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Valeriya Mechkova, Anna Lührmann, Staffan I. Lindberg

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Please address comments and/or queries for information to:

> V-Dem Institute
>
> Department of Political Science
>
> University of Gothenburg
>
> Sprängkullsgatan 19, PO Box 711
>
> SE 40530 Gothenburg
>
> Sweden
>
> E-mail: contact@v-dem.net

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The Accountability Sequence:

From De-jure to De-facto Constraints on Governments[1]

Valeriya Mechkova[2]
V-Dem Institute, Department of Political Science
University of Gothenburg, Sweden

Anna Lührmann
V-Dem Institute, Department of Political Science
University of Gothenburg, Sweden

Staffan I. Lindberg
V-Dem Institute, Department of Political Science
University of Gothenburg, Sweden

Abstract

Accountability is one of the cornerstones of good governance. Establishing accountable governments is a top priority on the international development agenda. Yet, scholars and democracy practitioners know little about how accountability mechanisms develop and thus can be supported by international and national actors. The present study tackles the questions of how, and in what sequence accountability sub-types develop. We consider not only vertical (elections and political parties) and horizontal accountability (legislature, judiciary and other oversight bodies), but also diagonal accountability (civil society and media) in both their de-jure and the de-facto dimensions. By utilizing novel sequencing methods, we study their sequential relationships in 173 countries from 1900 to the present with data from the new V-Dem dataset. Considering the long-term dimensions of institution building, this study indicates that most aspects of de-facto vertical accountability precede other forms of accountability. Effective institutions of horizontal accountability – such as vigorous parliaments and independent high courts – evolve rather late in the sequence and build on progress in many other areas.

I.   Introduction

Political accountability is one of the cornerstones of good governance and a key topic in academia and development practice. The power of the people to hold political leaders to account is one of the fundamental pillars of representative democracy. Therefore, accountability is central to the most widely used definitions of democracy (e.g. Dahl 1971, 1989; Schmitter et al. 1991). Moreover, establishing accountable institutions is a top priority on the international development agenda, and singled out as a target of the Sustainable Development Goals (UN Resolution: A/Res/70/1).

Yet, scholars and practitioners know very little about how and in what sequence accountability sub-types evolve in practice. Arguably, solving that puzzle requires a systematic study of the patterns of long-term historical development across many countries. The present study presents such an approach by investigating the question: Are there generalizable sequences in the evolution of accountability? More specifically, the study focuses on whether certain types of accountability are preconditions for achieving high levels of others.

Scholars from a diverse range of fields employ the concept of accountability with over 100 subtypes and usages attached to it (Lindberg 2013: 204). Yet, the underlying etymological principle of allocating authority, appraising performance, and the possibility of applying sanctions, spans across. An established tradition in political science, at least since Locke's (1980 [1690]) argument, is that accountable leadership requires separation between governors and the governed. This paper is focusing on political accountability in this original sense: When decision-making power is transferred from a principal (e.g. the citizens) to an agent (e.g. government), there must be a mechanism in place for holding the agent accountable for their decisions and tools be available for the principal to sanction the agent. Accountability hence is associated with the act of discretionary governing, typically understood as the authoritative allocation of resources and exercising control and coordination (e.g. Dahl 1971; Kooiman 1993; Marsh and Rhodes 1992). This explains why accountability has always been central to democratic theory, even if there are naturally, types and mechanisms of accountability that have little to do with democracy (in accounting, business relationships, etc.).

Based on earlier work [reference blinded for review: 2] we thus approach political accountability as "constraints on the governments' use of political power through requirements for justification of its actions and potential sanctions." By governments we mean the executive branch of the government including the chief executive: the head of state or government, the

cabinet, ministries and top civil servants (Coppedge et al. 2016: 413). The actors of accountability in this conceptualization are voters, political parties, media, Members of Parliament (MPs), judiciary, and civil society organizations (CSOs). Henceforth, we refer to this meaning simply as "accountability."

We further distinguish between three sub-types of accountability: 1) Vertical accountability captures citizens' ability to monitor and effectively penalize a government through elections and political parties; 2) Horizontal accountability encompasses mechanisms for state institutions to oversee the government; 3) Diagonal accountability refers to civil society and media overseeing the government directly as well as indirectly by enhancing the effectiveness of the other two sub-types [reference blinded for review].

In the literature, we find an intense debate on the sequence of the beginnings of democratization – thus how accountability starts to evolve. For instance, Dahl (1971) argues that competition among elites evolves before the expansion of participation to larger parts of the society. More recently Wilson (2015: 234) finds empirical support for this notion using sequence analysis. In what sequence high levels of *de-facto* accountability are reached is less in focus.

To address this gap, we develop a novel theory of the accountability sequence. Building on Dahl's (1971) famous axiom, we argue that governments are more likely to allow for *de-facto* accountability if the costs of supplying accountability decrease and the costs of suppressing the demand for accountability increase. We argue that progress in vertical and diagonal accountability increases the pressure for horizontal accountability. For instance, the evolution of vertical accountability increases the incentive of MPs to demand for more power and thus *de-facto* oversight capacity. Conversely, the evolution of high levels of vertical accountability is less dependent on progress in other areas, because voters are not agents in accountability relationships. Furthermore, effective horizontal accountability is more costly for governments because its key actors such as high courts and MPs are relatively close to the power center. Thus, we expect high levels of vertical accountability to develop first and *de-facto* horizontal accountability to develop last.

Our empirical results support these hypotheses drawing on evidence from 173 countries from 1900 to today. We use the new V-Dem data (Coppedge et al. 2016 a, b) and novel sequencing methods developed by Lindenfors et al. (forthcoming) building on established approaches in evolutionary biology. This allows us to offers a distinctive depiction of sequences between 35 indicators of accountability.

In the next section of the paper we lay out the main theoretical argument. Then follows the presentation of the concept and measurement of accountability. The next section discusses the empirical analysis. A final section concludes the paper.

II.   Theorizing Sequences of Accountability

It is established knowledge in political science that order, timing, and historical context matter for the evolution of complex sets of institutions (e.g. Mahoney 2001, Yashar 1997). Nevertheless, the existing literature on sequencing has three main shortcomings: 1) it typically focuses on the place and role of one specific institution in a sequential relationship to another (e.g. introducing competition before extending suffrage); 2) it does not employ appropriate methods that can identify a series of variables related sequentially in longer chains; and 3) it usually analyses the *de-jure* introduction of institutions and not their *de-facto* effectiveness.

For example, several studies of sequencing related to accountability focus on the timing of the introduction of *de-jure* multiparty elections. On the one side of the argument, Mansfield et al. (2007: 6-7) hold that a premature "out-of sequence" push to hold competitive elections in culturally diverse societies without reasonably effective institutions, is likely to fail and even lead to violence. Others like Gandhi and Lust-Okar (2009) also caution against early introduction of multiparty elections suggesting that they stabilize and legitimize dictatorships if introduced before full competition. Contrary to that view, Carothers (2007: 20-21) reasons stable political institutions and accountability mechanisms are more likely to develop "as part and parcel" of the process of democratization rather than separate from it. Similarly Howard and Roessler (2006) and Lindberg (2006) argue that countries holding repeated elections, even if they are held early and in authoritarian contexts, are more successful in democratizing than countries without elections.

Others argues that a powerful legislature must develop first or else a concentration of power in the hands of the executive and underdevelopment of political parties inhibits democratization (Fish 2005). A case study on the Ukraine supports this notion and shows that even in weak democracies, opposition parties in a legislature can hold the executive somewhat to account through legislative requests (Herron et al. 2015: 132). On the other hand, scholars have found that conflicts between the legislature and the executive may ultimately lead to democratic breakdown (Stepan et al. 1993).

Furthermore, establishing a robust and active civil society is often viewed as a precondition for the subsequent fall of authoritarian regimes, as well as for building a resilient democracy (Bernhard 1993). Carothers (2007: 20) points out that the development of strong grass root movements (e.g. Solidarity in Poland, the African National Congress in South Africa) have often been necessary conditions for democratic change in many countries. Yet, the "moderation argument" (Bermeo 1997) poses that mass popular action needs to be curbed around the moment of transition in order for democratization to succeed (e.g. Karl 1990, Weiner 1987, Huntington 1984, Valenzuela 1989).

However, we have been unable to study interactive relationships involving several institutions affecting each other over longer sequential "chains", due to both a lack of systematic and comparable data across a global sample of countries extending over a large number of years, as well as methods appropriate for such an endeavor. For example, do powerful and active CSOs before holding of elections systematically reinforce the quality of subsequent elections, which then push MPs to hold governments to account? Current scholarship has little to say on how these institutions evolve in sequential terms.

Finally, most of the extant literature focus *de-jure* institutions. However, what really matters is how well such institutions are functioning in practice. High levels of *de-facto* accountability may have different causes and consequences than the mere *de-jure* introduction of institutions related to accountability. We will develop this notion more in detail in the following section.

The Implementation Gap: De-jure vs. De-facto Accountability

It has become conventional wisdom that there is an important difference between the introduction of *de-jure* institutions of accountability and their *de-facto* implementation (Besley 2006: 37, Snyder 2006: 219). For instance, the Global Commission on Electoral Integrity (2012: 12) chaired by Kofi Annan pointed out that "many authoritarian governments (…) seek to wrap themselves in the veneer of democratic legitimacy." To this end, regimes introduce pro-forma institutions but skillfully strip them of their power to constrain the executive (Gandhi et al. 2009).

For example, almost 90 percent of countries in the world hold *de jure* multiparty elections for national office but less than half of these elections are substantially free and fair (Hafner-Burton et al. 2013: 152, van Ham & Lindberg 2016, 5f). Breaches range from election day manipulations such as stuffing ballot boxes and fabrication of results, to more subtle activities

such as informal limitations on media freedom (Schedler 2002). Such practices undermine two key preconditions for vertical accountability: procedural certainty and *ex ante* uncertainty (Przeworski 1986: 56–57).

Another example is the media. Journalists are often severely restricted in practice even when freedom of expression and freedom of the press are constitutionally guaranteed. Russia is a contemporary example where non-coercive capture of key media outlets by the government effectively obstructs critical reporting (Besley et al. 2002: 720). Although the Russian constitution formally guarantees freedom of the media, state-controlled companies own all national broadcasters, and journalists are in practice submissive to the regime.

Finally, most nations have parliaments with constitutionally guaranteed oversight functions. Yet, many cannot effectively exercise such *de-jure* prerogatives of scrutinizing the executive (Salih 2005, Rakner and van de Walle 2009, Vliet 2014). To the contrary, authoritarian governments can use legislatures to co-opt elites and shield governments from criticism (Gandhi 2008). In many African countries, limited implementation of constitutions and one-party-dominance undermine the division between legislative and executive powers, which is necessary for horizontal accountability (Cranenburgh 2009: 64).

Perhaps it will just take some time for these newer systems to develop effective institutions of accountability. Legislatures were introduced in many European countries already before the 20th century, but it was not until much later that they actually developed the power to effectively oversee government. For instance, the German emperor established a national parliament with oversight rights in 1871, but a strong parliamentary oversight *de-facto* did not evolve until after World War II.[3]

The next section develops arguments about the sequence in which high levels of *de-facto* accountability develop over time.

Closing the Gap: Sequences in the Evolution of Accountability

The advancement of *de-facto* accountability is not inevitable. Here we focus on how accountability results from a political struggle between the government and accountability actors. By accountability actors we mean actors that have an incentive to hold the government to account and are principals in vertical, horizontal or diagonal accountability relationships with a

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[3] See V-Dem data on legislative oversight (Coppedge et al. 2016).

government.[4] This includes citizens, political parties, legislatures, high courts, ombudsman offices and other oversight bodies, as well as media, journalists, and CSOs.

As a baseline approximation, it seems reasonable to assume that agents' (governments) strategic interest is to remain as unconstrained as possible, while principals (accountability actors) want to maximize the amount of control they exercise over agents, and hence seek to expand the reach of *de-facto* accountability mechanisms. The government then has to decide whether and to what extent to concede to this demand. In an iterative process, it weighs the *costs of supplying accountability* against the cost of *suppressing the demand for accountability*. This notion builds on Dahl's (1971: 14f) famous theoretical axiom that the likelihood of democratization increases as the cost of tolerating opposition decrease and the cost of repression increase. We also adopt the modification introduced by Lindberg (2009: 320) that what is relevant is not if the costs are higher or lower per see, but if that level of cost is acceptable or not to a particular ruling government.

Fig. 1. The probability of governments allowing the evolution of *de-facto* accountability
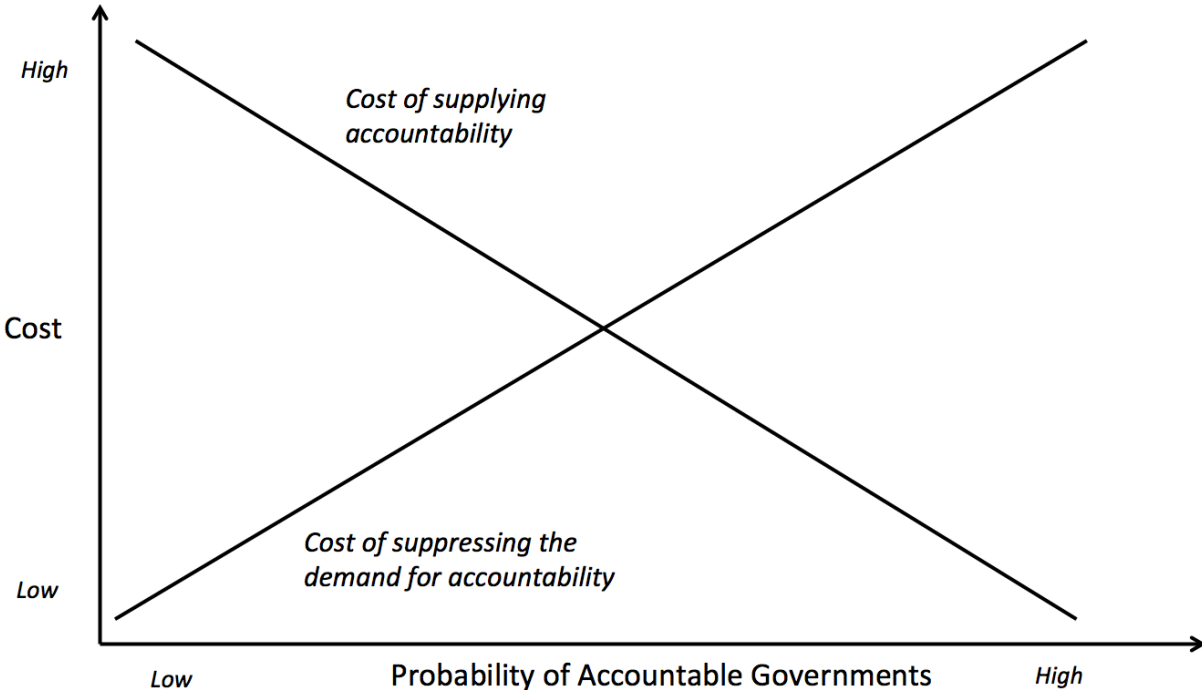
Note: This figure builds on Dahl (1971: 16).

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[4] Downs and Rocke (1994) apply the principle-agent model to the study of governments, where the chief executive is the agent of the public – the principal, who controls the agent by being able to remove her from power.

Thus, the evolution of specific patterns of accountability is a function of (1) how costly it would be for the government to supply improved institutions of accountability - meaning how much their room to maneuver would be constrained; and (2) whether governments perceive the cost it would incur to suppress the demand for specific types of accountability, as acceptable or not.

(1) The Cost of Supplying Accountability

Recall that we conceptualize accountability, following Schedler (1999), to have two main dimensions: availability of information and power to enforce sanctions. Ultimately, both dimensions require that the offices of agents and principals are established, and the domain of authority of the agent. Here, we focus on how such institutions of accountability (e.g. elections, parliaments) evolve from being in place *de-jure* to being effective *de-facto* and functioning as full-fledged accountability actors. The three sub-types of political accountability – vertical, diagonal and horizontal – encompass varying mechanisms to constrain governments. We suggest here that because of this variation, one should expect that the sub-types vary in how effective they are in the information and sanctions dimensions. Consequently, supplying higher levels of de-facto accountability in these respective areas, are associated with varying costs for governments. Table 1 shows the pattern we expect.

Table 1. Effectiveness of the three sub-types of *de-facto* accountability in the information and enforcement dimension of accountability

Sub-Type of Accountability / Dimension of Accountability	*Vertical*	*Diagonal*	*Horizontal*
Information	Low	High	High
Sanctions	High	Low	High

Vertical accountability between citizens and government has a sharp edge as enforcement tool by voters' power to "throw the rascals out" at the ballot box if governments perform poorly. The consequence of immediately losing power is drastic and we therefore consider the sanction capacity of vertical accountability high. However, it is also often considered a "long route" to implement accountability (World Bank 2004). Elections provide opportunity for exercising accountability only in periodic intervals. Furthermore, ruling elites have multiple instruments to

deceive and manipulate the electorate (Schedler 2002) and elections' effectiveness as an instrument for holding leaders accountable even in democracies has been questioned by many studies (e.g. Achen and Bartels 2016, Brennan 2016, Evans 2004). Citizens oftentimes are in a situation of enormous informational disadvantage, which constrains their ability to judge the governments' actions (Miller 2005: 207). Hence, we consider the information dimension low for vertical accountability.

Conversely, the strength of *diagonal accountability* mechanisms, when effectively in place, lies in the realm of uncovering and providing information. For instance, media are the main source of information for many citizens and hence a vital link between the government and citizens. Thus, investigative journalists and watch-dog CSOs are key for uncovering unethical behavior. Nevertheless, the success of CSOs and media ultimately depend on whether the institutions of vertical and horizontal accountability respond to them (Mainwaring and Welna 2003). Therefore, we consider the effectiveness of diagonal accountability to in the dimension of sanctions as low, whereas it is high in the dimension of information.

Finally, we argue that *horizontal accountability,* when realized in practice, is strong on both dimensions. First, it is difficult for governments to evade fully effective and independent horizontal oversight mechanisms. In most democracies the parliament is a key intermediary institution for probing the ruling government (Laver and Shepsle 1999). Self-confident, independent and capacitated legislatures, high courts, and other oversight bodies have both institutional incentives and power to monitor the actions of the executive on a day-to-basis (Fish 2005). They cannot be easily deceived and have ways of accessing information not available to ordinary citizens. For example, in many countries such as Sweden (National Audit Office) or the U.S (Government Accountability Office), independent courts of audit have the right to thoroughly scrutinize records of public expenditure. Their reports are important tools for parliamentarians and journalists to hold the government to account. Second, powerful parliaments – for instance through votes of non-confidence – and high courts through court rulings have the power to directly sanction the government.

Its dual characteristic of effective information and enforcement makes the implementation of full de-facto horizontal accountability highly costly for governments. Additionally, institutions of horizontal accountability can constrain the government's day-to-day actions. Conversely, actors of vertical and diagonal accountability are further away from the center of power and therefore their effectiveness is less costly for governments.

*(2) The Cost of Suppressing the Demand for Accountability*

The cost of supplying accountability is only one side of the coin. Additionally, the cost of repressing the demand for accountability shapes the propensity of governments to make concessions. Since we study the accountability sequence, we are mainly interested in how advancements in one sub-type of accountability influence the demand for high-levels of de-facto accountability in others. It seems plausible that a strong demand is more costly to repress than a weak demand.

There is evidence that introducing institutions of vertical accountability – even if weak - creates a demand for more *de-facto* accountability of any kind. For example, Lindberg (2006) shows that the introduction of de-jure multiparty elections has pushed African countries towards greater respect for civil liberties. Gandhi and Lust Okar (2009: 415) argue that repeated participation in elections can change citizens' expectations towards political regimes, encouraging them to demand democratic procedures and broader participation. Furthermore, the regular holding of elections may prompt actors to believe that democracy is the new game in town, which gives them an incentive to them to adhere to democratic norms (Lindberg 2009: 335). This includes holding the government to account. At the same time, political competition and a minimum level of press freedom enables civil society to push for better quality of government (Grimes 2013).

Building on these notions, we argue that improvements in *vertical accountability* can increase the demand for *de-facto horizontal accountability*, thus making it more costly for governments to repress such demands. For instance, MPs facing clean elections are more likely to insist that the legislature actually gains the power to oversee the government due to two pathways (Fig. 2). First, if MPs are forced to actually attract voters in elections they need to have good arguments about what they have achieved during their tenure – such as getting the government to implement a certain policy or uncovering misuse of public funds. This creates an incentive for MPs to demand for more power and thus *de-facto* horizontal accountability. Second, in clean elections, independent and genuine opposition MPs are more likely to have a chance to be elected. Furthermore, MPs are likely to be more self-confident, if they have a genuine mandate from voters and do not depend on the good will of the government to manipulate elections in their favor. In contexts with flawed elections, MPs are often dependent on clientelistic services from the government (Lust 2009). Thus, clean elections increase the independence of MPs and hence make it less costly for them to demand for more horizontal accountability. Due to both

pathways, high levels of vertical accountability are likely to increase the demand for more horizontal accountability.

Fig. 2. Two pathways illustrating how vertical accountability can enhance the demand for horizontal accountability
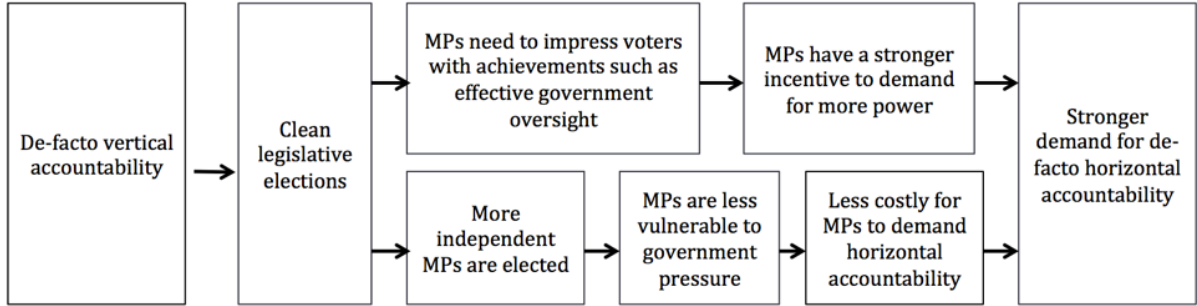
South Korea is one example how vertical accountability can push for greater horizontal accountability. The first free and fair parliamentary elections in the country were held in 1988.[5] However, it was not until 1998 that South Korean MPs became more rigorous in overseeing the government. In that year a party different from the party of the president held the parliamentary majority (Freedom House 1998). Finally, in 2016, citizens staged mass protests against the president due to a massive corruption scandal. This pressure from the principals pushed the National Assembly to impeach the president.[6]

Thus, we expect effective diagonal accountability to create a stronger demand for improved horizontal accountability. For instance, independent media outlets are able to give a platform to voices criticizing shortcomings in government oversight and for campaigns demanding more horizontal accountability. A well-informed, organized and active citizenry is likely to push for better governance such as more effective instruments of horizontal accountability (Grimes 2013: 381). One successful example of diagonal accountability improving horizontal accountability is a campaign by Argentinian CSOs using the media to push for reforms in the judicial system in the country. The non-profit organization Asociación Por Los Derechos Civiles (ADC) led a coalition of CSOs in a campaign resulting in parliamentary and public hearings for Supreme Court of Justice nominees (Fisher 2013: 238). Similarly, CSOs spearheaded judicial reforms at provincial level in Argentina. Several CSOs held a preparation course for

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[5] See V-Dem data on *Clean elections* (v2elfrfair, Coppedge et al. 2016).
[6] See V-Dem data on *Legislature investigates executive in practice* (v2lginvstp_ord, Coppedge et al. 2016). On this indicator, ranging from 0 ("extremely unlikely") to 4 ("certain"), South Korea is rated 2 or lower from 1989 until 1998, when the scores improve to 3. In 2016 the country receives the highest score (4).

judicial nominees for the provincial government of Santiago del Estero in 2008. As result, within one year, reportedly the selection of judges was removed from political control and now takes place under the auspices of the Council of Magistrates, and CSO monitoring (Fisher 2013: 239). Thus, we expect self-confident CSOs to push for more transparency and better horizontal oversight of governments. Together with independent media this strengthens the demand for effective de-facto horizontal accountability.

Thus, our central argument is that the cost of suppressing the demand for more de-facto *horizontal accountability* depends on advancements in other sub-types of accountability. Conversely, the demand for de-facto *vertical accountability* does not depend as much on other sub-types. Key actors in vertical accountability are voters. They are the principals of MPs – at least in contexts with clean elections - whereas voters themselves are not at the dependent end of any political accountability relationship.[7] This makes their incentive and capacity to demand for accountability less dependent on advancements in other areas. Disappointed voters can rapidly turn into protesters, which gives them a potent tool to demand improvements in vertical accountability without much help of other accountability actors.[8] For example, in 2010 Nigerians took to the streets demanding free and fair elections and the replacement of the head of the Election Management Body (EMB) due to his mismanagement of the 2007 elections and alleged partiality (Le Van and Ukata 2012). The government gave in, appointed a new and widely respected EMB head, who organized much better elections in 2011 (Lewis 2011).

III. Summary and Hypotheses

To sum up, we argue that governments try to evade being held to account whereas accountability actors want more oversight power. Thus, the accountability sequence is shaped by the specific costs for governments of giving in to demands for accountability and the strength of these demands.

After the establishment of *de-jure* institutions of accountability, we expect the initial demand for high-levels of *de-facto* vertical accountability to be stronger than the demands for other sub-types.

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[7] However, note that in societies dominated by clientelism a "perverse accountability" relationship can be created between citizens and politicians, where citizens are dependent on clientelistic goods (Stokes 2005).
[8] Of course, a free media reporting about citizens' protests would help their advancement but this is not a necessary condition – particular in the digital age - as the recent Arab Spring protests illustrate. People of Egypt, Tunisia and Libya took to the streets in 2011 without much reporting in the official media outlets of their country.

The incentives and capacities of voters to demand are relatively independent from advancements in other sub-types, because – conversely to MPs – they are not at the dependent end of an accountability relationship. Giving in to demands for vertical accountability also carries limited costs for governments, because voters often lack accurate information about the behavior of elected officials, which limits their ability to effectively sanction government in elections. Hence, in many cases the cost of repressing the demand for vertical accountability is higher than the cost of improving the electoral institutions. Thus,

H1: High levels of de-facto vertical accountability develop before high levels of other sub-types of de-facto accountability.

In the realm of horizontal accountability, institutions with the capacity to directly oversee and constrain governments are most costly for them. Therefore, governments may be ready to institutionalize parliaments and high courts, but can be expected to be reluctant to allow such institutions to become fully effective. Governments are only likely to make substantive concessions in this realm, if the demand would be too costly to repress. Advances in vertical and diagonal accountability intensifies this demand, because free and fair elections change the incentive structure of MPs and gives CSOs and media the opportunity to pressure for effective oversight. Hence,

H2: Institutions of horizontal accountability that directly oversee and constraint governments become de-facto fully effective relatively late in the sequence – after progress in the diagonal and vertical sub-types.

IV.   Concept and Measurement

Figure 3 maps our conceptualization of accountability and identifies a measurement scheme with a combination of factual and evaluative indicators. We distinguish between vertical, horizontal and diagonal sub-types of accountability. The distinction between vertical and horizontal accountability is commonly found in the literature (O'Donnell 1998). Other authors have added a third dimension - social accountability - to capture the important function of civil society and media in constraining governments (e.g. Melena et al. 2004). Here, we follow Goetz and Jenkins (2010) in terming this sub-type "diagonal," because this term better reflects its intermediary nature. For a more in-depth discussion see [reference blinded for review]. We also consider the *de-jure* existence of institutions potentially enabling accountability separate from the *de-facto* practice.

Fig. 3. Accountability and its sub-types
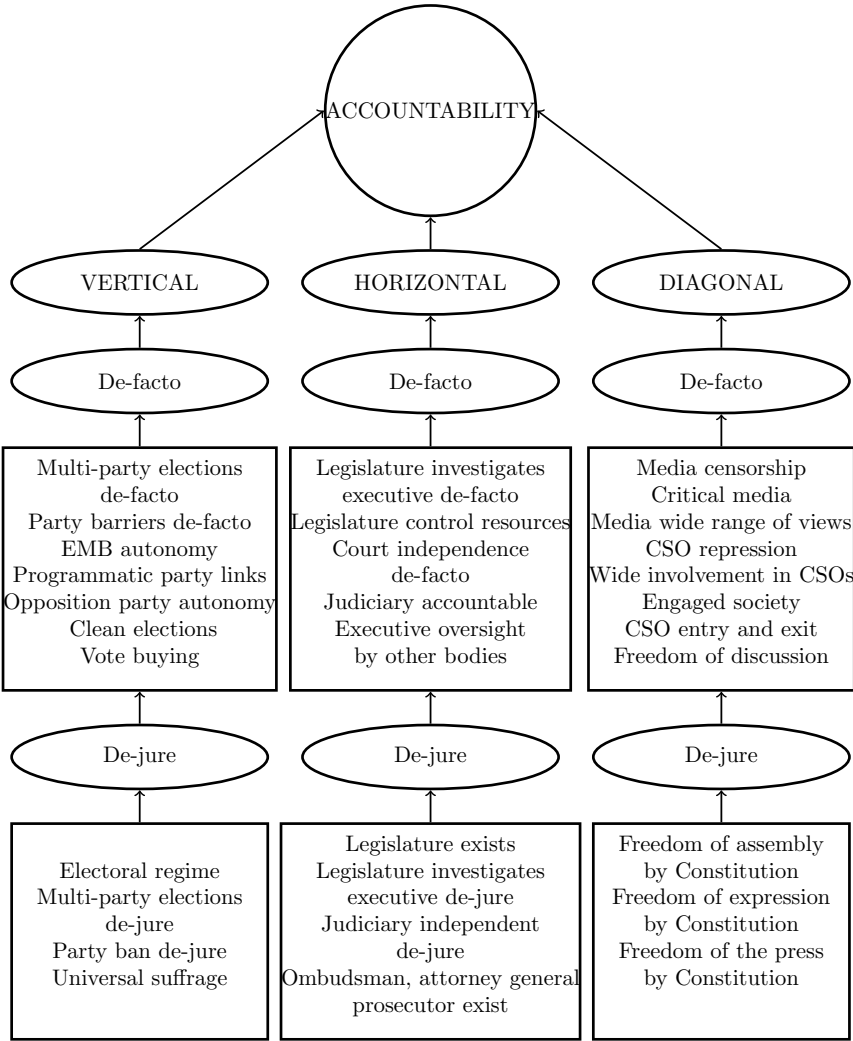
To measure *de-facto* accountability we primarily rely on V-Dem data, which draws on over 2,600 country experts (Coppedge et al. 2016a). Version 6.2 of the V-Dem data set provides more than 350 distinct indicators on democracy and governance for 173 polities between 1900 and 2012. Data for 76 countries are available until 2015 and for 37 countries until 2014. V-Dem aggregates the expert assessments in a custom-built measurement model, which takes coder disagreement and measurement error into account (Pemstein et al. 2016).[9] This enhances reliability and validity of the data. In the following analysis, unless explicitly mentioned, the data come from V-Dem. If V-Dem data on specific de-jure aspects is not available, we use data from the Comparative Constitution Project (CCP, Elkins 2014). We present a detailed description of the variables in Table A.1. in the Appendix.

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[9] The measurement model produces a probability distribution over country-year scores on a standardized interval scale (Coppedge et al 2016: 33). As the sequencing models require ordinal variables, we use the transformed ordinal version of the V-Dem variables.

We now discuss concept and measurement of each accountability sub-type in turn. **Vertical accountability** concerns the relationship between the citizens and their elected representatives (Fox 2015, Mainwaring 2003). Through voting for competing candidates, voters exert control over politicians. Faced with the uncertainty of re-election, incumbents aim to meet voters' expectations (Olson 2000). Political parties are important for vertical accountability as stronger and more organized parties can enforce constraints on governments' behavior, aiming to implement programmatic goals and prevent illicit activities that would hurt the party's reputation (Gehlbach et al. 2011; Svolik 2012).

We use four indicators to capture the *de-jure* aspects of vertical accountability. First, the variable *Electoral regime* indicates whether regularly scheduled elections for parliament and for the chief executive are on course or if they are interrupted due to a coup, military defeat or similar. Second, we consider whether it is legally possible for parties not affiliated with the government to form (*Party ban de-jure)*. Thirdly, we identify if laws allow for multiple parties to register for the elections (*Multiparty elections de-jure)*, and fourthly, if elections were held under universal suffrage (*Share of population with suffrage)*.[10]

Second, to capture the *de-facto* aspect of vertical accountability, we use seven indicators. The first measures the extent to which electoral contestation is truly multiparty in practice (*Multiparty elections de-facto*) and, second, the degree to which freedom to form political parties is unrestricted (*Party barriers de-facto*). Furthermore, we use measures of to what extent the electoral management body (EMB) has the autonomy from the government to apply election laws impartially (*EMB autonomy*); an indicator of to what extent elections are free and fair and not marred by fundamental flaws and irregularities (*Clean elections*), and fifth, to what extent *Vote buying* occurs. In order to capture the functioning of political parties, we include an indicator on the extent political parties are based on programs versus clientelistic linkages (*Party linkages*). Finally, we capture *Opposition parties autonomy* from the government, in order to determine if voters have a choice.

The oversight exercised between state institutions is commonly termed **horizontal accountability (**O'Donnel 1998). Such separation of power and should ensure that checks between institutions prevent abuse of power (Rose-Ackerman 1996). Examples of institutions of horizontal accountability are legislative, and judicial branches, as well as various oversight

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[10] We define virtual universal suffrage to be achieved when 98% of the population is enfranchised - as is common practice in the field (Skaaning 2015).

agencies such as ombudsmen, prosecutor generals. (O'Donnel 1998: 119). We focus here on how these institutions oversee the government (and not each other).

In order to measure the *de-jure* horizontal aspects of accountability, we use indicators from the CCP data set on the existence of government oversight bodies. First, we account for whether a *Legislature exists*, and, second, whether the legislature is allowed to question the government (*Legislature questions executive de-jure*). Third, we capture if there is *Judicial independence by constitution* and, fourth, whether provisions for an *Attorney general/ prosecutor exist*.

To measure *de-facto* horizontal accountability, we use the following indicators. First, we capture the likelihood that the *Legislature investigates* [the] *executive in practice* and issues a report unfavorable to the government if needed, and if the *Legislature controls resources* for its own operations. Second, we gauge the likelihood that other bodies such as a comptroller general, general prosecutor, or ombudsman would conduct such an investigation (*Executive oversight by other bodies*). Third, we take into account to what extent judges are subject to disciplinary action (*Judicial accountability*), and, finally, the *High/Low court independence* from the government.

Diagonal accountability reflects how civil society actors constrain the government either directly or indirectly via providing information for other accountability actors or pressurizing them (Goetz and Jenkins 2010). Media empowers citizens to make informed political choices (Voltmer 2009: 139). A robust civil society is a critical to hold governments accountable beyond elections (Besley 2006; Johnston 2005; Peruzzotti and Smulovitz 2006). In particular, CSOs are important for increasing the political awareness and impact of their members (Lipset et al. 1956).

To describe *de-jure* diagonal accountability, we use three CCP indicators reflecting whether there is *Freedom of assembly; Freedom of expression and Freedom of the press by constitution*.

For *de-facto* diagonal accountability, we include indicators measuring *Media censorship*; whether media outlets regularly criticize the government (*Critical media*); and the extent to which media represent a wide range of political perspectives (*Media wide range of views*). Three additional indicators capture civic action: the extent to which CSOs are free to organize, associate, strike, express themselves (*CSO entry and exit*), and to criticize the government without fear of negative consequences (*CSO repression*); an indicator of how wide and how independent are public deliberations when important policy changes are being considered (*Engaged society*); and finally, to what degree there is *Wide involvement in CSOs* and participation is voluntary.

V.   Empirical Analysis

Methodology

To test our hypotheses, we use a set of novel analytical approaches only now being introduced to the field of political science (Lindenfors et al 2016; Lindenfors forthcoming; Wang et al. 2017). In particular, we use the following two sequencing methods: 1) graphical investigation of the exact pathways for how variables change in relation to one another; and 2) dependency analysis, exploring whether the values of one variable are systematically conditional on certain values of other variables.

The latter method is inspired by "the contingent states test", developed to investigate dependencies in biological evolution (Sillén-Tullberg 1993). For highest value of each indicator, we scan the dataset for the lowest value of all other variables. In order to reduce the risk that outliers drive our results, we exclude the lowest 5% of observations following the convention (Lindenfors et al 2016:10).

The method combines a series of bivariate analysis, and thus, establishes a long series of sequences involving many multi-state variables. If high values in Variable A always correspond to a certain minimal value of Variable B, then it can be inferred that the high values of Variable A are likely to be conditional on this minimal value of Variable B. Conversely, if for the highest value of Variable B, the corresponding value of Variable A is its minimum, then this shows that Variable B is not contingent on Variable A. The result is a detailed and empirically based map of which aspects of a phenomenon occurs before others.

For our analyses here, we construct so-called dependency tables, which indicate how our accountability indicators have developed in relation to each other. We identify the lowest value of each accountability indicator, which has been reached historically in virtually all countries before the highest value of the variable in question was reached. The sum of these minimum values is called contingency conditions. A low number of contingency conditions for a variable indicates that it assumed its highest level before much progress in other aspects has been made. Conversely, a high number of dependencies for a variable indicate that it cannot fully develop before many other variables have reached high levels.

When interpreting the results one should not draw any strong conclusions from small differences in the number of dependencies and contingency conditions presented in such a table,

but we could draw inferences on sequence mechanisms from large differences (Lindenfors 2016: 24).

One strong advantage of this method is that - unlike in time-series cross-section analysis - the sequencing approach does not focus on average effects. Rather, the analyses tells us that one aspect never emerged before another one – in our case never in the history since 1900, across some 17,500 country-years. This is arguably rather strong evidence that it is unlikely to ever happen. Thus, we can present evidence on which aspects develop first, in the middle, and last in the processes of building accountability.

Global Trends

The following analysis investigates how the 35 individual accountability indicators evolved in relation to one another in virtually all countries from 1900 to today. Table 3 presents the aggregate summary of 595 bivariate analyses following the dependency analysis approach outlined above, displaying the sum of contingency conditions for each of the variables reaching their highest value (the top category) with a 5% cut-off point. For selected indicators more detailed dependency tables can be found in Table A.3 in the Appendix.

The first thing to note is that almost all de-jure indicators have very few dependencies. This reflects the fact that several countries had achieved most aspects of de-jure accountability before making much progress on any de-facto aspects. The only exception is the formal establishment of an ombudsman office, which comes relatively late in the sequence.

We expect de-facto vertical accountability to evolve first in the accountability sequence *(H1)*. Our findings partially support this hypothesis. Most indicators of de-facto vertical accountability require fewer contingencies than indicators of the horizontal and diagonal sub-type. The sequence pattern demonstrates that improving vertical accountability by diminishing *Vote buying* in elections can be achieved very early. Similarly, the evidence in Table 3 reveals that getting *Multiparty elections de-facto* and transforming *Party linkages* from clientelistic to programmatic can also be achieved very early in the sequence of developing the three types of accountability mechanisms.

Table 3. Dependency table indicating the minimum number of contingency conditions required for reaching each accountability indicator's highest value

De-facto/ De-jure	Type of accountability	Indicator name	Contingency conditions (max. 127)
De-facto	Horizontal	Legislature investigates executive in practice	62
De-facto	Horizontal	Executive oversight by other bodies	57
De-facto	Horizontal	High court independence	54
De-facto	Diagonal	Engaged society	48
De-facto	Diagonal	Media censorship	48
De-facto	Vertical	EMB autonomy	47
De-facto	Diagonal	CSO entry and exit	42
De-facto	Diagonal	Freedom of discussion	38
De-facto	Diagonal	Critical media	37
De-facto	Diagonal	CSO repression	37
De-facto	Diagonal	Media wide range of views	34
De-facto	Diagonal	Wide involvement in CSOs	30
De-facto	Vertical	Opposition parties autonomy	27
De-facto	Vertical	Clean elections	25
De-facto	Vertical	Party barriers de-facto	25
De-facto	Horizontal	Lower court independence	24
De-jure	Horizontal	Ombudsman exists	23
De-facto	Horizontal	Legislature controls resources	17
De-facto	Vertical	Multiparty elections de-facto	17
De-facto	Horizontal	Judicial accountability	13
De-facto	Vertical	Party linkages	10
De-jure	Vertical	Party ban de-jure	6
De-jure	Vertical	Multiparty elections de-jure	6
De-jure	Vertical	Executive electoral regime index	5
De-facto	Vertical	Vote buying	5
De-jure	Diagonal	Freedom of the press by constitution	4
De-jure	Horizontal	Legislature exists	3
De-jure	Vertical	Electoral regime	3
De-jure	Vertical	Legislative electoral regime index	3
De-jure	Horizontal	Attorney general/ prosecutor exist	3
De-jure	Diagonal	Freedom of expression by constitution	3
De-jure	Horizontal	Legislature questions executive de-jure	2
De-jure	Horizontal	Judicial independence by constitution	2
De-jure	Diagonal	Freedom of assembly by constitution	2
De-jure	Vertical	Share of population with suffrage	1

Note: Contingency conditions indicate the minimal sum of values on all other accountability indicators achieved in virtually all countries from 1900 to today before reaching the highest value on the indicator in question.

However, there are two exceptions to the pattern that high levels of vertical accountability develop first. First, three indicators capturing aspects of horizontal accountability have fewer dependencies than key indicators of vertical accountability. These indicators are: *Lower court independence*, *Legislature controls resources*, and *Judicial accountability*. All three aspects are important for strengthening actors of horizontal accountability, but do not immediately threaten the government, compared to other much sharper tools such as *High court independence*. Thus, this finding does not challenge our theoretical assumptions.

Second, full *EMB autonomy* requires more contingency conditions than all other aspects of vertical accountability and most indicators of diagonal accountability. Thus, the "last holdout" for governments in the area of vertical accountability seems to be influencing the management of elections. This is plausible, because restricting *EMB autonomy* is a low-cost way of manipulating elections (Schedler 2013:274).

The indicators of de-facto diagonal accountability cluster together in the upper half of the contingency table, which indicates that they require more progress than most indicators of vertical accountability. Furthermore, virtually no country in the world has fully ended CSO repression before achieving at least medium levels of *Freedom of discussion*, *Clean elections* and *Critical media*.[11]

Figure 2 presents the bivariate relationship between two key variables of diagonal and vertical accountability: *Media censorship* (y-axis) and *De-facto multiparty elections* (x-axis). Higher values of the variables indicate that the government is more accountable. The size of the dots on Figure 2 signifies the frequency of country-years with a particular combination of values. Bigger sizes of the bubbles indicate a higher frequency of the particular combination. Thus, the relatively small dots to the left of the diagonal line indicate that only few cases have accomplished an un-censored media before *De-facto multiparty elections*. The arrows on Figure 2 illustrate the pathways of countries moving from one combination of indicators to another. Thick arrows indicate that such pathway occurred more often than pathways with thin arrows. The fact that there is no strong direct connection between the lowest and highest states of any indicator suggests that high-levels of these aspects of de-facto accountability evolve in a sequential process and not over night. Almost all high values on *Media censorship* occur when *De-facto multiparty elections* has already reached the highest value.

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[11] See Table A.3 that documents the specific contingencies for selected individual indicators. Contingency tables for the remaining indicators are available upon request.

Fig. 2. Development of key indicators of diagonal and vertical accountability.
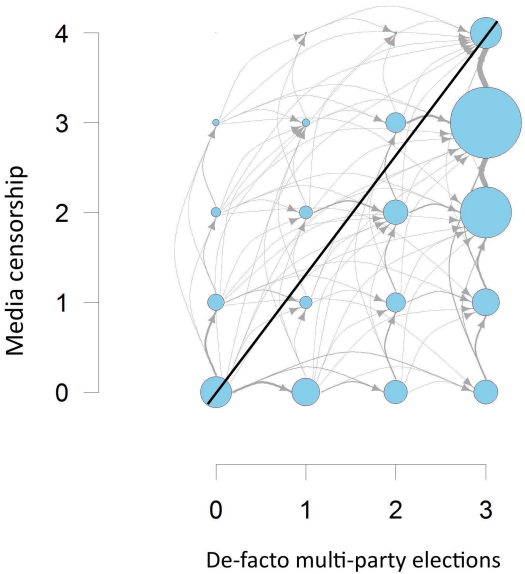
We expect institutions of *de-facto* horizontal accountability that directly oversee and constraint governments to become fully effective de-facto relatively late in the sequence (H2). Our findings support this hypothesis (Table 3). All indicators of diagonal and vertical accountability have fewer contingencies than the three key indicators of horizontal accountability. They capture if it is likely that a) the legislature and b) other bodies (such as ombudsman, comptroller general or prosecutor) would conduct an investigation of the executive potentially leading to an unfavorable report or decision; and c) the likelihood that the high court would rule independently on cases salient to the government, regardless of the government's position.

Table 3 provides evidence that no country has scored high on these three indicators without achieving significant progress in many other mechanisms of accountability. The legislature and other bodies can effectively hold the executive to account, and the high court can issue rulings independently only in an environment in which politicians are subject to regular and clean elections, citizens are free to organize themselves and express their political will through political parties and independent CSOs, and the media is able to scrutinize the work of the government.[12] This finding supports our second hypothesis that effective institutions of *de-facto* horizontal accountability develop last in the accountability sequence.

Figure 3 and 4 illustrate this finding. Figure 3 shows the development of the variables *Legislature investigates executive in practice* (y-axis) and *Clean elections* (x-axis). The bigger bubbles on

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[12] See Table A.3 documenting the specific contingency conditions for selected individual indicators. Dependency tables for the remaining indicators are available upon request.

right of the diagonal line indicate that, historically, countries have started holding clean elections before the legislature could investigate the executive.

Fig. 3. Development of key indicators in horizontal and vertical accountability.
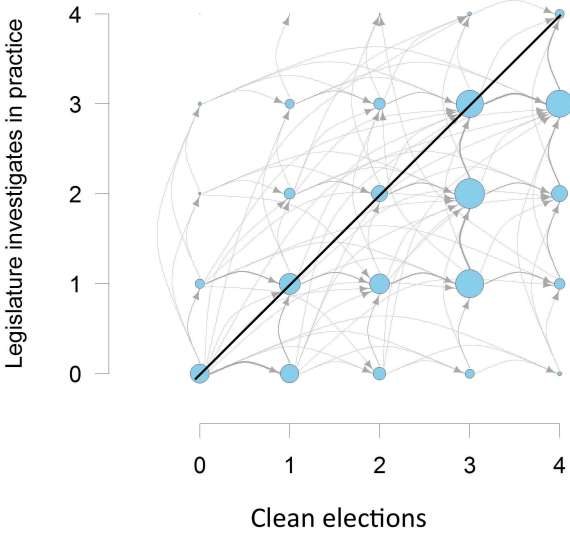
Similarly, when we look at the combination of values of two key variables from diagonal and horizontal accountability (Figure 4), we see that *Freedom of discussion* (diagonal accountability) develops higher values earlier than *High court independence* (horizontal accountability).

Fig. 4. Development of key indicators of diagonal and horizontal accountability.
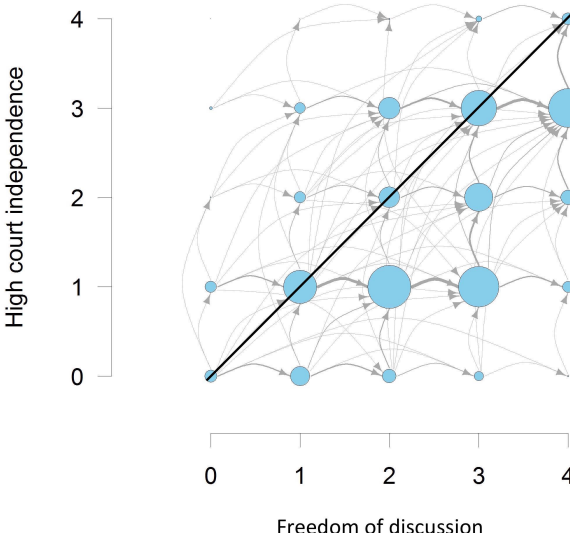
Thus, the results from Figure 3 and 4, and Table 3 support the theoretical expectations that *de-facto* diagonal and vertical accountability facilitates high levels of horizontal accountability.

How accountability evolved in Ghana

These general findings based on 115 years of data from 173 countries also tally well with country experiences. Consider, for example, Ghana that after eleven years of dictatorship, returned to an electoral regime in the fall of 1992. The new constitution installed de-jure provisions for accountability immediately. The first presidential poll in 1992 was split between the National Democratic Congress (NDC, 58%) and other candidates (42%). Most of the losing vote went to the Danquah-Busia legatee of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), which refused to accept the outcome (Morrison 1999). The 1992 elections were somewhat free and fair, largely free of vote buying, and barriers for parties to form and participate were low. But there was evidence of irregularities and questions about the autonomy of the EMB (Gyimah-Boadi 2001; Lindberg 2003; Nugent 2001). Despite these problems, after the election, the legislature headed by a well-known liberal, Justice D. F. Annan, asserted its independence in control over its own resources.

With the 1996 elections, opposition party autonomy was beyond doubt, and lower courts were clearly independent of the regime even though the ruling NDC and its leader President Rawlings remained in power. A fully independent and critical media that would openly challenge the sitting government did not develop until around the third elections in 2000. The opposition party NPP then won both a narrow majority in parliament, and the presidential office. Despite this electoral turnover, the legislature was still not fully capable of exercising executive oversight and conducting real investigations of illicit behavior by the executive. The new President Kufour and his government even actively sought and managed to minimize the reach of the legislature's oversight power and continued doing so into the party's second term from 2005 to 2008. The most important explanation for this circumvention of the legislature is to be found in the strategy of the President Kufour to coopt members of the legislature in order to reduce political competition (Lindberg 2009). As illustrated by the history of Ghana, many governments across the world resist full *de-facto* horizontal accountability for as long as they can, even if they came to power in clean elections.

Regional and Time Trends

To assess the scope conditions of our findings we explore patterns of accountability development by time and by regions. Since the end of the Cold War, the number of electoral authoritarian regimes has surged. During the first and second wave of democratization this practice was not as widespread. It seems plausible that this trend is reflected in different sequencing patterns.

Therefore, we split the sample into two parts: One including all countries in 1988 or earlier and one with all countries after 1988. Based on the methods described above, Table 4 lists the de-facto accountability indicators sorted in descending order with the indicators with the highest number of dependencies at the top of the list, and the lowest at the bottom.

Most key findings from the general patterns are similar to the results described for the global sample. In particular, it is noteworthy that the three mechanisms of horizontal accountability that directly oversee and constrain the degree of freedom of governments are on top of the dependency table for both before and after the Cold War. These aspects of horizontal accountability require most other aspects to be relatively highly developed *de-facto* in both time periods. Thus, the fundamental post-cold war transitions did not affect the reluctance of governments to give-in on these issues.

Second, however, there are instructive differences between the two samples in terms of some vertical accountability mechanisms. Before 1988, two important indicators of de-facto vertical accountability - *Clean elections* and programmatic *Party linkages* – are at a similar spot in the sequence as *Multi-party elections de-facto*. Such aspects often developed hand-in-hand. However, after the end of the Cold War, the development of *Clean elections* and non-clientelistic *Party linkages* seems to require considerable more progress in other aspects of accountability than *Multi-party elections de-facto*. This could be linked to the emergence of a larger number of electoral autocracies in the latter period, which only improve the quality of elections – if at all - after internal as well external pressure (Lindberg 2006, Schedler 2013).

Third, in the period after 1988 *Lower court independence* developed last in the sequence, whereas for the earlier time period it can be found in the middle of the dependency table. This finding suggests that countries that developed accountability after 1988 had to struggle with a legacy of weak low courts.

We also disaggregate the analysis by splitting the sample by world regions in order to investigate regional trends. Tables A.2 in the Appendix shows the results from this analysis including a more detailed discussion. Importantly, the key findings from the global sequence of variables hold across regions. The variables necessitating the lowest number of contingency conditions tend to be associated with vertical accountability; many diagonal accountability indicators are concentrated in the middle of the table, and the aspects that come at the latest stage of development (or are not achieved yet) reflect horizontal accountability. Thus, a specific

region does not drive the results in the global sample but there is a global pattern of the sequence in which accountability developed.

Table 4. Dependency table of accountability mechanisms by time period

1988 or earlier		After 1988	
Indicator name	Contingency conditions	Indicator name	Contingency conditions
Legislature investigates in practice	63	Lower court independence	62
Executive oversight	61	Executive oversight	59
Engaged society	58	High court independence	57
High court independence	52	Legislature investigates in practice	55
Media censorship	50	Party linkages	52
EMB autonomy	48	Media censorship	51
CSO entry and exit	47	Engaged society	50
Freedom of discussion	37	EMB autonomy	49
Critical media	34	Clean elections	44
Media wide range of views	32	Critical media	43
CSO repression	30	CSO entry and exit	42
Wide involvement in CSOs	30	Freedom of discussion	42
Opposition parties autonomy	23	CSO repression	41
De-facto barriers to parties	20	De-facto barriers to parties	37
Lower court independence	19	Media wide range of views	36
Clean elections	14	Wide involvement in CSOs	35
Judicial accountability	13	Legislature controls resources	35
Legislature controls resources	11	Opposition parties autonomy	35
Multi-party elections de-facto	11	Multi-party elections de-facto	26
Party linkages	6	Judicial accountability	22
Election vote buying	4	Election vote buying	8

Note: Contingency conditions indicate the minimal sum of values on all other accountability indicators achieved in virtually all countries from 1900 to today before reaching the highest value on the indicator in question.

VI. Conclusion

Our paper breaks new ground in understanding how governments become more accountable *de-facto* focusing on three sub-types of accountability – vertical, horizontal and diagonal. We argue that governments are more likely to allow for *de-facto* accountability if the costs of supplying accountability decrease and the costs of suppressing the demand for accountability increase. Based on this notion, governments are more likely to make initial concessions in the vertical sub-type of accountability (voters, political parties), because this sub-type is less effective in directly constraining their actions and thus less costly than *de-facto* horizontal accountability (judiciary, MPs, other oversight bodies). Furthermore, since voters are not agents in accountability relationships their incentive to demand for more influence is less contingent on advances in other sub-types. Conversely, the incentive of MPs as key agents of horizontal accountability to demand for more oversight power increases with more vertical and diagonal accountability (CSOs, media).

Using novel sequencing methods, we present new evidence on how accountability has evolved in 173 countries from 1900 until the present. Our findings support our theoretical assumption and uncover the following empirical trends. High levels of *de-facto* accountability in the realm of vertical accountability can evolve before other types of accountability. Effective horizontal accountability is contingent on progress in vertical and diagonal accountability. Without fully clean elections, autonomous opposition parties and a developed civil society and media, virtually no country in the world has ever achieved effective government oversight through independent high courts, vigorous parliaments or other institutions.

These findings have important policy implications. Efforts seeking to enhance horizontal accountability, such as the legislature's *de-facto* power, are very unlikely to be fully successful unless a series of other mechanisms of accountability are in place. International efforts to improve elections, the situation of opposition parties and media can have positive repercussions for other areas of accountability as well.

In sum, the novel sequencing methods utilized in this paper make an important contribution to our understanding of endogenous patterns of accountability evolution. Future research should also examine the role of exogenous factors – such as international interventions or economic development – in these sequential developments.

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Appendix

Table A.1. Variable names and question text.

	Variable name and tag	Note	Clarification/full question text	Source
Vertical accountability				
De-jure vertical accountability				
	Electoral regime (v2x_elecreg)		At this time, are regularly scheduled national elections on course, as stipulated by election law or well-established precedent?	V-Dem
	Multi-party elections de-jure (v2elmulpar)	First two categories of v2elmulpar	Is it legally possible for multiple parties to run in elections?	V-Dem
	Party ban de-jure (v2psbars)	First two categories of v2psbars	Are there legal barriers to forming a party?	V-Dem
	Universal suffrage (v2elsuffrage)	98% is 1, less is 0	What percentage (%) of adult citizens (as defined by statute) has the legal right to vote in national elections?	V-Dem
De-facto vertical accountability				
	Multi-party elections de-facto (v2elmulpar)	Categories 2, 3, 4	Are multiparty elections being held in practice?	V-Dem

Party barriers de-facto (v2psbars)	Categories 2, 3, 4	Barriers include legal requirements such as requirements for membership or financial deposits, as well as harassment.	V-Dem
EMB autonomy (v2elembaut)		Taking all aspects of the pre-election period, election day, and the post-election process into account, would you consider this national election to be free and fair?	V-Dem
Programmatic party links (v2psprlnks)		A party-constituent linkage refers to the sort of "good" that the party offers in exchange for political support and participation in party activities.	V-Dem
Opposition parties autonomy (v2psoppaut)		Are opposition parties independent and autonomous of the ruling regime? An opposition party is any party that is not part of the government, i.e., that has no control over the executive.	V-Dem
Clean elections (v2elfrfair)		Taking all aspects of the pre-election period, election day, and the post-election process into account, would you consider this national election to be free and fair?	V-Dem
Vote buying (v2elvotbuy)		Vote and turnout buying refers to the distribution of money or gifts to individuals, families, or small groups in order to influence their decision to vote/not vote or whom to vote for. It does not include legislation targeted at specific constituencies, i.e., "porkbarrel" legislation.	V-Dem
Horizontal accountability			
De-jure horizontal accountability			

	Legislature exists (v2lgbicam)	Is there a legislature in place? Advisory bodies that do not have the formal authority to legislate–as stipulated by statute, legislative rules, the constitution, or common law precedent–are not considered legislatures.	V-Dem
	Legislature investigates executive de-jure (INTEXEC)	Does the legislature have the power to interpellate members of the executive branch, or similarly, is the executive responsible for reporting its activities to the legislature on a regular basis?	CCP
	Judiciary independent de-jure (JUDIND)	Does the constitution contain an explicit declaration regarding the independence of the central judicial organ(s)?	CCP
	Ombudsman, attorney general, prosecutor exist (ATGEN, OMBUDS)	Does the constitution provide for an ombudsman, attorney general or public prosecutor?	CCP
De-facto horizontal accountability			
	Legislature investigates executive de-facto (v2lginvstp)	If the executive were engaged in unconstitutional, illegal, or unethical activity, how likely is it that a legislative body would conduct an investigation that would result in a decision or report that is unfavorable to the executive?	V-Dem
	Legislature controls resources (v2lgfunds)	In practice, does the legislature control the resources that finance its own internal operations and the perquisites of its members?	V-Dem
	High court/lower court independence (v2juhcind, v2juncind)	When the high/lower court in the judicial system is ruling in cases that are salient to the government, how often would you say that it makes decisions that merely reflect government wishes regardless of its sincere view of the legal record?	V-Dem
	Judicial accountability (v2juaccnt)	When judges are found responsible for serious misconduct, how often are they removed from their posts or otherwise disciplined?	V-Dem

		Executive oversight by other bodies (v2lgotovst)	If executive branch officials were engaged in unconstitutional, illegal, or unethical activity, how likely is it that a body other than the legislature, such as a comptroller general, general prosecutor, or ombudsman, would question or investigate them and issue an unfavorable decision or report?	V-Dem
Social accountability				
	De-jure social accountability			
		Freedom of assembly de-jure (ASSEM)	Does the constitution provide for freedom of assembly?	CCP
		Freedom of expression de-jure (EXPRESS)	Does the constitution provide for freedom of expression or speech?	CCP
		Freedom of the press de-jure (PRESS)	Does the constitution provide for freedom of the press?	CCP
	De-facto social accountability			
		Media censorship (v2mecenefm)	Indirect forms of censorship might include politically motivated awarding of broadcast frequencies, withdrawal of financial support, influence over printing facilities and distribution networks, selected distribution of advertising, onerous registration requirements, prohibitive tariffs, and bribery.	V-Dem
		Critical media (v2mecrit)	Of the major print and broadcast outlets, how many routinely criticize the government?	V-Dem
		Media wide range of views (v2merange)	Do the major print and broadcast media represent a wide range of political perspectives?	V-Dem
		CSO repression (v2csreprss)	Does the government attempt to repress civil society organizations (CSOs)?	V-Dem

Wide involvement in CSOs (v2csprtcpt)	Is participation in civil society organizations (CSOs) voluntary and is there wide popular involvement?	V-Dem
Engaged society (v2dlengage)	When important policy changes are being considered, how wide and how independent are public deliberations?	V-Dem
CSO entry and exit (v2cseeorgs)	To what extent does the government achieve control over entry and exit by civil society organizations (CSOs) into public life?	V-Dem
Freedom of discussion (v2xcl_disc)	This indicator specifies the extent to which citizens are able to engage in private discussions, particularly on political issues, in private homes and public spaces (restaurants, public transportation, sports events, work etc.) without fear of harassment by other members of the polity or the public authorities. We are interested in restrictions by the government and its agents but also cultural restrictions or customary laws that are enforced by other members of the polity, sometimes in informal ways.	V-Dem

Regional Trends

We split the sample by world regions in order to investigate regional trends.[1] Table A.2 lists the de-facto accountability indicators sorted in descending order with the indicators with the highest number of dependencies at the top of the list, and the lowest at the bottom.[2]

Key findings from the sequence of variables in the global sample hold across regions. The variables that necessitate the lowest number of conditions tend to be associated with vertical accountability (indicators displayed in red in the table); many diagonal accountability indicators (displayed in green) are concentrated in the middle of the table, and for most regions the indicators that come at the latest stage of development reflect horizontal accountability (blue indicators). Some exceptions to this pattern in Table 6 can also be found in the global sample: e.g. establishing autonomous EMB comes relatively late in time, while in some regions progress in terms of horizontal accountability, like financial independence of the legislature and judicial accountability, comes before reaching high levels on any other mechanisms of accountability. While the exact ordering sometimes varies a little, the indicators at the bottom, the middle, and at the top in the three types of accountability are the same as in the global analysis for most regions.

There are a number of interesting differences in the progress of accountability mechanisms across regions. First, in some regions no country has reached the highest level on all accountability indicators. These are crossed-out in Table A.2. For example, no government has yet fully given up on media censorship or enabled the legislature to effectively investigate in practice in the MENA region (here including Turkey and Israel).

Second, the pattern of development of vertical accountability seems to differ across regions. In most regions, vote buying is eradicated relatively early. However, in Western countries as well as in the Caribbean, vote buying persists longer than other deficits in vertical accountability – with the
exc
eption of EMB autonomy, which has been fully realized relatively late in the sequence everywhere. EMB autonomy comes particularly late in the sequence in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, indicating that there governments have kept a backdoor for electoral manipulation open longer than other instruments for limiting accountability. Finally, Clean elections are achieved rather late in the MENA region (if at all) and unlike in other regions, countries from the Caribbean have not developed programmatic relationships between political parties and citizens early in the sequence.

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[1] To divide the countries, we have used a politico-geographical classification scheme (e_regionpol) from the V-Dem data set v6 (taken from QoG 2013). We dropped the Pacific region (excluding Australia and New Zealand) due to the low number of countries and cases.

[2] Table A. documents the full table with number of contingency conditions for each region.

Thus, interventions to help make the EMB fully autonomous should be synchronized with efforts to strengthen the other mechanisms of vertical accountability too. On the other hand, vote buying is something that can be addressed early in most regions of the world where weak mechanisms of accountability is an issue, and regardless of the state of other mechanisms being in place or not.

There are also some interesting differences across regions with regards to horizontal accountability. Notably, no country from Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and South-East Asia has reached full judicial accountability – a measure of whether judges are held accountable for possible illegal actions - before making substantial progress in many other aspects of accountability. This is one instance where the disaggregated, regional analysis is very useful. Because of the fact that in a minority of regions (e.g. Western Europe) judicial accountability developed to a high degree early, the global analysis "hides" that in most of the regions it is actually an aspect of accountability that comes very late in the sequence.

Similarly, lower court independence was developed relatively late in the sequence in regions in the world covering a substantial number of countries (Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Latin America, East and South Asia), but in other regions it had a relatively low number of contingency conditions. While the present analysis cannot provide an answer to why these regional differences occur, it is important to note these exceptions to the global pattern if and when the analyses here are used to make policy recommendations.

Table A.2. Sequence analysis of accountability mechanisms by region, detailed.

Eastern Europe and Central Asia	Contingency conditions (max 127)	Latin America	Contingency conditions (max 127)	MENA	Contingency conditions (max 127)	Sub-Saharan Africa	Contingency conditions (max 127)	Western Europe	Contingency conditions (max 127)
Judicial accountability	75	Executive oversight	75	Media censorship	Highest score not reached	Judicial accountability	66	Executive oversight	70
Executive oversight	70	Legislature investigates in practice	66	Legislature investigates in practice	Highest score not reached	EMB autonomy	50	Ombudsman	70
Media censorship	66	Lower court independence	60	Executive oversight	64	Engaged society	48	Engaged society	66
Lower court independence	62	High court independence	54	Engaged society	57	Legislature investigates in practice	42	Legislature investigates in practice	63
Legislature investigates in practice	61	Engaged society	52	CSO repression	46	Media censorship	40	Media censorship	61
High court independence	61	CSO entry and exit	49	High court independence	46	Freedom of discussion	39	Judicial accountability	61
Engaged society	59	Ombudsman	49	EMB autonomy	46	Executive oversight	38	CSO entry and exit	58
EMB autonomy	56	EMB autonomy	48	Clean elections	45	High court independence	36	High court independence	58
Wide involvement in CSOs	53	Media censorship	40	Wide involvement in CSOs	43	CSO entry and exit	33	EMB autonomy	58
Critical media	50	Freedom of discussion	40	CSO entry and exit	42	Critical media	29	Critical media	57
CSO entry and exit	47	Media wide range of views	36	Ombudsman	42	Media wide range of views	27	Media wide range of views	57
Media wide range of views	41	Wide involvement in CSOs	34	Freedom of discussion	37	CSO repression	26	Lower court independence	57

Opposition parties autonomy	41	Critical media	29	Critical media	36	Ombudsman	21	Vote buying	57
Freedom of discussion	41	Programmatic party links	27	Lower court independence	35	Wide involvement in CSOs	17	Judicial independence	56
Ombudsman	36	Party barriers de-facto	27	Media wide range of views	31	Opposition parties autonomy	16	Freedom of discussion	56
CSO repression	35	CSO repression	25	Party barriers de-facto	24	Party barriers de-facto	16	CSO repression	55
Clean elections	31	Opposition parties autonomy	21	Opposition parties autonomy	22	Programmatic party links	14	Wide involvement in CSOs	55
Multi-party elections de-facto	29	Clean elections	17	Programmatic party links	19	Legislature controls resources	13	Programmatic party links	55
Party barriers de-facto	27	Legislature controls resources	15	Multi-party elections de-facto	17	Multi-party elections de-facto	12	Opposition parties autonomy	52
Executive electoral regime	11	Multi-party elections de-facto	15	Judicial accountability	11	Lower court independence	11	Clean elections	52
Multi-party elections de-jure	10	Vote buying	14	Legislature exists	10	Executive electoral regime	8	Party barriers de-facto	49
Attorney general, Prosecutor	10	Judicial accountability	12	Legislature controls resources	10	Freedom of expression	7	Freedom of expression	49
Vote buying	9	Party barriers de-jure	9	Party barriers de-jure	9	Attorney general, Prosecutor	6	Legislature controls resources	48
Party barriers de-jure	8	Freedom of expression	7	Vote buying	8	Multi-party elections de-jure	5	Legislature investigates executive	47
Judicial independence	8	Attorney general, Prosecutor	7	Multi-party elections de-jure	7	Freedom of assembly	5	Suffrage	44
Legislature controls resources	7	Multi-party elections de-jure	6	Electoral regime	5	Legislature exists	4	Party barriers de-jure	40
Programmatic party links	7	Legislative electoral regime	5	Legislative electoral regime	5	Clean elections	4	Multi-party elections de-facto	40
Freedom of expression	7	Electoral regime	5	Attorney general, Prosecutor	5	Vote buying	4	Multi-party elections de-jure	37
Legislature investigates executive	6	Freedom of the press	5	Freedom of expression	5	Party barriers de-jure	4	Legislature exists	34

Suffrage	5	Executive electoral regime	4	Executive electoral regime	4	Electoral regime	3	Electoral regime	33
Freedom of the press	5	Legislature exists	4	Suffrage	3	Legislative electoral regime	3	Legislative electoral regime	33
Freedom of assembly	5	Suffrage	4	Legislature investigates executive	3	Judicial independence	3	Freedom of the press	11
Legislature exists	4	Judicial independence	4	Freedom of the press	3	Freedom of the press	3	Freedom of assembly	11
Electoral regime	4	Freedom of assembly	4	Freedom of assembly	3	Legislature investigates executive	2	Executive electoral regime	9
Legislative electoral regime	4	Legislature investigates executive	2	Judicial independence	1	Suffrage	1	Attorney general, Prosecutor	9

East Asia	Contingency conditions (max 127)	South-East Asia	Contingency conditions (max 127)	South Asia	Contingency conditions (max 127)	Caribbean	Contingency conditions (max 127)
High court independence	Highest score not reached	Judicial accountability	Highest score not reached	Executive oversight	Highest score not reached	Engaged society	Highest score not reached
Lower court independence	Highest score not reached	Executive oversight	Highest score not reached	EMB autonomy	61	Executive oversight	Highest score not reached
Executive oversight	Highest score not reached	Media censorship	70	High court independence	60	Freedom of expression	Highest score not reached
Ombudsman	Highest score not reached	Legislature investigates in practice	62	Lower court independence	58	Freedom of assembly	Highest score not reached
Freedom of the press	Highest score not reached	CSO entry and exit	47	Legislature investigates in practice	51	Programmatic party links	76
Freedom of expression	Highest score not reached	Freedom of discussion	46	CSO entry and exit	48	Media censorship	71
Freedom of assembly	Highest score not reached	Engaged society	45	Media censorship	43	Judicial accountability	70
Engaged society	77	EMB autonomy	44	Engaged society	43	EMB autonomy	57
EMB autonomy	70	Critical media	40	Ombudsman	41	High court independence	51
CSO entry and exit	68	CSO repression	39	Critical media	36	Legislature investigates in practice	49
CSO repression	66	Media wide range of views	35	Media wide range of views	34	Critical media	47
Media censorship	65	Legislature controls resources	29	Freedom of discussion	34	CSO repression	47
Legislature investigates in practice	65	Wide involvement in CSOs	25	CSO repression	33	Vote buying	47
Freedom of discussion	64	Opposition parties autonomy	23	Wide involvement in CSOs	32	CSO entry and exit	46

Indicator	Value	Indicator	Value	Indicator	Value	Indicator	Value
Critical media	63	Party barriers de-facto	23	Opposition parties autonomy	32	Legislature controls resources	45
Media wide range of views	62	Legislature exists	21	Freedom of expression	32	Wide involvement in CSOs	44
Clean elections	61	Clean elections	20	Programmatic party links	30	Lower court independence	44
Programmatic party links	60	Lower court independence	18	Multi-party elections de-facto	28	Attorney general, Prosecutor	40
Party barriers de-facto	57	Executive electoral regime	17	Legislature controls resources	27	Clean elections	38
Wide involvement in CSOs	54	High court independence	15	Clean elections	27	Freedom of expression	36
Opposition parties autonomy	51	Programmatic party links	15	Party barriers de-facto	24	Media wide range of views	35
Legislature controls resources	41	Vote buying	15	Vote buying	22	Multi-party elections de-facto	35
Judicial accountability	40	Ombudsman	15	Executive electoral regime	16	Freedom of discussion	34
Executive electoral regime	35	Party barriers de-jure	9	Judicial accountability	14	Ombudsman	31
Legislature exists	33	Attorney general, Prosecutor	6	Party barriers de-jure	14	Opposition parties autonomy	29
Multi-party elections de-facto	33	Electoral regime	5	Multi-party elections de-jure	13	Legislature exists	25
Multi-party elections de-jure	27	Legislative electoral regime	5	Legislature exists	12	Party barriers de-facto	24
Party barriers de-jure	19	Multi-party elections de-facto	5	Attorney general, Prosecutor	9	Multi-party elections de-jure	19
Vote buying	11	Judicial independence	5	Freedom of the press	9	Party barriers de-jure	17
Attorney general, Prosecutor	10	Freedom of expression	5	Freedom of assembly	9	Electoral regime	13
Legislature investigates executive	10	Legislature investigates executive	4	Suffrage	7	Legislative electoral regime	13

Judicial independence	9	Freedom of the press	4	Electoral regime	7	Suffrage	12
Suffrage	6	Freedom of assembly	4	Legislative electoral regime	7	Executive electoral regime	12
Electoral regime	6	Suffrage	1	Judicial independence	6	Judicial independence	10
Legislative electoral regime	6	Multi-party elections de-jure	1	Legislature investigates executive	5	Legislature investigates executive	6

Note: *Indicators sorted in descending order: highest number of dependencies on top. Vertical accountability indicators are in red, horizontal in blue, diagonal in green. Indicators that are stricken out have not reached the highest level in a single country in the respective region by 2012.*

Table A.3. Detailed contingency levels to reach the highest state on selected indicators.

Legislature investigates in practice	Level	High court independence	Level	Executive oversight	Level	CSO repression	Level
Opposition parties autonomy	4	Opposition parties autonomy	4	Opposition parties autonomy	4	CSO entry and exit	3
Election free and fair	4	Election free and fair	4	Election free and fair	4	Opposition parties autonomy	3
Media censorship	3	Media censorship	3	Media wide range of views	3	Freedom of discussion	3
Media wide range of views	3	CSO repression	3	CSO repression	3	Media censorship	2
CSO repression	3	CSO entry and exit	3	Engaged society	3	Print or broadcast Critical media	2
Engaged society	3	Lower court independence	3	CSO entry and exit	3	Media wide range of views	2
CSO entry and exit	3	EMB autonomy	3	Legislature investigates in practice	3	Engaged society	2
High court independence	3	Election vote buying	3	EMB autonomy	3	Election free and fair	2
Lower court independence	3	De-facto Party barriers	3	Programmatic party links	3	De-facto Party barriers	2
Executive oversight	3	De-facto multi-party elections	3	De-facto Party barriers	3	De-facto multi-party elections	2
EMB autonomy	3	Freedom of discussion	3	De-facto multi-party elections	3	Legislature exists	1
Programmatic party links	3	Print or broadcast Critical media	2	Freedom of discussion	3	Electoral Regime Index	1
De-facto Party barriers	3	Media wide range of views	2	Media censorship	2	Legislative electoral regime index	1
De-facto multi-party elections	3	Wide involvement in CSOs	2	Print or broadcast Critical media	2	Wide involvement in CSOs	1
Freedom of discussion	3	Engaged society	2	Wide involvement in CSOs	2	Legislature investigates in practice	1
Print or broadcast Critical media	2	Legislature investigates in practice	2	Election vote buying	2	High court independence	1
Wide involvement in CSOs	2	Executive oversight	2	Legislature exists	1	Lower court independence	1
Judicial accountability	2	Legislature exists	1	Electoral Regime Index	1	Judicial accountability	1

Indicator		Indicator		Indicator		Indicator	
Election vote buying	2	Electoral Regime Index	1	Legislative electoral regime index	1	Executive oversight	1
Legislature exists	1	Legislative electoral regime index	1	Legislature controls resources	1	EMB autonomy	1
Electoral Regime Index	1	Judicial accountability	1	High court independence	1	Programmatic party links	1
Legislative electoral regime index	1	Programmatic party links	1	Lower court independence	1	Election vote buying	1
Legislature controls resources	1	De-jure Party barriers	1	Judicial accountability	1	De-jure Party barriers	1
De-jure Party barriers	1	De-jure multi-party elections	1	De-jure Party barriers	1	De-jure multi-party elections	1
De-jure multi-party elections	1	Executive electoral regime index	0	De-jure multi-party elections	1	Executive electoral regime index	0
Legislature investigates executive by law	1	Legislature controls resources	0	Freedom of expression	1	Legislature controls resources	0
Executive electoral regime index	0	Attorney general/Prosecutor general	0	Share of population with suffrage	1	Attorney general/Prosecutor general	0
Attorney general/Prosecutor general	0	Legislature investigates executive by law	0	Executive electoral regime index	0	Legislature investigates executive by law	0
Judicial independence by law	0	Judicial independence by law	0	Attorney general/Prosecutor general	0	Judicial independence by law	0
Ombudsman	0	Ombudsman	0	Legislature investigates executive by law	0	Ombudsman	0
Freedom of expression	0	Freedom of expression	0	Judicial independence by law	0	Freedom of expression	0
Freedom of the press	0	Freedom of the press	0	Ombudsman	0	Freedom of the press	0
Freedom of assembly	0	Freedom of assembly	0	Freedom of the press	0	Freedom of assembly	0
Share of population with suffrage	0	Share of population with suffrage	0	Freedom of assembly	0	Share of population with suffrage	0
Contingency Conditions	**62**		**54**		**57**		**37**

Note: *Indicators sorted in descending order: highest number of contingency conditions on top.*