Global Overview of COVID-19 Impact on Elections: Data Dashboard Glossary

Scope and key definitions

Timespan: The dashboard includes electoral processes from 21 February 2020, which was the date of the first round of parliamentary elections in Iran, until the end of 2020. Iran's election is seen to be the first for which the impact of Covid-19 was a significant consideration.

Coverage: The dashboard seeks to include every electoral process scheduled to occur during the stated period in countries and territories worldwide. This includes national elections, regional and local elections, direct democracy votes, by-elections, and primaries organised by election management bodies.

Defining a distinct electoral process: Standardising the definition of an electoral process poses several challenges. In this dataset, elections have been categorised on a case-by-case basis depending on the specific context, but there are key definition challenges that are standardised.

- **Rounds -** Electoral processes that have multiple rounds are counted as one election.
- **Local elections -** Whether elections in different localities of a country or territory are counted as one electoral process or several separate ones is determined based on how close together they were and the extent to which decision-making on them was coordinated.
- **Primaries** – In the case of the US primaries, recording 50 separate elections for each state would have a disproportionate impact on the global figures. Thus, they have been consolidated into a cohort that were postponed and a cohort that were held on schedule.
- **Multiple elections on the same day –** If national and local elections are held simultaneously on the same day, they are counted as a single electoral process. However, a referendum held on the same day as an election is counted as a separate electoral process.

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Descriptive categories:

- **Postponed elections:** Electoral processes that have been delayed until a later date (and may since have been held) or indefinitely.
- **Held elections:** Electoral processes that have been held, which includes those that were initially postponed and subsequently held.

Sub-group categories:

- **Level:** National electoral processes are those that involve electing representatives for a national governing or decision-making body. This includes elections for President, national legislatures, and also national referendums. Sub-national electoral processes are those that involve electing representatives for a sub-national governing or decision-making body, such as for local or municipal councils, state legislatures, mayoral elections, and sub-national direct democracy votes.

- **Region:** The regions displayed on the dashboard are Africa, the Americas, Asia Pacific, Europe, Middle East.

Figures and Measures:

- The national versus sub-national pie charts show a simple count of electoral processes postponed (first wheel) and held (second wheel).
- The shading of the world maps is based on this national versus sub-national distinction. However, if a country has had a national and sub-national electoral process, both of which were postponed or both of which were held, then the national supersedes the sub-national in terms of shading.
- The region wheels show the percentage of electoral processes in each region that have been postponed (first wheel) and held (second wheel).

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Descriptive categories

- **Held on schedule:** Electoral process was held on its originally scheduled date.
- **Upcoming on schedule:** Electoral process is due to be held on its originally scheduled date.
- **Postponed then held:** Electoral process was postponed then subsequently held.
- **Postponed and rescheduled:** Electoral process was postponed and has been rescheduled for a date in the future.
- **Postponed with no new date:** Electoral process was postponed and has not been given a newly scheduled date.

Sub-group categories

- **Original election date:** The table on the right of page 2 breaks down the status of electoral processes in 2020 by the month that they were originally scheduled for.

Figures and measures:

- The election status wheel shows the percentage of all scheduled electoral processes in each status category.
- The timetable shows a simple count of the number of electoral processes broken down by the month they were originally scheduled for and their current status.
- The world map shows in green shade every country that has either held or postponed an electoral process in 2020.

Interacting with the dashboard

Users can interact with the dashboard to drill down on specific figures, descriptive categories, and sub-groups. If the user clicks on a particular data point on the wheels – for example, the national elections postponed section of the wheel on page 1 – then the map and region wheel opposite will automatically filter to show shading and figures for national elections.

The same process applies to interacting with the held elections section of page 1 and page 2. Page 2 has the added capability to filter for a specific month using the bar at the top left of the page.

The user needs only to click again on the same data point to reset the dashboard.