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THE PHILIPPINES UNDER DUTERTE:
A TERM-END PERFORMANCE
EVALUATION BASED ON
INTERNATIONAL
**GOVERNANCE
INDICATORS**



THE PHILIPPINES UNDER DUTERTE: A TERM-END PERFORMANCE EVALUATION BASED ON INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

Was the Duterte administration a success or a failure? Unfortunately, there is no one report card that we can rely on to answer that question. This paper will attempt to present the performance of the Duterte administration from the perspective of the performance of the Philippines using the very same indicators of good governance listed by the National Economic Development Authority, as follows: (1) The Worldwide Governance Indicators, (2) Ease of Doing Business, (3) Global Competitiveness Index, (4) Economic Freedom Index, (5) Corruption Perception Index, (6) Rule of Law Index, and (7) Open Budget Index.

Journalists, historians, and analysts compile a list of the most significant events of every year in what is commonly referred to as “the year that was.” The list, generally, does not generate much controversy when prepared from the perspective of news as a mere accounting of events. It, however, sparks more attention when the author introduces the relative importance of the events composing the list, such as when the events are ranked or the list is limited to a certain number. In these cases, issues would naturally arise as value judgments come in. This situation becomes particularly emphasized when the list is prepared for a specific—and therefore, narrower—field.

Such is the case in politics and government. A list of accomplishments of any administration would equally be as controversial as a list of failed promises. But these lists continue to be developed anyway, primarily to document and serve as material for public consumption. For instance, it is normal and expected for any administration to release its list of accomplishments for the first 100 days, for each year, and for the entire term.

The Duterte administration is no exception. Starting with his last State of the Nation Address (SONA) in July 2021, Duterte has not wasted any

opportunity reciting his achievements. Expectedly, opposition politicians lambasted and negated his claims, calling these “a superspreader event of lies, threats, empty and failed promises, inaccuracies, and misleading information, all of which were already fact-checked and disproven before,” according to the House of Representatives’ Makabayan bloc, as reported by Lalu and Corrales (2021).

Moreover, the Philippine government held a two-day “Duterte Legacy Summit” on 30 and 31 May 2022 to showcase the accomplishments of the six-year administration of President Rodrigo Duterte in what was dubbed “The Final Report to the People.” The six Cabinet clusters, namely: (1) Security, Justice, and Peace, (2) Infrastructure Development, (3) Economic Development, (4) Climate Change Adaptation, Mitigation, and Disaster Risk Reduction, (5) Participatory Governance, and (6) Human Development and Poverty Reduction reported their achievements. In addition, testimonials and success stories were also shared by selected beneficiaries of specific government projects.

* THE VIEWS AND OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS PAPER ARE THOSE OF THE AUTHOR AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THOSE OF THE INSTITUTE.

Among the accomplishments the administration lays claim to are the fulfillment of campaign promises such as the Universal Health care Law and Malasakit Center, Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education, Bangsamoro Organic Law, the anti-illegal drugs campaign, migrant workers’ protection, tax reform laws such as the TRAIN and CREATE laws, modern infrastructure under the Build-Build-Build program and amendments to the Retail Trade Liberalization Act, Public Service Act, and Foreign Investments Act (Nicolas, 2022). There are many other lists of achievements.

Not surprisingly, the Duterte Legacy Summit was marked with controversies. Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez reported that many socioeconomic reform measures were finally enacted under the Duterte administration, including the Rice Tariffication law. Ironically, this law was denounced as an “assault on farmers’ productivity and welfare” by the women’s peasant group Amihan (De La Peña, 2021). Cathy Estavillo from Amihan, as quoted by De La Peña in his report (2021), said that “if there was (sic) any legacy that Duterte would leave to farmers, it would be neglect.” For the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), the administration’s legacy is one where the government “encouraged a culture of impunity,” according to its 48-page report (Subingsubing, 2022). This finding is based on an earlier determination by the CHR en banc that police used “excess, unreasonable” force and showed clear intent to kill during anti-drug operations.”

This scenario of contradicting assessments pervades the political scene, not just in the Philippines. Both sides cannot be right on the same issue. With each side feigning objectivity, the need for more credible and unbiased sources of the administration’s performance evaluation becomes more evident. Several measures are developed and presented specifically for their purported lack of bias.

For some political observers, the classic job approval rating measures

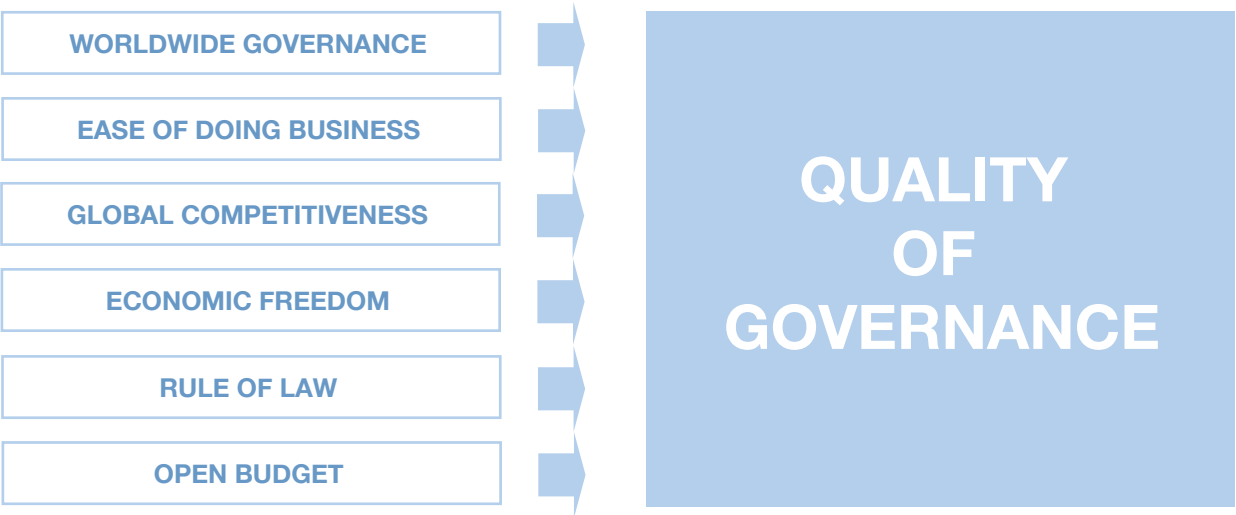
a president’s performance. In particular, Newport (2019) believes that when the job approval rating is used as a measure of a president’s performance, the people are deputized as data summarizers, asking them to take into account all aspects of the president’s performance and to summarize it with one response. In the Philippines, this takes the form of the satisfaction ratings released by the Social Weather Stations and the performance approval ratings and trust ratings by Pulse Asia Research, Inc.

On the other hand, there is widespread consensus that the state of the economy matters for presidents’ standing in public opinion (Burden and Mughan, 2003). This is because the performance of an economy is usually assessed in terms of the achievement of economic objectives, such as growth and development.

Many indices also compare and rank countries in various performance and policy areas. These measures are not without criticisms, with methodological, conceptual, and logical flaws commonly cited. Nonetheless, these indices may arguably present—albeit obliquely—a view of the president’s performance in a similar way that a company’s performance reflects that of its Chief Executive Officer.

This paper will use the indicators of good governance listed by the National Economic Development Authority, as follows: (1) The Worldwide Governance Indicators, (2) Ease of Doing Business, (3) Global Competitiveness Index, (4) Economic Freedom Index, (5) Corruption Perception Index, (6) Rule of Law Index, and (7) Open Budget Index.

FIGURE 1 . GOOD GOVERNANCE INDICATORS



SOURCE: NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (NEDA)

THE WORLDWIDE GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

The Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) measure the quality of governance in over 200 countries using six key dimensions of governance: (1) voice and accountability, (2) political stability and absence of violence/terrorism, (3) government effectiveness, (4) regulatory quality, (5) the rule of law, and (6) control of corruption. The World Bank (n.d.) explains the different categories in the WGI as follows:

The category voice and accountability is about the extent of participation of a country's citizens in choosing their government, including their freedom of expression, freedom of association, and free media. The category political stability and absence of violence/terrorism indicates the perceived likelihood of political stability and political violence. Moreover, the category government effectiveness summarizes perceptions of the quality of public services, civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies.

In addition, the category regulatory quality is about the perceived ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that permit and promote private sector development. Next, the category rule of law captures perceptions of the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, and in particular, the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police, and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence. Finally, the category control of corruption captures perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including petty and grand forms of corruption and “capture” of the state by elites and private interests.

The annual Worldwide Governance Index was started in 1996. Table 1 presents the percentile rank — the country's rank among all countries covered, with 0 as the lowest and 100 as the highest — of the Philippines from 2015 to 2021

In the latest WGI results in 2020, the Philippines achieved its highest percentile rank in the government effectiveness category at 56.25. This standing is also the highest under the Duterte administration (shaded area in the table).

The country posted its lowest rank in political stability and absence of violence/terrorism in the latest results at 18.87. This standing is a marked improvement from the ranking at the start of the Duterte administration at only 9.52.

TABLE 1. WORLDWIDE GOVERNANCE INDEX OF THE PHILIPPINES
(2015-2020)

Year	VA	PS	GE	RQ	RL	CC
2020	41.06	18.87	56.25	53.37	31.73	34.13
2019	45.41	16.51	54.81	55.29	34.13	31.25
2018	47.34	12.74	55.29	53.37	34.13	34.13
2017	48.77	11.43	51.44	55.77	36.54	39.42
2016	51.23	19.52	51.92	53.85	39.42	36.06
2015	51.23	19.52	57.21	52.40	43.27	39.90

SOURCE: THE WORLD BANK

TABLE 1A . SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES UNDER THE DUTERTE ADMINISTRATION
(WGI)

Index/Indicator	Worsened	No Change	Improved
Worldwide Governance Index			
Voice and accountability	✓		
Political stability and absence of violence			✓
Government effectiveness			✓
Regulatory quality	✓		
Rule of law	✓		
Control of corruption	✓		

SOURCE: THE WORLD BANK

The country posted its lowest rank in political stability and absence of violence/terrorism in the latest results at 18.87. This standing is a marked improvement from the ranking at the start of the Duterte administration at only 9.52.

The Philippines posted lower rankings for 2020 in the categories voice and accountability, regulatory quality, the rule of law, and control of corruption than when the Duterte administration started in 2016. The category with the most significant decline was voice and accountability, from 51.23 in 2016 to 41.06, a drop of more than 10 percentage points.

It is interesting to note that the Philippines, in 2020, posted its lowest ranking ever in the category rule of law at 31.73 and in the category voice and accountability at 41.06.

Table 1A presents the summary of outcomes for the Worldwide Governance Indicators under the Duterte administration.

EASE OF DOING BUSINESS

The Ease of Doing Business index is part of the annual Doing Business report published by the World Bank Group. Higher rankings indicated better and simpler regulations for businesses.

The ranking was based on the following sub-indices: (1) starting a business, (2) dealing with construction permits, (3) getting electricity, (4) registering property, (5) getting credit, (6) protecting investors, (7) paying taxes, (8) trading across borders, (9) enforcing contracts, and (10) resolving insolvency. From the ranking, each country is classified as very easy, easy, medium, or below average in terms of ease of doing business.

There were controversies about data irregularities and manipulation in 2018 and 2020. However, the specific issues uncovered had been addressed. Nonetheless, the Doing Business project was discontinued in September 2021. Table 2A provides the Ease of Doing Business score, rank, and classification of the Philippines from 2016 to 2020. Table 2B provides the ranking of the Philippines in the sub-indices.

The Duterte administration (shaded area in table) started with an Ease of Doing Business rank of 103

TABLE 2A . EASE OF DOING BUSINESS, PHILIPPINES
(2015 - 2020)

Year	Score	Rank	Classification
2020	62.8	95	Easy
2019	60.9	124	Easy
2018	59.3	113	Easy
2017	59.3	99	Easy
2016	58.2	103	Easy
2015	60.5	95	Easy

SOURCE: WORLD BANK GROUP

TABLE 2B . EASE OF DOING BUSINESS SUB-INDICES, PHILIPPINES
(2015 - 2020)

Year	SB	CP	GE	RP	GC	PM	PT	TB	EC	RI
2020	171	85	32	120	132	72	95	113	152	65
2019	166	94	29	116	184	132	94	104	151	63
2018	173	101	31	114	142	146	105	99	149	59
2017	171	82	22	112	118	137	115	95	136	56
2016	165	99	19	112	109	155	126	140	95	53
2015	161	124	16	108	104	154	127	65	124	50

Legend: SB (Starting a business); CP (Dealing with construction permits); GE (Getting electricity); RP (Registering property); GC (Getting credit); PM (Protecting minority investors); PT (Paying taxes); TB (Trading across borders); EC (Enforcing contract); RI (Resolving insolvency)

SOURCE: WORLD BANK GROUP

and precariously moved to rank 95 by 2020, maintaining the classification “easy” throughout the period, though only two spots away from the next lower classification of “medium” in 2020.

Of the ten sub-indices in the Ease of Doing Business index, the ranking of the Philippines improved in only three areas—dealing with construction permits, from 124th to 85th; protecting minority investors, from 154th to 72nd; and paying taxes, from 127th to 95th—from the start of the Duterte administration in 2016 to 2020.

The seven areas where the country deteriorated in its ranking for the same period are: starting a business, from rank 161st to 171st; getting electricity, from 16th to 32nd; registering property, from 108th to 120th; getting credit, from 104th to 132nd; trading across borders, from 65th to 113th; enforcing contract, from 124th to 152nd; and resolving insolvency, from 50th to 65th.

The most improved area for the Philippines for the same period is protecting minority investors—climbing 82 spots, from 154th to 72nd. On the other hand, the country experienced its worst setback in trading across borders, dropping from the 65th spot to the 113th, or a slide of 48 places.

Table 2C presents the summary of outcomes for the Ease of Doing Business under the Duterte administration.

GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS INDEX

The Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) is a ranking integrated into the Global Competitiveness Report, published annually by the World Economic Forum (WEF). The GCI assesses the competitiveness landscape of countries and how countries achieve and maintain economic growth.

The World Economic Forum (n.d.) defines competitiveness as the “set of institutions, policies, and factors that determine the level of productivity of a county.” The fundamental principle of WEF is that a more competitive economy is more likely to grow faster over time.

The GCI is divided into 12 pillars, grouped into four components, as follows: (1) enabling environment, (2) human capital, (3) markets, and (4) innovation ecosystem.

Table 3 presents the GCI (Overall Ranking) of the Philippines from 2014 to 2019.

TABLE 2C . SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES UNDER THE DUTERTE ADMINISTRATION
(EODB)

Index/Indicator	Worsened	No Change	Improved
Ease of Doing Business			✓
Starting a business	✓		
Dealing with construction permits			✓
Getting electricity	✓		
Registering property	✓		
Getting credit	✓		
Protecting minority investors			✓
Paying taxes			✓
Trading across borders	✓		
Enforcing contract	✓		
Resolving insolvency	✓		

SOURCE: THE WORLD BANK

TABLE 3 . GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS INDEX, OVERALL RANKING, PHILIPPINES
(2014 - 2019)

Year	Rank	Score
2019	64	61.9
2018	56	62.1
2017	56	4.35
2016	57	4.36
2015	47	4.40
2014	52	4.40

SOURCE: WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM (WEF)

TABLE 3A . GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS INDEX, ENABLING ENVIRONMENT
(2014 - 2019)

Year	Pillar 1 Institutions	Pillar 2 Infrastructure	Pillar 3 ICT adoption	Pillar 4 Macroeconomic stability
2019	87	96	88	55
2018	101	92	67	43
2017	94	97	83	22
2016	81	95	83	20
2015	77	90	68	24
2014	67	91	69	26

SOURCE: WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM (WEF)

The ranking of the Philippines, under the leadership of Duterte (shaded area in the table), in the Global Competitiveness Index dropped significantly in 2019 to 64th place from the previous year’s 56th place and 57th place when he assumed the presidency in 2016, a drop of 8 and 7 spots, respectively.

Table 3A shows the ranking of the Philippines, from 2014 to 2019, for the four pillars belonging to the enabling environment component—institutions, infrastructure, ICT adoption, and macroeconomic stability.

Regarding the pillars belonging to the component enabling environment, the Philippines deteriorated in all areas under the Duterte leadership (shaded area in the table, from 2016 to 2019).

For this component of the GCI, the Philippines suffered the most in macroeconomic stability, dropping 35 slots from 20th place when Duterte assumed the presidency to 55th in 2019. It is widely accepted that sustainable economic growth is unreachable with an unstable macroeconomic environment. For this reason, macroeconomic stability is essential to business and, therefore, to the country’s overall competitiveness.

Though not as severe as the country’s position in macroeconomic stability dip, the Philippines nonetheless suffered a drop in rankings in institutions, infrastructure, and ICT adoption.

The six-spot drop in ranking for institutions could mean a perceived negative government attitude toward markets, such as corruption, dishonesty in dealing with public contracts, lack of transparency and trustworthiness, and political dependence on the judicial system.

Ironically, the country’s ranking in infrastructure did not significantly improve, considering the administration’s flagship “Build, Build, Build” program that is supposed to usher in the golden era of infrastructure.

Similarly, the ICT adoption area is where the Philippines could have achieved a better position, considering the establishment of the Department of Information and Communications Technology in 2016. Instead, the country’s position deteriorated from the 83rd spot to the 88th spot in 2019.

Table 3B shows the ranking of the Philippines, from 2014 to 2019, for the two pillars belonging to the human capital component—health and skills.

TABLE 3B . GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS INDEX, HUMAN CAPITAL
(2014 - 2019)

Year	Pillar 5 Health	Pillar 6 Skills
2019	102	39
2018	101	67
2017	82	55
2016	81	58
2015	86	63
2014	92	64

SOURCE: WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM (WEF)

In the human capital component, there has been significant improvement in the area of skills under the Duterte administration (shaded area in the table, from the 58th spot in 2016 to the 39th in 2019, an escalation of 19 spots. People with improved skills contribute to productivity and the country’s competitiveness.

On the other hand, health, the only other pillar in the human capital component of the GCI, suffered a setback of 21 spots, from 81st in 2016 to 102nd in 2019. Like skills, a healthy workforce is necessary to improve the country’s productivity and competitiveness. However, it is also important to note that these are pre-pandemic results.

Table 3C shows the ranking of the Philippines, from 2014 to 2019, for the four pillars belonging to the component markets—product market, labor market, financial system, and market size.

The Philippines, under the Duterte administration (shaded area in the table), made significant headway in improving the pillars under the component markets of the GCI.

The country achieved an impressive 47-spot improvement in the ranking in two pillars—the product market, from its 99th spot in 2016 to its 52nd spot in 2019, and the labor market, from its 86th mark to 39th, for the same period. These results generally signal a much-improved efficiency in the product and labor markets, allowing some flexibility to businesses.

The pillar financial system improved from its 48th in 2016 to 43rd in 2019. However, the pillar market size managed to maintain its position at 31st.

Table 3D shows the ranking of the Philippines, from 2014 to 2019, for the two pillars belonging to the innovation ecosystem component—business dynamism and innovation capability.

Business dynamism—essential to productivity and sustained economic growth—improved from 2016 to 2019, under the Duterte administration (shaded area in the table), from the 52nd to the 44th spot. This result could mean a significant improvement in the formation of new businesses and job creation.

Innovation capability has decreased for the same period from occupying the 62nd spot to the 72nd spot. This outcome could mean a slowing down in the ability of the country to push the frontiers of knowledge, perhaps, due to reduced investment in research and development

TABLE 3C . GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS INDEX, MARKETS
(2014 - 2019)

Year	Pillar 7 Product market	Pillar 8 Labor market	Pillar 9 Financial system	Pillar 10 Market size
2019	52	39	43	31
2018	60	36	39	32
2017	103	84	52	27
2016	99	86	48	31
2015	80	82	48	30
2014	70	91	49	35

SOURCE: WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM (WEF)

TABLE 3D . GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS INDEX, INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM
(2014 - 2019)

Year	Pillar 11 Business dynamism	Pillar 12 Innovation capability
2019	44	72
2018	39	67
2017	58	65
2016	52	62
2015	42	48
2014	46	52

SOURCE: WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM (WEF)

or a less-than-conducive environment from both the public and private sectors.

Table 3E presents the summary of outcomes for the Global Competitiveness Index under the Duterte administration.

INDEX OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM

The Index of Economic Freedom is released annually by The Heritage Foundation and The Wall Street Journal. The Heritage Foundation (n.d.) defines economic freedom as “the fundamental right of every human to control his or her own labor and property.”

The organization explained further that “in an economically free society, individuals are free to work, produce, consume, and invest in any way they please” and that “governments allow labor, capital, and goods to move freely, and refrain from coercion or constraint of liberty beyond the extent necessary to protect and maintain liberty itself.”

Countries are scored from 0 to 100—from no economic freedom to total economic freedom—on 12 aspects divided into four categories: (1) rule of law, (2) government size, (3) regulatory efficiency, and (4) market openness. Countries that attain an overall score of 80 to 100 are considered as “free”; those with a score of 70 to 79.9 are considered “mostly free”: from 60 to 69.9, “moderately free”; from 50 to 59.9, “mostly unfree”; and from 0 to 49.9 are considered “repressed.”

Table 4 shows the rank and score of the Philippines for the Index of Economic Freedom from 2015 to 2022.

The Philippines under the Duterte administration (shaded area in table) dropped 10 spots from being ranked number 70 in 2016 to 80 in 2022. It is interesting to note that in Duterte’s earlier years, the country improved its ranking in 2017 to the 58th spot and the 61st spot in 2018. In the years 2019 and 2020, the country slid to its former rank in 2016 of 70th spot.

Table 4A shows the scores for the aspects under rule of law of the Philippines for the Index of Economic Freedom from 2015 to 2022. Under the category rule of law are property rights, judicial effectiveness, and government integrity

TABLE 3E . SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES UNDER THE DUTERTE ADMINISTRATION
(GGI)

Index/Indicator	Worsened	No Change	Improved
Global Competitiveness Index	✓		
Institutions	✓		
Infrastructure	✓		
ICT adoption	✓		
Macroeconomic stability	✓		
Health	✓		
Skills			✓
Product market			✓
Labor market			✓
Financial system			✓
Market size			✓
Business dynamism			✓
Innovation capability	✓		

SOURCE: WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM (WEF)

TABLE 4 . INDEX OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM, RANK AND SCORE, PHILIPPINES
(2015 - 2022)

Year	Rank	Score
2022	80	61.1
2021	73	64.1
2020	70	64.5
2019	70	63.8
2018	61	65.0
2017	58	65.6
2016	70	63.1
2015	76	62.2

SOURCE: THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

TABLE 4A . INDEX OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM, RULE OF LAW, PHILIPPINES
(2015 - 2022)

Year	Property Rights	Judicial Effectiveness	Government Integrity
2022	47.1	25.6	34.7
2021	57.0	34.5	40.6
2020	54.6	34.2	38.7
2019	48.7	36.4	30.9
2018	45.0	38.2	34.4
2017	49.2	37.1	38.7
2016	30.0	N/A	38.0
2015	30.0	N/A	36.0

SOURCE: THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

The country’s score for property rights increased from 30.0 to 47.1 from 2016 to 2022, under the Duterte administration (shaded area in table). However, the score for 2022 is a decline of about 10 points from 2021. Judicial effectiveness was not available as a variable in 2016. In 2017, when it was introduced, the country posted a score of 37.1. By 2022, the country’s score has declined to 25.6. For government integrity, the country’s score also suffered from 38.0 in 2016 to 34.7 in 2022.

Table 4B shows the scores for the aspects under government size of the Philippines for the Index of Economic Freedom from 2015 to 2022. For the category government size, there are three aspects under it—tax burden, government spending, and fiscal health.

The scores of the Philippines for tax burden, government spending, and fiscal health follow the declining trend of the previous areas under the Duterte administration (shaded area in the table).

The tax burden fell from 79.0 in 2016, when President Duterte took over the presidency, to 76.8 by 2022, his last year in power. The score for government spending was at 89.6 in 2016 and fell to 84.2 by 2022. Fiscal health, which was at a high of 97.2 in 2017, when introduced, declined to 81.8 in 2022, suffering the most significant slide of 15.4 points in the category of government size.

TABLE 4B . INDEX OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM, GOVERNMENT SIZE, PHILIPPINES
(2015 - 2022)

Year	Tax Burden	Government Spending	Fiscal Health
2022	76.8	84.2	81.8
2021	76.8	87.4	94.3
2020	76.7	87.9	96.3
2019	76.9	88.7	97.1
2018	78.9	89.3	97.7
2017	78.9	89.4	97.2
2016	79.0	89.6	N/A
2015	79.1	89.3	N/A

SOURCE: THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

TABLE 4C . INDEX OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM, REGULATORY EFFICIENCY, PHILIPPINES
(2015 - 2022)

Year	Business Freedom	Labor Freedom	Monetary Freedom
2022	61.5	58.0	69.4
2021	58.2	57.7	68.7
2020	59.5	57.4	66.9
2019	61.3	57.9	69.6
2018	62.6	57.6	76.3
2017	62.6	57.2	80.6
2016	63.0	57.1	77.7
2015	55.3	58.2	78.8

SOURCE: THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Table 4C shows the scores for the aspects under regulatory efficiency of the Philippines for the Index of Economic Freedom from 2015 to 2022. Under regulatory efficiency are business freedom, labor freedom, and monetary freedom.

The country saw a slight improvement in the score for labor freedom under the Duterte administration (shaded area in the table) from 57.1 in 2016 to 58.0 in 2022. However, both business freedom and monetary freedom suffered in their scores. Business freedom was at 63.0 in 2016 and 61.5 in 2022. The country scored 77.7 in 2016 and was down to 69.4 by 2022.

Finally, Table 4D shows the scores for the aspects under market openness of the Philippines for the Index of Economic Freedom from 2015 to 2022. Under market openness are trade freedom, investment freedom, and financial freedom.

Of the three freedoms under market openness, only trade freedom posted a change in score for the Philippines for the period under the Duterte administration (shaded area in the table)—a decrease from 76.4 in 2016 to 73.8 in 2022.

Both Investment freedom and financial freedom remained unchanged during the Duterte administration at a score of 60.0.

Table 4E presents the summary of outcomes for the Index of Economic Freedom under the Duterte administration.

CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX

Every year, the non-governmental organization Transparency International publishes the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) which ranks countries based on the perceived level of corruption—abuse of entrusted power for private gain—in the public sector.

The CPI ranks on a scale from 100 (very clean) to 0 (highly corrupt). Countries scoring 0 to 49 are perceived as more corrupt and those from 50 to 99 as less corrupt. Table 5 shows the ranking of the Philippines from 2012 to 2021.

TABLE 4D . INDEX OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM, MARKET OPENNESS, PHILIPPINES
(2015 - 2022)

Year	Trade Freedom	Investment Freedom	Financial Freedom
2022	73.8	60.0	60.0
2021	74.2	60.0	60.0
2020	81.6	60.0	60.0
2019	78.2	60.0	60.0
2018	80.7	60.0	60.0
2017	76.4	60.0	60.0
2016	76.4	60.0	60.0
2015	75.4	60.0	60.0

SOURCE: THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

TABLE 4E . SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES UNDER THE DUTERTE ADMINISTRATION
(IEF)

Index/Indicator	Worsened	No Change	Improved
Index of Economic Freedom	✓		
Property rights			✓
Judicial effectiveness	✓		
Government integrity	✓		
Tax burden	✓		
Government spending	✓		
Fiscal health	✓		
Business freedom	✓		
Labor freedom			✓
Monetary freedom	✓		
Trade freedom	✓		
Investment freedom		✓	
Financial freedom		✓	

SOURCE: THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

According to Transparency International (2021), the global average score in 2021 is 33 points and that two-thirds of countries scored below 50, indicating serious corruption problems. The Philippines belongs with those countries scoring below 50 and with serious corruption problems. Worse, it also scored way lower than the global average.

Under the Duterte administration (shaded area in the table), the Philippines started off with a CPI of 35 in 2016 and, by 2021, it registered a CPI of 33. Averaging the CPIs from 2016 to 2021, the resulting score is 34 points. These findings point to a stagnation of anti-corruption efforts in the Philippines.

The best rating the country has achieved in the CPI was in 2014 at 38 under the Aquino III administration.

Table 5A presents the summary of outcome for the Corruption Perceptions Index under the Duterte administration.

RULE OF LAW INDEX

The Rule of Law Index is based on eight dimensions of the rule of law: (1) constraints on government powers, (2) absence of corruption, (3) order and security, (4) fundamental rights, (5) open government, (6) regulatory enforcement, (7) civil justice, and (8) criminal justice. It is released annually by the World Justice Project, an international civil society organization committed to “working to advance the rule of law around the world” (World Justice Project, n.d.).

The rule of law is defined by the World Justice Project (n.d.) as a “durable system of laws, institutions, norms, and community commitment that delivers accountability, just law, open government and accessible and impartial justice. According to the organization, rule of law “correlates to higher economic growth, greater peace, less inequality, improved health outcomes, and more education.”

Table 6 presents the Rule of Law Index—rank and score—of the Philippines from 2015 to 2021.

While the decline in the score of the Philippines in the Rule of Law Index may be seen as insignificant at 0.5, from 0.51 in 2016 to 0.46 in 2022, the corresponding drop in the ranking of the Philippines is definitely significant from 70 in 2016 to 102 in 2021, a drop of 32 spots in the ranking.

TABLE 5 . CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX OF THE PHILIPPINES
(2015 - 2021)

Year	Rank	Score
2021	117	33
2020	115	34
2019	113	34
2018	99	36
2017	111	34
2016	101	35
2015	95	35

SOURCE: TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL

TABLE 5A . SUMMARY OF OUTCOME UNDER THE DUTERTE ADMINISTRATION
(CPI)

Index/Indicator	Worsened	No Change	Improved
Corruption Perceptions Index	✓		

TABLE 6 . RULE OF LAW INDEX, RANK AND SCORE, PHILIPPINES
(2015 - 2021)

Year	Rank	Score
2021	102	0.46
2020	91	0.47
2019	90	0.47
2017-2018	88	0.47
2016	70	0.51
2015	51	0.53

SOURCE: WORLD JUSTICE PROJECT

Of the eight dimensions of the Rule of Law index, Table 6A presents factors 1 to 4—constraints on government powers, absence of corruption, open government, and fundamental rights of the Philippines from 2015 to 2021.

The Philippines dipped in ranking in all four factors from 2016 to 2021 under the Duterte administration (shaded area in the table).

The dimension called fundamental rights (labeled as FR in the table) suffered the biggest decline with the country at the 83rd spot in 2016 down to the 123rd spot by 2021, or a slide of 40 spots. It had a corresponding decrease in score from 0.50 in 2016 to 0.39 in 2021.

The constraints in government powers (labeled as CGP in the table) suffered the second biggest slide in ranking of 34 spots from 51st in 2016 to 85th in 2021 and a corresponding drop in the score from 0.59 in 2016 to 0.48 in 2021.

In terms of absence of corruption (labeled as AoC in the table), the country also suffered a big decline in ranking of 21 spots, from the 56th spot in 2016 to 77th in 2021.

For open government (labeled as OG in the table), the drop in the score of the Philippines under the Duterte administration is insignificant, from 0.51 in 2016 to 0.50 in 2021. However, there was a corresponding eight-spot decline in ranking from 53rd in 2016 to 71st in 2021.

Completing the eight dimensions of the Rule of Law index, Table 6B presents factors 5 to 8—order and security, regulatory enforcement, civil justice, and criminal justice of the Philippines from 2015 to 2021.

The country, under the Duterte administration (shaded area in the table) suffered the biggest drop in ranking in the area of Criminal Justice (labeled as CrJ in the table), from the 84th spot in 2016 to the 120th spot in 2021, or a drop of 36 spots.

The second area that suffered the most decline in ranking is the Order and Security (labeled as OaS in the table), from the 77th spot in 2016 to the 110th spot in 2021, or a drop of 33 spots in the ranking.

Not far behind in terms of decline is the score of the country in regulatory enforcement (labeled as RE in the table). From the 55th spot in 2016, the country was ranked 82nd in 2021, a drop of 27 spots.

TABLE 6A . RULE OF LAW INDEX, FACTORS 1 TO 4, PHILIPPINES
(2015 - 2021)

Year	CGP		AoC		OG		FR	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
2021	0.48	85	0.44	77	0.50	71	0.39	123
2020	0.50	75	0.46	64	0.52	55	0.41	107
2019	0.53	71	0.47	63	0.53	51	0.42	105
2017-2018	0.55	59	0.47	62	0.52	54	0.42	99
2016	0.59	51	0.48	56	0.51	63	0.50	83
2015	0.61	39	0.49	47	0.54	50	0.52	67

Legend: CGP (Constraints on Government Powers); AoC (Absence of Corruption); OG (Open Government); FR (Fundamental Rights)

SOURCE: WORLD JUSTICE PROJECT

TABLE 6B . RULE OF LAW INDEX, FACTORS 5 TO 8, PHILIPPINES
(2015 - 2021)

Year	OaS		RE		CiJ		CrJ	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
2021	0.63	110	0.48	82	0.45	101	0.31	120
2020	0.65	97	0.48	75	0.46	92	0.31	112
2019	0.57	115	0.47	83	0.44	99	0.31	113
2017-2018	0.51	107	0.51	55	0.47	81	0.31	102
2016	0.67	77	0.51	55	0.45	87	0.36	84
2015	0.71	58	0.50	52	0.46	75	0.38	66

Legend: OaS (Order and Security); RE (Regulatory Enforcement); CiJ (Civil Justice); CrJ (Criminal Justice); InJ (Informal Justice)

SOURCE: WORLD JUSTICE PROJECT

Finally, civil justice (labeled as CiJ in the table), while not registering the same score in 2016 and 2021, suffered a 14-spot dropped from 87th spot in 2016 to 101st in 2021.

Table 6C presents the summary of outcomes for the Rule of Law Index under the Duterte administration.

OPEN BUDGET INDEX

The Open Budget Survey (OBS) was launched in 2016 by the International Budget Partnership (IBP). The International Budget Partnership (n.d.) describes the OBS as “the world’s only comparative, independent, and regular assessment of transparency, oversight and participation in national budgets in 120 countries.”

The Open Budget Index (OBI) measures the overall commitment to transparency and whether governments are releasing eight key budget documents: (1) pre-budget statement, (2) executive’s budget proposal, (3) enacted budget, (4) citizens’ budget, (5) in-year report, (6) mid-year report, (7) year-end report, and (8) audit report. The OBI is released every other year.

Table 7 presents the Open Budget Index for the Philippines for the years 2015 to 2021.

In 2017, the first year the Duterte administration intersected with the release of the OBI, the country ranked 19th and scored 67 points. By the next release of the OBI in 2019, the Philippines made it to the top ten countries, ranking 10th, with a score of 76. However, the Duterte administration (shaded area in table) would end its term in 2022 with the most recent OBI released in 2021, with the same ranking at 19th spot as in 2017, but with an increase in score by one point, at 68.

Table 7A presents the summary of outcomes for the Index of Open Budget Index under the Duterte administration.

TABLE 6C . SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES UNDER THE DUTERTE ADMINISTRATION
(ROL)

Index/Indicator	Worsened	No Change	Improved
Rule of Law Index	✓		
Constraints on government powers	✓		
Absence of corruption	✓		
Open government	✓		
Fundamental rights	✓		
Order and security	✓		
Regulatory enforcement	✓		
Civil justice	✓		
Criminal justice	✓		

SOURCE: TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL

TABLE 7 . OPEN BUDGET INDEX, PHILIPPINES
(2015 - 2021)

Year	Rank	Score
2021	19	68
2019	10	76
2017	19	67
2015	23	64

SOURCE: WORLD JUSTICE PROJECT

TABLE 7A . SUMMARY OF OUTCOME UNDER THE DUTERTE ADMINISTRATION
(OBI)

Index/Indicator	Worsened	No Change	Improved
Open Budget Index		✓	

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

For the Worldwide Governance Indicators, the Philippine standing improved in two out of six areas—political stability and absence of violence/terrorism and in government effectiveness. However, the country's position worsened in the areas of voice and accountability, regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption.

In general, there was improvement in terms of ease of doing business. However, looking at the specific areas, the country managed to improve only in three out ten areas—dealing with construction permits, protecting minority investors, and paying taxes. Seven out of the ten areas worsened under the Duterte administration—starting a business, getting electricity, registering property, getting credit, trading across borders, enforcing contract and resolving insolvency.

For the Global Competitiveness Index, overall, the country's position worsened under the Duterte administration. However, looking at the sub-indices, the Philippines managed to improve in six out of twelve areas—skills, product market, labor market, financial system, market size, and business dynamism. On the other hand, the country also worsened in the remaining six areas—institutions, infrastructure, ICT adoption, macroeconomic stability, health, and innovation capability.

Using the Index of Economic Freedom, overall, the Philippines worsened under the Duterte administration, with only two out of twelve sub-areas posting improvements in scores—property rights and labor freedom. Eight sub-areas worsened. These are judicial effectiveness, government integrity, tax burden, government spending, fiscal health, business freedom, monetary freedom, and trade freedom. Two sub-areas had no changes—investment freedom and financial freedom.

Under the Rule of Law Index, overall, the country worsened under the Duterte administration. At the same time, all sub-areas deteriorated also. These are constraints on government powers, absence of corruption open government, fundamental rights, order and security, regulatory enforcement, civil justice and criminal justice.

The Corruption Perceptions Index registered a worsening situation for the Philippines, in effect, reinforcing a similar outcome for control of corruption under the Worldwide Governance Indicators and absence of corruption under the Rule of Law Index.

The Open Budget Index essentially showed no change under the Duterte administration.

These indicators are in the realm of the abstract for the average Filipino. For them, the accomplishments that are being trumpeted by the administration may be the ones that are tangible and relatable to the people. Of course, any claim of achievement—or failing—will always be met with controversies arising from differences in interpretations, approach, and political affiliation.

Nonetheless, the indicators remain valuable as they provide an independent and objective view into the general quality—or health, if you will—of the governance in the country on specific periods in our history. Because of this, the indicators may also present—albeit indirectly—a report card of the performance in specific areas of governance of the presidencies covered. Beyond that, the rankings and scores supply a comparative perspective relative to the countries in the region and the rest of the world. In some of the indicators, the drop in the ranking of the Philippines may mean a faster rate of improvement by other countries than a backsliding of the Philippine government's vigilance and efforts.

The results of the governance indicators used do not paint a rosy picture for the quality of governance under the Duterte administration insofar as the areas and sub-areas covered are concerned. While this is not to say that the administration failed miserably, it does not project a high-quality governance either. In the final analysis, the performance evaluation of any administration should be done objectively and that it comes with a forward-looking perspective of benefitting from the experiences of “the administration that was.”

Arguably, good governance will always be a moving target not only because its form and shape are constantly evolving, but also given the changes in the political environment. Notwithstanding, it has become one of the cornerstones by which public leadership is reckoned, more so now with an increasing awareness of its implications on development. How well an administration performs in achieving good governance may have far-reaching implications on its political capital.

The new Marcos administration is heavily saddled with the old Marcos brand that is widely seen as antithetical to good governance. If the new administration is to have any chance at succeeding in casting off the effects of that negative reputation, it would have to make bigger strides than other administrations towards good governance. It is not as if he must start from scratch. The indicators provide baseline data that could serve as inputs for new good governance programs and for decisions about existing programs that will stay, go, or be revised. What could be difficult, though, is the political will to see the programs through amidst conflicting political pressures.

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