

Electoral Reform & Strategic Voting in Chilean Legislative Elections*

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Abstract

This paper examines the effects of Chile’s 2015 electoral reform, which increased the magnitude of districts in Chile’s lower legislative chamber from two to between three and eight. This increase in district magnitude allows for a convenient “natural experiment”: post-reform voters should strategically vote at lower levels than pre-reform voters. I find strong evidence that voters have responded to Chile’s electoral reform by engaging in less party-level strategic voting. However, I surprisingly find no evidence that the reform has decreased strategic voting for Chile’s pre-electoral pacts. This study demonstrates that Chile’s electoral reform is already affecting voter behavior and is doing so in line with theoretical expectations.

Keywords: electoral systems, Chile, electoral reform, strategic voting, tactical voting

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