



**PRELIMINARY STATEMENT
Lima, 9 June 2026**

Competitive run-off and polarising campaign culminate in technical tie

This second preliminary statement of the EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) is delivered before the entire electoral process is complete. Critical stages remain, including final results and the adjudication of possible petitions, which the EU EOM remains in the country to observe. The EU EOM is at present solely in a position to comment on observations undertaken to date, and will later publish a final report, including recommendations for electoral reform.

Summary

Following the 7 June presidential run-off, early results revealed a technical tie between presidential candidates Keiko Fujimori (*Fuerza Popular*) and Roberto Sánchez (*Juntos por el Perú*). Both candidates recognised the close results and showed a commitment to await their final adjudication. The period between the two rounds was overshadowed by a persistent fraud narrative, investigations into the late distribution of election material in parts of the capital on 12 April, and the ongoing adjudication of first-round results. The latter meant that the run-off campaign did not get underway until the candidates were announced, just three weeks before election day. Once underway, the low intensity campaign was largely peaceful, but with instances of racism and discrimination. Election management was adequately prepared; election day calm and orderly, although with isolated incidents, and EU observers assessed voting and counting processes positively. The presence of party agents and citizen observers lent transparency to the process.

Throughout the campaign period fundamental freedoms were generally respected. Keiko Fujimori focused on security and stability, social programmes, and highlighted certain aspects of her father's legacy as President. Roberto Sánchez prioritised social development, fiscal reforms, and called for improved access to housing, healthcare, and education.

The adjudication of first-round results was ongoing throughout the run-off period. This was due to the large number of results protocols with inconsistencies, coupled with the non-alignment of legal and regulatory procedures for the timely treatment of such protocols with constitutional deadlines. The *Jurado Nacional de Elecciones* (JNE) eventually adopted *ad hoc* decisions to accelerate the process. During this time, stakeholders awaited the final results of the presidential vote to resolve a technical tie for second place between Roberto Sánchez and Rafael López-Aliaga (*Renovación Popular*).

Throughout the run-off period, several state institutions launched administrative and judicial investigations into the 12 April logistical failures. López-Aliaga, the third-placed presidential candidate, promoted a narrative of electoral fraud. He led 'Marches for Democracy' and called for supplementary elections (which are not foreseen under the legal framework for general elections).

In the period following the 12 April logistical failures, the JNE distanced itself from the *Oficina Nacional de Procesos Electorales* (ONPE), the ONPE Chief resigned, staff members linked to the 12 April failures were replaced, and numerous inquiries were opened by the Public Prosecutor and other State entities. After presidential results were announced, and in an effort to regain public trust, both JNE and ONPE attempted to present an image of unity and stepped up their public

communications. The ONPE redoubled its logistical efforts and election preparations were adequate and timely.

Traditional media coverage focused primarily on the two presidential candidates and criticism of the electoral authorities, while some private media also persisted with fraud narratives. EU EOM media monitoring revealed that state-owned media maintained neutral and balanced coverage, while most privately-owned media mainly presented consistently negative coverage against Sánchez and *Juntos por el Perú*. The JNE debates between each campaign's technical team and their presidential candidates contributed to an informed choice.

Fraud narratives and attacks on electoral institutions shaped the online environment, while candidates' social media accounts focused mainly on campaign messaging. Hostile and discriminatory discourse carried over from the first round, mostly aimed at *Juntos por el Perú* presidential ticket candidates and to a lesser extent at the *Fuerza Popular* candidates. Electoral authorities and fact-checking initiatives actively sought to counter false or misleading claims.

Election day was overall calm and orderly, with isolated incidents promptly addressed by the authorities. Polling stations observed by the EU EOM had all the necessary material, but opened with up to one hour of delay, due mostly to absence of poll workers. Most polling stations visited throughout the day were staffed with the pre-designated poll workers and voting procedures were followed. JNE staff fulfilled their supervisory capacity at voting centres, and a considerable presence of party agents lent transparency to the process. Counting was observed to be quick and transparent, although procedures were not always strictly followed. ONPE started to publish the first results one hour after the close of polls.

Preliminary findings

1. Background

On 7 June, Peruvians went to the polls to elect a president and vice-presidents for a five-year mandate. Two tickets competed in the run-off. *Fuerza Popular* presented seasoned politician and former first lady Keiko Fujimori and her running mates, Luis Galarreta and Miguel Torres. Meanwhile, *Juntos por el Perú* nominated current Congressman Roberto Sánchez, who ran with political newcomers Analí Márquez and Brígida Curo.

For several weeks following the first round of voting, stakeholders waited for final results on the presidential vote to resolve a technical tie for second place. On 17 May, it was eventually confirmed that Rafael López-Aliaga (*Renovación Popular*) placed third, only 21,209 votes behind Roberto Sánchez. Over the weeks since the first round of voting, López-Aliaga promoted a narrative of electoral fraud, organised 'Marches for Democracy' and called for an international audit of the electoral process, supplementary elections in Metropolitan Lima, (which are not foreseen under the legal framework for general elections), and cancellation of votes from rural polling stations.

2. Campaign Environment

A competitive but polarised campaign was punctuated by instances of discrimination and hostilities.

With contestants awaiting the final results of first-round presidential voting, proclaimed only on 17 May, the run-off campaign was off to a slow start and reached its momentum only during the week preceding the election day. While Keiko Fujimori's participation in the run-off was known from the outset, Roberto Sánchez was slightly disadvantaged in having to wait for the confirmation of his participation in the second-round. Keiko Fujimori ran a structured campaign, undertaken with larger resources and greater reliance on her party structure. Roberto Sánchez based his campaign

on forging political alliances, and at times accepting the political support of controversial players, including Antauro Humala, the leader of an extreme nationalist movement based in the Andean south. EU observers reported that the political endorsements of both candidates, voiced by political parties and movements in Lima, had moderate traction in regional campaigning.

The presidential candidates campaigned on distinct programmes. Roberto Sánchez called for social development, fiscal reforms, and reduction of inequalities in access to housing, healthcare, and education. Keiko Fujimori emphasised security and stability, social programmes, a reform of public spending, and recalled certain aspects of her father's legacy as the country's President.

Overall, the campaign was competitive, and fundamental freedoms were respected. However, instances of racism and discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, and social class, present in the narrative of both camps, remained largely unaddressed by the competent state authorities. The mostly calm environment was punctuated by hostile attempts to disrupt Keiko Fujimori's campaigning in Arequipa, Cusco, Huánuco, Junin, and Puno. Moreover, various political and civil movements organised anti-Keiko marches in the main urban centres of the country.

The campaign messages from both camps were often polarising, at times with the apparent aim to instil fear. Keiko Fujimori posited the vote for her opponent would favour chaos and a return to communism. Roberto Sánchez alleged that Fujimori's victory would lead to the capture of the state by the elites, perpetuation of social inequalities, and marginalisation of those in need. Both candidates ran intensive party agent recruitment efforts and framed their deployment as vote protection.

3. Legal Framework

The JNE adopted ad hoc decisions to ensure timely adjudication of results, highlighting the need for legal reforms to strengthen legal certainty.

The JNE adopted two significant resolutions when faced with the practical impossibility to comply simultaneously with all the established legal and regulatory procedures to resolve the high number of protocols with inconsistencies (*actas observadas*) within the prescribed timeframes and also with the constitutional deadlines for the newly-elected to take office. Among other aspects, one resolution repealed the need to conduct ballot recounts to resolve inconsistencies arising from the counting of preferential votes and introduced new deadlines for *Jurados Electorales Especiales* (JEEs) to conduct recount hearings. Another resolution imposed a deadline for JEEs to announce presidential results. Most of the JEEs interviewed welcomed the decision to cancel the recounts of protocols with inconsistencies based on preferential votes, which were mostly resolved through cross-checking of the various copies of results protocols.

The JNE assumed an *in extremis* legislative role during the electoral process, which it justified by the need to respect the constitutional deadlines. However, this may have undermined the principle of legal certainty and the provision that the electoral legal framework cannot be altered during the one-year period ahead of elections. The conflict between the legal and regulatory procedures that can affect the timely adjudication of results should be addressed ahead of future elections.

4. Election Administration

While preparations for the run-off proceeded adequately, relations between the electoral bodies and their public image remained deeply affected by the 12 April logistical failures.

The notable logistical problems in parts of Lima on 12 April and the subsequent pressure on ONPE led to the resignation of its Chief, Piero Corvetto. The managing director, Bernardo Pachas, took over as acting head, while the *Junta Nacional de Justicia* (JNJ) launched the process to appoint a new Chief, due to take office on 3 July. At the same time, ONPE replaced staff members linked to

the 12 April failures and strengthened coordination with its decentralised offices. Besides the investigations by the Public Prosecutor, ONPE faced numerous inquiries by other State entities as well as Congressional hearings. These investigations and inquiries tied up considerable resources and placed an additional burden on ONPE staff who worked under a strict and demanding timetable for organising the run-off.

Whilst the Peruvian Constitution establishes one single electoral management system formed by three autonomous bodies, in the aftermath of the logistical failures in Lima on 12 April the JNE initially sought to disassociate from ONPE and assume a lead role within the electoral management. Subsequently, after the announcement of presidential results, JNE and ONPE attempted to present an image of unity ahead of the run-off. Across the rest of the country, where the elections on 12 April had proceeded normally, relations between *Oficinas Descentralizadas de Procesos Electorales* (ODPEs) and JEEs were observed to be unaffected by the tensions at the national level. The decentralised offices of both institutions continued to work together on preparations for the run-off election and coordinated with all relevant actors through inter-institutional commissions on conflict prevention.

In response to a request from *Fuerza Popular*, ONPE invited representatives of both candidates to discuss measures to guarantee political party scrutiny of the process. *Fuerza Popular* requested permission to livestream the counting from polling stations; it was eventually agreed that recordings of the ballot count could be made for internal party purposes, provided the poll workers were not disturbed in their tasks. This is broadly in line with the election law, which does not explicitly prohibit the taking of photographs or filming within polling stations and stipulates that the vote count is public. Also, to ensure unimpeded access of party agents to all polling stations, ONPE and the political parties agreed on a format for credentials, which could be pre-printed or filled in by hand, and must include the name of the party and the agent, the polling stations to be monitored, and a scanned or handwritten signature.

After presidential results were announced, and in an effort to regain public trust, both JNE and ONPE stepped up their public communications through press statements, interviews, and social media activities. Some logistical preparations for the run-off, including the printing of ballot papers, were delayed until the announcement of presidential results. ONPE managed to catch up and distribute the electoral material to all voting centres in good time. Training of poll workers was of overall good quality, although with a lower rate of participation, and focused on the filling of results protocols and the rights and obligations of party agents. In the weeks leading up to election day, ONPE had to relocate 44 voting centres (out of 10,313), mainly because the property owners were no longer willing to make their premises available, due to reconstruction, or, in the case of Lima, because the polling stations were moved from open, public spaces into buildings on the recommendation of the security forces. These changes were widely publicised by ONPE. The JNE, for its part, increased training efforts for its supervisors and took measures to improve their internal reporting mechanisms.

5. Complaints and Electoral Offences

The large volume of untimely and inadmissible applications for annulment of results revealed limited knowledge of complaint procedures if not abuse of the electoral dispute mechanisms.

The Constitution, the Law on Elections (LOE), and the JNE resolution on the procedure for applications for annulment clearly set out the established grounds for declaring elections invalid. Procedural and evidence requirements are also established, in accordance with the rule of law. A polling station result may be annulled under specific conditions (Article 363, LOE) or an entire district or provincial result may be annulled when invalid or blank votes, taken together or separately, exceed two-thirds of the number of valid votes (Article 364). Political organisations

appeared to have limited knowledge of (or extensively disregarded) these mechanisms, as did private citizens who, without legitimate standing, also lodged a considerable number of applications for annulment. In the case of *Renovación Popular*, the request for annulments – mostly made with little or no regard for the established legal mechanisms – were extensively highlighted in its post-election political discourse.

According to the JNE case file platform, which is not user-friendly, only 63 of the 199 requests for the annulment of polling station results were submitted to the JEEs within the legally established period (up to three days after election day). The majority were declared inadmissible due to non-payment of fees. There were a further 25 requests for annulment of district results and 325 requests to annul the entire election results. The overwhelming majority of the more than 500 cases, now largely resolved, were dismissed as inadmissible and without substance. More than 800 rulings were issued by the 60 JEEs and the JNE on appeal. The untimely and inappropriate nature of requests was observed to amount to an abuse of the electoral dispute system and its safeguards.

Several institutions launched or continued administrative and judicial investigations into the 12 April logistical failures that occurred in some districts of Lima. The JNJ initiated disciplinary proceedings against the former ONPE Chief and Congress summoned the heads of the three electoral authorities. The Public Prosecutor's Office continued confidential investigations and the Comptroller's Office published a report on the alleged criminal and administrative liability of ten ONPE officials, including its former Chief. At the same time, most of the predominant Presidential candidates were involved in investigations and legal proceedings, including Rafael López-Aliaga, Keiko Fujimori, and Roberto Sánchez. The Venice Commission recently expressed concern about the independence of the judiciary, and in May of this year the Supreme Court acknowledged and condemned attempts to undermine its legitimacy and attacks against the judicial branch.

6. Traditional Media

While state-owned media provided balanced and neutral coverage, biased coverage by most privately-owned national media outlets undermined citizens' right to an informed choice.

Traditional media coverage focused primarily on the two presidential candidates and criticism of the electoral authorities, while some media also persisted with fraud narratives. The JNE-organised debates between both campaign's technical team (on 24 May) and the presidential candidates (on 31 May) contributed to voters' right to an informed choice. *TVPerú* organised interviews between members of the technical teams; however, representatives of *Fuerza Popular* did not participate. In addition, neither candidate appeared for the agreed interview with *TVPerú*.

EU EOM media monitoring revealed that while state-owned media maintained neutral and balanced coverage, most privately-owned media showed a strong bias against Sánchez and *Juntos por el Perú*.¹ In the combined data of all monitored private television, Sánchez and *Juntos por el Perú* received considerably more airtime with more than half of it negative, while 96 per cent of Fujimori and *Fuerza Popular* coverage was neutral or positive. Among the outlets monitored, *Willax TV* showed the strongest bias, while *Latina TV* provided balanced and largely neutral coverage of both candidates. Monitored radio stations maintained a largely neutral tone and provided comparable coverage of both candidates. Among newspapers, *Perú21*, *El Comercio*, *Correo*, and *Trome* devoted more than twice the coverage to Sánchez and *Juntos por el Perú*, largely with a negative tone, with *Perú21* showing the strongest bias, with over 70 per cent of its coverage of Sánchez and *Juntos por el Perú* being negative. In contrast, *La República* gave comparable coverage to both

¹ From 9 May until 7 June, the EU EOM monitored the primetime broadcast of national TV channels *TVPerú*, *América TV*, *Latina TV*, *ATV*, *Panamericana TV*, and *Willax TV*, as well as *Radio Nacional*, *RPP*, and *Radio Exitosa*, and the daily newspapers *El Peruano*, *El Comercio*, *La República*, *Correo*, *Peru21*, and *Trome*.

candidates, yet 40 per cent of it was negative to Fujimori and *Fuerza Popular*, while its coverage of Sánchez and *Juntos por el Perú* was mostly neutral. The coverage across monitored media of Fujimori largely focused on campaign activities, and coverage of Sánchez was linked to concerns over alleged economic impact, his relationship with Antauro Humala and alleged ties to illegal mining, investigations into party financing, terrorism, and also the arrest of a former *Juntos por el Perú* congressional candidate who was supposedly connected with a criminal extortion group.

7. Digital Communication and Social Media

Fraud narratives and attacks on electoral institutions shaped the online environment, while candidates' accounts focused mainly on campaign messaging

The run-off online environment remained highly polarised, marked by continued challenges to the first-round results and criticism of electoral institutions. EU EOM monitoring of electoral fraud claims on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and X, found that such narratives were sustained throughout the run-off period and promoted by identifiable political actors, particularly Rafael López-Aliaga *Renovación Popular*. These narratives combined the real 12 April logistical failures with unsubstantiated or false claims, framing administrative incidents and technical aspects of the results process as evidence of deliberate manipulation. They were further amplified by accounts displaying coordinated inauthentic behaviour, primarily on X and Facebook. The JNE, and to a lesser extent ONPE, were primary targets, as fraud allegations evolved into personalised attacks on individual officials and institutional leadership. Electoral authorities and fact-checking initiatives actively sought to counter false or misleading claims related to the electoral process, often facing hostile responses online.

By contrast, the official accounts of the two run-off candidates focused mainly on campaign events and policy messages. Hostile and discriminatory discourse nevertheless remained present, particularly on X, where Roberto Sánchez, *Juntos por el Perú*, and its second vice-presidential candidate Brígida Curo were targeted by ideological, racist, and identity-based attacks. Keiko Fujimori also faced racist and gendered online harassment, though at substantially lower levels.

Paid advertising on Meta was limited on official candidate accounts. Third-party advertising played a more visible role, notably through pro-Fujimori content, anti-Sánchez attacks, and political ads that were not transparently labelled as such.

8. Polling, Counting and Tabulation of Results

An orderly election day with isolated incidents, and a quick and transparent counting process.

Election day was overall calm, with the JNE and ONPE reporting isolated cases of ballot papers with markings found in polling stations, which were reported to the Public Prosecutor. The EU EOM observed the opening of the process in 56 polling stations across all regions of the country, most of which opened before 8:00am. Electoral materials were observed to be on hand and EU observers qualified the opening as calm, orderly, and without complications.

During voting, EU observers visited 504 polling stations, most of which were staffed with the pre-designated poll workers; in only 14 stations, there were poll workers drawn from the queue of voters. Voting procedures were followed and poll worker performance was graded positively in 97 per cent of observed polling stations. The EU observed a considerable presence of party agents (in 68 per cent of polling stations), contributing to the transparency of the process. JNE supervisors were present in 94 per cent of visited voting centres and the Ombudsperson's Office in 71 per cent. Overall, EU observers described the voting as calm, orderly, and smooth.

The EU observed closing and counting in 57 polling stations. Procedures were mostly followed, and party agents could follow the process without restrictions. In nine polling stations, poll workers did not always check whether the ballot papers had the required signatures, and in eight they had difficulties filling out the results protocols. EU observers classified the counting positively in 53 out of 57 polling stations.

ONPE started to publish the first results protocols shortly after 18h00 on election night, reaching 50 per cent of protocols by 22h00, and 92 per cent by early next morning. The results were published on a dedicated website together with digitally timestamped, fully traceable images of the results protocols. Observers as well as political organisations were granted privileged access to bulk download the disaggregated results and protocol images for their own verification purposes. EU observers were present at 47 ONPE computing centres during the election night and described the reception of material and processing of results as professional, transparent, and methodical. The EU will continue to observe the results management process over the coming days. Prior to election day, the JNE announced that the announcement of results could take up to one month.

The strong nationwide presence of the 5,000 *Transparencia* observers offered an important citizen oversight of the process. *Transparencia*, together with Ipsos and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), published a quick count at 21h00 on election night.

The European Union was invited by the Government of Peru and JNE to observe the 2026 general elections. The EU EOM is led by Annalisa Corrado, a Member of the European Parliament from Italy. The mission comprises a core team of 10 analysts who have been in Peru since 26 February, 50 Long-Term Observers (LTOs), and 50 Short-Term Observers (STOs), who have been present to follow both rounds of polling. In addition, the mission was joined by a delegation of six Members of the European Parliament. Locally Recruited STOs from the diplomatic community of EU member states resident in Peru as well as from Canada and Switzerland also joined the mission. Observers were drawn from all 27 EU member states, as well as Canada, Norway, and Switzerland.

The EU EOM assesses the whole electoral process against international obligations and commitments for democratic elections as well as the laws of Peru. The EU EOM is independent in its findings and conclusions and adheres to the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation, endorsed at the United Nations in October 2005.

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