Importance of Democracy Around the World

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R Markdown

Foa and Mounk (2017) argue that there are worrying signs of "democratic deconsolidation," particularly among younger people, who are less likely to agree that living in a democracy is essential. In this report, we'll evaluate some evidence pertaining to that claim from Wave 7 of the World Values Survey (Inglehart 2020).

```
library(tidyverse)
```

Importing Data

First, we'll load the World Values Survey dataset, which I've saved in the `data/raw` folder of my R project workspace. R Markdown always looks for files relative to the folder where it is saved, which can sometimes be a pain. For example, this .Rmd file is in the `R/week-06/` folder, but I want to load a data file in the `data/raw/` folder. The `here()` function is useful, because it tells R to look for things relative to your `.Rproj` file instead (you'll need to install the `here` package if you don't have it).

```
library(here)

load( here( 'data/raw/WVS_Cross-National_Wave_7_R_v2_0.RData' ) )
```
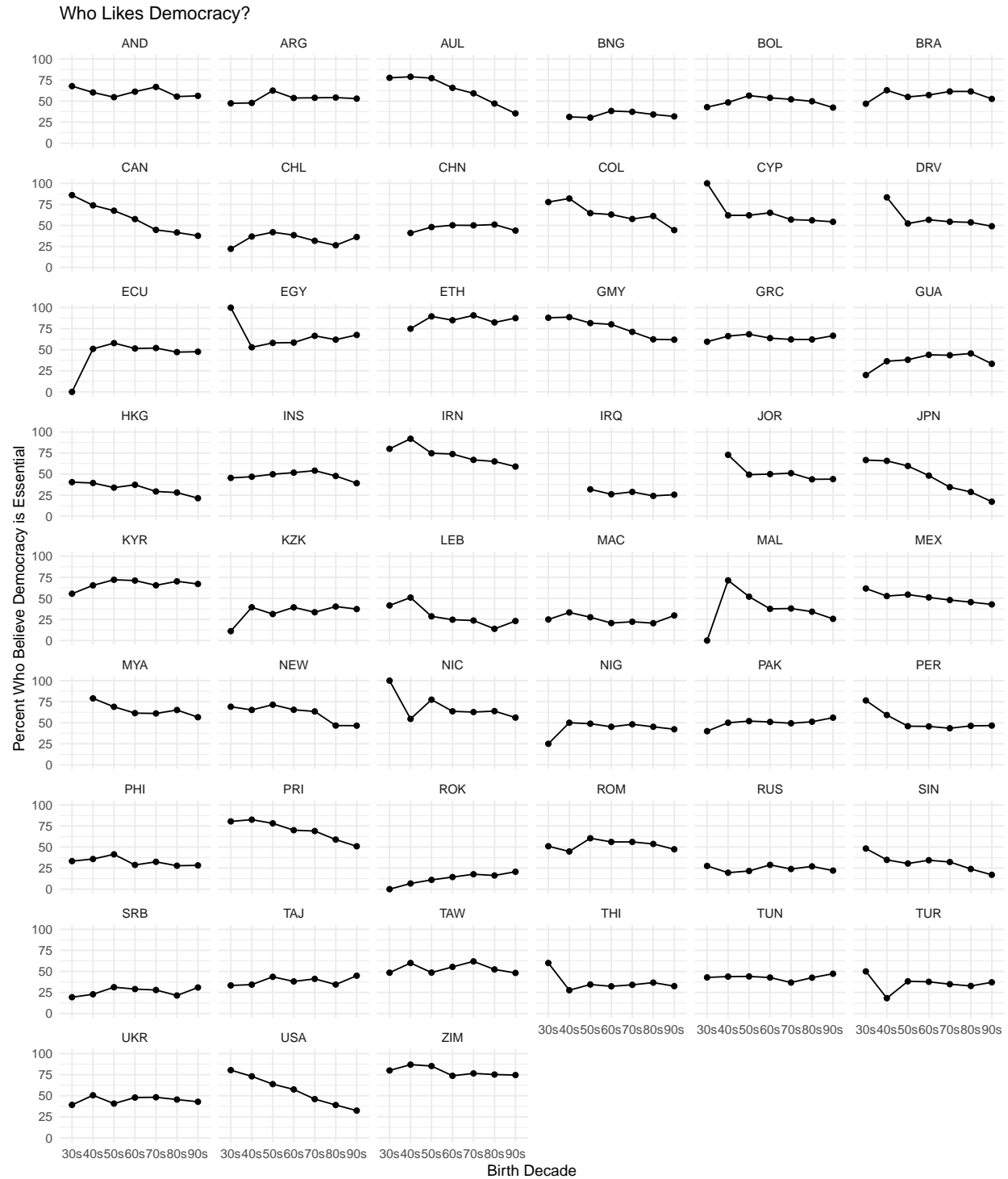
Cleaning the Data

Next, I'll tidy up the data, creating a decade of birth variable, and filtering only respondents from the countries we want to analyze. The relevant variables here are `Q250` (the importance of democracy score), `Q261` (year of birth), and `C_COW_ALPHA` (country code).

```
wvs <- `WVS_Cross-National_Wave_7_v2_0` %>%
  select(country = C_COW_ALPHA,
         birthyear = Q261,
         importance_of_democracy = Q250) %>%
  # filter out the missing values
  filter(importance_of_democracy > 0) %>%
  filter(birthyear >= 1930 & birthyear < 2000) %>%
  # create birth_decade column
  mutate(birth_decade = case_when(birthyear < 1940 ~ '30s',
                                  birthyear < 1950 ~ '40s',
                                  birthyear < 1960 ~ '50s',
                                  birthyear < 1970 ~ '60s',
                                  birthyear < 1980 ~ '70s',
                                  birthyear < 1990 ~ '80s',
                                  birthyear < 2000 ~ '90s'))
```

Plots

```
wvs %>%
  group_by(country, birth_decade) %>%
  # percent who responded 10 equal to the count of all people who responded with a 10, divided by the n
  summarize(pct_10 = sum(importance_of_democracy == 10) / n() * 100) %>%
  ggplot(mapping = aes(x=birth_decade, y=pct_10, group = country)) +
  geom_point() +
  geom_line() +
  facet_wrap(~country, ncol = 6) +
  theme_minimal() +
  labs(x = 'Birth Decade',
       y = 'Percent Who Believe Democracy is Essential',
       caption = 'Data from World Values Survey Wave 7',
       title = 'Who Likes Democracy?')
```

Who Likes Democracy?

Data from World Values Survey Wave 7

References

Foa, Roberto Stefan, and Yascha Mounk. 2017. "The Signs of Deconsolidation." *Journal of Democracy* 28 (1): 5–15. https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2017.0000.

Inglehart, Ron. 2020. "World Values Survey Codebook."