

Abstracts

Philip Manow und Peter Flemming

Passed with Distinction? Do candidates with an academic or noble title enjoy a comparative advantage - an analysis of Bundestag elections 1949-2009

Do candidates with an academic or noble title enjoy a competitive advantage vis-à-vis candidates without one? In our study we compare nominal votes and list ranks between candidates with and without a title for all Bundestag-elections since 1949. We find that candidates with titles do indeed have higher nominal votes and better list places – but we cannot rule out that this is a self-selection effect, meaning that titles do not lead to political success, but that the politically successful have a higher probability to have a title, too.

Markus Reiners

E-revolution. Actor-centered and structural interdependencies in the realization of Estonia's democratic revolution

The citizens of Estonia started electing their political representatives per internet in 2005. Since then the number of e voters has grown strongly. A number of countries have conducted pilot tests, but no other country has followed Estonia's example to date. Apart from analyzing the political processes up to the implementation of the project, the study examines why it was possible to implement this far-reaching project in Estonia. It concludes that a variety of structural and legislative factors, as well as a number of actor constellations, supported the process. The study analyzes the factors and constellations, highlights the influence of history on the introduction of e voting aimed at increasing the legitimacy of the political system, and suggests that political power games accompanied the introduction process. It will be interesting to see whether Estonia's e voting vision spawns sustainable copies in other countries in years to come.

Berthold Kuhn

Use and Appreciation of the BTI and the FHI by Researchers and Practitioners. An Expert Survey

Political Science has recently witnessed a proliferation of index projects measuring democracy, governance and transformation processes. This paper addresses the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) and the Freedom House Index (FHI) which are considered to be among the best known indices in their area of thematic focus. It presents the results of an expert survey among researcher and practitioners of different age, sex and qualification which is based on a questionnaire and interviews. It also includes some experts working in both fields and students. The findings from the interviews and the questionnaires which were filled out by 82 potential German speaking users of the indices indicate that the BTI gets slightly higher scores of general appreciation but the FHI is still more frequently used. The indices receive appreciation but also different kinds of criticism, mainly on conceptual and methodological issues. One key recommendation is to better involve regional and national institutions in the process of making the assessments and drafting the reports.