

# THE JORDAN TIMES

## Jordan tops Arab countries in freedom index

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AMMAN — Jordan ranked first among the Arab states and 78th globally in the Human Freedom Index (HFI) for this year.

The report, issued by the US-based Cato Institute, Canada's Fraser Institute and Germany's Liberales Institut at the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, showed that Jordan was first among the Arab states and was ahead of Lebanon which ranked third place and Bahrain, which landed in fourth place.

The report, which covers issues including the rule of law, religion, expression, freedom to trade internationally, business regulation and legal system, showed that Kuwait came fifth and was followed by Oman, Tunisia, Qatar, the UAE, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Yemen respectively.

In the personal freedom index, Jordan scored 5.89 out of 10. It scored 7.86 in economic freedom and 3.8 in the democracy index, the report indicated.

Covering 152 countries and based on data from 2012, the most recent available, the HFI is “the most comprehensive freedom index so far created for a globally meaningful set of countries”, according to Cato.

In terms of the rule of law Jordan scored 5.4 out of 10. In terms of security and safety it scored 7.7, while in movement it got 8.3 points, the report indicated.

In religious freedoms, it scored 7.5 points; expression and information (5.9); assembly and civil society (6.9).

In its report covering data from 2011, Jordan ranked 82nd globally in the Human Freedom Index.

Commenting on the report, Basel Tarawneh, the government coordinator on human rights, said: “This is a great achievement for Jordan and a testimony to the successful collaboration between civil society organisations and the government agencies.”

“There are great efforts exerted by all stakeholders to enhance freedoms and human rights in Jordan, and the Kingdom has a strategy for supporting human rights that will play a key role in advancing Jordan's position in this field,” he told The Jordan Times on Monday.

“We need to do more to further enhance our position and Jordan has always been keen on taking recommendations by local and international agencies into account,” he said.

Founded in 1977, the Cato Institute is a public policy research organisation dedicated to the principles of individual liberty, limited government, free markets and peace.