

Political Discontent and Regime Instability

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Data Availability Statement

Replication data is available on the Harvard Dataverse [link tbd], and the work's complete revision history is available at https://github.com/fsolt/trust_stability.

Political Discontent and Regime Instability

abstract

Intro does not need a header.

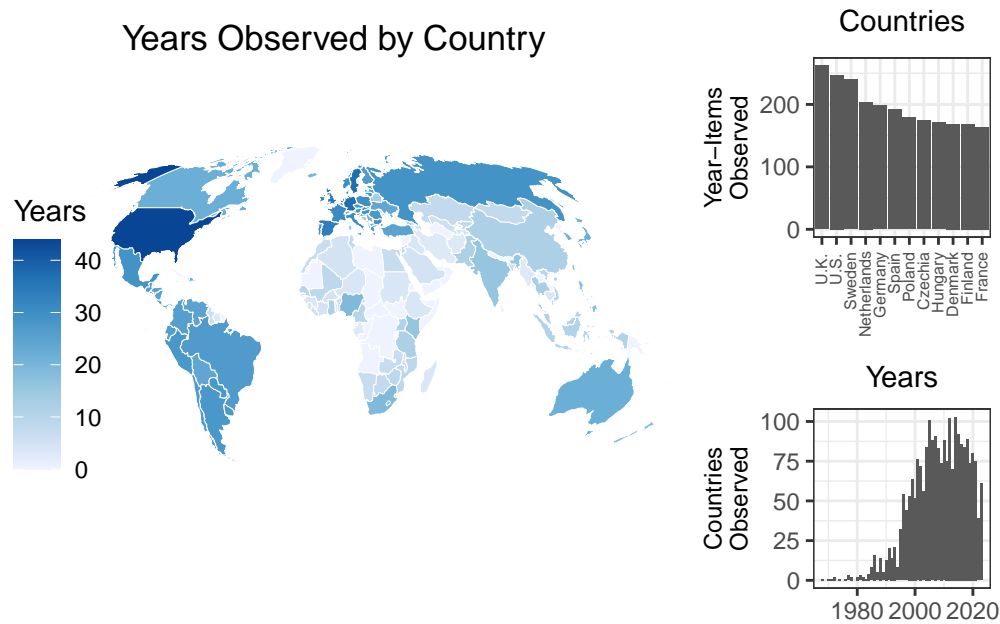


Figure 1: Countries and Years with the Most Observations in the Source Data

Estimates

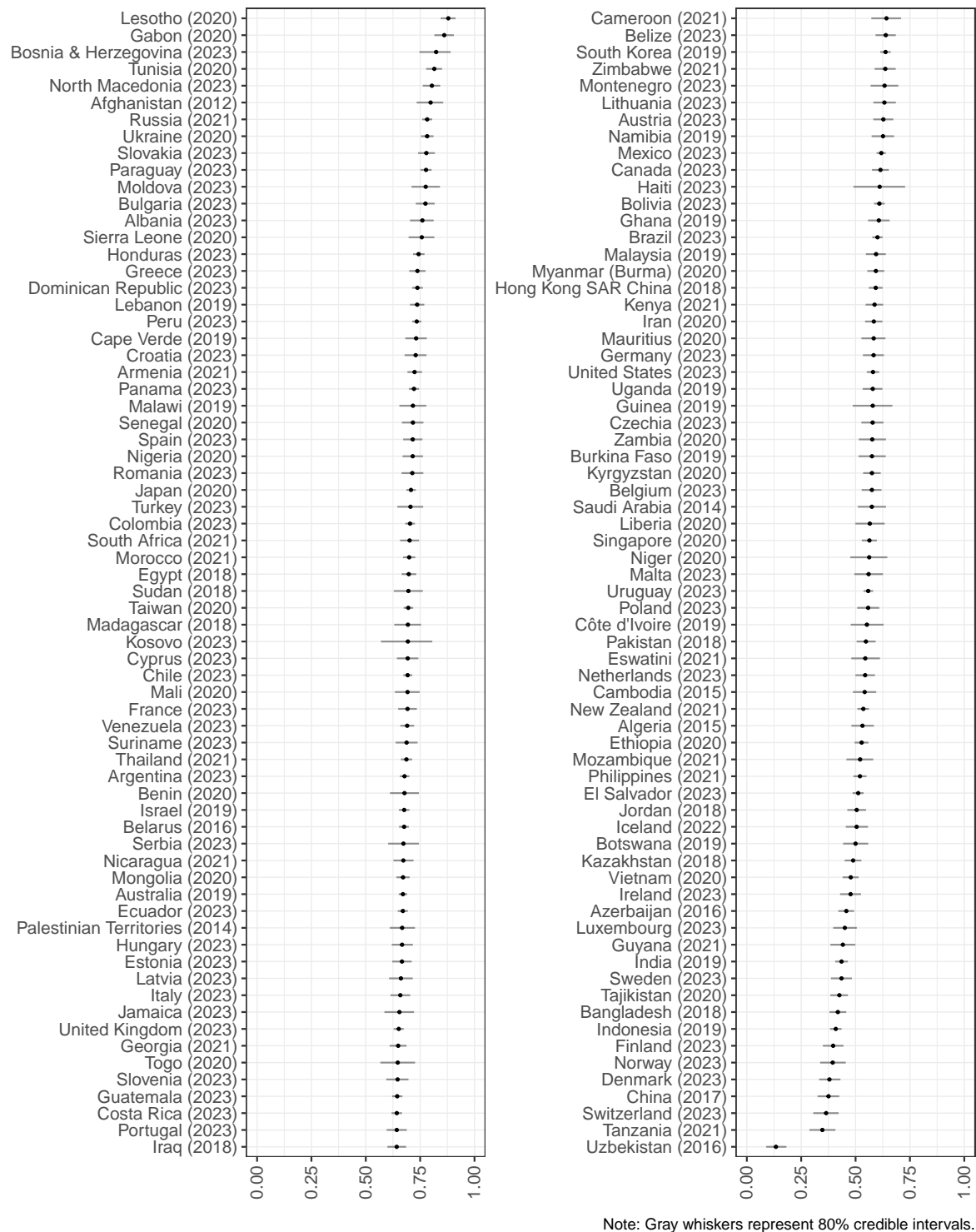
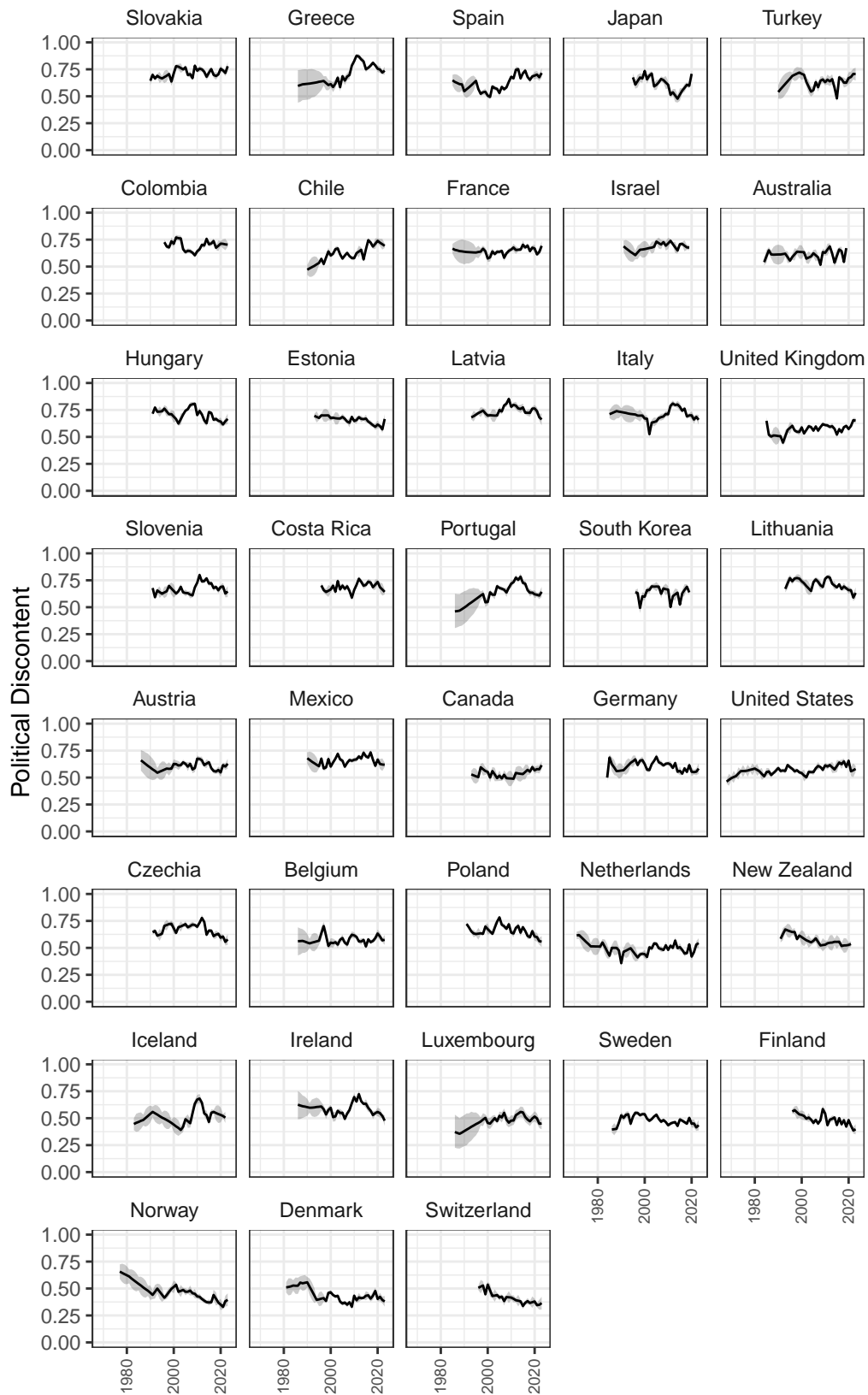


Figure 2: PD Scores, Most Recent Available Year



ed by their most recent political discontent score; gray shading represents 80% credible intervals.

Figure 3: Political Discontent Scores Over Time Within OECD Democracies

Consider validation tests with: democratic satisfaction trust in government CPI from Transparency International Proud of: way democracy works (ISSP National Identity) incumbent vote share populist vote share

1 Explaining Political Dissatisfaction

Data to test these hypotheses are drawn from several sources. The Democratic Electoral Systems (DES) dataset updated in Bormann and Golder (2022) provides information about the timing of elections, yielding a dichotomous variable coded one in election years and zero when no election was held. The three institutional variables are measured as in (?). Data on parliamentarism, a dichotomous variable coded one in pure parliamentary systems and zero otherwise, is sourced from the DES. Federalism is likewise dichotomous, coded one in countries with strong federal systems (see ?) and zero in all others. Proportionality in the electoral system is measured using the Gallagher least-squares index of disproportionality, which measures the disparity between parties' vote shares and their seat shares (Gallagher 1991, 40–41; 2023). The context of good and bad economic conditions was measured with data on GDP per capita, national GDP growth, and unemployment from OECD.Stat (OECD 2024) and on the Gini index of disposable income inequality from the Standardized World Income Inequality Database (Solt 2020).

The resulting dataset comprises the thirty-eight OECD countries and a total of 1217 country-years. The number of country-years observed per country ranges from sixteen (Turkey) to forty-three (the United States) consecutive years (mean: 32 years, median: 31 years). The advantage in data availability over pooling responses to a single question is clear: even among these relatively data-rich countries, the two richest single items available—the Eurobarometer's questions on trust in national parliaments and in political parties—each provide only fewer than half as many country-years for analysis, 582 observations, and these Eurobarometer data naturally entirely exclude the nine OECD members outside Europe.

Finally, Bayesian analysis allows us to incorporate directly into our model the quantified measurement uncertainty in the data for political discontent and for income inequality, with the estimated values of these two variables treated as random draws from distributions with unknown true means but known standard deviations (McElreath 2016, 425–31;

see also [Kurz 2023, 15.1.2](#)). The model was estimated using the `brms` R package (?).

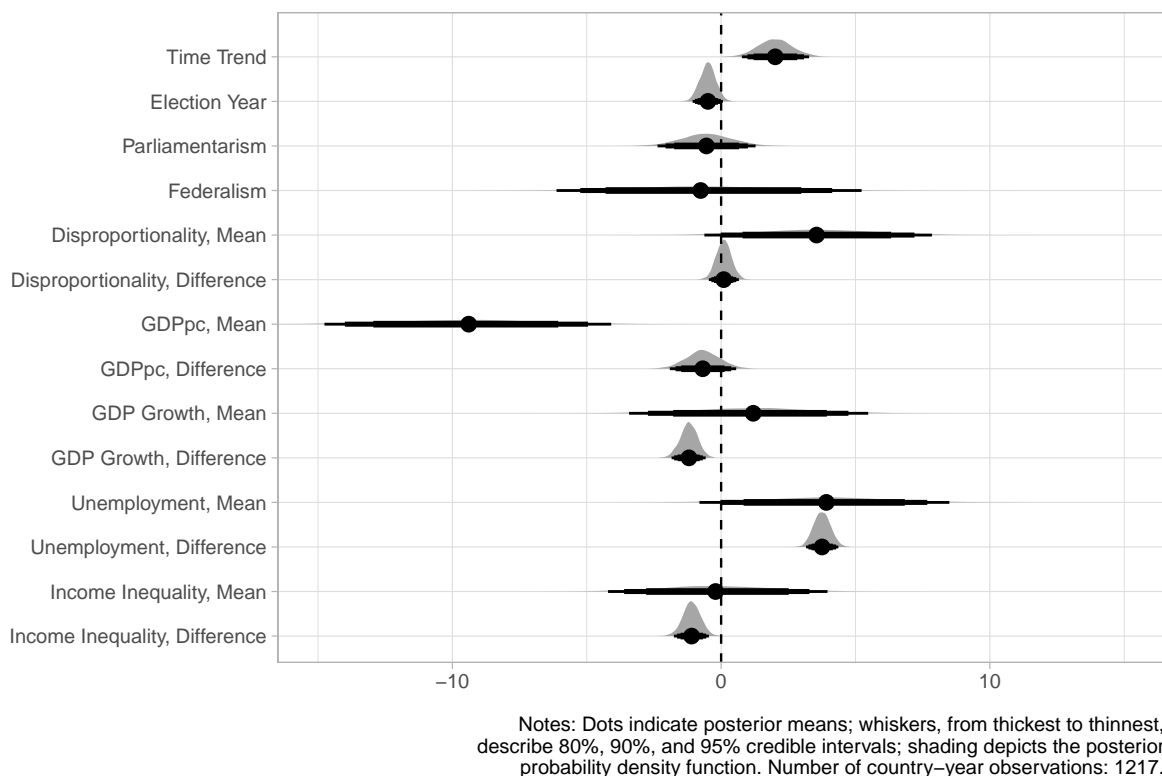


Figure 4: Predicting Macrointerest in OECD Democracies

Figure @ref(fig:resplot) displays the results.¹ Consistent with the argument that campaigns bring attention-grabbing information to the public, macrointerest in election years is found to be -0.5 points (95% credible interval: -1.1 to 0.1 points) higher than in years without elections. This accords with previous research finding small but well-estimated increases in political interest in election years (see, e.g., ?).

The hypothesis that power-sharing institutions yield more public interest in politics is also supported. Macrointerest is estimated to be -0.5 (95% c.i.: -2.4 to 1.3) points higher in countries with parliamentary systems. The point estimate for the difference in macrointerest between countries with and without federalism is estimated be -0.8 points, with 60.8% of the posterior distribution greater than zero. And although disproportionality is not estimated to have long-run effects that consistently distinguish countries with more or less proportional electoral results, *changes* in disproportionality appear to have an immediate negative effect: a two-standard-deviation increase in the Gallagher index yields 0.1 points less macrointerest (95% c.i.: -0.5 to 0.7).

¹Appendix @ref(resultstable) provides a tabular version.

Regarding the debate on whether macrointerest is invigorated or instead discouraged by bad times, the evidence of our cross-national analysis of the impact of economic conditions falls on the side of the latter. Supporting modernization theory, increases in per capita GDP have a positive short-term effect on aggregate political interest, with a two-standard-deviation increase associated with -0.7 (95% c.i.: -1.9 to 0.6) points more macrointerest. The point estimate for the long-term, historical effect as evidenced by differences in mean levels across countries is found to be -9.4 points, albeit with only 99.9% of the posterior distribution greater than zero. As predicted by relative power theory, the long-term effects of income inequality are strongly negative, with a two-standard-deviation difference across countries associated with 0.2 points less macrointerest (95% c.i.: -4.2 to 4 points). Year-to-year changes in income inequality are found to make little difference—it would seem that, from one perspective, the influence of the wealthy over the political agenda does not change on such a short time scale, and from the other, that the public does not react to worsening conditions in the distribution of income with greater interest in its agents' actions. The results with regard to growth in the national economy and with regard to unemployment similarly do not provide strong evidence of either negative or positive effects. Still, taken as a whole, this evidence indicates that at least with regard to economic conditions, it is good times, not bad ones, that yield more macrointerest.

Literature

A test of citation ([Claassen 2019](#); [Hu, Tai, and Solt 2022](#)).

Theory

Research Design and Results

See the descriptive statistics in OSM [A2](#).

See the full, numeric results in OSM [A3](#).

Summary and Discussion

Reference

- Claassen, Christopher. 2019. “Estimating Smooth Country–Year Panels of Public Opinion.” *Political Analysis* 27 (1): 1–20.
- Hu, Yue, Yuehong Cassandra Tai, and Frederick Solt. 2022. “On Data ‘Janitor Work’ in Political Science: The Case of Thermostatic Support for Democracy.” June 21, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/kd7mu>.

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Online Supplementary Materials

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Table A1: Indicators Used in the Support for Political Dissatisfaction Latent Variable Model

Table A.1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
trust_parties2	735	How much trust do you have in certain institutions? Political parties	1 tend to trust / 2 tend not to trust	1.06	0.04	eb
trust_parl2	734	How much trust do you have in certain institutions? National parliament	1 tend to trust / 2 tend not to trust	0.70	1.18	eb
trust_parl4	637	How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Parliament?	0 not at all / 1 a little / 2 somewhat / 3 a lot	0.25	0.29, 1.34, 2.31	lb, asianb, afrob
trust_parties4	461	How much trust do you have in political parties?	1 none at all / 2 not very much trust / 3 quite a lot of trust / 4 a great deal of trust	0.21	0.28, 1.30, 2.24	lb, asianb, kobar, icenes, sasianb
big2	373	Would you say that this country is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?	1 run by a few big interests / 2 run for all the people	0.29	1.00	wvs, anes, lb, nsss
will2	296	Would you say that your country is governed by the will of the people?	1 yes / 2 no	0.62	1.16	gallup
trust_parl11	270	Using this card, please tell me on a score of 0-10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust. [Country's] parliament?	0 no trust / 123456789 / 10 complete trust	0.49	-0.76, -0.31, 0.34, 0.83, 1.18, 1.69, 1.98, 2.35, 2.70, 3.01	ess, issp, res, fsdelection
trust_pol11	258	Using this card, please tell me on a score of 0-10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust. Politicians?	0 no trust / 123456789 / 10 complete trust	0.51	-1.41, -1.03, -0.39, 0.21, 0.66, 1.22, 1.55, 1.93, 2.33, 2.71	ess, res, fsdelection
say5	246	People like me don't have any say about what the government does	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	1.00	-1.31, 0.50, 1.36, 2.99	bes, cnep, issp, ases, gles, icnl, belgiumes, aes, nzes, caucasusb
trust_parties11	236	Using this card, please tell me on a score of 0-10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust. Political parties?	0 no trust / 123456789 / 10 complete trust	0.50	-1.37, -1.00, -0.37, 0.23, 0.67, 1.24, 1.58, 1.97, 2.37, 2.75	ess, res, fsdelection
trust_parl5	217	How much confidence do you have in: Parliament	1 complete confidence / 2 a great deal of confidence / 3 some confidence / 4 very little confidence / 5 no confidence at all	0.42	-0.46, 0.63, 1.55, 2.33	issp, lits, som, pgss
corrupt4	217	There is corruption in national institutions in	1 totally agree / 2 tend to agree / 3 tend to disagree / 4 totally disagree	0.83	-1.51, -0.07, 2.14	eb

Table A.1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent (*continued*)

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
care4c	177	The interests of people like you are well taken into account by the political system in	1 totally agree / 2 tend to agree / 3 tend to disagree / 4 totally disagree	1.06	-0.81, 1.45, 3.17	eb, feb
right4	159	How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right?	1 none of the time / 2 some of the time / 3 most of the time / 4 just about always	0.55	-0.48, 1.27, 3.00	eb, anes, lb, asianb
corrupt_pol4	135	Now I am going to read you a list of things that may be problems in our country. Please tell me if you think it is a very big problem, a moderately big problem, a small problem or not a problem at all: corrupt political leaders	1 very big problem / 2 moderately big problem / 3 small problem / 4 not a problem at all	0.75	-2.10, -0.67, 0.92	pew
corrupt_officials4	126	Taking into account your own experience or what you have heard, corruption among public officials is	1 very common / 2 common / 3 uncommon / 4 very uncommon	1.10	-1.99, -0.04, 1.93	amb
care7	123	Those who govern this country are interested in what people like you think	1 strongly disagree / 23456 / 7 strongly agree	0.51	-0.17, 0.37, 0.94, 1.46, 1.90, 2.35	amb
trust_parties5	120	To what extent do you trust the following institutions? Parliament	1 complete distrust / 2 some distrust / 3 neither trust nor distrust / 4 some trust / 5 complete trust	0.40	-0.58, 0.51, 1.42, 2.15	lits, som
rigged2	114	Speaking generally, do you think that the elections in this country are clean or rigged?	1 are clean / 2 are rigged	0.14	1.69	lb
say5a	113	And how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have a say in what the government does?	1 not at all / 2 very little / 3 some / 4 a lot / 5 a great deal	0.48	-0.39, 0.57, 1.65, 2.67	ess, wvs
corrupt4a	111	How widespread do you think the problem of corruption is in	1 very widespread / 2 fairly widespread / 3 fairly rare / 4 very rare	0.67	-1.06, 0.47, 2.37	eb
corrupt_party2	111	Do you think that the giving and taking of bribes, and the abuse of positions of power for personal gain, are widespread among any of the following? Political parties	0 not mentioned / 1 mentioned	1.54	1.31	eb
right5	109	Most of the time we can trust people in government to do what is right	1 Strongly agree / 5 Strongly disagree	0.70	-1.40, 0.55, 1.57, 2.91	issp, usgss
get5	108	Most politicians are in politics only for what they can get out of it personally	1 agree strongly / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 disagree strongly	0.49	-0.78, 0.37, 1.11, 2.15	issp
corrupt_pol2	106	Do you think that the giving and taking of bribes, and the abuse of positions of power for personal gain, are widespread among any of the following? Politicians at the national level	0 not mentioned / 1 mentioned	1.11	1.47	eb

Table A.1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent (*continued*)

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
say4	103	However you look at it, people like me have no influence on what the government does	1 completely agree / 2 tend to agree / 3 tend to disagree / 4 completely disagree	1.14	-1.97, 0.19, 2.24	allbus, uspew, cnep, itanes, jgss, asianb, kobar, cnes, canadianes, cdem, pewrel
satis_gov21	99	Here is a scale for ranking how our system of government works. Where on this scale would you put our current system of governing with free elections and many parties?	minus-100 the worst / -90 to 90 / 100 the best	0.43	-0.49, -0.28, 0.13, 0.38, 0.62, 1.13, 1.31, 1.51, 1.74, 1.93, 2.26, 2.37, 2.50, 2.62, 2.72, 3.04, 3.13, 3.25, 3.43, 3.59	neb
trust_mp7	87	How much trust do you have in Members of Parliament in general?	1 no trust / 23456 / 7 a great deal of trust	0.45	-0.49, 0.22, 0.87, 1.55, 2.12, 2.64	besip, neb
sat_officials4	87	How satisfied are you with the way the people now in national office are handling the country's affairs?	1 very satisfied / 2 fairly satisfied / 3 fairly dissatisfied / 4 very dissatisfied	0.43	-0.46, 1.24, 2.53	wvs
big4a	77	Generally the state/government is run for the benefit of all the people	1 completely agree / 2 mostly agree / 3 mostly disagree / 4 completely disagree	0.33	0.81, 1.75, 2.57	pew
trust_parties7	77	To what extent do you trust each of these political institutions to look after your interests? Political parties	1 no trust / 23456 / 7 great trust	0.45	-0.61, -0.06, 0.59, 1.34, 1.97, 2.48	neb
care5a	74	The government does not care much about what people like me think	1 disagree strongly / 2 somewhat disagree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 somewhat agree / 5 agree	0.76	-1.16, 0.35, 1.07, 2.39	issp, canadianes
sat_parties4	74	In your opinion, how is the work the political parties are doing	1 very good / 2 good / 3 bad / 4 very bad	0.44	-0.90, 1.05, 2.57	politbarometer, lb
say5b	73	And how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have an influence on politics?	1 not at all / 2 very little / 3 some / 4 a lot / 5 a great deal	0.82	-2.39, -0.85, 0.90, 2.44	ess
corrupt_official	70	And in your opinion, about how many public officials in [COUNTRY] are involved in corruption?	1 almost none / 2 a few / 3 some / 4 quite a lot / 5 almost all	0.60	-0.93, 0.53, 1.70, 3.14	issp
corrupt_pol5a	70	In your opinion, about how many politicians in [COUNTRY] are involved in corruption?	1 almost none / 2 a few / 3 some / 4 quite a lot / 5 almost all	0.54	-0.84, 0.44, 1.46, 2.71	issp
care4a	64	In your opinion are politicians concerned with what people like yourself think?	1 a lot / 2 some / 3 a little / 4 not at all	0.57	-0.17, 1.20, 2.33	pew, uspew, fnes
say5e	60	The ordinary person has no influence on politics	1 strongly disagree / 2 disagree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 agree / 5 strongly agree	1.10	-1.85, 0.43, 1.53, 3.69	issp, ines
will2a	59	Which of the following words describes your perception of the government of [this country]? READ OUT. Responds to the will of the people	0 not mentioned / 1 mentioned	0.11	0.59	gallup
care5	55	I don't think public officials care much what people like me think	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.65	-1.42, 0.06, 0.94, 2.37	ases, asiab, icnl, aes, caucasusb
corrupt_official	52	How widespread do you think bribe taking and corruption is in this country?	1 almost no public officials engaged in it / 2 a few are / 3 most are / 4 almost all public officials are engaged in it	0.44	-0.49, 1.24, 2.42	wvs

Table A.1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent (*continued*)

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
resp_gov4	52	How well do you think the government responds to what people want?	1 very responsive / 2 somewhat responsive / 3 not very responsive / 4 not responsive	1.09	-1.98, 1.15, 4.30	asianb
corrupt_pol5	49	Thinking about politicians of [COUNTRY], how many to you think are involved in corruption?	1 none / 2 less than half / 3 half of the politicians / 4 more than half / 5 all	0.75	-1.67, -0.01, 1.12, 2.66	amb
parties7	48	To what extent do political parties listen to people like you?	1 not at all / 23456 / 7 a lot	0.51	-0.86, -0.23, 0.50, 1.15, 1.72, 2.30	amb
rep_parties7	47	Thinking about political parties in general, to what extent do [nationality] political parties represent their voters well?	1 not at all / 23456 / 7 a lot	0.44	-0.58, 0.06, 0.81, 1.47, 2.02, 2.54	amb
corrupt_gov4a	43	How widespread corruption in national government	1 almost everyone is corrupt / 2 most officials are corrupt / 3 not a lot of officials are corrupt / 4 hardly anyone is involved	0.39	-0.47, 0.88, 2.21	asianb
care5d	41	Some people say that political parties in Australia care what ordinary people think. Others say that political parties in Australia don't care what ordinary people think. Where would you place your view on this scale from 1 to 5?	1 political parties care what ordinary people think / 234 / 5 political parties don't care what ordinary people think	1.29	-1.67, 0.22, 2.14, 3.54	cses, aes, nzes
care4	41	Politicians don't care much about what people like me think	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 disagree / 4 strongly disagree	0.56	-0.33, 1.11, 2.34	pew, cnep, fsdelection
care5f	37	Politicians don't care much about what people like me think	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.73	-1.51, 0.17, 0.96, 2.40	cnep, nzes
care4f	36	Do you think that the political leaders are concerned about the issues that interest you?	1 a lot / 2 fairly / 3 a little / 4 not at all	0.74	-1.59, -0.31, 1.82	lb
say5c	35	Generally speaking, people like me don't have the power to influence government policy or actions	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.92	-2.07, -0.22, 0.94, 2.81	asiab
big5b	34	Do you think that the leaders of political parties in this country are more concerned with serving the interests of the people, or more concerned with advancing their own political ambitions, or haven't you heard enough to say?	1 more to serve their own political ambitions – strongly agree / 2 more to serve their own political ambitions - agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 more to serve the people – agree / 5 more to serve the people – strongly agree	0.79	-1.33, -0.07, 0.33, 1.66	afrob
corrupt_mp4	33	How many are corrupt? Members of Parliament	1 none / 2 some of them / 3 most of them / 4 all of them	0.08	0.73, 2.05, 2.88	lits
corrupt_officials4b	33	How many are corrupt? Government officials	1 none / 2 some of them / 3 most of them / 4 all of them	0.19	0.57, 2.08, 2.97	lits
care2c	33	Which statement comes closer to your own views — even if neither is exactly right. Most government officials care what people like me think [OR] Most government officials DO NOT care what people like me think	1 most government officials care closer to your own views / 2 most government officials do not care			pew
corrupt_gov5	33	There is widespread corruption among those who govern the country	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.39	-0.41, 0.41, 1.04, 2.12	asiab

Table A.1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent (*continued*)

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
right4e	33	Please indicate to what extent you trust the following institutions to operate in the best interests of society. Parliament	1 trust a lot / 2 trust to a degree / 3 don't really trust / 4 don't trust at all	0.78	-0.38, 1.76, 3.40	asiab
touch5a	33	Generally speaking, the people who are elected to the [NATIONAL PARLIAMENT] stop thinking about the public once they're elected	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.48	-0.77, 0.32, 1.06, 2.18	asiab
say4e	32	People like me have too little influence in what the Government does	1 strongly agree / 2 tend to agree / 3 tend to disagree / 4 strongly disagree	1.17	-1.83, -0.30, 1.70	eb
say4f	32	Voting gives people like me some say about how government runs things	1 completely agree / 2 mostly agree / 3 mostly disagree / 4 completely disagree	2.02	-0.10, 3.51, 6.01	pewrel, uspew
vote5	31	Political parties are only interested in my vote and not in my opinions	1 completely agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 completely disagree	0.70	-1.58, 0.19, 0.98, 2.42	bsa, bes, gles, icnl, belgiumes, nores
say2	27	People like me don't have any say about what the government does	1 agree / 2 disagree	0.59	1.17	issp, anes, npes, cnes
corrupt_pol4a	27	Most politicians are corrupt. Does this statement describe	1 very well / 2 somewhat well / 3 not too well / 4 not well at all	0.48	0.48, 1.33, 2.20	pew
right4d	27	Please indicate to what extent you trust the following institutions to operate in the best interests of society. Your central government	1 trust a lot / 2 trust to a degree / 3 don't really trust / 4 don't trust at all	0.78	0.31, 2.33, 4.10	asiab
trust_pol4	26	How much trust do you have in Danish politicians in general	1 great trust / 2 trust / 3 little trust / 4 hardly any trust	0.38	-0.88, 0.69, 1.82	som, dkes
care2a	24	Do you ever feel that the people running the country don't really care what happens to people like you	1 yes / 2 no	2.08	0.05	eb
right4b	22	How much do you trust British governments of any party to place the needs of the nation above the interests of their own political party?	1 almost always / 2 most of time / 3 some of time / 4 almost never	0.41	-0.53, 0.70, 1.83	bsa
care11	21	How much would you say that politicians care what people like you think?	0 not at all / 123456789 / 10 completely	0.60	-1.81, -1.41, -0.70, -0.08, 0.38, 0.88, 1.24, 1.69, 2.14, 2.52	ess
say11a	21	And how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have a say in what the government does?	0 not at all / 123456789 / 10 completely	0.75	-1.91, -1.52, -0.78, -0.15, 0.33, 0.91, 1.32, 1.88, 2.41, 2.81	ess
say11b	21	And how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have an influence on politics?	0 not at all / 123456789 / 10 completely	0.56	-1.37, -1.02, -0.40, 0.12, 0.50, 0.94, 1.28, 1.72, 2.15, 2.52	ess
touch4	21	Those elected to parliament soon lose touch with the problems of ordinary people	1 strongly agree / 2 somewhat agree / 3 somewhat disagree / 4 strongly disagree	0.78	-1.43, 0.01, 1.72	uspew, fsdelection, itanes
care2b	20	Some people say that the deputies and senators are concerned about what people think. Others say that they aren't. Which statement is closest to your way of thinking?	1 the deputies and senators are concerned about what people think / 2 the deputies and senators aren't concerned about what people think			npes, lb

Table A.1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent (*continued*)

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
equal4	19	Under our present system of government do you think people like yourself are treated equally and fairly by government	1 definitely agree / 2 somewhat agree / 3 disagree somewhat / 4 definitely disagree	0.51	-0.11, 1.36, 2.51	neb
corrupt_gov3	19	Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are crooked?	1 quite a few / 2 not many / 3 hardly any	0.59	-0.04, 1.41	anes
vote2	19	Parties are only interested in people's votes, not in their opinions	1 agree / 2 disagree	0.97	0.91	anes, npes
care4b	19	Government officials seriously consider citizens' opinions	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 disagree / 4 strongly disagree	0.53	-0.69, 0.80, 2.21	fsdelection, kobar, arabb
touch5	18	Those elected to Parliament soon lose touch with the people	1 agree strongly / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 disagree strongly	0.56	-1.51, 0.05, 0.70, 2.11	bsa, bes, icnl
say4b	18	Under our present system of government how much influence do you think people like yourself can have on government?	1 a lot of influence / 2 some influence / 3 not much influence / 4 no influence	0.86	-1.87, 0.07, 1.71	neb
say4d	18	I can have influence on the national government	1 agree / 2 quite agree / 3 rather disagree / 4 disagree	0.87	-0.97, 0.03, 1.45	eurasiab, fsdelection
right4c	17	And how much do you trust politicians of any party in Britain to tell the truth when they are in a tight corner?	1 just about always / 2 most of the time / 3 only some of the time / 4 almost never	0.62	-1.56, -0.29, 1.29	bsa
big2a	16	In general, would you say the government is run for the benefit of all the people in	1 benefit all / 2 benefit few groups	0.51	1.26	pew
big4b	16	How much of the time do you think elected leaders, like parliamentarians or local councilors, try their best: To look after the interests of people like you?	0 never / 1 some of the time / 2 most of the time / 3 always	0.38	-0.73, 0.25, 1.83	afrob
say4a	16	How much of the time do you think elected leaders, like parliamentarians or local councilors, try their best: To listen to what people like you have to say?	0 never / 1 some of the time / 2 most of the time / 3 always	0.26	-0.61, 0.32, 1.69	afrob
care5b	15	Politicians do not care about what people like me think	1 completely agree / 2 somewhat agree / 3 partly agree-disagree / 4 somewhat disagree / 4 completely disagree	0.43	-0.75, 0.32, 1.02, 1.91	bes, besip, gles, autnes
right2	15	The people who run the more concerned with themselves than with the good of the country	1 tend to agree / 2 tend to disagree	0.41	0.70	eb
care4d	14	Politicians don't care much about what people like me think	1 completely agree / 2 tend to agree / 3 tend to disagree / 4 completely disagree	0.93	-1.38, 0.44, 2.07	allbus, belgiumes, cnes, canadianes, cdem
care2	13	I don't think public officials care much what people like me think	1 agree / 2 disagree	0.79	0.47	politbarometer, anes, cispol
care3	13	Public officials don't care much what people like me think	1 agree / 2 disagree / 3 neither agree nor disagree	0.51	0.78, 1.16	anes

Table A.1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent (*continued*)

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
say3	13	People like me don't have any say about what the government does	1 agree / 2 disagree / 3 neither agree nor disagree	0.58	1.12, 1.41	anes
care5e	13	If people like me let the politicians know what we think, then they will take our opinions into account	1 completely agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 completely disagree	1.40	-3.25, -1.17, 0.40, 2.67	dkes, belgiumes
care11a	12	How much weight do politicians attach to opinions presented to them by ordinary people	0 none at all / 123456789 / 10 very large	0.58	-1.71, -1.41, -0.85, -0.31, 0.15, 0.72, 1.04, 1.45, 1.89, 2.34	cid
trust_mp4	12	In general, how much confidence do you have in the way the following groups do their job? - Parliamentarians	1 very high trust / 2 quite high trust / 3 quite low trust / 4 very low trust	0.51	-1.14, 0.41, 1.58	som
trust_pol5a	12	Do you think that politicians are in general trustworthy, that many of them are trustworthy, some are trustworthy, few, or perhaps none?	1 in general / 2 many / 3 some / 4 few / 5 none	0.80	-1.12, 0.18, 1.94, 3.73	icenesis
touch2	10	Generally speaking those we elect to Congress in Washington lose touch with people pretty quickly	1 agree / 2 disagree	1.42	-0.17	anes, npes
right5a	10	You can generally trust that our political leaders make the right decisions for the country	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	1.04	-1.98, 0.51, 1.52, 2.95	dkes
say5d	10	People like me can vote, but we can't do anything else to influence politics	1 completely agree / 2 somewhat agree / 3 yes and no / 4 somewhat disagree / 5 completely disagree	1.28	-0.57, 1.05, 1.33, 2.95	nores
big5	10	Would you say the government is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?	1 entirely run for the big interests / 2 mostly run for the big interests / 3 about half and half / 4 mostly run for the benefit of all / 5 entirely run for the benefit of all	0.57	-1.06, 0.43, 1.60, 2.82	nsss, aes
right4a	10	In general, do you feel that the people in government are too often interested in looking after themselves, or do you feel that they can be trusted to do the right thing nearly all the time?	1 Usually look after themselves / 2 Sometimes look after themselves / 3 Sometimes can be trusted to do the right thing / 4 Usually can be trusted to do the right thing	0.59	0.12, 1.10, 1.79	aes
big5a	10	The New Zealand government is largely run by a few big interests	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.57	-0.79, 0.74, 1.33, 2.55	nzes
self_min4	9	Ministers and state secretaries are primarily concerned about their personal interests	1 fully agree / 2 agree / 3 disagree / 4 fully disagree	0.66	-0.79, 1.48, 2.73	npes
trust_pol5	8	Danish politicians in general are trustworthy	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.05	0.00, 0.51, 0.90, 1.15	fsdelection, dkis, formpubop
say7	8	People like me don't have any say about what the government does	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 somewhat agree / 4 neither agree nor disagree / 5 somewhat disagree / 6 disagree / 7 strongly disagree	0.50	-0.62, 0.20, 0.63, 0.92, 1.37, 2.13	norcs, eass, jgss
big4c	8	The nation is run by a powerful few and ordinary citizens cannot do much about it	1 strongly agree / 2 somewhat agree / 3 somewhat disagree / 4 strongly disagree	1.01	-1.23, 1.08, 3.69	asianb

Table A.1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent (*continued*)

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
corrupt_gov4	8	Now I am going to read you a list of things that may be problems in our country. Please tell me if you think it is a very big problem, a moderately big problem, a small problem or not a problem at all: government corruption	1 very big problem / 2 moderately big problem / 3 small problem / 4 not a problem at all	0.30	-1.90, -0.90, 0.15	pew
trust_parl7	7	Please tell me for each institution or organisation how much trust you place in it: Bundestag	1 no trust at all / 23456 / 7 great deal of trust	0.59	-0.85, 0.04, 0.89, 1.69, 2.36, 3.03	allbus
right5b	7	You can trust the government to do what is right most of the time	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.53	-0.64, 1.20, 1.84, 3.02	nzes
say2a	6	The average person has considerable influence on politics	1 agree / 2 disagree	1.15	0.00	issp
trust_parl3	6	I am going to name some institutions in this country. Would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them?	1 a great deal of confidence / 2 only some confidence / 3 hardly any confidence at all	0.40	0.10, 1.72	pgss
vote4	6	Political parties are only interested in people's votes, not their opinions	1 strongly agree / 2 somewhat agree / 3 somewhat disagree / 4 strongly disagree	0.59	-0.79, 0.51, 1.62	fsdelection, itanes
corrupt_pol4b	6	How widespread do you think corruption is among Icelandic politicians?	1 very widespread / 2 quite widespread / 3 not very widespread / 4 hardly happens at all	0.39	-0.32, 0.94, 1.90	icenes
say4h	5	People like me have no influence on what the different governments do	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 disagree / 4 strongly disagree	1.16	-0.43, 0.58, 1.77	formpubop

* Survey dataset codes correspond to those used in the DCPOtools R package (Solt, Hu, and Tai 2019).

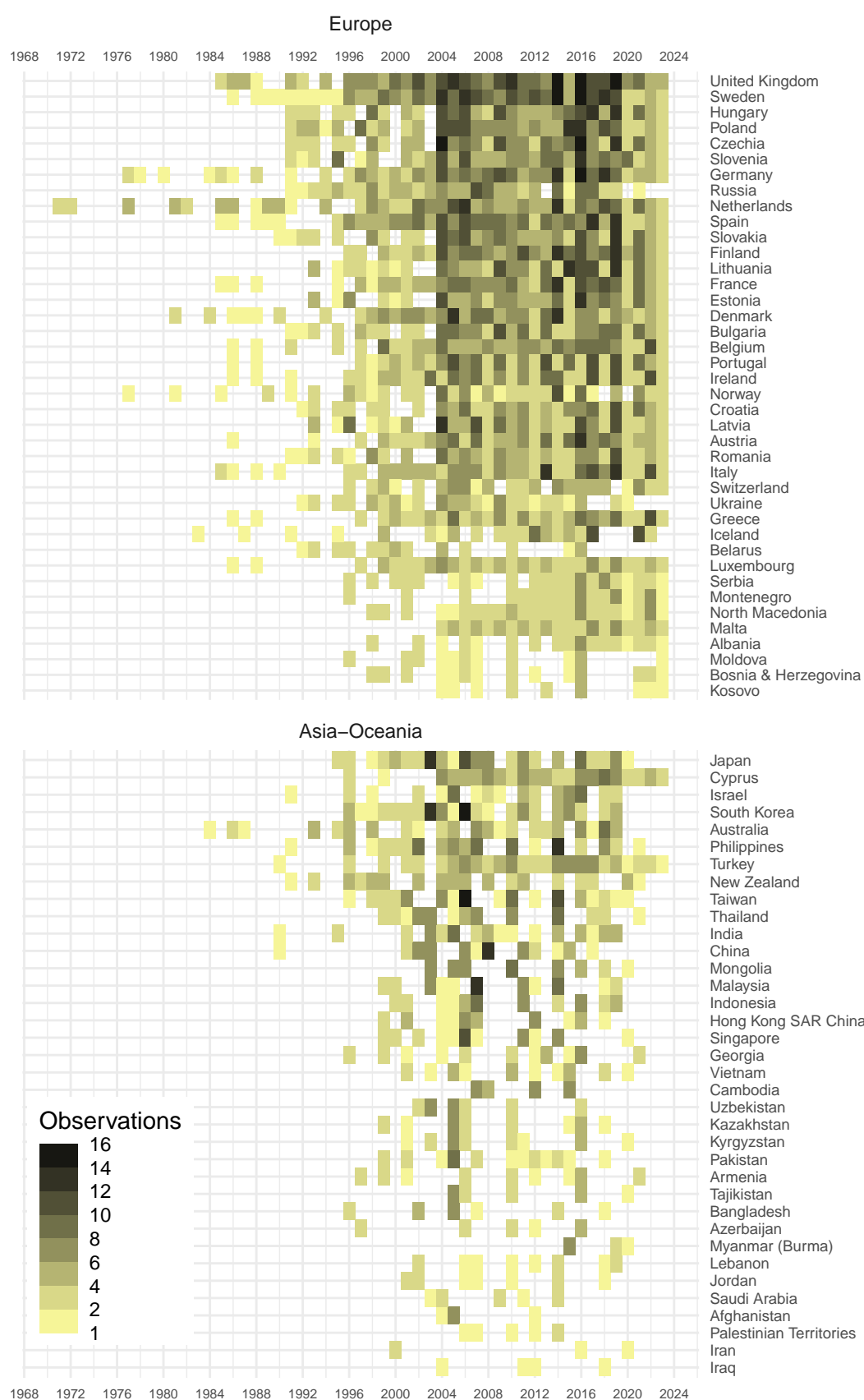


Figure A1: Source Data Observations by Country and Year

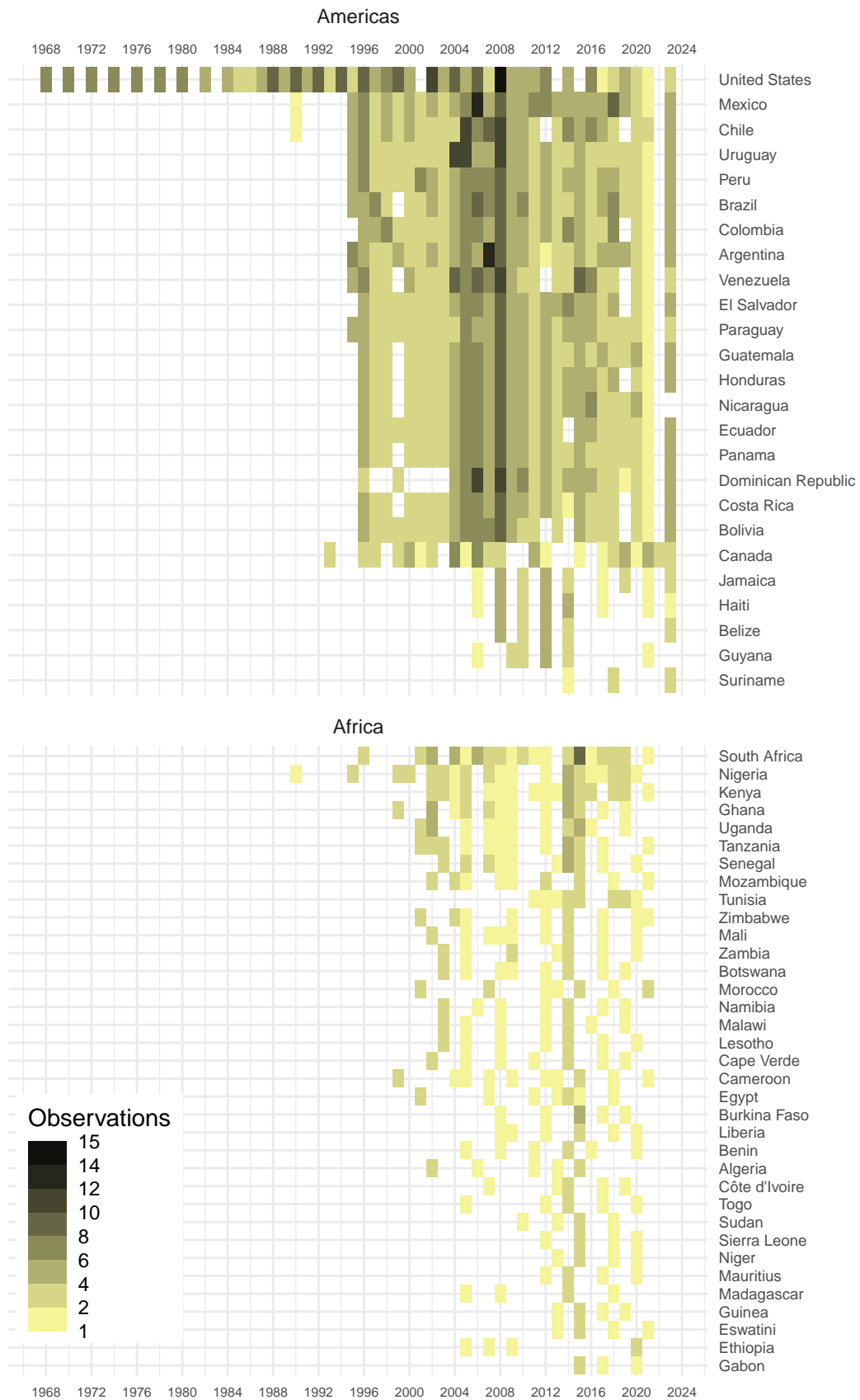


Figure A2: Source Data Observations by Country and Year, cont.

A1 Technical Details of DCPO

Another test of citation ([Rubin 1987](#); [Claassen 2020](#)).

A2 Descriptive Statistics

Here's the appendix references list:

A3 Numeric Results

References

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