

AUSTRALIA

Aborigines

Activity: 1945-2020

General notes

NA

Movement start and end dates

- Marshall & Gurr (2003: 64) indicate that the Aborigines have been seeking self-determination since at least 1945. As we have been unable to find specific information on Aborigine political organizations, for this version of the dataset we follow this start date for the movement. Non-zero MAR protest scores for 1945-49 and 1960-2006 indicate that the movement was active by 2006 (also see Hewitt & Cheetham 2000; Marshall & Gurr 2003; Minahan 2002; MAR).
- In 1972, some Aboriginal leaders set up a “tent embassy” on the parliament grounds in Canberra and designed an Aboriginal flag.
- In 2013-2014 several Aboriginal groups declared their independence from Australia (Creative Spirits 2020; Roth 2015: 384 Minahan 2016: 5; Wikipedia). The movement remained active after this (Creative Spirits 2020; National Museum Australia 2022; Minority Rights Group International). [start date: 1945; end date: ongoing]

Dominant claim

- Some militant Aborigines want to form independent aboriginal states. However, the majority of Aborigine organizations seem to press for a special status within Australia. Imai (2008: 16), for example, writes that the suggestion of some Aboriginal leaders in the late 1980s to seek full independence did not gain “much traction”. The clearest evidence for autonomy as the dominant claim comes from the Minority Rights Group International, which writes that “only a minority of Aborigines call for full political independence, most preferring regional autonomy with wide-spread powers.” Behrendt (2002), also suggests that the aboriginal aspiration is “internal self-determination” or “increased Indigenous autonomy within the structures of the Australian state”. The majority of Aborigines seem to press for land rights and a special status within Australia and has also done so in the past (see Minority Rights Group International). Additional evidence for an autonomy claim comes from the National Museum Australia, which provides an overview of the different claims made by various groups representing Aborigine interests (see National Museum Australia). [1945-2020: autonomy claim]

Independence claims

- During the 1970s and 1980s there were increasingly calls for “sovereignty” (Martin 2012). However, the exact meaning of sovereignty in this context is not always entirely clear (Aboriginal Publications Foundation 1977).
 - o On the one hand, claims for sovereignty can also be understood as center-seeking because, according to some conceptions, Aborigine sovereignty should cover the entirety of Australia. For example, in 1983 the Aboriginal Standing Committee stated at the Australian parliament that “We have never conceded defeat and will continue to resist this on-going attempt to subjugate us [...]. The Aboriginal people have never surrendered to the European invasion and assert that sovereignty over all Australia lies with them. [...]

We] demand that the colonial settlers who have seized the land recognize this sovereignty [...]” (Australia Parliament 1983). The Chairman of the Northern Land Council, Galarwuy Yunupingu declared in 1987 that “Aboriginal people are the indigenous sovereign owners of Australia and adjacent islands since before 1770 [...]. Their sovereignty has never been ceded” (Weatherall 1990; in Cassidy 1998: 70).

- At the same time, proponents of Aborigine sovereignty do not necessarily want full Aborigine control over all of Australia. For example, the 1988 “Aboriginal Sovereignty – Treaty ’88 Campaign” pamphlet aspired at internal autonomy (Janson and Macintyre 1988).
- Other sources suggest that while some aboriginal leaders made claims for independence in the 1980s, these “did not gain much traction” at the time (Imai 2008: 16).
- Claims for outright independence appear to have achieved increased prominence in recent years, however. Several Aboriginal groups have unilaterally renounced their legal ties with Australia in the 2010s and declared independence. The most notable of these is the Murrawarri tribe that declared its independence on the 30th of March 2013; but several other tribes sought independence too, including the Euahlayi, the Mbarbaram, and the Yidindji – followed later by the Yuggera Ugarapul and the Mirrabooka Sovereign United Nations (Creative Spirits 2020). [start date: 2013; end date: ongoing]

Irredentist claims

NA

Claimed territory

- It remains somewhat unclear to what specific territory these claims are tied. We therefore flag this territorial claim as ambiguous and code it based on the group’s settlement area as indicated by the GREG dataset (Weidmann et al. 2010), which offers the best available approximation in this case.

Sovereignty declarations

- Several Aboriginal groups unilaterally renounced their legal ties with Australia in the 2010s and declared their independence. This includes:
 - The Euahlayi, Mbarbaram, and Murrawarri tribes declared themselves independent in 2013 (Euahlayi Peoples Republic 2013; SBS News 2013; YouTube 2013).
 - The Yidindji tribe declared itself sovereign in 2014 (De Facto Borders). The intent seems to be for outright independence (Sunday Morning Herald 2015). Another group that declared itself independent is the Wiradjuri (Creative Spirits 2020).
 - The Yuggera Ugarapul tribe declared itself independent in September 2016 (Creative Spirits 2020).
 - The Mirrabooka Sovereign United Nations declared independence in 2017. (Creative Spirits 2020).
- However, according to the coding rules, the originators of the declaration must represent a significant part of a movement. These seem to be small communities; so, we do not code the declarations.

Separatist armed conflict

- We find no reports of separatist violence, hence a NviolSD coding. [NviolSD]

Historical context

- Having moved to Australia from Southeast Asia around 40,000 to 60,000 years ago, the Aborigines have been living as hunter-gatherers in around 650 small tribal groups, with each group having its own dialect, political and social system, and its own laws and territory. With the arrival of the Europeans in 1788, epidemics, violence, and the appropriation of land and water sources led to a massive reduction in the number of indigenous Australians, from between 750,000 and 3 million in 1788 to around 30,000 in 1930 (Minahan 2002: 14).
- Starting from the 1930s, the policies of malignant or benign neglect were replaced with policies of assimilation, which also included the forcible removal of Aboriginal children from their parents in order to send them to white-run schools. There is no evidence of a concession or restriction during the ten years before movement onset.

Concessions and restrictions

- In 1962, Aboriginal people were given the right to vote in Commonwealth elections in every Australian state (Minahan 2002). We do not code this as a territorial or cultural concession since it refers to access to the central government. This is reflected in the change of status as coded in EPR (from discriminated to powerless).
- According to Cunningham (2014), the 1967 Constitutional Referendum called by Prime Minister Harold Holt and accepted by 90.77% of the Australian voters granted the Aborigines the legal status as a protected peoples and mandated the government to take responsibility of the welfare of Aborigines. For this purpose, the Office for Aboriginal Welfare was set up. Furthermore, Aborigines were included in the census to determine parliament representation. Although aboriginal groups had been campaigning strongly for this referendum, we do not code this as a concession. The referendum was first and foremost about a transfer of Aboriginal affairs to the federal government (Coombs 1994: 70). According to Tonkinson and Howard (1990: 72), the 1967 referendum was therefore “widely misunderstood by Aborigines and non-Aborigines as guaranteeing civil rights, when all it did was give the Commonwealth powers concurrent with those of the States in matters of Aboriginal affairs, plus the power to include Aborigines in any national census counts”. As a result, there was no real increase in either territorial or cultural self-determination.
- In 1970, Victoria state passed the Aboriginal Lands (Vic) Act. This was the first Act to recognize Aboriginal people’s entitlement to Land in Australia (State Library Victoria 2022). After that, several acts transferred specific land to Aboriginal communities (Creative Spirits 2020). [1970: autonomy concession]
- In 1971, the case *Milirrpum v. Nabalco Pty. Ltd.* rejected the doctrine of Aboriginal title and reinforced the concept of “terra nullius”, the assumption that Australia was “practically unoccupied” and “desert and uncultivated” before European settlement (van Krieken 2000: 64). This decision is not coded as a restriction since it did not alter the status quo. However, it is important to be noted here since it became relevant in the 1992 High Court ruling in the case *Mabo and others vs. Queensland (no 2)* that abandoned the doctrine of “terra nullius”.
- In 1973, the Northern Territory (back then still under federal government control) introduced bilingual education programs. The program allowed students to be educated in their native language while simultaneously being taught English. The program was first started in four schools and was gradually expanded to 22 schools in the Northern Territory. The policy reached about half of the school-aged children in the Northern Territory's remote aboriginal communities. The bilingual education policy inspired similar developments in other states such as South Australia and Queensland and “strongly influenced all Aboriginal bilingual programs in Australia between 1973 and 1990” (Harris and Devlin 1997). We code a concession in 1973, when the policy change was initiated. 1973 is also the year used in other sources (see Lo Bianco and Rhydwyn 2001: 414). [1973: cultural rights concession]
- The Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory (NT)) Act that was passed in 1976 on the recommendation of the Woodward Commission (see Minahan 2002: 16 and Minority Rights Group International). The act came into force on 26 January 1977 and is “the first attempt by an

Australian government to legally recognize the Aboriginal system of land ownership and put into law the concept of inalienable freehold title” (Central Land Council). The Aboriginal Land Rights Act transformed former ‘reserves’ into Aboriginal land (Schedule One land) and provided the framework under which Aboriginal people could claim rights to additional land if they provide evidence of their traditional association with the land. Furthermore, the legislation established four land councils in order to represent Aboriginal landowners: The Northern Land Council, the Central Land Council, the Anindilyakwa Land Council, and The Tiwi Land Council. The councils are representative bodies of elected Aboriginal people. The act also established the Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) that receives payments based on the amount of mining on Aboriginal land. The act contained further measures to protect Aboriginal land such as the ban to build roads on Aboriginal land unless there is the consent of traditional landowners or that the damaging of sacred sites is an offence (Central Land Council). [1976: autonomy concession]

- Following Victoria and Northern Territory, New South Wales (NSW) passed the Aboriginal Land Rights (NSW) Act in 1983. It allows Aboriginal people to claim Crown land that is not needed for any essential purpose. [1983: autonomy concession]
- In 1988, the Barunga Statement was presented to then Prime Minister Bob Hawke. It called for Aboriginal self-determination, a national system of land rights, compensation for loss of lands, respect for Aboriginal identity, an end to discrimination and the granting of full civil, economic, social and cultural rights (The Guardian 2018; AIATSIS 2022). Hawke responded that he wished to conclude a treaty between Aboriginal and other Australians by 1990, but this has not come to pass.
- The 1989 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act established the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), a national body of elected representatives that govern both Torres Strait Islanders and the Aboriginal peoples (Pratt 2003). The ATSIC existed from 1990 to 2005, when it was dismantled due to allegations of corruption [1989: autonomy concession]
- On 3 June 1992, the High Court ruled in the case Mabo and others vs. Queensland (no 2), also known as the “Mabo decision”. The decision rejected the doctrine of “terra nullius”, which assumed that Australia was uninhabited prior to the arrival of the Europeans. The ruling opened the way for major land claims by aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders. The case was named after Eddie Mabo, who fought for the recognition of the land rights of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders as the traditional owners of their land. The implications of the Mabo decision were accepted by the Federal government and the ruling was followed by legislation one year later (Native Title Act 1993) that set up a National Native Title Tribunal to adjudicate aboriginal claims (Hewitt and Cheetham 2000: 32). The Australian government agreed to protect native titles whenever Aborigines were able to show a continuous link to traditional land; except for the highly-populated areas such as Canberra or Brisbane. Tribunals were established to determine whether the Aboriginal claims were eligible (Minority Rights Group International). In 1994, the government gave back titles over 23,000 km². The move was generally welcomed by Aborigines but rejected by militants, as the plan failed to give them control over the economic use of the land (Minahan 2002: 17). The earliest indication of a concession was the 1992 ruling of the High Court, which is why we code the concession in that year. [1992: autonomy concession]
- In 1995, the Parliament of Tasmania passed the Aboriginal Lands Act. It provided for the establishment of an Aboriginal Land Council, which is elected by Tasmania’s indigenous people. Since then, land has gradually been returned. Parliament has twice approved the transfer of further lands in 1999 and 2005, and 16 separate areas had been returned by 2014. [1995: autonomy concession]
- The Native Title Amendments Act of 1998 (also called ‘10 Point Plan’) restricted aboriginal land rights. The amendments significantly diminished “the area of land and water over which native title might exist and the areas of land or water and the types of activities over which indigenous people have meaningful rights in relation to future uses” (Tehan 2003). The amendments were followed by an immediate legal challenge under Australia’s Racial Discrimination Act (Minorities at Risk). The amendments were the result of the 1996 Wik Decision, which is why we code the restriction in that year. The act was again amended in 2007 and 2009, but we could not find any evidence that these later amendments resulted in a decrease in Aboriginal self-determination. [1996: autonomy restriction]

- In 1998, the government of the Northern Territory passed legislation to axe the bilingual education program due to “poor standards in English literacy” (Nicholls 2005: 160) and in order to “shift \$3 million away from the 21 bilingual programs to a Territory-wide program teaching English as a second language” (New World Encyclopedia). Following pressure from indigenous communities and the bilingual lobby, the government softened its position a little and allowed bilingual programs to continue, but local languages were primarily to be used as a means of teaching English literacy (Australian Broadcasting Cooperation 2009; New World Encyclopedia). This decision decreased the status of aboriginal languages and is hence coded as a cultural rights restriction. [1998: cultural rights restriction]
- The Croker Island is a small island 200 km northeast of Darwin. The water around the island were subject of the first claim to exclusive native rights over the sea. In 2001, the High Court of Australia (Yarmirr vs. Northern Territory) ruled that the aboriginal Yarmirr people have native title of the sea and sea-bed adjoining Croker Island. The court hereby rejected arguments that native titles cannot exist offshore. The native title was limited to personal, domestic and non-commercial activities such as fishing and the protection of cultural and spiritual knowledge and did not include a right to trade in resources of the sea (Levy 1999). Nevertheless, this constitutes a territorial concession. We code 1998 as the year of the concession, since it was in that year that the Federal Court delivered its decision in that matter (the Federal Court’s decision was appealed to the High Court of Australia). [1998: autonomy concession]
- In 2005, the ATSIC was abolished. Unlike in the case of the Torres Strait Islanders, where the ATSIC was replaced with the TSRA which increased autonomy for Torres Strait Islanders (2005 is coded as a concession for the Torres Strait Islanders), the government has failed to introduce an alternative model for a representative body for Aborigines but instead installed a government-appointed advisory board, the National Indigenous Council. According to the Minority Rights Group International, this move reflected the belief that “indigenous self-determination should be off the agenda”. [2005: autonomy restriction]
- In August 2005, the Northern Territory Department of Education announced that it would “strengthen the bilingual program and improve its effectiveness and sustainability to deliver outcomes” (Australian Broadcasting Cooperation 2009). This announcement was followed by the Northern Territory Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2006-2009 that endorsed bilingual education for the following five years (University of Notre Dame). [2005: cultural rights concession]
- In 2006, the Australian Parliament passed Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI). It provides a legal mechanism for Aboriginal people to register a corporation to manage and control their own affairs including social, cultural, linguistic and/or economic affairs. De Villiers (2019) argues that an Aboriginal corporation can become a de facto government with non-territorial jurisdiction to self-govern in regard to matters that impact on their communal land. By 2019, there are approximately 3000 Aboriginal corporations registered under the CASTI Act (IWGIA 2020; de Villiers 2019; Australian Government). [2006: autonomy concession]
- In June 2016, the Western Australian government passed the Noongar Recognition Act. Its purpose is to recognize the Noongar people as Traditional Owners of the South West and provide a comprehensive package of benefits and in increasing Noongar Corporations’ level of self-government. The Act thus lays the basis for a system of autonomy whereby the Noongar people can manage their own traditional and cultural affairs (de Villiers 2019, 2022; Hobbs and George 2018). [2016: autonomy concession]
- In July 2018, The Victorian parliament passed the Advancing the Treaty Process with Aboriginal Victorians Act 2018, Australia’s first ever treaty law. This legislation created a framework for treaty negotiations (The Guardian 2018; Kroff 2022). Furthermore, the Barunga Agreement was signed in June 2008, which sets up a commission to conduct consultations about a treaty framework for settling Aboriginal land claims in the Northern territory (Hobbs 2019; The Guardian 2018). These actions could lead to concessions in the future.

Regional autonomy

- While there is a certain level of territorial SD (see above), it is insufficient for an autonomy code. According to Minahan (2002: 18), the Aborigines “have no special status in Australia akin to that of the Native Americans in the United States and Canada, as no treaty has ever been signed giving them such a legal status”. This is in line with the coding in EPR, where Aborigines are not coded as regionally autonomous.

De facto independence

NA

Major territorial changes

NA

EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Aborigines
<i>Scenario</i>	No match/1:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Aboriginal people
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	90001000

Power access

- EPR codes the Aborigines as discriminated until 1962 and powerless thereafter. EPR only covers the period from 1946, but there were no significant changes between 1945 and 1946. [1945-1962: discriminated; 1963-2020: powerless]

Group size

- We follow EPR. [0.02]

Regional concentration

- We code a group as spatially concentrated if at least 50% of group members reside in a geographically contiguous territory where they make up at least 50% of the local population. In the case of the Aborigines, the evidence is mixed with regard to these two criteria. According to Minahan (2002: 13), there were approximately 330,000 Aborigines in Australia in 2002 (including the Torres Strait Islanders, which make up around 44,000 people as coded in this dataset). Minahan (2002) states that most of these still live in rural areas, with three quarters living in rural towns and in the reserved lands of the outback and the north. MAR V also states that a majority of Aborigines lives in one region, with the rest being dispersed across the country. However, the Minority Rights Group International writes that the largest concentrations of Aboriginal people are in urban areas, but “achieve numerical dominance in the more remote northern and central areas of Australia” (hence only evidence for the second criteria). The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2013: 6) calls it a common myth that the average Aborigine lives in a remote community. Its numbers suggest otherwise: In 2006, 75% of Aboriginal people lived in cities and non-remote areas, 32% in major cities, 21% in inner regional

areas, and 22% in outer regional areas. In sum, it remains unclear whether the two criteria are fulfilled. We code the Aborigines as not territorially concentrated for the following reasons: 1) It remains unclear whether a majority of Aborigines really live in the rural towns and in the reserved lands of the outback and even if that would be the case, 2) this territory does not seem geographically contiguous (MAR V codes no regional base and GeoEPR also codes dispersed). [not concentrated]

Kin

- We found no evidence for numerically significant kin in another country (Minahan 2002: 13). [no kin]

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Christmas Islanders

Activity: 1981-2015

General notes

NA

Movement start and end dates

- The January 5, 2000, edition of *The Straits Times* reports that Christmas Islanders have been fighting the Australian government for two decades to gain more autonomy, namely “to make laws that are theirs, have a parliament or general assembly that matters, to control their own lives, to raise their own revenue.” Such provisions would be “no more or no less than the status enjoyed by every other Australian state, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory” and “even Australia’s other two island territories, Norfolk and Cocos Islands, enjoy a level of self-government denied to Christmas Islanders.” This suggests movement activity from 1980 onwards; hence 1980 is coded as start date.
- Note: Christmas Islanders attained Australian citizenship only in 1981 (Green 2006: 116). Due to this, we consider the movement an anti-colonial movement prior to 1981. Accordingly, we code the movement from 1981 onwards, but note prior non-violent activity.
- In 1994 and 1999, Christmas Islanders organized referendums on increased autonomy.
- On July 30, 2004, a delegation of young Islanders signed an open letter to Minister Lloyd, which stated: “we reject your proposal that our democratic rights will be addressed by incorporation into WA. We also reject the position that you and your Government will decide what is best for us. We must have a right to decide our own future. We want you to enter into a dialogue with us about a fair system of governance for Christmas Island, on agreed and just terms” (Shire of Christmas Island 2005: 198). While the open letter’s main motivation appears to be opposition to incorporation into Western Australia (and, therefore, maintaining the status quo), it also appears to imply a claim for increased autonomy.
- In 2005, Christmas Islander authorities published a report entitled “Our Future In Our Hands”. This is the last evidence for a claim for increased autonomy we could find. We code the movement’s end date in 2015 in accordance with the ten-year rule.
- A 2015 survey conducted by the chief executive of the Shire of Christmas Island shows that Christmas Islanders want some form of self-determination (SBS News 2015). We could not, however, detect subsequent activity. [start date: 1980; end date: 2015]

Dominant claim

- The January 5, 2000, edition of *The Straits Times* reports that Christmas Islanders have been fighting the Australian government for two decades to gain more autonomy, namely “to make laws that are theirs, have a parliament or general assembly that matters, to control their own lives, to raise their own revenue.” Such provisions would be “no more or no less than the status enjoyed by every other Australian state, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory” and “even Australia’s other two island territories, Norfolk and Cocos Islands, enjoy a level of self-government denied to Christmas Islanders.” In an unofficial referendum in 1994, increased autonomy was supported but secession rejected. In 1999, a second unofficial referendum again favored autonomy. And a Commonwealth inquiry in 1995 found that residents were dissatisfied with their level of autonomy because they felt their administrative system did not provide a sufficient degree of self-government (Arthur 2005: 78). In sum, there appear to be claims for autonomy either within or outside Western Australia; since we were unable to establish the dominant claim, we code the more radical claim (sub-state secession). [sub-state secession claim]

Independence claims

- 15% of Christmas Islanders favored independence in a 1994 referendum while 85% favored greater autonomy. We notably found no evidence for an organized movement for independence. The 1999 referendum did not include an independence option. [no independence claim]

Irredentist claims

NA

Claimed territory

- The territory claimed by the Christmas Islanders consists of the Christmas Islands. We code this claim based on the Global Administrative Areas database (GADM 2019).

Sovereignty declarations

NA

Separatist armed conflict

- We find no reports of separatist violence, hence a NVIOLSD coding. [NVIOLSD]

Historical context

- Britain annexed Christmas Island, then uninhabited, in 1888. The UK transferred the island to the Christmas Island Phosphate Company in 1897. In 1900, it was incorporated into the Straits settlement and became subject to the law of Singapore. It was occupied by the Japanese army from 1942 to 1945. Together with Cocos (Keeling) Islands, the island became a colony of Singapore.
- The origins of movements for greater autonomy in the Christmas Island can be understood within the post-Second World War period of decolonization, “reconstruction and redevelopment” – and the influence of the “post-war ‘independence’ movements in many of the countries where Christmas Islanders had their origins” (Matthews 2019: 69). The national independence of India (1947), Indonesia (1949), Singapore and Malaya (late 1950s and early 1960s), as well as political turmoil in China with Mao fighting against the Kuomintang would have all been early inspirations for the ethnically diverse (semi-permanent) population of the island (Matthews 2019: 69, 73).
- In 1958, Christmas Island became an Australian territory (Green 2006: 115). The 1958 Christmas Island Act and the Assembly Ordinance established a local court and an elected Assembly (Arthur 2005: 76). No de-colonization occurred on Christmas Island, and only in the mid-1980s did it achieve any level of political representation (Matthews 2019: 70).
- No concessions or restrictions in the ten years before movement onset.

Concessions and restrictions

- In 1981, Christmas Islanders attained Australian citizenship, which signifies the end of the colonial period. In 1984, Australian social security benefits were extended to Christmas Islanders (Green 2006: 116). Neither constitutes a concession as defined in the codebook.

- The 1958 Christmas Island Act and the Assembly Ordinance established a local court and an elected Assembly. The Assembly provided all local government and municipal services by means of the Christmas Island Services Corporation. Due to administrative problems, the Assembly was dismissed in 1987 and replaced by a Commonwealth Administrator (Arthur 2005: 76). [1987: autonomy restriction]
- The 1992 Territories Law Reform Act established a local parliament, the Christmas Island Shire Council. The Shire Council provides local services and has the power to receive Commonwealth Local Government funding (Arthur 2005: 76). This constitutes an autonomy concession, though it has to be noted that the Christmas Islanders' level of autonomy has remained limited. In particular, Christmas Island continues to be sub-ordinated to Western Australia; that is, most Western Australian laws apply also in Christmas Island. [1992: autonomy concession]
- Around 1994, there appear to have been plans to abolish the island's duty-free status, which was at least part of the rationale of the Christmas Islanders to hold a unilateral referendum on their autonomy in 1994. It seems that the plan was never implemented (Christmas Island continues to have duty free status as of 2014). We do not code a restriction.

Regional autonomy

- There is a local parliament, but its competencies are too limited to justify a regional autonomy coding. Christmas Island has no state-level of government, and the Australian Government is responsible for the provision of state-type laws and services to the territory. All Australian Government laws and regulations apply to Christmas Island, unless its application is explicitly excluded, and Western Australian laws apply also there (Australian government). [no autonomy]

De facto independence

NA

Major territorial changes

NA

EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Christmas Islanders
<i>Scenario</i>	No match
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	-
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	-

Power access

- EPR does not code Christmas Islands since it is an overseas entity. According to EPR, the Australian central government is dominated by Whites. We did not come by evidence that would suggest Christmas Islanders at any point had an important role to play in the central government. there are no signs of discrimination, either. Thus, we code Christmas Islanders as powerless throughout the movement's activity. [powerless]

Group size

- We do not have an estimate of the number of people who self-identify as Christmas Islanders and thus have to draw on the island's population. The CIA World Factbook estimates Christmas Island's population at 1,513 in 2013. With Australia's population at 22,262,501 (same year and source), the Christmas Islanders' group size is estimated as 0.00007. [0.0001]

Regional concentration

- We deemed it more likely than not that the threshold for territorial concentration is met, but whether or not the Christmas Islanders can be considered territorially concentrated is ambiguous. We lack population data based on self-identification. For the group size estimate, we relied on the island's population. We do not know how many self-identified Christmas Islanders there are in other parts of Australia. [concentrated]

Kin

- None found. [no kin]

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New Englanders

Activity: 1948-1977

General notes

- New England is a region near Brisbane in New South Wales, Australia.

Movement start and end dates

- The claim for the separation of New England from New South Wales had emerged under colonial rule, but separatist activity only really took off with Australia's independence. The claim for separation from New South Wales was considered by two Royal Commissions, one set up following the First World War and the second in the aftermath of the Great Depression. While the first ruled against separation, the second ruled in favor. However, the separation was not implemented, and the movement died down (Ellis 1966).
- The movement resurfaced after the Second World War. According to Ulrich Ellis (1966), Campaign Director of the New England New State Movement: "[t]he modern New England Movement was launched in 1948 at a conference convened by the Armidale City Council and the Dumares Shire... The conference decided that decentralization of government was the first essential step and, accordingly, the New England New State Movement was inaugurated early in 1949" (Ellis 2007: 17)." Thus, we peg the start date to 1948, the first year the modern New England movement was active. In 1953, an unofficial referendum on separation from New South Wales garnered significant support. In 1967, an official referendum was finally held, but this time the claim was narrowly defeated. Separatist activity appears to have died down following the loss. Following our ten-year rule, we code an end to the movement in 1977. [start date: 1948; end date: 1977]
- In recent years the movement has reappeared on the scene, but separatist activity appears too limited to warrant re-inclusion (The Sydney Morning Herald 2005).

Dominant claim

- All sources consulted for this case name the separation of New England from New South Wales as the only claim of the movement. We thus code a claim for sub-state secession throughout. [1948-1977: sub-state secession claim]

Independence claims

NA

Irredentist claims

NA

Claimed territory

- The territory claimed by the New Englanders is New England, which is a region near Brisbane in northeastern New South Wales, Australia. There are multiple definitions regarding the exact shape of New England; we coded this claim based on Roth (2015: 378).

Sovereignty declarations

- The separatist movement in 1955 established a representative assembly “with self-conferred powers to conduct a referendum, organize an election and pass its own legislation” (Rienstra & Williams 2016). The assembly also referred the bill that asked for a new state and that resulted in the authorization of the referendum by the NSW Parliament in 1966. However, there is no evidence of a sovereignty declaration.

Separatist armed conflict

- We find no reports of separatist violence, and thus we code the entire movement as NVIOLSD. [NVIOLSD]

Historical context

- New England is an undefined region near Brisbane in New South Wales. The claim for a separate New England within Australia already emerged in 1922, when a formal request to the Commonwealth was made to create a new state in northern New South Wales.
- The Australian Constitution that came into effect in 1901 was crafted around the idea that the creation of new states is possible if not desired. According to Sir Henry Parkes, unofficial leader of the Federal Conference in 1890, a federal legislature would “possess the power of more promptly calling new states into existence throughout their immense territory, as the spread of population required it”. This sentiment influenced the writing of the Constitution and resulted in section 121, which grants the Commonwealth Parliament the power to create new states. The right to establish a new state was restricted by several requirements (e.g., section 124 that requires the consent of the relevant state Parliament), however (Rienstra & Williams 2016). Proponents of a New England state interpret the constitution as such that New England could be created "over coffee tomorrow morning" if the government of NSW wanted to (Sydney Morning Herald 2005).
- The request of 1922 was answered with the creation of two Royal Commissions (formal public inquiries) by the New South Wales Parliament. The 1924 Cohen Royal Commission found that new states in New South Wales were “neither practicable nor desirable, primarily for economic reasons” (Rienstra & Williams 2016). The separatist movement resurged a few years later and led to the second Royal Commission in 1935. The Nicholas Commission ruled in favor of self-government and concluded that the area in northern New South Wales (among other areas in NSW) was suitable for self-government. The Commission recommended that a referendum be held in order to gauge public opinion. However, likely due to the Great Depression and the Second World War, there was no immediate move to hold such a referendum (Rienstra & Williams 2016; Sydney Morning Herald 2003).

Concessions and restrictions

- The separatist movement reemerged after the Second World War. In 1953, 21 local councils in the north of the state, without permission of the state government, held an unofficial referendum/poll on the issue of a separate New England state. The people voted overwhelmingly (77%) in favor of a new state, however with a very low turnout (less than 10%). Prior to the vote, the New South Wales Department of Local Government had warned local councils that they would be exceeding their powers in conducting the poll (Rienstra & Williams 2016; Sydney Morning Herald 2005). The referendum was unilateral. The state government never promised to hold a referendum nor did it prohibit the councils from holding it, it simply stated its dissatisfaction. The behavior of the state government did not affect the level of self-determination nor did it renege on an earlier promise. Hence, no restriction is coded.
- With the election of Robert Askin as the new Prime Minister of NSW in 1965, the referendum was back on the agenda. Askins has campaigned with the promise that he would support a

referendum to gauge support for a separate New England state. After his election, proponents of a new state set up a cabinet subcommittee to draft the legislation for the referendum. In 1966, the NSW Parliament authorized the referendum in the boundaries recommended by the 1935 report of the Nicholas Commission. The referendum was seen as a first step towards a new state, which, however, would still be “conditional upon the resolution of constitutional and economic questions” (Rienstra and Williams 2016). The referendum was held on 29 April 1967 (Bongiorno and Messner 2006: 154) and was narrowly defeated with 54.2% of voters saying no to the proposed new state (turnout: 92.5%). We code an autonomy concession in 1966, the year the parliament authorized the referendum. [1966: autonomy concession]

Regional autonomy

NA

De facto independence

NA

Major territorial changes

NA

EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	New Englanders
<i>Scenario</i>	n:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Whites
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	90003000

Power access

- The New Englanders are part of the EPR group ‘Whites’, which EPR codes as ‘dominant’ throughout. Ian McCahon Sinclair, who represented the New England division, held various ministerial roles in the 1960s and 1970s. Doug Anthony, who represented Richmond division, also served as minister in the 1970s and 1980s. On this basis, we assign a junior partner code, though it should be noted that Sinclair was born in Sydney, which could make his New Englander identity doubtful. [1948-1977: junior partner]

Group size

- We found no data on the number of self-identified New Englanders and so use an estimate of the population of the New England Region as the group size. There are multiple definitions of the exact territory, and they all vary in terms of size and population. We here draw on Roth (2015: 378), who cites a population of ca 200,000. This compares to a country population of 23.8 mio according to the World Bank. [0.0084]

Regional concentration

- We could not find any sources indicating the percentage of New Englanders living inside or outside the claimed territory. It is likely that such data does not exist, given the regional-identity character of this movement. Whether or not someone belongs to such a regional-identity movement is not determined by personal characteristics such as color, language, and religion, but via identification with the place of residence. As this is a regional identity movement, we assume that the movement is territorially concentrated. [regionally concentrated]

Kin

- As noted above, it is close to impossible to determine the number of New Englanders outside New England, let alone outside Australia. It is however, very unlikely that there are more than 100,000 New Englanders living outside of Australia, given that the entire New England territory is only inhabited by less than 700,000 people. One could argue that the New Englanders have kin in Europe, but the same applies to all Whites in Australia, so we do not code this. [no kin]

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Norfolk Islanders

Activity: 1986-2020

General notes

- Norfolk Island has been part of the Commonwealth of Australia since 1914. It had never been placed on the United Nations list of non-self-governing territories and is governed under article 122 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia. Using the powers granted to Parliament under article 122, the Norfolk Island were granted significant self-government through the establishment of the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly (Norfolk Island Act 1979).

Movement start and end dates

- According to Angelo (2002: 99) “Norfolk Island has argued vigorously and persistently for greater autonomy.” This is confirmed by Sorens (2012: 75) who lists the Norfolk Islanders as an independence movement. The earliest evidence of this claim are the Submissions of the Norfolk Island Government to the Distribution of Powers Advisory Committee of the Australian Constitutional Commission in 1986 and the Submission of the Norfolk Island Government to the Inquiry into Australia’s Relations with the Pacific. In these documents it is demanded that “the future of the Island’s relationship with Australia should involve a greater degree of self-government” (paragraph 4) and that the “dominant feature of the relationship has been the tension between local autonomy and mainland control” (paragraph 8). The Norfolk Island Government further demanded that the Norfolk Island should no longer be regarded as ‘part of’ the Commonwealth, but as a dependency of the Commonwealth (paragraph 13) and that the island seeks recognition of the individual status by constitutional guarantee (paragraph 17). On this basis, 1986 is coded as start date.
- The demand for increased self-determination was substantiated in 1996 when, according to Hewitt & Cheetham (2000: 208), the Norfolk Islanders wrote a letter to the British PM, John Major, claiming that the island was never formally handed over to Australia and that they were therefore still British. Hewitt & Cheetham (2000) argue that the main grievance was the movement towards severing ties with the British monarchy in Australia. This was resolved by a 1999 referendum in Australia that came out in favor of retaining the monarchy.
- In 2015, the Australian government revoked Norfolk’s autonomy, which was met with fierce resistance (BBC 2015; The Guardian 2015, 2022). This led to an island-wide referendum in May 2015 where 68% voted for self-determination (Costello 2019). The result of the non-binding referendum was interpreted as such: “residents have overwhelmingly indicated they want a say in their future governance arrangements” (Madden 2015). A subsequent grievance letter was filed requesting a binding referendum or plebiscite on increased autonomy noting that “obviously given what is at risk, which is loss of [Norfolk’s] democratic processes and the loss of its legislative assembly, we need to take whatever action is necessary” (Lawson 2015). [start date: 1986; end date: ongoing]

Dominant claim

- According to Angelo (2002: 99) the Norfolk Island movements “has argued vigorously and persistently for greater autonomy.” This is confirmed by the Submissions of the Norfolk Island Government to the Distribution of Powers Advisory Committee of the Australian Constitutional Commission in 1986 and the Submission of the Norfolk Island Government to the Inquiry into Australia’s Relations with the Pacific. These documents demanded that “the future of the Island’s relationship with Australia should involve a greater degree of self-government” (paragraph 4) and that the “dominant feature of the relationship has been the tension between local autonomy and mainland control” (paragraph 8). The Norfolk Island Government further demanded that the

Norfolk Island should no longer be regarded as “part of” the Commonwealth, but as a dependency of the Commonwealth (paragraph 13) and that the island seeks recognition of the individual status by constitutional guarantee (paragraph 17).

- After the Norfolk Island Government was abolished in 2013, Norfolk Islanders started seeking recognition as a non-self-governing territory by the UN. Advocates of independence exist, but are a “hardcore minority” (NZ Herald 2013). In a 2019 survey of 457 island residents, only 25% of preferred full independence. However, the dominant claim is for increased autonomy within Australia. [1986-2020: autonomy claim]

Independence claims

- A 2013 article in the New Zealand Herald suggests that the Norfolk Islands’ Chief Minister, Lisle Snell, is part of a “hardcore minority” which believes that Norfolk Islands could “go it alone”. However, the article does not clearly refer to an organized independence movement.
- However, survey results are not the same as an independence movement.
- In 2015, Norfolk Island’s autonomy was revoked; the changes entered into force in 2016. We found evidence for independence claims after the revocation. According to Costello (2019), Norfolk Islander activists have gone to the UN to make their case, with their ultimate being free association with Australia, with self-government for Norfolk Island while Australia provisions security and defense (e.g., like Cook Islands). In a 2019 survey of 457 island residents, 25% preferred full independence. We could not find concrete information on when agitation for independence started except that it was after the autonomy revocation in 2015, which was implemented in 2016. [start date: 2016; end date: ongoing]

Irredentist claims

- According to a 2017 newspaper article, a former Chief Minister has suggested that Norfolk Islanders consider joining New Zealand; however, we found no evidence for an organized movement (The Guardian 2017). [no irredentist claims]

Claimed territory

- The territory claimed by the Norfolk Islanders is Norfolk Island, an external territory of Australia. We code this claim based on the Global Administrative Areas database (GADM 2019).

Sovereignty declarations

NA

Separatist armed conflict

- We found no reports of separatist violence, hence a NVIOLSD classification. [NVIOLSD]

Historical context

- The Norfolk Island, 1,670km north-east of Sydney in the South Pacific, was discovered by James Cook in 1774 and remained a British colony until 1914 when it became part of the Commonwealth of Australia (Hewitt and Cheetham 2000: 208).

- In 1979, the Norfolk Islanders were granted significant self-government with the Norfolk Island Act that established the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly that ran most of the island's affairs. We thus code a prior concession. [1979: autonomy concession]

Concessions and restrictions

- In 2015, the Australian parliament revoked Norfolk Island's autonomy and abolished the Norfolk Island Legislative assembly (The Guardian 2015). Most Australian Commonwealth laws and New South Wales ones were extended to Norfolk Island. [2015: autonomy restriction]

Regional autonomy

- The 1979 Norfolk Island Act established the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly and granted significant self-government to the island. Autonomy was revoked in 2015, which became effective in mid-2016 (Costello 2019). [1986-2016: regional autonomy]

De facto independence

NA

Major territorial changes

- [2016: autonomy revocation]

EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Norfolk Islanders
<i>Scenario</i>	No match
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	-
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	-

Power access

- EPR does not code overseas entities, such as Norfolk. We did not come by evidence that would suggest that the Norfolk Islanders at any point had an important role to play in the central government. There are also no signs of discrimination. We thus code the Norfolk Islanders as powerless throughout the movement's activity. [1986-2020: powerless]

Group size

- We found no reliable estimate of the number of self- (or other-)identified Norfolk Islanders, so we have to rely on the island's population for the group size estimate. Information on the population of the Norfolk Island varies: According to the BBC (2015), there are 1,800 Norfolk Islanders, of which 80% are Australian citizens. According to the New Zealand Herald (2013), there are 1,500 people that live on Norfolk Island. The Guardian (2015) mentions 1,277 inhabitants. We rely on data from the CIA World Factbook, according to which 2,210 people lived on Norfolk Island in 2014. Given Australia's total population of 23,490,736 in that year, the group size of the Norfolk Islanders is 0.00009. [0.0001]

Regional concentration

- We deemed it more likely than not that the threshold for territorial concentration is met, given that this is a regional identity case, but whether or not the Norfolk Islanders can be considered territorially concentrated is ambiguous. We lack population data based on self- (or other-identification and we do not know how many self-identified Norfolk Islanders there are in other parts of Australia. [regionally concentrated]

Kin

- As noted above, it is close to impossible to determine the number of self-identified Norfolk Islanders. However, with a population size of approximately 2,000, it is safe to assume that there is no kin group of at least 100,000 people outside Australia. Note: While the Norfolk Islanders are also Whites (as coded by EPR), we do not code Whites in other countries (e.g. in the United States) as kin because this movement is directed against a government dominated by Whites. [no kin]

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North Queenslanders

Activity: 1955-2020

General notes

NA

Movement start and end dates

- There was a push for a separate state in North Queensland in the late 19th century, but the movement petered out subsequently (Fellows & Chong 2014; Neale 1950; Raffles 2016).
- Interest in the idea of a separate North Queensland state resurged in the 1910s and 1920s (Raffles 2016).
- Interest again resurfaced in the 1950s in parallel with the New Englanders movement (Fellows & Chong 2014). There is evidence of organized political mobilization, with the formation of the North Queensland New State Movement in the 1950s, the North Queensland Self-Government League in the 1970s, and the formation of the North Queensland Party in 1994 (Raffles 2016). The first evidence for activity by the North Queensland New State Movement we found was a 1955 address to the Convention of the North Queensland New State Movement (Ellis 1955).
- Interest in a separate North Queensland state again resurged in the 2000s and 2010s, and this time mobilization seems more significant (McKinnon 2007). In 2010, a number of Queensland mayors publicly supported proposals for an autonomous northern Queensland (Fellows & Chong 2014). In 2011, Bob Katter formed the Katter Australian Party, which proceeded to win a small number of seats in the Queensland Parliament and retained the founder's seat in the national parliament (Katter's Australian Party). Katter is a long-time supporter of a separate North Queensland (Johnston 2020) and the party formally advocates for a separate North Queensland (Katter's Australian Party n.d.).
- Another organization making the same claim is the North Queensland State Alliance Inc. In 2013 and 2017 e-petitions were lodged with the Queensland authorities for the holding of a referendum on the creation of a separate North Queensland state, but these were rejected (Raffles 2018).
- In 2019, North Queensland First was formed, one of whose primary claims is for a separate North Queensland state. Interest in a separate North Queensland is fueled by interest in financial autonomy and autonomy over the region's natural resources (Brennan 2020; Fellows & Chong 2014).
- Overall, there is clear evidence for continuous and politically significant mobilization starting in the 2000s and especially from 2010 onwards. There were several organizations making separatist claims also before that, but the evidence we collected is insufficient to determine whether activity was continuous. Furthermore, popular support seems to have been very low before the 2000s, perhaps with the exception of the 1950s, though again the evidence is limited. Based on the evidence, we code the start date in 1955, the first evidence for the existence of the North Queensland New State Movement (see above); however, we note that this decision is ambiguous and the start date could also be coded in ca. 2010. The movement is ongoing as of 2020. [start date: 1955; end date: ongoing]

Dominant claim

- A variety of individuals and organizations have made claims for a separate North Queensland state since the 1950s including the North Queensland New State Movement in the 1950s, the North Queensland Self-Government League in the 1970s, the North Queensland Party that was formed in 1994, the Katter Australian Party that was formed in 2011, and the North Queensland First party that was formed in 2019 (Ellis 1955; Katter's Australian Party n.d.; Johnston 2020; Raffles 2016). In 2010, a number of Queensland mayors publicly supported proposals for an

autonomous northern Queensland (Fellows & Chong 2014). In 2013 and 2017 e-petitions were lodged with the Queensland authorities for the holding of a referendum on the creation of a separate North Queensland state, but these were rejected (Raffles 2018). [1955-2020: sub-state secession claim]

Independence claims

- In line with the above, the North Queenslander movement is focused on sub-state secession, not outright independence. However, it is important to note that there are reports that the movement might become more radical eventually, primarily due to legal disagreements over the extent of autonomy permitted within the federal Australian framework (Clements 2006). In 2020, Katter called for a referendum on statehood and suggested this could eventually lead to outright independence (Independent 2020). [no independence claims]

Irredentist claims

NA

Claimed territory

- The exact contours of the claimed territory vary, but the most prominent proposal appears to be to separate Queensland along the 22nd parallel south (Fellows & Chong 2014: 99). We code this claim using GIS data on admin units from GADM, retaining the part of the Australian state of Queensland that lays above the 22nd parallel south.

Sovereignty declarations

NA

Separatist armed conflict

- We found no evidence for separatist violence and hence code the entire movement as NVIOLSD. [NVIOLSD]

Historical context

- North Queensland is a weakly defined region in the northern part of the state of Queensland. The territory includes today's North Queensland region, but also Far North Queensland, and at least parts of Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday as well as Central Queensland regions. Townsville is sometimes considered the unofficial capital of North Queensland. There was a push for a separate state in North Queensland in the late 19th century, but the movement petered out subsequently (Fellows & Chong 2014; Neale 1950; Raffles 2016).
- The Australian Constitution that came into effect in 1901 was crafted around the idea that the creation of new states is possible if not desired. According to Sir Henry Parkes, unofficial leader of the Federal Conference in 1890, a federal legislature would "possess the power of more promptly calling new states into existence throughout their immense territory, as the spread of population required it." This sentiment influenced the writing of the Constitution and resulted in section 121, which grants the Commonwealth Parliament the power to create new states. The right to establish a new state was restricted by several requirements (e.g., section 124 that requires the consent of the relevant state Parliament), however (Rienstra & Williams 2016).

Concessions and restrictions

- We found no evidence for concessions or restrictions as defined in the codebook until the time of writing (early 2022). There have been several parliamentary motions and petitions over the years demanding a separate North Queensland state or at least a referendum on the creation of a new state, but these have consistently been rejected (Raffles 2018).

Regional autonomy

NA

De facto independence

NA

Major territorial changes

NA

EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	North Queenslanders
<i>Scenario</i>	n:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Whites
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	90003000

Power access

- We found evidence for representation in the national executive: Bob Katter Sr. served as minister in the early 1970s. David Scott Thomson, who represented Leichhardt, had ministerial roles between 1979 and 1983 (Thomson was not originally from North Queensland though). De-Anne Kelly (Dawson division) served as minister under Howard between 2004 and 2007. On this basis, we apply a junior partner code. [1955-2020: junior partner]

Group size

- We draw on Roth (2015: 384), who cites a population of ca 1 mio in 2015. This compares to a country population of 23.8 mio according to the World Bank. [0.042]

Regional concentration

- We could not find any information on the number of self-identified North Queenslanders, but given the regional character of this movement, it seems safe to assume the criteria are met. [regionally concentrated]

Kin

- We could not find data on the number of self-identified North Queenslanders including outside Australia. We judged it unlikely that there are more than 100,000 North Queenslanders living outside of Australia, given that North Queensland has a population of only ca 1 mio (Roth 2015: 384). One could argue that the North Queenslanders have kin in Europe, but the same applies to all Whites in Australia, so we do not code this. [no kin]

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Torres Strait Islanders

Activity: 1976-2020

General notes

NA

Movement start and end dates

- Torres Strait Islanders first called for independence in 1976 when James Akee formed the Torres United Party. "It called publically for the first time for a separate and independent 'Free Nation of Torres Strait' where the Islanders would control the Strait's resources and future and facilitate the return of Islander diaspora" (Shnukal 2001).
- In 1981 calls for independence were rejected by the High Court of Australia. In 1988, a Torres Strait Islanders Congress voted for the secession of the island not just from Queensland (to which it is sub-ordinated), but from Australia (Elks 2011).
- However, in subsequent years the mood appears to have softened, and most Torres Strait Islanders, including the leader of the secessionist movement, George Mye, "want to become a separate territory of Australia – similar to the Northern Territory – with their own parliament and full regional control of island affairs, including the provision of health and education." Mr. Mye's "vie on the ideal model for regional autonomy has softened. The fervor remains. "To secede from Australia is a no-no," he said. "What we want, what we need, to look after the Torres Strait's future is autonomy for the region, but we should be Australians for all time. "We're not seceding from Australia, but Queensland, yes" (Elks 2011).
- Less radical claims have also been raised, such as the attainment of a status similar to Norfolk Islands, which would mean substantial autonomy within Queensland. In 1994, the Torres Strait Regional Authority was created as an autonomous regional assembly, but "true autonomy has not been achieved" (Elks 2011).
- In 2017, there was a forum in the Torres Strait discussing regional autonomy (SBS 2017). In 2022, Torres Strait Islanders delivered the Masig Statement to the Australian government. The statement demanded self-determination (SBS 2022).
- [start date: 1976; end date: ongoing]

Dominant claim

- Torres Strait Islanders first called for independence in 1976 when James Akee formed the Torres United Party. "It called publically for the first time for a separate and independent "Free Nation of Torres Strait" where the Islanders would control the Strait's resources and future and facilitate the return of Islander diaspora" (Shnukal 2001). In 1981 calls for independence were rejected by the High Court of Australia. In 1988, a Torres Strait Islanders Congress voted for the secession of the island not just from Queensland (to which it is sub-ordinated), but from Australia (Elks 2011).
- However, in subsequent years the mood appears to have softened, and most Torres Strait Islanders, including the leader of the secessionist movement, George Mye, "want to become a separate territory of Australia – similar to the Northern Territory – with their own parliament and full regional control of island affairs, including the provision of health and education." Mr. Mye's "vie on the ideal model for regional autonomy has softened. The fervor remains. "To secede from Australia is a no-no," he said. "What we want, what we need, to look after the Torres Strait's future is autonomy for the region, but we should be Australians for all time. "We're not seceding from Australia, but Queensland, yes" (Elks 2011).
- Less radical claims have also been raised, such as the attainment of a status similar to the Norfolk Islands, which would mean substantial autonomy within Queensland. While this is sufficient evidence for us to code a moderation of the independence claim issued in the initial phase, we

were unable to establish whether the claim for outright separation from Queensland or for an autonomous setting within Queensland was dominant (hence we code the more radical claim, sub-state secession). Elks (2011) seems to suggest that the moderation happened following the establishment of the Torres Strait Regional Authority in 1994. Hence, we code an independence claim until and including 1994, and a sub-state secession claim for 1995 onwards. [1976-1994: independence claim; 1995-2020: sub-state secession claim]

Independence claims

- Independence was the dominant claim until 1994. In 2012, the Kuarareg people of Torres Islands declared “their independence from Australia” and the establishment of the “United Isles of Kaiwalagal” (Minahan 2016: 212; Cultural Survival n.d.). Fellows & Chong (2014: 104) contain some evidence that the movement was active in-between, particularly in 2011. Further evidence for a continuous independence claim can be found in ADCQ (2018: 36). [start date: 1976; end date: ongoing]

Irredentist claims

NA

Claimed territory

- The territory claimed by the Torres Strait Islanders consists of the island group above the north of Queensland, Australia (Roth 2015: 383). We code this claim based on the Global Administrative Areas database (GADM 2019).

Sovereignty declarations

- Minahan (2016: 212) reports that the Torres Strait Islanders declared independence in 2012, as the United Isles of Kaiwalagal.
- By contrast, Cultural Survival (n.d.) refers to a declaration of independence on the 1st of November 2002. However, additional research suggests that the Cultural Survival article’s stated year is a typographical error and that the two resources refer to the same event in November 2012. Other publications seem to refer to the 2002 independence declaration event (Porter 2021: 84), but this is likely because they have the figure from Cultural Survival. [2012: independence declaration]

Separatist armed conflict

- We find no reports of separatist violence, hence a NVIOLSD coding. [NVIOLSD]

Historical context

- Due to their geographic position, the Torres Strait Islanders lived in relative isolation until the late 19th century, when the islands were annexed by the Colony of Queensland (Shnukal 2001). Given their remoteness, the Torres Strait Islanders continued to have a fair degree of autonomy until the early 20th century, though amidst of increasing discrimination against Torres Strait Islanders (Shnukal 2001). In the 1960s the Queensland government changed its policy to an assimilationist one. The 1960s saw the removal of much of the social and economic discrimination laws (e.g., travel restrictions). From 1964 onwards Islanders were allowed to vote

in both national and state elections (Shnukal 2001). In 1973, an Aboriginal advisory body to the Minister was established (Pratt 2003). In sum, there were concessions being made in the political (in particular introduction of the right to vote) and social and economic realm, but not related to culture or autonomy. Thus, no concession or restriction during the ten years before movement onset.

Concessions and restrictions

- The Torres Strait Treaty was signed in 1978 between Australia and Papua New Guinea. It defines the border between two countries. More importantly, it allows Torres Strait Islanders freely move across the national border for traditional activities. Lui Snr, a leading Torres Strait Islander activist, suggested that the treaty represents a “watershed for first Nations people of Australia and their struggle for recognition” (Griffith Asia Institute 2021). However, the treaty does not involve a concession as defined here.
- The 1989 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act established the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), a national body of elected representatives that govern both Torres Strait Islanders and the Aboriginal peoples (Pratt 2003). The ATSIC existed from 1990 to 2005, when it was dismantled due to allegations of corruption. [1989: autonomy concession]
- On 3 June 1992, the High Court ruled in the case *Mabo and others vs. Queensland (no 2)*, also known as the “Mabo decision”. The decision rejected the doctrine of “terra nullius”, which assumed that Australia was uninhabited prior to the arrival of the Europeans. The ruling opened the way for major land claims by aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders. The case was named after Eddie Mabo, who fought for the recognition of the land rights of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders as the traditional owners of their land. The implications of the Mabo decision were accepted by the Federal government and the ruling was followed by legislation one year later (Native Title Act 1993) that set up a National Native Title Tribunal to adjudicate aboriginal claims (Hewitt and Cheetham 2000: 32). The Australian government agreed to protect native titles whenever Aborigines were able to show a continuous link to traditional land; except for the highly-populated areas such as Canberra or Brisbane. Tribunals were established to determine whether the Aboriginal claims were eligible (Minority Rights Group International). In 1994, the government gave back titles over 23,000 km². The move was generally welcomed by Aborigines but rejected by militants, as the plan failed to give them control over the economic use of the land (Minahan 2002: 17). The earliest indication of a concession was the 1992 ruling of the High Court, which is why we code the concession in that year. [1992: autonomy concession]
- The Native Title Amendments Act of 1998 (also called ‘10 Point Plan’) restricted aboriginal land rights. The amendments significantly diminished “the area of land and water over which native title might exist and the areas of land or water and the types of activities over which indigenous people have meaningful rights in relation to future uses” (Tehan 2003). The amendments were followed by an immediate legal challenge under Australia's Racial Discrimination Act (Minorities at Risk). The amendments were the result of the 1996 Wik Decision, which is why we code the restriction in that year. The act was again amended in 2007 and 2009, but we could not find any evidence that these later amendments resulted in a decrease in Aboriginal self-determination. [1996: autonomy restriction]
- In 1994, the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) was separated from the ATSIC. The TSRA is an elected body of representatives and was formed “to recognize and maintain the special and unique Ailan Kastom of Torres Strait Islanders living in the Torres Strait area” (Torres Strait Regional Authority). The TSRA’s functions include creating and monitoring programs, acting as a liaison between the people living in the Torres Strait Islands and the mainland government, and “[protecting] Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal cultural material and information relating to the Torres Strait area if the material or information is considered sacred or otherwise significant by Torres Strait Islanders or Aboriginal persons” (Torres Strait Regional Authority). The creation of the TSRA increased the autonomy rights of the Torres Strait Islanders, hence we code an autonomy concession. [1994: autonomy concession]

- However, the TSRA remained linked to the ATSIC. In 1997, the Australian Prime Minister “promised TSRA full independence from ATSIC by 2000” (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs 1997: 49; also see Shukal 2001). The Australian government passed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Amendment Bill, which removed the TSRA budget from ATSIC jurisdiction. This gave TSRA autonomy over budgeting as a first step towards fully separating it from the ATSIC. [1997: autonomy concession]
 - o It should be noted that the promised full separation did not happen until 2005. The corresponding bill was put on hold in 2002, thus stopping the TSRA’s road to full independence from the ATSIC until 2005 (see below).
- The Croker Island is a small island 200 km northeast of Darwin. The water around the island were subject of the first claim to exclusive native rights over the sea. In 2001, the High Court of Australia (Yarmirr vs. Northern Territory) ruled that the aboriginal Yarmirr people have native title of the sea and sea-bed adjoining Croker Island. The court hereby rejected arguments that native titles cannot exist offshore. The native title was limited to personal, domestic and non-commercial activities such as fishing and the protection of cultural and spiritual knowledge and did not include a right to trade in resources of the sea (Levy 1999). Nevertheless, this constitutes a territorial concession. We code 1998 as the year of the concession, since it was in that year that the Federal Court delivered its decision in that matter (the Federal Court’s decision was appealed to the High Court of Australia). [1998: autonomy concession]
- Between 2001-2004, local Torres Strait Islands governing bodies formed two task forces to push for greater autonomy over local governance. However, their proposals – including the Bamaga Accord in 2002 - were ultimately rejected by the Queensland government. We do not code this as restrictions since the autonomy status remained unaffected and since Queensland does not appear to have promised increased autonomy.
- In 2005, the ATSIC was abolished and the TSRA took over the ATSIC’s responsibilities with regards to programs relating to the Torres Strait Islanders, implying increased autonomy for Torres Strait Islanders. [2005: autonomy concession]
- In 2006, the Australian Parliament passed Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI). It provides a legal mechanism for Aboriginal people to register a corporation to manage and control their own affairs including social, cultural, linguistic and/or economic affairs. De Villiers (2019) argues that an Aboriginal corporation can become a de facto government with non-territorial jurisdiction to self-govern in regard to matters that impact on their communal land. By 2019, there are approximately 3000 Aboriginal corporations registered under the CASTI Act (IWGIA 2020; de Villiers 2019; Australian Government). [2006: autonomy concession]
- In 2013, a group of Torres Strait Islanders wanted to build an economic base from commercial fishing in a vast area of sea between Australia and Papua New Guinea. This was strongly opposed by the Australian Commonwealth and Queensland governments, who argued that the Torres Strait Islanders’ title rights over the area had been extinguished by state and federal legislation. However, the Islanders won the case in the High Court and their native title rights to fish were recognized (AIATSIS 2013; ABC News 2013; Australian Human Rights Commission 2013). We do not code a concession because no new right seem to have been conferred.

Regional autonomy

- The competencies of the TSRA (mainly related to cultural and economic autonomy, see Minority Rights Group International) appear not significant enough to justify a regional autonomy coding. According to Elks (2011), “true autonomy has not been achieved”.

De facto independence

NA

Major territorial changes

NA

EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Torres Strait Islanders
<i>Scenario</i>	No match
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	-
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	-

Power access

- According to EPR Whites dominate the mainland's central government. Mainland Aborigines are considered powerless throughout the movement's existence. The power status of the islander indigenous people of the Torres Strait Islands is very similar to that of mainland Aborigines (Minahan 2002; Minority Rights Group International; Shnukal 2001). During the movement's existence, Torres Strait Islanders were not actively discriminated against in terms of access to the central government. Thus, we code Torres Strait Islanders as powerless throughout. [1976-2020: powerless]

Group size

- The Torres Strait Islands are not coded in EPR since it is an overseas entity. According to the 2001 census there are 26,046 Torres Strait Islanders in Australia, and another 17,528 of mixed Torres Strait Islander/Aboriginal descent (we combine the two). This yields a group size of 0.0023 relative to Australia's total population (18,769,249 in 2001). [0.0023]
 - o Note: Minahan (2002: 13) does not give an estimate of the number of Torres Strait Islanders but only of the total Aboriginal population.

Regional concentration

- According to the 2011 census, the Torres Strait Islanders make up a majority of their islands (roughly 90%). Yet, the islands' total population is only 4,248. The remaining approximately 40,000 Torres Strait Islanders live scattered across Australia. [not concentrated]

Kin

- We found no information on numerically significant kin in another country (see e.g. Minahan 2002: 13). [no kin]

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Western Australians

Activity: 1974-2020

General notes

NA

Movement start and end dates

- The movement first emerged in 1933, but we found little indication for any sustained self-determination efforts in the post-WWII period until 1974, when mining millionaire Lang Hancock announced that he and his partner were financially backing four secessionist candidates for the Senate election (unsuccessful candidates). Though there is later discussion of Western Australian secession by individuals, the Westralian Secessionist Party and the organized Westralian Secessionist Movement do not appear in news reports after the late 1970s. However, in 1993 the Western Australia Secession was formed, which at its peak had about 3,000 members. Due to a lack of popular support, the organization became defunct in 2011, but there continued to be more limited separatist activity (The West Australian 2013).
- In 2016, a political party called WAXit Party was established to separate Western Australia from the Federation (initially Small Business Party and then WAXit Party), which proceeded to make ca. 1% of votes cast in the 2017 election in Western Australia. [start date: 1974; end date: ongoing]

Dominant claim

- In the early 20th century, the dominant claim was clearly for secession from the Australian Federation (see Musgrave 2003). This does not seem to have changed in the more recent history of the Western Australian movement. We code the onset of the movement in 1974 due to the backing of four secessionist candidates for the Senate election on the Westralian Secessionist Party ticket by millionaire Lang Hancock and the establishment of the Westralian Secession Movement. Although the movement primarily focused on taxes and tariffs, its ultimate goal was the secession of Western Australia (Schmitt 1974). Secession remained the main goal with the formation of Western Australia Secession in 1993, which at its peak had about 3,000 members. The Small Business Party/WAXit Party, which was formed in 2016, also makes claims for independence. A poll conducted in late 2020 confirms the presence of strong minority-support for independence – approximately 25% of West Australians seeking a permanent break away from the rest of Australia (Law 2020). [1974-2020: independence claim]

Independence claims

- In line with the above, we identify the continuous presence of independence claims throughout the researched period. [start date: 1974; end date: ongoing]

Irredentist claims

NA

Claimed territory

- The territory claimed by Western Australians consists of the current Western province in Australia (Roth 2015: 377). We code this claim based on the Global Administrative Areas database (GADM 2019).

Sovereignty declarations

NA

Separatist armed conflict

- We find no reports of separatist violence, and thus we code the entire movement as NVIOLSD. [NVIOLSD]

Historical context

- Western Australia was not particularly eager to join the Australian Federation as approximately half of its government's revenue came from inter-colonial tariffs that made Western Australia very prosperous but that were to be prohibited under the new federal constitution that was proposed during the constitutional conventions of 1891 and 1897-1898. Furthermore, West Australia had only become self-governing in 1890, which meant virtual independence from Britain except in matters regarding defense, foreign affairs and trade. West Australia was not, at least initially, willing to give up this political power (Musgrave 2003).
- However, a referendum held in 1900 yielded a majority in Western Australia for the new constitution and made Western Australia join the Commonwealth as an original state. This change of heart was most likely induced by a mix of promises and threats from the constitutional convention as well as due to the formation of the Eastern Goldfields Reform League that agitated for the secession of the goldfields region from Western Australia. The goldfields region was predominantly inhabited by immigrants from other colonies of Australia which felt an ongoing attachment to the colonies they had come from. Economically and politically Western Australia could not afford to lose the goldfields region (Musgrave 2003).
- As a consequence of several tariff decisions, among which also the 1901 decision of the Commonwealth Parliament to introduce a federal tariff against imported manufactured goods – a decision which was harmful to the primarily agricultural Western Australian economy –, calls for self-governance or secession of the Western Australia from the federation increased. Many Western Australians blamed the constitutional structures of the federation to be at the root of the state's economic difficulties (Musgrave 2003). Anti-federal sentiments grew (e.g. the establishment of the Secession League in 1926, see Government of Western Australia 2015) but were not very successful due to the great prosperity of Western Australia in the 1920s (high wheat prices in the post-war period). However, with the Great Depression that hit Western Australia particularly hard, the period of prosperity came to an end. In the state election of 1930, the Labor government was replaced by a coalition of the National and Country Parties and the secessionist Dominion League, founded in 1930 by Keith Watson, received widespread support. Simultaneously, the federal government announced that it would continue the high tariff policy on imported secondary goods. The outrage over this decision resulted in the introduction of a Bill by the Western Australian government that foresaw a referendum on secession. The Bill as approved by the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council and enacted into law as the Secession Referendum Act in 1932. On 8 April 1933, the referendum on secession was held. Although 68% of the voters voted in favor of secession, the pro-secession nationalist government was voted out of office and replaced with the anti-secession Labor party in the Western Australia state election that was held on the same day. As a consequence of the referendum result, a petition (called "The Case for Secession") to secede by the government of Western Australia was

sent to the British Parliament. However, a joint select committee of the British Parliament rejected the petition and the secession unless it had the support of the federal government of Australia (Musgrave 2003).

- Although not much has changed in constitutional terms, the relation between the Commonwealth and the Australian states is different today from the situation in 1901 when the federal constitution was written. Grewal and Sheehan (2003: 5) list the 20 most significant landmarks in the division of powers since 1901. However, most of these either do not concern Western Australia or are too insignificant to be coded as they are part of the day-to-day transfer of sovereignty in federal systems. Major reforms of the division of powers did not seem to take place. There are two exceptions: A significant reform was the tax reform of 1942 that granted the Commonwealth exclusive power over income tax and significantly reduced the states' tax base. This trend was reversed in 1971, when the Commonwealth Payroll Tax was transferred to the states. The states gained an independent source of revenue and, as a consequence, their share of the entire tax revenue increased significantly (see Reinhardt and Steel 2006). We thus code an autonomy concession. [1971: autonomy concession]

Concessions and restrictions

- The Labor government of Prime Minister Rudd (Fenna and Anderson 2012) and the coalition of Prime Minister Abbott both announced plans to reform the federal system, but constitutional change has not followed since.

Regional autonomy

- Western Australia has been a federal entity throughout (see e.g. Hollander and Patapan 2007 for a description of Australian federalism). [1974-2020: regional autonomy]

De facto independence

NA

Major territorial changes

NA

EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Western Australians
<i>Scenario</i>	n:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Whites
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	90003000

Power access

- There have been several ministers from Western Australia in the national cabinet, e.g. David Albert Lloyd Johnston (Minister for Defense, Minister for Justice and Customs), Chris Ellision (Minister for Justice 2001-2007), Ian Campbell (several ministerial posts). We do not know if there was Western Australian representation in every year of the movement's activity, but Western Australians were clearly not systematically excluded from power at the center. Given

that there has not yet been a Western Australian prime minister, a junior partner coding seems adequate. [1974-2020: junior partner]

Group size

- We found no reliable estimate of the number of self- or other-identified Western Australians. Since this is a regional movement, we simply rely on the state's population for the group size estimate. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Western Australia had a population of 2,613,700 in 2016. Given Australia's total population of 24,127,200 in that year, the group size of the Western Australians is 0.10833. [0.1083]

Regional concentration

- Whether or not the Western Australians can be considered territorially concentrated is slightly ambiguous since we lack population data based on self- or other-identification, but since this is a regional movement it seems safe to assume that the Western Australians are territorially concentrated. [regionally concentrated]

Kin

- One could argue that the New Englanders have kin in Europe, but the same applies to all Whites in Australia, so we do not code this and focus only on Western Australians abroad. As noted above, it is close to impossible to determine the number of people that identify as Western Australians, particularly so for territory outside Australia. Neither Minahan (2002, 1996) nor EPR include the Western Australians. Overall, we judged it unlikely that there is a Western Australian diaspora of at least 100,000, and so we do not code kin in another country. [no kin]

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