

Education Policies and Systems across Modern History: A Global Dataset

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Education and politics

- The many functions of education: from human capital to human development to the “*good citizen*”
- Development of national education systems over last two centuries+
- At present: Compulsory ed. in all countries, often with some political-ideological component
- But wide variety:
 - North Korea and the teaching of Juche ideology
 - Taliban and the education of girls
 - Human rights education in democracies

Studying education cross-nationally; more data needed

Existing measures

- Enrollment rates and other “education quantity” measures (often used as proxies)
- Measuring contents of education and education policies
 - Limited cross-country coverage (often OECD)
 - Limited time series (often recent years)

Our contribution

- Measuring aspects of education systems and policies
 - 156 medium-sized countries with > 1 mill. inhab. back to 1789
 - Focus on political control and tools for indoctrination
 - Studying ed. pol. and regime survival in autocracies (ELDAR)
 - But, can be used for so much more!

Items in the dataset

1. Compulsory education (4 questions)
 - Existence, coverage, free?, mandatory years
2. Civic education and ideology (7 questions)
 - Existence and type, bans, compulsory readings
3. School autonomy/centralization (7 questions)
 - Curricula, who operates and funds?, selecting principals
4. Teacher training (3 questions)
 - General or specific training, source of training, ideological requirements

2.1 Existence compulsory education (compuls_exist)

Question: Is there a compulsory education system in place?

Clarification: The system must require at least one year of compulsory education for children/youth.

Answer categories:

1. No, there is no legal requirement that education must be compulsory
2. Yes, there is a legal requirement of compulsory education in place for certain groups of the population (e.g., by ethnicity, gender or geographic region)
3. Yes, there is a legal requirement of compulsory education in place for all children in the relevant age group

Measurement level: Nominal

Responsible for drafting question:

CHK

3.6 Ban on subjects or topics (subjects_ban)

Question: Are there any national laws in place that ban specific subjects or topics in school?

Clarification: Code only as other than "1" if they are specific laws or norms specifying a ban. Simple omission of certain topics does not constitute a ban. The existence of censoring bodies for schools and other education institutions, designated to screen and censor on one or more subjects or topics, are counted as equivalent to a law or norm specifying a ban.

Answer categories:

1. No, there are no such norms or laws
2. One specific subject or topic is forbidden
3. Several subjects or topics are

forbidden Measurement level: Ordinal

Responsible for drafting question: PL

4.4. Operating and funding, secondary schools (operate_sec)

Question: Which entities operate secondary schools?

Clarification: By secondary school, we refer to the classification by the ICSED from above. All other instructions remain the same as in the “operate prim” question.

Answer categories:

1. Local government
2. Regional government
3. National government
4. International organization or government from other country
5. Religious organization
6. Other private organization or person, and primarily with private funding
7. Other private organization or person, but primarily with public funding/subsidies
8. Two or more of the above alternatives, including at least one from alternatives 1.-3.
9. Two or more of the above alternatives, but restricted to alternatives 4.-7.
10. Two or more of the above alternatives, but restricted to alternatives 1-3

Measurement level: Nominal

Responsible for drafting question:

CHK

Extensive data sources

- Focus on de jure regulations (enacted)
- Reliance on primary sources
 - legislation
 - government's reports and other education actors
- If not, secondary sources
 - Language: Spanish, English, French, Portuguese, Russian, Italian, French, Norwegian, or Swedish

Team dynamics

- Five coders, countries assigned by language expertise
- Extensive training and regular feedback
- Always sources and coding decisions crosschecked
- Extensive rule of thumb file to:
 - make explicit our coding assumptions
 - carefully examine secondary sources (e.g., credible and relevant sources?)
 - distinguish de jure and de facto dimension (e.g., compulsory education?)
 - communicate uncertainty and its source

Missingness & Uncertainty

- Missingness varies substantially across variables (most cases $< 0.6\%$; military education in the curricula is the worst 10%)
- Cells with qualitative information (e.g., references, background)
- Measures of uncertainty

As of today...

- 156 countries coded and validated
- 11 countries coded where > 0.5 mill. inhab. back to 1789, for version 2!
- Working paper sent to V-Dem Working Paper Series and under review in a journal

Data coverage

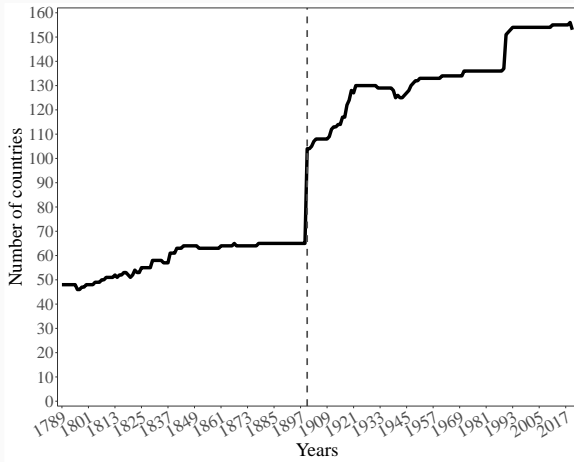


Figure 4: Data coverage, by year, for our measure on compulsory education

Validation

Cross-check most comparable items from our dataset against similar measures from Paglayan's (2021) dataset



Figure 5: Comparing introducing compulsory education and centralized curricula

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Cross-check most comparable items from our dataset against similar measures from Paglayan's (2021) dataset

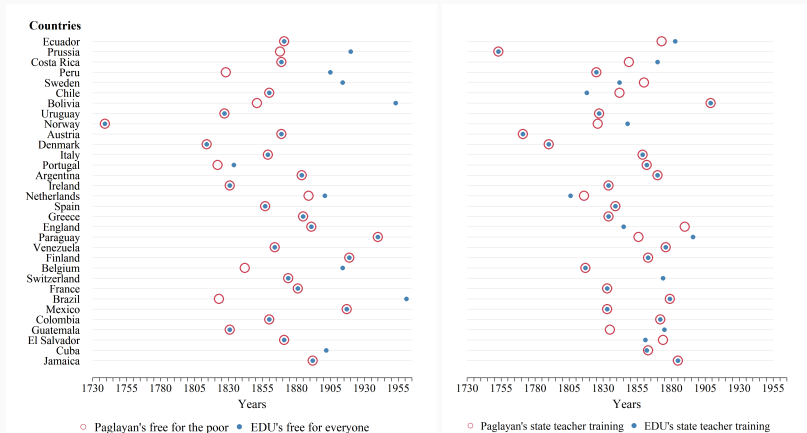


Figure 6: Comparing introducing free education and teacher training

Historical patterns in education systems

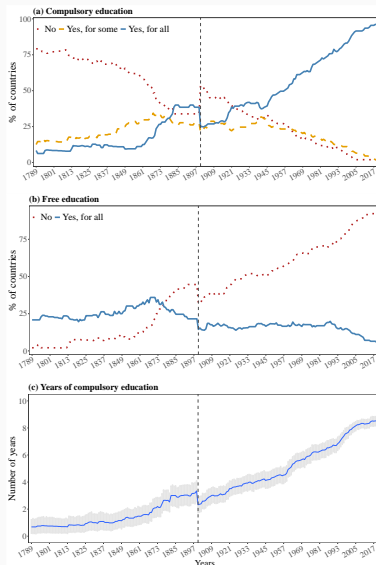


Figure 7: Compulsory education trends

Historical patterns in education systems

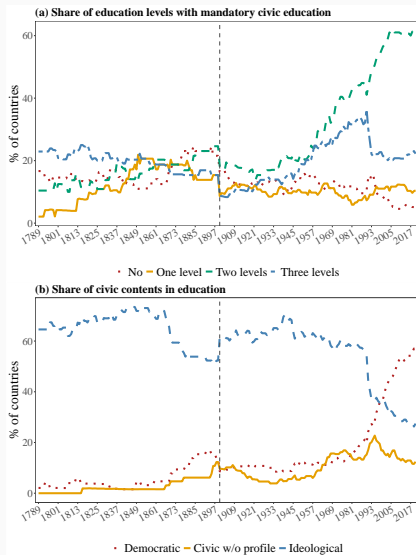


Figure 8: Ideological training trends

Historical patterns in education systems

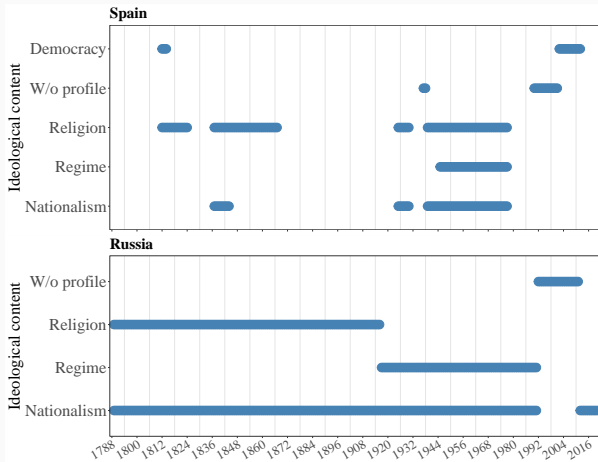


Figure 9: zoom in: Ideological training trends

Historical patterns in education systems

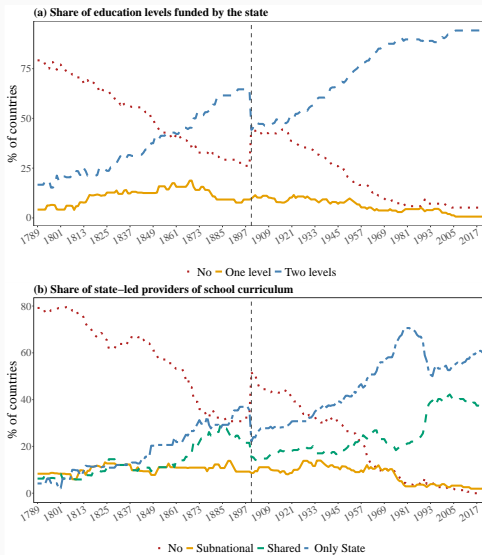


Figure 10: Centralization of education

Historical patterns in education systems

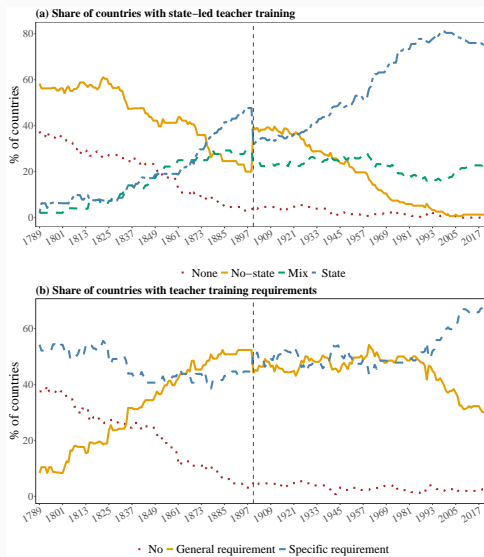


Figure 11: Teacher training

Application: Compul. Edu. & democratization (Paglayan, 2021)

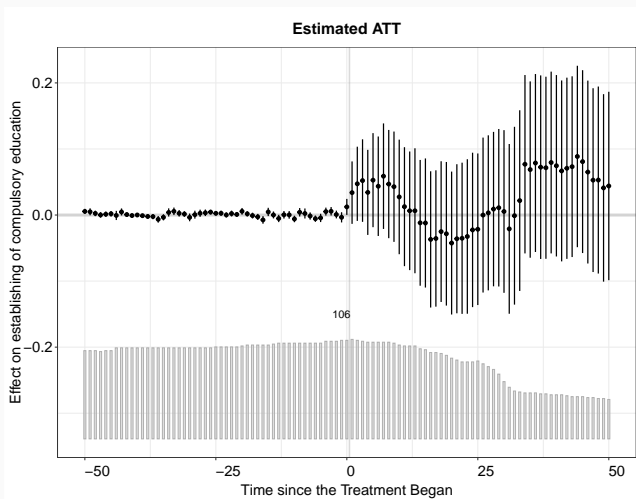


Figure 12: Results from staggered Diff-in-Diff estimation following Liu, Wang and Xu (2022) and Athey et al. (2021). Outcome: establishment compulsory education; treatment: first democratization as defined ≥ 0.4 in V-Dem's Polyarchy index. Note: Time to treatment is limited to ± 50 years.

Application: Democracies vs. Autocracies

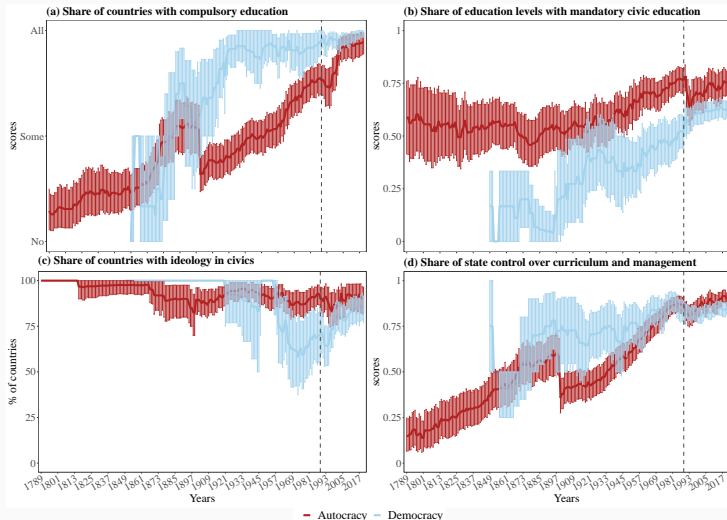


Figure 13: Patterns of education systems by regime type

Conclusion

- Dataset on education systems and policies in 156 countries with time-series since the French Revolution
- 21 indicators that measure more directly key dimensions
- Largest temporal and spatial coverage + rich qualitative information justifying coding decisions
- Tools to answer substantive questions on the causes and effects of education policies and systems
 - Impact on economic growth? legacies of colonialism? democratization? political attitudes?

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- Tools to answer substantive questions on the causes and effects of education policies and systems
 - Impact on economic growth? legacies of colonialism? democratization? political attitudes?
- Strength/weakness = we focus on de jure
- Strength/weakness = reliability on online sources

**Thank for your comments
&
write us if you have any questions/feedback!**

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