

NEWS RELEASE

UAE offers highest level of economic freedom among Arab nations, followed by Jordan and Bahrain

December 4, 2015
For immediate release

TORONTO—The United Arab Emirates (UAE), Jordan and Bahrain are the most economically free nations in the Arab world, according to the annual *Economic Freedom of the Arab World* report published by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank, and released in partnership with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Liberty (FNF) and the International Research Foundation (IRF) of Oman.

The UAE remained in first place overall with a score of 8.2, followed by Jordan at 8.1 and Bahrain at 8.0. Scores are based on 2013 data, the most recent available.

“Economic freedom increases prosperity, creates jobs and reduces poverty, and subsequently liberates people from government dependence while opening the door to democracy and other freedoms,” said Fred McMahon, Dr. Michael A. Walker Research Chair in Economic Freedom (Fraser Institute) and co-author of the report.

This year’s report ranks 21 nations, all the members of the Arab League except Somalia. However, this also includes nations that suffer from high-levels of internal conflict: Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen. The data and scores for nations troubled by violence should be interpreted with caution.

The *Economic Freedom of the Arab World* report compares and ranks Arab nations in five areas of economic freedom: size of government, including expenditures, taxes and enterprises; commercial and economic law and security of property rights; access to sound money; freedom to trade internationally; and regulation of credit, labour and business.

Economic freedom is based on the cornerstones of personal choice, voluntary exchange, freedom to compete, and security of private property. Research shows that individuals living in countries with high levels of economic freedom enjoy higher levels of prosperity, greater individual freedoms and longer life spans. This report provides a timely reminder of the importance of real reform to increase economic freedom and prosperity throughout the region.

The report, which has been presented since 2005, is one of a number of regional reports based in part or in whole on the Fraser Institute’s annual *Economic Freedom of the World Report*, which ranks the economic freedom levels of 151 jurisdictions.

Economic Freedom Rankings 2015: Countries of the Arab World

1. United Arab Emirates (8.2)
2. Jordan (8.1)
3. Bahrain (8.0)
4. Kuwait (7.8)
5. Qatar (7.8)
6. Lebanon (7.7)
7. Oman (7.6)
8. Palestinian Territories (7.4)
9. Saudi Arabia (7.3)

9. Yemen (7.3)
10. Egypt (6.8)
11. Tunisia (6.7)
12. Djibouti (6.6)
13. Comoros (6.5)
14. Morocco (6.5)
15. Iraq (6.2)
16. Mauritania (6.1)
17. Libya (6.0)
18. Sudan (5.9)
19. Algeria (5.6)
20. Syria (5.1)

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