

Bertelsmann Stiftung (ed.)

Transformation Index BTI 2020

Governance in International Comparison



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Foreword

Thirty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the euphoria over the seemingly unswerving progress of democracy and a market economy has given way to disillusionment. For the sixth time in a row, global scores for the quality of democracy, market-economic systems and governance – as measured by the Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI) – have reached new lows. Underlying these sobering figures is the reality that, in the last 14 years, growing numbers of people have been subjected to eroding political freedoms, economic exclusion and worsening governance.

These findings are of concern because these losses are registered precisely in those areas that are at the very core of democratic regimes and market-economic systems. Governments in both autocracies and democracies are restricting the space for civic activism and political opposition. They are also curtailing press freedoms and free speech while consolidating their power by weakening checks and balances. In addition to skewing the competition among political ideas that is essential for a functioning democracy, this also distorts the pluralistic negotiation of compromises regarding innovative, inclusive efforts to shape the future, and how best to address current challenges.

Distorted competition is also affecting many market economies that feature neither a transparent, fair and reliable framework nor the social policies that empower everyone to participate in the economy. And whereas

the fight against extreme poverty has made progress in many parts of the world, the rapid growth of economic and social inequality observed in many countries is increasingly dividing societies lacking fairness. As a result, solidarity, tolerance and a sense of community are losing ground. And in many countries, the transnational crises and challenges we face – such as climate change, digitalization, migration or advancing globalization – are fueling fears about the future.

Given the nature of these shortcomings and unmet challenges, many are losing confidence in the ability of their political leaders to govern. Citizens are expressing increasing doubts, and the level of approval of democracy (as measured by the BTI 2020) has hit a new low. While the vast majority of people still consider democracy to be the best political system, fewer and fewer are convinced that democracy is functioning well and delivering on the promises of freedom, justice and prosperity in their country. In fact, many no longer feel like they are being adequately represented and understood by their political leaders, and they are accusing the political and economic elites in their country of nepotism and self-interest.

In several countries across all regions of the world, citizens have taken to the streets to protest against not only corruption and economic ills, but also efforts to dismantle democracy. The wave of demonstrations observed in countries as diverse as Algeria, Armenia, the Czech Republic, Ethiopia,

Malaysia, Russia and Sudan is cause for hope, but it also underscores just how urgent it is that we address these problems before the populists and enemies of democracy seize the reins.

We must take the threats to democracy and a market economy seriously, both internally and externally. This begins with taking an unflinching look in the mirror provided by the BTI, with its comprehensive view of social change. When initiating the Transformation Index (BTI) more than 20 years ago, our founder, Reinhard Mohn, emphasized the need to identify the strengths and weaknesses of transformation processes and to thereby put democracy and the model of a social market economy to the test – over and over again. We need the insights provided by cross-national comparisons so that we can learn from each other and adapt to our ever-changing environment.

Rather than being static, democracy is a process. Taking democracy for granted is a danger to democracy itself. The same is true with regard to a social market economy. Both systems must evolve. They must allow for greater diversity, keep pace with current developments, and improve their capacity to meet the challenges ahead.

Democracy thrives on the fact that people can get involved. Those who embrace the institutions of democracy and are committed to protecting them constitute the lifeblood of democracy. Being able to make a difference

and to experience freedom and liberty is what makes people appreciate the value of democracy. Societies around the world are facing imminent and great changes. Moving forward, we will need to ensure that everyone is included in the process. We need bridges of understanding – within societies, but also across languages and borders.

However, what we need more than anything is good political leadership – which is also one of the conceptual pillars of the BTI. A functioning democracy requires the courage to compromise and the ability to build consensus while reconciling various interests between people within a society. This year's BTI findings show an increasingly diminished capacity for consensus-building among governments. This comes at a time when engaging in mutual dialogue is more important than ever before. Shared values of tolerance, freedom, solidarity and humaneness are the bedrock upon which a functioning society stands. As citizens, we'd do well to remind ourselves of this fact. And the same holds true for our political leaders, who must also demonstrate the courage to allow for more democracy and civic engagement.

How can we go about this? Given the formidable challenges ahead, it's easy to resign ourselves to despair and pessimism. But it would be much too premature to write an obituary for the normative models of democracy and a market economy. If we look around us, we see many people taking to the

streets to make themselves heard despite all efforts to suppress critical voices. They are courageous, and their example shows that standing up for our values in ensuring a future together is a worthy endeavor.

Alongside all its sobering findings, the BTI also repeatedly shows that there are countries where, in contrast to all the trends, such efforts are faring well, and in very different regions of the world. For example, Estonia and Mauritius – two small countries in difficult geopolitical contexts – have for years continuously succeeded in further consolidating their democracies while remaining innovative and able to adapt.

A society's ability to endure depends on the interaction of various factors, including a dynamic market economy anchored in the principles of social justice; an active, robust civil society; and an adaptive political system that allows everyone to participate in determining the course of the future while also ensuring that no one is above the law. This vision has yet to be realized, and we must remain resolute in our efforts to make it a reality. The BTI 2020 can be a part of this undertaking. We hope you enjoy and are inspired by this year's edition.



Liz Mohn
*Vice Chair Executive Board,
Bertelsmann Stiftung*




Stefan Empter
*Senior Director,
Bertelsmann Stiftung*



Executive Summary

The quality of democracy, market economy and governance in developing and transformation countries has fallen to its lowest level in 14 years. The Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI) shows that democratic regression, rampant corruption and deepening polarization are interlinked and mutually reinforcing each other in many of the 137 states surveyed.

The BTI 2020 findings record a growing number of countries that are subject to distorted political and economic competition. Government leaders and their associated economic elites are leveraging their positions and privileges to consolidate their power and line their pockets. And while we've always observed this form of patronage-based rule in autocracies, it is increasingly also a feature of democratically elected governments. As a result, we see growing numbers of people being excluded from the political process as the rule of law is hollowed out and opportunities for political participation are curtailed. We also see more people being excluded from economic participation and being subjected to unfair competition and growing social inequality. At the same time, consensus-building and other aspects of governance designed to balance interests are losing ground. Ethnic, religious or regional divisions are often instrumentalized and deepened, which has generated more societal polarization worldwide over the last decade.

More inequality, less competition

Most governments have no response to the most urgent issue in economic transformation: the socioeconomic marginalization of broad segments of the population. In 76 of the 137 BTI countries, including 46 out of

50 African countries, poverty and inequality are widespread. The global average score for the level of socioeconomic development, which had already sunk to 4.46 points in the BTI 2010, has continued to decline, reaching a new low of 4.28 points in this year's BTI. Halting the spread of social inequality, which is driven in part by globalization, is difficult even for those few governments that take a proactive approach to social policy.

Economic performance over the last decade has also been largely negative. Macroeconomic indicators deteriorated in 61 of the 128 BTI countries surveyed since 2010, and stagnated in another 35. As a result, fiscal stability suffered. While the BTI 2010 reported that 38% of all surveyed countries featured stable fiscal policies, this share fell to 20% in this year's edition. Several countries are burdened by debt levels not seen since the 1980s.

And while externally induced shocks certainly play a role here, the nepotism and mismanagement characterizing many governments exposes the responsibility they bear for the lack of progress. If one distinguishes market-economic systems from dirigiste, market-distorting or patronage-based structures, only 15 of 137 governments guarantee free and fair competition, while another 14 do so only halfheartedly. Economic systems in more than 100 BTI countries are only marginally market-economic in nature, if at all. In fact, while 70% of all economic systems surveyed by the BTI feature adequate conditions for a functioning private sector, they are also characterized by severe regulatory deficits, particularly with regard to anti-monopoly policy.

Economic and social fairness therefore demand considerably more attention. The discrimination and concentration of power we see in many countries is driven by social

exclusion as well as deficits in market organization and competition.

Quality of democracy is eroding

Political competition is also increasingly subject to restrictions. Authoritarian modes of governing have steadily increased over the past 10 years. A number of autocracies have intensified their repressive tactics, while several democracies – many of which were once classified as consolidated – have tampered with basic political participation rights and the rule of law. Despite a few developments to the contrary, the BTI 2020 registers a continuation of the global trend of eroding democratic quality.

Citizens around the world are increasingly frustrated by these developments. This can be seen in the alarming decline in the approval of democracy, which has fallen 0.79 points (on a scale of 10) since the BTI 2010. Although clear majorities in most societies continue to favor a democratic regime, they are nonetheless dissatisfied with how democracy works and distrust their institutions and politicians.

In many countries, rampant corruption and the systemic abuse of office are key factors in the lack of trust in the political class. The opposition and civil society are particularly outraged by partisan attempts to prosecute the abuse of office (Brazil) or to get in the way of such efforts (Romania). According to the BTI, only 12 countries – including Singapore, as the only autocracy – are equipped with effective mechanisms for prosecuting office abuse.

In some countries, this crisis of confidence is fueling populist protest and helping usher in governments ostensibly com-

mitted to the fight against “corrupt elites.” But these governments, such as those of Hungary and Turkey, instead tend to create new patronage-based networks. They see their mandate – through the lens of anti-pluralism – as a revolution at the ballot box that has given them the task of implementing the “will of the people,” as defined in their terms. They then proceed to amass power within the executive by tightening control over the judiciary, by restricting freedom of the press and the right to assemble, and by manipulating elections. Traditional elites in defective democracies as well as autocratic rulers seeking to refine their repressive strategies make use of a similar set of instruments in their efforts to secure power. This is reflected in the fact that during the last two years, the overall score for political transformation has deteriorated by at least 0.25 points in nearly one in five BTI countries (i.e., 24 of the 129 already included in the BTI 2018).

Deepening political divisions

As economic exclusion and political polarization grow, many governments are struggling to build a consensus on reforms. But there are also several leaders in power who are actively fomenting tensions in society. On global average, all five BTI indicators of consensus-building – and conflict management, in particular – deteriorated during the period under review. Political leaders’ waning efforts to reconcile diverging interests and de-escalate conflicts have deepened political divisions in 29 countries over the last two years, particularly in Nicaragua.

The trend toward autocratic behavior is also taking its toll on international cooperation efforts. Struggles over regional influence and illiberal alliances have significantly compromised cooperation with international organizations as well as within bilateral and multilateral frameworks in the Balkans, Central America, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Scores for the willingness to engage in regional cooperation, which have traditionally been rather high, are plummeting.

Contrary to the claims of autocrats and populists, a concentration of power in the executive branch does not improve governance.

This fact is most notably evident in the ability of governments to draw on their own experience and external input when making decisions. Nearly one-fourth of all governments surveyed – in particular, defective democracies and those governments recently classified as autocracies – have shown less willingness to engage in policy learning over the last two years. The example of Turkey demonstrates how a political system that is increasingly tailored to the whims of a leading figure robs itself of critical discourse, of alternative ideas and, ultimately, of innovation and flexibility.

On a positive note, however, progress has been made in the area of anti-corruption policy. In Armenia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Malaysia and South Africa, newly elected heads of government have identified the fight against corruption as a priority and have delivered initial successes. Malaysia and South Africa’s scores on this indicator have improved to seven points, making them part of a relatively small group of 23 transformation countries that represent good performers in this regard. But this also means that well over 100 countries are far from succeeding in the battle against corruption. Among all BTI governance indicators, that of anti-corruption policy continues to record the lowest scores.

Ongoing protests against the abuse of power

As the BTI 2020 shows, we see pseudo-participation in several democracies and the simulation of competition in many market economies, both of which are leading to increasingly centralized control in the executive and greater social inequality. However, there are promising developments recorded in Armenia, Ecuador and Ethiopia. In addition, prolonged protests in Algeria and Sudan brought down long-ruling presidents and raised hopes of broader political change after the end of the period under review. Autocrats may have refined their means of maintaining their rule, but civil societies are also showing a learning curve. It’s worth noting that demonstrators in the aforementioned countries have not been satisfied with the mere removal of heads of state, and have shown resolve in their demands for genuine change.

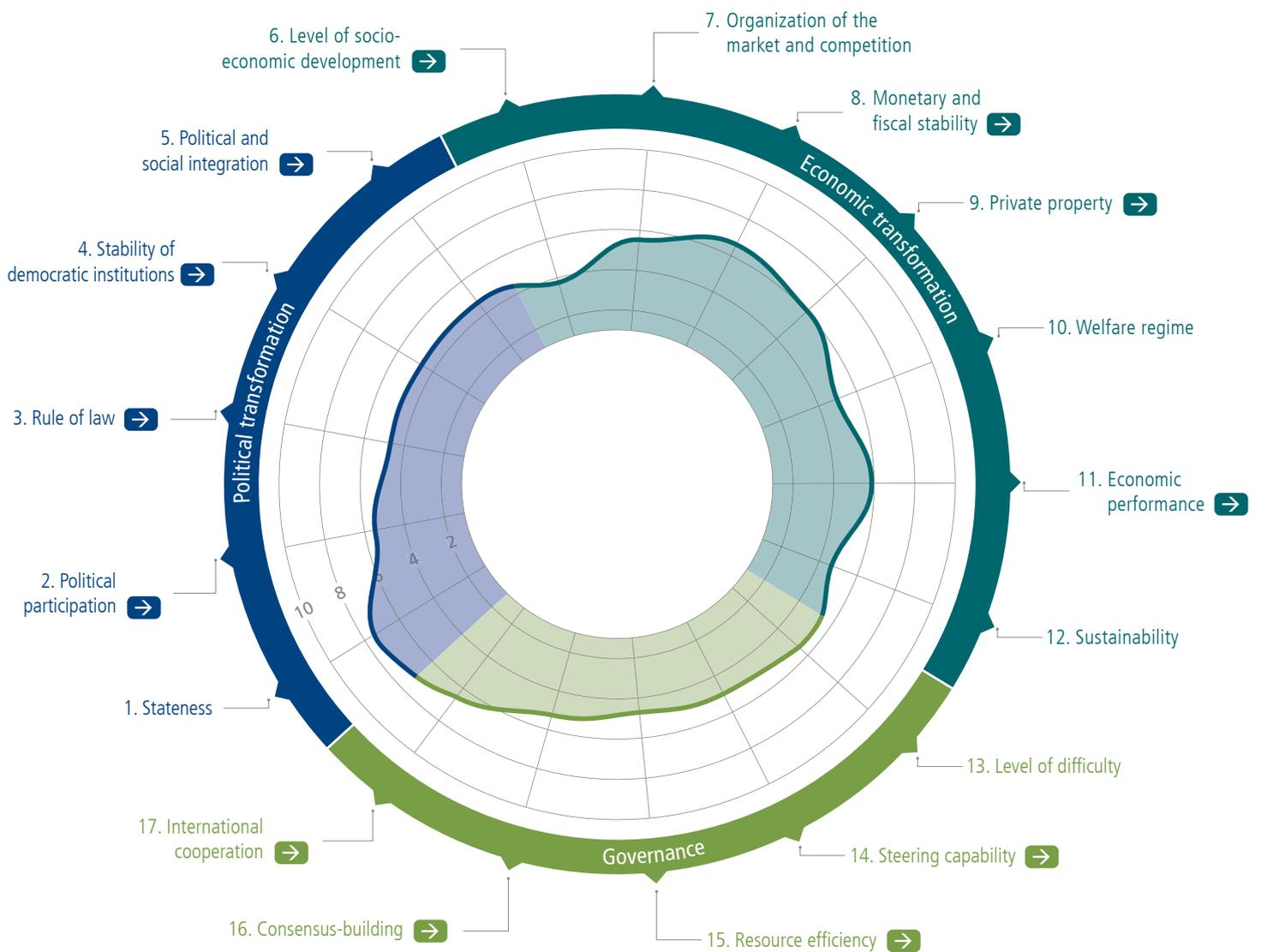
This is good news, as is the fact that protests against corruption and the abuse of office continue worldwide. In addition, these protests are directed against government efforts to formally promise political participation, economic inclusion and accountability while undermining them in practice. Thus, the normative transformation goals that inform the BTI model remain relevant: In order to achieve lasting societal change, democracies must be anchored in the rule of law and market-economic systems must be socially inclusive.

| Political transformation | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|------|
| 1 | Uruguay | 9.90 |
| 2 | Estonia | 9.80 |
| 3 | Taiwan | 9.55 |
| 4 | Lithuania | 9.50 |
| 5 | Czech Republic | 9.35 |
| 6 | Chile | 9.30 |
| 7 | Slovenia | 9.15 |
| 8 | Costa Rica | 9.05 |
| 9 | Latvia | 8.90 |
| 10 | Slovakia | 8.65 |

| Economic transformation | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|------|
| 1 | Czech Republic | 9.79 |
| 2 | Taiwan | 9.43 |
| 3 | Slovenia | 9.39 |
| 4 | Estonia | 9.29 |
| 5 | Lithuania | 9.11 |
| 6 | Singapore | 8.82 |
| 7 | Slovakia | 8.79 |
| 8 | South Korea | 8.71 |
| 9 | Latvia | 8.61 |
| 10 | Chile | 8.43 |
| 10 | Uruguay | 8.43 |

| Governance | | |
|------------|----------------|------|
| 1 | Estonia | 7.46 |
| 2 | Taiwan | 7.37 |
| 3 | Chile | 7.33 |
| 3 | Uruguay | 7.33 |
| 5 | Botswana | 7.25 |
| 6 | Lithuania | 7.21 |
| 7 | Czech Republic | 7.08 |
| 8 | Latvia | 7.00 |
| 9 | Costa Rica | 6.92 |
| 10 | Mauritius | 6.76 |

The BTI 2020 at a Glance



2. Political participation: Free and fair elections; Effective power to govern; Association / assembly rights; Freedom of expression

Freedom of expression → is increasingly subject to restrictions. In almost half of all countries, state restrictions have expanded and the plurality of media landscapes has narrowed over the last decade, most notably in Bangladesh, Hungary and Turkey.

4. Stability of democratic institutions: Performance of democratic institutions; Commitment to democratic institutions

Performance of democratic institutions → is the indicator with the lowest average score in the Democracy Index (4.69), following the abuse of office and party system indicators. Only 15 % of all countries feature efficient and effective institutional interaction.

6. Level of socioeconomic development: Socioeconomic barriers

Socioeconomic barriers → continue to grow. Once again, this indicator has the lowest average score among all BTI indicators (4.17). In more than half of all the countries surveyed, poverty and inequality are severe, which results in the exclusion of a large share of the population from economic participation.

9. Private property: Property rights; Private enterprise

Property rights → are subject to weakening protections. In the last 10 years, 44 countries have had a negative record with regard to defining, regulating and protecting property rights. In almost all of them, the rule of law has also weakened during the same period, most notably in Turkey.

14. Steering capability: Prioritization; Implementation; Policy learning

Policy learning → has deteriorated in 28 countries (22 %) and improved in only 12 countries (9 %) in the last two years. Several autocratic and democratic governments have been less inclined to identify and seize the opportunity for development and transformation.

16. Consensus-building: Consensus on goals; Anti-democratic actors; Cleavage / conflict management; Civil society participation; Reconciliation

Cleavage / conflict management → is a weak spot in transformation processes. Average scores for this indicator have deteriorated more than any other governance indicator over the past 15 years. A total of 60 countries are less able or willing to defuse domestic conflicts. Only 25 countries have improved in this regard.

3. Rule of law: Separation of powers; Independent judiciary; Prosecution of office abuse; Civil rights

Separation of powers → operates smoothly in only eight countries. Many governments are deliberately undermining the authority of independent institutions, such as parliament and the judiciary. With –0.47 points, East-Central and Southeast Europe is leading the negative trend.

5. Political and social integration: Party system; Interest groups; Approval of democracy; Social capital

Approval of democracy → is one of only four indicators for which the scores have not deteriorated since the BTI 2018. In the last 10 years, however, approval of democracy has declined in 60 % of all BTI democracies.

8. Monetary and fiscal stability: Monetary stability; Fiscal stability

Fiscal stability → has lost ground steadily for years and is the economic indicator showing the greatest deterioration over the last two years. Just under one-fifth of all countries surveyed maintain strict budgetary discipline (8–10 points), while many countries have a high debt-to-GDP ratio and are at risk of a debt crisis.

11. Economic performance: Output strength

Output strength → shows a slight upward trend for the first time in the last 10 years. Key macroeconomic indicators improved over the last two years in 33 countries, particularly in Guinea, Kuwait and Vietnam.

15. Resource efficiency: Efficient use of assets; Policy coordination; Anti-corruption policy

Anti-corruption policy → remains the weakest of all indicators of governance performance. However, several countries – such as Armenia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Malaysia and South Africa (all +2) – have made unexpected progress, often as a result of pressure applied by social movements and new leaders.

17. International cooperation: Effective use of support; Credibility; Regional cooperation

Regional cooperation → is increasingly less appreciated, particularly in the Middle East, East-Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans and Central America, where identity cleavages, historical and geopolitical conflicts, and disagreement over democratic values have intensified.

| Political transformation | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Global Ø | 5.52 (e.g., Nigeria) |
| Top-ranking country | Uruguay |
| Positive trend | Armenia, Ecuador, Malaysia |
| Negative trend | Guatemala, Honduras, Kenya |
| Regime distribution | → 74 democracies → 63 autocracies |

| Economic transformation | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Global Ø | 5.46 (e.g., Kenya) |
| Top-ranking country | Czech Republic |
| Positive trend | Ukraine, Vietnam |
| Negative trend | Burundi, Nicaragua, Turkmenistan |
| State of development | → 26 highly advanced / advanced → 55 limited → 56 very limited / rudimentary |

| Governance | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Global Ø | 4.77 (e.g., Kenya) |
| Top-ranking country | Estonia |
| Positive trend | Armenia, Ethiopia, Uzbekistan |
| Negative trend | Iran, Nicaragua, Romania |
| Quality of governance | → 42 countries with very good / good governance → 49 countries with moderate governance → 46 countries with weak / failed governance |

137 Countries
17 Criteria
52 Indicators
7,124 Scores
2 Indices

Methodology



The Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI) analyzes and evaluates whether and how developing countries and countries in transition are steering social change toward democracy and a market economy. Guided by a standardized codebook, country experts assess the extent to which a total of 17 criteria have been met for each of the 137 countries. These experts ground the scores they provide in assessments that comprise the country reports, all of which are available online. A second country expert then reviews these assessments and scores. In a final step, consistency is ensured by subjecting each of the 49 individual scores given per country to regional and interregional calibration processes. Standardizing the analytical process in this way makes targeted comparisons of reform policies possible.

The BTI aggregates the results of this comprehensive study of transformation processes and political management into two indices: the Status Index and the Governance Index. The Status Index, with its two analytic dimensions of political and

economic transformation, identifies where each of the 137 countries stands on its path toward democracy under the rule of law and a social market economy. The Governance Index assesses the quality of political leadership with which transformation processes are steered.

The BTI is published every two years. This biennial evaluation of transformation and development allows us to assess observed trends and identify the outcomes of transformation strategies. The BTI expands the available body of knowledge about how political processes are managed and decision-making is conducted, and makes this knowledge available to policymakers and other advocates of reform. Overall, the BTI offers a comprehensive body of data allowing a broad spectrum of actors to assess and compare the factors driving success in developing and transformation countries.



137 Countries

*What is meant by the term
“transformation”?*

We understand transformation as comprehensive and politically driven change in which an authoritarian system and a state-dominated or clientelist economic order evolve in the direction of democracy and a market-based economy. However, this implies neither linear, irreversible development nor a predetermined path of transformation, nor does it suggest that there is an ideal sequence of milestones to be passed. A return to authoritarianism and periods of stalling are possible, as are detours and out-of-sync political and economic change processes. Indeed, democracy under the rule of law and a market economy anchored in principles of social justice represent goals, but not necessarily immediate priorities within complex development processes. Many states, in fact, pass through radical, sometimes even revolutionary developmental stages; others have yet to undergo comprehensive systemic change; and some states are, for the moment, not targeting transformation.



State of political
and economic transformation



Political leadership toward
democracy and a market economy

Analytical framework

The state of political transformation (democracy status) is measured in terms of five criteria, which in turn are derived from assessments made in response to 18 questions. The BTI's concept of democracy goes well beyond other definitions of democracy, which are limited primarily to basic civil rights and the conduct of free elections. Stateness, which is seen as a precondition to democracy, is included in the BTI's definition of political transformation and examined through questions specifically dealing with the state's monopoly on the use of force and basic administrative structures. It also entails an evaluation of the rule of law, including the separation of powers and the prosecution of office abuse. The BTI puts a special emphasis on the evaluation of democratic consolidation. It assesses the quality of representation with regard to the party system and interest groups, and also measures social capital and the approval of democratic norms and procedures.

The state of economic transformation (market economy status) is measured in terms of seven criteria, which are based on a total of 14 indicators. The BTI's concept of a market economy includes not only aspects such as economic performance, regulatory or competition policy, and property rights; it also contains elements of social inclusion, such as social safety nets, equality of opportunity and sustainability. In BTI terms, comprehensive development not only aims at economic growth, but also requires successful poverty alleviation and the freedom of action and choice for as many citizens as possible.

The Governance Index is comprised of five criteria, which are based on a total of 20 indicators. It focuses on how effectively policymakers facilitate and steer development and transformation processes. By examining and evaluating decision-makers' reform policies, the BTI sheds light on those factors determining success and failure on the way

to democracy and a market economy. Successful governance implies that governments are consistent in pursuing their goals and use their resources wisely and effectively. It also implies that decision-makers cultivate the broadest possible consensus for their transformation goals and work reliably with external supporters and neighboring states.

Governance performance is weighted with the level of difficulty, which is derived from three qualitative and three quantitative indicators. It reflects the observation that each country's quality of transformation is influenced by structural constraints. In this way, difficult conditions and the scarcity of resources in a given country are factored in. With its focus on political actors' steering capacity, the BTI is the only index to analyze and compare governance performance with self-collected data.

17 Criteria



Political transformation

Economic transformation

Governance



Country selection

Because the BTI focuses in its analysis on transformation toward democracy under the rule of law and a market economy anchored in principles of social justice, it excludes countries that might be considered long-consolidated democratic systems and in which economic development can be regarded as well-advanced. In the absence of a clearly defined “threshold of consolidation,” the Transformation Index therefore excludes all countries that were members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) by the year 1989. This is not to suggest that these countries have achieved a static end-state. Rather, it reflects the observation that the reform agenda and the political priorities in a consolidated democracy with a highly developed market economy differ markedly from those that emerge during transformation.

Small states with fewer than 1 million residents are also not examined in the BTI. Exceptions to this rule have been made,

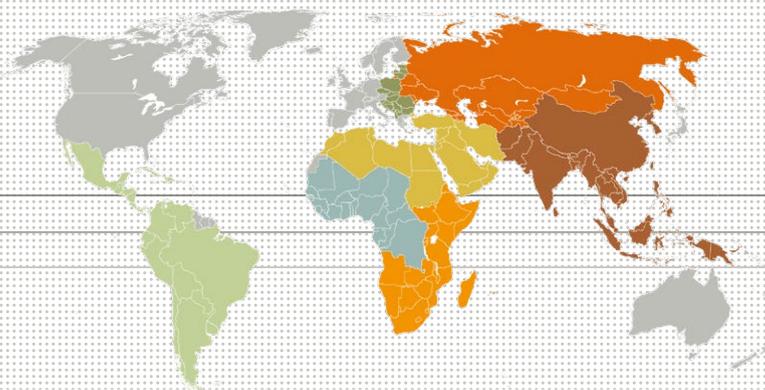
however, to allow for the inclusion of particularly interesting examples of development and transformation: Bhutan, Djibouti and Montenegro.

Since 2003, the number of countries surveyed has increased from 116 to 137. They are divided into seven regional groups: Latin America and the Caribbean (22 countries), West and Central Africa (22), Southern and Eastern Africa (22), Middle East and North Africa (19), East-Central and Southeast Europe (17), Post-Soviet Eurasia (13) and Asia and Oceania (22).

Is it even possible to compare countries that are so different, such as Nigeria and Singapore?

The 137 countries surveyed by the BTI exhibit substantial differences with regard to size and economic power, level of socioeconomic development, and political culture. In order to draw meaningful comparisons with respect to the state of transformation and the quality of governance, the BTI refers to variables that can be compiled in all countries. These variables – from the monopoly on the use of force and press freedom to bank regulation and education policy, and to the efficiency of resource use and conflict management – are relevant to national governments everywhere. This allows comparisons even between very different states to yield interesting insights into the operability of political institutions and the quality of management in transformation processes.

In the codebook upon which the survey is based, particular care has been taken to formulate questions without cultural or regional bias, thus ensuring their applicability to a broad diversity of states. However, because the BTI refers to nation-state frameworks, transnational developments and regional disparities at the subnational level are only addressed to a limited extent in the country reports and will largely escape quantitative assessment.



Criteria and indicators

1 Stateness

There is clarity about the nation's existence as a state with adequately established and differentiated power structures.

- 1.1 To what extent does the state's monopoly on the use of force cover the entire territory?
- 1.2 To what extent do all relevant groups in society agree about citizenship and accept the nation-state as legitimate?
- 1.3 To what extent are legal order and political institutions defined without interference by religious dogmas?
- 1.4 To what extent do basic administrative structures exist?

2 Political participation

The populace decides who rules, and it has other political freedoms.

- 2.1 To what extent are political representatives determined by general, free and fair elections?
- 2.2 To what extent do democratically elected rulers have the effective power to govern? To what extent are there veto powers and political enclaves?
- 2.3 To what extent can individuals form and join independent political parties or civic groups? To what extent can these groups associate and assemble freely?
- 2.4 To what extent can citizens, organizations and the mass media express opinions freely?

3 Rule of law

State powers check and balance one another and ensure civil rights.

- 3.1 To what extent is there a working separation of powers (checks and balances)?
- 3.2 To what extent does an independent judiciary exist?
- 3.3 To what extent are public officeholders who abuse their positions prosecuted or penalized?
- 3.4 To what extent are civil rights guaranteed and protected, and to what extent can citizens seek redress for violations of these rights?

4 Stability of democratic institutions

Democratic institutions are capable of performing, and they are adequately accepted.

- 4.1 Are democratic institutions capable of performing?
- 4.2 To what extent are democratic institutions accepted as legitimate by the relevant actors?

5 Political and social integration

Stable patterns of representation exist for mediating between society and the state; there is also a consolidated civic culture.

- 5.1 To what extent is there a stable, moderate, socially rooted party system able to articulate and aggregate societal interests?
- 5.2 To what extent is there a network of cooperative associations or interest groups to mediate between society and the political system?
- 5.3 How strong is the citizens' approval of democratic norms and procedures?
- 5.4 To what extent have social self-organization and the construction of social capital advanced?

6 Level of socioeconomic development

In principle, the country's level of development permits adequate freedom of choice for all citizens.

- 6.1 To what extent are significant parts of the population fundamentally excluded from society due to poverty and inequality?

7 Organization of the market and competition

There are clear rules for stable, market-based competition.

- 7.1 To what level have the fundamentals of market-based competition developed?
- 7.2 To what extent do safeguards exist to protect competition, and to what extent are they enforced?
- 7.3 To what extent has foreign trade been liberalized?
- 7.4 To what extent have a solid banking system and a capital market been established?

8 Monetary and fiscal stability

There are institutional and political precautions to achieve monetary and fiscal stability.

- 8.1 To what extent does the monetary authority pursue and communicate a consistent monetary stabilization policy?
- 8.2 To what extent do the government's budgetary policies support fiscal stability?

9 Private property

There are adequate conditions to support a functional private sector.

- 9.1 To what extent do government authorities ensure well-defined rights of private property and regulate the acquisition, benefits, use and sale of property?
- 9.2 To what extent are private companies permitted and protected? Are privatization processes conducted in a manner consistent with market principles?

10 Welfare regime

There are viable arrangements to compensate for social risks.

- 10.1 To what extent do social safety nets provide compensation for social risks?
- 10.2 To what extent does equality of opportunity exist?

11 Economic performance

The economy's performance points to solid development.

- 11.1 How does the economy, as measured in quantitative indicators, perform?

12 Sustainability

Economic growth is balanced, environmentally sustainable and future-oriented.

- 12.1 To what extent are environmental concerns effectively taken into account?
- 12.2 To what extent are there solid institutions for basic, secondary and tertiary education, as well as for research and development?

Political transformation

5 Criteria | 18 Indicators

Economic transformation

7 Criteria | 14 Indicators

13 Level of difficulty

- 13.1 To what extent do structural difficulties constrain the political leadership's governance capacity?
- 13.2 To what extent are there traditions of civil society?
- 13.3 How serious are social, ethnic and religious conflicts?
- 13.4 GNI p.c. PPP rescaled (2013)
- 13.5 UN Education Index, rescaled (2013)
- 13.6 Stateness + Rule of Law (average of 2 BTI criteria scores)

14 Steering capability

The government manages reforms effectively and can achieve its policy priorities.

- 14.1 To what extent does the government set and maintain strategic priorities?
- 14.2 How effective is the government in implementing its own policies?
- 14.3 How innovative and flexible is the government?

15 Resource efficiency

The government makes optimum use of available resources.

- 15.1 To what extent does the government make efficient use of available human, financial and organizational resources?
- 15.2 To what extent can the government coordinate conflicting objectives into a coherent policy?
- 15.3 To what extent can the government successfully contain corruption?

16 Consensus-building

The political leadership establishes a broad consensus on reform with other actors in society, without sacrificing its reform goals.

- 16.1 To what extent do the major political actors agree on democracy and a market economy as strategic, long-term goals?
- 16.2 To what extent can reformers exclude or co-opt anti-democratic actors?
- 16.3 To what extent is the political leadership able to moderate cleavage-based conflict?
- 16.4 To what extent does the political leadership enable the participation of civil society in the political process?
- 16.5 To what extent can the political leadership bring about reconciliation between the victims and perpetrators of past injustices?

17 International cooperation

The political leadership is willing and able to cooperate with external supporters and organizations.

- 17.1 To what extent does the political leadership use the support of international partners to implement a long-term strategy of development?
- 17.2 To what extent does the government act as a credible and reliable partner in its relations with the international community?
- 17.3 To what extent is the political leadership willing and able to cooperate with neighboring countries?

Governance

5 Criteria | 20 Indicators

Does the BTI assume a necessary linkage between democratic and market-economic development?

The BTI's normative reference points – democracy under the rule of law and a market economy anchored in principles of social justice – are closely related both functionally and empirically. The high correlation in scores between the BTI's two dimensions addressing these processes underscores their interrelated nature. Similarly, the fundamental market-economic and democratic institutions are to a large extent interdependent. However, the fact of such interdependencies does not mean there is a predetermined, automatic course of development. Indeed, there is no scholarly consensus on the best path to democracy and a market economy; the focus on the goals of democracy and a market economy therefore implies no sweeping definitions or limitations on the content of reform programs. Nor do we claim to know the optimal sequence of democratic and economic reforms – whether the introduction of the market economy should precede democratization, for example, or vice versa.

Aren't the guiding principles of democracy and a market economy simply Western objectives?

Unlike many other research projects, the Transformation Index makes its normative positioning wholly transparent. The BTI holds that certain desires – to have a say in the composition of the government, to be free from arbitrary imprisonment or torture, and to have recourse to independent courts and inalienable rights, for example – are not limited to a particular cultural sphere. Our analysis is also premised on the belief that the aspiration to be free from hunger, poverty and disease is universal, that there is more to economic development than simply solid growth rates and economic freedom, and that social welfare and the sustainability of economic development must be respected. At the same time, the BTI is committed to no particular existing institutional model, such as the German model of the social market economy or specifically European models of constitutional democracy. Rather, the previously mentioned fundamental standards and functions of democracy under the rule of law and a market economy anchored in principles of social justice can be effectively embodied in a variety of ways.

52 Indicators

Measurement and review process

Who are the BTI country experts, and how are they chosen?

The country reports form the foundation for all the BTI's evaluations and analyses; their quality is thus crucial for the reliability and validity of its use as a measuring tool. Careful selection of the experts is therefore of particular importance. The Transformation Index has built up a network of 269 experts for 137 countries from leading research institutions and civil society organizations (see list on pp. 128–129). These experts are chosen largely at the recommendation of the regional coordinators. Along with professional expertise, considerations of independence and impartiality are given particular weight in the selection of country experts.

The Transformation Index is based on a qualitative expert survey in which written assessments are translated into numerical ratings and examined in a multistage review process so as to make them comparable both within and across regions. This method enables those factors of political and economic development that elude purely quantitative assessments to be captured in the experts' qualitative appraisals. This method presents significant advantages as it allows, for example, a distinction to be made between rights granted *de jure* and their *de facto* implementation. In addition, statements can be made about the magnitude of social capital and the extent to which civil society is integrated into political decision-making processes. Furthermore, the quality of governance can be assessed and compared. Facts such as constitutional provisions or official economic data can be interpreted and weighed in context. The resulting country assessments render fully transparent and verifiable the reasons behind each of the BTI's 7,124 individual scores.

Nevertheless, this type of qualitative expert survey will always contain a degree of subjectivity. The BTI survey process takes this into account during the preparation of reports and evaluations, as well as during the review of the data. It is designed to minimize subjective factors as far as possible throughout the process. The process

| | | |
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| 16.3 | Cleavage/conflict management | <p>To what extent is the political leadership able to moderate cleavage-based conflict?</p> <p><small>Cleavages are significant and protracted divisions of society that are often, but not necessarily, reflected in the political party system. Cleavages may be manifested in ethnic, class, regional or religious conflicts.</small></p> <p><small>Please assess the extent to which the political leadership is able to depolarize structural conflicts, to prevent society from falling apart along these cleavages, and to establish as broad a consensus as possible across the dividing lines.</small></p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p>The political leadership depolarizes cleavage-based conflict and expands consensus across the dividing lines. 10</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p>The political leadership prevents cleavage-based conflicts from escalating. 7</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p>The political leadership does not prevent cleavage-based conflicts from escalating. 4</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"> <p>The political leadership exacerbates existing cleavages for populist or separatist purposes. 1</p> </div> |
|------|------------------------------|--|

The codebook ensures the standardized assessment of all countries

of country assessment has both a qualitative and quantitative component, in each case performed by two country experts. As a rule, one foreign and one local expert are involved in the evaluation process; this ensures that both external and internal perspectives are taken into account in the course of assessment, and helps counteract subjective influence. In total, 269 experts

1
Survey

2
Review



The first expert writes a detailed report and provides a score for each question posed.



The second expert reviews and comments on the report, and provides his/her own scores.

7,124

Scores

from leading research institutions around the world contributed to the production of the country reports.

A standardized codebook serves as the foundation of the survey process, providing a single reference framework for the experts when answering the questions. The first expert drafts a detailed report on the basis of the criteria outlined in the codebook, referencing the qualitative indicators associated with each criterion. The second expert reviews, comments on and adds to this country report. In addition, in the course of answering 11 of the 49 questions (indicators), the country experts are required to draw upon a set of quantitative indicators (ranging from inflation rates to education spending). Independently of one another, the two country experts translate the assessment into a numerical rating on a scale of one (the lowest value) to 10 (highest value), structured by four levels of score-based categories contained in the codebook. In this way, countries are evaluated on the basis of whether and to what extent they comply with the specified rating levels and fulfill the BTI criteria.

In order to ensure the validity, reliability and comparability of the assessment, each individual score undergoes a multistep pro-

cess of review by the country experts, the regional coordinators, the project team and the BTI board. The scores and responses provided by the experts for each of the 49 indicators are initially reviewed by regional coordinators, who examine the content to ensure it is both complete and consistent. The regional coordinators, all political scientists with expertise in comparative studies, participate in each step of the report-creation process and apply their regional expertise to ensure the high quality of the country reports. They subsequently perform an intraregional calibration of their countries' scores, and then they join with the project team to carry out an interregional score calibration for all 137 countries, this time checking for across-the-board comparability and viability. Finally, all scores are discussed once again by the BTI board before being adopted. The BTI board, a panel of scholars and practitioners with long-term experience in the field of development and transformation, provides the project with ongoing support and advice (see also p. 127).

Who uses the BTI data?

Because of its approach and particular focus on governance, the BTI is recognized as one of the world's premier instruments for the systematic comparison of transformation processes. It is used, for example, by the British, German and U.S. governments as a yardstick in assessing their partner countries. In addition, several international organizations, including the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, Transparency International and the World Bank, use it in the course of their own analyses. The BTI has gained wide acceptance in academia and the media, and is also used by reform-oriented civil society groups and politicians worldwide as a tool for facilitating critical dialogue.



Index aggregation

Why does the BTI use rankings?

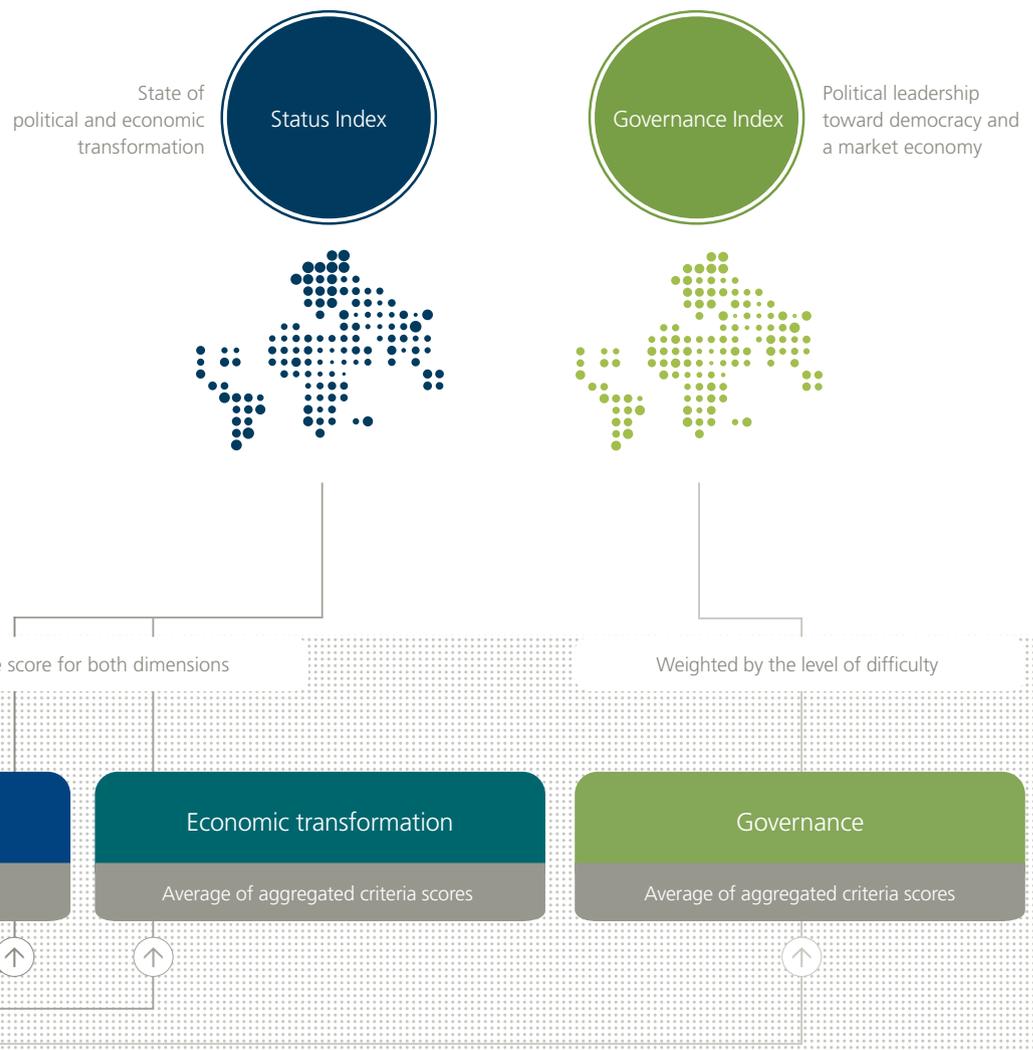
The high level of aggregation of individual scores and the use of rankings are primarily means of providing orientation and communicating findings to a broader public. Rankings necessarily reduce complexity in order to highlight particular differences between individual countries, call attention to trends in development, and make factors key to progress more readily identifiable.

However, the focus on rankings and the isolated consideration of one or only a few questions cannot replace a more thoroughly articulated analysis of a country's strengths and weaknesses. The BTI's non-aggregated individual scores as well as the country reports and regional reports – all available online – are therefore indispensable.

The Status Index is formed by calculating the average of the total scores given for the dimensions of political (democracy status) and economic (market economy status) transformation. The state of transformation in each analytic dimension is equivalent to the average of the scores of the associated criteria. Criterion scores are, in turn, based on the average scores of the equally weighted indicators that comprise the criterion. Combining the two analytical dimensions into a Status Index follows the normative

premise of the BTI, under which transformation is always conceived of as a comprehensive transition toward democracy and a market-economic system.

The Governance Index is formed by calculating the average of scores given for the governance criteria, which is then offset against the assigned level of difficulty.



Democracies and autocracies

The indicators on the state of political transformation are also used in determining whether a country is classified as a democracy or autocracy. This analysis comprises more than just whether sufficiently free and fair elections are held. In accordance with the Transformation Index's comprehensive concept of democracy, seven threshold values marking minimum requirements are considered. The country is classified as an autocracy if even one score falls short of the relevant threshold. Thus, the classification of a country as an autocracy is not determined by the aggregate political trans-

formation score, but rather by the thresholds listed below. A moderate autocracy, such as Singapore, which fails to meet all minimum requirements to be classified as a democracy, can and does score higher in the BTI's Democracy Index than a highly defective democracy, such as Lebanon.

Failing states are considered autocracies. They are defined as countries in which the state's monopoly on the use of force and basic administrative structures are lacking to such an extent that the government is severely limited in its capacity to act.

| | | |
|--------------|--|--|
| < 6 points | 2.1 Free and fair elections | Free elections are not held or are marked by serious irregularities and restrictions. |
| < 4 points | 2.2 Effective power to govern | Democratically elected leaders de facto lack the power to govern. |
| < 4 points | 2.3 Association/assembly rights | The freedom of association or assembly does not exist, or civil society organizations are suppressed. |
| < 4 points | 2.4 Freedom of expression | Freedom of expression or media freedom does not exist, or severe restrictions are in place. |
| < 4 points | 3.1 Separations of powers | Constitutional oversight of the executive, legislature or judiciary does not exist, or exists only on paper. |
| < 4 points | 3.4 Civil rights | Civil rights are systematically violated. |
| < 3.0 points | 1.1 Monopoly on the use of force and 1.4 Basic administration (average) | The state has no control over large parts of the country and fails to fulfill basic civil functions. |

Are authoritarian states at a disadvantage in the BTI assessments?

If a country is classified as an autocracy in the BTI, there are consequences in the evaluation of other democracy-related questions. For instance, if decision-makers are not selected through sufficiently free and fair elections, the effective power to govern does not, by definition, lie in the hands of democratically elected leaders, even if the government is otherwise stable. The performance and acceptance of democratic institutions will be similarly poorly assessed even if recognized and effective institutional structures are in place, as they would lack democratic legitimacy.

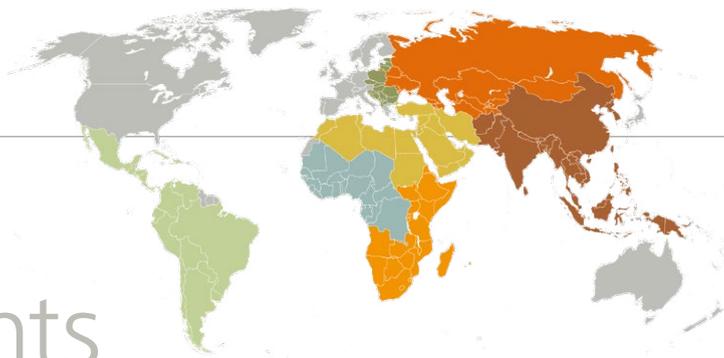
In the Governance Index, one of the four criteria takes the BTI's normative goals into account: The "steering capability" criterion consists of questions dealing with the capability of a specific government to set and maintain strategic priorities, implement related reform policies, and be flexible and innovative in terms of policy formulation and implementation. In the course of this evaluation, it is considered whether a government pursued both democracy and a market economy as overriding goals. This is done to ensure that effective prioritization, implementation and learning capacity in the service of authoritarian regime consolidation is not rewarded with a positive rating.



Further information about the BTI

- The codebook
- Complete datasets and detailed country reports
- Regional and global analyses
- The interactive visualization tool Transformation Atlas

and more available at www.bti-project.org



Acknowledgments

The BTI 2020 is a product of the combined efforts of more than 300 people who have contributed in various ways to its development, creation, evaluation and communication. A project of this magnitude could never succeed without the expertise, enthusiasm, creativity and attention to detail of all those involved.

Over the years, the BTI team has benefitted from the support, advocacy and counsel of many transformation experts and practitioners. But we extend special thanks and gratitude to our council of scholarly advisers, the BTI board, which is unequalled in its commitment to providing us with rigorous and collegial support. Within the BTI board, the regional coordinators deserve special mention, as they monitor not only the creation and review process for each report, but are also responsible for the calibration of results within their region and, together with us, across regions.

The country experts also play a key role in creating the BTI, as it is their knowledge and experience that our cross-national analysis is built upon. Their commitment to an extensive production and review process, and the critical feedback they provide along the way, have helped build a better and more accurate Transformation Index.

The quality and accuracy of the language in our in-depth reports for 137 countries and seven world regions is of considerable importance. A special thanks goes to managing editor Barbara Serfozo and her team for their tireless and diligent efforts in taking on – for the eighth time – the challenge of editing the large volume of BTI reports. And we very much appreciate Josh Ward’s meticulous care in proofreading this volume.

Ensuring the integrity and consistency of country-report sections and scores has been an enormous effort supported by a group of highly skilled young academic professionals. We wish to thank Tore Dubbert, Xenija Gru-

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We place considerable value on ensuring full transparency of our analytic process and providing clear and intuitive access to our data. Our tool to this end, the Transformation Atlas, provides an interactive visualization of thousands of scores as well as broader results of our analysis. Thanks to the creativity and assiduous dedication of information architect Dieter Dollacker and cartographer Dirk Waldik, the Transformation Atlas continues to serve us well in this regard.

Special thanks go as well to the graphic designer Veronika Döpjohann and her colleagues (Agentur kopfstand, Bielefeld, Germany). Her ideas have shaped the project’s image in all its features, from this report to the design of brochures and other materials. We are grateful for the journalist and communications consultant Jens Poggenpohl’s helpful support in developing and preparing the contributions for this report.

At the end of the seven regional overviews, outstanding political leaders and opinion-makers share their perspectives on the current BTI findings. We thank these members of the group of Transformation Thinkers, a joint initiative of the Bertelsmann Stiftung and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), for their contributions. Since 2003, this interregional

dialogue on the issues of democracy and good governance has yielded a superb network of 140 alumni from 76 countries.

The scope and complexity of an instrument such as the BTI must undergo continual development and improvement. For this edition, we owe particular gratitude to André Schmidt, Professor for Macroeconomics and International Economics at Witten / Herdecke University, and his team for their dedicated and knowledgeable support in our thematic review of the qualitative assessments of market organization and competition policy. We are committed to the regular evaluation of our methodology and process, and will always benefit from the critique, suggestions and input of a variety of individuals. We thank you all and look forward to your continued feedback and further constructive dialogue.

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