

**WE ARE ONE FAMILY!**



**LET US USE THE PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION (DISTRICT BLOCK) SYSTEM TO UNITE SIERRA LEONE**



**Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone  
(ECSL)**



**Frequently Asked Questions**

**ON  
THE PR SYSTEM**

**1. Which Electoral Systems will be used to conduct the 2023 Elections Sierra Leone?**

Three types of electoral systems will be used to conduct the 2023 Elections, and they are as follows:

- a. The Two-rounds system (Run-off) - to conduct the Presidential Election
- b. The First-Past-The-Post (simple majority) system will be used to conduct the Chairperson and Mayoral Elections, and
- c. The Proportional Representation (District Block) System will be used to conduct the election for Parliamentarians and Local Councillors.

**2. What is proportional representation?**

Party list proportional representation is an electoral system in which seats are first allocated to parties based on vote share obtained in an election, and then assigned to party-affiliated candidates on the parties' electoral lists. For example, if a party earns 39% of the votes, it should get roughly 39% of the seats.

**3a. What is the constitutional Provision for the Proportional Representation System (PR) in Sierra Leone?**

Section 38A of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, provides that where there are no established constituencies in accordance with subsection (3) of section 38 for the purposes of parliamentary election, such election can be conducted on the basis of the district block representation system instead of constituencies.

**3b. What do we mean by District Block System?**

It is a form of PR in which an entire district becomes a single constituency/ward which returns multiple members, as opposed to a single-member constituency/ward.

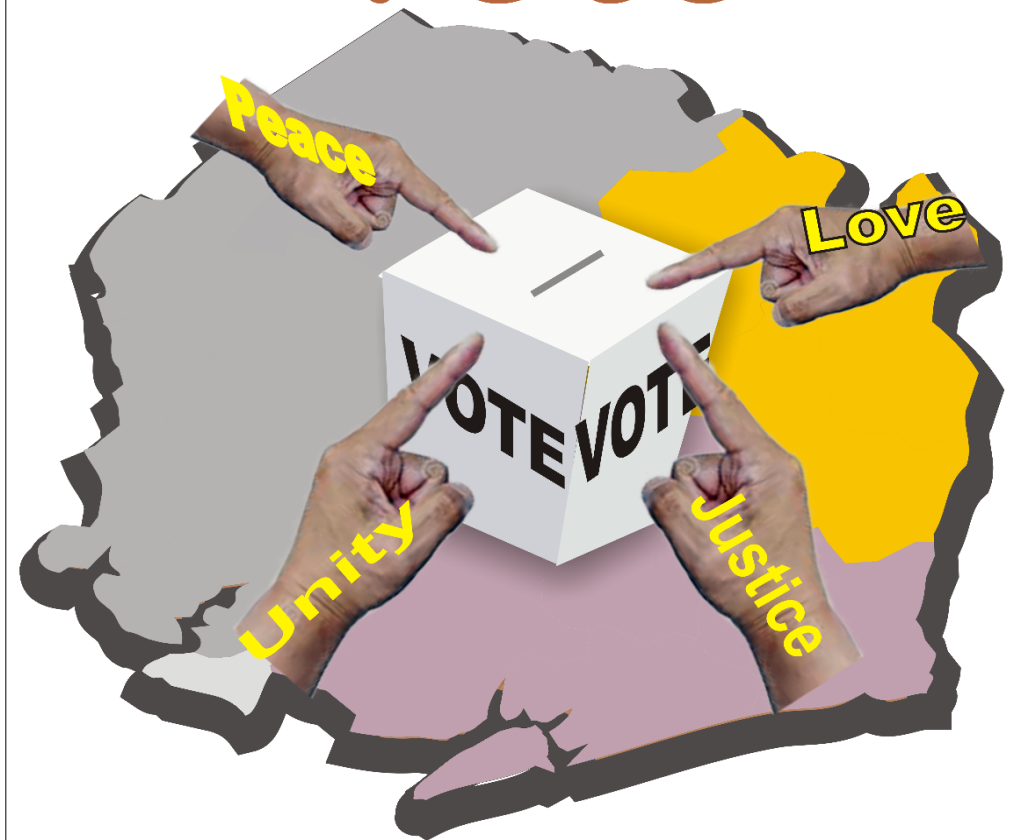
**4. How does this System operate? (How will the PR work?)**

In this electoral system, each of the 16 districts in the country is taken as a block

**EVERY VOTE COUNTS IN PR**

**Use the Ballot Box wisely**

**Vote**



**DEVELOPMENT**

# STOP



## ELECTORAL VIOLENCE

# USE THE BALLOT NOT WEAPONS

(district considered a constituency/ward) and allotted a number of seats based on the population quota.

### **5. How will the election be conducted in a PR System?**

In the District Block PR System (with Party List) the election shall be contested in each specified district by political parties and independent candidates for the block of seats in Parliament and Council allocated to each district by the Electoral Commission.

### **6. How are Political Parties/ Independent candidates awarded seats?**

Seats will be allocated based on each party's proportion of the total valid votes in a district. Once a political party or independent candidate meets the threshold of 11.9% for parliament and 4.5% for local councils, the Commission shall assign the number of seats won to the political party in the district/locality.

### **7. How are vacancies filled in Parliament/Council under the PR System?**

Where the seat of a political party candidate becomes vacant in Parliament/Council, the vacancy shall be filled by the person next-in-line on the endorsed list of the candidate's political party. If the vacant seat was occupied by an independent candidate, that seat will then go to a candidate of the political party with the highest remainder in the formula for apportioning seats.

### **8. What are the benefits of the proportional representation systems?**

- **INCLUSIVENESS:** Gives opportunity to smaller political parties and Independent Candidates to have a seat in Parliament or Local Council
- **Cost Effective:** With no bye election, PR IS cost effective saving millions of leones that could be spent on conducting bye elections
- **Reduces Wastage of Votes:** Unlike First-Past the Post where a candidate is elected

with a small number of votes leaving all other votes unused, PR uses most of the votes cast in determining percentage of seats won.

- High Turnout:** PR encourages high voter turnout and avoids apathy because voters know that all votes count.

- National Cohesion:** It builds unity as it limits the issue of party strongholds as it all parties have the potential of winning a seat everywhere in the country.

**9. Does proportional representation hurt rural voters?**

**No.**

No region will ever find itself shut out of the government. Every region will have representation in both government and opposition, strengthening their voice in the parliament.

**10. Does Proportional Representation cause “instability”?**

**No.**

With PR, incentives for political behaviour changes. Instead, parties are motivated to show voters they work productively together on a shared policy agenda.

**11. Does the district block system consider Independent Candidates?**

**YES.** Statutory Instruments Nos. 13 and 14 of 2022, Public Elections Regulations, 2022, makes provision for people who wish to contest as independent candidates (for Parliamentary and Local Council seats) to be nominated and have their names placed on the ballot paper along the political parties in the district.

**12. How will the ECLS Conduct the 2023 Local Council Elections?**

According to section 2 of Statutory Instrument No. 13 of 2022 (Public Elections Regulations of 2022), local council elections shall be conducted by the Proportional Representation System.





1. Add valid votes obtained by all contestants which total **41,550**
2. Divide valid votes obtained by each candidate by the total valid votes cast and multiply by 100 to get a fraction.  
E.g. For **Party A:  $15,700 \div 41,550 \times 100 = 37.7858$**
3. Add the product of all political parties and independent candidates that obtain the minimum threshold of **4.5%** and above.  
E.g.  **$37.7858 + 21.41997593 + 11.0709988 + 24.54874 = 95$**
4. Divide the product of each political party and independent candidate by the total sum of those that meet the threshold and multiply the quotient by the total number of seats allocated to the district to get a representational quotient.  
E.g. **Party A:  $37.7858 \div 95 \times 100 = 4.375198$**
5. Assign to each political party and independent candidate, a number of seats equal to the whole number in the representational quotient.  
E.g., **Party A = 4; Party B = 2; Independent = 1 and Party E = 2**
6. Apportion the remainder of seats using the highest remainder method. Party A with 0.8 and Party B with 0.4 shall be assigned one more seat each.

**13. How do ECSL Calculate population quota to allocate seats in council?**

*The population quota for local council elections shall be calculated, by –*

- (a) *Allocating 12 seats to every local council pursuant to section 4(3) of the Local Government Act, 2004;*
- (b) *subtracting the number of seats allocated from the total number of seats constituting local councils as prescribed in section 2(2)(d) of the Local Government Act, 2004;*
- (c) *Dividing the total population of Sierra Leone by the remaining number of local council seats subtracted.*

**14. How is the Allocation of Seats to Localities done?**

*The allocation of seats to localities shall be by, -*

- (a) *dividing, the total population of each locality by the population quota resulting in a representational quotient consisting of a whole number and a fractional remainder;*
- (b) *assigning to each locality, a number of seats equal to the whole number*
- (c) *subtracting this figure from the total number of seats to be allocated; and*
- (d) *allocating the remaining seats (if any) of the fractional remainder, beginning with the highest remainder and continuing through the ranks until all of the seats have been allocated.*

**NOTES:**

**HOW CALCULATIONS ARE DONE FOR SEAT ALLOCATION IN THE PR SYSTEM**

**A. Calculating Parliamentary Seat Allocation based on the 2021 Census and using the Highest Remainder Formula**

1. Calculate the population quota, which is calculated by dividing the total population of Sierra Leone by the number of seats prescribed by Parliament for Ordinary Members of Parliament.

$$7,548,702 \div 132 \text{ (number of seats in parliament)} = 57,187$$

Divide total population of each district by the population quota to obtain what is called the Representational quotient (this will be a whole number plus a fractional remainder).

**E.g. Kailahun  $550,435 \div 57,187 = 9.625154099$ ;**

**Bombali  $387,236 \div 57,187 = 6.771382948$**

2. Award each District a number of seats equal to the whole number in the representational quotient. E.g. Kailahun 9, Bombali 6, etc.
3. Add all seats allocated on the basis of the whole numbers and subtract this figure from the total number of seats to be allocated. This is the number of seats that remain to be allocated.
4. Rank the fractions of the representational quotient from highest to lowest and allocate the remaining seats (if any) to the fractional remainders, beginning with the highest remainder and continuing through the ranked fractions until all of the seats have been allocated.

**B. Calculating Local Council Seat Allocation based on the 2021 Census and using the Highest Remainder Formula**

1. Allocate 1 Chairperson/Mayor and 11 Councillor Seats to each of the 22 local councils. E.g. Kailahun District Council: 1 Chair and 11 Councillors; Makeni City Council: 1 Mayor and 11 Councillors etc.
2. Calculate total councillor seats allocated and subtract from total national councillor seats available.  
11 Councillor seats assigned to each locality = **242**.  
e.g. (total councillor seats) **489 – 242 = 247**
3. Calculate Population Quota by dividing total national population by remaining councilor seats still to be allocated.

**E.g. For Party A:  $15,700 \div 41,550 \times 100 = 37.7858$**

3. Add the product of all political parties and independent candidates that obtain the minimum threshold of **11.9%** and above.

**E.g.  $37.7858 + 21.41997593 + 24.54874 = 84$**

4. Divide the product of each political party and independent candidate by the total sum of those that meet the threshold and multiply the quotient by the total number of seats allocated to the district to get a representational quotient.

**E.g. Party A:  $37.7858 \div 84 \times 4 = 1.799324$**

5. Assign to each political party and independent candidate, number of seats equal to the whole number in the representational quotient. E.g. Party A = 1; Independent = 1 and Party E = 1
6. Apportion the remainder of seats using the highest remainder method. Party A with 0.7 shall be assigned one more seat.

**F. How seats will be apportioned for Councilors under the PR System**

This is done as follows:

Where 5 political parties and one independent candidate named A, B, Independent candidate, D, E and F, compete for a total of 11 seats in a particular district with a total district vote of 41,550, seats shall be apportioned be as follows:

**NOTE: These figures are only hypothetical figures**

	Party A	Party B	Independent candidate	Party D	Party E	Party F	Total
<b>Threshold</b>	4.5%						
Votes obtained	15,700	8900	4,600	1350	10,200	800	41,550
Product/percentage	37.7858	21.4200	11.0710	3.2491	24.5487	1.9254	100
4.59% threshold and above	37.7858	21.4200	11.0710		24.5487		95
Representational Quotient	4.375198	2.480208	1.2819051		2.842485		11
First apportioning of seat	4	2	1		2		9
Final apportioning of seat using highest remainder	4	3	1		3		11
Next highest-ranking Party	1						

#### D. CALCULATION OF THRESHOLDS

Threshold is the minimum level of votes required by a party or candidate to get a representation in parliament or local council (minimum votes required for a party or candidate not to be eliminated).

**Calculation of threshold for Parliamentary seat:** total number of districts divided by total seats prescribed by Parliament multiplied by 100. i.e.,  $16 \div 135 \times 100 = 11.9\%$

**Calculation of threshold for Local Council seat:** total number of localities divided by total seats in council and multiplied by 100. i.e.,  $22 \div 493 \times 100 = 4.5\%$

#### E. How seats will be apportioned for Parliamentary Elections under the PR

Where 5 political parties and one independent candidate named A, B, Independent candidate, D, E and F, compete for a total of 4 seats in a particular district with a total district vote of 41,550, seats shall be apportioned be as follows:

**NOTE: These figures are only hypothetical figures**

	Party A	Party B	Independent candidate	Party D	Party E	Party F	Total
<b>Threshold</b>	<b>11.9%</b>						
Votes obtained	15,700	4600	8,900	1350	10,200	800	41,550
Product/percentage	37.7858	11.0710	21.4200	3.2491	24.5487	1.9254	100
11.9% threshold and above	37.7858		21.4200		24.5487		84
Representational Quotient	1.799324		1.0199988		1.168987		4
First apportioning of seat	1		1		1		3
Final apportioning of seat using highest remainder	2		1		1		4
Next highest-ranking Party					1		

1. Add valid votes obtained by all contestants which total **41,550**
2. Divide valid votes obtained by each candidate by the total valid votes cast and multiply by 100 to get the product

E.g.  $7,548,702 \div 247 = 30,562$

4. Find the representational quotient for each locality: total population of the locality ÷ by the national population quota. This quotient will be a whole number plus some fraction.  
E.g. Kailahun District Council:  $550,435 \div 30,562 = 18.01070502$ ;  
Makeni City Council:  $85,116 \div 30,562 = 2.785068479$ ;  
Tonkolili District Council:  $557,257 \div 30,562 = 18.23392671$  etc.
5. Each locality is awarded a number of seats equal to the whole number contained within the representational quotient. E.g., Kailahun District Council 18, Makeni City Council 2, Tonkolili District Council 18 etc.
6. The whole numbers are then added up and subtracted from the total number of remaining seats to be apportioned
7. Rank the fractions of the representational quotient from highest to lowest and allocate the remaining seats (if any) to the fractional remainders, beginning with the highest remainder and continuing through the ranked fractions until all of the seats have been allocated.

#### C. Allocation of seats to district and localities based on average of current seat allocation and 2021 population quota

1. Identify current seat allocation to Parliament and Local Council (as was allocated for the 2018 elections)
2. Calculate seat allocation using the 2021 Mid-Term Census as explained above.
3. Add both seat allocations for each district and divide by 2
4. Use the answer as the new seat allocation for that district. Where the answer is 0.5, round up to the nearest whole number
5. By using average to allocate seats to districts and localities, the total number of seats increased from 132 to **135** and 489 to **493** respectively.

### Allocation of 135 Seats to 16 District Blocks

	Average	Total	Allocated based on 2021 Census figure	Allocation of seats in 2016	
<b>32</b>			<b>34</b>	<b>30</b>	
8	51	7	7	8	BOMBALI
4	7	3	3	4	FALABA
4	8	4	4	4	KOINADUGU
01	02	01	01	01	TOKOLO
<b>92</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>26</b>	
9	21	9	9	9	KAMBIA
5	01	5	5	5	KARENE
21	42	31	31	11	PORT OKO
<b>12</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>	
01	61	6	6	01	PORT OKO
9	01	5	5	5	KARENE
9	21	9	9	9	MOYAMBA
5	6	5	5	4	PUJEHUN
21	42	31	31	11	WESTERN AREA
<b>92</b>		<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>28</b>	
91	13	11	11	02	WESTERN URBAN
01	02	21	21	8	WESTERN RURAL
<b>03</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	
7	31	7	7	9	NUNHEJUP
9	21	9	9	9	MOYAMBA
9	21	9	9	9	MOYAMBA
5	6	5	5	4	PUJEHUN
21	42	31	31	11	WESTERN AREA
<b>135</b>		<b>131</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

### ALLOCATION OF 493 COUNCILLOR SEATS TO 22 LOCAL COUNCILS

NO	DISTRICT	LOCALITY	Allocation of seats in 2016	Seat Allocated based on 2021 Census figure	Total	Average
1	KALAHUN	KALAHUN DISTRICT COUNCIL	29	29	58	29
2	KENEMA	KENEMA CITY COUNCIL	18	19	37	19
3	KENEMA	KENEMA DISTRICT COUNCIL	25	28	53	27
4	KONO	KONO NEW SEMBEHUN CITY COUNCIL	15	17	32	16
5	KONO	KONO DISTRICT COUNCIL	24	25	49	25
6	BOMBALI	MAKENI CITY COUNCIL	16	14	30	15
7	BOMBALI	BOMBALI DISTRICT COUNCIL	21	21	42	21
8	FALABA	FALABA DISTRICT COUNCIL	18	17	35	18
9	KOINADUGU	KOINADUGU DISTRICT COUNCIL	18	18	36	18
10	TONKOLILI	TONKOLILI DISTRICT COUNCIL	29	29	58	29
11	KAMBIA	KAMBIA DISTRICT COUNCIL	23	23	46	23
12	KARENE	KARENE DISTRICT COUNCIL	21	21	42	21
13	PORT OKO	PORT OKO CITY COUNCIL	13	12	25	13
14	PORT OKO	PORT OKO DISTRICT COUNCIL	28	27	55	28
15	BO	BO CITY COUNCIL	17	18	35	18
16	BO	BO DISTRICT COUNCIL	25	29	54	27
17	BONTHE	BONTHE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL	11	11	22	11
18	BONTHE	BONTHE DISTRICT COUNCIL	18	20	38	19
19	MOYAMBA	MOYAMBA DISTRICT COUNCIL	22	22	44	22
20	PUJEHUN	PUJEHUN DISTRICT COUNCIL	23	25	48	24
21	WESTERN AREA	WESTERN AREA RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL	27	33	60	30
22	WESTERN AREA	FREETOWN CITY COUNCIL	48	31	79	40
			<b>489</b>	<b>489</b>		<b>493</b>