

‘Good Enough’ Governance in Post-Soviet Eurasia

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1 Introduction

There is an ongoing debate in the development literature about the role of governance in improving economic development and the quality of life for those people living in transitional countries. What is less clear is what should be the nature of the interventions aimed at helping countries to achieve these goals. This paper is specifically focused on post-Soviet Eurasia as a case study of countries which could be described as autocracies or defective democracies. The selection is of interest because many of the international donor organizations predicate or condition their support on democratic imperatives such as multi-party systems, free and fair elections, freedom of association and expression; the very things which may be seen to threaten the power of autocrats. This paper begins with a discussion of governance, good governance, and what is now termed ‘good enough’ governance. It unpacks what ‘good enough’ governance might mean for post-Soviet Eurasian countries through an empirical analysis of those factors which predict prosperity and good quality public services. As a result it

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reflects on what interventions are likely to result in ‘good enough’ governance in post-Soviet Eurasia and how international donors might optimize interventions to affect change.

2 Governance, good governance and ‘good enough’ governance

The field of governance is replete with definitions, multiple interpretations and fluidity in how it is described and circumscribed. A significant role for international donors in developing countries has been improving governance and they have offered their own definitions. The World Bank (2017, p.3), for example, defines governance as ‘the process through which state and non-state actors interact to design and implement policies within a given set of formal and informal rules that shape and are shaped by power’. The Bank sees governance as comprising three distinct elements: the form of political regime; the process by which authority is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development; and, the capacity of government to design, formulate, and implement policies and discharge functions (World Bank 1994). For the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the concept of governance denotes the use of political authority and exercise of control in a society in relation to the management of its resources for social and economic development (OECD 1995). To improve governance or provide ‘good governance’ demands participation, transparency, accountability, the rule of law, effectiveness, and equity. Good governance, according to the OECD, therefore refers to the management of government in a manner that is essentially free of abuse and corruption, and with due regard for the rule of law.

Scholars working in the field of governance have also contributed to the definitional discourse. Fukuyama (2013, p.350) defines governance as ‘a government’s ability to make and enforce rules, and to deliver services, regardless of whether that government is democratic or not’. The latter point is important and controversial when it comes to discussing ‘good governance’ which implies that democratic values are an integral element of such a descriptor. Fukuyama contends that an authoritarian regime can be well governed, just as a democracy can be maladministered. A similar point is made by Hyden (1998, p. 38) who argued that ‘getting politics right is different from getting policy right in that it called for a restructuring of the polity itself. The structural adjustment programs that

are associated with getting policy right have been and could be pursued by an autocratic government as well as a democratic one'. Hirst (2000) defines good governance as 'creating an effective political framework conducive to private economic action: stable regimes, the rule of law, efficient state administration adapted to the roles that governments can actually perform and a strong civil society independent of the state'. Rhodes (1996, 1997, 2007) in his influential work on governance has defined good governance as a concept 'that marries the new public management to the advocacy of liberal democracy' (Rhodes 1996, p.656). More specifically he described it as 'self-organizing, inter-organizational networks characterized by interdependence, resource-exchange, rules of the game, and significant autonomy from the state' (Rhodes 1997, p.15). This definition has been contested as being too narrow and devoid of political economy context.

The debate on how governance is defined has moved to one where funders need to operationalize how it is improved in practice. In other words, what are the constituents of good governance which would be helpful to development practitioners? Here, Jreisat (2011) offers a helpful list of the fundamentals of 'good governance' based on the following core values which include, *inter alia*: good governance is ethical and accountable governance; and, good governance creates trust and promotes broadly shared values, particularly accountability and sustained openness and transparency. A critical attribute of a 'good' governance system, Jreisat argued, is the capacity to act in the public interest. 'This should result in effective delivery of public services, improve citizens' trust and confirm the legitimacy and the capacity of institutions to make decisions with competence and integrity' Jreisat (2011, p.434). Bevir (2008, p.92), on the other hand, suggests: 'there is no agreed definition of good governance; definitions usually consist of a wish list' with each organization constructing its own list. Its eclectic nature is also captured by de Graaf and van Asperen (2016) (citing Bevir 2008, Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith 2005) when they point out 'usually, organizations using the good governance concept define it by creating a wish-list of rules processes and the behavior of governments. Given the definitional and operational complexities outlined above Bouckaert (2017, p.51) called for future research on governance to address three issues: 'governance with or without democracy, governance with or without government, and governance in countries with low degrees of development (or failed states)'. This paper attempts to address the need for research which Bouckaert has highlighted through the exploration of 'good enough' governance in post-Soviet Eurasia.

2.1 ‘Good enough’ governance

Merilee Grindle first introduced the term ‘good enough’ governance for developing countries as a way of creating a more realistic agenda for change (Grindle 2004). She argued that as more and more donors funded development programmes, what constituted ‘good governance’ became an ever increasing list of demands which were unattainable (a search for nirvana). Weiss makes a similar point when he argued that ‘good governance is more than multi-party elections, a judiciary and a parliament which have been emphasized as the primary symbols of Western-style democracy’ (Weiss 2000, p.801). He lists other attributes attributed to good governance describing them as formidable: universal protection of human rights; non-discriminatory laws; efficient, impartial and rapid judicial processes; transparent public agencies; accountability for decisions by public officials; devolution of resources and decision making to local levels from the capital; and, meaningful participation by citizens in debating public policies and choices. Such a wish-list is simply unattainable in autocratic countries and from them, some of these goals are undesirable.

Given the ever-expanding characteristics of good governance, Grindle recommended that international funders needed to pay attention to both the *context* of governance interventions and their *content*. In terms of the latter she implored donors to examine which political economy factors were most important in explaining the emergence of good or bad governance (Grindle 2007, 2012). She expanded her ideas around context further by developing a typology of states (collapsed states; personal rule; minimally institutionalized states; institutionalized non-competitive states; and, institutionalized competitive states). Categorising states within this typology allowed for an assessment of how resistant they are to good governance interventions.

In terms of the content of governance interventions, she promoted the idea of ‘good enough governance’ which demanded that funders should be much more selective and ‘targeted fewer more feasible interventions’. She concluded by suggesting that for practitioners there should be a ‘hierarchy of governance interventions related to state characteristics’ (Grindle 2007, p.572). In other words, the content of governance interventions needed to be appropriate to the context of the targeted state(s). More recently Grindle (2017) reasserts the demise of good governance as a concept that ‘encouraged muddy thinking about the role of governance in the development process’ and poses the question for academics and practitioners: in particular political economy situations, what pathways are most likely to lead to better conditions of governance? (Grindle 2017, p.17 & 22)

In a similar vein Levy (2014, 2015) argued for a ‘good fit approach to governance reform’ in which he grouped countries into specific categories with shared characteristics (a typology which characterized countries as: dominant discretionary, rule of law dominant, personalized competitive, and rule of law competitive). Applying this typology would allow for ‘more effective comparison of the like-with-like and thereby lead to the identification of better targeted and more effective options for governance reforms’ (Levy 2015, p.238).

There are three key points arising from the work of these development scholars. First, there is a rejection of the global ‘one size fits all’ approach to the promotion of good governance which has become an ever increasing repository for all kinds of reforms. Second, and as a way of being more targeted in terms the development interventions, there is a need to categorize countries which better reflect their political economy. How one arrives at country typologies may differ but they should exhibit similar characteristics likely to influence their capacity to deliver improved governance (Moore 2001). Third, priorities for the content of governance interventions will be significantly influenced by context.

While scholars have come up with what Grindle (2007, p.563) describes in her own work as ‘suggestive’ priorities for intervention, there is an absence of more empirically based approaches which would help countries to decide on key intervention priorities that take account of their specific context. In other words, it can be relatively easy to categorize countries with similar political economy characteristics. What is more difficult is to offer informed advice to development practitioners, beyond the intuitive, on where best to focus their intervention efforts. The purpose of this paper is therefore to examine intervention priorities which constitute ‘good enough’ governance in post Soviet Eurasia as a cluster of countries which exhibit similar political economy contexts.¹ In other words, from the plethora of potential intervention measures that constitute good governance, broadly defined, which work best for post Soviet Eurasian countries at this stage in their development journey?

¹There are 13 East European, Caucasian and Central Asian countries in post-Soviet Eurasia. With the exception of Mongolia and Afghanistan they share the common history as constituent parts of the former Soviet Union. Afghanistan shares it borders with other hard-line autocracies of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Afghanistan also lived under Soviet Union occupation (1979-89) and a surviving communist regime until the Taliban took over in 1996.

3 Post-Soviet Eurasia: The context for development reform

The initial political economy interest in this cluster of countries is that they largely represent autocratic states (see Table 1). The region divides

Table 1: Post-Soviet Eurasia: Democracy–Autocracy Axis

Country	Democracy Status Score (scale of 1-10)	Classification	GDP per capita (2015) (current \$US)
Afghanistan	3.0	Hard-line autocracy	594
Armenia	5.2	Moderate autocracy	3,489
Azerbaijan	3.5	Hard-line autocracy	5,497
Belarus	3.9	Hard-line autocracy	5,755
Georgia	6.7	Defective democracy	3,757
Kazakhstan	3.7	Hard-line autocracy	10,510
Kyrgyzstan	6.0	Highly defective democracy	1,103
Moldova	6.7	Defective democracy	1,848
Mongolia	7.3	Defective democracy	3,968
Russia	4.4	Moderate autocracy	9,329
Tajikistan	3.6	Hard-line autocracy	926
Turkmenistan	2.9	Hard-line autocracy	6,672
Ukraine	6.8	Defective democracy	2,115
Uzbekistan	3.0	Hard-line autocracy	2,132

Source: Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index (2016) and World Bank Development Indicators (2016)

into two fairly homogenous blocs with those states which have a European Union orientation tending to be more democratic (such as Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Mongolia) while those which lean towards Russia being characterized as more autocratic (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (Next Generation Democracy 2016). Casier (2015), for example, has argued that the European Union has a stronger unintended impact on the Eastern partnership countries than Russia has on its former Soviet neighbours. This, he suggests, follows from ‘its asymmetrically strong economic position vis-à-vis its neighbours and the externalities that result from it’. Russia’s unintended impact, on the other hand, is strong but ‘more differentiated because of

ambiguous relations with several former Soviet states. It does not exert the same magnetic force on neighbours' (Casier 2015, p.104).

Aside from their obvious similarities on the democracy-autocracy axis, what other political economy factors make post-Soviet Eurasian countries a suitable cluster for comparable development interventions? We considered the following as context-specific factors:²

- There has been a low level of development in post-Soviet Eurasia over the last 10 years with Tajikistan the poorest country (aside from Afghanistan) and Kazakhstan most prosperous in the cluster of countries (see Table 1). The decline in energy prices since 2014 has negatively impacted on the region's economies.
- All post-Soviet countries (except Moldova) have semi-presidential or presidential systems of government which result in limitations on the separation of powers, and judicial systems in the gift of political elites.
- The 'Euromaidan' revolution in the Ukraine precipitated by its refusal to sign an agreement with the European Union and instead opting for closer ties with Russia and Eurasian Economic Union caused unease across other autocracies and intolerance of, and repression against, protest. This has brought Russia closer to Central Asian autocracies.
- Russia's annexation of the Crimea in Eastern Ukraine has served to heighten Moscow influence in Eurasia and, with it, the rejection of the principles of democracy and increase in restrictive laws against civil society with the intent of political agitation. This example serves to highlight the rejection by Russia of democracy and social market economy principles and, by extension, its allies in Eurasia.
- The five defective/highly defective democracies in post-Soviet Eurasia still remain unstable since there are examples where representatives abuse their positions of power through to corruption and clientelism. The rule of law is weak and unable to hold political elites accountable. The nine moderate/hard-line autocracies range from closed societies (Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan) which persecute political opposition and violate civil liberties and human rights, through countries with mixed success in terms of openness (Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan), with Russia and Armenia claiming tolerance of party

²Sources: Brusis et al. (2016), Next Generation Democracy (2016) and Bertelsmann Stiftung Regional Report 2016a.

competition and an independent media. As an outlier Afghanistan is chronically unstable through conflict, experiences gross abuse of human rights and civil liberties and the ever present threat of a return to Taliban rule.

There is also what Lewis (2016, p.1) describes as the 'Moscow Consensus' where he argues that in much of the former Soviet Union, authoritarianism has become 'the default political system, informed by a remarkably unified set of ideas about the world, the state, and about politics an society, that resonates among elites'. This 'consensus' combines: promoting strong state and political elite as a defence against disorder; deep suspicion of western influence but at the same time seeking international approbation; and, a commitment to global economic growth while stymieing in-country market economy. If these are some political economy context similarities amongst post-Soviet Eurasia, what should be the content of development interventions? In other words, what should external donors and the governments involved consider as priorities for 'good enough' governance in these countries?

4 Post-Soviet Eurasia: the content of development reform

To explore good enough governance in post-Soviet Eurasia we draw on data from the Worldwide Governance Indicators 2016b, the Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (2016b), the Legatum Prosperity Index (2016) and the World Bank Development Indicators (2016a) to investigate. We use a data base comprising 27 governance variables across 14 post-Soviet Eurasia since 1990 onwards and explore those interventions most likely to predict prosperity (some of the data are unavailable for earlier years in the data set).

There have been criticisms of the use of the above sources, not least their reliance on perceptions of experts on concepts which can be difficult to capture quantitatively. Fukuyama, for example, disagrees with the type of aggregate measures used in the above reports. He offered a different analytical lens for the examination and measurement of good governance, rejecting aggregated measures which attempt to capture the quality of governance as 'inadequate and misleading' and argued for a two-dimensional framework which sees the capacity of bureaucracy and the autonomy which it can exercise as an agent of politicians Fukuyama (2013, p.363).

Table 2: Cross correlations between WGI variables.

	Rule of Law	Regulatory Quality	Political Stability and Absence of Violence	Government Effectiveness	Voice and Accountability
Rule of Law	1.00				
Regulatory Quality	0.85	1.00			
Political Stability and Absence of Violence	0.67	0.41	1.00		
Government Effectiveness	0.84	0.89	0.39	1.00	
Voice and Accountability	0.66	0.64	0.32	0.50	1.00

In addition, the accuracy of statistics from poor and underdeveloped countries is always a cause for concern. For the countries in our data set, we almost have no data available in regards to the pre-1990 period. After the 1990's, the indexation of several qualitative aspects of governance and policy variables by several agencies and institutions allowed scholars to run extensive statistical tests and analyses. This however, brings the risk of a dangerous circular loop, as some (if not all) of these indexes actually rely on a few but the same data sources. On the other hand, the accuracy of data is also closely linked to the level of development (see e.g. Jerven 2013). Since most of the countries in our data set are low or middle income countries, some level of distortion in the quality of data is unavoidable.

Another potential problem when dealing with these types of data is the high degree of correlation between independent variables. Table 2 summarizes the cross correlations between the WGI variables. To some extent, these correlations are unavoidable. When a country scores high in one of the governance indicators, it is reasonable to expect higher scores in other indicators. A high score in Rule of Law, for example, would not be possible with similar high scores in Voice and Accountability and Political Stability. Since the scope of our analysis is mostly developing countries, the variation within these indicators become crucial in understanding the marginal impact of each variable.

Furthermore, in order to avoid the pernicious effect of omitted varia-

Table 3: FE-Regression results.

	independent variables						
dep.variable	<i>roflaw</i>	<i>regqual</i>	<i>polstab</i>	<i>goveff</i>	<i>voice</i>	R^2	N of obs
<i>prosp</i>	6.00 (4.80)	-1.54 (-1.41)	-0.21 (-0.65)	1.78 (2.31)	0.21 (0.26)	0.55	108
<i>econ</i>	7.74 (4.43)	-4.99 (-3.26)	-0.30 (-0.67)	1.36 (1.27)	0.44 (0.38)	0.24	108
<i>gove</i>	5.38 (2.64)	-3.64 (-2.04)	0.56 (1.07)	3.61 (2.88)	5.37 (3.99)	0.79	108
<i>educ</i>	4.95 (3.56)	1.24 (1.02)	-0.72 (-2.00)	0.20 (0.23)	-0.97 (-1.05)	0.34	108
<i>heal</i>	6.66 (4.10)	-0.54 (-0.38)	-0.24 (-0.57)	2.28 (2.29)	-3.16 (-2.95)	0.37	108
<i>safe</i>	8.71 (3.42)	-1.29 (-0.58)	3.22 (4.92)	1.05 (0.67)	-4.12 (-2.45)	0.54	108
<i>pers</i>	-2.77 (-1.00)	-2.49 (-1.02)	0.97 (1.35)	1.08 (0.63)	8.00 (4.34)	0.46	108
<i>soci</i>	10.76 (4.20)	-5.38 (-2.40)	-1.23 (-1.88)	-0.66 (-0.42)	-1.92 (-1.14)	0.01	108
<i>envi</i>	7.99 (4.03)	-4.05 (-2.33)	-1.41 (-2.77)	-0.30 (-0.25)	-1.59 (-1.21)	0.00	108
<i>btistatus</i>	-0.40 (-0.87)	0.74 (2.25)	0.23 (2.17)	-0.31 (-1.17)	0.27 (0.81)	0.79	70
<i>btidem</i>	0.04 (0.06)	0.61 (1.38)	0.28 (1.96)	-0.52 (-1.46)	1.12 (0.51)	0.82	70
<i>btimarket</i>	-0.83 (-1.89)	0.87 (2.75)	0.18 (1.77)	-0.10 (-0.39)	0.04 (0.11)	0.52	70

(*t-values in parenthesis.*)

ble bias, we employ a Fixed Effects model. Accordingly, we construct our regression equation as follows:

$$y_{it} = \alpha_i + x'_{it}\beta + \epsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

where our independent variables are the Worldwide Governance Indicators. For the dependent variable we use a number of different variables Bertelsman Transformation Index and Legatum Prosperity Index [See Appendix]. The results are summarized in Table 3.

The most striking observation in Table 3 is the significance of the rule of law in almost all regressions. Secondly, there is a marked difference between the LPI and BTI variables. While rule of law and government effectiveness are more important for LPI variables, BTI variables rely heavily on regulatory quality and political stability.

If we look at individual regressions, the two variables which best predict prosperity (*prosp*) in post-Soviet Eurasia are rule of law and government

effectiveness respectively. Prosperity in this analysis is the overall index measure of nine weighted variables which capture: economic quality, business environment, governance, education, health, safety and security, personal freedom, social capital and natural environment (Legatum Institute 2016). In relative terms, rule of law interventions are much more likely to improve prosperity than government effectiveness. An increase in rule of law by one standard deviation change will lead to 6 standard deviation changes in prosperity. An increase in government effectiveness by one standard deviation change will lead to 1.8 standard deviations in prosperity. Government effectiveness in this analysis is measuring the quality of public services, the capacity of the civil service and its independence from political pressures, and the quality of policy formulation.

Importantly in this analysis, political stability and voice and accountability are not significant predictors of prosperity. In other words, the characteristics which are likely to adversely distinguish autocracies appear not to be significant in terms of their prosperity as a group of countries.

If however one correlates rule of law and prosperity levels in autocracies and democracies the gradient is less steep for democracies than autocracies. In other words, one percentage point increase in the rule of law yields a higher return in prosperity for autocracies than democracies. (See Figure 1)

Additional analyses examines the variables will predict key public services (economic quality-*econ*, education-*educ* and health care-*heal*) most likely to impact on the quality of peoples lives living in post-Soviet Eurasia. In all three cases, the rule of law is the most significant predictor of improvement. For economic quality, it might appear surprisin that regulatory quality has a negative sign and statistically significant. However, when we consider the heavy burden of regulatory bureaucracy on these economies it is hardly surprising.

In both cases of education and health care, rule of law was a significant predictor of education and health. The former is a measurement of access to education, quality of education and human capital. The latter is a measurement of basic physical and mental health, health infrastructure, and preventative care (Legatum Institute 2016).

The importance of these results is that interventions in autocratic countries intuitively suggest measures to promote democratic accountability, political stability and the control of corruption, all of which may well be important but less predictive of economic prosperity. Instead, rule of law interventions such as separation of powers, an independent judiciary, and an effective policing service are more important in good enough governance for autocracies.

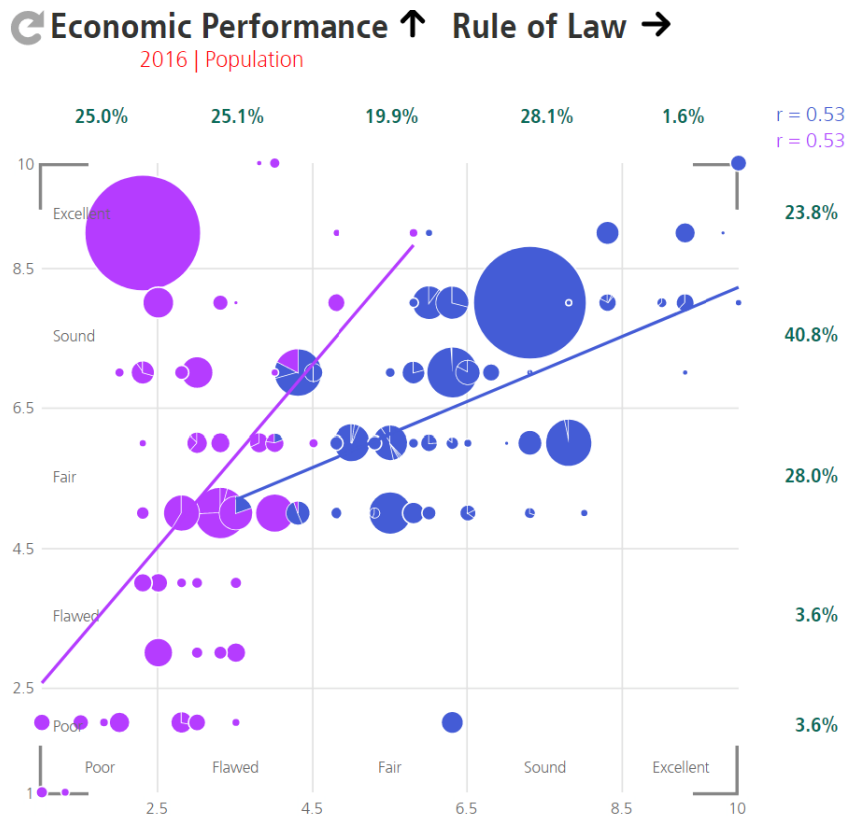


Figure 1: Bertlesmann (2006) graph: lavender/pink color line is for autocracies; purple line is for democracies

As a major limitation, we need to be cautious when using statistical inference from the magnitudes due to the data and measurement problems discussed before. We skip calculating individual effects since the magnitudes will be hardly meaningful in this context. All in all, the statistical significance and the direction of the relationship is more important in our results.

5 Rule of Law – the key to good enough governance?

In fact, there has been a significant shift in the importance of the rule of law in the most recent World Bank's Development Report (World Bank 2017, p.29) entitled *Governance and the Law* which argues the case for 're-

thinking governance for development'. Therein the World Bank suggests three guiding principles for development reform: restructuring institutions should take account of form and functions; capacity building to tackle power asymmetries; and strengthening the rule of law to ensure that policies and rules are applied impersonally, but also the role which the law can have in enhancing contestability, changing incentives and reshaping preferences. The World Bank concludes 'ultimately, the rule of law – the impersonal and systematic application of known rules to government actors and citizens alike – is needed for a country to realize its full social and economic potential' (World Bank 2017, p.14). In short, establishing a strong rule of law and the role that the law can play in wider governance improvements is critical to development success.

The challenge however, particularly in hard-line autocracies described in this paper, is why would autocratic leaders feel the need to transition to the rule of law when they already control the judiciary, executive and legislature? Two explanations are offered: first, elites accept that they have more to gain in the long term through constitutional rules, and second, that the introduction of the rule of law is accompanied by a normative framework which makes elites respect the law (North et al. 2009, Fukuyama 2010, 2014). Strengthening the rule of law is easier said than done but is entirely dependent on institutions of the law retaining their independence. As one report projecting the potential for changes in the rule of law for post-Soviet Eurasian countries put it:

Global economic integration and the need for economic modernization will continue to generate a demand for rule-of-law reforms... Business-oriented rule-of-law reforms will be promoted by post-Soviet Eurasian's democratic and authoritarian political regimes alike. However in the latter regimes these reforms will be limited insofar as they will not be extended to apply to political leaders, the repressive apparatus, clientelistic networks supporting the exercise of political power or the state controlled economic sectors (primarily natural resource industries) that sustain these clientelistic power structures (Next Generation Democracy 2016, p.11).

In short, our analysis empirically confirms this argument. Rule of law is good for prosperity in post-Soviet Eurasia. This does not guarantee that it will spill over into the separation of powers and a proper system of checks and balances which protects civil rights, leads to effective policing, and a court system which holds to account the excesses of repressive regimes against their citizens. As Lewis (2016, p.6) succinctly argues countries like Kazakhstan 'is much more concerned about its rating in the World Bank's Doing Business rankings than in Freedom House's democracy league'. Simi-

larly in Russia the system of governance (sistema), described by Ledeneva (2013), as informal power networks that enables leaders to mobilize and control, locks politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen into informal deals, mediated interests and personalised loyalties. Ultimately sistema ‘undermines the fundamental principles of the rule of law, the separation of powers and the security of property rights and reduce Russia’s chances of achieving the strategic goals of modernisation’ Ledeneva et al. (2012, p.23). In the same vein on post Soviet autocracies Melville and Mironyuk (2016, p.132) argue that there is ‘no incentive for their leaders to improve institutions that make their monopolies vulnerable’ rather they prefer to ‘preserve a low quality of institutions and ‘bad enough’ governance’.

6 Conclusion

We conclude that ‘good enough’ governance in post-Soviet Eurasia equates to the selective adaptation of principles of rule of law insofar as they lead to supporting business and improving prosperity. This does not extend to the wider adoption of ‘western’ rule of law principles of separation of powers, independent judiciary, and human and civil rights. Improvements in the rule of law is also a significant predictor of better public services such as health, education and public safety. These become very tangible expressions of good enough governance in post-Soviet Eurasia and a way to enhance the quality of life and welfare of its citizens. Where post-Soviet Eurasia becomes involved in a wider development agenda (sustainable development goals) which might threaten their autocratic base (free and fair election, freedom of expression and association, civil rights etc) these countries then engage in empty mimicry of western style public management reforms with little intention of adopting systemic changes (Meyer and Rowan 1977, Bunse and Fritz 2012). In short, they eschews western values which promote democratic principles in order to consolidate autocracies or flawed democracies. Post-Soviet Eurasian autocracies shore-up their regimes and consolidate their durability through: political monopoly, repression, control of the media, institutionalized elites, a passive population, and being impervious to external influences, including good governance imperatives from international donors (Croissant and Wurster 2013).

The wider issue here is that governance and what Weiss (2000, p.805-806) calls ‘its prescriptive partner of ‘good governance’ is now pushing the boundaries well beyond the original intentions of the former agenda. He argued: the forces of democratization and globalization are pressuring ‘good

governance’ proponents to reorient their priorities from the exigencies of economic growth and efficiency to those governance policies and institutions that best promote greater freedom, genuine participation and sustainable human development’. Our analysis suggests two things: first, governance as outlined in this way is too ambitious for post-Soviet Eurasia and likely to meet with resistance as a highly Westernized view of how to improve prosperity; second ‘good enough’ governance with a specific focus on the rule of law is a significant predictor of prosperity albeit applied in a much more selective way that does not threaten existing autocrat power bases.

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A Appendix

Variable name	Description	Source
<i>roflaw</i>	Rule of Law estimate by the World Bank	The Worldwide Governance Indicators, 2016
<i>regqual</i>	Regulatory Quality estimate by the World Bank	The Worldwide Governance Indicators, 2016
<i>polstab</i>	Political Stability and Absence of Violence estimate by the World Bank	The Worldwide Governance Indicators, 2016
<i>goveff</i>	Government Effectiveness estimate by the World Bank	The Worldwide Governance Indicators, 2016
<i>voice</i>	Voice and Accountability estimate by the World Bank	The Worldwide Governance Indicators, 2016
<i>btistatus</i>	BTI Status Index	Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index
<i>btidem</i>	BTI-Democracy Status	Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index
<i>btimarket</i>	BTI-Market Economy Status	Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index
<i>btimgmt</i>	BTI-Management Index	Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index
<i>prosp</i>	Legatum Prosperity Index (LPI)	Legatum Prosperity Index
<i>econ</i>	LPI-Pillars:econ	Legatum Prosperity Index
<i>busi</i>	LPI-Pillars:busi	Legatum Prosperity Index
<i>gove</i>	LPI-Pillars:gove	Legatum Prosperity Index
<i>educ</i>	LPI-Pillars:educ	Legatum Prosperity Index
<i>heal</i>	LPI-Pillars:heal	Legatum Prosperity Index
<i>safe</i>	LPI-Pillars:safe	Legatum Prosperity Index
<i>pers</i>	LPI-Pillars:pers	Legatum Prosperity Index
<i>soci</i>	LPI-Pillars:soci	Legatum Prosperity Index
<i>envi</i>	LPI-Pillars:envi	Legatum Prosperity Index

Code	Country name
AFG	Afghanistan
ARM	Armenia
AZB	Azerbaijan
BLR	Belarus
GRG	Georgia
KAZ	Kazakhstan
KGZ	Kyrgyz Republic
MLD	Moldova
MNG	Mongolia
RSA	Russia
TJK	Tajikistan
TKM	Turkmenistan
UKR	Ukraine
UZB	Uzbekistan