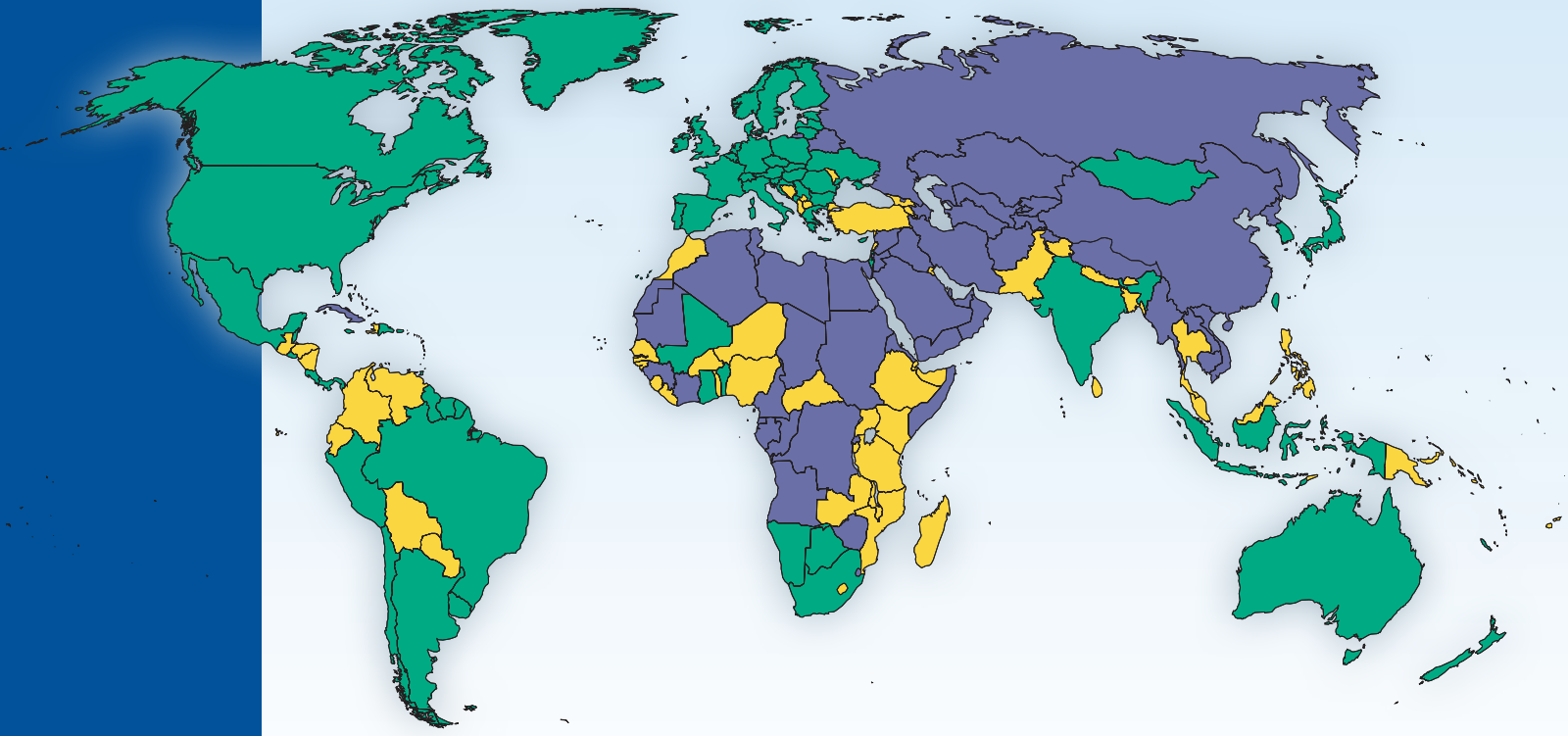
Freedom in the World 2010



EROSION OF FREEDOM INTENSIFIES

SELECTED DATA FROM FREEDOM HOUSE'S ANNUAL SURVEY OF POLITICAL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

FREEDOM IN THE WORLD 2010: EROSION OF FREEDOM INTENSIFIES

By Arch Puddington

In a year of intensified repression against human rights defenders and democratic activists by many of the world's most powerful authoritarian regimes, Freedom House found a continued erosion of freedom worldwide, with setbacks in Latin America, Africa, the former Soviet Union, and the Middle East. For the fourth consecutive year, declines have trumped gains. This represents the longest continuous period of deterioration in the nearly 40-year history of *Freedom in the World*, Freedom House's annual assessment of the state of political rights and civil liberties in every country in the world.

In 2009, declines for freedom were registered in 40 countries, representing 20 percent of the world's polities. In 22 of those countries, the problems were significant enough to merit downgrades in the numerical ratings for political rights or civil liberties. Six countries moved downward in their overall status designation, either from Free to Partly Free or from Partly Free to Not Free. The year also featured a drop in the number of electoral democracies from 119 to 116, the lowest figure since 1995.

A series of disturbing events at year's end reinforced the magnitude of the challenge to fundamental freedoms, including the violent repression of protesters on the streets of Iran, lengthy prison sentences meted out to peaceful dissidents in China, attacks on leading human rights activists in Russia, and continued terrorist and insurgent violence in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, and Yemen.

There were a few bright spots. Of the 194 countries assessed, 16 experienced gains in freedom. Broad improvements were recorded in the Balkans, as Montenegro moved into the Free category and Kosovo moved up to Partly Free, while ratings increases were seen for Croatia, Moldova, and Serbia. Countries including Iraq, Lebanon, Malawi, and Togo also made noteworthy gains. There were advances for freedom in South Asia for the second consecutive year, and political institutions in major Asian democracies showed impressive strength in the face of global economic upheaval.

By absolute historical standards, the overall state of freedom in the world has improved over the last two decades. Many more countries were in the Free category and were designated as electoral democracies in 2009 than in 1989, and the majority of countries that made major progress 20 years ago have retained those improvements.

Indeed, as the world marks the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the democratic institutions of the post-communist countries of Central Europe, the Baltic region, and the Balkans have shown encouraging resilience despite mounting stresses. The majority of new democracies in Latin America have not seen major ratings declines, and a number of young democracies in the Asia-Pacific region have maintained or improved their ratings.

But over the last four years, the dominant pattern has been one of growing restrictions on the fundamental freedoms of expression and association in authoritarian settings, and a failure to continue democratic progress in

previously improving countries due to unchecked corruption and weaknesses in the rule of law.

The continued downward spiral throughout Central Asia in 2009, with Kyrgyzstan moving from Partly Free to Not Free, gave it the dubious distinction of becoming the world's least free subregion. The Kazakh government notably failed to enact the fundamental political reforms it had promised during its campaign to secure the chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for 2010.

Sub-Saharan Africa suffered the largest setbacks, with 15 countries registering declines and 4 securing gains. Nigeria and Kenya, both large and influential states that had demonstrated some democratic improvements in the past, saw continued backsliding. They were joined by a number of other African countries that had earned records of democratic achievement, including Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, and Mozambique.

Several parts of the Arab Middle East also saw deterioration, causing three countries in the region—Bahrain, Jordan, and Yemen—to drop into the Not Free category.

Other notable trends in 2009 include:

- **Authoritarian crackdowns on front-line human rights defenders.** In Russia, human rights lawyer Stanislav Markelov, journalist Anastasia Baburova, and human rights advocate Natalya Estemirova were among the victims of unsolved political murders. In China, Liu Xiaobo, an organizer of the Charter 08 democracy movement, received an 11-year prison sentence, though he was only one among dozens of civic activists sentenced to long prison terms during the year. In Vietnam, a group of dissidents were given five-year prison sentences for advocating multiparty politics. And in Iran, hundreds of regime critics were detained, tortured, or killed in the aftermath of the June presidential election.

- **Attacks on journalists and new threats to new media.** The massacre of 29 journalists in a single incident in the Philippines stood out in a year of killings in such disparate locations as Russia, Pakistan, Mexico, and Somalia. Meanwhile, authoritarian governments expanded their efforts to stifle free expression by systematically blocking the use of new media for any activity they saw as a threat to their power. China remained at the cutting edge of this campaign, developing and deploying new forms of internet control and cracking down on bloggers and internet journalists who crossed political redlines. Bloggers in other authoritarian countries—including Iran and Azerbaijan—also faced increased threats, censorship, and prosecution for their activities.

- **Coups d'etat.** Coups have been a rare phenomenon in the last two decades. During 2009, however, a number of countries experienced what amounted to coups. In Guinea, a classic military takeover that began at the end of 2008 took hold during the year, while in Honduras, Niger, and Madagascar, extraconstitutional mechanisms were used to remove or extend the rule of sitting leaders.

- **Challenges from nonstate actors, including religious extremists and drug lords.** Violent Islamic extremism continued to plague a number of countries from Africa to South Asia, including Somalia, Yemen, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. At the same time, regimes continued to use such problems to justify their crackdowns on civic activists or ethnic minorities, as China did with its concerted repression of the Uighur population. Organized drug trafficking contributed to insecurity and corruption in Afghanistan as well as in parts of Central America and Africa.

Five-Year Trends for Political Rights and Civil Liberties

An analysis of *Freedom in the World* subcategories under the broader political rights and civil liberties rubrics from 2005 through 2009 shows that the past year was not an anomaly. Throughout this period, there have been growing pressures on freedom of expression, including press freedom, as well as on civic activists engaged in promoting political reform and respect for human rights, including the rights of workers to organize.

Overall, however, the most significant declines were in the rule of law arena. Judicial systems on the whole remain weak, unable to act independently or apply the law equally to all members of society. Arbitrary detention and human rights violations by both state and nonstate actors continue to hamper progress toward the institutionalization of democratic gains in many societies.

On a positive note, most regions have shown an outright improvement in the conduct of elections over the last five years. Globally, the elections scores in *Freedom in the World* would have improved by a significant degree were it not for a broad decline in one subregion: the former Soviet Union. Asian countries registered a substantial improvement on indicators tied to the conduct of elections and the ability of the political opposition to compete on a level playing field.

Thus, despite the vote-rigging, fraud, and other manipulations that occurred in a number of countries in 2009, the global picture over the last five years suggests that governments are more likely to permit relatively honest elections than to allow an uncensored press, a robust civil society, and an independent judiciary.

FREE, PARTLY FREE, NOT FREE

Freedom in the World provides three broad category designations for each of the countries and territories included in the index: **Free, Partly Free, and Not Free**.

A **Free** country is one where there is broad scope for open political competition, a climate of respect for civil liberties, significant independent civic life, and independent media.

A **Partly Free** country is one in which there is limited respect for political rights and civil liberties. Partly Free states frequently suffer from an environment of corruption, weak rule of law, ethnic and religious strife, and often a setting in which a single political party enjoys dominance despite the façade of limited pluralism.

A **Not Free** country is one where basic political rights are absent, and basic civil liberties are widely and systematically denied.

WHAT IS AN ELECTORAL DEMOCRACY?

In determining whether a country is an electoral democracy, Freedom House examines several key factors concerning how its national leadership is chosen. To qualify as an electoral democracy, a state must have the following:

- A competitive multiparty political system
- Universal adult suffrage for all citizens*
- Regular elections conducted in conditions of ballot secrecy and reasonable ballot security, and in the absence of massive voter fraud that subverts the public will
- Significant public access of major political parties to the electorate through the media and through generally open political campaigning

The designation reflects a judgment about whether the most recent elections, for both the executive and legislative branches, were free and fair. A country cannot be listed as an electoral democracy if a single party or movement enjoys consistent and overwhelming dominance over national elections. Nor can a country be an electoral democracy if significant authority for national decisions resides in the hands of an unelected power (whether a monarch or a foreign or international authority). A country is removed from the ranks of electoral democracies if its last national election has failed to meet the criteria listed above, or if changes in law significantly erode the possibility of free electoral choice.

* With exceptions for legitimate sanctions placed on citizens for criminal offenses

The State of Freedom in 2009: A Snapshot

The number of countries assessed by *Freedom in the World* to be Free in 2009 stood at 89, representing 46 percent of the world's 194 countries and 3,088,704,000 people—46 percent of the global population. The number of Free countries remained unchanged from the previous year's survey.

The number of countries qualifying as Partly Free stood at 58, or 30 percent of all countries, and they comprised 1,367,440,000 people, or 20 percent of the world's total. The number of Partly Free countries declined by four from the previous year. (Among the Partly Free countries for 2009 was Kosovo, which in previous editions of *Freedom in the World* had been listed as a disputed territory.)

Forty-seven countries were deemed Not Free, representing 24 percent of the total. The number of people living under Not Free conditions stood at 2,333,869,000, or 34 percent of the world population, though it is important to note that more than half of these people live in just one country: China. The number of Not Free countries increased by five from 2008.

Two countries, both in the Balkans, registered positive changes in status during the year. Montenegro moved from Partly Free to Free, and Kosovo rose from Not Free to Partly Free. Six countries experienced declines in status: Lesotho moved from Free to Partly Free, while Bahrain, Gabon, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, and Yemen fell from Partly Free to Not Free.

The number of electoral democracies dropped by three and stands at 116. Setbacks in four countries—Honduras, Madagascar, Mozambique, and Niger—led to their

removal from the electoral democracy list. One country, the Maldives, joined the ranks of the world's electoral democracies.

WORST OF THE WORST

Of the 47 countries designated as Not Free, nine have been given the survey's lowest possible rating of 7 for both political rights and civil liberties. These worst-rated countries represent a narrow range of systems and cultures. One—North Korea—is a one-party, Marxist-Leninist regime. Two—Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan—are Central Asian countries ruled by dictators with roots in the Soviet period. Libya is an Arab country under the sway of a secular dictatorship, while Sudan is ruled by a leadership that has elements of both radical Islamism and a traditional military junta. The remaining worst-rated states are Burma, a tightly controlled military dictatorship; Equatorial Guinea, a highly corrupt regime with one of the worst human rights records in Africa; Eritrea, an increasingly repressive police state; and Somalia, a failed state. The one worst-rated territory in the survey, Tibet, is under Chinese jurisdiction.

An additional 10 countries and territories received scores that were slightly above those of the worst-ranked countries, with ratings of 6,7 or 7,6 for political rights and civil liberties: Belarus, Chad, China, Cuba, Guinea, Laos, Saudi Arabia, South Ossetia, Syria, and Western Sahara.

ANALYSIS OF REGIONAL TRENDS

Latin America: Regional and Internal Challenges

Declines for freedom in Honduras and Nicaragua were signal developments in a year of general deterioration in Central America.

The elite classes' fear of a power grab by Honduran president Manuel Zelaya provoked a coup that resulted in his forced exile. This clear democratic rupture was complicated by an institutional clash: Zelaya's ouster, though disapproved of in opinion polls, was supported by the country's legislature and Supreme Court, and it came after Zelaya himself had acted in ways that many felt violated the checks and balances of the Honduran constitution. But while Zelaya's actions provided his opponents with much fodder, his forced exile and the restrictions imposed on civil liberties by his successors resulted in declines for the country's political rights and civil liberties ratings.

In Nicaragua, civil liberties declined due to President Daniel Ortega's continued use of violent intimidation and politicized courts to overcome obstacles to his plans for reelection. Guatemala's political rights rating fell as a result of the government's inability to implement policies and legislation in the face of rampant organized crime and related violence. Indeed, the violence perpetrated by nonstate actors, including drug traffickers, have over the years led to declines in civil liberties in a number of countries in Central America, as well as in Mexico and Colombia.

Political rights in Venezuela have deteriorated due to the ongoing concentration of power by President Hugo

Chavez and the further marginalization of the political opposition. These developments in turn have influenced politics in the rest of the region. Chavez's populist message resonates in some places, and left-of-center candidates have scored electoral victories in a number of countries, most notably in the Andean and Central American subregions. Unfortunately, fears of growing Venezuelan influence also helped motivate the coup in Honduras. Nevertheless, many in Latin America have both rejected the populist-authoritarian model of Venezuela and strengthened their countries' democratic institutions. This has been the case in Chile, Brazil, and Uruguay.

There remained one Not Free country in the Western Hemisphere in 2009: Cuba. The Cuban government took no significant measures during the year to open up the political system or allow citizens to exercise their freedoms of expression and association. At year's end, Cuban authorities arrested an American who was in the country to distribute telecommunications equipment to political dissidents. Cuba remains one of the handful of countries worldwide that treats the distribution of laptops and mobile telephones to civil society groups as a crime.

Middle East and North Africa: Some Gains, But Reversals Prevail

News from the region was dominated by the upheaval in Iran, where election rigging, deadly state violence against civilians, and repression of the political opposition were met by a protest movement that impressed the world with its size, courage, commitment to democratic values, and staying power. Overall, the Middle East and North Africa region suffered a number of significant setbacks, and these were often centered in countries that had produced some evidence of reformist intentions in the recent past. Declines in 2009 brought the portion of the region's residents who live in Not Free societies to 88 percent.

Three countries—Jordan, Bahrain, and Yemen—dropped from the Partly Free to the Not Free category. Jordan suffered a decline in political rights due to the king's decision to dissolve the parliament and postpone elections. In Bahrain, political rights suffered as a result of the harassment of opposition political figures and discrimination by the minority Sunni elite against the Shiite majority. Yemen's political rights rating declined due to rapidly deteriorating security conditions and the increased marginalization of the parliament and other political institutions. Although Morocco's status did not decline in 2009, the increased concentration of power in the hands of forces aligned with King Mohammed VI, along with stepped-up harassment of opposition critics, increased concerns about the erosion of political rights in that country.

Improvements were noted in two countries that have experienced conflict in recent years: Iraq and Lebanon. Iraq's political rights rating improved in light of provincial elections, which were generally regarded as fair and competitive, and due to the government's enhanced autonomy as the phased withdrawal of U.S. troops got under way. Lebanon benefited from a decline in political violence, which resulted in an improvement in its civil liberties rating.

Nevertheless, violence remains a dominant theme in the politics of the region and a significant impediment to the exercise of fundamental freedoms in many countries, including Iraq. The beginning of the year was marred by fierce fighting between the Israeli military and the Hamas movement in

the Gaza Strip. While Israel remains the only country in the region to hold a *Freedom in the World* designation of Free, freedoms of assembly and association came under pressure there during the year. Hundreds of people were arrested during demonstrations against the Gaza conflict, and the parliamentary elections committee passed a measure banning two political parties from national elections, though the ban was quickly overturned by the Supreme Court.

Sub-Saharan Africa: Year of Major Setbacks

While the advances made in sub-Saharan Africa in recent decades have not eroded overall, the region suffered the largest setbacks of 2009, with 15 countries registering declines and only 4 countries marking gains.

Botswana and Lesotho both experienced reversals, with Lesotho moving from Free to Partly Free status. A decline in Botswana's political rights rating was attributed to growing secrecy in the government. In Lesotho, political rights deteriorated as a result of the government's failure to negotiate in good faith with the opposition over flaws in the election system that emerged during balloting in 2008.

Three countries experienced coups: Guinea, Madagascar, and Niger. In the case of Guinea, the military takeover was followed by a terrifying rampage in which soldiers massacred and raped peaceful protesters.

Among the region's most repressive or least free states, declines were recorded in Eritrea, Gabon, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Perhaps the most disturbing trend in the region is the decline over several years of some of sub-Saharan Africa's largest and most influential countries, which had previously made important democratic progress. Kenya continued to see declines in freedom stemming from charges of vote-rigging during the 2007 elections, the violence that came in the election's wake, and a failure to hold those responsible to account.

Another regional powerhouse, Nigeria, continued on its downward path of recent years, which have featured flawed elections, pervasive corruption, and troubling levels of sectarian and religious violence. These problems have eroded some of the gains the country made following the transition from military rule in 1999.

Ethiopia's trajectory has also been negative for a number of years, as Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has persecuted the political opposition, tilted the political playing field, and suppressed civil society.

Improvements were noted in four countries: Malawi, Burundi, Togo, and Zimbabwe. While harsh conditions in Zimbabwe eased somewhat after opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai was brought into a unity government as prime minister and a parliament led by his party was sworn in, the country remained among the continent's most repressive. The authoritarian president, Robert Mugabe, remained in office, and his allies in the security forces continued to harass, arrest, and torture opposition figures.

Central and Eastern Europe/Former Soviet Union: Balkan Progress, Central Asian Decay

The year 2009 marked the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. It was also a year when many of the countries that had won their freedom from Soviet domination

found themselves under increased pressure from the global economic downturn. Latvia, Hungary, and Bulgaria were among those most severely affected by the crisis, but the entire region suffered to some degree, with skyrocketing rates of unemployment, increased poverty, financial instability, and waning confidence in free-market capitalism. Despite these pressures, the institutions of freedom remained remarkably resilient throughout Central Europe, the Baltics, and the Balkans.

Five countries in the western Balkans experienced gains for freedom during the year. The most notable improvements occurred in Kosovo, which advanced from Not Free to Partly Free status after holding elections that were deemed to be in compliance with international standards and strengthening the protection of minority rights. The other countries registering gains were Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, and Montenegro, with the last moving from Partly Free to Free.

Meanwhile, the countries of the non-Baltic former Soviet Union continued their decade-long backslide during 2009. Conditions in this subregion have deteriorated to the point that almost every country ranks at the very bottom on multiple indicators measured by *Freedom in the World*. The area's average political rights score—which covers the spheres of electoral process, political pluralism, and functioning of government—has dropped sharply over the past four years and is now comparable to that of the Middle East and North Africa. The non-Baltic former Soviet Union lags far behind sub-Saharan Africa on the average scores for political rights and civil liberties, as well as on the majority of individual indicators, including freedom of expression, freedom of association, and the rule of law.

The dominant regional power, Russia, suffered further deterioration despite assurances from President Dmitry Medvedev that reform is in the offing. While Medvedev announced policies to fight corruption, loosen controls on civil society organizations, strengthen the rule of law, and enhance freedom of expression, the country met with a range of setbacks for political rights and civil liberties. Credible reports suggest that local and regional elections were suffused with irregularities. New restrictions were placed on religious minorities. A new commission was established to influence the presentation of history in schools and elsewhere, a move consistent with the Kremlin's wider efforts to manage and manipulate information in the public sphere. Human rights defenders and journalists remained vulnerable to persecution and murder, and there was a distinct lack of progress in punishing those responsible for previous politically motivated killings.

Central Asia remained one of the repressive areas in the world. Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have long ranked at or near the bottom of the *Freedom in the World* scale. The decline of Kyrgyzstan from Partly Free to Not Free was of particular concern, as the country seemed to have been embarked on a reformist course at various times in the post-Soviet period. Kazakhstan, Central Asia's wealthiest state, also registered a decline. It has made no progress toward implementation of reforms it had promised in advance of its assumption of the chairmanship of the OSCE. During 2009, the Kazakh authorities took a further step backward when they arrested and sentenced Yevgenii Zhovtis, a prominent human rights advocate.

The regimes in other authoritarian states on Russia's periphery, including Belarus,

Armenia, and Azerbaijan, have shown no signs of abandoning their repressive policies. Ukraine, which has also suffered heavily from the economic downturn and is burdened by enormous corruption problems, remains the only Free state in the non-Baltic former Soviet Union.

Asia-Pacific: Modest Improvements

As the world's most populous region, Asia is home to some of the globe's largest democracies as well as its biggest authoritarian regime, presenting a unique dynamic for democratic development. While most regions experienced various degrees of decline for freedom in 2009, the Asia-Pacific region as a whole experienced modest gains. Three of its most strategically significant countries—India, Indonesia, and Japan—held competitive and fair general elections, with the historic victory of Japan's opposition Democratic Party reconfirming that Japanese citizens can change their government when they choose to do so.

Other gains for political rights were seen in Bangladesh, where an elected civilian government replaced a military-backed administration, and the Maldives, where the first democratic parliamentary elections passed peacefully. Polls in Mongolia and both Indian and Pakistani Kashmir similarly contributed to improvements in the realization of political rights.

Not all election-related developments were positive, however. In Afghanistan, which saw a decline in its political rights rating, a deeply flawed presidential poll exacerbated an already unstable security situation and exposed the prevalence of corruption within the government. And in the Philippines, the massacre of civilians in connection with a local official's attempt to register his candidacy, and the government's subsequent declaration of martial law in the area, were indicative of heightened political violence in the run-up to 2010 elections.

Among civil liberties, particular pressure was placed on the rule of law and respect for freedom of expression, with reversals noted in both authoritarian and democratic societies. In Cambodia, the government recriminalized defamation and then used the new legislation to intimidate independent journalists. In Vietnam, a prominent independent think tank was shut down and prodemocracy civic activists were imprisoned. In Indonesia, top law enforcement officials were implicated in efforts to undermine anticorruption bodies. In Taiwan, increased government efforts to enforce anticorruption laws were marred by flaws in the protection of criminal defendants' rights, and new legislation restricted the political expression of academics. And in China, Communist Party leaders sought to tighten control over judges, while embarking on a sweeping crackdown against leading human rights lawyers and nonprofits offering legal services.

Indeed, as China's leaders showed greater confidence on the world stage, their actions at home demonstrated continued insecurity and intolerance with respect to citizens' demands for legal rights and accountable governance. The authorities' paranoid handling of a series of politically sensitive anniversaries—such as the 60-year mark of the Communist Party's time in power—included lockdowns on major cities, new restrictions on the internet, the creation of special extralegal taskforces, and harsh punishments meted out to democracy activists, petitioners, Tibetans, Falun Gong adherents, and human rights defenders. Separately, long-standing government policies of altering the demography and

repressing religious freedom in the Xinjiang region came to a head in 2009, when an eruption of ethnic violence was followed by forced "disappearances" of Uighur Muslims, a series of executions, and tightened internet censorship. Often at great personal risk, many of China's bloggers, journalists, legal professionals, workers, and religious believers nevertheless pushed the limits of permissible activity in increasingly sophisticated ways. They managed to expose cases of official corruption, circulate underground political publications, and play a role in forcing the government's partial retraction of a policy to install monitoring and censorship software on personal computers. Growing labor unrest and better organized strikes reflected workers' ability to bypass the party-controlled union, sometimes resulting in concessions by employers.

South Asia saw several improvements in 2009. Bangladesh's new civilian-led government enacted important legislation to improve transparency, and while the issue of detainee deaths remained a serious concern, lower levels of politically motivated violence and detentions, as well as fewer restrictions on the media, led to better scores for the country in a number of categories. Scores for the Maldives also improved, thanks to the holding of generally free legislative elections and a series of reforms in the areas of accountability, anticorruption, free assembly and association, and prison conditions.

While Pakistan remained mired in official corruption and extremist violence, positive signs were noted in initial reforms of the administration of the tribal areas and especially in the peaceful resolution of the judicial crisis, which included the reinstatement of the chief justice of the Supreme Court and the restoration of a large measure of judicial independence.

In Sri Lanka, improvements in political freedom following the end of the long-running civil war were balanced by the government's unwillingness to meaningfully address ethnic grievances, the internment in squalid conditions of several hundred thousand displaced civilians for much of the year, and increased hostility toward journalists and nongovernmental organizations.

Western Europe and Northern America: Some Change in U.S., Assimilation Crisis Endures in Europe

The countries of Western Europe and North America continued to register the highest scores on the *Freedom in the World* scale despite their ongoing struggle to assimilate large numbers of immigrants from developing countries, the continued tension between security and civil liberties, and problems stemming from libel tourism and other threats to freedom of expression.

In the United States, the presidency of Barack Obama was greeted with enthusiasm by civil libertarians, as his campaign platform had suggested a major rollback of controversial antiterrorism policies instituted by his predecessor, George W. Bush. In some areas, Obama did pursue a markedly different course than did Bush. For example, at year's end Obama issued an order than will result in the release to the public of millions of documents that had been classified during World War II, the Cold War, and other conflict periods. The new administration also issued a policy that forbade the use of torture by U.S. personnel; announced plans to close down the military detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; and decided that some of the terrorism

suspects held at Guantanamo would be tried in U.S. civilian courts, while others would be brought before military tribunals. More broadly, however, Obama decided against reversing course on many Bush-era security policies. Furthermore, the goal of shutting down the Guantanamo facility was complicated by the revelation that a number of previously freed detainees had joined jihadist groups in Afghanistan, Yemen, and elsewhere; by a nearly successful attempt to destroy an American airliner at year's end; and by political resistance to the relocation of terrorism detainees to facilities in the United States.

In Europe, cultural tensions driven by an influx of immigrants from Muslim countries continued to pose challenges to the region's tradition of tolerance and civil liberties. A number of countries have experienced political disputes over the building of mosques and minarets, the wearing of headscarves and burqas, the treatment of women in Muslim families, and similar issues. Apprehensions over immigration have led to the growth of right-wing political parties whose platforms are centered on demands for immigration restrictions. Switzerland, home to the region's most politically successful anti-immigrant party, suffered a decline in its *Freedom in the World* score after its citizens voted in a referendum to ban the construction of minarets. Malta also suffered a decline due to its record of often refusing to come to the aid of foundering boats carrying immigrants from North Africa, as well as the poor condition of its immigrant detention centers. Turkey experienced a modest score decline due to a court decision that outlawed a political party representing the interests of Kurds, an action that seriously undermined the government's efforts to end the Kurdish insurgency.

Challenges to freedom of expression remained a problem, especially in the United Kingdom, where journalists and scholars have been brought to court on libel charges by individuals from foreign countries—most often countries under authoritarian rule. The problem has prompted press freedom advocates to cite such "libel tourism" as a serious menace to intellectual inquiry and the robust exchange of ideas. The controversy deepened in 2009, when libel charges were advanced against scientists who had written critiques of the conclusions of fellow scholars. Meanwhile, several states in the United States have passed laws that would effectively nullify monetary awards for libel or defamation issued by foreign courts in most instances. In a positive development, a court decision in Canada significantly narrowed the conditions under which cases of libel or defamation can be brought before the judicial system.

REGIONAL PATTERNS

	Free	Partly Free	Not Free
Americas	25 (71%)	9 (26%)	1 (3%)
Asia-Pacific	16 (41%)	15 (38%)	8 (21%)
Central and Eastern Europe/Former Soviet Union	14 (48%)	7 (24%)	8 (28%)
Middle East and North Africa	1 (6%)	3 (17%)	14 (78%)
Sub-Saharan Africa	9 (19%)	23 (48%)	16 (33%)
Western Europe	24 (96%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)

CONCLUSION

Meeting the Authoritarian Challenge

Despite the record of global setbacks during the past year, the overall state of freedom in the world remains quite positive by any historical measurement. With some exceptions, the societies that embraced democracy during the Cold War's waning years and immediately after the dissolution of the Soviet Union have retained their array of free institutions. The apparent durability of democracy in a number of Asia's most important countries represents a bright spot, as do the gains for freedom in the Balkans, a region that was mired in civil war and ethnic hatred during the 1990s. The fact that more societies did not seek authoritarian alternatives in the face of a severe worldwide economic crisis last year could be held up as a testament to the strength of the democratic idea.

Still, the notion that things could have been worse is poor consolation for a year in which freedom showed some measure of decline in roughly 40 countries. And the results for 2009 were no isolated occurrence: they marked the fourth consecutive year of overall decline, the longest such stretch of negative data in the history of *Freedom in the World*. This is a phenomenon that should be galvanizing civic leaders and governments throughout the democratic world, no less than it should be concerning to those men and women elsewhere who aspire to live in free societies. Yet it comes at a time when American public opinion, at least, is experiencing a resurgence of isolationism in key respects.

According to a survey published by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press on December 3, 2009, for the first time since World War II, a plurality of Americans (49 percent) believe the United States should "mind its own business and let other countries get along the best they can." The steepest specific change in general public attitudes surveyed is the decline in interest in "spreading democracy around the world," from 44 percent just after the 2001 terrorist attacks to a mere 10 percent today. As was the case when Freedom House was founded in 1941, the reluctance of American public opinion to support active engagement in a messy world, despite clear infringements on democratic liberties overseas, makes it extremely difficult for American foreign policy to defend democracy from its enemies.

Another source of concern is the growing paranoia of even the largest and most headstrong among the world's authoritarian powers. No country can compete in this respect with China, which—despite its waxing economic and military prowess—behaves as if it were under siege by its own citizens. The prison sentence recently issued to democracy advocate Liu Xiaobo is reminiscent of the anti-dissident campaigns of the Soviet Union under Leonid Brezhnev. Similarly disturbing is Beijing's persecution of lawyers who have represented defendants in politically sensitive cases, including ethnic and religious minorities and independent journalists. While China asserts that its relations with the rest of the world are based on a fundamental principle of noninterference, it recently tried to intimidate foreign cultural officials into silencing regime critics at conferences and exhibition venues in Germany, Australia, South Korea, and Bangladesh. It has likewise badgered foreign countries to return Uighurs seeking asylum abroad, and succeeded in persuading Pakistan and Cambodia to do so despite a credible risk of torture and execution.

While these acts of repression are disturbing, so is the absence of protest from the democratic world. When the Soviet Union arrested a dissident or suppressed religious expression, it drew widespread condemnation by figures ranging from heads of state to trade union leaders, as well as by human rights organizations and prominent humanitarians. China's current actions, by contrast, elicit little more than boilerplate criticism, and just as often they provoke no response whatsoever. Nor is China the only authoritarian power that has managed to avoid global attention for its breaches of democratic standards. Kazakhstan holds the chairmanship of the OSCE for the year 2010 despite a record of fraudulent elections and repression of independent critics in the media and civil society—behavior that only grew worse as 2010 approached. Venezuela's Hugo Chavez has beguiled many and escaped censure by the Organization of American States despite his increasingly contemptuous attitude toward pluralism and his own country's constitution. Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other influential authoritarian states in the Middle East similarly avoid criticism for their assaults on citizens who seek to improve the climate for rights and freedoms in their countries.

The Cold War has ended, but the tendency of authoritarians of various stripes to band together and pursue common strategic, diplomatic, and occasionally economic interests remains a reality of international behavior. Authoritarians prefer alliances with other authoritarians and continue to regard the United States and the world's other democracies as adversaries. They are deeply unsettled by citizen-driven movements for change, such as the one witnessed in the U.S. electoral campaign of 2008, or those that—in very different contexts—currently threaten the forces of repression in Iran and Zimbabwe. Authoritarian rulers fear their own citizens: hence their frequently expressed apprehensions about an American-inspired "velvet revolution." In response, they devote more and more strategic thought and material resources to the challenge of keeping their people under control and the democratic world at bay.

While a "freedom recession" and an authoritarian resurgence have clearly emerged as global trends, they are subject to reversal. Democracy remains the preferred form of government; indeed, no other system or model has gained widespread support. The United States and other democracies should take the initiative to meet the authoritarian challenge, and democratic leaders should make the case to their wary publics about the importance of doing so now, while the balance remains relatively favorable, rather than waiting for a further erosion in the global state of freedom.

Eliza Young assisted in the preparation of this report.

Freedom in the World 2010: Status and Ratings Changes, Trend Arrow Explanations

Status Changes	
Improvements	
Kosovo	Kosovo's political rights rating improved from 6 to 5, its civil liberties rating from 5 to 4, and its status from Not Free to Partly Free due to November parliamentary elections—the first since the 2008 declaration of independence—that were generally deemed to be in compliance with international standards, and greater recognition of minority rights.
Montenegro	Montenegro's civil liberties rating improved from 3 to 2 and its status from Partly Free to Free due to the successful organization of parliamentary elections in March, progress in adopting anticorruption legislation, and an overall stabilization of country conditions.
Declines	
Bahrain	Bahrain's political rights rating declined from 5 to 6 and its status from Partly Free to Not Free due to arrests of prominent members of the Haq political society, an increase in systematic harassment of opposition political figures, and worsening sectarian discrimination.
Gabon	Gabon's civil liberties rating declined from 4 to 5 and its status from Partly Free to Not Free due to increased restrictions on the media in the period surrounding the presidential election as well as a crackdown on postelection protesters.
Jordan	Jordan's political rights rating declined from 5 to 6 and its status from Partly Free to Not Free due to King Abdullah's dismissal of the parliament and his announcement that elections would not be held until the end of 2010, representing an attempt to manipulate the political process by further marginalizing an already weak legislature, as well as an increased influence of security forces over political life.
Kyrgyzstan	Kyrgyzstan's political rights rating declined from 5 to 6, its civil liberties rating from 4 to 5, and its status from Partly Free to Not Free due to a flawed presidential election, the concentration of power in the executive branch, and new legal restrictions on freedom of religion.
Lesotho	Lesotho's political rights rating declined from 2 to 3 and its status from Free to Partly Free due to unresolved disputes over legislative seats from the 2008 elections and a breakdown in internationally mediated negotiations between the government and opposition.
Yemen	Yemen's political rights rating declined from 5 to 6 and its status from Partly Free to Not Free due to the renewal of fighting between central authorities and al-Houthi rebels in the north and the escalation of violence between the government and opposition forces in southern Yemen.
Ratings Changes	
Improvements	
Bangladesh	Bangladesh's political rights rating improved from 4 to 3 due to the installation of a new elected government and related gains in government functioning and accountability.
Croatia	Croatia's political rights rating improved from 2 to 1 due to improvements in the treatment of minority Serb and Romany communities.
Indian Kashmir	Indian Kashmir's political rights rating improved from 5 to 4 due to reports that the December 2008 elections were generally fair and competitive, drawing a comparatively high voter turnout despite calls for a boycott from militant groups.
Iraq	Iraq's political rights rating improved from 6 to 5 due to free and competitive regional elections in early 2009 and an increase in the Iraqi government's autonomy as U.S. troops began their phased withdrawal.
Lebanon	Lebanon's civil liberties rating improved from 4 to 3 due to a decline in political violence that had

	plagued the country since 2005, coupled with a series of positive reforms to combat sectarianism and limit arbitrary detention.
Malawi	Malawi's political rights rating improved from 4 to 3 due to a fairer and more competitive presidential election in 2009, greater electoral participation by women, and women's subsequent representation in governing institutions.
Maldives	The Maldives' political rights rating improved from 4 to 3 due to largely fair and competitive legislative elections held in May 2009.
Moldova	Moldova's political rights rating improved from 4 to 3 due to parliamentary elections that resulted in a rotation of power between the long-ruling Communist Party and a coalition of opposition parties.
Serbia	Serbia's political rights rating improved from 3 to 2 due to the consolidation of a stable multiparty system after several rounds of elections in the post-Milosevic period.
Taiwan*	Taiwan's political rights rating improved from 2 to 1 due to enforcement of anticorruption laws that led to the prosecution of former high-ranking officials, the annulment of several legislators' elections owing to vote-buying, and the investigation of over 200 candidates for alleged vote-buying in local elections.
Togo	Togo's civil liberties rating improved from 5 to 4 due to the launch of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate past human rights abuses, as well as a decrease in violence throughout the country.
Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe's political rights rating improved from 7 to 6 due to the formation of a national unity government, the appointment of opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai as prime minister, and the swearing in of an opposition-led parliament.
Declines	
Afghanistan	Afghanistan's political rights rating declined from 5 to 6 due to a deeply flawed presidential election that included massive fraud, a compromised electoral management body, and low voter turnout due to intimidation.
Antigua and Barbuda	Antigua and Barbuda's political rights rating declined from 2 to 3 due to the collapse of a massive fraudulent investment scheme, which revealed how deeply the government had been influenced and corrupted by foreign business interests.
Botswana	Botswana's political rights rating declined from 2 to 3 due to decreased transparency and accountability in the executive branch under President Seretse Khama Ian Khama's administration.
Eritrea	Eritrea's civil liberties rating declined from 6 to 7 due to the government's persistent and intense repression of religious minorities, its dominance over the judiciary, and its harsh system of national service, which ties people to the state for much of their working lives.
The Gambia	The Gambia's civil liberties rating declined from 4 to 5 due to President Yahya Jammeh's enhanced personal control over the judiciary and threats of violence against civil society organizations.
Guatemala	Guatemala's political rights rating declined from 3 to 4 due to the government's inability to implement policies and legislation in the face of pervasive organized crime.
Guinea	Guinea's civil liberties rating declined from 5 to 6 due to the military junta's repressive measures, including the massacre of some 150 opposition protesters in September and the use of rape as a means of political intimidation.
Honduras	Honduras's political rights rating declined from 3 to 4 and its civil liberties rating from 3 to 4 due to the forced exile of President Manuel Zelaya and subsequent restrictions on citizens' civil liberties.
Kenya	Kenya's civil liberties rating declined from 3 to 4 due to the government's failure to address abuses by the security forces, including their role in postelection violence in 2008.
Madagascar	Madagascar's political rights rating declined from 4 to 6 and its civil liberties rating from 3 to 4

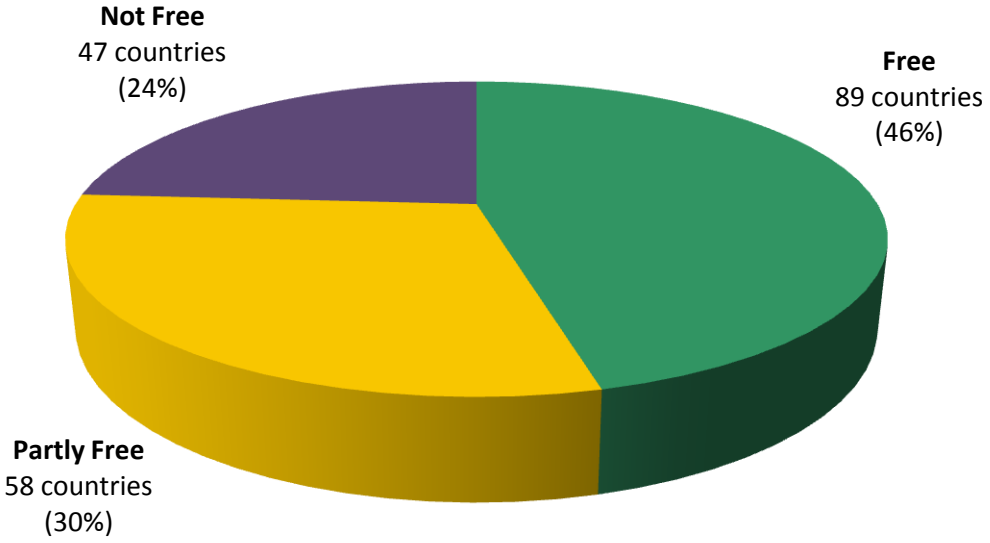
	due to President Andry Rajoelina's unconstitutional rise to power, suspension of the parliament, repression of opposition protests, and limitations on press freedom, including the closure of several opposition media outlets.
Mozambique	Mozambique's political rights rating declined from 3 to 4 due to significant irregularities and a lack of transparency pertaining to the registration of candidates and the tabulation of votes in the October 2009 presidential, legislative, and provincial elections.
Nicaragua	Nicaragua's civil liberties rating declined from 3 to 4 due to President Daniel Ortega's continued use of violent intimidation and politicized courts to overcome obstacles to his plans for reelection.
Niger	Niger's political rights rating declined from 3 to 5 due to President Mamadou Tandja's antidemocratic moves to extend his power, including the dissolution of the Constitutional Court and National Assembly and the holding of a referendum to eliminate term limits and postpone the next presidential election—originally due in December 2009—until 2012.
Palestinian Authority–Administered Territories	The Palestinian Authority–Administered Territories' political rights rating declined from 5 to 6 due to the expiration of Mahmoud Abbas's four-year term in January 2009, the ongoing lack of a functioning elected legislature, and an edict allowing the removal of elected municipal governments in the West Bank.
Somaliland	Somaliland's civil liberties rating declined from 4 to 5 due to further restrictions on press freedom and the suppression of demonstrations following the postponement of the presidential election.
Taiwan*	Taiwan's civil liberties rating declined from 1 to 2 due to flaws in the protection of criminal defendants' rights that were exposed during anticorruption prosecutions and a high-profile murder case, as well as a law that infringes on academic freedom by barring staff and scholars at public educational facilities from participating in certain political activities.
Venezuela	Venezuela's political rights rating declined from 4 to 5 due to the adoption of laws designed to further marginalize the political opposition, including provisions that were rejected by referendum voters in December 2007.
Zambia	Zambia's civil liberties rating declined from 3 to 4 due to new legal restrictions on the activities of nongovernmental organizations.
Trend Arrows	
Up	
Burundi	Burundi received an upward trend arrow due to the integration of the last remaining rebel group into the political process and the establishment of an independent electoral commission.
Macedonia	Macedonia received an upward trend arrow due to presidential and local elections that were deemed fair and competitive by outside observers and the implementation of reforms recommended after the 2008 parliamentary elections.
Mongolia	Mongolia received an upward trend arrow due to a fair and competitive presidential election, as well as the peaceful transfer of authority from one prime minister to another.
Pakistani Kashmir	Pakistani Kashmir received an upward trend arrow due to largely peaceful elections for the reformed Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly in November.
Down	
Cambodia	Cambodia received a downward trend arrow due to the deportation of 22 Uighur asylum-seekers to China in December 2009.
Congo (Brazzaville)	Congo (Brazzaville) received a downward trend arrow due to President Denis Sassou-Nguesso's increasing centralization of power and the authorities' handling of the July 2009 presidential election and its aftermath, including their disqualification of several opposition candidates and intimidation of journalists.

* Taiwan's political rights rating improved in 2009, while its civil liberties rating declined.

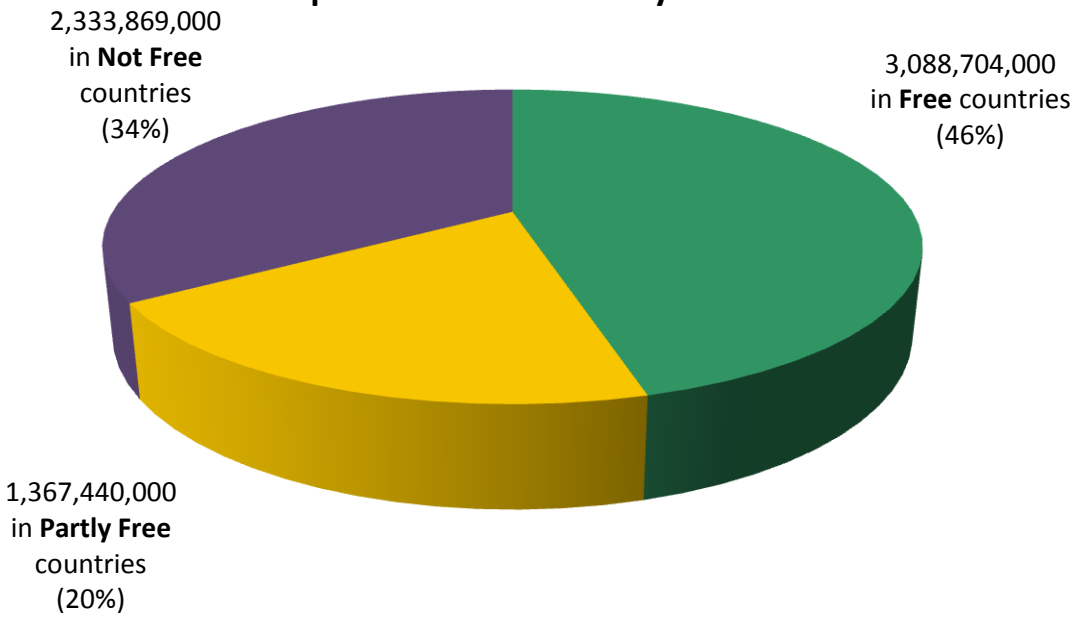
Congo (Kinshasa)	Congo (Kinshasa) received a downward trend arrow due to the government's continued harassment of human rights groups and an increasingly dangerous working environment for journalists.
Dominican Republic	The Dominican Republic received a downward trend arrow due to the revelation through several major scandals of the level of drug traffickers' penetration of Dominican police and legal institutions, as well as new constitutional bans on abortion and gay marriage that are among the strictest in the world.
Ethiopia	Ethiopia received a downward trend arrow due to the narrowing of political space in advance of the 2010 elections, the government's crackdown on the operations of nongovernmental organizations, and its use of antiterrorism legislation against political opponents.
Guyana	Guyana received a downward trend arrow due to the violation of detainees' rights by law enforcement officials.
Iran	Iran received a downward trend arrow due to strong evidence of fraud in the June 2009 presidential election and the violent suppression of subsequent protests.
Kazakhstan	Kazakhstan received a downward trend arrow to reflect a spate of politically motivated libel suits against critical media outlets, a restrictive new internet law, arbitrary arrests of officials and businesspeople, and the grossly deficient judicial proceedings against rights activist Yevgenii Zhovtis.
Malta	Malta received a downward trend arrow due to its refusal to assist seagoing migrants in distress and the deplorable conditions of detention centers for migrants, which have yet to be brought up to European Union standards.
Morocco	Morocco received a downward trend arrow due to the increased concentration of power in the hands of political elites aligned with the monarchy.
Nigeria	Nigeria received a downward trend arrow due to the ruling party's consolidation of power, especially through its influence over opposition appeals of 2007 election results, and government involvement in sectarian violence that led to the deaths of several hundred people.
North Korea	North Korea received a downward trend arrow due to the government's tightening of control over its burgeoning private market and its repression of citizens' economic freedom.
Philippines	The Philippines received a downward trend arrow due to a general decline in the rule of law in the greater Mindanao region, and specifically the massacre of 57 journalists, lawyers, and other civilians on their way to register a candidate in upcoming elections.
Russia	Russia received a downward trend arrow due to electoral abuses, declining religious freedom, greater state controls over the presentation of history, and the repeated use of political terror against victims including human rights activists and journalists.
Slovakia	Slovakia received a downward trend arrow due to an increase in civil defamation cases against journalists, with plaintiffs including the prime minister and the head of the Supreme Court.
South Ossetia	South Ossetia received a downward trend arrow due to Russia's increased control over the economy and political system, and Russian aid that has fueled rampant corruption among local elites.
Switzerland	Switzerland received a downward trend arrow due to referendum voters' approval of a constitutional ban on the construction of minarets.
Turkey	Turkey received a downward trend arrow due to due to the Constitutional Court's decision to ban the pro-Kurdish Democratic Society Party.
Vietnam	Vietnam received a downward trend arrow due to a serious tightening of space for civil society to comment on and criticize the government, including the banning of private think tanks and arrests of prominent reform advocates.

Freedom in the World 2010: Global Data

Country Breakdown by Status



Population Breakdown by Status

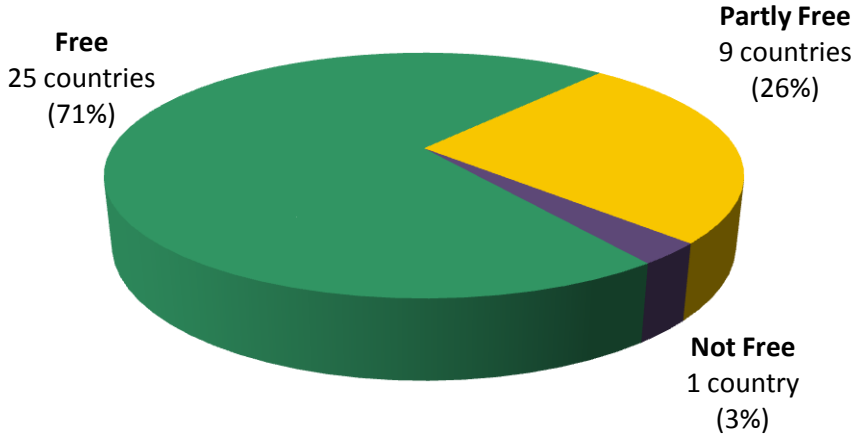


Global Trends in Freedom

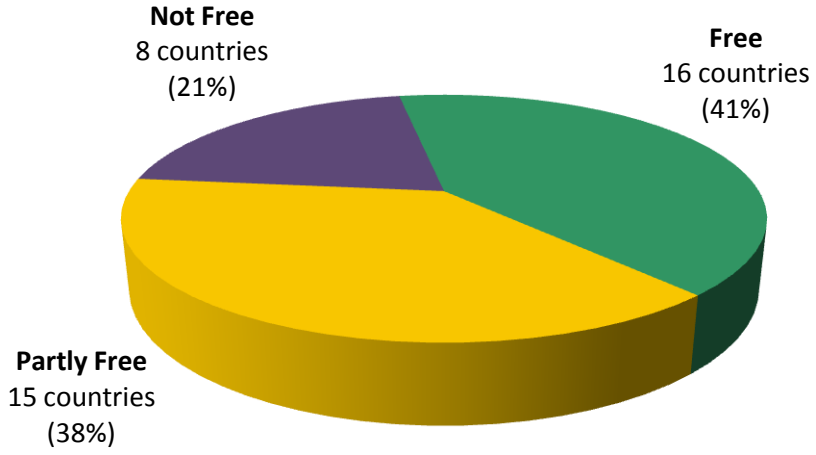
Year Under Review	Free Countries		Partly Free Countries		Not Free Countries	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1979	51	32	54	33	56	35
1989	61	37	44	26	62	37
1999	85	44	60	31	47	25
2009	89	46	58	30	47	24

Freedom in the World 2010: Regional Data

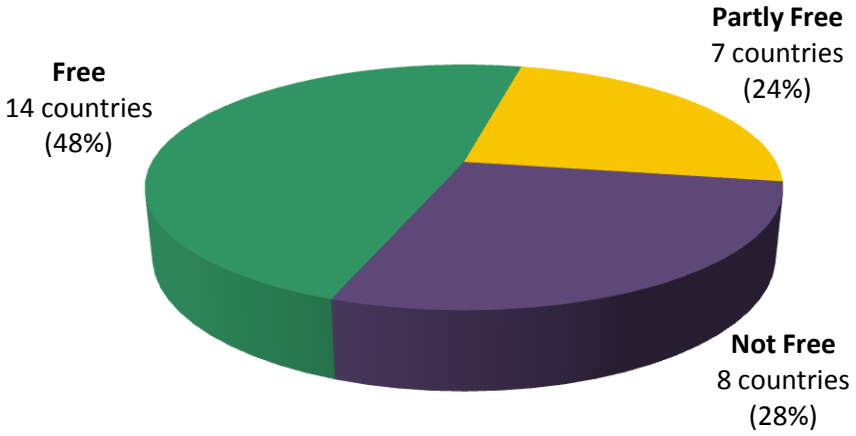
The Americas



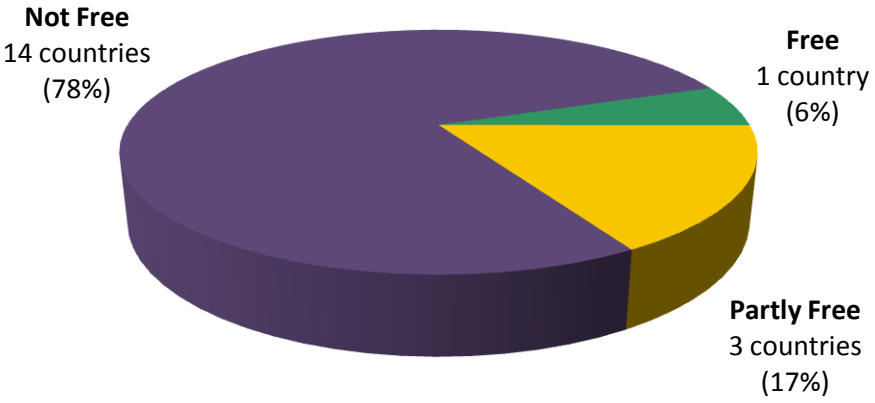
Asia-Pacific



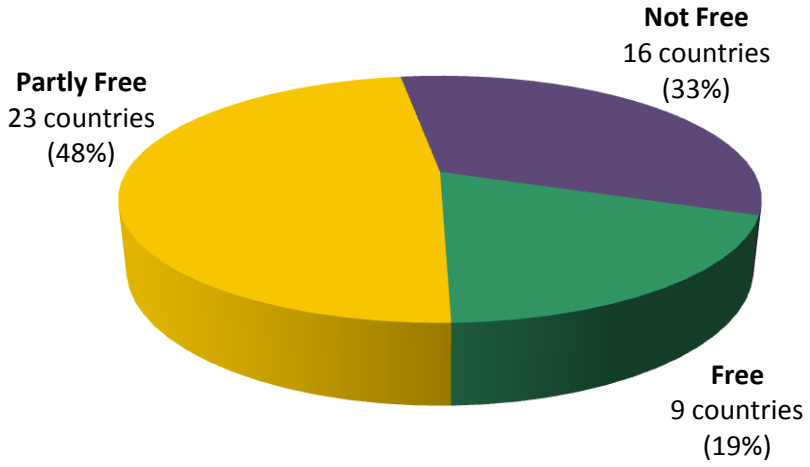
Central and Eastern Europe/Former Soviet Union



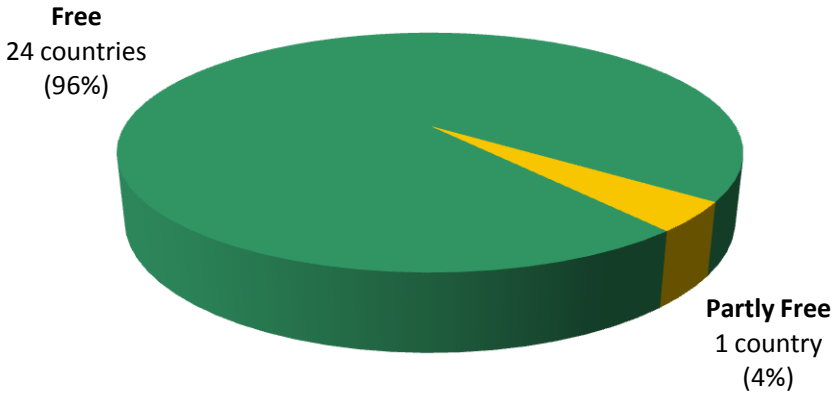
Middle East and North Africa



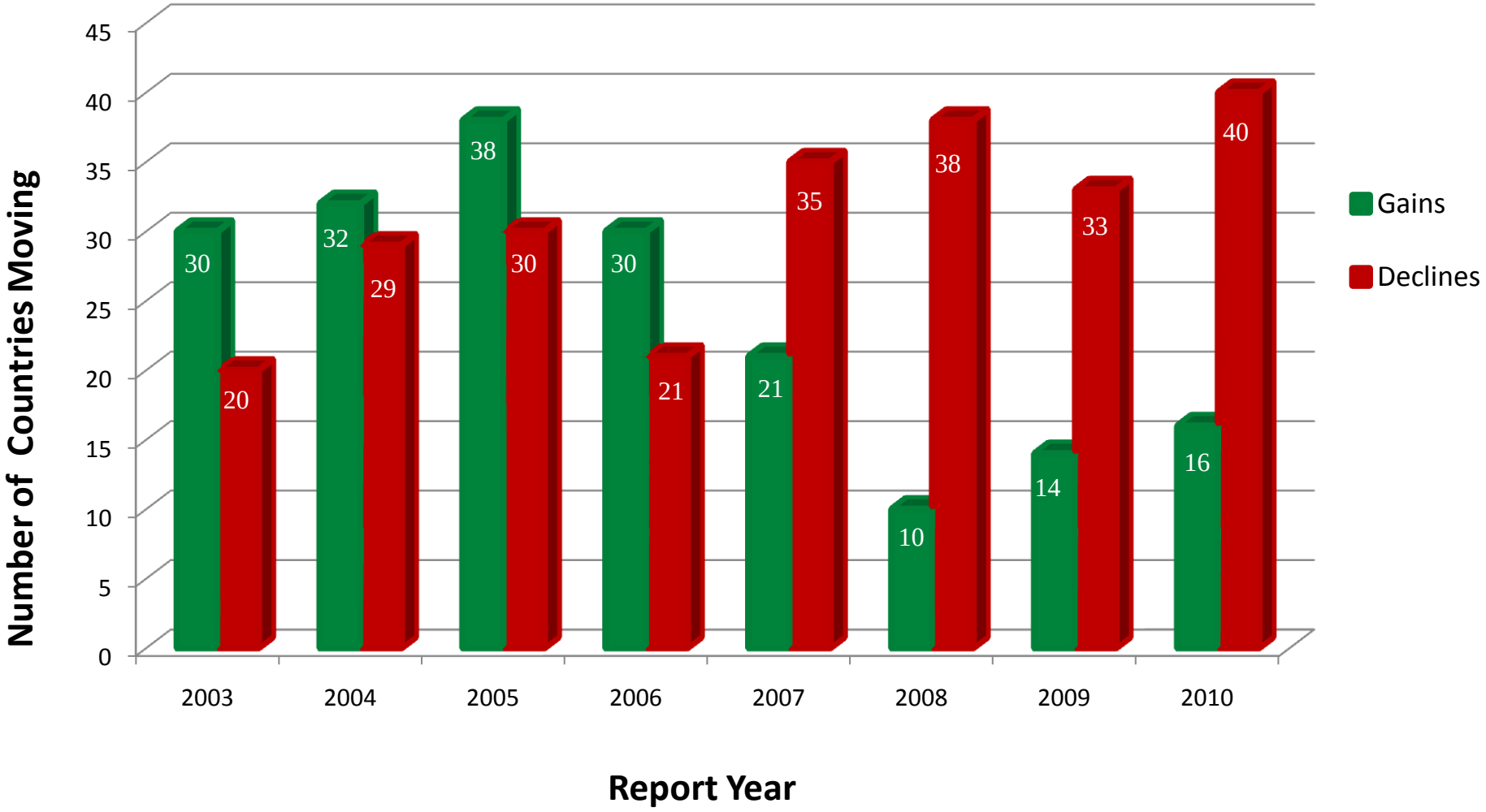
Sub-Saharan Africa



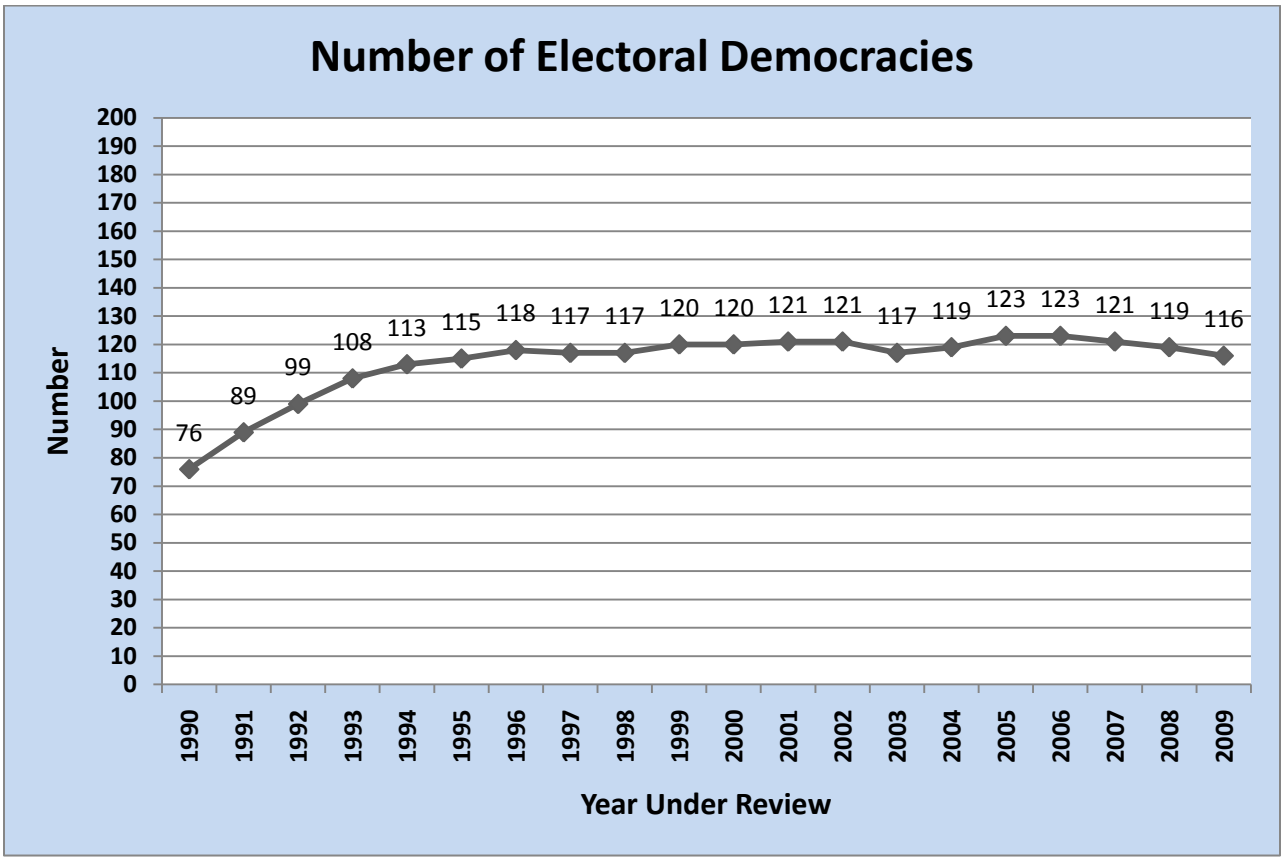
Western Europe

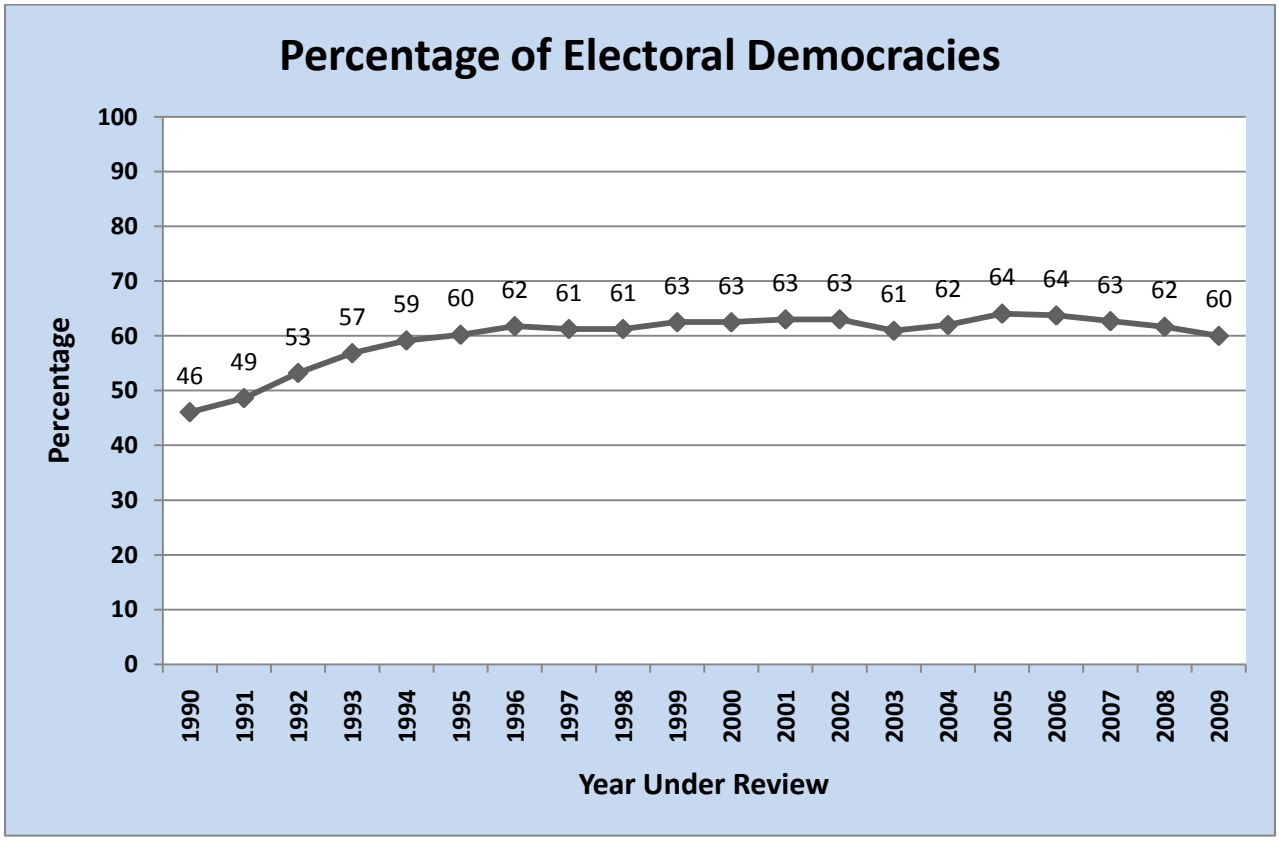


Freedom in the World: Global Gains versus Declines



Freedom in the World: Electoral Democracies, 1999–2009





Freedom in the World: Global Data, 1972–2009

Year Covered	Total Countries	Free Countries		Partly Free Countries		Not Free Countries	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2009	194	89	46	58	30	47	24
2008	193	89	46	62	32	42	22
2007	193	90	47	60	31	43	22
2006	193	90	47	58	30	45	23
2005	192	89	46	58	30	45	24
2004	192	89	46	54	28	49	26
2003	192	88	46	55	29	49	25
2002	192	89	46	55	29	48	25
2001	192	85	44	59	31	48	25
2000	192	86	45	58	30	48	25
1999	192	85	44	60	31	47	25
1998	191	88	46	53	28	50	26
1997	191	81	42	57	30	53	28
1996	191	79	41	59	31	53	28
1995	191	76	40	62	32	53	28
1994	191	76	40	61	32	54	28
1993	190	72	38	63	33	55	29
1992	186	75	40	73	39	38	21
1991	183	76	42	65	35	42	23
1990	165	65	40	50	30	50	30
1989	167	61	37	44	26	62	37
1988	167	60	36	39	23	68	41
1987	167	58	35	58	35	51	30
1986	167	57	34	57	34	53	32
1985	167	56	34	56	34	55	33
1984	167	53	32	59	35	55	33
1982–1983*	166	52	31	56	34	58	35
1981–1982**	165	54	33	47	28	64	39
1980	162	51	31	51	31	60	37
1979	161	51	32	54	33	56	35
1978	158	47	30	56	35	55	35
1977	155	43	28	48	31	64	41
1976	159	42	26	49	31	68	43
1975	158	40	25	53	34	65	41
1974	152	41	27	48	32	63	41
1973	151	44	29	42	28	65	43
1972	151	44	29	38	25	69	46

* This survey covered events that occurred from 1981 through mid-1982.
** This survey covered events that occurred from mid-1982 through late 1983.

Freedom in the World 2010: Table of Independent Countries

Country	PR	CL	Freedom Status	Trend Arrow
Afghanistan	6 ▼	6	Not Free	
Albania*	3	3	Partly Free	
Algeria	6	5	Not Free	
Andorra*	1	1	Free	
Angola	6	5	Not Free	
Antigua and Barbuda*	3 ▼	2	Free	
Argentina*	2	2	Free	
Armenia	6	4	Partly Free	
Australia*	1	1	Free	
Austria*	1	1	Free	
Azerbaijan	6	5	Not Free	
Bahamas*	1	1	Free	
Bahrain	6 ▼	5	Not Free ▼	
Bangladesh*	3 ▲	4	Partly Free	
Barbados*	1	1	Free	
Belarus	7	6	Not Free	
Belgium*	1	1	Free	
Belize*	1	2	Free	
Benin*	2	2	Free	
Bhutan	4	5	Partly Free	
Bolivia*	3	3	Partly Free	
Bosnia-Herzegovina*	4	3	Partly Free	
Botswana*	3 ▼	2	Free	
Brazil*	2	2	Free	
Brunei	6	5	Not Free	
Bulgaria*	2	2	Free	
Burkina Faso	5	3	Partly Free	
Burma	7	7	Not Free	
Burundi*	4	5	Partly Free	↑
Cambodia	6	5	Not Free	↓
Cameroon	6	6	Not Free	
Canada*	1	1	Free	
Cape Verde*	1	1	Free	
Central African Republic	5	5	Partly Free	
Chad	7	6	Not Free	
Chile*	1	1	Free	
China	7	6	Not Free	
Colombia*	3	4	Partly Free	
Comoros*	3	4	Partly Free	
Congo (Brazzaville)	6	5	Not Free	↓
Congo (Kinshasa)	6	6	Not Free	↓

Country	PR	CL	Freedom Status	Trend Arrow
Costa Rica*	1	1	Free	
Cote d'Ivoire	6	5	Not Free	
Croatia*	1 ▲	2	Free	
Cuba	7	6	Not Free	
Cyprus*	1	1	Free	
Czech Republic*	1	1	Free	
Denmark*	1	1	Free	
Djibouti	5	5	Partly Free	
Dominica*	1	1	Free	
Dominican Republic*	2	2	Free	↓
East Timor*	3	4	Partly Free	
Ecuador*	3	3	Partly Free	
Egypt	6	5	Not Free	
El Salvador*	2	3	Free	
Equatorial Guinea	7	7	Not Free	
Eritrea	7	7 ▼	Not Free	
Estonia*	1	1	Free	
Ethiopia	5	5	Partly Free	↓
Fiji	6	4	Partly Free	
Finland*	1	1	Free	
France*	1	1	Free	
Gabon	6	5 ▼	Not Free ▼	
The Gambia	5	5 ▼	Partly Free	
Georgia	4	4	Partly Free	
Germany*	1	1	Free	
Ghana*	1	2	Free	
Greece*	1	2	Free	
Grenada*	1	2	Free	
Guatemala*	4 ▼	4	Partly Free	
Guinea	7	6 ▼	Not Free	
Guinea-Bissau*	4	4	Partly Free	
Guyana*	2	3	Free	↓
Haiti*	4	5	Partly Free	
Honduras	4 ▼	4 ▼	Partly Free	
Hungary*	1	1	Free	
Iceland*	1	1	Free	
India*	2	3	Free	
Indonesia*	2	3	Free	
Iran	6	6	Not Free	↓
Iraq	5 ▲	6	Not Free	
Ireland*	1	1	Free	
Israel*	1	2	Free	
Italy*	1	2	Free	

Country	PR	CL	Freedom Status	Trend Arrow
Jamaica*	2	3	Free	
Japan*	1	2	Free	
Jordan	6 ▼	5	Not Free ▼	
Kazakhstan	6	5	Not Free	↓
Kenya	4	4 ▼	Partly Free	
Kiribati*	1	1	Free	
Kosovo	5 ▲	4 ▲	Partly Free ▲	
Kuwait	4	4	Partly Free	
Kyrgyzstan	6 ▼	5 ▼	Not Free ▼	
Laos	7	6	Not Free	
Latvia*	2	1	Free	
Lebanon	5	3 ▲	Partly Free	
Lesotho*	3 ▼	3	Partly Free ▼	
Liberia*	3	4	Partly Free	
Libya	7	7	Not Free	
Liechtenstein*	1	1	Free	
Lithuania*	1	1	Free	
Luxembourg*	1	1	Free	
Macedonia*	3	3	Partly Free	↑
Madagascar	6 ▼	4 ▼	Partly Free	
Malawi*	3 ▲	4	Partly Free	
Malaysia	4	4	Partly Free	
Maldives*	3 ▲	4	Partly Free	
Mali*	2	3	Free	
Malta*	1	1	Free	↓
Marshall Islands*	1	1	Free	
Mauritania	6	5	Not Free	
Mauritius*	1	2	Free	
Mexico*	2	3	Free	
Micronesia*	1	1	Free	
Moldova*	3 ▲	4	Partly Free	
Monaco*	2	1	Free	
Mongolia*	2	2	Free	↑
Montenegro*	3	2 ▲	Free ▲	
Morocco	5	4	Partly Free	↓
Mozambique	4 ▼	3	Partly Free	
Namibia*	2	2	Free	
Nauru*	1	1	Free	
Nepal	4	4	Partly Free	
Netherlands*	1	1	Free	
New Zealand*	1	1	Free	
Nicaragua*	4	4 ▼	Partly Free	
Niger	5 ▼	4	Partly Free	

Country	PR	CL	Freedom Status	Trend Arrow
Nigeria	5	4	Partly Free	↓
North Korea	7	7	Not Free	↓
Norway*	1	1	Free	
Oman	6	5	Not Free	
Pakistan	4	5	Partly Free	
Palau*	1	1	Free	
Panama*	1	2	Free	
Papua New Guinea*	4	3	Partly Free	
Paraguay*	3	3	Partly Free	
Peru*	2	3	Free	
Philippines	4	3	Partly Free	↓
Poland*	1	1	Free	
Portugal*	1	1	Free	
Qatar	6	5	Not Free	
Romania*	2	2	Free	
Russia	6	5	Not Free	↓
Rwanda	6	5	Not Free	
Saint Kitts and Nevis*	1	1	Free	
Saint Lucia*	1	1	Free	
Saint Vincent and Grenadines*	2	1	Free	
Samoa*	2	2	Free	
San Marino*	1	1	Free	
Sao Tome and Principe*	2	2	Free	
Saudi Arabia	7	6	Not Free	
Senegal*	3	3	Partly Free	
Serbia*	2 ▲	2	Free	
Seychelles*	3	3	Partly Free	
Sierra Leone*	3	3	Partly Free	
Singapore	5	4	Partly Free	
Slovakia*	1	1	Free	↓
Slovenia*	1	1	Free	
Solomon Islands	4	3	Partly Free	
Somalia	7	7	Not Free	
South Africa*	2	2	Free	
South Korea*	1	2	Free	
Spain*	1	1	Free	
Sri Lanka*	4	4	Partly Free	
Sudan	7	7	Not Free	
Suriname*	2	2	Free	
Swaziland	7	5	Not Free	
Sweden*	1	1	Free	
Switzerland*	1	1	Free	↓
Syria	7	6	Not Free	

Country	PR	CL	Freedom Status	Trend Arrow
Taiwan*	1 ▲	2 ▼	Free	
Tajikistan	6	5	Not Free	
Tanzania	4	3	Partly Free	
Thailand	5	4	Partly Free	
Togo	5	4 ▲	Partly Free	
Tonga	5	3	Partly Free	
Trinidad and Tobago*	2	2	Free	
Tunisia	7	5	Not Free	
Turkey*	3	3	Partly Free	↓
Turkmenistan	7	7	Not Free	
Tuvalu*	1	1	Free	
Uganda	5	4	Partly Free	
Ukraine*	3	2	Free	
United Arab Emirates	6	5	Not Free	
United Kingdom*	1	1	Free	
United States*	1	1	Free	
Uruguay*	1	1	Free	
Uzbekistan	7	7	Not Free	
Vanuatu*	2	2	Free	
Venezuela	5 ▼	4	Partly Free	
Vietnam	7	5	Not Free	↓
Yemen	6 ▼	5	Not Free ▼	
Zambia*	3	4 ▼	Partly Free	
Zimbabwe	6 ▲	6	Not Free	

PR and CL stand for political rights and civil liberties, respectively; 1 represents the most free and 7 the least free rating. The ratings reflect an overall judgment based on survey results.

▲ ▼ up or down indicates a change in political rights, civil liberties, or status since the last survey.

↑ ↓ up or down indicates a trend of positive or negative changes that took place but that were not sufficient to result in a change in political rights or civil liberties ratings of 1-7.

***** indicates a country's status as an electoral democracy.

NOTE: The ratings reflect global events from January 1, 2009, through December 31, 2009.

Freedom in the World 2010: Table of Related Territories

Territory	PR	CL	Freedom Status	Trend Arrow
Hong Kong	5	2	Partly Free	
Puerto Rico	1	1	Free	

Freedom in the World 2010: Table of Disputed Territories

Territory	PR	CL	Freedom Status	Trend Arrow
Abkhazia	5	5	Partly Free	
Indian Kashmir	4 ▲	4	Partly Free	
Israeli-Occupied Territories	6	6	Not Free	
Nagorno-Karabakh	5	5	Partly Free	
Northern Cyprus	2	2	Free	
Pakistani Kashmir	6	5	Not Free	↑
Palestinian Authority–Administered Territories	6 ▼	6	Not Free	
Somaliland	5	5 ▼	Partly Free	
South Ossetia	7	6	Not Free	↓
Tibet	7	7	Not Free	
Transnistria	6	6	Not Free	
Western Sahara	7	6	Not Free	

Freedom in the World Methodology Summary

The *Freedom in the World* survey provides an annual evaluation of the progress and decline of freedom in 194 countries and 14 select related and disputed territories. The survey measures freedom according to two broad categories: political rights and civil liberties. Each country and territory is rated on a seven-point scale for both political rights and civil liberties, with 1 representing the most free and 7 the least free, and then assigns each country and territory a broad category status of Free (for countries whose ratings average 1.0 to 2.5), Partly Free (3.0 to 5.0), or Not Free (5.5 to 7.0). Freedom House also assigns upward or downward "trend arrows" to certain countries and territories which saw general positive or negative trends during the year that were not significant enough to result in a ratings change from the previous year. In addition, the survey includes detailed narrative reports on each country and territory describing the major political and human rights developments of the year.

Freedom House does not maintain a culture-bound view of freedom. The methodology of the survey is grounded in basic standards of political rights and civil liberties, derived in large measure from relevant portions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These standards apply to all countries and territories, irrespective of geographical location, ethnic or religious composition, or level of economic development. The survey operates from the assumption that freedom for all peoples is best achieved in liberal democratic societies.

The survey does not rate governments or government performance per se, but rather the real-world rights and social freedoms enjoyed by individuals. Freedoms can be affected by state actions, as well as by nonstate actors, including insurgents and other armed groups. Thus, the survey ratings generally reflect the interplay of a variety of actors, both governmental and nongovernmental.

The survey findings are reached after a multilayered process of analysis and evaluation by a team of in-house and consultant regional experts and scholars. The survey, which has been published since 1972, enables an examination of trends in freedom over time and on a comparative basis across regions with different political and economic systems. *Freedom in the World*'s ratings and narrative reports are used by policymakers, leading scholars, the media, and international organizations in monitoring the ebb and flow of freedom worldwide.

For a more detailed analysis of last year's survey methodology, please consult the methodology chapter from *Freedom in the World 2009*. The methodology for the forthcoming survey edition will be published in *Freedom in the World 2010*.

Freedom in the World 2010 Checklist Questions

POLITICAL RIGHTS CHECKLIST

A. ELECTORAL PROCESS

1. Is the head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections?
2. Are the national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?
3. Are the electoral laws and framework fair?

B. POLITICAL PLURALISM AND PARTICIPATION

1. Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system open to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?
2. Is there a significant opposition vote and a realistic possibility for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections?
3. Are the people's political choices free from domination by the military, foreign powers, totalitarian parties, religious hierarchies, economic oligarchies, or any other powerful group?
4. Do cultural, ethnic, religious, or other minority groups have full political rights and electoral opportunities?

C. FUNCTIONING OF GOVERNMENT

1. Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government?
2. Is the government free from pervasive corruption?
3. Is the government accountable to the electorate between elections, and does it operate with openness and transparency?

ADDITIONAL DISCRETIONARY POLITICAL RIGHTS QUESTIONS

1. For traditional monarchies that have no parties or electoral process, does the system provide for genuine, meaningful consultation with the people, encourage public discussion of policy choices, and allow the right to petition the ruler?
2. Is the government or occupying power deliberately changing the ethnic composition of a country or territory so as to destroy a culture or tip the political balance in favor of another group?

CIVIL LIBERTIES CHECKLIST

D. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND BELIEF

1. Are there free and independent media and other forms of cultural expression? (*Note*: In cases where the media are state-controlled but offer pluralistic points of view, the survey gives the system credit.)
2. Are religious institutions and communities free to practice their faith and express themselves in public and private?
3. Is there academic freedom, and is the educational system free of extensive political indoctrination?
4. Is there open and free private discussion?

E. ASSOCIATIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL RIGHTS

1. Is there freedom of assembly, demonstration, and open public discussion?
2. Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations? (*Note*: This includes civic organizations, interest groups, foundations, etc.)
3. Are there free trade unions and peasant organizations or equivalents, and is there effective collective bargaining? Are there free professional and other private organizations?

F. RULE OF LAW

1. Is there an independent judiciary?
2. Does the rule of law prevail in civil and criminal matters? Are police under direct civilian control?
3. Is there protection from political terror, unjustified imprisonment, exile, or torture, whether by groups that support or oppose the system? Is there freedom from war and insurgencies?
4. Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population?

G. PERSONAL AUTONOMY AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

1. Do citizens enjoy freedom of travel or choice of residence, employment, or institution of higher education?
2. Do citizens have the right to own property and establish private businesses? Is private business activity unduly influenced by government officials, the security forces, political parties/organizations, or organized crime?
3. Are there personal social freedoms, including gender equality, choice of marriage partners, and size of family?
4. Is there equality of opportunity and the absence of economic exploitation?

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Freedom House supports the expansion of freedom in the world.

Freedom is possible only in democratic political systems in which governments are accountable to their own people; the rule of law prevails; and freedoms of expression, association, belief, and respect for the rights of minorities and women are guaranteed. Freedom ultimately depends on the actions of committed and courageous men and women.

We support civic initiatives in societies where freedom is denied or under threat, and we oppose ideas and forces that challenge the right of all people to be free. Freedom House functions as a catalyst for freedom, democracy, and the rule of law through its analysis, advocacy, and action.

- **Analysis.** Freedom House is a leading source of information on the state of freedom around the globe. Since 1972, Freedom House has published *Freedom in the World*, an annual survey of political rights and civil liberties experienced in every country of the world. The survey is complemented by an annual review of press freedom, an analysis of transitions in the post-communist world, and other publications.

- **Advocacy.** Freedom House encourages American policymakers, as well as other governments and international institutions, to adopt policies that advance human rights and democracy around the world.

- **Action.** Through exchanges, grants, and technical assistance, Freedom House provides training and support to human rights defenders, civil society organizations, and journalists to strengthen indigenous reform efforts in countries around the globe.

Founded in 1941 by Americans concerned with mounting threats to peace and democracy, Freedom House has long been a vigorous proponent of human rights and democratic values. Eleanor Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie served as Freedom House's first honorary co-chairpersons. The organization's diverse Board of Trustees is composed of a bipartisan mix of business and labor leaders, former senior government officials, scholars, and journalists who agree that the promotion of democracy and human rights abroad is vital to America's interests.

***Freedom in the World*, the Freedom House flagship survey whose findings have been published annually since 1972, is the standard-setting comparative assessment of global political rights and civil liberties. The survey ratings and narrative reports on 194 countries and a group of select territories are used by policymakers, the media, international corporations, civic activists, and human rights defenders to monitor trends in democracy and track improvements and setbacks in freedom worldwide.**

"The explosion of democracy is a central development of our era. Freedom House provides an invaluable resource in this authoritative survey of the on-the-ground realities of the state of freedom around the world."

—Jessica Tuchman Matthews, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

"An essential source, *Freedom in the World* works from the assumption that freedom is a universal value, not reserved for the rich."

—Francis Fukuyama, Johns Hopkins University

"*Freedom in the World* is the Michelin Guide to democracy's development."

—Daniel Henninger, *The Wall Street Journal*

"*Freedom in the World* is an invaluable source for scholars and essential reading for policymakers and political leaders concerned with the promotion and consolidation of democracy."

—Orlando Patterson, Harvard University

"While there are many sources of economic data, good political data is hard to find. Freedom House's survey is an exception. For anyone concerned with the state of freedom, or simply with the state of the world, *Freedom in the World* is an indispensable guide."

—Fareed Zakaria, Newsweek

Freedom House is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that supports democratic change, monitors freedom, and advocates for democracy and human rights.

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