

## PRESS RELEASE

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## Europe and Central Asia Regional Highlights Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2005

*The Nordic countries have again performed very strongly in the CPI 2005, in stark contrast to the rampant corruption indicated by low scores throughout the Central Asian republics and Southern Caucasus. In addition, Russia and Belarus show declines in their CPI 2005 scores as compared with 2004, indicating severe problems.*

### Improvers 2004 to 2005

In **Ukraine** (CPI 2005 score 2.6; CPI 2004 score 2.2) the improvement this year may be a sign that the new administration coming to power after the “Orange Revolution” is viewed in a far more positive light than its predecessor, and that the rejection of a flawed election and the subsequent democratic transition have resulted in an increased sense of optimism regarding governance and corruption in Ukraine.

### Decliners 2004 to 2005

The two countries with the largest negative changes are **Belarus** (CPI 2005 score 2.6; CPI 2004 score 3.3) and **Russia** (CPI 2005 score 2.4; CPI 2004 score 2.8). These scores demonstrate a perception of endemic and worsening corruption. The declines can be linked to the reduction in the transparency of government activities in recent years, as well as a crackdown on independent organisations and the media, with several NGOs in Russia and Belarus having been closed down or outlawed. In Russia, this has led to fewer organisations and individuals in a position to act as watchdogs and monitor government activities, while in Belarus such entities were nearly absent to begin with.

### Top performers

**Iceland** (CPI 2005 score 9.7; CPI 2004 score 9.5) has achieved the top score in Europe and Central Asia, as well as in the CPI overall. Several other European countries have also continued to perform very strongly in the latest survey, in particular **Finland** (CPI 2005 score 9.6; CPI 2004 score 9.7), **Denmark** (CPI 2005 and 2004 score 9.5) and **Sweden** (CPI 2005 and 2004 score 9.2). All Nordic countries’ scores show good performance over the ten years of CPI data, reflecting a professional and transparent public administration combined with strong civil society and civic culture.

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## Poor performance in Central Asia

An area of particular concern is the **Central Asian republics and Southern Caucasus**. The lowest performer there is **Turkmenistan** (CPI 2005 score 1.8; CPI 2004 score 2.0), a country whose government is the most authoritarian in the whole region. With the score of all the countries in this region below 3.0, however, it is clear that there is a strong perception of endemic corruption. However, the modest improvement in **Georgia** (CPI 2005 score 2.3; CPI 2004 score 2.0) shows that change is possible with political will. but it also shows that there is a long way to go to clean up corrupt systems. Except for Georgia, Mongolia and the Kyrgyz Republic, no post-Soviet country in the region has held what international observers could call free elections. Soviet era rent-seeking elites still hold onto power in several countries, preventing much needed reforms.

**Afghanistan** (CPI 2005 score 2.5) makes its first appearance in the 2005 CPI. Its score, like that of its Central Asian neighbours, reflects endemic corruption.

## New European Union members and proposed accession countries

Of the new EU member states, several have shown an improvement on their 2004 scores, including **Estonia** (CPI 2005 score 6.4; CPI 2004 score 6.0). This reflects sweeping reforms introduced over the years and, heavily influenced by the Nordic countries, the strong emphasis placed on the transparency of public institutions and e-governance.

In general, post-communist countries in Eastern Europe that are involved in the accession process show more positive signs than countries that are not. This points to the leverage of the accession process in promoting anti-corruption reforms in candidate countries. However, this external pressure is gone when the accession country becomes a member. Some long-term member states, such as **Italy** (CPI 2005 score 5.0; CPI 2004 score 4.8) and **Greece** (CPI 2005 score 4.3; CPI 2004 score 4.3), and several new members, such as the **Czech Republic** (CPI 2005 score 4.3; CPI 2004 score 4.2) and **Poland** (CPI 2005 score, 3.4; CPI 2004 score 3.5) have performed relatively poorly and show little or no sign of improvement. To some extent, this weakens the credibility of the EU in promoting anti-corruption in its new members and exporting anti-corruption to countries proposed for accession in 2007. However, it is clear that fighting corruption must be a key part of the next accession round, involving **Romania** (CPI 2005 score 3.0; CPI 2004 score 2.9) and **Bulgaria** (CPI 2005 score 4.0; CPI 2004 score 4.1). Both countries would be among the lowest EU scorers on accession.

**Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2005**  
**Central Eastern Europe & Central Asia**  
**Regional average: 2.67**  
**Global average: 4.11**

Country Rank	Regional rank	Country	2005 CPI Score	Confidence range	Surveys Used
55	1	Bulgaria	4.0	3.4 - 4.6	8
65	2	Turkey	3.5	3.1 - 4.0	11
70	3	Croatia	3.4	3.2 - 3.7	7
85	4	Romania	3.0	2.6 - 3.5	11
88	5	Armenia	2.9	2.5 - 3.2	4
		Bosnia and Herzegovina	2.9	2.7 - 3.1	6
		Moldova	2.9	2.3 - 3.7	5
97	8	Serbia and Montenegro	2.8	2.5 - 3.3	7
103	9	Macedonia	2.7	2.4 - 3.2	7
107	10	Belarus	2.6	1.9 - 3.8	5
		Kazakhstan	2.6	2.2 - 3.2	6
		Ukraine	2.6	2.4 - 2.8	8
117	13	Afghanistan	2.5	1.6 - 3.2	3
126	14	Albania	2.4	2.1 - 2.7	3
		Russia	2.4	2.3 - 2.6	12
130	16	Georgia	2.3	2.0 - 2.6	6
		Kyrgyzstan	2.3	2.1 - 2.5	5
137	18	Azerbaijan	2.2	1.9 - 2.5	6
		Uzbekistan	2.2	2.1 - 2.4	5
144	20	Tajikistan	2.1	1.9 - 2.4	5
155	21	Turkmenistan	1.8	1.7 - 2.0	4