

# WJP Rule of Law Index 2023: Global Rule of Law Continues to Decline



Anna Pinggen

## News

Amid alarming global developments, the integrity of the rule of law is on a decline, affecting more than six billion individuals globally. The [2023 Rule of Law Index](#) released by the World Justice Project (WJP) on 25 October 2023 highlights the ongoing erosion in global commitment to the rule of law. It reveals that a significant number of countries are regressing, marked by unchecked governmental power, eroding human rights, and judicial systems that are increasingly unable to serve their citizens effectively.

The 2023 edition of the WJP Rule of Law Index (for the 2022 index → [eucrim 2/2022, 168](#); for the WJ project → [eucrim news of 17 June 2019](#)), which assesses rule-of-law strengths, weaknesses, progress, and setbacks across 142 countries, indicates that the rule of law had declined overall in a majority of countries for yet another year. This continuation of authoritarian trends that began in 2016 is evident in every region, signalling a disquieting global rule-of-law recession. The decline in the functioning of justice systems – especially civil justice – spread in 2023, with more countries struggling to provide people with timely, affordable, and accessible justice.

The Index notes, however, that the decline in the rule of law was less widespread and extreme for the second year in a row. A number of countries have successfully countered trends towards authoritarianism, while yet others have effected continuous improvement in areas such as justice, the fight against corruption, and the protection of human rights.

The Index's comprehensive approach offers original, independent data organized into eight factors that comprise the concept of the rule of law:

- Constraints on government powers;
- Absence of corruption;
- Open government;
- Fundamental rights;
- Order and security;
- Regulatory enforcement;
- Civil justice;
- Criminal justice.

These factor scores reflect the perspectives and experiences of more than 149,000 households and 3400 legal experts around the world and are backed by a rigorous process of validation and analysis.

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