OMCT GLOBAL TORTURE INDEX 2026: METHODOLOGY NOTE

1. WHAT IS THE GLOBAL TORTURE INDEX?

Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (hereinafter, CIDTP or "other ill-treatment) represent some of the most severe violations of human integrity and dignity. Yet, torture and other ill-treatment remain widespread in many countries across the world. They take place in detention settings, but also in extra-custodial settings, such as during protests, evictions, and day to day police operations. This crime is often perpetrated against individuals or communities who have been historically marginalised and discriminated against. Moreover, impunity for these crimes is pervasive, constituting one of the primary obstacles to progress in their prevention and eradication. The lack of transparent, victim, survivor-centred and responsive mechanisms to process and sanction claims of torture and other ill-treatment leads to a global underreporting of such acts.

The Global Torture Index ('the Torture Index') aims to shed light on this crime by **assessing the risk of being subjected to torture and other ill-treatment in any given country**. The Torture Index is a tracking tool that provides a thorough country analysis based on comprehensive data, measuring the different dimensions of the eradication of torture. It enables to identify trends, track progress and setbacks on State compliance with human rights standards among countries and regions over time. The Index data has been collected and validated by OMCT members and partners, with longstanding experience and local expertise in anti-torture and human rights.

The Torture Index's methodology has been developed in **collaboration with members of the SOS-Torture Network** and leading global anti-torture experts. It is grounded in a bottom-up approach, relying on detailed, first-hand information provided by local civil society organisations—primarily OMCT members and partners. With nearly 200 members working on the front lines in the fight against torture in diverse contexts worldwide, the SOS-Torture Network brings unique credibility and insight to the analysis. This local expertise is complemented by a verification phase and rating methodology to ensure accuracy and reliability.

The Index evaluates national legal systems, public policies, and their real-world effects, measuring them against international human rights standards. It aims to inform governments, international organisations, and the public through an interactive and accessible online platform. The Index not only quantifies risk but also provides qualitative insights gathered from local civil society organisations, and human rights defenders—highlighting the systemic issues of this global underreported problem, emerging trends, and testimonies from survivors. It identifies concerning country practices, underlying causes, and priority areas for advocacy. By highlighting both challenges and examples of positive change, the Index serves as a platform to support evidence-based action and foster greater State compliance with human rights standards.

The **universal anti-torture framework** sets out a comprehensive range of rights and state obligations designed to ensure the absolute prohibition of torture, encompassing prevention, accountability, and the protection of victims' rights. The Torture Index measures and evaluates States' progress, or regression, across the various dimensions established in the following standards[1]:

- The UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and its General Comments (Nº 2, 3,4)
- The UN Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other Core International and Regional Human Rights Treaties
- The UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.
- The UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials.
- Other crucial international and regional human rights legal frameworks, instruments, standards, rules and guidelines.

To measure the above standards, the Torture Index is structured in **seven thematic pillars**:

1. *Political commitment against torture*: Evaluation of the State's legal obligations, treaty ratifications, and implementation of core anti-torture commitments and public policies in line with the UN Convention Against Torture, international and regional frameworks at the national level.
2. *Ending police brutality and institutional violence*: Assessment of safeguards and oversight mechanisms to prevent torture and other ill-treatment in the context of law enforcement operations, during arrest and interrogation, as well as during public assemblies and border control. Related institutional human rights violations such as the death penalty, life sentence and enforced disappearances are also measured.
3. *Freedom from torture while deprived of liberty*: Evaluation of safeguards in detention facilities, ensuring decent conditions, legal protections, and humane treatment, with attention to specific groups, as well as oversight mechanisms for accountability and monitoring.

1 *Note: for more information on the standards and references used to develop the Index, see the document 'Legal framework of the Global Torture Index'.*

4. *Ending impunity:* Examination of mechanisms to ensure accountability for torture and other ill-treatment, including investigative and judicial mechanisms, effective remedies for victims and trained forensic services.
5. *Victims' rights*: Analysis of the fulfilment of the State's responsibilities to provide holistic redress to torture victims, along with comprehensive rehabilitation, protection measures, and specialised services.
6. *Protection for all*: Evaluation of States' positive obligations and responsibility to prevent torture and ill-treatment in the private sphere, focusing on groups in situations of heightened vulnerability—women, children, and LGBTQIA+ individuals—who have special protection under international and regional standards.
7. *Right to defend and civic space:* Evaluation of the legal framework, institutional practices and risks faced by human rights defenders and civil society organisations due to their human rights work, focusing on the ability to monitor human rights, operate freely and document abuses without restrictions.

The *countries selected* for Index implementation were chosen based on a range of strategic criteria to ensure relevance, impact, and effectiveness. These factors include the prevalence of torture and other ill-treatment, the presence of active civil society partners, regional balance, and opportunities to influence national and international legal and policy reform processes. Priority was given to countries where the OMCT has established members and close partners, ensuring strong local engagement and a substantial base of relevant data, analysis, and reports, providing a solid foundation for evidence-based monitoring and advocacy. Lastly, we have selected countries that have undergone a review by the Committee Against Torture (CAT) in recent years or during the Index implementation year, aligning the information with international human rights mechanisms.

In its second edition, released in June 2026, the Index covers **39 countries across all regions**—Africa, the Americas, Europe and Central Asia, Asia, and the MENA region—reflecting its steady expansion in scope and partnerships. The Index is designed to grow year on year, with additional countries and partners joining as the initiative develops. Updated annually, it draws on information and analysis gathered over the previous year to provide a regular, comprehensive snapshot of the enjoyment of human rights in each country.

2. METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The Index questionnaire is grounded in a human rights-based approach, aiming to identify and mainstream, across the seven thematic pillars, both high-risk contexts and the individuals or groups most vulnerable to torture and other ill-treatment. These include women, children, LGBTQIA+ individuals, migrants and asylum seekers, and ethnic or racial minorities.

2.1. Indicators to measure human rights commitments, efforts and results

The Index questionnaire takes the OHCHR guide on human rights indicators as the main methodological reference for human rights measurement. It is designed to collect information about compliance with international standards, its implementation and impact on rights holders, and thus includes the following three types of indicators:

- **Structural**- reflecting the legal and policy framework of a country in line with human rights international treaties, instruments, and standards.
  Example: Has the State ratified the (1984) UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UN CAT)?
- **Process**- measuring the State's efforts to implement human rights commitments through public policies, regulations, programmes, budgets and, protocols, among others.
  Example: How is the dialogue of government authorities and civil society organisations on the implementation of the Concluding Observations adopted by the CAT?
- **Outcome**- capturing the actual and/or perceived enjoyment of human rights by groups and reflects the impacts of the two indicators above.
  Example: In practice, how often are law enforcement officials observed to have clear and visible identification during all operations?

These three levels of measuring human rights are articulated through:

Fact-based indicators

- Quantitative- indicator phrased in a quantitative form, based on information on objects, facts or events that are observable and verifiable. *For example, number of complaints of torture and/or CIDTP cases received by the prosecution office.*
- Qualitative- indicator phrased in a narrative form and based on information on objects, facts or events that are observable and verifiable. *For example: a narrative description of an act of torture.*

Judgment-based indicators

- Qualitative- indicator phrased in a qualitative form, based on information that is a perception, opinion, assessment, or judgement. *For example: Is the right to freedom of assembly fully guaranteed in law and in practice in a given country?*

2.2. Assumptions

The Torture Index adopts a positive approach in formulating its hypothesis. The first and foremost premise is that the right to freedom from torture and CIDTP will be a more realistic scenario –and therefore the risk will be lower— in a country in which:

- There is a legal and institutional structure that criminalises and punishes torture and other ill-treatment.
- There are specific policies that ensure freedom from torture and other ill-treatment in the riskiest contexts including detention, protests, national security operations, migration, armed conflict.
- There is a strong and independent rule of law system and judiciary that ensures that there are efficient and prompt investigations, leading to the prosecution and sentencing of perpetrators for acts of torture and other ill-treatment.
- Torture survivors are properly accompanied, protected, and rehabilitated.
- There are specific policies protecting individuals and groups such as children, women, ethnic and racial minorities, and persons on the move.
- There is recognition of the right to defend human rights enabling human rights defenders and civil society organisations to freely and openly advocate for the implementation of anti-torture policies, and play a watchdog role.

2.3. Survey Design and Implementation

The 2026 survey distinguishes three types of survey questions based on the methodology and indicators. Multiple-choice and checkbox items are included in the quantitative score calculation, while open-ended questions are retained as qualitative evidence to contextualise country findings and are not directly included in the index score.

a) Multiple choice: the respondent selects one option from a predefined list of answers. Each answer option is mapped to a single coded value for scoring.

b) Checkbox items: the respondent can select all options from a list of predefined answers that apply. These are typically used to capture the presence or absence of safeguards, including situations where safeguards are not respected or are violated. For scoring, checkbox responses are summarised in a single coded value, using a variety of methods, including direct or inverse proportional scoring and minimum-value rules, depending on the item coding.

c) Open-ended questions: partners are required to type their answer and there are no pre-set answer options. These items are excluded from the numeric Index scoring but provide crucial qualitative data to better understand the local realities and contextualise responses.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In recognising the inherent challenges in measuring the likelihood and risk of torture and CIDTP in a given country, the Torture Index is guided by a set of core principles. These guiding principles provide a clear framework and offer direction on key substantive and methodological aspects of the Index.

a) The Torture Index reflects the level of compliance, both in law and practice, with international anti-torture and human rights standards as reflected in legislation and, public policies as well as its implementation and impacts on rights-holders. Thus, the Index covers the three human rights dimensions of respect, protect and fulfil.

b) At all times the OMCT gives priority to the principles of confidentiality, non-disclosure and do-no-harm of the partners on the basis of informed consent of partners or victims who participate in the Index.

c) The questionnaire considers statistical and publicly available official data, bearing in mind that if the information lacks transparency, this will negatively affect the Index score. Similarly, if a lack of information hampers the completion of the questionnaire, this will be reflected on the Index webpage in the '*Transparency and Access to information*' scale. By combining these two indicators, users will be able to assess the reliability and completeness of the corresponding Torture Index analysis.

d) In federal states, we understand that if a specific state or region fails to comply with international standards, the national government is ultimately held accountable.

e) Participating organisations at the national level are publicly recognised as the sources of information and counterparts of the Global Index (except in cases where security concerns have been expressed by local partners).

4. PARTICIPARTORY SURVEY AND VALIDATION PROCEDURE

Firstly, the OMCT Secretariat has drafted the Index methodology and questionnaires, in line with international human rights standards, following multiple rounds of internal review within the staff and key partners, renowned anti-torture experts and organisations that have developed other indexes. The objective was to provide an initial validation process of the methodology, identifying gaps in the questionnaire and in the implementation process.

At a second instance, in 2023, the Secretariat organised a Global Torture Index expert meeting in Geneva, involving a broader audience of partners working in torture advocacy, research, statistics, and decision-making bodies to discuss the Index in depth. The meeting involved the participation of experts and practitioners from across the globe to ensure that diverse views, human rights concerns and systems were considered. The aim was to present and discuss the drafted methodology, questionnaire, thematic pillars, as well as to identify ways to overcome implementation challenges and how the Index can be used. Following the meeting, the questionnaire underwent a comprehensive review through seven thematic workshops, involving the same participants from the Geneva discussion.

Thirdly, following the thematic workshops and methodological adjustments, the Index was tested in 7 countries across all regions in 2023. After this initial phase, the OMCT Secretariat conducted follow-up meetings with implementation partners to refine the questionnaire and improve data collection processes where needed. In 2024, the Index was piloted in an additional 14 countries, followed by 5 more in 2025. The Torture Index was officially launched on 25 June 2025, with a first edition covering 26 countries. Since then, it is published annually, updating existing data and expanding its geographical scope each year.

5. SURVEY IMPLEMENTATION

5.1. First Phase: Data Collection and Cross check

a) Data collection

For the 2025 launch of the Index, the OMCT Secretariat strategically selected approximately 80 partners across 26 countries to participate in the pilot phase. Building on this initial phase, in 2026 an additional 20 OMCT members and partners joined the initiative, bringing the total number of respondents to around 100 organizations across 38 countries[2]. The data collection process includes existing information sources such as internal databases, reports, shadow submissions to UN mechanisms, and documented victim cases as well as published reports from international organisations and regional human rights systems. To ensure comprehensive and accurate responses, additional research and consultations were carried out with independent local actors, including researchers, specialised human rights NGOs, legal and medical professionals. Table 1 provides an overview of the questionnaire structure used in 2026.

A variety of additional tailored data collection methods were used to reflect the diverse contexts of each country. These included working sessions and consultations with local anti-torture networks, distributing thematic responsibilities among different organisations, identifying dedicated research units within partner institutions, and in countries with limited capacity, engaging expert consultants to pre-fill the data, which was then reviewed and validated by local partners.

In countries where multiple organisations were involved, validation meetings were held to build consensus on the collected data and to agree on good practices and country-specific recommendations. Throughout this process, the Index team actively gathered feedback and insights from participants, using their input to refine the methodology and improve its effectiveness for subsequent years.

Tab. 1: Global Torture Index Survey 2026

	GLOBAL TORTURE INDEX ITEMS
NUMBER OF UNIQUE ITEMS	431
Items per type	Multiple Choice: 334 Checkboxes: 97
Items by weight	Weight 1: 133 Weight 5: 218 Weight 10: 80
Items by parent topic	Political Commitment: 41 Ending Police Brutality and Institutional Violence: 112 Freedom from Torture While Deprived of Liberty: 80 Ending Impunity: 66 Victims' Rights: 21 Protection for All: 72 Right to Defend and Civic Space: 39

2 *The 2026 Global Torture Index covers 39 countries. However, it was not possible to review the information for Hungary in 2026, thus the assessment for this country reflects the latest available analysis published in 2025.*

b) Data Cross check with expert collaboration

The Global Torture Index second edition, published in June 2026, explored and piloted the use of machine learning and AI-based tools for data analysis and cross-checking. New technologies are essential to the Index given the large volumes of data it must process from diverse sources. Large language models (LLMs) and other AI tools can identify inaccuracies that human analysts might miss, enabling faster and more thorough assessments. Given the sensitive nature of the data collected and the organisations involved, ensuring data protection and privacy remain a critical priority.

OMCT members and partner's responses are the primary source of information underpinning the Index. The methodology prioritises locally gathered data, close to rights-holders, as this is considered the most accurate and context-specific. As a second layer of verification, completed questionnaires are cross-checked against reliable sources from international organisations to identify any inconsistencies.

To this end, the OMCT has developed a partnership with **HURIDOCS** (Human Rights Information and Documentation Systems)—an international NGO that has supported human rights groups in gathering, organising, and using information to defend human rights and drive positive changes since 1982. The partnership builds a secure online Uwazi database with AI capabilities, designed to collect, store, organise, and analyse information relevant to the Index. The database platform is equipped with an AI-based service that analyses third-party reports and Index data to obtain **Data-Cross Reports**. These automatically generated documents provide conclusions on the level of alignment between information from trusted third parties and the partners' Index data collection, identifying the degree of agreement and discrepancies of the data that needs to be considered.

The joint project successfully implemented a complete solution within Uwazi to support the analysis and comparison of reports against Index data. A structured data model was developed, defining the database architecture through templates, relationships, data dictionaries, and controlled vocabularies. A dedicated user interface was also designed and integrated into Uwazi, enabling the configuration and management of AI-powered functionalities. To support the integration, a comparative assessment of available AI tools was conducted, resulting in the selection of the option that best met the requirements for analytical accuracy and information privacy. The Uwazi instance was then configured, including the setup of the core platform and data model. Available country reports and Index partners' data were imported into the system. Finally, the solution underwent testing to evaluate its performance and the quality of its outputs, leading to refinements and adjustments that improved the overall design and functionality of the system. The entire process was designed to incorporate human oversight at key stages, including the labelling of data used for training and testing, as well as the final review of the results. The final design is implemented in the Uwazi instance while the source code for the data analysis has been run on local computers at HURIDOCS.

As part of the technical assessment process, 310 reports were automatically evaluated using machine learning (ML) tools. These reports contained a combined total of approximately 60,000 paragraphs, which were matched against 504 questionnaire items, resulting in approximately 30 million question-to-paragraph comparisons. Of these, 158,000 question–paragraph pairs were identified by the ML algorithms as relevant. Subsequent evaluation using frontier large language models (LLMs) determined that approximately 15,000 of these pairs contained either contradictions or corroborations of the assessed statements, which was not possible to undergo human evaluation in a reasonable timeframe.

Thus, for the 2026 edition, this process was piloted in one country per region — Kenya, the Russian Federation, Venezuela, Iran, and Libya — and, as the partnership remains in a pilot phase with further avenues of collaboration still being explored, it is expected to expand in scope in future editions. Where discrepancies arose between partner assessments and the third-party reports, the OMCT Secretariat contacted the relevant partners to discuss the issue and reach a consensual resolution — either by partners justifying their response or revising it.

5.2. Second Phase: Index Construction

For **each country** measured in the Torture Index, the following key Index indicators were calculated:

- 1 aggregate torture and ill-treatment country-score,
- 7 thematic sub-scores per country for each thematic pillar of torture and ill-treatment:
    - *Political commitment against torture*
    - *Ending police brutality and institutional violence*
    - *Freedom from torture while deprived of liberty*
    - *Ending impunity*
    - *Victims' rights*
    - *Protection for all*
    - *Right to defend and civic space.*
- 1 data transparency score, assessing national data landscapes, access to information, and the prevalence of no data responses. The transparency score is calculated separately and is used to contextualise country and thematic scores rather than as a direct penalty within the 2026 country score.

The calculation of country and thematic scores is based on a scale from 0 to 100. Based on these numeric scores, countries are classified into five distinct risk categories, as follows:

- **Low risk**
- **Moderate risk**
- **Considerable Risk**
- **High risk**
- **Very high risk**

How to Read These Risk Categories

The risk categories above should be read alongside the Global Torture Index survey's thematic pillars and their respective tables of contents. They reflect **varying degrees of compliance**, effectiveness, and risk across the same indicators relating to the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Each score reflects how the assessed State performs across all seven pillars and the weight of any given gap or failure will vary depending on the complexity of each thematic area. Readers are encouraged to consult the Global Torture Index table of contents to understand which specific dimensions shape the score in each area.

Low Risk:

A low-risk score reflects a strong and broadly effective adherence to international, regional, and domestic human rights standards concerning the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. States in this category generally demonstrate comprehensive treaty ratification without significant reservations, meaningful cooperation with international and regional monitoring bodies, timely reporting, implementation of recommendations and judgments, and constructive engagement with civil society. Domestic law prohibits and criminalises torture and other ill-treatment, while institutional safeguards, detention monitoring, complaint mechanisms, victim protection, and accountability structures appear capable of reducing the likelihood of torture and responding effectively when allegations arise.

Moderate Risk:

A moderate-risk score indicates that the State has made visible progress toward alignment with international and regional anti-torture standards, but that implementation remains uneven in some areas. In general, torture and other ill-treatment is not the main concern, the legal and institutional framework are largely in place, and the State may cooperate with monitoring bodies and recognise relevant remedies, yet gaps remain in practice. These may include delayed reporting, partial implementation of recommendations, inconsistent enforcement of safeguards (mostly for specific groups and contexts), challenges in accessing legal remedies and protecting persons deprived of liberty, as well as some weaknesses in the independence and effectiveness of oversight institutions.

Considerable Risk:

A considerable-risk score suggests that, although some formal legal and institutional commitments may exist, there are significant weaknesses in their practical operation. The State may have ratified relevant instruments and established domestic rules or institutions, but enforcement is weak, cooperation with monitoring bodies is limited, recommendations are only partially or rarely implemented, and accountability for violations is inconsistent. Detention safeguards, access to independent monitoring, complaint mechanisms, remedies for victims, and protection against reprisals is insufficient. In this category, torture and other ill-treatment remain a persistent concern.

High Risk:

A high-risk score reflects serious shortcomings in the State's compliance with the absolute prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment. Domestic torture criminalisation and institutional safeguards are incomplete, ineffective, or applied selectively. The State may display limited or obstructive cooperation with international and regional mechanisms, fail to implement recommendations or judgments, restrict access to places of detention, or provide inadequate protection for victims, complainants, lawyers, human rights defenders, and civil society organisations. Allegations of torture or other ill-treatment are frequent, accountability weak, and impunity a systemic feature. This category indicates that the risk is rooted in significant legal, institutional, and practical failures.

Very High Risk:

A very high-risk score indicates systematic and deeply rooted shortcomings in upholding the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In such countries, torture or other ill-treatment is widespread, denied, and enabled by State authorities. Safeguards against violations are absent, or ineffective; detention monitoring is obstructed; complaints expose victims or civil society actors to reprisals or exile; and accountability mechanisms are unable or unwilling to investigate, prosecute, punish, and provide redress. International and regional engagement is likely to be non-cooperative or even confrontational, with poor implementation of recommendations, decisions, or judgments. This category represents the most severe level of risk, reflecting a state of profound institutional failure, where torture and ill-treatment is systematically employed as a way of state control, coercion, or repression, both when facing arrest and detention, and in extra-custodial contexts.

These categories form the basis of the interactive online map on the Global Torture Index platform. Where countries will be categorised into risk levels—from *low* to *very high*—and visualised using a colour-coded heat map. This approach allows users to easily compare countries, identify positive change and emerging trends, as well as highlight systemic challenges in preventing torture and ill-treatment, especially considering data transparency.

a) Country and Thematic Scores

The Index methodology employs a weighted-average scoring approach (0–100) to assess the risk of torture and ill-treatment at both country and thematic levels. Expert-based question weights (1, 5, 10), identified by several OMCT staff consultations, reflect the Index scoring scheme. This approach ensures that each response is weighted according to its designated importance and levels of strategic significance, so that the index does not only reflect legal landscapes, but the lived realities of rights-holders:

- *High Priority* (10): These questions are of utmost importance, focusing on the legal and policy framework, adequate institutions, and reported instances of human rights violations.
- *Medium Priority* (5): These questions are important but not as pressing, addressing legislative safeguards and implementation processes.
- *Regular Priority* (1): This category includes questions relevant to preventing and mitigating the risk of torture and other ill-treatment but considered less critical.

The calculation is applied after response cleaning, answer harmonisation, country-response selection, and exclusion of item types or special responses that are not part of the quantitative score. Text and number-only items are excluded from the quantitative score. Special responses that are not substantive answer options are excluded from the denominator. "No data" responses are coded as value = 1. For checkbox items, selected answers are expanded and scored according to the item-specific calculation type. The 2026 scoring script retains direct and inverse proportional calculations and direct and inverse minimum-value rules.

The Index uses two distinct levels of weighting: item weights and section weights.

First, item weights are applied within each thematic pillar. Each scored survey item is assigned an item weight reflecting its relative importance within that section. These item weights are used to calculate a weighted section score. Higher-weighted items therefore have a stronger influence on the score of the thematic section to which they belong.

For each section, the section score is calculated as:

$$\text{Section Score}_s = 100 \times \left[\frac{\Sigma\left(\text{value}_i, s \times \text{item weight}_i, s\right)}{\Sigma\left(\text{item weight}_i, s\right)} \right]$$

where:

- Section Score_s is the score for parent topic section s.
- s refers to one of the seven parent topic sections of the Index.
- i refers to an individual scored item within section s.
- value_i,s is the coded score assigned to item i in section s.
- item weight_i,s is the assigned importance weight of item i in section s.
- Σ(value_i,s × item weight_i,s) is the sum of all item values multiplied by their respective item weights within section s.
- Σ(item weight_i,s) is the sum of all item weights for scored items within section s.
- The multiplication by 100 converts the weighted average into a 0–100 section score.

Second, section weights are applied when calculating the overall country score. To ensure that sections with more questions do not contribute more heavily simply because they contain more items, each of the seven parent topic sections is given equal weight in the overall score. The number of questions per parent topic is therefore used to calculate the respective section score, but it does not determine the section's weight in the final country score. The overall country score is calculated as the simple average of the seven section scores.

The final categorisation of countries may be refined and adjusted based on recommendations and assessment provided by regional experts. The categories displayed on the GTI website represent the final validated classifications resulting from this expert review process.

b) Transparency score

Throughout the process of developing and testing the Index methodology, the OMCT has confirmed the existence of challenges in accessing information on torture and ill-treatment across countries. In many countries, opacity surrounds crucial data such as deaths in custody, excessive use of force, number of torture cases and sanctions against law enforcement officials. The Index identifies data gaps by highlighting the (un)availability of information across specific countries, both in the absence of specific legislation and in the lack of availability, in practice, of data regarding the number of cases of torture and investigations, protocols

used by law enforcement, type of weapons used and, oversight mechanisms in public offices, among others. In addition, data transparency matters for the interpretation of index values.

To facilitate the contextualisation of the country and thematic scores, each country is furthermore rated in terms of the availability and transparency of survey data with regard to various dimensions.
The transparency score is calculated separately from the main Index score and is based on 22 designed transparency items. These items capture the availability, accessibility and usability of information relevant to the assessment of torture and other ill-treatment, including obstacles such as government-imposed restrictions, the existence of relevant public data, and the ability of civil society to access and use that information.

Unlike the main Index score, the transparency score does not apply item weights. Instead, it uses the raw coded item values for the 22 transparency items. Each item contributes equally to the transparency score, as the purpose of this score is to assess the overall openness and accessibility of the data environment rather than the relative substantive importance of individual anti-torture indicators.

The transparency score is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Transparency Score} = 100 \text{ x } \frac{\text{sum of raw transparency items}}{22}$$

where:

- Transparency Score is the overall data transparency score for a country.
- The raw transparency item values are the coded values assigned to each of the 22 transparency items.
- The sum of raw transparency item values is the total of these coded values across all 22 items.
- 22 is the fixed number of items included in the transparency score.
- Multiplication by 100 converts the average raw item value into a 0–100 score.

Based on this numeric score, countries are classified into 5 categories that range from the best scenario in State compliance with transparency and data accessibility standards, to the worst:

- **Transparent**
- **Accessible**
- **Circumscribed**
- **Concealed**
- **Suppressive**

The Index platform features a dedicated country page which includes a country-risk analysis and seven thematic risk analysis, as well as narrative information that highlights root causes, key concerns within each pillar, advocacy recommendations, examples of good practices, and stories from victims and survivors. This approach offers a deeper, context-based and qualitative understanding of the local reality. Similarly, each analysed country receives a transparency scale and recognition to OMCT member and partners involved in the Index implementation process.

5.3. Third Phase: External Review of the Methodology

It is important to highlight that during the first three years, the Index methodology is been validated continuously. This means the questionnaire and scoring are adjusting and evolving as we are integrating learnings to simplify data collection and refine the scoring methodology. This process is being done with the expertise and support of the Index Steering Committee, OMCT staff, members and partners as well as with strong partnerships with experts and the academia.

The **Steering Committee of the Global Torture Index** plays a central advisory role in guiding the development, methodology and implementation of the Index. Comprising of eight human rights and anti-torture experts from across the five regions, the Committee ensures transparency, strategic oversight and regional representation in the Index's design and evolution. Its responsibilities include providing advice on the methodology, participating in high-level strategic discussions and serving as regional ambassadors to promote the Index. The Committee meets regularly to review progress, shape advocacy strategies, and explore opportunities for collaboration and fundraising with Index partners.

6. NEXT STEPS

The scaling of the Global Torture Index is a strategic investment for the years to come as an initiative collaboratively undertaken with the SOS Torture Network. It seeks to advance local anti-torture struggles and reforms, legitimize our member organization as an authoritative source of information, while ensuring that the issue of torture receives global visibility and attention.

Building on the preparatory work undertaken since 2023, the next phase will focus on strengthening its sustainability, reach, and analytical value. Key priorities include adding more countries to the Index map, securing long-term financial resources, and reinforcing partnerships. The Index will also seek to increase its influence, visibility, and advocacy impact by engaging with a broader range of stakeholders, including academia, the private sector, States, international mechanisms, and the wider public. Moreover, efforts will be made to enhance the robustness of the data through larger longitudinal datasets. This will improve the statistical power of the Index and enable more sophisticated analyses of trends and changes in torture and ill-treatment over time.

FURTHER RESOURCES

For further information, the complete 2025 Torture Index—including detailed data visualisations, FAQs, the methodology, and more—can be accessed on our website: https://www.omct.org/en/global-torture-index. Should you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at tortureindex@omct.org.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SUPPORT

This project is made possible through the generous support of our donors.

For a full list of contributors and partners, please visit:

https://www.omct.org/en/global-torture-index

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