



Congo-Kinshasa — Va-PoReg Country Report

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[officially known as the Democratic Republic of Congo; formerly known as Zaire (1971 to 1997)]

02/26/1885 Start Autocratic Monarchy: On 02/26/1885, the Berlin Conference recognized the sovereignty and independence of the International Association of the Congo (Willoughby/Fenwick 1974, Oppenheim/Roxburgh 1920). Later in the same year, Belgian King Léopold II became head of the Congo Free State as sovereign and declared it neutral (Willoughby/Fenwick 1974). The decisive criterion for the classification is the legitimation pattern: Léopold II's authority over Congo derived from personal monarchical sovereignty as King-Sovereign of a separate independent state rather than from external metropolitan power extending Belgian state authority, with the Congo Free State maintaining distinct international legal personality and the Belgian Parliament exercising no jurisdiction over Congo until 1908 annexation, demonstrating that legitimacy flowed from Léopold's position as sovereign monarch of Congo Free State rather than from Belgian colonial authority.¹ This monarchical rather than external legitimation is confirmed by the regime change upon annexation: on 11/15/1908, the Congo Free State was „merged by cession into Belgium“ and „lost its status as a sovereign and independent member of the Family of Nations“ (Oppenheim/Roxburgh 1920), transforming from Léopold's personal monarchical domain into Belgian colonial possession subordinate to Belgian Parliament, marking transition from autocratic monarchy to direct rule colonial regime and confirming that pre-1908 legitimation operated through monarchical sovereignty rather than colonial metropolitan authority. Since in this period Congo-Kinshasa was directly ruled by Belgian King Léopold II in an absolutist manner, with the whole territory treated as personal property where administrators served Léopold as personal sovereign rather than as agents of Belgian state, we classify it as an autocratic monarchy – of the worst kind – characterized by systematic atrocities including forced labor, mutilation, mass killings, and extreme exploitation that resulted in millions of deaths, representing one of history's most brutal autocratic regimes where the indigenous population was subjected to terror, violence, and enslavement for rubber extraction with no legal protections or civil liberties. The regime's extreme brutality and complete absence of political and civil rights exemplifies why it is classified as autocratic monarchy, distinguishing the personal absolutist rule under Léopold's monarchical sovereignty from subsequent Belgian colonial administration that, while still oppressive, operated under metropolitan parliamentary oversight and international scrutiny following exposure of the atrocities. According to LIED, no multiparty executive or legislative elections were held during the specified period. Political liberties were not present. A verdict which is also supported by LIED and V-Dem's PCLI. From 1900 to 1903, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were absent, and V-Dem's LCE is similarly interpreted as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were also absent, confirming the unconstrained absolutist authority exercised by Léopold with no institutional mechanisms to prevent systematic human rights violations. V-Dem's subsequent coding of moderate legislative constraints in 1904 and robust legislative constraints from 1905-1908, alongside limited judicial constraints in 1908, appears inconsistent with the regime's actual structure, as Léopold maintained unilateral personal sovereignty throughout the period with no legislative or judicial bodies in Congo Free State possessing authority to constrain his decisions, suggesting these indicators may reflect developments in metropolitan Belgium rather than constraints on Léopold's absolutist rule over his personal domain.

11/15/1908 End Autocratic Monarchy/Start Direct Rule Colonial Regime [of Belgium, Constitutional Monarchy]: On this date, the Congo Free State was annexed by Belgium and became the Belgian Congo (Willoughby/Fenwick 1974). The Congo Free State was merged by cession into Belgium and thus lost its status as a sovereign and independent member of the Family of Nations (Oppenheim/Roxburgh 1920). Multiparty executive and legislative elections were absent during this period per LIED. In 1957, universal suffrage was introduced (LIED). According to LIED, no multiparty executive or legislative elections were held during the specified period. Political liberties were absent for this period according to LIED and V-Dem's PCLI. For the year 1909, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were moderate, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were robust. For the rest of the regime period, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were moderate, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were limited.

05/22/1960 End Direct Rule Colonial Regime [of Belgium, Liberal Democracy]/Start Indirect Rule Colonial Regime [of Belgium, Liberal Democracy]: The Belgo-Congolese Round Table Conference held in January 1960 decided on a provisional constitution, the Loi Fondamentale. It implemented a federalist parliamentary system led by a strong dual executive, but it faltered in adequately delineating the roles of the President and Prime Minister (Schmidt/Stroux 1999).² On 05/22/1960, in order to create a government to rule the country following independence as the Republic of the Congo, general elections were held. The formal electoral campaign commenced on 05/11, overshadowed by chaos and acts of violence. Competing parties utilized tactics ranging from intimidation and sabotage of opponents' headquarters to outright murder. Such coercion was particularly rampant in regions heavily influenced by militant factions aligned with various parties.³ The Mouvement National Congolais – Lumumba (MNC-L) won the majority of seats in Parliament. Patrice Émery Lumumba was confirmed as Prime Minister. Additionally, a senate was set up. The two chambers elected Joseph Kasa-Vubu as President.⁴ This duality led to conflict between the conservative Kasa-Vubu and the leftist Prime Minister Lumumba.⁵ This regime change event of Congo-Kinshasa is coded as a negotiated transition because it was the direct outcome of the Belgo-Congolese Round Table Conference in January 1960, where Belgian authorities and Congolese political leaders formally bargained the terms for the transfer of power. The resulting compromise granted the Congolese elite immediate political sovereignty in exchange for significant economic and strategic guarantees that preserved Belgian interests post-independence.⁶

06/30/1960 End Indirect Rule Colonial Regime [of Belgium, Liberal Democracy]/Start Electoral Autocracy [as independent country]: On this date, the Belgian Congo gained independence as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Crawford 2006: 56-57). The coalition government led by Lumumba, which was elected in May of the same year, assumed power.⁷ The regime change from is coded as a voluntary exit, because it marks the Belgian withdrawal as the consequence of the compromise which granted the Congolese elite immediate political sovereignty in exchange for significant economic and strategic guarantees that preserved Belgian interests post-independence. Based on our observations, multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period, which aligns with the observations of LIED. The election was not competitive (LIED). Moreover, no real cleanliness was achieved. Whereas V-Dem's EF&FI declares the election as free and fair. Joseph Kasa-Vubu became president. Lumumba was the leader of the Congolese National Movement (MNC), Kasa-Vubu represented Abako (Alliance des Ba-Kongo). On 07/05/1960, soldiers began to mutiny against their white commanders. The insurrection spread across the country. This marked the beginning of the so-called Congo Crisis.⁸ On 07/11/1960, the wealthy Katanga province declared its independence from the Republic of the Congo, followed in August by South Kasai province.⁹ Shortly after Belgium's departure from Congo, the government collapsed. On 07/15/1960, UN troops arrived in the country. The UN sent a mission to the Congo in order to fill the power vacuum. It took over administrative prerogatives in the Congo between 1960 and 1964 (Wilde 2001). Patrice Lumumba appealed for Soviet support. This led to a political split within the government. On 09/05/1960, Kasa-Vubu announced to the public that he had unilaterally dismissed Lumumba. The latter was not able to gather support for a dismissal of Kasa-Vubu, initiating a constitutional

deadlock.¹⁰ Political liberties are coded as absent by LIED and can be interpreted as ambiguous by V-Dem's PCLI.

09/14/1960 End Electoral Autocracy/Start Military Autocracy: On this date, a bloodless military coup led by Colonel Joseph Mobutu ousted Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba to overcome the political deadlock (Lemarchand 1993, Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014: 55). He initially replaced both Lumumba and Kasa-Vubu with a College of Commissioners-General. Lumumba was put under house arrest and Kasa-Vubu resumed office in February 1961.¹¹ Over the ensuing five-year period, Kasa-Vubu presided over a series of ineffectual administrations.¹² Lumumba escaped house arrest and fled to Stanleyville where he hoped to rally support. He was captured on 12/01/1960.¹³ For the relevant regime period, V-Dem's JCE and LCE are both interpreted by us as indicating moderate constraints on the executive.

02/09/1961 End Military Autocracy/Start Electoral Autocracy: The Soviets proposed a resolution to the UN Security Council demanding Lumumba's immediate release. The resolution failed on 12/14/1960. Lumumba was tortured and ultimately handed over to Katangese forces by whom he was executed near Élisabethville on 01/17/1961.¹⁴ Due to an escalation of the situation in the Southern Provinces, the UN occupied South Kasai in April 1962. On 10/05/1962, government troops arrived in Bakwanga after a coup and helped end the South Kasai secession. On 12/24/1962, UN troops and the Katangese Gendarmerie clashed in Élisabethville. After a month of fighting, Tshombe surrendered on 01/17/1963 marking the end of the Katangese secession.¹⁵ An attempt at political reconciliation followed the end of the Katangese secession. Negotiations culminated in the Luluabourg Constitution which elevated the powers of the president and ended the joint consultations between the president and the prime minister. Additionally, it increased the autonomy of the newly defined 21 provinces.¹⁶ At the same time, political opposition was forming from exile in the neighboring Congo – Brazzaville. On 10/03/1963, the Comité National de Libération (CNL) was founded by Christophe Gbenye and Gaston Soumialot, both exiled Lumumbists.¹⁷ This marked the beginning of the Simba Rebellion. Soumialot's army invaded South Kivu in late 1963 and took Uvira on 05/15/1964 with Fizi following shortly after. Additionally, Gbenye's forces were taking over in the North and a third rebel group, independent of Gbenye and Soumialot, was revolting in Northern Katanga. By late 1964, the rebels had taken control of most of the North-Eastern territory.¹⁸ They founded a rival socialist state named People's Republic of the Congo with a government in Stanleyville. Gbenye became President of the new State which was supported among others by China, the Soviet Union, Cuba and Tanzania.¹⁹ Parallely, the new Luluabourg Constitution was approved in a constitutional referendum which ended on 07/10/1964. As a consequence, the country's name was changed to Democratic Republic of the Congo.²⁰ Kasa-Vubu appointed Tshombe as interim prime minister. The parliament was dissolved, and new elections were scheduled for 03/10/1965.²¹ The rebels began to face local resistance and by the end of August 1964 they were losing territory to the Armée Nationale Congolaise (ANC). Tshombe engaged several mercenaries which were backed by the CIA. As a last attempt at remaining in control, the rebels held the remaining white population of Stanleyville hostage in November 1964. Within the framework of Operation Dragon Rouge, Belgian paratroops landed in Stanleyville on 11/24/1964 and quickly retrieved the hostages. Nevertheless, around 70 hostages and 1000 Congolese civilians were killed during the operation. While the aim of the paratroopers was not to drive the rebels out of Stanleyville, the intervention broke the last stronghold of the rebels. The leaders of the Simba Rebellion went into exile. Belgium was accused of neocolonialism in light of the intervention. Tshombe lost the support of Kasa-Vubu and Mobutu and was dismissed in October 1965.²² Meanwhile elections had been held between 03/18/1965 and 04/30/1965.²³ Tshombe's party, the Convention Nationale Congolaise (CONACO) won the majority of the seats but many of the members soon formed the Front Démocratique Congolais (FDC). This put the government and parliament in a political deadlock.²⁴ Based on our observations, multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period, which aligns with the observations of LIED. The election was not competitive per LIED and no real cleanliness was given per V-Dem' CEI. However, according to V-Dem's EF&FI somewhat free and fair election conditions were provided. The regime in this period is classified as an electoral autocracy, as it is a continuation of the post-independence period. President

Kasa-Vubu, legitimized by elections, held office with various unstable governments until 1965. Political liberties were still coded as absent according to LIED and can be interpreted as ambiguous according to V-Dem's PCLI in this period. For the year 1962, V-Dem's JCE and LCE are both interpreted by us as indicating moderate constraints on the executive. From 1963 to 1964, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were moderate, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were limited. For 1965, V-Dem's JCE is classified by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were moderate, whereas V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were absent.

11/24/1965 End Electoral Autocracy/Start Personalist Autocracy: On this date, commander of the armed forces Major General Joseph-Désiré Mobutu, who named himself Mobutu Sese Seko, dissolved the civilian regime and proclaimed himself president of the Second Republic (Lansford 2021: 361). The decisive criterion for the classification is the legitimization pattern: while the coup invoked guardianship rhetoric to overcome the political deadlock following the 1965 elections, Mobutu immediately established personalist legitimization by concentrating all authority in himself as individual ruler rather than vesting sovereign power in collective military structures, with legitimacy derived from Mobutu's constructed persona as indispensable leader rather than from military institutional authority, ideological doctrine, or electoral procedures. Mobutu installed a „régime d'exception" amounting to a state of emergency, declaring that democracy would return after five years,^[1] but the regime was from the coup on characterized by personalist rather than military institutional control, as Mobutu centralized power around himself and maintained direct personal command without establishing military junta structures or power-sharing among high-ranking officers. This personalist legitimization intensified systematically over time: On 05/20/1967 Mobutu Sese Seko founded the Popular Movement of the Revolution (MPR).²⁵ From the moment of its foundation, it was established as the de facto sole political party. Between 06/04/1967 and 06/16/1967, a constitutional referendum was held to adopt a new constitution proposed by Mobutu which was approved by 97.8% of voters.²⁶ It included the centralization of all power onto the president, the abolition of the limit on presidential terms and limited the number of political parties to two.²⁷ The MPR was the only party allowed to nominate candidates in presidential and parliamentary elections held in November 1970. The party had no real ideology other than support for Mobutu. As such, it disappeared in short order when Mobutu was overthrown by Laurent-Désiré Kabila in 1997, during the First Congo War.²⁸ This is why this period is coded as a personalist rather than a one-party autocracy. Mobutu dominated Zaire's political life and claimed the title „father of the nation". He adopted a policy of „authenticité" which aimed at a „Zaireanization" of the country and required all Zairians to adopt „authentic names". Mobutu renamed himself as Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Wa Za Banga which translates roughly to „the all-conquering warrior who goes from triumph to triumph."²⁹ In 1971, Mobutu changed the name of the country to Republic of Zaire, Zaire being the original name of the Congo River which had changed over time and translation into English.³⁰ The new constitution of Zaire was promulgated on 08/15/1974. It solidified Mobutu's dictatorial control over the country and codified the MPR as the only legal party in the country. Mobutism was made state ideology and state power was defined as an extension of Mobutu's power.³¹ The late 1970s were marked by invasions and battles with communist Katangese guerilla forces. While Zaire remained a one-party state during the 1980s, opposition was beginning to become more active.³² It has to be noted that we only code regimes as personalist autocracies if the ruler has (almost) no constraints. This means „unlimited authority" in terms of Polity5. Until the 1990s, there is no doubt that this was the case during Mobutu's rule. However, Mobutu faced popular unrest and discontent in the population in 1990 that led him to announce an end to the one-party system and promise the introduction of a multi-party system which, however, was suspended for a substantial period. Upset in the population led to a confrontation at the University of Lubumbashi on 05/11/1990, during which more than 50 student protesters were reportedly killed (Knutsen/Nygård 2015, Lansford 2021: 361-362). Within a year, Zaire saw the rise of over 100 parties, split into three main groups: the Mobutu bloc, led by the MPR; the anti-Mobutu bloc, led by UDPS, UFERI, and PDSC; and various smaller parties without clear stances. The anti-Mobutu coalition pushed for a National

Conference, forming the Union Sacrée in July 1991. The Conference, led by Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo, became the battleground between Mobutu's camp and the opposition. Etienne Tshisekedi of UDPS becoming Prime Minister in August 1992 marked a step toward democratization. A transitional constitution was adopted, limiting the President's powers and reinforcing human rights. However, Mobutu dismissed Tshisekedi's government illegally in December 1992, maintaining control through a mix of reforms and repression. In 1993, political deadlock led to duplicated institutions. Eventually, negotiations merged the parliaments into the HCR-PT, dominated by pro-Mobutu forces. An interim constitution in April 1994 allowed Mobutu to remain in power. With French support, Kengo wa Dondo became Prime Minister in June 1994 as a compromise candidate (Schmidt/Stroux 1999). These last years of Mobutu's presidency can therefore no longer be clearly classified as personalist, and yet no reclassification is possible. There were still no multi-party or multi-candidate elections, Mobutu retained power despite the onset of transformative processes and could ultimately only be deposed by force in the course of the First Congo War. On 10/29/1996, Kinshasa declared a state of emergency in North and South Kivu as theretofore sporadic firefights between Rwandan and Zairean regular forces escalated into intense cross-border shelling (Lansford 2021: 363). Starting from the eastern region of Zaire, rebels, with assistance from foreign government forces led by President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and Rwandan Minister of Defense Paul Kagame, initiated an attack with the aim of ousting Mobutu from power. They joined forces with local individuals who opposed Mobutu, rallying behind Laurent-Désiré Kabila, and together they advanced westward toward Kinshasa. The rebellion gained momentum and received support from Burundi and Angola, eventually evolving into the First Congo War.³³ According to LIED, no multiparty executive or legislative elections were present until 1970. From 1970 onwards LIED lists both executive and legislative elections as present, but they were not categorized as multiparty. While there were legislative elections in 1970, there was only one listed party and elections were tightly controlled. From 1967 to 1991, based on Polity5's assessment, during this period, the executive operated with unlimited authority, facing no institutional checks on power. For the relevant regime period, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were absent, and V-Dem's LCE is similarly interpreted as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were also absent. Per FH, for this regime period, the country scores between 11 and 14 as not free, which we also interpret as not free. Besides, LIED codes political liberties as absent. V-Dem's PCLI indicates them as absent until 1990 and as not really present from 1991 to 1997.

05/17/1997 End Personalist Autocracy/Start Personalist Autocracy: 05/17/1997 End Personalist Autocracy/Start Personalist Autocracy: On this date, Laurent-Désiré Kabila took the presidential oath of office after his forces, the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL), proclaimed victory against Mobutu on 05/29/1997, renaming Zaire as the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 05/23/1997. The decisive criterion for the classification is the legitimation pattern: Kabila's announcement of a two-year delay before elections, stating „it would require at least that amount of time for him to establish order,³⁴ invoked guardianship legitimation claiming crisis necessity for personal rule rather than caretaker facilitation of transition, with promised referendum by end of 1998 and elections by April 1999 never materialized, demonstrating substantive sovereignty claims rather than procedural commitments. Throughout his tenure, Kabila wielded both executive and legislative authority through the AFDL coalition³⁵ without establishing multiparty power-sharing, international framework, or genuine transitional institutions, with authority concentrated personally rather than distributed through power-sharing arrangements. This personalist legitimation is confirmed by the institutional structure: Kabila governed through personal control of the military AFDL coalition as vehicle for personal authority rather than autonomous institutional structure, maintained unlimited authority without institutional checks (FH 11-14 „not free,“ LIED no political liberties), with the 9-year duration demonstrating consolidated personalist rule beneath transitional rhetoric rather than genuine provisional governance. On 08/02/1998, a rebellion broke out among the Banyamulenge community in Goma, evolving into the Second Congo War,³⁶ yet Kabila retained personal authority throughout the conflict until his assassination. Following Laurent Kabila's assassination on 01/16/2001, his son Major

General Joseph Kabila, former chief of staff, was selected by the transitional legislature installed by Laurent Kabila in August 2000 to succeed him on 01/24/2001 (Lansford 2021: 364), demonstrating dynastic succession characteristic of personalist autocracy and confirming continuity of personalist rule through family networks rather than institutional procedures. Joseph Kabila, holding the rank of Major General and position of former chief of staff, continued to concentrate executive and legislative authority personally through inherited military command structures, was designated „transitional president“ from 04/07/2003,³⁷[4] yet the regime's authority continued to derive from personal dynastic legitimation rather than from negotiated international framework or genuine caretaker facilitation. UN peacekeepers (MONUSCO) were deployed by the UNSC. By June 2003 all foreign armies except those of Rwanda had pulled out of Congo. A transitional government was set up until after the election. Only on 05/05/2005 did the transitional legislature approve the draft of a new constitution (Lansford 2021: 365), and elections were finally held on 07/30/2006, demonstrating that „transitional“ status masked personalist consolidation for 9 years until external pressure eventually forced electoral transition. According to LIED, no multiparty executive or legislative elections were held during the specified period. Per FH, for this regime period, the country scores between 11 and 14 as not free, which we also interpret as not free. LIED codes no presence of political liberties throughout the period. Following V-Dem's PCLI the scores indicate not really presence until 2001 before they increased towards an ambiguous level. From 1998 to 1999, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were absent, and V-Dem's LCE is similarly interpreted as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were also absent. From 2000 to 2006, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were limited, and V-Dem's LCE is similarly interpreted as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were also limited.

07/30/2006 End Personalist Autocracy/Start Electoral Hybrid Regime: On this date, the first round of presidential elections as well as the parliamentary elections took place. These were the first in 41 years after the overthrow of Mobuto. The elections themselves were relatively peaceful, however, chaos regarding the results led to armed clashes.³⁸ On 10/29/2006, run-off presidential elections were held after no candidate had been able to secure a majority in the first round.³⁹ International Observers described the elections as generally free and fair (Lansford 2021: 365). Multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period, which aligns with the observations of LIED. However, LIED classifies the election as not competitive, while we classify them as rather not competitive. According to V-Dem no cleanliness was given, but V-Dem's EF&FI declares ambiguous election conditions. Joseph Kabila emerged victorious from the run-off election, but these results were rejected by Bemba. The Supreme Court declared the result to be rightful on 11/27/2006.⁴⁰ There were deficits not only in the electoral process but also in the guarantee of political and civil liberties during the first term of Kabila.⁴¹ Per FH, for this regime period, the country scores between 11 and 14 as not free, which we also interpret as not free. Political liberties were coded as absent per LIED. V-Dem's PCLI scores political liberties as ambiguous with the exception of 2019 and 2020 for which political liberties indicated as somewhat present. On 11/28/2011, general elections were held amid widespread violence (Lansford 2021: 365). International Observers raised concerns about the transparency of the elections.⁴² Election laws were changed by the government to prevent a facultative run-off which should have taken place on 02/26/2012. According to the constitution, no more than two presidential terms were allowed. Elections for Kabila's successor were originally scheduled for 11/27/2016. When Kabila announced that a national census was needed to determine the number of voters before an election could be held, violent protests broke out on 09/19/2016. On 12/23/2016, an agreement was reached between Kabila and the opposition according to which Kabila would leave office before the end of 2017 and would not alter the constitution. The opposition would appoint the prime minister and the implementation of the deal would be overseen by opposition-leader Étienne Tshisekedi. On 12/30/2018, elections finally took place. Officially, Félix Tshisekedi won the election with 38.56% of the vote. However, Martin Fayulu claimed the results to be fraudulent. The Catholic Church, the SADC and the African Union agreed, that they believed Fayulu to be the winner of the election. According to a large-scale investigation by the Financial Times and Radio France Internationale, a revision of 86% of the

votes revealed a win for Fayulu at 59.4%. Fayulu subsequently filed a court case with the Constitutional Court on 01/12/2019. On 01/19/2019, the court rejected Fayulu's claim. Tshisekedi was inaugurated on 01/24/2019.⁴³ He gradually managed to oust the last Kabila supporters from the government. General elections in December 2023 were won by incumbent Tshisekedi. Election observers claimed the procedure to be marred by irregularities and procedural problems and the EU observation mission was cancelled due to security risks. According to Reuters, the EU long-distance observation mission was met by raising numerous problems that hampered their efforts and transparency.⁴⁴ Repression, manipulation, corruption, and violence remain prevalent.⁴⁵ In addition to that, LIED considers the elections as not competitive since 2011. No real cleanliness was scored in 2011 and 2021. The remaining years are characterized by no clean elections (V-Dem CEI). During the entire time ambiguous election conditions are scored according to V-Dem EF&FI. From 2006 to 2015, according to the Polity5 indicator, during this period, the executive faced substantial limitations on decision-making power. Between 2016 and 2018, the executive faced slight limitations on power during this period. From 2007 to 2022, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were limited, and V-Dem's LCE is similarly interpreted as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were also limited. For the year 2009, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were limited, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were moderate. For 2023, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were absent, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were limited.

Electoral Hybrid Regime as of 07/01/2025 continued.

Additional sources (Clark 1997b, Crawford 2006, Decalo 1990b, Fleischhacker 1999, Ikambana 2007, Lansford 2021, Lemarchand 1993, Leslie 1993, Meditz/Merrill 1993, Oppenheim/Roxburgh 1920, Reyntjens 2009, Schmidt/Stroux 1999, Wilde 2001, Wrong 2000, Willoughby/Fenwick 1974, Zagel 2010)

Notes

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_Free_State

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1960_Belgian_Congo_general_election#

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1960_Belgian_Congo_general_election

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1960_Belgian_Congo_general_election

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Kasa-Vubu

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belgo-Congolese_Round_Table_Conference

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrice_Lumumba

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_Crisis#

⁹ <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/congo-decolonization>

¹⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_Crisis#Political_disintegration

¹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_Crisis#Killing_of_Lumumba

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Kasa-Vubu

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_Crisis#Killing_of_Lumumba

¹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_Crisis#Killing_of_Lumumba

¹⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_Crisis#United_Nations_escalation_and_the_end_of_the_Katangese_secession

¹⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luluabourg_Constitution

¹⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simba_rebellion#

¹⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simba_rebellion#

¹⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_Crisis#Kwilu_and_Simba_rebellions

²⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_Crisis#Attempted_political_reconciliation

²¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_Crisis#Attempted_political_reconciliation

²² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_Crisis#Suppression_and_Belgian_and_American_intervention

²³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1965_Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo_general_election

- ²⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_Crisis#Second_Mobutu_coup_d%C3%A9tat
- ²⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Popular_Movement_of_the_Revolution
- ²⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1967_Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo_constitutional_referendum
- ²⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zaire#Constitutional_changes
- ²⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mobutu_Sese_Seko#Second_coup_and_consolidation_of_power;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Popular_Movement_of_the_Revolution
- ²⁹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zaire#Mobutu>
- ³⁰ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zaire#Etymology>
- ³¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_Zaire
- ³² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zaire#Growing_conflict
- ³³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mobutu_Sese_Seko#Second_coup_and_consolidation_of_power
- ³⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laurent-D%C3%A9sir%C3%A9_Kabila#
- ³⁵ <https://www.refworld.org/reference/annualreport/freehou/1999/en/95272>
- ³⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Congo_War
- ³⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transitional_Government_of_the_Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo#:~:text=On%20July%2017%202003%2C%20the,swearing%20allegiance%20to%20President%20Joseph
- ³⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2006_Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo_general_election
- ³⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2006_Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo_general_election
- ⁴⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2006_Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo_general_election#Supreme_Court_decision
- ⁴¹ <https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/100475.htm>
- ⁴² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2011_Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo_general_election
- ⁴³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2018_Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo_general_election#Constitutional_Court_appeal
- ⁴⁴ <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/eu-cancels-congo-election-observation-mission-2023-11-29/>
- ⁴⁵ <https://freedomhouse.org/country/democratic-republic-congo/freedom-world/2024>

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