Ukraine
Rice

Ukraine achieved independence in 1991 after the coup confusion in Moscow. The leader of the Supreme Soviet in Ukraine, Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk, radically reversed his personal views upon independence. He resigned from the Communist Party and was elected the first president of Ukraine as an independent candidate. His term lasted until 1994.

Kravchuk ran for the presidency again in the 1994 elections, however, he was defeated by another independent, Leonid Danylovych Kuchma. This leadership transition is coded as a SOLS change because, while the men were not from different parties as both were independent, they relied on a clearly shifting basis of support in the electorate. Kuchma stayed in power for two five-year terms.

In 2005, elections that put Kuchma's heir apparent in the presidency were regarded as almost universally corrupt and fraudulent. The following weeks of massive protests and demonstrations are referred to as the Orange Revolution, and they culminated in a reelection that instated Viktor Yushchenko in power (the man believed to be the true victor in the fraudulent original elections), and a SOLS change was coded for his presidency. He led a political party operating under two different names: the Bloc Our Ukraine Party (BYNU) and the Our Ukraine Party (NU).

Viktor Yanukovych was elected president in 2010 (Harding 2010). In late 2013, Yanukovych rejected a trade deal with the EU, instead opting for closer ties with Russia, which led to many protests. In February 2014, Parliament voted to remove Yanukovych and hold presidential elections in May (BBC News 2014a). Oleksandr Valentynovych Turchynov was appointed as interim PM (Walker 2014). Petro Oleksiyovych Poroshenko was elected president in the May 2014 elections (BBC News 2014b). In 2014, Ukraine transitioned to a non-democracy, so we use the predesignated successor rule to identify SOLS changes. The transition from Yanukovych to Turchynov is not coded as a SOLS change as Turchynov is considered an interim leader. The transition from Turchynov to Poroshenko is coded as a SOLS change because Poroshenko was not the predesignated successor of Yanukovych and was not part of Yanukovych's Party of Regions (Gardner 2016).

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