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WHAT IS ELECTORAL INTEGRITY?

*Conceptualising Election Quality
in an Age of Complexity*

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What is Electoral Integrity?

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Abstract: There are worldwide concerns about the quality of elections and democracy. There is also an ambiguity in academia, the international community and popular discourse about how to define and measure good elections. This Element develops an original concept of electoral integrity based on human empowerment. Elections serve a purpose: They should give citizens a voice, empower the everyday citizen against the powerful and act as mechanisms for political equality. Secondly, it argues that there have been major societal “megatrends,” meaning that the holding of elections has moved from the modern era to an age of complexity. This describes an era of demographic, technological, legal, economic and political complexity and fluidity. The greater connection between nodes of activities in the electoral process means that elections held in one part of the world can be very quickly affected by actors and developments elsewhere. Thirdly, it provides new measurement tools to assess election quality.

Keywords: democracy, democratic backsliding, elections, electoral integrity, election integrity

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