



## Yugoslavia — Va-PoReg Country Report

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[the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, which was briefly the new name for rest-Yugoslavia before the state resolved, is handled under the name Yugoslavia]

[For the regime period between 01/01/1900 and 12/01/1918 see Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia.]

12/01/1918 Start Constitutional Monarchy: On this date, Yugoslavia was founded to be a state that unites all South Slavic people. It was also known as Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.<sup>1</sup> The Kingdom of Yugoslavia was initially governed as a constitutional monarchy with multiparty elections. From the year 1920 onwards, multiparty executive and legislative elections were held. No such elections were registered prior to this date. In 1920 male suffrage was introduced (LIED). From 1921 to 1928, as per Polity5's classification, the executive's authority was significantly constrained by institutional checks during this time. For 1918-1928, 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 the given period, LIED identifies political liberties as absent and V-Dem's PCLI is classified by us as ambiguous since 1919 regarding the status of political liberties.

01/06/1929 End Constitutional Monarchy/Start Autocratic Monarchy: King Aleksandar Karadjordjevic abrogated the constitution on 01/06/1929 and dissolved parliament, declaring a royal dictatorship and engaging in repression of political opposition. Aleksandar reintroduced limited democracy in 1931 and allowed some political parties. However, the regime is still coded as an autocratic monarchy since voters in the elections of 11/08/1931 were presented with a single list of candidates supporting the royal dictatorship of King Alexander. Aleksandar was assassinated in 1934, and a three-man regency ruled on behalf of his young son (Sudetic 1994: 28-29, 32-35, Casey et al. 2020: 17). As documented in LIED, multiparty executive and legislative elections were not held until 1930. Subsequently, both executive and legislative elections were conducted between 1931 and 1934, though they were not classified as multiparty. From 1935 onward, multiparty executive and legislative elections were conducted. From 1929 to 1936, as per Polity5's classification, the executive wielded unrestricted authority without any formal limitations during this time. In 1939 and 1940, the executive's authority was significantly constrained by institutional checks during this time. In 1929, 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 1930, V-Dem's JCE is classified as limited, indicating weak judicial oversight. Concurrently, V-Dem's LCE shows no value, which can be cautiously interpreted as indicating an absence of legislative constraints on the executive. For 1931-1939, 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 1940, V-Dem's JCE is classified by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were absent, whereas V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were limited. LIED identifies political liberties as absent, whereas V-Dem's PCLI is classified by us as showing that political liberties are not truly present.

03/27/1941 End Autocratic Monarchy/Start Autocratic Monarchy: On this date young officers overthrew the government and the regency led by Prince Paul of Yugoslavia. The coup was orchestrated by a group of

pro-Western Serb nationalist officers of the Royal Yugoslav Air Force, led by Brigadier General Borivoje Mirković and General Dušan Simović, in response to the signing of the Tripartite Pact with the Axis powers. They declared a new government under General Dusan Simovic. King Peter II fully assumed his monarchical powers. Although the coup was military in origin, the immediate installation of the King as the active head of state excludes the classification as a military autocracy (due to the Monarchy Exclusion Rule). The regime functioned as a short-lived emergency government in the context of immediate rupture. After anti-Axis demonstrations erupted, Germany invaded Yugoslavia.<sup>2</sup>

04/17/1941 End Autocratic Monarchy/Start Direct Rule Occupation Regime [by Germany, Right-Wing (Fascist) Autocracy]: On this date, the Yugoslav troops surrendered unconditionally to the German troops after eleven days of fighting. The regime collapsed due to German occupation (Sudetic 1994: 37, Casey et al. 2020: 17). The region that is now Serbia was partitioned among Hungary, Bulgaria, the Independent State of Croatia, Greater Albania, and Montenegro. The remaining area of occupied Serbia was subjected to military control by Nazi Germany, and Serbian puppet governments were established under the leadership of Milan Aćimović and Milan Nedić, with the support of the Yugoslav National Movement (Zbor), a fascist organization headed by Dimitrije Ljotić.<sup>3</sup> For 1941, 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. For 1942, V-Dem's JCE indicates that judicial constraints on the executive are absent. Simultaneously, V-Dem's LCE shows no value, which, with appropriate caution, can be interpreted as an absence of legislative constraints on the executive. For 1943 and 1944, 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. According to LIED, no multiparty executive or legislative elections were held during the specified period. During the German occupation, LIED identifies political liberties as absent, and V-Dem's PCLI is also classified by us as indicating that political liberties are absent.

10/20/1944 End Direct Rule Occupation Regime [by Germany, Right-Wing (Fascist) Autocracy]/Start Communist Ideocracy [as Yugoslavia]: On this date, Belgrade was liberated from German occupation by Soviet and Bulgarian troops, as well as Yugoslav partisans. This marked the end of the occupation for the Serbian territories within Yugoslavia. On 03/07/1945, and during the retreat of the German forces, a government dominated by Tito and the communists was established (Petrovich 1947: 508-9, Van Dyke 1947: 375). With the German surrender on 05/09/1945, the occupation also ended for the remaining territories of Yugoslavia, including Istria and Slovenia. Constituent Assembly elections were held in November 1945 in which only People's Front candidates could run. The non-communist ministers resigned in protest, and several non-communist parties boycotted the election. It resulted in a communist dominated government led by Tito as prime minister. The assembly ended the monarchy (Sudetic 1992, Petrovich 1947: 515-18, Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014: 92). In 1945 female suffrage was introduced, but de facto women first could vote in 1990.<sup>4</sup> On 11/29/1945 the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with Serbia being one of its six constituent republics was proclaimed. Women were allowed to vote with the Communist constitution of Yugoslavia.<sup>5</sup> According to LIED, both executive and legislative elections were held during this period, but they were not categorized as multiparty. From 1945 to 1950, as per Polity5's classification, the executive's authority was subject to minor institutional constraints during this time. In 1948 Yugoslavia was expelled from the Soviet-led Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties (Cominform), following disagreements regarding policies between Stalin and Tito. Yugoslavia then adopted a non-aligned stance in the cold war.<sup>6</sup> On 01/13/1953 the Yugoslav Constitutional Law came into effect, amending the Constitution by further establishing workers' control over enterprises, as well as expanding local governmental power.<sup>7</sup> Between 1953 and 1979, the executive encountered slight limitations on decision-making power imposed by other institutions. On 04/07/1963 the second constitution of Yugoslavia came into effect, dividing the Federal Assembly into a total of five chambers, making it the only pentacameral legislature. The constitution also introduced term limits to executive positions and extended human and civil rights.<sup>8</sup> The fourth and final

constitution came into effect 02/21/1974 and introduced extensive protection of the republics' self-management system. It reduced the number of members of the Federal Presidency and ensured equal representation for each republic. Additionally, it proclaimed Josip Broz Tito president for life.<sup>9</sup> Tito died on 05/04/1980.<sup>10</sup> Since 1980, the executive's power was noticeably limited but not substantial, fitting Intermediate Category 2. From 1945 to 1962, 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 1963-1988, 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 1989 and 1990, V-Dem's JCE is classified 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 also limited. For the communist period, LIED still identifies political liberties as absent, whereas V-Dem's PCLI is likewise classified by us as showing that political liberties are absent.

01/20/1990 End Communist Ideocracy [as Yugoslavia]/Start No Central Authority: The Congress of the League of Yugoslav Communists ended de facto communist rule in Yugoslavia. While the parts of Yugoslavia did not become independent countries until 1991, since January 1990 there was no de facto rule by a central authority. The commencement of the 14th (extraordinary) Congress of the League of Yugoslav Communists marked a significant moment, as the Yugoslav communist party disbanded itself into its constituent republican parties, effectively terminating one-party rule in Yugoslavia. In February 1990, Slovenia and Croatia passed legislation legalizing opposition parties. Subsequently, opposition parties emerged victorious in multiparty elections held in Slovenia and Croatia during April-May 1990, leading to the conclusion of communist rule in both regions. Following this, both countries ceased tax contributions to the central government and withdrew their troops from the central government's military operations in Kosovo (Glaurdic 2011: 127-139, Lampe 2000: 325-55). The Slovenian parliament declared full sovereignty in July 1990, and in the same month a constitutional reform in Serbia legalized opposition parties and defined it as de facto independent (Glaurdic 2011: 165). While the initial breakaway nations did not achieve formal independence until 1991, the Yugoslav League of Communists and the central government began to lose authority over policymaking in January 1990. By the conclusion of 1990, they had relinquished control over most of the territory that comprised Yugoslavia (Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014: 92). The dominance of Serbia in Yugoslavia began when Slovenia declared its independence in 1991, following the disintegration of the Yugoslav communist party regime (Prunk 2001). According to LIED, multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period. As per Polity5's classification, the executive's authority was subject to minor institutional constraints during this time. For 1991, V-Dem's JCE is classified as limited, indicating weak judicial oversight. Concurrently, V-Dem's LCE shows no value, which can be cautiously interpreted as indicating an absence of legislative constraints on the executive. In this timeframe, LIED identifies political liberties as absent, and V-Dem's PCLI is classified by us as ambiguous regarding the status of political liberties.

04/27/1992 End No Central Authority/Start Electoral Autocracy: On this date, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with only Serbia and Montenegro as part of it, was founded. After the secessions of Slovenia, Croatia, and Macedonia, the Serbian communist party and its leader Milosevic became the dominant force. (Sekelj 2000: 63, Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014: 92, Haggard/Kaufman/Teo 2016: 57). On 09/24/2000 general elections were held and presidential candidate Vojislav Koštunica defeated Milošević, despite attempted vote rigging. It was the first election of the 40 members of the Chamber of the Republics by direct universal suffrage after the constitution was amended. Koštunica's party Democratic Opposition of Serbia was a wide electoral alliance of political parties in Serbia, intent on ousting the ruling Socialist Party and its leader Milošević.<sup>11</sup> President Milošević annulled the elections he lost and stayed in power. However, protests spread. Based on our observations, multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period, which aligns with the observations of LIED. In addition to that, elections were not competitive per LIED. V-Dem's CEI indicates that elections were not really clean since 1993 and that the election in 2000 was of ambiguous

cleanliness. According to V-Dem's EF&FI elections have not been really free and fair in this period. Besides, LIED considers the political liberties as absent. V-Dem's PCLI considers them as ambiguous. From 1993 to 1996, as per Polity5's classification, the executive wielded unrestricted authority without any formal limitations during this time. In 1997 and 1998, the executive's constraints fell into Intermediate Category 1, between unlimited authority and slight limitations. In 1999, the executive encountered slight limitations on decision-making power imposed by other institutions. For 1992-1999, 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.

10/05/2000 End Electoral Autocracy/Start Electoral Democracy: Miners and later other sectors of the populace revolted against Milošević and forced him to resign on this date.<sup>12</sup> The Democratic Opposition of Serbia that had won the election took office (Binnendijk/Marovic 2006, Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014: 92).<sup>13</sup> After the resignation of Milošević, Yugoslavia became part of the UN again in 11/01/2000.<sup>14</sup> On 07/06/2000, the parliament amended the constitution such that the president would no longer be selected by the parliament but would be directly elected instead. On 02/04/2003 Serbia and Montenegro formed the state union of Serbia and Montenegro (Haggard/Kaufman/Teo 2016: 57). On 05/21/2006 the people of Montenegro voted for their independence, and on 06/03/2006 it was proclaimed (see Montenegro).<sup>15</sup> Throughout this era, competitive elections took place under universal suffrage, accompanied by a gradual improvement in press freedom and the protection of civil liberties.<sup>16</sup> However, according to LIED political liberties were still absent. Whereas V-Dem's PCLI indicates full political liberties since 2001. Based on our observations, multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period, which aligns with the observations of LIED. In addition to that, LIED confirms the presence of competitive elections since 2000. From 2000 to 2001 ambiguous cleanliness is scored. From 2000 to 2002, as per Polity5's categorization, the executive's authority was significantly constrained, nearing parity with other branches, placing it in the third intermediate category. For the time since 2003 V-Dem' CEI indicates that elections were somewhat clean. Moreover, since 2000 the overall election conditions are classified as somewhat free and fair by V-Dem's EF&FI. From 2003 to 2006, based on Polity5's evaluation, the executive's power was limited to a degree between substantial constraints and parity with other institutions, fitting Intermediate Category 3. For the year 2000, 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 2001 and 2002, V-Dem's JCE is classified by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were robust, whereas V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were comprehensive. Nonetheless, reports indicated a lack of independence within the judiciary, which was purportedly influenced by the governing authorities (Piano/Puddington/Rosenberg 2006: 625).

06/03[-05]/2006 End Yugoslavia [Electoral Democracy]: The Union of Serbia and Montenegro, formerly known as Yugoslavia, was officially dissolved in 2006.

For the time after 06/03[-05]/2006, see Montenegro and Serbia.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom\\_of\\_Yugoslavia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Yugoslavia)

<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yugoslav\\_coup\\_d%27%C3%A9tat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yugoslav_coup_d%27%C3%A9tat)

<sup>3</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serbia#The\\_Balkan\\_Wars\\_and\\_World\\_War\\_I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serbia#The_Balkan_Wars_and_World_War_I); [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invasion\\_of\\_Yugoslavia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invasion_of_Yugoslavia)

<sup>4</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s\\_suffrage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s_suffrage)

<sup>5</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal\\_suffrage#cite\\_note-centralasiainstitute.org-37](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal_suffrage#cite_note-centralasiainstitute.org-37)

<sup>6</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cominform#Expulsion\\_of\\_Yugoslavia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cominform#Expulsion_of_Yugoslavia)

<sup>7</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1953\\_Yugoslav\\_constitutional\\_amendments](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1953_Yugoslav_constitutional_amendments)

<sup>8</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1963\\_Yugoslav\\_Constitution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1963_Yugoslav_Constitution)

<sup>9</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1974\\_Yugoslav\\_Constitution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1974_Yugoslav_Constitution)

- <sup>10</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josip\\_Broz\\_Tito](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josip_Broz_Tito)
- <sup>11</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic\\_Opposition\\_of\\_Serbia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Opposition_of_Serbia)
- <sup>12</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overthrow\\_of\\_Slobodan\\_Milošević](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overthrow_of_Slobodan_Milošević)
- <sup>13</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/4y2eg35>; <http://tinyurl.com/8derdce>
- <sup>14</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serbia\\_and\\_the\\_United\\_Nations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serbia_and_the_United_Nations)
- <sup>15</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serbia\\_and\\_Montenegro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serbia_and_Montenegro)
- <sup>16</sup> <https://2009-2017.state.gov/outofdate/bgn/serbiaandmontenegro/28187.htm>
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