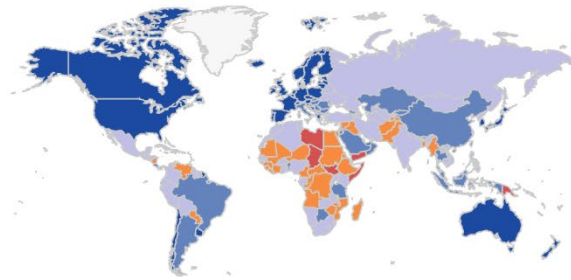


## StIx Report: The World of States in 2025

Year 2025 | Context Measurement



● Collapsed State ● Profound defective State ● Defective State ● Moderate functioning State ● High functioning State

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### Top-Level Insights

- Insight 1: Profound defective and collapsed states are caught in multidimensional fragility traps for years with no end in sight.
- Insight 2: Defective states continue to be the predominant type of global stateness.
- Insight 3: Balanced transformation dynamics 2000-2025 - 'positive' and 'negative' state transformations occur worldwide in equal measures.

*The **Stateness Index (StIx)** is a tool for measuring stateness and state quality using both aggregated and disaggregated data. One of StIx's most notable strengths is its comprehensive coverage of countries and years, which exceeds that of existing indices measuring stateness. The index is based on data from the Varieties of Democracy Project (V-Dem) and provides data on over **170 countries from 1950 to 2025**.*

*The **Stateness Index** represents a significant innovation by distinguishing between two distinct layers, both conceptual and operational in nature. The initial layer pertains to the **formal state** and stateness, which is measured through a set of indicators representing formal or 'official' institutions. The second layer of **informality** serves to enrich the formal concept by incorporating informal institutions that exist alongside the formal institutional framework of a state. The incorporation of a second layer of measurement serves to enhance the concept, thereby facilitating a more accurate capture of the 'reality' of stateness as opposed to the measurement of formal institutions alone.*

## Concept: The State

The state is an institutionalised social and political order and organisation of hierarchical authority that has exclusive control over the monopoly of law, violence and administration throughout a given territory and its inhabitants. These three dimensions encapsulate the state's central functions: the legislative, the judiciary, and the executive.

The initial two dimensions are associated with parliament (the institution responsible for the formulation of legislation) and the courts (the institutions responsible for the control and interpretation of legislation). The executive is divided into enforcement (comprising the military and police) and implementation (comprising the government and state bureaucracy). The capacity of a state to legislate and enforce its rules throughout its territory, to exercise effective control over its populace, and to establish and maintain a bureaucratic apparatus to implement and assert territorial sovereignty, is indicative of its institutional performance.

## The Typology of StIx

StIx employs a typology of states that is theoretically grounded. The initial threshold, set at 0.7, differentiates between the 'full' presence of components and attributes, consistent with the concept of a functioning state, and empirical patterns that, while not fully aligning with the concept of a functioning state, nevertheless satisfy certain criteria despite exhibiting minor deficiencies; that is to say, moderate functioning states. The second threshold, located at 0.5, serves to differentiate between moderate functioning states and defective states. The third threshold, at 0.3, is located within the diminished subtypes, and is used to differentiate between defective and profoundly defective states, which differ in terms of the severity of

the defects. The fourth threshold delineates the point at which attributes and components are no longer sufficiently present, i.e. when minimal standards are no longer met (non-functional/collapsed state; 0.1).

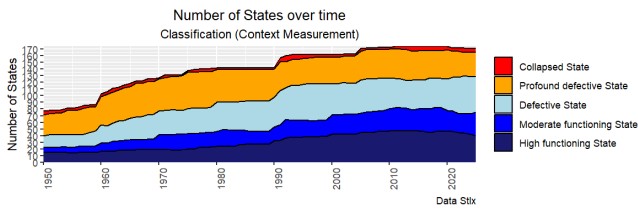


The concept of state fragility as a continuous phenomenon encompasses states with minor defects (defective states), significant defects (profound defective states), and situations of institutional collapse (non-functional/collapsed states), where (formal) stateness is de facto absent.

## The added value of StIx

StIx is an Index that measures stateness between 1950 and 2025, and therefore significantly surpasses existing indices in terms of the number of cases and time periods covered. It also avoids a regime bias often found in other measurement frameworks by excluding regime indicators from its analysis. Furthermore, by incorporating informal institutions into its conceptualisation and measurement, StIx addresses a significant research gap that has not yet been systematically included in stateness measurement.

## The global distribution of state-types over time (1950-2025)



Between 2010 and 2015, high functioning states are in the majority, with 47 states being classified as high functioning states. Subsequently, e.g., Croatia, Mauritius and Botswana were affected by a loss of quality, slipping into the category of moderate functioning states.

Except for these years, defective and profound defective states are the most widely represented types of stateness globally. Defective states are therefore not the exception but the norm, both globally and over time.

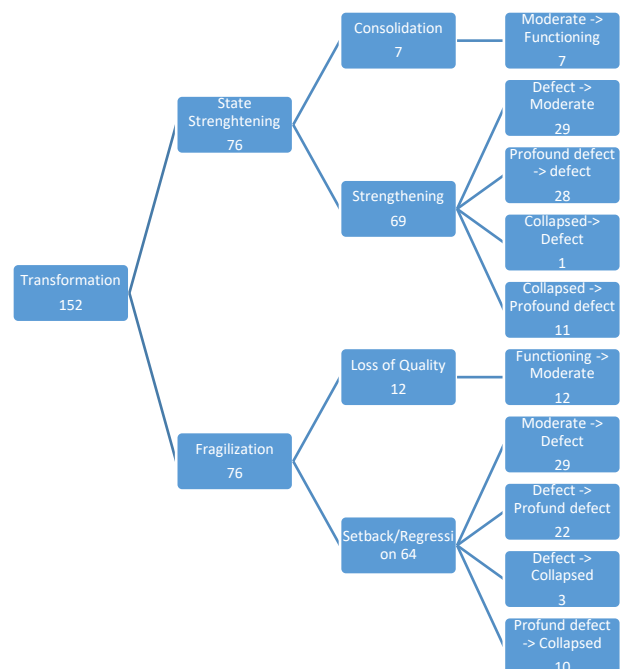
Furthermore, the number of collapsed states fluctuates only insignificantly between 1950 and 2025: After 1991 the number of collapsed states rises due to the disintegration and reestablishment of states after the collapse of the Sowjet Union and again after 2011 (Arab Spring). Hence, defective stateness is the old and new normal. Rather than escalating into state collapse, crises tend to manifest as phases of latent regression. Additionally, a group of stable and functioning states have emerged that possess the necessary resilience and stability to withstand crises without loss of quality.

However, defective states often find themselves in a 'low-level equilibrium trap'. These 'fragility traps' are spirals of self-perpetuating dysfunction. While state collapse is prevented, positive development in terms of addressing these deficiencies is unlikely. "Those fragile states whose stagnation is so tenacious despite generous aid programmes and substantial,

costly interventions are considered to be stuck in a 'fragility trap'. [...] Caught in a low-level equilibrium, trapped states appear to be in a perpetual political and economic limbo that can last for years and in several cases, decades".<sup>1</sup>

## State Transformation (2000-2025)

The Total Value Index (context measurement) from StIx is used to operationalize processes of state transformation. States with single or multiple transformation points - defined as the point in time when a state changes its type - are described in terms of stateness development. Additionally, changes in state types, that is, transitions from functioning to deficient states and vice versa, are examined to gain insight into state transformation dynamics over the past 25 years. This enables the identification of processes of state consolidation and state-building, as well as processes of 'fragilization' or an increase in deficiencies.



<sup>1</sup> Carment/Samy (2017).

Overall, during the observation period 2000-2025, 'positive' and 'negative' state transformations occur worldwide in equal measures.<sup>2</sup> There were 76 transformations involving state-strengthening and consolidation, while 76 cases involved loss of state quality and setbacks/regressions of stateness. This suggests a balanced transformation dynamic that predominantly affects moderate functioning and defective states and is not limited to the poles of the continuum of stateness. Furthermore, no functioning state regresses directly into a defective or fragile state. No general trend of quality loss in functioning states can be identified empirically.

Thus, even defective states possess a certain degree of resilience, as well as the ability to adapt to changing circumstances and respond flexibly to crises. For the most part, these are sufficiently 'stable' political systems that do not collapse despite crises, conflicts, or disasters, since only a very small proportion of defective states regress into collapsed states.

## The global distribution of state-types 2025

### State collapse/ non-functional States

As in the previous year, six states are classified as collapsed or non-functional in 2025: Yemen, South Sudan, Libya, Chad, Somalia and Papua New Guinea. Somalia and Papua New Guinea are states that have been caught in a fragility trap for a long time. Informal institutions and actors substitute state functions, while maintaining the appearance of a functioning state is necessary to receive foreign investment and aid.

**Papua New Guinea's** stateness is highly imbalanced, with defects in the monopoly of administration far exceeding those in the monopoly of violence and law.

PNG is caught in a fragility trap: a self-reinforcing cycle of non-functional institutional and organisational capacity, corruption, and 'isomorphic mimicry' without performance, which locks the state of PNG in a 'low-growth-poor-governance equilibrium'.<sup>3</sup>

Although non-state actors frequently challenge the state's monopoly on violence, the monopoly of law and the monopoly of violence fall within the thresholds of a somewhat moderate functioning state. PNG is a resource-rich country, but the government has yet to convert the economic benefits into development outcomes, while poverty and inequality persist.

In addition, Papua New Guinea suffers from a profound urban bias ("paper state"), i.e., the absence of the state within the periphery: public services and infrastructure are highly deficient to absent outside of major towns and capitals, while in some areas of PNG, mining and logging companies provide state functions.<sup>4</sup> One of the main reasons for this administrative dysfunction is the politicisation of public services.

The state suffers from state capture by interest groups, ethnicity or communities due to a strong societal fragmentation caused by the archipelagic nature of the state territory, which limits the state's reach, and patronage/clientelism, which plays a major role in the distribution of state resources.<sup>5</sup>

**Chad** is a non-functional/collapsed state affected by a poly-crisis. As an environmental fragility hotspot, it is particularly vulnerable to

<sup>2</sup> Due to the calculation methods used by V-Dem and StIx, the number of transformation processes varies depending on the version of the dataset (here: V16)

<sup>3</sup> Andrimihaja et al. (2011).

<sup>4</sup> Walton (2015)

<sup>5</sup> Nematullah/Gorea (2022).

climate change. Floods create substantial displacement, and the climate crisis ignites violent conflict between herders and farmers that the state is unable to contain.

The political crisis that unfolded following President Déby's death in 2021 exacerbated the instability and fragility of Chad and the wider region. A military committee led by Deby's son seized power and began a transition period that culminated in Mahamat's election as president in 2024. Conditions have deteriorated further in the interim, and the Lake Chad Basin and Sahel are now among the world's most unstable regions.<sup>6</sup> The absence of the state creates opportunities for armed groups, while poverty, social tensions and insecurity are continuously rising. The administration is poorly funded and highly susceptible to corruption, and basic infrastructure is lacking in rural areas. The monopoly on violence is often challenged by armed groups, gangs and rebels operating from Libya and Chad, who exploit the state's absence. In addition, Chad is heavily affected by the ongoing war in Sudan.

Corruption at all societal levels, especially within the "power circle" and security forces, impairs the monopoly of law. The judiciary and the state are absent from some parts of the country, where customary law prevails in rural regions. Law enforcement is limited to major cities and remains geographically and functionally restricted.<sup>7</sup>

**Libya**, the fourth-biggest country on the African continent and home to the continent's largest hydrocarbon reserves, has been classified as a collapsed/non-functioning state since 2011. The country is divided into two regions, each with its own government and state institutions: the Government of National Unity in the west and the House of Representatives in

the east. The monopolies of law and violence are non-functioning, while the monopoly of administration has limited capacity. The armed forces are factionalized, with some having parochial ties to local leaders. In the absence of a functioning state amid ongoing violent conflict, regional leaders and tribal identities have increased in importance, fostering exclusive neo-patrimonial structures. The latent civil war has forced citizens to resort to militias to access essential services, which have increasingly been weaponized in the internal competition for power by several opposing armed and political factions in the country."<sup>8</sup> While various armed militias in the east are under the command of the government, the aspiration to dismantle the armed militias in the west resulted in violent clashes with the military.

Without a constitution that regulates the rights and responsibilities of governing institutions, a state encompassing monopoly of law is non-existent, and the judiciary cannot function effectively. Ongoing conflict and political division within the state result in an increase in informal adjudication methods. Corruption in Libya is endemic and pervades all branches of the state. The proliferation of weapons, autonomous militias, criminal networks, regional de facto rulers and extremist groups is both a cause and consequence of the ongoing collapse of the state.

**Yemen** is a collapsed state, plagued by civil war and a history of violent conflict since the unification of the two Yemeni states in 1990. Following the failure of the Yemeni 'Arab Spring' in 2011, the National Dialogue Conference in 2013/14 and a Houthi insurgency in 2015 with the rebels seizing the capital and much of northern Yemen. The Saudi-led 'Restoring Hope' operation has exacerbated the

<sup>6</sup> McDonald (2024).

<sup>7</sup> Global Organized Crime Index (2023): Chad.

<sup>8</sup> BTI (2024): Libya Country Report.

humanitarian catastrophe and civil war in Yemen since 2015. The internal division has also turned into a proxy war along the broader Sunni-Shia divide, prolonging the conflict: the Iran-backed Houthi rebels against a multinational coalition led by Saudi Arabia.<sup>9</sup>

The causes of the collapse of the Yemeni state are the armed insurgency by the Houthis in the north and the power vacuum in the central government after the mass protests of 2011. This power vacuum was ultimately filled by both domestic and foreign non-state actors, which contributed further to the country's chronic economic weakness, social fragmentation along tribal lines, and regional disparities.

There is no monopoly of violence, as there is no central government to control the state territory. Instead, different factions and armed groups effectively control different regions. Houthis hold the capital and much of the north, while the internationally recognized government and the Southern Transitional Council (STC) control other areas.

The monopoly on law is ineffective in most parts of the state; consequently, citizens turn to tribal forms of law and courts. The monopoly of administration has been destroyed, and networks of corruption and patronage have become endemic within state institutions.

With its independence in 2011, **South Sudan** became the world's "first pre-failed state" due to the dysfunctionality of its rump-state, the profound defective state Sudan.<sup>10</sup> The state is marked by inter-ethnic violent conflicts, multi-rebellions against the government and the ethnicization of politics as well as the politicization of ethnicity,<sup>11</sup> producing a profoundly polarized society.

In 2025 South Sudan is at risk of returning to armed conflict amid the continued failure to

fully implement the 2018 peace agreement, following a civil war fueled by tension between the president and vice president from 2013 to 2015 that ended in a peace agreement in 2018.

The monopoly of administration is non-functional, the territorial administration lacks funding, capacities and personnel; hence, the administration is incapable of implementing the law or providing services to the population. The monopoly of law is highly dysfunctional, the population has no regular access to state-based courts, relying instead on local customary courts. The monopoly of violence is contested by armed groups and militias, and only small parts of the state territory are under the state's control. Increasing violent confrontations between the military (President) and insurgents (suspended vice President) that risks returning the country to "full-scale civil war".<sup>12</sup> Political and military power are intertwined, while high-ranking military have accumulated wealth through corruption and embezzlement.

### **Profound defective States**

In 2025, 36 States are classified as profound defective states. Most of this type of stateness is found in eastern Africa and middle Africa.

As a profoundly defective state, **Mozambique's** state institutions are severely dysfunctional. While the monopoly of law is partially functioning, the monopolies of violence and administration are absent. The regime, which still caters primarily to clientelist networks and interests, has failed to implement geographically balanced and inclusive development. The 'youth bulge' with few economic prospects

<sup>9</sup> Robinson (2023).

<sup>10</sup> Chol (2022).

<sup>11</sup> Chol (2022).

<sup>12</sup> Hume (2026).

has provided fertile ground for militant Islamist groups that challenge the state in the northern province of Cabo Delgado. Although the Wagner Group was deployed to Cabo Delgado, it withdrew after two months as its involvement in the absence of governance measures to address the volatile situation led to further violence.<sup>13</sup> Corruption is endemic, and large-scale impunity has 'allowed organized crime to infiltrate the Mozambican state'.<sup>14</sup> A profound urban-rural bias shapes both the administration and judiciary.

**Haiti** is a profound defective state on the brink of repeated state collapse and caught in a downward spiral of a severe dysfunctionality trap. Haiti is “characterized by widespread poverty and inequality, economic decline and unemployment, institutional weakness and poor governance, violence, lawlessness, and persistent conflict”.<sup>15</sup>

Following the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, the political and security situation has deteriorated severely. After the election of Didier Fils-Aimé as interim Prime Minister by the Transitional Presidential Council general elections are scheduled for 2026. Albeit, failing transitional arrangements led to a deterioration of the state.

The monopoly on violence is contested by gangs that control large parts of the territory, including the capital. A surge in violence, with gangs attacking state institutions, has led to displacement and a humanitarian crisis. The gangs temporarily controlled around 85% of the greater capital area, including downtown Port-au-Prince and large parts of the surrounding suburbs.

Administrative and infrastructural resources are concentrated in the capital, while rural and poor urban areas depend on non-state organizations to provide services. The situation has further deteriorated since the state lost territorial control to the gangs. The judiciary is 'in a state of total dysfunction'<sup>16</sup>, and corruption and collusion between state officials and gang members has transferred significant political power to the gangs. The near absence of the state has created a vacuum of informal rules and formal lawlessness (anomic state), which the gangs control by dominating both inhabitants and territory.

### Defective States

54 states are classified as defective states in 2025, making this category the predominant type of global stateness. Defective states are found around the globe, except for western and northern Europe, as well as northern America.

Contrary to the assumption that defective stateness is inherently unstable, the majority of defective states are stable within this category. The necessary stability is generated by an institutional equilibrium between the monopolies of law, violence and administration, in combination with informal networks within the state.

**Iran** is a stable defective, at times even moderately functioning (2000-2004) state. Iran's stateness is well balanced, implying a strong institutional equilibrium between the state's monopolies. The monopoly of violence is a “complex institutional arrangement”,<sup>17</sup> held by state and semi-state entities like vigilante groups that operate with the state's approval. The administration is highly centralized, and

<sup>13</sup> Ramani 2023, in: OECD (2025).

<sup>14</sup> BTI (2024): Mozambique Country Report.

<sup>15</sup> World Bank (2007).

<sup>16</sup> BTI (2024): Haiti Country Report.

<sup>17</sup> BTI (2024): Iran Country Report.

basic services are provided throughout the state territory, however corruption is widespread among the local administration. The monopoly of law is semi-functioning, corruption and the politicization of the judiciary lead to large-scale abuses of public offices.

### India

Although India has been a stable defective state since 1981, there have been recent transformations in its regime type, i.e. democracy. Since 2009, India has been moving towards autocracy, a process described as “a slow but systematic dismantling of democratic institutions”<sup>18</sup> by the ruling anti-pluralist, Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party and Prime Minister Modi.

The monopoly of violence is strengthening, and the monopoly of administration is approaching the threshold of a profound defective state. The monopoly of law has declined slightly since 2014. The state administration covers a wide range of fields of expertise and is responsible for jurisdiction, tax authorities and law enforcement. However, there are still significant challenges and discrepancies in the provision of basic services, particularly in rural and remote areas. The state’s monopoly of violence is largely assured, except for some areas in central India where mostly indigenous Naxalites run parallel administrations. The renewed active and violent conflict in Kashmir continued in 2024, with India increasing its efforts to consolidate territorial control. Since a militant attack on Indian tourists on 22 April 2025, Indian and Pakistani forces have exchanged fire across the Line of Control. The monopoly of law is moderately functioning but undermined by political corruption. Corrup-

tion is prevalent at all levels and affects citizens' interactions with the police, public services, and public procurement.<sup>19</sup>

### In addition: State dysfunction and the gender gap

Dysfunctional states are “inherently complex”, i.e. they “manifest as a complex web of interdependent challenges, marked by interactions between formal and informal networks, institutions and economies and diverse national and international stakeholders, each with their own agendas and priorities”.<sup>20</sup> One important but understudied aspect of state dysfunctionality is its inherent gender gap. Gender inequalities are both a consequence of and a root cause for state dysfunction or collapse: state defects exacerbate existing inequalities, and gender inequalities shape a state’s risks and coping capacities.

In collapsed or defective states women are more exposed to health risk, have lower educational outcomes and experience higher levels of gender discrimination with lower access to social and political protection.<sup>21</sup> In dysfunctional and collapsed states, women and marginalized groups face high risks of violence with “women experiencing reduced access to services and natural resources, including land, increased vulnerability to rights violations and, particularly in conflict areas, heightened instances of gender-based violence”.<sup>22</sup> In most collapsed and many profound defective states no legislation that specifically addresses domestic violence exists, with discriminatory legal frameworks and social norms that connect to wider societal violence in general.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Nord et al. (2026).

<sup>19</sup> BTI (2026): India Country Report.

<sup>20</sup> Goemans et al. (2021).

<sup>21</sup> OECD (2025).

<sup>22</sup> Boyer et al. (2020).

<sup>23</sup> Goemans et al. (2021).

### Moderate functioning states

Moderate functioning states deviate from the ideal type of stateness, but do not reach the threshold for being classified as defective. Instead, they exhibit minor deficits that do not culminate in state fragility. In 2025, 35 countries were categorized as moderate functioning states. Nineteen of these countries (e.g. Argentina, Qatar, Croatia, Israel and Kuwait) are classified as high-functioning states without incorporating the context measurement. This leads to the conclusion that, at least within this group, informality bends some of the rules and procedures of the formal state.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina** is a defective state due to its unique institutional configuration, i.e. a defective state by design: The Dayton Agreement of 1995 established a decentralized and fragmented state with weak, dysfunctional central institutions and two sub-state entities: the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (and the local self-governing unit Brčko District). Both sub-state entities have significant autonomy with a constitutional system that emphasises division and favours political blockade.<sup>24</sup>

Consequently, the monopolies of violence, administration and law are decentralized and fragmented. Instead of a coherent state identity, the Dayton Agreement and Constitution incorporate mutually exclusive state concepts. The inevitable polarization has fuelled a secessionist narrative in the Republika Srpska.

**Georgia** is a moderate functioning state since 2013. The state is in control of the monopoly of violence, although conflicts with the aspiring separatist territories Abkhazia and South Ossetia remain. Hence, Georgia controls about 80% of its state territory, while the de facto authorities of these territories have – with the

help of Russia – managed to stabilize their authority within their provinces. The state administration is established throughout the territory, but clientelist networks remain. The monopoly of law is decreasing due to Georgia's dependence on foreign actors to implement domestic and international policies, as well as growing corruption within the judiciary and legislation.

### High functioning states

Forty states correspond to the legal-rational ideal-type of a state, leading to their classification as high-functioning states. Unsurprisingly, this type of stateness is mainly found in Europe, which may affirm a Western bias in the measurement. However, countries such as Singapore, Costa Rica, Botswana, the United Arab Emirates, Chile, South Korea and Uruguay also fall into this category, contradicting the idea of a democratic and Western bias.

The **United Arab Emirates** has been classified as a high-functioning state since 2005. The UAE is a federation of seven emirates that grants these entities autonomy regarding local administration, as well as economic and social policies, while foreign policy and national security are under the control of the federal government. Despite having a small population and the eighth-largest oil reserves, the UAE has successfully avoided the 'resource curse', with the non-oil sector accounting for 70% of GDP thanks to investment in infrastructure and services. The UAE state has a complete monopoly on the use of force across its entire territory, with omnipresent security services.<sup>25</sup> The State has invested in the administrative personnel and technology to ensure that security services are omnipresent. Preemptive pro-

<sup>24</sup> Usvatov/Muharemović (2022).

<sup>25</sup> BTI (2024): United Arab Emirates Country Report.

ceedings against people suspected of undermining the state and regime foster state and autocratic stability.

The administration is sophisticated and differentiated, with 90% of public services available online. The monopoly of law is well established and functions throughout the state's territory. Due to strict regulations of office abuse, the UAE ranked 19th out of 142 countries in the World Justice Project's 2025 for the absence of corruption.

**Singapore** places second in the ranking of 2025, placing an electoral autocracy<sup>26</sup> at the top of states. The monopoly of violence is undisputed, the highly trained and skilled personnel in both administration and armed forces implement and execute the laws enacted by the regime. The state is fully capable to fulfil its jurisdictional functions to enforces the laws within its territory. The regime's coercive measures are of 'low intensity' and are designed to prevent politically undesirable behaviour through subtle techniques of social control.<sup>27</sup> The formal rule of law has been fully established. Together, these measures constitute a system of 'calibrated coercion' and the depoliticization of citizens. The infrastructure encompasses the whole territory, and due to the ruling Party's (People's Action Party) rigorous fight against corruption most corruption cases end with conviction. In 2025, Singapore ranked 2nd out of 142 countries in the World Justice Project's for the absence of corruption, surpassed only by Denmark.

## Regional Distribution of Stateness 2025

Comparing Stateness across World Regions 2025					
Region	CS	PD	DS	MF	HF
Caribbean	-	1	2	1	2
Central America	-	1	4	1	1
Central Asia	-	1	2	2	-
Eastern Africa	2	8	4	2	1
Eastern Asia	-	-	2	1	3
Eastern Europe	-	-	3	5	2
Middle Africa	1	6	1	-	-
North America	-	-	-	-	2
Northern Africa	1	2	3	-	-
Northern Europe	-	-	-	-	10
Oceania (including Australia and the Pacific)	1	1	1	-	2
South America	-	2	6	2	2
South-Eastern Asia	-	1	5	3	1
Southern Africa	-	-	4	1	-
Southern Asia	-	3	4	2	-
Southern Europe	-	-	-	7	6
Western Africa	-	8	7	1	-
Western Asia	1	2	6	7	1
Western Europe	-	-	-	-	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>

CS = Collapsed State, PD = Profound defective State, DS = Defective State, MF = Moderate functioning State, HF = High functioning State

The level of stateness varies considerably across regions. These regional differences demonstrate that defective states are primarily found outside the OECD. Most states exhibit defects to varying degrees, and defective states are the dominant form of stateness in many regions of the world.

<sup>26</sup> V-Dem (2025): Regimes of the world.

<sup>27</sup> Croissant (2022).

## State Transformation: Changes between 2024 and 2025

State transformation encompasses all movements along the stateness spectrum, from functioning to non-functional or collapsed states. Fragilization is the process by which a state declines towards a non-functional state. However, this process does not necessarily end in a collapsed state. While the starting point may be a functioning state, states with pre-existing defects are more likely to become fragile. Any shift towards the functioning pole with the above-defined features is labelled a 'strengthening of stateness'.

### State Transformation 2024-2025

Declines in Stlx Total Value (context)			
Top 5 Countries	2024	2025	Change
	Total	Total	
Ivory Coast	0.53	0.44	-0,09
Pakistan	0.44	0.38	-0,06
Panama	0.66	0.61	-0,05
Burkina Faso	0.59	0.55	-0,04
Bulgaria	0.74	0.70	-0,04
Gains in Stlx Total Value (context)			
Top 5 Countries	2024	2025	Change
	Total	Total	
Bangladesh	0.43	0.53	0,1
Kuwait	0.67	0.76	0,09
Qatar	0.65	0.72	0,07
Bahrain	0.45	0.52	0,07
Malawi	0.41	0.48	0,07

Stateness is deteriorating in many countries, and the number of states that experienced a decline of stateness between 2024 and 2025 (83) outweighs those states that experienced a strengthening of stateness (79).

### Gains: State strengthening

The five countries that show the most pronounced signs of state strengthening between

2024 and 2025 are Bangladesh, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and Malawi.

### Declines: Loss of Quality and State Fragilization

The most pronounced declines of stateness between 2024 and 2025 are found in Ivory Coast, Pakistan, Panama, Burkina Faso and Bulgaria.

### Top 10 and Worst 10 Performer in 2025

Top 10 Performer 2025 (context measurement)					
	ML	MA	MV	Total	Rank
Estonia	0,94	0,86	0,96	0,92	1
Singapore	0,90	0,94	0,88	0,91	2
Denmark	0,91	0,89	0,92	0,91	3
Luxembourg	0,88	0,87	0,97	0,90	4
Iceland	0,93	0,82	0,96	0,90	5
Norway	0,90	0,90	0,90	0,90	6
Germany	0,93	0,86	0,91	0,90	7
Netherlands	0,90	0,88	0,92	0,90	8
New Zealand	0,90	0,83	0,95	0,89	9
Seychelles	0,92	0,83	0,92	0,89	10
Worst 10 Performer 2025 (context measurement)					
	ML	MA	MV	Total	Rank
Libya	0,00	0,30	0,22	0,04	171
Yemen	0,18	0,07	0,09	0,10	170
South Sudan	0,38	0,08	0,19	0,18	169
Haiti	0,36	0,10	0,24	0,20	168
Somalia	0,56	0,08	0,29	0,23	167
Central African Republic	0,29	0,12	0,44	0,25	166
Chad	0,41	0,09	0,45	0,25	165
Papua New Guinea	0,72	0,06	0,39	0,25	164
Venezuela	0,36	0,15	0,33	0,26	163
Sudan	0,52	0,26	0,14	0,27	162
ML = Monopoly of Law, MV = Monopoly of Violence, MA = Monopoly of Administration					

Unlike in previous years, with a total Index value of 0.91 Singapore is no longer leading the ranking of 2025. With a total value of 0.92 **Estonia** is placed at the top of all states.

The state maintains the monopoly of violence throughout its territory. No domestic paramilitary groups or external forces threaten the country's territorial integrity. The Police and Border Guard Board and the defence forces operate under strict legal and constitutional mandates.<sup>28</sup> The state is fully capable of fulfilling its jurisdictional functions and enforcing the law within its territory. Although there are regional disparities concerning resources and personnel competence, the administrative monopoly is fully functional: the quality and accessibility of public services in Estonia are excellent, especially the e-government initiatives that ensure smooth 24/7 government operations.

Estonia leads the global ranking in terms of the quality of its monopoly of law. Comprehensive anti-corruption laws, strategies and integrity standards ensure that no significant informal institutions undermine the formal state institutions.

Singapore, Denmark, Luxembourg and Iceland complete the ranking of the top five performing states in 2025.

As in 2023 and 2024 **Libya**, a non-functional/collapsed state, is the worst performing state in 2025. The armed factions primarily operate in pursuit of their own agendas, and the division that has emerged between the eastern and western regions in the aftermath of the power vacuum consequent to Ghaddafi's removal has rendered the nation almost ungovernable.<sup>29</sup> The armed forces are known to exhibit strong localised allegiances and have historically maintained close ties with their respective local leaders. Meanwhile, ideological differences between political authorities have been identified as a significant contributing factor to the ongoing conflict between warring militias.

The ongoing civil war, coupled with the persistent institutional and geographical divisions that have become characteristic of the nation, have a detrimental effect on administrative structures and capacities. The judiciary is unable to function effectively, corruption is endemic, and informal courts are the primary source of conflict resolution between citizens and between militias and the government.

Yemen, South Sudan, Haiti and Somalia were also among the five worst-performing states in 2025.

For more information including online analysis visit the website:

<https://www.stateness-index.org>

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<sup>28</sup> BTI (2026): Estonia Country Report

<sup>29</sup> Abubakar/Wapmuk (2021).

### **What's new?**

The indicator “Judicial accountability” (Monopoly of law) that examines if judges are disciplined when they are found responsible of serious misconduct is now transformed on a scale from 0.1 to 1 (former transformation 0 to 1).

### **Cautionary notes:**

The time series for the indicator “Access to public services distributed by urban-rural location” encompasses the years 1900-2023. I filled in missing values using the most recent preceding value.

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