



## EUROPEAN UNION ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION

REGIONAL AND MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS  
VENEZUELA 2021



### PRESS RELEASE

**Isabel Santos, Chief Observer of the European Union Election Observation Mission for the regional and municipal elections Venezuela 2021, presents the Mission's final report and recommendations**

22 February 2022 - Isabel Santos, Chief Observer of the European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) for the Venezuelan regional and municipal elections of 21 November 2021, presented the Mission's final report at a press conference today. The final report builds on the findings set out by the Mission in its preliminary statement of 23 November 2021 and proposes recommendations for possible reforms to improve future electoral processes.

Among the improvements observed in the process, Santos highlighted *"the role of the National Election Council, generally recognised as the most pluralistic and balanced of the last 20 years, the conduct of several audits at different stages of the electoral process, and a more extensive update of the voter register"*. Among the areas for improvement, Santos highlighted *"the lack of legal certainty, which led to the arbitrary disqualification of candidates, the extensive use of state resources in the campaign, the unequal access of candidates to the media, and the handing over of symbols and electoral tickets of some political parties to internal minority factions"*.

The final report submits 23 recommendations for the consideration of the Venezuelan people and institutions. Santos emphasised the priority character of seven of the recommendations: 1) to enhance the separation of powers and the confidence in the independence of the Supreme Court of Justice; 2) to abolish the Comptroller General prerogative to strip citizens of their political rights through an administrative procedure; 3) to conduct voter education campaigns aimed at increasing confidence in the integrity and secrecy of the electronic voting system; 4) to strengthen the CNE's sanctioning powers, especially in relation to the use of state resources in electoral campaigns; 5) to ensure a balanced media coverage of electoral campaigns, especially in state media; 6) to promote freedom of expression through the repeal of the Law against Hatred; and 7) to make more efforts to inform citizens about their selection as polling staff.

Santos concluded her speech by highlighting the fact that the European Union had been invited to return to the country to observe elections after 15 years. *"We hope that this final report, particularly its recommendations, will contribute to improving future elections. From now on it is up to Venezuela to decide what to do with the recommendations of this report, knowing that they can always count on the support of the European Union to support democracy."*

The EU EOM was present in the country between 14 October and 5 December 2021, to conduct a technical, impartial and independent assessment of the elections. During Election Day, the Mission deployed a total of 134 observers from 22 EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland to all Venezuelan states.

The mission's final report can be downloaded from [https://eeas.europa.eu/election-observation-missions/eom-venezuela-2021\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/election-observation-missions/eom-venezuela-2021_en) (English) and [https://eeas.europa.eu/election-observation-missions/eom-venezuela-2021\\_es](https://eeas.europa.eu/election-observation-missions/eom-venezuela-2021_es) (Spanish).