

The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES)



The CSES After Fifteen Years: Three Modules Going On Four, What Progress?

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**Comparative Cross-National Electoral Research
(CCNER)**

Three Goals



- How social, political, economic, institutional contexts shape belief and behaviors, affecting the nature and quality of democratic choice
- To understand the nature of political and social cleavages and alignments
- How do citizens evaluate democratic institutions and practices?

Module 1



System Performance

- Constitutional and institutional effects on democratic performance
- The social underpinnings of party systems
- Attitudes to parties, political institutions, and the democratic process
- 33 countries

Module 2



Accountability and representation

- Do elections make governments accountable, are citizens' views represented?
- Political participation and turnout
- Institutions and contexts in new democracies
- 38 countries

Module 3



Political choices: contestation and inclusiveness

- Policy questions about electoral system design
- Established democracies
 - ✦ How satisfaction varies with choices
 - ✦ How and why new parties are formed
- New democracies
 - ✦ Electoral system design and political stability

Module 3



Survey instruments on -

- Retrospective evaluation of candidates and parties
- Prospective evaluations via ideology, party image, and policy differences
- Voter perceptions of policy choices

Consequences of limited choices?

- ✦ Turnout, new parties, disorder, threats to democracy?

Module 4

Distributional Politics and Social Protection

- Policy expenditure preferences
- Job and income security
- Prospect of upward mobility
- Positional and Valence Economic Voting
- Wealth and assets

Mobilization

- Campaigns
- Different styles of mobilization

- ✦ New and old forms – SMS, internet

Political Knowledge: a new approach – questions address knowledge about

- Responsibility
 - ✦ Minister of Finance
 - ✦ Second party
- Institutional – legislative term
- Party ideological placing
- International affairs

Uniqueness of CSES

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Post-national election surveys

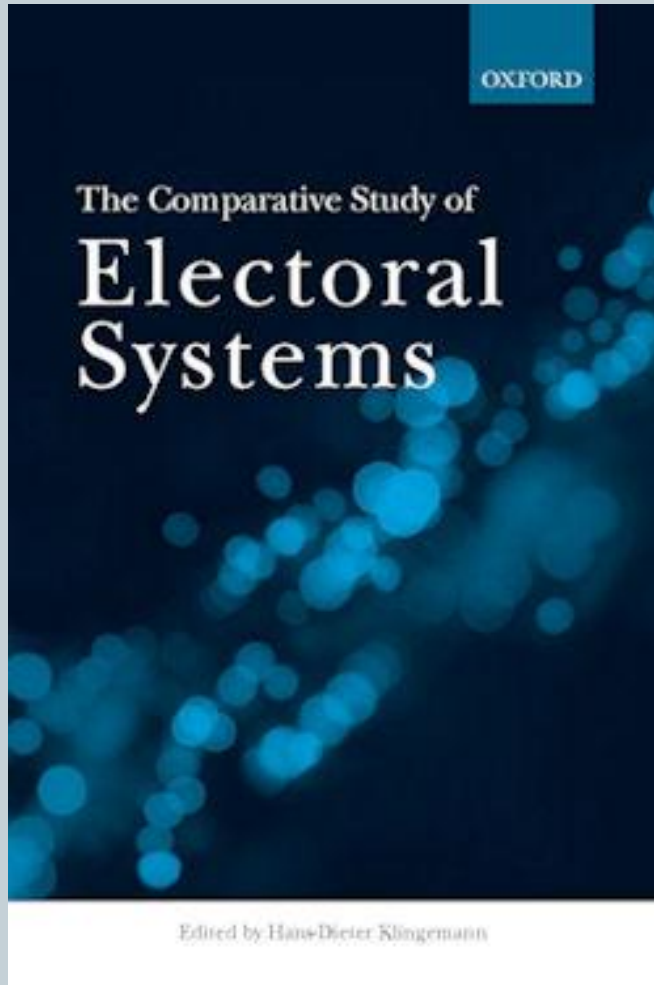
Unlike virtually all cross-national datasets

Suited for turnout, campaign involvement, and election-related attitudinal effects – fairness, legitimacy, political trust

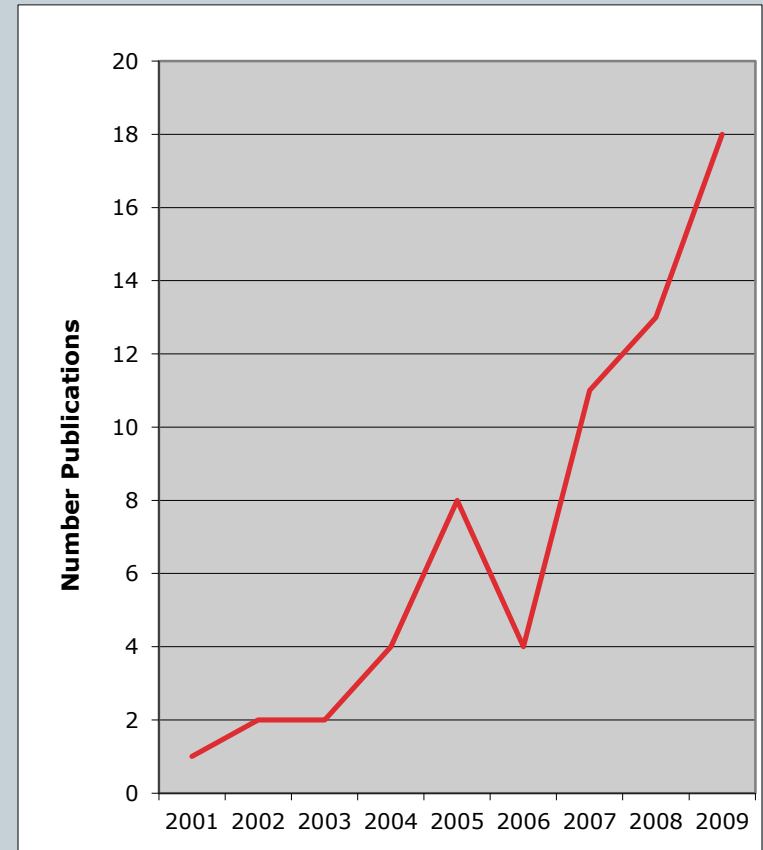
A time when citizens will be as attentive to the electoral process as they ever will be

Should not other cross-national surveys asking such questions should add time since election as a control?

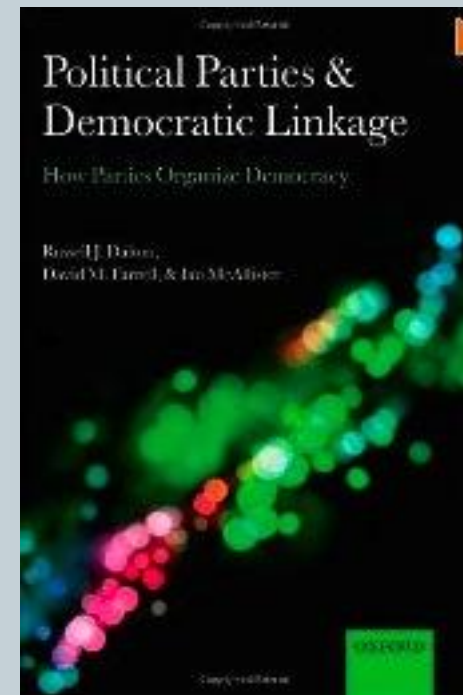
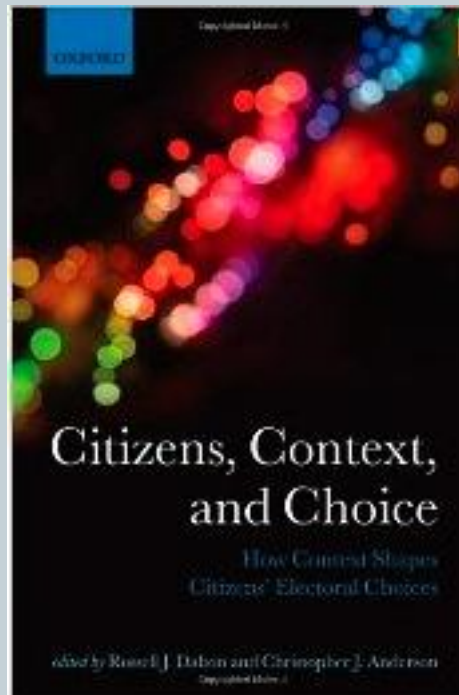
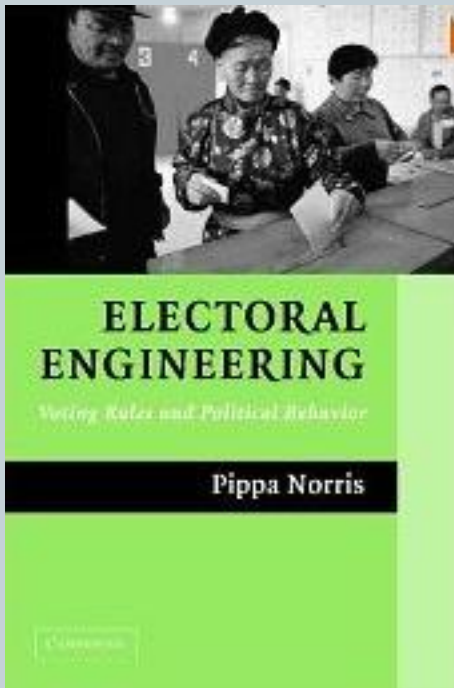
Publications



2001-2009



More Books



Journal Special Issues

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Electoral Studies 27 ,1, 2008:
Special Symposium: Public
Support for Democracy

Party Politics 13, 2, 2007: Special
Issue: Political Parties and
Political Development

Independent Variables

Electoral System	21
Old/New Democracies	10
Knowledge	4
Coalitions	7
Party Evaluations	3
Party System	4
Social Background	2
Divided Government	2

Presidential/Parliamentary	2
Globalization	2
Ballot structure	2
Win/Lose	2
Turnout	2
Gender	1
Ideological Congruence	2
Religion	1
Inequality	1

Dependent Variables

Choice Parameters	9
Accountability	9
Satisfaction with democracy	7
Turnout	7
Engagement/Efficacy	7
Cleavages	6

Ideology/Issue Voting	6
Party ID	5
Economic Voting	4
System Support	4
Mass/Elite Policy Congruence	5
Right Protest	2
Fairness	2
Knowledge	1

Some Findings



PR systems may better represent (although debatable), but are not necessarily worse at accountability

No differences in government proximity to the median voter across PR/majoritarian systems

But low income systems better represented under PR

Higher turnout under PR is despite lower grassroots party activity under that system

Higher turnout under PR does seem related to fewer wasted votes

Issues for the Future

Case Selection Bias: is the CSES
‘representative’ ?

What about Case Selection in terms of
subsets of countries?

Should we delete some cases as outliers?

Statistical issues – is multi-level
modeling ‘the state of the art’
(N of level 2 cases small...)

Issues for the Future

How to judge certainty of findings when country-level selection non-random?

Even if all cases covered, how do we estimate possibilities of other outcomes?

Simulation, Bayesian analysis

Plus multi-level modelling, complicated data analysis...