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Elections in Burkina Faso

2016 Municipal Elections

Frequently Asked Questions

Africa

International Foundation for Electoral Systems

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Frequently Asked Questions

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Disclosure:

These FAQs reflect decisions made by the Burkina Faso election authorities as of May 20, 2016, to the best of our knowledge. This document does not represent any IFES policy or technical recommendations.

Who will citizens be voting for in the municipal elections?

Burkinabe voters will elect Municipal Councilors, who will in turn elect their Mayors and Deputy Mayors. In total, 19,624 seats will be contested in 9,299 electoral districts. There are 72 political parties, one political coalition, and 12 independent organizations running candidates in this election.

When will the vote take place?

The elections are scheduled for Sunday, May 22, 2016. Polls will be open between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Who is eligible to vote?

According to Article 42 of the electoral code, the electorate is made up of all Burkinabes from both sexes who are 18 years or older by the date of the vote, enjoy their civic and political rights, are registered on the voters list and who have not, on any occasion, been made ineligible to vote by law.

Article 43, subparagraph 1 of the electoral code specifies that naturalized foreigners, including those who have received their Burkinabe nationality by marriage, are eligible to vote.

How many registered voters are there?

According to the information provided by the National Independent Electoral Commission, approximately 5.5 million voters are registered, of which 5,539,384 voters will be of age for the municipal elections on May 22, 2016. Article 49 of the electoral code allows voters who do not fulfill the age or residence conditions when voter lists are compiled to register if they will meet the conditions before the voter list is finalized.

What type of election system will be used?

According to Article 239 of the electoral code, Municipal Councilors are elected based on proportional representation using the largest remainder allocation method.

Are there reserved seats for women? What is the gender balance within the candidates lists?

Lists of candidates for the municipal elections that do not include at least 30 percent of people of the other gender lose 50 percent of the public funding set aside for election campaigns. Those who respect the quota benefit from supplementary financing. So, there are financial incentives for the inclusion of female candidates. For the 2016 municipal elections, there are 156,693 candidates, with 98,926 men (63.13%) and 57,767 women (36.86%).

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

The National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) is the election management body in Burkina Faso. For certain activities, they are assisted by the public administration. According to Article 3 of the electoral code, the CENI is responsible for:

- The management and conservation of the national voter roll (for these activities, the CENI receives assistance at its request from the public administration); and
- The organization and supervision of electoral and referendum-related activities.

The CENI is comprised of:

- Provincial Independent Election Commissions;
- Municipal Independent Election Commissions; and
- The Communal District Independent Election Commission for the residents of Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso that are under the jurisdiction of a special statute.

What is a polling station?

Each municipality and town has at least one polling station. Each polling station handles a maximum of 800 voters. According to Article 72 of the electoral code, polling stations must be situated in public places to ensure peaceful elections, and will never be on private property, in a place of worship, market, clinic, or at a military or paramilitary camp. For municipal elections, each polling station has four polling station workers, with a President, two assessors and a Secretary. Election officials are chosen from people who have been judged as capable, are residents in the electoral district, and registered on voter lists for the electoral district. If needed, the National Independent Electoral Commission can call on anyone who is capable and registered on the voter list or not, regardless of residential criteria, to serve as a polling station worker.

According to Article 79 of the electoral code, polling station workers are chosen by Municipal Independent Election Commissions and in the case of the Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso by the Communal District Independent Electoral Commission.

How many polling stations will there be on Election Day?

According to information provided by the National Independent Electoral Commission, there will be 17,938 polling stations.

Is out-of-country voting allowed?

No. According to Article 265 of the electoral code, measures related to out-of-country voting will not enter into effect until after 2016.

How are electoral authorities guaranteeing equal access for persons with disabilities?

According to Article 91 of the electoral code, any voters with disabilities preventing them from casting their vote are authorized to receive assistance from a voter of their choice or from a member of the polling station. Measures are in place to integrate sign language into televised communications by the National Independent Electoral Commission.

Where will the voting, counting, and compiling of results take place?

Voting procedures and vote counting will take place at the polling stations. District Compilation Results Centers (CCCR) will be in charge of compiling results at the municipal level. They will transmit the results to the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) in an electronic format. Candidate delegates and the candidates themselves can assist with the compilation of results in the CCCRs and are invited to sign the results report. The CENI is then charged with validating the results of each municipality.

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

According to Article 147 of the electoral code, observers are admitted into polling stations and District Compilation Results Centers. Applications for accreditation must contain the following:

- A request specifying the area of coverage, addressed to the President of the National Independent Electoral Commission;
- The list of names of people to be accredited with their contact information and two photos; and
- The address of the organization requesting accreditation.

More than 100 Burkinabe civil society organizations have adopted an observation platform called the Convention of Civil Society Organizations for the Domestic Observation of Elections (CODEL). The objectives of CODEL are to harmonize and coordinate election observation strategies of member organizations and coordinate the deployment of national observers (1,000 expected) throughout the country as well as those who will focus on the parallel vote tabulation.

International missions have already announced their intention to deploy observers including the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the European Union.

Will the candidates be represented at the polling stations?

According to Article 77 of the electoral code, each political party, coalition, and independent organization with a candidate has the right to observe election operations from the opening of the polling stations until the announcement and posting of results at these stations. Political parties, coalitions, and candidates from independent organizations who choose to do so can designate a delegate and an alternate for each

polling station, chosen among registered voters on an electoral list from the electoral district. Delegates can enter polling stations freely where they have jurisdiction, proceed with the identification of voters and require the registration of all observations and disputes, which will then be recorded.

Candidate delegates are invited to countersign the observation and dispute report. The refusal of a delegate to countersign does not nullify the reporting process. According to Article 96 of the electoral code, the reasons for a delegate's refusal to sign must be mentioned in the report.

When will the final results be announced?

According to Article 98 of the electoral code, the National Independent Electoral Commission has seven days to announce provisional results.¹ All decisions related to provisional results disputes are received by the State Council within the seven-day period following the announcement of provisional results, per Article 98 of the electoral code.

The State Council will make a decree on appeals and announce the definitive results or cancellation of the election within an eight-day period following the expiration of any extension allowed for resolution of disputes, per Article 262 of the electoral code. In the case of a cancellation, a new vote will be organized within 60 days.

How will election disputes be adjudicated?

For municipal elections, the Administrative Courts are responsible for adjudicating, with the possibility of recourse by the State Council.

¹ If needed, the CENI can ask the Constitutional Council or the Council of State for an extension not to exceed three days.

Resources

- [National Independent Electoral Commission](#) (French)