



Positive Peace Report 2026

Results
& Trends

The Positive
Peace Dividend

Leading Global
Powers

Pathways
to Peace





Quantifying Peace and its Benefits

The Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP) is 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 well-being and progress. IEP achieves its goals by developing new conceptual frameworks to define peacefulness; providing metrics for measuring peace; and uncovering the relationships between business, peace and prosperity as well as promoting a better understanding of the cultural, economic and political factors that create peace.

IEP is headquartered in Sydney, with offices in New York, The Hague, Abuja, Nairobi and Manila. 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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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Positive Peace as described by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) is a transformational concept, which places peace at the centre of national wellbeing regardless of a country's current state of development.

What makes Positive Peace transformational is that it fosters harmonious societal relations while also generating many of the other qualities that societies aspire to, including higher levels of per capita income, better measures of wellbeing and happiness, stronger development outcomes, and improved ecological health. Positive Peace therefore describes an optimal environment for the flourishing of human potential.

This body of work yields a key insight: peace is not a by-product of a functioning society but a foundation of it, one that can be measured and adopted for societal regeneration. This insight has important implications for many countries struggling with low economic growth and social friction.

Based on over a decade of empirical research, IEP's Positive Peace framework represents one of the most comprehensive bodies of work analysing the factors that create peaceful countries. It is systemic, evolutionary, and applicable in any country, regardless of its state of development. One notable quality of the framework is that it has been adapted for community development, with activities occurring in over 150 countries.

For high-income countries struggling with issues like social cohesion, flat or falling productivity, and loss of credibility in government, it provides a blueprint for revitalising these societies. For middle and low-income countries, it provides a framework for better material performance.

To better understand Positive Peace, IEP has created the Positive Peace Index (PPI). It helps to analyse the factors associated with peace, the dynamics that cause changes in national peacefulness, and the trajectory of countries over time. The power of the Index is derived from how it is built, which is purely empirical and based on statistical assessments of over 20,000 indicators. The Index spans 163 countries and 99.7 per cent of the world's population. This report covers in detail the approach taken to build the PPI and its latest findings.

The conditions that sustain peace also generate many of the other outcomes that societies value. In this sense, Positive Peace describes an optimal environment in which human potential flourishes. Countries that score higher on the Index tend to:

- sustain stronger and more dynamic economies,
- perform better on ecological measures,
- report higher levels of wellbeing and happiness,
- display greater social cohesion,
- prove more resilient to shocks and disruption,
- express more satisfaction with living standards,
- and many other benefits.

The 59 countries with the largest improvements in internal peace over the last decade also had improvements in Positive Peace four times larger than the average of the rest of the world. These countries outperformed global averages on 21 of the 24 indicators. Their biggest improvements were

concentrated in indicators most closely tied to governance quality and social cohesion, including *rule of law*, *control of corruption*, and *group grievance*. IEP's Positive Peace framework includes eight Pillars of Positive Peace that are systemically linked and shape the overall quality of the system: societies high in Positive Peace have less systemic friction and subsequent fragmentation.

Positive Peace is a strong empirical gauge of societal resilience, aligning with better outcomes across macroeconomic performance, environmental sustainability, health, and wellbeing.

- Real GDP in countries that improved in Positive Peace grew at twice the rate of countries where it deteriorated.
- Foreign direct investment in countries that improved in Positive Peace grew at over twice the rate of countries where it deteriorated.
- Inflation in countries that improved in Positive Peace was nearly three times less volatile than in countries where it deteriorated.
- Positive Peace correlates at -0.83 with the Yale Environmental Performance Index, and at -0.81 with the OECD's measure of life satisfaction.
- Countries with high Positive Peace record childhood stunting rates below three per cent, against 30 or 40 per cent in some low Positive Peace countries.
- Countries with high Positive Peace proved more resilient after COVID-19, deteriorating at a lower rate than countries with low scores and recovering from the pandemic at a rate three times higher.

Globally, Positive Peace improved by 1.7 per cent over the past decade to 2024, with 112 of the 163 countries in the Index improving.

However, this headline result conceals a weaker underlying trend. The global improvement was overwhelmingly concentrated in a single indicator: *telecom infrastructure index*. If this indicator were excluded from the Index, Positive Peace would have deteriorated by 0.1 per cent, with 84 countries declining against 79 improving. The *telecom infrastructure index* improved by 36.8 per cent over the decade, reflecting global improvements in connectivity. Countries strong in Positive Peace have higher levels of connectivity.

In Western and Central Europe, the countries with the largest deteriorations in Positive Peace were the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Austria, all of which are struggling with social cohesion, poor perceptions of government, and rising perceptions of corruption. These three countries have recorded poor per capita income growth in the past four years.

The last decade is best understood as two opposing trends running in parallel. The first is continued strengthening of structural conditions; such as connectivity, health, and human capital. The second is the weakening of institutional and informational conditions, including press freedoms, government openness and transparency, and infighting between elites. Half of the 24 indicators improved over the period and half deteriorated; the global score improved only because the structural gains outweighed the institutional losses.

Five of the eight Pillars improved over the decade: *Free Flow of Information*, *High Levels of Human Capital*, *Acceptance of the Rights of Others*, *Equitable Distribution of Resources*, and *Sound Business Environment*. However, two of the underlying indicators of the *Free Flow of Information* Pillar, *freedom of the press* and *quality of information*, deteriorated substantially.

The largest deterioration in any Positive Peace Pillar occurred in *Well-Functioning Government*, which declined by three per cent. Nearly three times as many countries deteriorated in *government openness and transparency* than improved. Sixty per cent of countries deteriorated in *rule of law* and 53 per cent fell in *government effectiveness*. The *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillar declined in more than 60 per cent of countries.

The indicator with the steepest deterioration over the decade was *freedom of the press*, which fell by 22.1 per cent, with 141 countries declining. This is overwhelmingly a post-pandemic phenomenon. In the five years before COVID-19, the indicator deteriorated by 3.4 per cent; between 2020 and 2024, it fell by 18.5 per cent, a rate more than five times faster, with 137 of 163 countries deteriorating. The decline cuts across contexts, affecting long-standing democracies of all income levels alongside states in conflict or political transition. Many emergency restrictions introduced during the pandemic were never fully reversed, while the rapid spread of disinformation has placed further pressure on society.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been the major shock of this century, and it has served to highlight the important role Positive Peace has on resilience. Global Positive Peace improved from 2015 to 2019, deteriorated through 2020 and 2021 at the height of the pandemic, then began recovering from 2022 to exceed pre-pandemic levels by 2024. Countries with stronger Positive Peace recovered more rapidly: those in the top third for Positive Peace improved by 2.1 per cent on average between 2021 and 2024, against 0.6 per cent for the bottom third.

The world's leading powers tend to rank substantially higher on the PPI than on the Global Peace Index (GPI), indicating socio-economic foundations stronger than current levels of peacefulness. The United States recorded the second largest PPI deterioration of any country in the Index, deteriorating by 8.8 per cent, with its *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillar declining by 26.4 per cent, the largest fall in that Pillar of any country. China and India each improved by around six per cent, although India's *freedom of the press* fell by 45.4 per cent. Russia deteriorated by 5.2 per cent, and Western and Central Europe improved by two per cent. Notably, *freedom of the press* and *quality of information* deteriorated for every leading power, regardless of its overall trajectory.

Positive Peace also has predictive power. Countries that rank substantially lower in Positive Peace scores than their internal peace, as measured on the GPI, are said to have a Positive Peace deficit, and these countries are most likely to experience substantial falls in peacefulness. The 16 countries with the largest deficits all deteriorated in their internal peace scores between 2009 and 2024. Conversely, 58 per cent of countries with sizable Positive Peace surpluses improved. This rate would rise to 75 per cent if the countries of the Americas were excluded.

Using a dynamic systems model, two attractor basins have been identified: one referred to as the Conflict Trap and the other as Sustainable Peace. Once in these basins, it is difficult for countries to extricate themselves. However, in mid-peace countries, small changes can precede rapid deteriorations if they pass various tipping points.

Analysis finds that different Pillars are important at different stages of development:

- For low-peace countries, the *Sound Business Environment* and *Good Relations with Neighbours* Pillars show the most importance.
- For mid-peace countries, *Well-Functioning Government* and *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* are the key Pillars.
- For high-peace countries, the *Equitable Distribution of Resources* and *Well-Functioning Government* Pillars are the most influential.



Peace is not a by-product of a functioning society but a foundation of it, one that can be measured and adopted for societal regeneration.

The mid-peace group warrants particular attention, as these countries have the greatest capacity to either move closer to Sustainable Peace or to fall into the Conflict Trap.

IEP has also developed the Halo framework, which provides the theoretical foundation for understanding societal systems, including peace. It can be used to examine the dynamics

governing societal systems. Positive Peace and Halo are complementary: the former provides a measurement platform and actionable approach, the latter an analytical architecture for mapping and modelling system dynamics over time, including the understanding of concepts like homeostasis, self-modification, encoded norms, feedback loops, stocks, flows, archetypes, path dependencies, and system boundaries.

The Positive Peace framework has been adapted for community-level development in over 150 countries, with recent face-to-face projects reintegrating former FARC combatants in Colombia and building inter-faith initiatives in Northern Iraq. In South Sudan, Positive Peace framed a US\$7 million integrated development program, giving communities a shared language for managing disputes over newly introduced resources. In Sydney and the Democratic Republic of Congo, youth- and women-led projects have applied the same principles to strengthen social cohesion. Its strength in these settings is defined by its forward-looking, solutions-oriented approach, which identifies a community's existing strengths rather than cataloguing its problems.

Section 1

A Decade of Positive Peace

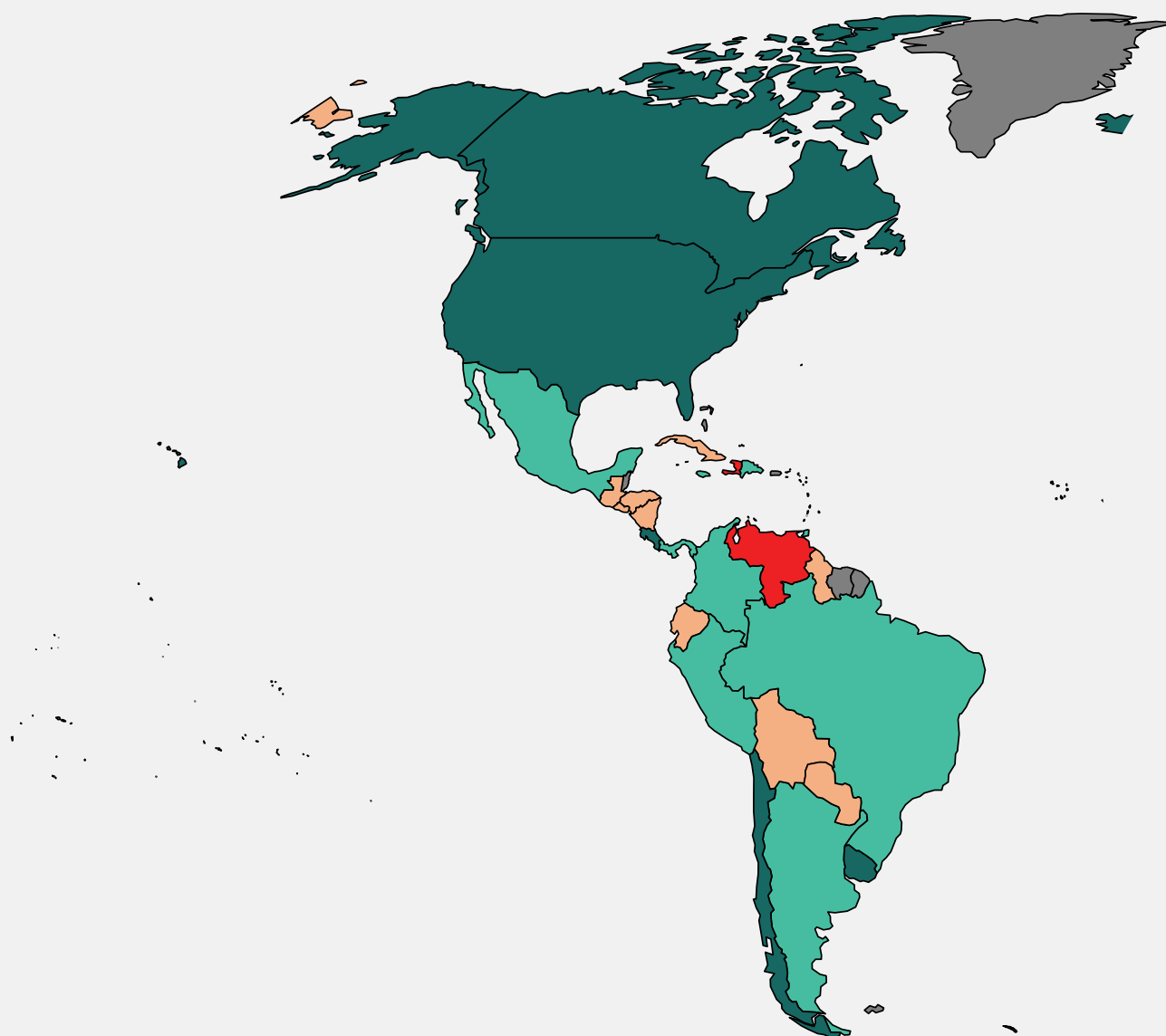


Key Findings

- The global PPI score improved by 1.7 per cent over the past decade, with 112 of 163 countries improving, 49 deteriorating, and two showing virtually no change.
- The global improvement was concentrated in a single indicator. *Telecom infrastructure index* improved by 36.8 per cent, registering gains in 158 of 163 countries.
- If this indicator were excluded, then the Index would have deteriorated by 0.1 per cent with 84 countries deteriorating compared with 79 that improved.
- Five of the eight Pillars improved over the decade: *Free Flow of Information*, *High Levels of Human Capital*, *Acceptance of the Rights of Others*, *Equitable Distribution of Resources*, and *Sound Business Environment*.
- The Pillar with the largest aggregate gain was *Free Flow of Information*, which improved by 8.4 per cent. The gain was driven entirely by *telecom infrastructure index*; the Pillar's other two indicators, *freedom of the press* and *quality of information*, both deteriorated globally.
- The Pillar with the largest deterioration was *Well-Functioning Government*, which declined by three per cent. All three of its indicators worsened, with *government openness and transparency* deteriorating by 6.2 per cent, *rule of law* by two per cent, and *government effectiveness* by 1.5 per cent.
- All eight regions recorded improvements in their average PPI scores. Eastern Europe and Central Asia recorded the largest, at three per cent, while North and Central America recorded the smallest, at 0.6 per cent.
- Global Positive Peace improved from 2015 to 2019, deteriorated in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and recovered to exceed pre-pandemic levels by 2024.

2026 Positive Peace Index

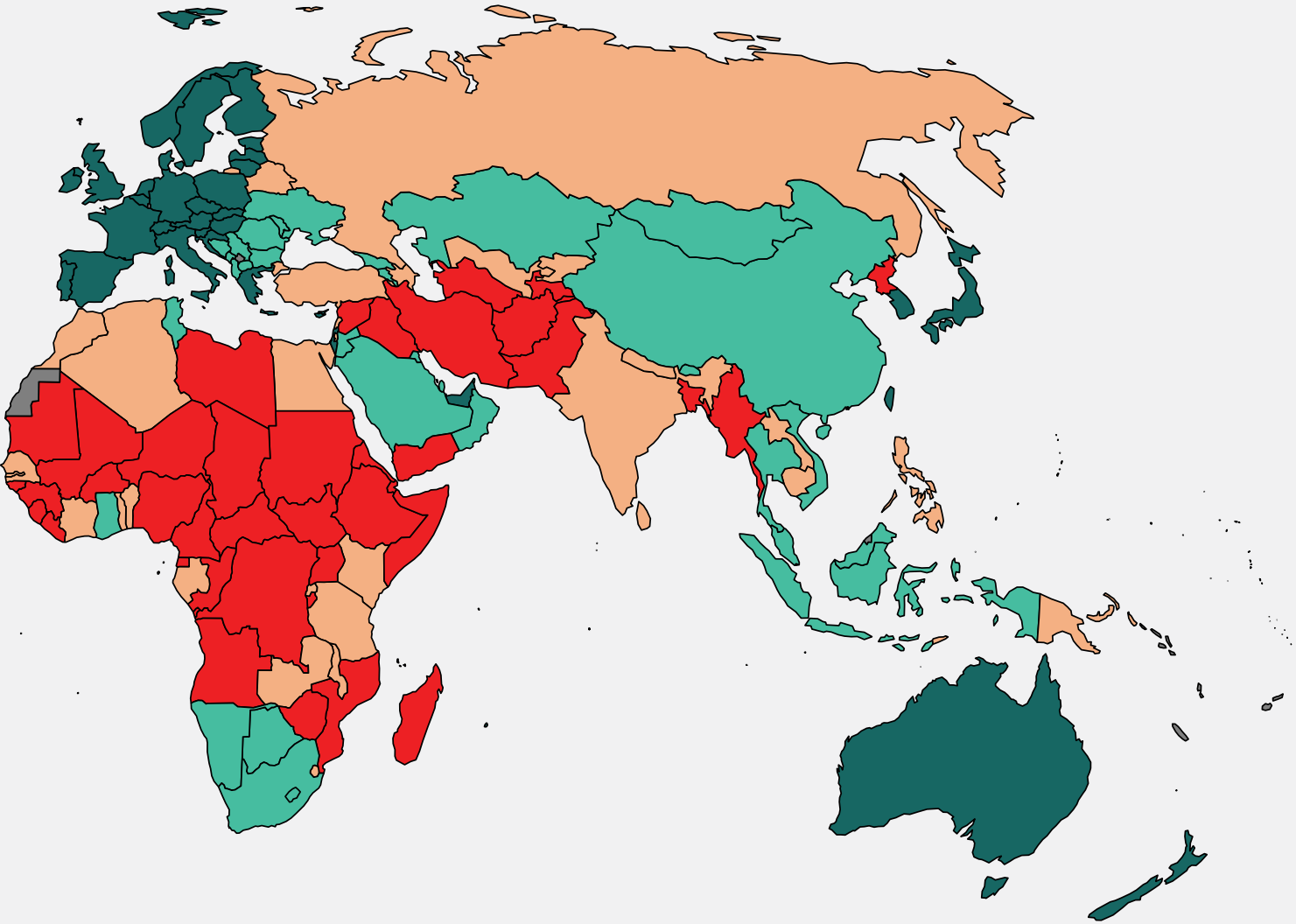
A snapshot of the global levels of Positive Peace



The State of Positive Peace

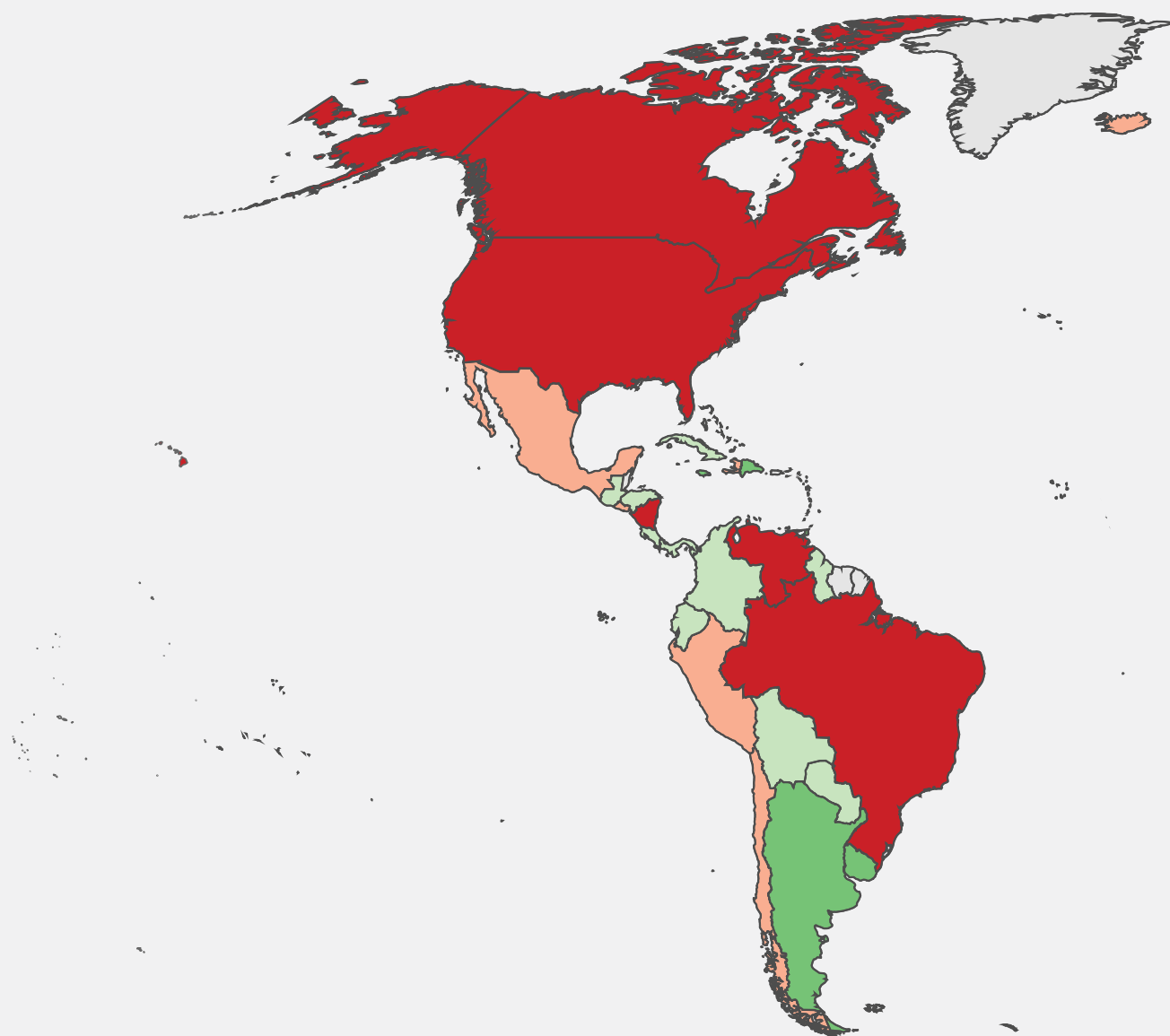
Very High High Medium Low Not Included

Source: IEP



Percentage changes in Positive Peace, 2015–2024

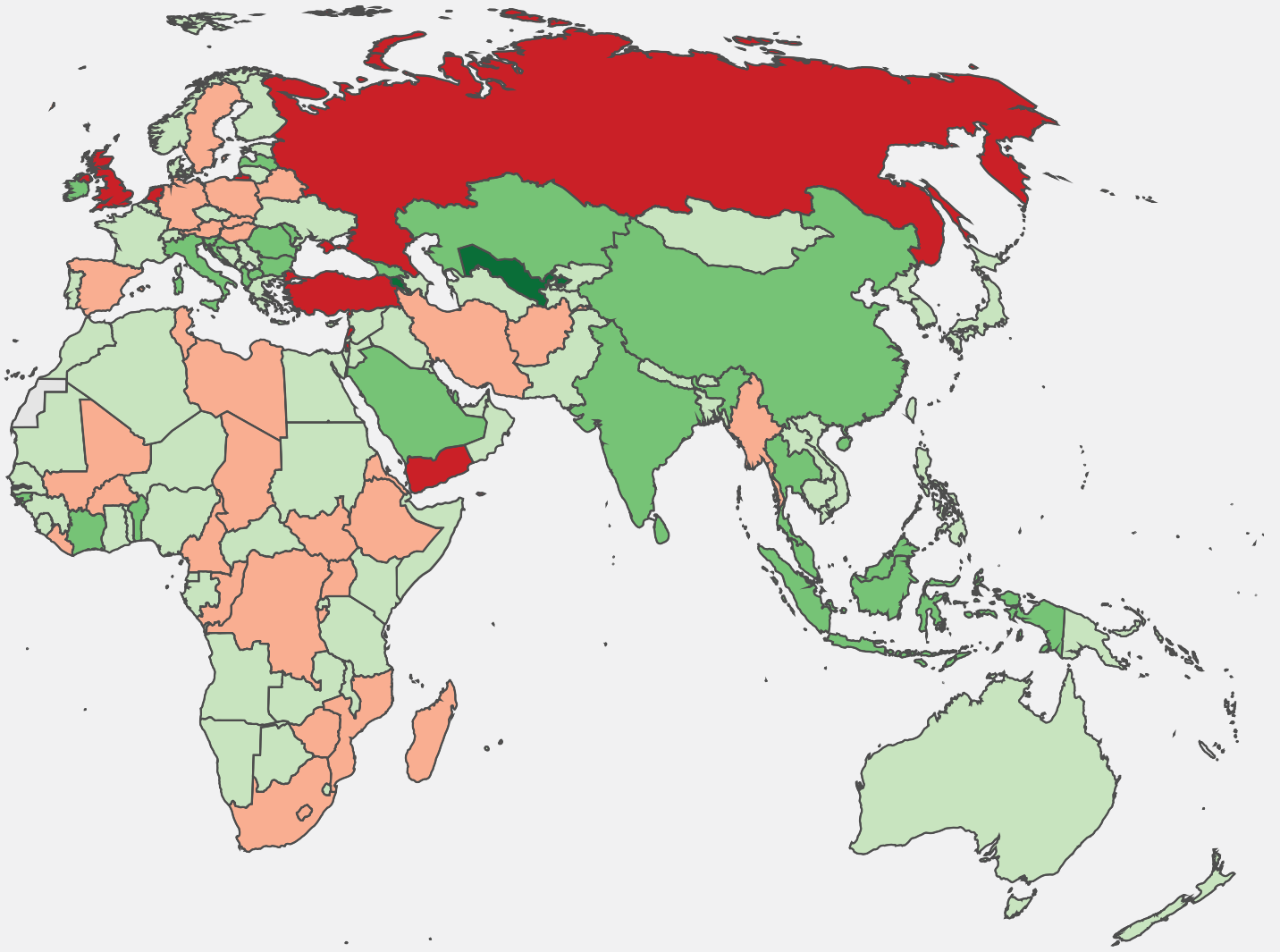
How and where positive peace has changed in the past decade



Change in PPI

■ -10% ■ -10% to -5% ■ -5% to 0% ■ 0% to 5% ■ 5% to 10% □ NA

Source: IEP



Rank	Status	Country	2024 Score	2015 Score	Percentage Change	Rank Change
1	Very High	Denmark	1.213	1.274	-4.8%	↗ 2
2	Very High	Finland	1.245	1.261	-1.3%	↘ 1
3	Very High	Sweden	1.28	1.262	1.4%	↘ 1
4	Very High	Switzerland	1.284	1.333	-3.7%	↗ 1
5	Very High	Norway	1.301	1.307	-0.5%	↘ 1
6	Very High	Ireland	1.344	1.431	-6.1%	↗ 2
7	Very High	New Zealand	1.428	1.498	-4.7%	↗ 4
8	Very High	Australia	1.478	1.519	-2.7%	↗ 4
9	Very High	Netherlands	1.479	1.369	8.1%	↘ 3
10	Very High	Iceland	1.5	1.431	4.8%	↘ 3
11	Very High	Germany	1.502	1.464	2.6%	↘ 1
12	Very High	Japan	1.534	1.589	-3.5%	↗ 2
13	Very High	Canada	1.539	1.46	5.4%	↘ 4
14	Very High	Singapore	1.582	1.608	-1.6%	↗ 1
15	Very High	Belgium	1.61	1.65	-2.4%	↗ 2
16	Very High	France	1.632	1.674	-2.5%	↗ 2
17	Very High	Austria	1.632	1.557	4.8%	↘ 4
18	Very High	Portugal	1.67	1.711	-2.4%	↗ 1
19	Very High	Slovenia	1.71	1.808	-5.4%	↗ 3
20	Very High	United Kingdom	1.736	1.642	5.7%	↘ 4
21	Very High	Estonia	1.741	1.805	-3.5%	0
22	Very High	Czech Republic	1.794	1.853	-3.2%	↗ 2
23	Very High	South Korea	1.837	1.837	0%	0
24	Very High	Lithuania	1.859	1.948	-4.6%	↗ 2
25	Very High	Uruguay	1.874	2.015	-7%	↗ 4
26	Very High	Spain	1.895	1.864	1.7%	↘ 1
27	Very High	Italy	1.899	2.066	-8.1%	↗ 4
28	Very High	United States of America	1.949	1.792	8.8%	↘ 8
29	Very High	Latvia	2.012	2.143	-6.1%	↗ 4
30	Very High	Chile	2.019	1.991	1.4%	↘ 3
31	Very High	Cyprus	2.021	2.059	-1.8%	↘ 1
32	Very High	Poland	2.051	2.013	1.9%	↘ 4
33	Very High	Croatia	2.103	2.223	-5.4%	↗ 3
34	Very High	Slovakia	2.114	2.11	0.2%	↘ 2
35	Very High	Greece	2.114	2.169	-2.5%	↘ 1
36	Very High	Costa Rica	2.149	2.209	-2.7%	↘ 1
37	Very High	Taiwan	2.182	2.272	-4%	↗ 2
38	Very High	United Arab Emirates	2.206	2.292	-3.8%	↗ 3
39	Very High	Israel	2.207	2.254	-2.1%	↘ 1
40	Very High	Hungary	2.25	2.249	0.04%	↘ 3
41	Very High	Mauritius	2.318	2.29	1.2%	↘ 1
42	High	Bulgaria	2.334	2.518	-7.3%	↗ 3
43	High	Kosovo	2.37	2.412	-1.7%	↘ 1
44	High	Romania	2.376	2.508	-5.3%	0
45	High	Montenegro	2.422	2.498	-3%	↘ 2

46	High	Qatar	2.458	2.653	-7.4%	↗ 2
47	High	Malaysia	2.46	2.601	-5.4%	↘ 1
48	High	Trinidad and Tobago	2.469	2.612	-5.5%	↘ 1
49	High	Georgia	2.505	2.695	-7.1%	↗ 3
50	High	Argentina	2.512	2.728	-7.9%	↗ 3
51	High	Albania	2.524	2.692	-6.2%	0
52	High	Jamaica	2.549	2.731	-6.7%	↗ 2
53	High	Panama	2.592	2.675	-3.1%	↘ 3
54	High	North Macedonia	2.593	2.737	-5.3%	↗ 3
55	High	Armenia	2.603	2.934	-11.3%	↗ 12
56	High	Kuwait	2.663	2.736	-2.7%	0
57	High	Moldova	2.686	2.914	-7.8%	↗ 7
58	High	Mongolia	2.691	2.792	-3.6%	↗ 1
59	High	Botswana	2.699	2.733	-1.2%	↘ 4
60	High	Oman	2.7	2.819	-4.2%	0
61	High	Serbia	2.715	2.755	-1.5%	↘ 3
62	High	Thailand	2.733	2.956	-7.5%	↗ 9
63	High	Brazil	2.809	2.655	5.8%	↘ 14
64	High	Saudi Arabia	2.831	3.076	-8%	↗ 15
65	High	Bhutan	2.832	2.953	-4.1%	↗ 5
66	High	Bahrain	2.84	2.927	-3%	↘ 1
67	High	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2.863	2.976	-3.8%	↗ 5
68	High	Kazakhstan	2.872	3.062	-6.2%	↗ 10
69	High	Jordan	2.879	3.025	-4.8%	↗ 6
70	High	China	2.897	3.078	-5.9%	↗ 10
71	High	Namibia	2.92	2.951	-1.1%	↘ 2
72	High	Tunisia	2.935	2.874	2.1%	↘ 11
73	High	Peru	2.938	2.904	1.2%	↘ 10
74	High	Dominican Republic	2.947	3.17	-7%	↗ 11
75	High	South Africa	2.954	2.95	0.1%	↘ 7
76	High	Vietnam	2.963	3.087	-4%	↗ 5
77	High	Colombia	2.971	3.018	-1.6%	↘ 3
78	High	Mexico	2.976	2.931	1.5%	↘ 12
79	High	Ukraine	2.98	3.043	-2.1%	↘ 3
80	High	Indonesia	3.013	3.207	-6.1%	↗ 11
81	High	Ghana	3.025	3.13	-3.4%	↗ 2
82	Medium	Paraguay	3.039	3.177	-4.3%	↗ 6
83	Medium	Türkiye	3.052	2.874	6.2%	↘ 21
84	Medium	Guyana	3.055	3.183	-4%	↗ 5
85	Medium	Ecuador	3.078	3.162	-2.7%	↘ 1
86	Medium	Senegal	3.078	3.187	-3.4%	↗ 4
87	Medium	Cuba	3.102	3.175	-2.3%	0
88	Medium	Sri Lanka	3.107	3.316	-6.3%	↗ 11
89	Medium	Belarus	3.107	2.982	4.2%	↘ 16
90	Medium	El Salvador	3.12	3.053	2.2%	↘ 13
91	Medium	Philippines	3.149	3.22	-2.2%	↗ 1
92	Medium	India	3.154	3.354	-6%	↗ 8

93	Medium	Morocco	3.161	3.253	-2.8%	↗ 2
94	Medium	Benin	3.182	3.384	-6%	↗ 10
95	Medium	Timor-Leste	3.191	3.42	-6.7%	↗ 11
96	Medium	Bolivia	3.191	3.229	-1.2%	↘ 3
97	Medium	Uzbekistan	3.201	3.604	-11.2%	↗ 25
98	Medium	Azerbaijan	3.217	3.286	-2.1%	0
99	Medium	Algeria	3.24	3.358	-3.5%	↗ 2
100	Medium	Kyrgyz Republic	3.273	3.273	0%	↘ 3
101	Medium	Russia	3.281	3.119	5.2%	↘ 19
102	Medium	Honduras	3.299	3.393	-2.8%	↗ 3
103	Medium	Zambia	3.34	3.441	-2.9%	↗ 4
104	Medium	Tanzania	3.373	3.376	-0.1%	↘ 2
105	Medium	Egypt	3.39	3.559	-4.8%	↗ 12
106	Medium	The Gambia	3.393	3.716	-8.7%	↗ 28
107	Medium	Rwanda	3.403	3.469	-1.9%	↗ 2
108	Medium	Kenya	3.414	3.494	-2.3%	↗ 3
109	Medium	Palestine	3.435	3.172	8.3%	↘ 23
110	Medium	Gabon	3.437	3.486	-1.4%	0
111	Medium	Laos	3.45	3.452	-0.1%	↘ 3
112	Medium	Nepal	3.451	3.62	-4.7%	↗ 12
113	Medium	Papua New Guinea	3.453	3.513	-1.7%	↘ 1
114	Medium	Lesotho	3.463	3.382	2.4%	↘ 11
115	Medium	Côte d'Ivoire	3.47	3.706	-6.4%	↗ 18
116	Medium	Malawi	3.484	3.554	-2%	0
117	Medium	Guatemala	3.484	3.518	-1%	↘ 4
118	Medium	Eswatini	3.49	3.536	-1.3%	↘ 4
119	Medium	Nicaragua	3.501	3.253	7.6%	↘ 23
120	Medium	Cambodia	3.503	3.586	-2.3%	↗ 1
121	Medium	Togo	3.514	3.67	-4.3%	↗ 9
122	Medium	Lebanon	3.517	3.241	8.5%	↘ 28
123	Low	Sierra Leone	3.55	3.699	-4%	↗ 9
124	Low	Iran	3.568	3.566	0.1%	↘ 6
125	Low	North Korea	3.585	3.617	-0.9%	↘ 2
126	Low	Burkina Faso	3.608	3.581	0.8%	↘ 7
127	Low	Turkmenistan	3.615	3.665	-1.4%	↗ 2
128	Low	Bangladesh	3.626	3.757	-3.5%	↗ 7
129	Low	Mozambique	3.634	3.539	2.7%	↘ 14
130	Low	Tajikistan	3.665	3.672	-0.2%	↗ 1
131	Low	Libya	3.691	3.648	1.2%	↘ 3
132	Low	Uganda	3.709	3.645	1.8%	↘ 5
133	Low	Mauritania	3.716	3.869	-4%	↗ 11
134	Low	Madagascar	3.729	3.621	3%	↘ 9
135	Low	Pakistan	3.736	3.768	-0.9%	↗ 2
136	Low	Guinea-Bissau	3.743	3.946	-5.2%	↗ 11
137	Low	Niger	3.758	3.815	-1.5%	↗ 2
138	Low	Liberia	3.764	3.637	3.5%	↘ 12

139	Low	Djibouti	3.766	3.874	-2.8%	↗ 6
140	Low	Iraq	3.767	3.933	-4.2%	↗ 6
141	Low	Nigeria	3.8	3.962	-4.1%	↗ 8
142	Low	Mali	3.814	3.763	1.4%	↘ 6
143	Low	Ethiopia	3.816	3.782	0.9%	↘ 5
144	Low	Angola	3.826	3.966	-3.5%	↗ 7
145	Low	Zimbabwe	3.841	3.821	0.5%	↘ 4
146	Low	Republic of the Congo	3.89	3.824	1.7%	↘ 4
147	Low	Haiti	3.917	3.842	2%	↘ 4
148	Low	Venezuela	3.926	3.584	9.6%	↘ 28
149	Low	Cameroon	3.974	3.965	0.2%	↗ 1
150	Low	Burundi	3.986	3.962	0.6%	↘ 2
151	Low	Guinea	3.999	4.055	-1.4%	↗ 2
152	Low	Myanmar	4	3.819	4.8%	↘ 12
153	Low	Equatorial Guinea	4.043	4.054	-0.3%	↘ 1
154	Low	Syria	4.127	4.176	-1.2%	↗ 3
155	Low	Sudan	4.186	4.238	-1.2%	↗ 3
156	Low	Eritrea	4.186	4.128	1.4%	0
157	Low	Afghanistan	4.19	4.055	3.3%	↘ 3
158	Low	Democratic Republic of the Congo	4.28	4.278	0.05%	↗ 1
159	Low	Yemen	4.307	4.064	6%	↘ 4
160	Low	Chad	4.328	4.32	0.2%	0
161	Low	Central African Republic	4.335	4.351	-0.4%	0
162	Low	South Sudan	4.403	4.397	0.1%	0
163	Low	Somalia	4.425	4.573	-3.2%	0

Why Positive Peace is Transformational

Positive Peace identifies the structural conditions that enable societies to flourish, shifting the focus from the absence of violence toward the *attitudes, institutions, and structures that create and sustain peace*. Because its eight Pillars operate as an interdependent system, progress in one area reinforces progress in others. The result is a framework whose improvements are associated not only with greater peacefulness, but with higher GDP growth, better development outcomes, improved wellbeing, and greater resilience to shocks.

Positive Peace provides a theory of social change grounded in empirical evidence, explaining how and why societies transform over time and offering a practical platform for those seeking to accelerate that process.

The context in which Positive Peace operates has deteriorated sharply. Peace has fallen every year for the past 12 years. The number of countries involved in at least one external conflict in the previous five years rose from 59 in 2008 to 103 in 2025, and the number involved in other countries' internal conflicts increased by more than 175 per cent since 2010, according to the Global Peace Index (GPI). There are now more conflicts than at any time since the end of the Second World War.

Alongside these security pressures, humanity faces a set of existential challenges: climate change, accelerating biodiversity loss, freshwater depletion, and population pressures. The drivers of these challenges cross national borders, and solutions to them require globally coordinated responses at a scale without historical precedent. Addressing them demands fundamentally new frameworks for analysis and action.

Peace is a prerequisite for the survival of society as we know it in the 21st century. Without peace, it will not be possible to generate the levels of trust, cooperation, and inclusiveness necessary to effectively address these challenges, nor to empower the international institutions needed for globally coordinated responses.

Peace is no longer an altruistic aspiration. In an interconnected and highly mobile global society it is a prerequisite for addressing these challenges and a matter of collective self-interest.

Positive Peace provides the framework through which these challenges can be understood and addressed. It acts as a cross-cutting enabler: its structural conditions make it easier for businesses to operate, for entrepreneurs and scientists to innovate, for individuals to be productive, and for governments to regulate effectively.

Understanding Positive Peace requires systems thinking. A system is a set of interconnected parts whose combined output exceeds what any individual component can achieve in isolation. Applied to Positive Peace, this means that none of its eight Pillars correlates with peacefulness as strongly as the combined system, and that improvements in any single Pillar are reinforced, or constrained, by the others.

Countries function as systems governed by formal and informal rules that regulate behaviour and maintain stability through feedback mechanisms. Governments stimulate economic activity in response to falling GDP and increase policing in response to rising crime. While each country's system is unique, all follow similar underlying principles. Because a system cannot be fully understood by examining its parts in isolation, Positive Peace cannot be reduced to its eight Pillars individually.

This systems approach contrasts with the linear causality that dominates much contemporary decision-making, in which a problem is isolated, its causes identified, and each addressed independently. Without an understanding of underlying system dynamics, such approaches are often ineffective and generate unintended consequences. Positive Peace shifts the focus toward structural relationships and flows rather than isolated events, making it possible to identify interventions that produce durable rather than temporary change.

Systems are self-regulating and adaptive, and they exhibit tipping points arising from lagged and non-linear relationships. IEP's research has identified such tipping points in the relationships between peace and corruption, and between peace and per capita income. Because countries may respond very differently to the same external stimulus depending on their histories, institutions, and social norms, understanding these interdependencies is essential for designing effective policy.

Together, Positive Peace and systems thinking form an overarching framework for advancing progress across economic performance, ecological sustainability, wellbeing, development, and social advancement. Each of these areas shows a strong statistical relationship with Positive Peace, and each benefits from the same structural foundations that produce and sustain peace.

Positive Peace provides the optimal conditions under which human potential can sustainably flourish. It does so not by prescribing a single path, but by strengthening the systemic foundations that allow any society to adapt, recover, and advance: governance, information, human capital, and the rule of law.

Positive Peace Index Overview

The Positive Peace Index (PPI) measures societal resilience across 163 countries, covering 99.7 per cent of the world's population. It is the most comprehensive quantitative framework for defining and measuring the factors that create and sustain peaceful societies, providing an actionable platform for development practitioners, policymakers, business leaders, and other stakeholders seeking to improve their societies.

Improvements in Positive Peace strengthen not only peacefulness but also governance quality, economic development, wellbeing, and ecological performance. The same factors that improve Positive Peace are associated with higher GDP growth. The PPI stands as one of the few holistic and empirical frameworks capable of identifying the positive conditions that enable societies to flourish.

The PPI measures the structural foundations that sustain peace. The Global Peace Index (GPI), by contrast, measures actual levels of peace, defined as the absence of violence or the fear of violence, also known as negative peace. Both indices use inverted scales: scores closer to 1 indicate higher peacefulness and scores closer to 5 indicate lower peacefulness.

To construct the PPI, IEP analysed over 20,000 data series, indices, and attitudinal survey variables in conjunction with current thinking about the drivers of violent conflict, resilience, and peacefulness.

The result is an eight-part taxonomy of the factors most strongly associated with peaceful societies. These eight areas, the Pillars of Positive Peace, were derived from the datasets with the strongest statistical correlation with internal peacefulness, as measured by the GPI. Each Pillar is measured by three indicators selected as the best available globally comparable data with a statistically significant relationship to peacefulness.



Positive Peace Index: Results

The Decade in Context

The decade from 2015 to 2024 produced a net improvement in global Positive Peace, but the aggregate figure masks a fundamental split. Structural conditions strengthened across most of the world, while institutional and informational conditions deteriorated. The improvement and deterioration occurred against a backdrop of geopolitical fragmentation, technological acceleration, and intensifying political polarisation.

Structural improvements were broad based. Gains in health, education, infrastructure, and social acceptance raised average country scores across indicators measuring economic development, human capital, and equitable distribution. These long-running advances continued through the political turbulence of recent years, reflecting durable trends that operate largely independently of short-term events.

The weakening of institutional and informational conditions is a serious concern. Political polarisation has intensified in roughly one in four countries, and the rapid spread of AI-enabled disinformation and synthetic media has compounded existing pressures on media independence and information quality. Active conflicts in Europe, the Middle East, the Horn of Africa, the Sahel, and Asia are compounding the fragmentation of the international system through intensifying rivalries and the erosion of multilateral institutions.

Overall, the global PPI score improved by 1.7 per cent over the period because structural gains outweighed institutional losses, but the underlying split is even, with half of the 24 indicators in the Index improving and the other half deteriorating.

Positive Peace tends to change slowly, with most movement occurring gradually as institutions develop and social norms shift. A change of more than five per cent in an individual country's score over a decade is considered large.

Since 2015, 112 of the 163 countries in the Index improved, 49 deteriorated, and two showed only a slight change. The global improvement was almost entirely concentrated in a single indicator, *telecom infrastructure index*. This indicator improved by 36.8 per cent globally, recording gains in 158 of 163 countries. Excluding it, only 79 countries would have improved compared with 84 that deteriorated, and the global PPI score would have fallen by 0.1 per cent rather than improving by 1.7 per cent.

Figure 1.1 illustrates the world's Positive Peace trajectory over the past decade. Positive Peace improved from 2015 to 2019, deteriorated through 2020 and 2021 in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and then recovered from 2022 onwards to exceed pre-pandemic levels by 2024. The decade-long improvement was driven primarily by gains in technological infrastructure, health, and human capital indicators.

The trajectory illustrates the systemic nature of Positive Peace: external shocks test societal resilience, and countries with stronger Positive Peace foundations recover more rapidly.

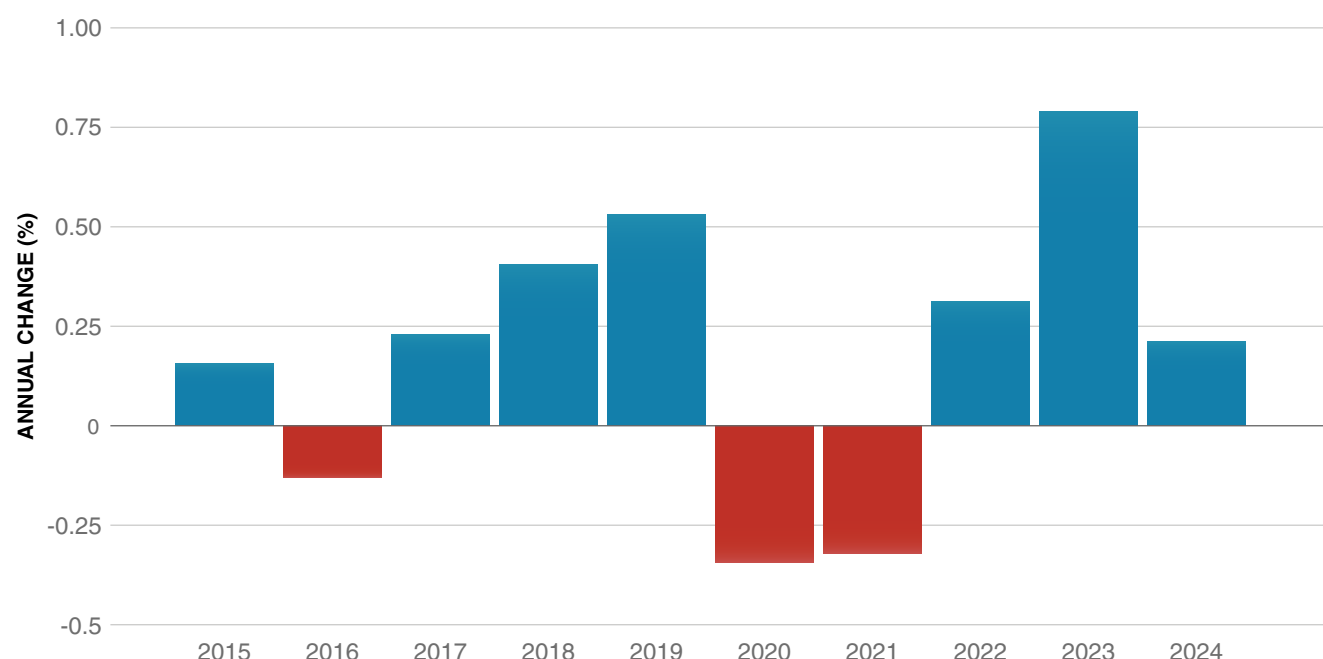
The post-COVID-19 recovery demonstrates this directly. Countries in the top third for Positive Peace improved their score by 2.1 per cent on average between 2021 and 2024, compared with 1.7 per cent for the middle third and 0.6 per cent for the bottom third. The structural conditions that support peace also support recovery from disruption.

The Pillar, indicator, and regional breakdowns that follow examine these global trends in detail.

FIGURE 1.1

Year-on-year changes in Positive Peace, 2015–2024

The global average Positive Peace score has seen improvements since 2022.



Source: IEP

Changes in Positive Peace Pillars

Figure 1.2 shows percentage changes across all eight Pillars from 2015 to 2024. Pillar scores reflect gradual changes within complex social systems and do not typically fluctuate sharply from year to year. Five Pillars improved over the decade and three deteriorated.

The largest improvement was recorded in the *Free Flow of Information* Pillar, which gained 8.4 per cent. This was driven entirely by the *telecom infrastructure index*. The Pillar's other two indicators, *freedom of the press* and *quality of information*, both deteriorated globally over the period.

The *High Levels of Human Capital* Pillar experienced the second largest improvement, at 5.1 per cent. Since 2015, this gain was the result of improvements across all three of the Pillar's underlying indicators, which together measure the health, development, and productive potential of a population.

In contrast, the largest deterioration was in the *Well-Functioning Government* Pillar, which declined by three per cent. This Pillar measures the effectiveness, transparency, and integrity of a country's public institutions. All three of the Pillar's underlying indicators have deteriorated since 2015.

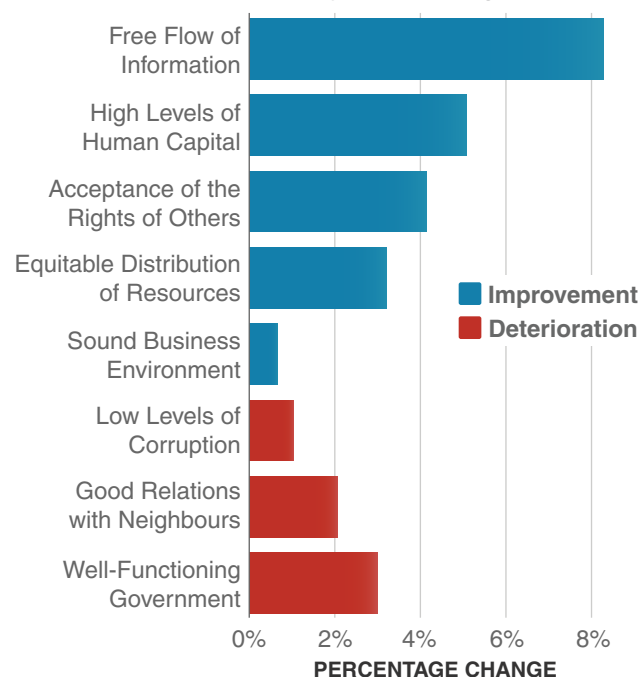
The deterioration in *Well-Functioning Government* reflects a broader retreat from open government practices over the past decade, particularly notable in countries that have historically been leaders in transparency. Governments globally have become more inclined to restrict information considered politically sensitive. The Pillar also captures reductions in related civil liberties and political and legal rights.

The *Good Relations with Neighbours* Pillar experienced the second largest deterioration, with its score worsening by 2.1 per cent. Two of three indicators deteriorated in the Pillar, which measures a country's openness to international exchange and the equitable treatment of groups within its own society.

FIGURE 1.2

Changes in the Pillars of Peace, 2015–2024

Five of the eight Pillars have improved over the past decade. The largest change occurred in *Free Flow of Information*, which improved by more than eight per cent.



Source: IEP

Changes in Positive Peace Indicators

Only 12 of the 24 indicators in the PPI improved over the period, with the other 12 deteriorating. As Figure 1.3 shows, the scale of the improvements outweighed the deteriorations, producing a net gain in the global score. The improvement, however, was heavily concentrated in a single indicator.

The *telecom infrastructure index* indicator measures the reach and quality of a country's communications networks, including those associated with telephones, mobile, and the internet. For decades, these technologies have advanced considerably while also becoming

cheaper, more accessible, and more reliable to countries of all income levels. Over the past decade, continued global advances in this area connected hundreds of millions of people to communication technologies, resulting in the substantial improvement in the indicator score.

While this indicator recorded by far the largest improvement, several others also recorded large gains. Foremost among these was *inequality-adjusted life expectancy*, which is part of the *Equitable Distribution of Resources* Pillar. It improved by 9.3 per cent, the result of 153 countries improving. The other third and fourth largest improvements occurred for indicators within the *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* Pillar: *group grievance* and *gender inequality*, each of which improved by eight per cent.

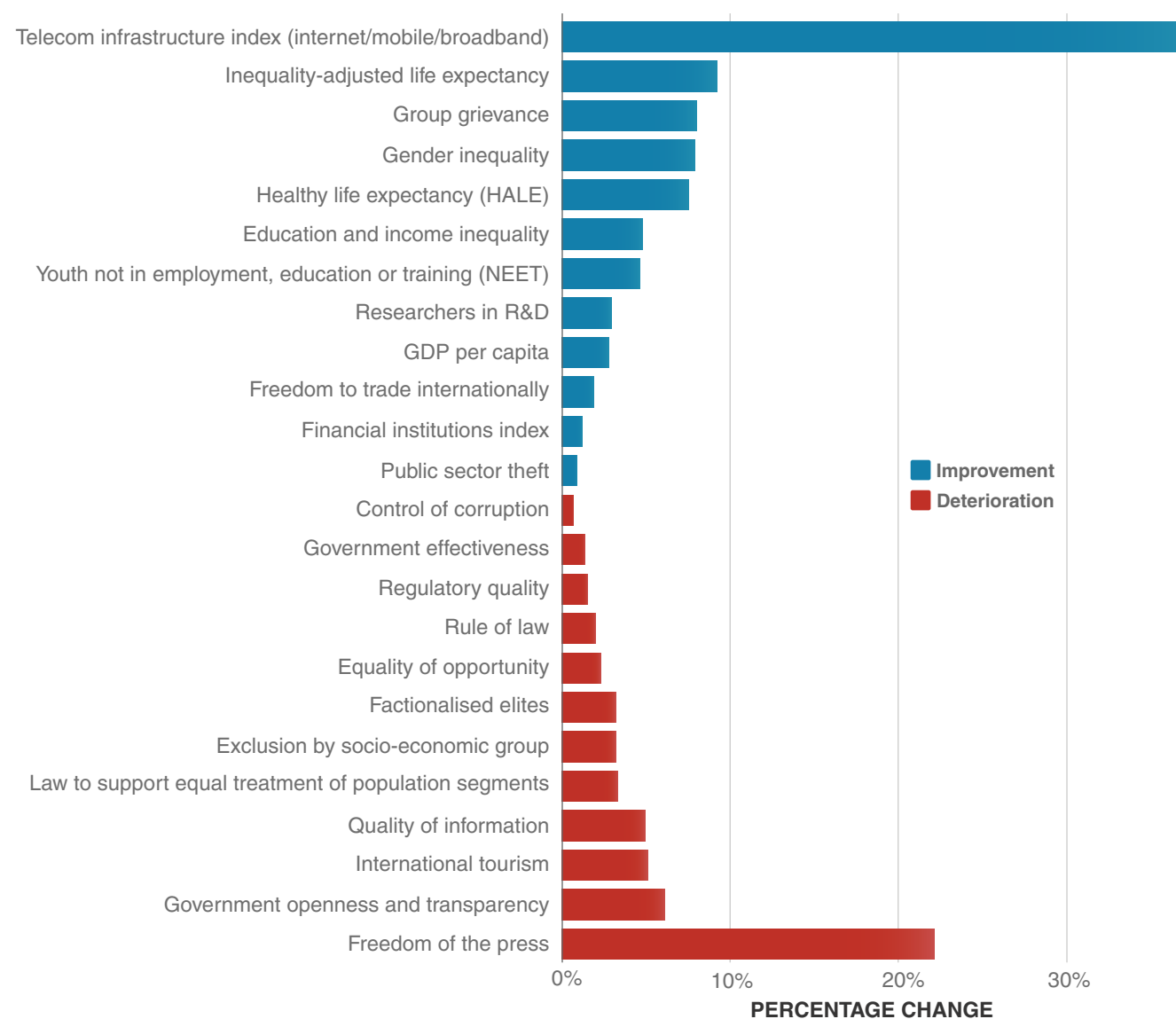
In stark contrast to the *telecom infrastructure index* indicator, the worst deterioration was in *freedom of the press*, another indicator within the *Free Flow of Information* Pillar. This indicator deteriorated in 141 countries, falling 22.1 per cent overall. The decline in *freedom of the press* reflects a decade-long global trend driven by two converging forces. The first is a rising number of formal and informal restrictions on the press in many jurisdictions. The second is the increasing polarisation of media markets, with outlets developing content tailored to particular audience segments. The proliferation of misinformation has further eroded public trust in news.

The second largest deterioration was in the *government openness and transparency* indicator, which fell by 6.2 per cent globally. The other two indicators within the *Well-Functioning Government* Pillar also deteriorated, with *rule of law* worsening by two per cent and *government effectiveness* by 1.5 per cent. These declines were broad based, with 97 of 163 countries deteriorating in *rule of law* and 87 countries deteriorating in *government effectiveness*, reflecting a widespread weakening in governance over the past decade.

FIGURE 1.3

Change in PPI indicators, 2015–2024

The *telecom infrastructure index* indicator recorded the largest improvement, while *freedom of the press* recorded the largest deterioration.



Source: IEP

BOX 1.1

Changes in the *Attitudes, Institutions and Structures* of Positive Peace

The Pillars provide the foundational framework for understanding Positive Peace. However, the 24 indicators that make up the Positive Peace Index can also be grouped into three broader domains, offering another lens on how *attitudes, institutions, and structures* have shifted over time. Each domain captures a distinct aspect of how a society functions:

- **Attitudes:** how people in a society view and interact with one another, including trust, tolerance, and social tensions.
- **Institutions:** how effective, transparent, and broad based a country's organisations of government and civil society are.
- **Structures:** the economic, technological, and scientific foundations of a society, such as infrastructure, health outcomes, and business performance.

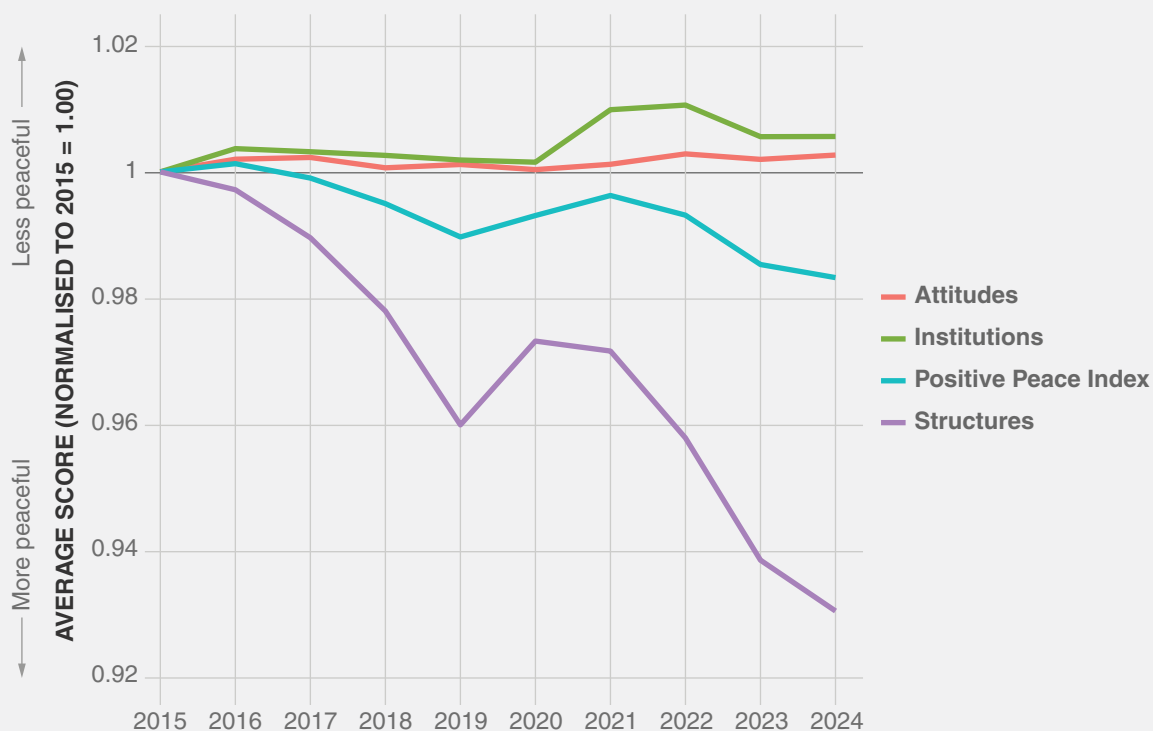
Viewed through this lens, Figure 1.4 shows that the overall improvement in the PPI since 2015 has largely been driven by gains in the *Structures* domain. *Telecom infrastructure index, inequality-adjusted life expectancy, and healthy life expectancy* have improved rapidly.

Interestingly, the largest indicator deterioration was recorded in *freedom of the press*, which is categorised within the *Structures* domain. Overall, indicators within the *Institutions* domain experienced the greatest deterioration, specifically within the *Well-Functioning Government* Pillar, such as *rule of law, government effectiveness, and government openness and transparency*.

FIGURE 1.4

Changes in the *Attitudes, Institutions and Structures* of Positive Peace, 2015–2024

The global improvement in PPI over the past decade was driven by structural improvements, while the *Attitudes* and *Institutions* domains both deteriorated.



Source: IEP

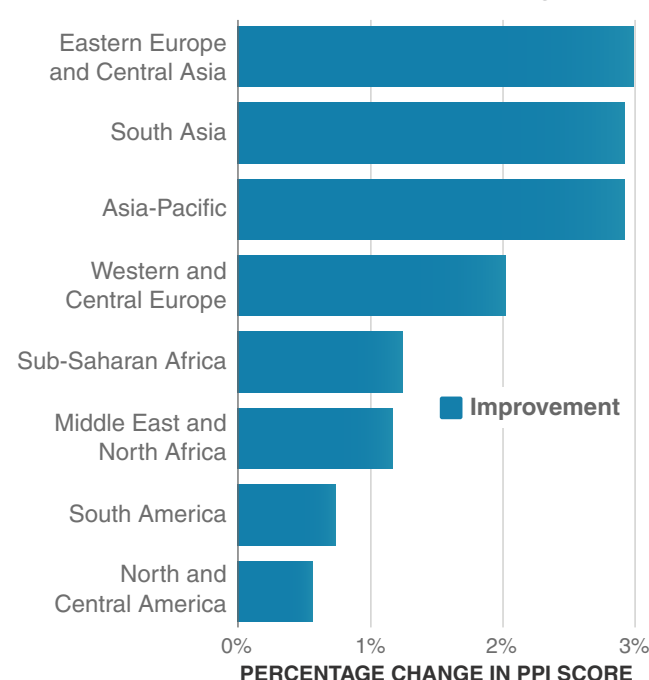
Regional Changes in the Past Decade

All regions recorded improvements in their PPI scores since 2015, as shown in Figure 1.5. The largest improvements occurred in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, which improved by three per cent, followed by South Asia and Asia-Pacific, which both improved by 2.9 per cent.

FIGURE 1.5

Change in average regional scores, 2015–2024

North and Central America recorded the smallest improvement in Positive Peace over the past decade, while Eastern Europe and Central Asia recorded the largest.



Source: IEP

Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Eastern Europe and Central Asia recorded the largest average improvement in PPI score. Eleven of the 15 countries in the region improved over the period. Armenia and Uzbekistan recorded the strongest gains, improving by 11.3 and 11.2 per cent, respectively, followed by Moldova at 7.8 per cent, Bulgaria at 7.3 per cent, and Georgia at 7.1 per cent. Three countries deteriorated: Türkiye by 6.2 per cent, Russia by 5.2 per cent, and Belarus by 4.2 per cent. The Kyrgyz Republic recorded virtually no change in score.

Beyond-regional gains in *telecom infrastructure index*, improvements were broad based across

governance, human capital, and acceptance indicators. The next largest improvement was in *inequality-adjusted life expectancy*, which improved by 11.9 per cent, followed by *gender inequality*, which improved by 11.6 per cent.

Armenia's 11.3 per cent improvement in Positive Peace was driven by a 35.7 per cent improvement in the share of *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)*. Uzbekistan registered substantial improvements in *group grievance*, *regulatory quality*, *equality of opportunity*, and *government openness and transparency*, each improving by 20 per cent or more. Bulgaria's improvements were led by *government openness and transparency* and *NEET*, both improving by 33.3 per cent, while Moldova recorded a 30.9 per cent improvement in *public sector theft* and a 23.5 per cent improvement in *gender inequality*.

The deteriorations in Türkiye, Russia, and Belarus all followed a similar pattern, concentrated in indicators related to political openness and the flow of information. In Türkiye, *freedom of the press* deteriorated by 36 per cent, and *law to support equal treatment of population segments*, *government openness and transparency*, and *equality of opportunity* each deteriorated by 33.3 per cent. Russia's decline was driven by a 36.6 per cent deterioration in *freedom of the press*, alongside declines of 33.3 per cent in *equality of opportunity* and 25 per cent in *government openness and transparency*. The largest single-indicator change anywhere in the region was in Belarus, where *quality of information* deteriorated by 83.9 per cent, followed by a 34.6 per cent deterioration in *freedom of the press* and a 34.4 per cent deterioration in *exclusion by socio-economic group*.

South Asia

South Asia recorded one of the largest average improvements in PPI score over the past decade, improving by 2.9 per cent since 2015. Six of the seven countries in the region improved over the period. Sri Lanka and India recorded the strongest gains, improving by 6.3 and six per cent, respectively, followed by Nepal at 4.7 per cent and Bhutan at 4.1 per cent. Bangladesh and Pakistan also improved, by 3.5 and 0.9 per cent, respectively. Afghanistan was the only country in the region to deteriorate, with its score worsening by 3.3 per cent.

In addition to the widespread gains in *telecom infrastructure index*, improvements in South Asia were concentrated in human capital, equitable distribution, and governance indicators. India recorded broad-based gains, including improvements of 19.3 per cent in *government effectiveness*, 17.5 per cent in both *gender inequality* and *inequality-adjusted life expectancy*, and 13.3 per cent in the share of *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)*. Sri Lanka recorded particularly strong gains in *NEET*, *government openness and transparency*, and *freedom to trade internationally*, each improving by between 24 and 27 per cent. Nepal recorded a 25 per cent improvement in *law to support equal treatment of population segments*, alongside gains in *inequality-adjusted life expectancy* and *healthy life expectancy*. Bangladesh recorded a 44.8 per cent improvement in *NEET*, the largest single-indicator gain in the region outside *telecom infrastructure index*.

Afghanistan's deterioration was driven by sharp declines in indicators related to political openness and the flow of information. *Freedom of the press* deteriorated by 78.8 per cent, the largest single-indicator decline in the region, alongside a 23.4 per cent deterioration in *quality of information* and a 25 per cent deterioration in *law to support equal treatment of population segments*. *Exclusion by socio-economic group* and *government effectiveness* also worsened by 20.4 and 13.2 per cent, respectively. *Freedom of the press* deteriorated across most other countries in the region as well, including by 60 per cent in Bhutan and 45.4 per cent in India, pointing to a regional pattern of decline in this indicator that runs counter to the broader improvements in Positive Peace.

Asia-Pacific

Asia-Pacific recorded one of the largest average improvements in PPI score over the past decade, improving by 2.9 per cent since 2015. Of the 19 countries in the region, 17 improved over the period, while one deteriorated and one remained virtually unchanged. Thailand recorded the strongest gain at 7.5 per cent, followed by Timor-Leste at 6.7 per cent, Indonesia at 6.1 per cent, China at 5.9 per cent, and Malaysia at 5.4 per cent. Myanmar was the only country in the region to deteriorate, with its score worsening by 4.8 per cent.

In addition to gains in *telecom infrastructure index*, other improvements in the region were also broad based: *group grievance* improved by between 16 and 24 per cent in Thailand, China, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Taiwan, while *gender inequality* improved

across multiple countries, including by 20.2 per cent in Thailand, 19.7 per cent in China, and 15.1 per cent in Malaysia. Thailand also recorded a 17.9 per cent improvement in *quality of information*, and China recorded a 21.3 per cent improvement in *inequality-adjusted life expectancy*. Timor-Leste's improvement was driven by a 30.3 per cent gain in *freedom to trade internationally* and a 26.6 per cent improvement in *freedom of the press*. Taiwan recorded a 50 per cent improvement in *government openness and transparency*, the largest single-indicator gain in the region, and Indonesia an 18.7 per cent improvement in *government effectiveness*.

Although only Myanmar deteriorated overall, both Myanmar and South Korea recorded sharp declines in indicators related to political openness and the flow of information. Myanmar's decline was driven by a 58.1 per cent deterioration in *quality of information* and a 53.3 per cent deterioration in *freedom of the press*, alongside 25 per cent declines in both *government openness and transparency* and *equality of opportunity*. South Korea, despite its overall PPI score remaining essentially unchanged, recorded a 50 per cent deterioration in *government openness and transparency*, a 27 per cent deterioration in *exclusion by socio-economic group*, and declines of around 23 per cent in both *freedom of the press* and *quality of information*.

Western and Central Europe

Western and Central Europe recorded the fourth largest average improvement in regional score, improving by two per cent since 2015. Of the 33 countries in the region, 23 improved over the period. Italy recorded the strongest gain at 8.1 per cent, followed by Albania at 6.2 per cent, Ireland and Latvia each at 6.1 per cent, and Croatia at 5.4 per cent. The remaining 10 countries deteriorated, with the largest declines in the Netherlands at 8.1 per cent, the United Kingdom at 5.7 per cent, and Iceland and Austria each at 4.8 per cent.

Beyond the region-wide gains in *telecom infrastructure index*, improvements were concentrated in human capital and acceptance indicators. Croatia recorded the largest single-indicator gain in the region outside *telecom infrastructure index*, a 40.3 per cent improvement in the share of *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)*. Ireland and Italy also recorded strong *NEET* gains, of 37.6 and 36.6 per cent, respectively. *Group grievance* improved by between 18 and 29 per cent in Italy, Ireland, Croatia, Albania, and Slovenia, and *gender inequality* improved by between 18 and 27 per cent in Ireland, Albania,

and Latvia. Latvia also recorded 33.3 per cent improvements in both *equality of opportunity* and *government openness and transparency*.

The deteriorations in Western and Central Europe were concentrated in indicators related to governance and institutional quality, with declines clustered in countries that have historically scored among the highest on Positive Peace. The Netherlands recorded the largest decline in the region, with deteriorations of 100 per cent in both *government openness and transparency* and *equality of opportunity*, alongside a 55.1 per cent deterioration in *quality of information* and a 29.1 per cent deterioration in *rule of law*. The United Kingdom recorded a 44.6 per cent deterioration in *factionalised elites* and a 38.5 per cent deterioration in *rule of law*, alongside declines in *government effectiveness* and *control of corruption*. Austria recorded a 100 per cent deterioration in *government openness and transparency* and a 68.8 per cent deterioration in *freedom of the press*, while Germany recorded broad-based deteriorations across *quality of information*, *public sector theft*, *government effectiveness*, and *rule of law*, each worsening by between 24 and 34 per cent. Across these countries, a similar pattern of decline emerges in formal governance and institutional indicators.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa recorded the fifth largest average improvement in regional PPI score, improving by 1.2 per cent since 2015. Of the 44 countries in the region, 26 improved over the period. The Gambia recorded the strongest gain at 8.7 per cent, followed by Côte d'Ivoire at 6.4 per cent, Benin at six per cent, Guinea-Bissau at 5.2 per cent, and Togo at 4.3 per cent. The remaining 18 countries deteriorated, with the largest declines in Liberia at 3.5 per cent, Madagascar at three per cent, Mozambique at 2.7 per cent, and Lesotho at 2.4 per cent.

In addition to gains in *telecom infrastructure index*, improvements in sub-Saharan Africa were notable for taking place in indicators that have generally deteriorated elsewhere in the index. The Gambia recorded substantial improvements in *quality of information* and *government openness and transparency*, of 40.3 and 40 per cent, respectively. Nigeria recorded the largest single-indicator gain in the region outside *telecom infrastructure index*, a 48 per cent improvement in the share of *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)*, while Benin and Guinea-Bissau recorded strong *NEET* gains of 28.9 and 32.9 per cent, respectively.

Benin also recorded a 39.8 per cent improvement in *public sector theft*, and Côte d'Ivoire a 25 per cent improvement in *equality of opportunity* and a 22.9 per cent improvement in *group grievance*.

The deteriorations in sub-Saharan Africa were concentrated in indicators related to the flow of information and political openness, mirroring the pattern observed in other regions. *Freedom of the press* deteriorated across most of the deteriorating countries, including by 54.4 per cent in Lesotho, 48.3 per cent in Uganda, 46 per cent in Madagascar, and 40.6 per cent in Mozambique. Mauritius recorded a 100 per cent deterioration in *government openness and transparency* and a 69.7 per cent deterioration in *exclusion by socio-economic group*. The largest single-indicator change in the region was in Liberia, where *NEET* deteriorated by 122.8 per cent, with Madagascar recording a 92.8 per cent deterioration in the same indicator.

Middle East and North Africa

The Middle East and North Africa recorded the sixth largest average improvement in regional PPI score, improving by 1.2 per cent since 2015. Of the 20 countries in the region, 14 improved over the period. Saudi Arabia recorded the strongest gain at eight per cent, followed by Qatar at 7.4 per cent, Jordan and Egypt each at 4.8 per cent, and Iraq and Oman each at 4.2 per cent. Six countries deteriorated, with the largest declines in Lebanon at 8.5 per cent, Palestine at 8.3 per cent, and Yemen at six per cent.

Beyond the cross-regional gains in *telecom infrastructure index*, improvements in the region were concentrated in human capital, equitable distribution, and acceptance indicators. Qatar recorded the largest single-indicator gain in the region outside *telecom infrastructure index*, a 55 per cent improvement in *gender inequality*, alongside a 32.4 per cent improvement in *group grievance*. The United Arab Emirates recorded gains of 33.7 per cent in *education and income inequality*, 30.4 per cent in *gender inequality*, and 29.5 per cent in *group grievance*, while Oman recorded a 36 per cent improvement in *education and income inequality* and a 20.3 per cent improvement in *researchers in R&D*. Saudi Arabia recorded an 18.9 per cent improvement in *government effectiveness* and a 16.2 per cent improvement in *gender inequality*, while Egypt recorded gains of 20.4 per cent in *gender inequality* and 13.5 per cent in *rule of law*.

The deteriorations in the region were concentrated in indicators related to governance, the flow of information, and trade. Lebanon's decline was driven by a 55 per cent deterioration in *freedom of the press*, a 46.2 per cent deterioration in *freedom to trade internationally*, and a 36.3 per cent deterioration in *government effectiveness*, alongside a 25 per cent deterioration in *government openness and transparency*. Palestine recorded its largest deterioration in *healthy life expectancy*, which worsened by 56.3 per cent, alongside a 43.1 per cent deterioration in *freedom of the press* and a 23.1 per cent deterioration in *quality of information*. Yemen's decline was led by a 61.4 per cent deterioration in *freedom to trade internationally* and 25 per cent deteriorations in *government openness and transparency*, *equality of opportunity*, and *law to support equal treatment of population segments*. Tunisia recorded a 100 per cent deterioration in *government openness and transparency*.

South America

South America recorded the seventh largest average improvement in PPI regional score, improving by 0.7 per cent since 2015. Of the 11 countries in the region, seven improved over the period. Argentina recorded the strongest gain at 7.9 per cent, followed by Uruguay at seven per cent, Paraguay at 4.3 per cent, Guyana at four per cent, and Ecuador at 2.7 per cent. Four countries deteriorated, with declines in Venezuela at 9.6 per cent, Brazil at 5.8 per cent, Chile at 1.4 per cent, and Peru at 1.2 per cent.

In addition to the cross-regional gains in *telecom infrastructure index*, improvements in South America were concentrated in human capital, equitable distribution, and acceptance indicators. Excluding the *telecom infrastructure index* indicator, Guyana recorded the largest single-indicator gain in the region: a 42.4 per cent improvement in *GDP per capita*. Argentina recorded a 33.3 per cent improvement in *government openness and transparency* and a 33 per cent improvement in *group grievance*, while Uruguay recorded improvements of around 21 per cent in both *gender inequality* and the share of *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)*. Paraguay and Ecuador recorded improvements in *group grievance* of 18.3 and 23.1 per cent, respectively, alongside gains in *inequality-adjusted life expectancy*.

The deteriorations in South America were concentrated in indicators related to political openness, the flow of information, and equality.

Venezuela recorded the largest decline in the region, with a 66.7 per cent deterioration in *equality of opportunity*, a 61.2 per cent deterioration in *NEET*, a 42.4 per cent deterioration in *freedom of the press*, and a 41.2 per cent deterioration in *exclusion by socio-economic group*. Brazil recorded 50 per cent deteriorations in *law to support equal treatment of population segments*, *government openness and transparency*, and *equality of opportunity*, alongside a 36.1 per cent deterioration in *quality of information*. Peru's decline was driven by a 46.4 per cent deterioration in *freedom of the press* and a 37.6 per cent deterioration in *quality of information*. Chile, despite remaining among the most peaceful countries in the region, recorded broad-based deteriorations across *quality of information*, *rule of law*, *regulatory quality*, *freedom of the press*, and *control of corruption*, each worsening by between 28 and 57 per cent.

North and Central America

North and Central America recorded the smallest average improvement in regional PPI score, improving by 0.6 per cent since 2015. Of the 14 countries in the region, eight improved over the period. The Dominican Republic recorded the strongest gain at seven per cent, followed by Jamaica at 6.7 per cent, Trinidad and Tobago at 5.5 per cent, and Panama at 3.1 per cent. Six countries deteriorated, with the largest declines in the United States at 8.8 per cent, Nicaragua at 7.6 per cent, Canada at 5.4 per cent, and El Salvador at 2.2 per cent.

Beyond gains in *telecom infrastructure index*, improvements in North and Central America were concentrated in human capital, acceptance, and governance indicators. Trinidad and Tobago recorded the largest single-indicator gain in the region outside *telecom infrastructure index*, a 54.4 per cent improvement in the share of *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)*. Jamaica recorded a 38.2 per cent improvement in *group grievance* and a 30.8 per cent improvement in *NEET*, while the Dominican Republic recorded improvements of 38.2 per cent in *quality of information* and 18.8 per cent in *group grievance*. Costa Rica recorded a 50 per cent improvement in *government openness and transparency* and a 38.6 per cent improvement in *group grievance*, while Honduras recorded improvements of 27.6 per cent in *researchers in R&D* and 25 per cent in *government openness and transparency*.

The deteriorations in North and Central America were concentrated in indicators related to political openness, governance, and the flow of information.

Nicaragua's decline was driven by a 95.1 per cent deterioration in *freedom of the press*, the largest deterioration in this indicator across the index, alongside a 54.1 per cent deterioration in *quality of information* and 33.3 per cent deteriorations in both *law to support equal treatment of population segments* and *government openness and transparency*.

The United States's decline was driven by a 54.6 per cent deterioration in *factionalised elites*, a 50 per

cent deterioration in *law to support equal treatment of population segments*, and a 31.2 per cent deterioration in *exclusion by socio-economic group*.

El Salvador recorded a 150 per cent deterioration in *government openness and transparency* and an 87 per cent deterioration in *freedom of the press*. Canada's decline followed a similar pattern, with deteriorations of 49.5 per cent in *exclusion by socio-economic group*, 34.7 per cent in *freedom of the press*, and 33.7 per cent in *rule of law*.



Section 2

Positive Peace and Societal Resilience



Key Findings

- Positive Peace is a strong empirical gauge of societal resilience, aligning with better outcomes across macroeconomic performance, environmental sustainability, health, and subjective wellbeing.
- Real GDP in countries that improved in Positive Peace grew at twice the rate of countries where Positive Peace deteriorated between 2015 and 2024.
- Inflation rates in countries where Positive Peace deteriorated were nearly three times as volatile as those in countries where it improved.
- Foreign direct investment grew at an average annual rate of 9.3 per cent where Positive Peace improved, compared with 3.5 per cent in countries where Positive Peace deteriorated. This large difference underscores the sensitivity of long-term capital flows to institutional quality, stability, and policy predictability.
- Positive Peace is closely correlated with environmental performance and resilience to ecological threats, with correlations of -0.83 against the Yale Environmental Performance Index and 0.86 against the Ecological Threat Report.
- Higher Positive Peace is associated with substantially better health outcomes, including lower infant and adult mortality, lower child stunting, and greater equity in life expectancy across socio-economic groups.
- Subjective wellbeing rates track closely with Positive Peace, with the OECD's measure of life satisfaction correlating with the PPI at -0.81.
- Countries with higher Positive Peace are more resilient. Their institutions have more effective governance, early warning systems, disaster preparedness, emergency response, and post-shock recovery.
- Following the COVID-19 pandemic, countries with higher Positive Peace recovered more quickly than countries with lower Positive Peace. This was also true for countries that improved in Positive Peace compared with those that deteriorated.
- Countries with high Positive Peace record childhood stunting rates below three per cent, while rates rise rapidly as Positive Peace deteriorates, often exceeding 30 or 40 per cent in low Positive Peace countries. There are also gender disparities in malnutrition, with boys recording acute thinness rates 61 per cent higher than girls in low Positive Peace countries.

Societal resilience refers to a country's capacity to adapt to, withstand, and recover from a wide range of challenges, shocks, and disruptions, while maintaining essential functions and protecting social wellbeing. Previous research has demonstrated a clear link between higher levels of Positive Peace and favourable social and economic outcomes, with countries that improve in Positive Peace consistently outperforming otherwise comparable countries across a broad range of indicators associated with resilience.

A note on interpretation: the PPI is presented on a 1-to-5 scale where lower scores indicate stronger positive peace. Correlations with indicators where higher values are favourable, such as life expectancy or GDP per capita, are therefore negative, while correlations with indicators where higher values are unfavourable, such as infant mortality or ecological threat, are positive. Both signs indicate the same underlying alignment between higher Positive Peace and better outcomes.

Positive Peace and Economic Resilience

This section examines the economic dimensions of Positive Peace, highlighting its relevance for business activity, investment conditions, and the quality of economic governance. Rather than focusing on short-term outcomes, the analysis emphasises how improvements in Positive Peace are associated with stronger, more durable patterns of economic performance over time.

Economic Growth

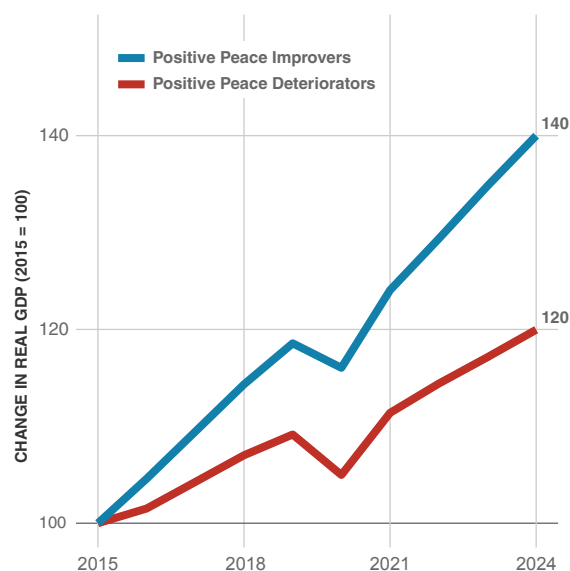
Countries that record improvements in Positive Peace tend to achieve higher rates of real GDP growth than otherwise comparable countries. Tracking changes in Positive Peace and subsequent economic performance shows that gains in Positive Peace are followed by stronger growth trajectories, reflecting the role of stable institutions, effective governance, and social cohesion in supporting economic expansion. As shown in Figure 2.1, countries that advance in Positive Peace not only grow faster on average, but also display greater resilience to economic disruptions, contributing to steadier growth outcomes.

Since 2015, countries that improved in Positive Peace recorded growth in real economic output that was twice that of countries where Positive Peace deteriorated. By 2024, the real GDP of countries with improving Positive Peace was approximately 40 per cent higher than its 2015 level, compared with an increase of around 20 per cent among countries where Positive Peace deteriorated.

FIGURE 2.1

Real GDP growth by Positive Peace trend, 2015–2024

Countries that improved in Positive Peace recorded significantly stronger real GDP growth than countries where Positive Peace deteriorated.



Source: World Bank, IEP

Although both groups experienced a temporary slowdown around 2020, countries that improved in Positive Peace recovered more rapidly and experienced greater growth in the years that followed. This divergence highlights the role of Positive Peace in supporting economic resilience and longer-term growth.

These patterns are not only evident over time, but are also reflected in cross-country comparisons at a given point in time. Higher levels of Positive Peace are also associated with higher levels of income per capita, as illustrated in Figure 2.2. Countries with stronger Positive Peace tend to provide more predictable and enabling environments for economic activity, supporting greater productivity and sustained income growth over time.

The institutional and social characteristics captured by Positive Peace, such as lower levels of corruption, more effective and accountable governance, a free flow of information, and higher levels of human capital, are central to the functioning of robust and competitive economies. These factors reduce uncertainty, lower transaction costs, and support investment in skills, innovation, and enterprise, contributing to higher average living standards.

There is also a strong relationship between changes in Positive Peace and growth in income per capita over time. Countries that improve in Positive Peace tend to experience faster and more sustained increases in living standards than countries where Positive Peace deteriorates. This relationship highlights the dynamic role of Positive Peace in shaping long-run economic performance, beyond differences observed at a single point in time.

As shown in Figure 2.3, between 2015 and 2024, countries that recorded improvements in the Positive Peace Index achieved a median annual growth rate of 1.8 per cent in real GDP per capita. By contrast, countries in which Positive Peace deteriorated recorded a median annual growth rate of just 0.6 per cent.

FIGURE 2.2

GDP per capita and Positive Peace, 2024

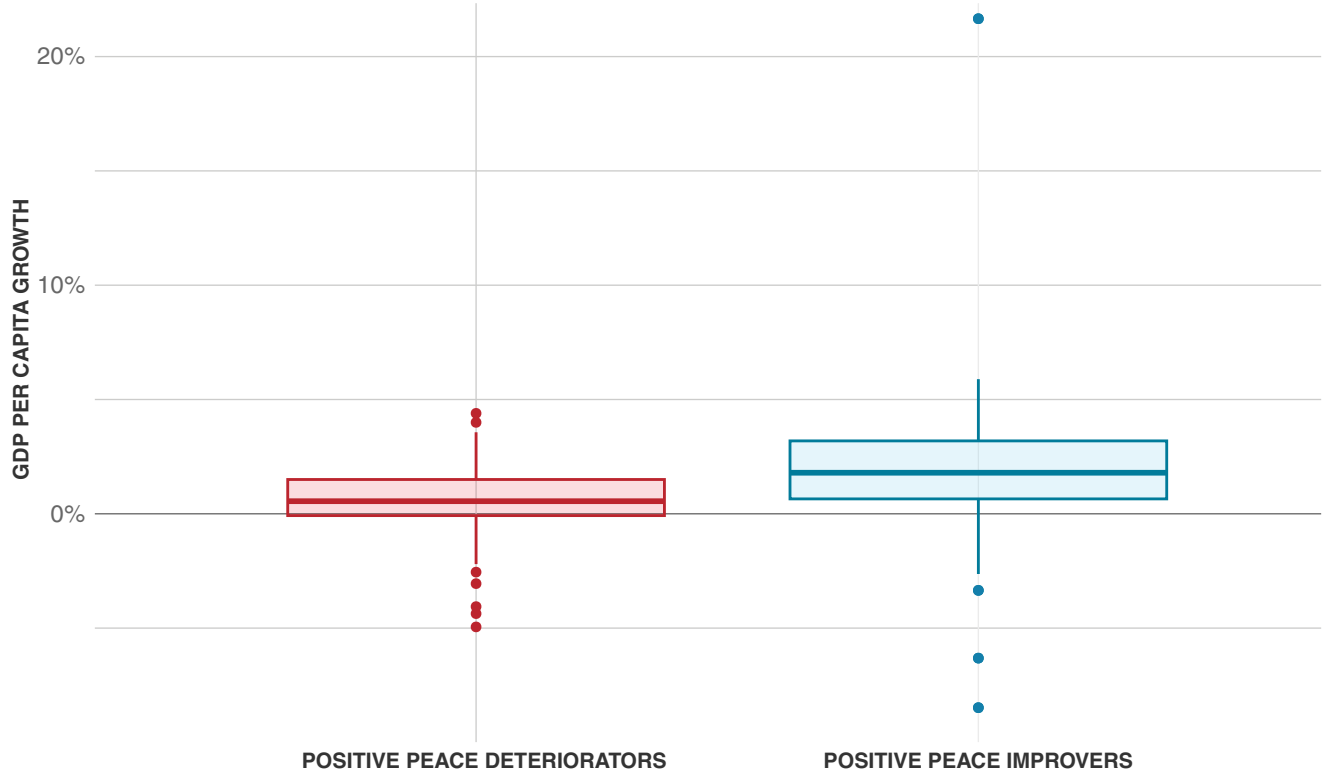
Positive Peace is highly correlated with higher per capita income.



Source: World Bank, IEP

FIGURE 2.3
GDP per capita growth by Positive Peace trend, 2015–2024

The median annual growth rate in countries that improved in Positive Peace was three times greater than in countries where it deteriorated.



Source: World Bank

Volatility of Inflation

From 2015 to 2024, countries that improved in Positive Peace experienced markedly lower inflation rates and inflationary volatility than countries where Positive Peace deteriorated, as shown in Figures 2.4 and 2.5. Over this period, the average volatility of annual inflation in countries where Positive Peace deteriorated was 9.4 percentage points, compared with 3.5 percentage points in countries that recorded improvements in Positive Peace. This represents an almost threefold difference in the degree of inflation instability between the two groups.

The volatility of inflation poses a significant constraint on economic development. Large and unpredictable swings in inflation make it difficult for firms to forecast future costs, prices, and demand, increasing uncertainty and discouraging long-term investment. Heightened inflation volatility can also dampen employment growth, as businesses become cautious in expanding operations. For households, volatile inflation erodes purchasing power and weakens confidence, often leading to reduced consumption and precautionary saving. Inflationary volatility can be measured here as the standard deviation of annual inflation rates, expressed in

percentage points, capturing the extent to which inflation fluctuates around its average level over time.¹

FIGURE 2.4
Average inflation rate by Positive Peace trend, 2015–2024

Countries in which Positive Peace deteriorated experienced inflation rates that on average were more than twice as large as those in countries with improved Positive Peace.
Source: World Bank, IEP

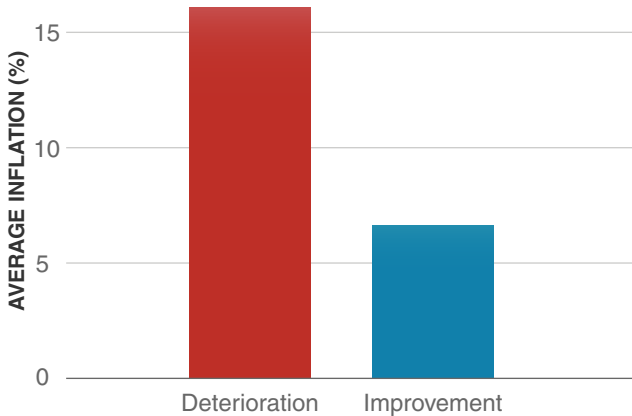
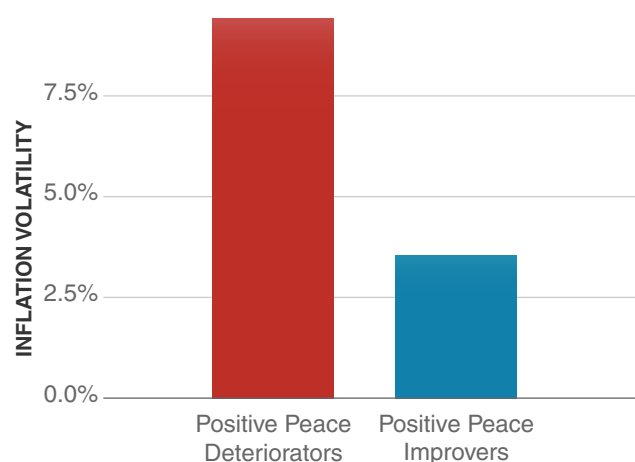


FIGURE 2.5

Volatility of inflation rates by Positive Peace trend, 2015–2024

Countries in which Positive Peace deteriorated experienced inflation rates that were nearly three times as volatile as those in countries with improved Positive Peace.



Source: World Bank, IEP

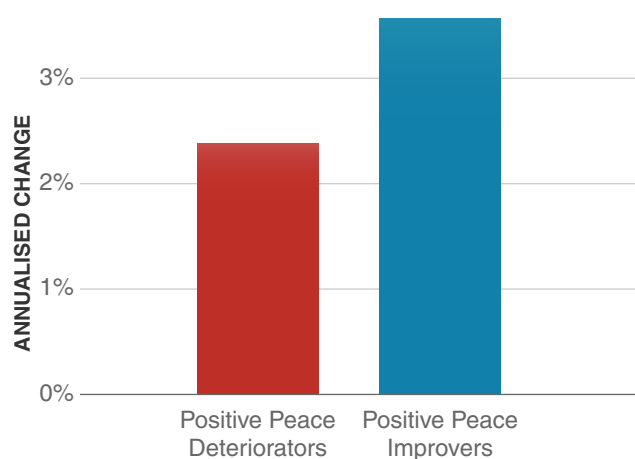
Household Consumption

Household consumption is particularly responsive to improvements in Positive Peace. Between 2015 and 2024, countries that recorded improvements in Positive Peace experienced stronger growth in household consumption than countries where Positive Peace deteriorated, as shown in Figure 2.6. Over this period, household consumption in countries that improved in Positive Peace grew at an average annual rate of more than 3.5 per cent, compared with less than 2.5 per cent in countries where Positive Peace deteriorated.

FIGURE 2.6

Changes in household consumption by Positive Peace trend, 2015–2024

Household consumption grew at a faster rate in countries where Positive Peace improved, averaging over 3.5 per cent per year, compared with under 2.5 per cent in countries where Positive Peace deteriorated.



Source: World Bank, IEP

Gross Value Added for Business

The business sector accounts for the vast majority of goods and services produced in most economies. A common measure of activity within this sector is gross value added (GVA), which captures the value of output generated by firms after subtracting the variable costs of production. GVA therefore provides a direct indication of the contribution of different sectors to economic growth and, at the firm level, represents the basis from which profits are generated once fixed costs are accounted for.

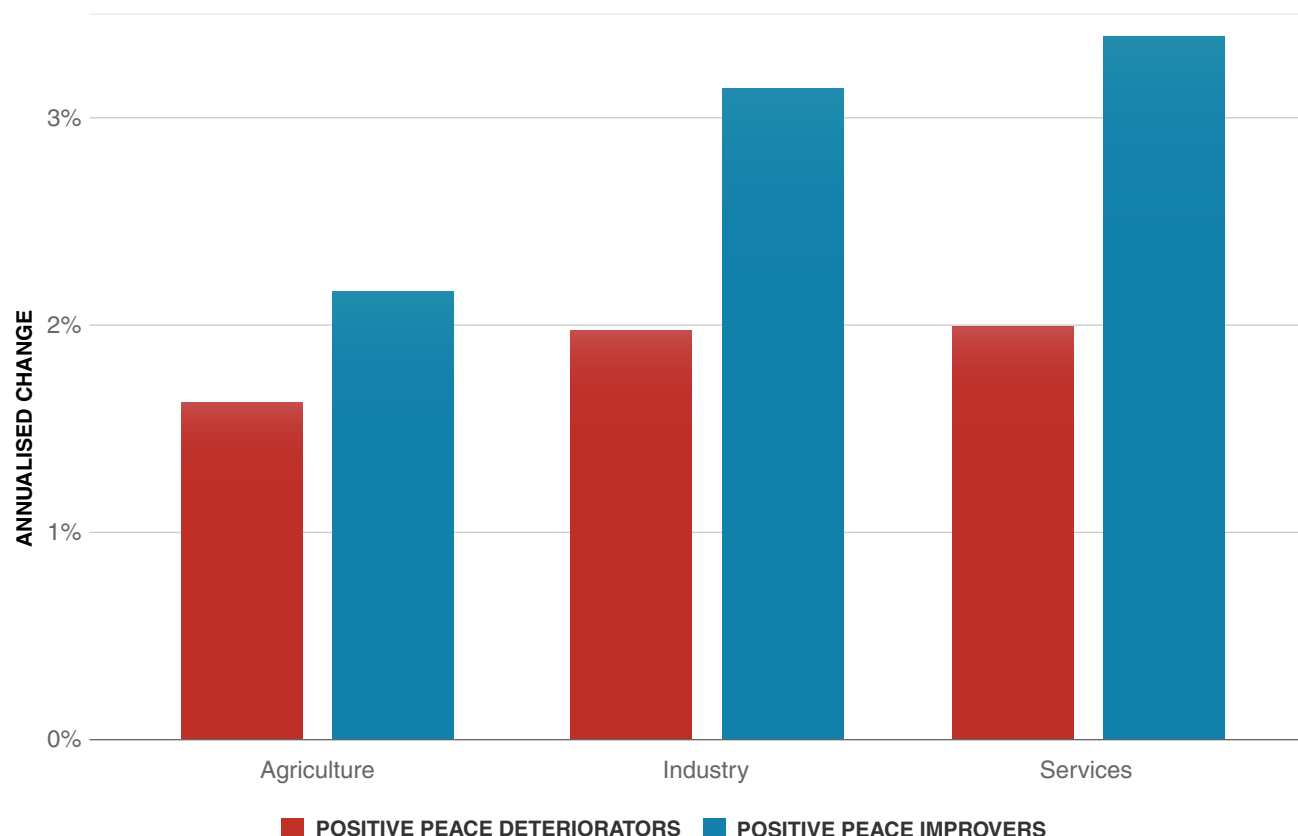
As shown in Figure 2.7, improvements in Positive Peace are associated with stronger growth in GVA across all major sectors of the economy. The industry sector, which includes manufacturing and construction, appears to be the most responsive. Between 2015 and 2024, industry GVA grew at an average annual rate of just over three per cent in countries that improved in Positive Peace, compared with around two per cent in countries where Positive Peace deteriorated. This reflects the sector's sensitivity to institutional quality, regulatory efficiency, and investment certainty, all of which are closely linked to Positive Peace.

The agricultural sector also shows a clear positive association with improvements in Positive Peace. Countries recording gains in Positive Peace experienced faster growth in agricultural value added than those where Positive Peace deteriorated, highlighting the importance of stability, access to inputs, and effective governance for productivity in primary sectors. Growth in the services and industrial sectors was stronger in Positive Peace improvers as well, with differentials even greater than in agriculture.

FIGURE 2.7

Changes in GVA by Positive Peace trend and sector, 2015–2024

Industry and services recorded the strongest gains in countries improving in Positive Peace, while agricultural growth was also higher but with a smaller differential.



Source: World Bank, IEP

Foreign Direct Investment

Countries that improve in Positive Peace tend to be attractive destinations for international trade and foreign direct investment (FDI). FDI plays a critical role in supporting long-term economic development and resilience. Unlike short-term capital flows, FDI typically reflects sustained commitments of capital, technology, and managerial expertise, often involving the establishment or expansion of productive capacity. As a result, FDI is associated with productivity gains, job creation, skills transfer, and deeper integration into global value chains.² Countries that attract stable and diversified FDI inflows are generally better positioned to absorb shocks, adapt to structural change, and sustain long-run growth.

As shown in Figure 2.8, these advantages translated into materially stronger performance across trade

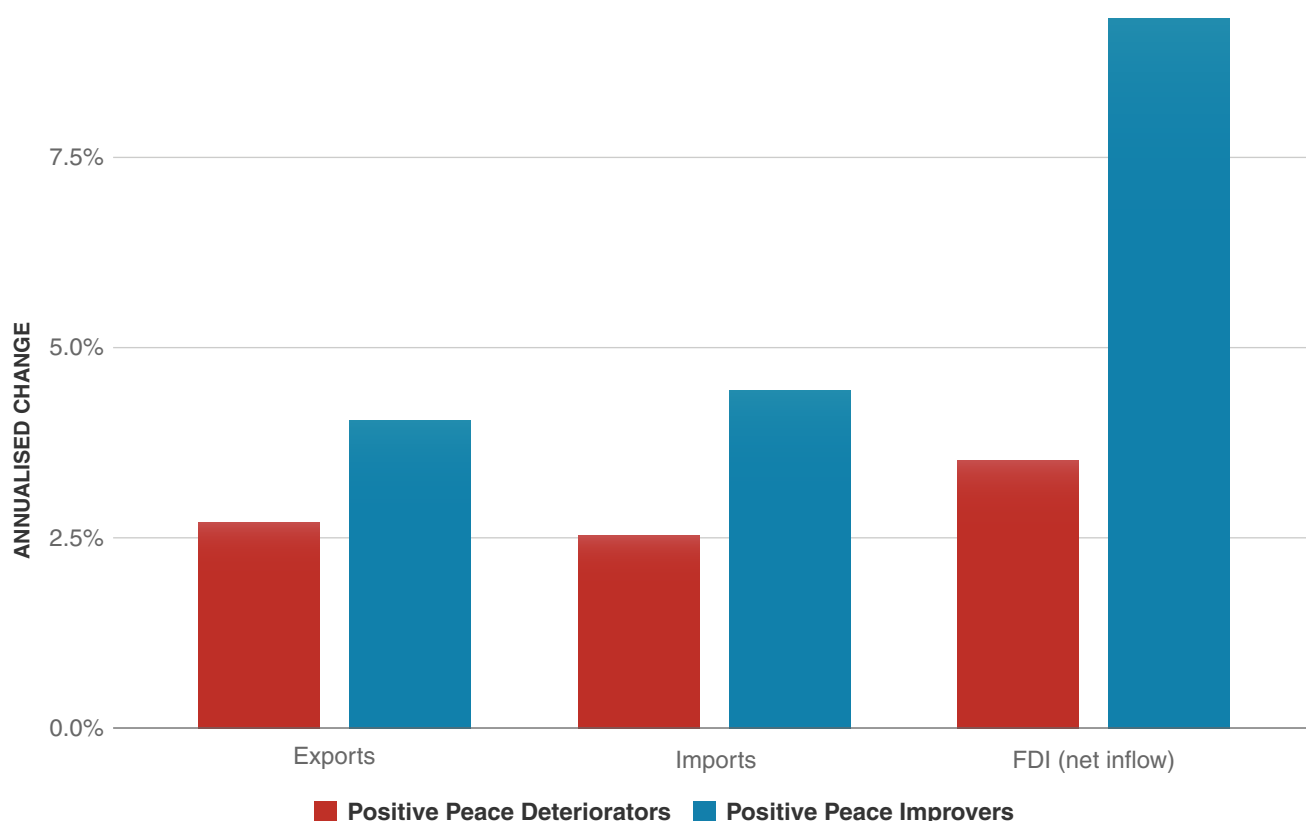
and investment flows between 2015 and 2024. Net inflows of FDI grew substantially faster in countries that improved in Positive Peace than in those where Positive Peace deteriorated. On average, FDI inflows in countries that improved in Positive Peace increased at an annual rate of around 9.3 per cent, compared with about 3.5 per cent in countries where Positive Peace deteriorated. This large differential underscores the sensitivity of long-term capital flows to institutional quality, stability, and policy predictability.

Exports of goods and services grew at an average annual rate of around four per cent in countries that improved in Positive Peace, compared with just under three per cent in countries where Positive Peace deteriorated. Imports followed a similar pattern, increasing by around 4.4 per cent per year in Positive Peace improvers, compared with approximately 2.5 per cent in countries with deteriorating Positive Peace.

FIGURE 2.8

Changes in trade and FDI by Positive Peace trend, 2015–2024

Countries with improved Positive Peace far outpaced their deteriorating peers in terms of growth in trade and FDI inflows.



Source: World Bank, IEP

Governance

There is a strong conceptual and empirical relationship between the quality of governance exercised by public authorities and the level of peacefulness within a society. Effective governance supports trust, accountability, and the fair provision of public goods, all of which underpin social stability and reduce the likelihood of conflict. In turn, more peaceful societies tend to create conditions that enable institutions to function with greater effectiveness and inclusivity.

Empirical evidence supports this relationship. Positive Peace is closely associated with governance outcomes measured by the World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA), which evaluates the quality of a country's policy and institutional framework. Countries that recorded improvements in the Positive Peace Index over the past decade also tended to strengthen their performance across several CPIA dimensions, particularly in areas such as education policy, equity and inclusion, quality of public administration, and business regulation. These improvements reflect

gains in state capacity, regulatory effectiveness, and institutional credibility.

By contrast, countries where Positive Peace deteriorated generally experienced weaker governance outcomes, with declines observed across a broad range of CPIA criteria. In many cases, this deterioration points to reduced administrative effectiveness, weaker regulatory frameworks, and greater challenges in delivering equitable public services. These governance shortcomings can exacerbate social tensions and undermine economic performance, reinforcing cycles of fragility.

It is also important to note that some aspects of governance deteriorated globally over the period, including fiscal policy, financial sector oversight, and macroeconomic management, reflecting the strain placed on public institutions by global shocks and heightened economic volatility. However, countries that improved in Positive Peace tended to experience smaller declines in these areas, showing that greater institutional resilience results in enhanced ability to adapt policy frameworks in response to external pressures.

Positive Peace and Environmental Resilience

Positive Peace provides a theory of change that helps explain the underlying conditions through which societies achieve better environmental outcomes, alongside social and governance performance. Rather than focusing narrowly on environmental pressures alone, contemporary assessments of environmental performance increasingly emphasise the ways in which environmental conditions affect human activity, wellbeing, and living standards. Indicators such as access to clean water, exposure to outdoor air pollution, and the protection of ecosystems therefore play a central role in evaluating environmental sustainability.

The impact of environmental conditions on living standards is shaped not only by economic activity or geography, but also by the attitudes, institutions, and structures captured by Positive Peace. For example, while urban air quality is influenced by industrial output and transport patterns, it is also dependent on a society's capacity to design, implement, and enforce effective environmental regulation.³ Similarly, access to clean water and sanitation depends on governance quality, social inclusion, and institutional effectiveness, rather than environmental endowments alone. In this sense,

environmental, social, and governance outcomes are deeply interdependent and conceptually linked through the broader framework of Positive Peace.

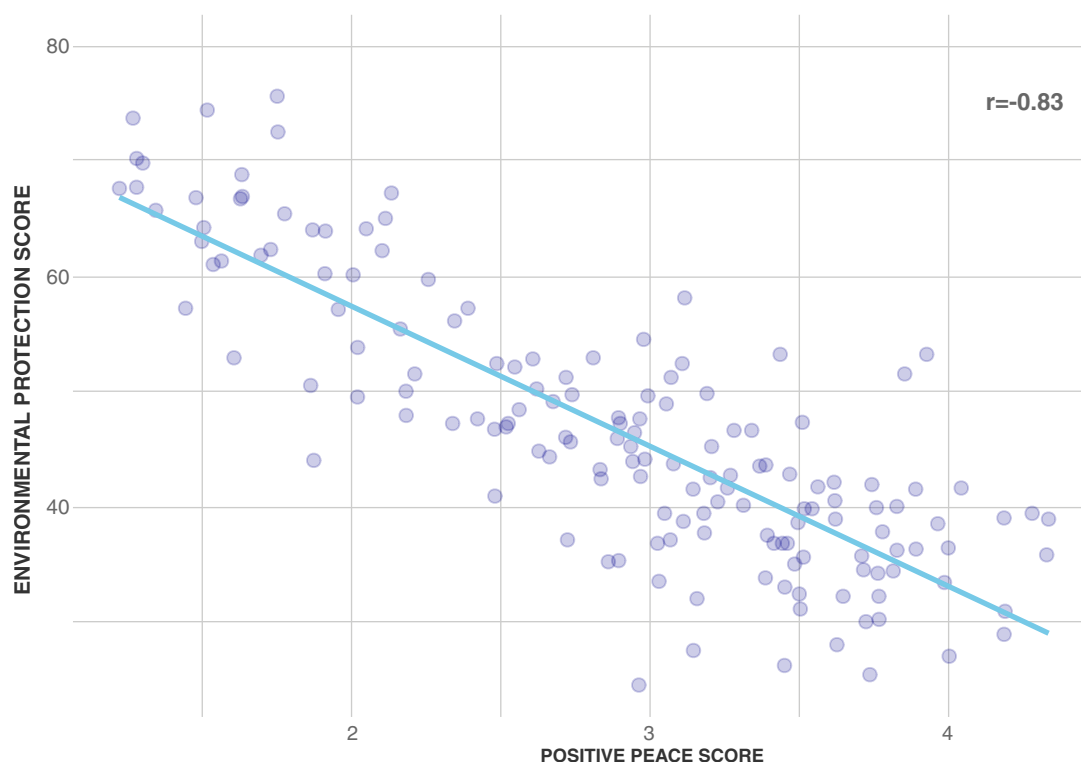
Empirical evidence confirms this relationship. As shown in Figure 2.9, Positive Peace is closely associated with environmental performance as measured by the Yale Environmental Performance Index (EPI). The correlation between the Positive Peace Index and the EPI is -0.83, indicating a very strong relationship in which higher levels of Positive Peace correspond to better environmental performance outcomes. This finding indicates that societies with stronger Positive Peace tend to be more effective at managing environmental risks, investing in environmental protection, and mitigating threats to human health and ecosystems.

These results highlight the role of Positive Peace as a reliable predictor of favourable environmental outcomes. By strengthening the institutional and social foundations that support collective action, accountability, and long-term planning, Positive Peace contributes to improved environmental performance and greater resilience to environmental challenges.

FIGURE 2.9

Environmental protection and Positive Peace, 2024

Countries with better environmental protection scores tend to record stronger Positive Peace outcomes.



Source: Yale Environmental Performance Index, IEP

The Ecological Threat Report (ETR) provides a comprehensive, data-driven assessment of risks arising from food insecurity, water stress, demographic pressures, and natural hazards. Each of these threats is scored on a scale from 1 to 5, ranging from very low to extremely high risk. They capture the intensity and convergence of ecological pressures facing societies, as well as the potential for these pressures to translate into humanitarian crises, economic disruption, or conflict when coping capacity is weak.

Ecological Risk and Response

Countries differ markedly in their ability to respond to ecological threats, not only because of geography or exposure, but also because of the strength of their underlying societal systems. This capacity to cope, adapt, and recover is captured in the PPI. Positive Peace is critical for a society's ability to absorb ecological shocks without destabilising its economic, political, or social systems.

As shown in Figure 2.10, there is a very strong relationship between Positive Peace and ecological

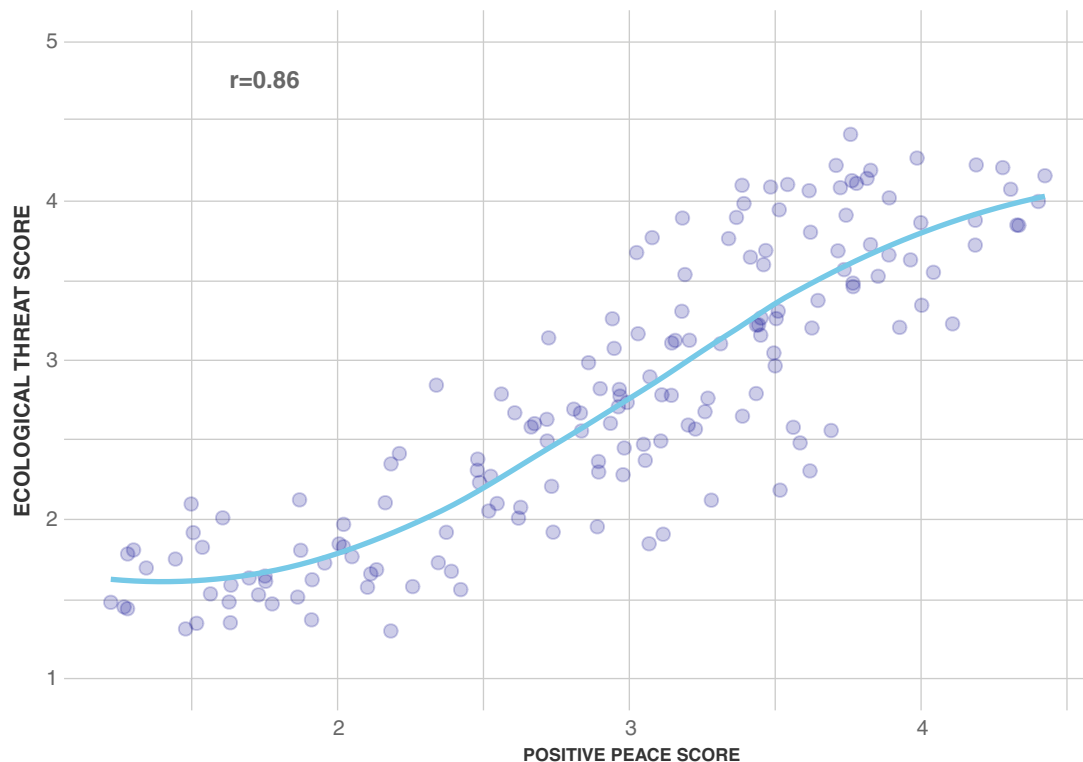
threat outcomes. The correlation between a country's PPI score and its overall ETR score is 0.86, indicating that countries with higher levels of Positive Peace tend to face substantially lower ecological risk. In practical terms, countries with stronger Positive Peace are better equipped to manage food and water security, respond to natural disasters, and adapt to demographic pressures, while countries with low Positive Peace are more vulnerable to cascading and compounding ecological stresses.

This relationship reflects the role of Positive Peace in shaping a society's coping capacity and ability to recover. Countries with higher Positive Peace typically have more reliable institutions, more effective governance, greater social cohesion, and better access to resources. These characteristics support early warning systems, disaster preparedness, emergency response, and post-shock recovery, reducing the likelihood that ecological pressures escalate into humanitarian emergencies or social instability. Conversely, in countries with low levels of Positive Peace, even moderate ecological shocks can overwhelm fragile systems, triggering disorderly economic adjustments, political instability, or violent conflict.

FIGURE 2.10

Ecological threat scores and Positive Peace, 2024

Countries that score well in the Ecological Threat Report tend to record better Positive Peace outcomes.



Source: IEP

Positive Peace and Societal Wellbeing

Countries with greater levels of societal resilience also tend to exhibit higher levels of social wellbeing. A resilient society is better able to shield its population from social, economic, public health, and environmental shocks, while also supporting faster and more effective recovery when disruptions occur. This resilience reduces persistent insecurity related to income, employment, health, and access to essential services. As a result, citizens in such societies face fewer constraints on basic survival and have greater scope to pursue education, productive employment, and personal fulfilment. In this way, Positive Peace supports not only stability, but also the conditions required for human flourishing.

Positive Peace is strongly associated with a wide range of wellbeing outcomes, including life satisfaction, happiness, public health, measures of gender equality, and human development more broadly. One of the most widely used composite measures of societal wellbeing is the Human Development Index (HDI), which captures three core dimensions of human development:

- longevity and health, measured through life expectancy;
- knowledge, measured through years of schooling; and
- a decent standard of living, measured through gross national income per capita.

Unlike purely economic indicators, the HDI reflects the extent to which people are able to live long, educated, and productive lives.

Human Development

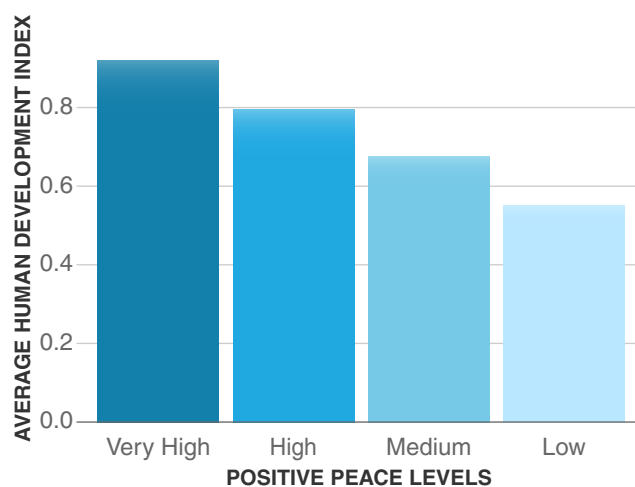
As shown in Figure 2.11, Positive Peace is a robust predictor of human development outcomes. Countries with very high levels of Positive Peace record substantially higher average HDI scores than countries with lower levels of Positive Peace. On average, countries in the highest Positive Peace category record HDI scores close to 0.9, compared with approximately 0.55 among countries with low Positive Peace. This relationship reflects the holistic nature of Positive Peace, which captures the institutional effectiveness, social cohesion, and economic foundations that underpin sustained improvements in education, health, and living standards. Societies that actively foster Positive Peace create enabling environments in which

investments in human capital can be effectively translated into better outcomes for their populations.

FIGURE 2.11

Human development and Positive Peace, 2024

Higher Positive Peace is associated with higher scores in the Human Development Index, which captures education, life expectancy, and economic development.



Source: UNDP, IEP

Food Security

In addition to human development, Positive Peace is closely linked to food security, a critical dimension of human wellbeing and resilience. Food security is measured using the Proteus Food Security Index, a multidimensional measure developed by the UN World Food Programme and research partners. The index assesses food security across 185 countries using 21 indicators spanning four pillars: availability, access, utilisation, and stability. By capturing both chronic vulnerabilities and acute shocks, the Proteus index provides a more comprehensive and comparable measure of food security than single-indicator approaches, while also identifying the underlying drivers of food insecurity.

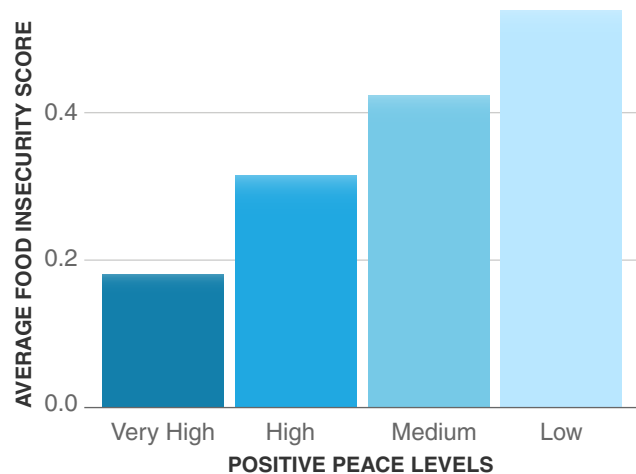
As illustrated in Figure 2.12, higher levels of Positive Peace are associated with significantly better food security outcomes. Countries with very high Positive Peace record average food insecurity scores of less than 0.2, while countries with low Positive Peace record scores above 0.5, indicating substantially greater levels of food insecurity. This relationship underscores the role of social cohesion, effective governance, and inclusive economic systems in

ensuring reliable access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food. Societies characterised by stronger Positive Peace are better able to manage supply chains, respond to price shocks, protect vulnerable populations, and adapt to climate-related and demographic pressures.

FIGURE 2.12

Food insecurity and Positive Peace, 2024

Higher Positive Peace countries on average enjoy greater levels of food security.



Source: World Food Programme, IEP

Life Satisfaction

Measures of life satisfaction also tend to be stronger in countries with higher levels of Positive Peace. Across OECD countries, reported life satisfaction is closely aligned with the Positive Peace Index, with a correlation coefficient of -0.81 (Figure 2.13). Countries with better Positive Peace scores generally report increased satisfaction with life, reinforcing the idea that resilient institutions, social trust, and effective governance help translate economic and social activity into lived wellbeing.

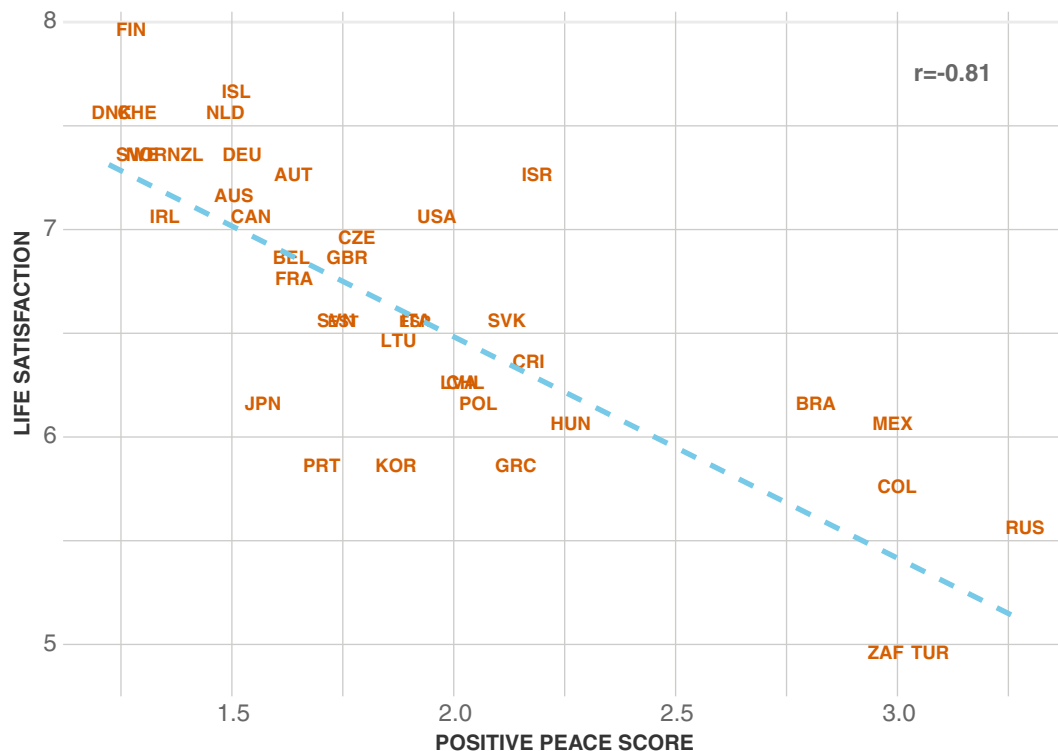


Positive Peace is strongly associated with a wide range of wellbeing outcomes, including life satisfaction, happiness, public health, measures of gender equality, and human development more broadly.

FIGURE 2.13

Life satisfaction and Positive Peace, 2024

Countries with greater levels of reported life satisfaction tend to have higher levels of Positive Peace.



Source: OECD, IEP

However, subjective wellbeing is not a purely mechanical outcome of institutional strength. While the relationship in Figure 2.13 is strong, several countries sit meaningfully above or below the trend line, highlighting that life satisfaction is shaped by a broader set of interacting factors. These include material living conditions, social expectations, household structures, and the quality of interpersonal relationships that shape how people experience and evaluate their lives.

This broader picture is reinforced by Figure 2.14, which shows the relationship between Positive Peace and satisfaction with living standards. The correlation here is more moderate ($r = -0.54$), indicating that while higher Positive Peace is generally associated with greater satisfaction with material conditions, this link is weaker than for overall life satisfaction.

Figure 2.15 further deepens this perspective by examining the relationship between Positive Peace and happiness scores, which capture affective wellbeing rather than cognitive evaluations of life circumstances. The correlation between Positive

Peace and happiness is strong ($r = -0.77$), though slightly weaker than for life satisfaction. This distinction is important: while life satisfaction reflects an overall assessment of one's life, happiness captures day-to-day emotional experiences, which are particularly sensitive to social connection, stress, and relational support.

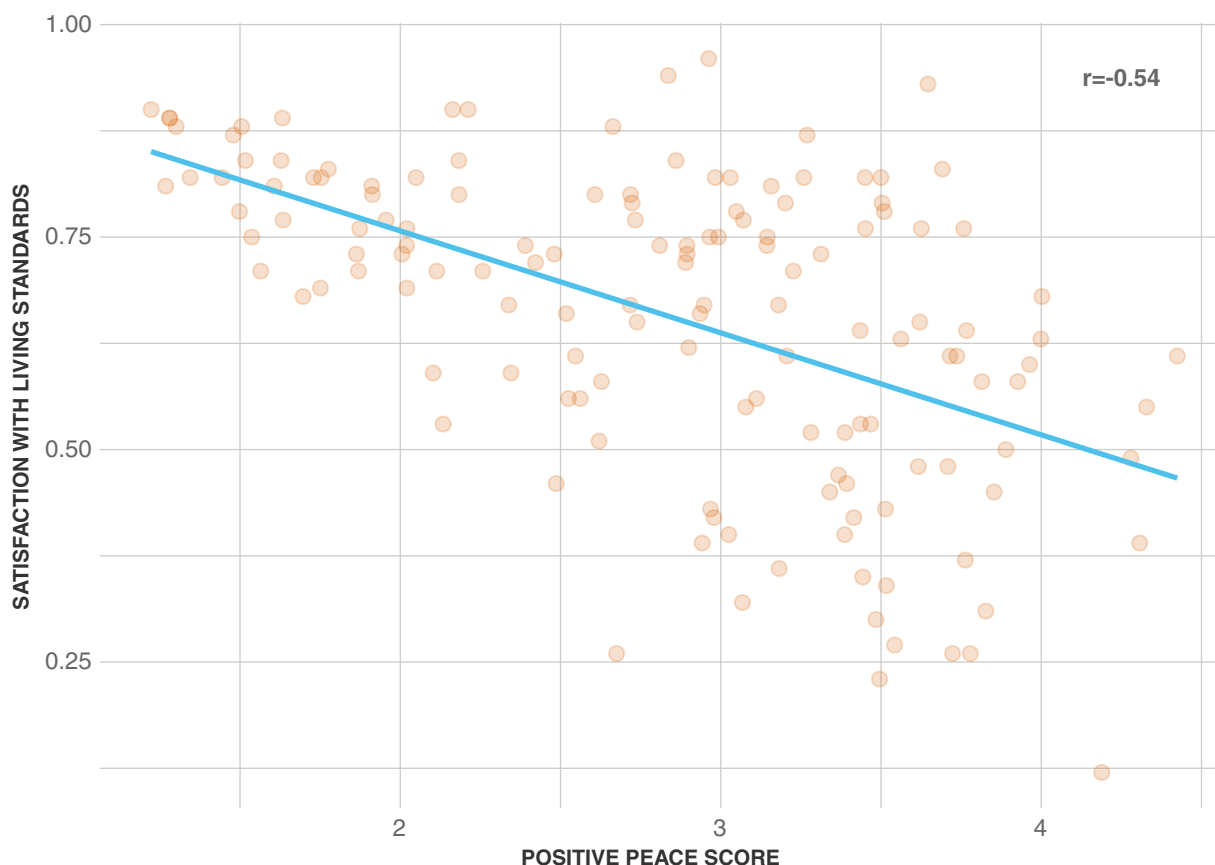
That countries diverge from the overall trends in these subjective measures of wellbeing highlights how people's perceptions of their own happiness and life satisfaction are shaped by more than institutional strength alone. As shown in Figure 2.13, countries such as Japan, South Korea, and Portugal stand out for reporting comparatively lower life satisfaction than would be expected given their Positive Peace performance, while several Latin American countries, including Mexico, Colombia, and Brazil report higher levels of life satisfaction than their Positive Peace scores alone would predict.

These deviations illustrate that, alongside institutional resilience and economic development, wellbeing also depends on how societies organise social life, maintain close relationships, and support

FIGURE 2.14

Satisfaction with standard of living and Positive Peace, 2024

Countries with higher levels of Positive Peace report greater satisfaction with living standards.



Source: Gallup, IEP

FIGURE 2.15

Happiness levels and Positive Peace, 2024

Countries with higher levels of Positive Peace report increased levels of happiness.



Source: World Happiness Report, IEP

everyday connection. In some high-performing societies, pressures linked to work-life balance, social isolation, ageing populations, or changing family structures may weigh on reported life satisfaction. Conversely, in countries with lower Positive Peace scores, stronger relational bonds, social cohesion, and shared norms around mutual support can partially offset institutional or economic deficiencies, supporting higher levels of subjective wellbeing.

Gender

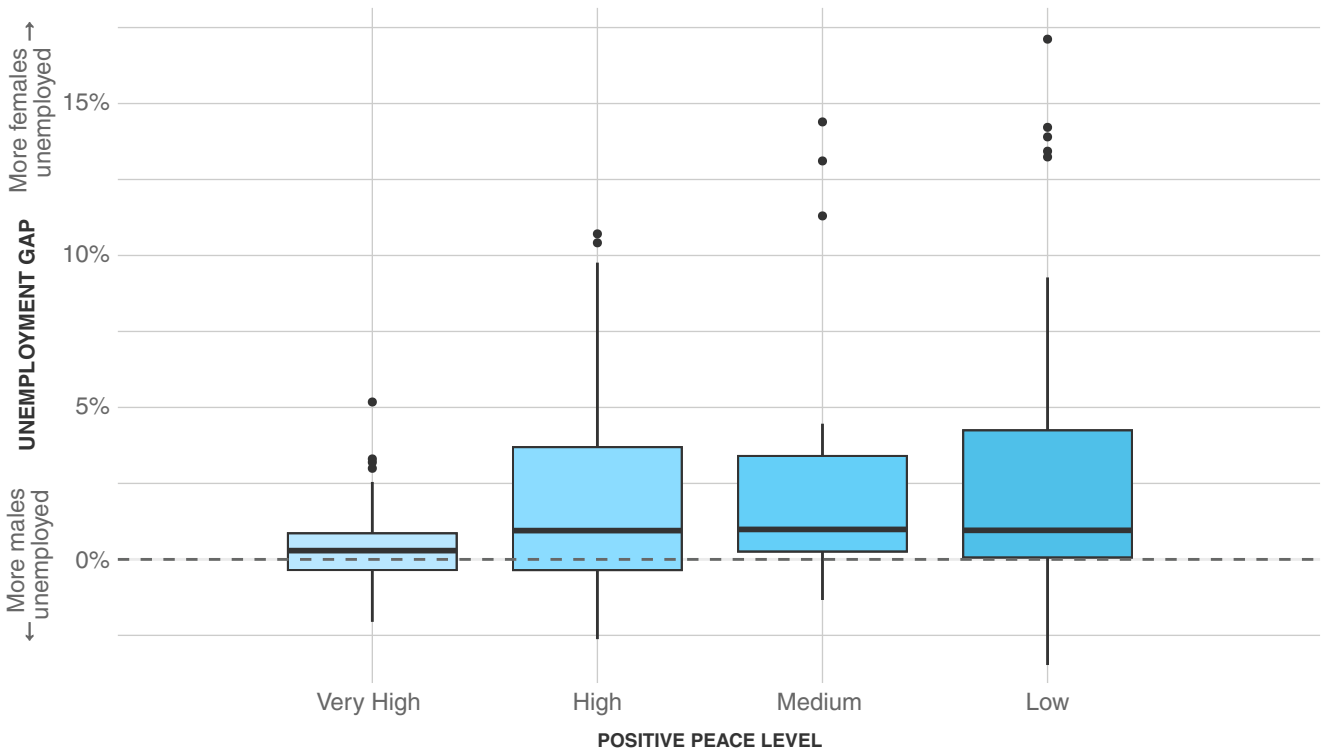
In parallel with its connection with relational wellbeing, Positive Peace also aligns closely with

gender dynamics, particularly in how equitably risks and opportunities are shared in the labour market. However, these relationships are nuanced. Figures 2.16 and 2.17 show the distribution of gender gaps in unemployment and youth unemployment across countries grouped by Positive Peace level. Rather than large differences in median outcomes between all groups, the most striking pattern is the progressive narrowing of the range of gender gaps as Positive Peace improves. Countries with very high Positive Peace exhibit the smallest dispersion in gender gaps, indicating more consistently balanced labour market outcomes between men and women.

FIGURE 2.16

Gender gap in unemployment by Positive Peace level, 2024

Gender disparities in unemployment are smallest and most consistent in very high Positive Peace countries.

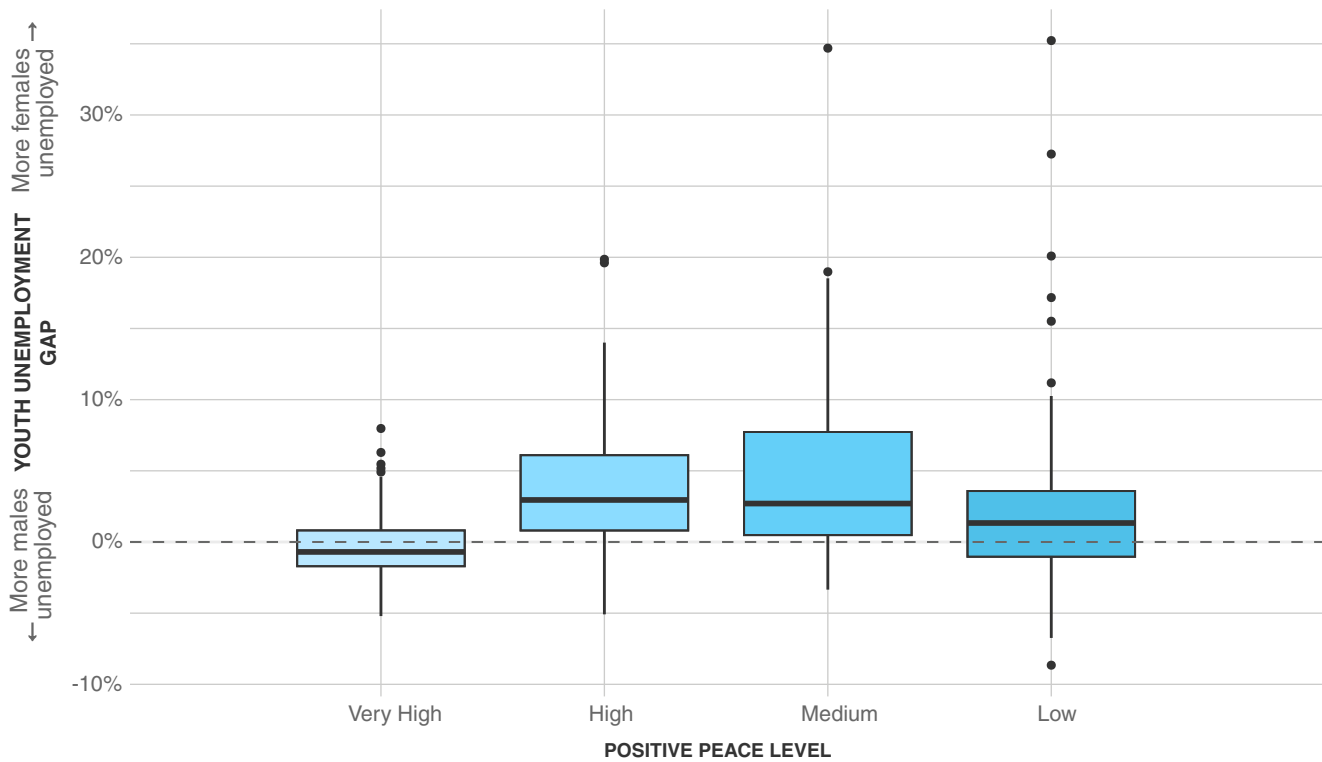


Source: ILO, IEP

FIGURE 2.17

Gender gap in youth unemployment by Positive Peace level, 2024

Youth unemployment gender gaps are most contained in countries with very high Positive Peace.



Source: ILO, IEP

As shown in Figure 2.16, in very high Positive Peace countries, the median gender gap in overall unemployment is close to zero, though it remains slightly worse for women. Countries in the high, medium, and low Positive Peace groupings display higher levels of unemployment for women.

A similar pattern is observed for youth unemployment, as shown in Figure 2.17. However, in very high Positive Peace countries, young men are unemployed at slightly higher rates than young women. Moreover, in such contexts, gender gaps show the lowest levels of variability, with the gap not rising above or below 10 per cent in any very high Positive Peace country.

Health

Countries with higher levels of Positive Peace tend to provide environments in which individuals are better supported to live longer and healthier lives through more effective healthcare systems, safer living conditions, lower exposure to chronic stress, and reliable access to essential services. These

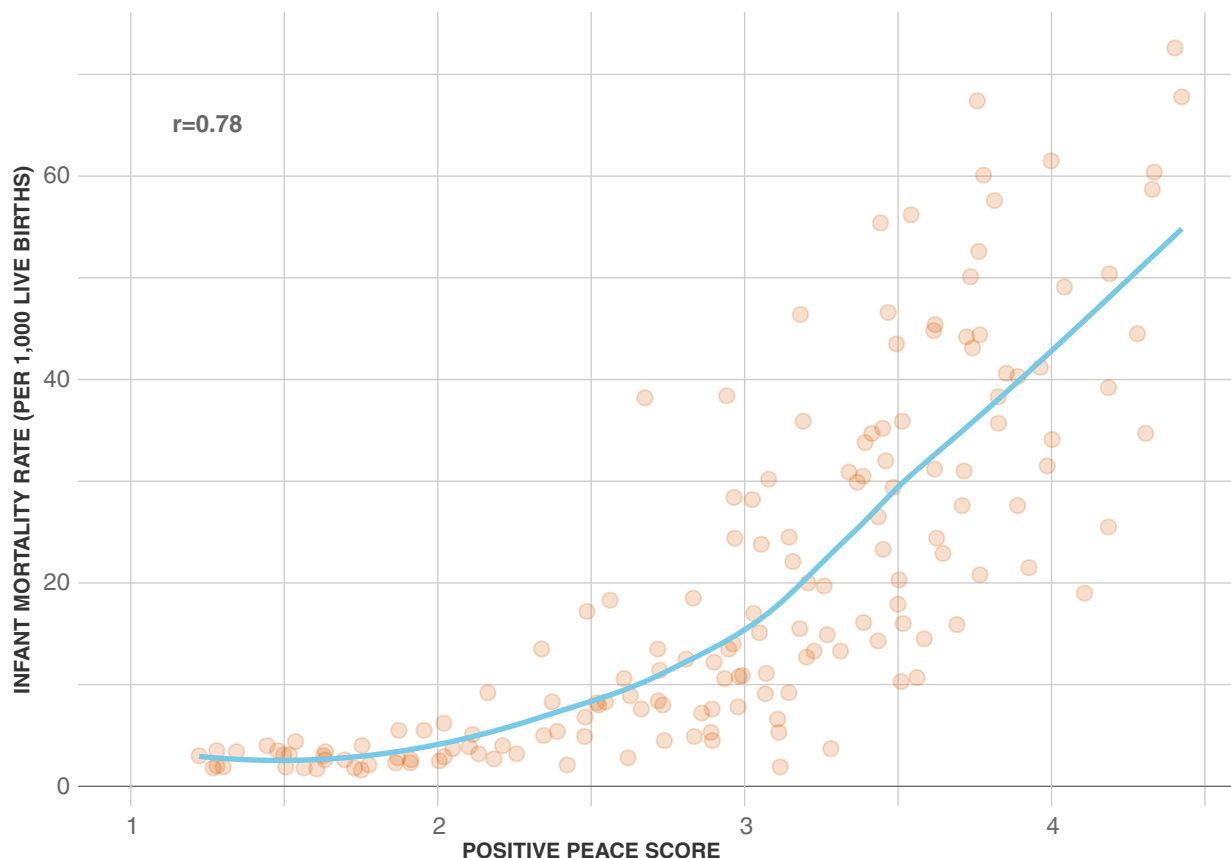
conditions reduce both preventable deaths and the long-term health risks associated with poverty, insecurity, and social exclusion. As a result, mortality from both non-violent and structural causes is substantially lower in societies with stronger Positive Peace.

This relationship is particularly evident in infant and adult mortality outcomes. As shown in Figures 2.18 and 2.19, infant mortality rates rise sharply as Positive Peace deteriorates, with a strong correlation between the PPI and infant mortality ($r = 0.78$). Countries with high Positive Peace typically record infant mortality rates in the low single digits per 1,000 live births, while countries with low Positive Peace frequently experience rates exceeding 40 or even 60 deaths per 1,000 live births. A similar pattern holds for adult mortality, where lower Positive Peace is associated with significantly higher rates of premature death among adults ($r = 0.69$). These outcomes reflect cumulative disadvantages in healthcare access, disease prevention, occupational safety, and broader living conditions in less resilient societies.

FIGURE 2.18

Infant mortality and Positive Peace, 2024

Lower levels of Positive Peace are strongly associated with high infant mortality rates.

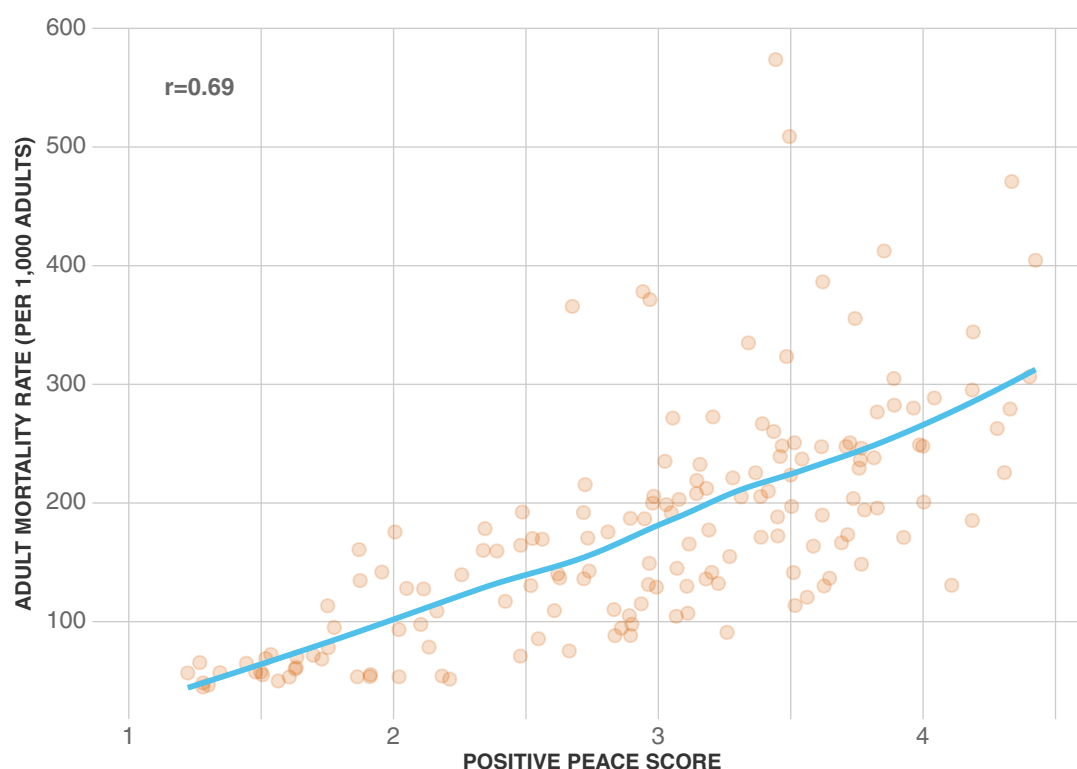


Source: WHO, IEP

FIGURE 2.19

Adult mortality and Positive Peace, 2024

Countries with higher levels of Positive Peace enjoy lower levels of adult mortality.



Source: WHO, IEP

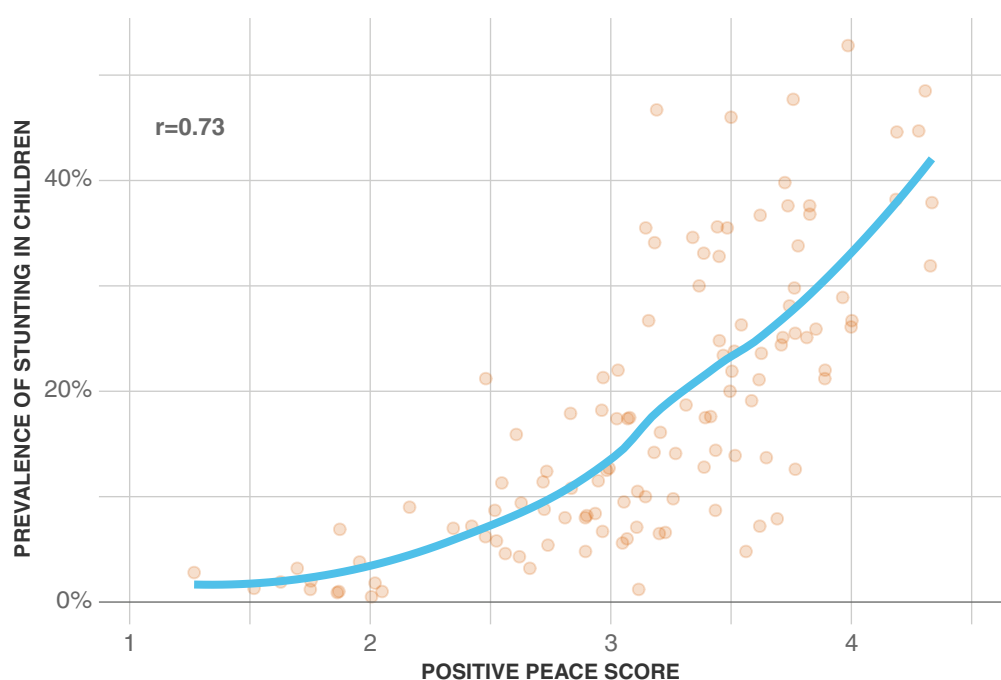
Positive Peace is also closely linked to nutrition outcomes and early-life development. Figure 2.20 shows a strong association ($r = 0.73$) between Positive Peace and the prevalence of child stunting, a widely used indicator of chronic malnutrition.

Countries with high Positive Peace typically record stunting rates below three per cent, while rates rise rapidly as Positive Peace deteriorates, often exceeding 30 or 40 per cent in low Positive Peace contexts.

FIGURE 2.20

Childhood stunting and Positive Peace, 2024

Malnutrition among children is strongly associated with lack of Positive Peace.



Source: WHO, IEP

These dynamics underscore how food security, health services, maternal education, sanitation, and income stability interact as part of a broader system of resilience. Improvements in Positive Peace support not only elevated agricultural productivity and food availability, but also the institutional capacity to deliver nutrition, healthcare, and social protection to vulnerable populations.

There are also important gender dynamics to stunting, especially for children and youth, with boys having substantially worse outcomes than girls. Across 159 countries, boys under five years old experience stunting at an average rate of 18.8 per

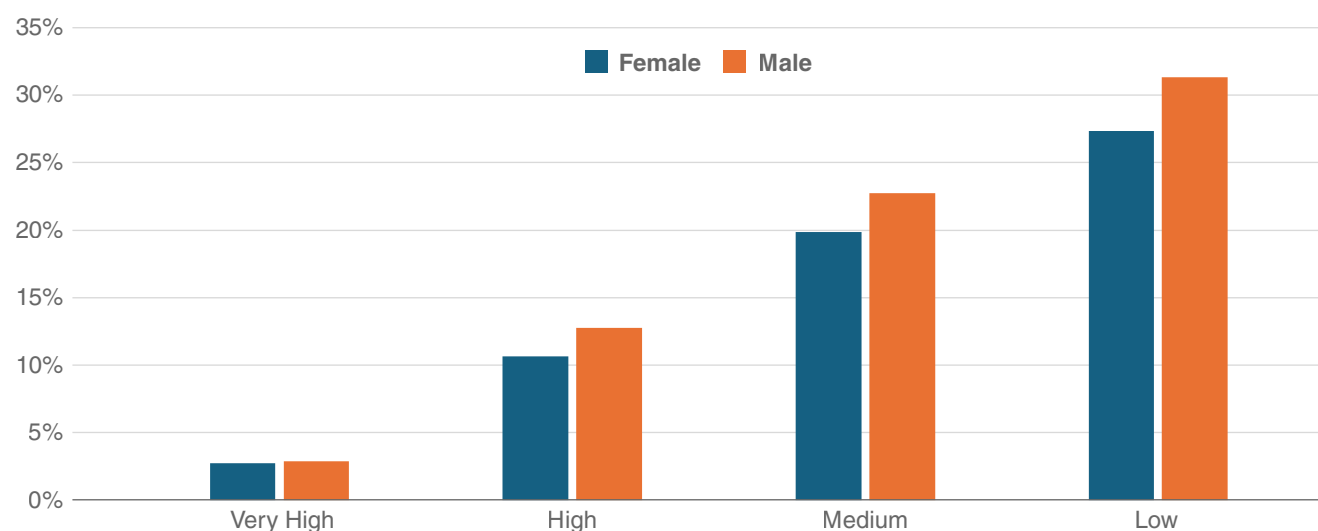
cent, compared to 16.3 per cent for girls under five, as shown in Figure 2.21.

Similar trends are observable in relation to acute thinness among older children and adolescents. Rates of acute thinness are higher in boys than girls globally, but as countries become less peaceful, the gap widens, as shown in Figure 2.22. In very high Positive Peace countries, thinness rates for boys are 2.8 per cent, compared to just 1.9 per cent for girls. But in low Positive Peace countries, boys are acutely thin at a rate of 11.3 per cent, compared to seven per cent in girls.

FIGURE 2.21

Stunting in children under five, by Positive Peace level and sex, 2024

Early childhood stunting rates climb markedly as Positive Peace decreases, with disproportionate impacts on boys.

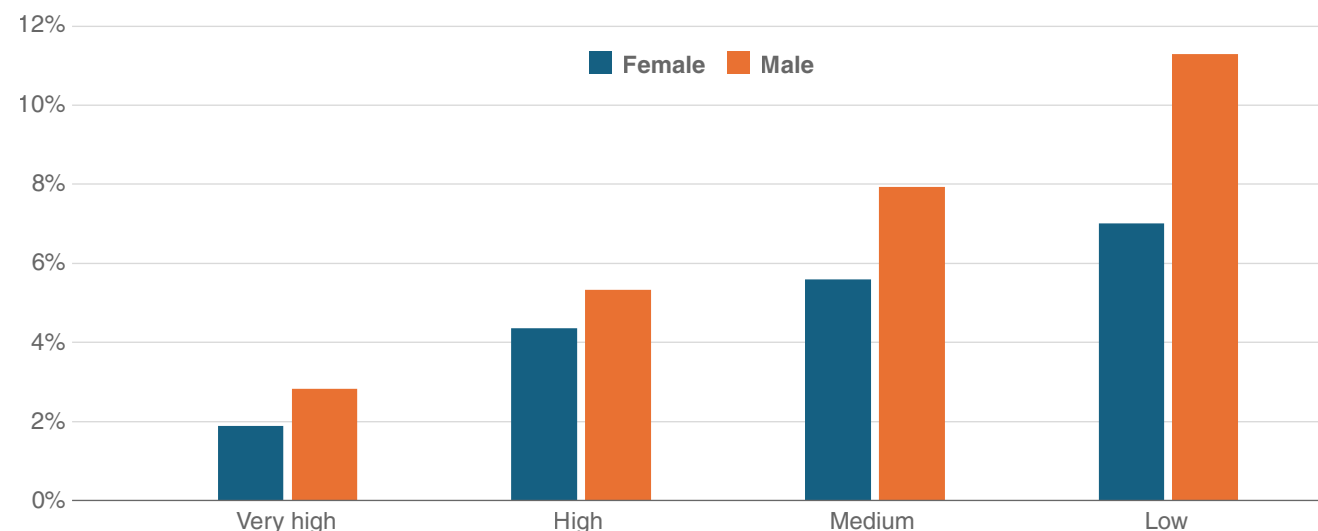


Source: WHO, IEP

FIGURE 2.22

Acute thinness in 5–19 year olds, by Positive Peace level and sex, 2024

Countries with low levels of Positive Peace tend to have much higher rates of acute thinness in children and adolescents, with gender discrepancies widening as peacefulness declines.



Source: World Bank, IEP

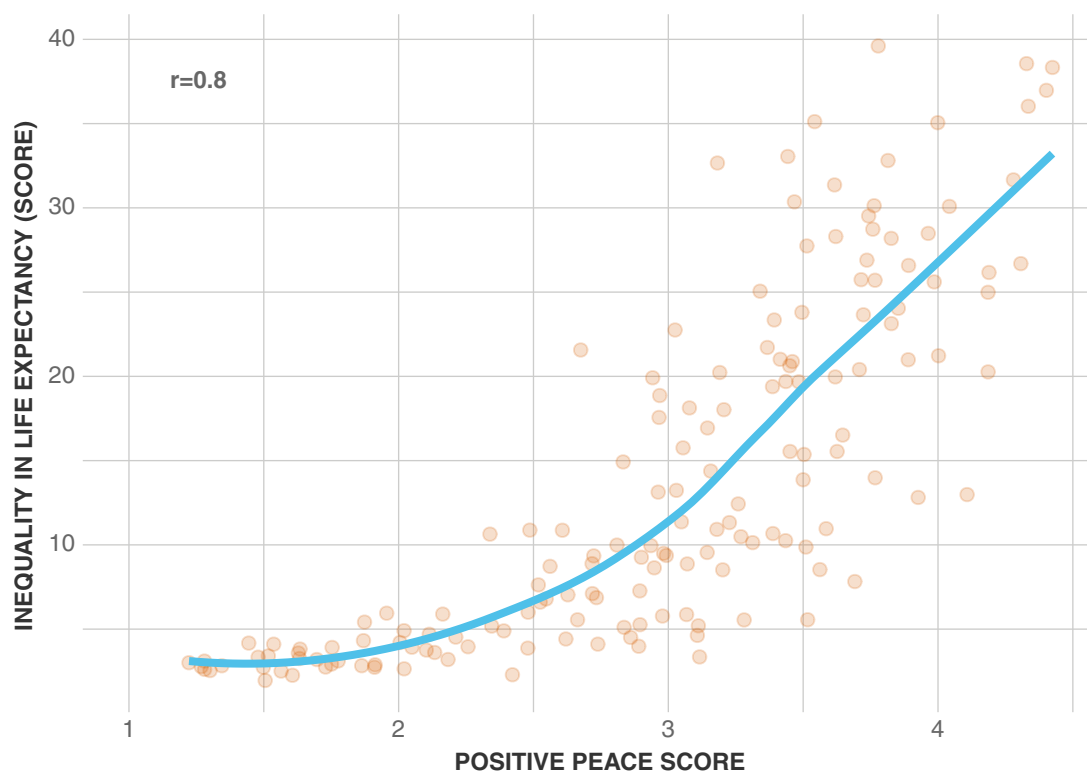
Beyond average health outcomes, Positive Peace is also associated with greater equity in health. Figure 2.23 shows a robust relationship between Positive Peace and inequality in life expectancy ($r = 0.80$). Countries with higher Positive Peace tend to exhibit much smaller gaps in life expectancy between socio-economic groups, reflecting inclusive access to healthcare, education, and public services.

In contrast, countries with low Positive Peace often experience large disparities in survival outcomes, where wealth, geography, or social status strongly determine life chances. This pattern highlights that Positive Peace contributes not only to higher overall levels of health, but also to fairer distributions of health outcomes across society.

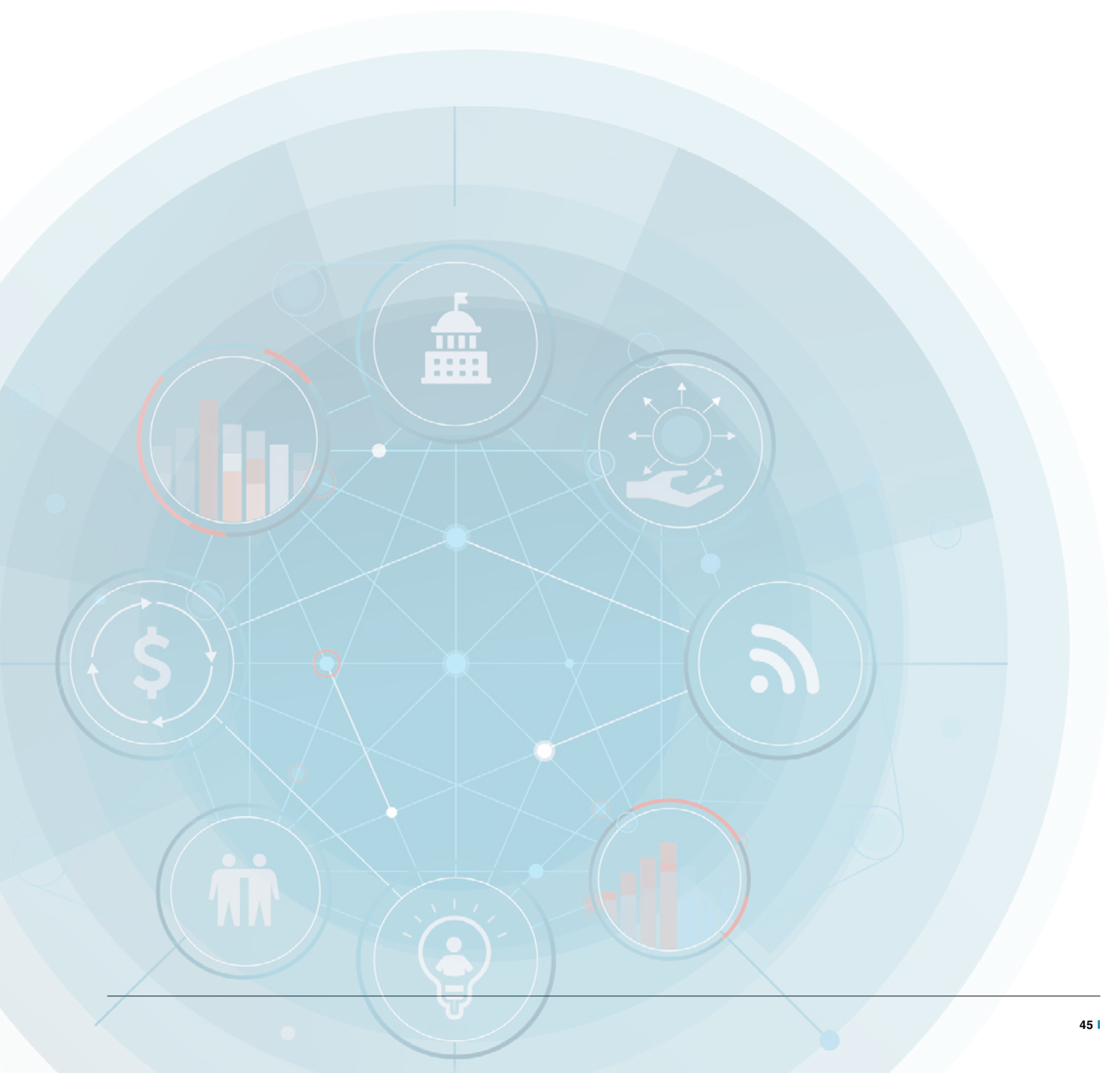
FIGURE 2.23

Inequality in life expectancy and Positive Peace, 2024

Countries lacking in Positive Peace tend to have much more disparate health outcomes across socio-economic groups.

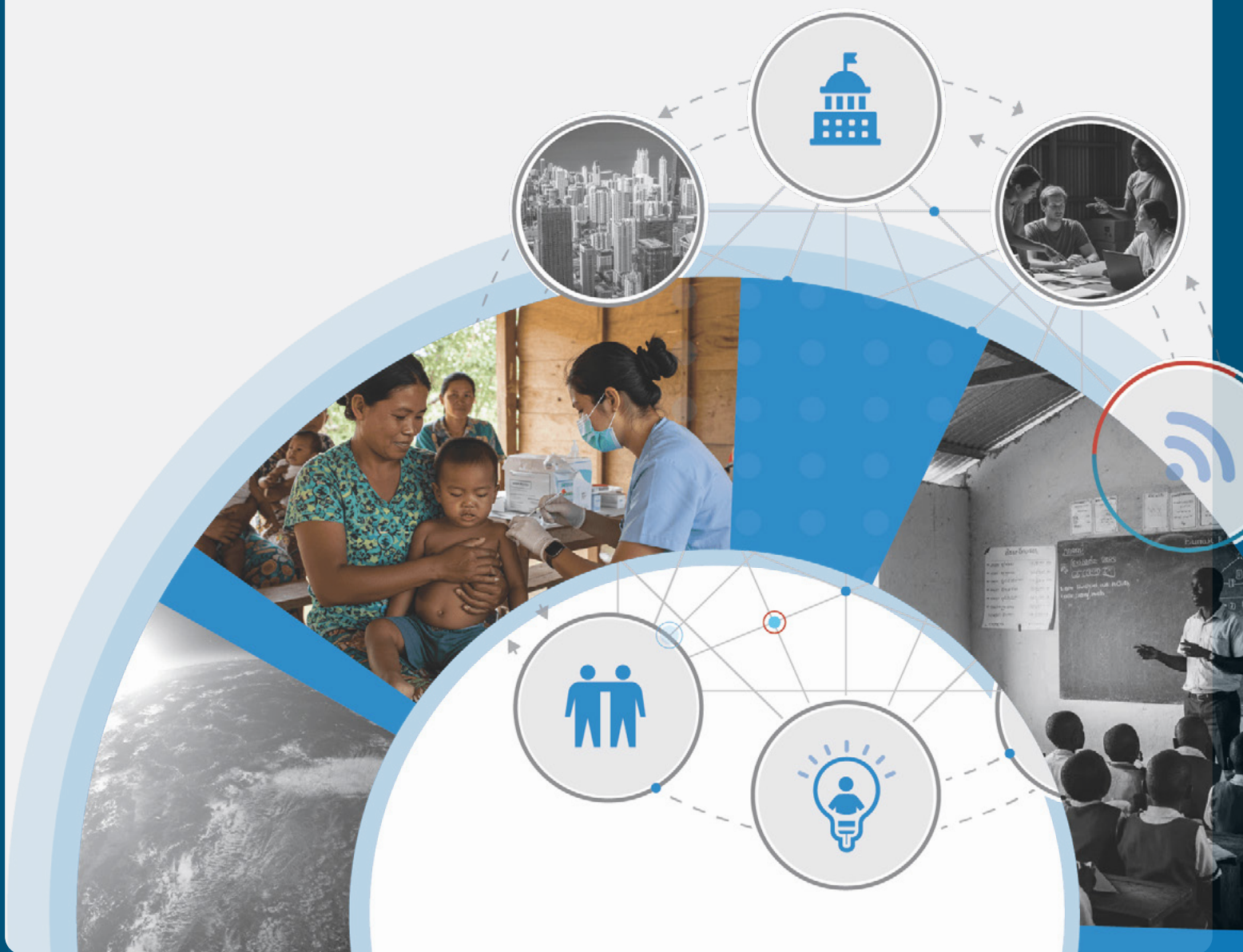


Source: UNDP, IEP



Section 3

Positive Peace Since COVID-19



Key Findings

- The COVID-19 pandemic acted as a systemic shock globally and also within countries. The countries with the highest levels of Positive Peace recorded the fastest recoveries.
- During the pre- and post-COVID-19 periods, most Positive Peace indicators maintained the same direction and rate of change, but for some the pandemic set a new path.
- *Freedom of the press* is the indicator whose trajectory changed most dramatically after the pandemic. The indicator deteriorated by 18.5 per cent globally between 2020 and 2024, with declines in 137 of 163 countries. The pre-COVID deterioration rate was 3.4 per cent over five years; the post-COVID rate has been more than five times faster.
- *Healthy life expectancy, GDP per capita, youth not in employment, education or training (NEET), and international tourism* fell sharply during the pandemic, but have since recovered to or surpassed their pre-pandemic levels, indicating short-term shocks rather than structural changes.
- The Pillar with the most substantial deterioration was *Well-Functioning Government*. The rate of deterioration remained roughly the same before, during, and after the pandemic, and the Pillar deteriorated by three per cent overall between 2015 and 2024.
- Six of the eight Pillars improved between 2020 and 2024. *High Levels of Human Capital* recorded the largest gain at 4.3 per cent, driven primarily by post-COVID recovery in *healthy life expectancy*, which improved in 145 of 163 countries.
- The largest national improvements between 2020 and 2024 occurred in Saudi Arabia, Moldova, the Dominican Republic, the Czech Republic, and Uzbekistan, ranked by absolute change in PPI score.
- The sharpest national deteriorations occurred in Myanmar, Burkina Faso, Russia, Belarus, and Palestine, with conflict or armed insurgency driving four of the five deteriorations.

Positive Peace Post-Pandemic: Pressures on Information, Institutions, and Trust

Several indicators experienced sharp short-term shocks during the pandemic. *Healthy life expectancy*, *GDP per capita*, *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)*, and *international tourism* all declined during the 2019 to 2021 period before recovering to or surpassing their pre-pandemic levels. The *High Levels of Human Capital* Pillar improved sharply over the post-pandemic period as a rebound from the health shock rather than as new structural progress.

Beyond these short-term shocks, most Pillars continued moving in the same direction and at roughly the same rate as before 2020. *Well-Functioning Government* deteriorated by 1.6 per cent in the five years before the onset of COVID-19 and by 1.4 per cent in the five years after; the pandemic did not accelerate or slow this long-running trend.

One area did show a distinct post-pandemic shift. The *freedom of the press* indicator deteriorated by 18.5 per cent between 2020 and 2024, the largest decline of any indicator in the Index, with 137 of the 163 countries deteriorating since the onset of COVID-19. In the five years prior to COVID-19, it deteriorated by only 3.4 per cent. The pandemic substantially accelerated the decline and the decline has continued since.

Freedom of the press is one of three indicators within the *Free Flow of Information* Pillar, which improved by 1.7 per cent between 2020 and 2024. The improvement in this Pillar was entirely driven by improvements in the *telecom infrastructure index* indicator, which improved by 20.6 per cent globally, with gains in 147 of 163 countries. The third indicator in the Pillar is *quality of information*, which deteriorated by 1.9 per cent, with declines in 82 countries.

The deterioration in *freedom of the press* is overwhelmingly a post-pandemic phenomenon, accelerating by more than five times the pre-pandemic rate. The number of countries with banded scores above 3 (denoting restricted press freedom) more than doubled, rising from 39 in 2020 to 82 in 2024, and the number with scores above 4 (denoting extreme levels of restriction) more than tripled, rising from seven to 24. Almost all of the decade-long deterioration in this indicator occurred after 2020.

The acceleration of deterioration in *freedom of the press* cuts across very different country contexts. Afghanistan recorded the largest decline at 77.9 per cent, following the change of government in 2021, and Bhutan deteriorated by 75.1 per cent. Long-standing democracies of all income levels were not exempt: Costa Rica fell by 64.6 per cent, Uruguay by 63 per cent, Jamaica by 59.2 per cent, Cyprus by 52.7 per cent, and New Zealand by 46.2 per cent, with deteriorations of more than 20 per cent also recorded in Austria, South Korea, Finland, the United States, Japan, and Australia. Countries in political transition, including Nicaragua at 62.2 per cent and El Salvador at 59.2 per cent, deteriorated alongside conflict-affected states such as Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, and Lebanon.

Several factors plausibly contributed to the acceleration. Many countries introduced emergency restrictions on media activity during the pandemic, often citing the need to control public health information; however, many of these restrictions were not fully reversed when the emergency receded. The same period saw a sharp increase in the production and distribution of AI-enabled disinformation and synthetic media, which has placed additional commercial and reputational pressure on independent journalism. Economic strain on news organisations, partly a consequence of the pandemic and partly reflecting longer-term shifts in advertising and subscription models, has further reduced the resources available for investigative reporting in many markets.

The picture is not uniformly negative. *Freedom of the press* improved in 26 countries between 2020 and 2024, with the largest gains concentrated in countries consolidating democratic institutions or recovering from periods of political restriction. Timor-Leste recorded the largest relative improvement, followed by Montenegro, Mauritania, and Moldova, with further gains in parts of Central and Eastern Europe. The improvers are a small group against the 137 deteriorators, but they show that the post-pandemic compression of the information environment is not inevitable where institutional reform and protections for independent media proceed in parallel.

The *government openness and transparency* indicator, from the *Well-Functioning Government* Pillar, fell by 4.5 per cent over the same period.

Taken together, these movements describe a wider breakdown in the institutional and informational architecture through which citizens develop trust

in their institutions. Although access has expanded, the conditions for credible and independent information have not.

Post-Pandemic Risers and Fallers

While the global PPI score improved by one per cent between 2020 and 2024 and most Pillars continued their pre-pandemic trajectories, individual country movements ranged from improvements of around 8.5 per cent to deteriorations of more than 10 per cent. The country profiles in this section examine the five largest improvers and five largest deteriorators of the period.

The largest absolute improvements were recorded in Saudi Arabia, Moldova, the Dominican Republic, the Czech Republic, and Uzbekistan, recording gains of between five and 8.5 per cent. These countries span the Gulf, Eastern Europe, the Caribbean, Central Europe, and Central Asia, and their improvements reflect a mix of post-pandemic

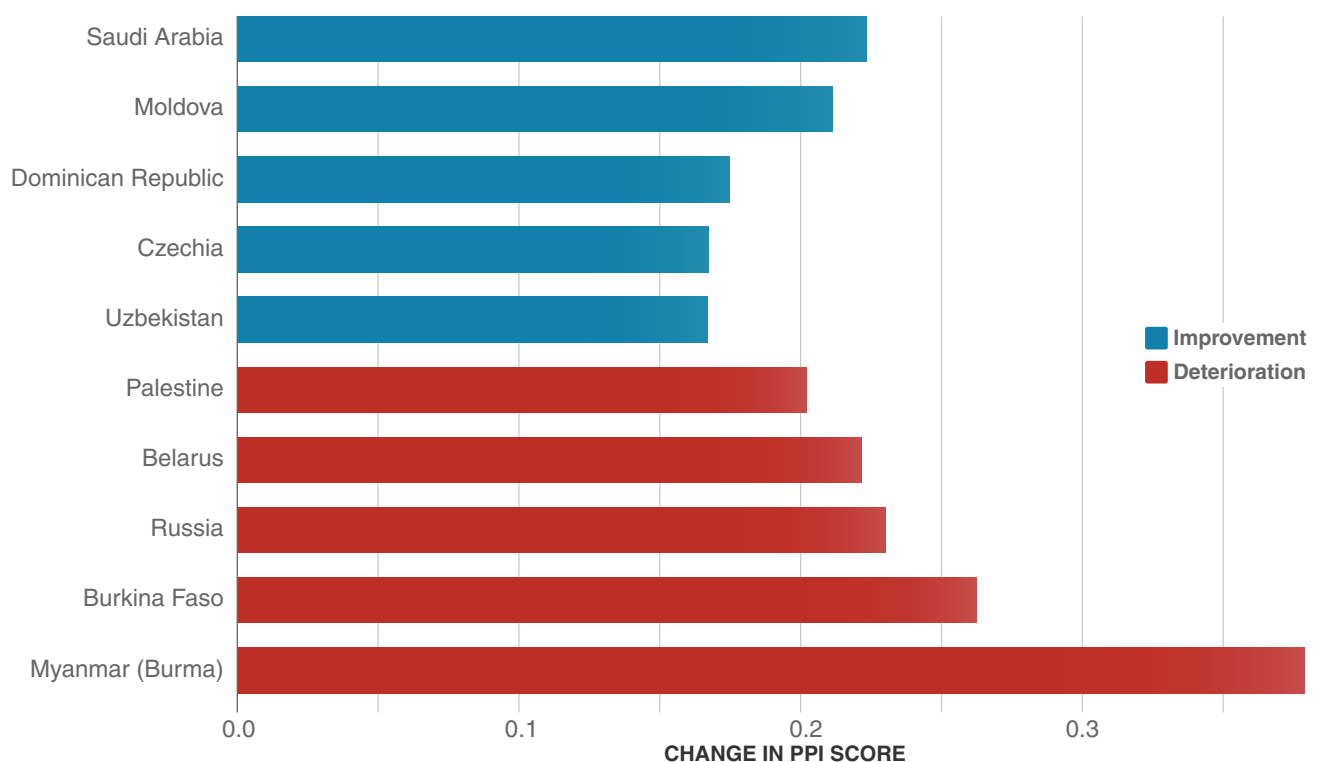
economic recovery, gains in human capital, and selected institutional and economic reforms.

The largest absolute deteriorations occurred in Myanmar, Burkina Faso, Russia, Belarus, and Palestine, recording declines ranging from 6.2 to 10.5 per cent. Each of these countries experienced significant political instability or armed conflict during the period, and their indicator-level deteriorations were concentrated in governance, the flow of information, and economic conditions. The magnitude of the largest deteriorations exceeded the magnitude of the largest improvements, consistent with the broader pattern that Positive Peace gains accumulate gradually while losses can be rapid and concentrated.

FIGURE 3.1

Largest changes in Positive Peace, 2020–2024

Saudi Arabia recorded the largest improvements in Positive Peace, while Myanmar recorded the largest deterioration.



Source: IEP



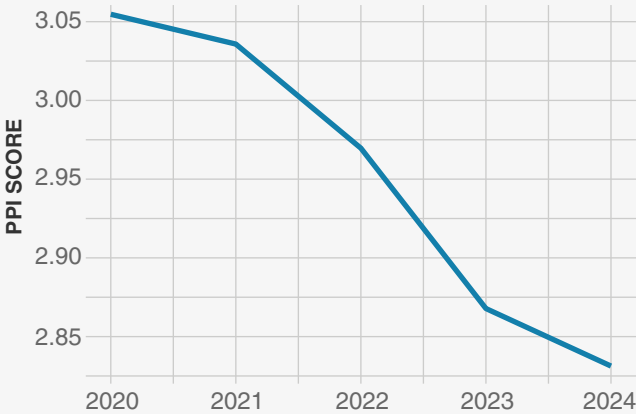
Five Largest Improvements in Positive Peace (2020–2024)

Saudi Arabia	Change in Overall Score, 2020–2024	2024 Rank	Change in Rank, 2020–2024
	-0.22	64 th	↗ 16

TABLE 3.1
Largest Changes in Positive Peace in Saudi Arabia

Indicator	2020 Score	2024 Score	Percentage Change
Law to support equal treatment of population segments	5	4	-20.0%
International tourism	2.8	1.89	-32.6%
Telecom infrastructure index (internet/mobile/broadband)	1.62	1.06	-34.6%
Freedom to trade internationally	2.08	2.34	12.6%
Group grievance	4.35	4.75	9.2%
Freedom of the press	3.77	4.22	11.8%

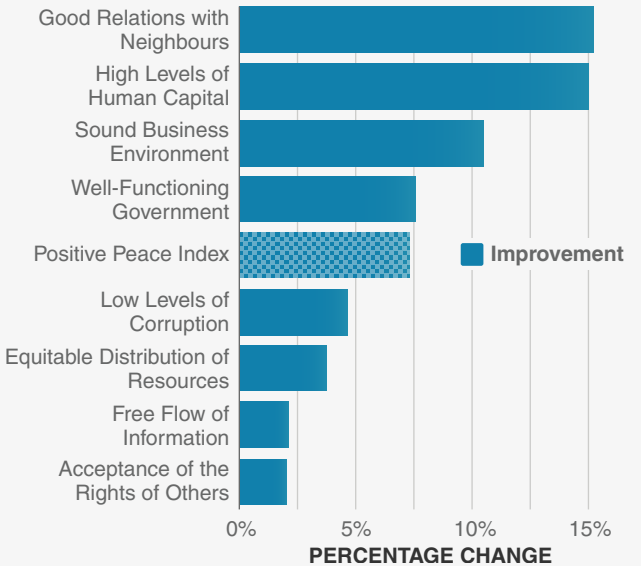
FIGURE 3.2
PPI score, Saudi Arabia, 2020–2024
Positive Peace improved substantially over the past five years.



Source: IEP

Since 2020, Saudi Arabia has recorded the largest improvement in Positive Peace, with its score improving by 0.22 points on the 1 to 5 scale, equivalent to a 7.3 per cent gain. The country climbed 16 places in the global ranking, from 80th in 2020 to 64th in 2024. Coming off a low base relative to its level of economic development, the improvement coincides with the objectives of the Vision 2030 reform agenda, which prioritises governance modernisation, economic diversification, and institutional reform.¹ Gains were concentrated in Pillars connected to economic openness and institutional capacity, with

FIGURE 3.3
Positive Peace Pillar changes, Saudi Arabia, 2020–2024
Good Relations with Neighbours recorded the largest improvement among Positive Peace Pillars since 2020.



Source: IEP

the largest improvements recorded in the *Good Relations with Neighbours*, *High Levels of Human Capital*, and *Sound Business Environment* Pillars.

In absolute terms, the single largest indicator movement was *international tourism*, which improved by 32.6 per cent, reflecting a sharp post-pandemic expansion of inbound visitor flows. *Law to support equal treatment of population segments* improved by 20 per cent, with Saudi Arabia one of only three countries globally to record an improvement on this indicator over the period.

Within *High Levels of Human Capital*, *researchers in R&D* improved by 17.4 per cent, the largest gain on this indicator of any country in the Index. *Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)* improved by 17.3 per cent and *healthy life expectancy* by 8.8 per cent. Governance and business indicators strengthened in parallel, with *regulatory quality* improving by 17.9 per cent, *government effectiveness* by 17.1 per cent, *control of corruption* by 10.1 per cent, and *rule of law* by 9.1 per cent. Saudi Arabia also recorded the sixth largest improvement globally in *gender inequality* over the period.

The improvement was not uniform. *Freedom to trade internationally* deteriorated by 12.6 per cent, *freedom of the press* by 11.8 per cent, and *group grievance* by 9.2 per cent. The deterioration in *freedom of the press* is consistent with formal and informal restrictions on the press observed in many jurisdictions over the period.²

Moldova	Change in Overall Score, 2020–2024	2024 Rank	Change in Rank, 2020–2024
	-0.21	57 th	↗ 9

TABLE 3.2

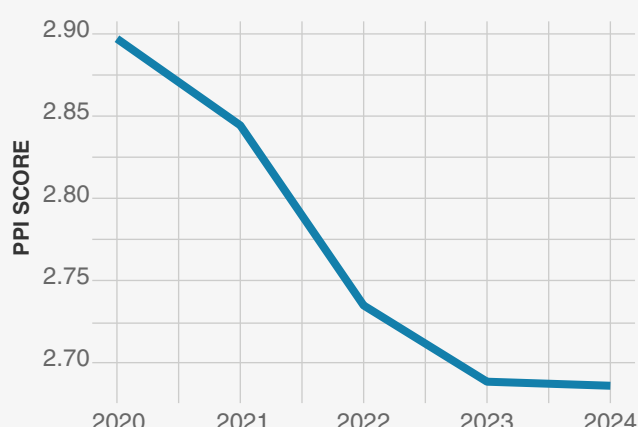
Largest changes in Positive Peace in Moldova

Indicator	2020 Score	2024 Score	Percentage Change
International tourism	4.13	2.99	-27.6%
Telecom infrastructure index (internet/mobile/broadband)	2.72	1.75	-35.7%
Public sector theft	3.05	2.42	-20.7%
Financial institutions index	3.93	3.96	0.8%
Researchers in R&D	2.45	2.49	1.6%
Quality of information	2.19	2.84	29.8%

FIGURE 3.4

PPI score, Moldova, 2020–2024

Positive Peace recorded substantial improvements between 2021 and 2023.



Source: IEP

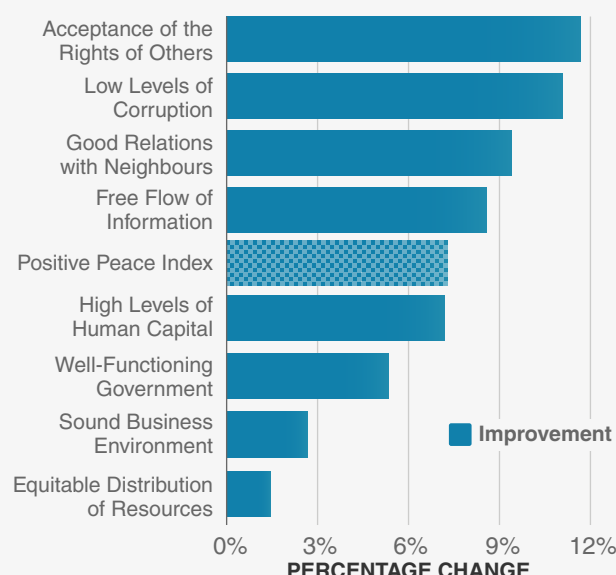
Moldova recorded the second largest improvement in Positive Peace between 2020 and 2024, with its score improving by 0.21 points on the 1 to 5 scale, equivalent to a 7.3 per cent gain. The country climbed nine places in the global ranking, from 66th in 2020 to 57th in 2024. Most of the overall improvement occurred between 2021 and 2022, with smaller incremental gains in the years that followed. Improvements were broad based, with the largest gains recorded in the *Acceptance of the Rights of Others*, *Low Levels of Corruption*, and *Good Relations with Neighbours* Pillars.

Moldova recorded the largest improvement in the *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillar of any country in the Index, driven by a 20.7 per cent improvement in *public sector theft*, the second largest gain on this indicator globally. *Control of corruption* improved by 9.8 per cent and *factionalised elites* by 5.3 per cent. These movements coincide with the institutional reform agenda associated with the country's pursuit of European Union accession, formalised when Moldova was granted EU

FIGURE 3.5

Positive Peace Pillar changes, Moldova, 2020–2024

Acceptance of the Rights of Others and *Low Levels of Corruption* recorded the largest improvements, while *Equitable Distribution of Resources* improved marginally.



Source: IEP

candidate status in June 2022.³ The consolidation of democratic institutions has helped strengthen societal resilience, even as Moldova has navigated regional instability stemming from the war in neighbouring Ukraine.⁴ Improvements in *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* were driven by *exclusion by socio-economic group*, which improved by 12.8 per cent, and *group grievance*, which improved by 11.9 per cent.

The information and human capital Pillars also strengthened. Within *Free Flow of Information*, *freedom of the press* improved by 14.3 per cent, the fourth largest gain on this indicator over the period. *Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)* improved by 19.4 per cent, *rule of law* by 8.6 per cent, *government effectiveness* by 7.2 per cent, and *healthy life expectancy* by 6.3 per cent. *International tourism* improved by 27.6 per cent, reflecting a sharp post-pandemic recovery in inbound visitor flows. *Gender inequality* also improved over the period.

The improvement was not uniform within the information environment. *Quality of information* deteriorated by 29.8 per cent, even as *freedom of the press* improved by 14.3 per cent. Moldova's information landscape remains pluralistic but susceptible to disinformation, a tension that has become more visible against the backdrop of the war in neighbouring Ukraine and the heightened cross-border information pressures associated with it. The juxtaposition fits a pattern observed across the Index in the post-pandemic period, in which institutional press freedoms have at times improved while indicators capturing the reliability and integrity of public information have moved in the opposite direction. Other deteriorations were small, with *researchers in R&D*, *freedom to trade internationally*, and *financial institutions index* each moving by less than two per cent.

Dominican Republic	Change in Overall Score, 2020–2024	2024 Rank	Change in Rank, 2020–2024
	-0.18	74 th	↗ 12

TABLE 3.3

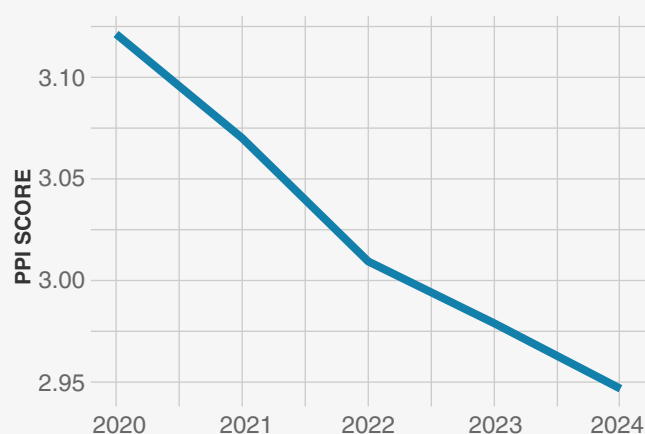
Largest changes in Positive Peace in the Dominican Republic

Indicator	2020 Score	2024 Score	Percentage Change
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)	4.20	3.14	-25.2%
Telecom infrastructure index (internet/mobile/broadband)	2.88	2.02	-29.9%
International tourism	2.56	1.87	-26.8%
Freedom to trade internationally	1.63	1.69	3.3%
Researchers in R&D	4.50	4.62	2.7%
Public sector theft	3.21	3.57	11.2%

FIGURE 3.6

PPI score, Dominican Republic, 2020–2024

Positive Peace has improved steadily since 2020.



Source: IEP

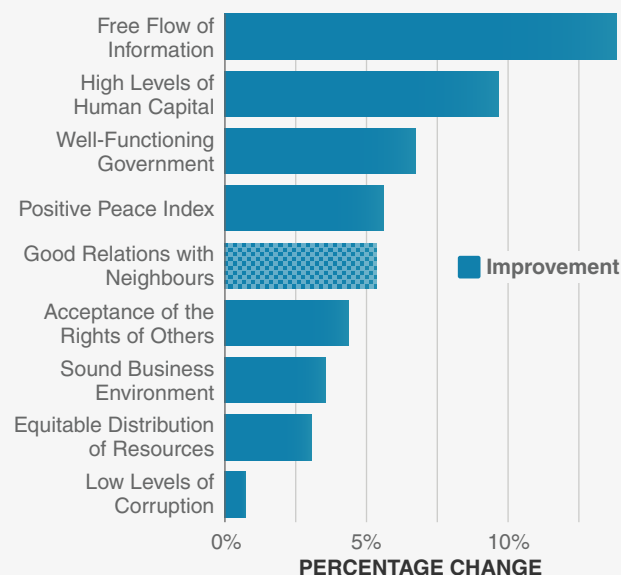
The Dominican Republic recorded the third largest improvement in Positive Peace between 2020 and 2024, with its score improving by 0.18 points on the 1 to 5 scale, equivalent to a 5.6 per cent gain. The country climbed 12 places in the global ranking, from 86th in 2020 to 74th in 2024. Improvements were broad based, with the largest gains recorded in the *Free Flow of Information*, *High Levels of Human Capital*, and *Well-Functioning Government* Pillars.

Within the *High Levels of Human Capital* Pillar, *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)* improved by 25.2 per cent, reflecting the single largest indicator movement recorded by the country in absolute terms. Improvement in the *High Levels of Human Capital* Pillar was also supported

FIGURE 3.7

Positive Peace Pillar changes, Dominican Republic, 2020–2024

Free Flow of Information recorded the largest improvement, while *Low Levels of Corruption* improved only slightly.



Source: IEP

by a 6.1 per cent gain in *healthy life expectancy*.⁵ The pattern is consistent with sustained labour market and education program expansion, including the rollout of the República Digital initiative and continued investment in the 'Quédate en la Escuela' retention strategy.

Within the *Free Flow of Information* Pillar, *freedom of the press* improved by 4.6 per cent. Within *Well-Functioning Government*, *government effectiveness* improved by 12.8 per cent and *rule of law* by 5.6 per cent. *Control of corruption* improved by 9.9 per cent, in a period that has included the establishment of the PEPCA specialised anti-corruption prosecutor's office and a series of high-profile prosecutions of senior public officials.⁶ *International tourism* improved by 26.8 per cent, reflecting a sharp post-pandemic recovery in inbound visitor flows that has consolidated the country's position as one of the largest tourism economies in the Caribbean. *Education and income inequality* improved by 7.9 per cent and *group grievance* by 5.9 per cent. *Gender inequality* also improved over the period.

The improvement was not uniform. *Public sector theft* deteriorated by 11.2 per cent, the largest single-indicator movement against the country's overall improvement. Set against the 9.9 per cent improvement in *control of corruption*, a perceptions-based measure, the deterioration in *public sector theft* could itself be partly a product of greater scrutiny by more trusted institutions bringing more corruption to light, rather than a sign that corrupt practice has actually worsened. *Freedom to trade internationally* deteriorated by 3.3 per cent and *researchers in R&D* by 2.7 per cent.

Czech Republic	Change in Overall Score, 2020–2024	2024 Rank	Change in Rank, 2020–2024
	-0.17	22 nd	↗ 4

TABLE 3.4

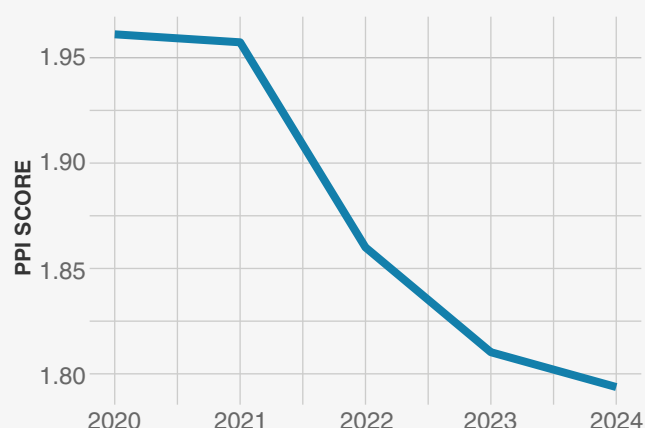
Largest changes in Positive Peace in Czech Republic

Indicator	2020 score	2024 score	Percentage Change
Quality of information	2.55	1.08	-57.6%
Group grievance	2.55	2.10	-17.6%
Telecom infrastructure index (internet/mobile/broadband)	1.74	1.31	-24.7%
International tourism	1.88	1.88	0.0%
Education and income inequality	1.08	1.12	3.7%
Financial institutions index	3.42	3.47	1.5%

FIGURE 3.8

PPI score, Czech Republic, 2020–2024

Positive Peace has improved substantially since 2021.



Source: IEP

The Czech Republic recorded the joint fourth largest improvement in Positive Peace between 2020 and 2024. Recording the same improvement as Uzbekistan, the Czech Republic's score improved by 0.17 points on the 1 to 5 scale, equivalent to an 8.5 per cent gain. In percentage terms, it was the largest improvement of any country, but the absolute movement is smaller because the Czech Republic was already among the most peaceful countries in the Index at the start of the period. Improvements were broad based, with the strongest movements concentrated in the *Free Flow of Information* and *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* Pillars, and material gains also recorded across the *High Levels of Human Capital*, *Low Levels of Corruption*, and *Well-Functioning Government* Pillars.

The standout indicator was *quality of information*, which improved by 57.6 per cent and registered the single largest country-level gain on this measure of any of the top risers. *Freedom of the press* improved by a further 10.9 per cent. Together, these movements reflect the change of government

FIGURE 3.9

Positive Peace Pillar changes, Czech Republic, 2020–2024

Free Flow of Information recorded the largest improvement among Positive Peace Pillars, while *Equitable Distribution of Resources* remained unchanged.



Source: IEP

after the 2021 parliamentary election, which replaced an administration under Andrej Babiš, a media-owning businessman whose government was criticised for its role in the disinformation environment, with a coalition government that introduced anti-disinformation and public-media measures and reduced the executive's own role in originating disinformation. However, with the return of Babiš to the prime minister position in December 2025, media watchdogs have warned that the new government's program could reverse recent gains in press freedom and information quality.⁷

Within the *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* Pillar, the largest gains were in *group grievance* and *exclusion by socio-economic group*, which improved by 17.6 and 12.4 per cent, respectively. Progress on *group grievance* was supported by Council of the European Union (EU) recommendations to establish the Roma Equality, Inclusion and Participation Strategy 2021–2030, which provides a framework to address discrimination against the Roma people and to bolster their participation in decision-making.⁸ *Gender inequality* also improved over the period.

Human capital indicators strengthened in parallel, with *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)* improving by 13.1 per cent and *healthy life expectancy* by 12.5 per cent. Governance gains were also evident, with *control of corruption* improving by 9.1 per cent and *government effectiveness* by 7.9 per cent.

The Czech Republic recorded only marginal deteriorations on two indicators, *financial institutions index* and *education and income inequality*, which weakened by 1.5 and 3.7 per cent respectively, these movements reflect a slight widening of socio-economic gaps and modest financial pressure from rising interest rates since the COVID-19 pandemic.⁹

Uzbekistan	Change in Overall Score, 2020–2024	2024 Rank	Change in Rank, 2020–2024
	-0.17	97 th	↗ 6

TABLE 3.5

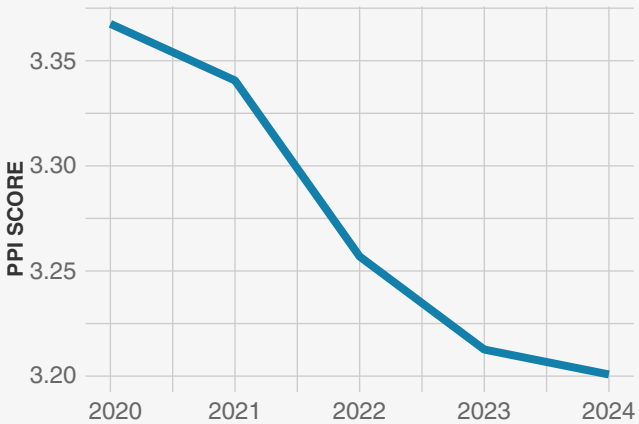
Largest changes in Positive Peace in Uzbekistan

Indicator	2020 Score	2024 Score	Percentage Change
Telecom infrastructure index (internet/mobile/broadband)	3.10	1.49	-51.9%
International tourism	3.43	2.63	-23.3%
Regulatory quality	3.81	3.39	-11.0%
Gender inequality	2.27	2.38	4.8%
Quality of information	3.84	3.98	3.6%
Freedom of the press	3.40	3.80	11.7%

FIGURE 3.10

PPI score, Uzbekistan, 2020–2024

Positive Peace has improved considerably since 2022.



Source: IEP

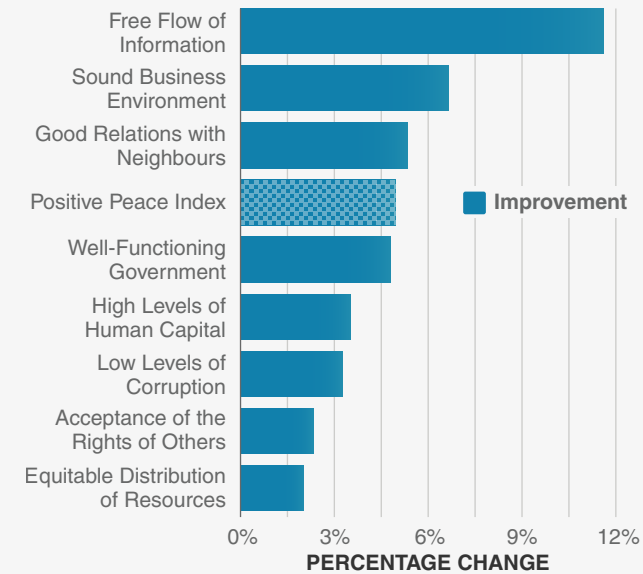
Uzbekistan recorded the joint fourth largest improvement in Positive Peace between 2020 and 2024, tied with the Czech Republic, with its score improving by 0.17 points on the 1 to 5 scale, equivalent to a five per cent gain. The country climbed six places in the global ranking, from 103rd in 2020 to 97th in 2024. Improvements were concentrated in the *Free Flow of Information*, *Sound Business Environment*, and *Good Relations with Neighbours* Pillars, with smaller gains recorded across the *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillars.

The improvement coincides with the broader reform program initiated since 2016, which has prioritised currency liberalisation, privatisation, the expansion of the private

FIGURE 3.11

Positive Peace Pillar changes, Uzbekistan, 2020–2024

Free Flow of Information and *Sound Business Environment* saw the largest improvements since 2020.



Source: IEP

sector, and selective political and judicial reform.¹⁰ Within *Sound Business Environment*, *regulatory quality* improved by 11 per cent, the largest single business indicator movement. *International tourism* improved by 23.3 per cent, reflecting a sharp post-pandemic recovery in inbound visitor flows from a country that has substantially relaxed visa requirements over the period. *Group grievance* improved by 12.6 per cent.

Governance and human capital indicators strengthened in parallel. *Government effectiveness* improved by 7.9 per cent, *rule of law* by six per cent, and *control of corruption* by 5.8 per cent. Within *High Levels of Human Capital*, *researchers in R&D* improved by 5.1 per cent and *healthy life expectancy* by 4.9 per cent. *Inequality-adjusted life expectancy* improved by 6.7 per cent.

The improvement was uneven within the information environment and on social acceptance indicators. *Freedom of the press* deteriorated by 11.7 per cent and *quality of information* by 3.6 per cent, despite the broader institutional opening of the period. *Gender inequality*¹¹ deteriorated by 4.8 per cent, against the near-universal improvement observed elsewhere in the Index. The pattern fits a wider trajectory across the Index, in which institutional and economic gains have at times outpaced gains in indicators capturing the openness of the information environment and the equal status of social groups.



Five Largest Deteriorations in Positive Peace

Myanmar	Change in Overall Score, 2020–2024	2024 Rank	Change in Rank, 2020–2024
	+0.38	152 nd	↘ 25

TABLE 3.6

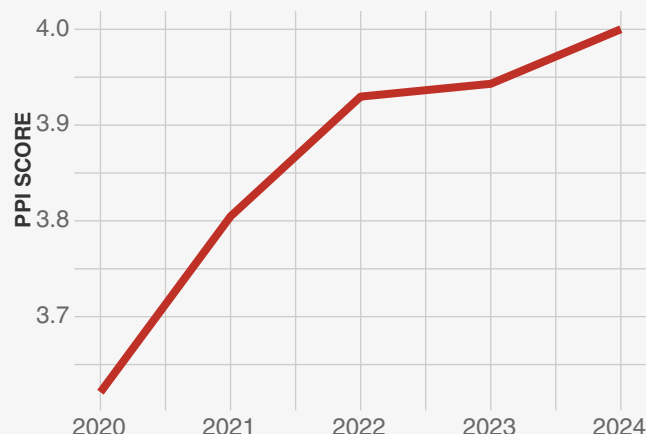
Largest changes in Positive Peace in Myanmar

Indicator	2020 Score	2024 Score	Percentage Change
Telecom infrastructure index (internet/mobile/broadband)	2.90	2.33	-19.7%
Inequality-adjusted life expectancy	3.16	3.03	-4.1%
Gender inequality	3.42	3.31	-3.2%
Government openness and transparency	4	5	25.0%
Freedom of the press	2.99	4.38	46.5%
Quality of information	2.40	4.58	90.4%

FIGURE 3.12

PPI score, Myanmar, 2020–2024

Positive Peace in Myanmar deteriorated significantly between 2020 and 2022.



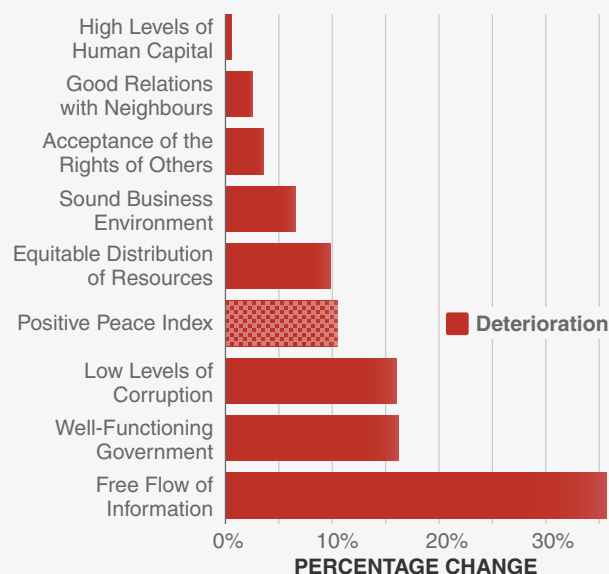
Source: IEP

Myanmar recorded the largest deterioration in Positive Peace between 2020 and 2024, with its score deteriorating by 0.38 points on the 1 to 5 scale, equivalent to a 10.5 per cent decline. The country fell 25 places in the global ranking, from 127th in 2020 to 152nd in 2024. All eight Pillars of Positive Peace deteriorated over the period, with the largest declines recorded in the *Free Flow of Information* (35.7 per cent), *Well-Functioning Government* (16.2 per cent), and *Low Levels of Corruption* (16 per cent) Pillars.

FIGURE 3.13

Positive Peace Pillar changes, Myanmar, 2020–2024

Free Flow of Information, *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* recorded the largest deteriorations since 2020.



Source: IEP

The worst deterioration was a 90.4 per cent deterioration in *quality of information*, followed by a 46.5 per cent deterioration in *freedom of the press*. *Government openness and transparency* and *equality of opportunity* both deteriorated by 25 per cent, *public sector theft* by 23.3 per cent, *regulatory quality* by 16.9 per cent, *control of corruption* and *exclusion by socio-economic group* by 15.2 per cent each, *rule of law* by 12.8 per cent, *government effectiveness* by 12.4 per cent, and *factionalised elites* by 11.9 per cent.

Much of the deterioration accelerated after the February 2021 military takeover and the period of internal conflict that has followed.¹² Heightened conflict between the military and various armed opposition groups has displaced an estimated 3.5 million people internally and disrupted economic activity across the country, with national output contracting and agricultural production declining sharply.

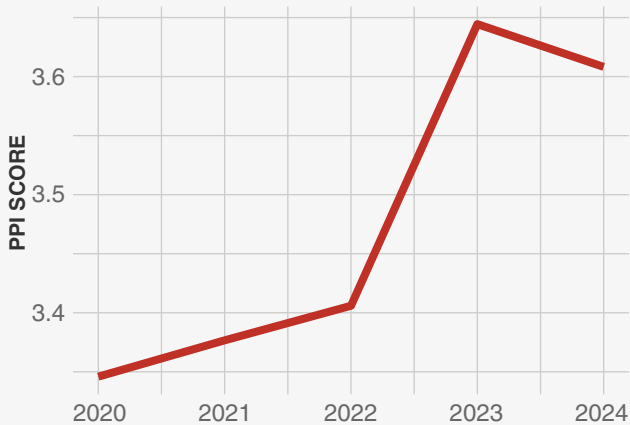
A small number of indicators improved over the period. *Telecom infrastructure index* improved in line with broader regional trends, *inequality-adjusted life expectancy* improved by four per cent, *gender inequality* by 3.2 per cent, and *international tourism* by 1.7 per cent. The improvements were narrow in scope relative to the broad-based deterioration across institutional and information environment indicators.

Burkina Faso	Change in Overall Score, 2020–2024	2024 Rank	Change in Rank, 2020–2024
	+0.26	126 th	↘ 25

TABLE 3.7
Largest changes in Positive Peace in Burkina Faso

Indicator	2020 Score	2024 Score	Percentage Change
International tourism	4.77	4.47	-6.3%
Telecom infrastructure index (internet/mobile/broadband)	3.75	3.54	-5.6%
Inequality-adjusted life expectancy	4.15	3.94	-5.1%
Freedom of the press	1.87	2.84	51.9%
Law to support equal treatment of population segments	3	4	33.3%
Government openness and transparency	3	5	66.7%

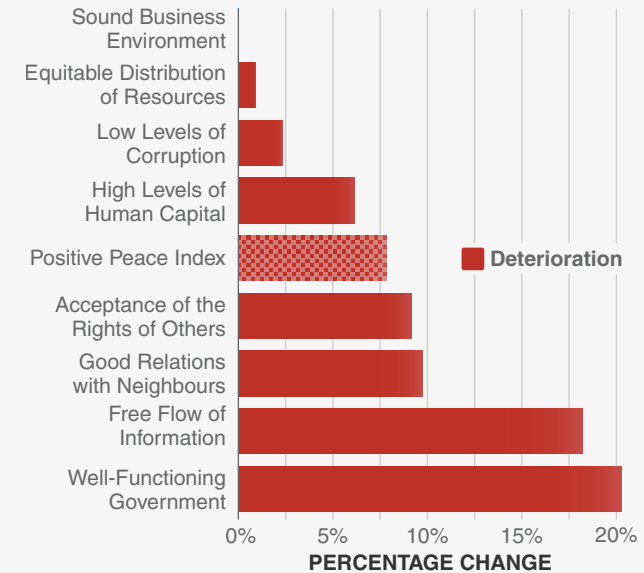
FIGURE 3.14
PPI score, Burkina Faso, 2020–2024
Positive Peace in Burkina Faso deteriorated significantly between 2022 and 2023.



Source: IEP

Burkina Faso recorded the second largest deterioration in Positive Peace between 2020 and 2024, with its score deteriorating by 0.26 points on the 1 to 5 scale, equivalent to a 7.8 per cent decline. The country fell 25 places in the global ranking, from 101st in 2020 to 126th in 2024. Seven of the eight Pillars deteriorated over the period, with the largest declines recorded in the *Well-Functioning Government* (20.3 per cent), *Free Flow of Information* (18.2 per cent), *Good Relations with Neighbours* (9.7 per cent), and *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* (9.2 per cent) Pillars.

FIGURE 3.15
Positive Peace Pillar changes, Burkina Faso, 2020–2024
Well-Functioning Government, *Free Flow of Information* and *Good Relations with Neighbours* recorded the largest deteriorations since 2020.



Source: IEP

The largest single-indicator movement was a 66.7 per cent deterioration in *government openness and transparency*. Within *Free Flow of Information*, *freedom of the press* deteriorated by 51.9 per cent and *quality of information* by 33.4 per cent. *Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)* deteriorated by 34.4 per cent, *law to support equal treatment of population segments* by 33.3 per cent, *group grievance* by 28.5 per cent, and *exclusion by socio-economic group* by 11.1 per cent. *Education and income inequality* deteriorated by 7.9 per cent and *rule of law* by 7.8 per cent.¹³

The deterioration coincides with two military takeovers in 2022 and the country's subsequent suspension from the Economic Community of West African States. The transitions of governance have occurred against a backdrop of intensifying insurgent activity, particularly in rural areas, where incidents of violence have nearly tripled since 2021 and overall conflict activity has increased by approximately 46 per cent.

The *Sound Business Environment* Pillar was flat over the period, and a small number of indicators improved marginally, including *telecom infrastructure index*, *international tourism*, and *inequality-adjusted life expectancy*. The improvements were limited in scope and did not offset the broader institutional decline.

Russia	Change in Overall Score, 2020–2024	2024 Rank	Change in Rank, 2020–2024
	+0.23	101st	↘ 22

TABLE 3.8

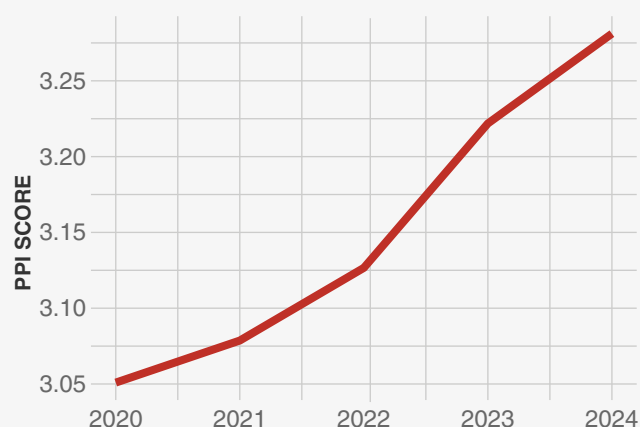
Largest changes in Positive Peace in Russia

Indicator	2020 Score	2024 Score	Percentage Change
Telecom infrastructure index (internet/mobile/broadband)	1.90	1.19	-37.4%
Healthy life expectancy (HALE)	2.94	2.64	-10.2%
Group grievance	4.15	3.90	-6.0%
Freedom of the press	3.20	4.10	28.3%
Equality of opportunity	3	4	33.3%
Government openness and transparency	4	5	25.0%

FIGURE 3.16

PPI score, Russia, 2020–2024

Positive Peace in Russia deteriorated significantly following the invasion of Ukraine in 2022.



Source: IEP

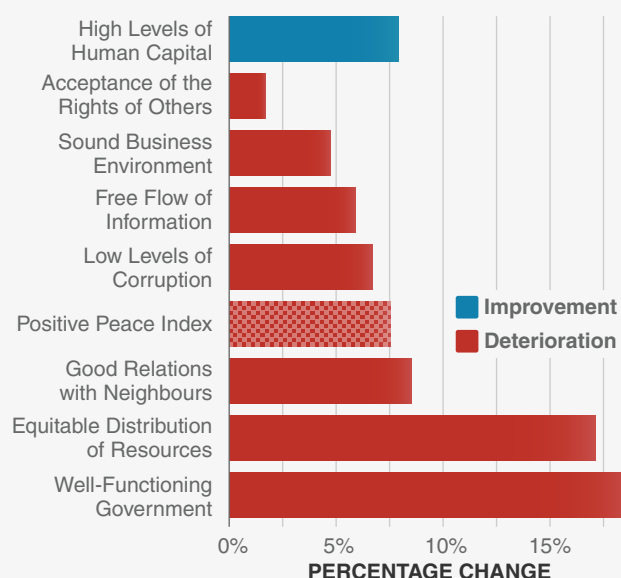
Russia recorded the third largest deterioration in Positive Peace between 2020 and 2024, with its score deteriorating by 0.23 points on the 1 to 5 scale, equivalent to a 7.5 per cent decline. The country fell 22 places in the global ranking, from 79th in 2020 to 101st in 2024. Seven of the eight Pillars deteriorated, with the largest declines recorded in the *Well-Functioning Government* (18.7 per cent), *Equitable Distribution of Resources* (17.1 per cent), *Good Relations with Neighbours* (8.5 per cent), and *Low Levels of Corruption* (6.7 per cent) Pillars.

Within *Equitable Distribution of Resources*, *equality of opportunity* deteriorated by 33.3 per cent. Within *Well-Functioning Government*, *government openness and*

FIGURE 3.17

Positive Peace Pillar changes, Russia, 2020–2024

Well-Functioning Government and *Equitable Distribution of Resources* recorded the largest deteriorations. In contrast, *High Levels of Human Capital* recorded substantial improvements.



Source: IEP

transparency deteriorated by 25 per cent, *government effectiveness* by 21.9 per cent, and *rule of law* by 10.7 per cent. *Freedom of the press* deteriorated by 28.3 per cent, *quality of information* by 11 per cent, and *freedom to trade internationally* by 32.4 per cent, the latter consistent with the international sanctions regime imposed since 2022. *Public sector theft* deteriorated by 10 per cent and *control of corruption* by 7.2 per cent.¹⁴

Much of the deterioration has accelerated since the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and the international sanctions that followed. Between 2022 and 2023 alone, the country's PPI score fell by approximately three per cent, accounting for nearly half of the total deterioration recorded over the four-year period. The country's population has declined by an estimated three million since the start of the war because of military casualties, emigration, and persistently low birth rates.

The improvement was concentrated in the *High Levels of Human Capital* Pillar, which improved by 7.9 per cent over the period. *Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)* improved by 12.6 per cent and *healthy life expectancy* by 10.1 per cent. *Group grievance* improved by six per cent.

Belarus	Change in Overall Score, 2020–2024	2024 Rank	Change in Rank, 2020–2024
	+0.22	89 th	↘ 25

TABLE 3.9

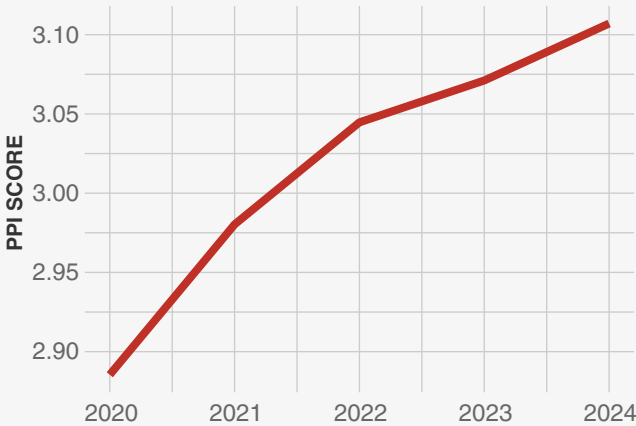
Largest changes in Positive Peace in Belarus

Indicator	2020 score	2024 score	Percentage Change
Group grievance	3.13	2.73	-12.8%
Telecom infrastructure index (internet/mobile/broadband)	1.68	1.33	-20.8%
International tourism	2.34	2.02	-13.7%
Law to support equal treatment of population segments	4	5	25.0%
Government openness and transparency	4	5	25.0%
Freedom of the press	3.24	4.24	30.9%

FIGURE 3.18

PPI score, Belarus, 2020–2024

Positive Peace in Belarus has been steadily deteriorating since 2020.



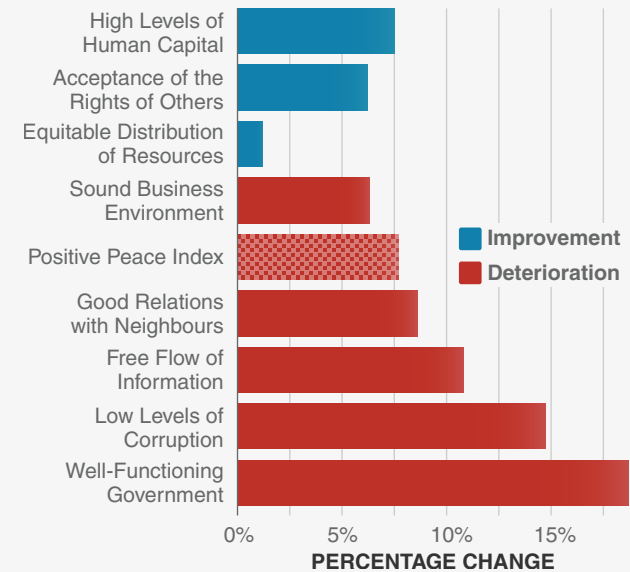
Source: IEP

Belarus recorded the fourth largest deterioration in Positive Peace between 2020 and 2024, with its score deteriorating by 0.22 points on the 1 to 5 scale, equivalent to a 7.7 per cent decline. The country fell 25 places in the global ranking, from 64th in 2020 to 89th in 2024. The deterioration was concentrated in institutional Pillars, with the largest declines recorded in the *Well-Functioning Government* (18.7 per cent), *Low Levels of Corruption* (14.7 per cent), *Free Flow of Information* (10.8 per cent), and *Good Relations with Neighbours* (8.6 per cent) Pillars.

FIGURE 3.19

Positive Peace Pillar changes, Belarus, 2020–2024

Well-Functioning Government saw the largest deterioration since 2020, while *High Levels of Human Capital* and *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* recorded substantial improvements.



Source: IEP

Within *Free Flow of Information*, *freedom of the press* deteriorated by 30.9 per cent and *quality of information* by 10.6 per cent. Within *Low Levels of Corruption*, *control of corruption* deteriorated by 21.6 per cent and *factionalised elites* by 15.5 per cent. Within *Well-Functioning Government*, *government openness and transparency* deteriorated by 25 per cent, *government effectiveness* by 22.9 per cent, and *rule of law* by 9.9 per cent. *Law to support equal treatment of population segments* deteriorated by 25 per cent.¹⁵

The deterioration coincides with the political environment that has consolidated since the 2020 presidential election. Civil society and media space have been substantially constrained over the period, with more than 1,200 individuals reportedly imprisoned on politically motivated charges as of 2025.

The *High Levels of Human Capital* and *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* Pillars improved over the period, by 7.5 and 6.2 per cent respectively, *group grievance* improved by 12.8 per cent, *healthy life expectancy* by 11.2 per cent, and *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)* by 10.3 per cent. The improvements sit alongside, rather than offset, the broader institutional deterioration.

Palestine	Change in Overall Score, 2020–2024	2024 Rank	Change in Rank, 2020–2024
	+0.20	109 th	↘ 15

TABLE 3.10

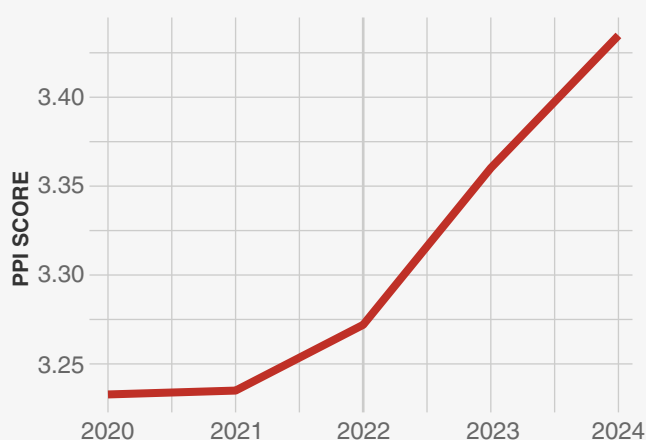
Largest changes in Positive Peace in Palestine

Indicator	2020 Score	2024 Score	Percentage Change
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)	3.57	3.24	-9.2%
Factionalised elites	4.45	4.30	-3.4%
Exclusion by socio-economic group	3.02	2.94	-2.6%
Inequality-adjusted life expectancy	2.04	2.84	39.2%
Freedom of the press	2.96	4.02	35.8%
Healthy life expectancy (HALE)	2.37	3.81	60.5%

FIGURE 3.20

PPI score, Palestine, 2020–2024

Positive Peace in Palestine has deteriorated significantly since 2022.



Source: IEP

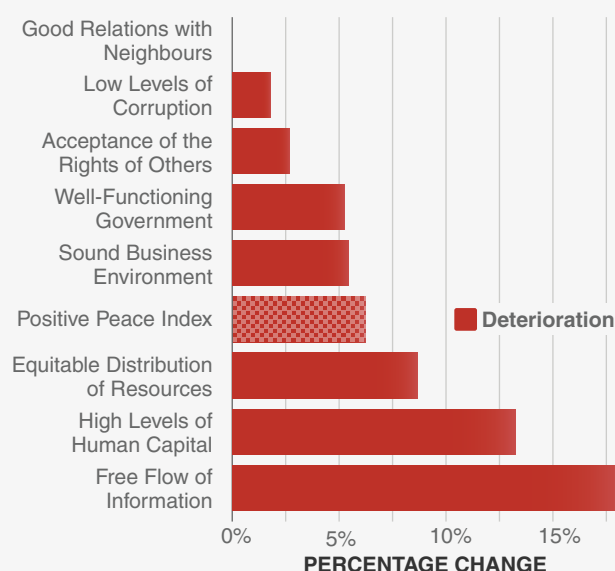
Palestine recorded the fifth largest deterioration in Positive Peace between 2020 and 2024, with its score deteriorating by 0.20 points on the 1 to 5 scale, equivalent to a 6.2 per cent decline. The country fell 15 places in the global ranking, from 94th in 2020 to 109th in 2024. All eight Pillars deteriorated or held flat over the period, with the largest declines recorded in the *Free Flow of Information* (18.1 per cent), *High Levels of Human Capital* (13.2 per cent), and *Equitable Distribution of Resources* (8.7 per cent) Pillars.

The most severe single-indicator movement was a 60.5 per cent deterioration in *healthy life expectancy*, the largest decline

FIGURE 3.21

Positive Peace Pillar changes, Palestine, 2020–2024

Free Flow of Information, *High Levels of Human Capital*, and *Equitable Distribution of Resources* recorded the largest deteriorations since 2020.



Source: IEP

on this indicator of any country in the Index. *Inequality-adjusted life expectancy* deteriorated by 39.2 per cent. The two movements reflect the impact of the large-scale armed conflict in the Gaza Strip from October 2023 onward, with life expectancy in Gaza falling from 77 years before the conflict to 65 in 2023 before partially recovering to 73.5 in 2025.

Within *Free Flow of Information*, *freedom of the press* deteriorated by 35.8 per cent and *quality of information* by 23.1 per cent.¹⁶ Reporters Without Borders records 67 journalists killed and 11 more detained or disappeared over the 2022 to 2025 period in Palestine,¹⁷ and the United Nations Human Rights Office reported 247 journalists killed in Gaza by August 2025.¹⁸ The conflict period has also been marked by heightened food insecurity and rising rates of malnutrition, particularly among young children, contributing to an estimated 68,000 fatalities according to local health authorities. *Group grievance* deteriorated by 13.7 per cent and *government effectiveness* by 10.4 per cent.

Some indicators improved over the period. *Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)* improved by 9.3 per cent, *factionalised elites* by 3.4 per cent, and *exclusion by socio-economic group* by 2.7 per cent. The deterioration concentrated in the human capital and information environment Pillars reflects the toll of the conflict period, with the broader institutional indicators showing more limited movement.

Positive Peace Trends of Leading Powers



Key Findings

- All five leading powers rank substantially higher on the Positive Peace Index than on the Global Peace Index. The gap is largest for the United States, where the difference between PPI and GPI rank is 102 places, and Russia, where it is 61 places.
- The United States recorded the second largest deterioration in PPI score of any country in the Index over the past decade, worsening by 8.8 per cent since 2015. Only Venezuela, at 9.6 per cent, recorded a larger decline.
- The *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillar in the United States deteriorated by 26.4 per cent, the largest decline in this Pillar of any country in the Index, driven by a 54.6 per cent deterioration in *factionalised elites*, which is itself the largest deterioration on this indicator of any country in the Index.
- China and India each recorded PPI improvements of around six per cent over the decade, driven by broad-based gains in human capital, equitable resource distribution, and governance indicators. However, India's *freedom of the press* deteriorated by 45.4 per cent, the largest decline of all India's indicators.
- Russia's PPI score deteriorated by 5.2 per cent over the decade, with much of the decline concentrated since the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and the international sanctions that followed. The *Well-Functioning Government* Pillar deteriorated by 16.4 per cent.
- Western and Central Europe improved by two per cent on average over the decade, with 23 of 33 countries recording gains. The regional *freedom of the press* score deteriorated by 19.4 per cent, with declines of 78.7 per cent in Poland and 75.2 per cent in Cyprus.
- *Freedom of the press* and *quality of information* deteriorated for all the leading powers, regardless of their underlying Positive Peace trajectory over the decade.

This section examines the United States, China, India, Russia, and Western and Central Europe, five of the world's largest economic and military powers. Western and Central Europe is treated as a single block given the close economic and political integration across the region. The figures throughout this section cover the period from 2015 to 2024, capturing the structural trajectory of each country, in contrast to the five-year window used in Section 3, which captures more recent trends.

A consistent pattern emerges. As Table 4.1 shows, each of these countries, along with the Western and Central Europe region, ranks substantially higher on the Positive Peace Index (PPI) than on the Global Peace Index (GPI). This gap, referred to as a Positive Peace surplus, indicates that their underlying socio-economic foundations score more strongly than their current levels of internal and external peace. IEP's Positive Peace surplus and deficit models and their predictive capacity are discussed in detail in Section 5 of this report.

The divergence of ranks is largest for the United States and Russia, where the differences between PPI and GPI ranks are, respectively, 102 and 61 places. The pattern reflects the structure of the two indices. The GPI captures military expenditure, weapons, and active conflict involvement, while the PPI measures the longer-run institutional and economic conditions associated with peaceful societies. Countries with significant defence capabilities and ongoing or recent involvement in armed conflicts therefore tend to retain a Positive Peace surplus over time. Large, economically wealthy nations with strong militaries tend to be actively engaged in more conflict, which adversely affects their scores on the GPI. Unless there is a substantial change in their international posture, the gap is unlikely to change.

All five profiles recorded substantial deteriorations on *freedom of the press* and *quality of information*,

even while many other institutional and economic indicators improved.

The information environment has been the area of weakest performance for the leading powers over the decade, regardless of their underlying trajectory on Positive Peace overall.

TABLE 4.1
PPI and GPI rankings, leading global powers, 2024

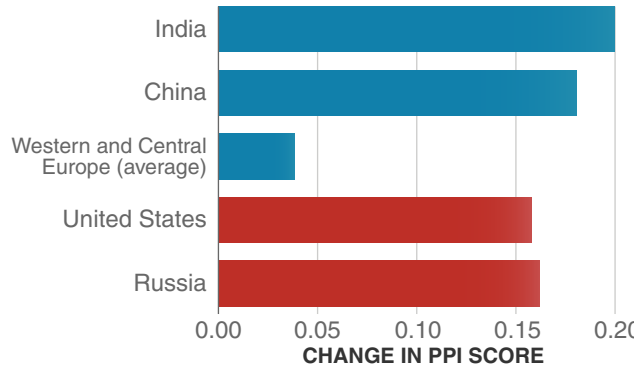
All the entries listed are ranked better in the PPI than in the GPI.

Country/Region	PPI Ranking	GPI Ranking	Rank Difference
United States of America	28	130	102
China	70	104	34
India	92	126	34
Russia	101	162	61
Western and Central Europe (average)	25	29	4

Source: IEP

FIGURE 4.1
Change in PPI score, leading global powers, 2015–2024

India and China recorded substantial improvements in Positive Peace, while the United States and Russia experienced significant deteriorations.



Source: IEP

United States

The United States recorded the second largest global deterioration in PPI score over the past decade, with its score worsening by 8.8 per cent since 2015. Only Venezuela, at 9.6 per cent, recorded a larger decline. Despite this, the United States still ranks among the higher-scoring countries on the Index, placing 28th on the PPI compared with 130th on the GPI in 2024.

The deterioration was concentrated in Pillars related to political cohesion, governance, and equal treatment of citizens. The largest Pillar-level declines were in the *Good Relations with Neighbours* and the *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillars, which each fell by over 26 per cent. The main driver of the decline in *Good Relations with Neighbours* was a 50 per cent deterioration in *law to support equal treatment of population segments*. This Pillar also captures *international tourism*, which fell sharply during the COVID-19 pandemic but has since rebounded.

The United States's deterioration in the *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillar was the largest global decline. It was driven primarily by a 54.6 per cent deterioration in *factionalised elites*, which captures division among ruling political and institutional actors. The United States experienced the largest percentage and absolute deterioration in this indicator of any country in the Index. The *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* Pillar deteriorated by 14.3 per cent, reflecting a 31.2 per cent worsening in *exclusion by socio-economic group* and a 25.6 per cent worsening in *group grievance*. Other governance and institutional indicators also deteriorated, with *freedom of the press* worsening by 25.5 per cent, *rule of law* by 18.6 per cent, *quality of information* by 14.7 per cent, *control of corruption* by 14.2 per cent, and *government effectiveness* by 12.7 per cent.

Over the period several indicators improved. *Gender inequality* improved by 12.8 per cent and *researchers in R&D* by 9.1 per cent. *GDP per capita*

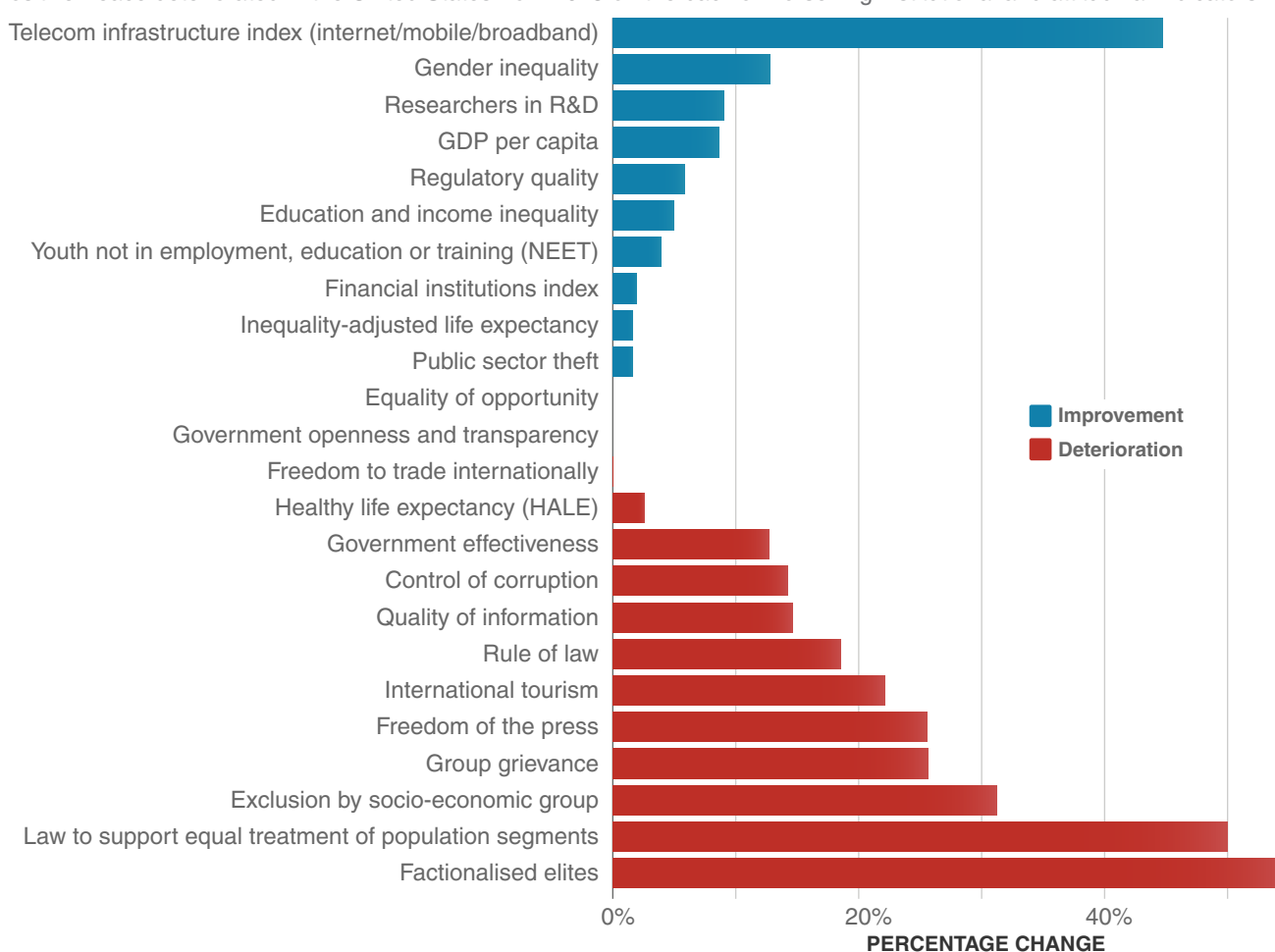
and *regulatory quality* improved by 8.6 and 5.8 per cent, respectively, contributing to a 5.7 per cent improvement in the *Sound Business Environment* Pillar. *Education and income inequality* in the *Equitable Distribution of Resources* Pillar improved by five per cent. These improvements are real but partial, concentrated in human capital and economic indicators rather than in the social and institutional measures that drove the overall decline. Much of the deterioration in the social and institutional indicators has accelerated since 2020, with around half of the 10-year movement in indicators such as *factionalised elites* and *freedom of the press* concentrated in the post-pandemic window.

The PPI data underlying this analysis covers the period through 2024 and does not reflect the impact of the more recent conflict between the United States and Iran or President Trump's second term in office.

FIGURE 4.2

Percentage changes in Positive Peace indicators, United States, 2015–2024

Positive Peace deteriorated in the United States from 2015 on the back of worsening institutional and attitudinal indicators.



Source: IEP

China

China's PPI score improved by 5.9 per cent over the past decade, placing it among the larger improvements globally. China ranks 70th on the PPI in 2024 compared with 104th on the GPI in 2024, reflecting a Positive Peace surplus of 34 places. Since 2015, six of the eight Pillars of Peace have improved in China.

Beyond gains in *telecom infrastructure index*, improvements were broad-based across human capital, equitable distribution, and governance indicators. The largest indicator-level improvements were in *group grievance* and *inequality-adjusted life expectancy*, which both improved by 21.3 per cent, and *gender inequality*, which improved by 19.7 per cent. The improvement in *gender inequality* reflects expanded access to education and healthcare for women, with an estimated 94 per cent of women in China now covered by basic health insurance.¹ *Researchers in R&D* improved by 12.6 per cent and *GDP per capita* by 12.5 per cent, contributing to gains in the *High Levels of Human Capital* and *Sound Business Environment* Pillars.

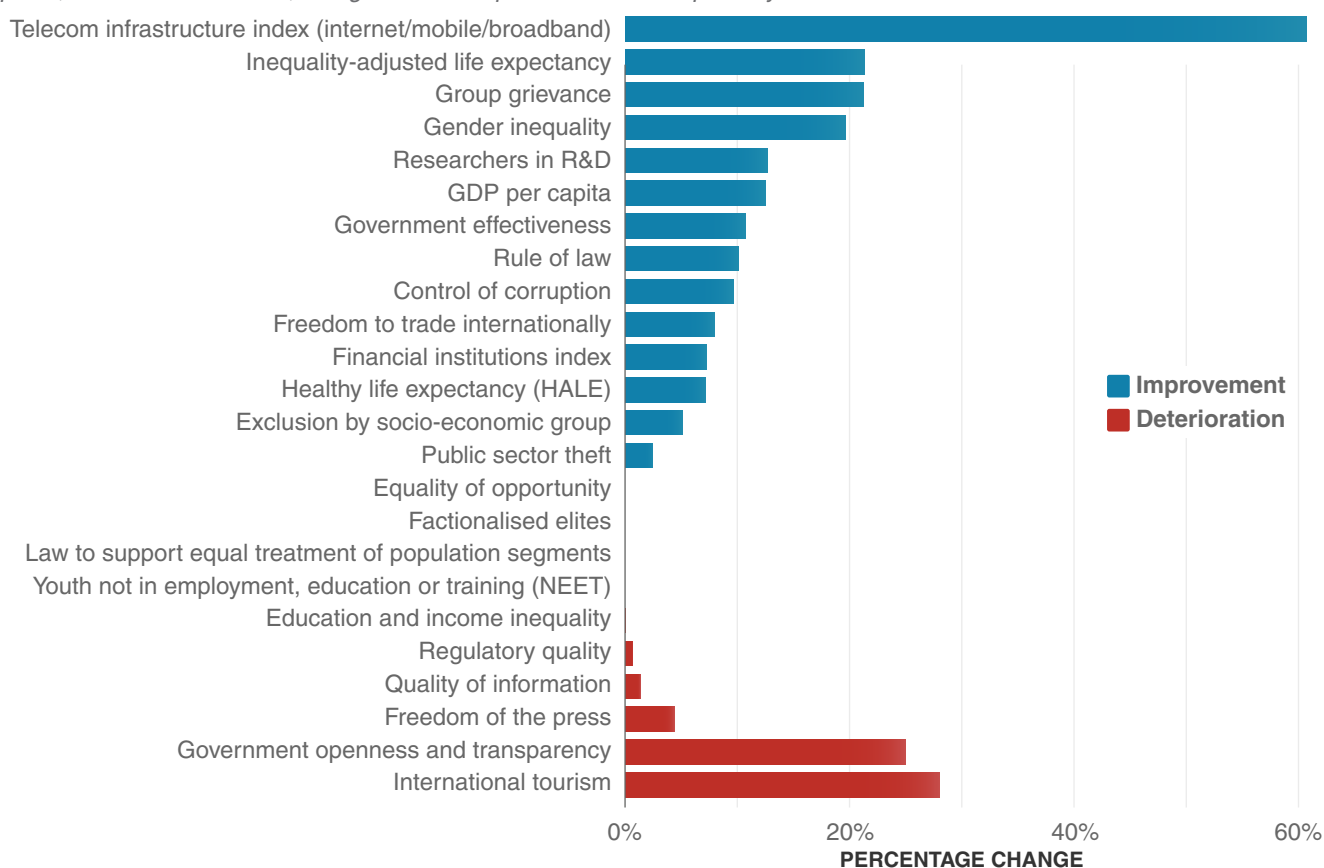
Several governance and corruption indicators also improved, with *government effectiveness* improving by 10.7 per cent, *rule of law* by 10.1 per cent, and *control of corruption* by 9.6 per cent. The *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* Pillar improved by 15.4 per cent.

The improvements were partially offset by deteriorations in indicators related to political openness and the flow of information. *Government openness and transparency* deteriorated by 25 per cent, contributing to a two per cent decline in the *Well-Functioning Government* Pillar. *Freedom of the press* worsened by 4.4 per cent and *quality of information* by 1.3 per cent; both indicators were already at the lower end of the Index before these declines. Although the *Free Flow of Information* Pillar registered an aggregate improvement of 15.8 per cent, this reflects gains in *telecom infrastructure index* rather than improvement in either of the indicators capturing media freedom or information quality. China's profile combines broad-based gains in development and human capital indicators with continued deteriorations in formal openness and the flow of information.

FIGURE 4.3

Percentage change in Positive Peace indicators, China, 2015–2024

Improvements have been driven by a large change in *telecom infrastructure index*, despite deteriorations in *freedom of the press*, *international tourism*, and *government openness and transparency*.



Source: IEP

Western and Central Europe

The average PPI score in Western and Central Europe improved by two per cent over the past decade. Of the 33 countries in the region, 23 improved over the period. Italy recorded the strongest gain at 8.1 per cent, followed by Albania at 6.2 per cent, Latvia at 6.1 per cent, Ireland at 6.1 per cent, and Croatia at 5.4 per cent. The remaining 10 countries deteriorated, with the largest declines in the Netherlands at 8.1 per cent, the United Kingdom at 5.7 per cent, Iceland at 4.8 per cent, and Austria at 4.8 per cent.

Beyond regional gains in *telecom infrastructure index*, improvements were concentrated in human capital, equitable distribution, and acceptance indicators. The largest Pillar-level improvement was in the *High Levels of Human Capital* Pillar, which improved by 11.3 per cent, driven primarily by a 15.7 per cent improvement in the share of *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)* across the region. The *Acceptance of the*

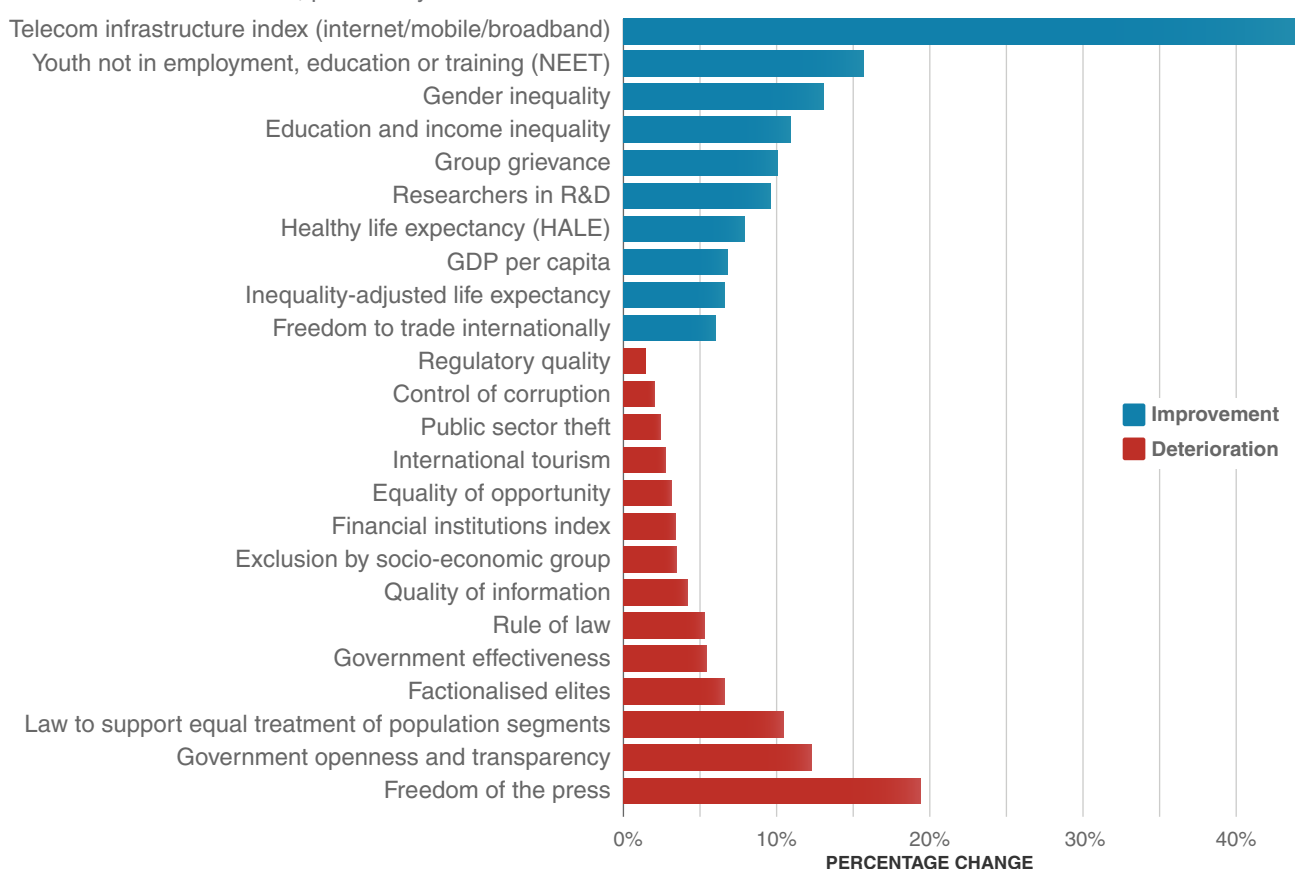
Rights of Others Pillar improved by 7.2 per cent and the *Equitable Distribution of Resources* Pillar by 4.2 per cent. Economic indicators also strengthened, with *GDP per capita* improving by 6.8 per cent on average across the region. Gains were particularly large in Kosovo and Serbia, where the indicator improved by 11 and 9.4 per cent, respectively.

The deteriorations were concentrated in indicators related to political openness and the flow of information. *Freedom of the press* deteriorated by 19.4 per cent across the region, with particularly sharp declines of 78.7 per cent in Poland and 75.2 per cent in Cyprus.² *Government openness and transparency* deteriorated by 12.3 per cent, with large declines in Austria, the Czech Republic, Spain, and the Netherlands. The United Kingdom recorded a 44.6 per cent deterioration in *factionalised elites*, the largest deterioration in this indicator across the region, alongside declines of 38.5 per cent in *rule of law* and 26.2 per cent in *government effectiveness*; seven of the eight Pillars of Peace deteriorated for the United Kingdom over the period.

FIGURE 4.4

Percentage change in Positive Peace indicators, Western and Central Europe, 2015–2024

Deteriorations in indicators like *freedom of the press* and *international tourism* were more than offset by improvements in several *Structures* indicators, particularly *telecom infrastructure index*.



Source: IEP

Russia

Russia's PPI score deteriorated by 5.2 per cent between 2015 and 2024, with its global rank declining by 19 places to 101st. Russia ranked 162nd on the GPI in 2024, representing a Positive Peace surplus of 61 places.

Much of the deterioration in Russia's Positive Peace score has accelerated since the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and the international sanctions that followed. The deterioration was concentrated in pillars related to governance, economic openness, and the flow of information. The largest Pillar-level decline was in the *Well-Functioning Government* Pillar, which deteriorated by 16.4 per cent, driven by a 25 per cent deterioration in *government openness and transparency*, a 14.4 per cent deterioration in *government effectiveness*, and a 10.7 per cent deterioration in *rule of law*. *Freedom of the press* deteriorated by 36.6 per cent and *quality of information* by 15.8 per cent, reflecting tighter state controls on information since 2022. *Equality of opportunity* deteriorated by 33.3 per cent. *Freedom to trade internationally* deteriorated by 12.3 per cent over the period, with the entire decline occurring since 2022 and coinciding with

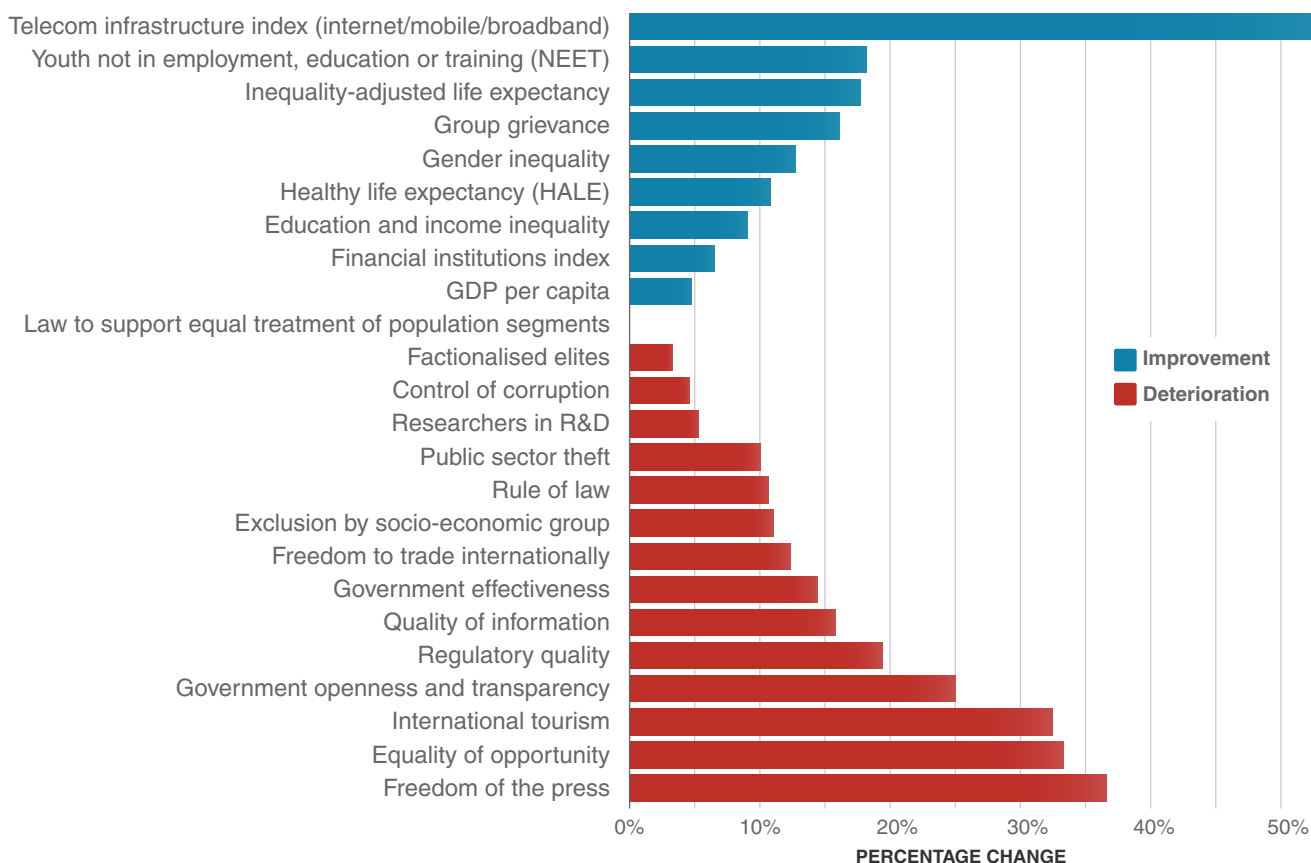
the country's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the introduction of broad-based international sanctions associated with the war; the indicator had improved slightly between 2015 and 2022 before reversing sharply.³

In addition to gains in *telecom infrastructure index*, Russia recorded improvements in human capital and equitable distribution indicators. The largest indicator-level improvements were in the share of *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)*, which improved by 18.2 per cent, and *inequality-adjusted life expectancy*, which improved by 17.7 per cent. The *NEET* improvement may partly reflect expanded military recruitment since 2022, with sign-on bonuses and contracted salaries reportedly running well above the national average, drawing substantial numbers of young men into the armed forces.⁴ *Group grievance* improved by 16.1 per cent and *gender inequality* by 12.8 per cent, contributing to a 6.1 per cent improvement in the *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* Pillar and an 8.7 per cent improvement in the *High Levels of Human Capital* Pillar. These improvements are concentrated in development and human capital indicators, while the broader deterioration spans governance, openness, and information.

FIGURE 4.5

Percentage change in Positive Peace indicators, Russia, 2015–2024

Russia has seen strong improvement in telecommunications, but this has been offset by deteriorations in *freedom of the press*, *equality of opportunity*, and *international tourism*.



Source: IEP

India

India's PPI score improved by six per cent over the past decade, with its global rank improving from 100th in 2015 to 92nd in 2024. India ranked 126th on the GPI in 2024, representing a Positive Peace surplus of 34 places.

Of the 24 indicators in the PPI, 15 improved over the period, five deteriorated, and four were unchanged. Beyond gains in *telecom infrastructure index*, improvements in India were broad-based across human capital, equitable distribution, and governance indicators. The largest indicator-level improvements were in *government effectiveness*, *gender inequality*, and *inequality-adjusted life expectancy*, each improving by between 17.5 and 19.3 per cent. The share of *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)* improved by 13.3 per cent, *healthy life expectancy* by 12.8 per cent, and *freedom to trade internationally* by 12.9 per cent. *GDP per capita* improved by 7.6 per cent and *regulatory quality*

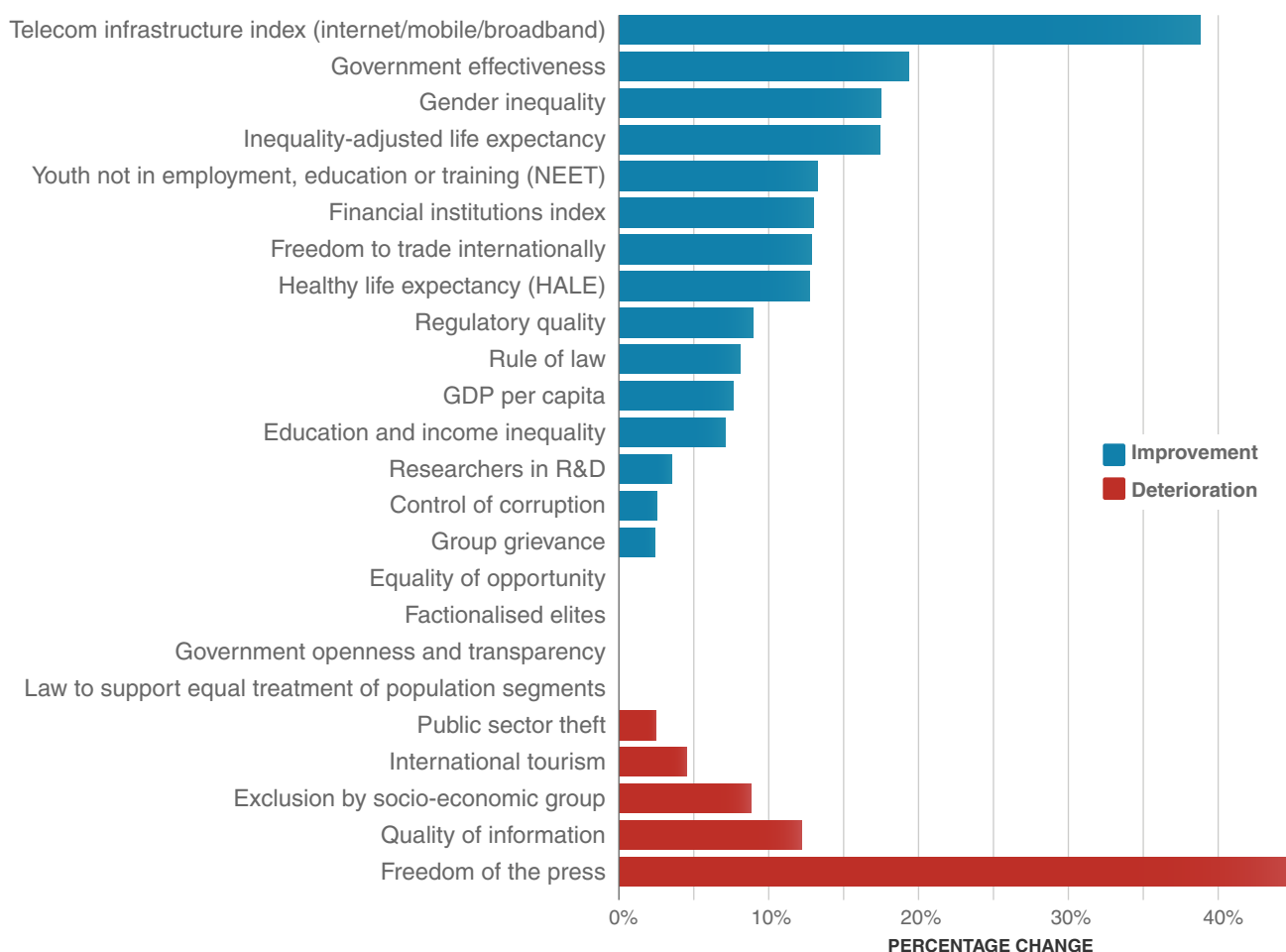
by nine per cent. At the Pillar level, the *Well-Functioning Government* Pillar improved by 11 per cent, the largest Pillar-level improvement in India's profile, alongside gains of around 10 per cent in the *High Levels of Human Capital* and *Sound Business Environment* Pillars.

The improvements were partially offset by sharp deteriorations in indicators related to the flow of information. *Freedom of the press* deteriorated by 45.4 per cent, the largest single-indicator decline in India's profile,⁵ and *quality of information* deteriorated by 12.2 per cent. Although the *Free Flow of Information* Pillar registered a marginal improvement of 2.4 per cent, this reflects *telecom infrastructure index* gains offsetting the declines in media freedom and information quality; without the telecom contribution, the Pillar would have deteriorated significantly. *Exclusion by socio-economic group* also worsened by 8.8 per cent. India's profile combines broad-based gains in development, human capital, and governance effectiveness with significant deteriorations in media freedom and information quality.

FIGURE 4.6

Percentage change in Positive Peace indicators, India, 2015–2024

Like many developing countries, India saw strong improvements in internet usage, which drove much of the overall improvement, but *freedom of the press* has declined substantially in the country.



Source: IEP

Section 5

Peace Trajectories: Positive and Negative Peace



Key Findings

- Countries with the largest improvements in internal peace recorded improvements in Positive Peace four times higher than the rest of the world, underscoring that gains in Positive Peace drive improvements in peace.
- Internal peace and Positive Peace co-evolve. Improvements in the structural conditions captured by Positive Peace are not separate from improvements in internal peace. The improvement in internal peace is underwritten by gains in governance quality, social cohesion, and inclusion.
- The biggest positive difference on improvements was related to governance indicators, highlighting their importance for improvements in internal peace. The best performing indicators were *rule of law*, *control of corruption*, *freedom of the press*, *government effectiveness*, *regulatory quality*, and *factionalised elites*.
- Improvements in Positive Peace indicators are also important for the business environment. The top 20 improvers in Positive Peace in the decade to 2024 recorded GDP growth of 4.7 per cent compared to the global average of 3.4 per cent.
- Fifty-nine countries achieved meaningful improvements in internal peace between 2015 and 2024. In these countries, Positive Peace improved by 2.9 per cent on average, while the rest of the world recorded 0.7 per cent average improvement.
- Internal peace improvers outperformed the rest of the world on 21 of the 24 Positive Peace indicators. The widest gaps were in *telecom infrastructure index*, *rule of law*, *freedom of the press*, *control of corruption*, and *group grievance*.
- Iraq, Thailand, and Côte d'Ivoire illustrate how reforms in governance quality, inclusion, and social cohesion underpin combined improvements in internal peace and Positive Peace.
- IEP's Positive Peace deficit model is an accurate predictor of future deteriorations in peace. The 16 countries with the largest deficits in 2009 all deteriorated by 2024.
- Of the countries with Positive Peace surpluses, 58 per cent recorded improvements over the same period. If the countries of the Americas were excluded, the figure would be 75 per cent.
- Of the countries with the largest Positive Peace deficits, nearly 60 per cent deteriorated last year.
- A dynamical systems model of peace transitions identifies two attractor basins: Sustainable Peace at high levels of both Positive and internal peace, and the Conflict Trap at low levels of both. Countries near the boundaries between these and the transition regions are most exposed to tipping points.
- A comparison between Egypt and Syria illustrates how relatively small differences in institutional resilience in 2009 produced sharply divergent peace trajectories after the regional shocks of the early 2010s. A comparison of Georgia and Venezuela shows the same dynamic in reverse, with stronger Positive Peace foundations supporting movement towards Sustainable Peace.

Positive Peace and internal peace are tightly connected. Countries with stronger institutions, more equitable resource distribution, broader information environments, and higher levels of human capital tend to be more peaceful, and they tend to grow in peacefulness over time. This is due to the reinforcing system dynamics of Positive Peace. These system dynamics can be expressed as operating in virtuous or vicious cycles, where the interactions between the Pillars drive directional change. Systems are always evolving and the direction of change is important.

Therefore, countries with structural weaknesses tend to deteriorate in peacefulness, sometimes sharply, when shocks test their underlying fragility.

This section has two halves. The first half examines countries that recorded meaningful improvements in internal peace over the last decade. The main finding is that improvements in countries' internal peace was associated with substantially larger improvements in Positive Peace than the rest of the world. The pattern is consistent across 21 of the 24 Positive Peace indicators and across very different country contexts. Case studies on Iraq, Thailand, and Côte d'Ivoire trace the policy and institutional channels through which those gains can be achieved.

The second half of the section reviews how Positive Peace can predict future changes in peace, drawing on IEP's longstanding deficit and surplus framework. Countries whose internal peace levels currently sit ahead of their socio-economic and institutional resilience are described as having a Positive Peace deficit, and the historical record shows that the great majority of such countries subsequently deteriorate in internal peace. The deficit framework is then embedded within a dynamical systems model of peace transitions, which identifies attractor basins toward which countries gravitate over time and tipping points at which small shocks can produce sharply divergent trajectories. The Egypt and Syria comparison and the Georgia and Venezuela comparison illustrate how relatively small differences in structural conditions in 2009 led to very different peace outcomes by 2024.

Taken together, the two halves of the section describe the same relationship from two directions. Improvements in Positive Peace predict and underwrite improvements in internal peace, and weaknesses in Positive Peace predict and underwrite deteriorations in internal peace. The mechanism is the same in both directions, with the structural conditions captured by the eight Pillars of Positive Peace shaping a society's capacity to absorb shocks, resolve grievances non-violently, and convert resilience into peaceful outcomes over time.

How Positive Peace Creates Substantial Improvements in Internal Peace

Countries that achieved meaningful improvements in internal peace between 2015 and 2024 also recorded substantially larger improvements in Positive Peace than the rest of the world. Among the 59 countries that recorded meaningful internal peace improvements, Positive Peace improved by 2.9 per cent on average, more than four times the 0.7 per cent average improvement recorded by the rest of the world.

The pattern is consistent across the great majority of indicators, with internal peace improvers outperforming the rest of the world on 21 of the 24 Positive Peace indicators.

This finding has two implications. First, internal peace and Positive Peace co-evolve. Improvements in the structural conditions captured by Positive Peace are not separate from improvements in internal peace; they accumulate together, in the same countries, over the same windows.

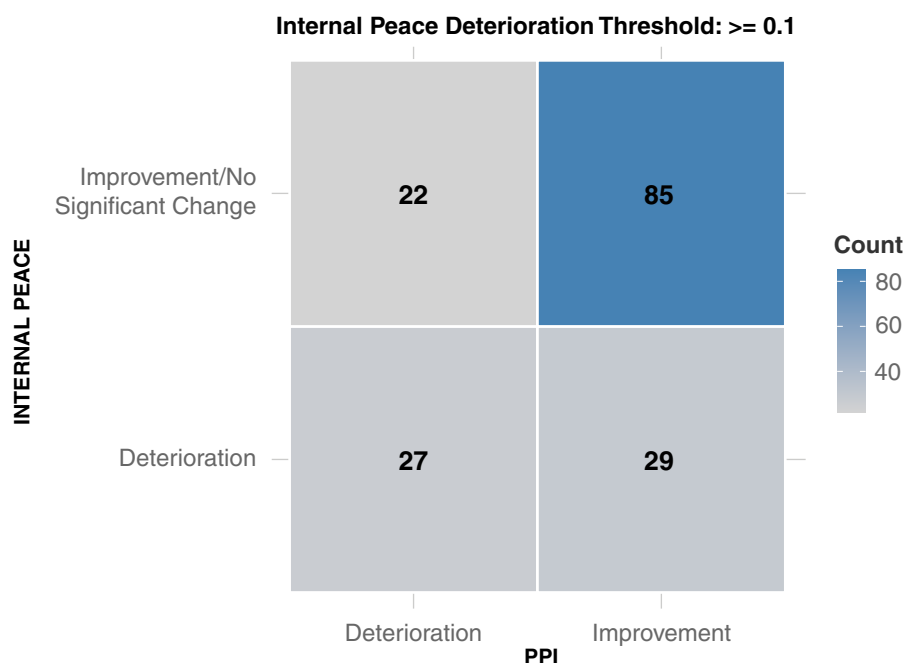
Second, the improvement was not evenly spread across all indicators of Positive Peace. Improvements were most closely tied to governance quality and social cohesion, including *rule of law*, *control of corruption*, and *group grievance*. Such indicators reflect the structural foundations on which durable peace rests.

Figure 5.1 shows the broader cross-sectional pattern. Over the past decade, more than 70 per cent of countries that improved in Positive Peace also improved in internal peace or held steady, while more than half of countries that deteriorated in Positive Peace recorded a substantial deterioration in internal peace.

FIGURE 5.1

Relationship with changes in internal peace on the GPI and Positive Peace, 2015–2024

More than 70 per cent of countries that improved in Positive Peace in the past 10 years either improved or did not decline in internal peace over the same period.



Source: IEP

TABLE 5.1

Positive Peace changes by internal peace trajectory, 2015–2024

Countries registering meaningful improvements in internal peace record substantially larger improvements in Positive Peace.

Indicator/Pillar/Domain	Percentage Change in Countries with Large Improvements in Internal Peace 2015–2024	Percentage Change in the Rest of the World, 2015–2024	Difference (Percentage Point Difference)
Acceptance of the Rights of Others	-6.5%	-3.7%	2.8%
Gender inequality	-11.0%	-8.2%	2.8%
Group grievance	-11.9%	-7.3%	4.6%
Exclusion by socio-economic group	3.8%	5.4%	1.5%
Equitable Distribution of Resources	-4.0%	-2.5%	1.4%
Inequality-adjusted life expectancy	-9.4%	-8.3%	1.2%
Education and income inequality	-7.1%	-4.6%	2.5%
Equality of opportunity	2.3%	4.0%	1.6%
Free Flow of Information	-10.9%	-7.3%	3.6%
Freedom of the press	21.6%	27.0%	5.4%
Quality of information	5.5%	7.8%	2.3%
Telecom infrastructure index (internet/mobile/broadband)	-44.1%	-35.6%	8.4%
Good Relations with Neighbours	5.0%	4.5%	-0.5%
Law to support equal treatment of population segments	7.1%	4.9%	-2.3%
International tourism	17.5%	13.7%	-3.8%
Freedom to trade internationally	-2.9%	-1.4%	1.5%
High Levels of Human Capital	-6.8%	-4.7%	2.1%
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)	-5.2%	-1.5%	3.8%
Healthy life expectancy (HALE)	-8.1%	-6.9%	1.1%
Researchers in R&D	-4.7%	-3.1%	1.6%
Low Levels of Corruption	-0.1%	2.6%	2.7%
Control of corruption	-1.6%	3.3%	4.9%
Factionalised elites	2.4%	5.0%	2.6%
Public sector theft	-0.4%	-0.1%	0.3%
Sound Business Environment	-1.2%	-0.3%	1.0%
Regulatory quality	-0.2%	3.2%	3.3%
Financial institutions index	0.3%	-1.3%	-1.6%
GDP per capita	-3.5%	-2.9%	0.6%
Well-Functioning Government	1.1%	6.0%	4.9%
Government openness and transparency	10.6%	11.1%	0.4%
Rule of law	-1.8%	6.1%	7.9%
Government effectiveness	-0.4%	3.6%	4.0%
Institutions	-0.9%	2.0%	2.9%
Attitudes	-0.6%	1.0%	1.6%
Structures	-8.1%	-5.7%	2.3%
Overall PPI score	-2.9%	-0.7%	2.2%

Source: IEP

The clearest distinguishing feature of internal peace improvers was governance quality. The second largest single-indicator gap was in *rule of law*, where internal peace improvers outperformed the rest of the world by 7.9 percentage points.

Control of corruption followed at 4.9 percentage points, *government effectiveness* at 4.0, *regulatory quality* at 3.3, and *factionalised elites* at 2.6. The *Well-Functioning Government* Pillar deteriorated for both groups over the period, but only by 1.1 per cent for internal peace improvers, against a 6.0 per cent deterioration for the rest of the world. The *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillar registered a similar pattern, holding flat among internal peace improvers while deteriorating across the rest of the world.

The information environment and human capital outperformance was the second strongest signal. Internal peace improvers outperformed on the *Free Flow of Information* Pillar by 3.6 percentage points, with *freedom of the press* ahead by 5.4 points and the *telecom infrastructure index* ahead by 8.4 points. This was the largest single indicator gap, though much of this likely reflects amplification of broader connectivity gains rather than an independent effect. Internal peace improvers outperformed on the *High Levels of Human Capital* Pillar by 2.1 percentage points, driven by *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)* at 3.8 points. Within *Acceptance of the Rights of Others*, *group grievance* stood out with a 4.6 percentage point gap.

Two Pillars showed smaller or reverse gaps. The *Good Relations with Neighbours* Pillar movements were modestly larger for the rest of the world, mainly through *law to support equal treatment of population segments* and *international tourism*. The *Sound Business Environment* Pillar gap was small, with the rest of the world registering slightly better movements on *financial institutions index*. The pattern across the eight Pillars is

that internal peace improvers do not necessarily outperform on every dimension of Positive Peace, but they outperform decisively on the dimensions most closely tied to governance quality and social cohesion.

A tighter sample of 39 countries achieved simultaneous above-threshold improvements in both internal peace and Positive Peace over the period. Within this group, the consistency of improvements across health, education, and inclusion indicators is even stronger than the headline analysis suggests. *Inequality-adjusted life expectancy* improved in 38 of the 39 countries, with *healthy life expectancy* and *education and income inequality* not far behind, and *group grievance* improving in 74 per cent.

Internal peace gains are not stand-alone outcomes. They accumulate alongside, and appear to be underwritten by, gains in governance quality, social cohesion, and inclusion. Policies that strengthen these structural foundations are therefore the most reliable path to durable internal peace, and conversely, internal peace improvements that are not accompanied by parallel improvements in Positive Peace are likely to be fragile.

The countries that improved most in Positive Peace also tended to see broader economic gains. Among the 20 countries with the largest improvements in Positive Peace between 2015 and 2024, GDP per capita grew at an average of 4.7 per cent a year, against a global average of 3.4 per cent. This is consistent with the wider evidence, set out in Section 2, that Positive Peace improvements are associated with stronger macroeconomic performance, higher investment, and better development outcomes. The structural conditions that sustain peace also support the conditions in which economies grow.

Case Studies

The three countries profiled in this section, Iraq, Thailand, and Côte d’Ivoire, are among those that recorded combined improvements in internal peace and Positive Peace between 2015 and 2024. They are drawn from three different regions, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and West Africa, and from very different starting points and political histories. They are presented here as illustrations of the policy and institutional channels through which the combined gains identified in the preceding analysis have been achieved in practice.

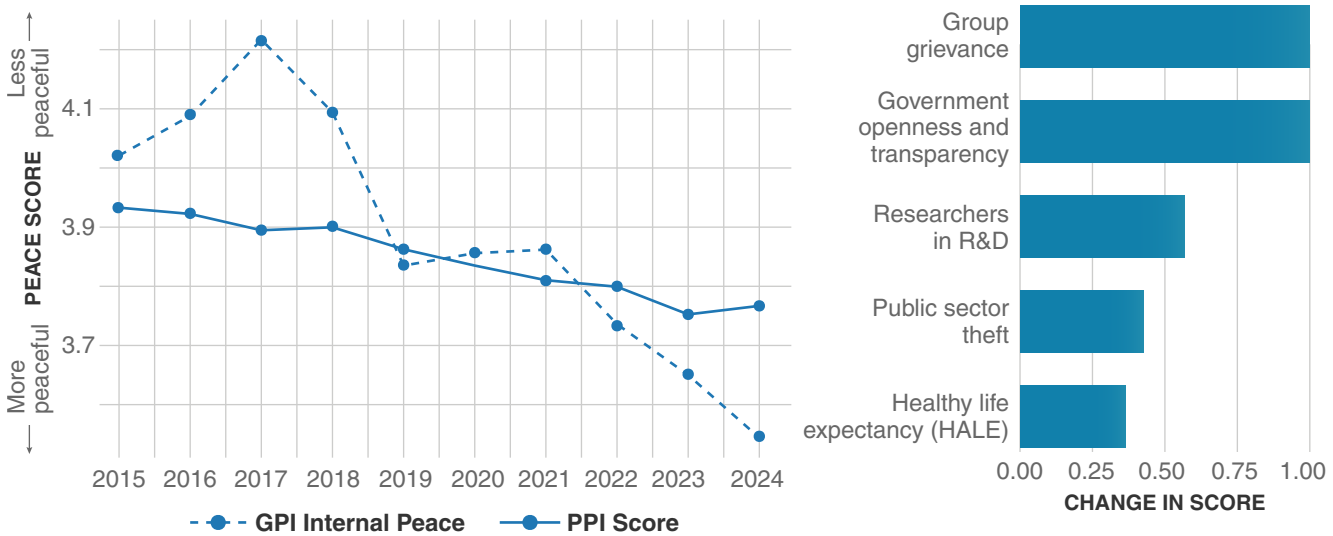
A common pattern emerges across the three: the institutional reforms that accompanied the peace gains share a thread of post-conflict or post-coup transitions that opened political space for legal and institutional change. The improvements concentrated on indicators of social cohesion and human capital, with *group grievance* improving by

between 16 and 23 per cent in each country, and substantial gains in indicators including *equality of opportunity*, *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)*, and *healthy life expectancy* in two of the three. None of the three has moved uniformly. *Freedom of the press* deteriorated in all three over the period, and the harder governance indicators of *rule of law*, *government effectiveness*, and *factionalised elites* show a more mixed picture, with some indicators and countries improving and others moving against the trend.

The case studies therefore illustrate the section’s main finding: improvers tend to outperform on indicators of governance, social cohesion, and inclusion. However, they do not automatically post improvements on every dimension of Positive Peace.

Iraq	PPI 2024 (and change from 2015)	GPI Internal Peace 2024 (and change from 2015)
	3.77 ↗0.17 (-4.2%)	3.54 ↗0.48 (-11.9%)

FIGURE 5.2
PPI and internal peace trends and most improved PPI indicators, Iraq, 2015–2024



Source: IEP
Note: Analysis of the most improved indicators excludes *telecom infrastructure index* and *GDP per capita*.

Iraq improved its Positive Peace score by 4.2 per cent between 2015 and 2024, with its global rank climbing from 146 to 140. Improvements were concentrated in the *Acceptance of the Rights of Others*, *High Levels of Human Capital*, and *Free Flow of Information* Pillars. Iraq also recorded one of the larger improvements in internal peace globally over the period.

Group grievance and *government openness and transparency* both improved by 20 per cent in relative terms. Within human capital, *researchers in R&D* improved by 14.4 per cent, *healthy life expectancy* by 11.5 per cent. *Public sector theft* improved by 10.4 per cent. These movements coincide with the post-2017 period after the

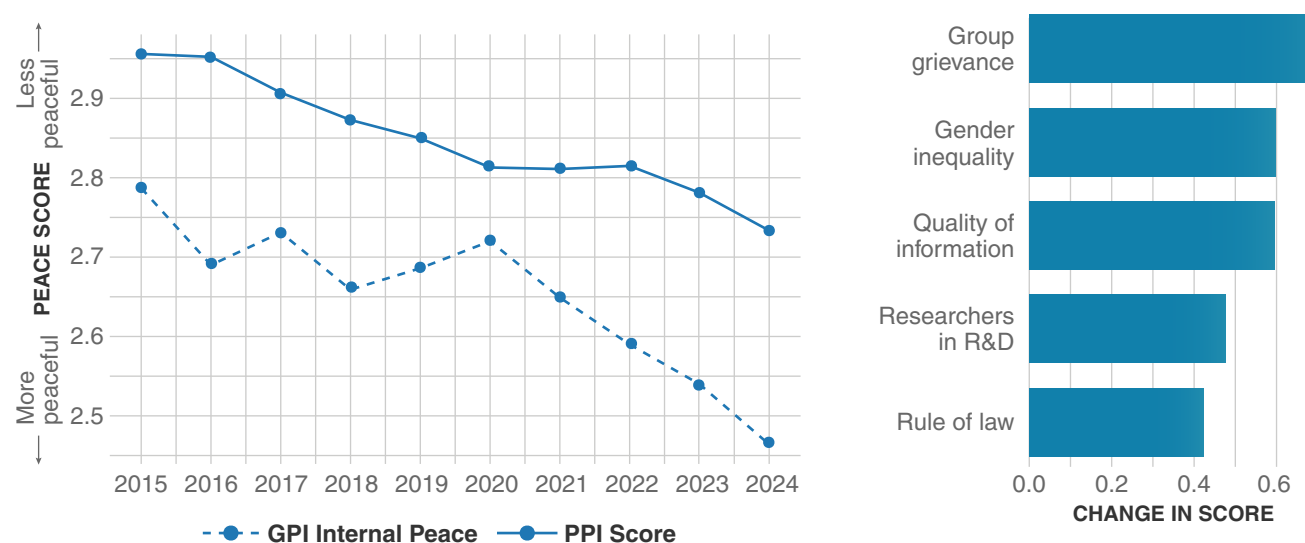
territorial defeat of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS),¹ the Tishreen protest movement of 2019,² and the institutional reforms that followed, including the country's validation by the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Board³ and the implementation of the Yazidi Survivors Law.⁴ *Gender inequality* also improved over the period.

Freedom of the press deteriorated by 37.6 per cent, the largest single-indicator movement in Iraq's profile, in line with continuing constraints on protest coverage and journalistic activity.⁵ The broader governance picture is uneven, with *government effectiveness* deteriorating by 7.5 per cent and *rule of law* by 5.4 per cent. *Sound Business Environment* was the only Pillar to deteriorate over the period, by 3.4 per cent.

Thailand	PPI 2024 (and change from 2015)	GPI Internal Peace 2024 (and change from 2015)
	2.73 ↗ 0.22 (-7.5%)	2.46 ↗ 0.32 (-11.6%)

FIGURE 5.3

PPI and internal peace trends and most improved PPI indicators, Thailand, 2015–2024



Source: IEP

Note: Analysis of the most improved indicators excludes *telecom infrastructure index* and *GDP per capita*.

Thailand improved its Positive Peace score by 7.5 per cent between 2015 and 2024, with its global rank climbing from 71 to 62. Thailand was among the top countries globally for combined improvement in Positive Peace and internal peace over the period. Improvements were broad based, with all eight Pillars of Positive Peace registering gains. The largest movements were concentrated in the *Free Flow of Information*, *Acceptance of the Rights of Others*, and *High Levels of Human Capital* pillars.

Quality of information improved by 17.9 per cent and *group grievance* by 16.5 per cent. Within governance and human capital, *rule of law* improved by 14.0 per cent and *researchers in R&D* by 19.8 per cent. *Inequality-adjusted life expectancy* improved by 7.4 per cent. These movements coincide with the period of governance and institutional reform that followed the 2014 military takeover and the establishment of the National Council for Peace and Order.⁶ It included the 2017 constitution, which embedded *rule of law* principles and reinforced the independence of

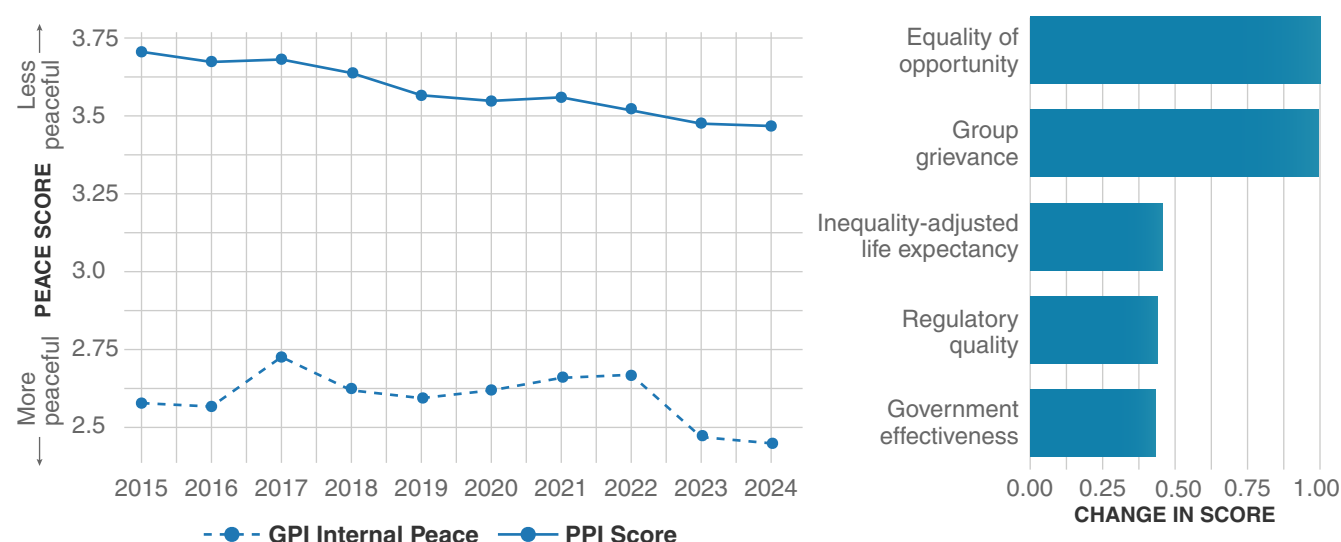
constitutional oversight bodies such as the National Anti-Corruption Commission,⁷ the 2018 Organic Act on Anti-Corruption that expanded the Commission's mandate, the 2015 Gender Equality Act,⁸ and the 2019 establishment of the Anti-Fake News Centre as the lead institution for addressing misinformation.⁹ Renewed dialogue between the government and armed groups in the southernmost majority-Muslim provinces has also produced an agreed roadmap towards stability over the period.¹⁰ *Gender inequality* also improved over the period.

The improvement was not uniform. *Exclusion by socio-economic group* deteriorated by 9.0 per cent, the largest single-indicator movement against Thailand's overall improvement. *Freedom of the press* deteriorated by 3.2 per cent and *government effectiveness* by 2.7 per cent. The *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillar registered the smallest improvement of any Pillar at 1.1 per cent, indicating that the institutional reforms have not yet produced commensurate movement on indicators of corruption control.

Côte d'Ivoire	PPI 2024 (and change from 2015)	GPI Internal Peace 2024 (and change from 2015)
	3.47 ↗ 0.24 (-6.4%)	2.45 ↗ 0.13 (-5%)

FIGURE 5.4

PPI and internal peace trends and most improved PPI indicators, Côte d'Ivoire, 2015–2024



Source: IEP

Note: Analysis of the most improved indicators excludes *telecom infrastructure index* and *GDP per capita*.

Côte d'Ivoire improved its Positive Peace score by 6.4 per cent between 2015 and 2024, with its global rank climbing from 133 to 115. The country was among the larger improvers globally over the period, and recorded an improvement in internal peace of around 5 per cent. Improvements were broad based, with six of the eight Pillars registering gains, and the largest movements concentrated in the *Free Flow of Information*, *Equitable Distribution of Resources*, and *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* Pillars.

Equality of opportunity improved by 25.0 per cent and *group grievance* by 22.9 per cent, the two largest single-indicator movements in the country's profile. *Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)* improved by 15.0 per cent, *regulatory quality* by 12.8 per cent, *government effectiveness* by 11.7 per cent, and *inequality-adjusted life expectancy* by 11.0 per cent. The improvements coincide with sustained reforms in education access, including the 2014 introduction of compulsory schooling for children aged six to 16 and the abolition of school fees,¹¹ a 2019 law requiring at least 30 per cent of candidates in

parliamentary, regional, and local elections to be women,¹² a post-conflict reconciliation program including an amnesty for those prosecuted in connection with the 2002 to 2011 civil conflicts,¹³ and a 2022 reconciliation meeting between current and former heads of state widely read as a symbolic gesture of political unity.¹⁴ *Gender inequality* also improved over the period.

The improvement was not uniform. Two Pillars deteriorated. The *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillar weakened by 3.3 per cent, with *factionalised elites* deteriorating by 8.8 per cent, the *Good Relations with Neighbours* Pillar also deteriorated by 3.3 per cent, driven primarily by a 16.4 per cent deterioration in *international tourism*. *Freedom of the press* deteriorated by 6.4 per cent, *financial institutions index* by 4.0 per cent, and *public sector theft* and *quality of information* each by 3.2 per cent. The country's broader institutional reforms have therefore not yet translated into commensurate movement on indicators of corruption control or political cohesion.

Positive Peace Deficits and the Risk of Violence

Positive Peace and internal peace tend to align over time. Countries whose internal peace levels sit ahead of their structural and institutional resilience are described as having a Positive Peace deficit, defined here as a country whose Global Peace Index (GPI) internal peace rank is at least 20 places ahead of its Positive Peace Index (PPI) rank. The inverse, where structural resilience sits ahead of peacefulness, is described as a Positive Peace surplus. Countries within 20 places on the two indices are considered stable. The deficit framing reflects a structural gap: when peacefulness sits ahead of resilience, the system is more exposed to shocks; when resilience sits ahead of peacefulness, countries tend to translate that resilience into peace gains over time.

From 2009 to 2024, 83.3 per cent of countries with large Positive Peace deficits recorded deteriorations in internal peace, against a backdrop of 54 per cent of all countries deteriorating over the same period. Among Positive Peace surplus countries, 58 per cent recorded improvements in internal peace. The two

patterns are part of the same dynamic, with the structural relationship between Positive Peace and internal peace operating in both directions.

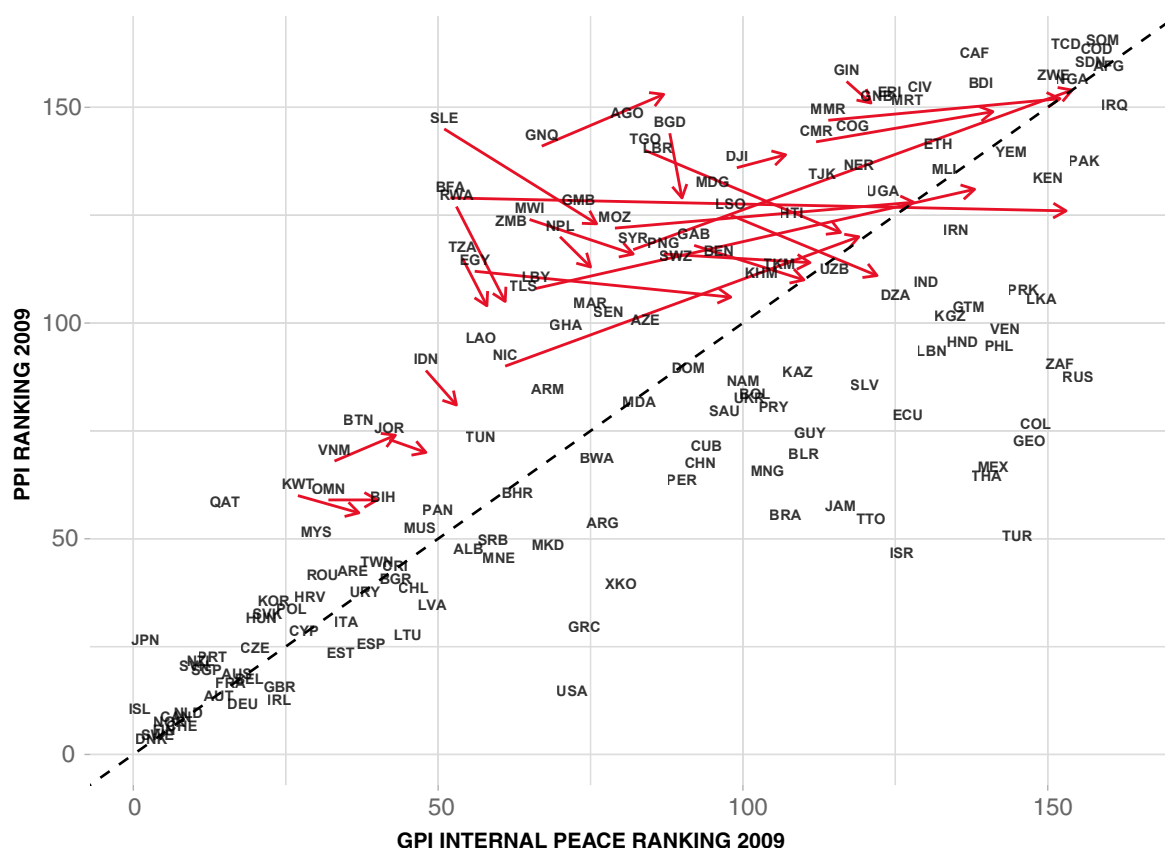
The surplus pattern is most pronounced outside the Americas, where regional dynamics including organised crime and political instability have produced widespread internal peace deteriorations among countries that would otherwise have been expected to improve. Outside the Americas, 75 per cent of surplus countries recorded improvements in internal peace over the period.

Figure 5.5 illustrates the broader pattern. Most countries that experienced large deteriorations in internal peace between 2009 and 2024 carried Positive Peace deficits in 2009. Red arrows in the figure denote countries that deteriorated in internal peace. Almost all countries that deteriorated in internal peace also experienced declines in Positive Peace over the period.

FIGURE 5.5

Largest deteriorations in internal peace rankings, 2009–2024

The higher the rank is in relation to Positive Peace, the more likely a deterioration in peace.



Source: IEP

Of the 30 countries with the largest Positive Peace deficits in 2009, 25 deteriorated in internal peace by 2024. The 16 countries with the largest deficits all deteriorated. The five largest deteriorations in the internal peace rankings over the period (Burkina Faso falling 101 places, Libya 72 places,

Syria 72 places, Nicaragua 58 places, and Panama 56 places) most came from countries that carried large or near-large deficits in 2009. Nicaragua's deficit ranked 31st largest overall, just outside the list captured in Table 5.2.

TABLE 5.2

Positive Peace deficits in 2009 and changes in internal peace, 2009–2024

Of the 30 countries with the largest Positive Peace deficits in 2009, 25 recorded deteriorations in internal peace over the next decade and a half.

Country	PPI Rank 2009	GPI Internal Peace Rank 2009	Positive Peace Deficit 2009	Percentage Change in Internal Peace Score, 2009-2024	Direction Change in Internal Peace Score 2009-2024
Sierra Leone	145	51	94	11.8%	Deterioration
Burkina Faso	129	52	77	71.3%	Deterioration
Equatorial Guinea	141	67	74	8.7%	Deterioration
Rwanda	127	53	74	5.3%	Deterioration
Angola	146	81	65	1.5%	Deterioration
Tanzania	115	54	61	3.2%	Deterioration
Malawi	124	65	59	7.8%	Deterioration
Zambia	121	62	59	2.8%	Deterioration
Egypt	112	56	56	18.5%	Deterioration

Togo	140	84	56	16.5%	Deterioration
Bangladesh	144	88	56	2.6%	Deterioration
The Gambia	126	73	53	1.0%	Deterioration
Liberia	138	86	52	2.5%	Deterioration
Nepal	120	70	50	4.7%	Deterioration
Mozambique	122	79	43	25.4%	Deterioration
Libya	108	66	42	42.9%	Deterioration
Timor-Leste	106	64	42	-1.7%	Improvement
Indonesia	89	48	41	4.9%	Deterioration
Qatar	56	15	41	-0.7%	Improvement
Guinea	156	117	39	5.4%	Deterioration
Bhutan	75	37	38	-12.0%	Improvement
Djibouti	136	99	37	7.2%	Deterioration
Laos	94	57	37	-2.4%	Improvement
Syria	117	82	35	57.6%	Deterioration
Vietnam	68	33	35	2.9%	Deterioration
Madagascar	130	95	35	-8.4%	Improvement
Myanmar	147	114	33	37.3%	Deterioration
Kuwait	60	27	33	2.3%	Deterioration
Jordan	73	42	31	6.3%	Deterioration
Cameroon	142	112	30	25.1%	Deterioration

Source: IEP

Burkina Faso illustrates the deficit dynamic in its sharpest form. In 2009, the country ranked 129th on the PPI but 52nd in internal peace, a deficit of 77 places. The fragility surfaced after 2014 with the fall of the Compaoré government, the spread of insurgent violence linked to extremist groups operating across the Sahel, and military coups in 2022. Between 2009 and 2024, Burkina Faso's GPI internal peace score deteriorated by 71.3 per cent, with its rank falling 101 places. Libya followed a comparable trajectory, with a 2009 deficit of 42 places, the Arab Spring revolution and the Libyan civil war, and a 42.9 per cent deterioration in internal peace by 2024.

Not all deficit countries follow this trajectory. Bhutan, Madagascar, and Timor-Leste held substantial Positive Peace deficits in 2009 yet recorded improvements in internal peace by 2024. In these cases, peacefulness has been sustained through small populations, strong community ties, geographic isolation, or post-conflict fatigue, even where the economic and institutional base remains limited. Long-term resilience for these countries still depends on building the institutions and service delivery that reduce the incentives for corruption, organised crime, or political instability.

The deficit pattern is not just about the proportion of deteriorations; it is also about their magnitude.

Among countries with deficits of at least 20 places that deteriorated in internal peace, the average deterioration was 15 per cent, compared to a 12 per cent average across other deteriorating countries.

On the surplus side, countries that converted Positive Peace surpluses into internal peace gains over the same period registered an average internal peace improvement of 10.2 per cent, against a global average internal peace deterioration of 3.2 per cent. The Georgia and Venezuela comparison set out later in this section illustrates the surplus dynamic in its starkest form, with two countries that started from comparable positions in 2009 diverging sharply over the next 15 years.

The deficit framework also looks forward. Table 5.3 shows the countries with the largest Positive Peace deficits in 2024. These countries are most exposed to internal peace deteriorations over the coming decade. Eritrea is of particular concern, combining a large 2024 deficit with a long-running deterioration in its Positive Peace foundation: the country's overall PPI score deteriorated by 8.5 per cent over the 2009 to 2024 period, with seven of the eight Pillars deteriorating. Equatorial Guinea, Turkmenistan, Laos, Madagascar, the Republic of the Congo, Angola, and Djibouti have also recorded modest to large deteriorations in Positive Peace over the same period.

TABLE 5.3

Countries with Positive Peace deficits, 2024

Countries in this list are more likely to experience increasing levels of violence over the next decade.

Country	PPI Rank 2024	GPI Internal Peace Rank 2024	Positive Peace Deficit 2024
Madagascar	134	60	74
Angola	144	74	70
Equatorial Guinea	153	87	66
Laos	111	49	62
Liberia	138	86	52
Sierra Leone	123	76	47
Tanzania	104	58	46
Rwanda	107	61	46
Zambia	103	62	41
Eritrea	156	115	41
Timor-Leste	95	55	40
Bangladesh	128	90	38
Republic of the Congo	146	108	38
Nepal	112	75	37
Malawi	116	82	34
Bhutan	65	31	34
Guinea-Bissau	136	103	33
Qatar	46	13	33
Vietnam	76	43	33
Djibouti	139	107	32
Turkmenistan	127	97	30
Guinea	151	121	30
Morocco	93	65	28
Indonesia	80	53	27
China	70	46	24
Jordan	69	48	21

Source: IEP

The deficit and surplus frameworks describe patterns of risk rather than mechanical predictions for any single country. Both deficits and surpluses systemically shift the odds of internal peace improving or deteriorating over time, but they are not deterministic. Bhutan, Madagascar, and Timor-Leste illustrate that countries can hold large deficits

without deteriorating; Eritrea and the broader 2024 deficit list illustrate that countries with large deficits remain exposed to further deterioration. The framework is best understood as a structural risk indicator that complements country-specific analysis rather than replacing it.

Tipping Points

Tipping points are a defining feature of complex systems. In a dynamical system, they are positions in state space at which small differences in initial conditions, or small subsequent perturbations, produce large differences in long-run trajectories. The concept appears across the natural and social sciences. Climate systems can shift abruptly between stable states once a threshold is crossed. Ecosystems can collapse when a keystone species is lost. Financial markets can flip from stability to crisis under accumulated stress. Disease outbreaks can transition from contained to epidemic when transmission rates pass a critical level. The defining property in each case is non-linearity: outcomes near a tipping point are not proportional to inputs, and the same shock can produce dramatically different responses depending on the system's starting position.

The same non-linear structure appears empirically in the relationships between internal peace and the institutional and economic conditions that underpin Positive Peace. Figure 5.6 plots internal peace against six core indicators: *control of corruption*, *government effectiveness*, *public sector theft*, *rule of law*, *regulatory quality*, and *GDP per capita*. Each panel fits a piecewise linear relationship to the cross-country data, and each reveals a clear break point at an internal peace score concentrated between 2.0 and 2.4 on the GPI scale, where lower values indicate more

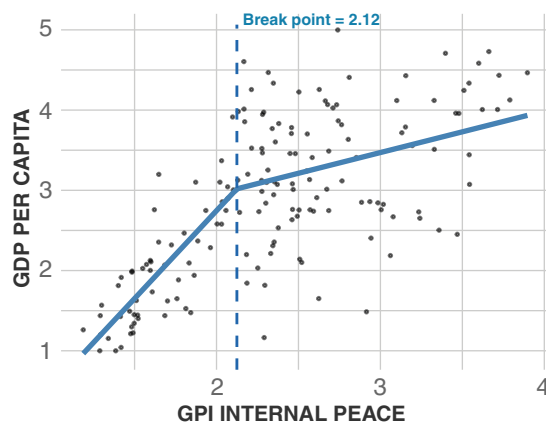
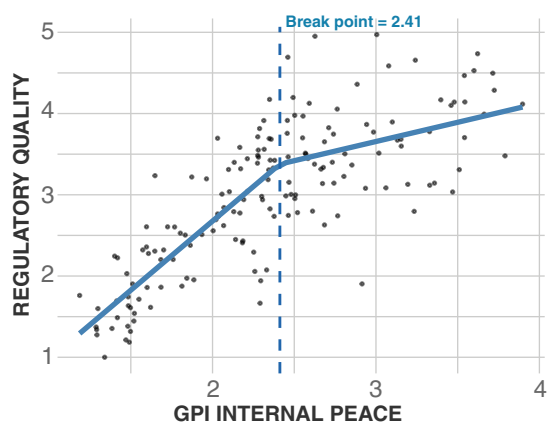
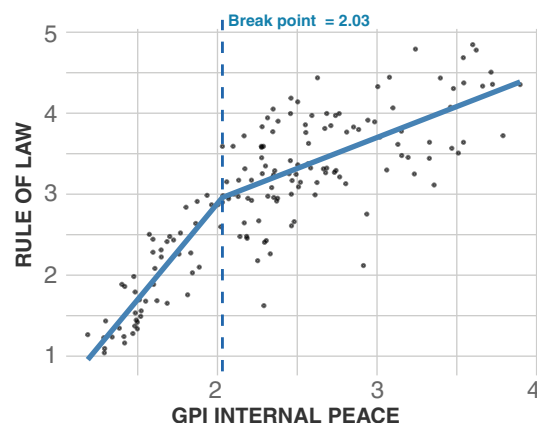
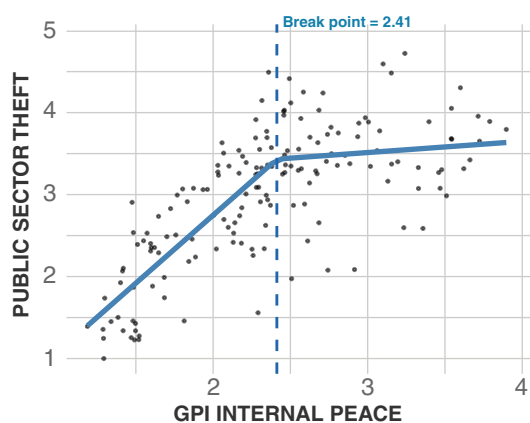
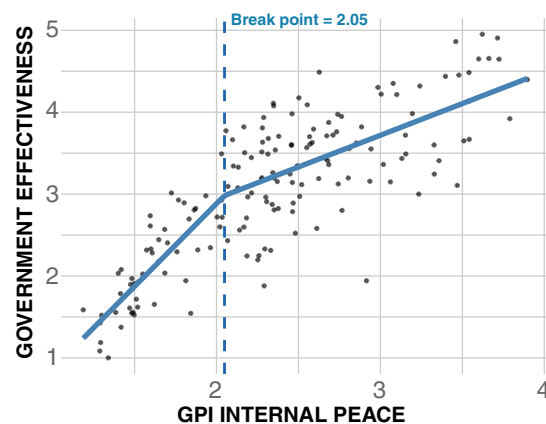
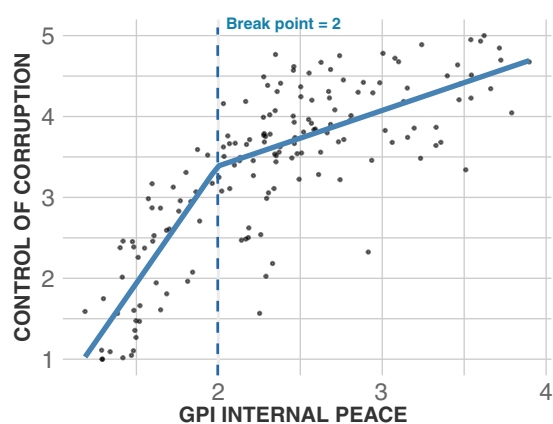
peaceful societies. Below the threshold, in the more peaceful half of the distribution, the relationship is steep: small deteriorations in internal peace are associated with large deteriorations in governance quality and economic output. Above the threshold, in less peaceful societies, the relationship flattens substantially. The same pattern appears across all six indicators, fitted independently. This consistency suggests that the break is not an artefact of any single variable but a feature of how peace, institutions, and material conditions co-evolve. Countries close to the threshold are exposed to disproportionate movement in their underlying conditions for a given change in internal peace, while countries far above or below it sit in regimes where peace and these conditions are more loosely coupled.

When these tipping point dynamics are aggregated across all 163 countries between 2009 and 2024, peace emerges as a complex dynamical system. Countries do not move randomly across the joint space of internal peace and Positive Peace; they gravitate towards a small number of stable configurations and diverge sharply when small differences in starting position interact with subsequent shocks. This systemic view can be made concrete by constructing a phase plane from the historical data, which is the subject of the next sub-section.

FIGURE 5.6

Tipping points in the relationship between internal peace and Positive Peace conditions

Each panel plots internal peace against an indicator of governance quality or economic capacity, with a piecewise linear fit revealing a break point at an score of approximately 2.0 to 2.4. Below the threshold, the relationship is steep; above it, the relationship flattens.



A Dynamical Systems View of Peace Transitions

Figure 5.7 presents the phase plane, built directly from the joint movement of all 163 countries on the PPI and the GPI between 2009 and 2024. The horizontal axis is internal peace and the vertical axis is Positive Peace, with arrows indicating the direction in which countries at a given starting position have historically tended to move.

The phase plane has three regions. The red regions mark unstable combinations of Positive Peace and internal peace that have historically been associated with subsequent deteriorations. Syria, Libya, and Egypt sat in this region in 2009 and each subsequently experienced substantial declines in internal peace. The blue regions mark combinations that have tended towards subsequent improvement. The yellow regions mark combinations of relative stability, where countries have undergone limited movement over the period of analysis.

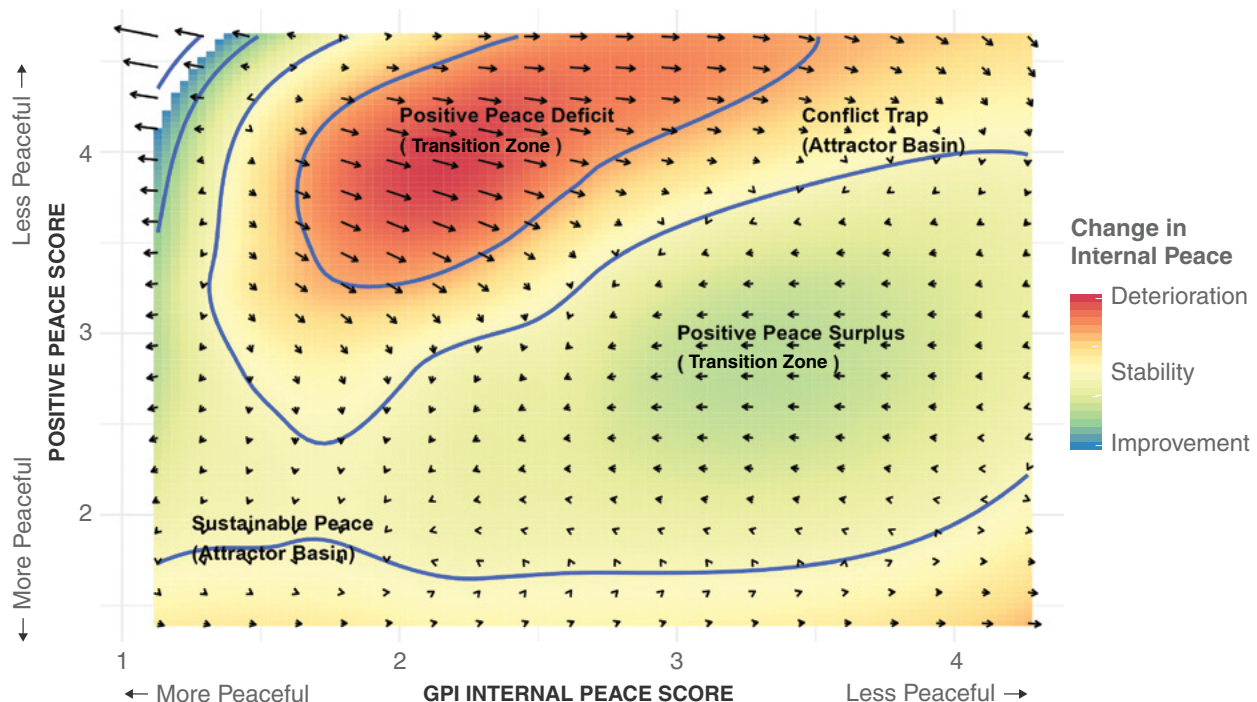
The two largest yellow regions in the phase plane function as attractor basins, states towards which the system tends to evolve and from which countries find it difficult to depart. The combination of high Positive Peace and high internal peace forms the Sustainable Peace region, characterised by strong institutions, social cohesion, and high levels of societal wellbeing. The combination of low Positive Peace and high violence forms the Conflict Trap, where weak institutions and persistent violence reinforce one another. Over the 2009 to 2024 period, no country located in the Sustainable Peace region experienced a large deterioration in internal peace. Conversely, a number of countries fell rapidly into the Conflict Trap following political, economic, and security shocks.

Most of the action in the model happens at the boundaries between regions. Countries located near attractor basin boundaries are most exposed

FIGURE 5.7

IEP dynamical system of GPI and PPI trajectories

The pace and direction of changes in peace can be anticipated based on a country's starting position in Positive Peace and internal peace levels.



Source: IEP

to shocks, and small differences in Positive Peace can produce sharply divergent trajectories. The two case studies below illustrate this dynamic, with Egypt and Syria starting from comparable positions on the boundary of the red region in 2009 and Georgia and Venezuela starting from comparable positions on the boundary of the blue region in the same year.

This dynamic is illustrated in Figure 5.8, which compares the historical trajectories of Egypt and Syria. In 2009, both countries occupied comparable positions on the PPI and the GPI, placing them close to the boundary between relative stability and instability. However, their subsequent paths diverged dramatically. In this sense, Syria in 2009 can be understood as being close to a tipping point toward the Conflict Trap.

Over the past two decades, both Egypt and Syria have been classified as authoritarian regimes in the Economist Democracy Index. However, Syria's scores have consistently been substantially weaker than Egypt's. In 2009, Egypt scored materially better than Syria in areas such as *Well-Functioning Government*, *Low Levels of Corruption*, and *Sound Business Environment*. These differences, while modest in absolute terms, proved critical in shaping

the countries' respective capacities to absorb and respond to subsequent shocks.

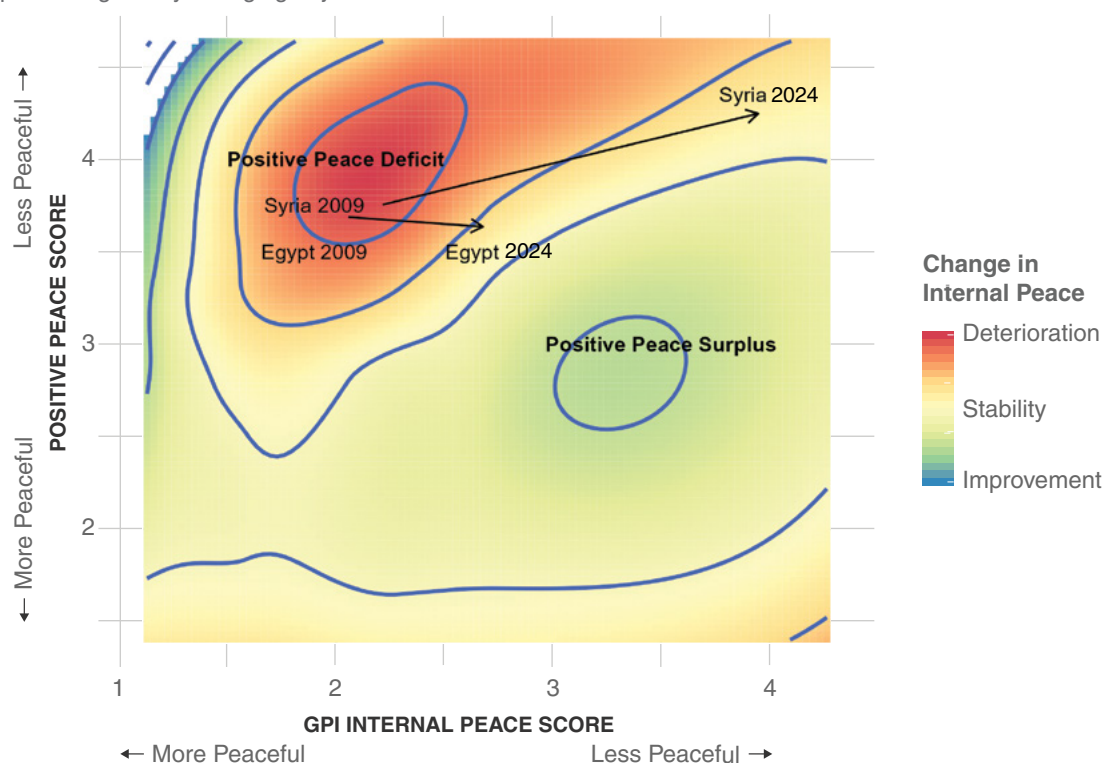
Both countries were affected by the regional upheavals associated with the Arab Spring of the early 2010s. However, the underlying differences in institutional resilience and societal cohesion led to very different outcomes. Syria experienced a rapid descent into large-scale violence and civil war, becoming entrenched in the Conflict Trap. Egypt, by contrast, underwent significant political upheaval and periods of instability but avoided a comparable collapse into sustained civil conflict. By 2024, both countries continue to exhibit low levels of Positive Peace, but Egypt scores substantially better than Syria on both internal peace and Positive Peace measures.

Tipping points can also be beneficial. Figure 5.9 illustrates how some countries can overtake peers in both peacefulness and wellbeing when relatively small early differences in Positive Peace shift them onto more favourable trajectories. In 2009, Venezuela was slightly more peaceful than Georgia in terms of internal peace, ranking 143rd compared to Georgia's 147th. However, Georgia had stronger Positive Peace foundations, ranking 70th on the PPI compared to Venezuela's 96th. At that time, both were categorised as hybrid regimes in the Economist Democracy Index.

FIGURE 5.8

Tipping points in Positive Peace deficit region

Tipping points in the negative and Positive Peace system can result in countries that are relatively close to each other on the PPI and GPI experiencing widely diverging trajectories.

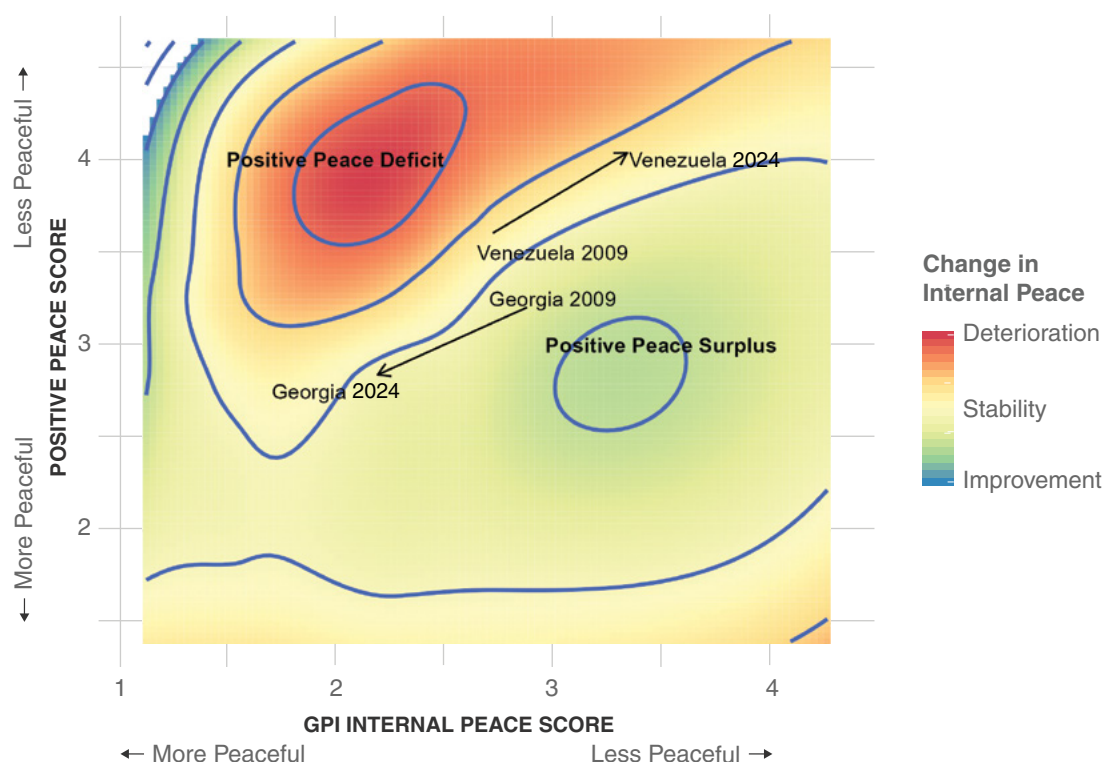


Source: IEP

FIGURE 5.9

Tipping points in the Positive Peace surplus region

Despite starting at a lower level of peacefulness in 2009, Georgia had become significantly more peaceful than Venezuela by 2024.



Source: IEP

Over the subsequent 15 years, their political trajectories diverged sharply. Georgia experienced a peaceful transfer of power through elections in 2012, which was widely seen as an important milestone in democratic competition. Despite this, Georgia's politics have since been marked by persistent polarisation, repeated waves of street mobilisation, and concerns about democratic backsliding.¹⁵ Against this backdrop, its Positive Peace score has improved, but not dramatically. As of 2024, it had moved up 21 places in the PPI to be ranked 49th.

Venezuela followed a very different path. In the 2010s, political power in the country became increasingly concentrated and opposition mobilisation was repressed. Over time, the erosion of checks and balances, electoral legitimacy disputes, and sustained political conflict contributed to a deterioration in democratic

governance, and Venezuela is now commonly classified as an authoritarian regime.¹⁶

In the phase plane, Georgia's stronger Positive Peace positioned it closer to the region in which subsequent improvements in internal peace are more commonly observed. By 2024, Venezuela had deteriorated in internal peace, while Georgia had improved markedly. Georgia was ranked 70th in internal peace in 2024, while Venezuela received a dismal ranking of 145th.

This comparison also highlights the significance of shocks. A shock can push a country from its current trajectory into another region of the phase plane. If a country experiences a shock that moves it closer to the Positive Peace deficit region, it can shift from a pathway tending toward Sustainable Peace to one that increases the risk of falling into a Conflict Trap.

Section 6

Development Pathways for Mid-Peace Countries



Key Findings

- Different Pillars are most constraining at different levels of peace: *Sound Business Environment* and *Good Relations with Neighbours* for low-peace countries; *Well-Functioning Government* and *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* for mid-peace countries; and *Equitable Distribution of Resources* and *Well-Functioning Government* for high-peace countries.
- The largest deteriorations in internal peace since 2008 have occurred among countries with mid-level peace outcomes.
- Because these countries are neither entrenched in conflict nor securely in sustainable peace, the central policy question is which Positive Peace Pillars should be prioritised to reduce the risk of deterioration.
- Correlations between internal peace and Positive Peace indicators are markedly weaker for mid-peace countries, and transitions are non-linear.
- *Well-Functioning Government*, *Acceptance of the Rights of Others*, and *Low Levels of Corruption* play a disproportionately important enabling role for mid-peace countries. Strengthening any of these Pillars reduces structural barriers and unlocks gains across the remaining Pillars.
- *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* stand out as structural bottlenecks within this group. They have deteriorated on average among mid-peace countries since 2009, and sustained year-on-year improvement in them is comparatively rare.
- Governance and anti-corruption gains are most valuable when they unlock parallel progress across the full set of Pillars. Unbalanced gains, in which governance improves but other Pillars do not, can leave countries vulnerable to renewed deterioration in internal peace.
- *Well-Functioning Government* retains its relative importance across virtually all levels of Positive Peace, while *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* declines in importance as countries advance, reflecting the fact that high-peace countries already exhibit strong levels of respect for rights.

The previous section established that Positive Peace and internal peace co-evolve, and that countries in the mid-peace transition zone are particularly exposed to tipping points where small shocks can produce sharply divergent trajectories. This section asks which specific Pillars mid-peace countries should prioritise to keep them on a sustainable peace trajectory and help their economies flourish.

In this section, mid-peace countries are defined in two complementary ways, reflecting the two indices the analysis draws on. The first is based on GPI internal peace score. Mid-peace countries are those occupying the middle of the internal peace distribution, the 61st to 150th ranked countries. This is the definition used in the correlation analysis that follows. The second usage of middle-level peacefulness is based on Positive Peace and refers to countries with moderate levels of structural resilience. This is the definition used in the constraints analysis below, as well as in the case studies, which assesses which Pillars most limit further progress for countries at this stage of development.

The constraints analysis identifies *Well-Functioning Government*, *Acceptance of the Rights of Others*, and *Low Levels of Corruption* as the most constraining for this group. The case studies that follow, Timor-Leste and Indonesia, examine how sustained gains in governance and corruption control can be achieved in practice, with Indonesia's broader experience also showing the limits of governance-only progress when not accompanied by parallel gains across the other Pillars.

The most peaceful countries in the world all perform strongly across all eight Pillars of Positive Peace. In these societies, institutional capacity, social cohesion, economic foundations, and governance quality reinforce one another, creating a stable environment in which violence is less likely to emerge. At the other end of the spectrum, the least peaceful countries tend to exhibit widespread weaknesses across most, if not all of the Pillars, reflecting deep-seated fragility and limited resilience to shocks.

Between these two extremes sits a large group of countries with mid-range levels of Positive Peace. Unlike high- or low-Positive Peace countries, these countries display far greater internal variation. They typically possess a mix of strengths and weaknesses across the Pillars, rather than a uniformly strong or weak peace architecture. This heterogeneity makes their peace trajectories more uncertain and their policy challenges more complex.

This section examines how Positive Peace evolves as countries move towards higher or lower levels of peacefulness. It explores how the Pillars of Positive Peace and their underlying indicators improve or deteriorate across different stages of peace development, and how these changes interact with outcomes measured by the Global Peace Index (GPI). In doing so, the section seeks to identify which Pillars and indicators play a disproportionate role in shaping transitions towards greater peacefulness among countries in the middle of the peace distribution.

This focus is particularly important because, over the history of the GPI, the largest deteriorations in internal peace have been recorded among countries with mid-level peace outcomes. These countries are often neither entrenched in conflict nor firmly embedded in sustainable peace, making them especially vulnerable to political instability, economic shocks, and security crises. Yet standard correlation analysis offers limited guidance for this group. As a result, a central policy question emerges: for countries in this middle range, which Pillars of Peace should be prioritised to reduce the risk of deterioration and support sustained improvements in peace?

The relationship between internal peace, as measured by the GPI, and the eight Pillars of Positive Peace provides an initial point of insight. This relationship is not uniform; it varies systematically depending on a country's level of Positive Peace. Table 6.1 presents the correlations between internal peace and each of the eight Pillars across high-, mid-, and low-peace groupings.

The transition to high Positive Peace is gradual. As countries become more peaceful, correlations between internal peace and the Pillars strengthen, reflecting the increasingly reinforcing role that Positive Peace plays in sustaining low levels of violence. Among high-peace countries, all eight Pillars are strongly correlated with internal peace, underscoring the importance of broad-based institutional and social strength. Among low-peace countries, by contrast, only a subset of Pillars shows strong correlations, reflecting the dominance of acute insecurity and institutional breakdown.

For mid-peace countries, however, the pattern changes markedly. Correlations are substantially weaker, with only two Pillars, *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* and *Low Levels of Corruption*, exhibiting at least moderate correlations across all three levels of peacefulness. This weakening of correlations highlights the non-linear and unstable nature of peace dynamics in the middle range, and

TABLE 6.1

Correlations between Positive Peace and internal peace in high-, mid-, and low-peace countries, 2024

Acceptance of the Rights of Others and *Low Levels of Corruption* are the only Pillars that have at least moderate correlations across all three levels of peacefulness.

Pillar	High-Peace	Mid-Peace	Low-Peace
High Levels of Human Capital	0.76	0.00	0.08
Acceptance of the Rights of Others	0.70	0.34	0.55
Well-Functioning Government	0.66	0.16	0.56
Low Levels of Corruption	0.65	0.29	0.61
Sound Business Environment	0.61	-0.13	0.21
Equitable Distribution of Resources	0.58	-0.08	0.11
Free Flow of Information	0.50	0.07	0.31
Good Relations with Neighbours	0.44	0.06	0.51

Source: IEP

points to the need for more nuanced, systems-based approaches to policy prioritisation.

The same dynamic is apparent when looking at the underlying indicators of the Positive Peace Pillars. Very few of the Positive Peace Index (PPI) indicators show a strong correlation with internal peace in mid-peace countries. Table 6.2 reports correlations between each of the 24 indicators of Positive Peace to the GPI internal peace score for different levels of peace.

To explore this further, the analysis is disaggregated into overlapping groupings of 60 countries, with each group starting and ending ten places apart in the GPI internal peace rankings. This approach provides a more granular view of how the relationship between Positive Peace indicators and internal peace evolves as countries move through different stages of peacefulness. Rather than treating peace transitions as discrete jumps, it allows for the identification of thresholds at which particular Pillars and indicators begin to matter more consistently.

Table 6.2 shows how these correlations progress across successive ranking bands. Some Pillars become more salient only once countries reach

higher levels of internal peace. For example, *Equitable Distribution of Resources* becomes increasingly important from an Internal Peace ranking of around 100 or better, while *High Levels of Human Capital* shows stronger and more consistent correlations from approximately rank 90 or better. This indicates that the contribution of different Pillars to peace outcomes is stage-dependent, with their relative importance shifting as countries move along the peace spectrum.

What is most striking, however, is the behaviour of the correlations across the broad middle of the rankings. In Table 6.2, the blue shaded area corresponding to relatively strong correlations contracts sharply and almost disappears across the 61–120 and 91–150 ranking bands. This range contains the majority of countries commonly described as mid-peace. The weakening of correlations across this zone reinforces the earlier finding that, for mid-peace countries, internal peace outcomes are not closely or consistently aligned with individual Positive Peace Pillars or indicators. Instead, peace dynamics in this range appear more unstable, contingent, and sensitive to short-term political and security factors.

TABLE 6.2

Correlations between GPI internal peace scores and Positive Peace Pillars and indicators, by peace level ranges, 2024

The relationship between Positive Peace indicators and internal peace is strongest among highly peaceful countries and weakest among mid-peace countries, indicating a non-linear dynamic. Correlations above $r = 0.3$ are highlighted.

Positive Peace Indicators	1 to 60	11 to 70	21 to 80	31 to 90	41 to 100	51 to 110	61 to 120	71 to 130	81 to 140	91 to 150	101 to 160
Acceptance of the Rights of Others	0.80	0.66	0.63	0.54	0.48	0.29	0.22	0.19	0.17	0.21	0.50
Exclusion by socio-economic group	0.68	0.53	0.54	0.46	0.42	0.32	0.28	0.13	0.09	0.07	0.38
Gender inequality	0.70	0.66	0.61	0.53	0.39	0.26	0.19	0.26	-0.01	0.09	0.31
Group grievance	0.52	0.31	0.23	0.17	0.20	0.03	-0.01	0.03	0.28	0.29	0.49
Equitable Distribution of Resources	0.72	0.67	0.62	0.47	0.31	0.22	0.09	0.19	0.16	0.24	0.34
Education and income inequality	0.56	0.57	0.50	0.41	0.26	0.16	0.06	0.21	0.03	0.12	0.11
Equality of opportunity	0.63	0.56	0.56	0.28	0.15	0.20	0.05	0.01	0.27	0.28	0.45
Inequality-adjusted life expectancy	0.67	0.61	0.55	0.50	0.33	0.18	0.11	0.21	0.08	0.15	0.24
Free Flow of Information	0.74	0.67	0.57	0.45	0.22	0.18	0.24	0.28	0.21	0.22	0.35
Freedom of the press	0.55	0.50	0.40	0.15	0.05	0.19	0.15	0.13	0.22	0.05	0.24
Quality of information	0.65	0.52	0.42	0.33	0.14	0.11	0.10	0.10	0.18	0.17	0.30
Telecom infrastructure index (internet/mobile/broadband)	0.54	0.47	0.37	0.38	0.21	0.09	0.25	0.32	0.09	0.22	0.22
Good Relations with Neighbours	0.62	0.51	0.59	0.52	0.35	0.31	0.23	0.16	0.28	0.33	0.43
Freedom to trade internationally	0.61	0.57	0.55	0.54	0.40	0.32	0.06	0.10	0.14	0.27	0.22
International tourism	0.48	0.40	0.52	0.42	0.10	-0.01	0.15	0.11	0.12	0.33	0.25
Law to support equal treatment of population segments	0.48	0.36	0.37	0.28	0.21	0.27	0.23	0.08	0.30	0.17	0.44
High Levels of Human Capital	0.79	0.73	0.64	0.51	0.37	0.17	0.17	0.27	0.04	0.02	0.17
Healthy life expectancy (HALE)	0.72	0.63	0.54	0.50	0.32	0.15	0.16	0.28	0.07	0.11	0.18
Researchers in R&D	0.73	0.65	0.55	0.45	0.34	0.17	0.27	0.24	-0.11	-0.08	0.00
Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)	0.63	0.63	0.55	0.34	0.25	0.07	-0.04	0.11	0.13	0.01	0.17
Low Levels of Corruption	0.82	0.65	0.57	0.45	0.42	0.34	0.34	0.21	0.27	0.23	0.39
Control of corruption	0.83	0.61	0.51	0.44	0.35	0.40	0.50	0.32	0.25	0.15	0.34
Factionalised elites	0.72	0.52	0.42	0.29	0.34	0.14	0.11	0.11	0.29	0.32	0.48
Public sector theft	0.76	0.64	0.58	0.48	0.43	0.32	0.23	0.10	0.11	0.04	0.11
Sound Business Environment	0.81	0.73	0.58	0.49	0.36	0.16	0.24	0.24	0.01	0.10	0.29
Financial institutions index	0.62	0.60	0.47	0.43	0.28	0.07	0.21	0.15	-0.14	-0.07	0.07
GDP per capita	0.82	0.73	0.58	0.48	0.25	-0.05	0.05	0.26	-0.03	0.14	0.30
Regulatory quality	0.81	0.69	0.56	0.46	0.42	0.39	0.35	0.20	0.17	0.17	0.33
Well-Functioning Government	0.87	0.70	0.61	0.45	0.31	0.37	0.42	0.24	0.23	0.19	0.40
Government effectiveness	0.84	0.67	0.53	0.43	0.37	0.28	0.42	0.28	0.23	0.33	0.48
Government openness and transparency	0.64	0.44	0.42	0.21	0.10	0.33	0.28	0.08	0.14	-0.02	0.22
Rule of law	0.90	0.77	0.63	0.51	0.36	0.33	0.44	0.32	0.29	0.29	0.48

Source: IEP

The correlation patterns in Table 6.2 provide strong empirical support for the phase-plane analysis in the previous section. Positive Peace indicators are most strongly correlated with internal peace among highly peaceful countries, with these relationships weakening markedly across mid-peace countries before, in some cases, strengthening again among the least peaceful states. This non-linear pattern is consistent with the presence of attractor basins in peace dynamics: in the Sustainable Peace region, strong Positive Peace foundations and low violence reinforce one another, producing stable correlations, while in the mid-peace transition region, greater exposure to shocks and instability weakens the observable link between structural resilience and violence outcomes. As countries approach the Conflict Trap, reinforcing feedback loops between institutional breakdown and high violence reassert themselves, strengthening correlations for indicators such as *rule of law* and *group grievance*, as well as the *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillar.

As such, the weak correlations in mid-peace countries should not be interpreted as evidence that Positive Peace is unimportant. Rather, they reflect a transition zone characterised by non-linearity, competing forces, and heightened sensitivity to

shocks. In this context, traditional correlation-based approaches offer limited guidance for policy prioritisation.

To address this, the analysis in the following subsection applies a process of statistical inference to identify which Pillars act as the most significant constraints on progress for mid-peace countries. This approach highlights *Well-Functioning Government*, *Acceptance of the Rights of Others*, and *Low Levels of Corruption* as critical focus areas for transitions towards greater peace. These Pillars are among the most constraining in relation to other Pillars of Positive Peace, meaning that weaknesses in these areas are more likely to limit broader system-wide improvements.

These three Pillars also emerge as primary drivers of Positive Peace improvements among mid-peace countries. Within this group, *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* warrant particular attention, as they exhibit the lowest incidence of sustained improvement across the time series of the PPI. Their persistent weakness suggests that they represent structural bottlenecks in peace transitions, constraining the pace, durability, and breadth of Positive Peace gains in countries situated in the middle of the peace distribution.

A Constraints-Based View of Mid-Peace Transitions

Higher levels of Positive Peace create conditions in which societies are better able to realise their economic, social, and political potential. Strong Positive Peace foundations enhance resilience, improve adaptability to shocks, strengthen institutions, and expand opportunities for individuals and communities. As countries move towards higher levels of peacefulness, the eight Pillars of Positive Peace increasingly operate as a mutually reinforcing system, in which progress in one Pillar supports and amplifies gains in others.

However, societies face distinct challenges at different stages of peace and development. As demonstrated in the preceding analysis, simple correlation analysis does not provide clear or actionable insights for countries in the middle of the peace distribution. This reflects a broader limitation of statistical approaches: correlation does not imply causation. While correlations can signal the presence of relationships, they do not explain how or why transitions in peace occur, nor do they reveal the mechanisms through which improvements in Positive Peace are sustained or constrained.

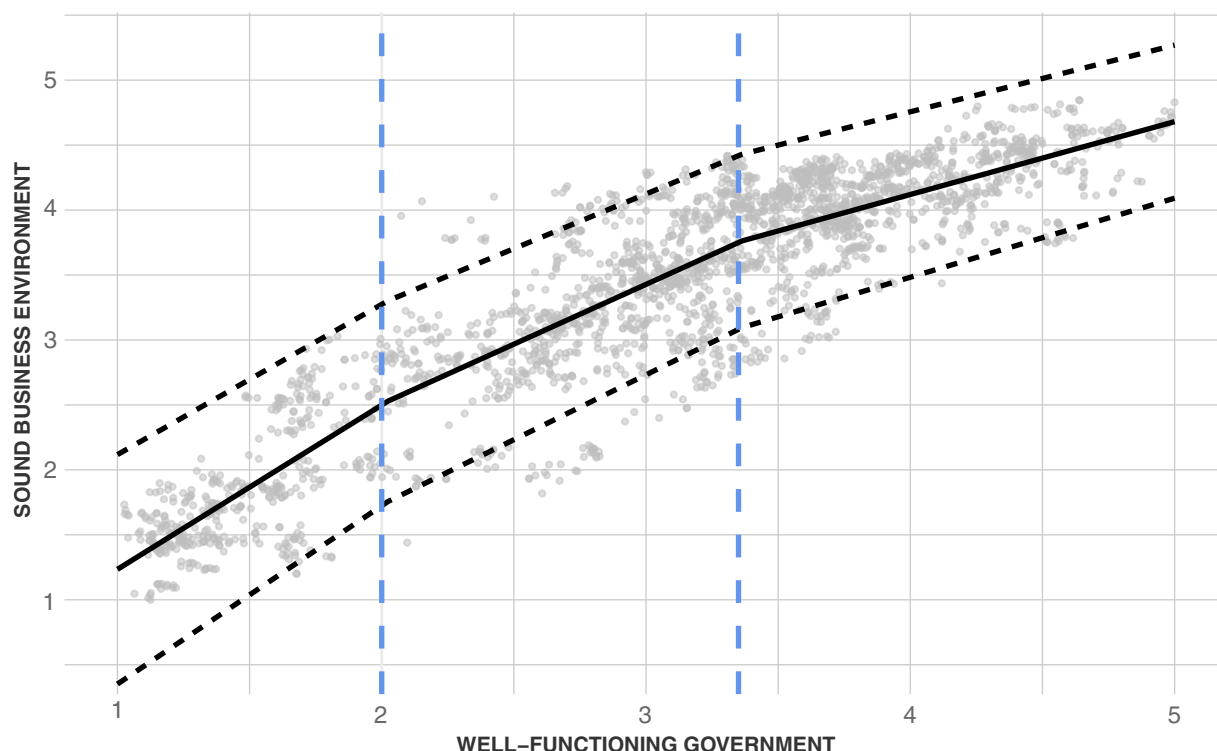
Given this limitation, and the complexity of peace as a social system, IEP adopts a systems-based approach to examine how transitions in Positive Peace take place. Rather than focusing solely on the direct relationship between individual Pillars and internal peace outcomes, this approach examines how the Pillars interact with one another at different levels of Positive Peace. In practice, this means identifying where progress in one Pillar is enabled, limited, or constrained by weaknesses in others.

Figure 6.1 illustrates this interaction-based perspective by showing the relationship between *Well-Functioning Government* and *Sound Business Environment* across all country-year observations since 2009. The figure shows a clear positive association, but one that is uneven and bounded rather than linear. Certain combinations of outcomes cluster together, while others are rarely observed, indicating that the relationship between Pillars tends to be structurally constrained.

FIGURE 6.1

Non-linear relationships of the *Sound Business Environment* and *Well-Functioning Government* Pillars of Positive Peace, 2009–2024

The relationships between Pillars vary at different levels of Positive Peace.



Source: IEP

At lower and higher levels of Positive Peace, the range of feasible outcomes tends to be more tightly bounded, producing more predictable combinations of Pillar performance. In contrast, countries in the mid-range of Positive Peace exhibit substantially greater dispersion. Similar levels of performance in one Pillar are associated with a wide range of outcomes in another, reflecting a system with fewer binding constraints but greater instability and sensitivity to shocks.

Importantly, these patterns do not imply that improvements in one Pillar directly cause improvements in another. Instead, they reveal the presence of structural bounds within the system. Certain outcomes tend not to occur unless minimum conditions in other Pillars are met. For example, very strong performance in *Sound Business Environment* is rarely observed in the absence of a baseline level of *Well-Functioning Government*. Strong governance performance without corresponding economic or social foundations is uncommon.

Figure 6.1 therefore serves a diagnostic purpose. It illustrates why correlation-based approaches are insufficient in mid-range Positive Peace contexts and motivates a shift towards identifying constraints within the system. By examining how tightly one Pillar limits the feasible range of outcomes in others, it becomes possible to infer

which Pillars play a more central role in shaping Positive Peace trajectories.

Figure 6.2 builds directly on this insight. Rather than examining individual Pillar relationships in isolation, it aggregates constraint-based relationships across all eight Pillars to estimate their relative importance at different levels of Positive Peace. The figure shows how the Pillars that most constrain progress change as Positive Peace improves, highlighting that the drivers of transition are not constant across the peace development spectrum.

For countries at low levels of Positive Peace, economic and external-facing Pillars such as *Sound Business Environment* and *Good Relations with Neighbours* tend to play a more prominent role in shaping feasible outcomes. In the mid-range of Positive Peace, institutional and social Pillars, particularly *Well-Functioning Government*, *Acceptance of the Rights of Others*, and *Low Levels of Corruption*, emerge as the most constraining. At higher levels of Positive Peace, the relative importance of the Pillars begins to converge, reflecting the fact that highly peaceful countries tend to perform strongly across all eight Pillars.

The results, summarised in Figure 6.2 and Table 6.3, show that strengthening the most constraining Pillars not only improves Positive Peace directly, but also reduces barriers to progress across

FIGURE 6.2

Relative importance of the Pillars as Positive Peace increases

The importance of the Pillars to peaceful transitions changes based on a country's level of Positive Peace.



Source: IEP

the remaining Pillars. In this way, targeted improvements can unlock broader system-wide gains. The clustering of Pillar importance among high Positive Peace countries likely reflects the mature, reinforcing nature of peace systems at this stage, where no single Pillar dominates because all are already well developed.

This framework is particularly relevant for countries in the mid-range of Positive Peace. The slightly greater variance observed in Figure 6.1 indicates that these countries face multiple possible pathways, but also that progress is more fragile and uneven. Figure 6.2 shows that, without addressing the most constraining Pillars, gains in other areas may fail to translate into durable improvements in overall Positive Peace or internal peace. Identifying and alleviating these constraints therefore becomes central to understanding how mid-range Positive Peace countries can transition towards more sustainable and resilient peace outcomes.

Government Performance and Corruption in Countries with Mid-range Positive Peace

As shown in Table 6.3, the analysis indicates that *Well-Functioning Government*, *Acceptance of the Rights of Others*, and *Low Levels of Corruption* are the most important Pillars for facilitating broader social and institutional progress in countries with mid-levels of Positive Peace. These Pillars exert a disproportionate influence on other areas of Positive Peace, meaning that improvements in them are more likely to reduce structural barriers and unlock gains across the remaining Pillars.

Within this group, *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* warrant particular attention. Three considerations support this

conclusion. First, long-term trends show that *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* has, on average, improved in mid-Positive Peace countries since 2009, while both *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* have deteriorated over the same period. This divergence suggests that institutional capacity and integrity are weakening precisely in the countries where they are most needed to support stable peace transitions.

Second, sustained improvements in these two Pillars are comparatively rare. Year-on-year progress in *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* is less common than in most other Pillars of Positive Peace, indicating that gains in these areas are harder to achieve and more difficult to maintain. This persistence of weakness reinforces their role as structural bottlenecks within the Positive Peace system.

Third, the countries that have succeeded in strengthening *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* exhibit markedly better peace outcomes. Among mid-range Positive Peace countries, those that improved in these two Pillars recorded the largest average gains in both Positive Peace and internal peace over time. By contrast, countries in which these Pillars deteriorated experienced substantially weaker peace outcomes, highlighting the pivotal role they play in shaping overall peace trajectories.

For these reasons, this section focuses on *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption*, examining how progress in these areas has been achieved in practice. This emphasis does not imply that mid-Positive Peace countries should focus exclusively on these Pillars. Positive Peace is inherently systemic, and sustained peace improvements require balanced progress across all eight Pillars. The experience of Indonesia illustrates this point. Despite sustained gains in governance

TABLE 6.3
Relative importance of the Positive Peace Pillars across levels of Positive Peace
As Positive Peace improves, the Pillars that most constrain further progress vary.

	Low-Positive Peace Countries	Mid-Positive Peace Countries	High-Positive Peace Countries
Highest Importance	Sound Business Environment	Well-Functioning Government	Equitable Distribution of Resources
Very High Importance	Good Relations with Neighbours	Acceptance of the Rights of Others	Well-Functioning Government
High importance	Acceptance of the Rights of Others	Low Levels of Corruption	High Levels of Human Capital
Moderate importance	Well-Functioning Government	Equitable Distribution of Resources	Free Flow of Information

Source: IEP

and corruption control, Indonesia has experienced declines in *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* and a corresponding deterioration in its GPI ranking, underscoring the risks of unbalanced progress.

Trends in the Pillars over time provide further insight into why countries in the mid-range of Positive Peace are particularly vulnerable to deterioration. Figure 6.3 shows that two of the three Pillars identified as most constraining for this group, *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption*, have, on average, deteriorated between 2009 and 2024. This decline shows a weakening of institutional capacity and integrity among countries already situated in a fragile transition zone.

By contrast, *Acceptance of the Rights of Others*, while identified earlier as a constraining Pillar for countries in this range, has shown modest improvement over the same period. This divergence highlights an important asymmetry: gains in social inclusion and rights have not been matched by corresponding improvements in *government effectiveness* or *control of corruption*. At the same time, the Pillar *Good Relations with Neighbours* has experienced a pronounced deterioration. Although this Pillar does not rank among the top three most constraining for mid-range Positive Peace countries in Table 6.3, its sustained decline remains a cause for concern, as external relations can amplify domestic vulnerabilities and increase exposure to geopolitical and security shocks.

Importance of Sustained Growth in Critical Pillars

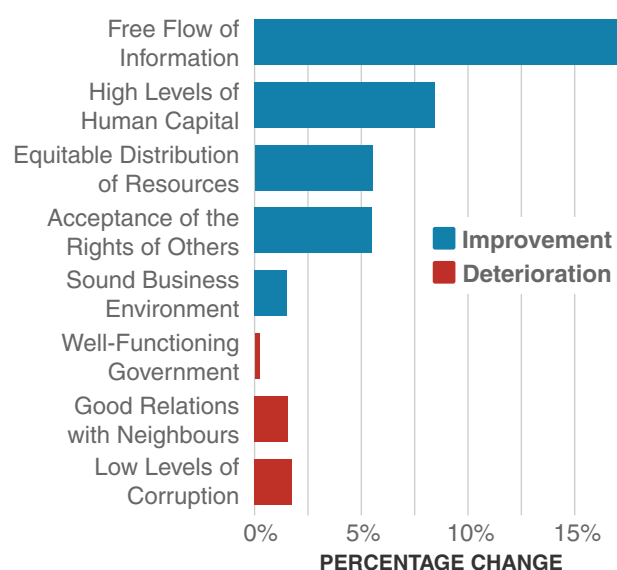
While aggregate changes over time provide an important overview, understanding the sustainability of improvements is equally critical. Small but consistent year-on-year gains can accumulate into substantial long-term progress, whereas volatile patterns, where periods of improvement are followed by deterioration, tend to stall or reverse peace gains.

To capture this dynamic, sustained improvement in a Pillar is defined as five or more consecutive years of growth along the Positive Peace Index time series. Figure 6.4 shows that some Pillars are far more likely than others to exhibit sustained improvement. In particular, *Equitable Distribution of Resources*, encompassing income, health, and opportunity, frequently shows long runs of consistent improvement, reflecting the cumulative nature of social and economic development.

FIGURE 6.3

Change in Positive Peace Pillars in mid-range Positive Peace countries, 2009–2024

Good Relations with Neighbours, *Low Levels of Corruption*, and *Well-Functioning Government* deteriorated over the past 15 years.



Source: IEP

At the other end of the spectrum, sustained improvements in *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* are notably rare. From 2009 to 2024, only three countries, China, Indonesia, and Timor-Leste, recorded periods of extended year-on-year improvements in both Pillars. This rarity underscores the structural difficulty of reforming governance systems and reducing corruption, and it reinforces the finding that these Pillars act as persistent bottlenecks in Positive Peace transitions.

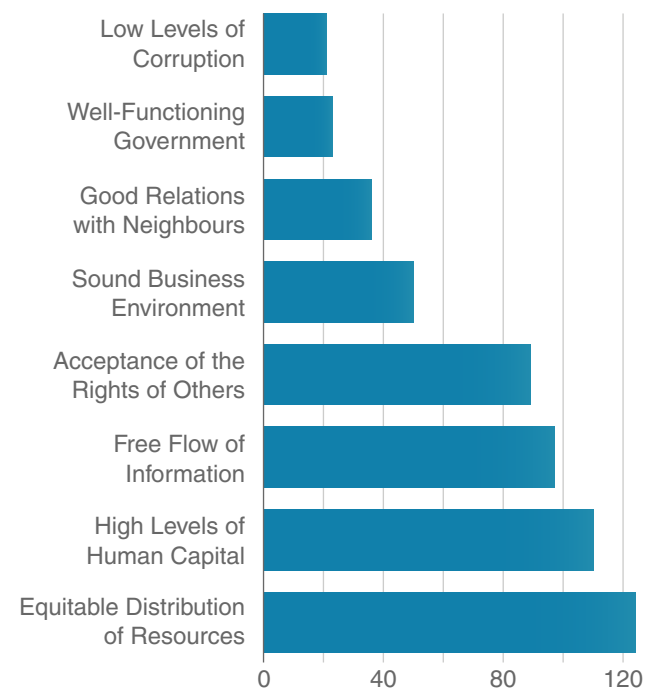


Strong Positive Peace foundations enhance resilience, improve adaptability to shocks, strengthen institutions, and expand opportunities for individuals and communities.

FIGURE 6.4

Number of countries with five or more years of sustained improvements, by Positive Peace Pillar, 2009–2024

Low Levels of Corruption, Well-Functioning Government, and Good Relations with Neighbours show the lowest incidence of sustained improvement.



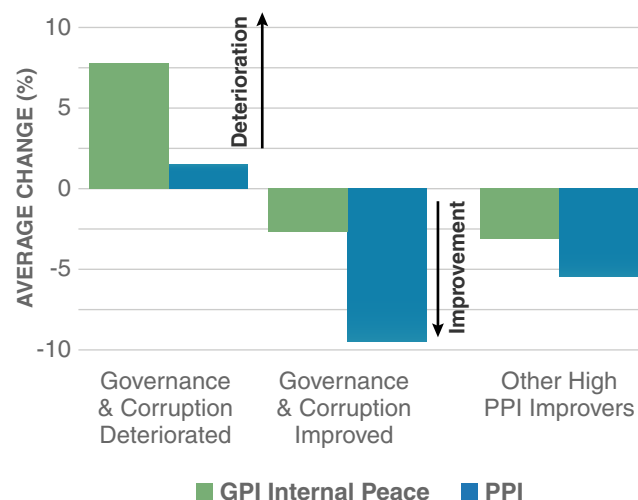
Source: IEP

The consequences of deterioration or improvement in these Pillars are substantial. Among countries in the mid-range of Positive Peace, declines in *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* are associated with marked reductions in peacefulness. Figure 6.5 contrasts average changes in Positive Peace and internal peace between three groups: countries where these two Pillars improved, countries where they deteriorated, and countries that achieved the largest overall improvements in Positive Peace over the 2009–2024 period.

FIGURE 6.5

Changes in Positive Peace and internal peace, mid-Positive Peace countries, 2009–2024

Countries that improved in *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* recorded gains comparable to or exceeding the top Positive Peace improvers, while countries that deteriorated in these Pillars experienced significant declines.



Source: IEP

The differences between these groups are noteworthy. In countries where *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* deteriorated, both Positive Peace and internal peace declined, with the deterioration in internal peace particularly pronounced. By contrast, countries that improved in these two Pillars recorded clear gains in both Positive Peace and internal peace over the same period. Other countries in the mid-range of Positive Peace that achieved large overall improvements in Positive Peace also experienced increases in internal peace, with outcomes broadly on par with those that strengthened governance effectiveness and reduced corruption.

These results indicate that improvement in *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* is strongly associated with positive trajectories in both Positive Peace and internal peace, and that deterioration in these areas is linked to disproportionate setbacks in peacefulness. While gains in other parts of the Positive Peace system can also support improvements in peace outcomes, sustained weakness or decline in governance capacity and institutional integrity appears to significantly undermine progress, even when advances are made elsewhere.

Case Studies: Sustained Governance and Integrity Gains at Moderate Positive Peace Levels

This section presents case studies of Timor-Leste and Indonesia, two countries situated in the middle range of Positive Peace that have achieved sustained, year-on-year improvements in the *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillars since 2009. Such extended improvements across these Pillars are relatively uncommon among mid-range countries over the history of the PPI, making these cases particularly instructive.

Both countries continue to face significant and evolving challenges. Indonesia has experienced a decline in its ranking on the GPI in recent years, likely reflecting rising group grievances and social tensions. Timor-Leste, meanwhile, has

seen increases in the proportion of *youth not in employment, education, or training (NEET)*, a factor that in other contexts has been associated with longer-term risks to peace and stability.

Despite these challenges, the two countries have been selected to illustrate pathways through which improvements in governance effectiveness and institutional integrity have been achieved in mid-range Positive Peace contexts. Their experiences highlight policy choices, institutional reforms, and social dynamics that may offer relevant insights for other countries seeking to strengthen governance and reduce corruption, even where structural constraints and social pressures persist.

Timor-Leste

Change in Overall PPI Score, 2009–2024	Change in PPI Ranking, 2009–2024	Change in Internal Peace Score, 2009–2024	Change in Internal Peace Ranking, 2009–2024
-0.216	-11	-0.037	-9
from 3.407 to 3.191	from 106 to 95	from 2.135 to 2.098	from 64 to 55

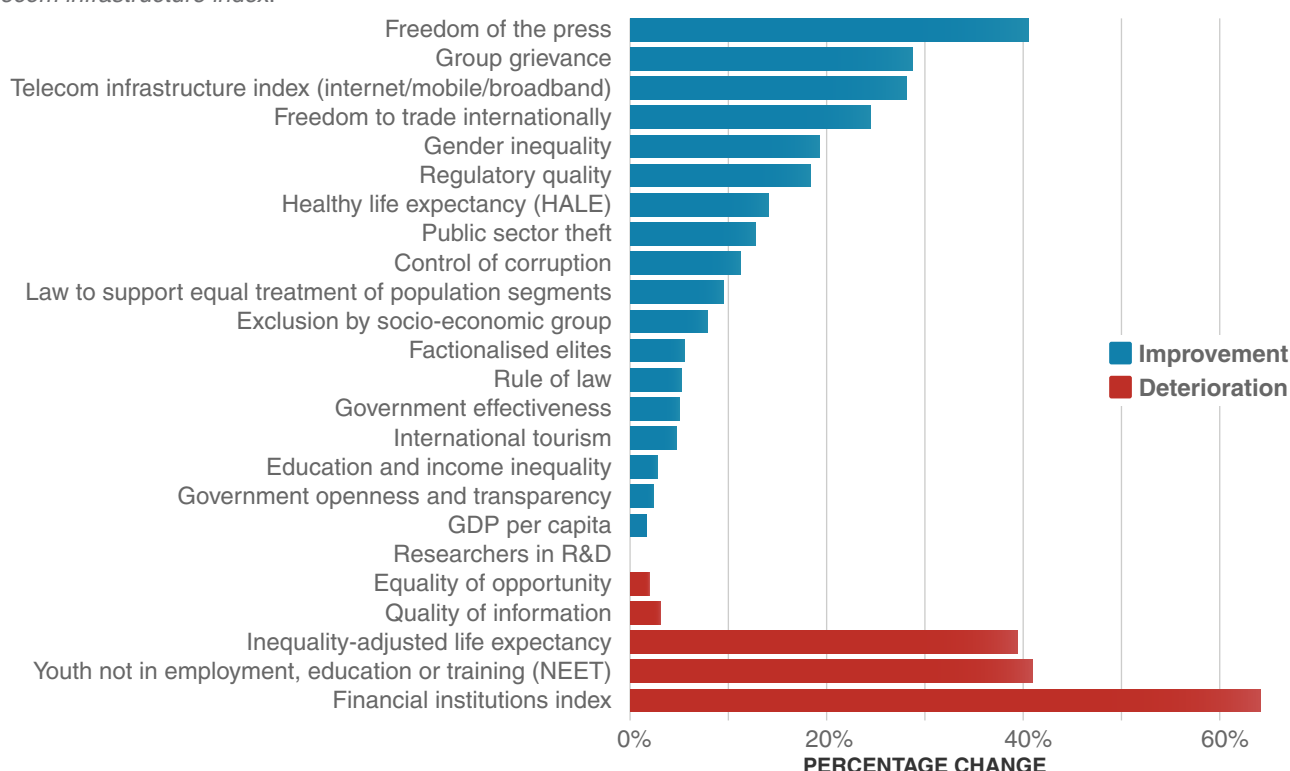
Timor-Leste is a small Southeast Asian nation that gained independence in 2002 after a prolonged period of conflict following Indonesia's occupation in 1975. Since independence, the country has focused on consolidating democratic governance, rebuilding public institutions, and strengthening social cohesion. Despite a relatively weak economic base, it has recorded one of the longest sustained runs of governance and anti-corruption improvement among mid-peace countries over the period analysed.

Since 2009, Timor-Leste has had 10 years of annual improvements in the *Well-Functioning Government* Pillar and 11 years of improvements in the *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillar. Figure 6.6 shows that these improvements coincided with gains in most of the other PPI indicators.

FIGURE 6.6

Change in PPI indicators in Timor-Leste, 2009–2024

Most Positive Peace indicators have improved in the past 15 years, led by *freedom of the press*, *group grievance*, and *telecom infrastructure index*.



Source: IEP

Positive Peace in Timor-Leste improved by over six per cent from 2009 to 2024. *Freedom of the press* improved by more than 40 per cent, contributing to a 23.9 per cent improvement in the *Free Flow of Information* Pillar. *Group grievance* and *gender inequality* improved by 28.8 and 19.3 per cent, respectively, supported by the Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation, traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms, and a national plan on gender-based violence.

Despite these gains, several indicators deteriorated over the period. The *financial institutions index* indicator deteriorated by 64 per cent, the largest decline of any indicator, reflecting the country's relatively nascent financial sector and limited access to financial products. The *youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)* indicator deteriorated by over 40 per cent over the period, with youth unemployment rising from under 20 per cent in 2009 to 29.1 per cent in 2022. The deterioration reflects limited job opportunities, a weak private sector, and heavy reliance on public-sector employment. *NEET* is widely regarded as a leading indicator for conflict, and the durability of Timor-Leste's peace trajectory will depend in part on addressing it.¹ *Inequality-adjusted life expectancy* also deteriorated by almost 40 per cent, pointing to a slow post-COVID-19 recovery and persistent disparities in access to healthcare between richer and poorer groups.

Corruption indicators have improved steadily over the period. *Control of corruption* and *public sector theft* both improved by more than 11 per cent, contributing to a 9.5 per cent improvement in the *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillar. The pathway has rested on three institutional planks. The 2010 establishment of the Anti-Corruption Commission, supported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, has steadily increased its investigative capacity and pursued cases at multiple levels of government.² New anti-corruption laws have introduced stricter regulations for public spending and procurement processes, supported by the Asian Development Bank.³ Civil society organisations and independent media have built public pressure for accountability through educational campaigns, budget participation, and investigative reporting on government activities.⁴

Timor-Leste's coordinated approach, combining institutional reform, legal action, civil society engagement, and media scrutiny, has laid a foundation for continued progress in transparency and accountability. The country's challenges around *NEET* and limited economic diversification remain significant, but the structural framework for governance and corruption control is considerably stronger than it was at independence.

Indonesia

Change in Overall PPI Score, 2009–2024	Change in PPI Ranking, 2009–2024	Change in Internal Peace Score, 2009–2024	Change in Internal Peace Ranking, 2009–2024
-0.260	-9	0.096	5
from 3.274 to 3.013	from 89 to 80	from 1.972 to 2.068	from 48 to 53

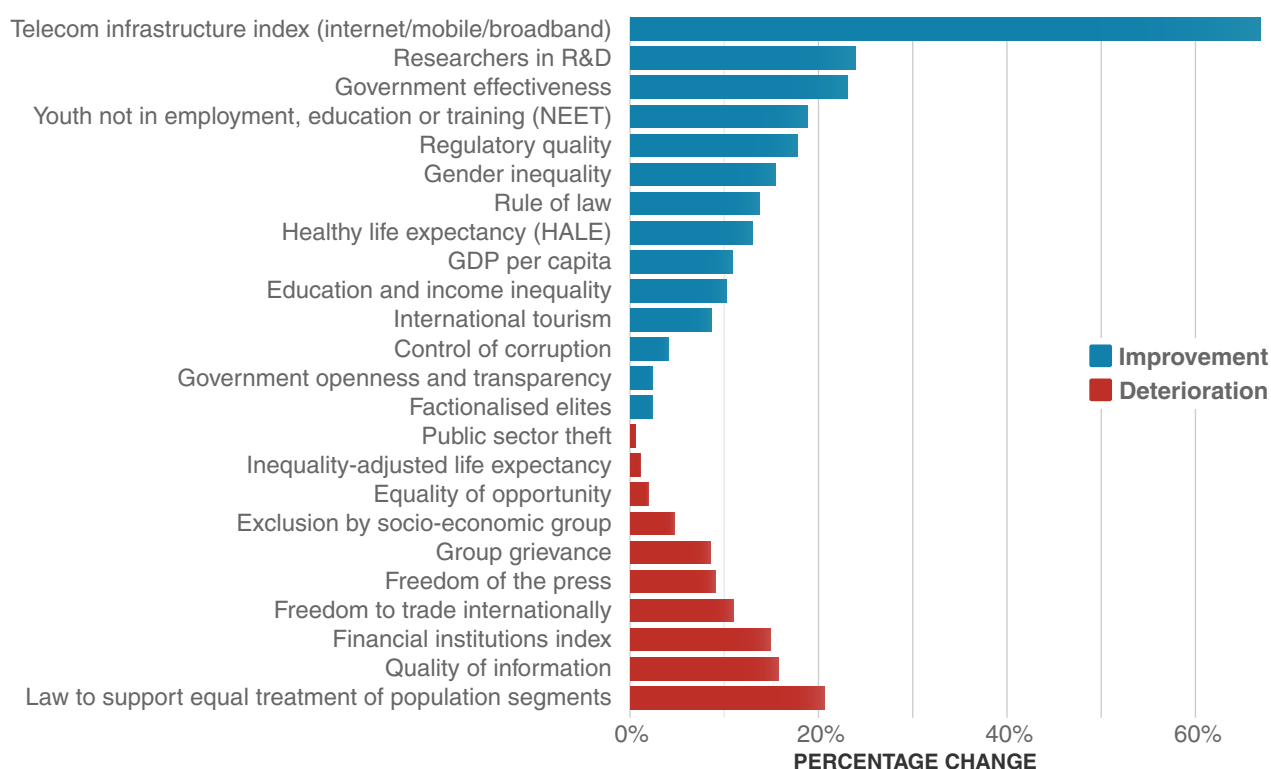
Indonesia is the world's third-largest democracy and the largest economy in Southeast Asia, with over 275 million people across more than 17,000 islands. Since transitioning from authoritarian rule in the late 1990s, the country has undertaken far-reaching political and institutional reforms toward democratic governance, decentralisation, and stronger institutional checks and balances.

Indonesia has recorded sustained year-on-year improvements in the *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* Pillars since 2009. Despite this, its internal peace ranking has fallen modestly over the period. Indonesia's experience therefore complicates the section's central finding by showing the limits of governance-only progress when not accompanied by parallel gains across the rest of the Positive Peace system.

FIGURE 6.7

Change in PPI indicators in Indonesia, 2009–2024

Indonesia's most significant improvement came in the *telecom infrastructure index* indicator, followed by *researchers in R&D* and *government effectiveness*.



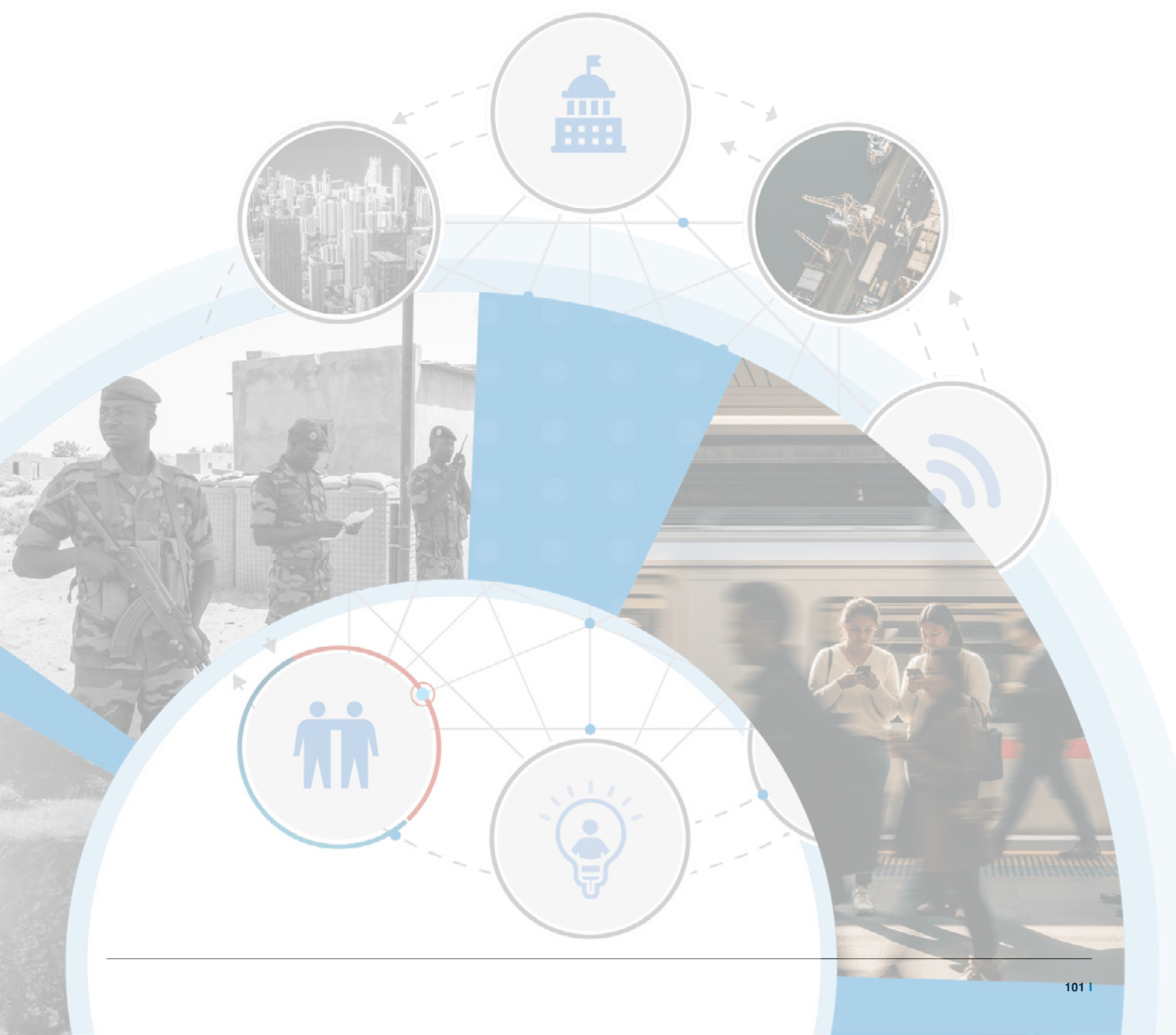
Source: IEP

Positive Peace in Indonesia improved by eight per cent between 2009 and 2024. The *Well-Functioning Government* Pillar improved by 13.9 per cent, supported by the digitalisation of public services, the streamlining of bureaucratic processes, and the Open Government Indonesia initiative, which expanded access to information on public spending and policy decisions.⁵ The fight against corruption, led by the Corruption Eradication Commission, has contributed to a measurable reduction in corruption indicators, although entrenched local-level networks continue to limit the reach of national reforms.⁶

These governance gains have been accompanied by deteriorations in the indicators that capture social inclusion and openness. *Law to support equal treatment of population segments* deteriorated by 20.6 per cent, the largest fall of any indicator, amid reported concerns about the treatment of minority communities, including in Papua.⁷ *Quality of information* deteriorated by 15.7 per cent between

2009 and 2024, a period over which observers documented the increased spread of false or misleading information. The *financial institutions index* indicator deteriorated by 14.9 per cent, reflecting persistent constraints on the depth of the financial sector and on access to financial services, with a large share of the population remaining underbanked.⁸

Indonesia's progress in governance and corruption control should not overshadow the deeper structural issues that persist. Improvements in *Well-Functioning Government* and *Low Levels of Corruption* are necessary but not sufficient for durable internal peace. Without parallel improvements in the indicators that capture social cohesion and the openness of the information environment, governance gains can be neutralised. Indonesia's broader trajectory will depend on whether reform can extend from the institutional core into the social and information domains.⁹



Section 7

The Halo Framework: A Systems-Based Approach to Analysing Societies



Halo is IEP's framework for applying systems thinking to the analysis of societies. It complements Positive Peace by providing the theoretical understanding of how societal systems operate, how they can be mapped and modelled, and how they evolve over time and under different conditions.

As with other social phenomena, peace arises out of the dynamic interaction of a wide array of societal forces and patterns of collective behaviour. Both measuring and building peace necessitate an approach that explains the complex interplay of these social dynamics. Because of this, IEP is increasingly engaged in advancing its analytic work in the domain of systems thinking, specifically through the Halo framework.

Positive Peace and Halo are complementary but have different uses for understanding and applying systems thinking to societal challenges. Positive Peace provides a measurement platform and actionable approach that can be used by any level of society to understand and alter societal systems, whereas Halo provides the theoretical understanding of how societal systems operate and how to map and model system dynamics over time and under different conditions. For a more complete understanding of the relationship of Positive Peace and Halo, refer to IEP's Halo, *Positive Peace and Systems Thinking* report.

What is Systems Thinking?

Systems thinking represents a potent framework for analysing complex phenomena, offering a means to understand the networks of relationships within systems. Derived from the study of biological, ecological, and mechanical systems, the approach has been employed in fields ranging from business management to public health, from manufacturing logistics to urban planning, though for social systems, systems thinking is still in its early stages of development.

The strength of systems thinking lies in its capacity to reveal patterns, interdependencies, and feedback loops, and thereby model outcomes based on systemic interactions. It offers a particularly useful approach for understanding how changes in one part of a system can have flow-on effects throughout the system, allowing for better decision-making and policymaking.

This is facilitated by understanding that such systems have momentum and direction. They can be described as moving in virtuous or vicious cycles,

with stimuli and shocks having cascading effects and social feedback loops amplifying the drivers of either progression or deterioration. By recognising the dynamics that lock systems into such cycles, the cycles can be redirected, either through small-scale nudges or larger-scale reforms, to produce better social outcomes.

Systems thinking is central to IEP's conception of Halo and Positive Peace. It represents a holistic approach to understanding and solving complex problems by assessing them in terms of interconnected wholes, rather than breaking them down into isolated components. It is a way of analysing the world which entails focusing on the connections between the relationships and flows of the components of the system to understand the dynamics of the whole.

What is Halo?

Recognising the great promise of systems thinking, IEP is dedicated to advancing this approach in the analysis of societal systems. IEP employs the term Halo in reference to its efforts to apply systems thinking across a wide range of projects and analyses. The term Halo is used to capture the ways in which a systems-based approach encircles and illuminates IEP's body of work on the functioning of societies, particularly in relation to the analysis of social progress, including peacefulness, development, and societal resilience. Central to the Halo approach is the mapping of human systems, with the view of discovering their dynamic evolution and developing a practical approach to defining change.

Much in the same way that the operations of the human body cannot be perceived directly, but rather through measurements such as heart rate, temperature, and blood pressure, the operations of societies also cannot be perceived directly. Therefore, the word Halo was selected to indicate that the data and values that emanate from a societal system shed light on its underlying functioning.

To date, there are few holistic frameworks that explain how societal systems operate, and fewer that can be implemented. Halo helps fill this gap, providing a unique and practical theory of social change. With Halo, IEP draws on its robust experience in employing data to measure multifaceted social dynamics to bolster the evidence base for social systems analysis.

The Halo Process

In addition to this broad conception of Halo, IEP has also developed the Halo process as a methodology to map and assess the functioning of specific systems within societies. Drawing on the direct knowledge of stakeholders from within these systems as well as available quantitative data on the systems, the Halo process combines workshoping and computer-based modelling to evaluate system dynamics, with the view of testing assumptions, potential interventions, and resilience to changes.

The Halo process has been designed to be both practicable and comprehensive, allowing for the modelling and analysis of the behaviours and processes of specific components and subsystems while ultimately focusing on the overarching dynamics of the totality of a system. The process takes a building block approach, which enables users to mix and match different steps depending on their preferences, the type of analysis being undertaken, and the level of detail it requires.

The process involves mapping and gathering data, through which a system's interactions and flows are captured, simulated, and probed using a combination of stakeholder analysis and systems dynamics software. This process allows for the identification of the factors that create stability or instability within societal systems.

The strength of the Halo process is that it brings together and harmonises five key pathways to achieving a better understanding of social systems and to finding solutions to problems within them:

1. Identification: The process begins by clearly defining the question that the analysis will aim to answer, without which the process can become too wide ranging, leading to over-complication and the inability to produce practical outcomes.
2. Deliberation: Drawing on stakeholders' direct knowledge of a system, the process is grounded in a structured exercise of collective reflection and mapping of the bounds, key components, and connections within the system. This includes the identification of subsystems within it.
3. Theory: Deliberations are guided by the Halo conceptualisation of how societal systems function and operate.
4. Numbers: Before and during the deliberative process, hard data and informed best estimates are generated about the stocks, flows, and conditional relationships within a system.
5. Modelling: Based on the system mapping and figures settled on during theory-guided deliberations, the techniques of system dynamics modelling are employed to test assumptions, refine understanding of the relationships within the system, and simulate the impacts of potential interventions and unforeseen shocks.

In view of the depth of complexity and inherent unpredictability of human societies, IEP understands the limitations in extracting hard or immutable facts from social analysis of this kind. Therefore, the principal objective of Halo is to understand the key relationships that foster societal wellbeing and to glean actionable insights for the construction of more prosperous, resilient, and peaceful societies.

Conceptual Building Blocks for Systems Analysis

This section represents a summary of the key conceptual building blocks for engaging in the Halo process. It provides short definitions and explanations of constructs and ideas from systems thinking necessary to develop a schematic representation or model of a societal system within the Halo framework. For examples of how to use Halo to perform a systems mapping exercise, refer to the *Halo, Positive Peace and Systems Thinking* report.

System Bounds

Systems have boundaries. These boundaries can be described according to a geographic area or social grouping. For example, a system can be defined by a geographic area, such as a country, a state, or a forest. These types of geographic boundaries are the easiest to define. It is more difficult if the system is an ethnic group or a societal function. Societal functions include the education system, military, policing, or a local health system. It is best to approach these as simplistically as possible at first. Some questions that help are: what are the subsystems which lie within the system, and what are the legal frameworks affecting the system? For example, the health system consists of hospitals, doctors, pharmacists, government health departments, psychologists, etc. For the analysis, it may not consist of alternative medicines, aged care homes, or psychic healers. Sometimes it is helpful to stipulate what is not included in a system, as it makes for a simpler analysis.

Often, relations and flows can be confused as systems, for example a conflict is an exchange between two or more systemic groups. A conflict is not a social system, but a series of relationships and flows between systems.

Subsystems

Systems do not exist in a vacuum, as they form parts of larger systems. For example, states are systems that form part of a larger national system. However, they also include systems, such as education, policing, business associations, and others. Identifying the core systems, or subsystems, within the greater system provides the basis for understanding its dynamics.

To determine the importance of a system, consider the number of people within it, the number of people affected by it, the amount of money revolving within it, the number of relationships, or

the extent of the laws or regulations prevailing in or governing the system.

Interrelated Systems

Systems interact with other systems. This could be an adjacent country or district. It could be another ethnic group or an area of governance. For instance, the military, the police, the judiciary, and border control can all be seen as systems that interact with one another to achieve a certain objective. Another example could be a school which interacts with families, the education department, and local leaders to improve literacy rates in a community.

Direction or Momentum Within a System

Momentum is important as it helps explain the changing dynamics of the system or subsystem, including emergence, runaway feedback loops, decay, and positive functions. The data can be assessed individually or grouped. By grouping the data, the momentum of the overall system or subsystem can be ascertained. An example of this would be the Positive Peace Index, as it measures national systems and can be used to determine the momentum of a country, either towards or away from higher levels of functioning.

It is also beneficial to compare measures of a system to those of its neighbours. This gives insight into a system's relative strengths and weaknesses, as neighbouring systems should be the most similar. For example, countries on a given continent would likely be more comparable to each other than to countries on the other side of the world, and schools in the same district would likely be more comparable than those on different sides of the country.

Momentum is an important concept for systems analysis because it facilitates the extrapolation or forecasting of future states the system may find itself in. If those states are undesirable – according to the intent of the system – interventions should be designed to slow down and possibly invert the system's momentum in that area. Where the extrapolated future state is desirable, programs can be developed to reinforce a specific momentum and take advantage of it to nudge its subsystems into higher states of development.

Path Dependencies

Systems are path dependent. This means that the way a system will develop in the future from a given state depends on the path taken to reach that

state. Path dependency can be understood as the influence that a social system's history, memory, and cultural values exert on the future development of that society. These influences are expressed in the encoded norms within the system.

Encoded Norms

Encoded norms refer to the formal and informal rules within a society which govern collective behaviour, often helping to maintain the system in a stable state. They are sometimes codified in laws, rules, or regulations. By determining how the people and institutions within a society respond to internal and external stimuli, encoded norms serve to establish tolerance thresholds for different social phenomena. This can be observed in many societal processes, such as when a government stimulates the economy in response to a drop in GDP or deploys more policing resources when there is a rise in crime. Each country's system will be unique, with different social norms and governance patterns, even when they follow the same general principles.

Isolating the main encoded norms within a system and the bounds within which they operate provides an understanding of the mechanisms that hold the system together. The encoded norms can sometimes be very subtle and difficult to quantify and therefore it is important to focus on the important ones.

Homeostasis States

All systems tend toward a steady state, defined by minimal change in their components, stocks, and flows. In the same way the human body seeks to maintain a core temperature or regular heartbeat, societal systems also seek stability. Encoded norms are crucial in maintaining a steady state as they determine the corrective actions when inputs are outside acceptable bounds determined by the encoded norms. Systems also have a tendency to grow. The steady state can be one in which the system achieves growth; however, homeostasis can also cause stagnation. This can vary by subsystem.

Feedback Loops

A feedback loop is a key concept that refers to the dynamics within a system whereby an output is fed back into the system to alter, accelerate, or dampen the input, thereby influencing future output. There are two main types of feedback loops: reinforcing and balancing.

Reinforcing feedback loops serve to amplify the effect of the input, potentially leading to exponential growth or decline within the system. If

detrimental to the system, then they are referred to as runaway feedback loops. A reinforcing feedback loop might be population growth. As healthcare improves, so does life expectancy, leading to a higher population. If unchecked, such growth can become a runaway feedback loop, leading to environmental degradation, more competition for resources, and heightened conflict. Emergent properties within a system gain traction through reinforcing feedback loops. An example would be the emergence of social media, where individuals gain positive feedback from associates, causing them to increase their usage of the technology. Sometimes there may be multiple steps in a reinforcing feedback loop. As more people use social media, more internet bandwidth is required, which in turn drives faster and cheaper services, driving an even greater uptake of social media.

On the other hand, balancing feedback loops are those in which the outputs mitigate the effect of the inputs. In these cases, an initial change or perturbation will trigger responses that work to offset the deviation from a desired state, preventing the system from veering too far from equilibrium. In the case of population growth, a balancing agent might be the adoption of a new technology, birth control, to bring the population back to manageable size. Other examples of balancing feedback loops are companies hiring more staff as their work expands, more arrests and jails being built as crime increases, interest rates increasing as inflation exceeds a certain threshold, or electoral boundaries changing as an area's population and demographics change.

Tipping Points

A tipping point refers to a permanent and irreversible change in the state of a system. Tipping points are thresholds beyond which non-linear change occurs within a system and its dynamics are substantially reconfigured. These changes can happen quickly and can be dramatic, resulting in new or restructured relationships within the system.

It is hard to predict the timing of tipping points. Often, an input can cause little change within a system until a particular moment, after which small inputs can cause substantial changes. For example, levels of corruption and per capita income exhibit tipping points. Changes in corruption only have a small effect on the overall peace until a certain point is past, after which small changes have large impacts.

Tipping points can be positive, when they lead to higher levels of societal resilience, or they may be negative, resulting in degraded systems. Identifying past tipping points can give insight into the dynamics which created the current system. Identifying exactly when a system may go through a future tipping point is extremely difficult. Therefore, understanding past system tipping points may shed light on possible future ones. The Egypt and Syria comparison and the Georgia and Venezuela comparison set out in Section 5 illustrate this dynamic in two contrasting directions.

Often, negative tipping points occur when a shock on a system breaks its resilience, causing the system to reconfigure. Examples are food shortages leading to conflict or increases in international interest rates causing a country's debt to become unserviceable and its currency to collapse. Positive tipping points can occur when per capita income passes a certain level, because of improvements in governance and business efficiency leading to a period of rapid economic expansion. Another example would be the take-up of a new technology, such as social media, leading to an expansion of human interactions and connectivity.

System Resilience and Adaptability

System resilience and system adaptability are two key concepts that address the ability of a system to respond to and navigate through disturbances or changes. System resilience refers to the reactive capacity of a system to absorb shocks, disruptions, or changes and still maintain its essential functions and structure. Resilient systems often feature redundancy, flexibility, and the ability to self-organise in response to challenges, ensuring they can absorb disturbances and continue to function effectively. System adaptability, on the other hand, focuses on a system's capability to proactively adjust and modify itself. In response to changing conditions, adaptable systems learn and evolve to enhance their performance by reconfiguring structures, processes, and functions. A highly adaptable system manages change, using it as an opportunity for improvement and innovation, continually adjusting to ensure its relevance and effectiveness over time.

There are two methods for measuring resilience and adaptability. The first is an analysis of past shocks that the system has suffered and the speed with which the system recovered back to a steady state. The second is a data-driven approach based around the Positive Peace framework which measures resilience. Societies with greater

resilience will more easily absorb the effects of shocks and recover more quickly in their aftermath.

Efficiency and Redundancy

Efficiency means that a system produces a maximum output with the minimum number of components and with the lowest level of resources. Redundancy means a system has excess capacity, or not fully used components or resources. In most cases, efficiency and redundancy are antagonistic concepts.

Efficient systems produce the highest level of output with the minimum costs and use of resources. However, if a component or subsystem is stressed or fails, the lack of alternate paths or capacity means the system may become degraded or even incapacitated.

Building redundancies in a system reduces the expected losses from failures. However, this comes at a cost to efficiency. Systems with redundancies tend to be those with the highest levels of resilience, as they are capable of absorbing shocks. However, too much redundancy may mean the system is uncompetitive.

Redundancies can be constructed in two different ways. Redundancy of components means the system has unused, or only partially used, components. For example, a factory may operate with two computers instead of one – if one breaks down, the other takes over, thereby creating a failsafe environment. Another example is an over-capacity in the health system to deal with any spikes in hospitalisation rates.

Redundancy of relationships takes place when two or more components are linked by a larger number of connections than strictly necessary. An example is when two cities are interconnected through various highways instead of just one.

Money Flows

Money flows represent the movement of financial resources within a system. Understanding these flows is critical as they shape the behaviour of the system elements, impacting relationships and feedback loops. They also help reveal the power dynamics within a system, as identifying the distribution and control of financial resources is crucial to understanding which actors and subsystems have the most impact on decision-making processes. In a national economy, money flows through various sectors, such as households,

businesses, and government, are fundamental to the functioning of the society.

Flows of money within a system often give an idea of the size of subsystems or the importance of encoded norms. If the amount of money is growing over time, the system may be in a virtuous cycle of development. Conversely, rising monetary power may also be an indication of an imbalance. An example would be special interest groups that are subsidised by the taxpayer, which increases their ability to garner political influence, which they use to secure additional government funding and concessions. Increases in the size of money stocks can also be a sign of emergence.

Functioning and Potential

System functioning refers to the dynamic processes, interactions, and behaviours shaping a system's operation. It captures how components work together to achieve common goals, emphasising interdependencies and feedback loops. For instance, in a transportation system, it involves vehicle flow, traffic patterns, and infrastructure responsiveness.

System potential describes how functioning could be altered with a change of inputs or a modification of goals. As such, it expresses a system's capacity for either future enhancement or future degradation. With regard to its capacity for advancement, it denotes the untapped capabilities inherent to a system that could be realised with, for example, additional resources or investment. In the case of a healthcare system, its potential for enhancement might entail going beyond existing practices of caring for patients to promote innovations to improve healthcare delivery or to address emerging health challenges.

With regard to a system's capacity for deterioration, potential refers to how system functioning could be undermined because of overwhelming shocks or a steady decline in resources. For instance, a society's potential for conflict and unrest might be realised if underlying tensions are not addressed, leading to a degradation of social cohesion.

System Purpose and Intent

While system functioning and potential refer to what a system does or could do, its purpose is what it is meant to achieve, while its intent is revealed through the outcomes it produces. Purpose and intent often overlap substantially, and in some circumstances it can be difficult to distinguish one from the other.

System purpose refers to the function that the system is meant to achieve, of which there can be more than one. For example, the purpose of a business that builds reliable, cost-efficient batteries may be to meet a profit target while also exceeding environmental standards.

For its part, system intent refers to the underlying motivations, objectives, or values that are not explicitly stated, but are inferred from the system's observed behaviour and patterns of action. Intent can be discerned from the systemic dynamics, cultural norms, and habitual practices within the system. For example, a healthcare system's outward purpose may be to provide accessible healthcare to a community within a government budgetary framework, emphasising a commitment to patient wellbeing. However, the intent may be revealed through cost-cutting measures and decisions prioritising profit over patient outcomes. While the stated purpose highlights patient-centric care, the observed practices point to financial considerations taking precedence. Another example of the similarities and differences between purpose and intent might be an educational system for the development of knowledge and skills in students. The system purpose may be to provide students with a clear level of academic achievement for entering the workforce, while the intent of the system may be to make a work environment conducive for teachers, for example, by minimising class hours.

In contrast, in highly congruent or transparent systems, purpose and intent may be the same or very similar.

Causality in Systems

Identifying causality within a system is about understanding the influences that lead it to behave in certain ways. However, in systems, cause and effect become entwined. A mutual feedback loop is an excellent example of this.

Functions, events, and emergence properties influence each other, causing changes in each. Therefore, differentiating between cause and effect loses its usefulness. This way of thinking avoids the pitfalls and failures of the old cause/effect approach whereby an intervention is targeted at the presumed cause of a problem or vulnerability. Understanding mutual causality leads to a deeper perspective on agency, feedback loops, connections, and relationships, which are all fundamental parts of systems mapping. Constructive change occurs through stimulating many points simultaneously or progressively over time.

Stocks, Flows and Transformations

Stocks, flows, and transformations are fundamental concepts that help describe and analyse the dynamics of a system. Stocks represent the accumulations or reservoirs of elements within the system, often denoting the quantity of a particular resource or state variable at a given point in time. Examples of stocks could be the number of people in a country, the balance in a bank account, the amount of grain in storage, or the number of persons incarcerated.

Flows are movements between stocks, capturing the rate of change in stocks over time. Examples could be money transfers, the movement of a prisoner to the workforce, or immigrants entering a country.

In many instances, the nature of the elements accumulated in stocks or moving through flows remain unchanged. That means within a closed system what is stocked or what is flowing remains the same across time. For instance, money can be stored in a safe or be transacted between persons, without losing or changing its attributes. However, in practice, systems usually are not closed and have some flows that originate outside of the system. An example may be foreign direct investment into a country or the migration of people.

Transformations refer to the processes or activities that alter the state or composition of elements within a system. For example, materials and electricity could flow into a factory and undergo a transformation to become a machine, or a stock of food could undergo a process of rot and become unusable even if there has been no outflow from storage.

Stocks, flows, and transformations work together to characterise the structure and behaviour of complex systems. The interactions among these components are often governed by feedback loops and contribute to the dynamic nature of systems. They are essential for understanding how systems respond to changes, adapt to their environment, and achieve or maintain equilibrium.

Emergent Properties

A system evolves through time and its current properties do not fully describe its future dynamics. Finding new emerging properties is important in understanding the trajectory of the system. The speed at which properties of the system accelerate is a good way of identifying emergence. Looking at a system's stocks, how they may increase in size over time, where they are

flowing, and what transformations are occurring among elements along the way can all give insight into a system's emergent properties. This can be seen through increases in money, the number of people employed, the rate of development of new technologies, or increases in the rules and regulations governing an aspect of society.

Non-Linearity of Effects

The effect of one part of a system on another is not always linear. Relationships may change depending on the state of development of the system. For example, for low peace countries, improvements in peace lead to small increases in worker productivity. However, as countries progress in peace, further reductions in violence lead to ever higher increases in worker productivity. This non-linear relationship has been discussed in IEP's *Business and Peace Report 2024*.

Attractor Basins

Attractor basins represent stable states or conditions toward which a system tends to evolve. Once in an attractor basin, a system finds it difficult to depart. These states act as points of attraction, and the system may exhibit stability when it converges toward these attractors. Between attractor basins, changes in the state of systems tend to be larger and more chaotic. In an ecological context, a stable population size or a balanced ecosystem structure can be considered an attractor basin.

Understanding attractor basins provides insights into the long-term behaviour and stability of a system, highlighting the factors that influence its trajectory and equilibrium. In a societal context, an attractor basin can be characterised by either positive or negative social conditions.

In the context of peace and conflict, analysis of the Global Peace Index (GPI) and the Positive Peace Index (PPI) has revealed two attractor basins, as discussed in Section 5. One is called Sustainable Peace and is the state where countries have high rankings in both the GPI and the PPI. None of the countries in the Sustainable Peace area of the GPI-PPI phase plane have had a substantial decline in their levels of peace across the measurement period of the indices, despite shocks to their systems. The other attractor basin is the Conflict Trap, defined as low rankings in both the GPI and the PPI. Countries in this plane find it difficult to improve their societal resilience because of the losses incurred by high levels of violence and the ensuing destruction of their societal structures. Given their

degraded levels of societal resilience, countries in the Conflict Trap region tend to find it difficult to exit this region without external assistance.

Archetypes

Archetypes are common reinforcing themes or patterns of interactions that are seen in many systems. They serve as mental models that can be applied to different contexts to identify and address common challenges. The value in identifying the archetypes in a system is that they provide shortcuts for the analysis and help in finding solutions. Some examples of archetypes include:

- **Limits to growth:** All systems have limited resources they can consume, after which the system will be impacted negatively.
- **Exponential success:** This is a runaway feedback loop where success increases exponentially, eventually dominating the system and potentially causing its demise.
- **Seeking the wrong goal:** This is related to the purpose or intent of the system. If the goal is inadequate, inappropriate, or dangerous, its pursuit will damage the system.
- **Rule breaking:** Rules are often set up to regulate and maintain the homeostasis through encoded norms. When rules which regulate society break down, the result will be changes in the system's internal structure. This can be positive but more often is destructive.
- **Escalation:** This can be defined as one-upping. Think of two groups competing for shrinking resources, escalating wars, or politicians competing for the highest spending for the popular vote.
- **The tragedy of the commons:** This is where a common resource gets utilised by agents who will aim at maximising their own benefit from a commonly shared resource. If the resource gets over-utilised, then it can lead to rule breaking and escalation.

Static and Dynamic Modelling

Static modelling analyses the system at a given point in time, while dynamic modelling uses many iterations of data over a period of time. Static models are useful when insufficient time series data is available for analysis. It is also useful for providing a snapshot early in the analysis that is simpler and easier to understand before building up the dynamic model.

To understand dynamic models, it is often necessary to use a system dynamics simulation modelling software package. This allows analysts to input data on the components of a system, including stocks, encoded norms, and more. This allows the analysis to view changes over time to better assess the way the system has evolved and the impact of changes over time. These packages also allow for changing the parameters of the stocks and flows and encoded norms to model different scenarios, allowing for a fuller understanding of the possible outcomes that interventions may cause.

Analysis through Positive Peace

Positive Peace has been derived empirically to provide a holistic expression of a healthy societal system and as such it can be used in this process as a check on the extent to which the system has been analysed systemically. Once a model has been derived, each of the items can be classified as belonging to a Pillar of Positive Peace. If the analysis is weak in a particular Pillar or Pillars, then there may be a flaw in the analysis.

In addition, Positive Peace as a multifaceted societal objective represents an excellent approach for analysing which interventions may be best for altering the system and their likely ripple effects. It allows for an approach that will consider multiple stimuli, rather than a small number which may have limited effect.

Gathering the Relevant Data on the System

While not a conceptual component of systems analysis, understanding what data is available in relation to a given system is important, as the comprehensiveness of the data will affect the approach to the analysis. Some systems may have an abundance of readily available data, while in others it may be lacking. In some cases, more data may need to be collected or estimated before a constructive analysis can begin, as insufficient data may prevent the identification of substantive insights into the dynamics of the system.

Moreover, in some cases, the fact that certain elements or subsystems are richer in data than others may reflect a higher level of importance within a system, as resources have been dedicated to measuring them. As such, identifying data availability across a system can help determine the most promising areas for deeper analysis.

Searching for relevant data and the development of new datasets can also be a reiterative process

undertaken throughout the analysis. As new insights arise, gaps in the data may also arise.

Where accurate and consistent data is available, a system may be characterised by a set of statistical indicators that could constitute the foundation for the analysis. However, it is often the case that statistical data for the specific system or subsystem is not produced, and values and figures need to be estimated indirectly through proxy data or via qualitative or subject matter expert assessments.

Section 8

Implementing Positive Peace



IEP's approach to on-the-ground peacebuilding is positive and future-oriented, built directly on its Positive Peace research and framework.

This section examines how Positive Peace is applied to community-based peacebuilding and development projects across diverse ethnic, cultural, religious, and socio-economic contexts, and sets out the practical approach used in implementation. The framework's relevance and flexibility have driven its broad uptake, allowing users to tailor it to their specific needs.

The creation of Positive Peace policies, projects, dialogues, and leadership delivers both immediate and long-term benefits:

Immediate effects:

- A positive shift in the way individuals and organisations think about peace
- Increased levels of social cohesion, cooperation, and productivity
- Understanding of the systemic nature of how societies operate
- Understanding how to create higher levels of peace, development, and resilience

Long-term benefits:

- Improved societal resilience to internal and external shocks
- Reductions in grievances and violent conflicts
- Stronger economic performance
- Better development outcomes
- Human flourishing

IEP has built a large implementation network, training over 7,000 IEP ambassadors who have carried out Positive Peace activities in over 150 countries. IEP also offers a short online course on Positive Peace that more than 160,000 people have completed.

A diverse range of organisations collaborate with IEP to meet their own objectives, from integrating peacebuilding into local development and humanitarian projects to building policymaker capacity and advancing conflict mitigation and cohesion initiatives. In the past few years, face-to-face projects and training have included reintegrating FARC combatants in Colombia, establishing inter-faith peace initiatives in Northern Iraq, and developing global peace leaders through the Rotary Activator Program.

IEP's data-driven approach supports objective, non-political, and culturally sensitive engagement, giving stakeholders a neutral starting point for devising solutions. Recent applications span a wide range of groups, including:

- Local government officials
- Police forces and military personnel
- Schools and universities
- Development organisations
- Faith leaders and communities
- Indigenous populations
- Diaspora groups
- Agricultural sectors
- Communities grappling with violence and extreme poverty

A Solutions-Oriented Approach

The Positive Peace framework is defined by a number of key attributes:

- Empirically based
- Adaptable
- Rooted in systems thinking
- Focused on leveraging strengths
- Oriented towards finding solutions
- Forward looking and positive approach

The framework is built on rigorous statistical analysis, which keeps it objective and independent of political bias or personal opinion. Combined with the customisable nature of IEP's training, this objectivity allows Positive Peace to be applied flexibly, meeting the needs of a diverse range of stakeholders.

Unlike traditional peacebuilding methods, which often emphasise conflict analysis, IEP's Positive Peace approach is forward-looking, positive, and solutions-oriented. It relies on participant-driven systemic analysis across economic, governance, social, and informational factors. Rather than concentrating solely on a community's challenges, Positive Peace identifies and uses its strengths to address weaknesses.

In practice, this means engaging stakeholders in crafting actionable strategies using the Positive Peace framework. Because actions outside a community's control have limited value, participants are guided to structure activities that are realistic and can deliver impactful systemic change.

Development organisations offer an excellent example of the multi-layered approach of the Positive Peace framework. These organisations are adept at designing and implementing humanitarian and development aid programs. By incorporating IEP's Positive Peace framework, such organisations can weave peace solutions into their core objectives, as the framework can orient the activities of the project. For instance, a project aimed at boosting agricultural productivity can use the eight Pillars of Positive Peace to frame the activities. By using the eight Pillars as a framing mechanism, it implements systems thinking as the Pillars offer a useful heuristic for understanding societal systems. The activities do not imply a specialised peacebuilding lens. They can be almost any type of conventional development activities; Positive Peace is aimed at building the resilience of the societal system and is particularly relevant for communities that are facing local risk or have experienced a recent history of conflict. By adopting this approach, there is little to no additional cost in incorporating peace into a larger project's programming. Clear examples are provided further on in this section.

As Figure 8.1 shows, applying the Positive Peace framework helps projects advance along the conflict sensitivity continuum, strengthening the systemic changes needed to sustain peace.

FIGURE 8.1

Positive Peace and the conflict sensitivity continuum

The Positive Peace framework helps projects go beyond the avoidance of harm to promote systemic change for peace.

IEP helps move initiatives beyond conflict sensitivity

Interventions that unintentionally stress conflict factors

Interventions that support and strengthen systemic peace



Interventions that are conflict sensitive

IEP collaborates with governments, NGOs, and companies worldwide to offer training and help implement projects built around one or more of the following themes:

- **Project design** to design a new social impact project or accelerate an existing one.
- **Policy design** to increase inclusive cooperation and embed systems thinking in policy.
- **Shared language** and Dialogue to increase stakeholder engagement and build a common language around strengths, weaknesses, and local development.
- **Leadership development** using a train-the-trainer approach that builds participants' understanding of the Positive Peace framework and their ability to teach it to others.
- **Community resilience monitoring** to apply mobile surveys based on Positive Peace.

IEP's trainings are customisable to fit local context and language, accommodate different group sizes, and integrate additional content aligned with Positive Peace principles.

IEP has built a broad range of partnerships with international, national, and local entities, including:

- Multilateral organisations and corporations
- International humanitarian, development, and non-governmental organisations
- Governments, policymakers, security forces, and the private sector
- Local government leaders, police forces, community leaders, faith leaders, youth, civil society, local business leaders



Guidelines for Implementing Positive Peace

One of the key reasons for the framework's success is its simplicity. Basic principles are easy to grasp, which drives faster uptake and more effective projects, particularly among participants with little or no formal education.

The eight Pillars map the key components of a societal system by design, and are easily understood and applied at the local community level.

Some key considerations for the successful implementation include:

- The approach involves identifying a community problem and building activities to solve it. The framework is active, not passive: examples include activities to empower youth, restore land, improve health, or strengthen social cohesion.
- Where possible, the community should identify the project, since its members best understand their own needs. This may be impractical for large development projects, but community support for the initiative is essential regardless.
- The vision is positive and future-oriented, focused on solutions rather than past grievances. Where two groups share a history of grievance, working on a common challenge can help bind them together.
- Positive Peace frames the project's activities, with an activity defined for each Pillar. This keeps the analysis systemic while embedding the principles of peace into the project, so participants understand how to apply peace in practice and can carry that understanding elsewhere.

- Societies carry rules and history, a constraint known as path dependency. Interventions should therefore start from the current state and work to develop towards greater resilience, since rapid change can destabilise the system.
- Participants understand their own situation best and are therefore best placed to identify activities for each Pillar. This non-interventionist approach respects local culture.
- Activities must stay within the community's control; overreaching objectives make it more likely the project will fall short of its aims.
- Activities must also be achievable within the political, social, and economic constraints of the environment.
- Activities must show tangible results within an acceptable time frame, or fatigue will set in and enthusiasm for the project will fade.

For a more detailed explanation of the Positive Peace implementation process, see the *Positive Peace Implementation Guide*.

Examples of Positive Peace Projects

The case studies below show how the Positive Peace framework has been tailored and implemented to deliver meaningful, quantifiable benefits for communities around the globe.

Applying Positive Peace to Development in South Sudan

This program was developed with World Vision, using Positive Peace as the framing for a US\$7 million integrated development initiative.

South Sudan sits among the bottom four countries globally on the Global Peace Index. Over 40 per cent of its population has been displaced at some point, one of the highest rates in the world. Against this backdrop, World Vision South Sudan implemented GREAW, an agricultural and livelihoods project, to improve food security and climate resilience for communities in Warrap State and Central Equatoria.

Development programs in fragile contexts often treat peacebuilding as a separate, bolt-on activity alongside agriculture, WASH, and nutrition workstreams. GREAW, working with IEP, took a different approach, applying the Positive Peace framework as the project's framing mechanism so peace became the lens informing the whole design, not a discrete add-on.

One of the clear advantages of applying the framework is that the project is approached from a systems perspective, without requiring additional work simply because it is built through the lens of Positive Peace. The example below shows how GREAW is structured through the Positive Peace Pillars.

Applying the eight Pillars of Positive Peace at the design stage meant GREAW's activities extend well beyond distributing seed and equipment. The project also builds:

- **Equitable Distribution of Resources** – transparent, inclusive management of shared water and land assets, including irrigation, water harvesting, and FMNR plots, with customary land-access systems strengthened for greater equity

- **Free Flow of Information** – community early-warning systems so information about risks and resources flows across and between groups
- **Good Relations with Neighbours** – youth-led peace clubs in cattle camps and schools, with intercommunal tensions, including over cattle raiding and resource access, managed by a coalition of customary leaders, churches, and community peace committees
- **High Levels of Human Capital** – increased agricultural production, mother gardens, and nutrition training, with rising household income used to fund children's education, and market knowledge and life skills built through farmer and savings groups
- **Acceptance of the Rights of Others** – community awareness raising on human rights, with gender-norm change driven by women and men champions, and tensions over land access between host communities and IDPs mitigated through community and local government structures
- **Low Levels of Corruption** – savings and producer groups with constitutions and bylaws that guard against corruption, backed by functioning project accountability mechanisms
- **Sound Business Environment** – agro-input dealers supported to offer pro-poor, cost-share models and farmer groups matured into registered cooperatives with access to finance through bank partnerships and credit unions
- **Well-Functioning Government** – training for village and county development committees, the primary local governance actors, to plan and deliver communal assets transparently and inclusively

None of this replaces the agricultural program; it is what makes the agricultural program durable in a place where competition over resources has historically been a driver of conflict.



World Vision South Sudan staff work on plans to facilitate Positive Peace dialogues with communities.

The Community Strength Barometer (CSB) is a short, repeatable perception survey administered orally, one-on-one, across all ten project areas, tracking community-level shifts across the eight Positive Peace Pillars every six months for the duration of the project. Rather than relying on project activity indicators as a proxy for peace, the CSB asks communities directly how their own experience of governance, fairness, information flow, and relations with neighbours is changing. Because it runs on a fixed six-monthly cycle aligned to GREAW's own reporting periods, it builds a longitudinal record rather than a single before-and-after snapshot, letting the project and its funders see how active Positive Peace is in people's lived experience, rather than inferring it from project output data alone.

The introduction of Positive Peace began by building staff capability through a train-the-trainer program for 13 World Vision staff in South Sudan. Trained facilitators then extended the training into the communities GREAW serves, using visual aids designed for low-literacy, outdoor village settings.

This community-level training matters because GREAW is putting new value into these communities: shared water points, land, seed, and income. Historically, competition over several of these resources has fed conflict, so distributing them without also giving communities a shared framework for managing disagreement risks

reproducing the tensions the project is trying to reduce. Positive Peace training addresses this directly, giving people the tools to negotiate and resolve disputes over the new resources so that the peace committees, savings groups, and development committees the project has established keep functioning once GREAW's active support ends.

GREAW's mid-point review found project activities advancing all eight Positive Peace Pillars, alongside a 9.3 out of 10 net-promoter score and universal participant confidence in applying the framework.

Integrating a peace framework into a development program involves three linked stages: designing activities against the framework so the program itself becomes systemic rather than single-sector, building genuine community-level ownership of the framework rather than confining it to staff, and measuring the community's own experience of change over time rather than assuming it from project outputs.

Positive Peace in Uganda: Improving Academic Achievement

Applying Positive Peace to a school in Uganda shifted the focus from literacy alone to the enabling environment within and around the school. Total enrolment rose from 327 to 805 students, the proportion achieving top grades rose from 30 to 62 per cent, and the school moved from the bottom third of its district to the top third in scholastic performance.

Development and humanitarian efforts worldwide invest heavily in education, yet education-focused interventions frequently hit a common ceiling: improvements in school resources do not always translate into proportional gains in attendance, performance, or community outcomes. The reason is rarely that the interventions are poor; more often, educational outcomes are shaped by a web of interconnected factors, including nutrition, gender equity, community trust, economic opportunity, and governance, that a single-sector approach cannot fully address.

The Positive Peace framework offers a structured way to see and respond to these interconnections. The experience of Jude Kakuba in Uganda is one of the clearest illustrations of this principle in action, showing how the eight Pillars can transform a well-intentioned but limited intervention into a systemic initiative that strengthens an entire community.

Kakuba spent two years working to improve a school outside of Kampala that was underperforming relative to the rest of the district. His approach was a logical and common one: provide books, pens, pencils, and other educational materials, and invest in teaching capacity. These are the interventions that education programs typically prioritise, and they reflect a reasonable assumption that academic underperformance is primarily an educational problem requiring educational solutions.

After two years of sustained effort, the results were positive but limited. Factors beyond the classroom were limiting the school's progress.

After participating in a Rotary-IEP Positive Peace workshop in Kampala, Kakuba began to see the school's situation through a different lens. Rather than asking how to improve education at this school, he asked a broader question: what systemic factors are shaping these children's ability to learn, and what strengths exist in this community that have not yet been drawn upon?

This reframing, from a single-sector problem to a systems challenge, is the foundational move the Positive Peace framework enables. Analysing the school and its surrounding community through all eight Pillars surfaced interconnected barriers and opportunities that a purely educational assessment would have missed. What emerged was not eight separate projects but a single integrated initiative, with actions reinforcing one another across the full breadth of community life.

The first step was to establish an inclusive, consultative process. Rather than designing the project in isolation, he brought together students, parents, community leaders, neighbours, and other local stakeholders to collectively identify challenges and shape the response. This approach strengthened *Well-Functioning Government* at the community level, ensuring that decisions reflected the knowledge and priorities of those most directly affected, and that the community felt genuine ownership of what followed.

This consultative process quickly surfaced a challenge that sat well beyond the classroom walls. Many students were arriving at school hungry. Hunger was directly undermining students' capacity to concentrate and learn. Some parents, aware that their children would go hungry at school, were choosing not to send them at all, rather than having them find income or support themselves. Hungry students had been taking fruit from neighbouring farms, creating significant tension between the school community and surrounding residents. Farmers were understandably frustrated, and the school had developed a reputation as a source of conflict rather than a community asset.

This single issue, hunger, sat at the intersection of several Pillars and demanded a response that was equally interconnected.

The school planted fruit trees and vegetable gardens on its own grounds and introduced a porridge program, costing a couple of cents per student per day, to ensure students were fed during the school day. These actions directly advanced *Equitable Distribution of Resources* by ensuring that basic nutritional needs were met for all students. They also addressed the barrier to enrolment: once parents knew their children would be fed at school, a key reason for keeping them from school was removed.

To ensure parents received this message, the project partnered with a radio station broadcasting in the local language. The radio informed parents that students would receive meals at school, while also keeping the wider community engaged with the school's progress and reasoning. This strengthened *Free Flow of Information* by creating a communication channel between the school and a community that previously had limited visibility into school life.

The feeding program and school gardens simultaneously transformed *Good Relations with Neighbours*. Once students were no longer taking fruit from surrounding farms, the friction that had defined the school's relationship with its neighbourhood dissolved. Farmers shifted from adversaries to supporters, and the school became an asset rather than a source of grievance.

The school gardens themselves introduced students to agricultural skills and food production, contributing to *Sound Business Environment* at the community level. This was reinforced by the decision to construct new classrooms using exclusively local materials and local labour, circulating economic benefit directly through surrounding households. When families gain income from an institution, they become stakeholders in its continuation, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of community investment.

Addressing the specific barriers to girls' participation proved equally important. The systemic analysis identified that many girls were missing school regularly due to lack of access to sanitary products. The project introduced monthly distribution of sanitary pads alongside hygiene education, responding to a barrier that had nothing to do with curriculum quality but everything to do with whether girls could attend consistently. This action advanced both *High Levels of Human Capital*, by enabling girls to remain in education and develop their capabilities, and *Acceptance of the Rights of Others*, by recognising and responding to the distinct needs of female students rather than treating all students as though they faced identical circumstances.

Finally, to sustain trust and accountability, a transparency committee was established for monitoring all funds and donations. All donated materials were branded as community gifts rather than attributed to individual donors, reducing the risk of patronage dynamics and reinforcing collective ownership. These measures directly addressed *Low Levels of Corruption*, building the institutional trust necessary for long-term community engagement.

The outcomes over the following two years demonstrated the success of a systems approach to education. Total enrolment rose from 327 to 805 students, a 146 per cent increase. Girls' enrolment grew from 201 to 449, and boys' enrolment from 126 to 356. The proportion of students achieving top grades doubled, rising from 30 to 62 per cent. The school moved from the bottom third in its district to the top third in scholastic performance.

Beyond the quantitative measures, the school's relationship with its surrounding community was reshaped. Neighbours who had once viewed the school as a source of conflict became supporters. Parents who had kept children away from school began sending them to school. Local leaders who had been uninvolved became invested participants in governance. The economic benefits of local construction and agricultural activity created a reinforcing cycle of community engagement. What had been an underperforming, somewhat isolated institution became a hub of community life.

These results did not emerge because of the abandonment of the original educational focus. Books, pens, pencils, and teaching capacity remained important. What changed was the breadth of the lens. By using the eight Pillars to analyse the system in and surrounding the school, the project identified the interconnected factors that had been limiting educational outcomes, and designed responses that addressed them together rather than in isolation.

Finally, this case study demonstrates something the chapter's other examples illustrate at different scales: the eight Pillars do not prescribe specific actions. They provide a structure for seeing connections, identifying what is missing, and designing responses that work with the grain of a community's reality rather than against it.

Resilience by Design: Malabon City, Philippines

The city of Malabon held a series of workshops to identify solutions to flooding and land subsidence.

Parts of Malabon City in the Philippines have been underwater for two decades. The Artex Compound, a former textile housing estate, has been permanently flooded since 2004, and residents are transported by boat rather than car. All 21 of the city's local administrative areas sit in flood-risk zones, and the subsiding land means the problem is worsening. Flooding drives housing insecurity for informal settlers, strains drainage and waste systems, and repeatedly tests the city's disaster-response capacity. Positive Peace's premise, that



Malabon City, Philippines

Photo by Judgefloro/CC BY 2.0

resilience against shocks depends on the same systems and institutions that sustain peace, made Malabon City an appropriate match.

In October 2024, IEP ran a Positive Peace Professional Development Program for Malabon City officials, the first Philippine local government to take part in an IEP training, aimed at using the

Pillars as a practical tool for disaster resilience. Thirty-seven officials completed the training. A context analysis mapping exercise identified the city's strengths, weaknesses, and stakeholders against the issue of flood exposure.



Malabon City officials participate in a training to build community resilience and teamwork in the face of climate shocks.

As a result of this training, understanding of Positive Peace and systems thinking concepts rose from around a quarter to over three-quarters. Community assessment skills nearly tripled, from 30 to 77 per cent, and 97 per cent of participants left seeing peace as a practical, achievable goal directly relevant to a city living with recurring disasters.

That understanding translated into multiple disaster-facing project plans, each grounded in a different Pillar. Relocation of informal settlers, paired with establishing economic activity for residents, reflected the *Equitable Distribution of Resources* Pillar, ensuring families displaced by flooding had adequate opportunities for employment once relocated.

Plans for redesigned drainage systems and flood mitigation measures reflected *Well-Functioning Government*, and the basic service-delivery obligations that decide whether a flood is a manageable event or a recurring crisis. Building local areas' capacity to handle disasters and emergencies strengthened *High Levels of Human Capital*, since local area staff and volunteers are first on the ground when flooding occurs, not the city government. A new public recreational space, Ahon Park, advanced *Good Relations with Neighbours* by giving displaced and long-settled residents shared ground. And a sustainable waste management plan applied *Sound Business Environment* Pillar, treating waste as a resource to be circulated locally rather than a cost to be managed.

Officials also reviewed seven of the city's existing programs against the framework, among them its Quality Management System, a social housing program, and the 'Second Chance' initiative for formerly incarcerated residents.

Malabon City shows Positive Peace working as a resilience analysis framework rather than a peace-education exercise. The results of the exercise were concrete plans for addressing flooding's downstream effects rather than the flooding alone.

Positive Peace and Youth Agency in Sydney

The 'Cohesive Communities' youth agency project demonstrates how the Positive Peace framework can be adapted for youth-led community development in an urban Australian context. The project equipped three cohorts of young people aged 13 to 17 with the knowledge and skills to apply Positive Peace principles through sports, leadership

development, and self-directed community projects across Sydney's inner-city and south.

Sydney's inner-city neighbourhoods of Redfern, Glebe-Leichhardt, and Woolloomooloo are among Australia's most culturally diverse urban areas, home to First Nations communities alongside Pacific Islander, migrant, and refugee populations. While these communities possess significant cultural assets and resilience, they also face challenges common to diverse urban settings globally: socio-economic disadvantage, low institutional trust, and limited platforms for young people to participate meaningfully in community life.

The project, supported by Multicultural New South Wales, engaged youth through three Police Citizen Youth Clubs that were embedded in their communities. In Redfern, participants were predominantly of First Nations, Fijian, Samoan, Cook Islander, and Tongan backgrounds. The project provided an opportunity to develop leadership skills and give back to their communities. Participants brought with them strong physical capabilities and deep cultural knowledge, alongside a range of life experiences that shaped how they engaged with institutions and authority. Some had school attendance rates as low as 20 per cent, and a number were navigating learning differences, literacy development, or re-engagement with formal education.

Through the training process, participants explored global and local dimensions of peace and were guided to identify the strengths and aspirations within their own communities. Through this participant-driven analysis, the young people identified a profound sense of intergenerational disconnect. Elders in their communities emphasised the importance of 'connection to land'; yet the participants, having grown up exclusively in urban Sydney, did not associate with this concept. Rather than fostering belonging, the message created friction, a gap between cultural expectation and lived experience that neither generation knew how to bridge. This represented a fracture in social cohesion with implications for identity, belonging, and community resilience.

Having identified the challenge, the group designed their own response. One of the features of the Positive Peace approach is that it recognises the limited value of suggesting actions outside one's control and instead guides participants to structure actions that foster realistic and impactful change.

They decided to create a documentary about ‘returning to the land’. Using project seed funding, they purchased video equipment and organised a trip to a rural area outside Sydney. There, they experienced the land directly, recorded their thought processes and emotions, and invited intergenerational leaders to teach practical skills such as fishing and building fires. Back in Sydney, participants partnered with local experts to learn video editing and other filmmaking skills and then organised a community film premiere and other screenings to share the documentary with their broader community.

This single project simultaneously addressed multiple Pillars of Positive Peace. The documentary process itself strengthened *Free Flow of Information* by creating a new channel for intergenerational dialogue. Through a partnership with local video editing experts and intergenerational knowledge holders, the project advanced *High Levels of Human Capital*. The collaborative design and community premiere fostered *Good Relations with Neighbours*. The use of seed funding to acquire equipment and organise logistics introduced participants to resource management, touching on *Sound Business Environment*. Inviting elders to teach on Country while young people led the creative

process modelled *Acceptance of the Rights of Others* across generational lines. The equitable allocation of project resources across participant needs reflected *Equitable Distribution of Resources*.

The project produced quantifiable shifts in participant capacity and cohesion across all three cohorts. Ninety-two per cent of participants reported feeling a sense of belonging, inclusion, and mutual support within their group, demonstrating strong social cohesion among participants who, at baseline, had limited prior engagement with civic programs.

Confidence in assessing community needs rose from 16 per cent at baseline to 74 per cent by program completion, nearly a fivefold increase that reflects not just knowledge acquisition but a fundamental shift in how participants related to their communities.

Sixty-eight per cent of participants developed an understanding of systems thinking, grasping the interrelatedness of community phenomena including business, economics, peace, education, and diversity, concepts that many had no prior exposure to. Eighty-seven per cent of participants reported feeling confident in designing community



Young filmmakers choreograph shots for ‘Returning to the Land’ in New South Wales, Australia.

initiatives, demonstrating their readiness to create meaningful change in their communities.

These outcomes are notable given participants' starting points and demonstrate that the Positive Peace framework's strengths-based, participant-driven methodology can be effective with young people whom conventional programs have not previously reached.

The Sydney project offers several insights for adapting Positive Peace to youth and urban community contexts. First, meet people where their strengths are. The participants were immersed in sport, meaning that the program built on existing interests, capabilities, and relationships rather than asking young people to step into unfamiliar territory. Physical confidence became a bridge to civic confidence.

Second, participant-driven problem identification surfaces challenges that external assessment cannot. The intergenerational disconnect identified in Redfern would not have appeared in a standard community needs assessment, yet it represented a genuine barrier to social cohesion that the participants were uniquely positioned to address.

Third, creative expression is a legitimate vehicle for systemic change. The documentary project was not merely an engagement activity; it was a structured response to an identified systemic challenge, designed by participants using the Positive Peace Pillars as an organising framework.

Finally, the project reinforces the multi-level applicability of Positive Peace highlighted throughout this section.

Women-Led Peace Initiatives in the DRC

Conflict linked to land and resources has left communities across the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) facing intercommunal tension, inequality, and poor access to services. Women often hold the family and community together in these places and play an important role in peacebuilding.

The Church of Christ in the Congo (Eglise du Christ au Congo) runs a national network of women leaders comprising the Department of Women, Families and Children (DFF), church leaders, community facilitators, and heads of women's groups. Working with IEP, DFF organised workshops around the network and held trainings at Kinshasa's Centennial Protestant Cathedral with support from Rotary, HandUp Congo, and others. Participants came from multiple provinces,

including Bas-Uele and South Kivu, as well as Kinshasa itself.

The training opened with a simple question: 'what is peace?' The answers showed that the topic was personal to the participants, touching on themes of dignity, safety, and providing for family. The eight Pillars gave participants a way to see corruption, inequality, and lack of opportunity as one connected system rather than separate problems. By the end, participants had turned that understanding into concrete project plans, grounded in a challenge identified within their own communities. These included intercommunal conflict, women's exclusion from economic life, environmental degradation, and lack of access to services.

Workshops like this one show how defining, measuring, and building peace together can strengthen leadership, produce concrete peace plans, and give communities a clear picture of their own strengths and weaknesses.

Positive Peace at Scale: Rotary International's Institutional Adoption

Almost a decade ago, Rotary International adopted Positive Peace as the modality for its peace and conflict prevention area of focus.

IEP and Rotary formalised their partnership in 2017, and the first phase was to raise awareness within the organisation on building peace. Online education programs carried Positive Peace to thousands of Rotarians worldwide, while the IEP-Rotary Positive Peace Activator Program went further, training over 300 peace practitioners within Rotary specifically to design meaningful peace projects. By the end of this phase, Positive Peace had broad awareness across the organisation and a trained cohort able to apply it.

After years of successful implementation and a deeper understanding of Positive Peace's systemic effects, Rotary adopted it as a framing approach across all seven of its focus areas:

- Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention
- Disease Prevention and Treatment
- Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)
- Maternal and Child Health
- Basic Education and Literacy
- Community Economic Development
- Protecting the Environment



Rotary International is one of the world's largest service organisations, with clubs in more than 200 countries and territories. Embedding a peace framework across an institution like that is a different kind of challenge to embedding it in a single project or city. The goal is not one community's programming but rather working with thousands of clubs and districts worldwide.

IEP and Rotary International have co-created manuals and resources for Rotary members to support peace across all Rotary programs.

Together, IEP and Rotary International have produced more than 20 specialised resources covering the seven areas of focus. These guides teach members how to run their own Positive Peace trainings, approaches to designing and measuring peace projects, and programs for young audiences. Critically, they also guide members on how to integrate the eight Pillars into their own program planning and design.



Rotary members design peace impact assessments at the Rotary Youth Exchange Pre-Convention in Taipei, Taiwan.

IEP Educational Programs

Education and the spread of knowledge sit at the core of IEP's mission. IEP offers three main pathways: the free online Positive Peace Academy, which builds a comprehensive understanding of the framework and its practical applications; the IEP Ambassador Program, a selective six-week course that certifies participants in applying Positive Peace; and collaborations with academic institutions to co-create courses and certifications in peace studies.

IEP Peace Academies

The IEP Positive Peace Academy offers free online peace education for the public, practitioners, and anyone looking to deepen their knowledge of IEP's work, equipping participants with the tools to foster peace at both the grassroots and institutional levels. More than 160,000 people have taken the course.

Through five modules, learners explore the history of peace studies and the role Positive Peace plays in maintaining societal harmony. The Academy also gives in-depth insight into IEP's key publications, including the Global Peace Index, Global Terrorism Index, Ecological Threat Report, and Positive Peace Report.

IEP Ambassador Program

Launched in 2016, the six-week IEP Ambassador Program has trained over 7,000 individuals from more than 150 countries, giving them the tools and understanding to implement and advocate for Positive Peace using IEP's research, data, and methodologies. Participants join a global network of practitioners applying Positive Peace in their own countries and communities. Held twice a year, the program now draws applications numbering in the thousands per intake.

Notable initiatives include empowering refugees in Uganda, leveraging AI for peacebuilding in Nigeria, and addressing caste-based discrimination in Nepal. Other activities have included building a mixed-ethnic trading cooperative in the DRC, diagnosing a natural resource conflict in Mozambique, reframing mental health as peace infrastructure in Kenya, and adapting homegrown governance structures into peace metrics in Rwanda.

Self-guided, the program comprises three online modules completed over six weeks. It appeals to a wide audience, including policymakers, business leaders, civil society representatives, academics, and

practitioners, enabling participants to integrate Positive Peace into their professional work and apply it in local and international settings.

The objectives of the program are:

- 1. Global Peace Network Development:** To develop a worldwide network of leaders and peacebuilders equipped to tackle the complex challenges of peacebuilding.
- 2. Data-Driven Empowerment:** To equip participants with a deep understanding of IEP's research, enabling them to incorporate data-driven insights into effective peacebuilding efforts.
- 3. Leadership Skills:** To improve participants' ability to analyse and disseminate peace research findings, engaging both in local contexts and through IEP's global networking platforms.
- 4. Societal Strengths in Peacebuilding:** To introduce a method that capitalises on societal strengths for peacebuilding, advocating for a significant shift away from traditional conflict-centric approaches towards lasting peace.

IEP's data from the past five years shows the program's broad impact: a single graduate influences an average of 109 people during the program alone, not counting their further contributions after graduating.

Customised Programs

The flexibility of the online IEP Ambassador Program and IEP Peace Academy lets the Institute customise its offerings to meet the needs of diverse communities, both online and in person.

Multicultural Peace Learning Hub in Australia

The Multicultural Peace Learning Hub, funded by Multicultural New South Wales, is a digital platform delivering multilingual peace education to communities across New South Wales, developed in response to a gap in accessible, multicultural-focused peace education, particularly for young people and new arrivals to Australia. The platform comprises six interactive online modules, covering topics from understanding multicultural Australia and Positive Peace to cross-cultural communication,

conflict resolution, civic participation, and digital literacy. Each module combines short videos, scenario-based activities, and guided reflections, with content informed by IEP's research for the World Bank on intercultural dialogue and designed to be accessible across diverse literacy levels and learning styles through browser-based translation tools.

The Hub was piloted in September 2025, with beta testers from the Multicultural Affairs Centre, Western Sydney University, and the Refugee Council of Australia validating its cultural sensitivity and practical relevance. Course completers reported significant improvements in understanding multiculturalism, conflict resolution, and social cohesion, and all respondents said they would recommend the course to others. One participant wrote that the course helped them realise 'compromise didn't mean losing, it meant finding a middle ground where both of us felt considered,' while others described discovering the richness of cultural diversity in their own communities for the first time.

Ethiopia Mass Online Training

IEP ran this program online, introducing the concepts of Positive Peace and the practical aspects of implementing the framework. Spread across three webinars, the training covered IEP's research and methodologies alongside strategies for sharing peace research findings, and participants were supported with a detailed Positive Peace resource pack and guidance on project development.

The first online workshop drew more than 350 participants from Ethiopia. To conclude the program, participants applied what they had learned by launching projects that incorporated Positive Peace principles in their own communities, submitting more than 130 peace projects and presentations in total.

Project examples include the establishment of a 'Positive Peace Association', a network for Ethiopian Ambassadors to collaborate and advance their Positive Peace initiatives. Membership requires a Certificate of Completion from the IEP Ambassador Program, creating a strong network with a shared framework for designing and carrying out peacebuilding initiatives.

Other efforts included translating Positive Peace materials into local Ethiopian languages to improve reach, especially in rural areas. One project was led by a teacher who adopted the eight Pillars to strengthen his school's community spirit. Under the *Well-Functioning Government* Pillar, for example, the school issued ID cards to track attendance for academic and extracurricular activities and better support students who were frequently absent. Inspired by the *High Levels of Human Capital* Pillar, a 'knowledge-sharing club' was also created to promote peer learning, encouraging students to share ideas and questions with each other and their teachers.

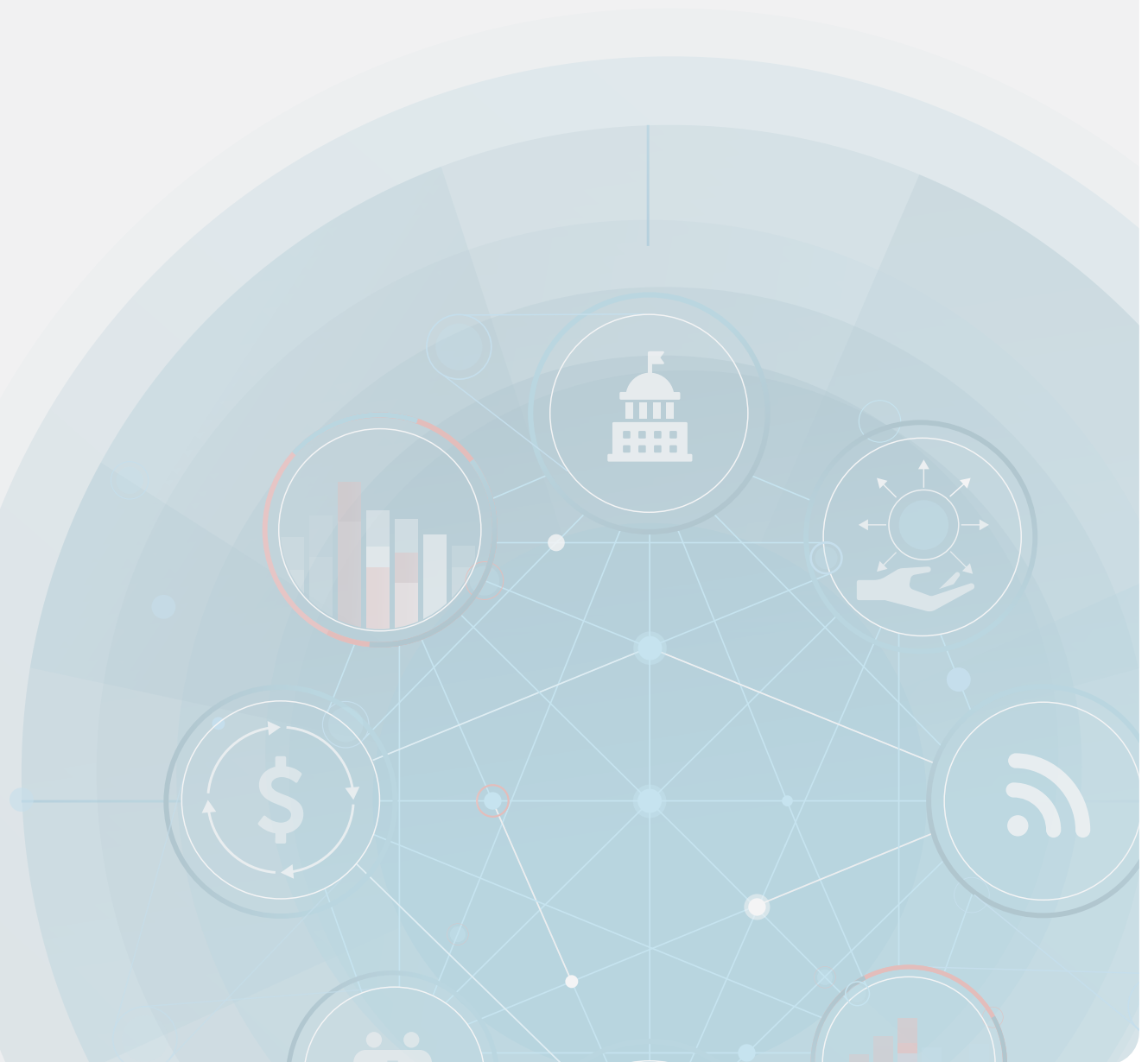
Academic Programs

Positive Peace has become part of university and school curricula around the world, supported by workshops, webinars, and seminars available to academic institutions globally.

IEP works closely with these institutions to give students the capabilities to explore and build structural, systemic peace. Incorporated into thousands of courses worldwide, IEP collaborates with educational bodies to offer a range of learning opportunities, including micro-credential courses, professional development programs, and specialised Bachelor's and Master's degree curricula.

One example is Rotary International, where IEP plays a significant role in the Rotary Peace Centers at seven universities worldwide. The Rotary Peace Center at Makerere University in Uganda, for instance, runs a professional development certificate program addressing regional peace through the Positive Peace framework, supported by a five-day workshop.

Appendices



APPENDIX A

POSITIVE PEACE INDEX

METHODOLOGY

The Positive Peace Index (PPI) is the first statistically derived index measuring Positive Peace according to the definition ‘the attitudes, institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies’. The PPI is similar to the Global Peace Index (GPI) in that it is a composite index built to gauge a multidimensional concept. It covers the same set of 163 countries included in the GPI, covering over 99 per cent of the world’s population. The key objective is to devise a measurement system that is simple, intuitive, auditable, comparable across countries and consistent over time.

IEP takes a systems approach to peace, drawing on a recent body of research on the topic. In order to construct the PPI, IEP analysed over 20,000 different data series, indices and attitudinal surveys in conjunction with current thinking about the drivers of violent conflict, resilience and peacefulness. The result is an eight-part taxonomy of the factors associated with peaceful societies. The eight domains, or Pillars of Positive Peace, were derived from the data series that had the strongest

correlation with internal peacefulness as measured by the GPI, an index that defines peace as ‘absence of violence or the fear of violence’. Each of the eight PPI Pillars is measured by three indicators, representing the best available globally comparable data with the strongest statistically significant relationship to levels of peace within a country. PPI indicators are further classified in three groups: *Attitudes*, *Institutions* and *Structures*.

- **Attitudes** indicators measure social views, tensions or perceptions.
- **Institutions** indicators represent the impact that formal and informal institutions of a society exert on peacefulness, social wellbeing and the economy.
- **Structures** indicators assess the underpinning of the socio-economic system, such as poverty and equality, or are the result of aggregate activity, such as GDP. Usually, these are the indicators that measure infrastructure or socio-economic development.

The 24 indicators, eight Pillars, and three domains of the PPI are listed in Table A.1.

TABLE A.1

Indicators in the Positive Peace Index

The following 24 indicators have been selected in the Positive Peace Index as a result of showing the strongest relationships with the absence of violence and fear of violence.

Pillar	Domain	Indicator	Description	Source	Correlation coefficient (with Internal Peace)
Low Levels of Corruption	Institutions	Control of Corruption	Control of Corruption captures perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain.	Worldwide Governance Indicators	0.78
	Attitudes	Factionalised Elites	Measures the fragmentation of ruling elites and state institutions along ethnic, class, clan, racial or religious lines.	Fragile States Index	0.70
	Institutions	Public Sector Theft	Assesses perceptions of how often public sector employees steal, embezzle or misappropriate public funds or other state resources.	Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)	0.70
Sound Business Environment	Institutions	Regulatory Quality	Captures perceptions of the ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that permit and promote private sector development.	Worldwide Governance Indicators	0.76
	Institutions	Financial Institutions Index	Part of the financial development index, this indicator measures the quality of the financial institutions, including the depth of the financial sector and the access to financial products.	International Monetary Fund	0.54
	Structures	GDP per capita	GDP per capita (constant 2015 US\$) is gross domestic product divided by midyear population.	World Bank	0.61

Pillar	Domain	Indicator	Description	Source	Correlation coefficient (with Internal Peace)
Well-Functioning Government	Institutions	Government Openness and Transparency	Assesses to what extent the Government operations can be legally influenced by citizens and are open to scrutiny from society.	Freedom House	0.64
	Institutions	Government Effectiveness: Estimate	Government Effectiveness captures perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies.	Worldwide Governance Indicators	0.80
	Institutions	Rule of Law: Estimate	Rule of Law captures perceptions of the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police, and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence.	Worldwide Governance Indicators	0.83
Acceptance of the Rights of Others	Attitudes	Gender Inequality	The Gender Inequality Index (GII) reflects women's disadvantage in three dimensions: reproductive health, political empowerment, and the labour market.	United Nations Development Programme	0.71
	Attitudes	Group Grievance	The Group Grievance Indicator focuses on divisions and schisms between different groups in society – particularly divisions based on social or political characteristics – and their role in access to services or resources, and inclusion in the political process.	Fragile States Index	0.61
	Attitudes	Exclusion by Socio-Economic Group	Exclusion involves denying individuals access to services or participation in governed spaces based on their identity or belonging to a particular group.	Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)	0.73
Equitable Distribution of Resources	Structures	Inequality-adjusted life expectancy index	Measures the overall life expectancy of a population accounting for the disparity between the average life expectancy of the rich and that of the poor. The smaller the difference the higher the equality and that is a reflection of the equality of access to the health system.	United Nations Development Programme	0.61
	Institutions	Education and income inequality	Combined education and income inequality (composite index)	United Nations Development Programme	0.56
	Attitudes	Equality of Opportunity	Assesses whether individuals enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from economic exploitation.	Freedom House	0.67
Free Flow of Information	Structures	Freedom of the Press	A composite measure of the degree of print, broadcast and internet freedom.	Reporters Without Borders (RSF)	0.50
	Attitudes	Quality of Information	Measured by Government dissemination of false information domestically: How often governments disseminate false or misleading information.	Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)	0.61
	Structures	Telecom infrastructure index (internet, mobile, broadband)	A composite index of internet users and mobile phone and broadband subscribers per 100 inhabitants	UN E-Government Knowledgebase	0.64

Pillar	Domain	Indicator	Description	Source	Correlation coefficient (with Internal Peace)
Good Relations with Neighbours	Attitudes	Law to Support Equal Treatment of Population Segments	This is a measure of how population segments interrelate with their domestic neighbours. It assesses whether laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population.	Freedom House	0.68
	Structures	International Tourism	Number of tourists (Number of arrivals per 100,000 population) who travel to a country (staying at least one night) other than that in which they have their usual residence.	World Tourism Organization	0.43
	Institutions	Freedom to trade internationally	Measures barriers to free trade such as tariffs regulations black market exchange rate and control of movement of capital and people	Economic Freedom of the World Dataset	0.64
High Levels of Human Capital	Structures	Share of youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)	Proportion of people between 15 and 24 years of age that are not employed and are not in education or training.	International Labour Organization	0.60
	Structures	Researchers in R&D	The number of researchers engaged in Research & Development (R&D), expressed as per one million population.	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	0.65
	Structures	Healthy life expectancy (HALE)	Average number of years that a newborn can expect to live in full health.	United Nations World Population Prospects	0.66

APPENDIX B

POSITIVE PEACE INDEX RANKINGS

TABLE B.1

Results of the 2026 Positive Peace Index

Country	Rank	Positive Peace Index	Acceptance of the Rights of Others	Equitable Distribution of Resources	Free Flow of Information	Good Relations with Neighbours	High Levels of Human Capital	Low Levels of Corruption	Sound Business Environment	Well-Functioning Government
Denmark	1	1.213	1.222	1.085	1.089	1.500	1.226	1.057	1.473	1.101
Finland	2	1.245	1.028	1.099	1.328	1.381	1.282	1.136	1.596	1.166
Sweden	3	1.280	1.198	1.147	1.170	1.564	1.122	1.299	1.420	1.329
Switzerland	4	1.284	1.154	1.537	1.236	1.846	1.197	1.154	1.148	1.113
Norway	5	1.301	1.220	1.093	1.163	1.983	1.175	1.130	1.539	1.191
Ireland	6	1.344	1.185	1.133	1.374	1.602	1.239	1.435	1.486	1.322
New Zealand	7	1.428	1.493	1.273	1.470	1.767	1.435	1.156	1.596	1.317
Australia	8	1.478	1.293	1.576	1.580	1.996	1.342	1.300	1.165	1.641
Netherlands	9	1.479	1.260	1.499	1.444	1.778	1.197	1.587	1.485	1.590
Iceland	10	1.500	1.270	1.409	1.565	1.719	1.159	1.451	1.878	1.586
Germany	11	1.502	1.335	1.524	1.391	1.844	1.383	1.464	1.643	1.473
Japan	12	1.534	1.194	1.557	2.076	1.927	1.110	1.733	1.464	1.342
Canada	13	1.539	1.536	1.211	1.756	1.823	1.494	1.455	1.379	1.680
Singapore	14	1.582	1.274	1.725	2.142	1.864	1.172	1.627	1.303	1.650
Belgium	15	1.610	1.386	1.498	1.487	1.749	1.256	2.041	1.820	1.604
France	16	1.632	1.899	1.618	1.660	1.615	1.381	1.620	1.644	1.609
Austria	17	1.632	1.321	1.524	1.777	1.688	1.342	2.027	1.719	1.647
Portugal	18	1.670	1.464	1.660	1.385	1.588	1.314	2.090	2.091	1.695
Slovenia	19	1.710	1.369	1.409	1.831	1.686	1.322	1.933	2.443	1.688
United Kingdom	20	1.736	2.134	1.579	1.764	1.815	1.597	2.002	1.446	1.531
Estonia	21	1.741	1.828	1.502	1.297	1.586	1.598	2.172	2.370	1.491
Czech Republic	22	1.794	1.473	1.434	1.334	1.727	1.380	2.608	2.307	1.913
South Korea	23	1.837	1.532	1.549	2.070	2.018	1.391	2.331	1.683	2.071
Lithuania	24	1.859	1.346	1.627	1.292	2.059	1.841	2.242	2.501	1.891
Uruguay	25	1.874	1.689	1.855	1.560	1.491	2.056	1.874	2.563	1.853
Spain	26	1.895	1.985	1.651	1.627	1.627	1.406	2.644	1.883	2.130
Italy	27	1.899	1.430	1.637	1.962	1.651	1.502	2.625	1.906	2.317
United States of America	28	1.949	2.296	1.752	1.880	2.436	1.633	2.417	1.328	1.820
Latvia	29	2.012	2.063	1.608	1.196	2.121	1.854	2.454	2.561	2.075
Chile	30	2.019	2.147	1.947	1.901	1.928	1.971	2.025	2.298	1.924
Cyprus	31	2.021	1.967	1.540	2.080	1.579	1.659	3.095	2.165	1.917
Poland	32	2.051	1.724	1.647	1.742	2.087	1.650	2.369	2.384	2.634
Croatia	33	2.103	1.744	1.521	2.062	1.970	1.662	2.715	2.393	2.578
Slovakia	34	2.114	2.179	1.496	2.114	1.642	1.647	2.669	2.617	2.363
Greece	35	2.114	1.638	1.601	2.163	2.044	1.449	2.674	2.366	2.799
Costa Rica	36	2.149	1.751	2.056	2.046	1.844	2.214	2.407	2.688	2.143
Taiwan	37	2.182	2.112	2.185	2.457	2.108	2.373	2.521	2.326	1.481
United Arab Emirates	38	2.206	1.862	2.307	2.631	2.516	1.471	2.150	2.042	2.696

Country	Rank	Positive Peace Index	Acceptance of the Rights of Others	Equitable Distribution of Resources	Free Flow of Information	Good Relations with Neighbours	High Levels of Human Capital	Low Levels of Corruption	Sound Business Environment	Well-Functioning Government
Israel	39	2.207	2.252	2.060	2.181	2.410	1.967	2.836	1.883	2.023
Hungary	40	2.250	1.982	1.489	2.801	1.930	1.677	2.816	2.526	2.660
Mauritius	41	2.318	2.657	2.470	2.460	1.725	2.430	2.314	2.311	2.149
Bulgaria	42	2.334	1.915	2.106	2.048	2.127	1.869	3.109	2.700	2.621
Kosovo	43	2.370	2.186	1.964	2.586	2.171	2.449	2.784	2.441	2.335
Romania	44	2.376	2.589	1.697	2.077	1.841	2.222	3.014	2.825	2.516
Montenegro	45	2.422	2.583	1.663	2.142	1.896	2.245	3.125	2.577	2.854
Qatar	46	2.458	2.417	2.480	2.279	2.977	2.323	2.716	1.932	2.521
Malaysia	47	2.460	2.349	2.609	2.181	2.748	2.068	3.024	2.180	2.458
Trinidad and Tobago	48	2.469	2.006	2.133	1.985	2.683	2.429	2.879	2.778	2.741
Georgia	49	2.505	2.517	2.145	2.734	2.058	2.483	3.046	2.649	2.333
Argentina	50	2.512	2.225	1.857	2.183	2.879	2.104	2.804	3.052	2.886
Albania	51	2.524	2.031	2.235	2.671	1.583	2.064	3.339	3.162	2.894
Jamaica	52	2.549	2.015	2.179	1.798	2.810	2.970	2.679	2.974	2.849
Panama	53	2.592	3.108	2.616	2.124	1.823	2.263	2.847	2.587	3.095
North Macedonia	54	2.593	2.101	2.090	2.173	2.425	2.355	3.435	2.948	2.987
Armenia	55	2.603	2.387	2.057	2.457	2.280	2.281	3.047	3.126	3.012
Kuwait	56	2.663	2.222	2.749	2.527	2.511	2.641	3.240	2.521	2.799
Moldova	57	2.686	2.120	2.122	2.200	2.630	2.384	3.275	3.229	3.299
Mongolia	58	2.691	2.305	2.325	2.660	2.249	2.493	3.351	3.164	2.839
Botswana	59	2.699	2.566	2.824	2.082	2.663	3.599	2.395	2.789	2.654
Oman	60	2.700	2.283	2.584	2.524	2.822	2.422	3.083	2.566	3.192
Serbia	61	2.715	2.422	1.930	2.864	2.380	1.902	3.755	3.001	3.220
Thailand	62	2.733	2.976	2.359	2.234	2.566	1.958	3.919	2.480	3.064
Brazil	63	2.809	2.978	2.737	2.348	2.814	2.362	3.228	2.636	3.185
Saudi Arabia	64	2.831	3.231	2.587	3.099	2.876	2.058	3.215	2.392	3.098
Bhutan	65	2.832	2.923	3.116	2.770	2.941	2.868	2.532	3.433	2.238
Bahrain	66	2.840	3.252	2.574	2.849	2.769	2.554	3.295	2.163	3.110
Bosnia and Herzegovina	67	2.863	2.538	2.216	2.513	2.430	2.200	3.908	3.137	3.610
Kazakhstan	68	2.872	2.712	2.076	2.825	2.981	2.170	3.587	2.811	3.583
Jordan	69	2.879	3.101	2.773	3.095	2.311	2.702	2.986	2.991	2.994
China	70	2.897	2.616	2.294	3.348	3.769	1.959	3.297	2.619	3.285
Namibia	71	2.920	3.021	3.318	2.209	2.793	3.471	2.719	3.039	2.758
Tunisia	72	2.935	2.464	2.550	2.566	3.242	2.313	3.421	3.467	3.336
Peru	73	2.938	3.329	2.618	2.507	2.512	2.599	3.598	2.835	3.245
Dominican Republic	74	2.947	3.023	2.692	2.078	2.631	3.437	3.490	3.089	2.919
South Africa	75	2.954	2.974	3.323	1.880	2.737	3.466	3.548	2.858	2.683
Vietnam	76	2.963	2.453	2.901	2.956	3.437	2.176	3.408	3.173	3.187
Colombia	77	2.971	3.420	2.723	2.867	2.817	2.853	3.314	2.881	2.809
Mexico	78	2.976	3.288	2.517	3.002	2.684	2.520	3.503	2.871	3.245
Ukraine	79	2.980	2.715	2.069	2.376	3.161	2.473	3.662	3.517	3.602
Indonesia	80	3.013	3.441	2.534	2.586	3.268	2.842	3.600	2.937	2.789
Ghana	81	3.025	2.370	3.480	2.186	3.039	3.618	3.269	3.537	2.695
Paraguay	82	3.039	3.126	2.644	2.572	2.548	2.822	3.857	3.232	3.250
Türkiye	83	3.052	3.062	2.807	3.232	2.920	2.214	3.865	2.697	3.444

Country	Rank	Positive Peace Index	Acceptance of the Rights of Others	Equitable Distribution of Resources	Free Flow of Information	Good Relations with Neighbours	High Levels of Human Capital	Low Levels of Corruption	Sound Business Environment	Well-Functioning Government
Guyana	84	3.055	2.787	2.711	2.893	3.027	3.566	3.164	3.119	3.119
Ecuador	85	3.078	3.058	2.472	2.920	2.883	2.432	3.763	3.513	3.385
Senegal	86	3.078	2.848	3.398	2.668	2.853	3.317	3.104	3.763	2.703
Cuba	87	3.102	2.018	2.658	3.804	2.909	2.251	3.720	3.605	3.775
Sri Lanka	88	3.107	3.443	2.376	2.824	3.362	2.683	3.656	3.375	3.023
Belarus	89	3.107	1.807	2.231	3.489	3.491	1.910	3.843	3.737	4.199
El Salvador	90	3.120	3.366	2.516	3.105	2.327	3.180	3.299	3.361	3.587
Philippines	91	3.149	3.388	2.607	3.304	3.331	2.766	3.744	2.992	3.008
India	92	3.154	3.292	3.161	3.505	3.372	2.974	3.594	3.032	2.426
Morocco	93	3.161	3.376	3.266	2.726	3.032	2.846	3.534	3.129	3.251
Benin	94	3.182	2.937	3.756	2.606	2.860	3.418	2.925	3.790	3.151
Timor-Leste	95	3.191	3.070	3.163	2.583	2.650	3.161	3.386	3.884	3.450
Bolivia	96	3.191	2.770	2.864	2.999	2.989	2.913	3.826	3.488	3.517
Uzbekistan	97	3.201	2.787	2.510	3.051	3.490	2.645	4.026	3.376	3.561
Azerbaijan	98	3.217	3.278	2.452	3.555	3.466	1.998	3.986	3.175	3.678
Algeria	99	3.240	2.960	3.064	2.941	3.618	2.416	3.525	3.689	3.628
Kyrgyz Republic	100	3.273	3.265	2.571	2.725	2.776	2.509	3.972	3.852	4.142
Russia	101	3.281	2.978	2.400	3.399	4.106	1.930	4.128	3.043	4.092
Honduras	102	3.299	3.117	2.728	3.199	3.098	3.195	3.804	3.578	3.523
Zambia	103	3.340	3.054	3.877	2.854	3.056	3.697	3.163	3.721	3.293
Tanzania	104	3.373	2.958	3.187	3.278	3.775	3.312	3.143	3.940	3.461
Egypt	105	3.390	3.600	3.089	3.458	3.453	2.769	3.985	3.358	3.332
The Gambia	106	3.393	2.684	3.890	2.749	3.119	4.030	3.408	4.039	3.221
Rwanda	107	3.403	3.971	3.584	3.310	3.162	3.377	3.228	3.615	3.011
Kenya	108	3.414	3.367	3.103	3.072	3.471	3.539	3.921	3.666	3.117
Palestine	109	3.435	2.943	3.140	3.414	3.599	3.225	3.853	3.351	3.856
Gabon	110	3.437	2.998	3.315	2.342	3.705	3.520	3.817	3.561	4.008
Laos	111	3.450	3.422	3.372	3.204	3.281	2.887	3.875	3.760	3.671
Nepal	112	3.451	3.306	3.474	2.638	3.405	3.451	3.800	3.784	3.598
Papua New Guinea	113	3.453	3.337	3.085	2.986	3.064	3.783	3.901	3.652	3.622
Lesotho	114	3.463	2.713	3.523	3.242	2.895	4.423	3.604	3.901	3.367
Côte d'Ivoire	115	3.470	3.454	3.738	2.603	3.351	3.554	3.880	3.570	3.461
Malawi	116	3.484	3.250	3.184	3.464	3.416	3.376	4.082	4.171	2.948
Guatemala	117	3.484	4.126	3.351	2.823	2.874	3.495	3.750	3.353	3.829
Eswatini	118	3.490	2.762	3.853	2.587	3.388	3.839	3.783	3.590	3.949
Nicaragua	119	3.501	3.482	2.765	3.817	2.915	2.948	4.096	3.831	3.954
Cambodia	120	3.503	3.646	3.363	3.345	3.116	2.901	4.260	3.662	3.564
Togo	121	3.514	3.343	3.572	3.622	3.486	3.387	3.650	3.835	3.268
Lebanon	122	3.517	3.556	2.938	3.038	3.618	2.507	4.386	3.414	4.350
Sierra Leone	123	3.550	2.939	3.827	3.328	3.266	4.008	3.650	4.153	3.264
Iran	124	3.568	3.820	2.911	3.369	4.224	2.298	4.208	3.391	4.145
North Korea	125	3.585	2.876	2.756	4.465	3.461	2.384	4.435	3.662	4.480
Burkina Faso	126	3.608	3.028	3.812	3.209	3.650	3.718	3.474	3.956	3.979
Turkmenistan	127	3.615	2.880	3.229	4.013	3.465	2.625	4.209	4.022	4.343
Bangladesh	128	3.626	4.006	3.127	3.731	4.049	2.570	4.477	3.715	3.296
Mozambique	129	3.634	3.550	3.693	3.996	3.087	3.557	3.697	4.038	3.476
Tajikistan	130	3.665	3.489	2.861	3.463	3.676	3.154	4.258	4.076	4.141

Country	Rank	Positive Peace Index	Acceptance of the Rights of Others	Equitable Distribution of Resources	Free Flow of Information	Good Relations with Neighbours	High Levels of Human Capital	Low Levels of Corruption	Sound Business Environment	Well-Functioning Government
Libya	131	3.691	3.160	3.534	2.656	3.853	3.096	4.395	3.955	4.568
Uganda	132	3.709	3.809	3.616	3.766	3.459	3.403	4.109	3.942	3.523
Mauritania	133	3.716	4.107	3.698	2.644	3.377	3.953	4.135	3.948	3.643
Madagascar	134	3.729	3.605	3.877	3.602	3.281	3.784	3.897	4.208	3.553
Pakistan	135	3.736	3.826	3.783	3.503	4.276	3.386	4.006	3.784	3.378
Guinea-Bissau	136	3.743	3.317	3.936	2.803	3.168	3.264	4.475	4.260	4.395
Niger	137	3.758	3.672	4.070	3.354	3.575	3.613	3.963	4.148	3.629
Liberia	138	3.764	3.568	3.606	3.460	3.291	4.163	4.097	4.152	3.673
Djibouti	139	3.766	3.462	3.770	3.534	3.607	4.177	3.668	3.768	4.077
Iraq	140	3.767	4.026	3.185	3.432	3.715	3.425	4.336	3.600	4.186
Nigeria	141	3.800	4.165	3.861	2.922	4.136	3.685	4.355	3.707	3.470
Mali	142	3.814	4.002	3.901	3.114	3.655	3.993	3.875	3.987	3.871
Ethiopia	143	3.816	3.818	3.785	3.796	4.377	3.197	3.865	4.116	3.655
Angola	144	3.826	4.101	4.472	3.021	3.576	3.862	3.525	3.780	4.153
Zimbabwe	145	3.841	3.229	3.620	3.775	3.736	3.790	4.425	4.085	3.980
Republic of the Congo	146	3.890	4.282	3.677	3.386	4.103	3.357	3.871	4.093	4.227
Haiti	147	3.917	3.933	4.373	3.431	3.242	3.330	4.266	4.220	4.331
Venezuela	148	3.926	3.511	3.186	3.928	3.868	3.402	4.774	3.805	4.684
Cameroon	149	3.974	4.090	4.017	3.502	4.172	3.629	4.489	3.994	3.820
Burundi	150	3.986	3.847	3.849	3.926	3.936	3.415	4.264	4.303	4.262
Guinea	151	3.999	4.173	4.171	3.223	3.833	4.065	4.427	4.118	3.846
Myanmar	152	4.000	4.057	3.612	3.731	4.295	3.353	4.082	4.193	4.553
Equatorial Guinea	153	4.043	3.865	4.370	3.822	4.007	3.722	4.212	3.947	4.328
Syria	154	4.127	4.004	3.477	4.321	4.160	3.217	4.543	4.449	4.703
Sudan	155	4.186	4.017	4.231	3.789	4.199	3.652	4.394	4.431	4.641
Eritrea	156	4.186	3.968	4.033	4.473	3.970	3.505	4.207	4.667	4.614
Afghanistan	157	4.190	4.423	3.847	4.389	4.090	3.839	4.050	4.173	4.636
Democratic Republic of the Congo	158	4.280	4.433	3.918	3.632	4.383	4.295	4.432	4.437	4.552
Yemen	159	4.307	4.799	3.943	3.969	4.311	3.486	4.594	4.370	4.787
Chad	160	4.328	4.369	4.189	3.922	4.479	4.284	4.674	4.232	4.382
Central African Republic	161	4.335	4.280	4.515	4.164	4.219	3.901	4.369	4.573	4.595
South Sudan	162	4.403	4.292	4.644	4.507	4.007	3.896	4.331	4.564	4.902
Somalia	163	4.425	4.391	4.702	3.803	3.898	4.304	4.752	4.518	4.821

ENDNOTES

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SECTION 7: THE HALO FRAMEWORK: A SYSTEMS-BASED APPROACH TO ANALYSING SOCIETIES

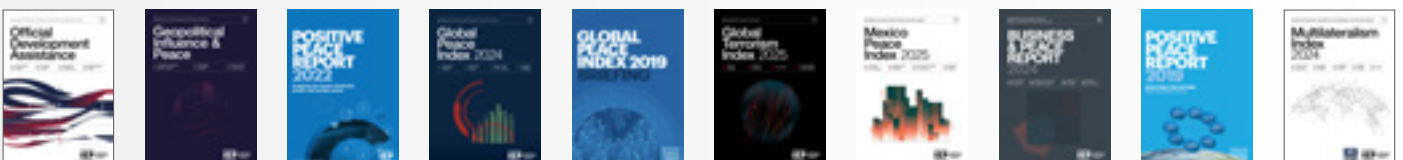
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