



Who Runs the States?

*An in-depth look at historical state partisan control and quality of life indices
Part 3: Partisanship and State Quality of Life Index (SQLI) Overlay between 1992-2012*

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Introduction

Politicians routinely claim that their policies produce better economic outcomes for their constituents, yet these claims are rarely tested empirically. This study investigates these claims by analyzing selected economic measures and comparing party control of state governments over time. The data show that states with Republican control are correlated with higher levels of wellbeing and economic outcomes, followed closely by states under divided government.

This report is the third installment in a three-part study. In [Part One](#), we considered partisan control of state governments from over the period 1992-2013 and identified eight states that demonstrated a shift of more than 40 percent in one direction or the other regarding partisanship. We looked for examples where one party controlled the three main levers of state government, because these “trifecta” years presumably provided a party an opportunity to enact its policies with little opposition. Three states demonstrated movements toward becoming more Democratic while five shifted more Republican. Those eight states were:

- **More Democratic:** Colorado, Illinois and New Jersey
- **More Republican:** Florida, Georgia, Missouri, South Carolina and Texas

In [Part Two](#), we aggregated selected economic and social measures into a “State Quality of Life Index (SQLI), that included measures such as unemployment rate and personal income per capita. For this study, we selected 19 state comparison indexes to combine into our aggregate index. Each of the 19 state comparison indexes we chose tries to capture a part of what it would mean for one state to have a relatively higher performance than other states. We calculated our quality-of-life index by equally weighting all of our indicators for which we had data for a given year and then giving each state an annual rank from 1 to 50 (1 being the highest relative to standard of living and 50 being the lowest). To view the full dataset, visit [this spreadsheet](#).

This study investigates how partisan control affects a state’s economic performance. We ask: Do state economies perform better (and do people enjoy greater quality of life) when one political party controls all of state government, or when control is divided?

Furthermore, for divided governments, does it matter how they’re divided? Do states perform better when they have Republican legislatures and a Democratic governor, or vice versa; or is there no difference in economic performance as long as the state government is divided?

To answer these questions, we consider the trend of individual state economic performance data with the break-down of partisan control of state government. This report includes our methodology and a selection of tables in the appendix.

Comparing Partisanship and the State Quality of Life Index (SQLI) Rankings

After generating results for the partisanship and SQLI in parts one and two, we compared the two sets to look for trends relating to partisan control and state economic performance. The authors would like to provide two notes:

First, the Democratic Party or the Republican Party controlling all three power positions in a state does not imply that the policymakers took advantage of their trifecta position to implement wholly "progressive policies" (rather than "policies enacted by Democrats") or wholly "conservative policies" (rather than "policies enacted by Republicans"). To assess specific policy impact on the well-being of the people in a state, a different analysis contrasting well-being measures to the actual policies implemented in a state would have to be conducted.¹

Second, we would like to provide a note about causation and correlation. The trends in the data we describe are correlation, and they should not necessarily be interpreted as causation. State economic performance is influenced by a number of factors that are independent of partisanship—such as geography and weather. Even though the trends described in this study are not necessarily causal, they do provide insight into the relationship between economic performance and partisan control. It is possible that, rather than political parties contributing to quality of life, voters with a certain quality of life may tend to support particular parties or divided government, in which case political control may be determined by quality of life, rather than vice versa.

In the spirit of transparency, the authors encourage readers to take the data used for this report and use it for other research purposes.^{2,3}

¹ [American Spectator](#), "Every Governor a Walker," September, 2012

² The results of the overlay of the partisanship data and SQLI would change if someone chose significantly different datasets than we did to measure quality-of-life. Our results are primarily of interest to someone who agrees that the datasets we selected would be the best way to measure SQLI. In July 2013, Political Science Professor Emily Shaw of Thomas College disagreed with using the State Government Spending/GDP as part of our SQLI index. We have created a spreadsheet that shows the overall rankings of the states on our aggregated index if you remove that index. Here's that [spreadsheet](#) with the different results. Thirty-three states stayed within three points of their prior ranking while 17 states changed by more than three spots. If you would like to see how the states compare to each other adding or subtracting various parts of our SQLI Index, please [email us](#).

³ Other indices use a similar methodology to ours. In January 2014, Politico released a 50-state ranking based on 14 indices. For details on its results, see this [link](#).

Description of the data

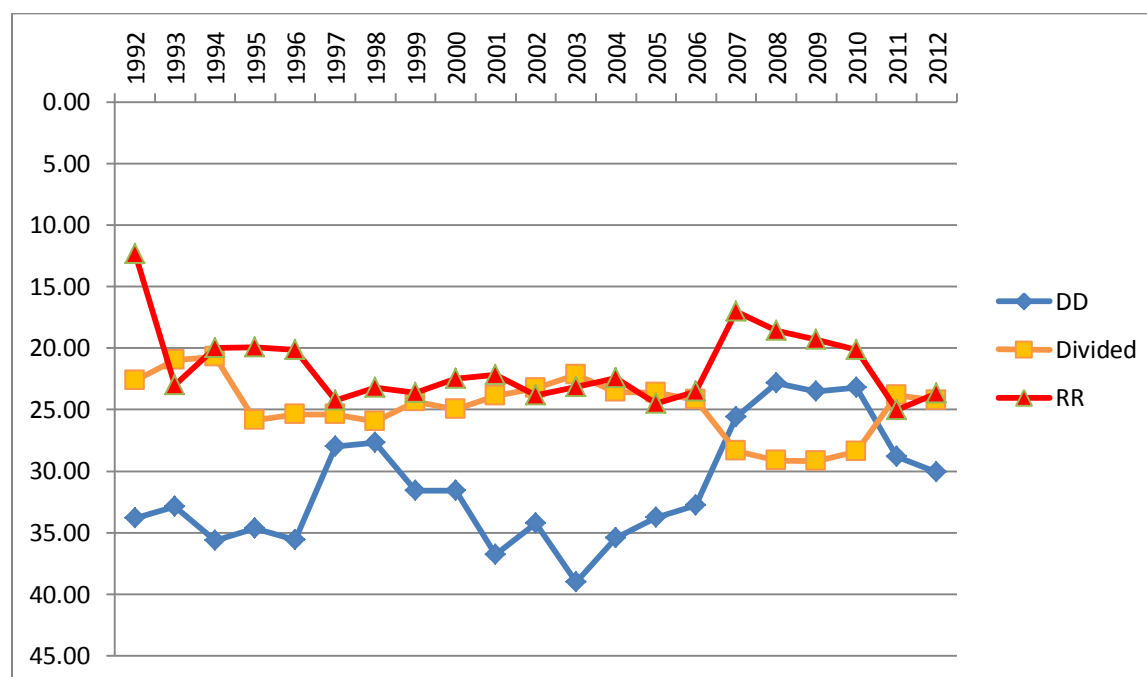
Over the period studied, states under Democratic trifectas had an average ranking of 30.67 and states with Republican trifectas had an average ranking of 22, indicating a higher quality of life according to the SQLI metric. States with divided governments had an average ranking of 24.67. This pattern held consistent over the period studied. Comparing the first half of the period (years 1992-2001) with the second half (years 2002-2012), states with Republican trifectas consistently outperformed states with divided governments. Both groups consistently outperformed states with Democratic trifectas.

Average of SQLI Rank by Category

Category	Whole Period	1992-2001	2002-2012
Democratic Trifecta (DD)	30.67	33.2	28.6
Divided Government	24.69	24.0	25.4
Republican Trifecta (RR)	22.24	21.8	22.5

The following graph shows trend of the average SQLI ranking for each category of government—Democratic trifecta, divided government, and Republican trifecta. We see from 1992 to 2006, Democratic trifectas performed worse compared to divided governments and Republican trifectas. Divided government performed slightly worse than Republican trifectas. We see that between 2007 and 2010, Democratic trifectas outperformed divided governments. Republican trifectas continued to perform best over this period.

Trend of Average of SQLI Rank by Category



As indicated in the introduction, we examined which political parties typically governed the states that enjoyed the greatest quality of life. Based on our findings, states with divided governments were most likely to have a better SQLI ranking than states under single-party control. Among those under single-party control, states were more likely to have a better quality of life result under Republican control than Democratic.

The data show a few notable outliers to this finding. Several states (Iowa, New Hampshire, Colorado) with Democratic trifectas scored remarkably high in the SQLI between the years 2007 and 2010.

Trend of SQLI for selected states for selected years

State	2007	2008	2009	2010
Colorado	1	2	2	8
Iowa	5	5	1	3
New Hampshire	2	1	3	2

States with Democratic trifectas made up a disproportionately large share of the bottom 10 states—36 percent as compared to their 22 percent share of all states. States with Republican trifectas included in the bottom 10 were less than a third the size of their 26 percent share of all states.

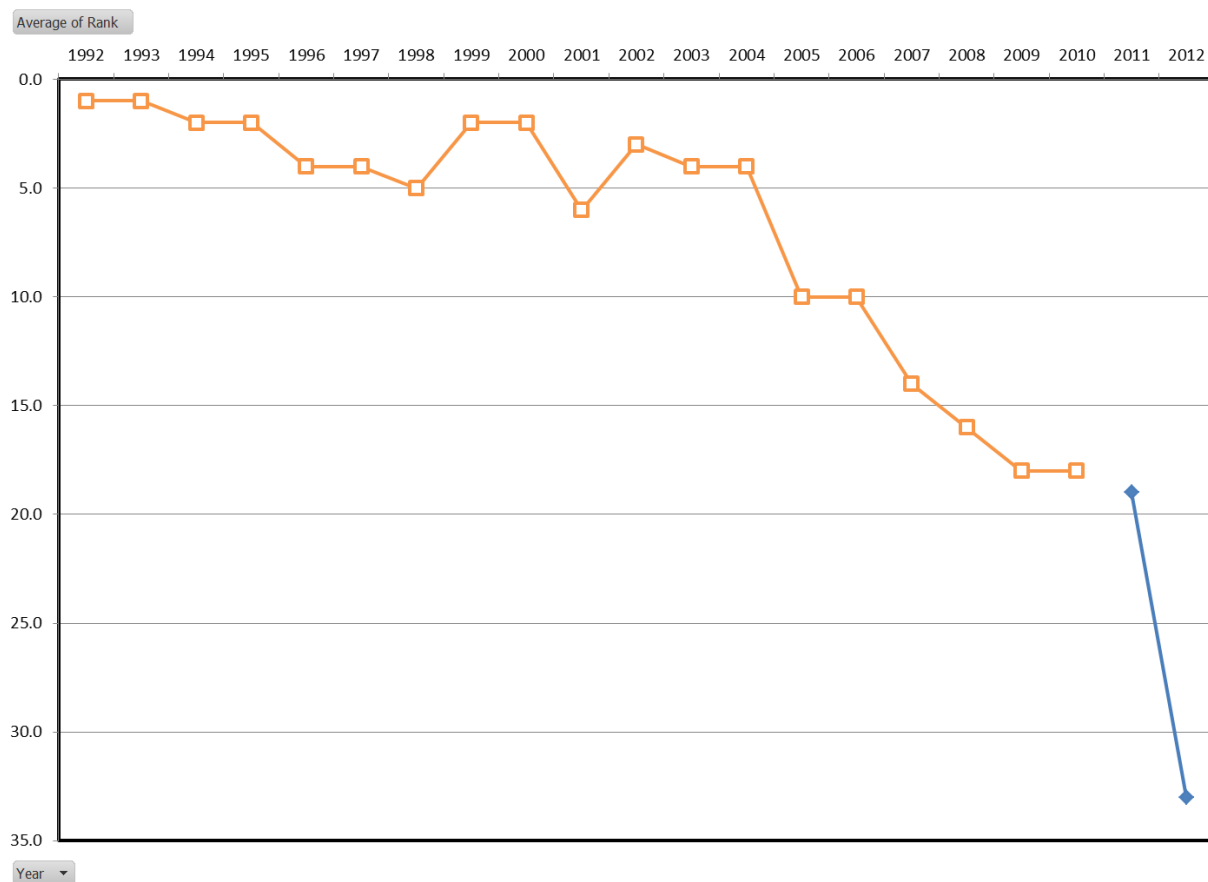
Among the 10 states that performed best on the SQLI, the majority had divided governments. In these states, neither party generally maintained control of government. States governed by divided governments accounted for 68 percent of the states that ranked in the top 10 during the 21 years of our study. The proportion of states with divided governments among the bottom 10 states was only slightly higher than their 53.5 percent share of all states. For comparison, states governed by Republican trifectas and Democratic trifectas accounted for 23 and 9 percent, respectively, of the top rankings.

In our analysis, we sought examples of states where voters regularly kept the same party in power. The only state that did not change party control was Utah, which maintained a Republican trifecta over the entire 21 year period. South Dakota was the second-most Republican-leaning state; it had a Republican trifecta for 19 years and a divided government for two years. North Dakota and Idaho each had Republican trifecta for 18 years and a divided government for three years.

We found two states that kept the same party in control despite performing consistently poorly in SQLI. The first case was West Virginia, which consistently elected a Democrat trifecta despite having the second-worst SQLI. The second case was South Carolina, which consistently elected Republican trifecta despite being the sixth-worst state in the SQLI.

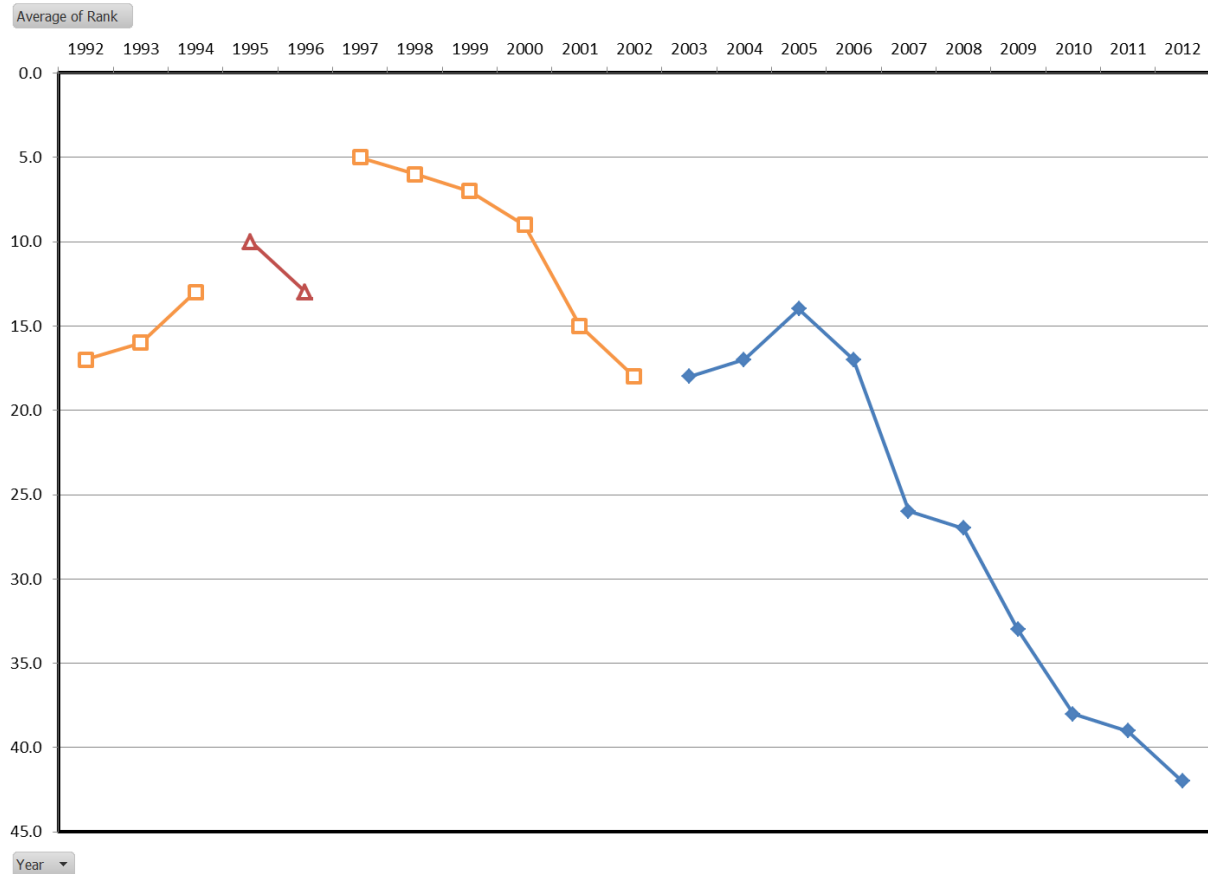
We also looked for states that saw significant changes in SQLI ranking over time. One example is Connecticut, which had a better average SQLI rank during divided years (6.6) than Democratic trifecta years (26.0). The Constitution State enjoyed remarkably high performance compared to other states between the years between 1992 and 2004, with an average ranking of 3.1. Things changed beginning in 2005. The state's SQLI rank fell to 10 and then slid consistently downward. The state had an average ranking of 14.3 during the years 2005 to 2010. In 2011, voters in the state brought a Democratic trifecta to power, and the state's SQLI ranking fell even further—from 19 in 2011 to 33 in 2012. This follows our general finding that Democratic trifectas under-perform divided governments.

Trend of SQLI rank for Connecticut
(Orange = divided government, Red = Republican trifecta, Blue = Democratic Trifecta)



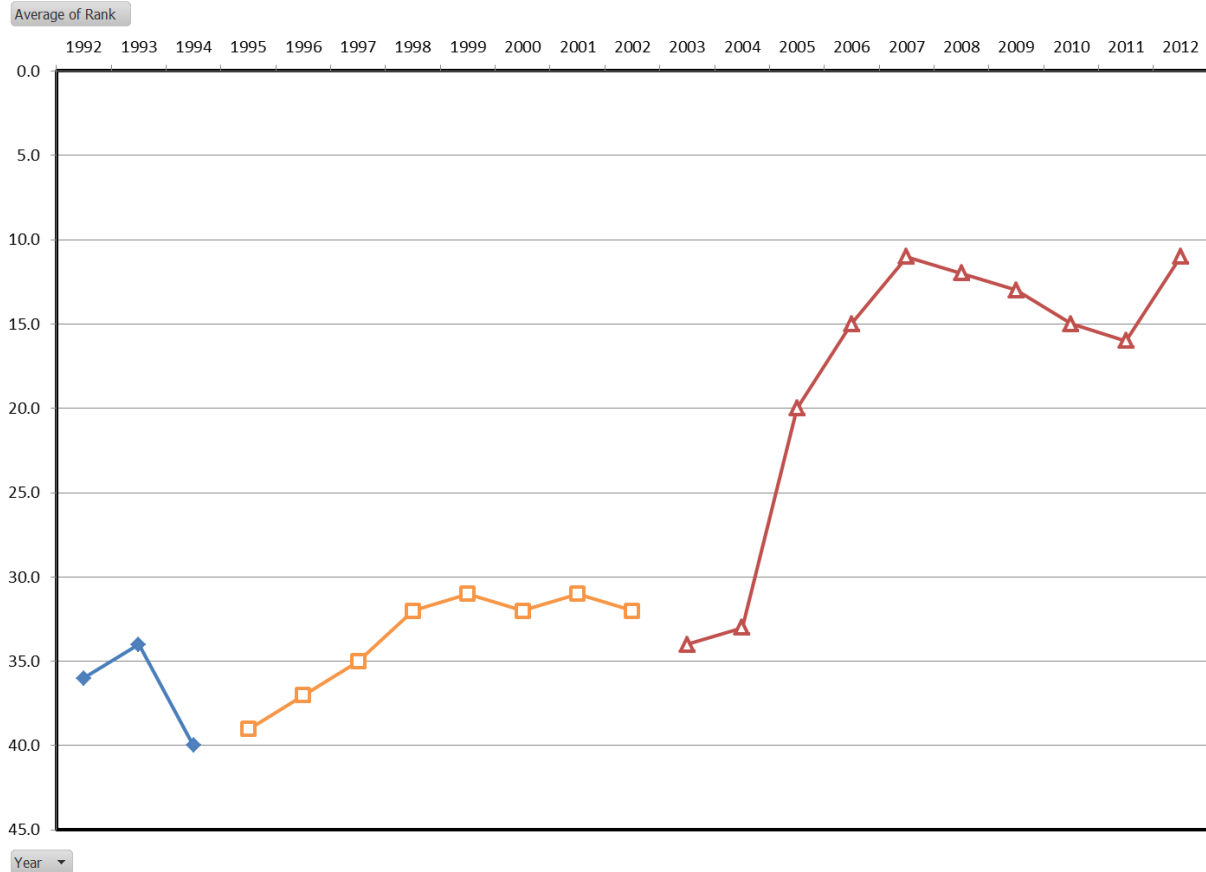
Illinois proves to be a similar case. This state had a worse SQLI rank during years of Democratic trifecta (27.1) than during its years of divided government (11.8) and Republican trifecta (11.5). Illinois voters have kept the same party in control despite seeing consistently worse social and economic outcomes since 2005.

Trend of SQLI rank for Illinois
(Orange = divided government, Red = Republican trifecta, Blue = Democratic Trifecta)



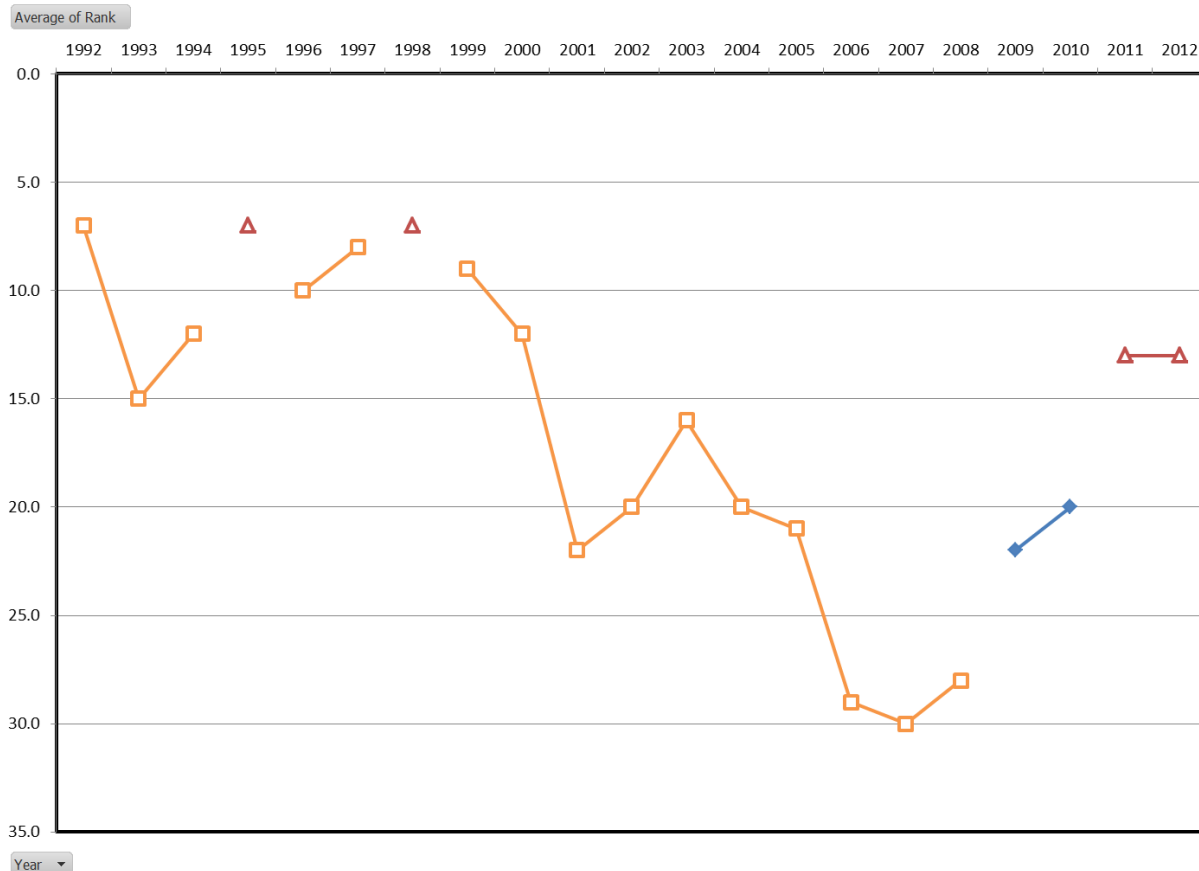
The state that saw the most significant change in ranking correlated with change in political control was Texas. Texas had an average SQLI rank of 36.67 under Democratic trifectas; 18 under Republican trifectas, and 33.6 under divided governments.

Trend of SQLI rank for Texas
(Orange = divided government, Red = Republican trifecta, Blue = Democratic Trifecta)



Wisconsin is an interesting example of a state that saw significant change in both SQLI and in party control over the period studied. Wisconsin received a higher average SQLI ranking under Republican trifectas (10) than under Democratic trifectas (21).

Trend of SQLI rank for Wisconsin
(Orange = divided government, Red = Republican trifecta, Blue = Democratic Trifecta)



Iowa, whose average SQLI ranking during Republican trifectas was 12, received an average SQLI ranking of 3.5 under Democratic trifectas, a change of 70.83%. Colorado also received a higher average SQLI ranking under Democratic trifectas (3.25) than under Republican trifectas (5.5), a change of 40.9%.

No state held a Democratic trifecta over the entire 21-year period. The most Democratic-leaning states were West Virginia and Maryland; both held Democratic trifectas for 17 years and divided governments for 4 years. North Carolina had a Democratic trifecta for 14 years and divided government for 7 years.

The only state that held a divided government over the entire studied period was Minnesota. The second-longest period of divided government was in Nevada, with 20 years of

divided government and 1 year of Democratic trifecta. New York and Connecticut held divided government for 19 years and a Democratic trifecta for 2 years.

Trends and correlations

After generating coded values for the partisanship and quality of life indices, we performed regression analysis to compare the two metrics to identify trends and correlations. In this section, we present some of the interesting trends found in our tabulations and basic regression analyses. Although we used regression models that may suggest causality in other situations, these basic comparisons between indices and rankings through regression models were primarily designed to indicate correlations and potential areas for further research.⁴ This analysis indicates situations where states performed better during, or after, certain combinations of party governments were in power.

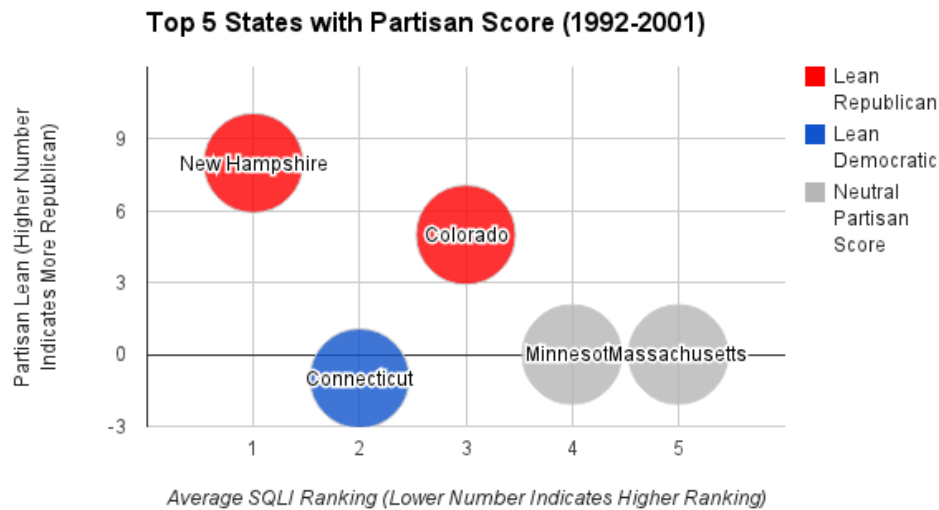
We created a measure called “partisan lean,” referring to a coding system by which we defined how partisan a state was over the course of the study. Trendline analysis showed a slightly positive trend toward better SQLI with Republican leaning governments. In other words, more Republican-leaning states are in the top 25 of SQLI than Democratic-leaning states. Additionally, there were more Democratic states in the bottom 25 than Republican states. These data show a positive trend toward Republican governments leading toward higher SQLI rankings. For more details and regression results, see Appendix D: Key Values for Fifty State Regressions.

In addition to the national findings, there are some individual state results worth noting. For example, a time-lagged panel data regression model of Georgia shows that the state has performed better two years after being under more Republican control. For more information and a complete list of state-by-state results, please see Appendix C: Key Values for Individual State Regressions.

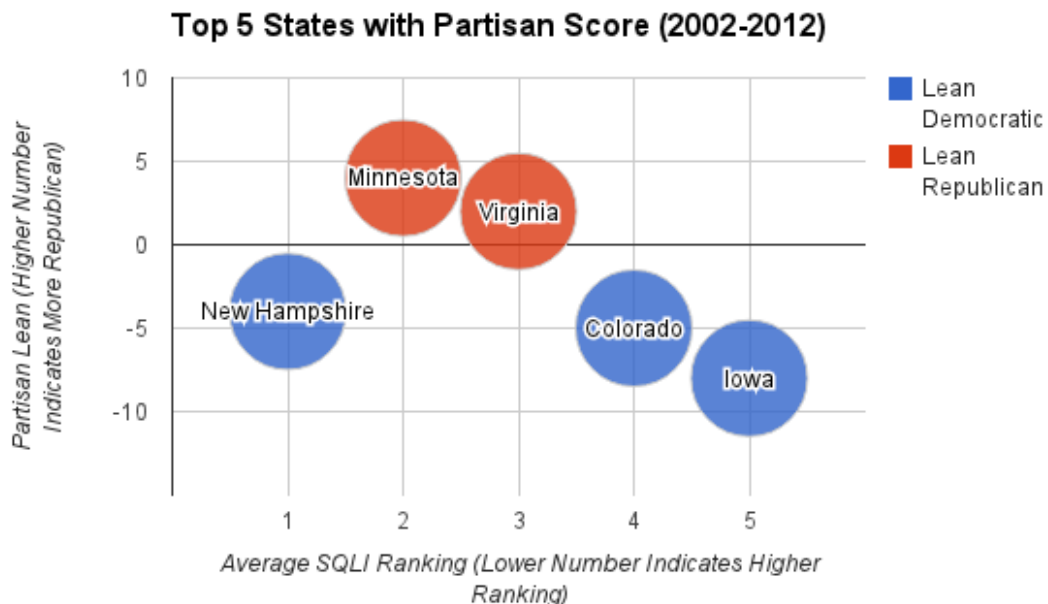
Comparing the performance of top 5 and bottom 5 states

During the first half of the study period (1992-2001), the five states that performed the best in SQLI were New Hampshire, Connecticut, Colorado, Minnesota and Massachusetts. These states had an average partisan lean of 2.4, indicating that they were slightly more Republican. Among the states in this group, 86 percent were divided government and 14 percent were trifectas. These states included seven trifectas, all of which were Republican.

⁴ These analyses should not be taken as indicating a causal link between party control of the levers of power in a state government, and that state's performance.

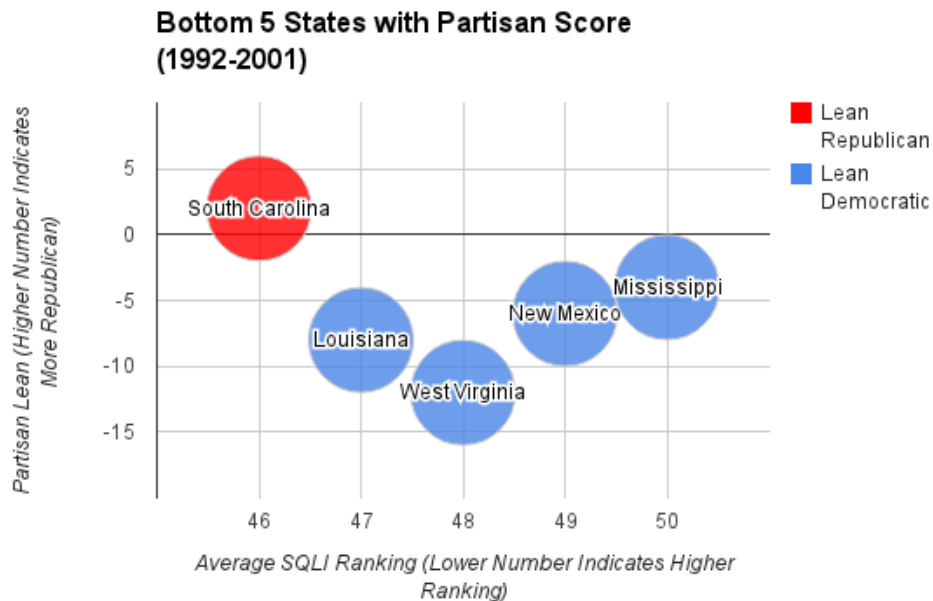


During the second half of the study period (2002-2012), the top five performing SQLI states were New Hampshire, Minnesota, Virginia, Colorado and Iowa. Those states had an average partisan lean of -2.2, indicating that they were slightly more Democratic. Among the states of this group, 69.1 percent had divided government and 30.9 percent had trifectas. Of the 17 trifectas, 12 were Democratic and 5 were Republican.

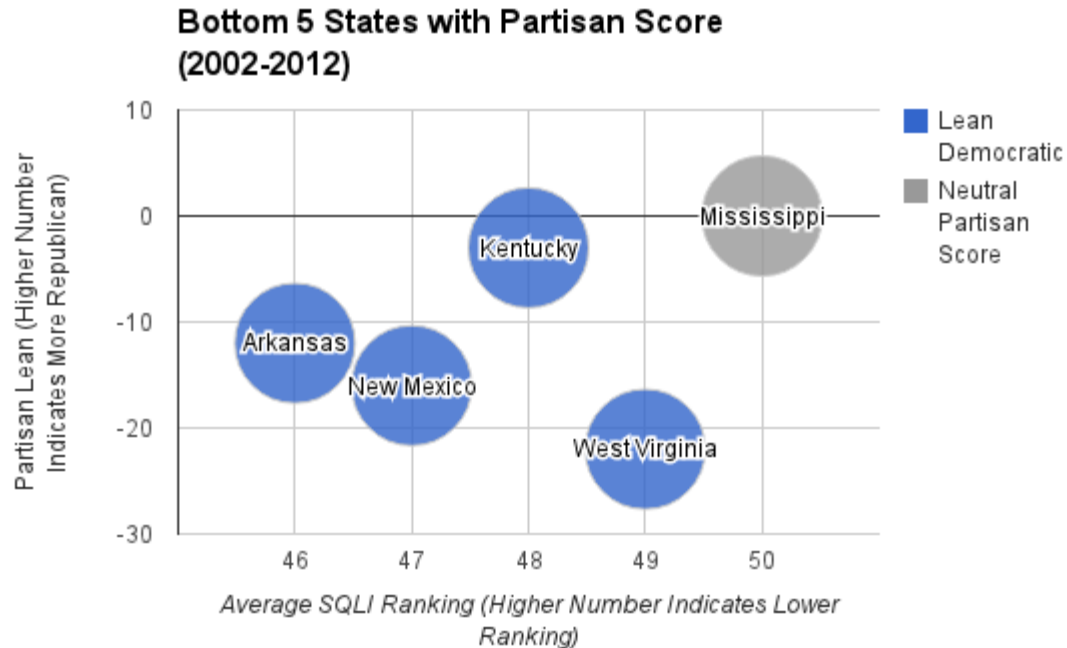


The states that were in the bottom five performing SQLI states during the first half of the study period were South Carolina, Louisiana, West Virginia, New Mexico and Mississippi. Those states had an average partisan lean of -5.6, indicating that they leaned Democratic. Among

the states in this group, 70 percent had divided government and 30 percent had party trifectas. Of the 15 trifectas, all 15 were Democratic.



The bottom five performing states during the second half of the study period were Arkansas, New Mexico, Kentucky, West Virginia, and Mississippi. Those states had an average partisan lean of -10.6 during the latter half of the study period, indicating they leaned Democratic substantially. Among states finishing in the bottom five of the SQLI during the second half of the study, 49.1 percent of those states were divided government and 50.9 were trifectas. Of the 28 trifectas, 27 were Democratic and 1 was Republican.



Comparing trifectas over time

Next we considered states that had a trifecta of party control over time. In the first half of the study, trifectas finished in the top-10 in rankings 10.6 percent of the time, and in the bottom-10 rankings 18.8 percent of the time. Only 22 of the 208 states with a trifecta from 1992-2001 finished in the top-10 for that year. Thirty-nine of the 208 finished in the bottom-10.

In the second half of the study, trifectas finished in the top-10 in rankings 17 percent of the time, and in the bottom-10 rankings 20 percent of the time. Forty-five of the 265 states with a trifecta from 2002-2012 finished in the top-10 for that year. Fifty-three of the 265 finished in the bottom-10.

These data show that in both periods a state with a trifecta was more likely to rank in the bottom-10 than the top-10. However, the gap decreased significantly from the first to second periods, with a jump in the percentage ranking in the top-10. Some of this is accounted for by states with a long record of trifectas that were able to break into the top-10 in the second period, such as Utah and North Dakota. Another factor is states like Colorado, which ranked in the top-10 throughout the study period but has seen a rise in trifectas in recent years. There is no clear example of a state with mostly divided government in the first period moving into the top-10 after trifectas in the second period.

Underperforming single-party states

We reviewed the data to find those states with both poor performance on the SQLI and lengthy single-party control. In which states should residents be disappointed in the results of single-party control? Two states stand in the data out as examples of underperforming states whose governments have been dominated by a single party in recent decades.

In West Virginia, Democrats held trifectas for 18 of the 22 years in the study period. During the other four years, Democrats still had control of the state legislature. West Virginia tied with Maryland as the most Democratic state with a score of -36 on our aggregate partisanship rankings. The state's overall SQLI ranking was 49.

In South Carolina, Republicans held trifectas for 11 of the 22 years and had control of the governorship for 18 of the 22 years. South Carolina was the seventh most Republican state with a score of 24 on our aggregate partisanship rankings. The state's overall SQLI ranking was 45.

Methodology

Partisanship/Quality of Life Regression Methodology

In our analysis of trends in rankings, we used several different regression models to explore tendencies and potential relationships. In our examination of the aggregate state rankings, we used an ordinary least squares bivariate regression to find correlations between the state performance rankings and the degree to which the state was Republican or Democratic according to our scoring method. The partisanship score functioned as the independent variable, and the aggregate state life quality rankings served as the dependent variable. We did not control specifically for region or population.

Another test of the aggregate rankings used a probit regression, which is designed to show relationships between dependent variables with a dichotomous outcome (0 or 1) and independent variables that may be any real number. All state governments in each year were then coded as one (1) for having a trifecta government (Democratic or Republican) or zero (0) for not having a trifecta government. These values were then regressed with the state's performance ranking for that year using the probit regression. This probit regression was also performed with a two-year lag on the dependent variable, which correlates a performance ranking in a given year with a trifecta ranking two years prior. This was done to test the difference between having a trifecta or a mixed government on quality of life.

Using this same dichotomous variable for trifecta or non-trifecta governments, we used a panel data series regression, which allows us to identify separate time periods and changes over time, to find trends in the performance of trifecta and non-trifecta governments. With this regression, we were able to incorporate the fixed effects associated with each state and control for more lurking or unaccounted for variables than our earlier analyses. However, the available data in rankings form, relative to other states or types of government, severely restricts the analytical power of this type of regression. For our independent variables, we used both the same-year trifecta ranking and the two-year lagged trifecta ranking for the independent variables in two separate regressions, with performance ranking relative to other states in that year as the dependent variable.

Finally, we used the panel data series regression with fixed effects for the comparison between the overall rankings of the states and the partisan coding of the states in each year. These metrics provide slightly stronger analysis of the data than the previous panel regression,

though they do not measure the specific influence of trifectas. In these regressions, the dependent variable was the state performance ranking for each year, and the independent variables were the state governments coded one through nine (1 through 9) as outlined in the “Overall Partisanship” section, both in the same year and lagged two years in separate regressions. Again, measuring coding limits the analytical effectiveness of these regressions, but still provides some sense as to the broader trends in the data.

Key Values for Fifty-State Regressions

SQLI versus Aggregate Partisan Score, Ordinary Least Squares Regression

This regression analysis showed the correlation between the partisan score of the state summed over the study period, the independent variable, and the aggregated SQLI ranking, the dependent variable. The negative coefficient indicates that a state with a Republican government correlates slightly with a higher ranking, but the P-value indicates that there is a 15 percent chance this relationship is actually zero. The R-squared value indicates that only 4 percent of the variation in the dependent variable can be explained by changes in the independent variable.

The explanatory power of these relationships is very limited, and much of the variation in the data cannot be accounted for by the party variables. This suggests that other, untested variables are more important drivers of these changes in rankings than party control. We also completed a regression comparing the states that had trifectas, either Democratic or Republican, with their change in rankings between the year of the trifecta and two years after the trifecta. This regression also found no statistically significant relationship, and barely any correlation between the two variables.

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-0.14	0.17	0.04

SQLI versus Lagged Trifecta, Ordinary Least Squares Regression

This regression analysis examined the relationship between the performance ranking of a state in a given year and the existence of a trifecta in the state two years before. The existence of a trifecta in the state two years before is measured with a dichotomous variable, with one indicating a trifecta of either major political party and zero indicating any other type of government. This regression allows us to see correlations between whether a state had a trifecta government or not, and its performance relative to other states two years later. The P-value indicates that there is a 92.3 percent chance this relationship is zero. The R-squared value indicates virtually no correlation between these two variables. Similar tests with one and three year lags do not yield statistically significant results.

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)

0.761	0.419	0.00
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SQLI versus Annual Government Composition Coding, Unlagged Panel Data Regression with Fixed Effects

This regression analysis showed the correlation between the government composition coding for each individual year, the independent variable, and the ranking of that state for each individual year, the dependent variable. This regression analysis identifies each state and follows trends over time, distinguishing the states from one another and controlling for the unchanging characteristics of each state over the time period. In this regression, the positive coefficient indicates that a more Republican state correlates with a higher ranking. The P-value shows the coefficient is statistically significant from zero. The R-squared value shows low correlation strength, with less than 9 percent of the variation of the dependent variable attributable to variation in the independent variable.

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.65	0.00	0.086

SQLI versus Annual Government Composition Coding, Lagged Panel Data Regression with Fixed Effects

This regression analysis is constructed identically to its unlagged counterpart, but it shifts the independent variable data back by two years. This lag permits time for the implementation of government policies and seeks to measure their impact after they take effect.

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.53	0.00	0.07

“Quality of Life” versus Trifecta Coding, Probit Regression Unlagged

This regression analysis uses a code that identifies either Republican or Democratic trifectas as one (1) and all other types of government as zero (0) as the dependent variable and the state “Quality of Life” ranking in the corresponding year as the independent variable. The probit regression analysis does not account for changes in time and does not identify individual states, but only seeks to identify the likelihood that a state with a higher or lower rank will have a trifecta government in that year. The coefficient and constant can be used to calculate the percent probability that a state will be under the control of a trifecta based on its ranking in a given year. These calculations weakly suggest that a state that ranks first (i.e., has the highest “quality of life”) may be about 7.5 percent less likely to be under a trifecta government than a state that

ranks fiftieth (i.e., has the lowest “quality of life”). However, these results are not strictly significant and should not be interpreted as causal, as they measure both the trifecta governments and the rankings in the same year, do not control for state characteristics, and do have additional control variables for economic downturns and other factors.

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	Constant
0.0039	0.142	-0.2253

SQLI versus Trifecta Coding, Probit Regression Lagged

This regression analysis uses the same variables and framework as the unlagged probit, but shifts the dependent variable back by two periods. This regression allows us to compare the performance ranking of a state in a year with whether or not the state had a trifecta two years before. The relationship was not statistically significant, and the overall correlation was very low.

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	Constant
0.0023	0.418	-0.1666

For more information on the regression methodologies and outputs, please see Appendices A, B, C, D, E, F and G.

Conclusion

Our research shows that partisan control is correlated with economic performance and quality of life, as measured by the SQLI. States generally experience higher economic performance and better quality of life when Republicans control the government, followed closely by states that have divided government. This leaves much room for future research; namely, to what extent did political parties take advantage of their trifecta and enact progressive policies or conservative policies.

Appendices

Appendix A: Partisanship Tables

Partisan Control of Governorships, 1992-2013

The following table shows the partisan affiliation of each state's governors over the past 22 years. For a year in which governors of more than one party held a state's governorship, we assigned the year to the party whose member(s) held office for the majority of the year. "D" is the number of years Democratic governors held office, "R" is the number of years Republican governors held office, and "O" is the number of years governors with other partisan affiliations (i.e., independent) held office.

State	D	R	O	State	D	R	O
Alabama	6	16	0	Montana	9	13	0
Alaska	8	12	2	Nebraska	7	15	0
Arizona	8	14	0	Nevada	7	15	0
Arkansas	12	10	0	New Hampshire	15	7	0
California	8	14	0	New Jersey	10	12	0
Colorado	14	8	0	New Mexico	11	11	0
Connecticut	3	16	3	New York	10	12	0
Delaware	21	1	0	North Carolina	20	2	0
Florida	7	14	1	North Dakota	1	21	0
Georgia	11	11	0	Ohio	4	18	0
Hawaii	14	8	0	Oklahoma	11	11	0
Idaho	3	19	0	Oregon	22	0	0
Illinois	11	11	0	Pennsylvania	11	11	0
Indiana	13	9	0	Rhode Island	3	16	3
Iowa	12	10	0	South Carolina	4	18	0
Kansas	11	11	0	South Dakota	0	22	0

Kentucky	18	4	0	Tennessee	11	11	0
Louisiana	8	14	0	Texas	3	19	0
Maine	8	6	8	Utah	0	22	0
Maryland	18	4	0	Vermont	14	8	0
Massachusetts	7	15	0	Virginia	10	12	0
Michigan	8	14	0	Washington	22	0	0
Minnesota	3	15	4	West Virginia	18	4	0
Mississippi	4	18	0	Wisconsin	8	14	0
Missouri	17	5	0	Wyoming	11	11	0

Partisan Control of State Legislatures, 1992-2013

State	D	R	S	State	D	R	S
Alabama	19	3	0	Montana	1	13	8
Alaska	0	15	7	Nebraska	0	0	0
Arizona	0	20	2	Nevada	6	0	16
Arkansas	21	1	0	New Hampshire	4	15	3
California	22	0	0	New Jersey	10	10	2
Colorado	7	11	4	New Mexico	22	0	0
Connecticut	20	0	2	New York	2	0	20
Delaware	5	0	17	North Carolina	13	3	6
Florida	1	17	4	North Dakota	0	19	3
Georgia	11	9	2	Ohio	0	17	5
Hawaii	22	0	0	Oklahoma	13	5	4
Idaho	0	21	1	Oregon	5	8	9
Illinois	12	2	8	Pennsylvania	0	15	7
Indiana	0	7	15	Rhode Island	22	0	0

Iowa	5	8	9	South Carolina	3	13	6
Kansas	0	21	1	South Dakota	0	20	2
Kentucky	9	0	13	Tennessee	13	3	6
Louisiana	19	3	0	Texas	5	11	6
Maine	16	2	4	Utah	0	22	0
Maryland	22	0	0	Vermont	13	0	9
Massachusetts	22	0	0	Virginia	4	10	8
Michigan	0	13	9	Washington	10	2	10
Minnesota	12	2	8	West Virginia	22	0	0
Mississippi	18	2	2	Wisconsin	3	9	10
Missouri	9	11	2	Wyoming	0	22	0

State Trifecta Breakdown, 1992-2013

State	D	R	Divided	State	D	R	Divided
Alabama	6	3	13	Montana	0	10	12
Alaska	0	7	15	Nebraska	0	0	22
Arizona	0	14	8	Nevada	1	0	21
Arkansas	11	0	11	New Hampshire	4	7	11
California	8	0	14	New Jersey	6	8	8
Colorado	5	4	13	New Mexico	11	0	11
Connecticut	3	0	19	New York	2	0	20
Delaware	5	0	17	North Carolina	12	1	9
Florida	1	14	7	North Dakota	0	19	3
Georgia	11	9	2	Ohio	0	15	7
Hawaii	14	0	8	Oklahoma	5	3	14
Idaho	0	19	3	Oregon	5	0	17

Illinois	11	2	9	Pennsylvania	0	11	11
Indiana	0	5	17	Rhode Island	3	0	19
Iowa	4	2	16	South Carolina	0	11	11
Kansas	0	11	11	South Dakota	0	20	2
Kentucky	9	0	13	Tennessee	5	3	14
Louisiana	8	3	11	Texas	3	11	8
Maine	8	2	12	Utah	0	22	0
Maryland	18	0	4	Vermont	7	0	15
Massachusetts	7	0	15	Virginia	2	4	16
Michigan	0	9	13	Washington	10	0	12
Minnesota	1	0	21	West Virginia	18	0	4
Mississippi	4	2	16	Wisconsin	2	5	15
Missouri	8	4	10	Wyoming	0	11	11

Changes in Partisan Control of State Governments, 1992-2013

State	Changes in Partisan Control	Change Rank	State	Changes in Partisan Control	Change Rank
Alabama	5	11	Montana	4	20
Alaska	5	11	Nebraska	1	48
Arizona	3	30	Nevada	3	30
Arkansas	3	30	New Hampshire	8	2
California	3	30	New Jersey	4	20
Colorado	7	3	New Mexico	3	30
Connecticut	3	30	New York	4	20
Delaware	2	39	North Carolina	7	3
Florida	5	11	North Dakota	2	39

Georgia	2	39	Ohio	4	20
Hawaii	2	39	Oklahoma	5	11
Idaho	2	39	Oregon	5	11
Illinois	4	20	Pennsylvania	4	20
Indiana	5	11	Rhode Island	2	39
Iowa	6	6	South Carolina	4	20
Kansas	4	20	South Dakota	2	39
Kentucky	3	30	Tennessee	4	20
Louisiana	4	20	Texas	3	30
Maine	6	6	Utah	0	50
Maryland	2	39	Vermont	5	11
Massachusetts	1	48	Virginia	7	3
Michigan	6	6	Washington	6	6
Minnesota	5	11	West Virginia	2	39
Mississippi	6	6	Wisconsin	9	1
Missouri	5	11	Wyoming	3	30

Appendix B: Complete State Partisan Rankings - Aggregate Measure, 1992-2013

We calculated these scores by coding each year that the Republican Party had the opportunity to control a state institution (governorship or legislature) as a one (1) and each year that the Democratic Party controlled a state institution as a negative one (-1). Each time the governorship was controlled by a third party or independent candidate, it was coded as a zero (0). Similarly, any time the legislature had split control between the two parties, the legislature was coded zero (0). The codes were assigned for both the governor's office and the legislature for each year. The summed total value of all the years is the state's overall score.

For example, a state with a Republican governor and a Republican legislature one year would be coded as a two (2); one (1) for the Republican control of the governorship and one (1) for the Republican legislature. If same state has a Democratic governor in the following year,

coded as negative one (-1), and a split legislature, coded as zero (0), then the state's overall partisan score for those two years would be one (1).

State	Partisan Score	State	Partisan Score
Utah	44	Colorado	-2
South Dakota	42	Georgia	-2
North Dakota	39	Mississippi	-2
Idaho	37	Alabama	-6
Ohio	31	Connecticut	-7
Arizona	26	Oklahoma	-8
South Carolina	24	Rhode Island	-9
Florida	23	Illinois	-10
Texas	22	Louisiana	-10
Wyoming	22	Missouri	-10
Kansas	21	Tennessee	-10
Alaska	19	Massachusetts	-14
Michigan	19	California	-16
Montana	16	Maine	-16
Pennsylvania	15	Oregon	-19
Wisconsin	12	Vermont	-19
Nebraska	8	Arkansas	-22
Virginia	8	New Mexico	-22
Indiana	3	Kentucky	-23
New Hampshire	3	Delaware	-25
Minnesota	2	Hawaii	-28
Nevada	2	North Carolina	-28

New Jersey	2	Washington	-30
Iowa	1	Maryland	-36
New York	0	West Virginia	-36

Appendix C: State Quality of Life Index Rankings

The following table shows the overall rank of SQLI for the states over the selected period. New Hampshire fared the best in overall economic outcomes, followed closely by Minnesota and Colorado. Mississippi scored the lowest, consistently ranking 49 or 50 during the 21 year period.

Ballotpedia's State Quality of Life Index (SQLI) Overall State Ranking, 1992-2012

State	Rank	State	Rank
New Hampshire	1	Alaska	26
Minnesota	2	Texas	27
Colorado	3	Georgia	28
Nebraska	4	Idaho	29
Iowa	5	Ohio	30
Connecticut	6	North Carolina	31
Virginia	7	Michigan	32
South Dakota	8	Hawaii	33
Massachusetts	9	Tennessee	34
Delaware	10	Rhode Island	35
Wyoming	11	Oregon	36
Maryland	12	Arizona	37
Wisconsin	13	Maine	38
New Jersey	14	Montana	39
Nevada	15	California	40
Washington	16	Oklahoma	41

Missouri	17	New York	42
Utah	18	Alabama	43
Illinois	19	Arkansas	44
Kansas	20	South Carolina	45
North Dakota	21	Louisiana	46
Indiana	22	Kentucky	47
Vermont	22	New Mexico	48
Florida	24	West Virginia	49
Pennsylvania	25	Mississippi	50

Appendix D: Key Values for Individual State Regressions

For each state, we ran a panel data regression with fixed effects to explore the individual trends in each state. Our independent variable was the type of government a state had, with coding identifying each state government as a number one through nine (1 through 9), with nine (9) as a Democratic trifecta and one (1) as a Republican trifecta, and gradations of more Democratic or more Republican governments between the two extremes.

Coding for Different Types of Party Government

Type of Government	Coding
Republican Trifecta	1
Other Party Governor – Republican Legislature	2
Democratic Governor – Republican Legislature	3
Republican Governor – Split Legislature	4
Other Party Governor – Split Legislature	5
Democratic Governor – Split Legislature	6
Republican Governor – Democratic	7

Legislature	
Other Party Governor – Democratic Legislature	8
Democratic Trifecta	9

The dependent variable was the state's SQLI ranking two years after the state government type identified in the independent variable. This lag is designed to allow the policies of that state government time to be implemented and affect the state's quality of life. Two years provides a rough measure, as some state policies take effect immediately while others may take many years to improve the quality of life in the state. These regression models are not specifically designed to identify trends in rankings, but they show some interesting correlations in the data. In these regressions, a positive coefficient indicates that a state has had higher ranking correlating with a more Republican government two years prior, while a negative coefficient indicates the a higher ranking correlating with a more Democratic government two years prior to the ranking. The P-value indicates the percent chance that this coefficient is zero (0), and that no real relationship exists. Statisticians typically consider a P-value of less than 0.10 or 0.05 thresholds for statistical significance, suggesting a high likelihood of a different coefficient value than zero (0). The R-squared value indicates the percent of the variation in the dependent variable that may be explained by variation in the independent variable in the model. An R-squared of one (1) would indicate perfect correlation, whereas an R-squared value of zero (0) would indicate no clear correlation between the variables.

Alabama

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.503	0.038	0.23

Alaska

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
3.078	0.008	0.35

Arizona

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-0.388	0.827	0.00

Arkansas

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-1.089	0.554	0.02

California

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-1.75	0.008	0.34

Colorado

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-0.287	0.407	0.04

Connecticut

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
2.015	0.112	0.14

Delaware

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.928	0.370	0.05

Florida

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
3.492	0.001	0.50

Georgia

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
1.907	0.000	0.71

Hawaii

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-1.511	0.422	0.04

Idaho

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-2.111	0.658	0.01

Illinois

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.359	0.658	0.01

Indiana

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-2.831	0.008	0.34

Iowa

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-0.137	0.698	0.01

Kansas

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.278	0.825	0.00

Kentucky

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-0.604	0.007	0.35

Louisiana

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-0.042	0.808	0.00

Maine

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.581	0.461	0.03

Maryland

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
4.700	0.074	0.18

Massachusetts

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
5.109	0.001	0.50

Michigan

Coefficient	P-value	R-squared
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(direction of relationship)	(statistical significance test)	(correlation strength)
1.615	0.192	0.10

Minnesota

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.463	0.130	0.13

Mississippi

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-0.072	0.601	0.02

Missouri

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.228	0.345	0.05

Montana

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.654	0.565	0.02

Nebraska

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-0.476	0.063	0.19

Nevada

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)

5.264	0.000	0.60
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New Hampshire

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-0.009	0.927	0.00

New Jersey

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-0.391	0.538	0.02

New Mexico

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-1.05	0.073	0.18

New York

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-0.651	0.380	0.05

North Carolina

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
1.366	0.098	0.15

North Dakota

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-5.204	0.166	0.11

Ohio

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
1.590	0.034	0.24

Oklahoma

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.590	0.114	0.14

Oregon

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-0.214	0.724	0.01

Pennsylvania

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.911	0.019	0.28

Rhode Island

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
4.469	0.086	0.16

South Carolina

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.038	0.872	0.00

South Dakota

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-2.33	0.115	0.14

Tennessee

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
1.434	0.001	0.46

Texas

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
3.307	0.001	0.48

Utah

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-	-	-

Note: A regression analysis on Utah could not be completed because the state government has remained a Republican trifecta for the entire study period. As such, the regression model did not have any changes in the independent variable to correlate with changes in the dependent variable.

Vermont

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.451	0.730	0.01

Virginia

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
1.171	0.344	0.05

Washington

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
-1.126	0.179	0.10

West Virginia

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
1.283	0.072	0.18

Wisconsin

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
1.616	0.091	0.16

Wyoming

Coefficient (direction of relationship)	P-value (statistical significance test)	R-squared (correlation strength)
0.350	0.810	0.00

Appendix F: Overall Average Rank of Rank of SQLI

The following is the overall rank of SQLI for the states over the selected period. New Hampshire fared the best in overall economic outcomes, followed closely by Minnesota and Colorado. Mississippi scored the lowest, consistently ranking 49 or 50 during the 21 year period.

Row Labels	Average of Rank	Rank of Rank
New Hampshire	2.0	1
Minnesota	3.1	2
Colorado	4.6	3
Nebraska	7.2	4
Iowa	8.1	5
Connecticut	8.5	6
Virginia	9.0	7
South Dakota	9.0	8
Massachusetts	9.2	9
Delaware	9.6	10
Wyoming	13.9	11
Maryland	15.3	12
Wisconsin	16.2	13
New Jersey	16.3	14
Nevada	16.6	15
Washington	17.8	16
Missouri	18.8	17
Utah	18.9	18
Illinois	19.0	19
Kansas	20.0	20
North Dakota	20.1	21
Vermont	22.4	22
Indiana	22.4	22
Florida	23.0	24
Pennsylvania	24.5	25
Alaska	25.8	26
Texas	26.6	27
Georgia	28.7	28
Idaho	28.9	29
Ohio	29.2	30
North Carolina	30.4	31
Michigan	30.9	32
Hawaii	31.1	33
Tennessee	31.4	34
Rhode Island	32.1	35
Oregon	32.4	36

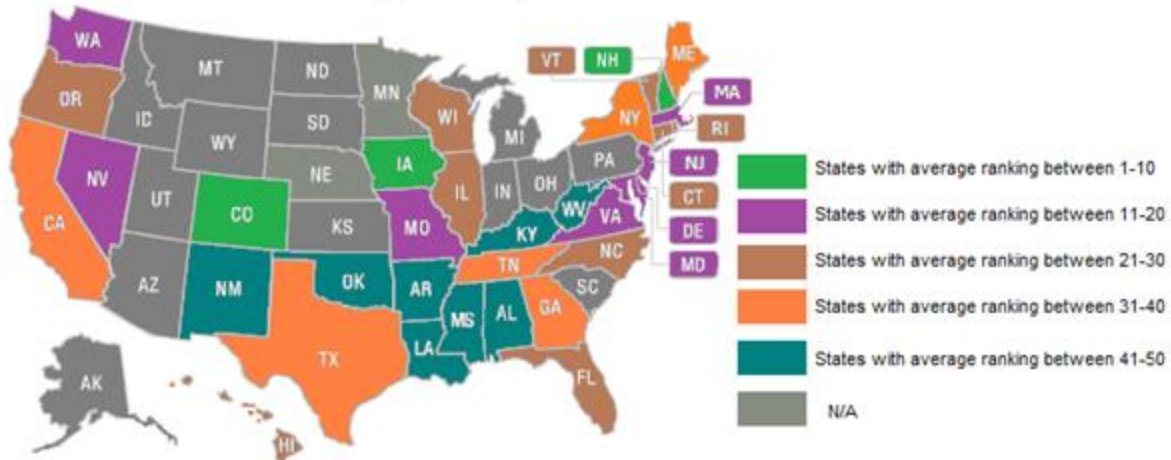
Arizona	32.4	37
Maine	35.0	38
Montana	35.3	39
California	35.8	40
Oklahoma	40.0	41
New York	40.2	42
Alabama	43.3	43
Arkansas	44.2	44
South Carolina	44.7	45
Louisiana	45.2	46
Kentucky	46.4	47
New Mexico	46.9	48
West Virginia	48.8	49
Mississippi	49.7	50

Appendix G: Additional Maps and Charts

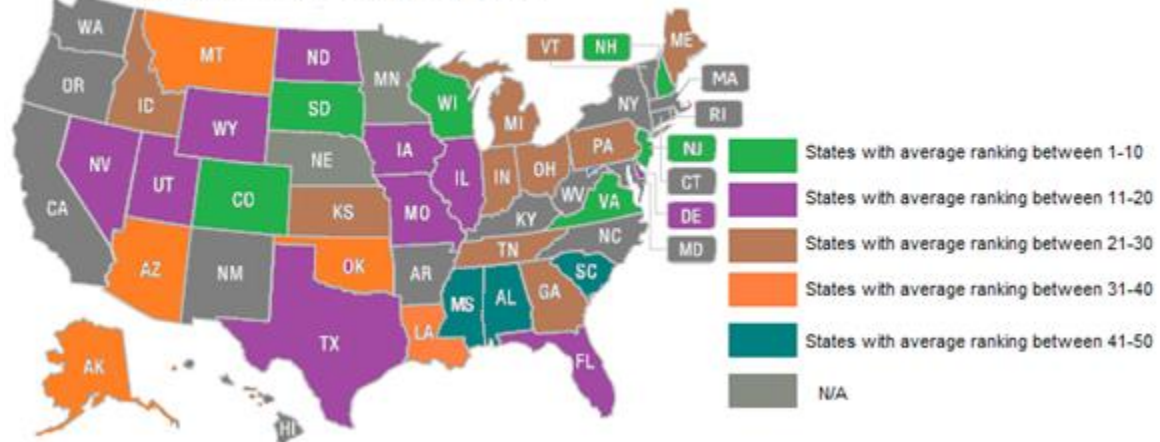
The table below shows the states that had the largest trends in one direction or the other in SQLI.

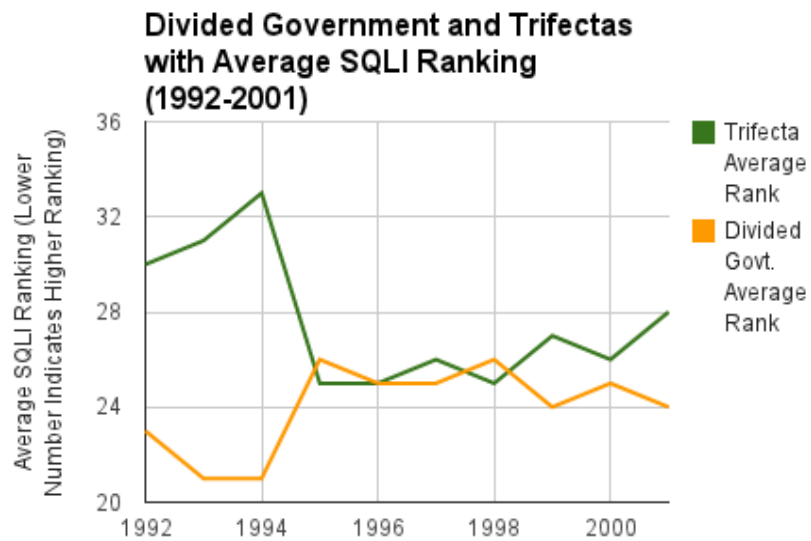
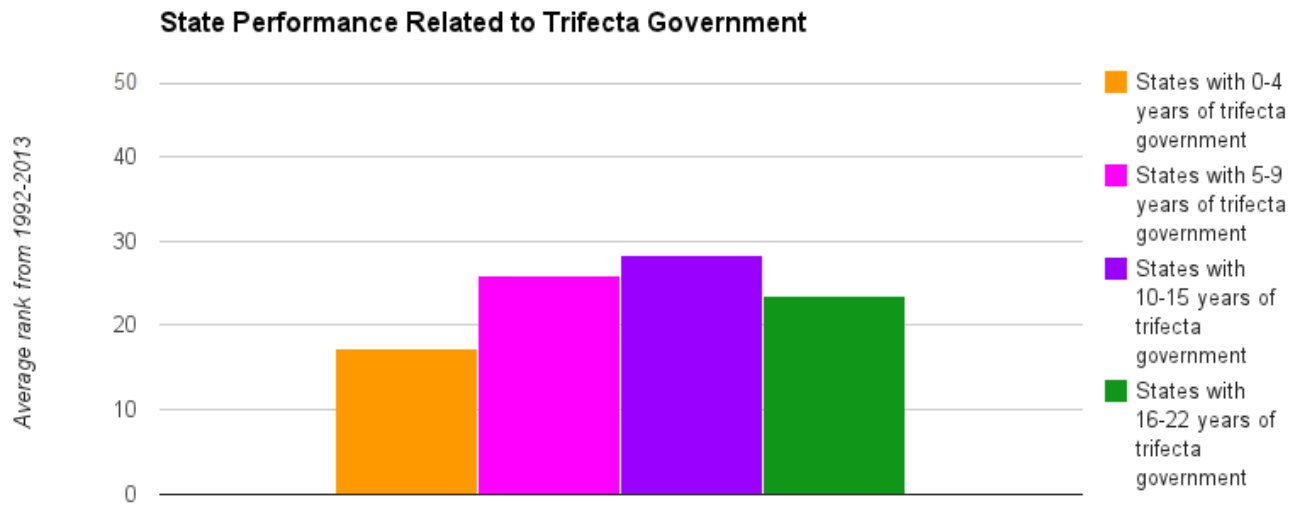
State	Overall SQLI	SQLI 1992-2001	SQLI 2002-2012
<i>Colorado</i>	4.57	3.3	5.73
<i>Florida</i>	23.05	28.2	18.36
<i>Georgia</i>	28.67	33.9	23.91
<i>Illinois</i>	19.05	11.1	26.27
<i>Missouri</i>	18.81	18.6	19
<i>New Jersey</i>	16.33	11.5	20.73
<i>South Carolina</i>	44.67	45	44.36
<i>Texas</i>	26.62	34.7	19.27

Average SQLI Rankings for States during Democratic trifectas (1992-2012)

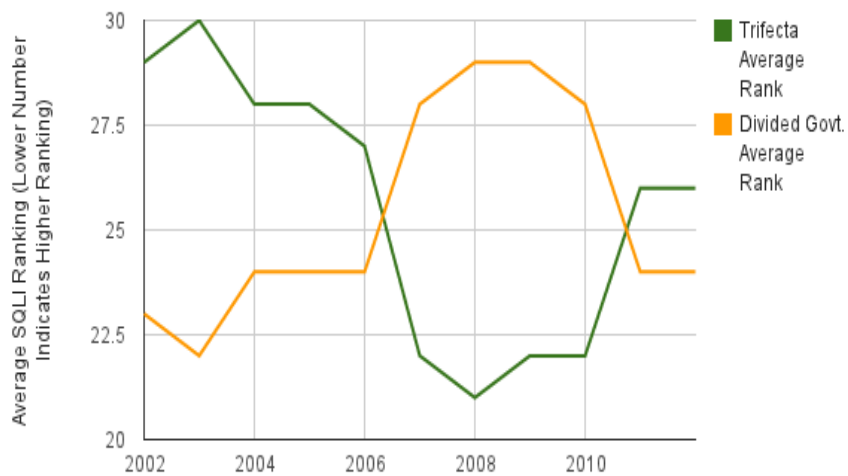


Average SQLI Rankings for States during GOP trifectas (1992-2012)





Divided Government and Trifectas with Average SQLI Ranking (2002-2012)



Divided Government and Trifectas with Average SQLI Ranking (1992-2012)

