



Canada '6th most free'

November 30, 2016

Hong Kong has been ranked the "most free" country in the world by a Fraser Institute report

Despite lacking democracy, a new international report is claiming Hong Kong is the "freest" country in the world.

The Human Freedom Index, produced by the Fraser and Cato Institutes, uses 79 indicators of personal, civil and economic freedoms to determine a score out of 10.

Canada finished sixth, tied with the U.K. and Australia.

The United States slipped four spots from last year's ranking to 24.

The report acknowledges the lack of democracy in Hong Kong makes it "an outlier" in its study, but states it has managed to enjoy high levels of economic and personal freedoms without it.

However, with pro-democracy protests taking hold, things may change.

"As the political future of Hong Kong plays out, we would not be surprised if we see a decline in its freedom ratings," the report reads.

In Canada, the study points to legislation from the federal, Alberta and Ontario governments in recent years that "encroach on economic freedom."

"Canadians are generally free to enjoy civil liberties such as freedom of speech and religion, and women's rights, but the more government hampers our ability to trade and conduct business openly, the less free we become," said Fred McMahon, editor of the study.

The 10 freest jurisdictions:

- Hong Kong
- Switzerland
- New Zealand
- Ireland

- Denmark
- Canada
- Australia
- United Kingdom
- Finland
- Netherlands

The 10 least free countries

- Angola
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Algeria
- Myanmar
- Venezuela
- Central African Republic
- Syria