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The Philippines Ranks 97 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 Philippines' score decreased, ranks 13 out of 15 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 Philippines.

The Philippines' overall rule of law score decreased by less than 1% in this year's Index. It ranks 97th out of 143 countries worldwide.

Regionally, the Philippines ranks 13th out of 15 countries in East Asia and the Pacific.* The region's top performer is New Zealand (ranked 7th out of 143 globally), followed by Australia and Singapore. The three countries with the lowest scores in the region are the Philippines, Myanmar, and Cambodia (140th globally).

In the last year, 11 out of 15 countries declined in East Asia and the Pacific. Of those 11 countries, 6 had also declined in the previous year.

Among upper-middle income countries, the Philippines ranks 35th out of 44.**

The Philippines 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 Philippines.

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 Philippines.
- **"Freedom of assembly and association"** declined in **67%** of countries, including the Philippines.
- **"Civic participation"** declined in **65%** of countries, including the Philippines.

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 Philippines.

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

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

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 Philippines' overall score is 0.46.

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 Philippines' WJP Rule of Law Index rankings

Overall score global rank: 97/143
Overall score regional rank: 13/15

Factor score rankings:

FACTOR	GLOBAL RANK	REGIONAL RANK*	INCOME RANK**
Constraints on Government Powers	88/143	10/15	27/44
Absence of Corruption	88/143	11/15	28/44
Open Government	83/143	10/15	30/44
Fundamental Rights	116/143	12/15	39/44
Order and Security	95/143	13/15	30/44
Regulatory Enforcement	87/143	11/15	26/44
Civil Justice	106/143	13/15	37/44
Criminal Justice	116/143	13/15	36/44

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

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

***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 East Asia and Pacific region: Australia, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam

**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