



**Congressional
Research Service**

Informing the legislative debate since 1914

Latin America and the Caribbean: Fact Sheet on Leaders and Elections

Updated January 3, 2023

Congressional Research Service

<https://crsreports.congress.gov>

98-684

This report provides the results of recent presidential elections in Latin America and the Caribbean. Below are three tables, organized by region, that include the date of each country's independence, the name of the most recently elected president or prime minister, and the projected date of the next presidential election. Information in this report was compiled from numerous sources, including the U.S. State Department, Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA's) *World Fact Book*, International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) Election Guide, Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), and other news sources.

Table 1. South America: Heads of Government and Election Schedules

Country	Independence Date	Head of Government	Last Election/Runoff	Next Election/Runoff
Argentina	July 9, 1816	FERNÁNDEZ, Alberto	Oct. 27, 2019	Oct. 2023
Bolivia	Aug. 6, 1825	ARCE, Luis	Oct. 18, 2020 ^a	2025
Brazil	Sept. 7, 1822	DA SILVA, Luiz Inácio (widely known as "Lula")	Oct. 2, 2022/ Oct. 30, 2022	Oct. 2026
Chile	Sept. 18, 1810	BORIC, Gabriel	Nov. 21, 2021/ Dec. 19, 2021	Nov. 2025/Dec. 2025
Colombia	July 20, 1810	PETRO, Gustavo	May 29, 2022/June 19, 2022	May 2026/June 2026
Ecuador	May 24, 1822	LASSO, Guillermo	Feb. 7, 2021/ Apr. 11, 2021	Feb. 2025
Paraguay	May 14, 1811	ABDO BENITEZ, Mario	Apr. 22, 2018	Apr. 2023
Peru	July 28, 1821	BOLUARTE, Dina ^b	Apr. 11, 2021 /June 6, 2021	Apr. 2026 ^c
Uruguay	Aug. 25, 1825	LACALLE POU, Luis	Oct. 27, 2019/Nov. 24, 2019	Oct. 2024
Venezuela	July 5, 1811	MADURO, Nicolás	May 20, 2018 ^d	May 2024

Source: Compiled by the Congressional Research Service (CRS).

Notes: For information on Guyana and Suriname, see **Table 3**.

- a. Elections were held on October 18, after the November 2019 results were annulled, and then delayed in March 2020 due to the spread of COVID-19. See CRS In Focus IFI 1325, *Bolivia: An Overview*, by Clare Ribando Seelke.
- b. On December 8, 2022, Pedro Castillo attempted to dissolve congress, create a government of exception, and rule by decree. That same day, the Peruvian Congress impeached Castillo, who was arrested shortly afterwards. Also on December 8, Vice-President Dina Boluarte was sworn in as president.
- c. President Boluarte said she will propose a bill for congress to set the next presidential elections for 2024, two years earlier than scheduled. See Marco Aquino, "Peru President Boluarte pledges early elections after protests turn deadly," Reuters, December 12, 2022, at <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/peru-president-boluarte-ask-congress-bring-elections-forward-2024-2022-12-12/>.
- d. In a controversial move, Venezuela's presidential election was moved earlier from December 2018 to May 20, 2018. Most Venezuelans and much of the international community considered the May 2018 election, in which then-President Nicolás Maduro won reelection, as illegitimate (CRS In Focus IFI0230, *Venezuela: Political Crisis and U.S. Policy*, by Clare Ribando Seelke). The United States and over 50 other countries have recognized Juan Guaidó, elected president of Venezuela's National Assembly in January 2019, as interim president of Venezuela, yet Maduro remains in power. See CRS In Focus IFI0230, *Venezuela: Political Crisis and U.S. Policy*, by Clare Ribando Seelke.

Table 2. Mexico and Central America: Heads of Government and Election Schedules

Country	Independence Date	Head of Government	Last Election/Runoff	Next Election/Runoff
Mexico	Sept. 16, 1810	LÓPEZ OBRADOR, Andrés Manuel	July 1, 2018	July 1, 2024
Costa Rica	Sept. 15, 1821	CHAVES, Rodrigo	Feb. 6, 2022/Apr. 3, 2022	Feb. 2026/Apr. 2026
El Salvador	Sept. 15, 1821	BUKELE, Nayib	Feb. 3, 2019	Feb. 2024
Guatemala	Sept. 15, 1821	GIAMMATTEI, Alejandro	June 16, 2019/Aug. 11, 2019	June 2023
Honduras	Sept. 15, 1821	CASTRO, Xiomara	Nov. 28, 2021	Nov. 2025
Nicaragua	Sept. 15, 1821	ORTEGA, Daniel	Nov. 7, 2021 ^a	Nov. 2025
Panama	Nov. 3, 1903	CORTIZO, Laurentino	May 5, 2019	May 2024

Source: Compiled by CRS.

Notes: For information on Belize, see **Table 3**.

- a. Prior to the elections, the Ortega government arrested eight people who sought to challenge Ortega in the elections and dozens of political and civil society leaders. Much of the international community, including the United States, rejected the elections; the Organization of American States declared that the elections “were not free, fair or transparent and have not democratic legitimacy.” See U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States, “OAS General Assembly Condemns the Ortega-Murillo Regime in Nicaragua,” November 12, 2021, at <https://usoas.usmission.gov/oas-general-assembly-condemns-the-ortega-murillo-regime-in-nicaragua/>. See also CRS Report R46860, *Nicaragua in Brief: Political Developments and U.S. Policy*, by Maureen Taft-Morales and CRS In Focus IFI2247, *Nicaragua*, by Karla I. Rios.

Table 3. Caribbean: Heads of Government and Election Schedules

Country	Independence Date	Head of Government	Last Election/ Runoff	Next Election/ Runoff
Antigua and Barbuda	Nov. 1, 1981	BROWNE, Gaston	Mar. 21, 2018	by Mar. 2023
Bahamas	July 10, 1973	DAVIS, Philip	Sept. 16, 2021	by Sept. 2026
Barbados	Nov. 30, 1966	MOTTLEY, Mia	Jan. 19, 2022	by Jan. 2027
Belize	Sept. 21, 1981	BRICEÑO, Johnny	Nov. 11, 2020	by 2025
Cuba ^a	May 20, 1902	DÍAZ-CANEL, Miguel	Apr. 2018	2023
Dominica	Nov. 3, 1978	SKERRIT, Roosevelt	Dec. 6, 2022 ^b	by Mar. 2028
Dominican Republic	Feb. 27, 1844	ABINADER, Luis	July 5, 2020	May 2024
Grenada	Feb. 7, 1974	MITCHELL, Dickon	June 23, 2022 ^c	by June 2027
Guyana	May 26, 1966	ALI, Irfaan	Mar. 2, 2020 ^d	by 2025
Haiti	Jan. 1, 1804	HENRY, Ariel ^e	Nov. 20, 2016 ^a	Postponed indefinitely ^g
Jamaica	Aug. 6, 1962	HOLNESS, Andrew	Sept. 3, 2020	by 2025
St. Kitts and Nevis	Sept. 19, 1983	DREW, Terrance	Aug. 5, 2022	by 2027
St. Lucia	Feb. 22, 1979	PIERRE, Philip	July 26, 2021	by 2026
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Oct. 27, 1979	GONSALVES, Ralph E.	Nov. 5, 2020	by 2025
Suriname	Nov. 25, 1975	SANTOKHI, Chandrikapersad	May 25, 2020	May 2025
Trinidad and Tobago	Aug. 31, 1962	ROWLEY, Keith	Aug. 10, 2020	by 2025

Source: Compiled by CRS.

Notes: Although Belize is located in Central America and Guyana and Suriname are located in South America, all three are members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

- a. Cuba does not have direct elections for its head of government. Instead, Cuba's legislature selects the members of the 31-member Council of State, with the president of that body serving as Cuba's head of government and head of state. In April 2019, Cuba's legislature selected Miguel Diaz-Canel for a five-year term. In October 2019, Cuba's legislature appointed Diaz-Canel as president of the republic under Cuba's new constitution.
- b. In November 2022, Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit called a snap election that was held on December 6, 2022, ahead of elections constitutionally due by March 2025.
- c. In May 2022, Prime Minister Keith Mitchell called a snap election held on June 23, 2022, ahead of elections constitutionally due in March 2023.
- d. Irfaan Ali was sworn into office on August 2, 2020, five months after elections were held on March 2, 2020. Allegations of fraud and vote tampering delayed the election results as supporters of the ruling government led by President David Granger pursued legal challenges. See CRS In Focus IFI1381, *Guyana: An Overview*, by Mark P. Sullivan and Joshua Klein.
- e. President Jovenel Moïse was assassinated on July 7, 2021. Haitian Acting Prime Minister Claude Joseph was in charge in the immediate aftermath. Moïse had named Ariel Henry as prime minister, but not sworn him in the day before his death. Henry became de facto prime minister on July 20, 2021. Under the Haitian Constitution, either the Council of Ministers under the Prime Minister should govern or, in the last year of a presidential term, the legislature should elect a provisional president. There has been no functioning legislature since January 2020, when most of the legislators' terms expired. See CRS In Focus IFI2182, *Haiti: Political Conflict and U.S. Policy Overview*, by Clare Ribando Seelke and Maureen Taft-Morales.

- f. Haiti held controversial national elections on October 25, 2015. After postponing runoff elections several times, the Provisional Electoral Council announced new presidential elections would take place instead in October 2016; these were delayed for a month due to Hurricane Matthew.
- g. On January 13, 2020, most of the national legislature's terms expired without the body having passed an elections law to elect new legislators. From that date until his death, President Moïse ruled by decree. Moïse appointed a new Provisional Electoral Council by decree, which announced a constitutional referendum that could change electoral laws, and parliamentary and presidential elections. The moves were arguably unconstitutional. In September 2021, de facto Prime Minister Henry dissolved the Provisional Electoral Council and has since said he also plans to hold a constitutional referendum and elections soon after. Elections were repeatedly postponed and no date has been set. Henry has said he will remain in office until new elections are held. Civil society and political coalitions are calling for an interim government to take his place, in part because they say his term expired when Moïse's should have, on February 7, 2022.

Author Information

Carla Y. Davis-Castro
Research Librarian

Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS's institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.