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Elections in Haiti

January 29 Legislative and Local Elections

Frequently Asked Questions

Americas

International Foundation for Electoral Systems

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Frequently Asked Questions

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Disclosure:
These FAQs reflect decisions made by the Haitian elections authorities as of January 27, 2017, to the best of our knowledge. This document does not represent any IFES policy or technical recommendations.

When is Election Day?

Haitian voters will head to the polls on January 29, 2017.

Who are citizens voting for on Election Day?

On Election Day, Haitians will elect eight senators in a second-round election, one deputy to the lower chamber, 3,032 members for the 570 Administration of Communal Sections (*Assemblée de Section Communale* [ASEC]), 1,170 members of the 570 Boards of Directors of Communal Sections (*Conseil d'Administration de Section Communale* [CASEC]), and 785 members to the 140 city delegates (*Deleguè de Ville* [DV]).

Who can vote in the country?

Haitians who are 18 years of age or older; registered in the electoral register; hold a national identification card; and have the full enjoyment of civil and political rights are eligible to vote.

How many registered voters are there?

There are 6,189,253 registered voters (3,112,335 women and 3,076,918 men) according to the Provisional Electoral Council (*Conseil Electoral Provisoire* [CEP]).

What is the structure of the government?

Haiti is a democratic republic composed of 10 administrative divisions, also called departments. These 10 departments are further divided into arrondissements, which are further divided into communes. In total, there are 41 arrondissements and 144 communes. The Government of Haiti is based upon a prime minister and a president where the prime minister is head of the government and the president is head of state.

Executive power is held by the president and the prime minister. The president is elected by popular vote and the prime minister is appointed by the president, then ratified by the National Assembly. Members of the cabinet for the executive branch are chosen by the prime minister with input from the president.

Legislative power is entrusted to the National Assembly, which consists of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. Senate seats are elected by an absolute majority vote through a two-round system, and the 119 seats in the Chamber of Deputies are elected through an absolute majority vote in single-member constituencies. At the local level there are mayors, Administration of Communal Sections (ASEC), Boards of Directors of Communal Sections (CASEC), and city delegates.

There are 570 three-member CASECs (one member must be a woman) to be elected by communal sections by simple majority for a four-year term. CASECs are the administrators of the local government and make decisions on development and execution of projects. The members of an ASEC are elected for a four-year term by simple majority. ASECs play an advisory role to CASECs on communal section projects to be supported and budget proposals, and it is an organ for the participation of civil society. The ASEC members do not have an office, so they meet once per trimester at CASEC offices. The number of ASEC and city delegate members depends on the number of registered voters in the constituency:

five for 10,000 or less registered voters, seven for 10,001-20,000 and nine for over 20,000. City delegates are the representatives of urban communal section. They are elected for a four-year term by simple majority.

How many candidates are participating in the January 29 elections?

There are 16 candidates for the second round of senatorial elections, two candidates for deputy, 4,583 city delegate candidates (including 1,864 women), 14,206 Administration of Communal Sections candidates (5,933 women), and 12,267 Boards of Directors of Communal Sections candidates (4,292 women). The total number of candidates is 31,073.

What is the gender balance within the candidate list?

According to the constitution and the electoral law, there is a 30 percent quota for women in the candidate list. The 30 percent quota was applied by political parties for local elections. The registration process for candidates put in place by the Provisional Electoral Council obliged the political parties to respect the quota.

What is the election management body? What are its powers?

The Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) is responsible for organizing and controlling with complete independence all electoral procedures throughout Haiti until the proclamation of the election results. The CEP carries out its mission following the election cycle as defined by the Constitution of Haiti.

The mission of the CEP is described in Article 191 of the constitution. The CEP is responsible for the organization of all elections in Haiti. Along with other state institutions, the CEP is also responsible for ensuring compliance with legislation governing the electoral process.

The constitution also gives the CEP the power to fulfill judicial functions in the event of electoral disputes. The following judicial bodies also deal with issues related to electoral disputes in accordance with the 2013 Electoral Law, under the authority of the CEP:

- Communal Office of Electoral Disputes
- Departmental Office of Electoral Disputes
- National Office of Electoral Disputes

How many polling places are set up on Election Day?

For the January 29 elections, a total of 1,534 polling centers will be set up across the country, which includes 11,993 polling stations.

Is out-of-country voting allowed?

Out-of-country voting is not permitted in Haiti.

How will voters with disabilities cast their ballots?

According to the 2013 Electoral Law, voters with disabilities may be accompanied by a person of their choice, who can assist them in casting their ballot. Article 58 of the Act on the Integration of Persons with Disabilities states: “The Electoral Council must ensure that electoral facilities and materials are appropriate, accessible, easy to use and easy to understand by disabled people [sic].”

Voters with disabilities as well as other groups with special needs, such as the elderly and pregnant women, have the priority in the queue.

Where are voting, counting and tabulation held?

After the polls close on Election Day, votes will be counted and tallied at the polling stations. The results sheets will then be transported to the Voting Tabulation Center, which is the main tabulation center located in Port-au-Prince.

When will official results be announced?

According to the Provisional Electoral Council, the official results will be announced on different dates: results for legislative elections will be released on March 17 and local election results will be released on April 23.

Who can observe during Election Day? How can they get accreditation?

All international and national observers must be accredited. The accreditation card is given by the Provisional Electoral Council to an observer organization upon request and according to established rules. International and national accredited observers may observe the conduct of all electoral operations throughout the country. To this end, observers can make any suggestion to improve and facilitate the conduct of all the stages of the electoral process and report any situation that would be likely disturb electoral operations.

Resources

- 2015 Electoral Law ([French](#))
- Provisional Electoral Council ([French](#))