

Brazilian Electoral Panel Study: 2014 Results

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Abstract

This report provides a summary introduction to some of the questions examined in the Brazilian Electoral Panel Study (BEPS) 2014 dataset. Following up on the 2010 Brazilian Electoral Panel Study, and taking advantage of the Brazilian 2014 presidential elections, a public opinion panel study was undertaken, comprising seven waves extending from May to November 2014. This document has two goals. The first is to familiarize those interested in using the data for their own analyses with the survey's technical approach and the dataset's subject matter. The second is to provide a preliminary dissemination of the survey's findings. These results are organized thematically around the topics covered in the questionnaire, consisting mostly of summary statistics, and the codebook provides further information on the design for the questionnaires and sample. The questionnaire also includes six controlled experiments.

JEL classification: D72

Keywords: Vote, Partisanship, Policy preferences, Political participation

1 Introduction

Latin American countries have made considerable progress towards democratization, and in recent years some have been particularly successful in implementing much needed reforms. However, like all democracies, countries in the region will continue to face many challenges that require decisive political action. Because democracies are representative forms of government, citizens need to choose individuals to represent their interests and to whom policy decisions will be delegated. Elections are a fundamental stage in the democratic political process and the main instrument for citizens to affect political decisions.

The objective of this project has been to collect original public opinion data in the largest democracy in Latin America to capture the dynamic game between voters and politicians during elections. Following up on the 2010 Brazilian Electoral Panel Study, and taking advantage of the Brazilian 2014 presidential elections, we conducted a public opinion panel study comprising seven waves extending from May to November 2014.

Questionnaires replicated items in the different waves capturing movements in vote intention, government evaluation, policy preferences, and partisanship, among others. The initial sample is representative of the Brazilian population, covering 22 of the 27 states and 118 municipalities in all regions of the country, proportional to population size up to the municipal level. Interviews in this first wave were conducted face-to-face, computer assisted, and were collected prior to the official beginning of the campaign, so as to capture baseline measures of vote intentions and all other variables, free from contamination of campaign events. Subsequent waves were conducted through computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) based on subsamples drawn randomly from the first wave. The scheduling of the waves followed the occurrence of campaign events, taking into consideration, in particular, the dates of presidential debates. Table 1 describes the basic features of the research design.

Table 1: Sampling Waves

Wave	N	Start	End
1	3120	5/17/14	6/16/14
2	609	7/16/14	7/20/14
3	595	8/28/14	9/1/14
4	606	9/16/14	9/21/14
5	667	9/29/14	10/4/14
6	1207	10/6/14	10/16/14
7	1001	10/28/14	11/7/14
Total	7805		

The dataset includes two complementary weighting mechanisms. The variable “weight_censo” weights the entire sample interviewed in wave 1 to the Brazilian national population. The weights are based on gender, age, region, and income, as reported in the 2010 census. The variable “weight” weights all subsequent waves to the first wave, or entire sample interviewed, using gender, wealth, and region. The variable “weight_combined” combines the

two weights, in order to make each wave individually representative at the national level. Unless otherwise specified, the graphs in this paper are calculated using the first wave in which the question was asked, and applying the combined weights (so as to be representative at the population level.) However, the data remain in raw form so that researchers may apply the discretion their individual queries may call for.

This document has two goals. The first is to familiarize those interested in using the data for their own analyses with the survey’s technical approach and the dataset’s subject matter. The second is to provide a preliminary dissemination of the survey’s findings. These results are organized thematically around the topics covered in the questionnaire, and consist mostly of summary statistics. The codebook provides further information on the design for the questionnaires and sample.

The questionnaire also includes six controlled experiments, addressing the economy, the voting base, partisanship, clergy influence, the influence of Silas Malafaia, and the role of God in climate change. As we have covered these experiments in other papers, they are not addressed in this document. Readers are encouraged to see “Exogenous Shocks and Misattribution of Responsibility for Economic Performance: Results from Survey Experience” (Campello and Zucco, 2015), “Looks Like Me, Thinks Like Me? Evangelicals and Descriptive Representation in Brazil” (Boas, Smith, 2014) and “Environmentalism, Evangelicalism, and End Times Thinking: Evidence from Brazil” (Smith and Veldman, forthcoming) for more information.

Rather than presume to present the entire contents of the dataset, we ask readers to treat this document as a first source of insight. Researchers are encouraged to explore the questionnaire and the data so as to better take advantage of the wealth of information the survey represents. As such, not every question included in the questionnaire is addressed in this document.

2 The Dataset

The survey was conducted in seven waves, beginning in May of 2014 as a baseline survey and ending in November 2014 after elections had taken place. All survey respondents were interviewed in the first wave, with about 600 respondents per wave in waves 2-5, and over 1,000 each in the last two waves. No interviewee was interviewed more than five times. The list of respondents willing to be recontacted was randomly split for waves 2 and 3, and then again (orthogonally) for waves 4 and 5. As such, every respondent was interviewed only once in either wave 2 or 3, and in either wave 4 or 5. The codebook includes tables of the exact number of response patterns, as well as the number of interviews per respondent.

2.1 The Sample by Demographic and Household Characteristics

Tables 2, 3 4, and 5 show urban/rural status, gender, skin color, and educational distributions by waves. The distribution for urban/rural remains consistent across waves, with about 89 percent of the sample living in urban environments and 11 percent in rural environments. Gender varies a bit more across waves, with the male percentage spanning from 45 to 50 percent across waves, but the ratio does not exhibit any consistent decreasing or increasing

Table 2: Urban or Rural by Wave

Wave	Urban	Rural	Total N
1	89%	11%	3,120
2	90%	10%	609
3	91%	9%	595
4	90%	10%	606
5	89%	11%	667
6	89%	11%	1,207
7	89%	11%	1,001
Total	6,984	821	7,805

Table 3: Gender by Wave

Wave	Male	Female	Total N
1	50%	50%	3,120
2	47%	53%	609
3	45%	55%	595
4	47%	53%	606
5	48%	52%	667
6	47%	53%	1,207
7	47%	53%	1,001
Total	3,735	4,070	7,805

Table 4: Wave by Skin Color (Self-Identified)

Wave	Skin Color					Total
	White	Parda	Indigenous	Black	Amarela	
1	46%	40%	1%	11%	2%	N = 3,121
2	46%	43%	1%	11%	2%	N = 589
3	45%	41%	1%	11%	2%	N = 598
4	41%	46%	1%	11%	2%	N = 605
5	46%	39%	1%	13%	2%	N = 637
6	45%	42%	1%	11%	2%	N = 1,188
7	46%	40%	1%	11%	2%	N = 1,008
Total	3,519	3,175	60	850	143	7,747

pattern. In Table 4, which reports skin color, 39 observations are missing, 16 were listed as “don’t know” and 3 chose “no response.” In Table 5, which reports education levels, 32 responses are recorded as missing, 12 did not know, and 18 chose not to respond.

Table 5:
Educational Level by Wave

Educational Level	Wave						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Daycare/ Pre-school	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Adult Literacy	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Antigo Primario	6%	6%	7%	7%	6%	7%	6%
Antigo Ginasio	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Ensino Fundamental	7%	6%	9%	8%	7%	7%	8%
Ensino Fundamenta	6%	8%	5%	7%	0%	6%	7%
Ensino Fundamental	16%	16%	13%	13%	19%	15%	15%
Supplement to Ensino Fundamental	0%	1%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%
Antigo Cientifico, classico, etc	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%
Supplement to middle school	10%	10%	12%	12%	9%	11%	10%
Superior de Graduacao	29%	30%	29%	27%	31%	30%	28%
Higher Level Specialization	02%	03%	03%	01%	05%	03%	03%
Masters	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Doctorate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total N	3,107	592	595	612	609	1,189	1,013

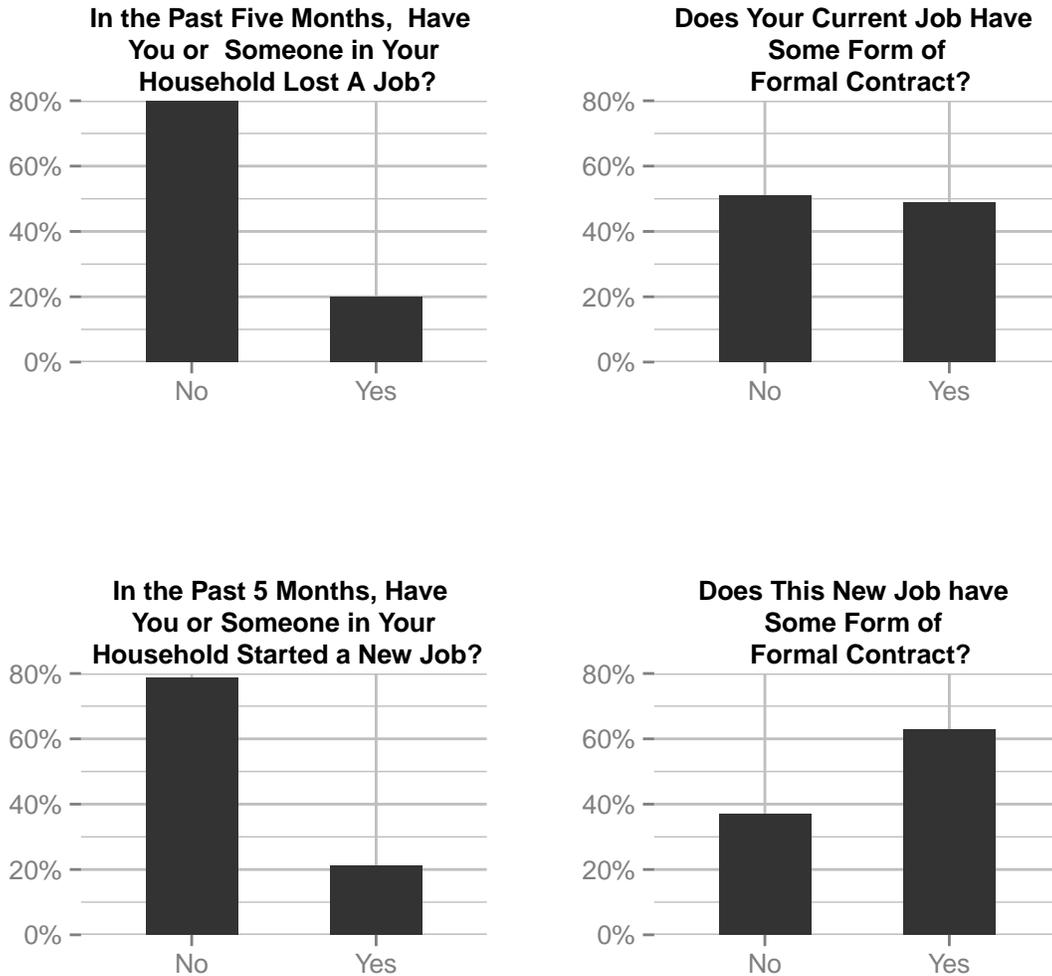
2.2 General Overview of Household Characteristics

In addition to the variables above, the questionnaires also measured other household characteristics of those interviewed. Here, we present the most important of these, weighted to be representative of the population. The graphs in Figure 1 show a number of informative statistics about respondents' employment status. The number of respondents losing a job in the five-month period before being surveyed is almost identical to the percentage beginning a new one. However, the proportion of new jobs that are taking place in the formal sector is much higher than the status quo among respondents, suggesting a move toward formal employment. Figure 2 shows respondents' own assessment of their economic status. Overwhelmingly, survey respondents identified their own personal economic situation to be at least regular, if not good or optimal, with only 17 percent saying it was bad or very bad. Table 6 shows the weighted income distribution.

Figure 3 is a compilation of household assets for which interviewees were asked to respond to the question "In your household, do you have the following?" Figure 4 presents Internet use. It is worth noting that the distribution of Internet use has changed considerably since the 2010 survey, when about half of respondents (49 percent) never used the Internet. Now, nearly that same percentage uses the Internet every day. The distribution follows a v-shaped curve, with most Brazilians either accessing the web daily or not at all.

Figure 5 shows how interviewees performed when asked a series of questions to test their political knowledge. The graph shows the distribution by number of questions answered correctly. The questions themselves can be found in the codebook.

Figure 1: Employment Situation

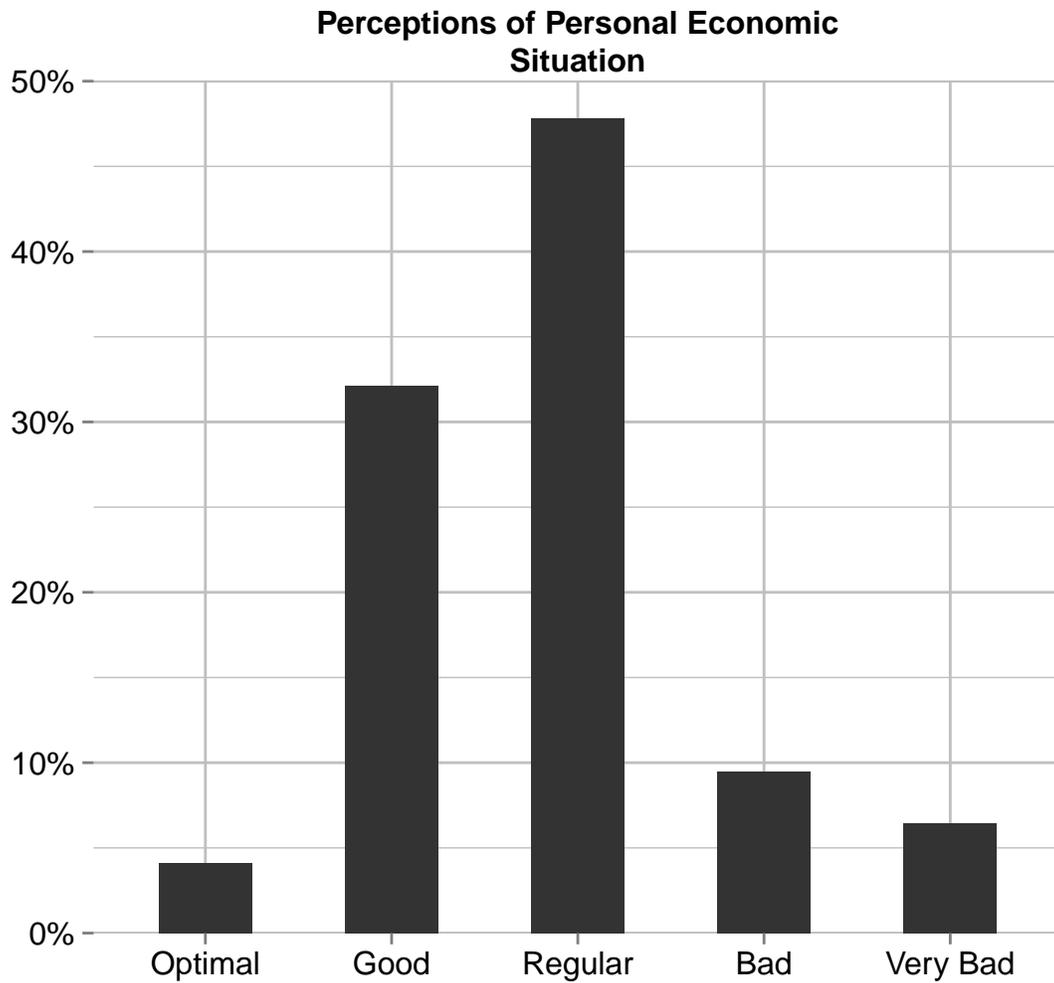


Survey Questions P11p1, P11p2, P11p3, P12. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 (P12) and 6 (P11p1–p3) answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Table 6: Household Income

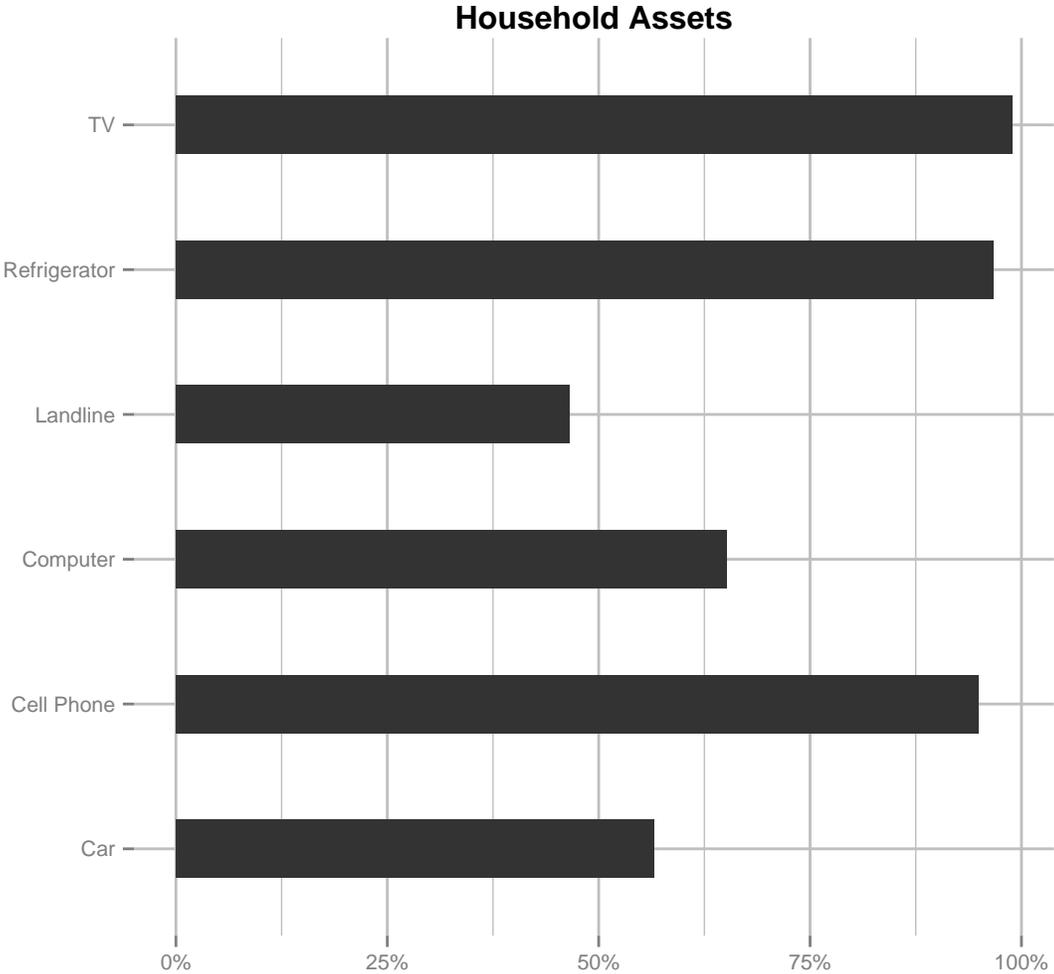
Income	Number	Percent
R\$0 - R\$1,448	1,029	35%
R\$1,448 - R\$2,172	442	15%
R\$2,172 - R\$3,620	552	19%
R\$3,620 - R\$5,792	546	19%
R\$5,792 - R\$7,240	183	6%
R\$7,240 - R\$14,480	110	4%
More than R\$14.480	71	2%
Total	2,932	100%

Figure 2: Personal Economic Situation



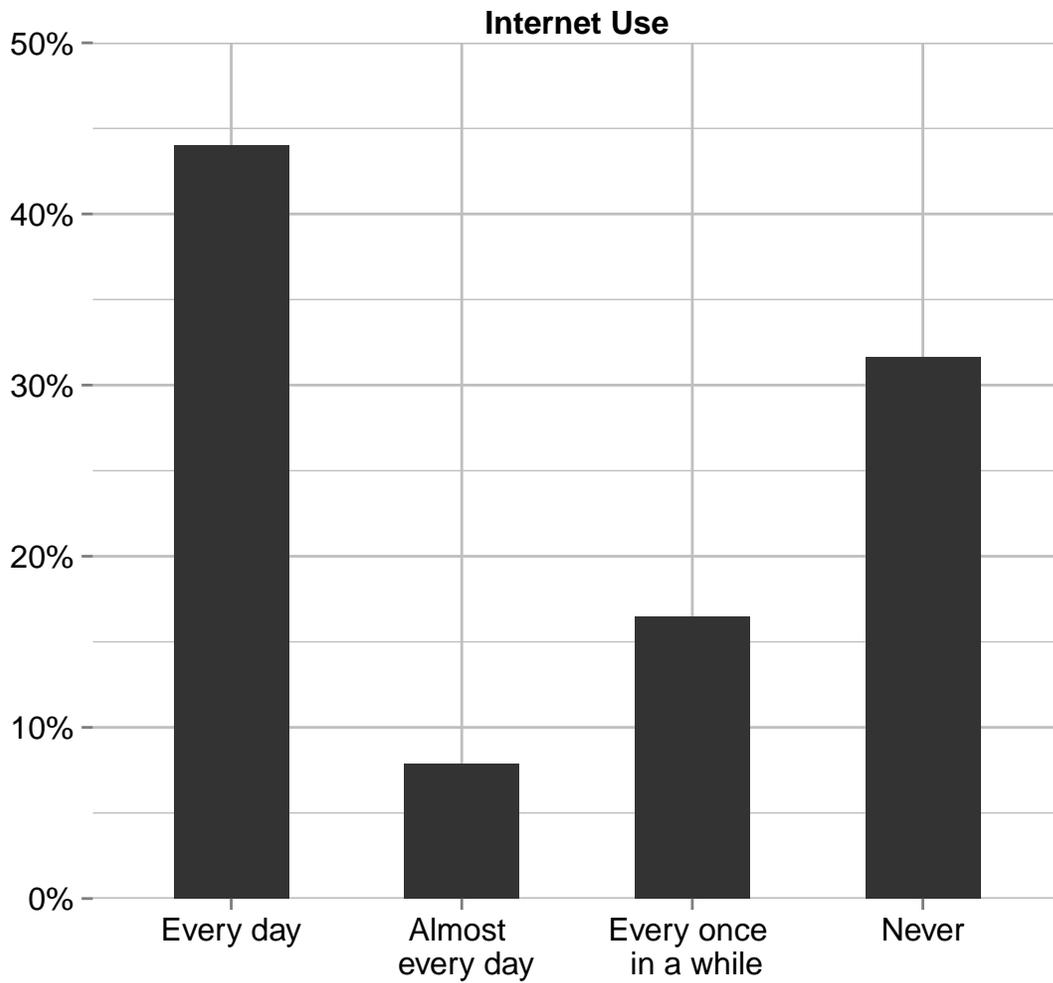
Survey Question idio1. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 3: Household Assets



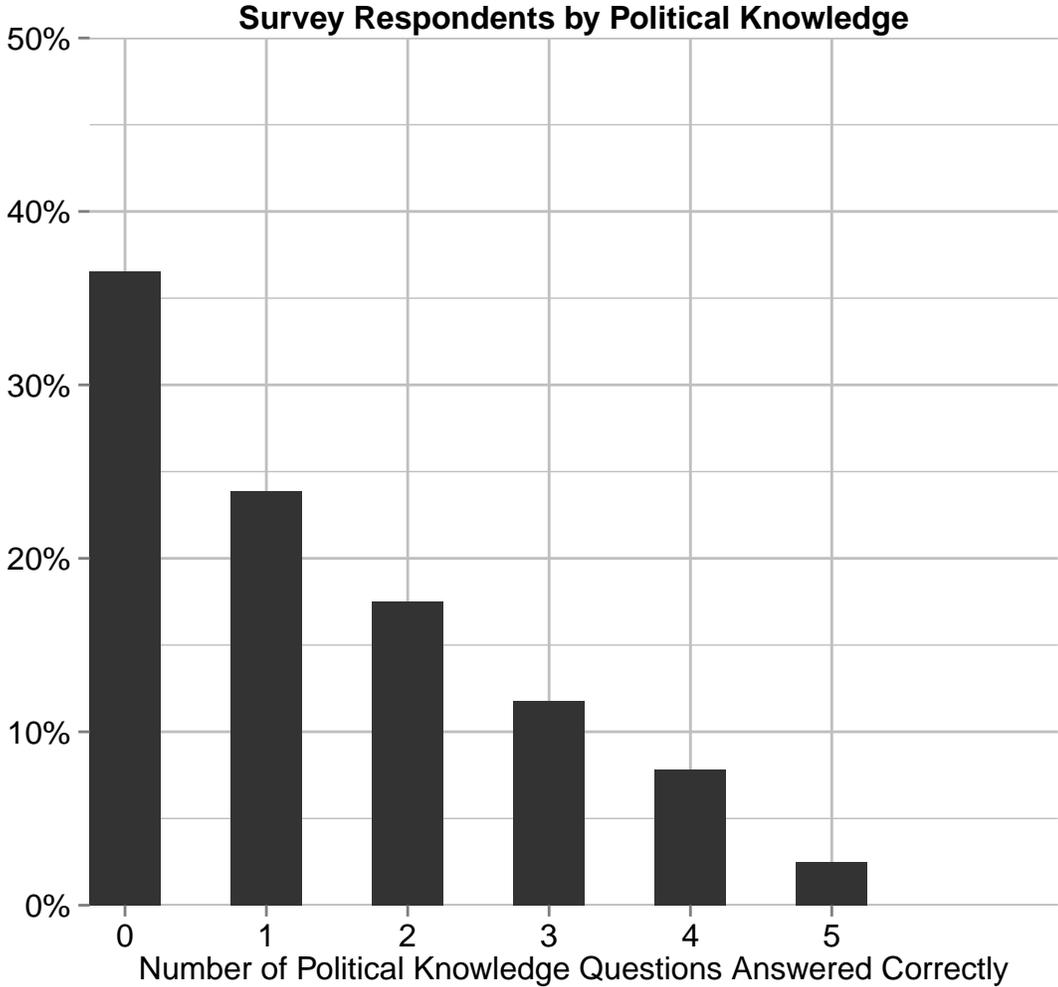
Survey questions HW1–6 Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 4: Internet



Survey Question p9. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 5: Political Knowledge



Survey Question pkw1. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014.
Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

3 Voting, Partisanship and Elections

This section presents the results for a number of different issues related to voting, partisanship, and specifically, the 2014 national elections. While respondents were asked to respond to questions about their local elections and this information is available in the dataset, we omit the local-level questions from this report for the sake of parsimony.

Table 7: Voting Participation: Anticipated

Will You Vote in the October 5th Election?	
Yes	0.915
No	0.085

Table 8: Voting Participation: Actual

Did You Vote in October 5th Election?	
Yes	0.906
No	0.094

With respect to participation, Tables 7 and 8 reflect Brazil’s high voter participation rates due to mandatory voting policies. With weights applied, the numbers are very similar between Wave 1 and Wave 6, with the 1 percent difference between plans to vote and actual voting likely insignificant.

Figure 6 shows respondents’ self-identification based on a left-right politics spectrum. The highest proportion of respondents identify as a 5, although it remains unclear whether this is a result of true moderation in views, or a lack of familiarity or comfort with the ideological spectrum. There are also predictably higher densities of voters at both 0 and 10, with 12 percent identifying as far left and 11 percent at extreme right.

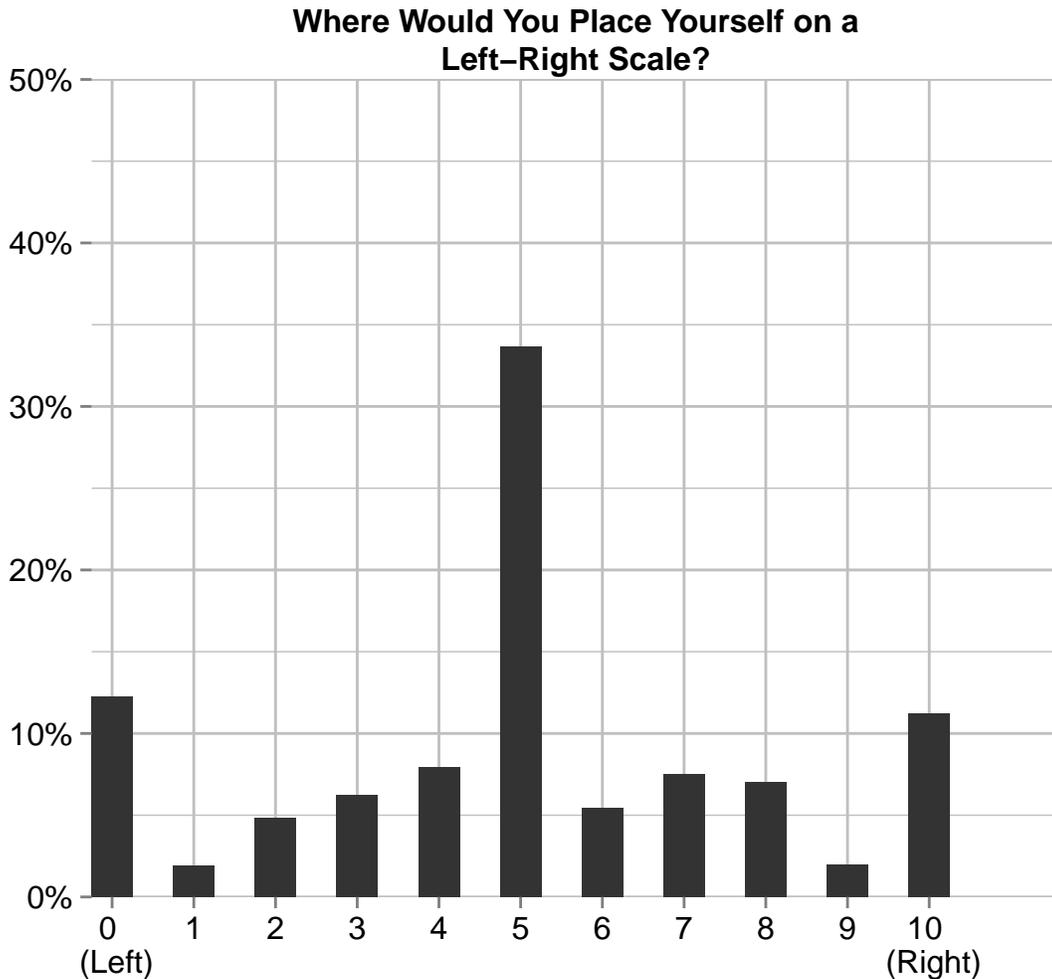
Figure 7 addresses whether those surveyed identify with a political party, and Figures 8 and 9 elaborate on those preferences. Those labeled “Strong Sympathy” responded affirmatively to the question “Do you identify with a political party?” and subsequently identified the party indicated. Those labeled “Weak Sympathy” answered no to the previous question, but when asked “Is there a party that you sympathize with a little more than the others?” indicated the illustrated party. Figure 9 presents the parties interviewees indicated they did not like. Both Figures 8 and 9 are based on subsets of the sample indicated by Figure 7.

Table 9: If Ex-President Lula da Silva Were President, Would You Vote for Him?

Wave 1	Number	Percent
Yes	1,590	53%
No	1,389	47%
Total	2,979	100%

Figure 3 traces voter preferences over time for the October 5th election amongst the four most important candidates. Figure 11 shows voter preferences for the October 26th

Figure 6: Self-Identified Political Positions

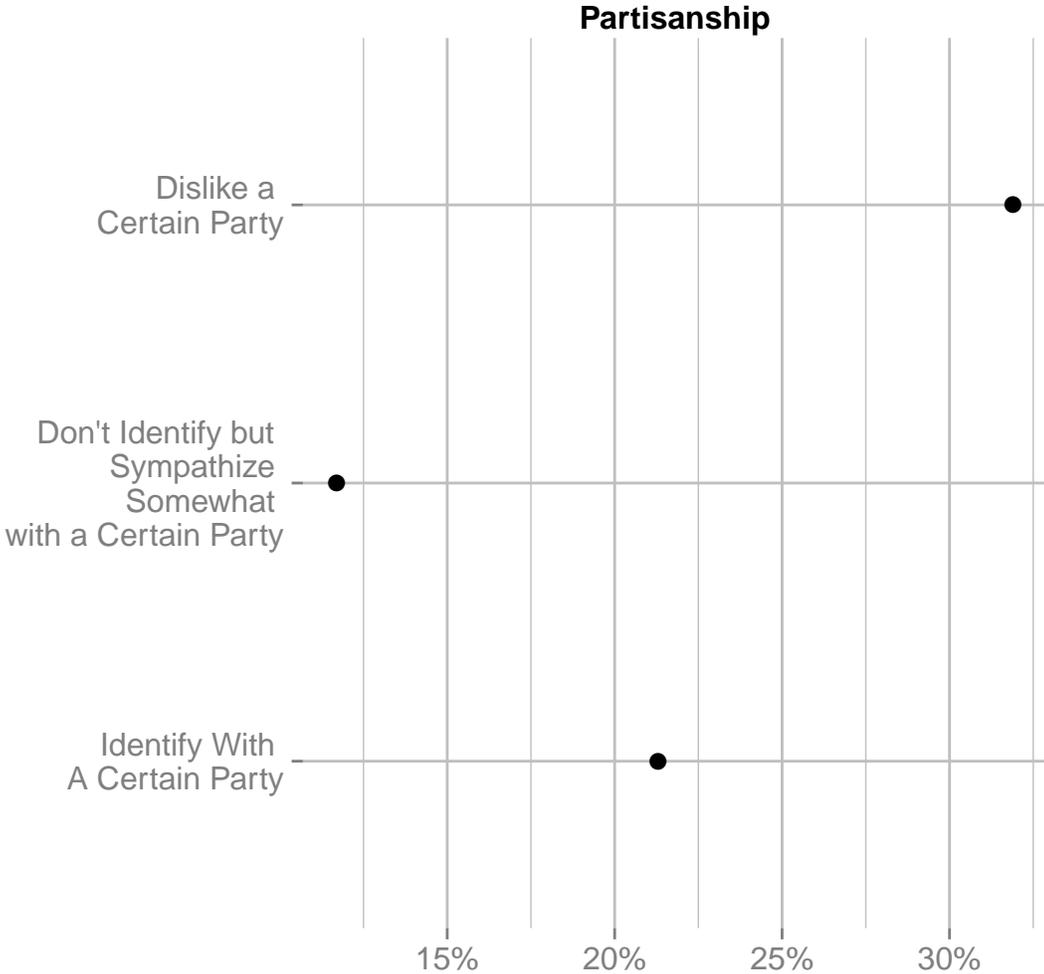


Survey Question I1 Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

runoff, observed in the sixth and seventh waves. Figure 12 shows that interviewees believed Dilma Rousseff would win the runoff in the wave 6 sampling. Figure 13 traces interviewees' perceptions of candidates' personality traits on a 1 - 10 scale over the election season. The graphs for honesty and competency are very similar, with only Dilma experiencing variation across the two traits. Candidate Eduardo Campos exhibited a large spike in both perceived honesty and competency right after his death, while most candidates experienced the greatest increase in perceptions between May and July, at the start of the campaign season.

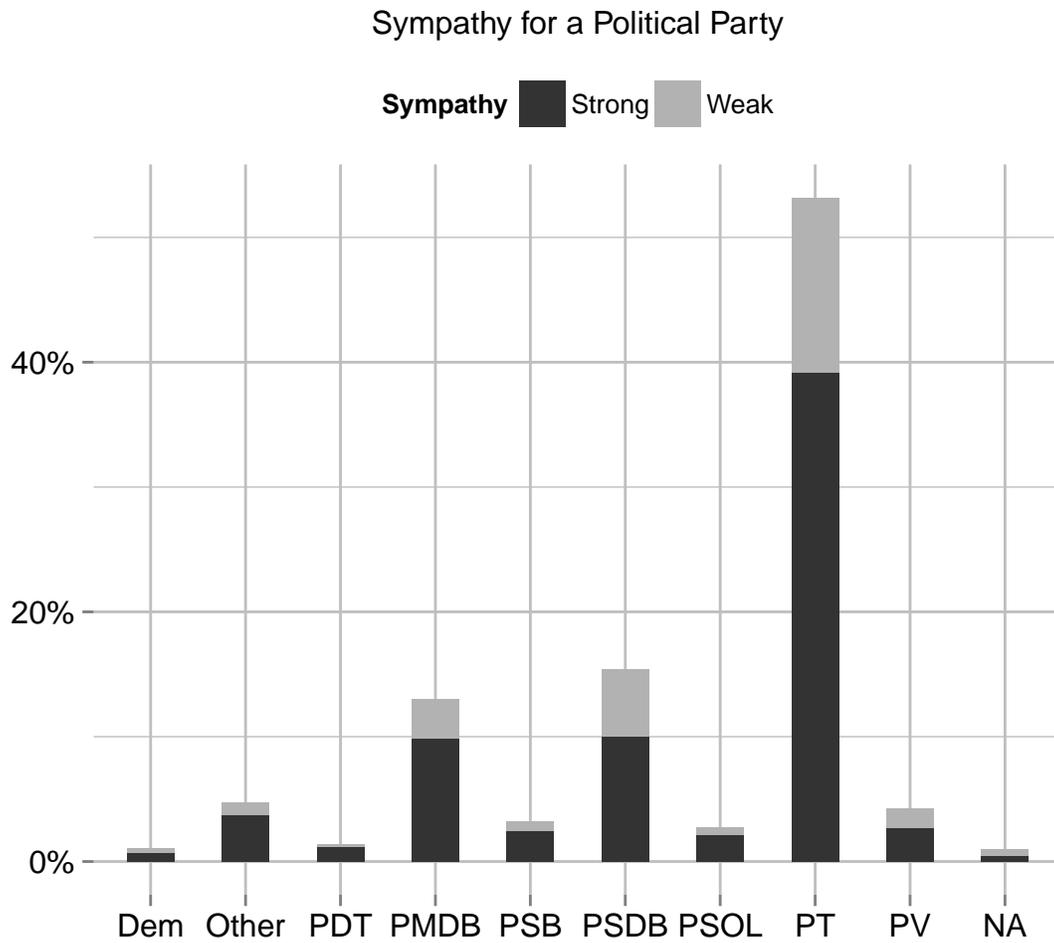
Figure 14 shows how interviewees perceived candidates' defenses of the interests of the poor and middle class. Table 9 is the weighted response to the yes-no question "If ex-president Lula da Silva were to run, would you vote for him?" Figure 15 shows how candidates responded to various questions about the risks of certain candidates winning the election.

Figure 7: Partisanship



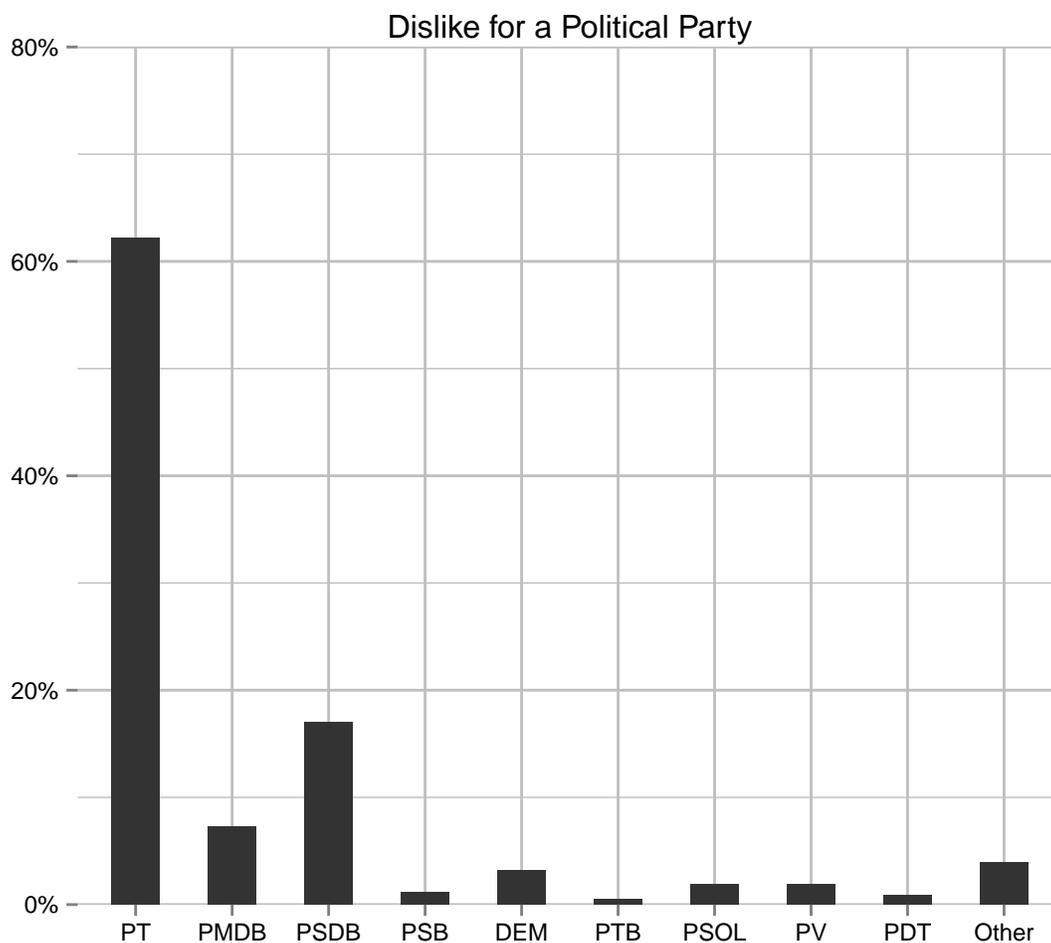
Survey questions VB10, VB12, VB14. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 8: Party Support

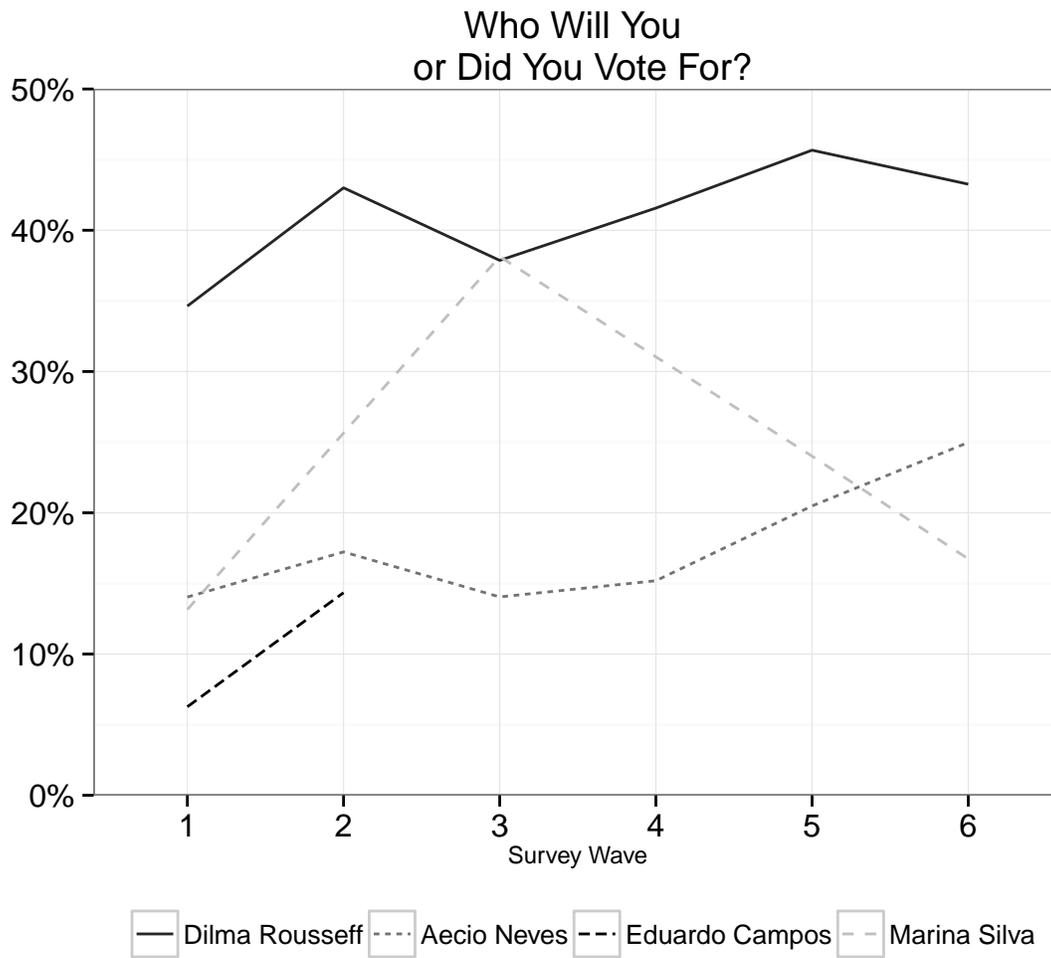


Survey questions VB11, VB12. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level. N = 863, Graph represents corresponding subsample of graph "Partisanship"

Figure 9: Party Dislike



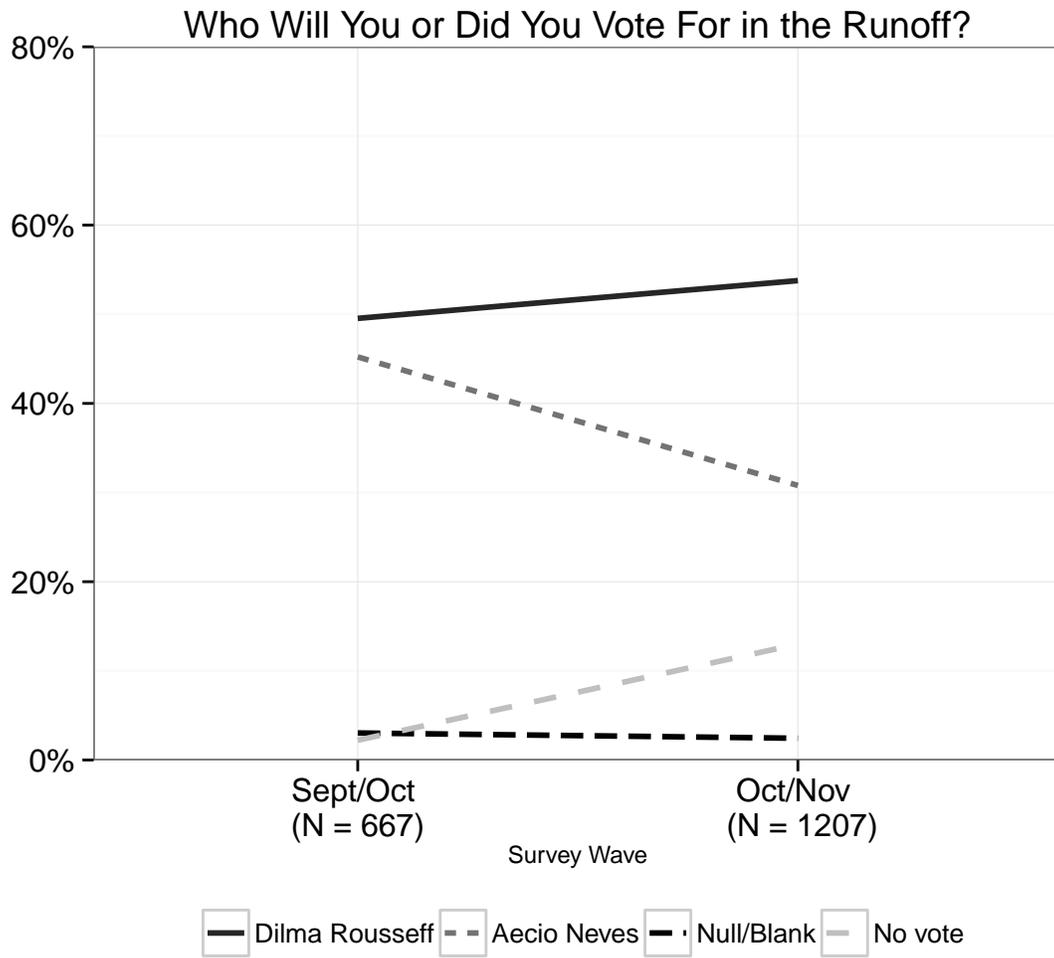
Survey question VB15. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level. N = 785, Graph represents corresponding subsample of graph "Partisanship"



Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Answers weighted to be representative at population level.

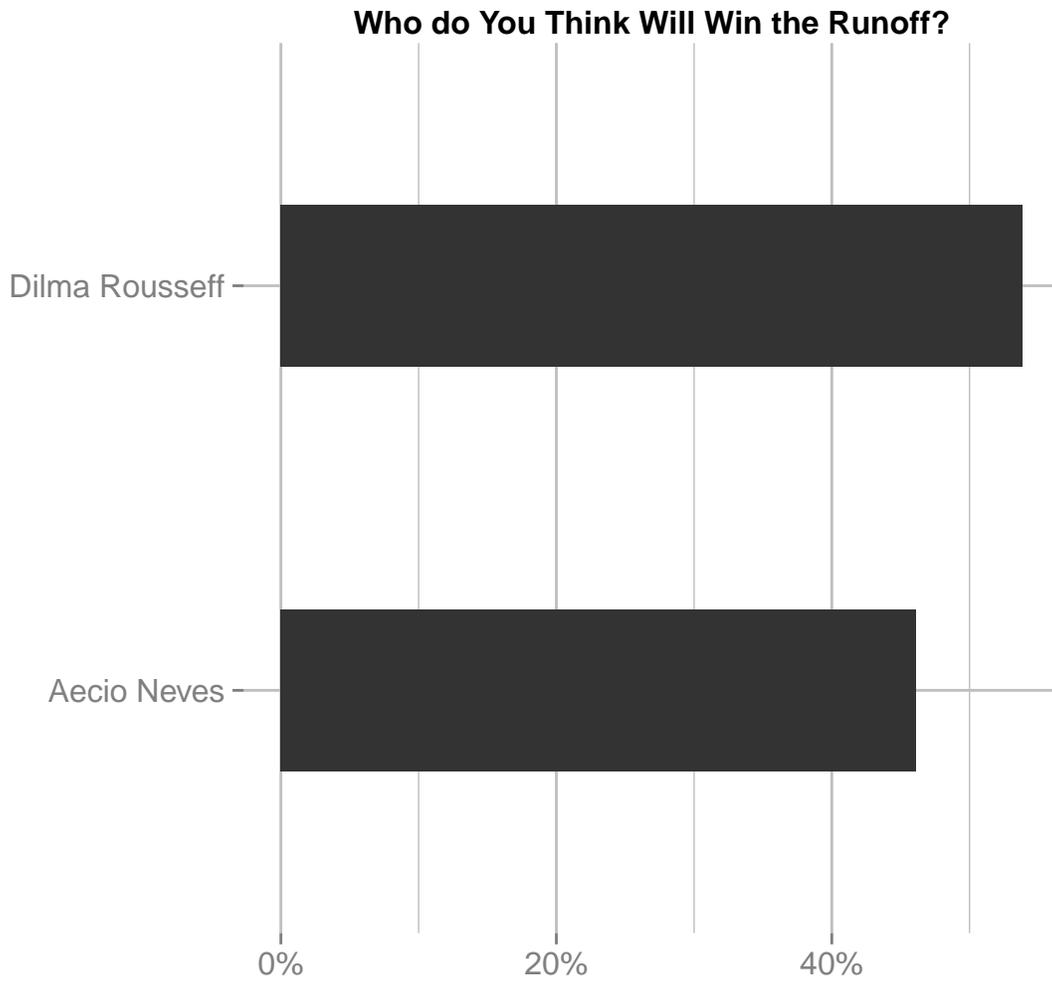
Figure 10: Candidate Preferences

Figure 11: Candidate Preferences in Runoff



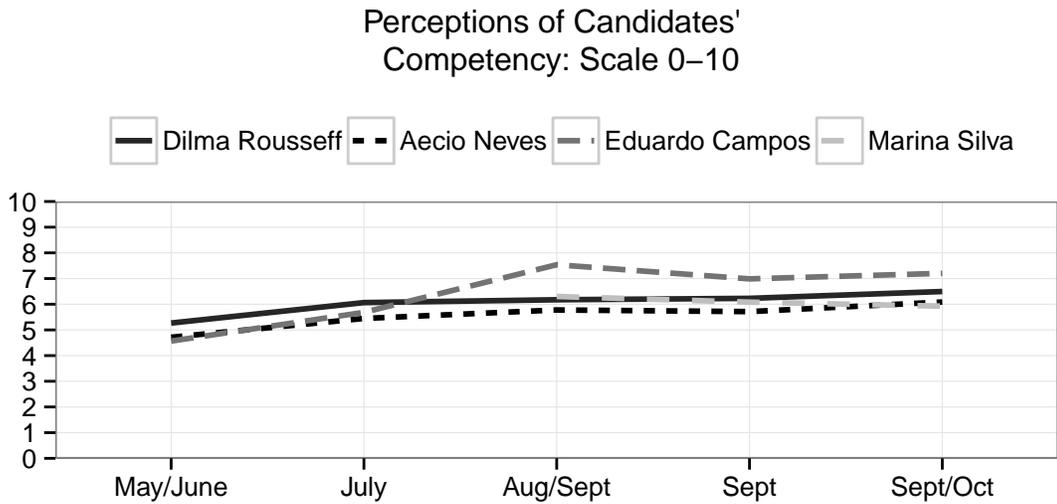
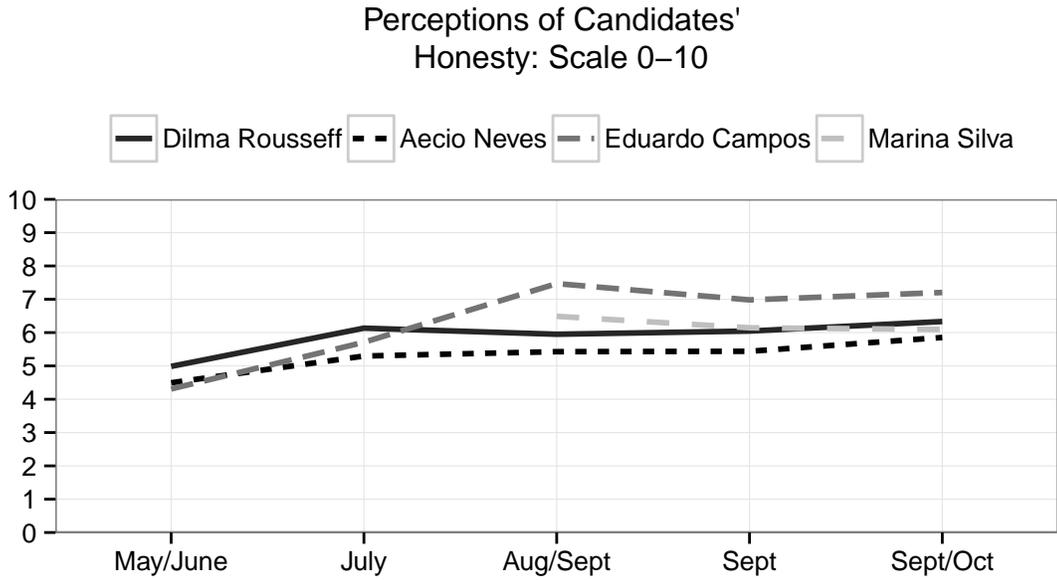
Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Answers from Wave 6 and 7, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 12: Election Expectations



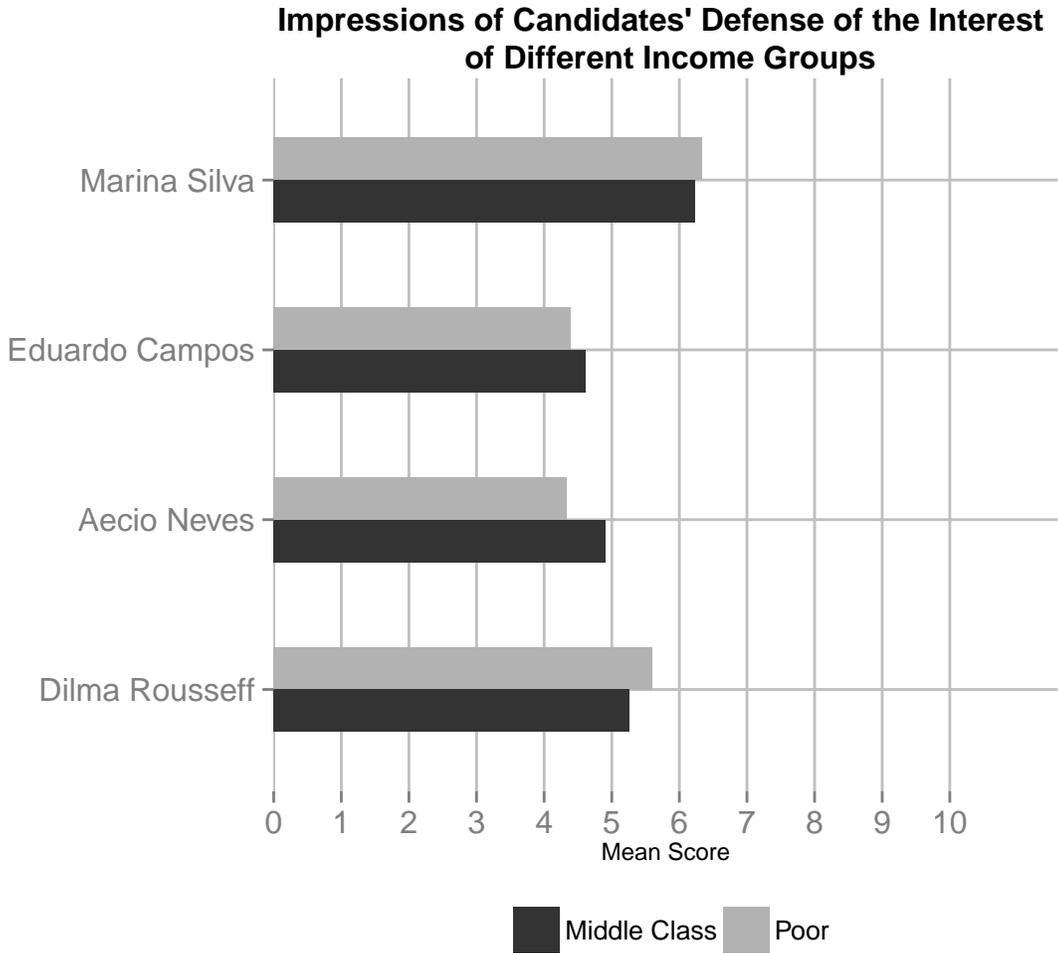
Survey question vb4. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 6 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 13: Candidate Personality Traits



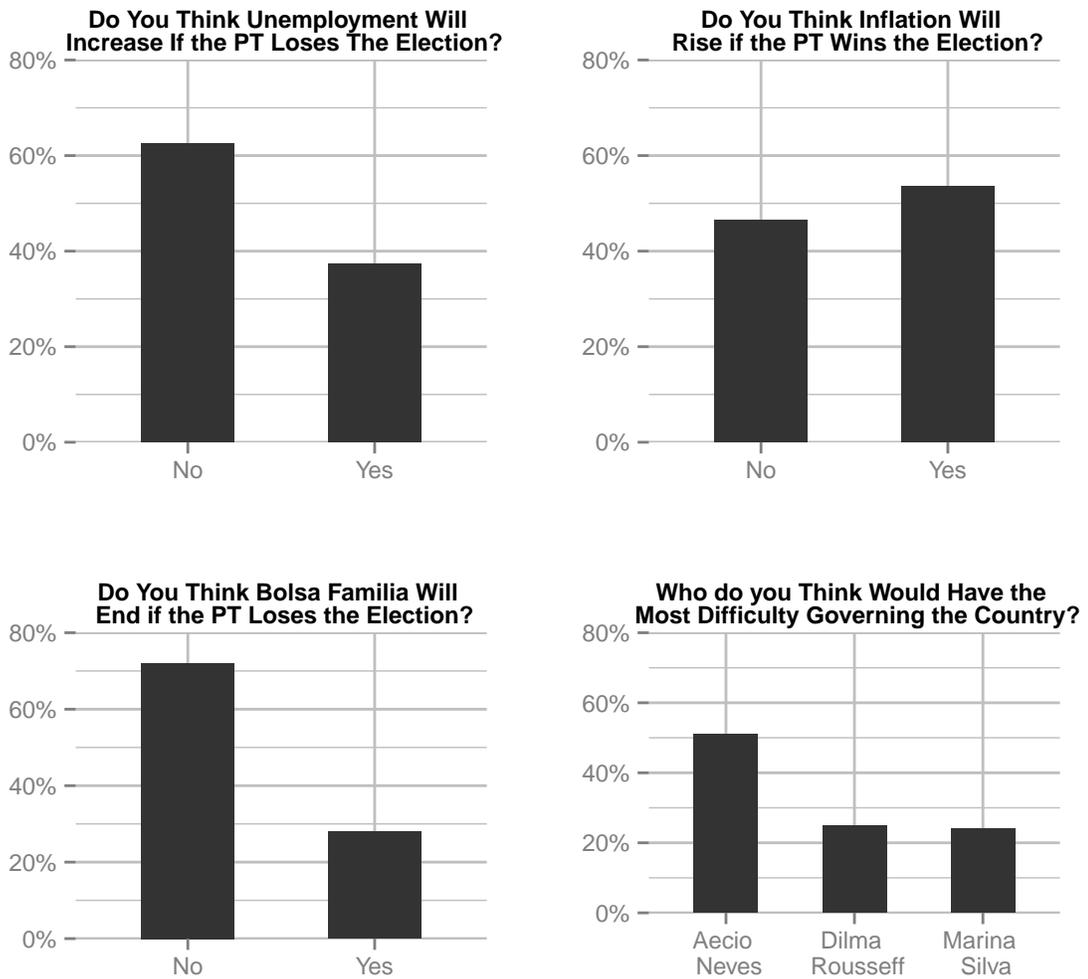
Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Answers weighted to be representative at population level. Eduardo Campos questions asked post-mortem in waves 3–6. Marina Silva question only asked in last three waves.

Figure 14: Candidates and Class Interests



Survey Questions Vb6a–c, vb6a–c2. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level. Marina Silva question asked in 4th wave.

Figure 15: Fears



Survey Questions Fear1-3, Difgov. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 2 (Fear1-3) answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

4 Democracy, Participation and Media

In this section, we take a look at the role of civil participation, civil society, and media in the elections and in survey respondents' daily life. Figure 16 addresses interviewees' democratic participation over the past year. Generally, about 10 - 25 percent attended some form of group gatherings, with student, union or professional organizations receiving the most attendance. Figure 17 shows that the June 2013 protests received about a quarter of the population's support, but only 8 percent of survey participants actually took part in them, with even fewer having participated in other protests before that date. About a quarter of the population believes that protests like those in June 2013 are a "normal political act like voting, which people use when the political system is working," while 75 percent feel they "are extreme measures that citizens take when they believe their political system is not functioning well."

More than half of survey participants watch, read or listen to the news at least once a day. The national debates were watched more in the runoff than in the first-round elections, but more than three-quarters of the population spoke with someone about the debates before the first-round elections. Figure 19 shows debate following.

5 Social Cohesion, Religion and Values

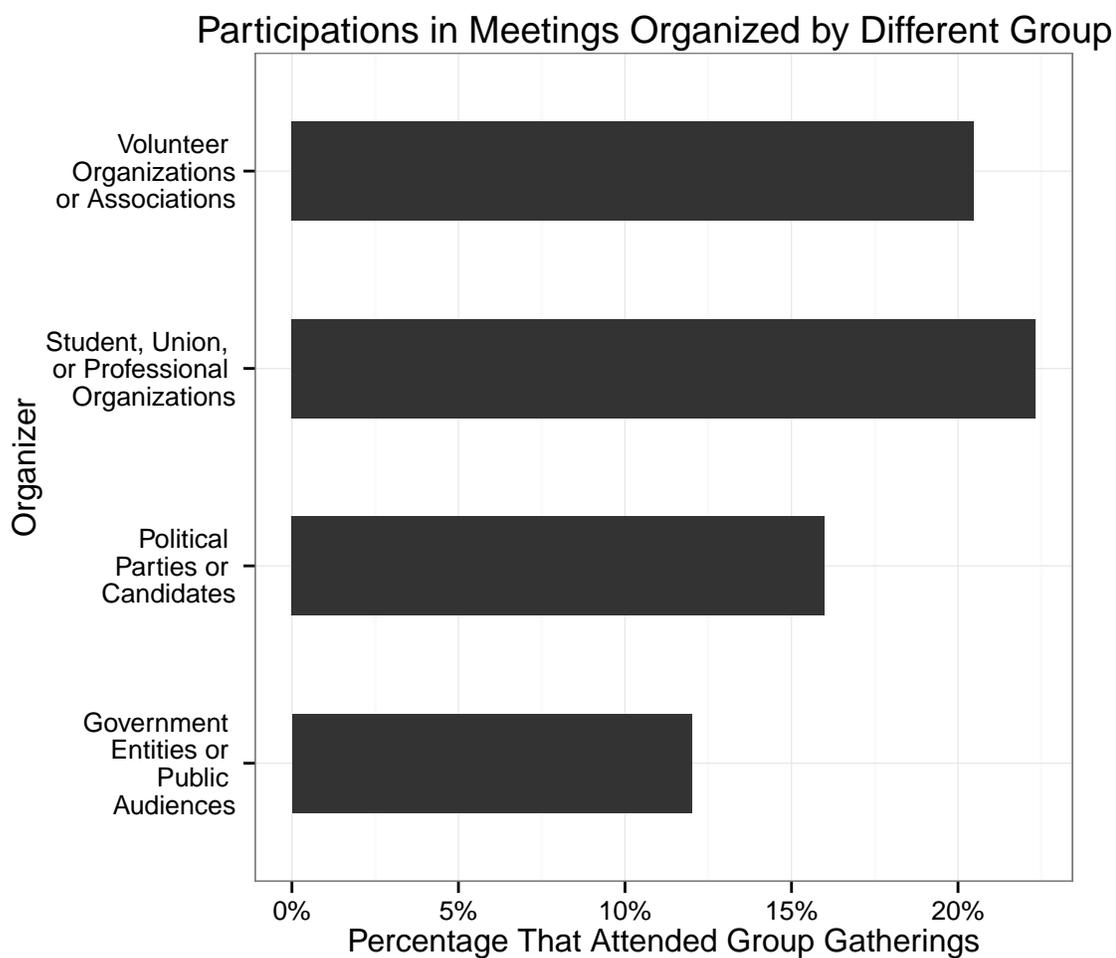
This section addresses the sentiment between different groups within society, as well as religion and values. Figure 20 shows impressions of various large demographic groups within Brazil, averaged on a 1 ("Very wrong in their beliefs") - 10 ("Very correct in their beliefs") scale. Table 10 and Figure 22 show the population of the sample that is religious and, within that sample, whether their place of worship condoned voting for a specific candidate. Figure 21 then breaks these demographics down into different faiths and habits of attendance. While 69 percent of Brazilians say they attend a church or place of worship and almost 25 percent attend weekly, the distribution is fairly evenly spread across all attendance patterns. Catholicism predictably dominates religious identification, at more than 60 percent of the population.

Figure 23 shows interviewees' responses to the question "Which value do you believe is most important for a young boy or girl?" Loyalty to country and treating others equally capture nearly all of the responses, with care for the weak and respect for authority each coming in at just over 10 percent together.

Table 10: Do You Attend a Church or Place of Worship?

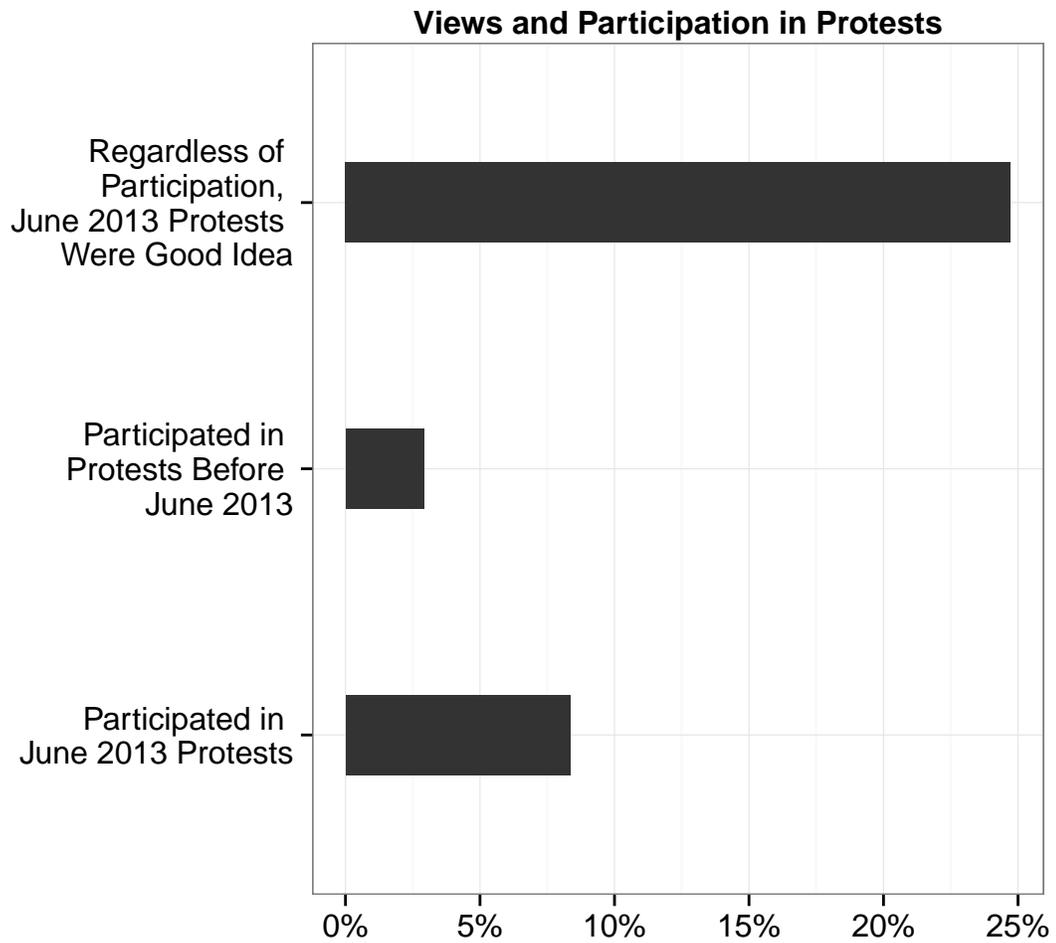
	Number	Percent
Yes	831	69%
No	371	31%
Total	1201	100%

Figure 16: Democratic Participation



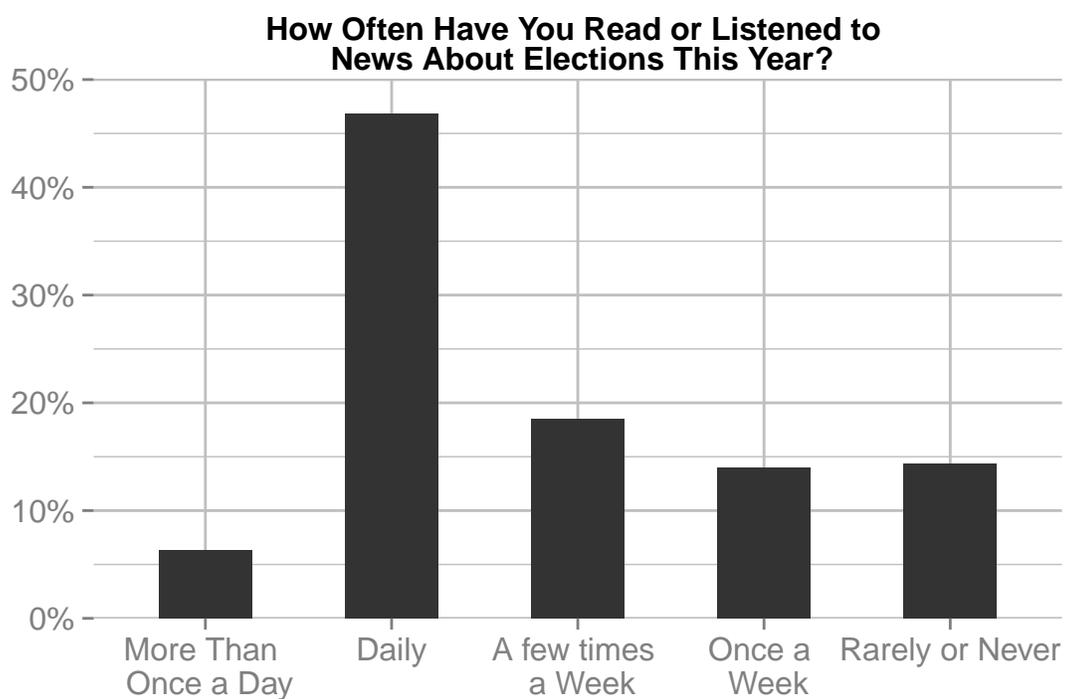
Survey Questions Dem4–7. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level. Answers are independent and do not sum to 1.

Figure 17: Protests



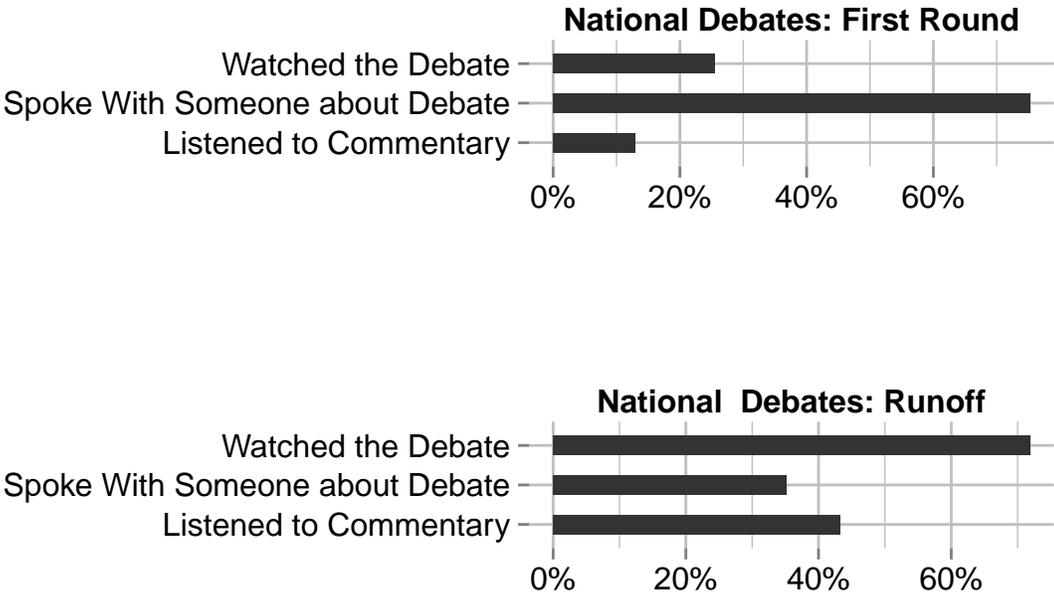
Survey Questions Dem8, 10 and 11. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level. Percentages are independent and do not sum to 1.

Figure 18: News



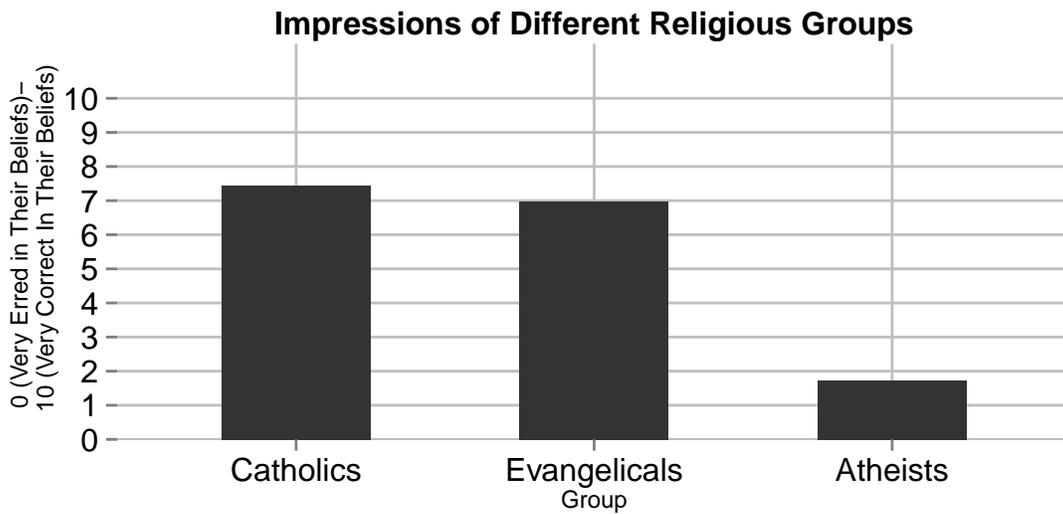
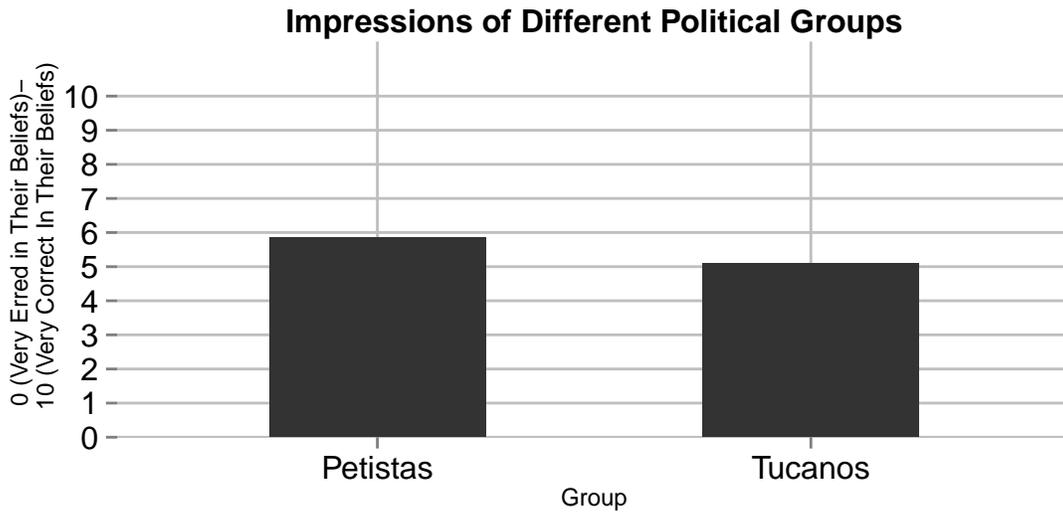
Survey Question Med1. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 2 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 19: Nationally Televised Debate



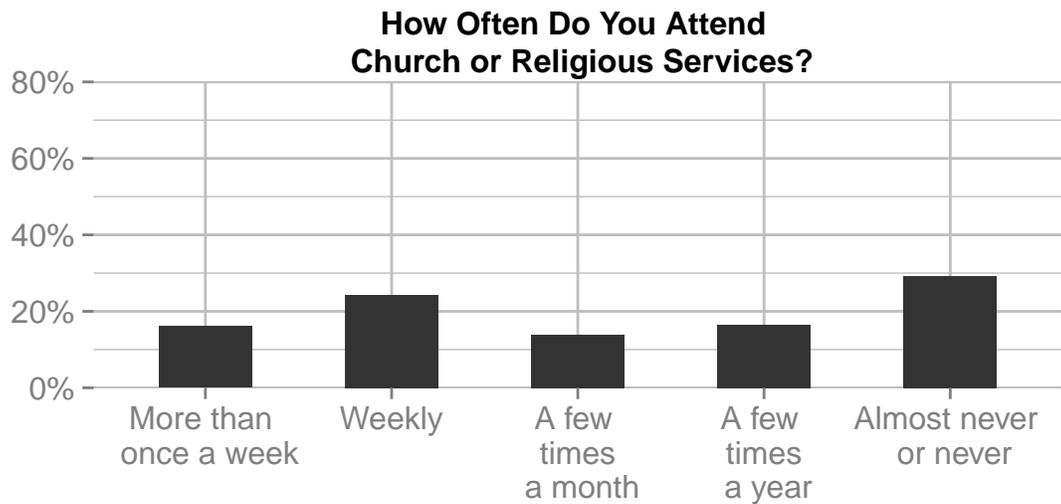
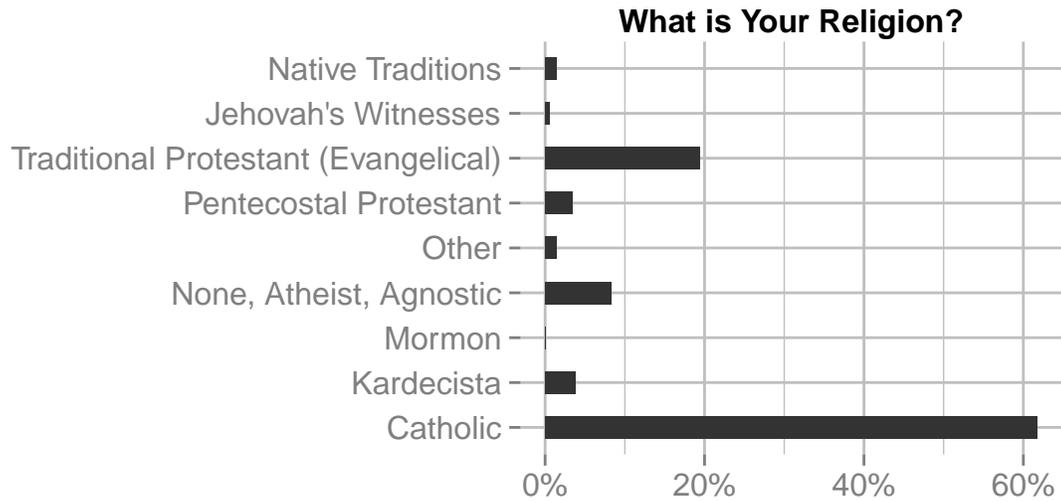
Survey Questions Deb1b_1, Deb1b_2, Deb1b_3. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 5 and 7 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 20: Social Impressions



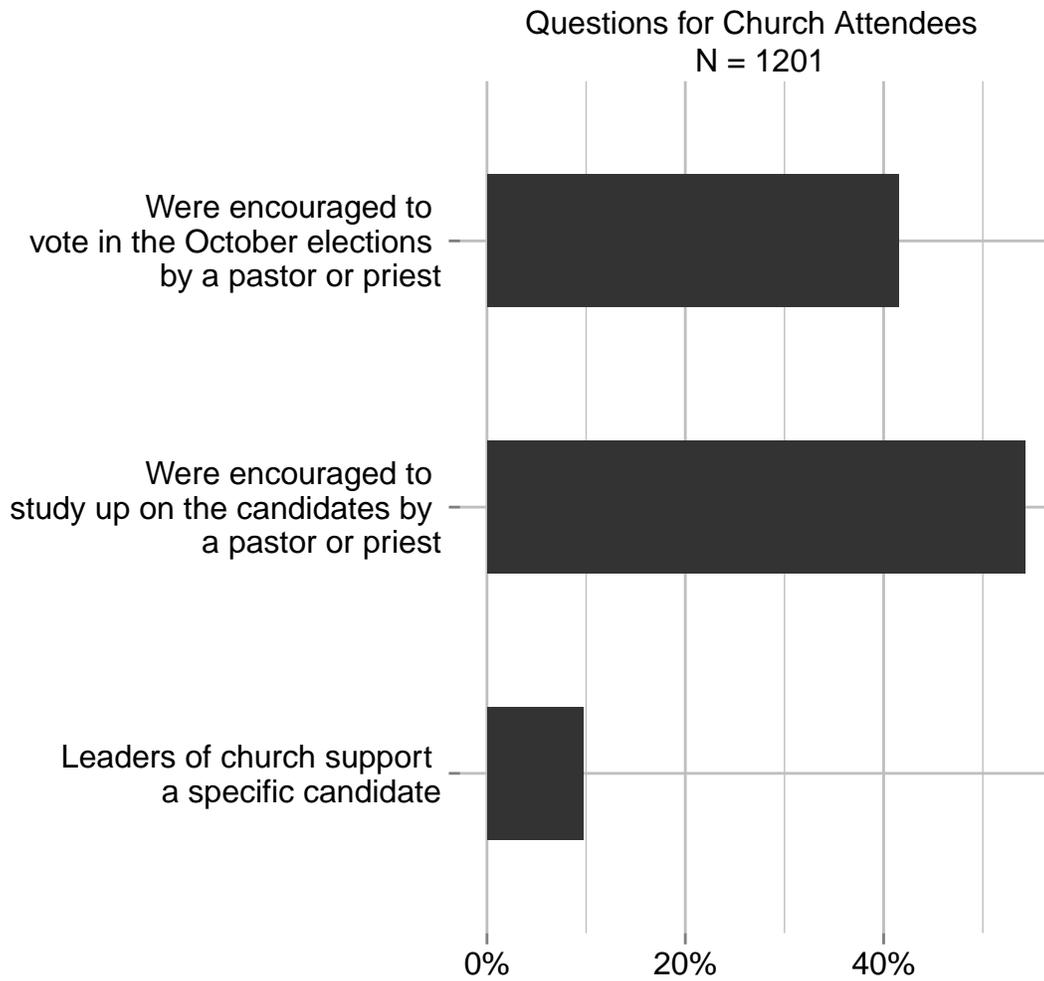
Survey Questions Grup 1–5. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 7 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 21: Religion



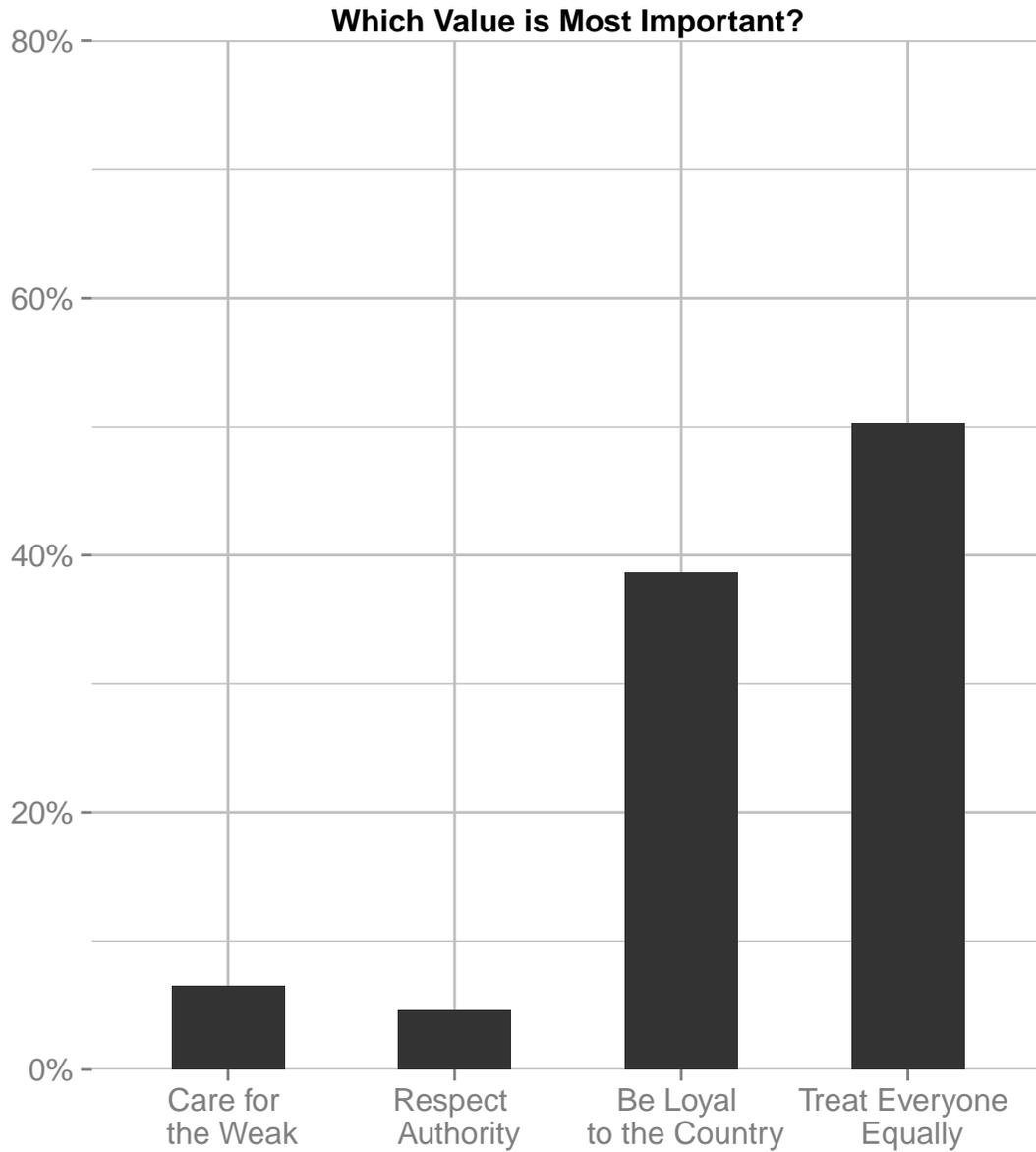
Survey Questions P4, P5. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 22: Church Attendees



Survey Questions Rel3–5. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 6 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 23: Values



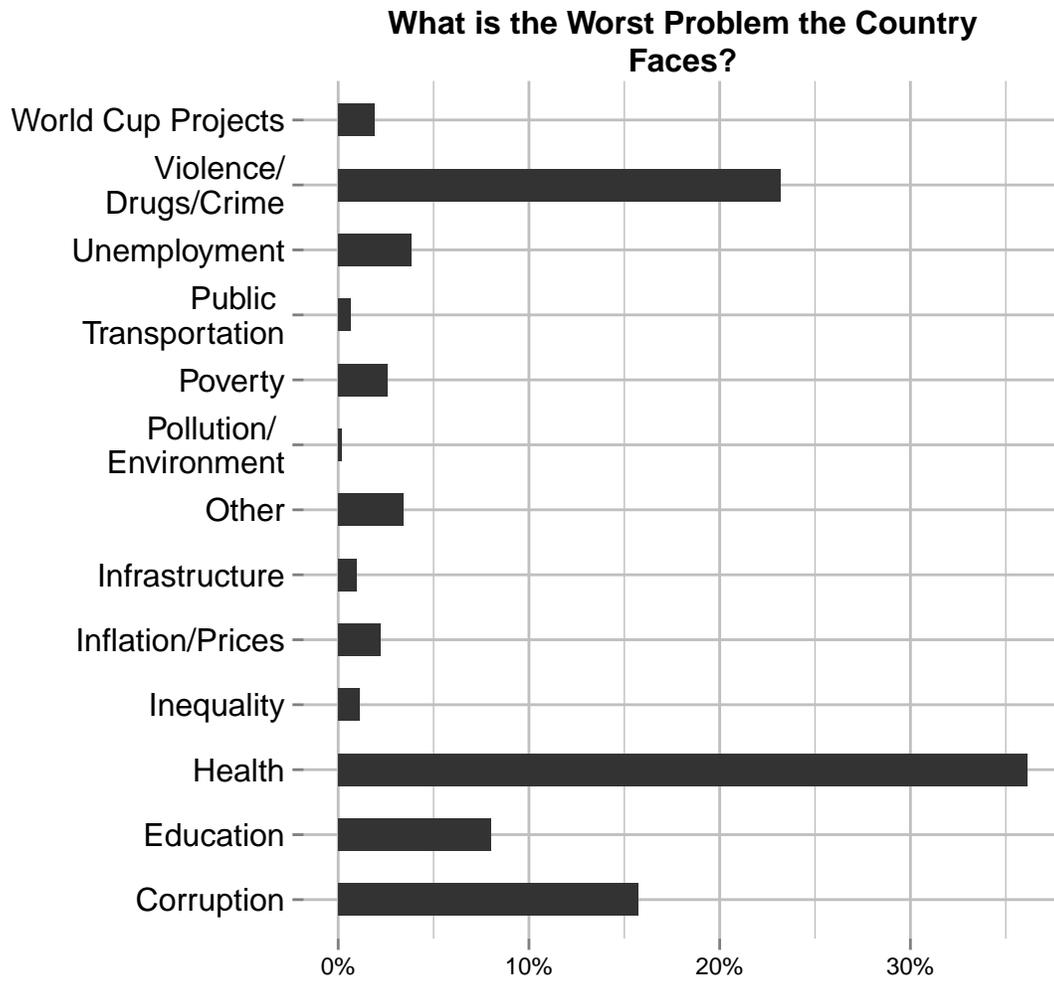
Survey Question val1. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

6 Policies and Performance

This section identifies a number of policy and performance indicators in order to present a primary barometer on a number of opinion questions. Figure 24 shows that interviewees overwhelmingly considered health to be the most important problem facing the country. Figure 25 shows what voters perceived to be the most important issues of the election at the beginning and end of the campaign period. Other noteworthy issues include violence and insecurity, as well as infrastructure, which was perceived in May and June as being related to World Cup public works, and as a stand-alone problem in October and November. Figure 26 shows evaluations of Dilma's performance as president, as well as perceptions of how the economy is doing, over the span of the six waves. Approval ratings for the economy and Dilma are highly correlated, although the perceptions of the economy were worse in May and June than were Dilma's ratings. Figure 28 shows the evaluation of different social services, along with their use (with the exception of policing, which is assumed to be used by society as a whole) in the past year. Health services are used by more than 75 percent of the population but receive very low marks in assessment of quality, while education scores higher than both health and transportation in terms of quality. Figure 29 shows how interviewees stand on various social programming issues. All programs scored very highly when respondents were asked simply if they approved, but less than a quarter of citizens would be willing to pay more taxes to finance them, with only about 10 percent willing to do so for conditional cash transfers.

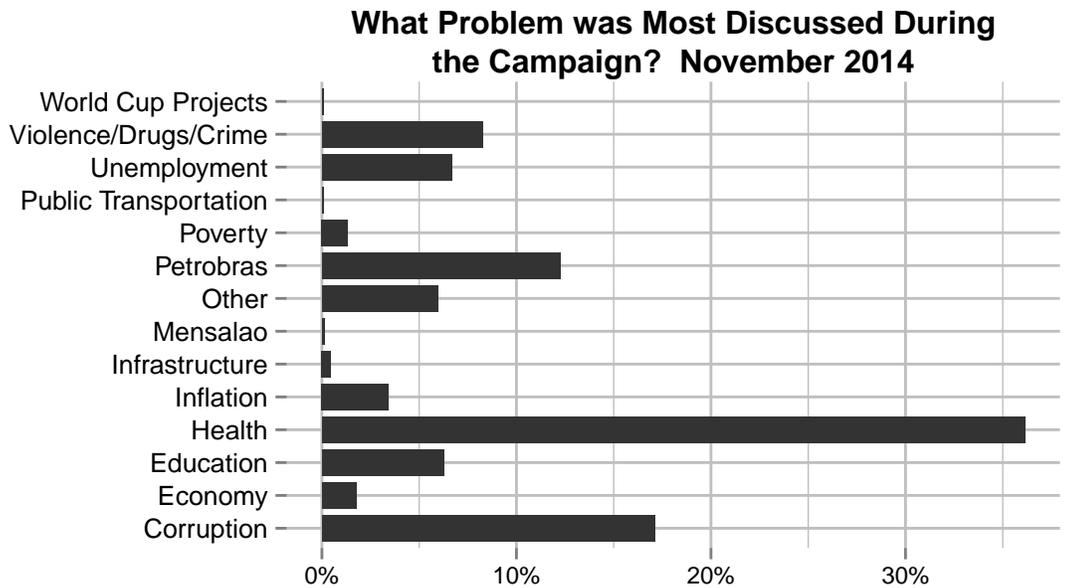
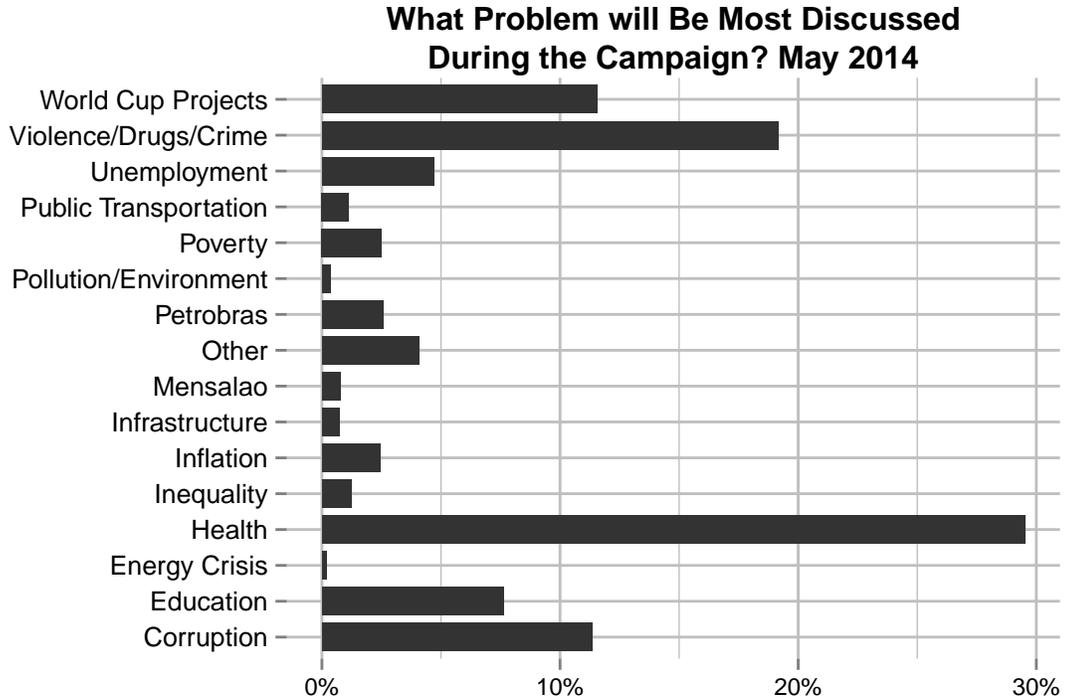
Interviewees were also asked a number of questions about their policy preferences. Figure 30 shows how respondents expressed their tax policy preferences. Just over 50 percent believe that the rich should pay a higher percentage than the middle class and the poor, while about 30 percent would prefer a flat tax. Figure 31 reflects preferences for abortion policy, which favor banning abortion at least in most, if not all, cases. Most respondents believe that the environment should be prioritized over the economy, as shown in Figure 32. Finally, Figure 33 shows a number of different policy preferences. The policy which gained the most public support is that of considering corruption a serious crime like homicide, while the least popular policy was allowing corporations to donate to campaigns. Affirmative action receives more support in public high schools and schools than in public universities.

Figure 24: Important Issues



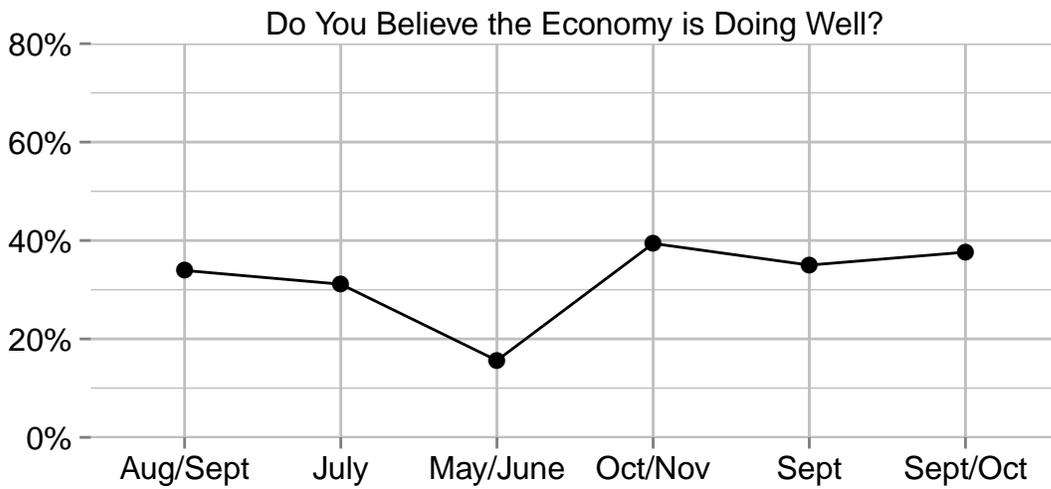
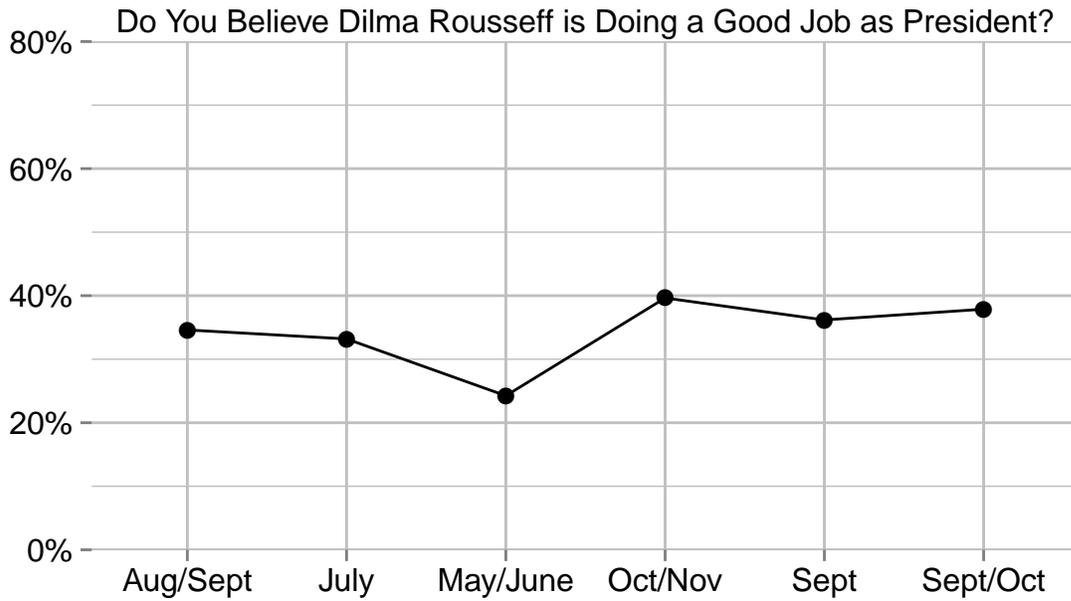
Survey Question a4 Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 25: Campaign Coverage of Issues



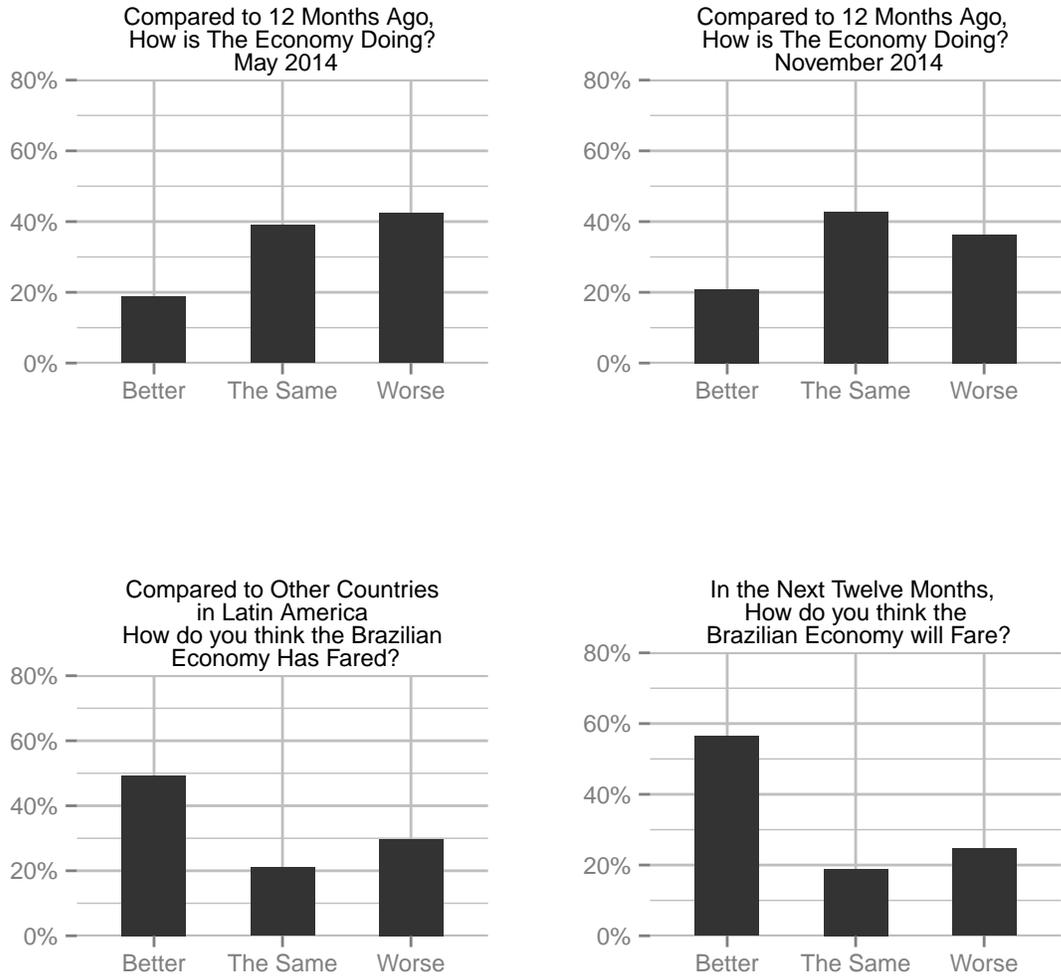
Survey Question vb5 Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 and 6 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 26: Performance



Percent indicating economy as doing well or excellent in variable soct1 and Dilma as doing a good or excellent job as president in m1. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Answers weighted to be representative at population level.

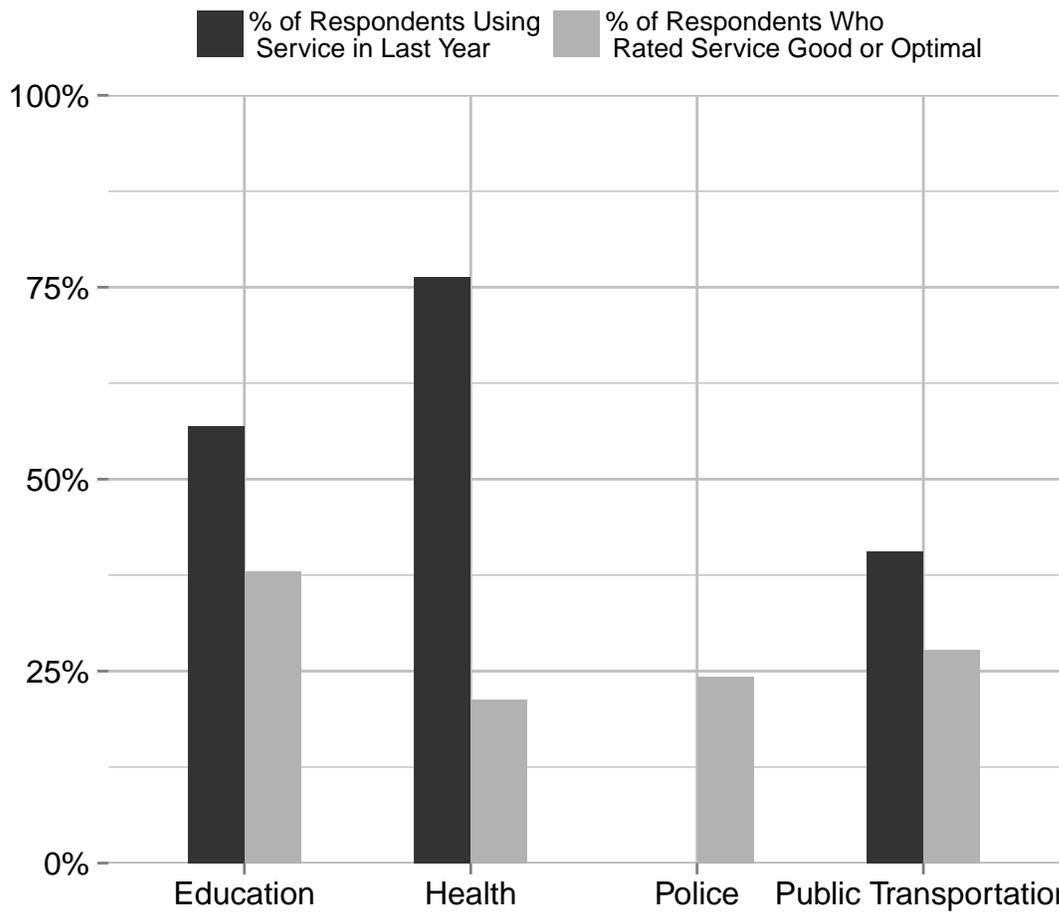
Figure 27: Economic Performance and Prospects



Survey Questions Soct2,4,6, Difgov. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 (Soct2,4) and 7 (Soct2,6) answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

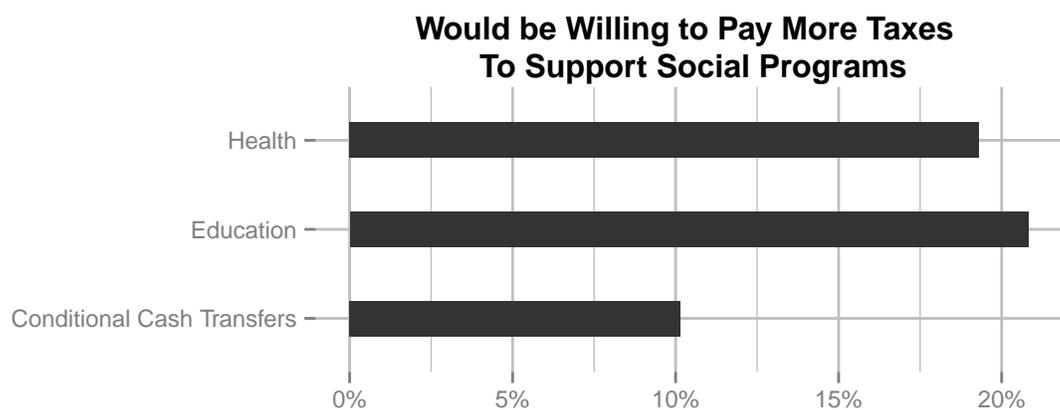
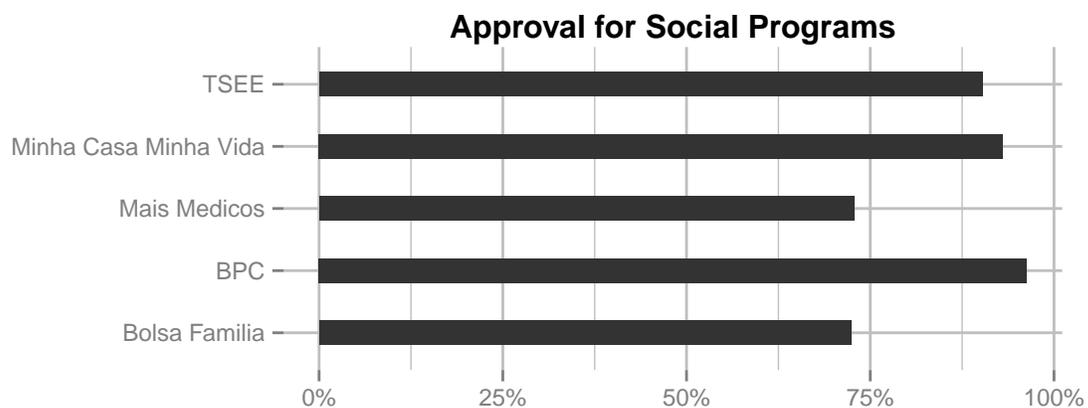
Figure 28: Social Services

Perceptions and Use of Public Services



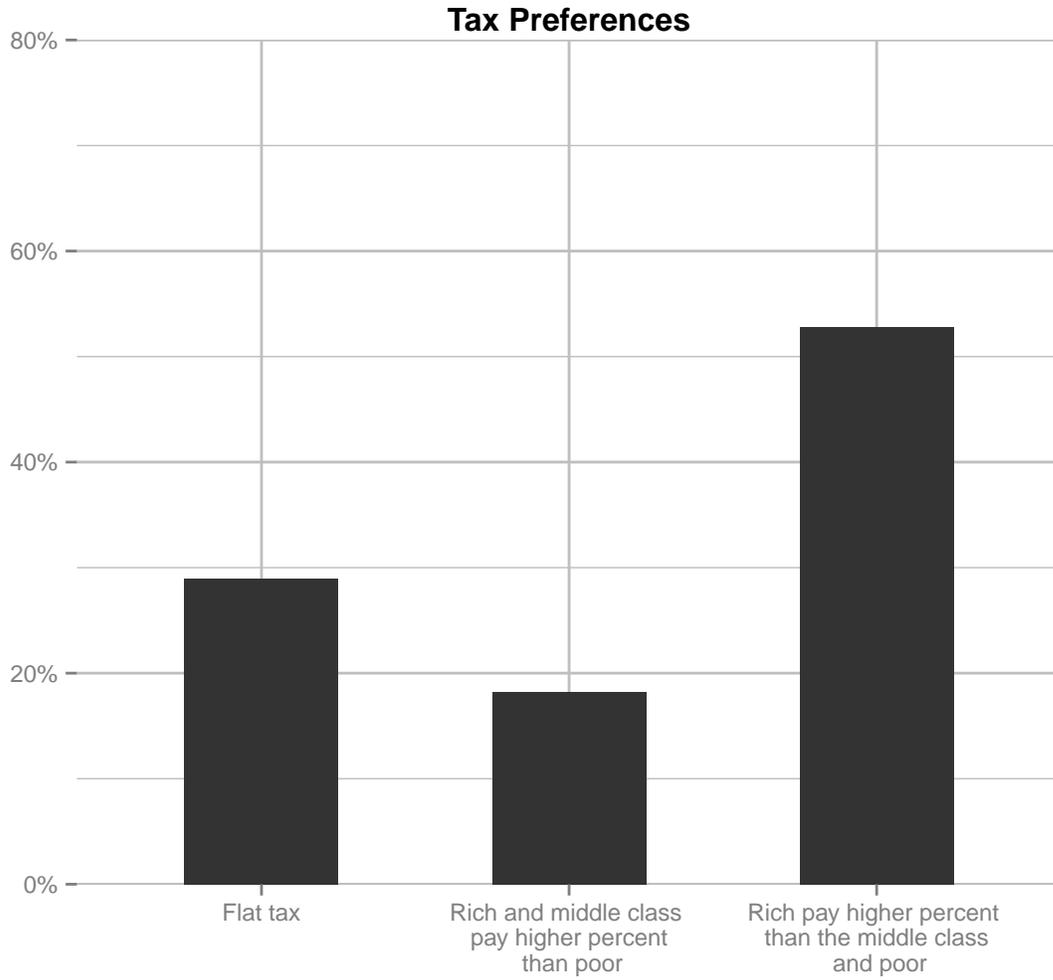
Survey Questions Vb6a–c, vb6a–c2. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level. Use data not available for policing.

Figure 29: Social Programs



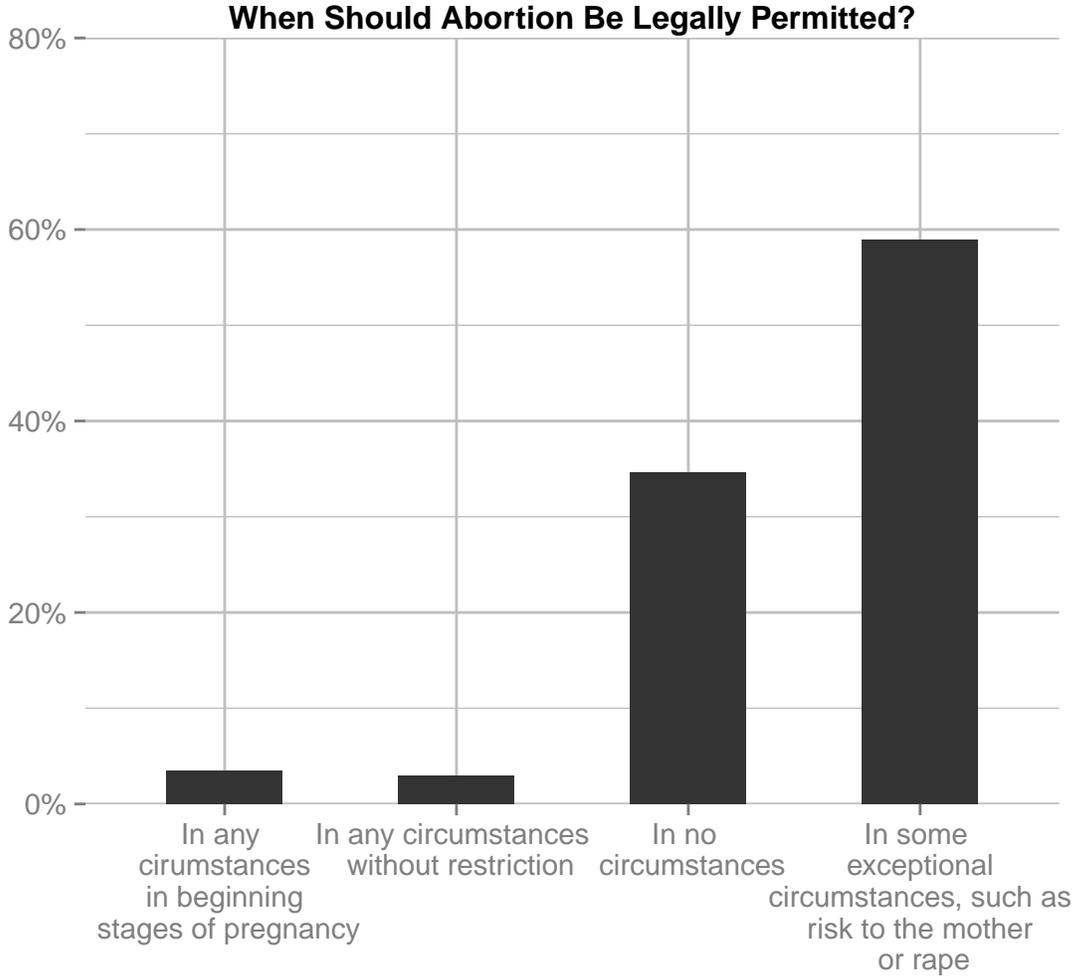
Survey questions PP10– PP14. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level

Figure 30: Tax Policy Preferences



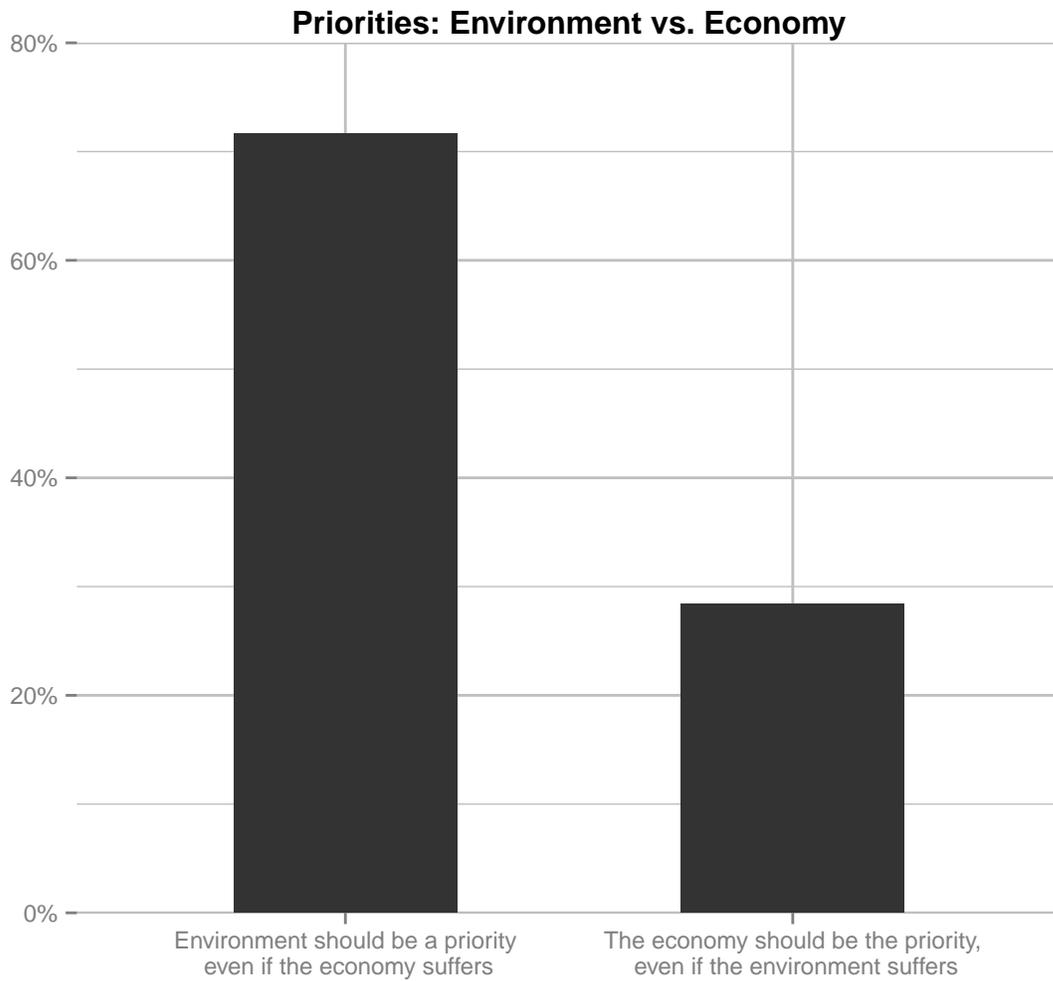
Survey Question L4. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 31: Abortion



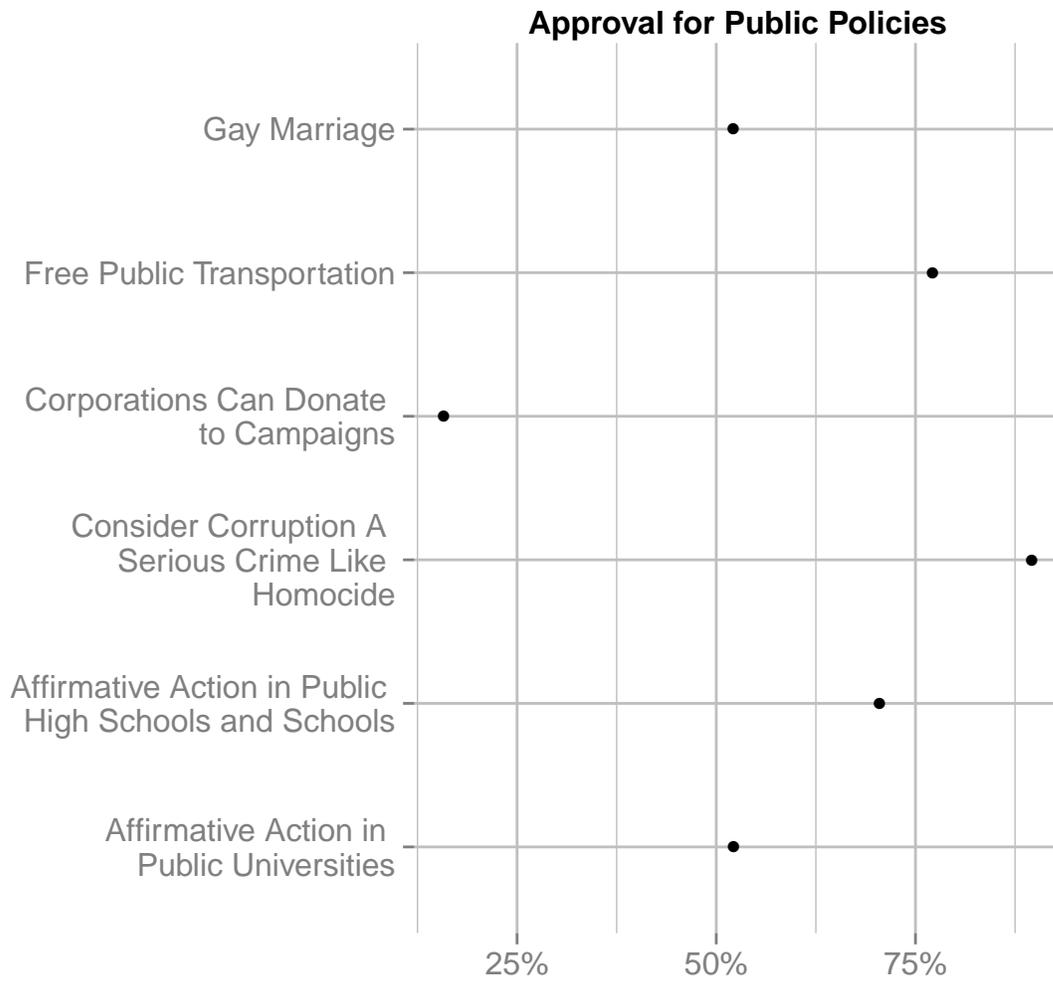
Survey Question Abort. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 32: Priorities



Survey Question Env1. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

Figure 33: Public Policies



Survey Questions Rac2B, AANEWB, D6b, PP2, PP3, PP5. Data from Brazilian Electoral Panel Study 2014. Percentages based on Survey Wave 1 answers, weighted to be representative at population level.

7 Conclusion

This report has provided a summary introduction to some of the questions which are examined in the BEPS 2014 dataset. The dataset itself is much more expansive, and can be examined with a fine-toothed approach for the purpose of tracking change over time or more comprehensive analysis. The numerous experiments, too, are worth further review by researchers. We hope this report will serve as a launching pad for further assessment of the data, as well as serve to provide some insight on the constantly changing face of Brazilian society and the electorate.

References

- [1] Daniela Campello, Cesar Zucco Jr *Exogenous Shocks and Misattribution of Responsibility for Economic Performance: Results from Survey Experience*. Stanford, 2015.
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