

Beta Release
NHRI Data Project:
Organizational Data User's Guide

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1 Executive Summary

The Executive Summary provides “at a glance” information about the National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) Organization data. For more detailed information about how to use the NHRI Organization data, please refer to the Table of Contents below.

- Concept: *de jure* organizational characteristics of NHRIs
- Unit of Observation: The NHRI
 - *NB*: Because this is a cross-sectional data set that reports information about each NHRI, users who wish to use this information in a country-year (or similar) data analysis will need to convert these data to that format.
- Spatial Domain: All NHRIs that exist(ed) in a country whose population surpassed one million during any period between 1978 and 2010.
- Temporal Domain: 1919 to 2010, although the vast majority of NHRIs come into existence after 1990.
 - *NB*: This is a cross-sectional dataset with information about each NHRI. As such, the observations are right-censored as of 2010.
- These are *de jure* data. These data are what organizations (including NHRIs themselves), authors, and governments say that NHRIs are permitted to do or should be permitted to do, *not necessarily what they actually do*.
- The NHRI Data Project has two data collection efforts:
 1. Organizational (*de jure*)
 2. Behavioral (*de facto*, self reported)¹

Beta Release

This is a [beta](#) release of the NHRI Organizational Data, and we solicit your comments and corrections. We are interested in feedback on issues and topics that this *User’s Guide* does not address adequately, errors in the data, etc. We plan to release the final version of the Organizational Data in late December 2013.

¹The Behavioral data coding rules are being beta tested as we seek funding to complete their collection.

Contents

- 1 Executive Summary** **1**

- 2 Introduction** **4**
 - 2.1 What is an NHRI? 4

- 3 The Organizational Data** **6**
 - 3.1 ISO3 Alpha Country Code 6
 - 3.2 COW Country Code 6
 - 3.3 ISO3 Numeric Country Code 6
 - 3.4 Begin Information Date 7
 - 3.5 End Information Date 7
 - 3.6 ICC Status 8
 - 3.7 NHRI Office Type 8
 - 3.8 Established by 9
 - 3.9 Year Formally Established 10
 - 3.10 Year First Occupied 10
 - 3.11 Identified Objective(s) 10
 - 3.12 Scope of Institutional Jurisdiction 12
 - 3.13 Report to State Institution 12
 - 3.14 Independent 13

3.15 Member Appointment	14
3.16 Leadership Appointed by	15
3.17 Chairperson Term	15
3.18 Donor Source(s)	16
3.19 Permitted Activities	16
3.20 Relations with NGOs	17

2 Introduction

The National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) Data Project provides users with quantitative data to explore patterns among—and test hypotheses about—organizational and behavioral characteristics of NHRIs. This *User’s Guide* describes the NHRI Organizational Data variables. The Organizational Data provides data on the *de jure* responsibilities and abilities of NHRIs.² The data contain cross-sectional information from various print and Internet sources on the structure and origination of the population of national NHRIs.³

The NHRI Organizational Data are cross-sectional. They focus on institutional and other fixed characteristics of the NHRI itself. The unit of observation is the NHRI. The data include information about (but are not limited to) the following:

- How was the NHRI created?
- To whom does it report?
- What responsibilities does it have?
- Does it have any legal authority?

2.1 What is an NHRI?

NHRIs are domestic bodies that sit at the intersection of government and civil society (Smith, 2006). Although they are created by states—often in conjunction with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)—NHRIs are distinct from state agencies. Rather than represent and pursue government or NGO goals exclusively, NHRIs are mandated to promote and protect citizens’ human rights.

NHRIs are an outgrowth of Ombudsmen offices, the first of which formed in Sweden at the end of the 19th Century as an office to which citizens could petition for redress of grievances stemming from treatment by government officials. Ombudsmen offices remained rare throughout the first half of the 20th Century, but began to diffuse among a few dozen countries between the 1950s and 1980s (Anderson and Weeks, 1969; Weeks, 1973). From the late 1970s through the early 1990s an international legal movement began calling for the creation of national institutions that focused exclusively upon human rights (rather than on

²The Behavioral Data, which is being beta tested, collects self-reported *de facto* responsibilities and abilities.

³Only English sources were coded (including abridged translations of documents available in other languages).

these and other complaints against government officials). In 1991, an international conference produced the Paris Principles, which were ratified by the UN General Assembly in 1993. The Paris Principles codified the standards that NHRIs must meet in order to promote states' respect for human rights (Pohjola, 2006; Smith, 2006; Carver, 2010). This project focuses upon the post-Paris Principles period: we are coding data only on NHRIs that have been given an accreditation grade by the United Nations' Subcommittee on Accreditation (SCA) of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (ICC),⁴ for the years 1993 through 2010.⁵

⁴The acronym "ICC" is commonly used to identify the International Criminal Court internationally and the Interstate Commerce Commission domestically in the United States, though note that the Year Formally Established and Year First Occupied sometimes precedes the date of accreditation (e.g., for NHRIs that were founded prior to the existence of the accreditation process). In this project the acronym "ICC" refers to the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

⁵Accreditation information is available from the ICC website: <http://nhri.ohchr.org/>, more specifically here: <http://nhri.ohchr.org/EN/Contact/NHRIs/Pages/default.aspx>.

3 The Organizational Data

This section includes a description of each of the variables coded in the Organizational Data. The unit of observation is the NHRI. The variables are listed here in the same order as the columns on the coding sheet. Each description includes a definition of the coded concept followed by details on the coding scheme used and (where appropriate) relevant descriptive statistics (including the number of missing values).

3.1 ISO3 Alpha Country Code

Definition: This is a three-letter country identification code published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) to represent countries, dependent territories, and special areas of geographical interest.

Type: Alpha

Level of Measurement: Nominal

Missing: 0

3.2 COW Country Code

Definition: This is a three-digit numeric identification code published by the Correlates of War (COW) project to represent countries, dependent territories, and special areas of geographical interest.

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Nominal

Descriptives:

—Min: 2

—Max: 990

—Missing: 0

3.3 ISO3 Numeric Country Code

Definition: This is a three-digit numeric identification code published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) to represent countries, dependent territories, and

special areas of geographical interest. ISO3 Number Codes are the same as codes defined by the United Nations Statistics Division.

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Nominal

Descriptives:

—Min: 4

—Max: 894

—Missing: 2

3.4 Begin Information Date

Definition: Although the Organizational data are primarily cross-sectional, the value of some variables change over time. This variable indicates the start date of the time period in which there are no changes in the values of any Organizational variables.

Coding Scheme: The start year of the time period in which values on no variables change is recorded, YYYY.

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Interval

Missing: 0

3.5 End Information Date

Definition: Although the Organizational data are primarily cross-sectional, the value of some variables change over time. This variable indicates the end date of the time period in which there are no changes in the values of any Organizational variables.

Coding Scheme: The end year of the time period in which values on no variables change is recorded, YYYY.

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Interval

Missing: 0

3.6 ICC Status

Definition: Letter Grade assigned by the ICC:

Coding Scheme: Values assigned according to the following ordinal scale. This variable is mutually exclusive.

- 0 = C: Non-compliant with Paris Principles
- 1 = B: Observer Status: Not fully compliant or insufficient information
- 2 = A(R): Accreditation–Reserve (insufficient documentation)
- 3 = A: Fully compliant with Paris Principles

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Ordinal

Descriptives:

- Min: 0
- Median: 3
- Max: 3
- Missing: 86

3.7 NHRI Office Type

Definition: This variable records the type of NHRI.

Coding Scheme: Values assigned according to the following binary scale describing the organizational arrangement of the NHRI. This variable is mutually exclusive.

- 1 = Ombudsperson⁶
- 2 = Human Rights Commission

⁶An *ombudsperson* is an official who acts as an intermediary between an organization (e.g., the government) and a constituency (e.g., citizens). S/he is usually appointed by the government or by parliament and charged with representing citizens' interests by investigating and addressing reported complaints.

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Nominal

Descriptives:

—Min: 1

—Mode: 2

—Max: 2

—Missing: 3

3.8 Established by

Definition: This variable records the most recent legal foundation for the NHRI's existence. The current legal foundation might be distinct from the original legal foundation.

Coding Scheme: Values assigned according to the following nominal scale. This variable is mutually exclusive.

- 1 = Treaty
- 2 = Constitution
- 3 = Executive Decree (mandate, declaration or promulgation not involving legislature)
- 4 = Legislation (law passed by legislature)
- 5 = United Nations
- 6 = Judiciary

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Nominal

Descriptives:

—Min: 1

—Mode: 4

—Max: 6

—Missing: 2

3.9 Year Formally Established

Definition: This variable records the year that the NHRI was initially established.

Coding Scheme: Year is recorded, YYYY.

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Interval

Descriptives:

- Min: 1919
- Median: 1996
- Max: 2008
- Missing: 0

3.10 Year First Occupied

Definition: This variable records the year that the NHRI initially met or convened.

Coding Scheme: Year is recorded, YYYY.

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Interval

Descriptives:

- Min: 1920
- Median: 1999
- Max: 2009
- Missing: 15

3.11 Identified Objective(s)

Definition: These variables record the NHRI's objectives. The list is adopted from the CIRI data project, and we adapt the definitions of these terms delineated in the CIRI Codebook (Cingranelli and Richards, 2010). The only difference in our definitions and those of CIRI is that we are only concerned with situations when the state violates rights. Often times this will be exactly as CIRI has defined a right (i.e., torture, disappearance, etc). However, some

cultural or economic rights listed in CIRI do not make this distinction. For our purposes we are only concerned with rights vis-a-vis the state.

Coding Scheme: A value of “1” assigned to each of the following applicable objectives. A value of “0” assigned to each objective that is explicitly identified as not part of the NHRI jurisdiction. These variables are not mutually exclusive. If this information is unavailable, the cell(s) are left blank.⁷

- Worker’s Rights
- Arbitrary detention (political imprisonment)
- Disappearance
- Extra-judicial killing
- Torture
- Freedom of Speech
- Freedom of Assembly and Association
- Freedom of Foreign Movement
- Freedom of Domestic Movement
- Electoral Self-Determination
- Freedom of Religion
- Women’s Economic Rights
- Women’s Political Rights
- Women’s Social Rights
- Children’s Rights
- Non Human Rights Objectives

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Ordinal

Descriptives:

⁷If the NHRI is said to protect human rights generally, a “1” assigned to each objective (except Non-Human Rights Objectives).

Table 1: Frequency of Identified Objectives

Worker	Detention	Disappearance	Killing	Torture	Speech	Assembly	Foreign Movement
200	201	180	200	202	202	203	203
Domestic Movement	Self-Determination	Religion	Economic	Political	Social	Children	
202	205	205	192	193	198	198	

3.12 Scope of Institutional Jurisdiction

Definition: This variable records whether the NHRI has the authority to comment upon all agencies/institutions in the country, or whether there are exceptions that may not be commented upon.⁸

Coding Scheme: Values assigned according to the following binary scale. This variable is mutually exclusive. If there are no mention of limitations, variable left blank.

- 1 = Limited
- 2 = Unlimited

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Ordinal

Descriptives:

- Min: 1
- Median: 2
- Max: 2
- Missing: 17

3.13 Report to State Institution

Definition: This variable records the state office (if any) to which the NHRI is required to report.⁹

⁸Agencies/institutions in this case are governmental only. This project does not include private and other non-governmental agencies/institutions.

⁹If an NHRI is to report to an institution that is to pass that report to another institution, both of these coded as receiving institutions.

Coding Scheme: A value of “1” assigned to each of the following applicable institutions that the NHRI is required to report to. These variables are not mutually exclusive. If this information is unavailable, cell left blank.

- No Reporting Required
- Executive (Prime Minister, President, Royalty, Ministry, etc.)
- Legislature
- Judiciary
- International Institution
- Public¹⁰

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Ordinal

Descriptives:

Table 2: Frequency of Institution Reported to

No Report	Executive	Legislature	Judiciary	International Institution	Public
20	88	143	22	13	25

3.14 Independent

Definition: This variable records whether the NHRI claims to have independence from other government actors/institutions in its decision-making.

Coding Scheme: Values assigned according to the following binary scale. This variable is mutually exclusive.¹¹

- 0 = No

¹⁰This value includes a mandate to report to the nationwide press, internet, etc.

¹¹A “0” recorded if there is no explicit mention of the NHRI’s independence in the English primary documents. Left blank if no available English primary documents.

- 1 = Yes

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Ordinal

Descriptives:

- Min: 0
- Median: 1
- Max: 1
- Missing: 0

3.15 Member Appointment

Definition: This variable records whether the NHRI appoints its own members.

Coding Scheme: Values assigned according to the following binary scale. This variable is mutually exclusive.

- 0 = No
- 1 = Yes, but approval¹²
- 2 = Yes

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Ordinal

Descriptives:

- Min: 0
- Median: 0
- Max: 2
- Missing: 32

¹²Approval from various sources i.e. legislature, executive, NGO, etc. is necessary to confirm NHRI member choice.

3.16 Leadership Appointed by

Definition: This variable records who appoints the leadership.¹³

Coding Scheme: A value of “1” assigned to each actor that appoints the leadership of the NHRI. If information is not found, variable left blank.

- Executive (Prime Minister, President, Royalty, Ministry, etc.)
- Legislature
- Judiciary
- NHRI/internal appointment¹⁴
- Other

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Ordinal

Descriptives:

Table 3: Frequency of Who Appoints Leadership

Executive	Legislature	Judiciary	NHRI/Internal	Other
97	89	6	43	5

3.17 Chairperson Term

Definition: This variable records the length of one term of the Chairperson

Coding Scheme: Length of the term recorded in years. If the chairperson’s term is unlimited, variable coded as –11. If it is not determined by the NHRI, variable coded as –66.¹⁵ Values of –11 and –66 are excluded from the descriptives below.

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Ratio

¹³Some NHRIs have more than one leadership position i.e. chairperson, ombudsman, director, executive

¹⁴This refers to a situation in which the membership of the NHRI is responsible for the appointment of the leadership.

¹⁵If there is a required retirement age or age limit, coded as unlimited. If there is a term limit(in years), but the chairperson is electable *ad infinitum*, coded as unlimited.

Descriptives:

- Min: 2
- Mean: 3.838
- Max: 8
- Missing: 18

3.18 Donor Source(s)

Definition: These variables record the actor(s) that are to provide or can provide funding to the NHRI at any time.

Coding Scheme: A value of “1” assigned to each of the following applicable actors. These variables are not mutually exclusive. If this information is unavailable, the cell(s) left blank. If the NHRI is forbidden to accept funding or mandated to be financially autonomous from a source, coded as “-1.”

- Government Funding
- Private Funding¹⁶
- IGO Funding
- NGO Funding
- Other Country Funding

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Ordinal

Descriptives:

Table 4: Frequency of Donor Sources

Government	Private	IGO	NGO	Other Country
190	58	50	40	42

3.19 Permitted Activities

Definition: This variable records the activities that are formally permitted by the NHRI.

¹⁶This can refer to either private individuals or organizations.

Coding Scheme: A value of “1” assigned to each of the following applicable activities. These variables are not mutually exclusive. If this information is unavailable, the cell(s) left blank. If the NHRI is forbidden to take part in an activity, coded as “-1.”

- Hear Complaints
- Initiate Investigations
- Bring Charges¹⁷
- Compel Testimony/Documents¹⁸
- Visit Prisons/Detention Centers¹⁹
- Publish Findings Publicly
- Levy Punishment
- Other

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Ordinal

Descriptives:

Table 5: Frequency of Permitted Activities

Complaints	Investigation	Charges	Testimony	Visit	Publish	Punishment	Other
178	182	37	142	128	182	46	154

3.20 Relations with NGOs

Definition: This variable records information about NHRI relations with NGOs.

Coding Scheme: If the NHRI has a mandate to work with NGOs, a value of “1” assigned. If no mandate to work with NGOs, a value of “0” assigned. If the NHRI has a mandate *not* to work with NGOs, a value of “-1” assigned.

¹⁷Binary indicator of whether the NHRI can bring charges against an allegedly abusive agency (i.e., can it act as a prosecutor itself or order a prosecutor to pursue a given charge)?

¹⁸Binary indicator recording whether the NHRI can compel testimony and/or documents in the course of an investigation.

¹⁹Binary indicator recording whether the NHRI has the authority to visit prisons and detention centers at will.

Type: Numeric

Level of Measurement: Ordinal

Descriptives:

—Min: -1

—Median: 1

—Max: 1

—Missing: 2

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