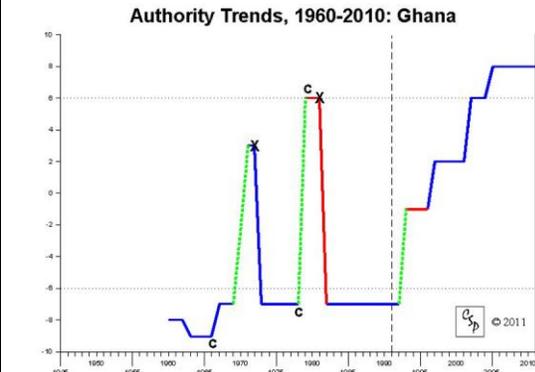


Polity IV Country Report 2010: Ghana					
Score:	2009	2010	Change		
<b>Polity:</b>	8	8	0		
<b>Democ:</b>	8	8	0		
<b>Autoc:</b>	0	0	0		
<b>Durable:</b>		9			
<b>Tentative:</b>		No			
SCORE	<b>GHA</b>	CCODE	<b>452</b>	Date of Report	<b>1 June 2011</b>
<b>Polity IV Component Variables</b>					
XRREG	XRCOMP	XROPEN	XCONST	PARREG	PARCOMP
3	3	4	6	2	4
<b>Date of Most Recent Polity Transition (3 or more point change)</b>					
End Date	8 December 1996		Begin Date	8 December 1996	
<b>Polity Fragmentation: No</b>					
<b>Constitution</b>	1992				
<b>Executive(s)</b>	President John Evans Atta Mills (NDC), directly elected 3 January 2009, 50.23%				
<b>Legislature</b>	Unicameral: Parliament (230 seats; directly elected; most recent elections, 7 December 2008) National Democratic Congress (NDC): 114 New Patriotic Party (NPP): 107 Other parties: 5 Non-partisan: 4				
<b>Judiciary</b>	Supreme Court				



**Narrative Description:**<sup>1</sup>

**Executive Recruitment: Competitive Elections (8)**

In 1979, Flt. Lt. Jerry Rawlings led a military coup that ousted the military junta of Gen. Akuffo and installed a civilian administration under President Hilla Limann, hoping to end Ghana's post-independence pattern of chronically unstable government. The Limann government, however, quickly fell into public disfavor amid widespread allegations of corruption. Rawlings engineered a second coup on 31 December 1981, to remove the Limann government and replace it with a military caretaker government; all political parties were banned. In 1983, Rawlings was elected president at the head of a one-party state dominated by Rawlings' National Democratic Congress (NDC) and he continued to rule in that capacity through the 1990s. As Ghana's situation improved, popular pressure for a lessening of political restrictions induced the

<sup>1</sup> The research described in this report was sponsored by the Political Instability Task Force (PITF). The PITF is funded by the Central Intelligence Agency. The views expressed herein are the authors' alone and do not represent the views of the US Government.

Rawlings government to pursue national reconciliation with the formation of a National Commission for Democracy and its adoption of a new multiparty constitution in April 1992. As a result, the government lifted its ban on political parties in May 1992 but the opposition immediately boycotted the legislative elections held later that year because of the obvious lack of time to prepare their campaigns. Rawlings and the NDC continued their domination of government through the 1996 elections, although the opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) made a strong showing in the 1996 legislative elections, winning nearly one-third of the seats.

Ghana's 1992 constitution limits the president to two terms and, so, the December 2000 presidential elections became a test of constitutional government in Ghana as its long-term ruler was expected to oversee Ghana's first peaceful transfer of power. The winner of the December elections, despite the best efforts of Rawlings to tilt the results in favor of his hand-selected National Democratic Congress candidate, John Atta Mills, was the New Patriotic Party (NPP) candidate John Kufuor. Kufuor took office in January 2001 and almost immediately launched investigations into alleged corruption and human rights abuses during the Rawlings era. Rawlings has countered with threats against the regime and intimated that the Kufuor regime may not enjoy the full support of the armed forces. Contention between the NDC and NPP, however, largely remains within the bounds of conventional politics.

On 6 November 2004, an alleged coup plot by former members of the disbanded 64 Infantry Regiment (bodyguards of former-President Rawlings) was reported but this was quickly dismissed by opposition leader Jerry Rawlings as a ploy by the ruling NPP to gain advantage in upcoming elections. Elections held on 7 December 2004 were deemed "peaceful, free, and fair" by observers and resulted in victories by incumbent President Kufuor and his ruling party (NPP). In 2006 former President Jerry Rawlings dismissed claims by President Kufuor that he has been trying to solicit funds for a coup.

#### **Executive Constraints: Near Parity (6)**

A system of checks and balances designed in the 1992 constitution envisages substantial constraints for executive authority. Under President Rawlings, those checks and balances were circumscribed by the domination of the President's party in the parliament. Eventually, the presence of a significant number of opposition legislators has led to increased scrutiny of the government's activities. Since December 2000, President Kufuor's party (NPP) holds only a small advantage in the Parliament over the former ruling party (NDC). Years of presidential dominance and one-party rule have limited the political influence of the legislature and political bargaining between opposing parties; new norms of deliberation will have to be worked out if the equally divided legislature is to gain effectiveness. The judiciary has been subject to executive influence and lacks adequate resources to perform.

#### **Political Participation: Political Liberalization: Limited and/or Decreasing Overt Coercion (9)**

The electoral victories of opposition (NPP) presidential candidate Kufuor in the New Patriotic Party victory in the 2000-2001 elections signified an important transition from restricted political competition under the authoritarian rule of President Rawlings to more institutionalized, open, electoral competition. In 2000, six opposition parties contested the Rawlings's National Democratic Congress in presidential and parliamentary elections that resulted in the defeat of the ruling NDC party. The elections were deemed to be generally free and fair by international observers; however, substantial violations of civil liberties including government pressure on the media and voter intimidation were reported. In the wake of their electoral victory, the new government acted quickly to lessen the vestiges of Rawlings' one-party rule by instituting investigations of past abuses and removing Rawlings loyalists from the government bureaucracies. Rawlings and the NDC responded with threats and acts of intimidation; however, the contention between the two rival parties, NPP and NDC, remained largely within lawful bounds. The December 2004 presidential and legislative elections were deemed "peaceful, free, and fair" and resulted in a ruling majority for the NPP in parliament and a second term for President Kufuor.

While Ghana has made significant strides in recent years in institutionalizing party competition, nonetheless, ethnic cleavages still influence, although they do not dictate, democratic competition in this country. The New Patriotic Party has had its greatest support in Akan speaking regions (Brong, Ahafo, Ashanti and the Central, Eastern and Western regions) while the National Democratic Congress has had its greatest success in the Volta region among the Ewe and Krobos. While ethnic voting patterns are quite clear in Ghana, it would be unfair to view either party as strictly ethnonationalist in ideology or action.

A growing source of political tension has emerged in Ghana in recent years as increasing land pressures have produced rising levels of economic inequality within the countryside. In line with tradition,

the tribal chiefs of Ghana, who represent one of Africa's oldest ruling classes, cannot sell any of the land vested in the chieftaincy. However, they are permitted to lease these lands. As growing population pressures and rising investor demand has increased the demand for these lands, the rents that these chiefs can accrue has also increased. As the wealth of the traditional chiefs has risen, increasing political pressure has been placed on them to redistribute their newfound economic gains.