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# **Elections in Guinea**

## *September 24 Legislative 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 Guinean election authorities, to the best of our knowledge as of September 17, 2013. This document does not represent any IFES policy or technical recommendations.*

## Who are citizens voting for on Election Day?

On September 24, citizens will cast ballots in a legislative election for a new National Assembly. The National Assembly is composed of 114 *députés* (parliamentarians) elected to serve five-year terms.

Guinea uses a mixed electoral system with 38 *députés* elected from single-member districts using a first-past-the-post system. The other 76 *députés* are selected through a party list proportional representation system.

Elections were scheduled to take place in 2007, but the term of the National Assembly was increased due to delays caused by a general strike and interruptions in establishing the Independent National Electoral Commission. The election was subsequently postponed following a military coup d'état led by Captain Moussa Dadis Camara after the death of President Lansana Conté, which dissolved the National Assembly in 2008.

In February 2010, the transitional government appointed a 155-member National Transition Council that has since acted in its place. Originally set to take place six months after the transitional presidential elections at the end of 2010, legislative elections have been delayed numerous times due to a lack of consensus over the voter roll and composition of the election management body.

In July 2013, the international community brokered a compromise between the government and the opposition, paving the way for elections to occur and for Guinea to return to constitutional order.

## Who can vote?

Citizens 18 and over who are registered and hold a biometric voter card may vote. There are 5,094,644 voters registered in Guinea.

## What is the structure of the government?

Guinea is a secular republic based on the separation of three branches of government: the executive, the legislature and the judiciary. An elected President serves as head of the executive branch with the power to appoint a Prime Minister as head of government. The current government is composed of 35 Cabinet ministers, five of whom are women.

Guinea has a unicameral National Assembly, with the last legislative elections held in 2002.

Current members of the government are mainly from the ruling party, *Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée Arc-en-Ciel* (Rally of the People of Guinea Arc-en-Ciel), and other allies.

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

For the proportional representation component of the election, the legal framework (Article 129 of the Electoral Law) states that at least 30 percent of candidates on party lists must be women. Of the 22 parties competing in the upcoming legislative elections, only 10 have met this quota; women candidates make up between 23 percent and 29 percent of the other 12 party lists. The law does not provide for sanctions or penalties in cases of non-compliance.

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

The Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) is responsible for the organization of all elections and referendum in Guinea. It is composed of 25 members; 10 from the ruling party (and allies), 10 from the opposition parties; three from civil society; and two from the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization. It is chaired by a civil society representative.

The CENI is responsible for voter registration; organizing and overseeing elections; and declaring provisional election results.

## **How is the polling station set up on Election Day?**

A polling station is the place where a voter casts his or her ballot. In Guinea, five poll workers are present in each station. Two of these poll workers represent political parties. Further, each political party is allowed to have a delegate in the polling place. Observers are also granted access.

Polling stations are set up in accessible, public venues. Each station serves approximately 500 voters. There will be a total 11,998 polling places set up on Election Day.

## **Is out-of-country voting allowed?**

Out-of-country voting has been a contentious issue in the run-up to the current legislative elections. An outcome of recent political dialogue was to permit out-of-country voting. For the upcoming election, the Independent National Electoral Commission has established 163 polling places in 17 countries where Guinea has diplomatic missions.

The latest voter registration exercise did not take place outside Guinea, so only the same 127,767 voters who registered in 2010 will be able to vote. Further, out-of-country voters may only participate in the proportional representation tier of the election.

## **How will voters with disabilities cast their ballots?**

The election law allows for voters with disabilities to be assisted by an individual of their choice, provided that person is registered in the same polling place.

## **Will the election management body use a media center?**

The Independent National Electoral Commission has not set up its own media center. Instead, URTEL-GUI, an association of radio broadcasters, will set up a media center at the Conakry Press Center.

## **Where are voting, counting and tabulation held?**

When voting ends at 6:00 p.m. on Election Day, votes will be counted at the polling station level. Hard copy results will then be transmitted to the Administrative Commissions for the Centralization of Votes located in each of the 38 prefectures for the first phase of tabulation.

A hard copy of tabulated results will then be sent from the prefecture to the centralization center at the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) headquarters in Conakry for final tabulation. The CENI will also allocate seats for the proportional representation tier of the legislative elections.

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

Over 2,000 local civil society observers will be deployed to observe the election, of which 980 are long-term observers.

The African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Mano River Union, the European Union and local Embassy and Consulate staff will also be sending international observers. The Independent National Electoral Commission's Training and Accreditation Department is responsible for accrediting observers.

## **When will official results be announced?**

The law requires the Independent National Electoral Commission to announce provisional results within 72 hours of the close of polling stations (i.e. September 27). If no political party files an election complaint, the Supreme Court will declare final results on the eighth day following the announcement of provisional results.

## **How will election disputes be adjudicated?**

Political parties have five days to present complaints to the Constitutional Court. If a complaint is filed, the Constitutional Court allows three days for other parties to respond to the complaint. After the three-day period has expired, the Constitutional Court must make a ruling 10 days from the filing date of the complaint. The Court will then either announce final results or annul the election.

## Resources

- [Independent National Electoral Commission Website](#)