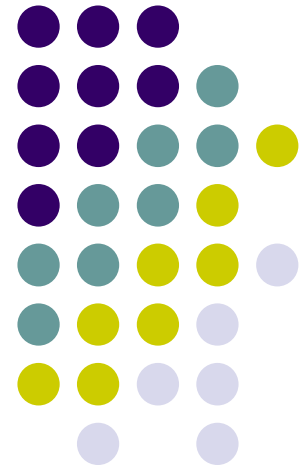


Multilevel Democracy: A Global View

Jefferey M. Sellers
University of Southern California

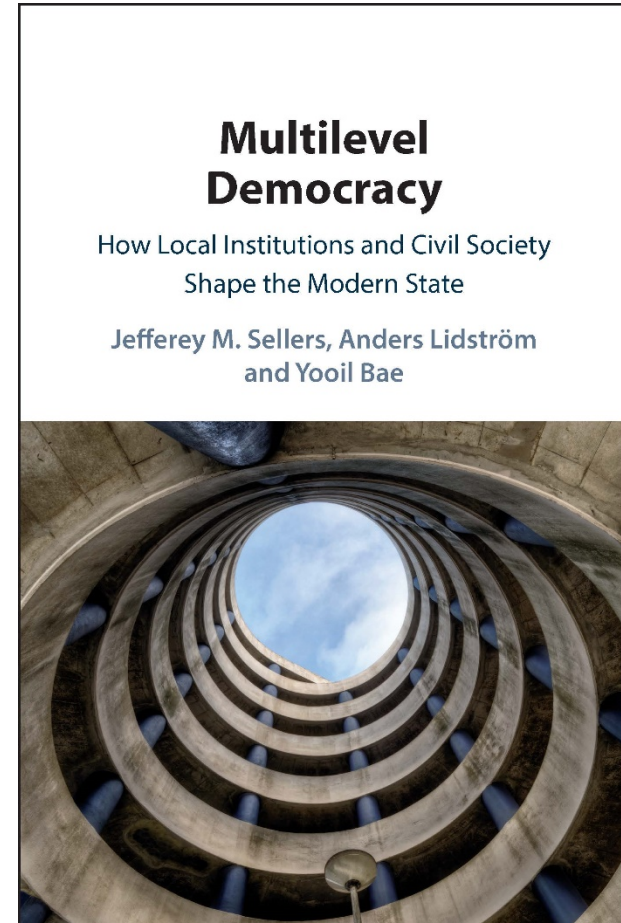
Center for Metropolitan Studies
University of Sao Paulo
December 2, 2021



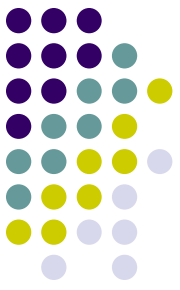


Agenda

- Democracy and local institutions: a framework
- Varieties of multilevel democracy in the Global North
- Sources, consequences of the divergences
- Local institutions in the Global South
- Frontiers for future research

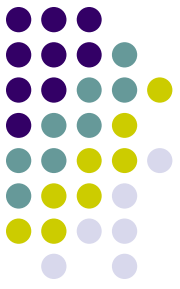


Toward a deeper empirical understanding of democracy

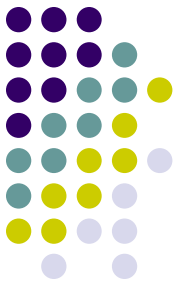


- A crisis of democracy, amid global challenges
- What role for local scale in national democracy?
 - Cities: beyond sociology (Burgess, Jessop/Brenner) economics (Weber)
 - First site of democratic rule, early empirical studies of democracy (Tocqueville 1848; Hunter 1954; Dahl 1961)
 - Still a pivotal component of the contemporary state
 - A primary site of political agency and everyday citizenship
- Growing concerns
 - Policy and its relationship to democracy (Weber 1920; Marques 2021)
 - Progressive inclusion of wider groups, esp. the marginalized and disadvantaged (Young 2000)

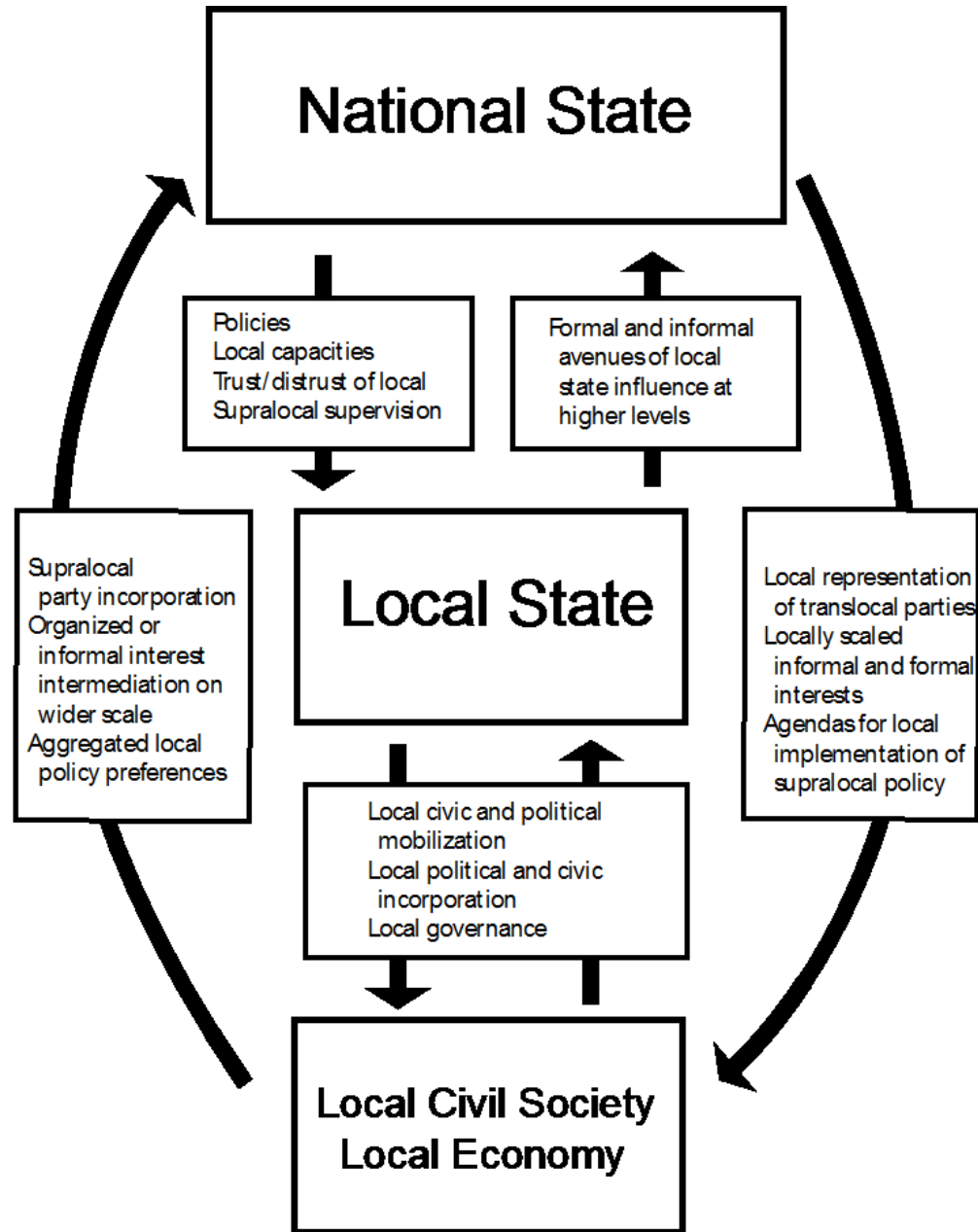
Multilevel institutions as an infrastructure for democracy



- Power in the modern state (Mann 1984)
 - *Infrastructural power*: Capacity of the state to penetrate society by carrying out policy
 - Requires territorial institutional infrastructure
 - Territorial administration
 - Local (and regional) governments
- Democratic institutions as infrastructures of *societal participation, incorporation and accountability*
- Beyond federalism: multilevel *local* linkages
 - Local relations between the state and civil society
 - Central-local relations *within* and *outside* the state



Multilevel local linkages in a democratic state

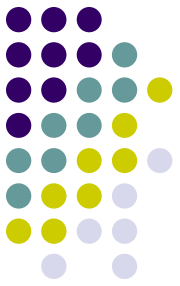


Multilevel local linkages: A Taxonomy



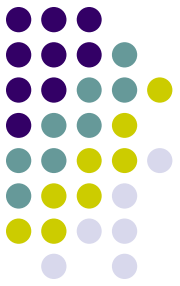
Integration with national state Local participation, incorporation	HIGH	LOW
HIGH	Nationalized	Civic localist
LOW	Elitist	Local elitist

The local state: capacities and supervision



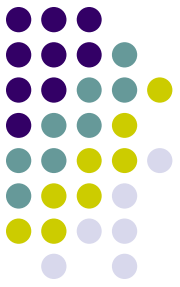
	Local capacities:	
Supralocal supervision:	Low	High
Strong	State monopoly (Elitist)	(NA)
Moderate	State dependence (Local elitist)	Nationalization (Nationalized)
Weak	Societal dependence (Civic localist)	Autonomous local government (Local elitist or Civic localist)

Local institutions

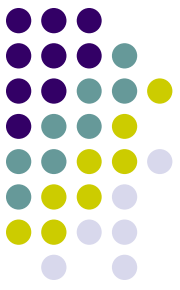


	Geopolitical Fragmentation	Consensus/ Majoritarian	Electoral Exposure	Direct democracy/ participation
Nationalized	Low	Consensus	Limited	Limited
Civic Localist	Mixed	Mixed	High	High
Local Elitist	High	Majoritarian	Limited	Limited

Civic and political organization



	National organized interests		National parties		Civic associations	
	Organization	Incorporation	Organization	Incorporation	Organization	Participation
Nationalized	Corporatist	High	Multiple, multilevel, hierarchical	High	Hierarchical	High to Moderate
Civic Localist	Pluralist	Limited	Few, loosely organized	Limited	Localized	High
Local Elitist	Mixed/pluralist	Limited	Mixed, clientelist	Clientelist or limited	Localized	Low



The Local Linkages Dataset

- Extensive collection of 50+ quantitative and qualitative indicators on local institutions for 44 countries (base year 2005)
- Includes:
 - Legal, administrative, fiscal institutions
 - National aggregate data
 - Local data aggregated to the country scale
 - For federal countries, national aggregation
- Joined to compilations of survey-based data on civic membership and participation

Governmental and civic infrastructures



Local Government Infrastructure

		Nationalized	Civic Localist	Local Elitist
Civic infrastructure	Nationalized	Denmark Finland Sweden Netherlands Norway		Austria Germany Netherlands Norway
	Civic Localist		Australia Canada New Zealand United States Ireland Switzerland Netherlands	Ireland Netherlands Switzerland United Kingdom
	Local Elitist			Belgium France Greece Italy Portugal Spain Germany Japan Austria
		Japan	Ireland United Kingdom	

Bold: Core countries

Plain: Hybrid classification

Light: Partial Hybrid classification

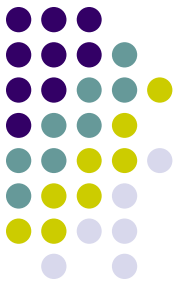
(Results of cluster and principal components analyses)

Sources of the divergences



- The problem of sustainable local political inclusion
- Divergent early state forms (11th-18th C)
 - Absolutist state-building as predation → Local Elitism (most of Continental Europe)
 - Local assemblies + national embedding of local power for nonelite groups → Civic Localism (England, Switzerland, USA)
 - Absolutist elements + local assemblies + national embedding of local power for nonelite groups → Nationalized (Sweden, Norway, Netherlands)

Medieval and early modern precursors to modern governance infrastructures



	France	US	Sweden
Local assemblies/ governance arrangements	Weakened, state predation	Yes	Yes
Constituencies beyond elites	Limited	Independent farmers	independent peasantry
Centralized state authority	Yes	No	Yes
Hierarchical embeddedness	None	State and federal legislatures	Peasant estate
Contemporary classification	Local elitist	Civic localist	Nationalized

Critical Junctures

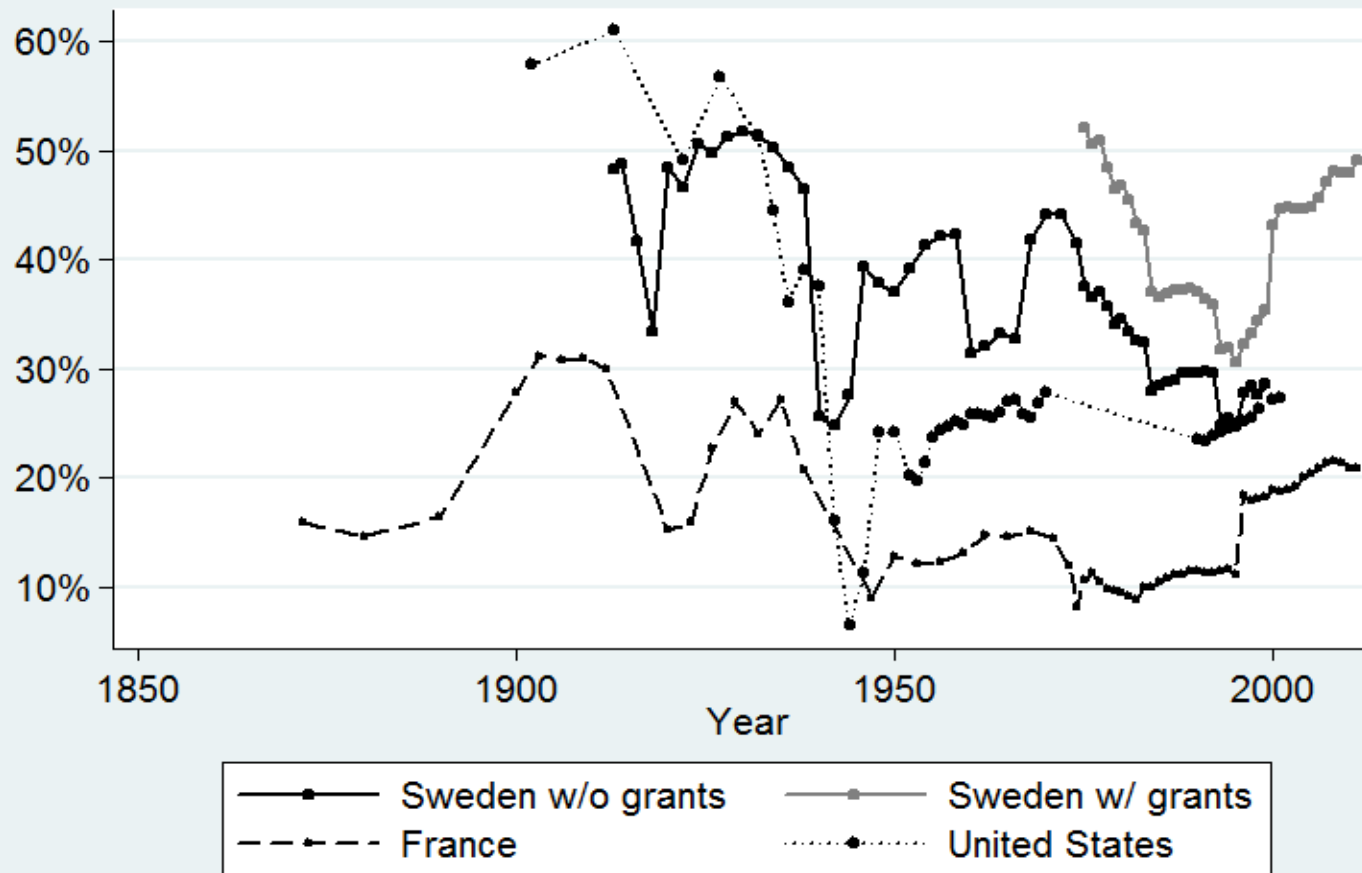


- Formation of local states (19th – early 20th C)
 - Bureaucratic domination → Local Elitism
 - Local civic governance → Civic Localism
 - Centralized rule, local inclusion → Nationalized
- Civic formation (mid19th – early 20th C)
 - Weak, unsupported → Local Elitist
 - Strong, locally supported → Civic Localist
 - Strong, multilevel support → Nationalized
- Policy state formation (late 19th – mid 20th C)
 - Consolidated supralocal state → Local Elitist
 - Shift to supralocal state → Civic Localist
 - Localized national policy → Nationalized

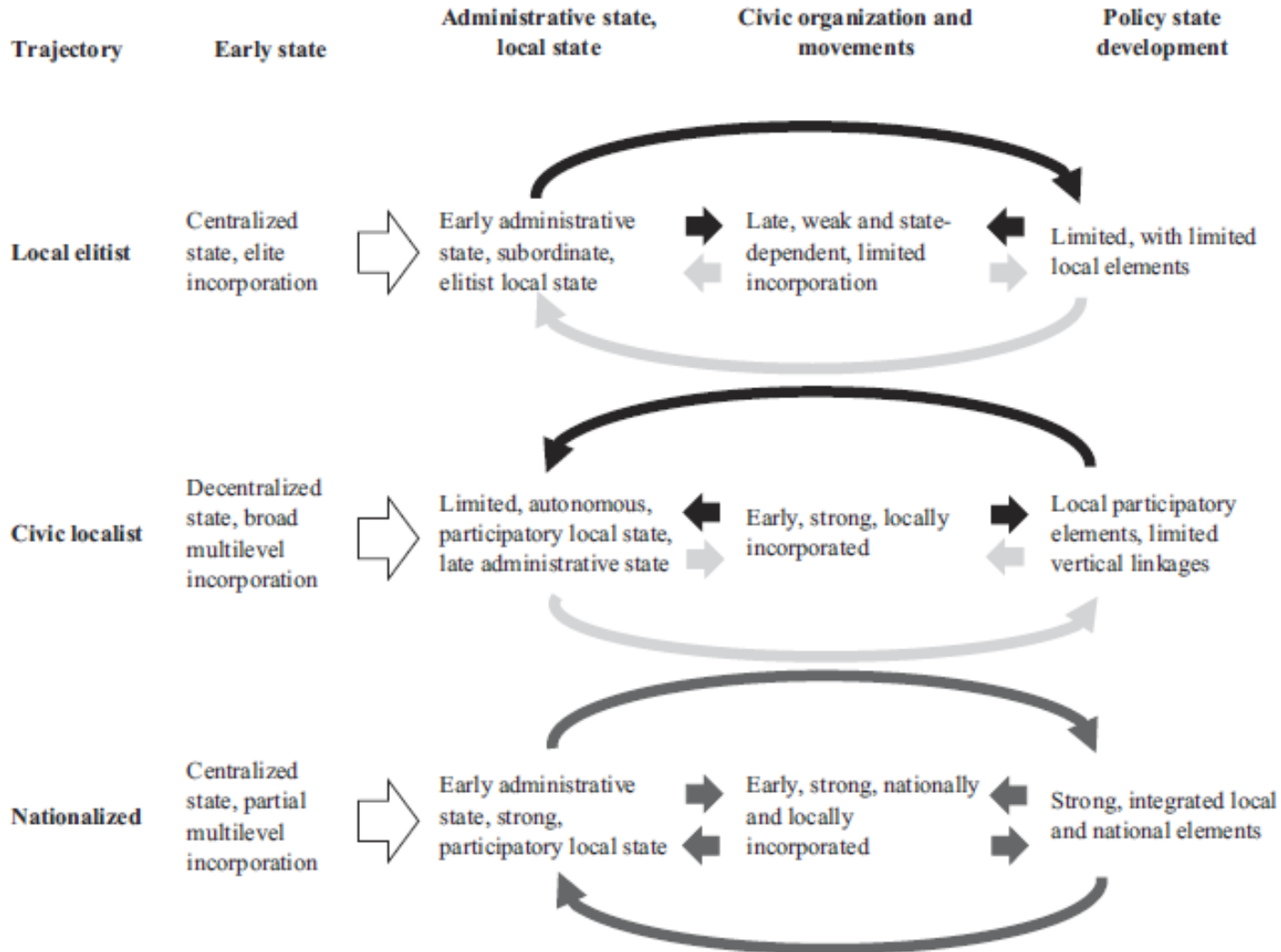
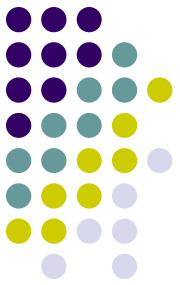
Local governance infrastructures and the policy state



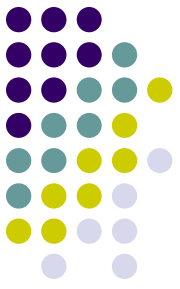
Local Proportion of Public Expenditures, 1870–2011



Pathways to multilevel democracy



Consequences of multilevel democracy



- Other national institutional differences
 - Consensus/Majoritarian democracy (Lijphart 2000)
 - Welfare state types (Esping Andersen 1990)
 - Varieties of capitalism (Hall and Soskice 2001)
- Multilevel institutional infrastructures help explain **origins** of these differences
- Direct effects: mechanism for accountability (table)
- Sector-specific variations

Patterns of Democratic Accountability

	Top-down	Strong	Weak
Bottom-up	Strong	Nationalized	Local Elitist
	Weak	Local Elitist	Civic Localist

The Quality of multilevel democracy



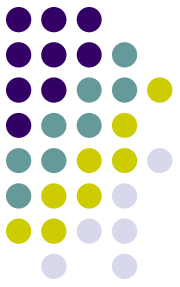
- Nationalized: Strong citizen democratic support, strong metrics for governance, policy performance (social, environmental, economic)
- Civic localist: Strong citizen democratic support, mixed metrics for governance, mixed policy performance
- Local elitist: Less strong citizen democratic support, weaker metrics for governance, weaker/mixed policy performance

The Global South: Developing and transitional democracies

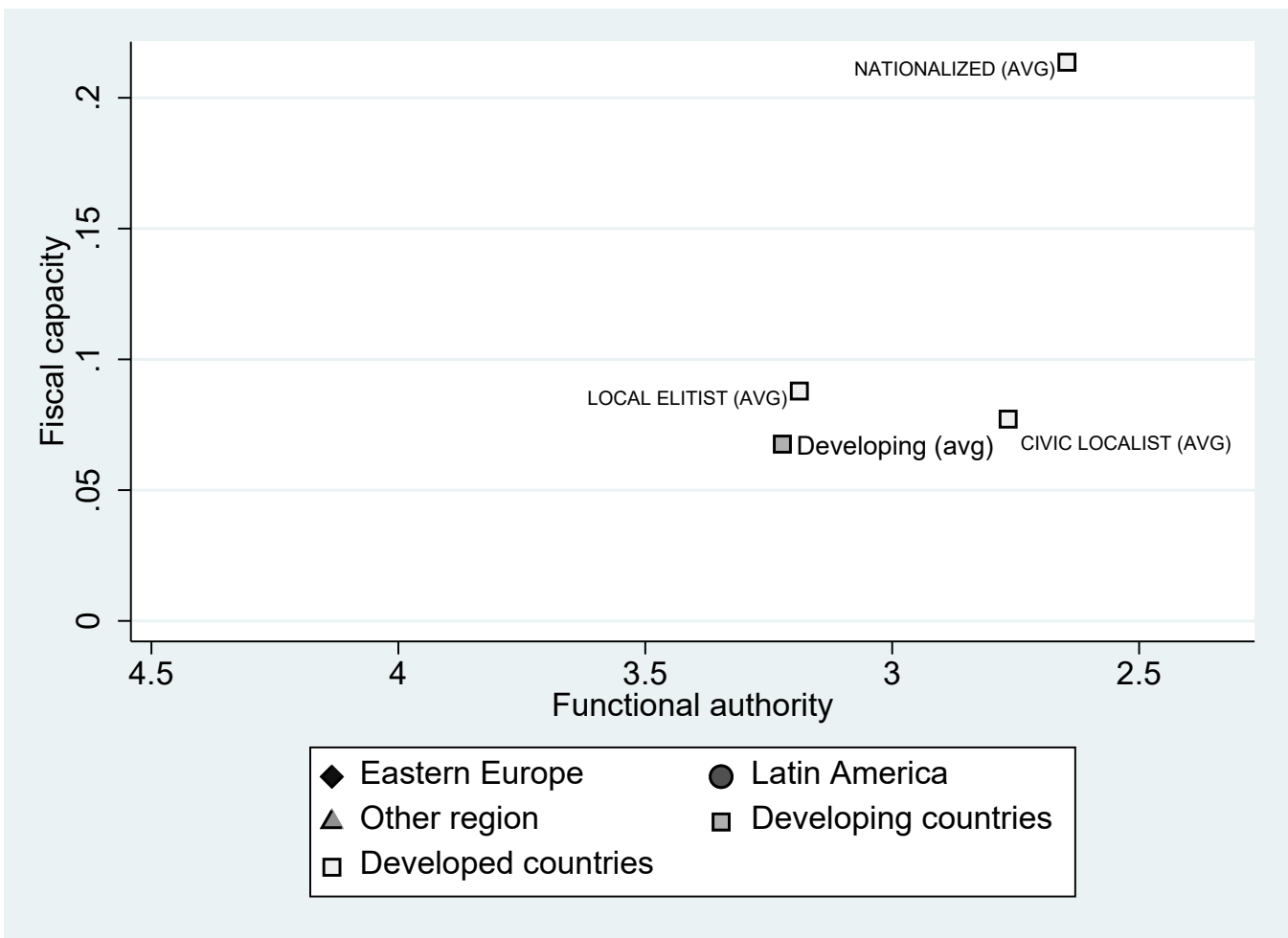


- Early local state formation
 - Nondemocratic regimes with limited societal incorporation: Favors Local elitism
 - In Latin America, S. Africa, limited central administrative state and legacies of earlier democratic elements: Favor Civic localism
- Policy state: prior to full democracy, often limited incorporation of civil society or local institutions
- Democratization: civic mobilization, but policy and democratic incorporation often less developed

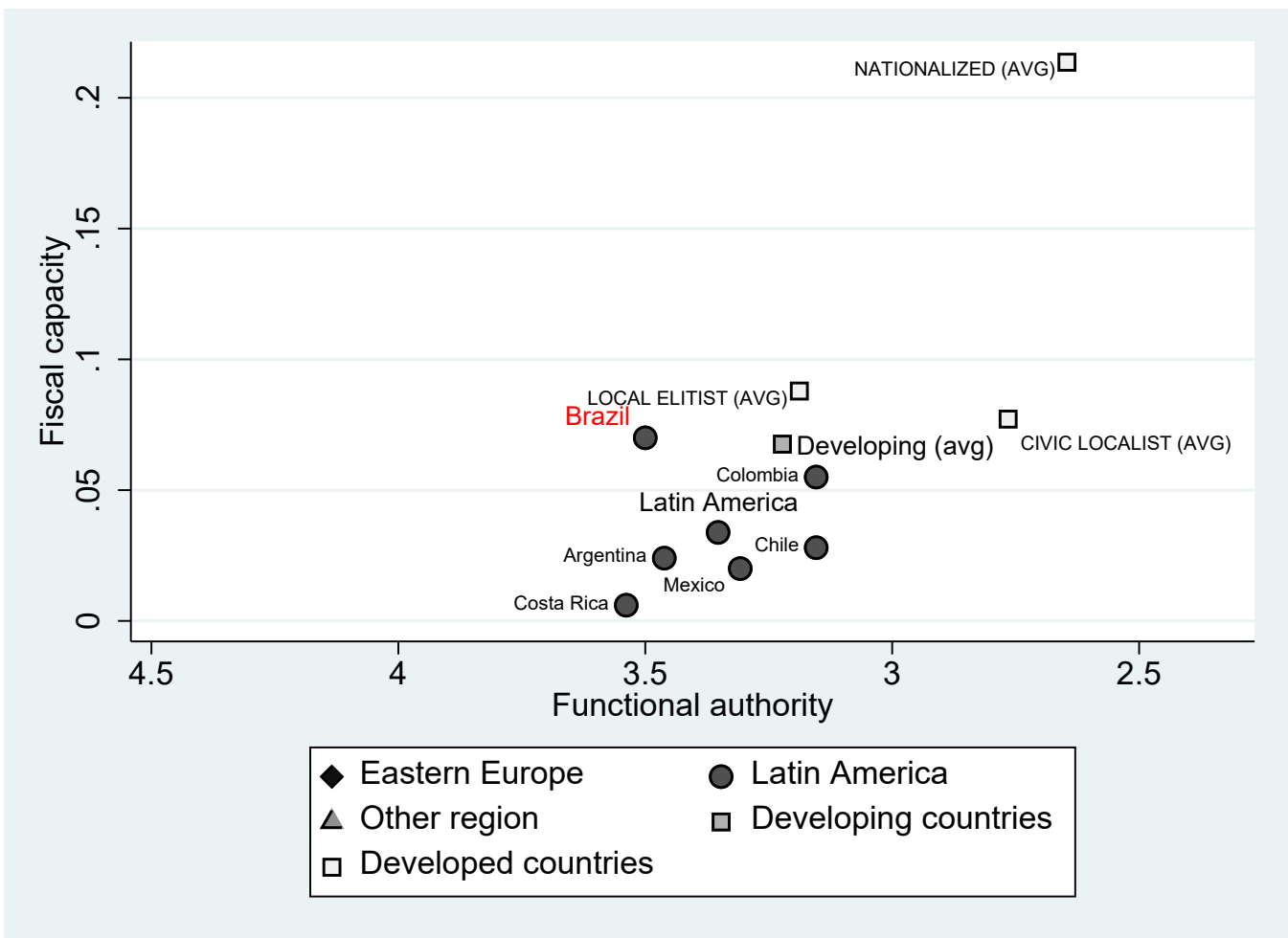
Comparing local state capacity



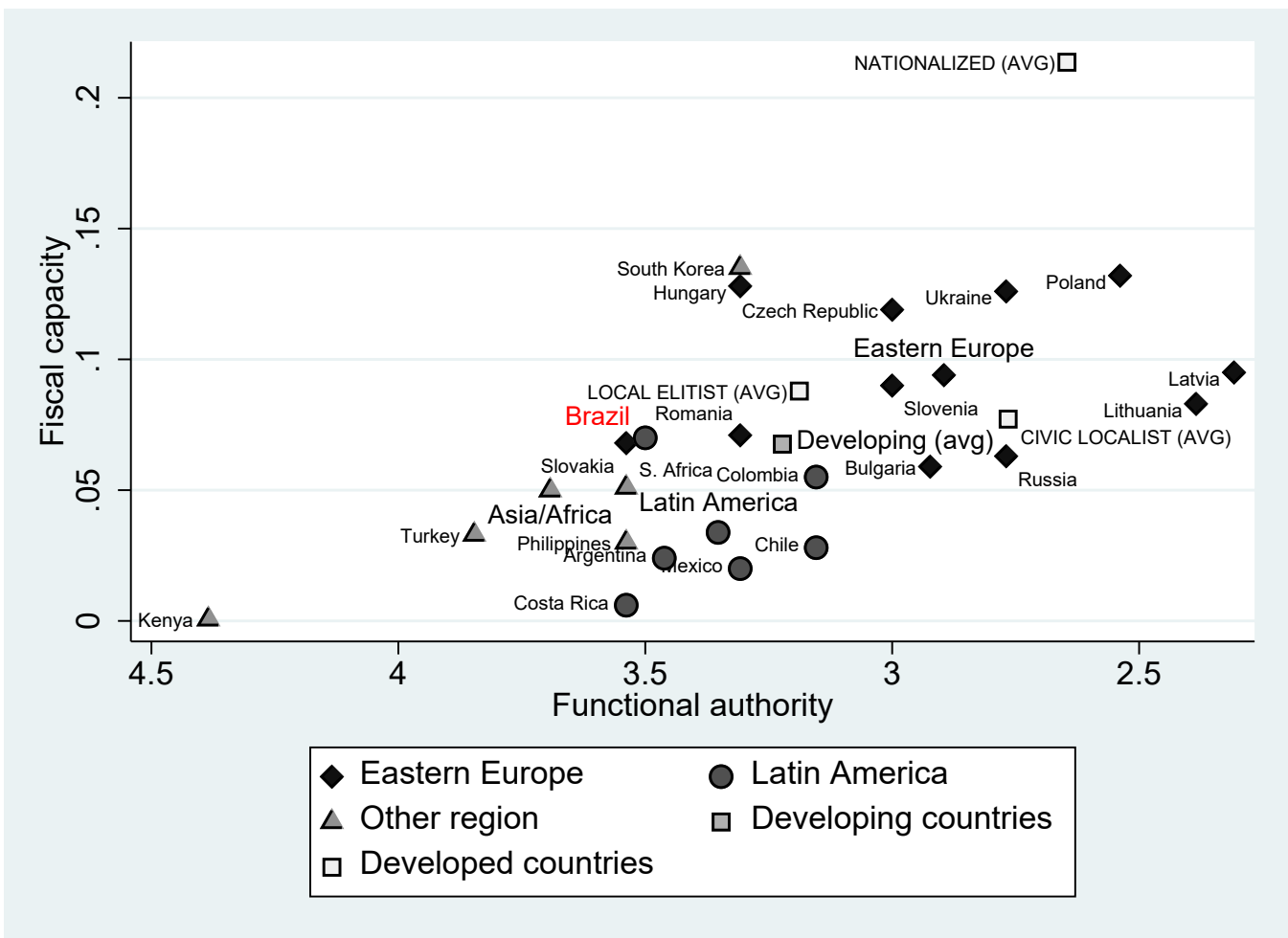
- Fiscal capacity: Local expenditures as a percent of GDP
- Functional authority:
 - Allocation of functional responsibilities in 9 discrete policy sectors
 - Scale from 5 (no local role) to 1 (exclusive local role)



**Developing and transitional countries:
Limited local fiscal resources
Limited functional authority**

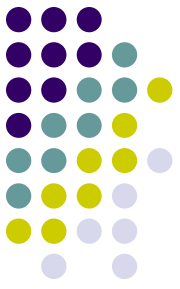


**Developing and transitional countries:
Limited local fiscal resources
Limited functional authority**

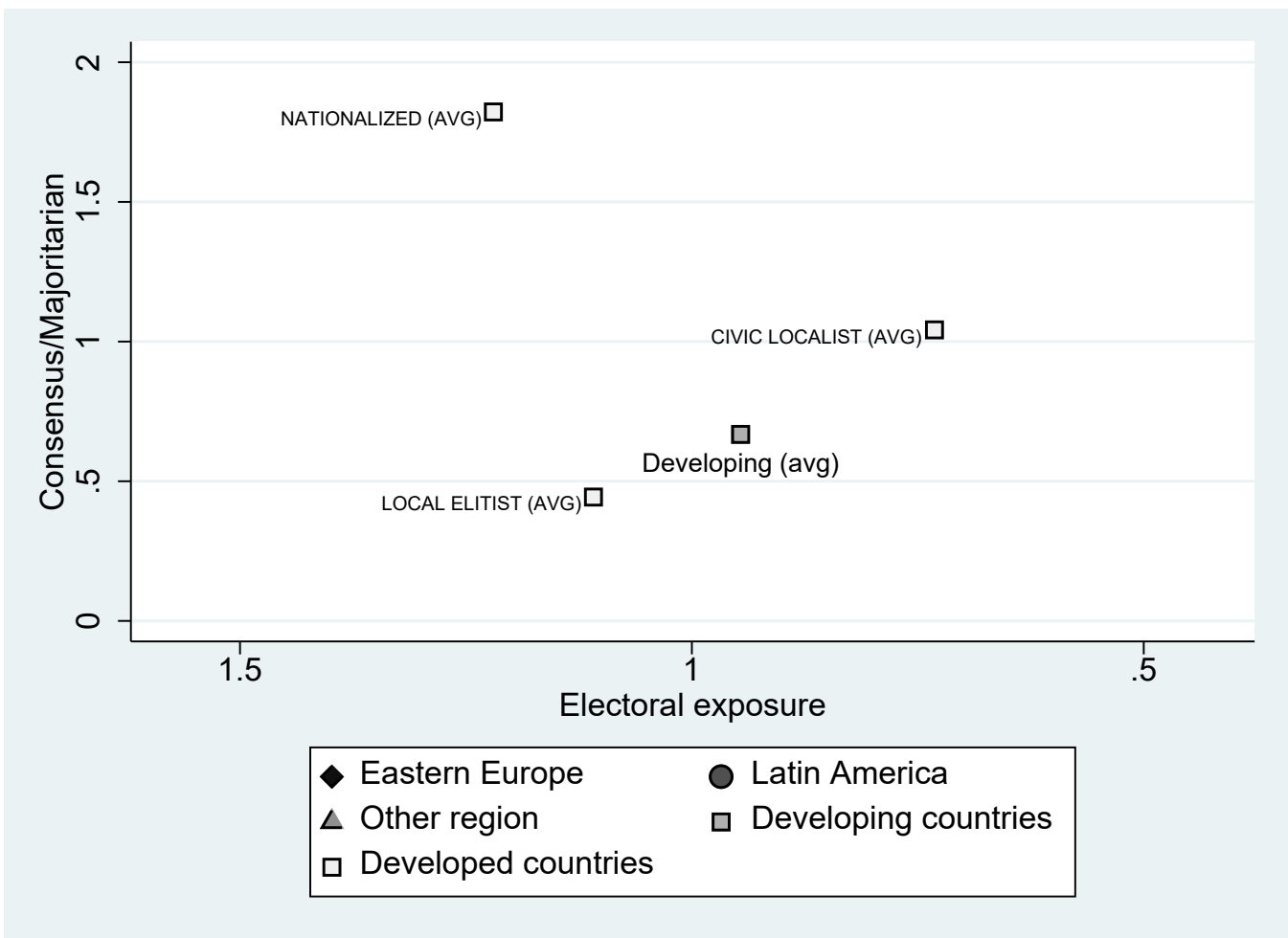


**Developing and transitional countries:
Limited local fiscal resources
Limited functional authority**

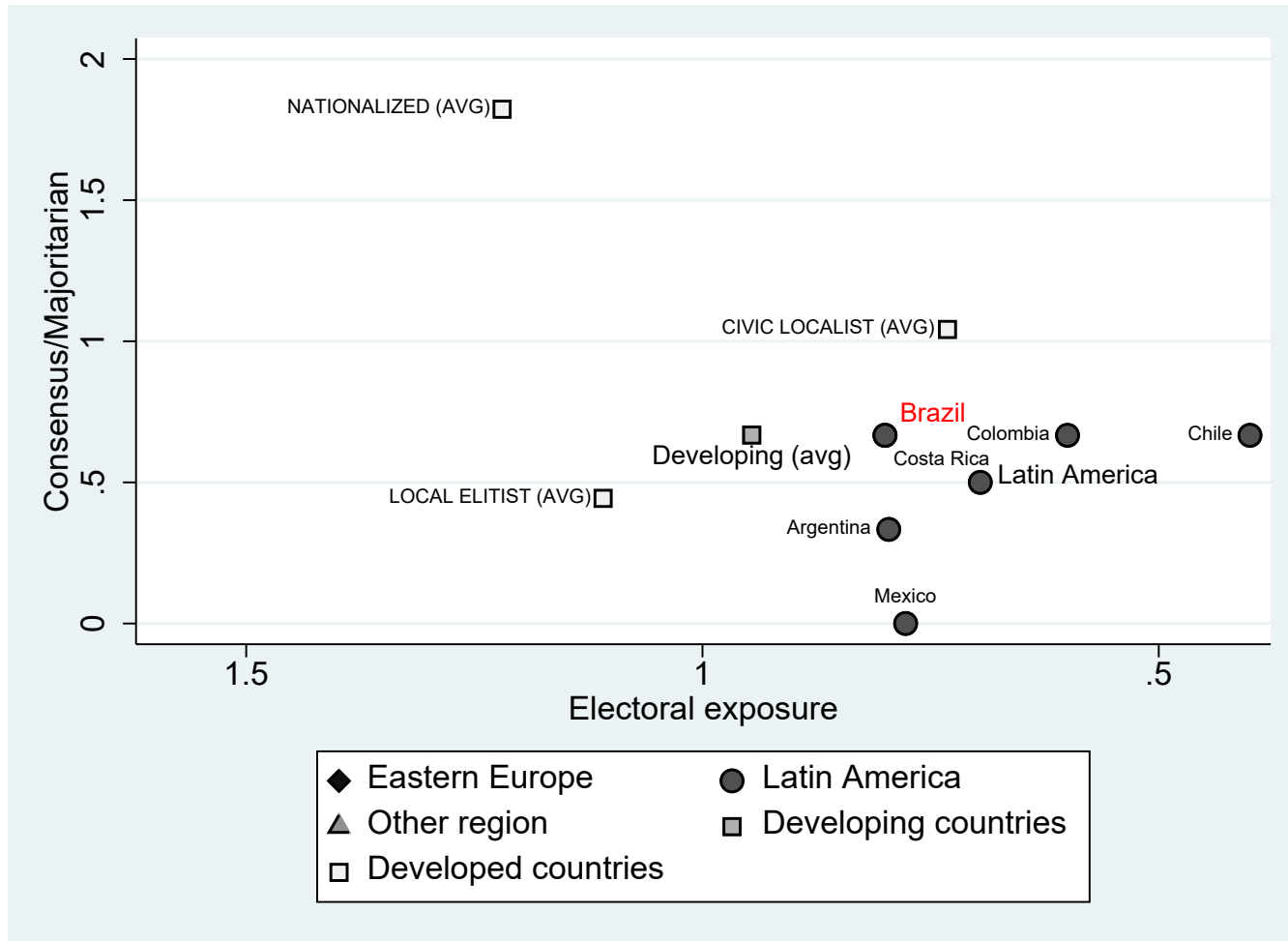
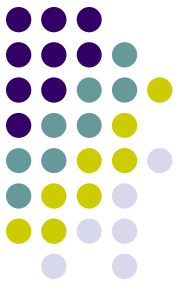
Local electoral and decisionmaking institutions



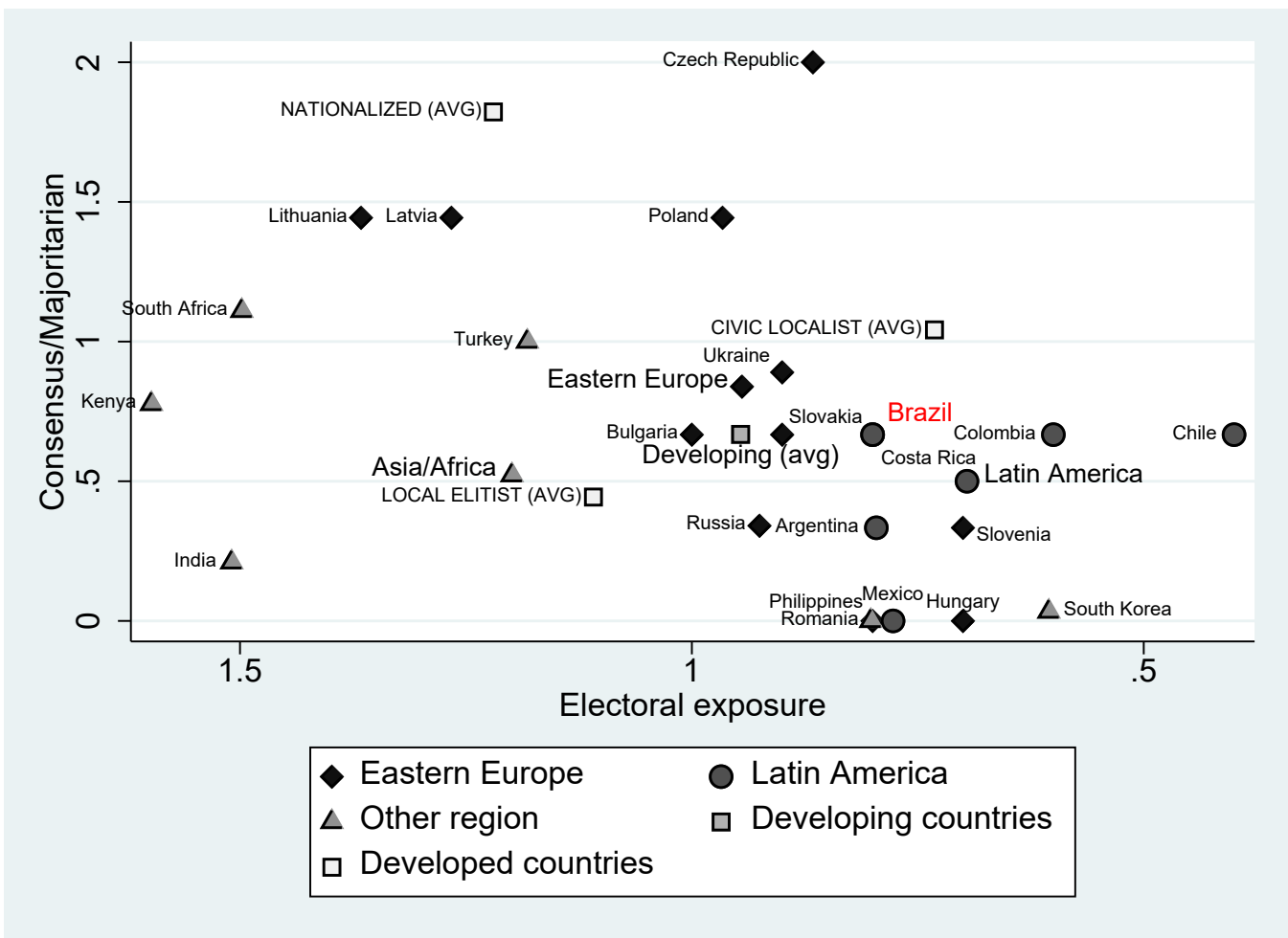
- Majoritarian/consensus democracy (Lijphart) (0-2)
 - Proportional representation in council
 - Proportional representation in executive
- Electoral exposure (0 high - 2 low):
 - Election of mayor
 - Terms of chief executive, council members



Developing and transitional countries: Local electoral institutions

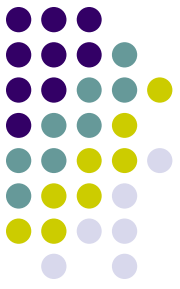


**Developing and transitional countries:
Local electoral and decisionmaking institutions**

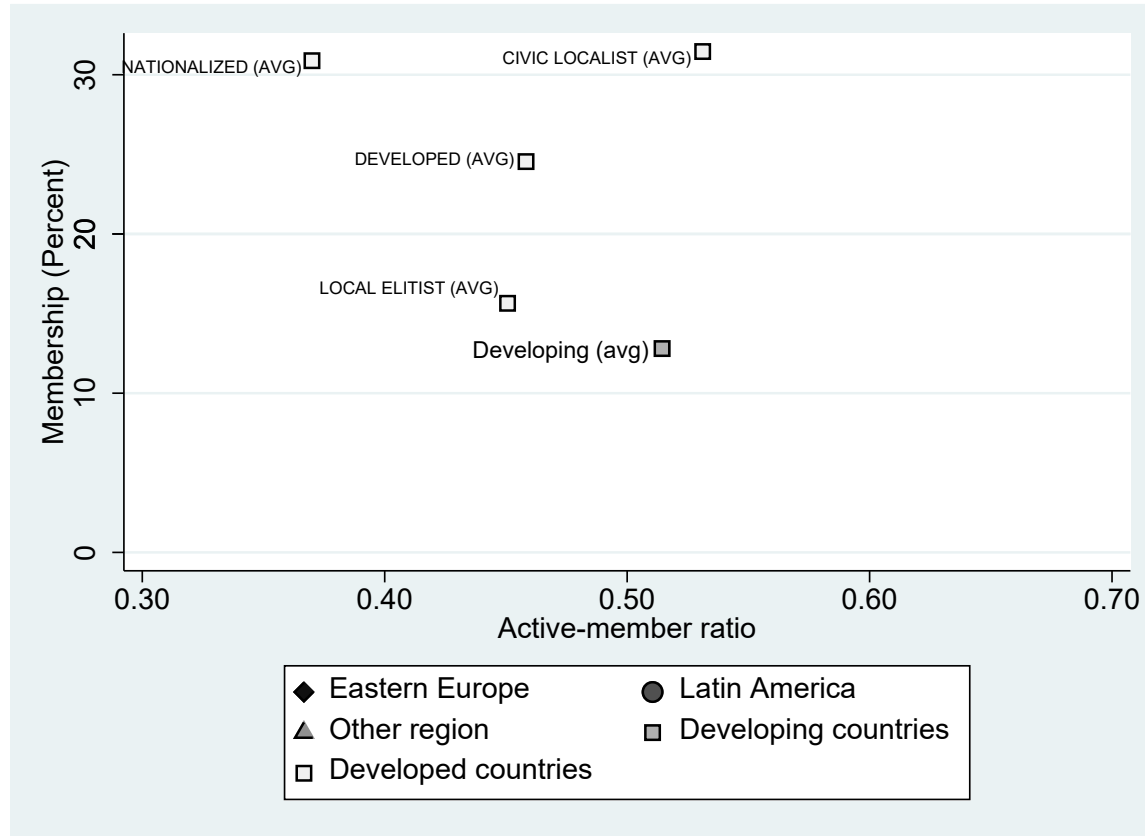
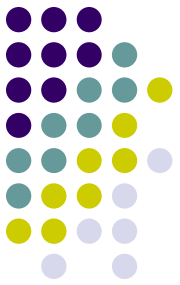


Developing and transitional countries: Local electoral institutions

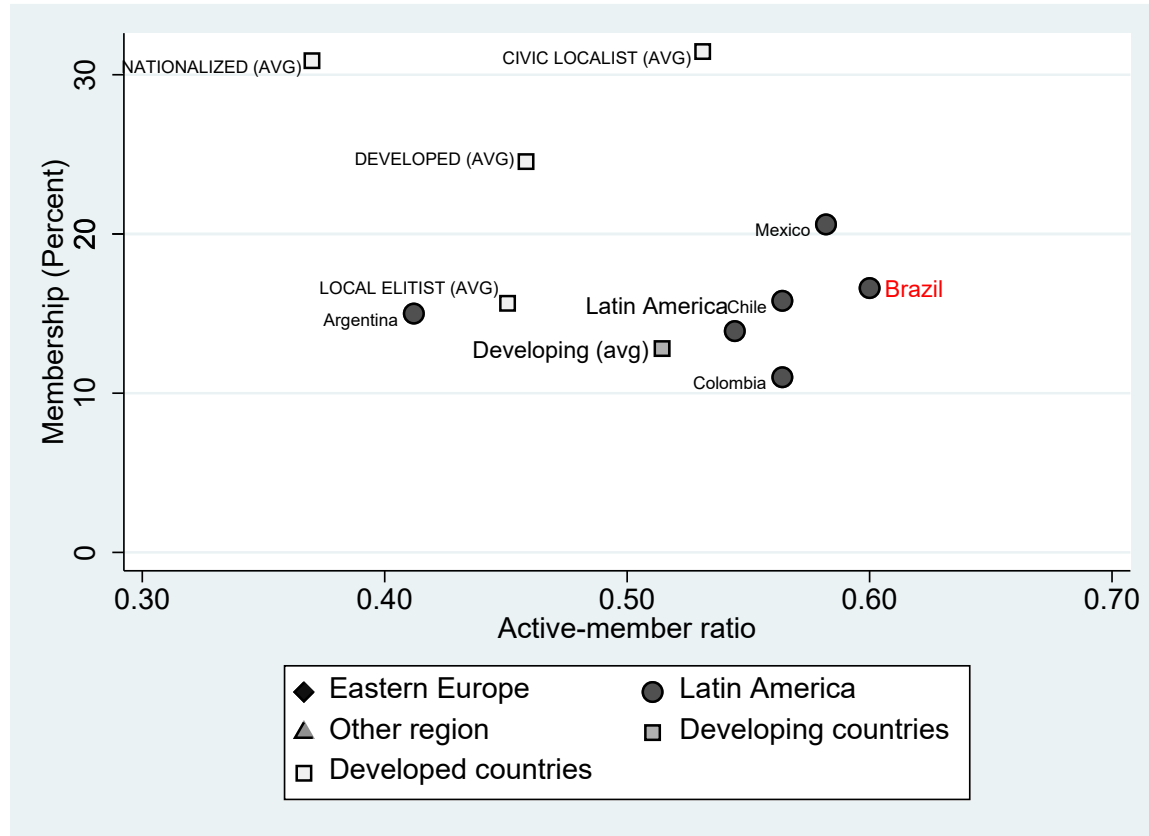
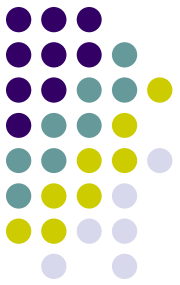
Political and civic organizational infrastructure



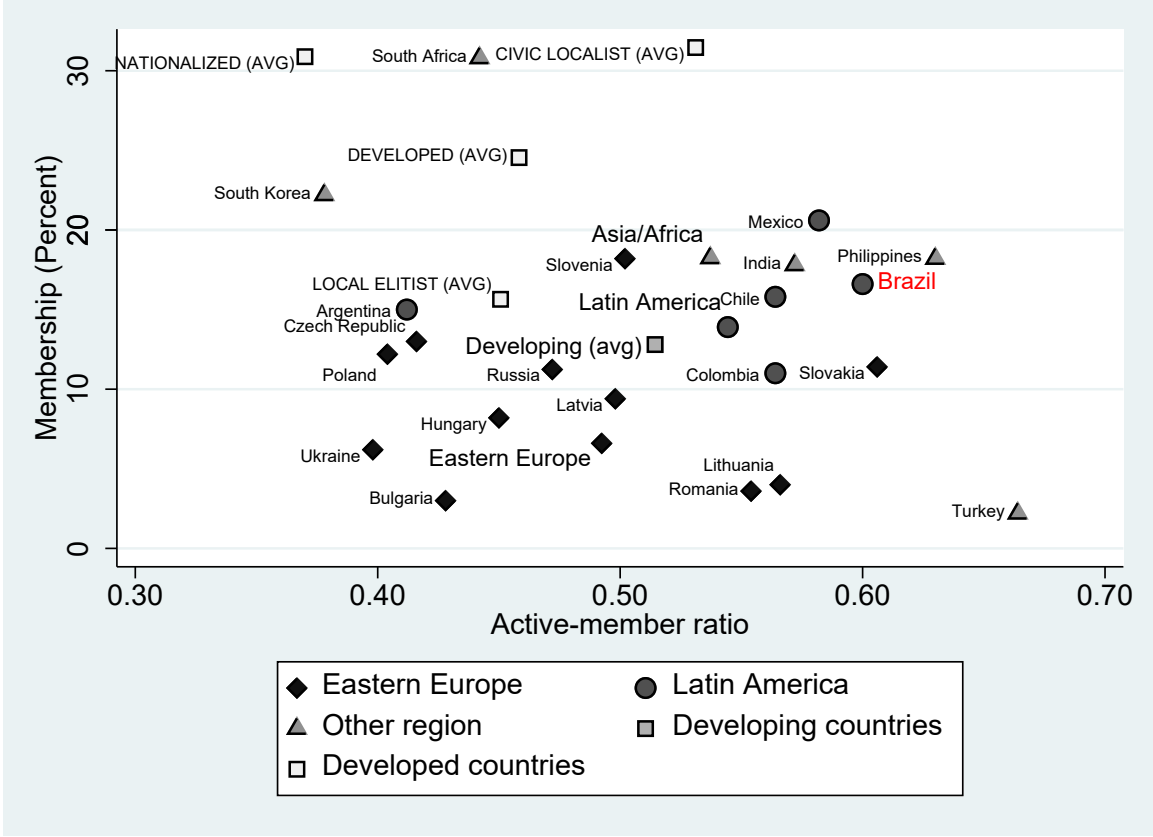
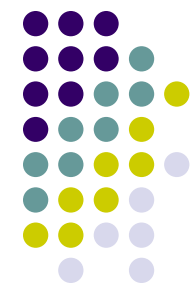
- Beyond formal institutions, affect potential for representation and democratic governance
- Especially critical at the urban/local scale
- Comparative national data
 - On parties, unions, other civic organizations
 - Aggregated from World Values Surveys, ISSP, regional survey barometers, party and union datasets, late 1990s-2000s
 - Metrics for *membership* and *activism*



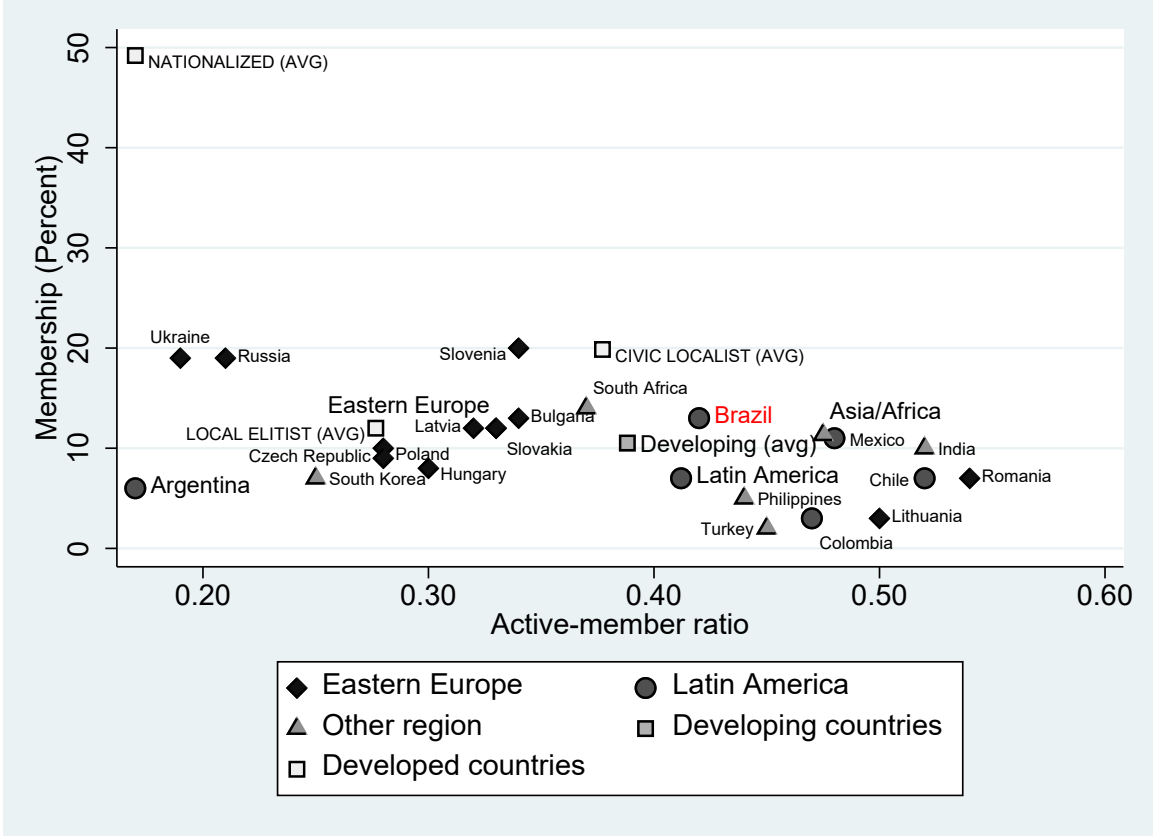
Average civic membership and activism
(average of religious, sports, cultural, environmental and charitable associations):
Membership generally lower, activism diverges widely



Average civic membership and activism
(average of religious, sports, cultural, environmental and charitable associations):
Membership generally lower, activism diverges widely

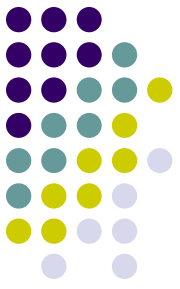


Average civic membership and activism
(average of religious, sports, cultural, environmental and charitable associations):
Membership generally lower, activism diverges widely



Average union membership and activism
Membership generally lower, activism diverges widely

Findings: Brazilian local governance infrastructures



- Limited local governmental capacities
 - Similar to those in some developed countries
 - Higher in Brazil than other LA countries
- Local participatory institutions
 - Electoral exposure, direct democracy exceed many developed countries
 - Less consensus democracy
- Political and civic organization
 - Limited membership
 - But stronger engagement among members than in developed countries with similar membership levels

Pathways to Multilevel Democracy in the Global South?

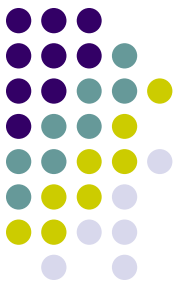


- Within general tendencies:
 - A hybrid Civic Localist (“Civic Elitist”) pathway (Brazil, S. Africa, Kerala)
 - Encouragement, partial incorporation of civil society
 - *Local* institutional development leverages state capacities to carry out policy
 - Example: Progressive Incrementalism in Sao Paulo?
 - A hybrid Local Elitist pathway (east-central Europe, e.g., the Czech Republic)
 - Strong local state capacities
 - Limited or marginalized civil society

The Problem of Democratic Nationalization



- Fully nationalized multilevel democracy so far developed only in smaller countries (Populations <20M)
- Alternatives for larger countries
 - Germany: Hybrid Local Elitist model
 - Sector-specific nationalization (e.g., U.S. air pollution regulation, Brazilian City Planning Law)
 - Subnational vertical integration (e.g., climate policy in California)
 - Problems of vertical *political* and *state* integration



Frontiers for future research

- **Contextualized** comparison of urban and local governance
- Multilevel local linkages in governance of developing and transitional countries
- Varieties of MLD within national traditions
- E.g., COVID politics: lockdowns, mask mandates, vaccine distribution all require
 - Mass participation and society-wide support
 - Integrated multilevel governmental action down to the local level