

SGI Sustainable
Governance
Indicators

2015 Safe Living Report

Safe Living Conditions



Indicator **Safe Living Conditions**

Question **How effectively does internal security policy protect citizens against security risks?**

41 OECD and EU countries are sorted according to their performance on a scale from 10 (best) to 1 (lowest). This scale is tied to four qualitative evaluation levels.

- 10-9 = Internal security policy protects citizens against security risks very effectively.
- 8-6 = Internal security policy protects citizens against security risks more or less effectively.
- 5-3 = Internal security policy does not effectively protect citizens against security risks.
- 2-1 = Internal security policy exacerbates the security risks.

Croatia

Score 9 In Croatia, crime represents no significant threat to public safety and security. The police are generally effective in maintaining public order and combating crime. The police and prosecutors office collaborate effectively with international organizations and countries in the south east European region, the European Union and internationally. Intelligence services cooperate with their counterparts within NATO and the European Union, and act within an integrated security system. Croatia does not face significant terrorist threats. Organized crime affects the country mostly through transnational and regional crime networks involved in drugs and human and arms trafficking.

Finland

Score 9 Finland is still among the safest countries in Europe. Although, its rate of violent crime, and homicides in particular, is relatively high. Finnish citizens, according to polls, regard the police as one of the most reliable public institutions. In 2004, the government established the First Program on Internal Security. This program was modified and expanded in 2007. In June 2012, the government adopted the Third Internal Security Program, which aimed to reduce citizen's daily security concerns. The program places an emphasis on measures to prevent social exclusion and social polarization. In sum, the program includes 64 measures, each designating a responsible agency and a timetable for implementation. The program's overall implementation will be monitored by the Ministry of the Interior. Additionally, the government has adopted or is considering national strategies for combating organized crime, the informal economy and terrorism.

Citation:

“Turvallisempi huominen. Sisäisen turvallisuuden ohjelma.” [A more secure tomorrow. Programme of Internal Security] 26/2012. Ministry of Interior, Helsinki.

http://www.intermin.fi/en/development_projects/internal_security_programme

Japan

Score 9

Japan enjoys a very low crime rate, although it is unclear just how much the effectiveness of internal security policies contributes to this. Other social and economic factors are also at work. For major crimes such as homicide or hard-drug abuse, Japan’s good reputation is well deserved. Terrorism also poses no major threat today. With respect to lesser offenses, however, particularly in the case of burglaries and robberies, Japan now occupies only a middle rank among OECD countries. Another issue is the existence of organized gangs (so-called yakuza), which have never been eradicated, although incidents in which these groups molest ordinary citizens seem rather rare.

The total number of reported crimes has decreased in recent years and data for 2013 seems to confirm this trend; the percentage of solved crimes has somewhat increased. This positive image was somewhat tarnished in mid-2014 by newspaper reports showing that, over the span of five years, the Osaka police had concealed more than 80,000 cases from reporting.

Asahi Shimbun, To improve Osaka’s reputation, police conceal 81,000 crimes, 31.07.2014, http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201407310054

New Zealand

Score 9

New Zealand internal security is the responsibility of the police. The NZSIS (Security Intelligence Service) and the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) provide advisory services. Expenditures for public order and safety are relatively high and growing, as New Zealanders feel crime to be a salient issue. Recent crime statistics show a considerable decline in criminal offences – partly as a result of an aging society where age groups that statistically commit more crimes are shrinking in number, and partly as a consequence of increased expenditures for police, criminal justice and prison services.

Internal security threats are also addressed through a Combined Threat Assessment Group (CTAG) which involves staff seconded from NZSIS, the New Zealand Police, the New Zealand Defense Force, GCSB, New Zealand Customs Service and Maritime New Zealand. CTAG provides assessments on terrorist or criminal threats aimed to create physical harm to New Zealand citizens or affect New Zealand interests at home or overseas, based on all information sources from the New Zealand government.

Citation:

New Zealand Police Crime Statistics for the fiscal year ending 30 June 2014: <http://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/publication/crime-statistics-fiscal-year-ending-30-june-2014> (accessed October 13, 2014).

New Zealand Security Intelligence Service: <http://www.security.govt.nz/our-work/protection-from-terrorism/> (accessed October 13, 2014).

Norway

Score 9

Norway is traditionally a safe country. The country's security is not seriously threatened by crime. For example, the number of homicides per capita is the third-lowest in the world, and incarceration rates are also small. Police presence is rarely significant, and incidents of police activism are rare. The police continue to be predominantly unarmed. Prison sentences are relatively mild, and Norway has relied instead on long-term crime-prevention policies. Theft and petty crimes are relatively infrequent, although there has been some concern over increasing levels of narcotics- and gang-related crimes. There is a perception that knife- and gun-related crimes are increasing in frequency and brutality. In recent years, various reforms have sought to enhance cooperation between various police and intelligence units, both internally and with respect to cross-border cooperation.

The police service is decentralized, organized in 27 relatively small police districts. In 2001, a central police directorate was established, but this was mainly a matter of moving the central police authority bureaucratically from under the Ministry of Justice. The directorate is small, with about 120 officials. The head of the directorate has recently proposed a merger of police districts into larger units, but no such action has as of the time of writing taken place.

In the aftermath of the 22 July 2011 terrorist assaults on the government compound in Oslo and the summer camp of the Labor Party youth organization, the police service was severely criticized for not having put necessary precautions in place. This revealed shortcomings in police organization and logistics, including a low capacity for planning and implementation within the central police directorate. However, notable improvements have subsequently been made.

Slovenia

Score 9

Slovenia's accession to the Schengen group in December 2007 has resulted in a substantial professionalization of the Slovenian police force and border control. While the effectiveness of the police force still suffers from occasional underfunding, actual and perceived security risks are very low. Compared to other East-Central European countries, trust in the police is relatively high.

Citation:

Politbarometer, Faculty of Social Sciences, June 2013. Available at: http://www.cjm.si/sites/cjm.si/files/file/aktualne_raziskave/PB6_13.pdf.

South Korea

Score 9 Police statistics show a small increase in both violent crime and street crimes over the last few years, but the general sense of security remains high. The country has very strong gun control laws, making crimes involving firearms rare. There is no known terrorist activity in South Korea. Although a major concern that has not yet been effectively addressed is the spread of cyber-crime, whose perpetrators take advantage of South Korea's excellent broadband infrastructure and lax online security measures. The lax enforcement of traffic laws remains another issue, as South Korea has the second highest ratio of road fatalities among OECD countries, with 14.1 deaths per 100,000. Every year 6,800 people die in road traffic accidents. Generally respect for and trust in the police is low.

Citation:

OECD, OECD Factbook 2009

WHO, Global Health Observatory Data Repository, <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/view.main.51310>

Switzerland

Score 9 Switzerland has improved its internal security through its integration into the European Schengen/Dublin regime. However, the country's participation remains domestically controversial, as right-wing populist actors have accused center-left politicians of cooperating in an inefficient European security network.

Internal security policy has developed as a collaborative policy field, in which various international and national governmental actors interact with private organizations.

Given the country's comparatively low crime rates, and the public confidence shown in the police and the justice system, internal security policy can be deemed a success.

Australia

Score 8 Internal security is largely the responsibility of the states and there is correspondingly some variation in policies and outcomes across the states. While crime is widely regarded as a significant economic and social problem, in most states crime rates are in fact relatively low. As for coordination between various policing, enforcement and intelligence-gathering authorities, it is generally satisfactory.

After decades of security, terrorism hit Australia for the first time in December 2014. The hostage drama in Sydney confirmed the expectations of experts, who had

warned of a terror risk for Australia for many years. Prior to the Sydney hostage crisis, Australians were hit by terrorism abroad, not at home. Before December 2014, there had been several failed plots involving Islamic extremists, most notably an attempt to bomb a major sporting event and an attempt to storm a military base with automatic weapons. All resulted in long prison sentences for the defendants.

Responsibility for internal security rests with the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Security Intelligence Organization; the latter has no powers of arrest and relies on the police for support. Both rely on the criminal law for prosecutions, as well as on the Anti-Terrorism Act 2005, the last piece of legislation to be passed to combat terrorism. International organized crime that is not terrorism-related is investigated by the Australian Crime Commission, which was established by the Australian Crime Commission Act 2003, which amalgamated several bodies with similar remits.

Citation:

<http://www.smh.com.au/comment/martin-place-cafe-siege-overreaction-from-fear-is-a-measure-of-a-terrorists-success-20141215-127rih.html>

Austria

Score 8

Internal security is comparatively well protected in Austria. The crime rate is volatile, rising in some areas such as criminal assaults, while falling in others such as break-ins and car thefts. Internet crime is an increasingly significant problem, and the Austrian police forces are seeking to counteract it through the creation of special task forces. The incidence of economic fraud is also rising due to the growing share of transactions over the Internet.

Police-force budgets and personnel counts have risen over time, an indicator that the police are viewed as the appropriate instrument to provide internal security.

The open borders guaranteed by the European Union and the Schengen agreement have made it easier for organized crime to cross borders, leading some to criticize Austria's EU membership status. And although some parties (e.g., the FPÖ) do so for political purposes, the data shows that, despite recent increases concerning burglaries and car theft, there is no significant increase in crime as such.

Citation:

Stats from the interior ministry:

http://www.bmi.gv.at/cms/BK/publikationen/krim_statistik/2013/2732014_KrimStat_2013_Broschuere.pdf

Belgium

Score 8 Belgium is generally a safe country, yet violence does occur and the country's crime rate is higher than in neighboring countries. Underfunded, overcrowded, unhealthy prisons are part of the problem. Efforts have been made to improve the presence of the police in potentially risky areas, but the courts are too slow (huge backlog) and often perceived as lenient. Part of this is due to chronic underfunding of the judiciary, further impaired by linguistic issues in and around Brussels (the issue being the imbalance in the proportion of French- and Dutch-speaking judges and chambers, which creates a huge backlog in some chambers, particularly for penal issues). Overcrowding in prisons is another problem, as it prevents judges from sending convicts to jail, unless they have committed major crimes. This helps maintain a feeling of impunity for small misdemeanors.

Importantly, relative social stability, neocorporatist practices and arrangements and limited income inequality has largely insulated the country from mass demonstrations or riots as the ones sometimes observed in France, for instance.

Canada

Score 8 Canada's internal security policy has been quite effective in protecting citizens against security risks. Canada has experienced no terror attacks mounted from outside the country, which suggests that the Canadian intelligence services are doing excellent work. However, two separate attacks by native Canadians in 2014, resulting in the deaths of two soldiers, have raised concerns about police forces' ability to prevent terrorist attacks and the security measures in place at federal and provincial legislatures. Following the incidents, the government announced plans to introduce new anti-terror measures and expand the powers of Canada's spy agency.

Crime rates in Canada are low from an international perspective and continue to fall. Canadians in general have a high degree of confidence and trust in the police. However, this is not true to the same extent within the aboriginal community. The Assembly of First Nations, the Metis National Council, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Native Women's Association of Canada have made repeated calls for a national public investigation into the unsolved cases of the murder or disappearance of about 600 aboriginal women and girls across the country. The U.N. Human Rights Council's recent Universal Periodic Review of Canada expressed concerns about violence against indigenous women and girls and Canada's perceived failure to address the problem.

Citation:

UN Human Rights Council (2013). Universal Periodic Review: Canada. Report available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/CASession16.aspx>

Chile

Score 8 Internal security policy is quite effective. While organized crime is not apparent to the average citizen, there are some disturbing trends: selective acts of terrorism (or acts classified as terrorism) based on ethnic or political grounds, and a slightly rising incidence of drug trafficking (and related crimes). Homicide rates in Chile are among Latin America's lowest. Common crime rates have not shown any significant changes since 2012. Still, public perceptions of crime tend to overestimate the statistical reality. Private security services are widespread in the wealthier urban areas, especially in Santiago. Chile has an extremely high number of prisoners among the younger population in particular. Prevention measures are not well developed. The last two governments each launched anti-crime programs focusing more on detection and repression than on prevention. These had very mixed results. Crime-control programs such as the Plan Cuadrante and the marked increase in the numbers of police officers have significantly reduced crime rates. However, penal-code reforms and their implementation over the last eight years have significantly raised the efficiency of crime detection and criminal prosecution.

Citation:

http://www.ine.cl/canales/chile_estadistico/encuestas_seguridadciudadana/victimizacion2013/presentacion_x_encuesta_nacional_seguridad_ciudadana.pdf

UNODC report 2013:

http://www.unodc.org/documents/gsh/pdfs/2014_GLOBAL_HOMICIDE_BOOK_web.pdf

Denmark

Score 8 The security forces and police are responsible for internal security (falling under the Ministry of Justice). Cooperation between the police and defense intelligence services was increased after 9/11. International cooperation has also increased among Western allies.

Denmark is not a violent society. The homicide rate is low and Danes normally trust the police. However, burglaries are not uncommon and crimes related to drug use do occur.

The European Union is also trying to improve all aspects of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) cooperation. Here, too, there is a problem with regard to Denmark's cooperation that is rooted in its opt-outs dating back to 1993. Despite holding an opt-out with regard to the EU's JHA, Denmark participated in JHA cooperation so long as this was subject to intergovernmental cooperation (the third pillar of the EU's legal framework). However, since 2009, when the Treaty of Lisbon came into force, all JHA actions have become subject to supranational principles, which means that

Denmark no longer takes part in JHA activity. This could, however, change should Denmark decide to opt-in.

In recent years, a majority of Danes have been favoring participation in JHA, but the chance Denmark will opt-in has decreased since 2009. The current government, though it favors abolishing the Danish opt-out, has postponed holding a referendum. In her opening speech to the Danish parliament at the beginning of October 2014 the Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt said that the government is in favor of a referendum about the Danish opt-out from JHA. The Liberal Party supports this. The vote on an opt-in solution will only take place after the next election (which must take place by September 2015, at the latest). A central issue is continued participation in Europol.

Because of the Muhammad cartoon controversy in 2005, it is reasonable to expect that there are both foreign and domestic threats against Denmark. The murder plot discovered by Danish police in February 2008 against cartoonist Kurt Westergaard lends support to the feeling that Denmark may be the target of terror attacks. The Danish engagement in Afghanistan, Iraq and now against ISIS may also increase these risks. So far the Danish police have successfully dealt with the threat.

In the June 2011 Eurobarometer, 56% of Danes said terrorism was the most important challenge to the security of Danish citizens at the moment (the EU average was 25%). Thirty percent of Danes said the biggest challenge was the financial crisis (the EU average was 33%). Recent opinion polls suggest that there is a majority in favor of abolishing the JHA opt-out. There is also a majority in favor of joining the EU defense policy, but a majority against joining the euro. A referendum on all of Denmark's opt-outs at one time would probably be lost.

Citation:

Murder plot against Danish cartoonist, http://jyllands-posten.dk/uknews/EC_E3923645/murder-plot-against-danish-cartoonist/ (accessed 18 April 2013)

DIIS, "Opinion Polls," <http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/Books2012/YB2012/040.Chapter%204%20opinion%20polls.pdf> (accessed 18 April 2013).

DIIS, "Opinion Polls," http://en.diis.dk/files/publications/Books2014/DIIS2014_yearbook_forweb.pdf (accessed 18 October 2014).

Statsminister Helle Thorning-Schmidts tale ved Folketingets åbning den 7. oktober 2014, http://www.statsministeriet.dk/_p_14086.html (accessed 18 October 2014).

"Klart flertal for at afskaffe retsforbeholdet," <http://www.altinget.dk/artikel/klart-flertal-for-at-afskaffe-retsforbeholdet> (accessed 3 November 2014).

Germany

Score 8 In general, residents of Germany are well protected against security risks such as crime or terrorism. Crime rates are on the decline. While in 1998 a total of 7,869 crimes were recorded per 100,000 inhabitants, this figure had fallen to 7,404 in 2013, with a slight increase in the detection rate from 52.3% to 54.5% (Bundesministerium des Innern 2013: 18). In absolute numbers, a total of 5,961,662 crimes were committed in 2013 – a drop of 0.6% in comparison to 2012.

However, the National Socialist Underground (NSU) scandal revealed institutional problems inside domestic intelligence and police agencies. In November 2011, right-wing terrorists Uwe Böhnhardt and Uwe Mundlos killed themselves in order to avoid arrest. Along with Beate Zschäpe, who was facing trial at the time of writing, they had formed the NSU, a neo-Nazi group that had murdered nine people from immigrant families as well as a German policewoman between 2000 and 2007. The trial of Beate Zschäpe, the only surviving member of the group, is still pending. Five leading officials of various intelligence agencies at the state and federal levels had been forced to resign as a consequence of mismanagement and possible misconduct related to the case.

Along with extremist activities by right-wing and left-wing groups and organizations, Islamic extremism is perceived as a threat in Germany. The Salafist movement (a Muslim group considered radical) is perceived to be a threat to domestic security and under surveillance by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution. The group is quickly growing in number and attracts support principally from younger German Muslims. However, right-wing reactions appear to be a greater threat to public order. In October 2014, an anti-Salafist rally by hooligans got out of control when they attacked police. Many demonstrators and police officers were injured when police used a water cannon and pepper spray to get the situation back under control.

In summary, authorities have been successful in securing public order and preventing major terrorist attacks, largely by detecting conspiracies at an early stage.

Citation:

Crime rates 2013

http://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Nachrichten/Pressemitteilungen/2014/06/PKS2013.pdf?__blob=publicationFile

Iceland

Score 8 Iceland has always been a secure place to live, with relatively few assaults, burglaries or other crimes. However, some changes have occurred since the 2008 economic collapse. The 2007 to 2009 government was undermined by a series of

protests, which – although largely peaceful – did lead to clashes between protesters and riot police in early 2009. While these events led only to minor injuries and some 20 arrests, they were the first serious riots since March 1949's protests against the decision to bring Iceland into NATO. The main policing priority has been Iceland's internal security, rather than efficiency, as the police force has long suffered from a manpower shortage, exacerbated by low pay.

The incidence of drug-smuggling has been increasing for several years. This trend reflects an associated increase in the prevalence of violent attacks by individuals under the influence of alcohol or other drugs in Reykjavik, especially at the weekends.

Latvia

Score 8

The group of institutions responsible for internal security policy in Latvia (the Ministry of Interior, the State Police, the Security Police, State Fire and Rescue Service, State Border Guard, Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs) do not collaborate on policy. Crime rates in 2012 were down by 3% over 2011. There are 2,238 reported crimes per 100,000 inhabitants, the lowest such rate among the Baltic states. The threat of terrorism did not change in 2011 and has remained low. In 2011, no acts of terrorism or other criminal offenses associated with terrorism were committed in Latvia.

Opinion polls from 2013 show that citizens' trust in the State Police (Valsts policija, VP) has reached 57%, an increase over previous years. A total of 63% of residents say they feel safe in their home and surrounding area.

A 2011 report on the State Border Guard stated that the number of counterfeit documents detected as well as the number of individuals from third countries illegally entering Latvia had doubled. The rate of increase for these indicators was much higher in Latvia than in other Baltic states. In 2011, 247 third country nationals were detained, which was an increase of 162% on the 94 individuals detained in 2010. In general, the effectiveness of the State Border Guard has improved, as a result of financial support from the EU.

1. Research center SKDS (2013), Attitude Toward the State Police, Available at (in Latvian): <http://www.vp.gov.lv/?id=704>, Last assessed: 20.05.2013

2. State Border Guard (2011), Official Report, Available at (in Latvian): http://www.rs.gov.lv/doc_upl/Valsts%20robezsardzes%202011.gada%20publiskais%20parskats.pdf, Last assessed: 20.05.2013

3. Ministry of Interior (2011), Public Report, Available at (in Latvian): http://www.iem.gov.lv/files/text/Gada_parskats_2011_wwwf%281%29.pdf, Last assessed: 20.05.2013

4. Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, Information Technology and Communications Department (2013), Crime statistics in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Available at: http://www.ird.lt/doc/statistika/duomenys_bv_per_2012m_%2001-12_men.pdf, Last assessed: 20.05.2013

Netherlands

Score 8

Data from 2010 show that confidence in the police is high; satisfaction about policy performance is fairly high (28% of those polled express that they are “very satisfied”). In 2015 the Dutch government spends €10 billion (down €3 billion from 2010) on public order and safety (police, fire protection, disaster protection, judicial and penitentiary system) – an amount of which has been approximately stable since 2008. The Integral Safety Monitor for 2010 reports that the 25% of the population aged 15 years and over that claims to have been the victim of frequently occurring crimes (vandalism, fraud, violence) is decreasing; cybercrime (hacking, internet harassment, commercial and identity fraud) increased somewhat to 13%; however, the feeling of vulnerability among the public remains at the same level. Regarding terrorism threats, the intelligence services (Nationale Coördinator Terrorismebestrijding, established 2004) appear able to prevent attacks. Fighting terrorism, extremism and anticipating political radicalization and transboundary criminality have increased in priority. The policies of the present government focus on considerable cost reduction and the centralization of the previously strictly municipality- and region-based police, judicial and penitentiary systems. Judges and other legal personnel have voiced public complaints about the “managerialization” of the judicial process and the resulting overburdening workload for judges, leading to “sloppy” trials and verdicts. The government intends to save €5 million in 2018 on costs for legal assistance to (poor) citizens. Government policy attempts to shift part of the burden on the judicial system to intermediation procedures. Despite frequently occurring large fires in industrial complexes, spending on fire and disaster protection remains unaltered.

Citation:

Ministerie van Veiligheid en Justitie, Onderwerpen (www.rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries/venj/onderwerpen)

Prinsjesdag 2014, Huishoudboekje van Nederland (rijksoverheid.nl)

CBS (2013), Integrale Veiligheidsmonitor 2011. Landelijke rapportage, Den Haag/Heerlen, 2014

Poland

Score 8

The annual number of homicides and thefts further decreased during the review period, and the feeling of safety among citizens has grown. While men face a greater risk of falling victim to assaults or other violent crimes, women report lower feelings of security than men. The effectiveness of the police forces has increased.

Portugal

Score 8 Portugal is signatory to and participant in all of the relevant Europe-wide programs regarding public security.

Despite the economic crisis, crime has not risen in the period under analysis. Indeed, the 2013 National Internal Security report indicates a considerable drop in overall reported criminality of 6.9% compared to 2012. While 2013 was the fifth consecutive year of falling reported crime rates, it also showed the biggest single-year decline during this period (the most significant previous drop was 2012, with a fall of 2.3%). Of the various types of crime, only two saw an increase in reported incidences in 2013 – domestic violence and opportunistic stealing. With regard to the former, this increase is more likely a reflection of greater awareness of domestic violence than an increase in its actual occurrence. Overall, Portugal remains a relatively safe country in international terms.

Citation:

Sistema de Segurança Interna, “Relatório Anual de Segurança Interna 2013”

Nick Cowen & Nigel Williams / Civitas (2012), “Comparisons of Crime in OECD Countries,” p. 5

Spain

Score 8 Compared with other OECD and European countries, Spain performs quite satisfactorily in protecting citizens against security risks and public confidence in the police force is high. The official data shows that crime rates are on the decline, particularly violent crimes. The rate of homicides per 100,000 inhabitants is one of the lowest in the world, although the figures are somewhat higher for assaults or muggings. Nevertheless, considering the high unemployment and budgetary cuts on law and order policies, the overall situation can be considered quite successful. It is precisely this effectiveness that makes the new bill on public safety (Draft Organic Law “de protección de la seguridad ciudadana” not yet approved at the end of 2014) so controversial. In the eyes of its critics, the new regulation has much more to do with trying to repress political protest (see “Civil Rights” and “Political Liberties”) than with increasing the protection of citizens.

Nonetheless, it is also true that the impact of the economic crisis has contributed to an increase in the subjective feeling of insecurity, and public opinion continues to press for additional preventive measures. It must also be mentioned that a clear cease fire agreement with the Basque terrorist group ETA was signed during the review period. The government of Spain and its citizens are now more concerned that they are a principal target of Islamic extremism, though Spanish intelligence and police communities have demonstrated their effectiveness in fighting this risk in recent years. Finally, a renewed security strategy (combining internal and external risks)

was approved in 2013 and, since then, it has been implemented introducing organizational changes and new measures in specific realms such as cybersecurity.

United Kingdom

Score 8

Objectively speaking, citizens of the United Kingdom have enjoyed improved security over the last 15 years as the crime rate has dropped significantly and consistently (although it continues to be relatively high in absolute terms when compared to other OECD countries).

This is not reflected, however, in increased subjective perception of security, since British citizens (probably influenced by media reporting) perceive crime to be on the rise. The issue thus remains in the public spotlight, and cuts in the budgets of the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice – in line with overall budget cuts to fight the deficit – have therefore been politically contentious. The most recent figures do, nevertheless, suggest a further fall in crime, although questions have been raised about whether “new” crimes like cybercrime are being adequately recorded. Moreover, even in higher crime areas, there are few signs that citizens consider the environment to be unsafe.

The coalition government abolished some of the harsh counter-terrorism laws introduced by earlier Labour governments in an attempt to correct the balance in favor of civil rights. A new National Crime Agency started work in the autumn of 2013 as a central body for crime fighting. Certain high-profile revelations of police malpractice, including the recently exposed falsification of records in the Hillsborough football disaster of 1989, have led to disquiet about police behavior, but have not conspicuously undermined confidence.

There is continuing concern about terrorist threats, accentuated by the renewed difficulties in the Middle East as well as specific incidents (such as the brutal murder of a young soldier in May 2013) and revelations of planned attacks.

Cyprus

Score 7

Cyprus is generally considered to be a safe environment. A low incidence of serious crime, assaults and homicides place it in very good position compared to other EU countries and the world more generally. As an island, it has developed adequate monitoring of the coast and entry points. Its only relatively vulnerable points are the line dividing the government-controlled areas and the Turkish-occupied north, as well as the portions of the British bases that abut the north. Cyprus is not part of the Schengen Area. The Green Line, or demarcation between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish-controlled areas, provides peculiar problems with respect to border protection. Burglaries and robberies of houses and businesses are by far the most

common crimes, with a relatively stable occurrence in the period under review. Illegal drug activity is comparatively minimal overall, but an increase in the amount of illegal drugs confiscated at entry points has been evident.

The country's police force collaborates closely with Interpol and cooperates with the United States in the fight against terrorism. The number of police officers per 100,000 people is among the highest in the world. However, in a 2014 survey of residents, 28% of respondents reported feeling unsafe when walking alone in the dark, which is above the EU-28 average (22%).

Citation:

1. Police force per 100,000, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_number_of_police_officers
2. Feeling safe in EU, Eurobarometer 2014, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb81/eb81_vie_en.pdf

Czech Republic

Score 7

Confidence in the police is low from an international perspective, but relatively high compared with confidence in other public institutions; more than half of Czech citizens are satisfied with the performance of police and feel secure. Crime figures are unremarkable. However, there are increasing regional differences as well as tension in regions with a concentration of marginalized groups. Protection against security risks is favored by well-functioning, cross-border cooperation. There is also cooperation with other police and enforcement agencies on human trafficking from the Czech Republic for prostitution and forced labor. Prosecutions within the Czech Republic have been rare, but there were some successful cases in 2014.

Estonia

Score 7

Despite improvement in recent times, Estonia ranks at the bottom in homicide and violence statistics in the OECD. One of the major causes of high crime rates is alcohol and drug consumption that often leads to violent behavior at home or in other private settings. This makes crime prevention harder and calls for better cooperation between social workers and the police. In contrast, there is barely any violence in the streets, and if it occurs, it is usually an alcohol related conflict between people who know each other. The police enjoy public trust and support, but the main problem is scarcity of human and material resources. Due to very strict fiscal policy, all security forces have to survive on cut budgets, which has led to the closing down of police and rescue units in rural areas. As a result, people of small towns and villages feel less secure than they used to. In response, local people have organized voluntary rescue groups and neighborhood watch groups.

Citation:

- Estonian Human Development Report 2012/13, chapter 2.3. <http://www.kogu.ee/olemus-ja-roll/e-esti-inimarengu-aruanne/eesti-inima-rengu-aruanne-2013/>

Ireland

Score 7 Irish crime rates are relatively low by international standards. Property-crime rates rose somewhat during the economic crisis, and over the past decade there has been an increase in “gangland” crime, including murders involving firearms. The low detection and conviction rates for gangland crimes are disturbing.

The main police force remains unarmed. It enjoys a good relationship with the majority of the population, although tensions exist in certain areas and with certain social groups. In 2013 and 2014 a long-running controversy over the administration of “penalty points” for driving offenses had a significant negative impact on the public image of the police force, undermining public trust in the institution.

Cross-border policing cooperation between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland remains good, although the existence of a long land border is an inherent obstacle to effective law enforcement.

Italy

Score 7 With the exception of some regions of southern Italy where mafia-type organized crime can have a serious impact on the security of certain sectors of the population (for instance entrepreneurs and shop owners) internal security is sufficiently guaranteed. Crime levels are not particularly high but recently have significantly risen with economic crisis and rising unemployment going on now for years. The population has in general a rather high level of confidence in the security forces. The segmentation of security forces (Carabinieri, Polizia di Stato, Guardia di Finanza, Polizia Municipale) has resulted in some inefficiencies. The security forces’ are not always able to provide efficient protection in major urban areas in particular.

Lithuania

Score 7 Lithuania’s internal security has improved in recent years, in part thanks to Lithuania’s accession to the European Union in 2004 and to the Schengen zone in 2007. These relationships improved police cooperation with the country’s EU peers and allowed the public security infrastructure, information systems and staff skills to be upgraded. Crime rates fell during the 2005 – 2007 period, but this trend was reversed beginning in 2008, coinciding with the onset of the economic crisis. The country has a high number of homicides by EU standards, and the population expresses a relatively low level confidence in the police. In the 2011 Eurobarometer survey, 58% of Lithuanians either disagreed or totally disagreed with the statement

that their country was doing enough to fight organized crime, as compared to an EU-27 average of 42%.

State funding for internal-security purposes remains limited; though it gradually increased between 2004 and 2008, government expenditure for public-safety purposes dropped from 2.4% of GDP in 2008 to 2.1% in 2011. Observers say that motivation, competence and stability within the police force (and other internal-security organizations) are among the most pressing challenges to improving public safety. According to the 2011 Eurobarometer report, 42% of Lithuanians felt corruption to be an issue very important to citizens' security, while just 5% felt the same about terrorism threats, and 2% for civil wars/wars. The annual report of the Lithuanian Security Department has recently highlighted threats linked to the activities of external intelligence services from neighboring non-NATO countries. The country is also reconsidering its internal-security policies due to increasing threats associated with Russia's intervention in Ukraine.

The 2011 Eurobarometer reports is available at http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_371_fact_lt_en.pdf.

Luxembourg

Score 7

While Luxembourg no longer scores among the very top cities in Mercer's Quality of Living survey, the capital as of 2012 is ranked 19th worldwide with regard to standards of living and personal security.

As of 2000 the government merged the police and the gendarmerie to create the Police Grand-Ducale, cutting administration staff strengthening the forces overall, resulting in an improvement in crime clearance rates.

One ongoing focus is the continuous education and training of police officers as an important method in adjusting to new criminal methods and activities. An additional goal is to strengthen international cooperation and bilateral agreements in combating cross-border crime. Sustained efforts remain necessary to prevent activities such as money laundering, other financial crimes and terrorism. In 2013, 165 people were convicted of money laundering, 14% more than in the prior year.

Although the number of police officers has increased every year, the crime rate is also rising continuously. The national police force was increased to 1,762 police officers and 227 civil officers as of 2013. According to 2013 statistics, the crime rate rose 3.75% as compared to 2012, with 7,440 crimes per 100,000 residents. Drug-related crime and robberies (+37%) have climbed faster (with respect to total number of cases) than other crime. Vandalism, however, has fallen (-8.6% in 2013), and Luxembourg's prisoner population increased only slightly, by 2.5% compared to the previous year (2012: 679; 2013: 697). This was slightly above the EU-28 average for 2012.

Increasing criminality in Luxembourg not only results in rising costs, but also decreases subjective and objective safety. A recent survey showed that 34% of population “believed they could be burgled during the next year and more than a third (37 percent) of people living in houses believed they were at risk” (Wort 2014).

Citation:

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<http://www.internationalhradviser.co.uk/storage/downloads/2012%20Quality%20Of%20Living%20Worldwide%20City%20Rankings%20Survey.pdf>
<http://www.justice.public.lu/fr/publications/rapport-activites-crf/rapport-crf-2013.pdf>
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Slovakia

Score 7

The Slovak law-enforcement system meets EU standards of border management and is quite effective in protecting the national borders in line with the Schengen agreement. As a result, Slovak citizens have expressed only mild levels of concern over illegal migration or porous EU borders. In spite of modest crime figures and low security risks, however, overall levels of trust in the police remain low. The police forces suffer from underfunding and corruption, as well as from a lack of coordination among the different security institutions. Marginalized groups such as Roma and homosexuals run the risk of being discriminated against by the police.

Sweden

Score 7

The crime rate in Sweden is slightly higher than it is in comparable countries. Assessing the effectiveness of the internal security police is a complex undertaking. Sweden has experienced substantial problems with organized crime for a long time. Despite increased efforts to address this problem during the period of review, organized crime has shown no sign of waning, rather the opposite. Many media accounts of homicides and assaults relate these incidents to organized crime and rivalry among competing organizations.

In terms of solving and preventing crime, there has been extensive debate about police effectiveness. Studies suggest that the police do not use their resources effectively and that only 2% of their working time is spent on actual crime prevention or resolution.

An additional problem is related to the emphasis on performance measurement and

management which, critics argue, has led the police to focus on high performance scores rather than crime prevention. Pre-emptive police work which may observers argued is the best way to prevent crime does not show up in performance measures. Also, given the performance targets some aspects of police work such as checking automobile drivers' sobriety is conducted with almost more attention to getting the numbers in than actually bringing criminals to court.

The percentage of "smaller" crimes, particularly smaller crimes such as theft or burglary, solved in Sweden is still lower than many citizens think is acceptable.

Citation:

Holgerson, S. and J. Knutsson (2012), Vad gör egentligen polisen? (Institutionen för ekonomisk och industriell utveckling. LIU-IEI-Research Report 12/0004. Linköping: Linköpings Universitet).

France

Score 6

Although the police maintains a reputation of being efficient (sometimes too efficient, as the institution is granted significant powers and discretion vis-à-vis the citizenry), concerns over internal security are high. Attention has focused on repeated outbreaks of urban violence in the suburbs or other areas. Following a rising level of petty crime and several terrorist attacks on French territory and abroad, citizens have been more and more vocal about the need to be better protected by enforcing "law and order" measures. There is a growing feeling of insecurity related to the rise of robbery both in cities and - this is a new phenomenon - in the countryside. Drug trafficking and violence are such in some neighborhoods of large cities that they are seen as off-limits. There is obviously a relationship between the economic and social crisis and this increase in feelings of insecurity. This situation has also had a decisive impact on protest votes in favor of the extreme-right party, the National Front.

Nonetheless, domestic security policy is able on the whole to protect citizens; some problems (related to urban violence for instance) are often linked to social problems and have to be managed by actions beyond security policy.

Greece

Score 6

As UN data on homicides for 2012 show, Greece, despite suffering from a severe economic crisis, is not a dangerous country to live in. However, in the wake of the crisis, many people consider some areas in central Athens as "no go zones." It is telling that while in 2008, 12% of respondents in nationwide surveys of living conditions reported vandalism and criminality as major problems, by 2012 this figure increased to 20%.

Efforts to improve safety have improved since 2012. The Ministry of Public Order

placed policemen on the streets at visible points and intersections. However, Greeks do not feel safe. According to data from a study conducted in 2011 by the Greek Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), Greeks report noise (25% of respondents), environmental pollution (also 25%) and vandalism and criminality (20%) as the greatest risks with regard to housing.

Citation:

Data on homicides are drawn on the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. Data on risks Greeks perceive are drawn on research conducted in the context of EU-SILK program by the Greek Statistical Authority and is available at http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/BUCKET/A0802/PressReleases/A0802_SFA10_DT_AN_00_2011_08_F_GR.pdf

Data on the share of nationwide survey respondents reporting vandalism and criminality is drawn on the Greek Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), available at http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ver-1/ESYE/BUCKET/A0802/PressReleases/A0802_SFA10_DT_AN_00_2012_08_F_GR.pdf

Israel

Score 6

The Ministry of Public Security (MPS) manages the internal security field in conjunction with the armed forces and other government agencies such as “Rachel” (emergency) and “Malal” (Terrorism prevention). After altering its previous title (The Ministry of Police), The MPS broadened its scope, and is now in charge of crime prevention, the prison system, gun control, prevention of terrorist acts and fire prevention policies. Reforms aim to integrate the country’s dispersed agencies dealing with security issues and in 2013 the ministry reported some accomplishments. For example, the Firearm Licensing Department (2011), the Israel Fire and Rescue Services (2011) and the Israel Anti-Drug Authority have been successfully integrated into the ministry, improving coordination capabilities.

The OECD’s Better Life Index gives Israel a moderate mark on security. Israel’s murder rate is below average for OECD countries (2.2 persons killed annually per 100,000 inhabitants compared to the OECD average of 4.1) with 63% of citizens questioned stating that they felt safe walking alone at night (OECD average: 69%). The rate of sexual assaults in Israel is above the OECD average by 16%. In 2014, several high profile crime incidents including the abduction and murder of three Jewish teenagers in the occupied Palestinian territories and a Palestinian teen in east Jerusalem, as well as a number of gun related murders and attacks in Israeli Arab cities, were followed by public outrage and protest, voicing public frustration over escalating violence and the poor security conditions in Israel’s periphery.

Since Israel’s internal-security budget is divided between different agencies, and cannot be separated from the defense budget managed by the Ministry of Defense, it is hard to estimate the country’s overall internal-security expenditure. Although the Ministry of Public Security’s budget increased in recent years, it is at least partly the result of expanding the ministry’s responsibilities and not increased investment or policy implementation.

Citation:

Chartuf, Jacob, "Description and analysis of budget offer of the MPS for the years 2010-2011," Knesset Research Institute 14.12.2010. (Hebrew)

Hori, Jackie, "Three murders over the weekend in Jet and in Tayibe", Haaretz 31.8.2014: <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/law/1.2420286> (Hebrew).

"National violence index 2014", the Ministry of Public Security publication February 2014 (Hebrew).

"Policy of the Minister of Public Security 2013," MPS August 2012. (Hebrew)

"Safety: Better life index Israel," OECD.
<http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/countries/israel/>

Malta

Score 6

Security threats to the state originating from outside have been largely absent. But this in itself means that one cannot really assess local readiness or ability to protect citizens if such threats were to materialize. According to the U.S. Department of State, no indigenous terrorist or extremist groups are known to be active in Malta; however, the report adds that due to its geographic location and status as an EU country, Malta could be used as a possible staging point for terrorists desiring to enter other European Union countries. Malta has its own Secret Service, but this is very much dependent on intelligence from friendly outside intelligence services than its own resources.

For this purpose Malta is affiliated with Interpol and seeks to acquire intelligence from countries with which it has treaties supporting its security, such as Italy. Malta is also a member of a number of cross-border security cooperation efforts, including the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex). As Malta has to make provisions for the security of the external frontier of the European Union, it has received assistance to maintain this role.

The government is pursuing measures to enhance the existing border control system, incorporating biometric capturing devices (fingerprints) in immigration booths and implementing shore-based surveillance measures. In relation to smarter borders, Malta's security apparatus is primarily directed toward policing the island's maritime borders and is focused on irregular migration and drug smuggling. Between 2007 and 2013, Malta is projected to spend €150 million on border security, 75% of which will be financed by the European Union.

Malta's Secret Service is a relatively new institution and has been effective in supporting the police in the fight against corruption and drugs. However, it has thus far been much less effective in pre-empting or resolving isolated crime-related bombings or helping police to identify perpetrators in such a way as to lead to their conviction in the Maltese courts. The Secret Service and the police are undergoing reforms, and a new police academy was recently established.

Citation:

Malta Security Service Ignored Invitations for International Collaboration. Times of Malta 09/04/13
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eu2012.dk/.../Conference%20on%20Innovation%20Border%20Management
 MULTI-ANNUAL PROGRAMME 2007-13 EXTERNAL BORDERS FUND MEMBER STATE Republic of Malta
www.ppcd.gov.mt/file.aspx?f=1366
 MALTA Information Exchange on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security 31 December 2012 www.osce.org/fsc/101506

Romania

Score 6

In Romania, homicide and violent-crime rates have been relatively low. According to the Global Competitiveness Report, threats of terrorism, crime and violence were not particularly important concerns among businesses in Romania (the country performed better in this regard than several EU members, including Greece, Hungary and Bulgaria). Nonetheless, the majority of Romanians reveal low trust levels when it comes to the activities of the police forces, which are known to be rife with corruption (though the extent of police corruption has declined since the 1990s). The European Commission decided in 2005 to take direct involvement in the implementation of the Anti-Corruption General Directorate (DGA) within Romania's Ministry of Internal Affairs (encompassing the gendarmerie, the police and the immigration office). In 2010, the salaries and bonuses of police officers were cut significantly as part of the austerity measures, which undermined anti-corruption efforts by acting as a disincentive to attracting and retaining qualified staff. However, in the past year salaries have increased by 25% for police employees with higher education, and are scheduled to increase by about 15% across the board in January 2015.

Turkey

Score 6

In Turkey, 5.0% of people report having been victims of assault over the previous 12 months, more than the OECD average of 3.9%. In surveys, 62% of people say they feel safe walking alone at night, lower than the OECD average of 69%.

The General Directorate of Security was allocated an annual budget of €6.44 billion in 2013. Performance analyses conducted that year found the performance of the Turkish National Police (TNP) to be successful in many fields. The TNP collaborates extensively with domestic partners as well as international organizations such as INTERPOL, EUROPOL, SECI, AGIT, BM, CEPOL, and FRONTEX. Further, the TNP has introduced e-government infrastructure in many divisions, and initiated several projects intended to bring operations into harmony with the EU acquis communautaire. For instance, a community-policing approach was first introduced to

Turkey during the implementation of an EU project designed to strengthen the TNP's accountability, effectiveness and efficiency.

In May 2014, Turkey ratified the Council of Europe (CoE) Convention on Cybercrime, which it signed in 2010. This was slated to take force on 1 January 2015. Further, in August 2014, the government submitted the CoE Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data, signed in 1981, to parliament for ratification. At the time of writing, the government was preparing a bill concerning the protection of personal data, and a separate bill for the establishment of an Anti-Discrimination and Equality Board.

Amendments adopted in September 2014 to the legislation regulating the use of the Internet – presented as necessary for “national security and protection of public order” – have raised concerns regarding the introduction of excessive restrictions on the freedom of expression. Moreover, after the illegal, pro-Kurdish protests in Turkey's southeastern provinces in early October 2014, which resulted in the deaths of at least 19 people and the injury or detention of hundreds more, the Turkish government sought to pass a comprehensive new domestic-security law enabling it to handle massive acts of violence more quickly and effectively. These reform plans also raised domestic and international concerns about potential civil-rights curtailments.

Citation:

Mehmet Karlı, İç güvenlik paketi ve otoriterleşme, 24 October 2014, Al Jazeera Türk, <http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/gorus/ic-guvenlik-paketi-ve-otoriterlesme> (accessed 5 November 2014)

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'Turkey gears up for ratification of key treaty on protection of personal data' (Hürriyet Daily News, 4 August 2014)

Bulgaria

Score 5

While Bulgaria does have a serious problem with organized crime, normal citizens can live relatively safely. Crime statistics have fallen in the period under review, and trust in the police, while low in international comparison, is substantially higher than trust in other public institutions such as the president, the government, the legislature or the judicial system. The strong feeling of personal insecurity revealed by various surveys relates more to economic insecurity than to fear of crime. While governments rhetorically declare Schengen accession a priority, progress with international cooperation in security matters has remained limited, as reflected in the repeated postponements of Bulgaria's admission to the Schengen Area.

Hungary

Score 5 In Hungary, regular crime is largely kept within “normal” limits. By European standards, Budapest is a rather safe capital city. However, there are strong security risks associated with violence perpetrated by extreme-right groups and confrontations between opposing political camps on the streets. The government’s attempts to prevent atrocities from being perpetrated against Roma, Jews and homosexuals, as well as to protect opposition demonstrators, have remained rather half-hearted. In fact, the government has tolerated the militant organizations centered around the Jobbik party. In October 2014, for instance, following the dissolution of the extreme-right paramilitary organization For the Better Future, the government did not prevent it from reorganizing.

United States

Score 5 The United States invests massively in efforts to protect citizens against security risks such as crime and terrorism. In the years after 9/11, the United States built an extraordinarily large security establishment centered in the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Agency. The United States has assumed that international terrorist groups, such as Al Qaeda and the recently emergent Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), regard the country and its citizens as their primary targets, and that efforts to attack the United States are always underway. It views homegrown terrorists, sympathetic to radical Islamist or other terrorist groups, but not trained or directed by them, as an additional threat.

The federal government has therefore invested heavily in a wide range of measures and resources. These efforts have been successful in preventing attacks in the United States beyond any reasonable expectation. Indeed, from October 2001 to November 2014, there were no major, successful terrorist attacks on American territory. Nevertheless, the April 2013 Boston Marathon bombings – which resulted in three deaths and the hospitalization of 246 people with injuries – demonstrated that the anti-terrorist security establishment’s shields are not impregnable. In 2013 and 2014, the Snowden leaks revealed massive, largely unauthorized NSA surveillance of Americans’ telephone and Internet communications. Although there has been scarce evidence provided on the concrete achievements of this surveillance program, policymakers had not as of the time of writing moved to impose major limitations on surveillance authority.

The government has had less success dealing with two other kinds of violence. First, large cities are plagued by homicides, primarily in inner-city black and Latino neighborhoods. New Orleans, St. Louis, Baltimore and Detroit all number among the world’s 50 cities with the highest homicide rates. Second, deranged individuals

(without political or religious motives) have used semi-automatic weapons with large ammunition clips to kill large numbers of people. Under pressure from the National Rifle Association and its mass membership, Congress has failed to pass legislation imposing background checks for the purchase of a gun or limiting the size of ammunition magazines – measures with overwhelming public support. Third, the fatal shooting of an unarmed black teenager by a police officer in a St. Louis suburb drew attention to a possibly growing phenomenon of excessive police violence, especially against blacks.

Mexico

Score 2

Mexico is among the most dangerous countries in the world. This is mainly a result of criminal activity, as the amount of political violence is very small for a country of Mexico's size. From a regional perspective, it has a slightly better homicide rate than Honduras or Venezuela, but is as bad as Colombia. The main reason for this high homicide rate is that Mexico has become a major center for the transit of illegal drugs to the United States. In brutal competition with each other, Mexico's criminal gangs, or cartels, have carried out horrific acts and killed thousands.

In 2006, then-incoming PAN President Calderon made the so-called war on drugs a policy priority. However, the murder rate has increased since 2006. The reasons for this increase are complex and cannot all be blamed on the government. But Calderon's anti-drug policy clearly did not succeed. The incoming Pena Nieto government has criticized the Calderon government for relying too much on force in dealing with the drug problem, but it is not clear if Mexico has any alternatives. Mexico has improved the efficiency of its crime-fighting operations, but there are still huge problems stemming from a lack of bureaucratic cooperation and the immense scale of the criminal activity. Moreover, at least a portion of the security apparatus has been infiltrated by organized crime, which makes taking effective measures against Mexico's most significant problem even more difficult. It is probably too early to evaluate Pena Nieto's performance in this regard, but the number of killings remains high. Interestingly enough, the government of Mexico City seems about to decriminalize marijuana, which may have some impact on the activity of drug gangs. However, this remains to be seen.

This country report is part of the Sustainable Governance Indicators 2015 project.

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