



## PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

### **Competitive elections and peaceful voting, yet undue advantage of incumbency and legal gaps created uneven playing field**

**Georgetown, 3 September 2025**

*This preliminary statement of the EU election observation mission (EU EOM) is delivered before the completion of the entire electoral process. Critical stages remain, including tabulation of results and adjudication of any petitions. The EU EOM is now only in a position to comment on observation undertaken to date and will later publish a final report, including full analysis and recommendations for electoral reform. The EU EOM may also make additional statements on election-related matters as and when it considers it appropriate.*

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#### **Summary**

On 1 September, Guyana's General and Regional Elections took place in a highly polarised political climate, affecting trust in the election administration. Election day was peaceful and efficiently-run, implementing new transparency measures and recently adopted legal provisions for the first time. The campaign was competitive, with fundamental freedoms mostly respected, yet undue advantage of incumbency and insufficient campaign rules created an uneven playing field.

The legal framework provides an adequate basis to conduct key stages of democratic elections. While the law was to a certain extent clarified in 2022, further reform is needed to address enduring deficiencies in the legal framework that contribute to undermining the independence of key authorities, diminishing transparency, and leaving room for uncertainty. A constitutional reform process, though launched in 2024, has yet to start public consultations.

The Guyana Elections Commission's (GECOM) structure and decision-making remain heavily influenced by political divisions. Commission members often expressed conflicting stances about the election process, publicly compromising an already reduced trust in the institution. The GECOM Secretariat carried out technical preparations for the elections efficiently and managed logistical arrangements well. However, GECOM's public communication was inconsistent; there was limited direct engagement with the public and media, leaving space for uncertainty and misinformation to spread. On 19 August, GECOM prohibited the use of mobile phones and other recording devices inside polling stations on election day, in an effort to address concerns for possible vote buying.

The final voter list contained a total of 757,690 registered voters, including those living abroad and Commonwealth citizens residing in Guyana. Opposition parties questioned the accuracy of the

voter list, claiming it was inflated. Combined with the absence of reliable population data, this fuelled a narrative of potential voter list manipulation in the elections.

In an inclusive and timely candidate registration process, GECOM approved six political parties to contest, all of which complied with the legal requirements, including having one third women candidates and competing in at least six of the ten regions. The People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C), A Partnership for National Unity (APNU), We Invest in Nationhood (WIN) and Alliance for Change (AFC) contested all ten geographical constituencies while Forward Guyana Movement (FGM) ran in seven, and Assembly for Liberty and Prosperity (ALP) in six. In total, 2,424 candidates contested the general and regional elections. For the National Assembly, 771 candidates (50 per cent women) competed for 65 seats.

The campaign was largely peaceful with no major incidents, however increasingly confrontational rhetoric involving PPP/C, WIN, and APNU representatives was observed closer to election day. Part of this rhetoric was linked to the reported use of US sanctions as a pretext by domestic airlines and banks against WIN Presidential candidate Azruddin Mohamed to impose no-fly restrictions and to close his bank accounts. Bank account closures were extended to over 70 WIN members, including candidates, in a process criticised for lack of transparency by various stakeholders.

Most candidates were able to campaign freely, although the EU EOM received reports from WIN alleging it was unfairly denied the use of public venues in a few instances and that it was hindered to campaign in some indigenous villages. Some cases of direct pressure on civil servants and part-time governmental employees were reported, with instances of demotions or transfers based on support for WIN candidates.

An undue advantage of incumbency distorted the level playing field during the election campaign. The President and his administration inaugurated a high number of public projects (hospitals, schools, roads and bridges) and launched several social support programmes combining these events with campaign activities. At the same time, the state media and government-run social media accounts were instrumentalised to amplify campaign messages, further blurring the line between state and party.

The media landscape was highly politicised with many outlets aligned with the government resulting in a disproportionate coverage in favour of the ruling party. Campaign coverage in broadcast and print media is largely unregulated, diminishing opportunities for voters' access to pluralistic information. Independent journalists were verbally attacked by high-ranking government officials and their followers at public events and harassed on social media for their professional stance and challenging questions.

The digital information environment was vigorous, yet antagonistic and marred by manipulative content, leaving little space for a respectful and pluralistic debate. Political discourse on Facebook and TikTok was driven by a small number of influencers and digital media, many of whom showed close alignment with the PPP/C, WIN or APNU. Some voters' private data was misused for political gains. Encouragingly, a few popular media and personal pages offered a nonpartisan view on the elections, helping voters to make an informed choice.

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*The European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) has been present in Guyana since 23 July following an invitation from the government of Guyana. The Mission is led by Chief Observer, Robert Biedroń, Member of the European Parliament from Poland. In total, the EU EOM deployed 50 observers from 26 EU Member States across the country to assess the whole electoral process against international obligations and commitments for democratic elections as well as the laws of Guyana. On Election Day, observers visited 262 polling stations in all 10 regions of Guyana to observe voting and counting.*

*This preliminary statement is delivered prior to the completion of the election process. The final assessment of the elections will depend, in part, on the conduct of the remaining stages of the election process, in particular, the tabulation of results, and the handling of possible post-election day complaints and appeals. The EU EOM remains in country to observe post-election developments and will publish a final report, containing detailed recommendations, within two months of the conclusion of the electoral process.*

*The EU EOM is independent in its findings and conclusions and adheres to the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation, endorsed at the United Nations in October 2005.*

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## **Preliminary Findings**

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### **BACKGROUND**

On 1 September 2025, Guyanese voters elected their President, the 65 members of the unicameral National Assembly (NA), and representatives to the ten Regional Democratic Councils (RDCs), in the 12th general and regional elections since the country's independence in 1966.

The elections took place in a highly polarised and evolving political landscape, against the backdrop of exponential oil revenue growth. Since the 2020 disputed elections, political divisions have remained strong, confidence in electoral institutions is not fully restored, and demands for electoral and constitutional reform have intensified, but resulted in few substantive changes. A constitutional reform process, launched in 2024, has yet to start its public consultations.

The elections were contested by six political parties: The People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C), A Partnership for National Unity (APNU), the Alliance for Change, (AFC), and three newly created movements: Forward Guyana Movement (FGM), Assembly for Liberty and Prosperity (ALP) and We Invest in Nationhood (WIN), all formed in 2025. Guyana's traditional political opposing forces, PPP/C and APNU, historically drew their respective support base from the Indo-Guyanese and Afro-Guyanese population. Indigenous peoples were considered a key electorate for these elections. Regarded as a significant third political force during the campaign, WIN challenged the traditional two-party dominance, presenting itself as an alternative beyond ethnic divisions. In this context, both PPP/C and APNU sought to broaden their support base by emphasising national unity.

This political landscape was characterised by escalating tensions among key stakeholders. Since June 2025, the leadership of the ruling PPP/C engaged in open conflict with WIN's founder and presidential candidate Azruddin Mohamed, once perceived as a close ally of the ruling party. In June 2024, Mohamed was placed under United States sanctions for corruption, tax evasion and money laundering, alongside Mae Thomas Toussaint, the then Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour. Though the candidate appears not to have been formally charged in Guyana, during the election campaign the sanctions were reportedly used as a pretext to impose no-fly restrictions with domestic airlines on him and by local commercial banks to close his accounts. Closure of bank accounts were extended to over 70 WIN members including candidates, in a process criticised

for a lack of transparency by various stakeholders. Several candidates launched legal actions against the banks, alleging unlawful and improper conduct.

## **LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM**

Guyana's Constitution and two key laws amended in 2022, the Representation of the People Act (RoPA) and the National Registrations Act (NRA), are the main legal instruments for the conduct of the elections. The electoral law offers an adequate basis to conduct key stages including candidate nominations, voting, counting, and tabulation. Still, further reform is needed to address enduring inconsistencies and deficiencies in the legal framework that contribute to undermining the independence of key authorities, diminishing transparency, and leaving room for uncertainty. Such legal gaps are at odds with Guyana's international commitments for democratic elections.

Positively, the Constitution guarantees fundamental rights (association, assembly, freedom of expression) and assures due process with access to courts for electoral disputes including challenges to results. The legal reforms in 2022, to a certain extent, streamlined the electoral laws and introduced new transparency measures for processing and transmission of results. The changes also created new procedures for corrections to a Statement of Poll, introduced time bound requests for recounts, and established substantially increased penalties for various electoral offences, including by election officials.

Despite these improvements, enduring uncertainties are linked to a constitutionally entrenched partisan framework for the election management body, risking inefficient decision making and paralysis, and thus diminished stakeholder trust. There are inadequate rules and regulations for the conduct of political parties, notably for the transparent and inclusive allotment of seats to candidates, especially women. The framework lacks adequate provision for financial transparency and accountability in political party and campaign financing, to avoid misuse of state resources, to ensure an independent state media, and to promote access to information of public interest.

The 65-seat NA is elected for a five-year term in a variant of a closed-list proportional representation (CLPR) system. Voters select one list on a single national ballot to fill 25 NA seats in 10 geographical constituencies (GC) and 40 top-up seats nationally. The winning party takes the presidency. Parties assign seats from their often-lengthy lists, limiting voter awareness of eventual representatives and creating uncertainty for candidates. The RDCs are elected separately under the same variant CLPR system via regional ballot.

## **ELECTION ADMINISTRATION**

The political structure of Guyana's election management body has become a matter of controversy as its commission struggles to function in a cohesive manner. Constitutionally, GECOM is composed of seven-members appointed for an indefinite term and comprises three commissioners nominated by the president, three from the parliamentary opposition, and the chairperson mutually agreed upon. This structure, a legacy of the political landscape of the 1990s, endures. The commissioners are split along party lines, with the chairperson's deciding vote often reinforcing perceptions of partisanship. The commission members did not present unified positions, including on election preparations, and often publicly expressed conflicting stances, eroding trust in the institution.

Despite the above, the GECOM Secretariat administered election preparations well. Although there were some delays, including for the assignation of polling stations and the reception of non-sensitive election materials, these did not impact the election process. To address logistical challenges for the distribution of election materials, GECOM established multiple regional staging areas. For these elections, GECOM recruited 11,718 poll workers. Trainings for poll workers observed by the EU EOM were mostly assessed as comprehensive and professional.

GECOM's public communication strategy was inconsistent, leaving space for confusion and reducing transparency. Since nomination day, 23 press releases were issued, yet messages were often formalistic and difficult for the general public to understand. In response to repeated calls from stakeholders for direct public engagement, starting only in the last two weeks prior to election day, GECOM held three press conferences. After initial reluctance, on 19 August, GECOM prohibited the use of mobile phones and other recording devices within polling stations on election day, to address concerns for possible vote buying.

Voter information outreach was generally adequate, including the publication of the full voter list, voter guides and election manuals, and use of digital channels. In July, GECOM intensified its voter information campaign in person and in traditional and social media, including educational videos with sign language, flyers and infographics as well as a search tool on its website to identify polling stations. Despite these efforts, voter information was perceived as inadequately tailored for remote indigenous communities with reduced access to information.

Overall, the elections were carried out in an atmosphere marked by a lack of confidence in the work of the election administration, notably among opposition political parties and some media and civil society organisations. This was further compounded by allegations of GECOM's inaction on key issues, including addressing concerns related to the accuracy of the voter list, which is widely perceived as susceptible to manipulation.

## **VOTER REGISTRATION**

The right to vote extends to citizens of 18 years and to Commonwealth citizens domiciled and resident in Guyana for the year prior to the closure of the voter list. Among few legal restrictions, persons deemed by court order as "insane" or otherwise of "unsound mind" cannot vote. Prisoners and non-convicted detainees cannot vote although there are no legal restrictions except for individuals convicted of electoral offences. In practice, the lack of specific rules and practical arrangements for voting in prisons and places of detention results in the disenfranchisement of this category of voters.

A total of 757,690 voters (50 per cent women) including those living abroad are on the official list of electors, published by GECOM on 30 July, an increase of 15 per cent compared to 2020. More than 320,000 voters (43 per cent) are concentrated in the capital region Demerara-Mahaica. Guyana has a continuous voter registration system; the Official List of Electors (OLE) is drawn from the National Register of Registrants Database (NRRD).

The OLE is updated twice a year, with a cut-off date of 30 June for these elections. The 2022 amended law provides new mechanisms for the removal of deceased voters. The claims and objections period was reduced from an already short period of eleven days to one week, from 16

to 22 June, limiting opportunities for corrections. In this period, GECOM removed four names and 25 duplicates from the voter list.

The accuracy of the voter list was a subject of concern among the opposition linked to the lack of reliable population data in the broader context of the 2022 population census, the results of which have not yet been released by the government without explanation. The absence of recent and reliable population data together with the lack of political will for transparency fuelled a narrative of potential voter list manipulation in the run-up to the elections.

## **REGISTRATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND CANDIDATES**

Citizens attaining the age of 18 years qualify to stand for election to the NA and RDCs, and for the presidential office if resident in Guyana for at least seven years. The electoral system entails that contestants run only on party lists; the limitation on independent candidacies, however, is not in line with ICCPR commitments. The law includes some positive measures such as promoting genuine candidacies by prohibiting a candidate on more than one list in the same constituency. The law excludes hate-crime offenders and bars some mid to high-ranking public servants from candidacy, as well as election officials and security forces. The latter category is unduly broad as it restricts the right to stand of public service personnel such as fire brigade and prison officers.

In an inclusive and timely manner, on 14 July GECOM approved six political parties to contest, all of which complied with the legal requirements, including one third women candidates and competing in no less than six of the ten geographical constituencies. The PPP/C, APNU, WIN and AFC contested all ten geographical constituencies while FGM ran in seven, and ALP in six. A seventh party, whose lists were incomplete, did not submit corrections by the deadline. A total of 2,424 candidates contested the general and regional elections. For the National Assembly, 771 candidates (50 per cent women) competed for 65 seats. GECOM did not receive any appeals against decisions on candidate registration.

## **CAMPAIGN ENVIRONMENT**

While the campaign was largely peaceful, the weeks leading to the elections were marked by rising tensions, increasingly confrontational rhetoric involving PPP/C, WIN and APNU representatives, and a number of altercations between supporters and disruptions of campaign events.

WIN and PPP/C led the most active campaigns, organising 129 and 118 activities respectively, covering all ten regions. The EU EOM directly observed 56 events, assessing the majority as calm and orderly. Even though all campaigns emphasised the importance of national unity, PPP/C and APNU leaders resorted to inflammatory language on several occasions. Most candidates were able to campaign freely, although the EU EOM received reports from WIN representatives alleging, they were unfairly denied use of public venues in a few instances and hindered from campaigning in some indigenous villages.

An undue advantage of incumbency distorted the level playing field during the election campaign. After the elections were announced, the President and his administration inaugurated a large number of public projects such as hospitals, schools, police stations, and major transportation projects, representing a significant increase compared with previous months. EU observers noted that most inauguration events were largely attended by PPP/C supporters in party colours and symbols, while candidates' speeches urged to vote for the ruling party. Beneficiaries of

government cash support reported having received unsolicited phone calls encouraging them to vote for the ruling party, raising concerns over misuse of personal data. Several new or expanded social programmes were launched before 1 September. Among other benefits to the public sector, on 10 August the President announced an unprecedented mass promotion and bonuses for more than 2,800 police officers, the timing of which raised concerns.

Direct pressure on civil servants and part-time governmental employees was also reported, with instances of civil servants being demoted or transferred from one to another location after they had expressed support for WIN candidates. In this context, EU EOM observers received reports of voters refraining from openly supporting opposition parties fearing negative repercussions such as the loss of employment or social benefits.

Campaign finance is largely unregulated leading to a lack of transparency and accountability. Spending ceilings are low and outdated, and the existing rules are ambiguously drafted. Political parties and candidates' obligations to report campaign expenditures to GECOM are not enforced. There is no state funding in Guyana, and no provisions defining permissible sources and uses of funding, donations, or campaign expenditures. There are no regulations to ensure a level playing field for campaigning, nor adequate rules to minimise the use of state resources to the advantage of incumbency. The campaign was marked by widespread allegations of direct and indirect vote-buying, against PPP/C and WIN candidates, predominantly in vulnerable communities.

## MEDIA

The media landscape is highly politicised with many outlets aligned with the government resulting in a disproportionate coverage in favour of the ruling party. State-run media favoured the government, while the editorial output of most private broadcast, print and digital outlets reflected their owners' political alignment. The integrity of independent reporting was undermined as some journalists openly campaigned for contesting parties, mostly the PPP/C. Positively defying this trend, a few independent outlets upheld journalistic standards, providing non-partisan scrutiny of candidates, their policies, and the electoral process. All monitored media outlets made a positive contribution to GECOM's voter education efforts, airing many such clips during prime-time.

Several long-standing problems hindered the media's work throughout the campaign. Journalists faced difficulties in obtaining access to information of public interest, owing to inadequate action by the Commissioner of Information to address requests for information. Independent journalists were also singled out and verbally attacked by high-ranking government officials and their supporters at public events and harassed on social media for their professional stance and challenging questions. One prominent investigative reporter faced threats of legal action by government ministers, who considered his reporting as defamatory. Such a media environment does not foster independent, professional, and analytical reporting.

Campaign coverage on broadcast and print media is largely unregulated, diminishing opportunities for voters' access to pluralistic information. There are no legal obligations for media to offer equitable airtime or space to the candidates, nor to label political advertising. The state media regulator, Guyana National Broadcasting Authority (GNBA), whose board is composed mainly of ruling party nominees, is mandated to oversee broadcasters' compliance with the Broadcast Act of 2011. GNBA's hearings are closed to the public and its decision-making process is non-

transparent. The GNBA failed to finalise and gazette the election broadcasting guidelines required by law, relying instead on non-binding advisories published on its website. As a result, campaign coverage remained largely unregulated, and concerns about media bias remained unaddressed.

The PPP/C dominated the prime-time coverage of both state-run broadcasters. The EU EOM media monitoring shows that the Voice of Guyana radio and NCN TV devoted up to 92 per cent of their election-related coverage to PPP/C campaign events and aired clips that promoted the ruling party but were not labelled as political advertising. Up to three per cent of prime-time news featured APNU, while all other parties were practically excluded. Such coverage runs counter to the public service remit of state-run media - to the detriment of voters' access to information. Only one private broadcaster was inclusive, with airtime equitably divided among all parties. Their news was mostly neutral in tone.

## **DIGITAL COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

The digital information environment was vigorous, yet also antagonistic and polluted with manipulated and misleading content, leaving little space for a respectful and pluralistic debate on elections. The political discourse on Facebook and TikTok was set by influencers and digital media, most of whom operated as an arm of the PPP/C, APNU or WIN campaigns. Partisan influencers traded personal insults daily, entwining allegations with official campaign messages and aiming to disrepute the opposing party. Only a few digital outlets and some Facebook and TikTok accounts offered a non-partisan view, helping voters to make an informed choice.

The credibility of WIN's presidential candidate was the dominant topic across all social media platforms. Posting by the four most followed PPP/C leaning media/influencer Facebook pages illustrates this striking level of attention to one person. Since nomination day, each of those pages placed twice as many posts targeting WIN than the WIN party itself. There were also concerted efforts by pro-PPP/C accounts to elevate the topic of "sanctions" (referring to US sanctions to WIN candidate) by applying scare tactics to discourage voting for WIN, with up to 35 per cent of their posts alluding to this issue. In parallel, pro-WIN TikTok influencers with large audiences focused on replacing the "sanctions" narrative with allegations of corruption against the PPP/C.

The PPP/C messages were kept highly visible on the digital agenda through paid-for content and the use of government's digital assets. The Government's Department of Public Information Facebook page posted identical content to that of PPP/C campaign pages, abusing administrative resources. PPP/C and their affiliates placed 85 per cent of all election related ads on Facebook and was the most visible on Google platforms.

Manipulative and outright false content stained the digital space, which, exacerbated by a polarised media environment, contributed to the erosion of public confidence in the integrity of the process and results. Meta and Google did not offer a country-specific content moderation around election day and there was no direct collaboration between global tech companies, GECOM, and lead digital outlets to promptly remove or deplatform content harming electoral integrity. Hence, especially in the absence of non-partisan fact-checking, it was difficult for voters to distinguish facts from fiction.

Constitutional safeguards for freedom of expression online are diluted by vague definitions in the 2018 Cyber Crime Act. The data protection legislation is not in effect, and politically motivated doxing occurred with impunity and personal data was misused.<sup>1</sup> Verified images show PPP/C activists profiling people visible in photos from WIN events, which was intimidating.

## PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

While women play a prominent role across public life, access to elective offices could be further improved. GECOM does not publish gender-disaggregated data on candidates. Women constituted 43 per cent and 51 per cent on the national top up list and RDC respectively as calculated by EU EOM. Two women contested as presidential candidates. Despite this generally positive level of participation, some constitutional provisions to promote women's representation in elected office are not reflected in legislation. This diminishes the equality of opportunity for women candidates to take a seat. Women were well-represented at various levels of GECOM, which is chaired by a woman commissioner.

Abusive content aiming to denigrate women politicians and activists was observed on social media. The WIN presidential candidate's sister, the President's mother, the Minister of education and two opposition-leaning influencers were the most targeted public figures, with denigrating comments made about their appearances, faith and personal integrity.

## PARTICIPATION OF VULNERABLE AND MARGINALISED GROUPS

Persons with disabilities continue to face barriers for inclusion and opportunities for equal participation. Several recommendations by representative organisations to GECOM to improve independent access through ramps and tactile ballots at all polling places were not addressed prior to the elections. The law foresees voting in person, by proxy, or with an assistant of choice for people with disabilities. However, prior to election day, concerns remained about insufficiently targeted information on the option to vote by proxy. According to official statistics there are at least 24,000 persons declared with disability.

Before election day, at least five political parties publicly demonstrated a positive commitment to promoting inclusion and addressing lingering discriminatory aspects of the law impacting LGBTQIA+ rights, including the right to privacy. At the same time, advocates' calls to include provisions on sexual orientation and gender-based discrimination in the Ethnic Relations Commission's Code of Conduct were not addressed, underscoring a need for timely engagement by the authorities with civil society and the will to address their issues of concern.

## PARTICIPATION OF NON-MAJORITY COMMUNITIES

Indigenous citizens are active across the political spectrum. Several community leaders (Toshaos), notably young village heads, contributed positively to the democratic process by promoting inclusive campaigning, supporting villagers in making informed choices, and using social media to list their development priorities. By law, physical access to indigenous villages requires prior authorisation. There were instances when Toshaos hindered campaigns by opposition parties, mostly WIN, but also APNU and FGM, while government ministers were given undue advantage.

<sup>1</sup> Doxing - unlawful profiling of persons and publication of personal data, such as name, address, and occupation on social media.

Toshaos are vulnerable to pressure from the government since they are dependent on decisions on development projects in their communities.

Indigenous communities are also vulnerable due to their often-deprived socio-economic conditions, geographical remoteness, and more difficult access to education. Most villages visited by the EU EOM did not have mobile coverage or TV, while free Wi-Fi is typically accessible only around the community centres. Some Toshaos and other representatives of indigenous organisations also expressed concerns over limited access to telecommunications and media. Still, the indigenous population, estimated at 10 to 15 per cent, was perceived by political parties as a critical electorate, attracting their particular interest.

## **ELECTION OBSERVATION**

The law provides a solid basis for international election observation but adequate provisions for domestic observation were not included in the 2022 legal reforms. Still, GECOM accredited 12 local observer organisations and five international observer missions. Most of the prominent groups accredited for these elections were professional bodies and interest groups. Civil society organisations previously involved in election observation were not active, reportedly due to a lack of funding. Other international observation missions included: The Carter Center, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Commonwealth, and the Organization of American States (OAS).

## **ELECTORAL DISPUTES**

There were overall few pre-election disputes and none arising from the candidate list approvals. A few matters came before the High Court constitutional division, one challenging the exclusion of independent candidates and another disputing the constitutionality of some conditions for political parties to contest. Both applications were expeditiously adjudicated and rejected without merit. Ten days prior to elections, an FGM candidate sought to suspend the poll altogether alleging GECOM unlawfully omitted her list from the ballot in the constituencies where her party was not participating. However, this application was also dismissed by the Chief Justice as having no merit. Still, these cases served to highlight uncertainties in aspects of the electoral law.

## **POLLING, COUNTING, AND TABULATION**

The EU EOM observed the opening in 21 polling stations (PS), voting in 222 PS, and counting in 19 PS. Overall, election day was assessed as peaceful, with the elections efficiently administered. All PS staff were present in the observed PS. Women made up 87 per cent of polling staff, including 81 per cent of presiding officers. Most PS observed opened on time, with a few experiencing slight delays. The secrecy of vote was not guaranteed in 35 per cent of PS observed during voting, due to the positioning of the voting compartment and the layout of the PS. Party agents were present in 100 per cent of all the PS observed, with PPP/C, APNU and WIN fielding the biggest share of party agents, while local observers were present only in 17 per cent. Party agents could monitor the process without restrictions. Some 59 per cent of the PS did not provide independent access for persons with reduced mobility and 32 per cent of PS had unsuitable layouts for these voters.

Throughout the day, voting procedures were mostly followed, although, the prohibition on the use of phones in PS was handled inconsistently. However, the use of phones for taking pictures of ballots was not observed. As a security measure, indelible ink was used to mark voters' index

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finger to prevent multiple voting. However, checks for traces of ink prior to voting were not consistently conducted in 27 per cent of observed PS. Proxy voting took place in 41 per cent of PS observed. The EU EOM noted campaign activities near 6 per cent of observed PS. Insufficient or missing voter information materials were reported in 14 per cent of PS observed.

Early voting of 10,482 disciplined forces (military, police and prison service) was conducted on 22 August in a calm and orderly manner. The EU EOM observed 15 out of 83 early voting polling stations. While polling staff was professionally well-organised, the voting process was slow and at times lengthy. Early voting ballots were counted on election day in designated polling stations.

The EU EOM assessed closing and counting procedures in 18 out of 19 PS observed as positive. Overall, observed PS closed on time and counting procedures were mostly followed. During the count the validity of the ballots in all PS observed was determined in a consistent manner. EU observers reported from five counts that PS staff had difficulties in filling in the Statements of Poll (SoP). Observers and party agents were able to observe without restrictions in all PS. The presiding officer publicly displayed copies of the SoP as required by law in all PS observed.

On the evening of the election, PS results started to be processed in the 20 district and sub-district tabulation centres and SoPs were uploaded to the GECOM SoP portal. GECOM published the first SoPs almost three hours after the closing of the polls, yet the portal was not always accessible to the public. Political party representatives were present in 16 of the tabulation centres observed. The EU EOM continues to observe the tabulation process.

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An electronic version of this Preliminary Statement is available on the Mission website (<http://guyana2025.eueom.eu>). For further information, please contact: Marek Mracka, Press Officer, [marek.mracka@eomguyana2025.eu](mailto:marek.mracka@eomguyana2025.eu)

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