THE ELECTORAL INTEGRITY PROJECT

WHY ELECTIONS FAIL AND WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT IT

THE YEAR IN ELECTIONS, MID-2016 UPDATE

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Table of Contents

OVERVIEW:

There is widespread concern that elections around the globe commonly suffer from major flaws, whether from violence and conflict, corruption and clientelism, or vote rigging and fraud. In longstanding democracies, as well, such as the United States and the United Kingdom, there are worries about the risks of potential suppression of voters' rights, impersonation at the polls, and technological vulnerability to hacking.

What is the state of the world's elections this year? Updating our previous work, based on the release of the Perceptions of Electoral Integrity dataset (PEI 4.5), in August 2016, this report compares 153 countries holding 213 elections from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2016.

This cumulative coverage is comprehensive, representing 87% of all independent nation states holding national parliamentary and presidential elections around the world, excluding micro-states (with a population below 100,000). The study provides independent assessments utilizing a rolling design where experts assess the quality of national elections one month after the close of the polls. Based on the views of 2,417 experts, the average response rate for PEI 4.5 is 29%. The technical appendix provides full details about the reliability and validity of the dataset.

What is new in this most recent release?

PEI-4.5 expands and updates coverage by covering elections held worldwide in 32 countries during the first half of 2016.   The report provides an overview of the results and highlights several selected cases during early-2016 (Syria, Iran, the Philippines and Benin), and two forthcoming cases to watch, in Russia and the US.

RESULTS

FIGURE 1: THE PERCEPTIONS OF ELECTORAL INTEGRITY INDEX (PEI-4.5)

The Perceptions of Electoral Integrity Index (PEI-4.5)

Africa	PEI	Asia-Pacific	PEI	C&E Europe	PEI	Middle East	PEI	Americas	PEI	N.&W.Europe	PEI
Cape Verde *	71	New Zealand	76	Estonia	79	Israel	74	Costa Rica	81	Denmark	86
Benin *	69	Republic of Korea *	74	Lithuania	77	Tunisia	67	Uruguay	75	Finland	86
Mauritius	64	Taiwan *	73	Slovenia	77	Oman	60	Canada	75	Norway	83
Rwanda	64	Australia	70	Czech Republic	76	Kuwait	55	Brazil	67	Iceland *	82
South Africa	63	Japan	68	Slovak Republic *	75	Iran *	50	Chile	66	Sweden	81
Lesotho	63	Mongolia *	64	Poland	74	Turkey	48	Grenada	66	Netherlands	79
Namibia	59	Vanuatu *	63	Latvia	63	Jordan	72	Jamaica *	66	Switzerland	78
Ivory Coast	59	Micronesia	61	Croatia	61	Iraq	67	Argentina	64	Austria *	77
Sao Tome & Principe	58	Bhutan	61	Georgia	59	Egypt	42	Barbados	63	Portugal *	75
Botswana	58	India	59	Moldova	57	Bahrain	38	United States	62	Belgium	71
Ghana	57	Samoa *	57	Bulgaria	56	Afghanistan	32	Peru *	62	Ireland *	71
Sierra Leone	57	Solomon Islands	57	Hungary	56	Syria *	25	Panama	60	Cyprus *	70
Guinea-Bissau	54	Maldives	57	Albania	54			Colombia	59	Spain *	69
Nigeria	53	Indonesia	57	Kyrgyzstan	54			Mexico	57	Italy	67
Burkina Faso	53	Myanmar	54	Bosnia	52			Cuba	56	Greece	66
Mali	52	Nepal	54	Serbia *	52			Bolivia	55	Malta	65
Central African Rep *	52	Fiji	53	Ukraine	51			Ecuador	55	United Kingdom	65
Niger *	52	Singapore	53	Romania	51			Paraguay	55		
Malawi	48	Philippines *	52	Macedonia	48			El Salvador	54		
Cameroon	46	Sri Lanka	52	Kazakhstan *	45			Belize	53		
Swaziland	45	Thailand	51	Armenia	44			Guyana	53		
Comoros *	45	Pakistan	49	Uzbekistan	39			Suriname	50		
Zambia	44	Laos *	48	Turkmenistan	38			Guatemala	48		
Mauritania	44	Bangladesh	39	Belarus	36			Venezuela	45		
Tanzania	44	Malaysia	35	Tajikistan	36			Honduras	45		
Sudan	43	Vietnam *	34	Azerbaijan	35			Dominican Rep *	44		
Algeria	43	Cambodia	32					Haiti	28		
Guinea	42										
Kenya	41										
Madagascar	39										
Togo	38										
Uganda *	37										
Zimbabwe	35										
Angola	35										
Mozambique	35										
Chad *	31										
Djibouti *	29										
Congo, Rep. *	27										
Equatorial Guinea *	25										
Burundi	24										
Ethiopia	23										
Total	47	Total	56	Total	56	Total	48	Total	57	Total	75

Note: *Green = High to Very High Electoral Integrity (PEI Index of 60+); Yellow = Moderate Electoral Integrity (50-59); Red = Low to Very Low Electoral Integrity (less than 50).*
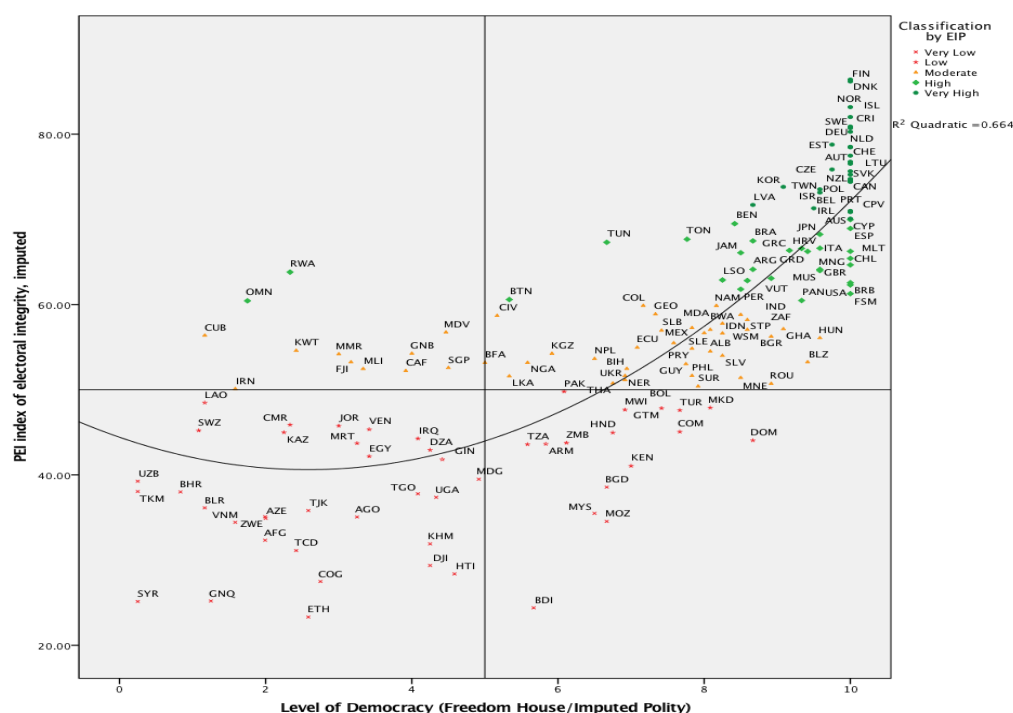
Source: *The perceptions of Electoral Integrity expert survey (PEI 4.5) * = updated ratings in 2016.*

The updated global comparison of how countries rated according to the PEI index, illustrated in Figure 1, suggests that several Nordic democracies – Denmark, Finland, Norway and Iceland- continue to lead the world in the quality of their elections. These countries are followed by Costa Rica (5th), Sweden (6th), Germany (7th), Estonia (8th), the Netherlands (9th) and Switzerland (10th). The fact that many long-established democracies score highly according to the survey suggests that historical experience of multiparty elections is important for their quality. At the same time, however, this is far from an inviolable rule: several older majoritarian democracies performed less well in this category, including the United States (ranked 52nd worldwide) and the United Kingdom (ranked 43rd).

By contrast, countries holding elections scoring *least* well worldwide, ranked in the bottom ten, include Ethiopia (ranked 153rd), Burundi (152nd), Syria (151st), Equatorial Guinea (150th), Republic of Congo (149th), Haiti (148th), Djibouti (147th), Chad (146th), Cambodia (145th), and Afghanistan (144th). Several of these estimates were updated in PEI-4.5. Their poor performance reflects the repression of political rights and civil liberties in these countries, as well as common problems of contentious contests flawed by violence, maladministration, and corruption.

A more systematic comparison of all 153 countries in the study confirms the impression of the strong association between PEI and democratization (measured by the Freedom House/Polity IV index), as expected. [1] Nevertheless, some exceptions can be observed in Figure 2, like Tunisia and Bhutan, where the positive rating of recent elections, if sustained, bodes well for their transition from autocracy.

FIGURE 2: ELECTORAL INTEGRITY (PEI) AND DEMOCRATIZATION

Source: The perceptions of Electoral Integrity expert survey (PEI 4.5)

Table 3 shows the scores in eleven sub-dimensions of electoral integrity, which allows a more detailed comparison of the performance of types of regimes (measured by Freedom House) at different stages of the electoral cycle. As with previous PEI surveys, the weakest stage of the electoral process concerns campaign finance, generating the greatest concern in not free and partly free regimes. Several forms of legal regulations seek to control the abuse of money in politics around the world, including transparency requirements, spending and donor limits, and public funding, but these often encounter implementation problems.[2] In addition, after the announcement of the results, challenges to the legitimacy of the outcome are most common in partly free (hybrid) regimes, whereas these types of protests are suppressed under autocratic regimes.

FIGURE 3: SUB-DIMENSIONS OF ELECTORAL INTEGRITY AND REGIME TYPE

Source: The perceptions of Electoral Integrity expert survey (PEI 4.5)

ILLUSTRATIVE CASES

Some elections held during spring 2016 help to understand the factors underlying these expert evaluations. Four selected cases are highlighted. Elections in Syria, Iran and the Philippines each illustrate problems weakening the quality of free and fair elections, while by contrast the case of Benin provides a positive example of an African democracy which is well rated by experts.

Syria – 13 April 2016

In Syria, more than 270,000 people have died in almost five years of civil war armed conflict.[3] Conflict has destabilized the Middle East and has forced more than 11 million Syrians away from their homes, fueling the refugee crisis in Europe.[4] The conflict, which began as an anti-government protest in 2011, has also facilitated the rise of the Islamic State (IS) in the country. [5]

Three elections have been held since the uprising against Assad; in 2012 and 2016 for Syrian People's Council (Majlis al-Sha'ab), and in 2014 for the presidency. The latter saw Bashar al-Assad win by a landslide victory with 88.7 percent of the vote[6], allowing him to rule until 2021. Opponents of the regime regard the contest as fraudulent, as voting did not take place in areas controlled by the opposition, effectively excluding millions of citizens.[7] In October 2015, Assad stated that he was willing to hold early presidential and parliamentary elections, as well as discuss constitutional changes, but only if terrorist groups were defeated beforehand.[8]

The parliamentary election to the Syrian People's Council on 13 April 2016 was the second held in the midst of the civil war. The 250 members of parliament were elected by plurality vote from 15 multi-member districts. Several seats are assigned to each constituency. Under the block voting electoral system (also known as plurality

at large), each citizen has as many votes as seats are available. Candidates with the most votes in each district (but not necessarily a majority) are returned to office.[9] This gives an advantage to the more developed and established parties - in Syria's case, the Ba'ath party. The block vote system works against the opposition if it is fragmented, as in this country. It gives the party that has even a slight lead in the popular vote an overwhelming number of seats.[10] About 3,500 candidates ran for office and non-Ba'athist candidates were eligible, although all went through a careful screening process. Half of Syria's parliamentary seats are reserved for laborers and farmers who have no party affiliation. Various committees, whose members are appointed by either Assad himself or provincial governors, determine who is a non-affiliated farmer or laborer. 7,300 polling centers were established in government-controlled areas of the country, but large parts of the country controlled by insurgent groups did not participate. State employees were warned that they must show up to vote, with fears of retaliation and punishment if they failed to comply.[11] The Ba'ath Party-led National Progressive Front coalition, including Syria's ruling Baath party and its allies, won 200 of the 250 seats (80%), gaining 32 members. The Syrian electoral commission announced that 50 other candidates were elected but not the underlying share of the vote. The media widely reported the number of seats but gave no indication of the vote share. The major opposition coalition inside and outside the country boycotted the elections. In total, 33 women were elected (13.2%).[12] Voter turnout was estimated as 57.6% (up from 51.2% on the previous 2012 elections).

The results were widely denounced by opposition forces as illegitimate and sham political theatre. The UN and Western powers also condemned the elections, including official spokespersons from the US, the UK, France, and Germany, since it was impossible to hold free, fair and transparent contests meeting international standards across the whole country in the context of the on-going civil war.[13] The Council is also largely a symbolic and powerless body. On the PEI study, experts scored the Syrian election as 25 out of 100-points on the standardized PEI index, ranking Syria 151st out of 153 countries in the dataset. The fraudulent contests were a façade serving to prop up the Assad regime, rather than providing a genuine choice allowing all Syrians to exercise their voice over the future of the country. No international observers were allowed to monitor the contests, with Assed claiming that foreign interference would undermine Syrian sovereignty.[14]

Iran – 26 February 2016

On 26 February 2016 Iran held elections for the 290-seat bicameral parliament, known as the Islamic Consultative Assembly (also called Iranian Majlis, or People's House). Members are directly elected for four year terms in single and multi-seat constituencies by a two-round plurality vote electoral system where winners need at least 25% of the vote. There are also reserved seats for several minority communities. The Ministry of Interior, including the Central Executive Elections Board and the Election District Executive Committees, administers all election-related activities. The main cleavage is between moderate reformists and fundamentalist conservatives.

Simultaneous elections were held on the same day for the Assembly of Experts for Leadership, the 88 member body with the authority to appoint the Islamic Republic's Supreme Leader.[15] All members are Islamic scholars and jurists. Districts are divided among 31 provinces based on population size. Members are elected using a single round plurality electoral system, with no minimum threshold.[16]

The fairness of the ballot access process was thrown into doubt by questions arising over the exclusion of many potential candidates in both contests.[17] The Guardian Council (a 12-member panel of Islamic jurists[18]) vetted and disqualified all but around 4,700 out of more than 12,000 potential parliamentary candidates.[19] They also approved only 166 of the 801 candidates who applied to run for the 88-member Assembly of Experts, excluding all 16 women.[20] There has never been a female representative elected to the Assembly of Experts. The vetoing of candidates in 2012 led to a parliamentary election boycott by reformist parties[21]; however, one prominent moderate ruled out this tactic for the 2016 elections.[22]

The election was seen by some commentators as a referendum on the future direction of the revolution.[23] A win by moderates was thought to give President Hassan Rouhani more scope to push through reforms, such as the codification of political crimes and a prohibition on the policing of religious adherence, which have been blocked by his more conservative political opponents.[24]

Rouhani has achieved a lot in the international sphere since wresting the presidency away from hardliner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. He secured a groundbreaking nuclear deal with world powers, an achievement that may have had hardliners sensing the winds of change.[25] The agreement seeks to improve Iran's economic situation through a lifting of crippling economic sanctions.[26] In the wake of the nuclear deal, Rouhani toured

Europe to sign multi-million dollar trade deals and met with the Pope, a sign of increasing international engagement.[27]

The result saw a historical victory for the moderates led by President Hassan Rouhani and Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, along with their allies, who secured 59% of the seats in the assembly, up from 20 seats before. Turnout was officially declared at 62%, out of 55 million eligible voters, although Iran does not have a voter registration system. Iran does not permit domestic or international observers to monitor the contest. There were no reports of post-election protests and demonstrations. In the PEI 4.5 study, experts scored the Iranian elections on the standardized PEI Index as 50 out of 100; ranking Iran 104th out of 153 countries. Experts rated the electoral laws, candidate access to the ballot, and campaign finance as the weakest stages in the Iranian electoral process.

FIGURE 4: SUB-DIMENSIONS OF ELECTORAL INTEGRITY AND SELECTED ELECTION CASES
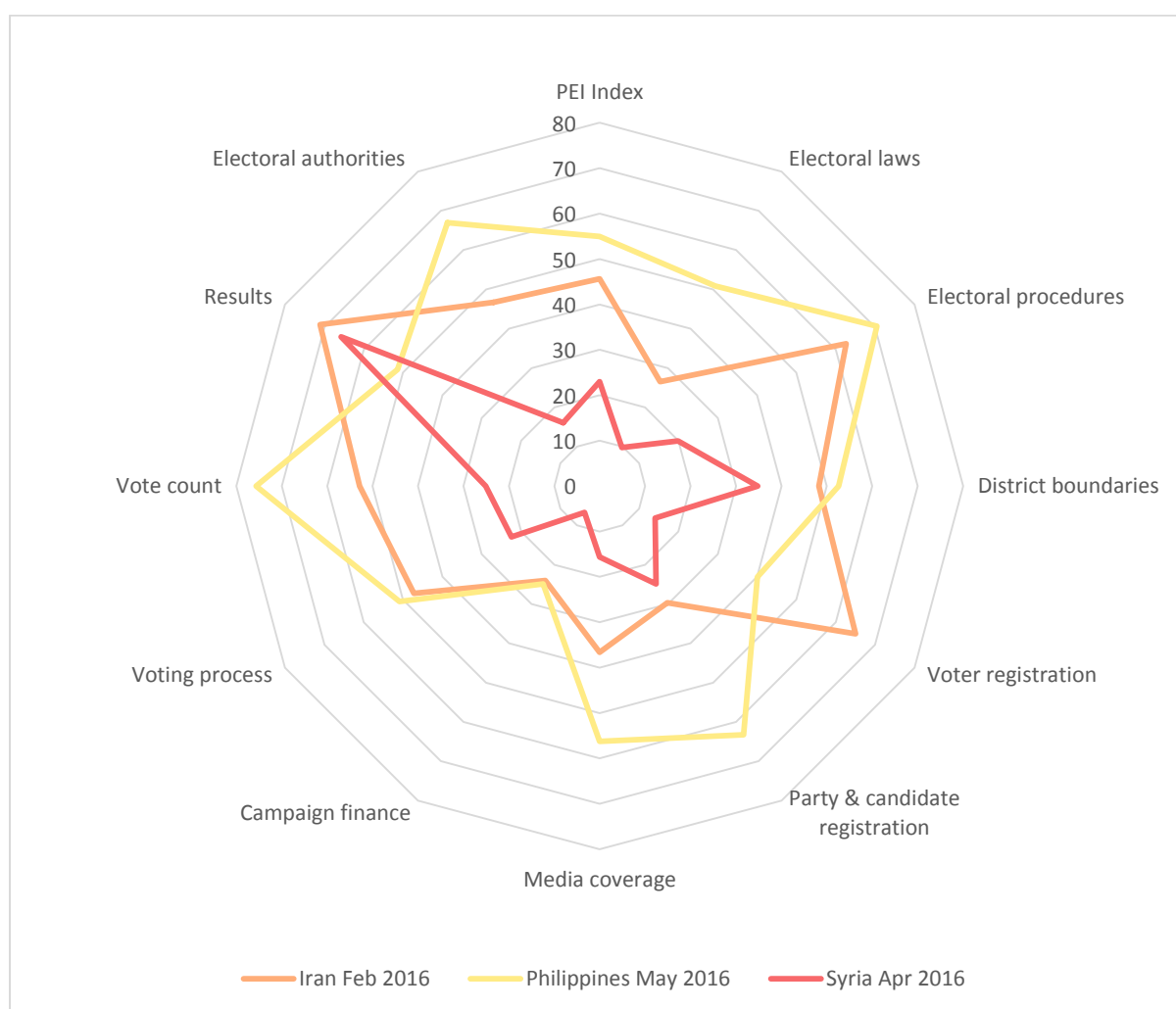
Source: *The perceptions of Electoral Integrity expert survey (PEI 4.5)*

The Philippines general election – 9th May 2016

Since the 1986 revolution that ended the authoritarian regime of Ferdinand Marcos, the sixth general election took place on May 9th 2016. Filipinos voted for the president and vice president, both the Senate and the House of Representatives in the national congress, and for provincial/city/municipal office.[28]

The president is elected through a simple plurality popular vote for a period of six years and she/he cannot be reelected, as there are constitutional term limits.[29] The president and vice president are elected separately.[30]

The House of Representatives uses a mixed member system: 230 members are directly elected in single-seat constituencies by simple majority vote and 57 members are directly elected by proportional representation. The Senate and local contests use a block vote electoral system (plurality at large), like that already described for the Syrian case.

The Philippines use automated voting technology.[31] These may be faster in providing credible election results although considerable worries remain about the reliability of the digital software and the potential manipulation of results.[32] Previous elections in the Philippines have often been violent and corrupt, for example, in an attempt to block gubernatorial candidate, Esmael Mangundadatu, 58 followers and family members were slaughtered in 2009.[33] Since 2001, the Philippine National Police has reported a total of 1,036 violent poll-related incidents, which claimed the lives of more than 600 Filipinos. The bloodiest period occurred with 155 casualties and injuries in 2010.[34]

Under President Benigno Aquino III, GDP reached the highest levels in four decades but poverty, corruption, and crime still remain substantial, along with unemployment and income inequality.[35] Aquino named Manuel "Mar" Roxas II as his successor for the Liberal Party of the Philippines. The populist Rodrigo Duterte rose in the polls from January to May, a colourful and outspoken figure. His hardline policies seek to stamp out illegal drugs through tolerating extrajudicial killings, raising major questions of human rights. Another prominent candidate was Vice President Jejomar Binay, for the United Nationalist Alliance, although he has faced trial for alleged corruption.[36] Another prominent potential candidate was Mary "Grace Poe" Llamanzares, an Independent. In December 2015 she was temporarily disqualified by the electoral commission on the grounds that she was not a "natural born Filipino".[37] She also failed to satisfy a 10-year residency requirement in the Philippines. She appealed the Comelec's decision at the Supreme Court and in March she was listed on the ballot.

The result saw a substantial victory for President Rodrigo Duterte, with almost 16 million votes (39% of the vote), compared with almost 10 million cast for Roxas, his nearest rival. Turnout was reported at 78%. Overall, 87 women were elected out of 292 members (29.8%).

A number of civil society organizations monitored the polls. The National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) noted increases in voter confidence in the election system compared to the past and attested a "generally perceived credible and orderly conduct of the May 9 elections".[38] More than 100 international observers monitored the polls from the Commission on Elections headquarters and local precinct office, including the multinational Compact of Peaceful and Democratic Elections (COMPACT).[39] Several problems were noted. At least ten people died and three were wounded on polling day from election-related violence, as gunmen attacked polling stations ambushed vehicles add stole vote counting machines, according to police reports, although these incidents were sporadic.[40] There were also reports of poll vote count machine malfunctions and over-heating, vote-buying through gifts of cash and food, lack of ballot secrecy, harassment, and party worker ballot stuffing, shortage of ballots, lack of special facilities for persons with disabilities, complaints of voter disenfranchisement after names were missing from the register.[41] Thus the Philippines is relatively open in party competition and ballot access, but contests are often flawed by procedural short-comings. In the PEI study, the Philippines is scored as 52 out of the standardized 100-point PEI Index, ranking 96th out of 153 countries in the survey.

The Benin presidential election - 6 March 2016

Benin faces endemic poverty (with a GDP per capita of $800) and many problems of governance common in African states, including corruption in the public sector, but several high-profile cases of malfeasance have been pursued by the courts. There were alleged coup attempts in 2012 and 2013 and delayed local elections in 2013, triggering mass protests. Many incumbent African leaders have sought to extend constitutional term limits, and when President Thomas Boni Yayi had completed his second presidential term in 2016 he was constitutionally barred from running again.[42] He repeatedly attempted to introduce a similar constitutional reform in Benin to extend his period in office but he was defeated in parliament and he stood down at the election.

The first round of the Benin presidential was held on 6 March 2016 with a runoff following on 20 March. The President is elected through a two-round (second ballot) electoral system. The winning candidate needs 50% (plus one) of the valid votes cast. If no candidate obtains more than 50% in the first round, a run-off election is held between the two candidates with the highest number of votes. The candidate who obtains the highest number of votes in the second round is the winner.[43]

Over thirty candidates entered the contest, and the leading contenders were technocrats from diverse backgrounds, including successful businesspersons from the private sector. The campaign was largely peaceful.

Both candidates focused on economy, presenting detailed programs for reducing unemployment and stimulating agriculture.[44] The candidates had free access to the media and they were able to campaign across the country. For the first time in the country, a live-telecast presidential debate was organized allowing candidates to reach out to the electorate with their manifestoes and programs.[45] The diaspora living abroad were also allowed to vote.

In the first round, the leading candidates were prime minister Lionel Zinsou, leader of the Cowry Forces for an Emerging Benin, who placed first with 28.4% of the vote; and Patrice Talon, an independent candidate and Beninese cotton entrepreneur, with 24.8%. In the second round, however, Talon won the election with 65.7% of the vote and his opponent quickly conceded defeat. These elections were characterized by lower turnout (66%) than in 2011 (over 84%).[46]

The International Observers reported commitment of all the political actors to comply with provisions of the Constitution and the legal framework governing the electoral process, as well as to make every effort to preserve the social peace and national cohesion.[47] Overall the presidential election in Benin was rated 69 in the 100-point PEI Index, ranked 30th out of 153 nations in the survey, and scoring equivalent or marginally better than several West European contests.

As a result, the 2016 elections mark a further peaceful milestone in Benin's democratic consolidation, a process which started with the introduction of the new constitution and the introduction of multiparty elections in 1991.[48] For more than a quarter century now, despite widespread poverty, Benin has experienced a series of legislative and presidential elections which domestic and international observers have reported as free, peaceful, and fair, including transitions bringing the opposition party into power. Today Benin is widely regarded as a successful African democracy with constitutional checks and balances, multiple parties, a high degree of judicial independence and respect for human rights, and a lively partisan press which is often critical of the government. The country is categorized as 'free' by the 2016 Freedom House index, comparable to Argentina, Mexico, and Romania in its record of civil liberties and political rights.[49]

Comparing elections

The comparison of the three most problematic cases in Figure 4 shows the contrasts in how these were assessed by experts on each country. Thus the Syrian election is clearly rated by far the worst of these three contests – with both the Philippines and Iran displaying moderate results but slightly different profiles throughout the electoral cycle. For example, the open competition and freer media in the Philippines were reflected in their ratings, while the results were somewhat contentious and voter register was a problem. The Iranian elections were most poorly rated for electoral laws, and party and candidate registration, for the reasons already discussed, as well as doing badly overall. The PEI survey allows these issues to be examined in finer detail – as well as being monitored over successive elections in each country.

Finally, Figure 5 shows the global map of electoral integrity and the distribution of the types of electoral integrity. Thus contests rated 'very high' in electoral integrity are those found typically in long-established democracies in Northern Europe and Scandinavia, but those rated as 'high' are distributed far more broadly geographically, ranging from Australia and Mongolia to South Africa, Brazil and Argentina. The 'moderate' category contains the most diverse mix of countries, including the Mexico, India, Myanmar, or Nigeria. Countries rated 'low' or 'very low' tend to be clustered in Africa, the MENA region and Central Asia.

ELECTIONS TO WATCH IN 2016

Additional elections forthcoming during the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2016 will be discussed in the full 2016 report. Two in particular will be the focus of much of the world's attention: the Duma contests in Russia on 18th September 2016 and the US presidential and congressional elections on 8th November 2016

Russia's Duma election – 18th September 2016

In the previous Duma elections in December 2011, the ruling party United Russia won 49% of the overall vote, and 238 seats in the lower house of parliament.[50] The outcome proved controversial and allegations of widespread fraud caused mass protests; for example, more than 50,000 people gathered near the Kremlin to demand a re-run of the parliamentary election, representing the biggest anti-government rally in Moscow since the fall of the Soviet Union.[51] The Duma subsequently passed legislation tightening rights to demonstrate and public assembly.

The 2016 election for the State Duma, the lower house of the Federal Assembly, is based on a parallel mixed electoral system. Half of the 450 seats will be elected by proportional representation from closed party lists with a 5% electoral threshold with the whole country as a single constituency. Seats are allocated using Hare quota and largest remainder method. The other 225 seats are elected in single-member constituencies using the first-past-the-post system. Fourteen parties have registered to contest seats and the major opposition to governing United Russia comes from three parliamentary parties: the leftist Just Russia party, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), and the Communist Party of Russia (KPRF). The elections will be managed by the Central Election Commission (CIK), which since 2007 does not require anymore to its members to have a higher diploma in Law. As in previous contests, if access is granted, the international community will closely scrutinize the elections. The outcome will be seen as an important indication of future political developments in Russia, including the presidential elections due in 2018.[52]

United States – Presidential and Congressional Elections, 8th November 2016

The 2016 US presidential elections have been a contest which has repeatedly confounded and upended conventional expectations. Senator Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump have battled through an exceptionally brutal campaign generating highly negative and deeply polarized opinions among the electorate.

Several major challenges have been highlighted by the campaign, all deepening public mistrust of the electoral process.

First, ever since Florida in 2000, the Republicans and Democrats have become increasingly divided over processes of electoral registration and balloting.[53] The GOP have emphasized the desirability of photo identification and verification checks on the electoral register, to prevent the risks of voter impersonation, while the Democrats have highlighted the risks which this process poses to restricting voter's rights and advocated the expansion of convenience voting facilities, like extended hours, postal and advance voting, to boost turnout. These partisan disagreements have intensified with new laws in state houses and challenges in the courts.[54] While many of the more restrictive attempts have been struck down by judges as discriminatory, the process has politicized the electoral process and fueled public mistrust. These problems were further exacerbated by repeated claims by Donald Trump that the election in several battleground states such as Pennsylvania was in danger of being 'rigged', a serious charge which goes beyond previous Republican claims of fraud. He has called for volunteers to serve as observers in polling places, a process which may cause local tensions on polling day, and he said that courts which had thrown out state voter ID laws were vulnerable to fraud. If Trump loses the election, these heated claims may serve to delegitimize the outcome and encourage challenges among his supporters.

Secondly, chiefs of the FBI and the National Security Agency have taken very seriously the threat of external attempts to hack the results of the election, including potential threats which are alleged to arise from Russia. Cybersecurity officials have become increasingly worried that Russian-based hackers were behind the break into the emails of the Democratic National Committee, with the results released to the media the day before the Democratic Convention, as well as subsequent attempts to break into two state registration databases. One incident included stealing information in Illinois from roughly 200,000 voting records. In another attempt, in Arizona, cyber criminals used malware to try and breach voting records, forcing state officials to disable online voting registration for nine days as they investigated the unsuccessful hacking.[55] The age of many US electronic voting machines, and the lack of sophisticated security in state records, mean that these are particularly vulnerable to attack. The decentralized nature of US electoral administration may provide a partial protection against wholesale efforts at vote rigging but nevertheless it would just take security breaches in a few polling places in a couple of swing states to reduce the credibility of the overall electoral process and throw doubts upon the eventual outcome.

Thirdly, the issue of campaign finance has fueled further mistrust of the process, with attacks on the fund-raising role of major donors and corporations from both the left (Bernie Sanders) and the right (Donald Trump).[56] Experts predicted that this could be the most expensive election in history with spending on all races expected to reach as much as $5 billion, more than double the amount spent on 2012's campaigns.[57] Major decisions by the Supreme Court have deregulated campaign spending.[58] The increased importance of third-party advertising has increased the use of attack rhetoric and negative advertising.[59] In late summer (August 2016), according to FEC figures, Clinton has raised more than three times the total funds compared with Trump ($315 million to around $127 million).[60] At the same time, patterns of spending on campaign communications and local organizations have been upended in this race, with Hillary Clinton outspending Donald Trump in television advertisements by a 17-to-1 margin in late August.[61] Trump has relied largely upon his substantial advantage in

the amount of news coverage contained in free media, as well as the use of social media/Twitter, and traditional campaign rallies.[62]

Finally, these developments are likely to exacerbate and deepen long-standing short-comings of electoral administration observed in previous American contests.[63] When it comes to evaluating the integrity of US elections, experts rated the 2012 and 2014 contests relatively poorly compared with other established democracies. The 2014 Congressional election raised concerns about electoral laws, voter registration, the process of drawing district boundaries, as well as regulation of campaign finance.[64] American electoral administration also suffers from exceptionally partisan and decentralized arrangements. The PEI 4.5 data show that, comparing with all 153 countries in the survey, the US ranks 52nd worldwide. The US scored 62 out of the 100-point PEI Index, the lowest performance among established Western democracies, for example compared with 65 in the UK, 70 in Australia, 75 in Canada, 76 in New Zealand, and 86 in Denmark. In these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that a September 2016 Gallup poll found that only six in ten Americans were very or fairly confident that their vote would be accurately cast and counted in the US election, down from around three quarters of all Americans a decade earlier.[65] Among Republicans, the proportion who were confident dropped to around half, the lowest which the Gallup poll has ever recorded on this question when asked in a series of surveys. At a time of persistently low confidence in American institutions, this deepening erosion of faith in elections is cause for serious concern.

For all these reasons, the EIP project will be monitoring the integrity of the election, using expert surveys across all 50 states after polling day to see where problems arise and to compare the quality of the 2014 and 2016 elections.
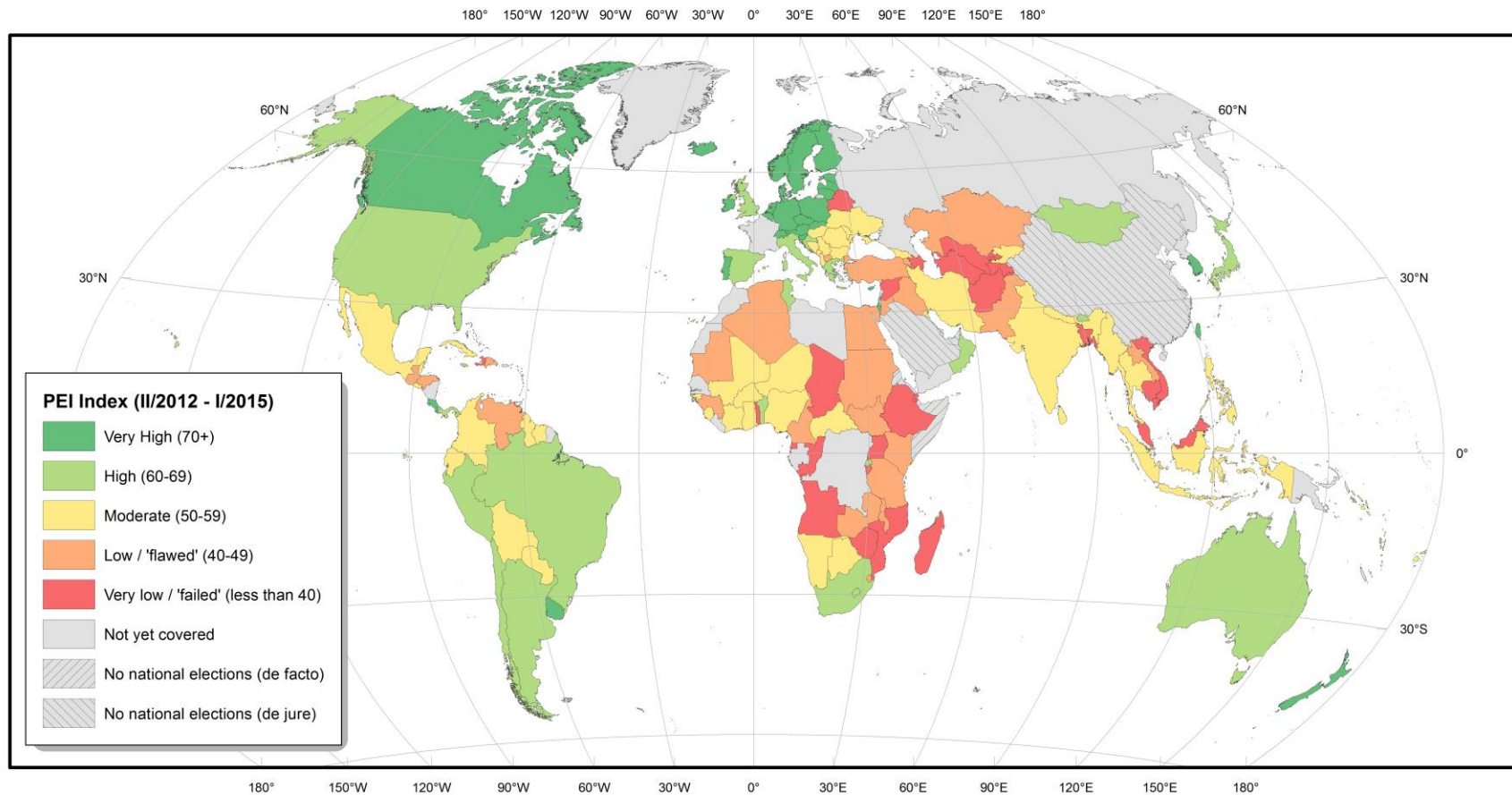
MORE INFORMATION

More information about the Electoral Integrity Project and the PEI survey is available at
www.electoralintegrityproject.com.

The PEI 4.5 data release and codebook are available for download at:
https://thedata.harvard.edu/dataverse/PEI.

"Voting in Kubwa" (CC BY 2.0) by Jeremy Weate

FIGURE 5: THE PEI WORLD MAP

Source: *The Perceptions of Electoral Integrity expert survey (PEI 4.5)*

Technical Appendix: Performance indicators, methods and data

Aims: To start to gather new evidence, on 1st July 2012 the project launched an expert survey of Perceptions of Electoral Integrity. The design was developed in consultation with Professor Jorgen Elklit (Aarhus University) and Professor Andrew Reynolds (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill). The method of pooling expert knowledge has been used for years for measuring complex issues, such as to assess the risks of building nuclear plants, levels of corruption, and processes of democratization.

Global Coverage: 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 criteria for inclusion are listed below. The elections analyzed 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.[66]

Criteria for inclusion in the survey	#	Definition and source
Total number of independent nation-states	194	Membership of the United Nations (plus Taiwan)
Excluded categories		
Micro-states	12	Population less than 100,000 in 2013, including Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Liechtenstein, Marshall Islands, Monaco, Nauru, Palau, Saint Kitts and Nevis, San Marino, Seychelles, and Tuvalu.
Without de jure direct (popular) elections for the lower house of the national legislature	5	Brunei Darussalam, China, Qatar, UAE, and Saudi Arabia
State has constitutional provisions for direct (popular) elections for the lower house of the national legislature, but none have been held since independence or within the last 30 years (*de facto*)	3	Eritrea, Somalia, and South Sudan
Sub-total of nation-states included in the survey	174	
Covered to date in the PEI 4.5 dataset (from mid-2012 to mid-2016)	153	87% of all the subtotal of nation-states

Because of the selection rules, elections contained in each cumulative release of the PEI survey can be treated as a representative cross-section of *all* national presidential and legislative elections around the world (with the exception of the exclusion of micro-states). The countries in PEI 4.5 are broadly similar in political and socio-economic characteristics to those countries holding national elections which are not yet covered in the survey, with the exception of being slightly larger in population size.

Respondents: 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 the survey, representing just under one third of the experts that the project contacted (29%).

Concepts: The idea of electoral integrity is defined by the project 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.[67]

Measurement: To measure this 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',[68] 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 then 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.[69]

Validity and reliability tests: The results of the pilot study, from the elections held in 2012, were tested 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, presented elsewhere, 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.[70]

For *external* validity tests, the PEI Index was significantly correlated with other standard independent indicators contained in the 2016 version of the Quality of Government cross-national dataset. This includes the combined Freedom House/imputed Polity measure of democratization (R=.762** N. 151), and the Varieties of Democracy measure of electoral democracy (polyarchy) (R=.824**, N.140).[71]
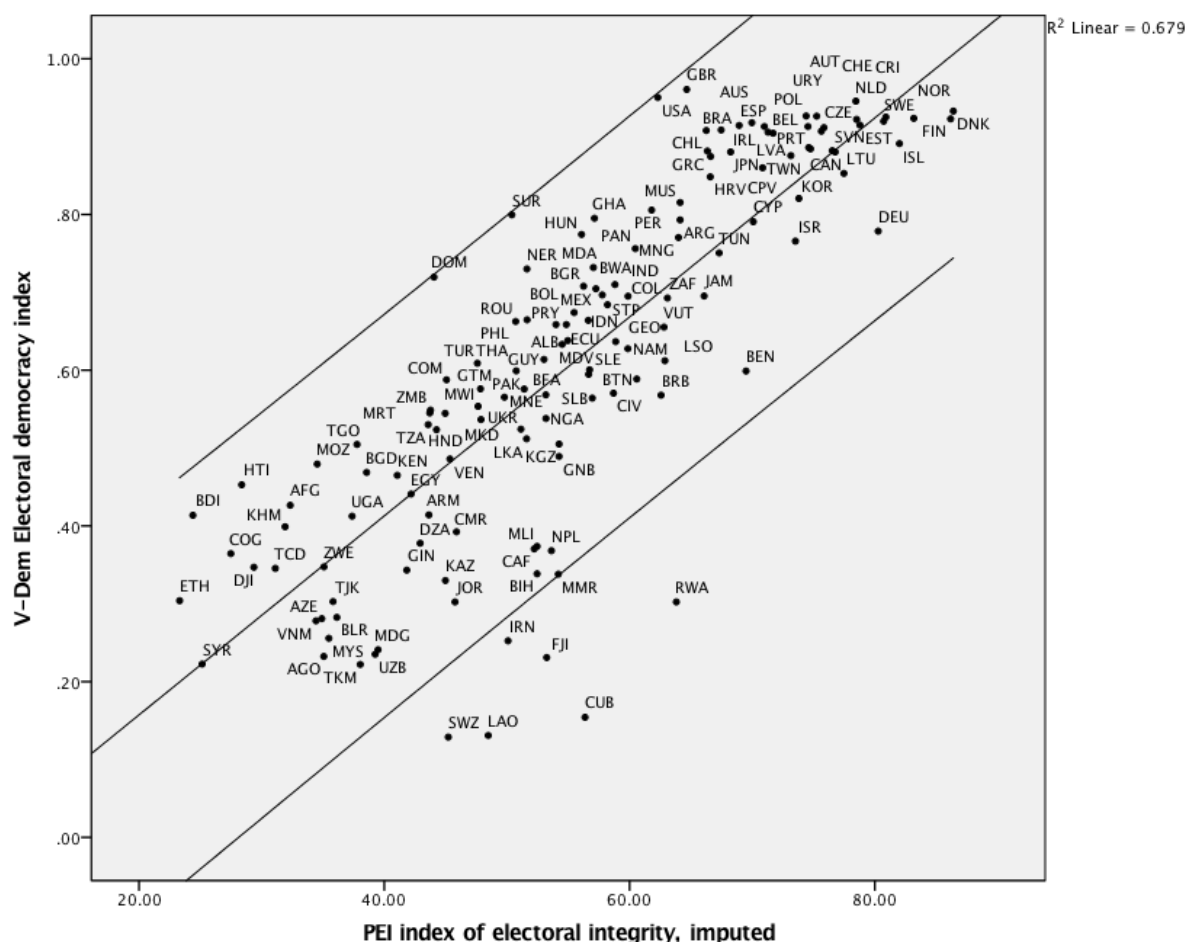
For internal validity purposes, several tests were run using OLS regression models to predict whether the PEI index varied significantly by several social and demographic characteristics of the experts, including sex, age, education, domestic and international institutional location, and familiarity with the election. Domestic experts, in particular, were significantly more positive in their evaluations, by around 10 points on the 100 point PEI Index. Those born in a country were also more positive, by around 6 points. But these differences became insignificant after controlling for societal levels of development. Other social characteristics were not significant predictors of evaluations.

Codebook The PEI 4.5 Codebook provides detailed description of all variables and imputation procedures. A copy and all the data can downloaded from the project's dataverse: https://thedata.harvard.edu/dataverse/PEI

TABLE A1: PEI SURVEY QUESTIONS

	Sections	Performance indicators	Direction
PRE-ELECTION	1. Electoral laws	1-1 Electoral laws were unfair to smaller parties	N
		1-2 Electoral laws favored the governing party or parties	N
		1-3 Election laws restricted citizens' rights	N
	2. Electoral procedures	2-1 Elections were well managed	P
		2-2 Information about voting procedures was widely available	P
		2-3 Election officials were fair	P
		2-4 Elections were conducted in accordance with the law	P
	3. Boundaries	3-1 Boundaries discriminated against some parties	N
		3-2 Boundaries favored incumbents	N
		3-3 Boundaries were impartial	P
	4. Voter registration	4-1 Some citizens were not listed in the register	N
		4-2 The electoral register was inaccurate	N
		4-3 Some ineligible electors were registered	N
	5. Party registration	5-1 Some opposition candidates were prevented from running	N
		5-2 Women had equal opportunities to run for office	P
		5-3 Ethnic and national minorities had equal opportunities to run for office	P
		5-4 Only top party leaders selected candidates	N
		5-5 Some parties/candidates were restricted from holding campaign rallies	N
CAMPAIGN	6. Campaign media	6-1 Newspapers provided balanced election news	P
		6-2 TV news favored the governing party	N
		6-3 Parties/candidates had fair access to political broadcasts and advertising	P
		6-4 Journalists provided fair coverage of the elections	P
		6-5 Social media were used to expose electoral fraud	P
	7. Campaign finance	7-1 Parties/candidates had equitable access to public subsidies	P
		7-2 Parties/candidates had equitable access to political donations	P
		7-3 Parties/candidates publish transparent financial accounts	P
		7.4 Rich people buy elections	N
		7-5 Some states resources were improperly used for campaigning	N
ELECTION DAY	8. Voting process	8-1 Some voters were threatened with violence at the polls	N
		8-2 Some fraudulent votes were cast	N
		8-3 The process of voting was easy	P
		8-4 Voters were offered a genuine choice at the ballot box	P
		8-5 Postal ballots were available	P
		8-6 Special voting facilities were available for the disabled	P
		8-7 National citizens living abroad could vote	P
		8-8 Some form of internet voting was available	P
POST-ELECTION	9. Vote count	9-1 Ballot boxes were secure	P
		9-2 The results were announced without undue delay	P
		9-3 Votes were counted fairly	P
		9-4 International election monitors were restricted	N
		9-5 Domestic election monitors were restricted	N
	10.Post-election	10-1 Parties/candidates challenged the results	N
		10-2 The election led to peaceful protests	N
		10-3 The election triggered violent protests	N
		10-4 Any disputes were resolved through legal channels	P
	11. Electoral authorities	11-1 The election authorities were impartial	P
		11-2 The authorities distributed information to citizens	P
		11-3 The authorities allowed public scrutiny of their performance	P
		11-4 The election authorities performed well	P

Note: Direction of the original items P=positive, N=negative.

Source: *The expert survey of Perceptions of Electoral Integrity*. www.electoralintegrityproject.com.

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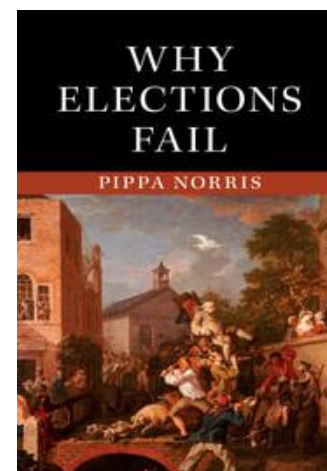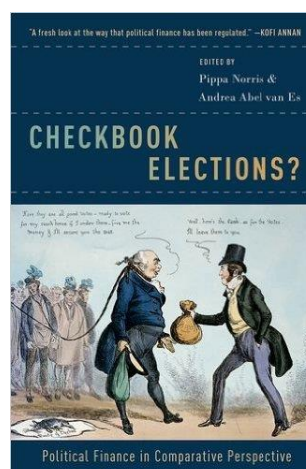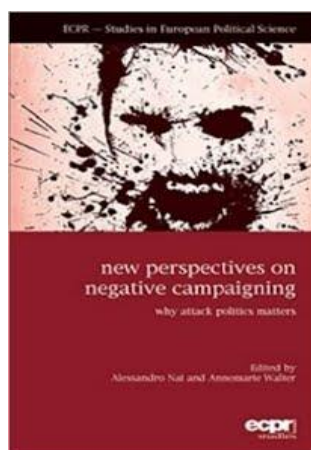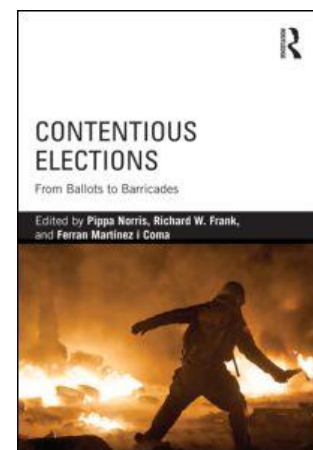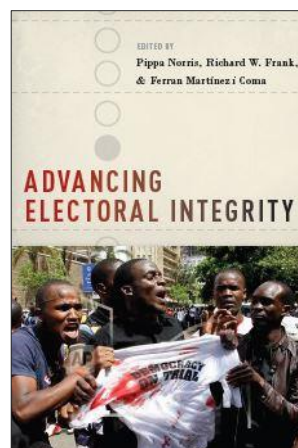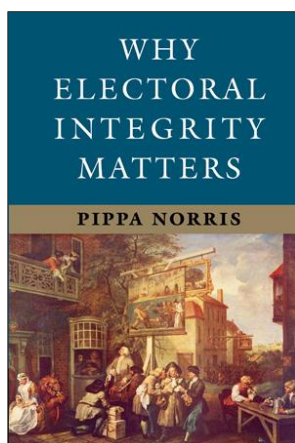
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