

Digitalization of Electoral Processes in Algeria: Registration on Electoral Rolls as a Model

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Abstract:

Electoral events are considered an important date and a decisive moment in determining the future of states and governments at the present time, given the pivotal role they play in the process of establishing and transferring power within the state. Since this is the case, the importance of using electronic administration in the electoral field has emerged publicly as one of the vital pillars for strengthening democracy and ensuring the integrity of electoral processes on the one hand, and bringing the administration closer to the citizen and improving the conditions of citizens' access to services on the other hand.

Given the significant impact of the registration process on the electoral rolls on the soundness and integrity of the electoral process, and its connection to a fundamental right of the voting citizen to express his political choices, the legislator has singled it out by applying full electronic procedures from the beginning of the process to its end, with the aim of ensuring the soundness of the electoral rolls, upon which the soundness and integrity of the electoral process are built, thereby reflecting positively on national and local development.

Keywords: Electronic administration, electoral system, registration on electoral rolls, public service.

Introduction:

Electoral events are considered an important date and a decisive moment in determining the future of states and governments at the present time, given the pivotal role they play in the process of establishing and transferring power within the state. Since this is the case, the importance of using electronic administration in the electoral field has emerged publicly as one of the vital pillars for strengthening democracy and ensuring the integrity of electoral processes, especially in states that have often been described as lacking reliability in their electoral results, such as Algeria. This has accelerated the adoption of modern mechanisms to enhance popular participation, keep pace with global developments, facilitate work procedures, and promote transparency and efficiency on the one hand, and save time, effort, and cost on the other.

In this context, the Algerian legislator has paid great attention to organizing and regulating electoral processes through the creation of a new constitutional body under Organic Law No. 19/07 relating to the National Independent Authority for Elections ¹, then constitutionalizing it within the constitutional amendment of the year (2020). Subsequently, Ordinance No. (21/01) was issued, containing the organic law relating to the electoral system, which in turn maintained the consecration of this constitutional institution according to a new legal organization and broad powers. This body began employing electronic administration as a decisive management and regulation system in the

transition from the traditional management of elections to electronic management, and from direct communication between citizens and electoral committees to virtual communication through various electronic networks, relying on a set of advanced technological programs for information and communication, such as its official website via the electronic link: <https://ina-elections.dz> ⁽²⁾.

Since the process of registration on electoral rolls is one of the most important stages on whose soundness the integrity of the electoral process depends, as it may appear on the surface to be simple and routine, while in reality it is complex and requires considerable effort to regulate, posing a challenge to those responsible for preparing it due to its direct impact on electoral results, the National Authority has begun the process of fully digitizing it in order to ensure the success of electoral events.

Based on the foregoing, it is appropriate to raise the following problem: How does the digitization of registration on electoral rolls contribute to the soundness and integrity of this process?

To answer this problem, this intervention may be divided into three basic points:

First: General concepts on electronic administration

Second: Electronic operations for regulating the national file of the electorate

Third: The electronic procedure for guiding the voter and requesting the voter card

First: General Concepts on Electronic Administration

The concept of electronic administration emerged as a result of the rapid technological development witnessed by the world day after day, in order to keep pace with individuals' aspirations and meet their increasing needs, whether related to goods or services, efficiently and effectively. This section will address the definition of electronic administration (A), then present its characteristics (B).

A/ Definition of Electronic Administration

There are numerous definitions of the term electronic administration, as it is one of the modern concepts closely linked to the world of technology, which is characterized by rapid change and development. It is defined as: the exchange of business and information between parties through the use of electronic means instead of relying on other physical means such as direct communication methods. ⁽³⁾

It may also be defined as: "the administration whose foundation is the use of computers and Internet, extranet, and intranet networks, which provide various websites to support and enhance access to information and services and deliver them to citizens, institutions, and businesses in society with transparency and high efficiency" ⁽⁴⁾. It appears from the two definitions that they focus on the element of exchanging information related to transactions through electronic means.

It is also defined as: "dispensing with paper transactions and replacing them with the electronic office through the extensive use of information technology, and transforming public services into office procedures, then processing them according to pre-executed sequential steps" ⁽⁵⁾.

Through the definitions referred to above, it becomes clear to us that the task of implementing administrative functions electronically allows for the continuous creation of knowledge and its employment in order to achieve objectives.

B/ Characteristics of Electronic Administration

Electronic administration is characterized by a set of features that stem mainly from its connection with modern information and communication technologies, which may be summarized as follows:

A/- Speed and Clarity:

Many administrative obstacles and barriers that hinder the completion of transactions have become completely avoidable in light of the employment of electronic administration as an administrative work mechanism in sending and receiving information and transactions, which ensures speed in completion and high efficiency ⁽⁶⁾.

B/- Non-Restriction by Time and Place:

With reliance on modern technologies, the idea of holidays, employees' rest times, and classrooms fades away, as virtual administration operates throughout the year and around the clock, (24) hours a day.

C/- Managing Information, Not Retaining It:

Electronic administration focuses on managing files rather than retaining and accumulating them on archive shelves. It also provides secure means of preservation for them. Under electronic administration, files are transformed into information stored on the electronic network and used upon request ⁽⁷⁾.

D/- Direct and Honest Control:

Electronic administration is considered a reliable and effective tool for evaluating activities and monitoring the various sites in their administrative areas. It can also monitor the outlets and devices with which the public deals ⁽⁸⁾.

E/- Confidentiality and Privacy:

Electronic administration ensures the confidentiality and privacy of important information through its programs, which enable it to block data and make it available only to authorized persons, in addition to protection systems against hacking, which makes access to its secrets and blocked files extremely difficult ⁽⁹⁾.

Second: Electronic Administration of the Registration Process on Electoral Rolls

The national file of the electorate is regulated through several stages in accordance with the provisions of the aforementioned Ordinance No. (21-01), particularly Article (53) thereof, and under the responsibility of the Independent Authority ⁽¹⁰⁾, as well as by a decision issued by the Independent Authority aimed at determining the conditions and methods for regulating and using the national file of the electorate ⁽¹¹⁾, which is "a nationally unified list in the form of a public and auditable electronic register that includes a database of persons eligible to vote in elections and referendums, consisting of the set of electoral rolls of municipalities and diplomatic or consular centers abroad" ⁽¹²⁾.

This process is managed by:

- The permanent secretariat of the municipal committee for the revision of the electoral roll: through its two offices, the administrative support office, which is responsible for the logistical aspect, and the legal support office, which is responsible for drafting and revising the electoral rolls. It is placed under the authority of the municipal delegate of the Independent Authority.

- The Information Technology and Information Security Committee: established at the headquarters of the Independent Authority, it is responsible for preparing the various applications related to the voting process for the benefit of its central services and its extensions at the local level and representations abroad, and for ensuring data and information security.

- The registration, removal, and updating system: represented by the applications used to register and remove voters from the electoral roll of municipalities and diplomatic or consular centers abroad, and to update their personal data.
- The remote registration system: represented by online registration through the official website of the Independent Authority. The most important operations managed electronically are as follows:

A/- Electronic Activities of the Information Technology and Information Security Committee of the Independent Authority:

This committee is responsible for the computerized processing of the national file of the electorate, by subjecting it to auditing and computerized processing and detecting material errors that it may observe, such as the registration of a person on several voters' rolls, the duplication of his registration on a single electoral roll, or other impurities and material errors. It then electronically refers the aforementioned cases to the legal support office of the municipal committee for the revision of the territorially competent electoral rolls, or to the secretary of the committee for the revision of electoral rolls at the level of the relevant district or consulate, as the case may be. ⁽¹³⁾

1/- Updating and Regulating the National File of the Electorate:

In order to update, regulate, and periodically revise the national file of the electorate and on the occasion of each vote, the central services of the automated national civil status register at the Ministry of Interior provide the Independent Authority, at the end of each month, with lists of persons who have reached the voting age, i.e. (18) years and above, accompanied by an electronic medium against an acknowledgment of receipt, as follows: ⁽¹⁴⁾

- The list of deceased persons.
- The list of persons whose national identification number has been changed.
- The list of persons whose birth certificate data have been corrected pursuant to judicial rulings, or whose surnames have been changed pursuant to presidential decrees, with the identification of the data subject to correction.

2/- Electronic Linkage of the National Civil Status Register with the Services of the Independent Authority

The automated national civil status register is linked to the central services of the Independent Authority, pursuant to Article 25 bis of Ordinance No. (70-20) of February 19, 1970, relating to civil status, as amended and supplemented, for the purpose of regulating the national file of the electorate in accordance with the provisions of Ordinance No. (01-21) of March 10, 2021, mentioned above, particularly Article (53) thereof. ⁽¹⁵⁾

The Information Technology and Information Security Committee of the Independent Authority sorts the data of the electoral rolls according to the case and extracts the results. It then updates the national identification numbers and notifies them to the legal support office of the municipal committee for the revision of electoral rolls at the level of the territorially competent municipal delegation, or to the secretary of the committee for the revision of electoral rolls at the level of the relevant diplomatic or consular representation, in order to initially enter the legal corrections ⁽¹⁶⁾.

B/ Opening Registration for New Voters on the Electoral Rolls:

After the digitization of the electoral process was approved, especially the process of registration on electoral rolls, the registration process became possible remotely through the electronic platform established for this purpose. The National Independent Authority for Elections also adopted a new

procedure consisting of registration by proxy, not to mention the continued application of the old method represented by direct registration.

1/- Remote Registration:

All male and female citizens who enjoy their civil and political rights have the right to request registration on the electoral rolls if they meet the legal conditions ⁽¹⁷⁾. They may register electronically by accessing the digital platform of the Independent Authority through the following electronic link: <http://services.ina-elections.dz/register> , the electronic services section, the field for requesting registration on the electoral rolls, after uploading the required documents, namely documents proving identity and documents proving residence, and sending them electronically ⁽¹⁸⁾.

2/- Registration by Going Directly to the Municipal Committee for the Revision of Electoral Rolls:

This is done by going directly to the municipal committee for the revision of electoral rolls at the place of new residence, accompanied by documents proving identity and residence according to each situation: residents within the country, the Algerian community residing abroad, and in the case of a change of electoral domicile.

3/- Registration by Individual and Collective Proxy:

The proxy form for registration, removal, and updating of individual and collective data is downloaded electronically from the official website of the Independent Authority. The proxy is submitted for certification before the following administrative authorities ⁽¹⁹⁾, either by the principal or the agent. It is also drawn up free of charge, taking into account the provisions of Article (161) of the aforementioned Ordinance No. (21-01).

B/ Electronic Activities of the Committees for the Revision of Electoral Rolls:

1/- The Municipal Committee for the Revision of Electoral Rolls:

The committee operates in accordance with the provisions of Articles (38) to (63) of the aforementioned Ordinance No. (21-01). It receives the files of applicants for registration, removal, and updating on the electoral roll of the municipality, and enters them automatically through the applications allocated to it. After correcting and regulating the electoral roll, the data are sent through the electronic platform to the Information Technology and Information Security Committee of the Independent Authority. An electronic copy is deposited with the registry of the court belonging to the ordinary judicial system with territorial jurisdiction, and another copy is deposited at the headquarters of the wilaya delegation of the Independent Authority, pursuant to Article (71), paragraph (2), of the aforementioned Ordinance No. (21-01) ⁽²⁰⁾.

2/- The Committee for the Revision of Electoral Rolls at the Level of Diplomatic and Consular Representations:

The Independent Authority, in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in accordance with the provisions of Articles (57) and (64) of the aforementioned Ordinance No. (21-01), works to ensure the proper conduct of registration, removal, and updating operations of electoral rolls at the level of diplomatic and consular representations by the committee for the revision of electoral rolls at the level of each diplomatic or consular district formed ⁽²¹⁾.

The person concerned is required to fill in the electronic form with complete information, in addition to his e-mail address, and attach it to supporting documents proving identity and residence ⁽²²⁾. After verifying the information, it is sent to the Independent Authority for Elections, which, in a first stage,

sends an e-mail message to the citizen's e-mail address in order to notify him of the registration process. In the second stage, it verifies the information by matching it with the automated national civil status register. The status of the application after its submission can be followed through the same electronic platform.

3/- In the Case of Objections and Appeals Against Registration or Removal from Electoral Rolls:

If the registration of any citizen on the electoral roll is omitted, he may submit a grievance to the president of the municipal committee for the revision of electoral rolls, or submit a reasoned objection to remove a person unlawfully registered, to register a person who has been omitted, or to correct an error in the voters' roll, within ten (10) days following the closing of the revision operations of the electoral rolls in the case of the annual revision, and five (05) days in the case of the exceptional revision. The period for deciding on objections is by a decision within a maximum period of three (03) days, and it is notified to the concerned parties within three (03) days by any legal means ⁽²³⁾.

The concerned parties may also file a judicial appeal against the decision of the municipal administrative committee before the ordinary court with territorial jurisdiction, or the Court of Algiers with regard to the Algerian community residing abroad, within five (05) full days from the date of notification of the decision, and eight (08) full days in the event of non-notification. As for the period for deciding on the appeal relating to the decision of the committee for the revision of electoral rolls, the court rules on the appeal by a judgment not subject to any form of appeal within a maximum period of five (05) days, based on a notice sent to the concerned parties three (03) days beforehand ⁽²⁴⁾.

Third: The Electronic Procedure for Guiding the Voter and Requesting the Voter Card

This electronic procedure consists of the "Where Do I Vote?" application (A) and the application for requesting the voter card (B).

A/ Electronic Guidance of the Voter "Where Do I Vote?":

In order to identify the polling center and polling office in which he is registered, the voter may verify that his name is registered on the electoral roll of his municipality by accessing the electronic platform of the Independent Authority for Elections, under the "Where Do I Vote?" section, through the following electronic link: ⁽²⁵⁾ (<https://services.ina-elections.dz/orientation/>).

The person concerned enters the required information, after which the applicant is notified of the polling center and directed to it in order to carry out the voting process at the voter's domicile.

B/ The Electronic Procedure for Requesting the Voter Card:

The voter card is one of the official personal documents that contains the complete information of the person and enables its holder to exercise his right to vote. It is requested from the electronic platform of the Independent Authority under the section "Request a Copy of the Voter Card" through the following electronic link: <https://services.ina-elections.dz/residence/>

After entering the required information as well as the e-mail address, the person records his mobile phone number in order to obtain the confirmation code for the operation through an automatic text message and complete the request process.

Conclusion:

In an effort by the Algerian legislator to take concrete and effective steps to strengthen and employ electronic administration in the electoral field, it adopted advanced electronic applications and

programs that were employed at all stages of the electoral process. This new approach allowed the simplification of remote voter registration and the regulation of the national file, which reflects the existence of a sincere political will to develop the electoral system, after it had been preceded by new legal procedures that changed the general course of elections through the adoption of the open list, the principle of parity in candidacy, and the rejuvenation of electoral lists by requiring one third to be university graduates and half of the lists to be under forty years of age. All these procedures reflect the seriousness of the profound political reforms that affected the electoral system, to the extent that today we no longer speak of falsification of results as much as we speak of electoral abstention. All this stems from the introduction of electronic administration into the field of elections, which gives greater integrity, responds to citizens' aspirations, and improves the public services directed to them. This leads us to value the effort made and to emphasize the need to continue working seriously to ensure the success of this transformation and achieve its objectives within a framework of transparency, credibility, and sustainable modernization through strengthening the digital infrastructure and ensuring information security and the protection of personal data. Based on the foregoing, this research paper reached the following results:

- Electronic administration of electoral processes in Algeria represents a qualitative shift toward consolidating democracy, integrity, transparency, and improving public service.
- Generalizing electronic administration of electoral processes reduces intervention and confrontation between the administration and citizens and negates the description of elections as fraudulent.
- Considering that the electoral process is complex and technical, the application of electronic administration has allowed secure processing of personal data and reliable management of the various stages of the electoral process without committing errors resulting from the traditional administration of the electoral process.

As for the proposed recommendations, they are as follows:

- Serious consideration should be given to generalizing electronic work in order to reach the stage of electronic voting.
- The legislator should take the initiative to criminalize acts and behaviors that affect automated data processing systems or information and communication technology crimes within electoral criminal law.
- Granting greater financial and administrative independence to the National Independent Authority for Elections, providing it with its own secure network system, and increasing the number of centers for collecting electoral information, especially during peak times that characterize election day after the closing of polling offices and the beginning of collecting results and sending them automatically.

Footnotes:

- 1) Organic Law No. 19-07 of September 14, 2019, relating to the National Independent Authority for Elections, Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, No. 55, dated September 15, 2019.
- 2) The official website of the National Independent Authority for Elections, accessed on 07/08/2025 at 14:30.
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- 9) Bouzekri Djilali, *Electronic Administration in Algerian Institutions: Reality and Prospects*, Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Science in Management Sciences, specialization in Business Administration and Marketing, Faculty of Economics, Commercial Sciences and Management Sciences, University of Algiers 3, 2015–2016, p. 48.
- 10) Article (53) of Ordinance No. 21-01 of March 10, 2021, containing the organic law relating to the electoral system, issued on March 10, 2021, No. 17.
- 11) Decision No. 06, dated August 01, 2023, issued by the Independent Authority for Elections, determining the conditions and methods for regulating and using the national file of the electorate, published under the decisions section, previous reference. Accessed on 07/08/2025 at 15:00.
- 12) Article (02), paragraph 1, of Decision No. 06, previous reference.
- 13) Article (55) of Decision No. 06, previous reference.
- 14) Article (58) of Decision No. 06, previous reference.
- 15) Article (59) of Decision No. 06, previous reference.
- 16) Article (60) of Decision No. 06, previous reference.
- 17) Articles (34) and (35) of Decision No. 06, previous reference.
- 18) The section for requesting registration on the electoral rolls, electronic services section, official website, previous reference, accessed on August 12, 2025, at 16:22.
- 19) Decision No. 13, dated October 26, 2023, issued by the Independent Authority for Elections, determining the conditions and model form of the proxy and its certification for registration, removal, and updating of data on the occasion of preparing and revising electoral rolls, decisions section, same reference.
- 20) Decision No. 15, dated October 30, 2023, concerning the formation of municipal committees for the revision of electoral rolls, published under the decisions section, official website, previous reference, accessed on 07/08/2025 at 16:35.
- 21) Decision No. 16, dated October 30, 2023, concerning the formation of the committee for the revision of electoral rolls at the level of diplomatic and consular representations, published under the decisions section, previous reference, accessed on 07/08/2025 at 17:00.
- 22) Statement concerning the periodic revision of electoral rolls during the period from Sunday, November 05, 2023, to Tuesday, December 05, 2023, published under the statements section, official website, previous reference, accessed on 08/08/2025 at 17:15.
- 23) Articles (66) to (68) of Ordinance 21-01, previous reference.
- 24) Article (69) of Ordinance 21-01, previous reference.
- 25) Statement by the Independent Authority for Elections concerning the electronic guidance of voters, published under the statements section, official website, previous reference, accessed on 08/08/2025 at 14:00.