



Democracy is in decline and freedom is waning across the globe.

- Global freedom declined for an 18th consecutive year in 2023 as political rights and civil liberties deteriorated in 52 countries, representing a fifth of the world’s population. ([Freedom House](#), 9/4/24)
- The declines were both widespread and severe, eclipsing the improvements observed in 21 other countries. ([Freedom House](#), 9/4/24)
- Nearly 38 percent of the world’s people now live in countries rated Not Free, 42 percent live in Partly Free countries, and only 20 percent live in Free countries – meaning that individuals who have the freedom to exercise their voting rights, voice their opinions, love freely, and practice their choice of religions are in the minority across the globe. ([Freedom House](#), 9/4/24)

Autocracies now outnumber democracies globally in developing and transitioning countries.

- According to the Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index of developing and transition countries, there are now 63 democracies compared to 74 autocracies. ([Bertelsmann Stiftung](#), 3/18/24)
- The Bertelsmann Stiftung annual study, which is the most comprehensive of its kind, analyzes political transformation toward democracy, economic transformation and governmental action. All three of these categories are currently at an all-time low. ([Bertelsmann Stiftung](#), 3/18/24)
- On the international stage, democracies should build broad partnerships based on shared principles, and reaffirm the norms of sovereignty and self-determination that are being subverted by authoritarian aggression from China, Iran, Russia, and others.

“Global freedom took a big step backward in 2023 ... If democracies do not respond to these challenges, more of the global population will be denied fundamental liberties in the years ahead, ultimately affecting peace, prosperity, security, and freedom for everyone.”

- Michael J. Abramowitz, president of Freedom House (9/4/24)