Worldwide Governance Indicators 2023 Update:
Changes in Underlying Source Data

September 29, 2023

This note describes revisions to the source data used in the current 2023 update of the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI). The 2023 WGI update covers the period 1996-2022, while the previous 2022 WGI update covered the period 1996-2021. In addition to providing new data for calendar year 2022, the 2023 WGI update includes the following changes to the source data used to construct the indicators through 2021.

1. **Afrobarometer (AFR)**. As of July 2023, Afrobarometer Round 8 is now complete and a new master dataset covering all 34 countries surveyed in Round 8 is now available on the Afrobarometer website. The previous WGI update used the data available as of July 2022, covering 26 countries. We use this master dataset to repopulate the WGI data calendar years 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 for all 34 countries. This introduces a few changes in the historical data for 2019, 2020, and 2021:
   a. We now have Afrobarometer data for 8 additional countries for 2019, 2020, and 2021.
   b. For a few countries, there are slight differences in the sampling weights in the master dataset and the data provided in previous years. The most recent sampling weights from the Round 8 master dataset are now used.
   c. There are slight changes in the data for the Trust in Parliament question in the master dataset relative to the data available in the Afrobarometer website in 2022. The most recent data from the Round 8 master dataset are now used for all countries.
   d. There was an error in our processing of the data for the question Satisfaction with Democracy in the Round 8 data used in the 2022 WGI update, relating to incorrect assignment of response codes to response categories. This error has been corrected in the 2023 WGI update.

   Overall, the corrections in (c) and (d) have only minor effects on the WGI input data, as the Voice and Accountability indicator from Afrobarometer is the average of four questions, of which only two have been corrected: for the 26 countries covered in the 2022 WGI update, the correlation between the old and corrected Afrobarometer data is 0.95. The overall effect of the changes (a)-(d) noted above is that there are some very small changes in the Voice and Accountability, Government Effectiveness, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption indicators for 2019-2021.

2. **Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI)**. In the 2022 WGI update, we use advance access data from the 2024 Bertelsmann Transformation Index kindly provided to us by BTI. BTI has also introduced a revision to their historical data, with a change in their coding rules for their "Steering Capability" variables that we use as a component of Government Effectiveness. This has minor effects on the WGI input data for Government Effectiveness for 2003-2019, resulting in corresponding very minor changes in this aggregate indicator during these years.

3. **Human Rights Measurement Initiative (HRM)**. Each annual update of the HRM dataset includes their revisions to data for previous years. Accordingly, we also update the WGI component data from this source for all years since 2017 when it first appears in the WGI. This introduces some minor changes to the aggregate indicators Voice and Accountability and Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism for the years 2017-2021.

4. **Political Terror Scale (HUM)**. At the time of the 2022 WGI update, data from the Political Terror Scale was only available through 2020, and so we used the 2020 data for 2020 and 2021. At the time of the 2023 WGI update, data from this source for 2021 is available. We use this data for 2021, and also carry it forward for 2022. This revision affects only the Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism indicator for 2021.

5. **IHS Global Insight (WMO).** The 2023 WGI update includes two changes to the historical data from this source:

    a. Due to a data processing error on our part, the 2019, 2020, and 2021 data from this source incorrectly assigned data from the Democratic Republic of Congo to the Republic of Congo. This error has been corrected in the 2023 WGI update, resulting in small increases in scores on Political Stability and Absence of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption for the Republic of Congo. The data for the Democratic Republic of Congo were correct and have not been changed.

    b. Starting in 2015, WMO began reporting data for five additional countries: Marshall Islands, Monaco, Nauru, Palau, and San Marino. The data for these countries was inadvertently not incorporated in the WGI over this period. With this update of the WGI, we include the data for these five countries since 2015. This affects the aggregate indicators Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption. For some countries/indicators/years, this results in substantial changes in the point estimates of governance, mostly because WGI estimates are based on a very small number of data sources for these small countries. The small number of data sources also means that the standard errors associated with the estimates are large for these countries. Taking these standard errors into account, the only statistically significant (in the sense of non-overlapping 90 percent confidence intervals for the original and revised estimates of governance) revisions to the historical data are increases in Government Effectiveness for the Marshall Islands in 2015 and 2016.

Because of these revisions to data from previous years, this update of the entire WGI dataset supersedes previous versions for all years – as is the case with each annual update of the WGI. For reference, previous years' versions of the full WGI dataset can be downloaded at www.govindicators.org (Documentation tab, section on WGI data sources).

For questions about the 2023 WGI Update, please contact Aart Kraay (akraay@worldbank.org).