

Latvia

Vanderbilt

Latvia is considered a democracy from 1920 to 1933. We code the dem variable as zero for 1919 (an unspecified non-democracy) and thus we use a predesignated successor rule for 1919. Latvia declared its independence in 1918, but fought over land with Germany and the Soviet Union until 1920. According to Plakans (1995, 199) a provisional government was created at independence in 1918, which lasted until 1922.

Karlis Ulmanis of the Latvian Farmers' Union (LZS, also known as the Agrarian Union) ruled from 1918 to 1919 as Prime Minister (PM) of the provisional government (Parrott 2002, 149). In April 1919 Oskars Borkovskis, Non-Party, became "acting" PM (Cahoon 2000). Since this is a provisional government, this is not a SOLS change. Weeks later, Andrievs Niedra of the Latvian Green Party (LZP) became PM as head of a "puppet government" (Latvian Institute 2011). "German militarists and the local German landed gentry, who had established their own armed formation (the Landeswehr)... deposed Ulmanis' government, which they considered anti-German, and created a marionette cabinet under the leadership of the pastor Andrievs Niedra" (Latvian Institute 2011). This is a SOLS change because Niedra was not Ulmanis' predesignated successor. "[W]ith help from the Estonians, the Latvian national armed forces gained victory over the Germans on June 23, 1919, in Cēsis, and the Latvian-founded Ulmanis government was able to return to Rīga" (Latvian Institute 2011). In July 1919 Ulmanis, LZS, once again became PM. This should be coded as a SOLS change because Ulmanis was not Niedra's predesignated successor.

Regarding Latvia's regime type, Latvia is considered a parliamentary democracy from 1920 to 1933 (and we code the demo/parl variables for 1919 as zero). On May 1920, the Constitutional Assembly which had been composed of elected members held its first session and selected Ulmanis to be a premier by election. Several sources describe this first session of the Constitutional Assembly as the end of the provisional rule (see John 2004, 56; Kortmann et al. 2006, V-4; Plakans 1995, 122; Robbers 2006, 513-14). Thus, we code this Ulmanis government in 1920 as a beginning of the parliamentary democracy in Latvia (it lasted until 1933), although the adoption of its new constitution was on Feb. 15, 1922.¹

Ulmanis' government lost its parliamentary mandate in June 1921, and a new government was formed under Zigfrids Meierovics, also of the LZS (no SOLS change). The first parliamentary elections took place on 7 and 8 October 1922. (During the next 12 years until 1934, three other parliamentary elections took place (in 1925, 1928 and 1931) (Zake 2005, 99)). In January 1923 Janis Pauluks, LZS, became PM. This is not a SOLS change because Pauluks has the same party affiliation as the prior leader. In June 1923 Meierovics, LZS, resumed his post as PM. This is not a SOLS change. In January 1924 Voldemars Zamuels of the Democratic Center Party (DC) became PM. This is a SOLS change. In December 1924 Hugo Celmins, LZS, became PM. This is a SOLS change. In 1925 Ulmanis, LZS, once again became PM. This is not a SOLS change. In May 1926 Artur Alberings, LZS, became PM. This is not a SOLS change. In December 1926 Margers Skujenieks of the United Latvian Social-Democratic Menshevik Workers' Party (ALSMSP-LS) became PM. This is a SOLS change. In January 1928 Peteris Jurasevskis, DC, became PM. This is a SOLS change. In December 1928 Celmins, LZS, once again assumed the

¹ POLITY does not have data before 1920. Latvia's POLITY score is 7 from Feb. 1, 1920 to May 17, 1934, although there are several individual spells.

post of PM. This is a SOLS change. In March 1931 Ulmanis, LZS, once again became PM. This is not a SOLS change. In December 1931 Margers Skujenieks of the Progressive Union (PA) became PM. This is a SOLS change. In 1933 Adolfs Blodnieks of the New Farmers and Small Landowners' Party (JSP) became PM. This is a SOLS change.

Blodnieks' government survived until March 1934, when it was overthrown in a coup led by Ulmanis (LZS). This is a SOLS change. Ulmanis then established a personalist government. The legislature was dissolved, and Ulmanis assumed full control over legislative powers, and all political parties including his own party (LZS) were disbanded (Jungerstam-Mulders 2006, 52; Latvianhistory.wordpress.com). Since Ulmanis ceased to use his LZS party affiliation following the coup and we did not find clear evidence that LZS functioned as his political support base after 1934, we code his SOLS as Non-Party.

From 1934 until 1940, when Latvia became occupied by the Soviet Union, the country is considered authoritarian. In 1940 Augusts Kirhensteins of the Latvian Working People's Bloc (LDTB) became PM. This is a SOLS change.

Latvia is coded as a parliamentary democracy from independence in 1991 until 2008. Ivars Godmanis of the Latvian People's Front (LTF) served as PM at the time of independence. There is no SOLS change at independence. In 1993 Valdis Birkavs of the Union Latvia's Way (LC) party (liberal) became PM in coalition with the Latvian Farmers' Union (LZS) (centrist). This is a SOLS change. In 1994 Maris Gailis, also of the LC, became PM in coalition with the Political Union of Economists (TPA). This is a minor SOLS change.

The 1995 elections "resulted in a deeply fragmented parliament with nine parties represented and the largest party commanding only 18 of 100 seats. Attempts to form right-of-center and leftist governments failed; seven weeks after the election, a broad but fractious coalition government of six of the nine parties was voted into office under Prime Minister Andris Skele, a popular, nonpartisan businessman" (U.S. Department of State 2012). Similarly, WKB lists a six-party coalition government (DPS, LC, TB, LNNK-ZP, LZS-LKDS-LLDP, LV). (Note: The IPU suggests that Skele became PM overseeing an eight-party coalition but doesn't list the parties (Inter-Parliamentary Union Database)). This is a SOLS change.

After the Skele government began to disintegrate, losing several ministers, Skele announced resignation at the end of 1997. The President invited Guntars Krasts of the Apvieniba Tevzemei un Brivibai-Latvijas Nacionalas Neatkaribas Kustiba (TB-LNNK, also known as Union For Fatherland and Freedom-Latvian National Independence Movement, a merger of the UFF and LNNK) to become PM. He took over in coalition with four other parties: Democratic Party Saimnieks (DPS), Latvia's Way (LC), Farmers Union (LZS), and Christian Democrats (KDS, for Kristīgi demokrātiskā savienība; also called Christian Democratic Union for Latvia or CDUL) (Morris 2004, 551; Europa World Yearbook 2, 2578). This is a SOLS change.

In 1998 Vilis Kristopans, LC, became PM in coalition with TB/LNNK and the New Party (JP). This is a SOLS change. In early February 1999, the Social Democrats joined the coalition (Europa World Yearbook, 2578). This is a minor SOLS change. On February 3, 1999, Andris Skele of the People's Party (TP), became PM in coalition with LC and TB-LNNK (Europa World Yearbook, 2578). This is a SOLS change.

In mid April, Skele resigned after Latvian Way (LC) left the coalition. On May 5, 2000 Andris Berzins, LC, became PM in coalition with three other parties: the three parties of the previous coalition (The Economist 2000). These were the TP, TB-LNNK, and the JL (Europa World Yearbook, 2578-9). This is a SOLS change.

In 2002, Einars Repse of the Partija Jaunais Laiks (JL, also known as the New Era Party) became PM in coalition with the Union of Greens and Farmers (ZZS), Latvia First Party (LPP), and TB/LNNK. This is a SOLS change. This coalition fell apart “when the JL withdrew in protest at a vote-buying scandal in municipal elections involving the LPP” (Inter-Parliamentary Union Database). Alternately, The Economist (2004) claims: “After Einars Repse, the prime minister, fired Ainars Slesers, his deputy, last week, Mr Slesers’s Latvia First party pulled out of the coalition, leaving it with a minority in parliament.”

A new coalition headed by Indulis Emsis, ZZS, was formed in March 2004 comprised of ZZS, LPP and the People’s Party (TP). This is a SOLS change. Emsis resigned and, later in 2004, Aigars Kalvitis, TP, became PM leading a coalition consisting of TP/ZZS/LPP/JL. This is a SOLS change because although the coalition remained unchanged, the party of the PM changed. Elections in 2006 led to the second PMship on Kalvitis. There are two minor SOLS changes as JL left the previous coalition and Kalvitis then formed a coalition government involving the TP, the ZZS, the LPP-LC, and the TB/LNNK, which assumed office November 7, 2006 (IPU).

In 2007 Ivars Godmanis, LC, became PM in coalition with the TP, ZZS, and the TB-LNNK (“Latvia country brief.”). While this is essentially the same coalition as that of Kalvitis, we code a SOLS change here. Kalvitis and Godmanis are from different parties.

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