



Electoral System Of Ghana

Have you ever wondered how the outcome of an election is determined? Ghana employs certain methods and rules of counting votes to ensure transparency and credibility of the polls.

Independence of Commission

Article 46 of the 1992 constitution provides that” in the performance of its functions, the Electoral Commission shall not be subject to the control or direction of any authority” except as provided in the constitution or any other law not inconsistent with the constitution.

The Chairman and the two Deputy Chairmen have permanent tenure of office and enjoy the same conditions of service as justices of the Superior Courts.

The Electoral Commission has the power to appoint its officers and other employees by acting in consultation with the Public Service Commission.

The administrative expenses of the Electoral Commission, including salaries, allowances and pensions are chargeable to the Consolidated Fund.

Types of Elections

- Presidential Elections

In Ghana, the presidential election is held every four years to elect the President who is the head of state and the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces through Majoritarian System (Two-Round System).

- Parliamentary Elections

Ghana’s parliamentary election is a single-member constituency election held every four years to elect representatives to the National Assembly (Parliament). Members are elected using the First Past The Post (FPTP) system.

Currently, the presidential and parliamentary elections are held on the same day.

- Local Government Elections

Local government elections consist of District Assembly and Unit Committee elections. All local government elections shall be held at least six months before or after parliamentary elections

- District Assembly Elections

District Assembly elections are held every four years to elect electoral area representatives to the District Assemblies.

- Unit Committee Elections

Unit committee is the lowest level of the Ghana’s local government structure. Election of Unit Committee members is held every four years to elect representatives to the Units.

- Referendum

Referendums allow people to express their opinion and vote for or against the proposed issue or amendment to the Constitution.

What are the Qualifications and Process of Appointment?

The mode of appointment of the Commission members are specified Article 43 of the 1992 Constitution and Act 451.

Qualification and Appointment of members of the Commission:

- A person is not qualified to be appointed as a member of the Commission unless he is qualified to be elected as a member of Parliament.
- The President acting on the advice of the Council of State, appoints the Chairman, Deputy Chairmen, and other members of the Commission. (Article 70(2))

What Happens if a Member is Incapacitated or Dies?

If a member cannot fulfill his or her duties or dies, the President, acting on the advice of the Council of State appoints a qualified person to fill the vacancy.

Structure of the Commission

The Commission has its Office in national capital, Accra,16 functional regional offices and 266 district offices across the country. The head office has 7 departments and various units under them.

Features of Ghana’s Electoral System

Ghana’s Electoral System has the following features:

- Universal adult suffrage for citizens who are 18 years or older
- Continuous registration of voters
- Non-compulsory/voluntary participation in registration of electors and voting
- Where you register is where you vote
- Secret ballot
- Regulation of political parties by Electoral Commission (EC)
- Political parties as corporate entities
- Partisan politics at national level elections
- Non-partisan politics at local level elections
- Presidential and parliamentary elections held on the same day
- No minimum voter turnout required for presidential and parliamentary elections
- Presidential election requires the winner to obtain more than 50% of valid votes cast
- A run-off election is required in case no winner emerges on the first ballot in the presidential election
- Simple majority/First-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral formula determines the winner in the parliamentary election
- Permanent Election Management Body (EMB), EC

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