



# Absentee Voting in National Elections

Egypt • France • Haiti  
Iraq • Lebanon

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### HAITI AND FRANCE

#### ABSENTEE VOTING IN NATIONAL ELECTIONS

##### I. Haiti

Haitians residing in the United States (or in any other foreign country) who would like to vote in upcoming elections in Haiti must return to Haiti to cast their ballots. There is no mechanism allowing them to vote in the United States or by absentee ballot.<sup>1</sup>

##### II. France

A French citizen residing abroad has three options allowing him to vote in national elections without returning to France.<sup>2</sup>

- He may register to vote at an embassy or consulate. This option gives him the right to vote at the embassy or consulate only for the election of the President of the Republic or in a referendum. He may vote in person or by *procuration* (a type of proxy). The proxy must be given to a person who is registered to vote at the same embassy or consulate.
- He may register in one of the *communes* (the smallest unit of local government) in France and may give a *procuration* to a French citizen who resides in France and who is registered to vote in the same *commune*. The proxy is valid for three years. It is given at the competent consulate in three copies: one for the mayor of the *commune*, one for the proxy, and one for the person giving the proxy. The proxy is valid for any type of election, whether national or local (e.g., election of the President of the Republic, referenda, European Parliament elections, National Assembly and Senate elections, and regional, municipal, and other local elections). The citizen may still vote in person in France if he wishes to do so.
- He may register at the embassy or consulate and in a *commune* in France. This option combines the advantages of the two first options. In this case, the citizen will vote for the election of the President of the Republic or in a referendum at the competent embassy or consulate and will give a proxy to a person who is registered to vote in the same *commune* so that person can vote on his behalf in the other elections. The mayor of the *commune* is notified of the registration at the embassy and consulate, and the notice is then transcribed on the registries so that the individual cannot vote twice in the presidential election or referendum.

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<sup>1</sup> Telephone conversation with a representative of the Haitian Consulate in the United States, Jan. 12, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Washington General Consulate at <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/etrangers/vivre/elections/index.html>.

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**IRAQ, EGYPT, AND LEBANON**  
**ABSENTEE VOTING IN NATIONAL ELECTIONS**

**I. Iraq**

Order Number 92 of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in Iraq established an Independent Electoral Commission to manage the polling and ballot-tabulation activities (section 3, paragraph 3f), among other things. Section 6 of the Electoral Law issued by CPA order Number 96 provides that:

“The Commission (defined in Section 2 as the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq) may issue regulations, rules, procedures and decisions to implement this order.”

Based upon news reports, it is assumed that the Commission has issued regulations authorizing the establishment of voting places outside Iraq to allow Iraqis living abroad to vote in the upcoming elections. The Library, however, does not have copies of such regulations.

**II. Egypt and Lebanon**

No provisions are found in the electoral laws of Egypt or Lebanon that forthrightly allow or prohibit the citizens of either country from voting abroad in their countries of residence.

Article 24 of Egyptian Law Number 73 of 1956 as amended, concerning the Exercise of Political Rights, provides that:

“The Minister of Interior shall fix the number of general and sub-divisional committees wherein referendum or election is to be held and shall also appoint their seats.”

A similar provision, Article 39, exists in Lebanese Law No. 171 of 2000 concerning the election of members of parliament.

In other words, it is incumbent on the government of each country to organize the elections and their modalities, including determining the polling places. The laws of Egypt and Lebanon do not seem to prohibit citizens living abroad from voting in their place of residence if the government in either country chose to do so.