

NEWS RELEASE

Italy ranks 53 among 165 jurisdictions in Economic Freedom

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For immediate release

Turin, Italy - Italy ranks 53 out of 165 jurisdictions included in the *Economic Freedom of the World: 2023 Annual Report*, released today by the Centro Einaudi in conjunction with Canada's Fraser Institute.

Last year, Italy ranked 50 (47 before adjustment).

Italy, with a global score of 7.25 (7.34 last year) scores in key components of economic freedom (from 1 to 10 where a higher value indicates a higher level of economic freedom):

- Size of government: changed to 5.43 from 5.32 in the last year's report
- Legal system and property rights: changed to 6.52 from 6.50
- Access to sound money: changed to 9.09 from 9.16
- Freedom to trade internationally: changed to 8.29 from 8.60
- Regulation of credit, labour and business: changed to 6.89 from 7.11

For the first time Hong Kong is not first in economic freedom and is expected to drop even further in future years, according to the Fraser Institute's annual Economic Freedom of the World report released today.

"This is the only year Hong Kong has not ranked number one on the index since its inception. Its score will continue to fall as the Chinese Communist Party suppresses freedom of all sorts," said Fred McMahon, Dr. Michael A. Walker Research Chair in Economic Freedom with the Fraser Institute.

The report measures the economic freedom of individuals—their ability to make their own economic decisions—by analyzing the policies and institutions of 165 jurisdictions. The policies examined include regulation, freedom to trade internationally, size of government, legal system and property rights, and sound monetary policy. The 2023 report is based on data from 2021, the last year with available comparable statistics across jurisdictions.

"Hong Kong's recent turn is an example of how economic freedom is intimately connected with civil and political freedom. The Chinese government's aim was to crack down on political and civil dissent. These repressions, combined with the government's efforts to control the private sector, inevitably led to diminished economic freedom. Hong Kong's prosperity will likely suffer as a result," said Matthew Mitchell, senior fellow at the Fraser Institute.

The number one spot is now occupied by Singapore, followed by Hong Kong, Switzerland, New Zealand, the United States, Ireland, Denmark, Australia, the United Kingdom, and Canada.

Other notable countries include Japan (20th), Germany (23th), France (47th) and Russia (104th).

Venezuela once again ranks last. Some despotic countries such as North Korea and Cuba can't be ranked due to lack of data.

The Fraser Institute produces the annual Economic Freedom of the World report in cooperation with the Economic Freedom Network, a group of independent research and educational institutes in nearly 100 countries and territories. It's the world's premier measure of economic freedom.

The report was prepared by Professor James Gwartney of Florida State University and Professors Robert A. Lawson and Ryan Murphy of Southern Methodist University.

According to research in top peer-reviewed academic journals, people living in countries with high levels of economic freedom enjoy greater prosperity, more political and civil liberties, and longer lives.

For example, countries in the top quartile of economic freedom had an average per-capita GDP of US\$48,569, compared to US\$6,324 for bottom quartile countries. Poverty rates are lower. In the top quartile, less than one per cent of the population experienced extreme poverty (US\$1.90 a day) compared to 32 per cent in the lowest quartile. Finally, life expectancy is 81.1 years in the top quartile of countries compared to 65 years in the bottom quartile.

"Where people are free to pursue their own opportunities and make their own choices, they lead more prosperous, happier and healthier lives," McMahon said.

See the full report at www.fraserinstitute.org/economic-freedom.

About the Economic Freedom Index

The Fraser Institute produces the annual *Economic Freedom of the World* report in cooperation with the Economic Freedom Network, a group of independent research and educational institutes in nearly 100 countries and territories.

Economic Freedom of the World measures how policies and institutions of countries support economic freedom. This year's publication ranks 165 countries and territories. The report also updates data in earlier reports where data has been revised.

For more information on the Economic Freedom Network, datasets and previous *Economic Freedom of the World* reports, visit www.fraserinstitute.org. And you can "Like" the Economic Freedom Network on Facebook at www.facebook.com/EconomicFreedomNetwork.

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The **Centro Einaudi** is a non-profit research institute based in Turin and founded in 1963. Its mission is to conduct independent research and to provide innovative recommendations for local and national policy makers. The Centro's research areas are political economy, social politics and welfare, liberal theory, politics and comparative public policy, Italian policies and reforms, regional development, bioethics.

The Centro trains young scholars and researchers, organizes seminars, conferences and lectures; publishes books, monographs, a quarterly journal and other on-line periodicals. Visit www.centroeinaudi.it