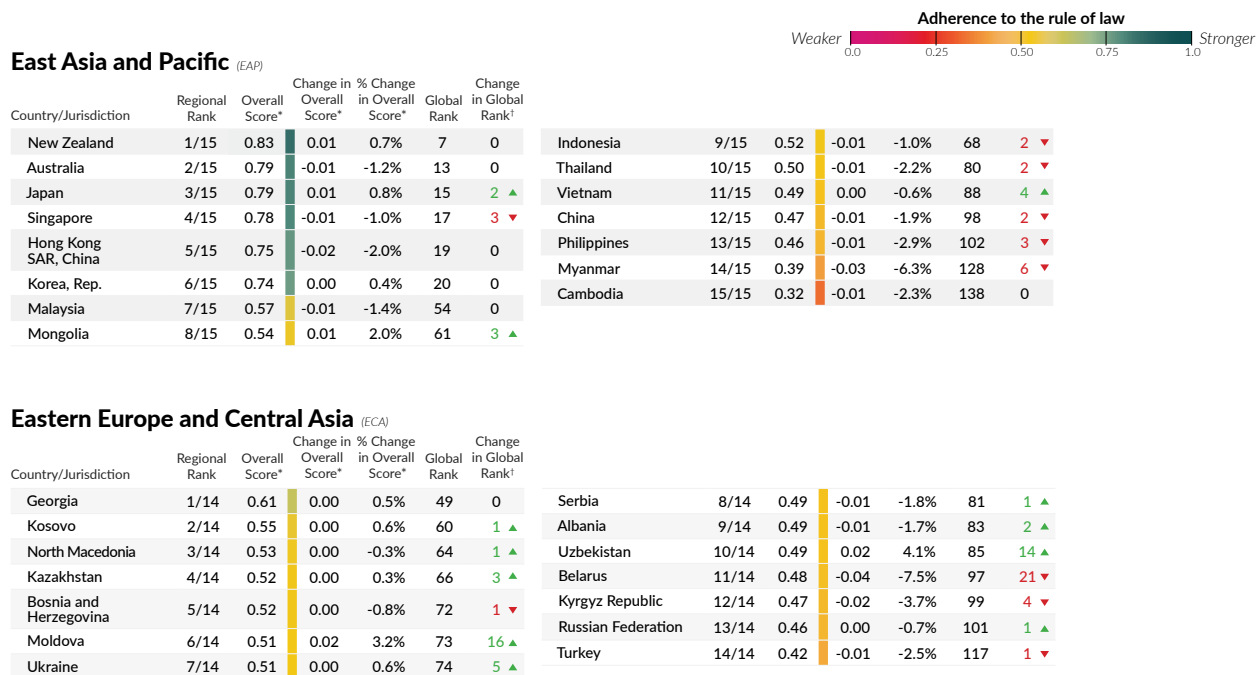
Country/Jurisdiction	Overall Score*	Global Rank
Nepal	0.52	70
Panama	0.52	71
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.52	72
Moldova	0.51	73
Ukraine	0.51	74
Burkina Faso	0.50	75
Sri Lanka	0.50	76
Brazil	0.50	77
Guyana	0.50	78
India	0.50	79
Thailand	0.50	80
Serbia	0.49	81
Algeria	0.49	82
Albania	0.49	83
Suriname	0.49	84
Uzbekistan	0.49	85
Colombia	0.49	86
Peru	0.49	87
Vietnam	0.49	88
The Gambia	0.49	89
Morocco	0.49	90
Benin	0.49	91
Ecuador	0.48	92
Belize	0.48	93
Dominican Republic	0.48	94
El Salvador	0.48	95
Paraguay	0.48	96
Belarus	0.48	97
China	0.47	98
Kyrgyz Republic	0.47	99
Tanzania	0.47	100
Russian Federation	0.46	101
Philippines	0.46	102
Togo	0.45	103
Lebanon	0.45	104

Country/Jurisdiction	Overall Score*	Global Rank
Côte d'Ivoire	0.45	105
Kenya	0.44	106
Zambia	0.44	107
Sierra Leone	0.44	108
Guatemala	0.44	109
Liberia	0.44	110
Niger	0.44	111
Madagascar	0.44	112
Mexico	0.43	113
Angola	0.43	114
Mali	0.43	115
Sudan	0.42	116
Turkey	0.42	117
Congo, Rep.	0.42	118
Iran, Islamic Rep.	0.42	119
Guinea	0.41	120
Nigeria	0.41	121
Ethiopia	0.41	122
Mozambique	0.40	123
Bangladesh	0.40	124
Uganda	0.39	125
Honduras	0.39	126
Zimbabwe	0.39	127
Myanmar	0.39	128
Bolivia	0.39	129
Pakistan	0.39	130
Nicaragua	0.38	131
Haiti	0.38	132
Mauritania	0.36	133
Afghanistan	0.35	134
Cameroon	0.35	135
Egypt, Arab Rep.	0.35	136
Congo, Dem. Rep.	0.35	137
Cambodia	0.32	138
Venezuela, RB	0.27	139

*Scores are rounded to two decimal places.

Figure 3. Rule of Law Around the World by Region

This table presents the scores, rankings, and changes for the 139 countries and jurisdictions included in the *WJP Rule of Law Index 2021* by region. Scores range from 0 to 1, where 1 signifies the highest score (strong adherence to the rule of law) and 0 signifies the lowest possible score (weak adherence to the rule of law).



* Scores and change in scores are rounded to two decimal places. Annual percentage change in score is rounded to one decimal place.

† The change in rankings was calculated by comparing the positions of the 128 countries and jurisdictions measured in the 2020 Index with the rankings of the same 128 countries and jurisdictions in 2021, exclusive of the 11 new additions to the 2021 Index. The 11 new countries and jurisdictions added to the Index this year are: Congo, Rep., Cyprus, Haiti, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Paraguay, Slovak Republic, and Sudan.

European Union, European Free Trade Association, and North America ^(EUNA)



Country/Jurisdiction	Regional Rank	Overall Score*	Change in Overall Score*	% Change in Overall Score*	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank [†]
Denmark	1/31	0.90	0.00	0.0%	1	0
Norway	2/31	0.90	0.00	0.5%	2	0
Finland	3/31	0.88	0.00	0.4%	3	0
Sweden	4/31	0.86	0.00	0.0%	4	0
Germany	5/31	0.84	0.00	0.4%	5	1 ▲
Netherlands	6/31	0.83	0.00	-0.5%	6	1 ▼
Luxembourg	7/31	0.83	-	-	8	-
Austria	8/31	0.81	0.00	-0.6%	9	0
Ireland	9/31	0.81	-	-	10	-
Estonia	10/31	0.81	0.00	-0.1%	11	1 ▲
Canada	11/31	0.80	-0.01	-1.0%	12	1 ▼
Belgium	12/31	0.79	0.00	0.6%	14	2 ▲
United Kingdom	13/31	0.79	0.00	-0.4%	16	1 ▼
Lithuania	14/31	0.75	-	-	18	-
Spain	15/31	0.73	0.00	0.1%	21	1 ▲
Czech Republic	16/31	0.73	0.00	-0.4%	22	1 ▼

France	17/31	0.72	-0.01	-0.9%	23	0
Latvia	18/31	0.71	-	-	24	-
Portugal	19/31	0.70	0.00	-0.6%	26	1 ▲
United States	20/31	0.69	-0.02	-2.9%	27	2 ▼
Cyprus	21/31	0.68	-	-	28	-
Slovenia	22/31	0.68	0.00	-0.4%	29	0
Malta	23/31	0.68	-	-	30	-
Slovak Republic	24/31	0.66	-	-	33	-
Italy	25/31	0.66	0.00	0.2%	34	0
Poland	26/31	0.64	-0.02	-2.4%	36	1 ▼
Romania	27/31	0.63	-0.01	-0.8%	41	2 ▼
Croatia	28/31	0.61	-0.01	-1.0%	46	0
Greece	29/31	0.61	0.00	-0.5%	48	1 ▼
Bulgaria	30/31	0.54	-0.01	-1.0%	62	2 ▼
Hungary	31/31	0.52	-0.01	-1.4%	69	2 ▼

Latin America and Caribbean ^(LAC)

Country/Jurisdiction	Regional Rank	Overall Score*	Change in Overall Score*	% Change in Overall Score*	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank [†]
Uruguay	1/32	0.71	0.00	0.6%	25	1 ▲
Costa Rica	2/32	0.68	-0.01	-0.8%	31	0
Chile	3/32	0.66	-0.01	-0.8%	32	0
Barbados	4/32	0.65	0.00	0.7%	35	1 ▲
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	5/32	0.64	0.00	-0.2%	38	0
Antigua and Barbuda	6/32	0.63	0.00	0.4%	39	2 ▲
St. Kitts and Nevis	7/32	0.63	0.00	-0.2%	40	0
St. Lucia	8/32	0.62	0.00	-0.1%	43	0
The Bahamas	9/32	0.61	0.00	0.5%	47	1 ▲
Grenada	10/32	0.59	0.00	0.1%	50	1 ▲
Dominica	11/32	0.58	0.00	-0.6%	53	0
Jamaica	12/32	0.57	0.00	0.4%	55	1 ▲
Argentina	13/32	0.56	-0.02	-3.7%	56	1 ▼
Trinidad and Tobago	14/32	0.53	0.00	-0.5%	63	1 ▼
Panama	15/32	0.52	0.00	-0.7%	71	1 ▼
Brazil	16/32	0.50	-0.01	-2.9%	77	3 ▼

Guyana	17/32	0.50	0.00	-0.7%	78	2 ▲
Suriname	18/32	0.49	-0.01	-1.9%	84	1 ▼
Colombia	19/32	0.49	-0.01	-2.2%	86	2 ▼
Peru	20/32	0.49	-0.01	-2.0%	87	0
Ecuador	21/32	0.48	0.00	-0.1%	92	1 ▲
Belize	22/32	0.48	0.00	0.0%	93	3 ▲
Dominican Republic	23/32	0.48	0.00	0.0%	94	3 ▲
El Salvador	24/32	0.48	-0.02	-3.3%	95	4 ▼
Paraguay	25/32	0.48	-	-	96	-
Guatemala	26/32	0.44	-0.01	-1.2%	109	0
Mexico	27/32	0.43	-0.01	-2.9%	113	1 ▼
Honduras	28/32	0.39	-0.01	-2.2%	126	0
Bolivia	29/32	0.39	0.00	0.9%	129	2 ▲
Nicaragua	30/32	0.38	-0.01	-3.7%	131	3 ▼
Haiti	31/32	0.38	-	-	132	-
Venezuela, RB	32/32	0.27	0.00	-1.5%	139	0

*† See page 10 or page 12 for full footnotes.

Middle East and North Africa ^(MENA)

Country/Jurisdiction	Regional Rank	Overall Score*	Change in Overall Score*	% Change in Overall Score*	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank†
United Arab Emirates	1/8	0.64	-0.01	-0.9%	37	0
Jordan	2/8	0.55	-0.02	-3.0%	59	2 ▼
Tunisia	3/8	0.53	-0.01	-1.5%	65	2 ▼
Algeria	4/8	0.49	0.00	-0.5%	82	8 ▲



Morocco	5/8	0.49	-0.01	-2.6%	90	4 ▼
Lebanon	6/8	0.45	0.00	-0.9%	104	0
Iran, Islamic Rep.	7/8	0.42	-0.01	-2.3%	119	0
Egypt, Arab Rep.	8/8	0.35	-0.01	-2.8%	136	0

South Asia ^(SA)

Country/Jurisdiction	Regional Rank	Overall Score*	Change in Overall Score*	% Change in Overall Score*	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank†
Nepal	1/6	0.52	-0.01	-1.1%	70	2 ▼
Sri Lanka	2/6	0.50	-0.02	-3.0%	76	3 ▼
India	3/6	0.50	-0.01	-1.9%	79	3 ▼

Bangladesh	4/6	0.40	-0.01	-2.8%	124	1 ▲
Pakistan	5/6	0.39	0.00	-0.4%	130	0
Afghanistan	6/6	0.35	-0.01	-2.7%	134	1 ▼

Sub-Saharan Africa ^(AFR)

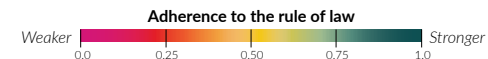
Country/Jurisdiction	Regional Rank	Overall Score*	Change in Overall Score*	% Change in Overall Score*	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank†
Rwanda	1/33	0.62	0.00	0.5%	42	2 ▲
Namibia	2/33	0.62	-0.01	-1.2%	44	2 ▼
Mauritius	3/33	0.61	-0.01	-0.9%	45	0
Botswana	4/33	0.59	-0.01	-1.5%	51	1 ▼
South Africa	5/33	0.58	0.00	-0.4%	52	0
Senegal	6/33	0.55	0.00	0.5%	57	2 ▲
Ghana	7/33	0.55	-0.01	-2.2%	58	0
Malawi	8/33	0.52	0.01	1.0%	67	5 ▲
Burkina Faso	9/33	0.50	0.00	-0.9%	75	2 ▲
The Gambia	10/33	0.49	-0.02	-3.1%	89	8 ▼
Benin	11/33	0.49	-0.01	-2.3%	91	3 ▼
Tanzania	12/33	0.47	-0.01	-1.1%	100	1 ▲
Togo	13/33	0.45	0.00	0.9%	103	4 ▲
Côte d'Ivoire	14/33	0.45	-0.02	-3.4%	105	2 ▼
Kenya	15/33	0.44	0.00	-0.9%	106	4 ▲
Zambia	16/33	0.44	-0.01	-2.3%	107	2 ▼
Sierra Leone	17/33	0.44	-0.01	-1.5%	108	0

Liberia	18/33	0.44	-0.01	-2.6%	110	4 ▼
Niger	19/33	0.44	-0.01	-1.5%	111	0
Madagascar	20/33	0.44	0.00	-0.6%	112	1 ▲
Angola	21/33	0.43	0.00	0.5%	114	4 ▲
Mali	22/33	0.43	-0.01	-2.9%	115	1 ▼
Sudan	23/33	0.42	-	-	116	-
Congo, Rep.	24/33	0.42	-	-	118	-
Guinea	25/33	0.41	-0.01	-1.4%	120	1 ▲
Nigeria	26/33	0.41	-0.02	-3.7%	121	3 ▼
Ethiopia	27/33	0.41	0.00	-1.0%	122	2 ▲
Mozambique	28/33	0.40	-0.01	-2.9%	123	0
Uganda	29/33	0.39	0.00	-0.9%	125	2 ▲
Zimbabwe	30/33	0.39	0.00	0.0%	127	2 ▲
Mauritania	31/33	0.36	0.00	0.9%	133	1 ▲
Cameroon	32/33	0.35	-0.01	-2.1%	135	0
Congo, Dem. Rep.	33/33	0.35	0.00	1.2%	137	0

* Scores and change in scores are rounded to two decimal places. Annual percentage change in score is rounded to one decimal place.

† The change in rankings was calculated by comparing the positions of the 128 countries and jurisdictions measured in the 2020 Index with the rankings of the same 128 countries and jurisdictions in 2021, exclusive of the 11 new additions to the 2021 Index. The 11 new countries and jurisdictions added to the Index this year are: Congo, Rep., Cyprus, Haiti, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Paraguay, Slovak Republic, and Sudan.

Figure 4. Rule of Law Around the World by Income*



This table presents the scores, rankings, and changes for the 139 countries and jurisdictions included in the *WJP Rule of Law Index 2021* by income group. Scores range from 0 to 1, where 1 signifies the highest score (strong adherence to the rule of law) and 0 signifies the lowest possible score (weak adherence to the rule of law).

High Income

Country/Jurisdiction	Income Rank	Overall Score ¹	Change in Overall Score ¹	% Change in Overall Score ¹	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank ²								
Denmark	1/46	0.90	0.00	0.0%	1	0	Uruguay	25/46	0.71	0.00	0.6%	25	1 ▲	
Norway	2/46	0.90	0.00	0.5%	2	0	Portugal	26/46	0.70	0.00	-0.6%	26	1 ▲	
Finland	3/46	0.88	0.00	0.4%	3	0	United States	27/46	0.69	-0.02	-2.9%	27	2 ▼	
Sweden	4/46	0.86	0.00	0.0%	4	0	Cyprus	28/46	0.68	-	-	28	-	
Germany	5/46	0.84	0.00	0.4%	5	1 ▲	Slovenia	29/46	0.68	0.00	-0.4%	29	0	
Netherlands	6/46	0.83	0.00	-0.5%	6	1 ▼	Malta	30/46	0.68	-	-	30	-	
New Zealand	7/46	0.83	0.01	0.7%	7	0	Chile	31/46	0.66	-0.01	-0.8%	32	0	
Luxembourg	8/46	0.83	-	-	8	-	Slovak Republic	32/46	0.66	-	-	33	-	
Austria	9/46	0.81	0.00	-0.6%	9	0	Italy	33/46	0.66	0.00	0.2%	34	0	
Ireland	10/46	0.81	-	-	10	-	Barbados	34/46	0.65	0.00	0.7%	35	1 ▲	
Estonia	11/46	0.81	0.00	-0.1%	11	1 ▲	Poland	35/46	0.64	-0.02	-2.4%	36	1 ▼	
Canada	12/46	0.80	-0.01	-1.0%	12	1 ▼	United Arab Emirates	36/46	0.64	-0.01	-0.9%	37	0	
Australia	13/46	0.79	-0.01	-1.2%	13	0	Antigua and Barbuda	37/46	0.63	0.00	0.4%	39	2 ▲	
Belgium	14/46	0.79	0.00	0.6%	14	2 ▲	St. Kitts and Nevis	38/46	0.63	0.00	-0.2%	40	0	
Japan	15/46	0.79	0.01	0.8%	15	2 ▲	Romania	39/46	0.63	-0.01	-0.8%	41	2 ▼	
United Kingdom	16/46	0.79	0.00	-0.4%	16	1 ▼	Mauritius	40/46	0.61	-0.01	-0.9%	45	0	
Singapore	17/46	0.78	-0.01	-1.0%	17	3 ▼	Croatia	41/46	0.61	-0.01	-1.0%	46	0	
Lithuania	18/46	0.75	-	-	18	-	The Bahamas	42/46	0.61	0.00	0.5%	47	1 ▲	
Hong Kong SAR, China	19/46	0.75	-0.02	-2.0%	19	0	Greece	43/46	0.61	0.00	-0.5%	48	1 ▼	
Korea, Rep.	20/46	0.74	0.00	0.4%	20	0	Trinidad and Tobago	44/46	0.53	0.00	-0.5%	63	1 ▼	
Spain	21/46	0.73	0.00	0.1%	21	1 ▲	Hungary	45/46	0.52	-0.01	-1.4%	69	2 ▼	
Czech Republic	22/46	0.73	0.00	-0.4%	22	1 ▼	Panama	46/46	0.52	0.00	-0.7%	71	1 ▼	
France	23/46	0.72	-0.01	-0.9%	23	0								
Latvia	24/46	0.71	-	-	24	-								

* † ‡ See page 16 for full footnotes.

Upper-Middle Income

Country/Jurisdiction	Income Rank	Overall Score [†]	Change in Overall Score [‡]	% Change in Overall Score [‡]	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank [‡]							
Costa Rica	1/40	0.68	-0.01	-0.8%	31	0	Guyana	21/40	0.50	0.00	-0.7%	78	2 ▲
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	2/40	0.64	0.00	-0.2%	38	0	Thailand	22/40	0.50	-0.01	-2.2%	80	2 ▼
St. Lucia	3/40	0.62	0.00	-0.1%	43	0	Serbia	23/40	0.49	-0.01	-1.8%	81	1 ▲
Namibia	4/40	0.62	-0.01	-1.2%	44	2 ▼	Albania	24/40	0.49	-0.01	-1.7%	83	2 ▲
Georgia	5/40	0.61	0.00	0.5%	49	0	Suriname	25/40	0.49	-0.01	-1.9%	84	1 ▼
Grenada	6/40	0.59	0.00	0.1%	50	1 ▲	Colombia	26/40	0.49	-0.01	-2.2%	86	2 ▼
Botswana	7/40	0.59	-0.01	-1.5%	51	1 ▼	Peru	27/40	0.49	-0.01	-2.0%	87	0
South Africa	8/40	0.58	0.00	-0.4%	52	0	Ecuador	28/40	0.48	0.00	-0.1%	92	1 ▲
Dominica	9/40	0.58	0.00	-0.6%	53	0	Belize	29/40	0.48	0.00	0.0%	93	3 ▲
Malaysia	10/40	0.57	-0.01	-1.4%	54	0	Dominican Republic	30/40	0.48	0.00	0.0%	94	3 ▲
Jamaica	11/40	0.57	0.00	0.4%	55	1 ▲	Paraguay	31/40	0.48	-	-	96	-
Argentina	12/40	0.56	-0.02	-3.7%	56	1 ▼	Belarus	32/40	0.48	-0.04	-7.5%	97	21 ▼
Jordan	13/40	0.55	-0.02	-3.0%	59	2 ▼	China	33/40	0.47	-0.01	-1.9%	98	2 ▼
Kosovo	14/40	0.55	0.00	0.6%	60	1 ▲	Russian Federation	34/40	0.46	0.00	-0.7%	101	1 ▲
Bulgaria	15/40	0.54	-0.01	-1.0%	62	2 ▼	Lebanon	35/40	0.45	0.00	-0.9%	104	0
North Macedonia	16/40	0.53	0.00	-0.3%	64	1 ▲	Guatemala	36/40	0.44	-0.01	-1.2%	109	0
Kazakhstan	17/40	0.52	0.00	0.3%	66	3 ▲	Mexico	37/40	0.43	-0.01	-2.9%	113	1 ▼
Indonesia	18/40	0.52	-0.01	-1.0%	68	2 ▼	Turkey	38/40	0.42	-0.01	-2.5%	117	1 ▼
Bosnia and Herzegovina	19/40	0.52	0.00	-0.8%	72	1 ▼	Iran, Islamic Rep.	39/40	0.42	-0.01	-2.3%	119	0
Brazil	20/40	0.50	-0.01	-2.9%	77	3 ▼	Venezuela, RB	40/40	0.27	0.00	-1.5%	139	0

* Income groups used in this year's report are based on the World Bank's 2021 fiscal year income group classifications. For the 2021 fiscal year, low-income economies are defined as those with a GNI per capita, calculated using the World Bank Atlas method, of \$1,035 or less in 2019; lower middle-income economies are those with a GNI per capita between \$1,036 and \$4,045; upper middle-income economies are those with a GNI per capita between \$4,046 and \$12,535; high-income economies are those with a GNI per capita of \$12,535 or more.

<https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>.

† Scores and change in scores are rounded to two decimal places. Annual percentage change in score is rounded to one decimal place.

‡ The change in rankings was calculated by comparing the positions of the 128 countries and jurisdictions measured in the 2020 Index with the rankings of the same 128 countries and jurisdictions in 2021, exclusive of the 11 new additions to the 2021 Index. The 11 new countries and jurisdictions added to the Index this year are: Congo, Rep., Cyprus, Haiti, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Paraguay, Slovak Republic, and Sudan.

Lower-Middle Income

Country/Jurisdiction	Income Rank	Overall Score [†]	Change in Overall Score [†]	% Change in Overall Score [†]	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank [‡]							
Senegal	1/35	0.55	0.00	0.5%	57	2 ▲	Côte d'Ivoire	19/35	0.45	-0.02	-3.4%	105	2 ▼
Ghana	2/35	0.55	-0.01	-2.2%	58	0	Kenya	20/35	0.44	0.00	-0.9%	106	4 ▲
Mongolia	3/35	0.54	0.01	2.0%	61	3 ▲	Zambia	21/35	0.44	-0.01	-2.3%	107	2 ▼
Tunisia	4/35	0.53	-0.01	-1.5%	65	2 ▼	Angola	22/35	0.43	0.00	0.5%	114	4 ▲
Nepal	5/35	0.52	-0.01	-1.1%	70	2 ▼	Congo, Rep.	23/35	0.42	-	-	118	-
Moldova	6/35	0.51	0.02	3.2%	73	16 ▲	Nigeria	24/35	0.41	-0.02	-3.7%	121	3 ▼
Ukraine	7/35	0.51	0.00	0.6%	74	5 ▲	Bangladesh	25/35	0.40	-0.01	-2.8%	124	1 ▲
Sri Lanka	8/35	0.50	-0.02	-3.0%	76	3 ▼	Honduras	26/35	0.39	-0.01	-2.2%	126	0
India	9/35	0.50	-0.01	-1.9%	79	3 ▼	Zimbabwe	27/35	0.39	0.00	0.0%	127	2 ▲
Algeria	10/35	0.49	0.00	-0.5%	82	8 ▲	Myanmar	28/35	0.39	-0.03	-6.3%	128	6 ▼
Uzbekistan	11/35	0.49	0.02	4.1%	85	14 ▲	Bolivia	29/35	0.39	0.00	0.9%	129	2 ▲
Vietnam	12/35	0.49	0.00	-0.6%	88	4 ▲	Pakistan	30/35	0.39	0.00	-0.4%	130	0
Morocco	13/35	0.49	-0.01	-2.6%	90	4 ▼	Nicaragua	31/35	0.38	-0.01	-3.7%	131	3 ▼
Benin	14/35	0.49	-0.01	-2.3%	91	3 ▼	Mauritania	32/35	0.36	0.00	0.9%	133	1 ▲
El Salvador	15/35	0.48	-0.02	-3.3%	95	4 ▼	Cameroon	33/35	0.35	-0.01	-2.1%	135	0
Kyrgyz Republic	16/35	0.47	-0.02	-3.7%	99	4 ▼	Egypt, Arab Rep.	34/35	0.35	-0.01	-2.8%	136	0
Tanzania	17/35	0.47	-0.01	-1.1%	100	1 ▲	Cambodia	35/35	0.32	-0.01	-2.3%	138	0
Philippines	18/35	0.46	-0.01	-2.9%	102	3 ▼							

Low Income

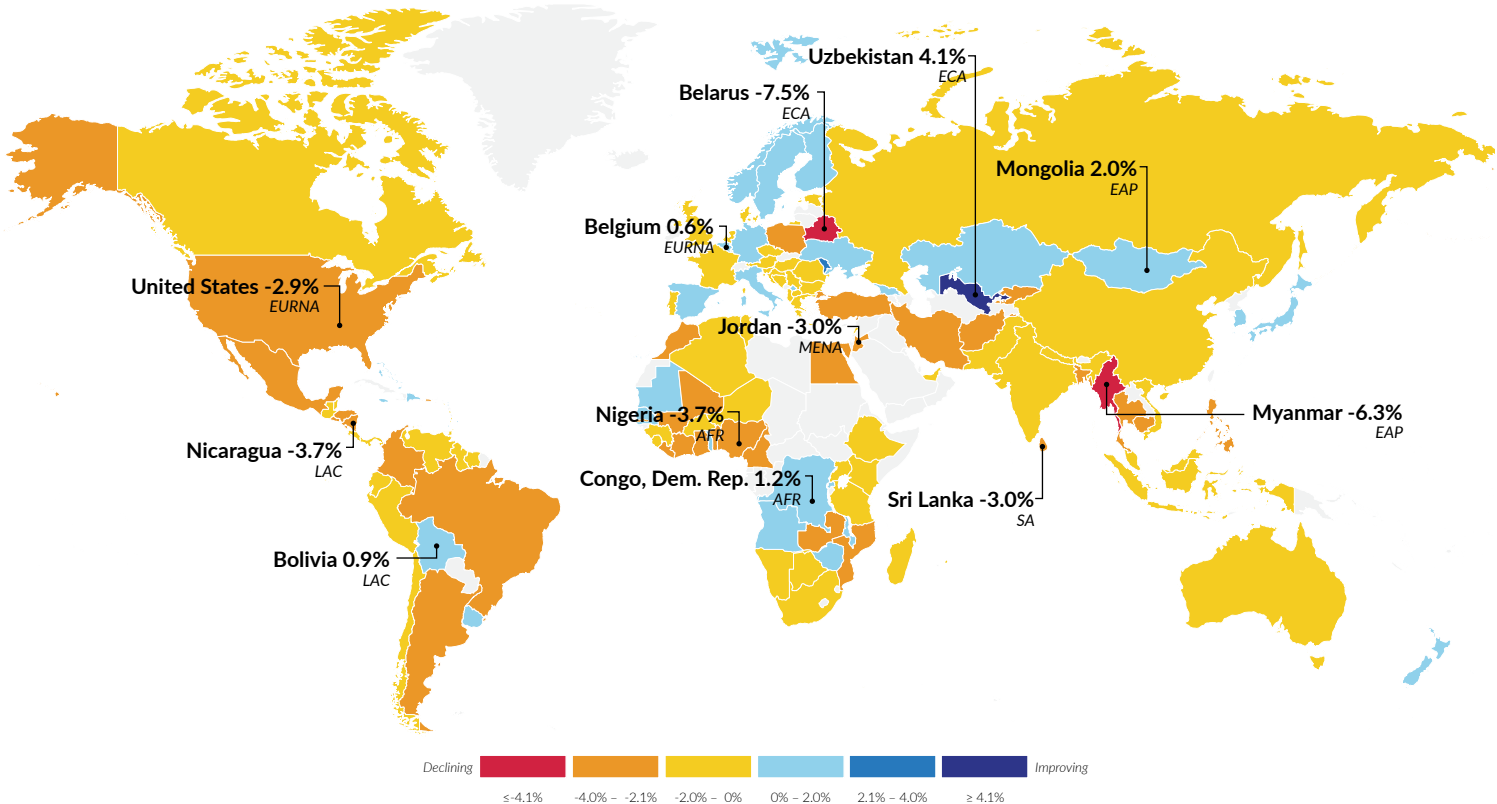
Low Income

Country/Jurisdiction	Income Rank	Overall Score [†]	Change in Overall Score [†]	% Change in Overall Score [†]	Global Rank	Change in Global Rank [‡]							
Rwanda	1/18	0.62	0.00	0.5%	42	2 ▲	Mali	10/18	0.43	-0.01	-2.9%	115	1 ▼
Malawi	2/18	0.52	0.01	1.0%	67	5 ▲	Sudan	11/18	0.42	-	-	116	-
Burkina Faso	3/18	0.50	0.00	-0.9%	75	2 ▲	Guinea	12/18	0.41	-0.01	-1.4%	120	1 ▲
The Gambia	4/18	0.49	-0.02	-3.1%	89	8 ▼	Ethiopia	13/18	0.41	0.00	-1.0%	122	2 ▲
Togo	5/18	0.45	0.00	0.9%	103	4 ▲	Mozambique	14/18	0.40	-0.01	-2.9%	123	0
Sierra Leone	6/18	0.44	-0.01	-1.5%	108	0	Uganda	15/18	0.39	0.00	-0.9%	125	2 ▲
Liberia	7/18	0.44	-0.01	-2.6%	110	4 ▼	Haiti	16/18	0.38	-	-	132	-
Niger	8/18	0.44	-0.01	-1.5%	111	0	Afghanistan	17/18	0.35	-0.01	-2.7%	134	1 ▼
Madagascar	9/18	0.44	0.00	-0.6%	112	1 ▲	Congo, Dem. Rep.	18/18	0.35	0.00	1.2%	137	0

* † ‡ See page 16 for full footnotes.

Figure 5. Overall Rule of Law Score Changes

Biggest improvement and decline in overall rule of law score per region over the last year. Figures reflect annual percentage change in overall rule of law score. Countries and jurisdictions that are new to the Index in 2021 are not included.*†

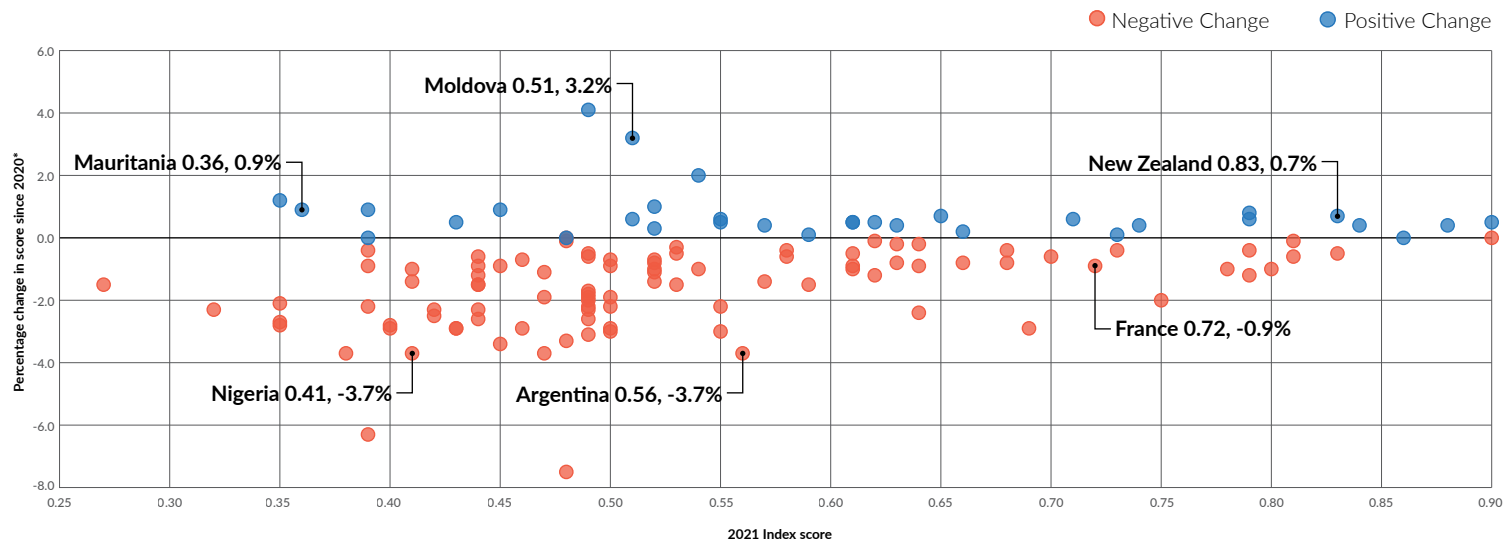


* Annual percentage change in score is rounded to one decimal place. Countries with annual percentage changes in scores that round to 0.0% have been graphed according to their unrounded score in order to show changes.

† In the Middle East and North Africa and South Asia, there were no improvements in overall rule of law score, so only the biggest decline is noted.

Figure 6. More Countries Declined than Improved in Rule of Law Performance for the Fourth Consecutive Year

Over the last year, 74.2% of countries and jurisdictions experienced declines in rule of law performance, and 25.8% improved. The countries and jurisdictions that experienced declines (74.2%) account for 84.7% of the world's population, or approximately 6.5 billion people.



Declining Rule of Law (95)

Afghanistan
Albania
Algeria
Argentina
Australia
Austria
Bangladesh
Belarus
Belize
Benin
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Botswana
Brazil
Bulgaria
Burkina Faso
Cambodia
Cameroon
Canada
Chile
China
Colombia
Costa Rica
Côte d'Ivoire
Croatia
Czech Republic
Denmark
Dominica
Ecuador
Egypt, Arab Rep.
El Salvador
Estonia
Ethiopia
France
The Gambia
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Guinea
Guyana
Honduras
Hong Kong SAR, China
Hungary
India
Indonesia
Iran, Islamic Rep.
Jordan
Kenya
Kyrgyz Republic
Lebanon
Liberia
Madagascar
Malaysia
Mali
Mauritius
Mexico
Morocco
Mozambique
Myanmar
Namibia
Nepal
Netherlands
Nicaragua
Niger
Nigeria
North Macedonia
Pakistan
Panama
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Russian Federation
Serbia
Sierra Leone
Singapore
Slovenia
South Africa
Sri Lanka
St. Kitts and Nevis
St. Lucia
St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Suriname
Tanzania
Thailand
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Uganda
United Arab Emirates
United Kingdom
United States
Venezuela, RB
Vietnam
Zambia

Improving Rule of Law (33)

Angola
Antigua and Barbuda
The Bahamas
Barbados
Belgium
Bolivia
Congo, Dem. Rep.
Dominican Republic
Finland
Georgia
Germany
Grenada
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Kazakhstan
Korea, Rep.
Kosovo
Malawi
Mauritania
Moldova
Mongolia
New Zealand
Norway
Rwanda
Senegal
Spain
Sweden
Togo
Ukraine
Uruguay
Uzbekistan
Zimbabwe

* The annual percentage change in score was calculated by comparing the scores of the 128 countries and jurisdictions measured in the 2020 Index with the scores of the same 128 countries and jurisdictions in 2021, exclusive of the 11 new additions to the 2021 Index. Countries with annual percentage changes in scores that round to 0.0% have been graphed according to their unrounded score in order to show changes.

Figure 7. Continuous and Spreading Declines in Rule of Law Over Time

Percentage of countries and jurisdictions whose overall rule of law score has improved or declined in each each edition of the *WJP Rule of Law Index* since 2015. Percentage of countries and jurisdictions that improved or declined each year is calculated using the number of countries and jurisdictions common to the years in question.

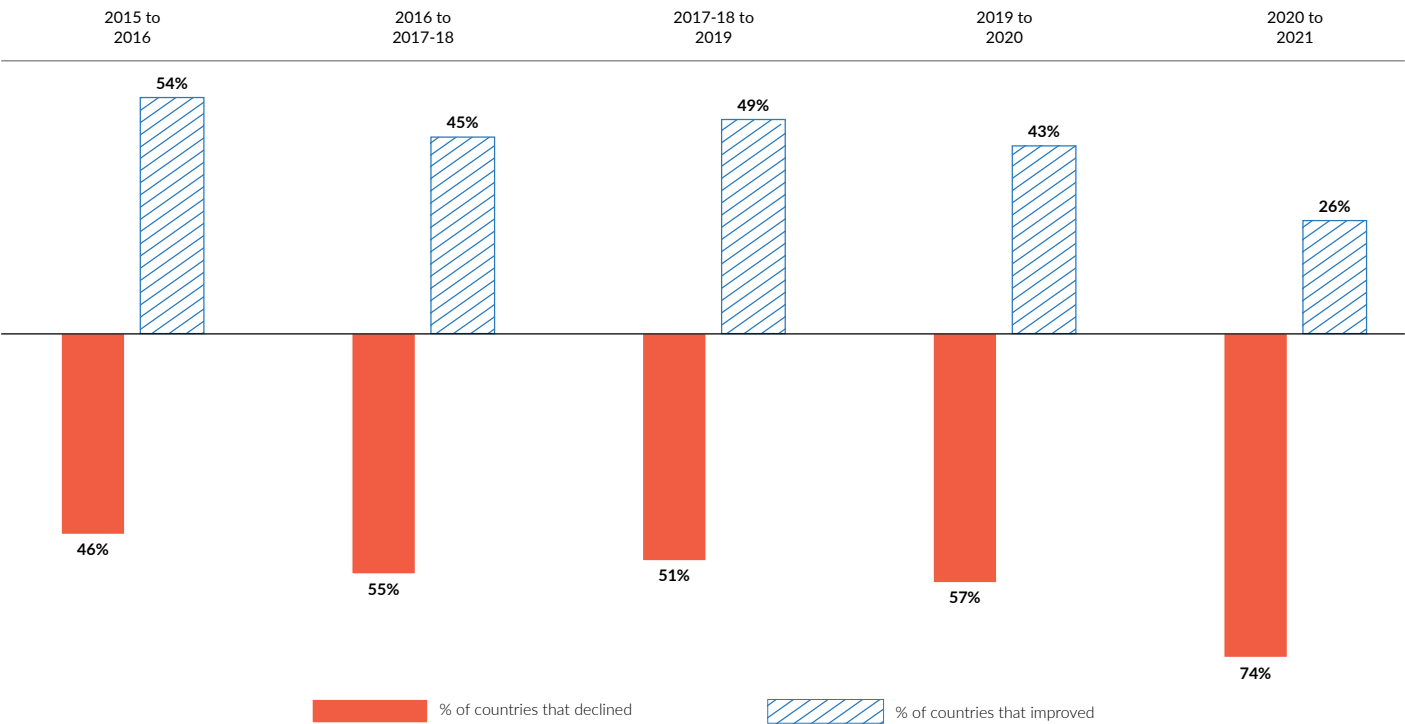


Figure 8. Factors of the Rule of Law Over Time

Percentage of countries and jurisdictions that improved or declined in the past year is calculated using the 128 countries and jurisdictions that were covered in 2020. Percentage of countries and jurisdictions that improved or declined in the past six years is calculated using the 102 countries and jurisdictions that were covered in 2015.

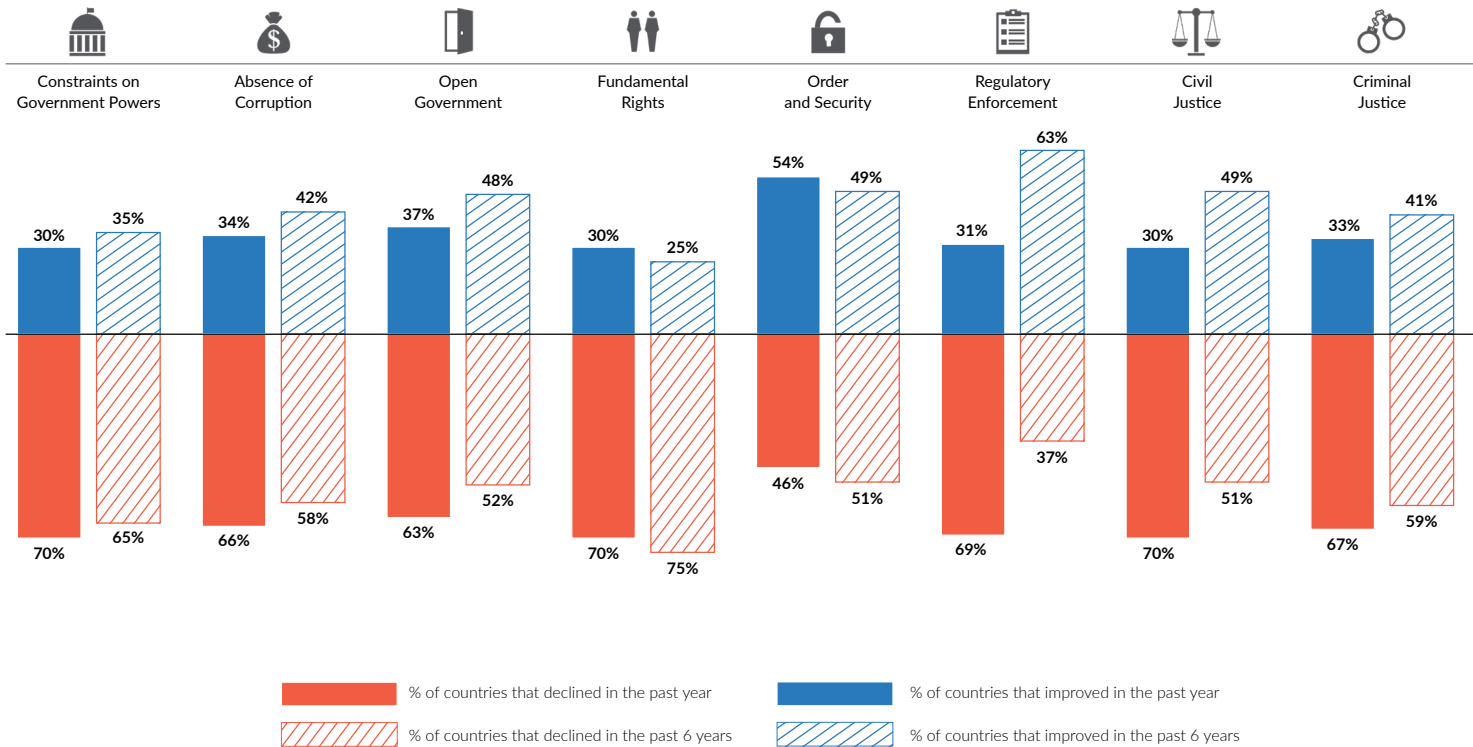
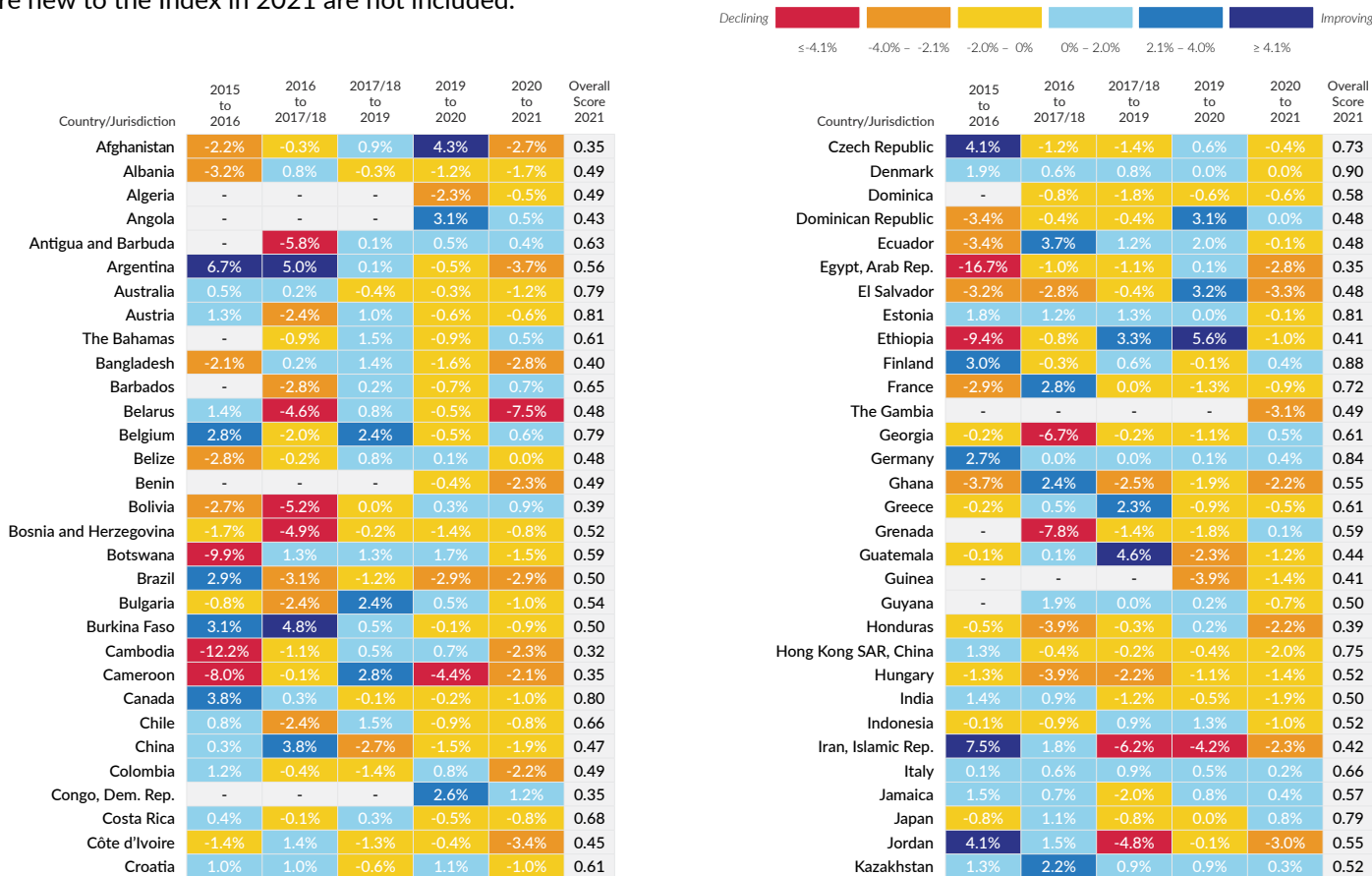
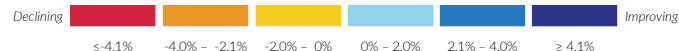


Figure 9. Rule of Law Progress is Often Slow and Inconsistent

Annual percentage change* in score between each edition of the *WJP Rule of Law Index* since 2015. Countries and jurisdictions that are new to the Index in 2021 are not included.



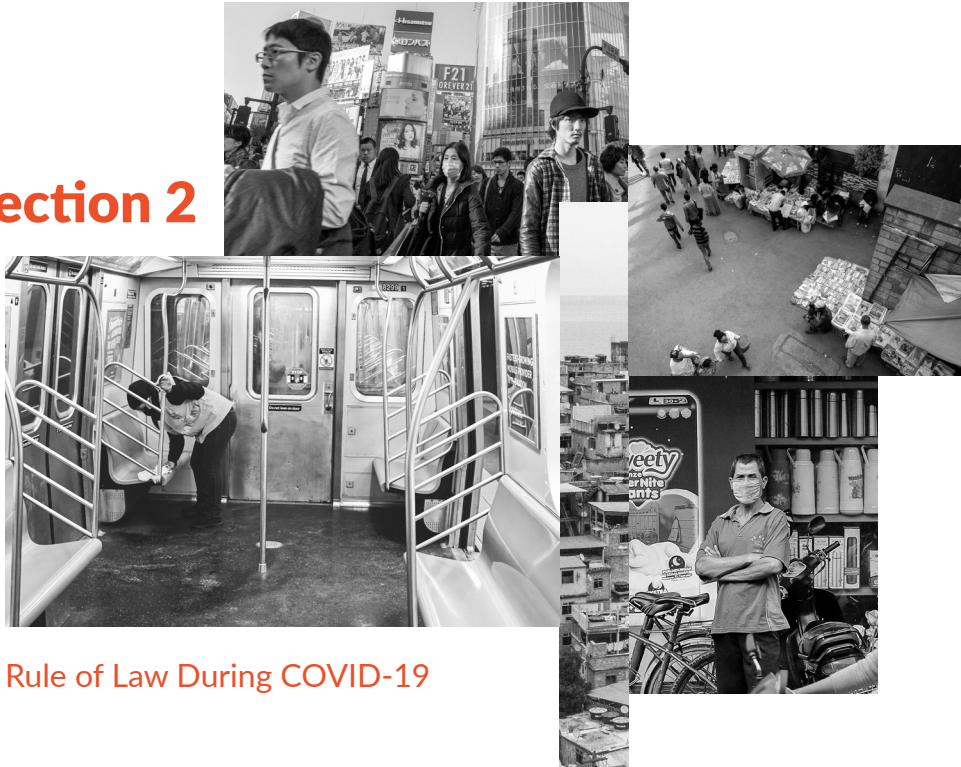
*Annual percentage change in score is rounded to one decimal place. Scores are rounded to two decimal places. Countries with annual percentage changes in scores that round to 0.0% have been graphed according to their unrounded score in order to show changes.



Country/Jurisdiction	2015 to 2016	2016 to 2017/18	2017/18 to 2019	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	Overall Score 2021
Kenya	-3.5%	4.0%	0.5%	-0.2%	-0.9%	0.44
Korea, Rep.	-7.7%	-1.0%	1.7%	0.0%	0.4%	0.74
Kosovo	-	-	-	-	0.6%	0.55
Kyrgyz Republic	-0.7%	0.7%	0.9%	1.4%	-3.7%	0.47
Lebanon	-5.4%	2.7%	0.2%	-3.3%	-0.9%	0.45
Liberia	0.1%	1.2%	1.4%	-1.3%	-2.6%	0.44
Madagascar	0.6%	-3.9%	-1.4%	2.4%	-0.6%	0.44
Malawi	0.7%	0.6%	0.8%	0.7%	1.0%	0.52
Malaysia	-5.2%	-0.5%	3.6%	5.1%	-1.4%	0.57
Mali	-	-	-	-2.8%	-2.9%	0.43
Mauritania	-	-	-	4.0%	0.9%	0.36
Mauritius	-	-	-	-0.1%	-0.9%	0.61
Mexico	-1.7%	-0.7%	-0.2%	-2.8%	-2.9%	0.43
Moldova	2.4%	-0.5%	-1.0%	2.2%	3.2%	0.51
Mongolia	1.1%	0.8%	0.3%	-2.2%	2.0%	0.54
Morocco	1.4%	-3.4%	-1.2%	-0.5%	-2.6%	0.49
Mozambique	-	-	-	-3.4%	-2.9%	0.40
Myanmar	4.0%	-3.2%	-0.5%	0.0%	-6.3%	0.39
Namibia	-	-	-	0.6%	-1.2%	0.62
Nepal	-2.2%	1.1%	0.8%	-0.7%	-1.1%	0.52
Netherlands	3.4%	-0.7%	-1.5%	-0.5%	-0.5%	0.83
New Zealand	0.0%	-0.3%	-0.5%	0.3%	0.7%	0.83
Nicaragua	-1.1%	3.2%	-6.9%	-2.6%	-3.7%	0.38
Niger	-	-	-	-1.0%	-1.5%	0.44
Nigeria	9.0%	-1.2%	-1.0%	-0.9%	-3.7%	0.41
North Macedonia	-1.7%	-2.3%	1.8%	-0.9%	-0.3%	0.53
Norway	1.7%	0.8%	0.7%	0.1%	0.5%	0.90
Pakistan	1.1%	1.9%	-0.2%	-0.7%	-0.4%	0.39
Panama	-1.9%	-0.3%	-0.2%	0.5%	-0.7%	0.52
Peru	3.1%	1.7%	-2.9%	-1.5%	-2.0%	0.49
Philippines	-3.6%	-7.7%	0.4%	0.8%	-2.9%	0.46
Poland	-0.2%	-5.8%	-0.9%	-1.1%	-2.4%	0.64
Portugal	1.7%	0.9%	-0.8%	-1.1%	-0.6%	0.70

Country/Jurisdiction	2015 to 2016	2016 to 2017/18	2017/18 to 2019	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	Overall Score 2021
Romania	6.6%	-0.7%	-1.9%	-1.5%	-0.8%	0.63
Russian Federation	-4.1%	3.2%	1.0%	-1.4%	-0.7%	0.46
Rwanda	-	-	-	1.3%	0.5%	0.62
Senegal	0.8%	-4.0%	0.3%	-0.1%	0.5%	0.55
Serbia	-0.7%	-0.3%	0.1%	0.6%	-1.8%	0.49
Sierra Leone	1.8%	2.0%	0.1%	-0.9%	-1.5%	0.44
Singapore	1.0%	-2.6%	0.0%	-0.9%	-1.0%	0.78
Slovenia	1.9%	-0.3%	0.5%	1.7%	-0.4%	0.68
South Africa	1.7%	0.3%	-1.6%	1.4%	-0.4%	0.58
Spain	2.0%	0.9%	2.4%	1.3%	0.1%	0.73
Sri Lanka	0.6%	2.8%	-0.9%	-0.2%	-3.0%	0.50
St. Kitts and Nevis	-	-0.5%	-2.2%	-2.1%	-0.2%	0.63
St. Lucia	-	-2.1%	-2.1%	0.7%	-0.1%	0.62
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	-	-0.4%	1.6%	2.8%	-0.2%	0.64
Suriname	-	-3.9%	0.4%	-1.8%	-1.9%	0.49
Sweden	1.3%	0.2%	-0.4%	0.2%	0.0%	0.86
Tanzania	-1.4%	0.2%	-0.3%	0.5%	-1.1%	0.47
Thailand	-0.3%	-1.8%	-0.4%	0.9%	-2.2%	0.50
Togo	-	-	-	-0.8%	0.9%	0.45
Trinidad and Tobago	-	-2.1%	-3.0%	-0.7%	-0.5%	0.53
Tunisia	-4.6%	0.3%	-0.2%	0.7%	-1.5%	0.53
Turkey	-7.2%	-3.1%	2.7%	0.3%	-2.5%	0.42
Uganda	-4.1%	2.6%	0.6%	-1.8%	-0.9%	0.39
Ukraine	1.9%	1.6%	1.0%	0.8%	0.6%	0.51
United Arab Emirates	-2.1%	-1.5%	-0.7%	0.6%	-0.9%	0.64
United Kingdom	3.0%	-0.1%	-0.7%	-1.7%	-0.4%	0.79
United States	1.4%	-1.1%	-1.5%	-0.6%	-2.9%	0.69
Uruguay	1.9%	-1.9%	-0.6%	0.7%	0.6%	0.71
Uzbekistan	-1.4%	1.9%	1.0%	1.7%	4.1%	0.49
Venezuela, RB	-13.7%	4.0%	-3.5%	-2.6%	-1.5%	0.27
Vietnam	2.9%	-2.1%	-2.4%	0.6%	-0.6%	0.49
Zambia	0.5%	-0.8%	-1.2%	-2.6%	-2.3%	0.44
Zimbabwe	0.8%	0.6%	7.1%	-1.5%	0.0%	0.39

Section 2



Rule of Law During COVID-19

- 26 *Figure 10 Declines in Constraints on Government Powers During COVID-19*
- 27 *Figure 11 Closing of Civic Space During COVID-19*
- 28 *Figure 12 Delays in Civil Justice, Criminal Justice, and Administrative Proceedings During COVID-19*
- 29 *Figure 13 Rising Discrimination During COVID-19*

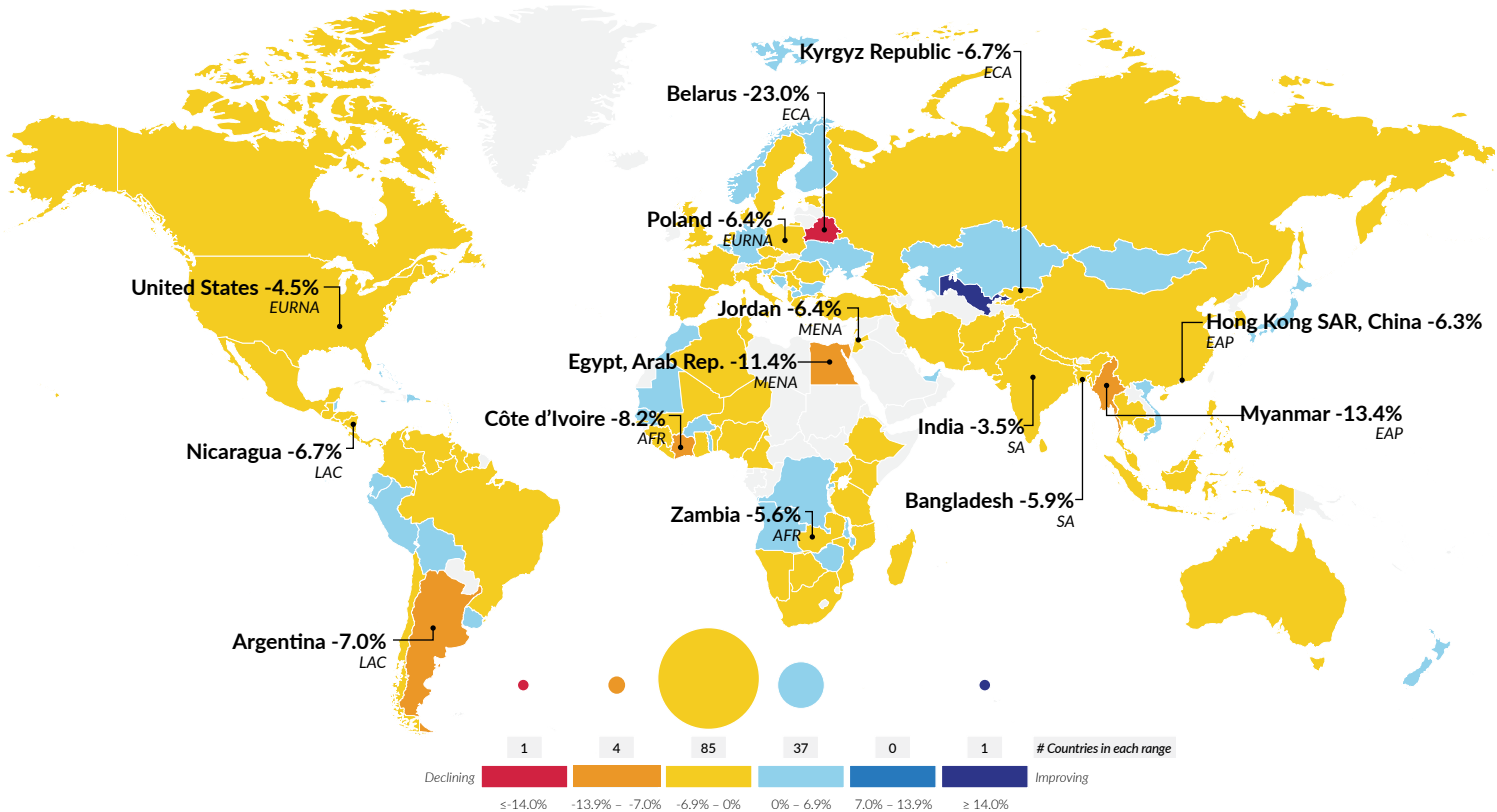
In early 2020, an outbreak of COVID-19 launched a global public health crisis that exists to this day. This pandemic has had wide-ranging and long-lasting effects on people and countries worldwide. The World Justice Project conducted its annual data collection during this time,

which allows us to compare the rule of law situation during the pandemic against that of 2019 (pre-pandemic). Significant changes can be seen in four areas: constraints on government powers, civic space, timely justice systems, and discrimination.

Photos: Jason Ortego (Unsplash), Insights Unspoken (Flickr), Farhan Abas (Unsplash), William F Santos (Unsplash), Robinson Grieg (Unsplash)

Figure 10. Declines in Constraints on Government Powers During COVID-19

During the last year, 70% of countries and jurisdictions* covered by the Index declined in Factor 1: Constraints on Government Powers. This decline was the most prevalent in three regions: South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and EU, EFTA, and North America. The map below highlights the two biggest declines in each region.

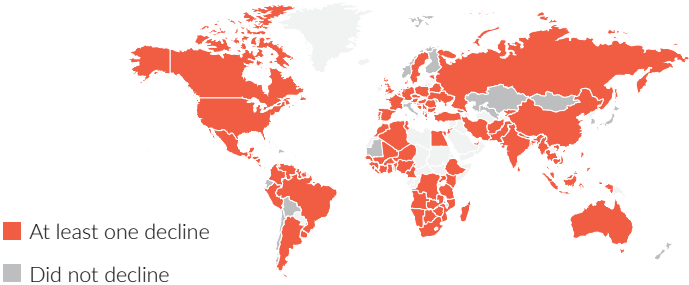


*Annual percentage change in score is rounded to one decimal place. Countries with annual percentage changes in scores that round to 0.0% have been graphed according to their unrounded score in order to show changes.

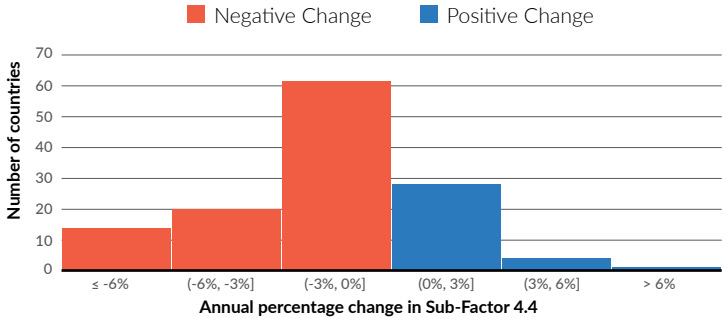
Figure 11. Closing of Civic Space During COVID-19

Over the last year, the majority of countries and jurisdictions* covered by the Index experienced declines in civic space, as measured by three Index sub-factors: civic participation, freedom of opinion and expression, and freedom of assembly and association. The graphics below depict the countries where at least one of these sub-factors declined over the past year (global map), and the distribution of the annual percentage change across countries for each sub-factor (three histograms).

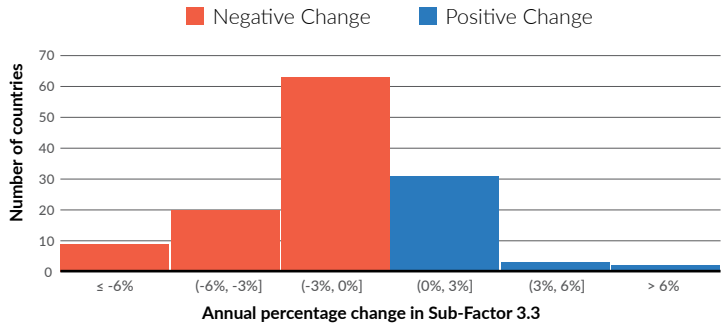
Over the past year, 82% of countries and jurisdictions in the Index experienced a decline in at least one dimension of civic space.



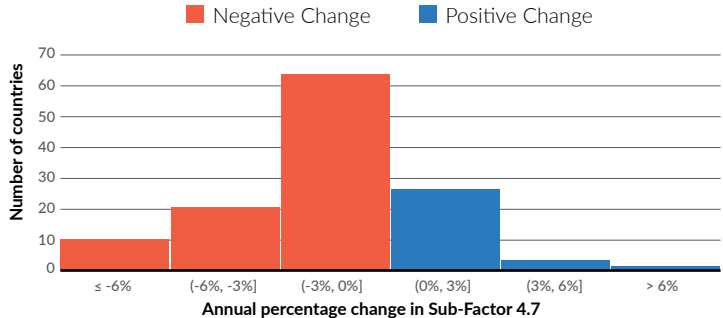
Changes in freedom of opinion and expression over the past year (Sub-Factor 4.4)



Changes in civic participation over the past year (Sub-Factor 3.3)



Changes in freedom of assembly and association over the past year (Sub-Factor 4.7)

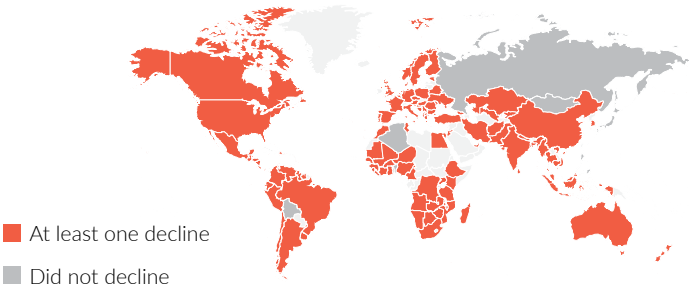


*Countries and jurisdictions that are new to the Index in 2021 are not included.

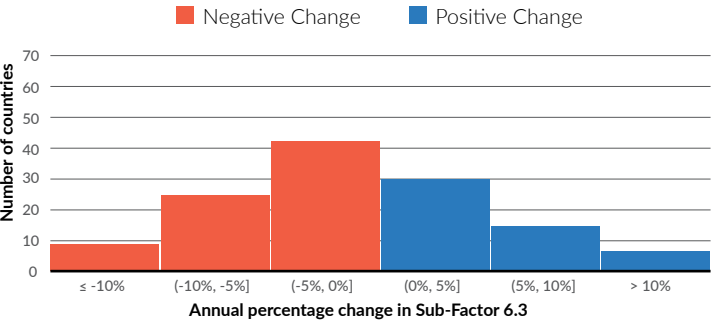
Figure 12. Delays in Civil Justice, Criminal Justice, and Administrative Proceedings During COVID-19

The majority of countries and jurisdictions* covered by the Index experienced increased delays in administrative, civil, and criminal proceedings during the last year. Civil justice was particularly affected, with two-thirds of countries exhibiting increased delays.

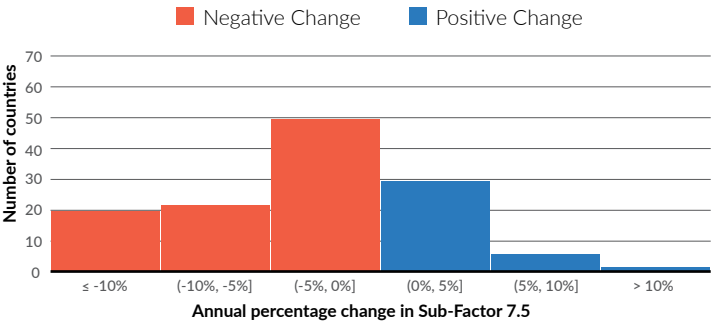
Over the past year, 94% of countries and jurisdictions in the Index experienced increased delays in administrative, civil, and/or criminal proceedings.



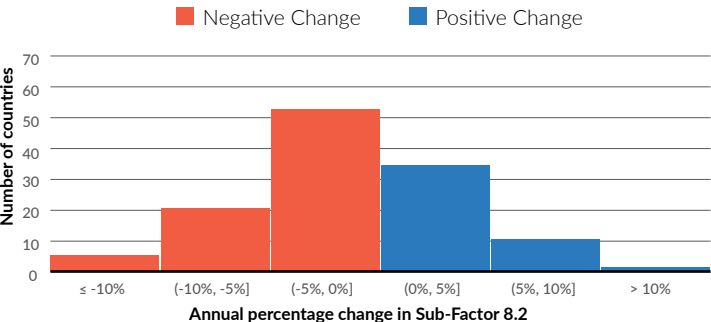
Delays in administrative proceedings over the past year (Sub-Factor 6.3)



Delays in civil justice over the past year (Sub-Factor 7.5)



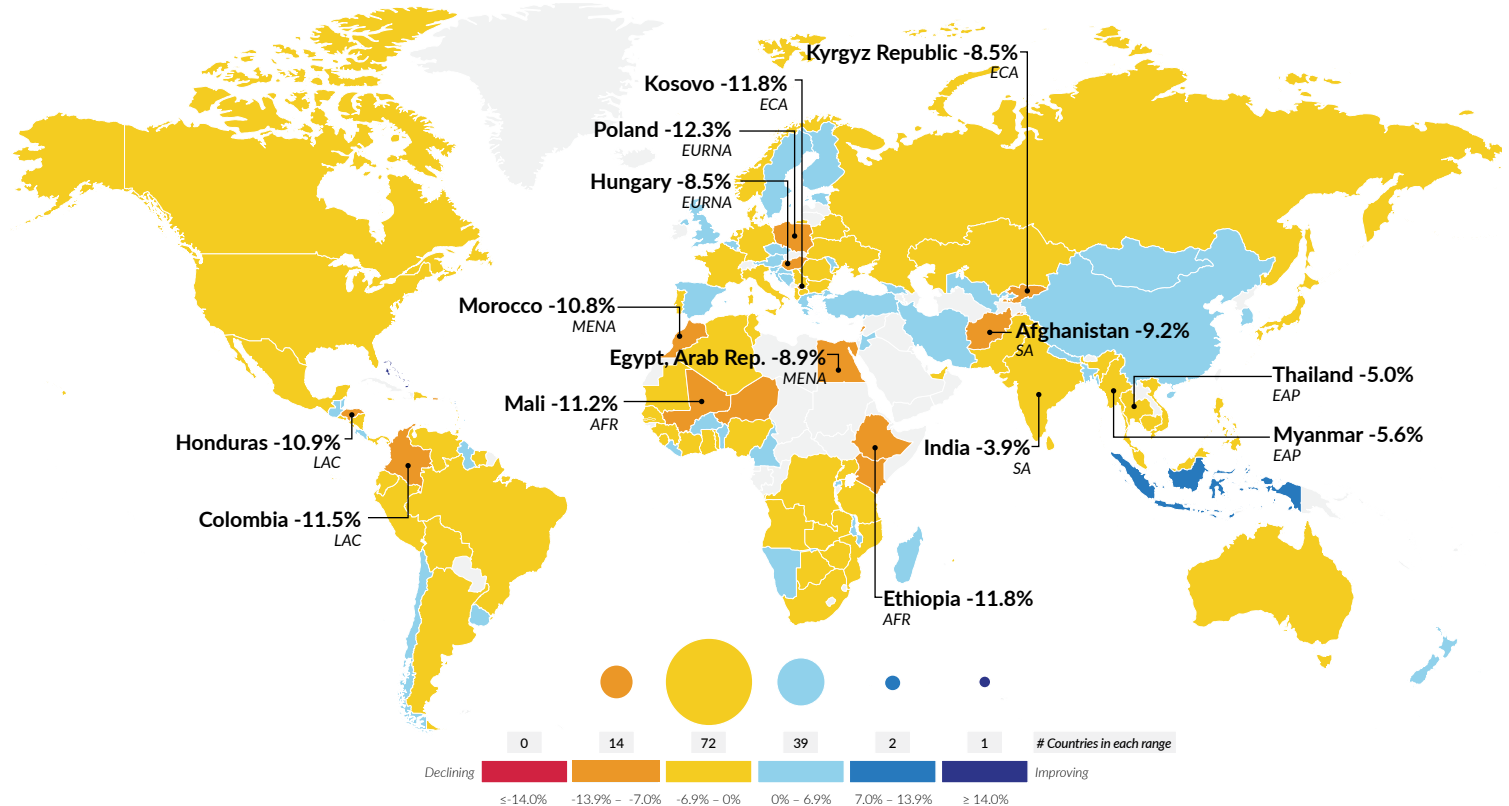
Delays in criminal adjudication over the past year (Sub-Factor 8.2)



*Countries and jurisdictions that are new to the Index in 2021 are not included.

Figure 13. Rising Discrimination During COVID-19

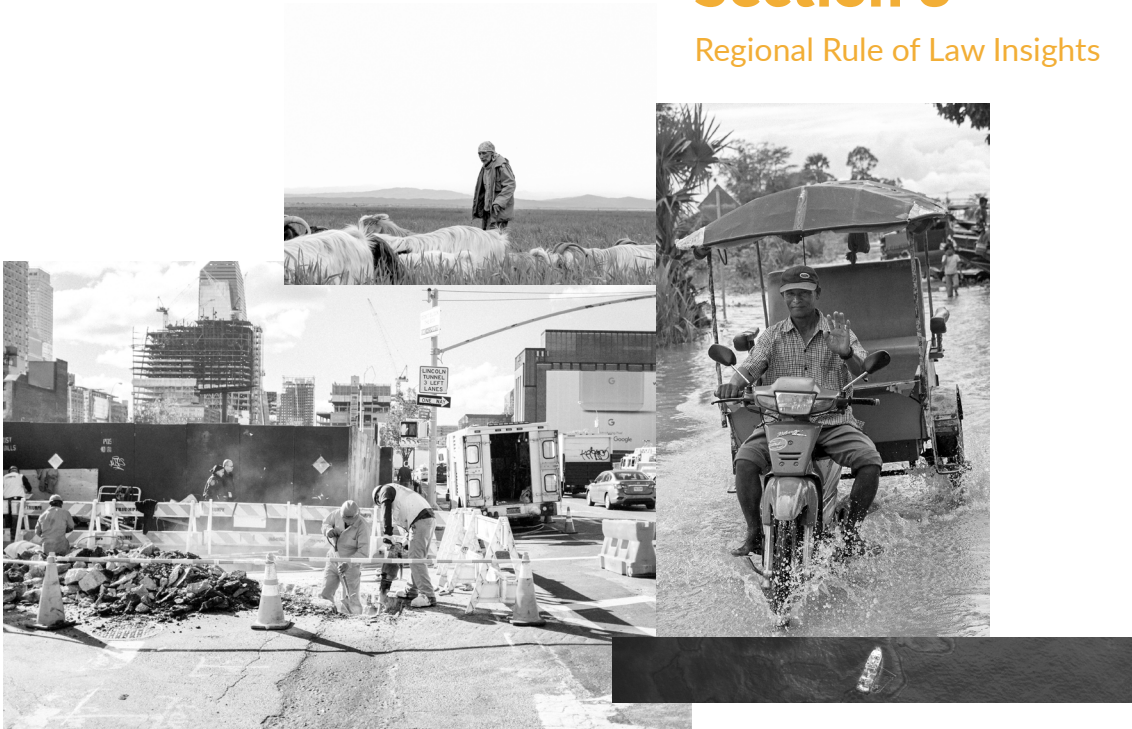
During the last year, 67% of countries and jurisdictions* covered by the Index experienced declines in sub-factor 4.1 on equal treatment and absence of discrimination. This decline was the most prevalent in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East and North Africa. The map below highlights the two biggest declines in each region.



*Annual percentage change in score is rounded to one decimal place. Countries with annual percentage changes in scores that round to 0.0% have been graphed according to their unrounded score in order to show changes.

Section 3

Regional Rule of Law Insights



- 32 *Figure 14 Rule of Law Changes in the European Union*
- 33 *Figure 15 Rule of Law Changes in Latin America*
- 34 *Figure 16 Rule of Law Changes in East Asia and the Pacific*
- 35 *Figure 17 Rule of Law Changes in Sub-Saharan Africa*

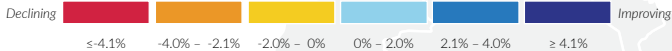
Photos: Peter Nijenhuis (Flickr), Kris Krug (Wikimedia), Hani Pirzadian (Unsplash), Nicolas Leclercq (Unsplash)

Figure 14. Rule of Law Changes in the European Union

In the last year, 14 out of 20 countries and jurisdictions declined in the European Union. Of those 14 countries and jurisdictions, 8 had also declined in the previous year.

Country/Jurisdiction	Overall Rule of Law Score*	% Score Change Since 2020*
Austria	0.81	-0.6%
Belgium	0.79	0.6%
Bulgaria	0.54	-1.0%
Croatia	0.61	-1.0%
Czech Republic	0.73	-0.4%
Denmark	0.90	0.0%
Estonia	0.81	-0.1%
Finland	0.88	0.4%
France	0.72	-0.9%
Germany	0.84	0.4%
Greece	0.61	-0.5%
Hungary	0.52	-1.4%
Italy	0.66	0.2%
Netherlands	0.83	-0.5%
Poland	0.64	-2.4%

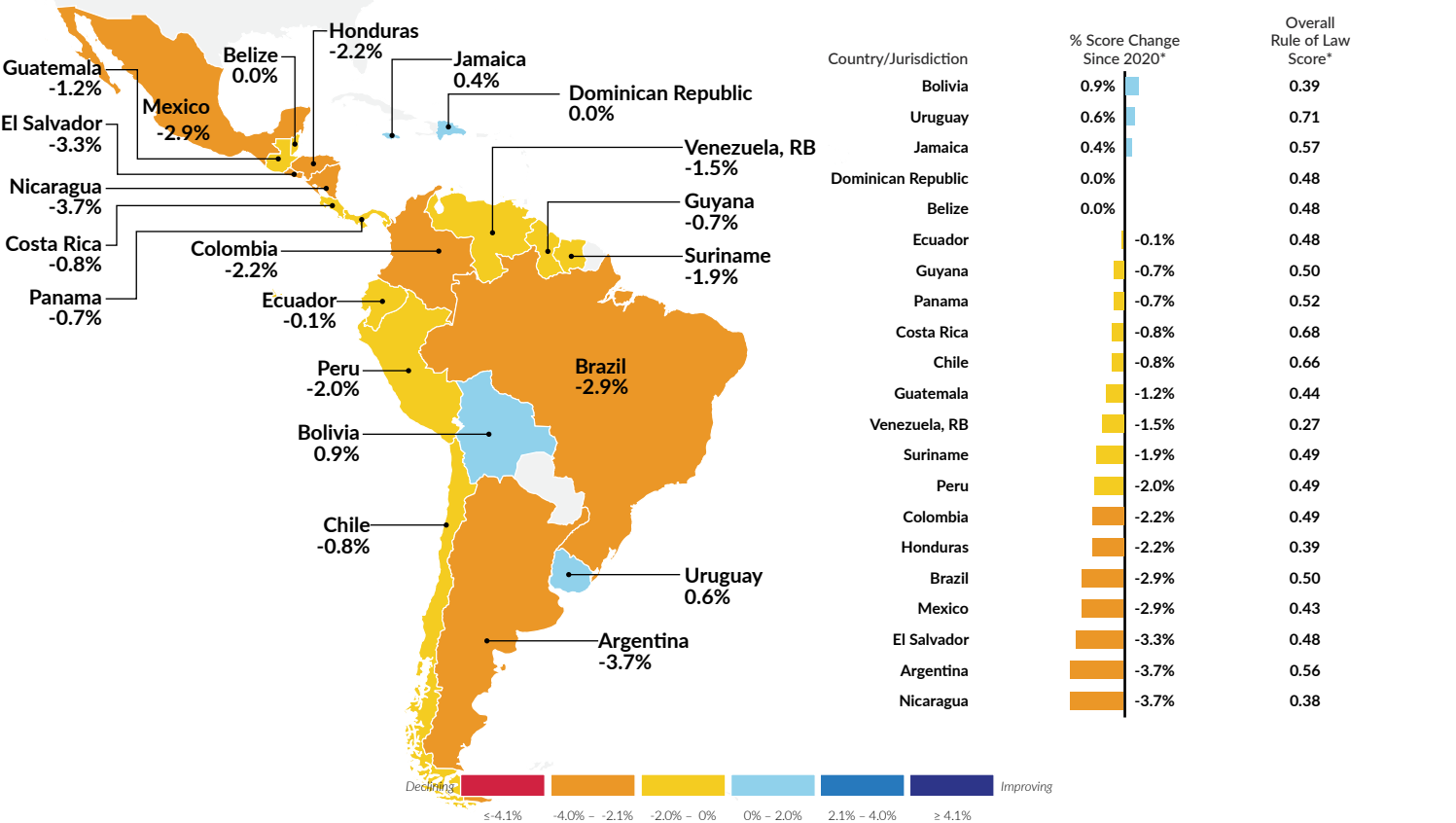
Country/Jurisdiction	Overall Rule of Law Score*	% Score Change Since 2020*
Portugal	0.70	-0.6%
Romania	0.63	-0.8%
Slovenia	0.68	-0.4%
Spain	0.73	0.1%
Sweden	0.86	0.0%



*Scores are rounded to two decimal places. Annual percentage change in score is rounded to one decimal place. Countries with annual percentage changes in scores that round to 0.0% have been graphed according to their unrounded score in order to show changes.

Figure 15. Rule of Law Changes in Latin America

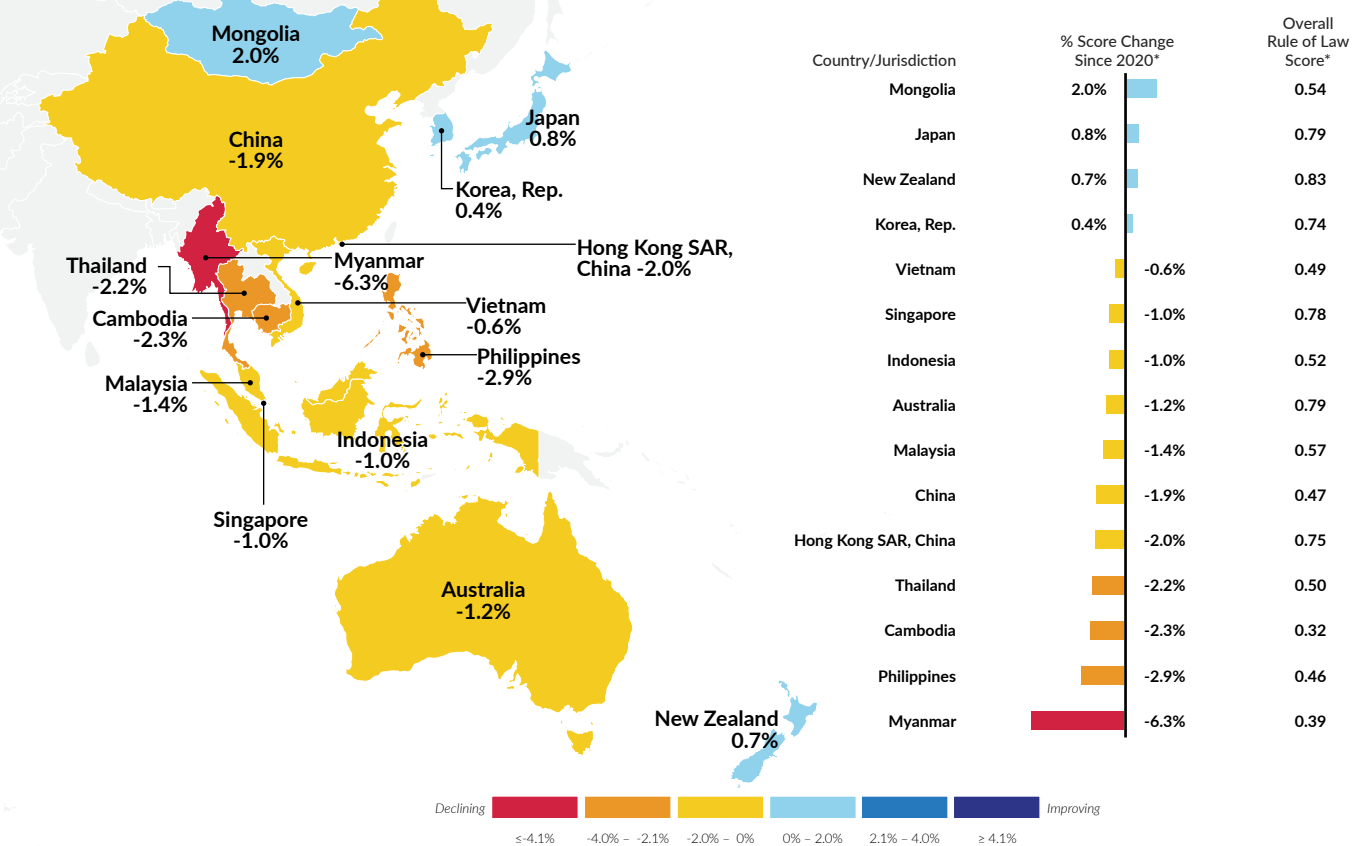
In the last year, 17 out of 21 countries and jurisdictions declined in Latin America. Of those 17 countries and jurisdictions, 10 had also declined in the previous year.



*Scores are rounded to two decimal places. Annual percentage change in score is rounded to one decimal place. Countries with annual percentage changes in scores that round to 0.0% have been graphed according to their unrounded score in order to show changes.

Figure 16. Rule of Law Changes in East Asia and the Pacific

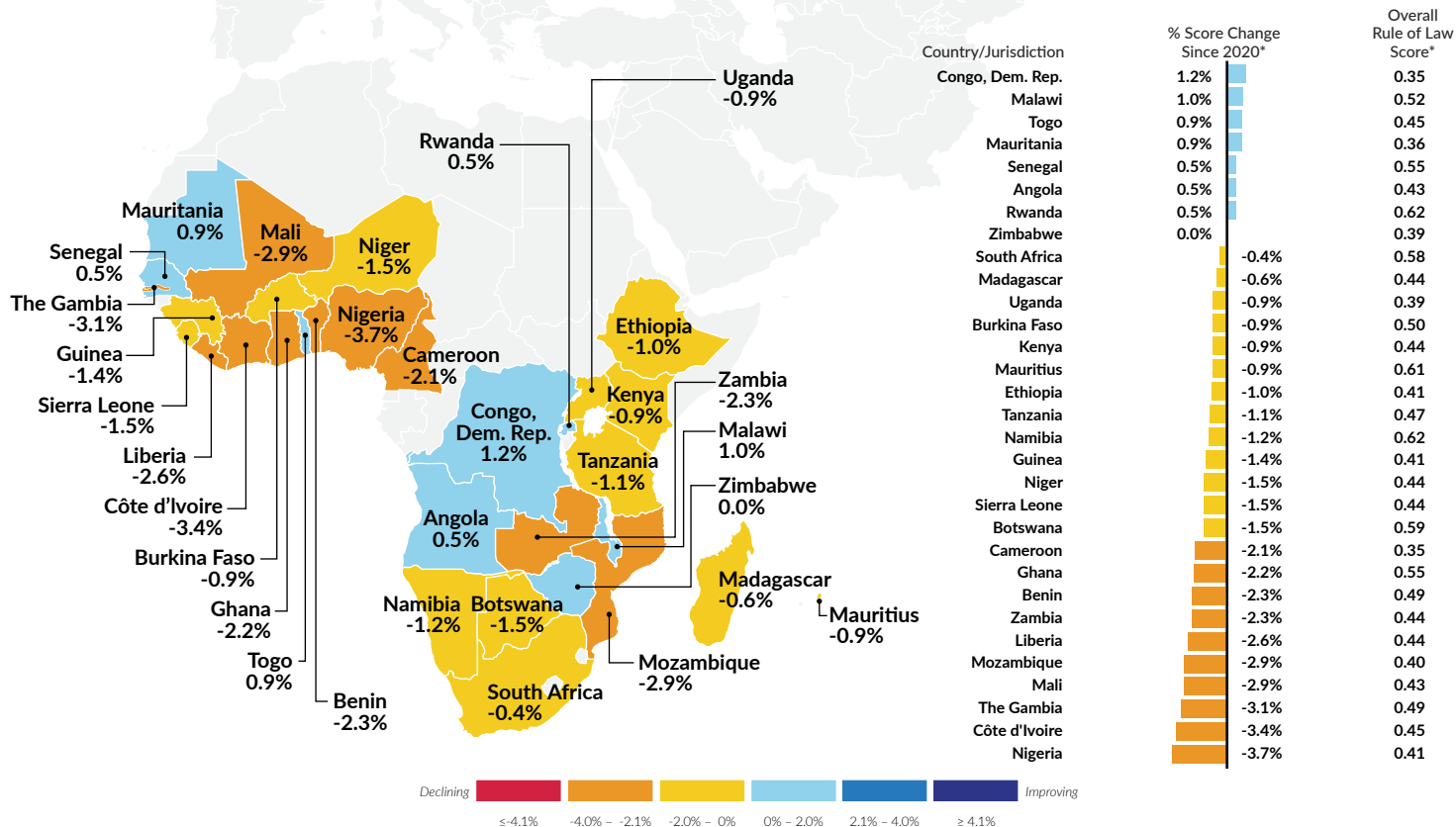
In the last year, 11 out of 15 countries and jurisdictions declined in East Asia and the Pacific. Of those 11 countries and jurisdictions, 5 had also declined in the previous year.



*Scores are rounded to two decimal places. Annual percentage change in score is rounded to one decimal place. Countries with annual percentage changes in scores that round to 0.0% have been graphed according to their unrounded score in order to show changes.

Figure 17. Rule of Law Changes in Sub-Saharan Africa

In the last year, 23 out of 31 countries and jurisdictions declined in Sub-Saharan Africa. Of those 23 countries and jurisdictions, 16 had also declined in the previous year.



*Scores are rounded to two decimal places. Annual percentage change in score is rounded to one decimal place. Countries with annual percentage changes in scores that round to 0.0% have been graphed according to their unrounded score in order to show changes.

Section 4

About the WJP



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About the WJP Rule of Law Index

The *WJP Rule of Law Index*[®] is a quantitative assessment tool designed to measure how the rule of law is experienced and perceived in practical, everyday situations by the general public worldwide. Performance is measured across the eight primary rule of law factors and 44 sub-factors outlined in the Conceptual Framework of the *WJP Rule of Law Index* on pages 4-5.

To present an accurate portrait of the rule of law as experienced by ordinary people, each score of the Index is calculated using a large number of questions drawn from two original data sources collected by the WJP in each country: A General Population Poll (GPP) conducted by leading local polling companies, using a representative sample of 1,000 respondents in each country; and Qualified Respondents' Questionnaires (QRQs) consisting of closed-ended questions completed by in-country practitioners and academics with expertise in civil and commercial law, criminal justice, labor law, and public health.

For the full methodology of the Index and more detailed country-level information, please refer to the *World Justice Project Rule of Law Index*[®] 2021 report, available for download at worldjusticeproject.org.



Defining the Rule of Law

The World Justice Project defines the rule of law as a durable system of laws, institutions, norms, and community commitment that delivers:



Universal Principle One *Accountability*

The government as well as private actors are accountable under the law.



Universal Principle Three *Open Government*

The processes by which the law is adopted, administered, adjudicated, and enforced are accessible, fair, and efficient.



Universal Principle Two *Just Law*

The law is clear, publicized, and stable and is applied evenly. It ensures human rights as well as contract and property rights.



Universal Principle Four *Accessible and Impartial Justice*

Justice is delivered timely by competent, ethical, and independent representatives and neutrals who are accessible, have adequate resources, and reflect the makeup of the communities they serve.

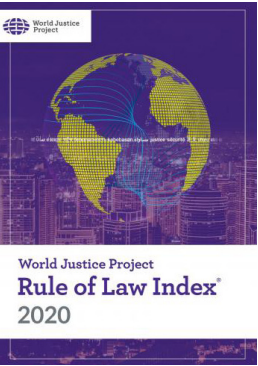
About the World Justice Project

The World Justice Project (WJP) is an independent, 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 is the foundation for communities of justice, opportunity, and peace—underpinning development, accountable government, and respect for fundamental rights. Learn more at: worldjusticeproject.org.

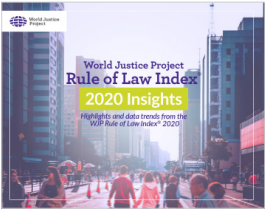
“Strengthening the rule of law is a never-ending process. No society has ever attained, let alone sustained, a perfect realization of the rule of law. That is the challenge that lies before us.”

- Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu

More from the World Justice Project



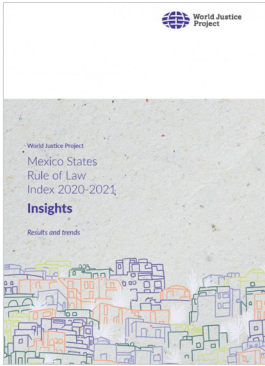
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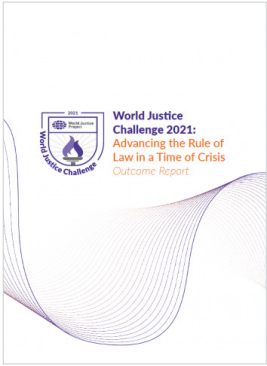
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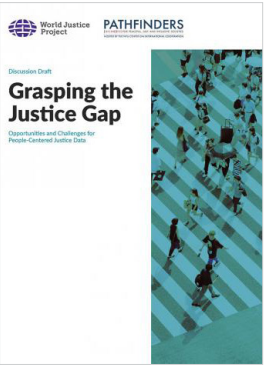
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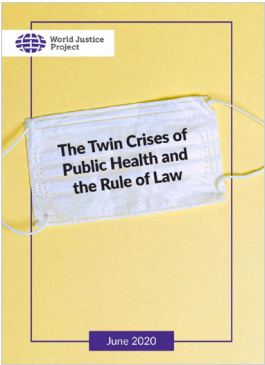
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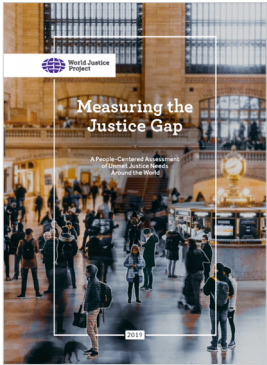
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