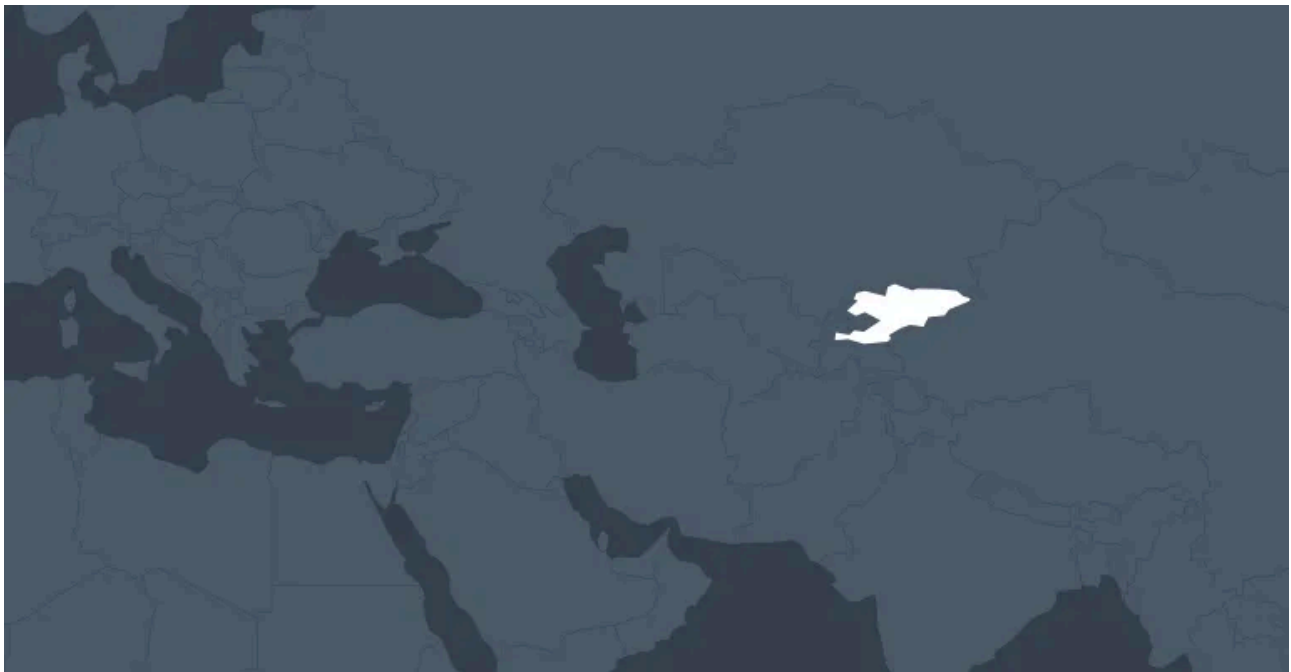


Freedom in the World 2025



header1 Overview

After two revolutions that ousted authoritarian presidents in 2005 and 2010, Kyrgyzstan adopted a parliamentary form of government. Governing coalitions proved unstable, however, and corruption remained pervasive. Unrest surrounding the annulled 2020 parliamentary elections led to significant political upheaval and the violent repression of opponents of nationalist politician Sadyr Japarov, who became president through a rapid series of appointments and resignations under pressure. Constitutional changes adopted in 2021 concentrated political power in the presidency and reduced the size and role of the parliament. Both the judiciary and extralegal violence have since been used to sideline President Japarov's political opponents and civil society critics.

header2 Key Developments in 2024

- In April, President Japarov signed long-debated legislation—modeled on Russia's "foreign agents" law—that required nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to register as "foreign representatives" if they received foreign funding and engaged in vaguely defined "political activities." Registered

groups would be subject to onerous and intrusive government monitoring. By year's end, only a handful of NGOs had registered under the law, and many more had chosen to close down rather than risk violating its provisions.

- In May, following a smaller brawl that was captured in an online video, a mob of hundreds of ethnic Kyrgyz attacked an international student dormitory in Bishkek, targeting Pakistanis but beating international students indiscriminately. Forty-one people reportedly sought medical attention for their injuries. The incident underscored xenophobic sentiment in the context of an influx of South Asian students and migrant workers in recent years.
- In July, Kyrgyzstani and Tajikistani delegations reported progress on the delimitation of their shared border, stating that they had reached tentative agreement on 94 percent of the total; the two sides said in December that the delimitation talks were complete, but a public release and formal approval of the final documents was still required. The negotiations were aimed at ending roughly three years of military tensions and sporadic conflict over the disputed border. A similar agreement with Uzbekistan in 2022 had prompted public protests and arrests of leading activists in Kyrgyzstan, and while most of those charged were acquitted in June 2024, final rulings and appeals were pending at year's end.
- The authorities continued to persecute independent journalists and outlets during the year. Four journalists and media workers associated with exiled anticorruption journalist Bolot Temirov were convicted in October of inciting unrest through their reporting; one of them, Temirov's wife and colleague Makhabat Tazhibek kyzy, received a six-year prison sentence, while another received five years and two received three-year suspended sentences. The defendants' lawyer, Samat Matsakov, was detained in November and remained behind bars at year's end. Separately in July, the Supreme Court upheld a 2023 order to shut down the investigative online news outlet *Kloop*, but it apparently continued to operate in the subsequent months.
- As part of a broader crackdown on online dissent, numerous social media users were summoned for questioning, threatened, physically mistreated, charged, or sentenced to prison for their posts during the year. In July, for example, poet and folk musician Askat Jetigen was sentenced to three years in prison for "calling for a seizure of power" after he posted a video in which he criticized President Japarov's government. Jetigen asserted in court that police had tortured him after his arrest in March.

This report has been abridged for Freedom in the World 2025 due to [ongoing budget constraints](#). Freedom in the World is entirely funded by nongovernmental sources such as private foundations, corporations, and individuals like you. Please consider making a [donation](#) to support future editions of this vital resource.

For additional background information, see last year's [full report](#).

PR Political Rights

A Electoral Process

A1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Was the current head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections?	0.000 4.004
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A2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?	1.001 4.004
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A3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies?	1.001 4.004
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B Political Pluralism and Participation

B1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system free of undue obstacles to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?

1.001
4.004

B2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there a realistic opportunity for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections?

1.001
4.004

B3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are the people's political choices free from domination by forces that are external to the political sphere, or by political forces that employ extrapolitical means?

0.000
4.004

B4 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do various segments of the population (including ethnic, racial, religious, gender, LGBT+, and other relevant groups) have full political rights and electoral opportunities?

1.001
4.004

C Functioning of Government

C1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government?

0.000
4.004

C2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are safeguards against official corruption strong and effective?

0.000 4.004

C3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Does the government operate with openness and transparency?

0.000 4.004

Add Q

Is the government or occupying power deliberately changing the ethnic composition of a country or territory so as to destroy a culture or tip the political balance in favor of another group?

-1.00-1

CL Civil Liberties

D Freedom of Expression and Belief

D1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are there free and independent media?

2.002 4.004

D2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are individuals free to practice and express their religious faith or nonbelief in public and private?

2.002 4.004

D3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there academic freedom, and is the educational system free from extensive political indoctrination?

3.003
4.004

D4 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are individuals free to express their personal views on political or other sensitive topics without fear of surveillance or retribution?	2.002 4.004
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Score Change: The score declined from 3 to 2 because authorities in recent years have increasingly harassed and prosecuted social media users for expressing critical views, encouraging self-censorship online.

E Associational and Organizational Rights

E1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there freedom of assembly?	1.001 4.004
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E2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations, particularly those that are engaged in human rights– and governance-related work?	1.001 4.004
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E3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there freedom for trade unions and similar professional or labor organizations?	2.002 4.004
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F Rule of Law

F1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there an independent judiciary?	0.000 4.004
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F2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Does due process prevail in civil and criminal matters?	0.000 4.004
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F3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Is there protection from the illegitimate use of physical force and freedom from war and insurgencies?	1.001 4.004
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F4 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population?	1.001 4.004
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G Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights

G1 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy freedom of movement, including the ability to change their place of residence, employment, or education?	2.002 4.004
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G2 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Are individuals able to exercise the right to own property and establish private businesses without undue interference from state or nonstate actors?	2.002 4.004
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G3 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy personal social freedoms, including choice of marriage partner and size of family, protection from domestic violence, and control over appearance?

2.002
4.004

G4 1.00-4.00 pts0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from economic exploitation?

1.001 4.004

