

# Trends for Democracy & Autocracy & Implications

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&

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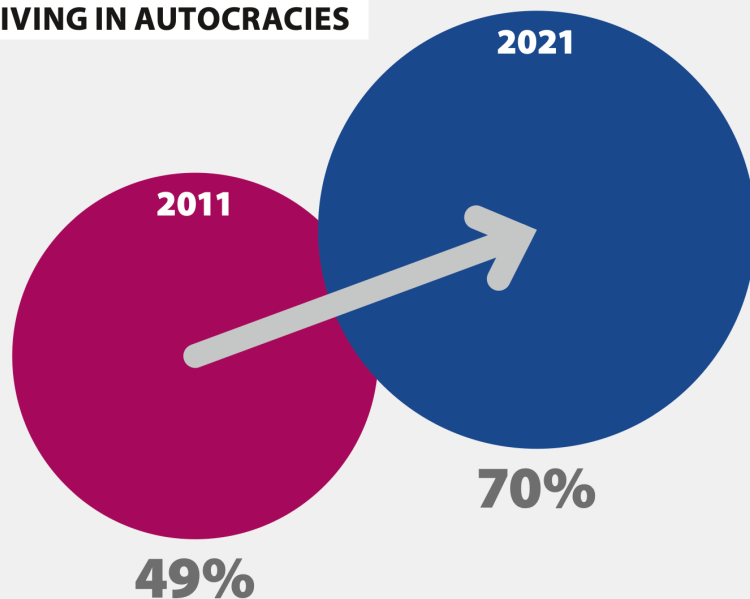


## State of the world 2021: autocratization changing its nature?

Vanessa A. Boese, Martin Lundstedt, Kelly Morrison, Yuko Sato & Staffan I. Lindberg

# 1 DEMOCRACY WORLDWIDE IN 2021

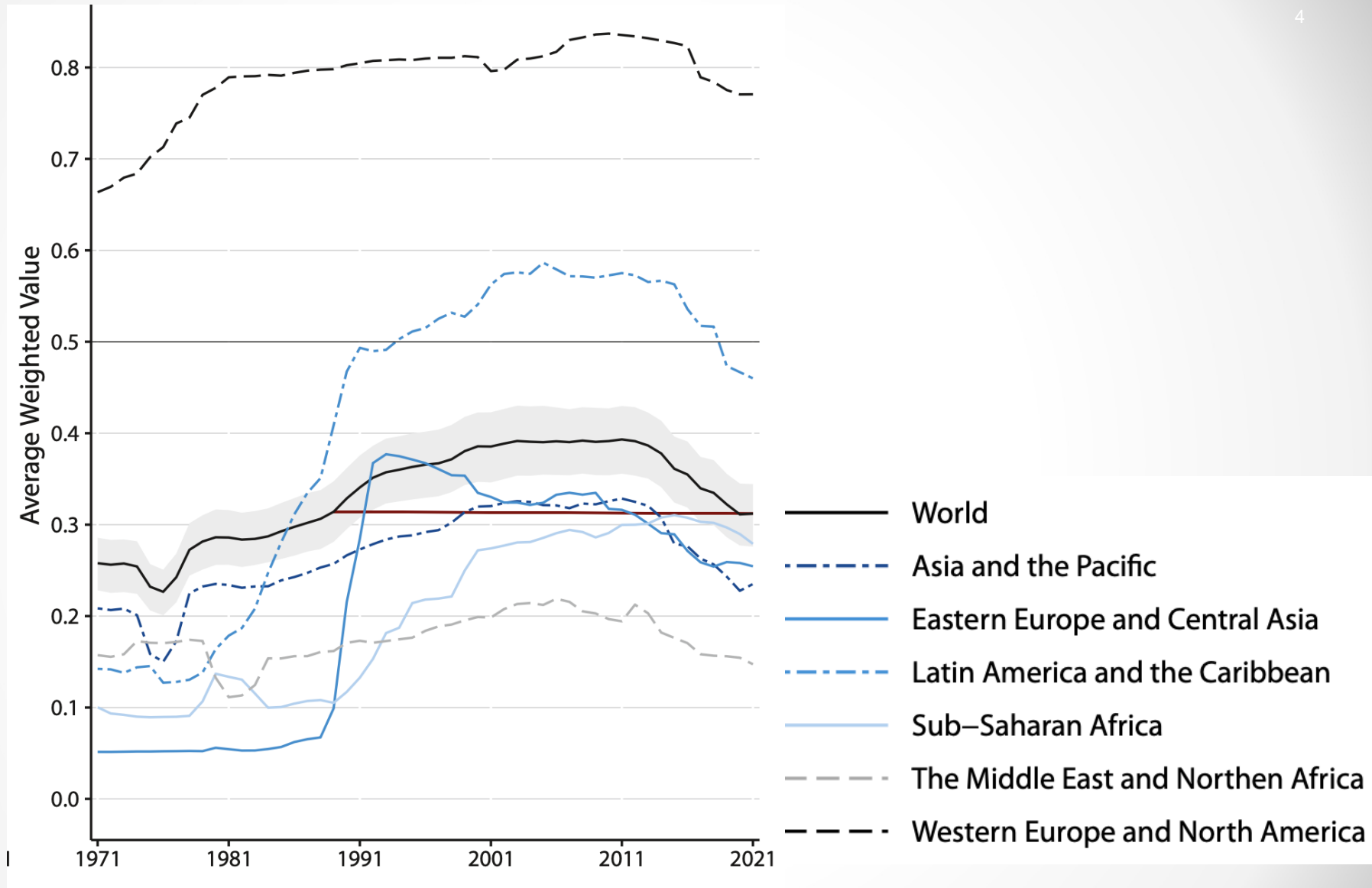
SHARE OF WORLD POPULATION  
LIVING IN AUTOCRACIES



## Back to 1989 Levels

# LIBERAL DEMOCRACY INDEX (population weighted)

4





# 1 DEMOCRACY WORLDWIDE IN 2021

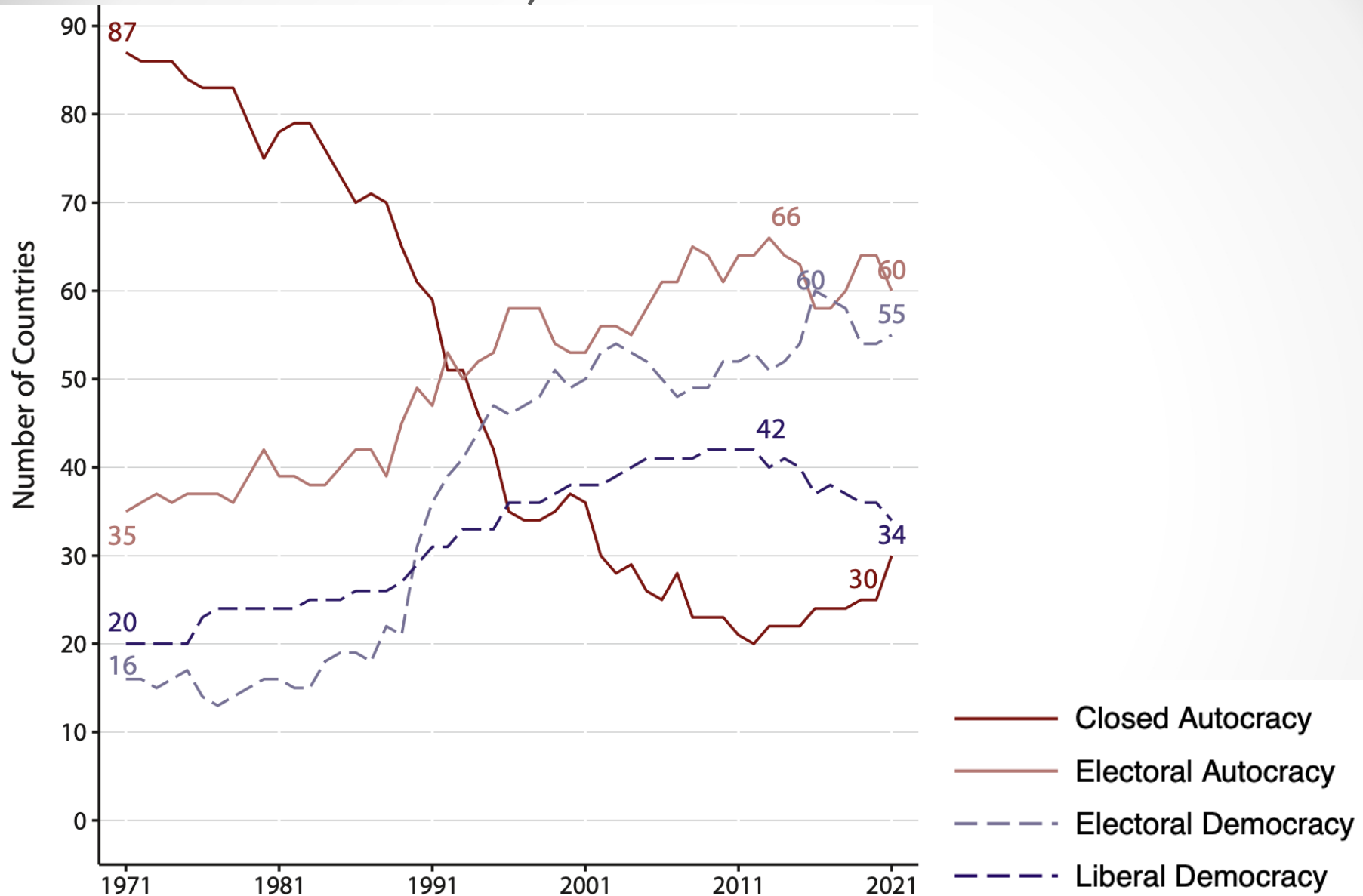
Back to 1989 Levels

**Dictatorships on the Rise**

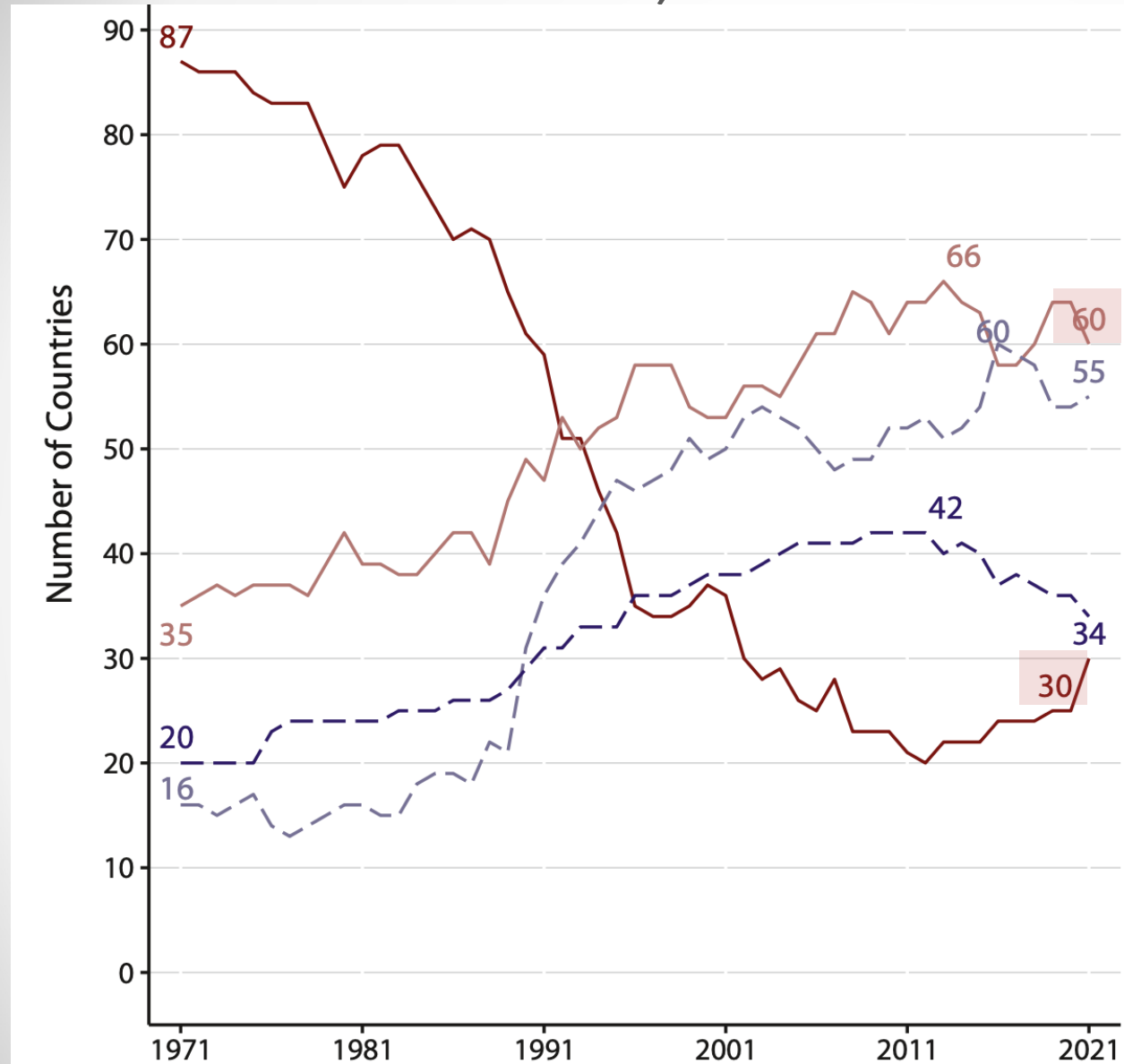


# REGIMES OF THE WORLD, 1972-2020

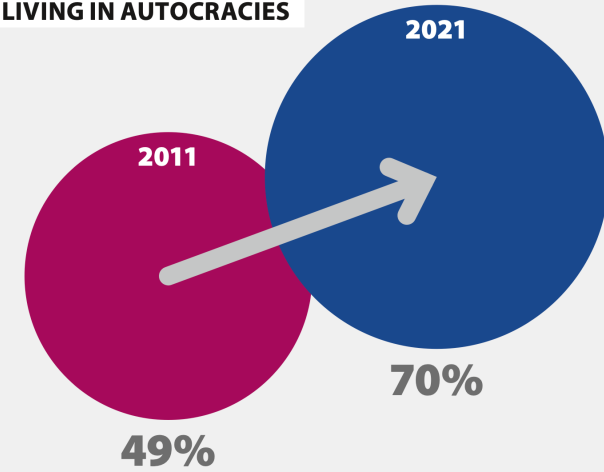
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# REGIMES OF THE WORLD, 1972-2020



## SHARE OF WORLD POPULATION LIVING IN AUTOCRACIES



# AUTOCRATIZATION



# MORE ARMED CONFLICTS

- Democracies do not fight wars with each other

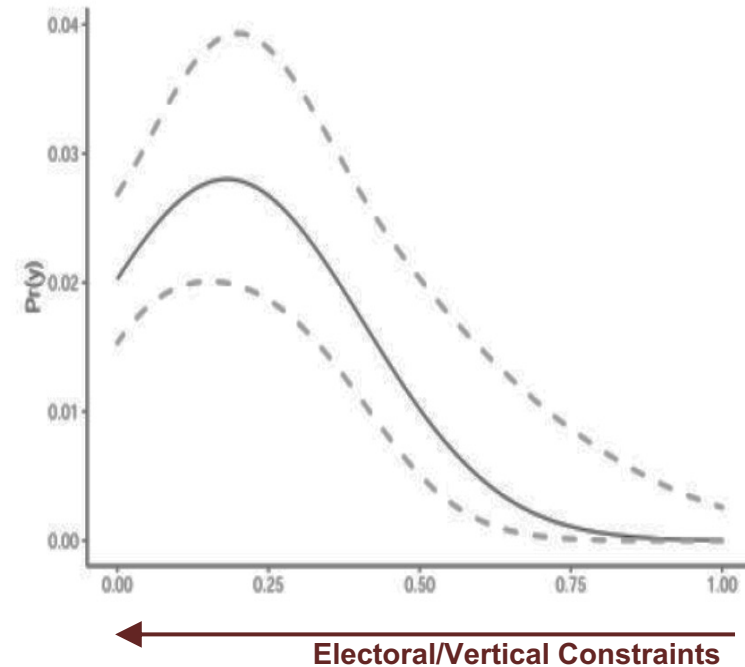
➤ India → Electoral Autocracy  
Risk of armed conflict  
with Pakistan  
▲ 300%

- Democracies least prone to domestic violent conflicts

(e.g. Fjelde et al. 2021; Hegre et al., 2001; Hegre, 2014)



In 1795, Immanuel Kant wrote  
*Zum Ewigen Frieden*



# AUTOCRATIZATION



# MORE ARMED CONFLICTS

- **Democracies do not fight wars with each other**

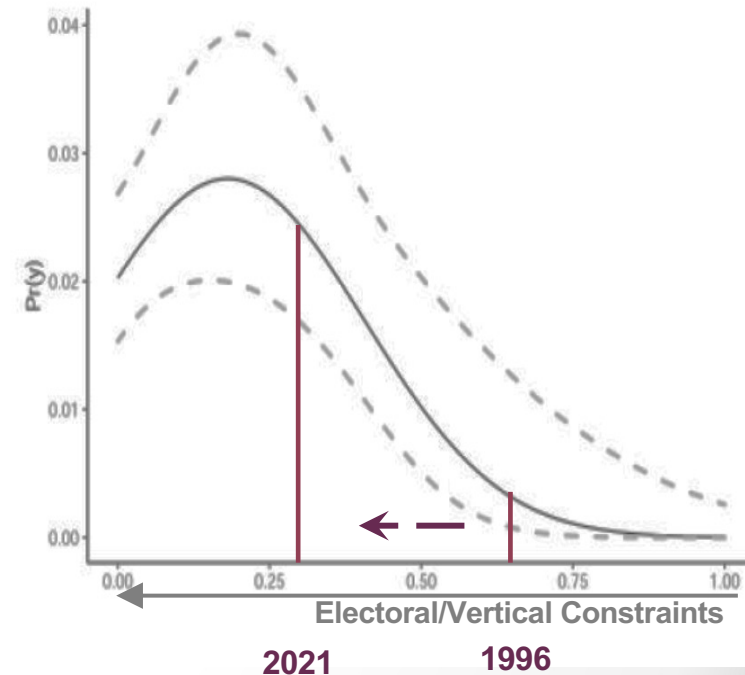
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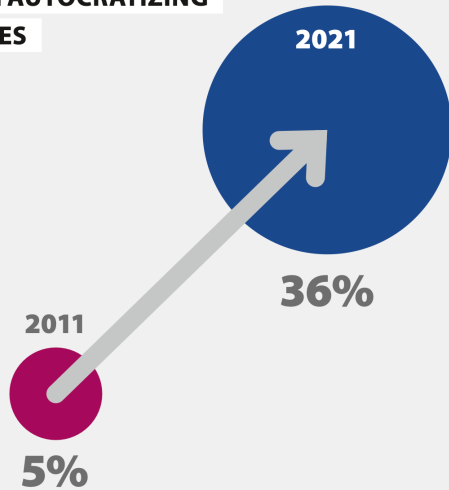


**RUSSIA**

# 2 DEMOCRATIZERS AND AUTOCRATIZERS

## A Record 33 Countries are Autocratizing

SHARE OF WORLD POPULATION  
LIVING IN AUTOCRATIZING  
COUNTRIES

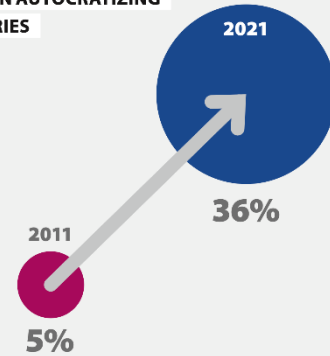




# NUMBER OF COUNTRIES, 1971-2021



SHARE OF WORLD POPULATION  
LIVING IN AUTOCRATIZING  
COUNTRIES



— Autocratizing Countries  
- - Democratizing Countries

# ≈80% of Democracies that Autocratize

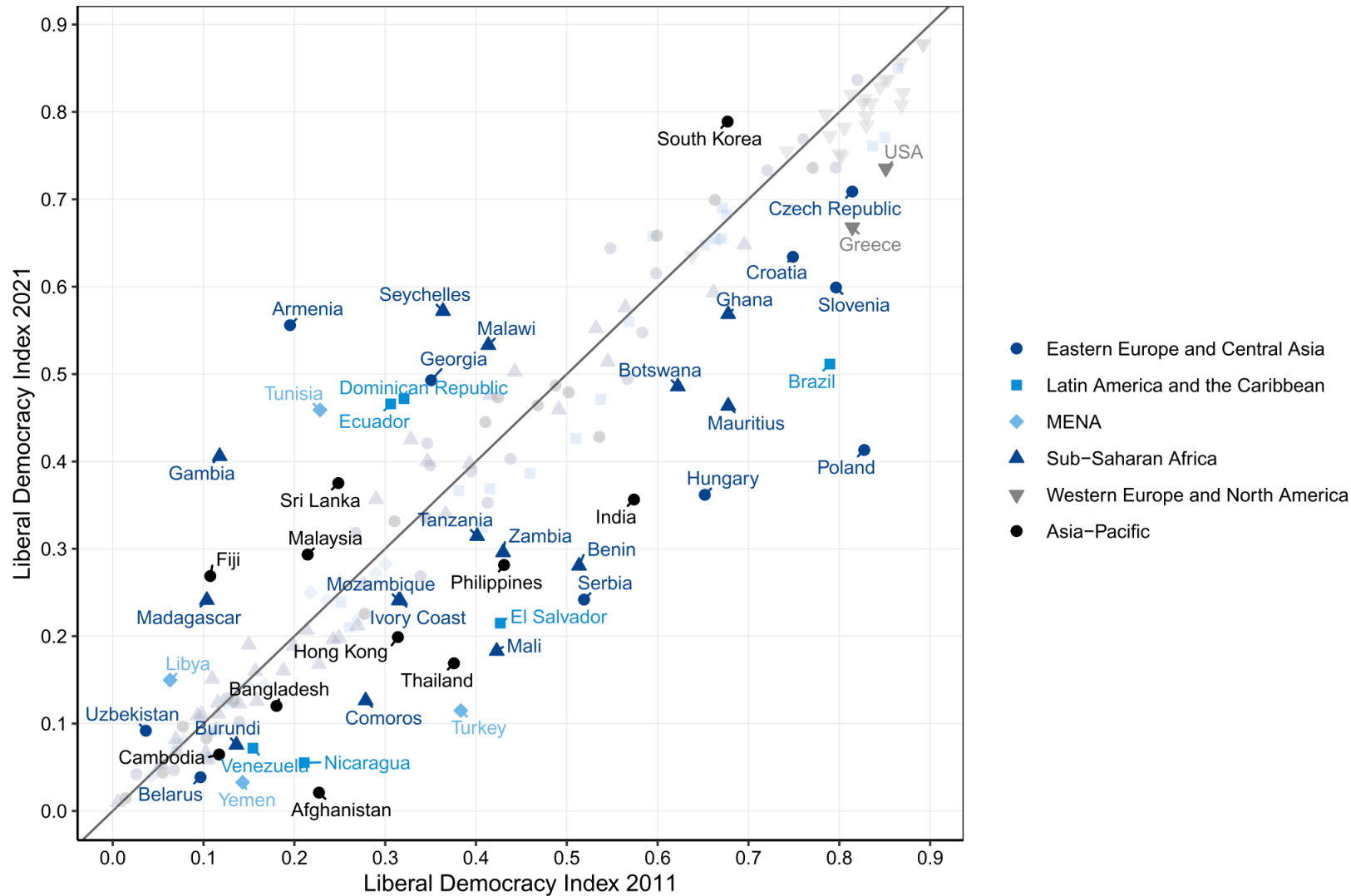
→ Break Down.....

Period	Episodes		
	Completed episodes	Averted breakdown	
		N	%
1900-1992	37	8	22%
1993-2019	47*	11	23%
total	84*	19	23%

Boese, V. et al. 2021: "How Democracies Prevail". *Democratization*. **Open access!**

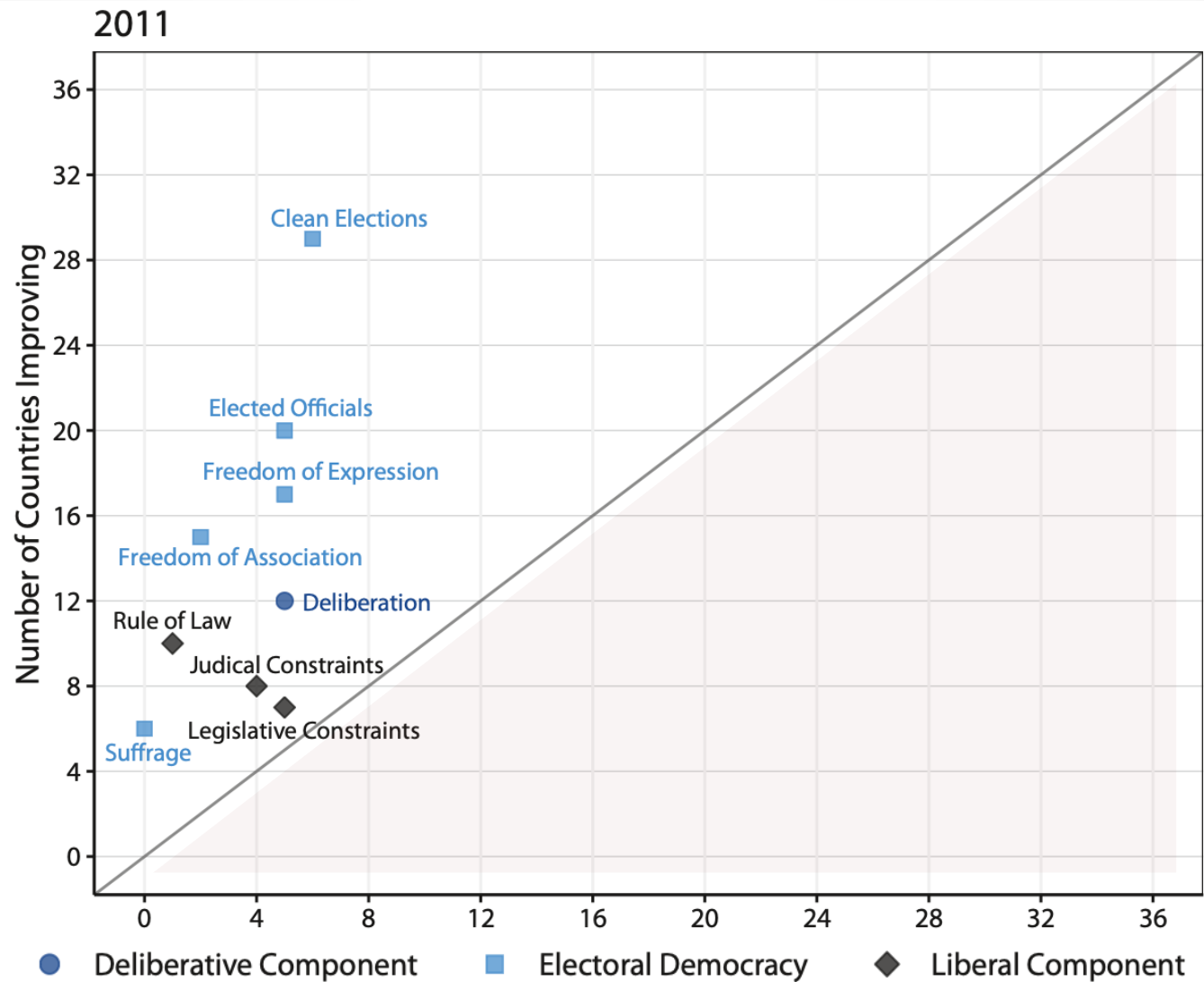


# DEMOCRATIZERS & AUTOCRATIZERS, 2011-2021

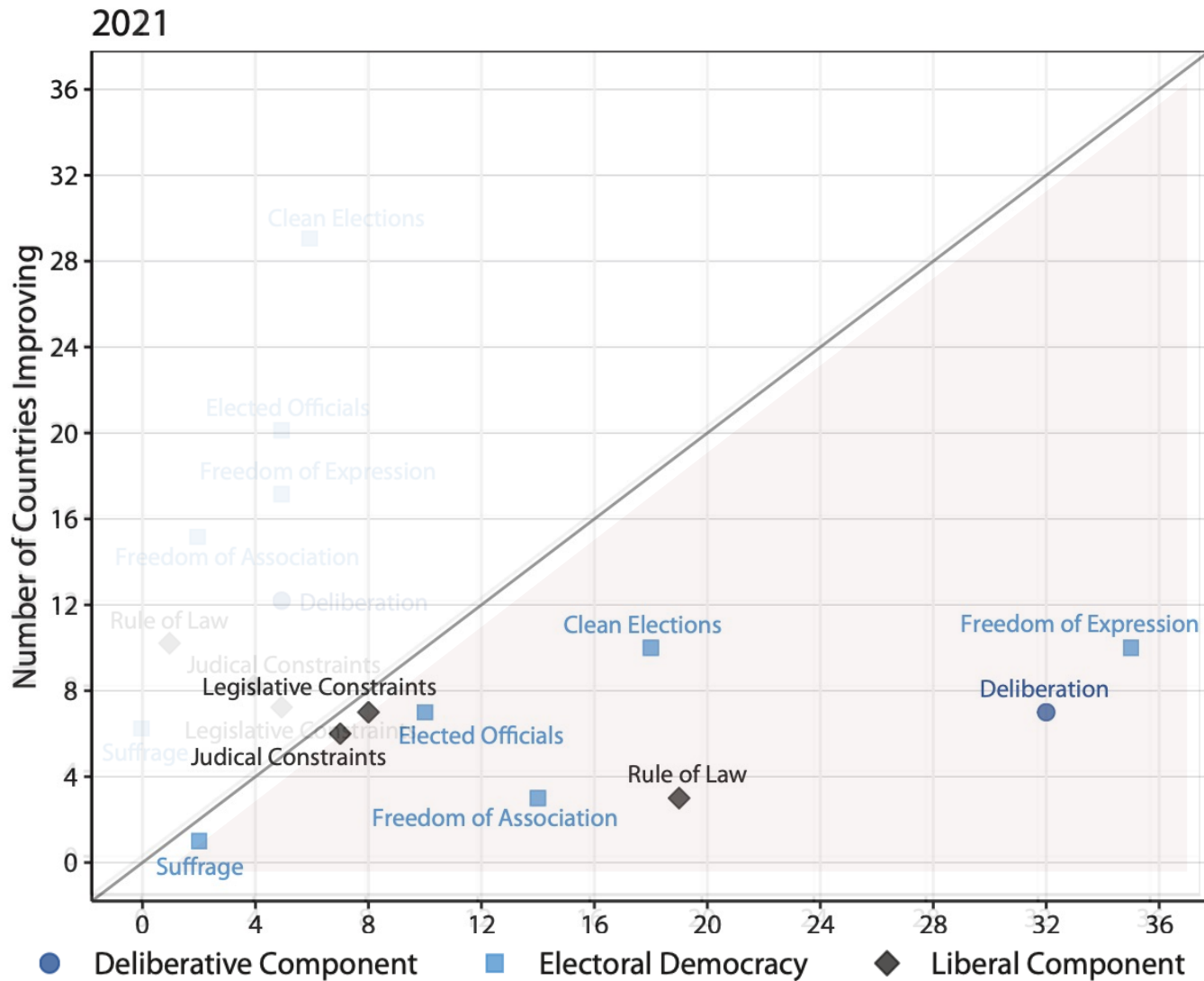


**Figure 6.** Advances vs. declines on the Liberal Democracy Index (LDI), 2011–2021.

# ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY, 2011 vs 2021



# ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY, 2011 vs 2021



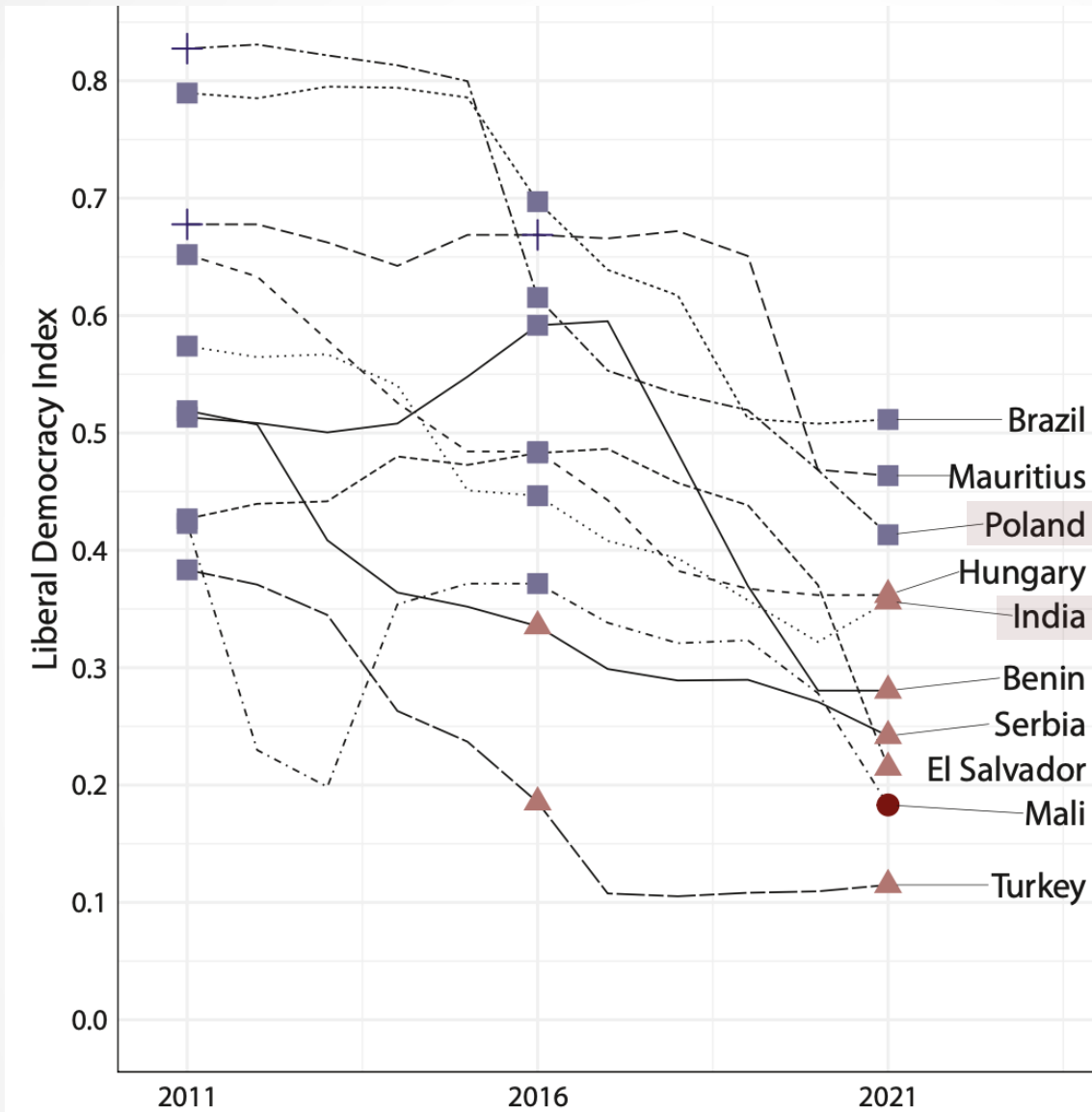
# 2 DEMOCRATIZERS AND AUTOCRATIZERS

## The Major Autocratizers





# TOP-10 AUTOCRATIZERS, 2011-2021



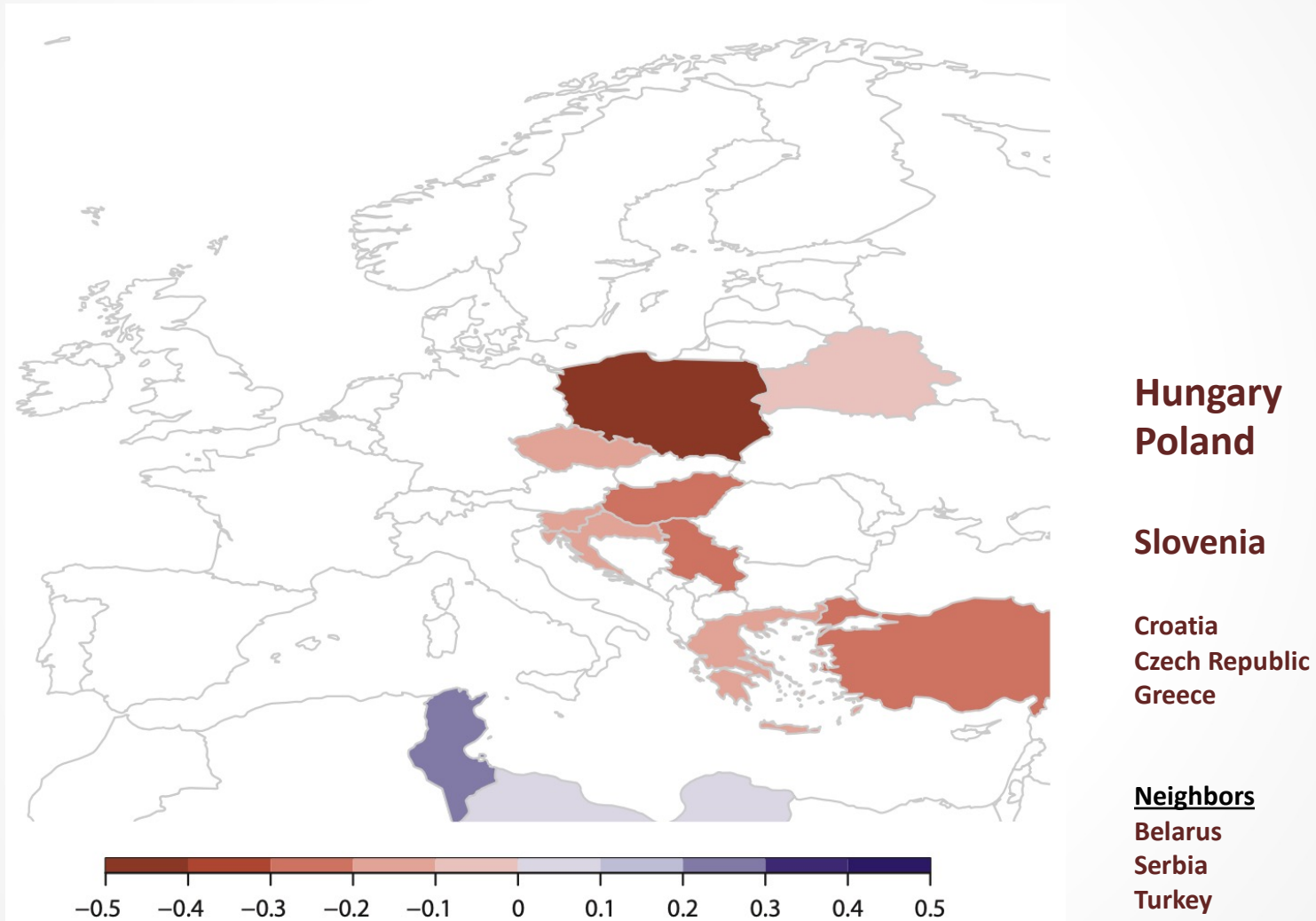
# 2 DEMOCRATIZERS AND AUTOCRATIZERS

## The Major Autocratizers

### IN FOCUS: EU AND ITS EASTERN FLANK

- 6 out of 27 EU members states – more than 20% of the Union – are now autocratizing. Three of EU's neighbors to the east are also autocratizing.

# IN FOCUS: EU AND ITS EASTERN FLANK



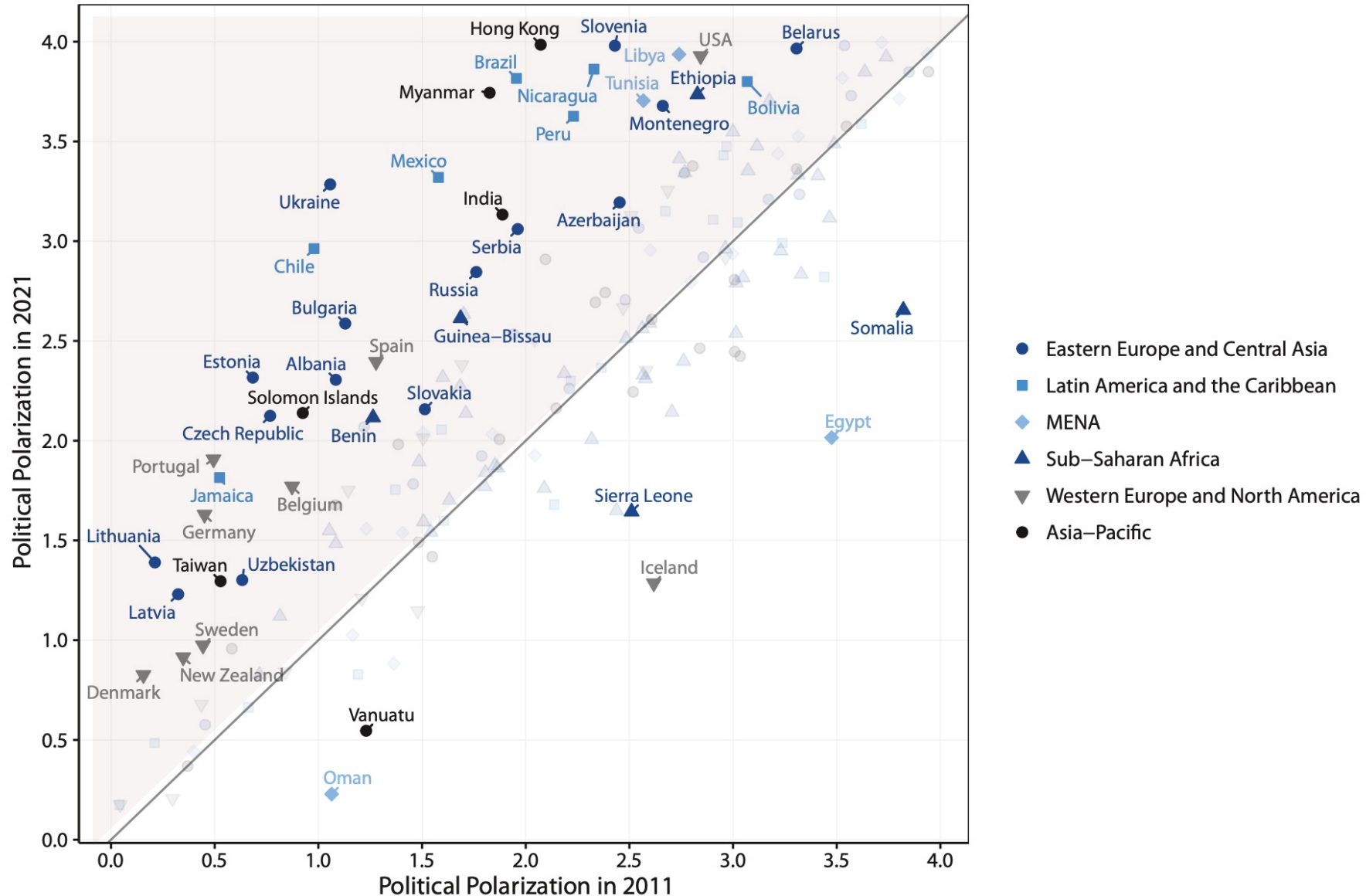
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## AUTOCRATIZATION CHANGING NATURE?

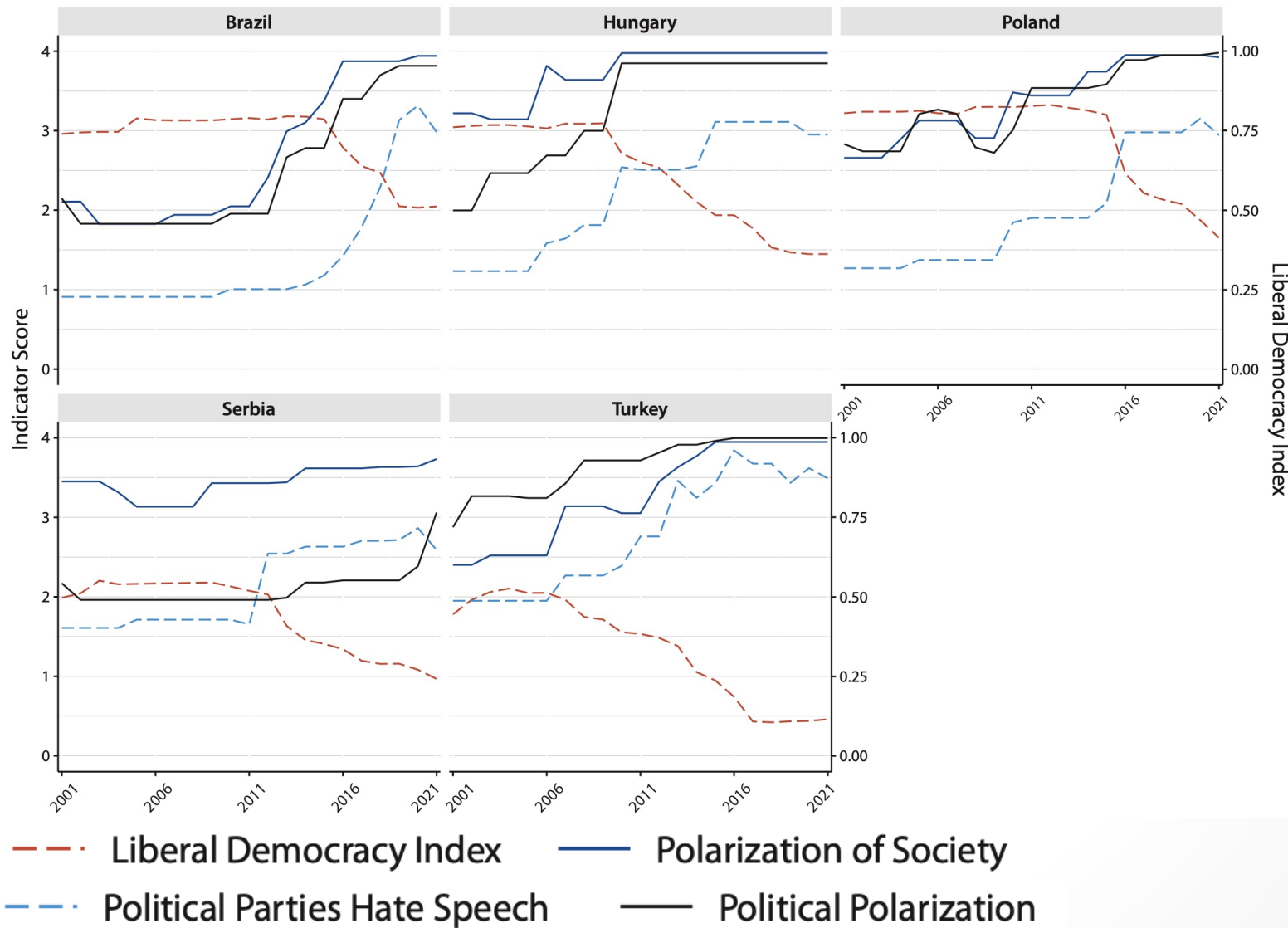
### **A Wave of Polarization**

- Polarization escalates towards toxic levels in 40 countries – contributing to the changing nature of autocratization.

# WAVE OF POLARIZATION, 2011-2021



# POLARIZATION & AUTOCRATIZATION, 2001-2021





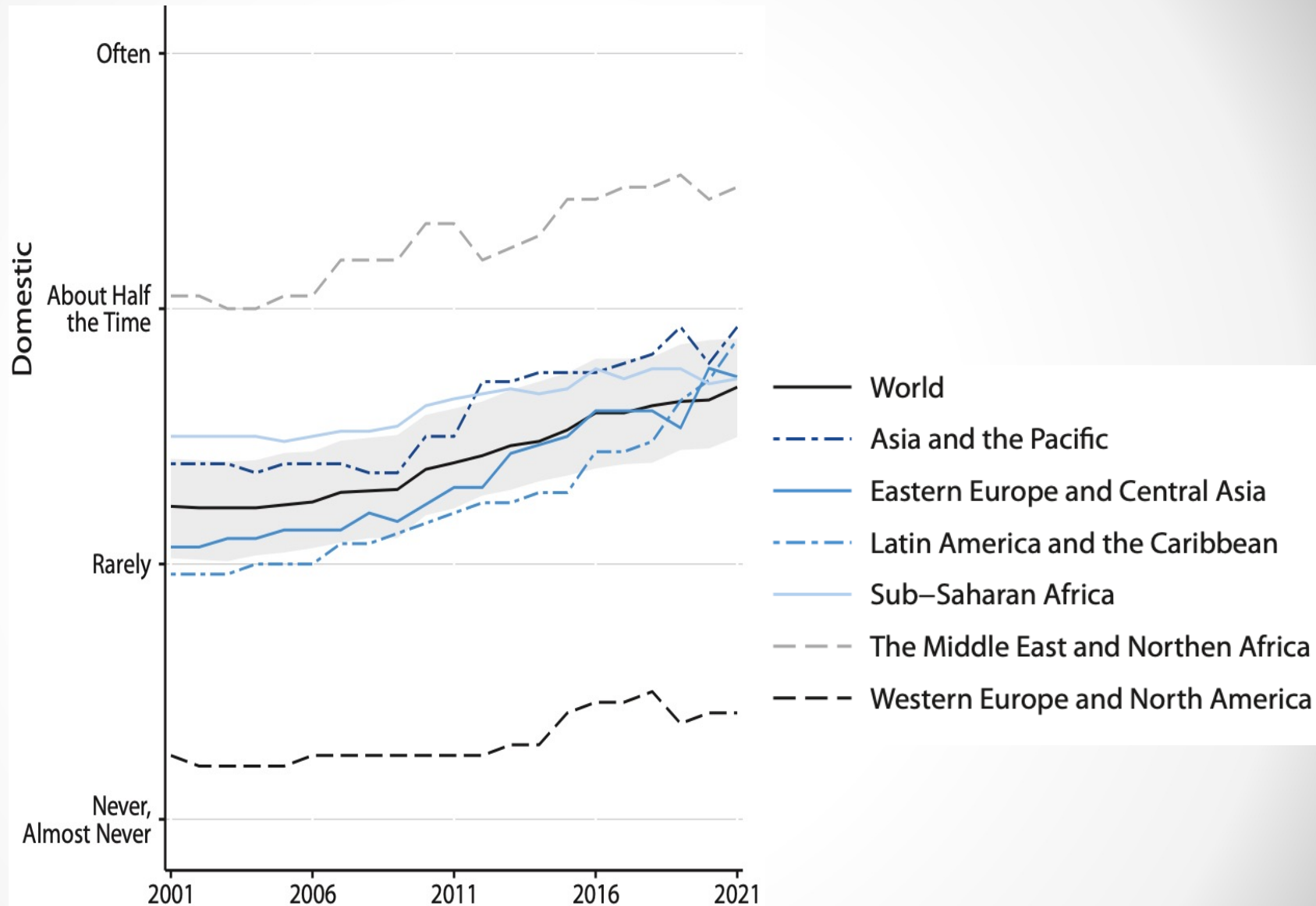
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## AUTOCRATIZATION CHANGING NATURE?

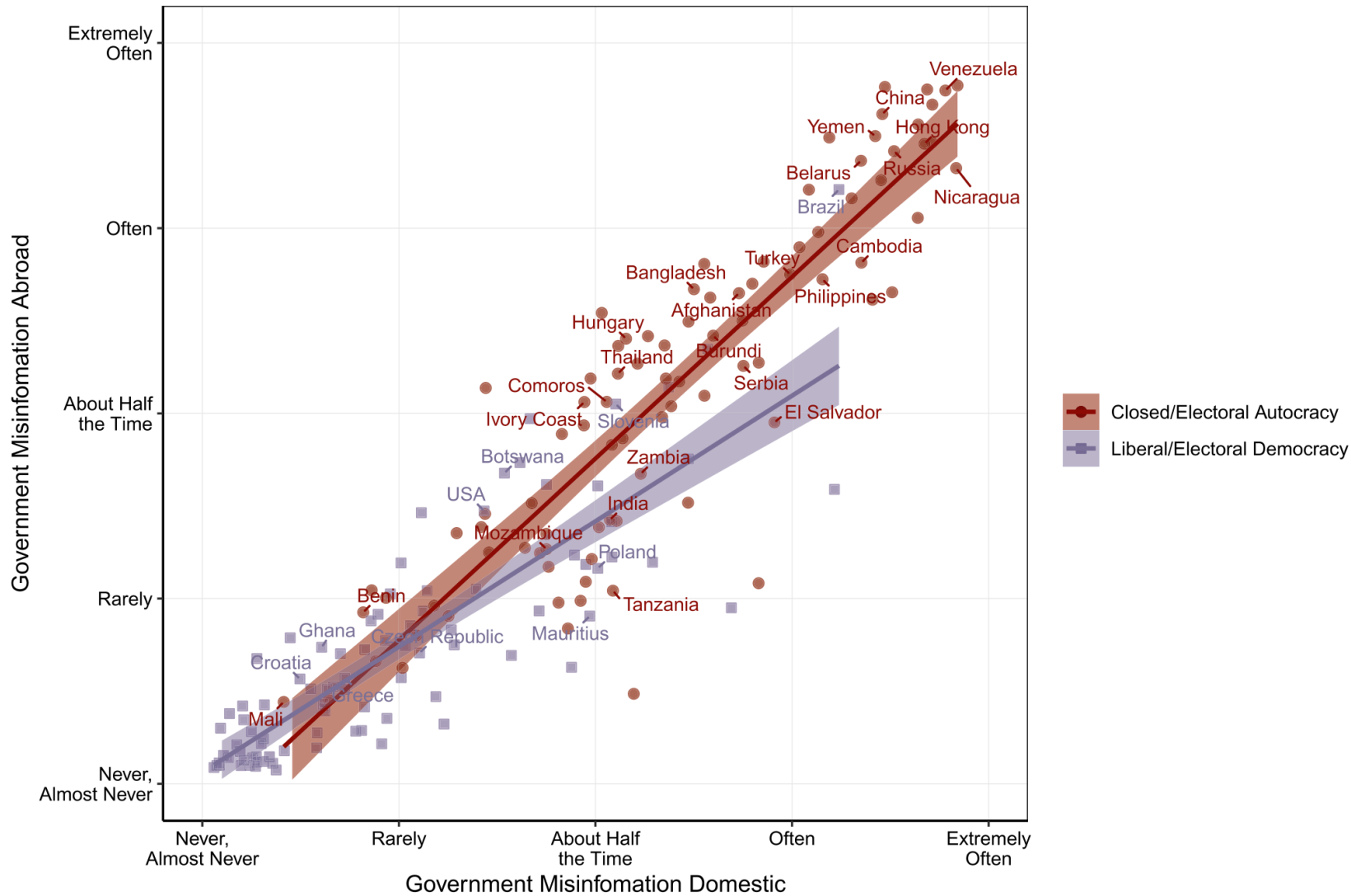
### Misinformation Multiplying

- Autocratic governments increasingly use misinformation to shape domestic and international opinion in their favor – a signal of emboldened autocrats.

# DOMESTIC MISINFORMATION, 2001-2021



# GOVT's & FALSE INFORMATION, 2021



**Figure 13.** Government dissemination of false information in 2021.

DEMOCRACY REPORT 2022

# Autocratization Changing Nature?



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

# CAN YOU DO DEMOCRACY PROMOTION?



*Table 1: Subtypes of Democracy Promotion: Support and Protection*

	Subtypes of Democracy Promotion (DP)	
	Democracy Support	Democracy Protection
<b>Direction of Regime Change</b>	Democratization	Autocratization
<b>Rationale of DP</b>	Foster democratization	Counter autocratization
<b>Objective of DP</b>	Strengthen pro-democratic actors and facilitate reforms of institutions	Protect pro-democratic actors, counter autocratic forces and prevent institutional reforms
<b>Instruments of DP</b>	Cooperative	Cooperative and Coercive

*Source:* Leininger, Julia “Towards a New Theory of Democracy Support and Protection”, *forthcoming* 2023





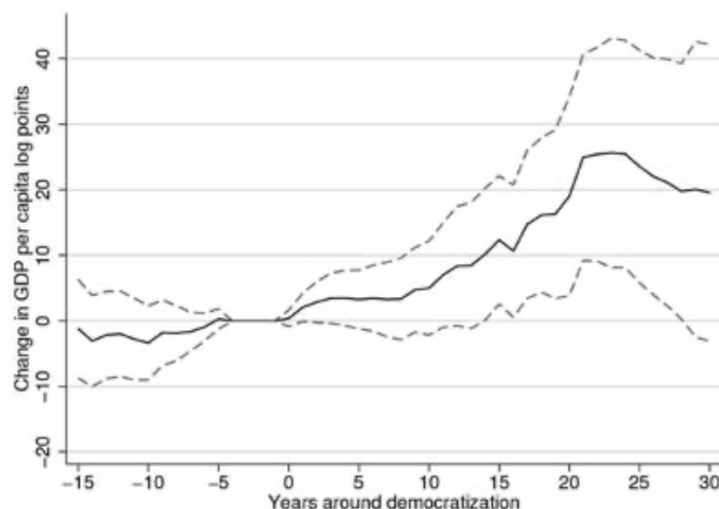
# CASE FOR DEMOCRACY



# DEMOCRACY -> Economic Growth

- **Democratize = GDP/c +20%** vs countries that remained autocracies (Acemoglu et al. 2019).

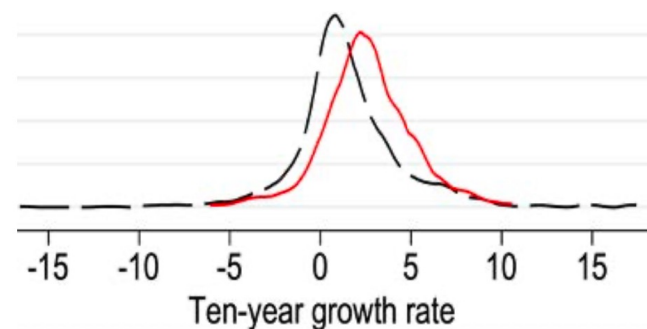
FIG. 2. EFFECT OF DEMOCRATIZATION ON GDP/C[LOG] (ACEMOGLU et al 2019).



## Democracy Gives Stable, Predictable Growth

Democracy also acts as a safety net against more catastrophic economic outcomes. **From 1990 to 2009, only 7% of democracies experienced negative growth rates, whereas over 30% of autocracies did.** About one in 20 autocracies had negative growth rates of over 10% (Knutsen 2020).

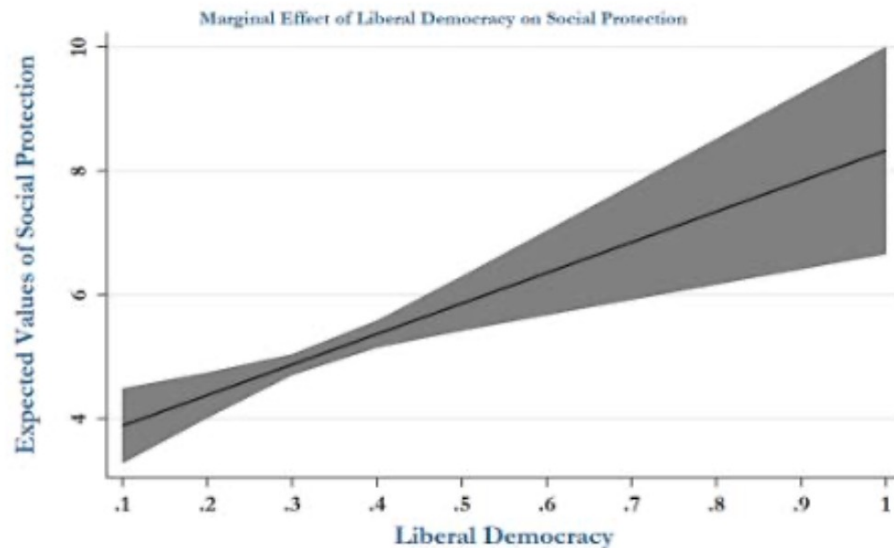
FIG. 1. MEAN GROWTH RATES FOR DEMOCRACIES AND AUTOCRACIES 1800S-2000S, DEMOCRACIES IN RED (KNUTSEN 2020).



# DEMOCRACY -> Social Protection

- **No -> Full Democracy= over 100% increase spending** (Murshed et al. 2020).

**FIG 1. POSITIVE EFFECT OF DEMOCRACY ON SPENDING ON SOCIAL PROTECTION** (Courtesy of M. Murshed and B. Bergouigi, based on results from Murshed et al).



## Gender Equality and Social Cohesion

Evidence from recent empirical studies demonstrates that gender equality is much more likely to be the norm in democratic countries. **Flawed democracy leads to almost 33% lower levels of egalitarian gender attitudes compared to fully democratic countries, and hybrid as well as authoritarian regimes to over 60% lower levels** (Zagrebina 2020).

# DEMOCRACY -> Human Development

- **Democratize:**  
**+3% life expectancy** 10 years after transition (Bollyky et al. 2019).
- **Autocratizing countries:**  
**- worse in all health outcomes** in a 10-year period after autocratization. (Wigley et al. 2020)
- **Democracies**  
**-94% infant mortality** vs autocracies (Wang et al. 2018)

FIG 1. ADULT LIFE EXPECTANCY, 1970-2015 (BOLLYKY et al 2019).

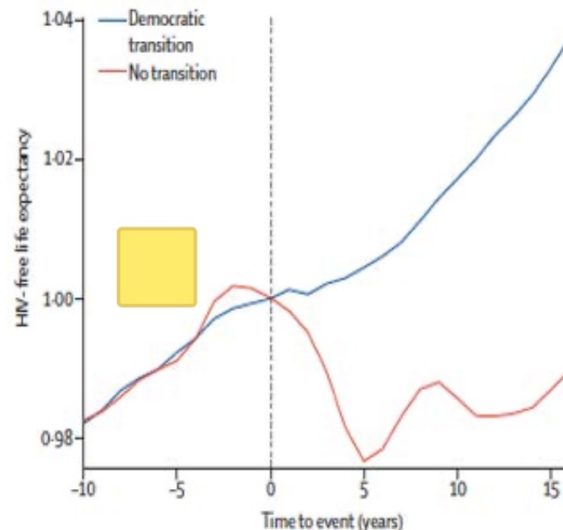
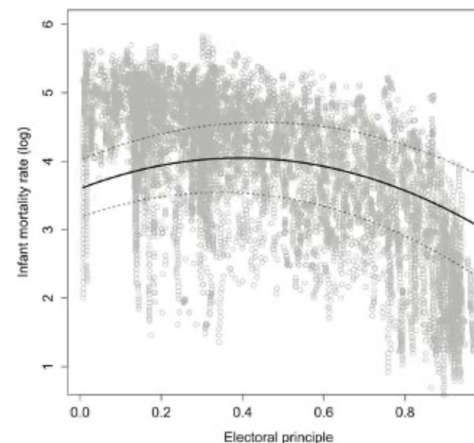


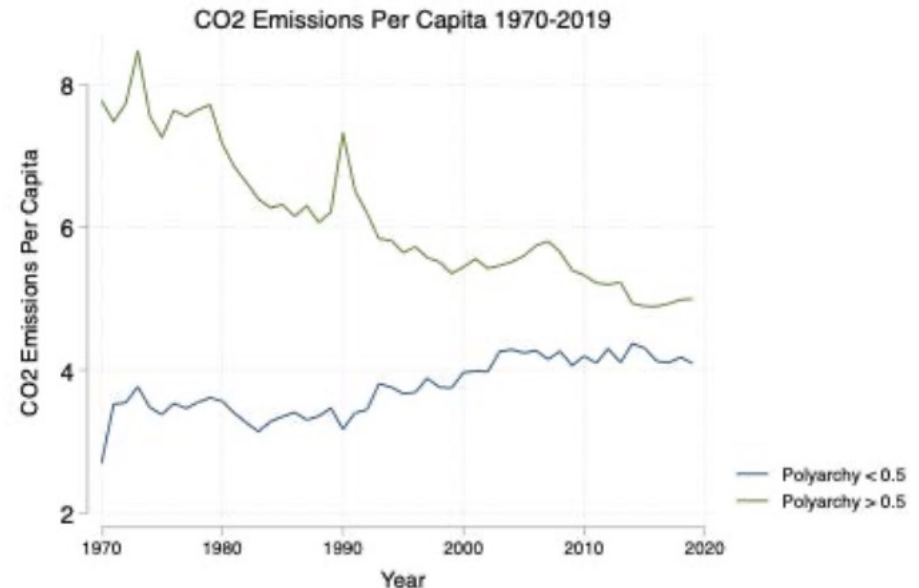
FIG 2. LOWER INFANT MORTALITY IN DEMOCRACIES (WANG et al 2019).



# DEMOCRACY -> Climate Change

- **-1.6 degrees in nationally determined goals** (Tørstad et al. 2020).
- **Air quality improve** 0.14% with each 1% increase in democracy (Bernauer & Koubi 2009).
- **Policy commitments +19%** (Bättig & Bernauer 2009)

FIG 1. EMISSIONS DEMOCRACIES AND AUTOCRACIES (V-DEM DATA AND OUR WORLD IN DATA)





*The Case for Democracy:*

**Does Democracy Cause Economic Growth, Stability, and Work for the Poor?**



*The Case for Democracy:*

**Does Democracy Have Dividends for Education?**



*The Case for Democracy:*

**Are Democracies Better for Social Protection of the Poor, Gender Equality, and Social Cohesion?**



*The Case for Democracy:*

**Does Democracy Improve Public Goods Provision?**



**Scientific evidence shows that:**

- Democracies with vibrant vertical accountability provide 23% more safe water access, 35% more immunization to young children, and up to 40% more electricity access, than autocracies.
- Democracy provides on average citizens with an internet connection rate more than 300% compared to autocracies.
- Democracy with strong vertical accountability mechanisms diminishes corruption.

**More Safe Water, Immunization, Electricity, and Social Protection for the Poor**

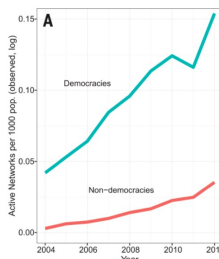
A large body of scientific research demonstrates that democratic elections induce governments to provide public goods. Already 20 years ago, Lake and Baum (2001) established that moving from the lowest to highest levels of democracy is associated with 23% more of the population having access to safe water and 35% more of the population younger than age 1 being immunized against DPT (Diphtheria, Pertussis, and Tetanus). A recent set of studies such as Borjag et al. (2016), have produced evidence that when corruption is low to moderate, moving from the lowest to the highest levels of democracy results in a 20-40% increase in electricity access/consumption.

Democratization is also instrumental in bringing access to public goods for the poor and marginalized. Solid evidence now demonstrates that transitioning from a closed dictatorship to a full democracy leads, on average, to more than a 100% increase in social protection spending (Mursheed et al. 2020). Thus, democracies also provide public goods to more people by reducing inequality.

FIG 1. POSITIVE EFFECTS OF DEMOCRACY ON PUBLIC GOODS PROVISION



FIGURE 1: INTERNET ACCESS RATES IN DEMOCRACIES AND NON-DEMOCRACIES (WEIDMANN ET AL. 2016)



*The Case for Democracy:*

**Does Democracy Increase Global Health?**



*The Case for Democracy:*

**Do Democracies Perform Better Combatting Climate Change?**



Scientific Evidence  
• Democracies have higher climate change mitigation efforts.  
• Each new democratic country reduces global CO2 emissions by 1.5%.

Democracy is a robust empirical finding. It is when it comes to moving from the lowest to the highest levels of democracy, the effect is similar to the effect of climate change.

*The Case for Democracy:*

**Does Democracy Bring International and Domestic Peace and Security?**



*The Case for Democracy:*

**Democracies Produce More Transparent and Higher-Quality Data**

**Scientific evidence shows that:**

- Democratization leads to an increase in supply of data to the World Bank by 13 percentage points.
- Democratic governments are substantially more transparent with data and their policy making processes than autocratic ones.
- Autocratic countries often manipulate data and overstate their performance across a range of economic development and public health indicators, including COVID-19 deaths.

**Democracies Supply More, and More Transparent Data than Autocracies**

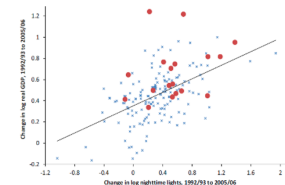
A robust series of studies now evidence that democracies report and provide more data than autocracies. For example, when a country becomes a good democracy transitioning from autocracy, the reporting on World Development Indicators increases by 13 percentage points, even taking into account countries' state capacity (Hollmer et al. 2011).

Scientific evidence also shows that data transparency increases with democratic accountability. Rosendorff and Doez (2006) demonstrate that in democracies, voters are 70% better informed about policy decisions and the policy making process (e.g. if and if so why the government repudiates contracts, or expropriates certain actors) than citizens in autocracies. Taking many factors into account, they show that more democratic institutions explain at least 1/3 of this rather large difference in transparency.

Similarly, Wehner and de Renzio (2013) provide evidence that switching from autocracy to democracy improves fiscal transparency by 18 percentage points.

democracies overstate GDP growth figures about 1.5 percentage points (Figure 1). Martinez (2021) finds evidence that autocracies overstate GDP growth by at least 0.7 percentage points. With their authoritarian control over national statistic bureaus, authoritarian leaders have a special capacity to twist realities.

FIGURE 1: COMPARISON BETWEEN OFFICIAL GDP FIGURES AND ESTIMATES FROM NIGHT LIGHTS.



# Varieties of Democracy

Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) is an unique approach to conceptualizing and measuring democracy. We provide a multidimensional and disaggregated dataset that reflects the complexity of the concept of democracy as a system of rule that goes beyond the simple presence of elections. The V-Dem project distinguishes between five high-level principles of democracy: electoral, liberal, participatory, deliberative, and egalitarian, and collects data to measure these principles.

[Download the Dataset](#)

[Download the Codebook](#)



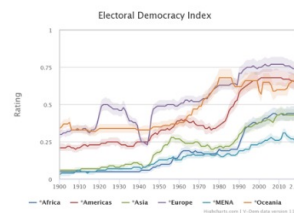
## About V-Dem

Learn more about V-Dem, our methodology, and team



## Datasets

Download the V-Dem datasets and reference materials



## Graphing Tools

Use our graphing tools specially designed to visualize V-Dem data

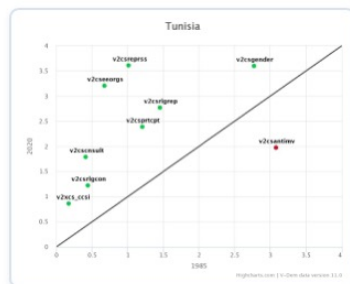
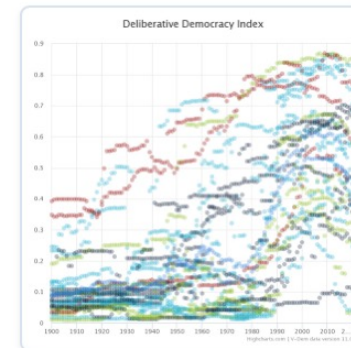
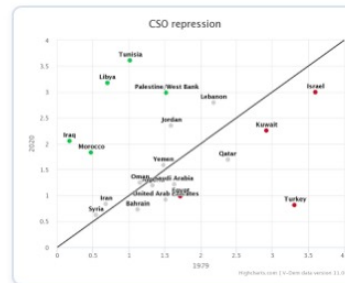
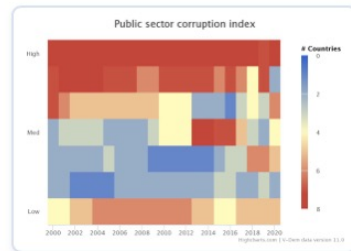
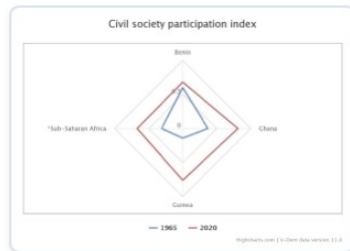
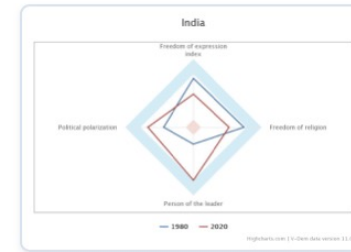
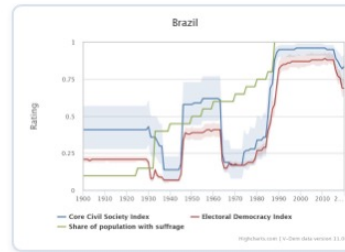
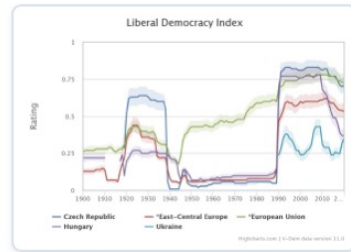
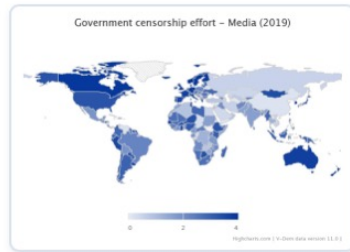
## Total:

- 600,000+ unique users, from 220 'countries'

## Since Jan 4<sup>th</sup> 2016:

- 250,000+ Dataset Downloads
- 12 million+ Graphs/Online Tools
- 85,000+ Downloads of 120+ Working Papers

# Graphing Tools

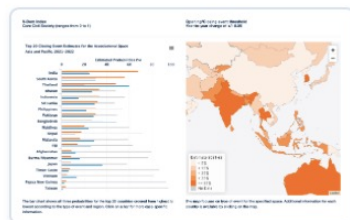
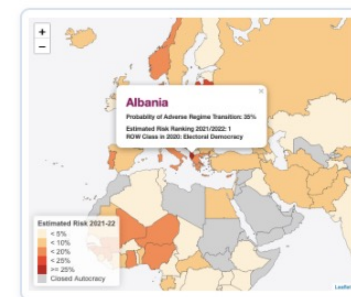


Deliberative Democracy (India vs. Asia)

Indicator	# of Countries	# India	Current Index in India
Report country corruption (publicly)	21	11	2
Report corruption (privately)	21	11	2
Range of corruption (publicly)	21	14	1
Report country (challenged)	20	14	1
Participate in public goods (challenged)	17	11	2
Collaborative (Challenged) index (challenged)	17	11	2
Collaborative (Challenged) index (challenged)	17	11	2
Report country corruption (publicly)	21	11	2
Report country corruption (privately)	21	11	2
Participate in public goods (challenged)	17	11	2

Goal Indicator: Freedom of discussion for women in India  
Relative to Region: Asia  
Contingent on Indicators: Deliberative Democracy

Indicator	Min Value	Current Value in India	Notes
Report country corruption (publicly)	2	11	1
Report corruption (privately)	1	11	1
Range of corruption (publicly)	1	14	1
Report country (challenged)	2	14	1
Report country corruption (publicly)	1	11	1
Report corruption (privately)	1	11	1
Range of corruption (publicly)	1	14	1
Report country (challenged)	2	14	1
Participate in public goods (challenged)	2	11	1





# Thanks for listening

