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NIGERIA'S 2027 GENERAL ELECTION: THE DEBATE OF E-TRANSMISSION OF RESULTS TOWARDS ELECTORAL TRANSPARENCY



The secret ballot electoral system on display in the Nigerian election

The tussle for E-Transmission of results

The introduction and legalisation of the electronic transmission of election results in Nigeria represents one of the most significant electoral reforms in the country's democratic history. With the signing of the amended Electoral Act (Amendment) Act 2026 by Bola Ahmed Tinubu, the framework for transmitting election results electronically is expected to play a major role in the conduct of the 2027 Nigerian General Election. As the electoral cycle draws closer, tension builds within the polity as lawmakers from the ruling party (APC) initially reject mandatory electronic transmission, with oppositions insisting on e-transmission of electoral results in real time for the upcoming General Election in 2027. Following the protest in Abuja on February 9th, the majority at the senate reversed its earlier rejection of a proposal requiring real-time electronic transmission of election results, as a result of increasing pressure from civil rights activists, labour unions and political stakeholders seeking to prevent inconsistency and increase electoral credibility on

February 10th 2026. Lawmakers previously voted against mandating the immediate electronic uploading of results after counting a measure long championed by pro-reform groups as vital to reducing interference during the manual collation process. With the adoption of the new proposal, the Senate passed an amended Clause 60(3), permitting the presiding officer at each polling unit to transmit election results electronically after Form EC8A has been duly completed and signed. Under the approved clause, electronic transmission is allowed where the technology does not fail and is possible to use. However, in situations where electronic transmission fails or becomes impossible, the signed Form EC8A will serve as the primary source of election results.



Voters peacefully exercising their civil right at their polling unit

The ambiguity in the amended Electoral Bill 2026 is aggravating public debate and increasing the tension within the public, with civil rights groups and human rights advocates campaigning and calling for a nationwide protest demanding an e-transmission of electoral results only. This preemptive action has served security implications nationwide and therefore calls for actions to address the legislative measures in enhancing sustainable electoral protocols. The gravity of the agitations in this pre-election time demands heightened security surveillance both virtually and physically during the acclaimed nationwide protest for the e-transmission of results. Law enforcement should be on alert for crimes in cyberspace, as saboteurs of the campaign can leverage the digital media for public havoc through the protest.

The path towards electoral transparency

Electronic transmission of results refers to the process where results from polling units are uploaded digitally to a central server in real time immediately after counting. The Independent National Electoral Commission has developed technological tools such as the INEC Result Viewing Portal (IREV) to facilitate this process. The system allows results of the election from polling units to be uploaded and viewed by the public in near real time. The main goal of this innovation is to reduce manipulation of results during the collation process, which has been a major challenge in Nigerian elections. For decades, allegations of electoral fraud in Nigeria have often occurred during the manual collation of results, particularly between the polling units and collation centres. Ballot snatching, falsification of figures, and intimidation of electoral officials have undermined the credibility of elections. Electronic transmission offers a potential solution by

ensuring that results recorded at the polling unit are transmitted instantly and stored digitally, making it more difficult for them to be altered later. This increases transparency and builds public trust in the electoral process.

However, the implementation of electronic transmission is not without its challenges. A major concern of this in Nigeria is infrastructural limitations, particularly internet connectivity and electricity supply in rural areas. A number of polling units are located in remote communities where reliable network coverage is weak. This has led lawmakers to adopt a hybrid system that allows both electronic and manual transmission of results. While this approach ensures that voting is not disrupted in areas with poor connectivity, a number of critics argue that it may still create loopholes for manipulation during the manual collation stage. Another important issue is public trust in electoral institutions. Technology alone cannot guarantee credible elections if the institutions managing the process lack transparency or accountability. For electronic transmission to be successful, the electoral commission must ensure that the technology used is secure, reliable, and resistant to cyber threats. In addition, proper training of electoral officials and voter education will be necessary to ensure the system functions effectively.

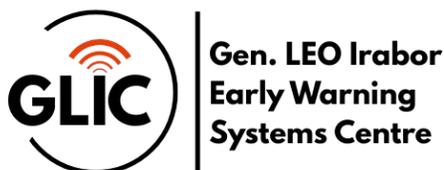
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