

[Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the presidential and regional elections in Venezuela](#)

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On 20 May, elections took place in Venezuela with the highest abstention rate in a presidential election in the country over the last decades.

These elections could have been a crucial opportunity for all Venezuelan citizens to express, through a democratic, free and transparent process, their political will and thereby determine the future of the country.

However, presidential and regional polls went ahead without a national agreement on an electoral calendar and without complying with the minimum international standards for a credible process, not respecting political pluralism, democracy, transparency and rule of law. Major obstacles to the participation of opposition political parties and their leaders, an unbalanced composition of the National Electoral Council, biased electoral conditions, numerous reported irregularities during the Election Day, including vote buying, stood in the way of fair and equitable elections.

Therefore, as advanced in our statement of April 19th, the EU and its member states will consider the adoption of adequate measures.

It is more urgent than ever that the Venezuelan government takes concrete steps to fully respect the country's Constitution and create the conditions that will allow all relevant political and social actors to play an active part in addressing the considerable challenges with which their country is faced. We call on the Venezuelan government to release all political prisoners.

Venezuela urgently needs a political solution to end the current crisis and, first and foremost, to deliver on its people most pressing humanitarian needs. The EU reiterates the need to restore the democratic process, and the importance that the country works towards a political and truly negotiated solution.

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