ELECT

**Electoral Learning
and Capacity Training**

Building Professional Electoral Management

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The Electoral Integrity Project
Why Elections Fail And What We Can Do About It

AWEB
Association of World Election Bodies

The Electoral Integrity Project

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Content

Executive summary

Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) are the central agencies responsible for running elections in countries around the world. This report seeks to understand the common challenges facing these agencies, and how to expand capacity and skills associated with professional electoral administration.

To address these issues, the Electoral Learning and Capacity Training project (ELECT) collected information from personnel working in EMBs around the world. Three sources of data are compared.

- The *ELECT Organizational Survey* gathered macro-level information about the agency from upper-management personnel in 35 diverse EMBs.
- To explore in greater depth, the *ELECT Staff Survey* gathered individual-level evidence from staff working within EMBs in two selected case-studies – South Korea and Mexico.
- Finally, the performance of EMBs was assessed separately through the *Perceptions of Electoral Integrity* rolling expert survey (PEI-4.5).

The structure, professional ethos, and capacity of EMBs

The ELECT organization survey constructed measures of the formal structural independence, the professional ethos and the functional capacity of Electoral Management Bodies. The evidence was unable to confirm that these factors related significantly at macro-level to either the performance of EMBs and the level of electoral integrity in the 35 countries under comparison. Elsewhere, evidence suggests that many societal-level factors influence patterns of electoral integrity, including structural conditions such as levels of economic development and natural resources, the institutional checks and balances in any constitution, and the role of international technical assistance and aid.[1] It appears that these conditional factors are likely to be more important in determining the overall performance of the EMB than its structural design, professionalization, or capacity.

Case-studies of electoral officials in Mexico and Republic of Korea

Nevertheless, the impact at macro-level among diverse societies provides only imperfect clues about many dimensions of how EMBs work. To consider this issue in greater depth, the ELECT staff surveys explored two case-studies of electoral officials employed in Mexico and the Republic of Korea.

The results show that compared with the Republic of Korea, staff in Mexico have greater experience of working in the public sector and in the conduct of elections, and report more skills and knowledge of electoral issues. For both countries, longer work experience strengthens electoral knowledge.

When it comes to training and capacity building, *mid-level EMB personnel in Mexico also benefit from better* training than in the Republic of Korea. Having a training plan improves working skills and knowledge of elections in the Mexican case and job satisfaction in both cases.

1. Introduction

Electoral management bodies (EMBs) are the front-line agencies for electoral governance. Ideally for contests to meet global norms, electoral officials should ensure that they deliver public services meeting professional international standards.[2] As International IDEA suggests, electoral management should seek to follow certain fundamental guiding principles, including independence, impartiality, integrity, transparency, efficiency, professionalism and service-mindedness.[3]

Yet meeting these ideal standards generates major challenges. These organizations are typically responsible for a wide range of tasks, which may include determining who is eligible to vote, who or what appears on the ballot, polling and conducting and tabulating the votes. EMBs may also be involved with the regulation and oversight of campaign finance, the registration of political parties, the role of the news media during campaigns, electoral boundaries, civic education, and dispute resolution. Consequently, EMBs serve multiple functions central for the smooth conduct of elections, for the legitimacy of democratic institutions, and for peaceful transitions in power.[4]

The challenges facing EMBs are substantial since elections are large-scale, complex and sensitive operations and agencies need the logistical capacity to develop strategic and operational plans; to assess election costs and prepare budgets; to improve voter registration processes; to implement procurement plans, to manage the vote count, and to handle any complaints and disputes.

To help EMBs meet these challenges, the international development community typically provides local agencies with technical assistance in many areas such as electoral administration and planning, review of electoral laws and regulations, electoral dispute resolution, boundary delimitation, voter registration, election budgeting, logistics, procurement of election materials, use of technologies, training of election officials, voter and civic education, voting and counting operations, election security and coordination of international donor assistance.

As the administration of elections has received more scrutiny, it has also become more professional. Electoral managers have learnt from experience of successive contests, from networks sharing best practices, and from programs of technical assistance. A diverse range of development agencies work with local partners to provide resources, capacity building and training programs, including multilateral regional organizations, bilateral donors, and NGOs. For example, the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division, and the United Nations Development Programme, and other related agencies, provide electoral assistance to support Member States in holding periodic, inclusive and transparent elections that are perceived as credible and establishing nationally-sustainable electoral processes. The United Nations provides electoral assistance to approximately sixty countries each year, or one third of all member states, at the request of national governments or a UN General Assembly or Security Council mandate.[5] This is an important part of broader efforts seeking to strengthen elections and democratic governance.

It is estimated that today multilateral organizations invest an estimated US$5 billion annually to assist states seeking to strengthen democratic governance, a growing total, although still relatively modest as a proportion of the overall development aid budget.[6] Many sub-sectors are supported through aid, including about half a billion annually allocated for the provision of electoral assistance.[7] Programs engage diverse agencies, with most

efforts focusing upon building the technical capacity and skills of electoral management bodies, as the official agencies concerned with running elections. Other initiatives have been designed to strengthen the electoral role of legislatures, the judiciary, political parties, civic society organizations, electoral observers, and the news media.

Despite the growth of technical electoral assistance programs, and evaluation case-studies, it remains difficult to generalise about their overall effectiveness with any degree of confidence. Several previous assessments of electoral assistance programs, drawing upon qualitative methods among selected cases, have drawn diverse conclusions. [8] Several success cases can be highlighted but nevertheless, given the complex range of responsibilities, the complexity of the tasks, and the timeliness and sensitivies of the process, too often electoral administrators still encounter problems, even in long-established democracies, whether arising from simple human errors, technical malfunctions, logistical failures or electoral malpractices. [9]

To contribute towards this body of knowledge, this report seeks to deepen understanding of electoral management bodies. In particular, who works in EMB organizations and what are their values, skills, and capacities? How and why does the degree of professionalism vary from one organization to the next? Does professionalism affect electoral integrity? How can the professionalism of electoral management bodies be strengthened to improve their effectiveness and enhance electoral integrity?

A growing body of research has begun to shed light on these issues.[10] Previous work suggests that several factors may potentially explain why EMBs vary in their capacity to overcome these challenges, including the formal organizational structure, the functional capacity of EMBs and the predominant administrative culture and ethos.

1.1. Formal organizational structures: Independent v. governmental EMBs

The first potential explanation focuses on the *formal organizational structures*. It is commonly suggested that elections work better where electoral authorities are established as independent institutions which are formally-separate administrative agencies operating at arms-length from politics, to insulate them from executive meddling. [11] Independent EMBs differ from those embedded as units staffed by civil servants within existing government departments and local authorities. Independence can also be conceptualized more broadly to include autonomy from any partisan influences, for example where EMBs are composed of judicial or civil society appointments.[12]

Establishing independent EMBs have been repeatedly recommended by international bodies such as the Venice Commission's 2002 *Code of Good Practice*: "Where there is no longstanding tradition of administrative authorities' independence from those holding political power, independent, impartial electoral commissions must be set up at all levels."[13] Yet previous comparative studies seeking to substantiate the claim that the formal independence of EMBs is a critical factor that affects trust in electoral officials and levels of electoral integrity have reported mixed findings. [14] The lack of confirmation may be due to the typology which has commonly been used, however, since many comparative studies have drawn upon the classification of types of EMBs published by International IDEA.[15] In practice, in this comparison, it remains difficult to distinguish de jure and de facto independence. It is also not straightforward to classify the independence of agencies from executive or partisan interference, however, since there are multiple dimensions, including institutional (legal), personal (appointment), financial (budgetary control), and functional

(competences). [16] In addition, the effects of independent EMBs may differ in traditional and established democracies, as well as in states with weak and strong governance capacity.[17]

1.2. Functional capacities: Skills, know-how and resources

The second approach emphasizes *functional capacity* and how far public sector agencies have the skills, experience, and resources needed to manage the deliver public goods and services.[18] This includes, by extension, how far electoral authorities have sufficient technical expertise, trained and competent officials, consistent procedural guidelines and rules, sufficient planning time, and adequate budgets. This is also a plausible claim which is widely assumed, and there is a growing body of literature examining the functional capacity of EMBs in several established democracies, including the US and UK.[19] Beyond case-studies, far less has been established about the capacity of EMBs in developing countries, including their human, technical, and financial resources, and the core claims have been difficult to test systematically from the existing cross-national evidence.

1.3. Professional ethos

The final account suggests that elections are most likely to meet international standards and principles of electoral integrity where a *professional ethos* predominates among officials within the public sector, setting common norms, procedures, and expectations about what is acceptable behavior for employees within the organization.[20] The professionalization of public administration implies staff dedicated to public service, with appropriate occupational qualifications, knowledge, and training for their roles and responsibilities, and long experience of working in the sector. Like other dimensions of public services, electoral integrity is thought to be strengthened where cultural norms of impartial service in the public interest predominate rather than norms and ethical practices of patronage, partisanship, and clientelism, serving particular groups.

Figure 1: Overall model
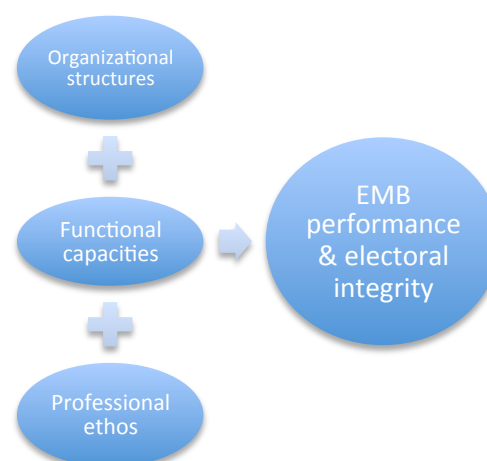
The formal structure, functional capacity and the professional ethos of the public sector therefore each provide plausible explanations for how far the performance of EMBs meets standards of electoral integrity. Nevertheless, outside of several established democracies

and affluent societies, the existing comparative evidence examining these claims has been limited, generating the need for undertaking this new research. Figure 1 provides an overview of the approach, drawing on concepts from the literature and their measurement.

1.4. Research design and evidence

To throw new light on these issues, in January 2016 the Electoral Integrity Project (EIP) launched the ELECT project, in cooperation with the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB). The Electoral Learning and Capacity training (ELECT) project focuses upon the following questions:

1. Under which conditions are EMBs most effective in managing elections?
2. How far do formal structures, functional capacity and professional ethos vary from one organization to the next?
3. To what extent do formal structures, functional capacity and the professional ethos affect the performance of EMBs and thereby contribute towards enhancing the integrity of elections?

The report draws upon three sources of evidence.

1. The *ELECT Organizational Survey* collected macro-level information from senior personnel working in 35 diverse Electoral Management Bodies. The Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) provided a comprehensive list of contact points within each national EMB from their membership. The questionnaire was distributed online through the Qualtrics platform between June and August 2016. Out of the 106 national EMBs initially contacted, 35 organizations responded to the survey (or a response rate of 33%).

2. The *ELECT Staff Survey* collected individual-level information from a range of mid-level personnel working within EMBs in two selected case-studies – South Korea and Mexico. For Mexico, the Instituto Nacional Electoral (INE) provided a comprehensive list of all their mid-level personnel. For the Republic of Korea, A-WEB provided a list of all personnel contacts (e-mails only) within the National Election Commission (NEC). The questionnaire was distributed online through the Qualtrics platform between June and August 2016. The final sample contains 245 respondents for Korea (or a response rate of approximately 11%), and 357 respondents for Mexico (21%).

3. Finally, the *Perceptions of Electoral Integrity* expert rolling expert survey (PEI-4.5) provided an independent way to gauge performance, including the overall integrity of elections in each country, as well as the impartiality, transparency and integrity of the electoral authorities. The latest release of the PEI dataset was analysed, averaging the overall performance of national parliamentary and presidential elections held from mid-2012 to mid-2016 in each country.[21]

This report provides an assessment of the findings. Section 2 describes how organizations vary across thirty-five diverse EMBs. Section 3 reports findings from the case-studies of mid-level personnel in the Republic of Korea and Mexico. The Appendix in Section 4 provides further technical details about the data and methods.

2. Types and structures of EMB: a global comparison

The ELECT project gathered evidence from a range of thirty-five diverse EMBs worldwide to understanding the common features of these organizations and how well they are equipped to deal with the challenges associated with electoral administration.

2.1. Electoral Integrity and EMB performance

Information about the structure and capacity of EMBs was obtained from diverse countries that vary considerably in their historical electoral experiences, regional locations, types of regimes, and levels of democratic, economic and human development. Some have experienced political instability and autocratic regimes, including Afghanistan, Cambodia, Thailand and Zimbabwe. Others, such as Mexico and Argentina, consolidated democratic institutions during recent decades. The comparison also includes some long-established democracies, such as Canada and New Zealand.

The research design therefore allows ELECT to compare how electoral management varies across a diverse set of countries, regimes, and national contexts. As the same time, it is important to note that multiple conditions, apart from electoral management, can be expected to influence the integrity of elections around the world. Structural constraints, international forces, and institutional arrangements are all contributing factors that help explain why sometimes elections succeed and fail to meet international standards. [22]

Performance indices

The cases under comparison also vary substantially in the performance of their elections and their EMBs. This report draws upon the concept of 'electoral integrity', which is understood to refer to agreed international conventions and global norms, applying universally to all countries worldwide through the election cycle, including during the pre-election period, the campaign, on polling day, and its aftermath. The Electoral Integrity Project measures integrity worldwide through a battery of questions asked of election experts. These questions monitor all stages of the electoral cycle, ranging from electoral laws and procedures, to electoral boundaries, media coverage, campaign finance, and electoral administration.

The concept of electoral integrity is measured through the Perceptions of Electoral Integrity (PEI). This rolling expert survey monitors the performance of all national parliamentary and presidential elections in all countries worldwide (except for micro-states with populations below 100,000) one month after each contest occurs. The expert survey includes fifty questions measuring the performance of all stages of the electoral cycle, ranging from electoral laws and procedures to electoral boundaries, media coverage, campaign finance, and electoral administration. Reponses use five point agree-disagree scales. The latest release, PEI-4.5, covers 153 countries and 231 national elections held from mid-2012 to mid-2016. More details are provided in the Technical Appendix in Section 4 of this report.

Two performance indices are used in this study. The first is a macro-level measure of the performance of the electoral authorities. This was constructed from the following four items:

- The election authorities were impartial
- The authorities distributed information to citizens
- The authorities allowed public scrutiny of their performance
- The election authorities performed well

In addition, for the overall performance of elections, the study used the Perceptions of Electoral Integrity (PEI) Index. This is an additive function of the 49 imputed variables, standardized to 100-points. [23]

As can be seen from Figure 2, based on these indices, some countries in ELECT have contests which experts rate highly in both the overall PEI index of electoral integrity, as well in the PEI measure of the performance of the electoral authorities, like Costa Rica, New Zealand, and Canada. Many cases are clustered in the center of the distribution. By contrast, others like Afghanistan and Cambodia represent cases where elections fail to meet agreed international conventions and global norms.[24]

Figure 2: Perceptions of Electoral Integrity index and EMB performance
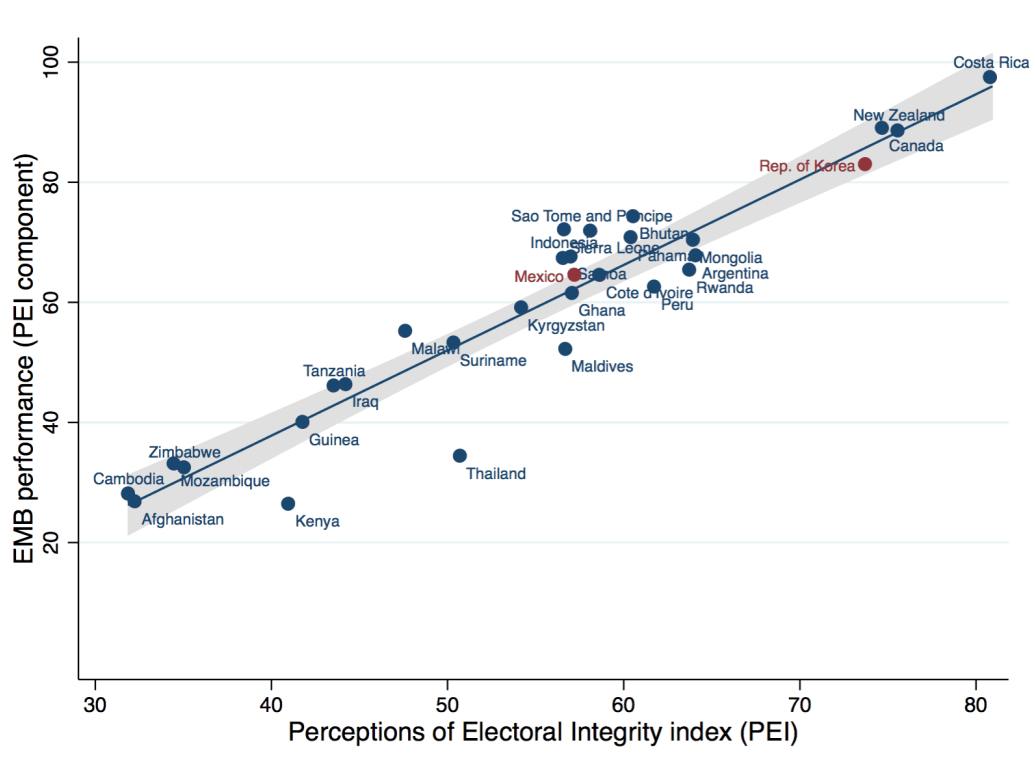
Note: Levels of electoral integrity and EMB performance for the 35 countries included in ELECT. Both variables vary between 0 (lower) and 100 (higher). Linear fit, 95% Confidence intervals. R^2=0.90. For details about the construction and measurement if the PEI indices, see the Technical Appendix in Section 4 of this report.
Source: PEI 4.5 www.electoralintegrityproject.com

The core issue which arises is what characteristics distinguish countries, elections, and EMBs which vary in these performance indices. Previous research suggests that many factors well beyond the scope of this report are likely to contribute towards performance, including levels of democratic and economic development, types of regime institutions, and informational forces.[25] Further research will monitor the effects of these conditions, using comprehensive models designed to explain these patterns more fully. This report focuses

only upon describing how far the role of the formal structures, functional capacity and professional ethos of EMBs are associated with both performance indices.

Is EMB performance related to their structure, capacities and ethos?

International IDEA emphasizes that the credibility and integrity of election processes requires EMBs meeting many principles, including formal organizational independence, functional capacity, and professional administrative ethos. [26] In what ways does the independence of EMBs (structure), their functional capacities, and their professionalism (ethos) affect the performance of electoral authorities and, beyond that, the overall quality of the elections?

2.2 Structural Independence

Structural independence refers to whether EMBs are established as autonomous agencies which are free of direct influence by governmental bodies, especially the executive. The importance of an impartial body is widely regarded as desirable for electoral integrity, although as the Venice Commission suggests, impartiality is not synonymous with independence.[27] Previous research has compared the effects of governmental, mixed, and autonomous EMB models. [28] In this aspect, studies have focused upon the mode of appointment of EMB members or commissioners, considering two models: "expert based" and "multi-party" or "watchdog" EMBs. [29]
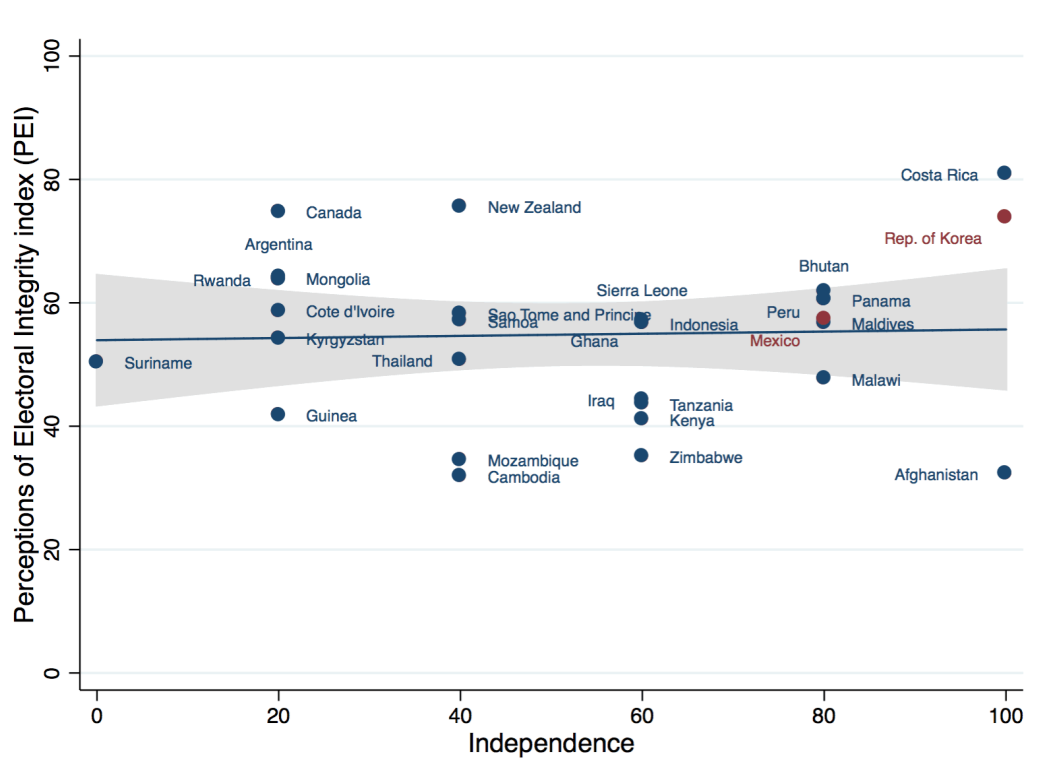
Figure 3: EMB performance by Independence index
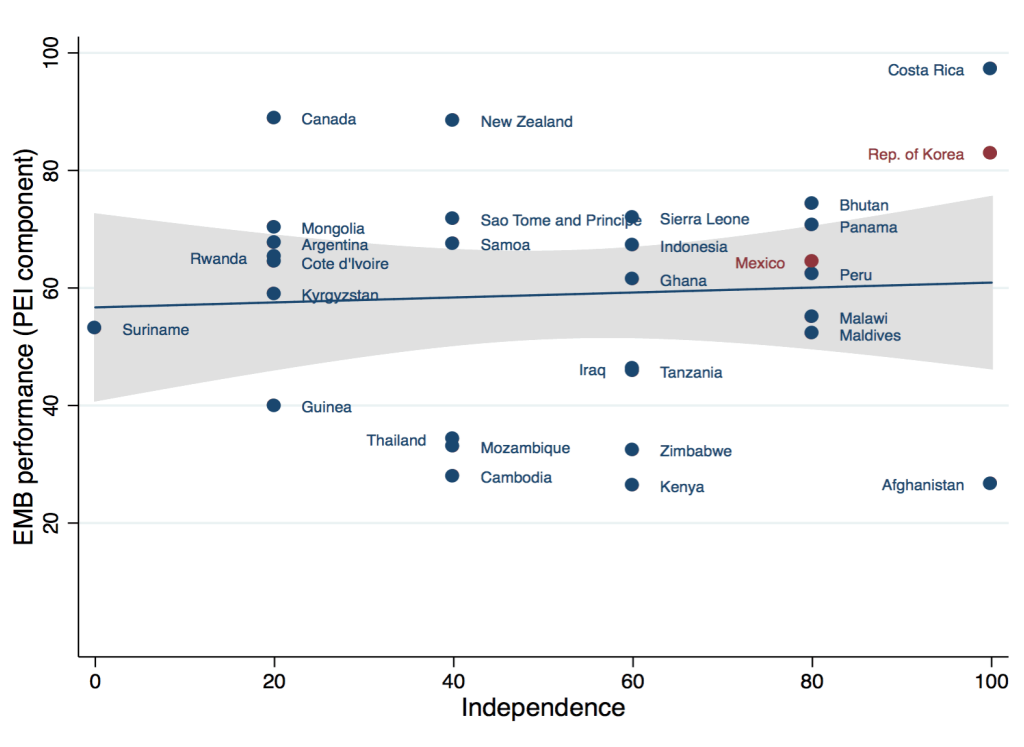
Note: EMB performance and Independence of EMBs for the 35 countries included in ELECT. Both variables vary between 0 (lower) and 100 (higher). Linear fit, 95% Confidence intervals. R2=0.003.
Source: ELECT Organizational Survey and PEI 4.5 www.electoralintegrityproject.com

ELECT developed an index to measure the formal independence of the EMB from government. These items were classified by whether the EMB could be influenced through the appointment of personnel, and in particular, its Head officer. The survey sought information on whether the Chair or President was appointed by an independent body, members of the EMB, or the Courts (as opposed to the government or the legislature). It also determined whether laws protected the Chair or President from being removed arbitrarily as well as whether Chairs or Presidents of EMBs were prohibited from belonging to a political party. Just two countries—the Republic of Korea and Afghanistan-- met all six criteria for independence. In contrast, Suriname and the Bahamas scored the lowest, meeting just one of the six criteria.

Figure 3 illustrates the relationship between the ELECT Independence Index and the PEI measure of EMB performance. Figure 4 displays similar patterns when the degree of independence is measured against the PEI Index of Electoral Integrity. In both, there are not any controls for the many other factors which can shape the quality of elections, such as levels of socioeconomic development and the length of experience of democracy in any country.

Figure 4: Electoral Integrity by Independence index

Note: Perceptions of Electoral Integrity (PEI) and Independence of EMBs for the 35 countries included in ELECT. Both variables vary between 0 (lower) and 100 (higher). Linear fit, 95% Confidence intervals. R2=0.001.
Source: ELECT Organizational Survey and PEI 4.5 www.electoralintegrityproject.com

Reports published by the international community commonly suggest that establishing the formal independence of EMBs is important so that officials are free to operate without undue political interference. In fact, the results show that contrary to these expectations, *no clear and consistent link is generally observed between the independence of EMBs and*

their performance or levels of electoral integrity. There are indeed several cases of independent EMBs which display strong performance, such as in Costa Rica and the Republic of Korea, but this is not an invariate relationship. The overall results tend to confirm previous research, based on the type of EMB classified by International IDEA, which has also failed to establish convincing relationships.[30] One reason is that the formal structure and autonomy of the EMB is often path dependent; thus governmental models which work well can be found in countries such as Sweden, Canada and New Zealand, where there is little undue government interference in the electoral process, whereas countries with a more problematic record of electoral integrity, such as Afghanistan and Zimbabwe, set up agencies which are nominally more independent.

2.3 Professional ethos

If not the organizational structure, then professional, experienced and competent electoral authorities may hold the answer for having better elections.

The concept of a 'professional' administrative ethos is complex. Professionalization in public sector employment generally refers to how far staff are appointed with appropriate educational qualifications for their roles and responsibilities, how far they are dedicated to working in one policy sector (gaining experience over successive elections), and how far they receive appropriate professional and technical training concerning the procedures and norms of electoral administration.

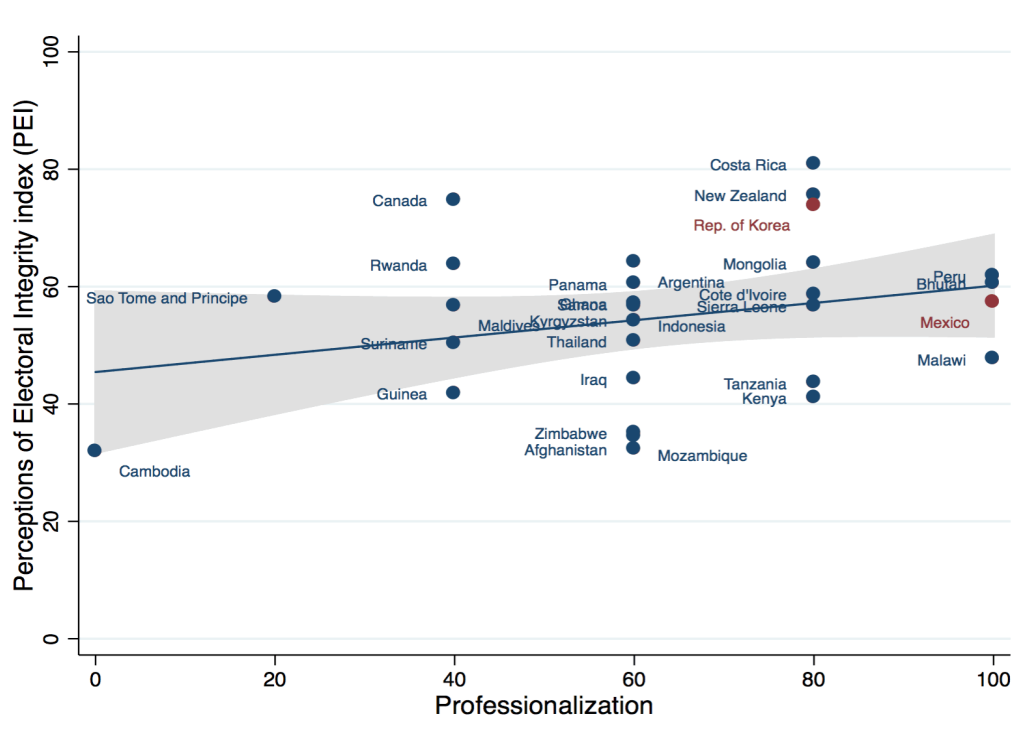**Figure 5:** EMB performance by Professionalization index
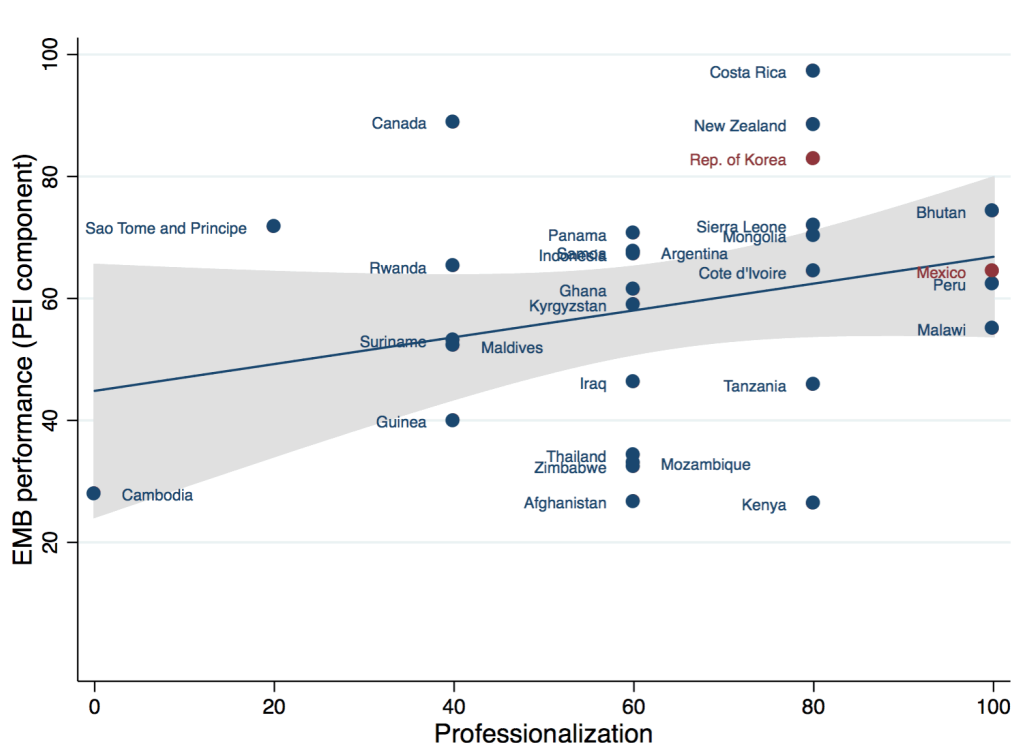
Note: EMB performance and Professionalization of EMBs for the 35 countries included in ELECT. Both variables vary between 0 (lower) and 100 (higher). Linear fit, 95% Confidence intervals. R^2=0.07.
Source: ELECT Organizational Survey and PEI 4.5 www.electoralintegrityproject.com

The degree of professionalization is measured in ELECT by whether i) the EMB is a permanent institution (vs. temporary); ii) the fact that the EMB never uses unpaid volunteer personnel during elections; iii) the fact that the EMB conducts regular trainings for its own staff; iv) the existence of a special department in charge of providing training programmes; v) the fact that the EMB itself provides technical support during elections concerning the use of election technology.

Figure 5 compares the ELECT Professionalism Index with the PEI index of EMB Performance, while Figure 6 compares professionalism with the overall PEI Index of Electoral Integrity. As in the previous graphs, there are no controls for varied societies, such as levels of development and democracy. The observed results show that, contrary to expectations, *the measure of professionalism is a poor predictor of both the performance of the EMB and overall levels of electoral integrity.*

Figure 6: Electoral integrity by Professionalization index

Note: Perceptions of Electoral Integrity (PEI) and Professionalization of EMBs for the 35 countries included in ELECT. Both variables vary between 0 (lower) and 100 (higher). Linear fit, 95% Confidence intervals. R2=0.07. Source: ELECT Organizational Survey and PEI 4.5 www.electoralintegrityproject.com

2.4. Functional capacities

Electoral management bodies are responsible for many of the essential elements involved in the conduct of elections. These include determining who is eligible to vote, receiving and certifying nominations of electoral candidates and parties and counting and tabulating votes (see ACE). In addition, some EMBs take on broader responsibilities that include other tasks such as voter registration, boundary delimitation, and campaign finance. Mexico illustrates

an organization that takes on a broad range of responsibilities, while Rwanda and Senegal are more limited.

The functional capacity of any organization refers to its ability to fulfil its mandate, including through the provision of appropriate human, technical and financial resources. Training of staff in the procedures, practices and norms of electoral management is central to this process. Clearly an EMB could be largely autonomous of government but it could still lack the skills, know-how and budget which would allow officials to manage a contest efficiently. Capacity can be monitored through a wide range of indices, such as the size of the staff or budget (as a proportion of the electorate), the educational qualifications and length of experience of staff, or the technical quality of its information and communications infrastructure.

One particular aspect of the capacity of any organization comes from the training of its personnel. ELECT sought details on the extent to which public servants and other actors involved in the electoral process receive training across a comprehensive range of activities, including civic education, electoral law and procedures, voter registration, and campaign finance. The full range of topics are listed in Table 3. These include the frequency of training for staff and other actors, including parties and candidates, citizens, government officials, media, civil society organizations, and even other EMBs. ELECT also reviewed whether training plans were in place. Table 2 reports the findings by country. Many of the EMBs engage in training on a regular and frequent basis, though there are some exceptions notably Guam, Sao tome and Principe and Mongolia who report that training either never or rarely occurs. There is also a substantial amount of variation in the topics that are covered.

Figure 7: EMB performance by the Capacity index

Note: EMB performance and Training of EMBs for the 35 countries included in ELECT. Both variables vary between 0 (lower) and 100 (higher). Linear fit, 95% Confidence intervals. R2=0.004.
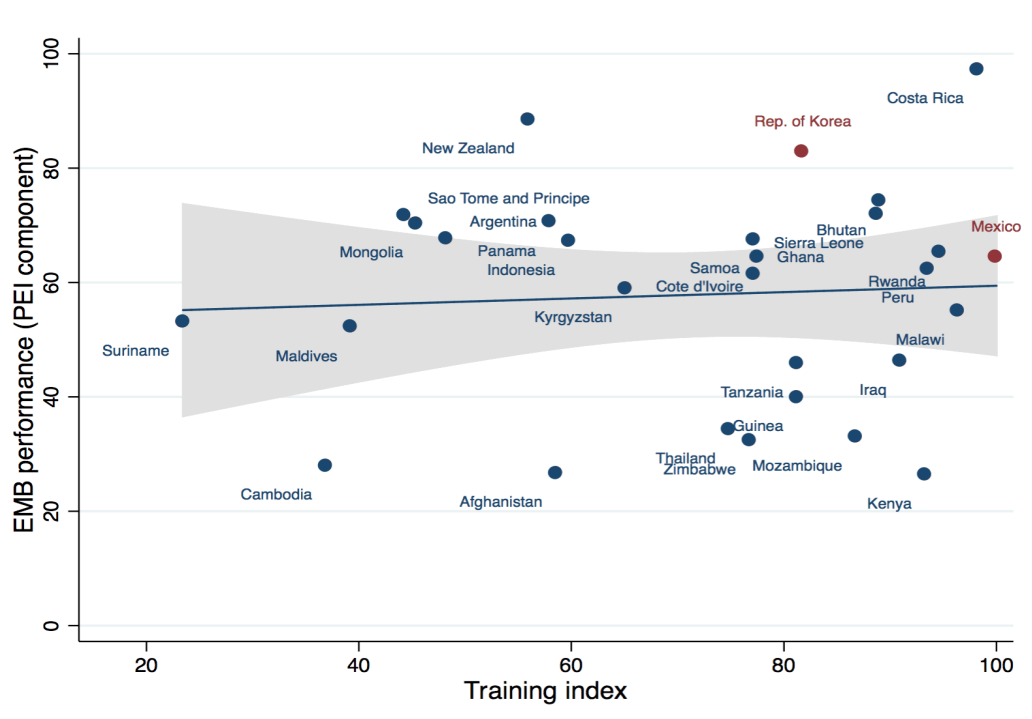Source: ELECT Organizational Survey and PEI 4.5 www.electoralintegrityproject.com

To compare how training varies from one context to the next, ELECT developed an overall index of functional capacity. The index varies between 0 (very low) and 100 (very high). The functional capacity of EMBs was defined as an organization having a permanent structure, relying entirely on paid employees, conducting training on a regular basis with a special department dedicated for training. In addition, ELECT measured expertise, based on whether EMB staff provided technical support for software or hardware used for voter registration and vote counting. EMBs in four countries met all these criteria. These include Mexico, Malawi, Peru, and Bhutan. Cambodia did not meet any of the criteria and Sao Tome and Principe and Guam met one.

The results show little correlation at macro-level when the capacity building index was compared against both EMB performance (in Figure 7) *and electoral integrity* (Figure 8). Thus, although the international development community often emphasizes the role of capacity building as important for more effective agencies, and although EMBs increasingly provide training for their staff, at macro-level, it could not be established from the ELECT evidence that this necessarily had a positive impact upon organizational performance. To go further, therefore, it is important to understand what and how training is being offered, on what topics, and to whom, using individual-level evidence from staff employed in electoral management bodies. The next section therefore turns from the ELECT Organizational Survey to the two cases where Staff Surveys were conducted.

Figure 8: Electoral integrity by the Capacity index

Note: Perceptions of Electoral Integrity (PEI) and Training of EMBs for the 35 countries included in ELECT. Both variables vary between 0 (lower) and 100 (higher). Linear fit, 95% Confidence intervals. R2=0.003.
Source: ELECT Organizational Survey and PEI 4.5 www.electoralintegrityproject.com

3. Training needs and capacities of EMBs personnel: Case-studies of the Republic of Korea and Mexico

To go beyond the formal macro-level structure, ELECT also conducted a micro-level Staff Survey, distributed to mid-level EMB personnel in two case-studies: The Republic of Korea and Mexico. Both countries transitioned towards a multi-party democracy with relatively free and fair elections in the late-20th century, after decades of one-party dominance. Nowadays, the Republic of Korea and Mexico hold competitive elections that allow for alternation of parties and leaders, and both have a vibrant civil society.

Both countries are presidential democracies with clear separation of powers and with similar party systems, measured by the effective number of political parties (ENPP).[31] Furthermore, as discussed earlier, Mexico and the Republic of Korea exemplify EMBs that invest substantially in training and capacity building initiatives for their staff (and beyond), and both have an overall quality of electoral contests which is above average, according to the PEI-4.5 index. Both countries have similar scores in terms of the professionalization and independence of their EMB.

This section describes the results of the ELECT Staff Surveys, conducted between June and August 2016, among mid-level EMB personnel in both cases. ELECT contains data from 357 respondents for Mexico and 245 for the Republic of Korea. The report discusses and compares the profile of EMB personnel in these cases, especially with regards of professional experience, skills and knowledge of electoral issues (3.1). Section 3.2 compares how personnel in those EMBs perceive training and capacity building, and the last section (3.3) discusses how the personnel profile and training experience affect their perceptions of EMB performance, overall integrity, skills and overall job satisfaction.

3.1. Profile: knowledge, skills and experience

What is the overall expertise of mid-level EMB personnel? Elections, especially in highly competitive and relatively "young" democracies as Mexico and South Korea, are complex matters. How do Mexico and South Korea personnel compare, in terms of experience, skills and knowledge? The first clear result that emerges from our analyses (Table 4) is that *personnel in Mexico seems, on average, to have a greater working experience*. This is overall the case for experience in public service, in EMB more specifically and in the current post, where personnel in Mexico has a significantly higher average, in years, than personnel in South Korea.

A similar trend also exists for self-reported working skills and electoral knowledge. Our analyses (Table 4) show, again, that *personnel in the Mexican EMB report statistically higher levels of self-evaluated working skills and knowledge*. Interestingly, for both Mexico and the Republic of Korea, a longer experience in working for the EMB (in years) seems only slightly associated with higher skills, but clearly increases the level of self-reported knowledge of electoral matters (Figure 9). Beyond the difference in self-reported skills and knowledge, thus, *working experience has virtually the same effect in Mexico and South Korea*.

Figure 9: Experience, skills and electoral knowledge in Mexico and Korea
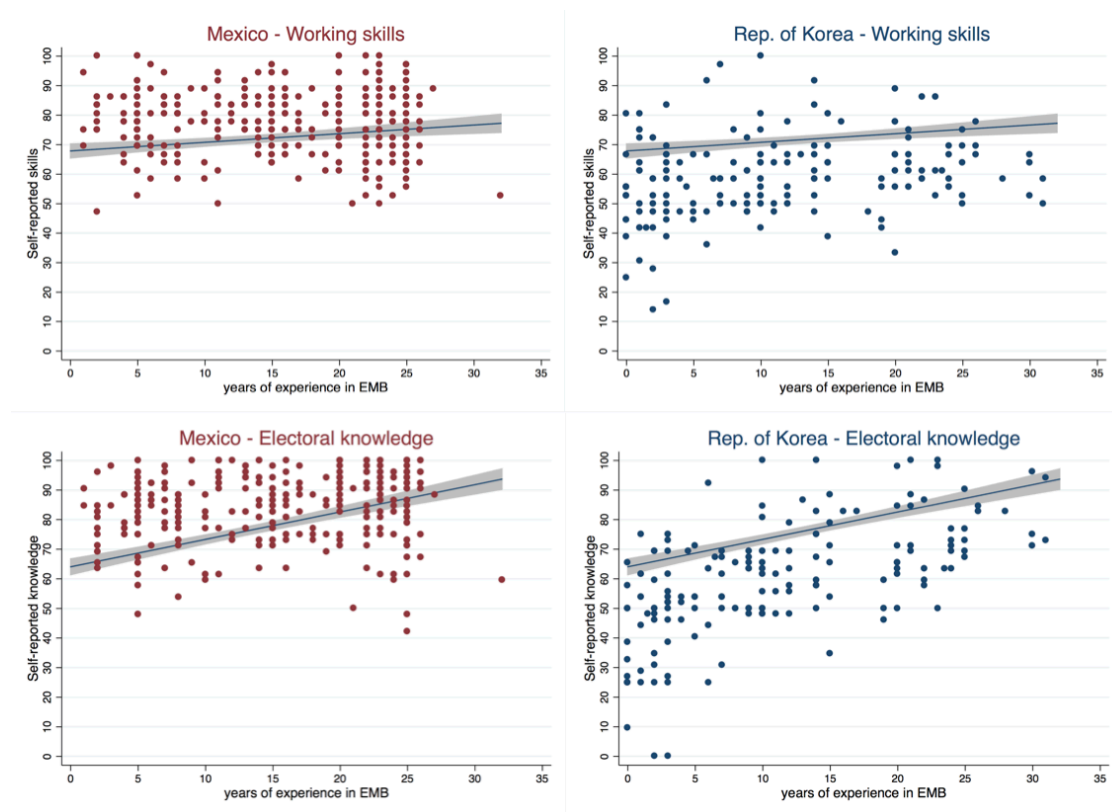
Note: Self-reported working skills and electoral knowledge vary between 0 (lower) and 100 (higher). Linear fit, 95% Confidence intervals
Source: ELECT Staff Survey

Table 4 highlights that the *socio-demographic profile of mid-level personnel determines the level of experience, skills and self-reported knowledge,* and sometimes in a different way in the two countries examined. Thus, in Mexico our analyses reveal a clear gender gap when it comes to working experience, women systematically reporting a significantly lower number of years, on average; in Korea, those differences seem less severe. The situation is however the opposite when it comes to self-reported skills and knowledge: in Mexico the differences between male and female employees are rather minimal, whereas in Korea those differences are more important. Similarly, age does not seem to affect skills and knowledge in Mexico, whereas in Korea older members of the personnel report higher knowledge and skills. Education plays a smaller role, even if it significantly increases electoral knowledge in both Mexico and Korea. Personnel with higher diplomas seem to have a greater experience in Korea, whereas in Mexico the association is never statistically significant. Finally, our data reveal no substantial difference in experience, skills or knowledge across different living areas (urban vs. rural), in both countries.

3.2. Training: why, when and how

Professional trainings are widely used to strengthen both functional capacity and a professional culture within the public sector, both of which set the broader context within which electoral authorities operate. Training and capacity building of the multiple stakeholders engaged in elections is a core priority for the development community.

International organizations have invested heavily in providing technical assistance for elections and building the capacity of Electoral Management Bodies so that they become more professional, effective, impartial, and independent.[32] Nation-wide elections are highly complex, costly and large-scale events, requiring long-term strategic planning, while raising politically-sensitive, logistical, and administrative issues. Almost no contests are implemented flawlessly due to the enormous demands elections often make on managerial, technical, legal, human, and financial resources.

With this in mind, the ELECT Staff Survey measured, at the individual level, three components of exposure to capacity building and training initiatives: the presence of a culture that incites and promotes capacity building (the existence of training plans discussed between the employee and her supervisor), the implementation of capacity building (total number of hours of training in the last five years), and the perception of capacity building (individual desire of having more training).

The analyses (Table 5) reveal that *mid-level EMB personnel in Mexico benefit from better structural conditions that promote capacity building*: the percentage of respondents having discussed a training plan, the average total number of hours of active training and the desire of being involved in more training initiatives are all significantly higher in Mexico than in the Republic of Korea.

Turning to the socio-demographic determinants, our analyses highlight that in neither society does gender affect capacity building at the individual level. Age has also a rather limited effect, except in a very interesting case: for personnel in Mexico, age is significantly and *negatively* correlated with the total number of hours spent in training. The average number of hours spent in training for younger personnel is almost three times as high as for older members of the personnel (an average of 84 v. 34 hours, respectively). This clearly points towards a generational shift in the organizational and individual culture towards capacity building, which seems to benefit younger generations. This trend also seems to exist in Korea, but the overall relationship is not significant. Having a postgraduate diploma increases the chances of having a training plan and significantly augments the total number of training hours, but only in Mexico. Finally, we find no substantial differences across different living areas, in both countries.

3.3. Effects of training: job satisfaction, efficacy and perceptions of integrity

We turn now to the effects of capacity building initiatives at the individual level. As before, we focus on the three components: the presence of a culture that incites and promotes capacity building (the existence of training plans discussed between the employee and her supervisor), the implementation of capacity building (total number of hours of training in the last 5 years), and the perception of capacity building (individual desire of having more training). We first discuss the effect of those components on working skills, electoral knowledge and job satisfaction, and then we discuss how capacity building initiatives increase perceptions of EMB performance and, ultimately, electoral integrity.

First (Table 6), *having a training plan clearly increases self-reported working skills and self-reported knowledge of electoral matters, but only for personnel in the Mexican EMB* – those effects are statistically not significant for the Republic of Korea. For Mexico, then, an overall culture that promotes the importance of capacity building creates better conditions for a more knowledgeable and skilled personnel. Interestingly, job satisfaction seems significantly

lower in the Republic of Korea than in Mexico. For both Mexican and Korean personnel, second, having a training plan significantly increases overall job satisfaction.

Figure 10: Hours of training, skills and electoral knowledge in Mexico and the Republic of Korea
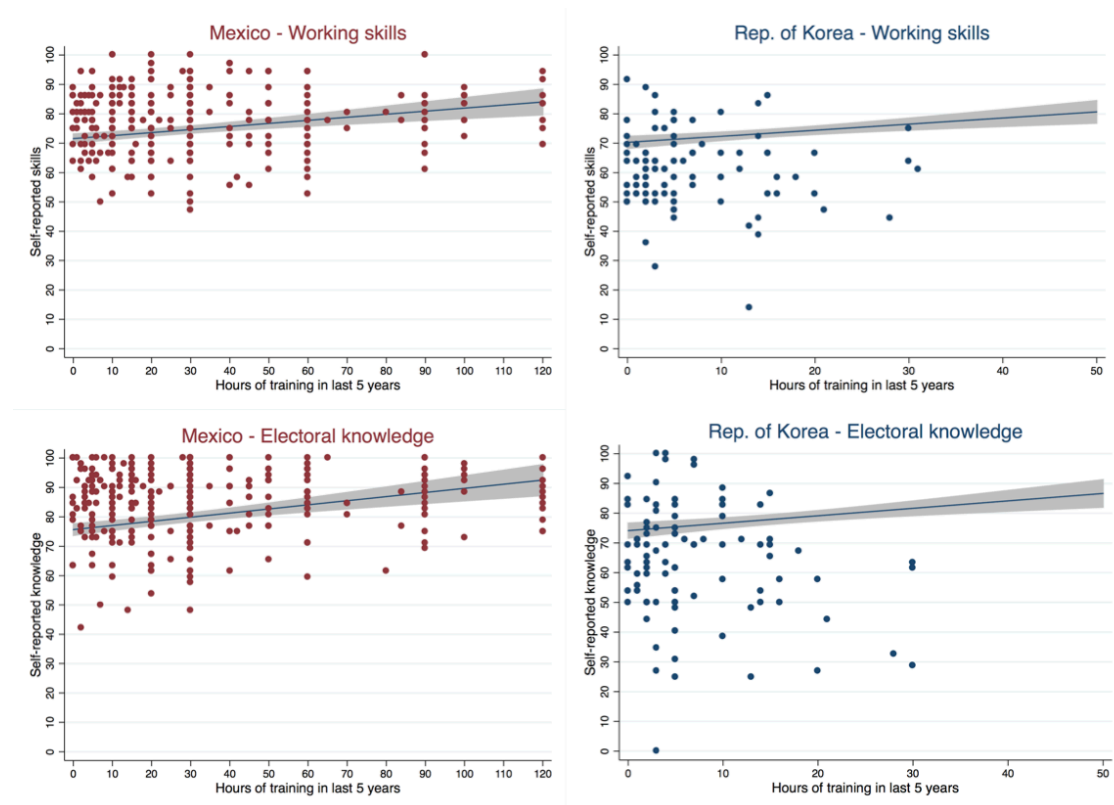
Self-reported working skills and electoral knowledge vary between 0 (lower) and 100 (higher). Linear fit, 95% Confidence intervals. For visualisation purposes, we excluded respondents having reported a total of training hours higher than 120 in Mexico (16 respondents) and higher than 50 hours in Korea (1 respondent).
Source: ELECT Staff Survey

Surprisingly, the ELECT data do not reveal an excessively strong effect of active training (total number of training hours) on self-reported skills and knowledge of electoral matters, overall (Figure 10). Even more surprisingly, Korean respondents that declared a total of training hours lower than the country average (about 11) report higher levels of skills and knowledge of electoral matters. This does however not imply that increasing the number for training hours is detrimental for capacity building – rather, it could signal a reversed causation, that is, targeted training strategies for less skilled personnel, where the likelihood of receiving more training increases with the decreasing level of skills and knowledge. In this case, only those who mostly need training receive it, instead of a more generalised culture that stresses the importance of capacity building regardless of skills and knowledge of personnel.

Finally, Table 7 looks at how training affects the way mid-level personnel perceive the performance of their organization. Three perceptual indicators are considered: of the overall level of electoral integrity, national EMB performance, and local EMB performance (the EMB office in which they actively work).

On average, *respondents in our sample evaluated the overall integrity of the last election in their country very similarly* (respectively, 73 for Mexico and 70 for Korea). There are some differences, however, in the comparison of those figures with the level of electoral integrity measured independently through the "Perceptions of Electoral Integrity" dataset (PEI 4.5, respectively 52.2 for Mexico and 76.5 for the Republic of Korea). Clearly, EMB personnel in Mexico largely overestimate the quality of elections in their country, when comparing with the independent benchmark provided by the PEI data; the opposite is true, even if to a lesser extent, for the Republic of Korea: the actual level of electoral integrity, as measured by the independent experts in the PEI dataset, is *higher* than the average perception of the Korean EMB personnel.

Beyond this discrepancy between the two countries, the data (Table 7) reveal that perceptions of the integrity of the last election are not affected by any training-related variables, nor by any socio-demographic determinants (if we exclude a slight gender effect in Korea).

Then, the data reveal that *personnel of the Mexican EMB have a significantly better perception of their electoral performance than their Korean counterparts*, regardless of the reality in the field. Our analyses also highlight that *being involved in training somewhat creates a more positive perception of the national EMB performance*. This is especially the case for respondents having a training plan in Mexico, and for Korean respondents expressing a desire for additional training. Interestingly, socio-demographic determinants do not play any role in this case for Mexico, but have a fairly significant role in the Republic of Korea: men, older respondents and those with a postgraduate diploma have a significantly more positive perception of the performance of their national EMB.

Finally, on average, *Mexican respondents are significantly more optimistic than their Korean counterparts.* Beyond this, the analyses do not reveal strong trends in terms of effects of training on those perceptions, beyond the fact that Korean respondents expressing a desire for additional training have a significantly more optimist perception. As for the perception of the national EMB, socio-demographics determinants do not play any role here for Mexican respondents, whereas in Korea older respondents and those with a postgraduate diploma have a significantly more positive perception.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

This report sought to deepen understanding of electoral management bodies. In particular, who works in EMB organizations and what are their values, skills, and capacities? How and why does the degree of professionalism vary from one organization to the next? Does professionalism affect electoral integrity? How can the professionalism of electoral management bodies be strengthened to improve their effectiveness and enhance electoral integrity? To answer these questions, this report relied upon three sources of evidence:

1. The *ELECT Organizational Survey* collected macro-level information from senior personnel working in 35 diverse Electoral Management Bodies. The Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) provided a comprehensive list of contact points within each national EMB from their membership. The questionnaire was distributed online through the Qualtrics platform between June and August 2016. Out of the 106 national EMBs initially contacted, 35 organizations responded to the survey (or a response rate of 33%).

2. The *ELECT Staff Survey* collected individual-level information from a range of mid-level personnel working within EMBs in two selected case-studies – South Korea and Mexico. For Mexico, the Instituto Nacional Electoral (INE) provided a comprehensive list of all their mid-level personnel. For the Republic of Korea, A-WEB provided a list of all personnel contacts (e-mails only) within the National Election Commission (NEC). The questionnaire was distributed online through the Qualtrics platform between June and August 2016. The final sample contains 245 respondents for Korea (or a response rate of approximately 11%), and 357 respondents for Mexico (21%).

3. Finally, the *Perceptions of Electoral Integrity* expert rolling expert survey (PEI-4.5) provided an independent way to gauge performance, including the overall integrity of elections in each country, as well as the impartiality, transparency and integrity of the electoral authorities. The latest release of the PEI dataset was analysed, averaging the overall performance of national parliamentary and presidential elections held from mid-2012 to mid-2016 in each country.[33]

4.1. Main results

The ELECT organization survey constructed measures of the formal structural independence, the professional ethos and the functional capacity of Electoral Management Bodies. The evidence was unable to confirm that these factors related significantly at macro-level to either the performance of EMBs and the level of electoral integrity in the 35 countries under comparison. Elsewhere, evidence suggests that many societal-level factors influence patterns of electoral integrity, including structural conditions such as levels of economic development and natural resources, the institutional checks and balances in any constitution, and the role of international technical assistance and aid.[34] It appears that these conditional factors are likely to be more important in determining the overall performance of the EMB than its structural design, professionalization, or capacity.

Nevertheless, the impact at macro-level among diverse societies provides only imperfect clues about many dimensions of how EMBs work. To consider this issue in greater depth, the

ELECT staff surveys explored two case-studies of electoral officials employed in Mexico and the Republic of Korea.

The results show that compared with the Republic of Korea, staff in Mexico have greater experience of working in the public sector and in the conduct of elections, and report more skills and knowledge of electoral issues. For both countries, longer work experience strengthens electoral knowledge.

When it comes to training and capacity building, mid-level EMB personnel in Mexico also benefit from better training than in the Republic of Korea. Having a training plan improves working skills and knowledge of elections in the Mexican case and job satisfaction in both cases.

4.2. Policy recommendations

This report was unable to demonstrate evidence supporting the common claims that several features of EMB at macro-level – including formal structural independence, professional ethos and functional capacity – have a positive impact on either the performance of EMBs or the level of electoral integrity in the 35 countries under comparison. Further analysis is needed with a broader range of countries, and with multivariate analysis and controls for social and political conditions, to explore these issues more fully in the next steps of the research agenda.

Evidence at the **staff-level** discussed in this report supports the following set of recommendations:

(1) Not surprisingly, longer working experience in the EMB strengthens knowledge of electoral issues among officials. ELECT thus recommend *setting up career paths that reduce turnover in EMB personnel and promote job stability*.

(2) ELECT recommends *expanding capacity building initiatives*. This should be done both at the level of the organizational culture and by increasing the total number of hours mid-level staff are exposed to training programs. Our data clearly show that the demand for additional training is high in both countries.

(3) Training plans increase working skills, electoral knowledge and job satisfaction. ELECT recommends *making the generalization of training plans a priority* within any new capacity building initiative.

(4) Capacity building initiatives enhance positive perception of organizational performance and thus staff morale. ELECT recommends that *capacity-building initiatives should include retrospective evaluations* (learning from past elections), next to prospective initiatives (establishing good practices).

5. Technical appendix: the data and methods

5.1. ELECT Organizational Survey

More than 100 EMBs worldwide were invited to participate to the ELECT structural survey. Senior personnel were asked to provide information about their functioning, activities, goals and capacity building infrastructures and programs. The Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) provided a comprehensive list of contact points within each national EMB in their current member list, which were contacted via a personalized message by the EIP team in Sydney. The EMBs that accepted to participate provided the EIP with the name and contact detail of an upper-level person susceptible to answer the questionnaire. The questionnaire, distributed online through the Qualtrics platform between June and August 2016, contained 57 questions or batteries of questions. Out of the 106 EMBs initially contacted, 35 responded to the survey (or a response rate of 33%). Data gathered through this survey is discussed in section 2 of this report.

5.2. ELECT Staff Survey

The Republic of Korea and Mexico were selected as case-studies for the ELECT Staff Survey. For Mexico, the Instituto Nacional Electoral (INE) provided a comprehensive list of all their mid-level personnel. For the Republic of Korea, A-WEB provided a list of all personnel contacts (e-mails only) within the National Election Commission (NEC). In total, our initial sample contained 2,285 unique contacts for Korea and 1,736 unique contacts for Mexico. Personal invitations, with unique links towards the survey, were sent out in the country's main language (respectively Spanish and Korean) between June and August 2016. Respondents could choose whether to answer the questionnaire in English or in the country's language. The questionnaire was distributed online through the Qualtrics platform; it contained 61 questions or batteries of questions. The final sample, on which the analyses are based, contains 245 respondents for Korea (or a response rate of approximately 11%), and 357 respondents for Mexico (21%). Data gathered through this survey is discussed in section 3 of this report.

More information about the two surveys, including the questionnaires and the link towards the data (forthcoming), can be accessed here: http://bit.ly/1U0ZBKN

5.3. Key ELECT indexes

ELECT Organizational Survey

EMB Independence is measured through six independent conditions (0 'No', 1 'Yes'), measured through as many variables: i) full independence of the EMB from the Government; ii) a non-partisan structure of the EMB; iii) a Chair/President of the EMB appointed independently either by an independent panel or body, EMB commissioners/members, or the Courts; iv) a Chair/President of the EMB appointed on the basis of professional qualifications (vs. party status); v) the existence of legal prohibitions for the Chair/President of the EMB to belong to any political party; vi) the existence of a guarantee in the Constitution or other laws to protect the Chair/President of the EMB against arbitrary removal. We cumulate the scores for those six dimensions into an overall scale that ranges from 0 (very low) to 100 (very high). Cronbach's alpha=0.37. The first factorial dimension

underlying the six original variables (PCA, varimax rotation) explains 28% of the variance, and is highly correlated with the final additive scale (R=.87***).

EMB Capacity is measured through five independent dimensions: i) the frequency that the EMB conducts training programmes for it staff (recoded into a 0-1 scale where 0 means 'Never' and 1 means 'On a regular basis'); (ii) an additive scale that measures how often the EMB runs training programmes for other actors (Political parties and candidates, citizens, government officials, media, other EMBs, civil society organizations) that ranges from 0 'None' to 1 'All of those actors'; iii) a variable that measures whether it is common in the EMB working and organizational culture for supervisors to discuss training plans with subordinates (ranging from 0 'Never' to 1 'On a regular basis'); iv) a binary variable measuring whether the EMB has a special department in charge of providing training programmes (0 'No', 1 'Yes'); v) and an additive scale that cumulates the number of topics covered in training programmes offered by the EMB (civic education, voter safety and electoral violence, election laws, electoral procedures, election boundaries, voter registration, party and candidate registration, campaign media, campaign finance, voting process, vote count, dispute resolution, gender equality), also ranging form a standardized minimum of 0 to a maximum of 1. Those five dimensions of training and capacity building are presented, by country, in Table 2. We cumulate the scores for those five dimensions into an overall scale that ranges from 0 (very low) to 100 (very high). Cronbach's alpha=0.77. The first factorial dimension underlying the five original variables (PCA, varimax rotation) explains 61% of the variance, and is very strongly correlated with the final additive scale (R=.97***).

EMB Professional ethos is measured through five independent conditions (0 'No', 1 'Yes'), measured through as many variables: i) the EMB is a permanent institution (vs. temporary); ii) the fact that the EMB never uses unpaid volunteer personnel during elections; iii) the fact that the EMB conducts regularly trainings for its own staff; iv) the existence of a special department in charge of providing training programmes; v) the fact that the EMB itself provides technical support during elections concerning the use of election technology. We cumulate the scores for those five dimensions into an overall scale that ranges from 0 (very low) to 100 (very high). Cronbach's alpha=0.57. The first factorial dimension underlying the five original variables (PCA, varimax rotation) explains 37% of the variance, and is rather strongly correlated with the final additive scale (R=.47**).

ELECT Staff Survey

Self-reported working skills are measured through a set of questions that asked respondents to rate the strengths and weaknesses of their own working skills in 9 areas: managing different teams, writing and communication skills, knowledge of electoral laws, using social media, planning budgets, computing skills, analysing statistics needed for the job, language knowledge and skills, and planning complex projects. We cumulate the responses in those 9 items to obtain an overall scale of self-reported skills that ranges from 0 (very low) to 100 (very high). Cronbach's alpha=0.82. The first factorial dimension underlying the nine original variables (PCA, varimax rotation) explains 44% of the variance, and is very strongly correlated with the final additive scale (R=.99***).

Self-reported electoral knowledge is measured through a set of questions that asked respondents to rate the strengths and weaknesses of their knowledge in 13 areas that cover the totality of the electoral cycle, both on the election itself, the preparatory phases, and its aftermath: election laws, electoral procedures, electoral boundaries, voter registration,

party and candidate registration, campaign media, campaign finance, voting process, vote count, results, civic education, voter security and electoral violence, gender equality and participation. As for self-reported skills, we cumulate the knowledge questions into an overall scale that varies between 0 (very low) to 100 (very high). Cronbach's alpha=0.94. The first factorial dimension underlying the thirteen original variables (PCA, varimax rotation) explains 61% of the variance, and is very strongly correlated with the final additive scale (R=.999***).

Job satisfaction is measured through a set of questions that asked respondents to rate, all things considered, how satisfied they are with five job-related issues: pay and conditions, career promotion opportunities, training opportunities, guidance from supervisors, overall satisfaction. We cumulate the responses in those 5 items into an overall scale of job satisfaction that ranges from 0 (very low) to 100 (very high). Cronbach's alpha=0.91. The first factorial dimension underlying the five original variables (PCA, varimax rotation) explains 73% of the variance, and is very strongly correlated with the final additive scale (R=.999***).

Perceptions of electoral integrity in ELECT are measured through a series of questions that ask respondents to evaluate the "quality" of elections in terms of agreement/disagreement with 10 propositions: electoral laws were unfair to smaller parties, information about voting procedures was widely available, electoral boundaries discriminated against some parties or candidates, some ineligible electors were registered, some opposition candidates were prevented from running, ethnic and national minorities had equal opportunities to run for office, TV news favored the governing party, voters were bribed, journalists provided fair coverage of the elections, and rich people buy elections. Answers to those questions are then standardized and cumulated into an overall scale of perceptions of electoral integrity that ranges from 0 (very low) to 100 (very high). Cronbach's alpha=0.73. The first factorial dimension underlying the original variables (PCA, varimax rotation) explains 30% of the variance, and is very strongly correlated with the final additive scale (R=.99***).

Perceptions of the performance of the national EMB are measured via a series of questions that asked respondents to evaluate how well their organization performed on 8 issues: staff are well trained, clear voting procedures are established, voters are informed about electoral matters, the electoral register is accurate and up to date, ballots are secret, appropriate measures are taken to prevent unlawful and fraudulent voting, ballots are counted fairly, and voters are not coerced or intimidated. Responses for those 8 variables are cumulated into an overall index performance that ranges from 0 (very low) to 100 (very high). Cronbach's alpha=0.85. The first factorial dimension underlying the original variables (PCA, varimax rotation) explains 51% of the variance, and is very strongly correlated with the final additive scale (R=.996***).

Perceptions of the performance of the local EMB (that is, in the constituency or electoral district where respondents work) are measured via a series of questions that asked respondents to evaluate four issues: electoral authorities were impartial, electoral authorities distributed information to citizens, electoral authorities allowed public scrutiny of their performance, and electoral authorities performed well. Responses for those 8 variables are cumulated into an overall index performance that ranges from 0 (very low) to 100 (very high). Cronbach's alpha=0.79. The first factorial dimension underlying the original variables (PCA, varimax rotation) explains 62% of the variance, and is very strongly correlated with the final additive scale (R=.998***).

5.4 Perceptions of Electoral Integrity (PEI)

For the independent measures of the performance of elections and electoral authorities in each country, this report draws upon the Perceptions of Electoral Integrity expert survey conducted by the Electoral Integrity Project. Full details and the full dataset can be found elsewhere. [35]

The PEI survey of electoral integrity focuses upon independent nation-states around the world which have held direct (popular) elections for the national parliament or presidential elections. The elections analysed in this report cover the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2016. In total, PEI 4.5 covers 213 elections in 153 nations.

For each country, the project identified around forty election experts, defined as a political scientist (or other social scientist in a related discipline) who had demonstrated knowledge of the electoral process in a particular country (such as through publications, membership of a relevant research group or network, or university employment). The selection sought a roughly 50:50 balance between international and domestic experts, the latter defined by location or citizenship. Experts were asked to complete an online survey. In total, 2,417 completed responses were received in PEI-4.5, representing just under one third of the experts that the project contacted (29%).

To measure the core concept, the PEI survey questionnaire includes 49 items on electoral integrity (see Table A1) ranging over the whole electoral cycle. These items fell into eleven sequential sub-dimensions, as shown. Most attention in detecting fraud focuses upon the final stages of the voting process, such as the role of observers in preventing ballot-stuffing, vote-rigging and manipulated results. Drawing upon the notion of a 'menu of manipulation',[36] however, the concept of an electoral cycle suggests that failure in even one step in the sequence, or one link in the chain, can undermine electoral integrity.

The electoral integrity items in the survey were recoded, where a higher score consistently represents a more positive evaluation. Missing data was estimated based on multiple imputation of chained equations in groups composing of the eleven sub-dimensions.

The Perceptions of Electoral Integrity (PEI) Index is an additive function of the 49 imputed variables, standardized to 100-points. Sub-indices of the eleven sub-dimensions in the electoral cycle are summations of the imputed individual variables.[37]

One of the standard sub-indices measures the performance of electoral authorities and this was constructed from the following four items:

- The election authorities were impartial
- The authorities distributed information to citizens
- The authorities allowed public scrutiny of their performance
- The election authorities performed well

Validity and reliability tests were conducted with tests for external validity (with independent sources of evidence), internal validity (consistency within the group of experts), and legitimacy (how far the results can be regarded as authoritative by stakeholders). The analysis demonstrates substantial external validity when the PEI data is compared with many other expert datasets, as well as internal validity across the experts within the survey, and legitimacy as measured by levels of congruence between mass and expert opinions within each country.[38]

5.5. Coefficients

Throughout the report, the statistical significance of the effects, represented by the p value, indicates the probability that the effect shown is due to chance. A small p value implies that this probability is very low, and thus that we can have enough confidence that a relationship exists (the relationship is "statistically significant"). The p value is either reported in full (e.g., $p=0.047$, which means that there are 4.7 chances out of 100 that the relationship is due to chance) or through thresholds (indicated by symbols).

In social sciences, it is common to accept up to a 5% probability that the relationship is due to chance ($p=0.05$). Above this level, the relationship is statistically non-significant, and thus the variable (e.g., gender) does not have a statistical effect on the other variable (e.g., self-reported working skills). In some cases, mostly when the number of observations is very low, a 10% probability can be used.

To facilitate comprehension of results, symbols referring to significance levels according to four thresholds are used: *** (indicates a relationship that is significant at $p<.001$, that is, there are less than 0.1 probabilities out of 100 that the relationship is due to chance), ** (relationship is significant at $p<.01$), * (relationship is significant at $p<.05$), and † (relationship is only significant at $p<.1$, which means that there are up to 10 probabilities out of 100 to make an error – usually considered too high). Above $p=.1$, we signaled throughout the report that the relationship is non-significant with the acronym (n.s.).

Throughout the report, percentages within parentheses should be interpreted with caution because they are computed on categories with too few observations ($N<15$).

Acknowledgments

Tables

Table 1: Primary Responsibilities of EMBs, by country

Country	Voter registration	Party and candidate nominations	Election Boundaries	Campaign media	Campaign finance	Authorizing Election Observers	Polling	Vote count	Vote total	Dispute resolution	Electoral Regulations
Afghanistan	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Argentina	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Bahamas	(n/a)	(n/a)	(n/a)	(n/a)	(n/a)	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Bhutan	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Cambodia	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Costa Rica	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Cote d'Ivoire	✔	✔	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Dominica	✔	✔	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Ghana	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Guam	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Guinea	✔	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Indonesia	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Iraq	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Kenya	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Korea	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Kyrgyzstan	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Malawi	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Maldives	(n/a)	(n/a)	(n/a)	(n/a)	(n/a)	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Mexico	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Mongolia	✗	✔	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Mozambique	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
New Zealand	✔	✔	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Palestine	✔	✔	✗	(n/a)	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Panama	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Peru	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Rwanda	✔	✔	✗	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Samoa	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Sao Tome and Prin.	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Senegal	✔	✔	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Sierra Leone	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Suriname	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Tanzania	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Thailand	(n/a)	(n/a)	✔	(n/a)	(n/a)	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Zimbabwe	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

Note: (n/a) 'no answer'

Table 2: Training and capacity building initiatives, by country

Country	Training for staff [a]	Training for other actors [b]	Training plan [c]	Training department [d]	Training topics [e]
Afghanistan	2	0.5	2	1	0.4
Argentina	2	0.4	1	1	0.3
Bahamas	3	(n/a)	3	1	0.6
Bhutan	4	0.7	4	1	0.8
Cambodia	2	0.4	2	0	0.4
Canada	(n/a)	(n/a)	(n/a)	(n/a)	(n/a)
Costa Rica	4	(n/a)	4	1	0.9
Cote d'Ivoire	4	0.6	3	1	0.5
Dominica	2	(n/a)	4	0	0.6
Ghana	2	0.5	4	1	0.9
Guam	0	0.3	0	0	0.4
Guinea	3	(n/a)	2	1	1.0
Indonesia	2	0.4	2	1	0.6
Iraq	4	0.8	4	1	0.7
Kenya	4	0.7	4	1	1.0
Korea	4	0.6	3	1	0.7
Kyrgyzstan	3	0.5	1	1	0.7
Malawi	4	(n/a)	4	1	0.9
Maldives	2	(n/a)	2	0	0.6
Mexico	4	(n/a)	4	1	1.0
Mongolia	1	0.4	1	1	0.4
Mozambique	4	0.6	4	1	0.7
New Zealand	4	0.3	3	0	0.7
Palestine	4	1.0	3	0	0.6
Panama	3	0.3	2	1	0.4
Peru	4	0.8	4	1	0.9
Rwanda	4	0.9	4	1	0.9
Samoa	3	0.5	3	1	0.9
Sao Tome and Principe	1	0.5	3	0	0.7
Senegal	2	0.3	3	0	0.8
Sierra Leone	4	0.6	4	1	0.9
Suriname	2	0.2	1	0	0.2
Tanzania	4	(n/a)	3	1	0.5
Thailand	2	0.5	4	1	0.8
Zimbabwe	4	0.6	2	1	0.7

Note: (n/a) 'no answer'

[a] Scores represent answers to the question *How often does your EMB conducts training programmes for its staff?* (0 'Never', 1 'Rarely', 2 'Occasionally', 3 'Often', 4 'On a regular basis').

[b] Scores represent answers to the question *Does the EMB have responsibility for conducting training programmes for the following actors, either as sole responsible or in cooperation with other bodies/agencies?* The following actors were proposed: Political parties and candidates, citizens, government officials, media, other EMBs, civil society organizations. Responses for those separate actors are cumulated, to obtain a variable ranging from 0 (none of those actors) to 1 (all of those actors).

[c] Scores represent answers to the question *In your organization, is it common for supervisors to discuss training plans with their subordinates (for instance during, but not limited to, performance assessments)?* (0 'Never', 1 'Rarely', 2 'Occasionally', 3 'Often', 4 'On a regular basis').

[d] Scores represent answers to the question *Does the EMB have a special department in charge of providing training programmes?* (0 'No', 1 'Yes').

[e] Scores represent answers to the question *What topics are covered by training programs? Please select all that apply.* The following topics were proposed: civic education, voter safety and electoral violence, election laws, electoral procedures, election boundaries, voter registration, party and candidate registration, campaign media, campaign finance, voting process, vote count, dispute resolution, gender equality. Responses for those separate topics are cumulated, to obtain a variable ranging from 0 (none of those topics) to 1 (all of those topics).

Table 3: Training topics, by country

Country	Civic education	Voter safety and electoral violence	Election laws	Electoral procedures	Election boundaries	Voter registration	Party and candidate registration	Campaign media	Campaign finance	Voting process	Vote count	Dispute resolution	Gender equality
Afghanistan	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✗	✔
Argentina	✔	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✔	✗	✗
Bahamas	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗
Bhutan	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✗
Cambodia	✗	✔	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✗	✔	✗
Costa Rica	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Cote d'Ivoire	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✗	✔	✗
Dominica	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗
Ghana	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔
Guam	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✗
Guinea	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Indonesia	✔	✗	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✗
Iraq	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✗	✔
Kenya	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Korea	✔	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Kyrgyzstan	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✗
Malawi	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔
Maldives	✔	✔	✗	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗
Mexico	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Mongolia	✗	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗
Mozambique	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗
New Zealand	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗
Palestine	✔	✗	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✗	✔
Panama	✔	✗	✗	✔	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✗	✗	✗
Peru	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Rwanda	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔
Samoa	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔
Sao Tome and Prin.	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✗	✔	✔	✗	✔
Senegal	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔
Sierra Leone	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔
Suriname	✗	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✔	✗	✗	✗
Tanzania	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✗
Thailand	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✔
Zimbabwe	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	✗

Table 4: Skills, knowledge and experience of personnel in Mexico and Korea

	MEXICO (N=357)					REPUBLIC OF KOREA (N=245)				
	Years public service (mean)	Years in EMB (mean)	Years current post (mean)	Skills (mean)[a]	Knowledge of elections (mean)[b]	Years public service (mean)	Years in EMB (mean)	Years current post (mean)	Skills (mean)[a]	Knowledge of elections (mean)[b]
Overall [c]	18	16	11	78	85	13***	11***	3***	59**	60***
Gender	***	***	***	n.s.	*	*	n.s.	n.s.	*	*
Male	20	18	13	77	86	14	12	3	61	63
Female	14	13	7	79	83	10	10	3	56	56
Age				n.s.	n.s.				*	***
18-34	.	.	.	78	83	.	.	.	56	46
35-49	.	.	.	79	85	.	.	.	59	62
50+	.	.	.	76	86	.	.	.	64	75
Education	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	*	*	**	**	n.s.	n.s.	*
No Postgr.	17	15	11	76	84	12	10	3	59	60
Postgrad.	19	16	11	79	87	19	16	3	63	70
Living area	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	*	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Not urban	18	16	11	78	87	11	10	3	57	58
City	18	16	11	78	84	13	11	3	60	62

Note: results weighted by age and gender. Scores within parentheses are computed on categories with too few observations (N<15), and should be interpreted with caution. Significance computed through F tests.
[a] Variable is a 0-100 scale variable, where 100 measures the highest level of self-reported skills. Variable obtained through additive procedure on 9 independent items.
[b] Variable is a 0-100 scale variable, where 100 measures the highest level of self-reported knowledge of elections. Variable obtained through additive procedure on 13 independent items.
[c] For Korea we also report if coefficients are significantly different from the Mexican coefficients (F tests).
*p<0.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001; [+]p<.1; n.s. 'not significant'

Table 5: Training of personnel in Mexico and Korea

	MEXICO (N=357)			REPUBLIC OF KOREA (N=245)		
	Have a training plan (% yes)	**Hours of training (mean)**	**Would like more training (% agree)[a]**	**Have a training plan (% yes)**	**Hours of training (mean)**	**Would like more training (% agree)[a]**
Overall [b]	74	46	92	38***	11***	85**
Gender	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Male	76	43	93	38	12	86
Female	70	50	92	42	10	79
Age	n.s.	***	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
18-34	60	84	95	50	16	80
35-49	77	47	93	34	14	86
50+	75	34	90	32	4	84
Education	*	*	n.s.	n.s.	†	n.s.
No Postgr.	69	38	92	41	9	83
Postgrad.	80	54	93	24	(27)	95
Living area	†	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Not urban	80	49	92	46	10	85
City	71	44	93	37	12	84

Note: results weighted by age and gender. Scores within parentheses are computed on categories with too few observations (N<15), and should be interpreted with caution. Significance computed through F tests when scores are means, and with chi2 tests when scores are percentages.
[a] Percentages combine respondents who answered "agree somewhat" and "agree strongly" to the question.
[b] For Korea we also report if coefficients are significantly different from the Mexican coefficients (F tests for means and chi2 for percentages).
*p<0.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001; †p<.1; n.s. 'not significant'

Table 6: Effects of training on skills, knowledge and satisfaction in Mexico and Korea

	MEXICO (N=357)			REPUBLIC OF KOREA (N=245)		
	Skills (mean)[a]	Knowledge of elections (mean)[b]	Job satisfaction (mean)[c]	Skills (mean)[a]	Knowledge of elections (mean)[b]	Job satisfaction (mean)[c]
Overall [d]	78	85	73	59**	60***	54***
Have a training plan	*	**	*	n.s.	n.s.	*
No	76	82	67	59	59	52
Yes	79	87	75	60	62	58
Hours of training	n.s.	†	†	*	***	n.s.
Less than country average	77	85	71	61	66	55
More than country average	79	87	77	57	56	54
Would like more training	n.s.	†	n.s.	*	n.s.	†
No, unsure	77	81	74	53	59	48
Yes	78	85	73	60	60	55

Note: results weighted by age and gender. Scores within parentheses are computed on categories with too few observations (N<15), and should be interpreted with caution. Significance computed through F tests when scores are means, and with chi2 tests when scores are percentages.
[a] Variable is a 0-100 scale variable, where 100 measures the highest level of self-reported skills. Variable obtained through additive procedure on 9 independent items.
[b] Variable is a 0-100 scale variable, where 100 measures the highest level of self-reported knowledge of elections. Variable obtained through additive procedure on 13 independent items.
[c] Variable is a 0-100 scale variable, where 100 measures the highest level of self-reported job satisfaction. Variable obtained through additive procedure on 5 independent items.
[d] For Korea we also report if coefficients are significantly different from the Mexican coefficients (F tests).
*p<0.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001; †p<.1; n.s. 'not significant'

Table 7: Effects of training and profile on perceptions of EMBs and electoral integrity in Mexico and Korea

	MEXICO (N=357)			REPUBLIC OF KOREA (N=245)		
	Electoral integrity (mean)[a]	National EMB performance (mean)[b]	Local EMB performance (mean)[c]	Electoral integrity (mean)[a]	National EMB performance (mean)[b]	Local EMB performance (mean)[c]
Overall [d]	73	85	93	70[†]	79***	89***
Have a training plan	*	***	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
No	71	81	92	70	78	89
Yes	74	86	94	73	80	91
Hours of training	n.s.	n.s.	*	n.s.	**	n.s.
Less than country average	73	85	94	71	83	91
More than country average	74	84	91	69	74	88
Would like more training	n.s.	†	n.s.	n.s.	**	**
No, unsure	73	89	91	73	69	82
Yes	73	85	93	70	80	91
Gender	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	*	**	n.s.
Male	74	85	93	72	81	90
Female	71	84	94	66	71	87
Age	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	**	*
18-34	72	84	94	68	72	86
35-49	72	84	93	70	78	90
50+	75	86	93	75	87	95
Education	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	**	*
No Postgr.	73	84	93	71	77	89
Postgrad.	73	85	94	69	90	96
Living area	n.s.	n.s.	†	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Not urban	73	86	95	70	74	86
City	73	84	92	71	79	90

Note: results weighted by age and gender. Scores within parentheses are computed on categories with too few observations (N<15), and should be interpreted with caution. Significance computed through F tests.
[a] Variable is a 0-100 scale variable, where 100 measures the highest level of Electoral Integrity. Variable obtained through additive procedure on 10 independent items.
[b] Variable is a 0-100 scale variable, where 100 measures the highest level of National EMB performance. Variable obtained through additive procedure on 8 independent items.
[c] Variable is a 0-100 scale variable, where 100 measures the highest level of Local EMB performance. Variable obtained through additive procedure on 4 independent items.
[d] For Korea we also report if coefficients are significantly different from the Mexican coefficients (F tests).
*p<0.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001; †p<.1; n.s. 'not significant'

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About the Electoral Integrity Project

The ELECT project was generously supported by the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB), and it was conducted by the scientific team at the Electoral Integrity Project (EIP).

The Electoral Integrity Project is an independent non-profit scholarly research project based at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and the University of Sydney's Department of Government and International Relations. The project is funded by the Australian Research Council and other research bodies. The project is directed by Professor Pippa Norris, and managed by Dr Alessandro Nai. Mr. Max Grömping is Program Manager of the 'Perceptions of Electoral Integrity' (PEI) expert survey. The EIP is governed by an Advisory Board of distinguished scholars and practitioners.

The Electoral Integrity Project is an independent academic body and the evaluations presented in the report are the assessments of the project alone. Nevertheless in its work, through a series of international workshops and conferences, the project collaborates closely with many professional associations, non-governmental organizations and international agencies, including the Australian Political Studies Association, the American Political Science Association, the Carter Center, Democracy International, Global Integrity, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), International IDEA, the International Political Science Association (IPSA), the Sunlight Foundation, the Organization of American States, the OSCE/ODIHR, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) and the World Values Survey (WVS).

Since 2014, EIP has yearly produced the "*Year in Elections Report*" which provides an overall assessment of the elections held in the world each year. The results have been featured, among others, at the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. Moreover, EIP has presented their work in different academic and policy venues such as APSA, IPSA, ECPR, AUSPSA, on the former and UN, IDEA, OSCE, ANFREL, on the later. The latest release of the dataset (PEI 4.5) was released in September 2016 and covers 153 countries having held 213 elections from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2016. The PEI 4.5 dataset and all related documentation can be accessed at: https://thedata.harvard.edu/dataverse/PEI.
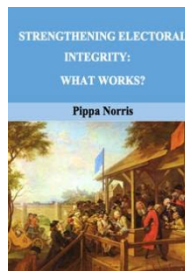
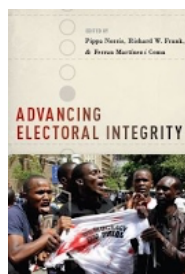www.electoralintegrityproject.com

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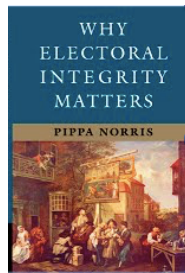
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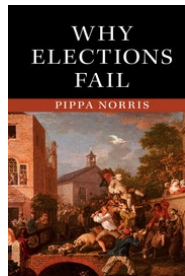
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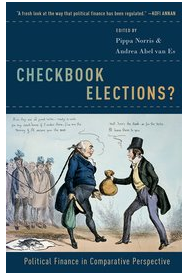
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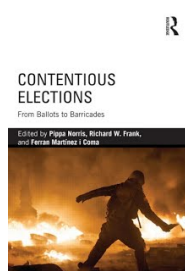
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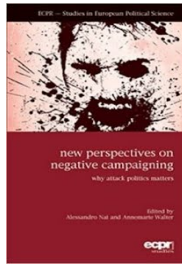
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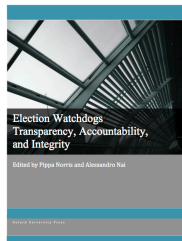
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