



RESPONSIBLE NATIONS INDEX

2026



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Responsible Nations Index – Abridged Global Report (2026)

World Intellectual Foundation

In collaboration with

Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and

Indian Institute of Management Mumbai (IIM Mumbai)



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MESSAGE FROM THE LEADERSHIP



Nations today are assessed primarily through the prisms of material capability—GDP size, military power, strategic influence, technological expansion, and financial competitiveness. Yet these criteria do not adequately capture how nations treat their citizens, how they engage with the global community, or how they steward the planet. The world now faces challenges that transcend borders and require a deeper ethical and civilizational re-evaluation of what constitutes national greatness.

The Responsible Nations Index (RNI) seeks to initiate this shift. It introduces responsibility—as exercised toward citizens, the international community, and the environment—as a central metric for evaluating national conduct. Built through academic engagement with faculty members of **Jawaharlal Nehru University** and analytical validation with **IIM Mumbai**, the RNI aspires to establish a **new global benchmark** where power derives legitimacy from responsibility.

This abridged report represents the first public release of the RNI’s conceptual foundations and global findings. The complete report—containing full datasets, country scorecards, methodological annexures, and peer-reviewed working papers—will be released within two months.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jagdish Mukhi'.

PROF. JAGDISH MUKHI,
CHAIRMAN, WORLD INTELLECTUAL FOUNDATION
FORMER GOVERNOR OF ASSAM, NAGALAND & MIZORAM



In an age of global uncertainty, fractured multilateralism, widening inequalities, and ecological stress, the defining question before nations is no longer power or progress, but responsibility. While states today wield unprecedented economic, technological, and military capacities, the growing disconnect between power and ethical accountability has become one of the gravest challenges of our time.

It is in this context that the Responsible Nations Index (RNI) gains significance. Moving beyond conventional indices that focus on wealth or influence, the RNI offers a principled, evidence-based framework to assess how nations act towards their citizens, the international community, and the planet. Anchored in constitutional ethics, international law, human rights, and civilizational wisdom, it reinforces the idea that true legitimacy flows from accountability, justice, and stewardship.

I commend the World Intellectual Foundation, in collaboration with Jawaharlal Nehru University and IIM Mumbai, for this intellectually rigorous and morally grounded initiative. By combining interdisciplinary scholarship, credible global data, and values such as Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the RNI presents a globally relevant and ethically rooted framework.

As the world confronts transnational challenges—from climate change to conflict and technological disruption—the RNI offers not judgment, but illumination: encouraging reflection, reform, and responsible conduct.

I hope this Report will enrich global dialogue and help shift the discourse from power and competition towards responsibility, cooperation, and shared humanity.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Arun Mishra'.

JUSTICE (RETD.) ARUN KUMAR MISHRA
CHAIRMAN (ADVISORY BOARD), WORLD INTELLECTUAL FOUNDATION
FORMER CHAIRPERSON, NHRC; BCCI OMBUDSMAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **Responsible Nations Index (RNI)** is an initiative of the **World Intellectual Foundation** that aims to reframe global discourse by shifting the focus from the construct of powerful nations to that of responsible nations, evaluating the nations based on the new metric of responsibility. Responsibility reflects a nation's commitment to use its power for collective well-being rather than narrow self-interest. Our mission is to emphasize the values of peace, prosperity, and sustainability, encouraging nations to take responsible actions for the betterment of their citizens, the environment, and the global community.

This Index is the outcome of rigorous and sustained **academic collaboration between the World Intellectual Foundation and Jawaharlal Nehru University, with concurrent validation from IIM Mumbai**. This layered academic approach ensures analytical depth, statistical robustness, and multidimensional legitimacy.

The index covers a large set of 154 countries across all regions of the world and draws upon internationally standardised data sources. The findings of the RNI reveal that high levels of GDP or economic power do not reliably predict or translate into responsible national conduct; in fact, several developing nations surpass wealthier countries in areas such as environmental ethics, gender fairness, and social justice. The analysis bears out a strong correlation between responsibility and the presence of accountable institutions, equitable development, and inclusive governance. Worryingly, global disparities are deepening particularly in climate responsibility, judicial independence, and peaceful international engagement -- highlighting the uneven moral landscape of contemporary nationhood. Collectively, these insights affirm that national success must be judged not merely by what nations achieve, but by how responsibly they achieve it.



The Responsible Nations Index is more than a ranking system; it is a catalyst for change. By redefining what it means to be a responsible nation, the RNI seeks to promote a world where nations are evaluated and esteemed for their contributions to global peace, prosperity, and sustainability. This initiative is a call to action for all nations to embrace responsibility and work collectively towards a better future for all.

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESPONSIBLE NATIONS INDEX

The Need for a New Global Metric

Global evaluation has been conventionally marked by metrics that capture capability -- economic output, hard power, technological advancement, market competitiveness, and institutional efficiency. While these indicators remain useful, they do not answer a contemporary critical question:

Are nation-states exercising the power that is vested in them responsibly towards citizens, other nations, and the planet at large?

The contemporary global landscape is marked by profound and accelerating tensions: climate change destabilizing regions far removed from the original emitters; conflicts triggering migration flows that reshape entire continents; financial crises cascading across borders within hours; and digital and biological technologies evolving far faster than ethical and regulatory frameworks. Simultaneously, social cohesion, democratic trust, and civil liberties are weakening across diverse regions.



When power eclipses responsibility, other nations become sources of suffering; when responsibility guides power, they become stewards of humanity's shared future.



In this context, a nation considered “successful” by traditional metrics, paradoxically, may act as a major source of global instability -- contributing disproportionately to environmental degradation, disregarding humanitarian norms abroad, exhibiting democratic backsliding, restricting freedoms, and externalizing human, economic, and ecological costs onto weaker societies. Crucially, many conventional superpowers with great military, economic, and political power, with global influence are often among the most irresponsible actors in the global ecosystem.

Through military interventions, proxy wars, arms transfers, and geopolitical rivalries have fuelled conflicts across West Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, and parts of Asia, resulting in humanitarian catastrophes that displace and impoverish millions. These wars also produce vast carbon emissions, accelerate ecological destruction, and undermine global climate efforts, thereby damaging the most important global public good -- our shared planet. This reveals a stark evaluative paradox: nations celebrated for their power and development may, in practice, undermine global welfare and planetary sustainability.

The Responsible Nations Index (RNI) responds directly to this moral and epistemological gap by shifting the gaze of the global conversation from

capability to conduct, from dominance to ethical statecraft, from statistical growth to human and planetary well-being, and from national achievement to global accountability. It evaluates how nations value and uphold internal equity and justice, contribute to peace and cooperation, and steward the environment for present and future generations. In a world that is deeply interconnected, strength without responsibility is destabilizing, while responsibility without capability is insufficient. The RNI therefore reframes the framing of progress, asserting that true national greatness lies not in the power a country accumulates, but in how its actions address marginality, uplift humanity and safeguard the planet.

Coloniality, Imperial Extraction and the Foundations of Global Inequality

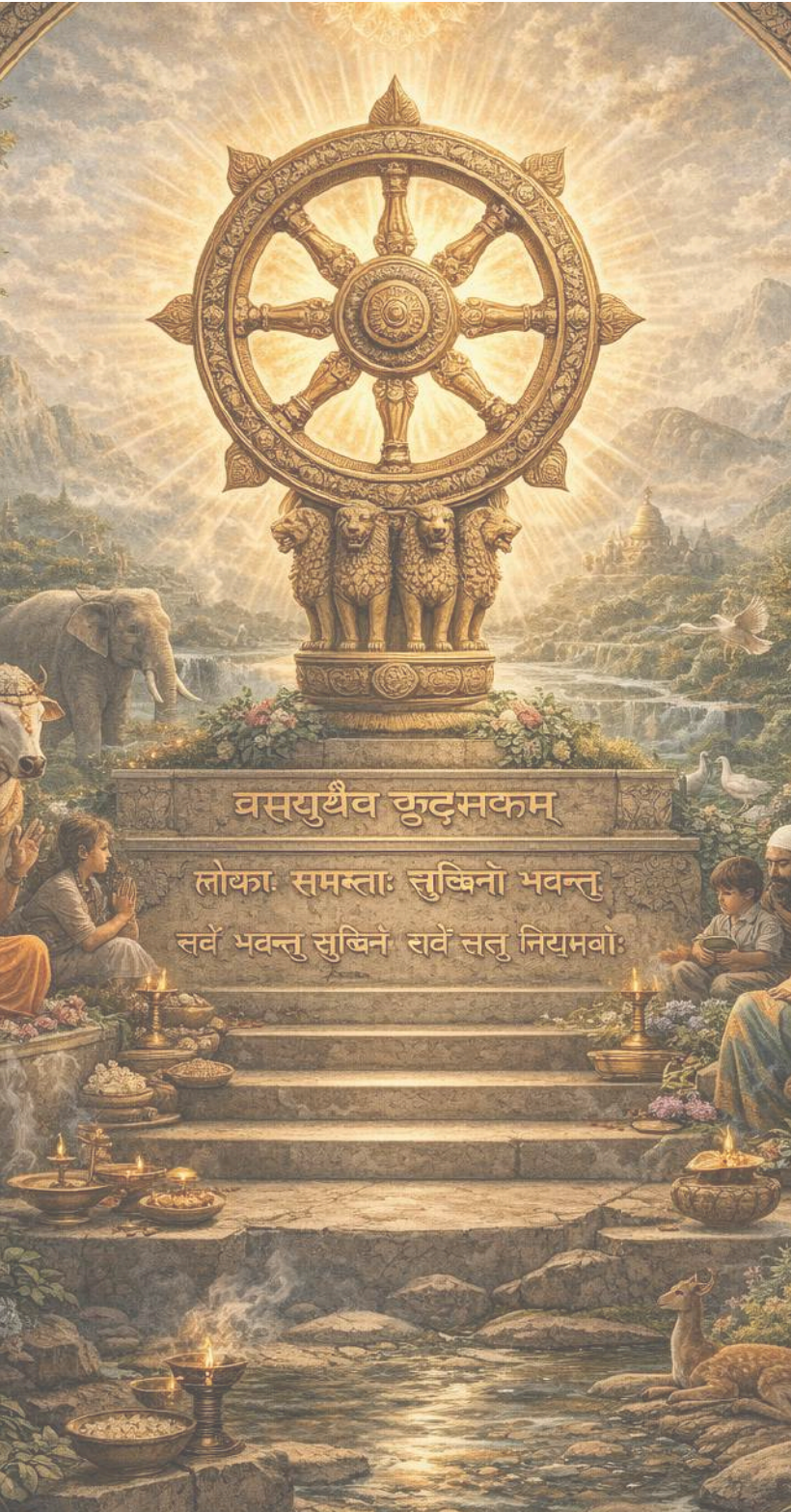
Any assessment of global capability must acknowledge that the modern global order did not emerge on a level playing field. For more than four centuries, vast parts of Asia, Africa, the Americas, the Middle East, and the Pacific were subjected to systematic colonisation, imperial conquest, and extractive domination. The British Empire, French Empire, Spanish and Portuguese empires, Dutch and Belgian colonial regimes, German and Italian imperial administrations, Czarist and later Soviet domination in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Ottoman imperial expansion, Japanese imperialism across East and Southeast Asia, and settler-colonial projects led by the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa together reorganised global hierarchies of power, wealth, and knowledge.

Colonial rule resulted in the expropriation of natural resources such as forests, minerals, fertile lands, water systems, and biodiversity on an unprecedented scale. It destroyed or distorted indigenous governance and knowledge systems, dismantled economic self-reliance, displaced entire populations, erased cultural identities, and dissolved civilizational continuities that had evolved over millennia. The wealth accumulated in imperial capitals was built on coerced labour, slavery, indenture, punitive taxation, exploitation of women and children, and the systematic destruction of ecological landscapes across colonised continents.

These long-term patterns of colonial power, control, knowledge, and social hierarchies continue to shape global realities today: conflict zones in Africa and West Asia, chronic underdevelopment in South Asia, disrupted maritime and trade ecologies in Southeast Asia, entrenched racialised inequalities in the Americas, and degraded landscapes across large parts of the Global South. Even contemporary global environmental vulnerabilities—deforestation, biodiversity collapse, erratic water systems, and carbon-intensive developmental pathways—are tied to dynamics that unfolded during the colonial era.

Understanding this legacy is essential for evaluating any metric in the present. Nations that once amassed power through domination now bear a heightened moral and historical obligation to advance justice, ecological repair, climate responsibility, equitable cooperation, and meaningful multilateralism

Philosophical and Epistemological Foundation A Civilizational Ethos of Responsibility



Among the world's oldest and most enduring philosophical traditions, the Indian civilizational worldview offers one of humanity's most refined articulations of responsible statecraft, where governance is conceived not as an instrument of domination but as an ethical duty (Dharma) toward the flourishing of all beings. Ethical invocations such as



“लोकाः समस्ताः सुखिनो भवन्तु”
*(May all beings, everywhere, be happy
and at peace),*



“सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः, सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः”
*(May all be happy;
may all be free from illness)*



“वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्”
(The world is one family)



articulate a universal moral horizon in which responsibility transcends borders and national interest is harmonized with global well-being. Classical Indian statecraft deepens this ethos: Kautilya's Arthashastra asserts that the legitimacy of power rests on justice, protection of the vulnerable, prevention of suffering, and the pursuit of prosperity anchored in ethics—capturing the enduring civilizational principle that power without Dharma decays, but power aligned with Dharma sustains civilizations.

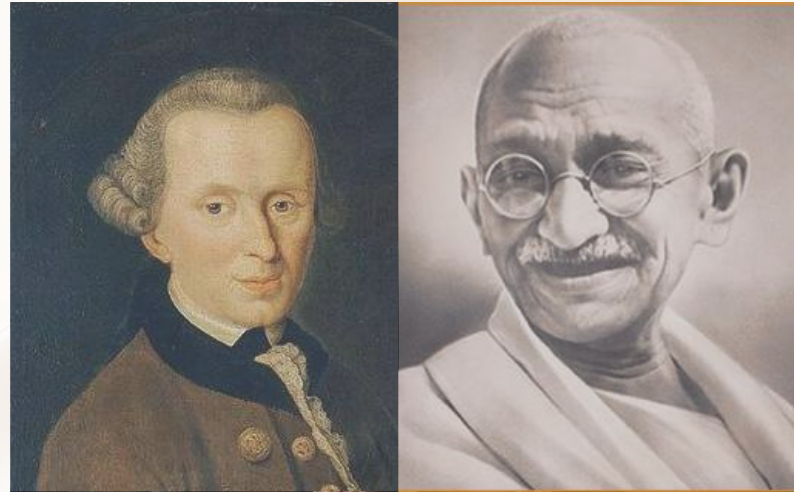
"The RNI rests on an ancient yet universal insight: sovereignty is not only a right but a responsibility."

Remarkably, this ethical architecture resonates across global traditions:

Kantian ethics affirms that nations must act according to principles that can be universally adopted; **Ubuntu teaches that "I am because we are,"** extending responsibility outward from the community to all humanity; **Gandhian political ethics** reminds that power is meaningful only when it uplifts the weakest and that moral means are inseparable from moral ends; and Latin American humanism emphasizes that national progress without social justice is fundamentally incomplete.

Across continents and civilizations, a profound convergence emerges—**moral action ennobles political strength, and responsibility is the highest expression of power.**

The Responsible Nations Index (RNI) embodies this shared civilizational insight, transforming enduring ethical wisdom into a contemporary global framework for evaluating how nations exercise power in service of humanity and the planet.



"Power endures only when it serves a purpose greater than itself; when aligned with Dharma, it becomes a force for the flourishing of all beings."

Epistemological Shift of the RNI

The Responsible Nations Index (RNI) introduces a fundamental epistemological shift in how national progress is understood, moving global assessment beyond the traditional questions --

How wealthy is a country?

How powerful is its military?

How competitive is its economy?

to a deeper and more consequential inquiry

How responsibly is national power exercised?

Does development reach the vulnerable?

Do a nation's choices strengthen global stability?

Is the planet being safeguarded for future generations?

By reframing evaluation in this way, the RNI accomplishes three critical transformations: restores ethics to the heart of global assessments; recognizes interdependence as a defining feature of 21st-century statecraft; and, aligns national metrics with the global public good. The RNI operationalizes this shift by transforming civilizational wisdom rooted in justice, stewardship, peace, and collective well-being into measurable indicators that integrate

governance quality, social equity, environmental ethics, economic resilience, and contributions to global peace into a unified evaluative framework.

In an era marked by ecological strain, technological disruption, widening inequalities, and geopolitical fragmentation, responsibility is no longer a mere moral aspiration but an indispensable ingredient for assessing national greatness that is robust in multiple dimensions.

"In an era of ecological strain, technological disruption, and geopolitical fragmentation, responsibility is not aspirational—it is indispensable."

METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

The Responsible Nations Index (RNI) is designed to assess national performance through the lens of responsibility rather than power or economic output. It is grounded in a normative framework that emphasises equity, sustainability, peace, and ethical governance, while remaining empirically robust and globally comparable.

The index evaluates countries across three core pillars of responsibility:

1. **Internal Responsibility** – a nation’s obligations towards the well-being, dignity, and empowerment of its citizens.
2. **Environmental Responsibility** – a nation’s commitment to ecological protection and sustainable development.
3. **External Responsibility** – a nation’s conduct and contribution within the international system.

These pillars are operationalized through **seven dimensions**—Quality of Life, Governance, Social Justice & Empowerment, Economic Performance, Environmental Protection, Commitment to Peace, and International Economic Relations—captured through **58 carefully selected indicators**.

Data for the Responsible Nations Index is drawn from credible and publicly accessible **international sources, including the World Bank, United Nations agencies, IMF, WHO, FAO, ILO, and the World Justice Project, using the latest available data as of 2023.**



Of the 58 indicators employed in the index, the largest share (approximately 29 indicators) is sourced from the World Bank, reflecting its extensive coverage of development, governance, economic, and environmental parameters. Seven indicators are drawn from Our World in Data, primarily capturing emissions, energy use, and resource pressures, while five indicators are sourced from the World Justice Project, focusing on governance, rule of law, and civil liberties. Five indicators are taken from WHO and UNICEF combined, covering public health outcomes and access to basic services, and three indicators from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) addressing food security and agricultural sustainability. Labour and social protection indicators (three) are sourced from ILO/ILOSTAT, with additional specialized indicators drawn from the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Global Findex Database, International Energy Agency (IEA), and the United Nations, ensuring balanced and comprehensive representation across social, economic, environmental, and international responsibility domains.

Data Sources



To ensure comparability, all indicators are **normalized on a 0–1 scale using min–max scaling**, with consistent directional alignment. An equal-weighting approach is adopted across indicators, dimensions, and pillars, reflecting the normative principle that different forms of responsibility carry equal moral significance.

Responsibility-wise scores are computed using arithmetic means, while the final RNI score is calculated using the geometric mean of the three responsibility pillars, ensuring balance and preventing overcompensation across domains. Countries are subsequently ranked and grouped into responsibility tiers ranging from *Very High* to *Very Low*.

Overall, the RNI methodology combines conceptual integrity with statistical rigor, offering a transparent and balanced framework to evaluate how responsibly nations act—towards their people, the planet, and the global community.

The Index covers **154 countries**, subject to data availability thresholds. The entire methodological architecture and computational process were subjected to independent academic validation, ensuring statistical soundness, internal consistency, and interpretive clarity.

Conceived as a living and iterative research exercise, the RNI methodology is designed to evolve over time through scholarly critique, expanded datasets, and refinement in response to changing global realities. The present edition represents the first annual publication, establishing a robust baseline for future comparative analysis.



FRAMEWORK OF THE RESPONSIBLE NATIONS INDEX

Responsibility	Dimension	Aspect	Indicator	Source
Internal Responsibility	Quality of Life	Food Security	Average Dietary Consumption (%)	FAO
			Total food production (Cereals+ Livestock) per capita	FAO
		Education	Literacy Rate (%)	World Bank
			Govt. Expenditure on Education (% of total expenditure)	World Bank
		Access to Basic Amenities	Drinking Water (%)	World Bank
			Sanitation (%)	UNICEF
			Access to Electricity (%)	UNICEF
		Healthcare and Wellbeing	Infant mortality rate (per 1000 live births)	World Bank
			Births attended by skilled health personnel (%)	WHO
			Maternal mortality rate (Per 100000 births)	World Bank
			Vaccination Coverage (%)	WHO
			Governement current expenditure on health sector (% of GDP)	World Bank
			Health emergency management (% - IHR capacity)	WHO
		Governance	Civil Liberties	Freedom of opinion and expression is effectively guaranteed (Sub-indicator score)
	Freedom of belief and religion is effectively guaranteed (Sub-indicator score)			
	Right to information (Sub-indicator score)			

Responsibility	Dimension	Aspect	Indicator	Source
Internal Responsibility	Governance	Law and Order	Complaint mechanisms (Sub-indicator score)	World Justice Report
			Crime is effectively controlled (Sub-indicator score)	
			Intentional Homicides (per 1,00,000 people)	
		Corruption	Government officials are sanctioned for misconduct (Sub-indicator score)	World Justice Report
			Transition of power is subject to the law (Sub-indicator score)	
			Bribery depth (% of public transactions where a gift or informal payment was requested)	World Bank Enterprise Survey
	Social Justice and Empowerment	Inclusiveness	Population covered by at least one social protection benefit (%)	ILOSTAT
			Vulnerable persons covered by social assistance (%)	ILOSTAT
		Women Empowerment	Sex ratio (Ratio (Male births per 1000 Female Births))	World Bank
			Female Labor Force Participation Rate (%)	World Bank
			Women in Parliament (%)	Interparliamentary Union
			Female Account Ownership (Age 15+) (%)	Global Findex Database
			Gender Gap in Education (GER Male - GER Female) (%)	World Bank
		Economic Performance	Growth and Investment	Annual Growth rate of output per worker (GDP constant 2021) (%)
	Gross Fixed Capital Formation (% of GDP)			World Bank
	Employment to population ratio, 15+ (%)			World Bank
	Research and Development expenditure (% of GDP)			World Bank

Responsibility	Dimension	Aspect	Indicator	Source
Environmental Responsibility	Environmental Protection	Climate Pollutants	CO2 Emissions (Excluding Land Use Change) (metric tons per capita)	World Bank
			CH4 Emissions (metric tons per capita)	Our World In Data
			NO2 Emissions (metric tons per capita)	Our World In Data
			SO2 Emissions (metric tons per capita)	Our World In Data
			CO Emissions (metric tons per capita)	Our World In Data
			Net CO2 Emissions due to Land Use Change (metric tons per capita)	World Bank
			PM2.5 air pollution, mean annual exposure (Micrograms per cubic meter)	World Bank
			Yearly Plastic Consumption (Per Capita)	Our World In Data
		Clean Energy	Energy use per person (Kilowatt hours per person)	Our World In Data
			Energy Intensity (MegaJoules)	IEA
			Renewable energy consumption (%)	World Bank
			Fossil Fuel Subsidies (Total Implicit + Explicit) (% of GDP)	World Bank
		Biodiversity Conservation	Terrestrial protected areas (% of total land area)	World Bank
			Pesticide Use (Kg/Hectare of Cropland)	FAO
			Fertilizers Use (Kg/Hectare of Cropland)	World Bank
			Forest Area (% of total land area)	World Bank
			Share of global forest area (%)	World Bank
			Annual Freshwater Withdrawals (% of internal resources)	Our World In Data

Responsibility	Dimension	Aspect	Indicator	Source
External Responsibility	International Economic Relations	Trade Relations	Remittances (% of GDP)	World Bank
			Merchandise Trade (% of GDP)	World Bank
			Services Trade (% of GDP)	World Bank
			Total Reserves (% of GDP)	World Bank
			Foreign Direct Investment, Net Inflows (% of GDP)	World Bank
	Commitment to Peace	Peaceful Co-existence	UN Peacekeeping Troop Contributions (% of total troops)	United Nations
			Net ODA Received (Per Capita (Current US\$))	World Bank

GLOBAL RANKINGS

Overall RNI Ranking Table

The abridged edition of the Responsible Nations Index presents the **global rankings and composite responsibility scores of all 154 countries assessed under the RNI framework**. These countries span all seven World Bank regions—East Asia & Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa, North America, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa—as well as all four World Bank income groups, from low-income to high-income economies.

This ensures that the comparative landscape is both geographically comprehensive and socio-economically balanced. By structuring the rankings across regions, income classifications, and developmental contexts, the RNI offers a nuanced understanding of how responsibility manifests across diverse governance systems, socio-economic conditions, and historical trajectories. Together, this presentation captures global variations in governance ethics, social justice, environmental stewardship, and international conduct—providing a robust snapshot of responsibility in the contemporary world order.



The Responsible Nations Index is more than a ranking system; it is a catalyst for change. By redefining what it means to be a responsible nation, the RNI seeks to promote a world where nations are evaluated and esteemed for their contributions to global peace, prosperity, and sustainability. This initiative is a call to action for all nations to embrace responsibility and work collectively towards a better future for all.

COUNTRY-WISE RANKING AND SCORES

Country Name	RNI Rank	RNI Score
Singapore	1	0.61945
Switzerland	2	0.58692
Denmark	3	0.58372
Cyprus	4	0.57737
Sweden	5	0.57397
Czechia	6	0.57037
Belgium	7	0.56900
Austria	8	0.56645
Ireland	9	0.56336
Georgia	10	0.55805
Croatia	11	0.55782
Germany	12	0.55703
Portugal	13	0.55513
Bulgaria	14	0.55466
Norway	15	0.55291
India	16	0.55151
France	17	0.54835
Albania	18	0.54650
Poland	19	0.54636
Netherlands	20	0.54408
South Korea	21	0.54244
Kyrgyzstan	22	0.54098
Finland	23	0.54092
Thailand	24	0.54036
United Kingdom	25	0.53849
El Salvador	26	0.53546
Mauritius	27	0.53521
Spain	28	0.53466
Nicaragua	29	0.53418
Iceland	30	0.53391
Romania	31	0.53367
Serbia	32	0.53266
Cambodia	33	0.53235
Italy	34	0.53204
Tajikistan	35	0.53148
Greece	36	0.53044
Armenia	37	0.52953

Country Name	RNI Rank	RNI Score
Japan	38	0.52930
North Macedonia	39	0.52845
Namibia	40	0.52775
Morocco	41	0.52741
Bangladesh	42	0.52695
Israel	43	0.52658
Vietnam	44	0.52456
Canada	45	0.52390
Antigua and Barbuda	46	0.52168
Costa Rica	47	0.52129
New Zealand	48	0.52108
Lebanon	49	0.52090
Indonesia	50	0.51992
Malaysia	51	0.51973
Tunisia	52	0.51965
Fiji	53	0.51821
Chile	54	0.51619
Dominican Republic	55	0.51613
Hungary	56	0.51543
Uruguay	57	0.51398
Uzbekistan	58	0.51345
Moldova	59	0.51335
Panama	60	0.51326
Belarus	61	0.51248
Australia	62	0.51194
Ghana	63	0.51174
Guatemala	64	0.51046
Libya	65	0.50933
United States of America	66	0.50880
Bosnia and Herzegovina	67	0.50871
China	68	0.50547
Lesotho	69	0.50546
Mexico	70	0.50544
Gambia	71	0.50526
Paraguay	72	0.50522
Philippines	73	0.50519

Country Name	RNI Rank	RNI Score
Guyana	74	0.50470
United Arab Emirates	75	0.50424
Mongolia	76	0.50373
Sri Lanka	77	0.50299
Peru	78	0.50089
Maldives	79	0.49907
Jordan	80	0.49768
Brazil	81	0.49324
Tanzania	82	0.49215
Mozambique	83	0.49175
Suriname	84	0.49093
Barbados	85	0.49073
Colombia	86	0.49008
Ecuador	87	0.48934
South Africa	88	0.48539
Solomon Islands	89	0.48378
Pakistan	90	0.48336
Zambia	91	0.48225
Argentina	92	0.48121
Bolivia	93	0.48046
Turkey	94	0.47974
Laos	95	0.47931
Russia	96	0.47896
Djibouti	97	0.47755
Bhutan	98	0.47727
Liberia	99	0.47720
Botswana	100	0.47513
Comoros	101	0.47502
Azerbaijan	102	0.47393
Togo	103	0.47329
Bahrain	104	0.47092
Kazakhstan	105	0.47068
Gabon	106	0.46974
Benin	107	0.46742
Oman	108	0.46687
Uganda	109	0.46643
Malawi	110	0.46568

Country Name	RNI Rank	RNI Score
Eswatini	111	0.46536
Sierra Leone	112	0.46012
Cameroon	113	0.45857
Kuwait	114	0.45814
Kenya	115	0.45794
Algeria	116	0.45794
Burundi	117	0.45749
Zimbabwe	118	0.45659
Egypt	119	0.45550
Congo	120	0.45508
Cuba	121	0.45438
Cote d'Ivoire	122	0.45429
Iran	123	0.45198
Burkina Faso	124	0.45115
Madagascar	125	0.44950
Guinea	126	0.44874
Trinidad and Tobago	127	0.44855
Saudi Arabia	128	0.44808
Mali	129	0.44760
Dominica	130	0.44676
Ukraine	131	0.44317
Haiti	132	0.44295
Ethiopia	133	0.44073
Iraq	134	0.43920
Niger	135	0.43659
Nigeria	136	0.43538
Mauritania	137	0.43036
Guinea-Bissau	138	0.42971
Congo DRC	139	0.42638
Equatorial Guinea	140	0.42632
Qatar	141	0.42372
Angola	142	0.42320
Turkmenistan	143	0.41999
Venezuela	144	0.41955
Afghanistan	145	0.41398
North Korea	146	0.41329

Country Name	RNI Rank	RNI Score
Papua New Guinea	147	0.41172
Chad	148	0.40310
Sudan	149	0.40120
Somalia	150	0.39995
Yemen	151	0.38265
South Sudan	152	0.37389
Syria	153	0.37254
Central African Republic	154	0.35715

Key Insights

The preliminary results reveal several important trends about the global distribution of responsibility. A cluster of northern and select eastern European nations consistently score high, reflecting strong rule-of-law cultures, robust and inclusive welfare systems, and sustained commitments to decarbonisation and climate ethics. Notably, several emerging economies show exceptional performance on dimensions such as peacekeeping contributions, inclusive welfare delivery, renewable energy adoption, and equitable development, often surpassing high-income nations that traditionally dominate global indices.

These patterns reaffirm that responsible national conduct is shaped less by the size of an economy and more by the quality of its institutions, the ethical orientation of governance, commitment to social justice and the extent to which development benefits are equitably shared.

The RNI thereby underscores a crucial global insight: responsibility is not a by-product of wealth, but of political will, institutional integrity, and long-term commitment to equity and social justice.

The Responsibility Heatmap

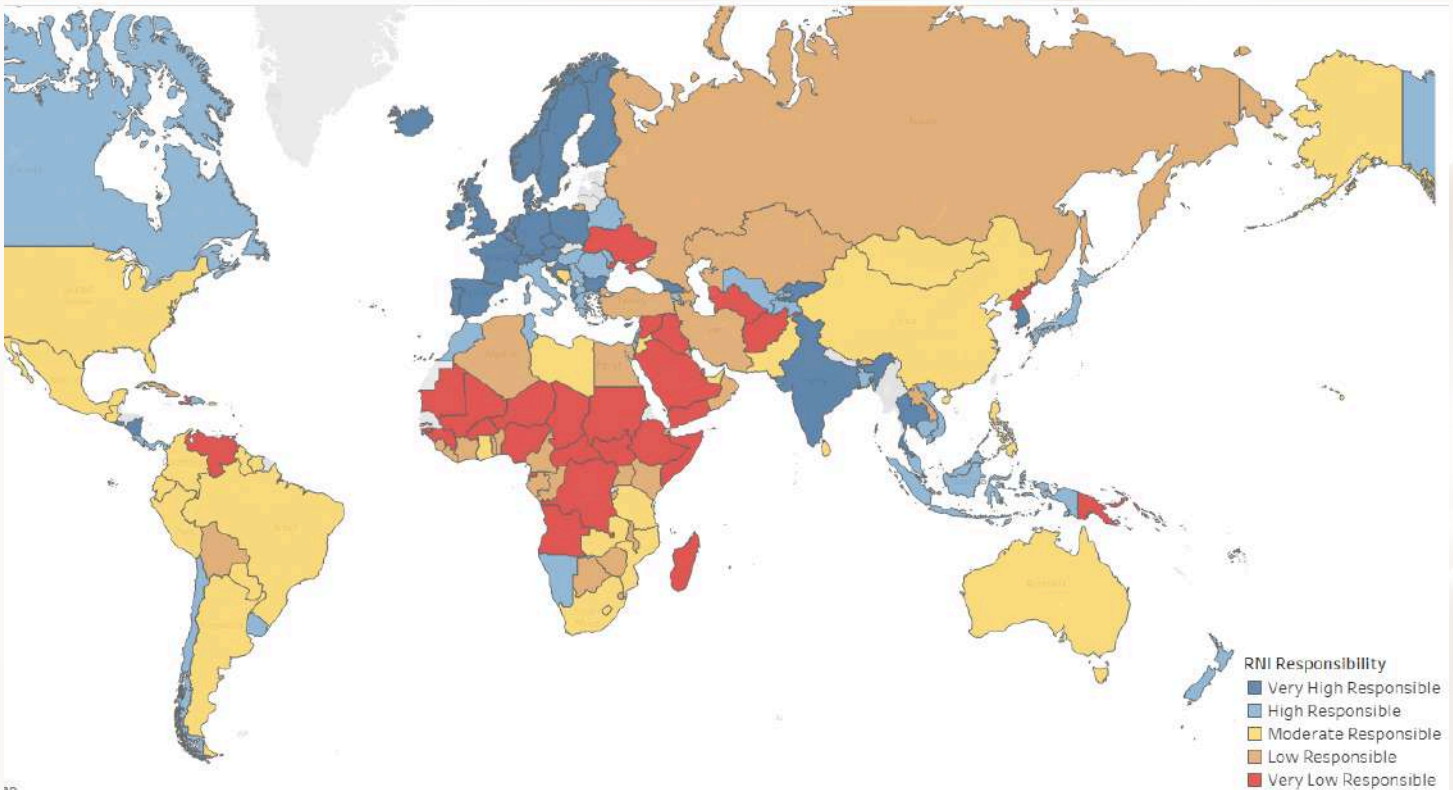


Chart 1: The Responsibility Heatmap, based on RNI Score, 2026

DIMENSION-WISE ANALYSIS

Quality of Life

This dimension captures the foundational elements that enable individuals to lead secure, healthy, and fulfilling lives. It assesses **food security, education, and healthcare and wellbeing, access to basic amenities**. Indicators span dietary consumption, literacy, drinking water, sanitation, electricity access, maternal and child health outcomes, vaccination coverage, and public health expenditure.

Countries with strong public health systems and robust basic service delivery consistently perform well irrespective of income levels, demonstrating that prioritizing human development yields high responsibility outcomes even in resource-constrained settings.



Governance

The governance dimension includes indicators related to **civil liberties, law and order, and corruption**, such as freedom of expression and belief, right to information, crime control, homicides, complaint mechanisms, constraints on government powers, and bribery depth.

It reflects the degree of transparency, rule of law, judicial integrity, and institutional accountability, all of which correlate strongly with responsible national conduct. Nations with effective governance frameworks tend to create environments where rights are protected and public institutions are resilient.



Social Justice and Empowerment

This dimension measures inclusiveness and women's empowerment, covering social protection coverage, support for vulnerable groups, sex ratio, female labour force participation, women's political representation, financial inclusion, and gender parity in education.

It highlights how gender equity, inclusion, and social protection systems shape a nation's social responsibility profile. Notably, many developing nations outperform high-income economies that still struggle with structural inequalities, proving that policy prioritization matters more than GDP size.

Economic Performance

Economic responsibility is assessed through indicators of growth, investment, and economic stability, including output growth per worker, gross fixed capital formation, employment rate, research and development spending.

This dimension evaluates not just economic output but also resilience, innovation, equitable growth, and long-term sustainability. It moves the discussion away from the size of the economy toward the distribution of benefits and the sustainability of growth pathways.

Environmental Protection

This dimension covers climate pollutants, clean energy, and biodiversity conservation. Indicators include greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂, CH₄, NO₂, SO₂), PM_{2.5} exposure, energy use per person, renewable energy consumption, fossil fuel subsidies, protected areas, pesticide and fertilizer use, freshwater withdrawals, forest cover, and global forest share.

It provides a comprehensive picture of environmental stewardship, revealing that many moderate-income nations demonstrate exemplary climate action and lead in biodiversity preservation despite limited resources.

Commitment to Peace

This dimension assesses the degree of peaceful coexistence and responsible global engagement. Indicators include UN peacekeeping contributions and net official development assistance received per capita.

It highlights how nations contribute to global peace, stability, and non-aggression, reinforcing their commitment to the international community.

International Economic Relations

This dimension includes indicators of remittances, merchandise and services trade, foreign direct investment inflows, and total foreign reserves.

It evaluates how nations participate in global economic systems through trade openness, financial flows, and interconnected markets, emphasizing responsible and mutually beneficial international economic behaviour.

GLOBAL INTERPRETATION AND KEY OBSERVATIONS

The Responsible Nations Index (RNI) reveals a decisive shift in how national performance must be understood in the 21st century. The data shows that responsibility is not correlated with GDP; several high-income nations that excel in economic output often fall behind in climate ethics, peaceful conduct, or equitable welfare delivery. Many developing countries outperform advanced economies in environmental stewardship and peaceful conduct, proving that responsibility stems more from political will than economic wealth.

At the same time, the global landscape also exposes fault lines of deep concern: escalating geopolitical militarisation, chronic shortfalls in climate responsibility, and widening inequities in access to public goods and services. Unlike conventional indices that measure output, capability, or influence, the RNI evaluates the ethical use of power by integrating domestic governance with international behaviour and planetary stewardship. Collectively, these patterns highlight a profound shift underway in global development discourse: the recognition that true national greatness is no longer defined by dominance, accumulation, or strategic leverage, but by a nation's ability to uplift its people, contribute to peace, and safeguard and sustain the planet. In essence, the RNI marks a radical shift in the global narrative, asserting that responsibility, not power, is the defining measure of leadership in the modern world.



"The RNI signals a transition from a model of dominance to a model of responsibility: True national greatness lies in uplifting humanity and safeguarding the planet."

The following analysis interprets RNI findings through aggregated lenses—region, income group, and relative position to the global median. This approach surfaces structural patterns of responsibility, revealing how governance, institutional quality, and development choices shape outcomes regardless of economic size or influence.

Responsibility Is Not a Linear Function of Wealth

One of the most striking findings is the absence of a direct, linear relationship between national income and responsibility outcomes. High responsibility scores appear among high income economies, but this pattern is neither uniform nor deterministic. Several upper-middle-income and even lower-middle-income economies consistently perform above the global median, often matching or surpassing high-income peers across multiple dimensions of responsibility. Conversely, a non-trivial subset of high-income economies cluster around the median or even fall below it, particularly in areas related to environmental stewardship, peaceful international engagement, and social inclusion.

This divergence reinforces the central insight: economic capacity may enable responsibility, but does not guarantee it. Responsibility arises from policy choices, institutional priorities, and ethical governance—not income alone.



Regional Patterns Reveal Distinct Responsibility Pathways

A region-wise reading of the data reveals distinct responsibility profiles shaped by governance traditions, development trajectories, and historical contexts.

Europe and Central Asia show a high concentration of scores above the global median, particularly driven by strong performance in governance quality, social protection systems, and institutional accountability. However, internal variation remains significant, indicating that regional advantage does not translate into uniform responsibility.

East Asia and the Pacific display a wide spread across responsibility categories. While some economies achieve very high responsibility scores — especially in economic resilience and human development — others remain clustered around the median, reflecting divergent development models and governance approaches within the same region.

Latin America and the Caribbean present a mixed but instructive pattern: several economies perform above expectations relative to income level, particularly in social inclusion and international economic engagement, while governance and environmental outcomes vary more sharply.

South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, often underrepresented in traditional global indices, demonstrate pockets of high responsibility performance, especially in environmental protection, peace contributions, and community-oriented development indicators. These findings challenge deficit-centric narratives and affirm that responsibility can emerge even under resource constraints.

The Middle East and North Africa exhibit one of the widest internal dispersions, with responsibility outcomes heavily influenced by governance quality, conflict exposure, and environmental management practices rather than income level alone

Above-Median Responsibility Is Achievable Across All Income Groups

An important analytical insight from the chart is the distribution of “Above Median” responsibility scores across all World Bank income groups. High responsibility is not monopolized by advanced economies; rather, it appears wherever states demonstrate:

- sustained investment in basic human well-being,
- relative institutional stability,
- deliberate policy emphasis on inclusion and equity, and
- constructive engagement with the global community.

Lower-middle-income economies that prioritize **targeted welfare delivery, gender inclusion, and renewable energy transitions** often outperform wealthier counterparts that rely on market-driven growth without equivalent social or environmental safeguards.

Responsibility Gaps Reflect Structural Choices, Not Structural Limits

Perhaps the most consequential insight emerging from the aggregated analysis is that responsibility gaps across the global system are not the inevitable outcome of structural constraints, historical disadvantage, or limited economic capacity. Rather, they are best understood as the result of deliberate institutional and policy choices that shape how power, resources, and authority are exercised within and beyond national borders.

The data reveal that lower responsibility scores consistently cluster in contexts where governance systems fail to translate authority into accountability. Weak or compromised oversight institutions, constrained civic space, and opaque decision-making processes reduce the capacity of states to align development with equity, sustainability, and long-term public welfare. In such settings, economic growth—where it occurs—often follows extractive or exclusionary pathways, concentrating benefits while dispersing social and environmental costs across vulnerable populations and future generations.

A second defining feature of lower responsibility outcomes is the systematic externalization of costs. Environmental degradation, carbon-intensive growth trajectories, biodiversity loss, and public health burdens are frequently displaced spatially (onto marginalized communities or neighbouring regions) or temporally (onto future generations). This pattern reflects not a lack of alternatives, but a governance preference that prioritizes short-term gains, strategic advantage, or elite accumulation over collective well-being.

Equally significant is the limited engagement of such states in peace-building, humanitarian cooperation, and multilateral problem-solving. Low responsibility scores often coincide with inward-looking or coercive international postures, minimal contributions to global public goods, and a reluctance to participate constructively in shared global challenges—particularly climate action, conflict mitigation, and development cooperation.

In contrast, higher responsibility scores exhibit a markedly different institutional and ethical architecture. These contexts are characterized by transparent and accountable governance frameworks, where public authority is constrained by law, rights are institutionally protected, and policy decisions are subject to scrutiny. Inclusive social policies—particularly those targeting health, education, gender equity, and social protection—emerge as central drivers of responsibility, demonstrating that equity is not a residual outcome of growth but a core governance objective.

Long-term environmental planning further distinguishes higher responsibility pathways. States that internalize ecological limits, invest in renewable energy transitions, protect biodiversity, and regulate resource use demonstrate a forward-looking conception of national interest—one that recognises environmental stewardship as integral to economic and social resilience. Finally, consistent engagement in multilateral cooperation, peacekeeping, and international economic responsibility reflects an outward-oriented ethical stance, where national prosperity is pursued in alignment with global stability rather than at its expense.

Collectively, these patterns affirm that responsibility is a deliberate outcome of governance and policy choices. High-responsibility outcomes across diverse income levels and regions show that meaningful responsibility is always a choice.

Implications for Global Discourse

Viewed collectively, these observations signal a profound recalibration in how global leadership and national success must be interpreted in the twenty-first century. The RNI evidence challenges the long-standing assumption that economic size, strategic dominance, or technological superiority constitute sufficient markers of global leadership. Instead, it demonstrates that legitimacy in an interconnected world increasingly derives from how responsibly nations exercise power—domestically, internationally, and ecologically.

This shift has far-reaching implications for global governance, development policy, and international cooperation. It suggests that the credibility of states in global forums will depend less on their capacity to project influence and more on their demonstrated commitment to equity, peace, and planetary stewardship. It also reframes development itself—not as a race toward accumulation, but as a process whose quality is defined by inclusion, sustainability, and ethical restraint.

For an abridged report, this aggregated and category-driven analysis performs a crucial intellectual function. By deliberately avoiding country-specific judgments, it foregrounds structural patterns over reputational rankings, enabling policymakers, scholars, and global institutions to engage with the deeper determinants of responsibility. The RNI thus invites a shift away from ranking fixation toward a more substantive conversation about governance choices, ethical frameworks, and institutional pathways capable of sustaining human well-being and global stability.

In doing so, **the Responsible Nations Index positions responsibility as the defining measure of leadership today and as the foundation for a more just, peaceful, and sustainable global order.**

Having established that responsibility outcomes depend on governance choices, it is necessary to examine how this logic manifests among major economies and outliers within the Responsible Nations Index.

Relative Positioning of Major Economies and Exceptional Responsibility Outliers

Major Advanced Economies: High Capacity, Uneven Responsibility

Among advanced economies, several countries occupy the top tier of the RNI due to balanced performance across internal governance, environmental stewardship, and external responsibility.

Singapore, ranked first overall, demonstrates exceptional internal governance capacity and strong external responsibility outcomes, reflecting institutional efficiency, regulatory coherence, and high-quality public service delivery. However, its environmental responsibility score remains relatively weaker compared to peers—illustrating how even top-ranked nations face dimension-specific responsibility constraints.

Switzerland, Denmark, and Sweden consistently occupy top positions due to strong internal responsibility systems—rule of law, social protection, and governance integrity—combined with sustained environmental commitments. Their performance reflects long-term institutional alignment between welfare, sustainability, and international cooperation.

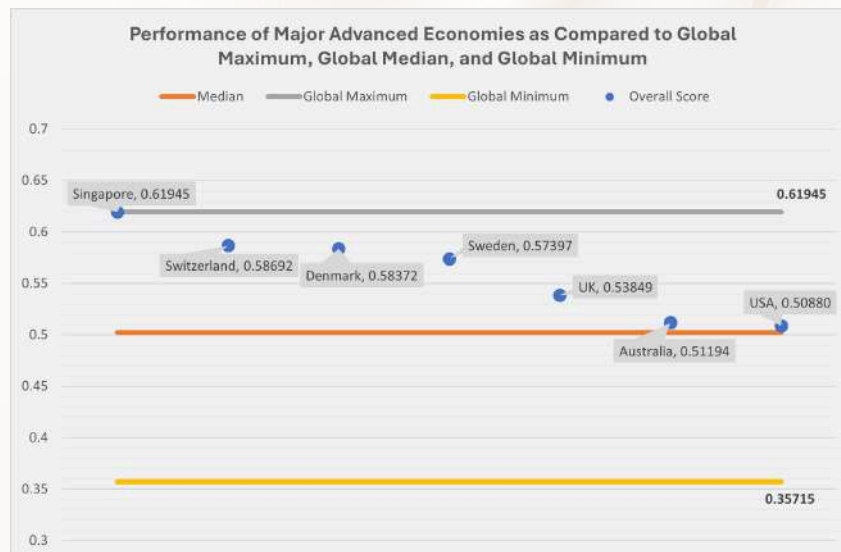


Chart 2: Performance of Major Advanced Economies as Compared to Global Maximum, Global Median, and the Global Minimum



By contrast, other high-income economies such as the **United States**, **Australia**, and the **United Kingdom** display internal responsibility strength but weaker environmental and external responsibility scores. In these cases, high institutional capacity and economic scale are offset by elevated carbon intensity, limited environmental ambition, or constrained peace-oriented international engagement. This explains why such economies cluster closer to the upper-middle of the RNI rather than its top tier.

Major Emerging Economies: Development Trade-offs and Responsibility Imbalances

Large emerging economies demonstrate mixed responsibility profiles shaped by developmental sequencing and institutional constraints.

India, ranked within the top 20 overall, presents a distinctive responsibility pattern. While its internal responsibility score reflects challenges in governance scale and service delivery across a large population, it performs relatively strongly on external responsibility, particularly in peacekeeping engagement and international cooperation. Environmental responsibility remains a constraint, reflecting the tensions between development imperatives and ecological sustainability.

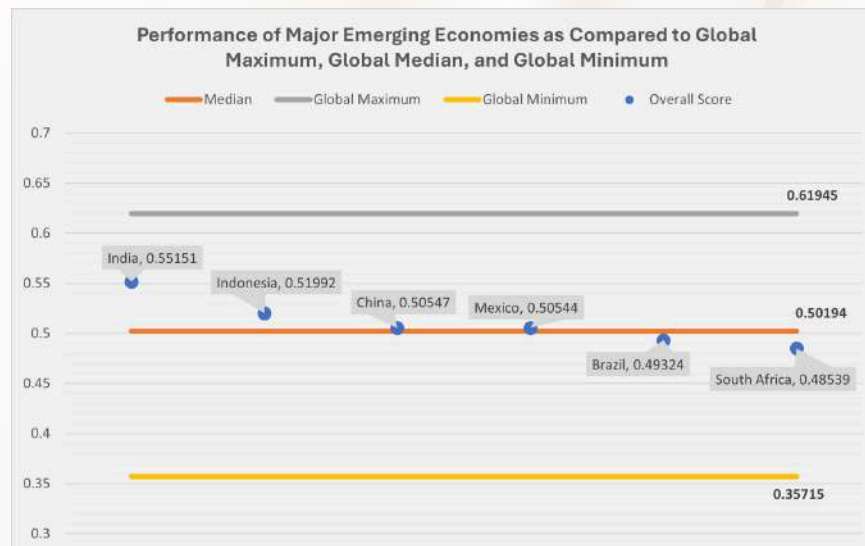


Chart 3: Performance of Major Emerging Economies as Compared to the Global Maximum, the Global Median, and the Global Minimum



China, positioned in the middle of the Index, exhibits comparatively strong internal delivery capacity but significantly weaker external responsibility outcomes. Its environmental responsibility score reflects the structural impact of carbon-intensive growth, while limited peace-oriented international engagement further constrains its composite responsibility standing.

Brazil, Mexico, Indonesia, and South Africa similarly occupy mid-range positions, reflecting strong social protection initiatives and development outreach in some dimensions, but persistent weaknesses in environmental outcomes, governance accountability, or external engagement. These cases illustrate how partial responsibility gains are insufficient to elevate overall responsibility without cross-dimensional alignment.

Exceptional Top-Quartile Outliers from Middle- and Lower-Middle-Income Groups

One of the most analytically significant findings of the RNI is the presence of middle-income and lower-middle-income countries within the top quartile of overall responsibility, outperforming many wealthier nations.

Costa Rica emerges as a leading outlier due to strong environmental responsibility—particularly biodiversity protection and renewable energy use—combined with consistent social investment and peaceful international conduct. Its performance demonstrates how ecological prioritization can elevate responsibility outcomes even without high economic scale.

Uruguay similarly achieves a high overall ranking through inclusive social policies, democratic governance stability, and relatively responsible environmental practices. Its external responsibility score reflects sustained engagement in cooperative international frameworks.



Countries such as **Albania, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, and Serbia** also emerge as exceptional performers. Their positioning reflects post-transition institutional reforms, improvements in governance accountability, and social inclusion strategies that translate into high internal responsibility scores, even as economic constraints persist.

In Southeast Asia, **Vietnam** ranks well above many higher-income peers, driven by strong internal service delivery and effective development planning, while maintaining relatively moderate environmental and external responsibility outcomes.

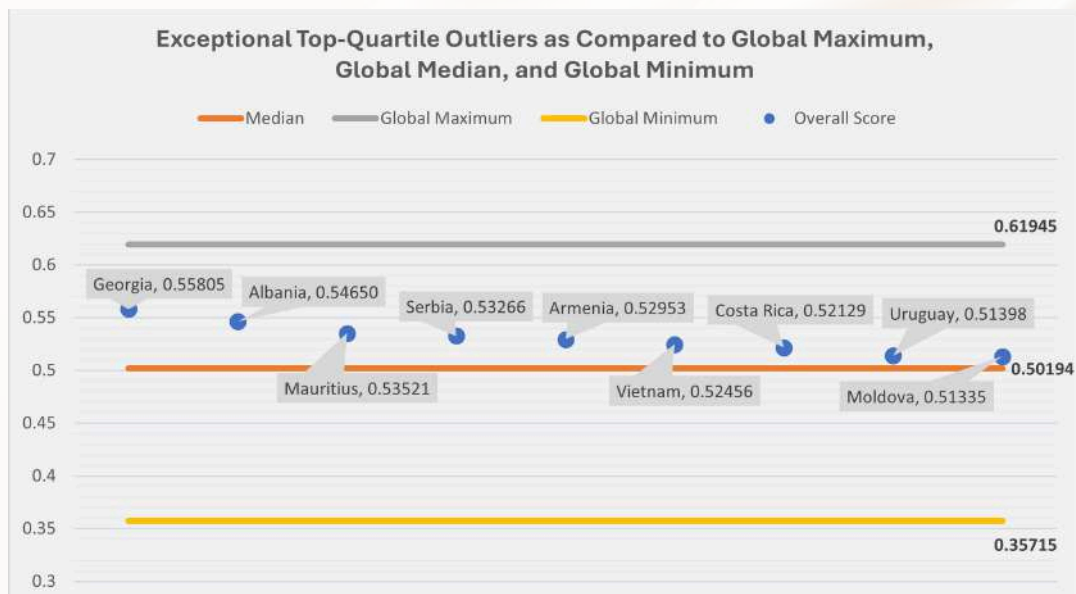


Chart 4: Exceptional Top Quartile Outliers as Compared to the Global Maximum, the Global Median, and the Global Minimum



Explaining Responsibility Divergence Across Income Levels

The divergence between high-income underperformers and middle-income overperformers reveals a central RNI insight: responsibility outcomes depend less on available resources than on how states institutionalize accountability, inclusion, and long-term planning. Countries that overperform relative to their income level exhibit a remarkably consistent set of institutional and policy characteristics, underscoring the central argument of the Responsible Nations Index that responsibility is governance-driven rather than resource-dependent. These countries systematically prioritize universal access to essential public goods, particularly health, education, and social protection, treating human development not as a residual outcome of growth but as a foundational obligation of the state. They also adopt regulatory and policy frameworks that internalize environmental costs, ensuring that economic activity accounts for ecological limits rather than displacing environmental harm across communities or generations. In the external domain, such countries tend to maintain relatively peaceful foreign policy postures, avoiding coercive or destabilizing engagement and contributing constructively to regional and global stability. Crucially, they demonstrate sustained engagement with multilateral

institutions beyond narrow or transactional interests, participating in international cooperation as a shared responsibility rather than a strategic convenience. These features explain why certain middle- and lower-middle-income countries achieve high responsibility outcomes despite constrained resources, reaffirming the RNI's proposition that ethical statecraft, not economic abundance, drives responsible conduct. Conversely, countries that underperform despite economic strength tend to externalize ecological costs, emphasize short-term growth or strategic leverage, and underinvest in inclusive governance mechanisms.

The comparative positioning of major economies and exceptional outliers reinforces the RNI's core normative claim: leadership in the contemporary global system is defined by responsibility, not dominance.

Major economies face a heightened responsibility threshold due to the scale of their global externalities. Meanwhile, high-performing middle-income countries offer transferable policy lessons, demonstrating that ethical governance pathways are viable under constraint. By explaining, not merely displaying, country-level positioning, the RNI reframes comparison as a tool for institutional learning and ethical reflection, rather than competitive ranking. In doing so, the Index advances a new evaluative standard for global leadership; one grounded in how nations govern internally, steward the planet, and engage the world responsibly.

ROADMAP AHEAD

Within three months, the **full RNI 2026 report** will include:

- country profiles for all 154 countries
- all 58 indicator scores
- country responsibility scorecards
- methodological annexures
- extended dimension-wise analysis

ABOUT THE INSTITUTIONS



WORLD INTELLECTUAL FOUNDATION

The World Intellectual Foundation is a non-partisan and sector-neutral global think tank. Through the foundation, we will create an ecosystem to bring diverse stakeholders with large canvas thinking, encourage, and assist individuals, organizations, and governments in implementing bold, innovative, and futuristic ideas for peaceful coexistence, prosperity, and overall happiness of humanity. The organization has successfully conceptualised and completed a series of papers including “Culture Policy for India: A Framework”, “Delhi: A City in Crisis”, and thematic studies on food security, Kashmir, caste census consciousness, disasters, circular economy, human potential, and media literacy

The World Intellectual Foundation is the concept originator and lead institution behind the Responsible Nations Index (RNI). WIF anchors the research design, theoretical development, dataset construction, and publication of the Index. With a commitment to ethical governance, global responsibility, and evidence-based policy innovation, WIF works at the intersection of civilizational thought and contemporary public policy. Website: www.wifdelhi.org



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Jawaharlal Nehru University is the foremost university in India, and a world-renowned centre for teaching and research. The University is ranked #2 in the 'University' category and #9 overall by the National Institutional Rankings Framework (NIRF) 2025, and also received the highest level of A++ by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC).

Jawaharlal Nehru University provides the intellectual and academic foundation for the Responsible Nations Index. Scholars from JNU contributed to conceptual development, political governance analysis, and civilizational theory, methodology design, as well as the development of the statistical modelling and analytical architecture, supported by academic review. Their rigour and diligence ensured that the Index is grounded in uncompromising scholarship and globally relevant normative frameworks.

Website: www.jnu.ac.in



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, MUMBAI (IIM MUMBAI)

IIM Mumbai erstwhile known as NITIE was established by the Government of India in 1963 with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). IIM Mumbai has been consistently ranked among the top B-schools in India. Currently, IIM Mumbai is ranked 6th in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) rankings among Management Institutes across India. IIM Mumbai is committed to creating skilled professionals in diverse functional areas like Operations Management, Analytics, Finance, Marketing, Project Management, HR, Information Technology, and Sustainability Management.

IIM Mumbai provided technical support in the concurrent methodological review of the Responsible Nation Index (RNI), focusing on assessing the internal consistency and robustness of the framework. Drawing on its expertise in quantitative modelling, data science, and policy analytics, IIM Mumbai offered advisory inputs on indicator normalisation, sensitivity analysis, and the composite index construction methodology. These contributions were intended to enhance the analytical rigour and technical robustness of the Responsible Nation Index framework.

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