

# NEWS RELEASE

## Hong Kong maintains top spot in freedom index, United States drops to 23<sup>rd</sup>

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For Immediate Release

**TORONTO**—Hong Kong is once again the freest jurisdiction in the world while the United States continues its decline in the *Human Freedom Index*, released today by the Fraser Institute and a network of international public policy think-tanks.

The index—which uses 76 indicators of personal, civil and economic freedoms to rank 159 countries and jurisdictions around the world—includes rankings from 2008 to 2014, the most recent year of comparable data.

“The Human Freedom Index measures civil liberties, economic freedom, the rule of law, freedom of movement, women’s rights and much more,” said Fred McMahon, Dr. Michael A. Walker Research Chair in Economic Freedom at the Fraser Institute and editor of study.

Hong Kong again ranks number one, followed by Switzerland, New Zealand, Ireland and Denmark. Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia are tied for sixth. Other notable countries include Germany (13), the U.S. (23), France (31), Japan (32), Russia (115) and China (141).

Hong Kong’s place atop the list is largely because of its high scores in economic freedom.

“While the freedom index doesn’t measure democracy, democracy remains the best safeguard of personal freedoms, so if China encroaches on its one-country, two-system relationship with Hong Kong, we can expect Hong Kong’s ranking to drop,” McMahon said.

By region, the average rankings on the index were highest for Western and Northern Europe, followed by North America. And they were lowest for South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa.

The complete index, a joint project of Canada’s Fraser Institute, the Cato Institute, USA, and the Liberales Institut of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Germany, is available as a free PDF download at [www.fraserinstitute.org](http://www.fraserinstitute.org).

McMahon is the project editor. Ian Vasquez of the Cato Institute, and Tanja Porčnik of the Visio Institute in Slovenia are the co-authors.

### The 10 freest and the least free countries in the index

The 10 freest jurisdictions (from top)	The 10 least free countries
1. Hong Kong	150. Angola
2. Switzerland	151. Democratic Republic of Congo
3. New Zealand	152. Algeria
4. Ireland	153. Myanmar
5. Denmark	154. Venezuela
6. Canada	155. Central African Republic
6. Australia	156. Syria
6. United Kingdom	157. Iran
9. Finland	158. Yemen
10. Netherlands	159. Libya

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