English summary

The main results from the empirical analyses are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Chapter 2: Voter turnout and the use of internet voting

In this chapter, voter turnout and voters' use of internet voting as well as paper ballot voting are analysed. We find that:

- Internet voting is popular among the voters in the trial municipalities. Between 37 per cent and 33 per cent of the ballots were cast online in the old and new trial municipalities respectively. This is an increase from 2011 when 26 per cent of the ballots were cast online. The number of ballots cast online in Norway seems high when compared to the general election in Estonia in 2011, where 24 percent of the ballots were cast online
- Internet voters make changes on the ballot to a greater degree than paper voters in national parliamentary elections. Both the level of changes made and the differences between internet votes and paper votes are surprising, given the minimal effect of this option. We do not find similar differences for the municipal elections in 2011.
- In line with previous research, our findings indicate that the trial with internet voting does not lead to increased turnout in elections. The change in voter turnout in the trial municipalities is in line with the changes seen for the country as a whole.
- Analysing registry data we find that internet voters are quite similar to paper voters when it comes to social and demographic background variables.
- As regards the differences between 2011 and 2013, we see that many voters remain in the same category in 2013 as in 2011. That is, most paper voters continue to cast their ballot on paper and most internet voters continue to cast their ballot online. The greatest variation is found among those who did not vote in 2011. Thirty per cent of these cast their ballots on paper in 2013, whereas 19 per

cent of the non-voters in 2011 cast their ballots online in 2013. When analysing the social and demographic characteristics of these mobilized voters, we find few if any differences between the paper voters and internet voters. The exception is that the Internet is more popular among the younger mobilized voters.

- The analysis of survey data confirms the findings from registry data that the differences between internet voters and paper voters are small.

Chapter 3: The accessibility of the election

In this chapter, voters' views on the accessibility of the election are analysed. We find that:

- There is a large degree of overlap between old and new trial municipalities, and between the results from 2011 and 2013 with regard to the internet voters' views on the accessibility of the election. The internet voters report that it was easy to cast a ballot over the Internet, and gave this as the main reason for their choice of this voting method. The second most important reason for casting a ballot online is curiosity about the trial. We see that this curiosity decreases in the old trial municipalities from 2011 to 2013.
- There are few or no differences in the paper voters' views on the accessibility in 2013 compared to 2011. The most marked change is that more paper voters in 2013 report proximity to the polling station as a main reason not to cast their ballot online. There are no marked differences in the paper voters' responses between the old and new trial municipalities.
- People with special needs (i.e. having problems with getting to the polling stations and/or problems with casting a ballot on paper) mostly report issues related to distances to the polling station as their main reason for casting their ballot online. On these issues people with special needs differed from the rest of the internet voters.
- Paper voters with special needs resemble the rest of the paper voters on their main reasons for not casting their ballot online.
- Voter turnout among citizens living abroad with the possibility to vote online (i.e. citizens living abroad who are registered in the trial

municipalities) is nine percentage points higher than for citizens living abroad registered in municipalities that were not taking part in the trial. Altogether 66 per cent of the ballots from citizens living abroad and registered in trial municipalities were cast online. Two factors may have contributed to this result. In addition to the possibility to vote online, these voters (unlike other citizens living abroad) were sent a polling card by post.

Chapter 4: Attitudes towards and trust in internet voting

In this chapter, attitudes towards internet voting – as well as trust in internet voting and the electoral process in general – are analysed. We find that:

- In the ten trial municipalities that also participated in the 2011 trial, trust in the electoral process increased somewhat from 2011 to 2013. The level of trust is now about equally high in the trial municipalities as in the rest of the country. This can be interpreted as normalization: the trial is now more familiar, has probably attracted less public attention, and may therefore not arouse critical attitudes to the same extent as it did in 2011. There is no significant difference between the ten old and the two new trial municipalities regarding trust in the electoral process.
- The 2013 internet voters had somewhat higher trust in the electoral process than the 2011 internet voters. In 2013, the non-voters had significantly less trust than either internet voters or paper ballot voters.
- Regarding attitudes towards internet voting, the main conclusion is that little has changed from 2011 to 2013 in the trial municipalities. Support for internet voting remains high, even when counter-arguments related to privacy, the secret ballot and technological security are introduced. In general, there is little resistance to and considerable confidence in internet voting among the citizens.
- More than nine out of ten citizens of the trial municipalities think that internet voting should be introduced in Norway, also in 2013. Support for internet voting is somewhat lower in the country as a whole, where seven out of ten agree with this statement.

Chapter 5: The secret ballot: principles and practice

This chapter deals with some research questions concerning the principle of the secret ballot, and how it is applied when votes are cast

via the Internet in a so-called 'uncontrolled environment'. We have examined the context in which voters cast their votes, and how the citizens view different situations that may conflict with the legal understanding of the principle of the secret ballot. We have also mapped the citizens' knowledge of the mechanisms that are supposed to ensure that ballots are cast in private. These are our main findings:

- As shown in Chapter 4, public support for internet voting is generally high, also when the principle of the secret ballot is explicitly mentioned as a counter-argument. Relatively speaking, however, the elderly and the least educated tend to give priority to the principle of the secret ballot.
- A large majority of the electorate – 82 per cent – supports the view that internet voting should be conducted in private. There are only minor differences between internet voters, paper voters and non-voters.
- When the principle of the secret ballot is applied to concrete situations, attitudes become more ambiguous. Our respondents were asked to consider some scenarios which described different situations that could arise when votes are cast via the internet. Many respondents – in several scenarios a majority of them – found it acceptable that others could see how a person voted, provided that nothing criminal (such as buying votes) took place. This does not necessarily mean that these respondents *themselves* would let others see how they voted, but that such behaviour might not be met with disapproval.
- Situations where somebody *helps* another person to cast his or her vote, and therefore may see how they vote, are largely perceived as acceptable. This applies especially when people with disabilities are involved.
- 27 per cent of the internet voters stated that they were not alone in the room when they voted, whereas 7 per cent stated that somebody saw how they voted. This means that a large majority of the internet voters cast their votes in private, but a not inconsiderable group is nevertheless willing to let others observe their voting.
- Very few stated that they experienced any pressure to vote for a specific party. Internet voters were not exposed to more pressure than others.

- Very few stated that others had tried to buy their vote, or that they knew about cases of vote-buying. There are no significant differences between internet voters and other voters in this respect.
- The extent of re-voting – internet voters casting more than one vote – is quite limited. The opportunity to vote more than once is intended to ensure that those voters who have been exposed to pressure should have the opportunity to cast a new vote. Accordingly, this is an important mechanism to protect the secrecy of the ballot.
- Which vote is valid if a voter casts both an internet vote and a paper ballot vote during the period of advance voting? Knowledge about this concerns the conditions for safeguarding the principle of the secret ballot. However, this knowledge is limited among the electorate of the trial municipalities. Less than half know the correct answer. We may therefore ask to what extent relevant information reached the voters.