



COMPROMISED BY DESIGN?

THE FRAGILE INTEGRITY OF INEC'S TECHNOLOGY



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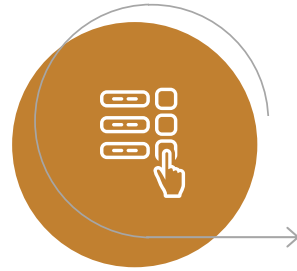
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SARAH EKE

KEY TERMINOLOGIES



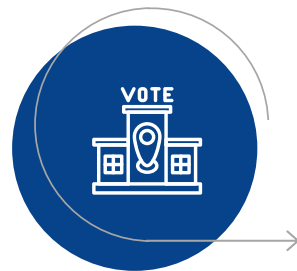
POLLING UNIT

A polling unit is a place, enclosure, booth, shade or house at which voting takes place.



FORM EC8A

Form used by INEC to record results at the polling unit level.



WARD (REGISTRATION AREA)

A Ward is an administrative unit within a local government that serves as a sub-division for electoral purposes. It is composed of several polling units.



FORM EC8B

Form used by INEC to collate polling unit results at the ward level.



LGA

Local Government Areas



FORM EC8C

Form used to collate ward results at the LGA level.



BVAS

Bimodal Voter Accreditation System



FORM EC40G

Form used to report cancelled results

KEY TERMINOLOGIES



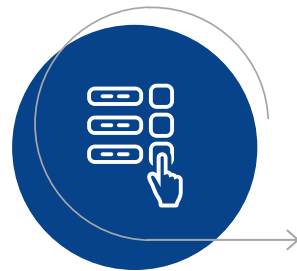
COLLATED RESULTS

Results from Polling units collated in form EC8B



INFLATED VOTES

When an electoral officer increases the total vote cast recorded in form EC8A



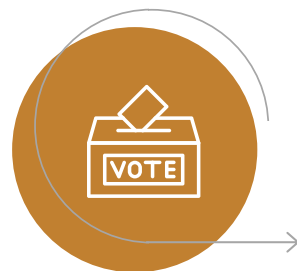
EXCLUDED PUS

Polling unit results that were not included in our analysis because they were not recorded in forms EC8A and EC8B either due to no election, cancelled election or illegibility of forms



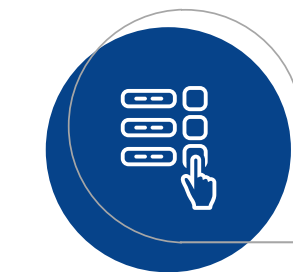
OVER-VOTING

Occurs when total votes cast exceed BVAS Machine accreditation.



VALID PUS

Polling Units results that were used in our analysis



TRANSFER OF OVERVOTING

Refers to cases where results with overvoting in EC8A were not cancelled by the collation officer and transferred to EC8B

SUMMARY

Athena Centre through a proprietary data analytical framework uncovered the following insights:



LACK OF TRANSPARENCY

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) denied access to EC40Gs and EC8Bs results for 12 wards in Edo State, raising concerns about the transparency of the electoral process



DISCREPANCIES IN VOTER ACCREDITATION

The huge difference between voter accreditation and EC8D accredited voters suggests possible manipulation of the BVAS.



INCIDENCE OF OVERVOTING

Despite the inflated accreditation figures, overvoting was identified in 186 polling units, further undermining the integrity of the process.



MANIPULATIONS AT WARD COLLATION CENTRE

This analysis revealed both vote inflation and vote reduction at Ward Collation Centre, highlighting systemic weaknesses in the result collation process and opportunities for electoral malpractice.



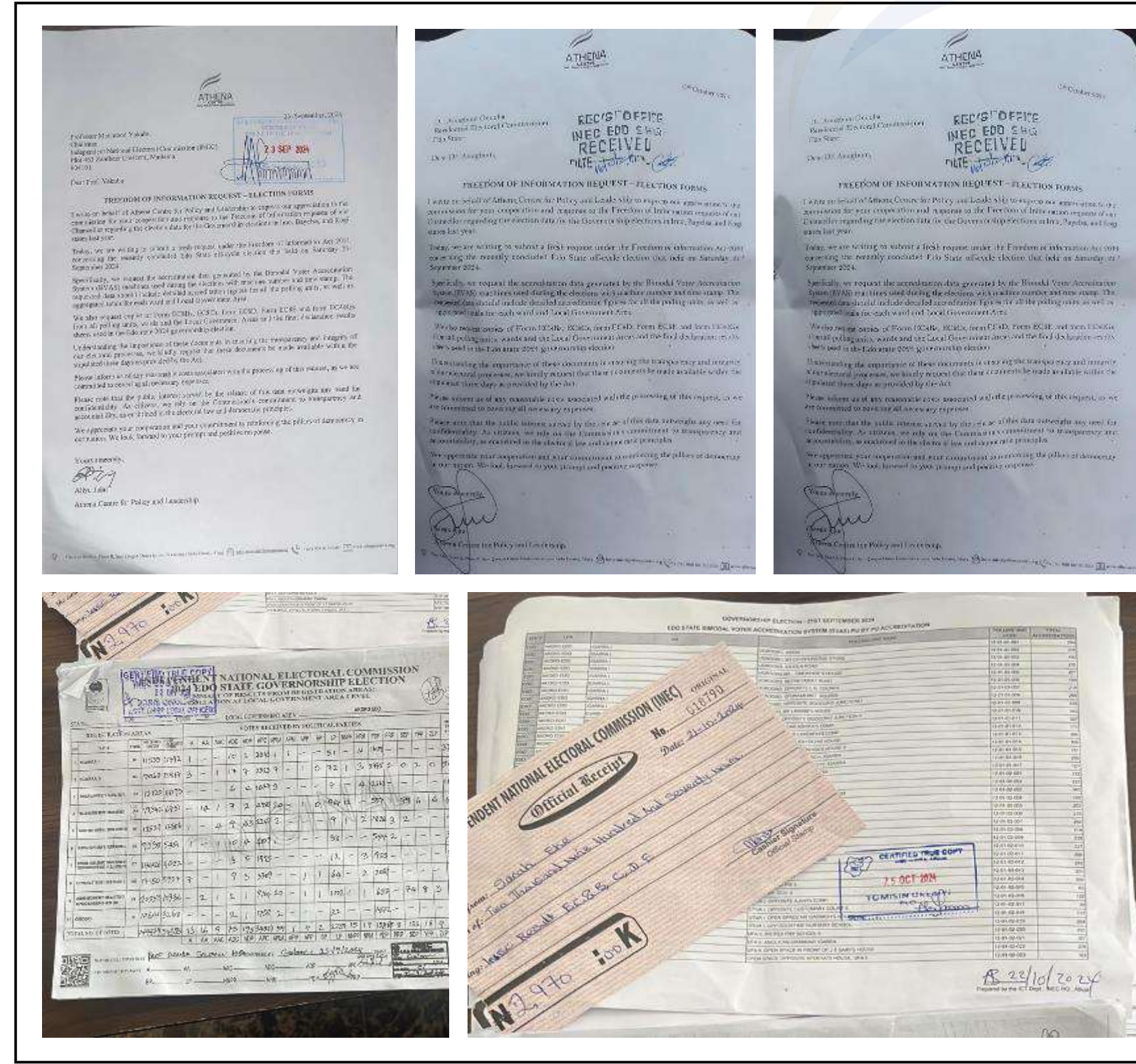
RESULT VIEWING PORTAL

BVAS accreditation record was not transmitted to INEC Result Viewing Portal (IReV)

METHODOLOGY

DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

- ▶▶▶ We downloaded results from IReV website and analysed with a proprietary tool
- ▶▶▶ We made a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to INEC on 23rd September 2024 and 15th October 2024 requesting form EC8B, EC8C, EC8D, EC8E and EC40G
- ▶▶▶ INEC provided us with form EC8B, EC8C, EC8D and BVAS generated Report
- ▶▶▶ In collecting data, we used a 2-step verification process, and a quality assurance team performed further checks to ensure data integrity.



EDO STATE AT A GLANCE



18

LGAs (Local Government Areas)



192

WARDS (Registration Areas)



4519

Polling Units



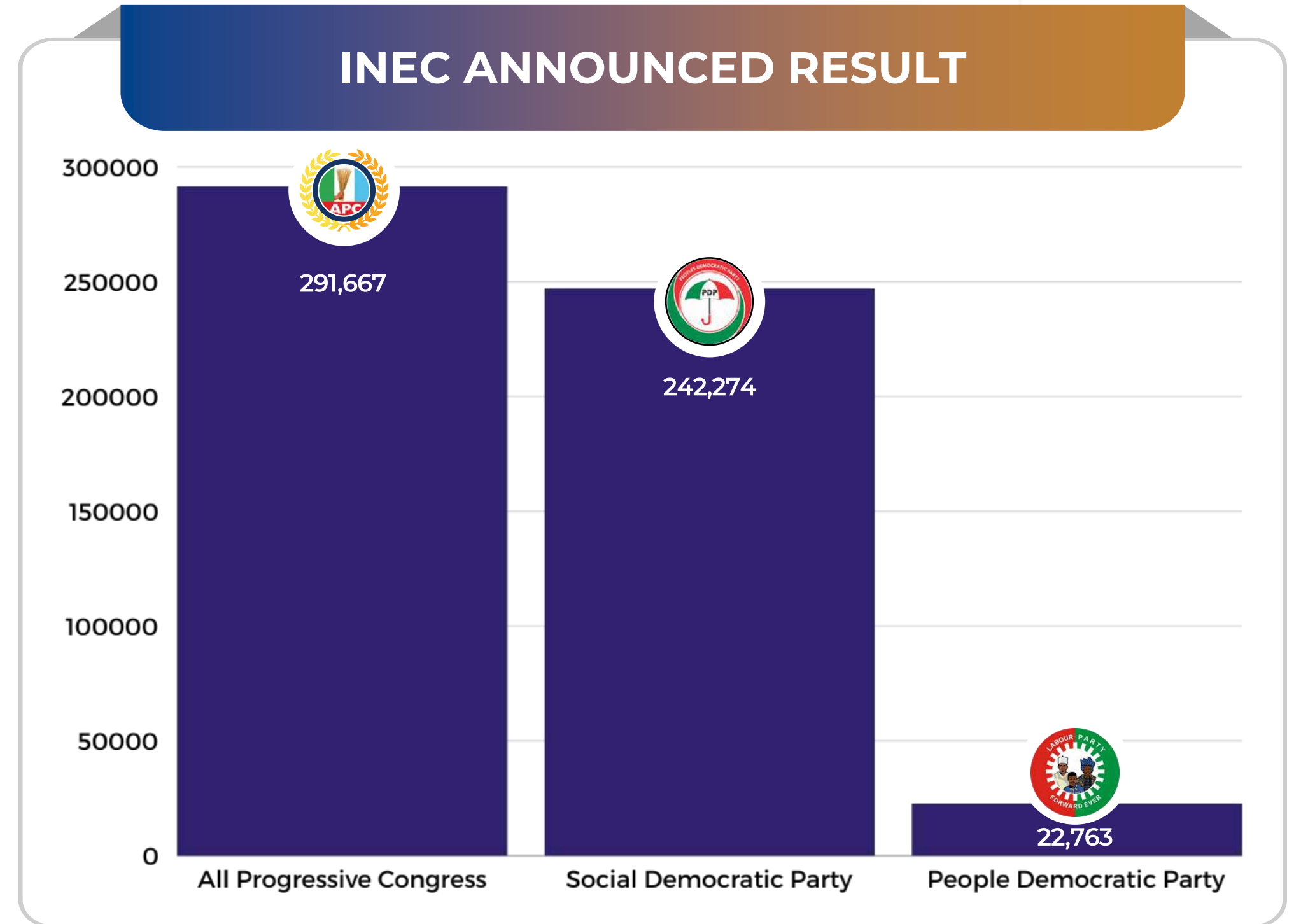
2,629,025

Registered Voters

2024 EDO ELECTION RESULT AS ANNOUNCED BY INEC



SEN. MONDAY OKPEBHOLO
DECLARED WINNER



EDO 2024 ELECTION – AVAILABLE DATA

HIGH COMPLIANCE BY INEC PRESIDING OFFICERS WITH IReV website UPLOADS ENHANCED RESULT VISIBILITY.
(98.8% RESULTS UPLOADED TO INEC RESULT VIEWING PORTAL)




4,466 polling units
 uploaded to IReV website

4410 PUs Were valid

109 Excluded PUs

- **53 PUs** not uploaded to IReV
- **36 PUs** cancelled results
- **14 PUs** with Illegible results
- **4 PUs** results with no votes
- 1 EC 60 E
- 1 EC 25 E



4,519 TOTAL
POLLING UNITS
192 WARDS



180 Wards given to us by
 INEC (4156 Polling Units)

363 PUs not given to us by INEC

Of the 4156 given to us, 3992 PUs are valid

164 Excluded PUs

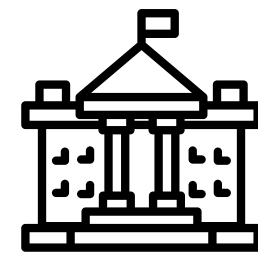
- **10 PUs** recorded as cancelled
- **153 PUs** not accounted for
- **1 PU** with an illegible result

EDO 2024 ELECTION - LIMITATIONS



The challenge with obtaining CTC of election result highlights transparency gap (results of 363 polling units in 12 wards were not given to us)

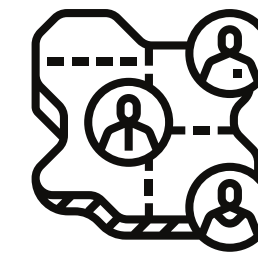
A TOTAL OF 210,209 REGISTERED VOTERS AFFECTED IN THE 363 POLLING UNITS INEC DIDN'T RELEASE TO US



12 WARDS NOT RELEASED BY INEC

11 Wards from Etsako West (284 PUs)

1 Ward from Ikpoba/Okha (77 PUs)



GAVE EC40G FOR ONLY 6 POLLING UNITS

3 polling units in Akoko Edo and

3 polling units in Ikpoba/Okha

EDO 2024 ELECTION – KEY DATA FROM INEC

DISCREPANCY BETWEEN BVAS VOTERS ACCREDITATION FIGURES AND EC8D VOTER ACCREDITATION SUGGESTS POSSIBLE INCIDENCE OF TAMPERING OF THE BVAS



687,427

Certified True Copy BVAS Generated Report
(From INEC Certified BVAS Machine Generated Report)



580,616

EC8A ACCREDITED VOTERS (Downloaded from INEC Result Viewing Portal – IReV website)



541,283

EC8B ACCREDITED VOTERS (From INEC Certified EC8B forms)



604,123

EC8D ACCREDITED VOTERS (From INEC Certified EC8D Form)



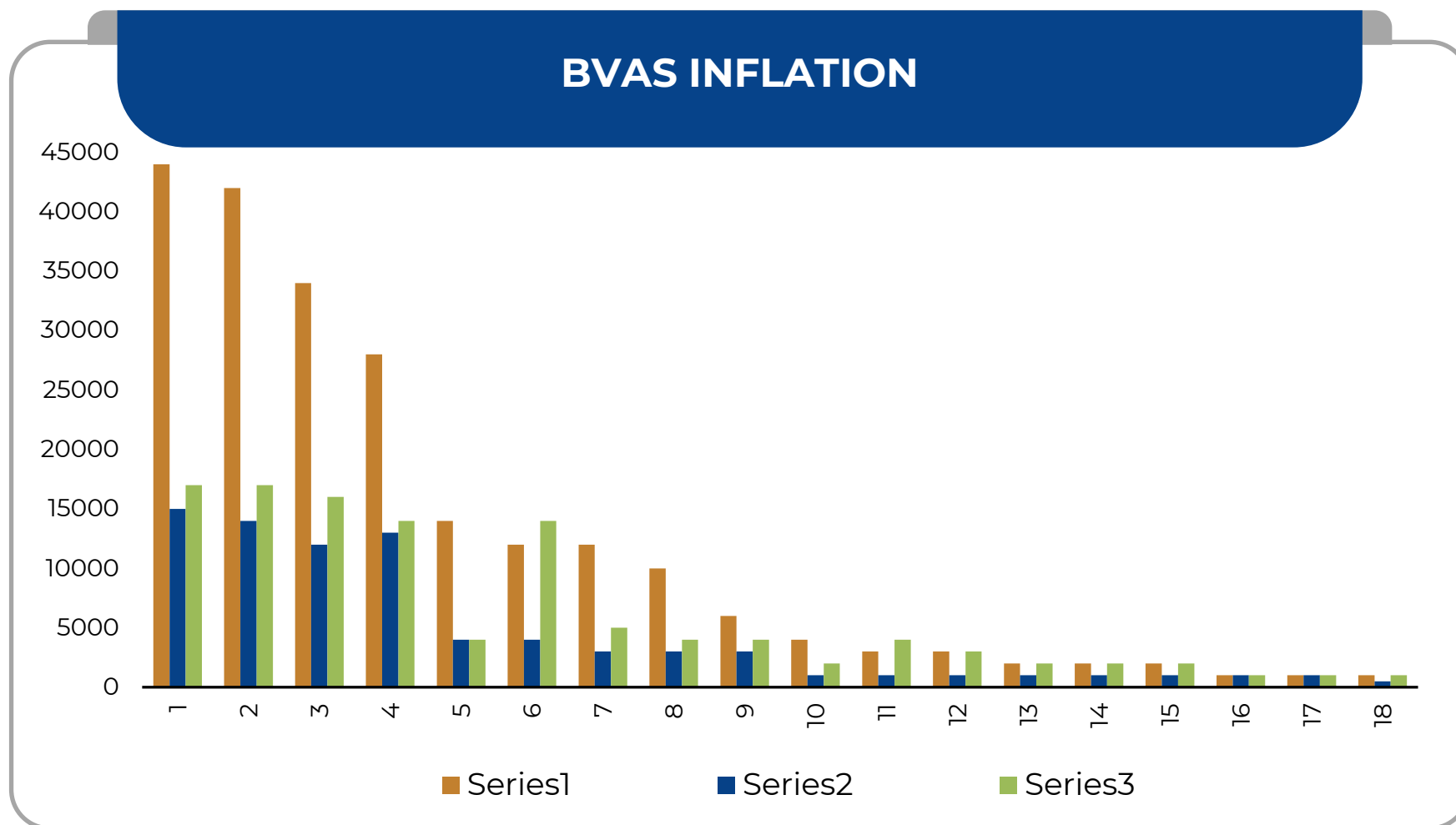
577,586

Used Ballot Papers (downloaded from INEC Result Viewing Portal)

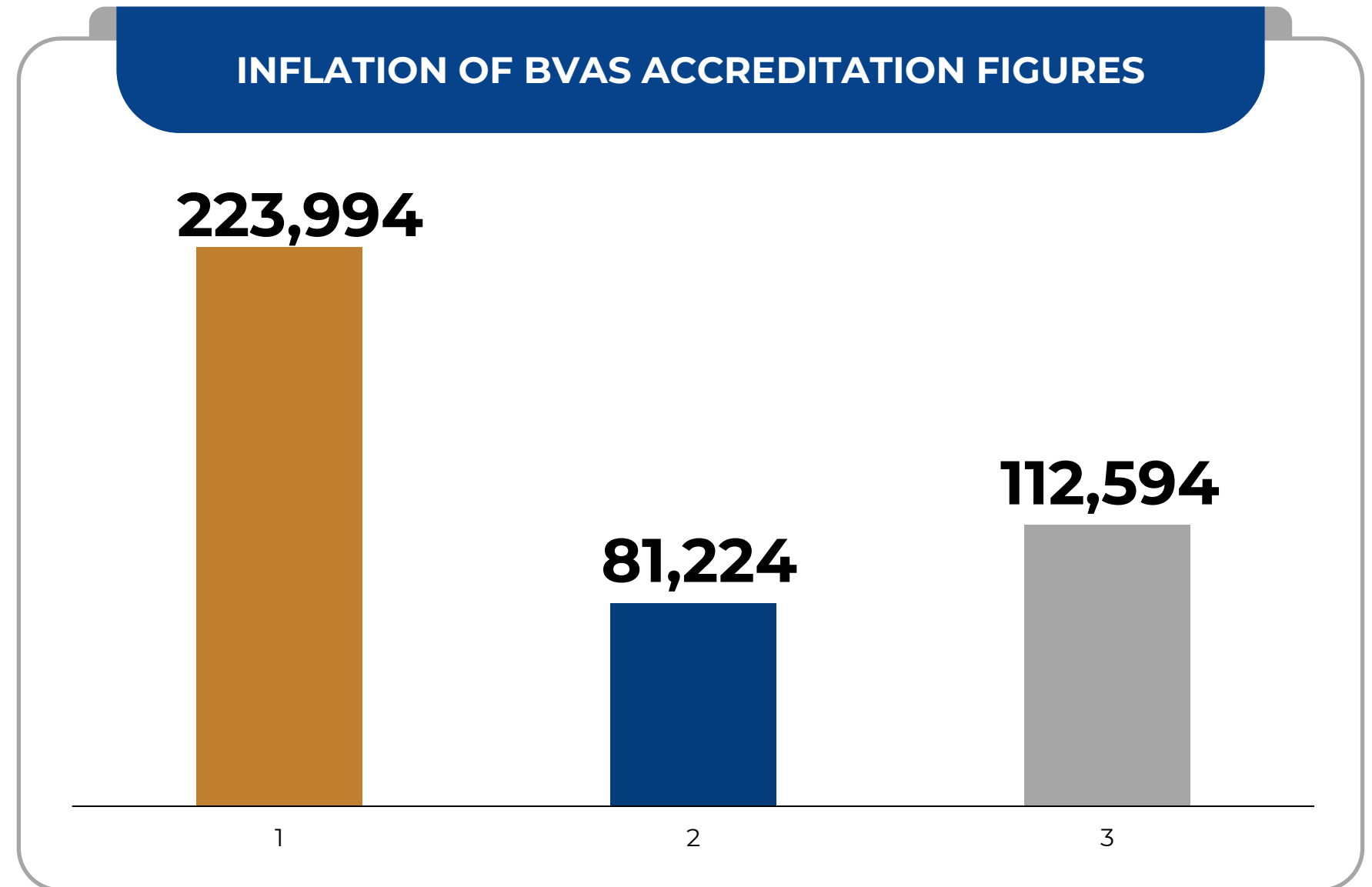
EDO 2024 ELECTION – ATHENA INSIGHTS 1

INFLATION OF NUMBER OF ACCREDITED VOTERS HIGHLIGHTS BVAS VULNERABILITIES QUESTIONING ITS CREDIBILITY IN ELECTIONS

794 Polling Units with Inflated BVAS Record



INFLATION OF BVAS ACCREDITATION FIGURES

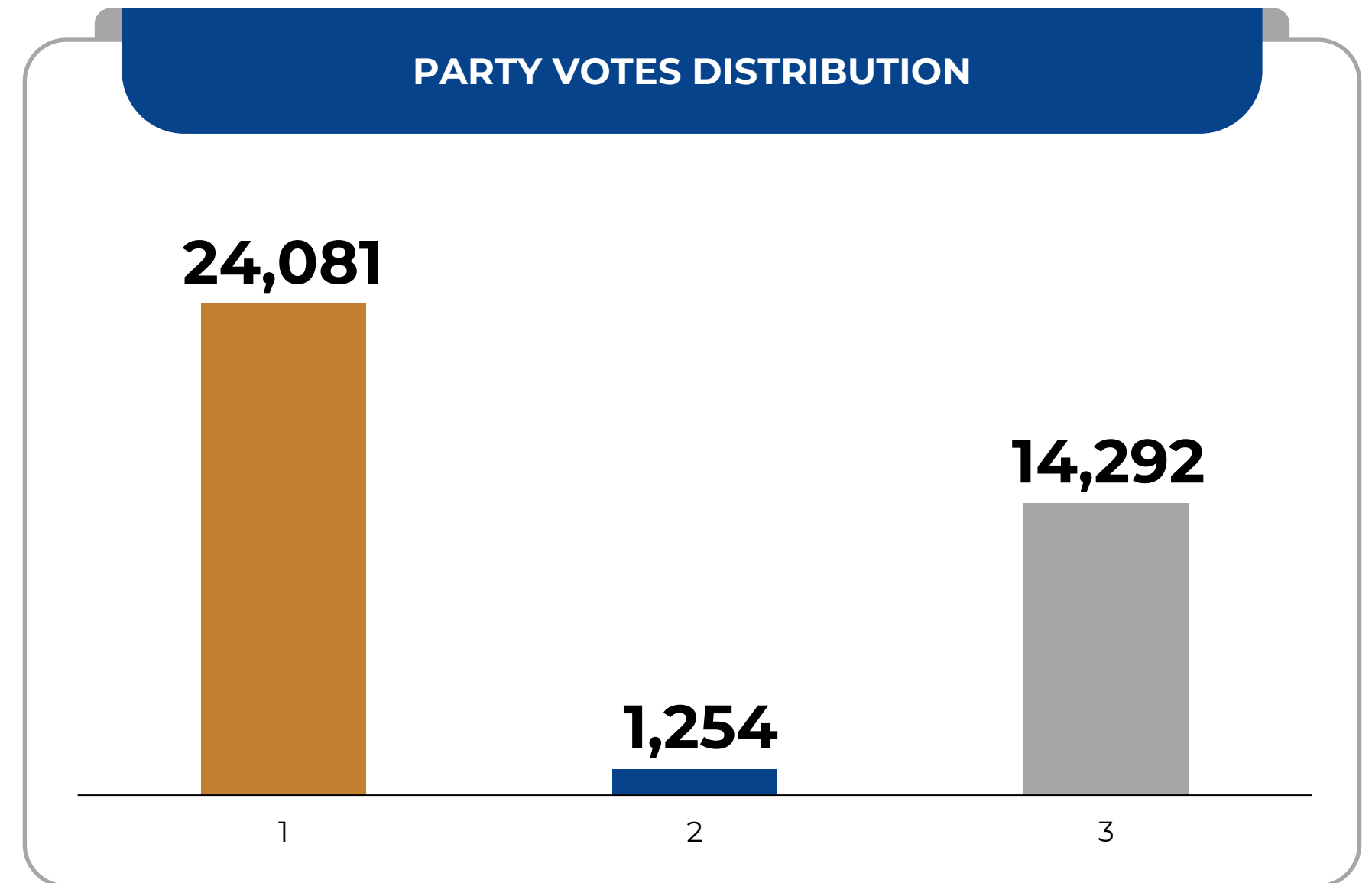
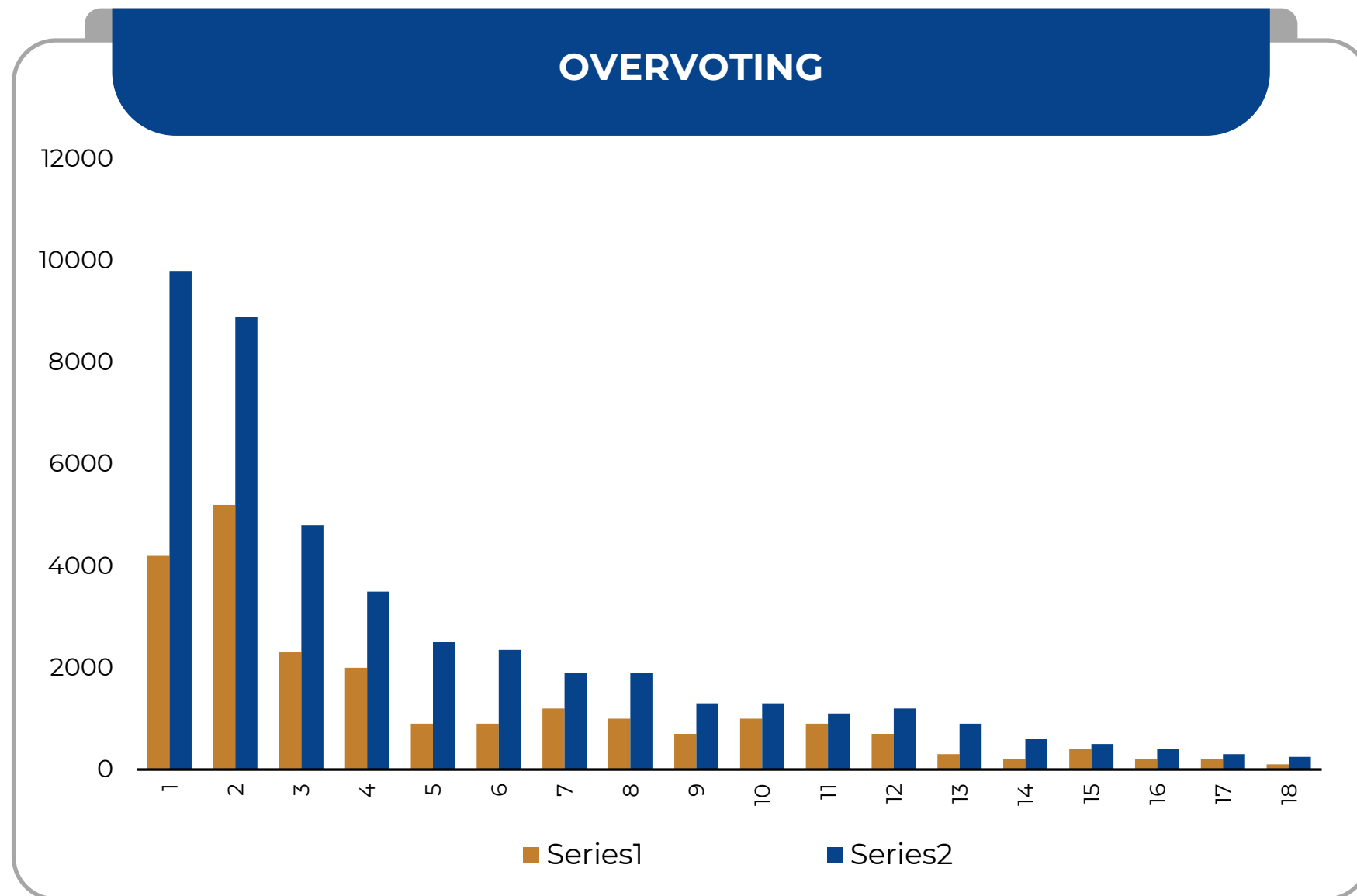


*In arriving at this number of polling units, we have allowed tolerance of 5 votes to account for human error.

According to the Electoral Act, 2022, section 51 (2), “where the number of votes cast at an election in any polling unit exceeds the number of accredited voters in that polling unit, the Presiding officer shall cancel the result of the election in that polling unit.”

EDO 2024 ELECTION – ATHENA INSIGHTS 2

DESPITE THE INFLATION OF BVAS ACCREDITATION FIGURES, WE IDENTIFIED OVERVOTING IN 186 POLLING UNITS

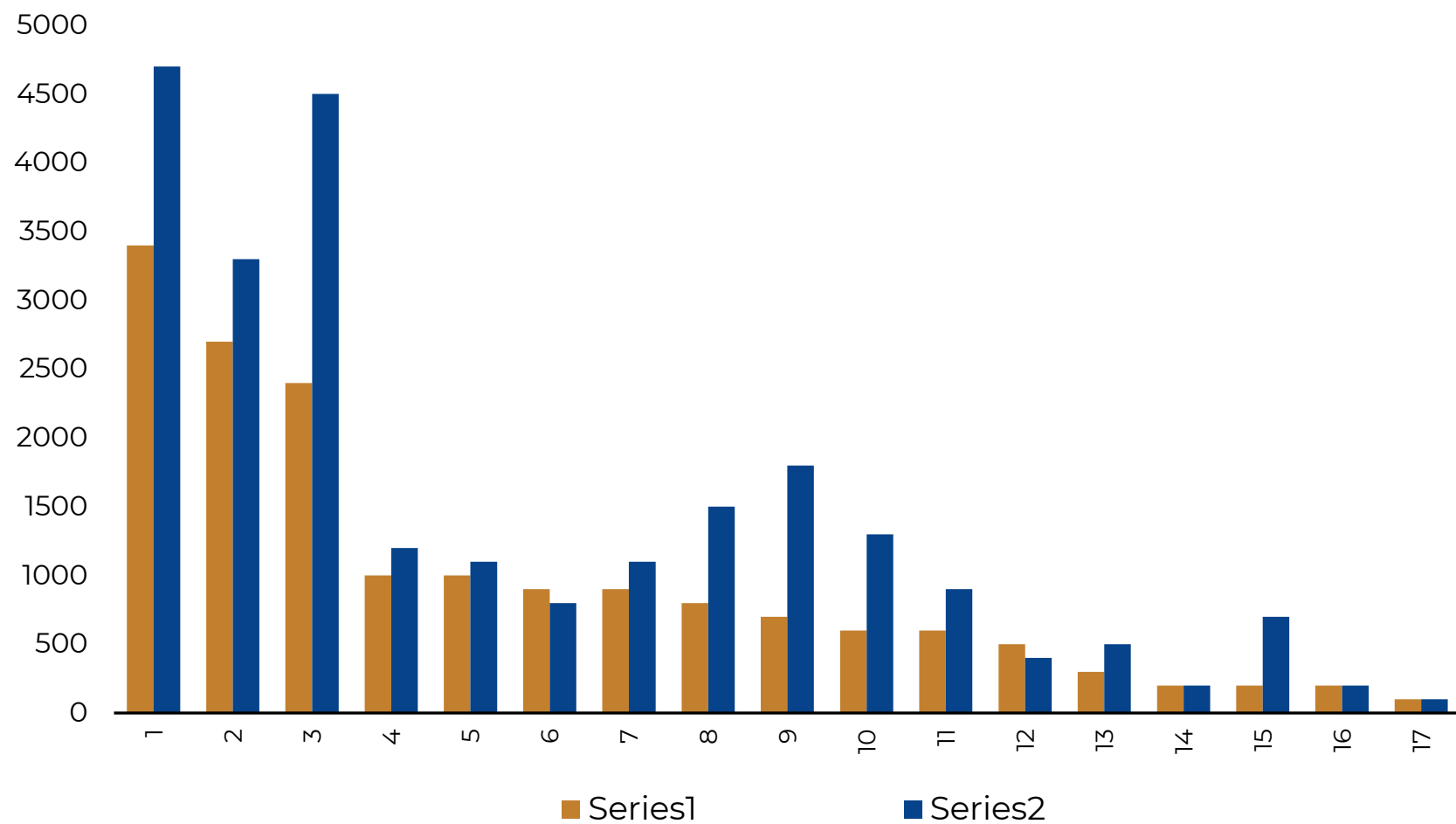


*In arriving at this number of polling units, we have allowed tolerance of 5 votes to account for human error. According to the Electoral Act, 2022, section 51 (2), “where the number of votes cast at an election in any polling unit exceeds the number of accredited voters in that polling unit, the Presiding officer shall cancel the result of the election in that polling unit.”

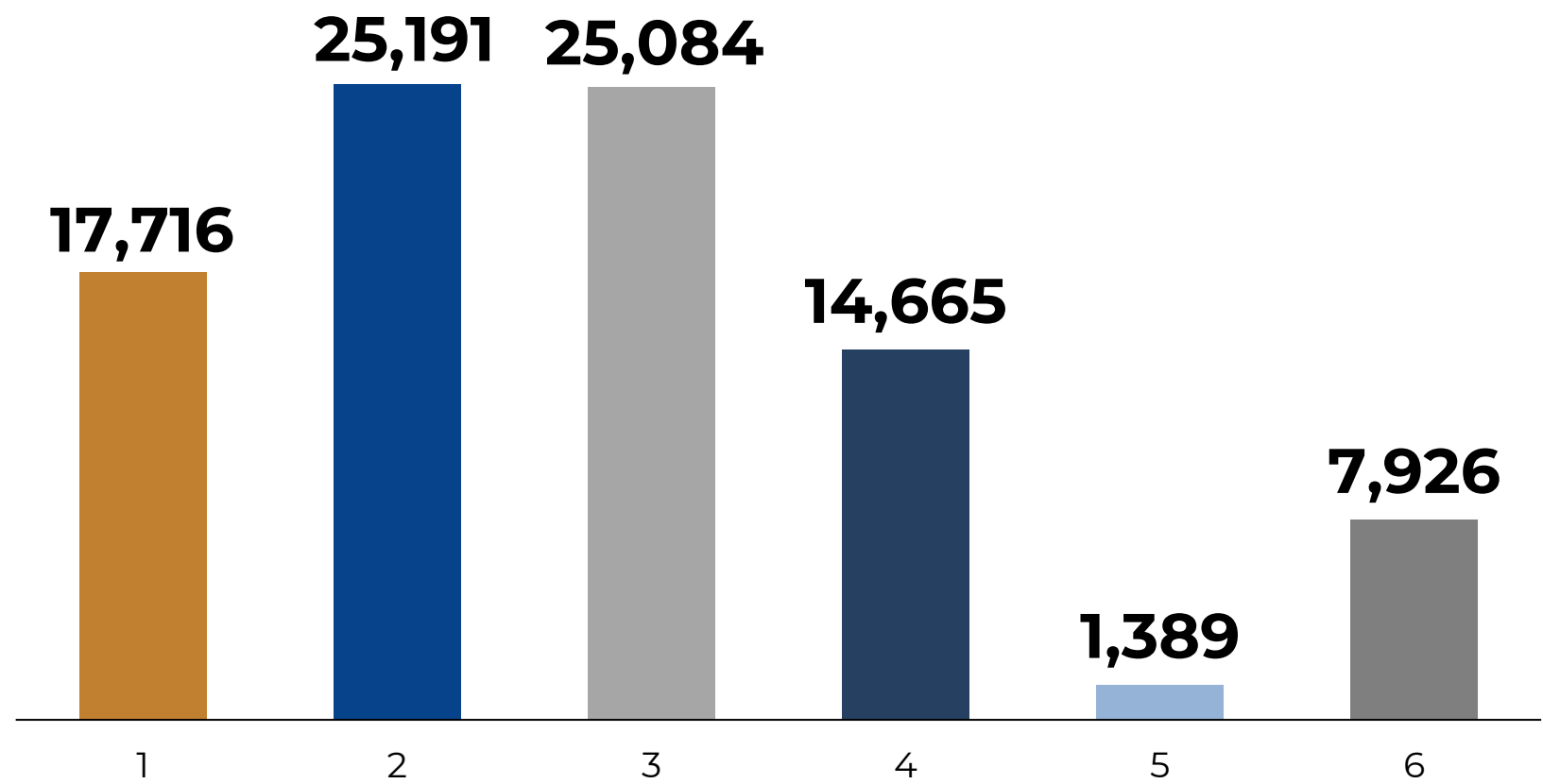
EDO 2024 ELECTION – ATHENA INSIGHTS 3

RESULTS FROM 140 PUs (75%) OF THE 186 PUS WITH OVERVOTING WERE TRANSFERRED TO FORM EC8B

TRANSFERRED OVERVOTING BY LGA



TRANSFERRED OVERVOTING

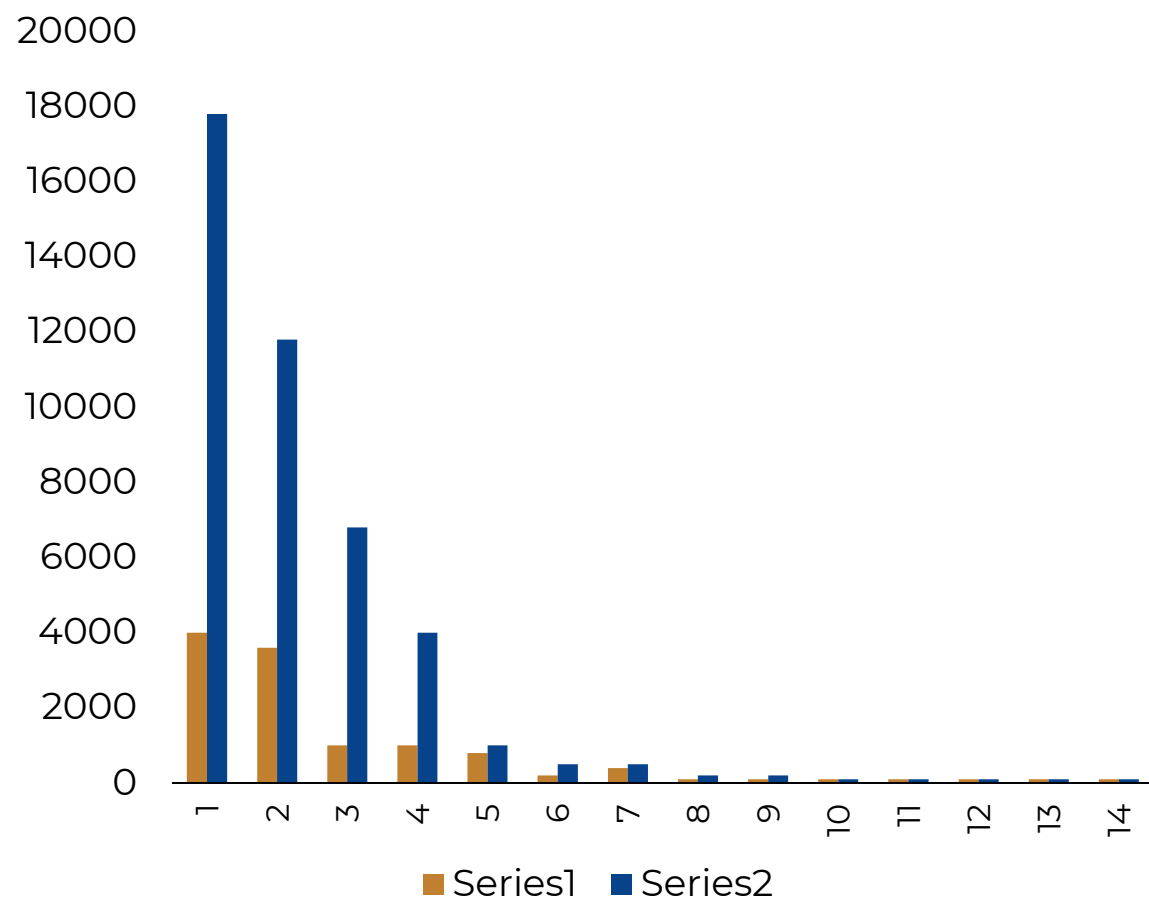


EDO 2024 ELECTION – ATHENA INSIGHTS 4

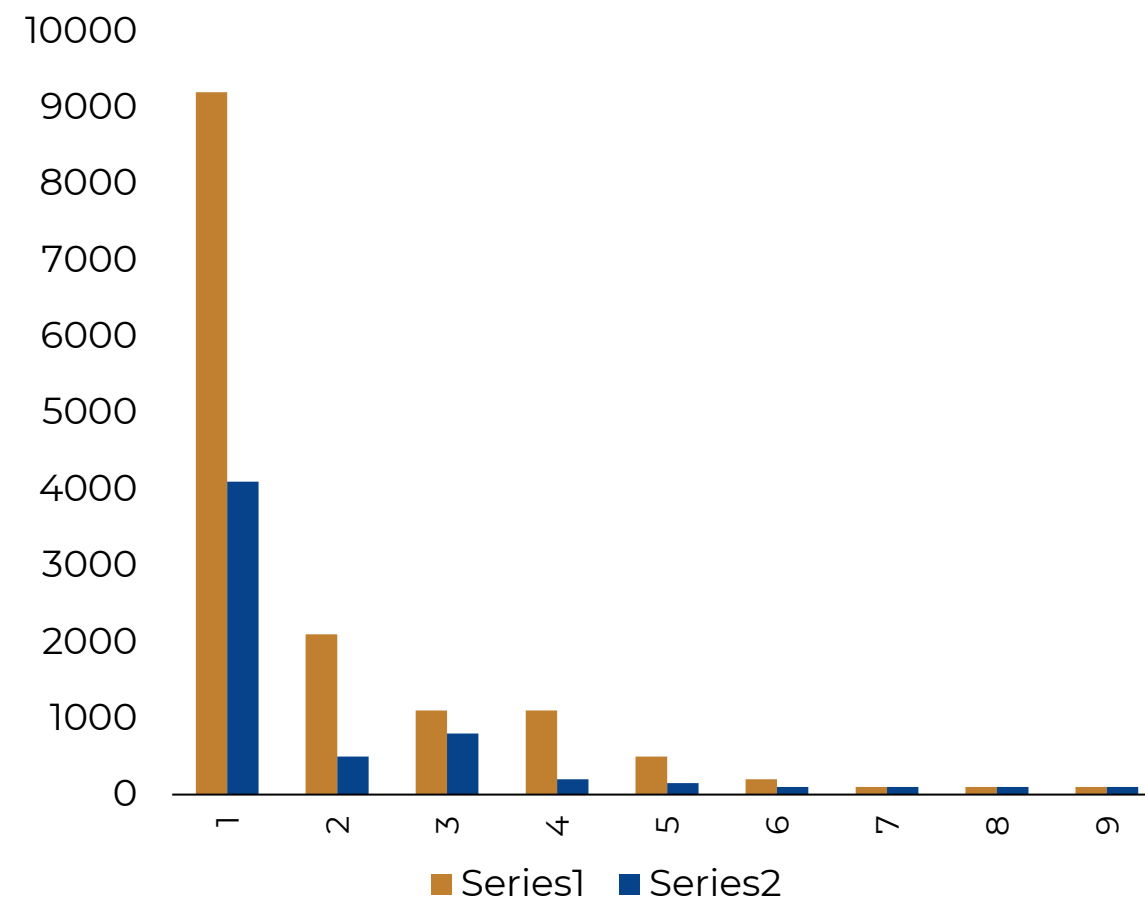
VOTE INFLATION AT WARD COLLATION CENTRES HIGHLIGHTS VULNERABILITIES IN THE COLLATION PROCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ELECTORAL MALPRACTICE

We observed the addition of **32,284 votes over what was recorded in form EC8A for APC in 328 polling units**. We also observed a **reduction of PDP votes in 227 of the 328 polling units**.

328 POLLING UNITS WHERE APC VOTES WERE INFLATED



PDP VOTE REDUCTION IN 227 PUS WHERE APC VOTES WERE INFLATED



APC VOTE INFLATION



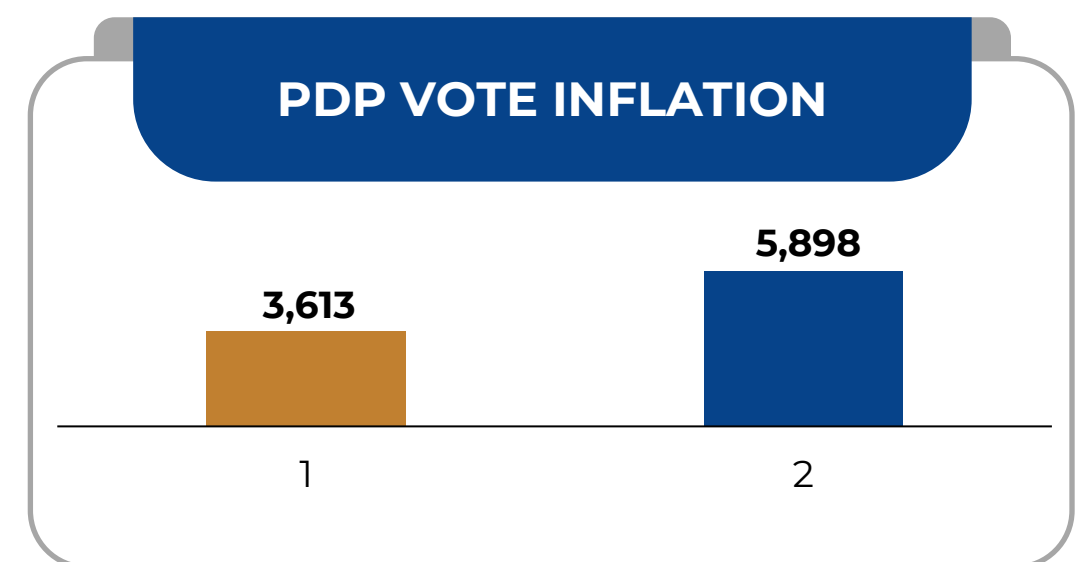
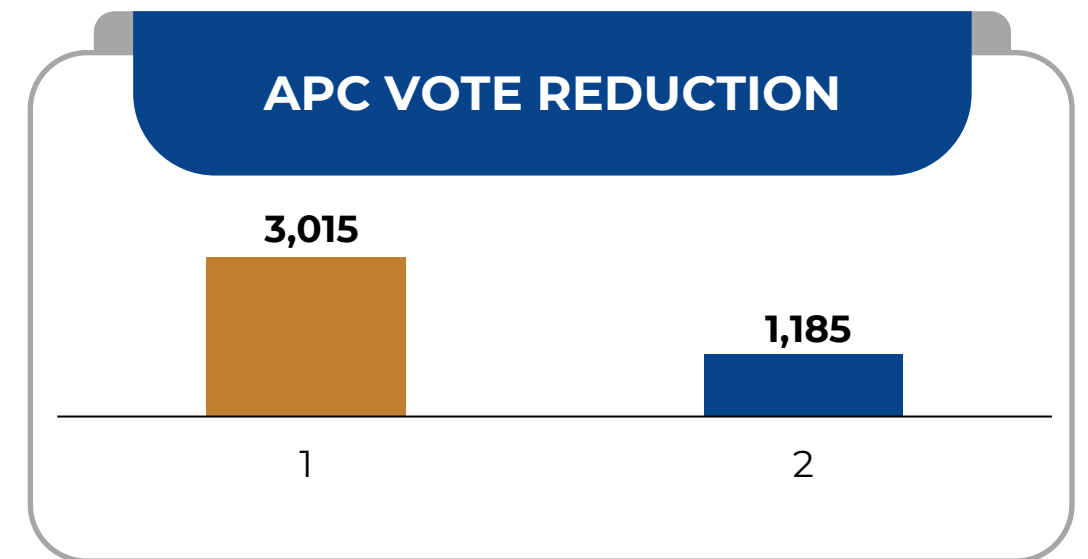
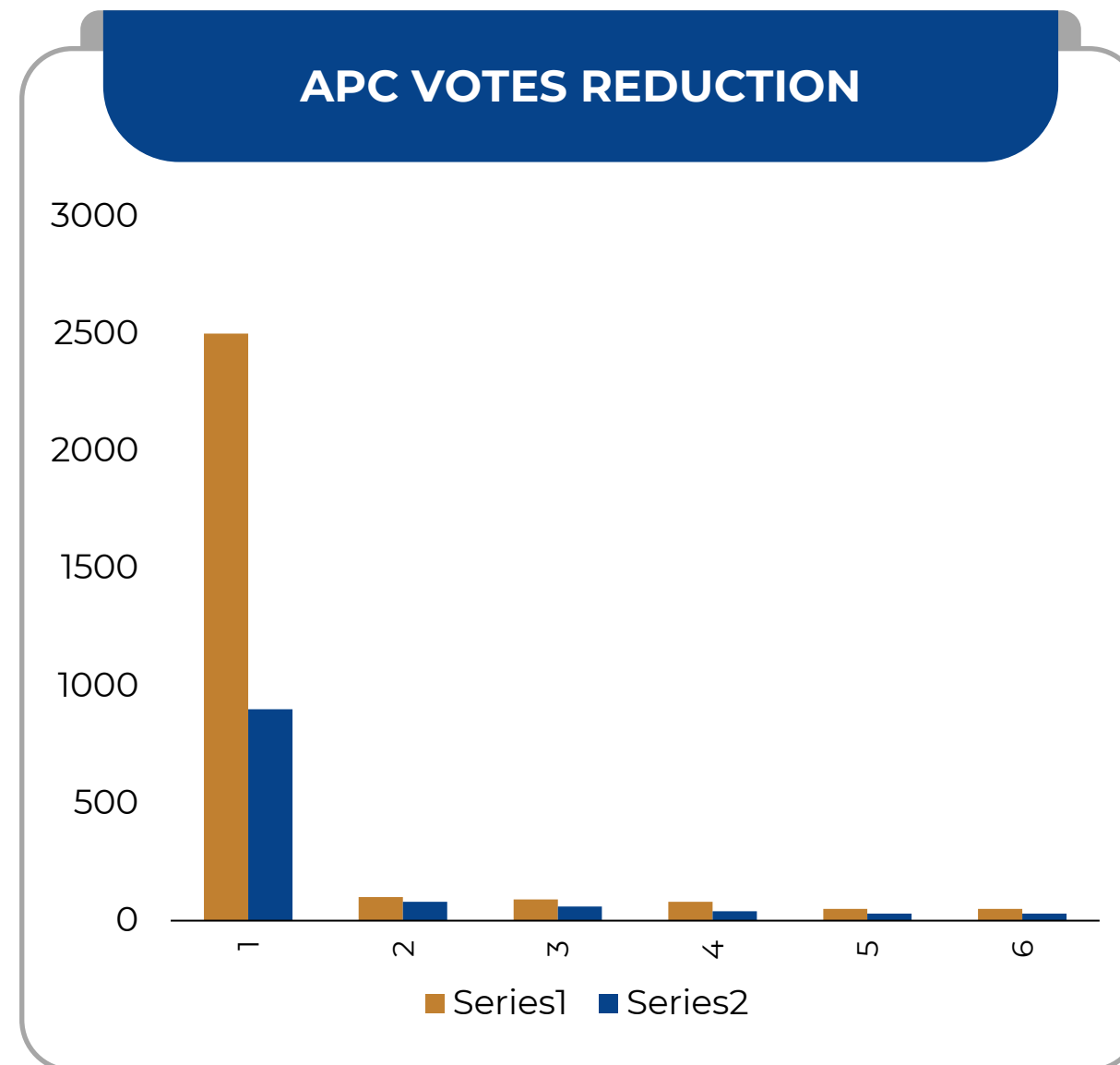
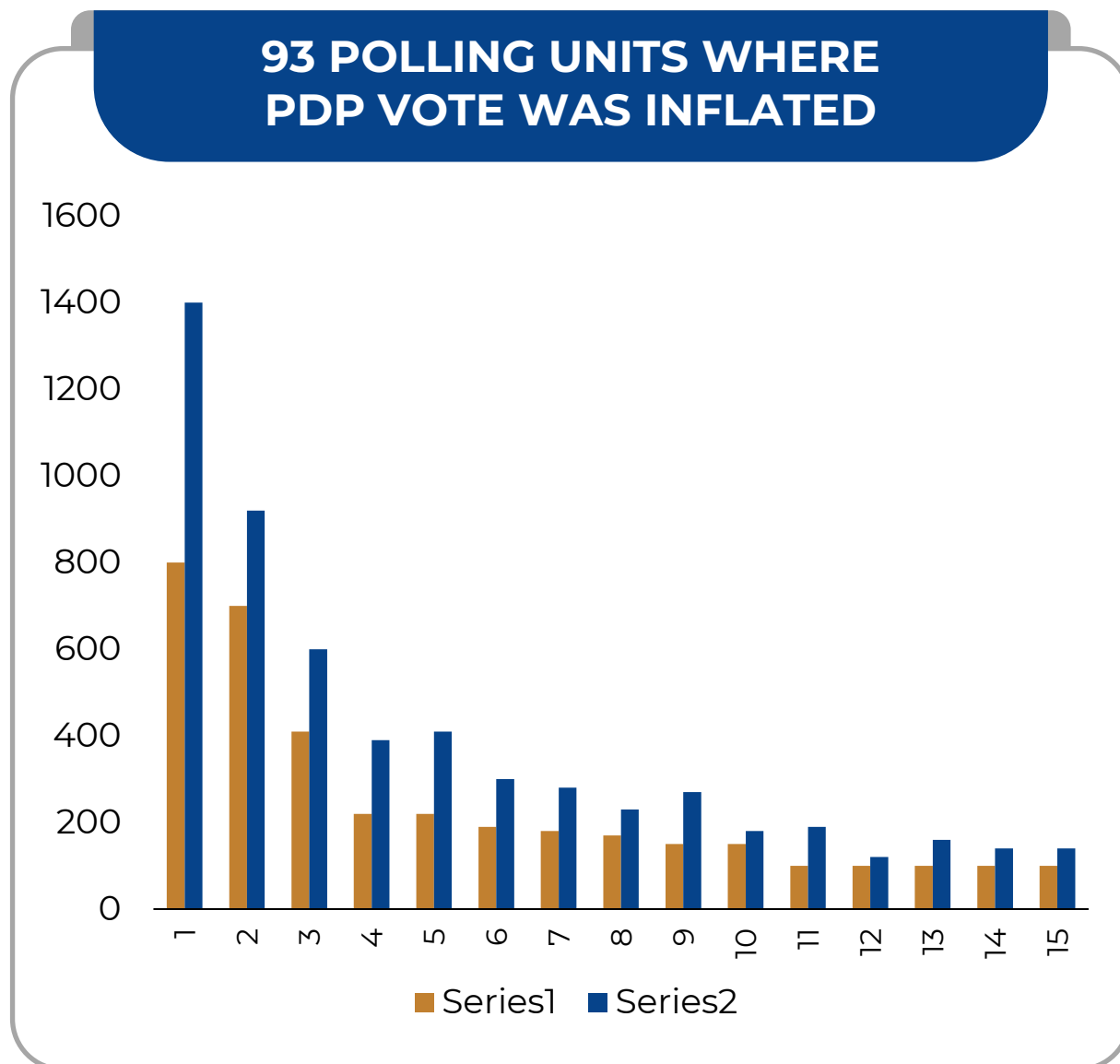
PDP VOTE REDUCTION



EDO 2024 ELECTION – ATHENA INSIGHTS 5

VOTE INFLATION AT WARD COLLATION CENTRES HIGHLIGHTS VULNERABILITIES IN THE COLLATION PROCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ELECTORAL MALPRACTICE

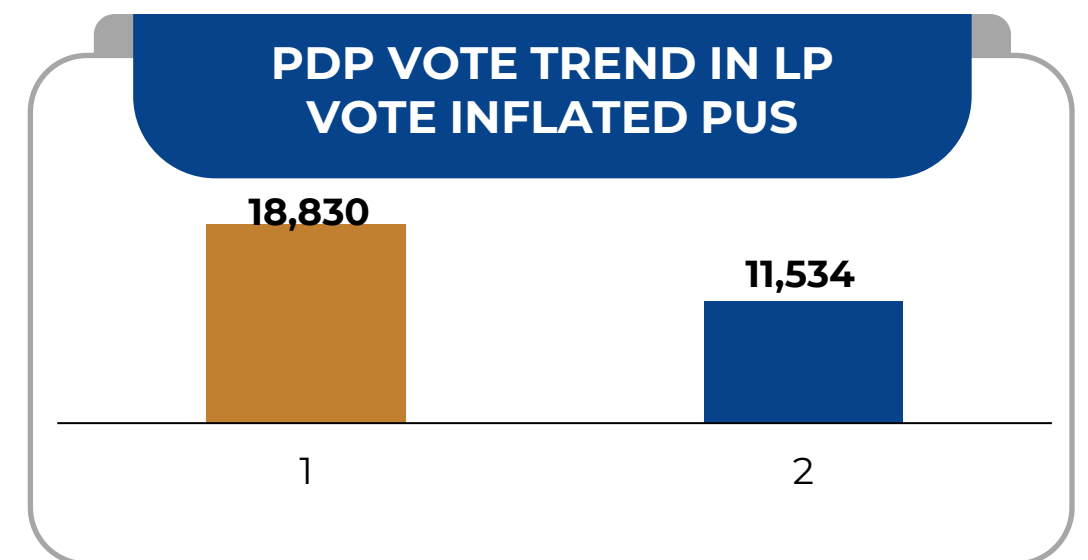
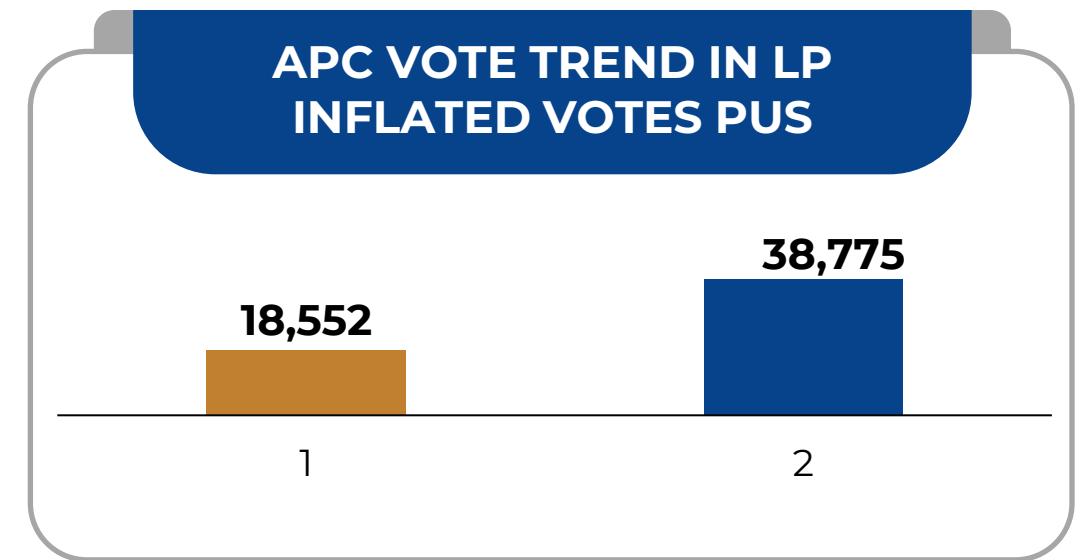
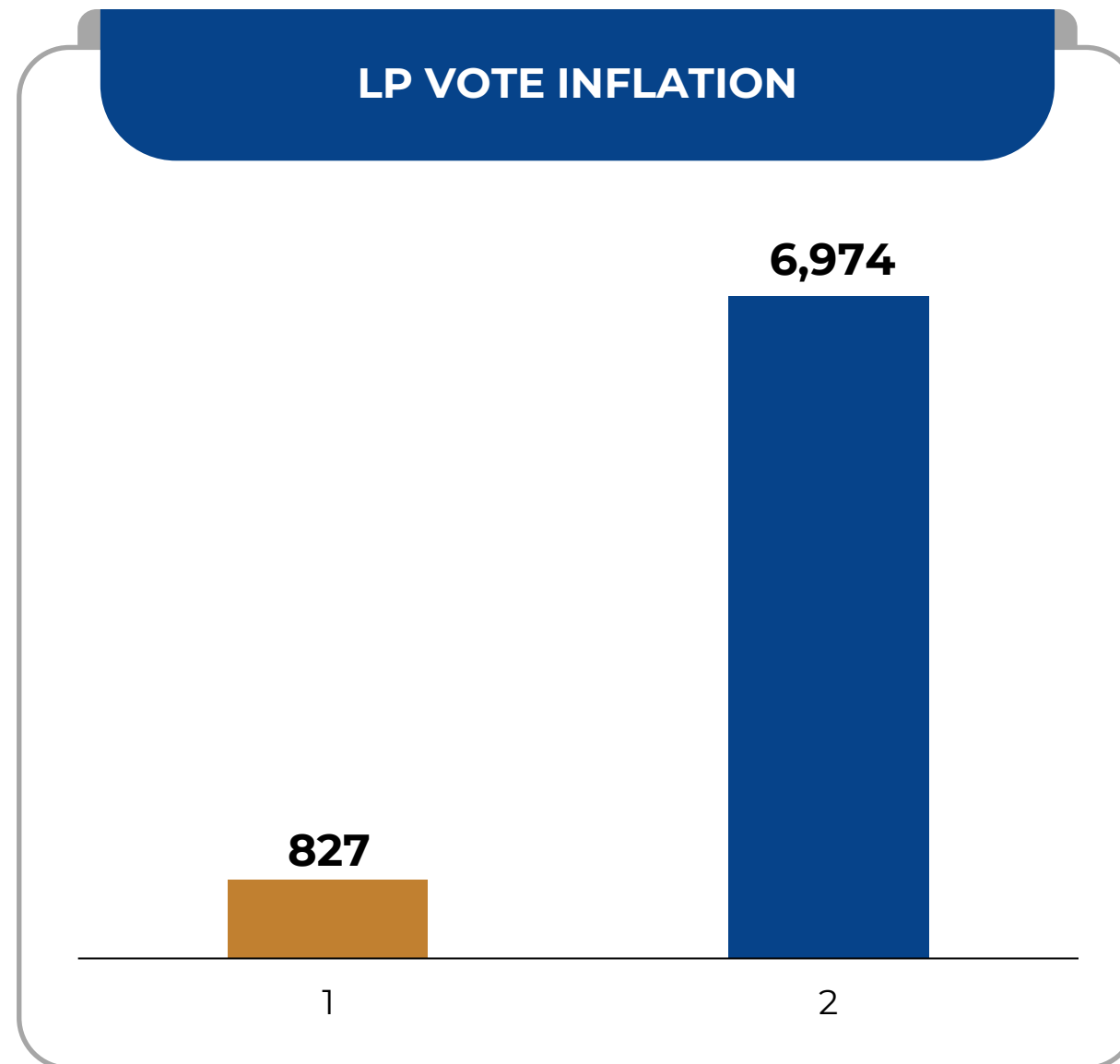
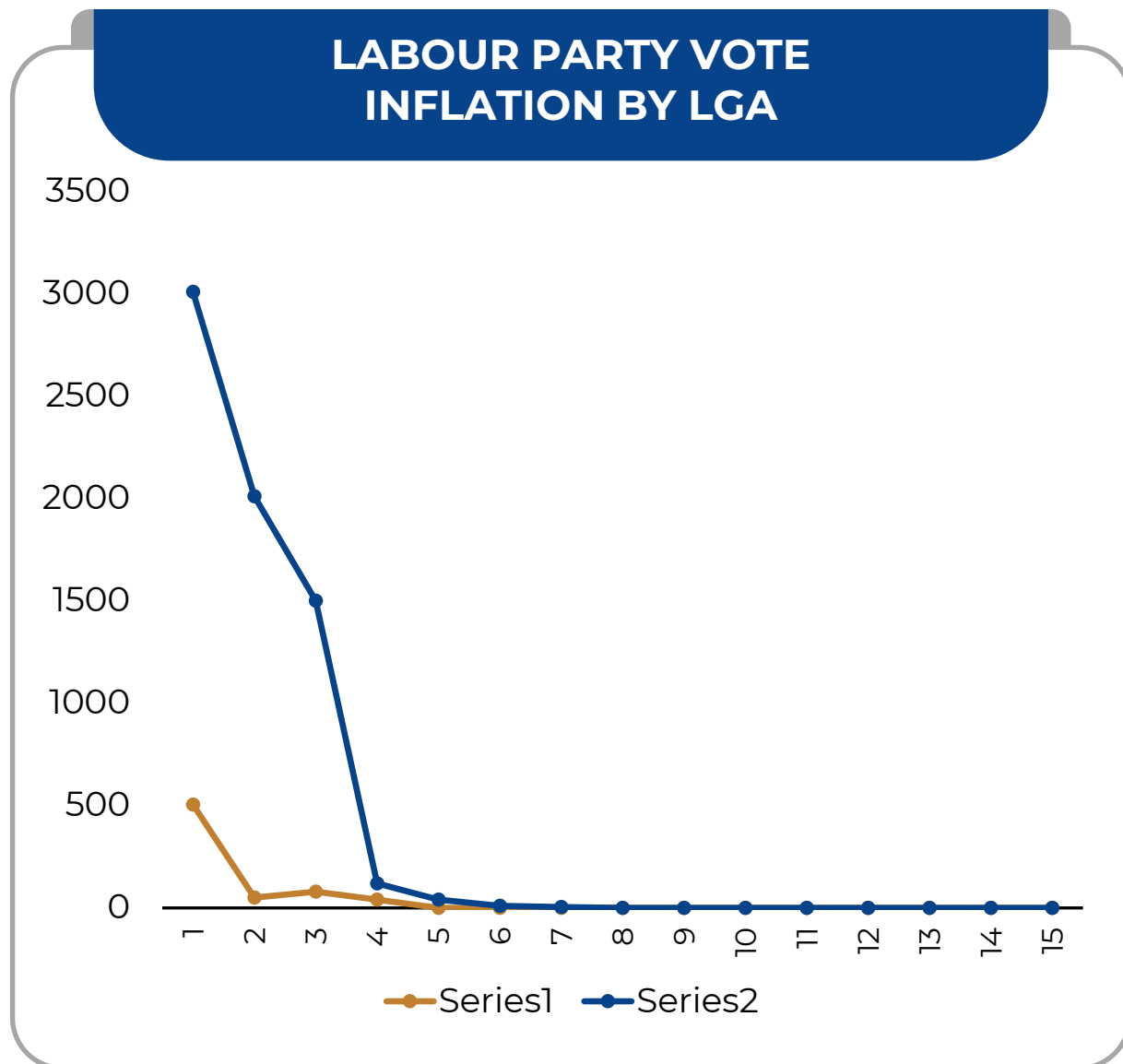
We observed the addition of **2,285 votes over what was recorded in form EC8A for PDP in 93 polling units.**
 We also observed **a reduction of APC votes in 15 of the 93 polling units.**



EDO 2024 ELECTION – ATHENA INSIGHTS 6

VOTE INFLATION AT WARD COLLATION CENTRES HIGHLIGHTS VULNERABILITIES IN THE COLLATION PROCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ELECTORAL MALPRACTICE

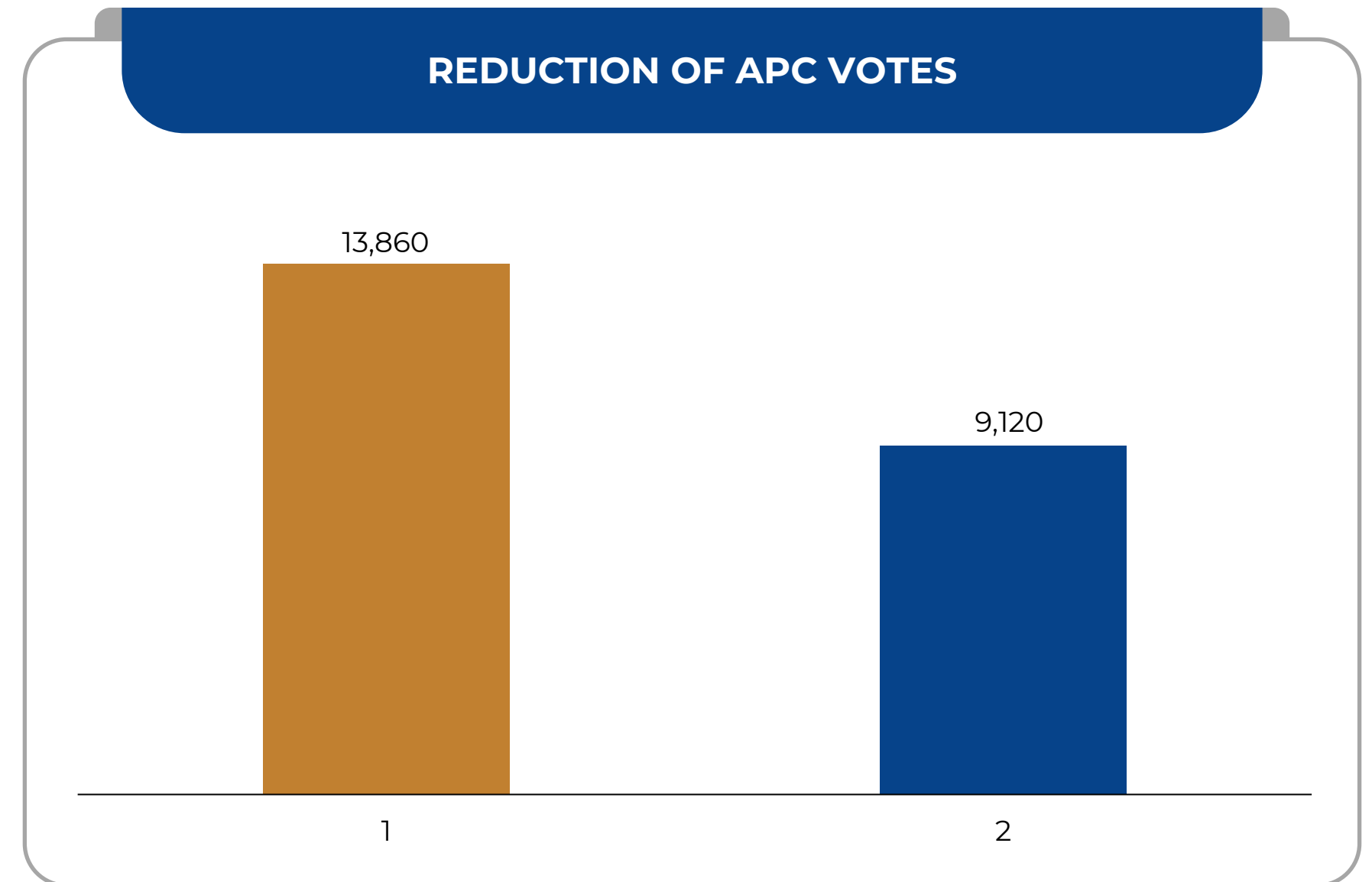
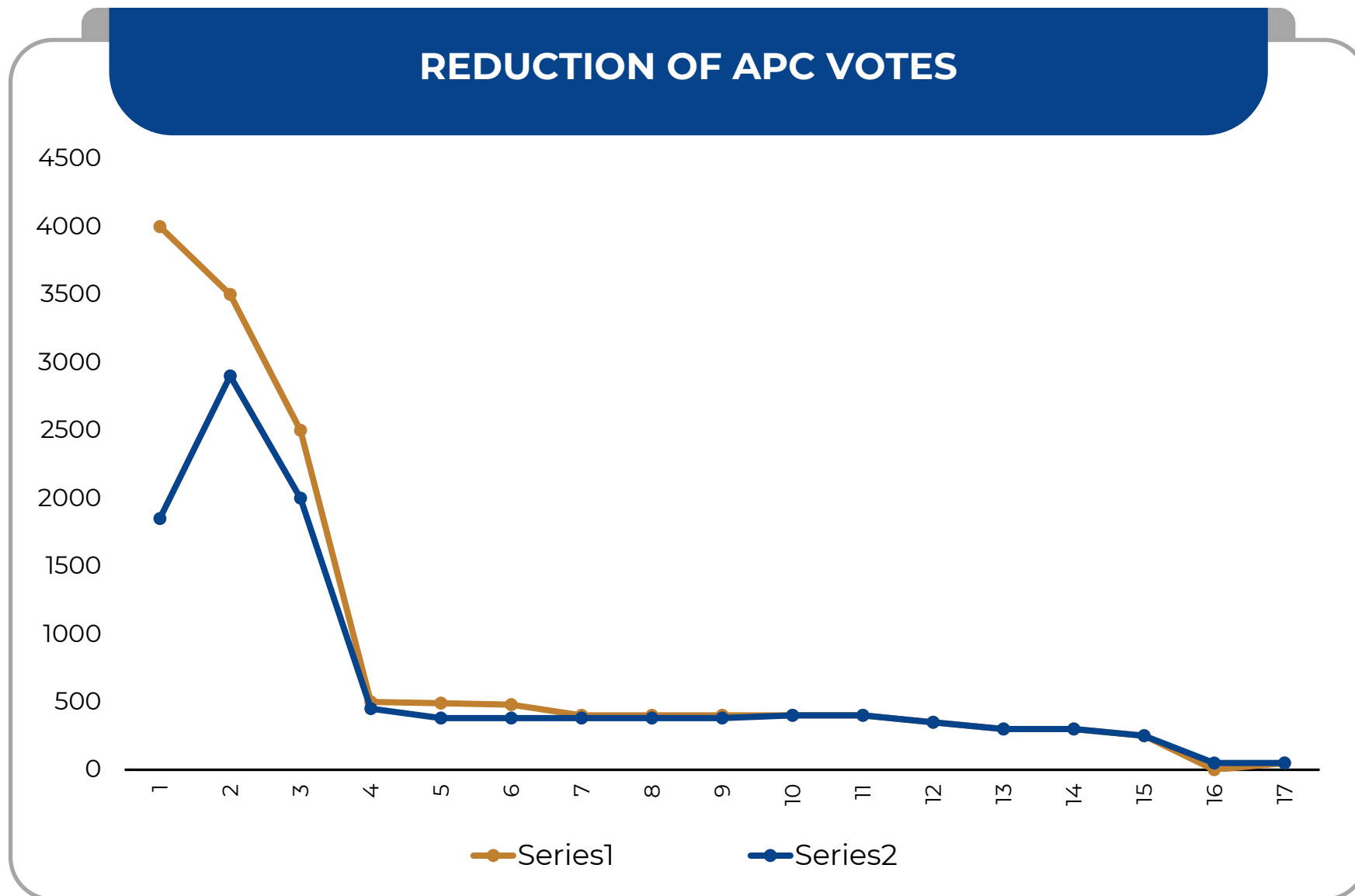
We observed the addition of **6,147 votes** over what was recorded in **form EC8A for LP in 290 polling units.**



EDO 2024 ELECTION – ATHENA INSIGHTS 7

VOTE INFLATION AT WARD COLLATION CENTRES HIGHLIGHTS VULNERABILITIES IN THE COLLATION PROCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ELECTORAL MALPRACTICE

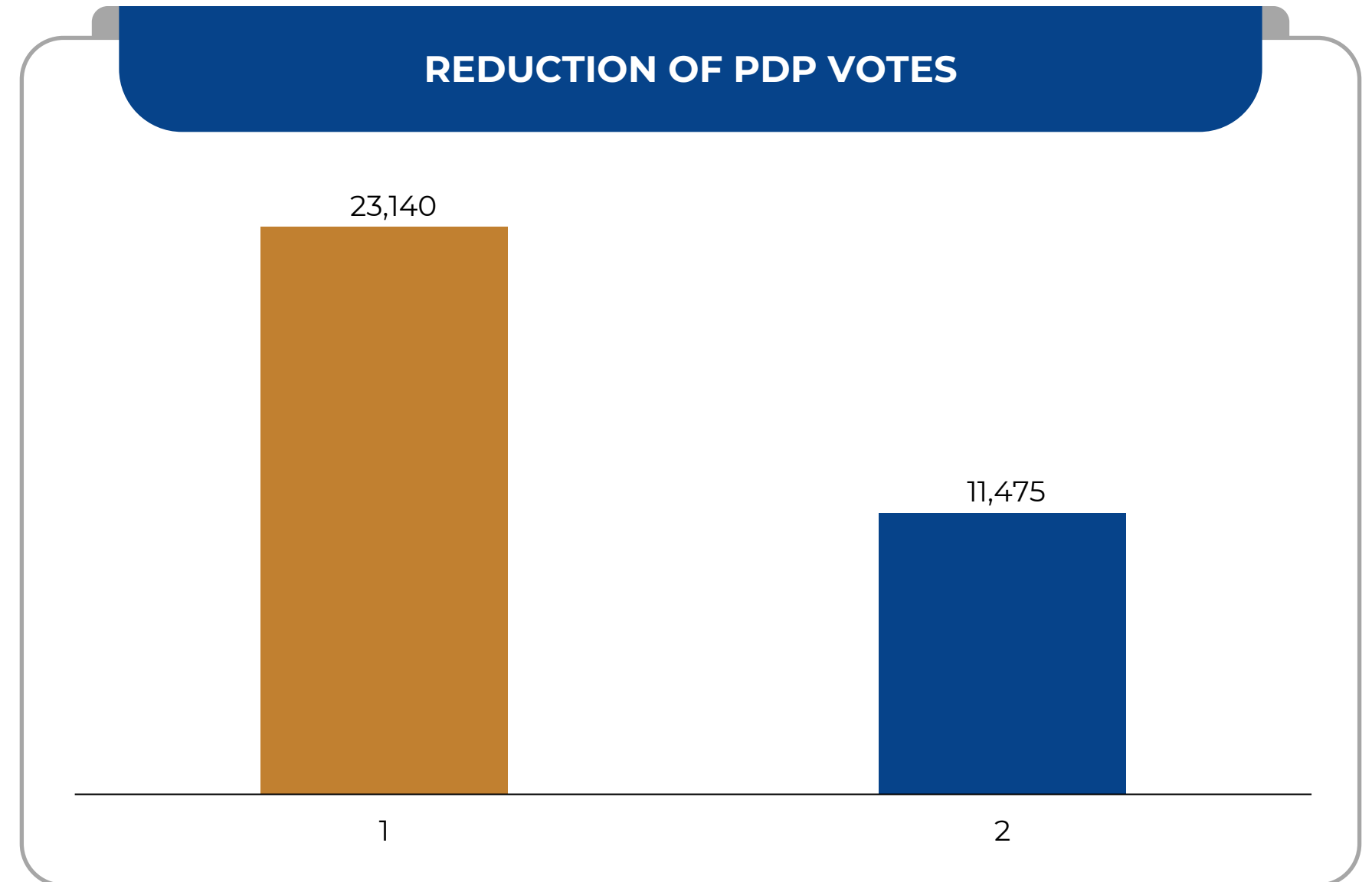
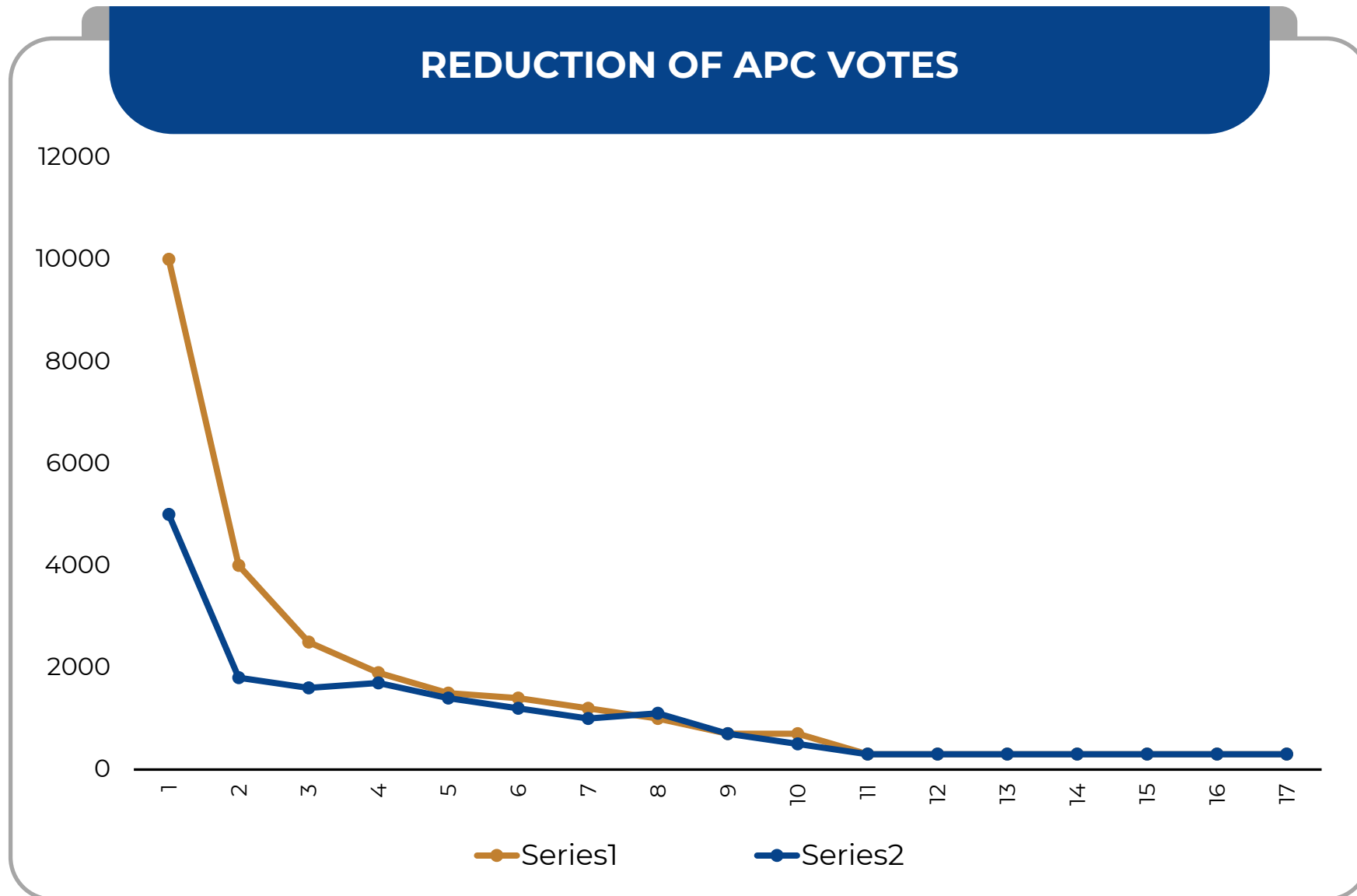
We observed the reduction of a total of **4,740 votes APC Votes in 106 Polling Units at the ward collation.**



EDO 2024 ELECTION – ATHENA INSIGHTS 8

VOTE REDUCTION AT WARD COLLATION CENTRES HIGHLIGHTS VULNERABILITIES IN THE COLLATION PROCESS & OPPORTUNITIES FOR ELECTORAL MALPRACTICE

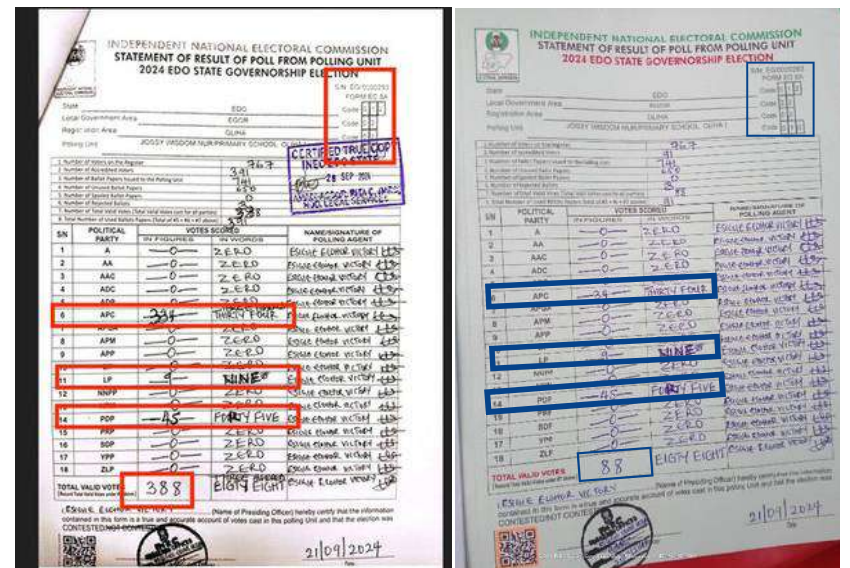
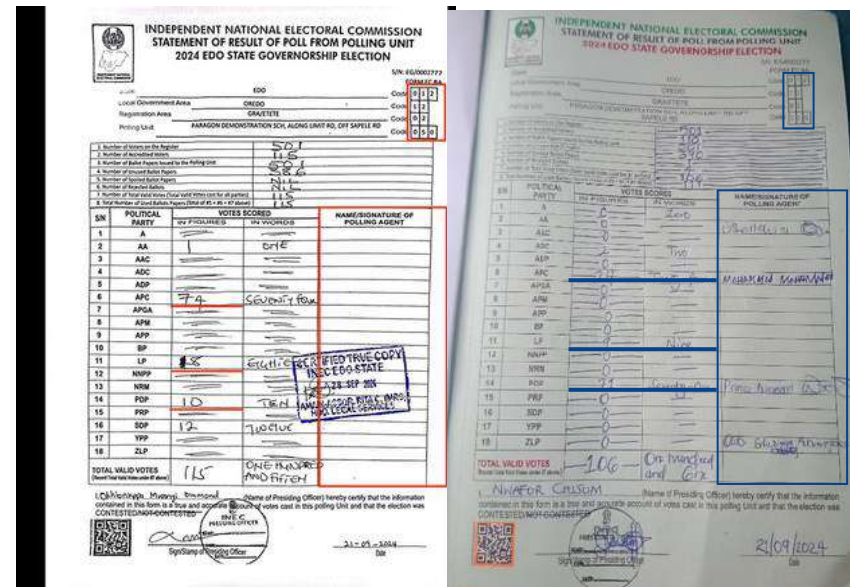
We observed the reduction of a total of **11,665 votes** PDP Votes in **325 Polling Units** at the ward collation.



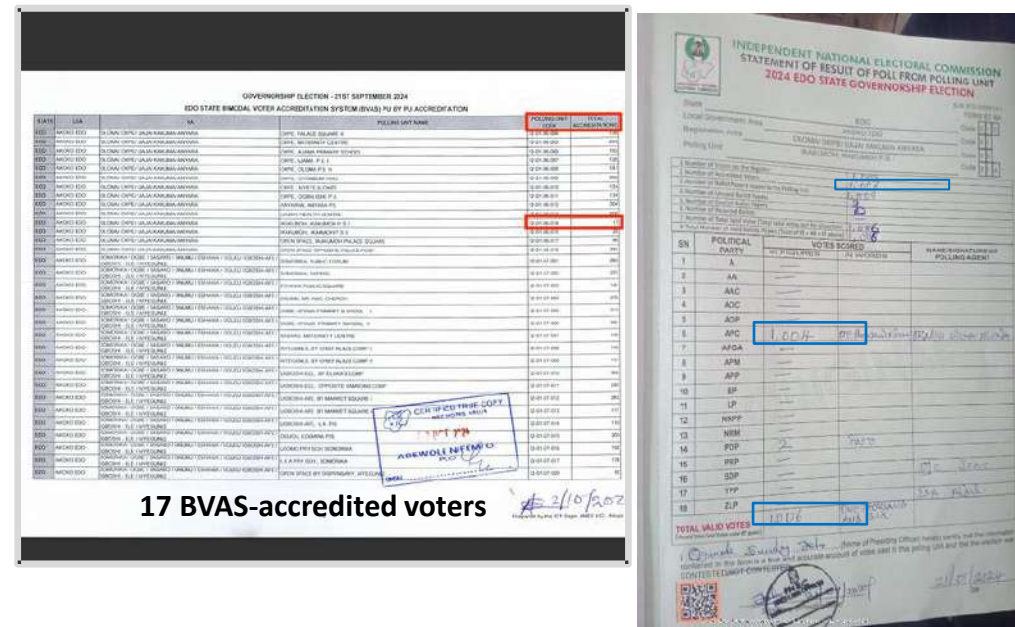
EDO 2024 ELECTION – ATHENA INSIGHTS CASE IN POINT

SAMPLES OF DISCREPANCIES RESULTING IN ELECTION MALPRACTICES

DISCREPANCY BETWEEN IReV EC8A AND CTC EC8A DIFFERENT PRESIDING OFFICER



OVERVOTING

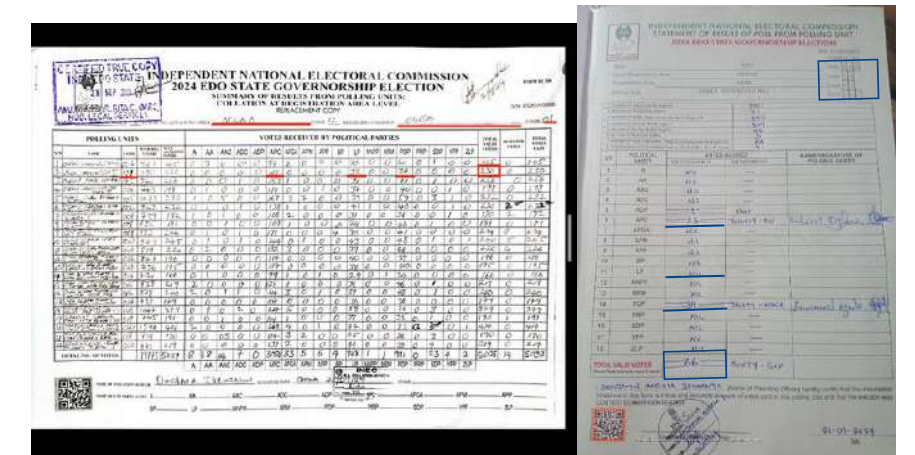


17 BVAS-accredited voters

VOTE REDUCTION



VOTE INFLATION



EDO 2024 ELECTION – OUR VERDICT

FLAWED ELECTION

The result of the Edo election can not be deemed credible because it failed to meet our basic integrity standards due to substantial interference in the electoral process.

The evidence of systemic rigging observed in this election is so substantial that we can not call the result.

- Back-end tampering with the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS)
- Clear disparities between form EC8A uploaded to IReV and INEC Certified True Copies of the same form
- Instances of Electoral malpractices carried out by Presiding and collation officers

EDO 2024 ELECTION – ATHENA INSIGHTS CASE IN POINT

RANDOMLY SELECTED ELECTORAL OFFICERS ENGAGED IN ELECTION MALPRACTICE

OVERVOTING (PRESIDING OFFICERS)

- Roland Aisosa
- Idowu Mariam
- Ekpe Mary
- Idaraobong
- Osagie Gift
- Felix Joy
- Temiloluwa Etiolu Oluwaguwon
- Samiuel Omotayo Henry
- Omoamila Dorcas
- Obazuwa Josephine
- Josadunbiola Dennisephine
- Aiyegunle Jeffery Ojo
- Augustine Arekpita
- Ibrahim O Rahmat
- Ajiboye Oluwatoni
- Olaakunle Faith
- Ngene Angel
- Ifeobu Chijioke Leonard

SUSTAINING OVERVOTING (COLLATION OFFICERS)

- Aroh Williams .C
- Franklin Osigbeneh
- Ogbegbe Kingsley
- Ibrahim Ahmed
- Igbenidion Omolara
- Hauwa Ahmed
- Aneesah Abdullahi Abubakar
- Bala I Garba
- Emeka G. OWABIE
- Mercy Awele Odibei
- Uwadiogwu Ogbonna
- Bello Yaro
- Ifeanyichukwu Nwakpa
- Jamila Dauda

VOTE INFLATION (COLLATION OFFICERS)

- Rafat Ibrahim
- Oluwatomisin A. Bose
- Mr Ogundipe Oluwole
- Modey Mary U
- Yahanasu Moh'd Ibrahim
- Hadiza Ibrahim
- Okoye Adaeze
- Saidu Ahmed
- Kene Agabaenwere
- Igbinidion Omolara
- Hauwa Ahmed
- Aroh Williams .C
- Amadi Uche O
- Oluwatomisin A. Bose
- Emeka G. Owabie
- Atama F
- Froluwatomisin A. Bose
- Franklin Osigbemeh

INEC 2024 ELECTORAL OFFICERS

CONTROVERSIAL INEC OFFICIALS MANAGED EDO ELECTIONS



DR. ANUGBUM ONUOHA

Resident Electoral Commissioner

- PhD. Law
- Allegedly reported to:
 - be Hon. Minister Nyesom Wike’s cousin
 - be a known People’s Democratic Party member
 - Former Commissioner of Lands and Special Adviser on Land and Survey to Gov. Nyesom Wike.
 - Under his leadership, we did not receive the EC8B forms for 11 wards in Etsako West, 1 ward in Ikpoba Okha, and the EC40 forms



PROF. RHODA GUMUS

National Electoral Commissioner (South South)

- Born on 21 July 1953 in Koroama town of Bayelsa State.
- Professor of chemical engineering.
- Her appointment as INEC Commissioner generated widespread criticism
- Allegedly reported to:
 - be a card-carrying member of the All Progressive Party.
 - A prominent political figure in Edo State Politics



PROF. FARUQ ADAMU KUTA

2024 Edo Returning Officer

- Born on 26th October 1973 in Kuta, Shiroro Niger State
- Professor of Microbiology

As a Returning officer, he has the authority to make decisions on key issues related to the voting and counting process.

However, he didn’t use his authority right, according to INEC Electoral Act 2022, section 6 (a), (b), (c), (d), section 7, section 8; Sec. 64 (4) “A collation officer or returning officer at an election shall collate and announce the result of an election, subject to his or her verification and confirmation that

a. Number of accredited voters stated on the collated result are correct and consistent with the number of accredited voters recorded and transmitted directly from polling units under Section 47(2).

b. The votes stated on the collated result are correct and consistent with the votes or results recorded and transmitted directly from polling units under section 60(4) of this Act.”

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION



The findings emphasise the need for strengthened technological governance, post election audit, and stricter oversight and monitoring systems to ensure the credibility of future elections in Nigeria.

EXAMPLES OF FORMAL POST-ELECTION AUDITS CONDUCTED IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES



UNITED STATES RISK-LIMITING AUDITS (RLA):

- Adopted in states like Colorado, Georgia, and Pennsylvania.
- Compares a statistically significant sample of paper ballots to the reported results to ensure accuracy.
- In Colorado, the audit process is mandated by law and conducted publicly to confirm the reliability of vote counts.



GERMANY MANUAL COUNTING AUDITS:

- All votes are initially counted manually.
- Audits involve recounting random samples to verify the accuracy of the initial count.
- Germany's manual counting emphasises transparency and public trust in election outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

EXAMPLES OF FORMAL POST-ELECTION AUDITS CONDUCTED IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES



MEXICO PRELIMINARY ELECTORAL RESULTS PROGRAM (PREP):

- Provides real-time updates for public transparency.
- A formal audit involves a detailed recount and validation process for polling station certificates starting the Wednesday after Election Day to ensure consistency and address any discrepancies.



INDIA ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINE AND VOTER-VERIFIABLE PAPER AUDIT TRAIL (VVPAT) AUDITS

- VVPAT allows voters to verify their vote on paper before submission.
- After elections, a random selection of VVPAT slips is matched with the EVM results in at least one polling station per constituency to confirm accuracy.

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

EXAMPLES OF FORMAL POST-ELECTION AUDITS CONDUCTED IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES



CANADA JUDICIAL RECOUNTS AND VERIFICATIONS:

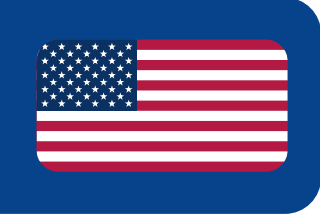



- Conducted when the margin of victory falls within a predefined range.
- A recount is carried out under judicial supervision, ensuring the impartiality and accuracy of results.

These post-election audit processes demonstrate how countries use formalised procedures to verify the integrity and accuracy of election outcomes, enhancing public trust in democratic systems.



RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

KEY LESSONS FOR NIGERIA FROM INTERNATIONAL POST-ELECTION AUDIT PRACTICES

 <p>UNITED STATES</p>	<p>1. Institutionalise Post-Election Audits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt mandatory and transparent post-election audits, such as risk-limiting audits, to verify results and bolster public confidence. 	<p>2. Emphasise Voter Trust:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure systems are designed to be auditable and trusted, with clear public communication about audit processes and results. 	
 <p>INDIA</p>	<p>1. Leverage Technology Effectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand secure Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and integrate Voter-Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs) to provide transparency. 	<p>2. Improve Accessibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure polling stations are within reasonable reach of all voters and adequately resourced to handle voter turnout efficiently. 	<p>3. Deploy Election Observers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen monitoring by deploying independent observers and expenditure monitors to uphold fairness and accountability.
 <p>MEXICO</p>	<p>1. Comprehensive Validation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce formal, scheduled validation processes to verify and finalise results, ensuring accuracy before public release. 	<p>2. Engage the Public:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use technology and accessible communication tools to involve citizens in the electoral process and enhance trust. 	
 <p>BRAZIL</p>	<p>1. Develop a Secure Technology Ecosystem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a robust and secure ecosystem like Brazil's, with tools like Gedai-UE for data handling and Sistot for secure tallying. 	<p>2. Ensure Contingency Preparedness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain backup systems and contingency plans to prevent disruptions due to technical failures or emergencies. 	<p>3. Encourage Citizen Participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage mobile applications and digital tools to simplify voter engagement, report irregularities, and access election results.

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

GENERAL LESSONS FOR NIGERIA



INVEST IN TECHNOLOGY GOVERNANCE

Ensure a clear legal framework regulates electoral technology to prevent abuse and enhance reliability.



BUILD PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

Transparency in results collation and real-time reporting can significantly reduce disputes and reinforce electoral integrity.



PROMOTE ACCOUNTABILITY

Post-election audits should be institutionalised, with findings used to hold officials accountable and improve future processes.



STRENGTHEN INSTITUTIONS

Depoliticise the electoral body to function independently, ensuring it operates with integrity and fairness.

By adopting these best practices, Nigeria can establish a more credible and transparent electoral system that restores faith in democratic processes.

RECOMMENDATION

TO ENHANCE ELECTORAL INTEGRITY AND REBUILDING TRUST IN INEC

► Reorganise and Depoliticise INEC

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) must undergo comprehensive institutional reorganisation to restore its independence and credibility. This includes:

- Appointing commissioners and electoral officers based solely on merit, integrity, and proven non-partisanship.
- Establishing an independent oversight mechanism to ensure INEC operates free from political influence and manipulation.

► Implement Robust Technology Governance

INEC's use of technology must be regulated under a clear and enforceable governance framework to enhance transparency and accountability. Key actions include:

- Developing national standards for electoral technology deployment, maintenance, and security.
- Independent third-party audits of technological systems before and after elections are mandated to prevent vulnerabilities and ensure system integrity.
- Creating a central database for real-time monitoring of electoral processes, accessible to accredited observers and stakeholders.



RECOMMENDATION

▶▶ Institutionalise Mandatory Post-Election Audits

INEC must conduct formal and transparent post-election audits after every electoral cycle. These audits should:

- Compare election results with data from BVAS and other accreditation technologies to identify discrepancies.
- Include independent observers, civil society organisations, and political parties to foster public confidence.
- Publish audit findings within a set timeframe to ensure accountability and inform future improvements.

▶▶ Restore Electoral Integrity and Public Trust

INEC must urgently rebuild trust with the electorate by taking bold and visible steps to prevent future compromise of election processes. These steps include:

- Publicly acknowledge past failings and commit to corrective measures.
- Instituting stricter penalties for electoral officers found guilty of malpractice or negligence.
- Strengthening communication channels with the public to provide real-time updates and address concerns promptly.



RECOMMENDATION

▶▶ Limit INEC's Discretion in Collation and Results Management

To reduce opportunities for tampering and manipulation:

- Polling unit results should automatically become the definitive basis for collation at all levels, with no manual alterations permitted.
- Results from polling units must be digitally transmitted immediately to a centralised system accessible to stakeholders.

▶▶ Legislate Against Electoral Mismanagement

The National Assembly must enact stringent laws to criminalise acts of deliberate electoral mismanagement by INEC or its officers, ensuring accountability at the highest levels.

- Specific provisions should compel INEC to:
- Adhere strictly to pre-established processes for result collation and announcement.
- Make its operations and decisions subject to real-time public and judicial scrutiny.
- By addressing INEC's structural deficiencies, implementing rigorous technology oversight, and committing to transparency through post-election audits, Nigeria can restore the integrity of its electoral system and rebuild citizens' confidence in democracy. These reforms are not optional but imperative for sustaining a credible democratic process.





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