

Russia No. 3 in Oil Transparency

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Russia ranks ahead of the United States in disclosing government revenue from producing oil and mining minerals, a new study says.

The study by Revenue Watch Institute and Transparency International put Russia at No. 3 in a list of 41 countries that are rich in natural resources.

The United States ranked 11th, said the study released in Washington late Wednesday.

Brazil and Norway topped the list; Turkmenistan was at the bottom.

The study for the first time measured how well the resource-rich countries make public their management of the national oil, gas and minerals, including the money they receive and contracts they conclude.

“Government openness about its income is essential to combat high-level corruption,” the organizations that sponsored the study said in a statement. “Transparent, accountable management of these revenues is also fundamental to economic development and political stability.”

Russia is ahead of countries such as the United States, Mexico, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan in how often it updated statistical databases of its oil and mining revenue and the frequency with which lawmakers reviewed the information, the study said.

New York-based Revenue Watch Institute and Berlin-based Transparency International are independent groups tracking corruption.

Independent consultants gathered the information to complete each country questionnaire from November 2009 to April 2010. Research concentrated on identifying publicly available information covering a period from January 2006 to December 2009.

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