

Politics



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Dominican Republic Tactical: General elections to elect President, Vice-President, Congress members, scheduled from 07:00-17:00 (local time) on May 19; allot for disruptions

Current Situation

- General Elections to elect the President, Vice President, 190 deputies, and 32 senators to the Congreso de la República Dominicana, and 20 deputies to the Parlamento Centroamericano (PARLACEN, Central American Parliament) are slated to be held nationwide on May 19. Voting will take place between 07:00-17:00 (local time).
- The nine presidential candidates are: President Luis Abinader (Partido Revolucionario Moderno), Former President Leonel Fernández (Fuerza del Pueblo), Abel Martínez (Partido de la Liberación Dominicana), Miguel Vargas (Partido Revolucionario Dominicana), María Teresa Cabrera (Frente Amplio), Fulgencio Severino Cruz (Partido Patria para Todos), Carlos Peña Batista (Partido Generación de Servidores), Virginia Antares (Partido Opción Democrática), and Roque Esparillat (Partido Esperanza Democrática).
- An estimated 8 million Dominicans are registered to vote at approximately 16,725 polling stations, installed across 4,286 precincts nationwide. Details regarding voting centers can be accessed through the [JCE voter verification portal](#). Over 800,000 Dominicans are registered to vote at overseas missions.
- The Junta Central Electoral (JCE) has issued a list of guidelines to be enforced by the Policía Militar Electoral (PME) security forces including the granting of access to the national press, prohibiting

voters from donning clothing promoting a candidate or a party, and to prevent photography inside polling stations among others.

- To ensure clear access to polling stations, prevent voter intimidation and electoral proselytism, and regulate security, 19,800 police personnel will be deployed nationwide on May 19.
- Ballot counting will commence at a privately owned establishment located on Avenida Anacaona 101 in Santo Domingo following the closure of polling stations. The first bulletin of results will be released after 20:30 on May 19.
- Unless a candidate receives over 50 percent of the total votes, run-off elections will be held between the two candidates receiving the highest votes in the first round.

Assessments & Forecast

1. Despite a lower voter turnout recorded at approximately 55 percent during the 2020 general elections due to COVID-19 restrictions, the 2024 election cycle is expected to witness higher levels of voter turnout, given that an average 61 percent turnout has been recorded during elections since 1998.
2. Although no demonstrations have been confirmed as of writing, ad-hoc gatherings and protests remain likely near key government buildings, polling sites, and across major thoroughfares. This is especially likely should the electronic voting devices malfunction, as witnessed during the 2020 municipal elections, when glitches in 50 percent of the devices prompted a temporary suspension of polling for over three hours, which in turn led to widespread protests nationwide.
3. Potential protests are expected to draw attendance in the low-to-mid hundreds and will mostly occur in major cities such as Santo Domingo, Santiago, Puerto Plata, and San Pedro de Macoris, among others.
4. Considering the bolstered security measures nationwide, such protests are liable to transpire largely peacefully without any incidents of unrest.
5. Additionally, significant disruptions to vehicular and pedestrian traffic can be anticipated in the vicinity of polling stations nationwide, including in Santo Domingo, due to security checkpoints and subsequent delays. Congestion is also expected on alternate modes of transportation, including on public buses, metros, and taxis as protestors make their way to polling stations.

Recommendations

Those operating or residing in the Dominican Republic on May 19 are advised to allot for disruptions to travel between 07:00-17:00 near polling stations due to the slated elections.