

Democracy index 2010

Democracy in retreat

A report from the Economist Intelligence Unit





The Economist Intelligence Unit’s Index of Democracy 2010

Democracy in retreat

This is the third edition of the Economist Intelligence Unit’s democracy index. It reflects the situation as of November 2010. The first edition, published in The Economist’s *The World in 2007*, measured the state of democracy in September 2006 and the second edition covered the situation towards the end of 2008. The index provides a snapshot of the state of democracy worldwide for 165 independent states and two territories—this covers almost the entire population of the world and the vast majority of the world’s independent states (micro states are excluded). The Economist Intelligence Unit’s Index of Democracy is based on five categories: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. Countries are placed within one of four types of regimes: full democracies; flawed democracies; hybrid regimes; and authoritarian regimes.

Free and fair elections and civil liberties are necessary conditions for democracy, but they are unlikely to be sufficient for a full and consolidated democracy if unaccompanied by transparent and at least minimally efficient government, sufficient political participation and a supportive democratic political culture. It is not easy to build a sturdy democracy. Even in long-established ones, if not nurtured and protected, democracy can corrode.

Democracy in decline

The global record in democratisation since the start of its so-called third wave in 1974, and acceleration after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, has been impressive. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit’s measure of democracy, one-half of the world’s population now lives in a democracy of some sort. However, there has been a decline in democracy across the world since 2008. The decades-long global trend in democratisation had previously come to a halt in what Larry Diamond (2008) called a “democratic recession”. Now democracy is in retreat. The dominant pattern in all regions over the past two years has been backsliding on previously attained progress in democratisation. The global financial crisis that started in 2008 accentuated some existing negative trends in political development.

Table 1
Democracy index, 2010, by regime type

	No. of countries	% of countries	% of world population
Full democracies	26	15.6	12.3
Flawed democracies	53	31.7	37.2
Hybrid regimes	33	19.8	14.0
Authoritarian regimes	55	32.9	36.5

Note. “World” population refers to the total population of the 167 countries covered by the index. Since this excludes only micro states, this is nearly equal to the entire actual estimated world population in 2010.
Source: Economist Intelligence Unit.



Disappointments abound across many of the world's regions. Authoritarian trends have become even more entrenched in the Middle East and much of the former Soviet Union. Democratisation in Sub-Saharan Africa is grinding to a halt, and in some cases is being reversed. A political malaise in east-central Europe has led to disappointment and questioning of the strength of the region's democratic transition. Media freedoms are being eroded across Latin America and populist forces with dubious democratic credentials have come to the fore in a few countries in the region. In the developed West, a precipitous decline in political participation, weaknesses in the functioning of government and security-related curbs on civil liberties are having a corrosive effect on some long-established democracies.

Reversals in or erosion of democracy and rising disenchantment with the results of some political liberalisations appear to have a variety of causes. The pace of democratisation was bound to slow after the "easy cases"—eager-to-liberalise east-central Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall and African regimes susceptible to outside pressure for political change. "Hard cases" such as China and Middle East autocracies were always going to be a more difficult proposition. Autocrats have also learned how better to protect themselves; many of them preside over energy-rich states and have been strengthened by sustained high oil prices. A key factor is the delegitimation of much of the democracy-promotion agenda, which has been associated with military intervention and unpopular wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. A combination of double standards in foreign policy (autocrats can be good friends as well as foes) and growing infringements of civil liberties has led to charges of hypocrisy against Western states.

Problems in the functioning of democracy in leading Western states diminish the scope for credible external democracy promotion. The US and UK are near the bottom of the "full democracy" category in our index. In the US, there has been an erosion of civil liberties related to the fight against terrorism. Problems in the functioning of government have also become more prominent. In the UK, there has also been some erosion of civil liberties, but the main feature is an exceptionally low level of political participation across all dimensions—voting turnout, membership of political parties and willingness to engage in and attitudes to political activity.

Although almost one-half of the world's countries can be considered to be democracies, in our index the number of "full democracies" is low, at only 26 countries; 53 countries are rated as "flawed democracies". Of the remaining 88 countries in our index, 55 are authoritarian and 33 are considered to be "hybrid regimes". As could be expected, the developed OECD countries dominate among full democracies, although there are two Latin American countries, one east European country and one African country, which suggests that the level of development is not a binding constraint. Only two Asian countries are represented: Japan and South Korea.

One-half of the world's population lives in a democracy of some sort, although only 12% reside in full democracies. Some 2.5bn people, more than one-third of the world's population, still lives under authoritarian rule (with a large share being, of course, in China).

Table 2
Democracy Index 2010

Category scores							
	Rank	Overall score	I Electoral process and pluralism	II Functioning of government	III Political participation	IV Political culture	V Civil liberties
Full democracies							
Norway	1	9.80	10.00	9.64	10.00	9.38	10.00
Iceland	2	9.65	10.00	9.64	8.89	10.00	9.71
Denmark	3	9.52	10.00	9.64	8.89	9.38	9.71
Sweden	4	9.50	9.58	9.64	8.89	9.38	10.00
New Zealand	5	9.26	10.00	9.29	8.89	8.13	10.00
Australia	6	9.22	10.00	8.93	7.78	9.38	10.00
Finland	7	9.19	10.00	9.64	7.22	9.38	9.71
Switzerland	8	9.09	9.58	9.29	7.78	9.38	9.41
Canada	9	9.08	9.58	9.29	7.78	8.75	10.00
Netherlands	10	8.99	9.58	8.93	8.89	8.13	9.41
Luxembourg	11	8.88	10.00	9.29	6.67	8.75	9.71
Ireland	12	8.79	9.58	7.86	7.78	8.75	10.00
Austria	13	8.49	9.58	7.86	7.78	8.13	9.12
Germany	14	8.38	9.58	7.86	7.22	8.13	9.12
Malta	15	8.28	9.17	8.21	5.56	8.75	9.71
Czech Republic	16	8.19	9.58	7.14	6.67	8.13	9.41
US	17	8.18	9.17	7.86	7.22	8.13	8.53
Spain	18	8.16	9.58	8.21	6.11	7.50	9.41
UK	19	8.16	9.58	7.86	6.11	8.13	9.12
South Korea	20	8.11	9.17	7.86	7.22	7.50	8.82
Uruguay	21	8.10	10.00	8.57	4.44	7.50	10.00
Japan	22	8.08	9.17	8.21	6.11	7.50	9.41
Belgium	23	8.05	9.58	8.21	5.56	7.50	9.41
Mauritius	24	8.04	9.17	8.21	5.00	8.13	9.71
Costa Rica	=24	8.04	9.58	8.21	6.11	6.88	9.41
Portugal	26	8.02	9.58	7.50	6.11	7.50	9.41
Flawed democracies							
Cape Verde	27	7.94	9.17	7.86	6.67	6.88	9.12
Greece	28	7.92	9.58	6.43	6.67	7.50	9.41
Italy	29	7.83	9.58	6.79	6.11	8.13	8.53
South Africa	30	7.79	8.75	8.21	7.22	6.25	8.53
France	31	7.77	9.58	7.14	6.11	7.50	8.53
Slovenia	32	7.69	9.58	7.14	6.67	6.25	8.82

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Category scores							
	Rank	Overall score	I Electoral process and pluralism	II Functioning of government	III Political participation	IV Political culture	V Civil liberties
Estonia	33	7.68	9.58	7.50	5.00	7.50	8.82
Chile	34	7.67	9.58	8.57	3.89	6.88	9.41
Botswana	35	7.63	9.17	7.14	5.56	6.88	9.41
Taiwan	36	7.52	9.58	7.14	5.56	5.63	9.71
Israel	37	7.48	8.75	7.50	8.33	7.50	5.29
Slovakia	38	7.35	9.58	7.50	5.56	5.00	9.12
Cyprus	39	7.29	9.17	6.43	6.11	5.63	9.12
India	40	7.28	9.58	8.57	4.44	4.38	9.41
Lithuania	41	7.24	9.58	5.71	5.56	6.25	9.12
Timor-Leste	42	7.22	8.67	6.79	5.56	6.88	8.24
Hungary	43	7.21	9.58	6.07	5.00	6.88	8.53
Jamaica	=43	7.21	9.17	6.79	5.00	6.25	8.82
Trinidad and Tobago	45	7.16	9.58	7.14	6.11	5.00	7.94
Panama	46	7.15	9.58	6.79	5.56	5.00	8.82
Brazil	47	7.12	9.58	7.50	5.00	4.38	9.12
Poland	48	7.05	9.58	6.07	6.11	4.38	9.12
Latvia	=48	7.05	9.58	5.36	5.56	5.63	9.12
Mexico	50	6.93	8.75	7.14	6.11	5.00	7.65
Argentina	51	6.84	8.75	5.71	5.56	6.25	7.94
Bulgaria	=51	6.84	9.17	5.71	6.11	4.38	8.82
Croatia	53	6.81	9.17	6.07	5.56	5.00	8.24
Suriname	54	6.65	9.17	6.43	4.44	5.00	8.24
Sri Lanka	55	6.64	7.00	6.07	5.00	6.88	8.24
Romania	56	6.60	9.58	6.43	5.00	3.75	8.24
Colombia	57	6.55	9.17	7.14	3.89	3.75	8.82
Thailand	=57	6.55	7.83	6.07	5.56	6.25	7.06
Papua New Guinea	59	6.54	7.33	6.43	4.44	6.25	8.24
Indonesia	60	6.53	6.92	7.50	5.56	5.63	7.06
El Salvador	61	6.47	9.17	6.07	3.89	5.00	8.24
Paraguay	62	6.40	8.33	6.07	5.00	4.38	8.24
Peru	=62	6.40	8.75	5.00	5.00	5.00	8.24
Mongolia	64	6.36	8.33	5.71	3.89	5.63	8.24
Serbia	65	6.33	9.17	4.64	6.11	4.38	7.35

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Category scores							
	Rank	Overall score	I Electoral process and pluralism	II Functioning of government	III Political participation	IV Political culture	V Civil liberties
Moldova	=65	6.33	8.75	5.71	6.11	3.13	7.94
Ukraine	67	6.30	9.17	5.00	5.00	4.38	7.94
Montenegro	68	6.27	8.75	5.00	5.56	5.00	7.06
Namibia	69	6.23	5.25	5.36	6.67	5.63	8.24
Dominican Republic	70	6.20	8.75	5.00	2.78	6.25	8.24
Malaysia	71	6.19	6.50	6.79	5.56	6.25	5.88
Benin	72	6.17	7.33	6.43	5.00	5.63	6.47
Macedonia	73	6.16	7.75	4.64	6.11	4.38	7.94
Philippines	74	6.12	8.33	5.00	5.00	3.13	9.12
Guyana	75	6.05	7.92	5.36	5.56	4.38	7.06
Guatemala	=75	6.05	8.75	6.43	3.33	4.38	7.35
Lesotho	77	6.02	7.42	6.07	6.11	3.75	6.76
Ghana	=77	6.02	8.33	5.00	5.00	5.00	6.76
Mali	79	6.01	8.25	6.43	3.89	5.63	5.88
Hybrid regimes							
Hong Kong	80	5.92	3.50	5.36	4.44	6.88	9.41
Bolivia	=80	5.92	7.92	5.00	5.56	3.75	7.35
Singapore	82	5.89	4.33	7.50	2.78	7.50	7.35
Bangladesh	83	5.87	7.42	5.43	4.44	5.00	7.06
Albania	84	5.86	7.42	5.07	4.44	5.00	7.35
Malawi	85	5.84	7.00	5.71	5.00	5.63	5.88
Lebanon	86	5.82	7.92	3.93	6.67	5.00	5.59
Ecuador	87	5.77	7.83	4.64	5.00	3.75	7.65
Honduras	88	5.76	7.50	5.71	4.44	4.38	6.76
Turkey	89	5.73	7.92	7.14	3.89	5.00	4.71
Nicaragua	=89	5.73	7.42	4.36	3.89	5.63	7.35
Zambia	91	5.68	6.17	5.36	3.89	5.63	7.35
Tanzania	92	5.64	7.42	4.29	5.56	5.63	5.29
Palestine	93	5.44	7.83	2.86	8.33	4.38	3.82
Bosnia and Hercegovina	94	5.32	7.33	3.29	3.33	5.00	7.65
Senegal	95	5.27	7.00	4.29	3.89	5.00	6.18
Venezuela	96	5.18	6.17	3.93	5.56	4.38	5.88
Liberia	97	5.07	7.83	0.79	5.56	5.00	6.18

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Category scores							
	Rank	Overall score	I Electoral process and pluralism	II Functioning of government	III Political participation	IV Political culture	V Civil liberties
Uganda	98	5.05	5.25	3.21	5.00	5.63	6.18
Mozambique	99	4.90	4.83	4.64	5.56	5.63	3.82
Cambodia	100	4.87	6.08	6.07	2.78	5.00	4.41
Kenya	101	4.71	3.92	4.29	4.44	5.63	5.29
Bhutan	102	4.68	6.25	5.36	3.89	4.38	3.53
Georgia	103	4.59	7.00	2.14	3.89	3.75	6.18
Pakistan	104	4.55	5.17	5.71	2.22	4.38	5.29
Sierra Leone	105	4.51	7.00	1.86	2.78	5.63	5.29
Kyrgyz Republic	106	4.31	5.75	1.14	5.00	4.38	5.29
Russia	107	4.26	5.25	3.21	5.00	3.13	4.71
Nepal	108	4.24	1.83	4.29	3.89	5.63	5.59
Armenia	109	4.09	4.33	3.21	3.89	3.13	5.88
Burundi	110	4.01	3.42	3.29	3.89	5.63	3.82
Haiti	111	4.00	5.17	1.86	2.78	3.75	6.47
Iraq	=111	4.00	4.33	0.79	6.11	3.75	5.00
Authoritarian regimes							
Madagascar	113	3.94	2.17	2.14	4.44	6.25	4.71
Kuwait	114	3.88	3.58	4.29	3.33	4.38	3.82
Mauritania	115	3.86	3.00	4.29	3.89	3.13	5.00
Morocco	116	3.79	3.50	4.64	1.67	5.00	4.12
Jordan	117	3.74	3.17	4.64	3.33	3.75	3.82
Ethiopia	118	3.68	0.00	3.93	4.44	5.63	4.41
Fiji	119	3.62	0.42	2.86	3.33	5.00	6.47
Burkina Faso	120	3.59	4.00	3.57	2.22	3.75	4.41
Cuba	121	3.52	1.75	4.64	3.89	4.38	2.94
Bahrain	122	3.49	2.58	3.57	2.78	5.00	3.53
Nigeria	123	3.47	3.83	3.21	3.33	3.13	3.82
Togo	124	3.45	4.00	0.79	3.33	5.00	4.12
Algeria	125	3.44	2.17	2.21	2.78	5.63	4.41
Cameroon	126	3.41	1.17	4.29	2.78	5.00	3.82
Comoros	=126	3.41	3.92	2.21	3.33	3.75	3.82
Niger	128	3.38	5.25	0.43	2.78	3.75	4.71
Gambia	=128	3.38	2.17	4.29	2.22	5.00	3.24



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	Rank	Overall score	I Electoral process and pluralism	II Functioning of government	III Political participation	IV Political culture	V Civil liberties
Belarus	130	3.34	2.58	2.86	3.33	4.38	3.53
Angola	131	3.32	1.33	3.21	4.44	4.38	3.24
Kazakhstan	132	3.30	1.33	2.14	3.33	4.38	5.29
Gabon	133	3.29	2.17	2.21	3.89	4.38	3.82
Rwanda	134	3.25	0.83	4.64	1.67	5.00	4.12
Azerbaijan	135	3.15	2.17	1.79	3.33	3.75	4.71
China	136	3.14	0.00	5.00	3.89	5.63	1.18
Qatar	137	3.09	0.00	3.21	2.22	5.63	4.41
Egypt	138	3.07	0.83	3.21	2.78	5.00	3.53
Côte d'Ivoire	139	3.02	0.33	2.86	2.78	5.63	3.53
Vietnam	140	2.94	0.00	4.29	3.33	5.63	1.47
Swaziland	141	2.90	0.92	2.86	2.22	4.38	4.12
Congo (Brazzaville)	142	2.89	1.25	2.86	3.33	3.75	3.24
Oman	143	2.86	0.00	3.57	2.22	4.38	4.12
Guinea	144	2.79	3.50	0.43	3.33	3.75	2.94
Tunisia	=144	2.79	0.00	2.86	2.22	5.63	3.24
Zimbabwe	146	2.64	0.00	1.29	3.33	5.63	2.94
Yemen	=146	2.64	1.33	1.79	3.89	5.00	1.18
UAE	148	2.52	0.00	3.57	1.11	5.00	2.94
Tajikistan	149	2.51	1.83	0.79	2.22	6.25	1.47
Afghanistan	150	2.48	2.50	0.79	2.78	2.50	3.82
Sudan	151	2.42	0.00	1.43	3.33	5.00	2.35
Eritrea	152	2.31	0.00	2.14	1.11	6.25	2.06
Syria	=152	2.31	0.00	2.50	1.67	5.63	1.76
Djibouti	154	2.20	0.83	1.43	1.11	5.00	2.65
Dem Rep of Congo	155	2.15	2.58	1.07	2.22	3.13	1.76
Laos	156	2.10	0.00	3.21	1.11	5.00	1.18
Guinea-Bissau	157	1.99	2.08	0.00	2.78	1.88	3.24
Libya	158	1.94	0.00	2.14	1.11	5.00	1.47
Iran	=158	1.94	0.00	3.21	2.22	2.50	1.76
Equatorial Guinea	160	1.84	0.00	0.79	1.67	5.00	1.76
Saudi Arabia	=160	1.84	0.00	2.86	1.11	3.75	1.47
Central African Republic	162	1.82	1.75	1.07	1.11	2.50	2.65



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Category scores							
	Rank	Overall score	I Electoral process and pluralism	II Functioning of government	III Political participation	IV Political culture	V Civil liberties
Myanmar	163	1.77	0.00	1.79	0.56	5.63	0.88
Uzbekistan	164	1.74	0.08	0.79	2.22	5.00	0.59
Turkmenistan	165	1.72	0.00	0.79	2.22	5.00	0.59
Chad	166	1.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.38	3.24
North Korea	167	1.08	0.00	2.50	1.67	1.25	0.00

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit

Looking at the regional distribution of regime types, flawed democracies are concentrated in Latin America and eastern Europe, and to a lesser extent in Asia. Despite progress in Latin American democratisation in recent decades, many countries in the region remain fragile democracies. Levels of political participation are generally low and democratic cultures are weak. There has also been significant backsliding in recent years in some areas such as media freedoms.

Much of eastern Europe illustrates the difference between formal and substantive democracy. The new EU members from the region have pretty much equal levels of political freedoms and civil liberties as the old developed EU, but lag significantly in political participation and political culture—a reflection of widespread anomie and weaknesses of democratic development. Only one country from the region, the Czech Republic, is rated a full democracy.

Changes between 2008 and 2010

Many of the world's authoritarian regimes are in the Middle East and North Africa (although there is also a fair number in Asia, the former Soviet Union and Sub-Saharan Africa). The dearth of democratic regimes in the Middle East and North Africa is a well-known phenomenon, with much debate about the causes. In the statistical relationship between democracy and income discussed below, a dummy variable for the Middle East and North Africa is negative and highly significant statistically even when oil wealth is included in our 167-country sample—that is, the Middle East and North Africa has much lower levels of democratisation than could be inferred on the basis of income levels.

The rollback in democracy is also part of an underlying trend that has been evident for some time, but has strengthened. Between 2006 (the year of the first issue of the index) and 2008 there was stagnation; over the past two years, between 2008 and 2010, there has been outright decline. In all regions, the average democracy score for 2010 is lower than in 2008. The democracy score was lower in 2010 than in 2008 in 91 countries out of the 167 covered by the Index, although in the majority of these the deterioration was modest. The score increased, at least marginally, in 48 countries, and it stayed the same in 28 countries over this period. The most pronounced decline was in eastern Europe. In 19 countries of eastern Europe, the democracy score declined between 2008 and 2010.



Table 3
Democracy across the regions

	No. of countries	Democracy index average	Full democracies	Flawed democracies	Hybrid regimes	Authoritarian regimes
North America						
2010	2	8.63	2	0	0	0
2008	2	8.64	2	0	0	0
Western Europe						
2010	21	8.45	16	4	1	0
2008	21	8.61	19	1	1	0
Eastern Europe						
2010	28	5.55	1	15	6	6
2008	28	5.67	2	14	6	6
Latin America & the Caribbean						
2010	24	6.37	2	15	6	1
2008	24	6.43	2	18	3	1
Asia & Australasia						
2010	28	5.53	4	10	7	7
2008	28	5.58	4	10	8	6
Middle East & North Africa						
2010	20	3.43	0	1	3	16
2008	20	3.54	0	1	3	16
Sub-Saharan Africa						
2010	44	4.23	1	8	10	25
2008	44	4.28	1	6	15	22
Total						
2010	167	5.46	26	53	33	55
2008	167	5.55	30	50	36	51

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit.

In 13 countries there was a change in regime type between 2008 and 2010; in 11 of these there was regression. France, Italy, Greece and Slovenia dropped from the category of full democracies to flawed democracies. In addition to these four European countries that regressed from full to flawed democracies, three countries moved from flawed to hybrid regimes and four from hybrid to authoritarian regimes. Only in two cases, both in Sub-Saharan Africa, was there an advance—Ghana and Mali moved from hybrid regimes to flawed democracies.

A noticeable decline in media freedoms in recent years, affecting all regions to some extent, has accelerated since 2008. This has affected mainly electronic media, which is often under



state control or heavy state influence—although repression and infringements of the freedom of expression have also extended to the print media and, most recently, the Internet.

In 36 countries there was a deterioration in scores for media freedom between 2008 and 2010. This included three countries in western Europe (France, Italy, Turkey), eight in eastern Europe (Albania, Azerbaijan, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Russia and Serbia), nine in Latin America (Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Mexico, Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru), four in the Middle East and North Africa (Iran, Egypt, Palestinian Territories and Saudi Arabia), four in Asia & Australasia (Fiji, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Thailand), and eight in Sub-Saharan Africa (Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo Brazzaville, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Madagascar and Rwanda).

The reasons for this decline are complex and varied. Underlying negative trends appear to have been exacerbated by the post-2008 economic crisis. Many governments have felt increasingly vulnerable and threatened and have reacted by intensifying their efforts to control the media and impede free expression. Increasing unemployment and job insecurity have fostered a climate of fear and self-censorship among journalists in many countries. The concentration of media ownership has tended to increase, which has had a negative impact on the diversity of views and the freedom of expression. Advanced nations have become more inward-looking and hence less interested and capable of monitoring and pressurising emerging market governments to ensure freedom of the press. In authoritarian regimes, which have often become stronger and more confident, state control and repression of any independent media is a given and has if anything tended to get worse, with increasing attacks on independent journalists.

Table 4
Democracy Index 2008 and 2010

	2010 Overall score	Rank	2008 Overall score	Rank	Difference in scores between 2010 and 2008
North America					
US	8.18	17	8.22	18	-0.04
Canada	9.08	9	9.07	11	0.01
Western Europe					
Austria	8.49	13	8.49	14	0.00
Belgium	8.05	23	8.16	20	-0.11
Cyprus	7.29	39	7.70	36	-0.41
Denmark	9.52	3	9.52	5	0.00
Finland	9.19	7	9.25	6	-0.06
France	7.77	31	8.07	24	-0.30
Germany	8.38	14	8.82	13	-0.44
Greece	7.92	28	8.13	22	-0.21



Table 4
Democracy Index 2008 and 2010

	2010 Overall score	Rank	2008 Overall score	Rank	Difference in scores between 2010 and 2008
Iceland	9.65	2	9.65	3	0.00
Ireland	8.79	12	9.01	12	-0.21
Italy	7.83	29	7.98	29	-0.16
Luxembourg	8.88	11	9.10	9	-0.22
Malta	8.28	15	8.39	16	-0.11
Netherlands	8.99	10	9.53	4	-0.54
Norway	9.80	1	9.68	2	0.13
Portugal	8.02	26	8.05	25	-0.03
Spain	8.16	18	8.45	15	-0.29
Sweden	9.50	4	9.88	1	-0.38
Switzerland	9.09	8	9.15	8	-0.06
Turkey	5.73	89	5.69	87	0.04
United Kingdom	8.16	19	8.15	21	0.01
Eastern Europe					
Albania	5.86	84	5.91	81	-0.05
Armenia	4.09	109	4.09	113	0.00
Azerbaijan	3.15	135	3.19	135	-0.04
Belarus	3.34	130	3.34	132	0.00
Bosnia and Hercegovina	5.32	94	5.70	86	-0.38
Bulgaria	6.84	51	7.02	52	-0.18
Croatia	6.81	53	7.04	51	-0.24
Czech Republic	8.19	16	8.19	19	0.00
Estonia	7.68	33	7.68	37	0.00
Georgia	4.59	103	4.62	104	-0.02
Hungary	7.21	43	7.44	40	-0.23
Kazakhstan	3.30	132	3.45	127	-0.16
Kyrgyz Republic	4.31	106	4.05	114	0.26
Latvia	7.05	48	7.23	46	-0.18
Lithuania	7.24	41	7.36	42	-0.11
Macedonia	6.16	73	6.21	72	-0.04
Moldova	6.33	65	6.50	62	-0.17
Montenegro	6.27	68	6.43	65	-0.16
Poland	7.05	48	7.30	45	-0.25
Romania	6.60	56	7.06	50	-0.46



Table 4
Democracy Index 2008 and 2010

	2010 Overall score	Rank	2008 Overall score	Rank	Difference in scores between 2010 and 2008
Russia	4.26	107	4.48	107	-0.22
Serbia	6.33	65	6.49	63	-0.16
Slovakia	7.35	38	7.33	44	0.02
Slovenia	7.69	32	7.96	30	-0.27
Tajikistan	2.51	149	2.45	150	0.06
Turkmenistan	1.72	165	1.72	165	0.00
Ukraine	6.30	67	6.94	53	-0.64
Uzbekistan	1.74	164	1.74	164	0.00
Latin America					
Argentina	6.84	51	6.63	56	0.21
Bolivia	5.92	80	6.15	75	-0.23
Brazil	7.12	47	7.38	41	-0.27
Chile	7.67	34	7.89	32	-0.23
Colombia	6.55	57	6.54	60	0.01
Costa Rica	8.04	24	8.04	27	0.00
Cuba	3.52	121	3.52	125	0.00
Dominican Republic	6.20	70	6.20	73	0.00
Ecuador	5.77	87	5.64	88	0.14
El Salvador	6.47	61	6.40	67	0.07
Guatemala	6.05	75	6.07	79	-0.02
Guyana	6.05	75	6.12	76	-0.07
Haiti	4.00	111	4.19	110	-0.19
Honduras	5.76	88	6.18	74	-0.42
Jamaica	7.21	43	7.21	49	0.00
Mexico	6.93	50	6.78	55	0.15
Nicaragua	5.73	89	6.07	78	-0.34
Panama	7.15	46	7.35	43	-0.20
Paraguay	6.40	62	6.40	66	0.00
Peru	6.40	62	6.31	70	0.09
Suriname	6.65	54	6.58	59	0.07
Trinidad and Tobago	7.16	45	7.21	48	-0.05
Uruguay	8.10	21	8.08	23	0.02
Venezuela	5.18	96	5.34	95	-0.15



Table 4
Democracy Index 2008 and 2010

	2010 Overall score	Rank	2008 Overall score	Rank	Difference in scores between 2010 and 2008
Asia and Australasia					
Afghanistan	2.48	150	3.02	138	-0.54
Australia	9.22	6	9.09	10	0.13
Bangladesh	5.87	83	5.52	91	0.35
Bhutan	4.68	102	4.30	109	0.38
Cambodia	4.87	100	4.87	102	0.00
China	3.14	136	3.04	136	0.10
Fiji	3.62	119	5.11	100	-1.50
Hong Kong	5.92	80	5.85	84	0.07
India	7.28	40	7.80	35	-0.53
Indonesia	6.53	60	6.34	69	0.19
Japan	8.08	22	8.25	17	-0.17
Laos	2.10	156	2.10	157	0.00
Malaysia	6.19	71	6.36	68	-0.17
Mongolia	6.36	64	6.60	58	-0.24
Myanmar	1.77	163	1.77	163	0.00
Nepal	4.24	108	4.05	115	0.20
New Zealand	9.26	5	9.19	7	0.07
North Korea	1.08	167	0.86	167	0.22
Pakistan	4.55	104	4.46	108	0.10
Papua New Guinea	6.54	59	6.54	61	0.00
Philippines	6.12	74	6.12	77	0.00
Singapore	5.89	82	5.89	82	0.00
South Korea	8.11	20	8.01	28	0.11
Sri Lanka	6.64	55	6.61	57	0.03
Taiwan	7.52	36	7.82	33	-0.29
Thailand	6.55	57	6.81	54	-0.25
Timor-Leste	7.22	42	7.22	47	0.00
Vietnam	2.94	140	2.53	149	0.42
Middle East & North Africa					
Algeria	3.44	125	3.32	133	0.12
Bahrain	3.49	122	3.38	130	0.11
Egypt	3.07	138	3.89	119	-0.82



Table 4
Democracy Index 2008 and 2010

	2010 Overall score	Rank	2008 Overall score	Rank	Difference in scores between 2010 and 2008
Iran	1.94	158	2.83	145	-0.89
Iraq	4.00	111	4.00	116	0.00
Israel	7.48	37	7.48	38	0.00
Jordan	3.74	117	3.93	117	-0.19
Kuwait	3.88	114	3.39	129	0.49
Lebanon	5.82	86	5.62	89	0.20
Libya	1.94	158	2.00	159	-0.06
Morocco	3.79	116	3.88	120	-0.09
Oman	2.86	143	2.98	140	-0.13
Palestine	5.44	93	5.83	85	-0.38
Qatar	3.09	137	2.92	144	0.18
Saudi Arabia	1.84	160	1.90	161	-0.06
Sudan	2.42	151	2.81	146	-0.38
Syria	2.31	152	2.18	156	0.13
Tunisia	2.79	144	2.96	141	-0.17
United Arab Emirates	2.52	148	2.60	147	-0.07
Yemen	2.64	146	2.95	142	-0.32
Sub-Saharan Africa					
Angola	3.32	131	3.35	131	-0.03
Benin	6.17	72	6.06	80	0.11
Botswana	7.63	35	7.47	39	0.16
Burkina Faso	3.59	120	3.60	122	0.00
Burundi	4.01	110	4.51	106	-0.50
Cameroon	3.41	126	3.46	126	-0.05
Cape Verde	7.94	27	7.81	34	0.13
Central African Republic	1.82	162	1.86	162	-0.04
Chad	1.52	166	1.52	166	0.00
Comoros	3.41	126	3.58	123	-0.17
Congo (Brazzaville)	2.89	142	2.94	143	-0.06
Democratic Republic of Congo	2.15	155	2.28	154	-0.13
Côte d'Ivoire	3.02	139	3.27	134	-0.24
Djibouti	2.20	154	2.37	152	-0.16
Equatorial Guinea	1.84	160	2.19	155	-0.35



Table 4
Democracy Index 2008 and 2010

	2010 Overall score	Rank	2008 Overall score	Rank	Difference in scores between 2010 and 2008
Eritrea	2.31	152	2.31	153	0.00
Ethiopia	3.68	118	4.52	105	-0.84
Gabon	3.29	133	3.00	139	0.29
Gambia	3.38	128	4.19	111	-0.81
Ghana	6.02	77	5.35	94	0.67
Guinea	2.79	144	2.09	158	0.70
Guinea-Bissau	1.99	157	1.99	160	0.00
Kenya	4.71	101	4.79	103	-0.08
Lesotho	6.02	77	6.29	71	-0.26
Liberia	5.07	97	5.25	98	-0.18
Madagascar	3.94	113	5.57	90	-1.63
Malawi	5.84	85	5.13	99	0.72
Mali	6.01	79	5.87	83	0.14
Mauritania	3.86	115	3.91	118	-0.05
Mauritius	8.04	24	8.04	26	0.00
Mozambique	4.90	99	5.49	92	-0.59
Namibia	6.23	69	6.48	64	-0.25
Niger	3.38	128	3.41	128	-0.03
Nigeria	3.47	123	3.53	124	-0.07
Rwanda	3.25	134	3.71	121	-0.45
Senegal	5.27	95	5.37	93	-0.10
Sierra Leone	4.51	105	4.11	112	0.40
South Africa	7.79	30	7.91	31	-0.11
Swaziland	2.90	141	3.04	137	-0.14
Tanzania	5.64	92	5.28	96	0.35
Togo	3.45	124	2.43	151	1.01
Uganda	5.05	98	5.03	101	0.02
Zambia	5.68	91	5.25	97	0.43
Zimbabwe	2.64	146	2.53	148	0.11

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit



Democracy and development

The relationship between the level of development (income per head) and democracy is not clear cut. There is an apparent association: the simple correlation between our democracy index for 2010 and the logarithm of GDP per head (at PPP US\$) in 2010 is just under 0.6. This may look even surprisingly low—it implies that in a simple two-variable regression of the democracy index on income per head, just one-third of the inter-country variation in democracy is explained by income levels. If we also include a measure of oil wealth (with a so-called dummy variable that takes a value of 1 for major oil-exporting countries and 0 otherwise), the explanatory power of the regression increases sharply to some 60% of the inter-country variation in the democracy index. Although this still leaves almost 40% of the variation unexplained, it illustrates the often-observed strong negative impact on democratic development of a reliance on oil wealth.

However, the direction of causality between democracy and income is also debatable. The standard modernisation hypothesis that economic development leads to, and/or is a necessary pre-condition for democracy, is no longer universally accepted. Instead, it has been argued that the primary direction of causation runs from democracy to income (Rigobon and Rodrik 2005; Acemoglu et al 2005).

Shifts in regime type

Downgrades

France—full democracy to flawed democracy

Various negative political trends in France in recent years have resulted in the country being downgraded to the flawed democracy category. Public confidence in political parties and the government is extremely low. Surveys also show that citizens' engagement with politics has declined. The degree of popular support for democracy is among the lowest in the developed world. One in seven do not agree that democracy is better than any other form of government. The chasm between the country's citizens and its political elites has widened. Outbreaks of violent rioting in recent years are another symptom of the country's political malaise. Under the French political system, the president wields huge power. The autocratic and domineering style of the current president, Nicolas Sarkozy, threatens to undermine democratic traditions. There has been increasing anti-Muslim sentiment and

emphasis on the country's Christian roots during the Sarkozy presidency. Pressure on journalists and the electronic media have led to a decline in media freedoms.

Italy—full democracy to flawed democracy

Since the prime minister, Silvio Berlusconi, returned to power in 2008, the media situation has deteriorated significantly. In addition to owning and controlling Mediaset, which comprises three national television channels, Mr Berlusconi also has indirect control over RAI, the state broadcaster. RAI 1, the state channel with the largest audience, has repeatedly chosen to limit coverage of, or completely ignore, negative news about Mr Berlusconi or his close associates. There has also been political pressure on RAI to cancel or curtail several popular left-leaning programmes for their criticism of Mr Berlusconi and his government.

Greece—full democracy to flawed democracy

Greece already had low scores for the categories of government functioning and political culture. For some years there has been a high level of perceived corruption, causing public confidence in the country's institutions to decline. The Greek



economic crisis has revealed that the flaws in the transparency and accountability of government in Greece are even deeper than had been previously supposed. A significant deterioration in the functioning of government category has led Greece to being downgraded to the flawed democracy category.

Slovenia—full democracy to flawed democracy

Slovenia was previously one of only two countries in eastern Europe that was considered a full democracy (in addition to the Czech Republic). In 2008 Slovenia ranked 30th out of 167 countries, putting it at the bottom of the list of full democracies. Slovenia's relatively strong position owes much to its high scores in the electoral process and civil liberties categories. In these areas it compares well with some long-established democracies. However, political participation in Slovenia has been declining and there is widespread popular apathy and disaffection with the political elite. In recent years, there has been an extraordinary deterioration in a range of attitudes associated with democracy. In particular, surveys show a sharp decline in public confidence and trust in political institutions (political parties, government and parliament). Scarcely more than one-third of Slovenes are satisfied with the way democracy functions in their country—a significantly lower proportion than in any west European state.

Fiji—hybrid to authoritarian regime

Fiji turned further from democracy in April 2009 when the then president, Ratu Josefa Iloilo, abrogated the constitution and reappointed the country's military commander, Commodore Voreqe (Frank) Bainimarama, as prime minister for another term (Mr Bainimarama had been forced to resign as prime minister less than 24 hours earlier). At the same time restrictions were placed on media reporting. Since then Mr Bainimarama has withstood international pressure to bring forward the next parliamentary elections, which he has insisted will not take place until 2014.

Honduras—flawed democracy to hybrid

The most significant reason for Honduras's downgrade to a hybrid regime was the coup d'état in June 2009 that toppled the government of Manuel Zelaya following a constitutional crisis. This led to a significant deterioration in the electoral process score, which now ranks among the lowest in Latin America, only ahead of Cuba, Venezuela and Haiti. Although elections were subsequently held in November 2009 and the outcome was not disputed, the political scene has been marred by frequent labour unrest and the emergence of a resistance movement sympathetic to Mr Zelaya, which, although non-violent, could become radicalised.

Bolivia—flawed democracy to hybrid

The central government has assumed a growing range of powers since 2008, under the presidency of a radical left-winger, Evo Morales. The legislature, in which the ruling party, Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS), has a two-thirds majority, generally serves as a rubber stamp to government policies. The Morales government has been using state funds to promote the MAS party. It has been using judicial bodies to carry out investigations against opposition members that have been forced out of local government positions.

Nicaragua—flawed democracy to hybrid

Although the constitution prohibited consecutive re-election, the president, Daniel Ortega, used his political clout to pressure the Supreme Court into overturning the ban. A weakening of the country's check and balances has led to rising political tensions. The 2008 municipal elections were marred by accusations of fraud and irregularities were reported in local elections in the Atlantic region in early 2010.

Madagascar—hybrid to authoritarian

The ousting of the last elected president, Marc Ravalomanana, in early 2009, by a military-led coup, was a severe setback. The unelected administration that took over, Haute autorité pour la transition (HAT), has repeatedly reneged on its promises to share power with the opposition. The HAT held a referendum on constitutional reforms in



November 2010, ostensibly with a view to holding fresh presidential and parliamentary elections in early 2011. However, the main opposition groups boycotted this process and international mediators have refused to acknowledge its legitimacy.

The Gambia—hybrid to authoritarian

In The Gambia, the regime's intolerance of dissent has worsened since 2008. Examples include the arrests of a leading opposition politician and the editors of two local newspapers, on dubious grounds, in early 2009. The judiciary's independence has been curtailed further, as illustrated most vividly by the sacking of the chief justice, by the president, without explanation, in mid-2009, despite objections that this violated the constitution. Power has become increasingly concentrated in the office of the president.

Ethiopia—hybrid to authoritarian

Ethiopia dropped by 13 places to 118th rank, reflecting the regime's crackdown on opposition activities, media and civil society. The passage of restrictive laws governing media, civil society and political funding was a main driver behind the landslide election in May 2010. The landslide election victory for the ruling party in May 2010 has

made Ethiopia a de facto one-party state.

Upgrades

Ghana—from hybrid to flawed democracy

Ghana has one of the most successful democracies in Sub-Saharan Africa. This was emphasised by the presidential election in December 2008, which was one of the closest in African history but was quickly accepted by the losing candidate, whose party had been in power. This was the second time that the party in power had been unseated by the opposition at a national election since the establishment of multi-party politics in 1992. There is a vibrant private press, which has continued to expand over the past two years.

Mali—from hybrid to flawed democracy

In Mali, the popular independent president, Amadou Toumani Toure, is committed to stepping down at the end of his term in 2012. Ahead of the elections, he is embarking on a constitutional reform programme that will further strengthen Mali's democratic framework. The reforms include the creation of an upper house, independent media and election watchdogs, and a new code of conduct for politicians. The security situation has improved markedly, as have media freedoms.

Democracy after the financial crisis

There are a number of ways in which democracy has been adversely affected by the economic and financial crisis. There has been a decline in some aspects of governance, political participation and media freedoms, and a clear deterioration in attitudes associated with, or are conducive to, democracy in many countries, including in Europe. The financial and economic crisis has increased the attractiveness of the Chinese model of authoritarian capitalism for some emerging markets. Democracy promotion by the Western world was already discredited by the experience in the Middle East in recent years. The economic crisis has undermined further the credibility of efforts by developed nations to promote their values abroad.

Nations with a weak democratic tradition are by default vulnerable to setbacks. Many non-consolidated democracies are fragile and socioeconomic stress has led to backsliding on democracy in many countries. The underlying shallowness of democratic cultures—as revealed by disturbingly low scores for many countries in our index for political participation and political culture—has come to the fore.

The impact of the economic and financial crisis on political trends has been most marked in Europe, both east and west. Although extremist political forces in Europe have not profited from



the economic crisis as much as might have been feared, populism and anti-immigrant sentiment has nevertheless been on the rise. This trend has interacted with concerns about terrorism and led to some further erosion of civil liberties.

Drawing on the results of worldwide Gallup polls, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) recently noted that since the start of the crisis in 2008 confidence in government has declined perceptibly in many countries, as have perceptions that policies are fair or lead to a better future (ILO, 2010). These trends are most common among advanced economies. Among west European countries, there is a perception of growing political extremism and social discontent. Perceptions of unfairness have increased in Latin America and remain high in Asia and, to a lesser extent, in Sub-Saharan Africa. Among advanced countries, confidence in government declined from 52% in 2006 to 41% in 2009. In countries of eastern Europe, confidence in government was down to 38% in 2009 from 43% in 2006 (ILO op cit, page 33).

The results of the Gallup polls are largely mirrored by the findings of Eurobarometer surveys. Confidence in national public institutions in western Europe—already low before 2008 in many countries—has declined further since the onset of the crisis. Less than one fifth of west Europeans trust political parties and only about one third trust their governments and parliaments. Levels of public trust are exceptionally low in the eastern Europe-12 (the 10 new EU member states and EU candidate countries Croatia and Macedonia). Less than 10% of people in this subregion trust political parties and less than one fifth trust their governments and their parliaments. The proportion that is satisfied with the way democracy functions in their countries fell from 40% in 2007 to only 33% in 2009.

Economic crises can threaten democracy, usually with a lag, through increased social unrest. So far, social unrest related to the financial and economic crisis has affected about two dozen countries, mostly in Europe. These cases have taken the form of protest against governments' crisis responses and austerity measures aimed at improving fiscal balances, and violent clashes between the government and demonstrators. Historically, economic crises and difficulties have been associated with democratic breakthroughs, such as the sudden collapse of seemingly stable autocratic regimes, as much as with the opposite outcome of increasing authoritarianism. However, in the current circumstances, and given the combination of other factors at work, it seems much more likely that the negative impact on democratisation would predominate.

Table 5

	Confidence indicators (% surveyed)							
	Trust political parties		Trust government		Trust parliament		Satisfied with democracy	
	2007	2009	2007	2009	2007	2009	2007	2009
EU27	18	16	34	29	35	30	58	53
EU-15	21	18	38	31	40	35	59	58
Austria	30	36	53	54	54	55	80	76
Belgium	29	21	43	36	49	38	66	62

Table 5

	Confidence indicators (% surveyed)							
	Trust political parties		Trust government		Trust parliament		Satisfied with democracy	
	2007	2009	2007	2009	2007	2009	2007	2009
Denmark	40	50	57	57	74	74	94	91
Finland	26	25	58	48	68	53	77	69
France	17	9	42	22	40	28	65	51
Germany	18	20	40	40	41	45	66	68
Greece	21	19	46	44	52	47	63	49
Ireland	22	13	32	15	33	19	69	56
Italy	16	17	23	26	25	27	40	44
Luxembourg	30	41	65	68	56	59	73	90
Netherlands	35	37	49	49	54	52	80	72
Portugal	15	21	36	32	34	41	36	40
Spain	32	18	49	29	47	29	77	58
Sweden	25	32	41	55	57	63	80	81
UK	15	9	30	19	34	19	62	58
East Europe-12	9	9	21	21	16	16	40	33
Bulgaria	7	12	16	44	11	27	26	21
Croatia	8	4	20	12	20	12	32	14
Czech Republic	11	12	21	37	16	15	51	48
Estonia	22	17	62	47	46	38	53	41
Hungary	8	9	21	14	21	15	24	23
Latvia	7	2	19	9	16	6	43	21
Lithuania	7	5	24	15	13	7	24	18
Macedonia	13	14	36	31	23	25	53	52
Poland	8	7	17	16	10	11	48	44
Romania	11	11	21	17	18	17	36	18
Slovakia	13	18	40	36	37	35	35	40
Slovenia	13	9	32	29	31	19	48	37

Note. Polls taken in October–November 2007 and October–November 2009. East Europe-12 comprises the ten EU members from eastern Europe and the two candidate countries (Croatia and Macedonia). Satisfaction with democracy based on the question: Are you satisfied with the way democracy functions in your country?

Source: Eurobarometer surveys.

When economic liberalism is curtailed, as it has been since the crisis broke out, social and political liberalism also tend to be affected. There is a well-known association between economic freedom and political freedom, and more broadly democracy. There are 152 countries for which data are available for both our democracy index and the Heritage Foundation's Index of Economic



Freedom (IEF). The simple correlation between the two measures is almost 0.7. The component indexes of the IEF are highly inter-correlated. Thus the scope for drawing reliable inferences about the separate effects of particular subcomponents of economic freedom may be limited. Nevertheless, several component indicators of the IEF are of special interest in the present context—that of the government's role in the economy as measured by the share of public spending in GDP and indicators of government regulation.

As expected, the size of government is positively associated with democracy, even when we control for the level of income per head. Popular demand for more public services is more likely to be satisfied in democracies. Thus there may not be any reason for concern because of bigger government or higher state spending levels. However, democracy is negatively associated with levels of government regulation in various fields, including, interestingly, the degree of financial sector regulation—also when income levels are controlled for. The same applies to an even greater extent to regulation of business, trade and capital flows (although not to labour market regulation, in which democracies appear likely to engage). A rise in economic nationalism, in particular, clearly seems to be associated with less democracy.

Major reversals have taken place before—a democratisation wave after the second world war ended with more than 20 countries subsequently sliding back to authoritarianism. That sort of rollback is not currently evident, but the threat of backsliding now greatly outweighs the possibility of further gains. Democracy as a value retains strong universal appeal worldwide. Despite setbacks and overall stagnation, surveys show that most people in most places still want democracy. Creating democracy by external intervention is being discredited. But trends such as globalisation, increasing education and expanding middle classes would have tended to favour the organic development of democracy. These underlying forces, even if developing at a slower pace than in the recent past, suggest that the retreat from democracy will not be permanent.



Regional patterns

Western Europe

Seven out of the top ten countries in our index are in western Europe. However, there has been a significant erosion in democracy in the region in recent years. A total of 15 countries out of 21 experienced a decline in their overall score in 2010 compared with 2008, in large part related to the various effects of the economic crisis. Three countries (Greece, Italy and France) dropped out of the category of full democracies. The strengthening of right-wing and anti-immigrant political forces contributed to the deterioration in the scores of several west European countries. Disaffection with the political system is widespread in western Europe, as reflected in many countries by declining levels of trust and confidence in political institutions.

Populist anti-Islamic forces have made an advance in the former liberal bastions of northern Europe such as Denmark and Sweden. Sweden drops from 1st position in 2008 to 4th position in 2010, owing mainly to a rise in anti-immigrant sentiment, the entry of the Sweden Democrats into the Swedish parliament after the elections of September 2010, and problems in transparency and party financing.

In many Western democracies, lack of public participation in the political process is a cause for concern, leading to a so-called democratic deficit. In Germany, membership of the major parties is in decline and election turnout is decreasing at all levels. The UK's political participation score is among the worst in the developed world. Problems are reflected across many elements—voter turnout, political party membership, the willingness of citizens to engage in, and their attitudes towards, politics. As in the US, there has also been a perceptible erosion of civil liberties in recent years, primarily linked to the fight against international terrorism. The issue is gaining prominence, amid growing concerns about the erosion of civil liberties in areas ranging from expanding police powers to official surveillance.

Eastern Europe

Eastern Europe was the region with the largest decline in its average score between 2008 and 2010, although in only one country was the difference large enough to precipitate a change in the regime type categorisation. Out of the 28 countries in eastern Europe, 19 recorded a decline in their democracy scores between 2008 and 2010. The deterioration has affected all subregions. The most significant decline in scores took place in Ukraine, where some of the democratic gains stemming from the “Orange Revolution” of several years ago are under threat, and in the Balkan countries.

Authoritarian trends have become entrenched in most members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). But the setbacks to democracy are by no means only limited to that subregion. Democracy is also being eroded across east-central Europe. A common explanation for the emergence of political difficulties in this subregion is that the EU accession process had previously held together the fractious party-political systems of these countries, as mainstream parties united behind the reforms that were needed to gain EU membership. But once accession



was achieved, and politics reverted to “natural” antagonistic patterns, the underlying fragility of east-central European political systems was exposed.

There are a number of possible reasons for this fragility. Most important is that although democratic forms are in place in the region, much of the substance of democracy, including a political culture based on trust, is absent. This is manifested in low levels of political participation beyond voting (and even turnout at elections is low in many countries), and very low levels of public confidence in institutions. A key underlying factor is that transition has resulted in a large stratum of discontented voters who feel that they have lost out during the transition. Another problem in the region is that party politics often remains fragmented, primarily reflecting the shallow roots of many parties and low voter identification with parties.

Some negative trends have recently got worse. Hungary is perhaps the prime example among the EU’s new member states in the region. In the April 2010 election, an extreme nationalist party, Jobbik, gathered almost as many votes as the former ruling Socialists. Since winning a two thirds parliamentary majority in the election, the centre-right Fidesz party has systematically been taking over the country’s previously independent institutions: the presidency, the state audit office and the media council are now all run by party placemen. Parliament recently voted to severely restrict the constitutional court’s right to adjudicate on budgetary matters (“Has Orban over-reached?”, *The Guardian*, November 25th 2010).

In Russia, the one positive development (the fact that the constitution was respected and that Vladimir Putin stepped down from the presidency in 2008) was offset by a number of negative developments. Although the formal trappings of democracy remain in place, today’s Russia has been called a “managed” (or “stage managed”) democracy. All the main decisions are made by a small group of insiders. The Duma is now little more than a rubber-stamp parliament; regional governors are appointed directly; the main media are state-controlled; civil society organisations have come under pressure; and the state has increased its hold over the economy. Even though Dmitry Medvedev, Mr Putin’s successor, has adopted a softer style, and has instituted some liberalising changes around the edges of the system, there have been no fundamental reforms during his presidency so far.

Most Russians appear unperturbed by the trend towards authoritarianism. During the presidency of Boris Yeltsin, many Russians came to associate the term democracy with chaos, and “capitalism” was synonymous with rigged privatisations, the rise of the oligarchs and widespread poverty. For now, however, the Russian middle class appears content with growing incomes and increased personal freedom, including opportunities to travel.

Many countries in the region have experienced a decline in media freedoms in recent years. In the CIS there is growing incidence of intimidation and attacks against journalists. There are few genuinely independent media outlets. For example, in Kazakhstan media outlets are entirely under the control of major financial groups affiliated with the regime.

Over the past few years, the countries of south-east Europe in particular have suffered declines in media freedoms. Intimidation of journalists, political pressure and illegal state subsidies for



government-controlled media are common in most Balkan countries. In Albania, journalists continue to be attacked and there is political pressure on the media. A campaign is being led in Macedonia against the media and journalists who are critical of the government. Police and public officials have failed to intervene over incitement to violence against journalists. In Serbia, media ownership patterns are opaque. In 2009 controversial new media laws and amendments were hastily adopted without public debate. Many cases of violence against journalists have not been properly investigated. The media in Serbia is under pressure, with the direct participation of state officials in governing bodies and through political appointments of chief editors. In Montenegro, free expression is “patchy”, according to the European Commission. In Croatia, concerns persist regarding the safety of journalists who write about corruption and organised crime. In Romania, the government even identified the media as a potential threat to national security.

Problems have been exacerbated by the financial and economic crisis, which has also hit the media in the region and led to a further increase in the concentration of ownership, usually by groups with close links to governments. Fear of unemployment has increased pressure on journalists and self-censorship.

The trend has not bypassed central Europe, either. For example, in Poland, the government has made efforts to subjugate public broadcasters directly to the minister of finance and to limit their market share for the benefit of government-friendly private media corporations. There have been controversial court decisions infringing on the freedom of expression as well as ongoing harassment of investigative journalists by the Internal Security Agency.

Asia and Australasia

The wide disparities in democratic development across Asia are captured in the results of our democracy index. The picture is exemplified by the Korean peninsula: South Korea is a full democracy, ranked 20th. By contrast, North Korea props up the global listings, coming last of the 167 countries covered by the index. Although the average score for the region was lower in 2010 than in 2008, this was one of the few regions in the world that had more countries with a higher overall score in 2010 than in 2008 (13 countries); eight countries had a lower score and in seven countries the score stayed the same. Only one country underwent a change in regime type—Fiji moved from a hybrid regime to the authoritarian category.

Although parts of the region—from Myanmar and North Korea to Laos, Vietnam and China—are still entrenched authoritarian regimes, the past couple of decades have seen the spread of democracy in the region overall. Over the past decade, some 20 Asian countries have held elections, and many have undergone peaceful transitions in government. India remains the world’s most populous democracy, despite the efforts of insurgents and religious extremists to derail it. Yet even in the democratic countries, there are often significant problems in the functioning of political systems. India’s rank, for example, has declined by five places compared with 2008, pulled down by a deterioration in its political participation and political culture scores.

Democratic political cultures in Asia are often underdeveloped and shallow, even in the countries



that have democratised. In only nine countries in the region do we rate elections as being both free and fair. Even in parts of the region that are not authoritarian there is often pressure on the independent media. In many countries, Asian Barometer polls show that more citizens believe that the nations' recent democratic transitions had brought no improvement to their lives than believe the changes have been positive. Nostalgia for overthrown dictators is widespread. Some in the region are calling for a resurgence of so-called "Asian values". Although the Asian Barometer Project found that the majority of Asians say they support democratic ideals, their commitment to limits on a leader's power is far lower than in most other regions. ("Asia's dithering democracies", *Time*, January 1st, 2010).

Latin America

The average score for the region declined slightly between 2008 and 2010. There was an erosion in some areas, such as media freedoms, reflecting a trend towards tighter government control of, and state participation in, the media in a number of countries. Rampant crime in some countries—in particular, violence and drug-trafficking—has also had a negative impact. However, in most countries free and fair elections are now well established. The recent evidence from surveys on attitudes towards democracy is mixed. In some countries, surveys indicate a slow shift in public attitudes on many issues in a direction that is conducive to democracy.

While most Latin American countries (15 out of 24) fall within the flawed democracy category, there is wide diversity across the region. For example, Uruguay is a full democracy with an index score of 8.1 (out of 10) and a global ranking of 21st, while Cuba, an authoritarian regime, ranks 121st.

Although the region was affected by the 2008-09 recession—with the US-dependent Central American and Caribbean subregions hit particularly badly—most countries avoided social unrest and a significant rolling back of democracy. However, a key issue that is undermining democracy in much of the region is an upsurge in violent crime. With rebel insurgencies largely defeated, the illegal drug trade is the main cause of violence in Latin America and is particularly affecting the trafficking corridor from the producing countries in South America through to the transport countries in Central America, the Caribbean and Mexico. The corrupting influence of organised crime and its ability to undermine the effectiveness of the security forces and the judicial authorities are a serious problem.

Electoral democracy, for the most part, remains firmly entrenched in Latin America, but media freedoms have been eroded significantly in several countries. Most visibly, there have been a number of attempts by governments to intimidate or block certain private media outlets since 2008. Aside from Cuba (the only state in the region without any independent media), Venezuela is the worst offender. Alongside a crackdown on the traditional media (including efforts to revoke the licence of the only remaining television channel that is critical of the administration), there are rising concerns about a crackdown on non-traditional web media. Similar trends have been evident in Argentina, where the government is battling against Grupo Clarín, a major media group that runs a newspaper and two television channels. However, this trend is not limited to the more radical left-wing governments. In Panama, the pro-business administration of Ricardo Martinelli has also come under fire for its hostility towards journalists and newspapers that are critical of its policy stance.

The failure to uphold press freedom partly reflects inadequate oversight bodies—a symptom of



broader institutional weaknesses in Latin America. The executive remains very strong in many countries, which is evident from a growing trend towards increasing presidential term limits. Venezuela was one of the first countries in the region to extend term limits, and it has served as a template for a number of Andean and Central American countries. The legislature is comparatively weak in many cases and most judiciaries suffer from some degree of politicisation. Supporting regulatory bodies are often overstretched and frequently lack adequate enforcement powers. Given that tackling these structural problems often requires controversial reforms, the lack of progress in this area has been a notable factor hampering the deepening of democratic processes in Latin America.

The Middle East and North Africa

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) remains the most repressive region in the world—16 out of 20 countries in the region are categorised as authoritarian. There are only four exceptions: Israel is the only democracy in the region, albeit a flawed democracy; and there are three hybrid regimes (Iraq, Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories).

Almost all governments in the region continue to restrict political freedoms. All the Gulf states except Bahrain, for instance, ban political organisations. There have been some political reforms in the region in recent years, including the establishment of representative assemblies in Oman, Qatar and the UAE, and the return of an elected parliament in Bahrain. But these reforms have certainly not changed fundamentally the political system in these states, in which the executive branch still dominates and is unaccountable.

Egypt amended its constitution to permit multiple candidates in presidential elections but followed with a law limiting this right to existing parties. Algeria's Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation was quickly followed by an extension of the presidential term in office, the removal of term limits and the continuation of the ban on the Islamic Salvation Front. Similar patterns are evident in other states in the region (UN Human Development Report 2010, page 69).

Enormous oil rents are the means by which governments in the region can entrench autocratic rule. Rulers can finance far-reaching patronage networks and security apparatuses. Oil revenue removes the need to levy taxes, thereby reducing accountability. Civil society is very weak throughout the region.

The average score of countries in the region declined from an already very low 3.54 in 2008 to 3.43 in 2010, almost a point below the next lowest-scoring region, Sub-Saharan Africa. The only improvement of any note between 2008 and 2010 occurred in Kuwait, which rose by 15 places in the global rankings to 114th. Kuwait improved as its parliamentary system—the most advanced in the Gulf, although still not able to check seriously the emir's executive power—continued to mature and press freedoms also strengthened.

Two of the largest authoritarian countries in the region, Iran and Egypt, suffered declines from already low bases, as the ruling regimes tightened their control further. In Egypt, the approach to the presidential election in 2011 has made it clear that changes to the constitution in 2007



effectively lock out any serious opposition presidential candidates, such as Mohamed ElBaradei, the former head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Iran's global rank declined by 13 places to 158th between 2008 and 2010 as the regime cracked down violently on opposition following the flawed presidential election in June 2009. The growing power of the Revolutionary Guards Corp, which is close to the president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has contributed, in the context of economic sanctions, to an increase in corruption and cronyism. The democracy index scores and ranks of the Palestinian Territories, Sudan and Yemen—all countries that have been suffering internal conflict and serious political instability—also declined.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Elections have become a normal occurrence in Sub-Saharan Africa. Since the late 1990s the number of coups has fallen sharply, whereas the number of elections has increased. However, many elections are rigged and defeated incumbents often still refuse to accept defeat. Only in five countries in the region are the elections judged to be both free and fair (Botswana, Cape Verde, Ghana, Mauritius and South Africa). Sub-Saharan Africa continued to score poorly in the latest democracy index. As elsewhere in the world, there was also a decline in democracy in this region in 2010 compared with 2008, although the difference between 2008 and 2010 is small: the region's average score fell fractionally.

Only one state in the region (of the 44 assessed) remains a full democracy: the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius, which has maintained a strong democratic tradition since the country gained independence in 1968. The region has several flawed democracies, headed by South Africa, which just falls short of being a full democracy because of weaknesses in political participation and political culture. The other flawed democracies are Cape Verde, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Ghana, Mali and Benin. However, hybrid regimes (ten countries) and authoritarian regimes (25; over one-half of the total assessed) continue to predominate.

There are a large number of hybrid regimes in the region that are close to being flawed democracies. These include Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania, Senegal, Liberia, Uganda, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Kenya and Burundi. However, although some are getting closer to the threshold, others are slipping back. Three countries—Madagascar, Ethiopia and The Gambia—dropped from being a hybrid regime to authoritarian.

Two countries—Ghana and Mali—improved their ratings from hybrid regime to flawed democracies. Ghana enjoys one of the most successful democracies in the region. In Mali, the popular independent president, Amadou Toumani Touré, is committed to stepping down at the end of his term in 2012. Ahead of the elections, he is embarking on a significant constitutional reform programme.

A large number of African countries continue to suffer from fragile and weak democratic processes. There is a tight election timetable in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2011, which will significantly test the evolution of democracy in a number of countries, starting with what could turn out to be highly controversial polls in Nigeria in April. As indicated by our index, democracy means more than the holding of elections: the worse slippage in our scores between 2008 and 2010 came in the Political culture category.



Defining and measuring democracy

There is no consensus on how to measure democracy, definitions of democracy are contested and there is an ongoing lively debate on the subject. The issue is not only of academic interest. For example, although democracy-promotion is high on the list of US foreign policy priorities, there is no consensus within the US government on what constitutes a democracy. As one observer recently put it, “the world’s only superpower is rhetorically and militarily promoting a political system that remains undefined--and it is staking its credibility and treasure on that pursuit” (Horowitz, 2006, p 114).

Although the terms freedom and democracy are often used interchangeably, the two are not synonymous. Democracy can be seen as a set of practices and principles that institutionalise and thus ultimately protect freedom. Even if a consensus on precise definitions has proved elusive, most observers today would agree that, at a minimum, the fundamental features of a democracy include government based on majority rule and the consent of the governed, the existence of free and fair elections, the protection of minority rights and respect for basic human rights. Democracy presupposes equality before the law, due process and political pluralism. A question arises whether reference to these basic features is sufficient for a satisfactory concept of democracy. As discussed below, there is a question of how far the definition may need to be widened.

Some insist that democracy is necessarily a dichotomous concept—a state is either democratic or not. But most measures now appear to adhere to a continuous concept, with the possibility of varying degrees of democracy. At present, the best-known measure is produced by the US-based Freedom House organisation. The average of their indexes, on a 1 to 7 scale, of political freedom (based on 10 indicators) and of civil liberties (based on 15 indicators) is often taken to be a measure of democracy.

The index is available for all countries, and stretches back to the early 1970s. It has been used heavily in empirical investigations of the relationship between democracy and various economic and social variables. The so-called Polity Project provides, for a smaller number of countries, measures of democracy and regime types, based on rather minimalist definitions, stretching back to the 19th century. These have also been used in empirical work.

Freedom House also measures a narrower concept, that of “electoral democracy”. Democracies in this minimal sense share at least one common, essential characteristic. Positions of political power are filled through regular, free, and fair elections between competing parties, and it is possible for an incumbent government to be turned out of office through elections. Freedom House criteria for an electoral democracy include:

- 1) A competitive, multiparty political system
- 2) Universal adult suffrage
- 3) Regularly contested elections conducted on the basis of secret ballots, reasonable ballot security and the absence of massive voter fraud
- 4) Significant public access of major political parties to the electorate through the media and



through generally open political campaigning

The Freedom House definition of political freedom is somewhat (though not much) more demanding than its criteria for electoral democracy—that is, it classifies more countries as electoral democracies than as “free” (some “partly free” countries are also categorised as “electoral democracies”). At the end of 2007, 121 out of 193 states were classified as “electoral democracies”; of these, on a more stringent criterion, 90 states were classified as “free”. The Freedom House political freedom measure covers the electoral process and political pluralism and, to a lesser extent the functioning of government and a few aspects of participation.

A key difference in measures is between “thin”, or minimalist, and “thick”, or wider concepts of democracy (Coppedge, 2005). The thin concepts correspond closely to an immensely influential academic definition of democracy, that of Dahl’s concept of polyarchy (Dahl, 1970). Polyarchy has eight components, or institutional requirements: almost all adult citizens have the right to vote; almost all adult citizens are eligible for public office; political leaders have the right to compete for votes; elections are free and fair; all citizens are free to form and join political parties and other organisations; all citizens are free to express themselves on all political issues; diverse sources of information about politics exist and are protected by law; and government policies depend on votes and other expressions of preference.

The Freedom House electoral democracy measure is a thin concept. Their measure of democracy based on political rights and civil liberties is “thicker” than the measure of “electoral democracy”. Other definitions of democracy have broadened to include aspects of society and political culture in democratic societies.

The Economist Intelligence Unit measure

The Economist Intelligence Unit’s index is based on the view that measures of democracy that reflect the state of political freedoms and civil liberties are not “thick” enough. They do not encompass sufficiently or at all some features that determine how substantive democracy is or its quality. Freedom is an essential component of democracy, but not sufficient. In existing measures, the elements of political participation and functioning of government are taken into account only in a marginal and formal way.

The Economist Intelligence Unit’s democracy index is based on five categories: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. The five categories are inter-related and form a coherent conceptual whole. The condition of having free and fair competitive elections, and satisfying related aspects of political freedom, is clearly the sine quo none of all definitions.

All modern definitions, except the most minimalist, also consider civil liberties to be a vital component of what is often called “liberal democracy”. The principle of the protection of basic human rights is widely accepted. It is embodied in constitutions throughout the world as well as in the UN Charter and international agreements such as the Helsinki Final Act (the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe). Basic human rights include the freedom of speech,



expression and the press; freedom of religion; freedom of assembly and association; and the right to due judicial process. All democracies are systems in which citizens freely make political decisions by majority rule. But rule by the majority is not necessarily democratic. In a democracy majority rule must be combined with guarantees of individual human rights and the rights of minorities.

Most measures also include aspects of the minimum quality of functioning of government. If democratically-based decisions cannot or are not implemented then the concept of democracy is not very meaningful or it becomes an empty shell.

Democracy is more than the sum of its institutions. A democratic political culture is also crucial for the legitimacy, smooth functioning and ultimately the sustainability of democracy. A culture of passivity and apathy, an obedient and docile citizenry, are not consistent with democracy. The electoral process periodically divides the population into winners and losers. A successful democratic political culture implies that the losing parties and their supporters accept the judgment of the voters, and allow for the peaceful transfer of power.

Participation is also a necessary component, as apathy and abstention are enemies of democracy. Even measures that focus predominantly on the processes of representative, liberal democracy include (although inadequately or insufficiently) some aspects of participation. In a democracy, government is only one element in a social fabric of many and varied institutions, political organisations, and associations. Citizens cannot be required to take part in the political process, and they are free to express their dissatisfaction by not participating. However, a healthy democracy requires the active, freely chosen participation of citizens in public life. Democracies flourish when citizens are willing to participate in public debate, elect representatives and join political parties. Without this broad, sustaining participation, democracy begins to wither and become the preserve of small, select groups.

At the same time, even our “thicker”, more inclusive and wider measure of democracy does not include other aspects--which some authors argue are also crucial components of democracy--such as levels of economic and social well being. Thus our Index respects the dominant tradition that holds that a variety of social and economic outcomes can be consistent with political democracy, which is a separate concept.



Methodology

The Economist Intelligence Unit's index of democracy, on a 0 to 10 scale, is based on the ratings for 60 indicators grouped in five categories: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. Each category has a rating on a 0 to 10 scale, and the overall index of democracy is the simple average of the five category indexes.

The category indexes are based on the sum of the indicator scores in the category, converted to a 0 to 10 scale. Adjustments to the category scores are made if countries do not score a 1 in the following critical areas for democracy:

1. whether national elections are free and fair
2. the security of voters
3. the influence of foreign powers on government
4. the capability of the civil service to implement policies.

If the scores for the first three questions are 0 (or 0.5), one point (0.5 point) is deducted from the index in the relevant category (either the electoral process and pluralism or the functioning of government). If the score for 4 is 0, one point is deducted from the functioning of government category index.

The index values are used to place countries within one of four types of regimes:

1. Full democracies--scores of 8-10
2. Flawed democracies--score of 6 to 7.9
3. Hybrid regimes--scores of 4 to 5.9
4. Authoritarian regimes--scores below 4

Threshold points for regime types depend on overall scores that are rounded to one decimal point.

Full democracies: Countries in which not only basic political freedoms and civil liberties are respected, but these will also tend to be underpinned by a political culture conducive to the flourishing of democracy. The functioning of government is satisfactory. Media are independent and diverse. There is an effective system of checks and balances. The judiciary is independent and judicial decisions are enforced. There are only limited problems in the functioning of democracy.

Flawed democracies: These countries also have free and fair elections and even if there are problems (such as infringements on media freedom), basic civil liberties will be respected. However, there are significant weaknesses in other aspects of democracy, including problems in governance, an underdeveloped political culture and low levels of political participation.

Hybrid regimes: Elections have substantial irregularities that often prevent them from being both free and fair. Government pressure on opposition parties and candidates may be common. Serious weaknesses are more prevalent than in flawed democracies--in political culture, functioning of government and political participation. Corruption tends to be widespread and



the rule of law is weak. Civil society is weak. Typically there is harassment of and pressure on journalists, and the judiciary is not independent.

Authoritarian regimes: In these states political pluralism is absent or heavily circumscribed. Many countries in this category are outright dictatorships. Some formal institutions of democracy may exist, but these have little substance. Elections, if they do occur, are not free and fair. There is disregard for abuses and infringements of civil liberties. Media are typically state-owned or controlled by groups connected to the ruling regime. There is repression of criticism of the government and pervasive censorship. There is no independent judiciary.

The scoring system

We use a combination of a dichotomous and a three-point scoring system for the 60 indicators. A dichotomous 1-0 scoring system (1 for a yes and 0 for a no answer) is not without problems, but it has several distinct advantages over more refined scoring scales (such as the often-used 1-5 or 1-7). For many indicators, the possibility of a 0.5 score is introduced, to capture 'grey areas' where a simple yes (1) or no (0) is problematic, with guidelines as to when that should be used. Thus for many indicators there is a three-point scoring system, which represents a compromise between simple dichotomous scoring and the use of finer scales.

The problems of 1-5 or 1-7 scoring scales are numerous. For most indicators under such a system, it is extremely difficult to define meaningful and comparable criteria or guidelines for each score. This can lead to arbitrary, spurious and non-comparable scorings. For example, a score of 2 for one country may be scored a 3 in another and so on. Or one expert might score an indicator for a particular country in a different way to another expert. This contravenes a basic principle of measurement, that of so-called *reliability*—the degree to which a measurement procedure produces the same measurements every time, regardless of who is performing it. Two- and three-point systems do not guarantee reliability, but make it more likely.

Second, comparability between indicator scores and aggregation into a multi-dimensional index appears more valid with a two or three-point scale for each indicator (the dimensions being aggregated are similar across indicators). By contrast, with a 1-5 system, the scores are more likely to mean different things across the indicators (for example a 2 for one indicator may be more comparable to a 3 or 4 for another indicator, rather than a 2 for that indicator). The problems of a 1-5 or 1-7 system are magnified when attempting to extend the index to many regions and countries.

Features of the Economist Intelligence Unit index

Public opinion surveys

A crucial, differentiating aspect of our measure is that in addition to experts' assessments we use, where available, public opinion surveys—mainly the World Values Survey. Indicators based on the surveys predominate heavily in the political participation and political culture categories, and a few are used in the civil liberties and functioning of government categories.

In addition to the World Values Survey, other sources that can be leveraged include the



Eurobarometer surveys, Gallup polls, Asian Barometer, Latin American Barometer, Afrobarometer and national surveys. In the case of countries for which survey results are missing, survey results for similar countries and expert assessment are used to fill in gaps.

Participation and voter turnout

After increasing for many decades, there has been a trend of decreasing voter turnout in most established democracies since the 1960s. Low turnout may be due to disenchantment, but it can also be a sign of contentment. Many, however, see low turnout as undesirable, and there is much debate over the factors that affect turnout and how to increase it.

A high turnout is generally seen as evidence of the legitimacy of the current system. Contrary to widespread belief, there is in fact a close correlation between turnout and overall measures of democracy—that is, developed, consolidated democracies have, with very few exceptions, higher turnout (generally above 70%) than less established democracies.

The legislative and executive branches

The appropriate balance between these is much-disputed in political theory. In our model the clear predominance of the legislature is rated positively as there is a very strong correlation between legislative dominance and measures of overall democracy.

The model

I Electoral process and pluralism

1. Are elections for the national legislature and head of government free?

Consider whether elections are competitive in that electors are free to vote and are offered a range of choices.

1: Essentially unrestricted conditions for the presentation of candidates (for example, no bans on major parties)

0.5: There are some restrictions on the electoral process

0: A single-party system or major impediments exist (for example, bans on a major party or candidate)

2. Are elections for the national legislature and head of government fair?

1: No major irregularities in the voting process

0.5: Significant irregularities occur (intimidation, fraud), but do not affect significantly the overall outcome

0: Major irregularities occur and affect the outcome

Score 0 if score for question 1 is 0.

3. Are municipal elections both free and fair?

1: Are free and fair

0.5: Are free but not fair

0: Are neither free nor fair

4. Is there universal suffrage for all adults?

Bar generally accepted exclusions (for example, non-nationals; criminals; members of armed



forces in some countries)

1: Yes

0: No

5. Can citizens cast their vote free of significant threats to their security from state or non-state bodies?

1: Yes

0: No

6. Do laws provide for broadly equal campaigning opportunities?

1: Yes

0.5: Yes formally, but in practice opportunities are limited for some candidates

0: No

7. Is the process of financing political parties transparent and generally accepted?

1: Yes

0.5: Not fully transparent

0: No

8. Following elections, are the constitutional mechanisms for the orderly transfer of power from one government to another clear, established and accepted?

1: All three criteria are fulfilled

0.5: Two of the three criteria are fulfilled

0: Only one or none of the criteria is satisfied

9. Are citizens free to form political parties that are independent of the government?

1: Yes

0.5: There are some restrictions

0: No

10. Do opposition parties have a realistic prospect of achieving government?

1: Yes

0.5: There is a dominant two-party system in which other political forces never have any effective chance of taking part in national government

0: No

11. Is potential access to public office open to all citizens?

1: Yes

0.5: Formally unrestricted, but in practice restricted for some groups, or for citizens from some parts of the country

0: No

12. Are citizens free to form political and civic organisations, free of state interference and surveillance?

1: Yes

0.5: Officially free, but subject to some restrictions or interference

0: No



II Functioning of government

13. Do freely elected representatives determine government policy?

1: Yes

0.5: Exercise some meaningful influence

0: No

14. Is the legislature the supreme political body, with a clear supremacy over other branches of government?

1: Yes

0: No

15. Is there an effective system of checks and balances on the exercise of government authority?

1: Yes

0.5: Yes, but there are some serious flaws

0: No

16. Government is free of undue influence by the military or the security services

1: Yes

0.5: Influence is low, but the defence minister is not a civilian. If the current risk of a military coup is extremely low, but the country has a recent history of military rule or coups

0: No

17. Foreign powers do not determine important government functions or policies

1: Yes

0.5: Some features of a protectorate

0: No (significant presence of foreign troops; important decisions taken by foreign power; country is a protectorate)

18. Special economic, religious or other powerful domestic groups do not exercise significant political power, parallel to democratic institutions?

1: Yes

0.5: Exercise some meaningful influence

0: No

19. Are sufficient mechanisms and institutions in place for assuring government accountability to the electorate in between elections?

1: Yes

0.5: Yes, but serious flaws exist

0: No

20. Does the government's authority extend over the full territory of the country?

1: Yes

0: No

21. Is the functioning of government open and transparent, with sufficient public access to information?



1: Yes

0.5: Yes, but serious flaws exist

0: No

22. How pervasive is corruption?

1: Corruption is not a major problem

0.5: Corruption is a significant issue

0: Pervasive corruption exists

23. Is the civil service willing and capable of implementing government policy?

1: Yes

0.5: Yes, but serious flaws exist

0: No

24. Popular perceptions of the extent to which they have free choice and control over their lives

1: High

0.5: Moderate

0: Low

If available, from World Values Survey

% of people who think that they have a great deal of choice/control

1 if more than 70%

0.5 if 50-70%

0 if less than 50%

25. Public confidence in government

1: High

0.5: Moderate

0: Low

If available, from World Values Survey

% of people who have a "great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in government

1 if more than 40%

0.5 if 25-40%

0 if less than 25%

26. Public confidence in political parties

1: High

0.5: Moderate

0: Low

If available, from World Values Survey

% of people who have a "great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence

1 if more than 40%

0.5 if 25-40%

0 if less than 25%



III Political participation

27. Voter participation/turn-out for national elections.

(average turnout in parliamentary elections since 2000. Turnout as proportion of population of voting age).

- 1 if consistently above 70%
- 0.5 if between 50% and 70%
- 0 if below 50%

If voting is obligatory, score 0. Score 0 if scores for questions 1 or 2 is 0.

28. Do ethnic, religious and other minorities have a reasonable degree of autonomy and voice in the political process?

- 1: Yes
- 0.5: Yes, but serious flaws exist
- 0: No

29. Women in parliament

% of members of parliament who are women

- 1 if more than 20% of seats
- 0.5 if 10-20%
- 0 if less than 10%

30. Extent of political participation. Membership of political parties and political non-governmental organisations.

- Score 1 if over 7% of population for either
- Score 0.5 if 4% to 7%
- Score 0 if under 4%.
- If participation is forced, score 0.

31. Citizens' engagement with politics

- 1: High
- 0.5: Moderate
- 0: Low

If available, from World Values Survey

% of people who are very or somewhat interested in politics

- 1 if over 60%
- 0.5 if 40% to 60%
- 0 if less than 40%

32. The preparedness of population to take part in lawful demonstrations.

- 1: High
- 0.5: Moderate
- 0: Low

If available, from World Values Survey



% of people who have taken part in or would consider attending lawful demonstrations

1 if over 40%

0.5 if 30% to 40%

0 if less than 30%

33. Adult literacy

1 if over 90%

0.5 if 70% to 90%

0 if less than 70%

34. Extent to which adult population shows an interest in and follows politics in the news.

1: High

0.5: Moderate

0: Low

If available, from World Values Survey

% of population that follows politics in the news media (print, TV or radio) every day

1 if over 50%

0.5 if 30% to 50%

0 if less than 30%

35. The authorities make a serious effort to promote political participation.

1: Yes

0.5: Some attempts

0: No

Consider the role of the education system, and other promotional efforts Consider measures to facilitate voting by members of the diaspora.

If participation is forced, score 0.

IV Democratic political culture

36. Is there a sufficient degree of societal consensus and cohesion to underpin a stable, functioning democracy?

1: Yes

0.5: Yes, but some serious doubts and risks

0: No

37. Perceptions of leadership; proportion of the population that desires a strong leader who bypasses parliament and elections.

1: Low

0.5: Moderate

0: High

If available, from World Values Survey

% of people who think it would be good or fairly good to have a strong leader who does not bother with parliament and elections



1 if less than 30%

0.5 if 30% to 50%

0 if more than 50%

38. Perceptions of military rule; proportion of the population that would prefer military

1: Low

0.5: Moderate

0: High

If available, from World Values Survey

% of people who think it would be very or fairly good to have army rule

1 if less than 10%

0.5 if 10% to 30%

0 if more than 30%

39. Perceptions of rule by experts or technocratic government; proportion of the population that would prefer rule by experts or technocrats.

1: Low

0.5: Moderate

0: High

If available, from World Values Survey

% of people who think it would be very or fairly good to have experts, not government, make decisions for the country

1 if less than 50%

0.5 if 50% to 70%

0 if more than 70%

40. Perception of democracy and public order; proportion of the population that believes that democracies are not good at maintaining public order.

1: Low

0.5: Moderate

0: High

If available, from World Values Survey

% of people who disagree with the view that democracies are not good at maintaining order

1 if more than 70%

0.5 if 50% to 70%

0 if less than 50%

Alternatively, % of people who think that punishing criminals is an essential characteristic of democracy

1 if more than 80%

0.5 if 60% to 80%

0 if less than 60%



41. Perception of democracy and the economic system; proportion of the population that believes that democracy benefits economic performance

If available, from World Values Survey

% of people who disagree with the view that the economic system runs badly in democracies

1 if more than 80%

0.5 if 60% to 80%

0 if less than 60%

42. Degree of popular support for democracy

1: High

0.5: Moderate

0: Low

If available, from World Values Survey

% of people who agree or strongly agree that democracy is better than any other form of government

1 if more than 90%

0.5 if 75% to 90%

0 if less than 75%

43. There is a strong tradition of the separation of church and state

1: Yes

0.5: Some residual influence of church on state

0: No

V Civil liberties

44. Is there a free electronic media?

1: Yes

0.5: Pluralistic, but state-controlled media are heavily favoured. One or two private owners dominate the media

0: No

45. Is there a free print media?

1: Yes

0.5: Pluralistic, but state-controlled media are heavily favoured. There is high degree of concentration of private ownership of national newspapers

0: No

46. Is there freedom of expression and protest (bar only generally accepted restrictions such as banning advocacy of violence)?

1: Yes

0.5: Minority view points are subject to some official harassment. Libel laws restrict heavily scope for free expression

0: No



47. Is media coverage robust? Is there open and free discussion of public issues, with a reasonable diversity of opinions?

1: Yes

0.5: There is formal freedom, but high degree of conformity of opinion, including through self-censorship, or discouragement of minority or marginal views

0: No

48. Are there political restrictions on access to the Internet?

1: No

0.5: Some moderate restrictions

0: Yes

49. Are citizens free to form professional organisations and trade unions?

1: Yes

0.5: Officially free, but subject to some restrictions

0: No

50. Do institutions provide citizens with the opportunity to successfully petition government to redress grievances?

1: Yes

0.5: Some opportunities

0: No

51. The use of torture by the state

1: Torture is not used

0: Torture is used

52. The degree to which the judiciary is independent of government influence.

Consider the views of international legal and judicial watchdogs. Have the courts ever issued an important judgement against the government, or a senior government official?

1: High

0.5: Moderate

0: Low

53. The degree of religious tolerance and freedom of religious expression.

Are all religions permitted to operate freely, or are some restricted? Is the right to worship permitted both publicly and privately? Do some religious groups feel intimidated by others, even if the law requires equality and protection?

1: High

0.5: Moderate

0: Low

54. The degree to which citizens are treated equally under the law.

Consider whether favoured members of groups are spared prosecution under the law.

1: High

0.5: Moderate



- 0: Low
55. Do citizens enjoy basic security?
- 1: Yes
- 0.5: Crime is so pervasive as to endanger security for large segments
- 0: No
56. Extent to which private property rights protected and private business is free from undue government influence
- 1: High
- 0.5: Moderate
- 0: Low
57. Extent to which citizens enjoy personal freedoms
Consider gender equality, right to travel, choice of work and study.
- 1: High
- 0.5: Moderate
- 0: Low
58. Popular perceptions on human rights protection; proportion of the population that think that basic human rights are well-protected.
- 1: High
- 0.5: Moderate
- 0: Low
- If available, from World Values Survey:
- % of people who think that human rights are respected in their country
- 1 if more than 70%
- 0.5 if 50% to 70%
- 0 if less than 50%
59. There is no significant discrimination on the basis of people's race, colour or creed.
- 1: Yes
- 0.5: Yes, but some significant exceptions
- 0: No
60. Extent to which the government invokes new risks and threats as an excuse for curbing civil liberties
- 1: Low
- 0.5: Moderate
- 0: High

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