

Local Autonomy Index and Coding Scheme

General Coding Instructions

Start with the most recent year (2014) and work backward. Find out whether there have been reforms which change the score.

If there are no written sources available you may have to get in contact with officials or colleagues. Please, state when the score stems from such sources.

Half-scores are not permitted. Exceptions: policy scope and effective political discretion where the total has to be divided by three (please see the additional coding instructions below).

Self-rule Index

Institutional depth	<i>The extent to which local government is formally autonomous and can choose the tasks they want to perform</i>	0-3	<p>0 local authorities can only perform mandated tasks</p> <p>1 local authorities can choose from a very narrow, predefined scope of tasks</p> <p>2 local authorities are explicitly autonomous and can choose from a wide scope of predefined tasks</p> <p>3 local authorities are free to take on any new tasks (residual competencies) not assigned to other levels of government</p>																		
	<p>Additional coding instructions: Whether a municipality is responsible for, the different tasks and/or has the financial resources is not the question here. Indeed, the coding has to comply with the legal framework in the respective countries. This means that the coding refers to the status of local government according to the constitution and other relevant legislation; if there are deeply contradictory regulations, this should be reflected in the coding and also mentioned in the notes.</p>																				
Policy scope*	<i>Range of functions (tasks) where local government is effectively involved in the delivery of the services (be it through their own financial resources and/or through their own staff)</i>	0-4	<p>Not at all; partly; fully responsible:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Education</td> <td>(0-2)</td> <td>Social assistance</td> <td>(0-2)</td> <td>Health</td> <td>(0-2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Land-use</td> <td>(0-2)</td> <td>Public transport</td> <td>(0-1)</td> <td>Housing</td> <td>(0-1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Police</td> <td>(0-1)</td> <td>Caring functions</td> <td>(0-1)</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Education	(0-2)	Social assistance	(0-2)	Health	(0-2)	Land-use	(0-2)	Public transport	(0-1)	Housing	(0-1)	Police	(0-1)	Caring functions	(0-1)		
Education	(0-2)	Social assistance	(0-2)	Health	(0-2)																
Land-use	(0-2)	Public transport	(0-1)	Housing	(0-1)																
Police	(0-1)	Caring functions	(0-1)																		
	<p>Additional coding instructions: Here we want to know whether the municipalities are involved in the provision of these tasks and services. How much they can decide is part of the next question. Half points (0.5) can be used if local government is only partly involved (i.e. below).</p>																				
Effective political discretion*	<i>The extent to which local government has real influence (can decide on service aspects) over these functions</i>	0-4	<p>No, some, or real authoritative decision-making in:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Education</td> <td>(0-2)</td> <td>Social assistance</td> <td>(0-2)</td> <td>Health</td> <td>(0-2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Land-use</td> <td>(0-2)</td> <td>Public transport</td> <td>(0-1)</td> <td>Housing</td> <td>(0-1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Police</td> <td>(0-1)</td> <td>Caring functions</td> <td>(0-1)</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Education	(0-2)	Social assistance	(0-2)	Health	(0-2)	Land-use	(0-2)	Public transport	(0-1)	Housing	(0-1)	Police	(0-1)	Caring functions	(0-1)		
Education	(0-2)	Social assistance	(0-2)	Health	(0-2)																
Land-use	(0-2)	Public transport	(0-1)	Housing	(0-1)																
Police	(0-1)	Caring functions	(0-1)																		
	<p>Additional coding instructions: half points (0.5) can be used if local government can only partly decide (i.e. below).</p>																				

Fiscal autonomy	<i>The extent to which local government can independently tax its population</i>	0-4	<p>0 local authorities do not set base and rate of any tax</p> <p>1 local authorities set base or rate of minor taxes</p> <p>2 local authorities set rate of one major tax (personal income, corporate, value added, property or sales tax) under restrictions stipulated by higher levels of government</p> <p>3 local authorities set rate of one major tax (personal income, corporate, value added, property or sales tax) with few or no restrictions</p> <p>4 local authorities set base and rate of more than one major tax (personal income, corporate, value added, property or sales tax)</p>
Financial transfer system	<i>The proportion of unconditional financial transfers to total financial transfers received by the local government</i>	0-3	<p>0 conditional transfers are dominant (unconditional = 0-40% of total transfers)</p> <p>1 there is largely a balance between conditional and unconditional financial transfers (unconditional = 40-60%)</p> <p>2 unconditional financial transfers are dominant (unconditional = 60-80%)</p> <p>3 nearly all transfers are unconditional (unconditional = 80-100%)</p>
Financial self-reliance	<i>The proportion of local government revenues derived from own/local sources (taxes, fees, charges)</i>	0-3	<p>0 own sources yield less than 10% of total revenues</p> <p>1 own sources yield 10-25%</p> <p>2 own sources yield 25-50%</p> <p>3 own sources yield more than 50%</p>
Borrowing autonomy	<i>The extent to which local government can borrow</i>	0-3	<p>0 local authorities cannot borrow</p> <p>1 local authorities may borrow under prior authorization by higher-level governments and with one or more of the following restrictions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. golden rule (e. g. no borrowing to cover current account deficits) b. no foreign borrowing or borrowing from the regional or central bank only c. no borrowing above a ceiling, absolute level of subnational indebtedness, maximum debt-service ratio for new borrowing or debt brake mechanism d. borrowing is limited to specific purposes <p>2 local authorities may borrow without prior authorization and under one or more of a), b), c) or d)</p> <p>3 local authorities may borrow without restriction imposed by higher-level authorities</p>
Organisational autonomy	<i>The extent to which local government is free to decide about its own organisation and electoral system</i>	0-4	<p>Local Executive and election system:</p> <p>0 local executives are appointed by higher-level authorities and local authorities cannot determine core elements of their political systems (electoral districts, number of seats, electoral system)</p>

			<p>1 executives are elected by the municipal council or directly by citizens</p> <p>2 executives are elected by the citizens or the council and the municipality may decide some elements of the electoral system</p> <p>Staff and local structures:</p> <p>Local authorities:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Hire their own staff (0-0.5)</td> <td>Fix the salary of their employees (0-0.5)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Choose their organisational structure (0-0.5)</td> <td>Establish legal entities and municipal enterprises (0-0.5)</td> </tr> </table>	Hire their own staff (0-0.5)	Fix the salary of their employees (0-0.5)	Choose their organisational structure (0-0.5)	Establish legal entities and municipal enterprises (0-0.5)
Hire their own staff (0-0.5)	Fix the salary of their employees (0-0.5)						
Choose their organisational structure (0-0.5)	Establish legal entities and municipal enterprises (0-0.5)						
Self-rule	0-28		The overall self-rule enjoyed by local government in X country (the sum of all the indicators above)				

Interactive rule Index

Legal protection	<p><i>Existence of constitutional or legal means to assert local autonomy</i></p> <p>This dimension is related to the § 4.1 and 11 in the European Charter of Local Self-Government</p>	0-3	<p>0 no legal remedy for the protection of local autonomy exists</p> <p>1 constitutional clauses or other statutory regulations protect local self-government</p> <p>2 local authorities have recourse to the judicial system to settle disputes with higher authorities (e.g. through constitutional courts, administrative courts or tribunals, or ordinary courts)</p> <p>3 remedies of types 1 and 2 above, plus other means that protect local autonomy such as e.g. listing of all municipalities in the constitution or the impossibility to force them to merge</p>
Administrative supervision	<p><i>Unobtrusive administrative supervision of local government</i></p> <p>This dimension is related to the § 8 in the European Charter of Local Self-Government</p>	0-3	<p>0 administrative supervision reviews legality as well as merits/expediency of municipal decisions</p> <p>1 administrative supervision covers details of accounts and spending priorities</p> <p>2 administrative supervision only aims at ensuring compliance with law (legality of local decisions)</p> <p>3 there is very limited administrative supervision</p>
Central or regional access	<p><i>To what extent local authorities are consulted to influence higher level governments' policy-making</i></p>	0-3	<p>0 local authorities are never consulted by higher level governments and there are no formal mechanisms of representation</p> <p>1 local authorities are consulted and/or have access to higher-level decision-making through formal representation but influence is limited</p> <p>2 local authorities are regularly consulted through permanent consultation channels and have substantial influence</p> <p>3 local authorities are either consulted or have access to higher-level decision-making through formal representation; and substantial influence</p>
Interactive rule		0-9	The overall interactiverule enjoyed by local government in X country (the sum of all the three indicators above)
LA		0-37	The combined autonomy of local authorities (the sum of all indicators)

Additional coding instructions

Policy scope (0-4)

Range of functions (tasks) where local government is effectively involved in the delivery of the services (be it through their own financial resources and/or through their own staff)

You can use half points (0.5) if local government is only partly involved, this also applies for the different items in Education, Social assistance, Health and Land use planning (please see the “PS”_tab in the Excel file).

Education (0-2)	Refers to primary education	+ 1 point if the local government is fully responsible for the construction and/or the maintenance of school buildings
		+ 1 point if the local government is fully responsible for teachers’ employment and payment
Social assistance (0-2)	Refers to economic and other help to destitute people (‘poverty relief’); social insurance (e.g. unemployment benefits) is excluded	+1 point if the local government is fully responsible for providing poverty relief
		+ 1 points if the local government is fully responsible for other social security/protection services
Health (0-2)	Refers to primary health services	+ 1 point if the local government is fully responsible for the construction and/or the maintenance of clinics or health centres (not hospitals or specialized health services)
		+ 1 point if the local government is fully responsible for doctors’ employment and payment
Land use (0-2)	Refers to building permits and zoning	+ 1 point if the local government is fully responsible for administering building permits
		+ 1 point if the local government is fully responsible for administering zoning
Public transport (0-1)	Refers to public transport services (not roads, streets, street lights, etc.)	1 point if the local government is fully responsible for public transport services (0.5 point if the local government is partly responsible for public transport services)
Housing (0-1)	Refers to housing and town development	1 point if the local government is fully responsible for housing and town development (0.5 point if the local government is partly responsible for housing and town development)
Police (0-1)	Refers to traffic police and public order police	1 point if the local government is fully responsible for police (0.5 point if the local government is partly responsible for police)
Caring functions (0-1)	Refers to kindergartens, services for the elderly or handicapped people, etc.	1 point if the local government is fully responsible for delivering caring functions (0.5 point if the local government is partly responsible for delivering caring functions)

Effective political discretion (0-4)

The extent to which local government has real influence (can decide on service aspects) over these functions

You can use half points (0.5) if local government can only partly decide, this also applies for the different items in Education, Social assistance, Health and Land use planning (please see the “EPD”_tab in the Excel file).

Education (0-2)	Refers to primary education	+ 1 point if the local government can decide on the number and location of schools
		+ 1 point if the local government can decide on teachers’ employment and payment
Social assistance (0-2)	Refers to economic and other help to destitute people (‘poverty relief’); social insurance (e.g. unemployment benefits) is excluded	+ 1 point if the local government can decide on whether an individual receives financial relief or not
		+ 1 point if the local government can decide on the level of assistance a person receives
Health (0-2)	Refers to primary health services	+ 1 point if local government can decide on the construction and/or the maintenance of health centres (not hospitals or specialized health services)
		+ 1 point if local government can decide on the organization and functioning of specialized health centres
Land use (0-2)	Refers to building permits and zoning	+ 1 point if the local government can decide on building permits
		+ 1 point if the local government can decide on zoning
Public transport (0-1)	Refers to public transport services (not roads, streets, street lights, etc.)	1 point if the local government can fully decide on range and level of public transport services offered (0.5 point if the local government can partly decide on range and level of public transport services offered)
Housing (0-1)	Refers to housing and town development	1 point if the local government can fully decide on housing and town development (0.5 point if the local government can partly decide on housing and town development)
Police (0-1)	Refers to police traffic and public order police	1 point if the local government can decide on public order police services (0.5 point if the local government can decide on traffic police services)
Caring functions (0-1)	Refers to kindergartens, services for the elderly or handicapped people, etc.	0.5 point if the local government can fully decide on the level of caring functions offered (0.5 point if the local government can partly decide on the level of caring functions offered)