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Elections in Tunisia

2019 Parliamentary Elections

Frequently Asked Questions

Middle East and North Africa

International Foundation for Electoral Systems

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September 27, 2019

Frequently Asked Questions

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Disclosure:

These FAQs reflect decisions made by the Tunisian elections authorities as of September 26, 2019, to the best of our knowledge. This document does not represent any IFES policy or technical recommendations.

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When is Election Day?

Elections to the Assembly of the Representatives of the People will take place on Sunday, October 6, 2019. Tunisians residing abroad will vote on October 4, 5 and 6 in embassies and consulates.

Who are citizens voting for on Election Day?

Tunisian citizens will elect a new Parliament to replace the assembly elected on October 26, 2014, whose five-year mandate will expire at the beginning of December 2019. The Assembly of the Representatives of the People (ARP) is a unicameral Parliament composed of 217 deputies, 18 of whom are elected from six constituencies abroad.

According to Article 57 of the Constitution, the first session of the legislature of the ARP shall begin within a maximum period of 15 days from the announcement of the final results of the elections, upon convocation by the outgoing president of the ARP.

Within one week after the announcement of the final parliamentary election results, the President of the Republic shall ask the head of the winning political party or coalition to form the government. The head of the political party or coalition that wins the largest number of seats in the ARP will have to form a government within one month, with the possibility to extend this deadline once (Article 89 of the Constitution).

What electoral system will be used to elect the assembly?

The 217 deputies of the Assembly of the Representatives of the People will be elected on a regional, closed-list proportional representation system with the largest remainder method.¹ Because candidate lists are closed, voters are not allowed to express a preference and change the order of candidates on the lists. There is no legal threshold to obtain seats in Parliament.

The boundaries of electoral districts are delineated the same way as for the 2011 election of the National Constituent Assembly and the 2014 legislative elections. There are 33 electoral constituencies – 27 districts in Tunisia and six abroad. Domestically, the electoral division largely corresponds to regional administrative divisions: each governorate comprises one electoral district, except for the three most populous governorates of Tunis, Nabeul and Sfax, which comprise two electoral districts each. Voting will take place in 45 countries divided in six out-of-country constituencies including two in France, one in Italy, one in Germany, one that includes the Americas and the rest of Europe, and one for the Arab world and the rest of the world.

¹ Seats are allocated to the candidate lists that obtain the electoral quotient that is calculated by dividing the number of valid votes by the number of seats allocated in the constituency. Blank votes are not included in the quotient calculation. Lists receive the number of seats equivalent to the number of times they reach the electoral quotient. Remaining seats will be allocated to lists with the largest number of remaining votes after the first allocation of seats based on the electoral quotient. There is no electoral threshold to obtain seats.

What is the legal framework applicable to the parliamentary elections?

The rules governing the election of the Assembly of the Representatives of the People (ARP) are mainly based on the Constitution (Articles 53 and 55), the Electoral Law and regulatory decisions.

The main legislative text applicable to the parliamentary elections is Organic Law No. 2014-16 of May 26, 2014, on elections and referendums, as amended and supplemented by Organic Law No. 2017-7 of February 14, 2017 and the Organic Law No. 2019-76 of August 30, 2019 (the "Electoral Law"). The second important piece of legislation on elections is Organic Law No. 2012-23 of December 20, 2012, on the High Independent Authority for Elections (ISIE), as amended and supplemented by Organic Laws Nos. 2013-44 and 2013-52.

In addition to the legislative texts, these elections are governed by regulatory decisions adopted and published by the ISIE. These decisions² supplement and detail the provisions of the Electoral Law. In addition to these regulations, the head of government adopts a decree setting the ceilings for the financing of parliamentary election campaigns, its procedures and conditions.

What is the election management body that will organize the elections?

The management of elections is entrusted to the High Independent Authority for Elections (ISIE), a permanent public institution independent of the executive power. This body was created by Organic Law No. 2012-23 of December 20, 2012, and was established as an independent constitutional body in the 2014 Constitution (Article 126). The ISIE is responsible for the organization and supervision of regular, genuine and transparent national elections (presidential and parliamentary), local elections (municipal and regional) and referendums.

The ISIE consists of a decision-making body, the Board of Commissioners (BoC), and an executive branch, the Executive Secretariat. The BoC is made up of nine members, including the president, who are elected by the ARP by a two-thirds majority for a nonrenewable six-year term. ISIE members must be independent, neutral and have proven experience in their respective professional fields. The BoC adopts all necessary regulations to implement election legislation and takes all appropriate measures to carry out its mandate. The Executive Secretariat is composed of several departments responsible for administrative, financial and technical affairs. It is headed by an executive director appointed by the ISIE BoC.

The ISIE has 27 permanent regional administrations reporting to the Executive Secretariat and headed by regional directors. In addition to regional administrations, the ISIE BoC may, on the occasion of each election, create regional election bodies, commonly called IRIEs. There are 33 regional bodies – 27 based in Tunisia and six based abroad – reporting directly to the ISIE BoC. Their members, whose number may not exceed four, are appointed by the BoC and must meet the conditions of independence, neutrality

² All these regulations are available on the official ISIE website at the following address:
<http://www.isie.tn/elections/elections-municipales-2018/cadre-juridique>.

and competence. IRIEs are temporary bodies with no powers of their own; they shall perform the functions expressly delegated to them by the ISIE BoC.³

In the context of the parliamentary elections, IRIEs and regional administrations have no role to play in the reception and validation of candidacies. However, they do have an important role in controlling the conduct of the election campaign and its financing, as well as in organizing voting and counting operations and the tabulation of results.

Who is eligible to vote in the parliamentary elections?

According to the Electoral Law, a voter must have Tunisian nationality, be at least 18 years old on Election Day, and be registered on the voter list with an address of effective residence.⁴ The Electoral Law provides for two cases when a citizen cannot vote, which must be confirmed in each case by a court decision. This includes:

- Persons sentenced to a criminal penalty expressly prohibiting them from voting as a complementary penalty; and
- Persons placed under legal guardianship for continuous dementia.

Unlike the 2018 municipal elections, the Electoral Law does not allow military and national security forces to vote in parliamentary elections. Voters eligible to vote in these elections are those registered on the final voter list published by the High Independent Authority for Elections on July 19, 2019.

When and how did voter registration take place?

Pursuant to its Decision No. 2017-6 of April 11, 2017, on voter registration, the High Independent Authority for Elections (ISIE) started the permanent voter registration procedure on September 22, 2018.

In the run-up to the 2019 parliamentary elections, the ISIE launched a registration drive on April 10, 2019, resulting in the registration of nearly 1,500,000 new voters. Two-thirds of new registrants are under 35 years of age and 54 percent are women. Registration for the parliamentary elections closed on June 15, 2019, two months before the start of the nomination period. The ISIE published the preliminary lists on June 23, 24 and 25; following adjudication of disputes, the final lists were released on July 19.

Voters on the electoral register since 2014 for the legislative and presidential elections or 2018 for the municipal elections were not required to re-register, unless they wanted to change their electoral constituency or place of voting. Since registration is voluntary, any person wishing to register was

³ See ISIE Decision, No. 2017-5 of April 11, 2017, on the conditions and procedures for the creation of regional electoral bodies and setting out their prerogatives and operating procedures.

⁴ Voters must provide proof of their effective address of residence, which may include:

- The address indicated on the voter's national ID card;
- The voter's habitual residence, if different from the ID card;
- The address of the voter's business or company; or
- The address where the voter pays property local tax.

required to contact one of the registration offices – fixed or mobile – and present proof of their address of effective residence, age and nationality. Registration is in principle personal, but the Electoral Law allows the registration of spouses, children, parents and grandparents by proxy. Tunisians residing abroad and wishing to vote in the parliamentary elections had the opportunity to apply for registration via a dedicated web platform. The ISIE checked the lists of previously registered voters to ensure that deceased citizens and those who are not eligible to vote in national elections – military and internal security forces – are no longer on the final voter lists for the 2019 parliamentary and presidential elections.

How many registered voters are there?

According to official figures announced by the High Independent Authority for Elections, the total number of registered voters eligible to vote in the parliamentary elections is 7,065,885, including 6,680,339 registered in Tunisia and 385,546 registered abroad. Forty-nine percent are women and approximately one-third are under 35 years of age. These numbers are slightly different from the number of registered voters eligible to vote in the early presidential election that took place on September 15, 2019, which included 7,074,575 voters (6,688,512 registered in Tunisia and 386,063 registered abroad). The number of voters registered for the 2019 national elections marks a considerable increase compared to the 5,369,843 registered voters for the 2018 municipal elections and the 5,306,324 registered voters for the 2014 presidential and legislative elections.

What are the requirements for parliamentary candidates?

The law allows for the formation of partisan lists, electoral coalition lists and independent lists. The lists must meet certain requirements related to the lists themselves and their members.

Each candidate list must meet the following requirements:

- Each list must consist of a primary list and a secondary list used to replace candidates disqualified from the primary list during the candidate nomination process.
- The number of candidates must be equal to the number of seats to be filled, plus a minimum of two additional candidates on the secondary list.
- The list must respect the principle of vertical parity, alternating between male and female candidates, resulting in a list with an equal number of female and male candidates.
- One of the first four candidates on the list must be 35 years of age or younger. Candidate lists that do not meet this requirement still qualify to participate in the elections but will only be reimbursed half of their electoral expenditures.
- Political parties and coalitions must use the same name and symbol for all candidate lists.

Each candidate on a list must meet the following requirements:

- Be a registered voter (without having to be registered in the electoral district in which he or she intends to run as a candidate).
- Be of Tunisian nationality.

- Be 23 years of age at the time of submission of the candidacy application.
- Not be in the military and security forces or be convicted of a crime by judicial ruling that prohibits him or her from running at the time of submission of the candidacy application.
- Not be in office in the electoral district in which he or she is running (e.g., magistrates, head of diplomatic or consular mission, governor, delegate).
- Have paid all state taxes due.

How many candidate lists will be competing in these elections?

The candidate nomination period ran from July 22-29, 2019. At the end of the application period, the High Independent Authority for Elections (ISIE) received 1,581 applications, 176 of which were from constituencies abroad. On August 6, after examination of the candidate nominations by the regional election authorities, the ISIE announced the preliminary acceptance of 1,503 candidate lists (1,340 in Tunisia and 163 abroad) and the rejection of 78 lists (65 in Tunisia and 13 abroad). The accepted lists included 673 partisan lists, 312 coalition lists and 518 independent lists.

According to the electoral calendar, on August 30, 2019, the ISIE was to announce the final candidate lists following the completion of the litigation phase. However, this announcement was made slightly later, in particular because of an appeal submitted on August 29 to contest the decision to reject the candidacy of the list concerned. The judgment was rendered on August 31, 2019 and finally led to the validation of this candidate list.⁵

The final number of candidate lists is 1,504, including 1,341 candidate lists competing in Tunisia and 163 abroad. Among the 1,341 candidate lists in Tunisia there are 589 partisan lists, 283 coalition lists and 469 independent lists. These 1,341 lists include 1,157 men heading lists and 184 women heading lists.

Can candidate nomination decisions be appealed to the courts?

Articles 27 to 30 of the Electoral Law govern the rules relating to the challenge of decisions relating to candidate nominations. According to these articles, decisions of acceptance or rejection of candidacy made by regional election bodies (IRIEs) may be contested before the courts of first instance that are competent in the electoral constituency. Decisions emanating from the six IRIEs abroad are subject to appeal before the court of first instance in the electoral district of Tunis 1. Judgments rendered by the courts of first instance may then be appealed to the appeal chambers of the Administrative Tribunal located in Tunis, whose decisions are irrevocable. Judgments by the courts of first instance may be appealed by the head of the list, one of the members of the list, the party's legal representative or members of other candidate lists in the same electoral district. The first instance appeal must be lodged within a maximum period of three days from the date of the IRIE decision or the posting of the preliminary candidate lists. The time limit for appeal of the first instance judgement is also set at three days from the date of notification. For the application to be admissible, the plaintiff must provide proof

⁵ This is a coalition of the Democratic and Social Union running in the electoral constituency of Tunis 2. See Administrative Court, 10th Appeal Chamber, Judgment No. 62194 of August 31, 2019, Head of List UDS Tunis 2 v. ISE and IRIEs Tunis 2.

of notification to the opposing parties – IRIEs, the candidate list concerned or the political party concerned – before the end of the appeal period. In addition, the law does not require the intervention of a lawyer at first instance or on appeal.

The time limits granted to the competent courts to give their judgments, including the holding of the oral hearing, deliberation and delivery of the judgment, are set at a maximum of three days for the first instance and five days for the appeal. Once rendered, the courts must notify the parties of the judgments within a maximum of 48 hours from the date of delivery.

At the time of publication, the number of appeals pertaining to candidate nominations was not available.

What are the differences between the electoral period, the pre-election campaign, and the election campaign?

The electoral period includes the pre-election campaign phase, the election campaign phase and the period of silence. The period of silence includes the day before Election Day until the closing of the last polling station in the constituency. For the parliamentary elections, the electoral period began on July 14 for out-of-country voting and on July 16 for Tunisia; this period will extend until October 6.

The pre-election campaign starts two months before the start of the election campaign. For this election, the pre-campaign period began on July 16, 2019, and will run until September 13, 2019. During this period, neither candidate lists nor media outlets are allowed to run paid political ads or publish the results of opinion polls related to the elections. Audiovisual media must ensure equal access for all lists. For out-of-country voting, this period began on July 14, 2019 and ended on September 11, 2019.

The election campaign refers to all the activities conducted by candidates or their supporters to publicize their platform and encourage voters to vote in their favor. The election campaign begins 22 days before the elections and closes 24 hours before Election Day. For these elections, it began at midnight on September 14, 2019, and runs until midnight on Friday, October 4, 2019. For candidate lists abroad, the campaign began on September 12, 2019, and ends on October 2, 2019.

What are the principles and rules governing the election campaign?

The election campaign is governed by the following key principles, as defined in the Electoral Law:

- Neutrality of public administration and places of worship
- Neutrality of the national media
- Transparency of the election campaign
- Equal opportunities between all candidate lists
- Respect for the physical integrity, honor and dignity of candidates and voters
- Respect for privacy and personal data of members of candidate lists
- No incitement to hatred, violence, intolerance and discrimination

During the election campaign, public meetings, demonstrations, marches and electoral rallies are allowed but need to be declared in advance to the High Independent Authority for Elections. Candidate lists may also make electoral announcements (posters, leaflets, platforms and information on meeting dates) in paper or electronic form or through national media (audiovisual media or print and electronic media). Electoral propaganda in all shapes and forms is however prohibited in schools, universities and vocational training centers, and places of worship. Distributing party documents, chanting slogans and delivering partisan speeches are prohibited in public administration and public enterprises. This prohibition also applies to private companies not open to the public. The use of public resources for the benefit of a candidate list is also prohibited.

Candidate lists have the right to conduct electoral propaganda in national and electronic media. Propaganda through foreign media is strictly prohibited for candidate lists in Tunisia. Only candidate lists in electoral districts abroad are allowed to use foreign media as part of their election propaganda (Article 66 of the Electoral Law). Political advertising,⁶ which is characterized by the use of commercial marketing techniques, is strictly prohibited to candidate lists in parliamentary elections during the entire election period, with the exception of advertising in partisan newspapers in favor of candidate lists on behalf of the party concerned. Thus, as part of their campaign, candidate lists are prohibited from using fixed advertisements (such as billboards) or mobile advertisements (such as outfitted cars); advertising spots broadcast by audiovisual media and on electronic sites; advertising in the print or electronic press; and advertising on sponsored pages on social networks.

What are the rules for financing election campaigns?

Election campaigns, as stipulated in the Electoral Law, may be funded through self-financing, private funding and public funding. Private donations are permitted from individual citizens, while those from legal entities – such as corporations and associations – are prohibited, as is foreign funding. Individuals donations are limited to 20 times the monthly minimum wage (approximately TND 8,000 or USD 2,750).

Public financing takes the form of ex-post reimbursement of election expenses after the proclamation of the final results. The Court of Accounts shall determine for each candidate list the amount of the reimbursement, which may in no case exceed the amount of the candidate list's self-financing and the allocation of public funding. This allocation is calculated based on the number of registered voters and other variables such as the size of each electoral constituency. For the parliamentary elections, the allocation of public funding varies from TND 5,550 (approximately USD 1,900) in Tozeur to TND 16,484 (approximately USD 5,600) in Sousse. For constituencies abroad, the public funding allocation is multiplied by four to take into account the cost of living.

For the parliamentary elections, the expenditure ceiling is six times the allocation of public funding, i.e., TND 33,000 (approximately USD 11,300) in Tozeur, the lowest, and TND 98,904 (approximately USD

⁶ The Electoral Law defines political advertising as "any advertising or propaganda against material countervalue or free of charge, using the methods and techniques of commercial marketing, intended for the public, and aimed at promoting a person, an opinion, a program or political party, with a view to attracting voters or influencing their behavior and choice, through the audiovisual media, written or electronic, or through fixed or mobile advertising media installed in places or public or private property."

33,900) in Sousse, the highest. Considering constituencies abroad, the highest ceiling is for France 2 with TND 164,736 (approximately USD 56,400).

To be eligible for reimbursement of election expenses, the candidate list must have:

- Received at least 3 percent of the votes cast;
- Filed the financial accounts with the Court of Accounts within the legal deadline and published the campaign accounts in one of the Tunisian daily newspapers within two months of the date when the final election results were announced;
- Complied with the legal requirements related to the election campaign and its finances; and
- Respected the rules pertaining to the representation of candidates aged 35 or younger on the candidate list. In case of noncompliance with this requirement, the candidate list will only receive half of the total amount of reimbursement.

Who controls campaign financing and when?

Campaign finance oversight is exercised by the High Independent Authority for Elections (ISIE) and the Court of Accounts. During the election campaign, the ISIE will deploy approximately 1,200 field control agents. These agents attend campaign activities, assess their costs and record possible violations. The ISIE monitors compliance with the rules and means of financing the campaign in collaboration with the various public institutions. The ISIE can impose sanctions for campaign violations should these substantially affect the election results based on Article 143 of the Electoral Law. For its part, the Court of Accounts regulates the resources and expenditure allocated to each candidate list's campaign following the elections. It may impose financial or electoral sanctions on candidate lists that have violated certain finance rules.

What are the principles and rules governing media coverage of elections?

Throughout the election campaign, the media are required to:

- Be neutral;
- Respect the principle of equity between candidate lists;
- Respect the physical integrity, honor and dignity of candidates and voters;
- Not infringe the candidates' privacy and personal data; and
- Not disseminate or publish calls for hatred, violence, fanaticism or discrimination.

Throughout the election period, the media are prohibited from engaging in political advertising – except in the case of partisan newspapers, which are allowed to engage in propaganda through advertisements in favor of candidates on behalf of the party – or producing any media coverage that can be construed as supporting one candidate list.

During the election campaign and the period of silence, the media are prohibited from disseminating or publishing the results of opinion polls directly or indirectly related to the elections. The media are also

prohibited from making any partial announcement of election results before the closing of the last polling station.

With the exception of candidate lists in constituencies abroad, candidate lists are prohibited from campaigning through foreign media. Additionally, by virtue of a joint decision between the High Independent Authority for Elections (ISIE) and the High Independent Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HAICA) adopted on August 21, 2019, candidate lists are prohibited from campaigning through Tunisian audiovisual media outlets that broadcast illegally and without a license. Candidate lists for legislative elections may publicize their platforms through free airtime on public audiovisual media⁷ under the condition that all candidate lists are given an equitable opportunity to do so. Under this equity rule, candidate lists have access to audiovisual media based on the proportionality between the number of candidate lists at the national or regional level and the amount of airtime allocated to them in the audiovisual media. In other words, access to audiovisual media must be proportional to their political representation at the national or regional level. All public and private audiovisual media must respect the principle of equity in their coverage.

The joint ISIE-HAICA decision foresees the organization of electoral debates between presidential candidates but is silent on debates for the parliamentary elections.

Which bodies monitor media conduct during the election campaign?

The main institution responsible for monitoring and regulating the conduct of the audiovisual media during the election campaign is the High Independent Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HAICA). HAICA guarantees the pluralism and diversity of the audiovisual media during the election campaign. The High Independent Authority for Elections sets up a media monitoring unit during the election campaign period and is charged with monitoring print and online media.

What are voting centers and polling stations? How many are there?

The High Independent Authority for Elections (ISIE) determines the number and locations of the voting centers and polling stations. For the parliamentary elections, the ISIE will open 4,871 voting centers, 4,568 in Tunisia and 303 abroad, each consisting of one or more polling stations. The voting center staff consist of a president and one or more information agents appointed by the ISIE. The president of the voting center is responsible for maintaining order in the center. She or he coordinates among polling stations and conducts logistical operations, while facilitating the work of polling station presidents and polling staff.

A total of 13,446 polling stations in Tunisia and 384 abroad will be available for voters to cast their ballots, with approximately 44,500 poll workers across the country. Each polling stations is staffed by a president and two members and serves a maximum of 600 voters. The polling station president ensures smooth voting and counting operations inside the polling station. The polling station members are

⁷ Private audiovisual media are prohibited from rebroadcasting free airtime provided to candidate lists, or providing paid airtime, which would be considered political advertising. They should respect the principle of equity in their election programming, such as news, political shows, etc.

responsible for checking the voters' identity, handing ballot papers to voters and supervising the ballot box. Members also participate in the counting process. Citizens can find out which polling station they are assigned to by dialing *195* followed by their national ID card number; they then receive a text message indicating their polling center address and polling station number.

What will the ballot paper look like and how should it be marked?

Each ballot paper will contain the number, name and symbol of the candidate lists competing in the constituency next to a box where the voter will mark the ballot. There will be one ballot paper for each of the 33 electoral districts. The candidate lists are ordered vertically in several columns on the ballot paper. Voters will mark the box next to their choice and can only mark one choice. Marks that do not clearly express the voter's will or ballots that mark more than one choice will be considered invalid.

What are the voting procedures?

Voting begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 6:00 p.m.

Upon entering the voting center, the voter must go to the polling station to which she or he is assigned. The voter lists are posted in the voting centers or polling stations to help voters identify the correct polling station where they are registered. Priority access is given to people with disabilities, the elderly and pregnant women.

When the voter enters the polling station, a polling station member verifies the voters' identity and the national ID number or passport number and finds the voter's name on the voter list. The voter must sign in front of her or his name, then ink the index finger of her or his left hand, before another polling official gives him or her the ballot paper bearing the stamp of the president of the station.

The voter marks the ballot in a voting booth to guarantee the secrecy of the vote. Before leaving the booth, the voter must fold the ballot in four so that the voter's choice is no longer visible. If the voter makes a mistake when using the ballot paper or damages it, she or he is allowed to request another ballot paper only once. In this case, the voter must return the spoiled ballot paper to the president of the polling station, who places it in a dedicated envelope. Finally, the voter places the marked ballot paper in the ballot box under the scrutiny of those present in the polling station – observers, candidates' representatives, polling station agents, etc. The voter must then immediately leave the polling station.

Voters who are inside the polling station at closing time are authorized to vote.

How will voters with disabilities vote?

The Electoral Law enshrines the principles of personal and secret voting for all voters, including voters with disabilities. To this end, it stipulates that polling stations must be set up in such a way as to enable persons with disabilities to access them and to exercise their right to vote (Article 131). The law permits the adoption of specific measures and procedures for the benefit of voters with disabilities, especially those who are blind or have low vision and those with physical disabilities that prevent them from writing. On Election Day, these two categories of voters have the right to assistance from a voter of their

choice who can assist them to vote if the following requirements are met (Article 33 of High Independent Authority for Elections Decision No. 2014-30):

- The voter presents a handicap card;
- The assistant must be a voter;
- The assistant must be either the spouse or a relative of the voter with a disability. In addition to the national ID card, the assistant must also present an official document proving the relationship to the voter. The voter may also, in the absence of such an assistant from his or her family, ask the president of the polling station to instruct one of the voters present at the polling station to assist him or her in voting; and
- The same assistant may not accompany more than one voter with a disability.

Braille ballot folders containing the ballot paper will be available in each polling center for voters who are blind or have low vision. The braille ballot folders will bear the number of the candidate lists but not the names of the lists. The braille folder will be accompanied by a note in braille that will allow voters to match the name and the number of each candidate list in the electoral constituencies.

How will illiterate voters vote?

The Electoral Law prohibits illiterate voters from using assistants to help them vote. However, the law encourages the High Independent Authority for Elections (ISIE) to carry out sensitization campaigns to explain voting procedures to illiterate voters. The ballot paper will be designed in color and contain the symbol and number corresponding to each candidate list in order to facilitate its use by illiterate voters. The ISIE will prepare and disseminate videos, flyers and posters to explain the voting procedures step-by-step in a simplified manner to enable illiterate voters to cast their ballots independently.

Where will counting and compilation of results take place?

The president and members of the polling stations will count and tabulate the ballots immediately after polling stations close in the presence of observers and candidate list representatives. When counting is complete, a copy of the results protocol of the counting for each polling station is posted in the voting center. Election observers do not receive a copy. These protocols must also be published on the High Independent Authority for Elections (ISIE) website.

At the same time, 33 tabulation centers will be opened to compile the results from all polling stations in a given constituency. The consolidated results from each of the 33 tabulation centers are then forwarded to the ISIE Board of Commissioners for verification and proclamation of the election results.

Who will observe the parliamentary elections? How can they obtain accreditation?

The Electoral Law permits observation of the elections by national and foreign observers and candidate list representatives. To carry out their duties, observers must obtain official accreditation from the High Independent Authority for Elections. Applications for accreditation close no later than one week before Election Day. Representatives of candidate lists, political parties and citizen observers may record their

remarks on the conduct of the vote in a memorandum which must be attached to the minutes of the voting operation. Their observations and reservations relating to the counting process must be recorded in a note annexed to the counting protocol. The president of the polling station shall reply to the said observations and reservations recorded in a separate note. A copy of the results is posted in front of each polling station. Approximately 12,000 domestic and international observers are currently expected.

When and how will the preliminary and final results be announced?

The High Independent Authority for Elections (ISIE) Board of Commissioners announces preliminary election results no later than three days after Election Day. According to the electoral calendar set by ISIE for the 2019 parliamentary elections, the announcement of the preliminary results will take place no later than October 10, 2019. Detailed results by polling station must be posted on the ISIE website and at the ISIE headquarters.

Once the litigation phase relating to the preliminary results has ended, the ISIE has 48 hours to announce the final results. According to the electoral calendar, the final results must be officially announced no later than November 13, 2019. They will also be published on the ISIE website and in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Tunisia.

Can the results of the elections be contested?

The preliminary results may be contested to the appeal chambers of the Administrative Tribunal located in Tunis within three days of the date of the publication of the results by the High Independent Authority for Elections (ISIE). For legislative elections, the right of appeal is open only to the heads and members of candidate lists and legal representatives of political parties. They may only contest the results of the constituency in which they are candidates. The request for appeal must be submitted to the appeals court by a cassation lawyer and accompanied by evidence and proof of the notification of appeal to the ISIE and any other related party. The Appeals Chamber shall conduct the hearing within three days from the filing of the appeal. The judgment must be delivered within five days following the hearing and the parties must be notified within three days of the decision.

Judgments rendered by the appeal chambers may be appealed before the Plenary Assembly of the Administrative Tribunal. The appeal must be lodged within three days from the notification of the first instance judgment. The first president of the Administrative Tribunal shall schedule the hearing within three days. The judgment on appeal shall be rendered within seven days from the date of the hearing and the parties shall be notified within two days of the judgment. The judgment rendered on appeal is final and cannot be challenged further.

How will the election management body disseminate electoral information to the public?

The High Independent Authority for Elections (ISIE) will operate a media center at the Conference Palace in downtown Tunis from October 3 until the announcement of the preliminary election results on October 9. The media center will be open to journalists, observers, guests, diplomatic missions and

election officials and will be the main communication channel between the ISIE and journalists, providing real-time information on the elections. Press conferences at the media center will be streamed live on the ISIE Facebook page and will include simultaneous interpretation from Arabic to French and English.

In the run-up to Election Day, the ISIE shares information with the public using its website (www.isie.tn) and social media networks. The ISIE also held meetings with political parties and civil society organizations, including disability rights organizations, on various aspects of the electoral process. These meetings and official ISIE press conferences provide sign language interpretation to make election information accessible to voters who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

Resources

- Tunisian Constitution of 2014
- Compilation of all legislative and regulatory texts related to elections and referendums, compiled by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, September 2019 (in French only)
- Compilation of all legislative and regulatory texts related to elections and referendums, compiled by the United Nations Development Programme, August 2019 (in Arabic only)
- Decisions, procedures and other manuals published on the High Independent Authority for Elections website (in Arabic only): <http://www.isie.tn>