

## **Belarus**

### **Vanderbilt**

Belarus is coded as a democracy from independence in 1991 until 1995. Interestingly, neither Cheibub et al. (2010) nor GWF considered Belarus to be a democracy during this time. Cheibub et al. have not provided data on democratic regime type and GWF has coded the country as a party-based authoritarian regime from 1992 to 1994, and then a separate personalist authoritarian regime from 1995 continuing until 2008. Since we code these early years as democratic, supplemental sources were used to determine that from 1991 through 1993 Belarus was a parliamentary democracy and that in 1994 it was a presidential democracy (Silitski 2003; Fish 2001). Starting in 1995 we also code the country as authoritarian until 2008. Fortunately, the discrepancy in regime type coding in the early 1990s does not affect the SOLS coding since there were no leader changes: Stanislav Shushkyevich (Shushkevich), Non-Party, served as Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, until 1994.

Shushkyevich was in conflict with the conservative parliament and when he also lost support from the reformists in 1994, his government fell (Europa Publications 2002, 134). Shushkyevich was ousted with a vote of no-confidence and Vyacheslav Kuznyetsov (Kuznyatsou), Non-Party, became acting Chairman for two days in late January. This is not a SOLS change since Kuznyetsov was an interim leader. Kuznyetsov was replaced by Myechyslaw Hryb (US Library of Congress 1995), who served less than six months. This is coded as a SOLS change. Unlike Shushkyevich who were a reformer, Hryb was pro-Soviet conservative (see Europa Publications 2002: 134; Brzezinski and Sullivan 1997:788; Tsygankov 2001:135; Wilson 2011:158ff) (Note: by our rule Belarus is democratic during this period. Thus, we do not follow GWF coding here).

Aleksandr Lukashenko became president after he won the country's first post-Soviet elections (Way 2005, 251) in mid-1994. This is a SOLS change because his rule represents a break with the previous personalist regime. He established a separate personalist regime and ruled through 2008.

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