



EUROPEAN UNION
ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION

General Elections – Sierra Leone
24 June 2023



Statement EU EOM Sierra Leone 2023

Freetown, 28 June 2023

For Immediate Release

The EU EOM calls on Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone to promptly publish disaggregated results data at polling station level, to ensure transparency and public scrutiny

The European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) to Sierra Leone continues to observe the ongoing electoral process, including the ongoing tabulation of results for parliamentary and local council elections.

On 26 June the EU EOM released a Preliminary Statement, noting that reception of sensitive materials and early stages of tabulation in regional tally centres “*were assessed by EU EOM observers as lacking transparency.*” The EU EOM observers could not meaningfully observe verification of the result forms for the presidential election. Furthermore, the number and type of corrections and cancellations of polling station results was neither released nor shared with party agents and citizen observers. The lack of publication of disaggregated results data at the polling station level has compromised the transparency of the results management process.

The EU EOM notes there are statistical inconsistencies between the first and second batch of presidential results published by the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone (ECSL) on 26 and 27 June, respectively. These include notable discrepancies in the number of average valid votes per polling station, ranging from a decrease of 75 per cent in Karene to an increase of 31 per cent in Kono. The results also show a particularly low number of invalid ballots of 0.4 per cent nationwide, as well as very high turnout in at least three districts exceeding 95 per cent, and in a further two districts exceeding 90 per cent. Statistical inconsistencies have also been noted by credible and impartial citizen observers.

To defuse tensions, the EU EOM calls on the ECSL to promptly publish disaggregated results data per polling station, including a copy of results forms, which would provide for a possibility of public scrutiny of results and ensure transparency and certainty.

The EU EOM encourages all stakeholders to address their grievances arising from the electoral process peacefully, through dialogue and by using the prescribed legal mechanisms.

The mission has been present in Sierra Leone since 11 May and will continue to observe tabulation of results and post-election developments. The EU EOM will present and publish its final report, including recommendations for improving the electoral framework in the next few months.

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