

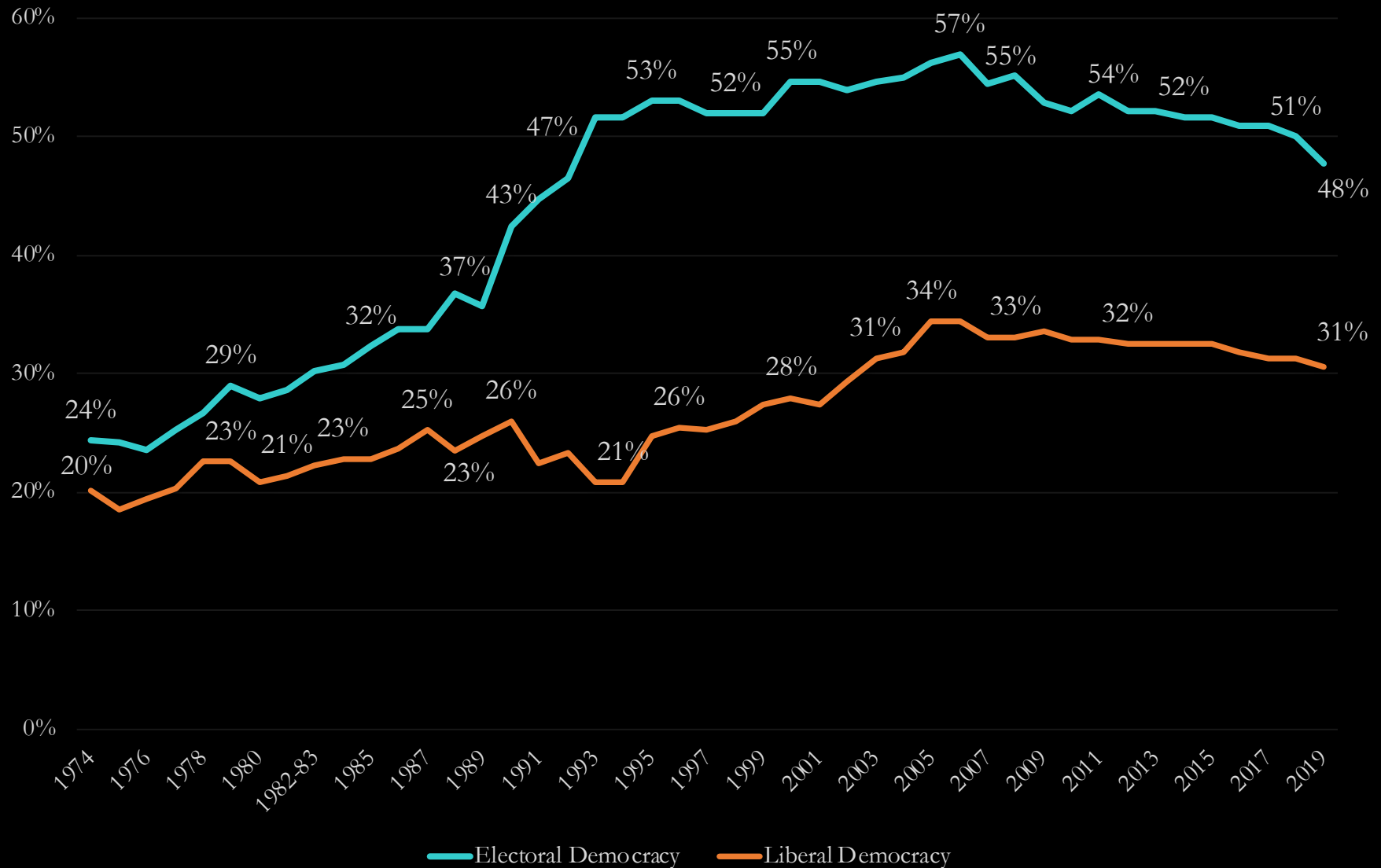
The Global Democratic Recession and How to Fight It

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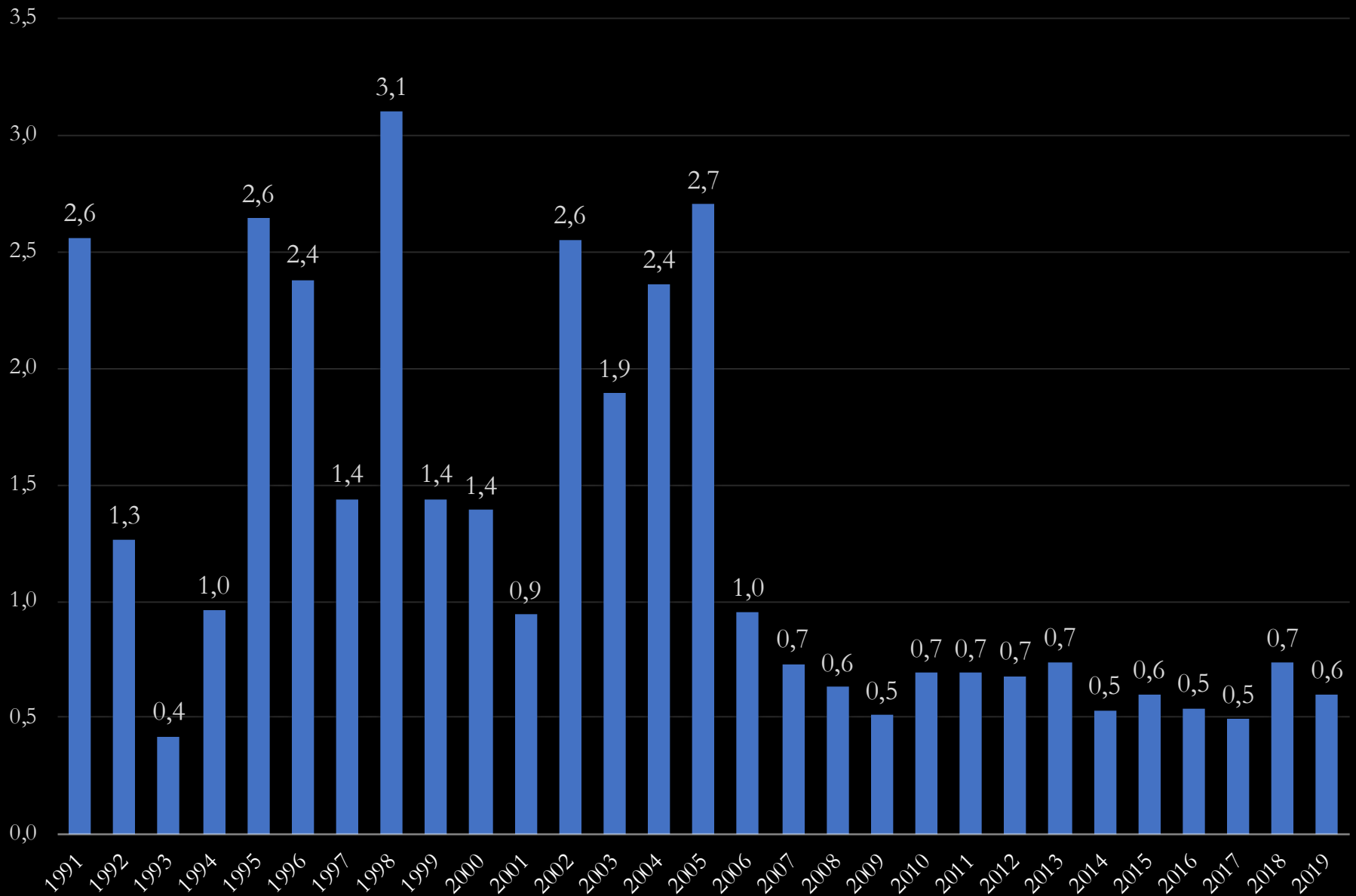
Updated August 2020

The Global Expansion of Democracy, 1974-2019

Percent of Countries with Population > 1 Million

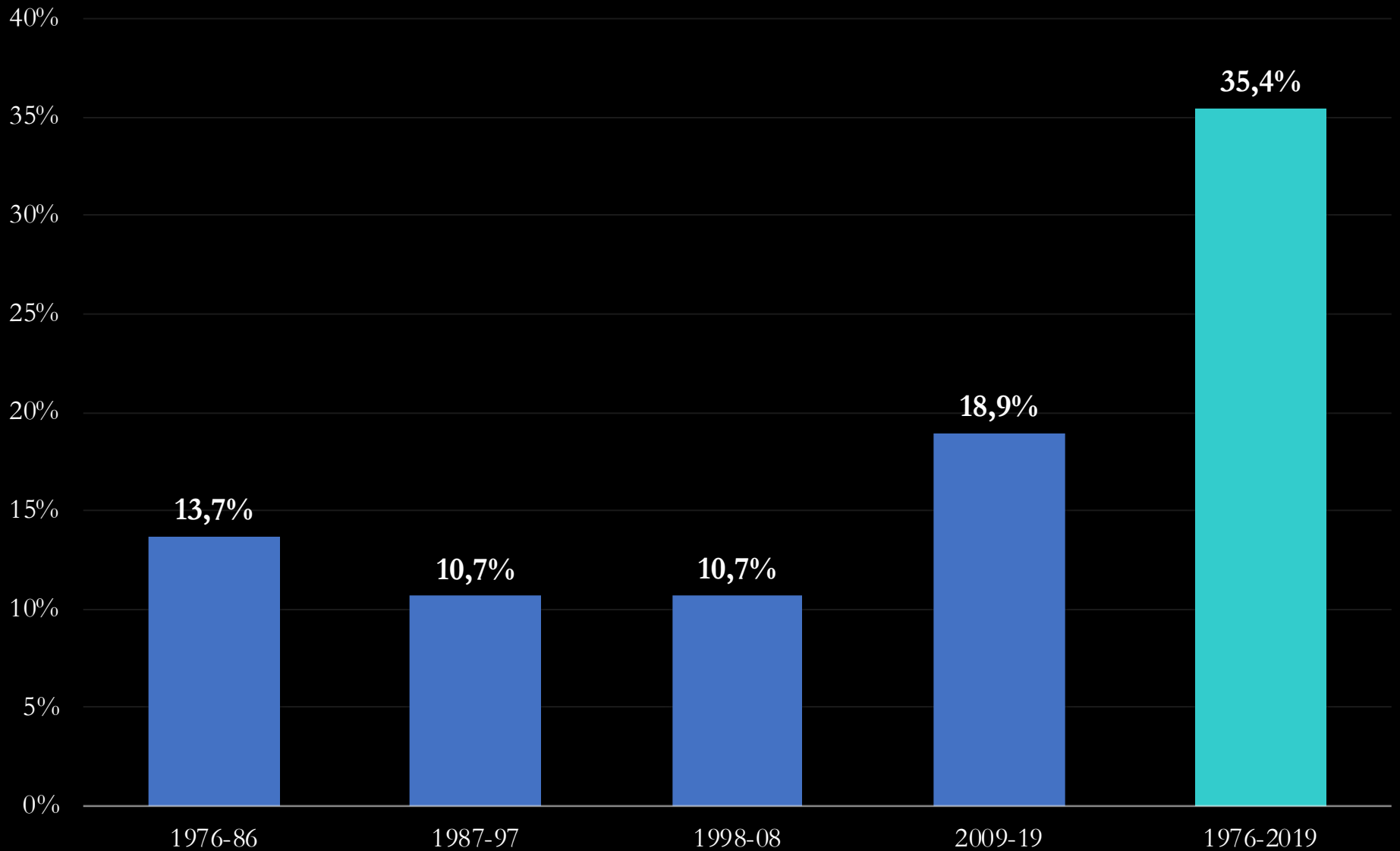


Ratio of Gains to Declines in Freedom, 1974-2019



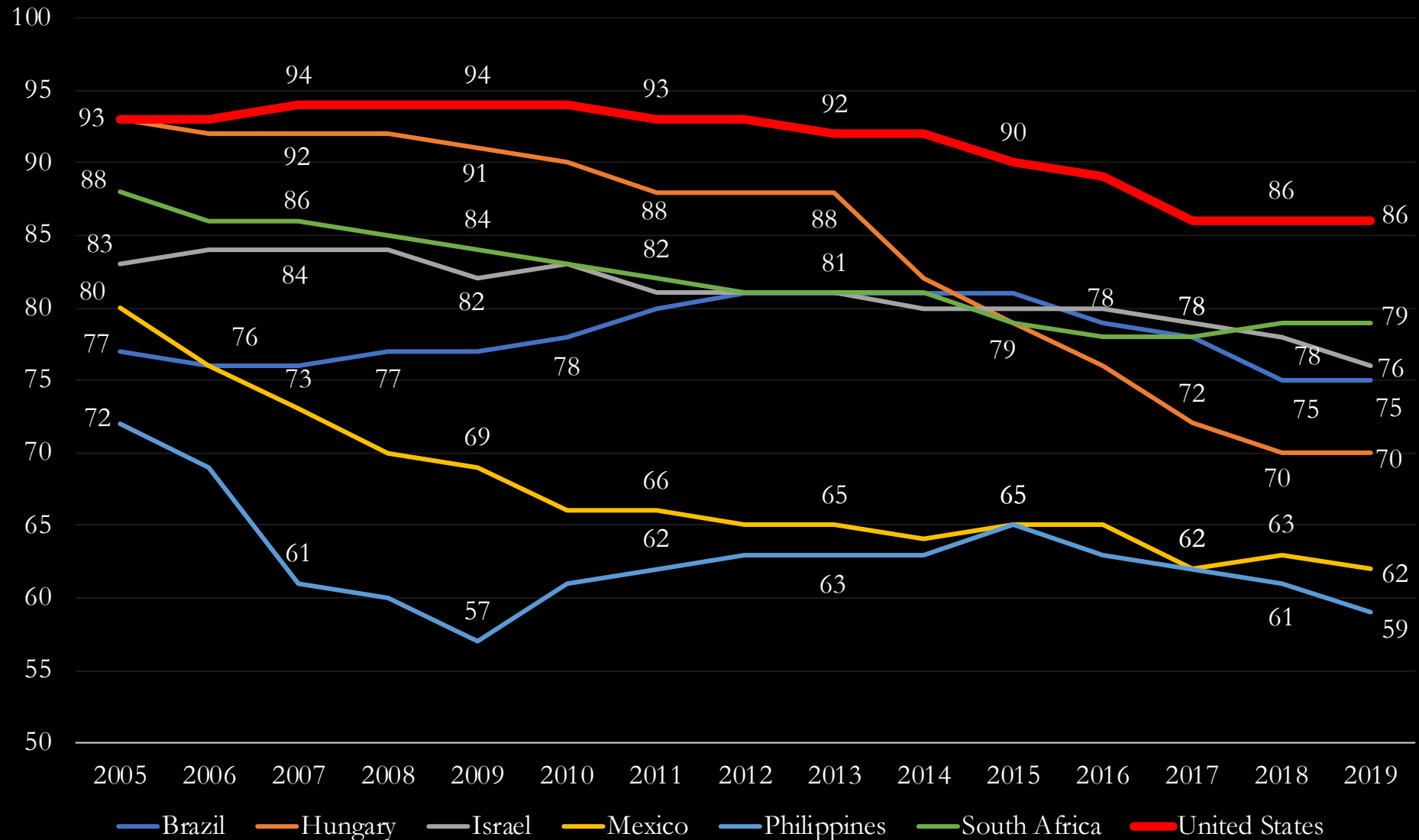
Rate of Democratic Breakdown, 1976-2019

Breakdown as % of democracies



U.S. versus Less Developed Democracies

Freedom House Selected Country Aggregate Scores, 2005-2019



Causes of Democratic Crisis & Decay

- Poor democratic performance: corruption, crime, insecurity, economic stagnation and inequality.
- Accelerating globalization: fear of losing sovereignty and control; cultural and religious pluralism
- Social media polarization, fragmented media sphere
- Diffusion of authoritarian leadership models
- Weakening of US, ebbing of democracy promotion
→ fewer constraints on autocrats
- More powerful and aggressive Russia and China

Key elements of Illiberal Populism

1. Anti-elitist
2. Anti-institutionalist (acute distrust of institutions)
3. Anti-pluralist (delegitimize difference, disagreement)
4. Illiberal—intolerant of religious, ethnic, & other minorities
5. Hegemonic: claims to be the only legitimate representative of the “true” people
6. Plebiscitary—direct over representative democracy
7. Nationalist—anti-globalization

The Autocrats' 12-step Program

1. Demonize and delegitimize political opposition
2. Undermine the independence of the courts.
3. Undermine the independence of the media
4. Gain control of public broadcasting
5. Constrain Internet freedom
6. Subdue civil society: NGOs, universities, think tanks
7. Intimidate the business community into submission
8. Enrich a class of loyal crony capitalists
9. Extend political control over state bureaucracy & security
10. Rig electoral rules
11. Gain control over electoral administration
12. Repeat steps 1 to 11, ever more vigorously

New Threats to Freedom in Pandemic

- Suspend parliament & elections, rule by decree (Hungary)
- Suspending freedom of movement & assembly
- Failure to ensure safe conditions for voting (Poland, May 10)
- Ban the printing of newspapers (Jordan)
- More arrests of opponents and critics (Egypt, Azerbaijan)
- Prosecution of critical journalists and intellectuals (India)
- Heightened news censorship (Cambodia, Thailand)
- 5- year prison terms for conveying “false information” (Hungary)
- Invasive state digital surveillance (Singapore, S Korea, Israel)
- Remove term limits on the president (Russia)
- Mobilize prejudice against minorities (Uganda)
- Global disinformation to discredit democracies (China, Russia)

Fighting Authoritarian Populism

- TRANSCEND, do not reinforce, the populist instinct to polarize
- Create a “big tent” that speaks to and welcomes in previous supporters of the authoritarian populist
- Lead with “bread and butter issues” of people’s needs and the populist government’s failure
- Expose the corruption of the populist leader & government, the fraud in its claim to represent “the people”
- Identify reforms to improve democracy, but do not make those the centerpiece of the campaign
- Embrace “civic nationalism” in which democracy and personal freedom are an integral part of what makes the nation great
- Mobilize crosscutting civil society alliances

Fighting COVID-10 Democratically

1. *Early warning and rapid response* (public health, education)
2. Early steps to identify, isolate those infected; trace contacts; screen & if necessary, quarantine travelers
3. *Early and widespread testing for the virus*, rapid results
4. Use of big data analytics to track the infection
5. Strong public health systems
6. Central government coordination for policy and med supplies
7. Transparent and consistent government communication
8. Led by public health experts who speak with authority
9. → Trust in government and in scientific expertise
10. Widespread availability & use of facemasks and hand sanitizer
11. Affordable, widely accessible healthcare.
12. Renewed social solidarity and shared community commitment