

Mauritius

Country:

Mauritius

Year:

2016

Freedom Status:

Free

Political Rights:

1

Civil Liberties:

2

Aggregate Score:

90

Freedom Rating:

1.5

Overview:

Political Rights: 38 / 40 [Key]

Civil Liberties: 52 / 60

The new Alliance Lepep government consolidated its political power in 2015, taking all 120 seats contested in June's local elections. The polls were conducted following electoral reforms that increased the number of councilors to 4 per district, from 3 previously. Alliance Lepep's sweep of the local polls followed its surprise victory over the ruling coalition of Navinchandra Ramgoolam in general elections held in late 2014.

The implementation of a 2012 gender quota for local elections resulted in women's representation in local government increasing to 34 percent following the June 2015 polls, from 26 percent previously. Additionally, after the 2014 polls, the new National Assembly elected a woman to be speaker of the assembly, and in June 2015 it unanimously elected the first woman president. However, there are only 8 women in the 70-seat National Assembly, and women hold just 3 positions in the 24-member cabinet. Separately, at the year's end, the country had yet to complete reforms to address a 2013 UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) ruling that a law requiring political candidates to declare their ethnic and religious status constituted a human rights violation.

The country's generally positive reputation for transparency and accountability was damaged by multiple corruption scandals in 2015, including the arrest in February of former prime minister Ramgoolam on allegations of conspiracy and money laundering, in connection with the discovery of \$6.4 million in cash at his residence. The inquiry later widened to include the former Bank of Mauritius governor. Separately, Pravind Jugnauth, a former finance minister and technology

minister and the son of Prime Minister Anerood Jugnauth, was convicted in June 2015 of a conflict of interest offense related to the government's use of public funds to buy a private hospital; the case was under appeal at the year's end.

In December 2015, the national assembly passed a good governance bill that expanded the number of public officials required to disclose their assets to the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC).

This country report has been abridged for Freedom in the World 2016. For background information on political rights and civil liberties in Mauritius, see Freedom in the World 2015.

Scoring Key: X / Y (Z)

X = Score Received

Y = Best Possible Score

Z = Change from Previous Year

Full Methodology

Source URL: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2016/mauritius>