

## Press Release

# Overview Of The Shoura Council Election System

## THE SHOURA COUNCIL

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The Shoura Council is the upper house of Egypt's parliament, it is composed of 180 elected members, and 90 members appointed by the President of the Republic. At least half of the elected members must be classified as workers/farmers. Members serve for a term of 6 years.

Half of the elected and appointed members are renewed each three years and they can be re-elected or appointed again. This renewed half is determined from members at the end of each three years through lottery conducted by the council in accordance with rules established by its bylaws.

## ELECTORAL SYSTEM

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Two-Thirds of the elected members of shoura council (120) are elected using a closed proportional list system via 30 multi-seat districts, and the other third (60) of the members are elected via 30 two-seat constituencies. In both cases, half of the elected members must be classified as Workers or Farmers

Voters will cast two ballots: The first for one candidate list of their choice, and the second for the two-seat constituency where they will choose any two candidates.

### Seat Allocation

**Closed Proportional Lists:** To qualify for seat allocation, parties or coalition lists must win at least 0.5% of all valid ballots casts in the elections nationally in all the proportional list districts. Qualifying lists are then allocated seats in proportion to their share of the total number of valid votes cast for qualifying lists in that district. At least half of the seats allocated to the lists must be worker/farmers. No run-off elections are used for these districts

**Two-Seat Constituencies:** Districts allocate each of their two seats to the two candidates who have won a number of votes equal to 50% + 1 of the total valid ballots cast in the district. Run-Off elections may be called in a number of cases, including if no candidates, or less than 2 candidates win 50%+1 of the total valid ballots cast, or if at least half the first round winners are not workers and farmers. In all cases at least half the elected members must be classified as workers or farmers.

## ELECTION ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

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The High Judicial Elections Commission (HJEC) is Egypt's independent all-judge election management body. The HJEC manages and supervises all aspects of the electoral process including voter and candidate registration, campaigning, balloting and vote counting, and results announcement.

A combination of proportional lists and dual seat constituencies to support party development while maintaining the direct link between citizens and their elected representatives

Independent & full judicial administration and supervision at every level will ensure the integrity and fairness of the elections.

- **Membership:** The HJEC is composed of 7 judges who are appointed to the Commission by virtue of their judicial offices. They include:
  - The President of the Cairo Court of Appeals, as Chairman
  - The two most senior Court of Cassation Vice-Presidents
  - The two most senior State Council Vice-Presidents
  - The two most senior Courts of Appeals Presidents, not including the President of the Cairo Court of Appeals

The HJEC is supported in its work by all-judge subsidiary bodies at the governorate and district level. Judges will also directly supervise the casting of ballots at all polling stations, and ballot counting will be conducted by all-judge counting committees.

### **Civil Society Observers and Media Coverage**

The same accredited identifications cards, which were issued by HJEC in People's Assembly elections, will be valid for Shoura Council elections, for both national & international civil society observers, as well as national media "public - private", and international media.

## **VOTER ELIGIBILITY, REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION**

**VOTER ELIGIBILITY:** All Egyptian citizens who are at least 18 years of age are eligible to vote, with a number of restrictions defined by law, including:

- Naturalized Egyptians who have not been citizens for at least 5 years
- Members of the Armed Forces and Police Forces
- Persons who are in the custody of mental health institutions
- Persons who have been declared bankrupt for the term of their bankruptcy
- Persons who have been convicted of certain crimes

An automatic universal voter registration system guarantees everyone's right to vote.

**VOTER REGISTRATION:** Building on reforms applied in the 2011 Referendum to Amend the Constitution, the Egyptian electoral system uses an automatic universal voter registration system, based on the National Identification Database. The database includes accurate and current information for all citizens 16 years and older. Eligible voters are registered according to the home address listed on their National ID Card

Voters can check their registration status and home district online by visiting the HJEC website. ( [www.elections2011.eg](http://www.elections2011.eg) )

**VOTER IDENTIFICATION:** Voters inside Egypt identify themselves to elections officials using their National Identification Card, and Egyptians abroad can vote in embassies and consulates in countries where they live, using their National Identification Cards or passports.

## CANDIDATURE

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### Candidate Eligibility

- Candidates must be registered to vote
- Be at least at least 35 years old,
- Candidates must be literate if born before 1970, or have completed their primary level education if born after 1970
- The father of the candidate must be an Egyptian citizen
- Male candidates must have completed or have been legally relieved of their compulsory military service.

Judge-administered candidate registration will guarantee all eligible persons the right to participate in the elections.

Party candidates are eligible to run for any of the Assembly's seats, either on electoral lists or as candidates for one of the two seats in a two-seat constituency.

Each candidate list for the proportional list districts must be composed of at least 50% workers/farmers, with at least every other candidate in list being a worker farmer. Each list must include at least 1 woman candidate.

**Candidate Registration:** Judge-led committees administrate the registration process in each governorate, and all decisions of these committees may be appealed before the Administrative Courts.

### Candidate Registration Process:

- **Candidate Registration Period:** 12 – 24 Oct. 2011
- **Publication of the Preliminary Candidate list & Appeals Period:** 25-29 Oct. 2011
- **Final Candidate List Publication:** 1 Nov. 2011

All registered candidates are entitled to request from the HJEC an electronic copy of the voter registration list for the district in which they are competing.

### Eligibility for Worker/Farmer Classification:

- To qualify as a worker an applicant must be registered in one of the labor unions, her/his principle source of income must be labor, and she or he must not be registered in the commercial registry or any professional syndicate, or have a university-level educational degree. As an exception those members of the professional syndicates who do not have a university education degree may qualify, as well those applicants who have university degree but began their career without one may also qualify.
- To qualify as a farmer, a candidate's only employment must be farming, must reside in a rural area, her/his principle source of income must be farming, and the candidate, as well as her/his spouse and minor children, may not own or rent in total more than 10 feddans (10.38 acres) of land.

## CAMPAIGNING

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- **The Official Campaign Period:**

Campaigning begins from the date of the publication of the final candidate list and ends 2 days before the start of balloting for each stage of the election (Phase 1: 29– 30 January - Phase2: 14 - 15 February, 2012)

In the case of run-offs (7 February and 22 February 2012) campaigns begin from the day after the announcement of the results of the first round to the day before the run-off election.

All candidates and parties have the right to freely campaign and compete for the support of Egyptian voters.

- **Campaign Spending Regulations:**

- **Spending Limits:**

- Main Campaign: EGP 500,000 (USD 83,752);
- Run-Off Campaign: EGP 250,000 (USD 41,876)

- Candidates may not accept funds from foreign natural or legal persons, or their representatives in Egypt.

- **FAIR CAMPAIGNING REGULATIONS:**

**Candidates and parties may not:**

- Use public property or funds, or educational or religious institutions,
- Violate the privacy of the personal lives of other candidates,
- Threaten national unity, or use religious slogans or discriminate on the basis of gender, language or origin, or religion, or
- Utilize threats, violence or bribery.

- **MEDIA COVERAGE:** All individual candidates and electoral lists are entitled to equal access, coverage and broadcast time by public and private media.

## ELECTION TIMETABLE

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|                | <b>Election Date</b> | <b>Run-Off Date</b> | <b>Governorates</b>  |
|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|--|
| <b>Phase 1</b> | 29 – 30 January 2012 | 7 February 2012     | Cairo, Alexandria, Munofia, Gharbia, Daqahlia, Damietta, Fayoum, Assiut, Qina, New Valley, North Sinai, South Sinai and Red Sea. |
| <b>Phase 2</b> | 14 -15 February 2012 | 22 February 2012    | Giza, Qalubia, Beheira, Kafr El-Sheikh, Sharqia, Ismailia, Suez, Port Said, Beni Sueif, Minya, Sohag, Luxor, Aswan and Matrouh   |

Results for the dual seat constituencies, and the number of votes obtained by each proportional list districts, will be announced during the next days of the end of each stage of the election, however the final results of the winning lists will be announced after all stages of the election have been completed, and the Shoura council first meeting will be on February 28, 2012