

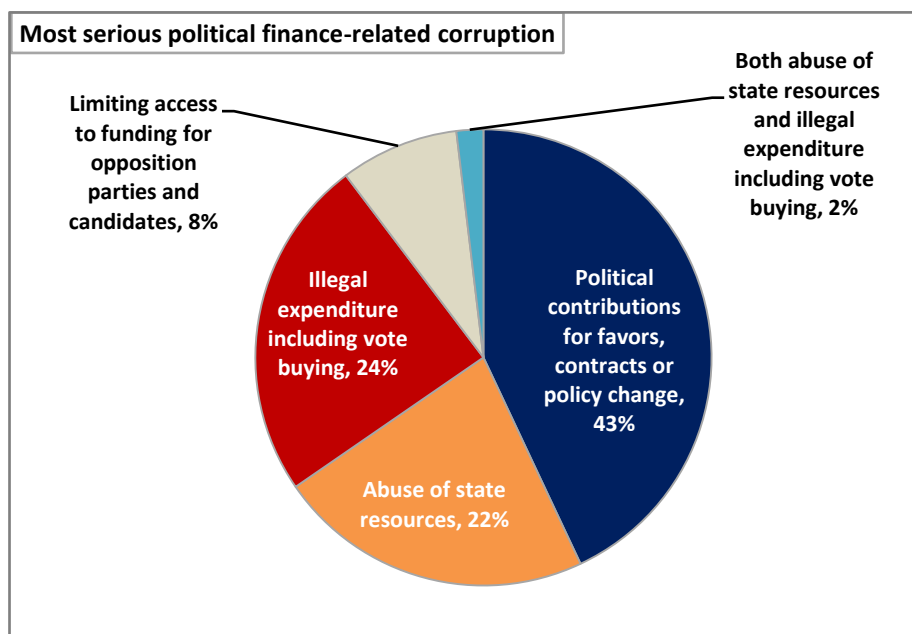
# Political Finance Survey Report 2008

## Survey Specifications

In October 2008, a range of practitioners, academics, and other election stakeholders were surveyed about various political finance-related topics at two conferences: the Athens International Anti-Corruption Conference and the IFES US Election Program Conference. For each question, respondents were presented with multiple choice options and in some cases were able to record “Other” and a verbatim response. A total of 107 respondents were surveyed.

## Most serious manifestation of political finance related corruption

When given a list of types of corruption and asked for their opinion on which is the most serious manifestation of political finance related corruption, a plurality of respondents (43%) believe political contributions for favors, contracts or policy change to be the most serious manifestation. About a quarter of respondents (24%) believe illegal expenditure including vote-buying to be the most serious. Twenty-two percent believe the abuse of state resources to be the most serious manifestation of political finance-related corruption, a narrow 8% say it is limiting access to funding for opposition parties and candidates, and 2% say the most serious manifestation is a combination of both abuse of state resources and illegal expenditure including vote-buying.



## Transparency for Monitoring Money in Politics

When given a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being strongly agree and 5 strongly disagree, and asked whether they agree or disagree that transparency is the foundation for monitoring money in politics, a majority 76% of respondents either strongly agree (52%) or somewhat agree (24%). Nine percent report a neutral stance (neither agree nor disagree) on this issue and 11% either somewhat or strongly disagree.

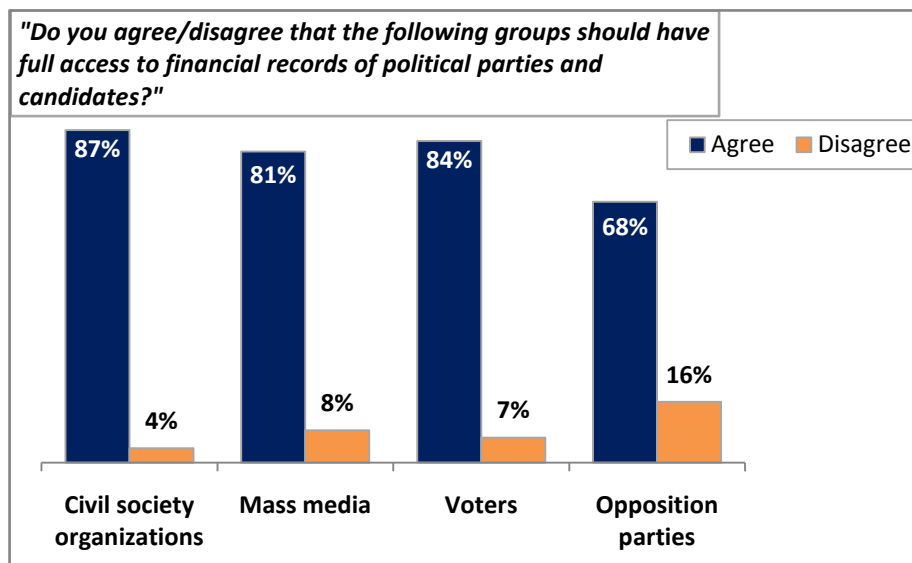
## Best Monitor of Political Party or Election Campaign Funding

Of three listed bodies, a majority of respondents (52%) believe an election management body would be the body best suited to monitor funding of political parties and election campaigns and nearly three in ten (29%) say a supreme audit office is the best suited. It is interesting to note that a few respondents gave the answer “election management body” or “supreme audit office” with the caveat that it is independent.

Fewer respondents believe either a ministry of justice (4%), an independent/autonomous body (4%), an electoral commission, body or court (3%), anti-corruption agencies/NGOs (3%), or a free press or media (1%) is the body best suited to monitor funding of political parties and election campaigns. Still, 4% of respondents say the body best suited to this task depends on the country or local circumstances.

## Access to Financial Records of Political Parties and Candidates

When asked if they agree or disagree, that certain groups should have full access to financial records of political parties and candidates, more than eight in 10 agree that civil society organizations (87%), mass media (81%), and voters (84%) should have full access to financial records of political parties and candidates. However, a relatively smaller percentage (68%) agrees that opposition parties should have full access.



## Incentives for Political Parties and Candidates to Disclose Funding

Respondents were then asked to select two incentives from a list that they believe are the strongest in pushing political parties and/or candidates to accurately disclose their funding. The top two incentives identified by respondents are fear that an enforcement body will discover and punish their noncompliance (68%) and learning facts they can use to criticize opponents in campaigns (38%). Nearly one third (32%) mention a material reward by an enforcement body for accurate discovery of an inaccurate disclosure as an incentive and a quarter of respondents believe learning about potential donors to their own parties/candidacies is an incentive to accurately disclose their funding. Other less cited incentives to disclose funding include disqualification of elected candidates (3%), knowing it will garner more votes as citizens look for honest candidates (2%), it levels the playing field for all candidates in the long term (2%), public humiliation of parties or candidates by media if caught in noncompliance (2%), or a rating system that would affect their global corruption standing (less than 1%).

Top Incentives for Political Parties and/or Candidates to Accurately Disclose Funding	
Fear that an enforcement body will discover and punish their noncompliance	68%
Learning facts they can use to criticize opponents in campaigns	38%
Material reward by an enforcement body for accurate discovery of an inaccurate disclosure	32%
Learning about potential donors to their own parties/candidacies	25%
Disqualification of elected candidates	3%
Knowing it will garner more votes as citizens look for honest candidates	2%
Levels the playing field for all candidates in the long term	2%
Public humiliation of parties or candidates by media if caught in noncompliance	2%
A rating system that would affect their global corruption standing	LT1%
<i>Percentages reflect percent of cases.</i>	

## Arguments Against Full Disclosure in Political Finance

From a list of five arguments against full disclosure in political finance, a plurality of respondents say the strongest argument against full disclosure is that “It may be used by bad governments as a tool against opposition parties” (35%), while 18% say “There is the chance that it may be misused for criminal purposes against donors,” and 16% say “It goes against personal rights to privacy and secrecy of political opinion” would be a strong argument against full disclosure in political finance. Fewer respondents say the strongest argument against full disclosure is “It is impossible to enforce because there are always ways around it” (14%), or “It may be used by irresponsible media to create baseless political scandal” (10%).

Less than 1% say none of the listed answers are the strongest arguments against full disclosure in political finance or gave other answers such as everything can be addressed by regulation (1%), corporate donors may stop contributing to opposition parties out of fear of reprisals (1%), or “any refusal to disclose is already a problem” (1%).

