

Peace as a Global Public Good:

Measuring Peace Through the Lens of Effective Multilateralism

Background

Data-driven measurements of peace can inform multilateral peacebuilding efforts and enable a more effective management of peace as a Global Public Good. Within the current global peace and security architecture there are numerous challenges to ensuring the equity, appropriateness and timeliness of interventions. As mechanisms such as the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism work to meet these challenges, peace measures developed and maintained by Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) can help provide actionable insight.

Composite Measures of Peace and Multilateralism

Composite indices combine data into one standard measure, help develop consensus and enable decision-makers to track changes over time. They can be used to understand circumstances more quantitatively, first from a macro level, then in a more granular way, and can take various forms:

NEGATIVE PEACE

IEP's [Global Peace Index \(GPI\)](#) measures indicators associated with negative peace, defined as the *absence of violence or fear of violence*. Using qualitative and quantitative indicators from highly respected sources, the GPI measures the state of peace across three domains: the level of *societal safety and security*, the extent of *ongoing domestic and international conflict*, and the degree of *militarization*. The GPI measures peace globally, regionally, and nationally.

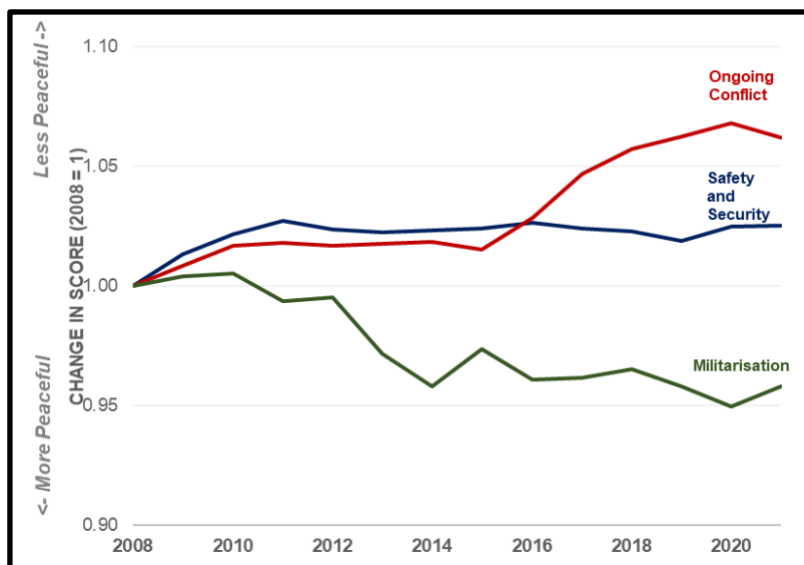


Figure 1: Global change in GPI domains from 2008-2021

GPI measures can be used to compare countries, domains and sub-domains and to uncover a broad array of peace and conflict dynamics.

Subnational analysis can help inform work and decision-making in local contexts. IEP's [Mexico Peace Index](#) is an example of this more granular form of work.

POSITIVE PEACE

Positive Peace can be understood as the underlying *attitudes, institutions, and structures* that create and sustain peace. Positive Peace insights can be gained by statistically analyzing data series, indices and attitudinal surveys to see which most strongly correlate with subsequent improvements and deteriorations in negative peace.

IEP's [Positive Peace Report \(PPR\)](#) provides an annual measure of change across 24 indicators strongly related with improvements in negative peace. These indicators fall into 8 categories, commonly referred as the eight “Pillars” of Positive Peace. Countries with high levels of Positive Peace are shown to be more resilient to all forms of crisis, including political and economic shocks, health crisis and natural disasters among others. Importantly, they are more likely to address and resolve conflict non-violently. Research shows that countries that most sustainably improve in peace do so by making progressive improvements in all Pillars simultaneously. This insight expands the definition of conflict prevention, sustainable development and multilateral work and can help guide the way in which it is pursued in the future.

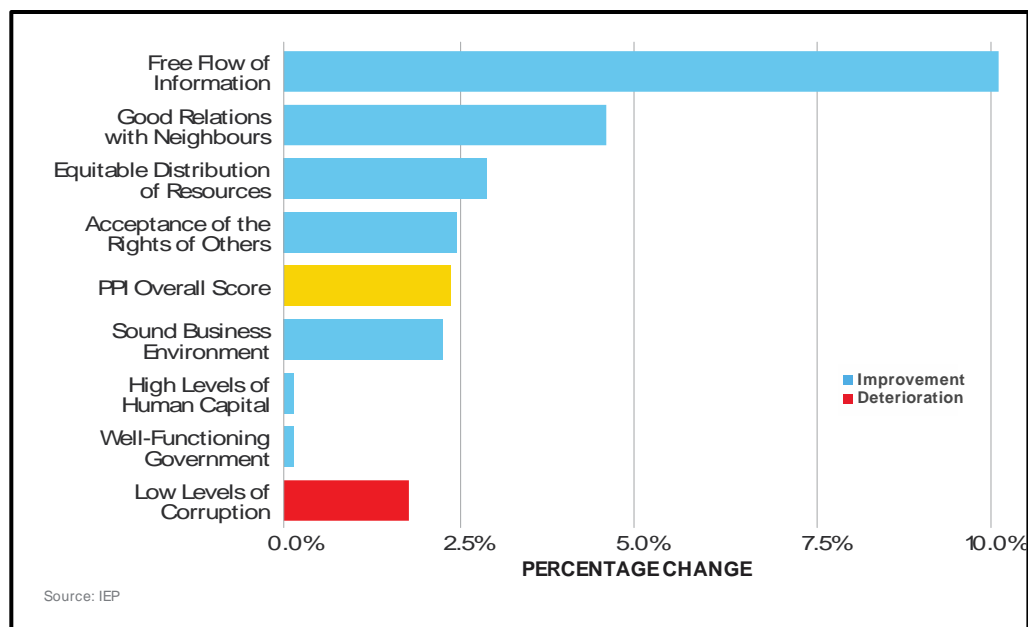


Figure 2: Global Percentage Change in the eight Pillars of Positive Peace 2009-2020

PREDICTING IMPROVEMENTS AND DETERIORATIONS IN PEACE

A distinct challenge faced by the multilateral system is the size of the conflict prevention window. Positive Peace measures can be particularly helpful in this regard. Because they are statistically correlated, they have an inherent predictive ability. As data availability improves, this can be built on over time. One example of this is when the actual peacefulness (negative peace) of a country is substantially higher than what its levels of Positive Peace would suggest, resulting in what IEP denominates a *Positive Peace deficit*. This is an indication the country cannot sustain its current level of peace for long. As a case in point, 79% of countries with a Positive Peace deficit in 2009 recorded significant increases in violence over the subsequent decade (See Fig. 3).

There are [34 countries](#) with a Positive Peace deficit in 2022, a majority of which are expected to deteriorate in peace over the next 10 years. As global governance mechanisms address emerging security issues, data-driven frameworks such as Positive Peace can be used to inform and help prioritize international support as well as guide national policy.

The graph below shows how countries with a Positive Peace deficit have deteriorated significantly in peacefulness over the past ten years, whereas countries with a Positive Peace surplus have improved.

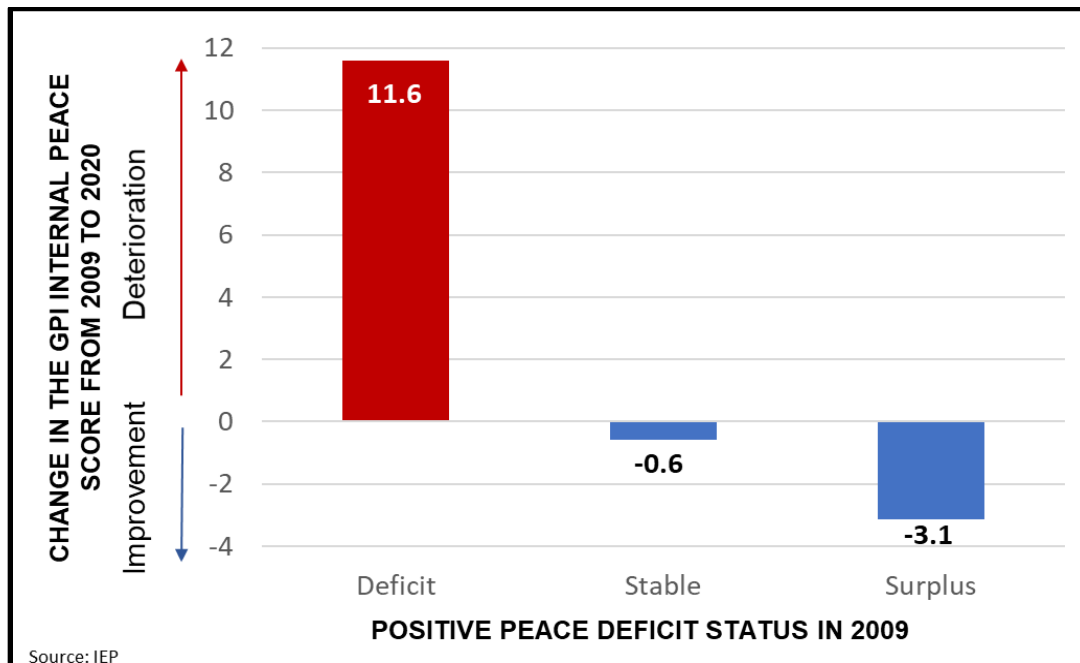


Figure 3: Internal changes in peace compared to countries Positive Peace status

SYSTEMS THINKING

A common critique of the multilateral system is that it's bureaucratic and hierarchical in nature, and as such, ill-suited to address issues systemically. Not being able to proactively respond to the changing dynamics of a system can create unforeseen consequences, nationally and in terms of relationships between countries. If institutions themselves are not set up systemically, inefficiencies, partial solutions, inter-organizational disagreement and duplication often ensues.

The systems-thinking framework developed by IEP ([Halo](#)) uses a multi-modal and modular approach to analyzing societal and organizational systems. Results from a Halo evaluation allow for more informed policy decisions and the development of interventions and processes that are better placed to meet the changing needs of the system being looked at, whether that be a country, community, social group or institution such as the United Nations.

CONFLICT AND ECOLOGICAL THREATS

IEP's [Ecological Threat Report \(ETR\)](#) assesses countries' exposure to a variety of ecological threats, combining them with measures of socio-economic resilience (Positive Peace) to determine which are most susceptible to collapse.

The ETR covers 178 independent states and territories and covers food and water security, rapid population growth, temperature anomalies and natural disasters. It projects those threats over the next 30 years (until 2050). [30 Ecological Hotspots](#) are identified in the report, including some exposed to a single high-level threat but with exceedingly low coping capability. This work can inform and help prioritize ecological and development interventions and may be especially useful for initiatives focusing on improving food and water security. It has already helped develop a deeper understanding of the link and cyclical nature between ecological degradation and conflict.

MULTILATERALISM

The Multilateralism Index, produced in partnership with the International Peace Institute (IPI), will quantify levels of *participation*, *performance*, and *inclusivity* of the multilateral system. The report will focus on changes in multilateral system over the past decade and will help provide a more quantitative answer to key questions including: *What is the state of the multilateral system? What is working? What is not? and How are these dynamics changing over time?* among others. The first edition of the Multilateralism Index will be published in September 2022 and will serve to inform, leverage and address many of the multilateral challenges and opportunities seen today.

LEADERSHIP - GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

The proposed Global Governance Index (GGI) will measure how well countries around the world manage key Global Public Goods, as a proxy of their global governance capability. The GGI, developed in partnership with the Stimson Center and Charney Research, will combine internally and externally facing data sets and surveys to paint an innovative picture of global governance from the inside out. It will help identify which countries are most sustainably living in and caring for the global context, and therefore those best placed to advise/ lead on issues of effective global governance. It will initially focus on members of the G20 with the aim of expanding over time.

About The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)

IEP is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to shifting the world's focus to peace as a positive, achievable, and tangible measure of human well-being and progress. We do this by developing data-driven peace indices, insights and frameworks that enable communities, governments and civil society organizations to help build peacefulness locally, nationally and globally. IEP has offices in New York, Brussels, the Hague, Mexico City and Harare and is headquartered in Sydney, Australia. We look forward to collaborating with the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, UN Member States, civil society, the private sector and academia as we all work towards a more peaceful, equitable and prosperous world.

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