



Mongolia — Va-PoReg Country Report

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01/01/1697 Start Part of Other Country [of China]: During the period from the 17th century until the end of the Qing dynasty, Mongolia was under the dominion of the Manchu-led Qing dynasty of China, after the Dzungar Khanate was defeated by the army of the Qing Dynasty in the First Dzungar-Qing War in 1697.¹ This encompassed the Mongolian Plateau, comprising the four Outer Mongolian aimags (also known as „leagues“) and the six Inner Mongolian aimags. „Outer Mongolia“: This region corresponds to the modern state of Mongolia, plus the Russian-administered region of Tannu Uriankhai, and a part of northern Xinjiang.² LIED and V-Dem do not provide data for Mongolia before 1911.

12/29/1911 End Part of Other Country [of China, Autocratic Monarchy]/Start Autocratic (Theocratic) Monarchy: After the fall of the Manchu dynasty in 1911, Outer Mongolia proclaimed its independence, placing its spiritual leader in a prominent position. In seeking support against China, Outer Mongolia turned to Russia for assistance.³ On 12/29/1911, the Mongols declared their independence from the collapsing Chinese Qing Empire following the Xinhai Revolution.⁴ They installed a theocratic sovereign, the 8th Bogd Gegeen, highest authority of Tibetan Buddhism in Mongolia, who took the title Bogd Khaan or „Holy Ruler“.⁵ In July 1912, the Bogd Khan appointed Namnansüren as the Prime Minister of Autonomous Mongolia, replacing Da Lam Tserenchimed. Tserenchimed had been acting as the de facto head of government since the Bogd Khan’s elevation as the national leader in December 1911 while serving as the Minister of Internal Affairs.⁶ According to LIED no multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period. For the relevant regime period, 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.

05/25/1915 Continuation Autocratic (Theocratic) Monarchy [semi-sovereign, external affairs under China, Personalist Autocracy]: On this date, Russia, Mongolia, and China entered into the Treaty of Kyakhta, a tri-party agreement. The treaty stipulated the following terms: Russia and China acknowledged Outer Mongolia’s autonomy, considering it as part of Chinese territory. In return, Mongolia recognized China’s suzerainty. Additionally, Mongolia was not allowed to engage in the negotiation of international treaties with foreign nations concerning political and territorial matters.⁷ According to LIED no multiparty executive and legislative elections were held. LIED identifies political liberties as absent, and V-Dem’s PCLI is also classified by us as indicating political liberties are absent in this period. For the relevant regime period, 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.

02/06/1921 End Autocratic (Theocratic) Monarchy [semi-sovereign, external affairs under China, No Central Authority]/Start Communist Ideocracy: In March 1921, revolutionary forces from the Soviet Union and Mongolia established a provisional government, leading to the Mongolian Revolution of 1921 (Turner 2022: 799). Mongolian revolutionaries, aided by the Soviet Red Army, successfully expelled the Russian White Guards from the country and founded the Mongolian People’s Republic in 1924. Although it had nominal independence, the Mongolian People’s Republic acted as a satellite state of the Soviet Union until the January 1990 Mongolian revolution.⁸ Initially, a constitutional monarchy was established under Jebtsun Damba

Khutukhtu, but after his death in 1924, the Mongolian People's Party transformed into the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP), leading to the declaration of the Mongolian People's Republic as the first Communist state outside of the Soviet Union (Lansford 2021: 1102). During the 1920s, factional conflicts within the MPP resulted in the elimination of those advocating for a more traditional form of rule. Eventually, the Communists gained control after the death of the Bogd Khan (Bawden 1968: 230-37, Shinn/Worden 1988, Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014: 78-79). In the context of World War II, Mongolia, with Soviet help, fended off Japanese invaders and participated in successful Soviet campaigns against Inner Mongolia and Manchuria. In 1946, China recognized the independence of Outer Mongolia, and until 1990, the Communist MPRP held absolute power (Turner 2022: 799). In 1984, Tsendenbal was forced out of power due to Soviet influence, leading to his replacement by Batmonh as party secretary. In December 1989, the Mongolian Democratic Party, an opposition group, achieved tacit recognition and held its first congress in February 1990 (Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014: 78-79). Mass protests and hunger strikes forced Batmohn to give up power and suspend the constitution which guaranteed power for the Communist party. According to LIED no multiparty executive and legislative elections were held until 1923, from 1924 onward executive and legislative elections, which weren't multiparty, were held. LIED identifies political liberties as absent, and V-Dem's PCLI is also classified by us as indicating that political liberties are absent for the entire communist period. From 1924 to 1933, based on Polity5's assessment, the executive faced slight limitations on power during this period. Between 1934 and 1951, the executive wielded unrestricted authority without any formal limitations. From 1952 to 1998, as per Polity5's classification, the executive's authority was subject to minor institutional constraints during this time. For the relevant regime period, 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 absent.

05/11/1990 End Communist Ideocracy/Start Democratizing Regime: In the course of the Mongolian Revolution of 1990 a multi-party system was introduced by constitutional amendment on 05/11/1990, ending one-party rule (Lansford 2021: 1102). In the aftermath of protests and hunger strikes, the complete resignation of the MPRP Politburo occurred on March 12, 1990. This move was accompanied by the legalization of political opposition (Turner 2022: 799).⁹ In 1990, LIED identifies political liberties as absent, and V-Dem's PCLI is classified by us as ambiguous regarding the status of political liberties. According to the Polity5 indicator, during this period, the executive faced substantial limitations on decision-making power. For the relevant regime period, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were robust, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were moderate.

06/22/1990 End Democratizing Regime/Start Liberal Democracy: On this date, legislative elections were held, with a second round on 06/29/1990, at which time the new second chamber of parliament (Little Khural) was also elected.¹⁰ On 06/28/1992, under a new constitution, an election for a reinstituted unicameral legislature saw the MPRP capturing 71 of 76 seats even though opposition parties won 40 percent of the vote (Lansford 2021: 1103). However, some opposition figures were incorporated into the cabinet. While the adoption of a new constitution on February 12, 1992, marked the formal end of one-party rule in Mongolia, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) continued to hold power until it faced defeat in the 1996 legislative election, when the Democratic Union Coalition won the elections.¹¹ On 06/28/1992 Communists won again in the first multiparty election of the post-Soviet era (Haggard/Kaufman/Teo 2016: 44). The first direct election of a president in Mongolia on 06/06/1993 resulted in the victory of an opposition candidate, marking a significant shift towards a more competitive political landscape. Despite Ochirbat's win as an opposition candidate, it is noteworthy that he ran against a candidate from the ruling MPRP. The June 1993 election is considered a turning point as it signified the end of communist dominance and the monopolization of the Mongolian political system (Ginsburg 1995: 462-71). The MPRP retained control of the assembly until the subsequent election in 1996 due to the nonconcurrent election schedules (Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014: 79).¹² On 03/27/2019 the State Great Khural began a constitutional crisis when it adopted an unprecedented

law that gave the National Security Council of Mongolia the power to recommend the dismissal of judges and prosecutors, as well as the head of the national anti-corruption service. Battulga's political party, the opposition's main minority faction in the parliament, claims that the law undermines the country's constitutional separation of powers and the larger Mongolian democratic system.¹³ On 06/09/2021, Mongolia conducted presidential elections, with former Prime Minister Ukhnaagiin Khürelsükh of the Mongolian People's Party emerging as the winner with 72% of the valid vote. The election was deemed to be free and fair by the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe). Nevertheless, the election stirred controversy due to the disqualification of several opposition candidates, and former President Khaltmaagiin Battulga was prevented from running for a second term.¹⁴ However, based on our observations, multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period, which aligns with the observations of LIED. According to LIED electoral competitiveness is achieved during the entire time. Moreover, V-Dem's CEI and V-Dem's EF&FI score somewhat cleanliness and somewhat free and fair elections since 1992. Besides, political liberties are present according to LIED and V-Dem's PCLI. Since 2023, V-Dem's PCLI scores decreased to somewhat present. In 1990 and 1991, as per Polity5's classification, the executive's authority was significantly constrained by institutional checks. Since 1992, based on Polity5's assessment, during this period, the executive was either equal to or subordinate to other institutions, demonstrating strong constraints on decision-making authority. For the relevant regime period, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were robust from 1990-2016, in 2020 and between 2022-2023. V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were comprehensive from 1991-2007, 2010-2012 and 2019-2020, and robust between 2008-2009, 2013-2018 and 202-2023. According to FH, Mongolia is classified as free throughout the entire regime period, with scores ranging from 5 to 3. This corresponds to our rather free and free categories.

Liberal Democracy as of 07/01/2025 continued.

Additional Sources (Elklit 1994, Fish 1998, Fish 2001)

Notes

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dzungar%E2%80%93Qing_Wars

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mongolia_under_Qing_rule

³ The region Outer Mongolia corresponds to the modern state of Mongolia, plus the Russian-administered region of Tannu Uriankhai, and a part of northern Xinjiang. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outer_Mongolia

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qing_dynasty

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bogd_Khanate_of_Mongolia

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T%C3%B6gs-Ochiryn_Namnans%C3%BCren

⁷ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Kyakhta_\(1915\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Kyakhta_(1915))

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mongolian_Revolution_of_1921

⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1990_Mongolian_legislative_election

¹⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1990_Mongolian_legislative_election

¹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mongolian_Revolution_of_1990

¹² <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-mongolia/>

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khaltmaagiin_Battulga

¹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2021_Mongolian_presidential_election#cite_note-4

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