

DEMOCRACY PERFORMANCE INDEX



# State of Democratic Performance in Nigeria 2025



**State of *Democratic*  
*Performance* in  
Nigeria - 2025**

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# About Kimpact

Kimpact Development Initiative (KDI) is a democracy, development, and civic tech institution or organization (we can pick one) working to strengthen democratic development and good governance in Nigeria and across West Africa. Established in 2014, KDI deploys innovative programming, development research, data-driven advocacy, and technology-enabled solutions to promote electoral integrity and accountability, institutional reform, and citizen participation.

**OUR MISSION:** To inspire citizen-led democratic development.

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# Disclaimer

The State of Democratic Performance in Nigeria -2025 is an independent, evidence-based assessment produced by Kimpact Development Initiative (KDI). The findings, interpretations, and conclusions presented in this report are based on data collected from a combination of administrative sources, citizen perception surveys, stakeholder engagements, and third-party documentation. This report is intended solely for research, policy dialogue, civic engagement, and advocacy purposes. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy, completeness, and reliability of the data, KDI and their affiliated organisations bear no responsibility for any direct or indirect actions taken based on the information contained in this report.

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*KDI remains committed to collaborative, evidence-driven approaches in advancing democratic development and strengthening accountability across Nigeria.*

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# Definition of Terms

This section defines the core concepts used in the Democracy Performance Index. The definitions reflect how democracy is operationalised and assessed at the subnational level in Nigeria.

- **Democracy (Subnational Context):** Democracy refers to how well state-level governance delivers accountable leadership, inclusive representation, effective institutions, and the protection of basic rights. In this study, democracy is understood as how governance works in practice, not just the existence of formal structures or laws.
- **Democracy Performance Index (DPI):** The Democracy Performance Index is a composite measurement framework that evaluates democratic performance across Nigeria's states. It aggregates performance across four dimensions: Electoral Participation, Political Inclusion, Democratic Institutional Effectiveness, and Civil Liberties and Civic Space, using a structured weighting model to generate comparable state-level scores.
- **Democratic Performance:** Democratic performance describes how well democratic principles actually work in a state, looking at how effective institutions are, how involved citizens are, how inclusive governance is, and how well rights are protected in practice.
- **Democratic Performance Categories:** Democratic Performance Categories are classification bands used to group states based on their composite scores. These categories reflect relative levels of democratic functionality, ranging from strong and coherent systems to structurally weak systems with significant governance limitations.
- **Electoral Participation:** Electoral participation refers to the extent to which citizens engage in electoral processes. It includes voter turnout, voter registration, political party participation, and the accessibility and openness of the electoral framework at the state level.
- **Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion refers to the extent to which governance structures reflect broad-based representation, particularly for historically marginalised groups such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities. In

this study, inclusion is assessed primarily through the appointive and judicial representation of the marginalised groups.

- **Democratic Institutional Effectiveness:** This refers to how well governance institutions function in practice, including the strength of legislative oversight, transparency, fiscal accountability, and the independence of democratic institutions.
- **Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Civil liberties and civic space refer to the extent to which individuals and groups can freely express views, associate, organise, and participate in public life without undue restriction. It reflects both formal protections and real-life experiences of freedom.
- **Governance Typology:** This refers to classifying states based on how different aspects of democracy interact, identifying patterns such as participatory but weak systems, institutionally strong but exclusive systems, or balanced systems where multiple elements reinforce each other.
- **Democratic Fragmentation:** Democratic fragmentation describes a condition in which key dimensions of democracy operate independently rather than reinforcing one another. In such contexts, improvements in one area, such as participation, do not translate into gains in institutional effectiveness, inclusion, or civic freedoms.
- **Perception Data:** Perception data refers to information collected from citizens and stakeholders that reflects their personal experiences, opinions, and views on how democratic processes work in practice.
- **Perception Gap:** The perception gap refers to the observable difference between how institutions assess democratic conditions and how citizens actually experience them. It highlights the mismatch between formal democratic rules or policies and their real-world impact on people's daily lives.
- **Democratic Depth:** Democratic depth refers to the extent to which democratic processes translate into meaningful representation, accountability, and citizen influence beyond formal participation in elections.
- **Procedural Democracy:** Procedural democracy describes a system where formal democratic processes such as elections and institutional structures are present and operational, but do not consistently produce substantive outcomes such as accountability, inclusion, or protection of rights.

- **Institutional Enclaves:** Institutional enclaves refer to contexts where governance institutions function internally but remain disconnected from broad citizen engagement, accountability mechanisms, or inclusive representation.
- **Procedural Enclaves:** These are states where elections and other democratic processes take place as expected, but they do not translate into meaningful outcomes for citizens. People vote, and institutions exist, yet many groups remain excluded, decision-making is not fully transparent, and citizens have limited space to question or influence government actions.
- **Triangulation:** Triangulation refers to the methodological approach of combining multiple data sources, institutional records and citizen perceptions, to improve the reliability and validity of findings.
- **Weighted Scoring Model:** A weighted scoring model is a structured method for combining different indicators and dimensions into one overall score. It assigns different levels of importance to each dimension, depending on how strongly it contributes to democratic performance.



# Abbreviations and Acronyms

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Acronym	Meaning
DPI	Democracy Performance Index
KDI	Kim pact Development Initiative
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
SIEC	State Independent Electoral Commission
LGA	Local Government Area
JAAC	Joint Account Allocation Committee
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
FBO	Faith-Based Organisation
PVC	Permanent Voter Card
SFTAS	State Fiscal Transparency, Accountability and Sustainability Programme
FOI	Freedom of Information
GPZ	Geopolitical Zone
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions

# Democracy Performance Index Report

The State of Democratic Performance in Nigeria 2025, developed by Kimpact Development Initiative (KDI), presents a structured assessment of how democracy functions across Nigeria's 36 states. The study evaluates democratic performance in practice, focusing on how institutions operate, how citizens engage, and how rights and freedoms are experienced within each state between 2024 and 2025.

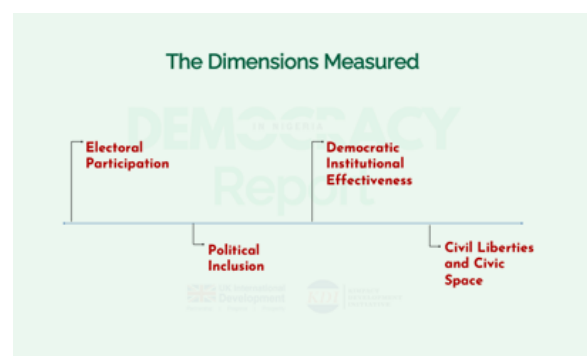
The purpose of the index is to provide a credible, comparable and data-driven picture of democratic performance across Nigeria's states. It enables users to identify where participation is active, where institutions are functioning effectively, where inclusion gaps persist, and where civic freedoms face constraints.

The index combines institutional evidence with citizen and stakeholder perspectives to balance formal democratic provisions with lived democratic realities. This dual approach allows the study to capture both what exists in law and policy and how those provisions operate in practice.

The index does not seek to measure democratic resilience in its full theoretical sense, such as long-term system durability or the capacity to withstand systemic shocks. It focuses instead on observable performance conditions, which provide a grounded assessment of how democracy is currently functioning at the sub-national level.

## Scope of the Study

The study covers all 36 states in Nigeria. The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) is excluded from the analytical framework and comparative ranking due to its distinct governance structure. Institutional arrangements in the FCT are largely shaped by federal authorities, including legislative oversight by the National Assembly and electoral administration by the INEC, making direct comparison with states methodologically inconsistent.



## Dimensions of the Index

The index is structured around four core dimensions that reflect how democracy functions in practice at the sub-national level.

### 1. Electoral Participation (Key Indicators):

- Electoral participation (turnout, PVC collection)
- Political interest and competition (party participation and boycotts in LG elections)
- Electoral legal framework and dispute resolution

### 2. Political Inclusion (Key Indicators):

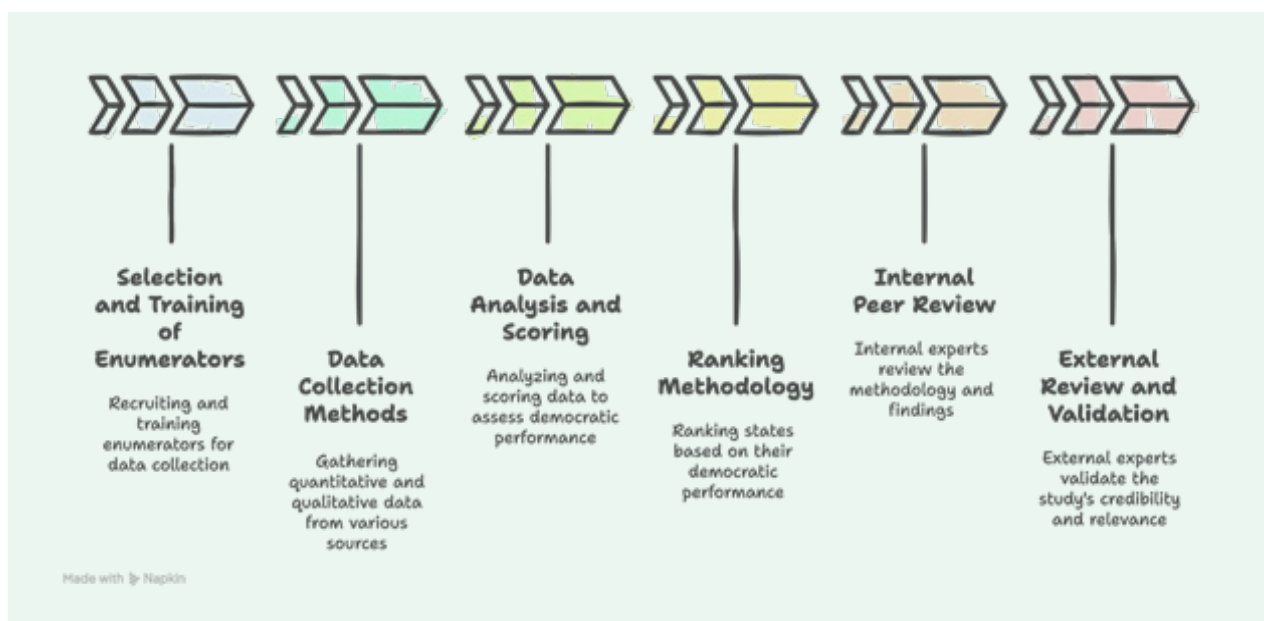
Representation of women, youth (18-35<sup>1</sup>), and persons with disabilities in appointive and judicial positions

### 3. Democratic Institutional Effectiveness (Key Indicators):

- Functionality of state democratic institutions,
- Separation of powers in practice (budget oversight)
- Fiscal structure affecting institutional balance (JAAC)
- Legislative openness (public hearings, oversight access)
- Information transparency (Hansard publication, budget disclosure)

### 4. Civil Liberties and Civic Space (Key Indicators):

- Freedom of association and assembly



- Civil society operational space
- Freedom of expression (citizens and media)
- Political repression and misuse of the security apparatus

## Methodological Approaches

**Data Collection Approach:** The study adopts a mixed-methods approach combining official/institutional data and citizen/perception data. Institutional data was collected through a structured checklist completed for each state using official records. These include electoral data from INEC and State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs), state houses of assembly records, court rulings, budget documents, official government publications, and reports from civil society organisations and media archives.

Respondent Category	Expected Total Responses Nationwide	Total Responses Nationwide
Institutions (Checklist)	216 (6 checklist per 36 state)	216
Citizens (Survey)	7200 (200 X 36 locations)	7128

Perception data was generated through structured surveys capturing the experiences and views of citizens and relevant stakeholders across all states. The survey adopted a purposive stratified sampling approach to ensure representation across key governance actors. A total of 7128 respondents were engaged across Nigeria, stratified across twelve categories, including citizens, media professionals, state and federal security agencies, civil society organisation leaders, political party officials, the state judiciary, appointive officials (commissioners and special advisers), SIEC staff, LGA staff, and state civil servants.

Efforts were made to ensure geographic spread and diversity across gender and age groups within each state. This sample captures informed perspectives from individuals directly engaged with democratic processes. Findings from the survey were therefore interpreted as reflective of stakeholder experience rather than general population estimates.

*Data collection was conducted between September and December 2025*

The index methodology integrates structured data management, triangulation, and composite scoring within a unified analytical framework. The process began with:

### **Data Processing and Triangulation:**

All data underwent structured cleaning and validation before analysis. This included standardising variable formats, removing inconsistencies, validating entries against source documents, and ensuring completeness of key variables. Missing data was not artificially imputed.

Where institutional data was unavailable, alternative sources such as civil society reports, media archives, and stakeholder input were used to triangulate findings. Where gaps persisted, such indicators were flagged and interpreted with caution, and triangulation was applied across three evidence streams:

- Institutional data from official records
- Independent data from civil society and media sources
- Perception data from citizen and stakeholder surveys

This process ensured that no single source determined the final score for any indicator. A question-matching exercise linking survey questions to checklist or independent data indicators was done. This ensured alignment between institutional measures and perception variables, enabling coherent triangulation and weighting.

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*The index incorporates multiple layers of validation, including internal peer review, international expert review, and regional stakeholder validation across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones. These processes ensured methodological rigour, contextual accuracy, and analytical credibility.*

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### **Scoring and Standardisation:**

Indicators were constructed based on predefined coding rules. Quantitative values such as turnout and representation were converted into standardised scores, while categorical variables were assigned numeric values based on defined scales. All indicators were standardised on a 0-100 scale to enable comparability across states.

## Weighting Structure

### Data Source Weighting (Institutional vs Perception)

To balance verifiability with lived experience, the index applies a structured weighting between institutional and perception data:

- **General baseline:** 70% Institutional Data / 30% Perception Data
- **Exception - Civil Liberties Dimension:** 60% Institutional Data/ 40% Perception Data
- **Exception - Political Inclusion:** 100% Institutional Data

Institutional data is weighted more heavily because it is directly verifiable and grounded in observable records. However, perception data is retained to capture gaps between formal provisions and actual experience, particularly in areas such as civic space and political freedoms, where lived experience is critical.

This approach reduces the risk of over-reliance on perception while ensuring that the index does not present a purely formal or documentation-based view of democracy.

Political Inclusion is measured using institutional data only. This reflects the structural nature of inclusion indicators, which are based on verifiable appointment records and demographic composition of public office holders. Unlike other dimensions, inclusion cannot be measured at all based on perception because it won't even give a direct measure of inclusion.

### Dimension-Level Weighting

The index applies a moderate, theory-informed weighting structure across the four dimensions:

Dimension	Weight	Rationale
Civil Liberties and Civic Space	30%	Foundational to democratic functioning; without basic freedoms, other democratic processes are constrained
Democratic Institutional Effectiveness	30%	Determines how governance systems function in practice and sustain accountability

Electoral Participation	20%	Reflects citizen engagement but can be influenced by administrative and political factors
Political Inclusion	20%	Critical for representation but tends to evolve gradually over time

This weighting ensures that foundational democratic conditions and institutional performance carry greater influence in the overall score, while participation and inclusion remain important but proportionately balanced.

## Composite Score construction For each State:

- Indicator score from the institutions and citizens were aggregated into dimension scores using a defined weight.
- Dimension scores are weighted based on the defined structure.
- The weighted pillar scores are combined to produce a final state score on a 0-100 scale

### Performance Ranking Framework:

States were ranked using a colour-coded classification system designed for clarity and public usability. Score bands interpreted as follows:

Score Range	Category	Meaning
■ 80-100	High Democratic Performance	Strong institutions, credible processes, and high levels of transparency and civic freedom
■ 60-79	Moderate Performance	Functioning democratic systems with identifiable gaps in participation, inclusion, or institutional effectiveness
■ 40-59	Low/Poor Performance	Noticeable weaknesses across multiple dimensions, including institutional inefficiencies and reduced public trust
■ 0-39	Weak Democratic Performance	Significant institutional and process failures, with substantial constraints on democratic functioning

These categories reflect relative performance across states based on the selected indicators. They are intended to guide interpretation and comparison, not to serve as absolute or permanent classifications.

## Analytical Boundaries

The index focuses on measurable aspects of democratic performance within the assessment period. It does not fully capture all elements of democratic quality, such as detailed election-day irregularities, vote-buying dynamics, or long-term institutional resilience factors that are not consistently measurable across states.

Findings should therefore be interpreted as a structured assessment of current democratic performance, rather than a definitive judgement on the long-term stability or durability of democratic systems.

## Limitation of the Study

The implementation of the study encountered a few data-related and operational constraints that influenced access to information and the completeness of some indicators. These limitations were managed through triangulation and validation procedures but remain relevant in interpreting the findings.

- **Access to administrative data varied across states:** In some instances, delays in processing formal requests and internal administrative procedures affected the timeliness of access to official records. Where this occurred, and we did not finally get it, the study relied on alternative verifiable sources, including civil society reports, media archives, and institutional cross-checks to ensure coverage.
- **The quality and organisation of documentation also differed across institutions:** In several cases, records were not digitised or centrally archived, which affected the ease of retrieval and, in some instances, the level of detail available for specific indicators. Where gaps existed, available data were supplemented through triangulation and clearly flagged during analysis.

These limitations reflect broader variations in data availability, documentation practices, and institutional openness across states. The methodological approach adopted ensures that, despite these constraints, the findings provide a credible and comparable assessment of democratic performance.



## Executive Summary

The state-by-state analysis of democratic performance across Nigeria presents a system that is active, visible, and procedurally intact, yet structurally constrained in depth, coherence, and inclusiveness. What emerges is not a picture of democratic absence, but of uneven functionality. Institutions exist, elections are conducted, and participation occurs, yet these elements do not consistently translate into accountable governance, inclusive representation, or protected civic freedoms.

Across Nigeria's 36 states, democratic performance is concentrated within a narrow and compressed range. No state attains a high democratic performance threshold, and only a limited number exhibit moderate levels of functionality. The majority fall within a low-performance category, suggesting that the constraints affecting democratic outcomes are systemic rather than region-specific or politically isolated. This pattern points to a democratic system that continues to operate procedurally

but shows limited evidence of consolidation. Institutions are present and active, yet their effectiveness, depth, and ability to deliver accountable governance remain uneven and constrained across the federation.

At the state level, the variation is not defined by extreme contrasts between strong and weak systems, but by subtle differences in how constraints manifest. Some states demonstrate relatively stronger institutional processes, others show higher levels of citizen engagement, while a few maintain more open civic environments. However, these strengths rarely converge within the same state. Instead, democratic performance is fragmented, with gains in one dimension not translating into improvements in others.

The most immediate pattern across states is the disconnect between electoral participation and governance outcomes. Electoral processes are active in most states, and participation levels are

broadly moderate. Yet this engagement does not consistently produce inclusive representation or stronger institutions. In many states, citizens participate in elections without seeing corresponding improvements in political inclusion or accountability. This creates a cycle where participation sustains democratic visibility, but not necessarily democratic effectiveness.

Political inclusion represents the most structurally constrained dimension across all states. No state achieves a level of representation that reflects its demographic composition. Women's participation in executive roles remains limited, youth representation is minimal, and persons with disabilities are almost entirely excluded from appointive structures. This pattern is consistent across regions and political contexts, indicating that exclusion is not incidental but systemic. Representation exists, but it is narrow, selective, and insufficient to reflect the diversity of the population.

Institutional performance further reinforces this pattern. While state institutions are operational, their effectiveness is uneven and often limited by weak oversight, constrained transparency, and fiscal centralisation. Legislative processes exist, but in many states, they do not function as robust mechanisms for oversight and accountability. The persistence of centralised fiscal structures, particularly in local govern-

ment financing, continues to limit the autonomy and responsiveness of governance systems at the grassroots level.

Civic space presents a similarly complex picture. In some states, civil liberties are actively upheld, allowing citizens, media, and civil society organisations to engage freely. In others, civic space is constrained by administrative barriers, selective enforcement, or the perceived misuse of security agencies. A consistent pattern across all states is the gap between institutional claims and citizen experience. While formal frameworks suggest the protection of rights, lived experiences indicate that these protections are unevenly applied.

The state-level analysis also reveals distinct governance profiles shaped by the interaction of these dimensions. Some states exhibit "democratic depth," where participation aligns with inclusion, suggesting a degree of responsiveness in governance. Others reflect "procedural enclaves," where institutions function but civic freedoms are constrained. There are also "fragile states," where weaknesses across institutions, participation, and civic space combine to produce compounded governance risks. These profiles demonstrate that democratic performance in Nigeria cannot be understood through a single indicator but must be interpreted through the interaction of multiple, partially independent systems.

Geographically, democratic performance does not conform to a clear regional pattern. While certain zones demonstrate relatively stronger outcomes, no region consistently achieves high performance across all dimensions. In many cases, variation within regions is as pronounced as variation between them, underscoring the importance of state-level analysis rather than broad regional generalisations.

These findings carry important implications for policy, reform, and democratic engagement. First, strengthening democracy in Nigeria requires a shift from procedural compliance to functional performance. The mere conduct of elections, publication of budgets, or existence of formal institutions is insufficient if these processes do not translate into accountability, inclusion, and citizen trust.

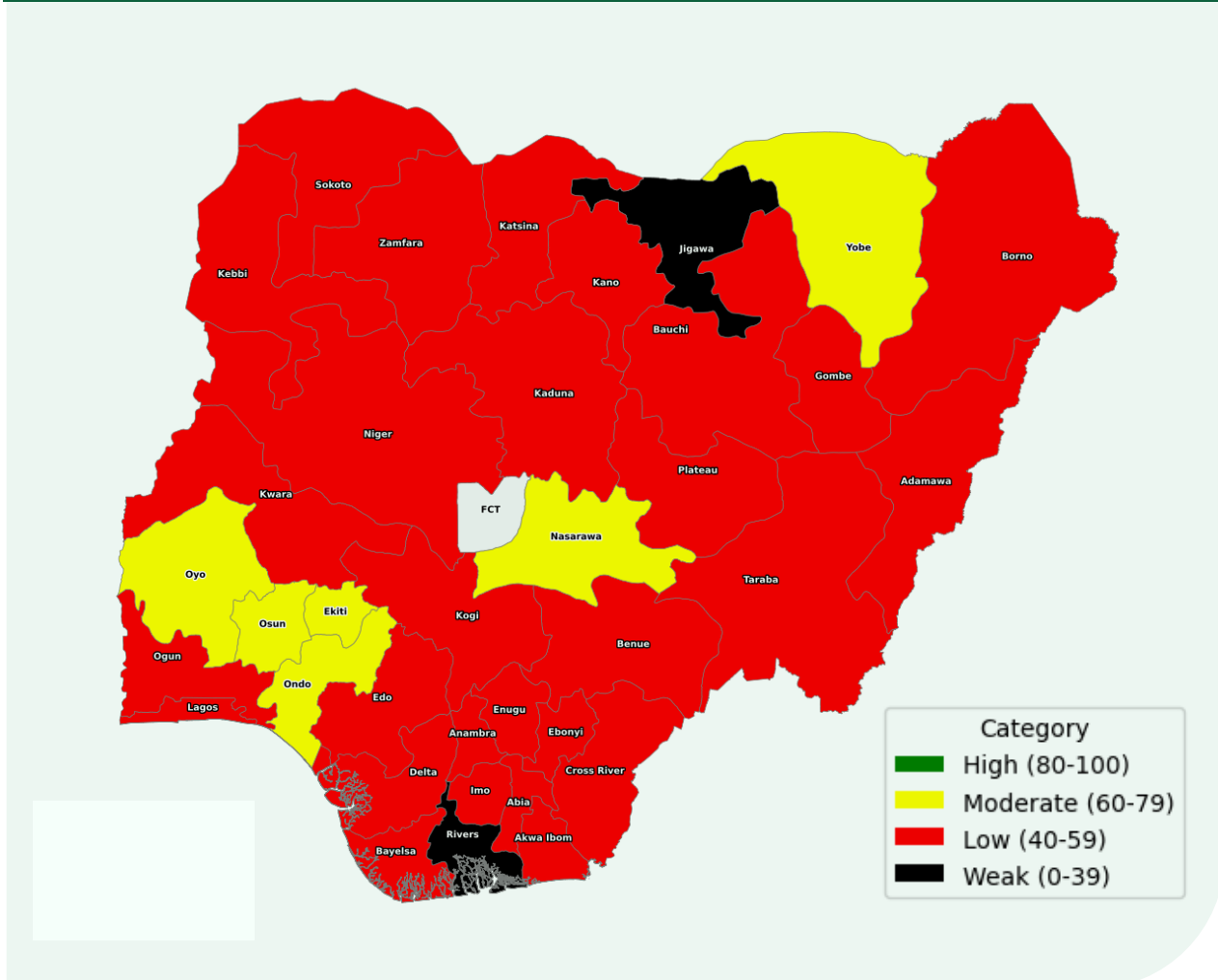
Second, reform strategies must be explicitly multi-dimensional. Improvements in one area, such as electoral participation, do not automatically lead to gains in institutional effectiveness or the expansion of civic space. Each dimension of democracy demands targeted, coordinated, and sustained intervention to produce meaningful and lasting outcomes.

Third, many states are close to the national average, meaning even small improvements in areas like transparency, inclusion, or institutional effectiveness can move them into higher performance levels. However, states at the lower end will need more sustained and tailored interventions to address deeper structural challenges.

This state-by-state report takes a closer look at how democracy works within each state, going beyond national averages to show the specific factors shaping governance outcomes. It highlights where democratic processes are working, where they face constraints, and where there are clear opportunities for reform.

The findings show a more complex picture than a simple story of progress or decline. Democracy in Nigeria is neither failing across the board nor improving consistently. Instead, it operates within a constrained system where participation exists, and institutions are in place, but inclusion is limited, and overall institutional effectiveness is weak. This analysis serves as a practical diagnostic, offering evidence to guide targeted actions for strengthening democratic governance at the state level.

# The State of Democratic Performance in Nigeria – 2025



Score Range	Category	Meaning
80-100	High Democratic Performance	Consistently strong voter turnout and PVC collection; competitive elections with broad party participation; electoral rules are accessible and dispute resolution is functional and trusted
60-79	Moderate Performance	Functioning democratic systems with identifiable gaps in participation, inclusion, or institutional effectiveness

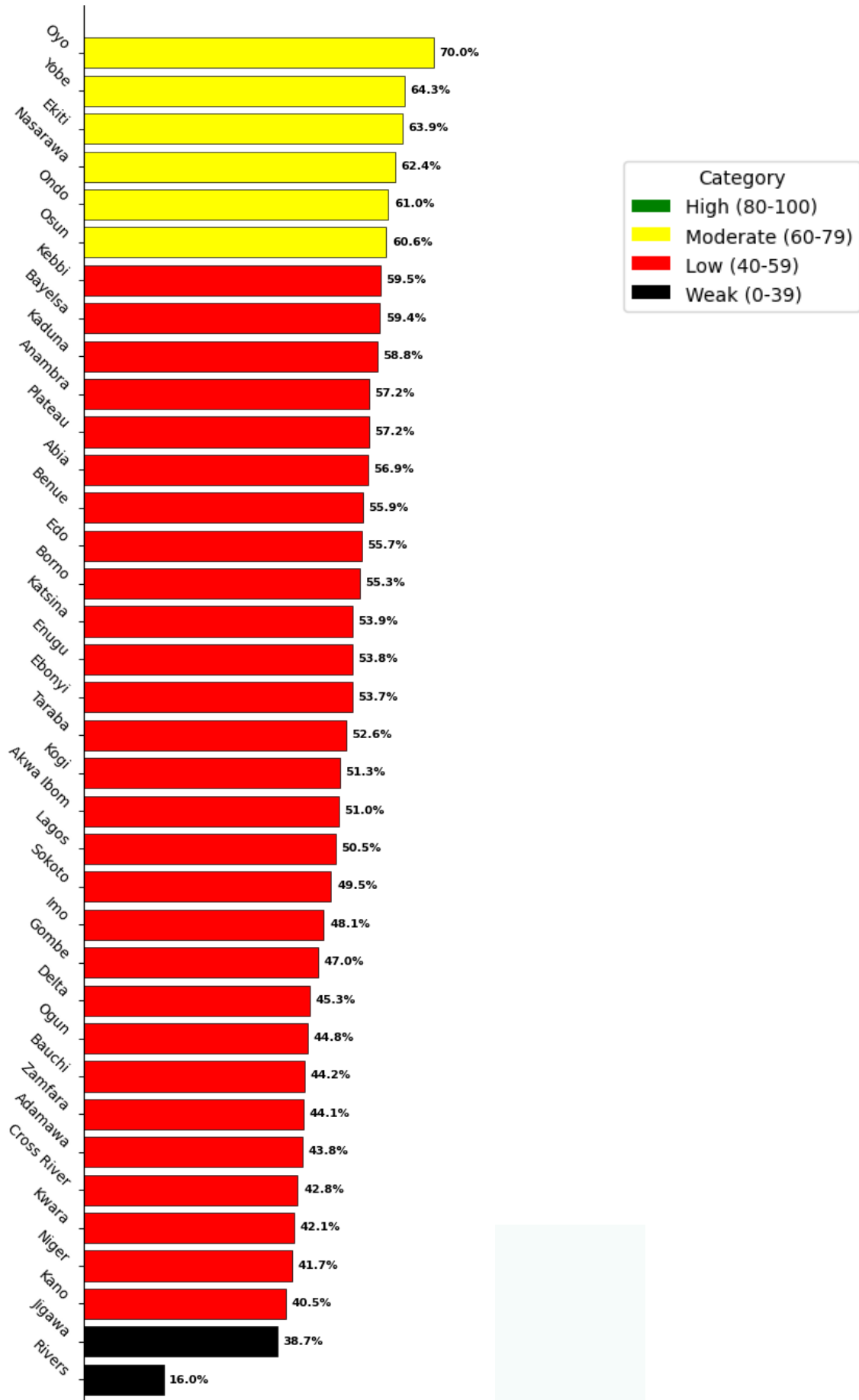
■ 40–59	Low Participation	Noticeable weaknesses across multiple dimensions, including institutional inefficiencies and reduced public trust
■ 0–39	Weak Participation	Significant institutional and process failures, with substantial constraints on democratic functioning

## Data Highlight

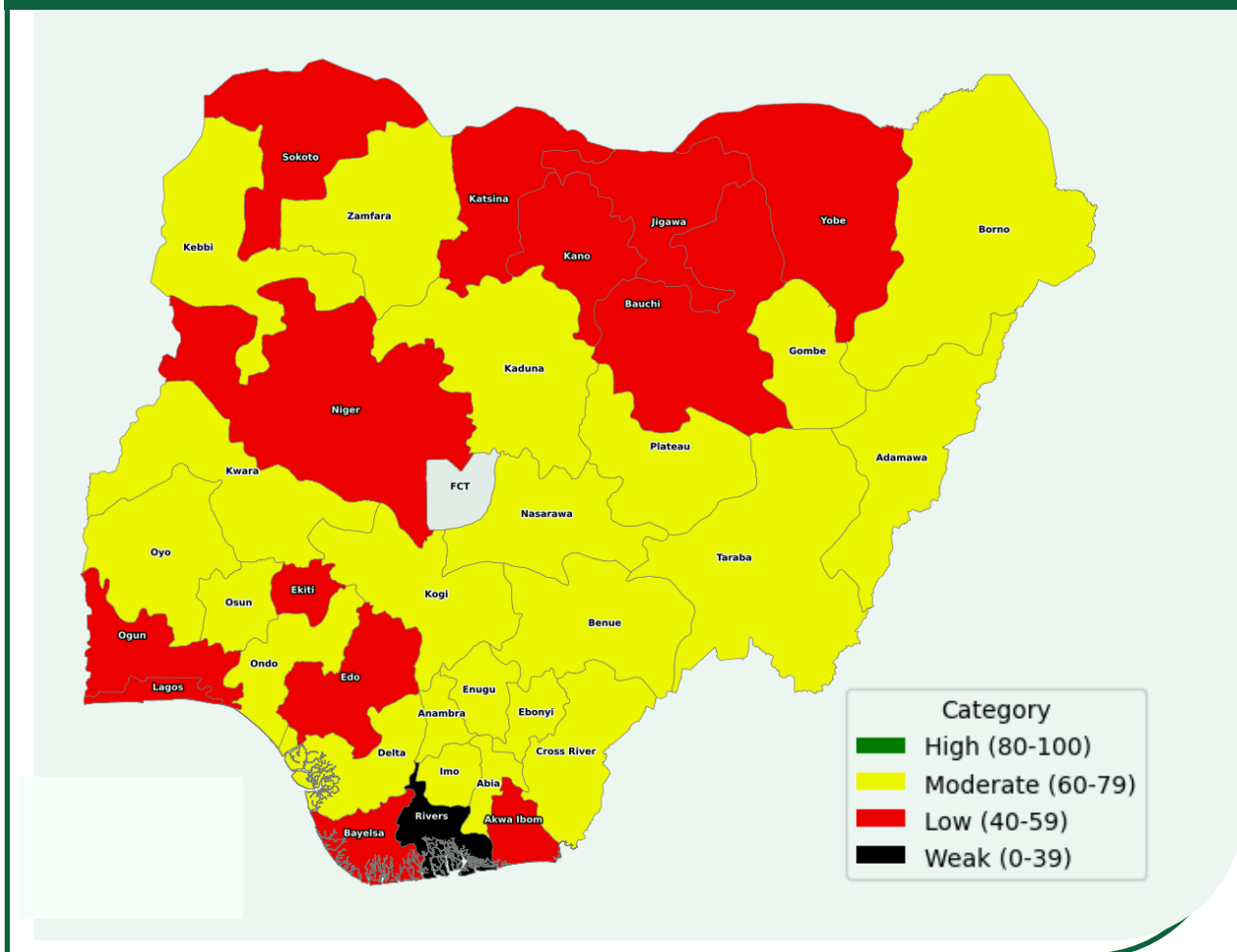


- None of the 36 states (0%) fall into the High-Performance band, showing that no state currently operates a fully consolidated democratic system
- Only six of Nigeria's 36 states (16.7%), Oyo, Yobe, Ekiti, Nasarawa, Ondo, and Osun, fall within the Moderate band, indicating that a limited number of states demonstrate baseline levels of functional democratic practice.
- A dominant 28 out of 36 states (77.8%) fall within the Low Performance band, reflecting widespread structural weaknesses across institutions, participation, and civic space.
- 2 out of 36 states (5.6%), namely Jigawa and Rivers, are in the Weak category, indicating severe systemic breakdown well below national expectations.
- **The national outlook shows that more than 83% of states are clustered between the Moderate and Low bands, and no states are showing strong upward movement beyond this range.**

## State of Democratic Performance in Nigeria - 2025



# State of Electoral Participation in Nigerian States – 2025



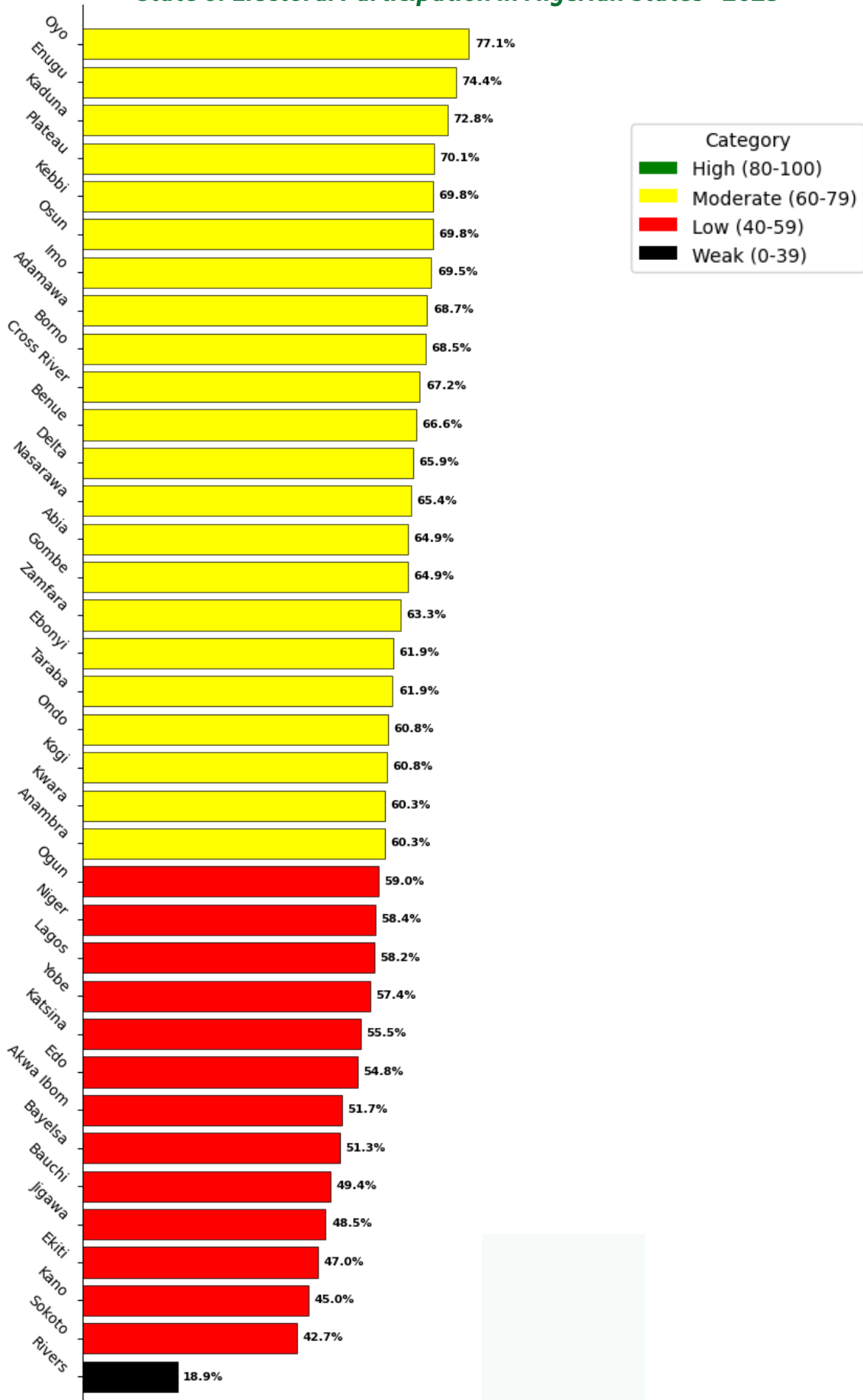
Score Range	Category	Meaning
80–100	High Participation	Consistently strong voter turnout and PVC collection; competitive elections with broad party participation; electoral rules are accessible and dispute resolution is functional and trusted
60–79	Moderate Participation	Reasonable levels of turnout and engagement; some competition, but with signs of boycott, uneven access, or limited public understanding of electoral rules
40–59	Low Participation	Weak voter engagement; limited competition; recurring boycotts or barriers to participation; electoral framework exists but is not fully accessible or effectively utilised

0-39	Weak Participation	Very low turnout or disengagement; elections lack competitiveness; significant barriers to participation; dispute resolution is ineffective or inaccessible
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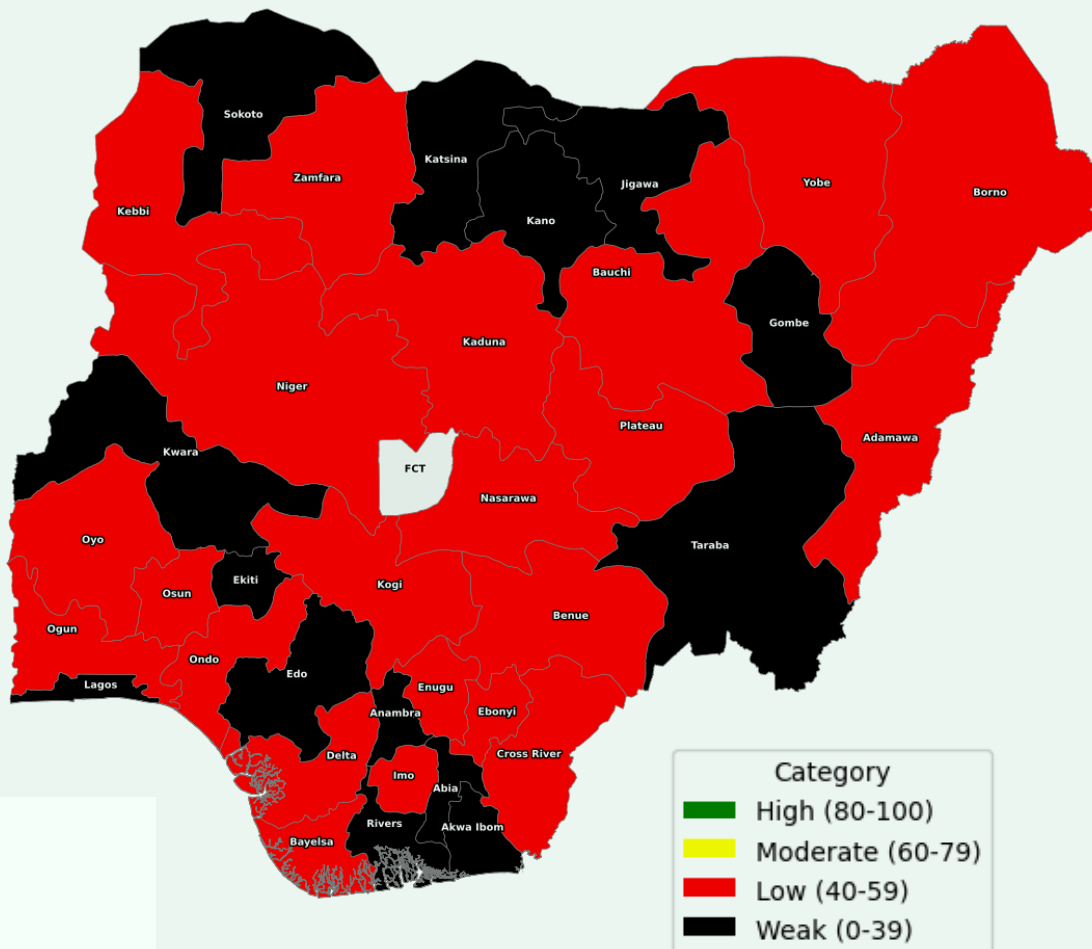
## Data Highlight

- **0 states (0%)** reach high participation levels, indicating no state achieves strong electoral engagement.
- **22 states (61.1%)** fall within the **Moderate participation category**, indicating that citizen engagement is relatively widespread but remains limited in depth and consistency across states.
- **13 states (36.1%)** record low participation levels.
- **1 state (2.8%)** falls into weak participation, representing extreme disengagement.

## State of Electoral Participation in Nigerian States - 2025



# State of Political Inclusion in Nigerian States – 2025



Score Range	Category	Meaning
80–100	High Inclusion	Broad and balanced representation of women, youth, and persons with disabilities across appointive and judicial positions; inclusion reflects deliberate policy and practice
60–79	Moderate Inclusion	Visible but uneven representation; some groups are included, but gaps remain across sectors or levels of governance

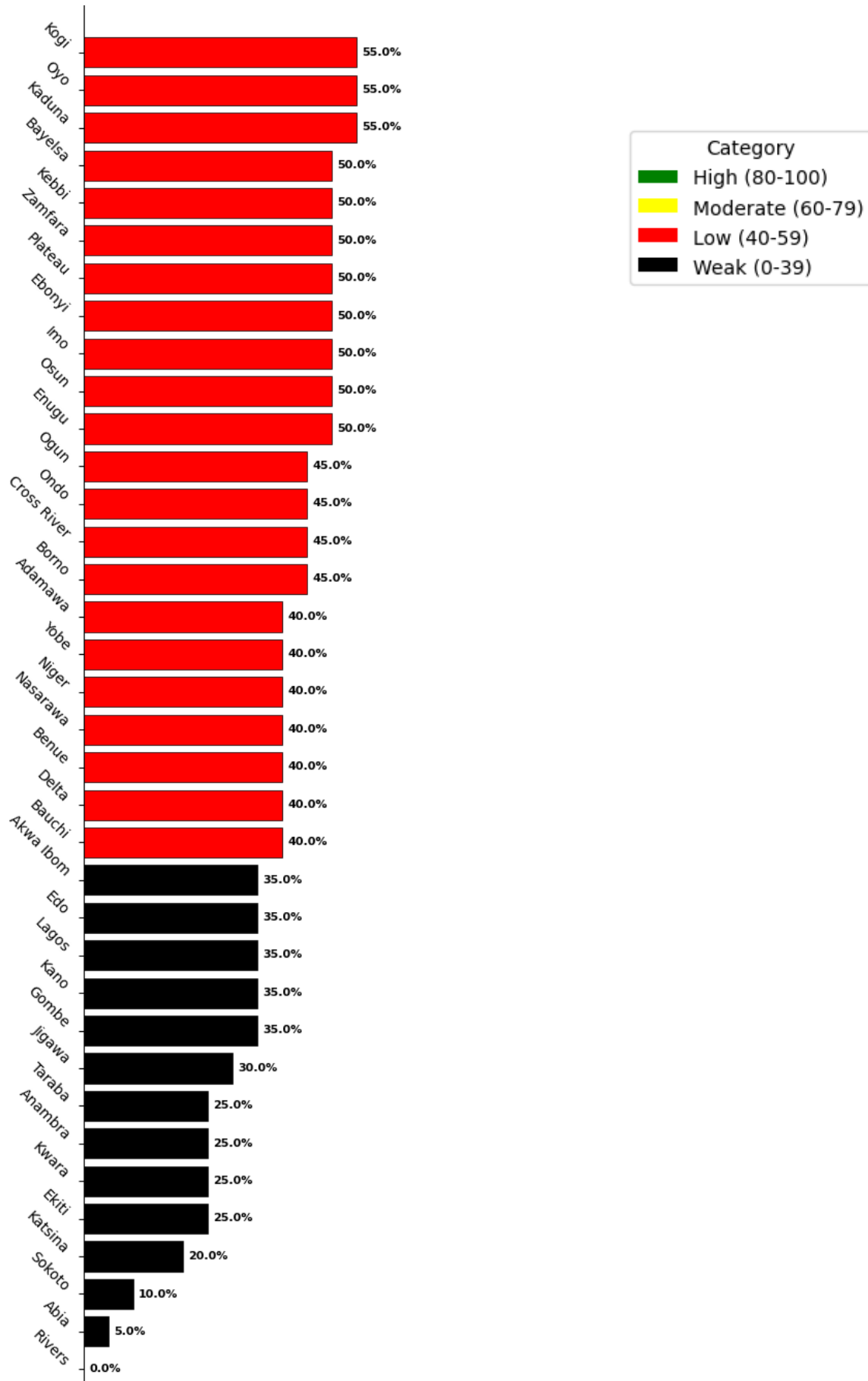
40-59	Low Inclusion	Limited representation of marginalised groups; inclusion is sporadic and not institutionalised; appointments remain concentrated among dominant groups
0-39	Weak Institutional Effectiveness	Minimal or near absence of representation for women, youth, and PWDs; governance space is highly exclusionary



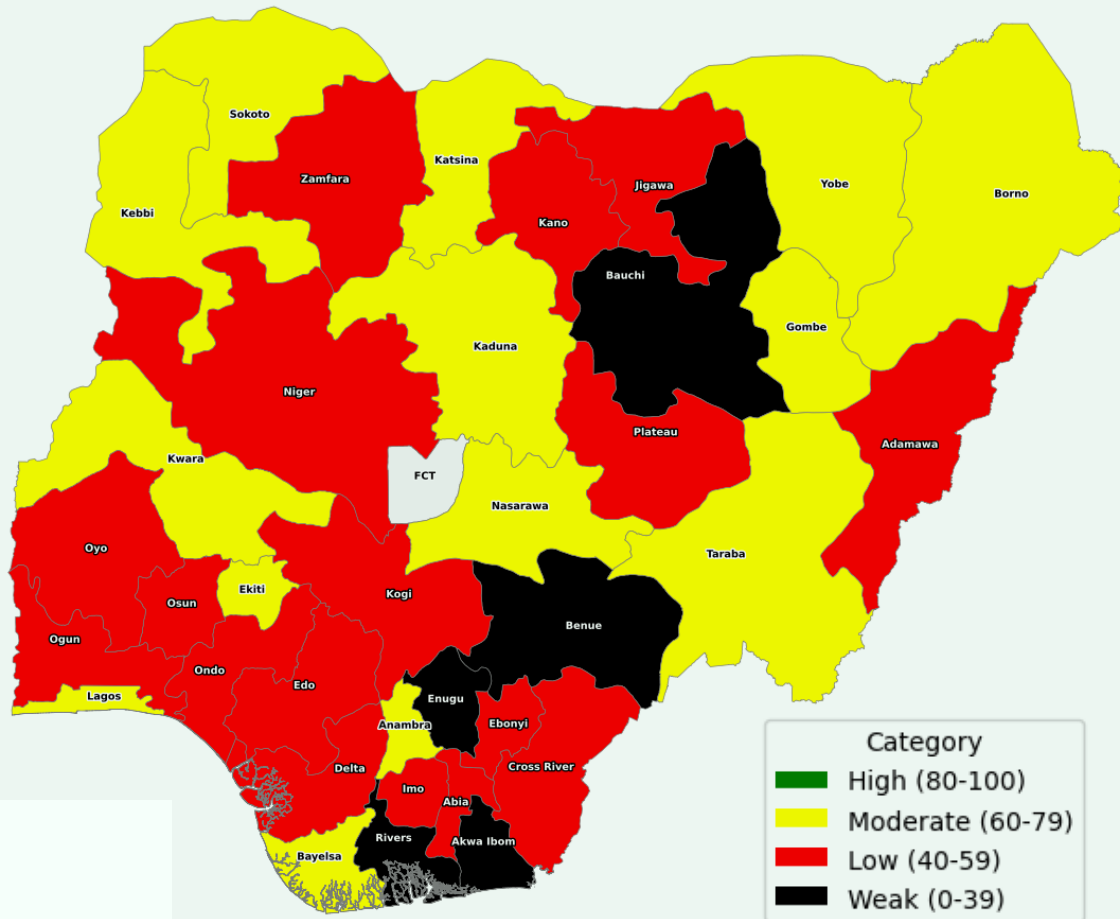
## Data Highlight

- **0 out of 36 states (0%) achieve high inclusion.**
- **0 states (0%) reach even moderate inclusion thresholds.**
- **22 states (61.1%) fall within low inclusion.**
- **14 states (38.9%) are classified as weak, indicating severe exclusion.**
- **This means 100% of states fall below acceptable inclusion standards.**

## State of Political Inclusion in Nigerian States - 2025



# State of Democratic Institutional Effectiveness in Nigerian States – 2025



Score Range	Category	Meaning
80-100	High Institutional Effectiveness	Strong protection of civil liberties; citizens, media, and civil society operate freely without intimidation; minimal or no misuse of state power
60-79	Moderate Institutional Effectiveness	Civic space is generally open but with occasional restrictions, harassment, or administrative barriers affecting expression and association
40-59	Low Institutional Effectiveness	Institutional weaknesses are evident; limited oversight, weak transparency, and constrained legislative functionality affect governance outcomes

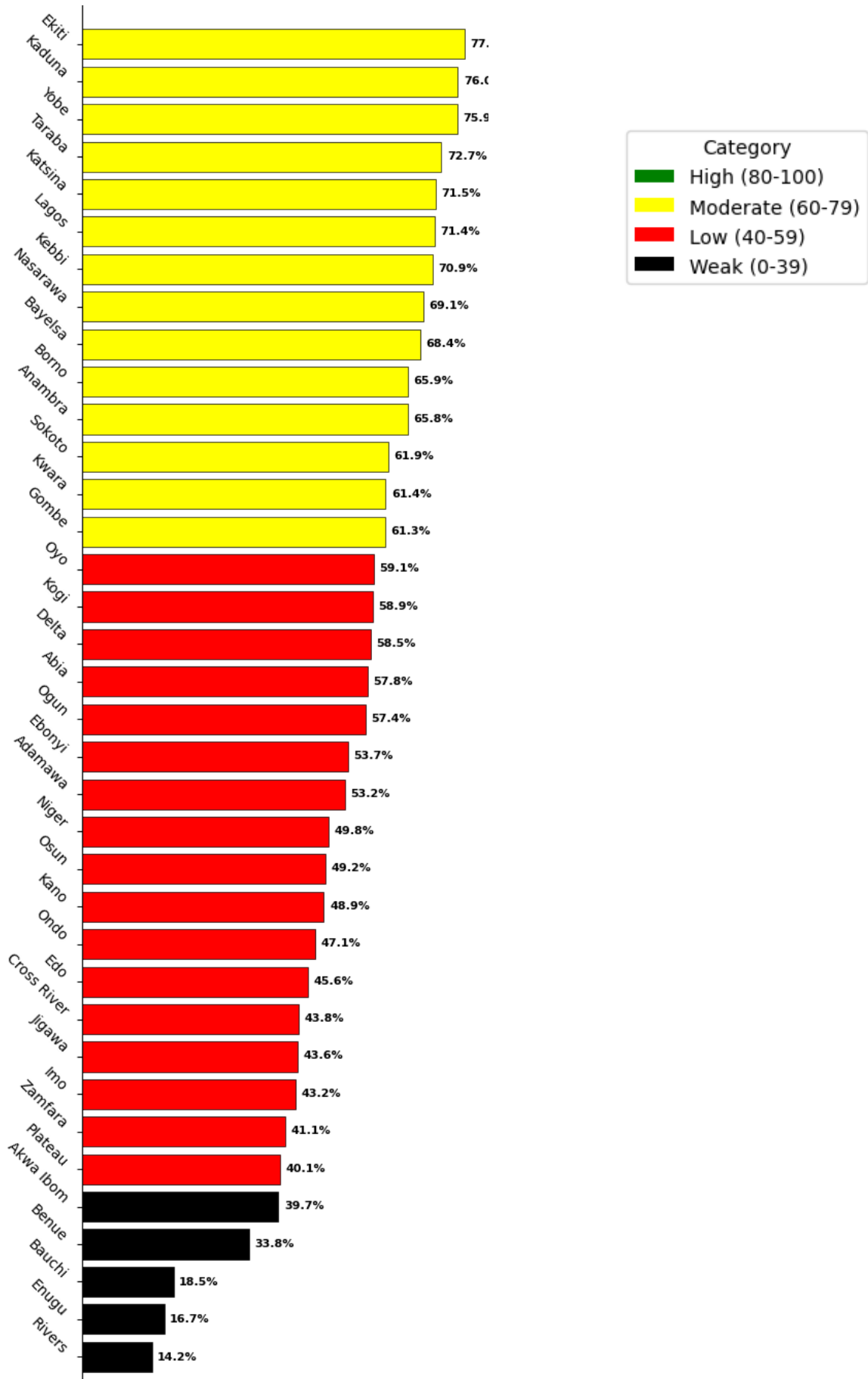
<b>0-39</b>	Weak Institutional Effectiveness	Institutions are largely ineffective; minimal oversight, poor transparency, and compromised separation of powers undermine governance
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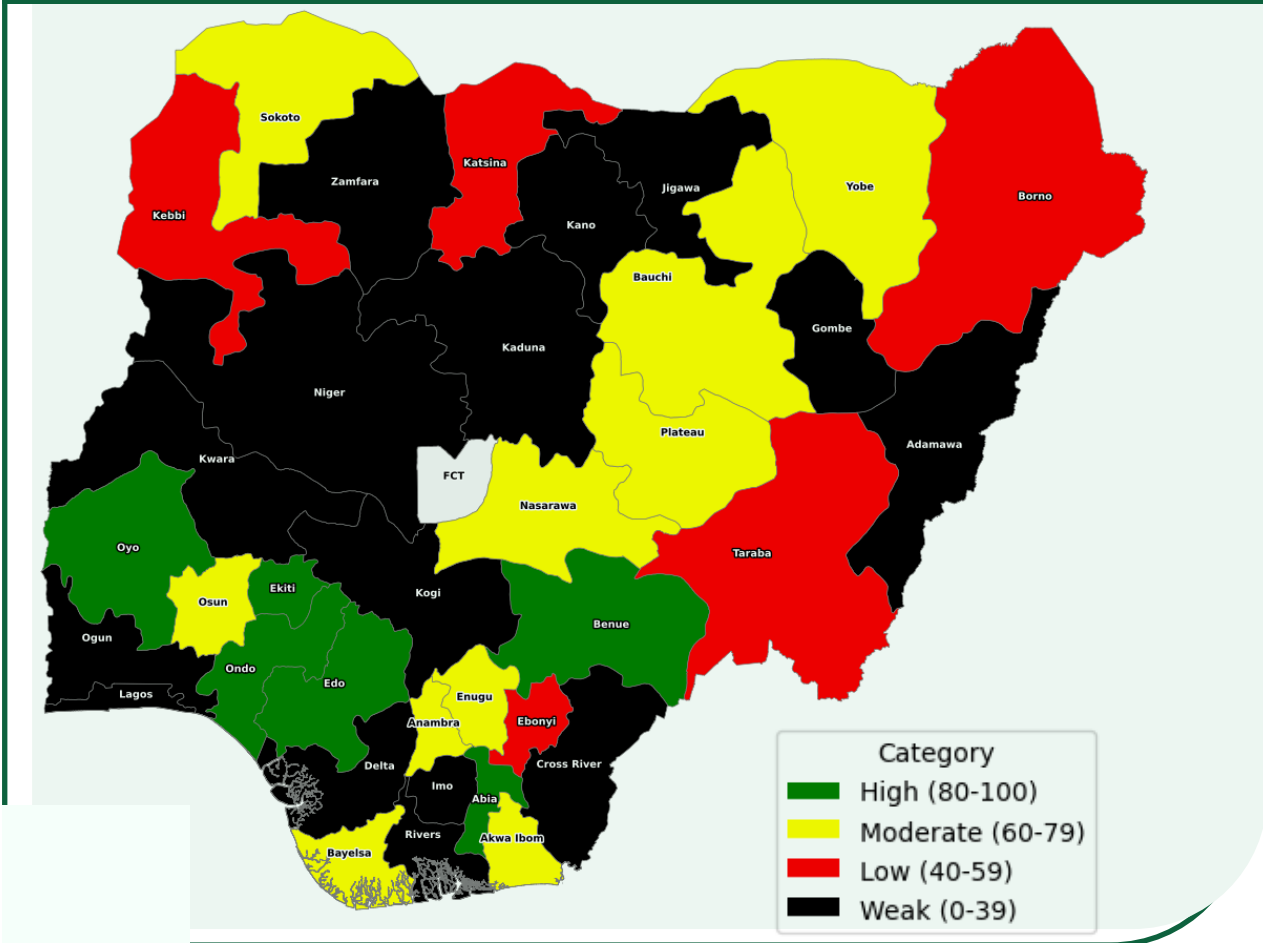
## Data Highlight

- 0 out of 36 states (0%) reach high institutional effectiveness, indicating that no state demonstrates fully robust democratic practices.
- 14 states (38.9%) fall within moderate institutional effectiveness, where institutions are operational but still constrained by gaps in oversight and transparency.
- 17 states (47.2%) are classified under low institutional effectiveness, reflecting visible weaknesses in legislative activity, accountability mechanisms, and governance processes.
- 5 states (13.9%) fall within weak institutional effectiveness, where institutional structures are largely ineffective, and oversight is minimal.
- In total, 22 states (61.1%) operate below moderate institutional standards, pointing to widespread institutional fragility across the federation.

## State of Democratic Institutional Performance in Nigerian States - 2025



# State of Civil Liberties in Nigerian States – 2025



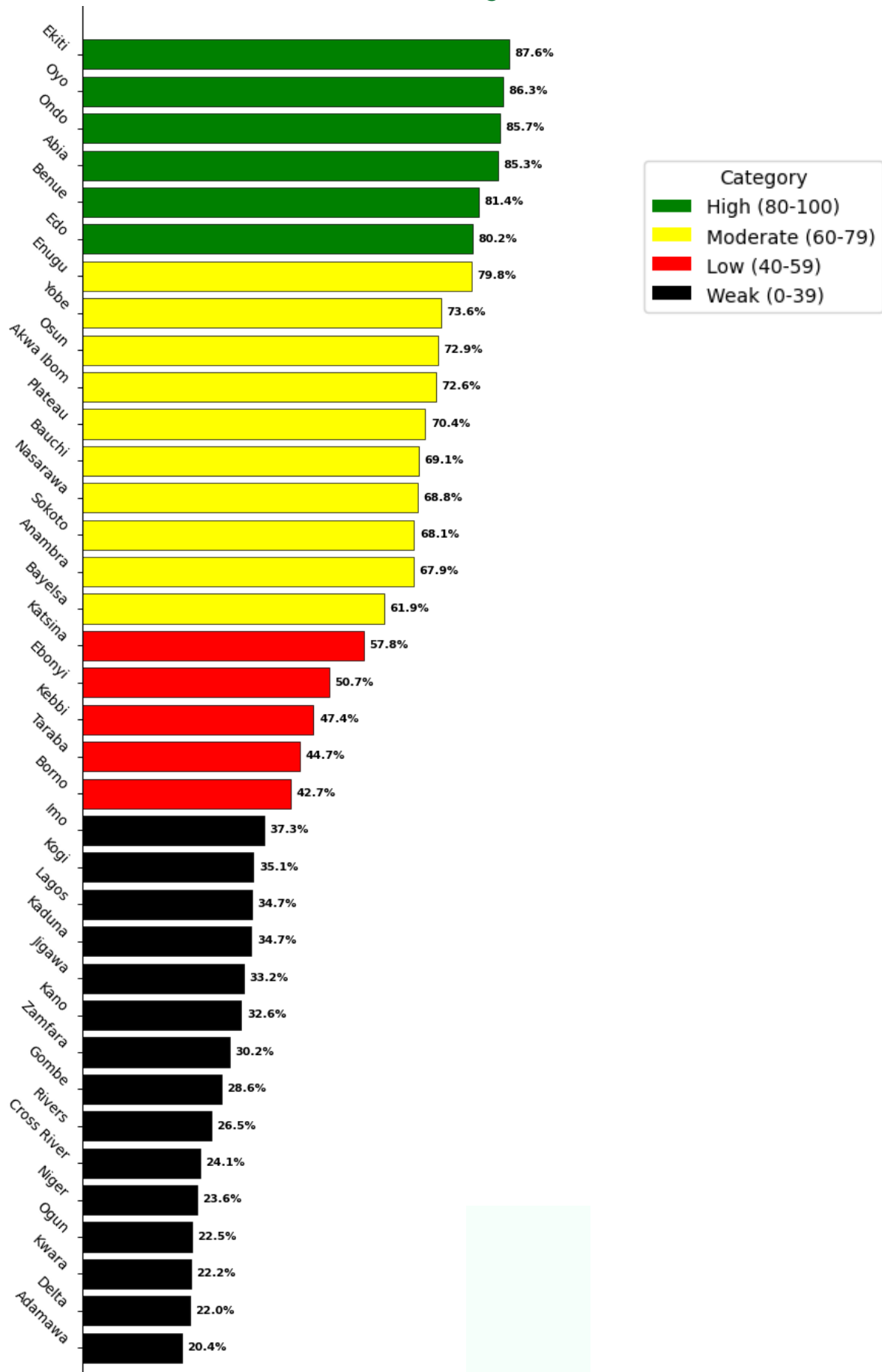
Score Range	Category	Meaning
80-100	High Civic Freedom	Strong protection of civil liberties; citizens, media, and civil society operate freely without intimidation; minimal or no misuse of state power
60-79	Moderate Civic Freedom	Civic space is generally open but with occasional restrictions, harassment, or administrative barriers affecting expression and association
40-59	Low Civic Freedom	Noticeable constraints on civic activity; recurring restrictions on expression, assembly, or CSO operations; risk of politically motivated interference
0-39	Weak Civic Freedom	Severe limitations on civil liberties; frequent repression, intimidation, or misuse of security agencies; civic space is highly constrained



## Data Highlight

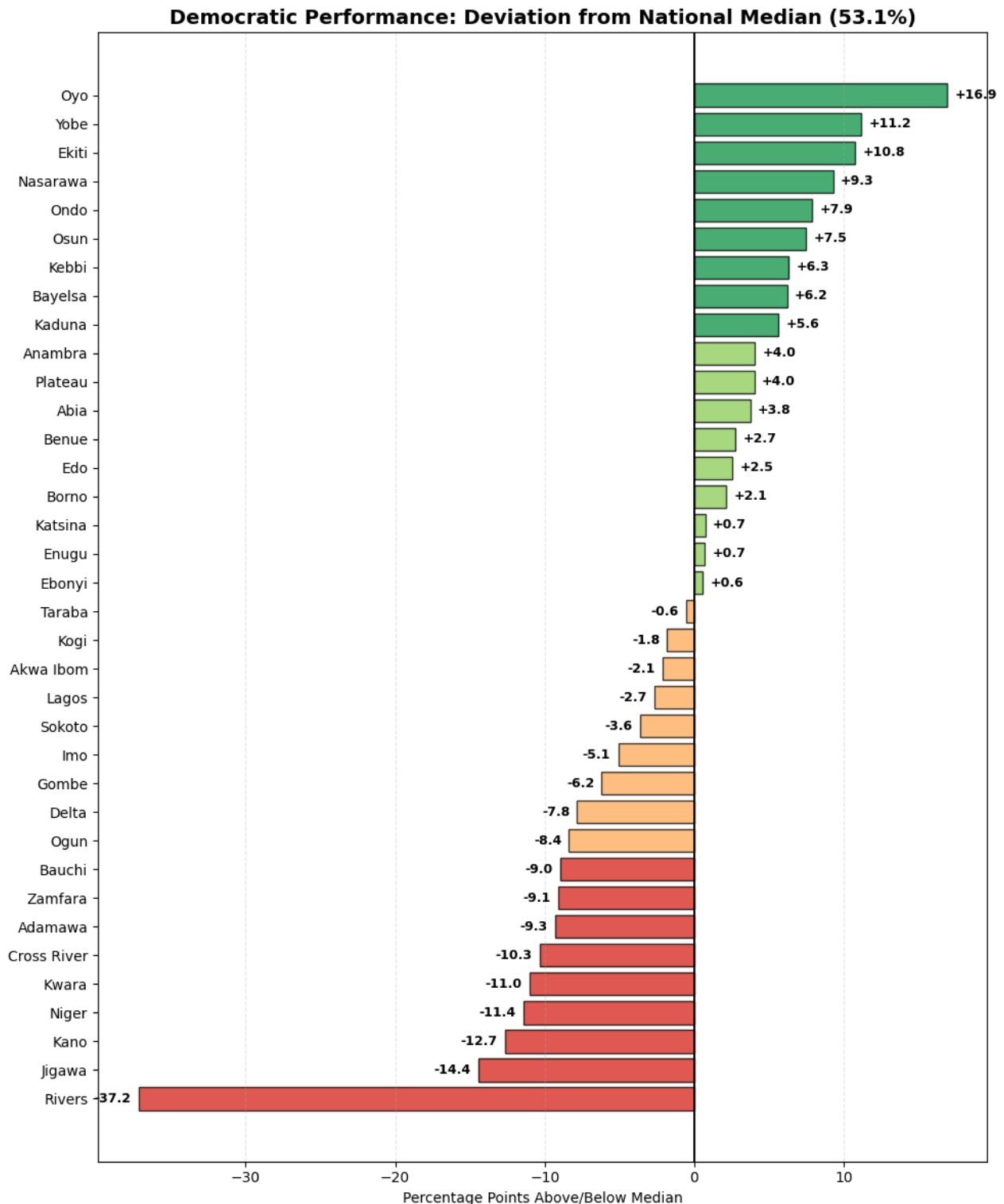
- Only 6 states (16.7%) fall within High Civic Freedom, where civil liberties are broadly protected, and civic actors operate with minimal restriction.
- 10 states (27.8%) fall within Moderate Civic Freedom, where civic space exists but remains inconsistent or occasionally constrained.
- 15 states (41.7%) fall within Low Civic Freedom, indicating noticeable and recurring restrictions on civic activity.
- 5 states (13.9%) fall within Weak Civic Freedom, where civil liberties are severely constrained, and civic space is highly restricted.
- In total, 20 states (55.6%) operate within low or weak civic freedom conditions, reflecting significant pressure on civic space across the country.

## State of Civil Liberties in Nigerian States - 2025



# Deviation Analysis:

## How States Fared in Democratic Performance Compared to National Median (53.1%)



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*The chart shows that democracy in Nigeria's sub-national units (states) is not defined by a simple hierarchy of strong and weak states. Instead, it is characterised by a narrow middle, a limited number of leading performers, and a more pronounced group of underperforming states.*

**Note: The national median (53.1%) is the midpoint of all state scores when listed from lowest to highest. It separates the states into two groups, with half scoring above it and half below. It is determined by assembling the 36 state scores and averaging the two middle values.**

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## Data Highlight

- The national median of 53.1% confirms that Nigeria's subnational democratic baseline is functional but limited, not strong.
- Only 6 states significantly outperform the system, showing that democratic strength is concentrated in a small group.
- Most states cluster tightly around the median, indicating a compressed system with limited differentiation in performance.
- The negative side of the distribution is longer and deeper than the positive side, revealing that democratic underperformance is more severe than in states that overperform than the national median. This is pointing to systemic weaknesses that are more entrenched than strengths that are widespread.
- The gap between the best and worst-performing states exceeds 50 percentage points, revealing substantial inequality in how democracy functions across Nigerian states.

# Understanding the Deviation Analysis

The deviation analysis helps us understand the size of the performance gap, not just the ranking of states. Instead of only asking which state came first or last, it shows how far each state is from the national median score of 53.1%, which represents the minimum reference point for democratic functioning in this assessment. Since this median falls within the moderate performance category, it suggests that the typical Nigerian state has democratic processes in place, but these processes remain limited in depth and effectiveness.

Only a few states perform clearly above the national median. States from Oyo (+16.9) to Osun (+7.5) show stronger positive deviation, meaning they are noticeably ahead of the national pattern. Their performance suggests better alignment between institutions, citizen participation, and civic space. However, many states are clustered close to the median, showing that democratic performance across the country is generally compressed within a narrow range.

The most important concern is the number of states that fall well below the median. In several cases, the level of underperformance is deeper than the level of overperformance seen among the better-performing states. This means democratic weaknesses are more widespread and more strongly entrenched than democratic strengths. Rivers State stands out as a major outlier, performing far below the rest of the distribution and requiring a more context-specific interpretation.

## Strategic Implications

**1. Reform should focus on proximity to the median:** States that sit just below the national baseline represent the most immediate opportunity for improvement. For example, states such as Taraba, Kogi, and Akwa Ibom are close enough to the median that targeted reforms in institutional transparency, participation, or inclusion could shift them into the above-median category within a short period.

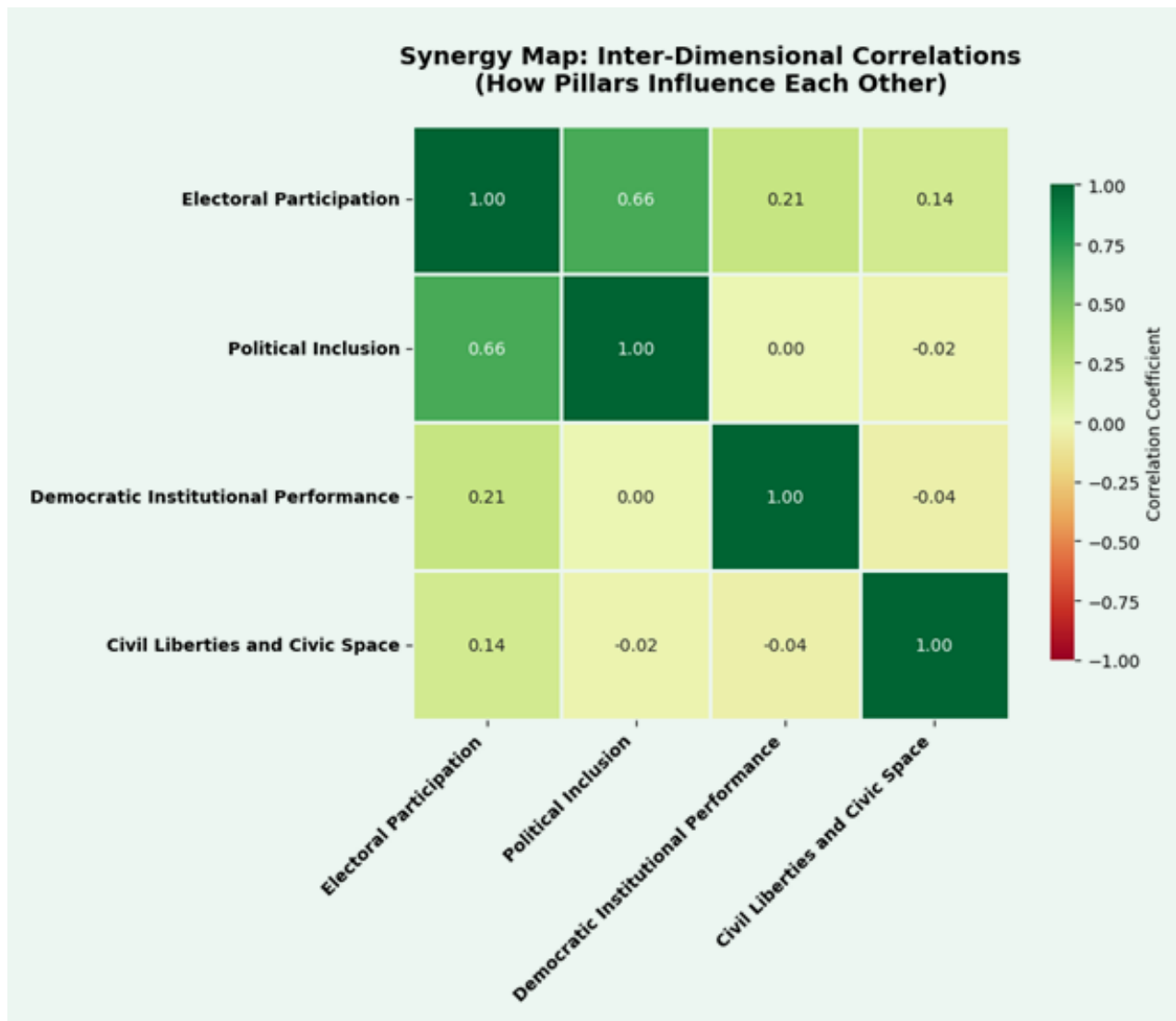
**2. Peer learning within regions is viable:** States operating in similar contexts can learn from one another. For instance, stronger-performing northern states such as Kebbi and Yobe demonstrate that improved outcomes are achievable within comparable structural conditions. This creates opportunities for practical, context-specific learning rather than reliance on external models.

**3. The lower tail requires differentiated intervention:** States with larger negative deviations require more than incremental reform. Their position suggests deeper structural constraints, which may include weak institutional coordination, limited inclusiveness, or restricted civic space. These states require more sustained and targeted engagement.

**“** *Deviation analysis reveals that Nigerian states cluster near a 53.1% national median, highlighting widespread democratic weaknesses. While few overperform, many fall significantly below the baseline, requiring targeted reforms in transparency, regional peer learning, and differentiated interventions for underperforming states.* **”**



## Synergy Analysis: How Each Dimension Influences the Others




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*The synergy map measures how the four pillars move together across states. It is a Systemic Health Check. It measures whether the four pillars of democracy in Nigeria are working together as a unified system or operating as isolated “islands.”*

*In a perfectly integrated democracy, you would see high positive numbers (near 1.0) across the board, meaning an improvement in one area (like voting) naturally triggers an improvement in others (like institutional strength). In Nigeria, however, the map reveals a fragmented system.*

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## Understanding the Synergy Analysis:

The Synergy Map provides a system-level explanation of how democratic performance operates across Nigerian states. It examines whether key DPI dimensions reinforce one another or function independently.

The analysis shows that democratic performance is not strongly integrated. The most important pattern is immediately clear. Only one relationship stands out as structurally meaningful: **Electoral Participation and Political Inclusion (0.66)**. Every other relationship is weak or negligible. This means that democratic performance across Nigerian states is not driven by a single reinforcing system. It is fragmented.

The electoral participation and political inclusion relationship is the only stable linkage, and it is still a moderate positive relationship, indicating that higher citizen engagement is associated with improved representation of women, youth, and other marginalised groups. This suggests that participation can serve as a practical entry point for expanding inclusion. Participation is not just an outcome. It is a driver. It creates pressure that opens political space, even if partially. This aligns with comparative democratic evidence. Studies using Afrobarometer data<sup>2 3</sup> show that higher civic engagement often correlates with demands for inclusion and accountability in governance processes. What DPI added is that this relationship is observable at the subnational level in Nigeria.

However, the remaining pillars show weak or negligible relationships. Institutional performance does not strongly correlate with participation or inclusion, indicating that improvements in electoral engagement do not automatically translate into stronger governance processes. Similarly, civil liberties and civic space appear largely disconnected from both institutional performance and inclusion. This pattern indicates that democratic systems at the state level operate as partially independent components rather than a fully aligned system. Gains in one area do not consistently produce gains in others.

**Practical Implications:** The findings have direct implications for policy and programming.

First, reform strategies cannot rely on a single-entry point. **Strengthening elections alone will not improve institutional performance or civic space.** Each pillar requires targeted intervention.

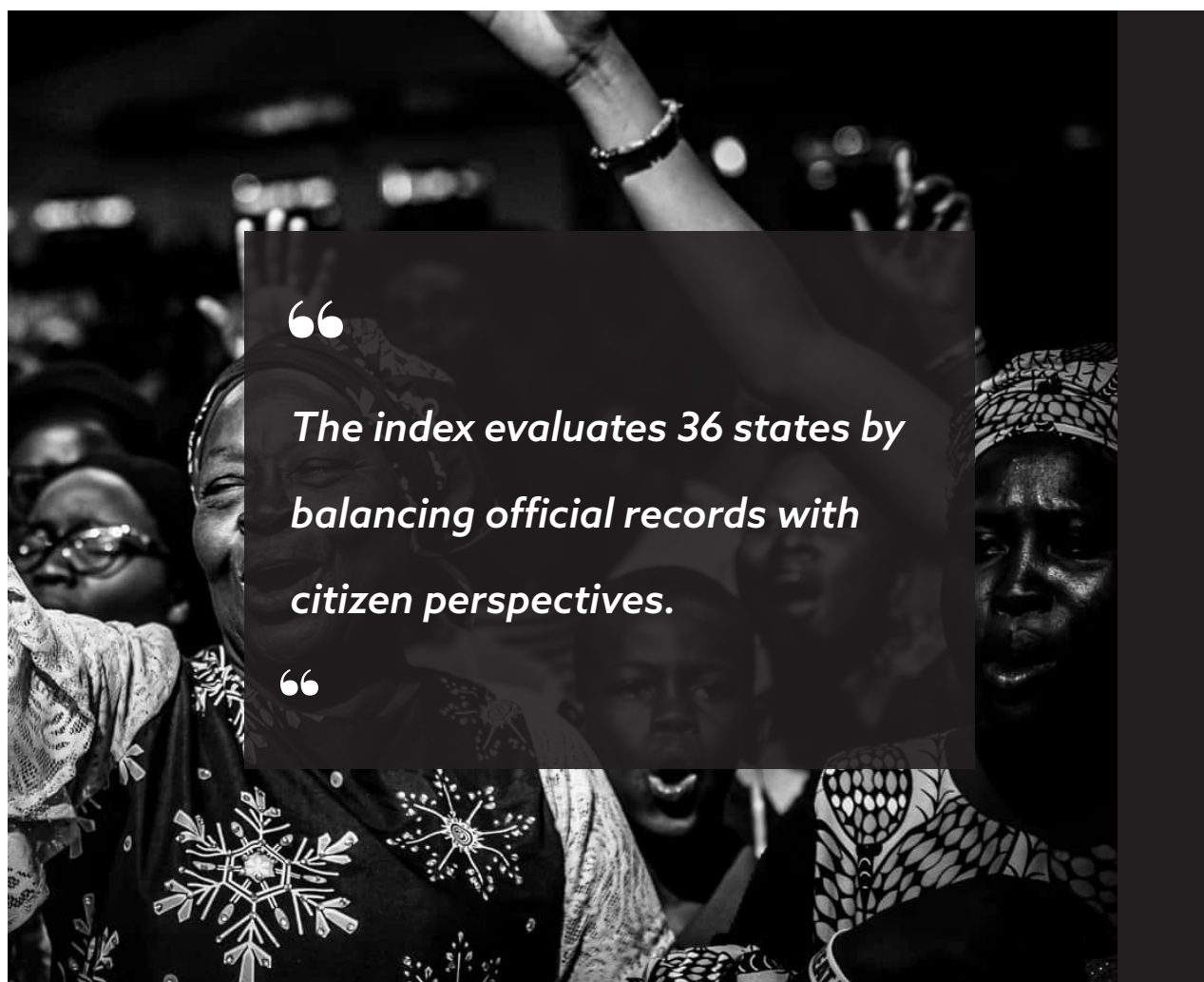
Second, electoral participation remains the most viable leverage point for influencing inclusion. Programmes that increase voter engagement, political awareness, and competitiveness are likely to have downstream effects on representation.

Third, institutional reform must be deliberate and cannot be assumed to follow political

participation. Improving legislative oversight, transparency, and fiscal accountability requires focused institutional strengthening efforts.

Fourth, civic space requires independent protection. The weak relationship between civic freedoms and institutional performance suggests that formal structures do not automatically safeguard rights. This reinforces the need for explicit safeguards for freedom of expression, association, and civil society operations.

Overall, the synergy analysis shows that democratic performance in Nigeria is characterised by partial linkages rather than systemic coherence. This reinforces the need for a multi-dimensional reform approach that addresses participation, inclusion, institutional quality, and civic space as distinct but interconnected areas.



# Typology Analysis: Four Patterns of Democratic Performance Across States

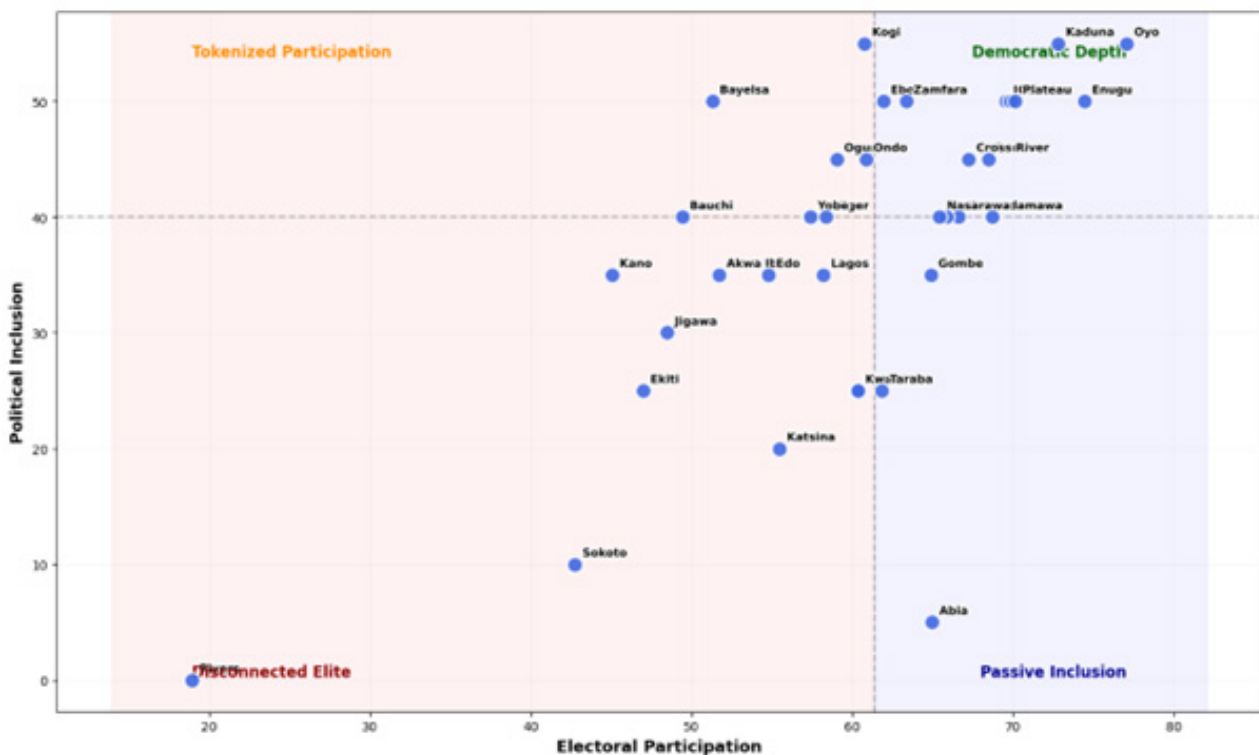
The typology analysis translates statistical relationships into practical governance patterns across Nigerian states. By pairing key dimensions, the analysis shows how different aspects of democracy interact in practice rather than in isolation.

Four patterns (typologies) were looked into, and these represent the most impactful "Governance Profiles" identified in the 2025 data. They categorise states not just by their scores, but by the behaviour of their democracy. The four patterns' rests on the intersections of the DPI dimensions:

- Electoral Participation vs Political Inclusion
- Electoral Participation vs Institutional Effectiveness
- Political Inclusion vs Institutional Effectiveness
- Institutional Effectiveness vs Civil Liberties

Across the four typologies, a consistent pattern emerges. Democratic performance is not uniform across dimensions. States often perform well in one area while lagging in another, producing distinct governance profiles.

## Pattern 1: Electoral Participation (Mobilisation) vs Political Inclusion (Representation)



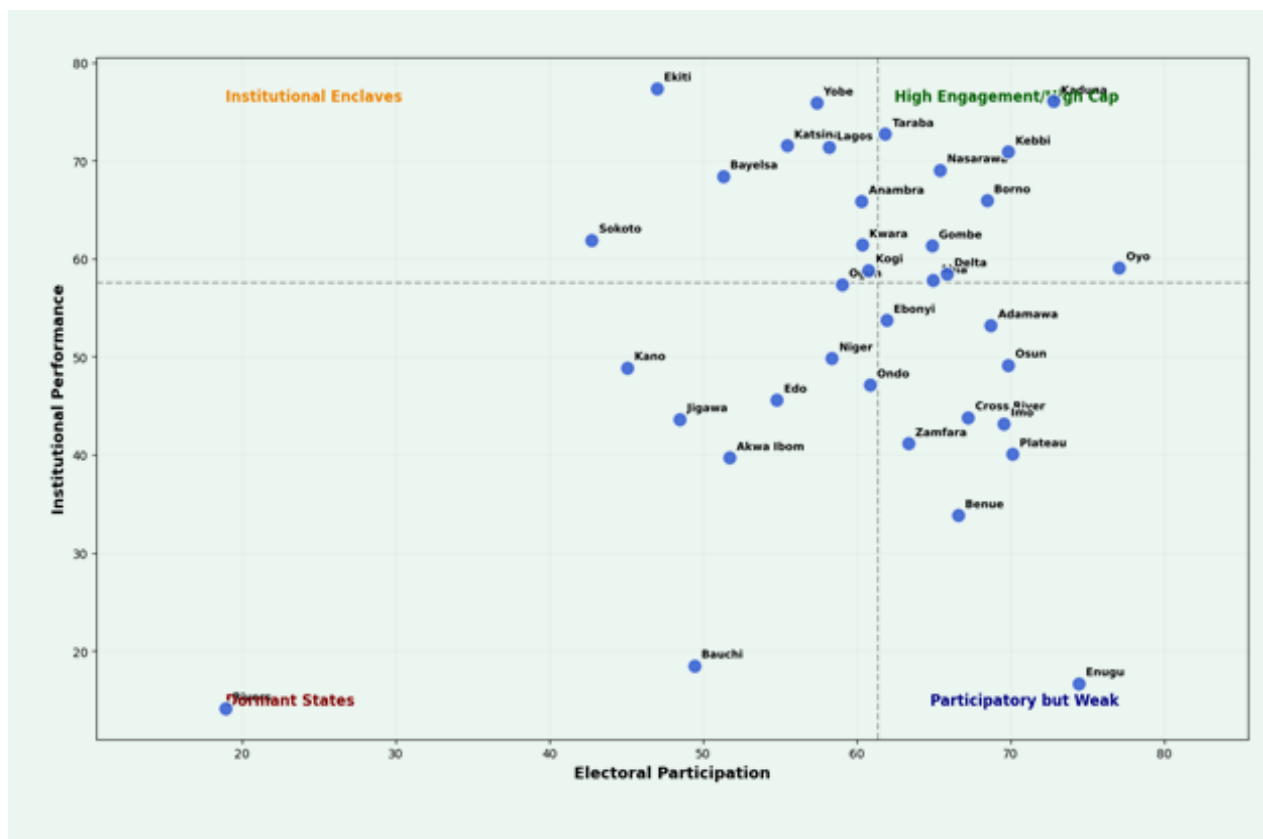
This pattern explains whether citizen engagement translates into representation. Four patterns were observed:

- States with high participation and high inclusion show alignment between citizen mobilisation and political openness. These are functionally responsive systems.
- States with high participation but low inclusion reflect tokenised engagement. Citizens vote, but representation does not follow.
- States with low participation but moderate inclusion suggest elite-driven inclusion, where representation exists without strong public engagement.
- States with low participation and low inclusion show structural disengagement.

<b>Pattern (Typology) Category</b>	<b>States</b>
<b>Democratic Depth</b>	Benue, Nasarawa, Plateau, Adamawa, Borno, Kaduna, Kebbi, Zamfara, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo, Cross River, Delta, Osun, Oyo
<b>Tokenized Participation</b>	Kogi, Niger, Bauchi, Yobe, Bayelsa, Ogun, Ondo
<b>Passive Inclusion</b>	Gombe, Taraba, Abia
<b>Disconnected Elite</b>	Kwara, Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Sokoto, Anambra, Akwa Ibom, Edo, Rivers, Ekiti, Lagos

The relationship between electoral participation and political inclusion reveals that citizen engagement can influence representation, but this relationship is not consistent across all states. In some contexts, participation translates into inclusive governance, while in others it does not. The key implication is that participation is necessary but not sufficient. In some states, the participation–inclusion link holds. In others, it breaks.

## Pattern 2: Electoral Participation vs Institutional Performance



This pattern tests whether citizen engagement translates into institutional strength. The patterns show:

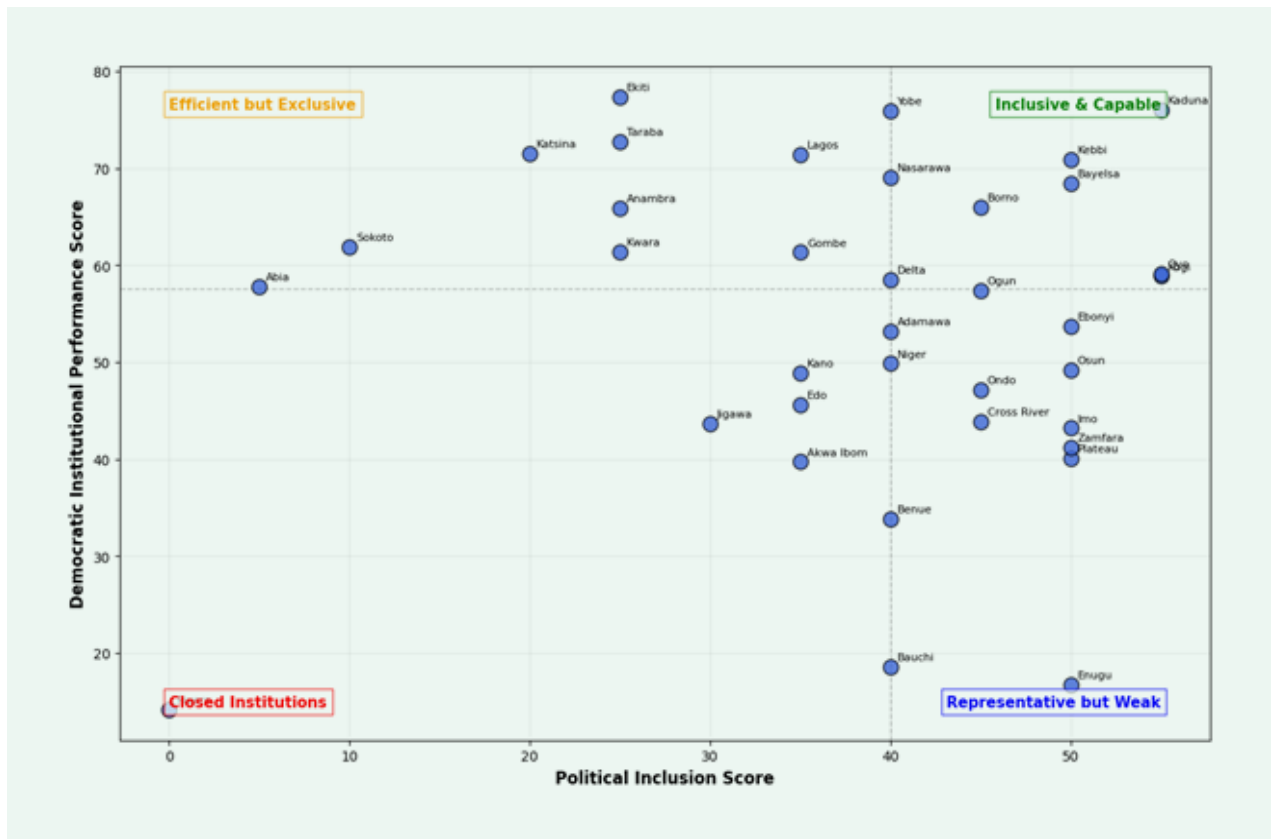
- States with high participation and strong institutions demonstrate aligned democratic functioning.
- States with high participation but weak institutions indicate procedural democracy. Elections occur, but governance systems remain weak.
- States with low participation but relatively strong institutions reflect technocratic governance with limited citizen influence.

Pattern (Typology) Category	States
Active & Functional	Nasarawa, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, Kaduna, Kebbi, Delta, Oyo
Participatory but Weak	Benue, Plateau, Adamawa, Zamfara, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo, Cross River, Osun

Institutional Enclaves	Kogi, Kwara, Yobe, Katsina, Sokoto, Anambra, Bayelsa, Ekiti, Lagos
Dormant States	Niger, Bauchi, Jigawa, Kano, Akwa Ibom, Edo, Rivers, Ogun, Ondo

The comparison between participation and institutional performance shows that electoral activity does not automatically lead to stronger institutions. Some states demonstrate high levels of participation alongside weak institutional effectiveness, indicating that elections alone are insufficient to drive governance quality. By implication, participation alone does not build institutional capacity. Institutional effectiveness depends on internal governance practices, not just electoral activity.

### Pattern 3: Political Inclusion vs Institutional Performance



This pattern examines whether representation aligns with institutional capability. Observation shows:

- States with high inclusion and strong institutions combine representation with functional governance.
- States with high inclusion but weak institutions suggest representational

expansion without administrative capacity.

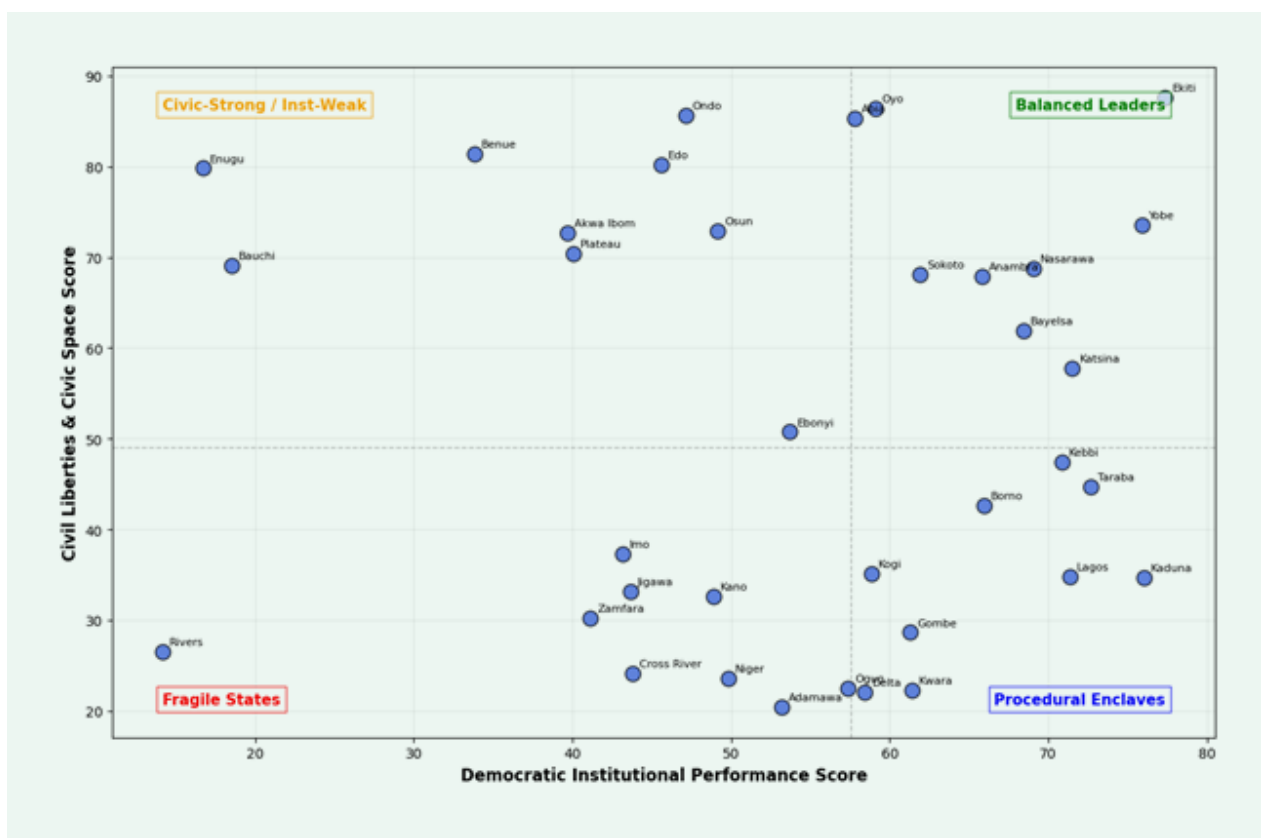
- States with low inclusion but strong institutions reflect efficient but exclusionary governance structures.
- States with low inclusion and weak institutions indicate systemic governance failure.

<b>Pattern (Typology) Category</b>	<b>States</b>
<b>Inclusive &amp; Capable</b>	Kogi, Nasarawa, Borno, Yobe, Kaduna, Kebbi, Bayelsa, Delta, Oyo
<b>Efficient but Exclusive</b>	Kwara, Gombe, Taraba, Katsina, Sokoto, Abia, Anambra, Ekiti, Lagos
<b>Representative but Weak</b>	Benue, Niger, Plateau, Adamawa, Bauchi, Zamfara, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo, Cross River, Ogun, Ondo, Osun
<b>Closed Institutions</b>	Jigawa, Kano, Akwa Ibom, Edo, Rivers

The analysis of political inclusion and institutional strength further shows that representation and institutional capacity do not necessarily move together. States may expand inclusion without strengthening governance systems, while others maintain functional institutions with limited representation. The implication is that inclusion and capacity are not automatically linked. Representation can expand without strengthening institutions, and strong institutions can exist without inclusive governance.



## Pattern 4: Institutional Performance vs Civic Liberties



This Pattern is the most structurally important because it captures the relationship between state power and citizen freedom. Data shows

- States with strong institutions and open civic space represent balanced systems where governance and freedoms coexist.
- States with strong institutions but restricted civic space reflect controlled governance environments.
- States with weak institutions but open civic space show active civic environments without strong state capacity.
- States with weak institutions and restricted civic space face compounded governance risks.

<b>Typology Category</b>	<b>States</b>
<b>Balanced States</b>	Nasarawa, Yobe, Katsina, Sokoto, Abia, Anambra, Bayelsa, Ekiti, Oyo
<b>Procedural Enclaves</b>	Kogi, Kwara, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, Kaduna, Kebbi, Delta, Lagos
<b>Civic-Strong Enclaves</b>	Benue, Plateau, Bauchi, Ebonyi, Enugu, Akwa Ibom, Edo, Ondo, Osun
<b>Fragile States</b>	Niger, Adamawa, Jigawa, Kano, Zamfara, Imo, Cross River, Rivers, Ogun

The relationship between institutional performance and civic space highlights a critical structural issue. Institutional strength does not guarantee the protection of civic freedoms. This indicates that formal governance systems and lived democratic experiences are not always aligned. The implication is significant. Institutional strength does not guarantee civic freedom. This reinforces the finding from the heatmap that civic space operates independently.

All these typologies taken together, demonstrate that democratic performance at the state level is shaped by multiple interacting but partially independent systems. This reinforces the need for targeted and coordinated reforms that address participation, inclusion, institutional effectiveness, and civic space as distinct components of democratic practice.



**Top Lessons  
and Trends  
from the State  
of Democracy in  
Nigeria.**

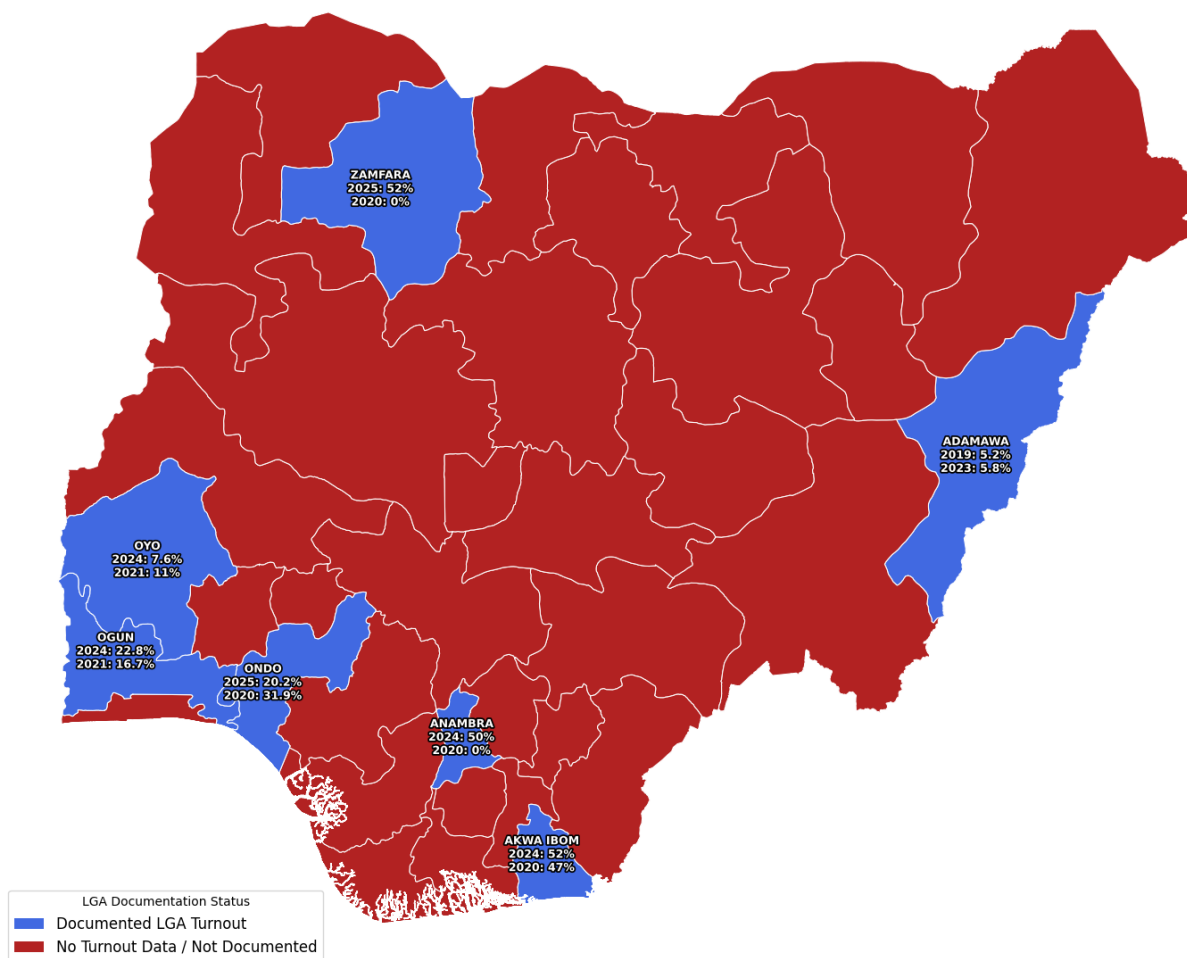


## Trend 1: LGA Elections Were Conducted in Most States, but with Weak Transparency and Poor Documentation

A majority of states conducted local government elections between 2024 and 2025, indicating continuity in subnational electoral cycles and formal compliance with statutory requirements. On the surface, this suggests that electoral processes at the local level remain active across the federation. However, the integrity of these elections is undermined by persistent transparency deficits and weak documentation systems.

Across most states, critical electoral data such as voter turnout and party-level vote shares were either unavailable or not disclosed by State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs). This pattern was widespread, with only a limited number of states, including Adamawa, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, and Zamfara, providing any form of turnout data.

Local Government Election Documentation (2023-2025)



The absence of verifiable electoral data raises substantive concerns about the credibility of local government elections. It limits the ability of citizens, observers, and analysts to independently assess electoral competitiveness, participation levels, and the legitimacy of declared outcomes. In practical terms, this creates a situation where elections are conducted without the minimum transparency standards required for public accountability.

**Two key explanations emerge from the data. First, low or inconsistently documented may point to limited citizen participation or challenges in accurately capturing and reporting electoral figures. Second, the absence of publicly available electoral data suggests constraints around transparency, which may reflect broader capacity or accountability challenges within subnational electoral management systems.**

Additional structural issues compound these concerns. Accessibility of legal electoral frameworks remains inconsistent at the subnational level, limiting public understanding of electoral processes and rights. Political party boycotts, particularly by opposition parties, further weaken competitiveness and reduce the representative quality of outcomes. These patterns reinforce concerns about whether local elections function as genuine democratic contests or as controlled administrative exercises.

Across all geopolitical zones, citizens consistently expressed low confidence in the integrity of local government elections within their states. Stakeholders reported that, in many cases, electoral processes are shaped more by informal selection and appointment practices than by open and competitive voting. Where elections are conducted, official records are often limited to final lists of declared winners, with no accompanying data on vote distribution, turnout, or polling units and ward-level results.

The pattern observed in Nigeria aligns with concerns raised in broader electoral integrity research. Studies such as the Electoral Integrity Project highlight that transparency in results reporting, including disaggregated vote data and turnout figures, is a core determinant of credible elections. Where such transparency is absent, perceptions of electoral legitimacy decline significantly.<sup>4 5</sup>

At the subnational level, the implications are more pronounced. Local governments represent the closest tier of governance to citizens, and weaknesses in electoral credibility at this level undermine the foundations of democratic participation and accountability. The findings from the DPI therefore point to a structural deficit in the legitimacy of local electoral processes, driven not by the absence of elections, but by deficiencies in transparency, documentation, and independent oversight.

## Data Highlight



- 36 out of 36 states (100%) conducted or reported **local government elections within the review period**, indicating formal compliance.
- 23 out of 36 states (63.9%) recorded at least one **political party boycott** in local elections.
- Approximately 34% of political parties that express interest **do not participate in local elections**, indicating weak electoral competitiveness.
- 36 out of 36 states (100%) show **significant gaps in LGA election transparency and documentation quality**.

### Trend 2: Inconsistent Participation in Political Party Activities at the Local Level

The data reveals a clear disconnect between the formal structure of Nigeria's multi-party system and its operational reality at the local government level. While states record an average of 18 political parties, nearly one-third of registered parties are either excluded, inactive, or unwilling to engage in grassroots electoral processes.

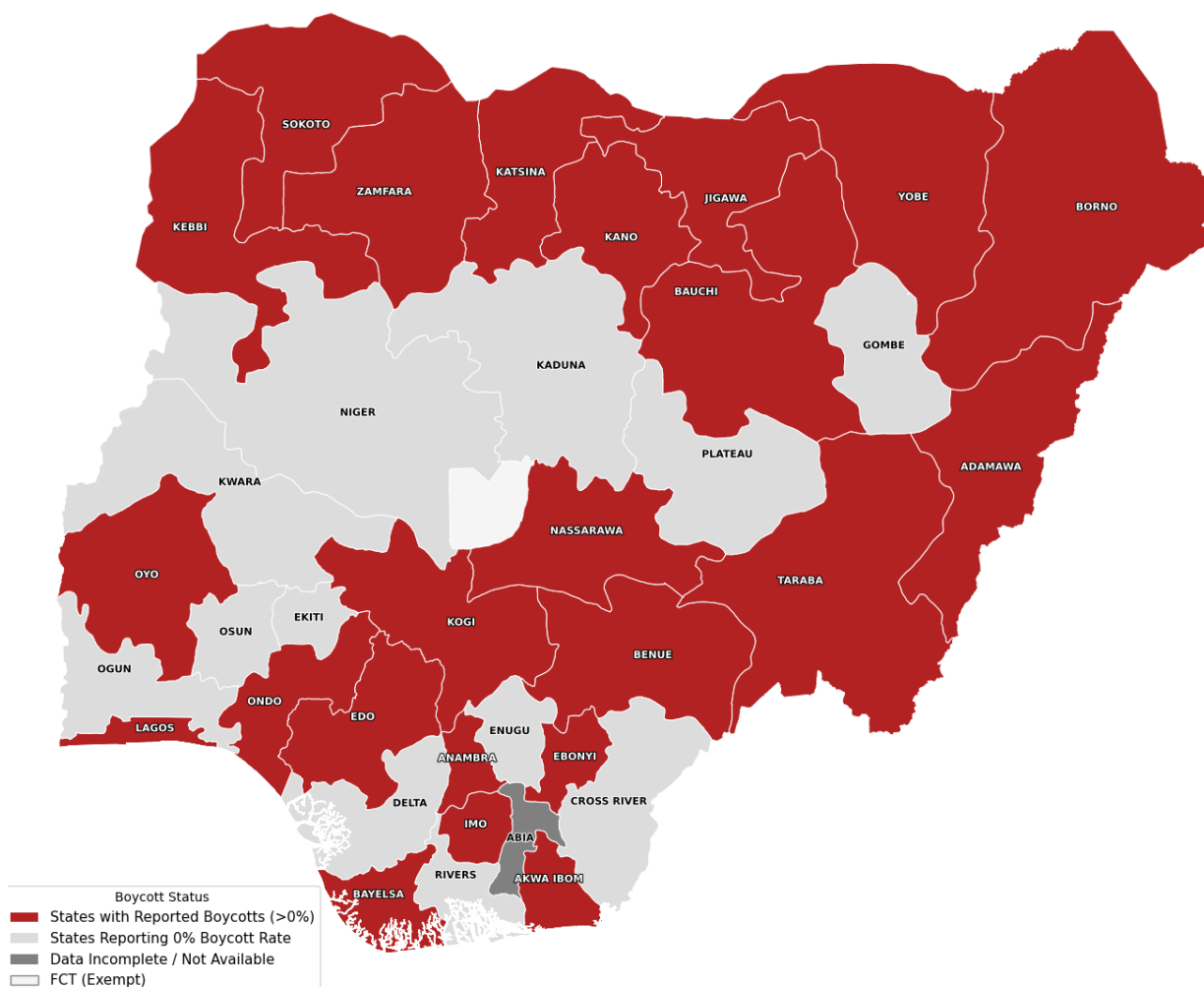
Metric	Value
Average Parties Present per State	18
Overall Participation Rate (Interested/Present)	65.99%
Overall Boycott Rate (Boycotted/Interested)	34.1%
Number of States Reporting > 0 Boycott	23

This participation gap is reinforced by the prevalence of political withdrawal. A total of 23 states reported at least one instance of party boycott, with a national boycott rate of 30.64 per cent. The affected states include Adamawa, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Bauchi, Bayelsa, Benue, Borno, Ebonyi, Edo, Imo, Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Kogi, Lagos, Nasarawa, Ondo, Oyo, Sokoto, Taraba, Yobe, and Zamfara.

The scale and spread of election boycotts point to a systemic challenge rather than isolated political choices. When a significant share of political actors withdraws from the process, it signals reduced confidence in the independence of State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) and concerns about the fairness of the electoral environment.

This dynamic often results in low-contest elections or outcomes dominated by a single party, reinforcing one-party dominance at the local level. Over time, this weakens representation and reduces incentives for accountability in local governance.

**Nigeria: Mapping Political Resistance and Election Boycott Trends (2024-2025)**



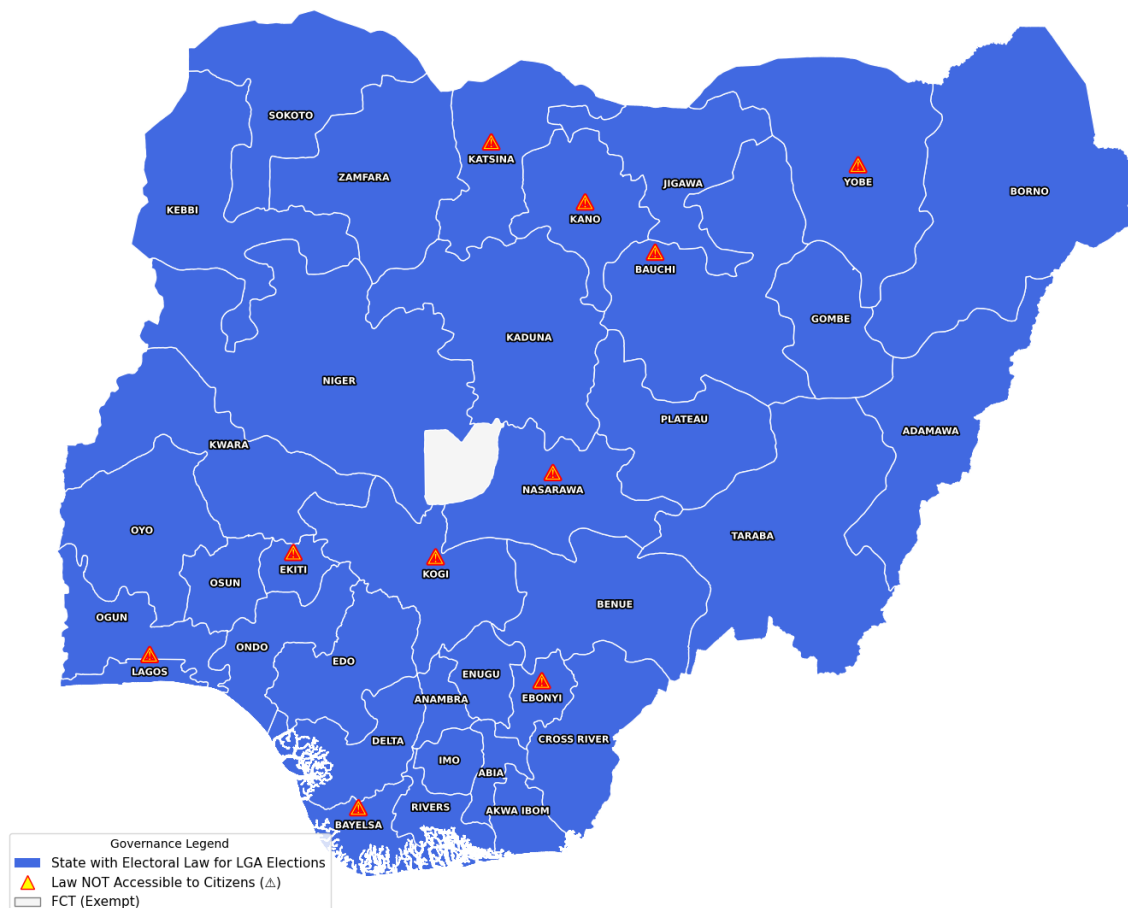
These findings align with broader assessments of Nigeria’s electoral landscape. International and National organisations have consistently highlighted concerns about the independence and credibility of SIECs, particularly in local government elections. Addressing this trend requires reforms that strengthen the independence, transparency, and credibility of SIECs, alongside measures that build confidence and ensure equitable participation for all political actors.

### Trend 3: Restricted Public Access to Electoral Legal Frameworks

Findings show a clear distinction between the existence of electoral laws and their accessibility to the public. All 36 states reported having legal frameworks guiding local government elections, indicating full structural compliance with statutory requirements. However, this formal compliance does not translate into public accessibility.

In 10 states, representing 28 per cent of the country, these electoral laws are not accessible to citizens and opposition political parties not available through public-facing platforms or easily retrievable institutional channels. The affected states include Bauchi, Bayelsa, Ebonyi, Ekiti, Kano, Katsina, Kogi, Lagos, Nasarawa, and Yobe.

**Nigeria: Presence and Citizen Accessibility of LGA Electoral Laws (2025)**



## Data Highlight



- 36 out of 36 states (100%) have an electoral law guiding local government elections.
- 10 out of 36 states (27.8%) do not provide public access to these electoral laws.
- 26 out of 36 states (72.2%) make electoral laws accessible to citizens, though accessibility for PWDs remains limited.

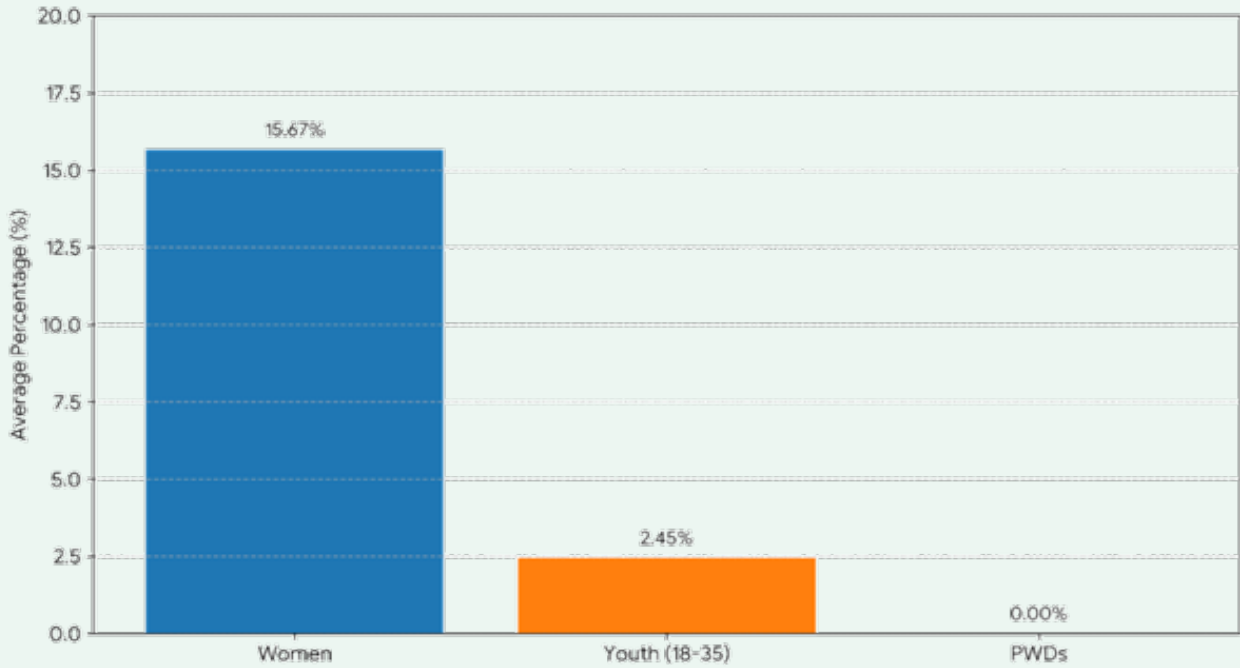
Limited public access to electoral laws weakens the regulatory foundation of local democracy by turning these laws into internal administrative tools rather than public document. Electoral laws are intended to clarify procedures, timelines, dispute-resolution mechanisms, and participation requirements. When they are not accessible, citizens, political parties, civil society organisations, and the media are unable to fully understand or engage with the electoral process, creating information gaps between electoral authorities and other stakeholders.

This lack of accessibility undermines both transparency and institutional legitimacy. Without clear and publicly available rules, it becomes difficult to assess whether electoral procedures are applied consistently and fairly, limiting external oversight and reinforcing perceptions of opacity. Strengthening electoral governance therefore requires not only the enactment of laws but their deliberate publication and dissemination in accessible formats. Without this, the gap between formal legality and practical accessibility will continue to constrain the credibility of local democratic processes.

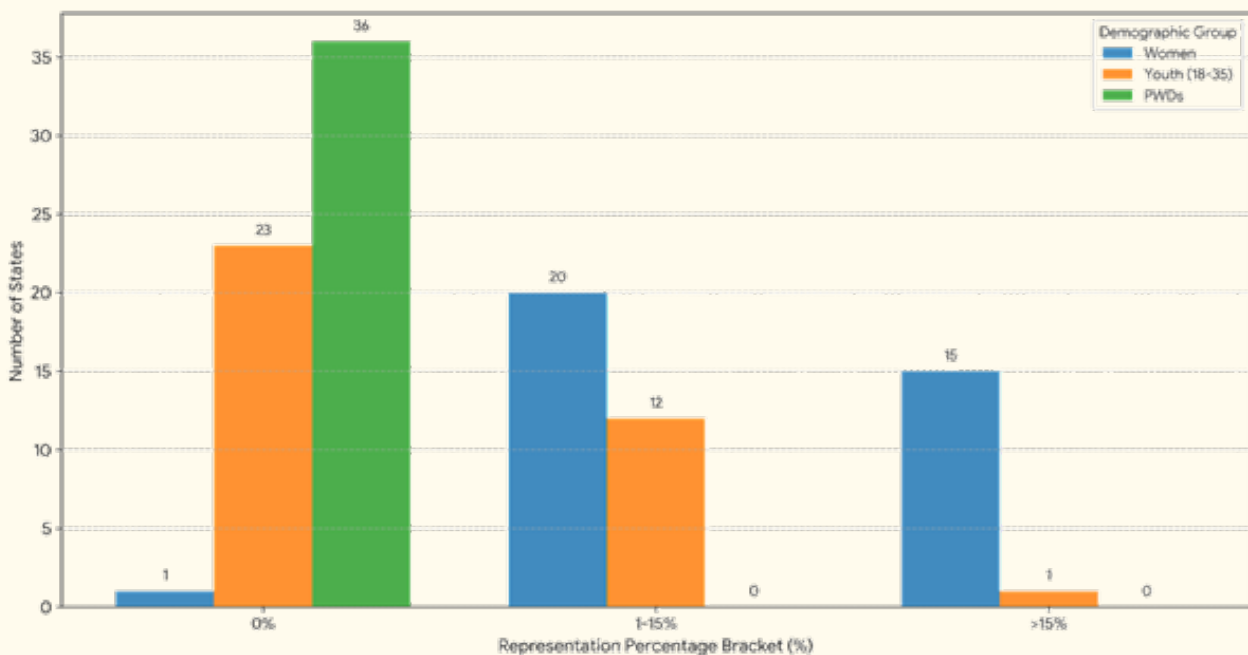


# State of Appointive Positions in Nigerian States

National Average Proportion of Marginalized Groups in State Commissioner Appointments (2025)



Distribution of States by Representation Brackets in Commissioner Appointments



## Trend 4: Executive Appointments Show Low Representation of Women



15.67%

Average proportion of women in Commissioner appointments

*With the exception of Rivers State, where data collection coincided with declared state of emergency, 35 out of 36 states recorded at least some level of female representation in executive cabinets.*

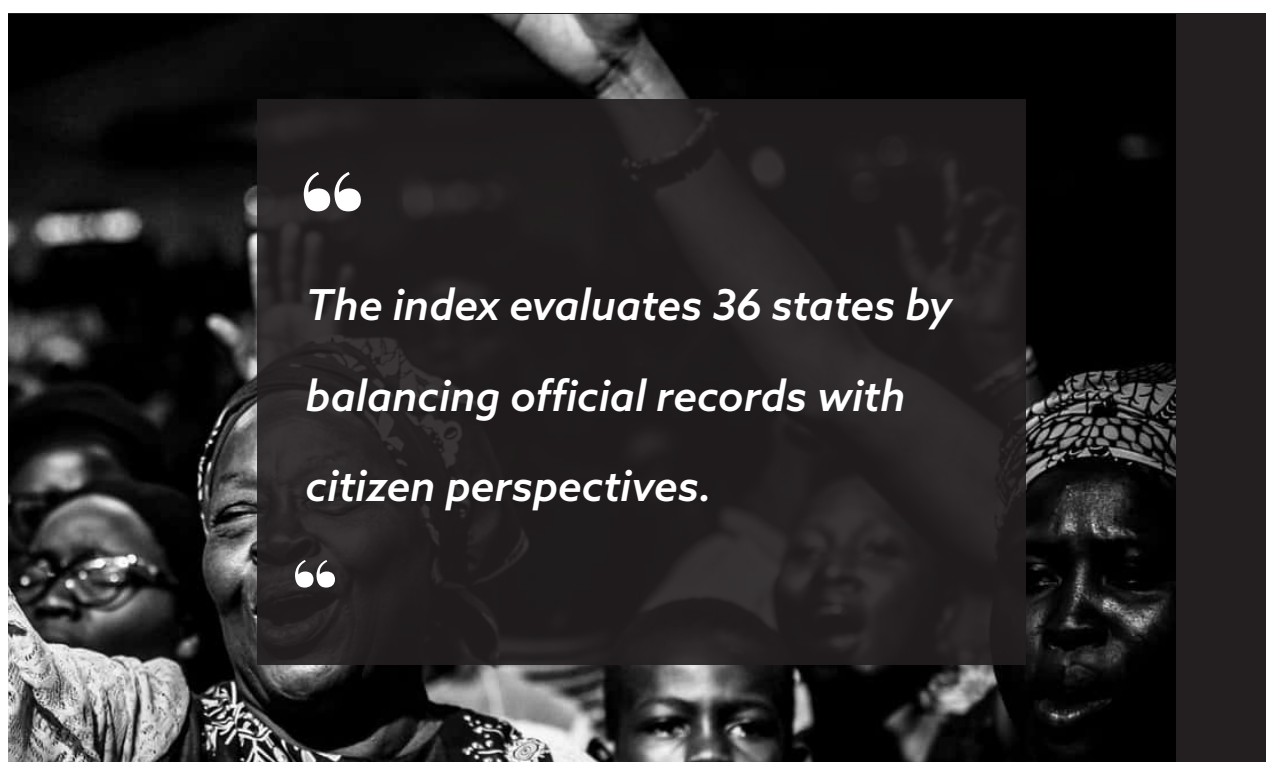
The data indicates that women's representation in commissioner-level appointments averages 15.67 per cent nationally. This places female inclusion below the 35 per cent affirmative action benchmark, despite modest gains across states. With the exception of Rivers State, where data collection coincided with declared state of emergency, 35 out of 36 states recorded at least some level of female representation in executive cabinets.

Distribution patterns show that 20 states fall within the 1–15 per cent range, while 15 states exceed 15 per cent representation. This suggests gradual progress but limited depth. Women remain present in executive structures, yet their representation does not approach parity or policy commitments.

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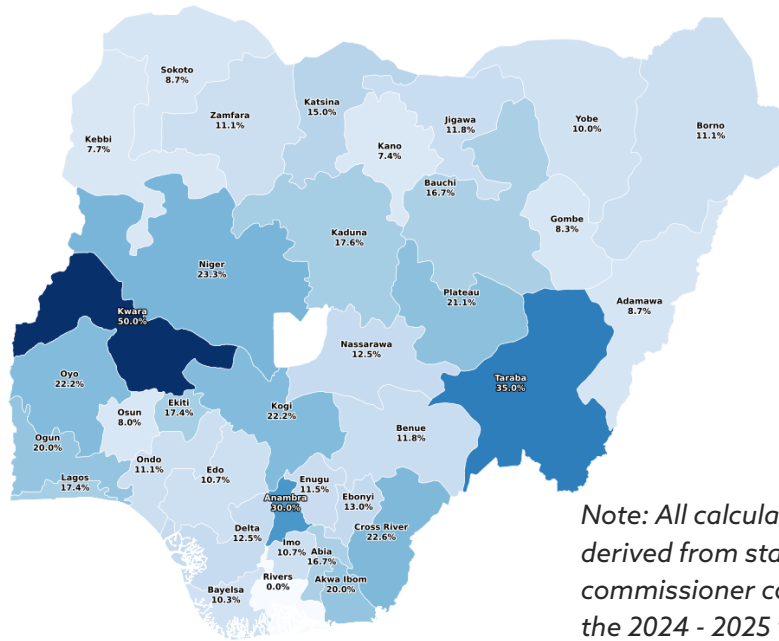
*The index evaluates 36 states by balancing official records with citizen perspectives.*

”



## Trend 5: Very Low Inclusion and Representation of Youth in Commissioners' Appointments

Nigeria: Women in Commissioner Appointments (Updated 2025 Data)



Note: All calculations are derived from state-specific total commissioner counts as provided in the 2024 - 2025 validated dataset.



**2.45%**

Average proportion of youth in Commissioner appointments

Most states, 23 out of 36, recorded zero youth representation at the commissioner level. Only one state, Zamfara, exceeded 15 per cent youth representation.

This pattern highlights a disconnect between demographic realities and governance structures. Nigeria has one of the largest youth populations globally, yet this demographic weight is not reflected in executive leadership. Participation by young people remains concentrated in electoral engagement rather than institutional representation.

The implications are structural. Limited youth inclusion reduces generational diversity in policymaking and weakens the responsiveness of governance systems to youth-related priorities such as employment, education, and innovation.

## Data Highlight



- 36 out of 36 states (100%) have 0% representation of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) as commissioners.
- 23 out of 36 states (63.9%) have 0% youth representation among commissioners.
- 35 out of 36 states (97.2%) have at least one female commissioner, indicating minimal baseline inclusion.
- Only 1 out of 36 states (2.8%) has more than 15% youth representation in executive appointments.
- 20 out of 36 states (55.6%) have women's representation below 15% in commissioner positions.



## Trend 6:

### Judicial Gender Balance Is Stronger but Remains Structurally Uneven



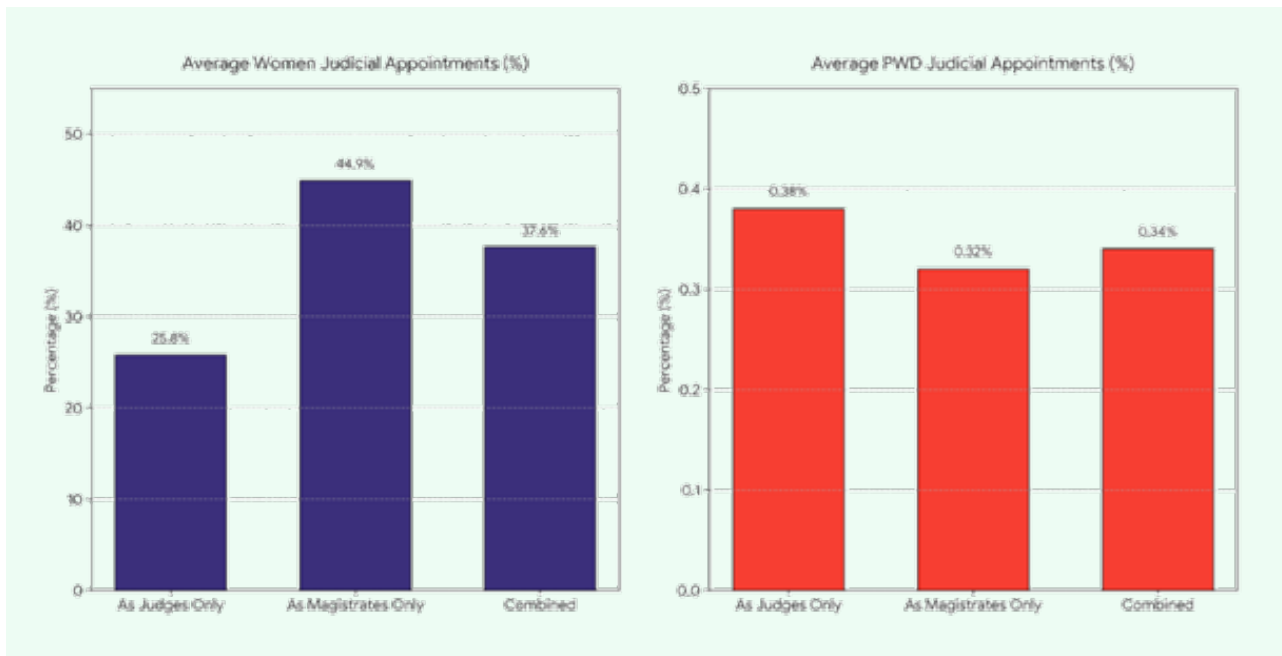
# 37.6%

Average proportion of women in judicial appointments

The judiciary presents a more complex inclusion pattern. Women's representation is higher compared to executive appointments, with an average of 25.8 per cent among judges and 44.9 per cent among magistrates, resulting in a combined judicial average of 37.6 per cent. This indicates that female participation in the judiciary approaches parity more closely than in political appointments.

However, this progress is uneven across judicial levels. While entry-level judicial positions are more inclusive, senior judicial appointments remain less accessible, indicating a vertical gap in representation.

At the same time, inclusion across other demographics remains limited. Persons with disabilities account for only 0.34 per cent of judicial appointments.



The data reveal a dual pattern. On one hand, the judiciary demonstrates that professional career pathways can support higher female representation compared to political appointments. On the other hand, it highlights persistent exclusion for persons with disabilities and younger professionals.

## Data Highlight

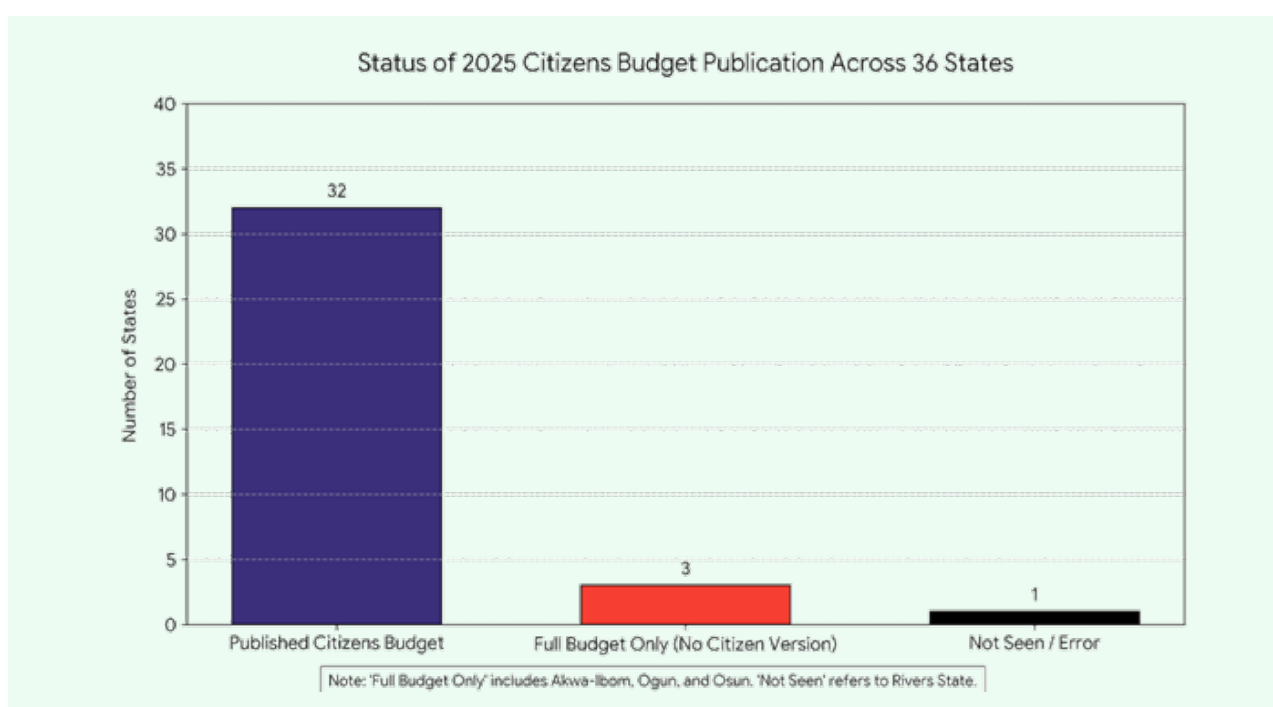


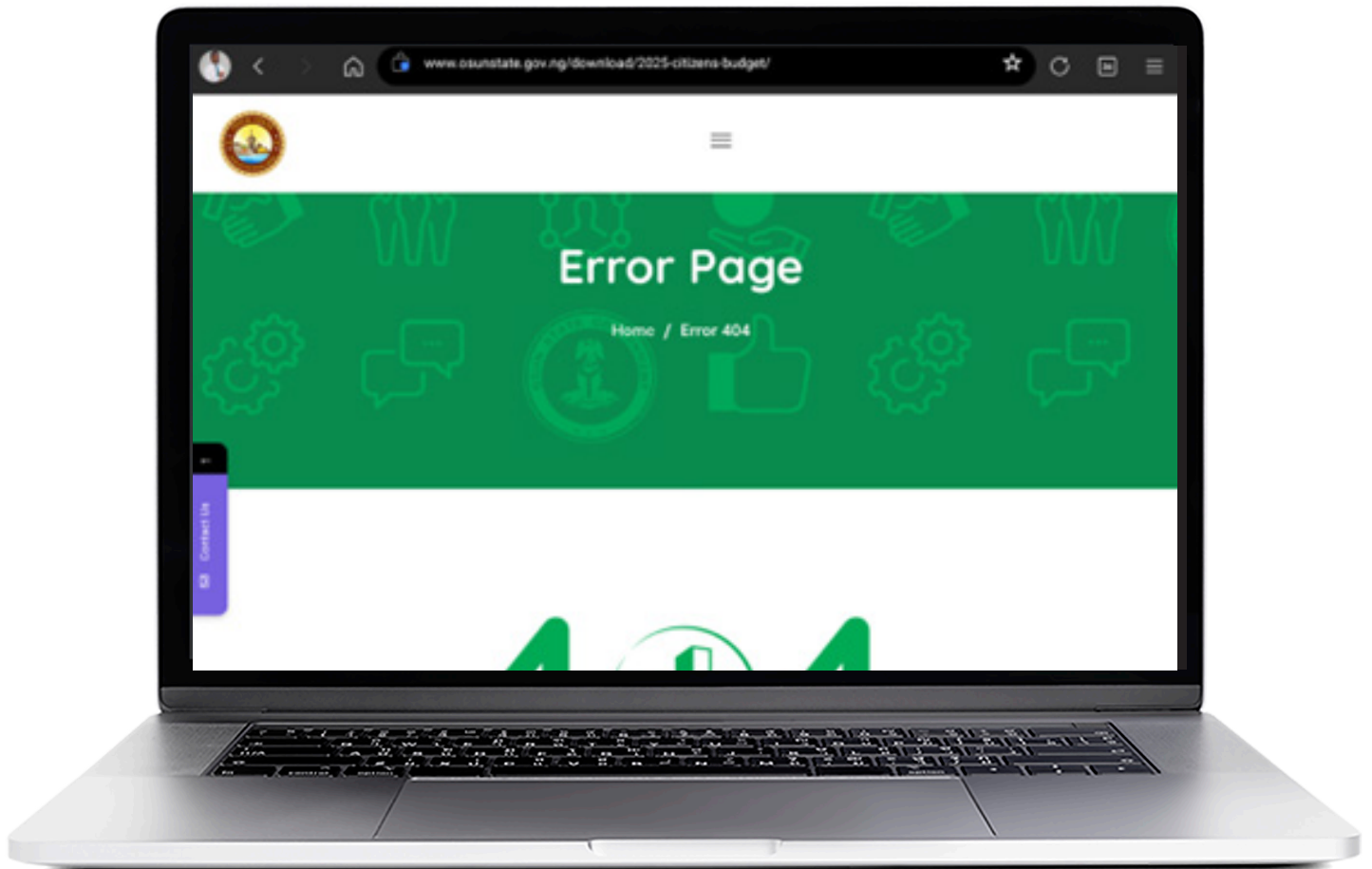
- Women account for approximately **37.6% of total judicial appointments**, indicating moderate gender inclusion.
- 36 out of 36 states (100%) show **near-zero representation of PWDs in the judiciary**.
- Youth representation in judicial appointments is **negligible across all states**, reflecting structural barriers to entry.
- A majority of states show **higher female representation at the magistrate level than at the judge level**.

### Trend 7:

### Budget Transparency Is Widespread but Functionally Uneven

The data shows that 32 states meet the technical requirement of publishing budget information, with 88.9 per cent providing a citizen-friendly version. This level of compliance reflects the influence of the State Fiscal Transparency, Accountability and Sustainability (SFTAS) programme, which tied fiscal transparency reforms to performance-based grants and drove widespread adoption of budget disclosure practices across states.<sup>6 7</sup>





However, this compliance masks a functional gap. In Akwa Ibom, Ogun and Osun, only full technical budgets are available, while Rivers State remains offline. In these cases, the absence of a simplified “Citizens’ Budget” creates a barrier to entry for non-expert users. Full budget documents are often complex, limiting the ability of citizens to interpret allocations, track spending priorities, or engage meaningfully in oversight. For budgeting to be truly participatory, the data must be presented in a format that empowers citizens to hold the government accountable during the implementation phase. The “Error 404” in Osun or the missing version in Ogun represents a breakdown in the “social contract” where transparency is promised but not functionally delivered.



## Trend 8:

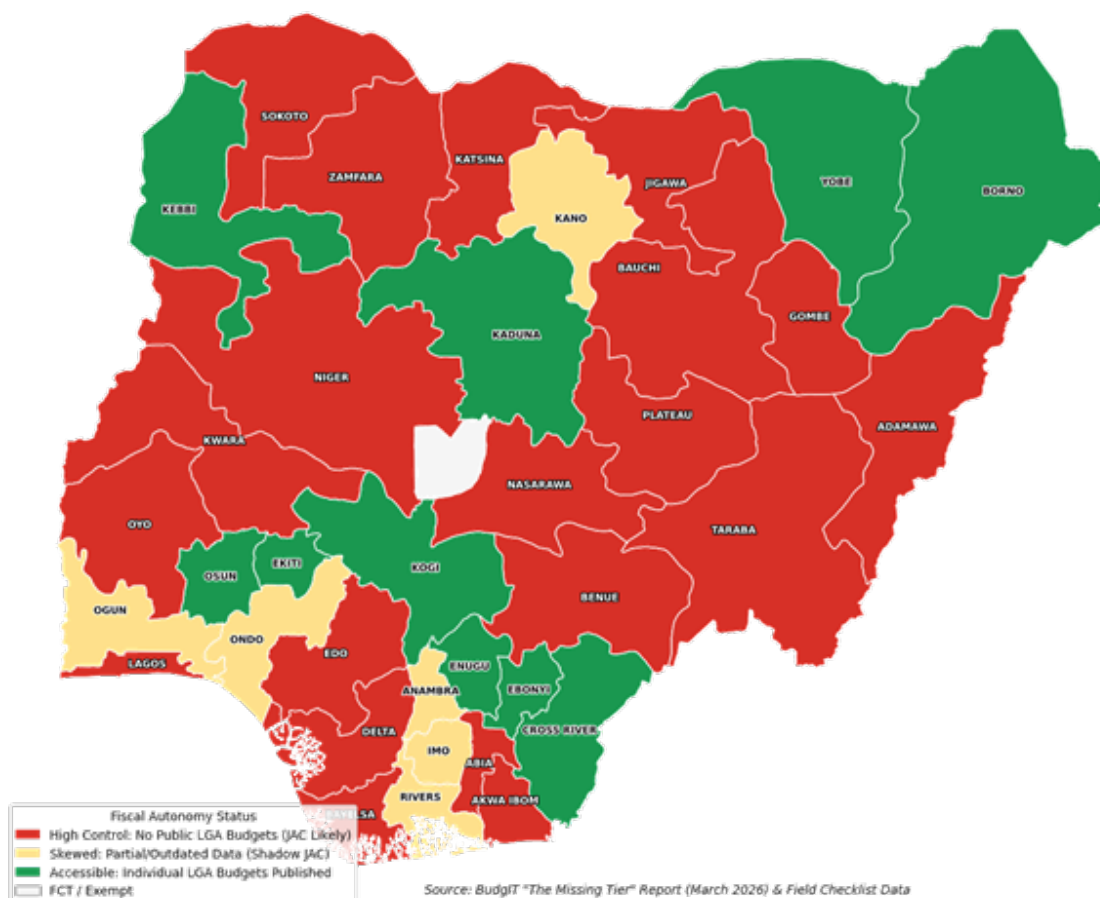
### Joint Accounts Continue to Undermine Local Government Autonomy

*Virtually all states run JAC directly or indirectly*

The absence of genuine financial autonomy at the Local Government Area (LGA) level remains a major constraint on democratic effectiveness and institutional independence in Nigeria's subnational governance system. Although LGAs are expected to function as the tier of government closest to citizens, their capacity to plan, budget, and deliver services is still heavily shaped by state-level control over local government funds. The continued use of the State Joint Local Government Account (JAC) allows state governments to retain significant influence over federal allocations meant for LGAs, weakening the ability of local councils to operate as strong, independent, and accountable democratic institutions.

The continued use of the State Joint Local Government Account (JAC) allows state governments to retain significant influence over federal allocations meant for LGAs, weakening the ability of local councils to operate as strong, independent, and accountable democratic institutions.

**Mapping LGA Budget Transparency & State Control (JAC Dynamics 2026)**



Despite the 2024 Supreme Court ruling mandating direct financial allocations to local governments, evidence suggests that most states continue to maintain JAC either directly or through modified arrangements. This has produced a pattern of **adaptive centralisation**, where formal compliance with financial autonomy exists on paper, while informal or legal mechanisms continue to preserve state control over LGA finances. In effect, some local governments may receive funds technically, but still lack real authority over how those funds are prioritised, managed, and spent. This limits institutional independence and weakens the foundations of accountable local governance.

National evidence reinforces the scale of the challenge. BudgIT's 2026 *The Missing Tier* report shows that in **26 states**, local government financial records are either unavailable or outdated, creating a "black box" around LGA finances. Of these, **20 states have no publicly available LGA budget data**, while **6 states provide only partial or outdated disclosures**. Only **10 states** demonstrate full budget transparency at the local government level. This shows that the problem is not only lack of financial autonomy, but also weak transparency systems and limited institutional openness. Where citizens cannot access LGA financial records, local governments operate with little public scrutiny, reducing accountability and weakening trust in grassroots institutions.

## Data Highlight



- 26 out of 36 states (72.2%) operate under opaque or partially transparent LGA financial systems, consistent with continued JAC influence.
- Only 10 out of 36 states (27.8%) demonstrate functional financial transparency at the local government level.
- Most states continue to exhibit centralised control over LGA finances, despite legal reforms supporting autonomy.

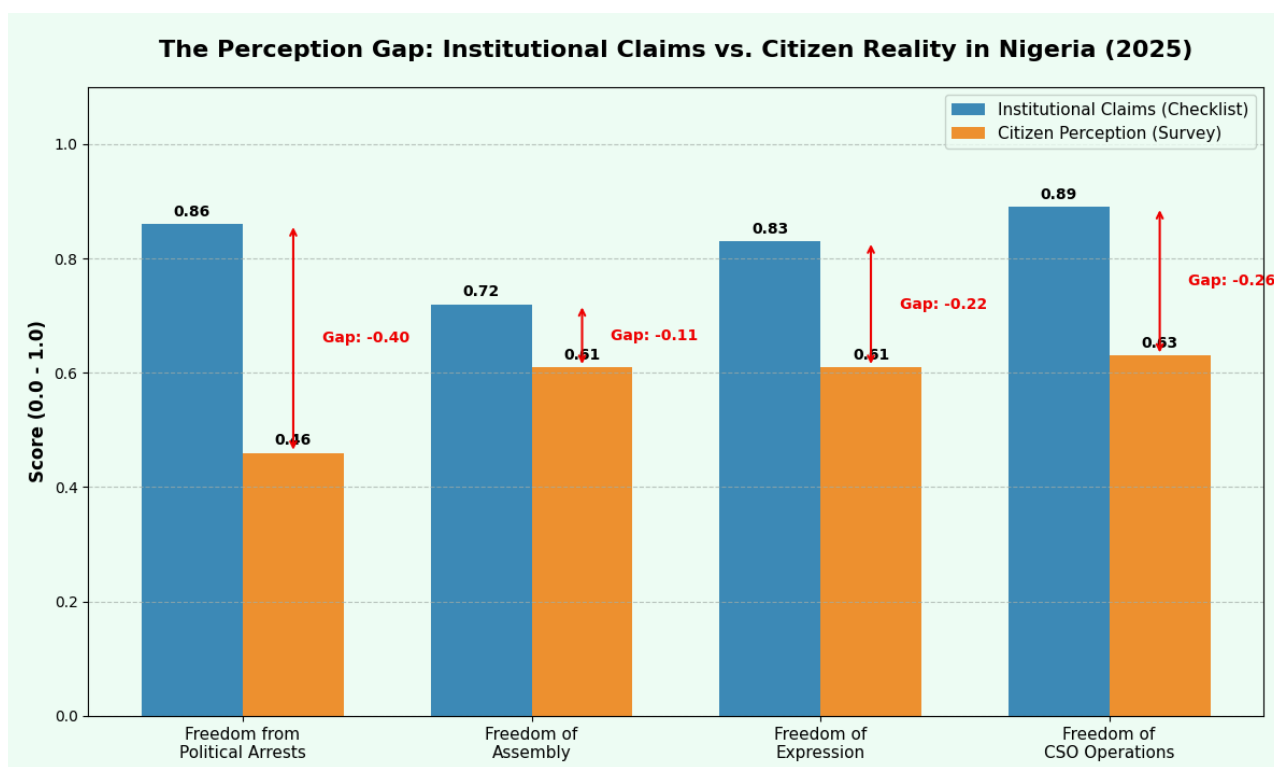
## Trend 9:

### Constraints on Civil Liberties Persist Despite Strong Institutional Claims

The comparison between institutional data and citizen perception of civil liberties reveals a consistent divergence in the assessment of civic space across states. Across all four measured indicators, institutional scores are significantly higher than citizen-reported experiences, indicating a systemic perception gap.

The most pronounced gap appears in freedom from politically motivated arrests, where institutional data records a high score of 0.86, while citizen perception stands at 0.46, producing a gap of  $-0.40$ . This disparity suggests that although formal records and official positions indicate limited misuse of security agencies, a substantial proportion of citizens surveyed perceive, or experience, political intimidation linked to state or informal security actors. The implication is that informal enforcement practices may persist outside formal reporting systems, weakening the credibility of institutional safeguards.

A similar pattern emerges in the operational space for civil society organisations. Institutional assessments indicate near-complete freedom, with a score of 0.89, yet citizen responses are lower at 0.63, creating a gap of  $-0.26$ . This suggests that while civil society groups can exist and operate formally, their activities may be constrained by administrative bottlenecks, regulatory pressure, or indirect forms of oversight that limit effective advocacy.



Freedom of expression also reflects a notable divergence. Institutional data records a score of 0.83, compared to a citizen score of 0.61, resulting in a gap of  $-0.22$ . This indicates that while legal protections and the presence of media platforms are recognised at the institutional level, lived experiences point to a more constrained environment characterised by self-censorship, reputational risks, or selective enforcement.

The smallest gap is observed in freedom of assembly, with institutional and citizen scores at 0.72 and 0.61, respectively, producing a gap of  $-0.11$ . Although narrower, this difference still reflects limitations in how freely citizens can organise or mobilise, particularly in politically sensitive contexts.

Taken together, these gaps point to a structural disconnect between formal democratic provisions and actual civic experience. Institutional data suggests the presence of legal safeguards and policy frameworks that support civic freedoms, while citizen data indicates that these protections are unevenly implemented in practice.



## Data Highlight

- 36 out of 36 states (100%) show a negative perception gap where citizens rate civic freedoms lower than institutional claims.
- The largest gap ( $-0.40$ ) is observed in freedom from politically motivated arrests, indicating widespread concern about the misuse of security agencies.
- 36 out of 36 states (100%) exhibit lower citizen confidence in freedom of expression and CSO operations compared to institutional reporting.

# Recommendations



These recommendations aimed to move state and sub-national institutions from procedural compliance to functional democratic performance, directly addressing the structural and perception gaps identified across the nine trends.

### **1. Strengthen Transparency and Independence of Local Government Elections**

State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) should adopt enforceable national minimum reporting standards requiring the full publication of election results, including voter turnout, party vote shares, and disaggregated ward-level data. INEC's national election reporting framework can serve as a benchmark, supported by institutionalised public access portals for real-time disclosure and archival access.

Critically, these transparency measures must be underpinned by the genuine institutional independence of SIECs from state executives and state assemblies are essential to safeguard electoral integrity, limit political interference, and rebuild public confidence in local government elections.

### **2. Guarantee Public Access to Electoral Legal Frameworks**

All states should mandate the publication of electoral laws in accessible formats, including simplified versions for citizens and adapted formats for persons with disabilities. Laws should be hosted on official state and SIEC websites with offline dissemination through civic education platforms.

Access to electoral frameworks should be treated as a core democratic obligation rather than an administrative option, enabling citizens, political actors and observers to engage meaningfully with electoral processes.

### **3. Increase Women's Representation in Executive Appointments**

State governments should adopt enforceable gender inclusion targets aligned with the 35 percent affirmative action benchmark. This should be integrated into executive appointment frameworks and monitored through public reporting.

Political leadership pipelines for women should be strengthened through deliberate nomination strategies, mentorship structures and collaboration with political parties and civil society organisations.

### **4. Expand Youth Inclusion in Governance Structures**

States should establish minimum youth representation thresholds in executive appointments and advisory roles. Beyond symbolic inclusion, youth appointees should be positioned in portfolios with decision-making authority.

Institutional reforms should link youth participation in elections to governance inclusion, ensuring that demographic representation translates into policy influence.

### **5. Address Structural Barriers to Inclusion in the Judiciary**

Judicial appointment processes should incorporate diversity criteria that promote inclusion of women, youth and persons with disabilities. This includes reviewing eligibility frameworks, recruitment pipelines and institutional accessibility.

Infrastructure and administrative reforms are required to ensure that courts are accessible to persons with disabilities, both as professionals and as users of the justice system.

### **6. Move from Budget Transparency to Participatory Budgeting**

States should complement budget publication with citizen-friendly formats that simplify key allocations, priorities and implementation plans. Budget summaries should be disseminated through multiple channels, including digital platforms and community-level engagements.

Institutional mechanisms for citizen participation in budgeting should be strengthened, including public hearings, feedback systems and post-budget tracking frameworks that allow citizens to monitor implementation.

### **7. Reform the State Joint Local Government Account (JAC) System**

Full implementation of direct financial autonomy of Local Government Areas should be enforced. States should eliminate practices that re-centralise funds through informal or proxy arrangements.

Local governments should publish their budgets, expenditures and financial reports in accessible formats. Strengthening fiscal transparency at the LGA level is essential to restoring accountability and service delivery at the grassroots.

### **8. Strengthen Enforcement of Civil Liberties Protections**

Administrative and regulatory barriers affecting civil society operations should be reviewed to ensure that organisations can operate without undue constraints. Media protections should be strengthened to reduce self-censorship and improve the quality of public discourse.

Bridging the gap between institutional claims and citizen experience requires shifting focus from legal provisions to enforcement, institutional independence and accountability.

# Data Flash

## Distribution of Executive Appointments (Commissioner) based on demographics

State	Women Commissioners	Youth (18-35) Commissioners	PWD Commissioners
Abia	4 out of 24	0 out of 24	0 out of 24
Adamawa	2 out of 23	2 out of 23	0 out of 23
Akwa-Ibom	4 out of 20	0 out of 20	0 out of 20
Anambra	6 out of 20	1 out of 20	0 out of 20
Bauchi	4 out of 24	3 out of 24	0 out of 24
Bayelsa	3 out of 29	0 out of 29	0 out of 29
Benue	2 out of 17	0 out of 17	0 out of 17
Borno	2 out of 18	0 out of 18	0 out of 18
Cross River	7 out of 31	0 out of 31	0 out of 31
Delta	4 out of 32	0 out of 32	0 out of 32
Ebonyi	3 out of 23	1 out of 23	0 out of 23
Edo	3 out of 28	0 out of 28	0 out of 28
Ekiti	4 out of 23	0 out of 23	0 out of 23
Enugu	3 out of 26	1 out of 26	0 out of 26
Gombe	2 out of 24	0 out of 24	0 out of 24
Imo	3 out of 28	0 out of 28	0 out of 28
Jigawa	2 out of 17	0 out of 17	0 out of 17
Kaduna	3 out of 17	0 out of 17	0 out of 17
Kano	2 out of 27	1 out of 27	0 out of 27
Katsina	3 out of 20	0 out of 20	0 out of 20
Kebbi	2 out of 26	0 out of 26	0 out of 26
Kogi	3 out of 18	1 out of 18	0 out of 18
Kwara	11 out of 22	1 out of 22	0 out of 22
Lagos	4 out of 23	0 out of 23	0 out of 23
Nasarawa	2 out of 16	1 out of 16	0 out of 16
Niger	7 out of 30	2 out of 30	0 out of 30
Ogun	4 out of 20	1 out of 20	0 out of 20

<b>Ondo</b>	2 out of 18	0 out of 18	0 out of 18
<b>Osun</b>	2 out of 25	0 out of 25	0 out of 25
<b>Oyo</b>	4 out of 18	1 out of 18	0 out of 18
<b>Plateau</b>	4 out of 19	0 out of 19	0 out of 19
<b>Rivers</b>	0 out of 0	0 out of 0	0 out of 0
<b>Sokoto</b>	2 out of 23	0 out of 23	0 out of 23
<b>Taraba</b>	7 out of 20	0 out of 20	0 out of 20
<b>Yobe</b>	2 out of 20	0 out of 20	0 out of 20
<b>Zamfara</b>	2 out of 18	3 out of 18	0 out of 18

### **Legislative Sitzings of the State House of Assembly (2025)**

<b>State</b>	<b>Number of Sitzings (out of 181)</b>
<b>Abia</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Adamawa</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Akwa-Ibom</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Anambra</b>	130 out of 181
<b>Bauchi</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Bayelsa</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Benue</b>	25 out of 181
<b>Borno</b>	96 out of 181
<b>Cross River</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Delta</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Ebonyi</b>	105 out of 181
<b>Edo</b>	181 out of 181
<b>Ekiti</b>	50 out of 181
<b>Enugu</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Gombe</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Imo</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Jigawa</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Kaduna</b>	150 out of 181
<b>Kano</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Katsina</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Kebbi</b>	144 out of 181
<b>Kogi</b>	100 out of 181
<b>Kwara</b>	44 out of 181

Lagos	No Data Provided
Nasarawa	120 out of 181
Niger	120 out of 181
Ogun	No Data Provided
Ondo	No Data Provided
Osun	No Data Provided
Oyo	No Data Provided
Plateau	No Data Provided
Rivers	0 out of 181
Sokoto	No Data Provided
Taraba	181 out of 181
Yobe	161 out of 181
Zamfara	No Data Provided

**LGA Election Turnout per State (Two Most Recent Cycles)**

State	Last Election Year	Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)	Turnout (Previous Cycle)
Abia	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Adamawa	2024	5.80% (2023)	5.20% (2019)
Akwa-Ibom	2024	52.00% (2024)	47.00% (2020)
Anambra	2024	50.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Bauchi	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Bayelsa	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Benue	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Borno	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Cross River	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Delta	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Ebonyi	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Edo	2023	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Ekiti	2023	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Enugu	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Gombe	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Imo	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Jigawa	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Kaduna	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Kano	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Katsina	2025	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
Kebbi	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)

<b>Kogi</b>	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
<b>Kwara</b>	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
<b>Lagos</b>	2025	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
<b>Nasarawa</b>	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
<b>Niger</b>	2025	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
<b>Ogun</b>	2024	22.80% (2024)	16.70% (2021)
<b>Ondo</b>	2025	20.20% (2025)	31.90% (2020)
<b>Osun</b>	2025	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
<b>Oyo</b>	2023	7.60% (2024)	11.00% (2021)
<b>Plateau</b>	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
<b>Rivers</b>	2025	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
<b>Sokoto</b>	2024	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
<b>Taraba</b>	2023	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
<b>Yobe</b>	2021	0.00% (2024)	0.00% (2020)
<b>Zamfara</b>	2025	52.00% (2025)	0.00% (2020)

### Governorship Election Turnout (Two Most Recent Cycles)

State	Most Recent Turnout (%)	Previous Turnout (%)
<b>Abia</b>	17.00% (2023)	22.99% (2019)
<b>Adamawa</b>	39.90% (2023)	45.88% (2019)
<b>Akwa-Ibom</b>	29.91% (2023)	33.97% (2019)
<b>Anambra</b>	21.50% (2025)	10.27% (2021)
<b>Bauchi</b>	38.50% (2023)	46.41% (2019)
<b>Bayelsa</b>	28.00% (2023)	54.83% (2019)
<b>Benue</b>	29.00% (2023)	34.75% (2019)
<b>Borno</b>	25.86% (2023)	55.66% (2019)
<b>Cross River</b>	27.00% (2023)	35.92% (2019)
<b>Delta</b>	22.06% (2023)	41.62% (2019)
<b>Ebonyi</b>	16.70% (2023)	23.20% (2019)
<b>Edo</b>	22.40% (2024)	27.00% (2020)

<b>Ekiti</b>	44.36% (2022)	36.50% (2018)
<b>Enugu</b>	27.76% (2023)	33.68% (2019)
<b>Gombe</b>	39.00% (2023)	45.25% (2019)
<b>Imo</b>	29.00% (2023)	33.28% (2019)
<b>Jigawa</b>	40.89% (2023)	55.15% (2019)
<b>Kaduna</b>	36.50% (2023)	49.10% (2019)
<b>Kano</b>	35.00% (2023)	40.19% (2019)
<b>Katsina</b>	39.00% (2023)	45.25% (2019)
<b>Kebbi</b>	39.39% (2023)	43.92% (2019)
<b>Kogi</b>	41.10% (2023)	37.80% (2019)
<b>Kwara</b>	27.76% (2023)	33.68% (2019)
<b>Lagos</b>	19.00% (2023)	35.60% (2019)
<b>Nassarawa</b>	34.80% (2023)	37.00% (2019)
<b>Niger</b>	33.33% (2023)	38.94% (2019)
<b>Ogun</b>	29.40% (2023)	35.49% (2019)
<b>Ondo</b>	24.80% (2024)	31.60% (2020)
<b>Osun</b>	42.16% (2022)	45.74% (2018)
<b>Oyo</b>	26.00% (2023)	43.60% (2019)
<b>Plateau</b>	40.00% (2023)	46.65% (2019)
<b>Rivers</b>	14.05% (2023)	34.00% (2019)
<b>Sokoto</b>	41.00% (2023)	57.39% (2019)
<b>Taraba</b>	32.65% (2023)	52.07% (2019)
<b>Yobe</b>	30.80% (2023)	41.00% (2019)
<b>Zamfara</b>	26.72% (2023)	47.22% (2019)

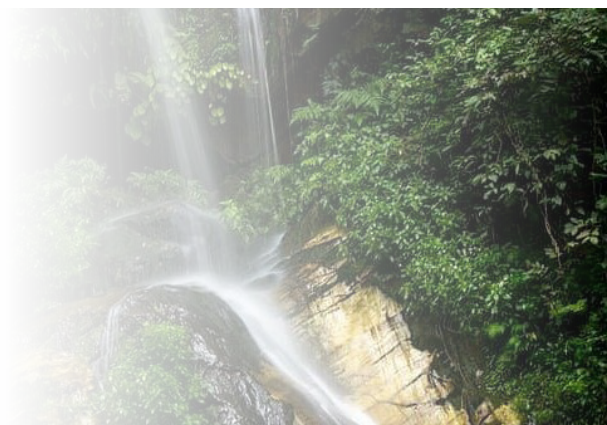


# State-by-State Democratic Performance Report

## South West

01.

# Ekiti State



*Ekiti ranks among the strongest-performing states nationally, driven by exceptional institutional performance and a highly open civic environment. Its first-place rankings in both institutional performance and civil liberties position it as a reference point for governance systems and civic openness. However, this strength is uneven. Electoral participation is among the weakest nationally, and political inclusion remains limited.*

*This creates a structural imbalance in which governance systems may appear efficient, but do not sufficiently translate into broad-based democratic engagement. The result is a comparatively high-performing but socially narrow democratic system, where institutional strength exists alongside limited citizen participation and representation.*

### State Performance Snapshot

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South West
DPI Category	Moderate Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	3rd (63.90%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	33rd (46.97%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	29th (25.00%)
Institutional Performance (Rank & Score)	1st (77.37%)

<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	1st (87.63%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Disconnected Elite
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Institutional Enclaves
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Efficient but Exclusive
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Balanced Leaders
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	63.9
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+10.8
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Top Tier (Leading)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	4 out of 23
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 23
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 23
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings</b>	50 out of 181
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2023
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024 )
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	44.36% (2022)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	36.50% (2018)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Published</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	2,398,957
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	3,398,177

<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	987,647
<b>No. of Collected PVCs (2023)</b>	958,052
<b>% of PVCs Collected (2023)</b>	97.00%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs (2023)</b>	29,595
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected (2023)</b>	3.00%

Ekiti has historically demonstrated a politically aware electorate and relatively structured governance processes. The state’s smaller population and administrative scale often allow for more efficient institutional coordination compared to larger states. Insight from experts at the validation meeting of the South West data shows that institutional strength in such contexts often reflects administrative efficiency rather than deep democratic engagement. Participants during the validation exercise noted that strong governance systems do not automatically generate voter participation or inclusive representation, particularly where citizens perceive limited influence over political outcomes. This context helps explain Ekiti’s profile as a state where governance systems perform strongly, but democratic participation remains constrained.

**Electoral Participation:** Ekiti records one of the lowest participation scores nationally at 46.97%. Governorship turnout increased from 36.50% in 2018 to 44.36% in 2022 but remains relatively low compared to high-performing participation states. Local government elections show no recorded turnout across both cycles. This reflects a systemic pattern where subnational elections lack competitive engagement and credible participation structures. Most experts at the regional validation exercises, regardless of which region, noted that weak participation often reflects limited trust in electoral competitiveness and reduced incentives for voter mobilisation.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion remains weak at 25.00%, with limited representation beyond gender inclusion. Women occupy 4 out of 23 commissioner positions, while youth and persons with disabilities are absent. Ekiti’s inclusion profile suggests that representation remains narrow despite strong institutional structures. **It is important to note that when data was collected for this study, Governor Biodun Oyebanji, sitting Executive Governor of Ekiti state, was said to be reshuffling his Executive cabinet members.**

**Institutional Performance:** Ekiti ranks first nationally in institutional performance with a score of 77.37%. Legislative activity, administrative coordination, and governance processes appear relatively strong. However, legislative sittings at 50 out of 181 suggest moderate legislative engagement relative to its high institutional score, indicating that performance may be driven more by administrative efficiency than legislative robustness.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** With a score of 87.63%, Ekiti leads nationally in civic space. This reflects a relatively open environment for expression, civic engagement, and media activity.

Ekiti demonstrates strong PVC collection rates at 97.00%, indicating high administrative efficiency in voter registration processes. However, the disconnect between high PVC collection and low participation highlights a critical gap between voter readiness and actual electoral engagement. Participants during validation exercises noted that documentation of local elections remains weak across states, limiting transparency and public confidence.

**Strategic Implications:** Ekiti represents a model of institutional strength within Nigeria's democratic landscape. However, its weak participation and inclusion levels indicate that institutional efficiency alone cannot sustain democratic depth. The key risk lies in the disconnect between governance systems and citizen engagement. Without improvements in participation and representation, institutional gains may remain limited in their democratic impact.



02.

# Lagos State



*Lagos presents a mixed democratic profile, defined by strong institutional performance alongside weak civic engagement and constrained civic space. Its relatively high institutional ranking reflects administrative capacity, governance systems, and policy execution. However, these strengths do not translate into citizen participation or inclusive political engagement.*

*Electoral participation remains moderate, but turnout trends show a decline in governorship elections, while local government elections record no measurable participation. Political inclusion is limited, and civic space performance is comparatively weak for a state with significant media presence and civil society activity. The overall pattern reflects a system that is administratively effective but socially detached, where governance operates efficiently without broad citizen engagement.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Lagos

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South West
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	22nd (50.47%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	25th (58.21%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	23rd (35.00%)

<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	6th (71.36%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	24th (34.74%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Disconnected Elite
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Institutional Enclaves
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Efficient but Exclusive
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Procedural Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	50.5
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-2.6
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Developing Tier (Fragile)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	4 out of 23
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 23
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 23
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2025
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	19.00% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	35.60% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	9,113,605

<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	15,772,884
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	7,060,195
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	6,214,970
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	88.03%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	845,225
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	11.97%

Lagos is Nigeria’s economic and political nerve centre, with a complex governance environment shaped by urban density, economic stratification, and high political competition. The state hosts a large concentration of media institutions, civil society organisations, and political actors, making it a central arena for national political discourse. Despite this, electoral participation in Lagos has been inconsistent, particularly at subnational levels. The scale of the electorate, logistical challenges, and perceptions of predetermined outcomes have influenced voter behaviour over time. Insight from the Validation meeting in the South West highlights that strong institutional frameworks in states like Lagos often coexist with limited citizen influence over political processes. This context helps explain Lagos’ positioning as an institutional enclave with limited democratic depth.

**Electoral Participation:** Lagos records an electoral participation score of 58.21%, placing it in the mid-range nationally. However, turnout trends reveal a declining trajectory. Governorship turnout dropped from 35.60% in 2019 to 19.00% in 2023, indicating weakening voter engagement over time. Turnout figures across both cycles of local government elections were not available. This aligns with broader patterns observed across states, where subnational elections often lack competitive credibility and public engagement. No gainsaying, stakeholders during focused group discussion noted that local elections are frequently characterised by limited transparency and weak documentation, which reduces public confidence and participation. The divergence between Lagos’ political prominence and its declining turnout reflects a participation deficit driven by both structural and perception-based factors.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion remains limited at 35.00%. While women hold 4 out of 23 commissioner positions, youth and persons with disabilities are absent from executive appointments. This pattern indicates a narrow inclusion structure, where representation does not fully reflect the demographic composition of the state. Given Lagos’ diverse population, the absence of youth representation is particularly significant.

Lagos' inclusion profile suggests a system that maintains formal representation but lacks broader access to political space.

**Institutional Performance:** Lagos ranks 6th nationally in institutional performance with a score of 71.36%. This reflects strong administrative capacity, policy coordination, and governance systems. The availability of the citizen budget indicates a level of transparency in fiscal communication. However, the absence of legislative sitting data limits a full assessment of legislative effectiveness. Validation insights across regions highlight that institutional strength in Nigeria often reflects executive efficiency rather than balanced institutional accountability. In Lagos, this suggests that governance effectiveness may be concentrated within the executive arm rather than distributed across institutions.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Despite its status as a media and civic hub, Lagos records a relatively low civic space score of 34.74%. This indicates constraints in areas such as freedom of expression, assembly, or citizen-state interaction. This outcome appears counterintuitive given the state's visibility in national discourse.



*Nevertheless, one of the experts at the validation meeting opined that despite Lagos's prominence as a civic and media hub, its constrained civic space is evidenced by post-#EndSARS governance practices that have limited peaceful assembly and expression. Since the October 2020 protests, security agencies have repeatedly disrupted commemorative gatherings, carried out arrests, and deployed force at memorial events in Lagos, while several protesters arrested in 2020 remain arbitrarily detained without trial, underscoring weak accountability and due process.<sup>8 9</sup> These patterns persist: police dispersed and arrested citizens marking the fourth #EndSARS anniversary at the Lekki Toll Gate in October 2024, despite the peaceful nature of the memorial, drawing condemnation from civil society actors.<sup>10 11</sup> The intolerance for symbolic civic action was further demonstrated in October 2025 when security operatives harassed civic activist Yemi Adamolekun during a quiet wreath-laying at Lekki, reinforcing validation findings that civic space outcomes depend less on actor density than on the freedom and accessibility of governance structures.<sup>12</sup>*

**Strategic Implications:** Lagos illustrates a critical structural pattern within Nigeria's democratic landscape, where institutional strength does not translate into democratic depth. The state's governance systems are capable, but citizen engagement remains limited.

The primary risk lies in sustained voter disengagement, which can weaken the legitimacy of democratic processes over time. The absence of participation at local levels further reduces accountability and citizen influence.

At the same time, Lagos presents opportunities for reform. Its strong institutional base and active civil society ecosystem provide a foundation for improving participation, inclusion, and civic engagement if targeted interventions are implemented.



03.

# Ogun State



Ogun's democratic profile reflects a combination of strengths and areas requiring further improvement, rather than a single dominant weakness. Participation is not critically low, inclusion mechanisms are visible, and institutions remain functional. However, these elements have not yet fully converted into a cohesive and consistently effective democratic system. As a result, the state demonstrates operational democratic structures, but with room for deeper consolidation.

The most notable area for attention is civic space. Ogun records one of the lower civil liberties scores nationally, suggesting that while citizen engagement is present, opportunities for broader public influence may be relatively limited. Formal democratic processes are in place, but the enabling environment for open expression, accountability, and sustained civic participation requires strengthening. This points to a democratic context where institutions function, but citizen ownership and influence can be further deepened.

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Ogun

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South West
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	27th (44.77%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	23rd (59.02%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	12th (45.00%)

<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	19th (57.37%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	33rd (22.51%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Tokenized Participation
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Dormant States
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Representative but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Fragile States
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	44.8
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-8.3
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Developing Tier (Fragile)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	4 out of 20
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	1 out of 20
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 20
<b>Number of Legislative Sittings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	22.80% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	16.70% (2021)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	29.40% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	35.49% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Published full budget not citizen version – Even the state website was not up
<b>2006 Population</b>	3,751,140
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	6,445,275
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,688,305
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	2,278,063
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	84.74%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	410,242
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	15.26%

Ogun State occupies a strategic position in Nigeria's political and economic geography as a border state to Lagos, functioning as a transitional corridor where metropolitan expansion, industrial growth, and governance expectations intersect. Its proximity to Lagos produces clear spillover effects, including heightened political mobilisation, comparative governance benchmarking, and elevated economic expectations shaped by Lagos's dominant political model.<sup>13 14</sup>

Despite this influence, Ogun has developed a distinct electoral identity characterised by moderate participation and uneven engagement across electoral tiers. Unlike many states, local government elections in Ogun continue to record voter participation, yet recurrent dominance by ruling party structures and post-election disputes raise concerns about competitiveness, credibility, and the depth of citizen agency<sup>15</sup>. Validation discussions and empirical assessments suggest that participation in Ogun is largely mobilisation-driven<sup>16</sup> rather than rooted in sustained civic trust, with political engagement often activated through hierarchical party networks and grassroots machinery amid persistent voter apathy and weak institutional legitimacy. This tension between democratic visibility and participatory depth remains a defining feature of Ogun's civic and democratic character.

**Electoral Participation:** Ogun's participation score of 59.02% places it within a moderate range, but the trend line is not stable. Governorship turnout declined from 35.49% in 2019 to 29.40% in 2023, indicating gradual disengagement at higher-stakes elections. At the local level, turnout improved from 16.70% to 22.80%. This is significant in a national context where most states record near-zero per cent participation.

**Political Inclusion:** Ogun records a political inclusion score of 45.00%, which is relatively stronger than its overall performance. Representation appears more balanced compared to many states, with women holding 4 out of 20 commissioner positions and limited youth presence. This indicates that access to political roles exists, but it does not necessarily translate into broad-based inclusion. The absence of persons with disabilities in executive appointments reflects a gap. Ogun's current structure suggests partial inclusion without systemic depth.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance stands at 57.37%, reflecting **moderate functionality**. Governance systems appear operational, but not consistently effective across all areas. The absence of legislative sitting data limits a full institutional assessment.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** This is Ogun's most critical weakness. With a score of 22.51%, the state ranks among the lowest nationally in civic space. This indicates constraints on freedom of expression, civic engagement, and state-citizen interaction.

The low score suggests that while political processes exist, the environment does not consistently support open participation or dissent.

**Strategic Implications:** Ogun's democratic condition is best understood as one of uneven consolidation rather than decline. Key democratic components are present, but they do not yet fully reinforce one another. The main area requiring attention is civic space, as limited opportunities for open engagement can reduce participation to a formal exercise rather than a meaningful channel for accountability.

At the same time, Ogun presents a clear reform opportunity. Since a basic level of citizen engagement already exists, targeted improvements in civic space, transparency, and public accountability could help deepen democratic practice and strengthen citizen influence over governance.

04.

# Ondo State



*Ondo presents a compelling but uneven democratic profile. Its overall performance places it firmly among the leading states, driven largely by an exceptionally strong civic space. Citizens operate in an environment where expression, engagement, and visibility are comparatively robust. This single factor significantly elevates the state’s standing.*

*Yet beneath this strength lies a structural imbalance. Participation remains moderate, inclusion is limited, and institutional performance lags. The result is a system where citizens have space to engage, but the institutions that should translate that engagement into governance outcomes are not equally responsive. The gap between an active civic environment and underperforming institutional structures defines Ondo’s democratic landscape.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Ondo

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South West
DPI Category	Moderate Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	5th (61.01%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	19th (60.84%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	12th (45.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	25th (47.13%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	3rd (85.66%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Tokenized Participation
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Dormant States
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Representative but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Civic-Strong Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	61.0
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+7.9
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Top Tier (Leading)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	2 out of 18
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 18
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 18
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2025
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	20.20% (2025)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	31.90% (2020)

<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	24.80% (2024)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	31.60% (2020)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	3,460,877
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	5,469,707
<b>Registered Voters (2024)</b>	1,991,344
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,729,641
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	86.86%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	261,703
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	13.14%

Ondo State’s political landscape reflects a sustained tradition of civic awareness and competitive electoral engagement rooted in South-West Nigeria’s history of political mobilisation. The state occupies a notable place in Nigeria’s democratic evolution as a site of early nationalist organisation, including the public inauguration of Chief Obafemi Awolowo’s Action Group in Owo in 1951, which helped embed norms of political participation, debate, and accountability in the former Western Region.<sup>17</sup>

In the Fourth Republic, Ondo has maintained a pattern of closely contested elections and party alternation, with civil-society assessments characterising the state as politically vibrant and electorally competitive, particularly during its off-cycle governorship polls.<sup>18</sup> Contemporary dynamics—including issue-driven campaigning and periodic civic protests—further reinforce Ondo’s reputation for politically conscious citizens and a resilient culture of public discourse within the South-West political tradition.<sup>19</sup>

However, this civic strength has not translated into institutional consolidation. Governance structures operate, but not always with the level of efficiency or responsiveness expected in a high-performing democratic environment. This creates a pattern where citizens remain engaged, yet outcomes do not fully reflect that

engagement. Insights, speaking to stakeholders from Ondo state, they positioned that Ondo often exhibit strong civic expression alongside institutional fatigue, where systems exist but struggle to sustain performance over time.

**Electoral Participation:** Ondo's electoral participation score of 60.84% reflects moderate engagement, but turnout trends show a clear downward trajectory. Governorship turnout declined from 31.60% in 2020 to 24.80% in 2024, indicating weakening voter mobilisation at the highest electoral level. Local government elections follow a similar pattern. Turnout dropped from 31.90% to 20.20%. This decline is notable given that subnational elections typically reflect grassroots engagement.

Stakeholders during focused conversation noted that declining turnout often signals reduced trust in electoral processes or diminishing confidence in the impact of voting. In Ondo's case, the drop suggests that civic openness does not translate to electoral participation.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion in Ondo stands at 45.00%, reflecting moderate access to political space but limited diversity in representation. Women occupy 2 out of 18 commissioner positions, while youth and persons with disabilities are absent from executive appointments. This indicates a narrow inclusion structure, where participation in governance remains concentrated within a limited demographic group.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance is structurally weakness in Ondo State with a score of 47.13%. Despite its high overall ranking, the state's governance systems do not perform at the same level as its civic environment. The absence of legislative sitting data limits a complete assessment, but available indicators suggest moderate institutional functionality. The presence of a citizen budget reflects a commitment to transparency, yet institutional responsiveness remains uneven. Implicatively, Systems function, but not reliably enough to sustain public confidence.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Ondo stands out nationally in this dimension, ranking 3rd with a score of 85.66%. This indicates a strong environment for civic engagement, freedom of expression, and citizen participation. In Ondo, this strength plays a stabilising role. The high score suggests that citizens can organise, express views, and interact with governance structures without significant constraint. This is a critical democratic asset.

**Strategic Implications:** Ondo's democratic trajectory is shaped by imbalance rather than absence. The state has a strong civic foundation, but institutional systems have not kept pace. The primary risk lies in this disconnect. When citizens remain active, but institutions fail to respond effectively, engagement can gradually shift from

participation to frustration. Over time, this weakens both turnout and trust.

At the same time, Ondo's strong civic space presents a clear opportunity. Few states combine openness with relatively stable participation levels. If institutional performance improves, the state has the capacity to transition into a more consolidated democratic system.

05.

## Osun State



*Osun ranks among the leading states in democratic performance, anchored by strong electoral participation. The state demonstrates a politically active electorate, with participation levels that outperform most peers. This engagement extends beyond turnout to a broader sense of democratic depth, where citizens remain invested in political processes.*

*However, this strength does not translate evenly across the system. Institutional performance remains comparatively weak, and representation does not reflect the diversity implied by the participation figures. The result is a system where citizens engage actively, but governance structures struggle to convert that engagement into institutional outcomes. The imbalance between participatory energy and institutional capacity defines Osun's democratic profile.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Osun

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South West
DPI Category	Moderate Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	6th (60.60%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	6th (69.84%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	4th (50.00%)
Institutional Performance (Rank & Score)	23rd (49.17%)
Civil Liberties & Civic Space (Rank & Score)	9th (72.93%)
Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)	Democratic Depth
Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)	Participatory but Weak
Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)	Representative but Weak
Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)	Civic-Strong Enclaves
State Performance Score (%)	60.6
Deviation from National Median (Points)	+7.5
National Tier based on Deviation	Top Tier (Leading)
Women Commissioners	2 out of 25
Youth (18-35) Commissioners	0 out of 25

<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 25
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2025
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	42.16% (2022)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	45.74% (2018)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Published full budget not citizen version – the citizen budget page for 2025 was given error 404
<b>2006 Population</b>	3,416,959
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	4,237,396
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	1,954,800
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,594,066
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	81.55%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	360,734
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	18.45%

Osun occupies a distinctive position within the South-West, marked by a long tradition of competitive elections, intense political debate, and strong civic awareness, with electoral contests that are closely monitored and actively contested by politically conscious citizens<sup>20</sup>.

However, this high level of political engagement coexists with structural and institutional constraints that limit governance effectiveness, particularly at the local government<sup>21</sup> and administrative levels, where legitimacy disputes and weak institutional cohesion

have periodically disrupted service delivery and accountability<sup>22</sup>. This creates a pattern where electoral processes are active and contested, yet governance outcomes do not always match the intensity of political engagement.

**Electoral Participation:** Osun records one of the strongest participation scores nationally at 69.84%, ranking 6th. This aligns with governorship turnout figures, where participation reached 42.16% in 2022, although this represents a decline from 45.74% in 2018. The downward trend, while not steep, suggests gradual disengagement. It indicates that even in politically active states, participation is not immune to broader national patterns of declining voter turnout. At the local government level, the absence of recorded turnout in both cycles signals a deeper structural issue. The lack of measurable participation at this level raises concerns about the credibility or competitiveness of local electoral processes. This is not far from the thoughts from the validation meeting across the country that when local elections lack visibility or trust, participation collapses entirely rather than declines gradually. This appears consistent with Osun's LGA turnout pattern.

Osun records one of the strongest participation scores nationally at 69.84%, ranking 6th, reflecting sustained engagement at the state level. This aligns with governorship turnout figures, where participation stood at 42.16% in 2022, down from 45.74% in 2018. While the decline is not steep, it suggests gradual disengagement even within a politically active state, mirroring broader national trends of declining turnout.

At the local government level, however, the absence of recorded turnout in both electoral cycles signals a deeper structural breakdown rather than gradual disengagement. The effect of the collapse system in Osun in measurable logic is closely linked to Osun's prolonged LGA crisis, where local elections were disputed, two different political parties laying claims to council leadership, and intermittent suspension of elected councils have undermined the credibility of grassroots electoral processes. Validation participants across the country noted that when local elections lack visibility, legitimacy, or trust, participation tends to collapse entirely rather than decline incrementally. Also, when democratic institutions don't have the capacity and cannot defend democracy, it kills trust and participation suffers. Osun's zero-turnout pattern at the LGA level is consistent with this dynamic.

The LGA crisis has had concrete governance consequences. Local governments—constitutionally responsible for primary healthcare, rural roads, environmental sanitation, markets, and community development—have operated in a legitimacy vacuum, paralysing decision-making and stalling service delivery. Disputes over lawful council leadership have delayed or blocked access to statutory allocations, even after the Supreme Court affirms local government financial autonomy, leaving councils

unable to plan, pay salaries consistently, or maintain basic services. For citizens, this institutional paralysis has translated into tangible welfare impacts: abandoned health facilities, deteriorating feeder roads, irregular waste management, and weakened channels for local accountability. As a result, democratic engagement has become increasingly concentrated at the state level, where elections are seen as meaningful, while local institutions are perceived as ineffective or illegitimate, further weakening accountability at the point closest to citizens.

**Political Inclusion and Institutional Performance:** Osun performs strongly in political inclusion, with a score of 50.00% and a national rank of 4th, suggesting relatively broader access to political space compared to many states. However, this inclusiveness does not fully extend into executive representation. Women occupy 2 of 25 commissioner positions, while youth and persons with disabilities are absent, indicating that inclusion is more visible at the electoral stage than within governance structures.

Institutional performance remains a constraint, with a score of 49.17% and a ranking of 23rd, placing Osun below its participation and inclusion performance. While the absence of legislative sitting data limits granular assessment, other indicators point to moderate rather than robust institutional functionality. Transparency gaps—such as the citizen budget portal referencing documents that are inaccessible—reflect implementation failures rather than policy absence. Validation participants repeatedly noted that institutional weakness in Nigerian states often manifests through execution gaps, a pattern that Osun’s transparency indicators clearly reflect.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Osun maintains a strong civic environment, ranking **9th** with a score of **72.93%**, indicating that citizens retain the freedom to express views, organise, and engage politically. Validation discussions highlighted that strong civic space often sustains political engagement even when institutional performance is uneven. Osun demonstrates this dynamic clearly: civic openness continues to reinforce participation, creating a feedback loop between expression and electoral engagement, even as governance institutions struggle.

### Key Lessons

- High electoral participation does not automatically translate into strong institutional performance.
- Political inclusion at the electoral level does not guarantee representation within executive structures.
- **Local election credibility directly determines grassroots participation; legitimacy crises produce zero engagement, not gradual decline.**

- LGA-level institutional paralysis weakens service delivery and erodes citizen trust in democracy, where it is most tangible.
- Transparency and accountability mechanisms lose effectiveness when implementation gaps limit public access.

**Strategic Implications:** Osun’s democratic system is characterised by strong citizen engagement operating within moderate institutional constraints, creating both resilience and vulnerability. The primary risk lies in the sustainability of participation: prolonged local governance paralysis widens the gap between citizen expectations and lived governance outcomes, increasing the likelihood of gradual disengagement over time.

At the same time, Osun’s strong civic culture presents a clear opportunity for democratic consolidation. The state retains the foundational elements—political awareness, participation, and civic openness—required to strengthen democracy. Resolving the LGA legitimacy crisis and restoring credible local electoral processes would decentralise engagement, revive grassroots accountability, and align governance performance with citizen participation, producing a more balanced and effective democratic structure.



06.

# Oyo State



*Oyo State stands at the apex of democratic performance nationally, not by excelling in a single dimension, but by sustaining high performance across nearly all indicators. Electoral participation, political inclusion, and civic space all rank at or near the top, forming a reinforcing system where citizens are both willing and able to engage meaningfully in governance processes. This alignment positions Oyo as one of the few states where democratic depth is matched with institutional functionality.*

*The state's only relative weakness lies in institutional performance, where it ranks mid-tier despite its overall leadership position. This gap is not severe but signals that governance structures have not fully caught up with the strength of citizen engagement. The system works, but it can work better. The interplay between high participation and moderate institutional performance suggests a democracy that is robust but still evolving.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Oyo

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South West
DPI Category	Moderate Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	1st (70.04%)

<b>Electoral Participation (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	1st (77.06%)
<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	1st (55.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	15th (59.08%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	2nd (86.35%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Democratic Depth
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Active & Functional
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Inclusive & Capable
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Balanced Leaders
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	70.0
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+16.9
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Top Tier (Leading)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	4 out of 18
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	1 out of 18
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 18
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2023
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	7.60% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	11.00% (2021)

<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	26.00% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	43.60% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	5,580,894
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	7,512,855
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	3,276,675
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	2,761,421
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	84.28%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	515,254
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	15.72%

Oyo’s political environment is shaped by a long-established culture of competitive elections, strong party organisation, and an electorate that has consistently demonstrated political awareness and independence in voting behaviour. Electoral contests in the state are closely followed, with outcomes often decided through active mobilisation, issue framing, and shifting alliances rather than automatic incumbency advantage, contributing to sustained citizen attentiveness to governance processes<sup>2324</sup>.

At the governance level, Oyo benefits from comparatively stable institutional arrangements and policy continuity, which have supported administrative functionality across electoral cycles. However, as one of Nigeria’s most populous states with a large and politically active electorate, the scale of demand places constant pressure on service delivery systems, coordination across local governments, and institutional responsiveness<sup>25</sup>. Validation participants noted that in states like Oyo, high civic engagement raises citizen expectations for performance and transparency; when institutional reform and capacity building lag behind these expectations, the gap between political participation and governance outcomes becomes a growing source of pressure rather than automatic democratic resilience, a dynamic clearly observable in Oyo’s evolving governance context.

**Electoral Participation:** Oyo leads nationally in electoral participation with a score of 77.06%. This dominance reflects a deeply embedded culture of political engagement,

supported by both formal and informal mobilisation structures. Despite this, turnout trends reveal a consistent decline. Governorship participation dropped from 43.60% in 2019 to 26.00% in 2023. Similarly, local government turnout declined from 11.00% to 7.60%. These figures suggest that while Oyo remains ahead of other states, it is not insulated from the broader national pattern of declining voter turnout.

**Political Inclusion:** Oyo ranks first in political inclusion with a score of 55.00%, indicating broad access to political participation. This suggests that barriers to entry into political processes are relatively low compared to other states. Executive representation shows moderate progress but not full alignment with inclusion metrics. Women occupy 4 out of 18 commissioner positions, and youth representation is limited to 1 out of 18. The absence of persons with disabilities highlights a gap between formal inclusion and equitable representation.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance in Oyo stands at 59.08%, placing it 15th nationally. This reflects a functioning system that performs above average but does not match the state's leadership in other dimensions. The availability of the citizen budget indicates a commitment to transparency. However, the absence of legislative sitting data limits a deeper assessment of legislative productivity.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Oyo ranks 2nd nationally in civil liberties and civic space, with a score of 86.35%. This indicates a strong environment for political expression, organisation, and engagement.

The strength of civic space supports high participation levels and reinforces democratic stability. Citizens operate within an environment where they can express dissent, mobilise, and engage with governance processes without significant restriction.

### Key Lessons

- Sustained democratic performance requires alignment between citizen participation and institutional capacity.
- High participation can coexist with declining turnout trends, indicating underlying structural challenges.
- Political inclusion at the participation level does not automatically translate into inclusive governance representation.
- Administrative inefficiencies, particularly in PVC collection, can undermine otherwise strong democratic systems.
- Strong civic space serves as a critical foundation for maintaining democratic

resilience.

**Strategic Implications:** Oyo represents a leading model of democratic performance, but its trajectory highlights emerging pressures that could shape future outcomes. The decline in turnout, though gradual, signals potential shifts in voter behaviour that require attention.

The state's strong civic foundation provides a platform for deeper democratic consolidation. However, if institutional performance does not improve to match citizen expectations, the gap between engagement and outcomes may widen.

The scale of uncollected PVCs introduces an additional risk, particularly in closely contested elections where marginal differences can determine outcomes. Addressing administrative gaps will be critical to sustaining Oyo's leadership position.

At the same time, Oyo's balanced democratic profile presents a clear opportunity. Strengthening institutions while maintaining high participation could position the state as a benchmark for democratic governance nationally.



## South East

07.

# Abia State



*Abia presents a mixed democratic profile where strong civic freedoms and relatively functional institutions coexist with one of the weakest political inclusion scores nationally. The state's high ranking in civil liberties indicates that citizens operate within an open civic environment, yet this openness has not translated into equitable access to political power. This disconnect creates a system where participation is possible, but representation remains narrow. The overall performance places Abia within the transition category, indicating stability without full democratic consolidation.*

### STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Abia

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South East
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	12th (56.90%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	14th (64.94%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	35th (5.00%)
Institutional Performance (Rank & Score)	18th (57.77%)
Civil Liberties & Civic Space (Rank & Score)	4th (85.28%)

<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Passive Inclusion
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Active & Functional
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Efficient but Exclusive
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Balanced Leaders
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	56.9
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+3.8
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Transition Tier (Stable)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	4 out of 24
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 24
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 24
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	17.00% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	22.99% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	2,845,380

<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	4,841,943
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,120,808
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,949,197
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	91.91%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	171,611
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	8.09%

Abia’s political environment reflects a historically active electorate shaped by strong political consciousness and competitive party dynamics. The state has maintained a reputation for political awareness, with citizens often engaged in electoral discourse and governance issues. However, this engagement has not consistently translated into inclusive governance structures.

The broader governance context reveals a system where access to political power remains concentrated. Structural factors such as party gatekeeping, limited generational transition, and entrenched political networks continue to shape participation outcomes. Insights from the South-East validation process indicate that democratic systems at the state level often reflect a gap between civic expression and institutional openness, where citizens can engage but not easily influence outcomes.

**1. Civil Liberties: A National Benchmark:** Ranking 4th nationally with a robust score of 85.28%, Abia’s strongest asset is its civic space. Citizens operate within a framework that generally respects the rights to organize, express dissent, and engage in public discourse with minimal restriction. However, this openness serves as a foundation that has not yet been utilized to reform more rigid political structures.

**2. Political Inclusion: The Structural Bottleneck:** In stark contrast to its civic openness, Abia ranks 35th in political inclusion with a critical score of 5.00%. This indicates profound structural barriers to entry for marginalized groups. The executive composition underscores this deficit:

- **Women:** Occupy only **4 out of 24** commissioner positions.
- **Youth & PWDs:** Are entirely absent from senior executive appointments. This “exclusive efficiency” suggests that while the machinery of government functions, it remains the domain of a narrow political network.

**3. Electoral Dynamics: Mobilization without Momentum:** Electoral engagement in Abia is characterized by a “Passive Inclusion” typology. While the state ranks 14th in participation (64.94%), actual voter turnout is in decline, dropping from 22.99% in 2019 to 17.00% in 2023. More concerning is the local government level, where turnout has remained at 0.00% across the last two cycles. This suggests a disconnect where citizens engage with high-level politics but find grassroots democratic processes largely inactive or inaccessible.

**4. Institutional Standing: Transparency with Data Gaps:** With an institutional score of 57.77%, the state maintains mid-range national performance. Fiscal transparency is evident through the consistent online publication of the Citizen Budget. However, a lack of data regarding legislative sittings prevents a comprehensive assessment of parliamentary productivity and oversight functions.

### Key Lessons & Strategic Outlook

- **The Inclusion Gap:** High civic freedom does not naturally dissolve elite gatekeeping; inclusive outcomes require deliberate policy intervention rather than just “open space”.
- **Grassroots Stagnation:** The sustained zero-turnout in local elections points to a need to revitalise the competitive nature of sub-state democracy.
- **Engagement vs. Outcome:** Abia demonstrates that administrative readiness (such as high PVC collection rates at 91.91%) does not automatically translate into voter enthusiasm or diverse representation.

**Strategic Implication:** Abia stands at a crossroads. Its strong civic foundation provides a rare opportunity for reform. The state’s future democratic health will likely depend less on increasing participation and more on **lowering the barriers to political power**, ensuring that its vibrant civic culture is finally reflected in a more diverse and representative government.



08.

# Anambra State



*Anambra's democratic profile reflects a state with relatively strong institutional performance and improved electoral engagement, but constrained by weak inclusion dynamics. Its top ten ranking is anchored on functional governance systems and high administrative efficiency, particularly in voter registration and institutional operations. However, the gains are unevenly distributed, with political access remaining limited to a narrower segment of actors.*

*The DPI data shows a system where institutions work, elections occur with improving turnout, and civic space remains moderately open, yet participation does not translate into broad-based representation. This creates a governance environment where democratic processes are operational but not fully inclusive. The state's positioning within the transition tier signals stability with underlying structural gaps that could limit long-term democratic consolidation.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Anambra

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South East
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	10th (57.19%)

<b>Electoral Participation (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	22nd (60.30%)
<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	29th (25.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	11th (65.85%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	15th (67.92%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Disconnected Elite
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Institutional Enclaves
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Efficient but Exclusive
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Balanced Leaders
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	57.2
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+4.1
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Transition Tier (Stable)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	6 out of 20
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	1 out of 20
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 20
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	130 out of 181
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	50.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	21.50% (2025)

<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	10.27% (2021)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	4,177,828
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	7,299,910
<b>Registered Voters (2025)</b>	2,802,790
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	2,769,137
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	98.80%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	33,653
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	1.20%

Anambra has a long-standing reputation for political competitiveness and vibrant electoral culture. Elections in the state often attract strong public interest, shaped by active political mobilisation, high levels of political awareness, and intense party competition. This culture has historically produced fluctuating turnout patterns, influenced by both trust in the process and perceptions of electoral credibility.

At the same time, governance in Anambra reflects a structured institutional environment, with relatively strong bureaucratic systems and legislative functionality. However, political power tends to circulate within established networks, limiting broader access. Insights emerging from the South-East validation discussions highlighted that in several states within the region, governance systems appear operational but are not necessarily open to new entrants, reinforcing patterns of elite consolidation.

**Electoral Participation:** Anambra’s electoral participation score of 60.30% places it in the mid-range nationally, but underlying trends reveal a more dynamic trajectory. Governorship turnout increased from 10.27% in 2021 to 21.50% in 2025, indicating renewed voter engagement. At the local government level, turnout improved significantly from 0.00% in 2020 to 50.00% in 2024. This sharp shift suggests a change in electoral conditions, possibly reflecting improved administration or heightened political competition at the grassroots level. Some experts have also argued that this may be fraudulent, considering the credibility and administrative issues in the LG election

**Political Inclusion:** Despite its institutional strength, Anambra records a low political inclusion score of 25.00%, ranking 29th nationally. This indicates restricted access to political opportunities, particularly for emerging groups. The composition of the executive reveals partial gender representation, with 6 out of 20 commissioners being women. Youth inclusion remains minimal, and there is no representation of persons with disabilities. This pattern points to a system where inclusion is present but not deeply embedded. Discussions during the validation process emphasised that political systems could maintain functional governance while limiting entry points for new actors. In such cases, participation exists within defined boundaries, reinforcing the typology of a “disconnected elite” system.

**Institutional Performance:** Anambra ranks 11th in institutional performance with a score of 65.85%, reflecting relatively strong governance capacity. Legislative activity stands at 130 sittings out of 181, indicating an active House of Assembly. The availability of a citizen budget further signals transparency in fiscal governance. These indicators collectively suggest that the state maintains functional institutional processes and a degree of openness in governance operations. Validation insights stressed the need to interpret institutional performance beyond procedural indicators. The emphasis was placed on assessing whether institutions enable accountability and responsiveness, not just activity. In Anambra’s case, while structures are active, the extent to which they expand democratic access remains limited.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** With a score of 67.92%, Anambra demonstrates a moderately strong civic space. Citizens are able to engage in political discourse, organise, and express opinions with relative freedom compared to lower-performing states. However, the civic environment is not among the strongest nationally, suggesting some constraints or uneven experiences across different groups. The gap between civic openness and political inclusion reinforces the pattern where citizens can express themselves but have limited influence over political outcomes. The validation discussions highlighted that civic restrictions are not always overt. In many cases, limitations emerge through institutional practices or regulatory frameworks that shape how citizens interact with the political system. This nuanced understanding aligns with Anambra’s performance profile.

### Key Lessons

- Anambra demonstrates that strong institutions can coexist with limited political inclusion, creating a system that functions efficiently but remains selective in access.
- Improved turnout across recent election cycles indicates that voter engagement

can recover when electoral conditions are perceived as credible.

- Active legislative performance does not automatically translate into expanded democratic accountability.
- Moderate civic space combined with low inclusion reflects structural barriers that operate beyond visible restrictions.

**Strategic Implications:** Anambra's trajectory suggests a system that is operationally stable but structurally constrained. The combination of improving participation and limited inclusion presents a critical tension. If not addressed, this could lead to a cycle where citizens engage electorally but remain excluded from decision-making processes.

The state's strong institutional base provides a platform for reform. There is clear potential to transition toward a more inclusive democratic system without requiring a fundamental structural overhaul. The key challenge lies in opening political space and diversifying access. Emerging patterns indicate that future democratic outcomes in Anambra will depend on how effectively the state bridges the gap between participation and representation. Without this shift, gains in electoral engagement may not translate into deeper democratic consolidation.



09.

# Ebonyi State



*Ebonyi presents a balanced but constrained democratic profile. Its overall performance sits just above the national median, supported by relatively strong political inclusion and moderate electoral participation. The state demonstrates that representation, at least in formal terms, is more open compared to many peers, which contributes to its stable positioning within the transition tier.*

*However, institutional performance and civic space do not reinforce these gains at the same level. The data points to a system where participation and representation exist, but institutional depth and civic protections remain moderate. This creates a structure where democratic engagement is visible but not consistently supported by strong governance systems or a fully enabling civic environment.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Ebonyi

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South East
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	18th (53.72%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	17th (61.92%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	4th (50.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	20th (53.72%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	18th (50.74%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Democratic Depth
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Participatory but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Representative but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Civic-Strong Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	53.7
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+0.6
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Transition Tier (Stable)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	3 out of 23
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	1 out of 23
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 23
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	105 out of 181
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	16.70% (2023)

<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	23.20% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	2,176,947
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	4,007,155
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	1,597,646
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,551,795
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	97.13%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	45,851
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	2.87%

Ebonyi's political environment is shaped by a mix of structured governance and evolving political participation. The state has experienced increasing political consolidation over time, with governance systems that are functional but not deeply institutionalised across all sectors. Electoral competition exists, but it often operates within defined political structures.

Socially, Ebonyi maintains strong community networks and local engagement systems, which influence participation patterns. However, structural limitations such as economic constraints and limited political diversification continue to affect how citizens interact with governance processes. Within the South-East regional discussions, contributors pointed to a recurring pattern where states exhibit visible participation but lack strong institutional anchoring, a dynamic that aligns with Ebonyi's current profile.

**Electoral Participation:** Ebonyi records a participation score of 61.92%, placing it in the mid-tier nationally. However, turnout patterns reveal a more complex picture. Governorship turnout declined from 23.20% in 2019 to 16.70% in 2023, indicating reduced voter engagement at the state level. At the local government level, turnout remains at 0.00% across both recent cycles. This absence of recorded participation suggests systemic challenges in local electoral processes, either in conduct, credibility, or reporting. The contrast between moderate participation scores and zero turnout at the local level indicates that engagement is uneven and concentrated at higher levels of electoral activity.

**Political Inclusion:** Ebonyi ranks 4th nationally in political inclusion with a score of 50.00%, making it one of the stronger performers in this dimension. This indicates relatively broader access to political representation compared to most states. The composition of the executive shows some level of gender inclusion, with 3 out of 23 commissioners being women, and minimal youth representation. There is no representation of persons with disabilities. While not fully inclusive, the state's ranking suggests that political opportunities are more accessible than in many other contexts.

This relatively high inclusion score, when compared with moderate institutional performance, reflects a system where representation is present but not fully supported by strong governance mechanisms. It reinforces the classification of being "representative but weak," where access exists but institutional backing is limited.

**Institutional Performance:** With a score of 53.72%, Ebonyi's institutional performance sits around the national average. Legislative activity stands at 105 sittings out of 181, indicating moderate engagement by the State House of Assembly. The presence of a citizen budget signals a degree of fiscal transparency. However, institutional performance does not match the strength observed in political inclusion. This imbalance suggests that governance systems are functional but lack depth in terms of accountability, responsiveness, and efficiency.

During the regional validation process, stakeholders pointed out that in similar contexts, institutional activity often reflects procedural compliance rather than substantive governance outcomes. This perspective helps explain Ebonyi's moderate score, where institutions are active but not necessarily transformative.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Ebonyi's civic space score of 50.74% indicates moderate openness. Citizens are able to engage in public discourse and political processes, but the environment does not rank among the most enabling nationally.

The state's classification under "civic-strong enclaves" suggests pockets of civic engagement rather than uniformly strong protections. This means that while some groups or locations experience relative openness, others may face constraints that limit full participation. The alignment between moderate civic space and moderate institutional performance reinforces the broader pattern of partial democratic consolidation. Civic freedoms exist but are not deeply entrenched across all segments of society.

## Key Lessons

- Ebonyi shows that high political inclusion can exist alongside moderate institutional performance, creating a system where representation does not

fully translate into governance effectiveness.

- Strong PVC collection rates indicate that administrative efficiency alone does not drive voter turnout or sustained engagement.
- The absence of local government turnout highlights structural weaknesses in subnational electoral processes.
- Moderate civic space combined with moderate institutional strength suggests uneven democratic consolidation across different sectors.
- Declining governorship turnout signals emerging risks in voter confidence despite stable overall performance.

**Strategic Implications:** Ebonyi's democratic trajectory reflects a system at equilibrium but without strong upward momentum. The balance between participation, inclusion, and institutional performance keeps the state within a stable range, but does not push it into higher-performing categories.

The gap between inclusion and institutional strength presents a critical risk. Without stronger governance systems, increased representation may not lead to improved accountability or service delivery. At the same time, declining turnout trends suggest that citizen engagement could weaken if underlying issues are not addressed.

The state has an opportunity to build on its relatively strong inclusion framework by strengthening institutional effectiveness and improving the credibility of local electoral processes. Future democratic outcomes will depend on how well these gaps are addressed.



10.

# Enugu State



*Enugu demonstrates a strikingly uneven democratic profile. The state records one of the highest levels of electoral participation in the country and ranks strongly in civil liberties, suggesting an active and relatively open civic environment. Political inclusion is also robust, placing Enugu among the better-performing states in terms of access to representation.*

*However, these strengths sit alongside one of the weakest institutional performance scores nationally. This imbalance defines Enugu's democratic structure. Citizens participate, civic space is relatively open, and representation is accessible, yet institutional systems fail to sustain or translate these advantages into effective governance. The result is a democracy that is active on the surface but structurally weak beneath.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Enugu

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South East
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	17th (53.84%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	2nd (74.43%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	4th (50.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	35th (16.71%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	7th (79.81%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Democratic Depth
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Participatory but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Representative but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Civic-Strong Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	53.8
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+0.7
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Transition Tier (Stable)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	3 out of 26
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	1 out of 26
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 26
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	27.76% (2023)

<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	33.68% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	3,267,837
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	5,396,098
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,112,793
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,995,389
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	94.44%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	117,404
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	5.56%

Enugu occupies a central position in the political and administrative landscape of the South-East. The state has a long-standing reputation for organised political structures and relatively stable governance arrangements. Electoral engagement has historically been visible, driven by strong party systems and community mobilisation.

At the same time, governance in the state reflects broader regional patterns where institutional strength has not kept pace with political participation. Public engagement tends to be high during elections, but governance systems often operate within constrained accountability frameworks. During regional validation discussions, participants highlighted that states like Enugu show high civic expression but limited institutional responsiveness, a dynamic that aligns closely with the state's DPI profile.

**Electoral Participation:** Enugu ranks 2nd nationally in electoral participation with a score of 74.43%, indicating a highly engaged electorate. This level of participation suggests strong mobilisation capacity and a population that remains interested in electoral processes. However, turnout trends present a more nuanced picture. Governorship turnout declined from 33.68% in 2019 to 27.76% in 2023. While still higher than in several states, this downward trend indicates weakening voter enthusiasm over time.

At the local government level, turnout remains at 0.00% across both recent cycles. This sharp contrast between high participation scores and zero local turnout suggests that participation is concentrated at higher electoral levels and that local electoral processes may lack credibility or relevance in the eyes of citizens.

**Political Inclusion:** Enugu ranks 4th in political inclusion with a score of 50.00%, indicating relatively broad access to political representation. This aligns with the state's classification under "democratic depth," where citizens have avenues to participate and be represented.

The executive composition reflects modest gender inclusion, with 3 out of 26 commissioners being women, and minimal youth representation. There is no representation of persons with disabilities. While inclusion exists at a structural level, it does not yet translate into broad-based diversity. The combination of high inclusion and weak institutions suggests that representation operates within a system that does not fully support or empower those included. This reinforces the "representative but weak" classification, where access is present but institutional backing is limited.

**Institutional Performance:** Enugu records one of the lowest institutional performance scores nationally at 16.71%, placing it 35th. This is the most critical weakness in the state's democratic profile.

The absence of legislative sitting data limits direct assessment of legislative activity, but the overall score indicates low effectiveness in governance systems. Despite the presence of a citizen budget, which signals some level of transparency, institutional processes appear weak in terms of accountability, oversight, and service delivery.

Participants during the validation exercise noted that in some South-East states, governance structures often function procedurally without strong enforcement or oversight mechanisms. This observation aligns with Enugu's data, where institutional activity does not translate into measurable governance strength.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Enugu ranks 7th nationally in civil liberties with a score of 79.81%, placing it among the stronger states in terms of civic openness. Citizens appear to have relatively greater freedom to express views, organise, and engage in public discourse.

The classification as a "civic-strong enclave" reflects this strength. Civic engagement is visible and active, creating an environment where participation is encouraged. However, the lack of institutional reinforcement means that civic expression does not consistently lead to accountability or governance improvements. This dynamic creates a disconnect where citizens can engage freely but may not see tangible outcomes from that engagement.

## Key Lessons

- Enugu illustrates how strong electoral participation and civic openness can

coexist with weak institutional performance, creating an imbalanced democratic system.

- Political inclusion without institutional strength limits the effectiveness of representation and reduces governance impact.
- The absence of local government turnout signals structural weaknesses in subnational democratic processes.
- Strong civic space requires institutional backing to convert citizen engagement into accountability and policy outcomes.

**Strategic Implications:** Enugu's democratic structure is defined by high engagement and low institutional depth. This creates a system that is participatory but vulnerable to governance inefficiencies. The risk lies in the growing disconnect between citizen expectations and institutional performance.

If institutional weaknesses persist, high participation levels may decline over time, as citizens disengage from processes that do not produce meaningful outcomes. The downward trend in governorship turnout already signals this risk.

At the same time, the state has a strong foundation for democratic consolidation. Its high participation rates and open civic space provide a platform for reform. Strengthening institutions could rapidly improve overall democratic performance and move the state into a higher performance tier.



11.

# Imo State



*Imo presents a pattern where participation and inclusion remain relatively strong, but the broader democratic environment struggles to sustain stability and trust. The state ranks within the top ten for electoral participation and performs strongly in political inclusion, indicating that citizens engage actively in formal political processes and that access to representation exists.*

*These gains are offset by weak civil liberties and below-average institutional performance. The state's civic space score is notably low, suggesting constraints in how citizens express dissent, organise, or interact with authority. This imbalance produces a fragile democratic structure where participation occurs, but the enabling environment for sustained democratic practice remains constrained. The overall performance reflects a system under strain, where engagement persists despite structural and civic limitations.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Imo

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South East
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	24th (48.06%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	7th (69.54%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	4th (50.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	29th (43.18%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	22nd (37.34%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Democratic Depth
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Participatory but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Representative but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Fragile States
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	48.1
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-5.0
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Developing Tier (Fragile)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	3 out of 28
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 28
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 28
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	29.00% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	33.28% (2019)

<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	3,927,563
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	6,067,722
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,419,922
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	2,318,919
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	95.83%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	101,003
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	4.17%

Imo's political environment has experienced periods of volatility, shaped by intense political competition, shifting alignments, and contested governance processes. These dynamics have influenced both citizen trust and institutional stability over time. Electoral participation has remained visible, but often within a context of heightened political tension.

The state also reflects broader South-East patterns where political mobilisation is strong but institutional consolidation is uneven. Participants during the regional validation exercise pointed to increasing pressure on civic actors and a narrowing of civic engagement spaces in parts of the region. This observation provides context for Imo's relatively low civil liberties score, despite its strong participation indicators.

**Electoral Participation:** Imo ranks 7th nationally in electoral participation with a score of 69.54%, indicating sustained voter engagement at higher levels of elections. This suggests that citizens continue to see value in participating in major electoral contests. However, turnout trends reveal a gradual decline. Governorship turnout dropped from 33.28% in 2019 to 29.00% in 2023. While still within a moderate range, this downward movement reflects growing disengagement or reduced confidence in electoral outcomes.

At the local government level, turnout remains at 0.00% across both recent cycles. This sharp absence of participation indicates that local electoral processes lack credibility or relevance. The contrast between relatively strong state-level participation and complete disengagement at the local level highlights a structural disconnect within the electoral system.

**Political Inclusion:** Imo ranks 4th in political inclusion with a score of 50.00%, placing it among the stronger states in terms of access to representation. This aligns with its classification under democratic depth, where citizens have pathways into political participation. However, representation within executive structures remains limited in diversity. Women account for 3 out of 28 commissioners, youth representation is absent, and there is no inclusion of persons with disabilities. This indicates that while political access exists at a systemic level, it does not fully translate into inclusive governance outcomes.

The combination of strong inclusion scores and weak institutional backing suggests that representation may be present in form but constrained in influence. This reinforces the classification of “representative but weak,” where access does not necessarily lead to effective governance.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance in Imo is relatively weak, with a score of 43.18%, placing it in the lower tier nationally. While not as low as some states, this score indicates limited effectiveness in governance structures.

The absence of legislative sitting data restricts direct evaluation of legislative activity, but the overall performance suggests gaps in oversight, accountability, and institutional coordination. The presence of a citizen budget indicates some level of transparency, yet this does not appear sufficient to offset broader institutional weaknesses.

Participants during the validation exercise noted that governance structures in some states operate under significant political pressure, which can affect institutional independence and effectiveness. This insight aligns with Imo’s data, where institutional systems appear constrained relative to levels of political participation.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Imo ranks 22nd in civil liberties with a score of 37.34%, placing it among the weaker states in this dimension. This is a defining constraint in the state’s democratic profile.

The classification as a “fragile state” within the governance map reflects limitations in freedom of expression, civic engagement, and state-citizen relations. Civic actors may face barriers that reduce the effectiveness of participation and limit the ability of citizens to hold institutions accountable. Participants during the validation exercise highlighted concerns around shrinking civic space in parts of the South-East, particularly in contexts of heightened political tension. This perspective reinforces the data, suggesting that civic openness in Imo is under pressure.

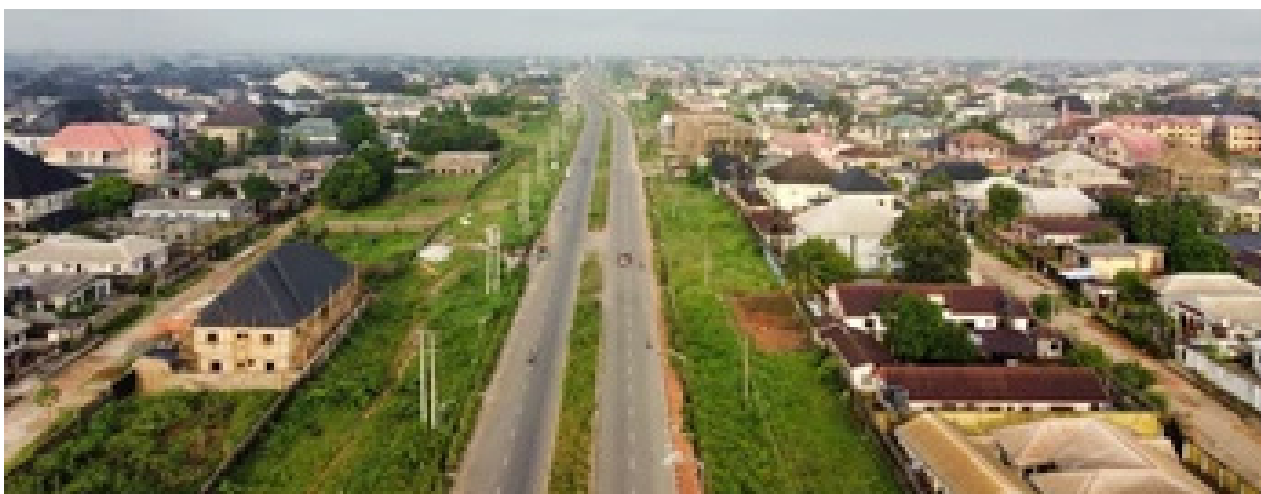
## Key Lessons

- Imo shows that high electoral participation can persist even when civic space is constrained, but this creates a fragile democratic balance.
- Strong political inclusion does not guarantee inclusive governance outcomes when diversity within leadership remains limited.
- Weak civil liberties reduce the effectiveness of participation by limiting how citizens engage beyond voting.
- The absence of local government turnout highlights deep structural weaknesses in grassroots democracy.
- Institutional performance remains a critical gap that undermines gains in participation and inclusion.

**Strategic Implications:** Imo's democratic trajectory is shaped by a tension between active participation and constrained civic space. This creates a system where citizens continue to engage, but under conditions that may not sustain long-term democratic consolidation.

The risk lies in the gradual erosion of trust. Declining turnout in governorship elections suggests that participation may weaken if civic and institutional conditions do not improve. Limited civic space also reduces the ability of citizens to demand accountability, which can further weaken governance outcomes.

At the same time, the state retains significant potential for improvement. High participation rates and strong voter registration provide a foundation that can support democratic strengthening if institutional reforms and civic protections are prioritised.



## South South

12.

# Akwa Ibom State



*Akwa Ibom presents a distinct imbalance in its democratic profile. The state performs strongly in civil liberties and civic space, ranking 10th nationally, suggesting that citizens retain a relatively open environment for expression and engagement. However, this openness does not translate into effective democratic participation or institutional strength. Electoral participation is low relative to national peers, and institutional performance ranks among the weakest. Political inclusion also lags, indicating limited diversity in representation and restricted access to political power structures. This creates a pattern where civic openness exists alongside weak institutional responsiveness and limited political integration. The resulting democratic system appears accessible at the surface level but constrained in its ability to convert participation into accountable governance.*

### STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Akwa Ibom

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South South
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	21st (51.04%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	29th (51.70%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	23rd (35.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	32nd (39.70%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	10th (72.63%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Disconnected Elite
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Dormant States
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Closed Institutions
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Civic-Strong Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	51.0
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-2.1
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Developing Tier (Fragile)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	4 out of 20
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 20
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 20
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	52.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	47.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	29.91% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	33.97% (2019)

<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Published full budget not citizen version
<b>2006 Population</b>	3,902,051
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	5,780,581
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,357,418
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	2,198,628
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	93.26%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	158,790
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	6.74%

Akwa Ibom operates within a political environment shaped by strong party dominance and relatively stable executive control. This has contributed to predictable electoral outcomes but has also influenced the competitiveness of political space. While the state has maintained relative calm compared to more volatile regions, this stability does not necessarily reflect deep democratic consolidation.

The South-South validation discussions highlighted variations in citizen engagement and institutional effectiveness across the region, with concerns around access to information and inclusivity. In Akwa Ibom, these dynamics are visible in the gap between civic openness and institutional performance. Citizens may have the space to engage, but structural pathways for influencing governance remain limited.

**Electoral Participation:** Akwa Ibom ranks 29th in electoral participation with a score of 51.70%, placing it below the national median. This reflects relatively weak engagement in electoral processes compared to other states. A more nuanced pattern emerges when comparing election types. Governorship turnout declined from 33.97% in 2019 to 29.91% in 2023, indicating gradual disengagement at higher levels of electoral competition. In contrast, local government elections recorded high turnout, increasing from 47.00% to 52.00%.

This divergence suggests that participation is not uniformly driven by voter enthusiasm but may be influenced by the perceived relevance or structure of different electoral processes. High local turnout alongside lower governorship engagement raises questions about the credibility, competitiveness, or mobilisation dynamics of elections

at different levels.

**Political Inclusion:** With a score of 35.00%, Akwa Ibom ranks 23rd in political inclusion. This places it in the lower-middle range nationally and reflects limited diversity in political representation. The composition of the executive council reinforces this pattern. Women account for 4 out of 20 commissioners, while youth and persons with disabilities are not represented. This indicates that access to political office remains narrow and does not reflect broader societal demographics.

Participants during the validation exercise emphasised that political appointments do not always translate into meaningful influence, as decision-making may be concentrated within a limited circle of actors. This insight is relevant in interpreting Akwa Ibom's inclusion score, where representation may exist but does not necessarily expand participation in governance.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance is a major weakness for Akwa Ibom, with a score of 39.70% and a ranking of 32nd. This places the state among the lowest performers nationally in this dimension. The absence of legislative sitting data limits direct assessment of legislative productivity. However, other indicators point to gaps in transparency and accountability. While the state publishes its full budget, it does not provide a citizen-friendly version, restricting accessibility and public understanding.

Validation discussions highlighted systemic challenges in accessing institutional data and documentation across states, including delays and inconsistencies in information availability. This aligns with Akwa Ibom's institutional profile, where formal structures exist but do not consistently translate into effective or transparent governance.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Akwa Ibom performs strongly in civil liberties, ranking 10th with a score of 72.63%. This indicates a relatively open civic environment where citizens can engage, express opinions, and participate in public discourse.

However, regional validation insights point to underlying concerns that complicate this picture. Participants raised issues around politically influenced enforcement practices and restrictions on civic freedoms in certain contexts. These concerns suggest that while the overall environment appears open, there may be inconsistencies in how civic freedoms are experienced in practice. This creates a layered dynamic where formal civic space exists, but its application may vary depending on political and institutional conditions.

## Key Lessons

- Akwa Ibom shows that strong civic space does not automatically lead to high participation or institutional effectiveness.
- Divergent turnout patterns across election types reveal that voter engagement is shaped by the perceived relevance and credibility of specific electoral processes.
- Limited diversity in political appointments constrains the depth of political inclusion, even where formal access exists.
- Institutional weakness undermines the ability of civic openness to translate into accountable governance.

**Strategic Implications:** Akwa Ibom's democratic structure reflects a system where civic openness coexists with weak institutional performance and limited inclusion. This creates a risk of superficial democracy, where citizens can engage but have limited influence on governance outcomes.

The divergence between local and state-level turnout suggests uneven confidence in electoral processes. If this pattern persists, it may deepen fragmentation within the democratic system, with participation becoming selective rather than consistent.

At the same time, the state has a strong foundation for reform. High PVC collection rates and relatively open civic space provide an enabling environment for improving democratic performance. Strengthening institutions and expanding inclusive governance could significantly enhance the state's overall trajectory.



13.

# Bayelsa State



*Bayelsa ranks among the top-performing states in the DPI, placing 8th nationally and well above the median. This performance is driven primarily by strong institutional capacity and relatively high levels of political inclusion. The state demonstrates functional governance structures and a degree of inclusiveness that distinguishes it from many peers. However, this strength rests on a narrow base. Electoral participation remains weak, ranking 30th, and voter turnout has declined significantly in recent cycles. This creates a structural imbalance where institutions appear capable and inclusive on paper, but citizen engagement in electoral processes is limited. The result is a democracy that performs well institutionally but lacks sustained participatory depth, raising questions about the durability of its democratic gains.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Bayelsa

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South South
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	8th (59.35%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	30th (51.28%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	4th (50.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	9th (68.41%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	16th (61.89%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Tokenized Participation
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Institutional Enclaves
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Inclusive & Capable
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Balanced Leaders
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	59.4
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+6.3
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Top Tier (Leading)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	3 out of 29
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 29
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 29
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	28.00% (2023)

<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	54.83% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	1,704,515
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	2,394,725
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	1,056,862
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,017,613
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	96.29%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	39,249
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	3.71%

Bayelsa’s political environment reflects its status as a smaller, resource-rich state within the Niger Delta. Political power tends to be concentrated, with relatively stable elite networks shaping governance outcomes. This has contributed to institutional continuity, but it also narrows the breadth of political competition.

Discussions during the South-South validation process highlighted how institutional effectiveness and access to information vary across the region, even where formal structures exist. In Bayelsa, this duality is evident. Governance systems function with a degree of efficiency, yet citizen engagement does not always match this institutional strength. The state’s democratic trajectory is therefore shaped by strong internal systems operating alongside limited external pressure from voters.

**Electoral Participation:** Bayelsa ranks 30th in electoral participation, with a score of 51.28%. This places it among the lowest-performing states in this dimension despite its overall high DPI ranking. Turnout trends reinforce this concern. Governorship participation dropped sharply from 54.83% in 2019 to 28.00% in 2023, representing one of the most significant declines across states. This suggests weakening voter engagement over time.

At the local level, turnout data records 0.00% for both recent cycles. While this likely reflects data limitations or reporting gaps, it still signals a weak institutionalization of local electoral participation.

**Political Inclusion:** Bayelsa performs strongly in political inclusion, ranking 4th nationally with a score of 50.00%. This suggests relatively better access to political representation compared to most states. However, a closer look at executive appointments reveals limitations. Women hold 3 out of 29 commissioner positions, while youth and persons with disabilities are not represented. This indicates that inclusion may be present at a systemic level but is not fully reflected in demographic diversity within leadership structures.

Participants during the validation exercise raised concerns that political appointments can sometimes serve symbolic purposes rather than enabling substantive participation in decision-making. This observation is relevant in interpreting Bayelsa's inclusion score, where formal inclusion may not always translate into meaningful influence across governance processes.

**Institutional Performance:** Bayelsa ranks 9th in institutional performance, with a score of 68.41%, positioning it among the stronger states in governance effectiveness.

The state demonstrates relative strength in transparency, evidenced by the availability of a citizen budget. This enhances public access to fiscal information and supports accountability mechanisms.

However, the absence of legislative sitting data limits direct assessment of legislative productivity. Validation discussions also highlighted broader challenges in data accessibility and documentation within state institutions. These systemic constraints suggest that while institutional frameworks are functional, gaps remain in the consistency and openness of governance processes.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Bayelsa records a mid-to-high performance in civil liberties, ranking 16th with a score of 61.89%. This indicates a relatively stable civic environment, though not among the most open nationally.

Validation insights from the region highlight concerns around civic freedoms, including politically influenced enforcement practices and restrictions on expression in certain contexts. These concerns suggest that civic space in Bayelsa may be conditionally open, with variations depending on political dynamics and local contexts. This creates a nuanced environment where formal freedoms exist but may not always be uniformly experienced by all groups.

## Key Lessons

- High institutional performance does not guarantee strong electoral participation, as seen in Bayelsa's declining voter turnout despite effective governance

structures.

- Formal inclusion mechanisms can coexist with limited demographic diversity in leadership, restricting the depth of representation.
- Strong administrative capacity in voter management does not translate into voter engagement without corresponding trust in electoral processes.
- Transparency initiatives such as citizen budgets contribute to institutional strength but require broader citizen awareness to be fully effective.
- Declining turnout trends indicate that democratic engagement is weakening over time, even in relatively stable political environments.

**Strategic Implications:** Bayelsa's democratic profile reflects a system that is institutionally functional but participatorily thin. This creates a long-term risk where governance becomes increasingly detached from citizen input, reducing accountability and responsiveness.

The sharp decline in governorship turnout signals potential erosion of public trust or interest in electoral processes. If unaddressed, this trend could weaken the legitimacy of elected institutions, even where those institutions perform effectively. At the same time, the state's strong institutional base provides a platform for reform. With high PVC coverage and functioning governance structures, targeted interventions to rebuild voter engagement could yield significant improvements. The key challenge lies in converting institutional capacity into participatory legitimacy.



# Cross River State



*Cross River presents a fragmented democratic profile. It ranks 31st overall, placing it within the critical tier despite relatively strong performance in electoral participation. The state records one of the higher participation scores nationally, suggesting that citizens show up for elections at notable levels compared to many peers.*

*This strength does not extend into institutional performance or civic space. Weak institutional capacity and a significantly constrained civic environment dilute the impact of electoral engagement. The result is a system where participation exists without corresponding institutional responsiveness or protection of civic freedoms. This imbalance limits the overall quality of democracy, as participation alone does not translate into effective governance or accountability.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Cross River

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South South
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	31st (42.83%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	10th (67.24%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	12th (45.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	27th (43.83%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	31st (24.10%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Democratic Depth
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Participatory but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Representative but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Fragile States
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	42.8
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-10.3
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Critical Tier (Lagging)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	7 out of 31
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 31
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 31
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	27.00% (2023)

<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	35.92% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	2,892,988
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	4,175,020
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	1,766,466
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,672,810
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	94.70%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	93,656
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	5.30%

Cross River’s political environment reflects a mix of competitive electoral participation and evolving governance structures. The state has historically experienced active political engagement, with elections attracting attention and voter involvement. However, governance systems have not consistently kept pace with this level of participation.

Validation discussions from the South-South zone pointed to uneven civic conditions across states, including concerns about enforcement practices and restrictions affecting civic actors. In Cross River, these dynamics appear to intersect with institutional weaknesses, creating a context where citizens engage electorally but operate within a constrained civic environment.

This duality shapes the state’s democratic trajectory. Participation signals public interest in governance, yet institutional fragility and civic limitations restrict how that interest translates into influence.

**Electoral Participation:** Cross River ranks 10th in electoral participation with a score of 67.24%, placing it among the stronger states in this dimension. This indicates relatively high voter engagement at the aggregate level. However, turnout trends show a decline. Governorship participation dropped from 35.92% in 2019 to 27.00% in 2023. While still within a moderate range, the downward trajectory suggests weakening momentum.

At the local government level, turnout is recorded as 0.00% across both recent cycles.

This likely reflects reporting gaps, but it also points to a weak or underdeveloped local electoral system.

**Political Inclusion:** Cross River ranks 12th in political inclusion with a score of 45.00%, indicating moderate performance. Representation data shows that women hold 7 out of 31 commissioner positions, which is relatively higher compared to many states. This suggests a degree of gender inclusion within executive appointments.

However, the absence of youth and persons with disabilities in commissioner roles highlights a narrow inclusion framework. Participation in political leadership remains uneven across demographic groups. Participants during the validation exercise noted that inclusion in some states often reflects access at the surface level rather than deep integration into decision-making processes. This observation aligns with Cross River's profile, where inclusion exists but does not fully capture the diversity of the population.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance remains a key weakness for Cross River, with a rank of 27th and a score of 43.83%. The availability of a citizen budget indicates some level of transparency, but the absence of legislative sitting data limits the ability to assess legislative productivity and oversight.

Validation discussions emphasised broader regional challenges around data accessibility and institutional openness. In Cross River, these issues appear to manifest as gaps in institutional documentation and performance visibility. This suggests that while governance structures are present, their effectiveness and accountability mechanisms are limited. Institutions do not appear to fully support or respond to the level of citizen participation observed in elections.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Cross River records one of the lowest scores nationally in civil liberties, ranking 31st with a score of 24.10%. This indicates significant constraints in civic space, including limitations on expression, association, and public engagement.

Insights from the validation process highlight concerns around civic restrictions and the broader operating environment for citizens and civil society actors. In Cross River, these constraints appear more pronounced, contributing to its low ranking. The weak civic environment undermines democratic consolidation. Even where citizens participate in elections, limited civic space restricts continuous engagement, advocacy, and accountability between electoral cycles.

**Electoral Access and Administrative Strength:** Cross River demonstrates relatively strong administrative capacity in voter registration and PVC distribution. With over 1.67 million PVCs collected, the state has achieved broad coverage.

The issue is not access but translation. High registration and participation rates are not matched by institutional responsiveness or civic openness. This creates a disconnect where electoral engagement does not lead to sustained democratic interaction.

### Key Lessons

- Strong electoral participation does not compensate for weak institutions, as seen in Cross River's low overall performance despite high participation rankings.
- Declining turnout trends indicate that initial voter engagement may not be sustained without improvements in trust and governance outcomes.
- Gender representation in executive roles can improve inclusion metrics, but gaps in youth and PWD representation limit overall inclusiveness.
- Weak civic space significantly constrains democratic quality, even in contexts where elections are relatively active.
- Institutional transparency tools such as citizen budgets require complementary accountability mechanisms to have a meaningful impact.

### Strategic Implications

Cross River's democratic trajectory reflects a participation-driven model that lacks institutional and civic reinforcement. This creates a structural risk where electoral engagement becomes episodic rather than transformative.

The low civic space score signals potential constraints on citizen voice beyond elections. This limits the ability of civil society and citizens to influence governance between electoral cycles, weakening accountability.

At the same time, the state's relatively strong participation base presents an opportunity. If institutional performance and civic freedoms improve, Cross River could convert its electoral engagement into a more balanced and resilient democratic system. Without such adjustments, the gap between citizen participation and governance outcomes may widen, leading to disengagement over time.



15.

# Delta State



*Delta State occupies a lower-middle position in the democratic performance landscape, ranking 26th with a score of 45.32%. Its profile reflects a system that functions procedurally but struggles to deliver balanced democratic outcomes. Electoral participation remains relatively strong, and institutional performance is above average compared to several states in the same tier.*

*The core weakness lies in civic space. Delta records one of the lowest scores in civil liberties, which significantly drags down its overall performance. This creates a structural imbalance where institutions function and elections occur, yet the broader democratic environment limits citizen expression and engagement. The result is a system that appears operational but lacks depth in participatory governance.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Delta

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South South
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	26th (45.32%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	12th (65.86%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	16th (40.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	17th (58.45%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	35th (22.04%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Democratic Depth
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Active & Functional
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Inclusive & Capable
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Procedural Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	45.3
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-7.8
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Developing Tier (Fragile)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	4 out of 32
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 32
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 32
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	22.06% (2023)

<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	41.62% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	4,112,445
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	6,107,543
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	3,221,697
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	2,989,514
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	92.79%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	232,183
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	7.21%

Delta State's political environment is shaped by its economic significance within the Niger Delta and its history of political competition. The state has maintained relatively stable governance structures, with institutions that function at a procedural level and electoral processes that attract voter participation.

At the same time, governance in Delta operates within a complex socio-political landscape influenced by resource politics, local power structures, and community-level dynamics. These factors shape both participation and institutional behaviour.

During the South-South validation exercise, participants pointed to underlying tensions between governance structures and civic engagement, particularly in states where institutions are active but civic freedoms face subtle constraints. This dynamic is reflected in Delta's profile, where institutional capacity does not fully translate into an open civic environment.

**Electoral Participation:** Delta ranks 12th in electoral participation with a score of 65.86%, indicating a relatively engaged electorate. However, turnout trends show a clear decline. Governorship turnout dropped from 41.62% in 2019 to 22.06% in 2023. This reduction is substantial and suggests weakening voter mobilisation or declining trust in electoral outcomes.

At the local government level, turnout is recorded as 0.00% across both recent

cycles. This reflects either gaps in data reporting or weak local electoral engagement structures.

**Political Inclusion:** Delta records a mid-level performance in political inclusion, ranking 16th with a score of 40.00%. Executive representation shows 4 women out of 32 commissioners, indicating limited gender inclusion. Youth and persons with disabilities are absent from commissioner-level appointments, pointing to a narrow representation base.

Participants during the validation exercise highlighted that inclusion across the South-South often remains selective, with access to political office concentrated among established actors. Delta reflects this pattern, where representation exists but does not fully capture demographic diversity. This limits the depth of political inclusion and reduces opportunities for broader participation in governance.

**Institutional Performance:** Delta performs relatively well in institutional effectiveness, ranking 17th with a score of 58.45%. This places it above many states within the same performance tier. The presence of a citizen budget suggests a degree of transparency and openness in fiscal communication. However, the absence of legislative sittings data restricts a full assessment of legislative productivity and oversight.

The state's typology as "Active & Functional" indicates that governance systems operate with a level of consistency. Yet, the disconnect between institutional functionality and civic space suggests that effectiveness does not fully translate into accountability.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Civil liberties represent Delta's most significant weakness. The state ranks 35th with a score of 22.04%, placing it among the lowest-performing states in this dimension. This indicates a constrained civic environment, where freedoms related to expression, association, and public engagement are limited.

Validation participants pointed to concerns around the operating space for civic actors in parts of the South-South, noting that restrictions can shape how citizens interact with governance structures. In Delta, this appears to manifest as a narrowing of civic engagement channels. The implication is clear. Even with functioning institutions and moderate electoral participation, a restricted civic environment undermines the overall democratic ecosystem.

**Electoral Access and Administrative Strength:** Delta demonstrates strong administrative capacity in voter registration and PVC distribution. With nearly 3 million PVCs collected, the system effectively reaches a large proportion of eligible voters.

The challenge lies in converting this administrative strength into sustained democratic

engagement. Declining turnout and weak civic space suggest that access alone does not guarantee participation or influence.

### Key Lessons

- Declining voter turnout despite high PVC collection indicates that access does not ensure sustained electoral engagement.
- Institutional functionality without strong civic space creates a procedural democracy that lacks participatory depth.
- Moderate inclusion outcomes are weakened by the absence of youth and PWD representation in leadership structures.
- Transparency tools such as citizen budgets need to be complemented by stronger accountability mechanisms.
- Civic space constraints can undermine otherwise functional governance systems, reducing their democratic impact.

**Strategic Implications:** Delta's democratic profile points to a system at risk of becoming increasingly procedural. Institutions operate, elections hold, and participation exists, but the underlying civic environment limits the quality of engagement.

The sharp decline in turnout signals potential voter fatigue or disengagement. If this trend continues, the state may experience reduced legitimacy in electoral processes over time.

At the same time, the relatively strong institutional base presents an opportunity. Strengthening civic space and broadening inclusion could significantly improve overall democratic performance without requiring a structural overhaul. The key issue is alignment. Without bridging the gap between institutions, participation, and civic freedoms, the state's democratic trajectory may remain constrained.



16.

# Edo State



*Edo State presents a mixed democratic profile, ranking 14th with a score of 55.68%, placing it within the transition tier. Its strongest asset is a highly open civic environment, reflected in its top-tier performance in civil liberties. Citizens appear to have relatively strong access to expression and engagement spaces compared to most states.*

*This openness, however, is not matched by institutional depth or inclusive political structures. Electoral participation remains relatively low, and institutional performance is moderate despite evidence of legislative activity. The result is a system where civic voice is present, but the pathways for translating that voice into governance outcomes remain constrained.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Edo

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	South South
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	14th (55.68%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	28th (54.79%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	23rd (35.00%)

<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	26th (45.60%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	6th (80.15%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Disconnected Elite
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Dormant States
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Closed Institutions
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Civic-Strong Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	55.7
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+2.6
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Transition Tier (Stable)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	3 out of 28
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 28
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 28
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	181 out of 181
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2023
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	22.40% (2024)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	27.00% (2020)

<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	3,233,366
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	5,527,810
<b>Registered Voters (2024)</b>	2,501,081
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	2,128,288
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	85.09%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	372,793
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	14.91%

Edo State has a politically active environment shaped by competitive elections and a history of strong public engagement in governance issues. The state often attracts national attention during election cycles, reflecting a politically aware and responsive citizenry.

This context supports a vibrant civic space, but governance outcomes do not always reflect the same level of responsiveness. Structural gaps in inclusion and institutional effectiveness have persisted, creating a disconnect between citizen engagement and policy influence. Participants during the South-South validation exercise described states like Edo as environments where civic expression is relatively open but institutional responsiveness does not always keep pace. This observation aligns with Edo's pattern of strong civic space but weaker institutional alignment.

**Electoral Participation:** Edo ranks 28th in electoral participation with a score of 54.79%, placing it below the national median. Turnout trends show a decline from 27.00% in 2020 to 22.40% in 2024. This reduction suggests weakening electoral engagement, despite the state's active political environment.

PVC collection stands at 85.09%, which is comparatively lower than many states. The relatively high number of uncollected PVCs indicates gaps in last-mile voter mobilisation and access. At the local level, turnout is recorded as 0.00% across both recent cycles, pointing to weak local electoral engagement or data limitations. The pattern suggests that while citizens are politically aware, this does not consistently translate into electoral participation.

**Political Inclusion:** Edo ranks 23rd in political inclusion with a score of 35.00%, indicating limited inclusiveness in governance structures. Executive appointments show 3 women out of 28 commissioners, with no youth or persons with disabilities represented. This points to a narrow leadership base that does not reflect broader demographic diversity.

The typology of “Disconnected Elite” reinforces this pattern. Participation exists, but access to decision-making spaces remains concentrated. Participants during the validation exercise noted that representation gaps in some South-South states are less about absence of participation and more about restricted access to leadership pathways. Edo reflects this dynamic clearly.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance in Edo is moderate, with a score of 45.60% and a ranking of 26th. One notable strength is legislative activity. The State House of Assembly recorded 181 sittings out of 181, indicating a fully active legislative calendar. This suggests procedural consistency and institutional presence.

However, high legislative activity does not automatically translate into effective oversight or accountability. The broader classification of “Dormant States” and “Closed Institutions” suggests that institutional outputs may not fully align with citizen expectations or governance outcomes. The availability of a citizen budget reflects some level of transparency, but the overall institutional score indicates that this is not sufficient to drive stronger performance.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Edo ranks 6th in civil liberties with a score of 80.15%, making it one of the strongest states in this dimension. This indicates a relatively open civic environment where citizens can express opinions, organise, and engage with public issues.

The classification as a “Civic-Strong Enclave” captures this strength. Civic actors appear to have space to operate, and public discourse is active. However, the contrast between strong civic space and weaker institutional performance highlights a critical imbalance. Civic engagement is not fully translating into institutional accountability or improved governance outcomes.

### Key Lessons

- Strong civic space does not automatically lead to high electoral participation or effective governance outcomes.
- High legislative activity can coexist with limited institutional impact if accountability mechanisms remain weak.

- Representation gaps in executive appointments constrain the inclusiveness of governance structures.
- Declining turnout alongside moderate PVC collection highlights weaknesses in voter mobilisation strategies.
- Institutional openness needs to be matched with responsiveness to convert civic engagement into policy influence.

### **Strategic Implications**

Edo's democratic trajectory reflects a system with strong civic foundations but uneven institutional alignment. The presence of an active civic space provides a critical asset for democratic consolidation. However, declining participation and limited inclusion suggest that the system risks becoming disconnected from its citizen base. If civic engagement continues without corresponding institutional responsiveness, public trust may erode over time.

The state's strong legislative activity presents an opportunity to strengthen accountability frameworks. Aligning institutional outputs with civic expectations could significantly improve overall democratic performance. The key strategic issue is integration. Bridging the gap between civic voice, institutional action, and inclusive representation will determine the direction of Edo's democratic development.



## NORTH CENTRAL

17.

# Benue State



*Benue State presents a mixed democratic profile, combining relatively strong civic engagement with weak institutional foundations. With an overall score of 55.89%, the state sits slightly above the national median, reflecting moderate performance. Electoral participation is comparatively strong, and civil liberties rank among the highest nationally. However, institutional performance remains significantly weak, dragging down overall democratic quality. The data reveals a clear imbalance. Citizens appear willing to engage politically, yet the structures meant to translate participation into accountable governance are underperforming. Legislative activity is limited, and political inclusion remains modest. This creates a system where participation exists without corresponding institutional responsiveness, raising concerns about the sustainability and depth of democratic practice in the state.*

### STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Benue

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North Central
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	13th (55.89%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	11th (66.57%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	16th (40.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	33rd (33.83%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	5th (81.42%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Democratic Depth
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Participatory but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Representative but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Civic-Strong Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	55.9
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+2.8
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Transition Tier (Stable)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	2 out of 17
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 17
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 17
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	25 out of 181
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	29.00% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	34.75% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes

<b>2006 Population</b>	4,253,641
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	6,687,706
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,777,727
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	2,607,141
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	93.86%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	170,586
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	6.14%

Benue State occupies a central position within Nigeria’s North Central region, with a political environment shaped by agrarian livelihoods, communal dynamics, and recurring security challenges. Governance in the state often intersects with issues of land use, farmer-herder conflicts, and localised insecurity, all of which influence citizen-state relations.

Electoral engagement has remained relatively active compared to several peer states, but this has not consistently translated into strong governance outcomes. Institutional structures, particularly legislative processes, have faced operational constraints, while inclusion mechanisms remain limited. These contextual factors shape the observed divergence between citizen participation and institutional effectiveness.

**Electoral Participation:** Benue ranks 11th in electoral participation with a score of 66.57%, indicating a relatively engaged electorate. This aligns with its classification under “Democratic Depth,” where citizens actively participate in electoral processes. However, turnout trends show a gradual decline. Governorship turnout dropped from 34.75% in 2019 to 29.00% in 2023. At the local government level, turnout is recorded as 0.00% across two election cycles, pointing to significant gaps in local electoral credibility or documentation.

PVC collection is high at 93.86%, suggesting that logistical barriers are minimal. The challenge lies elsewhere, particularly in sustaining voter confidence and ensuring meaningful participation at subnational levels. The validation discussions reinforced this pattern. Across North Central states, stakeholders highlighted weak documentation and credibility concerns in local government elections, noting that results often lack detailed breakdowns and transparency. This provides context for the absence of measurable turnout at the LGA level in Benue.

**Political Inclusion:** Benue's political inclusion score stands at 40.00%, placing it mid-range nationally. Representation remains limited, particularly for women, youth, and persons with disabilities. Out of 17 commissioners, only 2 are women, with no youth or PWD representation recorded. This reflects a narrow inclusion framework concentrated within established political elites.

Insights from the validation process provide further clarity. Stakeholders noted that broader inclusion mechanisms in the state are weak, with limited institutional pathways for underrepresented groups. While there is some evidence of female representation in the judiciary, this has not translated into broader executive inclusion. This pattern suggests that representation exists in isolated pockets rather than as a systemic feature of governance.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance is one of Benue's weakest areas, with a score of 33.83% and a ranking of 33rd. Legislative activity is particularly low, with only 25 sittings recorded out of 181 expected sittings in 2025. This indicates limited legislative engagement and raises concerns about oversight, lawmaking, and accountability functions.

Although a citizen budget is available, validation participants highlighted broader transparency concerns. Public hearings were described as limited in both scope and frequency, and legislative openness remains constrained. A critical distinction emerged during validation discussions. Participants emphasized that internal processes may exist, but without consistent public accessibility, they do not meet transparency standards. This is relevant for Benue, where institutional processes appear present but not sufficiently open.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Benue performs strongly in civil liberties, ranking 5th with a score of 81.42%. This suggests that citizens experience relatively open civic space, with room for expression, association, and engagement. However, this strong performance generated debate during validation. Stakeholders questioned whether the ranking fully reflects lived realities, particularly in the context of ongoing security challenges such as banditry affecting rural communities.

This tension highlights an important analytical point. High rankings in civil liberties may reflect comparative performance rather than absolute conditions. In other words, Benue may perform better than many states but still face substantive challenges in ensuring full civic freedoms.

**Governance Balance and Structural Dynamics:** Benue's overall democratic structure reveals a clear imbalance. Civic space and electoral participation are relatively strong,

but institutional performance and inclusion lag behind.

This creates a participatory system without corresponding institutional depth. Citizens engage, but governance structures struggle to absorb, respond, and translate that engagement into effective outcomes.

### **Key Lessons**

- Strong electoral participation does not automatically translate into effective governance when institutions are weak.
- Limited legislative activity constrains oversight and reduces accountability, even in states with active civic engagement.
- Inclusion deficits persist when representation is not systematically embedded across governance structures.
- High civil liberties scores may reflect relative positioning rather than fully enabling environments.
- Weak transparency practices, particularly in documentation and public access, undermine institutional credibility.

**Strategic Implications:** Benue State presents a case of partial democratic consolidation. The presence of active citizens and relatively open civic space provides a foundation for democratic strengthening. However, institutional weaknesses pose a significant constraint.

The low level of legislative activity suggests that governance processes may not be sufficiently responsive or accountable. Over time, this can erode the benefits of strong participation, leading to disengagement or frustration among citizens.

The disconnect between high civic space and weak institutions also creates a vulnerability. Without strong governance structures, civic freedoms may not translate into policy influence or improved public outcomes. At the same time, the state's moderate ranking and positive deviation from the national median indicate that improvements are achievable. Strengthening institutional capacity and inclusion mechanisms could significantly enhance overall democratic performance.

18.

# Kogi State



*Kogi State presents a layered democratic profile, where institutional strength and inclusion indicators appear relatively strong, but civic space and participation patterns introduce constraints. With an overall score of 51.34%, the state falls slightly below the national median, placing it within the developing category.*

*The most notable feature is its top ranking in political inclusion, suggesting a formal structure that accommodates representation. Institutional performance is also comparatively stable. However, this strength is offset by weak civic space and moderate participation levels. The result is a system where inclusion appears structured but may not be fully experienced in practice, raising questions about the depth and openness of democratic engagement.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Kogi

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North Central
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	20th (51.34%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	20th (60.75%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	1st (55.00%)

<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	16th (58.85%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	23rd (35.11%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Tokenized Participation
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Institutional Enclaves
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Inclusive & Capable
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Procedural Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	51.3
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-1.8
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Developing Tier (Fragile)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	3 out of 18
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	1 out of 18
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 18
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	100 out of 181
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	41.10% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	37.80% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	3,314,043

<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	5,053,734
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	1,932,654
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,833,160
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	94.85%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	99,494
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	5.15%

Kogi State occupies a strategic position in Nigeria’s North Central region, functioning as a political and economic gateway between northern and southern zones. Its governance environment reflects a blend of centralised authority structures and evolving local governance practices.

The state’s political dynamics often revolve around executive dominance and administrative control, with governance processes shaped by both formal institutions and informal influence networks. Electoral behaviour has shown moderate engagement, but questions around transparency, accountability, and public trust remain relevant in interpreting democratic performance.

**Electoral Participation:** Kogi ranks 20th in electoral participation with a score of 60.75%, reflecting moderate engagement. Governorship turnout increased from 37.80% in 2019 to 41.10% in 2023, indicating improved voter mobilisation at the state level. However, this upward trend is not reflected at the local level. LGA election turnout is recorded as 0.00% across two cycles, pointing to either weak documentation or limited electoral competitiveness.

Insights from the validation exercise suggest that local elections across the region often suffer from weak documentation and limited transparency, with results lacking detailed breakdowns and public accessibility. This provides a structural explanation for the absence of measurable turnout data.

**Political Inclusion:** Kogi leads nationally in political inclusion with a score of 55.00%. On the surface, this suggests a relatively inclusive political environment. However, the structure of inclusion is more complex than the aggregate score implies. Participants during the validation exercise noted that inclusion in Kogi operates through layered mechanisms rather than uniform representation. At the local government level, a “twinning” arrangement reportedly exists, where chairmanship positions are predominantly occupied by men while vice-chair roles are largely held by women.

This arrangement expands descriptive representation but raises questions about the distribution of decision-making authority. Women are present within governance structures, yet leadership remains concentrated. Additional insights indicate that women hold key administrative positions such as Head of Service and Secretary to the State Government, suggesting that inclusion extends beyond political offices into the bureaucracy. This points to a hybrid inclusion model that combines formal representation with administrative participation.

**Institutional Performance:** Kogi's institutional performance score of 58.85% places it in the mid-tier nationally. Legislative activity is moderate, with 100 sittings recorded out of 181, indicating a functioning but not fully optimised legislature. Transparency mechanisms show partial effectiveness. The availability of a citizen budget suggests some commitment to fiscal openness. However, broader validation insights highlight a systemic issue across states where documentation exists internally but is not consistently accessible to the public.

A more nuanced perspective emerged during the validation discussions. It was reported that governance presence may be uneven, with perceptions that elements of state administration are sometimes managed outside the state's territorial space. This has implications for responsiveness and oversight. Additionally, institutional record-keeping has reportedly been affected by fire incidents, leading to the loss of critical documents. This introduces a structural limitation in assessing governance continuity and data reliability.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Kogi ranks 23rd in civil liberties with a score of 35.11%, indicating a relatively constrained civic environment compared to other states. Validation discussions highlighted structural pressures within the media ecosystem in Kogi. Financial dependencies, informal agreements, and indirect influence mechanisms were identified as factors shaping editorial independence.

In such an environment, formal freedoms may exist, but practical constraints limit the extent to which citizens and media actors can operate independently. This helps explain the gap between institutional capacity and lived civic experience in the state.

**Governance Balance and Structural Dynamics:** Kogi's democratic structure reflects a controlled system with elements of inclusion and institutional functionality, but constrained openness. Political inclusion and institutional performance provide a stable base, yet limited civic space restricts broader democratic expression. This creates a governance model where participation is structured and managed, rather than fully open and competitive.

## Key Lessons

- High inclusion scores can mask uneven distribution of power when representation is not matched by decision-making authority.
- Institutional functionality does not automatically translate into transparency when public access to information is limited.
- Improved voter turnout at the state level does not guarantee credibility or engagement in local elections.
- Civic space constraints can limit the practical impact of otherwise strong institutional and inclusion frameworks.
- Structural disruptions, such as weak record-keeping systems, can undermine governance continuity and data integrity.

**Strategic Implications:** Kogi State demonstrates a model of structured democracy, where institutions and inclusion mechanisms are present but operate within controlled boundaries. This creates a stable but constrained democratic environment.

The relatively strong institutional and inclusion scores present an opportunity to deepen democratic practice. However, without expanding civic space, these gains may not translate into broader citizen empowerment.

The disparity between state-level electoral engagement and local-level opacity signals a risk. If local governance remains weakly documented and less competitive, it may undermine trust in the broader democratic system.

The emerging pattern suggests that future democratic strengthening in Kogi will depend on opening civic space and improving transparency, rather than building new institutional structures.



19.

# Kwara State



*Kwara State records a low overall democratic performance, ranking 32nd nationally with a score of 42.15%. The state's profile reveals a pronounced imbalance across key democratic dimensions. Institutional performance stands relatively strong, and electoral participation is moderate, yet these strengths are overshadowed by weak political inclusion and very limited civic space.*

*This imbalance produces a system where governance structures appear functional, but access to political power and civic expression remains restricted. The combination of moderate voter engagement and weak inclusion suggests that participation does not translate into broad-based representation. The low score in civil liberties further constrains citizen influence, limiting the ability of the public to shape governance outcomes.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Kwara

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North Central
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	32nd (42.15%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	21st (60.33%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	29th (25.00%)

<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	13th (61.40%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	34th (22.22%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Disconnected Elite
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Institutional Enclaves
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Efficient but Exclusive
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Procedural Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	42.2
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-10.9
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Critical Tier (Lagging)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	11 out of 22
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	1 out of 22
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 22
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	44 out of 181
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	27.76% (2023)

<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	33.68% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	2,365,353
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	4,259,613
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	1,695,927
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,537,275
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	90.65%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	158,652
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	9.35%

Kwara State has historically operated within a tightly managed political environment, where elite networks have played a central role in shaping political competition and governance outcomes. While electoral transitions have occurred, the structure of political participation often reflects continuity in influence rather than broad-based contestation.

The state's socio-political landscape is characterised by a relatively stable administrative system, but with limited permeability for new entrants into political power. This has implications for inclusion, particularly for youth and emerging political actors. Electoral behaviour tends to reflect moderate engagement, though this has not consistently translated into competitive or inclusive political processes.

**Electoral Participation:** Kwara records a mid-level performance in electoral participation, ranking 21st with a score of 60.33%. However, turnout trends show a decline in engagement at the state level. Governorship turnout dropped from 33.68% in 2019 to 27.76% in 2023, indicating reduced voter mobilisation.

At the local level, turnout data is recorded as 0.00% across two election cycles. This points to systemic issues in either the conduct or documentation of local elections. The absence of measurable participation at this level suggests weak electoral competitiveness or limited transparency. PVC collection stands at 90.65%, which indicates that most registered voters are ready to vote with the PVC collection rate. The decline in turnout despite high PVC collection suggests that disengagement is driven more by trust and perceived relevance than by logistical barriers.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion in Kwara is significantly weak, with a score of 25.00%, ranking 29th nationally. This aligns with the state's typology of "Disconnected Elite," indicating limited access to political power for broader segments of the population.

***A notable contrast emerges in the composition of the executive. Women hold 11 out of 22 commissioner positions, representing one of the highest levels of female representation in the dataset.*** However, youth representation remains minimal, with only one commissioner within the 18–35 age bracket, and no representation for persons with disabilities.

This pattern suggests that while gender representation has improved at the executive level, inclusion remains uneven across other demographic groups. It also raises questions about whether representation at the executive level reflects wider access to political participation or is confined to specific institutional spaces.

**Institutional Performance:** Kwara's institutional performance is relatively strong, with a score of 61.40%, placing it 13th nationally. This suggests that governance structures are operational and capable of delivering administrative functions. However, legislative activity presents a contrasting picture. The State House of Assembly recorded only 44 sittings out of a possible 181 in 2025, indicating low legislative engagement. This raises concerns about the depth of oversight, lawmaking, and accountability functions.

The state has published a citizen budget, which indicates a level of transparency in fiscal communication. Yet, institutional strength appears concentrated within the executive arm, with weaker performance in legislative processes. The combination of functional administrative systems and limited legislative activity suggests an imbalance in institutional power, where oversight mechanisms may not be fully effective.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Kwara ranks 34th in civil liberties with a score of 22.22%, placing it among the weakest states in this dimension. This reflects significant constraints in the civic environment. The low score indicates limited space for public expression, civic engagement, and independent media activity. In such a context, citizens may have restricted opportunities to organise, advocate, or hold government accountable.

This constraint reinforces the broader pattern observed in the state's democratic profile. Even where institutions function and elections are conducted, the limited civic space reduces the depth of democratic engagement and weakens the link between citizens and governance.

**Governance Balance and Structural Dynamics:** Kwara's democratic system reflects a concentration of functionality within institutions, but limited openness in participation and civic engagement. Institutional strength coexists with restricted access to political space and weak civic freedoms.

This creates a governance environment where decisions can be implemented efficiently, but without broad-based input or scrutiny. The resulting system is stable in form but limited in inclusiveness and responsiveness.

### **Key Lessons**

- Strong institutional structures do not guarantee inclusive governance when access to political participation remains restricted.
- High female representation at the executive level does not necessarily translate into broader inclusion across all demographic groups.
- Declining voter turnout, despite high PVC collection, indicates growing disengagement driven by trust and relevance rather than access.
- Weak legislative activity limits accountability, even when other institutional components appear functional.
- Restricted civic space undermines the ability of citizens to influence governance, reducing the practical impact of democratic processes.

### **Strategic Implications**

Kwara State's democratic trajectory is shaped by a central tension between institutional functionality and limited inclusiveness. The current structure allows governance processes to operate with relative stability, but without strong citizen engagement or oversight. The low level of civic space presents a critical risk. Without avenues for expression and accountability, public trust may continue to decline, further reducing electoral participation over time.

At the same time, the presence of relatively strong institutions offers an opportunity. If inclusion and civic freedoms are expanded, the state has the structural capacity to support more participatory governance. The emerging pattern suggests that future improvements in democratic performance will depend less on building new institutions and more on opening existing systems to broader participation and scrutiny.

20.

# Nasarawa State



*Nasarawa State ranks among the strongest performers nationally, placing 4th with a DPI score of 62.44%. Its performance reflects a relatively balanced democratic structure, with consistent strength across institutional effectiveness, civic space, and electoral participation. Unlike many states where gains in one dimension are offset by weaknesses in another, Nasarawa demonstrates alignment between governance capacity and citizen engagement.*

*The state's institutional performance and civic environment stand out as reinforcing factors. Functional governance systems operate alongside a relatively open civic space, enabling a more responsive interaction between state and citizens. Political inclusion, while not weak, remains moderate and slightly lags behind other dimensions, indicating that representation has not fully caught up with institutional and participatory gains.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Nasarawa

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North Central
DPI Category	Moderate Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	4th (62.44%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	13th (65.41%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	16th (40.00%)

<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	8th (69.06%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	13th (68.79%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Democratic Depth
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Active & Functional
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Inclusive & Capable
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Balanced Leaders
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	62.4
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+9.3
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Top Tier (Leading)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	2 out of 16
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	1 out of 16
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 16
<b>Number of Legislative Sittings (out of 181)</b>	120 out of 181
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)

<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	34.80% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	37.00% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	1,869,377
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	3,632,239
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	1899244
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1847752
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	97.29%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	51,492
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	2.71%

Nasarawa’s political environment is shaped by its proximity to the Federal Capital Territory and its role as a politically strategic state in the North Central region. This positioning has contributed to a governance culture that emphasises administrative functionality and political stability.

The state has experienced relatively competitive elections and a degree of political alternation, which has supported broader democratic engagement. Its socio-political composition, characterised by ethnic and religious diversity, has required a governance approach that balances inclusion with stability. This context has influenced both institutional development and civic engagement patterns.

**Electoral Participation:** Nasarawa records a solid performance in electoral participation, ranking 13th with a score of 65.41%. Voter turnout in governorship elections shows a slight decline, from 37.00% in 2019 to 34.80% in 2023. While the drop is not steep, it reflects a gradual reduction in voter engagement.

PVC collection stands at 97.29%, one of the highest rates nationally. This indicates strong voter registration and collection systems. The gap between high PVC collection and moderate turnout suggests that while access barriers are minimal, motivational factors such as trust and perceived electoral competitiveness may influence participation levels.

At the local government level, turnout is recorded as 0.00% across two cycles. This absence of measurable participation points to structural or reporting gaps in local electoral processes, which contrasts with the relatively stronger engagement seen in state-level elections.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion in Nasarawa is moderate, with a score of 40.00%, ranking 16th. This places the state within a functional range but below its performance in other dimensions.

Executive representation shows limited diversity. Women hold 2 out of 16 commissioner positions, while youth representation is minimal at 1 out of 16, and there is no representation for persons with disabilities. These figures indicate that while governance structures are operational, access to political power remains somewhat restricted.

The state's typology of "Inclusive & Capable" suggests that institutional frameworks support inclusion, but actual representation outcomes remain uneven. This gap highlights the difference between formal inclusivity and practical access to political roles.

**Institutional Performance:** Nasarawa performs strongly in institutional effectiveness, ranking 8th with a score of 69.06%. Legislative activity supports this assessment, with 120 sittings out of 181, indicating an active State House of Assembly. The availability of a citizen budget reflects a commitment to fiscal transparency and public communication. These elements point to a governance system that is both operational and relatively accountable. The alignment between executive functionality and legislative activity distinguishes Nasarawa from states where institutional strength is uneven. This balance contributes to its overall high DPI ranking.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** With a score of 68.79%, Nasarawa ranks 13th in civil liberties, reflecting a relatively open civic environment. This suggests that citizens have reasonable access to spaces for expression, engagement, and participation.

The strength of civic space complements institutional performance. It enables citizens to interact with governance structures, contributing to accountability and responsiveness. This alignment is consistent with the state's classification as "Balanced Leaders," where governance and civic engagement reinforce each other.

**Governance Balance and Structural Dynamics:** Nasarawa's democratic profile is defined by balance. Institutional systems function effectively, civic space remains accessible, and electoral participation is sustained. These elements interact to create a governance environment that is both stable and participatory.

The main constraint lies in the depth of political inclusion. While systems are in place to support participation, representation outcomes indicate that access to political power is not yet fully broad-based.

## 5. Key Lessons

- Balanced performance across institutions and civic space strengthens overall democratic outcomes and supports stability.
- High PVC collection rates do not automatically translate into increased turnout, highlighting the role of voter motivation and trust.
- Active legislative engagement contributes to stronger institutional performance and accountability.
- Moderate inclusion levels can persist even in well-functioning systems, indicating structural barriers to representation.
- Alignment between civic space and institutional effectiveness enhances citizen-state interaction and governance responsiveness.

**Strategic Implications:** Nasarawa's performance positions it as a leading example of balanced democratic development within the national context. The state demonstrates that institutional strength, when combined with an open civic environment, can sustain relatively high democratic performance. The primary risk lies in the gap between institutional capability and inclusive representation. If access to political power remains limited, it may gradually weaken public confidence and reduce the legitimacy of governance processes.

At the same time, the state's strong institutional base provides a platform for further improvements. Expanding inclusion within existing structures can deepen democratic quality without requiring significant structural reforms. The pattern suggests that future progress will depend on translating institutional and civic strengths into broader representation and participation outcomes.

21.

# Niger State



*Niger State records a weak democratic performance, ranking 33rd with a DPI score of 41.70%, placing it firmly within the critical tier. The state presents a fragmented democratic profile where moderate electoral participation and average inclusion coexist with weak institutions and severely constrained civic space. This imbalance significantly limits the overall quality of democracy.*

*The most defining feature of Niger's performance is the sharp deficit in civil liberties, which ranks 32nd nationally. Even where participation and representation show some functional presence, the restrictive civic environment undermines citizen engagement and accountability. Institutional performance also remains below optimal levels, suggesting that governance systems lack the consistency and responsiveness required to sustain democratic outcomes.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Niger

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North Central
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	33rd (41.70%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	24th (58.38%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	16th (40.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	22nd (49.84%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	32nd (23.58%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Tokenized Participation
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Dormant States
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Representative but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Fragile States
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	41.7
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-11.4
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Critical Tier (Lagging)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	7 out of 30
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	2 out of 30
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 30
<b>Number of Legislative Sittings (out of 181)</b>	120 out of 181
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2025
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)

<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	33.33% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	38.94% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	3,954,772
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	6,720,617
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,698,344
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	2,633,728
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	97.61%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	64,616
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	2.39%

Niger State occupies a strategic position in Nigeria’s North Central region, with a large landmass, diverse population, and significant rural communities. Governance in the state is shaped by its geographic spread and infrastructural challenges, which often affect service delivery and citizen engagement.

Politically, the state has experienced relatively stable electoral cycles but with limited competitive intensity in some areas. Socio-economic conditions, including rural isolation and uneven development, influence political participation patterns. These structural factors contribute to a governance environment where formal democratic processes exist, but deeper engagement and institutional effectiveness remain uneven.

**Electoral Participation:** Niger State records moderate electoral participation, with a score of 58.38% and a ranking of 24th. Governorship turnout declined from 38.94% in 2019 to 33.33% in 2023, indicating a noticeable reduction in voter engagement over time.

PVC collection stands at 97.61%, which is among the highest nationally. This suggests that administrative access to voting is not the primary constraint. The divergence between high PVC collection and declining turnout points to deeper issues related to voter motivation, trust, or perceived relevance of elections.

At the local government level, turnout is recorded as 0.00% across two election cycles. This absence of measurable participation signals systemic weaknesses in local electoral processes, either in conduct, reporting, or public engagement.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion in Niger is moderate, with a score of 40.00%, ranking 16th. Representation at the executive level shows relatively stronger female presence compared to many states, with 7 out of 30 commissioners being women. Youth representation remains limited at 2 out of 30, while there is no representation for persons with disabilities.

This pattern indicates that while gender inclusion has seen some progress, broader inclusivity across age and disability dimensions remains constrained. The classification of “Representative but Weak” reflects a system where representation exists but does not fully translate into influence or equitable access.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance is modest, with a score of 49.84%, placing the state 22nd. Legislative activity appears relatively active, with 120 sittings out of 181, suggesting that formal governance structures are operational.

The availability of a citizen budget indicates a degree of transparency in fiscal communication. However, these formal indicators do not fully translate into strong institutional outcomes. The typology of “Dormant States” suggests that while structures exist, their effectiveness in delivering governance outcomes remains limited. This disconnects between activity and impact points to challenges in institutional responsiveness and oversight.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Civil liberties represent the weakest dimension in Niger State, with a score of 23.58%, ranking 32nd. This indicates a significantly constrained civic environment where citizens may face limitations in expression, participation, or engagement with governance processes.

The weakness in civic space has broader implications. It restricts the ability of citizens to hold institutions accountable and reduces the effectiveness of participation. Even where electoral processes function, the lack of an enabling civic environment diminishes their impact. The state’s classification as “Fragile” within the governance map reflects the combined effect of weak civic space and limited institutional strength.

**Governance Imbalance and Structural Constraints:** Niger State’s democratic profile is characterised by imbalance. Electoral participation and inclusion provide a partial foundation, but weak institutions and restricted civic space undermine democratic consolidation.

The interaction between these dimensions reveals a system where participation occurs within constrained conditions. Without improvements in civic freedoms and institutional effectiveness, gains in participation are unlikely to translate into meaningful democratic outcomes.

### **Key Lessons**

- High PVC collection does not guarantee voter turnout, indicating that trust and perceived electoral value are critical determinants of participation.
- Moderate representation can coexist with weak institutional influence, limiting the practical impact of inclusion.
- Active legislative sittings do not automatically translate into effective governance outcomes without strong oversight and accountability mechanisms.
- Weak civic space significantly undermines democratic performance, even when other indicators show moderate strength.
- Imbalances across democratic dimensions create systemic fragility and reduce the resilience of governance structures.

**Strategic Implications:** Niger State's democratic trajectory reflects a system at risk of stagnation. While basic democratic processes are in place, the weakness of civic space and institutional effectiveness limits their impact. This creates a governance environment where participation exists but does not fully translate into accountability or responsiveness.

The constrained civic environment poses a significant risk. It reduces citizen trust, weakens public engagement, and limits the feedback mechanisms necessary for effective governance. Over time, this can lead to further declines in participation and institutional legitimacy.

At the same time, the state's relatively strong PVC collection and moderate inclusion levels provide an entry point for reform. Strengthening civic space and improving institutional performance could unlock the potential of existing participation levels and improve overall democratic outcomes.

22.

# Plateau State



*Plateau State presents a mixed but relatively stable democratic profile, ranking 11th with a score of 57.16%. The state's performance is anchored by strong electoral participation and relatively high levels of civil liberties, both of which contribute to a participatory democratic environment. Political inclusion also performs well, positioning the state among the more representative systems nationally.*

*This strength is, however, offset by weak institutional performance, which ranks 31st. The imbalance between active citizen engagement and underperforming institutions defines Plateau's democratic trajectory. Citizens participate and engage, but governance structures struggle to convert this engagement into consistent and effective outcomes. This gap limits the depth and sustainability of democratic gains.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Plateau

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North Central
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	11th (57.16%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	4th (70.12%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	4th (50.00%)

<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	31st (40.07%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	11th (70.39%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Democratic Depth
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Participatory but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Representative but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Civic-Strong Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	57.2
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+4.1
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Transition Tier (Stable)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	4 out of 19
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 19
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 19
<b>Number of Legislative Sittings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	40.00% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	46.65% (2019)

<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	3,206,531
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	5,400,974
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,789,528
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	2,687,533
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	96.34%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	101,995
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	3.66%

Plateau State occupies a politically significant position in North Central Nigeria, with a history shaped by ethno-religious diversity and periodic communal tensions. These dynamics have influenced governance structures, political competition, and patterns of civic engagement over time.

Despite these complexities, the state maintains a relatively active political culture, with citizens showing consistent interest in electoral processes. Civil society presence and community-level engagement have contributed to sustaining participation. However, underlying structural challenges, including governance capacity and conflict management, continue to shape institutional performance and democratic consolidation.

**Electoral Participation:** Plateau ranks 4th nationally in electoral participation with a strong score of 70.12%. This reflects a high level of voter engagement relative to other states. Governorship turnout, however, shows a decline from 46.65% in 2019 to 40.00% in 2023, indicating a gradual reduction in participation intensity.

PVC collection stands at 96.34%, suggesting that access to voting mechanisms is not a major constraint. The slight decline in turnout despite high PVC collection points to shifting voter attitudes, possibly influenced by trust in electoral processes or perceived effectiveness of elected leadership.

At the local government level, turnout is recorded as 0.00% across two cycles. This absence of measurable participation suggests systemic weaknesses in local electoral processes, raising concerns about grassroots democratic engagement.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion in Plateau is relatively strong, ranking 4th with a

score of 50.00%. This reflects a system where representation is comparatively broader than in many states.

At the executive level, women hold 4 out of 19 commissioner positions, indicating moderate gender inclusion. Youth and persons with disabilities remain unrepresented, pointing to gaps in inclusive governance. The classification of "Representative but Weak" highlights that while representation exists, its effectiveness in shaping policy and governance outcomes may be limited.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance is the weakest dimension in Plateau, ranking 31st with a score of 40.07%. This indicates that governance systems are not keeping pace with the state's levels of participation and inclusion.

Although a citizen budget is available, suggesting some level of fiscal transparency, the absence of data on legislative sittings limits a full assessment of legislative activity. The "Participatory but Weak" classification reflects a system where citizens engage actively, but institutions struggle to respond effectively.

Participants during the North Central validation discussions pointed to recurring gaps in coordination between state institutions and local governance structures, noting that decision-making processes often fail to translate into timely service delivery. This aligns with the observed institutional weaknesses.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Plateau performs relatively well in civil liberties, ranking 11th with a score of 70.39%. This indicates a comparatively open civic environment where citizens can express views and engage in public discourse.

The strong civic space provides a foundation for participation and accountability. However, this strength is not fully leveraged due to institutional limitations. The state's classification under "Civic-Strong Enclaves" reflects this dynamic, where civic freedoms exist but are not fully matched by governance effectiveness.

**Governance Imbalance and Structural Dynamics:** Plateau's democratic profile reveals a clear imbalance. Strong participation and civic space coexist with weak institutional performance. This creates a system where citizens are engaged, but governance structures lack the capacity to respond effectively.

The persistence of this imbalance suggests structural constraints within governance systems, particularly in translating citizen engagement into policy outcomes. Without strengthening institutions, the gains in participation and civic openness risk becoming unsustainable.

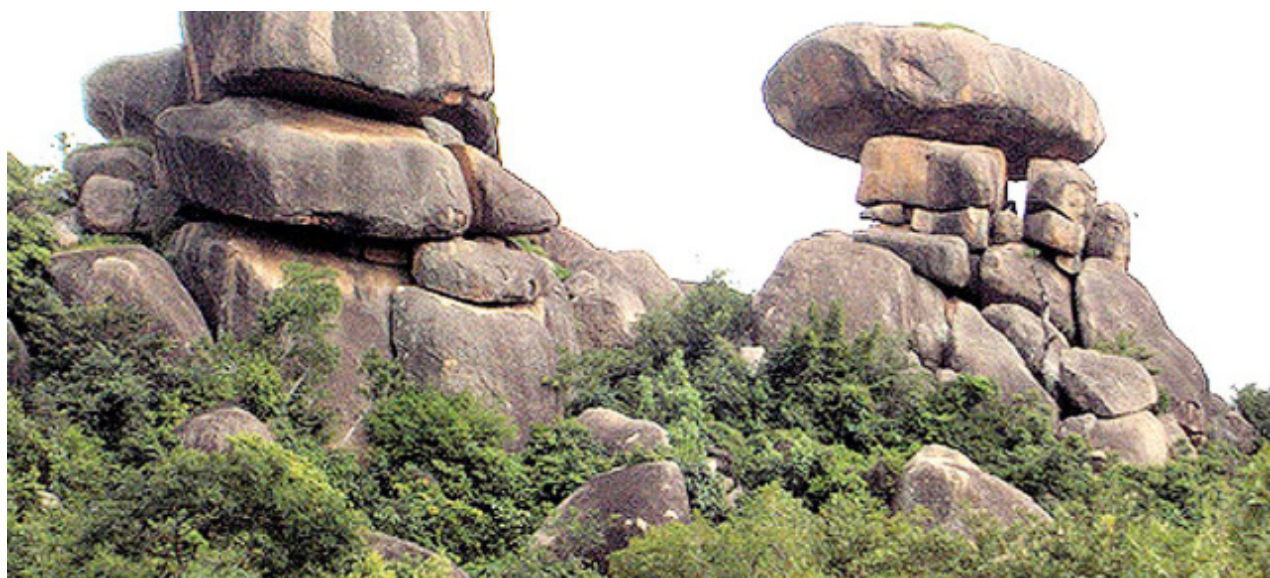
## Key Lessons

- High levels of electoral participation do not automatically translate into strong governance outcomes when institutions are weak.
- Moderate representation without corresponding institutional strength limits the effectiveness of inclusive governance.
- Strong civic space can sustain participation but requires responsive institutions to produce meaningful democratic results.
- Declining turnout trends, even in high-performing states, indicate emerging concerns around voter trust or engagement.
- Weak local government electoral participation undermines grassroots democracy, regardless of state-level performance.

**Strategic Implications:** Plateau State demonstrates the limits of participation-driven democracy without institutional depth. The state's current trajectory suggests that while citizens remain engaged, the inability of institutions to deliver responsive governance could erode trust over time.

The relatively strong civic space offers an opportunity for reform. It provides a platform for citizen engagement, advocacy, and accountability. However, without institutional strengthening, this openness may not translate into improved governance outcomes.

The decline in turnout, though moderate, signals a need to sustain voter confidence. If institutional weaknesses persist, this decline could accelerate, affecting future electoral cycles and overall democratic stability.



## NORTH EAST

23.

# Adamawa State



Adamawa State reflects a structurally imbalanced democratic system, where strong electoral participation exists alongside weak civic space and limited inclusion outcomes. With an overall score of 43.83%, the state ranks 30th nationally and falls within the Critical Tier, indicating persistent governance vulnerabilities.

The data shows that citizens are willing to participate, as seen in its 8th position in electoral participation. However, this engagement is not matched by enabling civic conditions or inclusive governance structures. Civil liberties rank last nationally, which significantly constrains the depth and quality of democratic engagement. Institutional performance sits at a moderate level, but without a supportive civic environment and stronger inclusion, these institutions struggle to translate participation into meaningful democratic outcomes.

### STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Adamawa

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North East
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	30th (43.83%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	8th (68.72%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	16th (40.00%)

<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	21st (53.20%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	36th (20.43%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Democratic Depth
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Participatory but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Representative but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Fragile States
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	43.8
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-9.3
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Critical Tier (Lagging)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	2 out of 23
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	2 out of 23
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 23
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	5.80% (2023)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	5.20% (2019)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	39.90% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	45.88% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes

<b>2006 Population</b>	3,178,950
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	5,236,948
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,196,566
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,970,650
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	89.72%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	225,916
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	10.28%

Adamawa State operates within a complex socio-political and security environment characteristic of the North East region. The state has experienced varying levels of insecurity and socio-economic pressures, which have shaped governance priorities and citizen-state interactions.

Political engagement in Adamawa remains active, particularly during major elections. However, structural limitations such as weak civic awareness, constrained civic space, and uneven representation patterns continue to affect democratic consolidation. Governance systems operate within these constraints, often balancing between maintaining order and enabling democratic freedoms.

**Electoral Participation:** Adamawa ranks 8th in electoral participation with a score of 68.72%, indicating relatively strong voter engagement. Governorship turnout declined from 45.88% in 2019 to 39.90% in 2023, reflecting a gradual reduction in electoral enthusiasm.

PVC collection stands at 89.72%, which is lower than several high-performing states. The proportion of uncollected PVCs at 10.28% suggests that logistical and access barriers still affect segments of the electorate.

At the local government level, turnout remains extremely low, increasing only marginally from 5.20% to 5.80%. This pattern points to weak grassroots electoral processes and limited citizen confidence in local governance structures.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion in Adamawa is moderate, with a score of 40.00% and a national rank of 16th. Representation at the executive level remains limited, with only 2 women and 2 youth commissioners out of 23 positions, and no representation of persons with disabilities.

Participants during the validation exercise noted that inclusive governance remains a practical challenge in Adamawa, with no strong institutional mechanisms to systematically improve representation across gender and youth categories. This aligns with the classification of “Representative but Weak,” where representation exists but lacks depth and structural reinforcement.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance ranks 21st with a score of 53.20%, placing Adamawa in a moderate position. The availability of a citizen budget indicates some level of transparency in fiscal governance.

However, participants during the validation exercise raised concerns about weak legislative oversight, noting irregular sittings and limited inclusivity in public hearings.

The absence of detailed legislative sitting data further complicates the assessment of institutional effectiveness. The typology of “Participatory but Weak” reflects this condition, where institutions exist but do not consistently function at an optimal level.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Adamawa records its weakest performance in civil liberties, ranking 36th with a score of 20.43%. This indicates a significantly constrained civic environment.

Low civic space affects freedom of expression, limits civic engagement, and reduces the ability of citizens and civil society actors to hold government accountable. This dimension is critical because it shapes how participation translates into democratic outcomes. The classification of “Fragile States” within the governance map reflects the combined effect of weak civic space and structural governance constraints.

**Governance Imbalance and Structural Dynamics:** Adamawa’s democratic profile is defined by a clear disconnect between participation and enabling conditions. Citizens engage in elections, but civic restrictions and limited inclusion reduce the effectiveness of that engagement.

Validation discussions further highlighted gaps between institutional processes and public accessibility, particularly in legislative oversight and representation. These structural issues reinforce a cycle where participation remains high but outcomes remain limited.

## Key Lessons

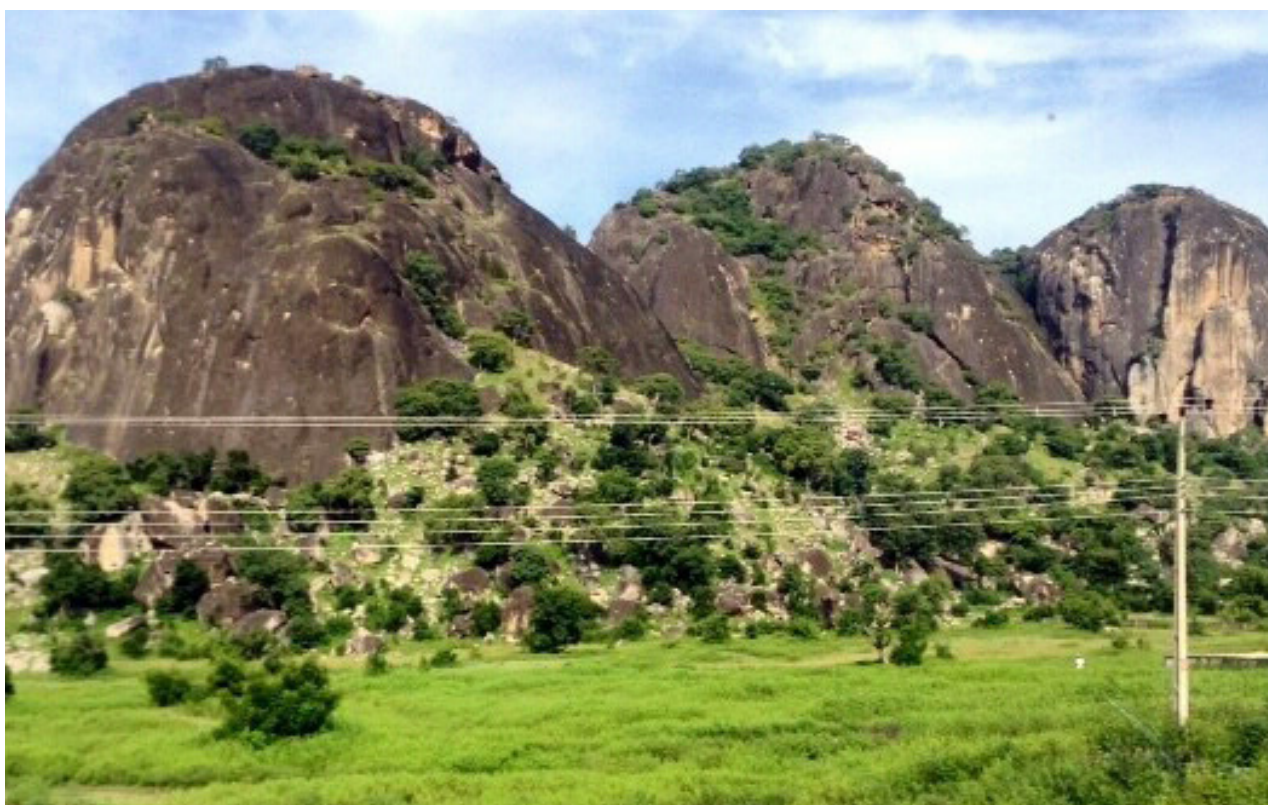
- Strong electoral participation can coexist with weak civic space, but this limits the quality of democratic engagement.
- Moderate institutional performance is insufficient when legislative oversight

and transparency remain inconsistent.

- Limited representation of women and youth reflects the absence of structured inclusion mechanisms within governance systems.
- Low turnout in local government elections signals weak grassroots democracy and limited trust in sub-state institutions.
- Uncollected PVC levels indicate that access and mobilisation challenges still affect segments of the electorate.

**Strategic Implications:** Adamawa's current trajectory suggests a participation-driven but structurally constrained democracy. The persistence of weak civic space presents a significant risk, as it limits accountability and reduces the capacity of citizens to influence governance beyond elections.

The moderate performance of institutions offers a foundation for improvement, but without addressing civic space constraints and inclusion gaps, progress will remain uneven. The decline in turnout also signals a need to sustain voter confidence and engagement. The state's classification within the Critical Tier indicates that without targeted reforms, democratic performance may stagnate or deteriorate, particularly in areas related to rights, inclusion, and local governance.



# Bauchi State



*Bauchi State presents a sharply uneven democratic profile, where relatively strong civic space coexists with weak institutional performance and low electoral engagement. With an overall score of 44.17%, the state ranks 28th and remains within the Critical Tier, reflecting systemic governance gaps.*

*The most defining feature of Bauchi's performance is the disconnect between civil liberties and institutional effectiveness. While the state performs well in civic space, ranking 12th, this advantage does not translate into strong institutional outcomes or active electoral participation. Electoral participation remains low, and institutional performance ranks near the bottom nationally, indicating that formal governance systems are not functioning with sufficient depth or consistency to support democratic consolidation.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Bauchi

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North East
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	28th (44.17%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	31st (49.41%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	16th (40.00%)

<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	34th (18.52%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	12th (69.09%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Tokenized Participation
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Dormant States
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Representative but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Civic-Strong Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	44.2
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-8.9
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Critical Tier (Lagging)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	4 out of 24
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	3 out of 24
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 24
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	38.50% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	46.41% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes

<b>2006 Population</b>	4,653,066
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	7,540,663
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,749,268
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	2,721,780
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	99.00%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	27,488
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	1.00%

Bauchi operates within a socio-political environment shaped by a mix of traditional authority structures, evolving democratic institutions, and socio-economic pressures typical of the North East. Political engagement exists but tends to be uneven across different levels of governance, with stronger activity during high-stakes elections and weaker engagement at subnational levels.

The state's governance architecture reflects a pattern where civic awareness and freedoms exist to some extent, but institutional systems do not consistently provide channels for meaningful participation or accountability. Structural limitations in transparency, documentation, and public access to governance processes continue to shape how democracy is experienced by citizens.

**Electoral Participation:** Bauchi ranks 31st in electoral participation with a score of 49.41%, indicating low engagement relative to other states. Governorship turnout declined from 46.41% in 2019 to 38.50% in 2023, reflecting a clear drop in voter participation.

At the local government level, turnout data shows 0.00% for both recent cycles. This pattern suggests either a lack of credible electoral processes at that level or significant gaps in documentation and reporting.

PVC collection is notably high at 99.00%, one of the strongest nationally. This indicates that access to voting materials is not the primary constraint. The gap between high PVC collection and low turnout points to deeper issues related to voter motivation, trust, or perceived relevance of elections.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion in Bauchi stands at 40.00%, placing the state at 16th position nationally. Representation data shows 4 women and 3 youth commissioners out of 24, with no representation of persons with disabilities.

Participants during the validation exercise pointed to low representation of women in both the executive and judiciary, stressing the need for more accurate documentation and stronger inclusion frameworks. The typology of “Representative but Weak” reflects this condition, where representation exists numerically but lacks structural depth and institutional backing.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance is the weakest dimension for Bauchi, with a score of 18.52% and a rank of 34th. This indicates significant limitations in governance effectiveness, oversight, and administrative functionality.

Participants during the validation exercise highlighted restricted access to legislative records, including Hansards and voting proceedings, making it difficult to independently assess legislative performance. Although a citizen budget is available, broader transparency issues persist. The classification of “Dormant States” captures the condition where institutional structures exist but do not operate with sufficient visibility or accountability.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Bauchi performs relatively well in civil liberties, ranking 12th with a score of 69.09%. This suggests that, compared to many states, there is a more open environment for civic engagement.

However, this performance should be interpreted cautiously. Participants during the validation exercise raised concerns about limitations in freedom of speech and access to information, particularly in relation to governance documentation. This creates a nuanced picture where formal civic space indicators appear strong, but practical access to information and expression remains uneven.

**Structural Disconnects:** Bauchi’s democratic system is characterised by multiple disconnects. High PVC collection does not translate into high turnout. Civic space does not translate into institutional accountability. Representation does not translate into inclusive governance. These gaps point to systemic inefficiencies in how democratic inputs are converted into governance outcomes. The persistence of these disconnects reinforces the state’s position within the Critical Tier.

### Key Lessons

- High PVC collection does not guarantee electoral participation, indicating that voter motivation and trust are critical determinants of turnout.
- Strong civic space alone cannot compensate for weak institutions, as accountability depends on functional governance systems.

- Limited access to legislative records reduces transparency and weakens oversight, affecting institutional credibility.
- Representation without structured inclusion mechanisms leads to weak political inclusion outcomes.
- Low or undocumented local government turnout signals a breakdown in grassroots democratic processes.

**Strategic Implications:** Bauchi's democratic trajectory reflects a system where foundational elements exist but do not align effectively. The combination of weak institutions and low participation creates a risk of democratic stagnation, where citizens remain disengaged from governance processes.

The relatively strong civic space presents an opportunity. If institutional reforms improve transparency and accountability, this could serve as a foundation for strengthening democratic engagement.

However, the persistence of weak institutional performance suggests that without deliberate reforms, the gap between civic openness and governance effectiveness will continue to widen. This has implications for future elections, particularly in sustaining voter interest and ensuring credibility at subnational levels.

25.

# Borno State

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*Borno State presents a comparatively strong institutional and participation profile within a challenging operating environment. With an overall score of 55.27%, the state sits above the national median and falls within the Transition Tier, indicating relative stability in democratic performance. Electoral participation and institutional performance stand out as key strengths, both ranking within the top 10 nationally.*

*This performance, however, is not evenly distributed across all democratic dimensions. Civil liberties remain comparatively constrained, ranking 21st, while political inclusion, although moderate, does not fully reflect broad-based representation. The state's profile reveals a system that functions procedurally, with active institutions and engaged voters, but where civic openness and inclusive governance have not advanced at the same pace.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Borno

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North East
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	15th (55.27%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	9th (68.45%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	12th (45.00%)

<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	10th (65.94%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	21st (42.66%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Democratic Depth
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Active & Functional
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Inclusive & Capable
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Procedural Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	55.3
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+2.2
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Transition Tier (Stable)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	2 out of 18
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 18
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 18
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	96 out of 181
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	25.86% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	55.66% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes

<b>2006 Population</b>	4,171,104
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	6,651,590
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,513,281
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	2,447,209
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	97.37%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	66,072
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	2.63%

Borno's democratic landscape is shaped by its recent history of insurgency and ongoing recovery efforts. Governance systems operate within a security-sensitive environment, where state authority and institutional rebuilding have taken priority over time. This context has influenced both the structure and functioning of democratic processes.

Electoral engagement in Borno tends to be influenced by a combination of state-led mobilisation and community-level dynamics. While formal governance institutions have regained operational capacity, broader civic participation and freedoms continue to evolve within a controlled environment. This duality defines much of the state's democratic experience.

**Electoral Participation:** Borno ranks 9th in electoral participation with a score of 68.45%, indicating relatively strong voter engagement. This performance aligns with high PVC collection rates at 97.37%, suggesting that both access to voting materials and mobilisation mechanisms are effective.

However, governorship turnout declined sharply from 55.66% in 2019 to 25.86% in 2023. This drop signals a significant shift in voter behaviour, pointing to reduced engagement despite the structural capacity for participation.

At the local government level, turnout remains at 0.00% across both recent cycles. This reflects either gaps in electoral conduct or documentation, and it highlights a critical weakness in grassroots democratic participation.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion stands at 45.00%, placing Borno 12th nationally. While this reflects a relatively better position than many states, representation data shows limited diversity. Only 2 out of 18 commissioners are women, with no youth or PWD representation.

The classification of “Inclusive & Capable” suggests that institutional frameworks for inclusion exist, but the composition of executive appointments indicates that these frameworks are not fully translating into diverse representation. Inclusion remains functional but not deeply embedded.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance is a key strength for Borno, with a score of 65.94% and a rank of 10th. Legislative activity shows 96 sittings out of 181, reflecting moderate operational engagement. The availability of the citizen budget further supports transparency efforts, indicating that formal governance processes are active and accessible at a basic level. The “Active & Functional” typology captures this dimension effectively. Institutions are operational and capable of delivering governance outputs, even within a constrained environment.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Borno ranks 21st in civil liberties with a score of 42.66%, indicating limited civic openness relative to its institutional strength. This gap reflects the broader context in which governance operates, where security considerations often shape the boundaries of civic engagement.

The classification under “Procedural Enclaves” reflects a system where democratic processes function, but civic freedoms remain constrained. Citizens may participate in elections, but broader freedoms of expression, association, and civic action are more restricted.

**Structural Dynamics:** Borno’s democratic structure shows a distinct pattern of institutional resilience combined with civic constraints. Electoral participation and institutional functionality reinforce each other, creating a stable procedural system. However, the limited expansion of civic space and uneven inclusion indicate that democratic consolidation remains incomplete. The system performs effectively in structured processes but shows limitations in participatory depth and inclusiveness.

### Key Lessons

- Strong institutional performance can sustain democratic processes even in complex environments, but it does not automatically expand civic freedoms.
- High voter participation does not guarantee consistency, as seen in the sharp decline in governorship turnout between election cycles.
- Operational institutions require complementary inclusion strategies to ensure broader representation.
- Limited civic space can coexist with functional electoral systems, but this

constrains long-term democratic deepening.

- Weak local government electoral engagement undermines the foundation of grassroots democracy.

**Strategic Implications:** Borno's democratic trajectory reflects a system that has stabilised at the procedural level but has not fully transitioned into a participatory and inclusive model. The strength of institutions and electoral processes provides a foundation for further democratic development.

The primary risk lies in the imbalance between institutional effectiveness and civic openness. If civic space does not expand, public trust and engagement may weaken over time, particularly among underrepresented groups.

At the same time, the state's relatively strong institutional base presents an opportunity. With targeted reforms, Borno can deepen inclusion and civic participation without compromising stability. This balance will be critical for future elections and governance outcomes.

# Gombe State



Gombe State records an overall score of 46.96%, placing it in the Developing Tier and below the national median. Its democratic profile shows a functioning institutional structure and moderate electoral engagement, but these are offset by weak inclusion and restricted civic space. Institutional performance ranks relatively strongly at 14th, while electoral participation remains above average, suggesting that formal democratic processes are operational and accessible.

The core limitation lies in the imbalance between participation and inclusion. Political inclusion is relatively low, and civic space ranks among the weakest nationally. This creates a system where participation exists without depth, and governance structures function without broad-based representation or civic openness. The result is a procedural democracy that operates, but without sufficient inclusiveness or citizen-driven accountability.

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Gombe

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North East
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	25th (46.96%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	15th (64.87%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	23rd (35.00%)

<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	14th (61.31%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	29th (28.64%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Passive Inclusion
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Active & Functional
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Efficient but Exclusive
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Procedural Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	47.0
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-6.1
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Developing Tier (Fragile)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	2 out of 24
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 24
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 24
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	39.00% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	45.25% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	2,365,040

<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	4,623,462
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	1,575,794
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,534,954
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	97.41%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	40,840
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	2.59%

Gombe’s political environment reflects a relatively stable governance setting within the North East, without the same level of disruption experienced in more conflict-affected states. This stability has supported the functioning of institutions and electoral processes, allowing governance systems to operate with a degree of continuity.

However, political participation in Gombe tends to be structured and mediated, with limited expansion into broader civic engagement. Representation patterns and access to political space remain constrained, particularly for women and young people. This context shapes a democratic environment that is orderly but not deeply participatory.

**Electoral Participation:** Gombe ranks 15th in electoral participation with a score of 64.87%, indicating moderate voter engagement. PVC collection is high at 97.41%, suggesting that administrative access to voting is not a major constraint.

Despite this, governorship turnout declined from 45.25% in 2019 to 39.00% in 2023. While not as steep as in some states, this downward trend signals weakening voter motivation or confidence over time.

At the local government level, turnout remains at 0.00% across both election cycles. This absence of recorded participation reflects a critical gap in grassroots democratic engagement, limiting the depth of electoral participation beyond state-level contests.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion is one of the weakest aspects of Gombe’s democratic profile, with a score of 35.00% and a rank of 23rd. Representation data reinforces this pattern, with only 2 women out of 24 commissioners and no youth or PWD representation.

The typology of “Passive Inclusion” captures this condition. While formal structures for inclusion may exist, they are not actively translating into diverse representation. Access to political space remains limited and uneven, particularly for marginalised groups.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance is relatively strong, with a score of 61.31% and a rank of 14th. This indicates that governance structures are operational and capable of delivering administrative functions.

The presence of a citizen budget suggests a baseline level of transparency, even though legislative activity data is unavailable. The classification of “Active & Functional” reflects institutions that are working, though not necessarily inclusive or fully accountable. The “Efficient but Exclusive” label further highlights that efficiency in governance does not automatically equate to openness or representativeness.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Civil liberties remain significantly constrained, with Gombe ranking 29th and scoring 28.64%. This positions the state among the weaker performers in terms of civic openness.

The “Procedural Enclaves” classification indicates that democratic processes exist, but civic freedoms are limited. Citizens can engage within formal structures, but broader freedoms of expression, assembly, and advocacy appear restricted. This constraint reduces the ability of citizens to influence governance beyond periodic elections, limiting the overall depth of democracy.

**Structural Dynamics:** Gombe’s democratic structure reflects a clear imbalance. Institutional functionality and electoral participation provide a stable procedural framework, but weak inclusion and limited civic space constrain democratic depth.

The coexistence of strong administrative systems with weak civic engagement creates a model where governance is delivered, but not broadly shaped by citizens. This structural pattern explains the state’s placement in the Developing Tier despite relatively strong institutional indicators.

### **Key Lessons**

- Moderate voter participation can coexist with weak inclusion, indicating that access to voting does not guarantee equitable political representation.
- Institutional functionality alone does not ensure democratic depth when civic space remains constrained.
- High PVC collection rates do not automatically translate into sustained voter turnout across election cycles.
- Limited representation of women and youth reflects structural barriers within political systems rather than administrative gaps.

- Weak local government electoral participation undermines the foundation of democratic engagement at the grassroots level.

**Strategic Implications:** Gombe's current trajectory suggests a stable but shallow democratic system. The strength of institutions and electoral processes provides a foundation for governance, but the lack of inclusion and civic openness limits long-term democratic consolidation.

The key risk lies in the persistence of an exclusionary system where citizens participate in elections but have limited influence over governance outcomes. Over time, this may reduce public trust and weaken civic engagement. At the same time, the existing institutional capacity presents an opportunity. By expanding inclusion and strengthening civic space, the state can build on its functional systems to achieve a more balanced and participatory democratic model.

27.

# Taraba State

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*Taraba State records a DPI score of 52.58%, placing it just below the national median and within the Developing Tier. Its performance is driven primarily by strong institutional effectiveness, where it ranks 4th nationally, supported by full legislative activity and relatively high administrative functionality. Electoral participation is moderate, indicating a functioning democratic process at the state level.*

*However, this institutional strength operates alongside weak political inclusion and only moderate civic space. The low inclusion score reflects limited access to political representation, while civic space constraints reduce the extent to which citizens can actively shape governance. The resulting democratic structure is operational and efficient, but not broadly inclusive, with participation that does not fully translate into representation or influence.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Taraba

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North East
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	19th (52.58%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	18th (61.85%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	29th (25.00%)

<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	4th (72.69%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	20th (44.69%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Passive Inclusion
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Active & Functional
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Efficient but Exclusive
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Procedural Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	52.6
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-0.5
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Developing Tier (Fragile)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	7 out of 20
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 20
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 20
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	181 out of 181
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2023
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	32.65% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	52.07% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes

<b>2006 Population</b>	2,294,800
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	4,331,885
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,022,374
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,825,325
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	90.26%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	197,049
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	9.74%

Taraba’s political environment is shaped by its diverse ethnic and religious composition, which has historically influenced governance and political competition. These dynamics often require careful balancing in political appointments and decision-making, affecting how inclusive governance structures become.

The state has maintained a relatively functional governance system despite these complexities, reflected in strong institutional performance. However, inclusion within political processes remains uneven, with representation often mediated through established political networks rather than open access. Electoral participation patterns reflect a system where citizens engage periodically, but sustained civic engagement remains limited.

**Electoral Participation:** Taraba records a mid-range electoral participation score of 61.85%, ranking 18th nationally. This suggests that voter engagement is present but not particularly strong relative to other states. PVC collection stands at 90.26%, indicating reasonable access to voting materials, though lower than several peer states.

A sharper concern emerges in turnout trends. Governorship turnout declined significantly from 52.07% in 2019 to 32.65% in 2023. This drop reflects weakening voter mobilisation or confidence in electoral outcomes. The absence of recorded turnout in LGA elections across two cycles further points to a structural gap in grassroots participation.

Participants during the North East validation exercise noted that in Taraba, voter engagement tends to be more pronounced during highly competitive elections, but declines when electoral outcomes are perceived as predictable. This aligns with the observed reduction in turnout.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion is a clear weakness, with a score of 25.00% and

a rank of 29th. Despite relatively higher female representation in the executive, with 7 out of 20 commissioners, youth and PWD representation remain absent.

The classification of “Passive Inclusion” reflects this imbalance. Inclusion appears selective rather than systemic, with certain groups represented while others remain excluded. Access to political participation is therefore uneven, limiting the overall representativeness of governance structures.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance stands out as Taraba’s strongest dimension, ranking 4th nationally with a score of 72.69%. Legislative activity is particularly notable, with the State House of Assembly recording 181 sittings out of 181, indicating full operational capacity.

The availability of a citizen budget reinforces transparency within governance processes. The classification “Active & Functional” is well supported by both legislative output and administrative indicators. However, the accompanying typology of “Efficient but Exclusive” highlights a critical limitation. Institutional strength has not translated into inclusive governance, suggesting that efficiency operates within a relatively closed system.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Taraba records a mid-level score of 44.69% in civil liberties, ranking 20th. This suggests that civic space is present but constrained. Citizens can engage within formal structures, but broader freedoms remain limited in practice.

The “Procedural Enclaves” classification indicates that civic engagement is structured rather than open-ended. While formal participation mechanisms exist, the space for independent civic action and public accountability appears restricted.

Participants during the validation exercise highlighted that civic engagement in Taraba often depends on local dynamics and power structures, with citizens more likely to engage through informal channels rather than institutionalised platforms. This helps explain the moderate but uneven civic space performance.

**Structural Dynamics:** Taraba’s democratic structure reflects a strong institutional backbone combined with weak inclusion and moderate civic openness. This creates a system where governance functions effectively, but participation and representation remain uneven.

The decline in electoral turnout, particularly at the state level, indicates that institutional strength alone is insufficient to sustain citizen engagement. Without broader inclusion and more open civic space, the system risks becoming increasingly procedural rather

than participatory.

### **Key Lessons**

- Strong legislative activity can sustain institutional performance even when broader democratic engagement is limited.
- Declining voter turnout reflects reduced public confidence, even in states with functional governance systems.
- Selective inclusion, such as gender representation without youth or PWD inclusion, limits the overall depth of democratic participation.
- High institutional efficiency does not automatically translate into citizen-driven accountability.
- Weak local government electoral participation undermines democratic engagement at the grassroots level.

**Strategic Implications:** Taraba presents a case of institutional strength without corresponding democratic depth. The state's governance systems are capable and active, but the limited inclusiveness and declining participation trends pose risks to long-term democratic sustainability.

If these patterns persist, the state may experience further disengagement from citizens, particularly at subnational levels. This could weaken accountability mechanisms and reduce the responsiveness of governance structures. At the same time, Taraba's strong institutional base provides a foundation for improvement. Expanding inclusion and strengthening civic space could significantly enhance the quality of democracy without requiring major structural reforms.

28.

# Yobe State

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*Yobe State ranks 2nd nationally with a DPI score of 64.31%, placing it firmly within the Top Tier of democratic performance. This strong position is anchored by high institutional performance and a robust civic space environment. The state demonstrates a governance system that functions effectively, with active institutions and relatively open civic engagement channels.*

*This performance, however, sits alongside comparatively weaker electoral participation. The state records one of the lower participation rankings despite high PVC collection rates, indicating a gap between voter readiness and actual turnout. Political inclusion remains moderate, suggesting that while governance structures are functional, access to political representation is not evenly distributed. The resulting pattern reflects a system where institutions are strong and civic space is relatively open, but citizen participation and inclusion lag behind.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Yobe

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North East
DPI Category	Moderate Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	2nd (64.31%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	26th (57.37%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	16th (40.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	3rd (75.89%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	8th (73.56%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Tokenized Participation
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Institutional Enclaves
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Inclusive & Capable
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Balanced Leaders
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	64.3
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+11.2
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Top Tier (Leading)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	2 out of 20
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 20
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 20
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	161 out of 181
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2021
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)

<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	30.80% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	41.00% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	2,321,339
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	4,350,401
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	1,485,146
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,437,851
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	96.82%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	47,295
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	3.18%

Yobe's political environment has been shaped by its experience with security challenges over the past decade, which has influenced both governance priorities and civic engagement patterns. The state has focused on rebuilding institutional capacity and stabilising governance structures, which is reflected in its strong institutional rankings.

This context has also affected electoral behaviour. Participation tends to fluctuate based on security perceptions and confidence in electoral processes. While governance institutions have regained functionality, citizen engagement has not fully recovered to match this progress. The state's political system therefore reflects a stabilised institutional framework with evolving patterns of participation and inclusion.

**Electoral Participation:** Yobe ranks 26th in electoral participation with a score of 57.37%, placing it below many states despite its overall high DPI ranking. PVC collection is notably high at 96.82%, indicating strong administrative capacity in voter registration and distribution.

However, this does not translate into turnout. Governorship election turnout declined from 41.00% in 2019 to 30.80% in 2023, suggesting reduced voter engagement over time. The absence of recorded turnout in LGA elections across two cycles reinforces this pattern of weak grassroots participation.

Participants during the North East validation exercise highlighted that in Yobe, improved

security conditions have not yet translated into higher electoral participation. Many communities remain cautious, and voter mobilisation efforts have not fully bridged this gap. This helps explain the disconnect between high PVC collection and lower turnout.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion in Yobe is moderate, with a score of 40.00% and a ranking of 16th. The representation profile shows limited diversity, with only 2 women commissioners out of 20 and no youth or PWD representation.

The classification of “Tokenized Participation” reflects this dynamic. While participation mechanisms exist, inclusion appears limited and not deeply embedded. Political access remains constrained, with representation not fully reflecting the demographic composition of the population.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance is one of Yobe’s strongest dimensions, ranking 3rd nationally with a score of 75.89%. Legislative activity is high, with 161 sittings out of 181, indicating consistent institutional engagement.

The availability of a citizen budget further supports transparency and governance openness. The classification “Institutional Enclaves” suggests that while institutions are strong and effective, they may operate within structured systems that limit broader citizen influence. This high level of institutional functionality provides a stable foundation for governance, even as other dimensions of democracy remain uneven.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Yobe performs strongly in civil liberties and civic space, ranking 8th with a score of 73.56%. This indicates relatively open conditions for civic engagement, expression, and participation.

The “Balanced Leaders” classification suggests a governance environment where institutional effectiveness and civic freedoms coexist. Citizens have space to engage, and governance structures allow for interaction, although this has not yet translated into higher electoral participation.

Participants during the validation exercise noted that civic engagement in Yobe has expanded in recent years, particularly through community-based initiatives and local dialogue platforms. This has contributed to improved civic space, even though electoral participation remains comparatively low.

**Structural Dynamics:** Yobe’s democratic profile reflects a system where institutional strength and civic openness are well established, but electoral engagement and inclusive representation lag behind. The combination of strong institutions and moderate participation creates a top-heavy democratic structure.

This imbalance suggests that governance capacity has outpaced citizen engagement. While the system functions effectively, its long-term sustainability depends on closing the gap between institutional performance and active participation.

### **Key Lessons**

- Strong institutional capacity can elevate overall democratic performance even when participation levels are moderate.
- High PVC collection does not guarantee voter turnout, indicating that administrative success alone is insufficient for electoral engagement.
- Civic space improvements can occur independently of electoral participation gains.
- Limited representation across youth and PWD groups constrains the depth of political inclusion.
- Sustained legislative activity contributes significantly to institutional credibility and governance stability.

**Strategic Implications:** Yobe's performance highlights a model of institutional recovery and stability, particularly in a context affected by security challenges. The state demonstrates that strong governance structures and improved civic space can coexist and drive overall democratic performance.

However, the persistent gap in electoral participation presents a risk. If citizens remain disengaged from electoral processes, institutional legitimacy may weaken over time despite current strength. The system risks becoming administratively efficient but less participatory. There is also a clear opportunity. With high PVC coverage and improving civic space, Yobe is positioned to significantly improve participation rates if targeted interventions address voter confidence and mobilisation.

## NORTH WEST

29.

# Jigawa State



*Jigawa State ranks 35th with a DPI score of 38.74%, placing it within the Critical Tier and indicating weak democratic performance. Across all four dimensions, the state records consistently low scores, reflecting systemic challenges rather than isolated weaknesses. Institutional performance is limited, political inclusion remains constrained, and civic space is comparatively restricted.*

*The pattern that emerges is one of structural disengagement. Despite strong administrative performance in voter registration and PVC distribution, electoral participation is low and declining. Institutions appear underactive or inaccessible, while representation remains narrow. The convergence of these weaknesses' positions Jigawa as a state where democratic processes exist formally but function with limited depth and public engagement.*

### STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Jigawa

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North West
DPI Category	Weak Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	35th (38.74%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	32nd (48.48%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	28th (30.00%)

<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	28th (43.65%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	26th (33.16%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Disconnected Elite
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Dormant States
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Closed Institutions
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Fragile States
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	38.7
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-14.4
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Critical Tier (Lagging)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	2 out of 17
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 17
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 17
<b>Number of Legislative Sittings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	40.89% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	55.15% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes

<b>2006 Population</b>	4,361,002
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	6,979,080
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,351,298
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	2,298,365
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	97.75%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	52,933
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	2.25%

Jigawa’s political environment reflects a highly centralised governance structure, where decision-making processes are often concentrated within a narrow political elite. This has implications for both participation and inclusion, as access to political processes may not extend broadly across the population.

Socio-political dynamics in the state are shaped by rural demographics, traditional authority structures, and relatively low levels of political contestation. While these factors can contribute to stability, they also tend to limit competitive political engagement and reduce incentives for broader citizen participation. Electoral behaviour in the state has therefore been characterised by moderate turnout levels historically, with recent trends indicating declining engagement.

**Electoral Participation:** Jigawa ranks 32nd in electoral participation with a score of 48.48%. This is notable given the state’s high PVC collection rate of 97.75%, which suggests that administrative processes for voter registration are effective.

However, turnout trends show a decline. Governorship election turnout dropped from 55.15% in 2019 to 40.89% in 2023. This decline indicates weakening voter engagement despite high readiness to vote. At the local level, turnout is recorded as 0.00% across two cycles, pointing to either extremely low participation or systemic issues in local electoral processes.

Participants during the North West validation exercise raised concerns about inconsistencies in institutional engagement and data availability, noting that responses from government institutions can vary depending on access points and data request processes. This insight helps contextualise the participation gap, suggesting that limited transparency and uneven institutional responsiveness may affect voter trust and engagement.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion is weak, with a score of 30.00% and a ranking of 28th. Representation remains narrow, with only 2 women commissioners out of 17 and no youth or PWD representation. The typology classification “Disconnected Elite” captures this dynamic. Political participation structures exist, but they are not broadly accessible. Inclusion appears limited to established actors, with minimal pathways for emerging or marginalised groups to engage meaningfully.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance is low, with a score of 43.65% and a ranking of 28th. The absence of legislative sitting data further limits transparency and makes it difficult to fully assess legislative activity.

While the state publishes a citizen budget, suggesting some level of fiscal transparency, this is not sufficient to offset broader institutional weaknesses. The classification “Dormant States” reflects institutions that exist but show limited activity or responsiveness.

Insights from the validation process emphasized the importance of clearly documenting institutional data sources and verification processes to strengthen credibility. In the context of Jigawa, this highlights the need for stronger institutional openness and clearer public-facing records of governance activity.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Jigawa ranks 26th in civil liberties and civic space with a score of 33.16%, indicating a constrained civic environment. Opportunities for expression, engagement, and civic mobilisation appear limited.

The “Fragile States” classification under governance mapping suggests that civic freedoms are present but not strongly protected or widely exercised. This environment can discourage active citizen participation and reduce accountability pressures on institutions.

Participants during the validation meeting also stressed the need to distinguish clearly between perception-based findings and verifiable evidence in assessing civic conditions. This reinforces the interpretation that while some civic space exists, its practical accessibility may be uneven across the state.

**Structural Dynamics:** Jigawa’s democratic profile reflects alignment across weak dimensions. Unlike states where strong institutional performance compensates for low participation, Jigawa shows no such balancing effect. Weak participation, limited inclusion, low institutional activity, and constrained civic space reinforce each other.

This creates a closed democratic system with low feedback loops. Citizens have limited incentives or opportunities to engage, institutions operate with reduced scrutiny, and

representation remains narrow. The result is a cycle of low participation and limited accountability.

### **Key Lessons**

- Low institutional activity correlates with reduced citizen engagement, as limited responsiveness discourages participation.
- High PVC collection does not translate into electoral participation without corresponding trust and mobilisation.
- Restricted political inclusion limits the diversity and responsiveness of governance structures.
- Weak civic space reduces accountability mechanisms and constrains citizen voice.
- Data transparency gaps can undermine both institutional credibility and public confidence.

**Strategic Implications:** Jigawa's democratic trajectory presents a risk of prolonged institutional stagnation. Without improvements in participation and inclusion, governance structures may remain functional in form but limited in responsiveness and legitimacy.

The decline in voter turnout signals weakening engagement, which could deepen over time if not addressed. At the same time, high PVC coverage presents an opportunity. The infrastructure for participation exists, but it requires activation through trust-building and engagement strategies.

The state also faces a structural challenge. Weak performance across all dimensions suggests that reforms must be comprehensive rather than targeted. Incremental improvements in one area may not yield significant impact unless accompanied by broader systemic changes.

30.

# Kaduna State

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*Kaduna State presents a strong overall democratic profile, ranking 9th nationally with a score of 58.78%. Its performance is driven by high institutional effectiveness, strong political inclusion, and robust electoral participation. These dimensions interact in a reinforcing manner, suggesting that governance structures are relatively functional and accessible, and that citizens have both the opportunity and incentive to engage politically.*

*However, this strength is not evenly distributed across all democratic dimensions. Civil liberties and civic space remain comparatively constrained, ranking 25th. This creates a structural imbalance where procedural and institutional aspects of democracy perform well, but the broader environment for expression and civic engagement does not keep pace. The implication is a system that delivers governance efficiency and inclusion within formal structures, but with limited openness in the public sphere.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Kaduna

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North West
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	9th (58.78%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	3rd (72.80%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	1st (55.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	2nd (76.04%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	25th (34.70%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Democratic Depth
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Active & Functional
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Inclusive & Capable
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Procedural Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	58.8
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+5.7
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Top Tier (Leading)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	3 out of 17
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 17
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 17
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	150 out of 181
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	36.50% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	49.10% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes

<b>2006 Population</b>	6,113,503
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	8,324,285
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	4,335,208
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	4,164,473
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	96.06%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	170,735
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	3.94%

Kaduna is one of Nigeria's most politically significant states, with a history of competitive elections, strong administrative reforms, and active policy experimentation. It has often positioned itself as a reform-oriented state, particularly in areas such as public financial management and governance digitisation. These factors contribute to its strong institutional performance within the DPI framework.

At the same time, Kaduna's socio-political environment is complex. The state has experienced recurring communal tensions and security challenges, which shape governance priorities and influence state-citizen relations. Electoral participation tends to be structured and relatively organised, but the broader civic environment reflects cautious engagement. This duality between administrative strength and socio-political sensitivity is central to understanding Kaduna's democratic profile.

**Electoral Participation:** Kaduna ranks 3rd in electoral participation with a score of 72.80%, placing it among the highest-performing states in this dimension. This reflects strong voter mobilisation and engagement during electoral cycles. The state also records a high PVC collection rate of 96.06%, indicating effective voter registration processes.

Despite this strength, turnout trends show a decline from 49.10% in 2019 to 36.50% in 2023 in governorship elections. This suggests that while participation levels remain relatively high compared to other states, there is an emerging downward trajectory. At the local government level, turnout is recorded as 0.00% across two cycles, pointing to a disconnect between state-level electoral engagement and local democratic processes.

Participants during the North West validation exercise highlighted the issue of inconsistent institutional responses during data collection, noting that access to information can vary significantly depending on the engagement channel. This

observation provides context for participation patterns, as variations in institutional transparency can influence voter confidence and engagement over time.

**Political Inclusion:** Kaduna ranks 1st in political inclusion with a score of 55.00%, indicating relatively strong representation within governance structures. This aligns with its classification as “Inclusive & Capable,” suggesting that access to political space is broader than in many other states.

However, demographic representation data reveals limitations beneath this strong ranking. Women occupy 3 out of 17 commissioner positions, while youth and persons with disabilities are not represented. This indicates that inclusion may be strong in terms of political access and competition, but less so in demographic diversity within executive appointments.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance is one of Kaduna’s strongest dimensions, with a score of 76.04% and a national ranking of 2nd. Legislative activity is high, with 150 sittings out of 181, indicating an active and functional legislative arm.

The publication of the citizen budget further supports transparency and fiscal openness. Together, these indicators reflect a governance system that is operational, structured, and relatively accountable. The typology “Active & Functional” accurately captures this dynamic.

Insights from the validation meeting emphasised the importance of documenting how institutional data is sourced and verified, particularly where multiple agencies are involved. In Kaduna’s case, strong institutional performance would be further reinforced by clear public documentation of these processes, enhancing both transparency and public trust.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Kaduna’s weakest dimension is civil liberties and civic space, where it ranks 25th with a score of 34.70%. This indicates a constrained environment for expression, association, and civic engagement.

The classification “Procedural Enclaves” suggests that while formal democratic processes function effectively, the broader civic environment may not fully support open participation. This imbalance is significant because it can limit the depth of democratic engagement, even in the presence of strong institutions.

Participants during the validation exercise also stressed the importance of distinguishing between perception-based assessments and verifiable evidence when evaluating civic space. This is particularly relevant for Kaduna, where civic space conditions may vary across locations and contexts, requiring careful interpretation.

**Structural Dynamics:** Kaduna demonstrates a layered democratic structure. Strong institutions and inclusive political processes create a stable governance foundation, while high electoral participation reinforces legitimacy. However, the relative weakness in civic space introduces a constraint that affects how citizens interact with the system outside formal electoral processes.

This creates a system that performs well in structured democratic activities but less so in informal or continuous civic engagement. The interaction between these dimensions suggests that Kaduna's democratic strength is procedural and institutional, rather than fully participatory across all spheres.

### **Key Lessons**

- Strong institutional performance can drive overall democratic outcomes, even when other dimensions are weaker.
- High electoral participation does not necessarily prevent declining turnout trends over time.
- Political inclusion at the system level does not automatically translate into demographic representation within leadership structures.
- Active legislative engagement contributes to governance effectiveness and public accountability.
- Constraints in civic space can limit the broader impact of otherwise strong democratic institutions.

**Strategic Implications:** Kaduna's democratic model shows that institutional strength and inclusion can sustain high performance, but imbalances in civic space pose a long-term risk. If citizens perceive limited freedom to engage outside formal processes, participation may gradually decline, as suggested by recent turnout trends.

At the same time, the state has a strong foundation to build on. High institutional capacity and established participation structures provide a platform for expanding civic engagement. Addressing civic space constraints could significantly enhance overall democratic depth.

The emerging pattern suggests that Kaduna is transitioning from procedural strength toward a more comprehensive democratic model. The direction of this transition will depend on how effectively the state integrates civic freedoms into its governance framework.

31.

# Kano State

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*Kano State records one of the weakest democratic performances nationally, ranking 34th with a score of 40.47%. The state's profile reflects systemic weaknesses across all dimensions, with particularly low electoral participation and limited political inclusion. Institutional performance remains moderate but insufficient to offset broader deficits, while civil liberties and civic space remain constrained.*

*The interaction between these indicators points to a structural disconnect between citizens and governance processes. Despite a large voter base and high PVC collection rate, participation remains low, suggesting that access to voting does not translate into actual engagement. This imbalance indicates underlying issues related to trust, political competition, and the perceived responsiveness of institutions.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Kano

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North West
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	34th (40.47%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	34th (45.05%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	23rd (35.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	24th (48.90%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	27th (32.64%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Disconnected Elite
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Dormant States
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Closed Institutions
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Fragile States
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	40.5
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-12.6
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Critical Tier (Lagging)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	2 out of 27
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	1 out of 27
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 27
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	35.00% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	40.19% (2019)

<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	9,401,288
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	16,253,549
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	5,921,370
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	5,594,193
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	94.47%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	327,177
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	5.53%

Kano is one of Nigeria’s most populous and politically influential states, with a long history of political mobilization and strong party structures. It has traditionally played a central role in national electoral dynamics, often recording high voter turnout and intense political competition. However, recent patterns suggest a shift in this trajectory, with declining participation and reduced engagement in formal democratic processes.

The state’s governance environment reflects a complex mix of strong political control and evolving institutional dynamics. While political actors remain influential, the broader democratic ecosystem appears less responsive to citizen participation. This creates a context where political processes are active, but public engagement within those processes is uneven.

**Electoral Participation:** Kano ranks 34th in electoral participation with a score of 45.05%, placing it among the lowest-performing states. This is notable given the state’s large number of registered voters, which exceeds 5.9 million. The PVC collection rate stands at 94.47%, indicating that administrative access to voting is not the primary constraint.

Turnout in governorship elections declined from 40.19% in 2019 to 35.00% in 2023, reinforcing a pattern of decreasing engagement. At the local government level, turnout is recorded as 0.00% across two cycles, suggesting a near absence of grassroots electoral participation.

This pattern signals a disengagement problem rather than a logistical one. The gap between voter registration and actual turnout suggests that citizens may not perceive elections as effective mechanisms for influencing governance outcomes.

**Political Inclusion:** Kano's political inclusion score stands at 35.00%, ranking 23rd nationally. While this places the state in the middle range, it does not reflect strong inclusivity. Representation within executive appointments remains limited, with only 2 women and 1 youth among 27 commissioners, and no representation for persons with disabilities.

The typology "Disconnected Elite" reflects a system where political participation is concentrated among a limited group of actors. This reduces the diversity of voices within governance and limits broader access to political decision-making.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance in Kano is moderate, with a score of 48.90% and a ranking of 24th. The absence of legislative sittings data introduces a limitation in assessing legislative activity, which is a key component of institutional effectiveness.

The availability of the citizen budget suggests some level of transparency in fiscal processes. However, the classification "Dormant States" and "Closed Institutions" indicates that institutional structures may not be fully active or accessible to citizens. This aligns with the broader pattern of limited engagement and weak accountability mechanisms.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Kano ranks 27th in civil liberties and civic space with a score of 32.64%, indicating a constrained environment for civic engagement. This suggests limitations in freedom of expression, association, and public participation.

The classification "Fragile States" within the governance map reflects a system where civic space does not effectively support democratic processes. This constraint interacts with low participation and limited inclusion, reinforcing a cycle of disengagement.

**Structural Dynamics:** Kano's democratic profile is defined by a combination of low participation, limited inclusion, and moderate institutional capacity. These dimensions do not reinforce each other in a positive way. Instead, they create a fragmented system where institutions function at a basic level, but without strong citizen engagement or broad-based representation.

The large population and voter base amplify the significance of these weaknesses. In a state of this scale, low engagement has broader implications for democratic stability and governance effectiveness.

## Key Lessons

- Low electoral participation can persist even when voter registration and PVC collection rates are high, indicating deeper issues of trust and engagement.
- Moderate institutional performance is insufficient to drive democratic outcomes without corresponding improvements in participation and inclusion.
- Limited demographic representation within leadership structures constrains political inclusion and reduces system responsiveness.
- Absence of reliable legislative data weakens transparency and limits assessment of institutional accountability.
- Constrained civic space reinforces disengagement and reduces the effectiveness of democratic processes.

**Strategic Implications:** Kano's democratic trajectory presents a significant risk due to the combination of low participation and weak inclusion. If this pattern continues, it may lead to further erosion of citizen engagement, particularly in a state with a large and politically significant population.

At the same time, the state's high PVC collection rate and established political structures provide a foundation for recovery. Strengthening the link between citizens and institutions could reverse current trends and improve overall performance.

The emerging pattern suggests a need to shift from procedural electoral processes toward more inclusive and participatory governance. Without this shift, institutional functionality alone will not be sufficient to sustain democratic legitimacy.

# Katsina State



*Katsina State presents a mixed democratic profile, ranking 16th with a score of 53.88%, slightly above the national median. Its strongest performance lies in institutional effectiveness, where it ranks 5th nationally. This indicates that governance structures are relatively functional and capable of delivering administrative processes. However, this strength does not extend to political inclusion, which is among the weakest in the country, nor to electoral participation, which remains below average.*

*The data reveals a system where institutions operate with a degree of efficiency yet remain socially narrow in representation and engagement. High institutional scores combined with low inclusion suggest that governance processes are not sufficiently accessible or responsive to a broad segment of the population. This imbalance limits the overall quality of democratic outcomes, even when administrative systems appear stable.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Katsina

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North West
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	16th (53.88%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	27th (55.45%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	33rd (20.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	5th (71.52%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	17th (57.76%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Disconnected Elite
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Institutional Enclaves
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Efficient but Exclusive
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Balanced Leaders
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	53.9
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+0.8
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Transition Tier (Stable)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	3 out of 20
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 20
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 20
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2025
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	39.00% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	45.25% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes

<b>2006 Population</b>	5,801,584
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	9,300,382
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	3516719
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	3459945
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	98.39%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	56,774
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	1.61%

Katsina occupies a strategic position within the North West, with strong historical political structures and deep-rooted party networks. The state has traditionally maintained steady electoral processes and administrative continuity, often reflecting a stable but tightly controlled political environment.

The socio-political landscape is shaped by hierarchical political relations and a relatively centralised governance structure. While this can support institutional coherence, it often narrows the space for broader participation and representation. Electoral behaviour in the state reflects this pattern, with consistent voter engagement at higher levels but weaker activity in local governance processes.

**Electoral Participation:** Katsina ranks 27th in electoral participation with a score of 55.45%, indicating moderate but declining engagement. Governorship turnout dropped from 45.25% in 2019 to 39.00% in 2023, reflecting a downward trend in voter participation.

At the local government level, turnout is recorded at 0.00% across two cycles. This sharp contrast between state-level and local-level participation suggests a disengagement from grassroots democratic processes. The data points to a pattern where citizens are more likely to participate in high-stakes elections but remain absent in local governance structures.

Despite this, PVC collection stands at 98.39%, one of the highest nationally. This reinforces the observation that administrative readiness does not automatically translate into voter turnout.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion is a major weakness, with Katsina ranking 33rd and scoring only 20.00%. Representation data reinforces this finding. Out of

20 commissioners, only 3 are women, with no youth or persons with disabilities represented.

This narrow representation aligns with the typology “Disconnected Elite,” where political participation is concentrated within a limited circle. The absence of youth and PWD representation highlights structural barriers to entry, which limit diversity in governance and reduce the system’s responsiveness to different social groups.

**Institutional Performance:** Katsina’s institutional performance stands out, ranking 5th with a score of 71.52%. This places the state among the strongest in terms of administrative and governance capacity. The availability of the citizen budget further supports a level of transparency in fiscal governance.

However, the absence of legislative sittings data limits a full assessment of legislative activity. The classification “Institutional Enclaves” suggests that while institutions are effective internally, they may not be fully open or participatory. This creates a situation where governance functions efficiently but without broad societal input.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** With a score of 57.76% and a ranking of 17th, Katsina performs moderately in civil liberties and civic space. This suggests that while some level of civic engagement exists, it is not robust enough to drive strong democratic participation.

The governance map categorisation as “Balanced Leaders” indicates a relative equilibrium between institutional effectiveness and civic space. However, this balance does not fully translate into inclusive participation, as reflected in low inclusion scores.

**Structural Dynamics:** Katsina’s democratic structure is defined by a clear imbalance. Strong institutions operate alongside weak inclusion and moderate participation. This creates a system that is stable but not deeply participatory.

The high PVC collection rate and moderate turnout suggest that citizens remain connected to electoral processes at a basic level. However, the lack of inclusivity and weak local engagement indicate that this connection is limited in depth and scope.

### Key Lessons

- Strong institutional performance does not guarantee inclusive governance, as seen in the gap between Katsina’s high institutional ranking and low inclusion score.
- High PVC collection rates can coexist with declining turnout, indicating that participation barriers are not administrative but behavioural or systemic.

- Limited demographic representation in leadership structures reduces the inclusiveness and responsiveness of governance.
- The absence of local-level electoral participation weakens the foundation of democratic engagement and accountability.
- Moderate civic space without active inclusion mechanisms is insufficient to drive broad-based democratic participation.

**Strategic Implications:** Katsina's current trajectory suggests a stable but restricted democratic environment. The strength of institutions provides a foundation for governance continuity, but the lack of inclusion poses a long-term risk to legitimacy and public trust.

The disconnect between citizens and governance processes may deepen if participation continues to decline, particularly at the local level. This creates a risk of increasing apathy and reduced accountability.

At the same time, the state's strong institutional base offers an opportunity to expand participation and inclusion. By opening governance processes and improving representation, Katsina could significantly improve its democratic performance without requiring major structural changes.

33.

# Kebbi State

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*Kebbi State ranks 7th nationally with a score of 59.47%, placing it firmly within the leading tier of democratic performance. The state records strong outcomes across three critical dimensions: electoral participation, political inclusion, and institutional performance. This combination indicates a relatively balanced democratic structure where citizens engage actively in elections, governance institutions function with consistency, and representation is comparatively broader than in many peer states.*

*However, this strong performance is not evenly distributed across all dimensions. Civil liberties and civic space remain comparatively weaker, ranking 19th. This introduces a structural imbalance where participation and institutional effectiveness are not fully matched by an open civic environment. The result is a system that performs well procedurally but shows constraints in how freely citizens can engage beyond formal electoral processes*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Kebbi

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North West
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	7th (59.47%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	5th (69.85%)

<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	4th (50.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	7th (70.89%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	19th (47.43%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Democratic Depth
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Active & Functional
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Inclusive & Capable
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Procedural Enclaves
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	59.5
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	+6.4
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Top Tier (Leading)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	2 out of 26
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 26
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 26
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	144 out of 181
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	39.39% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	43.92% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes

<b>2006 Population</b>	3,256,541
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	6,001,610
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,032,041
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,980,171
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	97.45%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	51,870
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	2.55%

Kebbi operates within a political environment shaped by stable party dominance and structured political coordination. Governance in the state tends to follow predictable administrative patterns, with relatively low volatility in political transitions. This stability often supports institutional effectiveness and consistent policy implementation.

The state's socio-political structure reflects a mix of traditional authority systems and modern governance institutions. These layered systems can facilitate mobilisation during elections but may also influence how political access is distributed. Electoral engagement in Kebbi has historically been strong, particularly at the state level, although this has not translated into active participation at the grassroots level.

**Electoral Participation:** Kebbi demonstrates one of the strongest performances in electoral participation, ranking 5th with a score of 69.85%. This places the state among the most electorally engaged in the country. Governorship turnout, while relatively high, declined from 43.92% in 2019 to 39.39% in 2023, suggesting a gradual reduction in voter engagement.

At the local government level, turnout is recorded at 0.00% across two cycles. This sharp contrast reveals a clear pattern: participation is concentrated in higher-level elections, while local governance processes remain largely inactive. The high PVC collection rate of 97.45% indicates strong voter registration and readiness, but this does not translate into consistent turnout across all electoral tiers.

**Political Inclusion:** Kebbi ranks 4th in political inclusion with a score of 50.00%, placing it among the more inclusive states in comparative terms. This aligns with its classification as "Inclusive & Capable." However, a closer look at executive appointments reveals limitations. Only 2 out of 26 commissioners are women, with no youth or persons with disabilities represented.

This suggests that while the state performs well on aggregate inclusion indicators, representation within formal executive structures remains narrow. Inclusion appears to function more at a systemic level than at the level of demographic diversity in leadership.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance is another area of strength, with Kebbi ranking 7th and scoring 70.89%. The State House of Assembly held 144 sittings out of 181 in 2025, indicating a high level of legislative activity and operational continuity.

The availability of the citizen budget further reinforces a degree of fiscal transparency. The typology “Active & Functional” reflects institutions that are not only present but actively engaged in governance processes. This strengthens administrative credibility and supports overall democratic performance.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Kebbi’s civil liberties score stands at 47.43%, ranking 19th. This is notably lower than its performance in other dimensions. The classification “Procedural Enclaves” suggests that while governance processes are structured and operational, civic freedoms may not be fully expansive.

This creates a constrained civic environment where participation is largely channelled through formal mechanisms such as elections, rather than broader civic engagement platforms. The moderate score indicates that civic space exists but may not be sufficiently open or dynamic.

**Structural Dynamics:** Kebbi’s democratic structure is defined by coherence across participation, inclusion, and institutional performance, but with a clear limitation in civic space. This creates a system that is efficient and participatory in formal terms but less open in informal or civic dimensions.

The combination of high PVC collection, strong turnout in major elections, and active institutions reflects a well-organised democratic framework. However, the absence of local-level participation and limited civic space indicates that this framework does not fully extend to all layers of governance.

### Key Lessons

- Strong electoral participation combined with high institutional performance can significantly elevate overall democratic outcomes, as seen in Kebbi’s ranking.
- High aggregate inclusion scores do not necessarily translate into diverse representation within executive leadership structures.

- Consistent legislative activity contributes to institutional credibility and strengthens governance performance.
- A disconnect between state-level and local-level electoral participation weakens the depth of democratic engagement.
- Moderate civic space can limit the broader impact of otherwise strong democratic systems.

**Strategic Implications:** Kebbi's performance positions it as a structurally stable democratic environment with clear institutional strengths. However, the uneven distribution across dimensions suggests that the state's democratic gains may not be fully resilient.

The limited civic space presents a risk of restricting citizen engagement beyond elections, which could affect accountability and public trust over time. The absence of participation at the local level further weakens the foundation of democratic governance.

At the same time, Kebbi has a clear opportunity to consolidate its position as a leading state by expanding civic space and strengthening inclusive representation. With strong institutions already in place, incremental reforms in these areas could produce significant improvements in overall democratic quality.

# Sokoto State



*Sokoto State records a DPI score of 49.54%, placing it in the lower half of national performance and within the developing tier. The state's democratic profile presents a sharp internal imbalance. Institutional performance and civil liberties show relative strength, yet electoral participation and political inclusion remain among the weakest nationally. This divergence defines Sokoto's democratic condition: governance structures function with a degree of stability, but citizen engagement and access to political space are significantly constrained.*

*The most critical pressure point lies in political inclusion, where Sokoto ranks 34th with a score of 10.00%. When combined with the lowest-ranked electoral participation nationally, this suggests that democratic processes are neither broadly accessible nor sufficiently competitive. While institutions operate and civic space appears comparatively open, participation deficits reduce the legitimacy and depth of democratic practice.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Sokoto

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North West
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	23rd (49.54%)

<b>Electoral Participation (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	35th (42.74%)
<b>Political Inclusion (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	34th (10.00%)
<b>Institutional Performance (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	12th (61.91%)
<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	14th (68.08%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Disconnected Elite
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Institutional Enclaves
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Efficient but Exclusive
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Balanced Leaders
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	49.5
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-3.6
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Developing Tier (Fragile)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	2 out of 23
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	0 out of 23
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 23
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2024
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2024)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	41.00% (2023)

<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	57.39% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	3,702,676
<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	6,163,187
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	2,172,056
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	2,097,798
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	96.58%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	74,258
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	3.42%

Sokoto’s political environment reflects a historically structured system influenced by strong traditional institutions and established political networks. These structures often shape candidate selection, political mobilisation, and governance priorities. While this can support administrative stability, it may also limit the permeability of the political system, particularly for new entrants and underrepresented groups.

Electoral culture in Sokoto shows a pattern of engagement that has weakened over time. Participation in high-level elections has declined, and local-level elections record negligible turnout. This indicates a system where political processes exist but do not consistently generate widespread citizen involvement. The state’s governance model therefore reflects continuity and control more than competitive pluralism.

**Electoral Participation:** Sokoto ranks last in electoral participation with a score of 42.74%, making it the weakest performing state in this dimension. The decline in governorship turnout from 57.39% in 2019 to 41.00% in 2023 signals a substantial reduction in voter engagement. This is not a marginal shift but a structural drop that suggests diminishing voter motivation or confidence.

At the local level, turnout remains at 0.00% across two election cycles. This reinforces the pattern of disengagement, particularly in grassroots governance. Despite a high PVC collection rate of 96.58%, indicating that citizens are registered and equipped to vote, actual participation remains low. The gap between readiness and action points to systemic barriers beyond voter registration, including trust, competitiveness, and perceived relevance of elections.

**Political Inclusion:** Political inclusion is Sokoto's weakest dimension, with a score of 10.00% and a ranking of 34th. This reflects a highly restricted political space. Representation patterns further confirm this limitation. Only 2 out of 23 commissioners are women, with no youth or persons with disabilities represented.

The typology "Efficient but Exclusive" captures this condition accurately. Governance systems function, but access to power is concentrated within a narrow group. Inclusion does not extend meaningfully across demographic categories, and entry points into political leadership remain limited.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance stands at 61.91%, ranking 12th nationally. This places Sokoto in a relatively strong position compared to its overall score. The state is classified under "Institutional Enclaves," indicating that governance structures are functional and capable of delivering administrative processes.

The availability of a citizen budget suggests some level of transparency in fiscal communication. However, the absence of data on legislative sittings limits a full assessment of legislative productivity. Even so, the available indicators point to a system where institutions operate with a degree of consistency, independent of broader participation challenges.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Sokoto performs moderately well in civil liberties, ranking 14th with a score of 68.08%. This places the state above the national median in this dimension. The classification "Balanced Leaders" suggests a governance environment where civic space is neither highly restricted nor fully expansive.

This creates an interesting contrast. Civic space appears relatively open compared to participation and inclusion levels. This indicates that the limitation in democratic depth is not primarily driven by repression of civic freedoms but by structural barriers within the political system itself.

**Structural Dynamics:** Sokoto's democratic structure is defined by a clear disconnect between institutional capacity and citizen engagement. Institution's function and civic space is moderately open, yet participation remains low and inclusion are limited. This produces a system where democratic processes are present but not deeply rooted in broad-based citizen involvement.

The high PVC collection rate, combined with low turnout, reinforces this conclusion. Citizens are registered and capable of participating, but the system does not effectively convert this potential into actual engagement.

## Key Lessons

- Strong institutional performance does not guarantee active citizen participation, as seen in Sokoto's low turnout despite functional governance structures.
- High PVC collection rates alone are insufficient to drive participation when underlying trust or competitiveness issues persist.
- Extremely low political inclusion correlates with restricted access to leadership and reduces the overall quality of democratic representation.
- Declining turnout across election cycles signals weakening voter confidence or engagement over time.
- Moderate civic space without corresponding participation indicates structural rather than restrictive barriers to democratic engagement.

**Strategic Implications:** Sokoto's current trajectory presents a risk of institutionalised disengagement. When participation remains low despite functional institutions, democratic legitimacy becomes increasingly procedural rather than substantive. This weakens accountability mechanisms and reduces citizen influence on governance outcomes.

The state also faces a structural inclusion challenge. Without expanding access to political leadership, governance risks becoming increasingly concentrated, limiting innovation and responsiveness. However, the relatively open civic space provides an opportunity. If leveraged effectively, it can serve as an entry point for expanding engagement and strengthening democratic depth.

The pattern emerging from Sokoto suggests that future democratic gains will depend less on building new institutions and more on opening existing ones to broader participation.

35.

# Zamfara State



*Zamfara presents a contradictory democratic profile. With an overall score of 44.06%, the state falls within the critical tier, yet it records relatively strong performance in electoral participation and political inclusion. This contrast highlights a system where citizens engage and representation exists, but the underlying institutional and civic environment fails to sustain democratic quality.*

*The state's weakest points lie in institutional performance and civic space. Despite active participation, weak institutional structures and limited civic freedoms undermine the effectiveness and credibility of democratic processes. This imbalance suggests that participation alone has not translated into governance strength or citizen protection.*

## STATE PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT: Zamfara

Indicator	Value
Geopolitical Zone	North West
DPI Category	Poor Democratic Performance
Overall Performance (Rank & %)	29th (44.06%)
Electoral Participation (Rank & Score)	16th (63.33%)
Political Inclusion (Rank & Score)	4th (50.00%)
Institutional Performance (Rank & Score)	30th (41.14%)

<b>Civil Liberties &amp; Civic Space (Rank &amp; Score)</b>	28th (30.18%)
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Political Inclusion)</b>	Democratic Depth
<b>Democratic Typology (Electoral Participation - Institutional Effectiveness)</b>	Participatory but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Representation vs. Institutional Strength)</b>	Representative but Weak
<b>Democratic Typology (Institutional Effectiveness - Civil Liberties)</b>	Fragile States
<b>State Performance Score (%)</b>	44.1
<b>Deviation from National Median (Points)</b>	-9.0
<b>National Tier based on Deviation</b>	Critical Tier (Lagging)
<b>Women Commissioners</b>	2 out of 18
<b>Youth (18-35) Commissioners</b>	3 out of 18
<b>PWD Commissioners</b>	0 out of 18
<b>Number of Legislative Sitzings (out of 181)</b>	No Data Provided
<b>Last LGA Election Year</b>	2025
<b>LGA Turnout (Most Recent Cycle)</b>	52.00% (2025)
<b>LGA Turnout (Previous Cycle)</b>	0.00% (2020)
<b>Most Recent Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	26.72% (2023)
<b>Previous Governorship Election Turnout (%)</b>	47.22% (2019)
<b>2025 Citizen Budget Seen Online</b>	Yes
<b>2006 Population</b>	3,278,873

<b>2025 Population (est.)</b>	5,517,793
<b>Registered Voters (2023)</b>	1,926,870
<b>No. of Collected PVCs</b>	1,850,055
<b>% of PVCs Collected</b>	96.01%
<b>No of Uncollected PVCs</b>	76,815
<b>% of PVCs Uncollected</b>	3.99%

Zamfara operates within a complex governance environment shaped by persistent security challenges and socio-economic pressures. These conditions influence both political behaviour and institutional capacity. Governance systems often operate under strain, affecting service delivery, oversight, and citizen engagement.

Electoral participation patterns in Zamfara reflect a population that remains responsive to political mobilisation, even in difficult conditions. However, sustained engagement appears uneven across election types and cycles. The broader context suggests that while citizens are willing to participate, structural limitations within governance systems constrain the overall democratic experience.

**Electoral Participation:** Zamfara ranks 16th in electoral participation with a score of 63.33%, placing it above the national median. This indicates that voter engagement is relatively strong compared to many other states. The LGA election turnout shows a sharp increase to 52.00% in the most recent cycle from 0.00% previously, suggesting a recent surge in local-level engagement.

However, governorship turnout declined significantly from 47.22% in 2019 to 26.72% in 2023. This divergence points to inconsistent participation patterns across election types. While local elections saw increased activity, participation in state-level elections weakened, indicating potential variations in voter motivation, trust, or perceived stakes.

The high PVC collection rate of 96.01% supports the observation that voter readiness is not the primary constraint. Instead, fluctuations in turnout suggest deeper issues related to electoral confidence or context-specific dynamics.

**Political Inclusion:** Zamfara ranks 4th in political inclusion with a score of 50.00%, placing it among the strongest states in this dimension. This indicates relatively broader access to political representation compared to national trends. The presence of 3 youth commissioners out of 18 suggests some level of generational inclusion.

However, gender representation remains limited, with only 2 women in the executive council. While the inclusion score is high, representation is uneven across demographic groups. The typology “Representative but Weak” reflects this condition, where inclusion exists but is not evenly distributed or fully institutionalised.

**Institutional Performance:** Institutional performance is one of Zamfara’s weakest areas, with a score of 41.14% and a ranking of 30th. This places the state among the lowest performers nationally. The classification “Participatory but Weak” highlights the disconnect between active citizen engagement and limited institutional capacity.

The availability of a citizen budget indicates some level of transparency, but the absence of legislative sitting data limits assessment of legislative effectiveness. The low institutional score suggests constraints in governance processes, oversight, and policy implementation.

Participants during the validation exercise noted that institutional responsiveness remains inconsistent, particularly in translating citizen demands into policy outcomes. This aligns with the data, which shows that participation has not been matched by institutional strength.

**Civil Liberties and Civic Space:** Zamfara ranks 28th in civil liberties with a score of 30.18%, placing it well below the national median. This indicates a constrained civic environment. The classification “Fragile States” reflects a context where civic freedoms are limited and state-citizen relations may be strained.

The low score suggests challenges related to freedom of expression, association, and public engagement. This weak civic space reduces the ability of citizens to sustain participation beyond voting, limiting accountability and continuous engagement.

**Structural Dynamics:** Zamfara’s democratic structure is defined by high participation and inclusion operating within weak institutional and civic frameworks. This creates a system where citizens engage in elections, but the broader democratic ecosystem does not fully support or sustain that engagement.

The coexistence of strong participation and weak institutions introduces volatility. Participation without institutional depth can lead to unstable governance outcomes, while limited civic space constrains citizen influence beyond electoral moments.

## Key Lessons

- Strong electoral participation does not compensate for weak institutional capacity, as seen in Zamfara’s low governance performance despite active voter

engagement.

- High political inclusion can coexist with uneven demographic representation, particularly when gender and marginalised groups remain underrepresented.
- Inconsistent turnout trends across election types indicate that participation is influenced by context rather than sustained voter confidence.
- Weak civic space limits the ability of citizens to translate electoral participation into continuous democratic engagement.
- Institutional weakness reduces the impact of both participation and inclusion on governance outcomes.

**Strategic Implications:** Zamfara’s democratic trajectory presents a risk of participatory instability. High engagement without institutional support can lead to dissatisfaction if citizen expectations are not met through governance outcomes. This creates pressure on the system and may weaken trust over time.

The state also faces a civic space constraint that limits accountability. When citizens cannot freely engage beyond elections, democratic processes become episodic rather than continuous. This reduces the effectiveness of participation and weakens feedback mechanisms.

However, the relatively strong inclusion and participation indicators present an opportunity. If institutional capacity and civic space are strengthened, Zamfara has the potential to transition toward a more balanced and functional democratic system.

# Recommendations



## Top Tier and High-Performing Transition States

### EKITI STATE

Ekiti demonstrates strong institutional performance and civic space but suffers from weak electoral participation and limited inclusion.

- **Electoral Bodies (INEC, SIEC)**  
Prioritise turnout recovery strategies by redesigning voter mobilisation models beyond routine sensitisation. Evidence suggests disengagement is not due to access constraints but declining electoral motivation. Introduce polling unit level turnout diagnostics and deploy targeted mobilisation in historically low-performing wards.
- **State Government**  
Institutional strength should be leveraged to improve inclusion. Formalise gender and youth inclusion benchmarks in executive appointments and advisory councils. Move beyond compliance to measurable inclusion targets tied to performance evaluation.
- **Civil Society**  
Shift from generic civic education to behavioural interventions. Focus on why voters abstain despite strong governance structures. Pilot community-based deliberation forums that connect policy outcomes directly to voting decisions.
- **Political Actors**  
Rebuild electoral competitiveness. Low turnout often reflects predictable outcomes. Parties should broaden candidate recruitment and reduce elite dominance in ticket allocation.

### OYO STATE

Oyo leads nationally but shows emerging vulnerabilities in institutional depth relative to its strong participation and inclusion.

- **Electoral Bodies**  
Sustain high turnout through continuous voter engagement, not just election-cycle mobilisation. Introduce post-election feedback systems to capture voter experience and institutional trust indicators.
- **State Government**  
Strengthen institutional resilience. Despite high overall performance, institutional ranking is mid-tier. Increase legislative oversight transparency and publish committee-level performance reports.

- **Civil Society**  
Move toward accountability tracking. With participation already high, focus on monitoring governance outputs and budget implementation at sector level.
- **Political Actors**  
Institutionalise internal party democracy. Sustaining leadership position requires reducing informal power structures that may erode long-term competitiveness.

## OSUN STATE

Osun combines strong participation and inclusion with weaker institutional performance.

- **Electoral Bodies**  
Maintain participation momentum but address logistical inefficiencies observed in previous cycles. Introduce real-time election monitoring dashboards accessible to stakeholders.
- **State Government**  
Institutional reform is central. Strengthen procurement transparency and legislative-executive balance. Institutional weakness risks undermining otherwise strong democratic engagement.
- **Civil Society**  
Expand budget tracking initiatives. Link citizen engagement to fiscal accountability, particularly at local government level.
- **Political Actors**  
Improve governance-policy linkage. Voter engagement is high, but policy delivery gaps risk long-term disengagement.

## ONDO STATE

Ondo shows strong civic space but weaker institutional performance and moderate participation.

- **Electoral Bodies**  
Address turnout stagnation by targeting rural and peri-urban disengagement. Use disaggregated turnout data to identify structural participation barriers.
- **State Government**  
Strengthen institutional coherence. Improve coordination between ministries and legislative oversight to enhance governance outcomes.
- **Civil Society**

Leverage strong civic space to deepen advocacy on institutional accountability rather than awareness campaigns alone.

- **Political Actors**

Reduce transactional politics. High civic awareness without institutional delivery creates voter fatigue.

## **NASARAWA STATE**

Nasarawa presents a relatively balanced democratic profile with strong institutional performance but moderate inclusion.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Stabilise participation by addressing marginal declines across election cycles. Introduce continuous voter engagement mechanisms between elections.

- **State Government**

Deepen inclusion frameworks. Institutional strength should translate into more equitable representation across gender and youth demographics.

- **Civil Society**

Focus on inclusion gaps. Advocate for structured pathways for women and youth into decision-making positions.

- **Political Actors**

Broaden representation pipelines. Current inclusion levels suggest room for expanding political access beyond established networks.

## **KEBBI STATE**

Kebbi performs strongly across participation, inclusion, and institutions but shows weaker civic space.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Maintain strong participation levels while improving transparency in result management to reinforce trust.

- **State Government**

Expand civic space protections. Institutional strength must be complemented by stronger guarantees for freedom of expression and civic engagement.

- **Civil Society**

Strengthen civic advocacy in constrained environments. Develop adaptive engagement models that operate effectively within limited civic space.

- **Political Actors**

Encourage issue-based campaigns. Strong institutional and participation indi-

cators provide an opportunity to shift political competition toward policy-driven engagement.

## Upper Transition States with mixed strengths and structural imbalances

### KADUNA STATE

Kaduna combines strong institutional performance, high participation, and strong inclusion but operates within a constrained civic space.

- **Electoral Bodies (INEC, SIEC)**

Consolidate gains in participation by institutionalising voter trust mechanisms. Introduce structured post-election audits that assess voter experience, especially in areas with historically tense electoral environments.

- **State Government**

Address civic space constraints directly. Institutional strength without open civic engagement creates long-term democratic fragility. Establish formal channels for citizen feedback and protect civic actors from administrative restrictions that limit engagement.

- **Civil Society**

Adopt dual strategies of engagement and protection. While continuing voter mobilisation, prioritise safeguarding civic space through coalition-based advocacy and legal literacy programmes.

- **Political Actors**

Shift from dominance to legitimacy. High institutional performance should not translate into reduced competition. Encourage broader participation in candidate selection processes to sustain democratic credibility.

### BAYELSA STATE

Bayelsa presents strong institutional performance and inclusion but weak electoral participation.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Rebuild voter motivation. Participation levels indicate disengagement rather than access issues. Deploy community-level mobilisation tied to tangible governance outcomes rather than generic messaging.

- **State Government**

Link governance delivery to citizen engagement. Institutional strength has not translated into electoral enthusiasm. Increase visibility of policy outcomes and create structured citizen-government interaction platforms.

- **Civil Society**  
Focus on turnout recovery. Move from awareness campaigns to targeted engagement in low-turnout communities, particularly riverine and hard-to-reach areas.
- **Political Actors**  
Reduce electoral predictability. Low participation often reflects limited perceived competition. Encourage more competitive primaries and transparent candidate selection processes.

## ANAMBRA STATE

Anambra shows moderate overall performance with strong institutions but weak inclusion and moderate participation.

- **Electoral Bodies**  
Stabilise participation trends. While turnout is not critically low, fluctuations indicate inconsistent voter engagement. Introduce sustained civic engagement strategies beyond election periods.
- **State Government**  
Address exclusion dynamics. Political inclusion is significantly weak relative to institutional performance. Develop formal frameworks to increase representation of women and young people in governance structures.
- **Civil Society**  
Interrogate elite dominance. Advocacy should focus on dismantling barriers to entry into political space rather than general civic education.
- **Political Actors**  
Open up political competition. The “Disconnected Elite” pattern suggests concentration of power. Reform internal party processes to allow broader participation.

## PLATEAU STATE

Plateau demonstrates strong participation and inclusion but weak institutional performance.

- **Electoral Bodies**  
Maintain participation levels while improving election management efficiency. High turnout must be matched with credible and transparent processes to sustain trust.
- **State Government**  
Strengthen institutional capacity. Weak institutional performance undermines

strong democratic engagement. Prioritise legislative strengthening, budget transparency, and oversight mechanisms.

- **Civil Society**

Shift focus toward governance accountability. Participation is already strong, but institutional weakness requires sustained monitoring of public sector performance.

- **Political Actors**

Improve governance delivery. High participation creates expectations that must be met through effective service delivery and policy implementation.

## **ABIA STATE**

Abia combines strong civic space and institutional performance with extremely weak political inclusion.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Maintain moderate participation levels while ensuring equitable access to electoral processes across demographics.

- **State Government**

Address structural exclusion. Political inclusion is critically low, indicating systemic barriers. Introduce affirmative inclusion policies and transparent appointment processes.

- **Civil Society**

Focus on representation gaps. Advocacy should prioritise inclusion of marginalised groups rather than general civic awareness.

- **Political Actors**

Reform candidate selection systems. Elite capture of political space limits democratic depth. Expand access to party structures for underrepresented groups.

## **EDO STATE**

Edo presents moderate overall performance with strong civic space but weaker institutional performance and inclusion.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Address declining participation trends by improving voter confidence in electoral outcomes.

- **State Government**

Strengthen institutional credibility. Improve transparency in governance processes and enhance legislative effectiveness to match strong civic engage-

ment.

- **Civil Society**

Leverage strong civic space to deepen accountability initiatives, particularly around budget transparency and service delivery.

- **Political Actors**

Improve inclusiveness in governance. Moderate inclusion levels indicate restricted access to political space that needs to be broadened.

## **Mid-tier and structurally inconsistent states with uneven democratic development**

### **BENUE STATE**

Benue shows relatively strong civic space and moderate participation but very weak institutional performance.

- **Electoral Bodies (INEC, SIEC)**

Strengthen confidence in electoral administration by improving transparency at collation and result transmission stages. Participation levels are not critically low, but weak institutions risk eroding trust over time. Introduce polling unit level reporting systems accessible to observers and citizens.

- **State Government**

Address institutional fragility as a priority. Legislative inactivity, evidenced by only 25 sittings in 2025, signals weak oversight capacity. Establish minimum legislative performance benchmarks and publish periodic activity reports. Strengthen budget transparency by linking allocations to measurable outputs.

- **Civil Society**

Rebalance engagement toward governance accountability. Civic space is relatively strong, creating room for sustained monitoring of legislative performance and executive actions.

- **Political Actors**

Improve governance responsiveness. Voter engagement exists, but weak institutional delivery risks disengagement. Political actors should prioritise policy delivery and constituency engagement beyond election cycles.

### **BORNO STATE**

Borno presents strong institutional performance and participation within a complex security environment, but civic space remains constrained.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Adapt electoral logistics to security realities. Maintain participation gains by ensuring safe access to polling units, especially in displacement-affected areas. Strengthen coordination with security agencies without compromising electoral independence.

- **State Government**

Balance institutional efficiency with civic openness. While institutional performance is strong, restrictions on civic space limit citizen engagement. Expand channels for citizen feedback, particularly in post-conflict communities.

- **Civil Society**

Operate with adaptive strategies. Focus on community-level engagement in areas affected by displacement while advocating for gradual expansion of civic space.

- **Political Actors**

Promote inclusive governance in recovery contexts. Participation levels indicate citizen willingness to engage despite constraints. Political actors should ensure equitable distribution of resources and representation in post-conflict reconstruction.

## **KATSINA STATE**

Katsina demonstrates strong institutional performance but weak political inclusion and moderate participation.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Improve voter mobilisation strategies to address participation gaps. While turnout is not critically low, it does not reflect the strength of institutional structures.

- **State Government**

Address exclusion in governance. Political inclusion is among the weakest nationally. Introduce structured pathways for women and youth participation in executive and advisory roles.

- **Civil Society**

Focus advocacy on access to political space. Move beyond voter education to addressing structural barriers that limit participation in governance.

- **Political Actors**

Reform internal party dynamics. Limited inclusion reflects concentrated power structures. Expand candidate selection processes to accommodate broader participation.

## ENUGU STATE

Enugu combines very high electoral participation with extremely weak institutional performance.

- **Electoral Bodies**  
Sustain high participation while improving election credibility mechanisms. High turnout must be matched with transparent processes to maintain trust.
- **State Government**  
Prioritise institutional rebuilding. Extremely low institutional performance, including weak legislative activity, undermines democratic gains from high participation. Strengthen oversight systems and improve budget transparency.
- **Civil Society**  
Shift focus from mobilisation to accountability. Participation is already strong, but weak institutions require sustained pressure for governance reform.
- **Political Actors**  
Translate participation into governance outcomes. High voter engagement creates expectations that must be met through effective service delivery and institutional strengthening.

## EBONYI STATE

Ebonyi shows balanced participation and inclusion but moderate institutional performance and civic space.

- **Electoral Bodies**  
Maintain stable participation levels by improving consistency in election administration.
- **State Government**  
Strengthen institutional effectiveness. While not critically weak, institutional performance does not match participation and inclusion levels. Improve legislative oversight and inter-agency coordination.
- **Civil Society**  
Expand accountability initiatives. Balanced democratic indicators provide an opportunity to deepen governance monitoring.
- **Political Actors**  
Sustain inclusive practices. Political inclusion is relatively strong and should be preserved through transparent candidate selection and governance practices.

## TARABA STATE

Taraba demonstrates strong institutional performance but weak political inclusion and moderate participation.

- **Electoral Bodies**  
Stabilise participation trends by addressing inconsistencies across election cycles. Strengthen voter education in underserved areas.
- **State Government**  
Address exclusion gaps. Despite strong institutional performance, political inclusion remains weak. Develop inclusive governance frameworks that reflect demographic diversity.
- **Civil Society**  
Focus on representation deficits. Advocate for increased participation of women and youth in governance structures.
- **Political Actors**  
Expand political access. Inclusion gaps suggest restricted entry points into political space. Reform party structures to allow broader participation.

## **Lower Transition and Emerging Fragility States with declining balance across key dimensions**

### **KOGI STATE**

Kogi presents a mixed profile with relatively strong inclusion and moderate institutional performance, but weak civic space and only average participation.

- **Electoral Bodies (INEC, SIEC)**  
Stabilise voter engagement by addressing inconsistencies in turnout. Participation levels suggest fluctuating voter confidence. Introduce targeted voter mobilisation in historically low-turnout LGAs and strengthen transparency at collation levels to reduce perceptions of bias.
- **State Government**  
Reopen civic space. Weak civic space undermines otherwise strong inclusion metrics. Establish formal engagement platforms for civil society and reduce administrative barriers that limit public discourse.
- **Civil Society**  
Prioritise civic space expansion. Advocacy should focus on protecting freedom of expression and strengthening citizen oversight mechanisms.
- **Political Actors**

Sustain inclusion gains while improving competitiveness. High inclusion does not automatically translate to democratic depth if civic space remains restricted.

## **AKWA IBOM STATE**

Akwa Ibom demonstrates moderate performance across most indicators but weak institutions and limited inclusion depth.

- **Electoral Bodies**  
Address low participation by improving voter trust and accessibility. Focus on riverine and underserved communities where turnout remains comparatively low.
- **State Government**  
Strengthen institutional accountability. Weak institutional performance signals gaps in oversight and transparency. Improve legislative effectiveness and publish implementation reports tied to budget allocations.
- **Civil Society**  
Expand engagement beyond awareness. Focus on monitoring public expenditure and governance delivery, particularly at sub-state levels.
- **Political Actors**  
Improve inclusiveness. Political participation remains limited to established networks. Broaden access to party structures and candidate selection processes.

## **LAGOS STATE**

Lagos shows relatively strong institutional performance but weak participation and moderate inclusion.

- **Electoral Bodies**  
Address persistent low turnout. Participation levels remain disproportionately low relative to the state's size and voter base. Introduce urban-specific mobilisation strategies that reflect mobility patterns, work schedules, and voter apathy.
- **State Government**  
Improve citizen engagement mechanisms. Institutional strength has not translated into active citizen participation. Expand participatory governance platforms and feedback systems.
- **Civil Society**  
Reframe civic engagement strategies. Traditional voter education approaches

are less effective in urban contexts. Focus on issue-based mobilisation and digital engagement tools.

- **Political Actors**

Increase electoral competitiveness. Low turnout often reflects perceived predictability. Encourage broader participation in primaries and reduce barriers to entry for new candidates.

## **IMO STATE**

Imo demonstrates strong participation and inclusion but weak institutions and constrained civic space.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Maintain participation levels while strengthening credibility. High turnout must be matched with transparent processes to sustain voter trust.

- **State Government**

Address institutional weakness urgently. Weak governance structures undermine strong citizen engagement. Strengthen legislative oversight and improve transparency in public administration.

- **Civil Society**

Operate within constrained civic space while sustaining accountability efforts. Focus on community-level monitoring and coalition-based advocacy.

- **Political Actors**

Improve governance delivery. Strong participation reflects citizen interest, but weak institutional performance risks eroding that engagement over time.

## **GOMBE STATE**

Gombe presents moderate institutional performance but weak civic space and limited inclusion.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Improve participation by addressing voter disengagement. Introduce targeted mobilisation strategies in rural communities where turnout remains inconsistent.

- **State Government**

Expand political inclusion. Limited representation of women and youth suggests structural barriers. Introduce inclusive appointment frameworks.

- **Civil Society**

Focus on both civic space and inclusion. Advocacy should address restrictions

on engagement while promoting broader access to governance processes.

- **Political Actors**

Broaden political participation. Encourage more inclusive candidate selection processes to improve representation.

## **DELTA STATE**

Delta shows moderate participation and institutional performance but weak civic space and declining engagement trends.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Address declining turnout trends. Participation has dropped significantly between election cycles. Strengthen voter education and improve confidence in electoral outcomes.

- **State Government**

Improve transparency and civic engagement. Weak civic space limits accountability. Expand access to government information and strengthen citizen feedback mechanisms.

- **Civil Society**

Focus on rebuilding citizen trust. Declining participation suggests growing disengagement. Prioritise community-level engagement and accountability tracking.

- **Political Actors**

Enhance credibility of electoral competition. Reduced voter turnout indicates declining trust in political processes. Improve transparency in candidate selection and campaign practices.

## **Critical and Lagging States with structural weaknesses across multiple dimensions**

### **OGUN STATE**

Ogun reflects moderate participation and institutional performance but very weak civic space and uneven inclusion.

- **Electoral Bodies (INEC, SIEC)**

Address structural disengagement in local elections. The marginal improvement in LGA turnout from 16.7 percent to 22.8 percent shows that participation can respond to targeted interventions. Scale this by institutionalising ward-level voter mobilisation anchored in community leadership structures. Improve election-day logistics in peri-urban LGAs where turnout remains suppressed.

- **State Government**

Restore transparency infrastructure. The absence of a functional citizen budget and weak digital access points signal deeper governance opacity. Re-establish a functional public information portal with real-time budget tracking and procurement disclosures.

- **Civil Society**

Exploit openings at the sub-state level. Where state-level civic space is constrained, focus on LGA budget tracking and community monitoring. Build alliances with traditional and informal institutions to sustain engagement.

- **Political Actors**

Reduce centralisation of candidate selection. Inclusion levels suggest that political access remains narrow. Decentralise party processes and open up ward-level structures to new entrants.

## **BAUCHI STATE**

Bauchi faces weak institutional performance and participation but maintains relatively strong civic space.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Rebuild participation from a low base. Electoral turnout remains among the weakest nationally. Introduce continuous voter engagement platforms tied to community structures rather than episodic campaigns.

- **State Government**

Prioritise institutional rebuilding. Extremely weak institutional performance indicates limited legislative oversight and governance effectiveness. Establish performance benchmarks for ministries and publish quarterly implementation reports.

- **Civil Society**

Leverage strong civic space to push accountability. There is sufficient openness to sustain advocacy. Shift from awareness campaigns to systematic monitoring of budget execution and service delivery.

- **Political Actors**

Improve credibility of political competition. Low participation reflects weak voter confidence. Strengthen transparency in candidate emergence and campaign financing.

## **ZAMFARA STATE**

Zamfara presents moderate participation and inclusion but weak institutions and

constrained civic space, within a fragile security context.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Adapt electoral operations to security realities. The sharp increase in LGA turnout to 52 percent indicates that participation can surge under specific conditions. Institutionalise these enabling conditions by improving security coordination and voter access.

- **State Government**

Strengthen institutional stability. Weak institutional performance suggests governance fragmentation. Improve coordination across agencies and enhance legislative oversight capacity.

- **Civil Society**

Operate through adaptive engagement models. Civic space constraints and security risks require decentralised, community-based approaches to civic engagement.

- **Political Actors**

Stabilise political competition. Inclusion levels are relatively strong, but weak institutions and security pressures risk undermining electoral credibility. Strengthen issue-based engagement to reduce volatility.

## **ADAMAWA STATE**

Adamawa combines moderate participation with weak civic space and below-average institutional performance.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Sustain participation gains while improving trust. Turnout levels are relatively stable but not strong enough to indicate deep engagement. Improve transparency in collation and result management.

- **State Government**

Expand civic space. Weak civic space constrains citizen engagement and limits accountability. Establish structured engagement platforms at state and LGA levels.

- **Civil Society**

Focus on civic space expansion. Advocacy should prioritise protecting citizen voice and strengthening oversight mechanisms.

- **Political Actors**

Enhance inclusiveness. Political inclusion remains moderate but uneven. Broaden access to political processes, particularly for women and youth.

## CROSS RIVER STATE

Cross River demonstrates relatively strong participation but weak civic space and institutional performance.

- **Electoral Bodies**  
Maintain participation levels while addressing credibility concerns. High turnout must be matched with transparent processes to sustain trust.
- **State Government**  
Improve governance transparency. Weak civic space and institutional performance indicate limited accountability. Strengthen public access to budget and policy information.
- **Civil Society**  
Reinforce accountability mechanisms. Participation levels provide a foundation for citizen engagement, but weak civic space requires strategic advocacy approaches.
- **Political Actors**  
Improve governance outcomes. Sustained participation without corresponding institutional delivery risks voter fatigue and long-term disengagement.

## KWARA STATE

Kwara shows moderate institutional performance but weak civic space and very low inclusion.

- **Electoral Bodies**  
Stabilise participation by addressing voter apathy. Turnout levels do not reflect institutional capacity. Introduce targeted engagement in low-turnout LGAs.
- **State Government**  
Address structural exclusion. Political inclusion is significantly weak, indicating concentrated access to governance. Introduce transparent appointment processes and inclusion benchmarks.
- **Civil Society**  
Focus on breaking elite concentration. Advocacy should prioritise expanding access to political space rather than general civic education.
- **Political Actors**  
Reform internal party systems. Inclusion gaps reflect restricted candidate pipelines. Open up party structures to allow broader participation.

## Deep Fragility and Systemic Breakdown States

## NIGER STATE

Niger reflects weak overall performance with low civic space, weak institutions, and only moderate participation and inclusion. The pattern points to a system where engagement exists but lacks structural support.

- **Electoral Bodies (INEC, SIEC)**

Re-anchor electoral credibility at the local level. Participation is not negligible, but it lacks depth and consistency. Introduce ward-level turnout diagnostics and deploy continuous voter engagement programmes tied to community structures rather than periodic campaigns. Improve transparency in collation processes to reduce scepticism around outcomes.

- **State Government**

Rebuild institutional functionality. Institutional performance remains weak despite moderate engagement levels. Strengthen legislative oversight and ensure regular sittings translate into measurable outputs. Expand access to budget information in simplified formats to improve public understanding and scrutiny.

- **Civil Society**

Shift from awareness to accountability. Civic space is constrained, but not closed. Focus on targeted monitoring of service delivery in key sectors such as education and health to demonstrate the value of citizen oversight.

- **Political Actors**

Stabilise political participation. Inclusion levels suggest some openness, but weak institutions undermine trust. Improve transparency in candidate emergence and reduce informal power concentration within party structures.

## KANO STATE

Kano exhibits one of the weakest democratic profiles nationally, with low participation, weak institutions, and limited civic space.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Address systemic voter disengagement. Participation levels are among the lowest nationally. Move beyond traditional voter education by introducing trust-building mechanisms, including transparent result transmission and real-time public access to polling unit data.

- **State Government**

Prioritise institutional recovery. Weak institutional performance reflects limited oversight and governance inefficiency. Establish enforceable performance

benchmarks for ministries and strengthen legislative independence.

- **Civil Society**

Rebuild civic engagement from the ground up. Civic space limitations require adaptive strategies. Focus on community-level engagement and issue-based mobilisation that connects governance outcomes to everyday realities.

- **Political Actors**

Reopen political space. The “Disconnected Elite” pattern indicates concentrated control. Reform party structures to allow broader participation and reduce barriers to entry for new actors.

## **JIGAWA STATE**

Jigawa presents a combination of weak participation, weak institutions, low inclusion, and fragile civic space.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Reconstruct participation systems. Low turnout reflects both disengagement and structural barriers. Introduce mobile voter engagement initiatives targeting rural populations and improve accessibility to polling units.

- **State Government**

Address systemic institutional weakness. Governance structures require comprehensive reform, particularly in legislative oversight and budget transparency. Publish detailed implementation reports linked to budget allocations.

- **Civil Society**

Operate through decentralised engagement. Fragile civic space necessitates working through community networks and informal institutions to sustain citizen engagement.

- **Political Actors**

Expand representation. Low inclusion indicates restricted access to political space. Open up party systems and introduce mechanisms that allow youth and women to participate meaningfully.

## **RIVERS STATE**

Rivers represents the most critical case, with extremely low performance across all dimensions, including participation, inclusion, institutions, and civic space.

- **Electoral Bodies**

Rebuild electoral legitimacy from first principles. Extremely low participation indicates a collapse of voter confidence. Prioritise transparency in the entire electoral process, from voter registration to result declaration. Introduce in-

dependent monitoring mechanisms and ensure full public access to electoral data.

- **State Government**

Undertake systemic governance reset. Institutional performance is critically low, with zero legislative sittings recorded. Restore functionality of the legislature as a matter of urgency and re-establish basic accountability systems. Ensure publication of budget documents and create accessible channels for citizen engagement.

- **Civil Society**

Focus on democratic recovery. Civic space constraints require coalition-based approaches. Work with national and regional actors to reopen civic engagement space and rebuild citizen trust.

### **Political Actors**

Re-establish political legitimacy. The absence of inclusion and participation reflects a breakdown in democratic competition. Reform internal party systems, ensure transparent candidate selection, and engage citizens beyond electoral cycles.

## List of state-based Enumerators

S/N	NAME	STATES
1.	Ogbonna Priscillia	ABIA
2.	Ibrahim Mohammed Ibrahim	ADAMAWA
3.	Satina Harry	AKWA-IBOM
4.	Ugochi Freeman	ANAMBRA
5.	Chiroma Mohammed Hassan	BAUCHI
6.	Tare Maureen Amananaghan	BAYELSA
7.	Agagbe Kelvin	BENUE
8.	Aisha Adamu Abdullahi	BORNO
9.	Efanga Etim	CROSS RIVER
10.	Olivia Endurance	DELTA
11.	Ugwu Ugochinyere Brenda	EBONYI
12.	Peter Aguebor	EDO
13.	Olajide Funsho Benjamin	EKITI
14.	Keneolisa Ogbuzuiu	ENUGU
15.	Jeremiah Micheal	GOMBE
16.	Prince Chimezie Okoro	IMO
17.	Farida Muhammed	JIGAWA
18.	Stephen John	KADUNA
19.	Ali Sabo	KANO
20.	Yahaya Saidu Lugga	KATSINA
21.	Nafiu Sani Gulumbe	KEBBI
22.	Attah Solomon	KOGI
23.	Akinsola Kehinde	KWARA
24.	Sussan kelechi Ihuoma	LAGOS
25.	Ejegwoya Peter Ogah	NASSARAWA
26.	Saba Umar Mohammed	NIGER
27.	Folashade Bamigboye	ONDO
28.	Emmanuel Kilaso	OGUN
29.	Bukola Ejiade	OSUN
30.	Gboyega Tokunbo	OYO

31.	Jacob Choji Pwakim	PLATEAU
32.	Ngozi Anyanwu	RIVERS
33.	Yakubu Abubakar	SOKOTO
34.	Yahuza A. MAGAJI	TARABA
35.	Muhammed Ibrahim	YOBE
36.	Abdullahi Lawali	ZAMFARA
37	Yakubu Isreal Bameyi	FCT

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<b>Prof. Olubukola S. Adesina</b>	University of Ibadan
<b>Tolulope Idowu</b>	A.A. Ademidu & Co.
<b>Hon. Y.A. Azeez</b>	Y.A. Azeez & Co.
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<b>Dr. Olusola R. Olorunfemi</b>	Anchor University Lagos
<b>Oludayo Tade</b>	University of Ibadan



# Endnotes

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