

DEMOCRACY REDLINE

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February 2026 formal report



February 2026 Formal Report

Democracy Redline Index: 8.4 / 10

February held the index in a critical range, with sustained structural stress around court compliance, detention due process, coercive state power, and election governance.

8.4 CURRENT	8.2 PRIOR	CRITICAL STATUS
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Bottom line: Critical-range pressure remained concentrated in rule of law, due process, coercive state power, and election integrity.

Report month February 2026	Direction Worsening +0.2	Period February 2026 published scorecard	Biggest move Court compliance and due process remained the highest-scoring risk categories, both recorded at 8.5.
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What changed this month

A critical baseline formed before the March acceleration.

The February scorecard described democratic institutions as operational but under sustained structural stress. The strongest pressure appeared around court compliance, detention due process, and election governance, with several immediate redline indicators listed as escalation triggers if they moved from warning signs into open constitutional breach.

Key scorecard signals <ul style="list-style-type: none">The February scorecard recorded Rule of Law & Court Compliance at 8.5.Habeas Corpus & Due Process was also recorded at 8.5.Coercive State Power was recorded at 8.0, keeping state-power risk in the severe-erosion range.	What moved the meter <p>The score remained in a critical range because rule-of-law and due-process categories sat at 8.5 while coercive state power, weaponized justice, and election integrity also remained elevated. The record still treated the immediate redline indicators as triggers rather than fully activated breakdown events.</p>	Report status <p>This formal report backfills a published February/March scorecard into the current report format.</p>
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Top score drivers

The monthly score reflected documented stress across several democratic-function categories.

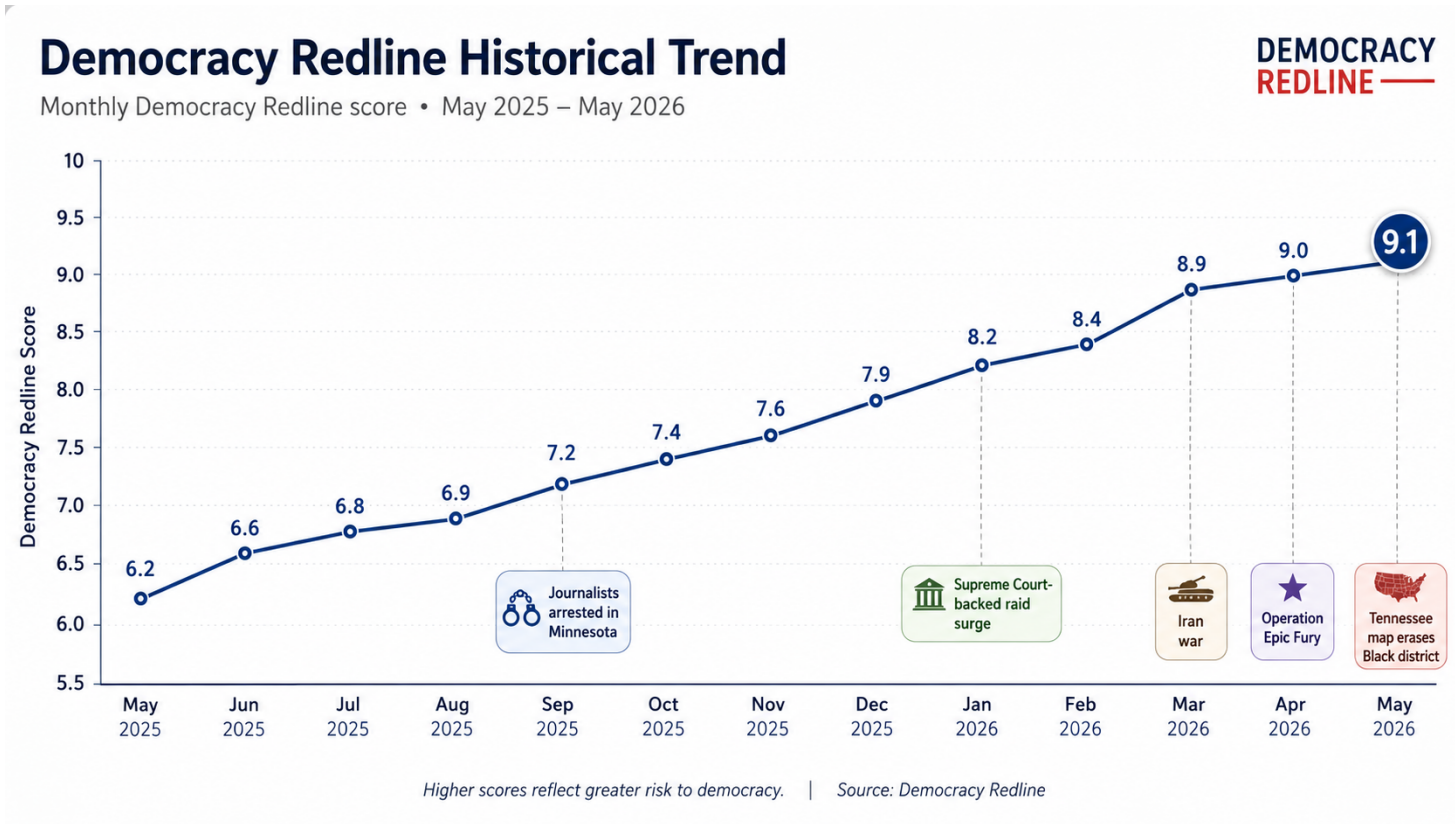
Driver	Status	Interpretation
Court compliance	Critical	The published scorecard placed Rule of Law & Court Compliance at 8.5, one of the highest category readings.
Due process and habeas access	Critical	Habeas Corpus & Due Process was also recorded at 8.5, making procedural rights a central score driver.
Coercive state power	Severe	Coercive State Power reached 8.0, keeping state authority and enforcement posture in the severe-erosion band.
Election governance	High	Election Integrity was recorded at 7.6, signaling that election administration was already a material risk category before March.

Category scorecard

Category	Score/status	Interpretation
Rule of Law & Court Compliance	8.5	One of the highest readings in the February scorecard.
Habeas Corpus & Due Process	8.5	Due-process access remained a core critical-range driver.
Coercive State Power	8.0	State-power pressure was in the severe-erosion band.
Weaponized Justice	7.8	Justice-system pressure remained high risk.
Election Integrity	7.6	Election governance was a significant elevated-risk category.
Press Freedom	6.8	Below the top risk tier but close enough to remain a watch category.
Civil Society	6.7	Civil-society pressure remained elevated.
Institutional Oversight	7.2	Oversight remained in the severe-erosion band.
Military Neutrality	6.2	Military neutrality was elevated but below the most severe February categories.

Historical trajectory context

February 2026 in the escalation sequence



February 2026 helps close the formal report bridge between January 2026 and the April/May Red Zone reports. The purpose is to show direction, intensity, and accumulation across the monthly record.

Prior score	Current score	Status
8.2	8.4	Critical

How this score is grounded

Evidence, interpretation, and score impact are separated.

The score is a structured civic-risk judgment based on the published scorecard record and the public-record source stack described in the methodology. It is not a poll or a prediction.

Fact	Interpretation	Score impact
Observable public actions, court rulings, official statements, documented enforcement activity, and major reporting.	Why those events matter for democratic function, institutional independence, civil liberties, and rule-of-law constraints.	How the evidence affected the monthly risk assessment, especially when categories reinforced one another.

Key evidence and benchmark events

The February scorecard recorded Rule of Law & Court Compliance at 8.5.	Habeas Corpus & Due Process was also recorded at 8.5.	Coercive State Power was recorded at 8.0, keeping state-power risk in the severe-erosion range.
Election Integrity was recorded at 7.6 as an active governance risk category.	The scorecard listed immediate escalation triggers including open defiance of a final Supreme Court order, functional habeas inaccessibility, federal override of certified election results, criminal charges against journalists for reporting, and intelligence use for domestic political surveillance.	

Methodology note

Published-scorecard backfills use the current Democracy Redline report structure to preserve earlier scorecard records in a consistent public format. These records are best read as sequence documents showing persistence and accumulation across months.

What to watch next

Forward indicators for the next reporting period

<p>Court compliance</p> <p>Whether final court orders were obeyed or openly defied.</p>	<p>Habeas access</p> <p>Whether counsel and habeas rights remained practically reachable in real time.</p>	<p>Election administration</p> <p>Whether elevated election-integrity risk turned into active override or certification conflict.</p>
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Companion visual



This companion graphic explains why high institutional-stress scores should not be treated as ordinary political volatility.