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# Annex 1: Case Selection

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Two comparative cases in the region were selected along with one out-of-region example (Ecuador) that was most similar on all other counts. The two within-region cases were selected to be most different (New Zealand) and most similar (Nepal) along four other dimensions: democracy score, development level, population, and GDP per capita.

The driving factors in case selection were democracy score,<sup>139</sup> development level,<sup>140</sup> executive and legislative types,<sup>141</sup> population,<sup>142</sup> GDP per capita,<sup>143</sup> and region. Based on these parameters, the most similar within-region case selected was Nepal. As lower-middle income countries with a roughly similar population size, both Nepal (population 29.6 million) and Sri Lanka (22 million) have been consistently rated “Partly Free” on Freedom House’s index with a Civil Liberties score of 4 since at least 2013. Both countries also had very similar average V-Dem democracy scores across three indices: liberal democracy, electoral democracy, and participatory democracy. The average across the three indices was 0.48 for Nepal and 0.43 for Sri Lanka. In contrast, New Zealand is also in region, but is different on most other core factors. Definitely upper income and with a much smaller population (5.1 million), New Zealand is rated “Free” by Freedom House standards and has an average V-Dem score of 0.80. Finally, Ecuador was selected as the country from a different region that was most similar to Sri Lanka. Ecuador had been ranked “Partly Free” by Freedom House until it just crossed the threshold to “Free” in 2022. Its democracy scores average close to those of Sri Lanka (0.52 versus 0.43). Ecuador is also a middle-income country, although admittedly upper middle, and it has a population of 17.9 million people.

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139. Evaluation of both Freedom House status and average Variety of Democracy (V-Dem) scores calculated in 2022. The V-Dem average was calculated across the annual “liberal democracy,” “polyarchy,” and “participatory democracy” index scores. The authors also consulted twenty-year regional trends.

140. Based on World Bank Income Groups.

141. Cheibub, J. A., Gandhi, J., & Vreeland, J. R. (2010). [Democracy and dictatorship revisited](#). *Public Choice*, 143(1), 67–101. Updated by authors with Economist Intelligence Unit political structure profiles.

142. World Bank Open Data. [Population total](#).

143. World Bank Open Data. [GDP per capita](#).