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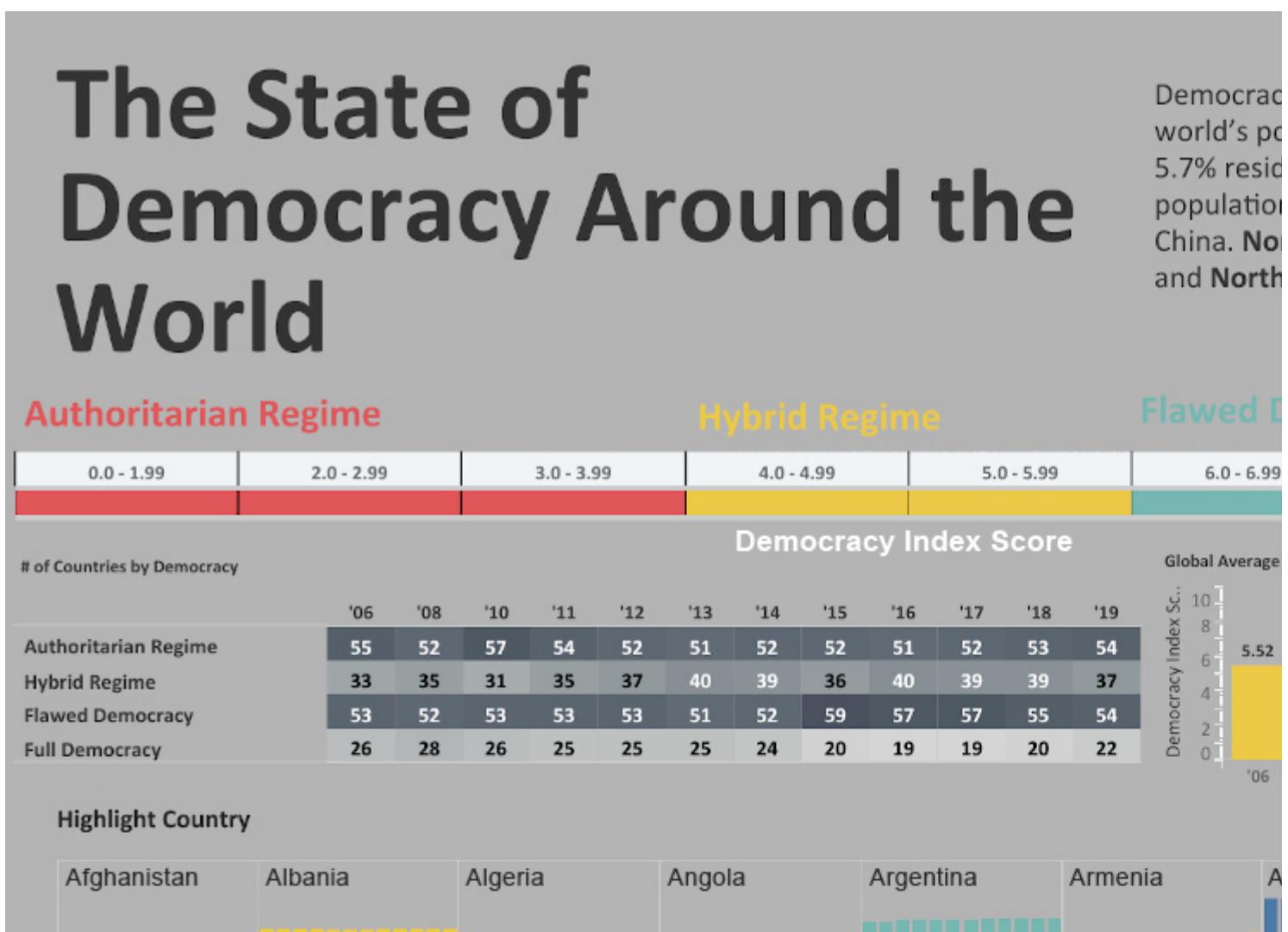
Visualizing the State of Democracy Around the World

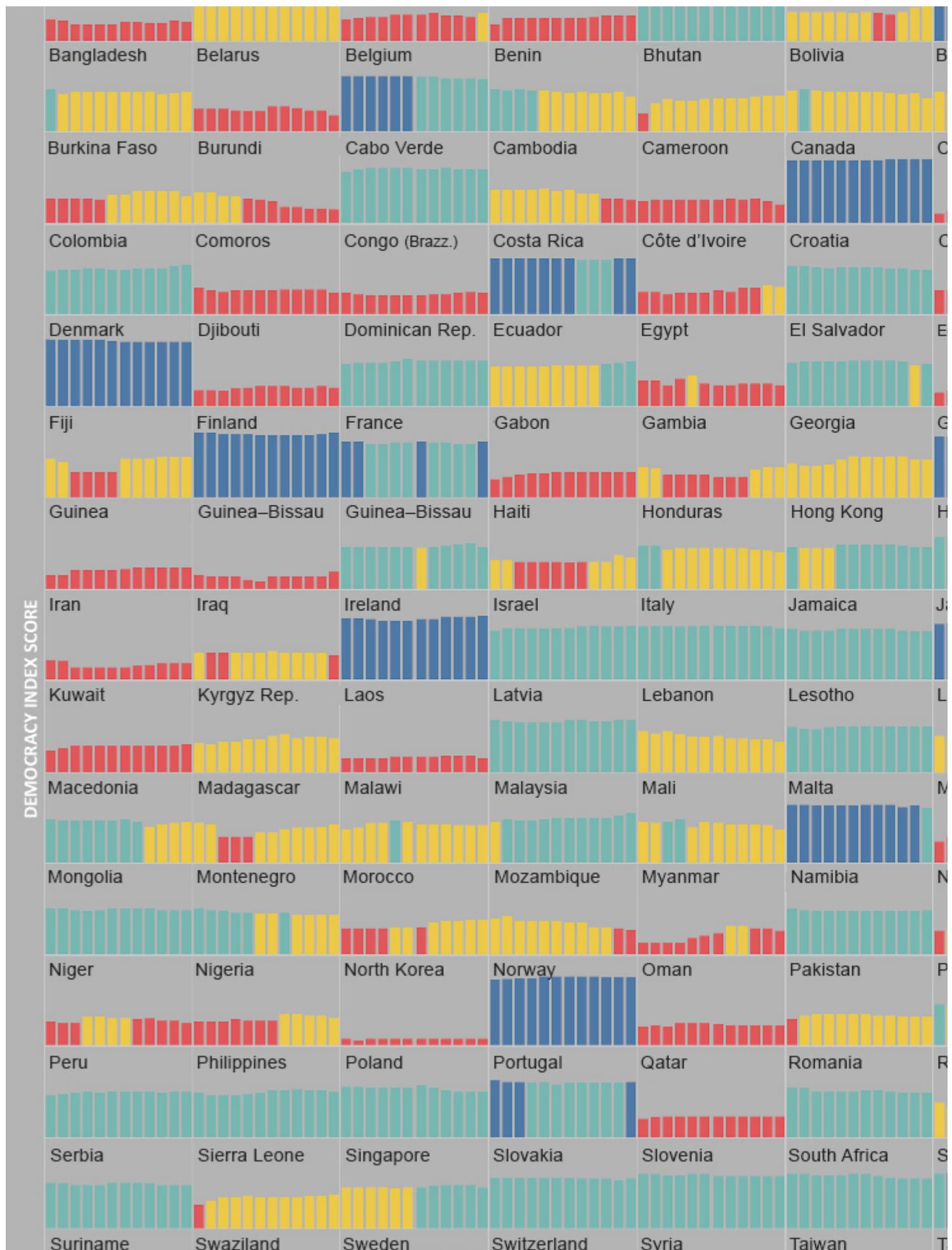


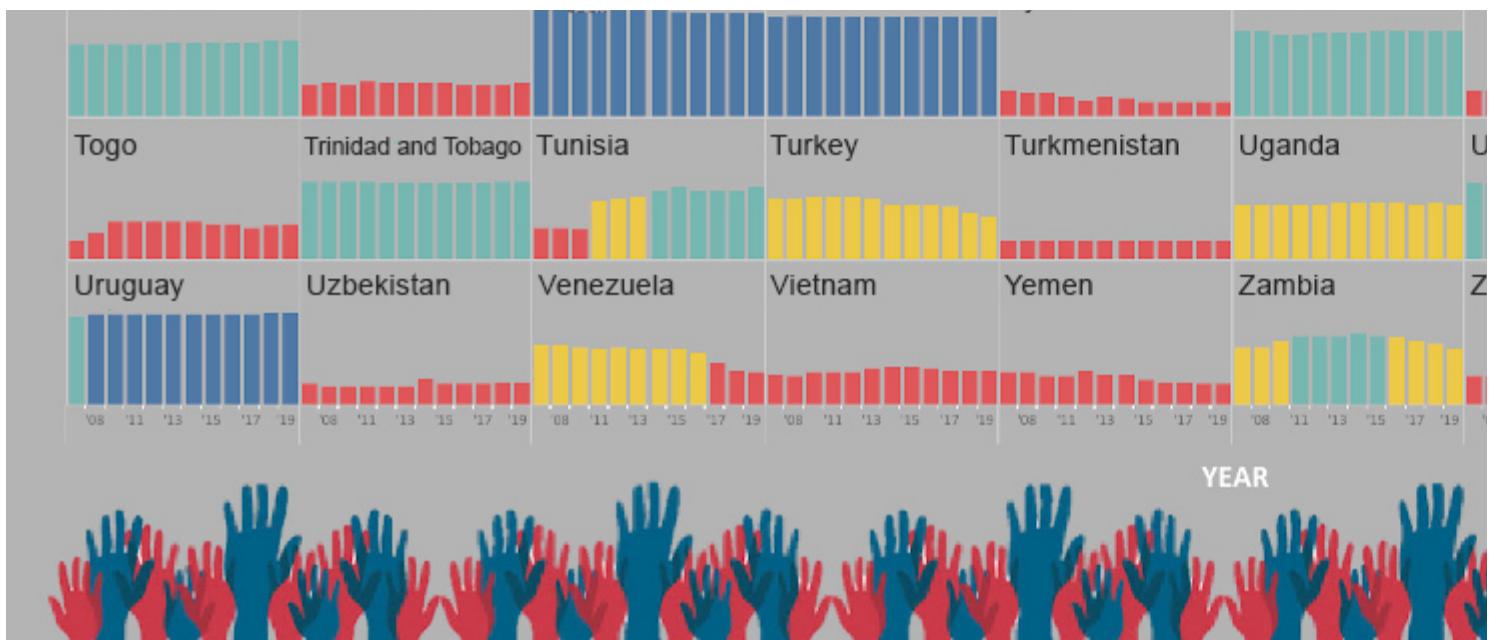
Published 1 year ago on September 1, 2020

By **Iman Ghosh**

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Visualizing the State of Democracy, by Country

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From Norway to North Korea, governing systems differ around the world. But has the world become more or less free in the past decade?

This visualization from [Preethi Lodha](#) demonstrates how democracy levels of 167 countries changed since 2006. The original data comes from the Democracy Index, which is compiled annually by the Economist Intelligence Unit.

Four Levels of Democracy

First, it's important to understand the classifications made by the Democracy Index.

Based on answers to 60 questions across a nation's electoral process, civil liberties, government functions, political participation and political culture, countries are assigned a range of scores in the Democracy Index.

Based on these scores, a nation automatically falls into one of the following four types of governance. Here's which category fits the bill, depending on the range of scores:

Governance Type	Description	Example	Democracy Index Score
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Governance Type	Description	Example	Democracy Index
Authoritarian Regime	Nations which exhibit frequent infringements of civil liberties, unfair elections, and rampant censorship.	China North Korea UAE	0.0-3.99
Hybrid Regime	Nations with regular electoral fraud, corruption, and low political participation, and suppressed opposition.	Kenya Pakistan Turkey	4.0-5.99
Flawed Democracy	Nations with fair elections, underdeveloped political participation and culture, with minor issues in civil liberty and government functions.	Brazil India U.S.	6.0-7.99
Full Democracy	Nations where political freedoms are respected with limited problems, governmental checks and balances, and diverse media exist.	Australia Canada Norway	8.0-10.0

One thing that stands out is that many hybrid regimes and flawed democracies are also considered high potential **emerging markets**, but are held back by their political instability.

Notable Improvements

In recent times, public demonstrations have been a major cause behind increases in Democracy Index scores and changes in governance classifications.

Algeria moved from authoritarian to hybrid regime in 2019, the only country in the Arab world to do so in the index. This came after sustained protests against the previous president, Abdelaziz Bouteflika—who had served for 20 years.

Chile experienced similar turmoil, for the better. After a spike in the scale of middle class anger over inequality and unfair policies in late 2019, the political participation moved it up from a flawed to full democracy.

Sliding Countries

The **U.S.** has one of the **oldest democracies** in the world. However, it was downgraded from a full democracy to a flawed democracy as of the 2016 index, a status that had been “teetering” since before the 2016 election.

according to the report that year.

Venezuela dropped into an authoritarian regime in 2017, and it doesn't seem to be improving anytime soon. The state was found to use the COVID-19 pandemic as an excuse to **crack down** on any dissent against the government.

Global Change in Democracy Levels

All in all, the average global democracy score worldwide emerged at **5.48** in 2019, although clear that certain countries pull this value towards the opposite extremes.

North Korea, an authoritarian regime with a **1.08** score, has remained consistently one of the lowest ranked countries in the index. Meanwhile, its alphabetical successor **Norway** steadily keeps up its high score streak, with **9.87** being the best example of a full democracy in 2019.

Here's how many countries made up each system of governance over the years, and the average Democracy Index score for that year.

Year	Authoritarian	Hybrid	Flawed Democracy	Full Democracy
2006	55	33	53	26
2008	52	35	52	28
2010	57	31	53	26
2011	54	35	53	25
2012	52	37	53	25
2013	51	40	51	25
2014	52	39	52	24
2015	52	36	59	20
2016	51	40	57	19
2017	52	39	57	19
2018	53	39	55	20
2019	54	37	54	22

Authoritarian regimes peaked in 2010 with **57** countries, whereas the full democracy category peaked in 2008 with **28** countries.

Since 2006, the average global score has slid from 5.52 to 5.48, and the total of countries categorized under full democracy decreased from 26 to 22.

Does this signal an increasingly divided world? And will the global pandemic—which is delaying elections—have a further pronounced effect on backsliding these democracy scores?

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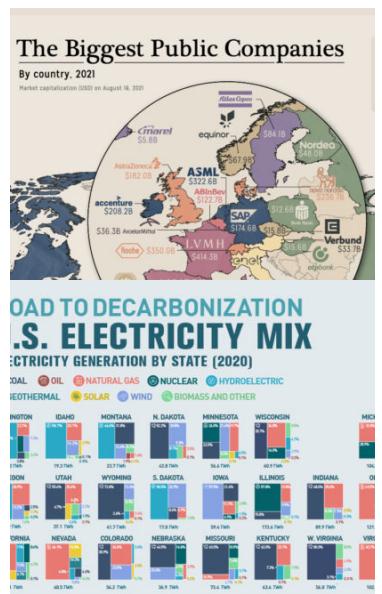
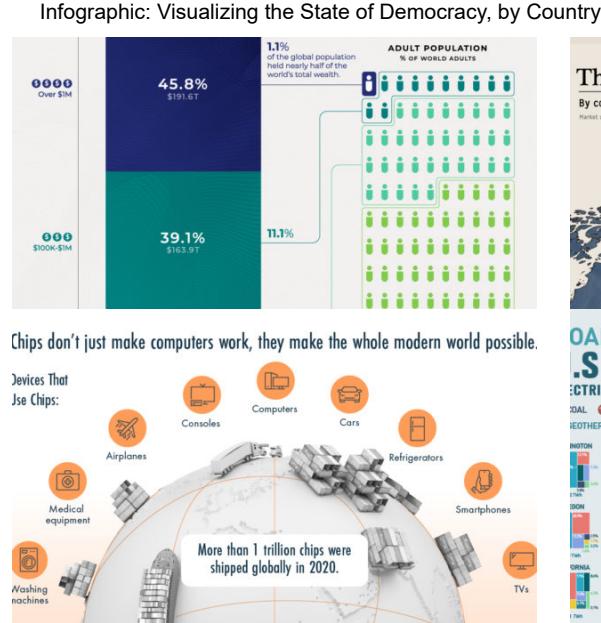
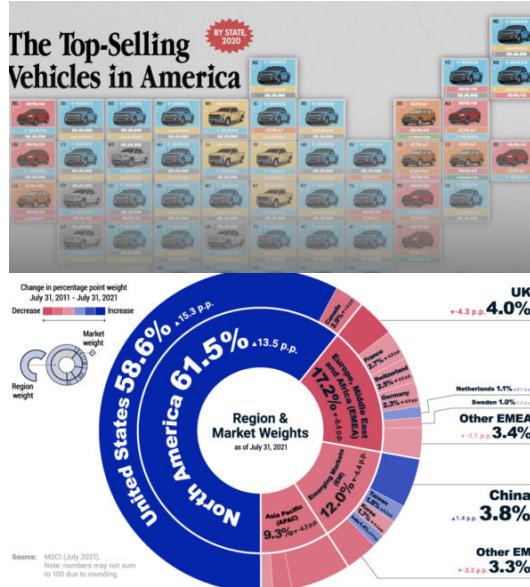
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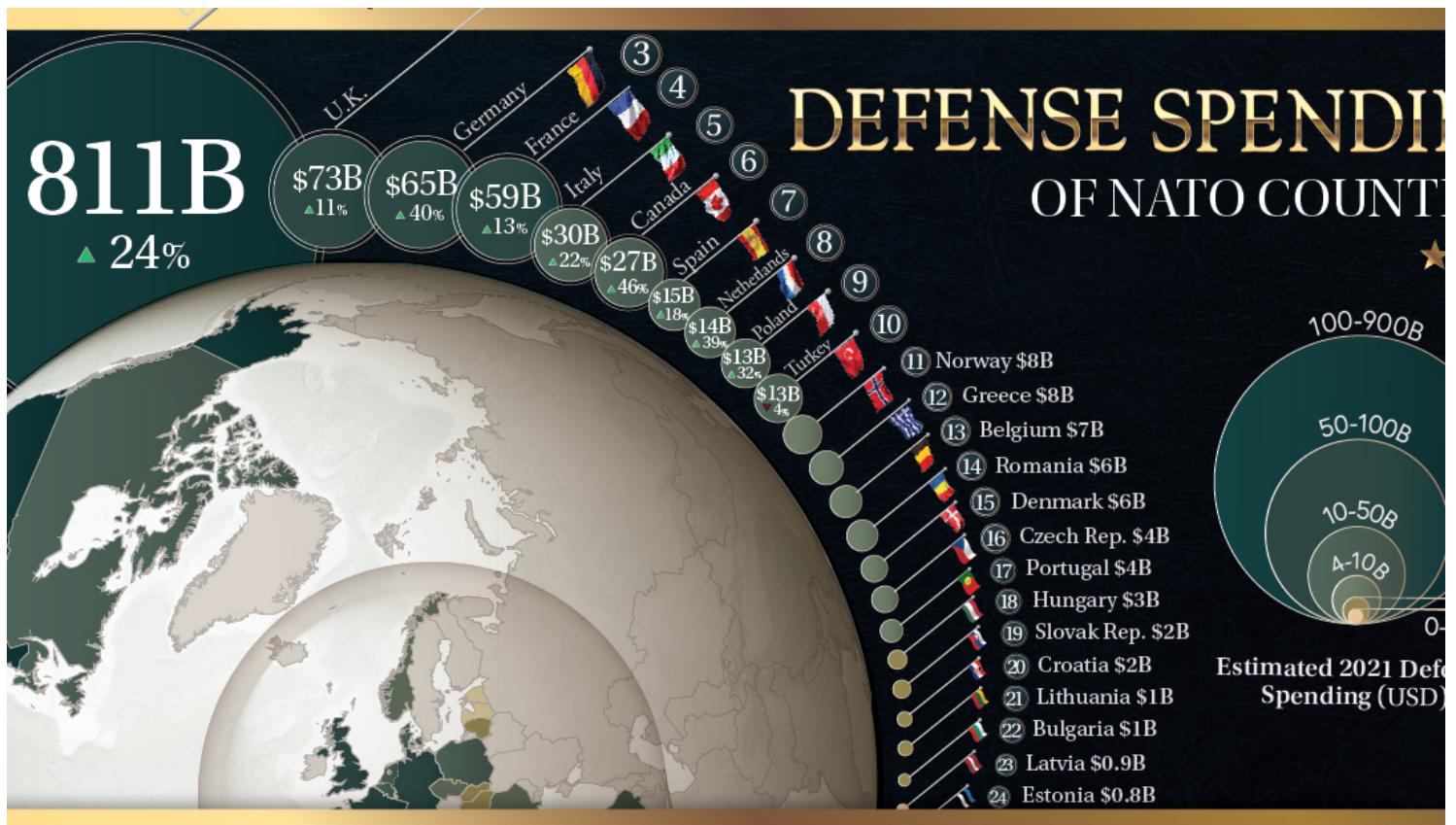
How much does each country in the military alliance contribute to NATO defense spending? We break it down with this map.



Published 6 days ago on September 23, 2021

By **Avery Koop**





This Is How Much NATO Countries Spend on Defense

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) exists for the sole purpose of facilitating a political and military alliance between almost 30 countries. All are obligated to defend one another in times of war, but some countries have much stronger militaries and defense systems than others.

Using data from [NATO](#), this map reveals what each NATO member country spends on its own national defense.

Note: Numbers are 2021 projections.

Biggest NATO Defense Spenders

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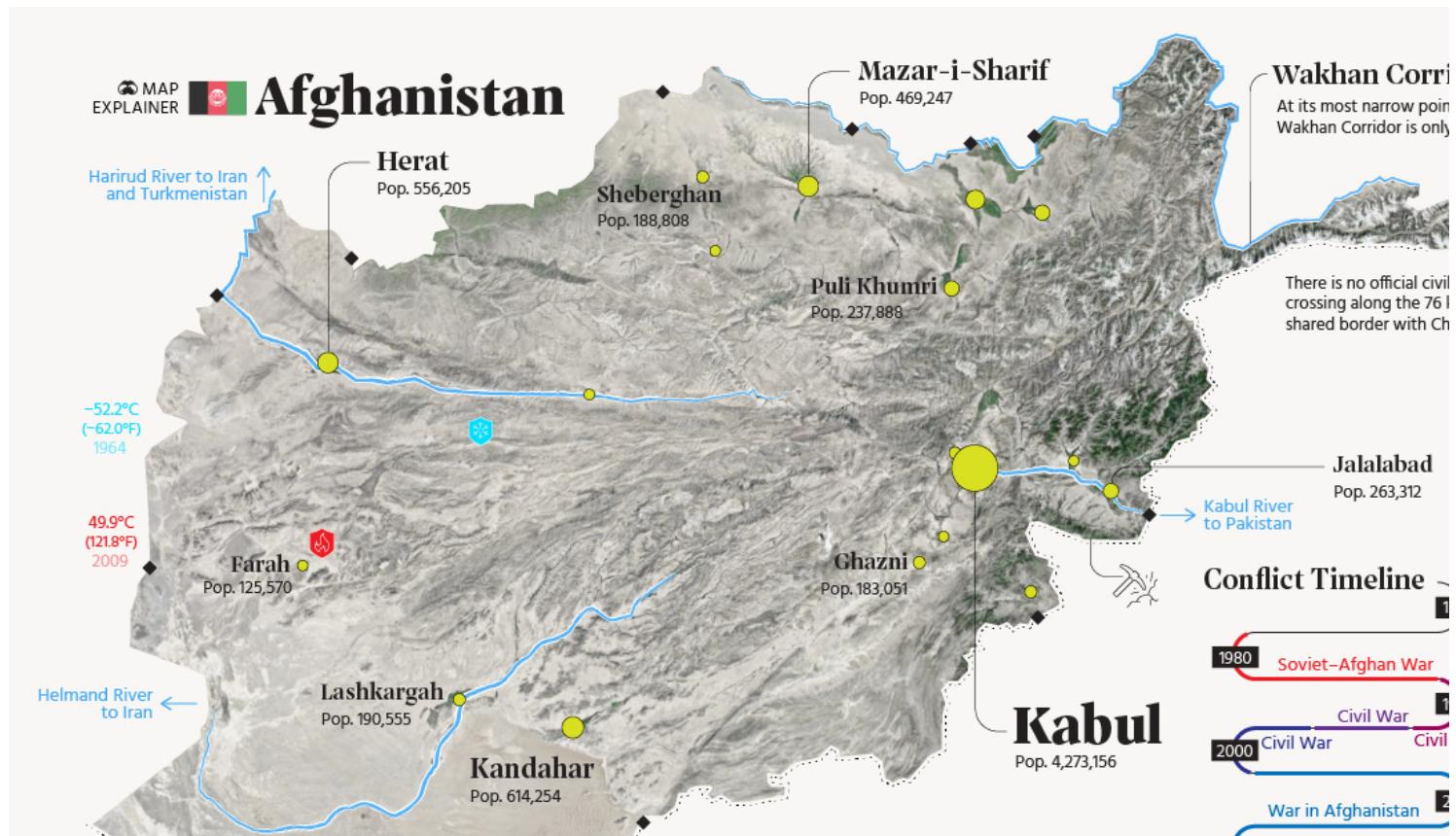
Map Explainer: Key Facts About Afghanistan

This map explainer looks at Afghanistan from a structural point of view, delving into geography and population patterns.



Published 1 month ago on August 18, 2021

By **Nick Routley**



Map Explainer: Key Facts About Afghanistan

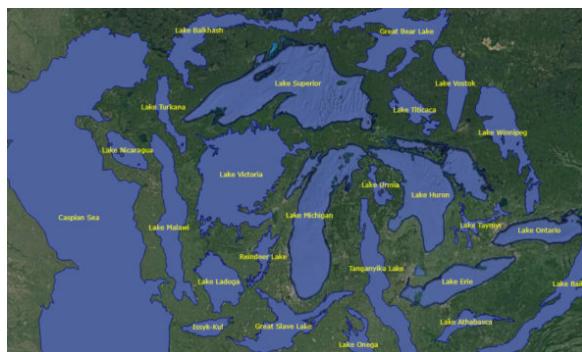
The country of Afghanistan has a long and complicated history of domination by foreign powers and conflict between factions within the country.

While Afghanistan is well covered in headlines and news stories, the lion's share of coverage is directly related to conflict. As a result, Afghanistan is viewed by many in Western countries as a war-torn desert, with conflict, ideology, and geopolitical power obscuring more practical information about the country and its people.

In the Afghanistan map graphic above, we step back and examine Afghanistan from structural point of view. How does its unique landscape influence population patter. How does this geography influence the economy and relationships with neighboring nations? Let's dive in.

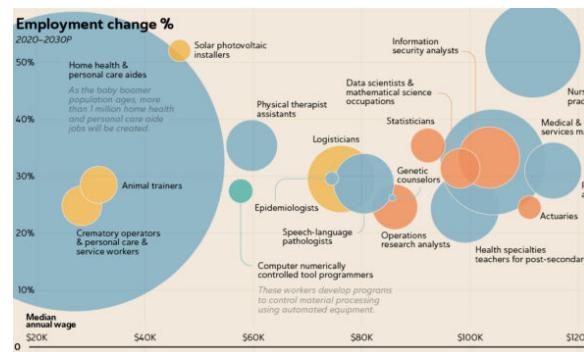
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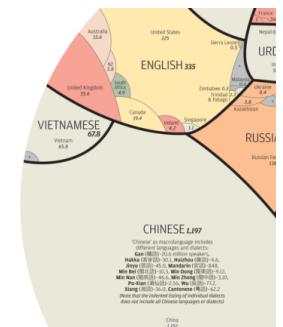
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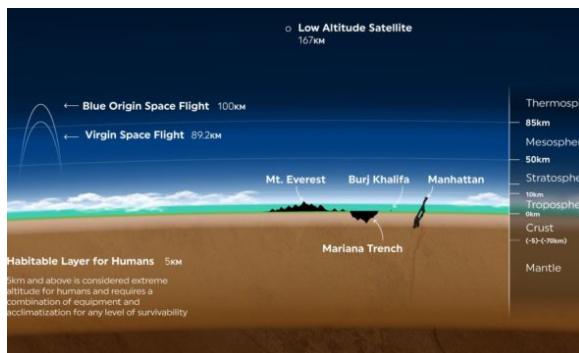
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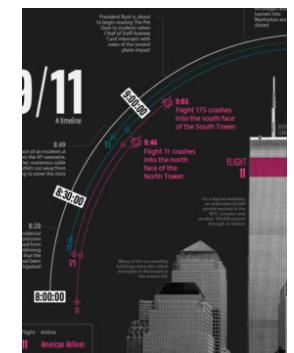
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