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Bucharest

Press release

## Corruption Perception Index 2020 in the context of COVID-19

### Romania fails to increase its scores and remains on the last positions in the CPI 2020, along with Bulgaria and Hungary

**TI-Romania’ recommendations: BICA Reform Agenda, transparency and accountability**

Persistent corruption weakens the health system and contributes to the regression of democracy, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, highlights Transparency International by launching the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) in 2020, report released today.

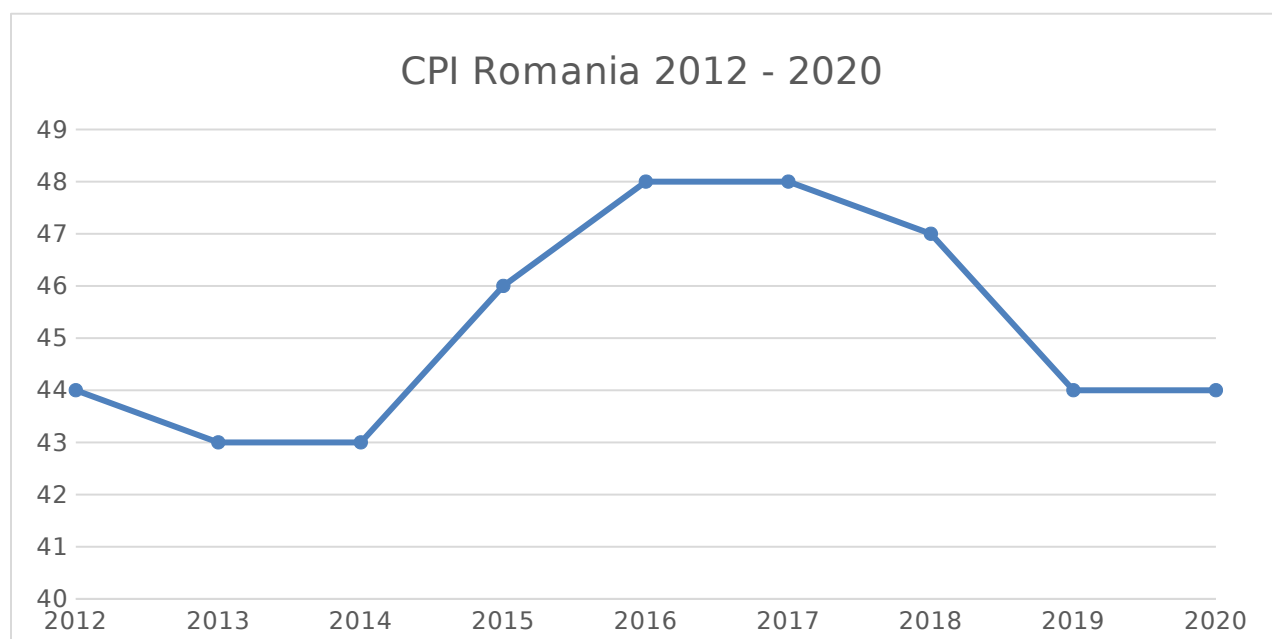
The TI report shows that there is a direct link between the place registered in the CPI and how a country can cope with the challenges raised by the COVID-19 pandemic: *Countries that perform well on the index invest more in health care, are better able to provide universal health coverage and are less likely to violate democratic norms and institutions or the rule of law.*

The Corruption Perceptions Index reflects how independent and business experts perceive corruption in 180 states and territories. The ranking is made by awarding points, from 0 to 100, where 0 means "highly corrupt" and 100 "very clean".

#### Romania - on the last place in the EU together with Bulgaria and Hungary

With a score of 44 points out of 100, Romania remains in the top three most corrupt countries in the European Union. Although the scores are similar to those of 2019 for most Member States, for the first time, three countries share the last place in the EU ranking - Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary - with the same score: 44 points out of 100 possible.

The perception of corruption in the public system and business environment in Romania remains unchanged compared to 2019, as well as in Hungary, while Bulgaria has one point more than the previous year. In fact, our country has the same score as in 2012, which shows that the measures taken in almost 10 years have not been constant and have failed to change the perception that independent experts and the business environment have about corruption in Romania.



Lack of transparency in public procurement, underfunding of the medical system, lack of consistent measures to digitize administrative processes are constant problems in Romania and have intensified in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Court of Accounts' report on procurement to combat the pandemic showed serious shortcomings in both local and central government.

Corrupt practices in companies, which declaratively assume integrity policies, have been likely to affect the credibility of the business environment, and the image promoting campaigns have had the effect of reducing public vigilance.

Romanian society has significantly lost its determination to sanction corruption and lack of integrity as a general problem and has manifested itself rather sequentially than constant.

### **BICA reform agenda, transparency and accountability**

Transparency International Romania proposes solutions that can be applied in medium and long term:

- Promoting Integrity Pacts in public procurement, as independent mechanisms for real-time monitoring of major public projects and more.
- Digitization of administrative processes, by establishing the National Compliance Register, which will be able to improve administrative transparency and accountability, contributing to reducing vulnerabilities to corruption in public administration.
- Transposition at high standards of compliance the EU Whistleblower Directive into the national law.
- Provide support to institutions that have anti-corruption role, in order to increase their operational capacity and effectiveness, including by preserving and improving the regulatory framework.
- Providing resources, in conditions of independence, of actors in the non-governmental sector and active involvement in monitoring the activity of the public sector, as well as the operations of major economic, national and international actors.
- Systematic development of a culture of acceptance of constructive criticism and feedback.
- Initiation of ranking and rating mechanisms in different sectors to support the exit from the 40-point blockade in which Romania has been for over 10 years in the CPI.

Last year, TI-Romania launched a research report on integrity in the Romanian business environment, a report that includes a series of recommendations, elaborated on the basis of specific consultations with representatives from the business environment, central public institutions and NGOs. In 2021 we continue the series of debates and invite representatives of all the three sectors to join us in order to establish a reform agenda with concrete solutions applicable in medium and long term.

Transparency International Romania reiterates that there is a need for a constant involvement of all representatives of society, from the political class, public institutions to the private sector and citizens, each with his role and responsibility, in the fight against corruption.

Transparency International Romania once again expresses its openness to enter into a constructive dialogue with the central authorities in order to identify those sustainable and impactful solutions that the Romanian society needs.

Data and statistics on the Corruption Perception Index 2020 at global and national level, as well as comparative data from previous years are available on the website: [www.transparency.org.ro](http://www.transparency.org.ro)

More information about the BICA project is available here:

<https://www.transparency.org.ro/ro/tiropage/business-integrity-country-agenda>

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*In the over 20 years of activity, Transparency International Romania has contributed to the establishment / consolidation of public institutions such as ANI, DGA, DNA; has developed over 40 public policies, including one on the protection of whistleblowers. At the same time, it developed and implemented standards of ethics and integrity for the public sector and the business environment. We are consistent with the principles that guide us in our activity: integrity, impartiality, accountability, professionalism.*

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