

# The State of Ethics & Compliance in the Workplace

## SUMMARY REPORT

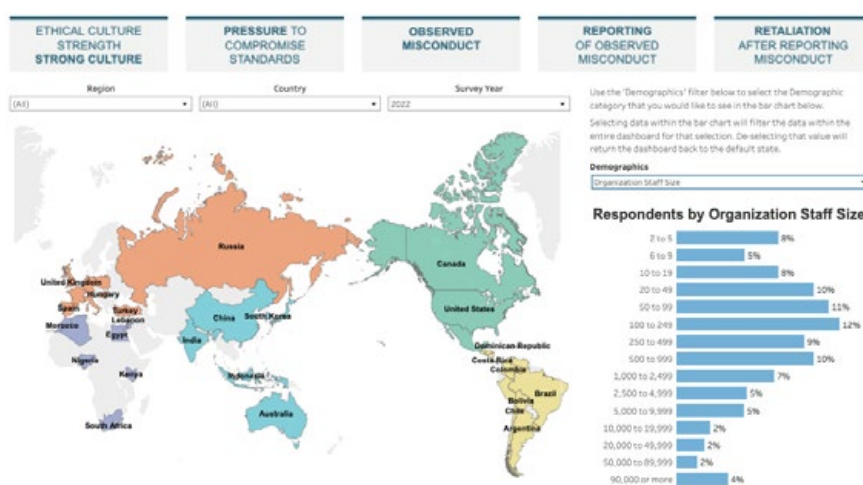


The Global Business Ethics Survey® (GBES®) is the most powerful source of current information for Ethics & Compliance professionals.

Conducted in more than 40 countries around the globe, the GBES surveys thousands of employees about their experiences and perceptions around ethics in the workplace. ECI members use this vast but easy-to-sort dataset to understand the current global state of Ethics & Compliance, identify potential issues at their own companies, and generate benchmarks that reveal how well their companies are doing in achieving their ethics goals.

## GBES 2023 AT A GLANCE

- **75,000+** employees surveyed
- Data from **5** regions: Africa/Middle East; Asia Pacific; Caribbean, Central & South America; Europe; and North America
- The GBES is a **longitudinal, cross-sectional study of worldwide ethical trends** that ECI has conducted since 1994.
- The 2023 survey is the 17th version of the GBES and **the largest yet**.
- **Survey participants are asked about a variety of topics**, including the strength of the ethics culture in their workplace, instances of misconduct that they have observed and efforts underway in their organization to promote integrity.



## NEW: THE INTERACTIVE GBES DATABASE AND PUBLIC DASHBOARD

Our new online GBES Database (for members only) and public [GBES Dashboard](#) make the data easier to search and customize than ever before. Want to know how much pressure to compromise standards there is in your specific industry, country, and/or region? Is reported misconduct on the rise in companies of your size?

With ECI's GBES Database, ECI members can delve into the most relevant and useful trends to them, sorting by additional metrics such as employees' views on top management setting a good example of ethical behavior, not tolerating retaliation, accountability for violating ethical standards, and much more.

## ABOUT ECI

ECI is the leading membership organization driving business integrity for a better, more ethical world. We provide Ethics & Compliance professionals the research, education, and networking resources they need to become great leaders, build exceptional teams, and create ethical workplaces that set the highest standard.

**Become an ECI member today to get access to the full GBES report.** Contact us for more information by emailing [trentw@ethics.org](mailto:trentw@ethics.org) or learn more at [www.ethics.org/membership](http://www.ethics.org/membership).





## GBES 2023: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### FINDING 1

**Employees continue to face exceptionally high levels of pressure to compromise workplace standards or the law.**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, pressure to compromise standards in the workplace grew to an exceedingly high level. In the past 3 years since, this pressure has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, still staying high. Delve into which industries and countries have employees perceiving less pressure with our customizable Database and Dashboard. With these insights, you can speak with colleagues in your own industry or country to determine strategies that can reduce pressure, and in turn, misconduct, in your own organization.

### FINDING 2

**Workplace misconduct is at an all-time high.**

Observed misconduct is at concerning levels, with a global median of 65% of employees reporting that they observed misconduct within the last 12-month period. What does that mean for your team? Be on the lookout for potential Ethics & Compliance violations. Protect yourself from potential liabilities with preparation and education for you and your team. Organizations with higher misconduct rates are at risk for economic or legal setbacks.

### FINDING 3

**Globally, reporting of observed misconduct is at a record high.**

On the bright side, as misconduct observation has increased, so has the reporting of misconduct. A good sign of a strong ethical business is the reporting of misconduct, as it keeps teams and employees accountable. Preventing misconduct entirely is an enormous task, so your team can demonstrate a dedication to building an ethical culture by

encouraging employees to report misconduct and ensuring that new reports are addressed effectively.

### FINDING 4

**Retaliation against employees who report misconduct continues to occur at unacceptable rates.**

While observed misconduct and reported misconduct rates have risen, retaliation rates have stayed steady. The number is still high, as almost half of employees around the world who reported misconduct experienced retaliation. When retaliation rates are lowered, employees are likely to feel more comfortable reporting wrongdoing. If observed misconduct reporters are not protected, fewer reports of misconduct will come in, putting your organization at risk.

### FINDING 5

**Few employees say they work in an ethical workplace culture.**

Just over 1 in 10 employees globally says that they work in a strong ethical workplace culture, a disappointing number. E&C practitioners and leaders should work to increase this rate, as having stronger ethical cultures is linked with reducing wrongdoing by over 400%. Does your workplace have an unusual amount of potential ethical violations? If so, you should investigate potential causes. ECI membership can help support your E&C team and identify best practices, leading to a stronger ethical culture in your organization.

### FINDING 6

**Businesses are not taking the steps that are proven to significantly reduce their risk.**

Less than half of employees surveyed indicated that their organization has taken steps to implement the most basic elements of a [High-quality E&C Program \(HQP\)](#), despite research showing that the presence of an HQP significantly reduces organizational risk.

LEARN MORE

## ACCESS THE FULL REPORT!

These topline trends are just the beginning of the insight that the GBES provides. Users can access data from every region surveyed, including Central & South America, Europe, Asia Pacific, and more, through the [GBES Dashboard](#).

Contact us about the benefits of ECI membership, including access to years of data from the Global Business Ethics Survey as well as a strong network of E&C experts, educational resources, and more by emailing [trentw@ethics.org](mailto:trentw@ethics.org) or by [scheduling a call](#) today!

