

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Finland, Norway, and Sweden lead the world in new Empowered People Index ranking UPG's EPI 2020 report sheds new light on issues related to the empowerment of people in societies Empowered People Index ranks countries by the ability of people to determine their own future**

*United People Global is an independent not-for-profit organisation based in Geneva, Switzerland. UPG is not a political or religious organisation.*

**29 July 2020, Geneva:** United People Global (UPG) has launched the Empowered People Index (EPI). The EPI 2020 sheds new light on the issue of empowerment of people by using data from 185 countries to rank societies according to an individual's ability to determine their own future. The index provides the tools to track socioeconomic performance rigorously thereby informing public policy and investment choices. It is structured to be useful to both individuals and organisations as well as activists and policy makers.

"People across the world are speaking out and demanding a more equal society, demanding fair access to opportunities, and demanding a fair chance to determine their own future. Businesses, governments, brands and international organisations are also speaking out on the side of the people, in ways that we have never seen before. The Empowered People Index provides metrics that focus on how our societies are doing when it comes to the ability of people to determine their own future. The EPI also provides a framework that guides positive action," shared Yemi Babington-Ashaye, President of United People Global.

The EPI 2020 ranks 185 countries and territories using 42 factors that provide a score for each society according to their progress on issues ranging from freedom of the press and access to information, to primary education and protection from discrimination. Each factor describes a related, but distinct aspect of what it means for a society to guarantee opportunity for its population. Taken together, the factors fall into one of three main categories; an individual's ability to scan, process, and act.

UPG argues that without access to information, or the ability to "scan," it is impossible to determine your future. You are not truly making a choice if you are unaware of your options. For a concrete example, without access to unbiased and exhaustive information about the political environment in your country, you are not genuinely empowered to use your vote. By "process," UPG means, an individual's ability to understand the information provided or to process the inputs that are observed. Without an education, enough nourishment, and shelter, it is impossible to consider your future as your main priorities are your basic survival needs. The ability to "act" concerns your ability to take action on the information you have processed. For example, the ability to start a business, access to bank loans, transportation, and to be considered for your desired job without discrimination. Currently, Finland, Norway, and Sweden lead the world in the New Empowered People Index, with Switzerland, Denmark, and Germany following. The United Kingdom ranked at 14 slightly ahead of the United States at 20, followed by Brazil (48), India (67), China (68), and Russia (89).

The EPI offers a conceptually coherent way of capturing how societies can empower (or limit) an individual's autonomy, freedom, and ability to progress. To structure the EPI, UPG consulted with experts across disciplines and consulted a large volume of existing publications. Data for each indicator was derived from different existing and reliable sources to ensure consistency in measurement across countries. Data sources include reliable international institutions such as the ILO, OECD, UNESCO Institute of Statistics for Education, WHO, Reporters Without Borders and more. The EPI 2020 serves as a milestone in the journey to understanding the empowerment of people in societies and the work continues as all feedback that is received is processed to strengthen the EPI.

Both the EPI 2020 report and dataset have been launched in accessible formats and can be downloaded for free. Using the dataset, each user can access their own country's data, compare countries, and learn from best practices. We hope that individuals, governments, NGOs and companies can use the EPI to take action that creates societies where people are empowered at home and around the world.

**Read the report and explore the data:** <https://epi.unitedpeople.global>

**Learn more about the EPI:** <https://youtu.be/tHseMdaKI8g>

#### **About United People Global:**

United People Global (UPG) is a community that encourages and enables people to participate in making the world a better place. This is achieved in various ways and especially by contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UPG works to raise awareness, strengthen belief, facilitate collaboration and foster community. UPG uses publications, projects and events to achieve its mission. Learn more about why we do this and [click here to see how we do this](#). More questions? Please [visit our FAQs](#).

#### **Notes for Editors:**

The global launch of the EPI takes place on 29 July 2020 at 5pm CEST (Geneva time) and your organisation can be accredited to attend. Please contact us in advance if you would like to guarantee that you can ask questions during the launch.

You can RSVP at the following link: <https://upglive.org/epievents-rsvp>

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