



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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Peru: The nature and use of electoral tables (*mesas electorales*); whether the "president" (*titular*) of an electoral table can be a candidate in an election; whether the Peruvian authorities conduct security screenings of a potential *titular*; whether there are pre-requisites to become a *titular*; whether one needs to register to become a *titular* and whether this needs to be done in Peru (2004 - April 2006)

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During a telephone interview on 18 April 2006, the minister counsellor of the Embassy of Peru in Ottawa indicated that, in Peru, electors are divided up into electoral tables (*mesas electorales*). With each electoral table representing 200 to 250 people, Peru's population of roughly 16 million people is divided into 80,000 electoral tables (Peru 18 Apr. 2006). According to Notimex, the Mexican news service, there were 85,971 tables in the April 2006 elections (9 Apr. 2006). During an election or referendum, electoral tables are convened in colleges or schools where voters gather to cast their votes (Peru 18 Apr. 2006). Voting is mandatory in Peru and, at the age of 18, all Peruvians must register to vote (*ibid.*).

For further information on the legal definition of electoral tables and the rules governing their operation, please see Chapter 6 of Part III of the attached Organic Law on Elections (*Ley Orgánica de Elecciones N° 26859*).

The National Office of Electoral Processes (Oficina Nacional de Proceso Electorales, ONPE) organizes elections (Peru 3 May 2006; *ibid.* 18 Apr. 2006). For each election or referendum and for each electoral table, the ONPE establishes who will act as *titular* and who will serve as the other two electoral table members (Peru 18 Apr. 2006). Alongside the *titular*, one of the other two members acts as a secretary for the table (*ibid.* 3 May 2006). All three table members are provided with training and the appropriate election material (*ibid.* 18 Apr. 2006). According to an official with the ONPE, the electoral table members are responsible for the following tasks: setting up the electoral table, conducting the vote, and counting the votes (*ibid.* 3 May 2006). The ONPE also selects three substitute members for each electoral table (*ibid.*).

The minister counsellor of the Embassy of Peru in Ottawa confirmed that following the election, the three table members are responsible for counting the votes and completing the requested forms (*ibid.* 18 Apr. 2006). The electoral table members are also tasked with addressing any problems that might arise at their table (*ibid.* 3 May 2006).

According to the minister counsellor, there are no specific pre-requisites for members of an electoral table (ibid. 18 Apr. 2006). All that is required is that the individuals be eligible electors (i.e. their names appear on the electoral list of an electoral table) (ibid.). However, as prisoners do not have voting rights, they cannot be selected as members of an electoral table (ibid.). Also, any individual who is a candidate in an election cannot serve as a *titular* or a member of the electoral table (ibid.; ibid. 3 May 2006).

Apart from appearing on the list of eligible voters, the minister counsellor did not know whether a potential *titular* and members of the electoral table would be subject to specific security screenings as part of the selection process (ibid. 18 Apr. 2006). Government sources also noted that the ONPE prefers members with a higher level of education (ibid. 3 May 2006; see also ibid. 18 Apr. 2006) or who have never held the position before (ibid. 3 May 2006). Both the regional offices and the central office in Lima can be involved in the selection process (ibid. 18 Apr. 2006).

According to Peru's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Peruvians living abroad are not required to vote in municipal elections (n.d.a). However, Peruvians living abroad can be fined if they fail to change the address on their national identity document (*documento nacional de identidad*, DNI) and do not vote or are unable to act as a member of an electoral table (Peru n.d.a).

The National Elections Jury (Jurado Nacional de Elecciones) stated that individuals with medical reasons can apply to be exempted from paying electoral fines (n.d.b).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Notimex [Mexico city]. 9 April 2006. "Cierran mesas electorales en Peru e inicia escrutinio de votos." (Factiva)

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2006]

Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sites, including: The Consulate general of Peru in Toronto, The Embassy of Peru in Canada, Factiva, Jurado Nacional de Elecciones, Political Database of the Americas, World News Connection.

Attachment

Peru. 1 October 1997. Jurado Nacional de Elecciones. *Ley Orgánica de Elecciones N° 26859*. Translation by the Multilingual Translation Directorate, Translation Bureau, Public Works and Government Services, Canada.

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