



# Voter Turnout

International IDEA, June 2019

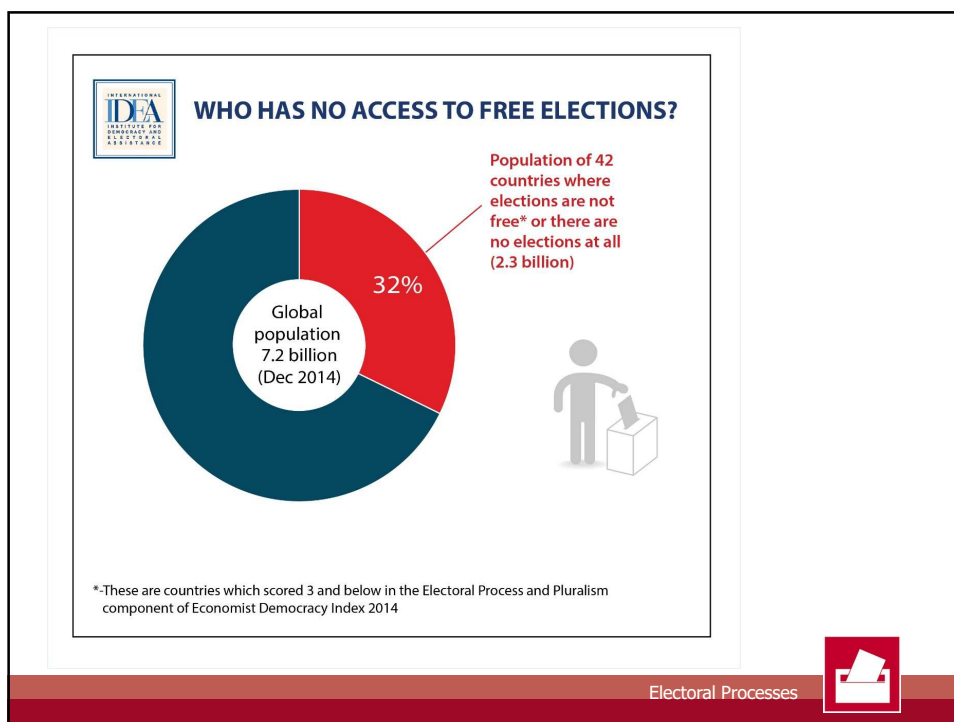
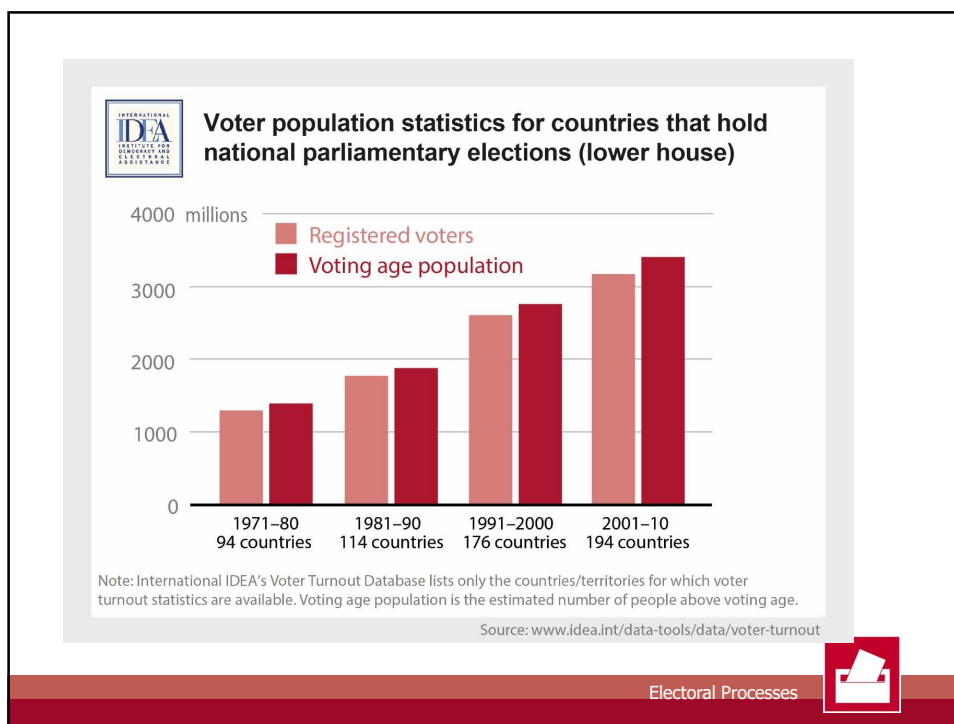
Electoral Processes



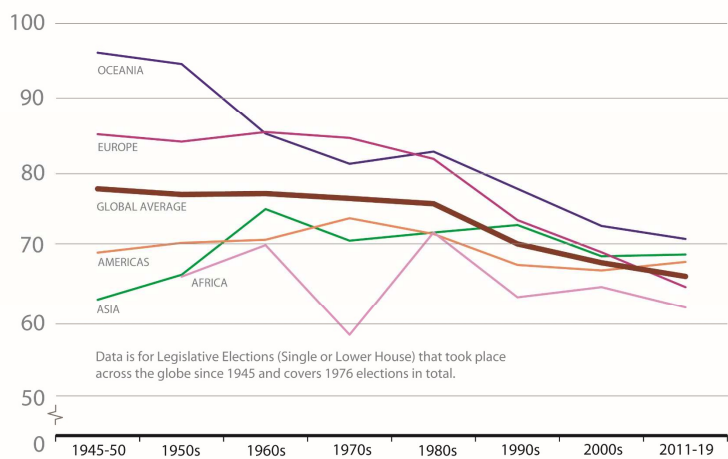
# Global trends in voter turnout

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### GLOBAL VOTER TURNOUT BY REGION, 1945-2019

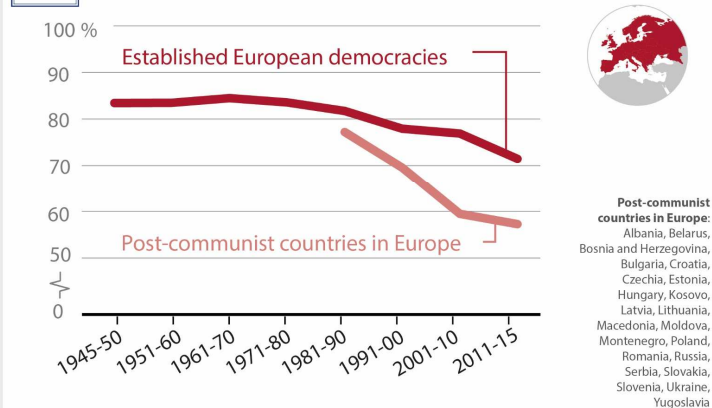


Source: Voter Turnout Database, <https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout>

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### Voter turnout in Europe (1945–2015)



Source: Voter Turnout Database, [www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout](http://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout)

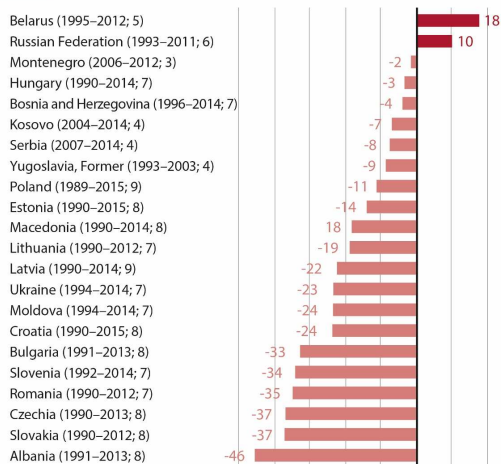
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### DECLINE OF VOTER TURNOUT IN EASTERN EUROPE

Differences in turnout between the first elections after the end of Cold War and the most recent elections



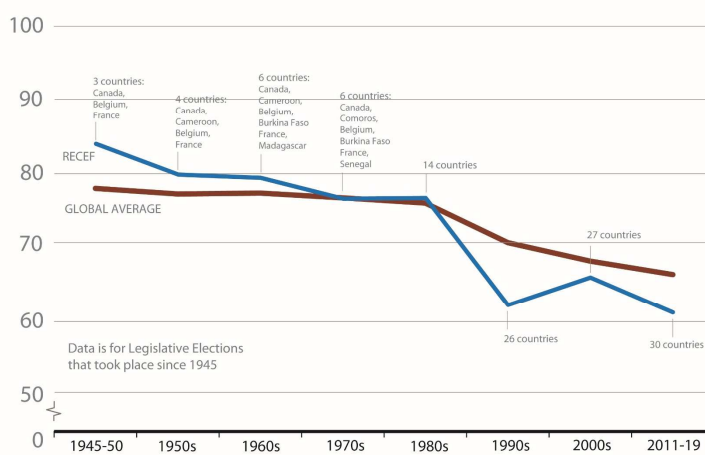
Figures in the brackets show the period when the elections were held and the number of parliamentary elections took place during this period.

Sources: Voter Turnout Database, [www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout](http://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout)

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### VOTER TURNOUT: RECEF vs GLOBAL, 1945-2019

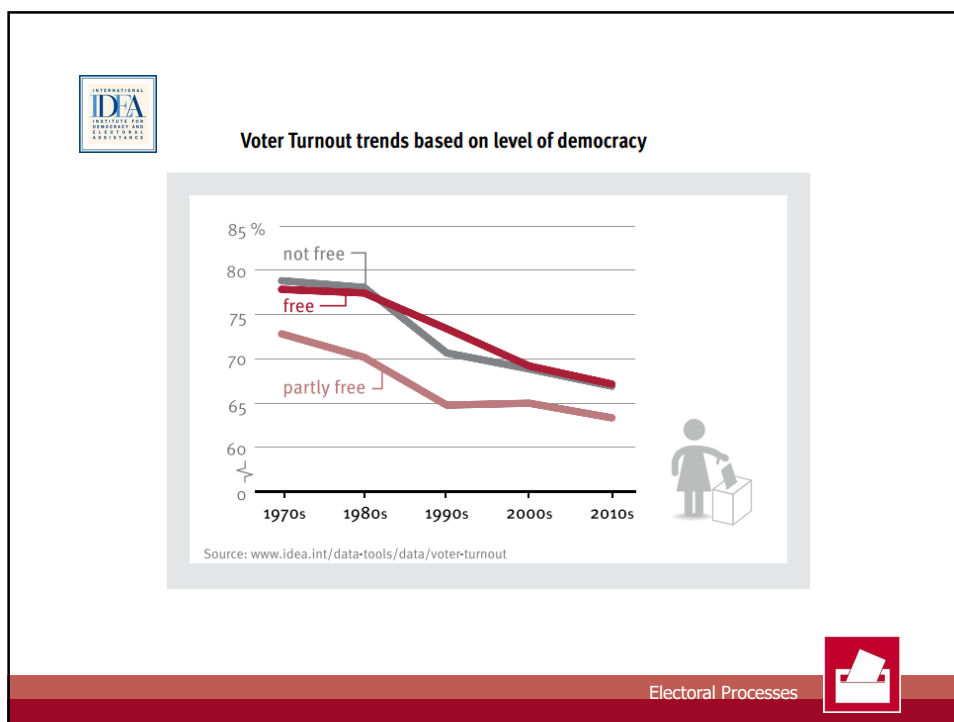
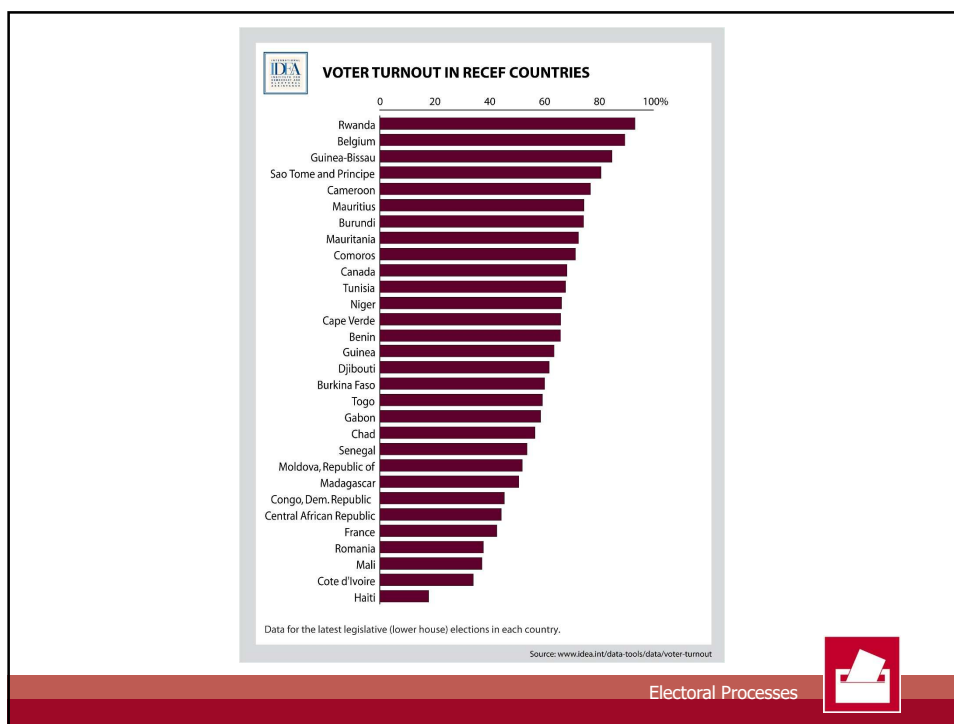


Data is for Legislative Elections that took place since 1945

Source: Voter Turnout Database, <https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout>

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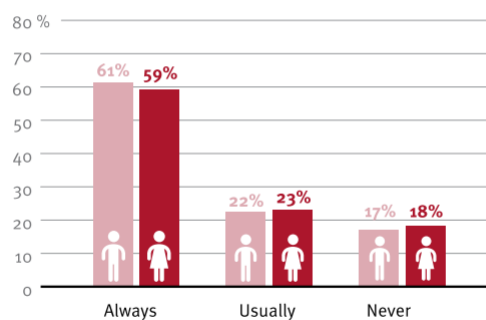






### Difference in voter turnout between women and men

#### Do you vote in national elections?

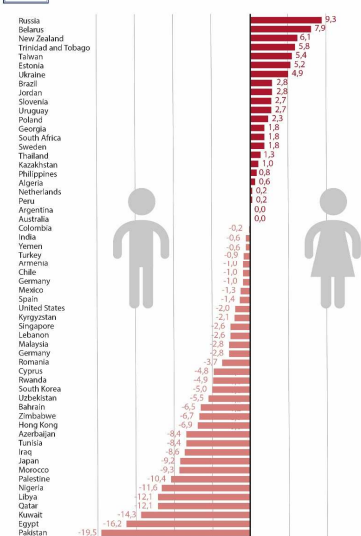


Source: World Values Survey, Sixth wave (2010–14). Data were collected from 59 countries.

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#### DIFFERENCE IN VOTER TURNOUT BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN



Note: the bars represent the difference between the percentage of female and male respondents who answered "always" to the question "Do you vote in the national elections?".

Source: World Values Survey, Sixth wave (2010–14)

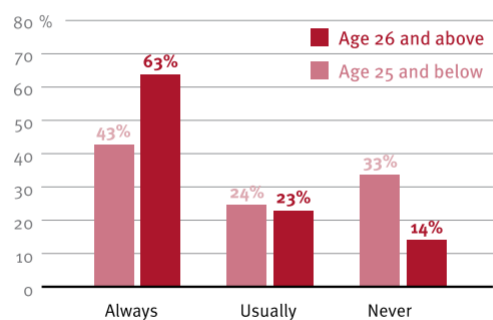
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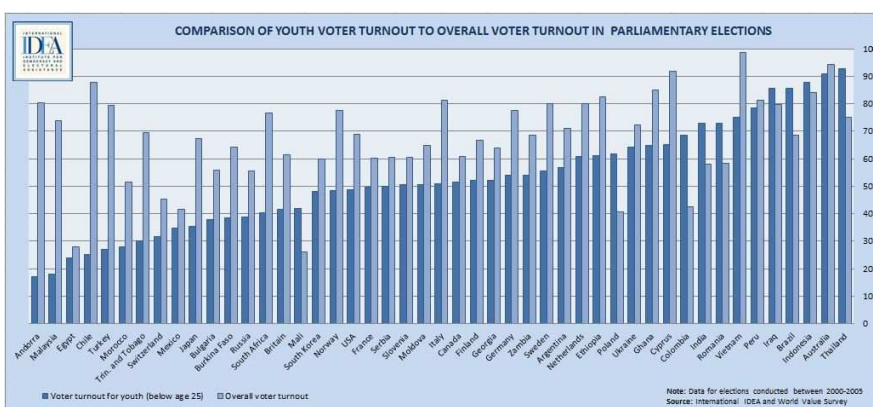
### Differences in voter turnout by age

#### Do you vote in national elections?



Source: World Values Survey, Sixth wave (2010–14)

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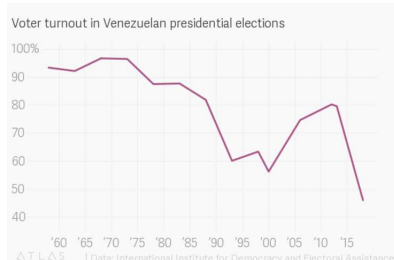
## The Election Legitimacy Problem: - how low is too low?

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### ***'SIX MORE YEARS Venezuela's record-low voter turnout is the latest chapter in the death of its democracy'***

June 18 2018 REUTERS/CARLOS GARCIA RAWLINS



Nicolás Maduro: "The revolution is here to stay!"





## What factors affect voter turnout?

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS:

- **Population size** (turnout is higher when population is smaller);
- **Population stability** (frequent movement from one place to another decrease people's desire to engage in political processes);
- **Economic development** (people are more engaged in political processes in developed countries).

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## What factors affect voter turnout?

### POLITICAL FACTORS:

- **Closeness of elections** (the closer the election between parties or candidates is expected to be, the higher the likelihood that voters will cast their vote);
- **Perception of political issues at stake** (important issues at stake increase voter turnout);
- **Campaign expenditures** (more money spend on campaigning increase awareness of an election);
- **Political fragmentation** (some argue that the availability of more parties gives more options to voters, and thus increase their desire to vote)

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## What factors affect voter turnout?

### INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS:

- **Electoral system** (turnout is higher in proportional systems compared to plurality/majority systems);
- **Compulsory voting** (when people are obliged to vote, turnout increases dramatically);
- **Concurrent elections** (when several elections take place on the same day voter turnout is usually higher);
- **Registration requirements** (In some settings, registration may entail burdens on voters (e.g. costs, travel) and these can affect registration and turnout rates);
- **Voting arrangements** (The design of various types of voting arrangement can have an impact on voter turnout.).

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## What factors affect voter turnout?

### INDIVIDUAL FACTORS:

- **Age** (as stated earlier, youth voter apathy is a primary source of concern in many countries);
- **Education** (higher levels of education can generally be associated with higher rates of voter turnout);
- **Political interest** (the more a person is interested in politics, the higher is his/her likelihood to vote in elections);
- **Civic duty** (a perception of civic duty is one of the most crucial factors affecting attitudes to voting in elections).

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## What factors affect voter turnout?

... AND MANY OTHER FACTORS:

- **Perceived level of corruption** (according to Sundström and Stockemer (2015), perceptions of corruption in government services suppress citizens' desire to turn out on election day);
- **Perception of electoral fairness** (Birch (2010) finds that perceptions of electoral integrity are positively associated with voter participation);
- **Decentralization** (Blais et al. (2011) find that decentralization increases turnout in regional elections);

The list goes on ...

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