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Modes of Democratic Transition, Power Dynamics Between Opposition and Incumbents, and Mass Internet Access: A Literature Review

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Abstract

This literature review explores the evolving landscape of democratic transitions in the 21st century within academia, with a particular focus on the influence of digital technology and access to information. The author examines the role of factors such as primary education, civil liberties, income, and internet access in three types of democratic transition: conversion, collapse, and cooperative. Drawing upon extensive literature, the author scrutinizes the ways in which the aforementioned factors shape the power dynamics between opposition and incumbents, which have a significant impact on democratic transition and maintenance. The author concludes her investigation with an emphasis on the need for systematic analysis of the relationship between digital access, freedom of information, and democratization.

Keywords: democratic transition, digital technology, power dynamics, internet access

1. Introduction

According to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, more countries were moving toward authoritarianism than approaching democracy in 2021.[1] Some might consider this observation as a glitch caused by the COVID-19 pandemic amid the overall optimistic wave of democratization in the 21st century, while others may view it as a sign of democratic backsliding. Regardless, this changing trend raises questions about what prerequisites are sufficient or necessary for democratic transition and how different processes of regime change shape post-transitional democracy consolidation. Throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, many political theorists have examined the causes of various modes of democratic transition using theoretical reasoning or empirical data. From Seymour Martin Lipset's classical theory—which argues that democratization requires specific socioeconomic requisites—to more recent studies examining the role of particular economic features and gender in regime transitions, our understanding of democratization has continued to evolve.[2,3]

Though empirical findings are rarely in consensus, most theorists agree that democratic transition can be categorized into "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches.[4] These different approaches are each characterized by a unique set of conditions and power dynamics between the incumbent, who are the ruling political party or the authoritarian leader and its supporting elites, and the opposition, who are the challenger aiming to end and replace the standing leadership. The top-down transition happens when the elites initiate liberalization policy, usually for economic reasons or to appease social unrest, ultimately leading to a democratic transition.[4] The "bottom-up" regime occurs when the people rise to demand democracy, disrupting the normal function of the government and diminishing the incumbent's power to repress.

This tends to happen when the opposition effectively mobilizes, or the authorities are handicapped due to endogenous and exogenous influences, such as a fallout with the military, so-called "democratic sanctions," or the interference of pro-democracy agencies.[5] While the effectiveness in successful democratization of some of these external forces is unclear, there is a general consensus that they have helped increase awareness and fueled grassroots oppositions. Agreeing on the basics, scholars then examine the preexisting conditions of various modes of democratic transition and their implications on democratic consolidation and stability of the new regime. Some findings have affirmed previous theories while others challenge them, citing flaws of the models used or time-period inconsistencies in data selection. More recently, communication technologies have emerged to the center stage of the democratization effort due to their growing role in both facilitating mass mobilization and reinforcing centralized governmental control.

This literature review aims to synthesize major existing arguments on preexisting conditions of democratic transitions to understand how various power dynamics between the authorities and the opposition shaped by primary education, civil liberties, income, and access to the internet lead to different types of democratic transition and impact the stability of the new democratic regime. The current literature concludes that disruptive bottom-up democratic transition occurs when the opposition acquires more strength than the authorities who refuse to negotiate; the violent and turbulent nature of this type of democratization leads to a less stable democratic regime than a cooperative transition does. In recent years, increasing observations and empirical evidence suggest that the advancement of digital technology and its access by citizens have significant impacts on the power dynamic that shapes democratic transitions. Yet, unlike factors like primary education and wealth level, access to the internet has not been studied through systematic analyses using a reliable and comprehensive dataset. Therefore, future studies should aim to examine how regime change evolves in the digital world with a more holistic approach based on adequate data.

This paper will be divided into four sections, with the first three each focusing on one of the three modes of democratic transition identified by Gary Stradiotto and Sujian Guo and one dedicated to discussion of digitalization. The three modes of transitions are:

1. **Conversion Democratization**: A top-down reform led by incumbents to liberalize without fully conceding power.
2. **Collapse Democratization**: A bottom-up transition driven by public revolt or regime weakness, leading to overthrow.
3. **Cooperative Democratization**: A negotiated transition where both incumbents and opposition agree on reforms and election.[6]

While the scholars have also recognized foreign intervention as a fourth mode of transition, it has been omitted in this review to narrow the scope of research to domestic factors.

2. Conversion Democratization

As Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead explain, the "top-down," also called conversion, democratic transition occurs when the soft-liners in the government or citizens of high socioeconomic status adopt liberalization policies.[7] Liberalization policies can manifest as greater private property rights for citizens, a freer market, religious freedom, and so on. The soft-liners provide greater liberty and rights to the citizens to either "strengthen their position in relation to hardliners" or address economic challenges.[4] In other instances, they do so to resolve deadlocks between

social groups.[8] Guo and Stradiotto argue that such a transition occurs when the incumbents are more powerful than the opposition and often act solely without much pressure from hardliners or grassroots.[6] However, opposition groups can occasionally get involved in the reform process by engaging in incumbent-led negotiations.

As part of modernization and development efforts, some authorities implement reforms to provide greater access to primary education. Scholars have not yet reached a consensus on the role that such reforms have in the chances of democratization. Best and Wade found that literacy is a poor predictor of democracy using data from 1992-2002 collected from the World Bank Development Indicators database and measuring political rights and civil liberties through the Freedom House (2004b) scores.[9] Mancur Olson only found an indirect correlation between education and democracy.[10] In contrast, Murtin and Wacziarg observed a strong causal relation between primary schooling and the quality of newly emerged democracy by sampling 70 countries from 1870-2000 using the Polity IV index and eliminating country-specific, time-invariant factors.[11] The inconsistencies among research findings can be partially attributed to the different periods surveyed and the different criteria used (i.e., Freedom House and Polity IV). One potential reason that the strong correlation between education/literacy and democratic transition, which existed in earlier democracies, gradually disappeared in more recent democratized countries could be the increasingly secured access to primary education in middle-income countries due to improved infrastructure and internet access.[9] With the majority of the population in most countries obtaining a basic level of literacy, primary education's association with regime shifts reasonably decreases. Meanwhile, the internet has emerged as a potential catalyst in reshaping social mobilization and political organization as countries around the world provide varying access to and degrees of freedom in internet usage.[9]

Scholars such as Daniel Treisman challenge the argument that top-down democratization happens when the soft-liners favor the democratic system and willingly initiate reforms.[12] He argues that most authoritarian regimes will never democratize willingly, and liberalization policies only aim to address a specific issue or rally political support rather than initiate a regime shift. Referencing Louis-Philippe of the Philippines, Augusto Pinochet of Chile, and Leopoldo Galtieri of Argentina, Treisman instead reasons that democratization usually happens when the authorities underestimate the strength of the opposition or overestimate their popularity or power.[12] Due to these misjudgments, the government assumes that a certain degree of liberalization will not pose a threat to itself and that the elites will still wield sufficient power to repress the citizens if necessary. It is with this false confidence that the incumbents initiate reform and empower the citizens.

When a country was in distress and the government felt threatened—such as during wartime, amidst heightened extremism, and facing political unrest—civil liberties such as freedom of the press and free expression were severely curtailed. As Michael Best and Keegan Wade observed, in the late 20th century and early 21st century, elites in non-western nations tightly controlled access to media and used the internet to consolidate power.[9] If state-censored and controlled internet access helps strengthen authoritarian rule, then does freer internet access undermine the ability of the incumbent to prevent a regime change? In 2002, Best and Wade found a statistically significant result that internet prevalence became a stronger predictor of democracy than GDP in 2001-2002 using raw data from 188 nations and ordinary least squares (OLS) regression.[9] They concluded that this

correlation could be a recent development, while acknowledging the lack of consistency in empirical evidence across the globe. Subsequent research confirmed that the internet did play a key role in facilitating multiple regime changes in the early 2000s by empowering the masses when authorities either underestimated its potential or were incapable of responding timely and effectively. However, often, information controls have been employed by authoritarian governments to suppress the seeds of liberation.

In summary, conversion democratic transition tends to occur when the incumbents are more powerful than the opposition and intentionally reform the system. Or, as some scholars argue, regime change happens when the elites fail to accurately calculate the strength of the opposition, causing liberalization to become unmanageable and eventually topple the existing authoritarian government. Besides theorists who promote this top-down approach, there is another group of scholars, including Arthur MacEwan, who point out that such focus on examining the "perennial tension between 'hard-liners' and 'soft-liners'" fails to account for other important actors—the people—in many historical democratizations.[13] Hence, scholars who share similar critiques have constructed another approach: bottom-up democratization.

3. Collapse Democratization

The collapse mode of democratic transition is also commonly referred to as the "bottom-up" approach. Recognizing that they cannot rely on incumbents to initiate reforms and feeling that their quality of life is unbearable, the people attempt to overthrow the government through either revolution or coup d'état.[14] Compared to the conversion mode, which consists mostly of the efforts of some high-position policymakers or elites, the collapse mode relies heavily on "the involvement and support from public masses".[14] In addition to mass support, the unwillingness of the military to defend the old regime is a common theme in the collapse mode. A successful revolution or coup d'état tends to result in the execution, imprisonment, or exile of the original leaders.[14]

For the transition to initiate and succeed, the incumbents must be too weak to repress the opposition or to bargain for a more desirable outcome. This is determined by factors such as freedom of movement, primary education, GDP per capita, and the more recently observed increasing mass digital access. In particular, the internet and social media, which facilitate the rapid spread of information and communication, have become often-used tools in organizing popular protests. Best and Wade found that internet access is weakly correlated with the democratic transition based on full data from 1992 to 2002, but significant when only considering 2001 to 2002.[9] This discrepancy, they reason, might be due to the shift from limited access by the few elites to the widespread usage of the internet by a greater number of citizens. In the next decade, with new revolutions happening in parts of Africa and the Middle East, scholars expanded on the findings of Best and Wade. For instance, Tunisia was subject to strict censorship prior to 2011, which demonstrates the non-compromising stance of the incumbent leaders. Yet, as Tunisian "bloggers with previous cyber-activism experiences were able to aggregate stories of government abuse and to use technology to bypass state authorities to broadcast images and narratives about the Ben Ali regime" during the eventually successful Tunisia revolution in 2011, scholars like Anita Breuer and Jacob Groshek became interested in examining the impact of internet access.[15] Through a respondent-driven, snowball sampling technique that helped

them collect 610 survey responses, the scholars found that "political use of the Internet during the revolution had a significant effect on the [respondents'] perceived political efficacy after the rebellion" and led to increased participation in "democratic-founding elections".[15] It should be noted that snowball sampling is a type of convenient sampling that produces nongeneralizable results, so this finding cannot be reliably applied to other incidences or countries.

It is theorized that the collapse mode of transition is inherently more violent and disruptive to a country's economy and social structure than other forms of democratization. In 1986, Schmitter, O'Donnell, and Whitehead reasoned that a radical upsurge tends to result in the rise of authoritarian regimes and is counterproductive to pro-democracy efforts.[7] MacEwan, however, challenges this assertion by pointing to a lack of empirical evidence. He argues that the mere fact of a radical social opposition movement followed by military action does not establish a causal relation between the collapse mode of transition and a more destabilized new democratic regime.[13] Pointing to the empirical evidence of military leaders conceding to opposition forces in fear of losing not only "their political position but their positions of social and economic privilege as well," MacEwan presents a counterargument that rapid popular movement could be effective at accelerating a democratic transition rather than provoking destructive suppression from incumbents.[13]

This disagreement was to some degree reconciled by Guo and Stradiotto, who found that "rapid transitions [collapse] are associated with lower levels of democracy during the post-transitional phase and are more likely to revert to authoritarian rule than are peaceful transitions, characterized by an atmosphere of cooperation and pacts".[6] The finding suggests that empirical evidence supports a middle ground between the arguments of Schmitter, et al. and MacEwan: a more violent democratic transition is not necessarily a transition-reversing coup, but it does carry a higher risk of reversal during the post-transitional phase compared to smoother and more cooperative transitions. This also affirms the claim of Ward and Gleditsch that steadier transitions indicate a greater probability of a strong and consolidated democracy.[16] While this view serves as a reasonable explanation, it does not provide clarity on another point of contention: the difference between a failed democratization and a successful one that later experienced a reversal. While both remain authoritarian, the process and the dynamic through which they reached that outcome could be drastically different.

The aforementioned studies were mostly conducted from a global perspective. Realizing the overlooked regional uniqueness of countries shaped by particular historical development, Bratton and Walle added their analysis of African countries, which display unique neopatrimonialism, to this dialogue.[14] They argued that neo-patrimonial regimes differ from other types of preexisting authoritarian states due to the lack of institutional structure to support a strong and active civil society that sustains a newly emerged democracy. As they observed, many Latin American and Eastern European countries that underwent democratic transition already have "formal governing coalitions between organized state and social interests or the collective bargaining over core public policies" that demonstrate "organized class interests within domestic society".[14] Without the crucial structure that allows citizens to mobilize and collectively advocate for their political demands and voice grievances, democracy faces a greater risk of regime reversal. For instance, despite the positive democratizing developments facilitated by digital

technologies in countries like Egypt and Tunisia in the early 2000s, both countries have struggled to consolidate.[14] Nevertheless, the Internet helped expedite the formation of civil society and is less susceptible to intervention by governmental forces than traditional forms of mobilization.

In fact, the potential correlation between 21st-century regime changes and access to the internet is worth exploring: Of the 16 African countries that had 50% or more internet users in 2022, 9 scored 5.00 and above on the Economist Intelligence Unit democracy index (See Appendix).[17,18] Though data is not available for five African states, the observed possibility of correlation between the two factors warrants future research to explore the causal relationship between citizens' access to the internet and the likelihood of democratic transition, especially in African countries and potentially in Middle East.

4. Cooperative Democratization

Though top-down and bottom-up modes of democratization each have their merits, historical examples and empirical data have shown that many democratic transitions do not fit neatly into either conversion or collapse mode. Often, it is the collaborative efforts of both incumbents and opposition that contribute to regime change. This approach is called cooperative democratic transition. Regime change of this nature "begins when a moderate faction within the state elite recognizes that social peace and economic development alone cannot legitimate an authoritarian regime," so they implement reforms based on the demands of the opposition and eventually concede to holding free and fair elections.[6] This differs from the conversion democratic transition because the soft-liners and hardliners are similarly strong, which makes them prefer negotiating a regime reform with the masses for a favorable outcome, as opposed to a full-on regime change most likely to their detriment[6].

One factor that determines the government's willingness to negotiate a change of regime is its perception of the costs of repression, which helps inform the power dynamic between the incumbent and the opposition. The cost depends on "the diversification and extension of opposition throughout society" to a large degree.[13] Repression becomes sufficiently costly when the opposition is not so weak that the authority can ignore their demands or too strong that the opposition need not negotiate with the government to accomplish the reforms. Most studies examining the cost of revolution and repression focus on increased mobilization as a result of modernization. The growing middle and working class, and their increasing integration into the global economy, make asset ownership and movement difficult to track and regulate.[19,20,21] When the cost is sufficiently high, MacEwan argues that incumbents' realization of their weakness leads to intense fear, pressuring them to enter a negotiation: "Military regimes and their allies are willing to cede authority to conservative or moderate civilians only because they fear a more radical, popular upsurge, which would threaten not only their political position but their positions of social and economic privilege as well".[13] Bratton and Walle echoed this logic, affirming that not only military but personal dictators who fear "egregious persecution" are more likely to step down.[14] In other words, when the authoritarian government has an adequately accurate understanding of the mounting power of the opposition and intensifying revolutionary sentiments, they will strategically compromise to minimize harm. One way that allows incumbents to gain such an accurate understanding of the situation is through technologies, either via

security surveillance systems or access to massive amounts of digital information. However, it must be noted that phenomena such as preference falsification, caused by fear of persecution and ostracism, might distort real public opinion and sentiments.[4]

5. Democratization in The Digital Age

I would be remiss not to dedicate a section to discuss the role of digital technologies and systems in shaping regime transition. From news reporting to mass participation in political conversations and social movements on social media, the Digital Revolution has shaped, if not completely transformed, how citizens engage with authorities. has the political landscape around the world. Due to the recency of this development, however, there are very few extensive research conducted on the causal correlation between levels of governmental monopoly over digital technologies and democracy. While frameworks such as the E-democracy index created by Kneuer in 2016 help provide some insights into the digital processes in established democracies, they provide limited insights into how similar developments fare in a authoritarian and transitional context.[22]

Despite the lack of systemic inquiry, recent scholarships reveal two major factors of the phenomenon through which we can began began unpacking it.

The first is the **type (functionality) of technology**. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have been the most relevant and widely used in driving regime transitions. The Egyptian and Tunisian revolutions both illustrate how effective use of social media such as Facebook and YouTube can augment domestic opposition and raise international awareness to exert sufficient pressure on incumbents to concede. While the tools alone could not have led to a positive outcome, the high level of *access* helped tip the balance of power between the opposition and the incumbent. ICTs lower barriers to social movements by significantly improving the two key elements of speed and interactivity in social mobilization.[23] As Larry Diamond of the Hoover Institution Stanford University's Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law describes, social media facilitates the dissemination and exchange of information, providing "dramatic new possibilities for pluralizing flows of information and widening the scope of commentary, debate, and dissent."[24] Compared to traditional mobilization techniques like distributing posters, new communication technologies leverage time-space compression and real-time interactions to sustain a movement across a larger geographical area and at a higher engagement level.[25] Besides strengthening the initiation of change, some scholars have found a correlation between greater social media penetration and less corruption in a country, independent of the economic development level.[26] While causality has not yet been examined, this finding suggests that ICTs might have instrumental value in both catalyzing regime change and consolidating post-transition democracy, establishing new mechanisms and norms to keep authorities accountable. So far, existing empirical evidence shows mixed impacts of digital media on the emergence and maintenance of democratic values and institutions.[26] Additional case studies with a particular focus on the specific impact of mass media on democratic institutions and cultural norms are necessary to inform a more robust understanding of how these tools can be utilized to advance certain political objectives.

Another type of technology that has only recently come into the political landscape is Machine Learning (ML). ChatGPT, the AI-powered chatbot that has arguably transformed all aspects of our lives, for better or worse, is developed using ML. Another technology built

from ML capability is Deepfake, which has already contributed multiple harmful political moves in both democratic and authoritarian states. In the current Russia-Ukraine war, the Kremlin advanced its propaganda campaign by producing and disseminating a deepfake of Ukrainian President Zelensky calling the Ukrainian army to surrender.[27] Similar dissemination of fabricated content has been spotted across Europe and the Americas. Though many are later debunked, the confusion and disruption to the public can be easily exploited by any political groups, especially powerful incumbents, to create misleading narratives that weaken the opposition.

The second factor to consider is **who controls the technology**. Usually, when the incumbent has an iron grip over the Internet and communication technologies, such as in the case of China, pro-democratic movements are constrained. Monitoring public sentiment and activities, preempting latent or emerging threats, and suppressing a brewing uprising, authoritarian regimes are leveraging technologies to enhance their control over the population. As Ronald Deibert observed, authoritarian states have rapidly developed information-control measures—including national cyber barriers, targeted regulations, surveillance systems, and disruptive cyber espionage—over the past two decades for repressive and constraining purposes.[28]

Besides the incumbent and the opposition, digitalization led to the entrance of another major player: Tech Companies. So far, tech giants' response to incumbents exploiting their platforms for political objectives has been ambiguous. Facing activists' criticism of breeding hate speeches targeting Rohingya and Muslims since 2013 and recognizing growing violence and escalation in the country in 2021, Meta's Facebook and Instagram both banned the Myanmar military on March 3, 2021.[29] Then, X censored accounts that criticized Turkish President Erdogan in 2022 and answered the Modi government's request to block journalists, activists, and a member of parliament in 2023. Despite a lack of clarity in these decisions on the part of the companies, the impact of Big Tech on political and social movements in both democratic and authoritarian countries is evident. By either passively permitting or outright banning certain political actors from spreading their messages, these companies have, been forced to pick a side. In other words, these powerful technological multinational corporations are becoming increasingly relevant stakeholders in the governance of authoritarian regimes and in how these authorities pre-emptively respond to conditions that could facilitate democratizing efforts. Beyond the most direct bans on apps and platforms in non-democratic countries, the growing legal controversies and tensions in democracies—such as the legal battle between Brazilian courts and X[30]—further highlight the complexity and ambiguity of digital implications in governance across jurisdictions.

6. Conclusion & Future Research

As demonstrated in all three types of democratic transition, the power dynamic between incumbents and opposition, as well as their perception of each other's strength, largely shapes how a transition occurs. When the opposition can mobilize a huge population without subjecting to much state intervention, a cooperative transition is the likely outcome. When opposition appears misleadingly incapable of mobilizing, an unintended top-down or conversion transition could occur. These conditions change depending on many factors, including access to information and online communication. Improved technologies in an increasingly digitalized world bring both opportunities and risks to opposition groups pushing for democratic transitions. The Arab Spring would not have had such a sweeping influence without information, videos, and words being spread so rapidly. However, when advanced

technologies are used by the incumbent to monitor the opposition and eliminate potential sources of rebellion, the power dynamic tilts toward the state. For instance, through selective control and media censoring by authorities, and a culture of self-monitoring in China, Chinese authorities have been successfully maintaining strong control over their citizens. Recent findings also suggest that rapid technological advancement and adoption in the past decade pose considerable threats to democratization. This is partially due to state monopoly, disparity in access, and the absence of key institutions and factors that are imperative in channeling the power of digital connectivity towards individual freedom and rights. In short, the correlations are ambiguous,[31] but a synthesis of findings suggest that 1) level access, 2) nature/function of technology, and 3) who exercise control over the technology are determining factors in democratic transition process.

With the world's attention increasingly turned towards the global South for its untapped resources and manpower that make it essential to the global value chain, the research community and policymakers have realized the importance of aligning political agenda with economic interests to establish sustainable collaboration and alliances. The rapid growth of access to the internet and critical infrastructure in the region, evident in Nigeria's digital transformation in the past two decades,[32] makes now the critical time to evaluate how digital technologies and informational control might tip the scale of the power dynamic between the incumbents and the oppositions in not only authoritarian states and weak states but also in flawed democracies.

This paper only addresses domestic factors shaping three different modes of democratic transition. Future research should also assess the omitted fourth modes of democratization of foreign intervention, especially as growing digital connectedness and rapid technological advancement have surpassed physical borders and turned cyberspace into a major battleground for geopolitical competition.

Lastly, on a more general note, there has been limited empirical data to assist the reconciliation of conflictual theories in the study of democratization. Most of the existing literature is either based on a convenient sampling of survey responses or are case studies of specific regions, making the findings nongeneralizable. Therefore, future research should compile a comprehensive data set and use less biased, systematic methods to analyze the correlations between freedom and access to the internet and democratic transition, and subsequent democratic consolidation.

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Appendix

Table 1: Democracy Index Points and Internet Penetration in 2022 by Countries in Africa

	Country (Ranked based on Democracy Index pts)	Democracy index points in 2022 (10 = full democracy)	Internet penetration in Africa in 2022 by country
1	Mauritius **	8.08	64.9%
2	Botswana **	7.73	61.0%
3	Cabo Verde **	7.65	61.9%
4	South Africa **	7.05	61.9%
5	Namibia **	6.52	59.0%
6	Ghana **	6.50	53.0%
7	Lesotho **	6.30	51.9%
8	Tunisia **	5.99	66.7%
9	Malawi *	5.74	20.2%
10	Zambia *	5.72	28.5%
11	Madagascar *	5.70	22.3%
12	Senegal *	5.63	46.0%
13	Liberia *	5.43	22.0%
14	Tanzania *	5.10	25.0%
15	Kenya *	5.05	42.0%
16	Morocco **	5.04	84.1%
17	Sierra Leone	4.97	32.4%
18	Uganda	4.80	29.1%
19	Gambia	4.41	51.0%
20	Côte d'Ivoire	4.22	36.3%
21	Benin	4.19	29.0%
22	Nigeria	4.11	51.0%
23	Mauritania	4.03	35.8%
24	Burkina Faso	3.84	27.3%
25	Algeria	3.77	60.6%

26	Mozambique	3.51	23.1%
27	Mali	3.48	29.9%
28	Gabon	3.40	62.0%
29	Angola	3.30	36.0%
30	Ethiopia	3.30	25.0%
31	Niger	3.22	14.5%
32	Comoros	3.20	8.5%
33	Rwanda	3.10	26.3%
34	Eswatini	3.08	47.0%
35	Egypt	2.93	71.9%
36	Zimbabwe	2.92	30.6%
37	Togo	2.80	25.9%
38	Congo (Brazzaville)	2.79	25.4%
39	Guinea-Bissau	2.75	28.0%
40	Djibouti	2.74	59.0%
41	Cameroon	2.56	36.5%
42	Sudan	2.47	30.9%
43	Guinea	2.28	23.0%
44	Burundi	2.13	14.6%
45	Eritrea	2.03	8.0%
46	Libya	1.95	49.6%
47	Equatorial Guinea	1.92	26.2%
48	Chad	1.67	19.0%
49	Central African Republic	1.43	7.1%
50	Democratic Republic of the Congo	1.40	17.6%
51	Seychelles	N/A	79.0%
52	Western Sahara	N/A	61.3%
53	Sao Tome & Principe	N/A	32.0%
54	Somalia	N/A	13.7%

55	South Sudan	N/A	10.9%

Notes: Countries marked with one asterisk (*) are the 16 countries with 50% or higher internal access rate. Countries marked with two asterisks (**) are the 9 countries that have *both* a 50% or higher internal access rate *and* scored 5.00 or higher on the democracy index.