

2015 Survey of Parliamentary Candidates - Summary of findings

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1 Key findings

1.1 This paper summarises the findings from a survey of candidates at the May 2015 UK parliamentary general election. Key findings are:

- Most candidates (84%) were satisfied with the administration of the election in their constituency. This measure was 80% in 2010.
- Fewer than half of all candidates (49%) agreed that the Commission was a useful source of advice and guidance during the campaign, with over a fifth neutral on this matter.
- Most (87%) agreed that the nominations process was straightforward.
- A smaller proportion (two thirds) agreed that election staff made it clear what was happening at all stages of the count, with a fifth disagreeing.
- Over three-quarters of candidates said that they thought voting was safe from fraud, but 15% felt this was not the case. Concern that fraud had taken place in their individual constituency saw 16% claiming 'a lot' or 'a little' occurred.
- When asked for wider comments on anything relating to the polls, the strongest and most frequent comments made by candidates were:
 - concern regarding the potential for fraud or abuse of postal voting
 - comments about counts, namely the time taken and issues such as lack of organisation or information.

2 About this Survey - Methodology

2.1 This survey was undertaken to understand more about the views and experiences of candidates for the May 2015 general election. There were closed 'tick box' questions on candidates' views and experiences across a fairly wide range of areas. There was also a free text section at the end of the survey so that candidates could raise anything that they wanted to.

2.2 We issued a postal survey to every candidate who provided an address on the statements of persons nominated across all 650 Parliamentary constituencies. Many candidates chose not to include their address on this statement and as such we issued 2363 surveys. We received a total of 732 responses (a 31% response rate) on which data in this report is based. In 2010 we had 745 responses returned from sending 2079 surveys; which equated to a response rate of 36%.

2.3 Those who return surveys of this sort are self-selecting, and the characteristics of our sample differ to an extent from those of all candidates. However, our sample does cover a broad range of characteristics (set out below) and given the breadth of the sample we decided not to weight the data from survey responses.

2.4 The findings here should not be taken to be representative of the views of all candidates in the same way that public opinion data seeks to be representative of the wider population, but they show us the views of a diverse sample consisting of 18% of all the candidates (3,971 in total) who stood in the general election on 7 May.

Assumptions

2.5 Any reference in this report to a proportion of candidates – i.e. 'most candidates,' is, unless otherwise stated, referring to the candidates who returned our survey, and should not be taken to represent the views of all candidates.

2.6 Please note that percentages given for some questions will not sum to 100% because some respondents selected the 'don't know' option, and a smaller number opted not to answer each question. Where the proportion of 'don't knows' or people who did not answer seems particularly high this is outlined.

2.7 Many of the questions on this survey asked whether people agreed with certain statements; unless otherwise outlined, the proportion said to 'agree' with something includes both those who agreed or tended to agree, and the proportion said to 'disagree' includes those who disagreed or tended to disagree.

Survey of agents

2.8 At times this report compares findings from this survey with the findings from a survey of election agents conducted by Brunel University, on which the Electoral Commission included a small number of questions. However, comparisons should be treated with caution, because the surveys of agents had a different methodology: covering only agents of the Conservative Party, Labour Party, Liberal Democrats,

Plaid Cymru, Scottish National Party and UKIP for 629 constituencies. The survey was distributed by post immediately after polling day to 2,592¹ agents.

2.9 Our questions only made up a small proportion of the survey, which was branded as being from Brunel rather than from the Commission, and both of these factors may have affected how people responded to it.

2.10 The data reported in the agent survey are based on 1116 valid responses a response rate of 43%. These consist of responses from 229 Conservative agents (36% response rate), 326 Labour agents (52% response rate), 315 Liberal Democrat agents (50% response rate), 20 Plaid Cymru agents (50% response rate), 28 SNP agents (47% response rate) and 198 UKIP agents (33% response rate). There was some variation by party in terms of agent experience: Conservative, Liberal Democrat, Plaid Cymru and SNP agents were more experienced, with 55%, 61%, 70% and 54% respectively having organised a campaign previously. The same was true of 51% of Labour agents and 35% of those of UKIP.

2.11 We have also published a report on the findings from this research with Agents.

¹ No questionnaires were sent to agents in Buckingham (the Speaker's seat), or to Rochdale and Heywood & Middleton. In the case of the latter two constituencies, the local authority (Rochdale) did not publish details of the agents. No electoral agent address details were available for 18 UKIP agents. This was principally the case where the agents were also Parliamentary candidates.

3 Characteristics of respondents

3.1 The respondents in our sample came from across the UK and the political spectrum, and varied in whether they have stood for election, or held, a seat in Parliament before. Some key characteristics are considered here. Some candidates decided not to provide details on their background - the percentages given here are proportions of those people who did provide details.

3.2 Where respondents answered the question of their constituency (or returned either an NI specific or Welsh language questionnaire) it was possible to record the country in which they stood. Of those who provided an answer, 79% of our sample stood in England, 9% in Scotland, 9% in Wales and 3% in Northern Ireland.

3.3 Most of our sample stood for political parties (96%), with 4% standing as independents. Among candidates standing for parties, the breakdown is as follows:

Party	Percentage of those who answered	Sample size (number)
Conservative	14	88
Labour	17	108
Liberal Democrat	22	143
UKIP	12	76
Green	21	131
SNP	1	5
Plaid Cymru	2	11
Parties in Northern Ireland <i>(grouped due to small sample size)</i>	2	10
Other parties	10	66

3.4 This means that candidates for 'other parties'² appear to be somewhat under-represented in our final sample and larger party candidates are slightly over-represented³.

3.5 In our 2010 candidate report (which we did not publish), we grouped parties by size for analysis into small, medium and large. The 2015 parliamentary election result means it is not appropriate to keep the same groupings this time, and as such where relevant in the report to comment on party type and size, we have decided to report by party. It is important to note the effect of a small sample in some instances (highlighted in red in the above chart).

3.6 There were 20 candidates who answered that they stood as an independent, only one of those was elected, whereas over 100 party candidates were elected. More party candidates had previously contested some kind of election than independent candidates.

² Defined as those not represented at Westminster and/or a devolved body

³ Candidate numbers standing for each party Con 648, Lab 631, LD 631, UKIP 624, Green 573, SNP 59, PC 40, others 765. Low numbers of respondents from SNP and Plaid Cymru candidates mean that percentages for these parties need to be treated with caution.

3.7 The overall sample was divided almost one third to two thirds between candidates who had stood for election before and those who were standing for the first time (67% and 33% respectively). Approximately ten per cent of our sample had been MPs before. Fifteen percent were elected in May 2015.

3.8 The sample was made up of 77% men and 23% women⁴ (in 2010 this was 81% Vs 19% respectively). Twelve percent of respondents were under 34, with most (57%) of candidates falling into the 45-54 category (23%) or 55-64 (34%).

3.9 Over 50% of candidates were aged 55+. Just 2% were aged 18-24 and all of these candidates stood for a political party.

3.10 Almost all (90%) of candidates described their ethnic group as 'White', with 1% saying they were 'Black Caribbean' and 1% saying they were 'Indian'. Other ethnicities were not identified in high enough numbers to report.

3.11 Eleven per cent of candidates stated they had a long-term illness, and 22% had caring responsibilities.

⁴ 26% of all candidates who stood in 2015 were female.

4 The Nomination process and participation in the election

4.1 Candidates were asked whether they agreed that the nomination process was straightforward. A total of 87% agreed, while 6% disagreed. We also asked if the nomination process was well run and 88% agreed, compared to 3% who disagreed. This compares with 89% of agents agreeing on the Brunel survey; while 6% disagreed.

4.2 This high agreement level was reflected across the sample. Encouragingly, independents were no less likely to agree that the process was straightforward. Agreement was over 80% for all parties.

4.3 Eighty-eight per cent agreed it was easy to find out what they needed to do to become a candidate, just 4% disagreed. This was similar to the percentage of people who said they understood the rules for becoming a candidate and how to follow them (89% agreed and 3% disagreed).

4.4 We asked if respondents were satisfied with the process for registering a political party, and approximately 40% of respondents answered this question, therefore responses are based on those who answered. Sixty-eight per cent agreed the process was satisfactory, 4% disagreed, yet 16% answered 'don't know' which is comparatively high compared to other questions and as such may have been an answer given by those for whom the question was not applicable. We would make clearer in future the option to give no answer, or introduce an 'NA' option.

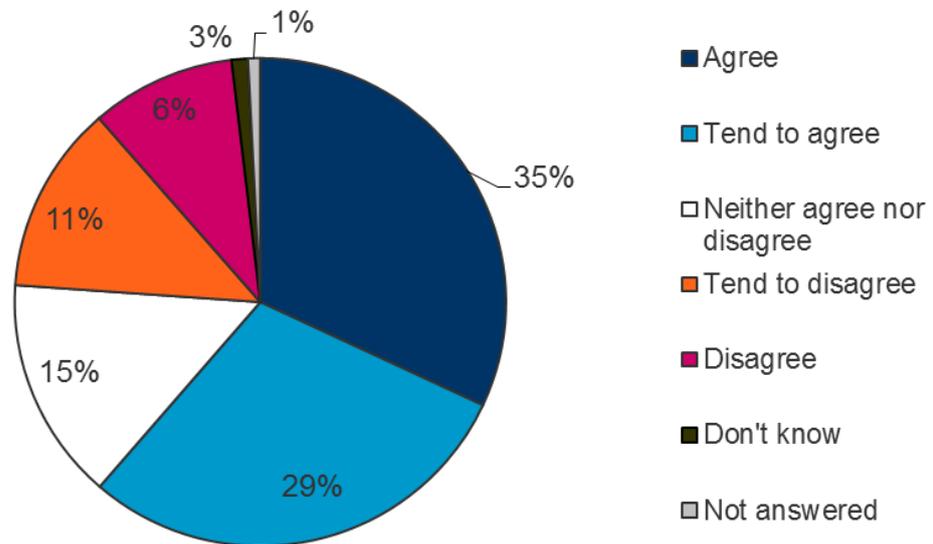
4.5 When asked if candidates received sufficient information from the RO/electoral staff on the nomination process 65% agreed or tended to agree (22%) that the (Acting) Returning Officer (Chief Electoral Officer in Northern Ireland), with only three per cent disagreeing or tending to disagree. 70% of agents agreed, 19% tended to agree, 5% were neutral and 3% tended to disagree as well as 3% disagree.

4.6 Across all parties, over 80% of candidates agreed that they had sufficient information from the RO.

4.7 Ninety per cent reported that it was easy to get the number of signatures required to secure their nomination, where five per cent disagreed. Independent candidates were more likely than party candidates (100% vs. 88%) to agree this was easy.

4.8 Nearly three-quarters (73%) of candidates agreed that it was easy to raise the deposit required to secure nomination, 17% disagreed and free text comments note that the current deposit requirement is too high, and can be particularly painful for independents and for both smaller and medium sized parties. There were some suggestions about raising the number of signatures required in place of requiring a deposit. Seventeen per cent of party candidates disagreed it was easy to raise the deposit, and 21% of independents disagreed.

Whether candidates found rules on election spending and donations clear



May 2015 Candidate Survey Source: Electoral Commission

Base: All respondents (731) UK

Q. Please tell us how far you agree or disagree with the following statements about the election? I found the rules on election spending and donations clear

4.9 Regarding the clarity of the rules on spending and donations, around three fifths (65%) of candidates agreed that the rules were clear (35% agreed and 29% tended to agree). Eighteen per cent disagreed, and a further 15% said that they neither agreed nor disagreed (these responses should be considered primarily to indicate that the respondent was neutral on this issue – there was a separate ‘Don’t know’ option for those who had no opinion). This compares to 77% agreement (48% agree, 29% tend to agree) and 13% disagreement (8% tend to disagree, 5% disagree) with 11% neutral on Brunel’s survey of agents.

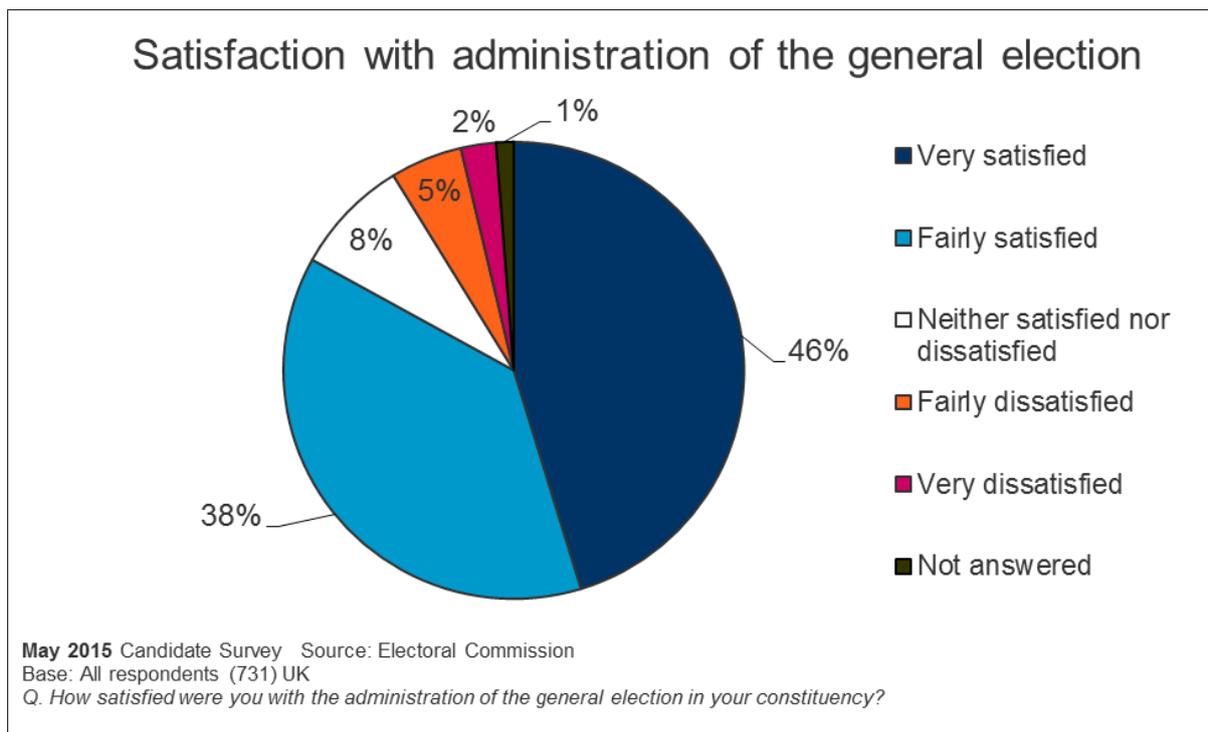
4.10 There is some variation in the responses from different kinds of candidates on this issue. Candidates from the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat parties were more likely to agree that rules were clear compared to candidates standing for the Green party. Agreement was 83% for Conservatives, 76% for Labour, 79% for Liberal Democrat and 54% for Green.

4.11 Seventy five per cent of independent candidates agreed that the rules were clear, and 65% of party candidates thought so. Of candidates who had previous experience of standing for election, 61% agreed the rules on spending and donations were clear, 67% thought this to be the case amongst those without previous electoral experience.

5 The administration of the election, polling day and the count

Administration

5.1 Of those who responded to our surveys, 84% of candidates and 71% of agents said they were very or fairly satisfied with the administration of the general election in their constituency. A total of 46% of candidates declared themselves very satisfied, and a further 38% fairly satisfied. Around 12% of agents and 8% of candidates, however, said that they were very or fairly dissatisfied with how the election was run.

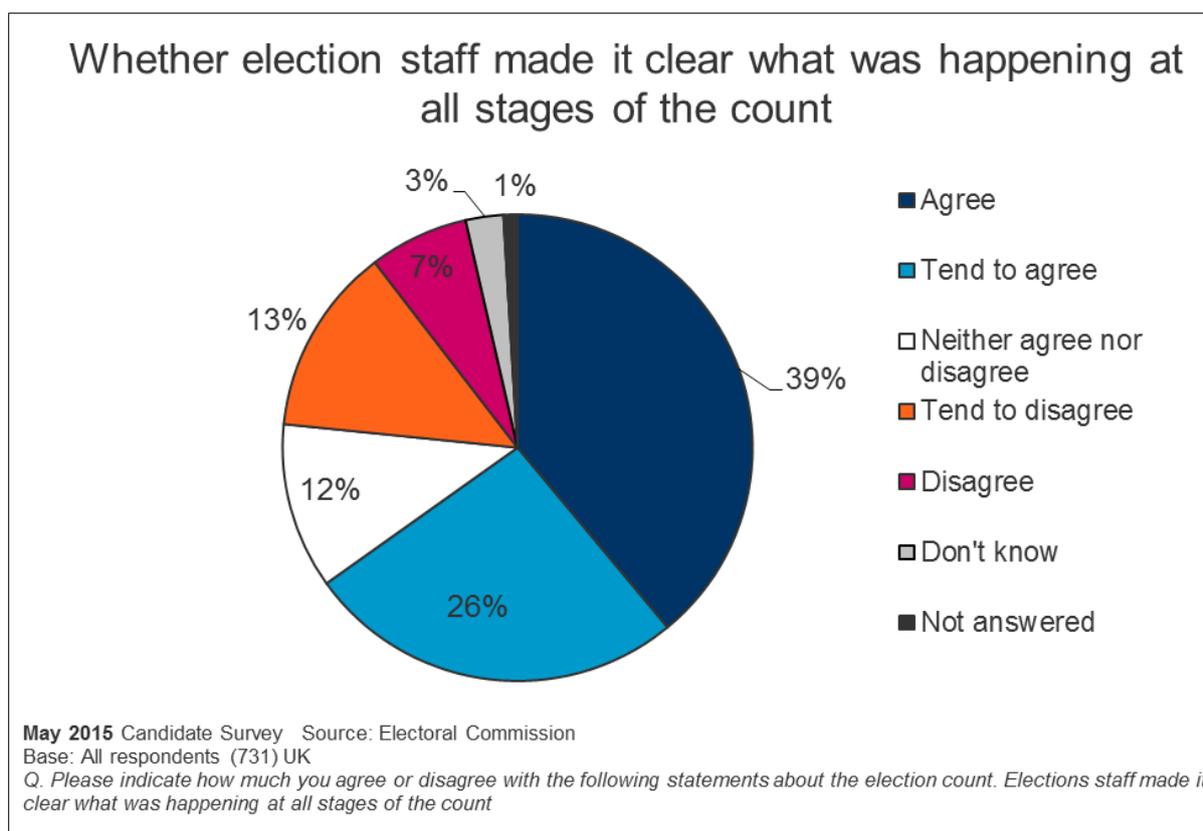


5.2 Responses to our survey of candidates indicated some areas of particular dissatisfaction, including: the time taken for the count and other issues of count management and specific difficulties resulting from running as a candidate for a smaller party, or as an independent. Some reported difficulty with gaining access to the electoral register; others raised issues of late delivery or non-delivery of postal votes.

5.3 Satisfaction with postal vote opening process was 62%, with 7% disagreeing and 31% reporting they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. A number of free text comments noted that they were unable to attend this part of the process, or that it was overseen by their agent on their behalf, and the 31% figure likely is a reflection of this.

Polling day and the count

5.4 We asked a number of statements about the count. Around two-thirds (66%) agreed that elections staff made it clear what was happening at all stages of the count, however a fifth (20%) disagreed. Slightly more (68%) agreed that it was clear what was happening during the verification and counting of ballot papers, with eighteen percent disagreeing. Agents were more positive on this point, with eighty one per cent of agents agreeing and eleven per cent disagreeing about clarity at the count.



5.5 Candidates were more positive that the process for judging doubtful ballot papers was transparent, 84% agreed versus 6% who disagreed. Eighty one per cent felt that overall the count process was transparent, yet 8% disagreed. When asked, *Overall how satisfied were you with how efficiently the verification and count processes were run?* 72% of candidates reported overall satisfaction (38% very satisfied, 34% fairly satisfied) and also 73% of agents were satisfied (41% very, 32% fairly) Ten per cent of candidates were fairly dissatisfied, and 7% very dissatisfied, the figures for agents were 13% and 5% respectively.

5.6 Agreement was significantly lower in England (68%) than in Scotland (88%) and Northern Ireland (100%). Agreement in Wales was 82%. Independent and party candidates broadly agreed about the verification and count, with 79% and 71% respectively agreeing they were satisfied. Candidates of smaller parties were somewhat more likely to agree than those from larger parties. However, first time candidates were more likely to have found the count process clear – 78% agreed compared to 69% of those who had stood before.

5.7 Taken together, complaints about the count constituted the strongest theme emerging from the free text section of the survey, with 29% of responses mentioning it. Among the issues noted were count layouts meaning it wasn't always possible to see which boxes were being counted, or that there was insufficient space to stand close enough to give proper scrutiny to counters. Others noted that other candidates appeared to be notified of the result before our respondents. A number were also disappointed where the RO decided not to allow speeches from all candidates after declaration.

5.8 The most common complaint about the count was simply that it had taken too long or finished too late. A small number of candidates put this down to the combination of the general election with local elections. Others attributed it to poor organisation, which was in itself a general complaint about the count.

6 Information Provision

6.1 Responses suggest that many found the Commission a useful source of advice and guidance. For example nearly half (49%) of the candidates who responded to our survey felt the Commission was a useful source of advice and guidance during the campaign. Although 7% said they did not find our guidance useful, 21% were neutral and a further 24% reported not using our guidance at all. By contrast nearly two-thirds (65%) of election agents who responded said that they found the Commission to be a useful source of advice and guidance during the campaign. Nine per cent said that they did not, 19% were neutral and a further 9% reported that they didn't use the Commission as a source of advice and guidance.

6.2 Perhaps unsurprisingly, independent candidates, and candidates with no previous electoral experience were more likely to report that they found the Commission a useful source of advice and guidance. Eighty per cent of independents, compared with 47% of party candidates agreed. Fifty seven per cent of those with no previous experience, compared to 44% who had stood for office before agreed.

6.3 Seventy-one per cent of agents and 64% of candidates thought our written guidance was clear and easy to use (11% of agents and 4% of candidates did not find it so).

6.4 Fewer respondents reported using the information about what to expect at the verification and count, but 53% of candidates said it was clear and easy to use, 3% disagreed and 17% were neutral whereas 27% reported not using it at all. More agents used this, and 61% said it was clear and easy to use, 6% disagreed and 17% were neutral, and another 16% did not use it.

6.5 There are some theories as to who may be more or less likely to use Commission guidance. For example, perhaps independent candidates, who are unable to rely on their parties for information, are more likely to look to us.

6.6 Respondents were asked statements about their experiences if they contacted the Commission directly for advice. For questions in this section, over seventy per cent of respondents reported that they 'did not use' the information we asked about. If those respondents are removed from the analyses, some 76% were satisfied in respect of the Commission's guidance and advice on electoral administration and some 64% on donations and spending. The respective figures from agents here are 70% and 61% satisfied.

6.7 Overall, when asked if direct advice or guidance on electoral administration was clear and easy to understand, 23% of candidates agreed, 2% disagreed and 70% did not use this resource. For Agents 46% agreed and 5% disagreed.

6.8 When asked if direct advice or guidance on spending and donations was clear and easy to understand, 18% of candidates agreed, 4% disagreed and 71% reported not using this. Thirty nine per cent of agents agreed and 10% disagreed.

6.9 Those who agreed that direct advice or guidance on registering a political party was clear and easy to understand totalled 14%, with 2% disagreeing and 79%

reporting they did not use it. If we exclude those who did not use this, the figure rises to 68% who agreed.

6.10 Finally, we asked if direct advice or guidance on any other area was clear and easy to understand, and asked respondents to specify, however 106 people provided a ranking in agree-disagree here, yet only 47 listed the topic on which they sought information. People may have missed the request to specify, or for reasons of confidentiality (or possibly effort) decided they did not want to specify. As such, it means we should report on this question with care but if we remove the 'did not use' responses we see some 54% of candidates agree advice was clear and easy to understand. The overall figures including all responses show 10 % agreed, 3% disagreed and that 81% did not use this.

6.11 Owing to some differences in Northern Ireland from GB, the NI survey had some additional questions to cover the role of the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland (EONI). It should be noted that only 17 candidates returned the NI survey.

6.12 Of respondents in Northern Ireland, 88% agreed that overall the Commission was a useful source advice and guidance, 87% agreed the same for EONI. For those using direct advice or guidance, 89% agreed this from EONI was clear and easy to use, 75% said the same for Commission guidance. Where direct advice on an area not specified by our survey was sought, a similar number of respondents reported using those from both bodies, and agreement this was clear and easy to use was 38% for the Commission vs 86% for EONI.

6.13 Eighty seven per cent of respondents felt that the written guidance for candidates and agents, written jointly by the Commission and EONI was clear and easy to use.

7 Electoral integrity

7.1 We asked candidates about both the safety of voting in general and their concern about fraud in their area at this election (the survey referred to 'electoral fraud' for ease of understanding). Over three quarters (76%) of candidates said that they thought voting was fairly or very safe from fraud. However, 15% said that they thought it was very or fairly unsafe, compared to 9% of respondents to our post-election public opinion survey.⁵

7.2 Candidates who felt that 'a lot' or 'a little' that fraud had actually occurred in their constituency were at 3% and 12% respectively. Thirty-one per cent felt that there was 'none at all', but 29% didn't know. A similar level was found in Brunel's survey of agents – (3% and 7% respectively).⁶ Overall, there was a low level of perception of electoral fraud.

7.3 Amongst agents, 45% were of the view that there was *None at All*, and if *Don't Knows* are excluded, that figure rises to 61%. Analysing these data by party shows that UKIP agents were most likely to perceive there to be fraud, with 28% responding *A Little* or *A Lot*. Agents without prior experience were slightly more likely to perceive some electoral fraud, though a clear majority (59%) did not share such a view.

7.4 There is some ambiguity in asking people how concerned they are about this, given that some may express concern at the mere prospect of fraud taking place. There is also room for debate as to whether a candidate is better placed to judge this issue than a member of the public, given their proximity to the process, or whether this proximity makes them more subject to hearsay.

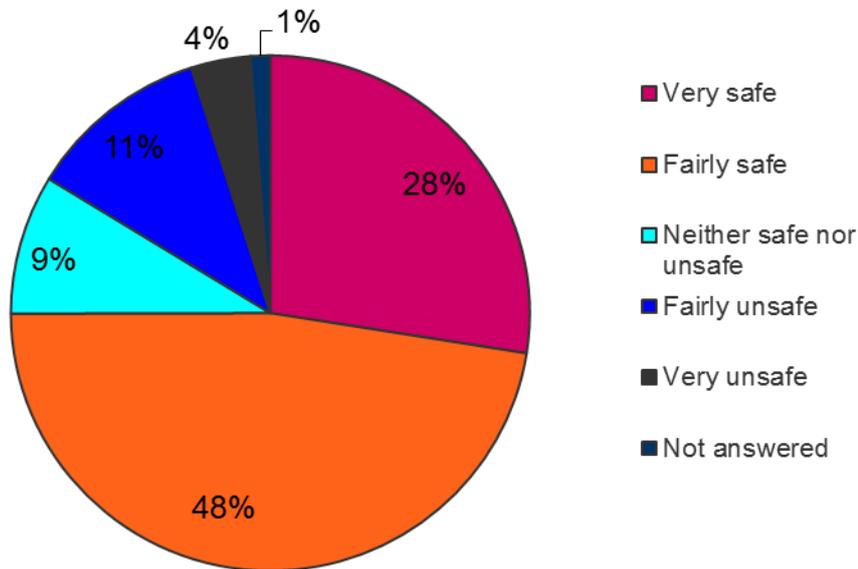
7.5 Candidates generally considered voting to be safe – with at least 80% of responses from candidates from all but two parties⁷ agreeing.

⁵ Ipsos MORI/The Electoral Commission Post election public opinion survey 2015. Survey of 3,564 UK adults (18+). This question was asked of all respondents.

⁶ This question was also not asked to candidates and agents after the polls in 2010, although they were asked how '*..concerned, if at all, were you about electoral fraud or abuse..*'. These surveys found that a quarter of candidates and 13% of election agents were very or fairly concerned electoral fraud and abuse took place.

⁷ Exceptions were UKIP at 46% and SNP at 60% (but note small base).

Perceived safety of voting from electoral fraud



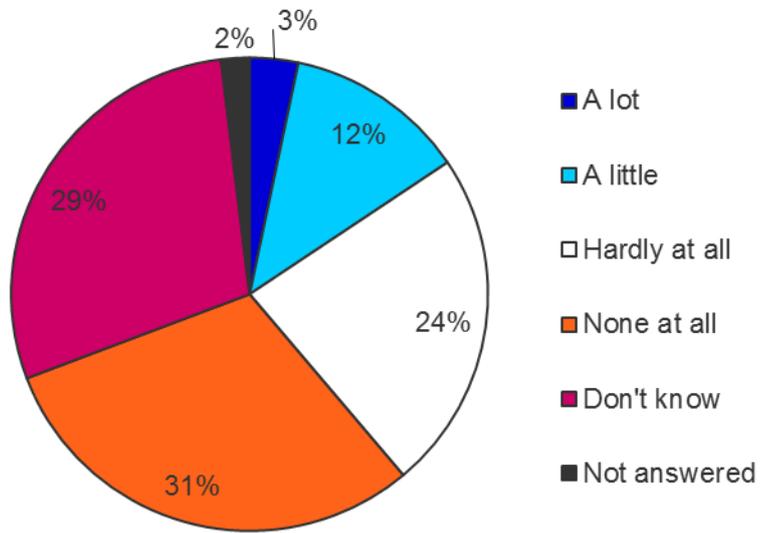
May 2010 Candidate Survey Source: Electoral Commission
 Base: All respondents (731) UK
 Q. *In general, when it comes to being safe from fraud and abuse, how safe or unsafe would you say that voting is?*

7.6 Independent and party candidates agreed equally (75%) that voting in general is safe from fraud and abuse. When asked about whether fraud took place at this election, 17% of independents and 31% of party candidates say there was 'none at all'.

7.7 The view of some candidates that voting is vulnerable to malpractice was emphasised by the recurrence of the point in the survey's free text comments. Around 18% of respondents expressed concern. The main point raised was a feeling that postal voting on demand is particularly open to fraud, with a number of people calling for it to be more restricted. There were a fairly small number of suggestions that voting is inherently open to fraud without voter ID being introduced.

7.8 However, only a fairly small number of people directly suggested that they thought fraud had taken place in their own constituency, in keeping with the findings of our closed questions on this topic.

Whether candidates felt there was electoral fraud took place at elections in their area



May 2015 Candidate Survey Source: Electoral Commission

Base: All respondents (731) UK

Q. How much, if at all, do you think that electoral fraud took place at elections in your area?

8 Other issues raised by candidates

8.1 Over 400 candidates raised a number of issues in their free text comments which do not fit easily into any of the themed sections of this paper. These are outlined briefly below.

Marginalisation of smaller parties and independents

8.2 A moderate number of independents and candidates from small and medium sized parties were disappointed or angry that they had not been invited to some local hustings or had not been given what they considered fair amounts of coverage by the local media. There was also feeling that access to register information, and the cost of deposits favoured larger parties.

8.3 Independent and smaller party candidates were generally in agreement with party candidates on our closed questions, although free text comments divided them more, as well as a few key areas such as making more use of Commission guidance, or more independent candidates also acting as agents.

Electoral modernisation

8.4 A fairly small number of candidates suggested that electronic voting or electronic counting should be introduced.

Standing for election

8.5 There was frustration over the 'Commonly used names' legislation, where candidates had stood previously using one name, but were now forced to change this. Some felt that this cost them votes as people did not recognise them on the ballot paper.

8.6 As previously mentioned, signatures and raising of the deposit caused debate, but further to this, on finance, some expressed a need for greater clarity over the spending rules and limits during the campaign.

8.7 A small number of candidates felt opponents' election literature or campaigns made false or inaccurate claims about them. Candidates were unsure what redress or appeal was available in such circumstances, and felt that anything that could be done would only be addressed too late in the campaign, or even after the election.

Security

8.8 As previously mentioned, concerns about the availability of postal voting was a cause for concern, many felt that in certain types of communities this could be problematic. A number of respondents raised the issue of postal votes in residential care homes also being open to fraud.

8.9 A number of candidates heard of electors not receiving polling cards and postal votes. Concern here was twofold – the voter being disenfranchised, or thinking they were (as a polling card is not required to vote), and whether a postal vote had fallen into the wrong hands.

8.10 The introduction of IER, and resultant changes to the system of registration, led candidates to report that some people thought they were registered but discovered they were not too late, and also that others were registered twice.

Polling Day

8.11 Some responses noted concern about behaviour near, or in polling stations from mainly tellers and campaigners, but in some cases, general members of the public.

8.12 As mentioned, the count was a cause for much consternation, but in addition to the time taken, other issues raised were around access for disabled people, facilities (such as heating, availability of sufficient toilets, chairs etc.) and space, not just for candidates/agents etc. to attend comfortably, but also space in being able to view the count satisfactorily.

The Electoral Commission

8.13 As well as comments on our guidance, as set out above, a number of candidates made comments about the Commission or suggestions for our role. It may be instructive to look at examples of what candidates were saying about us, although each was made by a very small number (often one, no more than three). The comments that follow are in no particular order.

Candidates variously suggested that the EC should:

- Direct more questions to agents.
- On future questionnaires, separate fraud questions for postal voting and polling station voting. Also to introduce more options for gender on the optional personal information section.
- Provide maps of constituencies to new candidates
- Have a more intuitive website, where things are easier to find.
- Issue a 'welcome pack' to candidates
- Produce one page summaries, or 'bite-sized' guidance on the campaign, count, legalities etc. to assist candidates in focusing on what is important.

9 Toplines

Results for all UK, expressed as percentages

The nomination process and participating in the election

Q1 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about participating in the election? Please 'X' one box only for each statement.						
	Agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to Disagree	Disagree	Don't know
It was easy for me to find out what I had to do to become a candidate	60	28	7	3	1	1
I understood the rules for becoming a candidate and how to follow them	62	27	7	3	1	1
I was satisfied with the process for registering a political party (if applicable)	50	18	11	2	2	16 (66 no ans)
The nomination process was straightforward	61	27	6	5	1	1
The nomination process was well run	64	24	7	2	1	2
I received sufficient information from the Returning Officer/ electoral staff on the nomination process	65	22	8	2	1	2
It was easy for me to get the number of signatures required to secure my nomination	70	20	5	4	1	1
It was easy for me to raise the deposit required to secure my nomination	56	17	10	8	10	0
I found the rules on election spending and donations clear	35	29	15	11	6	3

The administration of the election, polling day and the count

Q2 Overall how satisfied were you with the administration of the general election in your constituency? Please 'X' one box only				
Very satisfied 46	Fairly satisfied 38	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 8	Fairly dissatisfied 5	Very dissatisfied 2

Q3 How satisfied were you with how the postal vote opening process was run? Please 'X' one box only				
Very satisfied 33	Fairly satisfied 28	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 31	Fairly dissatisfied 4	Very dissatisfied 3

Q4 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the election count. Please 'X' one box only for each statement.						
	Agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to Disagree	Disagree	Don't know
Elections staff made it clear what was happening at all stages of the count	39	26	12	13	7	3
It was clear what was happening during the verification and counting of ballot papers	39	29	11	11	7	3
The process for judging doubtful ballot papers was transparent	61	22	7	4	2	3
Overall the count process was transparent	54	27	10	5	2	2

Q5 Overall, how satisfied were you with how efficiently the verification and count processes were run? Please 'X' one box only				
Very satisfied 38	Fairly satisfied 34	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 10	Fairly dissatisfied 10	Very dissatisfied 7

Information provision

Q6 Overall, the Electoral Commission was a useful source of advice and guidance during the campaign Please 'X' one box only					
Agree 20	Tend to agree 29	Neither agree nor disagree 21	Tend to Disagree 4	Disagree 3	Did not use 24

Q7 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the information provided by the Electoral Commission Please 'X' one box only for each statement.						
	Agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to Disagree	Disagree	Did not use
The Electoral Commission's written <i>Guidance for candidates and agents</i> was clear and easy to use	33	30	13	3	1	19
The Electoral Commission's written information on what to expect at the verification and count was clear and easy to use	28	25	17	2	1	27

Q8 If you contacted the Commission personally (e.g. by telephone or e-mail) for advice or guidance please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements Please 'X' one box only for each statement.						
	Agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to Disagree	Disagree	Did not use
Direct advice or guidance on electoral administration was clear and easy to understand	14	9	4	1	1	70
Direct advice or guidance on spending and donations was clear and easy to understand	9	9	6	3	1	71
Direct advice or guidance on registering a political party was clear and easy to understand	9	5	5	1	1	79

Direct advice on another area (please state) was clear and easy to understand 557 answered the numbers, only 47 free text	6	4	5	1	2	81
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Electoral integrity

Q9 In general, when it comes to being safe from fraud and abuse, how safe or unsafe would you say that voting is? Please 'X' one box only				
Very safe 28	Fairly safe 48	Neither safe nor unsafe 9	Fairly unsafe 11	Very unsafe 4
Q10 How much, if at all, do you think that electoral fraud took place at elections in your area? Please 'X' one box only				
A lot 3	A little 12	Hardly at all 24	None at all 31	Don't know 29

About you

Q14 Were you a candidate, or both candidate and agent in these elections?	
Candidate 86	Both 14
Q15 Did you stand for a political party or as an independent candidate?	
Political party 96	Independent candidate 4
Q16 Party name (if applicable)	
Q17 Was this the first time that you contested an election?	
Yes 33	No 67
Q18 IF NO at Q17: Please provide information about previous elections in which you have stood, and the position you held if you were elected (if applicable)?	
Q19 Were you elected at this election?	
Yes 15	No 85

Q20 What gender are you?					
Male 77			Female 23		
Q21 Which age group do you belong to?					
18-24 2	25-34 10	35-44 13	45-54 23	55-64 34	65+ 18
Q22 Which of these best describes your ethnic group?					
White 99	Chinese /	Irish Traveller /	Indian 1	Pakistani /	Bangladeshi /
Black Caribbean 1	Black African /	Black Other /	Other (please specify) 5_____		Prefer not to answer 4

Q23	Do you have any long term illness, health problems or disability which limits your daily activities or the work that you can do?	
	Yes 11	No 89
Q24	Do you have caring responsibilities for any people within your household (for example children under 18 or anyone with a disability or long-term illness)?	
	Yes 22	No 78

ENDS