EUROPEAN UNION
ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION NIGERIA 2019
GENERAL ELECTIONS

What is the mandate of the Election Observation Mission?

Following an invitation from the Independent National Electoral Commission of Nigeria, the EU has deployed an Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) to observe the general elections. The EU has observed all general elections in Nigeria since 1999.

The EU has an established long-term methodology for observing elections. Since 2000, it has deployed over 130 EOMs across the world.

The mission's mandate is to provide an expert assessment of the electoral process. The EU EOM assesses Nigeria's compliance with the international commitments it has made through various human rights instruments. It also considers requirements in national legislation, as well as international good practices for elections.

EU EOM reports

The EU EOM will issue preliminary statements after each election day in Nigeria, assessing the electoral process up to that point. The mission's overall conclusions will be presented in a final report only after the end of the electoral process, usually a few months later. The final report will also offer recommendations to improve future electoral processes.

The mission is neutral and impartial, and EU observers do not in any way interfere in the electoral process, including by offering advice and assistance. The EU EOM does not legitimise the electoral process nor does it validate the election results. All EU election observers are bound by a strict code of conduct that guarantees their neutrality and impartiality.

The EOM is independent from the EU Delegation to Nigeria, EU member states, and all EU institutions.

The EU EOM will observe and assess:

- the legal framework and its implementation;
- the work of the election administration;
- campaign activities of candidates and political parties;
- the role of state institutions and civil society;
- the conduct of the media;
- the overall environment of the elections, including respect for fundamental freedoms, civil and political rights;
- election days, including voting, counting and the tabulation of results;
- the complaints and appeals process.

About the EU EOM

The European Union Election Observation Mission is led by Chief Observer, Maria Arena, a Member of the European Parliament from Belgium. A core team of 11 election analysts arrived in Abuja on 5 January. The core team analyses political, electoral, legal and other issues related to the electoral process.

Forty long-term observers (LTOs) from EU member states, Norway and Switzerland arrived in Nigeria on 13 January to be deployed across the country a few days later.

Chief Observer
Maria Arena

LTOs observe all aspects of the electoral process in their areas and report back to the core team in Abuja. The EU EOM will observe in all six geo-political zones, meeting with as many people as possible.

Over the election days, the mission will be joined by a delegation of seven Members of the European Parliament, and diplomatic staff from EU member state embassies, as well as those from Norway, Switzerland and Canada.

Background to EU Election Observation

The EU deploys election observation missions around the world to provide support for the development of countries' democratic institutions and to assist partner countries in their commitment to holding elections in line with their international and regional commitments and obligations.The EU EOM operates in accordance with the 'Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation' adopted at the United Nations in 2005 by a number of international bodies involved in election observation. International election observation, says the Declaration of Principles, "assesses election processes in accordance with international principles for genuine democratic elections and domestic law, while recognizing that it is the people of a country who ultimately determine credibility and legitimacy of an election process."