The Corruption Perceptions Index 2018 reveals that corruption is contributing to a crisis of democracy around the world. Since 2013, 94 countries have seen a decline in their democracy scores. The index offers an annual snapshot of perceived public sector corruption, according to experts and businesspeople. The CPI scores 180 countries and territories by their levels of perceived public sector corruption, according to Transparency International.

**Top Countries**

- **Finland**
- **Denmark**
- **Sweden**

**Bottom Countries**

- **North Korea**
- **South Sudan**
- **Syria**

**A Perfect Score**

No country earns a perfect score. The index ranks countries from the top to the bottom of the corruption scale. The CPI scores countries on a scale of 0 to 100, where a score of 0 indicates very high levels of perceived corruption and a score of 100 indicates very clean public sector. The CPI data is collected by experts and businesspeople around the world and reflects their perceptions of corruption in the public sector.

**The Role of Populism**

Throughout the world, political leaders who run on a populist platform are gaining power and undermining democracy. High corruption rates can contribute to increased support for populism, as populist leaders campaign against corruption, listing it as a key issue in their campaigns to appeal to voters. However, once they are elected to represent, they are threatening to undermine the same institutions they were elected to protect. This work from Transparency International is licensed under CC BY-ND 4.0.