

Beyond the Rhetoric: A Comparison of GCD and ERC Countries



**F&M GLOBAL
BAROMETERS**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2020, the United States (under the first Trump administration),¹ Brazil, Egypt, Hungary, Indonesia and Uganda formed the Geneva Consensus Declaration² (GCD). One of the stated main objectives of the GCD was a commitment to the “dignity of the human person, the equality of men and women, the importance of the family, and the need for strong health care systems, particularly for mothers and children.”³ Beyond the rhetoric, GCD countries have fallen short in protecting the dignity of the human person (especially LGBTQI+ people) and gender equality (as measured through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Gender Inequality Index (GII)). In addition, GCD countries tend to be less democratic, less protective of LGBTQI+ human rights, and less wealthy than ERC countries.

Conversely, Equal Rights Coalition (ERC) countries tend to be more protective of the dignity of the human person (inclusive of LGBTQI+ human rights) and more democratic; they tend to have greater gender equality, and to enjoy more economic growth than Geneva Consensus Declaration (GCD) countries. Although there is a significant and strong relationship between ERC member countries and economic growth, democracy, gender equality, and respect for LGBTQI+ human rights, neither causality of this relationship nor its direction can be shown.

¹ The United States was a member of the ERC from 2016–2020. Under the first Trump administration, it first joined the GCD in **2020**, but rejoined the ERC from **2021–2025** under the Biden Administration. In **2025**, the USA rejoined the GCD under the second Trump administration. While the USA is currently a member of the GCD, this analysis removes the USA from that group to examine how it compares with both ERC and GCD categories.

² Geneva Consensus Declaration of Promoting Women's Health and Strengthening the Family.

³ Rebecca Oas, “The Significance of the Geneva Consensus Declaration,” Center for Family and Human Rights, Nov. 19, 2021, <https://c-fam.org/definitions/the-significance-of-the-geneva-consensus-declaration/>.

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INTRODUCTION

Members of the Geneva Consensus Declaration (GCD) claim that they are committed to the “dignity of the human person, the equality of men and women, the importance of the family, and the need for strong health care systems, particularly for mothers and children.”⁴ But does this commitment actually translate into reality? This report compares GCD countries with Equal Rights Coalition (ERC) member countries. Specifically, the question addressed here is whether a significant difference exists between GCD and ERC countries in issues of human dignity, gender equality, economic growth and commitment to democracy.

One measure of a country’s commitment to respecting the dignity of the human person is the extent to which all humans are treated fairly. This measure should be inclusive of LGBTQI+ people. To that end, the F&M Global Barometers data are utilized, specifically the F&M Global Barometers Unified LGBT Rights, to compare GCD and ERC countries’ commitments to the dignity of the human being.

THE F&M GLOBAL BAROMETERS METHODOLOGY

The Franklin & Marshall Global Barometers (FMGB) assess and quantify global lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT), and intersex human rights using four barometers: the F&M Global Barometer of Gay Rights® (GBGR), the F&M Global Barometer of Transgender Rights™ (GBTR), the F&M Global Barometer of Unified LGBT Rights™ (GBUR), and the F&M Global Barometers LGBTQI+ Perception Index™ (GBPI). These four databases track LGBT+ human rights and experiences in 192 UN member states and 12 additional territories or jurisdictions.⁵ The FMGB data provide a framework for accurately monitoring and analyzing the progression and regression of LGBT+ rights worldwide.⁶

⁴ Oas, “The Significance of the Geneva Consensus Declaration.”

⁵ The 12 territories/jurisdictions are England, Gaza, Hong Kong, Kosovo, North Cyprus, Northern Ireland, Puerto Rico, Scotland, Taiwan, U.S. Virgin Islands, Wales, and the West Bank.

⁶ No index can fully capture the complexities of identity, especially as labels related to sexual orientation and gender identity are shaped by a host of factors that vary across continents, cultures, and languages. The Global Barometer of Gay Rights focuses on sexual orientation minorities, which includes individuals who identify as homosexual, lesbian, gay, and/or bisexual. The Global Barometer of Transgender Rights focuses on gender identity minorities, which includes transgender men and women as well as those whose gender identity or expression does not align with their biological sex. The “+” sign occasionally added to the LGBT acronym represents the varied, multi-dimensional identities that are a part of the LGBT community but that do not explicitly fall under the categories gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.

The F&M Global Barometer of Unified LGBT Rights (GBUR)

This study will utilize data from the GBUR and the GBPI. Drawing from the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR) and the [Yogyakarta Principles plus 10](#) (YP+10), the GBUR—a combined index of the Global Barometer of Gay Rights® (GBGR) and the Global Barometer of Transgender Rights™ (GBTR)—measures state and societal indicators to determine the extent to which countries protect or persecute their LGBT populations. The GBUR includes five dimensions: De Jure Protections, De Facto Protections, LGBT Rights Advocacy, Socio-Economic Rights, and Societal Persecution. The five dimensions consist of 39 items which measure levels of protection or persecution toward LGBT people. The combined score allows for an aggregation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender rights.

The FMGB employ a double-blind coding system to collect and review the data for the 39 items on the GBUR, and assign binary codes (0/1) which are weighted equally. A country will receive a one (1) if evidence supports the item in the affirmative and a zero (0) if in the negative. To ensure reliability among coders, the team uses an extensive coding handbook that sets the parameters for evaluation. Each country's GBUR score is calculated by dividing the sum of its binary codes by 39, the total number of items. If a country has no military, the sum is divided by 37. Then, this score is converted to a percentage and assigned a letter grade (A–F), where 100 percent (A) is the most protective and 0 percent (F) is the least protective.

FMGB scales are color-coded and range from 0 to 100 percent, A–F (see [Figure 1](#), below).

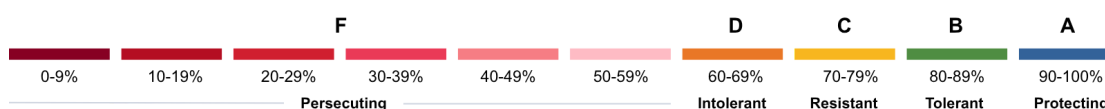


Figure 1. F&M Global Barometers Grading Scale

The F&M Global Barometers LGBTQI+ Perception Index (GBPI)

The F&M Global Barometers LGBTQI+ Perception Index™ (GBPI) survey was piloted in 2022 and launched again in 2024, and it is designed to measure LGBTQI+ individuals' perceptions and experiences. The GBPI asks six basic questions related to experiences with safety, acceptance, discrimination, and violence. Respondents complete the survey online and select answers on a Likert scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). The survey also asks respondents

demographic questions about their country of residence in the past 12 months, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics, urban, rural, or suburban location, and age.

Respondents have the option to skip any questions and to select multiple sexual orientations and gender identities. The survey adheres to human subjects guidelines and was approved by Franklin & Marshall College's Institutional Review Board.

Originally offered in Arabic, English, French, and Spanish, the 2024 survey was available in 11 additional languages: Bengali, Dutch, German, Hindi, Italian, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Swahili, Thai, and Urdu.

Each country's GBPI score is calculated by determining the average score for each of the six questions and then taking the mean of those averages. This score is then converted into a percentage and assigned a letter grade (A–F), where 100 percent (A) is the most protective and 0 percent (F) is the least protective (see **Figure 1**).

Survey data for countries with fewer than 30 responses in a particular year are excluded in order to establish a comparative threshold.

A full summary of the FMGB's methodology is available at; <https://www.fandmglobalbarometers.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/FMGB-Methodology-Background-Note-No-2.pdf>

Equal Rights Coalition (ERC)

The Equal Rights Coalition (ERC) is an intergovernmental body of 44 member states (see **Appendix 1**) dedicated to the protection of the rights of LGBTI persons. The ERC was founded in 2016 at the Global LGBTI Human Rights Conference in Montevideo under the leadership of Argentina and the Netherlands, and is dedicated to protecting the human rights of LGBTI persons as well as the promotion of inclusive development by engaging with civil society organizations, multilateral agencies and activists from all over the world. The ERC is currently co-chaired by the governments of **Columbia** and **Spain** for the 2024–2026 period.

Geneva Consensus Declaration (GCD)

The Geneva Consensus Declaration (GCD) is a 2020 political statement by a coalition of 40 countries (including the USA, see **Appendix 2**) championing traditional values, opposing

abortion as a human right, supporting the traditional family, and affirming national sovereignty over health policies. Specifically, the GCD represents itself as promoting women's health and strengthening the family, while excluding LGBTQI+ people. The United States first joined the GCD in 2020 under the first Trump administration, withdrew under the Biden administration and rejoined in 2025 (under the second Trump administration). The Government of **Hungary** is the Secretariat of the Declaration.

Figure 2, below, depicts which countries are part of the ERC and which are part of the GCD as of 2025.

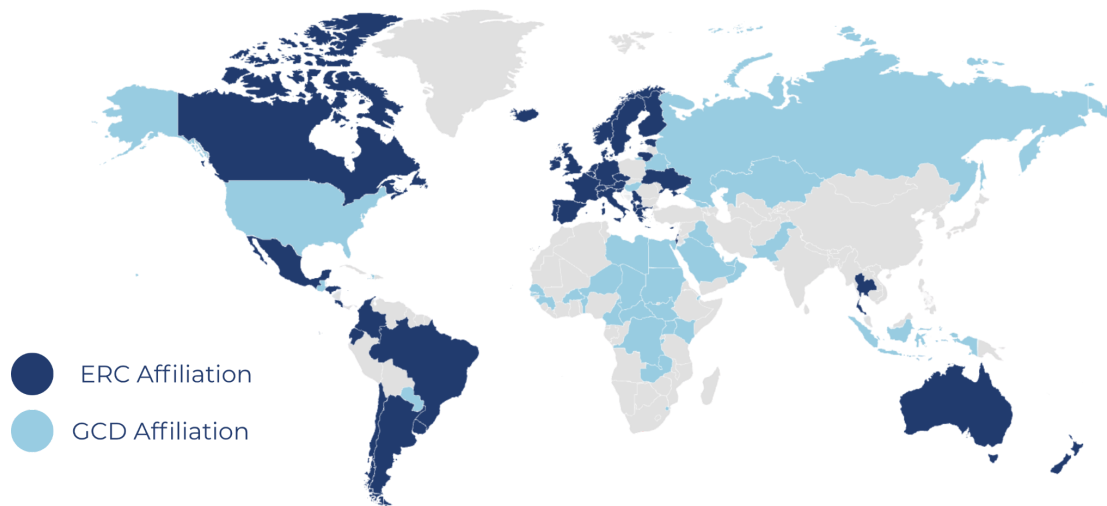


Figure 2. ERC and GCD Countries as of 2025

COMPARING LGBTQI+ HUMAN RIGHTS IN ERC & GCD COUNTRIES

F&M Global Barometer of Unified LGBT Rights (GBUR) and ERC & GCD Countries

This section examines the relationship between the 2023 F&M Global Barometer of Unified LGBT Rights (GBUR) and ERC and GCD countries. The GBUR holistically measures the level

of protection of LGBT human rights in a country: in other words, it does not simply focus on legislation, but also examines societal persecution, de facto items, as well as LGBT NGO mobilization. All 44 ERC countries have decriminalized homosexuality; however, only 20 GCD countries have done the same (as of 2023). Similarly, 40 ERC countries allow legal gender recognition, while only seven GCD countries offer any level of legal gender recognition.

Figure 3 shows that the majority of ERC countries fall within the A-Protecting category, while the majority of GCD countries fall within the F-Persecuting category. The only country in the ERC group that scores F-Persecuting is Italy, with a score of 59 percent (on the cusp of D-Intolerant). See Appendix 2 for a breakdown of 2023 GBUR scores for ERC countries.

Conversely, the highest-scoring GCD country is Hungary, with a score of C-Resistant (74%). The remaining countries score an F-Persecuting grade, with the exception of one other country: Georgia, D-Intolerant (64%). **Appendix 3** shows the breakdown of 2023 GBUR scores for GCD countries. The United States is not included in either category, but it scores a C-Resistant (79%).

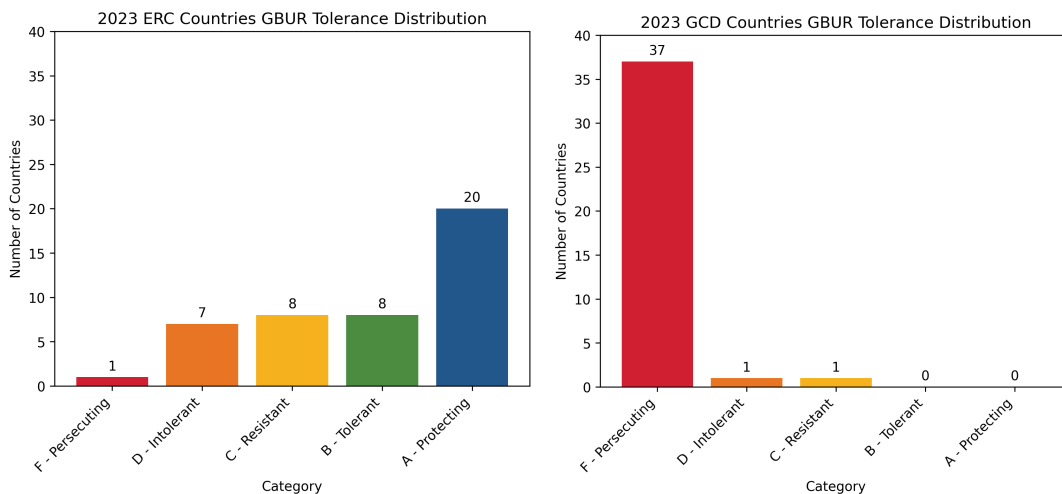


Figure 3. 2023 GBUR Tolerance Category Distribution - ERC & GCD Countries

F&M Global Barometers LGBTQI+ Perception Index (GBPI) and ERC & GCD Countries

This section examines the relationship between the F&M Global Barometers LGBTQI+ Perception Index (GBPI) and ERC and GCD countries. The GBPI provides a snapshot of the human rights experiences of LGBTQI+ people in a particular year. The GBPI is an important reflection of how LGBTQI+ people actually feel about safety, safety in gathering, security, fear of police, discrimination, and the likelihood of being a victim of violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or sex characteristics.

Overall, the majority of countries in both the ERC and the GCD fare much poorer on the GBPI in comparison to the GBUR. **Figure 4** compares results from the 2022 GBPI for ERC and GCD countries, while **Figure 5** compares results from the 2024 GBPI for ERC and GCD countries.

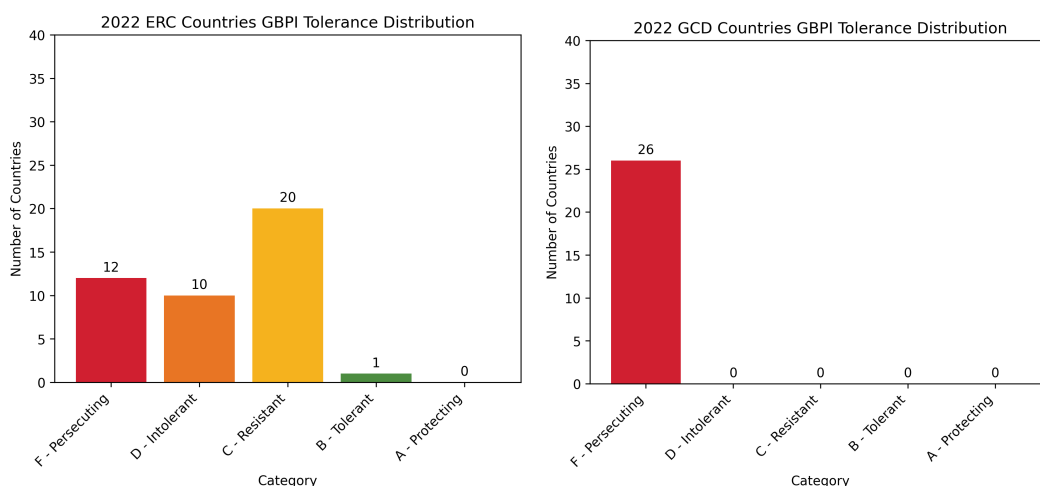


Figure 4. 2022 GBPI Tolerance Category Distribution - ERC & GCD Countries⁷

No country in either the ERC or the GCD category receives a grade of A-Protecting on the 2022 GBPI. One country, in the ERC category, Iceland, earns a score of B-Tolerant (83%). The second highest score in the ERC category is C-Resistant (79%), shared by Denmark and Finland. All countries in the GCD earn an F-Persecuting score; the United States earns a D-Intolerant (63%) grade.

⁷ The total number of ERC countries is **n=43** and the total number of GCD countries is **n=26**. The minimum number of responses for the F&M GBPI is 30. Several countries in the ERC and the GCD did not reach that threshold in 2022, so these numbers are lower than the total numbers of members in the ERC and in the GCD.

The human rights experiences of LGBTQI+ people as quantified by the GBPI appear to deteriorate even further in 2024. **Figure 5**, below, shows that all countries in the GCD category are now in the F-Persecuting category. Several GBPI country scores among ERC members also declined in 2024.

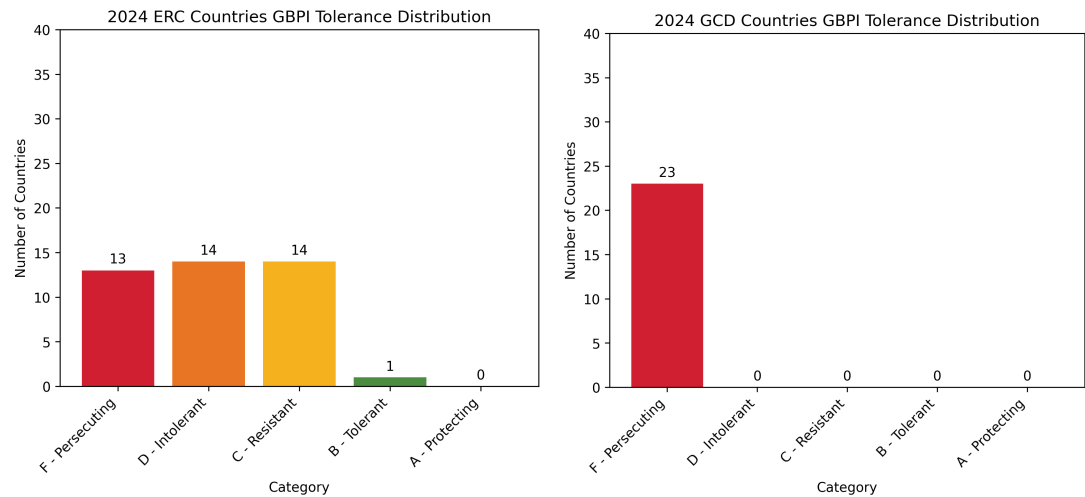


Figure 5. 2024 GBPI Tolerance Category Distribution - ERC & GCD Countries⁸

Specifically, ten countries in the ERC category decreased enough in score that they moved into a lower tolerance category, and two countries increased enough in score on the GBPI from 2022 to 2024 that they moved to a higher category (see below, **Table 1**). In the GCD category, all countries were in the F-Persecuting category in 2024. The United States' GBPI score dropped five percentage points from 2022 to 2024, from 63 to 58 percent.

Table 1. 2022 & 2024 GBPI - Tolerance Category Changes in ERC Countries

ERC Country	GBPI 2022 Score	GBPI 2022 Category	GBPI 2024 Score	GBPI 2024 Category	Change in Score from 2022 to 2024
Estonia	58%	F	69%	D	11%
Israel	68%	D	71%	C	3%
United Kingdom	70%	C	69%	D	-1%
Uruguay	71%	C	69%	D	-2%

⁸ The total number of ERC countries is **n=42** and the total number of GCD countries is **n=23**. The minimum number of responses for the F&M GBPI is 30. Several countries in the ERC and the GCD did not reach that threshold in 2022, so these numbers are lower than the total numbers of members in the ERC and in the GCD.

ERC Country	GBPI 2022 Score	GBPI 2022 Category	GBPI 2024 Score	GBPI 2024 Category	Change in Score from 2022 to 2024
Ireland	71%	C	68%	D	-3%
Italy	62%	D	59%	F	-3%
Germany	72%	C	68%	D	-4%
Portugal	71%	C	67%	D	-4%
Cyprus	60%	D	56%	F	-4%
Greece	60%	D	56%	F	-4%
Luxembourg	76%	C	68%	D	-8%
Czechia	74%	C	61%	D	-13%

LGBT RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY IN ERC & GCD COUNTRIES

Are members of the ERC more democratic than members of the GCD? This question is addressed using the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) Democracy Index.⁹ The EIU Democracy Index scores countries from zero to ten and classifies them into four regime types: *Full Democracy*, *Flawed Democracy*, *Hybrid Regime*, or *Authoritarian Regime*.¹⁰ The data affirm that, on average, countries in the ERC were more democratic than countries in the GCD. **Figure 6**, below, shows the mean (average) EIU democracy scores for ERC countries, GCD countries, unaffiliated (“Neither”) countries, and the United States (USA). What is equally interesting is that both ERC countries and unaffiliated countries score higher on the Democracy Index than countries that are part of the GCD. The mean EIU democracy score for ERC countries is **7.8**, while for GCD countries it is only **3.3**; that is a mean difference of **4.5**.

⁹ Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), “Democracy Index 2024: What’s wrong with representative democracy?,” accessed December 2025, <https://www.eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2024/>.

¹⁰ The EIU Democracy breakdown by category is: **Full Democracy = >8.00; Flawed Democracy = 6.01-8.00; Hybrid Regime = 4.01-6.00; and Authoritarian Regime = 1-4.00**

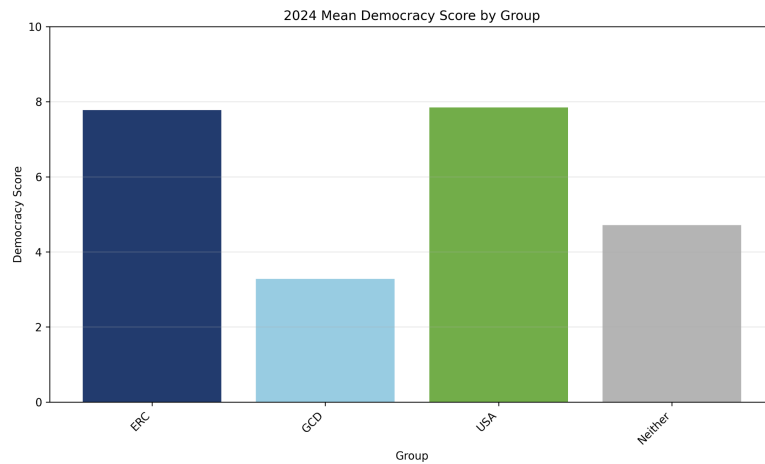


Figure 6. 2024 Mean EIU Democracy Score by ERC, GCD, “Neither” Category, & the USA

Figure 7, below, depicts the relationship between EIU democracy score, and ERC and GCD category in a boxplot.¹¹ The boxplot comparing ERC and GCD countries’ EIU democracy scores shows that countries in the ERC category are overwhelmingly more democratic, while countries in the GCD category show a significantly lower democracy score, pointing toward Flawed Democracies or Authoritarian Regimes. The ERC category countries show a high median score of around **8.0**, or *Full Democracy*. There is a tight clustering at the top, and the middle fifty percent of the data (the box) is tightly packed between scores of **6.7** and **8.8**. The ERC category has a high baseline: even the lowest-scoring countries in this group (the bottom whisker) hover around a score of **5.0**. Almost the entire ERC group sits in the upper half of the scale. In contrast, the GCD countries show a low median score of **2.7**. There is a clustering at the bottom of the boxplot that suggests that the middle fifty percent of countries score entirely between roughly **2.2** and **4.5**. There are no outliers in the GCD dataset. The most democratic country in the GCD category barely reaches a score of **6.5**, which is still significantly lower than the average ERC country.

¹¹ The “box” part of the boxplot outlines the lower and upper quartiles. The line inside the box represents the Median (50th percentile). The lines that extend outside the box—known as *whiskers*—depict a range of values in the dataset. The outliers are designated by individual dots.

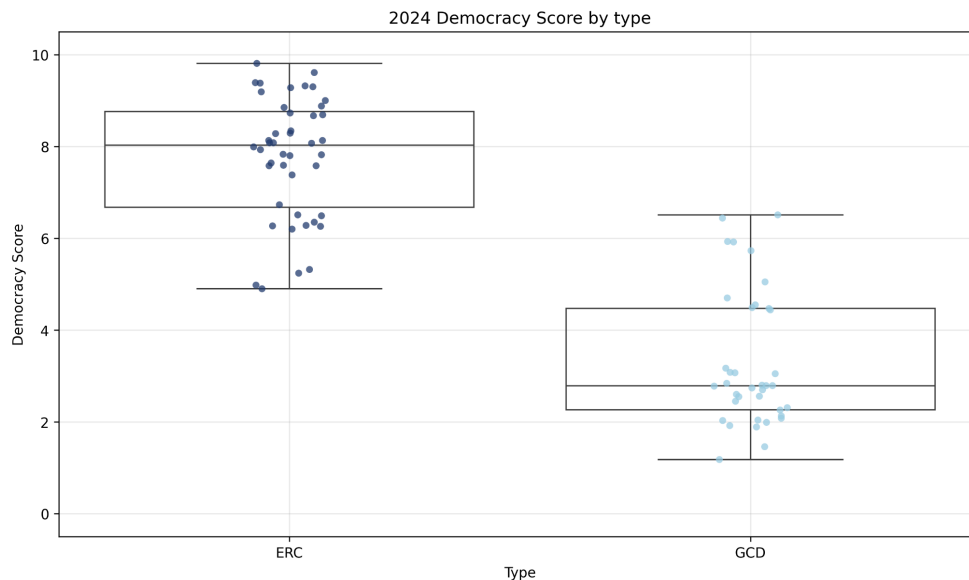


Figure 7. Boxplot of 2024 Democracy Score by Type - ERC & GCD Countries

A statistical comparison of EIU Democracy Index scores with ERC and GCD categories showed a **statistically significant** difference in EIU democracy scores between the two groups, with the ERC category showing higher values on average than the GCD category.¹²

Figure 8 illustrates the breakdown of ERC and GCD countries by EIU Democracy Index category. **Twenty-two** ERC countries were classified as *Full Democracies*, **18** as *Flawed Democracies*, and **four** as *Hybrid Regimes* (Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, and Ukraine). Conversely, no countries in the GCD category are *Full Democracies*, **two** are *Flawed Democracies* (Hungary and Indonesia), **nine** are *Hybrid Regimes*, and **26** are *Authoritarian Regimes*. The United States is classified as a *Flawed Democracy*. Two countries, Nauru and South Sudan, do not have EIU Democracy Index scores. Almost all ERC countries (91%) are either *Flawed* or *Full Democracies*, while almost all GCD countries (90%) are *Authoritarian* or *Hybrid Regimes*. **Appendix 4** shows ERC and GCD countries' EIU Democracy Index scores.

¹² A Welch's t-test was used as the primary test between ERC and GCD EIU democracy scores because it compares group means without assuming equal variance. This test is appropriate for country-level data where variance may differ between groups. A Mann-Whitney U was included as a non-parametric robustness check to account for potential non-normality or outliers. The ERC mean was 7.777 (**n=44**) while the GCD mean was 3.284 (**n=37**). The mean difference was **4.493**. The Welch's t-test shows **t=14.458**, with a p-value of **p=3.732050494279933e-23**. The Mann-Whitney U shows **U=1594.500**, with a p-value of **p=1.4095268368383254e-13**. Both tests indicate a **statistically significant difference**. The Effect size (Cohen's d) is **3.239**, indicating a large effect. Directionally, the ERC category has higher values on average than the GCD category. *Nauru and South Sudan were not included in this analysis because they did not have an EIU Democracy score in 2024.

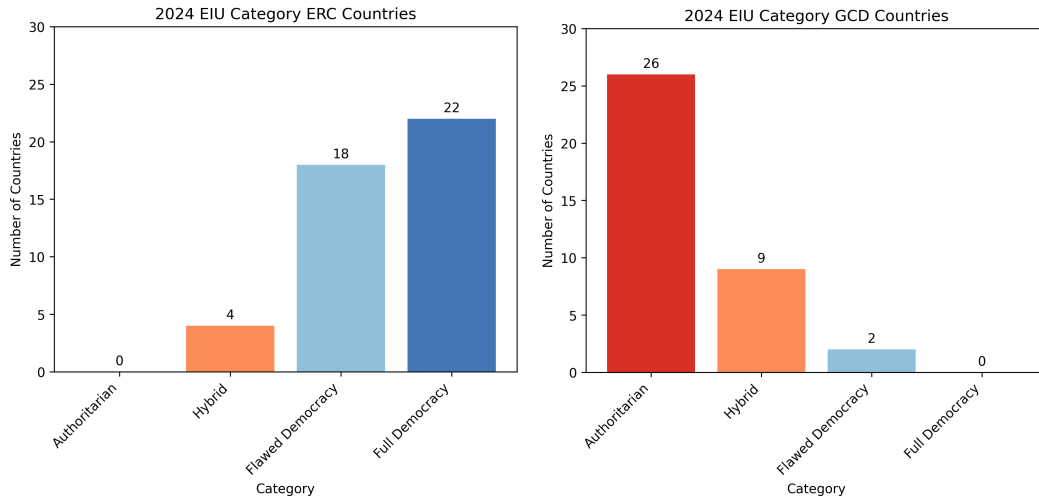


Figure 8. 2024 EIU Democracy Classification by ERC & GCD Category

Taking a more longitudinal approach, **Figure 9** shows that from 2011–2024, ERC countries outperformed both GCD countries and countries in the “Neither” category and continue on a stable trajectory, while both GCD countries and countries in the “Neither” category show a downward trajectory in their democracy score.

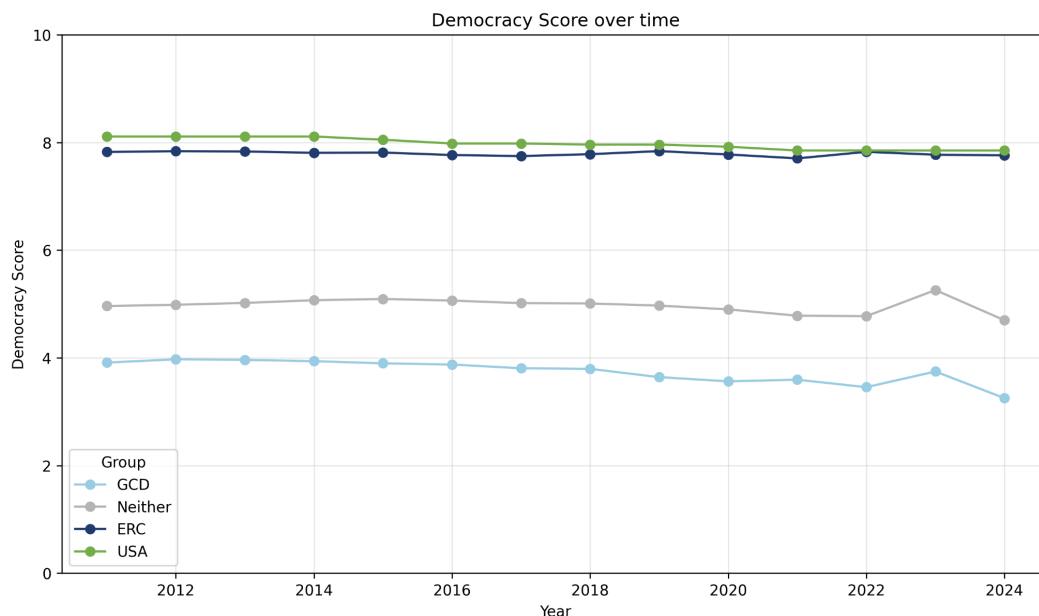


Figure 9. EIU Democracy Scores, 2011–2023 - ERC, GCD, “Neither” Category, & the USA

On average, ERC countries outperform GCD countries on democracy levels: ERC countries tend to overwhelmingly include *Full Democracies* and *Flawed Democracies*, while none of the GCD are *Full Democracies*, with the majority of countries classified as *Authoritarian* or *Hybrid Regimes*.

LGBT RIGHTS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN ERC & GCD COUNTRIES

How is economic growth correlated with membership in the ERC or the GCD? This question is answered utilizing Gross National Income per capita with purchasing power parity (GNI per capita with PPP).¹³ **Figure 10**, below, shows the average (mean) GNI per capita (PPP) for ERC, GCD, “Neither” category, and the United States in 2024.

¹³ Gross National Income (GNI) per capita is the total income earned by all residents within an economic territory during an accounting period. It is equal to gross domestic product plus earned income receivable from abroad minus earned income payable abroad. The purchasing power parity (PPP) conversion factor is a currency conversion factor and a spatial price deflator. PPPs convert different currencies to a common currency, and, in the process of conversion, equalize their purchasing power by eliminating the differences in price levels between countries, thereby allowing volume or output comparisons of GDP and its expenditure components. World Bank Development Indicators, available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.PP.CD?end=2024&start=2000&view=chart>.

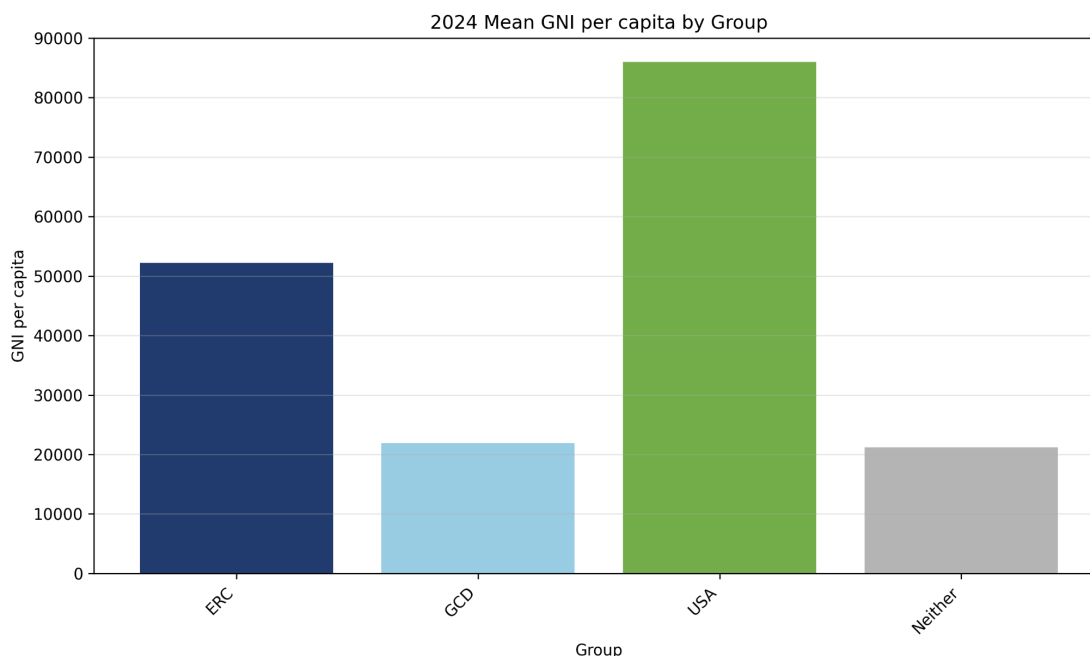


Figure 10. 2024 GNI per capita (PPP) Means - ERC, GCD, “Neither” Category, & the USA

The mean GNI per capita (PPP) for ERC countries in 2024 is \$52,170, while the mean GNI per capita (PPP) for GCD countries is only \$21,886, a mean difference of \$30,284. **Figure 11**, below, shows a clear economic divide between ERC and GCD countries. In general, ERC countries have a **significantly higher** GNI per capita than those in the GCD category. The median GNI per capita (PPP) for ERC countries (the horizontal line within the left box, below) is \$54,445. The box, representing the middle fifty percent of the ERC data, is quite tall, stretching from roughly \$30,000 to \$70,000. This indicates great variance among the “middle class” of this group. The ERC country scores are spread relatively evenly from top to bottom. There are no extreme outliers pulling the data in one direction. In comparison, the GCD countries’ median GNI per capita (PPP) is \$10,760. The majority of countries are clustered at the bottom of the boxplot, huddled between the lowest scoring country, Burundi (\$1,200) and \$20,000. The vast majority of countries in the GCD category have a low GNI per capita. Unlike the ERC category, the GCD category has some extreme outliers. Qatar hovers above \$120,000 (\$121,900) while other countries hover between \$60,000 and \$82,000: Bahrain (\$62,230), Kuwait (\$63,270), Saudi Arabia (\$71,730), and the United Arab Emirates (\$81,530).

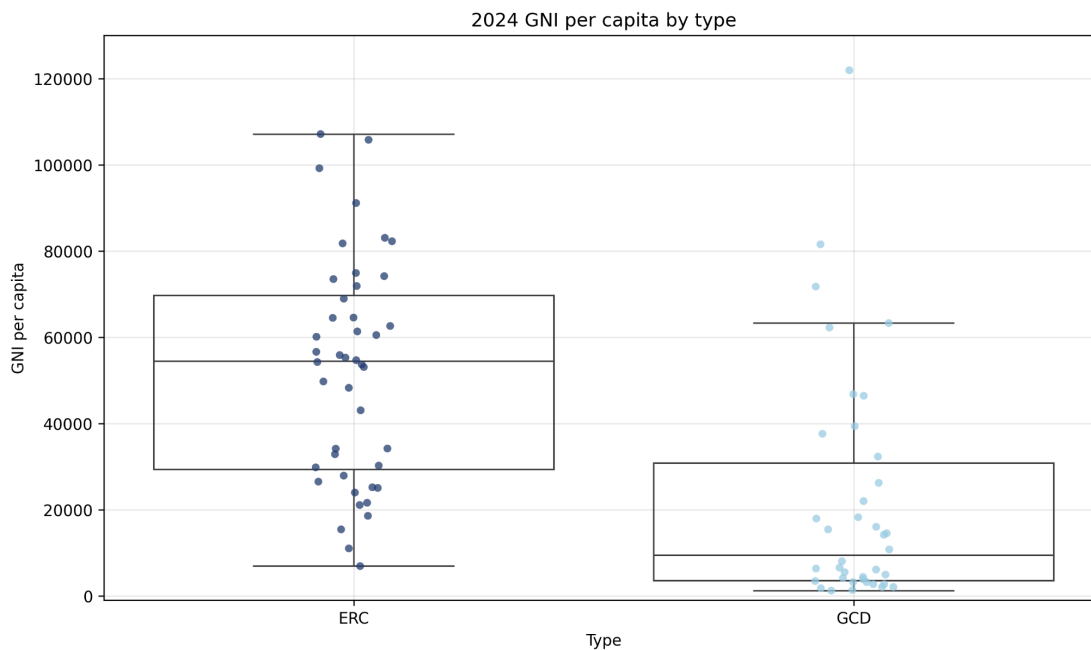


Figure 11. Boxplot of 2024 Mean GNI Per Capita (PPP) by ERC and GCD Category

ERC countries also **significantly** outperformed GCD and “Neither” countries in economic growth over time.¹⁴ **Figure 12**, below, illustrates the relationship between ERC, GCD and “Neither” category and economic growth between 2011 and 2024, measured by GNI per capita with (PPP). In 2011, the average GNI among ERC member states was \$29,366. By 2024, this amount increased by approximately 180 percent, reaching \$52,894. Conversely, the GCD’s economic growth, marked by periods of decline and stagnation, improved by only 18 percent in this same time period, increasing from \$18,517 to \$21,886.

¹⁴A Welch’s t-test was used as the primary test between ERC and GCD, GNI per capita (PPP) scores because it compares group means without assuming equal variance. This is appropriate for country-level data where variance may differ between groups. A Mann-Whitney U was included as a non-parametric robustness check to account for potential non-normality or outliers. The ERC mean was **\$52,170.68 (n=44)** while the GCD mean was **\$21,886.31 (n=38)**. The mean difference was **\$30, 284.36**. The Welch’s t-test reports: **t = 5.112**, with a p-value of **p= 2.273141210779472e-06**. The Mann-Whitney U reports: **U = 1388.000**, with a p-value of **p= 2.9222551383149105e-07**. Both tests indicate a **statistically significant difference**. The Effect size (Cohen’s d) = 1.134, indicating a large effect. Directionally, the ERC category has higher values on average than the GCD category. *South Sudan was not included in this analysis because it did not have a reported GNI per capita (PPP) score in 2024.

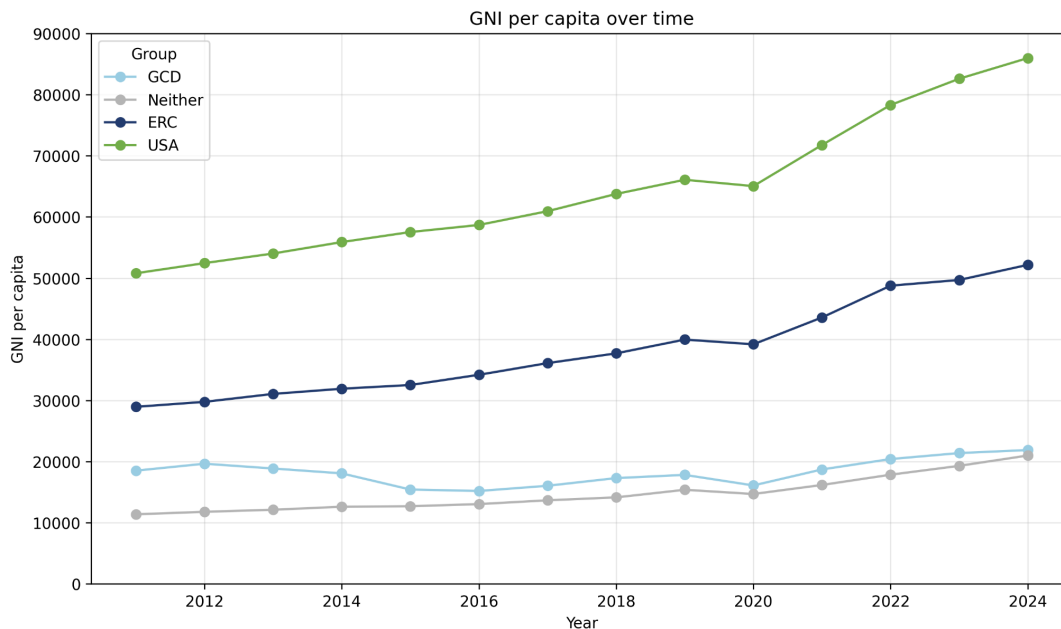


Figure 12. GNI per capita (PPP), 2011–2024 - ERC, GCD, “Neither” Category, & the USA

On average, ERC countries outperform GCD countries in economic growth, with the exception of the wealthy petrostates that tend to be authoritarian but have high GNI per capita (PPP).

GENDER EQUALITY

One of the central commitments of the GCD coalition is gender equality. However, do the data support the GCD’s rhetoric of gender equality? This section examines the relationship between gender equality, and scores in ERC and GCD countries. Specifically, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Gender Inequality Index (GII) is utilized to measure gender equality in ERC and GCD countries. The GII comprehensively measures gender inequality by focusing on three key dimensions: reproductive health (maternal mortality rates and adolescent birth rates); empowerment (share of parliamentary seats held and higher education attainment by women); and labor market participation (women’s participation in the workforce). **Figure 13**, below, shows the mean (average) scores for ERC, GCD, “Neither” category, and the United States in 2023. **Lower GII scores correlate to greater levels of gender equality in a country:** A score of zero reflects perfect equality between men and women, and a score of one reflects perfect inequality. Comparing the GII means of ERC, GCD, “Neither” category, and the United States, it is clear that ERC countries are much more committed to

gender equality in practice than any of the other categories, including the United States. The 2023 mean GII score for the ERC is **0.125**, while the GCD's mean GII is **0.418**, indicating a **significant** difference between gender equality in ERC and GCD countries.¹⁵

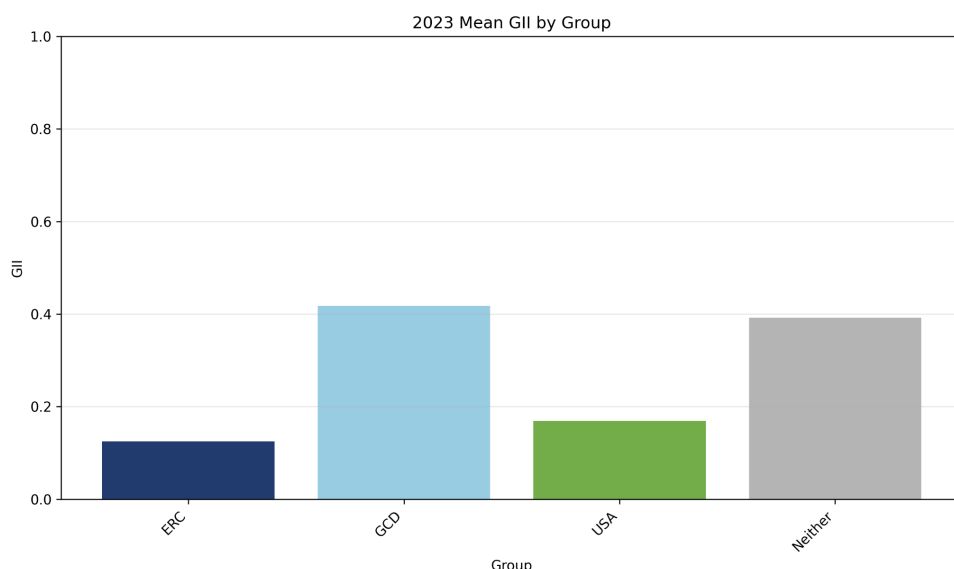


Figure 13. 2023 Mean Gender Inequality Index Scores - ERC, GCD, “Neither” Category, & the USA

Figure 14 shows an even starker contrast between ERC and GCD countries on gender inequality. Specifically, **ERC countries experienced significantly lower gender inequality than GCD countries**. The ERC category median was **0.08**, signifying very low gender inequality, while the GCD median was **0.487**, indicating much higher gender inequality. The boxplot shows that the majority of ERC countries’ GII scores are tightly clustered at the bottom of the boxplot, where the box (the middle fifty percent of countries) are at the bottom of the chart between roughly 0.04 and 0.18. **The vast majority of ERC countries have achieved very high levels of gender equality in health, empowerment, and the labor market**. Even the

¹⁵A Welch’s t-test was used as the primary test between ERC and GCD, Gender Inequality Index (GII) scores because it compares group means without assuming equal variance. This is appropriate for country-level data where variance may differ between groups. A Mann-Whitney U was included as a non-parametric robustness check to account for potential non-normality or outliers. The ERC mean was **0.125 (n=43)** while the GCD mean was **0.418 (n=36)**. The mean difference was **-0.293**. The Welch’s t-test reports: **t=-8.248**, with a p-value of **p=1.8684553728560048e-11**. The Mann-Whitney U reports: **U = 157.500**, with a p-value of **p= 1.3283614608480781e-09**. Both tests indicate a **statistically significant difference**. The Effect size (Cohen’s d) = **-1.893**, indicating a large effect. Directionally, the GCD category has higher values on average than the ERC category (meaning greater gender inequality). *Central African Republic, Nauru, South Sudan and Ukraine were not included in this analysis because they did not have a reported GII score in 2024.

worst-performing outliers—Honduras (0.437), Colombia (0.393), Brazil (0.390), Mexico (0.358) and Ecuador (0.358)—only reached a score roughly between 0.4 and 0.358. In contrast, the GCD countries' high median GII score of 0.487 suggests a substantial level of structural gender inequality. Unlike the tightly clustered ERC box, there is greater variance within the GCD boxplot. The middle fifty percent of countries range from about 0.22 to 0.56. The data clearly show that membership in the ERC correlates strongly with high gender equality. Conversely, countries in the GCD have much higher levels of gender inequality, though there is a much wider variation in how those countries perform.

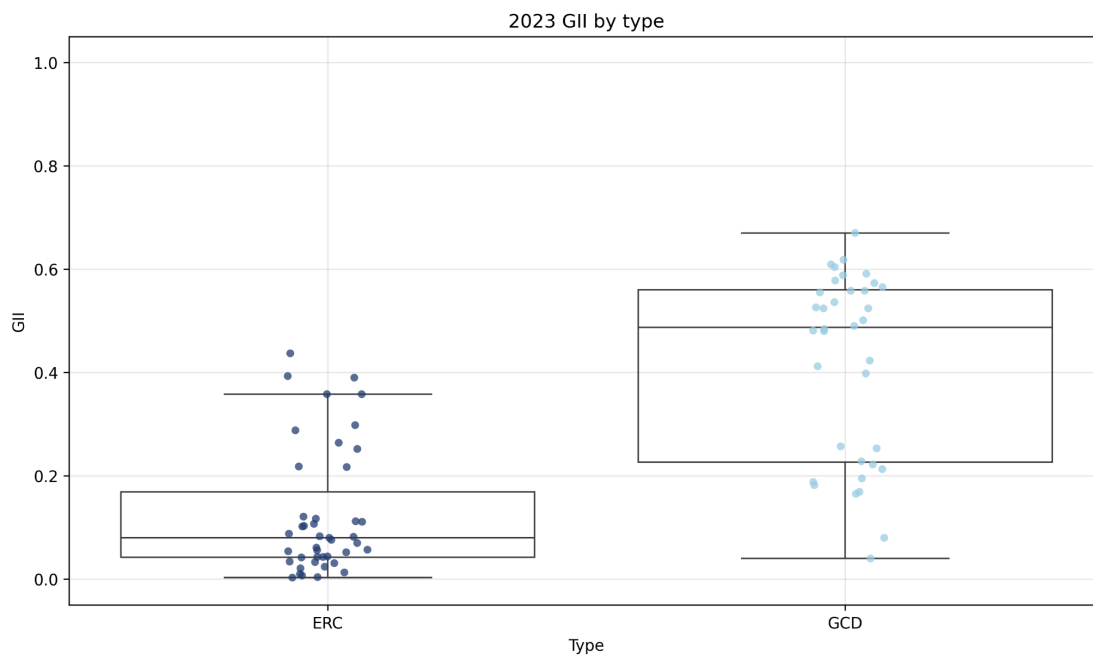


Figure 14. Boxplot of 2023 Mean Gender Inequality Index (GII) Scores by ERC and GCD Category

A longitudinal comparison between GII scores among ERC, GCD, “Neither” category countries, and the United States from 2011–2023 shows that ERC countries have been outperforming all countries in gender equality between 2011 and 2023 (see below, [Figure 15](#)).

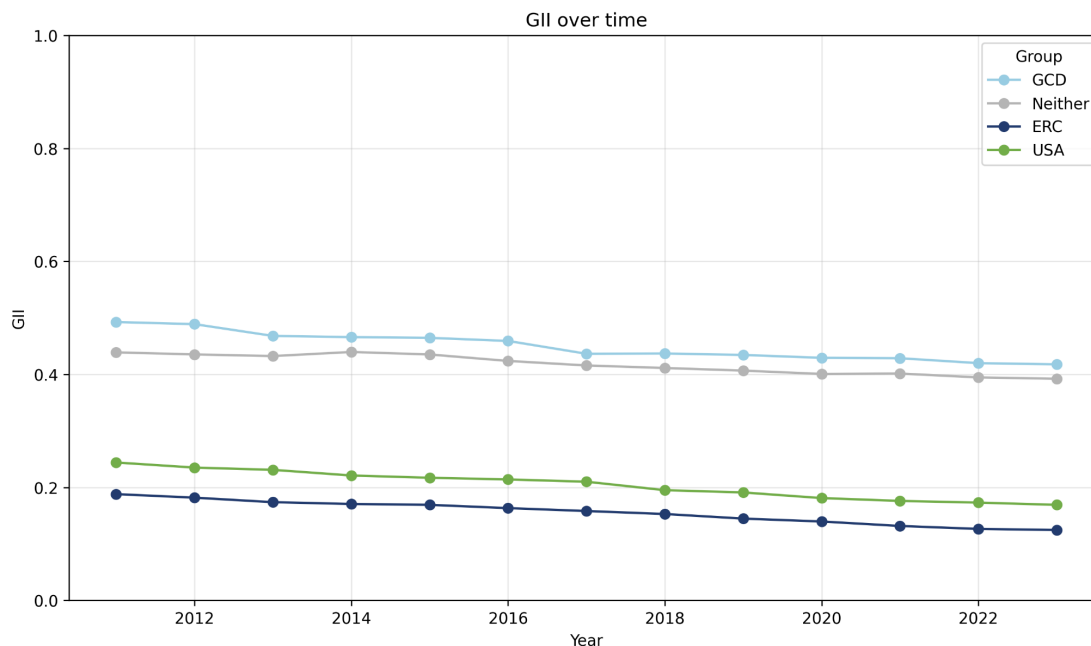


Figure 15. Mean Gender Inequality Index Scores, 2011–2023 - All Categories

CONCLUSIONS

Core tenets of the GCD embrace a commitment to the “dignity of the human person,” “the equality of men and women,” and the importance of family. However, data show that ERC countries tend to be **significantly** more protective of LGBTQI+ human rights and **significantly** more democratic; ERC countries tend to have **significantly** greater equality between men and women and to have **significantly** stronger economic growth than GCD countries. In contrast, GCD country data reveal that this is a group of nations that generally struggles with LGBTQI+ human rights protections, democracy, gender equality, and economic growth.

LGBT Rights

ERC countries score very high on the F&M Global Barometer of Unified LGBT Rights, with the majority of countries (64%) earning a grade of A-Protecting or B-Tolerant. Only one country, (Italy) earned a grade of F-Persecuting. This starkly contrasts with GCD countries, where 95 percent of countries earned a grade of F-Persecuting.

Although ERC countries tend to perform very well on LGBT rights protections (measured by the GBUR), neither ERC nor GCD countries perform as well when considering the human

rights experiences of LGBTQI+ people (measured by the GBPI). There is room for improvement with both ERC and GCD countries when it comes not only to securing protections for LGBTQI+ people, but also to ensuring that those protections are meaningfully implemented in the everyday lives of LGBTQI+ people.

Democracy

ERC countries feature highly robust democratic institutions. The majority (91%) of ERC countries are either *Full Democracies* or *Flawed Democracies*. No ERC countries are *Authoritarian Regimes*. The contrast with GCD countries is stark: Seventy percent of GCD countries are authoritarian, and only five percent qualify as democracies—and they are classified as *Flawed Democracies*. GCD countries lean heavily toward authoritarianism and restricted democracies. The GCD median democracy score is a very low 2.8, and not a single country in the coalition earns a score of 6.5 on the EIU Democracy Index.

Gender Equality

The ERC has also achieved impressive success in minimizing gender disparity. The median score on the Gender Inequality Index (GII) is a highly equitable 0.08, and the datapoints are tightly packed, showing strong consensus on gender equality across member states. In contrast, GCD countries experience significant structural gender inequality. The median score is a high 0.49, and the data are widely spread out, indicating that experiences vary significantly by country but generally remain poor compared to countries in the ERC.

Economic Growth

ERC countries are overwhelmingly wealthier compared to GCD countries, with a median income of approximately \$55,000, and the wealth is relatively well-distributed across the coalition without extreme, skewing outliers. GCD countries, on the other hand, tend to have a highly unequal economic distribution, and the vast majority of GCD countries consist of lower-income nations with a median GNI per capita (PPP) of roughly \$10,000. However, there are a few extreme outliers—nations with immense wealth—like the resource-rich petrostates, which have a GNI per capita (PPP) of more than \$100,000.

APPENDIX 1. ERC & GCD COUNTRIES (as of 12/15/2025)

ERC COUNTRIES		GCD COUNTRIES	
Country	[FMGB] Region	Country	[FMGB] Region
Albania	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	Bahrain	Middle East/Northern Africa
Argentina	Americas	Belarus	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia
Australia	Asia/Pacific	Benin	Sub-Saharan Africa
Austria	Western Europe	Burkina Faso	Sub-Saharan Africa
Belgium	Western Europe	Burundi	Sub-Saharan Africa
Brazil*	Americas	Cameroon	Sub-Saharan Africa
Cabo Verde	Sub-Saharan Africa	Central African Republic	Sub-Saharan Africa
Canada	Americas	Chad	Sub-Saharan Africa
Chile	Americas	Congo (Brazzaville)	Sub-Saharan Africa
Colombia*	Americas	Congo (Kinshasa)	Sub-Saharan Africa
Costa Rica	Americas	Djibouti	Sub-Saharan Africa
Cyprus	Western Europe	Egypt	Middle East/Northern Africa
Czechia	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	Eswatini	Sub-Saharan Africa
Denmark	Western Europe	Gambia, The	Sub-Saharan Africa
Ecuador	Americas	Georgia	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia
Estonia	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	Guatemala	Americas
Finland	Western Europe	Guinea	Sub-Saharan Africa
France	Western Europe	Haiti	Americas
Germany	Western Europe	Hungary	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia
Greece	Western Europe	Indonesia	Asia/Pacific
Honduras	Americas	Iraq	Middle East/Northern Africa
Iceland	Western Europe	Kazakhstan	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia
Ireland	Western Europe	Kenya	Sub-Saharan Africa
Israel	Middle East/Northern Africa	Kuwait	Middle East/Northern Africa
Italy	Western Europe	Libya	Middle East/Northern Africa
Lithuania	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	Nauru	Asia/Pacific
Luxembourg	Western Europe	Niger	Sub-Saharan Africa
Malta	Western Europe	Oman	Middle East/Northern Africa
Mexico	Americas	Pakistan	Asia/Pacific
Montenegro	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	Paraguay	Americas
Netherlands	Western Europe	Qatar	Middle East/Northern Africa
New Zealand	Asia/Pacific	Russia	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia
North Macedonia	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	Saudi Arabia	Middle East/Northern Africa

ERC COUNTRIES		GCD COUNTRIES	
Norway	Western Europe	Senegal	Sub-Saharan Africa
Portugal	Western Europe	South Sudan	Sub-Saharan Africa
Serbia	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	Sudan	Sub-Saharan Africa
Slovenia	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	Uganda	Sub-Saharan Africa
Spain	Western Europe	United Arab Emirates	Middle East/Northern Africa
Sweden	Western Europe	United States*	Americas
Switzerland	Western Europe	Zambia	Sub-Saharan Africa
Thailand*	Asia/Pacific		
Ukraine	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia		
United Kingdom	Western Europe		
Uruguay	Americas		

***The United States** was a member of the GCD in **2020**, but rejoined the ERC from **2021–2025**. In **2025**, the United States under (the second Trump administration) rejoined the GCD. While the USA is currently a member of the GCD, this analysis removes the USA from that group to examine how it compares with both ERC and GCD categories.

Brazil and **Colombia** were previous members of the GCD (**2020–2023**) but rejoined the ERC in **2023**.

Thailand joined the ERC in January **2025**.

APPENDIX 2. 2023 GBUR SCORES BY ERC CATEGORY

ERC Country	[FMGB] Region	GBUR 2023 Score	GBUR Category 2023
Luxembourg	Western Europe	100%	A - Protecting
Iceland	Western Europe	95%	A - Protecting
Norway	Western Europe	95%	A - Protecting
Sweden	Western Europe	95%	A - Protecting
Denmark	Western Europe	95%	A - Protecting
Malta	Western Europe	95%	A - Protecting
Portugal	Western Europe	95%	A - Protecting
Costa Rica	Americas	95%	A - Protecting
Finland	Western Europe	92%	A - Protecting
Canada	Americas	92%	A - Protecting
Austria	Western Europe	92%	A - Protecting
Spain	Western Europe	92%	A - Protecting
Uruguay	Americas	92%	A - Protecting
Belgium	Western Europe	92%	A - Protecting
Switzerland	Western Europe	90%	A - Protecting
Netherlands	Western Europe	90%	A - Protecting
Germany	Western Europe	90%	A - Protecting
United Kingdom	Western Europe	90%	A - Protecting
France	Western Europe	90%	A - Protecting
Brazil	Americas	90%	A - Protecting
New Zealand	Asia/Pacific	87%	B - Tolerant
Australia	Asia/Pacific	87%	B - Tolerant
Slovenia	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	85%	B - Tolerant
Estonia	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	85%	B - Tolerant
Colombia	Americas	85%	B - Tolerant
Ireland	Western Europe	82%	B - Tolerant
Ecuador	Americas	82%	B - Tolerant
Montenegro	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	82%	B - Tolerant
Chile	Americas	79%	C - Resistant
Greece	Western Europe	79%	C - Resistant
Czechia	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	77%	C - Resistant
Argentina	Americas	77%	C - Resistant
Albania	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	74%	C - Resistant
Israel	Middle East/Northern Africa	72%	C - Resistant
Serbia	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	72%	C - Resistant
North Macedonia	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	72%	C - Resistant
Ukraine	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	69%	D - Intolerant
Thailand	Asia/Pacific	67%	D - Intolerant

ERC Country	[FMGB] Region	GBUR 2023 Score	GBUR Category 2023
Cyprus	Western Europe	67%	D - Intolerant
Lithuania	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	67%	D - Intolerant
Mexico	Americas	64%	D - Intolerant
Cabo Verde	Sub-Saharan Africa	62%	D - Intolerant
Honduras	Americas	62%	D - Intolerant
Italy	Western Europe	59%	F - Persecuting

APPENDIX 3. 2023 GBUR SCORES BY GCD CATEGORY

GCD Country	[FMGB] Region	GBUR 2023 Score	GBUR Category 2023
United States	Americas	79%	C - Resistant
Hungary	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	74%	C - Resistant
Georgia	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	64%	D - Intolerant
Nauru	Asia/Pacific	49%	F - Persecuting
Paraguay	Americas	38%	F - Persecuting
Niger	Sub-Saharan Africa	36%	F - Persecuting
Congo (Brazzaville)	Sub-Saharan Africa	33%	F - Persecuting
Kazakhstan	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	33%	F - Persecuting
Haiti	Americas	31%	F - Persecuting
Belarus	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	28%	F - Persecuting
Benin	Sub-Saharan Africa	28%	F - Persecuting
Guatemala	Americas	28%	F - Persecuting
Bahrain	Middle East/Northern Africa	26%	F - Persecuting
Central African Republic	Sub-Saharan Africa	26%	F - Persecuting
Congo (Kinshasa)	Sub-Saharan Africa	26%	F - Persecuting
Eswatini	Sub-Saharan Africa	26%	F - Persecuting
Pakistan	Asia/Pacific	26%	F - Persecuting
Djibouti	Sub-Saharan Africa	23%	F - Persecuting
Burkina Faso	Sub-Saharan Africa	21%	F - Persecuting
Egypt	Middle East/Northern Africa	21%	F - Persecuting
Iraq	Middle East/Northern Africa	18%	F - Persecuting
Russia	Central/Eastern Europe/Eurasia	18%	F - Persecuting
Burundi	Sub-Saharan Africa	15%	F - Persecuting
Cameroon	Sub-Saharan Africa	15%	F - Persecuting
Chad	Sub-Saharan Africa	15%	F - Persecuting
Gambia, The	Sub-Saharan Africa	15%	F - Persecuting
Guinea	Sub-Saharan Africa	15%	F - Persecuting
Kenya	Sub-Saharan Africa	15%	F - Persecuting
Kuwait	Middle East/Northern Africa	15%	F - Persecuting
Libya	Middle East/Northern Africa	15%	F - Persecuting
Oman	Middle East/Northern Africa	15%	F - Persecuting
Senegal	Sub-Saharan Africa	15%	F - Persecuting
Indonesia	Asia/Pacific	13%	F - Persecuting
Qatar	Middle East/Northern Africa	13%	F - Persecuting
South Sudan	Sub-Saharan Africa	13%	F - Persecuting
Sudan	Sub-Saharan Africa	13%	F - Persecuting
Zambia	Sub-Saharan Africa	13%	F - Persecuting
United Arab Emirates	Middle East/Northern Africa	10%	F - Persecuting

GCD Country	[FMGB] Region	GBUR 2023 Score	GBUR Category 2023
Uganda	Sub-Saharan Africa	8%	F - Persecuting
Saudi Arabia	Middle East/Northern Africa	5%	F - Persecuting

APPENDIX 4: ERC AND GCD 2024 EIU DEMOCRACY SCORES

ERC Country	EIU Democracy Score (2024)	Democracy EIU Category (2024)	GCD Country	EIU Democracy Score (2024)	Democracy EIU Category (2024)
Albania	6.2	Flawed Democracy	Bahrain	2.45	Authoritarian
Argentina	6.51	Flawed Democracy	Belarus	1.99	Authoritarian
Australia	8.85	Full Democracy	Benin	4.44	Hybrid
Austria	8.28	Full Democracy	Burkina Faso	2.55	Authoritarian
Belgium	7.64	Flawed Democracy	Burundi	2.13	Authoritarian
Brazil	6.49	Flawed Democracy	Cameroon	2.56	Authoritarian
Cabo Verde	7.58	Flawed Democracy	Central African Republic	1.18	Authoritarian
Canada	8.69	Full Democracy	Chad	1.89	Authoritarian
Chile	7.83	Flawed Democracy	Congo (Brazzaville)	2.79	Authoritarian
Colombia	6.35	Flawed Democracy	Congo (Kinshasa)	1.92	Authoritarian
Costa Rica	8.29	Full Democracy	Djibouti	2.7	Authoritarian
Cyprus	7.38	Flawed Democracy	Egypt	2.79	Authoritarian
Czechia	8.08	Full Democracy	Eswatini	2.6	Authoritarian
Denmark	9.28	Full Democracy	Gambia, The	4.47	Hybrid
Ecuador	5.24	Hybrid	Georgia	4.7	Hybrid
Estonia	8.13	Full Democracy	Guatemala	4.55	Hybrid
Finland	9.3	Full Democracy	Guinea	2.04	Authoritarian
France	7.99	Flawed Democracy	Haiti	2.74	Authoritarian
Germany	8.73	Full Democracy	Hungary	6.51	Flawed Democracy
Greece	8.07	Full Democracy	Indonesia	6.44	Flawed Democracy
Honduras	4.98	Hybrid	Iraq	2.8	Authoritarian
Iceland	9.38	Full Democracy	Kazakhstan	3.08	Authoritarian
Ireland	9.19	Full Democracy	Kenya	5.05	Hybrid
Israel	7.8	Flawed Democracy	Kuwait	2.78	Authoritarian
Italy	7.58	Flawed Democracy	Libya	2.31	Authoritarian
Lithuania	7.59	Flawed Democracy	Nauru		
Luxembourg	8.88	Full Democracy	Niger	2.26	Authoritarian
Malta	7.93	Flawed Democracy	Oman	3.05	Authoritarian
Mexico	5.32	Hybrid	Pakistan	2.84	Authoritarian

ERC Country	EIU Democracy Score (2024)	Democracy EIU Category (2024)
Montenegro	6.73	Flawed Democracy
Netherlands	9	Full Democracy
New Zealand	9.61	Full Democracy
North Macedonia	6.28	Flawed Democracy
Norway	9.81	Full Democracy
Portugal	8.08	Full Democracy
Serbia	6.26	Flawed Democracy
Slovenia	7.82	Flawed Democracy
Spain	8.13	Full Democracy
Sweden	9.39	Full Democracy
Switzerland	9.32	Full Democracy
Thailand	6.27	Flawed Democracy
Ukraine	4.9	Hybrid
United Kingdom	8.34	Full Democracy
Uruguay	8.67	Full Democracy

GCD Country	EIU Democracy Score (2024)	Democracy EIU Category (2024)
Paraguay	5.92	Hybrid
Qatar	3.17	Authoritarian
Russia	2.03	Authoritarian
Saudi Arabia	2.08	Authoritarian
Senegal	5.93	Hybrid
South Sudan		
Sudan	1.46	Authoritarian
Uganda	4.49	Hybrid
United Arab Emirates	3.07	Authoritarian
United States	7.85	Flawed Democracy
Zambia	5.73	Hybrid