

Compilation of country rankings related to economic systems, socio-economic development and business environments covering the post-Soviet region since 1992 (or earliest available dates)

**Compiled by Heiko Pleines, Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen, Germany (pleines@uni-bremen.de)
available for download on www.discuss-data.net**

Version 1.0 (as of 01 January 2018), includes 14 indices produced by 13 organisations:

- 1 BDO / HWWI: BDO International Business Compass (IBC)
- 2 Cornell University et al.: Global Innovation Index
- 3 Heritage Foundation / Wall Street Journal: Index of Economic Freedom
- 4 International Budget Partnership: Open Budget Index
- 5 International Food Policy Research Institute: Global Hunger Index
- 6 Legatum Institute: Legatum Prosperity Index
- 7 New Economics Foundation: Happy Planet Index
- 8 Sustainable Society Foundation: Sustainable Society Index
- 9 Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich: KOF Index of Globalization
- 10 UNDP: Human Development Index
- 11 World Bank: Ease of Doing Business
- 12 World Economic Forum: Global Competitiveness Index (GCI)
- 13 World Economic Forum: Global Gender Gap Index
- 14 Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy et al.: Environmental Performance Index (EPI)

Description of Data Collection

This data collection aims to include all global country rankings related to economic systems, socio-economic development and business environments, including issues of globalisation, sustainability and equal opportunity¹, which:

- Assign scores in the form of numbers,
- Are based on an elaborated methodology which is documented,
- Include countries of the post-Soviet region,
- Are published regularly covering a period of several years since the end of the Soviet Union, i.e. since 1992.

The post-Soviet region includes 12 countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan) and up to 6 territories (Abkhazia, Chechnya, Crimea, Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, Transnistria).

For all rankings which fulfil the selection criteria the general or total scores for all countries and territories of the post-Soviet region since 1992 (as available) have been included in this data collection.

The scores provided by the original source have been copied into this data collection without any changes to the values. Later revisions of earlier data have been incorporated into this dataset.

As the rankings originate from different sources the underlying methodology differs, too. A brief outline of scores and methodology for each ranking included in this data collection is provided in this document. The outline is solely based on excerpts from the respective self-description on the rankings' online presentation. The outline also indicates changes in the score table and the methodology. Before using any of the rankings the original full description of the methodology should be consulted. A link to the respective online description of the methodology is provided in the list below. The link to the original dataset is provided in the excel file which contains the actual rankings ("CountryRankings-economy-FSU-data.xlsx").

When using the ranking data it is important to check whether the year indicated in the ranking refers to the year covered by the ranking or to the year of publication. The respective information is indicated for each ranking in the list below.

There is a controversial debate about the reliability, validity and informative value of country rankings. A brief introduction to this debate is given in a separate file ("CountryRankings-economy-FSU-validity.pdf") which is part of this data collection. It also includes a bibliography of academic literature on the validity of political regime-related country rankings.

¹ Indices related to corruption are included in the collection of country rankings related to political regimes and sub-categories of political regimes.

Brief Description of Scores and Methodology

(The entries in the list below are clickable and link to the respective description.)

BDO INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMPASS (IBC)	4
GLOBAL INNOVATION INDEX	5
INDEX OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM	6
OPEN BUDGET INDEX	7
THE GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX	8
LEGATUM PROSPERITY INDEX	9
HAPPY PLANET INDEX	10
SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY INDEX	11
KOF INDEX OF GLOBALIZATION	12
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX	13
EASE OF DOING BUSINESS	14
GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS INDEX (GCI)	15
GLOBAL GENDER GAP INDEX	16
ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE INDEX (EPI)	17

BDO International Business Compass (IBC)

Prepared by: BDO AG Wirtschaftsprüfungsgesellschaft and HWWI (Hamburgisches WeltWirtschaftsinstitut)

Since: 2012

Frequency: Annual

It is not clear to which year the individual indicators refer which are included in the index for a specific year.

Countries included: 174

Range of scores: 0 (lowest) to 100 (highest)

URL: <http://www.bdo-ibc.de/index/weltweiter-vergleich/gesamtindex.html>

Brief description

The IBC evaluates countries regarding their economic, politico-legal, and socio-cultural level of development. Here the sub-indices range from 0 (very low) to 100 (very high). In addition two sub-indices indicate the product site potential and the sales attractiveness of a country. All sub-indices range in five categories from "far below average" (f b ø) to "far above average" (f a ø) with values between 0 and 20. All sub-indices together are added up to the overall index. Only data from official international sources were used for the selection of the sub-indicators. The indicators included in the index are regularly updated and adjusted. The respective changes are also applied to the values for preceding years.

Global Innovation Index

Prepared by: Cornell University, INSEAD, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

Established: 2007

Frequency: annual

The scores refer to the respective previous year

Countries included: 107 (2007), 130 (2008/09), 132 (2009/10), 125 (2011), 141 (since 2012)

Range of scores: 0 (lowest) to 100 (highest)

URL: <https://www.globalinnovationindex.org/about-gii#reports>

Brief description

The GII recognizes the key role of innovation as a driver of economic growth and well-being. It aims to capture the multi-dimensional facets of innovation and to be applicable to developed and emerging economies alike. In doing so, it helps policy makers and business leaders move beyond one-dimensional innovation metrics towards a more holistic analysis of innovation drivers and outcomes.

The quantification scheme has been changed substantially in 2011. As a result figures for earlier years are not comparable to those since 2011.

The Global Innovation Index (GII) is an evolving project that builds on its previous editions while incorporating newly available data and that is inspired by the latest research on the measurement of innovation. The GII relies on two sub-indices—the Innovation Input Sub-Index and the Innovation Output Sub-Index—each built around key pillars.

Five input pillars capture elements of the national economy that enable innovative activities: (1) Institutions, (2) Human capital and research, (3) Infrastructure, (4) Market sophistication, and (5) Business sophistication. Two output pillars capture actual evidence of innovation outputs: (6) Knowledge and technology outputs and (7) Creative outputs.

Each pillar is divided into sub-pillars and each sub-pillar is composed of individual indicators (81 in total in 2017). Sub-pillar scores are calculated as the weighted average of individual indicators; pillar scores are calculated as the weighted average of sub-pillar scores.

The GII gathers data from more than 30 sources, covering a large spectrum of innovation drivers and results; privileging hard data over qualitative assessments (only five survey questions were included in the GII 2017) The framework is revised every year in a transparent exercise to improve the way innovation is measured.

Index of Economic Freedom

Prepared by: The Heritage Foundation and Wall Street Journal (USA)

Since: 1995

Frequency: Annual

The scores refer to the respective previous year.

Countries included: 186

Range of scores: 0 (lowest) to 100 (highest)

URL: <http://www.heritage.org/index/ranking>

Brief description

The methodology has been revised in 2007. The index now measures 10 specific factors, and averages them equally into a total score. Each one of the 10 freedoms is graded using a scale from 0 to 100, where 100 represents the maximum freedom. A score of 100 signifies an economic environment or set of policies that is most conducive to economic freedom. The ten component freedoms are: Business, Trade and Fiscal Freedom, Government Spending, Monetary, Investment and Financial Freedom, Property rights, Freedom from Corruption, Labor Freedom.

Open Budget Index

Prepared by: International Budget Partnership

Since: 2006

Frequency: every two years (planned)

The scores refer to the respective previous year.

Countries included: 40 (2006), 77 (2008), 91 (2010), 98 (2012), 101 (2015), 112 (2017)

Range of scores: 0 (lowest) to 100 (highest)

URL: <https://www.internationalbudget.org/open-budget-survey/>

Brief description

The Open Budget Survey (OBS) assesses the three components of a budget accountability system: public availability of budget information; opportunities for the public to participate in the budget process; and the role and effectiveness of formal oversight institutions, including the legislature and the national audit office (referred to here as the “supreme audit institution”). The majority of the survey questions assess what occurs in practice, rather than what is required by law.

The results for each country are based on a questionnaire, comprising 145 scored questions (in 2017), that is completed by researchers typically based in the surveyed country. Almost all of the researchers responsible for completing the questionnaire are from civil society organizations or academic institutions. Although the mandates and areas of interest of the research groups vary widely, all have a common interest in promoting transparent and responsive budgeting practices in their countries. Most of the researchers belong to organizations with a significant focus on budget issues.

All responses to the OBS questions are supported by evidence. This includes citations from budget documents; the country’s laws; or interviews with government officials, legislators, or experts on the country’s budget process. Once completed, the questionnaire responses are quantified. Each questionnaire was then reviewed by an anonymous peer reviewer who has substantial working knowledge of the budget systems in the relevant country. IBP also invited the governments of nearly all survey countries to comment on the draft OBS results. The decision to invite a government to comment on the draft results was made after consulting with the relevant research organization responsible for the survey.

The Open Budget Index (OBI) assigns each country a score from 0 to 100 based on the simple average of the numerical value of each of the responses to the 109 questions in the questionnaire that assess the public availability of budget information. In calculating the OBI scores, no method of explicit weighting is used.

Score ranges then get a substantive description:

Extensive Information Available (81-100)	Substantial Information Available (61-80)	Limited Information Available (41-60)	Minimal Information Available (21-40)	Scant or No Information Available (0-20)
---	--	--	--	---

The Global Hunger Index

Prepared by: The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)

since: 2006 (scores for earlier years have been calculated in 2006, 2011 and 2013)

Frequency: annual

The scores are based on figures from various years.

Countries included: 119 (fewer for retrospectively calculated scores)

Range of scores: 0 (best – no hunger) to 100 (worst)

URL: <http://www.globalhungerindex.org/>

Brief description

The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a tool designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger at the global, regional, and national levels. The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) calculates GHI scores each year to assess progress and setbacks in combating hunger.

To capture the multidimensional nature of hunger, GHI scores are based on four indicators:

1. **UNDERNOURISHMENT**: the share of the population that is undernourished (that is, whose caloric intake is insufficient);
2. **CHILD WASTING**: the share of children under the age of five who are wasted (that is, who have low weight for their height, reflecting acute undernutrition);
3. **CHILD STUNTING**: the share of children under the age of five who are stunted (that is, who have low height for their age, reflecting chronic undernutrition); and
4. **CHILD MORTALITY**: the mortality rate of children under the age of five (in part, a reflection of the fatal mix of inadequate nutrition and unhealthy environments).

The current formula for calculating the GHI scores was introduced in 2015 and is a revision of the original formula that was used to calculate GHI scores from 2006 to 2014. The primary differences are that child stunting and child wasting have replaced child underweight, and the four indicator values are now standardized

The 2017 GHI has been calculated for the 119 countries for which data on all four component indicators are available and measuring hunger is considered most relevant. GHI scores are not calculated for some high-income countries where the prevalence of hunger is very low.

The GHI is only as current as the data for the four component indicators. Thus the 2017 GHI scores reflect hunger and undernutrition levels during the period from 2012 through 2016 rather than in the year 2017. In 2015 scores have been recalculated for 1995, 2000 and 2005, leading to some substantial revisions of earlier numbers.

The GHI ranks countries on a 100-point scale. Zero is the best score (no hunger), and 100 is the worst, although neither of these extremes is reached in practice. The scale below shows the severity of hunger - from *low* to *extremely alarming* — associated with the range of possible GHI scores.

GHI Severity Scale				
≤ 9.9 low	10.0–19.9 moderate	20.0–34.9 serious	35.0–49.9 alarming	≥ 50.0 extremely alarming

Legatum Prosperity Index

Prepared by: Legatum Institute

Since: 2007

Frequency: annual

The scores refer to the respective previous year.

Countries included: 149

Range of scores: 0 (worst) to 100 (best)

URL <http://www.prosperity.com/#!/ranking>

Brief description

The *Legatum Prosperity Index*TM is a framework that assesses countries on the promotion of their citizens' flourishing, reflecting both wealth and wellbeing. It captures the richness of a truly prosperous life, moving beyond traditional macro-economic measurements of a nation's prosperity, which rely solely on indicators of wealth such as average income per person (GDP per capita).

Originally the Index included 89 variables (the variables being weighted by the size of their effect on either wealth or wellbeing) for each country, which underlied its 8 sub-indices: Economy, Entrepreneurship & Opportunity, Governance, Education, Health, Safety & Security, Personal Freedom and Social Capital.

For the 2016 issue, the Prosperity Index was refreshed following a two-year methodological review, with the input of academic and policy expert advisors. The Index now captures the breadth of prosperity across nine pillars of prosperity using 104 indicators.

A country is given a score for each pillar. This score is based on that country's performance with respect to each of the indicators in that pillar, and the level of that importance—the weight assigned to each indicator—which is discussed in the methodology report. Finally, the pillar scores are averaged to obtain an overall prosperity score, which determines each country's rank. Each pillar contains around 12 indicators. Where missing data are detected, we use the latest data available. For the 2016 and 2017 editions of the Index, most variables (75 percent) are based on data from 2014 onwards. Where no reliable real data are accessible, imputation is employed on a case-by-case basis. For 2016, before imputation, the Index had in total 783 missing data points out of 15,496—5.1 percent of the dataset.

The Prosperity Index score is determined by assigning equal weights to all nine pillars for each country. The mean of the nine pillar scores yields a country's overall Prosperity score. The range of the score reaches from 0 (worst) to 100 (best).

Happy Planet Index

Prepared by: The new economics foundation (NEF)

since: 2006

Frequency: usually every 3 years

The scores are based on figures from various years.

Countries included: 178 (2006), 143 (2009), 151 (2012), 140 (2016)

Range of scores: the higher, the better (grouped into an expanded traffic light)

URL: <http://happyplanetindex.org/about/>

Brief description

The Happy Planet Index measures the extent to which countries deliver long, happy, sustainable lives for the people that live in them. The Happy Planet Index combines four elements to show how efficiently residents of different countries are using environmental resources to lead long, happy lives.

Wellbeing: How satisfied the residents of each country say they feel with life overall, on a scale from zero to ten, based on data collected as part of the Gallup World Poll.

Life expectancy: The average number of years a person is expected to live in each country based on data collected by the United Nations.

Inequality of outcomes: The inequalities between people within a country, in terms of how long they live, and how happy they feel, based on the distribution in each country's life expectancy and wellbeing data. Inequality of outcomes is expressed as a percentage. This component has only been included since 2016. Data for 2012 have been recalculated. Accordingly, scores from 2006 and 2009 cannot directly be compared with the scores since 2016.

Ecological Footprint: The average impact that each resident of a country places on the environment, based on data prepared by the Global Footprint Network. Ecological Footprint is expressed using a standardized unit: global hectares (gha) per person.

For easy reference the Happy Planet Index illustrates the four (or before 2016 three) component scores with a traffic-light system. Green signifies a good, orange a middling and red a bad performance.

These scores are combined to an expanded nine-color (until 2012 six-color) traffic light for the overall HPI score (adding different shades of red and green).

Sustainable Society Index

Prepared by: Sustainable Society Foundation

Established: 2006

Frequency: bi-annually

The scores are based on figures from various years.

Countries included: 154

Range of scores: 0 (worst) to 10 (best), additionally grouped into an expanded traffic light

URL: <http://www.ssfindex.com/ssi/framework/>

Brief description

The Sustainable Society Index (SSI) is based on the well-known Brundtland definition, to which we added a third sentence to make explicitly clear that both Human Wellbeing and Environmental Wellbeing are included. It runs as follows: a sustainable society is a society

- that meets the needs of the present generation,
- that does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,
- in which each human being has the opportunity to develop itself in freedom, within a well-balanced society and in harmony with its surroundings.

The SSI is built up by 21 indicators, clustered in 7 Categories and finally pooled in 3 dimensions: human wellbeing (basic needs, health, personal & social development), environmental wellbeing (natural resources, climate & energy) and economic wellbeing (transition, economy).

Only public data sources are used for the SSI. Particularly the 2016 update was confronted with a large number of recalculated data by the official databases. The SSI has followed these updates for all countries and for historic data also. It caused some pretty large changes in the data. Thus only the data recalculated in 2016 can be compared over time.

For the aggregations the geometric average is used. The arithmetic average, offers the possibility of compensation: low scores for one indicator can be compensated by high scores for a different indicator. Since sustainability, i.e. strong sustainability, doesn't allow compensation, it is best to use the geometric average, which suppresses this compensation. Following the recommendations of Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission in its audit of the SSI, we haven't aggregated the 3 dimension levels into one single figure for the overall index. The reason being the negative correlation between Human and Environmental Wellbeing.

KOF Index of Globalization

Prepared by: Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich

Since: 2002 (data calculated backwards to 1970)

Frequency: annual

The figures refer to the indicated year and are published with a three year delay (i.e. scores for 2015 are published in 2018).

Countries included: 207

Range of scores: 0 (lowest) to 100 (highest), prior to 2007: 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest)

URL: <https://www.kof.ethz.ch/en/forecasts-and-indicators/indicators/kof-globalisation-index.html>

Brief description

The KOF Index of Globalization measures the three main dimensions of globalization: economic, social and political. In addition to three indices measuring these dimensions, the KOF Index calculates an overall index of globalization and sub-indices referring to actual economic flows, economic restrictions, data on information flows, data on personal contact, and data on cultural proximity. Data are available on a yearly basis for 207 countries over the period 1970 – 2011.

The 2007 index introduces an updated version of the original index. In most cases, this updating simply involves including more recent data than has been available previously. Between 2002 and 2006 the variables introduced were transformed to an index on a zero to ten scale, where ten is the maximum value for a specific variable and zero is the minimum value. After 2007 each of the variables were transformed to an index on a scale of one to hundred, where hundred is the maximum value for a specific variable and one is the minimum value. Higher values denote greater globalization.

Human Development Index

Prepared by: United Nations Development Program (UNDP)

Since: 1990 (retrospective calculation of scores for 1975 to 1990 for non-socialist countries)

Frequency: Annual

The scores refer to the year indicated and are published with a delay of two years later (i.e. scores for 2016 are published in 2018).

Countries included: 187

Range of scores: 0 (lowest) to 1 (highest)

URL: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi>

Brief description

The Human Development Index (HDI) measures the average achievements in a country in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life (life expectancy), knowledge (earlier: adult literacy (weighted 2 thirds) and school enrolment rate, since 2012: mean of years of schooling for adults aged 25 years and expected years of schooling for children of school entering age, capped at 18 year) and a decent standard of living (GDP per capita in purchasing power parity). Performance in each dimension is expressed as a value between 0 and 1. The HDI is then calculated as a simple average of the dimension indices.

Ease of Doing Business

Prepared by: Worldbank

Since: 2003

Frequency: Annual

The scores refer to the respective previous year.

Countries included: 190

Range of scores: 1 (worst) to 190 (best)

URL: <http://www.doingbusiness.org/>

Brief description

Economies are ranked on their ease of doing business, from 1–190. A high ease of doing business ranking means the regulatory environment is more conducive to the starting and operation of a local firm. The rankings are determined by sorting the aggregate distance to frontier scores on 10 topics, each consisting of several indicators, giving equal weight to each topic. In 2014 the ranking was adjusted and values were recalculated from 2010 onwards. 8 of 10 Doing Business' indicators were changed. Since then there have been regular changes to the methodology, accompanied by public debates about the validity of the Ranking. For further information see the literature on the ranking listed in the file "CountryRankings-economy-FSU-validity".

Global Competitiveness Index (GCI)

Prepared by: World Economic Forum

Since: 2005 (predecessor: 2001 – 2004: Growth Competitive Index)

Frequency: Annual

The scores refer to the first year given in the title.

Countries included: about 140 (depending on year)

Range of scores: 1 (worst) to 7 (best)

URL: <http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-competitiveness-report-2014-2015>

Brief description

The GCI assesses the competitiveness of nations and provides a holistic overview of factors that are critical to driving productivity and competitiveness. These factors are grouped into three principal categories, twelve policy domains ("pillars") with 90 indicators: institutions (property rights, ethics and corruption, undue influence, government inefficiency, security, accountability), infrastructure (infrastructure quality, transport, energy, telecommunications), macroeconomy, health and primary education, higher education and training, market efficiency (competition, distortions), flexibility and efficiency of labor market, sophistication and openness of financial markets, technological readiness, market size, business sophistication, innovation.

The rankings are drawn from a combination of publicly available hard data and the results of the Executive Opinion Survey, a comprehensive annual survey conducted by the World Economic Forum, together with its network of Partner Institutions. By now over 15.000 business leaders are polled in the 144 economies worldwide which are included in the index. The survey questionnaire is designed to capture a broad range of factors affecting an economy's business climate that are critical determinants of sustained economic growth.

The computation of the GCI is based on successive aggregations of scores from the indicator level (i.e., the most disaggregated level) all the way up to the overall GCI score. Unless noted otherwise, an arithmetic mean is used to aggregate individual indicators within a category. The scores of the pillars are weighted according to their relevance for a country's development stage. For this purpose 3 stages plus transition periods between them (i.e. 5 different groups) are operationalised.

Global Gender Gap Index

Prepared by: World Economic Forum

Since: 2006

Frequency: annual

The scores refer to the respective previous year

Countries included: rising from 115 (2006) to 144 (2017)

Range of scores: 0 (worst, i.e. absolute inequality) to 1 (best)

URL <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-gender-gap-report-2017>

Brief description

The Index benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education and health criteria, and provides country rankings that allow effective comparisons across regions and income groups. The rankings are designed to create greater awareness among a global audience of the challenges posed by gender gaps and the opportunities created by reducing them. The methodology and quantitative analysis behind the rankings are intended to serve as a basis for designing effective measures for reducing gender gaps. The Global Gender Gap ranks countries on a 0-1-point scale. Zero is the worst score (inequality) and 1 the best (equality).

Environmental Performance Index (EPI)

Prepared by: Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy (YCELP) and Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN), Columbia University Earth Institute

since: 2006

Frequency: biennially

Scores are based on most recent data available (including figures several years older than the index year)

Countries included: about 175

Range of scores: 0 (worst) to 100 (best)

URL: <https://epi.envirocenter.yale.edu/>

Brief description

The Environmental Performance Index (EPI) ranks how well the 178 countries perform in two overarching objectives: protection of human health from environmental harm and protection of ecosystems. These two objectives—environmental health and ecosystem vitality—are divided into nine, since 2018 ten issue categories measured through the calculation and aggregation of 20, since 2018 24 indicators. The indicators are calculated from country-level data and statistics from the WHO, OECD, UN, etc. Using a “proximity-to-target” methodology the performance indicators, as well as the issue categories, assess a country’s closeness to a policy target on a scale of 0—being the farthest from the target—to 100—being closest to the target. These policy targets are defined primarily by international or national policy goals or established scientific thresholds. To achieve a single score each indicator—as well as the policy issues and overall objectives—is weighted within each policy issue according to the quality of the underlying dataset, as well as the relevance or fit of the indicator to assess the policy issue.

Because the underlying methodology and data change between versions of the EPI, it is not appropriate to treat the scores from each release as a time series.

Previous scores have been fully revised on the basis of a consistent methodology in 2014. Additionally further years have been added. The revised scores for the years from 2002 to 2014 are therefore NOT comparable to the previous iterations of the EPI and are meant to provide a time series to show what a country’s EPI score would have been in a prior year, given the 2014 EPI’s method, framework, and target scores.