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Elections in Haiti

2016 Run-off 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 election authorities to the best of our knowledge as of January 22, 2016. This document does not represent any IFES policy or technical recommendations.

Election Postponement

These FAQs were produced prior to the Provisional Electoral Council's (CEP) decision to postpone the run-off elections scheduled for January 24, 2016. The CEP has not issued a new date for the elections. IFES will update these FAQs when a new date has been set.

When is Election Day?

On January 24, Haiti will hold run-off presidential and partial second-round legislative elections. The second-round partial legislative elections will be held in three electoral departments for seats in the Senate and in eight electoral departments for seats in the Chamber of Deputies. These run-off legislative elections will be held in electoral districts where elections were canceled on August 9, 2015, with the first round of voting occurring on October 25, 2015.

Who are citizens voting for on Election Day?

On Election Day, Haitians will elect the President and some Senators to the upper house and Deputies to the lower house of Parliament.

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 5,835,295 registered voters according to the Provisional Electoral Council.

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.

Who are the candidates participating in the run-off elections?

There are two presidential candidates competing in the run-off election: Jovenel Moïse from President Michel Martelly's Haitian Tet Kale Party (PHTK), who received 508,761 votes (32.76%) in the first round, and Jude Célestin¹ of the Alternative League for Haitian Progress and Empowerment (LAPEH), who received 392,782 votes (25.29%).

For the Parliament, there are 12 candidates competing for six Senate seats and 46 candidates competing for 27 seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

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. However, the 30 percent quota has not been applied by political parties for presidential and legislative posts. Although in the legislative and presidential elections, eight percent of the candidates who participated were women, only six women made it to the second round, with one woman competing for a Senate seat and five for seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

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 necessary 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 Act:

¹ As of January 19, Jude Célestin expressed his intent to withdraw from the presidential race. If this occurs, there will be only one presidential candidate, Jovenel Moïse, in the run-off.

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

How many polling places are set up on Election Day?

For the January 24 elections, a total of 1,229 polling centers will be set up across the country, with 13,735 polling stations within these polling centers.

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 tally 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 President in a press conference held on January 12, the preliminary results will be announced on February 1 and if complaints are not registered those results will be considered final. The 2015 electoral calendar stipulated that preliminary results are to be published 10 days after the elections, with final results published 21 days after the polls close.

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 to disturb electoral operations.

Resources

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