

# NIGERIA

## **Bakassis**

Activity: 2006-2008

### **General notes**

NA

### **Movement start and end dates**

- Bakassi Peninsula was a disputed territory between Nigeria and Cameroon that caused interstate tensions and border clashes throughout the 1990s. In 2002, the ICJ ruled that the Peninsula was to be ceded from Nigeria to Cameroon. The process of transfer began in 2006 and was formally completed in 2008. Though the territory was disputed, those living in Bakassi consider themselves Nigerians and thus protested their change in nationalities. In 2006, hundreds of Bakassi residents formed the Bakassi Movement for Self Determination (BAMOSD) a militant group aiming at complete secession and the formation of a new state, the Democratic Republic of Bakassi. BAMOSD refused to accept Cameroonian sovereignty but also refused relocation within Nigeria (BBC UK, 8/7/2006). The group claims, “[w]e will no longer have anything to do with Nigeria, since Nigeria does not want anything to do with us” (BBC UK 8/7/2006). Since Bakassi was not formally ceded to Cameroon until 2008, we code a movement in Nigeria from 2006-2008 (Bakassi Movement for Self-Determination; BBC 2007; Chinwo 2009; Johnson 2013). [start date: 2006; end date: host change (2008)]

### **Dominant claim**

- The Bakassi Movement for Self-Determination (BAMOSD) fights for the independence of Bakassi. This is confirmed by various sources, such as the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (2010) or an article by the BBC (2006) on the residents of Bakassi declaring independence. [2006-2008: independence claim]

### **Independence claims**

- See above. [start date: 2006; end date: host change (2008)]

### **Irredentist claims**

NA

### **Claimed territory**

- The territory claimed by the Bakassi is the Bakassi Peninsula. We code this claim based on the Global Administrative Areas database (GADM 2019).

## **Sovereignty declarations**

- According to the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (2010), BAMOSD wrote a declaration of independence. The decision to declare independence was taken in 2006, however, the actual unilateral declaration of independence of the Republic of Bakassi was made on August 6, 2008, just a few days before Bakassi peninsula was transferred to Cameroon on August 14, 2008. This is also confirmed by several news articles (see e.g. AllAfrica2008). We code this under Cameroon.
  - o Note: contrary to Minahan (2016: 481) we do not therefore code an independence declaration in 2006.

## **Separatist armed conflict**

- There has been violence stemming from the Bakassi movement, although the rebel groups have engaged mostly in kidnapping and holding hostages. 10 were killed on July 22, 2008, 12 days before the territorial transfer (CrisisWatch Database). Since violence does not reach the 25 deaths per year threshold, we code the movement as NVIOLSD. [NVIOLSD]

## **Historical context**

- In 1913, Germany and Britain signed an agreement concerning the border between British Southern and Northern Nigeria and German Kamerun. The agreement conceded the Bakassi Peninsula to Germany in exchange for Germany not threatening Calabar, a key trading post of the British. After WWI, German colonies were divided between France and Britain. The status of Bakassi, however, remained unclear and continued to be disputed (Ayim 2010).
- Between amalgamation in 1914 and independence in 1960, Nigeria had four constitutions: The Clifford Constitution (1922), the Richards Constitution (1946), the Macpherson Constitution (1951) and the Lyttleton Constitution (1954). The Richards Constitution of 1946 created the three regions (north, east, west), which later became self-governing with the passing of the Lyttleton Constitution in 1954 (Mathews 2002: 156). In 1960, when Nigeria gained independence from Britain, the newly independent country hence consisted of the Northern Region, the Western Region, and the Eastern Region. As envisaged by the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954, the three regions were given significant autonomy over internal affairs in the 1960 constitution (Diamond 1988: 72f). The creation of the three regions also meant that the Bakassi peninsula would be integrated into the Ibo-dominated Eastern Region of an independent Nigeria (Minahan 2002: 1446).
- A decentralization process started in 1999 in Nigeria with the inception of the Fourth Republic. According to Suberu (2001), 1999 brought the devolution of significant policy-making competences to constituent states and representation of constituent states in the federal government through the establishment of a robust upper legislative chamber. However, the Bakassi made up only 8% of their state's population, so we do not code this as a (prior) concession.
- In 1994, Cameroon turned to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to settle the dispute about Bakassi. Following a judgement of the ICJ in 2002, which was based on a colonial agreement of 1913 between Britain and Germany, sovereignty over the Peninsula was transferred from Nigeria to Cameroon. The transfer began in 2006 and was formally completed in 2008. The transfer was rejected by the Nigerian government (Kinni 2013) and BAMOSD, which refused both Cameroonian sovereignty and relocation within Nigeria. This ICJ decision could be seen as a restriction, given in particular that the Bakassis were not consulted; however, we considered this too ambiguous.

## Concessions and restrictions

NA

## Regional autonomy

- We code several groups as autonomous in 1999 onwards (see e.g. the Ibos), but the Bakassi only make up a small share of a much larger regional state. The Bakassi were part of the Cross River State and made up around 8% of the state's population. We could not find any evidence that they were significantly represented in the regional government between 2006 and 2008 (neither of the two governors in that time (Donald Duke and Liyel Imoke) were Bakassi). [no regional autonomy]

## De facto independence

NA

## Major territorial changes

- In 2008, on August 14, the Bakassi Peninsula was ceded from Nigeria to Cameroon, implying a change of the host state. [2008: host change (old)]

## EPR2SDM

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

## Power access

- The Bakassis are mainly ethnic Oron, a group that is not coded in EPR. The Oron are marginalized but there is no evidence of active discrimination nor is there any evidence of representation in central executive power. In the Oron Bill of Rights it is stated that "No Oron man has ever been appointed or elected a governor of a state and from 1984 till date, none of our sons and daughters has been deemed fit to hold ministerial position." We could not find evidence that would justify a coding different from "powerless". [2006-2008: powerless].

## Group size

- We could not find estimates of the number of self- or other-identified Bakassis, and so we have to rely on the region's population. The Bakassi Peninsula has a population of approximately 300,000 (BBC 2008). This information matches with Minahan (2016: 54). Given Nigeria's population of 151.2 million in 2008, the Bakassi's population share is 0.198%. [0.00198]

## Regional concentration

- We could not find any sources indicating the percentage of Bakassi outside the claimed territory. It is likely that such data does not exist, given the regional identity-character of this movement, but as with other regional identity groups it makes most sense to code them as concentrated. [concentrated]

## Kin

- It is difficult to identify kin with regional identity movements, but we found no kin for the larger group of the Oron (of which the Bakassi are a regional sub-group). [no kin]

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## **Edo**

Activity: 1960-1967; 1989-1991

### **General notes**

NA

### **Movement start and end dates**

- In 1948 Edo students formed the first openly nationalist organization, the Edo National Union, the forerunner of the later Out Edo, an organization dedicated to defending Edo interests against domination from the Yorubas (Minahan 2002: 568). 1948 is accordingly denoted as start date. The movement's activities carried over into independent Nigeria (see Minahan 2002: 568-569). Since Nigeria did not become an independent state until 1960, we code movement activity from 1960 and indicate that it was active and nonviolent prior to independence.
- In an attempt to thwart Edo threats of secession, the Nigerian government created in 1964 a fourth region – the Midwest Region. In August 1967 Edo separatists declared Benin independent of both Biafra and Nigeria, but the government suppressed the rebellion by September 1967. [start date 1: 1948; end date 1: 1967]
- Separatist demands resurfaced in 1989 and culminated in the creation of Delta state in 1991. We found no further evidence of separatist activity, suggesting that the movement ended in 1991 (Keesing's; Minahan 1996, 2002; Lexis Nexis). Roth (2015:244) confirms that the movement is dormant. [start date 2: 1989; end date 2: 1991]

### **Dominant claims**

- Minahan (2002) mentions at several occasions that the Edo claimed more autonomy within Nigeria. For example, the Edo remained “loyal to the federal cause” (Minahan 2002: 569) during the Biafra war. Also, when nationalist feelings resurfaced in 1989, the Edo demanded greater autonomy within Nigeria. Evidence is very scarce, but we could find no evidence at all that would support a more extreme claim by either Out Edo or the Edo National Union. We code a claim for sub-state secession during the period of genuine decentralization and a claim for autonomy once regional autonomy was abolished. [1960-1967: sub-state secession claim][1989-1991: autonomy claim]

### **Independence claims**

- While the movement in general made claims for independence, there was a single instance of an independence claim, namely during the Biafra war when the Edo declared Benin independent of both Nigeria and Biafra in 1967 after Edo troops had taken over Benin city. However, the claim was short-lived and ended shortly thereafter (Minahan 2002: 569; Roth 2015: 244). [start date: 1967; end date: 1967]

### **Irredentist claims**

NA

## **Claimed territory**

- The territory claimed by the Edo corresponds with the proclaimed Republic of Benin (also the Edo Republic) in south-central Nigeria (Roth 2015: 244). We code this claim based on the map shown in Roth (2015: 240), using the Global Administrative Areas database (2019) for polygon definition.

## **Sovereignty declarations**

- In September 1967, the Edo declared Benin independent of Nigeria and independent from Biafra, which had invaded Benin ten days before (Minahan 2002: 569). [1967: independence declaration]

## **Separatist armed conflict**

- We found no information regarding how many people were killed in the 1967 rebellion and so code the entire movement with NVIOLSD. [NVIOLSD]

## **Historical context**

- The Edo, who had already established the Edo kingdom of Benin around A.D. 1000, created a new kingdom between 1390 and 1440. The new kingdom gradually expanded over time and became one of the most advanced states on the continent (Minahan 2002: 567).
- In 1485, first contacts with the Portuguese were made. With the arrival of the Europeans, trade started to flourish, which allowed the Edo to further expand their territory. However, with increasing involvement of the British in the region, the Edo empire started to disintegrate. The British took over the slave ports and in 1885 annexed the entire coastal districts. The Edo broke off all contact with the British, who had forced them to outlaw slavery and human sacrifice. The Edo kingdom was finally incorporated into British Nigeria in 1897 (Minahan 2002: 568).
- In 1914, the British replaced direct rule with a more indirect rule with a newly installed Edo king (Eweka II). However, the administrative merger of Benin and Yorubaland was met with fierce resistance by the Edo, who established the Edo National Union in 1948, the first openly nationalist Edo organization. Nationalism increased when another administrative reorganization (Lyttleton Constitution of 1954) incorporated the Edo homeland into the Yoruba-dominated Western Region (Minahan 2002: 568). We code this administrative reorganization and the decrease in self-determination from an originally self-governing territory to an ethnic group in a state governed by another ethnic group as a prior restriction. [1954: autonomy restriction]
- Relevant events between first and 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of separatist activity:
- Nigeria returned to civil democratic rule in 1979. According to Oyovbaire (1983: 21), the 1979 constitution again centralized and concentrated power in the federal government and the presidency in particular. The federal government had the power to “intervene in virtually every matter of public importance”, whereas the power of the regional executive organs depended on “what the federal government voluntarily chooses to leave to the states” (Suberu 2001:36). This is confirmed by Mustapha (2006: 36), who mentions that the commitment to federalism remained but that the “balance of power between the center and the constituent units was radically adjusted.” [1979: autonomy restriction]
- The re-imposition of military rule in 1984 (the Second Republic was overthrown on December 31, 1983) and the military regimes of Buhari, Babangida and Abacha further reduced autonomy. According to EPR, “federalism and sub-state power were essentially aborted in this period” (Ejobowah 2000; Mustapha 2004). We code a restriction. [1984: autonomy restriction]

## Concessions and restrictions

- In 1960, Nigeria gained independence from Britain. The newly independent country consisted of the Northern Region, the Western Region, and the Eastern Region. As envisaged by the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954, the three regions were given significant autonomy over internal affairs in the 1960 constitution (Diamond 1988: 72f). The Edo were integrated into the Yoruba-dominated Western Region, where – based on current population numbers - they must have made up around 10% of the population. According to Mwakikagile (2001), the Yoruba were dominant in the state and were the only group benefiting from the autonomy status of the region. We thus do not code a concession. The decrease in self-governance due to the incorporation into the Yoruba-dominated Western Region is already reflected in the 1954 restriction (see above).
- In 1963 - and in an attempt to thwart Edo threats of secession, the Nigerian government created the Mid-Western Region. A few months prior to this, a majority of 89% (the numbers differ, depending on the source, but are all well beyond 75%) voted in favor of separating the Mid-Western Region from the Western Region. The new Mid-Western Region consisted of two provinces, Benin and Delta. With 420,842 people, the Edo were by far the largest group in Benin according to the 1952 census (the second biggest group were the Igbos, who numbered around 150,000). According to Nevadomsky (2017), the influence of the Edo in the new state was significant. In 1965, the NCNC had 63 of 65 seats in the Mid-Western House of Assembly. The NCNC was a national party but allied with Out-Edo in Benin and “represented the parochial interests of the Edo”. In the smaller Delta province, the NCNC represented the interests of the Igbo. However, the influence of the Edo in the regional executive of the entire Mid-Western Region is undisputed. The Benin province, where the Edo were dominant, made up around 63% of the population of the region. The creation of the Mid-Western Province hence clearly increased the level of Edo self-determination. [1963: autonomy concession]
- Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, Major General of the Nigerian Army, seized power in an Igbo-led coup on January 15, 1966. With the Unification Decree No. 34, Aguiyi-Ironsi announced the creation of a unitary system of government (Kirk-Greene 1971: 169). The new centralized system aimed to transform the “four regions into mere political units” and to establish “a unified Civil Service Commission” (Graf 1988: 42). The adjective “Federal” was dropped from the Republic’s name and federal institutions were abolished. We code an autonomy restriction in 1966. [1966: autonomy restriction]
- At the end of July in 1966, a counter-coup killed Aguiyi-Ironsi and put the Northerner Yakubu Gowon in power. According to Forsyth (2001), Gowon reversed Ironsi's abrogation of decentralization. However, it remains unclear in how far the level of regional self-determination really increased under Gowon. Generally, political power remained concentrated in the hands of the federal government at the expense of the sub-state entities (Mustapha 2004). Overall however, sources suggest that there was some increase in regional self-determination. Kifordu (2011: 79) mentions that Gowon reinstated the Federal Executive Council (FEC) and allowed for a fusion of civilian and military personnel for “the top federal executive portfolios”. Kifordu (2011: 81) described the military regime as a “disorderly amalgamation of centralization and decentralization”. Compared to the previous regime under Aguiyi-Ironsi, who abolished decentralization entirely, this is coded as an increase in the level of self-determination for the regions, among which also the Mid-Western Region of the Edo. Finally, this coding is to some extent also compatible with Minahan (2002: 569), who stated that Gowon granted the oil-rich Edo a significant degree of autonomy in 1967 to prevent them from seceding with the secessionist Ibos in Biafra. We could not find any additional evidence that would support Minahan's claim of “a significant degree of autonomy” to the Edo in particular. We assume that Minahan (2002: 569) refers to the loosening of centralization that started in 1966. [1966: autonomy concession]
- In May 1967, Gowon announced the establishment of twelve new states (Deiwiki 2011). The Mid-Western Region was not affected by this reorganization. 1976 saw another federal reorganization and the establishment of new regions (from 12 to 19 states), which “improved the autonomy of the minority groups” (Kifordu 2011: 84). The boundaries of the Mid-Western Region again remained intact. The 1976 reorganization also renamed the Mid-Western Region, which was henceforth called Bendel state (Minahan 2002: 569). The Edo opposed the change of



the name but since there was no change in the level of self-determination, we do not code this event.

- In 1991, Bendel was divided into two new states: Edo State in the north and Delta State in the south. While the Edo already made up a majority in Bendel, they now had their own state in which they dominated with approximately 63% of the population (Minahan 2002: 569). The creation of the Edo state terminated the Edo movement for self-determination. The level of regional autonomy was very limited at that time. [1991: autonomy concession]

### **Regional autonomy**

- The level of regional autonomy enjoyed by the states varied significantly over time (see above). We code autonomy for the Edo depending on the general level of decentralization and on the influence of Edo representatives in the autonomous regional governments.
  - o 1960-1963: Nigeria gained independence as a federal country with significant autonomy over internal affairs granted to the three regions. However, with the Edo being integrated into the Yoruba-dominated Western Region, there was no regional autonomy for the Edo.
  - o 1964-1965: With the creation of the Mid-Western Region in 1963, where the Edo made up a majority, there was also significant regional autonomy for the Edo. Following the first of January rule, we code regional autonomy from 1964 onwards. [1964-1966: regional autonomy]
  - o 1967-1979: The two coups of 1966 and the installation of military rule abolished genuine regional autonomy. Political power remained concentrated in the hands of the federal government at the expense of the sub-state entities (Mustapha 2004). We thus code no autonomy from 1967 onwards.
  - o 1980-1983: The return to civil rule did not bring back regional autonomy. During the Second Republic from 1979-1983, the federal government had the power to “intervene in virtually every matter of public importance”, whereas the power of the regional executive organs depended on “what the federal government voluntarily chooses to leave to the states” (Suberu 2001:36).
  - o 1984-1991: With the re-imposition of military rule on December 31, 1983, autonomy was again reduced to a minimum. According to EPR, “federalism and sub-state power were essentially aborted in this period” (Ejobowah 2000; Mustapha 2004).

### **De facto independence**

- Biafran forces invaded the Mid-Western Region in August 1967. The invasion was welcomed by the Igbo population, while others (also Edo) remained skeptical or undecided. The “Republic of Benin” was established on September 19 but again disestablished one day later. Neither Caspersen (2012) nor Florea (2014) list the Republic of Benin as a de-facto independent territory. We also refrain from doing so since the installed head of government of the Republic of Benin (Albert Okonkwo) was an Igbo and the episode lasted just two days.

### **Major territorial changes**

- [1960: host state change (new)]
- [1963: sub-state secession]
- [1966: abolishment of regional autonomy]
- In 1991, a separate Edo state was created. We do not code this as a major change (sub-state separation) because the autonomy of Nigerian regions was relatively limited at the time.

## EPR2SDM

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

### Power access

- The Edo are a relatively small group and were never a major player in any of the governments or military juntas. However, they had, in certain years, group members that were part of the government. We found evidence of two Edo having ministerial posts: Chief A.Y. Eke, for example, was a cabinet member from 1967 onwards and Minister of Education from 1970 until 1975. Tony Momoh was Nigerian Minister of Information and Culture from 1986 until 1990. Furthermore, Maj. Gen. David Ejoor, governor of the Mid-Western State during the Biafra War, was chief of the Nigerian army staff from 1971 until 1975 (Siollun 2009: 268), when Nigeria was ruled by a military regime. These years are thus coded as junior partner, given the Edo having (limited) access to the central executive power. In the remaining years, we code them as powerless, since we could not find evidence of discrimination nor any source stating that the Edo would have a constitutional right to representation in the executive (EPR also codes groups as included in the executive if they are not included in the central executive in a given year but if the constitution explicitly grants representation to that group). The first of January rule is applied. [1960-1967: powerless; 1989-1990: junior partner; 1991: powerless]

### Group size

- According to Minahan (2002: 566), the Edo numbered 4,620,000 in 2002. Compared to the total population of Nigeria in that year (129.2 million), this yields a group size of 3.575% [0.0357]

### Regional concentration

- According to Minahan (2002: 566), the Edo are “concentrated in historical region of Benin, currently divided between the states of Edo and Delta.” More precisely, the Edo make up a majority of 63% of the 7,175,000 people in the Region of Benin, which in turn is also a large majority of the entire Edo population in Nigeria (4,620,000). Hence, both criteria for regional concentration are fulfilled. [regionally concentrated]

### Kin

- Neither EPR nor MAR code the Edo. Minahan (2002) mentions small Edo communities in Ghana and Togo without providing exact numbers. We found no evidence suggesting that the 100,000 threshold is met. [no kin]

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## **Hausa and Fulani**

Activity: 1966; 1994-2016

### **General notes**

NA

### **Movement start and end dates**

- In 1949 the Hausa and Fulani (Northern Muslims) launched their own political party, the Northern People's Congress.
- In 1966 Ibo officers overthrew the government and established a new regime dominated by the Ibo (Christian) tribe. In response Northern leaders planned to reassert Muslim control over Nigeria or, alternatively, to proclaim secession of a new Republic of Hausa, hence the start date. Before the chosen "secession day" – July 29, 1966 – a new Nigerian government, headed by a Northern Christian and therefore supposedly neutral, proposed a compromise acceptable to Hausa-Fulani leaders, namely a loose-confederation of Nigerian states. But before the compromise took effect, severe anti-Ibo rioting spread across the north of Nigeria. The Hausa-Fulani leadership evacuated all northern civil servants and military personnel from the federal capital in Lagos and prepared to declare the north independent of Nigeria. This declaration, overtaken by the Ibo declaration of Biafra's independence, was put aside as the Muslims regained their predominance in the military and government (Human Rights 2001; Keesing's; Lexis Nexis; Minahan 1996, 2002; UCDP/PRIO). We code an end to the first phase in 1966.
- The movement re-emerged in 1994, when the Arewa People's Congress was formed, a Hausa-Fulani organization calling for secession. We found evidence that the Arewa People's Congress continued to be active until at least 2006 (Musa 2006). We find no further evidence in subsequent years. Roth (2015: 246) references the Hausa movement, but does not contain clear evidence of separatist mobilization in recent years. The same applies to Minahan (2016: 170).
- In 2000, an organization called the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) was formed. ACF defends Hausa/Northerner rights, but we found no evidence to suggest that ACF made SD claims as defined here (cf. Africa News 2006. Leadership Abuja 2010; The Nation 2018; Nigerien Tribune 2019; ACF 2020).
- Overall, based on the evidence we found, we code the movement's end date in 2016 in keeping with the ten-years rule. [start date 1: 1966; end date 1: 1966; start date 2: 1994; end date 2: 2016]

### **Dominant claim**

- In the first period of activity in 1966, the claim was clearly for independence, namely for an independent Republic of Hausa. The plan for this endeavor was called Araba, meaning secession day. Secession was scheduled for July 29, 1966 (Minahan 2002: 716). [1966: independence claim]
- The second period of activity was initiated by the founding of the Arewa People's Congress in 1994, an organization representing the Hausa and Fulani. The APC in its mission statement only wrote that their goal was to protect and promote "the cultural, economic and political interests of the Northern states and their people" (Agbu 2004: 27). However, in most secondary sources, the APC is described as secessionist (see e.g. Nwanesi 2008: 552; Adibe 2015). [1994-2016: independence claim]

### **Independence claims**

- See above. [start date 1: 1966; end date 1: 1966; start date 2: 1994; end date 2: 2016]

## **Irredentist claims**

NA

## **Claimed territory**

- The territory claimed by the Hausa and Fulani is the Hausaland, which is situated in northern Nigeria and extends into Niger and Benin. The region consists of the states of Bauchi, Jigawa, Kaduna, Katsina, Kano, Sokoto, Kebbi, Niger, Zamfara, and the Federal Capital Territory (Minahan 2002: 713). We code this claim based on the Global Administrative Areas database (GADM 2019).

## **Sovereignty declarations**

- Proclaiming secession was on the table in response to Ibo officers overthrowing the government. The date of secession would have been July 29, 1966. However, Hausa-Fulani leaders did not follow through with their plan and independence was never officially proclaimed.

## **Separatist armed conflict**

- No separatist violence was found. [NVIOLSD]

## **Historical context**

- The Hausa settlements developed as independent, centrally governed city-states. In the 11<sup>th</sup> century these city-states united into a confederation of seven states. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, nomadic Fulani moved into the region, conquered Hausa territory, and established the Sokoto Caliphate. Many Hausa migrated west or north to escape Fulani occupation. However, over time, with the Fulani adopting the Hausa culture and customs and with common intermarriage, the two ethnic groups came to be seen as one (Minahan 2002: 715).
- In the mid-nineteenth century, the Hausa-Fulani Emirs began establishing relations with the British, which so far had mostly controlled the coastal areas. In 1903, the British took control over the southern Hausa states and established an indirect-rule that retained traditional administrative structures. In 1914, Northern Nigeria was amalgamated with the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. Together, they made up British Nigeria (Minahan 2002: 715).
- While the south rapidly modernized, the northern Hausa remained largely traditional and feudal. Important administrative positions in the north were filled with southern Christians. The Hausa, who felt that they were neglected by the British, demanded a share of the newly discovered oil in the Eastern Region and 50% of the seats in the newly formed Central Legislature. Both demands were fulfilled by the British (Minahan 2002: 716).
- Between amalgamation in 1914 and independence in 1960, Nigeria had four constitutions: The Clifford Constitution (1922), the Richards Constitution (1946), the Macpherson Constitution (1951) and the Lyttleton Constitution (1954). The Richards Constitution created the three regions (north, east, west) and was the forerunner of a federal Nigeria, which until then had had a unitary orientation. However, it was not until the last colonial constitution (Lyttleton Constitution) that autonomy for these regions was put on the table. The Lyttleton Constitution was negotiated during two constitutional conferences in 1953 and 1954. The question of regional autonomy was the crucial issue of the negotiations. The conference eventually accepted a declaration of policy that would “grant to those Regions which desire it full self-government in respect of all matters within the competence of the Regional Government.” The constitution also enabled each region to become self-governing at its own pace: As a consequence, the Western and Eastern Region became autonomous in 1956, the Northern Region only in 1959 (Mathews 2002: 156).

- In 1960, Nigeria gained independence from Britain. The newly independent country consisted of the Northern Region, the Western Region, and the Eastern Region (and a fourth region as of 1963). As envisaged by the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954, the three regions, each dominated by rival groups, were given significant autonomy over internal affairs in the 1960 constitution (Diamond 1988: 72f). Hausa and Fulani were dominant in the Northern Region through the Northern People's Congress (NPC) (Suberu 2001; Mwakikagile 2001).
- Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, Major General of the Nigerian Army, seized power in an Igbo-led coup on January 15, 1966. With the Unification Decree No. 34, Aguiyi-Ironsi announced the creation of a unitary system of government (Kirk-Greene 1971: 169). The new centralized system aimed to transform the "four regions into mere political units" and to establish "a unified Civil Service Commission" (Graf 1988: 42). The adjective "Federal" was dropped from the Republic's name and federal institutions were abolished. We code an autonomy restriction due to the loss of autonomy of the Northern Region. The restriction led to the Hausa claim to secession. [1966: autonomy restriction]
- 2<sup>nd</sup> phase:
  - o Following the Biafran war, political power was mostly concentrated in the hands of the federal government at the expense of the sub-state entities (Mustapha 2004). The Second Republic from 1979-1983 also did not bring back autonomy to the regional states (Suberu 2001).
  - o The re-imposition of military rule in 1984 and the military regimes of Buhari, Babangida and Abacha reduced autonomy to a minimum. According to EPR, "federalism and sub-state power were essentially aborted in this period" (Ejobowah 2000; Mustapha 2004). We thus code a prior restriction for the second period of activity. [1984: autonomy restriction]
  - o In the period of separatist inactivity of the Hausa and Fulani, there were also several rounds of federal reorganizations that created new states in 1967, 1976, 1987, 1991. The former Northern Region was being broken up into several new states. However, since the Hausa and Fulani also dominated several of these new states, we do not code restrictions.

### Concessions and restrictions

- At the end of July in 1966, a counter-coup killed Aguiyi-Ironsi and put the Northerner Yakubu Gowon in power (Gowon was not of Hausa-Fulani origin but was supported and brought to power by the Hausa-Fulani). According to Forsyth (2001), Gowon reversed Ironsi's abrogation of decentralization. However, it remains unclear in how far the level of regional self-determination really increased under Gowon. Generally, political power remained concentrated in the hands of the federal government at the expense of the sub-state entities (Mustapha 2004). Overall however, sources suggest that there was some increase in regional self-determination. Kifordu (2011: 79) mentions that Gowon reinstated the Federal Executive Council (FEC) and allowed for a fusion of civilian and military personnel for "the top federal executive portfolios". Kifordu (2011: 81) described the military regime as a "disorderly amalgamation of centralization and decentralization". Compared to the previous regime under Aguiyi-Ironsi, who abolished decentralization entirely, this is coded as an increase in the level of self-determination for the regions, among which also the Northern Region of the Hausa-Fulani. [1966: autonomy concession]
- With the end of military rule and the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1999, decentralization returned to the agenda. However, there is disagreement among scholars as regards the federal character of the system: Obiyan and Amuwo (2012: 103) state that President Obasanjo (1999-2007) has turned Nigeria "into a unitary constitutional state where the center reserves the right to remove elected leaders by reckless deployment of soldiers and mobile policeman from the barracks". Furthermore, the fiscal regime is hyper-centralized and promotes the economic hegemony of the central government. Suberu (2001), on the other hand, emphasizes the federal character of the current system by highlighting the devolution of significant policy-making competences to constituent states and the representation of constituent states in the federal

government through the establishment of a robust upper legislative chamber. Further evidence for a federal character comes from the Ethnic Power Relations dataset (Cederman et al. 2010), which codes several groups as regionally autonomous as of 1999. Overall, the sources claiming an increase in regional autonomy are more frequent, which is why we code an autonomy concession in 1999 also for the Hausa-Fulani, which dominated several northern states. [1999: autonomy concession]

- In 1999, several northern states adopted Sharia law (Harnischfeger 2008). While it seems that Sharia law has not been fully implemented, we consider this sufficient to code an initial cultural rights concession for the Muslim Hausa and Fulani. [1999: cultural rights concession]
- A 2009 law mandated adequate representation of ethnic groups at all levels of government and administration (US Department of State 2016: Minahan 2016: 170). Yet, the Hausas already control their own state and are also well-represented in the central government (see below).

## Regional autonomy

- We do not code the Hausa as autonomous in 1966. While Nigeria had a federal system between 1960-1966, this was abolished after a coup by Ibo officers in 1996. This led to the Hausa/Fulani attempt at secession. Therefore, loss of autonomy and representation at the center played an instrumental role in the emergence of separatism. To reflect case dynamics, we do not code regional autonomy in 1966. [1966: no autonomy]
- The second period of activity saw significant autonomy for the states as of 1999. Following the first of January rule, we thus code autonomy from 2000 onwards. [2000-2016: regional autonomy]

## De facto independence

NA

## Major territorial changes

- [1999: establishment of regional autonomy]

## EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Hausa and Fulani
<i>Scenario</i>	1:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Hausa-Fulani and Muslim Middle Belt
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	47501000

## Power access

- EPR combines the Hausa and Fulani with other small Muslim peoples from the Middle Belt. Nevertheless, this is best seen as a 1:1 scenario. The group size coded by EPR (29%) matches with the group size given by the CIA World Factbook for the Hausa and Fulani, and the settlement pattern coded in GeoEPR effectively coincides with the settlement pattern of the Hausa and Fulani. Thus, it appears common not to make a distinction between the Hausa-Fulani and the other peoples from the Muslim Middle Belt that also includes under this header.
- We revise the EPR exclusion coding in 1966 to better reflect the case dynamics. According to EPR, the Hausa and Fulani dominated the Nigerian polity in 1965-1966 and then entered into a power-sharing agreement with the Yorubas from 1967-1970. While these codings are correct,



according to the evidence we found, they miss important elements of the case dynamics because EPR always codes the situation on January 1. There was a coup by Ibo officers in 1966 and they centralized power within their own ethnicity, which led to a Hausa/Fulani attempt at secession. Therefore, loss of autonomy and representation at the center played an instrumental role in the emergence of separatism, but this is only partly reflected in EPR. To resolve the situation, we recode the Hausa and Fulani as powerless in 1966 (so that in line with the qualitative information the Hausa are coded as out of power when separatism emerged). [1966: powerless]

- EPR codes the Hausa/Fulani as dominant from 1984-1998. We change this to “Senior partner”. The 1984-1998 period coincides with three successive military dictatorships: the ones led by Buhari (1984-1985), Babangida (1985-1993), and Abacha (1993-1998). Only one of the three is unambiguously an ethnic Hausa/Fulani, however: Buhari (ethnic Fulani to be more exact). Babangida, by contrast, was an ethnic Gwari, a separate linguistic group in Nigeria (see Ethnologue). Abacha, finally, was an ethnic Kanuri (see Paden 2005: ch. 2). The EPR coding notes provide two arguments why the Hausa and Fulani are nonetheless coded with exclusive access to the Nigerian polity throughout 1984-1998. First, because all three regimes mainly represented the Muslim north. Second, because EPR does not include the Kanuris and the Gwaris (though for the latter see below). These are not very good arguments. While several sources confirm that the military dictatorships indeed mainly represented the Muslim north (see eg Joseph 1999), this is not the same as saying that the Hausa and Fulani had exclusive access to the central state. There are other northern Muslim groups, including the Kanuri and the Gwaris, and they also had access to central state power. Further, the fact that EPR does not include these other groups can obviously not be used as an argument for stating that only the Hausa/Fulani had access to power. Based on this (and following the first of January rule), the Hausa and Fulani clearly cannot be seen as "DOMINANT" in 1994-1998, but as sharing power with the Kanuris and possibly other groups not included by EPR.
- For the period after 1998, we draw on EPR without making any changes. [1994-1999: senior partner; 2000-2007: junior partner; 2008-2010: senior partner; 2011-2015: junior partner; 2016: senior partner]

### **Group size**

- We rely on EPR. [0.29]

### **Regional concentration**

- GeoEPR, which applies a lower threshold (>25% in the regional base), codes the Hausa-Fulani as concentrated. According to Minahan (2002: 713), the threshold we apply in this dataset is also met: The Hausa-Fulani heartland, which encompasses the states of Bauchi, Jigawa, Kanduna, Katsina, Kano, Sokoto, Kebbi, Niger, Zamfara, and the Federal Capital Territory, had a population of 45.16 million in 2002, of which the Hausa-Fulani made up 70%. This is also a large majority of the Hausa-Fulani in the entire country, which is why we code them as concentrated. [regionally concentrated]

### **Kin**

- EPR codes several kin groups for the Hausa and Fulani: Peul (or Fulbe or Fulani) in Guinea-Bissau, Niger, and Guinea, Fula in Gambia, Blacks (Mande, Peul, Voltaic etc.) in Mali, Pulaar (Peul, Toucouleur) in Senegal, Black Africans in Mauritania, Fulani (and other northern Muslim peoples) in Cameroon, and the Hausa in Niger. [kin in neighboring country]

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## **Ibibios**

Activity: 1960-1987

### **General notes**

- The Ibibios are an ethnic group indigenous to Ibibioland, also called Calabar, in southeastern Nigeria within Akwa Ibom State and Cross River State.

### **Movement start and end dates**

- In the early 1900s, Ibos began migrating to Calabar and created ethnic tensions between the indigenous Ibibios and the migrant Ibos. Ibibio rioting over the Ibo issue in 1929 killed 32 people. In 1944, the Ibibio State Union was formed to “press for restrictions on Ibo immigration to their traditional lands, and to demand the creation of a separate Calabar region within Nigeria” (Minahan 2002: 760). As this is the first evidence of organized separatist activity we found, 1944 is coded as start date. Separatist demands grew after 1949, when there were again nationalist riots aimed at the more numerous Ibos (Minahan 2002: 760). We code movement activity for 1960 onwards, in accordance with Nigeria’s independence. Note: we could not find casualty information on the 1949 riots, but according to Minahan these mainly involved inter-ethnic violence, which is not coded. We found no other reports of separatist violence; thus we consider the Ibibios movement non-violent prior to Nigeria’s independence.
- According to Minahan, Ibo control over Ibibioland increased with Nigeria’s independence, and in the first few years of independence the Ibibio’s demands for a separate region increased. In 1965, Ibibio organizations began to demand separation from Nigeria entirely. In 1967, the new Nigerian constitution divided Nigeria into twelve ethnic states and the Ibibios were given their own South-Eastern State. In 1976, the Ibibios further demanded that South-Eastern State be divided into two states so that the Ibibios, who settled in the south, would be separate from other ethnic groups in the northern parts of the state. Minahan (2002: 761) suggests that the Ibibio national movement continued into the 1980s. In 1987, the new Akwa Ibom State was created from the southern part of the Cross River State. Ibibios form a majority in this state. This appears to have ended the movement, so we code the end date in 1987. Minahan (2016: 178) reports that Ibibio nationalism re-emerged in the 1990s and 2010s, but we found no concrete evidence for separatist mobilization. [start date: 1944; end date: 1987]

### **Dominant claim**

- Originally, the Ibibio State Union was formed in 1944 to “press for restrictions on Ibo immigration to their traditional lands, and to demand the creation of a separate Calabar region within Nigeria” (Minahan 2002: 760). This claim is confirmed in other sources: Noah (1987: 47), for example studies the Ibibio State Union in detail and also states that their primary goal in this was the creation of an own Ibibio state called Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers (COR) State. Once the South-Eastern State had been established, the Ibibios demanded that it would be further divided into two states so that the Ibibios, who settled in the south, would be separate from other ethnic groups in the northern parts of the state. Sub-state secession seems to have been the dominant claim throughout. Minahan (2002) mentions that in 1965, some Ibibio organizations also began demanding separation not only from the Eastern Region but from Nigeria entirely. But we could not find additional evidence that would justify coding an independence claim. We code a claim for sub-state secession during the period of genuine decentralization and a claim for autonomy once regional autonomy was abolished. [1960-1966: sub-state secession] [1967-1987: autonomy claim]

### **Independence claims**

NA

### **Irredentist claims**

NA

### **Claimed territory**

- Ibibio claims concern “Ibibioland” as their traditional settlement areas within the Akwa Ibom and the Cross River States in southeastern Nigeria. We code this claim based on the GREG dataset, which records the group’s settlement area in 1963 (Weidmann et al. 2010).

### **Sovereignty declarations**

NA

### **Separatist armed conflict**

- No violence was found from 1960-1987, and thus we code the movement with NVIOLSD.  
[NVIOLSD]

### **Historical context**

- The Ibibios settled in the coastal area of the Gulf of Guinea in the fifteenth century, where they formed a number of city states such as Calabar, Bonny, or Owome. The city states established a loose political and mercantile union held together by a system of patronage (Minahan 2002: 758).
- In 1472, first contacts with the Portuguese were made. With the arrival of the Europeans, trade started to flourish. The Ibibios soon replaced the trade with local products with the lucrative trade of slaves. The Ibibios raided the interior tribes and sold them to the Europeans (Minahan 2002: 758).
- The Ibibio homeland was incorporated into the British Oil Rivers Protectorate in 1884, in which it emerged as the most advanced region due to improved education and access to the colonial government. However, only after World War I did the British manage to gain a strong foothold in the Ibibios’ territory. The British established an indirect-rule system that retained traditional administrative structures (Minahan 2002: 760).
- In the early 1900s, Ibos began migrating to the Ibibio homeland of Calabar/Ibibioland to work in the palm oil trade. The immigration created ethnic tensions between the indigenous Ibibios and the migrant Ibos. Tensions intensified in the late 1920s and resulted in Ibibio rioting in October 1929 that killed 32 people (Minahan 2002: 759).
- Between amalgamation in 1914 and independence in 1960, Nigeria had four constitutions: The Clifford Constitution (1922), the Richards Constitution (1946), the Macpherson Constitution (1951) and the Lyttleton Constitution (1954). The Richards Constitution of 1946 created the three regions (north, east, west), which later also became self-governing with the passing of the Lyttleton Constitution in 1954. The creation of the three regions also meant that the Ibibio homeland would be incorporated into the Igbo-dominated Eastern Region (Suberu 2001; Mathews 2002). The administrative reorganization of 1946 was the first step towards minority status of the Ibibios in their new state.

## Concessions and restrictions

- In 1960, Nigeria gained independence from Britain. The newly independent country consisted of the Northern Region, the Western Region, and the Eastern Region. As envisaged by the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954, the three regions were given significant autonomy over internal affairs in the 1960 constitution (Diamond 1988: 72f). The Ibibios were integrated into the Igbo-dominated Eastern Region, where they made up around 6% of the population (Uwadibie: 4). According to Minahan (2002: 760), the Ibos were dominant in the state and were the only group benefiting from the autonomy status of the region as they inherited the commercial and bureaucratic structure in the region. We thus do not code a concession.
- Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, Major General of the Nigerian Army, seized power in an Igbo-led coup on January 15, 1966. With the Unification Decree No. 34, Aguiyi-Ironsi announced the creation of a unitary system of government (Kirk-Greene 1971: 169). The new centralized system aimed to transform the “four regions into mere political units” and to establish “a unified Civil Service Commission” (Graf 1988: 42). The adjective “Federal” was dropped from the Republic’s name and federal institutions were abolished. We do not code a restriction since the Ibibio did not have any autonomy in the first place.
- At the end of July in 1966, a counter-coup killed Aguiyi-Ironsi and put the Northerner Yakubu Gowon in power. In May 1967, Gowon announced the establishment of twelve new states. The Eastern Region was divided into the South-Eastern State, East-Central State, and Rivers State. The large majority of the Ibibios were incorporated into the South-Eastern State, in which they made up a majority. According to Forsyth (2001), Gowon also reversed Ironsi’s abrogation of decentralization. However, the extent to which the level of regional self-determination really increased under Gowon is not fully clear. Generally, political power remained concentrated in the hands of the federal government at the expense of the sub-state entities (Mustapha 2004).
- Overall however, sources suggest that there was some increase in regional self-determination. Kifordu (2011: 79) mentions that Gowon reinstated the Federal Executive Council (FEC) and allowed for a fusion of civilian and military personnel for “the top federal executive portfolios”. Kifordu (2011: 81) described the military regime as a “disorderly amalgamation of centralization and decentralization”. Compared to the previous regime under Aguiyi-Ironsi, who had abolished decentralization entirely, we thus assume an increase in the level of self-determination for the regions, among which also the South-Eastern State of the Ibibios.
- But did the Ibibios really benefit from this increased level of regional self-determination? Although they were the largest group in the state, Amoah (1992: 76) states that the Efik minority controlled power in the South-Eastern State (later called Cross River State). The Ibibio language was neglected in education and administration in favor of the language of the Efik. On the other hand, we also found evidence of Ibibios being part of the regional government: Most prominently, Clement Isong was governor of Cross River State from 1979-1983 (Hackett 1989: 207). Other influential Ibibios were Udoakaha Jacob Esuene, who was the Military Governor of South-Eastern State from 1967-1975, and Chief I.U. Akpabio and Chief Nyong Essien, who were Minister and President of the Eastern Regional House of Chiefs (Noah 1987: 51). Hence, we must assume that – despite Amoah’s (1992) suggestion – the Ibibios had some influence in the regional government of South-Eastern State (Cross River State), which is why we code a concession in 1967, the year in which the South-Eastern State was created. [1967: autonomy concession]
- 1976 saw another federal reorganization and the establishment of new regions (from 12 to 19 states), which “improved the autonomy of the minority groups” (Kifordu 2011: 84). However, the boundaries of the South-Eastern State remained intact. The 1976 reorganization also renamed the South-Eastern State, which was henceforth called Cross River State (Minahan 2002: 761). There was, however, no change in the level of self-determination, which is why we do not code this event.
- Nigeria returned to civil democratic rule in 1979. According to Oyovbaire (1983: 21), the 1979 constitution again centralized and concentrated power in the federal government and the presidency in particular. The federal government had the power to “intervene in virtually every matter of public importance”, whereas the power of the regional executive organs depended on “what the federal government voluntarily chooses to leave to the states” (Suberu 2001: 36). This is confirmed by Mustapha (Mustapha 2006: 36), who mentions that the commitment to

federalism remained but that the “balance of power between the center and the constituent units was radically adjusted.” [1979: autonomy restriction]

- The re-imposition of military rule in 1984 (the Second Republic was overthrown on December 31, 1983) and the military regimes of Buhari, Babangida and Abacha further reduced autonomy (Ejobowah 2000; Mustapha 2004). We thus code a restriction. [1984: autonomy restriction]
- In 1987, the new Akwa Ibom State was created from the southern part of the Cross River State. The Ibibios were the majority in this new state and dominated regional politics. According to Aga (2009) “politics in Akwa Ibom is dominated by the three main ethnic groups, the Ibibio, Annang and Oron”, whereby the “Ibibio remains the dominant and has held sway in the state since its creation. [1987: autonomy concession]

### **Regional autonomy**

- Until the establishment of Akwa Ibom State in 1987, which ended the movement, the influence of the Ibibios in a regional government had never been sufficient for them to be coded as regionally autonomous.

### **De facto independence**

NA

### **Major territorial changes**

- [1960: host state change (new)]
- The establishment of Akwa Ibom state in 1987 is not coded as a major change because states’ autonomy was limited at the time.

### **EPR2SDM**

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

### **Power access**

- EPR does not include the Ibibios. We could not find evidence that the Ibibios were represented in the central government or the military junta, but also not of outright discrimination, so we code them as powerless throughout. [1960-1987: powerless]

### **Group size**

- There were 5.75 million Ibibios in Nigeria and Cameroon in 2002 (Minahan 2002: 757). If we subtract the approximately 51,000 Ibibios of Cameroon (see Joshua Project) and compare to the entire Nigerian population of 2002 (129.2 million), we arrive at a vgroup size of 4.411% [0.0441]

## Regional concentration

- The Ibibio homeland (Ibibioland or Calabar) in southeastern Nigeria, which has no official status, is made up by the two states Akwa Ibom and Cross River. In this territory, the Ibibios make up 71% of the entire population. This 71% amount to 5.42 million people, which is almost the entire Ibibio population of Nigeria (5.75 million in 2002) (Minahan 2002: 757). Hence, both criteria for territorial concentration are fulfilled. [regionally concentrated]

## Kin

- Minahan (2002: 757) mentions small Ibibio groups in adjacent areas of Cameroon. According to the Joshua Project, these groups number approximately 51,000 people, hence not enough to be coded here, as we only code kin groups with more than 100,000 people. [no kin]

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## **Ibos**

Activity: 1966-1970; 1999-2020

### **General notes**

- Ibo, Igbo, and Biafrans are used interchangeably.

### **Movement start and end dates**

- Ibo officers took part in a coup in January 1966. In protest Northerners massacred thousands of Ibos living in the North in May 1966 and in July 1966 a counter-coup installed General Gowon, a northerner, as head of state. With the massacre of approximately 30,000 Ibos and other Easterners by Northern troops and civilians in October 1966 came ever more serious calls for Eastern secession, for it was becoming clear that the safety of the Ibo community was indeed jeopardized in a federal Nigeria. According to Horowitz (1992: 122, cited in Baker 2001: 90): “The Ibo were the most prominent proponents of one Nigeria [...] But when recurrent violence, culminating the massacres of September-October 1966 drove the Ibo back to the east, then, and then only, did the Ibo become secessionists. Meanwhile, the Hausa travelled the opposite direction, from their openly secessionist inclination of mid-1966, to their strong role in suppressing the Biafra secession and preserving an undivided Nigeria.” 1966 is coded as start date.
- In response to this mounting tension, regional and federal leaders signed in January 1967 the Aburi Agreement, which regionalized the national army and mandated unanimous approval by the regional military governors for any new federal legislation. On May 26, 1967 the Eastern Region Consultative Assembly voted to secede from Nigeria and two days later Gowon proclaimed a state of emergency and unveiled plans for the redivision of the country into twelve states, which purportedly undermined the possibility of continuing Northern domination and thus offered a major concession to the East. But at the same time the Ibo heartland would be deprived of control over the Niger Delta’s oil fields and access to the sea. With claims that this decree violated the Aburi Agreement, Ojukwu declared Biafra’s independence. On July 6, 1967 federal troops invaded the breakaway region. We code an end to the movement in 1970 because the rebels were decisively defeated (Sambanis & Schulhofer-Wohl 2019). [start date 1: 1966; end date 1: 1970]
- Demands for secession were revived in 1999 with the creation of the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB). In 2010, another Ibo organization, the Biafra Zionist Movement, was created in Nigeria to fight for Biafran independence (Biafra Zionist Movement). In 2012, a third organization called the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) was founded advocating an independent Biafra. IPOB became the focal point of Biafran independence after the 2015 election; it is now the largest Biafran organization by membership (Mahr 2019). The arrest and trial of IPOB’s leader in 2016 prompted a resurgence of support and calls for independence within the organization itself and beyond (AFP 2016). IPOB has an armed wing known as the Eastern Security Network (ESN). [start date 2: 1999; end date 2: ongoing]

### **Dominant claim**

- In the first period of activity, the claim was clearly secessionist. This is illustrated by a number of events and confirmed by various sources. The most important events in this regard were the Eastern Region Consultative Assembly voting to secede from Nigeria on May 26, 1967 and Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, the military governor of the Eastern Region, declaring the independence of Biafra on May 30, 1967 (Minahan 2002: 765). [1966-1970: independence claim]
- The second period of activity was initiated with the establishment of the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) in 1999. As the name of the organization already suggests, MASSOB “wants a separate country for the Igbo people of south-

eastern Nigeria” (BBC 2007). This is also confirmed by Duruji (2012: 542). Although a ‘sit-at-home-strike’ organized by MASSOB “failed to mobilize widespread support, showing that many Igbos did not want to publicly associate themselves with the separatist cause” (Minority Rights Group International), independence is the official goal of MASSOB.

- In 2010, another Ibo organization, the Biafra Zionist Movement, was created in Nigeria to fight for Biafran independence (Biafra Zionist Movement).
- In 2012, a third organization called the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) was founded advocating an independent Biafra. IPOB became the focal point of Biafran independence after the 2015 election; it is now the largest Biafran organization by membership (Mahr 2019). IPOB has continued to claim independence after this (The Sun (Nigeria) 2018; Vanguard 2020). Notably, IPOB called to boycott the 2019 general election unless the government committed to a referendum on independence (African Arguments 2019). In December 2020 the Eastern Security Network was established as IPOB’s armed wing; ESN shares IPOB’s goal of secession (Twitter.com 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020; Council on Foreign Relations 2021). [1999-2020: independence claim]

### **Independence claims**

- See above. [start date 1: 1966; end date 1: 1970; start date 2: 1999; end date 2: ongoing]

### **Irredentist claims**

NA

### **Claimed territory**

- The territory claimed by the Ibos is the Biafra region in southeastern Nigeria, which consists of the following contemporary states: Abia, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Cross River, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo, and Rivers (Minahan 2002). We code this claim based on Biafra’s administrative borders in 1966, using data from GADM for polygon definition.

### **Sovereignty declarations**

- On May 30, 1967, the military governor of the Eastern Region, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, declared the independence of Biafra (Minahan 2002: 765). [1967: independence declaration]
- A small Biafra group, the Biafra Zionist Movement (BZM), declared independence for Biafra on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2012 (Roth 2015: 243). However, according to Roth, “hardly anyone noticed” the declaration. The coding rules state that declarations issued by marginal organizations are not coded.

### **Separatist armed conflict**

- The HVIOLSD code in 1967-1970 follows Sambanis & Schulhofer-Wohl (2019). [1966: NVIOLSD; 1967-1970: HVIOLSD]
- MASSOB, the Biafra Zionist Movement, and IPOB were all engaged in separatist clashes, but we found no evidence for violence above the threshold between 1999 and 2020. Following President Buhari’s election in 2015, demonstrations by pro-independence protestors were met with harsh measures by the security forces. Amnesty International (2016) reports that the Nigerian government killed at least 150 members of the pro-Biafran organization IPOB between 2015 and 2016, but this was largely one-sided violence. In late 2020, IPOB’s armed wing, ESN, started an

insurgency that led to significant casualties in 2021 (Amnesty International 2021; UCDP/PRIO), but this beyond our timeframe. [1999-2020: NVIOLSD]

## Historical context

- The Ibos moved to their current territory around 5000 years ago. Unlike neighboring groups, they did not establish a central authority but remained divided into over 200 autonomous tribes (Minahan 2002: 763).
- First contacts with Europeans were made in the seventeenth century. Opposing British rule, the Ibos nevertheless took advantage of missionaries' education and were particularly receptive for Christianity, which gained foothold in Iboland in the early nineteenth century (Minahan 2002: 763; Minorities at Risk).
- The Ibo homeland came under British rule in 1884 and was incorporated into British Oil Rivers Protectorate one year later. Being among the best educated in the country, the Ibo were favored by the British to fill civil service and military posts both in the Ibo homeland and in other parts of the country (Minahan 2002: 764).
- Between amalgamation in 1914 and independence in 1960, Nigeria had four constitutions: The Clifford Constitution (1922), the Richards Constitution (1946), the Macpherson Constitution (1951) and the Lyttleton Constitution (1954). The Richards Constitution created the three regions (north, east, west) and was the forerunner of a federal Nigeria, which until then had had a unitary orientation. However, it was not until the last colonial constitution (Lyttleton Constitution) that autonomy for these regions was put on the table. The Lyttleton Constitution was negotiated during two constitutional conferences in 1953 and 1954. The question of regional autonomy was the crucial issue of the negotiations. The conference eventually accepted a declaration of policy that would "grant to those Regions which desire it full self-government in respect of all matters within the competence of the Regional Government." The constitution also enabled each region to become self-governing at its own pace: As a consequence, the Western and Eastern Region became autonomous in 1956, the Northern Region only in 1959 (Mathews 2002: 156).
- In 1960, Nigeria gained independence from Britain. The newly independent country consisted of the Northern Region, the Western Region, and the Eastern Region (and a fourth region as of 1963). As envisaged by the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954, the three regions, each dominated by rival groups, were given significant autonomy over internal affairs in the 1960 constitution (Diamond 1988: 72f). The Ibos were the "hegemonic" group in the Eastern Region, where they constituted 61% of the population (Mustapha 2006: 2; Suberu 2001).
- Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, Major General of the Nigerian Army, seized power in an Ibo-led coup on January 15, 1966 that killed several Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba politicians and army officers. With the Unification Decree No. 34, Aguiyi-Ironsi announced the creation of a unitary system of government (Kirk-Greene 1971: 169). The new centralized system aimed to transform the "four regions into mere political units" and to establish "a unified Civil Service Commission" (Graf 1988: 42). The adjective "Federal" was dropped from the Republic's name and federal institutions were abolished. We code an autonomy restriction due to the loss of autonomy. [1966: autonomy restriction]
- At the end of July in 1966, a counter-coup killed Aguiyi-Ironsi and put the Northerner Yakubu Gowon in power. The counter-coup was accompanied by massacres of approximately 30,000 Ibos and other Easterners in the north (Akinyemi 1972), which led to the emergence of the Ibo SDM in late 1966. According to Forsyth (2001), Gowon reversed Ironsi's abrogation of decentralization. However, it remains unclear in how far the level of regional self-determination really increased under Gowon. Generally, political power remained concentrated in the hands of the federal government at the expense of the sub-state entities (Mustapha 2004). Overall however, sources suggest that there was some increase in regional self-determination. Kifordu (2011: 79) mentions that Gowon reinstated the Federal Executive Council (FEC) and allowed for a fusion of civilian and military personnel for "the top federal executive portfolios". Kifordu (2011: 81) described the military regime as a "disorderly amalgamation of centralization and decentralization". Compared to the previous regime under Aguiyi-Ironsi, who abolished

decentralization entirely, this is coded as an increase in the level of self-determination for the regions, among which also the Eastern Region of the Ibos. [1966: autonomy concession]

- 2<sup>nd</sup> phase:
  - Following the Biafran war, political power was mostly concentrated in the hands of the federal government at the expense of the sub-state entities (Mustapha 2004). The Second Republic from 1979-1983 also did not bring back autonomy to the regional states (Suberu 2001). According to Oyovbaire (1983: 21), the 1979 constitution again centralized and concentrated power in the federal government and the presidency in particular. The federal government had the power to “intervene in virtually every matter of public importance”, whereas the power of the regional executive organs depended on “what the federal government voluntarily chooses to leave to the states” (Suberu 2001: 36). This is confirmed by Mustapha (Mustapha 2006: 36), who mentions that the commitment to federalism remained but that the “balance of power between the center and the constituent units was radically adjusted.”
  - The re-imposition of military rule in 1984 and the military regimes of Buhari, Babangida and Abacha, further reduced autonomy (Ejobowah 2000; Mustapha 2004). In-between the two periods of separatist inactivity, there were also several rounds of federal reorganizations that created new states in 1976, 1987, 1991 and 1996. The former East-Central State, where the Ibos made up a majority, was broken up into several new states. However, since the Ibos also dominated the new states, we do not code autonomy restrictions.
  - With the end of military rule and the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1999, decentralization returned to the agenda. However, there is disagreement among scholars as regards the federal character of the system: Obiyan and Amuwo (2012: 103) state that President Obasanjo (1999-2007) has turned Nigeria “into a unitary constitutional state where the center reserves the right to remove elected leaders by reckless deployment of soldiers and mobile policeman from the barracks”. Furthermore, the fiscal regime is hyper-centralized and promotes the economic hegemony of the central government. Suberu (2001), on the other hand, emphasizes the federal character of the current system by highlighting the devolution of significant policy-making competences to constituent states and the representation of constituent states in the federal government through the establishment of a robust upper legislative chamber. Further evidence for a federal character comes from the Ethnic Power Relations dataset (Cederman et al. 2010), which codes several groups as regionally autonomous as of 1999. Overall, the sources claiming an increase in regional autonomy are more frequent, which is why we code an autonomy concession in 1999 also for the Ibos, which dominated five eastern states (Enugu, Anambra, Ebonyi, Imo, Abia). [1999: autonomy concession]
    - Note: the Fourth Republic was formally formed in May 1999 while the best source we could find suggests that MASSOB was formed in September 1999 (Canada Immigration and Refugee Board 2002). Therefore, we treat this as a prior concession.

### **Concessions and restrictions**

- At the Aburi Meeting in January 1967 between the federal government and Eastern delegates, the parties decided that all decrees passed since the January coup, including the decrees that had abolished regional autonomy, should be repealed. It was furthermore decided that the army should be divided into regional battalions (Deiwiki 2011). However, due to varying interpretations of what has been agreed, the parties did not respect nor implement the agreement. While the East wanted a four-regional confederation with a weak federal government, the latter wanted to keep the federation and a strong central government (Azikiwe 2003: 190). According to Odoemene (2016: 186), it was “Gowon’s government that failed to keep the promises of that accord” because it considered some of the decisions impracticable. The failing of the accord

contributed to the outbreak of the war. As there were no steps towards implementation, we do not code the agreement as a concession and nor do we code the reneging on the agreement as a restriction. However, we still code a restriction in 1967 due to other events:

- On May 27, 1967, Gowon announced the creation of twelve new states. The Eastern Region was divided into the South-Eastern State, East-Central State, and Rivers State. This was a restriction in two ways: First, the Ibos, which had previously controlled the entire Eastern State, would now only be able to control one (East-Central State) of the twelve states (whereas the Hausa-Fulani would control four states and the Yoruba three states). Second, the Ibos would be deprived of control over the Niger Delta's oil fields and access to the sea (Uzoigwe 2016: 35). [1967: autonomy restriction]
  - o We code an onset of separatist violence in 1967. Sambanis & Schulhofer-Wohl (2019) and UCDP/PRIO both suggest that the first violent hostilities occurred in July 1967 and therefore after the restrictions.
- The Nigerian state committed large-scale one-sided violence against Biafran separatists in 2015 and 2016 (Amnesty International 2016) and other forms of repression, including arrests of separatist leaders (MRGI; The Whistler 2017); however, we could find no evidence of a restriction as defined here.

### Regional autonomy

- Nigeria gained independence as a federal country with significant autonomy over internal affairs granted to the three regions, among which the Ibo dominated Eastern Region. This period ended with the coup of January 15, 1966. Autonomy hence was abolished when the secessionist movement started. [1966-1967: no autonomy]
- The Ibos were regionally autonomous during the period of de-facto independence (1967-1970). Again, since we follow the first of January rule, we code the Ibos as autonomous from 1968 onwards. [1968-1970: regional autonomy]
- With the end of military rule and the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1999, decentralization returned to the agenda. As mentioned above, we consider this as the beginning of a period of significant regional autonomy for the states, of which five are Ibo-dominated (Enugu, Anambra, Ebonyi, Imo, Abia). The Ibo continued to have autonomy as of 2020 (Channels Television 2015: Daily Post 2017). [1999: no autonomy; 2000-2020: regional autonomy]

### De facto independence

- Both Caspersen (2012) and Florea (2014) include Biafra in their lists of de-facto states from 1967 until 1970. Again, we follow the first of January rule and code the Ibos as de-facto independent from 1968 onwards. [1968-1970: de facto independence]

### Major territorial changes

- [1967: establishment of de-facto state]
- [1970: abolishment of de-facto state]
- [1999: establishment of regional autonomy]

### EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Ibos (Biafrans)
<i>Scenario</i>	1:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Igbo
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	47502000

## Power access

- We revise the EPR exclusion coding in 1966 to better reflect the case dynamics. According to EPR, the Ibos are coded as powerless in 1965-1966, discriminated in 1967, and with self-exclusion from 1968-1970. While these codings are correct, according to the evidence we found, they miss important elements of the case dynamics because EPR always codes the situation on January 1. There was a coup by Ibo officers in 1966 and they centralized power within their own ethnicity, which led to a Hausa/Fulani attempt at secession. The situation was quickly contained, however: Nigeria's Muslims re-established their predominance shortly after the coup (within the same year). This halted the Hausa and Fulani's separatist activity, but initiated Ibo separatism. In 1967, the Ibos declared themselves independent and had de-facto independence until 1970. Therefore, loss of autonomy and representation at the center played an instrumental role in the emergence of separatism, but this is only partly reflected in EPR. Therefore, we change the Ibos to discriminated in 1966. For all other years, we rely on EPR. [1966-1967: discriminated; 1968-1970: powerless; 1999-2020: junior partner]

## Group size

- We follow EPR, which reports a relative group size of 18%. This is consistent with Minahan (2016: 178) and the CIA World Factbook (2022). [0.18]

## Regional concentration

- According to Minahan (2002: 762), the Ibos make up 65% of the population in Biafra (29.876 million). This is a lot more than 50% of the entire Ibo population in Nigeria (23.2 million). [regionally concentrated]

## Kin

- Neither EPR nor MAR code kin groups in other countries. However, other sources mention that there are significant numbers of Ibos outside Nigeria, the largest of them in the United States (221,000) and Cameroon (103,000) (Joshua Project). It is not entirely clear when the Cameroonian kin group crossed the 100,000-threshold required for a kin group to be coded here. According to Kleis (1980: 91), Ibo migration to Cameroon already began in the 1930s, but it appears likely that the threshold was not met before the second start date of the second period of separatist activity in 1999. Ibos in the United States consist of two sub-groups: Ancestors of Ibo slaves, which are the majority (Lovejoy and Trotman 2003: 92), and Ibo refugees from the war in Biafra. Lacking exact data and with regard to the population development in the last fifty years, we assume a little arbitrarily that the Ibo kin group in both the United States and Cameroon only met the 100,000 people criteria in the second period of activity starting in 1999. [1966-1970: no kin] [1999-2020: kin in adjoining country]

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## **Ijaw**

Activity: 1966; 1992-2020

### **General notes**

- The Ijaw, Nigeria's fourth largest ethnic group, inhabit the oil-rich Niger Delta region.
- Ijaw, Ijo, and Izon are used interchangeably in the literature.

### **Movement start and end dates**

- In 1966 Ijaw youth declared their homeland the Niger Delta People's Republic, but the rebellion was suppressed and we code an end to this period in 1966. [start date 1: 1966; end date 1: 1966]
- In 1992 when the Movement for the Survival of the Ijaw Ethnic Nationality adopted its charter and began to lobby for an Ijaw state, a demand that came to fruition in 1996 with the creation of Bayelsa State. The Ijaws have continued to make demands for increased autonomy (esp. related to natural resources) in subsequent years (Global Security; Gurr 2000; Hewitt et al. 2008; Marshall & Gurr 2003, 2005; Minahan 2002; MAR; Okolo 2020; Zinn 2005). [start date 2: 1992; end date 2: ongoing]

### **Dominant claim**

- In the first period of activity, the claim was clearly secessionist, given the below-mentioned declaration of independence of the Niger Delta People's Republic (Ikein et al. 2008: 265). [1966: independence claim]
- The dominant claim during the second period of activity is less clear since the demands of most Ijaw organizations in this period primarily revolve around the demand for a (larger) share in the revenues from oil and better environmental protection from oil production in the Niger Delta. The second period of activity is coded from 1992 onwards, when the Movement for the Survival of the Ijaw Ethnic Nationality adopted its charter and began to lobby for an Ijaw state. The demand for an own state was fulfilled in 1996 with the creation of Bayelsa State. A claim for sub-state secession is only coded when it refers to a separation from an already autonomous entity to establish a separate autonomous unit or to join another autonomous unit. Since Rivers State was only autonomous as of 1999, this is coded as a claim for autonomy.
- For the remaining years we continue to code autonomy as the dominant claim. There are a number of organizations that represent the Ijaws. However, according to Minorities at Risk and Minahan (2002: 774), claims are generally focused on more self-determination within Nigeria. These organizations include the Movement for the Survival of the Ijaw Ethnic Nationality or the Chikoko Movement that was founded in 1997 as a representative mass organization of the minorities of the Niger Delta, among which also the Ijaw. The Chikoko Movement calls for "the right to self-determination of the constituent ethnic nationalities of Nigeria to be recognized and enshrined in a new democratic Nigerian constitution" (Human Rights Watch 1999).
- Another important and influential event in the Ijaw's pursuit of more self-determination was the Kaiama Declaration of 1998, when the Ijaw's reiterated their demand for more self-determination. According to Minahan (2002: 772), the declaration did not specify whether that would be self-determination within Nigeria or in a separate state. Human Rights Watch (1999), however, mentions that the meeting "agreed to remain within Nigeria" and stressed that "the best way for Nigeria is a federation of ethnic nationalities."
- Autonomy continued to be the dominant claim in subsequent years (Okolo 2020). [1992-2020: autonomy claim]

## **Independence claims**

- The first period of the SDM has a clear independence claim. In February 1966, Isaac Adaka Boro founded a Ijaw youth organization called the Niger Delta Volunteer Service, a militia that issued a declaration of independence, followed by a twelve-day rebellion (Ikein et al. 2008: 265; Okonta 2006).
- In 1992, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta emerged, which is associated with the Ijaw Youth Council. Demands appear more related to the oil industry and focused on territorial autonomy rather than independence (MAR; Minahan 2002: 774). Therefore, a second period of independence claims is not coded. [start date: 1966; end date: 1966]

## **Irredentist claims**

NA

## **Claimed territory**

- The territory claimed by the Ijaw consisted of the former Rivers State, which lost territory to create Bayelsa State (Minahan 2002: 769'). We code this claim based on the Global Administrative Areas database (GADM 2019).

## **Sovereignty declarations**

- In 1966, Adaka Boro, an Ijaw nationalist, proclaimed the independent Niger Delta People's Republic (Ikein et al. 2008: 265). [1966: independence declaration]

## **Separatist armed conflict**

- UCDP/PRIO would suggest a LVIOLSD code in but a single year (2004), but this is too limited according to the evidence we collected. Specifically, anti-government and ethnic violence, as well as militant actions against oil multinationals, began in March 1997 after the relocation of the Warri Southwest local government headquarters – and the correlated access to municipal patronage, oil royalties and government funds – from an Ijaw to an Itsekiri town. From March 1997 to December 2002, at least 290 persons were killed in clashes between Ijaw youths and government forces, at least 596 persons were killed in ethnic warfare, and Nigerian security forces massacred at least 2,500 civilians. UCDP/PRIO does code violence between 1997 and 2003, but only as a non-state conflict. As this is not consistent with our findings, we code LVIOLSD from 1997, though it is worth noting that it is possible that the conflict de-escalated and re-escalated during this period.
  - o This coding decision is (to some extent) backed up by MAR, whose rebellion score is four in 1999 and 2000, indicating “small-scale guerilla activity”. Hewitt et al. (2008) similarly suggest separatist violence started before 2004 and peg the onset even to 1995. Yet, our research indicates 1997 as the start of low-level violence.
- [1966: NVIOLSD; 1992-1996: NVIOLSD; 1997-2004: LVIOLSD; 2005-2020: NVIOLSD]

## **Historical context**

- Having migrated to the Niger Delta in the thirteenth century, the Ijaw lived in decentralized, self-governing villages and federations of village communities. Around 1500, first contacts with Europeans were made and the Ijaw became involved in the trade with slaves from the interior.

Flourishing trade led to the establishment of trading city-states in the Niger Delta. A monarchical structure slowly replaced the traditional kinship system (Minahan 2002: 770).

- The Ijaw homeland was incorporated into the British Oil Rivers Protectorate in 1885 and the Niger Coast Protectorate in 1893. In 1914, it became part of the amalgamated British colony and protectorate of Nigeria (Minahan 2002: 771).
- Between amalgamation in 1914 and independence in 1960, Nigeria had four constitutions: The Clifford Constitution (1922), the Richards Constitution (1946), the Macpherson Constitution (1951) and the Lyttleton Constitution (1954). The Richards Constitution of 1946 created the three regions (north, east, west), which later also became self-governing with the passing of the Lyttleton Constitution in 1954 (Mathews 2002: 156). In 1960, Nigeria gained independence from Britain. The newly independent country consisted of the Northern Region, the Western Region, and the Eastern Region. The three regions were given significant autonomy over internal affairs in the 1960 constitution (Diamond 1988: 72f). The creation of the three regions also meant that the Ijaw homeland would be divided between the Yoruba-dominated Western Region and the Ibo-dominated Eastern Region (Minahan 2002: 771). According to Mwakikagile (2001), the Yoruba were dominant in the Western Region and were the only group benefiting from the autonomy status of the region. The same can be said about the Ibos in the Eastern Region. The Ijaw were thus left with no influence in the two regional governments. This decrease in self-determination from an originally self-governing territory to an ethnic group in a state governed by another ethnic group is coded as a prior restriction. The administrative reorganization of 1946 was the first step towards minority status of the Ijaw in their states.
- In 1961, the Niger Delta Development Act established the Niger Delta Development Board which was to be based in Port Harcourt, but only had powers to undertake surveys and make recommendations to the federal and regional governments (Human Rights Watch 1999: 84). This was not more than a gesture and did not increase the level of Ijaw self-determination.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> phase:
  - o In the period of separatist inactivity of the Ijaw, there were also several rounds of federal reorganizations that created new states in 1967, 1976, 1987, 1991. However, the settlement of the Ijaw did not undergo any significant administrative changes.

### **Concessions and restrictions**

- In October 1996, the Bayelsa State was carved out of the Rivers State and was established as a separate state (Frynas 2000: 45). The Ijaw are the majority in the state and also dominate regional politics: Goodluck Jonathan, an ethnic Ijaw, for example, was governor and deputy governor of the state from 1999 until 2007 before he became president of Nigeria. We code a concession while noting that states level of autonomy was limited at the time. [1996: autonomy concession]
- In March 1997 the Warri Southwest local government headquarters – and the correlated access to municipal patronage, oil royalties and government funds – were relocated from an Ijaw to an Itsekiri town (Minority Rights Group International). The Ijaw interpreted this move as “further evidence of their marginalization” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1999). We note that this restriction is ambiguous due to its more local character. [1997: autonomy restriction]
  - o We code an onset of separatist violence in March 1997 (see above); if the headquarters was relocated in the same month, it is likely that the restriction was initiated before the onset of violence.
- With the end of military rule and the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1999, decentralization returned to the agenda. However, there is disagreement among scholars as regards the federal character of the system: Obiyan and Amuwo (2012: 103) state that President Obasanjo (1999-2007) has turned Nigeria “into a unitary constitutional state where the center reserves the right to remove elected leaders by reckless deployment of soldiers and mobile policeman from the barracks”. Furthermore, the fiscal regime is hyper-centralized and promotes the economic hegemony of the central government. Suberu (2001), on the other hand, emphasizes the federal character of the current system by highlighting the devolution of significant policy-making competences to constituent states and the representation of constituent states in the federal

government through the establishment of a robust upper legislative chamber. Further evidence for a federal character comes from the Ethnic Power Relations dataset (Cederman et al. 2010), which codes several groups as regionally autonomous as of 1999. Overall, the sources claiming an increase in regional autonomy are more frequent, which is why we code an autonomy concession in 1999 for groups that have significant influence in a regional government. In the case of the Ijaw, which dominate Bayelsa State, the case is however a bit more complex. The uprising of several ethnic groups in the Niger Delta for adequate compensation for oil revenues in the 1990s led to severe discrimination and repression of ethnic minorities in the Delta. In September 1999, the military massacred Ijaw people in Bayelsa to retaliate the killing of eight police officers. Many Ijaws fled or were arrested (Bah 2005: 51). The EPR dataset also codes the Ijaw as discriminated in the period. In the light of this severe repression, it is questionable to what extent the Ijaw really enjoyed genuine regional autonomy. According to Ejobowah (2000) and EPR, the government of Bayelsa State still had some autonomous powers, which is why we code a concession. [1999: autonomy concession]

- In 2009 the Nigerian Federal Character Commission (FCC) proposed a series of recommendations, later made law, that aimed to meaningfully ensure ethnic diversity and representation at all levels of government (Mustapha 2009). The Ijaw already have representation at the regional level (see above), so we do not code a concession.

### Regional autonomy

- Regional autonomy for the states came with the end of military rule and the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1999. As argued above, the Ijaw had access to regional power in the Bayelsa State, which is why we code regional autonomy from 2000 onwards (following the first of January rule). The Ijaw continued to have autonomy as of 2020 and Bayelsa's governor at the time was a member of the Ijaw ethnic group (This Day 2017). This is broadly consistent with EPR. [2000-2020: regional autonomy]

### De facto independence

NA

### Major territorial changes

- [1999: establishment of regional autonomy]

### EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Ijaw
<i>Scenario</i>	1:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Ijaw
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	47503000

### Power access

- We follow EPR. [1966: powerless; 1992-2007: discriminated; 2008-2010: junior partner; 2011-2015: senior partner; 2016-2020: powerless]

## Group size

- EPR reports a group size of 10%, but several other sources suggest a much lower group size. Minahan (2016: 180) reports a group size of 3-5 million in a country of ca. 200 million. The CIA World Factbook similarly reports a group size of 1.8%. [0.018]

## Regional concentration

- According to Minahan (2002: 769), the Ijaw homeland comprises the states of Rivers, Delta, and Bayelsa. The statistics he reports suggest that the Ijaws make up only 48% of the population of their homeland, and less than 50% of all Ijaws live there. Minahan (2002) reports a much larger group size of 13 million, which is inconsistent with the majority of sources (see above). However, Wikipedia suggests that Ijaws are the main group in Bayelsa state but not in Rivers and Delta state, which confirms Minahan's data. [not concentrated]

## Kin

- Neither EPR nor MAR code ethnic kin. Minahan (2002: 769) mentions Ijaw communities in the United Kingdom, Ireland, and the United States. We could not find evidence that these communities are larger than 100,000. [no kin]

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## **Itsekiris**

Activity: 1987-2020

### **General notes**

NA

### **Movement start and end dates**

- Once the Warri Kingdom from (presumably) 1480 until 1884 AD, the Itsekiri homeland is now Warri province, located in the northwest region of the Niger Delta. An 1884 treaty brought the Warri Kingdom under colonialism and in 1894 it became part of Southern Nigeria. Nigeria was later created in 1914 as an amalgamation of different ethnic homelands, one of which was the Itsekiris of the Warri Kingdom.
- Since the colonial period, the Itsekiris and other ethnic groups within Warri such as the Ijaw and Urhobo have been embroiled in ethnic conflict over which group is the true indigene of Warri. Such conflicts were often communal and pertained to local government, rather than formal self-determination claims against the Nigerian government. No organized Itsekiri secessionist or autonomist movement was found until 1987 when the Itsekiris released a document entitled "Itsekiri and Delta State," which demanded "[a] local Government Council exclusively to the Itsekiris in which they can exclusively control and preserve: a) [t]heir lands, b) [t]heir language and customs, c) [t]heir culture" (Obiomah).
- In 1999 the Itsekiri organization, the Itsekiri Leaders of Thought, released a memorandum for the creation of a new Warri state that is separate from Delta State. They note that "Nigeria is a mere geographical expression" and thus they demand the creation of either their own Warri State, or for Warri to be designated a Special Area (Ekpoko and Ede). Separatist demands have arisen in the context of complaints about a lack of fiscal federalism, ethnic marginalization, and a lack of control over natural resources within Warri. The Itsekiris are a small minority in Nigeria and are not represented in the Senate, but they produce almost a third of Nigeria's oil and gas. They thus believe that the creation of a Warri State would give them more representation. Alongside the memorandum released in 1999 by the Itsekiri Leaders of Thought, the Warri Council of Itsekiri Chiefs in 1999 also sponsored a bill to create The Federal Protected Territory for Warri Division. The bill would create an administrative structure dominated by Itsekiris as well as a Territorial Force Command that would allow Itsekiris to administer justice within Warri (Edevbie 2000; Ekeh 2007; Ekpoko & Ede; Keesing's; Lexis Nexis; Obiomah; Vanguard News 2012).
- The movement remains ongoing as of 2020 (Vanguard 2019; Nigerian Tribune 2018). [start date: 1987; end date: ongoing]

### **Dominant claim**

- The Itsekiris have made different kinds of SD demands. On the one hand, Itsekiris have made demands for the creation of their own autonomous state separate from Delta State. For example, in 1987 a Itsekiris document demanded "[a] local Government Council exclusively to the Itsekiris in which they can exclusively control and preserve: a) [t]heir lands, b) [t]heir language and customs, c) [t]heir culture" (Urhobo Historical Society).
- On the other hand, Itsekiris have made claims for an autonomous region within Delta state. For example, in 1999 the Warri Council of Itsekiri Chiefs sponsored a bill to create The Federal Protected Territory for Warri Division. The bill would create an administrative structure dominated by Itsekiris as well as a Territorial Force Command that would allow Itsekiris to administer justice within Warri.
- It is not clear which claim is dominant and, notably, in 1999 an organization called the Itsekiri Leaders of Thought released a memorandum which included both claims simultaneously. More

specifically, the memorandum demands the creation of either an own Warri State or for Warri to be designated a Special Area (Ekpoko and Ede).

- There have also been some claims or at least threats of outright independence. For example, in 2014 the Itsekiri Leaders of Thought released a statement suggesting that the “Itsekiri nation would not hesitate to seek secession from Nigeria and seek the protection of other developed nations if the Federal Government fails to halt an alleged systematic extermination of its people” (The Nation 2014).
- Overall, different claims were made. The claim or threat of independence does not seem dominant (see e.g., Itsekiri Leaders of Thought 2017), but it is not clear whether the claim for the creation of a new state or an autonomous region within a state is dominant. We code the more radical claim, sub-state secession (though this is treated as a claim for autonomy until the re-federalization of Nigeria in 1999). [1987-1999: autonomy claim; 2000-2020: sub-state secession claim]

### **Independence claims**

- While there has been some talk of independence, these are generally seen as threats of an escalation of the claim in the future. [no independence claims]

### **Irredentist claims**

NA

### **Claimed territory**

- The territory claimed by the Itsekiri are the Warri provinces (Warri South, Warri North, and Warri South-West), which are located in the Delta State in the northwest region of the Niger Delta in Nigeria. We code this claim based on the Global Administrative Areas database (GADM 2019).

### **Sovereignty declarations**

NA

### **Separatist armed conflict**

- Although there have been some periods of inter-ethnic violence, we do not consider that as violence for self-determination. No violence against the Nigerian government over the creation of a Warri state could be found. Thus, we code the movement as NVIOLSD. [NVIOLSD]

### **Historical context**

- The Warri kingdom was founded around 1480 by a prince of Benin. In the 15th century, first contacts with the Portuguese were made. With the arrival of the Europeans, trade started to flourish. The Itsekiris soon replaced the trade with local products with the lucrative trade of slaves from the interior. However, when the British colonial administration broke their trade monopoly in the 1890s, the Itsekiri economy crumbled. (Encyclopaedia Britannica).
- The British took over the slave ports and in the 1880s annexed the entire coastal districts. A treaty in 1884 brought the Warri Kingdom under colonial rule and made it part of Southern Nigeria in 1894. Warri was established as a provincial headquarter by the British. Nigeria was later created

in 1914 as an amalgamation of different ethnic homelands, one of which was the Itsekiris of the Warri Kingdom (Ekeh 2005).

- Between amalgamation in 1914 and independence in 1960, Nigeria had four constitutions: The Clifford Constitution (1922), the Richards Constitution (1946), the Macpherson Constitution (1951) and the Lyttleton Constitution (1954). The Richards Constitution of 1946 created the three regions (north, east, west), which later also became self-governing with the passing of the Lyttleton Constitution in 1954 (Mathews 2002: 156). In 1960, Nigeria gained independence from Britain. The newly independent country consisted of the Northern Region, the Western Region, and the Eastern Region. As envisaged by the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954, the three regions were given significant autonomy over internal affairs in the 1960 constitution (Diamond 1988: 72f). The creation of the three regions also meant that the Itsekiris homeland would be incorporated into the Yoruba-dominated Western Region. According to Mwakikagile (2001), the Yoruba were dominant in the state and were the only group benefiting from the autonomy status of the region.
- In the period from Nigeria independence to the onset of the Itsekiris movement in 1987, there were several rounds of federal reorganizations that created new states. In 1963, the Nigerian government created the Mid-Western Region. The new Mid-Western Region consisted of two provinces, Benin and Delta, and incorporated the entire Itsekiri territory. The level of Itsekiri self-determination was not affected by the establishment of this new state, in which the Edo and the Igbos were the largest groups and controlled the regional government (Nevadomsky 2017).

### **Concessions and restrictions**

- In 1991, the Mid-Western Region (then called Bendel) was further divided into two new states: Edo State in the north and Delta State in the south. Although the creation of Delta State itself was not a concession to the Itsekiris (who continued their struggle for an own state), the establishment of the new state increased the influence of the Itsekiris on the regional level, particularly so since they were disproportionately advantaged vis-à-vis other groups as regards government resources and control of government structures in the three Warri Local Government areas (see Ngomba-Roth 2007: 145). The fact that several Itsekiris had influential positions in the Delta State government (most prominently Emmanuel Eweta Uduaghan, who was later appointed governor of Delta State from 2007 until 2015) shows that the Itsekiris had access to regional executive power. Still, we consider this too ambiguous to code a concession.
- In March 1997 the Warri Southwest local government headquarters – and the correlated access to municipal patronage, oil royalties and government funds – were relocated from the Ijaw-town of Ogbe-Ijaw to the Itsekiri town of Ogidigben (Minority Rights Group International; Human Rights Watch 1999: 101). The relocation caused the “Warri Crisis” that ended in riots that killed hundreds. We note that this concession is ambiguous due to its more local character. [1997: autonomy concession]
- In 1999, the Fourth Republic was inceptioned and regional autonomy returned. According to Suberu (2010), 1999 brought the devolution of significant policy-making competences to constituent states and representation of constituent states in the federal government through the establishment of a robust upper legislative chamber. While the Itsekiri do not have their own state, they have significant influence in Delta State despite not being the majority group (Ekeh 2007, Ngomba-Roth 2007). This is illustrated by Emmanuel Eweta Uduaghan, an ethnic Itsekiri, who was the governor of Delta State from 2007 until 2015 and who held several high-level positions in the Delta State government from 1999 onwards. Still, we considered this too ambiguous to code a concession.
- In 2014, the names of several Itsekiri areas in Warri were changed by non-Itsekiri provincial leaders, a move that was condemned by Itsekiri leaders (The Nation 2014). [2014: cultural rights restriction]

## Regional autonomy

- Nigeria has experienced several periods of substantial federalism. In the period of Itsekiri separatist activity, regional autonomy for the states came with the end of military rule and the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1999. The Itsekiris have been represented in the regional government of Delta State; most notably, Emmanuel Eweta Uduaghan, an ethnic Itsekiri, was the governor of Delta State from 2007 until 2015 after he had held senior positions in the Delta State government from 1999 onwards. However, Delta State is not an Itsekiri state, so we do not code this as meaningful autonomy for the Itsekiris.

## De facto independence

NA

## Major territorial changes

NA

## EPR2SDM

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

## Power access

- We could not find evidence that the Itsekiri were represented in the central executive nor that they were actively discriminated against. We thus code them as powerless throughout. [1987-2020: powerless]

## Group size

- According to various sources, the Itsekiris number approximately 1 million (GlobalSecurity.org). Given Nigeria's current population, this amounts to a relative group size of 0.576%. [0.00576]

## Regional concentration

- According to Globalsecurity.org (2017), the traditional Itsekiri homeland is constituted of three Local Government Areas of Delta State (Warri South, Warri North and Warri South-West) and parts of Edo and Ondo states. According to Ekeh (2007: 299), the Itsekiris are a minority in at least two of the three Local Government Areas in Delta State. Even in the city of Warri, the main Itsekiri town, they seem to be a minority, at least if we assume that there were no major changes since the 1952 census, when the Itsekiris only made up 16% of the city's population (Bradbury 1957: 173). Hence, it seems that the criterion that the group must make up a majority in a certain territory is not fulfilled, which is why we code the Itsekiris as not concentrated. [not concentrated]

## Kin

- There are no significant (>100,000) Itsekiri settlements outside Nigeria. [no kin]

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## **Kanuri**

Activity: 1976

### **General notes**

NA

### **Movement start and end dates**

- Although a Kanuri state called Borno was created in 1976, in November of that year mass demonstrations erupted, demanding immediate independence. Hundreds of armed men tried to force the new state government to establish a separatist Kanuri government. The uprising was suppressed by Nigerian troops (Keesing's; Lexis Nexis; Minahan 1996, 2002). Minahan (2016: 200) suggests that Kanuri nationalists have continued to make separatist claims in subsequent years, but we could not find evidence for a Kanuri SDM separate from the broader Northerners movement, which includes the Kanuri and other northern groups (see below and Roth 2015: 246f). Therefore, we code the end of this movement in 1976. [start date: 1976; end date: 1976]

### **Dominant claim**

- Independence was the dominant claim. This is illustrated by the events of November 1976, when mass demonstrations demanded immediate independence for the Kanuri and hundreds of armed men tried to force the new state government to establish a separatist Kanuri government. The nationalists presented a plan for independence of "Greater Kanowra", which would include historic Bornu and adjacent regions in Chad, Niger, and Cameroon (Minahan 2002: 899). [1976: independence claim]

### **Independence claims**

- See above. [start date: 1976; end date: 1976]

### **Irredentist claims**

NA

### **Claimed territory**

- The territory claimed by the Kanuri consists of the Borno and Yobe states in Nigeria. Parts of the movement have also claimed the following cross-border territories: The prefectures of Lac and Kanem in Chad, the southern districts of the departments of Diffa and Zinder in Niger, and the province of Extreme Nord in Cameroon (Minahan 2002: 897). However, following SDM coding rules on cross-border claims we only code those areas within Nigeria, relying on the Global Administrative Areas database (GADM 2019).

### **Sovereignty declarations**

NA

## **Separatist armed conflict**

- We were unable to find information on death counts and so code the movement as NVIOLSD.  
[NVIOLSD]

## **Historical context**

- In the eighth century, several Kanuri city states were established by Pastoral Berbers from North Africa and migrants from the upper Nile River. The city states were subsumed under the control of the Sefwa dynasty in the ninth century. The city of Kanem became the center of the expanding state. However, when nomadic invaders occupied Kanem in 1386, the center of the state shifted from Kanem to Bornu and over time, a new Kanuri language and nation was created from the mixture of Kanembu refugees and Bornu peoples. The Kanuri reconquered Kanem and created the powerful Kanem-Bornu empire, which in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries ruled over large territories in present-day Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, and Sudan (Minahan 2002: 897).
- The nineteenth century saw a series of wars, civil wars, and occupation which eventually led to the decline of the Kanuri empire. In 1902, Bornu was incorporated into British Nigeria, Kanem was added to French Equatorial Africa, and the Germans added a large share of the Dikwa region to Kamerun. The British colonial power left most of the traditional social system intact but took over political decision making (Minahan 2002: 898).
- Between amalgamation in 1914 and independence in 1960, Nigeria had four constitutions: The Clifford Constitution (1922), the Richards Constitution (1946), the Macpherson Constitution (1951) and the Lyttleton Constitution (1954). The Richards Constitution of 1946 created the three regions (north, east, west), which later also became self-governing with the passing of the Lyttleton Constitution in 1954 (Mathews 2002: 156). In 1960, Nigeria gained independence from Britain. The newly independent country consisted of the Northern Region, the Western Region, and the Eastern Region. The three regions were given significant autonomy over internal affairs in the 1960 constitution (Diamond 1988: 72f). The creation of the three regions also meant that the Kanuri homeland would be integrated into the Hausa-Fulani-dominated Northern Region (Minahan 2002: 898). Overall, the Kanuri's level of SD decreased from a self-governing empire to an ethnic group in a state governed by another ethnic group.
- In February 1976, a Kanuri state (Borno) was carved out of the North-Eastern State. Maiduguri was the capital of the new state. The state is dominated by the Kanuri, who make up around 75% of the population. This is confirmed by the 1979 election, where the Kanuri dominated Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP) won the state assembly, the governorship, and four of five senate seats (Horowitz 1985: 607). Since the state was created in February and the first evidence for separatist mobilization we could find was in November 1976, we treat this as a prior concession.  
[1976: autonomy concession]

## **Concessions and restrictions**

NA

## **Regional autonomy**

- Nigeria was not federal when the state of Borno was created and states therefore had limited autonomy. We thus do not code regional autonomy nor a major territorial change in 1976.

## **De facto independence**

NA



## Major territorial changes

NA

## EPR2SDM

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

## Power access

- The military junta under Murtala Muhammed ruled from July 1975 until he was assassinated in February 1976 and replaced by General Olusegun Obasanjo. We could not find evidence of Kanuri representation in his junta nor did we find any evidence of Kanuri discrimination under his rule. [1976: powerless]

## Group size

- According to Minahan (2002: 895), there were 4.9 million Kanuri in Nigeria in 2002. Compared to the total population of Nigeria in that year (129.2 million), this yields a group size of 3.793% [0.0379]

## Regional concentration

- The Kanuri homeland is the basin of lake Chad in west-central Africa, including north-eastern Nigeria, western Chad and south-eastern Niger. In Nigeria, the Kanuri heartland Bornu encompasses the state of Borno and Yobe. According to Minahan (2002: 895), the Kanuri make up 71% of the population in this territory (6.858 million). These 71% are almost the entire Kanuri population of Nigeria. Hence, both criteria are fulfilled and we code the Kanuri as concentrated. [regionally concentrated]

## Kin

- According to Minahan (2002: 895), there are 675,000 Kanuri in neighboring areas of Chad, 525,000 in Niger, 75,000 in Cameroon, and 20,000 in Sudan. Since the former two kin groups are larger than 100,000, we code the presence of ethnic kin. [kin in neighboring country]

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## **Northerners**

Activity: 2002-2015

### **General notes**

- The SDMs we code in Nigeria are generally bound together by language; by contrast, the Northerners movement reflects Nigeria's religious divide between Muslims and Christians.

### **Movement start and end dates**

- In the late 1990s northern politicians began to press for the introduction of Islamic Law in Nigeria's North. Then, in 2002, Jamā'at Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Da'wah wa'l-Jihād (Arabic for Group of the People of Sunnah for Dawah and Jihad' and more commonly known as Boko Haram/ "Western Education is forbidden") was formed with the aim of breaking away some of the Northern regions from Nigeria (Kannam, Yunusari, and Toshiya) and establishing an Islamic state. Historical parallels with the Islamic Kanem-Bornu Empire have been invoked to frame and gain support for this independence claim (The Guardian 2009). Thus, we peg the start date to 2002.
- In 2003 Boko Haram launched its first attacks on a number of police stations in Yobe State. In subsequent military action, the Nigerian army managed to flush the group out of Yobe State, eventually killing or arresting most of its members. However, Boko Haram again launched several attacks on the Nigerian government in recent years (Irin News 2011; UCDP/PRIO).
- While Boko Haram initially aimed at the establishment of an independent Islamist state in northern Nigeria (National Geographic 2014), its aims became increasingly expansive over time and now include the establishment of an Islamist theocracy across Nigeria as a whole, and also including territories beyond Nigeria (EPRS 2017; UPI 2017: The Daily Telegraph 2019; Premium Times 2020). The latter is not an SD claim as defined here and we therefore code an end to this movement. As cut-off we use March 2015, when Boko Haram pledged allegiance to ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) and took on the name of ISAWP/ISWA (Islamic State West African province).
- Additional information: after March 2015 the group splintered with one group retaining the ISAWP name and another reverting back to the original Boko Haram. Despite this, state sources often refer to both groups interchangeably (Premium Times 2015; New York Times 2019). Several sources also consider Boko Haram to remain a branch of ISAWP (Warner and Hulme 2018; CRS 2022). While the two organizations disagree on the methods of how best to achieve their goals, they both aim at establishing an Islamist theocracy across Nigeria as a whole after 2015 (Warner and Hulme 2018; Premium Times 2020; CRS 2022). [start date 2002: end date 2015]

### **Dominant claim**

- Boko Haram's initial principal goal was to break away the areas around Kannam, Yunusari and Toshiya from Nigeria and to establish an Islamic state in the north with strict adherence to Sharia (International Crisis Group 2014; National Geographic 2014; UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia). [2002-2015: independence claim]

### **Independence claims**

- See above. [start date 2002: end date 2015]

## **Irredentist claims**

NA

## **Claimed territory**

- The territory claimed by Boko Haram consisted of 12 states in northern Nigeria (Roth 2015: 246). A map can be found in Roth (2015: 240). We code this claim using data on admin units from the Global Administrative Areas Database (2019) for polygon definition.

## **Sovereignty declarations**

NA

## **Separatist armed conflict**

- We code 2002 and 2003 as NVIOLSD since it seems violence did not reach 25 deaths per year that year. Boko Haram began its attacks in 2003 and in December 2003, attacks killed 18 rebels, which does not meet the 25 deaths per year threshold. We code 2004 as LVIOLSD following UCDP/PRIO. According to Irin News, Boko Haram went underground from 2005-2008. The casualty estimates in those years do not meet the LVIOLSD threshold, thus 2005-2008 is coded as NVIOLSD. 2009 onward is coded as HVIOLSD following Sambanis & Schulhofer-Wohl (2019). Note: UCDP/PRIO treats the 2009-2015 (but not the 2004) as a conflict over government; we do not code mixed motives despite this because Boko Haram's goals at the time were focused on northern Nigeria only (see above). [2002-2003: NVIOLSD; 2004: LVIOLSD; 2005-2008: NVIOLSD; 2009-2015: HVIOLSD]

## **Historical context**

- Northern Nigeria gained self-government on 15 March 1957 with Ahmadu Bello (an outspoken advocate for self-determination under the British Era of control over Nigeria) as its first premier. The Northern Peoples Congress under Bello dominated parliament while the Northern Elements Progressive Union became the main opposition party (Paden 1986). In 1967, Northern Nigeria was divided into several states.
- Since independence in 1960, Nigeria has experienced various degrees of decentralization. The country started off as a federation devolving a considerable amount of legislative and executive power to its three regions: the Northern, Western, and Eastern Region (Deiwiki 2011). Following the Biafran war, political power was mostly concentrated in the hands of the federal government at the expense of the sub-state entities (Mustapha 2004). The Second Republic from 1979-1983 again saw some meaningful devolution of power to the regions that also included autonomy for the country's northern states. After 15 years of centralization following the re-imposition of military rule between 1984 and 1999, the Fourth Republic again put in place some degree of decentralization through federal structures. However, it remains disputed in how far the Fourth Republic was really decentralized, as Obiyan and Amuwo (2012) consider Nigeria a unitary state with significant amount of power remaining at the central state. Nevertheless, there was a trend towards increased territorial autonomy for the northern states. Moreover, in 1999 several northern states adopted Sharia law (Harnischfeger 2008). Note that the Northerners movement's primary aim is for the establishment of an Islamic state. While it seems that Sharia law has not been fully implemented, we consider this sufficient to code a prior cultural rights concession (as well as an autonomy concession due to the 1999 decentralization). [1999: autonomy concession; 1999: cultural rights concession]

## Concessions and restrictions

- From its emergence, the movement has been persecuted by the central government. Forest (2012) mentions force as the only government strategy in response to Boko Haram. According to a report by Amnesty International, the Nigerian police and anti-terrorist units are responsible for hundreds of extra-judicial killings and disappearances related to the state's counter offensive. The Government of Muhammadu Buhari (2015-ongoing) has been criticized for its heavy-handed approach (see UCDP/PRIO for more information). However, we could not find evidence pointing to a restriction as defined here.

## Regional autonomy

- It has been outlined above that with the end of military rule and the inception of the 4th Republic in 1999, decentralization returned to the agenda. However, there is disagreement among scholars as regards the federal character of the system: Obiyan and Amuwo (2012: 103) state that President Obasanjo (1999-2007) has turned Nigeria "into a unitary constitutional state where the centre reserves the right to remove elected leaders by reckless deployment of soldiers and mobile policeman from the barracks". Furthermore, the fiscal regime is hyper-centralized and promotes the economic hegemony of the central government. Suberu (2010), on the other hand, emphasizes the federal character of the current system by highlighting the devolution of significant policy-making competences to constituent states and the representation of constituent states in the federal government through the establishment of a robust upper legislative chamber. Further evidence for a federal character comes from the Ethnic Power Relations dataset (Cederman et al. 2010), which codes several groups as regionally autonomous as of 1999. In line with the latter, we code the Northerners as regionally autonomous for the period of activity. [2002-2015: regional autonomy]

## De facto independence

NA

## Major territorial changes

NA

## EPR2SDM

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

## Power access

- There are two, in part cross-cutting ethnic cleavages in Nigeria, a linguistic and a religious one. The groups covered in EPR (Hausa Fulani, Yoruba, Igbos etc.) are linguistic groups. What we termed the 'Northerners' relates to Muslims in Nigeria, and thus to the religious cleavage. Boko Haram, the main organization associated with the movement, "draws its fighters mainly from the Kanuri ethnic group" (BBC 2014), but has also many Hausa among its members (International Crisis Group).

- From 2002-2007 the Northerners are coded as junior partner since the president, Olusegun Obasanjo, was a Christian Yoruba and the vice-president a Muslim Fulani (Mustapha 2004).
- From 2008-2010, the Northerners are coded as senior partner since in 2007, Umaru Yar'Adua, a Muslim Hausa-Fulani, was elected president of an ethnically balanced government that also included Christian representatives (US State Department Human Rights Reports 2007-2013).
- From 2011-2015, the Northerners are again coded as junior partner since Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian Ijaw, assumed office in 2010, with a Muslim Hausa, Sambo, as vice-president (US State Department Human Rights Reports 2007-2013).
- Between 2015 and 2020 Nigeria was ruled by President Muhammadu Buhari, a northern Muslim. Thus, we again code "senior partner". [2002-2007: junior partner; 2008-2010: senior partner; 2011-2015: junior partner]

### Group size

- Regarding group size we rely on the CIA World Factbook, according to which Nigeria's Muslim population makes up about 50% of the total population. [0.5]

### Regional concentration

- The 'Northerners' relate to Muslims in Nigeria. These are concentrated in the Northern Region (>90% Muslims), most states in the Central Belt Region (over 50% in all states except Benu and Plateau), and several states in the Western States. [regionally concentrated]

### Kin

- The 'Northerners' relate to Muslims in Nigeria; Muslims in neighboring countries (especially Niger, Chad, Benin) can be considered close kindred. [kin in neighboring country]

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## **Ogoni**

Activity: 1990-2020

### **General notes**

NA

### **Movement start and end dates**

- The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni Peoples (MOSOP), aiming for increased self-determination for the Ogonis, was founded in 1990, hence the start date of the movement.
- MOSOP issued a Bill of Rights in 1990 and presented the document to the Government and People of Nigeria. The Ogoni Bill of Rights called for political autonomy of the Ogoni in order to ensure that a fair proportion of Ogoni economic resources are used for Ogoni development, and that the Ogoni gain adequate representation in all of Nigeria's institutions along with the right to protect the Ogoni environment and ecology from further degradation (The Ogoni Indigenous Nation Heritage and Research Initiative 2020). MOSOP states it is committed to non-violence (MOSOP 2010).
- In January 1993, after mass protests by approximately 300,000 Ogoni and the attack of Ogoni activists on oil companies and their employees, the military sealed off the area to outsiders. Ogoni villages were raided, around 2,000 Ogoni were killed and 80,000-100,000 fled (Minahan 2002: 1448; Human Rights Watch 1995). In line with the codebook, such one-sided violence is not coded as a restriction.
- In June 1993, senior Ogoni activists (Ken Saro-Wiwa, N. G. Dube and Kobari Nwilewas) were arrested and imprisoned in southern Nigeria. The three were charged on 13 July 1993 under the Criminal Code of Eastern Nigeria in connection with their activities on behalf of the Ogoni community. Several of them had their passports confiscated in order to prevent them from traveling to Vienna to represent MOSOP at the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights (Amnesty International 1993).
- On November 10, 1995, nine activists from the movement, were hanged 10 days after being convicted by the Nigerian government on charges of "incitement to murder" of the four Ogoni leaders (New York Times 1995).
- MOSOP remained active in subsequent years (Hewitt & Cheetham 2000; Keesing's; Minahan 2002; MAR; Premium Times 2012).
- The long-running dispute between local communities and Shell in the Niger Delta ended on 4 June 2008, when the Nigerian government took a decision to replace Shell as operator of oil concessions in Ogoni areas. Initial enthusiasm waned when the government announced that the concession would be taken over by the Nigerian Petroleum Development Company (NPDC) (MRGI 2018).
- Minahan (2016: 316) reports that the Ogoni declared autonomy in 2012. Roth (2015: 245) suggests that the movement is ongoing. [start date: 1990; end date: ongoing]

### **Dominant claim**

- Most claims are related to compensation for oil revenues and environmental protection. Claims with regard to self-determination are predominantly aimed at increased autonomy within Nigeria.
- According to their homepage, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni Peoples (MOSOP) seeks "appropriate rights of self-determination for the Ogoni people". The activities of MOSOP are based on the Ogoni Bill of Rights from 1990, which was presented to the federal government of Nigeria and which called for, among other things, "political autonomy to participate in the affairs of the Republic as a distinct and separate unit". The claim for increased political and cultural autonomy in an own administrative region within Nigeria is also the only claim

mentioned by Minahan (2002: 1450) and Minorities at Risk (2009). Autonomy within Nigeria as the dominant claim is also supported by the fact that the Ogoni are represented by the Chikoko Movement, that was founded in 1997 as a representative mass organization of the minorities of the Niger Delta and that calls for “the right to self-determination of the constituent ethnic nationalities of Nigeria to be recognized and enshrined in a new democratic Nigerian constitution” (Human Rights Watch 1999).

- Hewitt and Cheetham (2000: 217) claim that the Ogoni movement became secessionist under Ken Saro-Wiwa. The same is suggested by Ezetah (1996: 818), who writes that none of the Ogoni documents articulated a claim for secession but that certain activities and conduct strongly implied that there was a fight for secession (designing a flag, national anthem, and Saro Wiwas designation as Ogoni President).
- However, these are the only two sources that would support a secessionist claim. Notably, a 1996 New York Times article written by the Secretary General of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization clarifies that the perceived secessionist nature of MOSOP is wrong and used only by the federal government to justify military operations in Ogoniland. Ken Saro-Wiwa and other leaders of MOSOP “consistently emphasized that the movement was not secessionist” (New York Times 1996).
- In 2012, MOSOP organized a referendum in which 813,000 voters (98% of the electorate) allegedly supported the establishment of an autonomous Ogoni Central Indigenous Authority (OCIA) (Center for World Indigenous Studies 2012). In the same year, the president of MOSOP, Goodluck Diigbo, proclaimed “political autonomy for the self-determination or self-government of the Ogoni people within Nigeria” (Premium Times 2012a, 2012b).
- MOSOP continued to make claims for autonomy after 2012 (Daily Independent 2014; The Sun 2017. PM News 2020).
- Overall, while some sources suggest a secession claim, the evidence collected overall supports an autonomy claim. We code an autonomy claim and not a sub-state secession claim because we found no clear evidence that the Ogoni would have made demands for a separate Ogoni state, but only for an autonomous region. [1990-2020: autonomy claim]

### **Independence Claims**

NA

### **Irredentist claims**

NA

### **Claimed territory**

- Ogoni demands concern their homeland, Ogoniland, which lies in the Niger Delta in south-central Nigeria (Roth 2015: 245). We code this claim based on Roth (2015: 240).

### **Sovereignty declarations**

- Minahan (2016: 483) suggests that an independent Ogoni Republic was declared in 2012. This is corroborated by other sources; however, most sources speak of “political autonomy” or “self-government” (e.g., Premium Times 2012a, b). [2012: autonomy declaration]

## **Separatist armed conflict**

- Although the Ogoni have been involved in communal conflict since 1990 and have been the victims of severe government repression (2,000 Ogoni are reported to have been killed by the Nigerian army and police), these are not considered separatist violence. MOSOP engaged in separatist violence from 2006-2012, but fatalities do not qualify for an LVIOLSD classification, and thus the movement is coded NVIOLSD. [NVIOLSD]

## **Historical context**

- The Ogoni lived in six autonomous kingdoms for centuries. With the arrival of the Europeans in Nigeria in the late fifteenth century, the Ogoni fell victims to the slave trade. The Europeans explored Ogoniland in the 1700s. The Ogoni took advantage of missionaries' education and were particularly receptive for Christianity, which gained foothold in the six Ogoni kingdoms in the 1830s (Minahan 2002: 1445).
- The Ogoni homeland was incorporated into the British Oil Rivers Protectorate in 1884. However, the Ogoni remained autonomous until 1914, when the British consolidated their territory into the Nigerian Protectorate (Minorities at Risk). The British started to use the designation "Ogoni" in 1947, after the different tribes and kingdoms of the area had started to see themselves as one nation (Minahan 2002: 1446).
- Between amalgamation in 1914 and independence in 1960, Nigeria had four constitutions: The Clifford Constitution (1922), the Richards Constitution (1946), the Macpherson Constitution (1951) and the Lyttleton Constitution (1954). The Richards Constitution of 1946 created the three regions (north, east, west), which later also became self-governing with the passing of the Lyttleton Constitution in 1954 (Mathews 2002: 156). In 1960, Nigeria gained independence from Britain. The newly independent country consisted of the Northern Region, the Western Region, and the Eastern Region. The three regions were given significant autonomy over internal affairs in the 1960 constitution (Diamond 1988: 72f). The creation of the three regions also meant that the Ogoni homeland would be integrated into the Ibo-dominated Eastern Region (Minahan 2002: 1446).
- Prior to the onset of the Ogoni movement, there were several rounds of federal reorganizations that created new states in 1967, 1976, and 1987. The most relevant for the Ogoni was the 1967 reorganization, when the Eastern Region was divided into the South-Eastern State, East-Central State, and Rivers State. The large majority of the Ogoni were incorporated into the Rivers State. The new state was multiethnic but the Ijaw were the dominant group, while the Ogoni only made up around 12% of the state population. According to Watts (2001: 194), there were several influential Ogoni state politicians and at times the Ogoni managed to be disproportionately represented in Rivers State politics (e.g. in 1993, 30% of the Commissioners in the Rivers State Cabinet were Ogoni).

## **Concessions and restrictions**

NA

## **Regional autonomy**

- According to Watts (2001: 194), the Ogoni at times were disproportionately represented in state politics. In 1993, for example, despite only representing 12% of the state population, 30% of the Commissioners in the Rivers State Cabinet were Ogoni. The Ogoni had "produced since 1967 a cadre of influential and well-placed politicians". However, for the period of genuine regional autonomy (from 1999 onwards), we could not find evidence of significant Ogoni representation in the state government.

## De facto independence

NA

## Major territorial changes

NA

## EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Ogoni
<i>Scenario</i>	1:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Ogoni
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	47504000

## Power access

- We follow EPR. [1990-1991: powerless; 1992-1998: discriminated; 1999-2020: powerless]

## Group size

- We follow EPR. [0.005]

## Regional concentration

- The Ogoni homeland (Ogoniland) lies in the Niger Delta region in southern Nigeria. According to Minahan (2002: 1444), the Ogoni make up 89% of the population (625,000) in this territory, hence a clear majority. These 89% are almost the entire Ogoni population of Nigeria. Hence, both criteria are fulfilled and we code the Ogoni as concentrated. [regionally concentrated]

## Kin

- Minahan (2002: 1444) mentions “sizeable Ogoni communities” in the United Kingdom, Canada, and other African states. However, we could not find evidence that any of these communities are large enough to be coded here. This is in line with MAR and EPR, which also do not code ethnic kin outside of Nigeria. [no kin]

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## **Oron**

Activity: 1999-2020

### **General notes**

- The Orons are located in the Niger Delta in Nigeria; most Orons live in the Cross River and Akwa Ibom States.

### **Movement start and end dates**

- Several Oron organizations claim increased control over the natural resources and a separate Oron state. The earliest evidence for separatist activity we found is in 1999, when a couple of Oron organizations including the Oron National Forum and the Oron Youth Movement proclaimed the Oron Bill of Rights. The Oron Bill of Rights, among other things, demands a separate Oron state (General and Representative Assembly of the Oron Indigenous Ethnic Linguistic Nationality 1999; Marshall & Gurr 2003).
- The Oron Youth movement have been particularly active in recent years rallying around claimed marginalization of Oron youth in access to political representation and avenues for economic advancement and opportunities. Examples of continued activity can be seen in a 2020 July protest by Oron youth leaders (Today News Now 2020) as well as continued calls for increased access to power and autonomy (Vanguard 2019). [start date: 1999; end date: ongoing]

### **Dominant claim**

- The Oron Bill of Rights, which was proclaimed by the Oron National Forum and the Oron Youth Movement and which is the basis of Oron self-determination activities, lists eleven demands, among which also the demand that “the Oron Nation must be made a state within the Niger Delta Region” and that “every region should control its resources 100% from which it will allocate funds for running the central government” (General and Representative Assembly of the Oron Indigenous Ethnic Linguistic Nationality 1999). Hutchful and Aning (2004: 213) confirm that the Oron seek autonomy within Nigeria and are not secessionist. We code an autonomy claim in 1999 and sub-state secession claim after that because Nigeria re-federalized in 1999.
- In recent years, Oron mobilization has continued (Today’s News Now 2021), with claims among other things related to ownership of natural resources such as oil (The Will Nigeria 2021). We continue to code a sub-state secession claim while noting that it is not fully clear to what extent the movement still makes a claim for their own state and to what extent they would be happy with autonomy at sub-state level. [1999: autonomy claim; 2000-2020: sub-state secession claim]

### **Independence claims**

NA

### **Irredentist claims**

NA

### **Claimed territory**

- Oron claims for autonomy concern their homeland, which is composed of five Local Government Areas in Akwa Ibom State (Mbo, Oron, Okobo, Urue-offong Oruko, and Udung Uko) and one in Cross River State, namely Bakassi (Oron National Forum 1999). In 2008, Nigeria transferred the Bakassi peninsula completely to Cameroon, and we therefore do not include this territory anymore starting from 2009. In addition, the Oron Bill of Rights calls for the return of the Stubbs and Widenham creek forests to the Oron Nation. The latter area coincides with the Ibeno and Esit Eket districts within Akwa Ibom (Ogar 2016). We code these claims based on the Global Administrative Areas database (GADM 2019).

### **Sovereignty declarations**

NA

### **Separatist armed conflict**

- No violence was found, and thus the entire movement is coded NVIOLSD. [NVIOLSD]

### **Historical context**

- Between amalgamation in 1914 and independence in 1960, Nigeria had four constitutions: The Clifford Constitution (1922), the Richards Constitution (1946), the Macpherson Constitution (1951) and the Lyttleton Constitution (1954). The Richards Constitution of 1946 created the three regions (north, east, west), which later also became self-governing with the passing of the Lyttleton Constitution in 1954 (Mathews 2002: 156). In 1960, Nigeria gained independence from Britain. The newly independent country consisted of the Northern Region, the Western Region, and the Eastern Region. The three regions were given significant autonomy over internal affairs in the 1960 constitution (Diamond 1988: 72f). The creation of the three regions also meant that the Oron homeland would be integrated into the Ibo-dominated Eastern Region (Minahan 2002: 1446). This decrease in self-determination from an “independent, sovereign nation for hundreds of years” (Oron Bill of Rights 1999) to an ethnic group in a state governed by another ethnic group constitutes a prior restriction, though it is not within ten years of the movement emerging and therefore not coded.
- In 1970, Oron became a Division and in 1976 was made a Local Government Area (LGA). In 1989, the Oron LGA was again split up into three LGAs: Mbo, Oron and Okobo. In 1991 and 1996, two new LGAs (Urue-Offong/Oruko and Udung Uko) were carved out of the Oron LGA. These events did not significantly affect the level of Oron self-determination.

### **Concessions and restrictions**

NA

### **Regional autonomy**

NA

### **De facto independence**

NA



## Major territorial changes

NA

## EPR2SDM

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

## Power access

- The Oron are not coded in EPR. We could not find evidence that would justify a coding different from “powerless”: The Oron are marginalized but there is no evidence of active discrimination. In the Oron Bill of Rights it is stated that “no Oron man has ever been appointed or elected a governor of a state and from 1984 till date, none of our sons and daughters has been deemed fit to hold ministerial position.” While this may be a biased assessment, we indeed could not find any evidence of Oron representation in Nigerian central executive organs, which is why we code them as powerless for the entire period of separatist activity. [1999-2020: powerless]

## Group size

- Estimates of the ethnic Oron population differ. According to the Joshua Project, there are 131,000 Oron people in Nigeria, but no exact year is indicated. By contrast, Olson (1996: 468) estimates that the number of Oron exceeds 200,000. Other sources indicate even larger numbers whereas Ethnologue suggests that there were merely 75,000 Oro speakers in 1989. We draw on Olson’s estimate of 200,000 Oron, combining it with the World Bank’s estimate of Nigeria’s population in 2006 (111 mio). [0.0018]

## Regional concentration

- We could not find information on the percentage of Oron people living in certain areas. However, there are two factors that make territorial concentration as we define it unlikely. First, there are significant numbers of Oron on the Bakassi peninsula, which was part of Nigeria until 2008 and which is not contiguous with the rest of the Oron territory in Akwa Ibom State. Second, the small number of Oron and the presence of significant numbers of Ibibio, Annang, Eket, and Obolo on their territory makes it unlikely that they are a majority in any given territory. Based on these two considerations, we code them as not concentrated while noting that this case would profit from more research. [not concentrated]

## Kin

- We could not find evidence of a large number of Oron outside of Nigeria. There is a significant Oron population on the Bakassi Peninsula that was transferred to Cameroon in 2008. However, they most likely do not cross our 100,000 threshold required for a group to be coded as kin. Even if we open the spectrum and look at the Oron as a sub-group of the Ibibios, we cannot code the presence of ethnic kin as the Ibibios also do not have kin groups outside Nigeria. [no kin]

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## **Tiv**

Activity: 1960-1976

### **General notes**

NA

### **Movement start and end dates**

- According to Minahan (2002: 1904-1905), Tiv chiefs began to press the British to set up an autonomous Tiv government in the 1940s. Following Minahan, rejection of the plan led to riots and rebellion, with Tiv insurgents attacking both the government and neighboring peoples, in particular the Jukum. In reaction, the British gave in and in 1947 “established the office and title of Tor Tiv, with rights and duties similar to the northern Muslim emirs.” We lack a clearer indication as to when the first separatist demands were made. We code the start date in 1945: Minahan (2002: 1905) reports that the Tiv, along with other non-Muslim northerners, formed the Northern Non-Muslim League in 1945 “to fight for the rights of the tribes living in the region.” The date of formation appears to coincide with the above report on claims for the set-up of an autonomous Tiv government. However, in the data set, we only code the Tiv from 1960, the year of Nigeria’s independence.
- In 1950 the League changed its name to the Middle Zone League (MZL). MZL led a campaign for separation from (Muslim-dominated) northern Nigeria and the formation of a fourth region in Nigeria. In particular, in the late 1950s, the MZL’s president, J.S. Tarka (an ethnic Tiv), publically demanded a separate Middle Belt region separate from the Muslim north. Self-determination activity carried over into independent Nigeria. While Minahan notes a Tiv rebellion in the 1940s, we could not find an indication that the LVIOLSD threshold was met. We found no other reports of separatist violence before 1960, and thus note prior non-violent activity.
- Following the end of the Biafran Civil War in 1970, demands for a separate Tiv state were renewed. In 1976, Benué state was created, a state with a majority Tiv population. With this, the Tiv self-determination movement appears to have come to an end (Minahan 2002: 1906; Hewitt & Cheetham; MRGI), hence the end date.
- MRGI reports that tensions continued in relation to a region called Wukari. According to MRGI, there was intercommunal fighting involving the Tiv and Jokub over control of Wukari. We do not include this dispute because MRGI does not provide clear evidence of claims made vis-à-vis the state, and because we could not find better evidence in other sources. [start date: 1945; end date: 1976]

### **Dominant claim**

- The claim for a separate sub-state was the dominant claim for all years of activity. The Middle Zone League (MZL), a predominantly Tiv movement (Hewitt and Cheetham 2000: 206) established in 1945 as the Northern Non-Muslim League and renamed in 1950, led a campaign for separation from (Muslim-dominated) northern Nigeria and the formation of a fourth region in Nigeria. In the late 1950s, the MZL’s president, J.S. Tarka (an ethnic Tiv), publicly demanded a separate Middle Belt region separate from the Muslim north. This claim for an own sub-state was then transferred into independent Nigeria, where the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC), the successor of the MZL and the Middle Belt Peoples' Party, also demanded “the creation of a Middle Belt state with the same constitutional status as the existing regional governments” (Dudley 1968: 170). According to Minahan (2002: 1905), the UMBC was the dominant representative of the Tiv cause, with 85% of Tiv votes in the pre-independence elections. The claim for an own sub-state is also confirmed by the Minority Rights Group International, which also states that the Tiv “attempt to create a separate region”. A claim for sub-state secession is

only coded when it refers to a separation from an already autonomous entity to establish a separate autonomous unit or to join another autonomous unit, and Nigerian states lost much of their autonomy in 1966, so we code an autonomy claim thereafter. [1960-1966: sub-state secession claim; 1967-1976: autonomy claim]

### **Independence claims**

NA

### **Irredentist claims**

NA

### **Claimed territory**

- The United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) initially called for an autonomous Middle Belt state. This territory also included the population of other ethnic groups, and was supposed to be a separate region from the former Hausa-Fulani dominated Northern Region in Nigeria. The claim changed after 1966, when the Tiv started to agitate for a smaller, Tiv dominated territory. In 1967 the Benué-Plateau State was created, which in 1976 split into the Plateau State and the Benué State, which was created as a Tiv dominated homeland (Minahan 2002: 1905f; Ukase 2013). It is unclear whether Tiv territorial demands were identical to the Benué State, but we could not find more specific information on the contours of this claim. We therefore flag this claim as ambiguous, and code it based on the Benué state, with its boundaries at the time, using data from Deiwi et al. (2012).

### **Sovereignty declarations**

NA

### **Separatist armed conflict**

- We found no evidence for violence over self-determination and so code the movement as. [NVIOLSD]

### **Historical context**

- Having lived in fragmented tribes for centuries, the western Tiv were integrated in the Kwararafa empire of the Jukum in the sixteenth century. However, the Jukum state collapsed in the nineteenth century under increasing pressure from the northern Fulani, making the Tiv once again self-governing and later dominated by the Muslim Hausas and Fulani (Minahan 2002: 1903).
- The Tiv territory was among the last territories that came under British control in the late nineteenth century and it was not until the mid-1920s that British control over Tivland was definitely established. The British established a three-tiered system of councils at kindred, clan, and tribal levels (Minahan 2002: 1904).
- In the 1940s, the Tiv chiefs demanded an autonomous Tiv government. According to Minahan, rejection of the plan led to riots and rebellion, with Tiv insurgents attacking both the government and neighboring peoples, the Jukum in particular. The British eventually gave in and in 1947 “established the office and title of Tor Tiv, with rights and duties similar to the northern Muslim emirs” (Minahan 2002: 1905).

- Between amalgamation in 1914 and independence in 1960, Nigeria had four constitutions: The Clifford Constitution (1922), the Richards Constitution (1946), the Macpherson Constitution (1951) and the Lyttleton Constitution (1954). The Richards Constitution of 1946 created the three regions (north, east, west), which later also became self-governing with the passing of the Lyttleton Constitution in 1954 (Mathews 2002: 156). In 1960, Nigeria gained independence from Britain. The newly independent country consisted of the Northern Region, the Western Region, and the Eastern Region. As envisaged by the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954, the three regions were given significant autonomy over internal affairs in the 1960 constitution (Diamond 1988: 72f). The creation of the three regions also meant that the Tiv homeland would be integrated into the Muslim-dominated Northern Region (Minahan 2002: 1905). The marginalization of the Tiv in the government of the northern region led to rioting and severe violence that made the Nigerian government send in troops. Overall, the Tiv's level of self-determination decreased from a self-governing empire to an ethnic group in a state governed by another ethnic group.

### Concessions and restrictions

- In 1967, the Tiv territory became part of the newly established Bedué-Plateau state. We could not find sufficient evidence that would justify coding this event as a concession. A concession is, however, coded in 1976, when Bedué-Plateau was divided and Bedué became a state of its own. In the new state, the Tiv formed "a convincing majority" (Minority Rights Group International), with 73% of the population (Minahan 2002: 1902). We could not find a lot of information on the ethnic affiliation of members of the state government of Bedué, but the election of Aper Aku, an ethnic Tiv, as the state governor of Bedué in 1979 clearly illustrates the influence of the Tiv in the new state. [1976: autonomy concession]

### Regional autonomy

- The two coups of 1966 and the installation of military rule abolished genuine regional autonomy. Political power remained concentrated in the hands of the federal government at the expense of the sub-state entities until the return of genuine federalism in 1999 (Mustapha 2004). Since the Tiv movement had already ended in 1999 and since prior to 1966 the Tiv did not have access to the autonomous government of the Northern Region, we do not code regional autonomy.

### De facto independence

NA

### Major territorial changes

- [1960: host state change (new)]
- In 1976, Bedué became a state of its own. We do not code this as a major change (sub-state separation) because the autonomy of Nigerian regions was limited at the time.

### EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Tiv
<i>Scenario</i>	1:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Tiv
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	47505000

## Power access

- We follow EPR. [1960-1970: powerless; 1971-1976: junior partner]

## Group size

- We follow EPR [0.025]

## Regional concentration

- The Tiv homeland (the state of Beduë, or 'Tivland') lies in the Middle Belt region of east-central Nigeria. According to Minahan (2002: 1902), the Tiv make up 73% of the population of Beduë, hence a clear majority. These 73% are also a majority of the entire Tiv population of Nigeria. Hence, both criteria are fulfilled and we code the Tiv as concentrated. [concentrated]

## Kin

- We could not find evidence of significant Tiv population outside Nigeria. EPR does not code kin and Minahan (2002: 1902) only writes that there are "sizeable Tiv communities [...] in neighboring Cameroon." However, the Joshua Project estimates the Tiv community in Cameroon to number 1,600 people only, hence too small to be coded here. [no kin]

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## **Urhobos**

Activity: 1998-2020

### **General notes**

NA

### **Movement start and end dates**

- The Urhobos live in Delta State amongst the Itsekiris, Ijaws, and other minority groups, but they are the majority ethnic group within Delta State. Since the colonial period, the three groups have been embroiled in ethnic conflict over which group is the true indigene of Warri. However, during the colonial period, Urhobo nationalist groups – the Urhobo General Council and the Urhobo Progress Union – did not aim for self-determination but for greater representation and equal treatment under Britain in comparison to the Itsekiris (Ukiwo and Okonta: 7).
- Towards the late 1990s, however, the Urhobos became active in preventing Itsekiri dominance over the region and proclaimed self-determination on behalf of their ethnic group within Warri over land rights (control of natural resources) as well as language and cultural issues (Edevbie 2000; Ekeh 2007; Frynas 2000; Ibru 2009; Ikelegbe 2001; Obiamah; Ransome-Kuti; Vanguard News 2012).
- The Urhobos are represented by many organizations including the Urhobo Nationalist Movement, the Movement for the Advancement of Urhobo Nation, and the Urhobo National Youth Movement.
- A communiqué on the 1998 First Urhobo Economic Summit states that protests in the 1980s over the “economic enslavement of the oil producing areas and the massive reduction of the application of the principles of derivation” resulted in a slight increase in derivation. However, the Summit indicated that the slight increase in derivation was not enough: “[t]he Summit wishes to replace the principles of derivation with complete ownership and control of oil and gas wealth in our domain as the only way out of forty years of marginalization and deprivation” (Urhobo Historical Society 1998). The Summit also expressed dissatisfaction over environmental pollution as a result of the oil companies, loss of oil jobs to outsiders, and loss of language and culture. It asked for “the immediate establishment of Urhobo Language Centres at Delta State University, Abraka and the College of Education, Warri to propagate Urhobo culture in its entirety and offer scholarship awards for the study of the language” (Urhobo Historical Society 1998).
- Further research indicates that protests in the 1980s were over taxation and not necessarily over land rights. Thus, we code the start date as 1998 to coincide with the First Urhobo Economic Summit.
- The movement has since expanded from land rights and cultural rights into requests for an Urhobo state and more fiscal freedom. In 2009, the Urhobo Progress Union (UPU) submitted a request for the creation of an Urhobo State that “will consist of contiguous Urhobo kingdoms which comprise homogenous communities with common cultural and traditional values” (Ibru 2009). They also requested a return to “the Fiscal Federalism Principle (ownership and control of resources by states), which was the Revenue Allocation Principle in the 1960-63 Nigeria constitution” (Ibru 2009). The request for an Urhobo State was reiterated in 2013 when the Delta monarch called for the creation of a new Delta State that would be an Urhobo state (Vanguard News 2013). Minahan (2016: 443) describes the movement as ongoing as well.
- Additionally, several notable armed groups emerged within the Urhobo ethnic group such as the Urhobo Revolutionary Army (founded in 2009) and the Urhobo Gbagbako (founded in 2015). They make claims for autonomy over natural resources (Vanguard 2015). [start date: 1998; end date: ongoing]

## **Dominant claim**

- The Urhobos initially demanded increased rights over land and natural resources as well as language and cultural issues. These claims were most visible in a 1998 communiqué of the First Urhobo Economic Summit that demanded “complete ownership and control of oil and gas wealth” and “the immediate establishment of Urhobo Language Centres at Delta State University, Abraka and the College of Education, Warri to propagate Urhobo culture in its entirety and offer scholarship awards for the study of the language” (Urhobo Historical Society 1998). [1998-1999: autonomy claim]
- Subsequently, the movement expanded its claim towards more territorial self-determination through an Urhobo state and more fiscal freedom. The demanded Urhobo state should comprise the Local Government Areas of Ethiope West, Ethiope East, Okpe, Sapele, Ughelli North, Ughelli South, and Warri South (Ekeh 2007: 562). This claim was reiterated in 2009, when the Urhobo Progress Union (UPU) submitted a request for the creation of an Urhobo State that “will consist of contiguous Urhobo kingdoms which comprise homogenous communities with common cultural and traditional values”, and in 2013, when the Delta monarch called for the creation of a new Delta State that would be an Urhobo state (Vanguard News 2013). [2000-2020: sub-state secession]

## **Independence claims**

NA

## **Irredentist claims**

NA

## **Claimed territory**

- The territory claimed by the Urhobos consists of the following Local Government Areas in the Delta state: Ethiope West, Ethiope East, Okpe, Sapele, Ughelli North, Ughelli South, and Warri South. We code this claim based on the Global Administrative Areas database (GADM 2019).

## **Sovereignty declarations**

NA

## **Separatist armed conflict**

- The Urhobo have been involved in intercommunal fighting with the Bini (Edo), Ijaw, and the Itsekiris (UCDP/PRIO). As the state is not featured as a combatant in these conflicts, this does not count as separatist violence.
- Recent years saw the formation of several armed groups, including the Urhobo Revolutionary Army. Yet, we could not find evidence for >25 deaths in any year. [NVIOLSD]

## **Historical context**

- The Urhobos migrated from the Benin Empire to the Niger Delta region, where they established twenty-two subcultural units that developed into twenty-two separate kingdoms (Ekeh 2007). The

British annexed the entire coastal districts in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and signed “treaties of protection” with several Urhobo communities (Ekeh 2005).

- Between amalgamation in 1914 and independence in 1960, Nigeria had four constitutions: The Clifford Constitution (1922), the Richards Constitution (1946), the Macpherson Constitution (1951) and the Lyttleton Constitution (1954). The Richards Constitution of 1946 created the three regions (north, east, west), which later also became self-governing with the passing of the Lyttleton Constitution in 1954 (Mathews 2002: 156). In 1960, Nigeria gained independence from Britain. The newly independent country consisted of the Northern Region, the Western Region, and the Eastern Region. As envisaged by the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954, the three regions were given significant autonomy over internal affairs in the 1960 constitution (Diamond 1988: 72f). The creation of the three regions also meant that the Urhobo homeland would be incorporated into the Yoruba-dominated Western Region. According to Mwakikagile (2001), the Yoruba were dominant in the state and were the only group benefiting from the autonomy status of the region.
- In the period from Nigeria independence to the onset of the Urhobo movement in 1998, there were several rounds of federal reorganizations that created new states. In 1963, the Nigerian government created the Mid-Western Region. The new Mid-Western Region consisted of the two provinces, Benin and Delta, and incorporated the entire Urhobo territory. In 1991, the Mid-Western Region (then called Bendel) was divided into two new states: Edo State in the north and Delta State in the south. The establishment of the new state increased the influence of the Urhobos at the regional level. According to Ekeh (2007: 446), the creation of the Delta State has given the Urhobos the status of a majority group in the multi-ethnic new state (50.59% of the population); a status which they “tended to exploit [...] to the fullest.” There are several high-ranking Urhobo politicians in the Delta State government. Felix Ibru, for example, was the second governor of Delta State from 1992 until 1993. We code the creation of Delta State as a prior autonomy concession. [1991: autonomy concession]

### **Concessions and restrictions**

- We code a concession due to the decentralization that started in 1999 with the inception of the Fourth Republic. According to Suberu (2001), 1999 brought the devolution of significant policy-making competences to constituent states and representation of constituent states in the federal government through the establishment of a robust upper legislative chamber. As mentioned above, the majority Urhobos had significant influence on the regional executive (Ekeh 2007: 446), with Felix Ibru being the governor of Delta State from 1992 until 1993 and with ethnic Urhobos holding several other high-level positions in the Delta State government from 1999 onwards. [1999: autonomy concession]

### **Regional autonomy**

- Regional autonomy for the states came with the end of military rule and the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1999. The majority Urhobos had significant influence on the regional executive of Delta State (Ekeh 2007: 446), with Felix Ibru being the governor of Delta State from 1992 until 1993 and with ethnic Urhobos holding several other high-level positions in the Delta State government from 1999 onwards. Following the first of January, we thus code regional autonomy from 2000 onwards. [2000-2020: regional autonomy]

### **De facto independence**

NA

## Major territorial changes

- [1999: establishment of regional autonomy]

## EPR2SDM

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

## Power access

- The Urhobos are the sixth largest ethnic group in Nigeria. However, we found little evidence of Urhobo representation in the national executive beyond two instances. Firstly, Sam Egite Oyovbaire headed the ministry of information in 1991/92 and later Stephen Oru, was minister of Niger Delta Affairs from 2014-2015 (Girardin 2021). Given the Urhobos' limited representation, we code them as powerless. [powerless]

## Group size

- According to Ekeh (2007: 577), the Urhobo population is estimated at 2.3 million. We assume that this estimate refers to 2007. Compared to the total population of Nigeria in that year (147.2 million), this yields a group size of 1.563%. Note: Minahan (2016) also reports a population size of 2.3 million. [0.01563]

## Regional concentration

- According to Ekeh (2007: 446), the Urhobos are the largest ethnic group in Delta State, where they are concentrated in the Local Government Areas of Ethiope West, Ethiope East, Okpe, Sapele, Ughelli North, Ughelli South, Uvwie, and Warri South. They thus fulfill the criterion that the group must make up a majority in a contiguous territory. There are also some Urhobo communities in the states of Bayelsa and Ondo, and some other states. However, these communities do not make up more than 50% of the Urhobo population. The second criterion is thus also fulfilled and we code the Urhobos as concentrated. [regionally concentrated]

## Kin

- We could not find evidence of significant kin groups outside of Nigeria. [no kin]

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## **Yorubas**

Activity: 1966-1967; 1994-2020

### **General notes**

NA

### **Movement start and end dates**

- Yoruba leaders threatened and made preparations for secession in 1966-67. We could not find further separatist activity. While the evidence is not fully conclusive, it appears that the movement ended in 1967. [start date 1: 1966; end date 1: 1967]
- In 1994 the Odua People's Congress, which both promotes the self-determination of the Yoruba and is an ethnic vigilante group, was formed, hence the start date of the second phase of the movement. The OPC continued to advance claims for increased autonomy in subsequent years (Channels TV 2012; Daily Trust 2021; Falola & Oyabade 2010; Hewitt & Cheetham 2000; Minahan 1996, 2002; MAR; Refworld 2006: START). [start date 2: 1994; end date 2: ongoing]

### **Dominant claim**

- The first period of activity is coded due to Yoruba leaders threatening and preparing secession in 1966 and 1967 (Minahan 2002: 2082). [1966-1967: independence claim]
- The second period of activity is coded due to the founding of the Odua People's Congress in 1994. According to its constitution, the OPC was founded to "to ensure maximum self-determination of the people of O'odua" (Human Rights Watch 2003: 5).
- However, there is also a more militant fraction in the OPC that sees autonomy within Nigeria only as the minimum demand and, if such autonomy is not possible, would seek complete independence (e.g., Minahan 2016: 468). Furthermore, in 2011 a Yoruba nationalist group called Apapo Oodua Koya (Aokaya) petitioned the UN to allow a referendum on Yoruba independence; and in 2012 a group of Yoruba activists declared an independent Oduduwa Republic and named a provisional government with a territorial claim encompassing 26 states (Roth 2015: 245).
- However, the dominant claim appears to be for increased autonomy within Nigeria. The claim for autonomy within Nigeria is confirmed by Minahan (2002: 2083), who writes that the Yorubas campaign for autonomy and want to "restore the powerful regional governments of the early independence period". According to Minahan (2002: 2083), only the most militant nationalist favor independence, whereas a majority of Yoruba aim for more autonomy within Nigeria. [1994-2020: autonomy claim]

### **Independence claims**

- The second period of the SDM includes some minor independence claims. This is highlighted by Minahan who identifies the Odua Liberation Movement who proclaimed opposition to federalism and demanded secession from Nigeria in 1999 (Minahan 2002: 2083). Similarly Roth cites the Oodua Peoples Congress made claims for a separate Yoruba republic upon its formation, and in 2011 the Apapo Oodua Koya petitioned the UN to allow for an independence referendum for Yoruba. Therefore, an independence claim can be coded throughout the second period of the SDM. [start date 1: 1966; end date 1: 1967; start date 2: 1994; end date 2: ongoing]

## **Irredentist claims**

NA

## **Claimed territory**

- The territory claimed by the Yoruba is Yorubaland in southwestern Nigeria, which consists of the following regions: Kwara, Lagos, Ondo, Oshun, Oyo, and the western districts of Kogi (Minahan 2002: 2078). We code this claim based on the map in Roth (2015: 240), using the Global Administrative Areas Database (GADM 2019) for polygon definition.

## **Sovereignty declarations**

- In 2012 a group of Yoruba activists declared an independent Oduduwa Republic and named a provisional government with a territorial claim encompassing 26 states (Roth 2015: 245). However, this declaration was made by a relatively marginal group. Therefore, we do not code it.

## **Separatist armed conflict**

- According to UCDP/PRIO, OPC has been involved in inter-ethnic conflicts with several groups including the Hausa, Fulani, and Ibos. Those conflicts emerged for the first time in 1998 and were particularly intense, with 40-100 annual deaths, in 1998-1999, 2002, 2017, and 2021. Consistent with this, Keesing's reports that at least 60 people were killed in 2000 in clashes between the OPC and Hausas and that comparable violence continued through 2003. According to Keesing's, government forces were also involved in those clashes; yet, UCDP/PRIO suggests that OPC was never involved in armed conflict with the government above the 25 deaths threshold. This is the best information we could find and therefore we code NVIOLSD. [NVIOLSD]

## **Historical context**

- Having migrated from the upper Nile, the Yoruba settled their current homeland around 1,000 years ago, where they established several city-states in the eleventh century. Competition among these city-states divided the Yorubas into numerous tribal groups (Minahan 2002: 2080).
- In the seventeenth century, the Yoruba city-states were united by the emerging Oyo Empire, which became one of the largest and most important states in the region. However, civil war and conquest of the Muslim northern states dissolved the Oyo Empire at the end of the eighteenth century. Fleeing Yoruba established numerous smaller states further south (Minahan 2002: 2080).
- The British took over control in Yorubaland in the 1880s (according to MAR in 1861) both by force and by signing treaties of protection. Yorubaland became a British colony in 1901 and established an indirect-rule that retained traditional administrative structures (Minahan 2002: 2081).
- Between amalgamation in 1914 and independence in 1960, Nigeria had four constitutions: The Clifford Constitution (1922), the Richards Constitution (1946), the Macpherson Constitution (1951) and the Lyttleton Constitution (1954). The Richards Constitution created the three regions (north, east, west) and was the forerunner of a federal Nigeria, which until then had had a unitary orientation. However, it was not until the last colonial constitution (Lyttleton Constitution) that autonomy for these regions was put on the table. The Lyttleton Constitution was negotiated during two constitutional conferences in 1953 and 1954. The question of regional autonomy was the crucial issue of the negotiations. The conference eventually accepted a declaration of policy that would "grant to those Regions which desire it full self-government in respect of all matters within the competence of the Regional Government." The constitution also enabled each region to become self-governing at its own pace: As a consequence, the Western and Eastern Region



became autonomous in 1956, the Northern Region only in 1959 (Mathews 2002: 156). In 1960, Nigeria gained independence from Britain. The newly independent country consisted of the autonomous Northern, Western, and Eastern Region. The Yoruba dominated the Western region to the degree of a one-party rule of the Action Group (AG). The granting of regional autonomy started with the 1954 Lyttleton Constitution, we hence do not code it as a prior concession in the ten years before movement onset.

- In 1963, the Nigerian government created the Mid-Western Region from parts of the Western Region. The new region was mostly Edo, not Yoruba (Mathews 2002: 19). According to Nevadomsky (2017), the influence of the Edo in the new state was significant. In 1965, the NCNC had 63 of 65 seats in the Mid-Western House of Assembly. The NCNC was a national party but “represented the parochial interests of the Edo”. The influence of the Edo in the regional executive of the entire Mid-Western Region is thus undisputed. The creation of the Mid-Western Province hence primarily reduced Yoruba dominance over other groups. Yoruba self-determination in the Western Region, where the vast majority of Yorubas lived, remained intact, which is why we do not code a restriction.
- Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, Major General of the Nigerian Army, seized power in an Igbo-led coup on January 15, 1966. With the Unification Decree No. 34, Aguiyi-Ironsi announced the creation of a unitary system of government (Kirk-Greene 1971: 169). The new centralized system aimed to transform the “regions into mere political units” and establish “a unified Civil Service Commission” (Graf 1988: 42). The adjective “Federal” was dropped from the Republic’s name and federal institutions were abolished. We code an autonomy restriction due to the loss of autonomy. [1966: autonomy restriction]
- 2<sup>nd</sup> phase:
  - o The re-imposition of military rule in 1984 (the Second Republic was overthrown on December 31, 1983) and the military regimes of Buhari, Babangida and Abacha reduced autonomy to a minimum (Ejobowah 2000; Mustapha 2004). We thus code a restriction. [1984: autonomy restriction]
  - o In the period of separatist inactivity of the Yoruba, there were two rounds of federal reorganizations that created new states (1987 and 1991). In 1987, the Yoruba territory was not affected by the reorganization and in 1991, Osun State was created from part of the old Oyo State. The Yoruba remained influential in the new state, where they had a demographic majority and significant influence on the regional government with the Yorubas Olagunsoye Oyinlola, Theophilus O Bamigboye, Isiaka Adetunji Adeleke, Leo Segun Ajiborisha being elected governors of the state. The level of Yoruba self-determination was hence not affected, which is why we do not code a restriction.

## Concessions and restrictions

- At the end of July in 1966, a counter-coup killed Aguiyi-Ironsi and put the Northerner Yakubu Gowon in power. According to Forsyth (2001), Gowon reversed Ironsi's abrogation of decentralization. However, it remains unclear in how far the level of regional self-determination really increased under Gowon. Generally, political power remained concentrated in the hands of the federal government at the expense of the sub-state entities (Mustapha 2004). Overall, however, sources suggest that there was some increase in regional self-determination. Kifordu (2011: 79) mentions that Gowon reinstated the Federal Executive Council (FEC) and allowed for a fusion of civilian and military personnel for “the top federal executive portfolios”. Kifordu (2011: 81) described the military regime as a “disorderly amalgamation of centralization and decentralization”. Compared to the previous regime under Aguiyi-Ironsi, who abolished decentralization entirely, this is coded as an increase in the level of self-determination for the regions, among which also the Western Region of the Yoruba. [1966: autonomy concession]
- During the two periods of Yoruba separatist activity, there were several rounds of administrative reorganization that created new regions. Relevant for the Yoruba territory was the reorganization in 1967, which created Lagos from parts of the Western Region, the 1976 reorganization that replaced the Western Region with the states of Ogun, Oyo, and Ondo, and the 1996

reorganization that created the state of Ekiti from parts of Ondo. The Yoruba, however, remained dominant in the new states both demographically and politically. We thus do not a restriction.

- With the end of military rule and the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1999, decentralization returned to the agenda. However, there is disagreement among scholars as regards the federal character of the system: Obiyan and Amuwo (2012: 103) state that President Obasanjo (1999-2007) has turned Nigeria “into a unitary constitutional state where the center reserves the right to remove elected leaders by reckless deployment of soldiers and mobile policeman from the barracks”. Furthermore, the fiscal regime is hyper-centralized and promotes the economic hegemony of the central government. Suberu (2001), on the other hand, emphasizes the federal character of the current system by highlighting the devolution of significant policy-making competences to constituent states and the representation of constituent states in the federal government through the establishment of a robust upper legislative chamber. Further evidence for a federal character comes from the Ethnic Power Relations dataset (Cederman et al. 2010), which codes several groups as regionally autonomous as of 1999. Overall, the sources claiming an increase in regional autonomy are more frequent, which is why we code an autonomy concession in 1999 for the Yorubas, which dominated several south-western states (e.g. Oyo, Ondo, Osun, Ogun, Lagos, Ekiti). [1999: autonomy concession]

### **Regional autonomy**

- The two coups of 1966 and the installation of military rule abolished genuine regional autonomy. Political power remained concentrated in the hands of the federal government at the expense of the sub-state entities (Mustapha 2004). We thus code no autonomy for the first period of activity.
- During the second period of activity (1994-2012), there was significant autonomy for the states as of 1999 (see above). Following the first of January rule, we thus code autonomy from 2000 onwards. [2000-2020: regional autonomy]

### **De facto independence**

NA

### **Major territorial changes**

- [1999: establishment of regional autonomy]

### **EPR2SDM**

<i>Movement</i>	Yorubas
<i>Scenario</i>	1:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Yoruba
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	47506000

### **Power access**

- We follow EPR. [1966: powerless; 1967: junior partner; 1994-1998: powerless; 1999-2007: senior partner; 2008-2020: junior partner]

## Group size

- We follow EPR, which is broadly consistent with Minahan (2016: 468). [0.21]

## Regional concentration

- The Yoruba homeland consists of the states of Kwara, Lagos, Ondo, Osun, Ogun, Oyo, and the western districts of Kogi. In this territory, the Yoruba make up 85% of the population, hence a clear majority. These 85% are almost the entire Yoruba population of Nigeria (Minahan 2002: 2078). Hence, both criteria for territorial concentration are fulfilled. [regionally concentrated]

## Kin

- Several sources code the presence of ethnic kin. Minahan (2002: 2078) mentions around 500,000 Yorubas in the provinces of Xou and Ouème in neighboring Benin. This is confirmed by both MAR and EPR, which also code ethnic kin in Benin. [kin in neighboring country]

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