



European Union
Election Observation Mission

COLOMBIA 2026

Final Report



Legislative Elections

8 March 2026

Presidential Election

31 May 2026

Presidential Run- Off

21 June 2026



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EUROPEAN UNION ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION

Only the original English version is official.

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I. Executive summary

Throughout the 2026 electoral process, Colombia's democratic institutions demonstrated their strength and resilience in the face of persistent disinformation, fraud narratives, polarisation, and expanding illegal armed groups in some territories. A long tradition of competitive elections and the **rule of law**, anchored in strong institutions, a vibrant press and a vigilant civil society, enabled the country to conduct remarkably peaceful, orderly and well-managed elections, even with very close results. The process showed that, beyond the campaign's polarising rhetoric and disinformation pressures, Colombia's rule of law and democracy remain robust and central to the country's national identity.

The elections took place in a deeply polarised but genuinely competitive environment, marked by security concerns. The 8 March legislative elections to elect the Senate and the *Cámara de Representantes* was held alongside three inter-party presidential primaries. President Gustavo Petro's *Pacto Histórico* increased its congressional representation and consolidated its position as the main left-wing force, while traditional parties retained sizeable but diminished benches despite not fielding presidential candidates of their own. Colombians in conflict-affected areas also elected 16 special transitory peace constituencies (CITREP) representatives for the second and final time - as stipulated by the 2016 Peace Agreement-, although the mechanism remained vulnerable to co-optation by armed groups and traditional political interests, undermining its purpose of ensuring representation for conflict victims.

Eleven presidential candidates contested the 31 May first round, in a pluralistic race that centred around three frontrunners: Iván Cepeda, representing continuity with the governing *Pacto Histórico* project; Paloma Valencia, backed by *Centro Democrático* and most centre-right forces; and Abelardo de la Espriella, a newcomer whose campaign gained momentum through intensive social media outreach and anti-establishment rhetoric. De la Espriella won the first round ahead of Cepeda and was elected president in the 21 June run-off with 49.6 per cent of the vote, defeating Cepeda, who obtained 48.70 per cent, by just some 250,000 votes. Voter turnout was record-breaking in all three elections reaching 63% in the presidential runoff. In a sensitive post-election context, Cepeda promptly acknowledged the provisional results later followed by his formal acceptance of the official ones.

The Colombian Constitution and legislation, dispersed across numerous laws, are generally in line with international standards for democratic elections. The Election Code pre-dates the Constitution, resulting in some outdated provisions, while the Constitution is at times too detailed on elections. Nevertheless, fundamental political rights and freedoms, including for the opposition, are fully recognised and the country has a solid judicial system. Some gaps persist in the electoral **legal framework**, such as on campaigning on social media platforms, oversight of campaign finance and deadlines for complaints during results tabulation. Reviews of the electoral legislation, the latest including recommendations by the 2022 EU EOM, were approved in recent years but rejected by the *Corte Constitucional* on procedural grounds.

The *Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil* organised the elections in a transparent and efficient manner despite logistical and security challenges in certain regions, enjoying considerable public confidence. Electoral officials demonstrated professionalism, consistently upholding the independence and integrity of the **electoral administration**. In response to criticism from some political parties concerning minor shortcomings during the legislative elections, the *Registraduría* further strengthened its dialogue with stakeholders and showed openness to their requests. Its regular engagement with stakeholders, providing them with updates on technical and procedural developments, and enhanced public communication helped to counter disinformation and reinforce confidence in the integrity of the electoral process.

The *Registraduría* successfully implemented the operational and logistical arrangements for the elections across the country and abroad, ensuring that all polling centres opened on each election

day despite significant logistical and security constraints. The number of polling centres was increased compared to previous electoral cycles to enhance accessibility of polling premises. The *Registraduría* also implemented a comprehensive and well-organised training programme for temporary electoral personnel, which was further strengthened ahead of the presidential elections, with particular emphasis on the completion of results protocols. Despite initial technical difficulties, the CNE's new online accreditation system facilitated the efficient accreditation of party representatives and observers, with deadlines extended in response to requests from political parties.

The official tabulation of results (*escrutinio*) relied on manual processing of polling station results forms, conducted by independent judges and notaries in presence of party or candidate representatives. The application of **election technologies** to support the process, including for the fast publication of informative preliminary results (*preconteo*) and scanned copies of polling station results forms, complied with international good practices in terms of transparency, traceability and verifiability. All technical components and infrastructures were submitted to extensive tests and were the subject of an independent international audit which issued a positive assessment in all three elections. Nevertheless, President Petro repeatedly questioned the results processing software, making unsubstantiated claims about its lack of security and potential vulnerability to manipulation. The *Registraduría* made considerable efforts to debunk those statements to safeguard public trust in the electoral process.

The **voter register**, based on a passive and continuous registration system, generally enjoyed public confidence and was perceived as inclusive and accurate. However, by law, first-time registration of citizens is suspended four months prior to election day, leaving a significant number of citizens turning 18 in the interim effectively disenfranchised, at odds with international standards. While the *Registraduría* continued efforts to improve the quality of the civil and voter registers, under-registration of persons in remote and hard-to-reach areas persist.

Legislation on **registration of candidates** does not contain unreasonable or disproportionate restrictions, except for persons convicted of intentional crimes, who are banned for life from standing. The CNE received petitions for deregistration of candidates on constitutional grounds such as dual party membership and one controversial case to decide if the PH Presidential candidate Cepeda could participate in a second primary election. The CNE generally adjudicated petitions for deregistration of candidates giving due weight to the right to stand but was unable to decide on all requests before election day. The lack of a deadline to present petitions for candidates' deregistration, which may be submitted even on the eve of the election, collided with the right to replace disqualified candidates.

The **election campaign** was pluralistic, competitive and largely driven by social media, with fundamental freedoms generally respected. Candidates were able to campaign freely in most parts of the country, although security risks constrained outreach in some conflict-affected and sparsely populated municipalities, especially for smaller parties and CITREP candidates. While electoral violence affected actors across the political spectrum, election days were remarkably peaceful, supported by the large-scale *Plan Democracia* security deployment. The campaign was marked by heightened polarisation, reciprocal accusations of vote buying and allegations of voter coercion, particularly during the legislative elections and the presidential run-off. The run-off also saw accusations of foreign interference in favour of De la Espriella, while President Petro's sustained interventions in support of Cepeda raised concerns over institutional neutrality.

Campaign finance oversight remained largely ineffective. The CNE's monitoring did not ensure timely enforcement or effective detection of illicit funding, while campaign finance at local level and digital spending often remained unreported. Access to state, advance funds was significantly delayed, constrained by late regulation by CNE, bank-account requirements, and guarantee obligations, disproportionately affecting lower-polling and CITREP candidates. Reporting improved in the presidential race, but underreporting persisted, especially for in-kind donations. The lack of binding interim reporting, limited effectiveness of *Tribunales de Garantías Electorales*, and weak

interinstitutional coordination created opacity through which prohibited resources could enter campaigns with limited risk of early detection or sanction.

Freedoms of expression and of the press were generally respected throughout the campaigns. However, the killings of two journalists, presumably by a FARC dissident faction and *sicarios*, served as a reminder of the threats faced by the media in parts of the country. President Petro continued to campaign and promote his government's achievements in the **media**, also broadcasting a significant volume of government advertisement on state-run and private media, despite legal restrictions.

The campaign was conducted predominantly online, confirming the role of **social media** as the main arena for political communication. Candidates made extensive use of digital platforms, influencers and paid advertising to mobilise support and shape public debate. The tone became increasingly confrontational during the campaign, marked by recurrent fraud narratives and vote-buying accusations. The 2026 elections also represented a significant shift in Colombia's digital campaign environment, with AI becoming a routine tool both for campaign advertising and disinformation. This new environment exposed major regulatory and oversight gaps, particularly the absence of transparency over who funds online political advertising and how much they spend, compounded by spending on influencers and the opacity of most digital platforms.

EU EOM **media monitoring** revealed that the state-run television and radio, which have a heightened obligation of impartiality, mostly covered the President and the government during the legislative and presidential campaigns. They also favoured Iván Cepeda and *Pacto Histórico*, while coverage of the opposition candidates was limited. Private media allocated significantly less time to the President and the government, often with a negative tone. However, the coverage of the opposition and pro-government candidates was more balanced, although more negative in tone for the latter.

The Constitution provides that gender parity and alternation in party and candidate lists are to be introduced through gradual legal reform. However, current legislation only establishes a 30 per cent quota for the bigger constituencies, and no alternation. Although the number of women candidates significantly increased in 2026, the proportion of women elected to Congress remained, at 29 per cent, roughly the same as in 2022, suggesting the need for further reforms to facilitate **women's effective access to elected office**. *Pacto Histórico*, which adopted closed, zippered lists, will have the largest numbers of congresswomen sitting in both chambers.

The 1991 Constitution recognises the cultural and ethnic diversity of Colombian peoples and reserves five seats in Congress for **indigenous and Afro-Colombian** constituencies. However, civil society organisations have criticised the lack of accurate official data on these groups, highlighting their persistent political underrepresentation and that they are disproportionately affected by violence in conflict-affected areas. During legislative elections, the EU EOM observed that voters were not always clearly informed of the option to vote for indigenous and Afro-Colombian special constituencies at polling stations.

Colombian law guarantees broad access for citizen and international **election observation** throughout the electoral process. Accreditation procedures were administered in an inclusive manner, and 2026 saw unprecedented observer participation, particularly during the presidential elections. Observers reported unrestricted access to electoral activities, and their presence enhanced the transparency and public confidence in the electoral process.

All three **election days** were peaceful, with no major incidents reported. EU observers assessed all stages of the election-day process as transparent, orderly and well-organised. Party representatives (*testigos*), who were able to carry out their duties without restriction, were present in most polling centres observed. Polling proceeded smoothly, although isolated instances of vote-buying were reported. Polling staff performed well throughout the election days, with only minor procedural

omissions, particularly during the complex legislative election. Vote-counting was accurate and transparent.

The system for collection and publication of provisional results (*preconteo*) provided swift and accurate indications of election outcomes within hours of the close of polls. Scanned copies of all three versions of polling station results forms were promptly available for public consultation. The **aggregation of official results** (*escrutinios*) was conducted in a fast, reliable and transparent manner, as witnessed by EU observers. Individual polling station results could be traced through all stages of *escrutinios* up to the national consolidation conducted by the CNE. To further enhance the traceability of the results, the *Registraduría* introduced in the presidential elections, for the first time, special recount forms showing any modification carried out by aggregation commissions (*comisiones escrutadoras*) following ballot recounts.

The legal framework offers ample guarantees to contest election results at several stages of the process, including petitions for the annulment of results with the highest electoral court, the *Consejo de Estado*. **Complaints** filed during aggregation of results were resolved by judges and notaries in a transparent and professional manner. The lack of legal deadlines to file complaints during tabulation was criticised by some parties, as they considered that timeframes were inconsistent and too short at times. The absence of deadlines for the CNE to adjudicate complaints contributed to lengthy proceedings during the Congress results' tabulation.

Priority recommendations

The EU EOM made 15 recommendations with a view to further enhance the conduct of elections in Colombia and to support efforts to bring them fully in line with international obligations and standards for democratic elections. They are made for the consideration of the newly elected Congress, the new government, the election administration and Colombian society. A table with all the mission's recommendations can be found at the end of this report. Priority recommendations include:

1. To adopt legislative and administrative measures to guarantee that all citizens who have the right to vote, particularly those who will turn 18 in the months prior to the election day, are included in the voter register and can effectively exercise this right.
2. To consolidate and harmonise electoral legislation into a limited number of laws.
3. Strengthening interinstitutional coordination among key electoral, financial-intelligence, tax, procurement, oversight and criminal-investigation bodies to prevent illicit and criminal campaign financing.
4. To ensure equitable access for candidates and political parties to state-run media during the campaign.
5. To require digital platforms, during the electoral period, to disclose who places political advertising and the amounts they pay for it, to comply with national legislation.
6. To increase women's access to elected office, the current 30 percent quota in candidate lists could be raised to require parity and alternation of men and women, as requested by the Constitution. Mechanisms could also be explored to make parity effective when parties present open lists.

II. Introduction

The European Union Election Observation Mission began work in Colombia on 26 January, in response to an invitation from the *Consejo Nacional Electoral* (CNE) and the *Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil* (RNEC). The Mission was led by Chief Observer Esteban González Pons, Vice-President of the European Parliament. The EU EOM deployed between 140 and 150 observers from 24 EU Member States, as well as from Norway, Switzerland and Canada in all the country's departments and the district of Bogotá to assess the entire electoral process against international

obligations and commitments for democratic elections as well as the laws of Colombia.¹ A Delegation from the European Parliament, headed by Nicolás González Casares (for the legislative election) and Leire Pajín (for the presidential one), Members of the European Parliament, joined the mission for each of the three election days.

The mission published a preliminary statement after each election, on 10 March and 2 and 23 June and remained in Colombia until 12 July. 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.

III. Political background

The 2026 elections took place in a deeply polarised yet genuinely competitive environment, amid heightened security challenges and persistent fraud narratives. These narratives were primarily spread by President Gustavo Petro, who was constitutionally ineligible for re-election, although, as the campaign progressed and polarisation increased, also by opposition candidates. The assassination of presidential precandidate and senator Miguel Uribe Turbay (*Centro Democrático*) in the summer of 2025 brought security concerns to the forefront of the political debate. A growing number of illegal armed groups have consolidated territorial control across significant rural, thinly populated areas, establishing criminal governance structures sustained by illicit economies. Their presence created uneven conditions for the exercise of political rights, constraining freedom to campaign and vote in some rural areas, although fewer than 1.5 per cent of voters are estimated to reside in these areas.

The socio-economic and institutional record of the outgoing administration fed directly into the electoral debate. President Gustavo Petro, often called Colombia's first left-wing head of state, had pledged sweeping social transformation, yet his reform agenda was repeatedly slowed or blocked by a fragmented Congress, judicial scrutiny and institutional resistance, which *Pacto Histórico* framed as a blockage to the implementation of its mandate. Frequent cabinet reshuffles further weakened government cohesion. Petro's administration presided over moderate economic growth and a marked reduction in poverty, which fell from 37 per cent in 2022 to 28 per cent in 2025. This social record was politically reinforced by a redistributive agenda and successive minimum-wage increases, including a 23 per cent rise for 2026. President Petro's flagship *Paz Total* policy fell short of its stated objectives, as negotiations with armed groups produced limited progress while illegal armed actors expanded their territorial control and membership. The humanitarian and human rights situation deteriorated in several conflict-affected regions, where armed-group violence, forced displacement, confinement, recruitment and attacks on civilians continued to expose the limits of state presence.

Legislative elections and inter-party primaries

Legislative elections to elect the bicameral Congress, currently comprising 103 senators and 182 members of the *Cámara de Representantes*, were held on 8 March concurrently with three inter-party presidential primaries.² The congressional vote was seen as a key test of future governability, taking place in a highly fragmented and fluid political landscape marked by internal fractures within both the governing coalition and the opposition. The elections highlighted both the erosion of traditional party structures and the growing prominence of closed, ideologically cohesive party lists, notably *Pacto Histórico* and *Centro Democrático*, alongside outsider candidacies such as Abelardo de la Espriella from *Defensores de la Patria*. President Gustavo Petro's *Pacto Histórico* governing coalition entered the elections unified following the CNE's last-minute approval of the fusion of

¹ Figures varied on the three election days.

² The centre-right *Gran Consulta por Colombia*, the centre-left *Frente por la Vida* and centrist *Consulta de las Soluciones*.

Unión Patriótica, *Polo Democrático Alternativo*, *Partido Comunista Colombiano*, *Colombia Humana*, and *Progresistas*. Within the opposition, Paloma Valencia was selected as presidential candidate of former president Álvaro Uribe's *Centro Democrático* (CD) through an internal poll, while none of the three major traditional parties — *Conservador*, *Liberal* and *Cambio Radical* — fielded a presidential candidate of its own.

Paloma Valencia won the centre-right *Gran Consulta por Colombia*, Roy Barreras the centre-left *Frente por la Vida* and Claudia López the centrist *Consulta de las Soluciones* and advanced to the presidential election on 31 May as the candidates of their respective coalitions, while the defeated contenders were legally bound to endorse the winner.

Colombians in conflict-affected municipalities could elect 16 members of the *Cámara* through special temporary peace constituencies (*Circunscripciones Transitorias Especiales de Paz - CITREP*) for the second and final time (*see annex*). Established under the 2016 Peace Accord as a compensatory measure to ensure direct parliamentary representation for conflict victims, the mechanism revealed major design flaws during its implementation. Candidacies were restricted to officially recognised conflict victims without party affiliation. However, the system, in which 3.2 per cent of the electorate elected 8.8 per cent of *Cámara* seats, proved vulnerable to co-optation by armed groups and traditional political interests.

Pacto Histórico increased its representation in the new Congress and consolidated its position as the main left-wing force, while traditional parties retained sizeable but diminished benches despite not fielding presidential candidates of their own.

Presidential elections

Eleven presidential tickets contested the first round in a pluralistic and competitive race, offering voters a broad choice across the political spectrum.³ The contest unfolded among the three frontrunners: Iván Cepeda, the candidate of *Alianza por la Vida*, a left-wing alliance led by the governing *Pacto Histórico* and supported by progressive parties who represented continuity with the incumbent government's project; Paloma Valencia, the CD candidate backed by most traditional and centre-right parties; and Abelardo de la Espriella, an newcomer who rejected formal party endorsements but gained momentum through intensive social media outreach. Growing polarisation narrowed the space for centrist platforms, with candidates such as Sergio Fajardo and Claudia López attracting only modest support. Three candidates withdrew before election day and endorsed Cepeda.

De la Espriella and Cepeda advanced to the 21 June run-off as the two leading candidates from the first round.⁴ In the second round De la Espriella received the support of most traditional and right-wing parties while Cepeda received the endorsement of some centrist ones. De la Espriella was elected president in the 21 June run-off with 49.6 per cent of the vote, defeating Cepeda, who obtained 48.70 per cent, by just some 250,000 votes. Voter turnout was record-breaking in all three elections reaching 63% in the presidential runoff.

IV. Implementation of previous EU Election Observation Mission recommendations

The EU EOM 2022 made 24 recommendations with a view to further enhance the conduct of elections in Colombia. Two priority recommendations were implemented or partially addressed before the 2026 general elections - one concerned the need to enhance the secrecy of the vote - with

³ The candidates were, in ballot order: Iván Cepeda, Claudia López, Santiago Botero, Abelardo de la Espriella, Mauricio Lizcano, Miguel Uribe Londoño, Sondra Macollins, Roy Barreras, Gustavo Matamoros, Paloma Valencia and Sergio Fajardo, with their respective vice-presidential running mates.

⁴ De la Espriella's vice-presidential candidate was José Manuel Restrepo, a former minister of finance and trade, while Cepeda's was Senator Aida Quilcué, an indigenous Nasa leader.

the *Registraduría* redesigning the polling booth to offer more protection when marking the ballot - and another on CNE budgetary autonomy.⁵

Other recommendations that did not require legislative amendment were applied by the *Registraduría* and other institutions. The Fifth Section of the *Consejo de Estado* reinforced its human resources to facilitate a swifter resolution of election-related appeals, while the *Registraduría* increased the number of polling stations both in urban and in rural areas, introduced double data entry as a standard practice for the *escrutinios* and improved its public communication on the numerous safeguards and transparency mechanisms for results management. Crucially, the *Registraduría* also improved the transmission protocols for the *preconteo*.

Several other recommendations made it into a new *Código electoral* passed by Congress in 2023, but the proposed text was ultimately declared unconstitutional on procedural grounds by the *Corte Constitucional*. EU EOM recommendations adopted by the failed *Código* included the regulation of the campaign on social media, facilitating candidates' access to advanced public funding and establishing a deadline for complaints on the *escrutinios*, as well as simplifying the process to select polling station staff and setting up a permanent process for changing electoral addresses.

V. Legal framework

The Colombian Constitution and electoral legislation are generally in line with international standards for democratic elections. Colombia has ratified most international and regional treaties establishing conditions for the holding of inclusive and democratic elections.⁶

Apart from the *Código Electoral*, relevant laws pertaining to elections include the *Ley de Partidos Políticos y Procesos Electorales* 1475/2011, the *Ley de Garantías* 996/2005 - with stipulations for the presidential elections, and the *Estatuto Básico de Partidos y Movimientos Políticos* 130/1994. Case law from the Fifth Section of the *Consejo de Estado*, the highest jurisdictional entity on electoral matters, is paramount in interpreting the complex and dispersed electoral legislation.⁷ In addition, CNE administrative regulations and resolutions complement the legal framework.⁸

The 1986 Election Code pre-dates the 1991 Constitution, resulting in some outdated provisions, while the Constitution, with its numerous amendments, is at times too detailed on elections, or lacks legislative development, as with the HoR seat for the Raizal people.⁹ Some legal voids persist regarding rules governing campaigning on social media platforms, the oversight of campaign finance and the deadlines for the submission and resolution of complaints and appeals during the tabulation of results.

⁵ As mentioned under the section Election Administration, the financial autonomy of the CNE was implemented but a ruling by the *Corte Constitucional* declared it to be unconstitutional on procedural grounds. The CNE financial autonomy will only last until the end of 2026.

⁶ Colombia is party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPRD) and the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (ILO c. 169). Colombia is also party to the American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR), Inter-American Convention on the granting of political Rights to Women, Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (IACAC), Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities and the Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance (A-68), which Colombia signed but has not ratified yet.

⁷ Other laws include the *Ley del Estatuto de Oposición Política* 1909/2018, and the recently passed *Ley de Encuestas* (Opinion Polls Law) 2492/2025. In addition, articles 386 to 396C of the Penal Code regulate electoral crimes.

⁸ CNE resolution on advance payments was issued only three weeks before the first-round presidential election, sparking criticism from several candidates.

⁹ The CC reserves a seat for the *Raizal* community, but due to the lack of legal development, the seat remains vacant.

Recommendation: To consolidate and harmonise electoral legislation into a limited number of laws, ideally into one Electoral Code and one law on political parties and movements.

Recent attempts to review the legal framework were in Congress with contributions from civil society and a new electoral code was approved, incorporating many of the 2022 EU EOM's recommendations, but was ultimately rejected by the *Corte Constitucional* on procedural grounds in 2024. Electoral laws, considered *leyes estatutarias*, must be reviewed by the *Corte Constitucional* before entering into force.

Electoral System

The president and vice-president are elected for a four-year term, with no re-election. If no candidate obtains an absolute majority, a second round is held. The Congress consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives (HoR), and lists for both houses can be open or closed, the seats being allocated proportionally. For the Senate, 100 of its 103 members are elected in a national constituency and two in a special, nationwide indigenous constituency, as well as an additional seat for the presidential candidate who came second, in case he or she accepts it, as is the case with Iván Cepeda. The threshold to gain representation is three per cent of the valid vote.

The 2026-2030 HoR will be composed of 182 seats, with 161 members elected from 33 constituencies (32 departments and Bogotá). In addition, three special constituencies elected two Afro-descendants, one indigenous representative, and one representative for the diaspora. The Afro-descendants and indigenous constituencies are national. The vice-president runner-up may also occupy a seat in the HoR, as will Aida Quilcué. The remaining 16 seats were reserved for the *curules de paz*: established under the 2016 Peace Accords to secure direct parliamentary representation for conflict victims in 167 of the most conflict-affected municipalities, the *Circunscripciones Transitorias Especiales de Paz* (CITREP) were contested for the second and final time in 2026.

Constituency Delimitation

The Constitution provides for the allocation of seats in the House of Representatives to be regularly adjusted to reflect demographic changes.¹⁰ However, in the absence of a recent population census approved by Congress, as required by law, the distribution of seats has not been altered since 2002 and still rests on the 1985 population census.¹¹

Under the current allocation, 22 of the 33 territorial constituencies deviate by more than 15 per cent from the average number of voters per seat (*see annex*). On average, one seat in an ordinary in-country constituency represents approximately 249,000 voters. In Bogotá D.C. or La Guajira, the figure rises to around 339,000 and 354,000 voters per seat, respectively. By contrast, in departments such as Vaupés and Guainía, it falls to only around 13,000 and 18,500 voters per seat, respectively. While this disparity primarily reflects the constitutional will to guarantee a minimum representation for each department regardless of its population, it is further accentuated by the absence of a recent adjustment to the allocation of seats among departments.

Recommendation: Update the attribution of the House of Representatives seats to each constituency to reflect recent census data.

¹⁰ The election legislation stipulates that each ordinary territorial constituency shall have two representatives and one more for every 365,000 inhabitants or fraction greater than 182,500 in excess of the first 365,000. All special constituencies have a fixed number of seats allocated.

¹¹ Prior to these elections, the *Registraduría* decided to abstain from any modification of seat allocation, referring to the sentences of the Council of State which require the approval of the population census via a law for the purpose of adjustment of the seat allocation, effectively rendering it unfeasible.

VI. Election Administration

Structure of the election administration

The *Organización Electoral* comprises two administrative bodies: the *Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil* (National Civil Registry, RNEC) and the *Consejo Nacional Electoral* (National Election Council, CNE).

The *Registraduría* is an autonomous institution in charge of the civil registry and provision of identity documents, as well the organisation of elections and other mechanisms of direct citizen participation. It bears overall responsibility for conducting administrative and technical preparations for elections and maintaining the voter register. The *Registraduría* is headed by the *Registrador Nacional*, elected by the presidents of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, and the Council of State for a four-year mandate, following a merit-based selection process.

The *Registraduría*, which retains an extensive network of permanent territorial offices across the country, enjoys high public confidence and opinion polls consistently place it among the country's three most valued institutions. Throughout the election process, its officials demonstrated professionalism, efficiency and transparency in carrying out their duties, both at the central level and throughout the country, consistently upholding the independence and integrity of the electoral administration.

Throughout the electoral period, the election administration faced sustained attempts to undermine public trust in the electoral process, including narratives of fraud based on alleged vulnerabilities in the electoral system. The *Registraduría* sought to counter these narratives through a solid voter information campaign, including educational content on social media, engagement with the media, and public appearances by its officials. These efforts aimed to strengthen public confidence and curb disinformation, particularly regarding the reliability of the tabulation software, vote counting procedures, and the completion of results protocols. In response to criticism from some political parties concerning minor shortcomings identified during the legislative elections, the *Registraduría* further strengthened its dialogue with stakeholders, including through regular meetings with the candidates' electoral teams, and showed openness to requests for greater access to information and procedural adjustments put forward by them.

The CNE is the electoral oversight entity. It comprises nine members appointed by the Congress, reflecting its political composition and requires a six-vote majority to take decisions.¹² The CNE is an administrative body, and its decisions may be appealed to the Fifth Section of the Council of State, which is the competent court in electoral matters. Although the CNE was granted financial autonomy in 2023, the Constitutional Court ruled against it and the CNE will again be dependent on the *Registraduría* for its budget and spending by the start of 2027.¹³

The CNE's main responsibilities include adjudicating petitions on candidates' registration (*revocatorias*), supervising compliance with campaign regulations and campaign finance provisions including on social media, and the oversight of political parties' access to state-run media. In addition, the CNE conducts the national tabulation, the aggregation of out-of-country voting for the

¹² The *Acto Legislativo* 03/2017 introduced a tenth temporary representative from the *Comunes* party, which originated from the FARC movement, who participated in deliberations, but without a vote. This was its last term.

¹³ *Corte Constitucional* ruling C-116, 2026. The court ruled that the changes introduced to the national budget granting financial autonomy to the CNE were unconstitutional for violating the principle of subject unity. The CNE budget for 2026 reached approx. 252,653,000 EUR, a significant increase compared to the approx. 19,550,000 EUR it received in 2023, before its financial autonomy.

Congress and adjudicates on electoral complaints and appeals. It may investigate and impose sanctions on parties and candidates, including for breaching campaign finance regulations.¹⁴

The CNE reactivated 33 temporary decentralised offices, the *Tribunales Seccionales de Vigilancia y Garantías Electorales*, between January and June 2026. However, these departmental *tribunales*' engagement and initiative in performing their core campaign oversight functions remained limited and only a small number of actions were taken, mainly in relation to electoral advertising. Several interlocutors also emphasised the need for these *tribunales* to become more effective and less susceptible to political influence.

Particularly in the run-up to the legislative elections, the CNE faced criticism, primarily from the ruling coalition and the media. Concerns focused on its perceived lack of independence and institutional cohesion, linked to the political alignment of its magistrates.

Further development of the CNE oversight capacities is advisable in some fundamental areas. The CNE lacked capacity to supervise and enforce the campaign finance framework, including the timely distribution of public campaign funding advances. It also demonstrated poor oversight of political advertising of parties and candidates, both in state-run media and in social media. The EU EOM noted a shortage of a permanent technical staff to perform their duties with independence. Complaints filed with the CNE were not accessible by the public and its decisions were only notified to the parties and not always published promptly on its website.

Recommendation: To strengthen CNE's oversight of campaign finance and online campaigning with specialised administrative units with adequate resources and a clear mandate to monitor, investigate and sanction breaches of the regulations in these areas.

Election preparations

The *Registraduría* organised the elections in a transparent and efficient manner and successfully overcame a range of logistical and security-related challenges in parts of the country. Adverse weather conditions, including heavy rainfall and flooding, created additional difficulties, particularly in the lead-up to the legislative elections. Moreover, the three-week interval between the two rounds of the presidential election placed considerable operational and logistical demands on the election administration, requiring the completion of extensive technical preparations within a compressed timeframe. Nonetheless, the *Registraduría* successfully implemented the operational and logistical arrangements across the country and abroad, enabling all polling centres to open on election days.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the election administration mounted an extensive out-of-country voting operation to facilitate the participation of Colombian citizens residing and registered to vote abroad. Polling was organized at 253 polling centres in 77 countries over a one-week period, up to and including each election day in Colombia.¹⁵

In line with a previous EU EOM recommendation, the number of in-country polling centres was further increased for these elections, bringing electoral premises closer to voters. Across the country, 13,494 polling centres were established, representing an increase of about 10 per cent compared to the 2022 elections. Nevertheless, given the country's geography, some voters were still required to travel considerable distances to reach their assigned polling station. EU EOM observers also

¹⁴ CNE competences are defined by the Political Constitution of Colombia in articles 264 and 265, and in Law 1475/2011, article 12. The CNE sanctioned Gustavo Petro's 2022 campaign for breaching spending limits. Sanctions included fines against the campaign director and against *Columbia Humana* and *Unión Patriótica*.

¹⁵ The elections were administered with assistance of the Colombian consulates in 67 countries with polling centres opened only on Sunday in an additional 10 countries. Due to security concerns, the polling centres in Ramallah and Tel Aviv could not open for the legislative elections.

observed that some polling centres were in inadequate premises or accommodated so many polling stations that resulting overcrowding at times compromised the secrecy of the vote.

The location of polling centres and proposals for their relocation became a point of contention, particularly ahead of the presidential election. Requests to move polling centres from rural areas to municipal centres on security grounds and due to a perceived risk of voter coercion were rejected, as such changes were considered likely to limit rural voters' access to polling stations while adequate security arrangements were already in place.¹⁶ According to the *Registraduría's* territorial offices, only five polling centres were relocated on security or public order grounds during the electoral period, while a limited number were moved to nearby premises due to inadequate facilities or adverse weather conditions. In cooperation with the security forces and other state authorities, the *Registraduría* secured the nationwide distribution of election materials, the deployment of electoral personnel, and the opening of all polling centres for all three election days, allowing citizens to exercise their right to vote.¹⁷

For each electoral process, temporary personnel, including over 850,000 poll workers (*jurados*) and several thousand tabulation officers (*escrutadores*), were appointed through a random selection system.¹⁸ As previously observed and reflected in a 2022 EU EOM recommendation, the current system remains complex and administratively burdensome and may also fuel mistrust, as some electoral contestants questioned the political neutrality of nominees put forward by different nominating entities.¹⁹ In several municipalities, as well as abroad, the election administration faced difficulties in appointing the required number of poll workers because of the limited pool of eligible candidates. According to the *Registraduría* as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, increasing the current age limit of 60 years for their appointment could help address these recruitment challenges.

Training materials for polling staff were of high quality and training sessions observed by the EU EOM were well-organised, interactive, and comprehensive. However, the short duration of sessions proved to be insufficient at times for the particularly complex procedures in the legislative elections, contributing to numerous recounts and corrections during the tabulation process (*see section on Polling, counting and tabulation of results*). Drawing on lessons learned from the legislative elections, the *Registraduría* reinforced the training programme, while striving to increase participation among polling staff and tabulation officers, with greater emphasis on practical cases, including the determination of ballot validity, and the completion of electoral documents and forms. Following the first round, refresher training was provided to temporary personnel, with some municipal offices extending tailored training sessions also to *jurados*, particularly in areas with low attendance in earlier training activities. According to the *Registraduría*, 77 per cent of polling staff

¹⁶ In several municipalities across different departments, Centro Democrático requested the relocation of a significant number of polling centres from rural areas to municipal centres on these grounds. Majority of these requests were rejected by the local *Comisiones de Seguimiento Electoral*.

¹⁷ To coordinate the electoral operations and security arrangements, in cooperation with the *Registraduría*, the security forces, and relevant oversight bodies, the Ministries of Interior and Defence established a *Puesto de Mando Unificado Nacional* (PMU) for each election day. Prior to the presidential run-off, the PMU was established further in advance to guarantee the delivery of electoral materials and ensure the security of electoral personnel, *testigos*, and voters at polling centres, with a particular focus on certain municipalities where illegal armed groups are present.

¹⁸ Poll workers are randomly selected in public sessions by lot from the lists of eligible voters, aged from 18 to 60, provided by public offices, private companies, educational institutions and political parties, and participation is mandatory. Tabulation officers are randomly selected from among judges, notaries and judicial officials. Other temporary staff are contracted following an open selection process.

¹⁹ According to the *Registraduría*, most *jurados* pertained to the educational institutions and private companies. These nominees are not required to indicate their possible political affiliation. Politically nominated *jurados* constituted only some three and four per cent of the polling staff, respectively for the legislative and presidential elections.

attended in-person training sessions in both elections.²⁰ EU EOM observers found that they performed their duties to a high standard.

Voter education was primarily conducted through traditional and social media channels, with limited in-person outreach supported by the *Registraduría*'s territorial offices and civil society organisations. In view of the complexity of the legislative elections, these efforts may have been insufficient in remote areas and *CITREP* constituencies, where voters appeared to be less familiar with the electoral system, including the use of different ballots for different constituencies introduced in 2022.²¹

For these elections, the CNE introduced a new online platform through which candidate representatives (*testigos*) and observer groups could apply for accreditation. Despite initial technical difficulties and public criticism regarding its cost, the system ultimately facilitated the accreditation process and ensured the efficient issuance of credentials.²² Accreditation had to be renewed for each election. Although this entailed additional administrative effort, it helped address problems reported by political parties concerning the incorrect allocation of some *testigos* to polling stations. Positively, the CNE extended the accreditation period for both the legislative and presidential elections in response to requests from political parties that had encountered difficulties in securing sufficient representation in several areas.

Election technologies and results processing

Technology was used in most phases of the election process: in voter and candidate registration, voter information platforms, randomised selection of polling staff, biometric voter identification and, finally, in the results management. The processing of both the preliminary, informative results (*preconteo*), as well as of the official results (*escrutinio*) was built on transparency and traceability, in line with international good practices. Votes were counted by polling staff and processing of results forms (*escrutinios*) was conducted by judges and notaries in a largely manual procedure, all in the presence of party or candidate representatives. Polling station results forms (E-14) were swiftly published online and could be verified and followed through all the stages of the *escrutinio*. In addition, parties, candidacies and observer organisations enjoyed a privileged access to detailed information about the *escrutinio*, including on the corrections, recounts as well as complaints and their status, and to technical logs. This ensured that potential errors or omissions could be swiftly detected and challenged.

All components of the results processing, including *preconteo*, *escrutinio* and results forms scanning were extensively tested before each election and passed several full-load simulations and rigorous quality controls, observed and evaluated positively by the EU EOM. For the first time, the *Registraduría* commissioned an international audit of the election process, including results processing software, which was awarded to the *Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos/ Centro de Asesoría y Promoción Electoral* (IIDH/CAPEL). They examined the underlying source codes to assess their functionality, integrity and security; verified that the audited software was the same that was used in the results processing and confirmed that the system complied with applicable standards in terms of cybersecurity, redundancy, availability and continuity of service. They issued

²⁰ All poll workers could also use online modalities of training and brief training was provided by polling centre delegates on election day.

²¹ While invalid and unmarked ballots in the ordinary House of Representatives constituencies nationwide accounted for 3.1 and 1.8 per cent, respectively, their share was considerably higher in the special constituencies. In the *CITREP* constituencies, for example, invalid ballots represented 4.8 per cent and unmarked ballots 10.9 per cent in constituency number one, 4.3 and 8.7 per cent in constituency number two, and 3.4 and 10.3 per cent in constituency number 12, respectively. In the indigenous constituency, invalid and unmarked ballots accounted for 7.8 and 11.8 per cent, respectively, while in the Afro-descendant constituencies the corresponding figures were 8.5 and 6.77 per cent.

²² However, some campaigns reported delays in the issuance of credentials for some of their representatives.

positive evaluations of the results processing system after each election.²³ No security incidents or system failures were registered.

Nevertheless, the results processing was continuously questioned by the ruling party, particularly by President Petro. Criticism targeted the private consortium supplying the technological solutions and presented unsubstantiated claims about vulnerabilities of the system, as well as alleged malfunctioning or manipulation of the software. All these claims spread on social networks, with a potential to undermine public trust in the election process, were promptly refuted by the *Registraduría*. President Petro also repeatedly demanded that *Registraduría* hand over the source code of the employed software to parties (and also to a ministry) for a forensic audit, which was rejected due to potential serious risks for the integrity of the results system. Instead, the *Registraduría* offered party auditors a presentation and an unprecedented exhibition allowing access *in situ* to the source codes of the different components of the results processing. The exhibition period ranged from five days in the legislative election to four weeks in the presidential election first round.

Most technological solutions were outsourced, together with the entire election logistics, to the *Unión Temporal Integración Logística Electoral* (UT ILE), a temporary consortium of companies led by Thomas Greg & Sons which has provided a similar scope of services for decades, including the 2022 general elections.²⁴ The contract encompassed the preliminary and official results processing up to the departmental level, scanning of all polling station results forms (known as E-14), as well as the software for the selection of polling staff and the operation of biometric voter identification.²⁵ The conduct of national consolidation of preliminary results (*preconteo*), including the software and the network infrastructure, was awarded in a separate contract to the Spanish company INDRA. However, the software operating the national consolidation of the official results (*escrutinio*) was purchased from the same company by the *Registraduría* in 2018 following a State Council ruling encouraging the acquisition of the results processing software by the state.

With its recently attained financial independence, the CNE acquired in December 2025 a *testigo* and observer registration software (worth 85 million Euro), a purchase heavily criticised by CSOs because of some initial flaws registered prior to the legislative elections, and its high cost, 40 times exceeding the cost of the system used in 2022.

VII. Voter registration

The Constitution grants the right to vote to all Colombian citizens who are at least 18 years of age on election day, provided they enjoy full political rights. Members of the armed forces and the police on active duty, as well as persons deprived of their political rights by a court decision, are not entitled to vote. While the Constitution establishes participation in public affairs as a civic duty, voting is not compulsory.

The permanent voter register (*censo electoral*), maintained and updated by the RNEC, is based on a passive and continuous voter registration system, extracting data from the civil register. Eligible voters are automatically registered and assigned to a polling centre once issued with a national

²³ Initially, in the legislative election, the *Registraduría* was reluctant to provide the audit's main findings to the stakeholders, finally doing so just days before the presidential election. Subsequently, different audit reports were systematically published on their webpage.

²⁴ The contract awarded in July 2025, then worth 446 million Euro, covered also the Youth and the Primary elections (both held in 2025).

²⁵ A mixture of finger-print and facial recognition devices was deployed to identify a potential of some 10 million voters in the legislative elections. With a purchase of additional 9,000 facial biometry devices operating at voting centre level, this potential was increased to some 15 million in the presidential election. Though a progressive implementation of biometric identification is set out in the law, only the manual identification and signing of the voter lists by voters is legally valid.

identity card (*cédula de ciudadanía*) when they turn 18. The voter register is closed for any changes in civil registration data two months before every election. However, in accordance with the legislation, the first-time registration of citizens is suspended four months prior to election day. This considerably long period left a significant number of citizens turning 18 in the interim effectively disenfranchised, at odds with international standards. An estimated 278,554 citizens remained unregistered for this reason for the legislative elections, as were 269,040 citizens for the first round of the presidential election, with an additional 49,504 coming of age prior to the run-off.

While holding a valid identity card is a reasonable prerequisite for voter identification on election day, its issuance should not constitute an undue administrative barrier to voter registration. Since 2003, all citizens have been assigned a unique personal identification number at birth, which also serves as the identity card number used for electoral registration. This system creates conditions for individuals to be included in the voter register in advance to the actual issuance of the document, including those reaching voting age after the register has been closed. Voters' ability to exercise their right to vote may also be jeopardised by the lengthy identity card issuance process, which can take two to three months in the country and six to nine months abroad. *Registraduría's* officials also reported challenges in the distribution of identity documents in remote and hard-to-access areas, where a significant number of documents remain uncollected at local offices.

Priority recommendation: *Adopt legislative and administrative measures to guarantee that all citizens who have the right to vote, particularly those will turn 18 in the months prior to the election day, are included in the voter register and can effectively exercise this right.*

The voter register generally enjoys public trust in terms of its inclusiveness and accuracy. The final voter register for the legislative elections comprised 41,286,084 voters, including 1,250,846 registered to vote abroad, which constituted an increase of approximately 6 per cent since the last general elections in 2022. In line with international good practice, the register was updated ahead of the presidential election to incorporate changes in the eligible electorate, bringing the total number of registered voters to 41,421,973, including 1,414,661 abroad. The law does not provide for an update of the voter register between the two rounds of the presidential election to reflect changes in civil registration data; as a result, the first-round register was used without modification.

In recent years, the *Registraduría* has applied measures to improve civil and voter register updates, with better interinstitutional data exchange, that has facilitated the removal of deceased citizens. However, ahead of the closure of the voter register for the presidential election, the *Registraduría* carried out a special review (*depuración*), which resulted in the removal of 47,604 entries belonging to citizens presumed deceased.²⁶

Despite efforts to enhance civil registration, such as mobile identification campaigns, the *Registraduría* estimates that, out of a population of approximately 53 million, over a million Colombians – predominantly in areas inhabited by indigenous communities, remote and hard-to-access regions or marginalised urban zones – remain unregistered.²⁷ The expansion of civil registration continues to face a number of geographical, logistical, socio-economic and cultural barriers. These include the remoteness of many rural communities, limited transport and communication infrastructure, dispersed populations, and the absence of formal address systems in some areas.²⁸

²⁶ These citizens, however, remained listed in the civil register because of a lack of legal provision for their removal.

²⁷ Through mobile registration campaigns led by the Unit for Assistance to Vulnerable Populations, the *Registraduría* provided almost 388,400 civil registration and identification services during the period of 2024–2025. This included the issuance of birth registration certificates and identity cards, with the number of services more than doubling in 2025 compared with the previous year.

²⁸ Additional challenges stem from the indirect costs of accessing registration services, births occurring without formal medical certification, limited awareness of the importance of birth registration, and, in some regions, low levels of trust in public institutions.

A change in a citizen's place of residence is not automatically reflected in the voter register.²⁹ Voters may apply to update their electoral residence during the year preceding an election until two months before election day. More than two million voters requested such a change ahead of the legislative elections. Prior to the presidential election, voters were given another opportunity to transfer their electoral address. Between 9 January and the end of March, after this option had closed for the legislative elections, some 1.9 million voters changed their electoral address. To facilitate the process, the *Registraduría* extended opening hours and established additional registration points in high-traffic locations, while voters abroad were able to submit requests online.

The current legal definition of electoral residence recognises a broad range of links to a territorial entity other than a voter's habitual residence (*domicilio*), without being required to provide supporting evidence. Of the voters who transferred their electoral address for the legislative elections, roughly 150,000 were reported in *CITREP* constituencies. This represents considerably higher rates of registration changes than the national average, and raised concern, as the relatively small size of these constituencies means that seats can be obtained with comparatively fewer votes.³⁰ Most municipalities with *CITREP* constituencies recorded substantial increases in electoral residence transfers, suggesting voter movements from urban to rural areas within the respective municipalities, as only those rural areas fall within the *CITREP* electoral constituencies. While some of these transfers may reflect the return of internally displaced persons to their former places of residence, EU observers have reported allegations of instances of fraudulent registrations aimed at bolstering electoral support in certain constituencies (*transhumacia electoral*). Although several formal complaints were submitted, none of the transfers was subjected to verification or officially revoked, as the legal framework recognises this phenomenon only in relation to transfers between municipalities, but not within them, in local elections.³¹

VIII. Candidate registration

The *Registraduría* is the electoral entity responsible for conducting the candidate registration process, whereas the CNE verifies legal eligibility criteria, either ex-officio, or following a petition for deregistration (*revocatoria de inscripción*). Candidates may be presented by political parties and coalitions, or by citizen groups (*Grupos significativos de ciudadanos*) through the collection of supporting signatures.³² Candidates standing for the special *CITREP* and ethnic minority constituencies must fulfil particular prerequisites.³³ Eligibility criteria to stand as a President include being Colombian by birth and over thirty years of age. A candidate may hold more than one nationality, as was the case of De la Espriella, who holds three nationalities. Candidates must be at

²⁹ Slightly over a million of voters whose identity card was issued between 1 January 1998 and 7 January 2003 and who have not since then renewed their ID card or updated their address remained assigned to 74 register-based polling centres (*puesto censo*), indicating a decrease of around half a million citizens compared to 2022 elections.

³⁰ *CITREP* constituencies represent 3.5 per cent of the electorate and elected 8.8 per cent of the HoR seats.

³¹ Consistent with Article 316 of the Constitution and Decree 1294 of 2015, the *Registraduría* and the CNE apply the residence requirement to the election of territorial authorities and other voting processes concerning matters of a local nature, in relation to transfers between municipalities. However, Article 389 of the Penal Code establishes criminal sanctions for the fraudulent registration of voters intended to obtain an advantage in any popular election or direct democracy mechanism, including presidential and congressional elections, as well as plebiscites, referendums, popular consultations and recall proceedings.

³² In the 2026 elections, presidential candidates supported by a *Grupo significativo de ciudadanos* had to collect at least 635,216 signatures, a number equivalent to 3 per cent of valid votes cast in the 2022 presidential election. Independent candidates for the Senate had to present at least 50,000 signatures. The number of supporting signatures for independent candidates to the Congress depended on the size of the constituency, with a maximum of 50,000. All signatures must be validated by the *Registraduría*.

³³ Candidates running for ethnic minorities seats must be a traditional authority or community leader officially certified by the ethnic organisation or the Ministry of Interior. As for *CITREP* candidates, these could not be supported by political organisations and had to be recognised in the Registry of Victims as a victim of the armed conflict. If supported by groups of citizens, *CITREP* candidates had to present the equivalent of 10 per cent of signatures of the Census from the corresponding constituency, with a maximum of 20,000 supporting signatures.

least thirty to run for the Seante, and twenty-five years old if running for the HoR. In addition, there is a one-year limitation, prior to the election, for holding specific offices.³⁴

The registration period for candidates for Congress took place from 13 November to 8 December 2025, followed by five days for corrections. The *Registraduría* accepted 3,231 candidates, of whom 1,124 for Senate and 2,107 for the HoR, including 240 for the CITREP seats. For presidential candidates, registration started on 31 January and concluded on 13 March, while pre-candidates for inter-party primaries registered prior to 11 February. For the presidential election, the *Registraduría* registered 16 candidates presented by parties and groups of citizens in addition to three candidates resulting from the primaries. Of the 19 initial presidential candidates, six withdrew following their registration, and a further two after the ballot papers were printed. On 31 May, 11 presidential tickets contested the election.

The law allows for petitions to deregister candidates to be filed even after the closing of the registration period. At least 600 such petitions were received by the CNE. Over 80 candidacies were rejected, including 12 candidates for having been convicted of intentional crimes in the past. The Constitution establishes that those who have received a prison sentence, except for political and non-intentional crimes, cannot be elected for Congress or the Presidency for their entire lives. This lifelong, irredeemable disqualification, irrespective of the gravity of the offence or the length of the sentence, constitutes a disproportionate restriction to right to hold office.³⁵

Recommendation: *Eliminate the permanent ineligibility from running for Congress or President for those convicted of intentional crimes. If suspension of the right to stand is maintained as a sentence associated with imprisonment, it is the view of the EU EOM that the period of disqualification should be proportionate to the severity of the offence or the length of the sentence.*

The CNE can potentially invalidate lists or deregister candidates until one day before the election, which limits legal certainty for candidates. The EU EOM observed that the CNE was overloaded with petitions for deregistration of candidates and unable to resolve all *revocatorias* in a timely manner.³⁶

One of the most controversial decisions adopted by the CNE was the rejection of the registration of PH presidential pre-candidate Ivan Cepeda to participate in the 8 March inter-party primary election of the left, the *Frente por la vida*. The CNE considered that Cepeda had already participated in an inter-party primary in October 2025, and the law prohibits the participation in a second one for the same election. Cepeda argued that the first *consulta*, which he won, was intra-party, as all parties involved were in the process of merging at the time. The integration of the last merging party into the new *Pacto Histórico* was endorsed by the CNE shortly before the *Frente por la vida* primary election.

With regard to the congressional election, the largest number of petitions for deregistration were related to the HoR lists, for reasons such as dual party membership, failure to respect the results of the primaries, failure to comply with the 30 per cent gender quota or for exceeding the constitutional limit for the formation of coalitions.³⁷ The party most affected by these impediments was the PH, due to the legal entanglements arising from the merger process of the parties that made up the new PH, notably *Colombia Humana* (CH). Despite several complaints calling for the elimination of their lists, the CNE maintained their registration. The high number of *revocatorias* on the grounds of violation of norms on dual membership, coalitions and party mergers, as well as the case of Cepeda's

³⁴ Constitution Articles 191, 172, 177, 179 and 197.

³⁵ Constitution Articles 122, 179.1. and 197.1

³⁶ For the up-coming 2027 local elections, with possibly over 120,000 competing candidates, the adjudication of petitions for the deregistration will be an even bigger challenge for the CNE.

³⁷ Coalitions may be formed if the sum of the votes obtained by the parties in the immediately preceding election for the same body does not exceed 15 per cent of the votes.

ban from taking part in the *Frente por la vida* primary election, may suggest that the current framework on these issues, complex and sometimes restrictive, fails to reflect a changing party system, and has an excessive impact on the autonomy of the political organisations' internal affairs.

Four petitions to deregister presidential or vice-presidential candidates were processed by the CNE.³⁸ CNE decisions on deregistration of De la Espriella and Paloma Valencia were taken at a late stage. In the case of Valencia, an injunction ordered the CNE to make a decision by 27 June, just five days before the election. The petitions were ultimately rejected by the CNE. The law allows for a candidate to be replaced one month before election day, as long as the CNE decides before this deadline. In practice, the lack of a deadline to present petitions for the deregistration collides with the legal opportunity for replacement of candidates and could potentially compromise the guarantees of political participation.

Recommendation: *To establish deadlines for filing petitions challenging candidates' eligibility as well as their resolution by CNE, to ensure that, if necessary, disqualified candidates can be replaced.*

IX. The election campaign

Although the official campaign began on 8 December 2025 for the legislative elections and on 31 January 2026 for the presidential election, campaigning in practice started much earlier. Prospective candidates and *Grupos Significativos de Ciudadanos* began collecting signatures and promoting their candidacies up to a year before election day. These activities took place outside the regulated campaign period and were therefore not subject to spending limits. Campaign rules provide for a staggered timetable, first for campaigning in public spaces and later in the media, through free and then paid advertising.

The campaign was pluralistic, largely driven by social media, and relatively calm and low-intensity on the ground. Fundamental freedoms were generally respected, and candidates and parties were able to campaign freely in most parts of the country. While campaigning was constrained in some conflict-affected and sparsely populated municipalities, these limitations did not affect the overall competitiveness of the campaign. Security threats led some candidates and political organisations to avoid or reduce campaign activities in certain territories.³⁹

Within the electoral security framework *Plan Democracia*, a quarter of a million military and police personnel were deployed, with additional personnel on stand-by, to secure polling stations nationwide. Security forces paid a heavy toll during the electoral deployment, with 11 soldiers killed and 26 wounded in incidents related to the Plan. Reinforced protection measures for candidates helped avert security incidents involving congressional and presidential contenders. Three of the main illegal armed groups unilaterally declared an 'electoral truce' for the election days and largely upheld it.⁴⁰

Despite electoral violence affecting candidates and parties across the political spectrum throughout the campaign, election days stood out as remarkably peaceful, unfolding without major incidents or disturbances. Since the deployment of the EU EOM, at least seven killings and five kidnappings with links to the election campaign were recorded, although the motives of these incidents had not been established. Threats were the most common form of electoral violence, followed by vandalism

³⁸ An application was filed against De la Espriella alleging irregularities among the signatures backing his candidacy, and a case against Paloma Valencia for alleged irregularities in her selection process within *Centro Democrático*. In addition, petitions to de-register presidential candidate Carlos Caicedo and vice-presidential candidate Aida Quilcué (PH) the latter for double party affiliation were dealt with by the CNE.

³⁹ In Atlántico, Bolívar, Caquetá, Cesar, Córdoba, La Guajira, Guaviare, Huila, Magdalena, Nariño and Tolima.

⁴⁰ The *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* (ELN), the FARC dissident faction *Estado Mayor Central* (EMC) and the *Ejército Gaitanista de Colombia* (EGC).

and armed attacks, with incidents concentrated above all in Bogotá, Cauca, Antioquia and Santander. Violence affected *Centro Democrático*, *Pacto Histórico* and *Defensores de la Patria* in broadly comparable numbers.⁴¹

EU EOM observers reported allegations of voter coercion in support of both left- and right-wing candidates, involving local authorities, traditional political clans, private companies, public contractors and illegal armed groups. Such allegations, as well as related observations by the EOM, were most pronounced during the legislative elections and, to a lesser extent, during the presidential run-off. The EU EOM also observed indications of vote buying in several coastal, border and conflict-affected departments, particularly during the legislative elections and, to a lesser extent, the presidential run-off.⁴² Reciprocal public accusations of vote-buying became particularly prominent during the presidential run-off, turning the issue into a central campaign theme. Cepeda's campaign announced its own investigation into alleged vote-buying by *Defensores de la Patria*'s campaign, while De la Espriella made public allegations of large-scale vote-buying in the Caribbean region, naming political figures close to *Alianza por la Vida*, and called for U.S. scrutiny and possible visa removals. Cepeda's camp rejected these statements as intimidation and profiling.

President Trump's explicit endorsement of De la Espriella, together with statements by other U.S. officials and politicians, drew numerous accusations of foreign interference from the government, Cepeda's campaign, various political actors and media figures. These interventions became a prominent issue in the run-off campaign.

President Petro and members of his government remained highly visible throughout the campaign, repeatedly challenging the boundaries between institutional communication and campaign engagement in support of Cepeda. Their interventions drew sustained opposition criticism, a formal recrimination by the *Consejo de Estado* over unlawful political participation, and disciplinary measures by the *Procuraduría* against several public officials.

Legislative campaign

Campaign conditions varied across the country, with relatively open and visible campaigning in urban centres, while outreach in remote rural areas was often constrained by poor funding, geography and the presence of armed groups. The EU EOM observed 78 campaign events in 23 departments. Social media served as the main channel for outreach, increasingly compensating for limited in-person campaigning. Public debate focused primarily on security, institutional credibility, corruption, health services and the economy.

As in previous elections, competition in several departments was conditioned by entrenched patronage networks and local power structures, often in control of administrative and financial resources. EU EOM observers reported persistent allegations of vote buying in most departments, particularly targeting vulnerable communities. Several high-profile arrests around election day, mostly linked to transportation of large amounts of cash, received extensive media coverage, reflecting a stronger official focus on vote-buying. Observers noted cases in which, despite legal prohibitions, elected local officials allegedly promised public employment in exchange for votes.

Under *Plan Democracia*, protection measures were provided to most presidential pre-candidates, 14 per cent of congressional candidates and more than one-third of CITREP candidates, although opposition parties considered these guarantees insufficient.

⁴¹ The most frequent forms of electoral violence were threats (32 cases), vandalism (21), attacks (14), campaign obstruction (10), homicides (7) and kidnappings (5). *Centro Democrático* (20 cases), *Pacto Histórico* (20) and *Movimiento Salvación Nacional/Defensores de la Patria* (18) were the most affected. The highest number of incidents was recorded in Bogotá D.C. (10), followed by Cauca (8), Antioquia (8), Santander (7), Meta (5), Tolima (5).

⁴² Observed in Atlántico, Bolívar, Caquetá, Córdoba, La Guajira, Magdalena, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Tolima and Valle del Cauca.

Transitory Peace Constituencies (CITREP)

EU EOM observers, civil society organisations and journalists raised concerns about the extent to which the CITREP mechanism fulfilled its intended purpose of ensuring the direct representation of conflict victims. Almost all elected candidates were reported to have links, or potential links, to traditional political structures, illegal armed groups or both. Several incumbents were re-elected while under criminal investigations, and a few reportedly benefited from the backing of regional political structures or from armed-group pressure that prevented rival candidates from campaigning in parts of the constituency. These concerns were compounded by the registration of some candidates with family ties to well-known perpetrators of conflict-related crimes, and by documented cases of *transhumancia* electoral in several CITREP municipalities (fraudulent voter registration to boost support for certain candidates).

Persistent financial barriers and armed groups' intimidation, which prompted several candidates to withdraw, resulted in a 40 per cent decline in candidate lists compared to 2022. In conflict-affected areas, EU EOM observers reported that forced displacement and movement restrictions imposed by armed groups risked hindering voters' ability to exercise their rights. According to the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, between January and May 2026 some 12,071 people were displaced and a further 61,104 confined by armed-group action, more than 73,000 in total.⁴³

Presidential campaign

The first-round presidential campaign was conducted predominantly online and through low-visibility local events. Only the three leading candidates sustained a meaningful territorial presence and held large-scale public rallies in the main departmental capitals. Security and public order became the central issue of the campaign following the series of terrorist attacks in Cauca and Valle del Cauca in late April, attributed to FARC dissident structures. Most of the 66 campaign events observed by the EU EOM across 23 departments showed strong voter mobilisation, particularly those in support of Cepeda and De la Espriella. Amid deep polarisation, the opposition alleged that the president had unlawfully engaged in political campaigning, while several political parties accused the president of Ecuador of foreign interference.

Campaign violence intensified ahead of the first round, with frequent reports of threats, vandalism, physical attacks, kidnappings and the killings of a *Centro Democrático* city councillor in Valle del Cauca and two *Defensores de la Patria* campaign staff in Meta. All three frontrunner organisations were affected. In response, state protection measures for candidates were reinforced, including through expanded security arrangements and the provision of armoured vehicles.

The run-off campaign was marked by heightened polarisation and confrontational rhetoric, with both sides relying heavily on social media outreach. The EU EOM observed 49 campaign events across 18 departments, which reflected strong mobilisation around both candidates and proceeded without major disruption. Political competition increasingly shifted to the courts. Cepeda filed complaints with the *Fiscalía* against De la Espriella over alleged crimes related to associations with paramilitary groups, while De la Espriella's campaign filed a criminal complaint before the *Fiscalía* alleging voter coercion by illegal armed groups in municipalities of Cauca, Nariño and Chocó. These cases remained under investigation. Separately, initial restrictions on *Defensores de la Patria*'s use of national symbols and the national football jersey were ultimately lifted.

X. Campaign finance

Although the campaign finance framework is broadly in line with international transparency standards, providing for spending limits, public funding, disclosure obligations and the CNE's

⁴³ The cases were concentrated in the departments of Antioquia, Bolívar, Cauca, Guainía, Guaviare, Nariño, Norte de Santander and Valle del Cauca, while confinements were reported mainly in Caquetá and Putumayo.

Cuentas Claras platform, it remains fragmented across constitutional provisions, electoral legislation and CNE regulations. These rules are not always fully consistent, and important gaps persist, including in the oversight of campaign finance and online campaigning.⁴⁴ Oversight is further undermined by persistent shortcomings in timely and accurate reporting of campaign income and expenditure, access to state funding advances, inter-institutional coordination, and the traceability of in-kind support. The timing of a CNE sanction for irregularities in Gustavo Petro's 2022 campaign funding also drew criticism, as it was imposed right at the start of the 2026 election campaign.

The CNE is mandated to disburse public funding, regulate and enforce compliance with campaign finance and disclosure requirements.⁴⁵ However, it has yet to fully enforce the legal framework through systematic verification of reported information and sufficiently strengthened capacity to detect and prevent illicit funding. While its *Cuentas Claras* platform has enhanced transparency by facilitating disclosure of campaign income and expenditure by parties and candidates, compliance remains incomplete.

Campaign finance relies predominantly on private resources, complemented by public funding through advance payments and post-election reimbursements. Advances are calculated on the basis of votes obtained in the previous election, while reimbursements are proportional to the votes eventually received. State reimbursement (*reposición de votos*) requires a minimum result: four per cent of valid votes for presidential candidates, or 50 per cent of the electoral threshold for congressional lists. Campaigns falling below these thresholds must generally repay any advance received. The CNE sets both the spending limits for each election and the reimbursement value per vote. However, for parties receiving advance funding, the reimbursement value per vote is halved, a rule identified by the EU EOM as penalising candidates who depend on public support and favouring parties and candidates with greater personal wealth or better access to bank credit.

In practice, the advance payment system has itself generated unequal access to public funding. Candidates seeking advance payments must open a dedicated campaign bank account and provide an insurance policy or bank guarantee, requirements that proved difficult for many to meet. Banks reportedly refused to open accounts for some candidates, especially those without a credit history, including many women, citing due diligence requirements and concerns related to money-laundering risks. Insurance policies were likewise often unavailable or prohibitively expensive. These obstacles disproportionately affected smaller, newer and less institutionalised political actors, reinforcing the advantages already enjoyed by larger parties, better-resourced candidates and those prominent in the polls.

These constraints were particularly acute for candidates in the special transitory peace constituencies (CITREP). Direct private funding was prohibited, while access to public advances remained conditional on obtaining insurance, which candidates in general were unable to secure. As a result, most CITREP candidates were effectively deprived of the means to campaign and had to rely on personal resources or other informal support. Moreover, the CNE resolution authorising advance payments for the legislative elections was issued only three weeks before election day, constraining access to campaign funds.

The late regulation and delayed disbursement of state advances also disproportionately affected lower-polling presidential candidates. The CNE failed to issue, by the 31 January deadline, the resolution defining the insurance requirements for public funding advances, while insurers

⁴⁴ For example, the regulation on financing political parties is more permissive than that of campaigns. Candidates often use this loophole to finance campaigns by channelling donations made to parties, where – contrary to campaigns – there is no cap on individual donations.

⁴⁵ The CNE's regulatory mandate includes setting annual campaign spending limits and reimbursement amounts, as well as the adoption of procedural resolutions governing financial reporting and the *Cuentas Claras* platform.

reportedly refused to underwrite them. As a result, several smaller presidential campaigns were unable to access advances until the final week of the campaign, unlike contenders with access to bank credit. The three frontrunners relied entirely on bank credit, while smaller campaigns operated with very limited resources, reinforcing a credit-dependent funding model that widened pre-existing asymmetries.

Recommendation: *Guarantee effective access to advance public campaign funding by simplifying or removing the requirement to obtain an insurance policy or equivalent financial guarantee. Reconsider the rule that halves the reimbursement value per vote for campaigns that received advance funding, so that candidates and parties relying on public support are not financially disadvantaged.*

All presidential candidates submitted campaign finance declarations, marking an improvement on the legislative elections, when two-thirds of candidates failed to do so before election day despite a legal obligation. Across multiple departments, EU EOM observers reported that local campaign activities relied on in-kind donations, private contributions and volunteer networks that were not systematically declared on the *Cuentas Claras* platform, pointing to underreporting and weak traceability of local spending. This remained particularly relevant in the presidential run-off, when both campaigns increased spending on voter transport, *testigo* recruitment, small-scale territorial mobilisation and digital outreach. Local campaign coordinators also showed limited awareness that in-kind contributions and decentralised logistical support are subject to reporting obligations.

In addition to the ex-post reporting required by law, a CNE resolution requires candidates to report their finances during the campaign on the *Cuentas Claras* platform. However, this is not a binding obligation and in practice reporting on the platform is sporadic. If complied with more rigorously during the campaign, *Cuentas Claras* could be an important tool for public oversight and greater transparency of campaign finances.

Recommendation: *Reporting to Cuentas Claras could be made a legal obligation so as to ensure transparency and accountability in campaign spending before elections.*

The CNE reactivated 33 local *Tribunales Seccionales de Vigilancia y Garantías Electorales* between January and June, formally mandated to monitor campaign propaganda and financing, but the effectiveness of their oversight proved limited in practice.

Although the CNE is mandated to inspect and monitor campaign finance, the prevention of illicit and criminal funding depends on coordinated action across several institutions with complementary mandates.⁴⁶ At present, there are no standardised and timely channels for sharing alerts and analysis with the electoral authorities, and suspicious-transaction reports do not consistently translate into prompt investigations. The *Fiscalía* strengthened its response to electoral offences during the 2026 elections through increasingly coordinated and proactive institutional approach. However, its preventive impact remained limited, as most campaign-finance information is submitted or consolidated only after election day (see *Electoral offences*).

Oversight therefore remained largely fragmented, ex post and document-based, constrained by bank and tax secrecy, with key information dispersed across non-interoperable electoral, financial-intelligence, tax, procurement, public-employment, oversight and criminal-investigation systems. This limits the capacity to detect undeclared cash, in-kind contributions, third-party payments or

⁴⁶ The *Fiscalía* investigates electoral offences, the UIAF (*Unidad de Información y Análisis Financiero*) provides financial-intelligence, the DIAN (*Dirección de Impuestos y Aduanas Nacionales*) holds relevant beneficial-ownership information, and the Superintendencia Financiera supervises financial-sector compliance. The Registraduría holds candidate and electoral information, while URIEL receives and refers complaints. Other systems could also support early detection, including SECOP (*Sistema Electrónico para la Contratación Pública*), for identifying links between campaign providers and public procurement, and SIGEP (*Sistema de Información y Gestión del Empleo Público*), for detecting public officials or politically exposed profiles connected to campaign activity.

opaque campaign-provider arrangements before the vote, creating zones of opacity through which resources of prohibited or potentially criminal origin may enter campaigns with a low probability of early detection or effective sanction.

Priority recommendation: *Strengthen interinstitutional coordination among key electoral, financial-intelligence, tax, procurement, oversight and criminal-investigation bodies to prevent illicit and criminal campaign financing, including through the timely cross-checking of Cuentas Claras reports with other relevant institutional data. This would need to be supported by clear channels and protocols for joint analysis and coordinated preventive, administrative, disciplinary and criminal action.*

Given the growing importance of online campaigning, monitoring expenditure on digital products and online advertising has become essential. Yet the current legal and institutional framework remains largely insufficient for this task, particularly given the cross-border nature of social media platforms (see *Social media section*).

Use of public resources

Misuse of public resources was not widely reported during the campaign. However, EU EOM observers raised concerns over the potential electoral use of state resources, including government land allocations, educational infrastructure inaugurations and scholarship announcements, which risked blurring the line between institutional activity and campaign mobilisation, particularly when they coincided with campaign messaging. Observers also reported indications in several departments of public servants being occasionally pressured to attend campaign events or vote for a specific candidate.

Separately, the Comptroller General's Office raised concerns about the possible misuse of public resources during the electoral period after identifying direct contracts signed after the 31 January entry into force of the restrictions under the *Ley de Garantías*, including in sectors that did not appear to fall within the law's exceptions.

XI. Traditional and digital media

Media landscape

The Colombian media landscape is vibrant and pluralistic. A small number of companies own all main private national media, whose editorial lines are generally perceived as liberal or conservative. State-run *Radio Televisión Nacional de Colombia* (RTVC) traditionally echoes the government's views. There are also numerous local media outlets, including community radios, television channels and digital platforms.

Freedoms of expression and of the media were generally respected during the election campaigns. However, the killings of Mateo Pérez, a young journalist, in May in Antioquia by alleged FARC dissident fighters, and of Cristian Herrera, a senior journalist, in June in Cúcuta, by presumed hired hitmen (*sicarios*), served as a reminder of the threats faced by the media in parts of the country. The *Fundación para la Libertad de Prensa* (FLIP) identified 79 cases of election-related abuse against journalists during the first half of the year, a 60 per cent increase compared to the 2022 campaign. Most cases involved civil servants, politicians and presidential candidates, as well as security forces and illegal armed groups.⁴⁷

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) 2025 report featured “murders, attacks and threats against journalists, particularly those working in areas of armed conflict and

⁴⁷ Cases listed as election-linked involved: obstruction of journalist work (17 cases), stigmatisation (12), threats (7), harassment (7), judicial harassment (4), kidnapping and illegal detention (2), physical aggression (1), other types (29). The murders of the two journalists in May-June 2026 were described as not linked to elections.

areas where criminal groups are active” as the main challenges faced by journalists in Colombia.⁴⁸ EU EOM observers reported numerous cases of local journalists threatened by illegal armed groups and criminal organisations, fuelling self-censorship. They also reported allegations of advertising being withdrawn for political reasons from local media, generally by local and regional authorities, as well as instances of judicial harassment.

Media legal framework

The media legal framework guarantees freedoms of expression and of the press. Nevertheless, the penal code foresees sentences of up to nine years' imprisonment for journalists for libel or slander. While no recent related sentences were reported, such provisions are in contravention of international standards and may have a chilling effect. The 2022 EU EOM recommended replacing prison sentences for these offences with proportionate fines. This recommendation has not yet been adopted.

Regulation of the campaign in the media is scattered across different laws.⁴⁹ While the regulation of the campaign coverage in print and online press is rather limited, the legal framework for radio and television, particularly during the presidential campaign, is more robust. Paid ads, subject to limitations during the campaign periods, are to be supervised by the CNE.⁵⁰ However, paid ads by presidential pre-candidates participating in inter-party presidential primaries are not subject to oversight, in the absence of a specific regulation.

Overview of the campaign in the media

The CNE issued several resolutions on media aspects of the campaign, some of which were adopted late, such as those on free airtime distribution and polls. The Ministry of interior published two decrees, allowing use of cellular phones by the media and access to polling stations for ‘authorised’ journalists. The latter was described as a restriction of freedom of the press by media organisations, since accreditation was not provided to local journalists. On election days, several journalists reported being blocked by security and electoral agents.

Campaign coverage of the legislative and presidential primaries on national media was pluralistic, providing substantial information on the electoral process as well as interviews and debates with congressional and presidential pre-candidates. While the campaign in local media was vibrant in most parts of the country, it was barely existent in the so-called “information deserts”, vast and sparsely populated areas usually attracting poor media attention.

The presidential campaign was dominated by increased polarisation, particularly during the run-off period. Media coverage reflected increased verbal attacks between the candidates, amid persistent use of discrediting language and disinformation by the two camps. During the first-round campaign, state-run media, as required by law, broadcast three debates, while others were hosted by private media. None of them was attended simultaneously by Iván Cepeda, Abelardo De la Espriella, and Paloma Valencia, or even by two of them. Cepeda and De la Espriella did not agree on conditions for a presidential run-off debate. Although there is no legal obligation for candidates to participate in debates, the lack of a debate between the two contenders deprived citizens of the opportunity to see them present and challenge their respective visions of the country.

⁴⁸ IACHR 2025 Annual Report, April 2026.

⁴⁹ Law 996 on *elección del presidente de la república*, Law 1475 on *organización y funcionamiento de partidos políticos y procesos electorales*, Law 2494 on *elaboración y publicación de encuestas*, among others.

⁵⁰ According to *Transparencia por Colombia* information based on CNE *Cuentas Claras* platform, by 30 June, Iván Cepeda had declared 2.95 million euros and Abelardo De la Espriella 2.37 million euros for advertisement on media and social media for the presidential campaigns.

President Petro continued to campaign and promote his government's achievements in the media, including by broadcasting a significant volume of government advertisement on state-run and private radio and television, despite the legal restrictions (see annex).⁵¹

Recommendation: *To pass legislation ensuring an equitable distribution of government advertisement among media outlets, as well as setting clear limits, based on objective criteria of urgency or public need, for government ads during the campaign periods.*

The State Council (*Consejo de Estado*) banned President Petro from “using the state-run media in favour of or against a political movement” shortly before the presidential first round. For the first time during the elections period, the *Comisión de Regulación de Comunicaciones* (CRC) rejected a 12 June request by Petro to broadcast a presidential message on reduction of poverty during his mandate on all state-run and private television channels at peak hour. The CRC ruled that the legal criteria of urgency and exceptional circumstances were not met.⁵²

To ensure pluralism and impartiality, private radio stations and television channels are required by law to submit to the CNE weekly reports on airtime distribution between candidates throughout the presidential campaign. However, this oversight mechanism was only implemented during the run-off campaign. Although some reports showed unbalanced coverage, no decision was made by the CNE to enforce equitable access of candidates to the media.⁵³

The state-run media system, operated by *Radio Televisión Nacional de Colombia* (RTVC), which have a heightened duty of neutrality and balance in its coverage of the campaign, largely favoured President Petro and his government, *Pacto Histórico* and Ivan Cepeda. The adoption of specific measures regulating the campaign coverage on state-run media would foster pluralistic and impartial coverage on state-funded media.

Priority recommendation: *To ensure equitable access for candidates and political parties to state-run media coverage during the campaign.*

Media monitoring of the legislative and presidential elections campaigns

Legislative campaign

EU EOM media monitoring of the legislative campaign in news and election-related programmes revealed that, between 8 February and 7 March, state-run television and radio mostly covered the activities of the president and the government.⁵⁴ *Pacto Histórico* and the *Consulta Frente por la Vida* also received extensive coverage. Opposition parties' campaign was afforded limited airtime and often with a negative tone, except for *La Gran Consulta por Colombia*, treated more favourably.

Private television channels and radio stations allocated less time to the president and the government than state-owned media, often with a negative tone. However, coverage of the opposition and of the left, pro-government parties was more balanced in time, although more negative in tone for the latter.

⁵¹ According to EU EOM media monitoring, during the legislative and presidential election campaigns, state-run and private media broadcast over nine hours of government ads, mostly for the *Agencia Nacional de Tierras*, *Fondo Nacional de Ahorro* and *Salario Mínimo Legal Vigente*.

⁵² From November 2025 to June 2026, President Petro broadcast eleven *alocuciones presidenciales* on state-run and private television channels with national audience, which collectively lasted 6 hours and 48 minutes.

⁵³ The CRC sent a letter to the CNE on 18 June requesting appropriate action by the CNE based on the reports submitted by Canal 1 and *Teleantioquia* television channels for the presidential run-off campaign, which showed a clear advantage to one presidential candidate.

⁵⁴ The EU EOM monitored quantitatively a selection of national media: television channels (from 18 to 24:00 hr) - *Señal Colombia* (state-run), Caracol TV and RCN TV (private); radio stations (from 6 to 15:00 hr) *Radio Nacional de Colombia* (state-run), Blu Radio and Caracol Radio (private).

Paid electoral advertisement on private media increased during the last week of the campaign, with *Alianza por Colombia*, *Centro Democrático*, *La Gran Consulta* and *Partido Conservador* in the lead.

Presidential campaign (first round)

Media monitoring showed that, between 30 April and 30 May, state-run media mainly favoured President Petro, the government and Ivan Cepeda in their news programmes. Paloma Valencia and Abelardo de la Espriella were afforded much less time and partly in a negative tone.

Private media provided much less coverage of the president and the government than state-run media, and often in a negative tone. They afforded most time to Paloma Valencia, Abelardo de la Espriella and Ivan Cepeda, well above the other candidates, and mostly in a neutral way.

Paid electoral advertising on private media quadrupled in volume during the last weeks of the campaign, with Paloma Valencia, Iván Cepeda and Abelardo De la Espriella appearing in 70 per cent of the ads.

Presidential campaign (second round)

State-run media slightly privileged coverage of Cepeda, mostly in a neutral way, while De la Espriella was given a little? less time and mainly in a negative tone. As during the first round, state-run media favoured the president and his government, whereas private media allocated much less time to them, often in a negative light.

News programmes of private radio and television media monitored by the mission between 1 and 20 June allocated similar time in their news programmes to Abelardo De la Espriella and Ivan Cepeda and covered both candidates mostly in a neutral way.

Paid electoral advertising on private media, relatively low compared to the first round, increased in the last week with Cepeda leading in volume. As requested by law, free airtime slots were offered to both candidates on the main state-run and private television channels during the two periods of the presidential election campaign.

See the annexes, at the end of report, for further information on EU EOM's media monitoring.

XII. Social media

The 2026 elections marked a turning point in Colombia's digital campaigning, due to the increased importance of social media, and the arrival of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a routine campaign tool. These developments outpaced the regulatory framework, leaving key aspects of the online campaign, such as political advertising and institutional neutrality without effective oversight.

Colombia is one of the Latin America's most digitally advanced countries, with a dynamic online public sphere. Internet access remains uneven, reflecting the country's challenging geography, socio-economic disparities and insecurity in certain areas, yet Colombia continues to rank among the region's leaders in connectivity. Online political debate has been well established for more than a decade, but the 2026 general elections marked a significant shift: social media became the campaign's main channel of communication and took the centre stage in political conversation.

Constitutional Court case law has recognised that freedom of expression applies fully to the internet and social media, while also making clear that online speech is not exempt from the limits applicable to other forms of public communication. *Consejo de Estado* case law has applied the principles of neutrality, impartiality and the prohibition on the use of public resources for campaigning to institutional communication, including through official digital channels. However, Colombia lacks specific legislation regulating social media and other aspects of digital campaigning during electoral processes. Online activity is governed by general rules, which the *Consejo Nacional Electoral*

(CNE) adapts to the digital environment through resolutions, but oversight and enforcement have remained very limited. The absence of a dedicated framework for online campaigning, compounded by the cross-border nature of social media platforms, left the digital campaign without effective oversight in areas such as electoral advertising expenditure and the use of public resources for campaigning.⁵⁵

Priority recommendation: *Adopt legislation requiring digital platforms, during the electoral period, to disclose who places political advertising and the amounts they pay for it, to comply with current national requirements.*

Colombia has well-established fact-checking organisations (*ColombiaCheck*, *El Detector de Mentiras de La Silla Vacía*, and *AFP Factual*). In addition, both the *Registraduría* and the *CNE* have dedicated units to monitor social media and debunk harmful narratives during the electoral process. However, the EU EOM found both units to be understaffed and the *CNE*'s became operational only late in the electoral process.

The mission observed that AI played a key role in the production of disinformation and manipulated content, but its most notable use was as a campaign tool. It was widely used to create campaign spots, likely marking one of the first elections in which AI-generated content became a prominent feature of online campaigning. While much of this content was not inherently deceptive, its growing use underscored the need for clearer transparency standards and the labelling of AI content, in line with good practice.

Legislative elections (8 March)

The legislative election campaign was particularly intense in the digital sphere. The EU EOM Monitoring Unit observed that political debate on social media focused on security, corruption, health services and the economy, while negative campaigning filled the conversation with acrimony and insults. Attacks targeted parties rather than individual candidates, in line with a contest between party lists and coalitions.

Dominant disinformation narratives focused on the two figures who would later compete for the presidency: Iván Cepeda, portrayed as a former guerrilla fighter, and Abelardo de la Espriella, depicted as untrustworthy. The electoral administration was also targeted, particularly by President Gustavo Petro, who fueled narratives of fraud from well before the beginning of the campaign. The President posted numerous messages on his X account expressing mistrust of the tabulation software, casting doubt on the neutrality of the electoral authority and the transparency of the process.

Most ministries used their social media profiles to disseminate political messages and, in some cases, call for street protests, often in contravention of Colombian legislation, which bans the participation of authorities in electoral politics.

Presidential elections: first round (31 May)

All presidential candidates conducted their campaigns predominantly online. As the contest became more polarised, the debate grew more acrimonious, and insults became more frequent. Both Abelardo de la Espriella and Iván Cepeda enlisted influencers to convey their campaign messages and bolster their public image.

Although fraud narratives remained a central theme in political and media debate, their presence on social media declined compared to the legislative campaign. The other predominant narratives,

⁵⁵ *Constitución Política* (Arts. 20, 110 and 127); *Consejo de Estado* case law on neutrality, impartiality and the use of public resources in electoral periods. *Ley 996 de 2005 (Ley de Garantías Electorales)*, Arts. 30, 32 and 38; *Ley 1475 de 2011*, on electoral advertising and campaign-finance reporting; and the *Código General Disciplinario (Ley 1952 de 2019)*.

however, followed the previous pattern: Cepeda was linked to illegal armed groups, De la Espriella was portrayed as untrustworthy, and Paloma Valencia of the *Centro Democrático* was depicted as subordinate to former President Uribe. These narratives were frequently disseminated through fake images, audio clips and videos generated using AI.

Hate content was also present during the first-round campaign. In a sample of responses collected during this period, hate messages accounted, on average, for nearly four in every hundred responses to candidates' posts.⁵⁶ Women candidates were the target of sexist messages: Paloma Valencia and Claudia López were the most prominent targets - both received over 5 percent - whilst Aida Quilcué also received racist comments and both Claudia López and Juan Daniel Oviedo faced homophobic comments.

The misuse of official accounts persisted. Ministries continued to publish messages extolling the government's performance, often under hashtags such as *#100LogrosDePetro*. In a sample of eight ministries taken during this period, one in three messages promoted the administration's achievements, featuring slogans that were virtually indistinguishable from those used by *Pacto Histórico* campaign.⁵⁷

During the first round, AI moved decisively beyond the realm of disinformation to become a recurring tool of political advertising, enabling candidates to produce large volumes of campaign content at a speed and cost that would have been unfeasible only a short time earlier. Videos created using this technology proliferated, mostly attacking or mocking political opponents rather than conveying substantive policy messages.

Analysis of online electoral advertising expenditure, one of the most significant components of campaign spending, is limited, as only Meta discloses the sums invested in political ads. The other platforms, used intensively by some candidacies, remain opaque. Spending on influencers and other forms of online promotion is particularly difficult to monitor. In this context, advertising on Meta's platforms totaled COP 3.8 billion (EUR 919,000), with Paloma Valencia accounting for more than half of the total spend (53.9 per cent). The Monitoring Unit also detected campaigns funded through third parties which, while not explicitly soliciting votes, appeared to benefit centre-right candidates.

Presidential elections: run-off (21 June)

The run-off campaign was highly polarised, marked by frequent disinformation and an unprecedented use of AI and deepfakes. Narratives of fraud persisted, but their main source shifted: whereas President Petro had cast doubt on the electoral system during the parliamentary and first-round campaigns, in the second round it was the candidate De la Espriella who repeatedly alleged a vote-buying plot and published a list of politicians said to be involved in it. Reciprocal and unsubstantiated accusations of vote-buying characterised the online exchanges between the two camps.

The online campaign took an international dimension, as statements by President Trump and United States officials were widely amplified on social media, prompting accusations of foreign interference from across the political spectrum and further intensifying polarisation in the final stretch of the campaign.

Hateful content did not disappear in the second round but instead focused on the vice-presidential candidate for the *Pacto Histórico* and member of the Nasa people of Cauca, Aida Quilcué, who was subjected to sexist and racist comments. In a sample of responses collected during the run-off,

⁵⁶ A sample of 200,000 comments posted in response to messages from the candidates between 10 and 24 April.

⁵⁷ A sample of 3,850 posts on Facebook, X and TikTok collected from eight ministries' social media profiles, from 30 April to 24 May: Presidency, 64.43 %; Education, 52.46 %; Public Health, 41.19 %; Agriculture, 29.62 %; Transport, 28.03 %; ICT, 26.68 %; Environment, 25.66 %; Culture, 10.84 %.

almost 3 per cent contained racist comments and over 2 per cent sexist comments directed at the candidate.⁵⁸

Paid online advertising in the second round varied significantly by platform. Iván Cepeda increased his advertising spend on Meta's platforms, while De la Espriella concentrated on YouTube and TikTok, where he ran a far more intensive campaign than his rival.⁵⁹ The misuse of official accounts intensified. The proportion of messages praising government's performance rose from 36 to 47 per cent of all posts published on official accounts, often carrying hashtags such as #100LogrosDePetro, also used by the Cepeda campaign.

See the annexes, at the end of report, for further information on EU EOM's social media monitoring.

XIII. Women's political participation

The 1991 Constitution enshrines the principle of equal rights and opportunities for men and women and provides that parity and alternation in party and candidate lists be introduced through gradual legal reform. Since 2011, a mandatory 30 per cent of candidate lists must be women in constituencies with over five seats and lists for single-seat CITREP constituencies must be composed of one man and one woman.⁶⁰ Furthermore, an amendment in 2024 established that in the lists for constituencies electing fewer than five seats, at least one candidate must be a woman, but without defining her position on the lists.⁶¹

Following the 8 March election, 48 women were elected to the House of Representatives and 32 to the Senate, making up 29 per cent of Congress, roughly the same proportion as in 2022.⁶² The number of women who headed Senate lists remained low, with six out of 16 candidates. In 13 of the 32 departments, no woman was elected to the HoR. Three women were among the initial 14 presidential candidates, and five women ran for the vice-presidency.⁶³

For the first time, the coalition PH held open primaries for Congress, while also implementing parity and zippered lists. As a result, the PH benches will have the largest numbers of congresswomen sitting in both chambers, with 13 in the Senate and 14 women in the HoR. The remaining parties and coalitions that won representation in Congress, either presented open lists or did not opt for gender alternation in their closed lists.

Priority recommendation: *To increase women's access to elected office, the current 30 percent quota in candidate lists could be raised to require parity and be applied to all constituencies. To the same end, alternation of men and women could be required for closed lists. Lastly, mechanisms could be explored to make parity effective when parties present open lists.*

A law on gender-based violence against women in politics was approved in 2025, which specifies several forms of violence, including economic, symbolic, and digital.⁶⁴ The CNE supervises the

⁵⁸ Sample of 15,825 responses collected between 1 and 14 June

⁵⁹ Meta publishes details of political advertising purchased on its platforms, but YouTube/Google and TikTok provide very little information on such expenditure. For this reason, monitoring on these platforms can only be carried out on a qualitative basis: the EU EOM Monitoring Unit detected a significantly higher volume of advertising by the *Defensores de la Patria* campaign, particularly on YouTube.

⁶⁰ *Acto Legislativo* 02/2021, Article 6.

⁶¹ Law 2024/2024 modified article 28 of Law 1475/2011. Out of 32 constituencies, 18 have less than five seats, including four constituencies with four seats, three constituencies with three seats, and 12 constituencies with two seats only.

⁶² CNE official results on the number of women elected were not available at the time of closing of this report. Forty per cent of the candidates registered for the legislative election were women, a 15 per cent increase compared to 2022.

⁶³ CD's Paloma Valencia, and independent candidates Claudia López and Sondra Macollins.

⁶⁴ *Ley 2453/2025 - Violencia contra las Mujeres en Política* The law also specifies physical, sexual, and vicarious violence (when a secondary person is the target of the violence, like a family member of the candidate). Additional

implementation of the law and may investigate and apply administrative sanctions.⁶⁵ The first year of implementation revealed some weaknesses regarding the technical capacity of the CNE staff, especially in terms of facing digital violence and maintaining consistent interinstitutional cooperation.⁶⁶

Psychological and economic violence are the most frequent form of abuse reported by female candidates, including attacks on social media, and constitute a pervasive problem in Colombian political life. UN Women reported that in Colombia three out of four candidates have suffered some type of gender-based violence, with one out of three aggressions originating from their own parties.

XIV. Participation of Indigenous and Afro-Colombian peoples

The 1991 Constitution recognises the cultural and ethnic diversity of Colombia, and the rights to autonomy, self-determination and participation of minority ethnic groups, further developed by the decisions of the *Corte Constitucional*. The Constitution also enshrines the right of the peoples to administer traditional justice in their own territories.⁶⁷

It is estimated that 2.2 million indigenous people live in Colombia, belonging to 115 officially recognised groups. Of these, 55 per cent live in special territories. The Afro-Colombian community, an estimated 3.7 million people, include the black, the Afro-Colombian, Raizal and Palenquero groups.⁶⁸ Civil society organisations representing indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities have criticised the lack of accurate official data on these groups, highlighting their persistent political underrepresentation and that they are disproportionately affected by violence in conflict-affected areas.

The Constitution provides for special seats for the Afro-Colombian and indigenous peoples in the HoR, and for indigenous communities in the Senate. For the legislative election, Afro-Colombian communities presented 46 lists with 124 candidates for two seats in the HoR, while the indigenous communities presented 21 candidates on 10 lists for their single HoR seat, and 23 candidates on 10 lists for two seats in the Senate. *Movimiento Libres y Consejo Comunitario Los Naranjos* won the two Afro-Colombian reserved seats in the HoR. The indigenous special seat in the HoR was won by *Movimiento Unidad en Minga por Colombia*. In the Senate, one indigenous special seat went to MAIS and the second seat to *Movimiento de Autoridades Indígenas de Colombia*. As in 2022, two of the five candidates elected to these reserved seats were women.

legislation has strengthened the participation of women in politics: *Ley de Participación Paritaria de las Mujeres* (2024) and the *Ley sobre la Licencia Maternidad Mujeres en Política* (2024).

⁶⁵ A CNE Resolution details the CNE supervisory obligations of the law on Political Violence against Women in Politics. *CNE Resolution 10946/2025*. In addition, the CNE developed an institutional platform to provide information and to channel complaints: <https://mujeresenpolitica.cne.gov.co>

⁶⁶ CNE in cooperation with the *Procuraduría*, the *FGN*, the Ministry of Interior, and the *Registraduría*. Only eight instances of political violence against women have reportedly been investigated by the CNE, including a complaint brought by presidential candidate Sondra Macollins against De la Espriella. The case was dismissed for lack of legal grounds. In addition, two cases of violence against Paloma Valencia were pending a decision.

⁶⁷ Constitution, Articles 7 and 246. In a landmark 2025 governmental decree, Colombia recognised the right to establish autonomous territorial entities for the indigenous peoples - Decree 488/2025. In addition, Colombia ratified the International Labour Organisation's Convention 169 for Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

⁶⁸ Based on data from the *Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística* (DANE) Quality of Life Survey 2024. The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination raised concerns that the results of the DANE 2018 census do not adequately represent the Afro-Colombia, black, Palenquera and Raizal population and recommends Colombia to adopt an appropriate methodology to ensure the collection of accurate data on all population groups. Indigenous peoples are established throughout Colombia, with the departments of La Guajira, Cauca and Nariño having the largest populations. The main geographical distribution of Afro-Colombian people is along the Pacific and Caribbean coasts, and the San Andrés archipelago.

For the presidential race, only two vice-presidential candidates belonged to minority groups: Aida Quilcué (PH) from the Nasa indigenous community of Cauca, and Mila Maria Paz, an Afro-descendant from Nariño (*Partido Ecologista Colombiano*).

The *Registraduría* issued ballot papers in creole language for Raizal Afro-Colombian voters recruited interpretation services to assist voters in other local languages. Despite these efforts, the EU EOM observed a lack of public information materials in indigenous languages at polling stations and also noted higher rates of invalid votes for special seats for Congress, as was the case in the 2022. Observers also noted that voters were not always informed by *jurados* about the possibility to choose between the ordinary constituency ballots and those for indigenous and Afro-Colombian seats.

XV. Participation of people with disabilities

Despite efforts to improve accessibility, physical access for voters with reduced mobility remained a challenge in one fifth of the polling stations observed. To facilitate voting by persons with disabilities or reduced mobility, polling stations were equipped with adjustable polling booths, while voting materials could, where necessary, be temporarily brought outside to an accessible location. In each polling centre, special ballot papers in Braille were available.⁶⁹ However, EU EOM observers noted that the poll workers were not always fully aware of the protocol for the support of persons with disabilities or availability of these tools.

The *Registraduría* indicated its intention to explore additional voting modalities and adjustments for voters with visual impairments, such as tactile ballot guides, that would better safeguard the secrecy and independence of the vote. This follows concerns that the current design of special ballots differs significantly from regular ones, potentially allowing ballots to be linked to individual voters.

XVI. Election observation

Legislation provides for citizen and international election observation, granting observers the right to follow all stages of the electoral process and to access relevant information, but also establishes their duties, such as submission of an observation report to the election administration. Citizen observers commended the openness of the election administration and did not report any hindrance to their work. The presence and work of observers contributed to enhancing transparency in the electoral process.

Observer participation in the 2026 electoral processes registered a significant increase compared to previous processes, culminating in a record deployment during the presidential elections. To ensure a smooth accreditation process, the CNE extended the accreditation periods for election observers, as well as for system auditors and party representatives for both the legislative elections and the first round of the presidential election. For the legislative elections, the CNE accredited some 8,400 citizen and 480 international observers. In the run-up to the presidential election, the CNE registered unprecedented interest in election observation, accrediting around 13,800 citizen observers and over 1,300 international observers. This number further increased for the run-off, reaching almost 15,900 citizen and 1,700 international observers.

Several well-established and widely recognised organisations are engaged in assessing different aspects of electoral processes, including *Misión de Observación Electoral* (MOE), the most prominent election observation organisation over the past two decades; *Transparencia por Colombia*, which monitors campaign finance; and *Fundación para la Libertad de Prensa* (FLIP), which scrutinises the state of press freedom in the country. In addition to the EU EOM, international observation missions included, among others, the Organisation of American States (OAS), The

⁶⁹ For each election, 90,000 Braille ballots were supposed to be distributed across the country.

Carter Center, and the International Republican Institute (IRI), as well as an international observation mission comprising over a hundred observers from organisations and foreign electoral bodies directly invited by the CNE.

XVII. Polling, counting and tabulation of results

Polling and counting

All three election days were peaceful, orderly and well administered, with no major incidents reported. EU observers assessed all stages of the election days as calm and transparent. Polling overall proceeded smoothly. The performance of polling staff was evaluated positively across all phases of the election-day process, although the vote-counting stage received slightly less favourable assessments, particularly during the extremely complex legislative elections. Campaign activities, prohibited on election day, were observed in the vicinity of some polling centres visited, along with a few indications of vote buying.

Polling stations observed by the EU EOM opened on time or shortly after, with the vast majority of polling staff and all essential election materials present. The logistical preparations by the election administration ensured the timely establishment of polling operations nationwide on all three election days, notwithstanding isolated operational challenges. The *Registraduría* informed of only a few cases of delays in opening of polling centres following difficulties in the distribution of election materials due to weather conditions. EU observers evaluated the opening process on all election days as smooth and calm in all polling stations observed, highlighting the generally uniform application of procedures. Women generally made up for more than half of polling staff.

Observers described the voting process as well-organised, orderly and transparent in virtually all polling stations visited on all election days. The very few negative assessments were mostly connected with indications of influence on voters and campaign activities, which in some cases were coupled with tension outside the polling stations. Voting procedures and integrity safeguards, such as voter identification, were largely respected. However, during the legislative elections, the EU EOM observed poll workers not always offering the ballots for special constituencies and not informing the voters about the interparty primaries. In very few instances, the poll workers were observed handing over more than one ballot within one constituency.⁷⁰ This subsequently resulted in a random invalidation of excess votes during the counting, as prescribed by law. Moreover, the EU EOM noticed a lack of instructions on marking their ballots inside polling stations, an important tool for guiding voters through legislative election complex voting procedures.

While the voting process proceeded without major disruptions, high voter turnout recorded during the presidential election occasionally resulted in long queues and overcrowding. In most cases, polling staff properly managed voter flow. Although secrecy of vote was generally preserved, in some polling stations visited, observers identified shortcomings in the layout that could compromise it due to the placement of polling booths, overcrowding, or limited space. Both in the legislative elections and the presidential run-off, EU EOM observers noted voters attempting to take pictures of their ballot in some four per cent of the polling stations, which is prohibited, but most of these situations were prevented by polling personnel or the police.

Party representatives (*testigos*) were able to monitor all stages of polling without undue restrictions in the vast majority of stations observed on all three election days. During the legislative elections,

⁷⁰ In the elections to the Senate and the House of Representatives, voters may choose to vote in either the ordinary constituency or in one of the special constituencies (in senatorial election, the indigenous constituency; in the HoR election, the indigenous or Afro-descendant constituencies), but they may not vote in both. In *CITREP* constituencies, voters shall receive two ballot papers for each election: one for the ordinary or special constituency, depending on their choice, and one for the respective *CITREP* constituency. In addition, each voter had the opportunity to vote in the inter-party consultations.

testigos were present in some 72 per cent of polling stations attended by the EU EOM, rising to 76 per cent of polling stations visited in the run-off.

The conduct of vote counting was assessed as accurate, transparent and well organised and was generally conducted in line with procedures in observed polling stations. Although some procedural oversights were noted, these did not affect the integrity or accuracy of the process. The determination of ballot validity was generally reasonable and consistent, and votes were observed to be correctly attributed. During all three election days, closing procedures and integrity checks, such as reconciliation of the number of voters and ballots, were not completed correctly in close to a fourth of the observed polling stations in the legislative elections and up to 40 per cent in the presidential run-off. Observers ascribed this to an insufficient understanding of the complex procedures by poll workers, as well as to well-intentioned efforts to hasten the process.

Although the EU EOM did not directly observe voting abroad, observers regularly visited the Integrated Coordination Centre at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Overall, CSOs reported that election days abroad were well managed and proceeded without major problems. Primarily during the presidential election, a high voter turnout generated long queues and extended waiting times at some polling centres with significant numbers of voters assigned.

As out-of-country voting is conducted over a week, election materials for these polling stations are organised by day, with votes counted and materials sealed at the end of each day. This arrangement created challenges for the registration of voters in voter lists (form E-11), as a separate form was used for each day, while only one list of voters' ID numbers (form E-10) covered the entire voting period. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported cases in which voters were mistakenly marked as having already voted due to errors by polling staff. Allegations of multiple voting were also raised in this context. Unlike in-country polling stations, polling staff abroad did not have the ability to verify voter records from previous days to confirm whether voters had already voted or whether the issue resulted from a recording error.

Results processing (*Preconteo* and *escrutinio*)

The results management ensured transparency, traceability and verifiability at every stage. All technological components involved proved to be reliable, functioning without failures or delays. The preliminary results (*preconteo*) provided an extremely fast indication of election outcomes. Though purely informative, the *preconteo* proved to be of great importance to relieve political pressure, thus providing space and calm needed for the official results tabulation (*escrutinio*). In the *preconteo*, which involved some 40,000 personnel, the results were phoned in from each voting centre, as soon as the counting finished, to departmental reception centres. They were immediately published and updated in 5 to 10 minutes intervals.⁷¹

The *Registraduría* implemented effective measures that prevented the repetition of shortcomings detected in the 2022 legislative elections.⁷² By midnight of election day, the results of 99 per cent polling stations were published in the legislative elections, while this share was reached in the first round of the presidential election in less than two hours, and in the second round within 75 minutes of polls closing. Overall, there was a 99.8 per cent coincidence between the *preconteo* and the *escrutinio* in the legislative elections and almost a total coincidence in the presidential elections.

Simultaneously with the *preconteo*, the contracted consortium organised the collection, scanning and publication of the polling station results forms. For the sake of transparency, the *Registraduría* decided, for the first time, to scan also the third version of the results forms, the one used for the

⁷¹ The results from out-of-country voting (OCV) were transmitted through a secured online platform, except for Russia from where the results were called in due to restrictions on the internet access in force.

⁷² In the 2022 legislative elections, a design flaw in the results forms caused a considerable underreporting of the votes for *Pacto Histórico* in the *preconteo* and, to a lesser extent, also in the initial *escrutinio*.

preconteo.⁷³ In the legislative election, most forms from abroad were scanned *en masse* and published only after the diplomatic bags arrived in Colombia, which took close to two weeks.⁷⁴ In order to facilitate the *escrutinio* of the votes from abroad in the presidential elections (see below), the *Registraduría* set up scanning centres in six cities accounting for a quarter of Colombians registered abroad (in Spain, the USA, Venezuela and Chile).

Aggregation of official results (escrutinio)

Official results (*escrutinio*) were determined by a cascade system of over 3,000 aggregation commissions (*comisiones escrutadoras*, CE) under the authority of judges and notaries. Primary CEs (auxiliary or municipal) reviewed the original results forms (E-14) of some 40 to 70 polling stations and manually transcribed their results in the electronic database, stored in a cloud. At this stage, party or candidates' lawyers could request ballot recounts or submit complaints, benefitting from the projected sections of the results forms moving alongside the results being entered. Higher level CEs (municipal, zonal and departmental) processed the aggregated results provided by their respective inferior CEs, before passing to the national consolidation of results under the authority of the CNE. At the conclusion of the process, but also at the end of each day, the CEs of all levels drew up summary result forms E-24 and E-26: the latter containing the totals of votes consolidated by the CE concerned, while the former also included disaggregated data. These summary forms were available in pdf format on site and online, and together with the spreadsheets containing polling station results and the results forms published facilitated traceability of the results.⁷⁵

EU EOM observers followed the *escrutinio* at every level, positively evaluating its transparency, the functioning of technology and the professional conduct of the CE members. However, they noted minor procedural omissions in the legislative elections related to recounts, and that in the presidential elections, some CE did not consistently read the results aloud. Moreover, they reported that the *escrutinio* in the presidential election went so fast that candidates' lawyers could not take full advantage of the available transparency mechanisms and the analyses provided by their headquarters in order to file well-founded complaints.⁷⁶ The timeframes for lodging complaints are not clearly defined by the law, thus the time granted depended on the discretion of each CE, ranging between one and twenty-four hours (see Complaints and Appeals).

Though the preclusive system, in principle, does not permit filing complaints at the CEs of higher level without a prior complaint lodged at an inferior CE (or polling station), in practice, like in the past, CEs often accepted new complaints or requests for recounts. Before the second presidential round, the PH requested the *Registraduría* slow down the presidential *escrutinios* to better align with the pace of the publication of scanned results forms, claiming there was not sufficient time to process results forms and adequately prepare their lawyers before the corresponding *escrutinio* began.⁷⁷ The *Registraduría* could not take measures to this effect as it did not have any authority over the independent judges and notaries in charge of the *escrutinio*.

⁷³ Currently, the three versions of the forms are published on separate websites. Publishing all versions on one site would facilitate their comparison.

⁷⁴ As the results forms for the inter-party primary elections (*consultas*) arrived too late from abroad for a timely printing and distribution of presidential ballots, the CNE decided to use the *preconteo* results for determining the winners of the individual *consultas*.

⁷⁵ With these tools the PH detected irregular modifications in 20 out of 62 results forms in El Charco, Nariño in the *Cámara* elections in favour of the *Partido Liberal*, involving some 900 votes. After the departmental *comisión escrutadora* recounted the ballots, the PH gained one extra seat.

⁷⁶ While on the election night, the *escrutinio* of the legislative elections processed the results of only four per cent of polling stations, in the two rounds of the presidential elections it was 94 and 99 per cent, respectively.

⁷⁷ The PH's presidential candidate Cepeda publicly announced that they filed over 57,000 complaints during the *escrutinios* of the second presidential round. However, *Registraduría's* data show a total of 10,648 complaints. After the recognition of the results by Cepeda, the party dropped most of their complaints.

In line with a 2022 EU EOM recommendation, in the *escrutinios* polling station results were entered twice (by the same clerk) in order to minimise transcription errors.⁷⁸ However, in the legislative elections, the marking of the preferential vote in open lists appeared to have caused difficulties to voters and the polling staff, resulting in arithmetic inconsistencies of a substantial number of Senate and HoR results forms.⁷⁹ These could only be resolved by ballot recounts at the CEs. Nonetheless, to accelerate the process, some CEs verified the internal consistency of forms before entering the original figures in the electronic database. Subsequently, if needed, they recounted the ballots and entered only the corrected figures in the database (i.e. without ever entering the original figures registered in the E-14). To further enhance the traceability of the results, the *Registraduría* introduced in the presidential elections, for the first time, special recount forms showing any modification carried out by aggregation commissions (*comisiones escrutadoras*) following ballot recounts.

By law, the results of the legislative elections from abroad are tabulated by the CNE. Eight sub-commissions, each presided by one of the CNE's magistrates, processed the results of around 410 polling stations in the same manner and using the same software as regular CEs. The process finished on 15 April, 38 days after election day.

The three-week period between the first and a potential second round of the presidential election does not allow for this lengthy procedure. Therefore, the law provides for the *escrutinio* of the out-of-country voting (OCV) results on the basis of scanned results forms, although it does not define the procedure.⁸⁰ Rather than processing the scanned forms themselves, like in the legislative elections, the CNE, in charge of the *escrutinio* of the votes cast abroad, requested the *Registraduría* provide an electronic file with the transcribed results from all 3,670 OCV forms for the national results consolidation.

In the absence of legal provisions, the *Registraduría* ensured the results transcription by their staff within two days.⁸¹ Unlike in the *escrutinio* of the results from voting within country, there is no possibility to request or perform ballot recounts, as the existing legal framework does not provide for consuls to conduct recounts, as the *escrutinios* are an exclusive responsibility of the CNE (which in practice cannot have access to the physical ballots in reasonable timeframes). Given current legislation, conducting recounts abroad would also break the chain of custody of the election material sealed for the dispatch to Colombia.

Voting and counting procedures abroad comply with the same guarantees of integrity and transparency, including direct oversight by party representatives. The OCV official results fully coincided with the *preconteo* results.⁸²

Recommendation: Enable polling staff abroad to verify voter records for all days of voting from abroad. Explore mechanisms to enable recounts at the escrutinio level for out-of-country voting in the presidential elections.

While the CNE concluded the national *escrutinios* of the two presidential rounds within four and three days of the elections, respectively, the final results of the Congress elections were declared on July.

⁷⁸ With a new design of forms in the legislative elections, together with the primaries, the average number of results forms pages per polling station to be processed amounted to over 50.

⁷⁹ Voters could vote either for a party or a single candidate of their choice, but in many cases they marked both (candidate and party), which should be a valid vote for the candidate. However, some polling staff counted it as two votes. Therefore, the number of votes often exceeded the number of voters according to the voter list.

⁸⁰ Art. 6 of the Law 163 of 1994

⁸¹ It is a common international practice that OCV results processing does not follow the same procedures as within the country, for logistical reasons.

⁸² There was a slight discrepancy just in two forms which the EU EOM confirmed to be errors in the *preconteo*.

XVIII. Complaints and appeals

During the *escrutinio* (tabulation of results), administrative complaints and petitions could be filed by party and candidates' representatives at the *comisiones escrutadoras*. The most common reasons for complaints were erasures, arithmetical mistakes, and amendments in results forms, especially regarding the particularly complex legislative election.⁸³ The *escrutinio* of results starts at the lower levels and rises to the national CNE, based on a preclusive process.⁸⁴ Vote recounts are common at polling stations and at the first level of *comisiones escrutadoras* and can be requested by *testigos*, candidates or their representatives or conducted ex officio.⁸⁵

The CNE settles appeals against decisions taken by the lower *comisiones de escrutinio*. Complaints can be filed against the CNE national tabulation results with the CNE itself, and its decision is final. Notwithstanding, petitions for the annulment of election results may be lodged with the Fifth Section of the *Consejo de Estado*, the jurisdictional court on electoral matters.

Legislative elections

Different entities - from *comisiones escrutadoras* to the CNE - conduct the *escrutinio* at various levels. The CNE department delegates, usually former magistrates, certify results for the HoR ordinary seats and CITREP special seats. CNE certify the results of all nationwide constituencies, including those of the presidential election and the Senate, as well as the special HoR seats for Indigenous peoples, Afro-Descendants and for the Colombian diaspora. The CNE also decides on appeals on ordinary HoR seats and resolves disputes when CNE department delegates fail to agree on a decision. As in previous elections, *escrutinio* of the Senate was lengthy, especially for the diaspora vote.

Only for two HoR seats CNE department delegates were unable to reach an agreement. In Cundinamarca, the source of disagreement was the divergence between *preconteo* and *escrutinio* results for one candidate. In Chocó, alleged irregularities in results forms could not be settled. The CNE must decide on both cases before the new Congress is inaugurated.

For legislative elections 23,910 complaints (*reclamaciones*) were filed against official results at municipal level and some 6,894 at department level. Regarding the Senate, 13,957 complaints were filed with the CNE. EU EOM observers noted that complaints were handled generally in a transparent and swift manner and mostly concerned arithmetic mistakes and erasures.

EU observers also verified that *comisiones escrutadoras* implemented different deadlines to file complaints, which were announced at the start of tabulation and could vary between one hour to twenty-four hours. The law does not define deadlines to submit complaints stipulated in Article 192 of the Election Law nor are there deadlines for the CNE to decide. The lack of deadlines was criticised by some parties as timeframes were inconsistent and considered too short, while the lack of deadlines to adjudicate on complaints contributed to lengthy proceedings during the *escrutinios*.

⁸³ Election Law, Article 192. Other legal grounds to file a *reclamación* include when the number of voters at a polling station exceeds the number of registered voters or when the four results protocols were signed by less than three of the polling stations members. These are exhaustive grounds and no other are admissible.

⁸⁴ There are four levels to file complaints: 1. At the polling station, during counting, *reclamaciones* can be filed by *testigos* and are addressed by the polling staff. 2. At *comisiones escrutadoras auxiliares, zonales and municipales*, judges and notaries conduct the *escrutinio* and may decide on unresolved *reclamaciones* from the lower level and on new petitions. 3. At the 32 departments and Bogota, tabulation protocols are aggregated and *reclamaciones* adjudicated, including those unresolved from the lower *comisiones*. 4. Finally, at CNE national level, in a public hearing, aggregation is concluded. At all levels party representatives and the *Procuraduría*, *Controloría*, and the *Fiscalía* may be present. *Reclamaciones* can be presented within a short deadline, which is communicated at the start of every level of tabulation and at the CNE national *escrutinio*.

⁸⁵ Election Law, Article 164 establishes the legal grounds for recounts.

Recommendation: To establish deadlines for the submission of complaints and appeals at the comisiones escrutadoras and the CNE, as well as for their resolution, compatible with the timeframe for each election.

Presidential elections

The number of complaints for the first-round presidential election, a much simpler election than the legislative one, was much lower. Some 1,500 complaints were filed at the lowest level of *escrutinio*. At department level, 366 complaints were filed. Following the second round, 10,660 complaints were presented at the lowest level and at department level some 600. Also, for the presidential elections, the most common grounds for complaints were erasures, arithmetical mistakes, and amendments in results forms. The low number of complaints and the professional work of the *comisiones escrutadoras* allowed for a swift and transparent process.

The PH presidential candidate announced, after the second round, that a massive number of complaints would be filed. Nevertheless, shortly after Iván Cepeda recognised the preliminary results, all complaints were withdrawn. Official presidential results were certified by the CNE four days after the election.⁸⁶

Electoral offences

The competent authority to investigate electoral offences is the *Fiscalía General de la Nación* (Office of the Prosecutor General) and within the *Fiscalía*, the *Unidad de Delitos Electorales*.⁸⁷ For the 2026 elections, the *Fiscalía* adopted a proactive and structured approach to *denuncias* establishing a temporary investigation and prosecution strategy that combined specialised training for prosecutors and police on electoral offences, a joint election-day command post and an Electoral Risk Map to prioritise territories.

Electoral crimes related to campaign finances were monitored through a newly created *Observatorio del Financiamiento Electoral*, tasking the analysis directorates with compiling data on financing sources, resource management and prohibited contributions. Its departmental *Secciones de Análisis Criminal (SAC)* monitored billboards, traditional media advertising and online political ads for later cross-checking against the income and expenditure declared in *Cuentas Claras* reports. The *Fiscalía's Dirección Especializada contra la Corrupción* deployed 28 prosecutors, including 17 to support sectional offices and 11 for regional and national impact cases. 217 *noticias criminales* (criminal reports) were registered during the legislative elections with the most frequent offences being vote-buying (*corrupción de sufragante*, 65), fraudulent voting (55) and voter coercion (*constreñimiento al sufragante*, 30).

URIEL is the platform most used to report on *denuncias* (complaints) beside Línea 156 of the National Police.⁸⁸ All kinds of *denuncias* were received through URIEL and forwarded to the different authorities for further action.⁸⁹ In addition, the Colombian *Misión de Observación Electoral* channel *Pilas con el Voto* and the *Mesas de Justicia* placed at voting centres, also received *denuncias*. EU observers reported that in rural areas fewer *Mesas de Justicia* were installed

⁸⁶ CNE Resolutions E 2838/2026 (first round) and Resolution E 3181/2026 (second round).

⁸⁷ The Penal Code stipulates 16 electoral offences against the electoral process with sanctions that may range from four to 12 years of imprisonment and an economic fine depending on the gravity of the action and the person who committed the offence. Penal Code, Articles 386 to 396 C.

⁸⁸ URIEL *Unidad de Recepción Inmediata para la Transparencia Electoral* depends on the Ministry of Interior. This channel received some 680 complaints during the election for Congress; 755 complaints during the first presidential election; the number of complaints almost tripled regarding the second presidential round (2,459).

⁸⁹ Institutions include the *Fiscalía*, *Procuraduría General de la Nación* (in charge of disciplinary action against public servants and elected officials), *Contraloría* (Court of Auditors), *Registraduría* or the CNE.

compared to urban sites and despite the many channels to file complaints, voters seemed reluctant to report offences.⁹⁰

Challenges to results to the *Consejo de Estado*

The Fifth Section of the *Consejo de Estado* verifies the legality of CNE resolutions and adjudicates on *acciones de nulidad* (petitions for the annulment of results).⁹¹ *Acciones de nulidad* can be filed by any citizen represented by a lawyer, are free of judicial charge and must be presented within 30 days of the official declaration of results. The *Consejo de Estado* must adjudicate on petitions against legislative and presidential elections within six months.⁹²

By 9 July 2026, the *Consejo de Estado* had received 129 *acciones de nulidad* against the elections to the HoR. In several instances petitioners claimed that elected candidates held dual party membership, which is prohibited by the Constitution. The law does not require an exhaustive verification of constitutional disqualifications regarding candidates' registrations prior to the election, while the CNE may only act following *revocatorias de inscripción*. The possibility to file *acciones de nulidad* to disqualify elected officials is also linked to the CNE's inability to adjudicate on all received *revocatorias* in due time, creating legal uncertainty and, potentially, political instability at a time when voters have already elected their representatives.⁹³

In addition, thirteen *acciones de nulidad* were filed for the presidential elections, all against the president-elect, De la Espriella. In one of these, a former CNE magistrate and PH Senate candidate claimed De la Espriella had operated a systematic strategy of political violence, stigmatisation, and disinformation during his campaign. The petitioner also considered that, although dual citizenship is not in itself grounds for disqualification, the presidential office was incompatible with the oath De la Espriella took upon obtaining US citizenship, to hold loyalty to the US above all others. He requested the court for the annulment of the election and the calling of new elections.⁹⁴ This petition was dismissed.

XIX. Results and post-election environment

Election Results

The legislative elections returned a highly fragmented Congress with only limited changes in the balance of power, pointing to a governability scenario likely to depend on fluid alliances.⁹⁵ No political force came close to securing an outright majority in either chamber, while traditional parties lost considerable ground, with their combined losses equivalent to nearly 12 per cent of the Senate and 14 per cent of the *Cámara de Representantes*. *Pacto Histórico* won the popular vote in both the Senate and the *Cámara de Representantes* and emerged from the elections as Congress' main political force. In the Senate, 11 parties gained representation, with *Pacto Histórico* remaining the largest force with 26 of 103 seats, *Centro Democrático* rising to second place with 17 seats and *Partido Liberal* coming third with 13 seats. The *Cámara de Representantes* will be composed of 42

⁹⁰ *Mesas de Justicia* are integrated by officials from the *Procuraduría*, *Contraloría* and *Defensoría del Pueblo*.

⁹¹ The law specifies eight grounds to file for the annulment including violence or coercion on voters or electoral authorities; destruction of electoral documents and material or violence or sabotage against voting systems, information, transmission and consolidation of results; fraud on electoral documents with the aim to alter the results; or when a candidate occurred in double political affiliation. Law 1437/2011, Article 275

⁹² Constitution, Article 264. In line with an EU EOM 2022 recommendation, the *Consejo de Estado* prioritised the speedy resolution of petitions.

⁹³ The *Consejo de Estado* removed several elected officials in the past, including the then president of the Senate Roy Barreras in 2023, for dual party membership. Constitution, Article 107, 179 and 197 on constitutional disqualifications.

⁹⁴ Acción de nulidad against De la Espriella dated 7 July 2026

⁹⁵ The new Senate will be less fragmented than its predecessor, with 11 political organisations represented compared to 17 in the 2022–2026 term. By contrast, the *Cámara de Representantes* will be more fragmented, with 42 political organisations or ad-hoc territorial coalitions, 11 more than in the outgoing chamber.

parties, ad-hoc coalitions and organisations from ethnic and special peace constituencies. Based on a broader allocation that includes seats won through territorial coalitions, *Pacto Histórico* won 43 seats, *Centro Democrático* 32, followed by the *Partido Liberal* with 31 (see political annexes at the end of this report).

Indigenous and afro-Colombian movements aligned with *Pacto Histórico* also expanded the left's reach in the Congress. In the Senate, indigenous seats were won by *MAIS* and *AICO*, while in the *Cámara* allied movements also secured representation in the indigenous and Afro-Colombian constituencies, including one of the two Afro-Colombian seats for the *Libres* movement. These results further broadened *Pacto Histórico*'s representation in the Congress, bringing the left-wing bloc's total to 71 seats, representing a substantial increase from the 51 in the previous legislature.

In the presidential race, Abelardo de la Espriella, of *Defensores de la Patria*, led the 31 May first round with 43.7 per cent of the vote, ahead of Iván Cepeda of the coalition *Alianza por la Vida*, who obtained 40.9 per cent.⁹⁶ Turnout reached a record 57.9 per cent. *Centro Democrático*'s Paloma Valencia, winner of the centre-right interparty primary, came third, followed by Sergio Fajardo (*Dignidad & Compromiso*). The remaining candidates attracted modest support, with none exceeding one per cent.

In the 21 June run-off, Abelardo de la Espriella secured the presidency with 49.66 per cent of the vote, ahead of Cepeda's 48.70 per cent, a margin of over 250,000 votes. Turnout rose by about 5.7 per cent to 63.6 (26,344,960 voters), the highest recorded in Colombian electoral history. Contrary to many analysts' expectations, polarisation did not translate into higher levels of blank voting or abstention: blank votes accounted for 1.62 per cent, while invalid votes remained low at 0.84 per cent.

Following the presidential result, *Pacto Histórico*, *MAIS*, *Dignidad y Compromiso*, together with sectors of *Alianza Verde*, positioned themselves in opposition. On the government side, *Centro Democrático*, *Cambio Radical*, *Salvación Nacional*, *Creemos* and *Liga de Gobernantes Anticorrupción* aligned with the incoming administration, whereas *Partido Liberal*, *Conservador*, *de la U*, *MIRA*, *Nuevo Liberalismo* may negotiate with the government on a case-by-case basis.

Post-election environment

Iván Cepeda's acknowledgment of the *preconteo*, less than three hours after the close of polls and his call for calm and serenity helped defuse tensions in a sensitive post-election context, where political and security actors had feared possible protests following a narrow De la Espriella victory. Within three days, he formally accepted the results of the *escrutinio*, framing this as an act of democratic responsibility and institutional respect. He simultaneously denounced foreign interference, vote-buying and the use of AI for political manipulation during the campaign, while rejecting allegations that illegal armed groups had swayed the vote in his favour. Cepeda later threatened "peaceful civil disobedience" unless the president-elect renounced his U.S. citizenship and denounced his alleged ties to U.S. security agencies. On election night, De la Espriella also sought to lower tensions promising to govern for all Colombians, to respect the Constitution and to avoid retaliation or persecution.

President Petro announced that he would leave power after his persistent and unsubstantiated public questioning of the *preconteo* and the broader election process, presenting his acceptance of the result as a means to prevent violence rather than as recognition of the election's credibility.

⁹⁶ A left-wing alliance led by the governing *Pacto Histórico*

XX. Recommendations

N°	CONTEXT	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED CHANGE IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	KEY INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
LEGAL FRAMEWORK					
1	Colombian legislation electoral legislation is dispersed across numerous laws. The Election Code pre-dates the Constitution, resulting in some outdated provisions <i>Final report, page 10</i>	To consolidate and harmonise electoral legislation into a limited number of laws, ideally into one Electoral Code and one law on political parties and movements. <i>Priority recommendation</i>	Electoral Code, Decree 2241/1986 Law 996/2005 Law 1475/2011 Law 130/1994	National Congress	RULE OF LAW ICCPR, Article 2.2 “Where not already provided for by existing legislative or other measures, each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes the necessary steps, in accordance with its constitutional processes and with the provisions of the present Covenant, to adopt such laws or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the rights recognised in the present Covenant”. ICCPR GC 34, para. 25 “A norm, to be characterised as a “law”, must be formulated with sufficient precision to enable an individual to regulate his or her conduct accordingly and it must be made accessible to the public”. UN Human Rights Council, Resolution 19/36 of 2012 (A/HRC/RES/19/36), para. 16 “Calls upon States to make continuous effort to strengthen the rule of law and promote democracy by c) ensuring that a sufficient degree of legal certainty and predictability is provided in the application of the law, in order to avoid any arbitrariness”.

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2	Although the Constitution provides for the allocation of seats in the House of Representatives to be regularly adjusted to reflect demographic changes, in the absence of a recent population census approved by Congress, as required by law, the distribution of seats has not been altered since 2002 and still rests on the 1985 population census. The current regulation which requires the population census – necessary for the seat allocation adjustment – to be approved by Congress before it can be used for legal purposes, effectively hinders feasibility of implementation of this requirement. <i>Final report, page 10</i>	Update the attribution of the House of Representatives seats to each constituency to reflect recent census data.	Article 7 of Law 79/1993, regulating the conduct of population and housing censuses throughout the national territory	National Congress	EQUAL SUFFRAGE UN (CCPR): General Comment No. 25: The Right to Participate in Public Affairs, Voting Rights and the Right to Equal Access to Public Service (Article 25), para. 21 “The principle of one person, one vote, must apply, and within the framework of each State’s electoral system, the vote of one elector should be equal to the vote of another. The drawing of electoral boundaries and the method of allocating votes should not distort the distribution of voters or discriminate against any group and should not exclude or restrict unreasonably the right of citizens to choose their representatives freely.” Constitution, Article 176.2: “... [in the House of Representatives] there shall be two representatives for each territorial constituency and one additional representative for every 365,000 inhabitants... in excess of the first 365,000.”
ELECTION ADMINISTRATION					
3	The CNE’s lacked capacity to supervise and enforce the campaign finance framework. It also demonstrated poor oversight of political advertising of parties and candidates, both in traditional public media and in social media. The EU EOM noticed a shortage of permanent technical staff. <i>Final report, page 12</i>	To strengthen CNE’s oversight of campaign finance and online campaigning with specialised administrative units with adequate resources and a clear mandate to monitor, investigate and sanction breaches of the regulations in these areas.	Electoral Code, Decree 2241/1986 Law 1475/2011 Decree 111/1996 Annual Budget Law	National Congress	RULE OF LAW, GENUINE ELECTION THAT REFLECT THE FREE EXPRESSION OF THEIR WILL OF THE VOTERS ICCPR, Article 2.2 ICCPR GC 25, para 20 “An independent electoral authority should be established to supervise the electoral process and to

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					ensure that it is conducted fairly, impartially and in accordance with established laws (...).” UNAC Resolution 11/7, para 2: ...to ensure the existence of an oversight body or bodies [...] with the necessary independence, material resources and specialized staff to effectively monitor and supervise the funding of political parties, candidatures for elective public office and electoral campaigns...”
RIGHT TO VOTE AND VOTER REGISTRATION					
4	In accordance with the legislation, first-time voter registration is suspended four months before election day, effectively disenfranchising a significant number of citizens who turn 18 during this period. While a valid identity card is a reasonable requirement for voter identification on election day, it need not be a prerequisite for voter registration, as all citizens have been assigned a unique personal identification number at birth since 2003, allowing their inclusion in the voter register before the document is issued. <i>Final report, page 16</i>	Adopt appropriate legislative and administrative measures to guarantee that all citizens who have the right to vote, particularly those will turn 18 in the months prior to the election day, are included in the voter register and can effectively exercise this right. <i>Priority recommendation</i>	Election Code Law 6/1990 (which amended the Election Code)	National Congress	UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE UN (CCPR): General Comment No. 25: The Right to Participate in Public Affairs, Voting Rights and the Right to Equal Access to Public Service (Article 25), para. 11 “States must take effective measures to ensure that all persons entitled to vote are able to exercise that right. Where registration of voters is required, it should be facilitated and obstacles to such registration should not be imposed.”
REGISTRATION OF CANDIDATES					
	The legal framework for the registration of candidates offers the opportunity to participate to all Colombians without unreasonable or disproportionate restrictions, except for persons convicted of intentional	Eliminate the <i>permanent</i> ineligibility from running for Congress or President for those convicted of intentional crimes. If suspension of the right to stand is maintained as a sentence associated with	Article 179.1 and 197.2 of the Constitution	National Congress	RIGHT AND OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND HOLD OFFICE ICCPR, Article 25(b)

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5	crimes, who are banned for life from standing for Congress and the Presidency by the Constitution. For the 2026 elections some 20 candidates were rejected for having been convicted of intentional crimes in the past. <i>Final report, page 18</i>	imprisonment, it is the view of the EU EOM that the period of disqualification should be proportionate to the severity of the offence or the length of the sentence.	Article 280.1 of Law 5/1992		“Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions: b) To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing exercise of the rights protected by article 25 should be based on objective and reasonable criteria”. the free expression of the will of the electors.” ICCPR, General Comment No. 25.4 “Any conditions which apply to the exercise of the rights protected by article 25 should be based on objective and reasonable criteria.”
6	Following a decision to deregister a candidate by the CNE, the law allows for a candidate to be replaced one month before election day. As there is no deadline for submitting deregistration petitions (<i>revocatorias</i>), the CNE may receive them at a very late stage and make decisions on them even on the eve of elections. The lack of a deadline to present petitions for the deregistration collides with the legal opportunity for replacement of deregistered candidates. <i>Final report, page 19</i>	To establish deadlines for filing petitions challenging candidates’ eligibility as well as their resolution by CNE, to ensure that, if necessary, disqualified candidates can be replaced.	Electoral Code, Decree 2241/1986	National Congress	RIGHT AND OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND HOLD OFFICE ICCPR, Article 2.3 (a) “To ensure that any person whose rights or freedoms as herein recognised are violated shall have an effective remedy, notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity”. American Convention on Human Rights, Article 25.1 “Everyone has the right to simple and prompt recourse, or any other effective recourse, to a competent court or tribunal for protection against acts that violate his fundamental rights recognised by the constitution or laws of the state concerned or

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					by this Convention, even though such violation may have been committed by person acting in the course of their official duties”.
CAMPAIGN FINANCE					
7	Access to advance public funding remained challenging in practice. Parties and candidates were required to open a dedicated campaign bank account and obtain an insurance policy or bank guarantee, products that were not readily available or prohibitively expensive, particularly for smaller, newer and less institutionalised actors, candidates without credit history, and many CITREP candidates. Late regulation and delayed disbursement further limited access to advance public funding, while the halving of reimbursement values for campaigns receiving advances reduced the benefit of public support. Cumulatively, these restrictive conditions limited the right of political participation of smaller parties, less-resourced candidates and those without access to bank credit, especially in CITREP races, where direct private funding was prohibited. <i>Final report, page 23</i>	Facilitate effective access to advance campaign public funding by: - simplifying or removing the requirement to obtain an insurance policy or equivalent financial guarantee. - reconsidering the rule that halves the reimbursement value per vote for campaigns that received advance funding, so that candidates and parties relying on public support are not financially disadvantaged.	Article 22, Law 1475/2011	National Congress CNE	EQUAL RIGHTS, EQUAL ACCESS TO ELECTION CAMPAIGN, TRANSPARENCY AND THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION ICCPR, Article 25(b)
	In addition to the ex-post reporting required by law, a CNE resolution calls on candidates to report their finances during the campaign on the <i>Cuentas Claras</i> digital platform. However, as this requirement is not legally	Reporting to <i>Cuentas Claras</i> could be made a legal obligation so as to ensure transparency and accountability in campaign spending before elections.	Article 25, Law 1475/2011	National Congress CNE	TRANSPARENCY AND THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION UN Convention Against Corruption, Article 5.1

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8	binding, compliance remained uneven and often incomplete, limiting the platform's usefulness for real-time oversight. EU EOM observers reported that local campaign activities, including in-kind donations, volunteer support and logistical expenses, were not systematically declared, pointing to underreporting and weak traceability of decentralised spending. Limited awareness among local campaign coordinators of reporting obligations further reduced transparency. More rigorous and binding in-campaign reporting through <i>Cuentas Claras</i> would strengthen public oversight before election day. <i>Final report, page 23</i>				“Each State Party shall, in accordance with the fundamental principles of its legal system, develop and implement or maintain effective, coordinated anti-corruption policies that promote the participation of society and reflect the principles of the rule of law, proper management of public affairs and public property, integrity, transparency and accountability.” UNAC Resolution 11/7, para 3&4: “[...] to ensure that political parties, candidatures for elected public office and electoral campaigns, where applicable and in accordance with domestic law, keep records based on standard accounting requirements of all their revenues and expenditures, assets and liabilities, including their value, and above the thresholds defined by law [...], the sources and relevant identification information of monetary and in-kind donations and related financial support, in accordance with their domestic law, and to report on them to the competent oversight body on a regular basis, which may include at least one interim report before and one final report after the elections and [...] to take the measures necessary to ensure that the financial reports [...] are published online or are otherwise made public in a timely manner by a competent body or bodies, including, if applicable, the publication prior to the date of the election [...]”

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9	Campaign finance oversight remains largely fragmented, ex post and document-based. While the CNE is mandated to inspect and monitor campaign finance, the prevention of illicit and criminal funding requires stronger coordination with institutions holding complementary financial, tax, procurement, public-employment, oversight and criminal-investigation information. In practice, key data remain dispersed across non-interoperable systems, and there are no sufficiently timely and standardised channels for sharing alerts and analysis with electoral authorities. As most campaign-finance information is submitted or consolidated only after election day, the system has limited capacity to detect undeclared cash, in-kind contributions, third-party payments or opaque campaign-provider arrangements before the vote, creating risks that prohibited or potentially criminal resources enter campaigns with a low probability of early detection or effective sanction. <i>Final report, page 24</i>	Strengthen interinstitutional coordination among key electoral, financial-intelligence, tax, procurement, oversight and criminal-investigation bodies to prevent illicit and criminal campaign financing, including through the timely cross-checking of <i>Cuentas Claras</i> reports with other relevant institutional data. This would need to be supported by clear channels and protocols for joint analysis and coordinated preventive, administrative, disciplinary and criminal action. <i>Priority recommendation</i>	No legal reform required, implementable through administrative protocols and inter-institutional agreements	CNE UIAF (<i>Unidad de Información y Análisis Financiero</i>) <i>Fiscalía</i> <i>Registraduría</i> DIAN <i>Superintendencia Financiera</i> URIEL <i>Colombia Compra Eficiente/SECOP (Sistema Electrónico para la Contratación Pública)</i> <i>Función Pública/SIGEP (Sistema de Información y Gestión del Empleo Público)</i>	TRANSPARENCY AND THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION UN Convention Against Corruption, Article 14.1(b) "[Each State Party shall:] (...) Without prejudice to article 46 of this Convention, ensure that administrative, regulatory, law enforcement and other authorities dedicated to combating money-laundering (including, where appropriate under domestic law, judicial authorities) have the ability to cooperate and exchange information at the national and international levels within the conditions prescribed by its domestic law and, to that end, shall consider the establishment of a financial intelligence unit to serve as a national centre for the collection, analysis and dissemination of information regarding potential money-laundering." UN Convention Against Corruption, Article 38 "Each State Party shall take such measures as may be necessary to encourage, in accordance with its domestic law, cooperation between, on the one hand, its public authorities, as well as its public officials, and, on the other hand, its authorities responsible for investigating and prosecuting criminal offences. Such cooperation may include: (a) Informing the latter authorities, on their own initiative, where there are reasonable grounds to believe that any of the offences established in accordance with articles 15, 21 and 23 of this Convention has been committed; or (b) Providing, upon request, to the latter authorities all necessary information."

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					UNAC Resolution 11/7, para 15: “[...] to enable, in accordance with their domestic law, effective cooperation, including through promoting collaboration, joint activities and information exchange among, as appropriate, anti-corruption authorities, the police, investigative, prosecutorial and judicial authorities, financial intelligence units and administrative and oversight bodies, as well as election authorities, with a view to supporting corruption investigations and proceedings at the national level...”
	MEDIA				
10	The amount and distribution of the government advertisement in the state-run and private media are poorly regulated outside election periods and during the election campaigns. However, the use of government ads as an additional source of income for the media is often described as presumably influencing the editorial line of that media, and the decision of the voters when state advertisement is used in favour of the government agenda or its candidate. <i>Final report, page 26</i>	To pass legislation ensuring an equitable distribution of government advertisement among media outlets, as well as setting clear limits, based on objective criteria of urgency or public need, for government ads during the campaign periods.	To pass specific legislation Amend current legislation accordingly (Laws 996 and 1474, among others)	National Congress President of the republic Government State-run and private media outlets <i>Fundación para la Libertad de Prensa</i> (FLIP) and other media and journalists’ professional organisations	FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND OPINION TRANSPARENCY AND THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION IACHR, Declaration of principles on freedom of expression “The arbitrary and discriminatory placement of official advertising, with the intent to put pressure on journalists and media because of the opinions they express, threaten freedom of expression and must be explicitly prohibited by law.”

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11	The system of state-run media, operated by <i>Radio Televisión de Colombia</i> (RTVC), which have a heightened duty of neutrality and balance, largely favoured President Petro and his government, <i>Pacto Histórico</i> and Ivan Cepeda during the legislative and presidential campaigns as monitored by the EU EOM. Specific measures regulating the campaign on state-run radio and television would foster pluralistic and impartial coverage on state-funded media. <i>Final report, page 27</i>	Ensure equitable access for candidates and political parties to state-run media coverage during the campaign. Priority recommendation	To adopt specific legislation Amend current legislation accordingly (Laws 996, 1474 and 14, among others)	National Congress President of the republic Government State-run media (RTVC/Inravisión) FLIP and other media and journalists' professional organisations	FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND OPINION TRANSPARENCY AND THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION ICCPR, General Comment No.34, Alinea 16 “States parties should ensure that public broadcasting services operate in an independent manner. In this regard, States parties should guarantee their independence and editorial freedom.
SOCIAL MEDIA					
12	The absence of a dedicated framework for online campaigning limited effective oversight of political advertising expenditure, influencer-based promotion and the use of official digital channels during the electoral period. <i>Final Report, page 28</i>	To adopt legislation requiring digital platforms, during the electoral period, to disclose who places political advertising and the amounts they pay for it, to comply with current national requirements. Priority recommendation	Election Law and regulations on political campaigning on social media.	National Congress, CNE	RULE OF LAW, ACCESS TO CAMPAIGN, TRANSPARENCY AND THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION UN Assembly General Resolution A/RES/68/164(2013), point 6 “<i>The Assembly General</i> notes the importance of adequate resources for the administration of efficient and transparent elections at the national and local levels and recommends that Member States provide adequate resources for those elections, including considering the possibility of establishing internal funding, where feasible.” ICCPR, GC 25, para. 20 An independent electoral authority should be established to supervise the electoral process and to ensure that it is conducted fairly, impartially and in

N°	CONTEXT	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED CHANGE IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	KEY INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
					accordance with established laws which are compatible with the Covenant.
WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION					
13	The Constitution provides for parties and alternation in candidate lists to be introduced through gradual legal reform. However, current legislation only establishes a 30 per cent quota in constituencies which elect five or more seats. There is no mandatory gender alternation on closed lists, while open lists do not ensure women get elected. The proportion of women elected to the 2026 Congress remained, at 29 per cent, roughly the same as in 2022. <i>Final report, page 30</i>	To strengthen measures aimed at increasing women's access to elected office, the current 30 per cent quota in candidate lists could be raised to require parity and be applied to all constituencies. To the same end, alternation of men and women could be required for closed lists. Lastly, mechanisms could be explored to make parity effective when parties present open lists. Priority recommendation	Electoral Code, Decree 2241/1986 Article 28, Law 1475/2011	National Congress	WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS / EQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN ICCPR, Article 3 "The State Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal rights of men and women to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights set forth in the present Covenant". CEDAW, Article 7(a) "State parties shall take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right (a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies".
RESULTS PROCESSING AND PUBLICATION					
	The current procedures for week-long out-of-country voting do not allow polling staff to verify records of who has voted across successive election days. This limits their ability to identify and correct recording errors. Due to short timeframes, tabulation (<i>escrutinio</i>) of OCV results for presidential elections are based on scans of results forms	Enable polling staff abroad to verify voter records for all days of voting from abroad. Explore mechanisms to enable recounts at the <i>escrutinio</i> level for out-of-country voting in the presidential elections.	Election Code, Law 163 of 1994	<i>Registraduría,</i> CNE	RIGHT AND OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE ICCPR, Article 25(b) "Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, [...] without unreasonable restrictions: b) To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot,

N°	CONTEXT	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED CHANGE IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	KEY INTERNATIONAL & REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS / GOOD PRACTICE
14	(E-14) and, at the CNE's request, are compiled by <i>Registraduria</i> staff. This mechanism means that, although recounts may be requested during the count in OCV, unlike for in-country results, recounts cannot be requested during the <i>escrutinio</i> of OCV, as current regulation does not grant consuls the power to conduct them. <i>Final report, page 36</i>				guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors.” EQUAL SUFFRAGE ICCPR, General comment 25, para. 21 TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION ICCPR, General comment 25, para. 20 OAS Electoral Good Practices Guide for Strengthening Electoral Processes, section C.1, para 4 “[Electoral bodies] should have effective mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability vis-à-vis the population and all political actors involved in the election.”
ELECTION DISPUTES					
15	The current legal framework does not establish a deadline to file complaints with the <i>comisiones escrutadoras</i> following the publication of results at the various stages of the tabulation. In the past, the CNE issued protocols with deadlines, but the <i>Consejo de Estado</i> cancelled this attempt considering that a <i>Ley Estatutaria</i> was required for such a reform. <i>Comisiones escrutadoras</i> implemented inconsistent deadlines which were at times short, with complaints being referred to the next level of results tabulation. <i>Final report, page 38</i>	To establish deadlines for the submission of complaints and appeals at the <i>comisiones escrutadoras</i> and the CNE, as well as for their resolution, compatible with the timeframe for each election.	Electoral Code, Decree 2241/1986 CPACA - Code of Administrative Procedure and Administrative Litigation	National Congress State Council	RIGHT TO AN EFFECTIVE REMEDY ICCPR, Article 2.3 (a) “To ensure that any person whose rights or freedoms as herein recognised are violated shall have an effective remedy, notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity”. ICCPR, General comment 32.27 “An important aspect of the fairness of a hearing is its expeditiousness. While the issue of undue delays in criminal proceedings is explicitly addressed in paragraph 3 (c) of article 14, delays in civil proceedings that cannot be justified by the

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					complexity of the case, or the behavior of the parties detract from the principle of a fair hearing enshrined in paragraph 1 of this provision. Where such delays are caused by a lack of resources and chronic under funding, to the extent possible supplementary budgetary resources should be allocated for the administration of justice.” American Convention on Human Rights, Article 25.1

Annex I: DATA FOR POLITICAL ANALYSIS

Senate election results 2026

Party / Movement	Votes	%	Seats
NATIONAL SENATE ELECTION RESULTS			
Pacto Histórico Senado	4,471,232	23.0%	25
Partido Centro Democrático	3,072,702	15.8%	17
Partido Liberal Colombiano	2,276,223	11.7%	13
Alianza por Colombia	1,905,683	9.8%	11
Partido Conservador Colombiano	1,853,403	9.5%	10
Partido de la Unión por la Gente – Partido de la U	1,554,812	8.0%	8
Coalición Cambio Radical – ALMA	1,241,509	6.4%	7
Ahora Colombia	891,907	4.6%	5
Movimiento Salvación Nacional	707,761	3.6%	4
Frente Amplio Unitario	391,626	2.0%	0
Creemos	226,460	1.2%	0
Coalición Fuerza Ciudadana	111,189	0.6%	0
La Lista de Oviedo – Con Toda por Colombia	106,943	0.5%	0
Partido Político Oxígeno	27,485	0.1%	0
Colombia Segura y Próspera	10,292	0.1%	0
Patriotas	10,188	0.1%	0
Total votes for parties	18,859,415	96.8%	100
Blank votes	622,086	3.2%	
Valid votes	19,481,501	100.0%	
Invalid votes	580,711	2.8%	
Unmarked ballots	495,820	2.4%	
Total	20,558,032		
INDIGENOUS CONSTITUENCY ELECTION RESULTS			
Movimiento Alternativo Indígena y Social – MAIS	88,117	31.7%	1
Movimiento Autoridades Indígenas de Colombia – AICO	73,205	26.3%	1
Movimiento Unidad en Minga por Colombia	55,453	20.0%	0
Asociación de Autoridades Tradicionales Indígenas	16,510	5.9%	0
Movimiento SI	2,859	1.0%	0
Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas por Colombia	2,417	0.9%	0
Asociación Nacional Indígena de Colombia – ANIC	2,115	0.8%	0
Cabildo Indígena Tevis	1,257	0.5%	0
Triétnico Gobernativo Trigo	876	0.3%	0
ACMIZSAM	838	0.3%	0
Cabildo Indígena Tevis	41	0.0%	0
Total votes for parties	243,688	87.7%	2
Blank votes	34,196	12.3%	
Valid votes	277,884	100.0%	
Invalid votes	25,269	7.6%	
Unmarked ballots	31,149	9.3%	
Total	334,302		
Total participation in national and indigenous constituencies	20,892,334		
Registered voters	41,287,084		
Participation		50.6%	

House of Representatives election results 2026

Party / Movement	Votes	%	Seats
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ELECTION RESULTS			
Pacto Histórico Nacional	4,005,923	21.84%	37
Partido Centro Democrático	2,588,327	14.11%	25
Partido Liberal Colombiano	2,106,419	11.48%	23
Partido Conservador Colombiano	1,961,554	10.69%	18
Partido de la Unión por la Gente – Partido de la U	1,046,664	5.71%	12
Partido Cambio Radical	809,560	4.41%	9
Partido Alianza Verde	654,197	3.57%	4
Movimiento Salvación Nacional	450,720	2.46%	1
Centro Democrático – MIRA	356,437	1.94%	4
Primerio Córdoba	340,337	1.86%	2
Creemos	285,637	1.56%	2
Ahora Colombia	263,954	1.44%	1
Coalición Liberal – Colombia Renaciente	145,370	0.79%	1
Partido Político La Fuerza	140,092	0.76%	1
CR–LAU–MSN–OXI	118,097	0.64%	1
Partido Demócrata Colombiano	108,987	0.59%	1
Pacto Verde por el Tolima	107,531	0.59%	2
Pacto Histórico – Frente Amplio	100,288	0.55%	1
Avancemos Nariño	99,820	0.54%	1
CR–CJL–Liga de Gobernantes	96,135	0.52%	1
Coalición Demócrata Amplia por la Paz	84,298	0.46%	1
Pacto Histórico Alianza Verde	73,056	0.40%	1
Partido de la U – Cambio Radical	70,122	0.38%	1
Partido Alianza Social Independiente – ASI	65,848	0.36%	2
Partido Conservador – Movimiento Salvación Nacional	64,368	0.35%	1
Centro Democrático – Partido Conservador	64,054	0.35%	1
Fuerza Cauca	60,317	0.33%	1
Centro Democrático – Partido de la U	49,172	0.27%	1
Alianza por Casanare	41,759	0.23%	1
Coalición Caquetá	33,367	0.18%	1
Pacto Verde Putumayo	32,541	0.18%	1
Revive Caquetá 2.0	30,284	0.17%	1
Putumayo También es Colombia	27,686	0.15%	1
La Voz del Amazonas	12,406	0.07%	1
Votes for parties that obtained a seat	16,495,327		162
Total votes for parties	18,343,750		
Blank votes	688,913	3.6%	
Valid votes	19,032,663	100.0%	
Invalid votes	641,515	3.2%	
Unmarked ballots	360,484	1.8%	
Total votes cast	20,034,662		

House of Representatives election results 2026 – Special constituencies

INDIGENOUS CONSTITUENCY ELECTION RESULTS			
Movimiento Unidad en Minga por Colombia	45,340	41.79%	1
Total votes for parties	108,487		
Blank votes	25,688	19.1%	
Valid votes	134,175	100.0%	
Invalid votes	9,046	5.6%	
Unmarked ballots	17,027	10.6%	
Total votes cast	160,248		

AFRO-COLOMBIAN CONSTITUENCY ELECTION RESULTS			
Consejo Comunitario El Naranjo	159,387	33.99 %	2
Votes for parties that obtained a seat	159,387		2
Total votes for parties	468,961		
Blank votes	57,142	10.9%	
Valid votes	526,103	100.0 %	
Invalid votes	37,601	6.3%	
Unmarked ballots	31,509	5.3%	
Total votes cast	595,213		
Registered voters	41,287,084		
Participation		48.53 %	

Distribution of seats in the House of Representatives



CITREP election results 2026

CITREP	Region	Winning organisation	Votes	%
Constituency 1	Cauca - Nariño	Resguardo Indígena de Toribío	28,206	4.87%
Constituency 2	Arauca	Asociación de Víctimas Intercultural Regional - ASVINREG	7,996	1.38%
Constituency 3	Bajo Cauca	Asociación de Víctimas Constructoras de Paz	6,463	1.12%
Constituency 4	Catatumbo	Asociación de Víctimas Caminos de Esperanza Las Mercedes	15,807	2.73%
Constituency 5	Caquetá	Comité de Ganaderos de La Montañita	6,517	1.13%
Constituency 6	Chocó Antioquia	Consejo Comunitario Mayor de Nóvita - COCOMAN	23,893	4.13%
Constituency 7	Sur de Meta - Guaviare	ASOPROCACAO	9,173	1.58%
Constituency 8	Montes de María	ASOMONTEMARÍA	52,912	9.14%
Constituency 9	Pacífico -Valle del Cauca	Consejo Comunitario del Río Cajambre	9,407	1,62%
Constituency 10	Pacífico Nariño	Consejo Comunitario Río Gualajo	30,193	5.22%
Constituency 11	Putumayo	Consejo Comunitario Los Andes	9,218	1.59%
Constituency 12	Cesar	Asociación Paz es Vida	26,992	4.66%
Constituency 13	Sur de Bolívar	Asociación de Productores de Cacao APROCASUR	10,322	1.78%
Constituency 14	Sur de Córdoba	Asociación de Parceleros Retornantes del Tesoro “ASODEPART”	15,456	2.67%
Constituency 15	Sur del Tolima	ASOAMBEIMA	8,931	1.54%
Constituency 16	Urabá	Yo Soy Urabá	16,941	2.93%



Presidential election results – first round 2026

Candidates	Political party	Votes	%
Abelardo de la Espriella / José Manuel Restrepo	Defensores de la Patria	10.361.499	43,74 %
Iván Cepeda / Aída Quilcué	Pacto Histórico	9.688.361	40,90 %
Paloma Valencia / Juan Daniel Oviedo	Centro Democrático	1.639.685	6,92 %
Sergio Fajardo / Edna Bonilla	Dignidad & Compromiso	1.009.073	4,26 %
Claudia López / Leonardo Huerta	Con Claudia Imparables	225.517	0,95 %
Santiago Botero / Carlos Fernando Cuevas	Romper el Sistema	206.140	0,87 %
Mauricio Lizcano / Pedro Luis de la Torre	Firme con Lizcano	53.839	0,22 %
Miguel Uribe Londoño / Luisa Fernanda Villegas	Partido Demócrata Colombiano	28.657	0,12 %
Sondra Macollins / Leonardo Karam	Sondra Macollins, la Abogada de Hierro	19.889	0,08 %
Roy Barreras / Martha Lucía Zamora	La Fuerza	14.108	0,05 %
Gustavo Matamoros / Mila María Paz	Partido Ecologista Colombiano	5.627	0,02 %
Total votes for candidates		23.252.395	98,13 %
Blank votes		406.970	1,71 %
Total valid votes		23.659.365	100.0%
Unmarked ballots		47.586	0,19 %
Invalid votes		245.389	1,02 %
Total		23.952.340	
Registered voters		41.421.973	
Turn-out			57,88 %

Presidential election results by departments – first round 2026



Presidential election results – second round 2026

Candidates	Political party	Votes	%
Iván Cepeda Castro / Aída Marina Quilcué Vivas	Pacto Histórico	12,708,712	48.70%
Abelardo de la Espriella / José Manuel Restrepo Abondano	Defensores de la Patria	12,959,542	49.66%
Total votes for candidates		25,668,254	98.36%
Blank votes		426,848	1.63%
Total valid votes		26,095,102	100.0%
Unmarked ballots		29,499	0.11%
Invalid votes		220,763	0.83%
Total		26,345,364	
Registered voters		41,421,973	
Turn-out			63.60%

Presidential election results by departments – second round 2026



Source: Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil [National Civil Registry of Colombia], 2026 Presidential Election – Results by departments
<https://resultados.registraduria.gov.co/territorios/0/00/>

Annex II: TERRITORIAL CONSTITUENCIES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Constituency name	Numbers of seats	Number of voters	Estimated population 2025*	Cost of mandate (voters per seat)	Deviation in percentage	Estimated seats based on 2018 census
AMAZONAS	2	57 440	85 057	28 720	-88.45	2
ANTIOQUIA	17	5 404 926	6 928 372	317 937	27.85	20
ARAUCA	2	223 380	279 191	111 690	-55.09	2
ATLÁNTICO	7	2 133 135	2 865 034	304 734	22.54	9
BOGOTÁ D.C.	18	6 101 479	7 942 867	338 971	36.31	23
BOLÍVAR	6	1 794 168	2 241 282	299 028	20.25	7
BOYACÁ	6	1 045 700	1 290 393	174 283	-29.91	5
CALDAS	5	834 103	1 054 450	166 821	-32.92	4
CAQUETÁ	2	330 453	429 041	165 227	-33.56	2
CASANARE	2	328 998	473 165	164 499	-33.85	2
CAUCA	4	1 078 208	1 599 148	269 552	8.40	5
CESAR	4	931 353	1 469 159	232 838	-6.37	5
CHOCÓ	2	363 743	593 106	181 872	-26.86	3
CÓRDOBA	5	1 406 985	1 992 907	281 397	13.16	6
CUNDINAMARCA	7	2 288 130	3 525 067	326 876	31.45	11
GUAINÍA	2	36 929	59 706	18 465	-92.57	2
GUAVIARE	2	70 147	84 696	35 074	-85.90	2
HUILA	4	939 740	1 208 728	234 935	-5.52	4
LA GUAJIRA	2	708 871	1 066 679	354 436	42.53	4
MAGDALENA	5	1 095 749	1 544 507	219 150	-11.87	5
META	3	849 587	1 156 405	283 196	13.88	4
NARIÑO	5	1 233 757	1 713 586	246 751	-0.77	6
N. SANTANDER	5	1 382 708	1 709 289	276 542	11.21	6
PUTUMAYO	2	264 820	390 742	132 410	-46.75	2
QUINDÍO	3	504 543	557 884	168 181	-32.37	3
RISARALDA	4	874 695	1 003 225	218 674	-12.06	4
SAN ANDRÉS	2	54 067	63 438	27 034	-89.13	2
SANTANDER	7	1 867 345	2 398 303	266 764	7.28	7
SUCRE	3	768 586	1 034 102	256 195	3.03	4
TOLIMA	6	1 177 350	1 386 410	196 225	-21.09	5
V. DEL CAUCA	13	3 800 777	4 708 393	292 368	17.57	14
VAUPÉS	2	26 126	44 142	13 063	-94.75	2
VICHADA	2	58 204	148 738	29 102	-88.30	2
TOTAL	161	40 036 202	53 057 212	248 672		184

Source: DANE's 2025 population projection based on the 2018 Population Census

Annex III: TRADITIONAL AND DIGITAL MEDIA MONITORING

The EU EOM Colombia run a media monitoring unit during the general elections period. Radio and television programmes were recorded 24/7 and analysed.

The unit monitored quantitatively six state-run and private media with national coverage, all credited with significant audience ratings:

- Two state-run media: *Señal Colombia* television channel and *Radio Nacional de Colombia*.
- Two private television channels: *Caracol TV* and *RCN TV*.
- Two private radio stations: *Blu Radio* and *Caracol Radio*.

The team of media monitors focused on the news and electoral programmes during the following time slots: radio (6 am to 3 pm); television (6 pm to 00 am).

The media monitors identify and select the items, measure the time of coverage of political actors in seconds and evaluate the tone of coverage by the media of the candidates and other political and electoral actors.

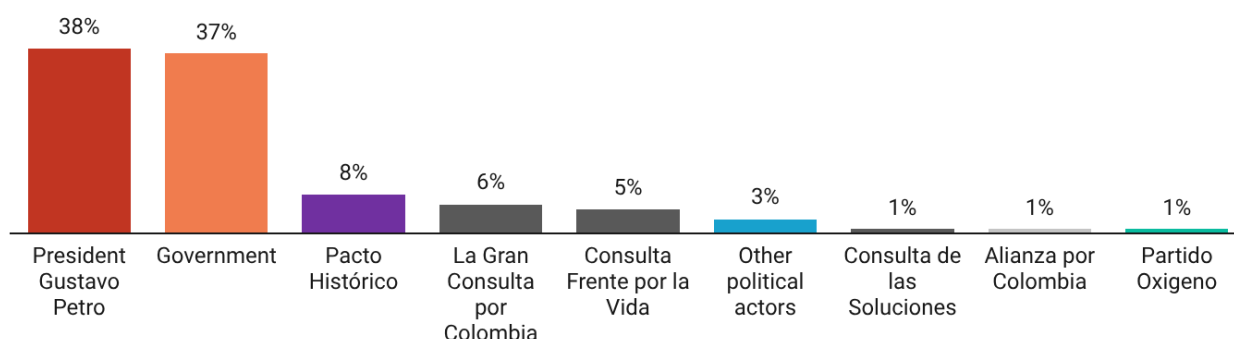
The media monitoring periods for quantitative media monitoring were as such:

- Legislative elections and inter-party primaries (8 February–7 March);
- First round of the presidential election (30 April–30 May);
- Presidential election run-off (1 to 20 June).

Other relevant national media, such as print media and digital platforms, were monitored qualitatively by the media monitoring unit, as well as significant local media outlets in the regions by EU observers.

Fig. 1. Time of coverage of political actors in news and other election-related programmes on state-run media during the legislative elections and presidential primaries

8 February – 7 March 2026

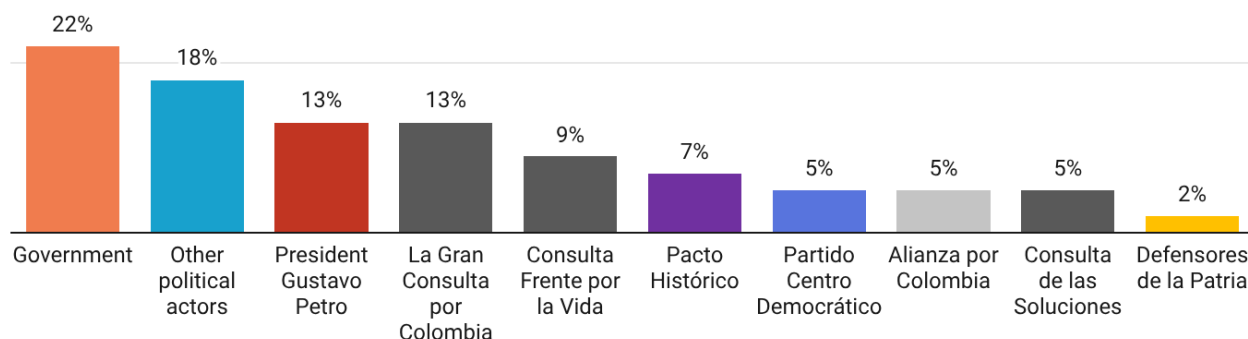


Total airtime: 41 hours, 13 minutes, 16 seconds (148.396 seconds). Other political actors included: Coalición Cambio Radical - Alma, CITREP and Firme con Lizcano Colombianismo, among others.

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 2. Time of coverage of political actors in news and other election-related programmes on private media during the legislative elections and presidential primaries

8 February – 7 March 2026



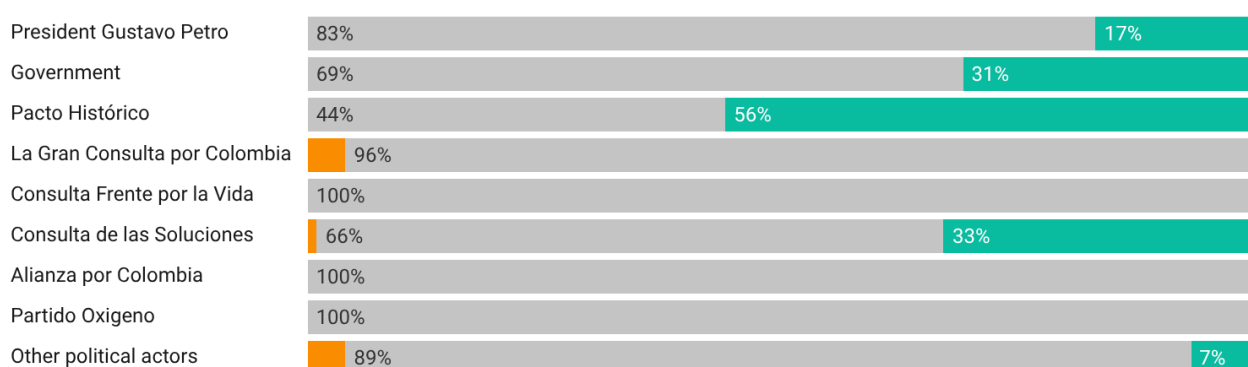
Total airtime: 71 hours, 36 minutes, 1 seconds (257.761 seconds). Other political actors included: Partido Conservador Colombiano, Partido Liberal Colombiano and Partido Oxígeno, among others.

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 3. Tone of coverage of political actors in news and other election-related programmes on state-run media during the legislative elections and presidential primaries

8 February – 7 March 2026

■ Negative
 ■ Neutral
 ■ Positive

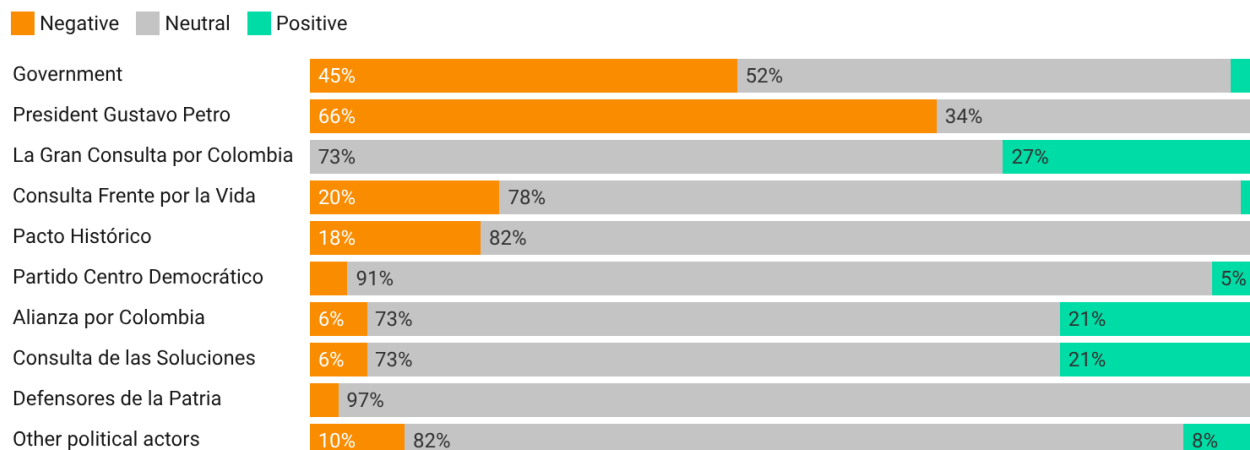


Total airtime: 41 hours, 13 minutes, 16 seconds (148.396 seconds). Other political actors included: Coalición Cambio Radical - Alma, CITREP and Firme con Lizcano Colombianismo, among others.

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 4. Tone of coverage of political actors in news and other election-related programmes on private media during the legislative elections and presidential primaries

8 February – 7 March 2026

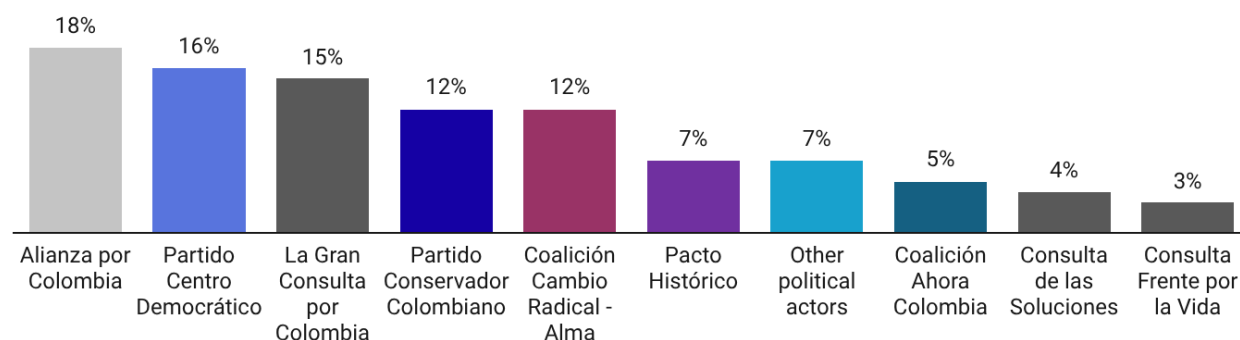


Total airtime: 71 hours, 36 minutes, 1 second (257.761 seconds). Other political actors included: Partido Conservador Colombiano, Partido Liberal Colombiano and Partido Oxígeno, among others.

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 5. Paid advertising by political actors on private media during the legislative elections and presidential primary elections

8 February – 7 March 2026



Total airtime: 9 hours, 19 minutes, 51 seconds (33.591 seconds).

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 6. Government advertising on state-run and private media during the legislative elections and presidential primaries

8 February – 7 March 2026



Total airtime: 3 hours, 39 minutes, 13 seconds (13.153 seconds).

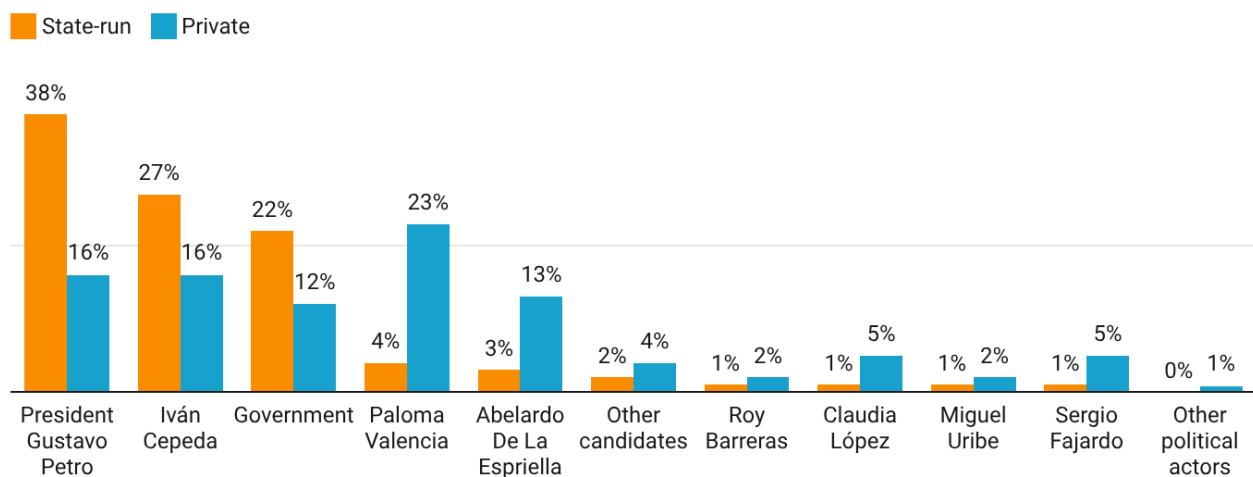
State-run media: 29 minutes, 4 seconds (1.744 seconds).

Private media: 3 hours, 10 minutes, 9 seconds (11.409 seconds).

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 7. Time of coverage of political actors in news on state-run and private media during the presidential election (1st round)

30 April – 30 May 2026



Total airtime: 83 hours, 59 minutes, 44 seconds (302.384 seconds).

State-run media: 27 hours, 23 minutes, 59 seconds (98.639 seconds).

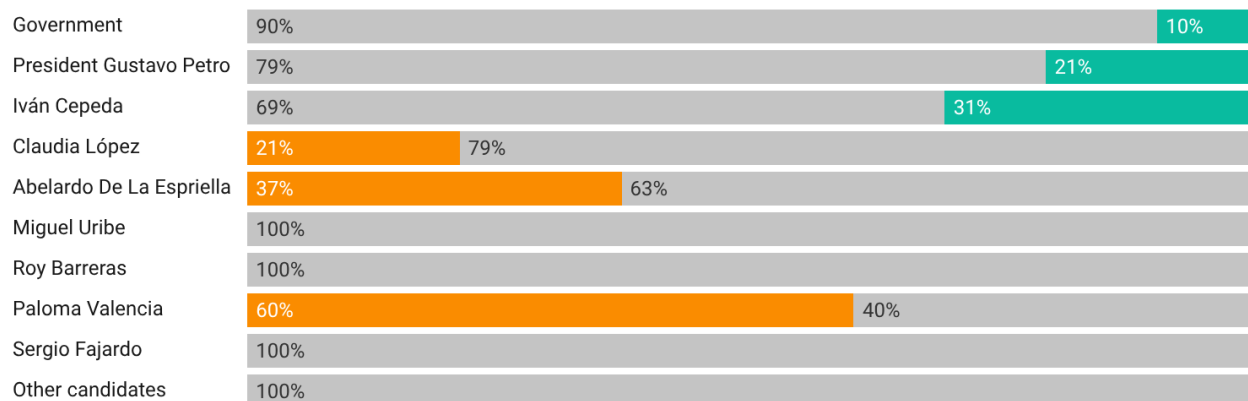
Private media: 56 hours, 35 minutes, 45 seconds (203.745 seconds).

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 8. Tone of coverage of political actors in news on state-run media during the presidential election (1st round)

30 April – 30 May 2026

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive



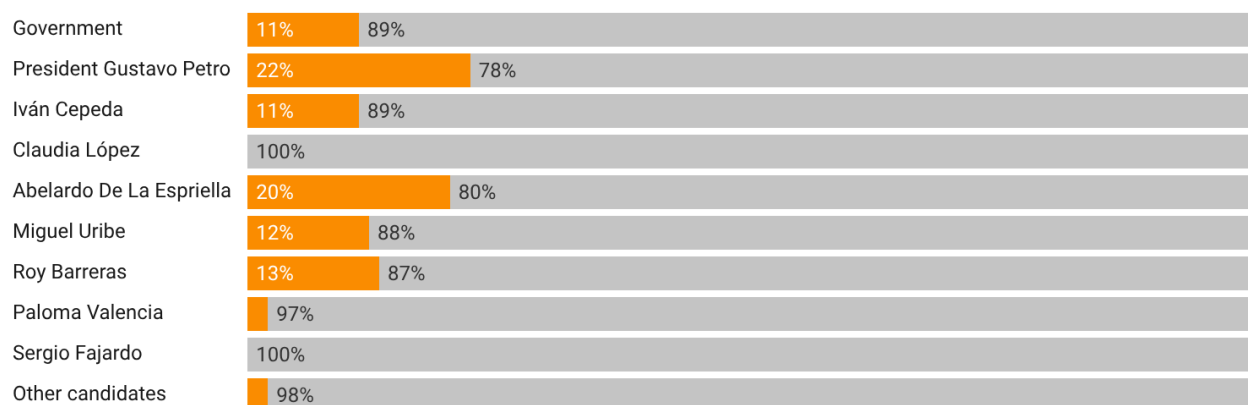
Total airtime: 27 hours, 23 minutes, 59 seconds (98.639 seconds).

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 9. Tone of coverage of political actors in news on private media during the presidential election (1st round)

30 April – 30 May 2026

■ Negative ■ Neutral ■ Positive

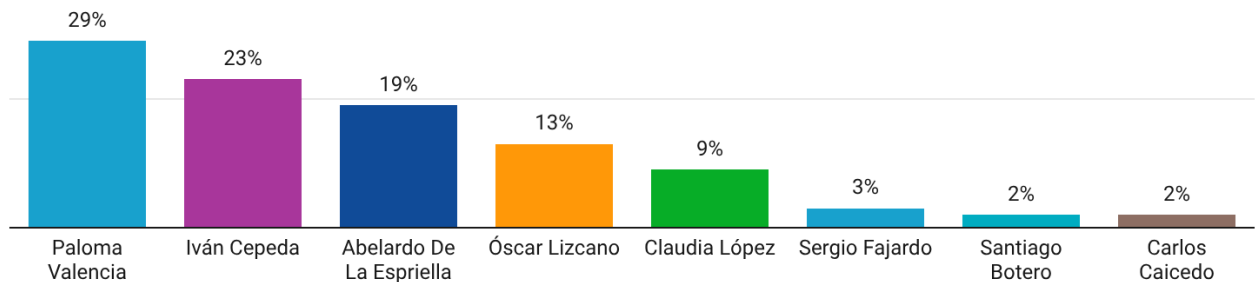


Total airtime: 56 hours, 35 minutes, 45 seconds (203.745 seconds).

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 10. Paid advertising by political actors on private media during the presidential election (1st round)

30 April – 30 May 2026



Total airtime: 6 hours, 44 minutes, 44 seconds (24.284 seconds).

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 11. Government advertising on state-run and private media during the presidential election (1st round)

30 April – 30 May 2026

State-run Private



Total airtime: 3 hours, 40 minutes, 58 seconds (13.258 seconds).

State-run media: 1 hours, 35 minutes, 10 seconds (5.710 seconds).

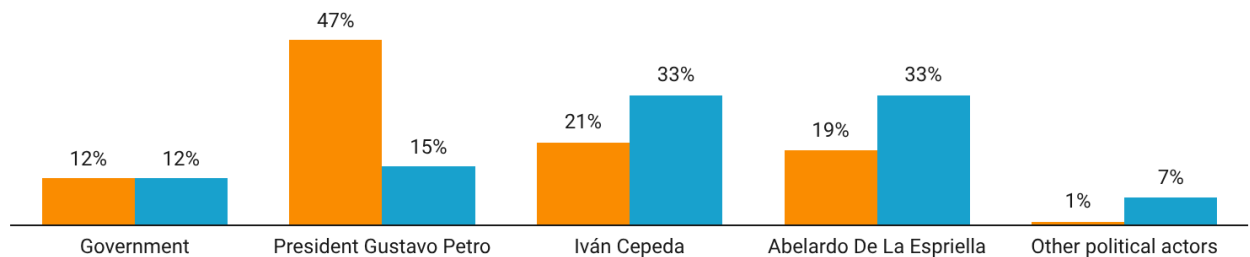
Private media: 2 hours, 5 minutes, 48 seconds (7.548 seconds).

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 12. Time of coverage of political actors in news on state-run and private media during the presidential election (run-off)

1–20 June 2026

State-run Private



Total airtime: 56 hours, 9 minutes, 30 seconds (202.170 seconds).

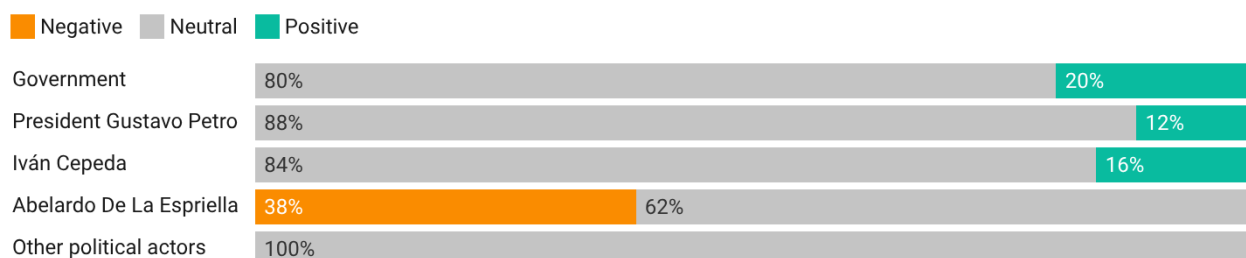
State-run media: 21 hours, 30 minutes, 26 seconds (77.426 seconds).

Private media: 34 hours, 39 minutes, 4 seconds (124.744 seconds).

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 13. Tone of coverage of political actors in news on state-run media during the presidential election (run-off)

1–20 June 2026

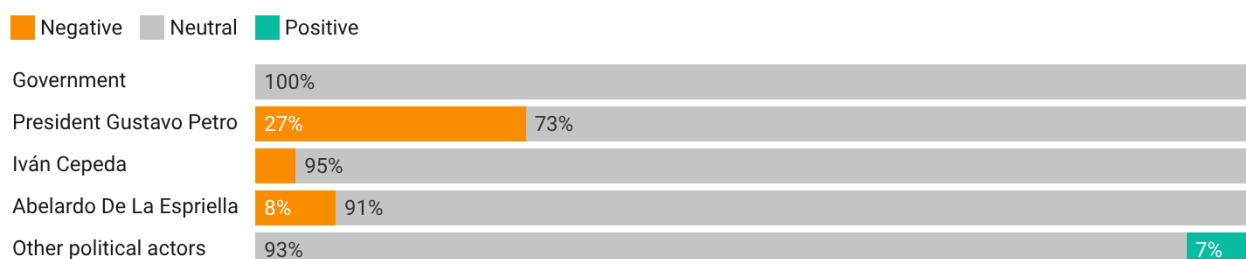


Total airtime: 21 hours, 30 minutes, 26 seconds (77.426 seconds).

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 14. Tone of coverage of political actors in news on private media during the presidential election (run-off)

1–20 June 2026

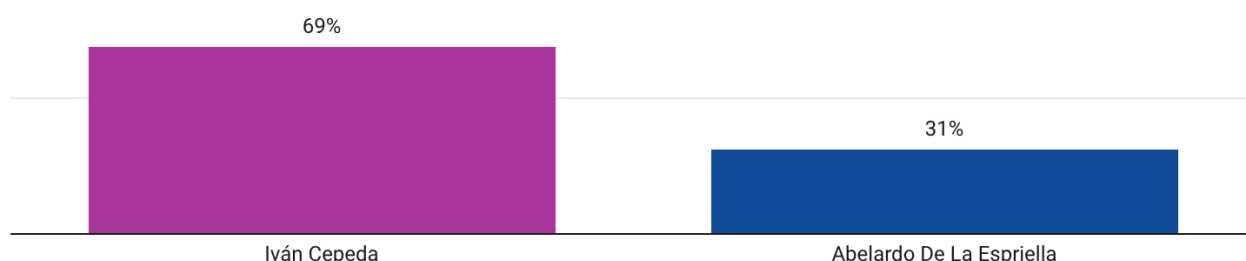


Total airtime: 34 hours, 39 minutes, 4 seconds (124.744 seconds).

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 15. Paid advertising by candidates on private media during the presidential election (run-off)

1–20 June 2026



Total airtime: 1 hours, 29 minutes (5.340 seconds).

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 16. Government advertising on state-run and private media during the presidential election (run-off)

1–20 June 2026

State-run Private



Total airtime: 1 hours, 43 minutes, 27 seconds (6.207 seconds).

State-run media: 35 minutes, 13 seconds (2.113 seconds).

Private media: 1 hours, 8 minutes, 14 seconds (4.094 seconds).

Source: EU EOM Colombia 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Annex IV: SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING

Methodology

The EU EOM's Social Media Monitoring Unit systematically monitored Colombian political discourse during the 2026 general elections in Colombia. The main objective of this monitoring was to analyse online information flows and their capacity to shape the electorate's perceptions and the political debate. This analysis supports the Mission's mandate to assess the overall conduct of the elections in accordance with international standards, national legislation and regional commitments. The Monitoring Unit's analytical framework is based on the *EU EOM Guidelines for observing online election related content* and combines quantitative and qualitative analysis.

The Monitoring Unit comprises five monitors, one assistant and one social media analyst. The monitors are Colombian citizens with a background in political science, who are familiar with their country's political landscape and have extensive experience in digital communication. The Unit's first task was to identify the most relevant social media platforms in Colombia, of which there were three: Facebook, X and TikTok. Qualitative monitoring was carried out periodically on Instagram and YouTube.

The monitoring covered the profiles of candidates and non-candidates, including media organisations, public institutions and all those figures in Colombian society who might have an influence on the electoral process. In total, 1,324 actors were monitored during the campaign, spread across 2,855 accounts by platform: 1,098 on Facebook, 954 on TikTok and 803 on X. The EU Election Observation Mission monitored the public activity of these profiles during the legislative elections and the first and second rounds of the presidential elections.

In addition, two further sets of keywords (44 electoral terms and 69 divisive and polarising terms) were monitored on a daily basis to identify campaign activity outside the selected profiles and to determine the narratives shaping the public debate. The official social media accounts of ministries and public institutions were also specifically analysed to determine whether their involvement in the process affected the level playing field between candidates.

By the end of this process, more than 163,000 posts from Facebook, X and TikTok had been collected, classified and analysed across the three elections.

Two tools were used for social media monitoring:

- TalkWalker: to periodically extract posts from each of the platforms.
- Who Targets Me: to facilitate the monitoring of political advertising purchased on Meta's platforms and to identify patterns of advertising that circumvent Colombian legislation.

Digital landscape

Internet and social media in Colombia

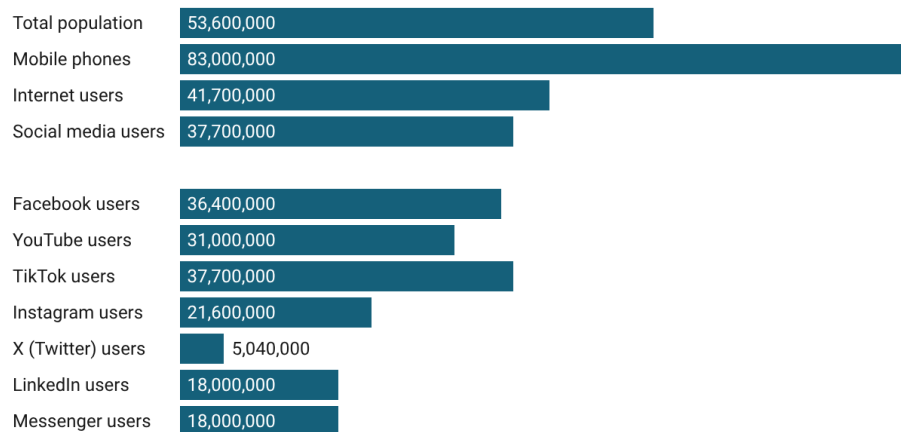


Chart: EU EOM COLOMBIA • Created with Datawrapper

Colombia has a highly connected population, for whom social media is a primary source of information. The number of mobile phone lines far exceeds the total population, and over 90 per cent of internet users are social media users. Breaking this down by platform, TikTok and Facebook lead the digital ecosystem, followed by YouTube and Instagram. However, X has had a more significant political and journalistic impact in the 2026 elections than its user base would suggest.

Digital campaign

Type of post

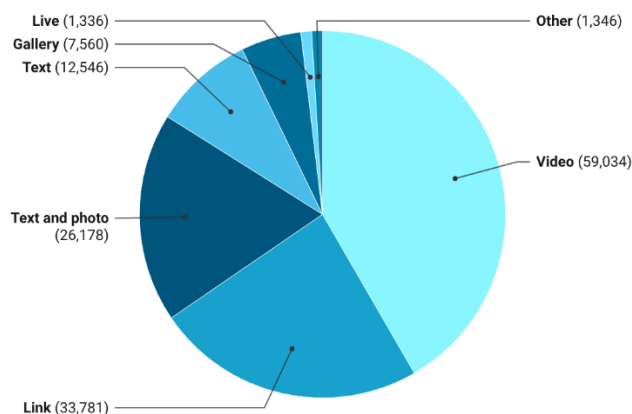


Chart: EU EOM COLOMBIA • Created with Datawrapper

Across all the accounts monitored, video was by far the most widely used format for conveying political discourse, followed by links and text with images. Plain text, photo galleries, live streams and other formats were overshadowed by increasingly audiovisual and concise content.

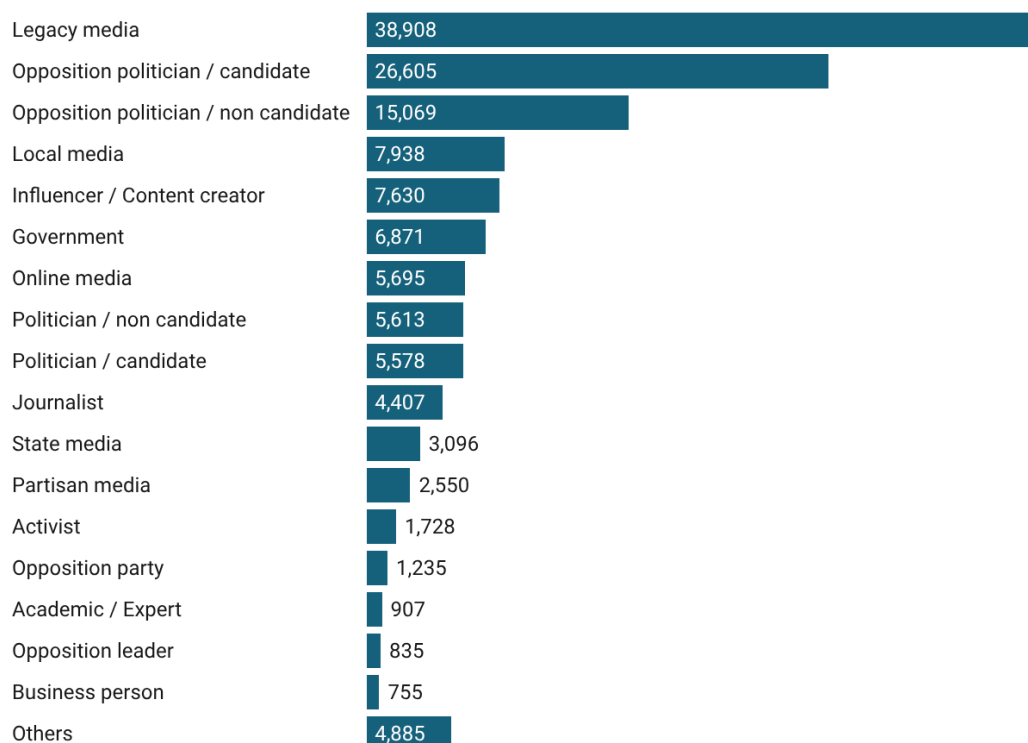
Type of page



Chart: EU EOM COLOMBIA 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

The media and politicians generated the bulk of the content monitored, well ahead of opinion leaders and public institutions. The prominence of the media seems to indicate the influence that traditional news organisations still wield in the digital environment.

Type of page: Subcategory



Source: EU EOM COLOMBIA 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

A more detailed analysis of the types of pages confirms the prominent role played by traditional media, as well as by opposition politicians and candidates. Influencers, content creators and government accounts also played a significant role, highlighting the diversity of key players in Colombia's digital campaign.

Political affiliation

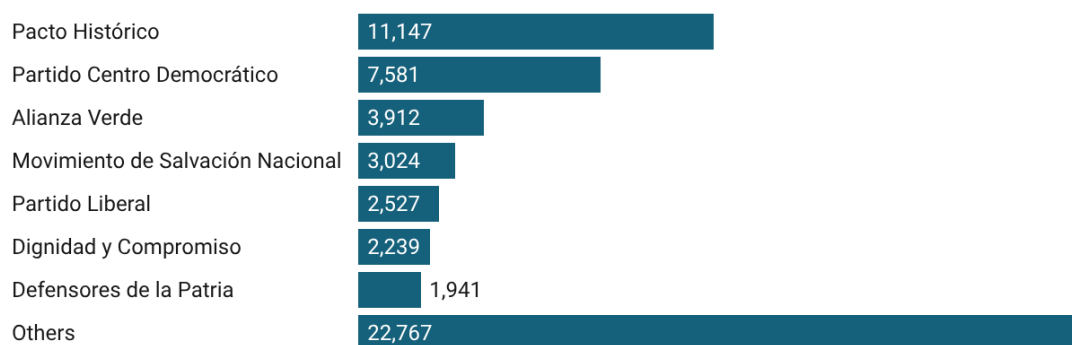


Chart: EU EOM COLOMBIA 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

The EU Election Observation Mission's monitoring revealed a higher number of messages associated with the Pacto Histórico and the Centro Democrático, followed at some distance by the Alianza Verde, Salvación Nacional and the Partido Liberal. The high proportion of content not attributable to a party reflects the fragmented nature of the online political debate.

Posts topics

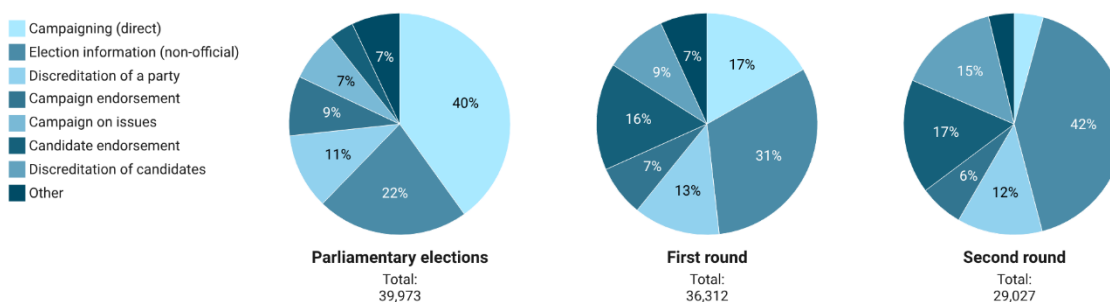


Chart: EU EOM COLOMBIA 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Political content varied across the three elections: in the legislative elections, direct campaigning and unofficial electoral information predominated; in the presidential election, as the number of candidates dwindled, the content shifted towards direct support for candidates rather than policy proposals.

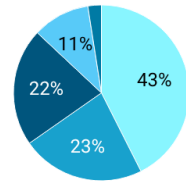
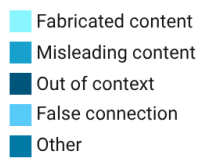
Hateful content



Source: EU EOM COLOMBIA 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

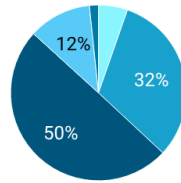
Content involving harassment consisted predominantly of derogatory speech (902 cases), with smaller numbers of hate speech (65), harassment against women (54) and against minorities (23), and explicit threats (10). Although these threats were comparatively rare, the volume of derogatory and denigrating content points to a hostile online environment for candidates, and in particular for women and minorities.

Content with manipulated information



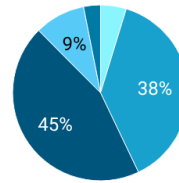
Parliamentary elections

Total:
484



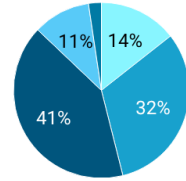
First round

Total:
785



Second round

Total:
676



Total of content with manipulated information

Total:
1,945

Chart: EU EOM COLOMBIA 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Manipulated content increased throughout the cycle and varied in nature. Fabricated content predominated during the legislative phase, whilst out-of-context material became the main category during the presidential rounds (50 per cent in the first round and 45 per cent in the second). Across the campaign as a whole, out-of-context and misleading content accounted for the bulk of the disinformation circulating during the process.

Use of artificial intelligence (AI)

Use of AI as a legitimate electoral tool

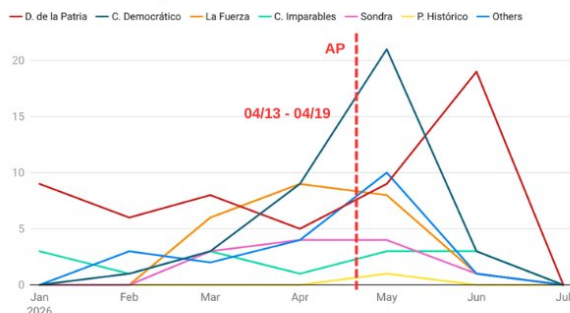


Chart: EU EOM COLOMBIA 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

(Accumulated)

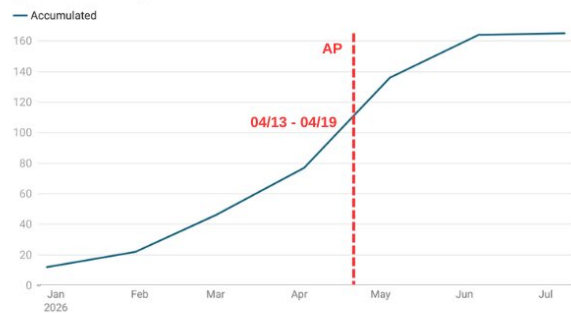


Gráfico: EU EOM COLOMBIA 2026 • Creado con Datawrapper

The use of artificial intelligence increased markedly from April onwards, when it began to be used as a tool for producing political advertising (the point of acceleration is marked as AP and falls between 13 and 19 April). AI-generated material was used by parties across the political spectrum, with the *Centro Democrático* and, later, *Defensores de la Patria* among the most frequent users. Both campaigns also enlisted content creators with audiences numbering in the millions to broaden their reach amongst younger, digitally active voters.



Total spending on META political ads (COP)

Total spending on political ads on Meta during parliament elections (COP)

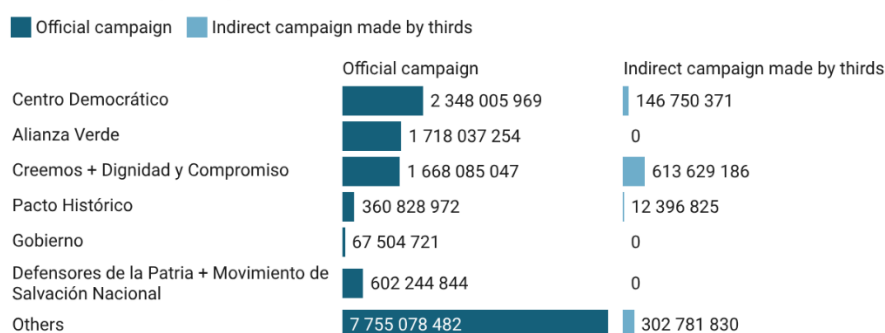


Gráfico: EU EOM COLOMBIA 2026 • Creado con Datawrapper

Total spending on political ads on Meta during presidential elections (COP)

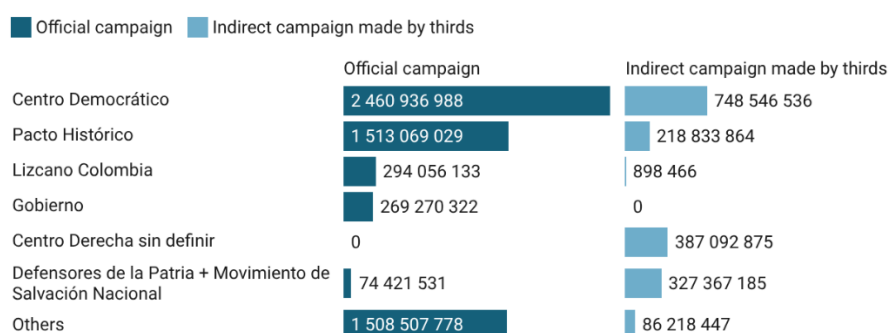


Gráfico: EU EOM COLOMBIA 2026 • Creado con Datawrapper

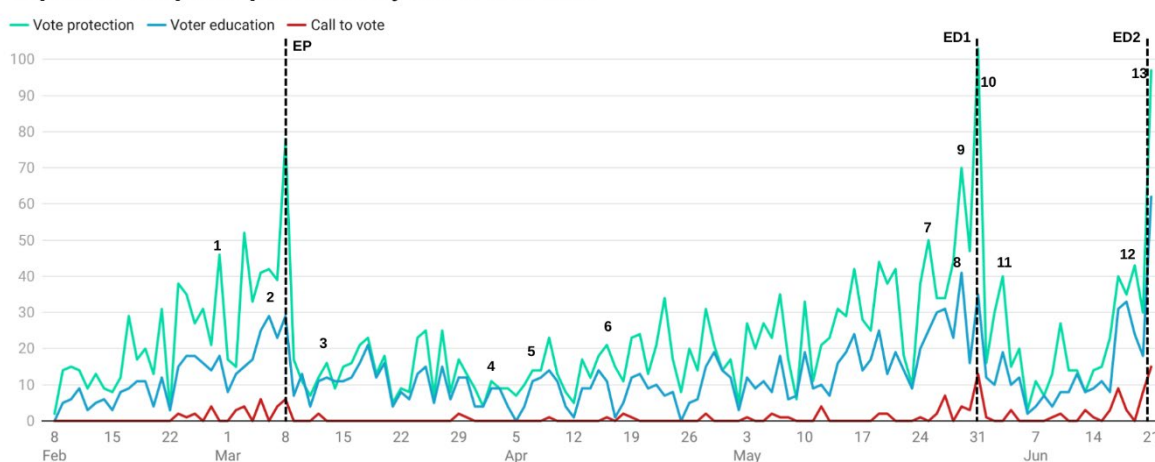
Paid political advertising on Meta's platforms was concentrated among a small number of players. In the legislative elections, the *Centro Democrático* (COP 2,348 million), the *Alianza Verde* (COP 1,718 million) and the *Creemos + Dignidad y Compromiso* coalition (COP 1,668 million) led the way in official spending. In the presidential elections, the *Centro Democrático* (COP 2,461 million) and the *Pacto Histórico* (COP 1,513 million) were the main advertisers. Meta is the only platform that discloses this data, so these figures reflect only online advertising expenditure disclosed by Meta.

Indirect advertising via third parties, through accounts not formally linked to a campaign, generated additional expenditure that was considerably less transparent. In the presidential election, third-party spending favoured centre-right candidates, with COP 749 million going to the *Centro Democrático* and COP 387 million linked to unspecified centre-right accounts.

CASE STUDIES

Case study: The electoral authority on social media

Topics of the posts published by RNEC and CNE



Posts from the accounts of the *Registraduría* (RNEC) and the *Consejo Nacional Electoral* (CNE) on vote protection, voter education and calls to vote, between 8 February and 21 June. Activity peaked around each election day (EP, ED1, ED2). The increase in messages on vote protection in response to disinformation about the integrity of the process illustrates the intensive use of social media to counter false narratives. In contrast, explicit calls to vote were less frequent and concentrated in the days leading up to the polls.

Themes of RNEC and CNE posts by category

Category	Total
Vote protection	3,019
Voter education	1,684
Call to vote	136
Total	4,839

Table: EU EOM COLOMBIA 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

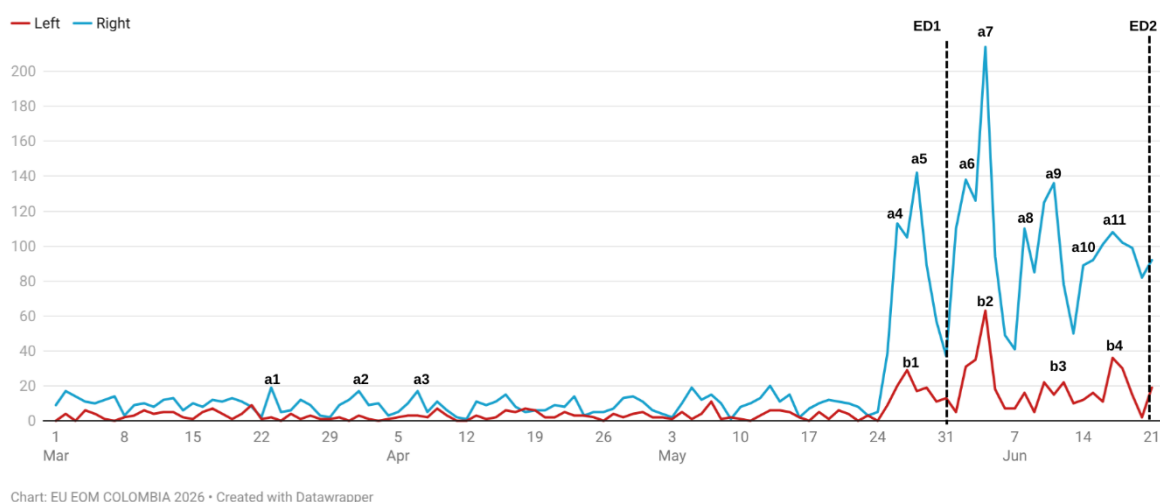
Methodology: A sample of 5,987 posts published by the official accounts of the *Registraduría* and the *Consejo Nacional Electoral* on X, Facebook and TikTok between 8 February 2026 and 21 June 2026. Each post was classified into one or more of three analytical categories: vote protection, voter education and calls to vote. Based on this classification, the number of daily posts by the electoral authorities for each of the analysed functions was compiled.

- 1 March: President Gustavo Petro claims that the vote counts are “opaque and vulnerable to fraud” a week before the parliamentary elections.
- 6 March: Petro emphasises the importance of citizen oversight: “only the people can safeguard the vote”, he asserts, calling on party witnesses to scrutinize the results forms and challenge the results from polling stations where irregularities were identified.

3. 10–12 March: Following the legislative elections, Petro warns of discrepancies between the results and “reality”. He later warns of an “attempt at fraud” in the presidential elections.
4. 1 April: Petro posts on X that the attempt to annul a contract currently in force was linked to “electoral fraud”, involving not only polling station officials but also the software.
5. 7 April: Petro again refers to an alleged “orchestrated fraud” surrounding a public contract and mentions the Bautista brothers and the presidential elections.
6. 18 April: *La Silla Vacía* reports that Petro continues to speak of electoral fraud, despite the court ruling prohibiting him from doing so.
7. 26 May: Petro once again raises doubts about electoral fraud, repeating that the Electoral Register is allegedly allowing the vote to be manipulated against the *Pacto Histórico* candidate, Iván Cepeda.
8. 29–30 May: A few hours before the first round, Petro asks the Registrar about the “hash lock” and the “timestamp” that prevent the vote count from being altered.
9. 30 May: The *Registraduría* states that the published E-14 forms retain traceability of date and time, and that the hash code remained embedded in the files.
10. 31 May–2 June: Following the first round, Petro refuses to recognize the preliminary count and alleges that 800,000 identity cards were not included in the official *censo*.
11. The *Registraduría* maintains that it can provide evidence to show that the software and the electoral register had not been tampered with.
12. 19–20 June: Ahead of the second round, Petro again questions the Electoral Registry and calls for the restoration of the timestamp and hash code for the E-14 forms.
13. 21 June: Following the release of the preliminary count for the second round, Petro states that “no one can be declared president” and questions the legitimacy of the result.

Foreign interference in the electoral process

Comments about Colombia from international authorities



Trends in comments on Colombia by international actors. In blue, statements favourable to the right; in red, those favourable to the left. Such comments were very scarce until the end of May, when they increased, driven by statements from US officials and other foreign figures. The predominance of comments favouring De la Espriella's candidacy fuelled numerous accusations of foreign interference and exacerbated polarisation.

Methodology: A sample of 10,493 posts (5,397 from X and 5,096 from Facebook) between 1 March and 21 June 2026 on the official accounts of international political actors selected for their relevance and influence on regional geopolitics. Expressions of support for or opposition to candidates, as well as references to the national political situation, were analysed. Subsequently, the main events were organised chronologically and classified according to their political orientation and relationship to the candidates, in order to identify periods of heightened activity and analyse the construction of narratives.

First Round: AE (Right, blue) – IC (Left, red):

AE1: 4 May 2026. The US unveils its new anti-drugs policy and President Donald Trump puts pressure on governments through sanctions and tariffs.

AE2: 12 May. Senator Rick Scott sends a letter to Secretary of State Marco Rubio asking him to intervene in the Colombian presidential election.

AE3: 13 May. Presidents Trump and Xi Jinping meet, with Latin America at the centre of the geopolitical dispute between the superpowers.

AE4: 16 May. Republican Senator Bernie Moreno comments on the first round of the presidential election and condemns the threats made against De la Espriella.

IC1: Ecuador's National Customs Service (Senae) issues a resolution abolishing the 100 per cent tariff imposed by Noboa on goods originating in Colombia.

AE5: 30 May: Ecuador's Head of State, Daniel Noboa, in talks with De la Espriella, expresses support for his candidacy and lifts the tariffs on Colombian goods.

AE6: 1 June: Heads of state and international leaders, including Javier Milei and Bernie Moreno, publicly declare their support for De la Espriella.

AE7: 3 June. Marco Rubio speaks about the presidential elections and reiterates his government's intention to guarantee free and fair elections in Colombia.

AE8: 5 June. President Trump makes statements in support of De la Espriella.

IC2: 8 June. Various centre and progressive politicians condemned the interference in Colombia's elections.

AE9: 8 June. A message from Peru's president-elect, Keiko Fujimori, referring to President Petro using as a "guerrilla fighter" and a "red nose".

IC3: 17 June. Thirteen members of the US Congress published a letter questioning the way in which De la Espriella acquired his wealth.

IC4: 18 June. Members of the European Parliament criticised President Trump for his interference in Colombia's presidential elections.

AE10: 19 June. Senator Moreno reiterates his support for De la Espriella and announces that he will be in Colombia as an international observer during the second round.

AE11: 20 June. US support for De la Espriella. During the heated exchange between politicians from both countries, terms such as Marxism, communism and fascism are used.

Allegations of fraud from the Office of the President of the Republic

President Petro's posts that cast doubt on the electoral process.

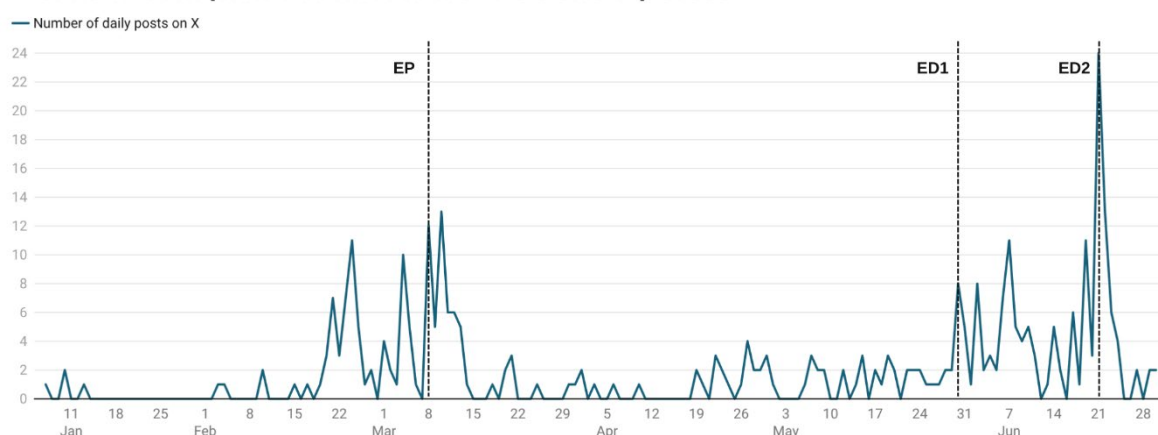


Chart: MOE UE COLOMBIA 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

The President of the Republic cast doubt on the process in all three elections, either by requesting an audit of the results software or by alleging manipulation of the electoral roll or the E14 forms. The Monitoring Unit identified 247 posts containing up to 930 references or insinuations (made from his personal account, not via official accounts).

Fraud narratives categories

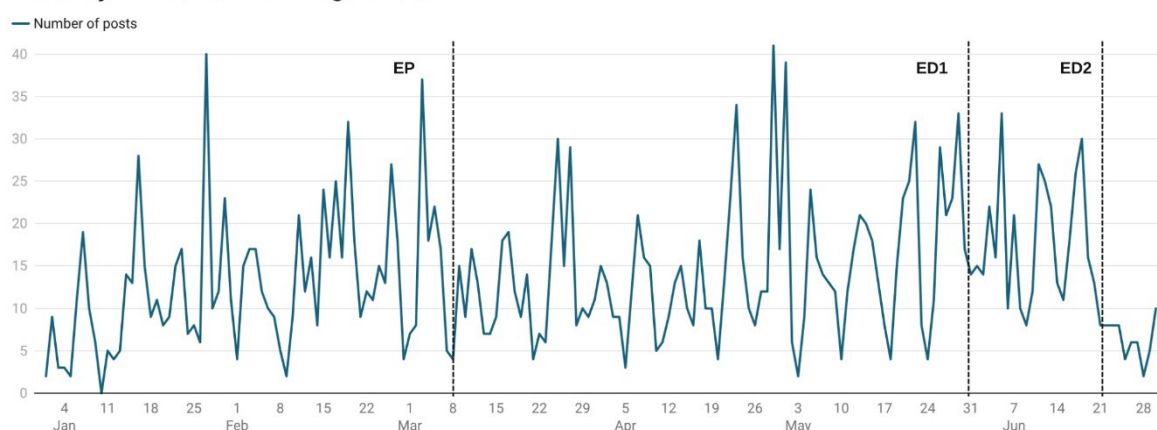
Category	Count	Percentage
General allegations of fraud or lack of electoral guarantees	195	21
Irregularities in voting polling stations and vote counting	191	21
Electoral software auditing and contracting	159	17
Institutional interference and misuse of power	135	15
Vote buying coercion and clientelism	82	9
Irregular campaign financing and opaque funding	64	7
Disinformation and manipulation of public opinion	54	6
Foreign interference	50	5
Total	930	100

Table: EU EOM COLOMBIA 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Methodology: A sample of all posts on President Gustavo Petro's profile on X, from 1 January to 30 June (1,128 posts). Content review to identify mentions or insinuations of fraud, irregularities, manipulation or a lack of transparency in the Colombian electoral process.

Improper use of public funds

Posts by ministries with irregularities



The involvement of the main ministries during the electoral process was almost constant. These bodies praised the government's performance during its term in office on a daily basis and shared images of the inauguration or handover of public works and the provision of public services to citizens, amongst other irregularities. Hashtags featuring slogans used in the Cepeda and Quilcué campaign were also utilised.

Posts by ministries showing potential irregularities

Ministry	Posts	Irregularities	% of Irregularities
Presidency	1,224	677	55
Health	1,064	498	47
Education	754	462	61
Agriculture	1,049	349	33
Transport	574	162	28
ICT	565	153	27
Environment	514	102	20
Culture	504	84	17
TOTAL	6,248	2,487	40

Table: EU EOM COLOMBIA 2026 • Created with Datawrapper

Methodology: The study analysed 6,248 posts on X between 1 January and 30 June from the official accounts of eight ministries. Each post was reviewed to identify possible uses of institutional accounts involving political participation, campaigning, the promotion of achievements, support for the president, the handover of public works, comparisons with previous governments and calls for mobilisation. Content dedicated exclusively to public service announcements or emergency response was excluded.

