

Country and Organization Leader Travel Dataset

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Project Summary

The Country and Organizational Leader Travel (COLT) Database was created to systematically track and analyze the foreign travel of heads of government and state (HOGS), providing critical insights into global policy interests, international relationships, and geopolitical dynamics. Developed by researchers at the Frederick S. Pardee Institute for International Futures, the COLT project compiles travel data from over 200 countries spanning from 1990 to the present, documenting the travel of key leaders. Drawing on a broad range of sources, the dataset encompasses travel records, biographical data, and educational backgrounds, offering users a multifaceted view of global diplomatic behavior. Recently made public for the first time through an article in *International Studies Quarterly*, the COLT dataset represents the first global and comprehensive dataset of its kind, covering 78,641 trips as of 2023. Analysis of the dataset reveals key findings such as the high frequency of leader travel in democracies, the impact of diplomatic influence, and the relationship between travel, trade, and conflict.

Research Question(s)

- What does land degradation and its impacts look like if current patterns persist?
- What if it accelerated?
- What if it was successfully slowed through integrated restoration efforts?

Key Findings

- Leader travel has a bidirectional relationship with trade, diplomacy, and conflict.
- Democracies generally travel more than autocracies, with notable country-level variation.
- Countries with high diplomatic influence (e.g., EU, NATO members) receive more visits.
- Global leader travel has increased over time, rebounding strongly after COVID-19.
- Travel patterns are shaped by geography, political similarity, and reciprocal ties.

Core and Related Activities

- Report: [Land Degradation and Human Development in Yemen](#)
- Report Launch at United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)'s 16th session of the Conference of Parties (COP16) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

