

<b>Status Changes</b>	
<i>Improvements</i>	
Tunisia	Tunisia's political rights rating improved from 7 to 3, its civil liberties rating improved from 5 to 4, and its status improved from Not Free to Partly Free due to free and fair elections for the transitional Constituent Assembly held in October; increased freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and religious expression; and greater freedom for academics and nongovernmental organizations, all of which followed the ouster of longtime president Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali in January.
<i>Declines</i>	
The Gambia	The Gambia's political rights rating declined from 5 to 6 and its status from Partly Free to Not Free due to President Yayha Jammeh's severe suppression of the opposition, media, and civil society in the run-up to the November presidential election, which was boycotted by ECOWAS monitors because the electoral and political environment was not conducive to free or fair polls.
<b>Ratings Changes</b>	
<i>Improvements</i>	
Burma	Burma's civil liberties rating improved from 7 to 6 due to an increase in public discussion and media coverage of news and politics, as well as reduced restrictions on education.
Côte d'Ivoire	Côte d'Ivoire's political rights rating improved from 7 to 6 due to opposition leader Alassane Ouattara's assumption of office after a reasonably credible 2010 presidential election and the forcible removal of incumbent Laurent Gbagbo, who had refused to accept his electoral defeat.
Guatemala	Guatemala's political rights rating improved from 4 to 3 due to progress made by the UN-backed International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) in investigating corruption, violence, and organized crime within Guatemalan public institutions, political parties, and civil society, and due to the anticorruption efforts of the country's attorney general.
Indian Kashmir	Indian Kashmir's civil liberties rating improved from 5 to 4 due to an unprecedented increase in online media, a significant decline in state violence, and greater space for open public discussion.
Italy	Italy's civil liberties rating improved from 2 to 1 due to a reduction in the concentration of state and private media outlets following Silvio Berlusconi's resignation as prime minister in November.
Libya	Libya's civil liberties rating improved from 7 to 6 due to increased academic and media freedom, as well as greater freedom of assembly and private discussion, following the rollback and collapse of the highly oppressive Qadhafi regime.
Niger	Niger's political rights rating improved from 5 to 3 due to the holding of successful presidential, legislative, and local elections following the 2010 ouster of former president Mamadou Tandja and a subsequent period of military rule.
Singapore	Singapore's political rights rating improved from 5 to 4 due to parliamentary and presidential elections that featured more active campaigning and increased support for opposition parties.
Thailand	Thailand's political rights rating improved from 5 to 4 due to relatively free and fair national elections in July, which resulted in a transfer of power to the opposition.

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<b><i>Declines</i></b>	
Bahrain	Bahrain's civil liberties rating declined from 5 to 6 due to the government's brutal response to the February 14 popular democracy movement, the imprisonment and torture of detainees, a clampdown on critical media, and the use of military trials for civilian activists.
Greece	Greece's political rights rating declined from 1 to 2 due the installation of an unelected technocrat as prime minister following anti-austerity riots, and the growing influence of outside entities over the country's fiscal and economic policies.
Hungary	Hungary's civil liberties rating declined from 1 to 2 due to controversial constitutional and legal changes that threaten to seriously undermine the independence of the judiciary.
Lebanon	Lebanon's civil liberties rating declined from 3 to 4 due to a violent government response to protests against Najib Mikati's appointment as prime minister in January, as well as the imposition of restrictions on those calling for democratic regime change in Syria, which resulted in a number of detentions by military intelligence officials.
Nicaragua	Nicaragua's political rights rating declined from 4 to 5 due to shortcomings regarding the constitutionality of Daniel Ortega's presidential candidacy, reported irregularities and the absence of transparency throughout the electoral process, and the Supreme Electoral Tribunal's apparent lack of neutrality.
Puerto Rico	Puerto Rico's civil liberties rating declined from 1 to 2 due to reports of serious police misconduct and brutality.
Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia's civil liberties rating declined from 6 to 7 due to new restrictions on the media and public speech as well as the severe treatment of religious minorities, including crackdowns on Shiite Muslim protests.
Syria	Syria's civil liberties rating declined from 6 to 7 due to increased government efforts to divide the country along sectarian lines, the complete deterioration of the rule of law, and increased restrictions on freedom of movement.
Ukraine	Ukraine's political rights rating declined from 3 to 4 due to the authorities' efforts to crush the opposition, including the politicized use of the courts, a crackdown on media, and the use of force to break up demonstrations.
United Arab Emirates	The United Arab Emirates' civil liberties rating declined from 5 to 6 due to the government's arrest of pro-reform political activists, its disbanding of the prominent professional advisory boards of certain nongovernmental organizations, and its decision to strip citizenship from notable Islamist leaders.
Western Sahara	Western Sahara's civil liberties rating declined from 6 to 7 due to the inability of civil society groups to form and operate, as well as serious restrictions on property rights and business activity.
Yemen	Yemen's civil liberties rating declined from 5 to 6 due to the regime's violent response to public protests throughout the year and a deterioration of the rule of law amid the protracted effort to remove and replace President Ali Abdullah Saleh.
<b>Trend Arrows</b>	
<b><i>Up</i></b>	
Egypt	Egypt received an upward trend arrow due to the development of a robust culture of popular protest, enhanced judicial independence, and an increase in political pluralism in connection with the ouster of longtime president Hosni Mubarak.

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Slovakia	Slovakia received an upward trend arrow due to an amendment to the Press Act that helps protect media from political influence and intimidation, as well as improvements in the independence of the judiciary.
Zambia	Zambia received an upward trend arrow due to the conduct of the September presidential election and the peaceful transfer of power to opposition leader Michael Sata, ending two decades of rule by the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy.
<b><i>Down</i></b>	
Afghanistan	Afghanistan received a downward trend arrow due to a steady increase in violence and further deterioration in the independence of the judiciary.
Albania	Albania received a downward trend arrow due to the killing of opposition protesters in January, the politicization of electoral mechanisms surrounding municipal balloting in May, and the failure of the courts to impartially adjudicate a corruption case against a senior government politician.
Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan received a downward trend arrow due to widespread attacks on civil society, including the unlawful detention and imprisonment of political activists, opposition members, and local and international journalists; restrictions and violent dispersals of public protests; and unlawful evictions of citizens from their homes.
Bangladesh	Bangladesh received a downward trend arrow due to heightened political polarization and attempts by the government to improperly strengthen its hold on power, including through selective prosecutions of opposition politicians and increased harassment of nongovernmental organizations.
China	China received a downward trend arrow due to increased Communist Party efforts to restrict public discussion of political, legal, and human rights issues, including through the systematic disappearance of dozens of leading social-media activists and lawyers and growing online censorship among domestic social-networking services.
Djibouti	Djibouti received a downward trend arrow due to harassment and intimidation of opposition parties that resulted in President Ismail Omar Guelleh winning a third term in office, a crackdown on antigovernment protesters, and a ban on public demonstrations.
Ecuador	Ecuador received a downward trend arrow due to the government's intensified campaign against opposition leaders and intimidation of journalists, its excessive use of public resources to influence a national referendum, and the unconstitutional restructuring of the judiciary.
Ethiopia	Ethiopia received a downward trend arrow due to the government's increased use of antiterrorism legislation to target political opponents and a decision by the parliament's lower house to include a leading opposition movement in its list of terrorist organizations.
Iran	Iran received a downward trend arrow due to the imposition of severe restrictions on nongovernmental organizations and the prosecution of an increasing number of civic leaders.
Israel	Israel received a downward trend arrow due to the passage of the so-called Boycott Law, which allows civil lawsuits against Israeli individuals and groups that call for an economic, cultural, or academic boycott of the State of Israel or the West Bank settlements.
Kazakhstan	Kazakhstan received a downward trend arrow due to new legislation restricting public expression of religious belief and the right to form religious organizations.

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Malawi	Malawi received a downward trend arrow due to the government's violent suppression of public protests, intimidation of journalists, and threats to academic freedom.
Pakistan	Pakistan received a downward trend arrow due to greater self-censorship on the issue of blasphemy laws in the wake of the murder of Punjab governor Salmaan Taseer in January, as well as an increase in official attempts to censor internet-based content during the year.
Sudan	Sudan received a downward trend arrow due to a surge in arrests of opposition political activists and leaders, the banning of a leading political party, the violent response to public demonstrations in Khartoum and other cities, and a crackdown on the activities of journalists.
Uganda	Uganda received a downward trend arrow due to the poor conduct of the February national elections, the government's violent response to protests over corruption and inflation, and a crackdown on journalists.