

The Global State of Democracy Indices

About the indices

The Global State of Democracy (GSoD) indices depict democratic trends and performance at the country, regional and global levels across 29 aspects of democracy from 1975 until today.

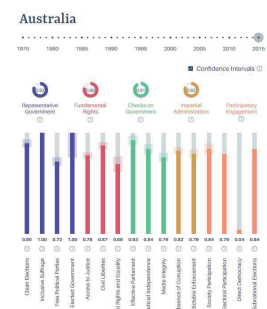
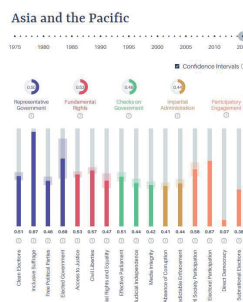
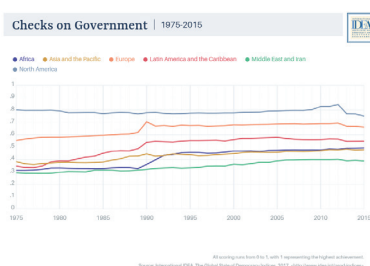
The indices produce data for 158 countries. Composed of indicators from V-Dem and eleven other sources, the indices are updated annually. The database is publicly available on International IDEA's website and aims to inform research and strategies of those working on democratic reform at the national, regional and global level. To access the database please visit: <<http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>>.

The indices consist of attribute and subattribute scores per country per year, from 1975 to the latest data update, which occur annually. All scoring runs from 0 to 1, with 0 representing the lowest achievement in the sample and 1 the highest.

Democracy is conceptualized as popular control over public decision-making and decision-makers, and equality between citizens in the exercise of that control. These principles have been translated into 5 main democracy attributes that cover 16 subattributes and a total of 29 aspects, of which 28 have a democratic performance score (see table overleaf).

The value-added of the GSoD Indices in relation to other existing democracy measurements on the market include:

- **A robust and transparent methodology** developed together with academic democracy measurement specialists and validated by experts in the field.
- Packaged into a theoretically-backed, **policy-friendly conceptual framework** of democracy, broken down into a total of 29 aspects of democracy and more detailed indicators
- Broad **multi-dimensional** conception of democracy that allows for nuanced analysis of democratic performance.
- The reliance on **various data sources to minimize bias** (12 datasets), including a combination of expert surveys, standards-based 'in-house coding', observational data, and composite measures.
- **Wide country coverage and timespan** (from 1975), updated annually.
- Allows for analysis of global, regional and country-level trends and comparative performance of democratic quality across **regions, sub-regions and countries**.
- Linked to analysis that is based on **policy-relevant on-the ground country and technical assistance and programming**.



Graphs generated from the GSoD indices website.



Overview of the GSoD indices conceptual framework: attributes, subattributes and assessment questions

The GSoD indices cover 29 aspects of democracy, of which 28 have a democratic performance score. The aspects are sub-divided into 5 attributes, 16 sub-attributes and 8 sub-components of democracy. The subattributes are coupled with an assessment question that guides the selection of empirical indicators.

Attribute	Subattribute	Assessment question
1. Representative Government (free and equal access to political power)	1.1. Clean Elections	To what extent are elections free from irregularities?
	1.2. Inclusive Suffrage	To what extent do all adult citizens have voting rights?
	1.3. Free Political Parties	To what extent are political parties free to form and campaign for office?
	1.4. Elected Government	To what extent is access to government determined by elections?
2. Fundamental Rights (individual liberties and resources)	2.1. Access to Justice	To what extent is there equal, fair access to justice?
	2.2. Civil Liberties	To what extent are civil liberties respected?
	2.3. Social Rights and Equality	To what extent are there basic welfare, and social and political equality?
3. Checks on Government (effective control of executive power)	3.1. Effective Parliament	To what extent does parliament oversee the executive?
	3.2. Judicial Independence	To what extent are the courts independent?
	3.3. Media Integrity	To what extent are there diverse, critical media sources?
4. Impartial Administration (fair and predictable public administration)	4.1. Absence of Corruption	To what extent is the exercise of public authority free from corruption?
	4.2. Predictable Enforcement	To what extent is the enforcement of public authority predictable?
5. Participatory Engagement (instruments of and for the realization of political involvement)	5.1. Civil Society Participation	To what extent do people participate in civil society organizations?
	5.2. Electoral Turnout	To what extent do people participate in national elections?
	5.3. Direct Democracy	To what extent are mechanisms of direct democracy available and used?
	5.4. Local Democracy	To what extent are there free regional and local elections?

Where to find the data

The data is available on the International IDEA website.

Users can generate their own data visualizations and extract data at the country, regional and global levels across the attributes and subattributes for specific years or for selected time periods starting from 1975. The indices are updated annually.

Visit: <http://www.idea.int/gsod-indices>

About International IDEA

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) is an intergovernmental organization with the mandate to promote and advance democracy worldwide. International IDEA contributes to the public debate on democracy and assists in strengthening process, reforms, institutions and actors that build, advance and safeguard democracy, with a focus on electoral processes; constitution-building processes; and political participation and representation.

The Global State of Democracy Initiative is headed by the Democracy Assessment and Political Analysis Unit (DAPA). For contact or queries on the GSoD Initiative or the GSoD Indices, please contact the DAPA team and GSoD Helpdesk at GSoD.indices@idea.int.