

30 January 2024,
Bucharest

Press release

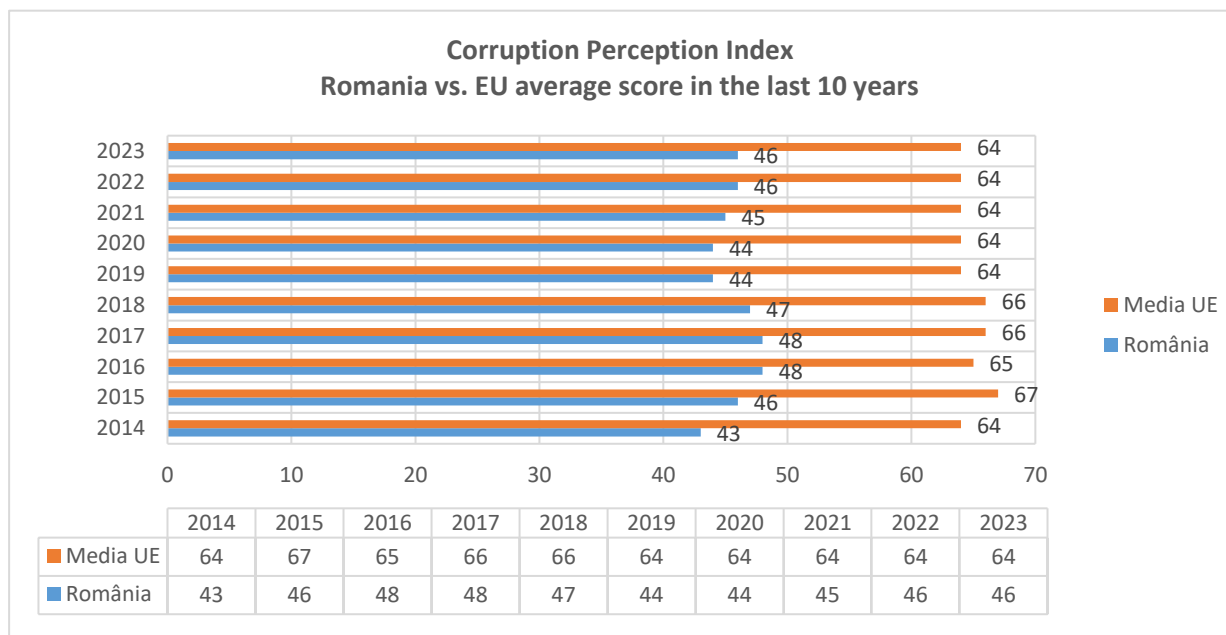
**Corruption Perception Index 2023
Constant actions to assure public integrity strengthening are needed**

Corruption Perception Index 2023, launched globally today by Transparency International, shows that most countries have made little to no progress in tackling public sector corruption.

Corruption Perception Index 2023 (CPI) shows the way independent and business experts perceive corruption in the public sector in 180 states and territories. The ranking is created by awarding points from 0 to 100, where zero means "highly corrupt" and 100 "very clean".

At the level of the European Union anti-corruption efforts have stagnated or declined in most member states. EU average score stays the same for the 5th year in a row – at 64 points.

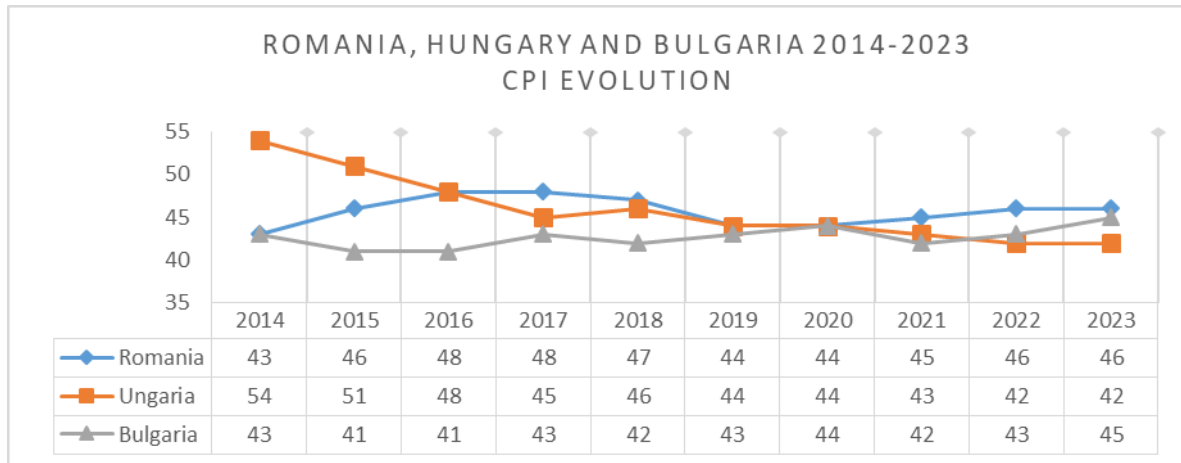
With 46 points out of a possible maximum of 100, Romania still remains among the EU countries with low performances, along Bulgaria (45 points) and Hungary (42 points), reflecting substantial weaknesses in the rule of law.



According to Transparency International methodology, a score below 50 points is unacceptably low, especially compared to the regional average. Moreover, the changes of 1-2 points from a year to another usually reflect the margin of error, especially if they are not constant.

Compared to 2014, our country has an increase of 3 points, but the evolution was not linear. Between 2014 and 2016 Romania gained 5 points, going from 43 in 2014 to 46 in 2015, respectively, to 48 points in 2016. In the following years, Romania lost 4 points, scoring in 2019 just 44 points and since then our country managed to recover just 2 points. In 2022 and 2023 Romania's score is just 46 points, far below the EU average.

Bulgaria had a similar path, having scores that varied between 41 points to 44 in the last 10 years. Worth noting is the fact that in 2023 Bulgaria reaches 45 points for the first time. In reverse, Hungary registered a constant decline, from 54 points in 2014 to just 42 points in 2023, ranking last at the EU level.



Constant actions to assure public integrity strengthening are needed

At the level of EU member states the anticorruption measures continue to be undermined by weakening of checks and balances, meant to assure control and stability of the rule of law. At the same time, adopting new laws, regulations or creating new agencies are measures that not necessarily lead to better control of corruption. In many countries, here including Romania also, there is still a large gap between what the law says and their implementation. Thus, there are needed constant actions and measures to assure both improving of the anticorruption mechanisms and strengthening the public integrity.

Regarding our country, Transparency International Romania recommendations are:

- Updating the legislation regarding integrity, in order to solve the gaps and legislative inconsistencies currently existing and to improve the clarity of the integrity regulation package;
- Improving the institutional and decision-making transparency, by effective public consultations and easy access to public information, in agreement with the National Anticorruption Strategy' provisions;
- Updating whistleblowing procedures and establishing effective whistleblowing channels, in accordance with the Law no. 361/2022 regarding the whistleblowers protection;
- Clear and standard administrative procedures, by passing the law regarding the Administrative Procedure Code;
- Adopting a new advanced legislation to clarify the status, career and efficiency of public administration human resources;
- Using Integrity Pacts as a public procurement monitoring tool, especially for procurement procedures and contracts with high-risk regarding irregularities, integrity incidents or fraud.

Transparency International Romania highlights that a constant involvement of all the society stakeholders is much needed, referring here to political class and public institutions, business sector and citizens, each having their role and responsibility in strengthening the public integrity.

Data and statistics regarding the Corruption Perception Index 2023 national and global level, as well as comparative data from previous years are available at www.transparency.org.ro.

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

For more information, please contact: Georgeta Filip, Transparency International Romania Public Relations Specialist, e-mail: georgeta.filip@transparency.org.ro