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International Foundation
for Electoral Systems

Election FAQs: Ghana

Presidential and Parliamentary Elections

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Africa

International Foundation for Electoral Systems

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Election Snapshot

- **Election Day:**
 - December 2, 2024: Special voting (also known as early voting) commences for the presidential and parliamentary elections.¹
 - December 7, 2024: General voting for the presidential and parliamentary elections.
- **Registered voters:** 18,774,159² (9,084,179 males and 9,689,980 females).
 - Youth (ages 18–35 years): 10,343,810.
 - Persons with disabilities: 55,492.
- **Polling stations:** 40,976.³
 - Special voting centers: 328.⁴
 - Voter threshold per polling station across the country: 749.
- **Seats:**
 - One presidential seat.
 - 276 parliamentary seats across Ghana's 16 regions.
- **Presidential candidate lists:** 13.⁵
 - Political party candidates: 9.
 - Independent candidates: 4.
- **Parliamentary candidates:** 801 (682 males and 119 females).
 - Independent candidates: 111.
- **Campaign expenditure and donation limits:** None.
- **Other rules around Election Day:**
 - The selling of alcohol is prohibited within 500 meters of any polling station. Drinking bars or spots are not permitted to operate on Election Day.
 - Voters are not permitted to carry weapons to a polling station on Election Day.
 - Voters must present valid government-issued identification at the polls. Those who do not have an acceptable form of identification, or who fail to bring it to the polls, may not be allowed to vote.⁶
 - A voter who loses his or her voter ID card has seven days to report in person to the district officer of the Electoral Commission or to the officer in charge of the

¹ Ghanaian law allows special, or early, voting before Election Day for registered voters who cannot present themselves at their polling station due to their roles in the election. To qualify for special voting, the voter must be registered in the constituency or should have transferred his or her vote to the constituency and must be a security official, accredited media personnel, or election management body staff, including polling staff.

² [Summary of 2024 Certified Voter Register - Electoral Commission.](#)

³ [Polling Stations - Electoral Commission.](#)

⁴ Special voting centers are separate from the polling stations for the general election. These are established in constituencies where security agencies' offices (barracks or stations) are located. At least one special voting center will be located in each of the 276 constituencies.

⁵ Initially, 13 candidates (11 males and two females) were in the race for the presidency. One of the female candidates died on October 28.

⁶ [Electoral Commission of Ghana: Frequently Asked Questions.](#)

nearest police station, who must report the loss to the district officer within seven days of receipt of the report.⁷

When is Election Day?

Ghana will conduct its presidential and parliamentary elections on Saturday, December 7, 2024, at 40,976 polling stations across 276 constituencies in the 16 regions of the country. Special, or early, voting will take place on December 2 for registered voters who have roles to play on Election Day. These include security officials, accredited media personnel, and election management body staff, including polling staff.

Why are these elections important?

The upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections are the ninth general elections since the inception of the 1992 Republican Constitution, with two presidential run-offs. These general elections provide an opportunity for citizens to deepen and consolidate Ghana's democratic gains in an era of democratic backsliding and military coups in countries including Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Mali, and Niger in west and central Africa.⁸

The National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the National Patriotic Party (NPP) are Ghana's two leading political parties. Since 1992, they have alternated power every eight years, with the NPP securing presidential victories in 2016 and 2020. With the current president nearing the end of his second and final term, Ghana is set to elect a new president through the December elections.

According to survey findings,⁹ the five key issues identified by Ghanaians for this election cycle are unemployment, infrastructure, healthcare, education, and economic management. Many citizens have been significantly impacted by the instability of the Ghanaian cedi, rising inflation, and persistently high unemployment. Afrobarometer reports that a considerable number of citizens have faced varying levels of lived poverty over the past year.¹⁰

Youth unemployment, at 14 percent, remains a pressing concern, particularly for younger voters. At 55.1 percent of the electorate, young people will be instrumental in shaping the election's outcome. In total, 708,280 citizens will be first-time voters. Political parties have ramped up efforts to engage Generation Z voters by leveraging social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram, underscoring the growing importance of the youth vote in this election.

⁷ [Electoral Commission of Ghana: Frequently Asked Questions.](#)

⁸ [Recent coups in West and Central Africa | Reuters.](#)

⁹ Afrobarometer. October 31, 2024. [Unemployment tops Ghanaians' priorities amidst strong support for key government initiatives, Afrobarometer survey shows.](#)

¹⁰ [Afrobarometer Round 10 survey in Ghana News Release - Unemployment tops Ghanaians' priorities -30 October 24](#)

Who are citizens voting for on Election Day?

In the upcoming general elections, citizens will elect the president of Ghana. One of the original contestants died on October 28. The remaining candidates are:

1. Mahamudu Bawumia, New Patriotic Party
2. John Dramani Mahama, National Democratic Congress
3. Alan John Kwadwo Kyerematen, Independent
4. Christian Kwabena Andrews, Ghana Union Movement
5. Daniel Augustus Lartey Jnr, Great Consolidated Popular Party
6. George Twum-Barima-Adu, independent
7. Nana Kwame Bediako, independent
8. Hassan Abdulai Ayariga, All People's Congress
9. Kofi Akpaloo, Liberal Party of Ghana
10. Mohammed Frimpong, National Democratic Party
11. Nana Akosua Frimpomaa, Convention People's Party
12. Kofi Koranteng, independent

Ghanaians will also elect 276 Members of Parliament from the 801 candidates contesting for seats in the parliamentary election.

What is the electoral system?

Ghana uses a simple plurality electoral system for presidential and parliamentary elections.

In presidential elections, the candidate who wins at least 50 percent of valid votes plus one becomes president and serves a four-year term. If no candidate achieves this threshold in the first round or if there is a tie, the Electoral Commission is required to organize a runoff.

For the parliamentary elections, 276 Members of Parliament are chosen for four-year terms from single-member constituencies. The candidate in a constituency who receives the most valid votes is declared the winner, as per the Public Elections Regulations, 2020. In case of a tie, the Electoral Commission organizes a runoff election.

What is the legal framework for conducting the elections?

The legal framework for conducting general elections in Ghana consists of:

1. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana (Articles 49, 50, and 51);¹¹
2. The Representation of the Peoples Law, 1992 (PNDCL ¹² 284);¹³ and

¹¹ [Constitution of the Republic of Ghana \(1992\)](#).

¹² PNDCL refers to a law passed by the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) of Ghana, the military government which ruled Ghana from 1981 to 1993.

¹³ [Republic of Ghana Judiciary, Representation of the People Law, 1992 \(PNDCL 284\)](#).

3. Public Elections Regulations, 2020 (CI¹⁴ 127).¹⁵

Who is eligible to run as a candidate?

To be eligible to run in the presidential election, candidates must be Ghanaian, 40 years or older, and registered voters. Candidates for parliamentary seats must be Ghanaian of 21 years or older, and registered voters.

Candidates for the elections must not owe allegiance to any other country and must have settled all tax obligations.¹⁶

Are there reserved seats for women? What is the gender balance within the candidate list?

Ghana does not reserve special or specific parliamentary seats for women. However, the Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Act, passed in September 2024, requires political parties to adopt measures to promote gender equality in their candidature processes. This includes adhering to a 30 percent representation quota for women. Although the act was passed too late to be a requirement for this election, political parties will need to adhere to it in future electoral cycles.

Currently, there is a gender imbalance among candidates vying for the presidential and parliamentary elections. There are 11 male presidential candidates and only one female candidate, and the 682 male parliamentary candidates far outnumber their 119 female counterparts.

What are the campaign expenditure and donation limits?

Ghana's electoral system has no campaign finance or donation limit for political parties or for presidential and parliamentary candidates, according to the Political Parties Act, 2000 (Act 574).¹⁷ Section 55 (15) of the 1992 Constitution¹⁸ states that only Ghanaian citizens or Ghanaian-owned companies may contribute or donate to a political party registered in Ghana. There also is no spending limit.

Civil society advocates have raised concerns about the high cost of politics, role of illicit funding, and lack of regulatory controls.¹⁹

¹⁴ A constitutional instrument (CI) is an instrument made under a power conferred by Ghana's constitution.

¹⁵ [Public Elections Regulations, 2020](#).

¹⁶ [Constitution of the Republic of Ghana \(1992\)](#).

¹⁷ [The Political Parties Act, 2000 \(Act 574\)](#).

¹⁸ [Constitution of the Republic of Ghana \(1992\)](#).

¹⁹ See: Ghana Center for Democratic Development. (n.d.). [Understanding How Dirty Money Fuels Campaign Financing in Ghana. An Exploratory Study](#).

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

The Electoral Commission of Ghana is the independent body responsible for managing elections. Its authority is derived from Articles 45, 46, and 55 of the 1992 Constitution²⁰ and the Electoral Commission Act of 1993 (Act 541).²¹

Article 46 of the Constitution guarantees the commission's independence, stating that it cannot be directed or controlled by any individual or authority. Article 45 outlines its key responsibilities, which include compiling and updating the voter register, defining electoral boundaries for national and local elections, conducting and supervising public elections and referenda, educating citizens about the electoral process, and implementing programs to increase voter registration.

What is the election management body doing to strengthen its technology and procedures to resist vulnerabilities and counter foreign interference?

Globally, elections are increasingly technology-based, and the use of computer- and network-based electoral operations, digitized data storage, and websites is inevitable in election management. Ghana is no different. The 2020 general elections witnessed cyberthreats, prompting increased cybersecurity efforts by the National Communications Authority and the Cybersecurity Authority.²² The commission then strengthened its technology to resist any potential vulnerabilities.

Who can vote in these elections?

According to Article 42 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, every Ghanaian citizen 18 years of age or above and "of sound mind" has the right to vote. They are entitled to be registered as voters for public elections and referenda.²³

How many registered voters are there?

The current voters' register lists 18,774,159 voters:

- **Males:** 9,084,179
- **Females:** 9,689,980

²⁰ [Constitution of the Republic of Ghana \(1992\)](#).

²¹ [Electoral Commission Act, 1993 \(Act 451\)](#).

²² Graphic Online. July 2, 2024. [Ghana faces cyberattack threat ahead of December elections - ACDT](#).

²³ [Constitution of the Republic of Ghana \(1992\)](#).

- **First-time voters (ages 18–21 years):** 708,280
- **Persons with disabilities:** 55,492
- **Youth (ages 18–35 years):** 10,343,810

What provisions are in place to support the equal rights of women, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups?

Women, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups have equal rights under the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Ghana passed the Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Act in 2024 after nearly three decades of advocacy by citizens and civil society organizations.²⁴ The act addresses gender imbalances and promotes gender equity in the public and private sectors.

The law mandates that women must constitute a minimum of 30 percent of members of key decision-making bodies, including the government. Political parties must adopt measures to promote gender equality in their processes, including by adhering to the female representation quota. The act intends to increase the active participation of women in public life from a minimum of 30 percent to 50 percent by 2030, in line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goal of achieving gender equality by 2030.

Although the act was passed too late to be required in the upcoming elections, political parties will need to adhere to it in future cycles.

Is out-of-country voting allowed?

Ghana's electoral laws allow out-of-country voting through proxy voters. A registered voter can apply for a proxy vote due to illness or disability, a busy work schedule, education, personal reasons, or residence overseas.

A proxy voter may not cast a vote for more than one voter in a particular election. The same person cannot be appointed as a proxy by two voters. A proxy must be a registered voter. Once a proxy is appointed, the person who requested the proxy cannot vote on Election Day. However, the requester may cancel the proxy before Election Day by applying to the Electoral Commission. In this case, the proxy appointment is voided, and the proxy can no longer vote on behalf of the citizen.

²⁴ Ghana Ministry of Information. August 8, 2024. [Affirmative Action Act, 2024 \(Gender Equity\) Passed by Parliament.](#)

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

All credible domestic and international groups accredited by the Electoral Commission of Ghana can observe during Election Day. Accreditation confers official recognition and gives individuals, groups, or organizations access to polling stations, collation centers, and Electoral Commission offices as observers on Election Day. To gain accreditation, a potential observer must submit an application to the Electoral Commission. Observers must conspicuously display their accreditation cards. Election observers have no role in the actual administration of an election.

Who is managing security on Election Day?

The Ghana Police Service is mainly responsible for managing security-related matters on Election Day. The Police Administration reactivated the National Elections Security Task Force to address election security issues in the upcoming general election. The task force, made up of the heads of security agencies and para-security agencies,²⁵ is responsible for planning and providing a conducive atmosphere for ensuring security before, during, and after elections.²⁶

Where are vote counting and tabulation held?

Article 49 (2) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana stipulates that, immediately after the closing of the poll, the presiding officer shall, in the presence of the candidates or their representatives and any polling agents present, count the ballot papers of that station and record the votes cast in favor of each candidate.²⁷ The results from the polling stations are then collated at constituency collation centers.

When will official results be announced?

While not a legal requirement, the Electoral Commission of Ghana traditionally declares official election results within 72 hours after the close of polls.

How will election disputes be adjudicated?

Ghana's judiciary adjudicates election disputes directly, with parliamentary and presidential election petitions typically handled by the High Courts and Supreme Court, respectively. Petitioners must file election disputes within 21 days after the publication of the election results.

²⁵ The Ghana Armed Forces, the comptroller general of the Ghana Immigration Service, Ghana National Fire Service, Ghana Prisons Service, Customs Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority, Ghana Ambulance Service, Electoral Commission, and National Commission for Civic Education.

²⁶ Graphic Online. December 6, 2023. [Police reactivate elections task force.](#)

²⁷ [Constitution of the Republic of Ghana \(1992\).](#)

Although there is no time limit for adjudicating parliamentary election disputes, presidential election disputes are to be resolved within 42 days by the Supreme Court of Ghana.

Resources

- [Electoral Commission of Ghana](#)
- [Electoral Commission of Ghana: Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Electoral Commission of Ghana: Polling Stations](#)
- [Electoral Commission of Ghana: Summary of 2024 Certified Voter Register](#)
- [Electoral Commission of Ghana: Voting](#)
- [Constitution of the Republic of Ghana \(1992\)](#)
- [The Political Parties Act, 2000 \(Act 574\)](#)
- [Public Elections Regulations, 2020](#)

About IFES in Ghana

Since Ghana's transition to democratic rule in 1992, observers have considered it one of Africa's most robust democracies. Despite this, the country has experienced some governance challenges over the past decade, along with falling public trust in the electoral process. Under the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded Political Accountability Activity (POLA), IFES supports Ghanaian civil society and government actors to address important issues of accountability and transparency in the country's political system. Through POLA, IFES is strengthening Ghanaian civil society organizations' knowledge of political finance, anti-corruption, and abuse of state resources to build public demand for stronger measures to control money in politics. IFES also partners with the National Commission for Civic Education to promote civic education on political accountability and civic engagement among Ghanaian youth.

Disclosure

These FAQs reflect decisions made by the Electoral Commission of Ghana as of November 27, 2024, to the best of our knowledge. This document does not represent any International Foundation for Electoral Systems policy or technical recommendations.

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