



## **Fact Sheet: KEY POINTS ON POLLING AND COUNTING**

### **1. Polling Centre and Polling Station Structure**

- For the purposes of conducting parliamentary and presidential elections for the Kurdistan Region, the IHEC will establish around 1150 polling centres in the Kurdistan region. Each centre consists of one or more polling stations, totaling around 5400 altogether. Each polling station is expected to serve up to approximately 500 voters.
- In order to broaden opportunities for the participation of all eligible voters in the electoral process, special voting facilities will also be established for certain categories of voters who are unable to cast their ballots in polling stations on Election Day, 25 July 2009. The IHEC will open around 150 polling centres and 450 polling stations in the Kurdistan region and specified other governorates in Iraq for special voting on 23 July.
- There will be a unique number for each polling centre and for each station (1, 2, 3 etc). This number will be recorded as the polling station number in all polling and counting forms and on all ballot boxes and other sensitive materials for that station. Special voting polling stations will be indicated by an additional letter to the station number (1/خ, 2/-خ, 3/-خ etc)<sup>1</sup>.
- Applicable legislation considers the Kurdistan Region as one electoral district. Consequently there will be one ballot for all governorates of the region for each election. Each voter will be issued in the polling station one ballot for the parliamentary election and one ballot for the presidential election.

### **2. Regular Polling and Counting**

- In regular polling stations, each station will have its own voter list, which lists voters' names in alphabetical order. Each voter who wishes to vote will sign the voter list prior to receiving the two ballots. A voter must be listed on the voter list in order to cast a ballot in that polling station.
- Counting of ballots for regular polling stations will take place in the station following close of polls. Polling staff will undertake all reconciliation and counting processes, and complete Form 401 (Polling Station Reconciliation and Results Form for the Parliamentary Election) and Form 402 (Polling Station Reconciliation and Results Form for the Presidential Election). Results forms will then be transported to the IHEC Data Entry Centre in Baghdad for data entry and compilation of results.
- If, during reconciliation processes, ballots cannot be reconciled within the agreed tolerance level, then counting processes in the polling station will cease, and the ballot box and all sensitive materials will be transferred through the GEO warehouse to the Count Centre for audit, following which decision will be made as to whether ballots will be counted and votes included in the results or not.

### **3. Special Voting Polling and Counting**

- There are two types of special voting, according to the category of voter: special voting with voter list and special voting by conditional ballot.

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<sup>1</sup> The first letter of the word for special voting(transcribed as khāss).

### **3A. Special Voting with Voter List**

- Members of regional security forces, ISF and army of Sulaymaniyah, Erbil and Dahuk governorates, and also government employees working in Baghdad outside the International Zone but registered to vote in the Kurdistan Region, will vote by special voting voter list.
- Polling processes for special voting with voter list will follow the same procedures as regular polling with the exception that counting will take place in the GEO Count Centres.
- The special voting voter list will be created according to names submitted by authorities in the region, which are then checked against the voter register. Only those found in the voter register will be listed on the special voting voter list and permitted to vote in special voting polling stations.

### **3B. Special Voting by Conditional Ballot**

- Eligible detainees in detention centres, hospital patients and employees of these facilities in the Kurdistan Region for whom polling facilities are established will be able to participate in special voting by conditional ballot, as will employees of governmental institutions located in the International Zone in Baghdad, who are registered in the Kurdistan Region, and members of the Kurdistan Region security forces on official duty in certain governorates outside the region.
- In special voting polling stations for these categories of voters, each polling station will have a blank polling station voter list. The voter list is filled on polling day according to the voter's documentation. Each voter signs the voter list prior to receiving ballots.
- Because the voter list is blank and created during the polling process, special voters will cast what is known as a 'conditional ballot'. This means that the ballot is cast at the time of polling, and then the voter's details are checked afterwards in the voter register database in the Count Centre before counting. If the voter is proven to be eligible according to the voter register in the governorate for which s/he cast a ballot, then the vote will be counted.
- In order to ensure secrecy of the vote, inside the conditional ballot envelope, the ballot will be sealed into a secrecy envelope. This contains no information on the voter. Once eligibility is verified, the secrecy envelope will be removed from the conditional ballot envelope prior to the start of counting processes, so the ballot itself remains confidential.

### **3C. Counting for Special Voting Polling Stations**

- Special voting ballots will not be counted in the polling stations, but in GEO Count Centres in the three governorates of the Kurdistan Region. Following partial ballot accounting in the polling station, using Form 400 (Special Voting Polling Station Reconciliation Form), the ballot boxes and all sensitive materials will be transported to the Count Centres.
- At the Count Centres, ballot boxes will be opened and reconciliation will be completed. As for regular polling stations, if reconciliation reveals a discrepancy outside the agreed tolerance level, the materials for the polling station will be audited.
- Following reconciliation, the voter eligibility verification process will be completed for conditional ballots, and ballots for special voting polling stations will be counted by polling station. Results will be recorded on Form 403 (Count Centre Reconciliation and Results Form for the Parliamentary Election) and Form 404 (Count Centre Reconciliation and Results Form for the Presidential Election), which will subsequently be transferred to the Data Entry Centre in Baghdad for compilation of results.
- While reconciliation and verification processes will take place after special voting polling day on 23 July, counting may not begin in Count Centres until after Election Day, 25 July 2009.