



Democratic Erosion Event Dashboard

Codebook v.1 – August 2018

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Collaborating institutions:

- American University
- Boston University
- Brown University
- Columbia University
- Georgetown University
- Georgia State University
- Indiana University
- Ohio State University
- Skidmore College
- Stanford University
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Part 1. Explanatory Notes

1.1 What's new in Version 2 of the Dataset?

Since its publication, the dataset underwent an extensive cleaning effort to verify the integrity of the data, remove duplicated events, and standardize the formatting of entries across coders. Entries containing more than one event were disaggregated, resulting in the addition of 57 new erosion-related events. Furthermore, the range of data entries was solidified to include all coded erosion-related events between 2000 and 2018. Over the course of the upcoming academic year, new case studies will allow for a more robust coding of events outside of the original range of years (2007-2016).

1.2 Variable information

The following information is available by variable (if applicable) in Part 2.

- **Question:** The question that the variable attempts to measure.
- **Clarification:** Definition of key terms, clarification of scope-conditions, contexts, and any other features needed to understand the question (if any).
- **Responses:** Numeric, Percentage, Text, Date, Countries, or specific response categories.
- **Answer-Types:**
 - *Multiple-choice:* Where a coder can select only one answer.
 - *Multiple-selection:* Where a coder can select more than one answer.

1.3 Suggested citation

- **Democratic Erosion Event Dataset**
Gottlieb, Jessica, Rob A. Blair, Aries Arugay, Cameron Ballard-Rosa, Hannah Baron, Guy Grossman, Shelby Grossman, Jennifer McCoy, Amanda Robinson, Steven Rosenzweig, Cathy Lisa Schneider, and Megan Turnbull. 2018. "Democratic Erosion Event Dataset v1." *Democratic Erosion Project: A Cross-University Collaboration*.
- **Democratic Erosion Event Dataset Codebook**
Gottlieb, Jessica, Rob A. Blair, Aries Arugay, Cameron Ballard-Rosa, Hannah Baron, Guy Grossman, Shelby Grossman, Jennifer McCoy, Amanda Robinson, Steven Rosenzweig, Cathy Lisa Schneider, and Megan Turnbull. 2018. "Democratic Erosion Event Dataset Codebook v1." *Democratic Erosion Project: A Cross-University Collaboration*.

1.4 Coders of data

Christopher Hill, Kyle Rueschhoff, Silvio Simonetti Neto, Joanne Teng, and Bryce Watson

1.5 Countries

The following countries are included in the most recent version of the Democratic Erosion Event Dataset:

Argentina	India	Panama
Austria	Indonesia	Paraguay
Bangladesh	Ireland	Peru
Benin	Israel	Philippines
Bolivia	Japan	Poland
Botswana	Kenya	Serbia
Brazil	Kosovo	Sierra Leone
Bulgaria	Kyrgyzstan	South Africa
Burkina Faso	Latvia	South Korea
Chile	Lebanon	Spain
Costa Rica	Liberia	Suriname
Croatia	Macedonia	Taiwan
Dominican Republic	Malawi	Tanzania
Ecuador	Maldives	Tunisia
Finland	Mali	Turkey
France	Mauritania	Ukraine
Georgia	Mexico	United Kingdom
Germany	Moldova	Uruguay
Ghana	Mongolia	Venezuela
Greece	Montenegro	Zambia
Guatemala	Namibia	
Hungary	Nepal	
Iceland	Nicaragua	
		Total number of countries: 66

Part 2. Dataset Indicators

This section lists all variables contained in the Democratic Erosion Event Dataset Dashboard.

2.1 Type (Type)

- **Question:** Is the captured event evidence of a precursor to, symptom of, or resistance to democratic erosion?
- **Clarification:** There is a fundamental difference between events that lead to severe erosion (i.e., precursors) and events where erosion had been institutionalized (i.e., symptoms). There are also events in which citizens or institutions push back against these forms of erosion (i.e., resistance).
- **Responses:** Text.
- **Answer-Type:** Multiple-choice.

2.2 Year (Year)

- **Question:** In what year(s) did the event occur?
- **Clarification:** While coders strived to capture erosion-related events in the single-year in which they occurred, certain events warranted a range of years (e.g., the omnipresent influence of organized crime in Mexico since the start of its War on Drugs in 2006).
- **Responses:** Date.
- **Answer-Type:** Multiple-selection.

2.3 Unconfirmed (Unconfirmed)

- **Question:** Is there reason to question the veracity of the entry?
- **Clarification:** Forty-six erosion-related events are denoted as “Unconfirmed.” Events may carry this label if there is reason to question their veracity. For example, in Venezuela, there were allegations of corruption in the executive branch with Government officials purportedly embezzling profits from the oil industry and accepting bribes from drug traffickers. The allegations are widely-recognized by analysts, but evidence (i.e., indictments, convictions) is lacking.

In addition to unsubstantiated allegations, other reasons that events may be considered “Unconfirmed” include subjective interpretation by either the case study author or cited entity (e.g., a political party deemed the Government response to its protests repressive) and imprecise data (e.g., Serbian watchdog organizations estimated that only 20 percent of state media funding was awarded competitively).

- **Responses:** Text.

- **Answer-Type:** Multiple-choice.

2.4 Precursor Categorization (PrecursorCategory)

- **Question:** If defined as a precursor, how should the erosion-related event be categorized?
- **Clarification:** The Capstone Team developed a framework to categorize precursors, symptoms, and resistance. The precursors were split into six subcategories: civic, economic, political, institutional, and violent/security events with a final “other” category to capture events that did not fit into the other subcategories. Within each subcategory, there are a number of labels to describe a particular event.

- *Civic*

The civic category relates to events in which the citizenry are directly involved, either through associations, nonprofits, the media, or general beliefs about the government.

- *Lack of legitimacy*

Linz and Stepan argue there are three characteristics that a democracy must have in order to rule: legitimacy, efficacy, and effectiveness. Legitimacy is the rulers’ right to govern a society, make laws, and enforce them. Efficacy is the ability to make laws that coincide with the will of the people. Lastly, efficiency is the ability to enact those laws. If a government is incapable of proving they are capable of upholding any one of these characteristics, they will face a higher risk of democratic erosion (Linz and Stepan 1989). One example of lacking legitimacy featured in the dataset is poll results from Ghana revealing that the percentage of Ghanaians with little or no trust in both the electoral commission and judicial system jumped from 32 and 39 percent, respectively, to more than 60 percent following the 2012 elections.

- *Media Bias*

A free press is often cited as a cornerstone of liberal democracy in order to hold those elected accountable to their constituency. Hill and Lupu find that an increase in the restrictions on media lead to less competitive elections and a reduction in the ability to limit the executive. (Hill and Lupu 2017). Numerous examples can also be found in Venezuela and Russia for attacks on the media (Gehlbach 2010). The team made a clear distinction between media bias and media repression. Media bias was the government’s attempt to influence either the content the media was producing or the perception of the media itself, while repression entailed greater control over the media apparatus. An example of media bias found in the dataset is the 2010 appointment of Kim Jae-Chul as network president of MBC, South Korea’s second-largest television network, which was facilitated through undue government influence and skewed MBC’s coverage in favor of the administration.

- *Polarization*

Numerous studies have found people’s seemingly inherent desire to group themselves into an “us” versus “them” mentality including Cass Sunstein and Jonathan Haidt, but more importantly the team focused on how this polarization can affect democratic erosion (Sunstein 2009) (Haidt 2012). Svolik argues that polarization increases the stakes of politics. If one group of people believes that another is trying to actively harm it, than they will be more willing to grant power to their political leaders to circumvent the institutional structures to ensure the competitor loses (Svolik 2017).
- *Increasing Control of Civil Society*

Tocqueville was among the first scholars to discuss the importance of civil society on democracy, but many since have contributed to this literature (Tocqueville, et al. 1947). Fung argues that there are six contributions that associations, and thus civil society make to democracy including, “the intrinsic value of associative life, fostering civic virtues and teaching political skills, offering resistance to power and checking government, improving the quality and equality of representation, facilitating public deliberation, and creating opportunities for citizens and groups to participate directly in governance.” (Fung 2003). We distinguish control of civil society (e.g., requiring civil society organizations to report foreign funding sources), which hinders civil society organizations’ operations but does not degrade the strength of democracy, from repression of civil society (e.g., arresting activists), which is symptomatic of greater erosion.
- *Economic*
 - *Corruption*

As mentioned above, Linz and Stepan argue that legitimacy is a key to democratic governance. Corruption degrades that legitimacy by displacing to the citizenry that the rule of law can be circumventing with payments. Many organizations have also used this as a measure of the functioning of a state including the Fund for Peace, Fragile State Index, Transparency International, and the World Bank.
 - *Economic Inequality*

Acemoglu and numerous other scholars argue that inequality allows for power to be centralized to a small group of elites. Those elites are then able to capture greater political power, and thus entrench their supremacy (Acemoglu, et. al 2015). More recent literature has used examples in Venezuela and other populist movements to display how autocrats and future autocrats can use the inequality to justify taking greater power for themselves in order to fight for “the people” (Mudde 2008). For this reason, the team decided to code for changes in economic inequality.
 - *Economic Shocks*

Bermeo states that people are more willing to give up power to an autocrat when a major economic shock occurs. It is also possible that these shocks disturb the hold on power of the current elites, but this may also allow for autocrats to take advantage of the crisis. They often argue that in such desperate times, they can provide order and economic improvement. While Bermeo argues that these events occurred more often in the past than today, the team decided it was still worth coding for our dataset (Bermeo 2016).

○ *Political*

▪ *Cooptation of the Opposition*

While in many cases democratic erosion occurs due to a single autocratic leader, it has also been found to occur when one party is able to consolidate power. Schedler discusses this dynamic explaining that many autocratic states exist that are seemingly democratic, except one party always wins a majority and thus stays in power (Schedler 2006). Political competition has been a fundamental aspect of defining democracy for decades, but Levitsky and Ziblatt argue that even if there is seemingly competition, the ruling party can co opt the opposition to ensure their victory (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018).

▪ *Extremist / Populist Parties*

Youcha Mounk defines populism as a leader who legitimizes themselves because they are the embodiment of the will of the people. The leader argues that there are many elites in the country that are trying to take advantage of the common person, but the populist understands what the citizenry wants and is fighting against the corruption to fulfill that need. In return the populist asks for greater power and authority over the other institutional checks in the government (Mounk 2018). Levitsky and Ziblatt make a similar argument that populism is an attempt to circumvent the institutional gatekeepers and increase their authority through the will of the people (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018). Seeing as this seems to be an increasing trend, the team decided to code for events in which populist and extremist parties were gaining prominence.

▪ *Malapportionment*

Both Bermeo and Kennedy discuss the troubling consequences of malapportionment in electoral democracies. Not only do people feel as though they are not being represented, but more extreme candidates are able to gain power. Elections become less competitive and therefore more radical candidates are often chosen because the more moderate voters are no longer needed to win a majority. Both the extremism and decreasing competitiveness of elections increases the possibility of democratic erosion (Bermeo 2016) (Kennedy 2016).

▪ *Party Weakness*

Levitsky and Ziblatt discuss the importance of gatekeepers. These are institutional checks that restrict certain people from gaining power. In both a presidential and parliamentary electoral system the party plays an active role in deciding who and who cannot gain power in their respective government. If the party becomes weak, outsiders that do not conform to the parties conception of who should gain power have a greater opportunity of creating institutional instability and possibility democratic erosion (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018).

- *Electoral Fraud*
Similar to corruption reducing the legitimacy of democratic institutions, electoral fraud has the same effect.
- *Institutional*
 - *Delegitimizing or Weakening the Judiciary*
Along with a long history of political scientists, Gibler and Randazzo recently found strong evidence that an independent judiciary is a successful defense against executive aggrandizement. It thus stands to reason that attacks on an independent judiciary are a sign of democratic erosion (Gibler and Randazzo 2011).
 - *Coup or Regime Collapse*
Bermeo details the difference between democratic cataclysm and democratic backsliding. She states that democratic cataclysm is a single major event in which democracies collapse, often in executive coups or due to economic shocks (Bermeo, 2016). Huq and Ginsberg define this form of erosion as Authoritarian Reversion (Huq and Ginsberg 2017). While the point of the piece is to point out that these events are becoming less common, the team decided to code for this form of rapid democratic decline.
 - *Manipulation of Civil Service*
Huq and Ginsberg outline a systematic method of conceptualizing democratic decline and one of the primary methods of what they call “constitutional retrogression” is the centralization and politicization of executive power. A key aspect of this process is decreasing the separation between the executive and the bureaucracy and thus the team has coding for manipulating the civil service (Huq and Ginsberg 2017).
 - *Constitutional Reform*
Not all constitutional reform should be seen as a sign of democratic erosion, but anything that increases the power of the executive should be viewed with skepticism. Once again, Huq and Ginsberg discuss the importance of institutional checks on the executive and if the executive is eliminating these checks on their power it is a clear sign of democratic erosion (Huq and Ginsberg 2017).

- *Violence/Security*

- *Non-state Violence*

- As Pinker, along with other authors, argues, the most important aspect of a state is its monopoly on the use of violence. Once groups are able to use violence for their own political or other means, the state has lost this legitimacy and is therefore in decline (Pinker 2011).

- *State-sponsored Violence or Abuse*

- As has been described above, both executive aggrandizement and the rule of law are deeply important for democratic consolidation. If political entities are using their power to arbitrarily and violently attack others, this is a significant sign of democratic erosion.

- *Electoral Violence*

- Similar to the previous two precursors, if citizens use violence rather than the democratic system to influence policies and elections it is clear that democratic erosion has begun either because the state is not capable of ensuring its citizens' safety, or because citizens believe the best method of gaining power is to subvert the democratic structure.

- *Others*

- *Refugee Crisis*

- While there is no direct evidence linking the refugee crisis to democratic decline nor significant theoretical literature, the recent refugee crisis has likely caused a sudden change in the informal institutions within the host-countries. It is also often blamed for the rise of populist parties in both European and Latin American countries (Mudde 2017).

- *External Realignment*

- While external realignment is understudied as it relates to democratic erosion, the team decided it was likely that outside actors would have some impact on democratic erosion. Hopefully, this dataset will shed light on the connection between outside actors and internal politics.

- *Prior Failed Attempts at Erosion*

- There were multiple events as the team was coding where the executive or other political leaders attempted to consolidate their hold on power but failed. The team decided to code these events as they are likely important precursors to democratic erosion in the future.

- **Responses:** Text.

- **Answer-Type:** Multiple-choice.

2.5 Resistance Categorization (ResistanceCategory)

- **Question:** If defined as resistance, how should the erosion-related event be categorized?

- **Clarification:** The resistance categorizations were distinguished by three subcategories: an increase in horizontal accountability, an increase in vertical accountability, and an “other” category. Within each subcategory, there are a number of labels to describe a particular event.
 - *Increase in Horizontal Accountability*
 - *Check on central power by subnational government*

There have been a number of examples of subnational governments such as provinces or states fighting the attempt of central governments to gather more power (do Vale 2017).
 - *Check on executive by judiciary*

Gibbler and Randazzo found evidence that independent judiciaries that have been around for at least 3 years mitigate democratic erosion (Gibbler and Randazzo 2011). This finding, along with others on the importance of an independent judiciary, led the team to create this category of resistance.
 - *Check on Executive by Legislature*

While the judiciary plays a strong role in checking the power of the executive, the legislature can as well. As the team read through the case studies, it became clear that the legislature was a strong check on executive aggrandizement. Levitsky and Ziblatt emphasize the importance of the legislative branch as a formal “gatekeeper” on the executive (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2017).
 - *Increase in Vertical Accountability*
 - *Nonviolent protest*

Nonviolent protests are a very common form of resistance to many government policies, but Stephan and Chenoweth find that nonviolent campaigns work better to produce loyalty shifts, especially where the regime is willing to use force (Stephan and Chenoweth 2008). For these reasons we’ve coded nonviolent protest into our dataset.
 - *Violent protest*

Krastev sees nonviolent protest and elections as a method of reducing the chance of revolution by giving people an outlet outside of violence (Krastev 2014). Violent protest is the progression to more extreme and radical reactions to government overreach.
 - *Increase in civic capacity*

As mentioned in previous sections, civil society is a pivotal aspect of democratic participation (Dahl 1972). The increase of civic associations' capacity increases its ability refute attempts at democratic erosion.

- *Coalitions or elite pacts*
There is a significant debate in political science about whether power sharing among elites is more important or the active participation of the citizenry. Scholars such as Douglass North argue that the true brilliance of democracy, was its ability to create a pact among elites in which all of them understood that if they played by the rules they may have the opportunity to win power in the future (North 1990). These pacts may reduce democratic erosion.

- *Others*

- *Pressure from outside actors*
Stephan and Chenoweth, along with their research on violent versus nonviolent protests, study external pressures from foreign actors. They find that foreign countries advantage violent campaigns (Stephan and Chenoweth 2008).
- *Exit of people or money*
When citizens are displeased with their government and want to act, they have multiple choices, either voice their opinion through protests as explained above, or exit the governance structure. Exiting with both the human and physical capital can have a significant impact on the government (Paul 1992).
- *State attempts to prevent backsliding*
In rare cases the government has actually decided to try and reduce backsliding themselves either through programs that reduce polarization or other means.

- **Responses:** Text.
- **Answer-Type:** Multiple-choice.

2.6 Symptom Categorization (SymptomCategory)

- **Question:** If defined as a symptom, how should the erosion-related event be categorized?
- **Clarification:** The symptoms were split into three subcategories: reduction in vertical accountability, horizontal accountability, and a change in societal norms. Within each subcategory, there are a number of labels to describe a particular event.
 - *Reduction in Horizontal Accountability*
 - *Suspension of rules/constitution*

Huq and Ginsberg discuss in their piece that the suspension or amendment of the constitution should be seen as one of the greatest symptoms of democratic erosion because they are fundamentally changing the power structures within the government (Huq and Ginsberg 2017).

- *Relaxing of term limits*
As described above, executive aggrandizement is one of the primary method for leaders to erode democracy, and relaxing term limits is a clear example of executive aggrandizement.
- *Circumventing the rule of law*
Circumventing the rule of law may take shape in many different forms. Bermeo and Mounk point out that the rule of law may be avoided even with the consent of the people, if they are able to demagogue and polarize issues to such an extent that the citizenry is willing to forgo the checks on their abilities for a seeming victory for “the people” (Bermeo 2016) (Mounk 2017) (Varol 2015).
- *Reducing judicial independence*
The same theories were used to inform the inclusion of this category as the “Delegitimizing or Weakening the Judiciary” precursor. The key difference is that for the event to be considered a symptom, the reduction in judicial independence must have been institutionalized (Varol 2015).
- *Weakening integrity institutions*
Scheppelle provides an excellent example of a legislature in Hungary weakening the checks and balances of an institution within the confines of the institution itself (Scheppelle 2013). There are certain institutions, such as 3rd party evaluators of elections like the caretaker government in Bangladesh, that act as checks on executive power. As Huq and Ginsberg discuss the executive often tries to gain control of the bureaucracy in order to reduce these checks (Huq and Ginsberg 2017).
- *Reduction in Vertical Accountability*
 - *Media repression*
See the above description for “Media Bias” to see the theoretical rationality for its inclusion in democratic erosion. The symptom is simply the institutionalization of this media bias and a greater control over the media by the government.
 - *Repression of opposition parties*
Rather than co-opting the opposition, some autocrats will actively repress the opposition either through arrests, limited freedoms, or direct violence. Seeing as competitive elections are among the most important

cornerstones of democracy, the direct targeting of this opposition should be coded as a symptom of democratic erosion (Schumpeter 1947).

- *Systemic reduction in electoral freedom/fairness*
The primary difference between this categorization and “Electoral Fraud”, is that the ruling party has creating a systematic way to influence the election.
- *Curtailed civil liberties*
Dahl argues that democracy entails far more than the minimalist approach which only considers fair competitive elections. He argues that the ability to assemble and the freedom of speech are pivotal to the ability for the citizenry to interact with its democratic government (Dahl 1972). The curtailment of these liberties has been coded as a symptom.

- *Changing Societal Norms*

- *Lack of confidence/public disillusionment*
As mentioned above in the “Legitimacy of Democracy” section, the belief that the government should have the ability to make and enforce laws that govern the citizenry is pivotal for a successful democratic regime. The lack of such confidence and changing norms should be considered a symptom, as Norris argues in his research on people’s cultural beliefs towards democratic governance (Norris 2017).
- *Threats and intimidation*
Similar to the violence precursors above, one of the most basic functions of a government is to have a monopoly on the use of violence, but when that violence is turned against its own people it has cleared turned towards democratic erosion.

- **Responses:** Text.
- **Answer-Type:** Multiple-choice.

2.7 Timestamp (Timestamp)

- **Clarification:** This information was automatically inputted by the coding form to note when the event data was recorded by the Coder into the dataset.
- **Responses:** Date and time.

2.8 Coder (Coder)

- **Question:** Who coded the erosion-related event?

- **Clarification:** There were 5 coders categorizing the erosion-related events: Bryce, Chris, Joanne, Kyle, and Silvio.
- **Responses:** Text.
- **Answer-Type:** Multiple-choice.

2.9 Course Instructor of Case Study Author (Casestudyinstructor)

- **Question:** What instructor taught the Democratic Erosion course that the case study author was enrolled in?
- **Clarification:** Eleven professors' students authored case studies included in the Democratic Erosion Event Dataset.
- **Responses:** Text.
- **Answer-Type:** Multiple-choice.

2.10 Country (Country)

- **Question:** In which country did the erosion-related event occur?
- **Clarification:** 66 countries are included in the Democratic Erosion Event Dataset.
- **Responses:** Countries
- **Answer-Type:** Multiple-choice.

2.11 Case Study Number (Casestudynumber)

- **Question:** Which number country case study is the erosion-related event data pulled from?
- **Clarification:** There were between 1 and 3 case studies authored per country.
- **Responses:** Numeric.
- **Answer-Type:** Multiple-choice.

2.12 Explanation of Erosion Rating Provided by the Student (StudentRatingExplained)

- **Question:** How did the author explain his/her overall erosion rating provided in the case study?
- **Clarification:** Case study authors were asked to rate the overall erosion of a country's democracy on a five-point scale. This variable captures the justification for the author's rating.
- **Responses:** Text.

2.13 Event Number (eventnumber)

- **Question:** What number event is this?
- **Clarification:** Events from the same case study were automatically numbered in order from 1 to x .
- **Responses:** Numeric.

2.14 Event Description (EventDescription)

- **Question:** How would you describe the erosion-related event?
- **Responses:** Text.

2.15 Entry Identifier (id)

- **Clarification:** Each entry was given an automatic ID formulated from Professor, Case Study Country, Case Study Number, Coder, and Event Number (e.g., SGrossmanSpain1Chris_3)
- **Responses:** Text.

2.16 Erosion Rating Provided by Coder (CoderRating)

- **Question:** What overall erosion rating of the case study country did the coder provide?
- **Clarification:** Case study coders were asked to rate the overall erosion of a country's democracy on the following five-point scale:
 - 0: No backsliding, and weak threat of future backsliding
 - 1: There are precursors to backsliding, e.g. the rise of extremist parties, but erosion of democratic institutions has not yet taken place
 - 2: There is weak erosion of democratic institutions, perhaps the institutions being eroded are not critical for the functioning of democracy
 - 3: There is moderate erosion of democratic institutions
 - 4: There is severe erosion of democratic institutions; it is unclear whether democracy will recover
- **Responses:** Numeric.
- **Answer-Type:** Multiple-choice.

2.17 Erosion Rating Provided by Student (StudentRating)

- **Question:** What overall erosion rating of the case study country did the author provide?
- **Clarification:** Case study authors were asked to rate the overall erosion of a country's democracy on the following five-point scale:
 - 0: No backsliding, and weak threat of future backsliding
 - 1: There are precursors to backsliding, e.g. the rise of extremist parties, but erosion of democratic institutions has not yet taken place
 - 2: There is weak erosion of democratic institutions, perhaps the institutions being eroded are not critical for the functioning of democracy
 - 3: There is moderate erosion of democratic institutions
 - 4: There is severe erosion of democratic institutions; it is unclear whether democracy will recover
- **Responses:** Numeric.
- **Answer-Type:** Multiple-choice.

2.18 Three-letter Country Code (country_text_id)

- **Clarification:** Each country was simplified to a three-letter country code.
- **Responses:** Countries.

2.27 Country Inclusion Indicator (insample)

- **Question:** Is the country a part of the sample?
- **Clarification:** If there is a 1 in the cell, the country is a part of the sample. After the initial calculation was run, additional countries of interest were added to the sample.
- **Responses:** Numeric.

2.28 Country Inclusion Explainer (Selection)

- **Question:** If the country is not in sample, why was it omitted?
- **Clarification:** To identify the original list of case studies for the meta-analysis on democratic backsliding, the Team used the Varieties of Democracy dataset (Coppedge et al, 2017). The country-year dataset was constrained to only include the past decade (e.g., years 2007-2016).

Then, because we are looking for cases of democratic erosion, we define democratic backsliding as originating in a country-year in which the country is coded as an electoral democracy. To identify countries-years that qualify as minimal electoral democracies, we use the Regimes in the World index (*e_v2x_regime*) which has already been coded for all years (rather than just election year). In the original iteration, we require a score of 2 or higher for year $t=1$. In year $t=2$, the regime can backslide to a score of 1, which is equivalent to having a score of 2 on the multiparty elections variable. The full coding of this variable is as follows:

- 0: Closed autocracy: No de-facto multiparty elections for the chief executive).
- 1: Electoral autocracy: De-facto multiparty elections for the chief executive, but failing to achieve a minimum level of Dahl's institutional prerequisites of polyarchy as measured by V-Dem's Electoral Democracy Index (*v2x_polyarchy*).
- 2: Electoral democracy: Free and fair multiparty elections and a minimum level of Dahl's institutional prerequisites for polyarchy as measured by VDem's Electoral Democracy Index (*v2x_polyarchy*), but liberal principles of respect for personal liberties, rule of law, and judicial as well as legislative constraints on the executive not satisfied as measured by VDem's Liberal Component Index (*v2x_liberal*).
- 3: Liberal democracy: Free and fair multiparty elections and a minimum level of Dahl's institutional prerequisites for polyarchy as measured by VDem's Electoral Democracy Index (*v2x_polyarchy*), and liberal principles of respect for personal liberties, rule of law, and judicial as well as legislative constraints on the executive satisfied as measured by V-Dem's Liberal Component Index (*v2x_liberal*).

To code democratic backsliding, we use the liberal democracy index (*v2x_libdem*). This measure places special weight on constraints on executive power. From the codebook: "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."

We code a country-year, t , as backsliding if the country received a lower score on the Liberal Democracy Index in year t than in year $t-1$. In addition, the country had to receive a score of at least 2 on the Regimes in the World index (indicating an electoral democracy) in year $t-1$ and a score of at least 1 in year t .

In addition to coding whether or not backsliding occurred in that country-year, we also code how much backsliding occurred in percentage terms (change in Lib Democracy Index divided by last year's score).

This exercise elicited a list of 108 countries that had at least one year of backsliding in the last decade. To prioritize cases, we constrained the list using several criteria.

- We eliminated island or micro-states (8 total).
- We eliminated cases in which the mean amount of backsliding was less than 1.5% (33 total).

- **Responses:** Text.
- **Answer-Type:** Multiple-choice.

2.29 Country Inclusion Calculation (originalsample)

- **Question:** Is the country in the sample?
- **Clarification:** If there is a 1 in the cell, the country is a part of the sample. This tally is a result of the original calculation and does not reflect the countries added at the Team's discretion.
- **Responses:** Numeric.

2.31 Country Region (region)

- **Question:** In what region is the coded country?
- **Clarification:** Five broad regions were identified: Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania.
- **Responses:** Region.

2.32 Country Sub-Region (subregion)

- **Question:** In what sub-region is the coded country?
- **Clarification:** Fifteen sub-regions were identified: Australia and New Zealand, Central Asia, Eastern Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Melanesia, Northern Africa, Northern America, Northern Europe, South-eastern Asia, Southern Asia, Southern Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, Western Asia, and Western Europe.
- **Responses:** Sub-region.

2.33 Country Intermediate-Region (intermediateregion)

- **Question:** In what intermediate-region is the coded country?
- **Clarification:** Seven intermediate-regions were identified: Caribbean, Central America, Eastern Africa, Middle Africa, South America, Southern Africa, and Western Africa.
- **Responses:** Intermediate-region.

2.35 Country New Region (newregion)

- **Question:** In what region is the coded country?

- **Clarification:** Nine regions were identified: Asia, Australia and New Zealand, Latin America and the Caribbean, Melanesia, North Africa and Middle East, North\West Europe, Northern America, South\East Europe, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

- **Responses:** Region.

Part 3. List of References

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