

Corruption decreasing in Italy according to the latest Corruption Perception Index.

Edoardo Bonatti

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According to Transparency International's latest report, the long-standing corruption problem in Italy seems to be improving. In the recently published Corruption Perception Index (CPI), which refers to 2021, Italy has gained three points marking a ten positions improvement in the ranking. With a score of 56, the country is now in 42nd place.

Italy's progress is consistent with the results of previous years, which have seen steady progress since 2012. The NGO's analysis shows that Italy is one of the countries with the most marked improvements in recent years due to the constant attention devoted to the problem in the last decade.

This effort, according to Transparency, bodes well for the recovery of the Italian economy after the crisis triggered by the pandemic. The reform programme announced over last year, including digitalisation, ecological transition and the modernisation of healthcare and infrastructure, require careful vigilance to ensure that it can be implemented and be free from the threat of corruption. The index uses thirteen sources to capture the assessment of experts and business executives about the corrupt behaviours that may plague the public sector. These include bribery, diversion of public funds, use of public office for private gain, nepotism in the civil service and state capture. Other indicators include the effectiveness of the government in punishing abuses, guaranteeing transparency, and streamlining bureaucratic red tape. The final score is determined on a scale ranging from zero (high level of perceived corruption) to 100 (low level of perceived corruption). The President of Transparency International Italy, Iole Anna Savini, commented favourably on these results. "Over the past year, Italy's international credibility has been strengthened thanks to the efforts of numerous private sector and civil society stakeholders to encourage the values of transparency, anti-corruption and integrity. The pandemic-induced emergency has strongly influenced the CPI drafting process. In some cases, the pandemic induced many countries to remove control guarantees, thereby reducing trust in their policies; in others, it has led to a stronger collective consciousness and more solid responses from governments".

However, on the anti-corruption and transparency front, there are still some outstanding issues. "Among the most relevant issues" - says the Director of Transparency International Italy, Giovanni Colombo - "there is the delay in the adoption of the European Directive 2019/1937 on whistleblowing, whose terms expired in December 2021, which would allow perfecting the discipline contained in Law 179/2017. We are also still waiting for the publication of the register of beneficial owners, and we hope that the legislative process of lobbying regulation will be completed in the best possible way."

About a week ago, the Minister of Justice, Marta Cartabia, stressed the importance of quick adoption of the whistleblowing directive, showing that the government is deeply concerned with the problem. Something that was also saluted as positive by the National Anti-Corruption Authority, the Italian independent administrative authority tasked with combating corruption in the country.

Source: Transparency International Italia