Proponents of freedom are challenged in various ways. One of the many questions liberals have to answer is how to conceptualize freedom and how to measure it. How can freedom be defined? This vexed question has stumped many a political scientist, let alone practitioners of politics. John Locke, the philosopher of liberty, based his political theory on the social contract concept, arguing that man is good at heart and should be allowed to protect his “Life, Health, Liberty, or Possessions.” For that to be possible there need to be limits to state power such as inviolable human rights and checks and balances. A more recent, yet in no way more modern, definition has been provided by Freedom House, one of the leading international think tanks in democracy research. According to Freedom House, freedom is “the opportunity to act spontaneously in a variety of fields outside the control of the government and/or other centers of potential domination”\(^1\) and the key ingredients of freedom are political rights and civil liberties. However, are these really the only important characteristics of freedom?

Detmar Doering of the German Liberal Institute has borrowed the distinction between “positive” and “negative freedom” from Isaiah Berlin in order to define what liberals understand by freedom. The latter denotes the absence of coercion and the freedom from being made the tool of others, a condition characterized by individual autonomy limited only by the freedom of others. This is the kind of freedom liberals propagate. Its “positive” manifestation goes beyond this structural focus and requires the means for the realization of one’s rights. Dr. Doering explains it

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\(^1\) Dr. Sebastian Braun, Regional Manager, Impact Assessment, Evaluation and Analysis, FNF Southeast and East Asia, Mr. Stefan Schoder, MA Politics and History, University of Augsburg
thus: If I have the right to drive a car and I cannot afford one on my own I have to be given one in order to be able to realize my right of driving a car. However, the implementation of positive freedom violates the notion of freedom itself by coercing others. Therefore, according to Doering, positive freedom "does not constitute real freedom. It is ultimately the power to live at the expense of others."[2] In addition, the limits of this positive freedom are hard to define, a condition that lends itself to a subversion of freedom by ending in a "perfect socialist redistributive bureaucracy". Negative freedom, on the other hand, creates equal opportunities by giving everybody the same rights. Individual abilities then are able to flourish and outstanding performance is rewarded. This merit system is the sine qua non of every successful society and market economy.

With over 50 years of experience, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Liberty (FNF) develops programs to strengthen these rights: democratic institutions, rule of law and human rights. But the liberal foundation not only concentrates on political and civil rights. It also sets great store by promoting economic freedom, given that personal freedom and free trade are inextricably linked. The German Liberal Institute, a sister organization of FNF, worked together with 52 other think tanks to produce the annual Economic Freedom of the World Report, which covers 141 countries. One of its major findings was that a high degree of economic freedom correlates positively with high living standards. For the period of 2008–2011, FNF is focusing on three main issues and their nexus: freedom and property, freedom and civil society, and freedom and the rule of law. Thus, for FNF, freedom comprises political, legal and economic rights.

Most of the leading indices concentrate on only one aspect of freedom, such as political or economic rights. For example, Freedom House does not include economic indicators in its assessment. The Freedom of the Press Index by Reporters without Borders only focuses on the media. By contrast, the Bertelsmann Transformation Index couples both political and economic aspects. However, it lacks a distinct liberal approach, being purely a research institution.

FNF is a liberal organization and as such sees freedom differently. The Freedom Barometer Asia contains a variety of indicators measuring freedom. This includes the degree of political freedom, rule of law as well as economic freedom. We believe that the presence of all of these factors is required for veritable liberty. In addition, we want to focus on aspects important to the liberal politician. The absence of the death penalty, for instance, is a crucial rallying point for liberals. Property rights is another. One of our objectives is to penalize lop-sided performance. Countries that mainly focus on only one aspect of freedom, such as for example the economy, will receive a significantly lower measurement value. A case in point is Singapore. Having an open international trade regime but suppressing the political opposition against the backdrop of an overweening control of the domestic economy by the state does not pass muster with us.

The Freedom Barometer Asia 2009 represents the first such effort to capture the notion of freedom from a distinctly liberal point of view. We think it can function as an incentive for further discussion and research. We believe it is an innovative tool that demonstrates the comprehensive level of freedom in nations all over the world. Due to its origin, the first edition of the Freedom Barometer only analyzes Asian countries. Because of its transparent methodology however, it is able to be transferred to every other region. Its pioneering and comprehensible nature makes the Freedom Barometer a valuable instrument to measure freedom in countries worldwide.
Abstract

The Friedrich Naumann Foundation’s (FNF) Freedom Barometer Asia 2009 is a new instrument to measure freedom in the world from a distinctly liberal point of view. It captures the notion of freedom in a three-pronged way by assessing political, legal and economic rights. The following chapters shed light on the Barometer’s variables, methodology and sources. Individual Asian countries are analysed in terms of their degree of freedom based on reputable sources. The results for the most part chime with other major indices, such as the Freedom House and the Economic Freedom of the World reports. However, the liberal bent of the Freedom Barometer leads to “non-conformist” verdicts in some cases, e.g. Singapore.

1. The Concept

The Freedom Barometer Asia is a project of the Regional Office for Southeast and East Asia of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom in Bangkok. It is an attempt to measure freedom in all its complexity in selected Asian countries. In contrast to most others indices, it is not limited to one aspect of freedom only; be it political or economic. The Barometer combines the most significant elements of economic and civil/political freedom with a specific liberal perspective. The existence of the death penalty, for instance, is for us not a positive element of a society’s existing political and legal order. Therefore we discriminate against countries with the death penalty. However, in order to not reinvent the wheel, we use existing indices, combining them in a new way. We also attempt to not overburden our new Barometer. Therefore we have limited ourselves to ten main bundles of variables.

The Freedom Barometer comprises three categories or components covering the following fields: political freedom, rule of law and economic freedom. The degree of political freedom is measured by the level of free and fair elections, the absence of undemocratic veto players, and the freedom of the press. Free and fair elections are the basis of a democracy. The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) puts emphasis on this element by declaring: “Electoral processes play a central role in democracy, based on the principle that the electoral process is integral to wider political processes and are not just a single technical event.”[3]

In addition, particularly in reference to unconsolidated democracies (for example in Asia), undemocratic veto players (e.g. the military) often beset democratic processes and therefore this aspect is included in the Freedom Barometer as a variable. Press freedom is the third component of political freedom. Article 19 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights underlines: “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”[4] Due to the highly political nature of the media, this variable forms part of our political freedom dimension.

In terms of rule of law, the Freedom Barometer comprises the following variables: independence of courts and checks and balances, the level of corruption, and human rights protection. Independence of the judiciary constitutes an elementary part of freedom of the individual or as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights demands: “All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such
discrimination.”[5] As independence of the courts and checks and balances are mutually dependent, both aspects are combined in one variable. Without an independent Constitutional Court or other legal institution true separation of powers is impossible. Corruption contradicts equal treatment and represents a violation of the rule of law. High levels of corruption correlate negatively with high levels of judicial integrity. Thus, both factors are highly interlinked. Human rights protection, as a fundamental element of freedom, constitutes the third variable of the rule of law dimension. Without rule of law there cannot be effective human rights. Without the presence of human rights rule of law is unthinkable. The Freedom Barometer 2009 contains all dimensions of the embedded democracy model, as can be seen below (Table 1).

Table 1: Structure of the Freedom Barometer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political freedom (democracy)</th>
<th>Economic freedom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
<td>1. Security of property rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players (e.g. military)</td>
<td>2. Size of Government: Expenditures, Taxes and Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>3. Regulation of credit, labour and business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule of law</td>
<td>4. Freedom to trade internationally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts and checks and balances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights protection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The relationship between positive economic development and a functioning democracy is a widely accepted fact. This is one of the major findings of the Economic Freedom of the World reports and the reason for the inclusion of this report's data in the Freedom Barometer Asia 2009. However, of the five aggregate variables we included only four. This mainly had to do with the nature of the "access to sound money" indicator which seemed to have little bearing on the political economy as a major factor in the determination of a democracy's quality. The four included variables are: security of property rights, size of government (expenditures, taxes, and enterprises), regulation of credit, labour and business as well as the freedom to trade internationally. These are major rallying points for liberals around the world.

The liberal bent of the Freedom Barometer Asia 2009 manifests itself in several aspects, as mentioned above. We particularly like to see the two variables of property rights and human rights protection as such an expression of liberalism. In the latter we expressly included the application of the death penalty and deviated in some cases from our source data if the respective country had not yet abolished this inhumane practice.
2. Components and Variables

2.1. Political freedom

The indicator “free and fair elections” is characterised by several essential features. Are there appropriate laws in place? Is the active and passive right to vote guaranteed? This also includes the right to form parties and to campaign. Furthermore, does the campaign period allow a plurality of opinion? Is the actual voting process free from state interference? Is the counting of the votes uninhibited by state or other actors’ manipulation? In addition, is a legal change of government possible?

The component “absence of undemocratic veto players” is mainly derived from the following questions: Do unelected actors have legal or constitutional privileges to delimit the authority of the designated political elite? Are those privileges exercised? Do unelected actors have informal veto power? How often do coups occur? Is the military under civilian control? The main source for this variable and “free and fair elections” is the Freedom House report.

In terms of press freedom, the following questions are decisive: Are there relevant laws in place and are they observed? Is there freedom of speech as well as plurality of opinion (e.g. through ownership)? In addition, are journalists persecuted because of their work? The main source for this indicator is the Press Freedom Index by the organisation Reporters without Borders.

2.2. Rule of law

The independence of the courts constitutes the major determinant of rule of law. It is essential that everyone is treated as equal before the law. Judges must not decide in favour of one particular political actor for political or financial reasons (bribes). Checks and balances are also a measure of the rule of law. Disputes between governmental institutions must be resolved according to the law and the overweening dominance of any one such institution violates the principle of equality before the law and gives rise to undemocratic or corrupt practices. The main source for this indicator is the Freedom House report.

The extent of corruption represents another vital factor in the concept of the rule of law. Corruption normally violates the law and contradicts equal treatment of citizens. The main source for this variable is the Corruption Perception Index by the organisation Transparency International.

Human rights constitute the third element of the rule of law in the Freedom Barometer 2009. To measure this concept, the following questions apply: Do respective laws exist? Is anyone persecuted because of his/her race, colour, gender, language, religion, national or social origin, political or other opinion, property, birth, or other status? Are basic human rights observed by the state apparatus? Does forced labour exist? Is the death penalty practised?
2.3 Economic Freedom

The dimension "economic freedom" is an important supporting pillar of democracy, as pointed out above. Its variables are taken from the Economic Freedom of the World reports and not altered in any way, except that one indicator has been left out. There are thus four variables: "security of property rights", "size of government", "regulation of credit, labour and business" and "freedom to trade internationally".

"Security of property rights" is one of the key principles of economic freedom. This macro-indicator consists of several variables: judicial independence, impartial courts, protection of property rights, legal enforcement of contracts and regulatory restrictions of sale of real property. Admittedly, there is a certain overlap between the independence of the courts and checks and balances indicator. However, we think this is a minor one, which is a result of the composite nature of the "security of property rights" indicator, which mainly focuses on property rights.

The indicator "size of government" consists of "expenditures, taxes and enterprises". This includes the level of general government consumption, the degree of transfers and subsidies of the state, the involvement of the government in enterprises and other investments and the top marginal tax rate.

"Regulation of credit, labour and business" constitutes the third indicator of economic freedom. Credit market regulations influence the degree of ownership of banks, the level of foreign bank competition, and the extent of private sector credit. Labour market regulations comprise the existence of a minimum wage, hiring and firing regulations, centralized collective bargaining, mandated cost of hiring, mandated expenditure of work dismissal and conscription. Furthermore, business regulations consist of price controls, administrative requirements, bureaucracy costs, expenses for starting a business, the extent of corruption, licensing restrictions and cost of tax compliance.

The indicator "Freedom to trade internationally" includes the areas of taxes on international trade, regulatory trade barriers, size of the expected trade sector, black-market exchange rates, and international capital market controls.

3. Methodology

The Freedom Barometer 2009 is based on highly regarded sources. The dimensions political freedom and rule of law are based on the data from Freedom House (2009)[6], Reporters without Borders (2008)[7] and Transparency International (2008)[8]. In the economic sphere, we used the data from the Economic Freedom of the World Report 2009 (values of 2007) (see Table 2). We acknowledge the lack of synchronicity of our data and strive to have a test Barometer using the latest available synchronic data (2007). Due to the limited overlap of some of the indicators, irregularities owing to time differences might be levelled out. Our aim was to use the latest data available, even if asynchronous, but we are aware of the inherent problems of this approach.
Table 2: Basis of the Freedom Barometer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political freedom and rule of law</th>
<th>Economic freedom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reporters Without Borders (2008)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency International (2008)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Due to the dissimilar measurement scales, a direct transfer of the values is often not possible. That is why we developed conversion keys for those that do not fit into our established pattern (1-10; 10 best).

Thus, Freedom House's three categories of free, partly free and not free are translated into 7-10 for "free", 4-6 for "partly free" and 0-3 for "not free". The values of Reporters without Borders (100-1; 1 best)\[9\] are 100-60 (0-3), 59-40 (4-6) and 39-0 (7-10). For the Corruption Perception Index by Transparency International and the Economic Freedom of the World Report a conversion is not necessary (see table 3 for an overview).

Table 3: Conversions of the indices used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversion</th>
<th>Matching pattern (1-10; 10 best)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freedom House (free, partly free, not free)</td>
<td>Economic Freedom of the World by Fraser Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free: 7-10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partly free: 4-6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not free: 0-3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporters without Borders (100-1; 1 best)</td>
<td>Transparency International Corruption Perception Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-60: 0-3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59-40: 4-6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39-0: 7-10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Freedom Barometer 2009 uses a scale that is widely used by indices of all kinds. Its range of 0 (in rare extreme cases) to 10 appears to us to be easily understandable and yet not too simple a representation of differing degrees of freedom.
4. Sources of the Freedom Barometer

4.1. Freedom House

Freedom House assesses the degree of political rights and civil liberties. It uses a checklist of 25 questions (10 political and 15 concerning civil liberties). The 10 political questions cover the following fields: Electoral Process (3 questions), Political Pluralism and Participation (4 questions), plus Functioning of Government (3 questions). The civil liberties questions are divided into Freedom of Expression and Belief (4 questions), Associational and Organizational Rights (3 questions), Rule of Law (4 questions) as well as Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights (4 questions).

Finally, a team of analysts evaluates the results and creates the scores and ratings. About one third of those analysts belongs to the Freedom House staff, the rest are specialists from the academic, media, think tanks, and human rights communities. As sources Freedom House names the websites listed on table 4 (see appendix).

4.2. Reporters without Borders

The annual Press Freedom Index is based on a questionnaire sent to the 14 so-called freedom of expression groups, to its 130 correspondents, to reporters, researchers, jurists, and human rights activists. This opinion poll asks about the well-being of press freedom in specific countries. The question catalogue includes physical attacks, imprisonment and direct threats; indirect menaces, pressures and access to information; censorship and self-censorship; public media; economic; legal and administrative pressure as well as the Internet and new media.

4.3. Transparency International

The Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2008 aims at measuring corruption by way of assessing people’s perceptions about it. It contains 13 different opinion polls and studies of eleven independent institutions. To guarantee its quality, the methodology is controlled by a board of experts, the so-called Index Advisory Committee.

4.4. Economic Freedom of the World

The Fraser Institute, a liberal think-tank in Canada, together with its many partners worldwide among them also the Liberal Institute of the FNF, publishes the Economic Freedom of the World Report each year. It contains the following five components:

1. Size of government: expenditures, taxes, and enterprises;
2. Legal structure and security of property rights;
3. Access to sound money
4. Freedom to trade internationally; and
5. Regulation of credit, labour, and business

These variables are sub-divided further, but for the purpose of our index we omitted the indicators of component 3 (Access to sound money).
5. Evaluated countries

The Freedom Barometer 2009 covers the countries of Southeast and East Asia. We included in the 2009 index the following countries: Brunei, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, North Korea, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. For some countries data are missing (see table 6). Therefore, of the 15 countries covered in the index only 11 show a full data set. However, for North Korea, Laos, Brunei and Cambodia no data on economic freedom are available, and therefore their total score remains incomplete. Myanmar on the other hand is included in the Economic Freedom Index and shows the lowest score of the eleven countries with full data sets.

Table 6: Ranking of the evaluated nations (100 best, 0 worst; markings = incomplete results)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>83.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>77.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>76.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>64.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>64.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>57.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>56.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>56.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>42.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>42.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>22.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>18.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>15.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>North Korea</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Incomplete data sets available for countries with Country Score highlighted with a grey background (i.e., Cambodia, Brunei, Laos, North Korea).

5.1. Japan

Japan ranks as number 1 for various reasons. Freedom House rates Japan as “free”. There are several political parties competing for power and, as evidenced by the recent elections, power transfers among them are possible by ballot. The military does not wield political veto power. The press is described as “private and independent” by Reporters without Borders. In terms of corruption, Japan is given 7.3 points on the Transparency International index. This results from the iron triangle system between the government and big business. Furthermore, the judiciary is independent. However, capital punishment is carried out. Japan’s economy is thought to be ra-
ther free, despite diverse regulations concerning international trade and the state’s big role in the domestic economy. Japan’s total value is 83.05 (see Table 7 for a detailed summary).

**Table 7: Japan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule of law</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>7.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>9.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Security of property rights</td>
<td>7.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Size of government: expenditures, taxes and enterprises</td>
<td>6.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regulation of credit, labour and business</td>
<td>6.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Freedom to trade internationally</td>
<td>6.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 83.05

5.2. Taiwan

Elections are categorised as free and fair in Taiwan. There are two main parties: the pro-independence DPP (Democratic Progressive Party) and the nationalist KMT (Chinese Nationalist Party). However, the media is not as free as it used to be. The Internet and TV stations are regulated. On the whole, the media remains free. Corruption is endemic. Other areas, like the independence of the judicial branch, human rights or economic freedom, are not jeopardized. Taiwan is a free country. Its total value is 77.16, the second best result here. (See Table 8 for the precise numbers.)

**Table 8: Taiwan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
<td>8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>9.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule of law</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
<td>9.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>5.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>9.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Security of property rights</td>
<td>6.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Size of government: expenditures, taxes and enterprises</td>
<td>7.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regulation of credit, labour and business</td>
<td>7.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Freedom to trade internationally</td>
<td>7.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 77.16
5.3. South Korea

South Korea’s political system is characterised by pluralism. The two major parties are the UNDP (United New Democratic Party; before: Uri Party) and the GNP (Great National Party). The winning party forms the government and can be criticized by the press. Although the South Koreans are told not to listen to North Korean radio, there is no direct censorship of the media. Apart from that, freedom is also guaranteed on several other levels, e.g. regarding the independence of the judicial sector. Human rights are in effect but ethnic minorities are susceptible to social and legal discrimination. The economy is relatively free but its value could be better. South Korea’s total value is 76.65. Its good ranking is primarily derived from the good results regarding political freedom. However, the latter has been suffering lately. (See Table 9 for more detailed results.)

Table 9: South Korea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
<td>9.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>9.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>9.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule of law</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
<td>8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>5.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>9.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Security of property rights</td>
<td>6.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Size of government: expenditures, taxes and enterprises</td>
<td>6.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regulation of credit, labour and business</td>
<td>6.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Freedom to trade internationally</td>
<td>7.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total                                       | 76.65 |

5.4. Singapore

Singapore is the fourth freest country in Southeast and East Asia, according to our measurements. This is largely because of its economic and social achievements. However, judging by its total value, Singapore is only “partly free” (Freedom House). Its total value is very close to that of Indonesia, despite the significant disparity in development between the two neighbouring countries. Singapore’s democracy values are very low for a country of supposedly high living standards. By way of its economic performance and a low perception of corruption, the city state manages to rank fourth in our Barometer. In terms of democracy, the PAP (People’s Action Party) controls Singapore by using various repressive instruments against the Opposition. For example, freedom of the press is limited. The foreign press can be banned for reporting on domestic issues. The Internet is strictly regulated. The state not only oppresses the opposition and the media, its judicial sector also lacks impartiality. In relation to the number of citizens in Singapore, there is no other nation in the world with so many executions annually. Furthermore, physical punishments are common in the legal system. The Freedom Barometer 2009 awards
Singapore 64.96 points, but only because of its above average economic performance and its low degree of perceived corruption. (See also Table 10.)

Table 10: Singapore

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule of law</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>9.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>3.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Security of property rights</td>
<td>8.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Size of government: expenditures, taxes and enterprises</td>
<td>7.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regulation of credit, labour and business</td>
<td>8.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Freedom to trade internationally</td>
<td>9.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 64.96

5.5. Indonesia

Indonesia’s results reflect a great variety. Elections are free and fair. The last national parliamentary and presidential elections in 2009 were both free and fair. Indonesia’s media is the freest in Southeast Asia. Restrictions do apply in the restless province of Papua. The military still enjoys wide-ranging impunity and wields political veto power. Corruption figures prominently in Indonesia. The so-called court mafia besets the independence of the judiciary. Freedom of religion is guaranteed by the Constitution but restricted in practice for certain minorities. Followers of unrecognized religions have problems getting national identity cards. Separatists in Papua and the Moluccas as well as labour and political activists in Java and Sulawesi are sometimes victims of violence. Discrimination against women, especially in the workplace, is widespread and the death penalty is still practised. The results of the three dimensions vary significantly. The degree of security of property rights is very low, while international trade is rather free. Indonesia’s total value is 64.23 points. (See also table 11.)

Table 11: Indonesia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>5.00</td>
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<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>8.00</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
<td>7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>2.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>7.00</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

12
1. Security of property rights  4.34
2. Size of government: expenditures, taxes and enterprises  7.14
3. Regulation of credit, labour and business  6.06
4. Freedom to trade internationally  7.09

Total  64.23

5.6. Thailand

Thailand lost its status as an electoral democracy with the military coup in 2006. While elections took place in December 2007, the elected government was ousted by Constitutional Court rulings in September and December 2008, forcing two PPP (People's Power Party) ministers to resign and the party itself to disband. This left the Democrat Party of Thailand (DP) in control of the government. Freedom House rates Thailand “partly free” (in its 2008 and 2009 reports). The judiciary seems to have overweening power since it is able to make or break the government and, in so doing, appears partial. In addition, the quality of Thailand's democracy has been suffering, owing to the stringent – and often politically motivated – application of lese majeste laws. The military continues to wield political veto power. Self-styled supporters of the monarchy often exert undue influence, limiting political freedom in Thailand. State officials restrain freedom of speech online. Supporters of Thaksin Shinawatra are censored, with lese majeste laws also limiting freedom of the press. Corruption runs deep in governmental departments. Minorities have seen their human rights trampled on. Human rights violations occur on a large scale in the south of Thailand. The death penalty is practised. Thailand fares better in terms of economic performance. The total value is 57.83. (See table 12 for more concrete results.)

Table 12: Thailand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule of law</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>5.00</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Security of property rights</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Size of government: expenditures, taxes and enterprises</td>
<td>7.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regulation of credit, labour and business</td>
<td>6.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Freedom to trade internationally</td>
<td>7.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total  57.83
5.7. Malaysia

Malaysia is another example of good economic performance and little political openness. Voting is considered free but not fair, e.g. the March 2008 elections. Corruption is rife in the ruling coalition of Barisan Nasional (BN). Freedom of the press is also limited. While the Internet enjoys a special status, freedom of speech in the virtual world is restricted as well. Self-censorship is encouraged and investigative journalism is limited. Arbitrary or politically motivated verdicts in the judiciary are not uncommon, with the most prominent case being that of Anwar Ibrahim. Courts have the right to sentence a convict to death. Discrimination, especially against women and non-Malays (affirmative action), remains a problem. The police are known for their heavy-handed actions and the authoritarian Internal Security Law is applied on a regular basis. Thus, the security forces play a political role as undemocratic players. Malaysia’s economy can be termed more open than its politics, though the BN exerts an undue influence over the country’s domestic economy. Hence, Malaysia’s total value evokes a picture of moderate freedom: 56.55. (See Table 13.)

Table 13: Malaysia

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rule of law</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>5.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic freedom</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Security of property rights</td>
<td>6.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Size of government: expenditures, taxes and enterprises</td>
<td>5.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regulation of credit, labour and business</td>
<td>7.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Freedom to trade internationally</td>
<td>7.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>56.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.8. Philippines

What stands out in the Philippines’ measurement sheet is the very low value given by the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index. Political violence is also widespread, as brutally evidenced by the recent massacre of 57 civilians, including women and journalists. The group intended to register the candidacy of a local politician and was massacred. However, this horrible incident occurred outside the evaluation period of this Barometer. Elections are often marred by vote buying and other irregularities. The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) is the venue for regular human rights abuses by the state’s security forces and the rebels. The judiciary tends to be influenced by the powers that be. Freedom House 2008 rates the Philippines “partly free”. The country’s total value here is 56.34 and thus places the country in the middle section. (See Table 14 for more information.)
Table 14: Philippines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule of law</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Security of property rights</td>
<td>4.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Size of government: expenditures, taxes and enterprises</td>
<td>7.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regulation of credit, labour and business</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Freedom to trade internationally</td>
<td>6.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>56.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.9. Vietnam

There is a rather large gap between the Philippines and Vietnam. This is mainly due to the complete lack of political freedom and rule of law (especially on the subject of corruption) in Vietnam. The Communist leaders do not allow free and fair polls. The CPV (Communist Party of Vietnam) is the only party allowed to contest elections. As a result, political opponents have been persecuted and convicted for “Spreading Anti-Vietnamese Propaganda”. State officials also try to control the media, including the internet. There is no freedom of press in Vietnam. The government has passed censorship laws, like those of 2006 prohibiting the spreading of “harmful” data or showing of “reactionary ideology”. The CPV dominates the country. Even the courts submit to the CPV. Lawyers, who have clients with sensitive cases (e.g. human rights issues) are in danger of harassment by the state. Violations of human rights are very common. Minorities, like Buddhists and Catholics, have been severely discriminated against and have often been victims of abuse by state officials. Moreover, capital punishment is carried out in Vietnam. The picture looks a bit brighter when it comes to economic freedom. The country’s total value is 42.73. (See Table 15 for the precise numbers.)

Table 15: Vietnam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule of law</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Security of property rights</td>
<td>5.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Size of government: expenditures, taxes and enterprises 6.87
3. Regulation of credit, labour and business 6.87
4. Freedom to trade internationally 6.95

Total 42.73

5.10. China

The case of China represents that of another officially Communist country. Freedom House rates China as “not free”. The Communist Party of China (CCP) has a political monopoly. The Politburo Standing Committee, consisting of nine members of the party, is responsible for the country’s most important decisions and sets the regime’s policies. The party permeates every important institution of the state, internal security services, administration and social organisations. The National People's Congress (NPC) plays a minor role in the political system. Its powers are more symbolic than substantial. The CCP also influences the judiciary, in particular with regard to political cases. This includes human rights issues, such as religious freedom. Though constitutionally recognized, religious freedom is restricted. Minorities are discriminated against. The death penalty is in full effect. China is the country that regularly sees the most executions worldwide. However, one can also spot some positive developments. Since 1987 the centrally planned economy has been undergoing reforms and economic freedom is on the rise. The regime has made some token efforts of testing democratic structures at the local level. Corruption continues to be widespread. China’s total value is 42.28, which is on a par with that of Vietnam. (See Table 16 for a detailed overview.)

Table 16: China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule of law</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>3.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Security of property rights</td>
<td>5.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Size of government: expenditures, taxes and enterprises</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regulation of credit, labour and business</td>
<td>5.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Freedom to trade internationally</td>
<td>7.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 42.28
5.11. Cambodia

In the case of Cambodia, the Freedom Barometer only contains data on political freedom and the rule of law. Cambodia is judged “not free” by Freedom House. Hun Sen and the Cambodia People’s Party (CPP) rule over the nation by being in command of the security forces and the state-owned media. Cambodia’s judicial system is characterised by inefficiency and corruption. Due to inadequate training, judges and lawyers are often unqualified. Moreover, there is a shortage of staff and those who work in such positions are often subject to political influence from the CPP. Corruption is a nationwide phenomenon, affecting foremost the government sector. In spite of this, foreign financial aid keeps pouring in. Discrimination against women and ethnic Cham Muslims is rife. Security forces often act with impunity and are involved in organised crime. Although the value of press freedom is the highest ranked in the Barometer, there are still many acute problems concerning this area. Cambodia’s total value is a very low 22.30, although this is partly due to the missing data. (See Table 17 for the concrete numbers.)

Table 17: Cambodia (flag = no figure available)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>6.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule of law</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>4.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic freedom</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Security of property rights</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Size of government: expenditures, taxes and enterprises</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regulation of credit, labour and business</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Freedom to trade internationally</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 22.30

5.12. Brunei

Similar to Singapore, Brunei is quite rich but fails to establish a level playing field in the political arena. Accordingly, Freedom House rates the state “not free”. It is not an electoral democracy. The sultan rules by way of a long-standing state of emergency. The last direct legislative elections took place in 1962. The unicameral Legislative Council is not sovereign. State officials repress freedom of the press in Brunei. A 2001 law stipulates that newspapers can be closed down without justification. Reporters who publish “false and malicious” articles have to face fines or detention. Brunei is not listed in the Reporters without Borders Index. The constitution does not guarantee the independence of the judiciary. However, trials seem to be fair in general, except for political cases. Violations of human rights are still common. Brunei has many stateless people, mostly Chinese citizens, who are not able to attain full citizenship. Foreign workers also have the problem of being excluded from almost any labour protection; women are fre-
quently discriminated against, e.g. regarding divorce issues. Brunei’s total value is 18.00. Economic freedom data are missing. (See Table 18.)

Table 18: Brunei (flag = no figure available)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political freedom</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic freedom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Security of property rights</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Size of government: expenditures, taxes and enterprises</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regulation of credit, labour and business</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Freedom to trade internationally</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.13. Myanmar

Myanmar is one of the places on earth where life is most abject. It is ruled by a self-serving and brutal military dictatorship. There have not been any elections since 1992. The only veto players in the political system are the members of the armed forces. They control all executive and legislative powers. Military officers hold most cabinet positions, and active or retired officers occupy most top posts in all ministries, as well as key positions in the private sector. The armed forces are also in command of the judicial sector, which is regularly used against the Opposition. Political violence is widespread. The military suppresses nearly all basic rights and commits massive human rights abuses with impunity. Capital punishment is in full effect too. Myanmar’s values regarding press freedom and corruption are some of the worst by worldwide comparisons. The country’s total value is 15.74. This is despite the fact that no data are missing. (See also Table 19.)

Table 19: Myanmar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule of law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic freedom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.14. Laos

The communist Lao People’s Revolutionary Party (LPRP) unilaterally rules the country. This is due to an illiberal Constitution of 1991 which does not allow any other political party. Freedom House considers Laos to be “not free”. Every branch of the media is also property of the state. Journalists criticising the government or reporting on controversial issues are always in danger of being harassed and put themselves in harms way. Even the judiciary is run by the one-party-state. Decisions are frequently based on instructions by the LPRP and venality often rears its ugly head. Although there are laws prohibiting corruption they are rarely enforced. The population of Laos suffers from massive human rights violations. Religious freedom is tightly restricted and discrimination against members of minority tribes is common at many levels. Capital punishment is legal and practised. The total value is 12.00, though economic data are missing. (See Table 20 for further information.)

Table 20: Laos (flag = no figure available)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political freedom</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule of law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic freedom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Security of property rights</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Size of government: expenditures, taxes and enterprises</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regulation of credit, labour and business</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Freedom to trade internationally</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.15. North Korea

One of the rare countries playing in the same worst-of-the-worst league as Burma is North Korea. North Korea is without question “not free”. In most indices that evaluate the country, North Korea brings up the rear. Elections are not free nor fair, they are a mere façade for one of the most inhumane of regimes. The country is governed by the military controlling every nook and cranny of political and social life. The courts are by no means independent from political influence. Human rights are practically unknown in North Korea. Only Freedom House and Reporters without Borders list the country in their indices or evaluation. The total value of North Korea is zero.

Table 21: North Korea (flag = no figure available)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political freedom</th>
<th>0.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule of law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Independence of the courts</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Corruption</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human rights</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic freedom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Security of property rights</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Size of government: Expenditures, Taxes and Enterprises</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regulation of credit, labour and business</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Freedom to trade internationally</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Summary and outlook

The overall score and the resulting ranking of the countries observed in the Freedom Barometer Asia 2009 confirm our main hypotheses. Japan (83.05) is the freest country in Asia. It is followed by Taiwan (77.16) and South Korea (76.65). All three can be classified as solid democracies with sufficiently free economies. In contrast to Japan, the other two countries have to catch up with credible and effective anti-corruption efforts. The next two countries in the ranking are Singapore (64.96) and Indonesia (64.23). What Singapore lacks in political freedom, Indonesia lacks in its rule of law regime, visible in its low security of property rights protection and its high level of corruption. Indonesia, however, shows much better scores in the freedom of the press and a functioning democracy where the opposition is duly recognized and can play its democratic function. Singapore’s human rights score is also much lower than Indonesia’s because of the highest per capita use of the death penalty and the use of degrading physical punishments.
The next three countries are Thailand (57.83), Malaysia (56.55) and the Philippines (56.34) which show very similar characteristics. They are weak in the independence of the courts, criminal prosecution, and the fight against corruption. The Philippines has the highest number of murdered journalists in the region. In Malaysia the opposition is hindered in playing its constitutional role so that a change of government through elections has never happened at the national level. Also in terms of security of property rights more needs to be done to secure economic freedom.

The three last positions in the ranking are occupied by the two socialist countries Vietnam (42.73) and China (42.28), and, as expected, Myanmar ((15.74) is trailing with a large margin. The military regime in Myanmar has announced elections for October 2010 but whether these elections will be called free and fair remains to be seen. There is no freedom of the press and undemocratic veto players are the real masters of the country.

Socialist countries face various challenges with regard to the realization of broad individual freedoms. People living in these countries enjoy about only half as much freedom as people in Japan. Whereas it seems to be easier and less threatening for the one-party regimes to bring about economic freedom, political freedom and rule of law are much harder to achieve. It remains to be seen whether the two countries follow the path of other authoritarian societies in the region and gradually democratize, following the example of South Korea and Taiwan. Alternatively, they might develop a whole new set of institutions and a fundamentally different system of political participation of its citizens. Whether these systems of societal order can guarantee the freedoms so essential to human beings elsewhere on the planet remains to be seen.

The objective of the FNF Freedom Barometer Asia 2009 has been to explore the possibilities of creating an index of liberalism. Due to the august nature of this undertaking, we see the current version of the Freedom Barometer as a test case and the whole project as a work in progress.

It is hoped that the Economic Freedom of the World Index will soon include Cambodia, Laos and Brunei so that these three countries can be fully included in our Barometer in 2010. We also intend to include Mongolia. North Korea might be dropped next year since there is little hope that it will score at all.

In creating the Barometer, we encountered several methodological problems and technical difficulties. First, the source indices vary in terms of evaluation year and data. The two-year time lag of the Economic Freedom of the World index is a case in point. In addition, the indices are not released on the same day. We intend to rectify this by assembling another version that employs synchronic data. However this means that our data will not include the latest measurements. Second, the conversion of the indices involves at least some subjective interpretation by the evaluator. Our decimal index allows for greater distinction than Freedom House’s three categories of “free”, “partly free” and “not free”. For instance, “free” can be “9” or “10” in our scale. Third, some countries’ degree of freedom has not been measured by the source indices. We need to decide whether we want to do the measuring ourselves by employing alternative ad-hoc sources.

A future index of freedom should take the above aspects into account. If our effort has contributed to this discussion by being quoted as an example of what such an index could look like we already feel vindicated in having had the first go at this daunting but certainly crucial task.
For more information please visit:

Impressum
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Internationale Politikanalyse
Karl-Marx-Straße 2
D-14482 Potsdam

Aktuelle Informationen zur Projektarbeit der Stiftung für die Freiheit finden Sie unter www.freiheit.org
7. Appendix

The Freedom Barometer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Freedom</th>
<th>NKR</th>
<th>LA</th>
<th>MYR</th>
<th>BRU</th>
<th>CAM</th>
<th>CH</th>
<th>VN</th>
<th>PH</th>
<th>ML</th>
<th>TH</th>
<th>IND</th>
<th>SIN</th>
<th>SKR</th>
<th>TA</th>
<th>JAP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Free and fair elections</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Absence of undemocratic veto players</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Press freedom</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rule of law

| 1. Independence of the courts | 0.00 | 1.00 | 0.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 3.00 | 5.00 | 7.00 | 4.00 | 8.00 | 9.00 | 10.00 |
| 2. Corruption | 0.00 | 2.00 | 1.30 | 4.00 | 1.30 | 3.60 | 2.70 | 2.30 | 5.10 | 3.50 | 2.60 | 9.20 | 5.60 | 5.70 | 7.30 |
| 3. Human rights | 0.00 | 3.00 | 0.00 | 4.00 | 4.00 | 4.00 | 4.00 | 6.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 7.00 | 3.00 | 9.00 | 9.00 | 9.00 |

Sources: Freedom House, Bertelsmann, Transformation Index, Human Rights Watch, Reporters Without Borders, Transparency International

Economic Freedom

| 1. Security of property rights | 0.00 | 0.00 | 2.60 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 5.16 | 5.34 | 4.47 | 7.05 | 5.71 | 4.15 | 8.19 | 6.66 | 6.32 | 7.66 |
| 2. Size of Government: Expenditures, Taxes and Enterprises | 0.00 | 0.00 | 5.77 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 5.00 | 6.87 | 7.12 | 5.50 | 7.15 | 6.36 | 7.96 | 6.61 | 7.21 | 6.23 |
| 3. Regulation of credit, labor and business | 0.00 | 0.00 | 6.22 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 4.95 | 6.87 | 5.80 | 7.34 | 6.81 | 6.07 | 8.22 | 6.63 | 7.02 | 7.17 |
| 4. Freedom to trade internationally | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1.93 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 7.47 | 6.95 | 7.17 | 7.55 | 7.66 | 7.29 | 9.39 | 7.15 | 7.91 | 5.87 |

Sources: Economic Freedom of the World by Fraser Institute, Index of Economic Freedom by Heritage Foundation

Values: 10 best, 0 worst
Total freedom value (political and economic): 100 best, 0 worst

| Total | 0.00 | 12.00 | 17.82 | 18.00 | 22.30 | 42.18 | 42.73 | 55.86 | 56.54 | 57.83 | 63.47 | 64.96 | 76.65 | 77.16 | 83.23 |

23
Country Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BRU</th>
<th>Brunei</th>
<th>JAP</th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>SIN</th>
<th>Singapore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MYR</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>LA</td>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>SKR</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
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<td>CAM</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>ML</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
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<tr>
<td>CH</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>NKR</td>
<td>North Korea</td>
<td>TH</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>PH</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>VN</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Footnotes

[2] Doering contradicts Berlin here in that Berlin argued that positive freedom was a genuine and valuable version of freedom.
[9] This scale applies to the 2008 report, Reporters without Borders is prone to changing the scale of its index. The website does not give any information on the reasons for this unusual practice.