Elections and Democracy: The Relevance of Election Studies in the Balkans

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- Democracy and Freedom
  (No taxation without representation)

- Democracy and Power
  (Acceptance of collectively binding decisions)

- Democracy and Public Goods/Policies
  (There is no truly best policy)
Possible Decision Criteria for Choice: The Funnel of Causality
2. Elections – Conditions to make them work

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTY MODEL

Demands on Parties
- Political parties must present different policy alternatives to the voters
- The internal cohesion, or party discipline, of parliamentary parties must be sufficient to enable them to implement their policy program

Demands on Voters
- Voters must have policy issue preferences
- Voters must be aware of the policy positions of parties
- Voters must compare their own position with that of the parties
- Voters should vote for the party that most closely represents their policy preferences/guarantees the highest “utility”

(Pierce 1999, Thomassen 1994).
B. MANDATING – PRINCIPAL-AGENT RELATION

PA-Relation Parliaments (Müller 2000)
– Voters vote for a party (policy-package)
– Parties commit their elected representatives to the policy package/election program
– Mandate goes from voters to parties, and from parties to representatives, i.e.: the principal for the party are the voters; the principal for the representatives is the party

PA-Relation Presidents
– party ‘mandate representation should be less common as we move from the ideal-type parliamentary chain of delegation’ to presidentialism (Samuals/Shugart 2010)
– Voters vote for a president(ial policy-package). Presidents apoint/propose the government.
– Mixed delegation: voters to president / parties; president/parties to representatives
Meaningful Choices and Meaningful Elections

**Meaningful Choices**
- Supply: Are there substantively different choices?
- Demand: Do voters make a reasoned choice?

**Meaningful Elections**
- Do principales have control over the agents?
- Do agents have control over policies?
How and what can election research tell us about the working of democracy?

**Two basic perspectives:**

- Country-specific evaluation of the working of elections and democracy
- Comparative analysis of the working of elections and democracy

**Two analytical dimensions:**

- Directly evaluative
- Conclusions from relationships about the working of elections
General Analytical Perspectives and Topics

Monitoring, self-observation of performance and problems
– Direct evaluation of elections and democracy

Explaining performance and problems from a voters’ perspective
– Reasonable voting:
  - supply conditions
  - structure of the impact of voters’ evaluation of political object on behavior (participation, choice)
– Implication of determinants of voters’ behavior for parties’/president’s strategy
– Investigating the working of electoral institutions, supply structures in terms of do voters to with them what resembles their normative goals

All topics under the perspective of representation and accountability
## Country-specific / comparative and evaluative / explanatory (examples)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Country-specific</th>
<th>Comparative</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Directly evaluative</strong></td>
<td>- Government makes a difference</td>
<td>- Social determinants of turnout depend on supply structure and competition</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Voting makes a difference</td>
<td>- Voters apply evaluations, depending on electoral system</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Satisfaction with the working of democracy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion from relationship</strong></td>
<td>- Who turns out (social inequality; representation gap)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Correct / sincere / strategic voting</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Macro-Micro Design of Comparative Research

MACRO VARIATIONS OF DEMOCRATIC SYSTEMS
parliamentarism vs presidentialism; electoral laws;
party system; cleavage structure

I. (conventional micro-micro)

II. (macro-micro)

III. (macro-micro)

IV. (macro-[micro-micro])

Independent Variables
MICRO LEVEL
Social Structural Characteristics
Evaluation of Government Performance
Evaluation of Economic Performance

Dependent Variables
MICRO LEVEL
Electoral Behaviour
Evaluations of Democratic Institutions
Evaluating Elections and Democracy by Looking at Voters

A) Using the Responsible Party Model as Yardstick

– Does the individual voter have a political position/preference? (left-right; policy preferences, party leaning)
– Do voters perceive differences between parties/candidates? (policy stands, performance)
– Do voters decide according to the match with a party? (proximity, evaluations)
B) Looking to the Perception of Mandating

– If voters vote for parties, is their primary criteria the evaluation of parties or candidates; if they vote for candidates, is their primary criteria the evaluation of candidates rather than parties? ("paradox of personalization of politics")

– Do voters think that it matters whom they vote for? Do voters think that it matters who is in government? (accountability)
C) Looking to the Impact of Institutions on the Calculus of Voting

- Do incentives and constraints of institutions work according to the norms/goals embedded in them?

Examples:
Does introducing a regional proportional system with small districts lead to a candidate-centered voting? (Albania)

Does introducing a mixed member proportional system lead to a candidate centered voting regarding the personal vote (Romania, Bulgaria)

Do hurdles lead to Duvergers strategic voting? (avoiding wasted votes)

- Do voters think that it matters whom they vote for?
Do voters think that it matters who is in government? (accountability)
Summary: Determining the Quality of Democracy by Electoral Research

- Performance evaluations by citizens
- Does mandating work properly
- Can representation work (demands on voters and political supply)
- Can accountability work (depends on more than electoral institutions)
The Role of CSES

- Offers a question module which contains basically all elements of the funnel of causality in condensed form
- Includes direct evaluative questions
- Offers the opportunity to compare:
  - descriptively (yardstick)
  - analytically (the behavioral consequences of institutions and context)
- Is of value for single country analysis, however, also offers the opportunity for comparison as the “King’s road” of social sciences
Aggregate Volatility of Vote Shares (Mean 1991-2011)

- Sweden: 13.9
- Netherlands: 21.7
- Great Britain: 11.4
- Germany: 12.3
- France: 40.3
- Serbia: 57.7
- Romania: 67.3
- Montenegro: 54.7
- Mazedonia: 57.7
- Croatia: 51.3
- Bulgaria: 58.1
- Bosnia Herzegoniva: 43.2
- Albania: 46.9
# Parliamentary Election Turnout

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Albania</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bosnia-Herzegovina</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>48.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>56.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Croatia</strong></td>
<td>61.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>59.58</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FYR Macedonia</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>55.98</td>
<td></td>
<td>57.99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kosovo</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>44.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>45.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Montenegro</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>72.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>66.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Serbia</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60.57</td>
<td>61.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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*Source: IDEA (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance) voter turnout*
Turnout in OECD Countries

Turnout since 1950*

Turnout since 1977**

Turnout since 1991***

* Excluding Southern and Eastern European Countries as well as Chile, Mexico and South Korea (N = 21);

** Excluding Eastern European Countries, Chile, and South Korea (N = 25);

*** Including all full members of the OECD (N = 31); cross-country means.

Source: Database „Elections, Parties, Governments“ of the Research Unit „Democracy“ at the Social Science Research Center Berlin (WZB).
Effective Democracy Index for the Balkans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Democratic Rights Index (DRI)</th>
<th>Rule of Law Index (RLI)</th>
<th>Effective Democracy Index (EDI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>66.66</td>
<td>.197</td>
<td>13.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>BiH</td>
<td>58.33</td>
<td>.328</td>
<td>19.13</td>
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<td>Croatia</td>
<td>83.33</td>
<td>.891</td>
<td>74.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kosovo</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.084</td>
<td>2.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>FYR Macedonia</td>
<td>66.66</td>
<td>.592</td>
<td>39.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>66.66</td>
<td>.576</td>
<td>38.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>.384</td>
<td>28.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*The methodology follows Welzel and Alexander (2008) and is described in Appendix 1. The EDI is at a minimum 0 when either democratic rights or the rule of law are absent. Conversely, the EDI is at a maximum of 100 when democratic rights are both fully present as well as made effective by an operational rule of law.


\[
DRI = \frac{(12 - ((PRR+CLR) - 2))/12}{RLI = \frac{(COS - LOS)}{(HOS - LOS)}}
\]

**DRI:** Democratic Rights Index  
**PRR:** Freedom House political rights rating (1 to 7, 1 is widest political rights)  
**CLR:** Freedom House civil liberties rating (1 to 7, 1 is widest civil liberties)  
**RLI:** Rule of Law Index  
**COS:** Country’s observed score  
**LOS:** Lowest ever observed score  
**HOS:** Highest ever observed score