

# PLS 140 Introduction to comparative politics

Week 2 – August 24  
State autonomy and capacity

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# State structures in the developing world

- Failed transposition from EU models?
- Colonizers never acted *ex nihilo*.
- States are not entirely artificial, their boundaries not entirely seen as arbitrary.
- They did not cease to exist after the Europeans left.

# In the developing world

- Heterogeneous social structures (web-like societies) make the **penetration of society** and the establishment of political order difficult.
- In Central Asia, clans parasite the political system and undermine the efficiency and stability of systems.

# State autonomy vs capacity

- **Capacity:** ability of the State to carry out basic functions of providing security and reconciling freedom and equality.
- **Autonomy:** exercise power independently of the public or international actors.
  - > Ex: corruption in Ukraine, clan politics.
- Low levels in one of them is not necessarily problematic, ex: Canada, Switzerland.

DO YOU HATE TAXES?



HATE GOVERNMENT?



HATE REGULATIONS?



LOVE GUNS?



# Difference between Africa and FSU

- ◉ Different plural societies.
- ◉ In Africa, ethnic divisions lead groups to compete for the control of the State.
- ◉ Opposite dynamics in FSU where conflicts emerge for political autonomy (secessionism) not for the control of the State.
- ◉ Subject to surveillance by former colonial powers.
- ◉ In case of conflicts, neighboring States are affected in the FSU. Russian influence still strong.

# State capacity and violent conflicts 1

- Many studies reveal that state weakness is the most important factor in the eruption of violent conflicts.
- After controlling for per capita income, more ethnically or religiously diverse countries have been no more likely to experience violence.

# State capacity and violent conflicts 2

- Factors that explain civil wars are not ethnic or religious characteristics but rather the conditions that favor insurgency.
- These include poverty—which marks financially and bureaucratically weak states t—political instability, rough terrain, and large populations.



# “Fragile” State definition

- The loss of physical control of its territory or a monopoly on the legitimate use of force;
- The erosion of legitimate authority to make collective decisions;
- An inability to provide reasonable public services;
- The inability to interact with other states as a full member of the international community

# Failed/fragile States

- Term appeared in the 1990s.
- Controversial term: Implies that something needs to be “fixed” or “saved” – of course by liberal external forces.
- Ex: Afghanistan, Somalia, Libya, Yemen, Pakistan, Rwanda.
- And...Haiti marked by poverty and instability but not violence.

Country	2015 score	Change from 2014 <sup>[6]</sup>	Change from 2013 <sup>[7]</sup>	Change from 2012 <sup>[8]</sup>	Change from 2011 <sup>[9]</sup>	Change from 2010 <sup>[10]</sup>	Change from 2009 <sup>[11]</sup>	Change from 2008 <sup>[12]</sup>
 South Sudan	114.5	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 1.6	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 3.9	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 6.1	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
 Somalia	114.0	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 1.4	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 0.1	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.9	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 0.6	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.3	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.7	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.2
 Central African Republic	111.9	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 1.3	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 6.6	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 8.1	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 6.9	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 5.5	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 6.5	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 8.2
 Sudan	110.8	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 0.7	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.2	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 1.4	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 2.1	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 1.0	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 1.6	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 2.2
 Democratic Republic of the Congo	109.7	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.5	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 2.2	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 1.5	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 1.5	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.5	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 1.0	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 3.0
 Chad	108.4	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.3	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.6	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 0.8	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 1.9	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 4.9	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 3.8	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 2.5
 Yemen	108.1	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 2.7	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 1.1	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 3.3	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 7.8	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 7.4	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 10.0	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 12.7
 Syria	107.9	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 6.3	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 10.5	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 13.4	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 22.0	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 20.0	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 18.1	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 17.8
 Afghanistan	107.9	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 1.4	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 1.2	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 1.9	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 0.4	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 0.6	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.3	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 2.5
 Guinea	104.9	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 2.2	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 3.6	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 3.0	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 2.4	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 3.3	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 0.3	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 3.1
 Haiti	104.5	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 0.2	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 1.3	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.4	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 3.5	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 5.4	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 2.7	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 5.2
 Iraq	104.5	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 2.3	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 0.6	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 0.2	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.3	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.5	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 4.1	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 6.1
 Pakistan	102.9	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.1	<span style="color: blue;">▬</span> 0.0	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 1.3	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 0.6	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 1.7	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 1.2	<span style="color: green;">▼</span> 0.9
 Nigeria	102.4	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 2.7	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 1.7	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 1.3	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 2.5	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 2.2	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 2.6	<span style="color: red;">▲</span> 6.7