

A World of Difference: the sources of regional government composition and alternation

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Online Appendix

Country profiles on regional executive government

Austria

There are nine regions (*Länder*) which have held elections since 1945. Vienna is both a municipality and a region. Each region (*Land*) has a directly elected assembly (*Landtag*) which elects the regional executive government (*Landesregierung*) who is headed by a governor (*Landeshauptmann*). A *Proporz* system ensures that the composition of the executive reflects the relative strength of the political parties in the assembly. However, since the 2000s some *Länder* do not strictly adhere to the *Proporz* system. Eight regions have five-year electoral cycles and upper Austria has a six-year term. Premature dissolution of an assembly by majority decision is possible. Elections are held under proportional rule and eight regions have an electoral threshold of four or five per cent. In 1945 and 1950 regional elections coincided with national elections but since then regional elections are rarely held at the same date with national or other regional elections.

Länder have wide-ranging executive legislative powers listed by the constitution and includes housing, health, social services, land reform, labor law, education and they have residual powers. Regional parliaments elect the members of the upper chamber of parliament (*Bundesrat*) in proportion to the regional population and the upper chamber is partially renewed after each regional election. The upper chamber can initiate and vote on most legislation, but it can be overridden by a simple majority in the lower house.

We code the party affiliations of the governor (*Landeshauptmann*) and the members of the regional executive government (*Landesregierung*) in relation to our regional government measures.

Belgium

The Belgian federation is quite complex and it has regions with territorial boundaries and communities based on language groups. We include four regions: Flanders which merged the institutions of the region (*Gewest*) and community (*Gemeenschap*); Walloon (region), Brussels (region), and the German-speaking community (*Deutsche Gemeinschaft*). The four entities introduced direct elections at various dates. The German-speaking community was first in 1974 (but our dataset includes the elections as from 1990), Brussel held its first election in 1989, and Flanders and Walloon followed in 1995. Elections were held under proportional rule every four years until 1999 and are held every five years since 2004. There is horizontal simultaneity in holding elections among the four regions and there was vertical simultaneity with national elections in 1995 and 1999 and, since 1999, there is also vertical simultaneity with European elections.

The communities and regions have wide-ranging legislative and executive powers since the country federalized its constitution in 1993 (implemented in 1995). The 1993 reform also introduced a system of forty popularly elected senators in electoral districts representing the two large language communities: twenty-five Flemish and fifteen Francophone), twenty-one community senators elected by and from the community councils (ten Flemish, ten Francophone, one German), ten co-opted senators elected by the previous two categories of senators convening by language group (six Flemish and four Francophone), and three senators by right (adult children of the king). The senate has equal legislative powers with the lower chamber on freedom of religion, language use, the judicial system, international treaties, and constitutional change. On other matters, it can invoke a ‘reflection period’ if requested by fifteen of its members. The 2014 reform of the Belgian Senate is not taken into account considering that the latest elections included in the dataset were held in 2014.

Belgian has a split party system whereby the Flemish and Francophone parties do not compete against each other except in bi-lingual Brussels. Many, but not all, Francophone parties also compete in the German-speaking community. Government coalitions tend to be broadly based and consisting of many parties and we consider Belgium to be consociational.

We code the party affiliations of the prime minister (Minister-President) and the members of the regional executive government (Ministers) in relation to our regional government measures.

Denmark

Until a reform implemented in 2007, there were 15 counties (*amstkommuner*) and we include Copenhagen which is both a county and a municipality. The 15 counties were replaced by five regions (*regioner*) which are only responsible for health and hospitals whereas the tasks for counties also included upper secondary schools, public transportation and care of mentally and physically disabled people. In addition, regions have no taxing powers and are completely fiscally reliant on the central government. Elections to both the county and regional councils are held under proportional rule without a formal electoral threshold and have fixed four-year election cycles and elections are held at the same date for all counties/regions and municipalities.

We include nine rounds of county council elections held since 1970 when a reform introduced country-wide regional government. The county council (*amtskommunale råd* or *amtsråd*) elected a county mayor (*amtsborgmestre*) who headed the county administration and who had ultimate responsibility for day-to-day management. The county mayor also chaired the mandatory finance committee (*økonomiudvalg*). The council could also set up one or more standing committees and the seats of the committees were distributed among the parties in proportion to the councilors seat allocation.

Each county also had a prefect (*statsamtmand*) who was appointed by central government and who was joined with four members elected from amongst the members of the county council. The prefect was responsible for post hoc legal oversight over municipalities within the county and its tasks mainly concerned family law, divorces, and adoptions. The reform of 2007 transferred these tasks to the central government. We do not code county government as dual executive government.

Three rounds of regional council (*regionsråd*) elections have been held starting in 2005 (the other two elections were held in 2009 and 2013). The regional council elects its president (*regionsrådsformand*) who forms the executive and heads the regional administration. The regional council president chairs the business committee (*forretningsudvalget*) which consists of a minimum of 11 to maximum of 19 members out of a total of 41 regional councilors. Similar to the previous finance committee of *amtskommuner*, the mandatory business committee primary task is to take care of preparing the draft budget and administering the finances and staff of the region. A regional council may set up other committees for particular tasks or policies. The seats of the committees are distributed among the parties in proportion to the councilors seat allocation.

We only take the party of the county mayor (*amtsborgmestre*, until 2001) and of the regional council president (*regionsrådsformand*, from 2005 onwards) into account for our measurements on regional executive government while the county mayor and regional council president is the official who holds (most) regional executive powers and heads the regional administration.

France

The 22 regions (*régions*; since 2016 there are 13 regions) held their first regional elections together with the legislative elections in 1986. Regional councilors are elected for six years. Regional elections are held on the same date and the regional elections of 1992, 1998, and 2004 coincided with cantonal (*départements*) elections. From 1986 to 1998, seats were attributed according to a PR system with blocked lists in each department and an electoral threshold of five per cent. A reform in 1999 introduced a majority bonus of 25 per cent of the total seats for the winning list (in Corsica the bonus was 3 and, since 2010, 9 out of a total of 51 seats) and introduced a second round of elections when no list gains 50 per cent of the valid votes in the first round. A second reform in 2003 raised the threshold to compete for seats in the second round from five to ten per cent (seven per cent in Corsica) of the valid votes. In between the two rounds, lists that have received more than five per cent of the vote in the first round can merge with a list that has received 10 per cent or more.

The president of the regional council (*Président de conseil régional*) holds executive power of the region and heads the regional administration. There is no collegial body with the exception of Corsica where, since 1992, the executive body (*Conseil exécutif*) consists of eight councilors and a president (*Président*) elected by the Corsican assembly (*Assemblée de Corse*). The *région* president is elected by the members of the regional council by absolute majority and if after two rounds of voting no candidate is elected, there is a third round with election by simple majority (and in the case of an equal number of votes, the oldest candidate is declared elected). The regional council also elects on a proportional basis a standing committee (*commission permanente*) consisting of four to fifteen vice-presidents and one or more other members. The standing committee replaces the council in between meetings and the regional council can delegate its powers, except for the budget, to the standing committee. The president can also delegate part of her executive powers to the members of the standing committee and often does so for the vice-presidents. Each region also has a *préfet*, who is appointed by the central government and who exercises *post-hoc* legal oversight over decisions made by the council and president. We code this a dual executive government.

From 1986 to 1998, electoral alliances were formed after the election when parties had to build a majority in order to elect a president. These alliances were often short-lived while councilors vote for presidential candidates by secret ballot, and once elected the president cannot be dismissed by the regional council and the president may govern with multiple and different *ad hoc* majorities. The electoral system in place since 2004 induces parties to form alliances before elections, at least before the second round, in order to secure the majority bonus and in order to garner a majority for the regional presidential candidate.

Régions have authority over education (excluding tertiary education), career training, planning and economic development, urban planning, the environment, culture, and transport. Tax autonomy includes setting the rate of the self-employment tax, motor vehicle tax, and property tax and *régions* can borrow under *post-hoc* supervision of the *préfet*.

We take the party of the regional president (*Président de conseil régional*) into account for our measurements on regional executive government while the president is the sole official who holds regional executive powers. From 1986 until 2004 we cannot discern which parties supported the regional president and often the president was elected in the third round by simple majority. From 2004 onwards we attribute the seat share for the winning list (alliance) to the party of the president. For Corsica we include the party affiliations of the president and the members of the executive body (*Conseil exécutif*).

Germany

There are eleven Western Germany regions (*Länder*) which have held elections since 1945 and five Eastern Germany regions which held their first elections in 1990 after German unification. 13 regions hold elections every five years and three regions have electoral cycles of four years. There is no coordinated time-table and early elections are possible and therefore regional elections rarely coincide with national or other regional elections. Most regions apply the two-vote, mixed member proportional system with a five per cent qualifying hurdle which is used at the federal level –we take the voting results of the proportional tier into account in our measurements on vote shares. However, there are a number of variations regarding the proportion of constituency to list representatives, the use of a single vote in some regions, and differences in the composition of party lists. The regional parliament (*Landtag*) elects the head (*Ministerpräsident* or *Reigerender Bürgermeister* or *Präsident des Senats*) and members (*Ministern*) of the regional executive (*Landesregierung* or *Staatsregierung* or *Senat* in the city-states).

The constitution grants the regions extensive legislative powers with regard to culture, education, universities, broadcasting, local government, police and they have residual powers. Regional executives (not parliaments) are directly represented in the upper chamber of parliament (*Bundesrat*) and each region sends between three and six members to the upper chamber. The upper chamber has wide-ranging authority and can initiate and veto legislation affecting regional competences and has a suspensive veto on most other legislation.

We code the party affiliations of the head (*Ministerpräsident*) and the members of the regional executive government (*Ministern*) in relation to our regional government measures.

Greece

A reform in 1994 introduced direct elections for the 50 prefectures (*nomoi*) which before 1994 were deconcentrated central government administrations. Three rounds of elections have been held in 1998, 2002, 2006. A reform in 2010 abolished the prefectures, introduced direct elections for 13 regions (*periphereies*), and reduced the *nomoi* to electoral constituencies. There is full simultaneity between regional and local elections which are held on the same date in Autumn (usually October). As of June 2014, all local and regional elections coincide with European elections which are all held once every five years. Preferential voting for candidates is allowed within each list but the position of the head of the list is fixed.

A peculiarity in Greece is that political parties are not allowed to compete in subnational elections but they can give official support to candidates (heads of the lists). The name of each list must be original and different from the names of registered, existing parties. What happens in practice, especially at the regional level and in large cities, is that caucuses draft lists of candidates with a clear party affiliation such as former members of national government or members of parliament. The official support of a party for a candidate list is reported and we treat the candidate lists as if they were political parties.

Representatives are elected based on votes cast for lists and the winning list is the one that receives an absolute majority of the votes. In case of no absolute majority in the first round, the two lists that received most votes in the first round compete in a second round held a week later. There is a majority bonus for the winning list which receives three fifths of the seats while two fifths of the seats are distributed proportionally over the other lists based on the vote shares of the first-round. The candidate on the top of the winning list becomes the prefect.

Until 2010, executive power of the prefectures was executed by the prefect (*nomarchis*). There was also a prefectural committee (*nomarchiakes epitropes*) whose members were appointed by and from the prefectural council (*nomarchiako simvoulio*): four members if the prefectural council had up to 25 members or six members if the prefectural council had 31 or more members. The prefectural committee prepared the prefectural council decisions and exercised competencies transferred to it by the prefectural council. The prefect headed the prefectural administration and implemented the council and committee decisions and thereby held (sole) executive power.

The electoral system for the regions is the same as it was for the *nomoi*: a winning list is one that receives an absolute majority of the votes, it receives three fifths of the seats, and the first candidate of the list becomes head of the region. Executive power of the regions is executed by the regional governor (*peripheriárkhis*) who may appoint deputy heads –who cannot be regional councilors– to exercise authority on his behalf. The head and deputy heads together form the executive committee (*peripheriakes epitropes*). There is also an economic committee (*ikonomikí epitropes*) which consists of the head of the region and regional councilors elected by the regional council (*peripheriakó simvoulio*). The governor implements the decisions made by the regional council, the executive committee, or the economic committee and thereby holds (sole) executive power.

Nomoi had competence over regional development funding, education, health, roads and transport, and hospitals. The *periphereies* have the same competences except for broader

competences in regional and economic development. Regions never had any tax autonomy and only *nomoi* had some limited borrowing powers.

We take the party of the prefect (*nomarchis*, until 2010) and the regional governor (*peripheriárkhis*, since 2010) into account for our measurements on regional executive government while they are the sole officials who respectively held and hold regional executive powers.

Italy

In Italy there are fifteen ordinary status and six special status regions. The special status regions have held elections since the late 1940s, while direct elections for the ordinary status regions were introduced in 1970. There is horizontal simultaneity between ordinary status regions (until the 2000s), while the special status regions follow their own electoral cycle. Before 1995 all regions had a parliamentary system and all regional assemblies were elected by proportional rule. In 1995, a reform introduced a majoritarian voting system based on a bonus for the most voted coalition of party lists. Following a constitutional reform in 1999, Italian regions (with the exception of South Tyrol) have adopted a peculiar blend of presidential and parliamentary democracy. Like in presidential systems, regional presidents are directly elected and cannot be voted down by the assembly. Like in parliamentary systems, they are meant to enjoy the support of a majority of the assembly in order to function properly. The elections of presidents and assemblies are held at same time and they are also inextricably tied, as allocation of seats in the assembly depends on the results of regional presidential elections. In addition, in case of early resignation by the regional president, the assembly is also automatically dissolved.

The special status regions have enjoyed wide-ranging legislative and executive powers since they signed their autonomy status. During the 1970s, considerable autonomy in a broad swathe of policies such as the environment, regional development, urban planning health, hospitals has been decentralized to the ordinary status regions. A constitutional reform in 2001 consolidated the principle of residual powers for the regions and gave regions concurrent powers in important policies such as international and EU relations, foreign trade, education, scientific research, and airports. Although the election of the higher chamber of the Italian parliament (*Senato della Repubblica*) is elected on the basis of regional constituencies, the chamber does not represent the regions because seats are proportionally distributed across regions. An extensive constitutional reform that included a mild form of regionalization of the *Senato* was rejected in a referendum in December 2016. The autonomous provinces of *Bozen-Südtirol* and *Trento* enter the dataset in 2003 and we include the region of Trentino-Aldo Adige from 1948 until 1998.

We count as parties in regional executive those parties that delivered and supported a regional president (*Presidente della Giunta Regionale* or *Presidente della Regione*) and/or delivered members of the regional government (*Giunta Regionale*). The seat and vote shares won by region-specific presidential lists are allocated to the party of the presidential candidate. Parties that endorsed a presidential candidate but are not represented in regional executive government are not included in the measures.

Netherlands

In the Netherlands there are twelve provinces which have held eighteen elections since 1945 except for the province of Flevoland which was created in 1986 out of new made land. Each province has a directly elected council (*Provinciale Staten*) and an executive board (*Gedeputeerde Staten*) which is presided by a King's Commissioner (*Commissaris van de Koning*) previously known as the Queen's Commissioner (*Commissaris van de Koningin*). Provincial elections are held every four years under proportional rule with no electoral threshold and the elections are held at the same date across the statewide territory but are not held simultaneously with local, parliamentary or European elections. There is a strong tradition to compose the executive board on a proportional basis in relation to the strength of the parties in the council although there have been some exceptions since the 2000s.

Provincial councilors elect the senators for the upper house (*Eerste Kamer*) of national parliament. Each provincial councilor cast a vote for national party lists submitted separately in each province and the final distribution of seats is proportional to provincial population. Before 1983 the members of the provincial assemblies elected a third of the senators every two years. Since 1983 the elections have taken place every four years following provincial elections. The upper house has a veto on all national legislation.

The King's Commissioner is appointed by the central government for a term of six years and she serves both as a representative of the central government as well as chief executive of the provincial administration. Since the early 2000s the provincial council gained the right to shortlist two candidates but the King's Commissioner remains appointed by the central government. Public order and safety is the most important task of the King's Commissioner and this policy is executed on behalf of the central government. The executive board may decide to extend the portfolio of the King's Commissioner with any task which can be taken up by the province. We code provincial executive government as dual. Provincial tasks may include physical planning, agriculture, environment, nature conservation, cultural activities, and transport. Provinces levy a ground water tax, a surcharge on the television and radio license fee, and a surcharge on motor vehicle tax and provinces can borrow with *post-hoc* control of central government.

We code the party affiliations of the member of regional executive (*Gedeputeerde Staten*) in relation to our regional government measures. Although the King's Commissioner forms part of provincial executive government we do not include the party affiliation of this official in our measurements on regional government while candidates are appointed by central government and serve for six years while the other members of the provincial executive are elected by the provincial council and serve, in principal, four year terms. Since 1945 the position of King's Commissioner has always been taken up by persons with a clear and often high profile political career and many were former ministers and party group leaders at the national level (detailed data available upon request).

Norway

There are 19 counties and Oslo is both a county and a municipality. The first direct elections were held in 1975 and eleven elections have been held between 1975 and 2015. Before 1975, members (often mayors of municipalities) of the county council were indirectly elected, appointed by and among members of the municipal councils within the county. County

council elections are held on the same day as municipal council elections on a regular four-year cycle with the elections coming halfway into a four-year parliamentary election cycle. Elections follow the principle of proportional representation with no electoral threshold and whereby the county serves as a single district.

The county council (*fylkestinget*) elects the county mayor (*fylkesordfører*) and the members of the county executive board (*fylkesutvalg*). There is a strong tradition to compose the executive board on a proportional basis in relation to the strength of the parties in the council. After an experiment in Oslo in the 1980s, the municipal law of 1992 opened up the possibility to introduce a parliamentary system whereby the members and county mayor (*fylkesrådmann*) of the county executive board (*fylkesråd*) can be chosen on the basis of an (absolute) majority of seats in the council. Oslo introduced this parliamentary system in 1986 and was followed by *Nordland* in 1999 and *Troms, Nord-Trøndelag* and *Hedmark* in 2003.

Executive power at the county level is shared with a prefect (*fylkesmann*) who is appointed by the central government. *Oslo* and *Akerhus* share one prefect as do *Aust-Agder* and *Vest-Agder* since January 2016 reducing the total number of prefects to 17. The prefect is responsible for implementing central government policy ranging from family law, environment, health, kindergartens, civil protection, and agriculture. We code *fylker* executive government as dual. The county councils (and county executive board) are responsible for upper secondary schools, hospitals (until a reform in 2002), county roads, public transportation, land use planning and regional development. They can set the rate of income tax within boundaries set by central government and they can borrow but need to seek approval by central government when their budget has a deficit.

The party affiliations of the county mayor (*fylkesordfører* or *fylkesrådmann*) and the members of the county executive board (*fylkesutvalg* or *fylkesråd*) are coded in relation to our regional government measurements.

Spain

There are nineteen regions (*comunidades autónomas*) in Spain which held their first elections at different times after a democratization process was set into motion in 1978. Three ‘historic nationalities’ and one additional ‘fast track’ region held their first elections in 1980 (Catalonia and Basque Country), in 1981 (*Galicia*), and in 1982 (*Andalucía*). Eleven ‘slow-track’ regions followed in 1983 and *Ceuta* and *Mellila* are included since 1995 when they became autonomous cities (*ciudad autónomas*). Each region has a unicameral legislature (*Parlamento* or *Cortes* or *Junta* or *Asamblea*) elected by universal suffrage. The regional legislature elects a president (*Presidente*) who, in turn, appoints (and dismisses) the members (*consejeros*) of the council or government (*Consejo de gobierno*). Regional elections are held simultaneously for thirteen ‘slow-track’ regions and the two autonomous cities and these regional elections plus the elections of *Andalucía* are held at the same date as local and provincial elections. There is no simultaneity with national or European elections except in *Andalucía* which has regularly held its elections at the same data as national elections. The four ‘fast-track’ regions are free to determine their own electoral calendar and early elections are possible for all *comunidades autónomas*. Regions can set their own electoral system but all of them have adopted party-list proportional representation with electoral thresholds of three to five per cent. All regions have four-year electoral terms.

Each region has its own autonomy statute but apart from the Basque Country and *Navarra*, which have extensive fiscal autonomy based on their *foral* rights, the powers for regions is comparable. Regions exercise extensive decision-making powers with regard to education, health, local government, public safety, infrastructure, transport, agriculture, and the environment. The assembly of each region selects at least one member up to a limit of one senator per million inhabitants but the total number of regional representatives in the upper chamber of parliament (*Senado*) constitute a minority.

We code the party affiliations of the president (*Presidente*) and the members of the regional council (*consejeros*) or government (*Consejo de gobierno*) in relation to our regional government measures.

Sweden

Sweden is divided into 20 county councils (*landstinge*) (24 until 1998). County councils generally coincide with counties (*län*) which are deconcentrated central government administration. The number of county councils has varied across time: 25 between 1946-1969, 24 between 1970-1998 (*Kalmar norra* and *Kalmar södra* merged into *Kalmar*), and 21 since 1999 ((*Göteborg og*) *Bohus*, *Skaraborg* and *Älvsborg* merged into *Västra Götaland* and *Kristianstad* and *Malmöhus* merged into *Skåne*). Since 1970, the *Gotland* municipal council exercises the authority of a county council. Throughout the past five decades, there have been several cities which were not incorporated into a county council: *Helsingborg* and *Gävle* until 1963, *Norrköping* until 1967, *Stockholm* until 1968, *Göteborg* and *Malmö* until 1998.

Elections to the county council takes place on the same day every four years (the third Sunday in September) in conjunction with local (municipal) elections and since 1970 also with national elections. Between 1970 and 1994 there were three-year terms. The seats in the council are proportionally divided between the parties according to their vote shares and there is an electoral threshold of three per cent. Personal voting is allowed and a candidate is elected when she receives five per cent or more of the vote.

The county councils (*landstingsfullmäktige*) elect the county executive board (*landstingsstyrelse*) which is chaired by the leader of the party which receives the majority of the votes. The executive board exercises executive authority collectively. The election of the members of the executive board is proportional unless the parties agree otherwise but this is very rare. Until the reform of 1971, county councils were mainly responsible for the provision of health care and they owned hospitals and outpatient centres, and they had secondary responsibilities for agricultural, craft, and industrial training. From 1971, county councils also implement policy in regional development, cultural activities, and public transport. The county councils can set the rate of income tax within boundaries set by central government and they can borrow but need to adopt action plans and return to a balanced budget within three years when a budget deficit occurs.

The administrative boards of the counties (*länsstyrelser*) act on behalf of the central government and the board is headed by the county governor (*landshövding*) who is appointed by the central government for a period of six years. The other 14 members are appointed by the central government on the proposal of the county councils. The county administrative boards exercise supervision over the municipalities in their respective counties but they also have executive authority in implementing central legislation in the fields of education, labor,

housing, regional policy and town planning. The presence of the county governor is counted as dual government.

Until 1971, *landstinge* had institutional representation in the upper chamber of the Swedish *Riksdag* which was composed of members selected for six-year terms by *landstinge* councils. Each *landsting* was allocated seats proportional to its population. The upper chamber and lower chamber had equal powers. In 1971, Sweden became unicameral.

Effective in 1999, a reform merged *Kristianstad* and *Malmö* into *Skåne* and *Göteborgs och Bohus*, *Skaraborgs*, and *Älvsborg* were merged into *Västra Götaland*. These two newly created regions (*regionkommuner*) assumed competences in economic development, regional transport and cultural institutions which were previously the responsibility of the *länsstyrelser*. These reforms have become permanent and were extended to *Halland* and *Götaland* in 2010, and to *Jönköping* and *Örebro* in 2015. Apart from additional competences in regional development, the regional council and regional executive commission (*regionstyrelse*) function in similar ways as the county councils and county executive board.

We count as executive government the parties on the left or right that form the majority in the county executive board (*landstingsstyrelse*). This data is made available by SALAR (*Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting*), the organization that represents *landstinge* and municipalities in Sweden, and data is available from 1994 onwards.

Switzerland

There are 26 cantons in Switzerland which all have their own election cycle which varies between two to five years but most cantons have an electoral cycle of four years. None of the cantonal elections have been held simultaneous with federal elections but they may coincide with federal referendums. Each canton can also choose its own electoral system. Most cantons have proportional rule but *Appenzell Inner-Rhode* and *Grisons* use majoritarian rule whereas *Appenzell Ausser-Rhode*, *Uri*, *Zug*, *Schwyz*, and *Basel-Stadt* apply majoritarian rule in some electoral districts.

Switzerland is a federal country and cantons have extensive legislative and executive powers in economic policy, education, environment, culture, health, transport, local government, and they have residual powers. Cantons can affect national legislation through their representation in the upper chamber, the Council of States (*Ständerat*; *Conseil des Etats*; *Consiglio degli Stati*; *Cussegl dals Stadis*), of national parliament. Each canton has two directly elected representatives and each 'half-canton' one representative. The upper chamber has veto powers on all issues, though all federal laws can be overturned by popular referendum.

A peculiarity in Switzerland is that the federal government consists of the four main statewide parties which deliver seven representatives for executive government (federal council) and these parties alternate the office of president on annual basis. Governments in most cantons are elected by majority voting but consociational multi-party governments are the rule.

We include all parties that are represented in cantonal executive government (*Conseil d'État*, *Conseil exécutif*, *Consiglio di Stato*, *Gouvernement*, *Regierungsrat*, *Staatsrat*,

Standeskommission) in our regional government measurements. Data is available from 1980 onwards and for some (small) cantons vote and seat data is missing.

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has four devolved entities: London, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Northern Ireland hold elections since 1945 but, until 1971 executive powers were exercised by the executive committee of the Privy Council whose members came from the parliament but who were appointed by the Lord Lieutenant. Devolution introduced elections in Scotland and Wales in 1999 and London elected its assembly and mayor for the first time in 2000. Elections are held simultaneous between the devolved entities but not including London. National elections are held under the first-past-the-post system but Scotland, Wales and London have a mixed member system whereby citizens cast a constituency vote for a candidate and a party vote for a regional list. The overall distribution of seats is close to proportional rule but the degree of proportionality varies. 73 out of 129 seats in Scotland are elected in single-member districts and this number is 40 out of 60 in Wales and 14 out of 25 for London. Northern Ireland applies the single-transferable vote.

Devolution has led to asymmetric autonomy arrangements but, in general, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales have wide-ranging legislative and executive powers except for competences designated as exclusive UK matters such as the constitution, foreign affairs, defense, fiscal, economic, monetary policy, social security schemes, nuclear energy, and trade and industry. The London mayor has responsibilities in transport, regional development, fire protection, the environment, culture, media, and sports and can set the congestion charge and the rate of the property tax. The devolved entities are not represented in an upper chamber of national parliament (the House of Lords) but, since the late 2000s, shared rule between regional (not including London) and national government is exercised through Joint Ministerial Committees.

Proportionality in executive government is enshrined in Northern Ireland through the consociational, power-sharing arrangements for government formation, with ministerial portfolios allocated (via d'Hondt) to parties to reflect their electoral strength in the assembly, and the two largest parties in each designation nominating the first minister and deputy first minister. The Northern Ireland Assembly shared executive power with the Lord Lieutenant until 1971 and was under suspension most of the time until 2007 and we code this as dual executive. In Wales, the Secretary of State functioned as a dual executive by determining the pace and scope of the devolved competences and exercising executive power for the non-devolved matters. The Secretary of State was not accountable to the assembly. The authority of the Secretary of State was significantly reduced in 2006. In London, executive powers are held by the mayor who is directly elected by citizens.

In our measurements we count the seat share won by the party of the mayor in the Greater London Council as the support base for executive government. For Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales we code the party affiliations of the First Minister and Ministers for our regional government measurements.

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