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Elections in Uganda

2016 General Elections

Frequently Asked Questions

Africa

International Foundation for Electoral Systems

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Frequently Asked Questions

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When is Election Day?

Ugandans will go to the polls on February 18, 2016 to vote for presidential and parliamentary candidates. The government has declared February 18 a public holiday, to allow registered voters to participate in the forthcoming polls.

Who are citizens voting for on Election Day?

Ugandans will be electing a President¹ as well as [290 Members of Parliament](#) (MPs) who are directly elected to represent the 290 constituencies of Uganda, and 112 woman district MPs, each representing Uganda's 112 districts. The President is elected using a two-round system with one candidate having to receive at least 50 percent of the vote in order to avoid a run-off vote. The Members of Parliament are elected in single-member constituencies through a simple majority system.

Who can vote in the country?

Under Chapter Five of the Constitution of Uganda, every eligible citizen of Uganda 18 years of age or above has a right to vote, and the state and Parliament shall take all steps to make sure that qualified citizens can vote.

To vote, Ugandan citizens also need to be registered. Accordingly, only registered voters will be allowed to vote at the polling station where they are registered, and this shall include persons whose particulars and photographs appear on the National Voters' Register, whether they have a National Identity Card or not, as per Section 34 of the Parliamentary Elections Act of 2005 (as amended).

Even though the constitution provides the right to vote to every eligible Ugandan, prisoners in Uganda do not vote, and this has been the case throughout the country's history. Currently, there are 20,348 detainees across the country and about 24,844 remanded in custody awaiting trial. It is important to note that there is no express or implied law that bars a prisoner from voting, as the law including the Prison Act, is silent on this. However, the Electoral Commission (EC) does not make any special voting provisions for those in prison as a result of sentencing or on remand. Civil society, activists, the Uganda Human Rights Commission and various electoral stakeholders are concerned that prisoner's rights per the constitution are being violated. The EC says the commission is open to having prisoners vote, but that it does not have

¹ Candidates vying for the presidency include: Incumbent President Yoweri Museveni, (National Resistance Movement); Amama Mbabazi, Museveni's former Prime Minister and National Resistance Movement Secretary General, now representing the Go Forward Party; Dr. Kizza Besigye (Forum for Democratic Change); Dr. Abed Bwanika (People's Development Party); Retired General Benon Biraaro (Uganda Farmers Party); Former Chancellor of Makerere University, Prof. Venansius Baryamureeba (independent); Joseph Mabirizi (independent); and former presidential adviser Faith Maureen Kyalya Walube, the only female candidate (independent).

the mandate to make such a call, and therefore the law should be amended to clearly define this issue. The EC also notes that the environment in prisons is unique; for prisoners to participate in voting, special provisions (e.g., setting aside special time slots on Election Day for prisoners to vote) have to be made by the commission.

How many registered voters are there?

A total of [15,277,198 voters are registered in the National Voters' Register](#) to be used in the 2016 general elections. They will be able to cast their votes at 28,010 polling stations distributed across the country. The number of registered voters for the 2016 election has increased from the [13,954,129 voters who were registered for the 2011 elections](#).

What is the composition of the Parliament?

Uganda is a unicameral democracy in which elected representatives vote on legislation and serve five-year terms. The [current ninth Parliament of Uganda](#) is comprised of:

- 238 Constituency Representatives
- 112 District Women Representatives
- 10 Uganda People's Defense Forces Representatives
- Five Representatives of the Youth
- Five Representatives of Persons with Disabilities
- Five Representatives of Workers
- 13 Ex-officio Members

Parliament is presided over by a Speaker, and in his absence, it is presided over by the Deputy Speaker. Both the Speaker and Deputy Speaker are elected by Members of Parliament.

What is the election management body? How is it structured?

Article 60 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda establishes the Electoral Commission (EC) of Uganda as the independent governing body that is mandated to organize, conduct and supervise elections and referenda in accordance with provisions of the constitution. The commission also compiles, maintains, revises and updates the National Voter's Register and the registers for special interest groups; produces and issues voter ID cards; develops voter education programs; performs demarcation of constituencies and electoral areas; is in charge of election complaints arising before and during polling; and performs other election-related functions as may be prescribed by Parliament and by law.² The EC currently consists of the Chairperson, a Deputy Chairperson and four other Commissioners appointed by

² Per Article 60 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.

the President with the approval of Parliament. The members of the Commission hold office for seven years, and can only be renewed for one additional term.

The EC has a secretariat that is headed by the Secretary who has a five-year term that is renewable, and is assisted by three Directors responsible for Operations, Finance and Administration, and Technical Support Services. The Secretary manages the day-to-day activities of the EC, [as well as coordinates the activities of the three Directorates](#).

How many polling places are set up on Election Day?

Those identified in the National Voters' Register will be allowed to cast their votes at [28,010 polling stations distributed across the country](#). This number has slightly increased from 23,968 polling stations set up for the 2011 elections.

For these elections, the Electoral Commission (EC) has introduced [voter location slips \(VLS\)](#) that indicate to voters where their polling station is. The VLS is a response by the EC to complaints raised in the past elections, where some voters reported difficulty in locating their polling stations.

The VLS bears the voter's photo, ID number, names, date of birth, and location (that is, the district, constituency, sub-county, parish and polling station). It also has a barcode that will be read by the biometric voter verification device and will be issued at every parish by the parish supervisor who is an employee of the Electoral Commission. The VLS is free of charge and can only be picked by voters in person.

Who manages the polling station?

Each polling station is managed by polling officials appointed by the Returning Officer. The officials are the Presiding Officer, Polling Assistants, Election Constables and Orderly Officers. Each polling station will have four Polling Assistants, with one Polling Assistant in charge of biometric equipment. The number of Orderly Officers is dependent on number of polling stations.

A total of [140,050 personnel](#) will be recruited to staff the polling stations.

Will Ugandans in the diaspora be allowed to vote?

Although Article 59 of the constitution provides for every eligible and registered Ugandan citizen of 18 years of age or above the right to vote, and further imposes a duty on the state to take all necessary steps to ensure the exercise of the right to vote, the legal framework to support out-of-country-voting is not yet in place. Therefore, Ugandans in the diaspora cannot vote in the upcoming February 2016 elections if they did not come home during the stipulated period for [registration in the National Voters' Register](#), and [no special provision has been made by the government](#) to include their vote in these elections.

How will voters with disabilities or other special interest groups cast their ballots?

Uganda is signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which protects the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, and commits the Government of Uganda to guarantee political rights and the opportunity to enjoy those rights on an equal basis to all people with disabilities in the country. Additionally, the Constitution of Uganda mandates the Parliament to enact laws that ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities are protected. For voters with disabilities such as blindness or any other disability that may hinder one from physically voting, or in case of illiteracy, old age or any other disability, the voter should report to the polling station accompanied by a person of his or her choice for assistance, or request any other person at the polling station for the same purpose. A Presiding Officer has the authority to deny this request if the person with disability has not met the above criteria.³ Article 29 of the CRPD also calls for voting procedures, facilities and materials that are appropriate, accessible and easy to understand for persons with disabilities. Unfortunately, and as is the case with many structures in Uganda including government buildings and institutions, hospitals and schools, many polling stations are not physically accessible, and no provisions have been made to remedy the situation for the upcoming 2016 elections.

In August 2014, the Electoral Commission (EC) noted that they were working on printing braille ballot papers for voters with visual disabilities to be used for the 2016 elections. It would be the first time a braille system would be applied in the country's elections. However, at the time of this writing, there was no indication that the EC had followed through on this.

What technology will be used?

For the first time in the country's history, the Electoral Commission (EC) of Uganda will use biometric voter verification equipment during the 2016 election. The Biometric Voter Verification System (BVVS) is one of the new measures aimed at improving the management and conduct of elections in Uganda through authentication of voter identity. The system uses fingerprints to match voter details, which will help the polling agents confirm that a voter is on the voters' roll of that polling station. The system will enable the EC to ensure that only registered persons vote during the elections and that voters do not vote more than once for the same election. The system will also assist the voter to locate his/her polling station within the district.

In order to expedite the process of identification, the EC will distribute [voter location slips \(VLS\)](#) that have all particulars of the voter, including the polling station and a photo of the voter. In addition, each slip will have a barcode that is unique for each voter. This barcode will be scanned by the BVVS equipment and instantly display a voters' details.

³ Per Section 37 of the Parliamentary Election Act of 2005 and Section 38 of the Presidential Election Act of 2005.

The commission has acquired [32,334 machines to cater to the 28,010 polling stations in Uganda](#), with a plan to [deploy at least two machines](#) at each of the approximately 1,400 sub-counties. Every polling station will have a [biometric verification machine along with trained Enrollment Officers](#). The country initially used biometric technology during the national identification registration process, which started in late 2014, and later fed into the voter registration exercise through which the voter's roll was compiled.

Further uses of technology during the 2016 election cycle are the EC's planned use of the Electronic Results Transmission and Dissemination System to transmit results from districts to the National Tally Center.

Additionally, the EC, with IFES assistance, has set up an [online web-based voter register](#) where voters can check their polling station information. Furthermore, voters can also send an SMS to 8228 to locate their polling station data.

Will the Election Commission use a media center? What social media outlets does the Election Commission use to reach out to the media and Ugandan citizens?

The Electoral Commission (EC) will not be setting up a specific media center for the elections. All EC communication is released directly on the EC's website under its media section, and the commission also uses national media sources to publish its decisions regarding election-related matters. Additionally, the EC currently uses [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) to connect with citizens, particularly younger, more tech-savvy youth.

Where will voting, counting and tabulation be held?

The counting of votes takes place at the polling station after the close of polls. Once polls close, the Presiding Officer at the polling station opens the ballot box in full view of all those present including the representatives of respective political parties, and with help from Polling Assistants, starts to count the votes. Both the constitution and Presidential Elections Act of 2005 note that after the vote counting is completed, the Presiding Officer fills and signs the declaration results forms, which are then countersigned by the present respective political party representatives at the polling station, and then declares the results of the voting at that specific polling station.

According to Section 51 of the Presidential Elections Act, each presiding officer shall file the necessary number of copies of the prescribed form for the declaration of results as follows:

- One copy of the completed form shall remain attached to the report book;
- One copy shall be retained by the Presiding Officer for display at the polling station;

- One copy shall be enclosed in an envelope supplied by the commission, sealed by the Presiding Officer and delivered to the nearest result collection center prescribed by the Returning Officer, together with the report book, for transmission to the returning officer;
- One copy shall be delivered to each of the candidates' agents or, in the absence of those agents, be retained by the Presiding Officer who shall transmit it to the Returning Officer; and
- One copy shall be deposited and sealed in the ballot box.

Once results counting is done at the polling station level, the Presiding Officer transmits and hands over the sealed ballot box containing (a) one duly signed declaration of results form; (b) the ballot papers received by each candidate, tied in separate bundles; (c) the invalid ballot papers, tied in one bundle; (d) the spoiled ballot papers, tied in one bundle; (e) the unused ballot papers; and (f) the voters' roll used at the polling station. The Returning Officer receives all the results from the individual Presiding Officers overseeing each polling station in an area, and in the presence of party representatives at the district level starts to tally the results by opening the envelopes containing the Declaration of Results forms, and adding up the number of votes cast for each candidate. At the completion of tallying, the Returning Officer then communicates the district level results to the Electoral Commission.

The Electoral Commission (EC) has procured the Electronic Results Transmission and Dissemination System that will be used to transmit the results from the District Tally Centers to the National Tally Center. Once results coming from the polling stations are entered into the computers at the district level, they will then be printed and party agents will receive a copy of the entered result. The District Tally Center will then electronically transmit results to the National Tally Center, where the results will be automatically tallied. At the National Tally Center, the EC will display the results through projectors for all present, to ensure transparency of the process. In addition, the EC will display polling station results on their web page to enable Ugandans to have access to results by polling station.

At the close of tallying, and once all results have been received, it is the responsibility of the EC to announce the final result. The commission has 48 hours after the close of polls to make this announcement.

On what basis are ballots rejected?

Ballots are rejected based on the following basis:

- a) The choice of the voter is not clear;
- b) The ballot is without an authorized mark of choice; or
- c) The ballot is marked in favor of a party/candidate who did not contest in the election.

Who will be/can observe during Election Day? How can they get accreditation?

The Electoral Commission (EC) will allow contesting political parties, media and monitoring organizations, and successfully nominated independent candidates, to submit names of their agents for accreditation as observers. Political parties and nominated independent candidates will be permitted to deploy not more than five observers per sub-county. These accredited observers will be required to limit their activity to the designated areas (sub-county), and police will be notified to enforce this regulation.

The accreditation of international observers will be processed through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while that of local observers will be handled at the respective district levels with district vetting committees comprised of EC officials, Ministry of Internal Affairs officers, and some internal security officials. However, accreditation for the districts of Kampala, Mukono and Wakiso districts will be handled directly by the EC. International observation will include teams from the European Union (short- and long-term observers), the East African Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and Intergovernmental Authority on Development, among others. A local observer group, Citizens' Election Observers Network-Uganda (CEON-U) is a network comprised of 18 civil society organizations. At the time of this writing, the EC had yet to release the full list of accredited observers for the 2016 election. A total of [706 international and 1,232 local observers were accredited for the 2011 elections](#).

When will official results be announced?

According to part VII, Section 57 of Uganda's Presidential Elections Act of 2005, the Electoral Commission (EC) is required to ascertain, publish and declare the results of the presidential election 48 hours after the close of polling. However for parliamentary results, the Parliamentary Elections Act of 2005 notes that the EC will announce parliamentary results as soon as practicably possible after the election, and does not mandate a specific timeframe as is the case with the presidential results. Per the recent 2015 amendment to both the Presidential and Parliamentary Acts, polling will now close at 4:00 p.m. as opposed to the original 5:00 p.m.

How will election disputes be adjudicated?

Several legal instruments such as the 1995 Constitution of Uganda, the Presidential Elections Act of 2005, the Electoral Commission Act of 1997 and the Parliamentary Elections Act of 2005, provide avenues through which election disputes should be handled. For example, Article 61(f) of the constitution empowers the Electoral Commission (EC) to hear and determine election complaints arising before and during elections. The Electoral Commission Act further gives the commission the authority to examine any election-related complaints and decide on a course of action. The EC is to take necessary action to correct irregularity once such is confirmed. In the event that a complainant does not agree with the EC's decision, they can appeal to the High Court in the form of a petition, supported by affidavits of evidence specifying the declaration that the High Court is being requested to make.

As was the case during the 2011 elections, the EC has set up Complaints Desks at both the headquarters and district level, with EC complaints officers responsible for receiving, coordinating and resolving queries and issues relating to the election. For challenges regarding presidential results, the Presidential Elections Act provides for aggrieved candidates that do not accept the election results to file a petition with the Supreme Court within 10 days of the announcement of results, and the court shall declare its findings within 30 days after the petition is filed.⁴ In addition, parliamentary results can be challenged 30 days after the EC has released them, and the court has six months to make a decision. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the land, and its decisions on election related matters are final.⁵

Although all the legal instruments are in place to resolve election complaints, both the EC and courts have in the past been accused of being partial, biased and not transparent. They have also been criticized for dragging out the cases and not being clear in their judgement. For instance during the 2006 election, opposition candidate Dr. Kizza Besigye filed a petition with the Supreme Court to overturn the election results on grounds of malpractice and non-conformity to electoral laws. The court agreed in its ruling that there was non-compliance to the electoral laws; however, they also disagreed on whether the non-compliance and malpractice were substantial enough to affect the results.

How will Election Day security be ensured?

The Uganda Police are in charge of providing security during the electoral process. Political parties and organizations, and aspiring independent candidates, cannot form any parallel groups such as youth brigades, vigilantes or militias, as this is illegal. Unfortunately, even though these groups are illegal, there has been a lot of discussion both in the media and Parliament about their existence in the run up to the February 2016 elections. The Electoral Commission issued a statement to this effect, noting its concern over political leaders supporting the formation of such parallel security groups, with claims that the intention of such is to safeguard their political interests during the electoral process. Uganda police are at the forefront of public criticism for [training up to 1.5 million mainly male youth civilians](#) that are being referred to as “crime preventers” to support local law enforcement at polling stations. However, the general public has accused the crime preventers of being at the center of election-related violence, and worry that this could discourage voters from turning up to vote in anticipation of violence at polling stations.

How will citizens learn about candidates' positions?

Campaigns for the presidential elections kicked off on November 9, 2015 and will last until 48 hours (February 16) before polls begin on February 18, 2016. It is important to note that the Electoral Commission (EC) and the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) are the two bodies responsible for formulating and implementing civic education programs. UHRC, however, has noted that due to lack of

⁴ Per Article 104 of the Constitution of Uganda Constitution (1995).

⁵ Per Article 64 of the Constitution of Uganda Constitution (1995).

funding from the government in this area, the organization has not been able to carry out its mandate effectively. In addition to civic education, the EC is charged with carrying out voter education. Several electoral stakeholders especially civil society organizations such as the Citizens' Election Observers Network-Uganda, an association of 18 civil society organizations responsible for conducting a unified and comprehensive domestic election observation mission for the general election, have [criticized the EC for abandoning critical voter education](#) ahead of the February 2016 polls. In October 2015, civil society organizations under an umbrella coalition called the Uganda Project Implementation and Management Centre (UPIMAC) launched the ["Make Your Vote Count" campaign](#) with support from the EC to create election awareness.

Were there presidential debates for this election?

On January 15, Uganda held its first ever presidential debate, which is one of two scheduled to be held by February 13. The debate was broadcast live and organized by the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU), the Elders Forum Uganda (TEFU), and the National Consultative Forum of Uganda, with funding from the United Nations Development Programme. Of the eight presidential candidates, seven participated in the debate that was listened to and watched by millions of Ugandans. During the first debate, one of the three main contenders, incumbent President Museveni, did not participate despite indications to the contrary ahead of the debate. A [second debate](#) is scheduled to take place on February 13.

Why are Uganda's 2016 general elections important?

The 2016 elections will mark the 30-year rule of President Museveni, who is expected to be elected for another five-year term, even as opposition against him grows, and internal woes within his political party, the National Resistance Movement (NRM), begin to show. The divisions within NRM are even more apparent with the recent split of its top leadership (e.g., current presidential aspirant Amama Mbabazi who was the party's former Secretary General and Prime Minister in Museveni's government is running for President as a candidate for the Go Forward movement). Following the 2011 elections, Dr. Kizza Besigye, one of the main opposition leaders, led anti-government protests and accused Museveni's administration of corruption, ballot rigging and voter intimidation.

The opposition, civil society and other electoral stakeholders called for electoral reforms that were tabled in Parliament, with only a few passed, even though the government had over two years to implement most of these reforms. Part of the reforms call for the disbandment of the Electoral Commission and revision of how Commissioners are appointed. Under Article 60(1) of Uganda's constitution, the Electoral Commission (EC) leadership is appointed by the President, with approval from Parliament. The identification and selection process of proposed EC Commissioners is not clear, and the opinion of stakeholders is not sought. Due to this, many have claimed that there is no room for the EC to safeguard itself from the influence of the President and his party. That noted, the February 2016 polls provide an opportunity for institutions such as the EC to act independently, transparently and more inclusively.

What are Uganda's treaty obligations related to holding democratic elections?

The international and regional conventions relevant to the Uganda's electoral process are the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which guarantees basic civil and political rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), which commits states to end racial discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which outlines a bill of rights for women; the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which protects the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, and commits Uganda to guarantee political rights to all people with disabilities in the country; the Treaty of the East African Community; and the 2002 African Union Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa. Uganda has also [signed but not yet ratified](#) the African Charter on Democracy Elections and Governance (ACDEG).

What is the legal framework for elections?

Election standards in Uganda are governed by the 1995 constitution, the Presidential Elections Act of 2005 (amended), the Political Parties and Organizations Act of 2005 (Political Parties Act), the Parliamentary Elections Act of 2005 (amended), and the Electoral Commission Act of 1997.

The Presidential Elections Act provides further specifications for presidential elections, including the qualifications for candidates and the manner of establishing equivalent qualifications. It also provides procedural standards for nomination, campaigning, polling, counting and tallying votes, declaring results of a presidential election and challenging the declared results. The Political Parties Act provides rules for party leadership, elections, party funding, and a Code of Conduct for political parties. It also provides a basis to enhance transparency and accountability in relation to the financing of political parties.

What type of electoral system will be used?

Uganda has a multi-party system and follows first-past-the-post voting.

How does a presidential candidate win?

In order to win in the first round, a candidate must secure more than 50 percent (50% plus one) of the valid votes cast. If no candidate obtains more than 50 percent, a run-off election shall be held within 30 days. The two candidates who obtain the highest number of votes shall be the only candidates in the run-off vote. The candidate who obtains the highest number of votes in the second round shall be declared winner.

How many electoral constituencies have been established?

In August 2015, the Parliament approved the creation of 43 new constituencies, which means that the number of legislators will increase from the current 375 in the present Parliament, to 418 Members of Parliament (MPs) in the next Parliament. MPs had originally proposed 65 new counties, [but 43 were approved](#).

How was the voter register compiled?

Under the Electoral Commission Act of 1999, the Electoral Commission (EC) compiles, maintains and updates, on a continuing basis, the National Voters' Register. The register includes the names of all persons entitled to vote in any national or local government election. The EC also maintains a voters' roll for each constituency that is used at each polling station within the constituency as prescribed by law. The voters' roll for every constituency is also open for inspection by the public, free of charge, at the office of the Returning Officer. It is also available at the sub-county headquarters and at each polling station within the constituency.

For the compilation of the current National Voters' Register, data collected during the national registration process conducted in 2014 was used after the government pushed for the Registration of Persons Act of 2015. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 16.4 million Ugandans registered. Of that number, the EC extracted 15.3 million names and compiled the new voter register, as not all those who registered for the national ID had reached the required minimum 18 years to vote by May 2015, the voter update deadline. A report in March 2015 by the Uganda Human Rights Commission indicated that the national ID registration exercise had faced a number of challenges prior to the registration process – such as insufficient civic and voter education for persons with disabilities⁶ – that could [negatively impact the voters' register](#) and possibly affect some voters' participation in the 2016 elections.

The Electoral Commission further updated the National Voters' Register in April 2015, which included fresh registration of Ugandan citizens of 18 years and above who had not registered during the exercise conducted for the national ID, or who had not yet registered as eligible voters. The [update was also open to voters](#) who wanted to update their information (e.g., transfer of particulars to new voting locations). This exercise was further followed by the National Voters' Register display period from July 22 through August 11, 2015. The [display of the voters roll](#) was to give a chance to citizens to cross check their voter details and inform the EC of any deceased persons that may still be on the register.

Can a voter who has not actively registered cast his/her ballot?

A citizen must be registered to be able to vote.

⁶ Uganda Human Rights Commission, "Report on the 2011 Uganda Elections," p.27.

How were polling stations allocated to voters?

Voters are registered under the National Voters' Register in their respective constituency and the Electoral Commission maintains, as part of the voters roll for each constituency, a voters roll for each polling station within the constituency as prescribed by law.⁷

What are the rules on campaigning?

Campaigns for presidential elections kicked off on November 9, 2015 and will last until February 16, 2016. The general rules of campaigning for presidential⁸ and parliamentary Elections⁹ are:

- Each candidate gives his or her campaign program to the Returning Officer and the Returning Officer ensures that campaign events do not coincide within the parishes
- The campaign period does not begin until the end of the nomination period
- Campaign meetings are not held 24 hours before polling day
- Candidates can use the local language of the area to conduct the campaign meeting
- The Electoral Commission ensures that adequate security is provided at campaign meetings
- Every candidate has the right to conduct his or her campaign freely and in accordance with the law

What rules should the media follow in reporting?

In reporting, [the media should](#):

- Refrain from biased reporting, exaggeration or false declarations or providing wrong information; and
- Be balanced in its coverage of the electoral process and not give undue advantage to any political party or candidate.

What are the rules for campaign finance?

According to the Political Parties Act of 2010, the government should provide funding to political parties to support their day-to-day activities, and for the purposes of elections. Section 22(2) of the Presidential Elections Act of 2005 also notes that the Electoral Commission (EC) is to provide contributions to candidates solely for use during the election, although this provision was [recently removed in September 2015](#) with amendments to the act. The above mentioned legal framework also prohibits candidates from receiving foreign funding or from any individuals who have tried to overthrow the government of Uganda.

⁷ Per Section 18 of the Electoral Commission Act of 1999.

⁸ Per Section 5 of the Presidential Elections Act of 2005.

⁹ Per Section 7 of the Parliamentary Elections Act of 2005.

Furthermore, it requires political parties to maintain an accurate record of all contributions and contributors, as well as submit audited accounts to the EC no later than six months following the close of the party's financial year.

Even though there have been laws in place to provide some guidance on campaign financing, these laws are considered lacking and do not meet international standards on campaign financing. Furthermore there have been calls for electoral reform on this issue, but these have fallen on deaf ears. The laws also lack tight restrictions on political party spending to solicit voters – for example, there are no direct provisions made to disclose individual candidate's campaign income – but [greater focus is put on routine financing of political parties](#). Each candidate, particularly those in the ruling National Resistance Movement, has spent an average of 200 million UGX (or approximately \$61,422 USD) on internal party elections [according to media reports](#), and the current election is set to be one of the most expensive in Uganda's history.

What are the main duties of polling agents?

Polling agents are appointed by candidates or political parties to witness proceedings at the polling station on behalf of their respective political parties, and their main duty is to observe the election and protect the interest of their parties by indicating any discrepancies in the electoral process.

Polling agents should be present on Election Day, from the time electoral materials are distributed, during the start of polling until the end, to when ballots are counted and results are announced. Polling agents should sign the declaration of results forms and keep copies.

What time do polling stations open and close on February 18? What are the steps for voting?

[Voting starts at 7 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m.](#), unless you were in the voting line before that time. Before voting starts, the empty ballot box is opened, shown to those present at the polling station and then sealed to ensure the protection of the ballot paper.

The procedures for voting are as follows:

- Polling agents at the station witness the process of opening the poll;
- The Polling Official, using biometric equipment, identifies and captures fingerprints of the voter, and marks the name in the register indicating that the voter has been issued with a ballot paper;
- The voter then proceeds to a voting basin to tick or thumbprint the ballot and places the ballot in the ballot box; and
- The voter is then marked with indelible ink.

Resources

- [Constitution of Uganda, 1995](#)
- [Electoral Commission Act, 1997](#)
- [Electoral Commission of Uganda](#)
- [Presidential Elections Act, 2005](#)
- [Parliamentary Elections Act, 2005](#)