



**CIVIC SPACE UNDER THREAT IN  
EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES  
TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE  
COUNTRIES**

**August 2017**



**MONITOR**  
TRACKING CIVIC SPACE

# CIVICUS

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## **Who We Are**

CIVICUS is a global alliance of civil society organisations and activists dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society around the world. Founded in 1993, CIVICUS strives to promote marginalised voices, especially from the Global South, and has members in countries throughout the world.

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CIVICUS gives special thanks to our CIVICUS Monitor research partners who provided information for the updates upon which this analysis is based. A full list of our research partners can be found [here](#).

To find out more about the CIVICUS Monitor, please contact [monitor@civicus.org](mailto:monitor@civicus.org).

## Executive summary

People's rights to organise, speak out and take action are being extensively violated in a large number of member countries of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). The [CIVICUS Monitor](#), a new online tool to track and compare civic freedoms on a global scale, shows that the space for civil society - civic space - is currently seriously restricted in 38 of 51 EITI countries, as at May 2017.<sup>1</sup>

The CIVICUS Monitor rates the quality of a country's civic space on a five-point scale from open to narrowed, obstructed, repressed and closed. Globally, the CIVICUS Monitor makes clear that the world faces a civic space emergency: only three per cent of the world's population live in countries where civic space is open. For EITI countries, the findings in each category are as follows:

- Only three EITI countries are rated as having open civic space. In conditions of open civic space, the state protects and enables the exercise of civil society's fundamental rights of association, peaceful assembly and expression, meaning that citizens are free to form associations, meet and protest in public places and receive and share information, without restrictions in law or practice.
- Civic space is rated as narrowed in 10 EITI countries. This means the state broadly allows citizens and civil society organisations (CSOs) to exercise their fundamental freedoms but civil society is occasionally harassed, permission for protests is sometimes denied and media freedom is undermined through regulation or political pressure.
- The largest number of EITI members, 24 countries, fall into the obstructed category, where serious restrictions - including illegal surveillance, excessive force during protests and physical attacks on journalists - mean that citizens cannot effectively exercise civic freedoms in order to hold those in power to account.
- Civic space is even more seriously pressured in the 12 EITI countries rated as repressed by the CIVICUS Monitor. In these countries, civil society members who criticise power holders risk surveillance, harassment, intimidation, imprisonment, injury and death. In cases where the perpetrators of major civic space violations are non-state actors, state authorities are often unable or unwilling to stop them.
- Civic space is rated as closed in two EITI countries, meaning that there are effectively no means for citizens to challenge those in power without being exposed to the risk of serious consequences, including enforced disappearances, torture and death.

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<sup>1</sup> EITI member countries covered by this analysis are: Afghanistan, Albania, Armenia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Republic of the Congo, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Yemen and Zambia. In May 2017, it was announced that [Suriname's](#) EITI candidacy had been accepted. Suriname, where civic space is currently rated as [narrowed](#), is not included in this analysis. The [Central African Republic](#) and [Yemen](#) are suspended at the time of writing due to political instability. The CIVICUS Monitor rates both of these countries as repressed and has documented severe recent civic space restrictions. [Azerbaijan](#), where civic space is also rated as repressed, withdrew from EITI in March 2017. [Australia](#), where civic space is rated as narrowed, announced that it was joining EITI in May 2016, but is not yet listed as an active country. [Equatorial Guinea](#), where civic space was rated as closed in May 2017, is a candidate country, but is not yet integrated into the initiative.

Data from the CIVICUS Monitor, covering the period between June 2016 and May 2017, reveals the tactics most commonly used to restrict civic space in EITI countries. These are the detention of human rights defenders and protesters, the use of excessive force during protests, the disruption and prevention of protests, and attacks on journalists and media censorship. Among the most serious violations, the CIVICUS Monitor contains 26 reports on killings of journalists, 25 on killings of protesters and 14 on killings of civil society activists and human rights defenders in EITI countries. The Monitor also published 12 reports involving torture or ill treatment and three involving enforced disappearances in EITI countries. The killing of human rights defenders is a particularly serious problem in a subset of Latin American EITI members - Colombia, Guatemala and Honduras.

Our research also investigates the drivers of civic space restriction in EITI countries. Civil society is being restricted when it seeks to express dissent, demand human rights, expose poor governance and stand up for excluded people. EITI states most often respond with repression when people, journalists or organisations criticise or challenge state officials, policies or institutions. People are also targeted when they engage in human rights activism and monitoring, push for basic economic and social needs to be met or call for free and fair elections. Environmental activism and opposition to international agreements also regularly attract repression from state and non-state groups.

While civic space is under pressure in many EITI countries, civil society continues to fight to defend its space, and in some cases it has succeeded in obtaining improvements. Recent examples include the adoption of a bill on the protection of human rights defenders in Mali, the approval of a law granting access to public information in Togo and the emergence of a stronger culture of independent investigative reporting in Mongolia.

On the whole, however, CIVICUS Monitor ratings reveal a stark terrain within the EITI: one in which CSOs and human rights defenders in most member countries face serious obstacles, including threats to their personal safety, denial of the right to protest, surveillance and censorship, as a direct result of their nonviolent activism. The fact that civil society's fundamental rights are seriously violated in so many EITI countries is alarming, given that the EITI seeks to promote "accountability by government to all citizens" and explicitly recognises the "important and relevant contributions" of non-governmental organisations.<sup>2</sup> The level of restrictions revealed by this report presents a direct challenge to the viability of the EITI and raises serious questions about member states that are routinely failing to protect CSOs and in many cases treating them as adversaries.

EITI should recognise the threat the violations documented in this report offer to its credibility and viability as an international multi-stakeholder initiative. It should respond by taking increased steps to ensure that the protection of CSOs and activists becomes a priority in all its member countries.

CIVICUS recommends that EITI:

- Enhances its requirements for multi-stakeholder engagement in a way that contributes to the creation of a more robust civic space. In doing so, EITI should ensure that CSOs enjoy the "[full, free, active and effective engagement](#)" they are meant to have within country-level multi-stakeholder groups.
- Ensures that all member governments engage fully and meaningfully with CSOs and implement the recommendations made in the [review](#) of multi-stakeholder groups carried out by MSI Integrity in 2015.
- Applies existing requirements more strictly and consistently to make sure that conditions for meaningful civil society participation are met in member countries;

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<sup>2</sup> References here are to EITI Principles 8 and 12, taken from the [EITI Standards](#) document, 2016.

- Promotes an early validation process against the EITI Standard - the requirements that apply to all EITI member countries - for all those countries in which civic space is seriously restricted.
- Prescribes corrective actions to governments of countries where there are serious civic space restrictions and closely monitors their progress in implementing recommendations;
- Credibly applies or threatens to apply sanctions, including suspension, towards countries failing to make discernible progress in upholding fundamental civil society rights.

## CIVICUS Monitor ratings for EITI countries

August 2017

Afghanistan: repressed  
Albania: narrowed  
Armenia: obstructed  
Burkina Faso: obstructed  
Cameroon: repressed  
Central African Republic: repressed  
Chad: repressed  
Colombia: repressed  
Côte d'Ivoire: obstructed  
Democratic Republic of the Congo: closed  
Dominican Republic: obstructed  
Ethiopia: closed  
Germany: open  
Ghana: narrowed  
Guatemala: obstructed  
Guinea: obstructed  
Honduras: obstructed  
Indonesia: obstructed  
Iraq: repressed  
Kazakhstan: obstructed  
Kyrgyzstan: obstructed  
Liberia: repressed  
Madagascar: obstructed  
Malawi: narrowed  
Mali: obstructed  
Mauritania: repressed  
Mongolia: obstructed  
Mozambique: obstructed  
Myanmar: repressed  
Niger: obstructed  
Nigeria: obstructed  
Norway: open  
Papua New Guinea: narrowed  
Peru: obstructed  
Philippines: obstructed  
Republic of the Congo: repressed  
São Tomé and Príncipe: open  
Senegal: narrowed  
Seychelles: narrowed  
Sierra Leone: obstructed  
Solomon Islands: narrowed  
Tajikistan: repressed  
Tanzania: obstructed  
Timor-Leste: obstructed  
Togo: obstructed  
Trinidad and Tobago: narrowed  
Ukraine: obstructed  
United Kingdom: narrowed  
United States of America: narrowed  
Yemen: repressed  
Zambia: obstructed

## Introduction

The CIVICUS Monitor is a new research platform that aims to provide up-to-date data on the state of civil society rights. It rates countries on how well they uphold civil society's three fundamental rights - of association, peaceful assembly and expression. Together these define the extent of the space for civil society, otherwise known as civic space. The CIVICUS Monitor provides frequent updates to track emerging developments in a country's civic space conditions.

By applying a series of standard calculations and checks on data from a variety of sources, the CIVICUS Monitor assigns ratings on the state of civic space to every country.<sup>3</sup> Countries are classified as having open, narrowed, obstructed, repressed or closed civic space. Ratings change as a result of input received from local civil society activists, regional civil society experts, research partners, other national and international CSOs, news media and user feedback.

The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), launched in 2002, is a global standard aimed at promoting the open and accountable management of oil, gas and mineral resources. EITI seeks to strengthen government and corporate systems, inform public debate and promote public understanding of the issues involved in natural resource management. It requires countries and companies to disclose information on key steps in the governance of oil, gas and mining, including contracting and licensing, production, revenue collection, revenue allocation and social and economic spending. In each implementing country, EITI is supported by a coalition of government, companies and civil society.

As part of the EITI Standard, civil society participation is considered essential to ensuring that the process leads to greater accountability. As stated in the EITI Protocol:<sup>4</sup>

“The participation of civil society in the EITI process is formally assessed at two stages of EITI implementation – during the candidature assessment and during the Validation process. An assessment of civil society participation may also take place on an ad hoc basis in response to specific concerns raised with the Board about the situation in specific implementing countries.”

In assessing civil society provisions, the EITI Board and its appointed validators are expected to apply the following tests:

- **Expression:** civil society representatives are able to engage in public debate related to the EITI process and express opinions about the process without restraint, coercion or reprisal.
- **Operation:** civil society representatives are able to operate freely in relation to the EITI process.
- **Association:** civil society representatives are able to communicate and cooperate with each other regarding the EITI process.
- **Engagement:** civil society representatives can be fully, actively and effectively engaged in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the EITI process.
- **Access to public decision-making:** civil society representatives are able to speak freely on transparency and natural resource governance issues, and ensure that EITI contributes to public debate.

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<sup>3</sup> In order to even out biases and prevent over-reliance on any particular dataset, the Monitor combines quantitative and qualitative data from a range of sources, including qualitative research produced by CIVICUS (including Civil Society Index research, Enabling Environment National Assessments, submissions to the United Nations' Universal Periodic Review process and Policy Action Briefs); standardised updates from regionally-based research partners; qualitative analytical reports produced by other organisations; scores from Freedom House, Reporters without Borders and the University of North Carolina's Political Terror Scale; inputs from civil society consultations; and information provided by users.

<sup>4</sup> See [EITI Protocol](#): Participation of civil society. For more on the Validation process, see EITI: [Validation](#).

Although they apply solely to the EITI process rather than to civil society activity more generally, these tests roughly correspond to the three fundamental civil society rights of association, peaceful assembly and expression that allow people to organise freely, participate and communicate with each other, and therefore to participate in decision-making and influence the shaping of political and social structures. It follows that if civic space is restricted, civil society will not be able to play a proper and full role in the EITI process, and EITI will not be able to deliver fully on its promise to promote the open and accountable management of extractive resources.

Framed by this concern, this report offers an overview of the quality of civic space in EITI member countries. It starts by setting out the spread of CIVICUS Monitor ratings for all EITI countries and comparing these with the global breakdown of ratings. It then provides an overview of the types of civic space violations documented by the CIVICUS Monitor in EITI countries, and examines the driving forces behind the most common violations, giving examples from EITI countries. The report also sets out some positive developments. Finally, it identifies some steps that EITI should take to address the problem of civic space restrictions in its member countries.

## Civic space classifications for EITI countries

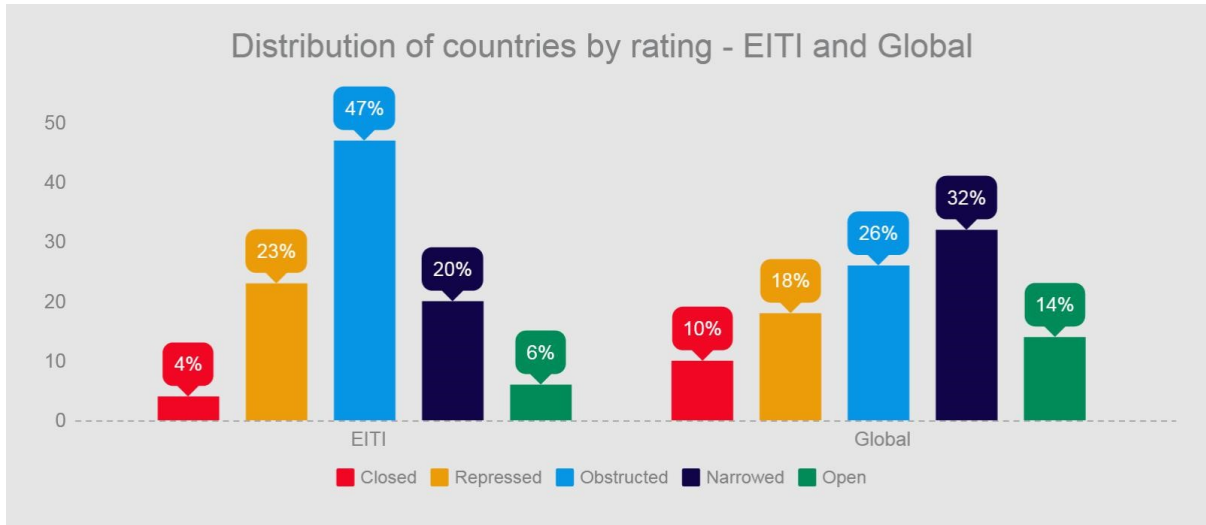
Given that EITI aims to promote the open and accountable management of oil, gas and mineral resources, all of its member countries have a sizeable extractives sector. Although its original objective was to tackle the so-called ‘resource curse’, in which a country’s natural resource wealth may drive corruption and human rights abuses, not all major oil, gas, coal or mineral producers take part in the initiative, while some countries that are not usually viewed as victims of the resource curse, such as Norway and the USA, have joined because they have come to see EITI as part of a broader commitment to transparent public finances.<sup>5</sup> Almost half of current EITI countries (25 out of 51) are in Africa, followed by 12 in Asia (23 per cent), seven in the Americas (14 per cent), five in Europe (10 per cent) and two in Oceania.

As shown below, both the regional distribution and the distribution of ratings for EITI countries differ from the overall distribution of countries as rated on the CIVICUS Monitor. EITI contains fewer countries in categories at the open and closed ends of the scale as well as fewer countries with narrowed civic space, but a markedly higher proportion of countries rated as repressed (47 per cent vs. 26 per cent).

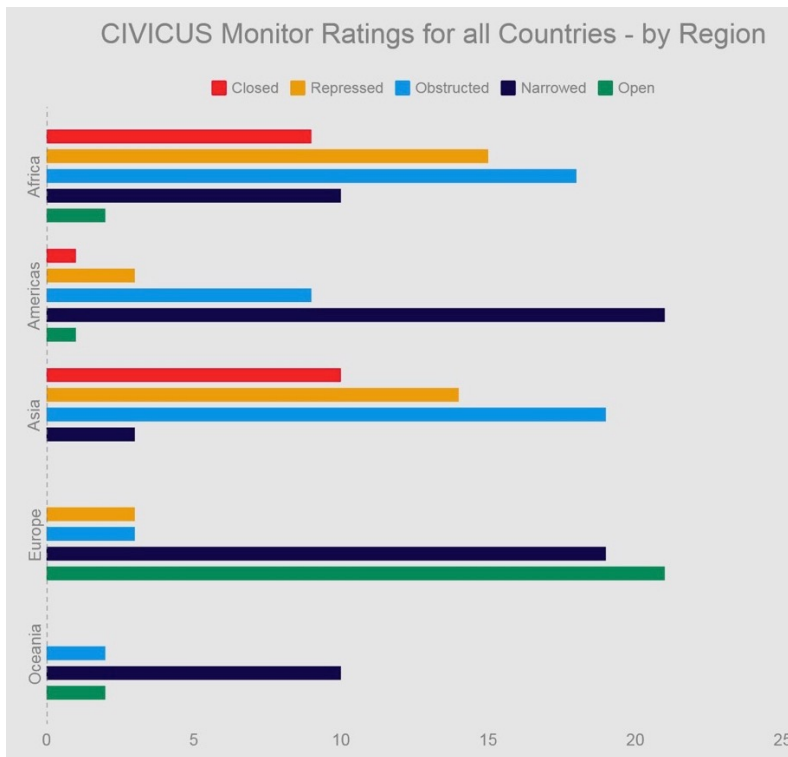
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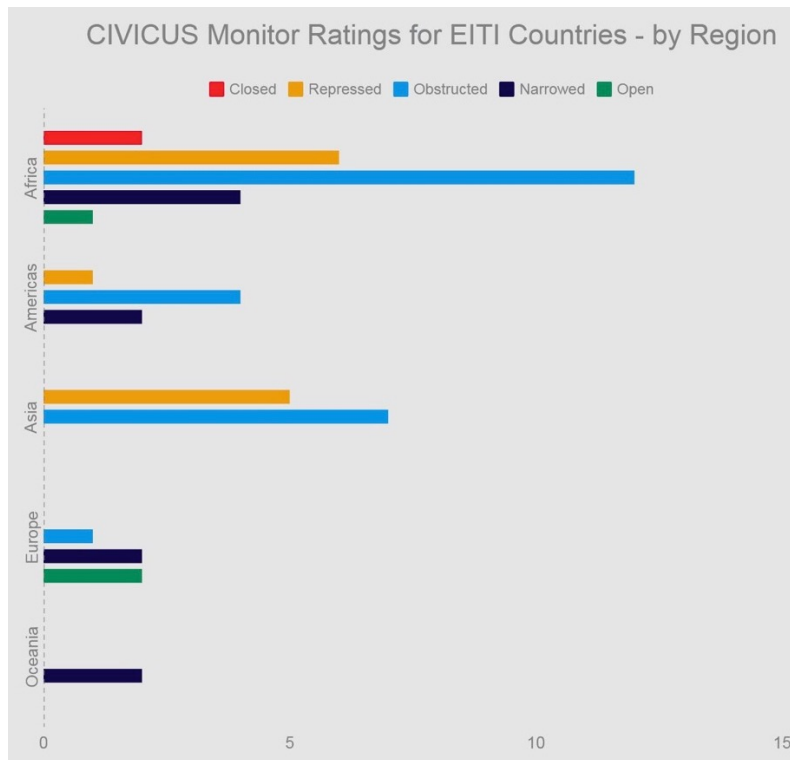
<sup>5</sup> For instance, only two of the world’s 10 biggest oil producers are EITI members. (Iraq and the USA are members, while Brazil, Canada, China, Iran, Kuwait, Russia, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are not.) Only two of the 14 current members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) - Iraq and Nigeria - are EITI members.





When compared to all 195 countries, the prevalence of open civic space among EITI countries is significantly lower (six per cent vs. 14 per cent), even though many leading oil and mineral producing countries where civic space is rated as closed, repressed or obstructed are not current EITI members. Notably, almost half the countries in the world that have obstructed civic space are EITI members (24 out of 51).





## Civic space ratings

Civic space is rated as closed in two of the 51 EITI member countries, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Ethiopia. Typically in this category, civic space is completely shut down both in law and practice. An atmosphere of fear and violence prevails, as state and frequently also non-state actors are routinely allowed to imprison, seriously injure and kill people with impunity for attempting to exercise their rights to associate, peacefully assemble and express themselves. Any criticism of the ruling authorities is severely punished and there is virtually no media freedom. The internet is heavily censored, many websites are blocked and online criticism of power holders is subject to severe penalties.

Civic space is rated as repressed in 12 EITI countries: six in Africa (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Liberia, Mauritania and the Republic of the Congo), five in Asia (Afghanistan, Iraq, Myanmar, Tajikistan and Yemen) and one in Latin America (Colombia). In countries with repressed civic space, human rights defenders and civil society members who criticise power holders risk surveillance, harassment, intimidation, imprisonment, injury and death. Although some CSOs exist, their advocacy work is regularly impeded and they typically face threats of de-registration and closure by the authorities. People who organise or take part in peaceful protests are likely to be targeted by the authorities with excessive force, including the use of live ammunition, and risk mass arrests and detention. The media typically reflect the position of the state, and independent voices are routinely targeted through raids, physical attacks and protracted legal harassment. Websites and social media platforms are blocked and internet activity is heavily monitored.

Twenty-four EITI countries are rated as obstructed on the CIVICUS Monitor: 12 (50 per cent) in Africa, seven in Asia, four in the Americas and one (Ukraine) in Europe. An obstructed rating indicates conditions in which civic space is heavily contested by power holders, who impose a combination of legal and practical constraints on the full enjoyment of fundamental rights. CSOs are undermined by state authorities through various means, including the use of illegal surveillance, bureaucratic harassment and demeaning public statements. In countries within this category, citizens can organise and assemble peacefully but they are vulnerable to frequent use of excessive force by law

enforcement agencies, including rubber bullets, teargas and baton charges. There is generally some space for non-state media and editorial independence, but journalists face the risk of physical attack and criminal defamation charges, which encourage self-censorship.

Ten EITI countries are rated as narrowed on the CIVICUS Monitor: four in Africa (Ghana, Malawi, Senegal and Seychelles) and two each in Europe (Albania and the United Kingdom), the Americas (Trinidad and Tobago and the USA) and Oceania (Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands). In countries with a narrowed civic space, typically the state allows individuals and CSOs to exercise their rights to the freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and expression, but significant violations of these rights take place. People can form associations to pursue a wide range of interests, but full enjoyment of this right is impeded by occasional harassment, arrest or assault of people deemed critical of those in power. Protests tend to be conducted peacefully, although authorities sometimes deny permission, citing security concerns, and excessive force, which may include teargas and rubber bullets, are sometimes used against peaceful demonstrators. The media are free to disseminate a wide range of information, although the state undermines complete media freedom either through strict regulation or by exerting political pressure on media owners.

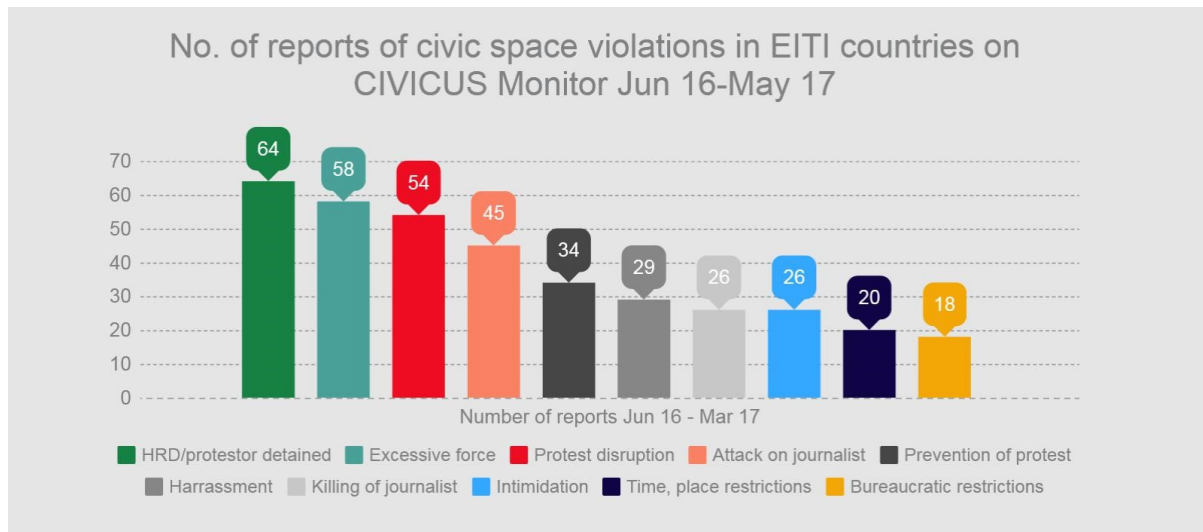
Only three EITI countries (Germany, Norway and São Tomé and Príncipe) are rated as open on the CIVICUS Monitor. In countries with open civic space, the state both enables and safeguards the enjoyment of civic space for all people. Levels of fear are low as citizens are free to form associations, demonstrate in public places and receive and impart information without restrictions in law or practice. The authorities are tolerant of criticism from civil society groups and provide space and platforms for open and robust dialogue with members of the public. As a rule, the police protect public protesters, and laws governing the freedom of peaceful assembly adhere to international law and standards. The media are free, online content is uncensored and citizens can access government information easily.

## Civic space violations

In addition to providing a comparative measure of civic space through ratings, the CIVICUS Monitor is building up a database of evidence on the tactics used to restrict civic space. Our analysis of all CIVICUS Monitor [updates](#) published for EITI countries between June 2016 and May 2017 shows that civic space freedoms are most frequently violated through the detention of human rights defenders and protesters, the use of excessive force against protests and the outright prevention or disruption of protests, and attacks on journalists and censorship of the media.<sup>6</sup> Other relatively common violations include harassment and intimidation of activists, the killing of journalists and protesters, the imposition of legislative restrictions on and bureaucratic obstacles to fundamental freedoms (including restrictive CSO laws), the imposition of time and place requirements that limit the right to protest, surveillance and public vilification of CSOs and activists, social media obstructions and internet restrictions, and the torture, ill-treatment and targeted killing of human rights defenders.

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<sup>6</sup> This date range refers to the date of publication of an update on the Monitor. Some of the violations described here took place prior to June 2016.



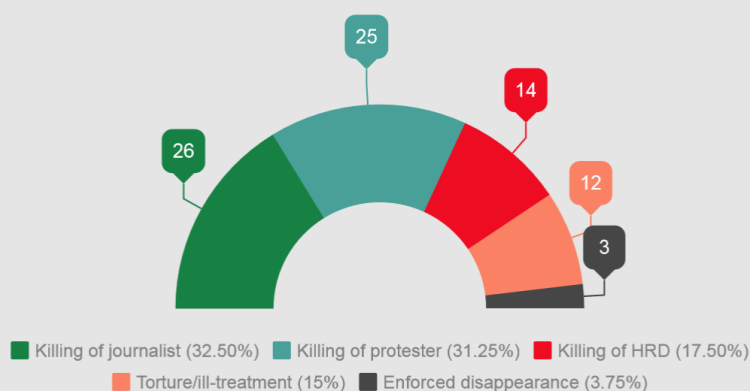
During the June 2016 to May 2017 period, the CIVICUS Monitor published many updates on the most serious civic space violations in EITI countries. These included 26 reports of the killings of journalists, 25 reports of the killings of protesters and 14 reports of the killings of civil society activists or human rights defenders. The CIVICUS Monitor also published 12 reports involving torture or ill treatment and three involving enforced disappearances in EITI countries.<sup>7</sup>

Between June 2016 and May 2017, instances of protesters being killed were recorded in 16 EITI countries: Afghanistan, Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Guinea, Indonesia, Iraq, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, Sierra Leone and Togo. Ten countries had at least one report of an assassinated journalist: Afghanistan, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Iraq, Peru, the Philippines, Ukraine and Yemen. Guatemala and Iraq each accounted for five such reports. Cases of murdered human rights defenders were reported in four countries - Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras and Myanmar - and enforced disappearances were observed in three: Colombia, Iraq and Yemen. Reports of torture and ill treatment were more widespread, coming from Cameroon, Colombia, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Myanmar, Tajikistan, Yemen and Zambia.

The human rights defenders most targeted for assassination were indigenous, environmental and land rights activists, followed by trade union leaders. The situation was particularly serious in a subset of Latin American countries, including: [Colombia](#), where at least 16 social activists, human rights defenders and Afro-Colombian, indigenous and rural leaders were killed during the first six months of 2016, often by neo-paramilitary groups, and an additional 19 were murdered between January and April 2017 alone; [Guatemala](#), where 14 activists were reported assassinated between January and November 2016; and [Honduras](#), which according to [Amnesty International](#) has the highest per capita murder rate of land rights activists in the world. As reported by [Global Witness](#), 109 activists working on environmental issues were murdered in Honduras between 2010 and 2015.

<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that one report does not equate to one violation against one person or organisation, as a report may contain news of multiple violations.

No. of reports of most serious violations in EITI countries on CIVICUS Monitor Jun 16-May 17



The CIVICUS Monitor recorded a wide range of additional civic space violations in EITI countries between June 2016 and May 2017. These include the intimidation of activists (26 reports), the imposition of disproportionate time and place restrictions on protests (20), the introduction or use of bureaucratic restrictions (18), the public vilification of human rights defenders (17) and the restriction of social media (16) and the internet (13). With the possible exception of countries where civic space is completely closed, these restrictions were typically not uniformly imposed on civil society, but rather have often been used to obstruct specific groups and causes, most notably at the grassroots level and against the civil society of excluded people. Among the groups targeted by restrictions were women (13 reports), indigenous organisations (10), LGBTI people (10) and other excluded groups (eight).

The following sections briefly analyse and provide examples for some of the most common types of civic space violations in EITI countries recently reported to the CIVICUS Monitor: the detention and criminalisation of activists; the disruption of protests through excessive force; censorship and violence against journalists; and the introduction of legislative restrictions.

## Detention and criminalisation of activists and protesters

Between June 2016 and May 2017, the CIVICUS Monitor published 64 updates from EITI countries on people detained because they tried to protest, organise or speak out. Reasons for detention were not always given or laid out explicitly: activists in various countries were detained under bogus accusations of drug possession, hooliganism, ‘felony lynching’, illegal entrepreneurship, tax evasion, corruption, coercion, libel, sedition, conspiracy, incitement to social discord, dissemination of knowingly false information, cybercrime, promotion of homosexuality and incitement to riot, among others.

Regardless of the alleged reasons for detention, analysis of CIVICUS Monitor data shows that states frequently detain people in order to prevent them from expressing criticism or challenging state officials, policies or institutions, and to warn others not to follow the dissenters’ path. Governments have recently done this in EITI countries as diverse as Ethiopia, Indonesia, Peru and the USA. Arrests and detentions have often come as part of concerted efforts to suppress rising tides of public anger and frustration at ineffective, corrupt or authoritarian states. Human rights activism and monitoring have also commonly been perceived by states as a form of criticism, prompting the detention of activists. For example, in February 2016, Vandalark Patricks, a [Liberian](#) human rights activist, was arrested and charged with sedition and criminal libel after he called for accountability for the killings of human rights defenders.

Governments sometimes arrest large numbers of people during demonstrations, as was the case in [Ethiopia](#), where at least 24,000 people were arrested, with many subsequently held without charges, between early October and late December 2016, under a national state of emergency that was declared to curb anti-government protests. Those detained included members of domestic human rights organisations such as the Human Rights Council, who were kept in custody to prevent them documenting the crackdown on protesters, and prominent opposition leader and chairperson of the Oromo Federalist Congress, Merera Gudina.

Protesters are criminalised in numerous countries, including [Myanmar](#), where several villagers were injured after police forces fired rubber bullets into a crowd that blocked access to a mine during a March 2017 protest over land rights in the Sagaing region. According to local sources, injured protesters refused to go to the hospital out of fear that they would be arrested and charged for taking part in the protest.

Governments frequently target key individuals who may be protest organisers, leaders of social movements or journalists who express dissenting views or are perceived as sympathetic to the opposition. For example, [DRC](#) pro-democracy leader Luc Nkulula was arrested and detained for over a month with 19 other activists during a peaceful sit-in in the city of Goma. In [Kazakhstan](#), Max Bokayev and Talgat Ayan were arrested for their involvement in organising nationwide protests against proposed changes to the country's land code. In November 2016 in [Zambia](#), five journalists and staff of Radio Mano were arrested on accusations of using insulting language against ruling party officials.

Citizens with no organisational affiliation, as well as committed activists, have been arrested and sometimes convicted for publishing social media posts in several countries, including [Ethiopia](#), [Kazakhstan](#), [Niger](#), [Nigeria](#) and [Tanzania](#). In Kazakhstan, a kindergarten teacher facing criminal defamation charges was forcibly confined to psychiatric detention after she was deemed 'socially dangerous' during a trial held with no regard for due process guarantees.

While many detentions are short-term, with the intention of deterring criticism, examples also abound of activists and journalists being kept in prison for longer periods. This was the case with the pro-democracy 'Filimbi' youth activists Fred Bauma and Yves Makwambala in [DRC](#) and the journalist Ahmed Abba in [Cameroon](#), who was held for more than a year. A broadcaster with Radio France Internationale (RFI), Ahmed Abba was charged under the 2014 Anti-Terrorism Act, allegedly aimed at combatting Boko Haram, and held in secret detention for three months before being transferred to the custody of the intelligence services in the capital, Yaoundé. He was physically and psychologically abused while in detention, and questioned without the presence of a lawyer. He claimed the motives for his detention and prosecution were linked to anti-France sentiment in the country, given that RFI is funded by the French government. As for Fred Bauma and Yves Makwambala, they have languished in prison since they were arrested during a civic education workshop for Congolese young people in 2015. In [Guatemala](#), meanwhile, seven indigenous leaders were held in prison for between one and three years for taking part in a peaceful protest against energy projects in their territories. They were eventually released following a court order.

On several occasions activists have been arrested pre-emptively to suppress protests before they start. For instance, during the days leading up to the demonstrations scheduled for late May 2016 in [Kazakhstan](#), at least 34 activists were arrested and sentenced to administrative detention for up to 15 days. In June 2016, authorities in [Senegal](#) arrested five members of a coalition opposing the signing of Economic Partnership Agreements between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the European Union. Their detention was intended to ensure that they would not disrupt the ECOWAS Summit being held in Dakar, Senegal's capital, and after three days in custody they were released.

Particularly for journalists, but also for activists and citizens exercising their right to free expression, defamation laws rank high among the weapons that governments use to silence critics. In [Myanmar](#), the government has repeatedly used the country's Telecommunications Law to arrest people alleged

to have insulted or 'defamed' government leader Aung San Suu Kyi, the president and the military. Activists, journalists and academics alike have been arrested for criticising or insulting heads of state in many other EITI countries, including [Ghana](#) and [Tanzania](#). In [Azerbaijan](#), Giyas Ibrahimov, a 22-year-old activist, was detained for several months before being handed a 10-year jail sentence in October 2016 for spraying graffiti on a statue of a former president.

Large numbers of people asking that their basic economic and social needs are met are also being arrested and detained in EITI countries, even though they are simply seeking to claim their rights. In several countries citizens are routinely detained for making public calls for the state to meet such basic needs as access to land, decent working conditions and greater social protection. One example came in [Cameroon](#) in June 2016, when activist and opposition party leader Bernard Njonga was detained after taking part in a protest. Bernard Njonga was supporting a group of poultry farmers who had been angered by government measures to curb avian flu, which they claimed discriminated against small domestic producers in favour of large importing companies.

Some updates also record the arrest of activists working on indigenous, land rights and environmental issues, including in the [USA](#), where protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline, which lasted for most of 2016, resulted in hundreds of arrests in November 2016. The use of [mass arrests](#) has become more common in the USA since Black Lives Matter protests spread across the country. Not surprisingly, in EITI countries in Latin America, indigenous and land rights activism is also a major driver of repression leading to arrests and detention of activists.

Apart from detention, activists are criminalised in other ways. Judicial harassment is a common tactic used by both state and non-state actors, such as companies and landowners, against indigenous and land rights defenders in Latin America. In [Guatemala](#), for instance, Digna Dalila Mérida, a leader of the Peasant Unity Committee, was arrested in September 2016 as a result of accusations made by a local landowner. She was later released when the judge hearing her case ruled that the charges were without merit. It is also increasingly common, in Latin America and elsewhere, for local elites to label opposition to their business activities as terrorism, and therefore have activists prosecuted on fabricated terrorism charges.

## Excessive force against protests

Between June 2016 and May 2017, the CIVICUS Monitor recorded 58 cases of security forces employing excessive force to disrupt peaceful protests in EITI countries, making this the second most common civic space violation. In the worst cases, police used live ammunition against unarmed and defenceless crowds. Extreme examples of this can be found in DRC and Ethiopia. In [DRC](#), at least 31 people were killed in late September 2016 as police used lethal force against people demonstrating against President Joseph Kabila's attempt to extend his reign beyond the constitutionally established two-term limit. In December 2016, an estimated 40 further citizens were killed during pro-democracy protests. In [Ethiopia](#), a Human Rights Watch report provided evidence of over 400 killings of protesters in the Oromia region between November 2015 and May 2016.

The use of excessive force against protests is not limited to authoritarian regimes. It also affects a number of countries that regularly hold competitive and reasonably fair elections, particularly in Latin America. In [Peru](#), for instance, one person died and 20 were injured following police disruption of a protest against the Las Bambas copper mine in late October 2016.

In [Chad](#), the police reacted harshly, killing a young demonstrator in February 2016, as crowds protested in outrage at the rape of a 16-year old girl by the sons of senior political and military leaders. In [Nigeria](#), 17 pro-Biafran demonstrators were shot dead in May 2016, and at least 10 were killed in November 2016 when police used lethal force during clashes with members of the Shiite Islamic Movement during a religious procession. In [Côte d'Ivoire](#), a protester died and a dozen others were injured by gunfire during a demonstration against rising electricity prices in July 2016. In [Mali](#) in August 2016, between one and three deaths occurred when a demonstration to demand the release

of an arbitrarily detained blogger and radio host was severely repressed. Also in July 2016, a peaceful youth protest expressing opposition to a new interim government was violently repressed in northern [Mali](#), leading to three deaths.

CIVICUS Monitor data show that police often use excessive force against protesters who criticise government decisions and policies or expose high-level government corruption. It seems clear that some governments are intolerant of public displays of dissent. In [Guinea](#), a young man was shot dead by the police in August 2016, as more than half a million people took to the streets of the capital Conakry to protest against alleged government corruption and economic mismanagement. In [DRC](#), tactics aimed at preventing pro-democracy protests have included outright repression as well as intimidatory search and cordon operations, leading to numerous arrests. Protests surrounding elections - either during campaigns or after contested results are made public - are also a frequent source of violence and repression, as seen in [Zambia](#) around the August 2016 elections.

Police in several countries have also used excessive force against protesters who call for action on human rights abuses committed by state or non-state actors. In [Honduras](#), for example, police violently attacked a group of indigenous people after they gathered outside the president's office to demand an investigation into the murder of Berta Cáceres, a well-known environmental and indigenous rights activist assassinated in March 2016. Similarly, in January 2017 in [Iraq](#), police fired shots into the air to disperse demonstrators demanding progress in the investigation of a journalist's abduction and beat four people, one of whom was hospitalised in critical condition. In May 2016, large protests in the 'green zone' of the capital Baghdad were met with lethal force by Iraqi security forces, which used rubber bullets, live ammunition and teargas canisters. Four people were killed and up to 200 were injured. The unarmed, peaceful crowd had assembled to protest about the lack of accountability and investigation into attacks against their communities.

Many people are being met with excessive force when they protest to demand that the state do better at meeting their social and economic needs, including employment, food aid, social welfare and access both to government services and basic goods and services provided by private companies that they believe the government should regulate better. In the [Philippines](#) in April 2016, security forces equipped with military armour and weapons used excessive force to disperse protesters demanding government food aid and other assistance for their drought-stricken region. As a result, at least 40 people were injured and 30 received gunshot wounds. In [Guinea](#), the security forces used teargas to disperse demonstrations held in October 2016 by citizens angered at frequent and unpredictable electric power outages. In January 2017 the police used teargas and rubber bullets against demonstrators protesting against toll collection on a road that crosses an urban area in Lima, capital of [Peru](#). Protesters claimed that the lack of an alternative route made charging for road use a violation of the constitutional right to the freedom of movement. In [Colombia](#) in June 2016, authorities used excessive force to disrupt protests of the Minga movement, which rejects the neoliberal economic model and calls for the creation of a more equitable society. Protests related to social and economic needs were also repressed in 2016, sometimes with resulting deaths of protesters, in [Honduras](#) and [Sierra Leone](#).

Popular opposition to international agreements has also been met with violence, including in [Peru](#), where police fired flares and teargas at a protest against the Trans-Pacific Partnership, injuring several protesters, in February 2016.

Of particular concern for the EITI process, there appears to be a rise in the repression of environmental protests carried out by citizens, often of indigenous heritage, against the advances of extractive industries. For example, in November 2016, a peaceful protest of [Togo's](#) Abobo-Zéglé community against the activities of a new phosphate mining company on their land was violently disrupted by security forces, who used teargas and rubber bullets to disperse the crowd. In the ensuing chaos, several people were trampled on and injured as protesters fled. In [Guatemala](#), a January 2017 attack on farmers and land rights activists protesting against a hydroelectric project in Huehuetenango, which led to the death of Sebastián Alonso, a 72-year-old demonstrator, was



perpetrated by unknown armed assailants who opened fired on the crowd. A protest questioning government mismanagement of natural resources was also repressed in October 2016 in [Senegal](#).

Additionally, the CIVICUS Monitor has tracked a wave of teacher and student protests that were met with excessive state force. Repression of such protests, typically calling for educational reform or advancing student demands, is particularly common in EITI countries in Latin America (including [Honduras](#) and [Peru](#)) and Africa (in [Ghana](#), [Guinea](#), [Malawi](#) and [Senegal](#)). In these cases protesters typically occupy campuses and take to the streets to voice such demands as better working conditions for teachers, reduced student fees and an end to corruption by university authorities. In [Guinea](#), at least five protesters died in February 2017 as student protests over a teachers' strike were met with excessive police force.

While in the overwhelming majority of cases protesters are hurt or killed as a result of actions by state security forces, it should be noted that it was a non-state actor that perpetrated one of the worst massacres of demonstrators in an EITI country during this period. On 23 June 2016, a suicide bombing by the terrorist group Islamic State killed 80 people and injured more than 200 during a protest in Kabul, the capital of [Afghanistan](#). Although the authorities were not to blame for this attack, the incident called into question their ability to protect demonstrators in public spaces adequately.

In other EITI countries, a number of protests have been repressed by a different kind of non-state actor, in the form of private security forces working under the orders of corporations or landowners. A example of this can be found in [Honduras](#), where a group of 210 farmers from Aguán Valley was attacked by private security agents in September 2016 while trying to recover land that a powerful landowner had illegally taken from them.

These violations of the right to the freedom of peaceful assembly are serious and constitute a deliberate attempt to stifle dissent and popular mobilisation. As shown in [2017 CIVICUS research](#) into the factors that influence the sustainability of protest movements around the world, the use of excessive force is among the top structural factors that curtail the ability of protest movements to survive and succeed.

## Censorship of and violence towards journalists

CIVICUS Monitor data show that there is a wide variety of circumstances in which journalists are censored, verbally or physically attacked and killed. Media freedom and the integrity of journalists are most compromised in a subset of EITI countries that includes Colombia, DRC, Ethiopia, Honduras, Iraq, Kazakhstan, the Philippines and Yemen. The situation is particularly bleak in [Yemen](#), where more than 100 press freedom violations were recorded during the first half of 2016, including murders, abductions, disappearances, detentions and assaults, as reported by the Gulf Centre for Human Rights. Eight journalists and two media support staff were killed in Yemen between March 2015 and September 2016.

Coercion and outright violence against journalists are widespread and take many forms. In 2016 and 2017 journalists were kidnapped by guerrillas and criminal gangs in [Colombia](#); abducted by rebels and tortured while in captivity in [Yemen](#); killed by a car bomb in [Ukraine](#); injured and killed by bombs and snipers while covering fighting, and abducted by unknown assailants in [Iraq](#); brutally attacked while covering a scuffle between two rival unions in [Guinea](#); intimidated and murdered in [Guatemala](#) and [Honduras](#); shot dead on air while reading the morning news in the [Dominican Republic](#); physically attacked while attempting to film fraudulent activities taking place at a polling station in [Armenia](#); kidnapped for interrogation after publishing an article about a scandal involving a high-level public official in [Mali](#); arrested during pro-democracy demonstrations in [DRC](#); detained for taking pictures of a police officer receiving a bribe in [Ghana](#); detained for police questioning in [Liberia](#) after re-publishing a "libellous" story about a foreign president; charged with "complicity in interfering with internal security" after publishing the comments of a former rebel leader in the

[Republic of the Congo](#); judicially harassed and imprisoned in [Kazakhstan](#); had their offices raided by security forces in [Zambia](#); had their laptops taken at gunpoint by unknown assailants in [Côte d'Ivoire](#); and were vilified, threatened and prosecuted, for “spreading rumours” and publishing “nonsense and garbage” in [Malawi](#), disseminating “seditious” content in [Tanzania](#) and “inciting revolt” while covering protests in [Côte d'Ivoire](#).

As the above suggests, the reasons why journalists suffer aggression vary widely. Many attacks against journalists take place while they are reporting on protests. In some cases, security forces attack journalists to prevent them photographing or recording the use of inappropriate policing tactics or excessive force during protests. Sometimes these attacks are highly targeted and occur despite journalists wearing visible identification of their role. Most often during protests, however, journalists simply get caught up in untargeted violence against protesters, and suffer the effects of teargas, water hoses and rubber bullets alongside demonstrators. It should also be noted that the state is not the only source of attacks, which are occasionally perpetrated by protesters angered at journalists' perceived political affiliation. In these cases the state has a duty to provide for the security of journalists and, when it fails to do so, to investigate and prosecute attacks properly.

Reporting on political affairs, stating an opinion on political events or criticising government officials can carry serious consequences for journalists in a number of EITI countries. Those who speak up or write to expose government corruption or mismanagement have an increased risk of being attacked. Those affected are often local media workers reporting on wrongdoing in local municipalities or police stations, or simply criticising inefficient or unresponsive local administrations. Such was the case of radio host Hernán Choquepata Ordóñez, who was shot dead in November 2016 during a live broadcast in Arequipa, [Peru](#). The reporter hosted a programme where listeners voiced their complaints and criticised the authorities. He had received death threats, which went unaddressed. A similar fate awaited Larry Que, a newspaper publisher who was shot dead in the [Philippines](#) in December 2016, after writing a column in which he criticised local officials for alleged negligence over an illegal drug factory. It is common for perpetrators of these crimes to be labelled as unknown and most cases remain unsolved. On top of this, there have been instances of murders being openly condoned by the very officials whose job is to prevent them from happening, including Filipino president Rodrigo Duterte, who went as far as [endorsing](#) the killing of “corrupt” journalists.

Short of physical violence, censorship persists as an effective mechanism to silence critical journalism. Cases of censorship, either open or veiled, against journalists and media outlets exposing or reporting on government corruption span from [Albania](#) to [Peru](#). Censorship has repeatedly taken the form of blocked access to the internet or social media in a number of EITI countries, including [Cameroon](#), [Chad](#), [Ethiopia](#) and [Kazakhstan](#).

Journalists have been criminalised, judicially harassed and subjected to trials on flimsy evidence in various countries, including in the case of Ahmed Abba in [Cameroon](#), mentioned above. Attempts to silence journalists through the courts often take the form of the filing of libel and defamation charges that lead to lengthy judicial proceedings and can result in the payment of disproportionate fines, as was seen in 2016 in [Peru](#). There are also several cases of journalists and media outlets being sued by public officials acting in a personal capacity and by businesspeople. Instances of surveillance of journalists and media outlets have also been recorded in [Albania](#) (through wiretapping) and [Honduras](#) (with drones), among other EITI countries.

Criminalisation occasionally takes more extreme forms, as in [Yemen](#), where in April 2017, journalist Yahya Al-Jubaihi was sentenced to death by a state security court in the city of Sana'a. Al-Jubaihi was convicted of spying for Saudi Arabia and passing information to Saudi diplomats. The judicial process took place in a closed-door courtroom that is usually used by Houthi rebel forces for trying Al-Qaeda militants.

## Legislative restrictions

CIVICUS Monitor data show that governments in several EITI countries have recently introduced or implemented legal changes intended to restrict fundamental civil society rights.

Generally speaking, newly introduced obstacles to the exercise of the freedom of association have taken the form of legal and administrative barriers to the creation, functioning, communication and resourcing of CSOs, and have sought to limit the kinds of activities CSOs can develop or the issues they are allowed to cover.

As [Burkina Faso](#) transitioned to democracy, the law on associations that entered into force in February 2016 led to a sharp increase in registered CSOs; however, some provisions of the new legislation could result in undue restrictions on civil society activities. Notably, the new law allows the competent authority to delay the process of granting legal personality in order to conduct a “morality survey” on the organisation that is applying and mandates the creation of a database on CSO leaders and activities, which CSOs fear could be used arbitrarily.

Similarly in [Kazakhstan](#), CSO legislation that entered into force in December 2015 granted the authorities broad new powers to oversee CSOs and provided for the establishment of a new government CSO database. Under the new law, CSOs classified as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are required to provide additional information about their activities on an annual basis; failure to do so or the provision of inaccurate information are punishable with fines or a three-month suspension. Additionally, amendments to the Tax Code that entered into force in October 2016 introduced new reporting obligations for NGOs receiving foreign funding for activities deemed “suspicious”, such as the provision of legal assistance and the carrying out of public opinion studies and information gathering, analysis and dissemination. Additional pressure on human rights CSOs has resulted from targeting through unscheduled, intrusive inspections by tax authorities.

In [Colombia](#), a recent presidential decree curbed direct state contracting with CSOs, which the government views as “a favourite tool of the corrupt to skim off the state.” As the decree was issued, the Colombian Confederation of NGOs expressed concern about the government stifling funding sources and stigmatising CSOs.

In [Nigeria](#), a bill to regulate and monitor civil society activities was proposed in mid-2016. According to civil society sources, if this law is passed, CSOs such as labour unions, professional associations and human rights bodies will face intrusive and unwarranted surveillance of their operations. Similarly in the [Republic of the Congo](#), a proposed bill would introduce ever more complex and costly procedures for registration and the maintenance of legal status, and prohibitions against CSOs engaging in political activity or faith-based organisations participating in public debate.

The exercise of the right to peaceful assembly has also been restricted in various countries by laws that increase the state’s coercive power to maintain public order and suppress protests. In a number of EITI countries laws have been passed or proposed to impose stringent authorisation requirements, privilege the free circulation of traffic over the right of people to join together in public space to express dissent, and allow for the more authoritarian policing of protests.

In [Colombia](#), for instance, a Police Code approved in July 2016 authorised the police to dissolve public demonstrations if an “alteration of coexistence” occurs, a vague term that grants the authorities wide discretionary powers. In [Ukraine](#), a draft bill proposed in late 2016 to regulate the freedom of peaceful assembly could legalise the forcible dispersal of peaceful protests.

In [Iraq](#), a bill proposed in July 2016 seeks to establish a convoluted procedure for obtaining permits for demonstrations. Authorisation would need to be sought six days before a planned event, and the authorities would be able to ban protests for any reason. The draft law also threatens the freedom of expression by imposing a minimum one-year prison sentence for anyone convicted of insulting a religious symbol or figure.

Additionally, decrees establishing a state of emergency and restricting the freedom of peaceful assembly have been issued in various countries, including [Guatemala](#), where a decree that was issued in September 2016 in response to heavy rain and floods allowed for the restriction and prohibition of demonstrations in vulnerable areas, and stated that strikes with “political objectives” could be banned. Due to widespread criticism, the decree was annulled after two days.

Conditions for the exercise of the freedom of expression are also deteriorating in several EITI countries, including as a result of tightened defamation laws, the introduction of cybercrime and cyber-security laws, increased surveillance provisions and the designation of ‘speech crimes’ as a form of terrorism under newly enacted anti-terrorism laws.

One such cyber criminality law was passed in [Guinea](#) in June 2016. Local and international CSOs and activists warned that its ill-defined notions of “false information” and “data to be kept secret” and its provisions criminalising online abuse could be used against the political opposition and to curb dissenting views in civil society and the media.

In [Malawi](#), an Electronic Transactions Bill passed in 2016 introduced regulations on social media that may well be used to suppress critical voices, including a provision that “any person who uses a computer for making any request, suggestion or proposal which is obscene, lewd, lascivious or indecent, commits an offence known as cyber harassment and shall upon conviction, be liable to a fine of K2,000,000.00 [approximately US\$2,800] and to imprisonment for five years.”

In the [Dominican Republic](#), two bills that could undermine the freedom of expression were submitted for parliamentary consideration in 2016. One of the initiatives seeks to regulate the protection of the rights to privacy, honour, good name and image, and establish definitions of media responsibilities and professional secrecy; the other one states that media outlets directors have a “duty of cooperation” with the Public Ministry, which “may request the information needed to identify the authors of publications under their supervision.”

In [Kazakhstan](#), amendments proposed in November 2016 to several laws relating to the media would make it an obligation for journalists to verify the accuracy of all information received, impose new restrictions on obtaining information from public bodies, and require internet users to undergo electronic identification before making comments on online resources.

In [Germany](#), a bill proposed in June 2016 to reform the Foreign Intelligence Law threatens to weaken protections against surveillance by the Federal Intelligence Service for non-German citizens. Three United Nations Special Rapporteurs criticised the initiative and noted that the right to the freedom of expression must be upheld regardless of nationality and national borders.

Bills restricting one or more civic space freedoms have also been recently drafted, if not yet passed, in [Togo](#) and the [United Kingdom](#).

## Positive developments

While it is clear from the above that civic space is under serious pressure in many EITI countries, civil society has continued to fight to defend its space, and in some cases has succeeded in obtaining improvements. The CIVICUS Monitor tracks improvements in civic space conditions, and has documented developments as varied as the adoption of a bill on the protection of human rights defenders in [Mali](#), the release of activists in [Guatemala](#) and protesters in [Ethiopia](#), the approval of a law granting access to public information in [Togo](#) and the emergence of a stronger culture of independent investigative reporting in [Mongolia](#).

The CIVICUS Monitor has also compiled examples of the successful exercise of the rights to the freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and expression, particularly the uneventful holding of peaceful demonstrations, including by groups that are excluded and vulnerable in specific contexts, such as LGBTI groups in [Ukraine](#). This reflects the reality that in a large number of cases peaceful protests in EITI countries are well policed and people are able to take to the streets to make their

voices heard without being disrupted or attacked. The CIVICUS Monitor will continue to track these positive trends, along with negative ones, in the months and years ahead.

## Conclusion and recommendations

While this report has not limited itself to the impact of extractive industries on civic space, nor only those civic space violations that could jeopardise the EITI process, a growing area of civil society concern is with the connections between civic space restriction and natural resource extraction, and the extent to which backlashes come in response to civil society's demands for transparency in the extractives sector. Several recent pieces of analysis have emphasised the role of extractive industries as a driver of repression of civil society.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, a number of civic space violations recorded by the CIVICUS Monitor, presented above, are explicitly connected to extractive industries. These include, but are not restricted to, the growing repression of environmental protests by communities, often of indigenous heritage, against extractive activities that threaten their livelihoods. As the CIVICUS Monitor develops, it will increasingly be able to identify the vulnerable groups being targeted for violations of the freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and expression, the forces that are most responsible for those violations, and the major drivers of restriction. As a result, it will be able to better weigh the contribution of the extractive sector to civic space restrictions.

Turning to EITI, it is important to bear in mind that one key difference between the initiative and other efforts to improve revenue transparency is that:<sup>9</sup>

“the EITI is not only about publishing the numbers. Countries implementing the EITI have a multi-stakeholder platform for dialogue about all aspects of the use of their country's natural resources.”

In every country, a multi-stakeholder group adapts the EITI implementation process to reflect local circumstances, needs and preferences. Because of this, civil society participation is a key element in the EITI process. This means that, while EITI may not be an initiative explicitly framed around issues of civic space and human rights, it must be concerned with the conditions in which civil society forms and functions, not least so that civil society can play a meaningful role in its process and bring about greater transparency and accountability.

While aware of the delicate balance required to keep participating countries within the initiative in the hope that their participation will improve the transparency and accountability of extractive industries where it is most needed, we believe that EITI should tighten its standards on civil society participation in order to promote the development of healthier civic space. We therefore recommend that EITI:

- Enhances its requirements for multi-stakeholder engagement in a way that contributes to the creation of a more robust civic space. In doing so, EITI should ensure that CSOs enjoy the “[full, free, active and effective engagement](#)” they are meant to have within country-level multi-stakeholder groups.
- Ensures that all member governments engage fully and meaningfully with CSOs and implement the recommendations made in the [review](#) of multi-stakeholder groups carried out by MSI Integrity in 2015.

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<sup>8</sup> See, for example, ‘2017 State of Civil Society Report: Civil Society and the Private Sector’, CIVICUS, 2017, <https://goo.gl/oR8V76>; ‘Against all odds: The perils of fighting for natural resource justice’, CIVICUS and Publish What You Pay, 2016, [goo.gl/GvVrTN](http://goo.gl/GvVrTN).

<sup>9</sup> ‘FAQ: What is the difference between the EITI and the other efforts to improve revenue transparency?’ EITI, [goo.gl/QOQE6x](http://goo.gl/QOQE6x).

- Applies existing requirements more strictly and consistently to make sure that conditions for meaningful civil society participation are met in member countries;
- Promotes an early validation process against the EITI Standard - the requirements that apply to all EITI member countries - for all those countries in which civic space is seriously restricted.
- Prescribes corrective actions to governments of countries where there are serious civic space restrictions and closely monitors their progress in implementing recommendations;
- Credibly applies or threatens to apply sanctions, including suspension, towards countries failing to make discernible progress in upholding fundamental civil society rights.



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