Contested Sovereignty: A Global Compilation of Sovereignty Referendums (1776–2012)

Codebook v.1.0

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Introduction

The *Contested Sovereignty* data set documents the worldwide use of the sovereignty referendum, 1776–2012. It contains a total of 602 sovereignty referendums. The present codebook lays out the coding rules and sources used for compiling this data set. It discusses conceptual and typological issues and includes a description of the variables.

1 Citation

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2 The Concept of the Sovereignty Referendum

2.1 Operational Definition

A sovereignty referendum is defined as *a direct popular vote on a reallocation of sovereignty between at least two territorial centres.*

2.2 Detailed Explanations and Coding Rules

2.2.1 The Concept of the Referendum

Since the sovereignty referendum constitutes a subset of referendums, it makes sense to start with a definition of the 'referendum'. We use the concept of the referendum to refer to any *direct popular vote*, or to be more exact, to *any popular vote on an issue of policy that is organised by the state or at least by a state-like entity.* This definition is relatively broad. In particular, it includes both binding and consultative votes, both official and unofficial votes as well as votes on citizen's initiatives. Moreover, the way in which a popular vote is expressed is irrelevant. That is to say, it does not matter whether an issue is voted via the ballot box or, for instance, in a town hall meeting.[1]

In operational terms, three conditions must be jointly fulfilled so that an instance counts as a direct popular vote. First, a referendum must be administered to the people. This delineates the referendum from other forms of political decision-making in representative or selected bodies. Limitations in suffrage can make it somewhat ambiguous whether an issue was administered to the people. In such cases, we require that the vote is administered to a significant body of citizens. Thus we include a vote even if suffrage is restricted to men or limited in terms of possession. In contrast, we

[1] This is especially important for accommodating some of the historical cases.

do not include consultations of selected elites which allegedly represent the people (e.g. the 1969 'consultation' in the context of West Papua's incorporation into Indonesia).

Second, a vote must directly relate to an issue. The focus on issues distinguishes the referendum from other forms of electoral participation with a focus on candidates or parties, in particular elections or the recall mechanism. Critically, this means that we exclude any form of elections to a constituent assembly-like body, even if the the latter's sole (or primary) purpose is to make a decision on a sovereignty matter. The 1863 vote on the Ionian Islands' merger with Greece constitutes a good example of what we do not include based on this criterion. This case has been listed as a sovereignty referendum e.g. by Laponce (2010) and Qvortrup (2012, 2014). However, it involved an election to a special assembly charged with deciding on leaving the United Kingdom and joining Greece (Goodhart, 1971, pp. 132–134; Wambaugh, 1920, p. 122-132). Thus it fails the criterion of direct relation to the issue.

Third, a vote must be organised by the state or at least a state-like entity. This delineates the referendum from petitions or opinion polls. It can be tricky to decide whether this condition is met, for instance if it is a self-proclaimed government that organises a vote. In such cases we base on an actor's self-perception and acting as a state rather than its outside recognition. Thus we consider the self-proclaimed governments of separatists regions, such as Transnistria, Abkhazia and Somaliland, public agencies. Likewise, we consider the organiser of the 1950 *enosis* referendum in Cyprus—the Greek-Orthodox Church—a public agency, given that it clearly acted as if it was a state. Conversely, we do not consider the 'referendum' on the secession of Padania from Italy that was organised by Lega Nord in 1997 due to its distinctly partisan nature.

2.2.2 The Concept of the Minimum Dyadic Shift

In terms of the subject matter, a sovereignty referendum as we define it must involve a *reallocation of sovereignty between at least two territorial centres.* Following this definition, sovereignty referendums must involve at a minimum a dyadic shift in the locus of sovereign rights between two territorial centres. It may be that three or more territorial centres are implicated, for instance if three states unify to form a single state. A territorial centre as understood here relates to a territorial centre of power; this may be a capital (like London), a regional centre (like Edinburgh) or the political centre of a supranational entity (like Brussels). Critically, the minimum dyadic criterion excludes referendums on power shifts within the same territory, such as referendums in the context of a transition from a monarchic to a democratic system (e.g. South Africa's 1992 referendum on ending Whites-only rule or Chile's 1988 vote which marked the transition from authoritarian rule to a democratic regime). None of these two examples entail a minimum dyadic shift in the reallocation of sovereignty between two territorial centres.

2.2.3 The Concept of Sovereignty

If a sovereignty referendum involves a reallocation of sovereignty between minimally two territorial centres, the question remains what we understand by sovereignty. Sovereignty is a notoriously muddled concept and varying definitions abound (Krasner, 1999). Our understanding of sovereignty is explicitly broad: specifically, we define sovereignty as *the right to make authoritative political decisions within a territorial unit.* Crucially, sovereignty as understood here need not be absolute (i.e. it need not extend to all matters within a territory). According to this modern understanding

of sovereignty (see Keohane, 2003; Philpott, 1995, 2010), a federal unit, such as an American state, can be considered (partly) sovereign. Similarly, the EU can be considered (partly) sovereign since it has ultimate decision-making powers with regards to certain matters (e.g. trade) but not others (e.g. defence). Thus we include referendums, for instance, on the creation of an autonomous region or the accession to the EU.

However, we require that *core competencies of the state* are at stake, for instance in the economic, cultural or security realms. This condition is unproblematic if a referendum concerns the full-type sovereignty of the nation-state as defined below. In contrast, we would not consider core competencies of the state affected if a referendum deals with municipal autonomy or purely administrative competencies. In federal systems, which are predicated on shared sovereignty and often feature a constant ebb and flow of competency transfers, we exclude referendums on 'day-to-day' sovereignty transfers and only code a referendum if it involves a fundamental change in the nature of the political system. Typically this involves a change in the number of constituent units or the special recognition of a constituent unit (e.g. Quebec in the 1992 Charlottetown Accord referendum). Referendums on an exchange of territory between federal units are not included (e.g. the referendum in the Swiss Laufental on its transfer from the canton of Berne to the canton of Basel-Country in 1993 is not coded). Finally, referendums in the supranational context are only included if they involve a substantial constraint or obligation on the nation-state. Operationally, in the economic realm we require that the reallocation goes beyond the establishment or joining of a customs union and involves the establishment or significant deepening of an economic union between nation-states. In the security realm we consider a referendum if it involves a significant military obligation, such as a system of collective defence. In practice this means that we include referendums related to the EU and NATO, but none related to any other international organisation, such as the UN.

Critically, the size of the territorial unit in question is irrelevant. Thus we code referendums on the independence of small islands, such as Tokelau with its tiny land area of 10 square kilometres and a mere 1,500 inhabitants, but not a referendum on the merger of two municipalities even if the size and population of many municipalities by far exceeds Tokelau's.

2.2.4 Bundled Referendums

Sovereignty reallocations are frequently bundled within a broader constitutional context. Consider Cyprus' failed 2004 referendum on the Annan plan, which if endorsed would have led to the reintegration of Turkish Cyprus, but would have also defined the constitutional set-up of the new state. A similar case occurs with Australia's referendum on the creation of a federation at the turn of the 19^{th} century, which was not only about the shift in sovereignty implied by the creation of a new polity but also entailed the latter's constitutional structure.

The present definition does not require that sovereignty reallocation is the only issue at stake. Thus, we follow past practice (e.g. Laponce, 2010) and, at least in principle, include bundled votes. However, in some cases referendums involving a sovereignty reallocation are arguably too bundled to count as sovereignty referendums. Consider the 1987 referendum on the Philippines' constitution, which included a clause that would provide the constitutional basis for the creation of autonomous regions in Mindanao and Cordillera, two regions. This evidently constitutes a sovereignty reallocation as defined above. But the respective clause was only a minor part of the constitution, which was mainly aimed at democratisation (it was drafted

shortly after Marcos was forced into exile). Also, the referendum was widely conceived of as a test of the new President Aquino's policies. To avoid ambiguous cases like Philippines (1987), we include bundled referendums only as long as the sovereignty reallocation is among the primary issues at stake.[2]

3 Unit of Analysis

The data set identifies sovereignty referendums by the territorial entity voting on a matter of sovereignty, the year wherein the vote is held and the sovereignty reallocation at stake.[3] For example, the 1979 Scottish devolution referendum would be identified as "entity = Scotland", "year = 1979" and "issue = Devolution". Note that it is possible that the same entity votes on more than one sovereignty matter in the same year. As long as the issues are clearly distinguishable, multiple votes in the same entity-year are coded as separate instances. For instance, the data set includes two entries for Ireland in 1997: one for the vote on the Belfast agreement and one for the vote on the Amsterdam treaty.[4]

In addition, the data set includes a second, alternative unit of analysis: the referendum event. In some cases separately coded referendums involve an institutional wrapper that binds them to other, (at least more or less) simultaneously held referendums. For instance, the 1996 referendum in Berlin on its merger with Brandenburg depended on an analogous referendum in Brandenburg. Here we would speak of two referendums, but one referendum event. The event variable indicates the presence of such an institutional link (e.g. both Berlin and Brandenburg are listed as "Berlin-Brandenburg (1996)") and allows to collapse the data set to referendum events. The 602 sovereignty referendums in our data set make up a total of 499 unique referendum events.

4 Typology

The *Contested Sovereignty* data set comes with a new, theory-derived typology that parts from the definition of the sovereignty referendum above and sub-classifies sovereignty referendums according to the type of sovereignty reallocation at stake. The typology is based on two dimensions which in combination provide a meaningful description of any sovereignty reallocation: (1) the *scope* of the sovereignty shift and (2) the *logic* of the sovereignty shift. The ensuing 3x2 matrix can be further sub-divided

[2] In particular, we are very restrictive when it comes to bundled referendums legitimating or celebrating past sovereignty reallocations. Such votes are generally excluded.

[3] In order not to unnecessarily augment the data set, we make an exception for referendums that determine which territories join an autonomous region. For instance, the 1989 referendum in Mindanao is denoted with a single entity even though each of the 13 Philippine provinces involved voted individually on joining the autonomous region of Mindanao. Similar cases include Jura (1995b), Gagauzia (1995), Mindanao (1977, 2001) and Cordillera (1990, 1998). In these cases the voting entities tend to be districts or municipalities. For the same reason we do not code some other referendums by the voting entity, such as the independence referendums held in a series of Catalan municipalities between 2009 and 2011.

[4] In contrast, cases such as the 1997 Scottish devolution referendum are coded as a single instance even if the vote involved two questions. In this case the two questions were very closely related: one was on a Scottish Parliament and the other on the parliament having tax-varying powers. A special case emerges if a vote involves a choice among multiple options for the future status of a territory. For multiple choice votes we assume the referendum broadly relates to the territory's future status and code a single observation.

Table 1: Synoptic summary of the scope dimension

Type of sovereignty	*Description*
Full	Concerns sovereignty exercised at the nation-state level. Relates to the question of acquiring the right to international legal sovereignty and, at least in its ideal-type form, full internal supremacy and the right to non-intervention in internal affairs (external or Westphalian sovereignty).
Partial	Concerned with limited, domestic authority over a given territory. Always relates to the sub-national level. Wesphalian sovereignty and the locus of international legal sovereignty remain unaffected, but the question is whether the national centre should limit its policy authority over certain matters.
Pooled	Relates to the pooling of sovereignty in specific issue areas at the supranational level. The arrangements are in principle voluntaristic and do not affect the involved states' international legal sovereignty although nation-states' internal supremacy over certain matters and the Westphalian principle of non-intervention in internal affairs are compromised.
Mixed	Applies if a referendum involves multiple options with different implications for the type of sovereignty at stake.

into a total of 12 types of sovereignty referendums. In addition, there is a residual mixed category that applies to referendums involving multiple options. This section describes the two dimensions and all 13 types in detail and also provides information regarding coding practice.

4.1 Scope

The scope of the sovereignty shift relates to the aspects or principles of sovereignty at stake in a given referendum. Building on Keohane's gradations of sovereignty concept (Keohane, 2002, 2003) we distinguish between the following three types: (1) full sovereignty; (2) partial sovereignty and (3) pooled sovereignty. See Table 1 for a summary.

Full sovereignty relates to the classic conception of sovereignty underpinning the modern state. It involves what Krasner (1999, 2004) referred to as international legal sovereignty (i.e. international recognition). At least in its ideal-type form, it also involves full internal supremacy and external or Westphalian sovereignty (i.e. the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs), though in practice both can and indeed are often compromised (Keohane, 2002, 2003; Krasner, 1999, 2004).

Partial sovereignty flows from the gradation logic and the reality that there are alternative configurations of sovereignty that fall short of the classical ideal. As Keohane (2003) has argued, there is no reason why sovereignty must inhere in a single centre since it can be dispersed among governmental entities as in a federal system. The partial sovereignty enjoyed by a territory such as the Basque Country in Spain constitutes a good example. Neither international legal nor Westphalian principles

of sovereignty are at stake in referendums pertaining to partial sovereignty. Instead, the question is whether the national centre should limit its internal supremacy by granting limited sovereignty to one or more sub-state entities.

Finally, *pooled sovereignty* involves the delegation of elements of domestic authority to supranational structures, such as the EU. Pooled sovereignty institutions do not affect international legal sovereignty: its members remain internationally recognised states. However, the pooling of sovereignty imposes constraints on member states' internal and Wesphalian sovereignty: the supranational authorities enjoy the right to intervene in some of the member states' internal affairs.[5]

Most referendums can be classified using this three-fold distinction. However, referendums involving multiple options may not fit into this scheme because different options may affect different categories. Puerto Rico's 2012 referendum constitutes a good example since it involved several options ranging from becoming a U.S. state (partial sovereignty) over free association with the U.S. to full independence (both full sovereignty). In such cases we consider the scope of the referendum as 'mixed', barring cases wherein one option is clearly the most relevant and the referendum thus effectively on this option.

4.2 Logic

Table 2: Synoptic summary of the logic dimension

Dynamic	*Description*
Integrative	An integrative logic refers to the dynamic whereby political actors in one or more political (sub-)systems are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities towards a new centre which has jurisdiction over this as well as other entities. The new centre is typically more inclusive than the old one.
Disintegrative	A disintegrative logic refers to the dynamic whereby political actors in one or more subsystems withdraw their loyalties, expectations and political activities from a jurisdictional centre and either focus them on a centre of their own or on an external centre, typically the cultural motherland.
Mixed	The logic is mixed if a referendum involves multiple options implying both an integrative and a disintegrative logic.

The logic of a sovereignty referendum is concerned with the identitarian dimension of a referendum. It incorporates a directional element that describes the shift in identities, loyalties and expectations implied in any given reallocation of sovereign authority. A sovereignty shift can take two distinct logics: integrative or disintegrative. An integrative logic refers to the dynamic whereby political actors in one or more political (sub-)systems are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities towards a new centre which then acquires overall jurisdiction (e.g.

[5]The term 'pooled sovereignty' is adapted from Keohane (2003). Note that Krasner (2004, 2005) uses the term 'shared sovereignty' rather than 'pooled sovereignty', which we avoid due to possible conflations with the notion of shared sovereignty that is used to characterise federal systems; see Riker (1964); Elazar (1987).

unification; this definition of political integration draws on Haas, 1958). A disintegrative logic, on the other hand, operates in the opposite direction and refers to the dynamic whereby political actors in one or more subsystems withdraw their loyalties, expectations and political activities from a jurisdictional centre and either focus them on a centre of their own or on an external centre, typically the cultural motherland (e.g. secession; this understanding of political disintegration builds on Wood, 1981). Table 2 provides a summary of the logic dimension.

While the distinction between integration and disintegration is useful theoretically, these two logics can collide. Below we comment on the three most prominent scenarios under which this is the case.

First, the two logics collide if a cession is at stake (i.e. whether region X in country A joins country B). A cession involves both a disintegrative logic (because X separates from A) and an integrative logic (because X joins B). However, typically either one or the other logic is more important. Operationally, we consider the disintegrative element to be dominant if the primary impetus for a referendum comes from the inside, that is, from a separatist movement that aims to join another country. On the other hand, we consider the integrative element to be dominant if the primary impetus for a referendum comes from the outside; more specifically, under three basic scenarios: i) if a territory is militarily conquered and then a vote is held on the annexation of the territory by the occupier, ii) if the referendum is held in the context of a large-scale, internationally negotiated territorial reshuffle (such as Versailles) and iii) if the referendum is held in the context of the sale or exchange of colonial entities or other negotiated territorial exchange between great powers.

Second, the integrative and the disintegrative logic can collide in referendums on the admission of territories to the metropole. The most prominent example involves the admission of territories to the U.S., i.e. the granting of statehood. If a U.S. territory acquires statehood this implies both formal integration into the U.S. mainland (and thus the logic of integration) and more autonomy[6] (and thus the logic of disintegration). Arguably, the integrative dynamic is stronger in these cases. Referendums on the admission of not fully incorporated territories to the metropole are therefore considered integrative.

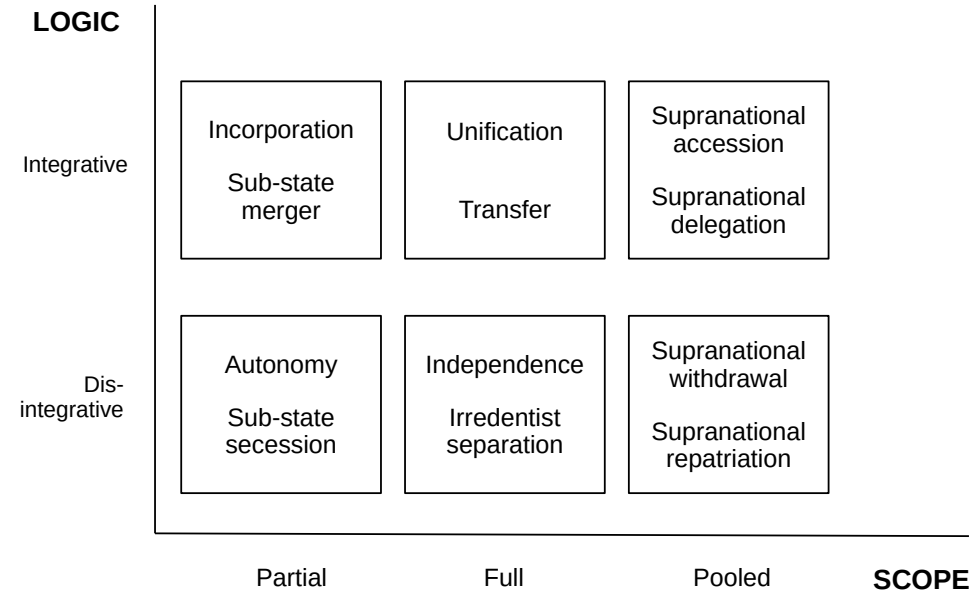
Finally, if a referendum involves two or more options other than the status quo, the different options can involve both logics. Consider the example of Puerto Rico (2012) where it was voted on several options ranging from becoming a U.S. state (integrative logic) over free association with the U.S. to full independence (both disintegrative logic). Barring cases wherein one option is clearly the most important and the referendum thus effectively on this option, the logic in multi-option referendums involving both logics is best considered mixed.

4.3 Types

As argued above, if combined the two dimensions yield a total of six categories as well as a seventh category consisting of multi-option referendums involving a mixed scope and/or a mixed logic. It is possible to further differentiate the resulting scheme by distinguishing between two sub-types within each of the six broad categories. This results in a total of 13 sovereignty referendum types. Figure 1 summarises the typology in the form of a conceptual map and Table 3 provides a detailed account of the attributes of each of the 13 referendum types.

[6] E.g. in many territories governors were appointed by the centre, while they are elected after the attainment of statehood.

Figure 1: Sovereignty referendum typology



Special case: Multi-option referendum

Table 3: Description of the 13 sovereignty referendum types

Type	*Description*
Incorporation	Incorporation referendums involve integrative reallocations of partial sovereignty between sub-national entities and the national centre. The logic is integrative since loyalties and expectations are refocused towards the national centre. There are two basic scenarios: i) referendums involving the incorporation of an entity into the metropole or mainland (e.g. admission of territories to the U.S.) and ii) referendums involving the centralisation of powers at the national level.[7]
Sub-state merger	Sub-state merger referendums involve the merger of two or more autonomous regions. The national centre is not directly affected by the sovereignty reallocation. The scope of sub-state merger referendums relates to partial sovereignty and the logic is integrative since loyalties and expectations are refocused towards a new sub-national centre.

[7] A special case emerges with reallocations of sovereignty between higher- and lower-level units in federal systems with more than two levels (e.g. the Soviet Union). The incorporation and autonomy categories are used for such cases. The sub-state merger/sub-state split categories are reserved for mergers/splits at the same level.

Table 3: Description of the 13 types of sovereignty referendums (continued)

Type	*Description*
Autonomy	Autonomy referendums involve the transfer of limited domestic authority from the national centre to one or more sub-national entities. The logic is disintegrative since loyalties and expectations are refocused internally.[8]
Sub-state split	Sub-state split referendums involve the separation of territorial units from pre-existing autonomous regions. The national centre is not directly affected by the sovereignty reallocation. The scope of the referendum relates to partial sovereignty and the dynamic is disintegrative since loyalties and expectations are refocused internally.
Unification	Unification referendums involve the merger of pre-existing independent states. This type of referendum is typical during foundational state moments and results in an integrative shift in the locus of full sovereignty. If implemented, the referendum entails a reduction in the number of internationally recognised states.[9]
Transfer	Transfer referendums imply a change in the status quo whereby the location of full sovereignty over a territorial entity is reallocated from one state to another (i.e. cessions). No new independent state is created. Note that cessions involve both the logic of integration and disintegration. The transfer category refers to cessions in which the integrative logic dominates. See section 4.2 for the circumstances under which this applies.
Independence	The referendum, if implemented, implies the creation of a new independent state. The scope of the referendum relates to full sovereignty and the dynamic is disintegrative as loyalties and expectations are refocused internally.
Irredent. separation	Irredentist separation referendums imply a change in the status quo whereby the location of full sovereignty over a territorial entity is reallocated from one state to another (i.e. cessions). No new independent state is created. Note that cessions involve both the logic of integration and disintegration. The irredentist separation category refers to cessions in which the disintegrative logic dominates. See section 4.2 for the circumstances under which this applies.

[8] See footnote 7 for the special case of federal systems with more than two levels.

[9] We make an exception for referendums on the reintegration of de-facto states. De-facto independent states (e.g. Abkhazia) lack international recognition. Thus their reintegration into the institutions of their host state does not imply a change in the number of internationally recognised states. However, referendums on the reintegration of de-facto states are still best seen as unification referendums.

Table 3: Description of the 13 types of sovereignty referendums (continued)

Type	*Description*
Supranat. accession	The referendum implies a change in the status quo that involves the accession to a supranational organisation. The scope of the referendum relates to pooled sovereignty and its logic is integrative since expectations are shifted towards a new external centre.
Supranat. delegation	The referendum involves the further delegation of competencies to a supranational organisation. The scope of the referendum relates to pooled sovereignty and its logic is integrative since expectations are shifted towards a new external centre.
Supranat. withdrawal	The referendum implies a change in the status quo that involves the withdrawal from a supranational organisation. The scope of the referendum relates to pooled sovereignty and its dynamic is disintegrative since expectations are refocused internally.
Supranat. repatriation	The referendum implies a change in the status quo that involves the repatriation of competencies from a supranational organisation. The scope of the referendum relates to pooled sovereignty and its dynamic is disintegrative since expectations are refocused internally. Note: this is a theoretical case. To date, there are no empirical examples for the supranational repatriation.
Multi-option	A referendum that has two or more options beyond the status quo which involve multiple of the other sovereignty referendum types. Note: if a vote involves multiple options but one option is clearly the most important, we code the referendum based on the most important option. For example, the 1999 vote in East Timor is coded as a vote on independence even if more autonomy was also at stake.

5 Data Collection

5.1 Coding Procedure

The coding exercise was performed by a team of three researchers and involved three steps. First, we drew up a list of cases that represented the putative universe of sovereignty referendums (see below for the sources used). It was then decided whether the cases satisfied the inclusion criteria used to define a sovereignty referendum as described in this codebook. Decisions were made independently by the three researchers. Agreement among coders was generally high. Disagreements were resolved by consensus. Usually disagreements could be resolved by gathering more case-specific

information. In a smaller number of cases, external experts were consulted for reconciling coding decisions, e.g. on certain cases from the Soviet Union.

After the establishment of the universe of sovereignty referendums, the final step entailed the addition context information, including the sovereignty referendum type, the regional and political context wherein a referendum was held, the ballot question, turnout and yes-share. Disagreements e.g. over the type of the sovereignty referendum were again resolved by consensus.

5.2 Sources

Existing compilations of sovereignty referendums and related concepts, such as ethnonational referendums, represent a natural starting point for the identification of sovereignty referendums. Thus, in a first step we compiled referendums listed in Laponce (2010), Qvortrup (2012, 2014), Wambaugh (1920, 1933), Peters (1995), He (2002) and other pre-existing collections.

However, even the most comprehensive of these efforts are not exhaustive. In a next step, we consulted some of the broader literature on the topic (e.g. Beigbeder, 1994; Brady & Kaplan, 1994; Farley, 1986; LeDuc, 2003; Mendez et al., 2014; Rourke et al., 1992; Walker, 2003) and browsed standard compilations of referendums and elections that do not focus exclusively on sovereignty referendums (Butler & Ranney, 1978, 1994; Centre for Research on Direct Democracy, 2011; Nohlen et al., 1999, 2001a,b; Nohlen, 2005a,b; Nohlen & Stöver, 2010; Suchmaschine fuer direkte Demokratie, 2014; Nunley, 2012). Coverage of these compilations is excellent regarding referendums at the national level with systematic searches revealing a number of cases that were missing from existing lists. However, they are more limited when it comes to sub-national referendums, in particular unofficial or semi-official referendums and historical cases.

Three main strategies helped us overcome this weakness.[10] First, we searched encyclopaedias of ethnic separatism (Hewitt & Cheetham, 2000; Minahan, 2002) and the Minorities at Risk Project's online resources (Minorities at Risk Project, 2009; also see Gurr, 1993, 2000) to get fuller coverage of sovereignty referendums in the context of ethnic self-determination conflicts. Second, we surveyed some of the less well-known older literature on the topic (e.g. David, 1918; Fauchille, 1925; Freudenthal, 1891; Gawenda, 1946; Giroud, 1920; Godechot, 1956a,b; Gonssollin, 1921; Kunz, 1961; Mattern, 1920; Rouard de Card, Edgar, 1890; Scelle, 1934; Soboul, 1989; Solière, 1901; Surrateau, 1965). Third, noting that we systematically missed referendums from the U.S. context, we searched seminal historical work on the creation of the American Union (in particular Chiorazzi & Most, 2005; Shearer, 2004).

The same sources, often in combination with case-specific literature, were used to code context information, including the ballot question, turnout and yes-share. In addition, we drew on information from the Correlates of War (COW) project for the affiliations of territorial units (Correlates of War Project, 2011; Sarkees & Wayman, 2010). Note that turnout and yes-share figures often differ among sources. Even if the differences tend to be marginal, we had to establish a hierarchy among sources. Where possible and in this order, we report the figures from the *c2d* database and the *sudd* database. Otherwise we used whatever best estimate was available. The reference list at the end contains the full set of sources used in this project.

[10] In addition, we browsed news sources and consulted other types of academic literature.

6 Variable Descriptions

General note: "NA" indicates that data is missing or not applicable.

6.1 id

Numeric referendum identifier.

6.2 eventid

Numeric referendum event identifier.

6.3 event

Referendum event (string).

6.4 entity

The territorial unit that is voting on an aspect of sovereignty.

6.5 year

The year a referendum was held. If the voting process lasted over a prolonged period of time, we code the date when the voting process began.

6.6 month

The month a referendum was held. If the voting process lasted over a prolonged period of time, we code the date when the voting process began.

6.7 day

The day a referendum was held. If the voting process lasted over a prolonged period of time, we code the date when the voting process began.

6.8 issue

Short description of the sovereignty matter at stake.

6.9 ballot_question

Ballot question in English.

6.10 announced

The date when a given referendum was announced (yyyy-mm-dd).

6.11 country

String variable identifying the country wherein a referendum was held. A country is defined as a territorial entity with diplomatic recognition as an independent state by major powers. The country coding draws heavily on the Correlates of War (COW) list of members of the interstate system (for the identification of independent states) and the COW list of non-state territorial entities (for the territorial belonging of territorial entities other than independent states) (Small & Singer, 1982; Sarkees & Wayman, 2010; Russet et al., 1968; Correlates of War Project, 2011). However, our coding can be different at times, mainly due to small definitional differences (e.g. we do not include a minimum size criterion for an entity to be considered an independent state; for the definition of an independent state in the COW project see Russet et al., 1968, p. 934; Sarkees & Wayman, 2010, pp. 15–19).

A special case emerges in case of territories that were mandated to a major power by the League of Nations or the United Nations. For mandated territories the country variable does not give the ultimate holder of sovereignty (the international organisation in question) but the mandatee (or trustee). Another special case emerges with confederations. Confederations are coded as a single country. This concerns Switzerland prior to 1848 and the U.S. before 1789.

6.12 ccode

Numeric variable that gives the COW country code of the state wherein a referendum was held (Correlates of War Project, 2011). 9999 stands for the Allied Powers which occupied e.g. the Schleswig territory for the period of the plebiscite. Note that COW does not cover the pre-Vienna Congress period (i.e. the pre-1816 period). We nonetheless assign COW codes where this makes sense. Microstates and other states not covered by COW are coded as missing.

6.13 region

String variable that gives the region where a referendum was held. The code indicates the geographic location; hence, overseas territories are *not* classified according to the location of the metropole. The region variable distinguishes between eight regions:

- *Europe* refers to both Eastern and Western Europe, including the European part of today's Russia. A commonly accepted division between Asia and Europe is formed by the Ural Mountains, the Ural River, the Caspian Sea, the Caucasus Mountains and the Black Sea with its outlets, the Bosporus and the Dardanelles.
- *Central Asia* refers to today's Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, as well as to the adjacent areas in today's Russia, including the Caucasus region.
- *Southern & Eastern Asia* refers to all of Asia except for Central Asia, including South-East Asia and the non-European and non-Central Asian part of today's Russia.
- *North America* refers to what today are Canada, the United States of America and Mexico, including offshore islands.
- *Latin America* refers to both Central and South America as well as to the Caribbean Islands.

- *North Africa & Middle East* refers to today's Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Turkey, Cyprus, Lebanon, Israel, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Iraq and Iran.
- *Sub-Saharan Africa* includes all of Africa except for Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt.
- *Oceania* refers to today's Australia and New Zealand, as well as to the South Pacific Islands.

6.14 region2

An alternative region code (WE = Western Europe; FSU = Former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe; NOA = North America; SA = South America; CAR = Caribbean; MENA = Middle East and North Africa; SSA = Sub-Saharan Africa; AS = Asia; OC = Oceania).

6.15 level

Level is coded 'National' if a sovereignty referendum is held at the national level and 'Subnational' if it is held at the sub-national level. The supranational level is not applicable since to date there has not been a vote at the supranational level.

Note: the level variable typically relates to the referendum level. However, in selected cases the level code refers to the referendum event: if multiple entities which in combination make up a whole country vote on the same issue. This means that level is coded 'National' in the following cases even if the individual rows do not constitute the whole country:

- Algeria (1961)
- Algeria (1962)
- Austria (1938)
- Cyprus (2004)
- France (1958)
- Kingdom of Two Sicilies (1860)
- Modena and Reggio (1848)
- Parma and Piacenza (1848)

6.16 overseas

Overseas is coded 1 if the vote concerns an entity which is separated from the mainland by a substantial body of water exceeding 150 statute miles (241 kilometers) in width, 0 otherwise. Note that the code refers to the territorial entity whose sovereignty is at stake. Hence, if the metropole votes on the sovereignty of an overseas colonial entity, overseas is coded 1.

6.17 dependency

The dependency variable is coded 1 if the vote concerns a colony, 2 if it concerns a mandate or trust territory and 3 if it concerns an occupied territory. If the entity does not concern a dependency, the variable is coded with 0. Note that the dependency code refers to the territorial entity whose sovereignty is at stake. Hence, if the metropole votes on the sovereignty of a colonial entity, dependency is coded 1.

A territorial entity is considered a dependency if it is not politically or legally integrated with the mainland, barring cases in which a sub-national entity has self-excluded itself from the state. The three types of dependencies are defined as follows:

- *colonies* are dependencies with a fairly durable status which are not politically integrated with the mainland, exercise almost no control over their foreign affairs, armed forces, immigration or trade, and whose indigenous populations is discriminated against by way of constitutional norms or other institutionalised practices, in particular in terms of citizenship and the right to vote in national elections;

- *mandate and trust territories* are entities mandated to a major power by the League of Nations or the United Nations;

- *occupied territories* are entities that are permanently occupied by foreign forces.

Our definition of a dependency, including the three sub-types, overlaps significantly with the definition employed in the Correlates of War (COW) project (Small & Singer, 1982; Sarkees & Wayman, 2010; Russet et al., 1968). Thus, the coding draws on the COW list of non-state territorial entities, though we overruled COW codes in a number of cases if our own research suggested that they cannot be justified. The following details how we handled some of the trickier cases:

- British overseas territories are considered colonies throughout since they do not form an integral part of the UK and because they are not represented in the UK parliament.

- Decolonisation in France constitutes a difficult case. Different overseas territories have had different statuses and must accordingly be treated differently.

  - Départements d'Outre-Mers (DOMs) are not considered colonies. In 1946, Martinique, Guadeloupe, La Réunion and French Guiana were given the status of a DOM and thus they became integral parts of France with representation in the French parliament.
  - With the exception of Wallis and Futuna (see below), the remaining French colonies in 1946 attained the status of Territoires d'Outre-Mer (TOMs). TOMs were not immediately decolonised according to our definition. TOMs were granted a degree of autonomy and French citizenship was extended to all inhabitants. However, TOMs retained a colonial-like structure that involved racially separated representative bodies and thus a structure that discriminated against natives and favoured white settlers. An important step towards the decolonisation of TOMs came in 1956 with the Loi Deferre, which extended universal suffrage to all inhabitants of TOMs. However, some discriminatory practices were retained. A further important step towards decolonisation followed in 1958, when the fourth republic collapsed and the fifth republic was installed. A referendum was organised in which all TOMs could decide on whether to remain with the republic or

become independent. Guinea was the only one to choose immediate independence. All other TOMs voted for continued union with France and then faced a decision whether i) they want to be fully integrated with France as a DOM, ii) become a state in free association with France or iii) retain the status of a TOM. Free association was a non-official status but understood as a transitional status leading towards independence. All African TOMs chose the status of free association, while Pacific islands such as New Caledonia and Tahiti retained TOM status. Furthermore, the 1958 constitution promised the TOMs 'free-determination' (Mrgudovic, 2012, pp. 85–87; Henningham, 1992, p. 49; Fisher, 2013, p. 47). Thus, 1958 appears to be a good cut-off point at least for those who opted for continued union with France, including New Caledonia and Tahiti. Black African territories, which were in a transitional status leading to independence, are probably better considered colonies until independence, including Comoros and Djibouti which both attained independence only in the 1970s.

  - Algeria is a special case. Officially, Algeria was an integral part of France. However, there was a high degree of discrimination against Algerians (e.g. Muslim Algerians were vastly under-represented in the Algerian Assembly). Thus Algeria is best considered a colony until independence in 1962.
  - Wallis and Futuna is a special case, too. It remained a French protectorate until 1961 and became a TOM in 1962. Thus we consider Wallis and Futuna a colony until 1962.
  - Though not a French overseas entity, the Saarland constitutes another special case. Before the First World War, the Saarland had belonged to Germany. The Treaty of Versailles made it a League of Nations territory (i.e. a mandated territory as defined above). After the 1935 Saar plebiscite it again became German. After the Second World War the Saarland became part of the French occupying zone. France did not intend to give the territory back to Germany, but instead aimed to incorporate it into France. Incorporation would have violated a June 1945 that the German borders as they had existed at the end of 1937 should be upheld and the plan was rejected by the Allies. France nevertheless detached the Saarland from Germany and from late 1946 onwards treated it as a quasi-autonomous French territory. While having some autonomy in domestic affairs (France even attempted to create a Sarrois nationality, though this was not recognised internationally), the Saarland was in an economic and monetary union with France and Paris was in charge of both foreign affairs and defence. Eventually, the Allies gave their tacit approval to the detachment of the Saarland from Germany. After a 1955 referendum, the Saarland again went to Germany (Angress, 1962; Roegele, 1952). In our coding scheme, the Saarland is best considered a French colony during the time between the end of the Second World War and its reunification with Germany, given its fairly durable attachment to France in the form of a protectorate.

- The overseas constituent countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, in particular the Netherlands Antilles (dissolved in 2010) and Suriname (independent in 1975), even if equipped with significant autonomy, are coded as colonies since they cannot vote in the Dutch national elections. In 2010 the BES islands (Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba) became special municipalities and thereby an integral part of the Netherlands. Contrary to the constituent countries, they

take part in the Dutch national elections. Hence, from 2010 onwards, the BES islands are no longer considered colonies.

- The status of Denmark's overseas collections varies considerably. Iceland enjoyed some autonomy already under the period of absolute rule, was granted home rule in 1904, a personal union with Denmark (a status very close to full independence) in 1918 and full independence in 1944. Iceland was never fully integrated with Denmark; in particular, Iceland never had representation in the Danish parliament (Hálfadanarson, 2006; Karlsson, 1995). Thus we consider Iceland a colony until it attained independence in 1944.[11] Note that the colonial status was in some way Iceland's own choice: Iceland was offered integration with Denmark but it rejected the offer (Hálfadanarson, 2006, p. 244). In contrast, the Faroe Islands were made an integral part of Denmark with the 1849 constitution. Since then, the Faroe Islands had representation in the Danish parliament and Denmark's constitution was directly applicable (Jensen, 2003, p. 171). Third, Greenland was a colony until 1953 but not thereafter. Until 1953, Denmark's constitution was not directly applicable to Greenland and Greenland did not have representation in the Danish parliament. In 1953 Greenland's constitution was changed and Greenland made an integral part of Denmark with representation in the Danish parliament (Jensen, 2003, pp. 171–172). Other overseas entities, such as the Danish West Indies (today's American Virgin Islands), clearly were colonies throughout their attachment to Denmark (Ostergard, 2004, p. 26; Dookhan, 1994, pp. 200–217). Similarly to Iceland, the Danish West Indies were offered integration into Denmark in the early 20$^{\text{th}}$ century but they declined (Dookhan, 1994, p. 214).

- New Zealand's overseas territories are considered colonies since the local population cannot vote in the national elections.

- The U.S. case is particularly tricky. Generally, a distinction has to be made between incorporated and unincorporated territories. Incorporated territories are integral parts of the U.S., typically with some form of self-rule. Its subjects have U.S. citizenship and they have a delegate to Congress (who does not have the same status as 'normal' representatives and cannot vote in roll-call votes, but at least has full voting rights in the committees). Thus we do not consider incorporated territories as colonies. Unincorporated (overseas) territories, on the other hand, used to have many more restrictions in particular with regard to citizenship and voting rights until the mid-20$^{\text{th}}$ century. This began to change after the Second World War, leading us to code some unincorporated territories as integral parts of the U.S. in the post-WWII phase. In particular: i) we stop coding Puerto Rico as a dependency after 1952, when it gained significant autonomy as well as a delegate to Congress (who can vote in committees but not in the House, see above); ii) Guamians gained citizenship in 1950 and a delegate to congress in 1972, after which they are no longer considered a colony; iii) the same goes for American Virgin Islanders, who gained citizenship in 1927 and a delegate in 1972; iv) finally, the Northern Marianas, formerly a mandated territory, gained a status similar to Puerto Rico in 1978 and are thus considered an integral part of the U.S. beyond that. It has to be noted that both incorporated and unincorporated territories cannot vote in presidential elections, which makes these codes a bit ambiguous. Lastly, even if they have a delegate

[11] Note: at the time of the 1944 referendum on full independence Iceland was occupied by the Allies, thus we apply an 'occupied' code.

to Congress, there continue to be restrictions on citizenship for the American Samoans (American Samoans are considered non-citizen U.S. nationals). Thus, we consider American Samoa a colony throughout.

- India involves a number of special cases too:
  - Upon the partition of British India, the princely states (feudal British protectorates) were given a choice of whether to join India or Pakistan. The princes of Junagadh and some smaller, adjoining princely states opted for Pakistan. While the princes were Muslims, Junagadh's population was predominantly Hindu and it is completely surrounded by an Indian state, Gujarat. India did not accept this and invaded the territory in late 1947. Referendums were held in 1948 on the former princely states' transfer to India. Based on this narrative, Junagadh and the adjoining territories are coded as militarily occupied and part of Pakistan at the time of the 1948 referendums.
  - India's Sikkim, a former princely state, became an Indian protectorate after the partition in 1947 endowed with far-reaching autonomy (Minahan, 2002, p. 1729) In September 1974 the Sikkimese king signed an agreement to formally integrate Sikkim into India, but he insisted on a referendum. In April 1975 the king was deposed and a referendum was held. Sikkim was integrated into India as a federal state in late April (Centre for Research on Direct Democracy, 2011). At the time of the 1975 referendum, Sikkim is best considered an Indian protectorate (colony in our terms), given that it lacked full integration into India.
  - Dadra and Nagar, a former Portuguese possession, was liberated by Indian forces in 1954. It then remained in a limbo state until it formally integrated into India as a union territory after a 1961 referendum. In the eyes of international law, sovereignty did not pass to India because Portugal only accepted the transfer in 1974. Nevertheless, for all purposes Dadra and Nagar was Indian. Given that it was only fully integrated into India after the 1961 referendum, we treat it as an Indian protectorate (colony) at the time of the 1961 referendum.
  - In 1961 India liberated another Portuguese possession: Daman, Diu and Goa. The former Portuguese possession then became a union territory. Union territories are formally integrated with the Indian state and can, for instance, vote in national elections. Thus, at the time of the 1967 referendums on joining adjoining Indian states, Daman, Diu and Goa do not constitute colonies/protectorates in our terms.

6.18 bundled

Binary that indicates referendum votes approving a new constitution or a new constitutional settlement (e.g. a treaty or a peace agreement) in which the transfer of sovereignty was one issue amongst others. Coding notes:

- Narrow constitutional amendments with a focus on sovereignty reallocations were not coded as bundled.
- We did not code autonomy referendums as bundled if the question was posed in the abstract (vote on the principle) or if the only issue at stake was the devolution of competencies. In contrast, if the organisation of a regional government

was also at stake (organic act) or power-sharing arrangements, we coded the referendum as bundled.

- With regard to referendums in the context of supranational organisations, we coded all referendums on accession or withdrawal as not bundled since the question (joining or not joining or withdrawing or not withdrawing) is sufficiently unidimensional. Referendums in the context of Treaty ratification, on the other hand, are more multidimensional in nature and thus coded as bundled.

6.19 n_options

The number of options in a referendum, including the status quo.

6.20 status_quo

Binary that indicates whether the status quo is among the options.

6.21 turnout

The reported turnout in per cent. Where possible and in this order, we report the figures from the *c2d* database and the *sudd* database. If a vote is not covered by either of the two, we report whatever best estimate is available.

6.22 yes

The yes-share in per cent. The yes variable is usually not applicable if the referendum does not involve a binary yes/no question. We make an exception if a vote effectively is on one of the options, that is, if other options are much less important. Where possible and in this order, we report the figures from the *c2d* database and the *sudd* database. If a vote is not covered by either of the two, we report whatever best estimate is available.

6.23 yes_direction

Binary that indicates whether the yes-share relates to agreement with the sovereignty reallocation at stake. Wherever possible, yes_direction is coded even if the exact yes-share of the vote is not available since this helps the interpretation of the passed variable. The yes_direction variable does not apply to referendums which do not involve a binary yes/no question, except if one option is much more important than the others. In the latter case, the code relates to the dominant option.

6.24 passed

Binary that indicates whether a referendum passed. The passed variable does not apply to referendums which do not involve a binary yes/no question, except if one option is much more important than the others. In the latter case, the code relates to the dominant option.

Usually the passed variable relates to the referendum-level. However, if two or more referendums are institutionally linked and thus form a single referendum event,

it is possible (but not necessarily the case) that the results of the separately held referendums depend on each other. For instance, a referendum on the merger of X and Y may depend on the result of referendums in both X and Y. If the results of separately held referendums hang together, the passed variable is coded at the event level.

6.25 passed_ref_event

Coded 'Referendum' or 'Event', depending on whether the passed variable relates to the referendum or the referendum event level.

6.26 yes_option

String variable indicating the yes-shares for all options at stake if a referendum involves more than two options. Where possible and in this order, we report the figures from the *c2d* database and the *sudd* database. If a vote is not covered by either of the two, we report whatever best estimate is available.

6.27 scope

String variable that gives the principles or aspects of sovereignty at stake in a referendum as defined in section 4.1 ('Full', 'Partial', 'Pooled' or 'Mixed').

6.28 logic

String variable that gives the directional shift in identities, loyalties and expectations implied in a sovereignty referendum as defined in section 4.2 ('Integrative', 'Disintegrative' or 'Mixed').

6.29 type

String variable indicating the sovereignty referendum type as defined in section 4.3.

6.30 sources

String variable indicating the sources used in author (date) format. The full references can be found in the reference list below.

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