

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL OCTOBER 28

Sri Lanka Ranks 74 out of 143 in the WJP Rule of Law Index

- *2025 WJP Rule of Law Index*[®] finds the rule of law recession accelerates as authoritarian trends expand
- Decline in judicial independence and shrinking civic space signal heightened risk to democracy worldwide
- Sri Lanka's score increased, ranks 2 out of 6 regionally

WASHINGTON (October 28, 2025) – The **global rule of law recession has accelerated** again, according to the new [*WJP Rule of Law Index*[®] 2025](#). A stark 68% of countries declined in their rule of law in 2025, compared to 57% in the previous year.

However, Sri Lanka is among the minority of countries to see its rule of law score increase this year.

Sri Lanka's overall rule of law score increased 1.1% in this year's Index. It ranks 74th out of 143 countries worldwide.

Regionally, Sri Lanka ranks 2nd out of 6 countries in South Asia.* The region's top performer is Nepal (ranked 72nd out of 143 globally), followed by Sri Lanka and India. The three countries with the lowest scores in the region are Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan (142nd globally).

In the last year, 4 out of 6 countries declined in South Asia. Of those 4 countries, 1 had also declined in the previous year.

Among lower-middle income countries, Sri Lanka ranks 6th out of 35.**

Sri Lanka and global trends

An expansion of **authoritarian trends is the primary force behind the rule of law recession**, with deep declines in factors measuring Constraints on Government Powers, Open Government, and Fundamental Rights.

The integrity of **checks and balances** has also been seriously weakened, but not in Sri Lanka.

A characteristic of this accelerated rule of law recession is a shrinking civic space. Freedoms crucial for public discourse and government oversight—measured under the **Open Government** and **Fundamental Rights** factors—saw widespread erosion. Sri Lanka is an exception to the over 70% of countries experiencing a shrinking of civic freedoms:

- **“Freedom of opinion and expression”** declined in **73%** of countries, but not in Sri Lanka.
- **“Freedom of assembly and association”** declined in **72%** of countries, but not in Sri Lanka.
- **“Civic participation”** declined in **71%** of countries, but not in Sri Lanka.

The Index shows that judiciaries are losing ground to executive overreach, with rising political interference across justice systems. Indicators measuring whether the **judiciary limits executive power** and whether **civil and criminal justice are free from improper government influence** declined in 61%, 67%, and 62% of countries, respectively. This includes Sri Lanka.

More broadly, **civil justice** weakened in 68% of countries, but not in Sri Lanka. This decline reflects longer delays, less effective alternatives to court (such as mediation), and greater government interference.

Global rankings

Globally, the top-ranked country in the 2025 *WJP Rule of Law Index* is Denmark, followed by Norway, Finland, Sweden, and New Zealand. The country with the lowest score is Venezuela, followed by Afghanistan, Cambodia, Haiti, and Nicaragua.

Sri Lanka's WJP Rule of Law Index rankings

Overall score global rank: 74/143

Overall score regional rank: 2/6

Factor score rankings:

FACTOR	GLOBAL RANK	REGIONAL RANK*	INCOME RANK**
Constraints on Government Powers	67/143	3/6	6/35
Absence of Corruption	61/143	1/6	4/35
Open Government	59/143	2/6	3/35
Fundamental Rights	85/143	2/6	6/35
Order and Security	91/143	2/6	14/35
Regulatory Enforcement	72/143	1/6	7/35
Civil Justice	100/143	1/6	15/35
Criminal Justice	79/143	2/6	8/35

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

To see Sri Lanka's performance across all 44 sub-factors the Index measures, visit:

www.worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/country/2025/Sri%20Lanka/

Explore the full rankings and findings of the 2025 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 4,100 legal 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 South Asia region: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka.

**Lower-middle income countries and jurisdictions: Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Cambodia, Cameroon, Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, India, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Zambia, Zimbabwe.