

The Global Police Forces Dataset – Definitions and Coding Rules

May 2019

I. General:

Police forces represent the state's monopoly on *domestic* force (Weber, 1981); they are the “custodians of the state's monopoly on force” (Brewer et al., 1996, 21), and are most often the “specialized body given primary formal responsibility for legitimate force to safeguard security” (Reiner, 2000, 7).

To be designated as a “Police Force” a police organization must fulfill two requirements:

1. Concerned primarily with domestic security. It is possible that some police forces might be deployed abroad, e.g. in conquered territories, or even to fight the enemy in limited capacity, as is the case for some gendarmeries (e.g. the Italian Carabinieri). Nevertheless, the organization's primary designation should be dealing with domestic security and threats to it.
2. It is an integral part of the state security apparatus, i.e., not a militia, a rebel group, an auxiliary, or an informal organization.

Any organization that fulfills these two requirements gets coded in the dataset (i.e., given a value of “1”, “0” otherwise). NOTE: there can be multiple organizations per country – the unit of analysis is the organization. Assign a unique ID for each organization, and write the organization's name (e.g., police department, FBI). Add country name and country code from the COW 3-digit designation (found at: <http://www.correlatesofwar.org/data-sets/cow-country-codes>).

II. Level of deployment/training:

Does the organization train and deploys troops locally, provincially, or nationally? The values to be assigned are:

1. Local/town/district (e.g., the Chicago PD)
2. Province/state (e.g., Vermont State Police)
3. National/federal (e.g., the FBI)

III. Uniformed:

Many police forces (including paramilitaries) wear uniform (part of their official designation), although they might operate in civilian clothes at some periods (e.g. detectives). Yet there are exception for some domestic security organizations and federal police forces. The values to be assigned are:

1. No uniform (e.g., the FBI, Israeli Shabac security service)
2. Uniformed (e.g., the Chicago PD, the Russian Border Guards)

IV. Paramilitary:

Paramilitaries are official, regular security agents that function as “militarized police units, domiciled in part in barracks, equipped with light military weapons and vehicles, and organized under the central government” (Janowitz, 1988, 28). Paramilitaries often supplement the police and are openly trained, equipped and mobilized by the state to enforce the law and maintain political stability. Hence, much like the police, there is a clear link between paramilitary violence and regime responsibility in most countries (Janowitz, 1988; Belkin and Schofer, 2003). NOTE: some local/city police forces have paramilitary capacity, and are able to deploy hostage rescue (HRT)/special weapons and tactics (SWAT) teams, machine guns, and even tanks and armored vehicles. Some groups receive full military training, and can be deployed to military operations abroad (although again, the organization’s official designation should be to deal primarily with domestic threats). The values to be assigned are:

0. Not a paramilitary (e.g., local police departments)
1. Some level of paramilitary capacity: some units go through specialized training (e.g., SWAT); heavy equipment is available (e.g., anti-riot tanks, automatic weapons). Most examples include the metropolitan police in some cities (e.g., Chicago, LA) or specific regional and city forces that are semi-paramilitarized (e.g., Sindh and Punjab Rangers in Pakistan).
2. Full paramilitary capacity: all troops go through military training, and are supplied with military-grade weapons and equipment. Examples include well-regulated militias (e.g., the U.S. National Guard) or militarized gendarmeries (e.g., the Italian Carabinieri)

V. Intelligence Gathering Capacity:

Some policing organizations are designed to heavily, or exclusively, emphasize intelligence gathering. Indeed, high intelligence gathering capacities are often associated with the most effective and powerful police organizations. The values to be assigned are:

1. Basic intelligence gathering capacity: for instance, ability to rely on eyewitnesses, investigation of suspects, wiretaps, possible undercover agents; organization does not report directly to responsible state- or country-level official (e.g., Chicago PD).
2. High intelligence gathering capacity: organization has the ability to rely on a wide variety of techniques, including signal intelligence (e.g., email hacking), Humint (human agents), and other approaches; organization reports to a senior official at the state/province or national/federal level (e.g., FBI, Israeli Shin Bet).

VI. Sources: include all the sources used in coding of these variables.

Resources:

1. The Country Study guide series by the Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (see, e.g., for Afghanistan: <https://iucanet.iu.edu/catalog/10796902?> You can also access most of these online through the IU library, again, e.g. for Afghanistan: <https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.cow/cowcs0001&id=1&size=2&collection=cow&index=cow/cowcs>). Note that some countries have multiple additions, so I would say start with the latter version, but you can use the earlier version for corroboration. This is probably the best research for identifying and mapping official security and police organizations, before moving on to find more detailed info.

2. The CIA's World Factbook has country profiles (e.g., here: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/docs/rankorderguide.html>). You can look at the security section under different countries and see if there are specific organizations they mention.
3. Paramilitaries data from the book *How Dictatorships Work* by Geddes et al. 2018, Chapter 7 replication file (see link here: <http://sites.psu.edu/dictators/how-dictatorships-work/>). In chapter 7 they code different types of paramilitary organizations. They have a do file showing the dataset they use and how they code these groups. Just be careful, some of these are militias or groups that do not adhere to the definition discussed in **Point I** above.
4. The Pro-Government Militia dataset (PGM) by Carey et al. You can look at a country-by-country case (here: <https://militiasdb.sowi.uni-mannheim.de/militias-public/country/>) and again try to identify specific organizations. Again, if you rely on this resource, make sure to adhere to the definition discussed in **Point I** above. My hunch is that there are very few semi-official groups – and probably no informal groups – that qualify. So I would use that more as an added resource to check out if you missed any groups rather than a main one.
5. Nexis Uni (formally LexisNexis Academic) <https://advance.lexis.com/bisacademicresearchhome?crd=6c02a53a-a727-4e92-98eb-f3d5dc4905bf&pdmfid=1516831&pdisurlapi=true>. This is a dataset of stories from news websites about anything you want. Use that to fine-tune some of your coding after you identified organizations to complement coding, or possibly identify clandestine groups that might not be mentioned in other data sources.
6. Encyclopedia of Law Enforcement by Sullivan and Haberfield, eds., vol. 3 (international). 2005.
7. World Police Encyclopedia by Das and Palmiotto, eds., vols. 1 & 2. 2006.