



Saudi Arabia:

A Country Report Based on Data 1900-2012

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About V-Dem

Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) is a new approach to conceptualizing and measuring democracy. What makes V-Dem different from extant democracy indices is the *multidimensional* and *disaggregated* approach, where the complexity of the concept of democracy is acknowledged. The V-Dem project distinguishes among five high-level *Principles* of Democracy:

Electoral, Liberal, Participatory, Deliberative, and Egalitarian.

The V-Dem Institute Database:

- Disaggregates into 27 of lower-level *Components* of Democracy such as regular elections, judicial independence, direct democracy, and gender equality, and provides 329 distinct and precise indicators for these components and beyond.
- Covers all countries (and some dependent territories) from 1900 to the present, whenever possible, and provides an estimate of measurement reliability for each rating.
- Makes all ratings public, free of charge, in a user-friendly interface.

With four Principal Investigators (PIs), two Project Coordinators (PCs), fifteen Project Managers (PMs) with special responsibility for issue areas, more than thirty Regional Managers (RMs), almost 200 Country Coordinators (CCs), several Research Assistants (RAs), and approximately 3,000 Country Experts (CEs), the V-Dem project is one of the largest social science data collection projects focusing on research).

The resulting infrastructure with over 15 million data is already the largest of its kind, and makes highly detailed, nuanced analysis of virtually all aspects of democracy in a country possible, while also allowing for summary comparisons between countries based on aggregated indices for different dimensions of democracy.

Users from anywhere are currently able to use sophisticated but intuitive and accessible online analysis tools. Governments, development agencies, and NGOs can benefit from the nuanced comparative and historical data when informing critical decisions such as aid allocation, conferring and/or withholding international legitimacy upon regimes, selecting country program priorities, informing program designs and monitoring impact of their programs.

For further details and information, see <http://v-dem.net>.

Introduction

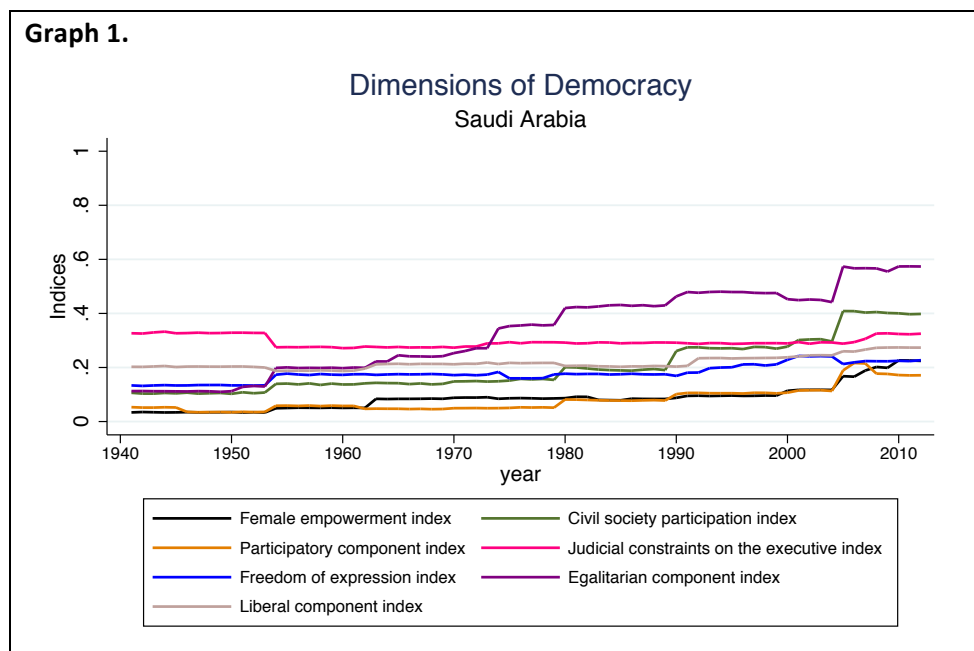
Saudi Arabia's regime is commonly criticized by a number of human rights organizations for failing to meet various democratic norms. The country has been accused of gross violations of women's rights, media oppression, implementing judicial corporal and capital punishment, failing to organize direct national elections for any public offices etc.

The V-Dem dataset, which contains various components measuring different aspects of democracy and human rights (HR), makes a detailed and nuanced picture of Saudi Arabia's historical development possible.

1. General Development of Different Democracy Dimensions

In Graph 1, the development in Saudi Arabia over the past 70 years is depicted with seven indices for different aspects of democracy and HR: *liberal, participatory, and egalitarian dimensions, as well as indices for more specific components like freedom of expression, civil society participation, judicial constraints on the executive, and female empowerment*¹. All indices vary from 0 to 1, where a score of 0 suggests that a country has completely failed to achieve the aspect of democracy or HR.

With the exception of the egalitarian component, which crosses the middle of the scale after 2005, Saudi Arabia's scores do not ever reach over .3 on any of the indices and values range mostly from 0 to .2, implying very low levels of inclusion of women in political power, limited protection of individual and minority rights, very restricted participation by citizens in all political processes, and extremely limited dialogue in political decision making.



Overall, a modest positive development can be noted in all indicators, although hardly any improvement can be observed when looking at the indices for the *liberal dimension* and for *freedom of expression* in particular. The component measuring the *judicial constraints on the executive* is even slightly lower in 2010 than it was in the 1940s. The most positive development seems to have taken

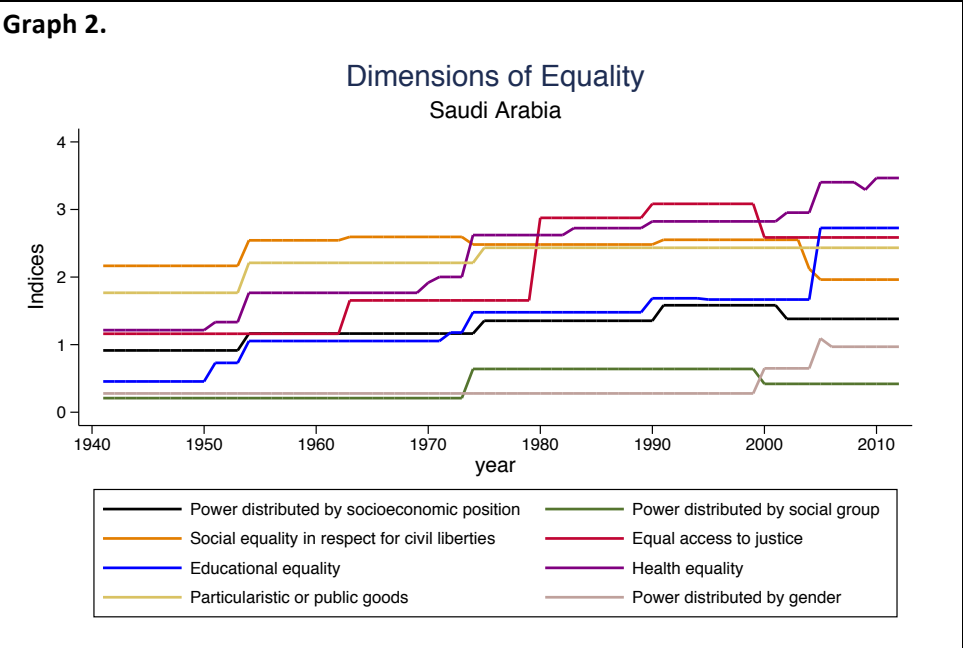
¹ The exact question formulation and answers of each indicator used can be found in the Appendix. Since Saudi Arabia has never held direct elections for national offices and suffrage in local elections is highly restricted, the electoral principle of democracy is not included in the graph.

place in the *egalitarian dimension* and in the *civil society participation*. The *participatory dimension* and the *Female empowerment index* display some very modest improvements after 2005.

2. Dimensions of Equality

The *Egalitarian index* showed the largest positive development in Graph 1 and one may be interested in what specific indicators is driving this change.

Graph 2 demonstrates that several indicators included in the egalitarian index are causing this result. Unequal political influence due to *health equality* has improved gradually whereas *educational equality* made the greatest improvement around 2005. It is of importance to emphasize that even though the health indicator is showing the most impressive development of the included indicators, in 2010 it still only reaches a score of 3, meaning that basic health care overall is equal in quality but because of poor-quality healthcare, five to ten percent (%) of citizens’ ability to exercise their rights as adult citizens is undermined.



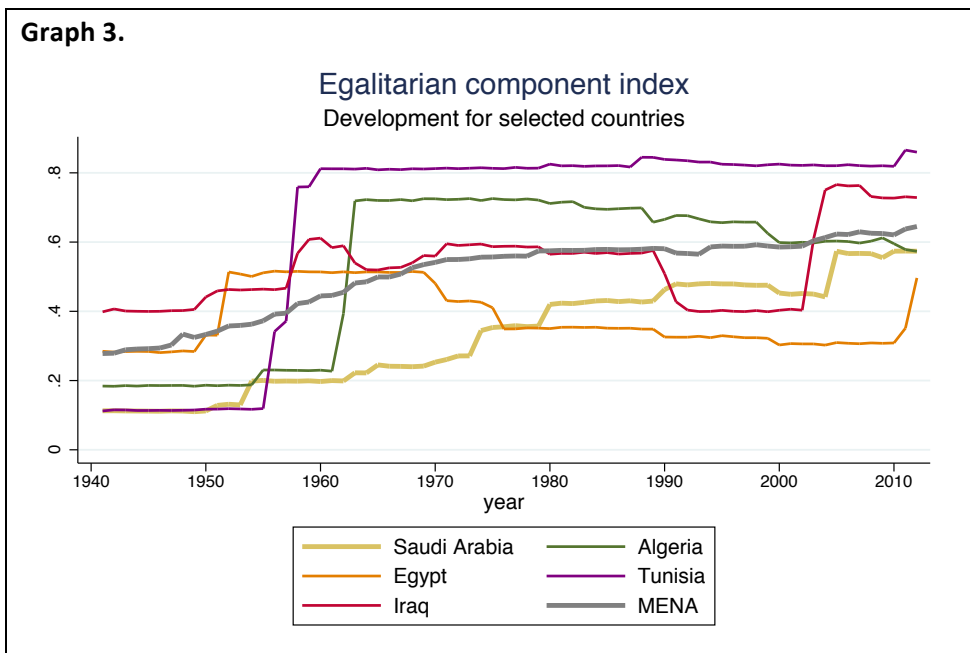
The indicator for how well *civil liberties are respected regardless of social group*, and the indicator of equal access to justice, however, display significant negative trends from 2005 and 2000 respectively. This indicates a hardening climate in Saudi Arabia, where members of certain groups enjoy much fewer civil liberties than the general population – which is low to begin with.

Power distributed by gender, Power distributed by socioeconomic position as well as *Power distributed by social group* have, according to the graph, not changed notably over the last 70 years, which is a well-known fact that men, and among them certain social and socioeconomic groups enjoy virtual monopoly on political power.

3. Regional Comparison

To get a more informed picture of the development in Saudi Arabia, we compare the country's progress to that of a few other states from the MENA² region (Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia and Iraq), as well as the average for MENA as a whole. Graphs 4 and 5 present the development of the *egalitarian dimension index* and the *female empowerment index*, respectively.

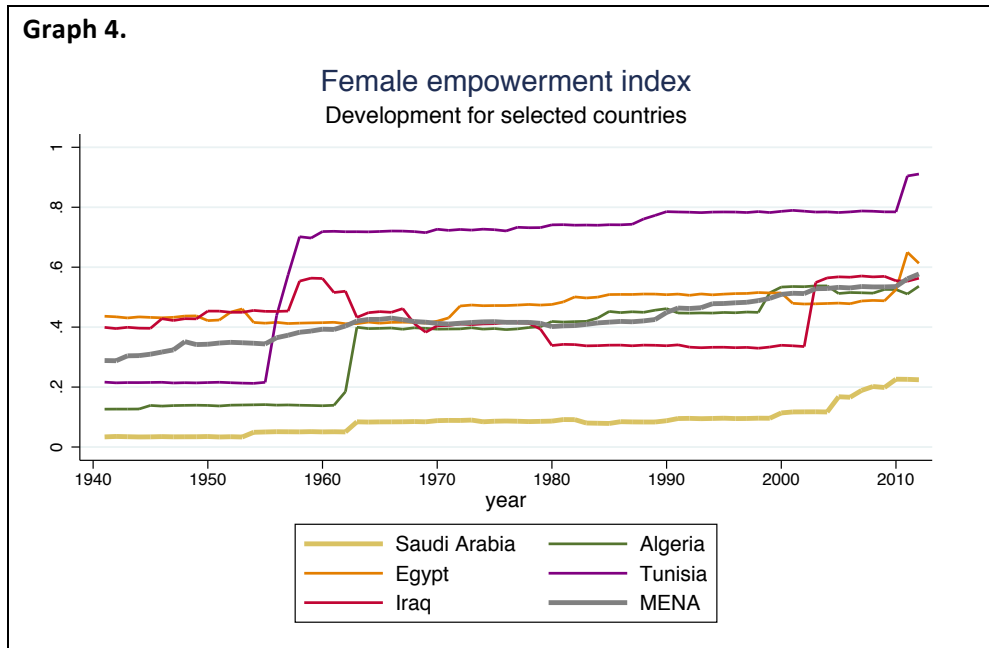
Saudi Arabia is performing worse than the regional average on both indices but it nonetheless follows the developmental trends in the region in terms of the egalitarian index. It is now on level with Algeria in this respect, and better than Egypt even after the revolution. Historically, it is also interesting to note that after independence, Saudi Arabia acted very different from Tunisia, Algeria, and to some extent Egypt and Iraq all whom achieved significant increase in the levels of equality in the 1950s and 1960s.



The gap between Saudi Arabia and the other MENA countries is, as expected, radically different with regards to the *female empowerment index*. Displayed in Graph 4, it measures the extent to which women are politically empowered. The overall scores for this component are low across the region. Only Tunisia crosses the middle of the scale and it did so already in the 1950s, demonstrating one possible reason to why Tunisia has achieved different results with the Arab Spring than other countries in the region.

² Countries included in the current analysis in MENA region are Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine (British Mandate, Gaza and West Bank), Qatar, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, and Yemen.

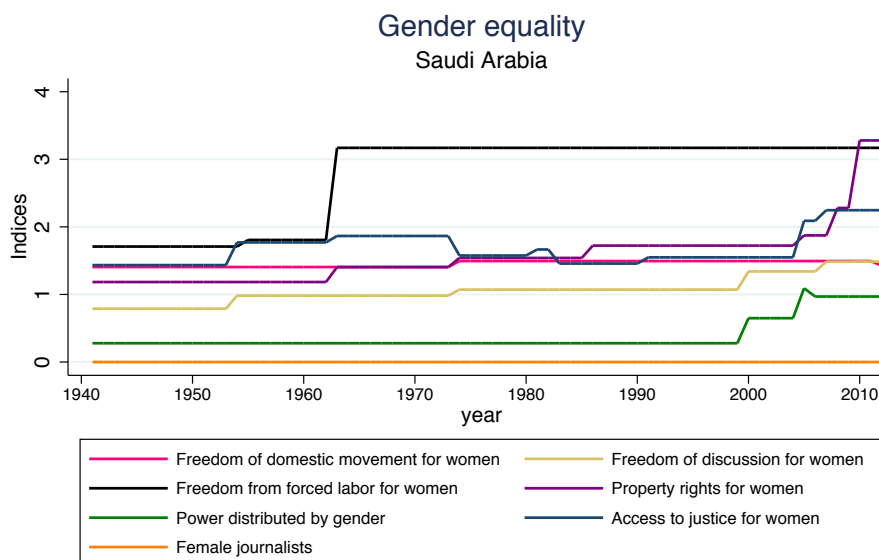
Graph 4.



Saudi Arabia's score on this index is lowest in the region (and among the lowest in the world) ranging from 0 to 0.1 for most of the period suggesting that men have had a monopoly on political power. An upward, yet very modest, trend can be noted starting from 2000 but this still means a near-total domination of power by men.

The nature of the V-Dem data allows one to drill down into the specific indicators of this (and any) index. Graph 5 displays six indicators included in the *female empowerment index*.

Graph 5.



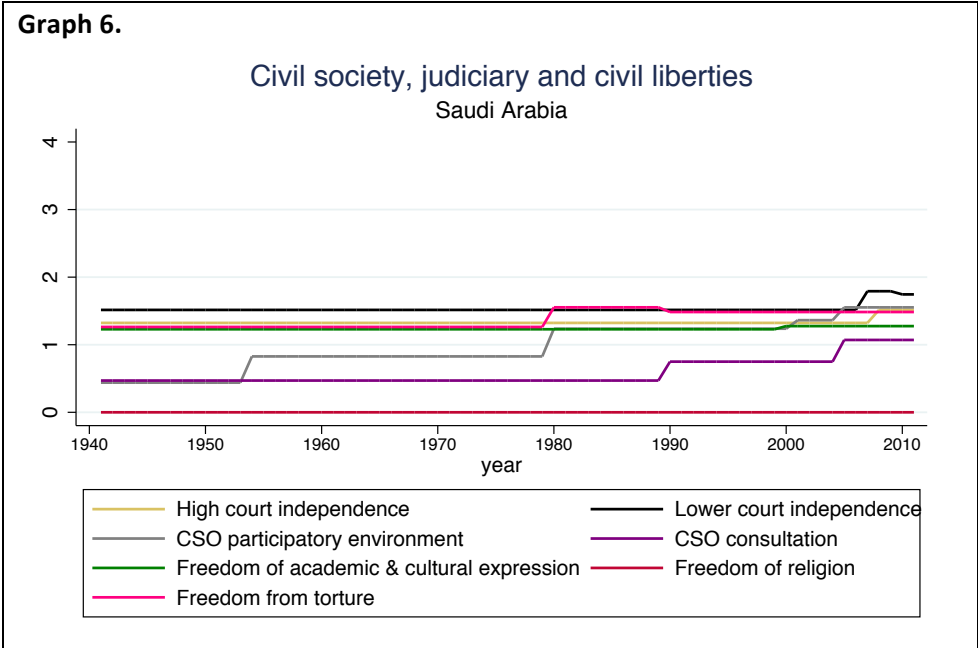
While women's property rights have recently improved significantly, and women-citizens are generally not subjected to forced labor by the state, the graph indicates that men have a near-monopoly on political power and this is the most severe discrimination against women in Saudi Arabia. Almost equally discriminatory, women's freedom of domestic movement is highly restricted, their freedom of discussion is generally not respected, and finally, women do not enjoy secure and effective access to justice although the latter has improved somewhat since around 2005. In

conclusion, the only aspects of women’s political power that has changed substantially so far, regards relatively “non-political” rights like property rights and access to justice. Those are the ones that have driven a slight increase in the female empowerment index discussed above.

4. Inspecting Critical Components

It is generally recognized in the international community that civil liberties are fundamental freedoms; that the rule of law requires an independent judiciary; and that an active civil society is important for good governance. In this report’s final Graph 6, a series of indicators (there are many more) for these areas are displayed.

For Saudi Arabia, none of the indicators reaches a score above 2 on the 0 to 4 scale, indicating serious deficits across-the-board in these critical areas. For example, the low score for *CSO participatory environment* indicates that diverse CSOs may exist but few people are active in them, and that the organizations are only to some degree consulted by policymakers. The scores signify that *academic freedom* and *freedom of cultural expression* are practiced occasionally, but direct criticism of the government is most of the time met with repression.



Graph 6 also indicates that about half of the time the high and lower courts makes decisions that merely reflect government wishes regardless its sincere view of the legal record. Torture is practiced semi-occasionally and although not always approved by top governmental leaders, they do not actively work to prevent it. Finally, we can see that *freedom of religion* is nil and any kinds of religious practice is controlled by the government.

Conclusion

This brief overview of some of the most important areas of democracy and HR in Saudi Arabia shows the advantages of a highly detailed and nuanced set of indicators for various aspects that can be quickly compared both over time and between countries. There are some aspects of the political development in Saudi Arabia that merit mentioning. A foundation for egalitarian access to political power has been laid that in the future may prove to be important if, and if so when, the country makes advances on fundamental political rights. Women's rights have also improved albeit only marginally, very slowly, and from extremely low levels.

At the same time, we note that in most areas of democratic and human rights, Saudi Arabia remains one of the most autocratic regimes in the world. With V-Dem data, this can be shown with indicators from a wide range of areas, from civil liberties to the rule of law, as well as civil society and not the least, the male monopoly of political power.

Appendix

Indicators included in Graph 1.

Female empowerment Index

Question: How politically empowered are women?

Clarifications: Political empowerment is understood to include open discussion of political issues, participation in civil society organizations, freedom of movement, the right to private property, access to justice, freedom from forced labor, representation in the ranks of journalists, and an equal share in the overall distribution of power.

Aggregation: The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for CSO women's participation (v2csgender), female journalists (v2mefemjrn), freedom of domestic movement for women (v2cldmovew), freedom of discussion for women (v2cldiscw), freedom from forced labor for women (v2clslavew), property rights for women (v2clprptyw), access to justice for women (v2clacjstw), and power distributed by gender (v2pepwrgen).

Civil society participation Index

Question: Are major CSOs routinely consulted by policymaker; how large is the involvement of people in CSOs; are women prevented from participating; and is legislative candidate nomination within party organization highly decentralized or made through party primaries?

Clarifications: The sphere of civil society lies in the public space between the private sphere and the state. Here, citizens organize in groups to pursue their collective interests and ideals. We call these groups civil society organizations (CSOs). CSOs include, but are by no means limited to, interest groups, labor unions, spiritual organizations (if they are engaged in civic or political activities), social movements, professional associations, charities, and other non-governmental organizations.

The core civil society index (CCSI) is designed to provide a measure of a robust civil society, understood as one that enjoys autonomy from the state and in which citizens freely and actively pursue their political and civic goals, however conceived.

Aggregation: The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for candidate selection – national/local (v2pscnslnl), CSO consultation (v2cscnsult), CSO participatory environment (v2csprtcpt), and CSO women's participation (v2csgender).

Participatory component Index

Question: To what extent is the participatory principle achieved?

Clarification: The participatory principle of democracy emphasizes active participation by citizens in all political processes, electoral and non-electoral. It is motivated by uneasiness about a bedrock practice of electoral democracy: delegating authority to representatives. Thus, direct rule by citizens is preferred, wherever practicable. This model of democracy thus takes suffrage for granted, emphasizing engagement in civil society organizations, direct democracy, and subnational elected bodies.

Aggregation: This index is formed by averaging the following indices: civil society participation (v2x_iccpart), direct popular vote (v2xdd_dd), elected local government power (v2xel_locelec), and elected regional government power (v2xel_regelec).

Judicial constraints on the executive Index

Question: To what extent does the executive respect the constitution and comply with court rulings, and to what extent is the judiciary able to act in an independent fashion?

Aggregation: The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for executive respects constitution (v2exrescon), compliance with

judiciary (v2jucomp), compliance with high court (v2juhccomp), high court independence (v2juhcind), and lower court independence (v2juncind).

Freedom of expression Index

Question: To what extent does government respect press & media freedom, the freedom of ordinary people to discuss political matters at home and in the public sphere, as well as the freedom of academic and cultural expression?

Aggregation: The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for print/broadcast censorship effort (v2mecenefm), internet censorship effort (v2mecenefi), harassment of journalists (v2meharjrn), media self-censorship (v2meslfcen), freedom of discussion for men/women (v2cldiscm, v2cldiscw) and freedom of academic and cultural expression (v2clacfree).

Egalitarian component Index

Question: To what extent is the egalitarian principle achieved?

Clarifications: The egalitarian principle of democracy addresses the distribution of political power across social groups, i.e., groups defined by class, sex, religion, and ethnicity. This perspective on democracy emphasizes that a formal guarantee of political rights and civil liberties are not always sufficient for political equality. Ideally, all social groups should have approximately equal participation, representation, agenda-setting power, protection under the law, and influence over policymaking and policy implementation. If such equality does not exist, the state ought to seek to redistribute socio-economic resources, education, and health so as to enhance political equality.

Aggregation: The index is formed by point estimates drawn from a Bayesian factor analysis model including indicators of power distribution according to socioeconomic position (v2pepwrses), power distribution according to social group (v2pepwrsoc), social group equality in respect for civil liberties (v2clsocgrp), equal access to justice (v2clacjust), equal access to education (v2peedueq), equal access to health (v2pehealth), power distribution according to gender (v2pepwrgen), share of budget allocated to public/common goods (v2dlencmps), and the share of welfare programs that provide universal rather than means-tested benefits (v2dlunivl).

Liberal component Index

Question: To what extent is the liberal principle of democracy achieved?

Clarification: The liberal principle of democracy emphasizes the importance of protecting individual and minority rights against the tyranny of the state and the tyranny of the majority. The liberal model takes a “negative” view of political power insofar as it judges the quality of democracy by the limits placed on government. This is achieved by constitutionally protected civil liberties, strong rule of law, an independent judiciary, and effective checks and balances that, together, limit the exercise of executive power.

Aggregation: This index is formed by averaging the following indices: equality before the law and individual liberties (v2xcl_rol), judicial constraints on the executive (v2x_jucon), and legislative constraints on the executive (v2xlg_legcon).

Indicators included in Graph 2.

Power distributed by socioeconomic position

Question: Is political power distributed according to socioeconomic position?

Clarification: All societies are characterized by some degree of economic (wealth and income) inequality. In some societies, income and wealth are distributed in a grossly unequal fashion. In others, the difference between rich and poor is not so great. Here, we are concerned not with the degree of social inequality but rather with the political effects of this inequality. Specifically, we are concerned with the extent to which wealth and income translates into political power.

Responses:

- 0: Wealthy people enjoy a virtual monopoly on political power. Average and poorer people have almost no influence.
- 1: Wealthy people enjoy a dominant hold on political power. People of average income have little say. Poorer people have essentially no influence.
- 2: Wealthy people have a very strong hold on political power. People of average or poorer income have some degree of influence but only on issues that matter less for wealthy people.
- 3: Wealthy people have more political power than others. But people of average income have almost as much influence and poor people also have a significant degree of political power.
- 4: Wealthy people have no more political power than those whose economic status is average or poor. Political power is more or less equally distributed across economic groups.

Social group equality in respect for civil liberties

Question: Do all social groups, as distinguished by language, ethnicity, religion, race, region, or caste, enjoy the same level of civil liberties, or are some groups generally in a more favorable position?

Clarification: Here, civil liberties are understood to include access to justice, private property rights, freedom of movement, and freedom from forced labor.

Responses:

- 0: Members of some social groups enjoy much fewer civil liberties than the general population.
- 1: Members of some social groups enjoy substantially fewer civil liberties than the general population.
- 2: Members of some social groups enjoy moderately fewer civil liberties than the general population.
- 3: Members of some social groups enjoy slightly fewer civil liberties than the general population.
- 4: Members of all salient social groups enjoy the same level of civil liberties.

Educational equality

Question: To what extent is high quality basic education guaranteed to all, sufficient to enable them to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens?

Clarification: Basic education refers to ages typically between 6 and 16 years of age but this varies slightly among countries.

Responses:

- 0: Extreme. Provision of high quality basic education is extremely unequal and at least 75 percent (%) of children receive such low-quality education that undermines their ability to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens.
- 1: Unequal. Provision of high quality basic education is extremely unequal and at least 25 percent (%) of children receive such low-quality education that undermines their ability to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens.
- 2: Somewhat equal. Basic education is relatively equal in quality but ten to 25 percent (%) of children receive such low-quality education that undermines their ability to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens.
- 3: Relatively equal. Basic education is overall equal in quality but five to ten percent (%) of children receive such low-quality education that probably undermines their ability to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens.
- 4: Equal. Basic education is equal in quality and less than five percent (%) of children receive such low-quality education that probably undermines their ability to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens.

Particularistic or public goods

Question: Considering the profile of social and infrastructural spending in the national budget, how “particularistic” or “public goods” are most expenditures?

Clarification: Particularistic spending is narrowly targeted on a specific corporation, sector, social group, region, party, or set of constituents. Such spending may be referred to as “pork,” “clientelistic,” or “private goods.”

Public-goods spending is intended to benefit all communities within a society, though it may be means-tested so as to target poor, needy, or otherwise underprivileged constituents. The key point is that all who satisfy the means-test are allowed to receive the benefit.

Your answer should consider the entire budget of social and infrastructural spending. We are interested in the relative value of particularistic and public-goods spending, not the number of bills or programs that fall into either category.

Responses:

- 0: Almost all of the social and infrastructure expenditures are particularistic.
- 1: Most social and infrastructure expenditures are particularistic, but a significant portion (e.g. $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$) is public-goods.
- 2: Social and infrastructure expenditures are evenly divided between particularistic and public-goods programs.
- 3: Most social and infrastructure expenditures are public-goods but a significant portion (e.g., $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$) is particularistic.
- 4: Almost all social and infrastructure expenditures are public-goods in character. Only a small portion is particularistic.

Power distributed by social group

Question: Is political power distributed according to social groups?

Clarification: A social group is differentiated within a country by caste, ethnicity, language, race, region, religion, or some combination thereof. (It does *not* include identities grounded in sexual orientation or socioeconomic status.) Social group identity is contextually defined and is likely to vary across countries and through time. Social group identities are also likely to cross-cut, so that a given person could be defined in multiple ways, i.e., as part of multiple groups. Nonetheless, at any given point in time there are social groups within a society that are understood - by those residing within that society – to be different, in ways that may be politically relevant.

Responses:

- 0: Political power is monopolized by one social group comprising a minority of the population. This monopoly is institutionalized, i.e., not subject to frequent change.
- 1: Political power is monopolized by several social groups comprising a minority of the population. This monopoly is institutionalized, i.e., not subject to frequent change.
- 2: Political power is monopolized by several social groups comprising a majority of the population. This monopoly is institutionalized, i.e., not subject to frequent change.
- 3: Either all social groups possess some political power, with some groups having more power than others; or different social groups alternate in power, with one group controlling much of the political power for a period of time, followed by another – but all significant groups have a turn at the seat of power.
- 4: All social groups have roughly equal political power *or* there are no strong ethnic, caste, linguistic, racial, religious, or regional differences to speak of. Social group characteristics are not relevant to politics.

Access to justice

Question: Do citizens enjoy secure and effective access to justice?

Aggregation: Average (mean) of indicators focused on access to justice for men (v2clacjstm) and women (v2clacjstw).

Responses:

- 0: Secure and effective access to justice is non-existent.
- 1: Secure and effective access to justice is usually not established or widely respected.
- 2: Secure and effective access to justice is inconsistently observed. Minor problems characterize most cases or occur rather unevenly across different parts of the country.
- 3: Secure and effective access to justice is usually observed.
- 4: Secure and effective access to justice is almost always observed.

Health equality

Question: To what extent is high quality basic healthcare guaranteed to all, sufficient to enable them to exercise their basic political rights as adult citizens?

Clarification: Poor-quality healthcare can make citizens unable to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens by failing to adequately treat preventable and treatable illnesses that render them unable to work, participate in social or political organizations, or vote (where voting is allowed).

Responses:

- 0: Extreme. Because of poor-quality healthcare, at least 75 percent (%) of citizens' ability to exercise their political rights as adult citizens is undermined.
- 1: Unequal. Because of poor-quality healthcare, at least 25 percent (%) of citizens' ability to exercise their political rights as adult citizens is undermined.
- 2: Somewhat equal. Because of poor-quality healthcare, ten to 25 percent (%) of citizens' ability to exercise their political rights as adult citizens is undermined.
- 3: Relatively equal. Basic health care is overall equal in quality but because of poor-quality healthcare, five to ten percent (%) of citizens' ability to exercise their political rights as adult citizens is undermined.
- 4: Equal. Basic health care is equal in quality and less than five percent (%) of citizens cannot exercise their basic political rights as adult citizens.

Power distributed by gender

Question: Is political power distributed according to gender?

Responses:

- 0: Men have a near-monopoly on political power.
- 1: Men have a dominant hold on political power. Women have only marginal influence.
- 2: Men have much more political power but women have some areas of influence.
- 3: Men have somewhat more political power than women.
- 4: Men and women have roughly equal political power.

Indicators included in Graph 3 and 4

Egalitarian component Index

Question: To what extent is the egalitarian principle achieved?

Clarifications: The egalitarian principle of democracy addresses the distribution of political power across social groups, i.e., groups defined by class, sex, religion, and ethnicity. This perspective on democracy emphasizes that a formal guarantee of political rights and civil liberties are not always sufficient for political equality. Ideally, all social groups should have approximately equal participation, representation, agenda-setting power, protection under the law, and influence over policymaking and policy implementation. If such equality does not exist, the state ought to seek to redistribute socio-economic resources, education, and health so as to enhance political equality.

Aggregation: The index is formed by point estimates drawn from a Bayesian factor analysis model including indicators of power distribution according to socioeconomic position (v2pepwrse), power distribution according to social group (v2pepwrsoc), social group equality in respect for civil liberties (v2clsocgrp), equal access to justice (v2clacjust), equal access to education

(v2peedueq), equal access to health (v2pehealth), power distribution according to gender (v2pepwrgen), share of budget allocated to public/common goods (v2dlencmps), and the share of welfare programs that provide universal rather than means-tested benefits (v2dlunivl).

Female empowerment Index

Question: How politically empowered are women?

Clarifications: Political empowerment is understood to include open discussion of political issues, participation in civil society organizations, freedom of movement, the right to private property, access to justice, freedom from forced labor, representation in the ranks of journalists, and an equal share in the overall distribution of power.

Aggregation: The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for CSO women's participation (v2csgender), female journalists (v2mefemjrn), freedom of domestic movement for women (v2cldmovew), freedom of discussion for women (v2cldiscw), freedom from forced labor for women (v2clslavef), property rights for women (v2clprptyw), access to justice for women (v2clacjstw), and power distributed by gender (v2pepwrgen).

Indicators included in Graph 5

Freedom of domestic movement for women

Question: Do women enjoy freedom of movement within the country?

Clarification: This indicator specifies the extent to which all women are able to move freely, in daytime and nighttime, in public thoroughfares, across regions within a country, and to establish permanent residency where they wish. Note that restrictions in movement might be imposed by the state and/or by informal norms and practices. Such restrictions sometimes fall on rural residents, on specific social groups, or on dissidents.

This question does not ask you to assess the *relative* freedom of men and women. Thus, it is possible to assign the lowest possible score to a country even if men and women enjoy equal – and extremely low – freedom of movement.

Do *not* consider restrictions in movement that are placed on ordinary (non-political) criminals. Do not consider restrictions in movement that result from crime or unrest.

Responses:

- 0: Virtually no women enjoy full freedom of movement (e.g., North Korea or Afghanistan under the Taliban).
- 1: Some women enjoy full freedom of movement, but most do not (e.g., Apartheid South Africa).
- 2: Most women enjoy some freedom of movement but a sizeable minority does not. Alternatively all women enjoy partial freedom of movement.
- 3: Most women enjoy full freedom of movement but a small minority does not.
- 4: Virtually all women enjoy full freedom of movement.

Freedom from forced labor for women

Question: Are adult women free from servitude and other kinds of forced labor?

Clarification: Involuntary servitude occurs when an adult is unable to quit a job s/he desires to leave – not by reason of economic necessity but rather by reason of employer's coercion. This includes labor camps but not work or service which forms part of normal civic obligations such as conscription or employment in command economies.

This question does not ask you to assess the *relative* freedom of men and women from forced labor. Thus, a country in which both men and women suffer the same conditions of servitude might be coded a (0) for women, even though there is equality across the sexes.

Responses:

- 0: Female servitude or other kinds of forced labor is widespread and accepted (perhaps even organized) by the state.

- 1: Female servitude or other kinds of forced labor is substantial. Although officially opposed by the public authorities, the state is unwilling or unable to effectively contain the practice.
- 2: Female servitude or other kinds of forced labor exists but is not widespread and usually actively opposed by public authorities, or only tolerated in some particular areas or among particular social groups.
- 3: Female servitude or other kinds of forced labor is infrequent and only found in the criminal underground. It is actively and sincerely opposed by the public authorities.
- 4: Female servitude or other kinds of forced labor is virtually non-existent.

Power distributed by gender

Question: Is political power distributed according to gender?

Responses:

- 0: Men have a near-monopoly on political power.
- 1: Men have a dominant hold on political power. Women have only marginal influence.
- 2: Men have much more political power but women have some areas of influence.
- 3: Men have somewhat more political power than women.
- 4: Men and women have roughly equal political power.

Female journalists

Question: Please estimate the percentage (%) of journalists in the print and broadcast media who are women.

Responses: Percent (re-coded on 0-4 scale)

Freedom of discussion for women

Question: Are women able to openly discuss political issues in private homes and in public spaces?

Clarification: This indicator specifies the extent to which women are able to engage in private discussions, particularly on political issues, in private homes and public spaces (restaurants, public transportation, sports events, work etc.) without fear of harassment by other members of the polity or the public authorities. We are interested in restrictions by the government and its agents but also cultural restrictions or customary laws that are enforced by other members of the polity, sometimes in informal ways.

This question does not ask you to assess the *relative* freedom of men and women. Thus, it is possible to assign the lowest possible score to a country even if men and women enjoy equal – and extremely low – rights to freedom of discussion.

Responses:

- 0: Not respected. Hardly any freedom of expression exists for women. Women are subject to immediate and harsh intervention and harassment for expression of political opinion.
- 1: Weakly respected. Expressions of political opinions by women are frequently exposed to intervention and harassment.
- 2: Somewhat respected. Expressions of political opinions by women are occasionally exposed to intervention and harassment.
- 3: Mostly respected. There are minor restraints on the freedom of expression in the private sphere, predominantly limited to a few isolated cases or only linked to soft sanctions. But as a rule there is no intervention or harassment if women make political statements.
- 4: Fully respected. Freedom of speech by women in their homes and in public spaces is not restricted.

Property rights for women

Question: Do women enjoy the right to private property?

Clarification: Private property includes the right to acquire, possess, inherit, and sell private property, including land. Limits on property rights may come from the state (which may legally

limit rights or fail to enforce them); customary laws and practices; or religious or social norms. This question concerns the right to private property, not actual ownership of property. This question does not ask you to assess the *relative* rights of men and women. Thus, it is possible to assign the lowest possible score to a country even if men and women enjoy equal – and very minimal – property rights.

Responses:

- 0: Virtually no women enjoy private property rights of any kind.
- 1: Some women enjoy some private property rights, but most have none.
- 2: Many women enjoy many private property rights, but a smaller proportion enjoys few or none.
- 3: More than half of women enjoy most private property rights, yet a smaller share of women have much more restricted rights.
- 4: Most women enjoy most private property rights but a small minority does not.
- 5: Virtually all women enjoy all, or almost all, property rights.

Access to justice for women

Question: Do women enjoy equal, secure, and effective access to justice?

Clarification: This question specifies the extent to which women can bring cases before the courts without risk to their personal safety, trials are fair, and women have effective ability to seek redress if public authorities violate their rights, including the rights to counsel, defense, and appeal.

This question does not ask you to assess the *relative* access to justice men and women. Thus, it is possible to assign the lowest possible score to a country even if men and women enjoy equal – and extremely limited – access to justice.

Responses:

- 0: Secure and effective access to justice for women is non-existent.
- 1: Secure and effective access to justice for women is usually not established or widely respected.
- 2: Secure and effective access to justice for women is inconsistently observed. Minor problems characterize most cases or occur rather unevenly across different parts of the country.
- 3: Secure and effective access to justice for women is usually observed.
- 4: Secure and effective access to justice for women is almost always observed.

Indicators included in Graph 6

High court independence

Question: When the high court in the judicial system is ruling in cases that are salient to the government, how often would you say that it makes decisions that merely reflect government wishes regardless of its sincere view of the legal record?

Clarification: We are seeking to identify autonomous judicial decision-making and its absence. Decisions certainly can reflect government wishes without “merely reflecting” those wishes, i.e. a court can be autonomous when its decisions support the government’s position. This is because a court can be fairly persuaded that the government’s position is meritorious. By “merely reflect the wishes of the government” we mean that the court’s own view of the record, its sincere evaluation of the record, is irrelevant to the outcome. The court simply adopts the government’s position regardless of its sincere view of the record.

Responses:

- 0: Always.
- 1: Usually.
- 2: About half of the time.
- 3: Seldom.
- 4: Never.

Lower court independence

Question: When judges *not* on the high court are ruling in cases that are salient to the government, how often would you say that their decisions merely reflect government wishes regardless of their sincere view of the legal record?

Responses:

- 0: Always.
- 1: Usually.
- 2: About half of the time.
- 3: Seldom.
- 4: Never.

CSO participatory environment

Question: Which of these best describes the involvement of people in civil society organizations (CSOs)?

Responses:

- 0: Most associations are state-sponsored, and although a large number of people may be active in them, their participation is not purely voluntary.
- 1: Voluntary CSOs exist but few people are active in them.
- 2: There are many diverse CSOs, but popular involvement is minimal.
- 3: There are many diverse CSOs and it is considered normal for people to be at least occasionally active in at least one of them.

CSO consultation

Question: Are major civil society organizations (CSOs) routinely consulted by policymakers on policies relevant to their members?

Responses:

- 0: No. There is a high degree of insulation of the government from CSO input. The government may sometimes enlist or mobilize CSOs after policies are adopted to sell them to the public at large. But it does not often consult with them in formulating policies.
- 1: To some degree. CSOs are but one set of voices that policymakers sometimes take into account.
- 2: Yes. Important CSOs are recognized as stakeholders in important policy areas and given voice on such issues. This can be accomplished through formal corporatist arrangements or through less formal arrangements.

Freedom of academic and cultural expression

Question: Is there academic freedom and freedom of cultural expression related to political issues?

Responses:

- 0: Not respected by public authorities. Censorship and intimidation are frequent. Academic activities and cultural expressions are severely restricted or controlled by the government.
- 1: Weakly respected by public authorities. Academic freedom and freedom of cultural expression are practiced occasionally, but direct criticism of the government is mostly met with repression.
- 2: Somewhat respected by public authorities. Academic freedom and freedom of cultural expression are practiced routinely, but strong criticism of the government is sometimes met with repression.
- 3: Mostly respected by public authorities. There are few limitations on academic freedom and freedom of cultural expression, and resulting sanctions tend to be infrequent and soft.
- 4: Fully respected by public authorities. There are no restrictions on academic freedom or cultural expression.

Freedom of religion

Question: Is there freedom of religion?

Clarification: This indicator specifies the extent to which individuals and groups have the right to choose a religion, change their religion, and practice that religion in private or in public as well as to proselytize peacefully without being subject to restrictions by public authorities.

Responses:

- 0: Not respected by public authorities. Hardly any freedom of religion exists. Any kind of religious practice is outlawed or at least controlled by the government to the extent that religious leaders are appointed by and subjected to public authorities, who control the activities of religious communities in some detail.
- 1: Weakly respected by public authorities. Some elements of autonomous organized religious practices exist and are officially recognized. But significant religious communities are repressed, prohibited, or systematically disabled, voluntary conversions are restricted, and instances of discrimination or intimidation of individuals or groups due to their religion are common.
- 2: Somewhat respected by public authorities. Autonomous organized religious practices exist and are officially recognized. Yet, minor religious communities are repressed, prohibited, or systematically disabled, and/or instances of discrimination or intimidation of individuals or groups due to their religion occur occasionally.
- 3: Mostly respected by public authorities. There are minor restrictions on the freedom of religion, predominantly limited to a few isolated cases. Minority religions face denial of registration, hindrance of foreign missionaries from entering the country, restrictions against proselytizing, or hindrance to access to or construction of places of worship.
- 4: Fully respected by public authorities. The population enjoys the right to practice any religious belief they choose. Religious groups may organize, select, and train personnel; solicit and receive contributions; publish; and engage in consultations without undue interference. If religious communities have to register, public authorities do not abuse the process to discriminate against a religion and do not constrain the right to worship before registration.

Freedom from torture

Question: Is there freedom from torture?

Clarification: Torture refers to the purposeful inflicting of extreme pain, whether mental or physical, with an aim to extract information or intimidate victims, who are in a state of incarceration. Here, we are concerned with torture practiced by state officials or other agents of the state (e.g., police, security forces, prison guards, and paramilitary groups).

Responses:

- 0: Not respected by public authorities. Torture is practiced systematically and is incited and approved by the leaders of government.
- 1: Weakly respected by public authorities. Torture is practiced frequently but is often not incited or approved by top leaders of government. At the same time, leaders of government are not actively working to prevent it.
- 2: Somewhat. Torture is practiced occasionally but is typically not approved by top leaders of government.
- 3: Mostly respected by public authorities. Torture is practiced in a few isolated cases but is not incited or approved by top government leaders.
- 4: Fully respected by public authorities. Torture is non-existent.