

Progress in world's democratic quality: Democracy Ranking 2013

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Global Democracy Ranking (<http://democracyranking.org/>) evaluates and compares the quality of democracy worldwide. Recent results show: the quality of democracy has advanced overall. Top-Improvers are Tunisia and other “Arab Spring”-countries. European nations still score highest, yet downward tendencies were seen in eleven countries. While the US shows stagnation in its democratic quality, South American countries improved.

Global Democracy Ranking, a non-profit organization based in Vienna, Austria, has been studying and measuring the quality of democracy for more than ten years. For the recently published Democracy Ranking 2013 a total of 115 countries have been evaluated using a scientifically valid and multidimensional approach that integrates political and non-political aspects of society, such as freedom, gender, economy, knowledge, health, and the environment.

The Democracy Ranking provides information about the quality of democracies twofold, says David Campbell, Academic Director of Global Democracy Ranking: “It shows absolute ranking scores and the changes in the quality of democracies over time.” Detailed information about the performance of each individual country as well as a chart tool for comparison are published on the Global Democracy [Ranking](#) website.

Top Ten 2013

Quality of democracy is best in Europe. Nine of the Top-Ten-states are located there. Again, the Scandinavian model scored highest. Yet, Europe is challenged by centrifugal tendencies: From the United Kingdom to Greece, a total of eleven European nations have shown downward tendencies. Crisis-stuck Greece ranks among the nations with least improvement worldwide. “The results suggest that the political systems have protected their democracy better against economic downturns”, says David Campbell of Global Democracy Ranking.

1. Norway (88.3 points)
2. Sweden (87.0)
3. Finland (86.7)
4. Switzerland (85.9)
5. Denmark (84.4)
6. Netherlands (83.5)
7. Germany (82.2)
8. New Zealand (81.5)
9. Austria (81.2)
10. Belgium (81.1)

Top Improvers 2013

“Arab Spring” has fuelled the progress of democracy’s quality, ranking Tunisia, Libya and Egypt among the top four improvers worldwide. No other country has enhanced its democratic quality as much as Tunisia (+13.6 points compared to 2008/09). “Tunisia has the chance of really establishing a democratic path”, says David Campbell. “Libya and Egypt

face greater challenges.” Although Egypt made progress in all examined categories, the country showed a decline in the gender classification. In Libya the only indicator showing a decline was the economy.

1. Tunisia
2. Libya
3. Guinea
4. Egypt
5. Niger
6. Zambia
7. Georgia
8. Tanzania
9. Kenya
10. Moldavia

Other key findings

With a score change of just +0.1 points the quality of democracy in the **United States of America** could be at a turning point, says David Campbell. “The US has shown improvement in gender aspects, yet a decline in the political dimension and economic dimension can be ascertained.”

South America realized levels of quality of democracy comparable to Eastern-Central and Southern Europe. Especially **Brazil** has increased in all dimensions but the environment. “Brazil reflects the world’s average”, says Campbell. “Instead of solving conflicts by force of any kind, democracies should be supported which in turn also fosters economic development”, concludes Campbell.

Method

For its study the Global Democracy Ranking considers countries classified as “free” or “partly free” by Freedom House (<http://www.freedomhouse.org/>) and with a population of more than one million. The ranking is indicator-based using indicators published by renowned and acknowledged international organizations. Thus the ranking displays empirical data.

Ranking scores for all dimensions and the transformed data of all indicators are publicly posted on the ranking website. In the archive, the previous ranking scores are listed (http://democracyranking.org/wordpress/?page_id=691). The Democracy Ranking encourages feedback from all communities and is open for conceptual and methodical improvement.

All rankings and raw data: http://democracyranking.org/wordpress/?page_id=738

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