

"Progress in combating corruption in North Macedonia in 2022"

North Macedonia has seen democratic progress over the past year, according to Freedom House's latest Nations in Transition report. The country received a score of 3.86 for democratic progress, as opposed to 3.82 in the previous report, on a scale of 1 to 7, where one indicates the lowest score and seven the highest score for democratic progress. At the same time, according to the Democracy Index for 2022 of The Economist on a scale of 0 to 10, North Macedonia received the lowest score for "political culture" – 3.13. For "electoral process and pluralism" it has the highest score - 7.83, for "functioning of the government" - 6.07, for "political participation" - 6.11 and for "civil liberties" - 7.35.

Main findings and recommendations:

1. North Macedonia is a "defective democracy" with a low level of political culture.

With an index of 6.10 and 72nd place on the list according to the Democracy Index for 2022, North Macedonia remains in the "democracy with flaws" group, and is one place higher than the previous ranking, when it left the "hybrid regimes" group. [Democracy Index 2022](#)

2. North Macedonia has some level of preparedness, it is moderately prepared in terms of preventing and fighting corruption.

The country continued to consolidate its record of investigation, prosecution and trial in several corruption cases, including high-level cases. The cases initiated by the former Special Public Prosecutor's Office (SPO) continued to be resolved, enabling the determination of responsibility for the illegal wiretapping. First-instance verdicts were adopted for a large number of cases. In accordance with recommendations from previous years, the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption (SCPC) has been proactive in providing guidance to public institutions in anti-corruption policies and has initiated several cases, including cases against high-ranking officials.

[European Commission Report, p. 6](#)

3. Macedonia is ranked 85th among 180 countries in the world according to Transparency International's 2022 Corruption Perceptions Index.

Compared to last year, the country advanced by one position. Macedonia has 40 points on the scale where 0 indicates the most corrupt and 100 the least corrupt country. Of the countries in the region, Slovenia is best positioned at 41st place. The least corruption is in Denmark, Finland, New Zealand and Norway, and the most corrupt countries in the world are Yemen, Libya and North Korea. [Corruption Perceptions Index 2022](#)

4. In North Macedonia, the relevant authorities open new cases of corruption, but these steps are threatened by the ineffective monitoring of the current cases and the lack of integrity in the selection of key individuals in the judiciary.

To ensure accountability and show a real will to fight corruption, the government must adequately resource and allow the independence of the Commission for Prevention of Corruption (CPC) and the institutions responsible for investigating corruption and organized crime. [Corruption Perceptions Index 2022](#)

5. The Corruption Perceptions Index for 2022 for Macedonia shows a lack of integrity and compliance with laws as well as a decline in democratic processes.

Although there is a minimal improvement according to the CPI (Corruption Perception Index), our country experienced major corruption scandals in 2022. The judiciary and the rule of law were overshadowed by new scandalous events related to the elections in the judicial bodies and situations in which it is possible for the cases to expire and to avoid the effective application of punishments. [Corruption Perceptions Index 2022](#)

This document was prepared as part of the "Encouraging the public debate on anti-corruption" project which aims to support the reform process in North Macedonia by strengthening the reform agenda in the area of the rule of law, and the project envisages cooperation and consultation with all relevant stakeholders for realization of this objective. The project is supported by the National Endowment for Democracy.