

African Leadership Transitions Tracker Technical Appendix

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Definitions

Multiparty election - two or more political parties have affiliated candidates participating in an election.

Single-party election - only one political party has an affiliated candidate participating in an election.

Other transitions - assumption of power via:

- Appointment by parliament, presidential council, military junta, clan leaders, or similar
- Appointment as an interim or “acting” head of state
- A plebiscite, national referendum, change to the constitution, or similar
- Conflicting claims for leadership or no recognized government

Coups or assassination - a segment of the state apparatus takes over the rest of the government and/or the current leader is assassinated.

Deaths in office - a leader dies of causes unrelated to a coup or assassination.

Resignation from office - A ruler leaves power of his or her own accord.

Total elections - either a single- or multiparty election.

Note: Coups/assassinations, deaths and resignations are considered to be both discrete events (distinct from how a subsequent leader assumes power) and as a way to categorize a period under which a country was governed. If, for instance, a coup occurs and the country’s subsequent leadership did not participate in it, the transition is marked in the “other” category as well as in the “coup/assassination” category. The figures that appear at the top of both the map and timeline views of the interactive and as part of the “summary of transitions” section in the expanded details for each country in the timeline view calculate only coups that represent a period of governance.

Notes

A number of issues are important to bear in mind when examining the African Leadership Transitions Tracker, including:

1. The Africa Leadership Transitions Tracker data is intended to be as accurate as possible. However, if an error in the data is apparent, please contact AGI@brookings.edu to submit a correction request. Corrections will be updated on a regular basis.
2. Generally, the data covers a time span from each country's independence to the present day. For countries that became independent or free from foreign occupation before 1950, the date of independence or the end of occupation is noted in the Data for Individual Countries section below (see Egypt, Ethiopia, Liberia, South Africa).
3. For the most part, a country's president is listed in the tracker. However, in instances in which a monarch or prime minister exerts more authority than the president, substitutions were made.
4. The dates included in the Africa Leadership Transitions Tracker are recorded at the time of a leader's inauguration. When a political leader's inauguration date is unavailable, the date of his or her election is noted in its place (if available).
5. The transitions were coded into Excel (downloadable on the landing page of the interactive) they are defined as follows:

Type of Transition	Code
Leader at independence	0
Multiparty election	1
Single-party election	2
Provisional, interim or other*	3
Died in office	4
Coup d'état or assassination	5
Resigned, retired or left office	6
Coup d'état (event)	7

Data Sources for Individual Countries

Data for the African Leadership Transitions Tracker covers the 54 countries in the continent that are fully recognized by the United Nations. The data was compiled from a variety of sources. Generally, the names of political leaders and their dates in office are sourced from [Rulers.org](http://www.rulers.org); information regarding elections until 2012 are sourced from the [African Elections Database](http://www.africanelections.com) and after 2012 from [The International Foundation for Electoral Systems](http://www.electionguide.org); and dates regarding coups d'état are sourced from the Center for Systemic Peace. These websites are shown in the Main Sources section below.

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