



CASES IN

# COMPARATIVE POLITICS



SIXTH EDITION



PATRICK H. O'NEIL | KARL FIELDS | DON SHARE

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# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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# PREFACE

*Cases in Comparative Politics* can be traced to an ongoing experiment undertaken by the three comparative political scientists in the Department of Politics and Government at the University of Puget Sound. Over the years the three of us spent much time discussing the challenges of teaching our introductory course in comparative politics. In those discussions we came to realize that each of us taught the course so differently that students completing our different sections of the course did not really share a common conceptual vocabulary. Over several years we fashioned a unified curriculum for Introduction to Comparative Politics, drawing on the strengths of each of our particular approaches.

All three of us now equip our students with a common conceptual vocabulary. All of our students now learn about states, nations, and different models of political economy. All students learn the basics about nondemocratic and democratic regimes, and they become familiar with characteristics of communist systems and advanced democracies. In developing our curriculum, we became frustrated trying to find cases that were concise, sophisticated, and written to address the major concepts introduced in Patrick H. O’Neil’s textbook *Essentials of Comparative Politics*. Thus, we initially coauthored six cases adhering to a set of criteria:

- Each case is concise, making it possible to assign an entire case, or even two cases, for a single class session.
- All cases include discussion of major geographic and demographic features, themes in the historical development of the state, political regimes (including the constitution, branches of government, the electoral system, and local government), political conflict and competition (including the party system and civil society), society, political economy, and current issues. This uniform structure allowed us to assign specific sections from two or more cases simultaneously.
- The cases follow the general framework of *Essentials of Comparative Politics*, but can also be used in conjunction with other texts.

After the publication of the initial six cases (the United Kingdom, Japan, China, Russia, Mexico, and South Africa), we received positive feedback from

teachers of comparative politics. Drawing on their comments and suggestions, we wrote new cases to accommodate individual preferences and give instructors more choice. We subsequently added cases on Brazil, France, India, Iran, the United States, and Nigeria. Based on feedback from instructors, the third edition added Germany, bringing the total number of cases to thirteen.

Selecting only thirteen cases is, of course, fraught with drawbacks. Nevertheless, we believe that this collection represents countries that are both important in their own right and representative of a broad range of political systems. Each of the thirteen cases has special importance in the context of the study of comparative politics. Five of our cases (France, Germany, Japan, the United States, and the United Kingdom) are advanced industrial democracies, but they represent a wide range of institutions, societies, political-economic models, and relationships with the world. Japan is an important instance of a non-Western industrialized democracy and an instructive case of democratization imposed by foreign occupiers. Though the United Kingdom and the United States have been known for political stability, France and Germany have fascinating histories of political turmoil and regime change.

Two of our cases, China and Russia, share a past of Marxist-Leninist totalitarianism. Communism thrived in these two large and culturally distinct nations. Both suffered from the dangerous concentration of power in the hands of communist parties and, at times, despotic leaders. The Soviet Communist regime imploded and led to a troubled transition to an authoritarian regime with a capitalist political economy. China has retained its communist authoritarian political system but has experimented with a remarkable transition to a largely capitalist political economy.

The remaining six cases illustrate the diversity of the developing world. Of the six, India has had the longest history of stable democratic rule, but like most countries in the developing world, it has nevertheless struggled with massive poverty and inequality. The remaining five have experienced various forms of authoritarianism. Brazil and Nigeria endured long periods of military rule. Mexico's history of military rule was ended by an authoritarian political party that ruled for much of the twentieth century through a variety of nonmilitary means. South Africa experienced decades of racially based authoritarianism that excluded the vast majority of its population. Iran experienced a modernizing authoritarian monarchy followed by its current authoritarian regime, a theocracy ruled by Islamic clerics.

In this sixth edition we have extensively rewritten and updated each chapter, and we are proud to feature up-to-date photographs and political cartoons, and an all-new comparative data chart at the front of the book.



In writing the cases we have incurred numerous debts. First, and foremost, we wish to thank our wonderful colleagues in the Department of Politics and Government at the University of Puget Sound. By encouraging us to develop a common curriculum for our Introduction to Comparative Politics offering, and by allowing us to team-teach the course in different combinations, they allowed us to learn from each other. These cases are much stronger as a result. The university has also been extremely supportive in recognizing that writing for the classroom is as valuable as writing scholarly publications, and in providing course releases and summer stipends toward that end. Student assistants Brett Venn, Jess Box, Liz Kaster, and Céad Nardi-Warner proved extremely helpful in conducting research for our various cases; Irene Lim has, as always, supported us with her amazing technical and organizational skills. Our colleagues Bill Haltom, Robin Jacobsen, and David Sousa provided very helpful input throughout the project.

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Don Share  
Karl Fields  
Patrick H. O'Neil  
Tacoma, WA 2017

***A note about the data:*** The data that are presented throughout the text in numerous tables, charts, and other figures are drawn from the *CIA World Factbook* unless otherwise noted.

	UNITED KINGDOM	UNITED STATES	FRANCE	GERMANY	JAPAN	RUSSIA
<b>Geographic Size Ranking</b>	80	3	43	63	62	1
<b>Population Size Ranking</b>	22	3	21	18	10	9
<b>GDP per Capita at PPP, \$</b>	\$42,600	\$57,500	\$41,500	\$48,700	\$41,500	\$23,200
<b>GDP per Capita at PPP, Ranking (Estimated)</b>	38	20	39	30	43	71
<b>UN Human Development Index Ranking</b>	16	10	21	4	17	49
<b>Freedom House Rating</b>	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Not free
<b>Transparency International Corruption Score Ranking</b>	10	18	23	10	20	131
<b>Capital City</b>	London	Washington, D.C.	Paris	Berlin	Tokyo	Moscow
<b>Head of State</b>	Queen Elizabeth II	Donald Trump	Emmanuel Macron	Joachim Gauck	Akihito	Vladimir Putin
<b>Head of Government</b>	Theresa May	Donald Trump	Édouard Philippe	Angela Merkel	Shinzō Abe	Dimitri Medvedev
<b>Legislative-executive System</b>	Parliamentary	Presidential	Semi-Presidential	Parliamentary	Parliamentary	Semi-Presidential
<b>Unitary or Federal?</b>	Unitary	Federal	Unitary	Federal	Unitary	Federal
<b>Electoral System for Lower House of Legislature</b>	Single-member districts with plurality	Single-member districts with plurality	Single-member districts with two rounds of voting	Mixed proportional representation and single-member districts with plurality	Mixed proportional representation and single-member districts with plurality	Proportional representation
<b>Political-economic System</b>	Liberal	Liberal	Social democratic	Social democratic	Mercantilist	Mercantilist

CHINA	INDIA	IRAN	MEXICO	BRAZIL	SOUTH AFRICA	NIGERIA
4	7	18	14	5	25	32
1	2	16	11	5	25	7
\$15,500	\$6,600	\$17,000	\$17,900	\$15,100	\$13,200	\$5,900
111	157	91	89	110	117	162
90	131	69	77	79	119	152
Not free	Free	Not free	Partly free	Free	Free	Partly free
79	79	131	123	79	64	136
Beijing	New Delhi	Tehran	Mexico City	Brasília	Pretoria, Cape Town, Bloemfontein	Abuja
Xi Jinping	Ram Nath Kovind	Ali Khamenei	Enrique Peña Nieto	Michel Temer	Jacob Zuma	Muhammadu Buhari
Li Keqiang	Narendra Modi	Hassan Rouhani	Enrique Peña Nieto	Michel Temer	Jacob Zuma	Muhammadu Buhari
Communist Party authori- tarian regime	Parliamentary	Semi-presidential theocracy	Presidential	Presidential	Parliamentary	Presidential
Unitary	Federal	Unitary	Federal	Federal	Unitary	Federal
Not applicable	Single-member districts with plurality	Single- and multimember districts	Mixed proportional representation and single- member districts with plurality	Proportional representation	Proportional representation	Single-member districts with plurality
Mercantilist	Liberal	Mercantilist	Liberal	Liberal	Liberal	Liberal



CASES IN

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**COMPARATIVE  
POLITICS**

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SIXTH EDITION



*Light emissions from North and South Korea. Whereas South Korea has experienced democratization and development over the past fifty years, North Korea remains a much poorer, communist state. What can comparative politics tell us about the different trajectories of North and South Korea?*

# INTRODUCTION

## What Is Comparative Politics?

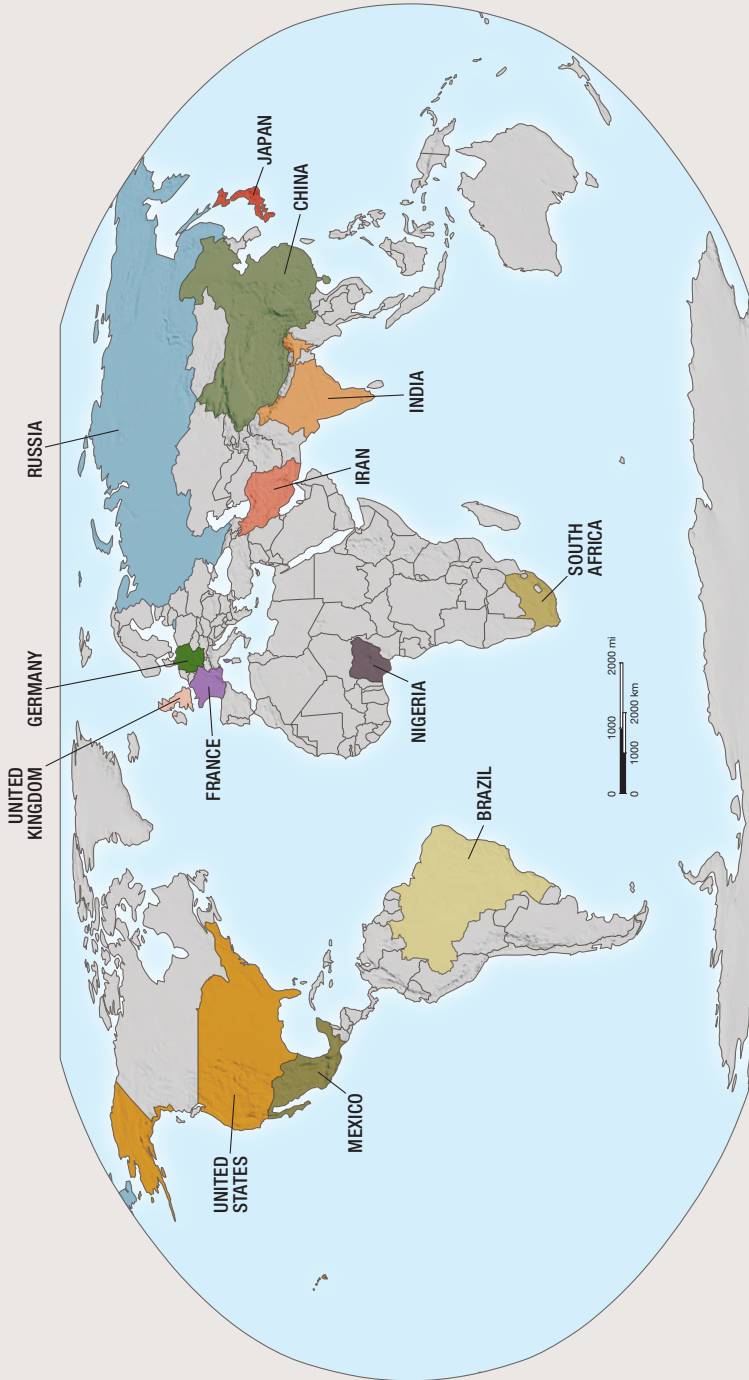
**Comparative politics** is the study and comparison of politics across countries. Studying politics in this way helps us examine major questions of political science: For example, why do some countries have democratic regimes whereas others experience authoritarianism? Why and how do regimes change? Why do some countries experience affluence and growth, but others endure poverty and decline? In this volume, we describe and analyze the political systems of 13 countries. We focus on their major geographic and demographic features; the origins and development of their state; and their political regimes, patterns of political conflict and competition, societies, political economies, and relationships with the world. This brief introduction seeks to familiarize students with the very basic vocabulary of comparative politics. The concepts and terms described here will be extremely useful in an examination of any of the country cases contained in this book. Moreover, this vocabulary is an essential tool for making comparisons *among* the cases.

## Comparing States

**States** are organizations that maintain a monopoly of violence over a territory. The term *state* can be confusing because it sometimes refers to a subnational government (for example, any of the 50 states in the United States). Political scientists, however, use *state* to refer to a national organization. In this book, *state* is used in the latter, broader sense. Still, the concept of state is narrower than the notion of country, which encompasses the territory and people living within a state. As illustrated by our collection of cases, states can differ in many ways, including in origin, length of existence, strength, and historical development.<sup>1</sup> Political



# MAP OF THE WORLD

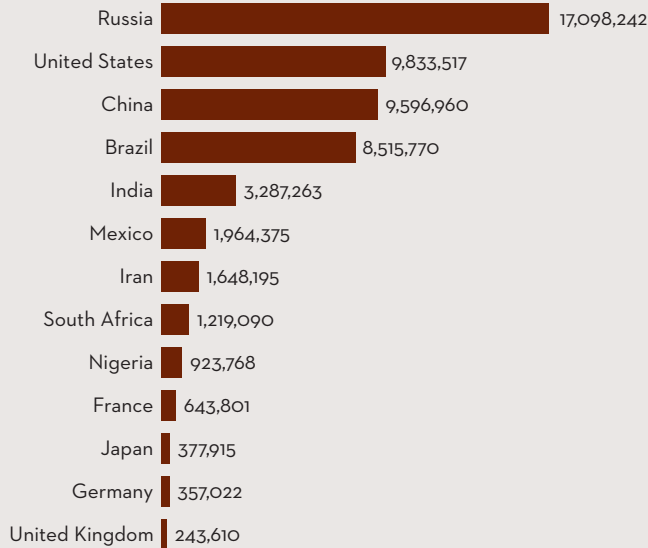


scientists also distinguish between the state and the **government**, considering the government to be the leadership or elite that administers the state.

Two of the most obvious differences among states are their size and population (see “In Comparison: Total Land Size” and “In Comparison: Population,” pp. 6 and 7). The 13 countries included in this book vary considerably in both respects. States also vary in their natural endowments, such as arable land, mineral resources, navigable rivers, and access to the sea. Well-endowed states may have advantages over poorly endowed ones, but resource endowments do not necessarily determine a state’s prosperity. Japan, for example, has become one of the world’s dominant economic powers despite having relatively few natural resources. Russia and Iran, in contrast, are rich in natural resources but have struggled economically.

States also differ widely in their origins and historical development.<sup>2</sup> Some countries (for example, China, France, and the United Kingdom) have long histories of statehood. Other political systems, such as Germany, experienced the creation of a unified state only after long periods of division. Many countries in the developing world became states after they were decolonized. Nigeria, for example, became an independent state relatively recently, in 1960. With the end of the Cold War in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union two years later, a number of states emerged or reemerged. At the same time, Germany, which had been divided into two states during the Cold War, became a single state in 1990. It is important to point out that in today’s world, we continue to witness both the erosion of existing states (for example, Somalia) and the emergence of new ones, such as the Republic of South Sudan, which was established in 2011.

States differ, too, in their level of organization, effectiveness, and stability. The power of a state depends in part on its **legitimacy**, or the extent to which its authority is regarded as right and proper. Political scientists have long observed that there are different sources of a state’s legitimacy. State authority may draw on **traditional legitimacy**, in which the state is obeyed because it has a long tradition of being obeyed. Alternatively, a state may be considered legitimate because of **charismatic legitimacy**—that is, its identification with the magnetic appeal of a leader or movement. Finally, states may gain legitimacy on the basis of **rational-legal legitimacy**, a system of laws and procedures that becomes highly institutionalized. Although most modern states derive their legitimacy from rational-legal sources, both traditional and charismatic legitimacy often continue to play a role. In Japan and the United Kingdom, for example, the monarchy is a source of traditional legitimacy that complements the rational-legal legitimacy of the state. Some postcolonial states in the developing world have had considerable trouble

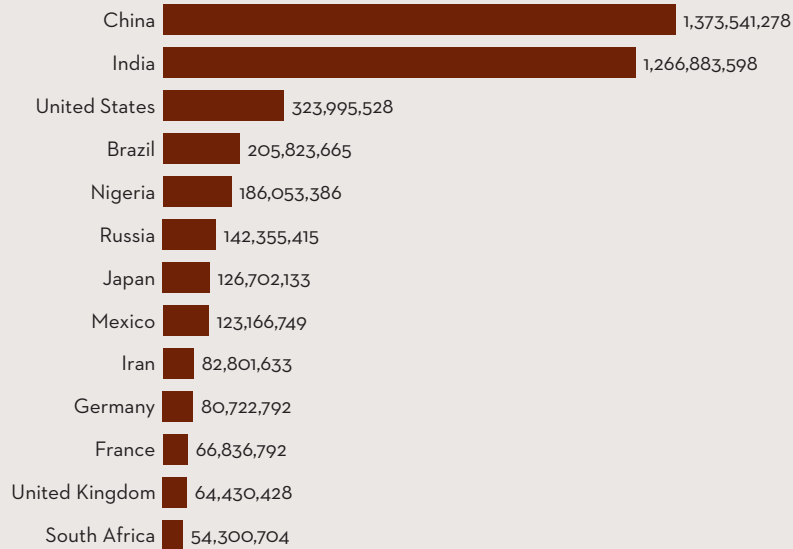


Source: CIA World Factbook, [www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook) (accessed 11/28/16).

establishing legitimacy. Often colonial powers created states that cut across ethnic boundaries or contain hostile ethnic groups, as in Nigeria and Iran.

States differ in their ability to preserve their sovereignty and carry out the functions of maintaining law and order. **Strong states** can perform the tasks of defending their borders from outside attacks and defending their authority from internal nonstate rivals. **Weak states** have trouble carrying out those basic tasks and often suffer from endemic internal violence, poor infrastructure, and the inability to collect taxes and enforce the rule of law. High levels of corruption are often a symptom of state weakness. Taken to an extreme, weak states may experience a complete loss of legitimacy and power and may be overwhelmed by anarchy and violence. Political scientists refer to those relatively rare cases as **failed states**.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, states differ in the degree to which they centralize or disperse political power. **Unitary states** concentrate most of their political power in the national capital, allocating little decision-making power to regions or localities. **Federal states** divide power between the central state and regional or local



Source: CIA World Factbook, [www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook) (accessed 11/28/16).

authorities (such as provinces, counties, and cities). Unitary states, such as the United Kingdom and South Africa, may be stronger and more decisive than federal states, but the centralization of power may create local resentment and initiate calls for a **devolution** (handing down) of power to regions and localities. Federal states, such as India, Brazil, Germany, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United States, often find that their dispersal of power hampers national decision making and accountability, and can even increase corruption by giving local officials greater access to resources.

## Comparing Regimes

**Political regimes** are the norms and rules regarding individual freedoms and collective equality, the locus of power, and the use of that power. It is easiest to think of political regimes as the rules of the game governing the exercise of power. In

On a scale of 1 to 100, with 100 representing the most free.

COUNTRY	RANKING
Japan	96 (Free)
Germany	95 (Free)
United Kingdom	95 (Free)
France	90 (Free)
United States	89 (Free)
Brazil	79 (Free)
South Africa	78 (Free)
India	77 (Free)
Mexico	65 (Partly Free)
Nigeria	50 (Partly Free)
Russia	20 (Not Free)
Iran	17 (Not Free)
China	15 (Not Free)

Source: Freedom House, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2017> (accessed 7/21/17).

modern political systems, regimes are most often described in written constitutions. In some countries, however, such as the United Kingdom, the regime consists of a combination of laws and customs that are not incorporated into any one written document. In other countries, such as China and Iran, written constitutions do not accurately describe the extra-constitutional rules that govern the exercise of power.

**Democratic regimes** have rules that emphasize a large role for the public in governance, protect basic rights and freedoms, and attempt to ensure basic transparency of and accountability for government actions. **Authoritarian regimes** limit the role of the public in decision making, often deny citizens' basic rights, and restrict their freedoms. In the past quarter century, the world has witnessed a dramatic rise in the number of democratic regimes.<sup>4</sup> Over half the world's population, however, is still governed by regimes defined as "partly free," or illiberal (meaning that some personal liberties and democratic rights are limited while

others are protected), or “not free,” or authoritarian (meaning that the public has very little individual freedom).<sup>5</sup> Freedom House, a U.S. research organization, regularly measures the amount of freedom in different political systems, and the “In Comparison: Freedom House Rankings, 2017” table on p. 8 provides those measures for the cases included in this volume.

## COMPARING DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

Most political regimes, whether democratic or not, establish a number of political institutions. Students of comparative politics must learn to identify and distinguish these institutions precisely. The **executive** is the branch of government that carries out the laws and policies of a given state. We can think of the executive branch as performing two separate sets of duties. On the one hand, the **head of state** symbolizes and represents the people, both nationally and internationally, embodying and articulating the goals of the regime. On the other hand, the **head of government** deals with the everyday tasks of running the state, such as formulating and executing policy. The distinction between those roles is most easily seen in, for example, France, Germany, India, Japan, and the United Kingdom, which have separate heads of state and heads of government. Other regimes, such as those of Brazil, Mexico, Nigeria, South Africa, and the United States, assign the two roles of the executive branch to a single individual.

The **legislature** is the branch of government formally charged with making laws. The organization and power of legislatures differ considerably from country to country. In some political regimes, especially authoritarian ones such as China and Russia, the legislature has little power or initiative and serves mainly to rubber-stamp government legislation. In other systems, such as those of Germany and India, the legislature is relatively powerful and autonomous. **Unicameral legislatures** (often found in smaller countries) consist of a single chamber; **bicameral legislatures** consist of two legislative chambers. In the latter systems, one chamber often represents the population at large and is referred to as the **lower house**, and the other chamber (referred to as the **upper house**) reflects the geographical subunits.

The **judiciary** is the branch of a country’s government that is concerned with dispensing justice. The **constitutional court** is the highest judicial body to rule on the constitutionality of laws and other government actions; in most political systems, the constitutional court also formally oversees the entire judicial structure. The