



Yemen, North — Va-PoReg Country Report

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[officially known as The Yemen Arab Republic; also known as Yemen (Sana'a)]

07/29/1872 Start Part of Other Country [of Ottoman Empire]: North Yemen, which was known as the Yemen Vilayet, became a part of the Ottoman Empire on 07/29/1872. The formal incorporation of the region into the Ottoman Empire was the result of an agreement between the Ottomans and local Yemeni leaders. However, Ottoman control was largely confined to cities.¹ Already before the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the Shiite Imam Yahya bin Hamiduddin took power in the Northern Kingdom of Yemen in 1911.² LIED and V-Dem's PCLI do not provide data on political liberties for this timeframe.

10/30/1918 End Part of Other Country [of Ottoman Empire, Autocratic Monarchy]/Start Autocratic Monarchy: After the conclusion of World War I and the subsequent collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the region of northern Yemen gained independence and established itself as the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen.³ Autonomy from the Ottoman Empire during the Hamid al-Din dynasty era marked the establishment of the traditional imamate of the Zaidi people in the region that later became North Yemen (Burrowes 1987, Haddad 1973, Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014: 107).⁴ On 09/02/1926 The Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen was internationally recognized. This regime change event is coded as a voluntary exit because independence was achieved as a direct consequence of the Ottoman Empire's collapse, formalized by the Armistice of Mudros.⁵ Imam Yahya declared independence in the resulting power vacuum left by the withdrawing imperial elite. Based on our observations, no multiparty executive or legislative elections were held during this period. Political liberties were absent according to LIED and V-Dem's PCLI. Based on Polity5's assessment, during this period, the executive operated with unlimited authority, facing no institutional checks on power. During this regime period, V-Dem's JCE is classified 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 also absent.

02/17/1948 End Autocratic Monarchy/Start Autocratic Monarchy: Ruling Imam Yahya Muhammad Hamid ed-Din was killed in the Alwaziri coup attempt.⁶ The rivalling Sayyid family seized power for three weeks⁷ under putschist and family member Abdullah bin Ahmad al-Wazir.⁸

03/13/1948 End Autocratic Monarchy/Start Autocratic Monarchy: The ruling monarchy was restored with Ahmad bin Yahya, Yahya Muhammad Hamid ed-Din's respective son taking over the throne.⁹ On 03/08/1958 North Yemen joined the federation of Egypt and Syria (UAR) as a confederate partner¹⁰, until Syria withdrew in 1961. Thereafter the relations between North Yemen and Egypt declined.¹¹ Based on our observations, no multiparty executive or legislative elections were held during this period. Political liberties were absent according to LIED and V-Dem's PCLI. According to Polity5, during this period, the executive held unlimited authority with no institutionalized constraints on decision-making power. Until 1952, V-Dem's JCE is classified 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 also absent. For the remaining years, 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 absent.

09/27/1962 End Autocratic Monarchy/Start Military Autocracy: On this date the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) was established when revolutionaries, motivated by the Arab nationalist beliefs of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, deposed Imam Muhammad al-Badr, the son of late Imam Ahmad bin Yahya¹², a week after he seized power in Sanaa. The North Yemen civil war started with the aforementioned coup, which saw YAR forces, aided by the United Arab Republic (Egypt), clash with the loyalist troops of King al-Badr, backed by Saudi Arabia and Jordan. The leader of the coup, Abdullah al-Sallal, created the Revolutionary Command Council to rule and thus rose to the presidency of the newly declared republic.¹³ The Yemeni army was small and weak and could probably have been defeated by tribesmen loyal to the royal family, but the regime was kept in power by Egyptian troops and administrators” (Burrowes 1987, Haddad 1973, Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014, Clark 1998). The conflict persisted intermittently until 1967, when Egyptian forces withdrew from Yemen to participate in the Six-Day War.¹⁴ Based on our observations, no multiparty executive or legislative elections were held during this period, which aligns with the observations of LIED. Political liberties were absent according to LIED and V-Dem’s PCLI. According to the Polity5 indicator, until 1965, the executive faced substantial limitations on decision-making power. From 1966 onward, the executive’s authority was subject to minor institutional constraints during this time. During this timeframe, 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 absent.

11/05/1967 End Military Autocracy/Start Electoral Oligarchical Autocracy: A coup ousted al-Sallal and installed a coalition led by the civilian Abdul Rahman al-Eryani, along with military figures (Burrowes 1987: 28, Haddad 1973: 285-88).¹⁵ Rahman al-Eryani was originally a leader of the Free Yemeni Movement (Al-Ahrar), a opposition group during the time of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen.¹⁶ A compromise on 12/01/1970 resulted in a republican form of government in North Yemen with prominent positions granted to members of the royalist faction, was agreed upon by the leaders of the region with the approval of the major foreign players involved, namely Egypt and Saudi Arabia. A new constitution came into force in 1970 and the first parliamentary elections were held in February and March 1971 (Glosemeyer 2001: 293).¹⁷ As political parties were banned, all candidates ran as independents. The indirect election system in rural areas led to a parliament being dominated by tribal elites. Secret elections only took place in urban areas, whilst indirect elections were held in rural areas, effectively barring women from voting (Glosemeyer 2001: 297). Since there were neither elections of the government by the parliament nor the population the preconditions for an electoral autocracy are not fulfilled. By LIED the period is classified as a Non-Electoral autocracy. According to our classification the regime is an electoral oligarchy. Based on our observations, multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period, which aligns with the observations of LIED. The elections held were not competitive according to LIED. V-Dem’s CEI indicates no cleanliness. V-Dem’s EF&FI underline not really free and fair election conditions. Per FH’s scoring for 1972, the country is classified as partly free with a score of 8, which we categorize as rather not free. According to FH, for 1973 and 1974, a score between 9 and 10 makes the country not free, which aligns with our interpretation of rather not free. Furthermore, both LIED and V-Dem’s PCLI indicates that no political liberties were guaranteed. According to Polity5, during this period, the executive encountered slight limitations on decision-making power imposed by other institutions. Until 1971, 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 remaining years, 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 absent.

06/13/1974 End Electoral Oligarchical Autocracy/Start Military Autocracy: Lieutenant Colonel Ibrahim al-Hamdi orchestrated a military coup that ousted the civilian-led government led by Abdul Rahman al-Eryani. Following the coup, a Military Command Council was established, the sheiks and other civilians. Subsequently, in 1975, the MCC dissolved the partially elected Consultative Council, diminishing the representation of tribal interests and consolidating control within the regime (Clark 2010: 107, Burrowes

1987: 57-60, Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014: 107). The appointed cabinet comprised mostly of technocrats.¹⁸ While Ibrahim al-Hamdi as well as his successor, Ahmad al Ghasmi were assassinated on 10/11/1977 and 24/06/1978 respectively, it is unclear who exactly was responsible for the assassinations.¹⁹ Because unlike the personnel, the power structure of the regime did not change significantly, we do not consider the two assassination attempts regime changes. Based on our observations, no multiparty executive or legislative elections were held during this period, which aligns with the observations of LIED. As classified by FH for this regime period, the country is scored from 11 to 14 as not free, which corresponds to our interpretation of not free. Political liberties were absent according to LIED and V-Dem's PCLI. Based on Polity5's assessment, the executive faced slight limitations on power 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 limited, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were moderate.

07/17/1978 End Military Autocracy/Start Military (Personalist) Autocracy: The four-member Presidential Council, which briefly governed the regime from 1974 to 1978 following the assassinations of previous leaders, appointed Lieutenant-Colonel Ali Abdullah Saleh as president and commander-in-chief of the armed forces (Burrowes 1987: 92-93). The post-1978 regime is considered different from the 1974-78 regime because Saleh began almost immediately to change the identity of those who could influence policy, reducing the military's role and incorporating sheikhs. Beginning in late 1978, he purged important officers, narrowing the faction of the military included in the inner circle. He brought back to influences sheikhs who had been excluded since 1974 and gave his family and tribe a privileged place in decision making, distribution, and command positions in the military (Burrowes 1987: 94-130, Clark 2010: 122). Starting in 1979, Saleh initiated the establishment of institutions aimed at enabling broader political engagement for ordinary citizens (Burrowes 1987: 112-131, Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014: 107-108). In 1980 Salih created the political party the General People's Congress (GPC). According to LIED, no multiparty executive or legislative elections were held until 1988. Thereafter, both executive and legislative elections were held, but they were not categorized as multiparty. As classified by FH for 1978-183, the country is scored from 11 to 14 as not free, which corresponds to our interpretation of not free. According to FH, for the rest of the regime period under consideration, a score between 9 and 10 makes the country not free, which aligns with our interpretation of rather not free. Political liberties were absent according to LIED and V-Dem's PCLI. 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 limited, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were absent.

05/22/1990 End Yemen, North [Military (Personalist) Autocracy]: Unification as Republic of Yemen .

For the time after 05/22/1990, see Yemen.

Notes

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

² <https://insidearabia.com/president-al-hamdi-yemen-collective-memory/>

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yemen_Arab_Republic

⁴ <https://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,844159-1,00.html>

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

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yahya_Muhammad_Hamid_ed-Din

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

⁸ https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sayf_Abdallah_ibn_Ahmad_al-Wazir

⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alwaziri_coup

¹⁰ https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vereinigte_Arabische_Staaten

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

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mutawakkilite_Kingdom_of_Yemen

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abdullah_al-Sallal

¹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Yemen_Civil_War; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yemen_Arab_Republic

¹⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abdul_Rahman_al-Eryani

¹⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abdul_Rahman_al-Eryani

¹⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elections_in_Yemen; <https://www.britannica.com/place/Yemen/The-age-of-imperialism#ref964972>

¹⁸ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Yemen/The-age-of-imperialism#ref964972>

¹⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yemen_Arab_Republic#Republic_after_war,_1970s

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