

# Comparing Nation States

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Comparative Government: *"The essence of comparative government as a study is to compare the ways in which different societies cope with various problems; the role of the political structures involved being of particular interest."* [Dictionary of Modern Politics]

- Quantitative Questions/Data
- Qualitative Questions/Data



## Political Lenses

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- History, Geography, Natural Resources
- Characteristics of the State
  - *Power v. Authority*
- System of Government
  - *Republic, Authoritarian*
  - *Transparency, Accountability*
  - *Linkage Institutions*
  - *Regime (in contrast to government)*
- Prevailing Political Ideology
  - *Democratic, Socialist, Communist*



## Economic Lenses

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- Government's Role in the Economy
  - *Capitalism, Command, Mixed*
- National Wealth
  - *GDP v. GDP (PPP)*
  - *Wealth's impact on public policy*
- Economic Structure
  - *% Agriculture, Industrial, Service*
- Supranational Organizations
  - *WTO, G-8, EU, IMF/WB, Challenges to Sovereignty*



## Social & Cultural Lenses

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- Quality of Life
  - *Literacy, Infant Mortality, Life Expectancy, Rights*
- External (Public) v. Internal Culture
- Political Culture
- Political Socialization, Civil Society



# CRISES OF NATION BUILDING

## — I D E N T I T Y —

Nationalism versus Ethnicity, Tribalism and/or Regionalism

*Bavarians* = *Germans*  
*Chechens* ≠ *Russians*  
*Scots* ? *British*

## — L E G I T I M A C Y —

How do the people feel about the government?

- *rightful and should be obeyed*
- *govt is invalid, govt must force people to obey*

## — L O Y A L T Y —

How far does allegiance extend out from the capital city?

*How much resistance is there to the national gov't?*

*China* → *Hong Kong, Tibet*

## — P A R T I C I P A T I O N —

How many people participate in their nation's government?

*The established political elite do not want to dilute their power BUT - increased participation increases national stability*

## — D I S T R I B U T I O N —

How is wealth distributed amongst the people?

*What is govt's role in the division of the "economic pie"?*  
*Leads to class divisions: Britain*