

Examining Democracy in Eastern Europe and Former Soviet Republics: Freedom House Exercise

By Thomas R. Mueller, Ph.D., GISP

Grade Level: Senior High School or Freshman Level College

Time: Two Classroom Periods

Pre Exercise Reading: Freedom in the World 2017 Methodology:
<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world-2016/methodology>

Standards

National Geography Standards

Standard 1: How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information

Standard 17: How to apply geography to interpret the past

Objectives

The student will be able to:

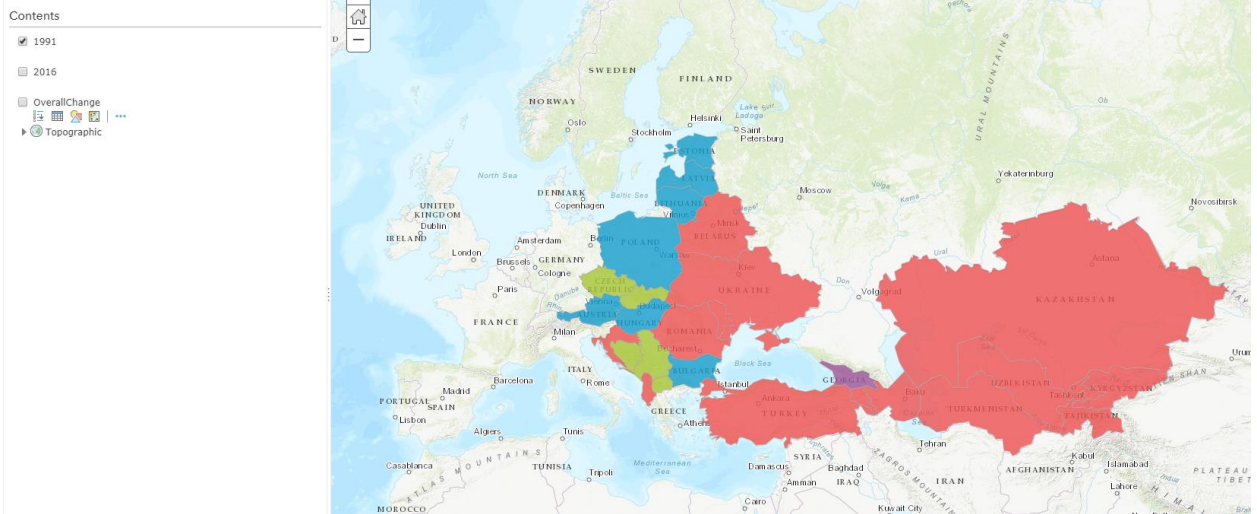
- A) Locate Eastern European and Former Soviet Republic countries
- B) Explain possible democratic issues
- C) Examine spatial patterns with a geopolitical framework

Pre Exercise Discussion

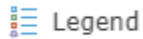
- 1) Have the students watch the following video - **Post-Soviet Democratization and the Authoritarian Counteroffensive - Adrian Basora:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nMfYeXkHWDY&sns=em>
- 2) When the presentation shows the map 18:43 in the video (Click Pause), ask them their opinions on the map – Knowledge of these countries, surprises of classification, etc.
- 3) At the 23:04 part of the presentation, click pause again and ask the students to describe the map. Patterns of Free, Partly Free and Not Free. Any surprises?
- 4) At the 24:22 of the video, ask the students to write down and learn these definitions. End the video at the 29:51 and ask the students to complete the exercise.

Steps

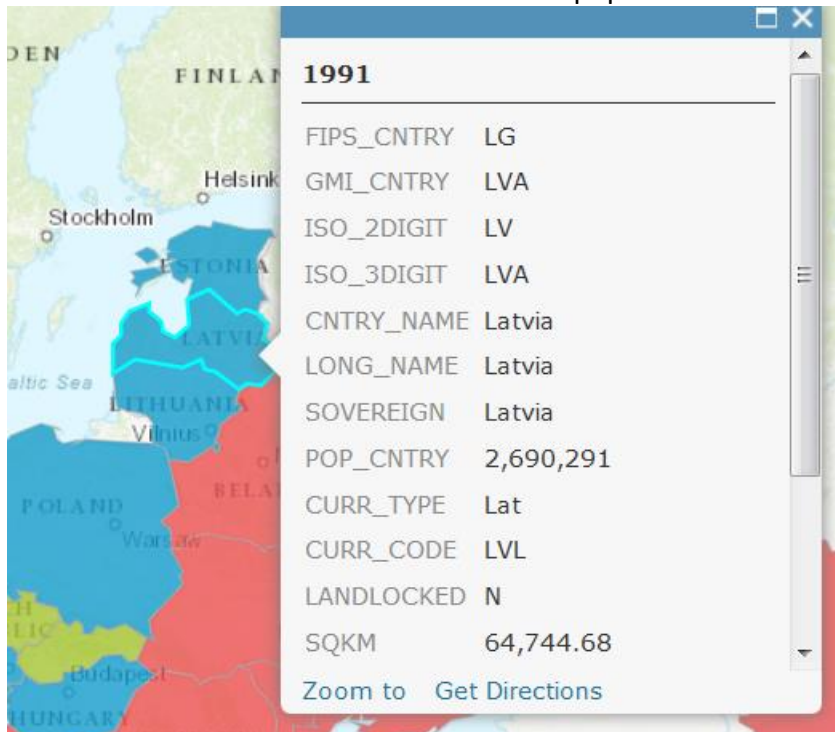
- 1) Go to the following link: <http://arcgis.is/1bbjm0> Then sign into ArcGIS Online
- 2) You should see the following map:



- 3) Click the Legend



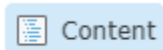
- 4) Is there a pattern (Not Free all to the North, etc.)? If yes, what is it?
 - A) Clustered?
 - B) Dispersed?
- 5) Now click on each of the countries and a Popup Menu will become visible



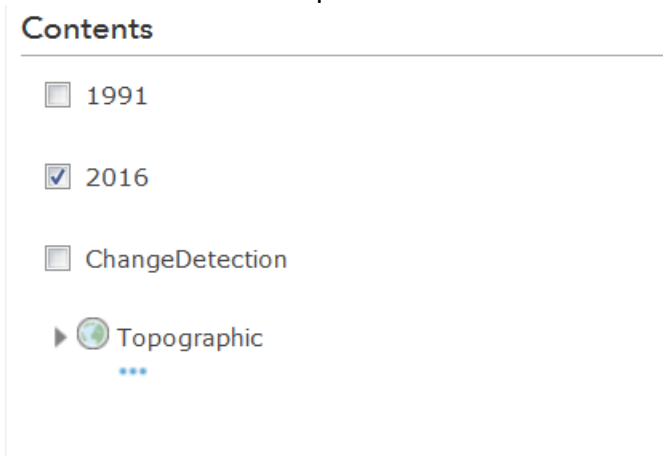
6) Place each country into a Table similar to below.

| FREE | PARTLY FREE | NOT FREE | NO DATA |
|------|-------------|----------|---------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

7) Now Click Content



8) Now uncheck 1991 and put a check in 2016.



9) Then Click Legend Again

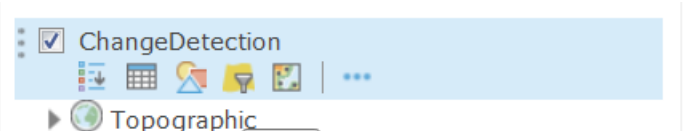
10) Is there a pattern? If yes, what is it?

11) Create a similar table for 2016

12) What changes have some countries gone through in 25 years? (Example: Change from Not Free to Free, etc.)

13) Now go back to Content, uncheck 2016 and put a check in ChangeDetection.

14) Move your cursor under the Change Detection title in the Table of Contents and a Filter Tool will be appear



15) Click the Filter Button

A) Choose 01_91CLcha (Civil Liberties Change 2001 – 1991)

B) Then Choose Is

C) Then Choose Diminishing Democracy (see below)

Create

+ Add another expression Add a set

Display features in the layer that match the following expression

01_91CLcha is Diminishing Democracy

Ask for values Value Field Unique

- 16) Click Apply Filter and write down the countries that were classified as Diminishing Democracy
- 17) Click the Filter Button Again and Choose Edit Tab and choose 01_91_CLcha is Improving Democracy and Click Apply Filter

View Edit

+ Add another expression Add a set

Display features in the layer that match the following expression

01_91CLcha is Improving Democracy

Ask for values Value Field Unique

- 18) Write down the countries that were classified as Improving Democracy
- 19) Now repeat this process for the No Data
- 20) Repeat this process for the following attributes
 - A) 01_91PRcha (Political Rights Change 2001 – 1991)
 - B) 11_01CLcha (Civil Liberties Change 2011 – 2001)
 - C) 11_01PRcha (Political Rights Change 2011 – 2001)
 - D) 16_11CLcha (Civil Liberties Change 2016 – 2011)

D) 16_11PRcha (Political Rights Change 2016 – 2011)

- 21) Which range of years had the largest number of countries change Improving Democracy?
- 22) Which range of years had the largest number of countries change Diminishing Democracy?
- 23) Are there any spatial patterns with those countries in the change of Improving Democracy? Diminishing Democracy? (Examine their location with (regard to both) Europe and Russia)
- 24) Which countries had the most No Change classification throughout the all of the ranges?
- 25) Now divide the students into groups and assign a country to each of them. Each group should investigate the potential reasons for Diminishing or Improving Democracy. Then each group will present their results.

Post Exercise Discussion

- 1) After the students have completed their discussions of their particular country.
- 2) Continue to play the video at 29:51:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nMfYeXkHWDY&sns=em>
 - A) Where did their country compare to the graph in Free Countries or Not Free Countries?
 - B) After the students watch the rest of the video, ask them about their conclusions and the conclusions of Ambassador Adrian Basora

Modifications

- 1) Teachers can create all the maps before class and present them in class for discussion, etc.
- 2) Teachers can divide the students by Eastern European countries and Former Soviet Republics.

Extensions

- 1) Ask students to not only investigate the potential reasons for Diminishing or Improving Democracy within their selected country, but also events in neighboring countries and globally (Western European Countries) that may have impacted their country's Diminishing or Improving Democracy.

Sources

What is Freedom House? <https://freedomhouse.org/about-us>

Freedom in the World 2017 Methodology: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world-2016/methodology>

Post-Soviet Democratization and the Authoritarian Counteroffensive - Adrian Basora:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nMfYeXkHWDY&sns=em>