

*New Datasets on Political Institutions and Elections, 1972-2005*

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**Abstract** This article introduces two new data sets produced by the *Institutions and Elections Project*. Those data sets contain nuanced information describing the political institutions, the constitutional and practical arrangements in governments, and every national election for every country in the international system between 1972 and 2005. We believe the 127 variables in these data represent a significant contribution to research programs in comparative and world politics interested in the nuances of domestic politics.

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Domestic political institutions are a cornerstone in a wide assortment of political science scholarship. Institutions constrain actors, shape their payoffs, and their strategies for maintaining political order, they define the sources of political legitimacy, and they shape expectations of other states in the international system. In addition, scholarship is increasingly suggesting institutional arrangements themselves are endogenous to the goals and preferences of political actors. Subfield variation in the political institutions of interest is wide —voting, legislatures, constitutions, courts, executive selection — but few comprehensive and detailed data sources on such political institutions exist, a circumstance that has hindered empirical testing. In this paper, we introduce two new data collections generated by the *Institutions and Elections Project* (IAEP). The first data set accounts for an extensive array of domestic political institutions and practices for the population of countries in the interstate system between 1972 and 2005.<sup>1</sup> The second data collection accounts for every national election in the same time period for the same set of states. We believe the 127 variables contained in the IAEP data provide an enormous amount of detail that scholars can use to refine their empirical tests of theoretical claims about how institutions influence political behavior.

The IAEP data are significant for their level of detail about institutions, and in the breadth of the states they cover. Many excellent data sources on institutions or elections are more limited either in scope or detail. For instance, Golder’s (2005) data on elections covers those held in democratic states (or more precisely, in states during democratic periods) whereas our election data cover elections in all states regardless of regime

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<sup>1</sup> We follow Polity’s convention of coding states with populations greater than 500,000.

characteristics. We think this breadth provides a chance to examine how superficially democratic processes play out in non-democratic regimes, and perhaps what leads authoritarian states to adopt such practices. Other important data collections like Beck et al.'s (2001) institutions data predominantly describes parties and party leaders in power as opposed to the formal institutions those parties and leaders occupy. The IAEP data offers detailed information on the rules states construct for governance including characteristics of legislatures, executives, courts, central banks, and the powers of those institutions; few such comprehensive data sources exist to date. Perhaps the most widely used data on institutions are the Polity project's indicators of regime characteristics, particularly the democracy and autocracy indices constructed from individual indicators (Marshall and Jaggers 2002). Polity is important for its breadth of coverage (more than two centuries), but as scholars have noted, emphasizes rules regarding recruitment and selection patterns, often focused heavily on executive power. This focus is useful for identifying properties of regimes on which to base an aggregate measure of regime (democracy, autocracy) as the Polity project does. Gleditsch and Ward (1997) report extensive evidence that Polity's democracy indicator is a powerful measure of constraints on the executive, not especially of other constituent variables or of other concepts sometimes attributed to it in the literature. Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2005) argue that the Polity scale is not sufficiently refined to allow for a finer granularity in our understanding of how democratic regimes respond to political challenges; they argue for disaggregating the Polity index into its components to achieve greater specificity. Despite these cautionary tales, scholars broadly use the Polity index in the empirical literature to represent any number of aspects of democracy including openness, constraints on the

executive, transparency, and democratic norms, to name a few. Claims about democracy and conflict provide a useful example of this insofar as Polity's measure is taken to represent a number of different characteristics of democracy; a related literature follows this general path in developing ideas about the onset of civil wars (Gates et al., 2001; Regan et al., 2007). The problem is that a single variable like Polity's democracy measure cannot adequately account for or separate the effects of all of these different concepts in empirical analysis. The data we present provides a host of opportunities for refining those institutional characteristics to measure concepts beyond openness.

By providing detailed indicators of states' institutions, the IAEP data make it possible to evaluate differences among states that have similar codings in widely used composite measures. For example, using Polity's democracy minus autocracy index, there are multiple ways to achieve any particular score. For instance, a "seven" on Polity's twenty-one point scale can occur from four different combinations of regime characteristics. The variability among states with the same index values is masked by the aggregation of institutional characteristics, and thus provides only limited guidance for understanding the character of the constraints faced by any particular form of a regime. The IAEP data we present offers an opportunity to capture some of the heterogeneous institutional structures and choices states make about institutions, and to augment measures like Polity's or Freedom House's indices.

Consider a specific illustration of this variability in two states with identical Polity index scores, and how the IAEP data can refine how we describe states, and speak to their heterogeneous characteristics. In 2000, both Bangladesh and Ecuador had Polity scores of six. There are substantial institutional differences between these countries with identical

scores. Bangladesh has a parliamentary form of representation with a unitary system of centralized government and a central bank with control over monetary policy, while Ecuador has a presidential system, a decentralized federal government, and a central bank with no control over monetary policy. And neither of these countries with electoral systems and formal legislative arrangements qualifies as democratic on the most widely used indicator of regime type.

To understand outcomes in the political arena, then, we need a more comprehensive way to disaggregate political institutions. We provide that with these data on institutions and elections. The article provides an overview of the data, the coding rules, and sources, discusses the seven general areas of institutions we code, and proposes several ways of aggregating the institutional variables into indices that measure executive powers and executive constraints. In addition, we describe the events data on national elections, and we conclude with a brief discussion about applicability of these data to a range of research questions.

### **The Institutions and Elections Project Data**

The two IAEP data collections present variables on formal – that is de jure – institutions that derive from constitutional arrangements, and de facto institutional arrangements that result from internal distributions of power, and elections. Below, we describe these data and provide an introduction to their depth, breath, and intellectual value.

This data project is actually two distinct datasets. The first is comprised of information on formal political institutions, often those institutions outlined in a country's constitution, but not limited to formal constitution arrangements. This is a country-year

dataset where the unit of observation is the country and year and the temporal range is from 1972 through 2005. The second is a dataset comprised of the population of elections over the same time period. Data on elections, moreover, are recorded for any country that holds an election, regardless of whether or not the election is considered free, open, or fair. We make no judgment about the character of the election; we only record its existence and characteristics including timing, turnout, and the outcome of the electoral process.

The data on formal institutions encompasses thirty-four years of time for 167 different countries; in total, the institutions data include 5,002 country-year observations. Like Polity, we include all countries with populations over 500,000. The number of independent countries in any one year, of course, varies over our temporal span, with countries coming into the system in large numbers after the breakup of the Soviet state. The lowest number of countries was in 1972 with 133; the highest number was 161 in 2005. The institutional data record information on seven general categories of political institutions, including 1) constitutional requirements, 2) legislature characteristics, 3) executive-legislature relationship, 4) judiciary, 5) centralization of government, 6) the electoral structure, and 7) the rules governing elections. These seven categories comprise a total of 111 separate variables, capturing sixty separate characteristics of the political institutions. Appendix 1 details the variables in each of these categories.

Whereas the institutional data are country-year unit of analysis, the national legislative and executive elections data use the elections themselves as the unit of analysis, and thus are event data. In some years and some countries there are multiple elections, and in some instances, scheduled elections are postponed or cancelled. We

record data on a variety of aspects of every national election, including 1) the date, 2) whether there were protests or boycotts, 3) whether the scheduled election was cancelled or postponed, 4) whether there was violence, 5) whether the election was considered competitive and contested, and 6) the voter turnout (see Appendix 1 for detail). In all there are 1,373 elections recorded over the 1972-2005 period, with the lowest number in 1975 (22) and the highest in 2000 (56).

The institutions data are coded based on conditions in the country in question as of January first of any given year. Institutional changes after January first are coded in the subsequent year, assuming those new conditions exist on the first day of the next year. For example, if a country has a constitution and a legislature and a whole host of other arrangements on January 1, 1994, but the country experiences a military coup that suspends the constitution and dissolves the legislature on February 1, 1994, our coding will still reflect the conditions as of January 1, 1994. We record the date that the constitution was suspended, but we do not record changes in the institutions for that year. In order to have the data “catch up” to the extant political changes, the user will have to look forward in the data to the following year. These data would record the new institutional arrangements as of January 1, 1995. This coding rule may prove important in relating the IAEP institutions data to other data collections. For instance, the Polity project codes country-year data based on conditions on December thirty-first of any given year. Users should be mindful of these differences and consider whether or how these timing matters might prove influential in analysis.

IAEP’s country year identifiers are consistent with those used widely in international-relations data, including country-code numbers corresponding to the

Correlates of War (COW) project (Singer and Small 1994), country abbreviations, and names, but following the Polity IV convention which, unlike the COW codes, provides distinct country numbers for countries that undergo significant changes. For instance, Polity IV creates distinct codes for the USSR (364) and for Russia (365).

### **Sources**

A wide variety of sources were marshaled during the coding process. The coding processes started with the most contemporary constitution, principally from the *Constitutions of the Countries of the World*. Beyond the formal aspects of the constitution, several other sources include the *Political Handbook of the World* (Banks, Overstreet, and Mueller, various years), news compilations such as *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* and *Facts on File*, and existing data bases such as the elections file from the *Center on Democratic Performance*. Where necessary we also consulted the *New York Times* and other primary media outlets. Much of the data required that we look beyond media-oriented sources and instead consult academic texts, country web pages, web pages for central banks, and in a few instances contacting embassies. Where language coverage allowed, we sometimes consulted media outlets in the primary language. All sources are recorded in the extensive notes that accompany the data.

We next describe the data in more detail by breaking out some of the specific variables and presenting them as distributions across time and space.

### **Institutions**

The institutions section can be broken down into seven parts: the constitution,

legislatures, the executive and legislature's relationship, constitutional courts, government centralization, central banks, and elections and electoral outcomes.

The constitution section codes the establishment of a country's constitution, amendments, rules for amendment, and whether a constitution was in force (See Figure 1). Our first observation is that nearly every country has a constitution, and most of these constitutions comprise written documents that describe the rules of the political institutions. Each year there are a reasonably small number of suspended or abrogated constitutions. Moreover, there are frequent amendments to existing constitutions. The range in the number of amended constitutions is from ten to forty of all the constitutions for a particular year. Amendments to a constitution do not always result in changes to the institutional arrangements that we record, but when they do those changes appear in the data coded for the following year.

We record in the data the initial date that a constitution in force was promulgated, just as we do any subsequent dates that the constitution went out of force. When considered as a timeline describing the ability of the constitution to withstand internal political changes, this provides a metric for thinking about political stability. Sometimes constitutions change – and therefore we record the termination of a constitution – for completely legitimate reasons such as a polity calling a constitutional convention to rewrite their institutional rules. Sometimes they change as a result of political turmoil. In Figure 1 this variability can be seen in by the sudden drop in the percentage of constitutions that went out of force in the 1991-1992 period. This difference is traceable in the way we record the start and end dates of constitutions. The duration of constitutions ranges from five days to hundreds of years.

**(FIGURE 1 about here)**

The legislature and the executive provide the critical components for understanding the distribution of political power and constraints within a country. We record information on both, as well as aspects of the institutional relationship between these two centers of authority. We record the number of chambers and number of seats in the legislature, if one is constituted. In 2005 almost all countries have formal legislatures, though in 1972 roughly 85% of countries had formal legislatures. Our data do not provide a direct evaluation of the veracity or independence of the legislature (see below), but rather characteristics of the institutions. For example, the number of seats in the lower chambers ranges from a low of fifteen in Niger (1991) to a high of 3,500 in China (early 1980s). The distribution between unicameral and multi-cameral legislative bodies is roughly 60/40. The rules that govern the election of legislatures are also described by the data. We code four possible rules that govern who wins: plurality, majority, proportional, and mixed systems. In 1972 of the ninety-six countries for which the legislative was elected, 32% used a plurality system and 25% a proportional system. By 2005 there were 149 countries that had elected legislatures, but only 15% used a plurality system and 35% determined winners based on a proportional representation. Thirty percent used a mixed system in 2005, whereas only 13% chose their legislatures based on a mixed system in 1972.

States' executive offices come in a host of configurations. The IAEP data report whether the executive is chosen from the legislature, independently of the legislature, appointed, elected, or meets our definition of a dictator. By our coding, 25% of the country-year observations have dictators as chief executives, although this ratio declines

steadily over time (see Figure 5). In 1972 roughly 35% of countries were led by dictators, while in 2005 only 10% of the executives were dictators. A somewhat striking aspect of the data is the fact that there are quite often multiple executives who share various aspects of executive authority. For instance, some members of the British Commonwealth like Canada have elected executives who are members of the legislature (Prime Ministers), executives selected independently of the legislature (the British Queen), and appointed executives (Governor General). In roughly 50% of the observations there is an elected executive, though this number, too, changes quite dramatically over the temporal range of our data. Elections for the legislature are much more common throughout our observations (see Figure 2).

**(FIGURE 2 about here)**

Two other forms of institutional constraints reside in a constitutional court and a central bank, and we record data on both. National courts can take on many descriptions; we restrict our coding to those courts that can rule on constitutional questions. The data reflect the existence of such a court, and, if so, how and for how long the judges are selected. We also record who has the authority to remove sitting judges and whether the court can rule over either executive or legislative decisions. In 1972 only 56% of the countries had a constitutional court, but by 2005 nearly 85% of countries had such a court. This rather dramatic change in the development of a constitutional constraint far exceeds the effects of increases in the number of independent countries. In the span of thirty years the number of countries that have structured constitutional courts doubled.

**(FIGURE 3 about here)**

Our data show that most countries have a central bank and that the frequency has not changed over time. Approximately 85% of the countries in our sample have a central bank and the range over the thirty-three years of data is between a low of 82% of the countries and a high of 89%. By the same percentages political systems give central banks control over the country's monetary policy (see Figure 4). If there is an apparent change in banking structures over time, it is that the executive's prerogative over appointment of the Bank's administrator has declined over time, with 76% of bank directors being appointed by the executive in 1972 and 69% of directors serving at the behest of the executive in 2005. Most of the change has been absorbed by a shared responsibility between the executive and the legislature.

**(FIGURE 4 about here)**

We could continue to describe de jure institutions at length, although what we have mentioned above provides a glimpse of the depth and breadth of the data. Instead, we turn to describe some of the de facto institutional arrangements that we record. Many of the institutional arrangements that structure political debates (e.g. characteristics of party systems) are not recorded formally in constitutions. This seems to be as true in stable political democracies as it is in autocratic states. For example, the number of seats in the House of Lords in Britain is not constitutionally mandated. Nor always is the banning of parties a constitutional function like in the barriers that the Mexican government raised to multi-party participation. More generally, the number of countries that ban political parties drops rather precipitously after the end of the Cold War, with a high of about ninety countries in 1979 to a low in 2004 of about fifty countries that ban some or all

political party participation. The banning of parties, moreover, follows a trend in the reduction of the number of countries with dictators as ruling executives, and it appears that the trend away from dictatorships precedes the legalization of political parties (see Figure 5).

The data on the existence of and the rules governing elections provide another – and complementary – way of capturing the political institutional processes at work. The existence of formal elections is one element, but we also capture various aspects of how the elections play out, even in countries for which we do not normally focus on electoral processes. In general, 80% of elections are considered to be competitive and contested, by which we mean that no one party wins more than 90% of the seats in a legislative election or no one candidate wins more than 90% of the vote in an executive election. In the 1970s only 54% of executive elections were competitive. In contrast, between 1998 and 2005, 87% of these elections are coded as competitive. Further, there are only half as many executive elections in the 1970s as there are after 1998. Similar numbers for legislative elections are 63% and 93%, even though the numbers of legislative elections were more constant across the thirty-three-year time span.

**(FIGURE 5 about here)**

### **Elections**

Our data also records the existence of national elections for the legislature, the executive, or when both are held simultaneously. Over the thirty-four year period captured in our data we record 299 executive elections, over 900 independent legislative elections, and 177 instances where both executive and legislative elections were held at the same time. With roughly 5,000 annual observations in our data, we record, on average, one election

every four years, although, of course, the data do not distribute quite so nicely. The range of election years in a country *for which they held elections* is one to eighteen, with an average number of elections in a country being eight. In total, 160 countries held at least one election over the temporal period we cover. These countries include Cuba, Ethiopia, Egypt, Syria, and Burma to name a few of the countries least expected to hold elections and those that tend to not be coded in other elections datasets (e.g. Golder 2005, Center on Democratic Performance, IFES, IDEA). The countries with the most elections tend to be in the Americas; those with the fewest tend to be in Central Africa. Moreover, nearly 80% of all elections are considered to be competitive by our coding rules.

Political participation in the form of electoral boycott, protests, and violence are also recorded. Roughly 10% of all elections, for example, were boycotted by at least one major party, but just over 7% of all scheduled elections were either cancelled or postponed and in only 6% of those instances do we pick up traces of protest as a result of the changed election schedule. In 159 of the elections we record, violence resulted from the elections' outcome, but in only one-third of those protests did we record widespread violence. In general, the data suggest that the global electoral processes' central tendency is competitive, complete, and reasonably peaceful, in spite of what conventional wisdom and high profile exceptions might suggest.

The correlation between our measure of competitiveness and the Polity indicator is .64, suggesting that as regimes become more democratic according to the Polity indicator, they also open up their electoral process to a wider range of parties. However, at the lower end of the Polity scale (-7 to -10), 30% of the eighty-seven elections we observed were considered to be competitive, yet only 13% of the thirty-six executive

elections were coded as competitive. The data at the democratic end of the Polity scale (7-10) identifies roughly 95% of legislative elections and nearly 92% of executive elections as competitive. This trend of competitive elections also tends to hold in anocratic polities, even though at slightly lower rates (85% and 88%, respectively).

### **Data Aggregation**

One useful way of assessing dimensions of political institutions is in the aggregation of individual variables into indices that describe relationships among actors and institutions. The IAEP data provide information for generating indices on different dimensions of states' institutions than those captured by Freedom House or Polity. And although indices created with the IAEP data suffer from similar concerns raised about aggregate indices in general, they provide a vehicle for observing relationships among aspects of political institutions. For example, the institution of the executive branch reflects a complex set of relationships that proscribe and prescribe actions and responsibilities. To the extent that the executive branch holds sway over the legislature we might expect certain types of political behaviors to be more prominent. The human rights literature often holds that executive prerogatives drive policy outcomes (Cingranelli and Pasquerello, 1985; Gartner and Regan, 1996). Constraints on executive authority can be vested in numerous institutional configurations that individually are weak but collectively act as a powerful force to moderate behavior. The role of a constitutional court is one example, and one for which contemporary events shape dramatic outcomes in Pakistan (*The Economist* 2007). The president in Pakistan has the authority to appoint and dismiss justices of the Supreme

Court, and he was therefore able to manipulate his political institutions to remain as chief executive in spite of what appeared to be popular condemnation.

Next, we describe a few of the possible indices that can be generated from these data. We develop three indices to capture the institutional relationships among government institutions. The number of possible components to any such index is rather large, but we think in terms of who has authority to veto whom, who appoints and who dismisses, who calls elections, who proposes legislation or amendments to the constitution, and who controls the budgetary process.

As a means of describing the data, we generate indices of executive assets, executive liabilities, and a net of these two, which we call executive power. By assets, we refer to institutional arrangements that give power to the executive at the expense of the legislature, such as powers of appointment, power to dismiss the legislature, the lack of executive elections, and the ability to use force without legislative approval, and rule by dictatorial authority. We also record the political institutional arrangements that act as a restraint on executive power, which we refer to as executive liabilities. These include the ability to propose legislation and veto executive decisions, to remove the executive from office, control of final approval of a budget, the election of an executive, and if the executive is chosen from the legislature. In the coding scheme – and in theory – these are mutually exclusive categories so the difference between these indicators should provide a sense the relative power of the executive. We generate the two component indices, executive assets and liabilities, by summing across the individual variables. The executive assets index ranges from 0 to 7. The executive liability index ranges from 0 to

6. The indicator of executive power, assets minus liabilities, ranges from -5 to +6, with negative numbers representing greater constraints on the executive (see Tables 1-3).

The data describe conditions in which the executive is generally constrained by countervailing institutional arrangements. For example, although executives tend to have a number of institutionally defined prerogatives over the legislature (median number of assets is three), across the range of countries the institutional forces constraining an executive tend to be greater (the model category is five institutional constraints; median is four). It should not be surprising, therefore, that on average the executive tends to be institutionally constrained relative to the legislature or the courts. The median (and modal) position on our twelve point indicator is a -1, suggesting that on average, power resided outside the executive office.

(Tables 1, 2 & 3 about here)

### **An Empirical Application**

We present a brief empirical application aimed at demonstrating the utility of these data, both in terms of the ability to merge into existing data sets and the intellectual contribution such efforts can provide. Without effort to provide theoretical justification, we merge our IAEP data into the data used by Poe, Tate, and Keith (1999) to examine the conditions under which states respect the human rights of their citizens. We replicate their original model (Model 1, Table 4) and then use our index of Executive Power as an additional explanatory variable. Based on prior research, for example, our expectation might be that unconstrained executives do not have to repress their citizens (Regan and Henderson, 2002). The results of our analysis confirm this expectation, with the sign and

significance of our index as expected (Model 2, Table 4). We would anticipate that other such indices – or individual variables – generated from the IAEP data will illuminate already existing results or add to the ability to test models for which data has heretofore been lacking.

(Table 4 about here)

### **General Issues and Potential Liabilities**

The dataset we have described has over 500,000 cells in the matrix, and, as such, there are inevitable questions regarding missing data and reliability. There are 5,002 country year observations in the data. Because of the conditionality of some indicators, data can be missing for either of two reasons: 1) either the data were not reliably obtainable, or 2) the prior condition did not exist and therefore no coding could be considered for a particular indicator. This second circumstance is quite common, since many of the variables describe characteristics of institutions or practices; if those institutions or practices do not exist, then variables describing their characteristics are necessarily missing. For instance, if a state has no constitutional court, then the selection mechanisms for the court are necessarily missing. Of the 5,002 country year observations in the data, 1,605 cases do not have constitutional courts, and so all subsequent variables marking the characteristics of the court are missing. It is important to distinguish this common reason for missing data from cases where information simply does not allow a reliable coding judgment. Of the 5002 cases, we code the constitutional court as missing 121 times, indicating this latter problem.

The coding process involved a team of as many as eleven graduate students and two faculty members, with the research assistants each taking a series of countries over a fixed period of time. The starting point for coding a case would be to access the operable constitution for a country-year and code as much of the case as possible from that original document; coding then turned to alternative sources. All sources and the rationale for coding decisions are recorded and included in the notes. Each week the team would meet to discuss coding decisions, both the hard ones and the easy, and to go over case-by-case the newly coded observations. When the coders had questions about a coding decision, we discussed them collectively and relied on similar cases to guide our decisions. When we encountered decisions without precedent or on which we could not reach agreement, we sent another coder off to code that case again, without resort to existing notes or sources beyond the constitution. Sometimes there remained disagreements and at that point the original coder would make an argument and the decision criterion would be noted. One of the assets of the IAEP data is that there is publically available documentation on the sources and the decision, permitting a future scholar to either check or challenge our coding decisions.

Over the course of the project, we also worked to ensure our coding judgments were reliable, no small task given the magnitude of the project, and the number of coders working on the project over nearly two years. We managed reliability issues in a number of ways. First, we employed many of the same coders over long and multiple phases of the project, ensuring continuity brought along with coding experience. Second, we trained all of our coders prior to their involvement in the project. Third, we met weekly over the entire course of the project to discuss newly coded cases, work out difficult

sourcing or coding issues, and to ensure that all coders were treating coding decisions similarly. Finally, we recoded approximately ten percent of all cases for the sake of intercoder comparisons; intercoder agreement was generally at a very high rate.

### **Notes on Coding Decisions and Sources**

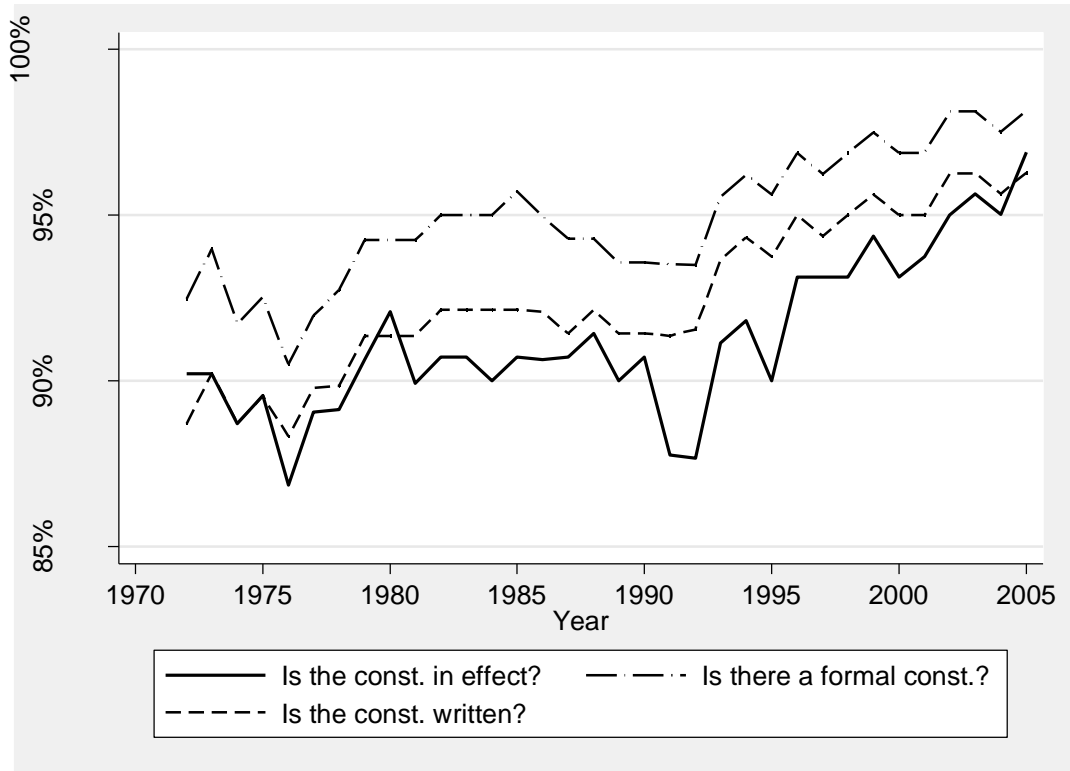
The coders recorded, for every country year, notes on their coding judgments and their sources. As a result, the coding notes are vast and provide a rich source of information both on the context surrounding many variables, and on the coding decisions themselves. The notes are organized by country and then within each country file, by year. In the coding process we erred on the side of inclusion for notes and source material. By way of describing our level of inclusion, the notes comprise, collectively, over 6,000 pages of text. For each country year we provide a list of sources, which will generally start with the source of the formal constitution in English. Other source materials are also identified, as well as the information that provided the primary justification for any difficult coding decision. While the notes are expansive and cumbersome, they do represent a comprehensive documentation of the IAEP data that can facilitate further archival work, either at the country-specific level or for someone looking to code additional information on institutional constraints or continue coding earlier or later years. The notes can be found on the IAEP webpage.

### **Conclusion**

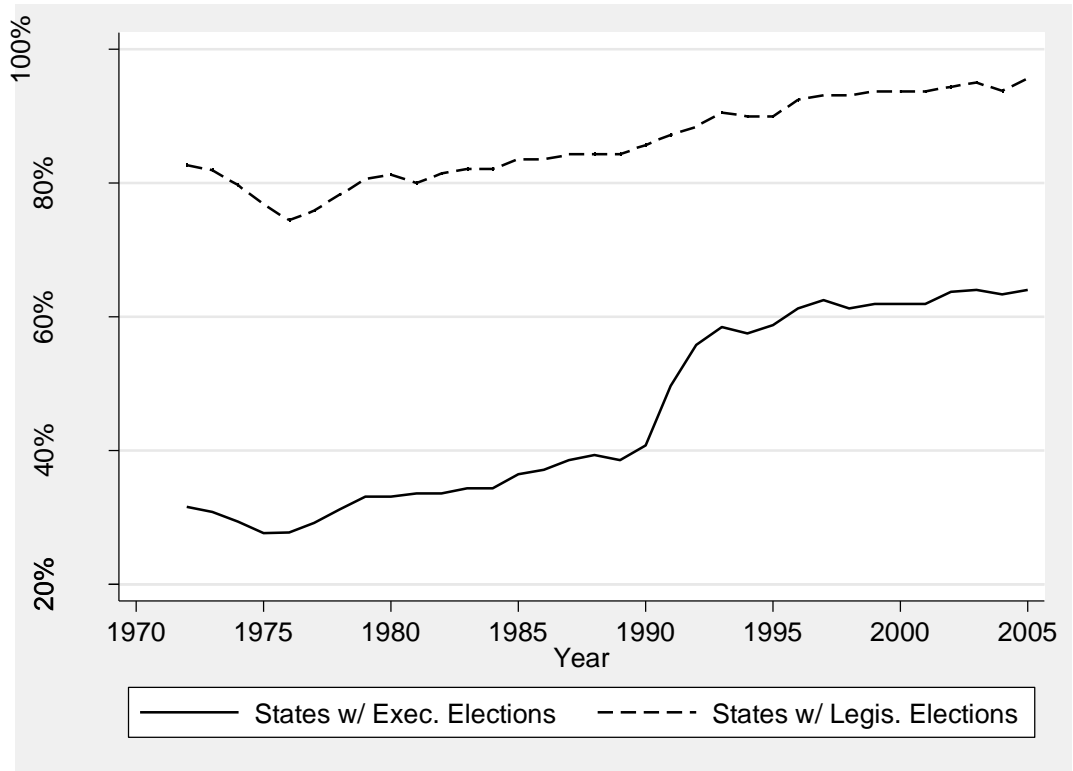
We conclude by pointing to the wealth of information contained in the Institution and Elections Data. Much of the scholarship in World and Comparative Politics relies on

some form of institutional argument tested with data proxying some form of institutional arrangement. We believe the IAEP data sets on institutions and elections provide substantial opportunities for scholars to refine statistical tests using more direct and specific measures.

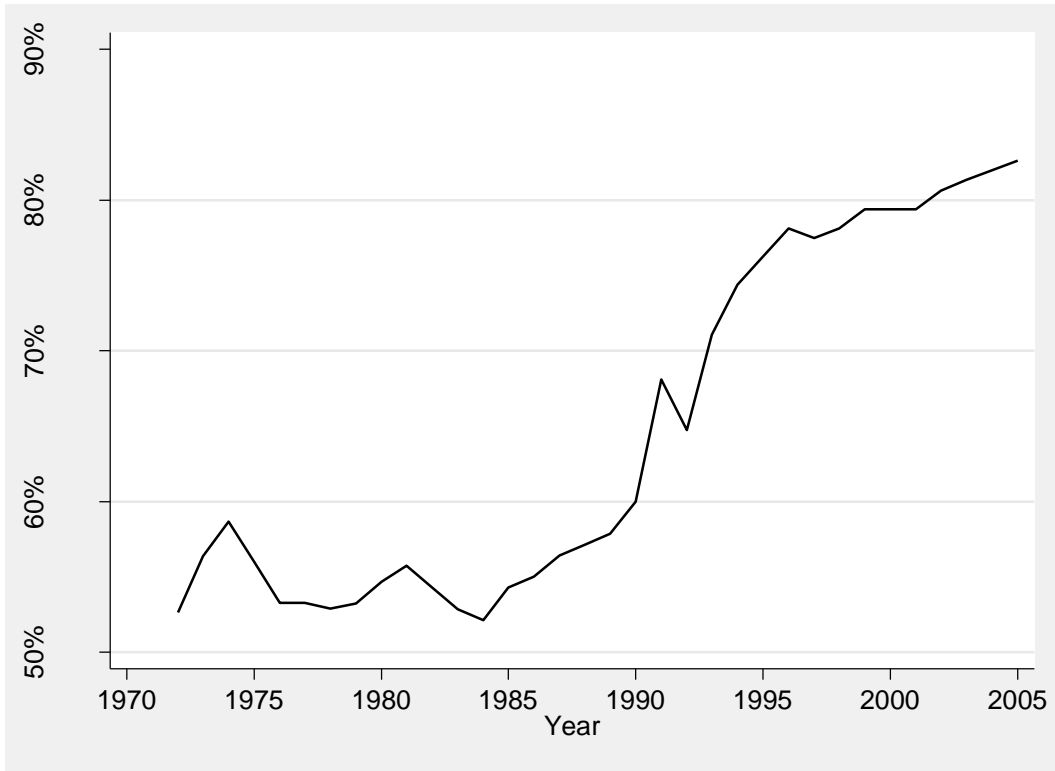
Theoretical questions to which these data speak include questions of political repression and human rights, the democratic peace, civil war onset, and party positioning or party switching. Further, we can envision questions of trade, investment, and foreign aid turning on the stability and power relationships within the target country, and the IAEP data providing one way to evaluate questions of institutional stability or endurance. The data are available on our web page at <http://iaep.binghamton.edu>.



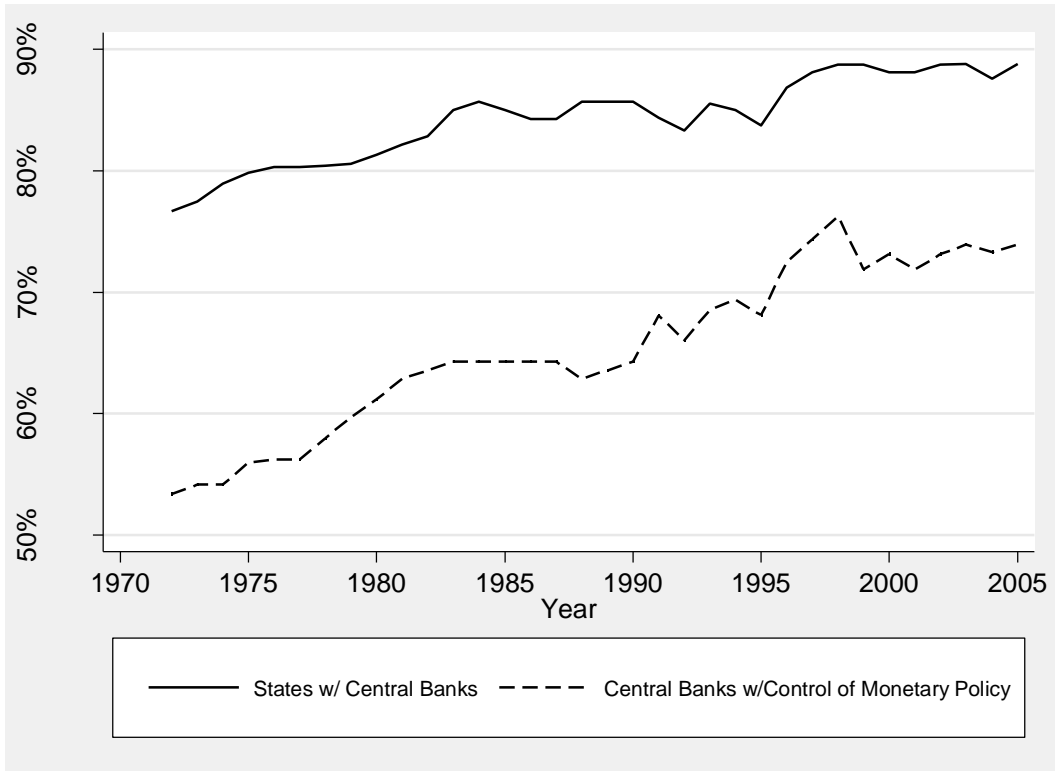
**FIGURE 1:** Percentage of Countries with Constitutions



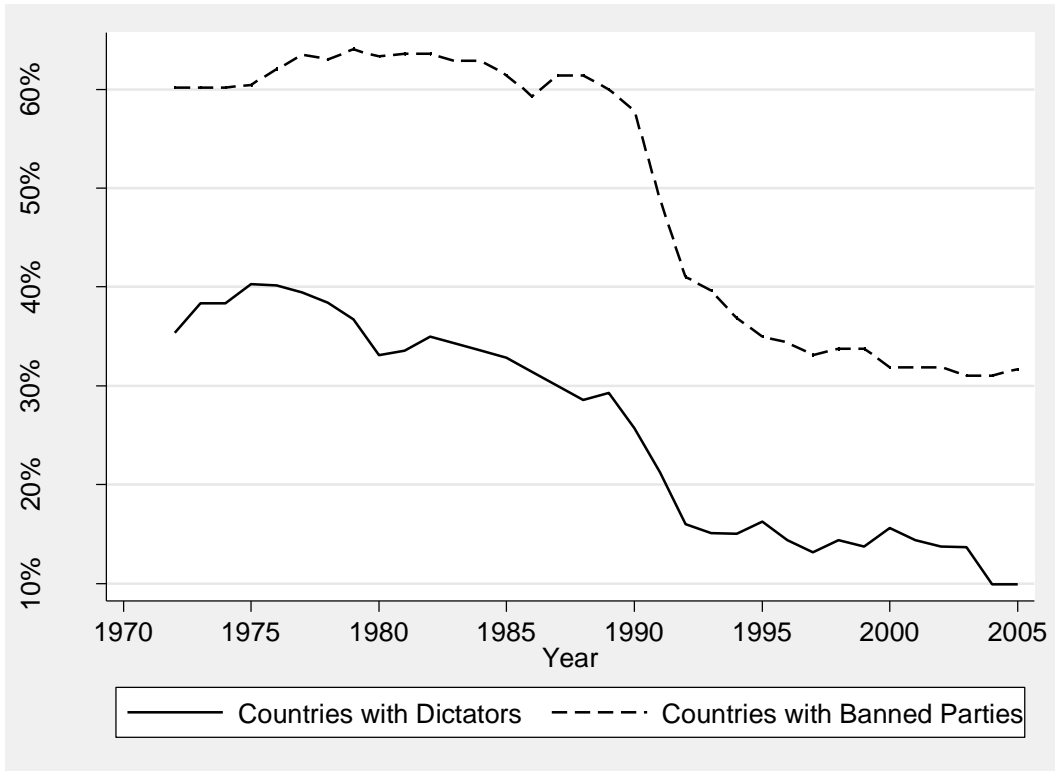
**FIGURE 2:** Executive and Legislative Elections



**FIGURE 3:** States with Constitutional Courts



**FIGURE 4:** States with Central Banks



**FIGURE 5:** Countries with Dictators and Banned Political Parties

Table 1: Executive Assets

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Value	Observations	Percentage	Cumulative
0	96	1.92	1.92
1	444	8.88	10.80
2	1394	27.87	38.66
3	1354	27.07	65.73
4	992	19.83	85.57
5	540	10.80	96.36
6	166	3.32	99.68
7	16	0.32	100.00
Total	5,002	100.00	

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Table 2: Executive Liabilities

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Value	Observations	Percentage	Cumulative
0	409	8.18	8.18
1	232	4.64	12.81
2	223	4.46	17.27
3	652	13.03	30.31
4	1409	28.17	58.48
5	1879	37.56	96.04
6	198	3.96	100.00
Total	5,002	100.00	

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Table 3: Executive Power

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Value	Observations	Percentage	Cumulative
-5	39	0.78	0.78
-4	201	4.02	4.80
-3	836	16.71	21.51
-2	928	18.55	40.06
-1	998	19.95	60.02
0	651	13.01	73.03
1	583	11.66	84.69
2	550	11.00	95.68
3	79	1.58	97.26
4	43	0.86	98.12
5	78	1.56	99.68
6	16	0.32	100.00
Total	5,002	100.00	

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Table 4. Replication of Poe, Tate, and Keith (1999)

	(1) Poe, Tate, and Keith's (1999) Model 1	(2) With Executive Power Index
Executive power		-0.021** (0.007)
	0.652*** (0.017)	0.649*** (0.017)
Rights abuse <sub>t-1</sub>	-0.057*** (0.008)	-0.065*** (0.008)
Democracy	0.066*** (0.007)	0.063*** (0.007)
Population size	0.005 (0.007)	0.005 (0.007)
Population change	-1.53e-05*** (1.95e-06)	-1.41e-05*** (1.99e-06)
Economic standing	-0.0009 (0.001)	-7.45e-04 (9.63e-04)
% economic change	-0.174*** (0.039)	-0.182*** (0.386)
Leftist government	0.086** (0.033)	0.100** (0.033)
Military control	-0.080** (0.026)	-0.062** (0.027)
British cultural influence	0.139** (0.044)	0.151*** (0.044)
International war	0.504*** (0.053)	0.502*** (0.053)
Civil war	0.071 (0.108)	0.128 (0.110)
Constant		
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.7514	0.7521
N	2471	2471

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ . Robust standard errors in parentheses.  
 Excluding our measure of executive power all variable descriptions can be  
 found in Poe, Tate, and Keith (1999).

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## Appendix I: Variable Descriptions

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### 1. Country Year Identifiers

1. Country name
2. Three letter country abbreviation
3. Correlates of War country code
4. Year

## Part I: Political Institutions

### 2. Institutions

1. Is there a constitution?
2. Is the constitution written?
3. Is it in effect in current year?
4. Does the constitution go out of force in current year?
5. Date it ceases to be in effect

### 2. a. Rules that Govern Amendments to the Constitution

1. Can the constitution be amended?
2. Three question about the amendment process

### 2. b. Rules that Govern the Ratification Process

1. Is ratification of amendments required?
2. Five questions that describe the ratification process

### 2. c. Establishment of the Prevailing Constitution

1. The date the prevailing constitution was established
2. Whether it was amended in the current year

### 3. Legislature

1. Records the existence of a formal legislature
2. Number of chambers
3. Number of seats in each chamber

### 3. a. Rules that Determine Selection into Legislature

1. Six questions that describe how the chambers of the legislature are filled  
—by election, by executive authority, by narrow selectorate

### 3. b. Rules that Govern the Introduction of Legislation

1. Does the public have constitutional authority to propose legislation?
2. Does the Executive have constitutional authority to propose legislation?
3. Do members of the legislature have constitutional authority to propose?

### 4. Executive-Legislature Relationship

Eight questions that describe the distribution of power

1. Who has authority to dissolve or remove the other body from office?
2. Who has veto powers?
3. Who has treaty ratification authority?
4. Who has budgetary and tax authority?
5. Who has authority to use force abroad?

### 5. Judiciary

1. Is there a constitutional court?
2. Are members elected or appointed?
3. Term of appointment and removal authority
4. Whether court can rule on legislative and executive actions

### 6. Government Centralization

1. structure of government: unitary, confederation, federal
2. appointment of regional administrators

### 7. Central Bank

1. Existence of a central bank
2. Term of office of director of bank
3. Authority over selection of director
4. Whether bank has authority over monetary policy

### 8. Election Rules and Electoral Outcomes

1. Does the country hold elections for the executive?
2. Does the country hold elections for the legislature?
3. Does the country hold referenda?

### 8. a. Selection of the Executive

1. Is executive also a member of the legislature?
2. Is executive chosen independently of legislature (like a President)?
3. Is executive appointed by a PM or president?
4. Is executive a dictator?

**8. b. Rules that Govern Executive Authority Over Use of Force**

1. Which executive has authority to use force abroad?
2. Whether a non-executive officer has authority

**8. c. Rules that Govern Executive-Legislative Process**

1. Identifies which executives can introduce legislation, if at all

**8. d. Rules that Govern the Calling of Elections**

1. Identifies who has the power to call elections
2. Identifies the rules that govern the timing of calling elections

**8. e. Rules that set the Time and Participation in Elections**

1. Is the election period one or multiple days?
2. Are legislative seats reserved for any group?
3. If reserved, what rule determines the number of seats?

**8. f. Rules Describing the Nomination Process**

Nine variables describing how candidates are selected for executive and legislative elections, including primaries, petition, party list, self nomination

**8. g. Rules Governing the Outcome of Elections**

1. What type of electoral system: plurality, majority, proportional, mixed?
2. Rules determining participation in and outcome of executive elections
3. How many parties hold at least 5% of seats in the legislature?

**8. h. Rules Governing Party Participation**

1. Are there banned parties?
2. Rules the determining banning of party
3. Is there an official state party?

**8. i. Rules Governing Suffrage Rights**

Eight questions that identify *de jure* restrictions on electoral participation

**Part II: Elections in Practice**

Sixteen variables describe the following characteristics for every national election:

1. Is there an election this year?
2. For the executive, legislature, or both simultaneously?
3. The date of the elections
4. Were the elections competitive, defined in terms of seats (legislative) or votes (executive)?
5. Were any elections boycotted by a major party?
6. Were scheduled elections postponed or cancelled?
7. Did an election outcome provoke protest or violence?
8. The timing and participation levels of protest or violence
9. Did the postponement or cancellation provoke violence or protest?
10. Voter turnout in elections (%)