

# Corruption Perceptions in North Cyprus: 2025 Factsheet

This year marks the completion of the ninth “Corruption Perceptions in North Cyprus” report, which continues to be guided by the same five fundamental objectives:

1. to measure the perception of corruption in north Cyprus using an internationally recognized method;
2. to determine where north Cyprus stands in the fight against corruption compared to the rest of the world;
3. to detect changes in the perception of corruption compared to the previous year;
4. to gauge the overall sentiment of businesspeople regarding corruption; and
5. to raise public awareness based on the study’s findings.

To achieve the first three objectives, this study adopts the methodology of the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)<sup>1</sup>, published annually by Transparency International (TI)—which does not cover the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)<sup>2</sup>—and relies on the perspectives of businesspeople and experts.

As in previous years, the survey, designed based on the TI-CPI methodology and expanded with questions from various studies, was administered to 352 participants holding managerial positions in companies registered in the TRNC. The survey of businesspeople was conducted in December 2025 and January 2026 using Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) and Computer-Assisted Self-Interviewing (CASI) methods, implemented by Lipa Consultancy. The sample was selected to represent the business community accurately, considering factors such as region, sector, number of employees, and the duration of the companies’ operations. The survey results have a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of ±5%.

The opinions of experts were also collected using the CASI method through a survey designed based on the methodology developed by Transparency International. The expert survey was conducted in December 2025, targeting a select group of senior retired public officials with extensive experience in the operation of state institutions.

Based on the responses from businesspeople and experts, the north Cyprus CPI 2025 score was calculated as 24 out of 100. On a 0–100 scale, zero indicates extremely high corruption, while 100 signifies the absence of corruption. This score is well below the average of 182 countries, which is 42, in the 2025 list published by Transparency International at the beginning of 2026, placing the TRNC in the 150th position.

Compared to last year, the TRNC’s score has decreased by two points and its ranking has dropped by ten places. Undoubtedly, this worsening in the perception of corruption leads to a further decline in trust in public administration. While the TRNC’s score last year was 8 points behind Türkiye’s, it is observed that the gap narrowed to 7 points this year. Meanwhile, the Republic of Cyprus’s score declined from 56 to 55, with its ranking dropping from 46th to 49th place. Consequently, the point gap with the southern neighbour has increased from 30 to 31, further widening the divide between the two sides. This situation points to a lack of effective anti-corruption policies in the TRNC and a reluctance to comply with international standards.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2025>

<sup>2</sup> The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) is only recognised by the Republic of Türkiye. As the government of the Republic of Cyprus remains internationally recognised as the government of the whole of the island, the entire island is now considered to be a member of the European Union. However, the *acquis communautaire* is suspended in northern Cyprus pending a political settlement to the Cyprus problem (see Protocol no. 10 of the Accession Treaty).

**Table 1: Comparison of the 2025 corruption perceptions scores of north Cyprus with the scores of selected countries**

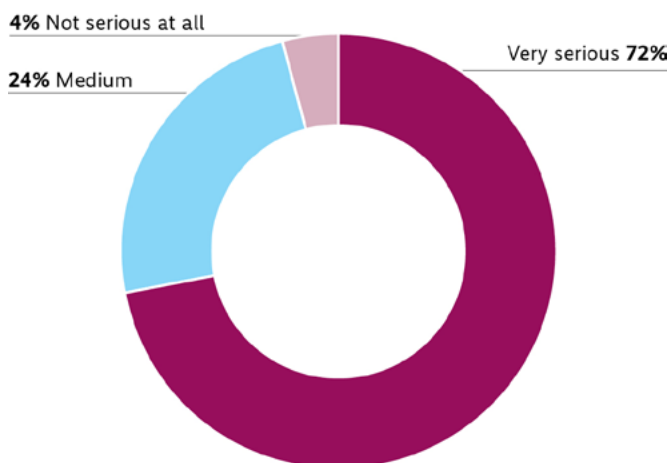
	North Cyprus	Republic of Cyprus	Malta	Greece	Türkiye	EU/W. Eur.
TI - CPI Score	24	55	49	50	31	64
Ranking	150	49	60	56	124	29

As stated above, the report goes beyond merely calculating a score by delving into businesspeople’s perceptions and experiences regarding corruption. In this context, in addition to the questions used by Transparency International in various studies, country-specific questions were also posed, and the detailed responses are presented in the report. The results of the survey of businesspeople can be summarised under thirteen headings.

**1. Corruption is very common and a very serious problem**

Seventy-three percent of the businesspeople surveyed believe that bribery and corruption are “very common” in the TRNC, while 72% consider corruption to be a “very serious problem.”

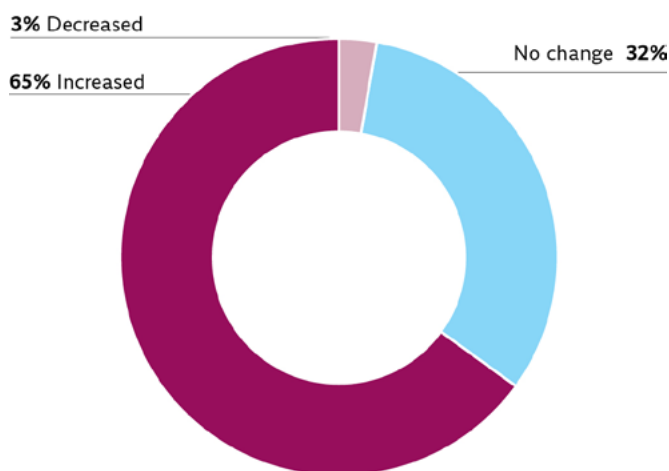
**Figure 1: Is corruption a serious problem?**



**2. Corruption has increased compared to the previous year**

Two out of three businesspeople believe that corruption in the country has increased compared to a year earlier. Only 3% of respondents think that corruption decreased in 2025.

**Figure 2: Has the level of corruption changed compared to the previous year?**



**3. Corruption is most common in the allocation or leasing of public land and buildings**

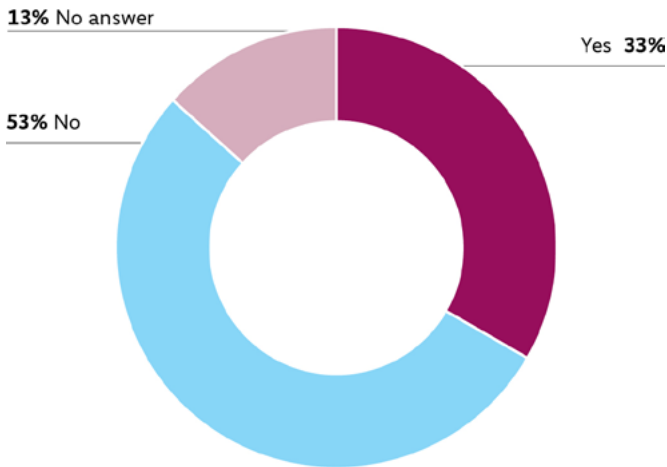
According to the participants, the procedures in which ‘bribery or making undocumented extra payments’ are most common are ranked as follows: 64% of participants believe that bribery is very widespread in the allocation or leasing of public land and buildings; this is followed by the awarding of public contracts and licences (60%). Annual tax payments; import/export transactions; work permit procedures; and the leasing of properties belonging to the Evkaf Administration share third place at 59%.

The areas where bribery is least common are ranked as follows: obtaining favourable judicial decisions (46%); public utilities (49%); and municipal services (50%)

**4. One in three businesspeople paid a bribe in 2025**

In response to the question, “In the past year, did you or someone in your circle have to give a bribe, gift, or do a favour to the relevant official to receive any of the above services?” 33% answered “Yes,” while 13% did not respond. The three most common reasons were: to expedite the process (49%), to complete the procedure (33%), and to reduce the cost of the service (9%).

**Figure 3: Did you have to give a bribe to an official in the last 12 months?**



**5. The misappropriation of public resources is most prevalent among cabinet members and senior civil servants**

Sixty-two percent of respondents believe that the diversion of public funds to companies, individuals, or groups due to corruption is “very common,” while only 6% think that it never happens.

Participants believe that members of the government and their appointees are the two groups most involved in corruption: While the percentage of those stating that corruption is ‘very widespread’ among high-level civil servants stands at 62%, cabinet members who appoint them have dropped to second place for the first time this year at 59%. Conversely, the public officials perceived by respondents as being least involved in corruption are police officers and prosecutors, with 44% of participants believing that corruption is ‘very widespread’ among them.

**6. Public trust in the authorities responsible for deterring corruption is extremely low**

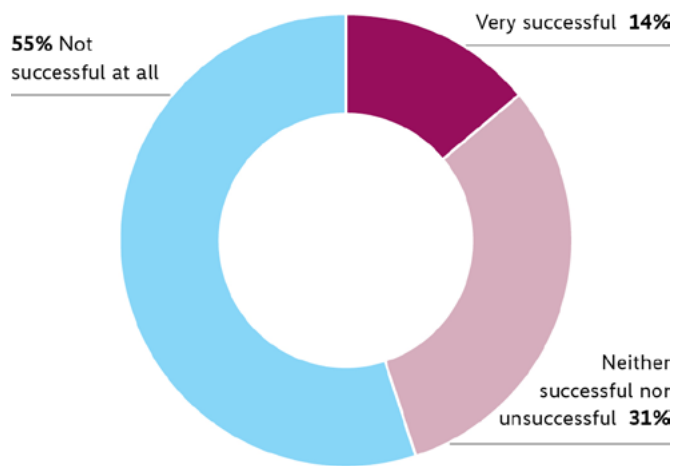
In the survey, the question ‘How much do you trust the following to fight against or expose corruption and irregularities?’ was asked. Here too, the proportion of participating businesspeople who said they ‘completely’ trust any institution is very low.

The most trusted entity is social media, with 30% of participants stating they trust it completely; traditional media follows in second place at 26%. At the bottom of the ranking is the government, in which 52% of participants expressed no trust at all. The proportion of those stating that they have no trust in parliament stands at 47%.

**7. The government is not successful in fighting money laundering**

Responses to the question, “How effective do you find the government’s efforts to combat money laundering?” indicate that confidence in the government’s performance in this area remains low. A vast majority (55%) believe that money laundering is a common occurrence in the country, and 55% consider the government completely to be ineffective in this regard.

**Figure 4: How successful is the government in fighting money laundering?**



**8. Offering voters money or a special favour in elections is common**

Fifty-three percent of respondents believe that vote buying or promising other benefits to voters in exchange for their votes is common. In addition, 30% think that threatening to punish voters if they do not vote in a certain way is common.

**9. The relationship between the business world and politics is highly problematic**

Forty-one percent of respondents indicate that it is very common for large companies to avoid paying their taxes. Similarly, 50% believe that the TRNC government is largely run by a few big interest groups that focus solely on their own benefits.

**10. Those who are involved in corruption are not held accountable**

Thirty-nine percent of respondents state that corrupt officials are never punished, while 31% report that this happens very rarely. Only 13% say that officials involved in corruption held accountable frequently or very frequently.

## 11. Public tolerance for favoritism and corrupt practices is on the rise

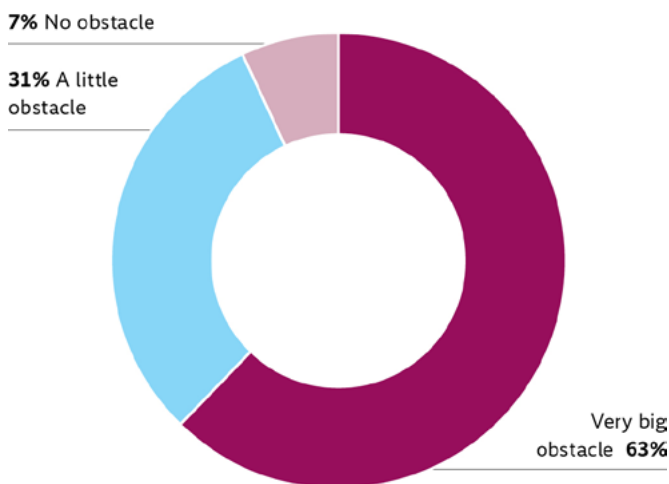
The proportion of those who agree that ‘using personal relationships and connections with public employees to speed things up is acceptable’ decreased from 25% in 2024 to 19% in 2025. However, considering that this figure stood at 5% in 2022, it is evident that there has been a significant increase in tolerance for favoritism over the last three years.

Similarly, the proportion of those who agree that ‘It is acceptable for the government to be involved in corruption as long as it delivers good services,’ was only 3% in 2022, but this rate rose to 11% in 2025. Conversely, the percentage of those who disagree with this statement dropped from 79% in 2023 to 68% in 2025. This indicates that tolerance towards corruption has been steadily increasing over the past three years.

## 12. Corruption is a major obstacle to doing business

Sixty-three percent of respondents believe that corruption is a major obstacle to doing business, while only 7% say that it poses no obstacle at all.

**Figure 5: Is corruption an obstacle for doing business?**



## 13. Belief in merit and effort as drivers of success is in decline

In 2024, when the statement ‘In our country, people’s chances of success depend on merit and effort’ was added to the study, 39% of respondents agreed, 37% were

undecided, and 24% disagreed. In 2025, however, responses across all three categories shifted to a level of 33% each. These results indicate a clear divergence of opinion regarding whether individual success in the country is tied to merit and effort.

**Table 2: Corruption, connections, merit**

	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
It is acceptable to use relationships and contacts in public institutions in order to speed up business-related procedures.	57%	23%	19%
It is acceptable for the government to engage in corruption as long as it delivers good results.	68%	21%	11%
The government in TRNC is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves.	30%	19%	50%
In our country, people’s chances of success depend on their merit and effort.	33%	33%	33%

## Authors

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This factsheet is based on information from the publication **↗ Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta Yolsuzluk Algısı: 2025 Raporu [Corruption Perceptions in North Cyprus: 2025 Report]**  
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Further information about the project:  
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