

## **FACTSHEET**

### **2014 Governate Council Elections in the Kurdistan Region**

*Elections for the governorate councils in the three governorates of the Kurdistan Region (Dohuk, Erbil and Sulaimaniya) are scheduled for 30 April 2014.*

#### ***What is the role of the UN in the elections in Iraq?***

At the request of the Government of Iraq, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), through the Security Council resolution 2061, is mandated to advise, support, and assist the Government of Iraq and the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) on the development of processes for holding elections and referenda.

To implement this mandate, a UNAMI led integrated team of electoral advisers from UNAMI, UNDP and UNOPS is collocated within IHEC in Baghdad and the Kurdistan Regional Electoral Office in Erbil. The Integrated Electoral Assistance Team (IEAT) provides advice and assistance in the areas of election management, operations; field coordination; data center management; information technology; logistics; procurement; training; gender; legal and regulatory frameworks; complaints; graphic design; external relations; and public outreach.

The Iraq-Kurdistan governorate councils elections (KRG GCE) are governed by amended Law No. 4 for 2009 on Governorate, District and Sub-District Council Elections in the Iraq-Kurdistan Region. The three councils jointly consist of 90 seats including 9 seats reserved for components.

- 2 seats for the component of Chaldeans, Assyrian and Syriacs in the Dohuk governorate council competed for by the component candidates.
- 1 seat for the Armenian component in the Dohuk governorate council competed for by the component candidates.
- 1 seat for the component of Chaldeans, Assyrian and Syriacs in the Sulaimaniya governorate council competed for by the component candidates.
- 2 seats for the component of Chaldeans, Assyrian and Syriacs in the Erbil governorate council competed for by the component candidates.
- 3 seats for the Turkmen component in the Erbil governorate council competed for by component candidates.

#### ***Allocation of Seats / Candidates' nominations***

<b>Governorate</b>	<b>No. of Seats</b>			<b>No. of Candidates</b>		
	<b>General</b>	<b>Minorities &amp; Ethnic groups</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Dohuk	25	3	<b>28</b>	107	52	<b>159</b>
Sulaimaniya	31	1	<b>32</b>	219	99	<b>318</b>
Erbil	25	5	<b>30</b>	168	73	<b>241</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>718</b>

The electoral system for the GCE in the Kurdistan region is by proportional representation with open list balloting.

***Does the law provide a quota for women representation in the I-KR Governorate Council?***

Women representation in the Council should not be less than 30% of the total membership. Candidates' lists must therefore be organized in a way that guarantees the percentage of women as stipulated in Article 7 (2) of the Law.

***Does the IHEC have any role in the GCE in the I-KR?***

The Law mandates the Independent High Electoral Commission of Iraq to conduct the governorate council elections in the Kurdistan region until the establishment of the Independent High Electoral and Referendum Commission in Kurdistan.

***Who qualifies to vote?***

An eligible voter must be an Iraqi citizen, fully eligible, 18 years old or above and must be registered exclusively in the voter registry of the governorate in which the election will be conducted. No voting by proxy is permitted in the elections.

***What are the eligibility criteria for Candidates?***

In addition to being a registered voter, a candidate;

- i. Must not be less than 25 years of age.
- ii. Must be one of the residents of the administrative unit and registered in the voter registry within the electoral constituency.
- iii. Must be of good conduct and reputation and not convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude.
- iv. Must hold at least a secondary school certificate or its equivalent in the case of a candidate for the governorate councils and the local councils of districts. A candidate for the local councils of sub-districts must hold at least elementary school certificate or its equivalent.
- v. Must not have participated in crimes planned and committed by the Baath System and
- vi. Must not be a member of the Armed Forces or internal security forces upon nomination.

Candidates will be subjected to certification by the IHEC.

***How many Political Entities and Coalitions are registered to contest the elections?***

There are 17 Political Entities and 1 Coalition registered to contest the Elections. From these entities and coalition, a total number of 718 candidates have been nominated. Out of this number, 224 candidates (31%) are women.

***When does the electoral campaign begin?***

The GCE Kurdistan region electoral campaign begins after the certification of the final Candidates’ list by IHEC. Campaigns activities must end 48 hours prior to the opening of polls.

***When was the last voters’ registration update conducted?***

The update of the voters’ registry (VRU) took place between 10 November and 09 December 2013 across the country. **No separate VRU was conducted for the GCE in the Kurdistan region.**

***Distribution of Voters***

Governorate	Category		Total
	Regular	Special	
Dohuk	612,065	29,370	641,435
Sulaimaniya	1,168,460	71,152	1,239,612
Erbil	971,195	81,793	1,052,988
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,751,720</b>	<b>182,315</b>	<b>2,934,035</b>

***Will there be special voting in this election?***

Special voting for the personnel of the Iraqi Security Forces who will be deployed at polling centres on Election Day will be held on 28 April 2014. Conditional voting, as part of the special voting, will be conducted for prisoners with a sentence of less than 5 years and wardens, and also for patients and staff of hospitals with not less than 200 beds. Conditional ballots are used in the prisons and hospitals to allow for the eligibility of the voters to be verified after the polls and prior to the votes being counted at the respective GEO count centres.

***Distribution of Polling Centres (PC) and Polling Stations (PS)***

Governorate	Regular		Special	
	PC	PS	PC	PS
Dohuk	264	1,512	15	74
Sulaimaniya	503	2,753	31	175
Erbil	498	2,340	51	208
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,265</b>	<b>6,605</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>457</b>

***When do polls begin and end?***

Polls open at 7:00 am and close at 6:00 pm. Polling staff will vote before 7:00 am so that they can open the polls to voters at 7:00 am. Voters who come after 6:00 pm will not be allowed to vote.

### ***What documents are voters required to present in order to vote?***

According to the polling procedures, each voter must present his or her electronic voter card and a photo ID document for the purpose of identification and verification before being allowed to vote (*this provision in the procedure is still under discussion and could change before Election Day*).

### ***Who has the power to suspend the polling process and or postpone the elections?***

The Polling Centre Coordinator can suspend the polling process if the centre or any of its stations is threatened by riot, violence, storm, flood or any other event which makes orderly polling impossible. Such a decision should be taken in consultation with the Sub-Centre. The Sub-Centre then informs the GEO who will also inform the National Office. Elections can only be postponed by the decision of the Council of Ministers with the approval of the Council of Representatives.

### ***Do Observers and the Media have any role in this election?***

Accredited Observers (domestic and international), Political Entity Agents (PEAs) and the Media can access PCs and PSs to monitor, observe and report on the electoral process as part of ensuring free and fair conduct of elections. Observers and PEAs report their findings to the IHEC and their respective organizations whereas the Media report to the general public. PEAs and voters have the right to submit a complaint about the electoral process to IHEC but Observers can include any irregularity observed in their report to IHEC.

Non-accredited media can still report on the elections but for security and logistical reasons, they cannot enter electoral premises and may not be on the list for press events related to the elections.

Polls begin at 7:00 am whether or not PEAs, observers or the media are present.

### ***What is the process of counting and results management?***

#### **Special Voting**

Ballots of special and conditional voting will be counted at the close of polls on 30 April 2014 at the count centres in the GEOs. Special voting results forms from the GEO Count centres will then be sent to the Data Entry Centre of IHEC NO for tabulation and announcement of provisional results.

#### **Regular Voting**

Sorting and counting of ballots begin at the polling stations upon closure of polls. After counting and completion of the results forms, the Polling Station Manager will announce the results to the people present and post the forth copy of the results forms at the polling

station. Representatives of political entities will be given hard copies of the results forms certified by the Polling Station Manager.

Upon completion of the count at the polling station, results forms will be transported to the Data Entry Centre of IHEC NO for tabulation and announcement of provisional results. The ballots will be stored at the GEO warehouses. **There will be no recount at branch centres in the GCE in the Kurdistan region.** Once all complaints about the electoral process have been received and adjudicated, IHEC will certify and announce the final results.