



**TRANSPARENCY  
INTERNATIONAL**  
the global coalition against corruption

# PEOPLE AND CORRUPTION: CITIZENS' VOICES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

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**Global Corruption Barometer**

**Transparency International is a global movement with one vision: a world in which government, business, civil society and the daily lives of people are free of corruption. Through more than 100 chapters worldwide and an international secretariat in Berlin, we are leading the fight against corruption to turn this vision into reality.**

**[www.transparency.org](http://www.transparency.org)**

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# INTRODUCTION

Ordinary citizens often stand on the front line against corruption. It is citizens who face demands for bribes to access public services, such as school entry for their children or life-saving medical care. Transparency International believes that people's experience and perceptions of corruption are key for understanding corruption risks around the world. The public also plays a vital role in holding governments accountable for their actions – or lack of action – in addressing graft.

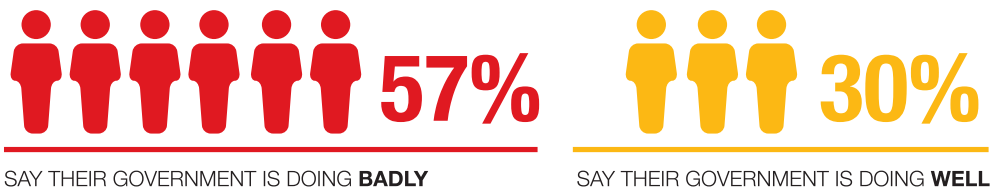
This is a summary report of the key findings from the ninth edition of Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer series – the world's largest survey asking citizens about their direct personal experience of bribery in their daily lives, their perceptions of corruption challenges in their own countries, and their willingness to act against corruption.

The results of this latest edition of the survey have been published via a series of regional reports. This summary brings together those reports and covers 119 countries, territories and regions around the globe. It is based on interviews with 162,136 adults from March 2014 until January 2017 and it identifies the key differences between the regions and key results by place.

This report clearly demonstrates that bribery is a far too common occurrence around the world, with nearly one in every four public service users having to pay a bribe each year. With the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals requiring governments to reduce corruption and bribery in all its forms by 2030, the results from the survey can be used to show governments just how far they must go before these goals will be realised.

# GOVERNMENTS' ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS ARE FALLING SHORT

We asked people how well or badly they thought their government was doing at fighting corruption in their country. Around the world, we found that nearly six in ten people thought that their government was doing poorly, while only three in ten thought that their government was doing well.



The Middle East and North Africa region had the highest percentage of citizens rating their government as doing a bad job at fighting corruption (68 per cent), followed by Sub Saharan Africa (63 per cent). In the remaining three reports covering Asia Pacific region, Europe and Central Asia and the Americas, half or just over half of citizens gave their government a bad rating (50 per cent, 53 per cent and 53 per cent respectively).

In 76 of the surveyed places, a majority of citizens rated their government as doing poorly at addressing corruption risks, while in only eight places did a majority said that their government had done well. The table below shows places which were most critical and most positive when rating their government's efforts. In Yemen, citizens were particularly critical with 91 per cent saying they had done badly, contrasting strongly with Thailand where 72 per cent rated their government well.

PLACES WHERE GOVERNMENTS ARE PERCEIVED TO BE DOING THE WORST % SAYING **BADLY**

Yemen	– 91%
Madagascar	– 90%
Ukraine	– 87%
Gabon	– 86%
Bosnia and Herz.	– 84%
Moldova	– 84%

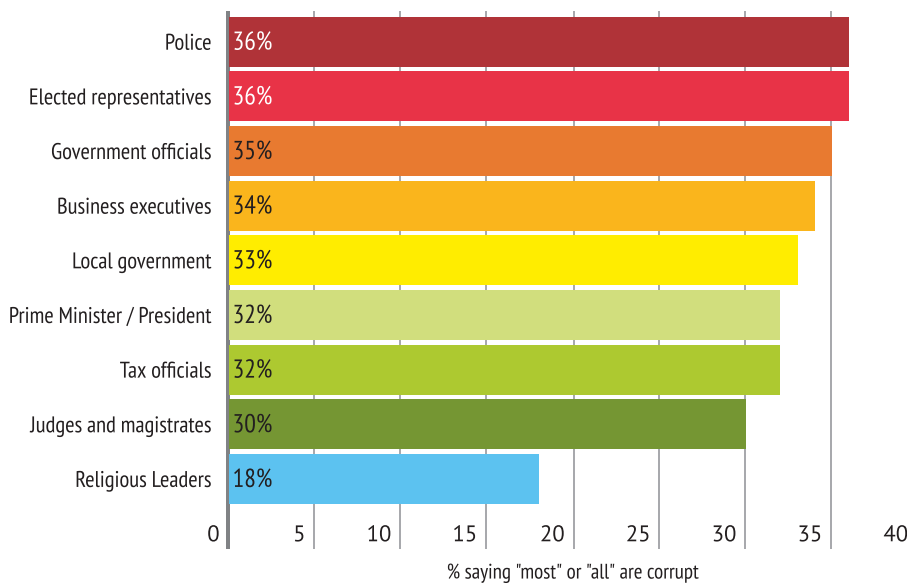
PLACES WHERE GOVERNMENTS ARE PERCEIVED TO BE DOING THE BEST % SAYING **WELL**

Thailand	– 72%
Indonesia	– 64%
Honduras	– 55%
Guatemala	– 54%
Botswana	– 54%
Ecuador	– 54%

Q. How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say? "Fighting corruption in government". Base: all respondents, excluding missing responses. Response categories "Very badly" and "Fairly badly" are combined into "Badly"; and response categories "Very well" and "Fairly well" are combined into "Well".

# KEY PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS SEEN AS CORRUPT

The survey asked citizens how corrupt they thought various key influential groups and institutions in their country were. Across the globe, the police and elected representatives (such as members of parliament, congressmen, senators etc.) were seen to be most corrupt – followed closely by government officials, business executives and local government officials.



Q. How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?  
Base: all respondents, excluding missing responses. Chart shows percentage of respondents who answered that either "most" or "all" of them are corrupt.

In the 2013 Global Corruption Barometer survey, when we asked a similar question, the police, political parties, public officials and parliament also came top as being perceived as the most corrupt.

When comparing the results between regions, in both Asia Pacific and Sub Saharan Africa police were seen as the most corrupt, with 39 per cent and 47 per cent of people respectively said most or all police officers were corrupt. In Europe and Central Asia elected representatives were seen as the most corrupt (31 per cent). In the Americas both the police and elected representatives fared worst (46 per cent both), while in the Middle East and North Africa elected representatives, tax officials and government officials were thought to be highly corrupt by 45 per cent of the population, a higher percentage than for any other institution.

When we looked at the results by country and took a simple average of the results for the seven public sector categories (the president's office, members of parliament, government officials, tax officials, the police, judges/magistrates and local government councillors), we were able to show in which place people generally perceive their public sector to be highly corrupt and in which places people generally perceive their public sector to be much cleaner. The table below shows the top scoring places in both the corrupt and clean categories. For example, in Moldova almost seven in ten people say that people working in these public sector institutions are highly corrupt compared with just 6 per cent in Germany who said the same.

PLACES WHERE THE PUBLIC SECTOR IS PERCEIVED TO BE **MOST CORRUPT**

	Moldova – 69%
	Yemen – 68%
	Lebanon – 67%
	Liberia – 65%
	Venezuela – 64%

PLACES WHERE THE PUBLIC SECTOR IS PERCEIVED TO BE **LEAST CORRUPT**

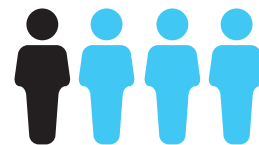
	Germany – 6%
	Switzerland – 8%
	Sweden – 8%
	Australia – 10%
	Netherlands – 11%

Q. How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? - Percentages refer to the average of the seven public sector intuitions, proportion who answered that "most" or "all" are corrupt.

# MANY PEOPLE PAY BRIBES FOR PUBLIC SERVICES

The survey asked people about their direct experiences of bribery in the 12 months prior to when the survey took place. In Asia Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa and the Middle East, citizens were asked whether they had paid a bribe for any of six services which they may have had contact with. In Europe and Central Asia they were asked whether their household had paid a bribe for any of eight public services.

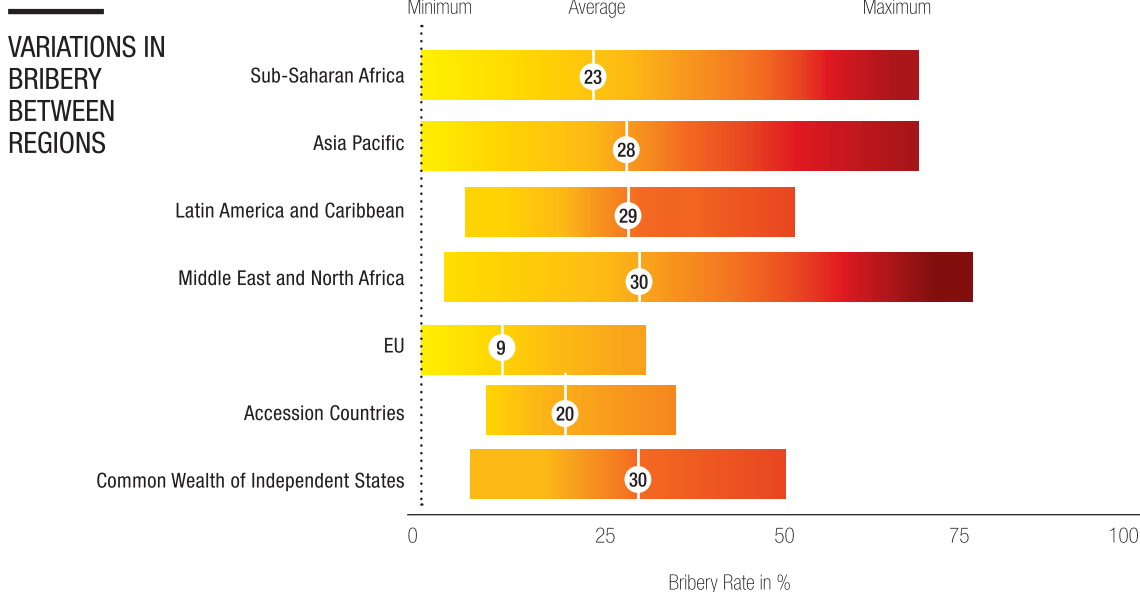
**Around the world nearly 1 in 4 people said that they paid a bribe for public services in the 12 months prior to when the survey took place.**



When we looked across the various regions surveyed we found that on average the bribery rate in the European Union was lowest (9 per cent), while the Commonwealth of Independent States in Eurasia, and the Middle East and North Africa region had an average bribery rate of 30 per cent, which was the highest of all the regions surveyed. The Latin America and Caribbean region and Asia Pacific region followed closely with an average bribery rate of 29 and 28 per cent respectively.

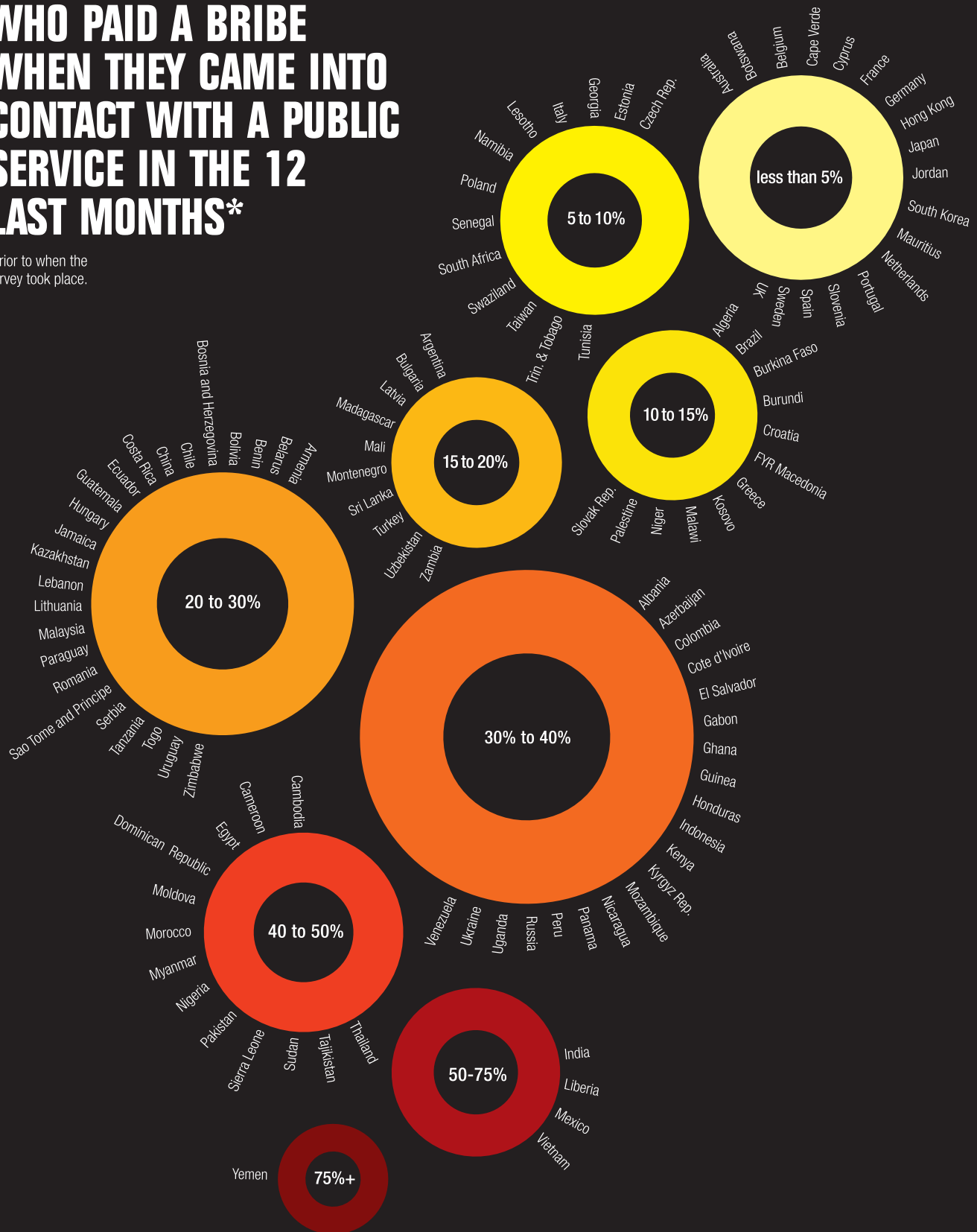
Countries seeking to join the EU and the Sub-Saharan African region have similar average bribery rates to each other (20 and 23 per cent respectively). Yet in Sub-Saharan Africa there is a far greater range in bribery rates by country as shown in the graph below, with some countries doing much worse, and some much better, than Accession countries.

Places with very low bribery rates were found in the Asia Pacific region, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and the EU.



# PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE WHO PAID A BRIBE WHEN THEY CAME INTO CONTACT WITH A PUBLIC SERVICE IN THE 12 LAST MONTHS\*

\*Prior to when the survey took place.



The survey asked about direct experiences of bribery in the 12 months prior to when the survey took place. In Asia Pacific, the Americas, Africa and the Middle East, citizens were asked whether they had paid a bribe for any of six services which they may have had contact with. In Europe and Central Asia they were asked whether their household had paid a bribe for any of eight public services. Results for Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the UK are taken from the 2014 Eurobarometer survey.



# ORDINARY PEOPLE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Despite many people having been affected by bribery around the world, the results still showed that large numbers of people are ready and willing to help in the fight against corruption. More than half the people around the world agreed that ordinary people could make a difference.

Young people aged 24 and under are the most likely to feel empowered to make a difference. Fifty-eight per cent of this age group, compared with 50 per cent of those aged 55 and over, agreed that they could make a difference. Men and women both expressed that they were willing to get involved in anti-corruption (56 per cent men, 53 per cent women).

## CAN ORDINARY PEOPLE MAKE A DIFFERENCE?



Q. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: "Ordinary people can make a difference in the fight against corruption". Base: all respondents, excluding missing responses.

There was a high level of engagement among citizens in many places around the world. In 78 of the 117 countries, territories and regions where this question was asked, a majority of citizens said that they felt empowered to fight against corruption. In only 11 places a majority of citizens said that they did not feel empowered. The table below shows where people felt most engaged and where people felt least engaged.

### PLACES WHERE PEOPLE FEEL **LEAST** ENGAGED % AGREEING

Belarus	10%
Czech Republic	12%
Ukraine	14%
Hungary	14%
Slovak Republic	18%

### PLACES WHERE THE PEOPLE FEEL **MOST** ENGAGED % AGREEING

Brazil	83%
Greenland	83%
Costa Rica	82%
Paraguay	82%
Portugal	82%

Q. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: "Ordinary people can make a difference in the fight against corruption". Base: all respondents, excluding missing responses.



# CONCLUSION

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The findings presented in this report reflect global public opinion on corruption and the experience of bribery. Negative ratings of governments' efforts to curb corruption suggest that more must be done to reduce public sector graft and clean up political institutions so that they act in the interests of citizens rather than in their own interests. There is a clear need to hold the corrupt accountable. Governments and other actors will have to win more trust before ordinary people change their views about the anti-corruption efforts of those in power.

Particularly in countries such as Moldova, Yemen and Lebanon, where people perceived high levels of public sector corruption, and in Mexico, India, Liberia and Vietnam, which have very high rates of bribery for public services, the results suggest real and urgent issues that must be addressed.

The good news is that there are many citizens around the world are ready and willing to help fight against corruption. However, governments must work harder and show progress in their efforts to fight corruption if they are to convince citizens of real progress.

# METHODOLOGY NOTE

Data for the 9th Edition of the Global Corruption Barometer was collected by either face to face or telephone interviews with adults living in 119 countries around the world. The fieldwork was conducted between March 2014 and January 2017.

The face to face interviews were conducted with Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) or Paper and Pencil Interviewing (PAPI). A random probability stratified clustered sample was designed in each project country. The sample was stratified by regions and by level of urbanisation. Households were selected at random, either using random walk, or using existing registers. The respondent was selected at random from all adults in the household.

The telephone surveys were conducted with Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI). Random digital dialling was used to randomly select households and respondents were selected at random from all adults in the household. Both landline telephones and mobile phones were selected for interviewing. Samples were stratified across all regions in the country according to population size.

The GCB questionnaire was translated into all major local languages in each country, and the interviews were conducted in the language of the respondent's choice.

## MODE EFFECTS

The report presents the results obtained using two different modes of data collection and may be prone to mode effects, in terms of sampling, the selection of respondents and the propensity to respond using different modes of data collection.

The questions highlighted in the report were asked as part of a longer interview on related topics. This report presents a selection of the results.

## WEIGHTING

The survey samples were selected and weighted to be nationally representative of all adults living in each country/territory. The results have margins of sampling error of a maximum  $\pm 2.6$  percentage points (for a sample of 1,500) and  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points (for a sample of 1,000) for dichotomous questions (for example, yes or no) at a 95 per cent confidence level.

In addition, an extra weight is applied so that the sample sizes for each country/territory are equal. The overall global results and the results for each region are equivalent to an average of the countries surveyed.

For full details on the survey approach including survey companies, sample sizes, fieldwork dates and survey mode, please see [www.transparency.org/research/gcb/gcb\\_2015\\_16](http://www.transparency.org/research/gcb/gcb_2015_16)

# NOTES

- I. A full methodology note is available online at [www.transparency.org/research/gcb/gcb\\_2015\\_16](http://www.transparency.org/research/gcb/gcb_2015_16)
- II. The regions referenced in this report correspond to the regional reports based on the 9th edition of the Global Corruption Barometer, published by Transparency International since 2015, namely Asia Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Sub Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa. When we refer to the Americas region, this includes the results from Latin America and the Caribbean and the USA.
- III. The regional results presented in this report for Sub Saharan Africa include Mozambique, Gabon and São Tomé and Príncipe. These countries were not included in the “People and Corruption: Africa Survey 2015” report as the results were not finalised then. Therefore, the overall regional figures may vary to those reported in that report.
- IV. This question was not asked in China. The results exclude Tajikistan due to an ongoing assessment of the results.
- V. Due to the high level of “don’t know” responses, of more than 40 per cent, the results for Azerbaijan, Germany and Poland are not shown.
- VI. This question was not asked in Uzbekistan. The results from Tajikistan are not included in the global average due to an on-going assessment of the data.
- VII. Due to the high level of “don’t know” responses, of more than 40 per cent, the results for Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Estonia, FYR Macedonia, Georgia, Lithuania, Montenegro and Poland are not shown.
- VIII. This question was not asked in Uzbekistan. The results from Tajikistan are not included in the global average due to an on-going assessment of the data.
- IX. The bribery module was implemented with amended wording in Europe and Central Asia including Mongolia as the questions were implemented as part of a longer existing survey. In this region the questions asked about household rather than individual level bribery and are based on contact with eight public services, rather than the six public services asked in the other regions. Care should therefore be taken with direct comparisons of bribery rates between countries from this region and those from other regions. The bribery questions were not asked in Belgium, France, Greenland, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and the USA due to funding constraints. The report uses results taken from the 2014 Eurobarometer survey for Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the UK. The full questionnaires are available online at [www.transparency.org/research/gcb/gcb\\_2015\\_16](http://www.transparency.org/research/gcb/gcb_2015_16)
- X. This question was not asked in China nor Uzbekistan.

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