

Peru elections 2026

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Peru's general elections on April 12, 2026, represent a pivotal juncture for a nation striving to restore political stability after years marked by acute volatility, institutional erosion, and declining public trust.

Over 27 million voters are called to select the president, two vice presidents, a 130-member unicameral Congress, and representatives to the Andean Parliament for the 2026-2031 term.

A runoff is scheduled for June 7 if no presidential candidate achieves an absolute majority—an outcome widely anticipated given the fragmented electoral landscape.

The presidential race is characterized by extreme political fragmentation, with over thirty candidates signaling the collapse of traditional party structures and the rise of outsider movements.

This dispersion sharply reduces the likelihood of a first-round victory, heightening electoral uncertainty in which marginal shifts could prove decisive. At the legislative level, stricter electoral thresholds may mitigate fragmentation in Congress, potentially enhancing governability while narrowing representation.

At its core, the election underscores a profound crisis of political representation. High levels of voter indecision reflect widespread disaffection, with citizens prioritizing insecurity, economic instability, and corruption.

The vote thus functions not only as a contest for leadership but as a referendum on democratic legitimacy itself.

The campaign environment has been marked by polarization, limited programmatic debate, and

the growing traction of populist narratives, which increase the likelihood of an outsider breakthrough.

At the same time, new eligibility rules have disqualified several prominent political figures, reinforcing perceptions of a tightly managed, high-stakes contest:

Key figures, including Hernando de Soto, Susel Paredes, Óscar Valdés, and Phillip Butters, have been excluded—mostly due to technical or timing issues with party registration. Their absence accentuates the controlled yet tension-filled nature of the electoral process.

Voters are required to cast multiple ballots—for president, Congress, and the Andean Parliament—raising the probability of invalid or blank votes. Such ballots could constitute a substantial share of the total, potentially complicating result clarity and legitimacy while signaling deeper dissatisfaction with the political system.

Moreover, the broader electoral cycle—particularly forthcoming regional and local contests—amplifies the influence of territorial political actors, whose mobilization capacity may shape national outcomes and post-election alliances.

Outlook:

The 2026 elections encapsulate Peru's central political dilemma: the pursuit of institutional normalization amid persistent fragmentation and public distrust.

While these elections offer an opportunity to recalibrate governance, the highly uncertain outcome¹ suggests that political stability and effective leadership will remain difficult to consolidate in the near term.

Bogotá, April 2, 2026.

¹ The study (March 13-17) shows that voter preferences are still shifting, but within the margin of error (±2.5). Keiko Fujimori and Rafael López Aliaga remain in a technical tie for first place. Alfonso

López Chau stays stable, Carlos Álvarez rises slightly, Jorge Nieto increases from 2.5% to 4.6%, and Wolfgang Grozo drops from 5.1% to 2.5%. El Comercio, 31.03.2026.