

## 2025 Parliamentary Elections Questions and Answers

**Prepared by:**

**Sarbast Mustafa Rashid**

President of Chav Network for Democracy and Human Rights Monitoring

**Q1: What does the electoral law consist of?**

**A:** The applicable electoral law consists of:

1. Law No. 4 of 2023 (Third Amendment to the Law on the Election of the Council of Representatives and Provincial Councils, No. 12 of 2018).
2. Law No. 12 of 2018 (Law on the Election of Provincial Councils and Districts).

**Q2: How many seats are there in the Council of Representatives?**

**A:** The Council of Representatives consists of 329 seats, with 320 general seats and 9 seats allocated to specific religious and ethnic components.

**Q3: Which components have allocated seats, and how are they distributed?**

**A:** The components and their allocated seats are as follows:

1. Christians – 5 seats in Baghdad, Nineveh, Kirkuk, Erbil, and Duhok. Iraq is considered a single electoral district for them.
2. Mandaean Sabians – 1 seat, with Iraq as a single electoral district.
3. Shabak – 1 seat in Nineveh Province.
4. Yazidis – 1 seat in Nineveh Province.
5. Fayli Kurds – 1 seat in Wasit Province.

**Q4: How is the election date determined?**

**A:** The date for parliamentary elections is set by a decision from the Council of Ministers, based on a proposal from the Independent High Electoral Commission.

#### **Q5: What are the eligibility requirements for voters?**

**A:** To be considered a voter under the electoral law, a citizen must:

1. Be of Iraqi nationality.
2. Have full legal capacity.
3. Be at least **18 years old** in the year of the elections.
- 4- Be registered in the voter roll and possess a long-term updated biometric voter card for voting.

#### **Q6: What is the difference between the preliminary and final voter registers?**

**A:**

- Preliminary Voter Register: This is a list containing the names and details of voters, prepared and published by the Electoral Commission for public review and to allow for appeals.
- Final Voter Register: This is the official list of voters, which cannot be challenged. It is announced and published by the Electoral Commission after the voter register update period and the appeal period.

#### **Q7: What is meant by the distribution of polling centers?**

**A:** This refers to the process of establishing and geographically distributing polling stations based on the voter register in alphabetical order. The goal is to place polling centers close to citizens' residences. The voter register is divided accordingly for each polling station. This process is considered the backbone of the electoral process, influencing all Commission plans, such as determining the number of polling staff, their appointment and training, procurement of election materials, and logistical and media plans.

#### **Q8: What type of voter registration system is used in Iraq?**

**A:** Iraq's voter registration system relies on biometric registration, where voter data is stored in the verification device at polling stations, in addition to a paper-based voter register.

### Q9: What are the eligibility requirements for candidates?

A: According to the electoral law, a candidate must:

1. Be an Iraqi citizen.
2. Have full legal capacity.
3. Be at least 30 years old on election day.
4. Hold a bachelor's degree or its equivalent, except for quota candidates (ethnic/religious minorities), who must have at least a high school diploma.
5. A candidate list may include up to 20% of candidates holding a diploma or high school degree.
6. Have good conduct and reputation, with no criminal convictions for offenses involving dishonor, including administrative and financial corruption, by a final court ruling.
7. Not be subject to the Accountability and Justice Law or any subsequent law.
8. Not be an active member of the armed forces, security institutions, a sitting judge, or a current or former member of the Electoral Commission, except for civilian employees.
9. Submit a list of at least 500 unique supporting voters registered in the same electoral district.

### Q10: What type of electoral list is used in the elections?

A: The **semi-open list** system is used in these elections.

### Q11: What is the adopted electoral system?

A: The **proportional representation system** is used, based on the **modified Sainte-Laguë method**.

**Q12: What is an electoral district, and how many are there in Iraq?**

**A:**

- An electoral district is a defined geographic area allocated a specific number of parliamentary seats according to constitutional and electoral law provisions.
- Iraq has 18 electoral districts, with each province serving as a single electoral district within its administrative boundaries.

**Q13: How does a voter cast their vote?**

**A:**

1. A voter can mark their choice for a party list and one candidate from that list.
2. A voter may vote for a party list only.
3. A voter may vote for an individual candidate only.

**Q14: What is the mathematical formula used in Iraq's electoral system?**

**A:** The formula used in Iraq's elections follows the modified Sainte-Laguë method:

1. The valid votes of each electoral list and individual candidates in a district are divided by sequential odd numbers, starting from (1, 3, 5, 7, 9, etc.), based on the number of allocated seats.
2. The seats are distributed to the lists and individual candidates with the highest resulting quotients, from highest to lowest, until all seats in the district are allocated.

**Q15: What does the term "electoral district size" mean?**

**A:** It refers to the number of seats allocated to a given electoral district.

**Q16: What electronic devices are used in the voting process?**

**A:**

1. Voter verification devices – to confirm voter identity.
2. Electronic counting and scanning devices – for ballot counting.
3. Results transmission devices (RTS) – to electronically send election results.

**Q17: What is the process of ballot counting and sorting?**

**A:** Iraq uses electronic ballot counting in all polling stations, in addition to a manual audit of all stations alongside electronic counting.

**Q18: What is the Audit Center?**

**A:** It is a center established by the Electoral Commission in each province. It begins operations after the general voting day and handles specific cases related to polling stations from both special and general voting days.

**Q19: What cases are referred to the Audit Center?**

**A:** Article 10 of the Third Amendment Law of 2023 specifies these cases:

1. If the discrepancy between electronic and manual vote counting exceeds 5%.
2. If the results are not sent to the office within more than six hours.
3. If the difference in the number of invalid ballots between electronic and manual counting is 3 out of 10 or more.
4. If the electronic counting and verification devices malfunction.
5. Stations that receive "red complaints" and require further auditing and investigation.

**Q20: What is the type of electoral administration in Iraq?**

**A:** The Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) in Iraq is the authority responsible for managing and conducting elections. According to Article 102 of the Constitution and Law No. 31 of 2019 (as amended), IHEC is an independent electoral body with administrative, financial, and technical autonomy.

**Q21: What are election complaints, who can file them, what types exist, and when can they be submitted?**

**A:** To ensure oversight and the right to dispute and object, IHEC allows affected parties to submit complaints according to official procedures. Eligible complainants include voters, political party agents, authorized representatives, and candidates.

- Complaints can be filed during the voter register update period, the election campaign period, or on election day.
- Complaints related to election day can be submitted from the start of polling at 7:00 AM until the end of the next business day.
- Complaints can also be submitted during the working days of audit centers in the provinces.

**Q22: What are electoral appeals?**

**A:** There are two types of electoral appeals:

1. Appeals during the voter register review period: The Board of Commissioners or its authorized representatives have the right to decide on these appeals.
  2. Appeals against preliminary election results: Candidates and political parties can file objections to the initial election results. The Judicial Electoral Commission is responsible for reviewing and adjudicating these appeals, serving as the court of jurisdiction for electoral disputes.
- Additionally, any affected party can appeal before this commission against any technical or procedural decisions issued by the Board of Commissioners at any stage of the electoral process.

**Q23: What is the election timeline?**

**A:** The election timeline outlines the tasks and steps that IHEC must implement from the moment it receives the approved electoral law and sets the election date.

- Each task is assigned a specific timeframe and designated implementing department(s) within IHEC.
- This timeline is crucial as it serves as IHEC's action plan and is also essential for electoral stakeholders, particularly competing political parties.

**Q24: Which authority certifies the results of the Iraqi parliamentary elections?**

**A:** The Federal Supreme Court has the exclusive authority to certify the final results of Iraq's parliamentary elections, as stipulated in Clause 7 of Article 93 of the Constitution.

**Q25: Has the law set a minimum voter turnout percentage for election results to be considered valid?**

**A:** No, neither the Constitution nor the electoral law specifies a required voter turnout percentage for election results to be deemed valid and legally accepted.