

UNDER EMBARGO – DO NOT PUBLISH UNTIL:

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AUSTRALIA RANKED 10 OUT OF 113 COUNTRIES ON RULE OF LAW, RISING ONE POSITION

World Justice Project (WJP) Releases 2017-2018 WJP Rule of Law Index

WASHINGTON, DC (31 January 2018) – The World Justice Project (WJP) today released the *2017-2018 WJP Rule of Law Index*® which measures rule of law adherence in 113 countries worldwide based on more than 110,000 household and 3,000 expert surveys. Featuring primary data, the *WJP Rule of Law Index* measures countries' rule of law performance across eight factors: Constraints on Government Powers, Absence of Corruption, Open Government, Fundamental Rights, Order and Security, Regulatory Enforcement, Civil Justice, and Criminal Justice.

Australia rose one position for overall rule of law performance (from 11 in the *2016 WJP Rule of Law Index*) to 10 out of 113 countries in the 2017-2018 edition. Its score places it at 2 out of 15 countries in the East Asia and Pacific region* and 10 out of 35 among high income** countries. Significant trends included an improvement in Open Government.

The top three overall performers in the 2017-2018 *WJP Rule of Law Index* were Denmark (1), Norway (2), and Finland (3); the bottom three were Afghanistan (111), Cambodia (112), and Venezuela (113).

Globally, a majority of countries worldwide saw their scores decline since the publication of the last *WJP Rule of Law Index* (in October 2016) in the areas of human rights, checks on government powers, and civil and criminal justice.

Regionally, East Asia and Pacific is the second-ranked region in rule of law, behind Western Europe and North America. New Zealand and Australia continue to be the top performers in the region, ranking 7th and 10th respectively out of 113 countries worldwide. However, more than two-thirds of countries in this region experienced a decrease in overall rule of law score. The Philippines continued to drop significantly in the global ranks, falling 18 places to 88th out of 113 countries.

The *WJP Rule of Law Index*® is the world's leading source for original data on the rule of law. The *Index* relies on more than 110,000 household and 3,000 expert surveys to measure how the rule of law is experienced and perceived in practical, everyday situations by the general public worldwide. Performance is measured using 44 indicators across eight primary rule of law factors, each of which is scored and ranked globally and against regional and income peers: Constraints on Government Powers, Absence of Corruption, Open Government, Fundamental Rights, Order and Security, Regulatory Enforcement, Civil Justice, and Criminal Justice.

“Effective rule of law is the foundation for communities of equity, opportunity, and peace,” said William H. Neukom, WJP founder and CEO. “No country has achieved a perfect realization of the rule of law. The

WJP Rule of Law Index is intended to be a first step in setting benchmarks, informing reforms, stimulating programs, and deepening appreciation and understanding for the foundational importance of the rule of law.”

The complete 2017-2018 report—including country profiles, data visualizations, methodology, and download options—is available on January 31 at: www.worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index

AUSTRALIA RANKINGS

WJP Rule of Law Index 2017-2018 performance (1 is best)

AUSTRALIA OVERALL GLOBAL RANK: 10/113

AUSTRALIA OVERALL REGIONAL RANK*: 2/15

FACTOR	REGIONAL RANK*	INCOME RANK**	GLOBAL RANK
Constraints on Government Powers	2/15	10/35	10/113
Absence of Corruption	5/15	12/35	12/113
Open Government	2/15	9/35	9/113
Fundamental Rights	2/15	13/35	13/113
Order and Security	5/15	17/35	18/113
Regulatory Enforcement	3/15	7/35	7/113
Civil Justice	5/15	13/35	13/113
Criminal Justice	3/15	13/35	13/113

*Countries measured in the East Asia and Pacific region: Australia, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong SAR, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam

**High income countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong SAR, China, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, St. Kitts and Nevis, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay

ABOUT THE WORLD JUSTICE PROJECT:

The World Justice Project (WJP) is an independent, multidisciplinary organization working 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 equity, opportunity, and peace—underpinning development, accountable government, and respect for fundamental rights. Learn more at: www.worldjusticeproject.org

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