



**Global State of  
Democracy Initiative**

# **DEMOCRACY TRACKER: METHODOLOGY AND USER GUIDE**

Beta version, 1 November 2023



## Democracy Tracker Methodology

The Democracy Tracker provides event-centric information on democracy and human rights developments at monthly intervals, covering 173 countries. The event reports provide a narrative summary of the event and indicate the specific aspects of democracy that have been impacted using the Global State of Democracy's (GSoD) conceptual [framework](#), as well as the magnitude of the impact (on a scale ranging from exceptionally negative to exceptionally positive).

Data are collected through a comprehensive scan of online and print news media items and expert reports and analysis relating to democracy and human rights in each of the 173 countries at monthly intervals. Coders primarily use two data sources, the subscription-based [LexisNexis Newsdesk](#) and the publicly available [Global Database of Events, Language and Tone](#), that collect media and expert reporting from around the world. They are supplemented by country-specific data sources and local expert inputs where needed. Wherever possible coders also consult primary sources, including court judgements, legislation and election observation reports.

Events are selected for reporting on the basis that they signal a significant change in the status quo – either positively or negatively. In addition to these, we also report events that signal such a change is very likely in the near future (events to watch), events that are uniquely and egregiously damaging to democracy, such as coups d'état and political assassinations (red flag events), and all national elections.

If an event merits inclusion, its effects are then coded with reference to the relevant categories, factors and sub-factors of democratic performance (following the GSoD framework). These indicators are coded at two levels: primary and secondary. In this way, we show which aspects of democracy are principally impacted by the event and which aspects are secondarily impacted. A measure of the magnitude of the impact is then assigned to the indicators using a five-point scale.

In addition to coding the relevance of the events to the categories and factors of democracy, country-coders also assign tags to the events that facilitate searching and filtering the data later. These tags include important concepts and political institutions, and the names of people (such as heads of government) and institutions (such as courts, electoral authorities, and political parties) that are named in the reports. Events that are relevant to more than one country are tagged as “transnational.”

Each month, the country coders complete their research, consult regionally based experts, draft their reports, and code the impact of the events. Their draft reports are submitted to senior colleagues within International IDEA for quality control in a process involving two rounds of review. Each report is verified by at least five individuals before it is published.

A more detailed overview of the Democracy Tracker methodology is available on request. Such requests should be made via the 'Contact Us' feature of the Democracy Tracker website.

## Democracy Tracker User Guide

### Country pages

#### Country profile overview

Monthly event reports are featured on individual country pages. Each country page includes qualitative and quantitative background data to provide an overview of the countries' democracy and human rights landscapes, including the following information:

#### Country briefs

Each country page features a brief that sets out the country's political context. Amongst other things, the briefs describe regime type, recent trends in the annual GSoDI data, relevant socio-political history, politically salient social cleavages, primary drivers of politics and an outlook on political developments to watch in the future.

The Republic of **Kenya** performs in the mid-range across all categories of the Global State of Democracy framework and is among the world's top 25 per cent of countries with regard to Participation. Over the last five years, it has not experienced any notable shifts in performance levels. A lower-middle income country, Kenya has the **largest economy** in the East Africa sub-region in terms of **GDP** and its **main economic sectors** are agriculture, manufacturing, logistics and technology. However, it has accumulated **high levels of debt** and has incurred **difficulties** financing its repayments.

#### Basic information boxes

Complementing the narrative text of the country briefs are a series of key data points describing the institutional features of a country's political system, recent elections, the representation of women in the legislature, and the country's engagement with the United Nation's (UN) Universal Periodic Review - a mechanism for reviewing member states' human rights records.

#### Basic Information

**POPULATION** ⓘ

2 587 340

**SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT**

Presidential system

**HEAD OF GOVERNMENT**

Prime Minister Saara Kuugongelwa (since 2015)

#### Human rights treaty boxes

Users are given a further indication of how countries engage with the international human rights system through summary information on the ratification status of three sets of human rights treaties: the UN's Core International Human Rights Treaties, the International Labour Organisation's Fundamental Conventions, and the principal regional human rights treaties.

### Human Rights Treaties

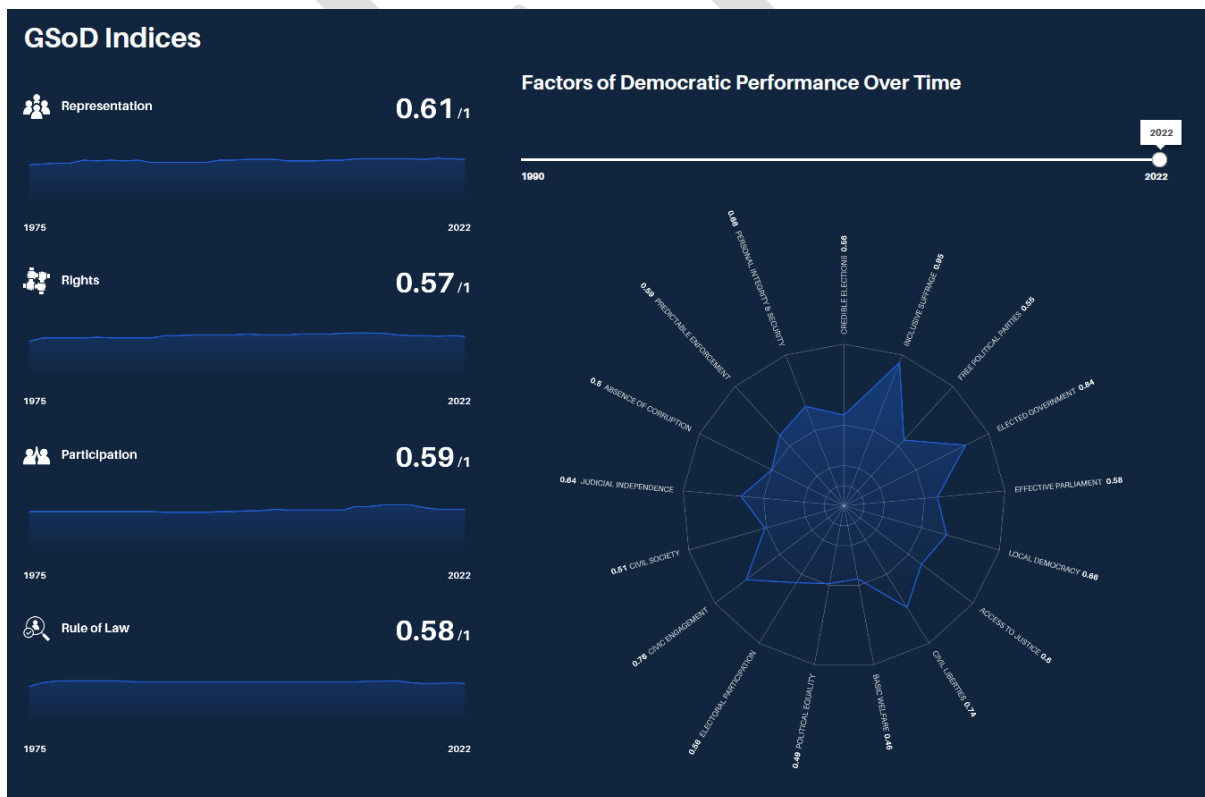
STATE PARTY
SIGNATORY
NO ACTION

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHT TREATIES

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

### Global State of Democracy Indices (GSoDI) boxes

The country pages also feature visualizations of key GSoDI data. Sparkline graphs show the country's performance on the GSoDI's four categories over the most recent ten-year period. A spider chart offers the user an overview of the state of democracy in the country, illustrating performance levels across the GSoDI's 17 factors of democracy. An interactive timeline illustrates the country's regime classification from 1975 to the year of our most recently published data and allows users to produce a spider chart for any year.

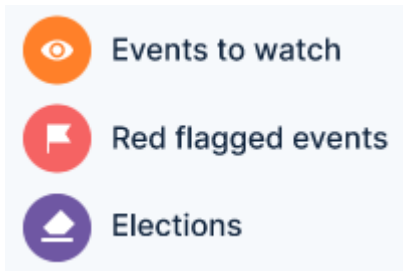


### Event reports

Democracy Tracker event reports are listed on the relevant country profile page. These reports are short summaries of the events, and they include links to sources in addition to visual indicators of the assessed impacts of the event.

### Icons

Icons are applied to event reports to indicate (1) Events to watch, (2) Red flagged events and (3) National elections.



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