

Afar, Ethiopia, February 2022.

Women seek shade from the blaring sun under boxes while waiting to be registered at the Agda Hotel compound, where millions of displaced Eritreans and Ethiopians have fled to escape violence at the Barhale refugee camp. One attack near the campsite led to "at least five refugees [being] killed and several women [being] kidnapped" according to survivors. Photo credit: Eduardo Soteras/AFP via Getty Images.

GLOBAL FINDINGS



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An estimated 50 million people were living in situations of modern slavery on any given day in 2021, according to the latest Global Estimates of Modern Slavery. Of these people, approximately 28 million were in forced labour and 22 million were in forced marriages.

The most vulnerable — women, children, and migrants — remain disproportionately affected. More than 12 million of all people in modern slavery are children, and women and girls account for over half of them (54 per cent). Migrant workers were three times more likely to be in forced labour than non-migrant workers.

Modern slavery occurs in every country, regardless of wealth. More than half (52 per cent) of all forced labour and a quarter of all forced marriages can be found in upper-middle income or high-income countries.

The new Global Estimates revealed that the situation is worse than when we last measured in 2016. Since then, the number of men, women, and children forced to work against their will or in a forced marriage has risen by 10 million. The worsening situation has occurred against a backdrop of increasing conflict, environmental degradation, over a decade of global democratic decline,¹ a global rollback of women’s rights,² and the economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and responses to it. These compounding crises have led to significant disruption to employment and education, increases in extreme poverty, and forced and unsafe migration, which together heighten the risk of all forms of modern slavery, particularly for those who are already vulnerable.

Overview and trends

The Global Slavery Index is a national breakdown of the extent of modern slavery in 160 countries, taking the Global Estimates as its starting point. This section presents findings of our country-level analysis of the extent and drivers of modern slavery, together with actions taken by governments to respond to modern slavery.

From global to national estimates

The 10 countries with the highest prevalence of modern slavery are:

1.

North Korea
2.

Eritrea
3.

Mauritania
4.

Saudi Arabia
5.

Türkiye
6.

Tajikistan
7.

United Arab Emirates
8.

Russia
9.

Afghanistan
10.

Kuwait

Four of the five world regions — Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe and Central Asia — are represented in the list of countries with highest prevalence, which underscores the global reach of modern slavery.

The 10 countries with highest prevalence share some political, social, and economic characteristics, including limited protections for civil liberties and human rights. Many of these countries are in volatile regions, which have experienced political instability, conflict, and/or authoritarianism. Many are home to large numbers of vulnerable people, such as refugees or migrant workers. Migrant workers comprise the vast majority of the workforce in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait where they effectively fall under the control of employers due to the kafala (sponsorship) system and have few, if any, labour rights.

While our understanding of the relationship between conflict and modern slavery is growing, protracted conflict is a known risk multiplier, as breakdown in the rule of law, loss of social support networks, and the large-scale disruption that occurs during conflicts all serve to increase risk of both forced labour and forced marriage. North Korea, Eritrea, and Afghanistan have all been involved in protracted conflicts.³ Türkiye, which hosts

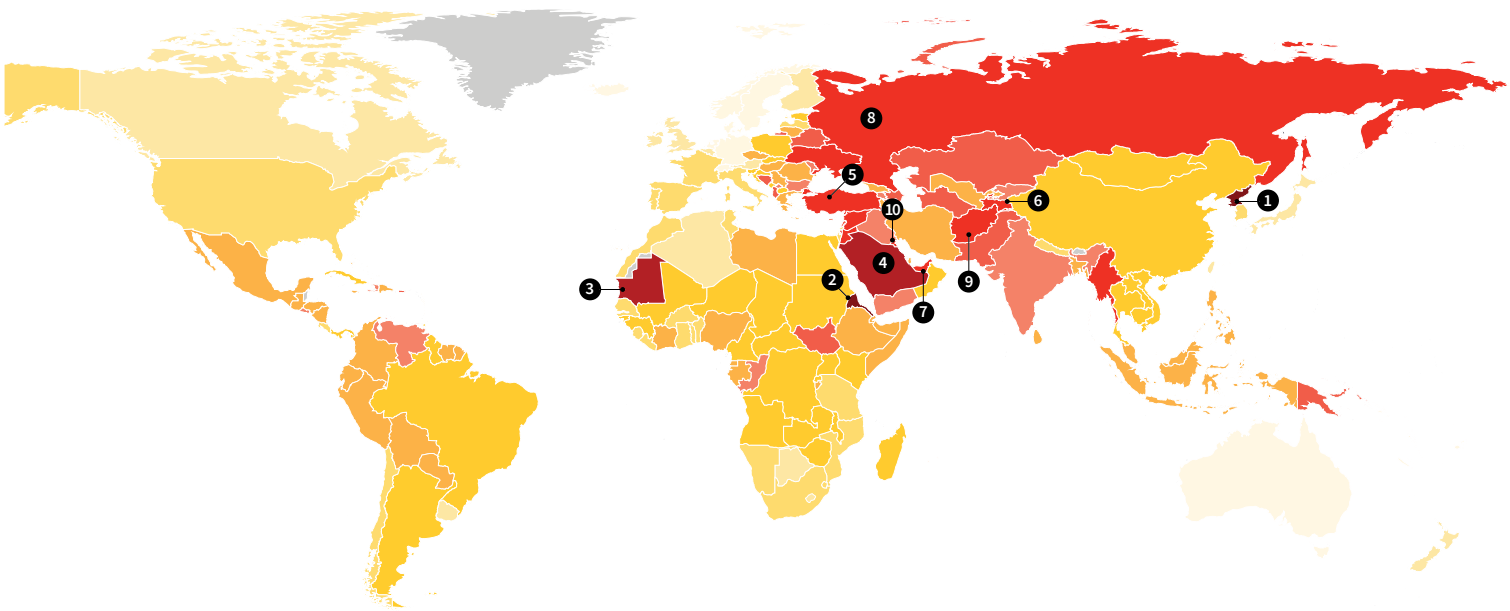


Figure 5
Estimated prevalence of modern slavery by country
(noting estimated prevalence per 1,000 population for the 10 countries with highest prevalence)



Rank	Country	Prevalence
1	North Korea	104.6
2	Eritrea	90.3
3	Mauritania	32.0
4	Saudi Arabia	21.3
5	Türkiye	15.6
6	Tajikistan	14.0
7	United Arab Emirates	13.4
8	Russia	13.0
9	Afghanistan	13.0
10	Kuwait	13.0

millions of refugees from Syria, and Russia were both involved in the Syrian conflict. Russia also launched an invasion of Ukraine in 2022 after having annexed Crimea in 2014.⁴ A lack of data in countries experiencing conflict means that estimates in these countries, and the regions they are situated in, will fall short of the true extent of modern slavery.

North Korea, Eritrea, Mauritania, and Afghanistan were among the ten countries with highest prevalence of modern slavery in the 2018 Global Slavery Index and remained in the list of countries with the highest prevalence in 2023. North Korea and Eritrea each have a high prevalence of state-imposed forced labour. While international conventions recognise that states have the power to compel citizens to work, this is limited to specific circumstances; for example, compulsory military service or obligatory work or service for citizens in emergency situations such as famine and natural disaster. A state exceeds these limits

when it compels citizens to work as a punishment for expressing or acting on political views, or for the purpose of economic development, or as a means of racial, ethnic, social, or religious discrimination.

In North Korea, one in 10 people are in modern slavery, with the vast majority being forced to work by the state. This is a conservative estimate in a country that the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights found engages in widespread and systematic abuses such as torture, wrongful imprisonment, and forced labour against its citizens.⁵ There are also reports of North Korean women being lured or coerced into leaving the country to be sold as brides in China. Women who escape from those situations and return to North Korea often face punishment by the authorities rather than receiving support as victims of bride trafficking.⁶

Global Estimates of Modern Slavery

Since 2016, the International Labour Organization (ILO), Walk Free, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) have collaborated on the development of the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery (Global Estimates). The three organisations worked together to harmonise definitions and methodologies to provide a single baseline estimate against which progress towards ending modern slavery could be measured.

In September 2022, the new Global Estimates were released. Each edition of the Global Estimates is based on the best available data and information about the scale and distribution of modern slavery. The estimates are derived from multiple data sources, as no single source can adequately measure the different forms of modern slavery. As was the case in 2016, the principal sources are data from nationally representative household surveys (68 forced labour surveys and 75 forced marriage

surveys) and anonymised data from the Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative that is collected by IOM and its partners in the process of providing services to trafficked persons.

The methodology underlying the new Global Estimates is the product of an ongoing process of refinement made possible by an improved understanding of forced labour and forced marriage and of how best to measure them. Due to the refinements in measurement and more balanced geographical coverage in data, the new Global Estimates are the most complete and comprehensive to date. Despite this, the estimate is conservative as substantial gaps remain. Forms of modern slavery, such as organ trafficking, recruitment of children by armed forces, and all child marriages, are not captured, and there remain parts of the world, such as countries experiencing profound and ongoing conflict, where using existing methods is difficult and dangerous.

Eritrea has the world’s second highest prevalence of modern slavery (9 per cent of the population), representing an estimated 320,000 people. The Eritrean government runs a mandatory national conscription program through which citizens between the ages of 18 and 40 must undertake military service but typically are forced to perform work of a non-military nature.⁷ The length of this national conscription is indefinite, with reports of Eritreans spending decades in service of the government. This has led to an estimated 15 per cent of the population — primarily those under 40 — fleeing the country to avoid conscription.⁸ In doing so, many face further risk of exploitation.

Eritrea also has among the weakest government responses to modern slavery, second only to North Korea. Its state-imposed forced labour system fundamentally undermines any other response to modern slavery, including the ratification of relevant conventions, or existence of national legislation. Corporations have been linked to state-imposed forced labour in Eritrea. Allegations made in 2014 against Nevsun Resources, a Canadian-based mining company, claimed it was complicit in the use of forced labour by the firm’s sub-contractor at the Bisha mine in Eritrea. The case, which ended in a settlement with plaintiffs for an undisclosed amount in October 2020,⁹ is seen as a positive step towards corporate accountability for forced labour in their supply chains.

As the last country to abolish slavery, which it did in 1981, Mauritania continues to have one of the highest rates of slavery (32 people in every thousand). Despite this, hereditary slavery continues to impact the Haratine and Afro-Mauritanian communities, with many survivors and their descendants dependent upon former “masters” because of limited skills and lack of alternative economic opportunities.¹⁰ The government has taken some steps to address the issue, such as criminalising slavery and creating anti-slavery tribunals, but enforcement remains weak. In addition, societal attitudes and cultural norms continue to contribute to the perpetuation of slavery.¹¹ In Mauritania, minority groups face discrimination in various areas, including education, employment, and access to public services, while there are also numerous reports of arbitrary detention, torture, and other forms of repression of political dissidents, journalists, and human rights activists.¹²

The 10 countries with the largest estimated numbers of people in modern slavery include some of the world’s most populous. Collectively, these countries — India (11 million), China (5.8 million), North Korea (2.7 million), Pakistan (2.3 million), Russia (1.9 million), Indonesia (1.8 million), Nigeria (1.6 million), Türkiye (1.3 million), Bangladesh (1.2 million), and the United States (1.1 million) — account for nearly

two in every three people living in modern slavery and over half the world’s population. Notably, six of these countries are G20 nations — India, China, Russia, Indonesia, Türkiye, and the United States.

With the exception of Japan, the countries with lowest prevalence of modern slavery are from northern or western Europe — Switzerland, Norway, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, Ireland, and Finland. Yet, even in these countries, thousands of people continue to be forced to work or marry, despite their high levels of economic development, gender equality, social welfare, and political stability, as well as strong criminal justice systems.¹³

A regional assessment reveals that while vulnerability to modern slavery is lowest in Europe across all dimensions, discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or migration status is the largest driver of modern slavery. Migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, and ethno-cultural minorities face discrimination, including limited access to services and protection. More people are migrating now than at any other point in the last five decades.¹⁴ As more people flee conflict and abuse of their human rights, Europe has increasingly closed its borders — either physically¹⁵ or through ever more complex and opaque migration policies. “Fortress Europe” does not stop asylum seekers and migrants from arriving, but instead forces people to take riskier routes.¹⁶

Part of the issue is that there is not a simple, coherent migration policy across the European Union. The Dublin system, for example, means that asylum seekers should seek asylum in the first country they reach in Europe.¹⁷ However, the so-called “migrant crisis” in 2015, which led to approximately one million people landing on European shores to seek asylum, with thousands dying en route, exposed the weaknesses in the system. The burden disproportionately fell on states bordering the Mediterranean, such as Greece and Italy, with asylum seekers and migrants originating from Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq and a significant, albeit smaller, number arriving via Libya.¹⁸ Since then, EU countries have been negotiating a system based on “solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility,”¹⁹ but they have not come to an agreement. In March 2023, migration ministers from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, and Switzerland released a joint statement to strengthen the Dublin system, reaffirming that asylum seekers would need to seek asylum in the first country they reached in Europe in a bid to curb illegal migration.²⁰



Hauts-de-France, France, November 2021.

Tents belonging to refugees seeking shelter in the woodland near Loon-Plage, after a boat capsized in the English Channel and claimed the lives of at least 27 refugees. NGOs have criticised consecutive Conservative governments in the UK for their attempts to curb “illegal” migration, which increases the risk of leaving modern slavery survivors unprotected. Photo credit: Thierry Monasse via Getty Images.

What are governments doing to address modern slavery?

The last few years have taught us that the ability to respond to modern slavery in times of crisis requires governments to continually invest in modern slavery responses and to build resilient systems that can withstand external shocks. However, governments in the top 10 global responses to modern slavery in 2023 have largely stagnated.

The top 10 are traditionally characterised by having more resources at their disposal, relatively strong political will, and a strong civil society to hold government to account. Notably, in 2018 Australia passed its Modern Slavery Act,²¹ which requires companies that have a consolidated revenue of over AU\$100 million (approximately US\$67 million) per annum to report on the actions they are taking to respond to modern slavery. In Portugal, there is evidence of an increasing number of referrals of victims to services.²² These changes remain the exception and not the rule, with few new developments. At the very top, the United Kingdom’s (UK) overall response has declined since 2018; the government saw an increase in referrals of just 1 per cent, but a worsening of measures on victim protection and access to visas, largely as a result of the 2022 Nationality and Borders Act.²³ A proposed Illegal Migration Bill²⁴ introduced in March 2023 is a potential violation of international law and the UN Refugee Convention and it shows that the UK is at risk of continuing its downward trend.

There is promising action outside of the top 10. In August 2020, Tonga ratified the ILO Convention, 1999 (No. 182) to reach universal ratification ensuring all children now have legal protection against the worst forms of child labour.²⁵ Since 2018, a further 15 countries have criminalised human trafficking in line with UN Trafficking Protocol, bringing the total number of countries to 137. Nearly 150 countries have a National Action Plan related to some form of modern slavery — a 30 per cent increase since 2018. Some countries stand out: Brunei has acceded to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children,²⁶ finalised a National Action Plan on tackling human trafficking,²⁷ and established a National Committee on Trafficking in Persons since the last Global Slavery Index.²⁸ Oman,²⁹ Qatar,³⁰ and Saudi Arabia³¹ adopted some reforms to the *kafala* (or sponsorship) system, the Republic of the Congo criminalised human trafficking in domestic legislation in 2019,³² and Canada amended its Custom Tariff to incorporate restrictions on forced labour.³³

When correlated against GDP per capita PPP (current international \$), countries such as Albania, Georgia, Montenegro, the Philippines, and Bosnia and Herzegovina have relatively stronger responses despite the fewer resources at their disposal. In 2021, the Philippines raised the minimum of age of marriage to 18³⁴ while in Albania a Victim Advisory Board was established to involve survivors in the design of awareness-raising campaigns, police interviews of victims, and the treatment of victims during court proceedings.³⁵

Encouragingly, countries are starting to recognise the expertise of those with lived experience. Sixteen governments from across the globe have either consulted with survivors as part of policy development or have provided them seats on their national coordinating councils or as part of a separate survivor advisory council. Since 2015, the United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking has provided a formal avenue for survivors to advise on federal policies to the President’s Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons.³⁶ In Rwanda, the government consulted with survivors as part of the development of the National Action Plan. That said, 16 still represents a small fraction of the 176 governments³⁷ included in the government response assessment.

There have been positive developments in tackling the specific vulnerabilities of women and girls. A new indicator introduced in 2023 reveals that 35 countries have set the age of marriage to 18 for girls and boys with no exception, with the UK joining the likes of Ireland, the Philippines, Costa Rica, Rwanda, and Malawi by announcing in early 2023 that it will raise the age to 18 and remove the exception for 16 and 17 year-olds to marry with parental consent.³⁸ Fifty countries have now criminalised forced marriage, an increase of 12 since the last report. While encouraging, criminalisation should be implemented as part of a suite of legislative protections in national legislation. Less encouragingly, few governments are taking a more holistic approach to tackle the underlying drivers of forced marriage and providing protections including access to civil protection orders, safe accommodation, emergency funds, and psychosocial support. Nearly half (59 countries) of the 130 governments that provide access to public primary education are reporting lower primary enrolment rates for girls.

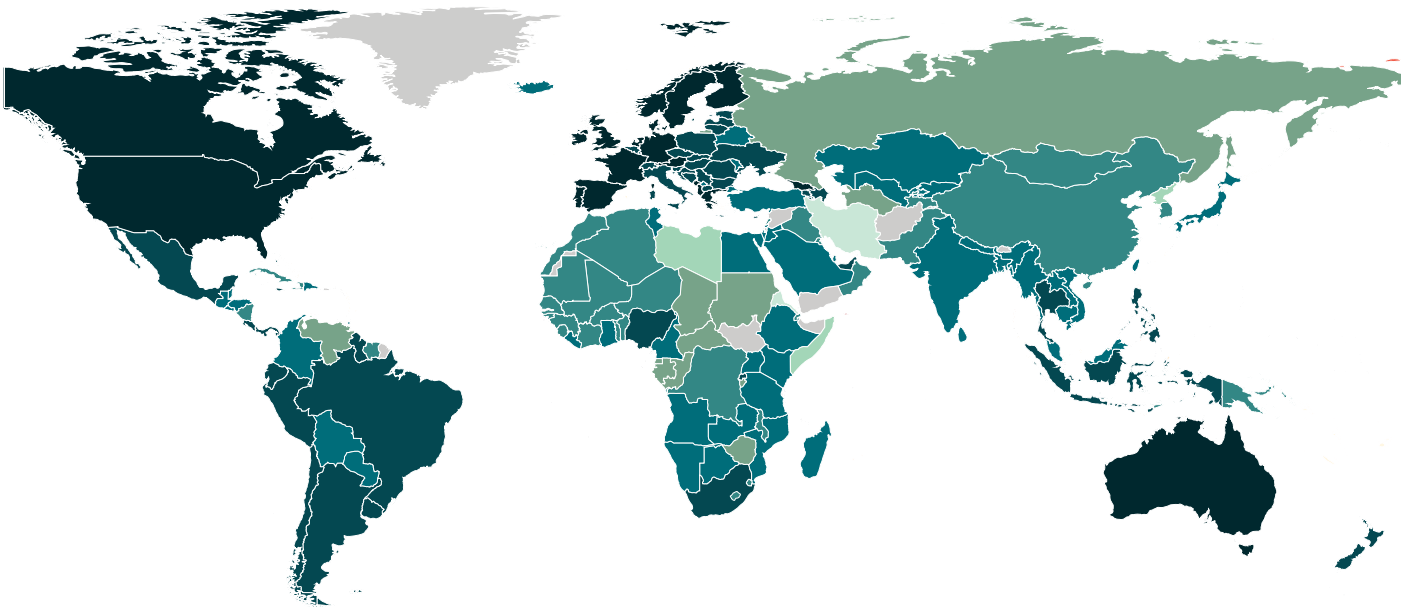
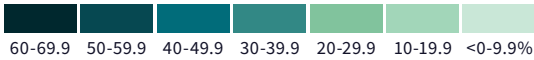


Figure 6
Government responses to modern slavery (noting scores for the countries with strongest responses)



Country	Response score
United Kingdom	68
Australia	67
Netherlands	67
Portugal	67
United States	67
Ireland	63
Norway	63
Spain	63
Sweden	63



New Jersey, United States, February 2021.

Brigitte gives an interview at a shelter, “Strengthen Our Sisters”, which supports domestic violence victims. Stay-at-home orders to restrict the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic led to an increase in reports of domestic violence worldwide. Family and domestic violence also spur unseen risks of modern slavery. Photo credit: Kena Betancur/ AFP via Getty Images.

There is some progress on measures to hold businesses more accountable in tackling modern slavery. Four countries have implemented mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence (mHRDD) legislation, which holds businesses accountable for failing to identify, and act upon, the actual and potential risks for workers in their operations and supply chains, including the risk of forced labour. Norway,³⁹ France,⁴⁰ and Switzerland,⁴¹ have established mHRDD legislation, with Germany's coming into force in early 2023.⁴² The Netherlands is currently exploring mHRDD⁴³ as an alternative to its child labour due diligence legislation.⁴⁴ The strongest mHRDD legislation includes penalties for a company's failure to prevent forced labour in supply chains and includes a right of action for those who have been impacted.

Increasingly, mHRDD is seen as part of a suite of measures implemented by governments to hold both business and public procurement accountable. Import controls, such as the Tariff Act⁴⁵ and the 2021 Uyghur Forced Labour Prevention Act in the US, prevent the entry of goods produced by forced

labour, and specifically by Uyghurs held in state-imposed forced labour in the latter case.⁴⁶ The UK has used Magnitsky legislation to impose travel bans and sanctions on individuals who commit forced labour.⁴⁷ Other countries have identified high risk sectors and work collaboratively with the private sector to tackle exploitation; the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), for example, created a regulatory authority to tackle child labour in cobalt and coltan mines.⁴⁸

The countries taking the least action to respond to modern slavery remain as in 2018 — Somalia, Libya, Iran, Eritrea, and North Korea. These countries continue to be characterised by conflict and/or active involvement from the government in modern slavery either through corruption and complicity or state-imposed forced labour. Those countries with some of the weakest responses have been excluded — Afghanistan, Palestine, South Sudan, Syria, and Yemen — due to ongoing conflict and extreme disruption.

Duzce, Türkiye,
July 2019.

Heavy rains and landslides cause significant damage to homes and community infrastructure, and have even led to the disappearance of three adults and four children. Upheaval caused by increasingly erratic and volatile weather events leads some to seek employment opportunities elsewhere, increasing their risk of modern slavery. Photo credit: Ibrahim Yozoglu/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images.



Alleged complicity in modern slavery crimes was reported in 90 countries in our assessment. This ranged from active involvement in committing modern slavery crimes to turning a blind eye to the action of criminals. In Zimbabwe, for example, those working in the judicial system, including police, magistrates, prosecutors, clerks, and court messengers, allegedly take bribes for not arresting artisanal mine operators, or swiftly releasing those in custody,⁴⁹ who have purportedly kidnapped workers and forced them to work. In Tajikistan, there are allegations that endemic corruption among government officials facilitates trafficking of victims across borders.⁵⁰

State-imposed forced labour is practiced in 17 countries in the GSI, and this greatly undermines any other aspect of a government response. The figure is likely much higher — our assessment is based on legal loopholes that enable forced labour to occur and publicly available evidence that this has occurred since 2018.

When correlated against GDP per capita, Luxembourg, Singapore, Qatar, Hong Kong, Brunei Darussalam, Kuwait, South Korea, Switzerland, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have taken limited action despite larger resources at their disposal. The *kafala*, or sponsorship program, in the Gulf states has long been criticised for exacerbating the vulnerability of migrant populations that these countries have long relied upon. The World Cup in Qatar and Dubai World Expo in UAE spurred reforms,⁵¹ many of which have largely remained on paper rather than being fully implemented.⁵² Migrants also working in countries in Southeast Asia, such as Hong Kong,⁵³ South Korea,⁵⁴ and Singapore,⁵⁵ face discrimination and limited protections alongside tied visas, which prohibit migrant workers from leaving their jobs and finding employment elsewhere in the country. Tied visas are not unique to these countries, as shown by a growing hostile environment across Europe to asylum seekers fleeing persecution and discrimination. Many wealthy countries across the Index are failing in their duties to protect the most vulnerable.

Figure 7
Correlation between GDP per capita PPP (current international \$) and government responses to modern slavery

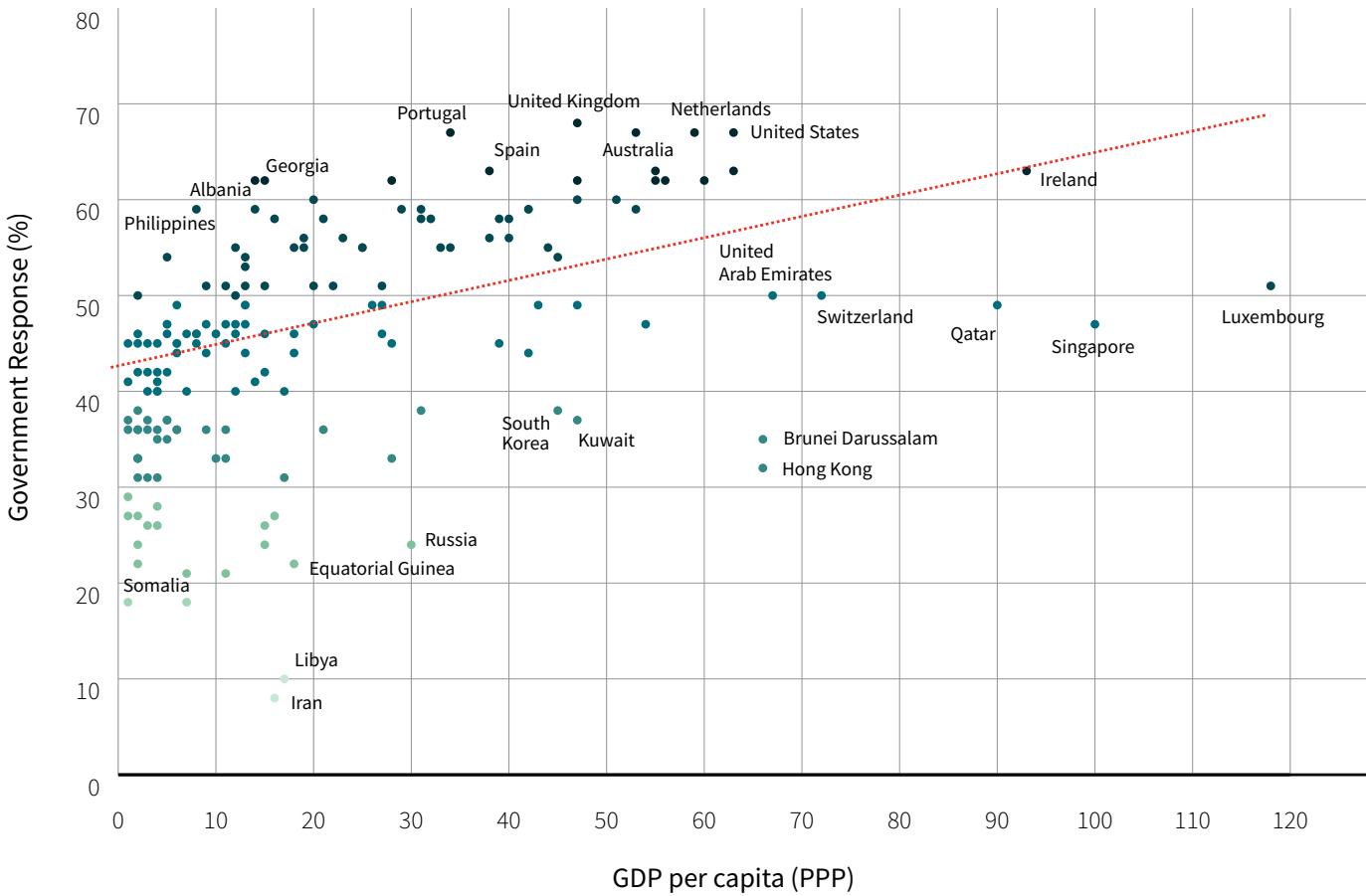


Table 1
Government response score, by country
(in order from highest to lowest within each category)*

60-69.9%	50-59.9%	40-49.9%	30-39.9%	20-29.9%	10-19.9%	<0-9.9%
United Kingdom	Azerbaijan	Bangladesh	Benin	Burundi	Somalia	Iran
Australia	Belgium	Malta	China	Republic of the Congo	Libya	Eritrea
Netherlands	Croatia	Paraguay	Lesotho	Central African Republic		North Korea
Portugal	Czechia	Qatar	Mongolia	Palau		
United States	Italy	Saudi Arabia	Morocco	Venezuela		
Ireland	Latvia	Sri Lanka	Senegal	Zimbabwe		
Norway	Philippines	Trinidad and Tobago	Malawi	Sudan		
Spain	Argentina	Türkiye	Oman	Turkmenistan		
Sweden	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Belarus	South Korea	Vanuatu		
Albania	Cyprus	Bolivia	Côte d’Ivoire	Chad		
Austria	Lithuania	Guatemala	Haiti	Gabon		
Denmark	North Macedonia	Honduras	Kuwait	Russia		
France	Romania	Iceland	Maldives	Equatorial Guinea		
Georgia	Kyrgyzstan	Moldova	Niger			
Germany	Slovakia	Singapore	Pakistan			
Greece	Estonia	Taiwan	Algeria			
Canada	Serbia	Colombia	Burkina Faso			
Finland	Slovenia	Dominican Republic	Democratic Republic of the Congo			
Montenegro	Uruguay	Fiji	Djibouti			
	Bahrain	India	Eswatini			
	Bulgaria	Jordan	Gambia			
	Chile	Kazakhstan	Guinea			
	Hungary	Kenya	Mauritius			
	Mexico	Lao PDR	Nicaragua			
	Peru	Uganda	Tajikistan			
	Poland	Uzbekistan	Brunei			
	Thailand	Belize	Darussalam			
	Armenia	El Salvador	Mauritania			
	New Zealand	Ethiopia	Timor-Leste			
	Nigeria	Ghana	Guinea-Bissau			
	Bahamas	Israel	Iraq			
	South Africa	Malaysia	Lebanon			
	Brazil	Mozambique	Seychelles			
	Costa Rica	Nepal	Sierra Leone			
	Ecuador	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Togo			
	Guyana	Zambia	Hong Kong			
	Jamaica	Kosovo	Cabo Verde			
	Luxembourg	Angola	Cuba			
	Panama	Antigua and Barbuda	Liechtenstein			
	Saint Lucia	Egypt	Mali			
	Ukraine	Japan	Papua New Guinea			
	Indonesia	Namibia	Solomon Islands			
	Rwanda	Botswana	Suriname			
	Switzerland	Cambodia				
	United Arab Emirates	Madagascar				
		Myanmar				
		Tanzania				
		Barbados				
		Cameroon				
		Liberia				

*Afghanistan, Palestine, South Sudan, Syria, and Yemen have been excluded due to ongoing conflict and extreme disruption to government function.

Comparability to the 2018
Global Slavery Index

While the methodology used in this edition of the Global Slavery Index (GSI) is broadly consistent with what was applied in the 2018 edition, some changes were made to reflect updates to the methodology of the Global Estimates, new data sources for measures of vulnerability, and stronger scoring systems for assessments of government response. These changes are likely to have some impact on comparability between the 2023 and 2018 editions of the GSI and are summarised below. A detailed description of the methodology is set out in Appendix 2.

Estimating prevalence

As was the case in 2018, the regional estimates produced through the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery⁵⁶ provide the starting point for the national level estimates presented in this edition of the Global Slavery Index. As a result, changes in the methodology for the Global Estimates will have some impact on the GSI. Although both editions of the Global Estimates draw on nationally representative household surveys and administrative data, for the most recent edition, surveys were conducted in a larger number of countries, including in regions for which there was previously a data gap. For example, surveys were conducted in high and upper-middle income countries across Europe and the Arab States.⁵⁷

Other changes in the methodology of the most recent Global Estimates were due to improvements in the statistical treatment of the underlying data.⁵⁸ Most notably, an imputation model was adopted to create estimates for countries in which national surveys were not conducted. While the refinements to the Global Estimates methodology do not affect the overall comparability between the results presented in 2017 and 2022, there was an impact on the estimates of forced labour at a regional level, which is reflected in the national estimates presented in this edition of the GSI and should be considered when comparing changes in forced labour at the national level.

Changes to methods of data collection due to the COVID-19 pandemic may also have had an impact on comparability. Some surveys were conducted after the emergence of COVID-19, which shifted the face-to-face mode of data collection that was used for all pre-pandemic surveys, to conducting the surveys via telephone. While measures were taken to minimise and assess mode effects, this may have impacted the comparability of the prevalence estimates.

Measuring vulnerability

The model of vulnerability to modern slavery developed for the 2018 GSI was maintained for the 2023 edition of the Index. Changes to the model instead reflected shifts in data sources, particularly in instances where data sources had been discontinued (refer to Appendix 2: Part B); as a result, the vulnerability model had to incorporate new source data for four indicators. While every effort was made to replace discontinued data sources with others measuring the same phenomena, these updates likely contributed to country-level differences in vulnerability. Every effort was made to select consistent and ongoing replacement data sources to minimise the impact on future editions of the GSI.

Assessing government responses

Similarly, the assessment of government responses remains broadly comparable with previous assessments used in the 2018 GSI. However, due to changes in both the conceptual framework underpinning this study, which outlines what constitutes a strong response to modern slavery, and the method of analysis. Extensive reviews by Lived Experience Expert Groups and our Expert Working Group led to edits to the conceptual framework. Refer to Appendix 2: Part C for more detail.

The method of analysis changed in 2023, specifically in relation to calculating total scores for milestones to better reflect a government’s commitment to completely achieving an activity. This signified a recent improvement to the methodology that was used in the 2018 GSI, where milestone scores reflected the number of indicators met. While the data remains comparable at the indicator level, changes at the milestone level are impacted by the new scoring system. Accordingly, comparing indicator ratings would be the most accurate way of understanding how much better or worse a government has performed in eradicating modern slavery between the 2018 and 2023 GSI.