

Australia

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Australia is coded as a democracy between 1920 and 1945. While we do not have Cheibub et al. coding for the specific subtype of democracy, Australia should be considered a parliamentary democracy throughout this period (Weller 2007). Throughout the period under investigation, the social democratic Australian Labor (ALP) and (since 1923) a coalition of the conservative Nationalist Party (NP; later United Australia Party – UAP; and Liberal party -- LP) and the conservative agrarian Australian Country Party (ACP; later National Country Party – NCP; and National Party of Australia -- NPA) alternate control of the government.

In 1919, Australia was governed by the Nationalist Party under the leadership of Hughes. Following elections of 1922, Hughes' nationalist party did not gain enough seats to establish a single party government and sought a coalition with the Country Party (ACP). As Hughes was unacceptable to the ACP, Bruce became Prime Minister of the NP/ACP coalition (minor SOLS change) that would govern through most of the 1920s. In 1929, following elections, Bruce was replaced by Scullin of the Labor Party (ALP). This is a SOLS change (Weller 2007; Sartori 2005; National Archives 2011).

Scullin in turn was replaced by United Australia Party (UAP – previously NP) headed by Lyons as PM in 1932. This is another SOLS change. In 1934, the UAP entered into a coalition with the ACP (minor SOLS change). When Lyons died in office, Earle Page (ACP) serves as caretaker PM for the UAP/ACP coalition for 20 days. This is not SOLS change. When Menzies subsequently became PM, Page refused to serve under Menzies and withdrew the ACP from the government. Menzies thereafter headed a UAP (now called LP) minority government that was not reliant on ACP support (minor SOLS change). Following the start of the war, the ACP reentered the coalition in March 1940, which is another minor SOLS change coded on March 14 (see Davey 2008: 35-36, Weller 2007: 193, Sartori 2005, National Archives 2011).

Menzies failure to create a government of national unity led him to step down in 1941. The successor to Menzies' cabinet was Fadden of the ACP in coalition with the LP. This is a SOLS change. Fadden was defeated in parliament within six weeks, lost the ACP/LP majority and Labor returned to power under the leadership of Curtin (2nd SOLS change). Curtin remained in power until his death in 1945.

Following the death of ALP premier Curtin, Forde, also ALP, became PM for 8 days before Chifley became prime minister for the ALP in 1945 (See "Francis Forde" National Archives of Australia; "Australian Governments: 1939-1945").

In 1949, he was replaced as PM by Menzies from the LP and Menzies headed a LP/CNT coalition until 1966 (WKB). This is a SOLS change in 1949. In 1966, Holt (LP) took over the LP/CNT coalition. No SOLS change. The LP/CNT coalition would then further remain in power until 1972 under various PMs. All of the LP/CNT coalitions in the 1945-2008 period were headed by an LP politician, with the exception of the coalition by McEwen. McEwen briefly became acting Prime Minister for the LP/CNT coalition from December 1967 until January 1968, following the death of Holt (Woldendorp, worldstatesmen.org). McEwen's premiership was not coded as a SOLS change since he was an acting PM. No SOLS changes occurred between 1949 and 1972, i.e. the time period for LP/CNT governance.

In 1972, the ALP took over again under PM Whitlam. This is a SOLS change. In 1975, the ALP lost the election and Fraser from the LP/CNT coalition became PM. This is a SOLS change. The next SOLS change occurred when the ALP returned to government in 1983 under

Hawke. Hawke began a long spell of ALP rule that was not broken until 1996, when Howard (LP) won the elections and formed a LP/NP coalition. This is a SOLS change. In 2007, Rudd (ALP) becomes PM. This is a SOLS change.

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