



Out of 159 Countries PHL ranks 101st in 2016 Human Freedom Index

Veronica Pulumbarit

November 30, 2016

The Philippines ranks 101st out of 159 countries and jurisdictions in the 2016 Human Freedom Index (HFI), a project of a network international policy think-tanks.

The 2016 HFI shows Hong Kong at the top spot, followed by Switzerland, New Zealand, Ireland and Denmark.

Three countries — Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia — are tied for sixth place. Then Finland and Netherlands grab the last two spots on the list of top 10 freest countries and jurisdictions.

10 freest countries/jurisdictions:

1. Hong Kong
2. Switzerland
3. New Zealand
4. Ireland
5. Denmark
6. Canada
6. Australia
6. United Kingdom
9. Finland
10. Netherlands

In contrast, these are the 10 least free countries:

150. Angola
151. Democratic Republic of Congo
152. Algeria
153. Myanmar

154. Venezuela
155. Central African Republic
156. Syria
157. Iran
158. Yemen
159. Libya

The Philippines is tied with Honduras at the 101st spot. Uganda fared a little better at 100th rank. Germany ranks 13th; US 23rd; France 31st, and Japan 32nd.

Some of those that have a lower rank than the Philippines are Argentina (103); Thailand (107); Lebanon (108); Russia (115); Malaysia (115), and China (141).

The index uses 76 indicators of personal, civil and economic freedoms/

"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, project editor as well as Fraser Institute Resident Fellow and holder of the Dr. Michael A. Walker Research Chair in Economic Freedom.

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

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

The HFI Index is a joint project of Canada's Fraser Institute, the Cato Institute in the US, and the Liberales Institut of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom in Germany.

PHL profile

Based on the [profile of the Philippines in the 2016 HFI](#), the country scored 6.53 out of 10. The Philippines' ranking has two components: human freedom and economic freedom.

The country fared better at economic freedom with a score of 7.01 out of 10 and a ranking of 80 out of 159 countries.

For human freedom, the Philippines scored 6.05 out of 10 and ranked 113th out of 159 countries.

For economic freedom, some of the factors considered were: judicial independence (the Philippines scored 4.56); impartial courts (3.90); military interference (5.00); reliability of police (4.39); business cost of crime (5.19); money growth (8.72); inflation (9.18); regulatory trade barriers (5.16), among others.

For personal freedom, some of the indicators used were: civil justice (4.59); criminal justice (3.76); security and safety (7.06); disappearance, conflict, and terrorism (6.58); freedom to

establish religion (5.00); autonomy of religious organizations (10.00); press killings (8.99); political pressure and control of media (5.00), assembly and demonstration (7.50), among others.

In 2008, the Philippines ranked 62nd on the HFI. This went up to 59th in 2010 but this moved down to 81st in 2012 then to 101st in 2013, which is also the country's ranking this year.