

Teaching about Democracy with International IDEA

Dr. Alexander Hudson



Do you live in a democracy?



How would you know?

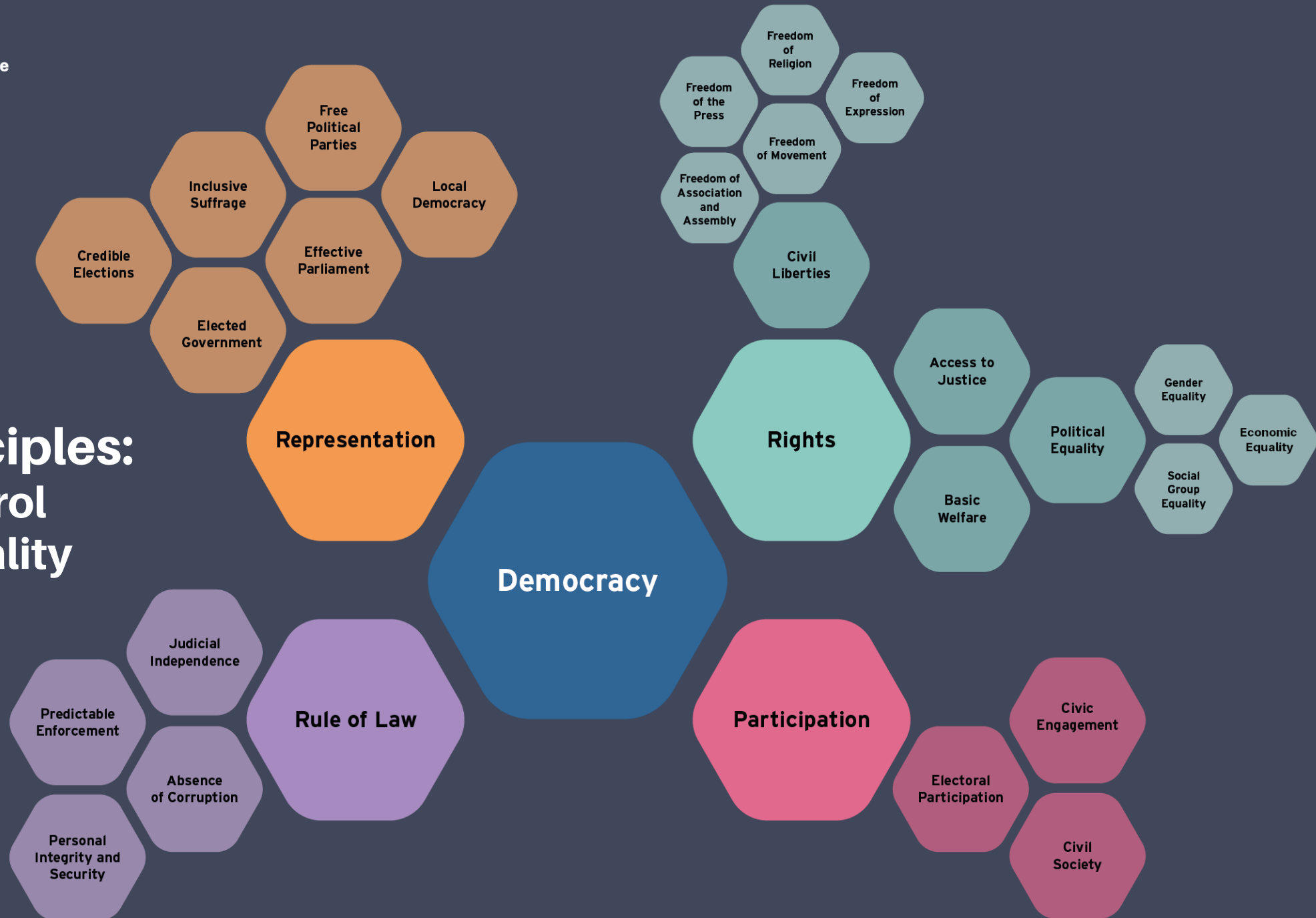


What does democracy really mean anyway?



Defining principles:

1. Popular control
2. Political equality



Democracy Tracker: A tool for monthly democracy monitoring

International IDEA



Co-funded by
the European Union



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development



Robert Bosch
Stiftung

The Global State of Democracy Initiative is also supported by
contributions of [International IDEA Member States](#)

What is the Democracy Tracker?



Democracy Tracker

The Democracy Tracker provides event-centric, monthly information on democracy and human rights developments in 173 countries. Event reports describe a **change to the status-quo** of the state of democracy at the country level. They include a description of the event, indications of the specific aspects of democracy that have been impacted, the magnitude of the impact, links to original sources and keywords to enable further research. Click on the country hexagons below to read the most recent developments, or hover over to the country profiles menu at the top to access the full data and analysis of a specific country.

Get customized monthly alerts
straight to your inbox!

Sign up to tell us which countries, regions, or topics you want to hear about every month!

> Sign up

Positive and Negative Events in February 2025



*Assessments are relative to each country and do not represent comparisons or rankings between countries.

Why did we create the Democracy Tracker?



- ➔ **Timely** - updates every month instead of every year
- ➔ **Specific** - tells you exactly how democracy is impacted
- ➔ **Country level** – drills down to each country
- ➔ **Cross country analysis** – regional page
- ➔ **Customized** – alerts system

**173 country
profile pages
provide a holistic
and timely picture
of democracy at
the country level**

- ➞ Monthly, coded event reports
- ➞ Socio-political background information
- ➞ Human rights treaty ratification status
- ➞ Quantitative scores
- ➞ Regional overview pages

Note: It's not a news feed.



Not intended to be a comprehensive accounting of political events



Value: classifying events & describing their potential impact on democracy

The Democracy Tracker has a wide range of users

Designed for policy-makers, researchers, democracy assistance organizations and journalists to assess the state of democracy on a monthly basis.

**It is also used by many
university students.**

**Can it be useful at other
levels?**

Key features of the Democracy Tracker





United States of America

[Monthly Event Reports](#)[GSOD Indices](#)[Archive](#)

The United States of America (the US) performs in the high range across all four categories of the Global State of Democracy framework, and among the top 25 per cent globally regarding most factors of democracy. Since 2018, it has experienced improvements in Credible Elections and Absence of Corruption and declines in Freedom of Association and Assembly and Economic Equality. With the world's **largest economy** (fueled significantly by the **services and industry** sectors) and **largest military (by expenditure)**, the US plays a significant economic and geopolitical role globally.

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January 2025

Far-reaching executive orders significantly damage the separation of powers

Following his inauguration on 20 January, President Donald Trump embarked on a far-reaching effort to change the way that the United States government functions, principally through Executive Orders (EOs). On the day of the inauguration, President Trump signed 26 EOs; he had signed 46 by the end of January. While the use of EOs is not unique to this administration, the powers claimed by the President in many of these orders are nearly unprecedented in US-American history. The EOs that have ordered the government to halt disbursements of funds appropriated by Congress have relied on claims of executive power to intervene in the budgetary process that far exceed what has been permitted under the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act (ICA) of 1974. EOs and memoranda halting the disbursement of congressionally appropriated funds for services provided by states (such as Medicaid) and official development aid distributed by agencies such as USAID were suspended through emergency orders granted by federal courts, but not before they generated destructive levels of

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Global ranking per category of democratic performance in 2023

	Representation	46/173
	Rights	34/173
	Rule of Law	26/173
	Participation	8/173

Basic Information

Human Rights Treaties

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Performance by category over the last 6 months



Blogs



The Primacy of Primaries: How Super Tuesday Shapes Democracy

Background information



Country context narratives:

- Background and history
- Socio-political cleavages that drive politics today



Rankings from the most recent dataset



Basic information on political institutions



Human rights treaty ratification status

Global State of Democracy Indices

Hover over the trend lines to see the exact data points across the years

(Example from Hungary)

[Explore the indices >](#)



Representation

0.54 /1



Rights

0.59 /1



Rule of Law

0.51 /1



Participation

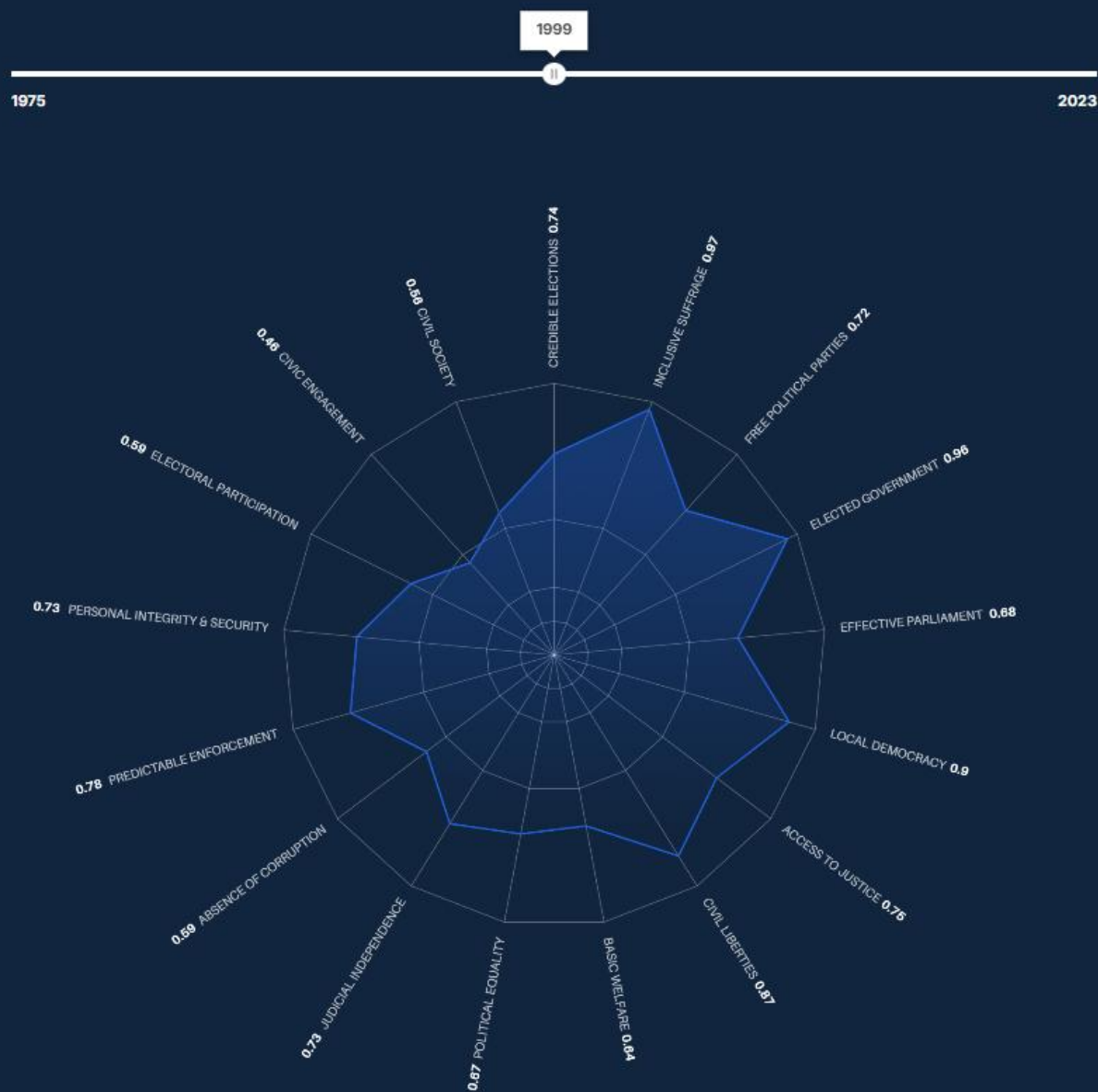
0.43 /1



Factors of Democratic Performance Over Time

(Example from Hungary)

Use the slider below to see how democratic performance has changed over time





United States of America - January 2025

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The President has also delegated a great deal of policy-making power to a newly established agency called the Department for Government Efficiency (DOGE). This agency is functionally led by businessman Elon Musk, although his only formal role in the US government is as an advisor to the President. The vast powers to intervene in government departments that President Trump has delegated to this agency have generated significant problems for democratic accountability and have introduced damaging levels of arbitrariness in the functioning of the government.

Many of the EOs have been challenged in legal proceedings, contributing to further uncertainty about the content of the law and US government policy until these cases are resolved.

Sources: [Federal Register](#), [Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act](#), [Public Broadcasting Service](#), [National Public Radio](#), [American Broadcasting Company News](#), [Just Security](#)

Description of event

Primary categories and factors ⓘ



REPRESENTATION (-2)



EP



RULE OF LAW (-2)



PE

See how we define democracy



Aspects of Democracy

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Keywords

DONALD TRUMP

DEMOCRATIC CONTRACTION

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

SDG16

Sources

Searchable Archive


Free text search

Search this site



Tag search

Tags

 Search Tags

Region filter

Region & country

Please Select ^

- ☒ Global
- ☐ Africa v
- ☐ Americas v
- ☐ Asia v
- ☐ Europe v
- ☐ Western Asia v

Concept filter

Aspect of democracy

Please Select v

Impact filter

Event Assessments

Please Select v


Time frame filter


Time range


From Please select v


To Please select v

Special event filter

☒  Events to watch

☒  Red flagged events

☒  Elections

 Download results (XLSX)

Active Tags & Keywords

From: February 2025 x Events To Watch x Elections x Red Flagged Events x Remove all

Philippines - February 2025

Vice President impeached over corruption and death threat allegations

On 5 February, lawmakers voted to impeach Vice President Sara Duterte over several allegations, including for high-level corruption and threatening President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. The development follows months of an escalating feud between Marcos and Duterte. The impeachment motion cited constitutional violations, betrayal of public trust, graft, and other serious crimes. An investigation into the misuse of public funds related to Duterte's roles as vice president and former education secretary is ongoing. Duterte denies any wrongdoing and will remain in office until her Senate impeachment trial, likely set for July after the midterm elections. If convicted, she could be removed from office and barred from future government positions, though it is uncertain if this would lead to a criminal case requiring her to return public funds.

Sources: [Rappler](#), [Reuters](#), [East Asia Forum](#)

[> READ MORE](#)

ACCOUNTABILITY

IMPEACHMENT

SDG16

CORRUPTION



Thailand - February 2025

Former opposition members face lifetime ban from politics

In February, the National Anti-Corruption Commission announced plans to indict 44 former Member of Parliaments (MPs) from the now-dissolved Move Forward Party (MFP) for sponsoring a bill in parliament to reform Thailand's lese majesty law. Among them, 25 are now part of MFP's successor, the People's Party. If found guilty, they could face a lifetime ban from politics. The indictment comes after the Constitutional Court dissolved MFP in August 2024. The accused MPs maintain that their support for amending the lese majesty was legal, emphasizing that lawmakers have the authority to propose new laws. The commission will now question the 44 MPs before referring the case to the Supreme Court or public prosecutors.

Sources: [Human Rights Watch](#), [The diplomat](#), [Bangkok Post](#), [Thai PBS](#), [International IDEA](#)

[> READ MORE](#)

LÈSE-MAJESTÉ

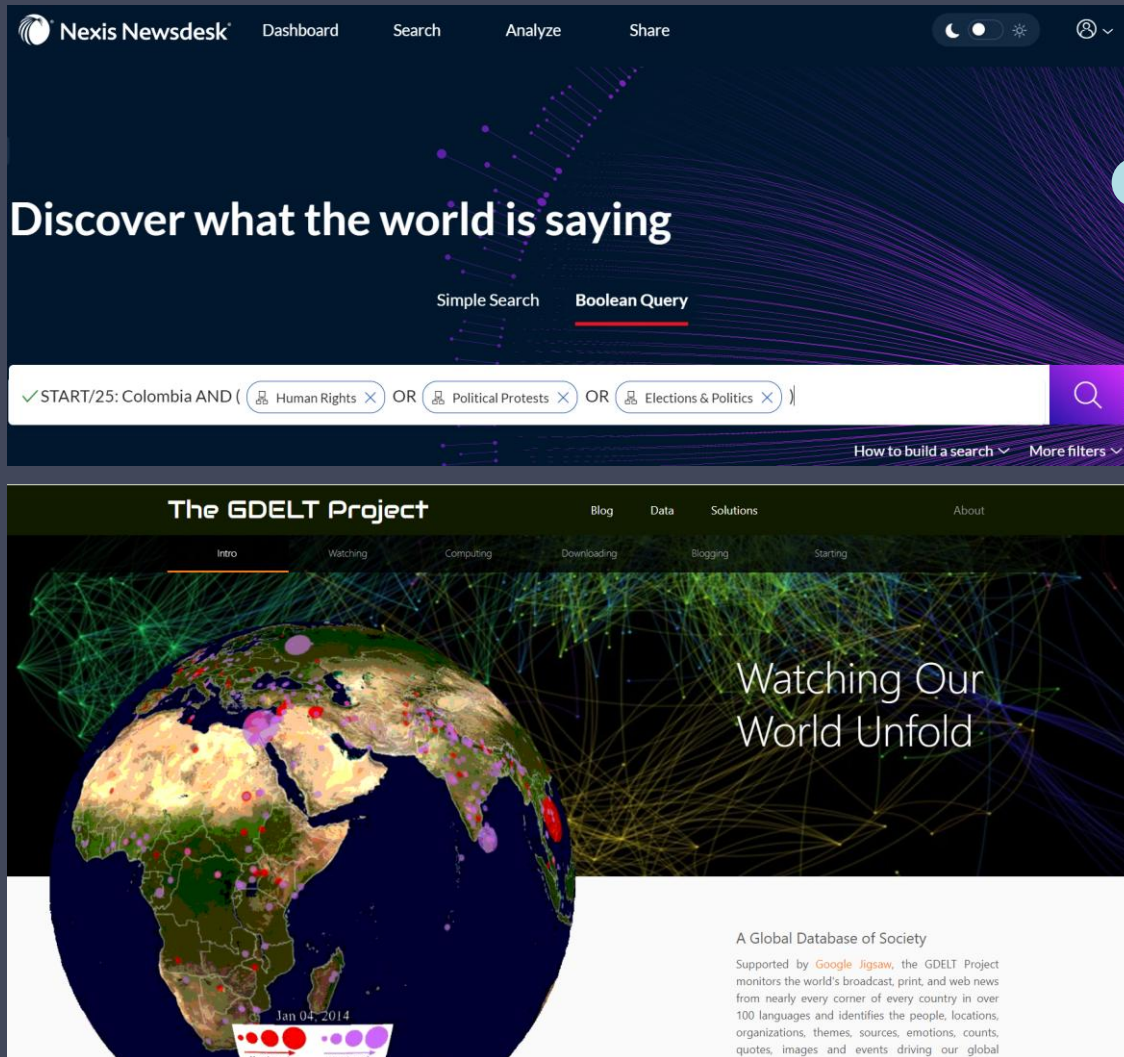
POLITICAL PARTY



Keep track of active search parameters

How do we do it?





Nexis
Newsdesk
& GDELT

Expert
publications

Data
sources

Local
media
reports

IDEA's field
based and
local experts

The decision-making points

- ➞ Is the event closely related to our conceptual framework?
- ➞ Does it impact the status quo of democracy in the country?
- ➞ What is the degree of the impact?

Questions?



For discussion:

- ➞ What are your needs when you teach about democracy?
- ➞ What has worked well for you in teaching about democracy?
- ➞ Are there ways we could adapt the Democracy Tracker to serve you better?

Thank you!



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