WORKSHOP ON ELECTORAL ADMINISTRATION
INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION
OF NIGERIA

Mexico City, October 21st to 25th, 2013
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I. PRESENTATION

The General Council of the Federal Electoral Institute approved the creation of the International Center for Electoral Training and Research in September, 2010. Its purpose is to offer an international forum for training, updating and professionalization, in order to provide with new aptitudes (knowledge and skills) and new attitudes (values and behaviors) thru different training programs aimed at those responsible for organizing and managing the electoral processes, but under an empirical approach of sharing experiences, best practices and knowledge in the frame of the horizontal cooperation and, therefore, the active participation in the society of several actors of the international electoral system, in its conformation and programming.

This initiative aims to justify the complexity in the organization of elections in which, during the last decade, new dynamics and challenges have emerged, such as: the oversiting of public and private funding of political parties and campaigns, regulation of political advertising and election campaign periods, the use of new technologies for issuing and counting of votes, the immediate provision of preliminary results, the vote from abroad and political representation of expatriates, the limitation on campaign spending and other mechanisms to ensure equitable conditions of competition.

In this sense, it is important to refer to the main precedent of the Center. It is the International Program on Electoral Training and Research (PICIE), which is a mechanism of horizontal cooperation, developed by IFE with the United Nations Development Program in Mexico and the Federal Electoral Court. This Program is aimed to senior managers and executives, under a medium and large term perspective. It emphasizes the strategic planning for political leadership of the technical aspects in the electoral management. Also it motivates the participation of other partners like the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Mexico, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), among others.

Under this Program, from March 2004 to October 2013, 45 international workshops have been developed. We have responded the applications from electoral authorities of 4 of the five continents as we can see in the next table.

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<td>El Salvador (2)</td>
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<td>Bosnia &amp; Herzegovina</td>
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<td>2008</td>
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<td>2009</td>
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<td>2010</td>
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<td>El Salvador, Guatemala</td>
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<td>2012</td>
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<td>Ecuador (3), Colombia, Peru y Bolivia, Haiti</td>
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<td>Guatemala</td>
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Within this framework, this International Workshop will assume the responsibility of providing with a comparative perspective of the main electoral challenges faced both by Mexico and Nigeria, while proposing some interesting and effective mechanisms and strategies that have proved very useful in the Mexican experience, related to different topics about the electoral cycle.

In this sense, it is important to refer to the main precedents of this International Workshop: in one hand, the Independent National Electoral Commission of Nigeria sent two representatives to participate in the Specialization Course on Voters Register for Authorities of Africa and Haiti, carried out from November 21st to November 25th in 2011 and, in the other hand, the INEC attended a Workshop on International Liaison and Cooperation Programs in the frame of the CICIE, from May 14th to 17th, 2012.

A. OBJECTIVES

- To contribute to the institutional strengthening of the Independent National Electoral Commission of Nigeria through the exchange of knowledge and experiences in order to improve the administrative processes, particularly for the structural changes in the INEC and the appointment of new officers and in the foreseen event of an electoral reform.

- To present useful international experiences and practices for the legal, political and
financial behavior of the electoral management bodies.

B. METHODOLOGY

In order to fulfill the needs and meet the expectations expressed by the delegates from Nigeria, the International Workshop program will include the following topics:

- Main Characteristics of Electoral Organisms, their type, functions, responsibilities and main challenges.
- Electoral technology and results' transmission
- Civic education and electoral training
- Comparative perspective on political systems and electoral reforms
- Comparative perspective on political parties' legal and jurisdictional framework
- Electoral Justice, conflict resolution and prevention

Mexican officials will present the experience of their country in the construction and development of the Mexican electoral system, and international experts will provide a compared overview on best practices and alternatives.

C. ORGANIZERS

The International Workshop program to be held in Mexico City on October 21\textsuperscript{st} to 25\textsuperscript{th}, has been organized by the partners of the International Program for Electoral Training and Research: United Nations Development Program (UNDP-Mexico), and the Mexican electoral authorities: the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE), and the Federal Electoral Court (TEPJF), with the support of the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SRE), thru the Embassy of Mexico in Nigeria and the Mexican Agency of International Cooperation for Development (Amexcid).
II. SPEAKERS’ PROFILES

Leonardo Valdés was appointed President Councilor of the Federal Electoral Institute of Mexico (IFE) in February 2008 by a majority vote in the Chamber of Deputies. He holds a Bachelor’s degree in Economics from Anahuac University and a PhD in Social Sciences with a specialization in Sociology from the Center for Sociological Studies of El Colegio de México. He was Executive Director of Electoral Organization at IFE from 1996 to 1998. He was member of a Commission of Experts appointed by the General Council of the IFE in 1998 to study the options for the voting from abroad program. From 1999 to 2005 he served as Electoral Councilor for the Electoral Institute of Mexico City, where he headed the Electoral Organization Commission. He was also President of the Directive Board of the Mexican Association for Electoral Studies (SOMEE for its acronym in Spanish). He was a full-time professor in the Department of Sociology at the Iztapalapa Autonomous Metropolitan University in Mexico City, where he taught undergraduate courses on Political Science, graduate courses on Social Studies, and a diploma course on Electoral Studies. His publications include eight collective books on political and electoral topics. Some of his essays have been published in the United States, Brazil, Uruguay and Great Britain. He has been a member of the Researchers National System since 1993. He was professor at the Faculty of Law and Public Administration at the University of Guanajuato until January 2008.

José Alejandro Luna Ramos is a Mexican lawyer. He has served as Secretary of the Unitary Court, Secretary of Collegiate Court, Secretary of Study and Account of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation, District Judge and Circuit Judge. He is a founding member of the National Association of Circuit Judges and District Judges of the Judiciary of the Federation. Magistrate Luna Ramos, presides, since 2011, the Superior Court of the Electoral Tribunal of the Judicial Power of the Federation.

Manuel Carrillo has been Chief of Staff of the International Affairs Unit at the Federal Electoral Institute of Mexico since 1993. He obtained a B.A. in Political Science and Public Administration from the Faculty of Social and Political Science of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, and a Master’s degree in Political Science at the Center of International Studies of El Colegio de México. He worked in the public officials’ training program at the National Institute of Public Administration (INAP), as well as in several governmental agencies, such as the Ministry of the Interior and the President’s Office. He has participated in several electoral observation missions and technical assistance projects. He has written several articles on electoral issues, and collaborated in the second edition of the Electoral Dictionary published by the Centre for Electoral Promotion and Assistance of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (IIDH/CAPEL).
**Patricio Ballados** obtained a BA in Law from the National Autonomous University of Mexico and a Master’s Degree in Political Science and Government from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). His professional career has been in the electoral field, human rights, gender equality and international affairs. Currently, he is the Director of the Democratic Governance Program at UNDP. He has been General Coordinator of Advisors at the Presidency of the Federal Electoral Court and Coordinator of the Unit of Vote from Abroad at the Federal Electoral Institute.

**Nguyen Huu Dong** holds a Bachelor’s degree in Political Science by Lausanne University, a Master’s degree in Sociology by the Sorbonne University and a PhD in Economics by the Paris High School of Social Sciences. He was visiting professor at El Colegio de México, the University of Chulalongkorn, the UNAM, Sussex University, Hanoi University, Algeria University and Paris University. He works for the United Nations since 1984, where he has been Officer of Economic Affairs in Bangkok, Chief of Staff of Social Development in CEPAL, Mexico, and Officer of Economic Affairs in New York. He has participated in electoral missions in Nicaragua, Haiti, El Salvador, Eritrea, South Africa, Republic of Center Arica, West Sahara, Guinea – Conakry, Zimbabwe, Nigeria and East Timor. He is currently International Coordinator of Projects for Electoral Assistance and Democratic Culture of the United Nations Developing Program in Mexico.

**Arturo Sánchez**, currently he is professor at the Technological Institute Autonomous of Mexico (ITAM) and at El Colegio de México; he has been an academic in the Mexican Institute of Political Studies, sociology professor in the UAM-Azcapotzalco and Political Science professor at the National University. He holds a Bachelor’s degree in Sociology from the Metropolitan Autonomous University (UAM), Azcapotzalco, and a Master’s degree in Latin American Studies from the Oxford University, England, and he is a PhD in Political Science candidate by the same University. He was Research Director of the Mexican Institute of Political Studies, invited academic in the Centre of Mexico-United States’ Studies, and academic professor at the Latin American Faculty of Social Science. Moreover, he has been coordinator of the Master in Government and Political Affairs of the Latin American Faculty of Social Science. He was Executive Director of Political Parties and Prerogatives at IFE and then elected Electoral Councilor from 2003-20011 where he presided the Council of Media.

**Miguel Ángel Rojano** is Director of Cartography at Federal Electoral Institute since 1999, where is responsible for cartography updating and modernization of the technical infrastructure of the Federal Voters Registry. He studied Biomedical Engineering with a specialty on medical electronics at the
Autonomous Metropolitan University. Since 1992, he has collaborated in electronic research programs at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. Since 1993, he has been working at the Federal Electoral Institute. From 1996 and 1997 he was in charge of the integration of the Voters’ List incorporating the voter’s photographs; in 1997 and 1998 he was Director of Technical Support.

René Miranda holds a degree in Electrical Mechanics Engineering with concentration in Communications and Electronics from the National Autonomous University of Mexico, and is currently studying a Master’s degree in Information Technology and Administration at the Autonomous Technological Institute of Mexico. He has been Project Supervisor of the division of Academic Computing Services at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. At IFE, he has been Deputy Director of Communications of the Preliminary Electoral Results Program; Computing Coordinator and Director of Operations of the Technical Computing and Information Unit. He currently is Executive Director of the Federal Electoral Register at IFE, where from 2001 he has been the General Coordinator of the Technical Computing and Information Unit, as responsible for the development and operation of information systems, and for planning new investment projects on information technologies.

Alfredo Ríos Camarena is the Head of the Executive Direction of Political Parties and Prerogatives of the Federal Electoral Institute. He has held several positions at IFE, such as Chief of Staff of the President Councilor Dr. Leonardo Valdés and the Temporary- Chairman of the Executive Direction of Administration and of the Legal Direction.

Alfredo Cristalinas holds a degree in Accounting by the National Autonomous University of Mexico. He has held several positions at the Tax Revenue Administration Service Office. From 2007 to 2009 he was Manager of Planning and Programming in the General Administration of the Federal Tax Audit. He is a member of the Accountability and Governmental Auditing Commission of the Public Accountants College of Mexico. He has participated in International Meetings of Internal Auditing, and in conferences on Tax Administration. He has published articles in national newspapers and magazines. In 2009 he was appointed as the Head of the Oversight Unit for Political Parties Resources at the IFE.

Luis Javier Vaquero holds a B.A. in Law by the National School of Professional Studies of the National Autonomous University of Mexico; and a Masters’ degree in Sociology by the Autonomous Meritorious University of Puebla. He has participated in seminars, congresses and workshops regarding human rights and environment. He has taught the following course: Law, Society and State,
Miguel Ángel Solís is currently Executive Director of Electoral Organization at the Federal Electoral Institute. He holds a degree in Elementary Education, and a Bachelors’ degree in Middle Education, specializing in Spanish Language and Literature, and a Master’s degree in Education Sciences specializing in Education Research. He has taught and participated in Diplomas on Educative Administration and Public Policies. He participated in the Training and Professional Development Program of the IFE’s Professional Electoral Service. He has represented the IFE at the observation mission in the federal elections of the United States in 2002. He was a facilitator of Constitutional Law in the Training and Development Program for the IFE’s Professional Electoral Service.

Gerardo Martínez graduated from the National School of Teachers. From 1974 to 1991 he was professor at different public and private institutions. Since 1992 he works at the Federal Electoral Institute where he has held different positions: he was Department Officer in the First and Third Circumscription; Executive Officer of District 01 in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas; Deputy Director of the Third Circumscription; Executive Secretary of the Local Board of Veracruz; Director of the Forth Circumscription. Since 1999 he is Director of Statistics and Electoral Documentation. He has been speaker at different national and international forums, including Master’s programs in electoral law. He has advised different countries on electoral matters such as Haiti.

María del Carmen Colín is director of the Planning and Monitoring Department of the Executive Direction of Electoral Organization at IFE. She studied economics at UNAM and specialized in financial markets. She’s also been following the specialization on Electoral Justice from the Federal Electoral Court. She taught at UNAM’s Economics Faculty prior to her arrival at IFE’s Electoral Processes division in 1997. She entered IFE’s Professional Service in 1999 and se has occupied posts such as Local Electoral Training responsible and deputy director for Monitoring and Planning. She has taught many courses and seminars
over electoral material for political parties, electoral observers and students.

**Jorge Torres** is a Computer Engineer by the National Autonomous University of Mexico. He was in charge of the design, building, and release of the first UNAM’s website. He was part of UNAM’s team as transmitter for the Preliminary Electoral Results Program in 1997. He became Deputy Director for the Federal Electoral Institute’s Computer Services Technical Communications Unit in 1999. He was appointed Operations Manager of the same Unit in 2001. He has carried out a Technical Coordinator role for the Preliminary Electoral Results Program, introduced for 2006, 2009, and 2012 federal elections. He has been appointed Office Manager of the Information Services’ Technical Unit since May 2013.
III. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MEXICAN POLITICAL-ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND ITS ELECTORAL ORGANISMS

The Mexican Electoral System

I. Political Organization

Mexico is a Federal State composed by thirty-two states: thirty-one states and the Federal District (Mexico City), the later being the seat of the Federal Branches. The government system is presidential. Both the power of the Federation and that of the thirty-two states are based on the principle of division of powers among the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Branches.

The Federal Executive power rests upon the President of the United Mexican States, in each one of the thirty-one states upon the Governor for each entity and in the Chief of Government for the Federal District. All of them are elected every six years and may not be re-elected.

The Federal Legislative Branch is vested upon the Union Congress, which is divided into an Upper and a Lower Chamber. The Legislative Branch of the thirty-two states is single-chambered; those belonging to the thirty-one states are called local congresses and the one for the Federal District is called Legislative Assembly. All legislators are elected for a three-year period, except the members of the Upper Chamber who serve a six-year period.

The Judicial Branch of the federation is vested upon the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation, made up of eleven ministers elected by the vote of two thirds of the Upper Chamber members, put forward by the President, to serve fifteen-year terms. The Judicial Branch of the thirty-two states is vested upon their respective Supreme Court of Justice.

The Constitution establishes that all the states of the federation must adopt the municipality as the basis for the territorial, political, and administrative division. A municipal Town Hall, elected through public and direct voting, administers each of the 2,441 municipalities into which the country is divided. Each municipal Town Hall is made up of a Municipal President and a varying number of officers and trustees.
2. Composition and Renewal of the Federal Branches

The Constitution acknowledges the elections as the only legitimate valid method to make up and renew the Federal Executive and Legislative Branches of the states and of the City Councils.

1. Executive Branch

The Supreme Federal Executive Branch rests upon one single member. It is vested upon the President of the United Mexican States. Besides leading the government of the Republic, the President is also Chief of State and the Army. He is elected every six years through direct election, universal suffrage, and the principle of relative or simple majority. The Political Constitution strictly forbids re-election in any modality.

2. Legislative Branch

The Federal Legislative Branch is vested upon the Union Congress, which is divided into an Upper and a Lower Chamber. 500 members who serve for a three-year period and may not be re-elected for an immediate period compose the Lower Chamber, and 128 members who are elected for a six-year period and may only be re-elected after a midterm period, compose the Upper Chamber.

Composition of the Lower Chamber

The Lower Chamber is made up of 500 representatives, all of whom are renewed every three years according to a variation of the personalized proportional representation system in which some of its members are elected by a majority formula and the remaining by a proportional representation formula, under terms that assure a high degree of proportionality between votes and seats.

Therefore, out of the 500 members that make up the Lower Chamber, 300 are elected by relative majority in single-member districts, and the other 200 are elected by proportional representation through the system of party lists in five multi-member districts of 40 seats each.

On this basis, the Constitution establishes two especially relevant provisions regarding the composition of the Lower Chamber:

No political party may have more than 300 Lower Chamber members elected by both principles, that is, relative majority and proportional representation. Thus, if a political party may aspire to the absolute majority of seats (251) due to its electoral performance, the law prevents it from reaching the qualified majority (two thirds of the total seats) required to approve constitutional reforms by the party itself.

In general terms and in order to guarantee proportionality between votes-seats, no political party is allowed to have a total number of Lower Chamber members that exceeds eight points from the percentage of national votes cast on its behalf. For instance, if a political party wins 35 percent of the election, it will not be entitled to obtain more than 43 percent of the seats, that is, more than 215 of the 500 seats.
The Constitution also establishes that the only exception to this rule shall be in the event that a political party gains a percentage of the overall Chamber seats that exceeds the sum of the percentage of the national votes cast plus 8 percent through relative majority voting in single-member districts. For instance, if a party wins 235 of the single-member districts (amounting to 47 percent of the total), with 35 percent of the total votes cast, the proportionality rule of 8 percent would not be applicable even though the differential between votes and seats would amount to 12 percent.

The Federal Lower Chamber members may not be re-elected for the immediate following term, although this restriction does not apply to the substitute Lower Chamber members who have never been in office. In this case, they may become holder Lower Chamber members for the immediate following term. However, the holder Lower Chamber members may not be elected for the immediate following term as substitutes.

**Election of Lower Chamber Members through the Principle of Relative Majority**

The election of the 300 federal Lower Chamber members through the principle of relative majority is conducted in 300 single-member districts. The distribution of the 300 districts among the thirty-two states is established according to the percentage of the population living in each of them. Based on the results obtained in the population and dwelling census that is carried out every ten years in Mexico, the Constitution establishes that no state may have less than two federal single-member districts.

The most recent redistribution of the 300 districts among the thirty-two states in order to guarantee that each deputy represents an equivalent segment of the population and hence satisfies the principle of equity in the vote was verified between April 2004 and January 2005, based on the population census carried out in 2000. This new district distribution will be in force until the midterm federal elections of July 2009, and a new district distribution will take place before the presidential and legislative elections of 2012.

The following chart indicates the distribution of the 300 single-member districts in the thirty-two states, resulting from the revision made in 2004 and in force until the midterm elections of 2009.

**Election of Lower Chamber Members through the Principle of Proportional Representation**

The election of the 200 Lower Chamber members through the principle of proportional representation is carried out by means of regional voters lists in five multi-member districts. 40 Lower Chamber members are equally elected in each of these districts.

In order to participate in the Lower Chamber member’s election, a political party must demonstrate that it has registered candidates for Lower Chamber seats to be elected through the principle of relative majority in at least 200 of the 300 single-member districts. If it complies with this requirement, the political party may proceed to the registration of its regional list of candidates in the five multi-member districts. These regional lists are closed and blocked, meaning that the order of the candidacies is invariable and none of them may be eliminated.

For a party to be entitled to have members of proportional representation in the Lower
Chamber, it must attain at least 2 percent of the total votes cast for these elections. The Constitution establishes that a political party that complies with the two aforementioned requirements shall be allocated a number of proportional representation Lower Chamber members per district according to the percentage of national votes won and considering the provisions regarding the maximum amount of seats that a single party may have (300) and the rule of proportionality in the votes/seats ratio of 8 percent, when applicable.

The electoral legislation details the applicable formulas and procedures to appoint proportional representation Lower Chamber members, considering the different hypotheses or scenarios set forth by the aforementioned provisions.

**Composition of the Upper Chamber**

The Upper Chamber or Senate is composed by 128 members elected through a segmented system in which a section is elected by a majority formula and another by a proportionality formula. Unlike the Lower Chamber, the two segments operate independently.

Three Senators are elected in each of the thirty-two states. For this purpose, the political parties must register a list with two formulas for their candidates. Two of the seats are allocated through the relative majority principle, that is, they belong to the party that obtained the largest number of votes, and the third one is appointed through the first minority principle, that is, to the party that obtained the second largest amount of votes.

The remaining thirty-two seats are appointed by means of the proportional representation system, according to voter rolls in one single national multi-member district. The law establishes that a pure proportionality formula (natural quotient and higher remainder) must be used for their appointment.

As earlier mentioned, the substitute Lower and Upper Chamber members may be elected for the immediate following term as holder members, provided that they had never been in office, but holder Upper and Lower Chamber members may not be elected as substitutes for the immediate following term.

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**Electoral Management Bodies**

There are two main features regarding electoral matter that determine the distribution of competences. First, the Federation, as well as the 32 states, has their own regulations, institutions and procedures in electoral matter. That is to say, the boundaries between the electoral competences of the two levels of government are clearly marked. Hence, although they have some fundamental rules in common, federal elections (President, Representatives and Senators) and local elections (Governors, State Representatives and local authorities) are ruled and organized separately.

Second, the administrative and the jurisdictional functions are clearly separated and therefore are given to different organs for each level of government.

The Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) is an autonomous, public organization, with an independent character regarding its decisions and functioning. It is in charge of organizing federal elections, that is, the election of President of the United Mexican States and Lower and
Upper Chamber members that constitute the Union Congress.

It was formally established on October 11, 1990, as the result of a series of reforms to the Constitution approved in 1989 and the issuing of a new legislation in electoral matter, the current Federal Code of Electoral Institutions and Procedures (COFIPE) in August 1990. This new legislation underwent its latest reform process by the end of 2007. The Legislative Branch, the national political parties, and the citizens participate in the integration of the IFE.

The Constitution states that the Federal Electoral Institute must be ruled by five fundamental principles:

- Certainty
- Legality
- Independence
- Impartiality
- Objectivity

The IFE is endowed with a permanent character, legal personality and patrimony of its own. Its headquarters are in the Federal District, and in order to carry out its tasks it operates in a decentralized fashion across the nation.

Ever since its creation, the constitutional and legal regulations in this matter have experienced significant reform processes, which have had an impact on its integration, attributions and functions. It is worth mentioning the reforms of 1996 and 2007. The first one because it reinforced the level of independence and autonomy of the IFE by completely dissociating the Executive Branch from any aspect regarding its integration and functioning, and by reserving the vote within all its directive bodies to Councilors that do not have links to any party or to any State power or body. The second, because it strengthened and extended IFE’s attributions, especially in terms of oversight audit and control of the funding of political parties and electoral campaigns, as well as the administration of the slots allocated to the State on radio and television to operate a new electoral advertisement scheme.

In order to guarantee a professional and specialized performance, the Institute relies on a special system regarding recruitment, selection, training, and evaluation of qualified staff to provide electoral services, especially in areas directly linked with the preparation and organization of elections. This system is called Professional Electoral Service.

Fundamental Goals

The electoral legislation establishes that the organization and functioning of the IFE must be oriented towards the achievement of eight fundamental goals:

- To contribute to the development of democracy.
- To preserve the strengthening of the political party system.
- To integrate the federal registry of voters.
- To ensure the citizens’ exercise of political-electoral rights and to guard the observation of their duties.
• To guarantee periodical and peaceful elections to renew the Legislature and the Executive Branch.
• To watch for the authenticity and effectiveness of suffrage.
• To promote voting and democratic culture.
• To serve as the sole authority to administer the slots belonging to the State in radio and television designated to electoral bodies objectives and to guarantee the rights of the political parties.

Main Attributions

The IFE is directly responsible for all of the activities concerning the preparation, organization, conduction, and surveillance of the federal electoral processes, as well as for those regarding the goals that the law has established for it. Among its main attributions are the following:

• To periodically determine and revise the electoral geography.
• To elaborate and update the Federal Registry of Voters, and issue the photographic voting card required for casting a vote.
• To register national political groups and parties as well as guard their rights and prerogatives.
• To set the ceilings for campaign expenses.
• To oversee and audit the origin, management and application of all parties’ resources regarding ordinary and campaign activities.
• To register the candidacies for federal election posts.
• To design, print, and distribute all electoral materials.
• To select and train the polling site officers.
• To regulate the electoral observation and the opinion surveys and polls.
• To count the electoral results.
• To declare the validity and grant certificates in the elections for Lower and Upper Chamber members.
• To review and sanction the electoral penalties and infringements established in the law.
• To design and implement permanent civic education programs.

The Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) gets the administrative powers that belong to the federal level; that is to say, those related to the election of the President, the members of the Lower Chamber and the Senators. The jurisdictional activity belongs to the Federal Electoral Court, a specialized organ of the Judicial Branch of the Federation. This Court has the faculty to solve federal electoral controversies and, in certain cases, some local electoral disputes.

The Institute is located in the Federal District (Mexico City), but acts all over the country through a wide net of decentralized organs that represent it in the capital cities of the 32
states and in the 300 electoral districts, in which the country has been divided into for electoral purposes.

The IFE has the power to perform fully and directly all the duties related to the preparation, organization, conduction and surveillance of federal elections, including the revision and adjustment of electoral geography, the integration and updating of the electoral roll, the attention due to the rights, obligations and prerogatives of the political parties and national political groups, the creation and execution of permanent programs for voters’ education, and the administration of free time on radio and TV.

**IFE’s organizational structure**

The IFE’s General Council is the highest directive organ of the Institute; therefore, its main responsibility is to monitor the compliance with constitutional and legal provisions on electoral matters and to ensure that Institute guides itself under the principles of certainty, legality, independence, impartiality and objectivity. It is composed of nine members that have voice and vote, and a variable number of members only with voice.

The nine members with voice and vote are the President Councilor and eight Electoral Councilors. They are elected by the vote of two thirds of the Chamber of Deputies, among the proposals made by the parliamentary groups and subject to wide consultation with the society. The President Councilor is elected to serve a period of six years (the period of the current President began on February 2008) and can be reelected only once. All eight council
members are elected on a staggered basis to serve a period of nine years and cannot be reelected.

The members with voice are the councilors of the Legislature (now seven, one from each parliamentary group), representatives of political parties (also currently seven) and the Institute’s Executive Secretary, who is appointed and removed by the President Councilor’s proposal and two thirds of the General Council’s vote.

The current Electoral Council is integrated by:

- Dr. Leonardo Valdés Zurita, President Councilor
- Dr. Maria Elizondo Macarita Gasperín, Electoral Councilor
- MSc. Marco Antonio Martínez Baños, Electoral Councilor
- Dr. Francisco Javier Guerrero Aguirre, Electoral Councilor
- MSc. Alfredo Fernandez Figueroa, Electoral Councilor
- Dr. Benito Nacif Hernández, Electoral Councilor
- Dr. Lorenzo Córdova Vianello, Electoral Councilor
- Dr. María Marván Laborde, Electoral Councilor

Voters Registry

The exact and timely registration, as well as the updating and permanent refinement of the diverse instruments that contain the names and personal information of all Mexican citizens that hold the right to vote, constitutes an essential requirement to guarantee the transparency and reliability of the electoral processes.

In Mexico, the vote is universal, free, secret, direct, personal and not transferable. All persons with Mexican nationality, by birth or by naturalization, who are 18 years of age or older, and have an honest way of living, have the right to vote. However, in order to exercise this right, the law establishes certain additional requirements such as registration of the citizen in the Federal Registry of Voters and possession of a photo-voting card, which is issued free of charge by the Federal Electoral Institute.

The electoral registry in Mexico is of an active nature, that is, it is responsibility of the citizens who fulfill the requirements, to attend, carry out and complete their registration in person before one of the field offices or modules set up for this purpose by the IFE throughout the country.

In any case, the registration process is verified by an accurate geographic-electoral frame in
accordance to the voters’ home address within the national territory which also determines the place where, as a general rule, the citizens must vote. The specific territorial site is called electoral section, which is the basic geographical unit into which the national territory is divided for electoral purposes. According to the law, an electoral section is made up of a minimum of 50 and a maximum of 1,500 voters; within the limits of each section, a polling booth or site must be installed for every 750 registered voters.

It is important to point out that the registry of voters is federal, which implies that it is also used for local elections. The use of the instruments from the Federal Registry of Voters for such purpose is formalized through collaboration agreements between the IFE and the local governments and electoral authorities.

**Political Parties Regime**

The Political Constitution conceives political parties as entities of public interest. Therefore, it acknowledges them as subjects to public legislation and it is the State’s consequent obligation to guarantee the conditions and the assistance needed for their development. On this basis, the Constitution acknowledges three fundamental aims for political parties:

- To promote the people's participation in democratic life.
- To contribute to the national representation integration.
- To assist people in the exercise of organized political power, in compliance with the programs, principles and ideas they propose and through universal, free, secret, and direct suffrage.

Besides, the Constitution establishes that only the citizens may form political parties and associate freely and individually to them, and prohibits the intervention of gremial organizations or with any other social purpose in the creation of parties and any form of corporate affiliation.

Today there are seven registered national political parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Name</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partido Acción Nacional (PAN)</td>
<td>PAN</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Action Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI)</td>
<td>PRI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional Revolutionary Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partido de la Revolución Demócrática (PRD)</td>
<td>PRD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Democratic Revolution Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partido Verde Ecologista de México (PVEM)</td>
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<td>Mexican Green Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partido del Trabajo (PT)</td>
<td>PT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labor Party</td>
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Registration and Legal Acknowledgement of the Political Parties

For an organization made up by citizens to become a political party and possess the rights, prerogatives and obligations established for it by the law, it is mandatory to apply and obtain legal registry before the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE). The name of national political party is exclusively awarded to those political organizations that have obtained registry as political parties, by satisfying two essential requirements:

- Submit its declaration of principles, as well as a consistent program and bylaws to regulate its activities.
- Account for three thousand members in at least twenty of the thirty-two states, or 300 in at least 200 of the 300 single-member districts into which the country is divided for electoral purposes; although the law establishes that the total number of its members may never amount to less than 0.26 percent of the registered voters in the national Electoral Roll used in the ordinary federal election that preceded the submission of the registry application.

The process to obtain the registry as a national political party is subject to time limits and procedures specifically established by law, and invariably take place during the two years between ordinary federal elections. Firstly, any interested organization must notify its purpose to the IFE during the month of January, of the year that follows an ordinary federal election. It must not only carry out a series of actions to prove that it complies with the requirements, but also inform on a monthly basis to the IFE about the origin and destination of the resources obtained for the development of activities aimed at obtaining the registry.

The General Council of the IFE forms a commission to examine the submitted documentation and emits the corresponding resolution. If the application is legitimate, the General Council issues a registry certificate, which is in force as of August 1, of the year before the following ordinary election. The registry is permanent and may only be lost on the grounds specified by law.

Rights and Prerogatives

The rights of the national political parties are grouped in two categories:

- To participate in the preparation, development and surveillance of the federal electoral processes.
- To organize internal processes to select and nominate candidates in federal elections.
- To make use of the prerogatives and receive public funding for its permanent and electoral activities.
To form coalitions, both for federal and local elections.
To participate in state, municipal and Federal District’s elections.
To sign electoral agreements of participation with National Political Groups.
To benefit from the guarantees to freely carry out their activities.
To appoint representatives before the collegiate bodies of the IFE (surveillance commissions and council).
To own, possess or administer the real estate necessary for the direct and immediate achievement of their purposes.
To establish relations with foreign political parties or organizations provided that they maintain their absolute political and economic independence, and that the integrity and sovereignty of the Mexican State and its government agencies are respected.
To have permanent and free access to radio and television.
To benefit from postal and telegraph exemptions from payment, whenever necessary to achieve their functions.

Obligations
Oppositely, the law establishes some obligations for political parties, among which are the following:

- To conduct legal activities and adjust their behavior and that of their affiliates to the principles of the democratic State, respecting at all times the free participation of other political parties and all citizens.
- To maintain the number of affiliates required to preserve their registry and the effective functioning of their statutory bodies; to comply with the affiliation regulations and comply with the statutory procedures for the nomination of candidates.
- To guarantee equity of gender within the directive bodies and nominations to posts of popular election.
- To avoid the use of expressions which denigrate or slander the institutions, parties or people, in political or electoral campaigns.
- Preserve their full independence.
- To admit audits and verifications by the IFE and submit the documents required regarding their income and expenses.
- To comply with their obligations in terms of transparency and information accessibility.

Financing and Monitoring of Political Parties System
In 1986, political parties achieved the constitutional right to receive public funding for the activities aimed at fulfilling their duties. Ever since then, and on that basis, the electoral legislation has established, developed and perfected provisions aimed at regulating, controlling and supervising the funding system of the political parties and electoral campaigns.
in a clear, accurate and integral fashion.

In fact, recent constitutional and legal reforms starting in 1993 and being the latest those passed by the Congress at the end of 2007, have made a set of adjustments and innovations, with the purpose of guaranteeing conditions of equity in the electoral contest and to ensure a more transparent accountability and a closer monitoring regarding the funding of parties and campaigns.

1. Public Funding

Firstly, it must be outlined that the Constitution establishes that public funding must prevail over private sources of funding. Therefore, no party may collect funds for an amount that equals or exceeds the one received from public funding. Public funding is granted under three differentiated concepts and the General Council of the IFE is in charge of determining the amounts based on procedures provided for by law. There is public funding for permanent ordinary activities, campaign expenses, and specific activities as entities of public interest.

2. Private Funding

The law specifies and regulates four sources of private funding for political parties:

a) From members: it comprises the ordinary and extraordinary fees of members and the contributions of their social organizations, whose amounts and frequency are freely determined by each political party. It also includes the voluntary and personal fees that the candidates of each party contribute to their own campaigns, and the internal party body in charge of its finances establishes the ceilings.

b) From supporters: it includes all donations and contributions, in money or goods, freely and voluntarily made by Mexican individuals or corporations that reside in the country, provided they are not comprised among the categories specifically prohibited by law.

c) Self-financing: it includes all the income obtained from promotional activities, such as conferences, shows, games, draws, cultural events, sales of publications or similar that are carried out in order to collect funds.

d) From financial yields: it comprises the yields generated through the funds that the political parties may create with their own patrimony in Mexican banks. The law establishes that all accounts, funds or trusteeships are not protected by bank secrecy so that the IFE may supervise them at all times.

Regarding the ceilings for private funding, no political party may receive an annual amount of funding from its members (including candidates), self-financing and collections in rallies or the streets, which exceeds the 10 percent established as a limit for campaign expenses of the preceding presidential election. Besides, contributions in cash by individuals or organizations have a limit, which equals 0.5 percent of the same ceiling for campaign expenses of the previous presidential election.

3. Prohibitions and Restrictions to Party Funding

The electoral legislation specifically points out the different private and public agencies, both domestic and foreign, that may not make contributions or donations to the political parties, whether in money or goods, either by themselves or through third parties. Among them are
the Federal Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches; the state and town halls; foreign political parties, individuals or corporations; international organizations of any nature; religious ministers, and associations, churches or groups of any religion or sect; people who live or work abroad; and Mexican mercantile corporations.

Likewise, it sets forth that political parties and groups may not request credits from the development bank to finance their activities, nor receive contributions from unidentified individuals, except for those obtained through collections in rallies or on the street.

4. Accountability and Monitoring System

The criteria, procedures, and mechanisms for the transparency and accountability on the origin and destination of financial resources collected and handled by political parties have developed simultaneously with the widening and strengthening of the provisions regarding the political parties funding system. The latest updates on this matter resulted from the legal and constitutional reforms of 2007 and have to do with the creation of a specialized technical entity in charge of the control and monitoring of the parties finances and campaigns. It is bestowed with attributions to carry out these responsibilities, especially since it is not limited by bank or fiscal secrecy.

Political parties must appoint an internal agency in charge of receiving and administering general and campaign resources, as well as of filing annual, pre-campaign and campaign reports on the origin, amount, destination and use of the income received through any kind of funding, in the following terms:

The revision of the reports filed by the political parties and groups regarding the origin and destination of their ordinary, pre-campaign and campaign expenses, as well as the monitoring of their resources, and the accounting and financial status of the parties is a faculty of the IFE’s General Council Oversight Unit for the Resources of the Political Parties.

Equity Conditions of the Electoral Contest

During the nineties, the main reform concerns were aiming to ensure equal opportunities in the electoral contest. In this matter, two fundamental provisions are outlined: the guarantees and conditions of access to the mass media that dramatically changed due to the most recent constitutional and legal reforms, and the accompanying changes to the setting of ceilings to campaign expenses.

1. Regulations on the Access and Use of Radio and Television for Electoral Purposes

Since the constitutional reforms of 2007-2009, all political parties (including pre-candidates and candidates) may only access the media by means of the slots in radio and television allotted to the State, that is, the use of those slots is exclusive of the political parties and entirely free. It is even prohibited to broadcast within the national territory, radio or television propaganda hired abroad with the purpose of influencing in favor or against any political party or candidate.

To this purpose, the IFE is the only authority in charge of administering radio and television slots belonging to the State, for the political parties to exercise their prerogative of
permanent use, and for the use of the Institute itself as well as the other electoral authorities. As the single authority, the IFE is also responsible of administering the time spans corresponding to the political parties for local elections and the time requested by the authorities responsible for the organization of local elections.

The access remains permanent, but whereas the time that is distributed daily between the political parties is four minutes in radio and three in television, during electoral periods the daily allowance is significantly increased. In fact, during the pre-campaigns, the time distributed on a daily basis amounts to 18 minutes equally for television and radio stations, and increases to 41 minutes a day per channel and station during campaign periods. The prerogative comprises all concessionary media (commercial) and licensed (public or social), that include 1,800 radio stations and 500 TV channels operating within the country. During non-electoral periods, the prerogative comprises a five-minute monthly program and 20-minute slots, equally distributed between all parties. During electoral periods (pre-campaigns and campaigns) the time is divided into 30, 60 and 120-second slots, assorted between 6:00 a.m. and 12 p.m. and distributed among the political parties under the proportionality formula used for direct public funding: 30 percent equally and 70 percent according to the number of votes obtained in the previous Lower Chamber election.

On this basis and to ensure the adequate participation of all political parties in this matter, there is a radio and television committee in the IFE, made up by a representative of each one of the political parties, three Electoral Counselors and a Technical Secretary (the IFE’s Executive Director of Prerogatives and Political Parties), responsible for approving the terms for the transmission of messages and programs. Concessionaries and license holders may not alter those terms nor ask for additional requirements to those approved by the Committee for the transmission of promotional materials.

The law establishes that political or electoral advertisement broadcasted by the parties, coalitions and candidates must avoid the use of expressions that denigrate or slander the institutions, other political parties or the people. In this regards, the General Council of the IFE is entitled to command the immediate interruption of any radio or television message that violates this disposition.

Also, the General Council of the IFE must monitor the electoral pre-campaign and campaign transmissions included in the radio and television news programs and disclose the results of the monitoring at least every two weeks. Political parties, coalitions and candidates are entitled to challenge the information presented by the media when such information is considered inaccurate.

2. Campaign Expenses Ceilings

Since 1993, the law entitles the IFE to set ceilings to the expenses in which the political parties, coalitions, or candidates may incur during the electoral campaigns for President and Chamber members. Since party plurality and competitiveness are growing, the main aim of these provisions is to offer conditions of equity in the electoral contest, in order to prevent that economic differences between political groups become a deciding factor on the outcome of the elections.

Because of the recent reforms on electoral matter and the new free access scheme of political parties to radio and television (that eliminated the high expenditure of hiring time
slots thus increasing the cost of campaigns), the formulas used by the General Council of the IFE to determine the ceilings on campaign expenses were tuned down to the following:

- For presidential elections the ceilings must be equal to 20 percent of the public funding for campaign expenses established for all parties on the year of presidential elections.
- For relative majority Lower Chamber members, the amount is that resulting from dividing the ceilings for the presidential election campaign into 300, that is, into the number of districts into which the national territory is divided for the election of majority Lower Chamber representatives.
- For each one of the Upper Chamber formulas elected by the majority principle (by state), the ceilings must amount the result from multiplying the ceilings for the Lower Chamber representatives by the number of districts comprised by the entity, but without considering a number of districts more than 20. Therefore, for those states that have more than 20 as the state of Mexico (40), the Federal District (27) or Veracruz (21), only 20 will be considered.

The law states that campaign ceilings include the expenses on account of generic advertisement (placards, banners, meetings in rented premises, utilitarian propaganda, etcetera); and campaign overhead expenses (salaries and wages of the temporary staff, occasional renting of real estate or movable items, transportation for material or staff, and similar ones); printed propaganda and the production of radio and television messages. However, the ceilings do not include the expenses for the ordinary operation of parties nor for the support of their directive bodies and organizations.

Electoral Training

The electoral training provides the tools to different actors (citizens acting as election polling site officers political parties, electoral observers, citizens) involved in the development, monitoring and observation of electoral processes to fulfill the entrusted task.

- **Polling station officers**: Citizens selected randomly, by means of two drawings, to receive, count and register the votes during Election- Day. The training program is based on the cascade program as shown in the chart:
**Electoral Supervisors and Electoral Assistant Trainers**
To rely on staff to assist the notification, appointment’s delivery and training of the citizens who will serve as polling site board officials.

**First training stage**
visiting, notification and training

**Second training stage**
designing, notify and train the citizens that will integrate the polling site directive boards, as they will receive, count and register the votes on the Election Day.

- **Electoral Supervisors and Electoral Assistant Training**: To rely on staff to assist the notification, appointment’s delivery and training of the citizens who will serve as polling site board officials.
- **Integration of the Polling Site Directive Boards**

  **First Stage**
  To notify, make aware and integrate the list of eligible citizens by section, from the drawn citizens (10% of the nominal list)

  The stages for the integration of the polling stations according the art 240 of the COFIPE are:

  1. General Council raffle
  2. First Training course:

    **Training Modes**: a) *In situ*: Teaching platform: Cognitive approach, constructivist theory and skills development. b) Individual or group: Home address; Alternative space determined by the EAT; Temporary of fixed training centers.

    **Materials**: Basic information for the drawn citizens, manual of electoral trainer-assistant (volume 1 and 1), electoral supervisor manual, polling station officer manual, document with the different stages of the election day, recommendations for the training courses for indigenous population, notification letter

  3. Objective evaluation
Second Stage

The stages for the integration of the polling site stations directive boards according the art 240 of the COFIPE are:

1. Raffle done by General Council
2. Second Raffle (councils) and designation of positions (boards)
3. Publication list
4. Notification ad second stages of training (substitutions, drills and practices)

Materials: Polling station officer manual, exercise notebooks, polling station officer Manual( special polling station), exercise notebooks(special polling stations), informative brochure on the Election Day, document with the different stages of the election day, document “Important aspects to carefully watch out during the election day” (drills and polling stations), list of activities of the FMDC (drills and polling stations), video of the election day, interactive CD, sample materials and documents for drills and practices, data form for the course for polling station officers, notifications

Electoral Organization

 Composition and Location of the Polling Site Directive Boards

The polling site directive boards are the electoral bodies which are instated on the day of the election for the reception and preliminary counting of votes. The electoral section constitutes the basic geographic unit used to determine the location of the polling site directive boards. By law, an electoral section should comprehend a minimum of 50 and a maximum of 1,500 voters and should install a poling site for every 750 voters or corresponding fraction.

Each polling site directive board is made up by a president, a secretary, and two scrutinizers, as well as by three general substitutes, a total of seven members. All of them must reside in the corresponding electoral section and must be included in the respective voters list. These posts are distributed according to their education level. For the fulfillment of their duties, the members of the directive board receive two training courses designed and implemented by the IFE, which may be supervised by the political parties.

The ruling legislation establishes that the polling sites should be located in places with free and easy access for voters, that allow the installation of booths or modules that guarantee secrecy in the casting of the vote, and that places which may be susceptible to influencing should be avoided. To this end, the preferred locations would be schools and public offices. In any case, it corresponds to the district councils of the IFE to determine the number and
location of the polling site that will be installed in the sections included within their area of jurisdiction. According to estimates, for the day of the election of July 5, 2009, there will be about 140,000 polling sites installed throughout the national territory.

In order to let voters know, in a timely and accurate fashion, the makeup and location of the polling sites where they must cast their vote, the law mandates that the exact location of the polling sites to be installed in each section, as well as the names of the members of the directive board, shall be published up to two times prior to the election day.

➢ Polling Day

The polling day is undoubtedly the crucial stage of the electoral process. During this stage, the citizens cast their votes, which will determine the integration of the national representation bodies.

The polling day starts at 8:00 a.m. with the installation and opening of the polling sites, and ends with the closing of the sites, after the scrutiny and tally of the votes received in each one of the sites have been carried out and the respective electoral dossiers have been put together.

➢ Installation and Opening of the Polling Site

At 8:00 a.m., the four regular members of the directive board shall install the polling site before the political party representatives that are present. A polling site may never be installed before 8:00 a.m., and the directive board officials may not leave before it is closed.

If a polling site is not installed according to the ordinary procedure, the electoral law provides a series of sequential alternatives, the last of which authorizes the political party representatives (in the absence of the previously appointed polling site officials or IFE staff) to appoint the necessary officials to integrate a polling site directive board. These officials may only be elected from among the voters of the electoral section who are present at the polling site to cast their vote, since no party representative may be appointed.

Installing the polling site at a different place than the one previously determined by the proper electoral agency constitutes grounds for the annulment of the votes received in it. Therefore, the law specifies the circumstances in which there could be a justified cause for the installment of the polling site at a different place from the one agreed beforehand by the respective district council. If the directive board must change the location of the polling site, the new location must be within the same section and at the nearest available setting. A notification of the change of location must be posted outside the original site.

➢ Voting

Polling sites are places specially adapted to receive and carry out the initial vote tallying. The amount of polling sites installed throughout the national territory is based on the electoral sections, which are the minimum units into which the national geography is divided for election purposes. An electoral section is made up of a minimum of 50 and a maximum of 1,500 voters. The law provides for the installation of a polling site for every 750 voters or corresponding fraction of an electoral section.
In general terms, voters must cast their vote in the polling site to be found in the electoral section that corresponds to their home address. The law establishes that the lists that indicate the exact location of the polling sites must be published up to twice before the election, but it is common to publish them again on the polling day itself in the main printed media of each state, so that the voters find their corresponding polling site easily.

It is possible that on polling day voters will not attend their corresponding polling site because they are temporarily out of their electoral section. In this event, the law allows voters to cast their vote in a special polling site, considering a series of conditions and restrictions regarding the geographic location of the voters and of the special sites. The legislation also establishes that there may only be a maximum of five special polling sites per electoral district.

Each polling site is headed by a directive board consisting of a president, a secretary and two scrutinizers, as well as three general substitutes, for a total amount of seven members. All the members of a polling site are citizens that live in the respective electoral section. They are selected through a double draw set forth by law, and according to their education. In order to carry out their tasks, they attend training courses designed and taught by the electoral authority that may be supervised by the political parties.

- **Counting**

Both the scrutiny operations, which are those required to reconcile and verify the amount of electors that voted in each polling site and to destroy the remaining ballots, and the tallying operations, those dealing with the counting of votes cast for each political party or candidate and the null ballots, are conducted by the directive board officials of each polling site throughout the country.

All these operations are witnessed by accredited electoral observers and international visitors as well as by the representatives of the political parties who may submit claims as well as.

The general public, the political parties, the coalitions, and the candidates themselves have different means of learning about the preliminary results of the elections on polling day. Shortly after the closing of voting in each polling site, the first publication of results is carried out. The law sets forth that the president of each polling site must post the results of the election in a visible place outside the corresponding site once the counting process is over.

However, the law authorizes the Executive Secretary of the Federal Electoral Institute to set a mechanism that provides immediate access of the results to the General Council, with the purpose of making the information available to the Councilors and accredited political party representatives as soon as possible.

Since 1994, the IFE has implemented and perfected a Preliminary Electoral Results Program (PREP), which allows the electronic transmission of data from each of the 300 district committees to a national center, by means of state of the art technology. These results are publicly broadcasted in a national pressroom and through the Internet at the moment they are received.

Besides, the law authorizes the President of the General Council, with the agreement of the Council itself, to order the conduction of studies or pertinent procedures, in order to get
to know the electoral trends on the polling day, which may only be broadcasted when the maximum collegiate body of the IFE authorizes it.

The prohibition to publish or broadcast results or opinion surveys on electoral preferences through any means is void as of 20h00 central time. Usually, the electronic communications media publicize the results of exit polls and of quick counts at this time.

**Electoral Justice**

The General Law for the Settlement of Electoral Disputes specifically stipulates the disagreement procedure to challenge, only during the stage of results and declaration of validity of the elections, the decisions of the federal electoral authorities that are allegedly in breach of constitutional or legal norms regarding the elections for President, Senators, and Deputies.

The system comprises the different appeals and procedures that may be filed for each one of the federal election posts. Only political parties and candidates are entitled to appeal, although candidates can do so only when because of illegibility reasons the electoral authorities do not grant certificate of majority or first minority. In any case, appeals must be filed within the first four days following the day in which the counting of the election is finished. All appeals for the election of Deputies (and, if needed, Senators) must be resolved by August 3, less than a month after the election.

Besides, the law comprises the appeal of reconsideration to challenge the resolutions set forth by the TEPJF for the appeals regarding the election of Deputies and Senators and allocation of seats by the General Council of the IFE by means of proportional representation. The resolution of such appeals is exclusive of the High Chamber of the TEPJF, and in any case must be resolved three days prior the establishment of the Chambers of the Congress of the Union, that is, not after August 26, of the election year. If the results are challenged by the disagreement procedure or lastly by means of the reconsideration challenge, they are only final when the authorized bodies of the TEPJF issue the corresponding resolutions, within the timeframe stated by law and according to the terms of such resolution.

When the counting, certificate of validity and majority or allocation are not challenged within the timeframe or by the correct means, they are considered as valid, final and undisputable four days after the IFE concludes the corresponding counting, since that is the term for the political parties to file disagreement challenges.

Also as a result of the recent reforms and to offer more security, reliability and transparency to the results of an election, the current electoral law explicitly comprises the feasibility of tallying the votes for a second time when the district counting takes place, that is, when the votes cast in every site of the districts into which the country is divided for electoral purposes, are added. These counting takes place the Wednesday after polling day.
The district re-count may be partial or total. Partial re-counts apply to Lower Chamber members’ election only, and refer to the votes cast in a determined number of polling sites under some theories provided by the law. The total re-count comprises not only the votes cast in all the polling sites in a district, but is applicable to elections for Deputies, Senators or President in equal circumstances and operates by direct request when the difference between the winning candidate and the second place is equal to or less than one per cent.