

Ombudsman cautions against complacency as NZ retains high ranking in global corruption perceptions index

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New Zealand's reputation as a country mostly free from corruption in its public service and judiciary has been reaffirmed in the 2022 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, Chief Ombudsman Peter Boshier says.

But Mr Boshier has warned against complacency, as reputations can rise and fall quickly as circumstances change.

"I am delighted that New Zealand continues to be perceived as one of the least corrupt countries – sharing second place in the rankings with Finland on 87 points out of 100."

Denmark has risen two points to 90 to take the top ranking. It shared the top spot with New Zealand and Finland in 2021. Both New Zealand and Finland dropped one point in 2022.

"That New Zealand has not been out of the top two places for a decade is testament to our commitment to being a transparent and honest democracy," Mr Boshier says.

"However, I note that over the years, New Zealand's score has declined from 91 to 87. It is also concerning that Transparency International has pointed to a 'gradual decline' in three of the eight indexes that contribute to our global ranking.

"We must be ever vigilant against any influences that may have an impact on the perception of New Zealand as a corruption-free country.

"My office plays a crucial role in maintaining our open and transparent democracy, overseeing government through legislation such as the Official Information Act, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act, the Ombudsmen Act and the Protected Disclosures Act.

"We live in a world where opinion can pass as fact and misinformation can be easily spread. Now, more than ever, we need a public service, judiciary and government beyond reproach," Mr Boshier says.

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