DPI-413
Class 8:
Measuring Democracy
Structure of class

Summarize the key pros and cons of each approach to measuring democracy:

1. Freedom House
2. Polity IV
3. Przeworski et al

II. Prepare for the lab sessions/assignment 1
Required Reading


2. Haerpfer et al Democratization Chapter 3 pp24-40


Practical issues

- You are asked by the African Union to compare and assess the state of democratic governance in the region during the last decade.
- Which states are doing well? Which are falling back?
- *How would you conceptualize and define democratic governance?*
- *What criteria would you use to evaluate indices?*
- *How would you measure the contemporary state of democratic governance?*
I. What are the pros and cons of Freedom House's measure of liberal democracy?
Liberal Democracy

- Modern democratic states can be understood in practice as polyarchies
- Two concepts are important: Contestation and participation
- ‘Polyarchies’ can be identified by the presence of certain key political institutions:
  1) elected officials;
  2) free and fair elections;
  3) inclusive suffrage;
  4) the right to run for office;
  5) freedom of expression;
  6) alternative information; and
  7) associational autonomy
Dahl's Conceptual Logic

Liberal Democracy

Contestation
- Right to form parties
- Associational autonomy

Freedom of the press

Participation
- Right to vote
- Extent of suffrage
- Fairness of election

Fairness of election
Table 3
Existing Data Sets on Democracy: An Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Index</th>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Components of Attributes</th>
<th>Measurement Level</th>
<th>Aggregation Rule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arendt (1991)</td>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Executive selection, Legislative effectiveness, Competitiveness of the administration process</td>
<td>Ordinal</td>
<td>Additive, at the level of components</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inclusiveness, Competitiveness</td>
<td>Ordinal</td>
<td>Combined additive and multiplicative, at the level of attributes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Party legitimacy, Party competitiveness</td>
<td>Ordinal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copeland &amp; Ruback (Polyarchy, 1991)</td>
<td>Contestation</td>
<td>Free and fair elections, Freedom of organization, Freedom of expression, Pluralism in the media</td>
<td>Ordinal</td>
<td>Guttman scale (hierarchical), at the level of components</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom House (Ryan, 1994)</td>
<td>Political rights, Civil rights</td>
<td>9 components</td>
<td>Ordinal</td>
<td>Additive, at the level of components</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gassersfeld &amp; Polity (U.S. 1966)</td>
<td>Competitiveness, Inclusiveness, Civil and political liberties</td>
<td>Ordinal with residual category +</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadenius (1992)</td>
<td>Elections</td>
<td>Suffrage, Electoral offices, Meaningful elections, Freedom of organization, Freedom of expression, Freedom from coercion</td>
<td>Ordinal</td>
<td>Combined additive and multiplicative (of weighted scores), at the level of components</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polity IV (Marshall &amp; Jaggers, 2001a)</td>
<td>Competitiveness of participation, Regulation of participation, Competitiveness of executive recruitment, Openness of executive recruitment, Constraints on executive recruitment</td>
<td>Ordinal</td>
<td>Additive (of weighted scores)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanhanen (2000a)</td>
<td>Competition, Participation</td>
<td>Interval</td>
<td>Interval</td>
<td>Multiplicative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Freedom House

- **Mission Statement**
  - Freedom House is an independent nongovernmental organization that supports the expansion of freedom in the world. Freedom is possible only in democratic political systems in which the governments are accountable to their own people; the rule of law prevails; and freedoms of expression, association, and belief, as well as respect for the rights of minorities and women, are guaranteed.
  - Freedom ultimately depends on the actions of committed and courageous men and women. We support nonviolent civic initiatives in societies where freedom is denied or under threat and we stand in opposition to ideas and forces that challenge the right of all people to be free. Freedom House functions as a catalyst for freedom, democracy and the rule of law through its analysis, advocacy and action.
  - Founded 1942 in NY, based in Washington DC
Freedom House Measure

- Annual Index since 1972
- Political Rights and Civil Liberties
- Scale from 1 (most free) to 7 (least free).
- Nations worldwide classified as...
  - Free (1 to 2.5) (established democracies)
  - Partly free (3 to 5.5) (consolidating democracies)
  - Not free (5.5 to 7) (non-democracies)
F.H. Checklist of Political Rights

1. Is the head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections?
2. Are the national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?
3. Are the electoral laws and framework fair?
4. Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system open to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?
5. Is there a significant opposition vote and a realistic possibility for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections?
6. Are the people’s political choices free from domination by the military, foreign powers, totalitarian parties, religious hierarchies, economic oligarchies, or any other powerful group?
7. Do cultural, ethnic, religious, or other minority groups have full political rights and electoral opportunities?
8. Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government?
9. Is the government free from pervasive corruption?
10. Is the government accountable to the electorate between elections, and does it operate with openness and transparency?
F.H. Checklist of Civil Liberties

1. Are there free and independent media and other forms of cultural expression?
2. Are religious institutions and communities free to practice their faith and express themselves in public and private?
3. Is there academic freedom and is the educational system free of extensive political indoctrination?
4. Is there open and free private discussion?
5. Is there freedom of assembly, demonstration, and open public discussion?
6. Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations? (Note: This includes civic organizations, interest groups, foundations, etc.)
7. Are there free trade unions and peasant organizations or equivalents, and is there effective collective bargaining? Are there free professional and other private organizations?
8. Is there an independent judiciary?
9. Does the rule of law prevail in civil and criminal matters? Are police under direct civilian control?
10. Is there protection from political terror, unjustified imprisonment, exile, or torture, whether by groups that support or oppose the system? Is there freedom from war and insurgencies?
11. Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population?
12. Does the state control travel or choice of residence, employment, or institution of higher education?
13. Do citizens have the right to own property and establish private businesses? Is private business activity unduly influenced by government officials, the security forces, political parties/organizations, or organized crime?
14. Are there personal social freedoms, including gender equality, choice of marriage partners, and size of family?
15. Is there equality of opportunity and the absence of economic exploitation?
Trends in democracy, FH

Source: Freedom around the World www.freedomhouse.org
## Correlates with other indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Freedom House 7-pt Rating (reversed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vanhanen Index of Democratization</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>3006</td>
<td>.730(**).000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polity Combined 20-pt score</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>4382</td>
<td>.904(**).000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheibub Type of Regime</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>5076</td>
<td>.826(**).000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pros and cons?
Advantages of FH Measure?

1. Allows global comparison of nation states and independent territories
2. Time-series analysis: 1972-date
3. Quantifiable yardstick of political development
4. Continuous measure not a simple dichotomy
5. Commonly used in research, so facilitates replicability across different studies
6. In practice the scale is strongly correlated with other common measures of democratization
Disadvantages of FH Measure?

1. Reliability/subjectivity of evaluations?
2. Indicators or evaluations reflect US/Western values?
3. Consistency of evaluations across time and place?
4. Limitations of information sources in some states
5. ‘Floor’ and ‘ceiling’ effects: compressed scale?
6. Excludes economic dimension (?)
7. Excludes direct democracy
8. Single indicator is less useful for policy evaluation
2. What are the pros and cons of Polity's measure of liberal democracy?
Measurement: Polity IV

- Long time-series (1800-2006) annual observations
- Academic standard especially in IR
Polity IV Concepts

- Democracy reflects three essential elements:
  - The presence of institutions and procedures through which citizens can express preferences about alternative policies and leaders;
  - The existence of institutionalized constraints on the power of the executive; and
  - The guarantee of civil liberties to all citizens (although not actually measured).
Polity IV measurement

- The dataset constructs a ten-point democracy scale by coding
- The *competitiveness of political participation* (1-3),
- The *competitiveness of executive recruitment* (1-2),
- The *openness of executive recruitment* (1), and
- The *constraints on the chief executive* (1-4).
- Autocracy is measured by negative versions of the same indices.
- The two scales are combined into a single democracy-autocracy score varying from -10 to +10.
Polity IV classification

- The existence or absence of institutional features of the nation state.
- **Competitive executive recruitment** is measured by leadership selection through popular elections contested by two or more parties or candidates.
- **The openness of recruitment** for the chief executive is measured by the opportunity for all citizens to have the opportunity to attain the position through a regularized process, excluding hereditary succession, forceful seizure of power, or military coups.
- By contrast, **autocracies** are seen as regimes which restrict or suppress competitive political participation, in which the chief executive is chosen from within the political elite, and, once in office, leaders face few institutional constraints on their power.
Polity IV

Figure 3.4: Trends in Polity IV measure of Constitutional Democracy, 1800-2000

Pros and cons?
3. What are the pros and cons of Przeworski et al's dichotomous measure of electoral democracy?
3. Electoral democracy

- Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, socialism and democracy*
- Procedural minimalist definition
- "The democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote"
- *Multiparty elections at regular intervals*
- *Citizens select leaders*
- *Pros and cons of this notion?*
- *How would you measure it?*
Measured by Przeworski/Cheibub

- Adam Przeworski et al *Democracy and development* (CUP 2000)
- Jose Cheibub *Presidentialism, Parliamentarism and Democracy* (CUP 2007)
- Minimalist
  - Dichotomous classification democratic v. autocratic regime, not a continuous scale
  - Criteria
    - Contestation
      - Regimes that allow some regularized competition among conflicting visions and interests
      - Regimes in which some values or interests enjoy a monopoly buttressed by threat or the actual use of force
Operationalization

- “Democracy is a regime in which government offices are filled by contested elections.” p19
- “Democracy is a system in which incumbents lose elections and leave office when the rules dictate.” p54.
- All other regimes are not democratic.
Rules

1. Chief executive must be elected directly or indirectly
2. The lower house of the legislature must be elected
3. There must be more than one party
4. (If pass above) and if incumbents subsequently held, but never lost elections, regimes are authoritarian.
   - Cases of Singapore, Botswana, Japan, Kenya, Mexico??

- Contestation rules:
  - **Ex-ante uncertainty** (probability that at least one member of incumbent coalition will lose)
  - **Ex-post irreversibility** (whoever wins election will be allowed to assume office)
  - **Repeatability** (temporary outcomes)
Minimalist exclusions

- No social or economic aspects included
- No measure of accountability, responsibility, responsiveness or representation
- No measure of freedom, liberties or human rights
- No measure of participation eg franchise
- No reference to civil-military relations

• Advantages and disadvantages of this approach?
Figure 3.1: Trends in Cheibub and Gandhi’s classification of regime types, 1945-2002

Key questions?

• **How would you assess the strengths and weaknesses of the normative concepts** of electoral democracy, liberal democracy, deliberative democracy and good governance?

• **Which of these concepts would you use to measure the quality of governance in your home region**, for example, working in a UN agency, a national NGO, as a journalist, as an official for a bilateral donor, or as an academic analyst?

• **How would you justify your choice of concepts and measures to a diplomatic official from, say, ASEAN, the African Union, or the UN?**
Pros and cons?
Pros and cons?

**Validity?**
- Reflects basic commonsense notions of democracy
- Excludes too much?
- No notion of freedom of speech or assembly, civil liberties, political rights, human rights, common good, regime structure, quality of governance, policy outputs?

**Reliability?**
- Institutional criteria (elections) can be observed and verified
- Are there multiparty competitive elections for national office?
- Yet what counts as a genuine ‘competitive struggle’?
  - Electoral autocracy?
- Potential measurement error through misclassification
Next class

- Governance
- Jan Teorell guest lecture Measuring bureaucratic governance
PREPARATION FOR LAB SESSION AND ASSIGNMENT #1

• Download copies of:

(i) An empty report template in Word 2010 which you may want to edit for your first assignment;

(ii) A few examples (A, B and C) of student reports (defined slightly differently) from previous years; and

(iii) Guides to using Stata and SPSS with the QoG datasets.

(iv) An Excel spreadsheet lists all the variables in the QoG codebook in thematic order.

(v) Look online at the QoG website and download the Codebook

Read these materials prior to the first lab sessions.

(vi) The list of lab participants signed up for each session is available online.
www.qog.pol.gu.se/

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QUALITY OF GOVERNMENT

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Our research addresses the questions of how to create and maintain high quality government institutions and how the quality of such institutions influences policy in a broader sense. While Quality of Government is our common intellectual focal point, we apply a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives in our various studies.

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