

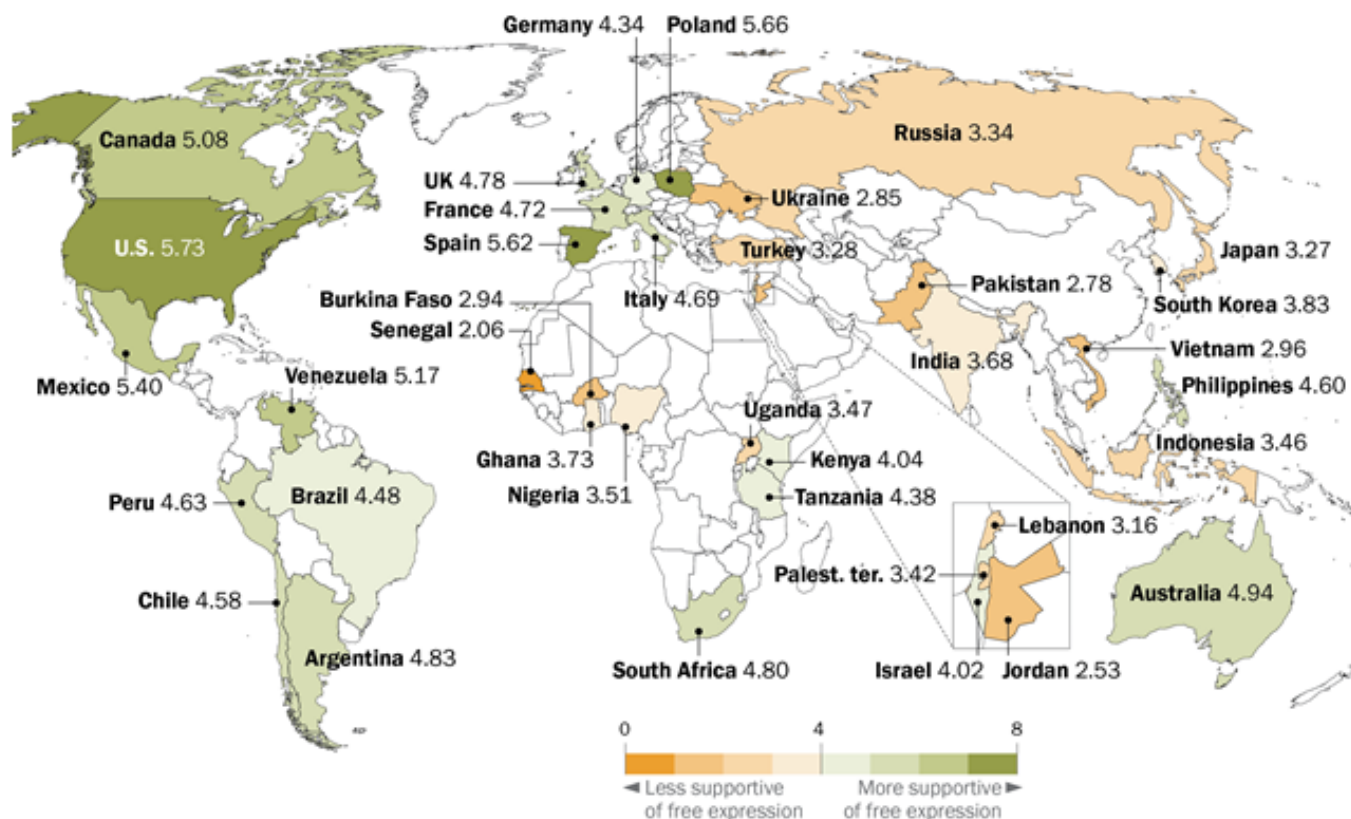
# A survey measured 38 countries' support for free speech. The US came out on top.

America loves freedom.

At least, Americans are more likely to say they support freedom — of speech and press in particular — compared with residents of other countries. That's what a new [survey](#) by the Pew Research Center found:

## Americans, Europeans and Latin Americans Most Supportive of Free Expression

*Free expression index\**



\*Support for free expression is measured using an eight-item index ranging from 0-8, with 8 representing the most supportive of free expression. Respondents were coded as 0 or 1 for each of the eight questions, where 1 indicates support for allowing free speech or press in a particular situation and 0 indicates support for government restrictions on free expression in some circumstances. Of the questions included in the index, five questions ask about free speech and three questions ask about free press. The mean score for each country is used in this analysis. (See Appendix A for more details.)

Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey. Q30a-e & Q31a-c.

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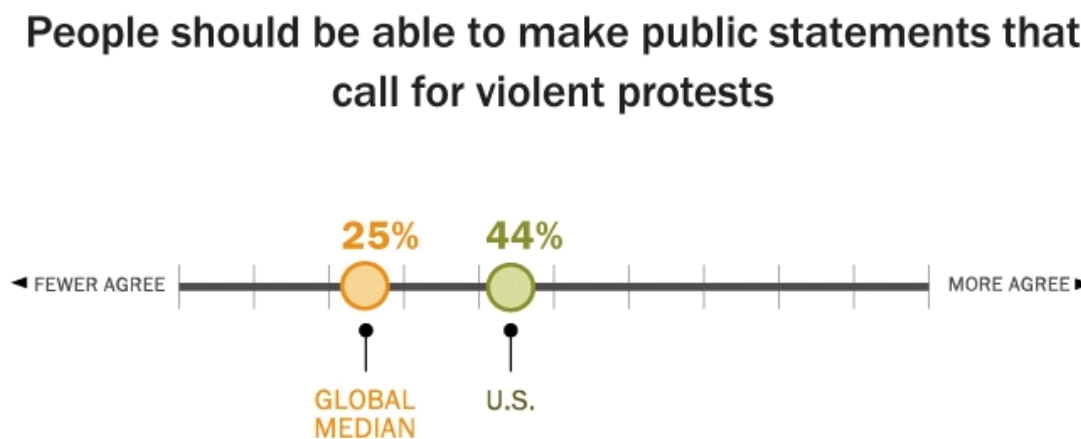
In April and May, Pew surveyed more than 40,000 people in 38 countries about support for legal protections for various forms of free expression — including criticisms

of the government, public comments that are sexually explicit, and media coverage of government policy and national security issues.

The findings: People in Western countries, like America, Poland, and Spain, tend to be more supportive of free expression, while those in the eastern parts of the world — like China, India, Japan, and Turkey — are generally less supportive. And the US stood out as more supportive of free expression than anyone else.

Still, the 38 countries surveyed by Pew were broadly supportive of free expression — with a few exceptions. For instance, a global median of about 52 percent of respondents said the media should not be able to publish information that's sensitive to national security issues. And respondents outside the US generally seemed to favor restrictions on specific types of speech, including that which may offend religious or minority groups.

To show how America and the other countries differed, Pew put together a great animated chart comparing the varying answers about free speech. (One interesting finding: Around the world, the right to say something that's potentially racist is generally more supported than the right to say something that's sexually explicit.)



Note: Global median of 38 countries.  
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So, yes, Americans love freedom — although apparently some forms of freedom more than others.

[Read the full report by the Pew Research Center.](#)