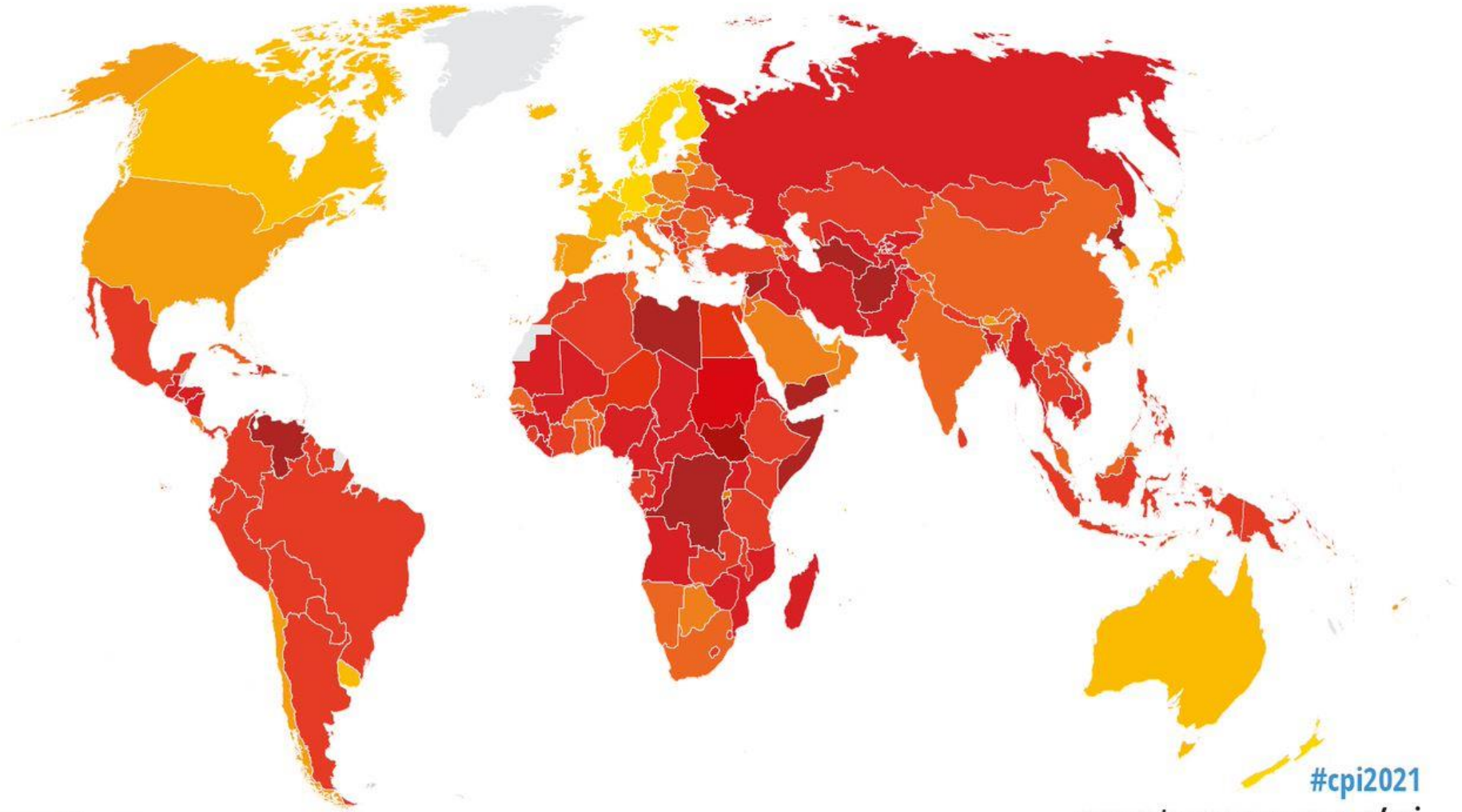
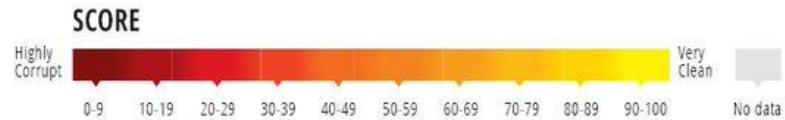


# CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2021

The perceived levels of public sector corruption in 180 countries/territories around the world.



#cpi2021  
[www.transparency.org/cpi](http://www.transparency.org/cpi)

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# Asia Pacific: A Regional Overview

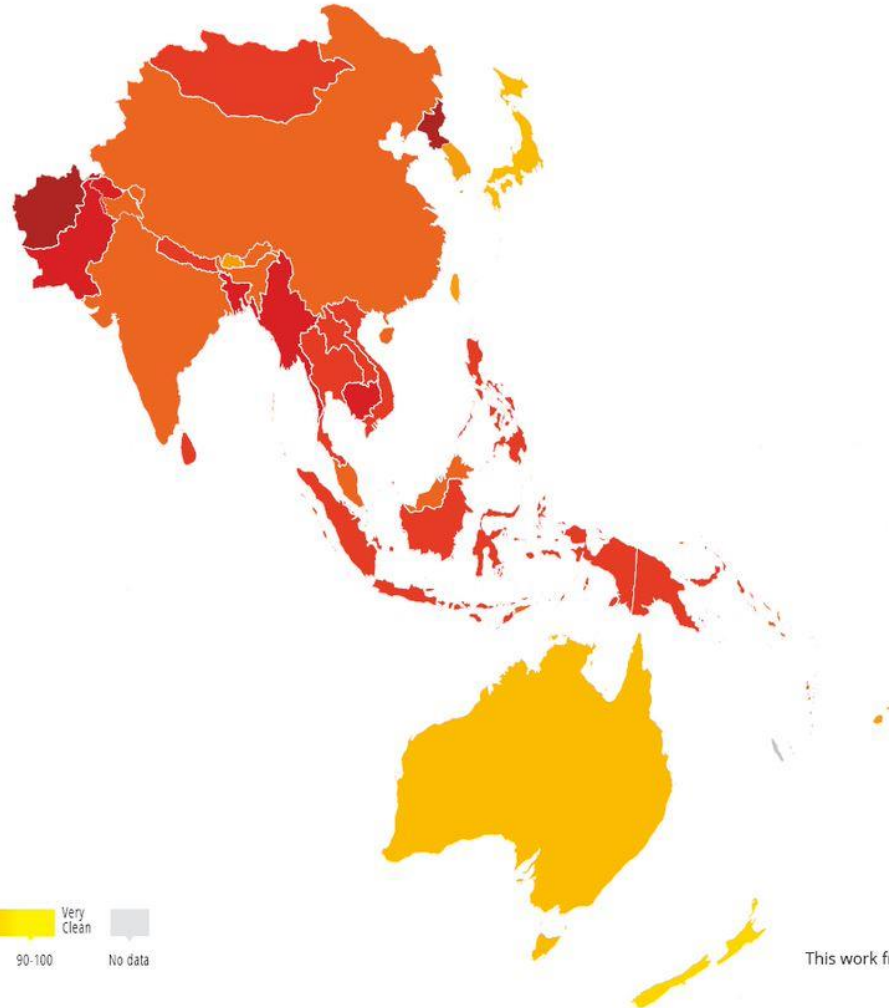


## CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2021

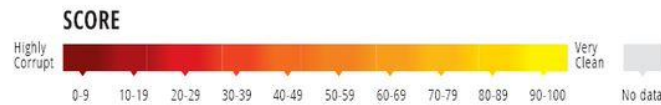
ASIA PACIFIC

**45**/100

AVERAGE SCORE



SCORE	COUNTRY/TERRITORY
88	New Zealand
85	Singapore
76	Hong Kong
73	Australia
73	Japan
68	Bhutan
68	Taiwan
62	Korea, South
55	Fiji
48	Malaysia
45	China
45	Vanuatu
43	Solomon Islands
41	Timor-Leste
40	India
40	Maldives
39	Vietnam
38	Indonesia
37	Sri Lanka
35	Mongolia
35	Thailand
33	Nepal
33	Philippines
31	Papua New Guinea
30	Laos
28	Myanmar
28	Pakistan
26	Bangladesh
23	Cambodia
16	Afghanistan
16	Korea, North



#cpi2021

[www.transparency.org/cpi](http://www.transparency.org/cpi)

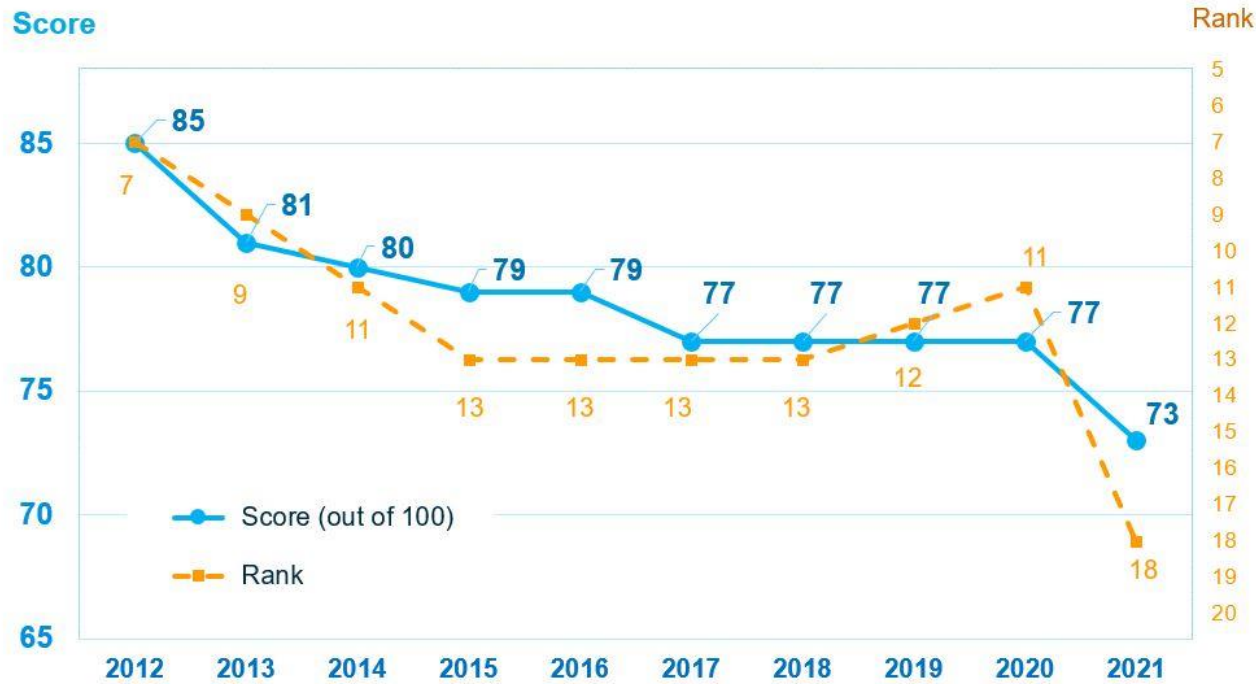
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# Where Australia stands

## CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX AUSTRALIA'S RESULT 2021

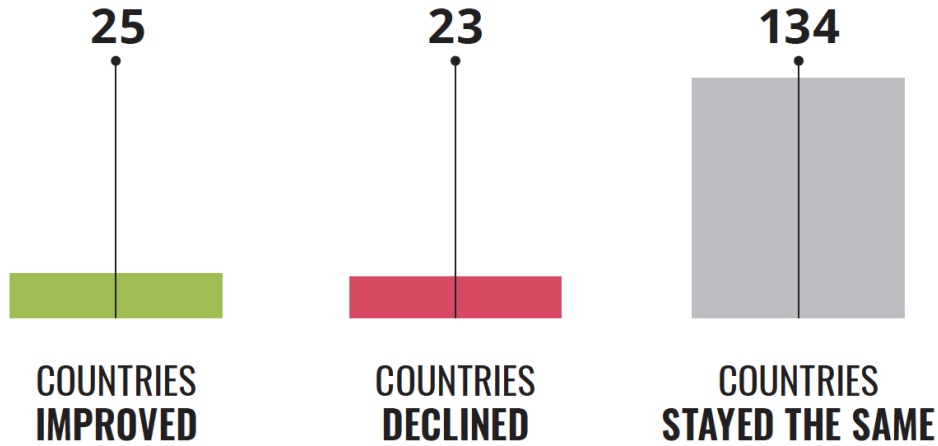


**AUSTRALIA**  
SCORE: 73  
RANK: 18



## CPI SCORE CHANGES, 2012-2021

Countries for which the underlying data sources largely agree on an improvement or decline, for the period 2012 to 2021.



**AME**  
Guyana  
Paraguay

**AP**  
China  
Vietnam  
Nepal

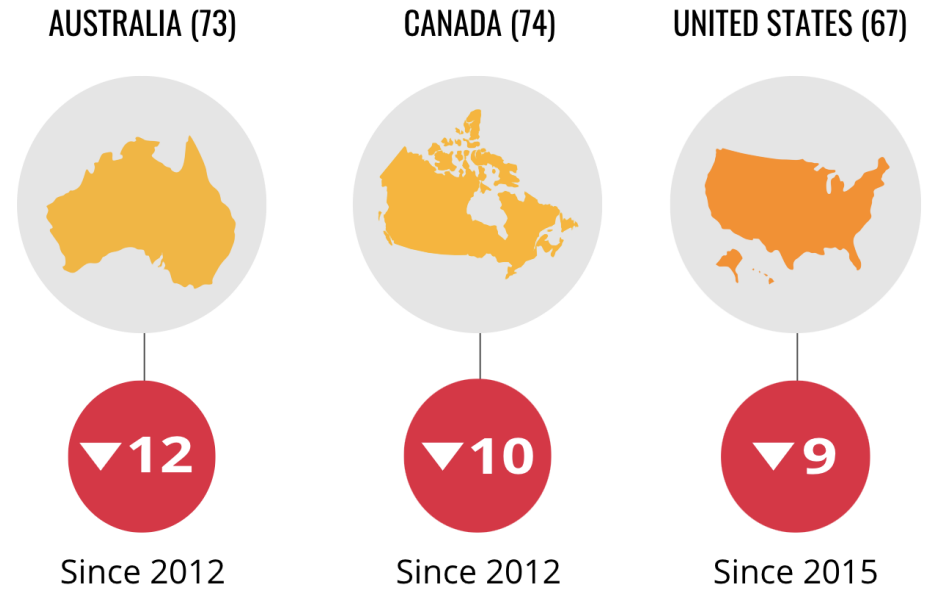
**ECA**  
Armenia  
Ukraine  
Moldova

**MENA**  
-

**SSA**  
Angola  
Ethiopia  
Tanzania

**WE/EU**  
Estonia  
Greece  
Italy

## SIGNIFICANT DECLINERS



**AME**  
USA  
Canada  
Venezuela

**AP**  
Australia  
Mongolia

**ECA**  
Turkey

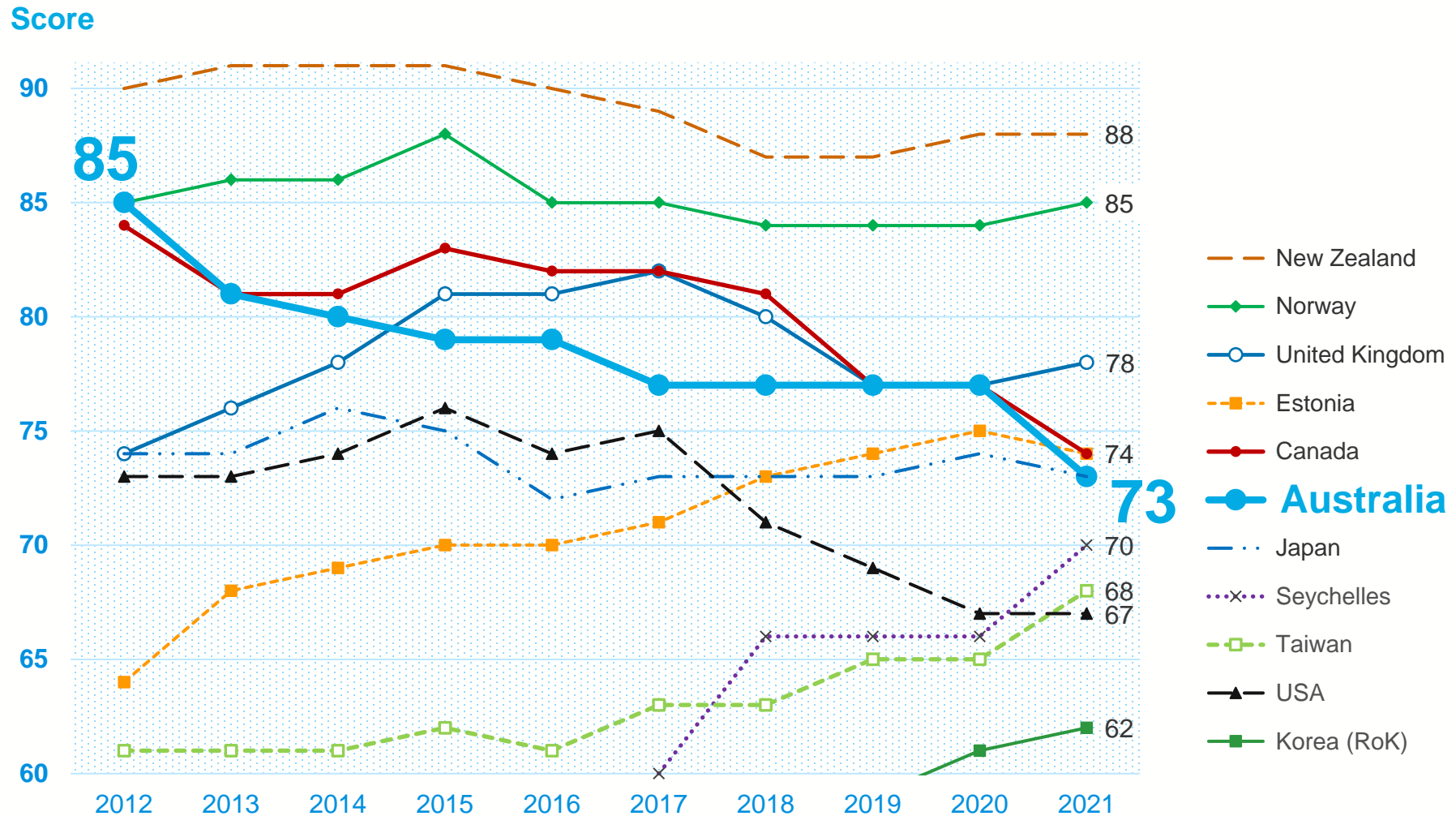
**MENA**  
Lebanon  
Syria  
Yemen

**SSA**  
Botswana  
Malawi  
Zambia

**WE/EU**  
Cyprus  
Luxembourg  
Hungary / Poland



# CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX SELECT RESULTS 2012-2021





**Australia and Norway were once tied in global anti-corruption rankings. Now, we're heading in opposite directions**

January 25, 2022 4.03pm AEDT

Lukas Coch/AAP

Email

Twitter

23

Facebook

1k

LinkedIn

In a worrying sign, Australia has plummeted in Transparency International's latest [Corruption Perceptions Index](#) – the world's most widely cited ranking of how clean or corrupt every country's public sector is believed to be.

Author



**A J Brown**

Professor of Public Policy & Law,  
Centre for Governance & Public  
Policy, Griffith University

## Australia result: key most likely influencing factors

- Prominence of official corruption allegations (State, federal) and whether being visibly resolved / dealt with
- Shift to policy commitments to a federal integrity commission, versus delay and controversy over true commitment
- Foreign bribery reform promises introduction (CLACCC) versus stalling
- Private sector progress and promises on [whistleblower protection](#), versus public sector delay and prosecutions
- AML enforcement action and profile lifting, versus lack of progress FATF Tranche 2



**CPI 2021 country result:**

Country / Territory	CPI score 2021	Rank	Standard error	No. of sources
Australia	73	18	1.63	9

**Sources used, data collection periods and individual source scores:**

1. Bertelsmann Foundation Sustainable Governance Index	2. PERC Asia Risk Guide	3. IMD World Competitive-ness Yearbook	4. World Economic Forum EOS	5. PRS International Country Risk Guide	6. Global Insights Country Risk Ratings	7. Varieties of Democracy Project	8. World Justice Project Rule of Law Index	9. Economist Intelligence Unit Country Ratings
Nov 2018 – Nov 2019	Feb – March 2020	Feb – April 2020	Feb – July 2020	Sept 2019 – Aug 2020	Jan – Dec 2020	Jan – Dec 2020	Oct 2020 - May 2021	Sept 2021
70	86	54	76	76	71	77	77	72

For details of each source and the CPI methodology: [www.transparency.org/en/cpi](http://www.transparency.org/en/cpi)



# AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL INTEGRITY SYSTEM: THE BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION

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National Integrity System Assessment,  
Australia, November 2020







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# INTRODUCTION

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In every country, a strong system of public integrity and accountability is essential to meet the public's expectations of trustworthy, ethical and effective governance.

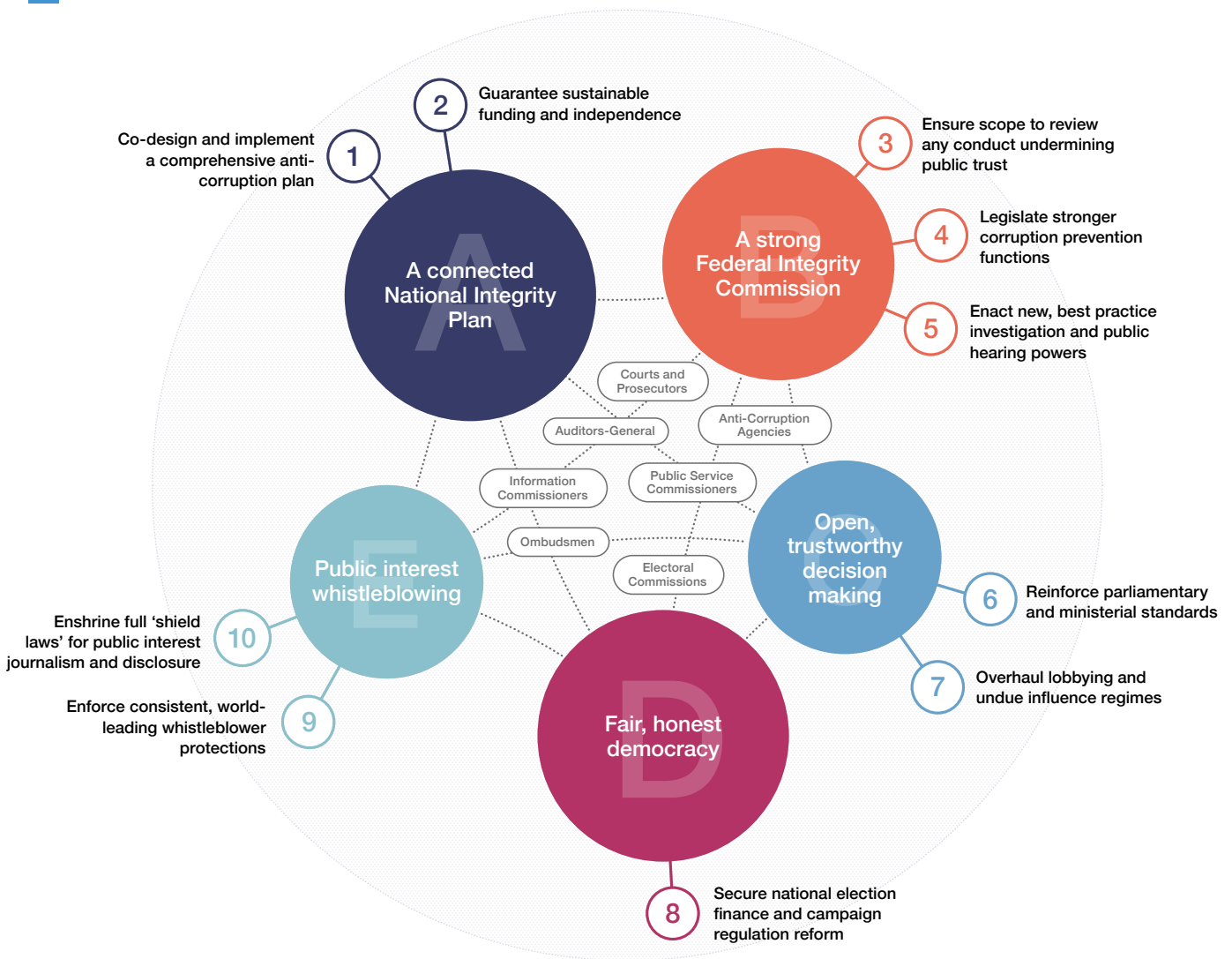
Once an international leader, Australia's efforts to fight corruption, undue influence and protect the integrity of democracy have been slipping. Nationally – even when individual states or territories are showing the way - Australia is now failing to keep pace.

A new federal integrity commission is a crucial step in creating a better and world leading system. Australia now has the opportunity to co-design a holistic, fit for purpose, interconnected system - one that the public and our multiple levels of government deserve, need, and expect.

*Australia's National Integrity System: The Blueprint for Action* is the roadmap to this system.



# AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL INTEGRITY SYSTEM: THE BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION



KEY

**A** Focus Area of the National Integrity System, A-E

**1** Actions needed, 1-10

Name Core integrity agencies



## THE BLUEPRINT EXPLAINED

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This blueprint for action outlines what can and should be done over the next 3-to-5 years to secure a high integrity future. Outlined in this summary and the full report are five focus areas and ten actions:

- A** A connected national integrity plan
  1. Co-design and implement a comprehensive anti-corruption plan
  2. Guarantee sustainable funding and independence
- B** A strong federal integrity commission
  3. Ensure scope to review any conduct undermining public trust
  4. Legislate stronger corruption prevention functions
  5. Enact new, best practice investigation and public hearing powers
- C** Open, trustworthy decision-making
  6. Reinforce parliamentary and ministerial standards
  7. Overhaul lobbying and undue influence regimes
- D** Fair, honest democracy
  8. Secure national election finance and campaign regulation reform
- E** Public interest whistleblowing
  9. Enforce consistent, world-leading whistleblower protections
  10. Enshrine full 'shield laws' for public interest journalism and disclosure



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## HOW TO USE THE REPORT

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There is a lot to be done. The actions set out are not a step-by-step guide – they are interrelated priorities intended to be pursued concurrently. In some cases, different states and territories are already progressing aspects, which is all the more reason to work together, to achieve a holistic system.

Each focus area and action in the report identifies and details the essential elements that need to be addressed.

Often these are at state, territory or local government level, but especially show where Australia's national institutions have the opportunity to provide new leadership and support coordination across all levels, or need to catch up.

The wider community and civil society also have a role to play in being a part of designing these efforts to ensure Australia's national integrity system is more than simply a sum of uncoordinated, disconnected or conflicting parts.

The full report, details and context can be found at:

<https://transparency.org.au/australias-national-integrity-system> ●



# FOCUS AREA A: A CONNECTED NATIONAL INTEGRITY PLAN

**Australia has a strong track record for integrity in public decision-making, democratic innovation and multi-agency frameworks for controlling corruption – defined by Transparency International as the abuse of entrusted power for private or political gain.**

However, that track record has been slipping. Anti-corruption frameworks have been slow to respond to global pressures, suffering gaps, fragmentation and lack of coordination.

Even before COVID-19 provided new reasons for ensuring public resources are not lost to corruption, investment in integrity assurance has declined, especially at the federal level. Nationally, many core integrity agencies remain unsupported by the legal and financial independence they need to guarantee their roles.

By creating a dedicated federal anti-corruption agency, Australia is poised to fill its largest institutional gap.

However, this important new body cannot provide a 'silver bullet' solution to all the challenges of maintaining and strengthening integrity in Australia. All agencies with major integrity functions need to be given the correct scope and mandate to operate as part of a coherent national approach, and unified, effective "system" – from auditors-general and



ombudsmen to information commissioners and the courts.

**Parliament House  
Canberra. Credit: Yicai.**

A coordinated national framework is needed, in which federal, state and territory agencies work better together – and with civil society, business and international partners – to achieve a more connected approach to corruption control.

Following open government principles, the co-design of Australia's approach requires new and ongoing flexibility to adapt to changing needs and public concerns, with participation channels for the public, civil society and the private sector.



# ACTIONS AND ELEMENTS

## ACTION 1

### CO-DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE ANTI-CORRUPTION PLAN

- A holistic plan for protecting public integrity, ensuring business integrity and meeting Australia's international anti-corruption commitments, based in Commonwealth legislation
- Clear roles for a federal integrity commission and all public integrity bodies, including legislative requirements for participation, consultation, cooperation and monitoring involving the states, territories, civil society and business
- Ongoing, legislated mechanisms for improved coordination and information-sharing within and across public integrity systems

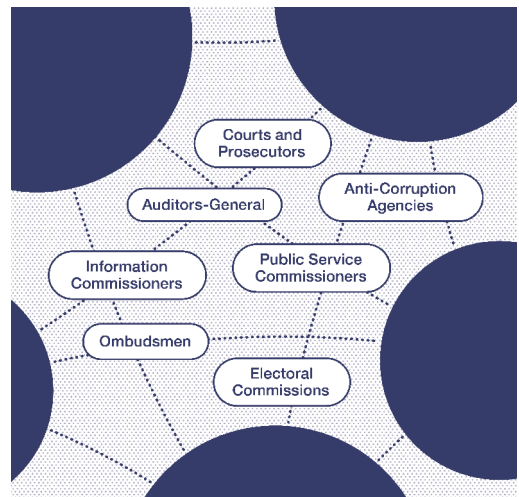
## ACTION 2

### GUARANTEE SUSTAINABLE FUNDING AND INDEPENDENCE

- Sustainable budgets for all core public integrity agencies at federal, state and territory level (combined, not less than 0.15 per cent of public expenditure)
- New federal funding of at least \$100 million p/a for a federal integrity commission, corruption prevention and whistleblower protection
- Greater financial independence for all core integrity agencies and Australia's judiciaries based on 4-year, direct budget allocations by parliament
- Strengthened independence and accountability of all core integrity agencies as constitutional and/or parliamentary officers

To read this section of the report, visit: <https://transparency.org.au/a-connected-national-integrity-plan>

Blueprint detail: core integrity agencies.



**Figure 1.2: Core public integrity institutions in Australia (as at 2020)**  
 Source: Catherine Cochrane, "Towards a national ICAC: A policy analysis of standing anti-corruption commissions in Australia", PhD Thesis, University of Adelaide (2020).

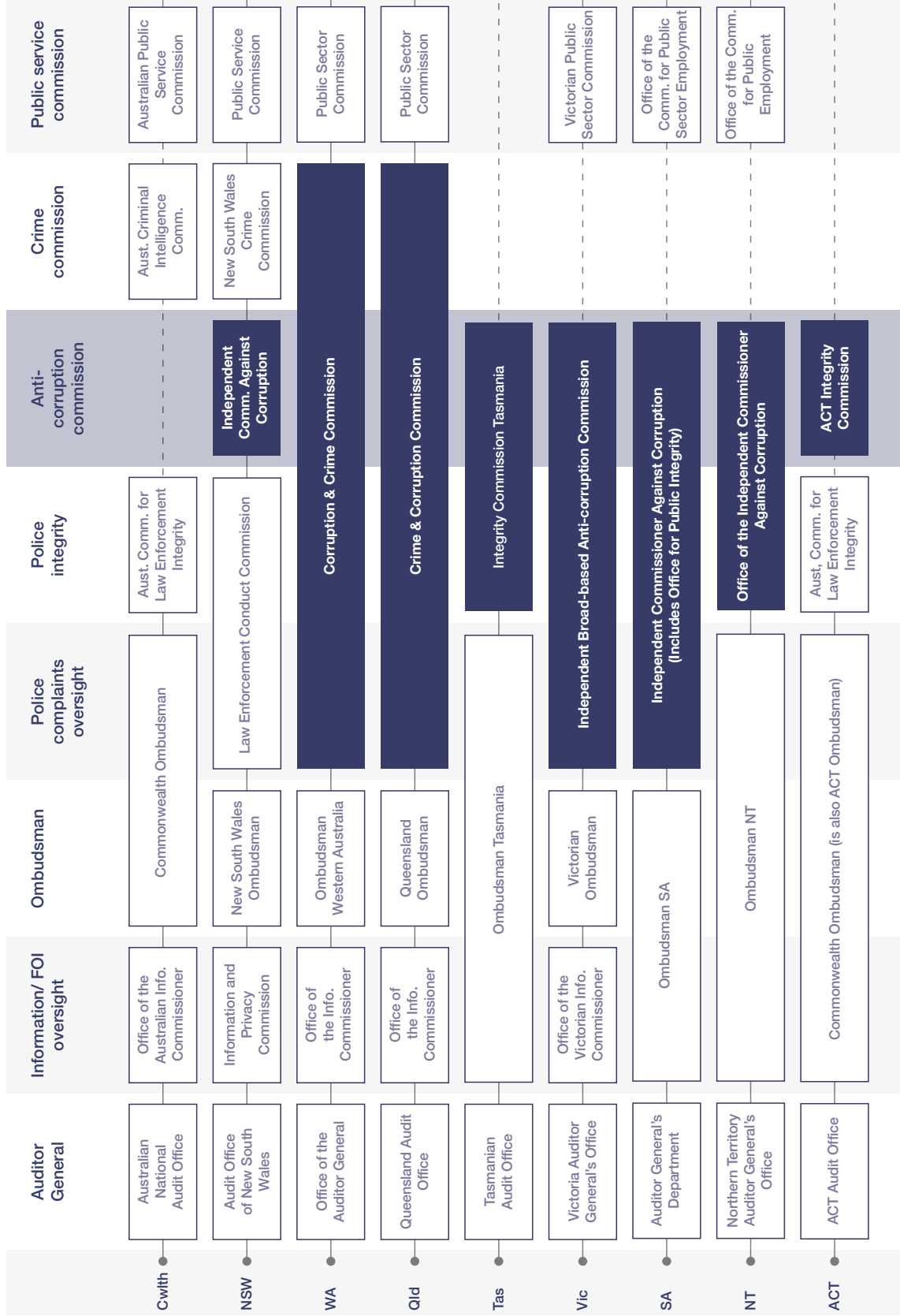
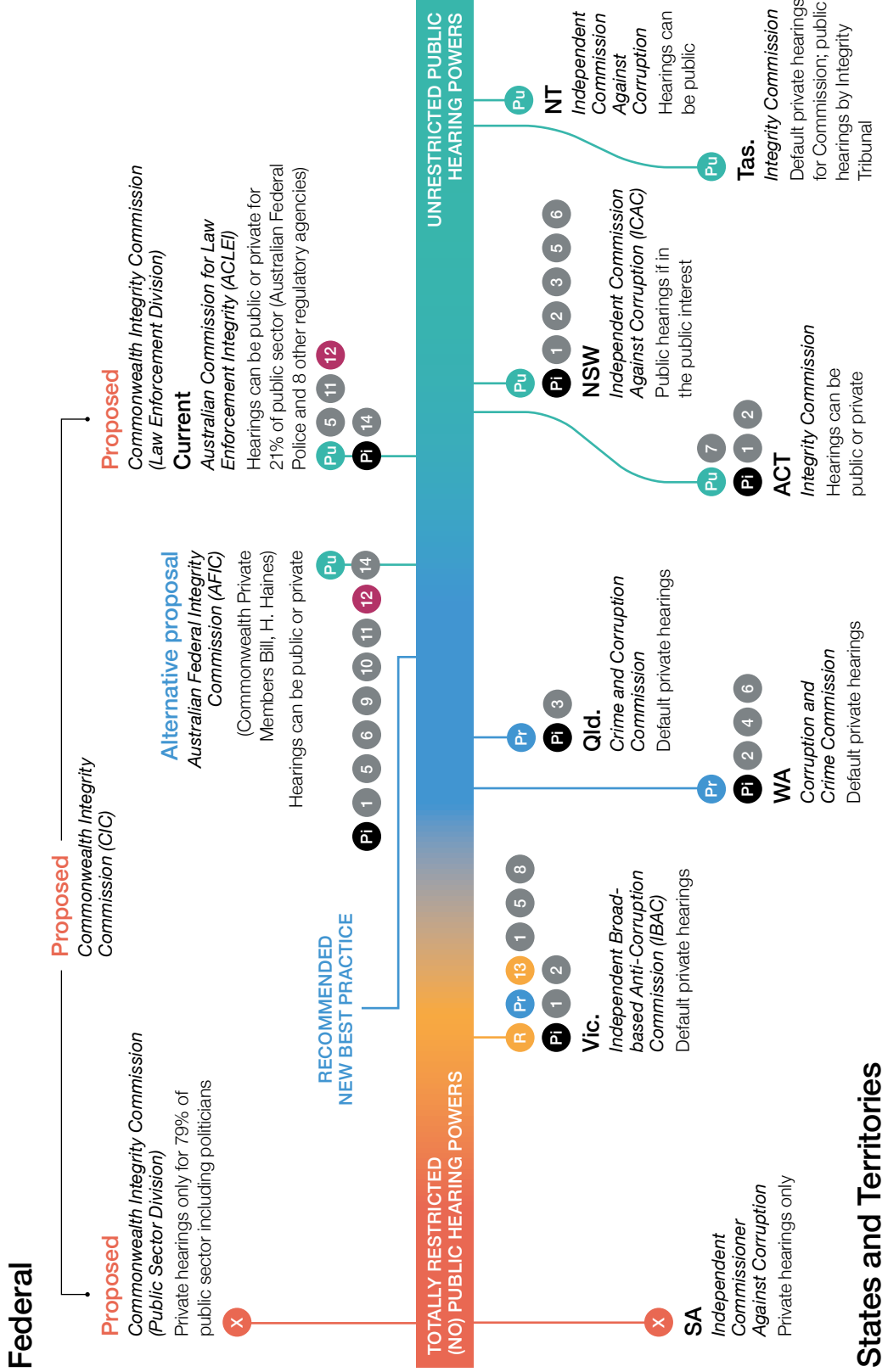


Fig 2.3: Legislated public hearing powers of anti-corruption commissions – current, proposed and recommended.



**KEY TO PUBLIC HEARING POWERS**

- X** No public hearings
  - R** Public hearings only in restricted circumstances
  - Pr** Default is private hearings, public hearings possible
  - Pu** Public or private hearings
  - Pi** Public interest test for public hearings
- Specific circumstances or criteria for public hearings:
- 1 Serious and/or systemic conduct
  - 2 Benefit of public exposure and awareness
  - 3 Unfairness of not holding in public
  - 4 Prejudice (general)
  - 5 Unfair risk to reputation
  - 6 Unfair risk to privacy
  - 7 Unfair risk to human rights
  - 8 Unfair risk to safety or wellbeing
  - 9 Vulnerability
  - 10 Under another's instruction or control
  - 11 Confidentiality of evidence
  - 12 Alleged or suspected criminal offence
  - 13 Exceptional circumstances
  - 14 Any other relevant matter







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# FOCUS AREA B: A STRONG FEDERAL INTEGRITY COMMISSION

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**After two decades of debate, Australia is close to introducing a new agency for combatting federal government corruption – filling the single biggest institutional gap in the nation's integrity system.**

However, there is intense debate over whether the new commission will deliver the system that the community needs and expects.

These questions reinforce Australia's opportunity to ensure the new agency makes a substantial and positive impact, nationally and globally. They also show that design of the federal integrity commission is striving to overcome difficulties in anti-corruption enforcement which have become very clear, not only locally but internationally. This includes the need for:

- Scope to adapt to address changing forms of corruption, integrity risk and public concern about abuse of entrusted power
- Strong, systematic and enforced prevention measures for promoting integrity; and
- Best practice investigation and enforcement powers, aimed at securing remedies.

The way these issues are addressed will impact the effectiveness and credibility of the national integrity commission with the wider public.

As Commonwealth parliament prepares to legislate, there is opportunity to move beyond simply copying state anti-corruption bodies or existing law enforcement agencies, and instead establish a best-practice model for all jurisdictions.

With the right actions, this approach can help end controversy and confusion over how corruption is best stamped out and prevented across all levels of government.

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# 77

**Australia's score on the 2019  
Corruption Perceptions Index,  
(down 8 points since 2012).**



## ACTIONS AND ELEMENTS

### ACTION 3

#### ENSURE SCOPE TO REVIEW ANY CONDUCT UNDERMINING PUBLIC TRUST

- Comprehensive scope for the Commission to investigate any conduct – criminal or non-criminal – which undermines confidence in the integrity of public decision-making
- Priority on serious or systemic matters but extending to any misconduct involving real or perceived conflicts of interest or undue influence
- Common minimum standards for all federal public officials irrespective of status or role, and private individuals and entities involved in federally funded services and projects
- Full capacity to receive and act on corruption information from any person.

### ACTION 4

#### LEGISLATE STRONGER CORRUPTION PREVENTION FUNCTIONS

- A federal integrity commission with a new, model corruption prevention mandate for Australia – targeted on situational and systemic corruption risks

- Legislated requirements for all public and contracted entities to implement prevention frameworks, with active central monitoring and compliance
- Comprehensive mandatory reporting requirements, for all public officials and agency heads to centrally report suspected integrity failures
- Adequate funding with public reporting on the average proportion of integrity commission expenditure spent directly on corruption prevention.

### ACTION 5

#### ENACT NEW, BEST PRACTICE INVESTIGATION AND PUBLIC HEARING POWERS

- Full powers to hold compulsory hearings (public and private), conduct public inquiries and make public reports wherever in the public interest
- More consistent safeguards for exercise of discretion to hold compulsory hearings – including clearer, best practice criteria for public hearings, requiring ongoing assessment of the feasibility and merit of prosecution, and implications for potential proceedings, wherever there is apparent (prima facie) evidence of a criminal offence
- Legislated requirements for Directors of Public Prosecutions and disciplinary bodies to prioritise corruption enforcement responses in the public interest.

To read this section of the report, visit:  
<https://transparency.org.au/a-strong-federal-integrity-commission>



# FOCUS AREA C: OPEN, TRUSTWORTHY DECISION-MAKING

**The single biggest problem for integrity in Australia is diminishing public trust that decision-making is fair, honest and free of undue influence.**

In politics and bureaucracies alike, some of Australia's ways of ensuring trustworthy decision-making remain world leading – but many are failing to keep pace with public concern and demographic and economic change.

Even as overall citizen confidence in competence of government rose with Australia's COVID-19 response, so too public concern continued to grow over the size of corruption as a problem in government (from 61 percent of citizens in 2018 to 66 percent in October 2020).

Again, while there are improvements to be made in many states and territories, the federal government provides the greatest need and opportunity to catch up.

Australia's federal parliamentarians, and WA's upper house, are currently the only types of public officials without any code of conduct. Mechanisms for transparency and fairness in dealings with decision-makers – especially through professional lobbying – remain weak, cumbersome and unenforced.

Success relies on simpler, more consistent rules for all; independent advice; openness; and enforced regulations that provide clarity and certainty to decision-making. Supported by greater trust and reduced “gaming” of ethical systems by those seeking to influence government, public decision-making can be more “scandal-free”, confident and responsive in challenging times.

**Surveyed Australians who think corruption in government is a quite big or very big problem, October 2020:**

# 66%

**(up from 61% in 2018).**



## ACTIONS AND ELEMENTS

### ACTION 6

#### REINFORCE PARLIAMENTARY AND MINISTERIAL STANDARDS

● Legislated codes of conduct for each house of parliament, ministers and staff, continuously improved and renewed by each parliament and government, covering integrity in all decision-making, including:

- continuous disclosure and avoidance of potential conflicting interests
- banning secondary employment by parliamentarians
- universal appointment on merit for all public positions

● Confidential independent advice for parliamentarians and staff on compliance

● Independent enforcement by a parliamentary integrity commissioner, reporting to parliamentary committees, supported by investigation and reporting by the integrity commission when needed

● In ministerial codes, requirements for recording and proactive publishing of diary events, reasons for decisions and decision-making processes

● Enforceable minimum 3 year 'cooling off' (anti-revolving door) periods for ministers before accepting any relevant position or benefit.

### ACTION 7

#### OVERHAUL LOBBYING AND UNDUE INFLUENCE REGIMES

● Legislated codes of conduct for all officials and persons seeking to influence public decisions involving financial, personal or political benefit (including but not limited to 'lobbyists'), based on respect for positive principles of integrity:

- transparency
- inclusivity
- honesty
- diligence
- fairness
- legality

● Registration of all professional lobbyists (including third-party, services firms and in-house) to boost transparency, awareness and compliance

● Confidential, independent advice for all senior office holders on compliance

● Administrative, disciplinary and criminal sanctions with independent oversight and enforcement.

To read this section of the report, visit: <https://transparency.org.au/open-trustworthy-decision-making>



# FOCUS AREA D: FAIR, HONEST DEMOCRACY

**The quality of Australia's democracy is the largest asset supporting the nation's public integrity. Fair, accurate and robust electoral and voting systems lie at the heart of public participation in selecting the nation's decision-makers and confidence in the decisions they make.**

Nevertheless, despite Australia being one of the world's great democratic innovators, most governments have failed to keep up with best practice against corruption stemming from the nature of the electoral process.

Systems for controlling the "arms race" of political campaign expenditure have improved in several states, but not nationally. Drivers of undue influence continue through ever-increasing pressure for funds, regulated through a fragmented, leaky system where the weakest donation rules set the standard.

Boundaries between party campaigning, supporter interests and good public policy have collapsed.

In the fake news era, falling standards of honesty and accuracy mean more overtly deceptive political campaigning – eroding the bedrock of trust in government.

Australia's democratic traditions need rejuvenating. By following democratic partners like Canada, United Kingdom and New Zealand – and domestically, advances made by over half of Australia's own states and territories – the nation can take immediate strides to strengthen the integrity, honesty and fairness of elections.



Through his companies and United Australia Party, billionaire Clive Palmer took political donations, election spending and negative campaigning to record levels since 2013.  
*Credit: AAP / Dan Peled.*



## ACTIONS AND ELEMENTS

### ACTION 8

## SECURE NATIONAL ELECTION FINANCE AND CAMPAIGN REGULATION REFORM

● Nationally-consistent, best practice electoral legislation, led by the Commonwealth, including:

- universal, workable caps on political campaign expenditure (by parties, candidates and associated entities),
- common political donation limits and public election funding rules,
- reasonable, consistent, real-time public disclosure requirements for donations,
- enhanced sanctions and enforcement by the Australian Electoral Commission and state electoral bodies

● Extension of parliamentary and lobbying codes of conduct to all political candidates and those seeking to influence them, from point of nomination / registration

● Legislated sanctions (administrative and criminal) against misleading or deceptive campaign conduct intended to influence a person's vote – enforced by the relevant electoral body and failing that, the integrity commission.

To read this section of the report, visit: <https://transparency.org.au/fair-honest-democracy>



Football salary caps show why election campaign expenditure caps are key to protecting political integrity: Melbourne Storm win the 2020 National Rugby League fair and square, 10 years after its infamous salary cap breaches.

Credit: AAP / Dan Himbrechts



# FOCUS AREA E: PUBLIC INTEREST WHISTLEBLOWING

**Integrity and accountability rely on the ability of citizens to speak up when they suspect or witness wrongdoing – especially the officials and employees who actually know what's going on within institutions.**

Together with freedom of the media to report what society needs to know, public interest whistleblowing remains the most important trigger, in practice, for the integrity mechanisms that keep institutions healthy, thriving and ethical.

Aspects of Australia's private sector whistleblower protections already lead the world. However, public sector protections lag behind. Across both sectors, loopholes, inconsistencies and lack of enforcement

undermine effectiveness, often leaving them as paper tigers.

As government secrecy legislation grows, Australia's strong traditions of independent journalism have been compromised. Indeed the rights of all citizens to receive and share official information, in the public interest, have been steadily disappearing.

Overhaul of whistleblower protection laws, internal and external to government, has been promised from all sides of politics. Fulfilling these promises, to a high level, is central to effective regimes for public interest disclosure and media freedom.



Internal and public whistleblowing over shocking alleged war crimes by Australian special forces in Afghanistan, as revealed in the ABC's 'Afghan Files' stories, has been met with intimidation, criminal investigations and prosecutions of journalists and whistleblowers alike. *Source: ABC News.*



## ACTIONS AND ELEMENTS

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### ACTION 9

## ENFORCE CONSISTENT, WORLD-LEADING WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS

- Law reform to ensure public interest whistleblowers (private and public) have effective access to remedies for any detriment suffered for reporting, whether through acts or omissions
- Consistent best practice thresholds across sectors for onuses of proof, public interest costs indemnities, exemplary damages and civil penalties
- A reward and legal support scheme based on returning a proportion of the financial benefits of disclosures directly to whistleblower welfare
- A whistleblower protection authority to assist reporters, investigative agencies and regulators with advice, case support, enforcement action and remedies for detrimental conduct.

### ACTION 10

## ENSHRINE FULL 'SHIELD LAWS' FOR PUBLIC INTEREST JOURNALISM AND DISCLOSURE

- Stronger journalism shield laws to ensure full confidentiality of public interest sources, ensure media freedom and protect journalists from prosecution for receiving and using whistleblower disclosures
- Clearer rules for when public whistleblowing is protected, including:
  - Simple, realistic principles for justified disclosure of wrongdoing to journalists by public or private employees
  - Removal of blanket carve-outs for 'intelligence information' and 'inherently harmful information' from federal whistleblowing and journalism protection laws
- Clear, legislated public interest defences for any citizen for unauthorised receipt or disclosure of official information, where revealing wrongdoing.

To read this section of the report, visit: <https://transparency.org.au/public-interest-whistleblowing>





# ASSESSING AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL INTEGRITY SYSTEM

This three year national integrity system assessment of Australia, using Transparency International's established approach, was led by Griffith University's Centre for Governance and Public Policy, and supported by the Australian Research Council, Transparency International Australia, Queensland Crime and Corruption Commission, Queensland Integrity Commissioner, NSW Ombudsman and Tasmanian Integrity Commission.

Identified by the 2017 Senate Select Committee on a National Integrity Commission and Australia's second Open Government National Action Plan as a key input for reform, the assessment has included:

- contributing researchers and authors from across Australia
- desktop research
- two national attitude and experience surveys
- five stakeholder workshops
- 50 face-to-face interviews
- 107 National Integrity Survey responses and
- 40 comments received on the assessment's 2019 draft report.

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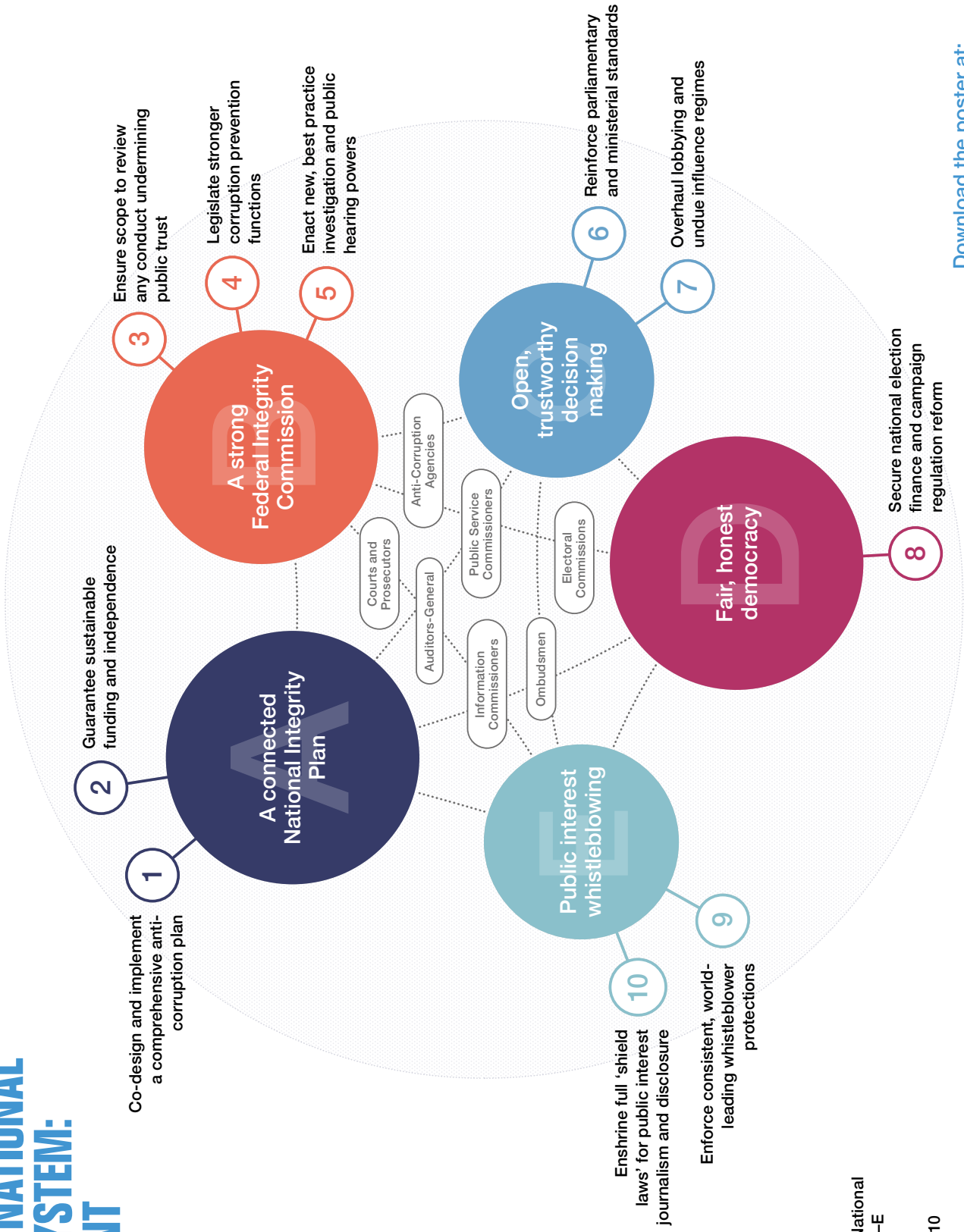
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Open government advocates [Nook Studios](#).



# AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL INTEGRITY SYSTEM: THE BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION



## KEY

**A** Focus Area of the National Integrity System, A-E

**1** Actions needed, 1-10

**Name** Core integrity agencies

Download the poster at:  
[www.transparency.org.au/](http://www.transparency.org.au/)



A

E

10

9



## Co-designing a new National Integrity System

For the full report, please visit:  
[www.transparency.org.au](http://www.transparency.org.au)

Centre for Governance and Public Policy:  
[www.griffith.edu.au/centre-governance-public-policy](http://www.griffith.edu.au/centre-governance-public-policy)