

The Voting System for the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC)

Who can vote?

- The right to vote is granted to every Palestinian, male and female, over the age of 18, who has registered himself at the central voting commission.
- Registration is possible without problems in every district.

Of how many members does the parliament consist?

- The PLC has 132 members.

How long does one legislative period last?

- From this year on, the parliamentarians are elected for four years
- The parliament elected in 1996 was of transitional character, but due to the breakdown of the Oslo peace process it is in office until today.
- Elections are set for the **25th January, 2006**

How are the PCL members elected?

- Half of the parliamentarians (66) are elected via national lists of the parties according to the system of proportional representation.
- The other half is elected in the different electoral districts according to the principle of majority vote. These parliamentarians are not elected according to party lists, but run as individual candidates. Thus the candidates receiving the highest amount of votes in a district are elected.

How many electoral districts exist in the Palestinian Territories?

- The West Bank is divided in 11 electoral districts.
- The Gaza Strip consists of 5 electoral districts.

How are the numbers of seats, which are attributed to each district, calculated?

- The number of mandates of each electoral district is distributed according to the number of inhabitants¹.

Is there a special quota for women and the Christian minority?

- A special regulation for women relates only to the national list. In this case every party on the list has to nominate a woman on one of the first three positions and afterwards also on every fifth place. This regulation guarantees the election of women at least when they are running on the lists of the strong parties; nevertheless it does not set a specific quota for women.
- The representation of the Christian minority in parliament is guaranteed by the direct election of the candidates in electoral districts².

Which regulations apply for Palestinians residing in East-Jerusalem?

- The technical details are regulated in the Oslo II agreement and are additionally negotiated with the Israeli side before every election.
- Though Palestinians in East-Jerusalem hold the full right to vote, according to Oslo II they can only submit their candidacy for the PLC if they hold residency not only in East-Jerusalem, but also in the West Bank or Gaza.
- Israel is denying the establishment of official electoral offices in East-Jerusalem, yet allows Palestinians to vote in certain post offices.

Who is monitoring the elections?

- Organizations of the civil society.
- The international community can send electoral observers.
- The Palestinians parties have the right to monitor the elections.

¹ West Bank: Hebron 9; Nablus 6; Ramallah/Al-Bireh 5; Jenin 4; Bethlehem 4; Tulkarm 3; Qalkilyah 2; Salfit 1; Toubas 1; Jericho 1
Gaza Strip: Gaza-City 8; Gaza-North 5; Khan Younis 5; Rafah 3; Deir El-Balah 3; East-Jerusalem: 6

² One each of the seats in Gaza-City and in Ramallah/Al-Bireh and two of the seats in Bethlehem and East-Jerusalem are reserved for the most successful Christian candidate in those districts. The Jewish sect of the Samaritans can claim one of the six seats in the district of Nablus. The religious minority candidate wins the electoral district in those areas even if another candidate had received more votes.

