Latvian election studies

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Election-related studies

• Abundance of elections since 1991:
  – Eight national elections
  – Six municipal elections
  – Three European elections

• Two strands of research:
  – Academic studies
  – Non-academic studies
Non-academic studies

• Pre-election surveys
  – Commissioned by political parties, media since 1998
  – Focus on issues, messages, leaders, party support
  – Nationally-representative samples
  – CAPI, CATI
  – Data sets typically not available

• Exit polls
  – Commissioned by media since 2002
  – Missing much of demographics
  – Various levels of accuracy (non-response 25-30%)
Academic studies, 1993-2002

• Various institutions in charge
• Unclear focus
  – Vote choice and socio-demographic variables
• Pre- and post-election surveys
• Varying quality of fieldwork
• Data deposited at GESIS
Academic studies, 2004- 

- Explicitly cross-national
  - Citizenship
  - National identity
- ESS 2006, 2008
  - trust in institutions;
  - party membership and ID;
  - ideological self-placement;
  - political participation
Academic studies, 2004-

- CSES M3 and M4
  - country-specific issues
- Attempts to maintain time-series
- Technicalities
  - CAPI within 2 months from the election day
  - Stratified random samples
  - 45-55 minute interview
- Data available via CSES
Main topics

• Turnout
• Vote choice
  – Importance of cleavage structure
  – Impact of IT and political communication
• Effects of preferential voting
Challenges

• Accuracy of data (emigration)
• Social/policy relevance of research
• Funding
• Small number of researchers
• Data collection method