

Corruption Perceptions Index for 2017: Kyrgyzstan moved up one.

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Corruption Perceptions Index: Transparency International's general report for 2018 (CPI 2018) ranks the Kyrgyz Republic 135th out of 180 countries. Kyrgyzstan received a score of 29 out of 100 alongside Russia, Paraguay, Papua New Guinea, Mexico, Laos, Honduras and the Dominican Republic.

Compared to the results of the Index for 2016, the situation of the Kyrgyz Republic has changed a bit: it received one score higher, and changed its position on ranking list (from 136th to 135th).

This year, New Zealand and Denmark rank highest with scores of 89 and 88 respectively. The 3^d place is divided between Finland, Switzerland and Norway with scores of 85. Syria, South Sudan and Somalia rank lowest with scores of 14, 12 and 9 respectively. The list of leaders and laggards has barely changed.

Corruption Perceptions Index is a composite index measuring the perceived level of public-sector corruption in different countries. Transparency International issues Corruption Perceptions Index annually since 1995. The Index for 2017 is based on data from 13 sources over the last two years (2016-2017) collected by 12 independent organizations in surveys for experts and businesspeople around the world. The countries are ranked on a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is a highly corrupt country and 100 is very clean. Kyrgyzstan was included in the ranking in 2003.

The observed position change of Kyrgyzstan in the "Corruption Perceptions Index" is caused by expectations for actions of the Kyrgyz authorities on the Open Government Initiative accession, the adoption several legislative acts, including the long-awaited Law on Conflicts of Interest and the announcement of the National Digital Transformation Programme "Taza koom"(a clean and honest society).

Among the reasons that Kyrgyzstan remained a country of an extreme level of corruption, below 30 score, among different countries, the principal ones are:

1. The cases of corruption offences by senior officials are either instituted not systematic or never instituted. Individual high-profile cases only shade the general deeply disappointing picture.
2. The weak rule of law and the lack of mechanisms governing responsibility for non-declared income and property, as well as conflicts of interests, may enable perpetrators to escape with a minimum or no penalty.
3. The implementation of departmental plans to counter corruption is extremely formal and not public.
4. The major national projects, including reputational and infrastructural projects, continue to be implemented in non-transparent ways. Executors are often selected according to principles and

criteria unknown to society, and not selected in an open competition.

Several concrete actions should be taken to change the situation and Kyrgyzstan's transition into the area of moderate level of corruption:

1. Develop an efficient and realistic national plan for combating corruption, involving in its development the civil society institutions and the expert community. Envisage personal responsibility of the heads of executive bodies for non-performance or formal implementation of the plan actions;
2. Introduce in the legal system effective liability mechanisms for illicit enrichment, that is, for the availability of assets and property from an official, whose origin such an official cannot reasonably justify;
3. Ensure effective internal and community oversight of compliance with the legislative requirements on the declaration and prevention of conflict of interests with the introduction of strict legal responsibility for abuse of conflict of interest situations by public officials;
4. Ensure the independence of the judiciary from the executive branch and the non-selectivity justice, as well as the disclosure information of judicial operations and law enforcement officials;
5. Provide for public organizations, journalists and civil activists with freely accessing and analyzing information related to civil anti-corruption control activities;

Practice has shown that strong political will, effective legislation, professional executors and public support is needed for effective corruption prevention.

The recently elected President of the Kyrgyz Republic S. Zheenbekov has already made a number of statements on the need to strengthen the fight against corruption. He held his first meeting as President of the Security Council, which covered the subject of anti-corruption. At this meeting, he criticized the public authorities that must fight corruption and stated that the fight against corruption would be his priority as head of state. The society stands ready to support in the fight against corruption, a legal basis existed. Whether the president can make a difference and provide the impetus for positive dynamics of Kyrgyzstan in the Corruption Perceptions Index remains to be seen.

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