

Embargoed until 00.01 Central Africa Time (CAT), 4 April, 2017

People power under attack: just three percent of people live in countries where civic space is fully respected

Commenté [CG1]: You should feel free to change this headline as appropriate to the CIVICUS Monitor findings for your region.

4 April 2017 – Just three percent of people live in countries where the rights to protest, organise and speak out are respected, protected and fulfilled according to the [CIVICUS Monitor](#), which today releases the first-ever global dataset on [civic space](#). CIVICUS also finds that serious civil space violations are taking place in 106 countries, well over half of all UN Member States.

The CIVICUS Monitor rates countries based on how well they uphold the three fundamental civic freedoms that enable people to act collectively and make change: freedom of association, freedom of peaceful assembly, and freedom of expression.

Of the 195 rated, it [finds](#) that civic space in 20 countries - Bahrain, Burundi, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iran, Laos, Libya, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan and Vietnam - is closed, a rating characterised by an atmosphere of fear and violence, and severe punishment for those who dare to disagree with authorities.

A further 35 countries are rated repressed. Fifty-one countries are rated obstructed and 63 narrowed. Just 26 countries are rated as open, meaning the state safeguards space for civil society and provides platforms for dialogue.

Click here for responsive visualisations of all of the findings: <https://monitor.civicus.org/findings>

In order to highlight countries of immediate concern to us, CIVICUS is also today launching a new [Watch List](#). This advocacy tool highlights up to five countries on the CIVICUS Monitor where there is a serious and rapid decline in civic space. Countries on this at launch it are: [Cameroon](#), [Macedonia](#), [Myanmar](#), the [USA](#) and [Turkey](#).

With the first ever global dataset on civic space, the CIVICUS Monitor is able to show that, on average, countries with more open civic space scale have higher Human Development Index scores, better Gini Index scores and better scores on the Electoral Democracy Index.

[QUOTE 1]

The CIVICUS Monitor also documents attacks on civil society with updates every weekday. Analysis of almost 500 updates published on the CIVICUS Monitor over the past four months has found:

- Detention of activists, use of excessive force against protesters and attacks on journalists were the three most common violations of civic freedoms.
- Activists were most likely to be detained over criticism of authorities, human rights monitoring or demands for social or economic needs to be met.
- Excessive force was most likely to be used against protesters who criticise government decisions or corruption, call for action on human rights abuses or call for basic social or economic needs to be met.
- Journalists were most likely to be attacked for political reporting, covering protests or conflicts, or because of their ethnicity, religious or political affiliation.
- In the majority of cases, the state is the perpetrator of violations, although non-state actors also frequently attack journalists, with many of these crimes going unpunished.

[QUOTE 2]

Embargoed until 00.01 Central Africa Time (CAT), 4 April, 2017

CIVICUS Monitor ratings and daily updates are based on a combination of inputs from local civil society activists, regional civil society experts and research partners, existing assessments by national and international civil society organisations, user-generated input and media-monitoring. The CIVICUS Monitor now provides ratings for all UN Member States and regular updates from a network of twenty research partners around the world.

Annex I – CIVICUS Monitor ratings, 4th April 2017

Closed (20 countries): Bahrain, Burundi, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iran, Laos, Libya, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

Repressed (35 countries): Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Djibouti, Egypt, Gambia, Iraq, Liberia, Mauritania, Mexico, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Republic of the Congo, Russia, Rwanda, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, Venezuela, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

Obstructed (51 countries): Armenia, Bhutan, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Fiji, Gabón, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Ukraine and Zambia.

Narrowed (63 countries): Albania, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Comoros, Costa Rica, Croatia, Dominica, El Salvador, France, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guyana, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kiribati, Kosovo, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malawi, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Micronesia, Montenegro, Namibia, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Romania, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay and Vanuatu.

Open (26 countries): Andorra, Barbados, Belgium, Cape Verde, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Sweden, Switzerland and Tuvalu.

Regional breakdown

	Africa	Americas	Asia	Europe	Oceania
Closed	9	1	10	0	0
Repressed	15	3	14	3	0
Obstructed	18	9	19	3	2
Narrowed	10	21	3	19	10
Open	2	1	0	21	2

Notes to editors:

Embargoed until 00.01 Central Africa Time (CAT), 4 April, 2017

The CIVICUS Monitor is available at <https://monitor.civicus.org>. If you have a question about the CIVICUS Monitor - see our FAQ page [here](#).

For more information or to set up interviews with CIVICUS staff and research partners, please contact Deborah Walter, Communication Manager, CIVICUS on media@civicus.org or deborah.walter@civicus.org . Tel: +27 - 11 - 8335959

CIVICUS is a global alliance of civil society organisations and activists dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society around the world.

www.civicus.org

www.twitter.com/CIVICUSalliance

www.facebook.com/CIVICUS

#CIVICUSMonitor