GLOBAL PEACE INDEX 2022
BRIEFING
Measuring peace in a complex world
The 16th edition of the annual Global Peace Index (GPI) report, the world's leading measure of global peacefulness, reveals that the average level of global peacefulness deteriorated by 0.3% in 2021. This is the eleventh deterioration in peacefulness in the last fourteen years, with 90 countries improving, and 71 deteriorating, highlighting that countries deteriorate much faster than they improve.

Iceland remains the most peaceful country, a position it has held since 2008. It is joined at the top of the index by New Zealand, Ireland, Denmark and Austria. For the fifth consecutive year, Afghanistan is the least peaceful country, followed by Yemen, Syria, Russia and South Sudan. Seven of the ten countries at the top of the GPI are in Europe, and Turkey is the only country in this region to be ranked outside the top half of the index.

2022 key highlights

- Deaths from external conflict recorded a sharp deterioration driven by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.
- Despite recent commitments, militarisation has improved in 113 countries since 2008.
- Terrorism continued to improve, with 70 countries recording no attacks in 2021. This is the best result since 2008.
- The rise in costs has increased food insecurity and political instability globally, with Africa, South Asia and the Middle East under greatest threat.
- The political terror scale, political insecurity, neighbouring country relations, refugees and IDPs reached their worst score since the inception of the GPI.
- The global economic impact of violence was $16.5 trillion in 2021, equivalent to 10.9% of global GDP, or $2,117 per person.
- Two of the five countries with the largest deteriorations in peacefulness were Russia and the Ukraine.
- Social media is changing the way intelligence is gathered - it is now shared instantaneously, raw and with little analysis.
- In contrast to the global trend, positive sentiment in the Ukraine was rising in 2021. Support for the West was strong, with 58% wanting to join a Western economic union, and 54% supporting joining NATO.

2022 regional overview

- Europe remains the most peaceful region in the world. The region is home to four of the five most peaceful countries, and only one country in Europe is ranked outside the top half of the index.
- South America experienced the third largest regional improvement in the 2022 GPI, owing to improvements in the Safety and Security and Militarisation domains.
- South Asia recorded the largest improvement in peacefulness of all the regions over the past year. Despite this, it remains the second least peaceful region overall.
- The Middle East and North Africa region remained the world’s least peaceful. It is home to two of the five least peaceful countries in the world. However, it recorded the second largest regional improvement over the past year.

Global Trends

- Militarisation: The improving trend in Militarisation since 2008 was widespread, with 113 of the 163 countries covered in the GPI improving. Ninety-four countries reduced their military expenditure as a percentage of GDP, although military spending increased in absolute terms.
- Violent Demonstrations: Violent demonstrations recorded the largest deterioration, rising by 49 percent since 2008. This indicator deteriorated in 126 countries of the 163 nations assessed in the GPI.
- Refugees and IDPs: There are now 17 countries where at least five percent of the population are either refugees or internally displaced.
Optimism about the present and the future, 2019 and 2021

Russians’ overall life satisfaction was higher than Ukrainians’. However, the percentage of Ukrainians rating their life as the “best possible” more than doubled between 2019 and 2021, rising from 2.1 to 4.9 per cent. During the same period, the percentage rating their lives positively overall rose from 28.7 to 41.3 per cent. While the change was also positive among Russians, it was much smaller. The percentage of Russians rating their life conditions as the best possible rose from 6.1 to 6.3 per cent, and the percentage rating their lives positively overall increased from 42.2 to 46.4 per cent.

Economic Impact of Violence

The global economic impact of violence was $16.5 trillion in 2021, equivalent to 10.9 per cent of global GDP, or $2,117 per person.

War in Ukraine

Global military spending, which had been increasing at a moderate pace since 2014, received a boost in 2022. Many NATO countries have pledged to raise their defence budgets to levels closer to or above the NATO’s recommended two per cent of GDP threshold by 2024.

Dual-use technology and emerging technology

In the Ukrainian conflict, fifth generation (5G) mobile technologies, the social media revolution, artificial intelligence, and the greater affordability of drones have changed warfare.
A snapshot of the global state of peace

The state of peace

90 countries recorded improvements in peacefulness

71 countries were less peaceful in 2022 than in 2021

The average level of global peacefulness deteriorated by 0.3 per cent in the 2022 Global Peace Index

About

The GPI is developed by the Institute for Economics & Peace, an independent, non-partisan, non-profit think tank dedicated to shifting the world’s focus to peace as a positive, achievable and tangible measure of human wellbeing and progress.

The GPI is headquartered in Sydney, with offices in New York, Brussels, The Hague, Mexico City and Harare. It works with a wide range of partners internationally and collaborates with intergovernmental organisations on measuring and communicating the economic value of peace.

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