



ENCOURAGING INDIGENEOUS PEOPLES' PARTICIPATION

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Indigenous peoples
in Guatemala praised the
EU EOM contribution with its
recommendations and
incentive to civil society's initiatives
promoting **electoral integrity**.

Full story below 

The European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM), invited to observe the 2023 general elections in Guatemala, reported on the **limited political representation** of indigenous peoples in the higher levels of policymaking and on the lack of **voter education**. It also reported on the limited **campaign information** available in indigenous languages and how it impacted monolingual **voters**, primarily women.

In Guatemala, indigenous peoples account for almost 44 per cent of the population. While the 1985 Constitution recognises the country's ethnic diversity, there is no framework in place to actively promote the indigenous peoples' political participation.

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The presence of EU long-term observers throughout Guatemala boosted the confidence of the indigenous communities to engage in the process and promote electoral integrity.

“The EU Mission was a source of motivation for our organisation”, said **Ms Gloria Núñez**, based in Livingston, a municipality where she runs the NGO ‘Political School for Garífuna Women’. “They supported us, engaging in the discussion of Garifuna women issues, and made us visible”.



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*The EU EOMs always assess **human rights** issues, including the participation in the political life of minority groups and that includes indigenous peoples. Indigenous organisations were among the most relevant actors in supporting the **integrity of the elections**, actively calling for respect of the Constitution throughout the process, promoting voter education, citizen election observation, and women's participation as highlighted by the EU EOM.*

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Based on its meetings with a wide range of stakeholders, the **EU EOM recommended** in its final report for:

“The TSE [Supreme Electoral Tribunal] to increase production and dissemination of voter education and election information materials in the most widely-spoken indigenous languages to provide voters, including rural monolingual population, with relevant information.”

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“The findings contained in the EU final report are similar to those that we at MOLOJ identified and presented in our own election observation conclusions. I believe the EU EOM’s recommendations are essential because they offer legitimacy to those we are also making as civil society”

said Ms Deysee Maribel Cotom Ixcot, general coordinator of the Mayan women political association, MOLOJ, which observed the elections and conducted voter education activities.

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