

ARTICLE19

Global Expression Report 2023

Indicator descriptions

www.article19.org

V-Dem indicator descriptions

V-Dem Variable Name	Description	Question	Responses
v2mecenefi	Internet censorship efforts	Does the government attempt to censor information (text, audio, or visuals) on the Internet?	<p>0: The government successfully blocks Internet access except to sites that are pro-government or devoid of political content.</p> <p>1: The government attempts to block Internet access except to sites that are pro-government or devoid of political content, but many users are able to circumvent such controls.</p> <p>2: The government allows Internet access, including to some sites that are critical of the government, but blocks selected sites that deal with especially politically sensitive issues.</p> <p>3: The government allows Internet access that is unrestricted, with the exceptions mentioned above.</p>
v2xcl_disc	Freedom of discussion for men and women	Are men/women able to openly discuss political issues in private homes and in public spaces?	<p>0: Not respected. Hardly any freedom of expression exists for men. Men are subject to immediate and harsh intervention and harassment for expression of political opinion.</p> <p>1: Weakly respected. Expressions of political opinions by men are frequently exposed to intervention and harassment.</p> <p>2: Somewhat respected. Expressions of political opinions by men are occasionally exposed to intervention and harassment.</p> <p>3: Mostly respected. There are minor restraints on the freedom of expression in the private sphere, predominantly limited to a few isolated cases or only linked to soft sanctions. But as a rule there is no intervention or harassment if men make political statements.</p> <p>4: Fully respected. Freedom of speech for men in their homes and in public spaces is not restricted.</p>
v2mecenefm	Government censorship efforts	Does the government directly or indirectly attempt to censor the print or broadcast media?	<p>0: Attempts to censor are direct and routine.</p> <p>1: Attempts to censor are indirect but nevertheless routine.</p> <p>2: Attempts to censor are direct but limited to especially sensitive issues.</p> <p>3: Attempts to censor are indirect and limited to especially sensitive issues.</p> <p>4: The government rarely attempts to censor major media in any way, and when such exceptional attempts are discovered, the responsible officials are usually punished.</p>
v2meslfcen	Media self-censorship	Is there self-censorship among journalists when reporting on issues that the government considers politically sensitive?	<p>0: Self-censorship is complete and thorough.</p> <p>1: Self-censorship is common but incomplete.</p> <p>2: There is self-censorship on a few highly sensitive political issues but not on moderately sensitive issues.</p> <p>3: There is little or no self-censorship among journalists.</p>
v2clacfree	Freedom of academic and cultural expression	Is there academic freedom and freedom of cultural expression related to political issues?	<p>0: Not respected by public authorities. Censorship and intimidation are frequent. Academic activities and cultural expressions are severely restricted or controlled by the government.</p> <p>1: Weakly respected by public authorities. Academic freedom and freedom of cultural expression are practiced occasionally, but direct criticism of the government is mostly met with repression.</p> <p>2: Somewhat respected by public authorities. Academic freedom and freedom of cultural expression are practiced routinely, but strong criticism of the government is sometimes met with repression.</p> <p>3: Mostly respected by public authorities. There are few limitations on academic freedom and freedom of cultural expression, and resulting sanctions tend to be infrequent and soft.</p> <p>4: Fully respected by public authorities. There are no restrictions on academic freedom or cultural expression.</p>
v2cscnsult	Civil society organisation (CSO) consultation	Are major civil society organisations routinely consulted by policymakers on policies relevant to their members?	<p>0: No. There is a high degree of insulation of the government from CSO input. The government may sometimes enlist or mobilise CSOs after policies are adopted to sell them to the public at large. But it does not often consult with them in formulating policies.</p> <p>1: To some degree. CSOs are but one set of voices that policymakers sometimes take into account.</p> <p>2: Yes. Important CSOs are recognised as stakeholders in important policy areas and given voice on such issues. This can be accomplished through formal corporatist arrangements or through less formal arrangements.</p>
v2dlengage	Engaged society	When important policy changes are being considered, how wide and how independent are public deliberations?	<p>0: Public deliberation is never, or almost never, allowed.</p> <p>1: Some limited public deliberations are allowed but the public below the elite levels is almost always either unaware of major policy debates or unable to take part in them.</p> <p>2: Public deliberation is not repressed but nevertheless infrequent and non-elite actors are typically controlled and/or constrained by the elites.</p> <p>3: Public deliberation is actively encouraged and some autonomous non-elite groups participate, but that tends to be the same across issue-areas.</p> <p>4: Public deliberation is actively encouraged and a relatively broad segment of non-elite groups often participate and vary with different issue-areas.</p> <p>5: Large numbers of non-elite groups as well as ordinary people tend to discuss major policies among themselves, in the media, in associations or neighbourhoods, or in the streets. Grass-roots deliberation is common and unconstrained.</p>

V-Dem Variable Name	Description	Question	Responses
v2cltrnslw	Transparent laws with predictable enforcement	Are the laws of the land clear, well publicised, coherent (consistent with each other), relatively stable from year to year, and enforced in a predictable manner?	<p>0: Transparency and predictability are almost non-existent. The laws of the land are created and/or enforced in completely arbitrary fashion.</p> <p>1: Transparency and predictability are severely limited. The laws of the land are more often than not created and/or enforced in arbitrary fashion.</p> <p>2: Transparency and predictability are somewhat limited. The laws of the land are mostly created in a non-arbitrary fashion but enforcement is rather arbitrary in some parts of the country.</p> <p>3: Transparency and predictability are fairly strong. The laws of the land are usually created and enforced in a non-arbitrary fashion.</p> <p>4: Transparency and predictability are very strong. The laws of the land are created and enforced in a non-arbitrary fashion.</p>
v2meharjrn	Harassment of journalists	Are individual journalists harassed —i.e. threatened with libel, arrested, imprisoned, beaten, or killed — by governmental or powerful nongovernmental actors while engaged in legitimate journalistic activities?	<p>0: No journalists dare to engage in journalistic activities that would offend powerful actors because harassment or worse would be certain to occur.</p> <p>1: Some journalists occasionally offend powerful actors but they are almost always harassed or worse and eventually are forced to stop.</p> <p>2: Some journalists who offend powerful actors are forced to stop but others manage to continue practicing journalism freely for long periods of time.</p> <p>3: It is rare for any journalist to be harassed for offending powerful actors, and if this were to happen, those responsible for the harassment would be identified and punished.</p> <p>4: Journalists are never harassed by governmental or powerful non-governmental actors while engaged in legitimate journalistic activities.</p>
v2clkill	Freedom from political killing	Is there freedom from political killings?	<p>0: Not respected by public authorities. Political killings are practiced systematically and they are typically incited and approved by top leaders of government.</p> <p>1: Weakly respected by public authorities. Political killings are practiced frequently and top leaders of government are not actively working to prevent them.</p> <p>2: Somewhat respected by public authorities. Political killings are practiced occasionally but they are typically not incited and approved by top leaders of government.</p> <p>3: Mostly respected by public authorities. Political killings are practiced in a few isolated cases but they are not incited or approved by top leaders of government.</p> <p>4: Fully respected by public authorities. Political killings are non-existent.</p>
v2csreprss	CSO repression	Does the government attempt to repress civil society organisations?	<p>0: Severely. The government violently and actively pursues all real and even some imagined members of CSOs. They seek not only to deter the activity of such groups but to effectively liquidate them. Examples include Stalinist Russia, Nazi Germany, and Maoist China.</p> <p>1: Substantially. In addition to the kinds of harassment outlined in responses 2 and 3 below, the government also arrests, tries, and imprisons leaders of and participants in oppositional CSOs who have acted lawfully. Other sanctions include disruption of public gatherings and violent sanctions of activists (beatings, threats to families, destruction of valuable property). Examples include Mugabe's Zimbabwe, Poland under Martial Law, Serbia under Milosevic.</p> <p>2: Moderately. In addition to material sanctions outlined in response 3 below, the government also engages in minor legal harassment (detentions, short-term incarceration) to dissuade CSOs from acting or expressing themselves. The government may also restrict the scope of their actions through measures that restrict association of civil society organisations with each other or political parties, bar civil society organisations from taking certain actions, or block international contacts. Examples include post-Martial Law Poland, Brazil in the early 1980s, the late Franco period in Spain.</p> <p>3: Weakly. The government uses material sanctions (fines, firings, denial of social services) to deter oppositional CSOs from acting or expressing themselves. They may also use burdensome registration or incorporation procedures to slow the formation of new civil society organisations and side-track them from engagement. The government may also organise Government Organised Movements or NGOs (GONGOs) to crowd out independent organisations. One example would be Singapore in the post-Yew phase or Putin's Russia.</p> <p>4: No CSOs are free to organise, associate, strike, express themselves, and to criticise the government without fear of government sanctions or harassment.</p>
v2cseeorgs	CSO entry and exit	To what extent does the government achieve control over entry and exit by civil society organisations into public life?	<p>0: Monopolistic control. The government exercises an explicit monopoly over CSOs. The only organisations allowed to engage in political activity such as endorsing parties or politicians, sponsoring public issues forums, organizing rallies or demonstrations, engaging in strikes, or publically commenting on public officials and policies are government-sponsored organisations. The government actively represses those who attempt to defy its monopoly on political activity.</p> <p>1: Substantial control. The government licenses all CSOs and uses political criteria to bar organisations that are likely to oppose the government. There are at least some citizen-based organisations that play a limited role in politics independent of the government. The government actively represses those who attempt to flout its political criteria and bars them from any political activity.</p> <p>2: Moderate control. Whether the government ban on independent CSOs is partial or full, some prohibited organisations manage to play an active political role. Despite its ban on organisations of this sort, the government does not or cannot repress them, due to either its weakness or political expedience.</p> <p>3: Minimal control. Whether or not the government licenses CSOs, there exist constitutional provisions that allow the government to ban organisations or movements that have a history of anti-democratic action in the past (e.g. the banning of neo-fascist or communist organisations in the Federal Republic of Germany). Such banning takes place under strict rule of law and conditions of judicial independence.</p> <p>4: Unconstrained. Whether or not the government licenses CSOs, the government does not impede their formation and operation unless they are engaged in activities to violently overthrow the government.</p>

V-Dem Variable Name	Description	Question	Responses
v2csprtpt	CSO participatory environment	Which of these best describes the involvement of people in CSOs?	<p>0: Most associations are state-sponsored, and although a large number of people may be active in them, their participation is not purely voluntary.</p> <p>1: Voluntary CSOs exist but few people are active in them.</p> <p>2: There are many diverse CSOs, but popular involvement is minimal.</p> <p>3: There are many diverse CSOs and it is considered normal for people to be at least occasionally active in at least one of them.</p>
v2psparban	Party ban	Are any parties banned?	<p>0: Yes. All parties except the state-sponsored party (and closely allied parties) are banned.</p> <p>1: Yes. Elections are non-partisan or there are no officially recognised parties.</p> <p>2: Yes. Many parties are banned.</p> <p>3: Yes. But only a few parties are banned.</p> <p>4: No. No parties are officially banned.</p>
v2clrelig	Freedom of religion	Is there freedom of religion?	<p>0: Not respected by public authorities. Hardly any freedom of religion exists. Any kind of religious practice is outlawed or at least controlled by the government to the extent that religious leaders are appointed by and subjected to public authorities, who control the activities of religious communities in some detail.</p> <p>1: Weakly respected by public authorities. Some elements of autonomous organised religious practices exist and are officially recognised. But significant religious communities are repressed, prohibited, or systematically disabled, voluntary conversions are restricted, and instances of discrimination or intimidation of individuals or groups due to their religion are common.</p> <p>2: Somewhat respected by public authorities. Autonomous organised religious practices exist and are officially recognised. Yet, minor religious communities are repressed, prohibited, or systematically disabled, and/or instances of discrimination or intimidation of individuals or groups due to their religion occur occasionally.</p> <p>3: Mostly respected by public authorities. There are minor restrictions on the freedom of religion, predominantly limited to a few isolated cases. Minority religions face denial of registration, hindrance of foreign missionaries from entering the country, restrictions against proselytising, or hindrance to access to or construction of places of worship.</p> <p>4: Fully respected by public authorities. The population enjoys the right to practice any religious belief they choose. Religious groups may organise, select, and train personnel; solicit and receive contributions; publish; and engage in consultations without undue interference. If religious communities have to register, public authorities do not abuse the process to discriminate against a religion and do not constrain the right to worship before registration.</p>
v2smgovfilprc	Government Internet filtering in practice	How frequently does the government censor political information (text, audio, images, or video) on the Internet by filtering (blacking access to certain websites)?	<p>0: Extremely often. It is a regular practice for the government to remove political content, except to sites that are pro-government.</p> <p>1: Often. The government commonly removes online political content, except sites that are pro-government.</p> <p>2: Sometimes. The government successfully removes about half of the critical online political content.</p> <p>3: Rarely. There have been only a few occasions on which the government removed political content.</p> <p>4: Never, or almost never. The government allows Internet access that is unrestricted, with the exceptions mentioned in the clarifications section.</p>
v2smgovshut	Government Internet shut down in practice	How often does the government shut down domestic access to the internet?	<p>0: Extremely often. It is a regular practice for the government to shut down domestic access to the Internet.</p> <p>1: Often. The government shut down domestic access to the Internet numerous times this year.</p> <p>2: Sometimes. The government shut down domestic access to the Internet several times this year.</p> <p>3: Rarely but there have been a few occasions throughout the year when the government shut down domestic access to Internet.</p> <p>4: Never, or almost never. The government does not typically interfere with the domestic access to the Internet.</p>
v2smgovsmcenprc	Government social media censorship in practice	To what degree does the government censor political content (i.e. deleting or filtering specific posts for political reasons) on social media in practice?	<p>0: The government simply blocks all social media platforms.</p> <p>1: The government successfully censors all social media with political content.</p> <p>2: The government successfully censors a significant portion of political content on social media, though not all of it.</p> <p>3: The government only censors social media with political content that deals with especially sensitive issues.</p> <p>4: The government does not censor political social media content, with the exceptions mentioned in the clarifications section.</p>

V-Dem Variable Name	Description	Question	Responses
v2smregcon	Internet legal regulation content	What type of content is covered in the legal framework to regulate Internet?	<p>0: The state can remove any content at will.</p> <p>1: The state can remove most content, and the law protects speech in only specific and politically uncontroversial contexts.</p> <p>2: The legal framework is ambiguous. The state can remove some politically sensitive content, while other is protected by law.</p> <p>3: The law protects most political speech, but the state can remove especially politically controversial content.</p> <p>4: The law protects political speech, and the state can only remove content if it violates well-established legal criteria.</p>
v2smgovsmmon	Government social media monitoring	How comprehensive is the surveillance of political content in social media by the government or its agents?	<p>0: Extremely comprehensive. The government surveils virtually all content on social media.</p> <p>1: Mostly comprehensive. The government surveils most content on social media, with comprehensive monitoring of most key political issues.</p> <p>2: Somewhat comprehensive. The government does not universally surveil social media but can be expected to surveil key political issues about half the time.</p> <p>3: Limited. The government only surveils political content on social media on a limited basis.</p> <p>4: Not at all, or almost not at all. The government does not surveil political content on social media, with the exceptions mentioned in the clarifications section.</p>
v2smregapp	Government online content regulation approach	Does the government use its own resources and institutions to monitor and regulate online content or does it distribute this regulatory burden to private actors such as Internet service providers?	<p>0: All online content monitoring and regulation is done by the state.</p> <p>1: Most online content monitoring and regulation is done by the state, though the state involves private actors in a limited way.</p> <p>2: Some online content monitoring and regulation is done by the state, but the state also involves private actors in monitoring and regulation in various ways.</p> <p>3: The state does little online content monitoring and regulation, and entrusts most of the monitoring and regulation to private actors.</p> <p>4: The state off-loads all online content monitoring and regulation to private actors.</p>
v2smarrest	Arrests for political content	If a citizen posts political content online that would run counter to the government and its policies, what is the likelihood that citizen is arrested?	<p>0: Extremely likely.</p> <p>1: Likely.</p> <p>2: Unlikely.</p> <p>3: Extremely unlikely.</p>
v2caassemb	Freedom of peaceful assembly	To what extent do state authorities respect and protect the right of peaceful assembly?	<p>0: Never. State authorities do not allow peaceful assemblies and are willing to use lethal force to prevent them.</p> <p>1: Rarely. State authorities rarely allow peaceful assemblies, but generally avoid using lethal force to prevent them.</p> <p>2: Sometimes. State authorities sometimes allow peaceful assemblies, but often arbitrarily deny citizens the right to assemble peacefully.</p> <p>3: Mostly. State authorities generally allow peaceful assemblies, but in rare cases arbitrarily deny citizens the right to assemble peacefully.</p> <p>4: Almost always. State authorities almost always allow and actively protect peaceful assemblies except in rare cases of lawful, necessary, and proportionate limitations.</p>
v2cafexch	Freedom of academic exchange	To what extent are scholars free to exchange and communicate research ideas and findings?	<p>0: Completely restricted. Academic exchange and dissemination is, across all disciplines, consistently subject to censorship, self-censorship or other restrictions.</p> <p>1: Severely restricted. Academic exchange and dissemination is, in some disciplines, consistently subject to censorship, self-censorship or other restrictions.</p> <p>2: Moderately restricted. Academic exchange and dissemination is occasionally subject to censorship, self-censorship or other restrictions.</p> <p>3: Mostly free. Academic exchange and dissemination is rarely subject to censorship, self-censorship or other restrictions.</p> <p>4: Fully free. Academic exchange and dissemination is not subject to censorship, self-censorship or other restrictions.</p>
v2smdefabu	Abuse of defamation and copyright law by elites	To what extent do elites abuse the legal system (e.g. defamation and copyright law) to censor political speech online?	<p>0: Regularly. Elites abuse the legal system to remove political speech from the Internet as regular practice.</p> <p>1: Often. Elites commonly abuse the legal system to remove political speech from the Internet.</p> <p>2: Sometimes. Elites abuse the legal system to remove political speech from the Internet about half the time.</p> <p>3: Rarely. Elites occasionally abuse the legal system to remove political speech from the Internet.</p> <p>4: Never, or almost never. Elites do not abuse the legal system to remove political speech from the Internet.</p>