

The Cost of Running Elections – A Cross Country Comparison

National Institute for Legislative Studies

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S/N	Country		Description	Amount
1.	US	2012	The total cost of the elections, Presidential and congressional elections ¹	\$7 billion ²
2.		2014	Includes cash from individual contributors, dark money groups, party committees and political action committees	\$3.7 billion ³
			Detail of Money spent (Congressional Elections)	
			Candidates Delegates	\$1,860,640
			Candidates House	\$888,126,210
			Candidates Senate	\$685,740,818
			Party Committees DNC & RNC	\$291,333,796
			Party Committees Other	\$841,220,241
			527 Federal Committees	\$203,645,665
			Outside Money Fully Disclosed	\$337,707,009
			Outside Money Partially Disclosed	\$54,938,014
			Outside Money Undisclosed	\$172,430,193
			PAC Overhead	\$292,650,413
			Grand Total	\$3,769,652,999
			Candidate & Party Spending	\$2,708,281,705
			Outside & 527 Spending	\$768,720,881
3.	India	2014	Between 2009 and 2014, the advertising campaign budget of political parties alone more than tripled from \$83 million to an estimated \$300 million	\$ 5 billion ⁴
4.	Kenya	2012	General Elections - Cost per registered voter of KSh2,000 (\$25) The cost of the election per registered voter at \$20.4 (or \$29 per cast ballot).	\$427 million (KSh36 billion)
5.	UK	2010	UK parliamentary election: i) £28,655,271 for the cost of distributing candidates' mailings ii) £84.6 million for the conduct of the poll Excludes: i) spending by individual candidates and national party organisations: £45.5m - £31.5m on national campaigns; ii) £14m of candidates' expenses.	£113,255,271

¹ Figure does not include election infrastructure and super-structure provided by the Government

² The Economist (2014). *Why American elections cost so much*. <http://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2014/02/economist-explains-4>

³ The Centre for Responsive Politics

⁴ Ghosh, Palash (2014), *India's 2014 Election To Cost \$5 Billion, Second Only To Price Tag For 2012 U.S. Presidential Election*. <http://www.ibtimes.com/indias-2014-election-cost-5-billion-second-only-price-tag-2012-us-presidential-election-1570668>

			Campaign broadcasts i) £420,000 for television broadcasts ii) £30,000 for those on radio.	
6.	Australia	2013	House of Representatives & half-Senate elections	\$197, 646, 219
7.	Canada		Includes information technology systems and infrastructure; maps and voter lists; training for returning officers and field and special events staff. It also covers the design of a new advertising campaign and other communication products.	\$375M
8.	Nigeria	2015	INEC ⁵ Includes information technology systems and infrastructure; maps and voter lists; training for returning officers and field and special events staff. It also covers the design of a new advertising campaign and other communication products.	\$625M
9.	Zimbabwe	2013	<p>The 2013 harmonized election was run on a minimum budget of USD132 477 million. When divided by 210 constituencies the figure is USD628, 571 per constituency. This constituency figure is then divided by the number of registered voters to find cost of election per voter. The same is done using the 2million per constituency figure which was recently pronounced by ZEC.</p> <p>The 2013 harmonized vote averages USD22 per voter. While on the high side, it is quiet consistent with the regional figures. The regional highest is Botswana costing USD28 per voter as of 2010. When using the 2million figure per constituency, the cost per voter balloons to an average of USD70 per voter for the impending by-elections.</p> <p>It also means the total cost of running a general election in Zimbabwe potentially goes up to USD420,000,000.</p>	\$420M ⁶

⁵ Includes only State infrastructure and super-structure & does not include of expenses of candidates, political parties, advertisements, etc.

⁶ Election Resource Centre (2015) Voting In Dollar: An Insight into the Cost of Election Administration in Zimbabwe. <https://erczim.org/?p=2595>

Table 2: Comparative Analysis of Regional Election Costs (Southern Africa)⁷

country	Election	Total cost	Per voter
Angola	1992	US\$100 million	US\$22
Botswana	2006	±\$500 million	±US\$27.9
	1994	US\$1 million	US\$2.7
DRC	2005	US\$546 million	US\$2.5
Lesotho	2002	US\$13.5 million	US\$15
	1998	\$6 million	US\$6.9
Malawi	1994	US\$8 million	US\$2.1
<u>Mauritius</u>	2005	US\$10.0 million	US\$ 11.0
	1995	US\$3.8 million	US\$ 5.6
Mozambique	2004	US\$21.5 million	US\$6.46
	1994	US\$64.5 million	US\$10.2
Namibia	1999	US\$0.98-1.15 million	US\$1.8-2.2
	1994	US\$1.46 million	US\$3
Seychelles	1998	US\$276 626	US\$5.8
South Africa	2004	US\$122 million	US\$7.8
	1999	US\$117 million	US\$7.3
	1994	US\$265 million	US\$13.5
Tanzania	2000	US\$49.6 million	US\$7.66
	1995	US\$38 million	US\$7.88

Other Links

<https://africacheck.org/factsheets/factsheet-nigerias-election/>

<http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2011/04/11/nigeria-costliest-election/>

⁷ <http://www.content.eisa.org.za/old-page/cost/elections>