



HOW DEMOCRATIC

Are Local Government Elections In Nigeria?

Local government elections should be **free, fair, transparent, and credible**. However, the **consistent pattern of incumbent parties winning local government elections** raises concerns about their credibility, undermining trust in local governance and sparking doubts about the democratic nature of the process.

The Supreme Court's **July 11, 2024 ruling on local government financial autonomy** requires local governments to have democratically elected officials to access their allocations, per the Constitution. In response, states are **hurriedly scheduling local government elections**.

How can State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECs) be strengthened to conduct free, fair, transparent, and credible elections?



LGA Elections (October 2022 - September 2024)

S/N	States	No. of LGAs	Election Date	Incumbent Party	No. of Seats Won by Incumbent	No. of Seats Won by Others
1	Osun ¹	30	October 15, 2022	APC	69 (inclusive of 39 LCDAs)	0
2	Niger	22	November 11, 2022	APC	22	0
3	Edo	18	September 2, 2023	PDP	18	0
4	Taraba	16	November 18, 2023	PDP	16	0
5	Borno	27	January 20, 2024	APC	27	0
6	Oyo	33	April 27, 2024	PDP	33	0
7	Delta ²	25	July 13, 2024	PDP	25	0
8	Adamawa	21	July 13, 2024	PDP	21	0
9	Ebonyi	13	July 20, 2024	APC	13	0
10	Sokoto	23	September 21, 2024	APC	23	0
11	Imo	16	September 21, 2024	APC	16	0
12	Kwara	23	September 21, 2024	APC	23	0
13	Enugu	17	September 21, 2024	PDP	17	0

"The system of local government by democratically elected councils is guaranteed under the constitution; and accordingly, the government of every state shall, subject to Section 8 of this constitution, ensure their existence under a law that provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finance, and functions of such councils."

- Section 7 (1) of the 1999 Constitution (as amended)

¹ On November 25, 2022, the Osogbo High Court **nullified elections in all 69 local council areas** because they contravened sections 29 & 32 of the Electoral Act 2022. Section 29 states that political parties must submit candidate lists not later than 180 days before elections, while Section 32 mandates the Commission to publish nominated candidates at least 150 days before the election.

Governor Ademola Adeleke appointed Caretaker Chairmen in August 2023. These chairpersons served until their resignation in July 2024. The Secretary and local government workers are currently running the local governments and elections are scheduled for February 2025.

² The Delta governor is PDP. 2 out of the 3 senatorial districts - Delta-South (8 LGs) and Delta-Central (8 LGs) have APC senators while Delta-North (9 LGs) has a PDP senator.

There is a clamour to scrap SIECs so that INEC can conduct local government elections. This would violate the tenets of a federation. **The solution is to strengthen SIECs the same way INEC has been supported.**

#RSVP #myLGA

Source: EiE Research | August 2024

