



REPUBLIC OF BENIN 2021 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION MEDIA MONITORING JANUARY-APRIL 2021



ELECTORAL HUB DATA BANK 3/2021



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REPUBLIC OF BENIN 2021 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION MEDIA MONITORING JANUARY – APRIL 2021.

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About the Electoral Hub

The Electoral Hub, an organ of the Initiative for Research, Innovation and Advocacy in Development (IRIAD), is a multidisciplinary strategic think-tank which seeks to provide solutions to improve the credibility and integrity of the electoral process. It is conceptualized to complement the roles and activities of the different institutions, stakeholders and drivers of the electoral process and governance. The Electoral Hub's aim is to strengthen electoral governance and accountability in Nigeria through the provision of data and critical analysis supporting the credibility and integrity of the electoral process. We believe that the integrity of the electoral process is crucial in improving the electoral governance architecture and democracy in Nigeria. We also believe in contextual analysis for solutions rooted in the principles of justice and equity

Our core values are knowledge-exchange, inclusion, justice, equity, transparency and accountability.

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INTRODUCTION

Elections in the Republic of Benin take place within the framework of a multi-party democracy and a presidential system. Both the President and the National Assembly are directly elected by voters, with elections organized by the Autonomous National Electoral Commission (CENA). The presidential elections held on April 11, 2021 led to the victory of incumbent President Patrice Talon of the Independent Party. Ahead of the election, the political atmosphere was characterized with protests, distrust, suppression of the media and threats against political opponents.

Following the outcome of the 2019 legislative elections held in the country, the stakes of this presidential election are more salient and higher because of the common sentiment that the outcome is rigged in favor of the incumbent president, who was declared to have won over 86% of the votes.¹

In order to further deepen understanding about the Benin elections and the context in which it took place, the Electoral Hub, an organ of the Initiative for Research, Innovation and Advocacy in Development (IRIAD), has been tracking the trends and happenings in Benin ahead of the election. This database gives an overview of the various events that took place in the country in the three months preceding the election. It is hoped that the information provided in this database will facilitate further research and discussions among CSOs, election practitioners, and the general public in order to conceptualise solutions to improve the integrity and credibility of our electoral process in Nigeria.

¹ Justin Cole, "What Are the Stakes of the Upcoming Elections in Benin?" available at <https://www.justsecurity.org/75665/what-are-the-stakes-of-the-upcoming-elections-in-benin/>

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| DATE | SOURCE | KEY POINTS |
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| January 11, 2021 | Facebook https://web.facebook.com/Commission-Electorale-Nationale-Autonome-Benin-882358331829388/?_rdc=1&_rdr;https://www.cena.bj/presidentielles-du-11-avril-2021-la-cena-a-recu-la-liste-electorale/ | <p>Official publication of the election calendar</p> <p>-The electoral calendar defining all the flagship activities of the organization of the 1st round of the election, April 11, 2021, and the second round on May 09, 2021 was officially launched on Monday January 11, 2021 by the president of the National Autonomous Electoral Commission (Cena), Emmanuel Tiando and his fellow commissioners</p> |
| January 19, 2021 | Africa News https://www.africanews.com/2021/01/19/benin-president-talon-announces-his-candidacy-for-second-term/ | <p>Benin: President Talon Announces His Candidacy for Second Term</p> <p>-With less than three months to go before the presidential election in Benin, President Patrice Talon opened the election campaign with an announcement of his candidacy for a second term — supposedly in the spirit of strengthening good governance.</p> <p>-A surprise for some in light of the president’s declaration of wanting to serve a single term at the time of his election in 2016. But not so much for opposition camps who had no doubt that the president would file a candidacy bid as they believe that he has had an authoritarian hold on the nation since he came to power.</p> <p>-</p> |
| January 21, 2021 | Facebook https://web.facebook.com/Commission-Electorale-Nationale-Autonome-Benin-882358331829388/?_rdc=1&_rdr;https://web.facebook.com/Commission-Electorale-Nationale-Autonome-Benin-882358331829388/?_rdc=1&_rdr;https://www.cena.bj/presidentielles-du-11-avril-2021-la-cena-a-recu-la-liste-electorale/ | <p>Issuing sponsorship forms at CENA</p> |

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| | https://www.cena.bj/presidentielles-du-11-avril-2021-la-cena-a-recu-la-liste-electorale/ | -From Tuesday 12 to Wednesday 20 January 2021, the National Autonomous Electoral Commission (CENA) issued 147 nominal sponsorship forms. |
| January 22, 2021 | Facebook https://web.facebook.com/Commission-Electorale-Nationale-Autonome-Benin-882358331829388/?_rdc=1&_rdr; https://www.cena.bj/presidentielles-du-11-avril-2021-la-cena-a-recu-la-liste-electorale/ | <p>Point of operation to issue nominal sponsorship forms at CENA</p> <p>-Launched on Tuesday, January 12, 2021 by CENA, the institution in charge of the organization of elections in the Republic of Benin, the operation to issue nominative sponsorship forms is on its 9th day this Friday 22 January It is remembered that 153 mayors and deputies have already received their forms.</p> <p>- The President of CENA invites elected officials who have not yet withdrawn the form to come and perform their constitutional duty to comply with the legal provisions in force in our country.</p> <p>- The sponsorship form issuance operation continues at the National Autonomous Electoral Commission (Cena) and is scheduled to end on January 31, 2021 at 16 pm</p> |
| January 29, 2021 | Facebook https://web.facebook.com/Commission-Electorale-Nationale-Autonome-Benin-882358331829388/?_rdc=1&_rdr; https://www.cena.bj/presidentielles-du-11-avril-2021-la-cena-a-recu-la-liste-electorale/ | <p>Promoting peace during election time: CENA receives JCI Benin peace white paper</p> <p>- The Young International Chamber (JCI) renewed its commitment to contribute to the rooting of peace especially during elections. On Friday, January 29, 2021, she officially handed the peace white paper to the National Autonomous Electoral Commission (CENA), as part of her project " Promotion of Peace in Electoral Period ".</p> |

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| | | <p>-During the peace-advocating white paper award ceremony, Project Director Coslin DEGBEY said that this activity is coupled with the official launch of the Project " Promotion of Peace in Electoral Period " (3 PE) "</p> <p>- In this book, he said, candidates and their sponsors will leave messages of peace that they will remember throughout the electoral process and guide their words, actions and behaviours.</p> |
| January 29, 2021 | <p>Facebook https://web.facebook.com/Commission-Electorale-Nationale-Autonome-Benin-882358331829388/?_rdc=1&_rdr;https://www.cena.bj/presidentielles-du-11-avril-2021-la-cena-a-recu-la-liste-electorale/</p> | <p>Exchange meeting with CSOs and Media</p> <p>-As part of the series of meetings with all stakeholders in the electoral process, the National Autonomous Electoral Commission (CENA) exchanged with civil society organizations and the media on the conduct of the electoral process.</p> <p>-" While Article 13 of the Electoral Code refers to CENA as the electoral management body, it is true that this challenge can only be met with the effective and efficient participation of all stakeholders in the electoral process. "</p> |
| January 29, 2021 | <p>Facebook https://web.facebook.com/Commission-Electorale-Nationale-Autonome-Benin-882358331829388/?_rdc=1&_rdr;https://www.cena.bj/presidentielles-du-11-avril-2021-la-cena-a-recu-la-liste-electorale/</p> | <p>CENA meeting with institutions, ministries and diplomatic corps</p> <p>-CENA meeting with institutions, ministries and diplomatic corps to discuss each stakeholder on their roles and responsibilities. The National Autonomous Electoral Commission (CENA) exchanged this morning with the institutions, ministries and the diplomatic corps on Wednesday,</p> |

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| | | <p>January 27, 2021 They were informed of the organization of the presidential elections of 11 April 2021 including the electoral calendar, the various pieces to be provided by each candidate duo.</p> |
| <p>January 29, 2021</p> | <p>Facebook https://web.facebook.com/Commission-Electorale-Nationale-Autonome-Benin-882358331829388/?_rdc=1&_rdr; https://www.cena.bj/presidentielles-du-11-avril-2021-la-cena-a-recu-la-liste-electorale/</p> | <p>Referral Form Issuance Operation</p> <p>-To date, there are 158 issues of sponsorship forms. In accordance with the election schedule, the process continues until January 31, 2021.</p> <p>-The sponsorship form issuance operation awaits only one elected official to close the loop. This is the mayor of Sinendé, Sanni BIO KOURI. On Tuesday, January 26, 2021, Mayor of Toviklin, Rigobert TOZO and Honorable Augustin AHOUANVOEBLA withdrew their sesames.</p> |
| <p>January 29, 2021</p> | | <p>CENA informs political parties</p> <p>-In order to inform all the parties involved in the organization of the presidential election of April 11, 2021, the Cena undertook a series of exchanges earlier this week. On Tuesday, January 26, 2021, she faced the political parties with which the exchange was frank and without taboos.</p> <p>- The President of CENA, Emmanuel reminded political parties that the electoral process is not CENA's business alone. But rather that of all political parties and all actors involved in the organization who must play their part fully. In this channel, political parties are at the forefront, said the president, justifying that this series of meetings began with them.</p> |
| | | <p>Sponsorage Form Deliverance</p> |

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| | | <p>-The National Autonomous Electoral Commission (CENA), started the operation of issuing the sponsorship form to deputies and mayors in the framework of the 2021. Presidential elections.</p> |
| February 3, 2021 | <p>Facebook https://web.facebook.com/Commission-Electorale-Nationale-Autonome-Benin-882358331829388/?rdc=1&rdr; https://www.cena.bj/presidentielles-du-11-avril-2021-la-cena-a-recu-la-liste-electorale/</p> | <p>Statements of presidential nomination of April 11, 2021</p> <p>-In accordance with the revised Beninese constitution, the electoral code and the electoral calendar, the National Autonomous Electoral Commission (CENA) opened its register of presidential nominations for the April 11, presidential elections, at 04 February 2021.</p> <p>- At the close of this operation, CENA registered 20 applications files.</p> |
| February 8, 2021 | <p>Africa News https://www.africanews.com/2021/02/08/benin-probes-gun-attack-on-opposition-presidential-candidate/</p> | <p>Benin probes gun attack on opposition presidential candidate</p> <p>- A Benin presidential candidate was wounded after shots were fired at his car soon after he filed his papers for the April presidential election, family members and the government said on Saturday.</p> <p>- Ganiou Soglo, a former minister and son of ex-president Nicephore Soglo, was wounded on Friday on the way to his farm in Zinvie, 35 kilometers from the West African country's commercial capital Cotonou.</p> <p>- He was one of 19 politicians who have filed papers for the April 11 ballot, including the incumbent Patrice Talon.</p> |

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| | | - Soglo was treated at a hospital in Cotonou. “He is out of danger, but to remove the bullet, that will have to be in Ghana or Morocco,” a Soglo family member told AFP. |
| February 12, 2021 | Benin Revele Magazine https://www.beninrevele.com/publication-de-liste-provisoire-des-candidats-par-la-cena/ | Publication of provisional list of candidates by CENA -CENA ahead of the election in the state released the provisional list of candidates contesting the election. |
| February 12, 2021 | Facebook https://web.facebook.com/Commission-Electorale-Nationale-Autonome-Benin-882358331829388/?rdc=1&rd;https://www.cena.bj/presidentielles-du-11-avril-2021-la-cena-a-recu-la-liste-electorale/ | CENA Receives Voters list. -The Computerized Permanent Electoral List Guidance and Supervision Board (Cos-Lépi) submitted the voters list to the National Autonomous Electoral Commission (CENA) on Wednesday, February 10, 2021. It’s a list of 5.523.524 voters who are called to vote in 7.860 centers including 11 abroad. 5.523.524 electors including 45.543 Beninese from outside. - According to the president of Cos-Lépi, Gilbert Bangana, the list he sent is the result of operations to clear, correct and update the national electoral register. For him, these voters are anchored to 7,860 polling centers including 11 outside. “Indeed, the biometric enrollment could not be carried out outside the country. - However, arrangements are being made to guarantee the vote of Beninese from outside in accordance with the new diplomatic map of Benin, ”he said, mentioning that this workforce of the Lépi integrates new registrants and new adults in reference to the polling date of the year 2021. |
| February 13, 2021 | Africa News | Benin: President Talon Announces His Candidacy for Second Term |

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| | <p>https://www.africanews.com/2021/01/19/benin-president-talon-announces-his-candidacy-for-second-term//</p> | <p>-With less than three months to go before the presidential election in Benin, President Patrice Talon opened the election campaign with an announcement of his candidacy for a second term — supposedly in the spirit of strengthening good governance.</p> <p>-A surprise for some in light of the president’s declaration of wanting to serve a single term at the time of his election in 2016. But not so much for opposition camps who had no doubt that the president would file a candidacy bid as they believe that he has had an authoritarian hold on the nation since he came to power.</p> <p>-Talon has been accused by his critics of having used the country’s legal system, with the creation of a special court, to keep his main opponents away from politics</p> |
| <p>February 13, 2021</p> | <p>FRANCE 24 https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20210213-benin-president-patrice-talon-to-face-two-rivals-in-april-election</p> | <p>Benin President Patrice Talon to face two rivals in April election</p> <p>-Benin President Patrice Talon and only two other candidates will run in the country’s presidential election in April, electoral authorities said Friday.</p> <p>- A total of 20 would-be candidates officially handed in their documents to run for the presidency, but the electoral commission said only the three chosen had met the necessary requirements.</p> <p>-Many opposition figures are already in exile or barred from office in Benin, a West African state which critics say has veered into authoritarianism under Talon.</p> |

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| | | <p>-The opposition says the ballot is already fixed in favour of Talon, especially because of an electoral law reform requiring each candidate to be formally sponsored by 16 mayors or members of parliament.</p> |
| February 26, 2021 | <p>Facebook https://web.facebook.com/Commission-Electorale-Nationale-Autonomie-Benin-882358331829388/?_rdc=1&_rdr</p> | <p>Positioning candidates on the specimen of the single bulletin.</p> <p>-The National Autonomous Electoral Commission (CENA) held a random draw of the candidate s’ logos on Thursday, February 25, 2021 on the specimen of the single ballot of April 11, 2021.</p> <p>- After the draw, the duo Korentin Kohue and Iréné AGOSSA are in first position, followed by the duo Alassane Soumanou Djimba and Paul Hounkpe. .</p> |
| March 29, 2021 | <p>Facebook https://web.facebook.com/Commission-Electorale-Nationale-Autonomie-Benin-882358331829388/?_rdc=1&_rdr</p> | <p>Benin’s National Autonomous Electoral Commission (CENA) Trained Agents ahead of the presidential election.</p> <p>- Ahead of the April 11th Elections CENA conducted a training to equip electoral officers on their roles and responsibilities on Tuesday at Jeco hotel in Dassa-Zoumè municipality ahead of the April 11 2021 elections.</p> |
| March 27, 2021 | <p>Facebook https://web.facebook.com/Commission-Electorale-Nationale-Autonomie-Benin-882358331829388/?_rdc=1&_rdr</p> | <p>Formation of Common Focal Points</p> <p>-Two weeks of the poll on April 11, 2021, the National Autonomous Electoral Commission (CENA) formed the communal focal points.</p> <p>- A total of 81 communal focal points received adequate training at their mission.</p> |

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| | | <p>- Their mission is to assist the Arrondissement coordinators in the municipality where they are deployed. They therefore have the task of receiving electoral material at the level of the capital of the municipality, distribution of electoral material by district, the day before at the communal level and serving as a link between CENA and the Arrondissement coordinators.</p> |
| March 28, 2021 | <p>Facebook https://web.facebook.com/Commission-Electorale-Nationale-Autome-Benin-882358331829388/?_rdc=1&_rdr</p> | <p>Ecowas In Phase With CENA Actions</p> <p>-The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) delegation in Benin from Tuesday, March 23 till Friday March 26 held a working session with the commissioners of the National Autonomous Electoral Commission (CENA) at its seat.</p> |
| April 2, 2021 | <p>Benin Revele Magazine https://www.beninrevele.com/liste-des-pieces-permettant-aux-electeurs-de-justifier-de-leur-identite-au-moment-du-vote-en-republique-du-benin/</p> | <p>List of documents allowing voters to prove their identity when voting in the Republic of Benin</p> <p>- Pursuant to the provisions of the second paragraph of article 12 of law n ° 2019-43 of November 15, 2019 on the electoral code in the Republic of Benin , the documents allowing voters to prove their identity at the time of voting are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - map of the Computerized Permanent List of Electors (LEPI); - National Identity Card; - biometric identity card to the standards of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); - passport; - driver's license; - professional identity card; |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - civil or military pension booklet bearing the holder’s photograph; - personal identification certificate; - student card; - school identity card. |
| April 7, 2021 | <p>Africa News https://www.africanews.com/2021/04/07/protests-erupt-in-benin-as-talon-seeks-reelection//</p> | <p>Protests erupt in Benin days before high-stakes election</p> <p>-Protests broke out in Benin Tuesday in another day of tensions as opposition demonstrators burned property of pro-government deputies and blockaded roads, days before President Patrice Talon faces an election.</p> <p>- Tensions have erupted in several towns around the West African country since Monday night, local residents and witnesses said, in the lead-up to Sunday’s ballot in which Talon is strongly favoured to win a second term.</p> <p>- “A dozen young people dismantled the toll facilities,” said Simboti Tcheitcha Victorine, a motorist who retreated to a nearby town. “Others chanted slogans hostile to President Patrice Talon.”</p> <p>- Motorcycles and several vehicles were also burned in the home of a pro-Talon lawmaker, local sources said. Opposition leaders say the April 11 election is already rigged in favour of Talon, a cotton magnate first elected in 2016.</p> <p>- Towards the north, the Save-Tchaourou route was still blocked Tuesday afternoon by tree trunks and burnt tires, witnesses reported.</p> |
| April 8, 2021 | Media Foundation for West Africa | Three Major Questions Shaping the 2021 Presidential Election in Benin. |

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| | https://www.mfwa.org/fr/trois-questions-majeures-qui-faconnent-lelection-presidentielle-de-2021-au-benin/ | <p>-Three candidates, including the current President, Patrice Talon, candidate for his own succession are in the running. The other candidates in the presidential race are former minister Alassane Soumanou Djimba of the Forces Cauris pour un Bénin Emergent (FCBE), and Corentin Kohoué, a rising figure in the Beninese political arena.</p> <p>- The three key controversial issues in this year’s elections are the adoption of a new electoral code; a sponsorship system for candidates; a legal context stifling the press; and the fear of an internet shutdown before and during the election.</p> |
| April 8, 2021 | Democracy Benin https://twitter.com/DemocratieBenin | -The candidate duo Talon-Talata was at the SèmèPodji stadium on Thursday, April 8, 2021 as part of the electoral campaign counting for the presidential election of April 11, 2021. |
| April 9, 2021 | INEC News https://twitter.com/InecNews | - Hon. Chairman, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu leads the INEC Observation Team for the Presidential Election of the Republic of Benin, scheduled for 11 th April 2021. |
| April 9, 2021 | COSCEP Benin https://twitter.com/COSCEPBenin | Capacity building for electoral observers in the Collines department by COSCEP for the 2021 presidential election observation mission in Benin |
| April 10, 2021 | INEC News https://twitter.com/InecNews | - INEC Observers in Cotonou, Republic of Benin for the Presidential Election holding on 11 th April 2021. L-R: REC, Ondo State, Ambassador Rufus Akeju, National Commissioner, Dr Adekunle Ogunmola, Hon. Chairman, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu and National Commissioner, Prof. Okechukwu Ibeanu. |

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| April 10, 2021 | <p>INEC NEWS https://twitter.com/InecNews</p> | <p>- INEC Chairman, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu (L) and National Commissioner, Prof. Okechukwu Ibeanu take a look at polling booths to be used for the Republic of Benin’s Presidential Election, when they visited the CENI Headquarters, Cotonou yesterday. The election holds on 11th April 2021.</p> |
| April 11. 2021 | <p>BBC News https://www.bbc.com/news/topics/ce1qrvtelw0t/benin</p> | <p>Benin’s president lauds polls despite ‘low turnout’</p> <p>-Benin’s President Patrice Talon lauded the conduct of Sunday’s elections saying his country had proven “expertise” in managing elections.</p> <p>-Turnout was low with several polling stations in the capital reporting low levels of participation, French public radio RFI has reported.</p> <p>-But according to RFI, voting could not take place in Savè, an opposition stronghold in central Benin, after youths blocked electoral workers from accessing polling centres. Savè was the scene of violent clashes earlier in the week between opposition supporters and security forces, in which at least two people were killed.</p> |
| April 11, 2021 | <p>Africa News https://www.africanews.com/2021/04/11/benin-awaits-results-of-tense-presidential-election/</p> | <p>Benin awaits results of tense presidential election</p> <p>-Incumbent President Patrice Talon is facing only two rivals: Alassane Soumanou and Corentin Kohoué, who a largely unknown to the public. Other opponents are either exiled abroad or barred from running due to the new electoral code and institutional reform.</p> |

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| | | <p>- Benin experienced a lackluster campaign in the South but in the North, serious violence broke out after residents blocked roads and the army cleared the way using live ammunition. In the city of Save two people were killed, sparking the international community to urge an end to the violence and for a transparent and fair vote.</p> <p>- According to the Autonomous National Electoral Commission (Cena) the roadblocks caused a delay in the deployment of electoral materials in the North.</p> |
| April 11, 2021 | <p>Aljazeera News https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/4/11/vote-counting-in-benin-after-election-marked-by-violent-protests</p> | <p>Benin vote count begins after opposition groups boycott election</p> <p>-President Patrice Talon is expected to win a second term in office as group of opposition parties called for a boycott.</p> <p>- Vote counting began in Benin on Sunday after a presidential poll that was boycotted by some opposition parties over pre-election violence and their objection to President Patrice Talon's quest for a second term.</p> <p>-Voters in Benin are set to cast their ballots in a presidential election on Sunday, days after violent demonstrations broke out against President Patrice Talon, who critics accuse of sidelining his opponents</p> <p>.</p> <p>- Provisional results of the first round of the election are expected by April 13.</p> |
| April 10, 2021 | <p>ALJEZEERA YouTube https://youtu.be/37WuiT4FrxA</p> | <p>Benin election: Campaigning ends ahead of presidential vote</p> |

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| | | <p>-Campaigning has ended in Benin ahead of Sunday's presidential election.</p> <p>- President Patrice Talon is facing a weakened opposition in a vote he has expected to win by a landslide. Most of his rivals have been silenced or forced into exile.</p> |
| April 11, 2021 | <p>Premium Times https://www.premiumtimesng.com/foreign/454497-presidential-election-begins-in-benin-republic.html</p> | <p>Presidential election begins in Benin Republic</p> <p>-Voting for the first round of Benin Republic's presidential election began on Sunday at most polling stations across the country.</p> <p>- Approximately five million voters are expected to take part in the first round of voting at 15,531 polling stations throughout Benin Republic and some foreign countries.</p> <p>- The incumbent President Patrice Talon and his running mate Mariam Talata will face the opposition duo of Corentin Kohoue-Irene Agossa of the Dynamics Restoring Confidence party (RLC) and Alassane Soumanou-Paul Hounkpe of Cowry Forces for an Emerging Benin (FCBE). Polling started at 7.00 a.m. local time and was expected to last nine hours.</p> |
| April 11, 2021 | <p>INEC News https://twitter.com/InecNews</p> | <p>Republic of Benin's Presidential Election (11 Apr 2021).</p> <p>- Hon. Chair, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu (M), National Commissioner, Prof. Okechukwu Ibeanu (L) and Admin Sec, Imo state, Mr. T. Ongele peruse the Register of Voters at the College Catholique Pere Aupiais polling Centre, Cotonou.</p> |
| April 11, 2021 | FRANCE 24 | <p>Benin begins counting votes in presidential election after week of violent protests.</p> |

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| | https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20210411-benin-votes-in-presidential-polls-after-week-of-violent-protests | <p>- Vote counting began in Benin on Sunday after a presidential poll that was boycotted by some opposition parties over pre-election violence and their objection to President Patrice Talon's quest for a second term.</p> |
| <p>April 11, 2021</p> | <p>ALJAZEERA https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/4/11/vote-counting-in-benin-after-election-marked-by-violent-protests</p> | <p>Benin vote count begins after opposition groups boycott election</p> <p>-Vote counting began in Benin on Sunday after a presidential poll that was boycotted by some opposition parties over pre-election violence and their objection to President Patrice Talon's quest for a second term.</p> <p>- Provisional results of the first round of the election are expected by April 13.</p> <p>-Benin was once praised as a vibrant democracy in the region, but most opposition figures are now exiled, disqualified by electoral reforms or have been targeted for investigation by a special court.</p> <p>-Protests in several cities this week turned violent. Some people were killed in gunfire on Thursday in the central town of Bante when security forces fired warning shots, its mayor told local radio, without saying how many died.</p> <p>-Among the protesters' complaints are Talon's U-turn on a pledge he made as a candidate in 2016 to serve only one term, and changes he pushed through to election laws, which resulted in total control of parliament by Talon's supporters and the exclusion of leading opponents from the presidential race.</p> |

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| | | <p>-A coalition of opposition parties in a statement late on Saturday called on their supporters to boycott the poll, and voters largely stayed away from at least five polling stations in opposition-supporting areas of Cotonou.</p> <p>-As of 11am local time (10:00 GMT), voting had not started in several districts in the centre of the country because election materials had been blocked from reaching polling stations, a group of civil society organisations monitoring the election said.</p> |
| <p>April 11, 2021</p> | <p>ALJAZEERA https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/4/11/benin-votes-in-presidential-election-opposition-sidelined</p> | <p>Opposition sidelined as Benin votes in presidential election</p> <p>-With most rivals in exile or sidelined, Benin’s President Patrice Talon looks set to win a second term in office.</p> <p>-Voters in Benin are set to cast their ballots in a presidential election on Sunday, days after violent demonstrations broke out against President Patrice Talon, who critics accuse of sidelining his opponents.</p> <p>-The 62-year-old faces off against two little-known rivals, Alassane Soumanou and Corentin Kohoue.</p> <p>-Benin was long praised as a thriving multi-party democracy, but critics say Talon has steered the country into authoritarianism with a steady crackdown on his opponents.</p> <p>-At least two people died in the central city of Save when troops on Thursday fired tear gas and live rounds to break up</p> |

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| | | <p>protesters who had blocked a major highway. Five others were wounded.</p> |
| April 11, 2021 | <p>AA Africa https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/over-5m-beninese-voters-going-to-presidential-polls/2205183</p> | <p>Over 5M Beninese voters going to presidential polls</p> <p>-More than 5 million Beninese voters are going to the polls on Sunday to elect their new president.</p> <p>-According to the Autonomous National Electoral Commission (CENA), 5,523,524 voters will cast their ballots in 7,860 polling stations, including 11 abroad for 45,543 Beninese nationals outside the country.</p> <p>-In the West African country of more than eleven million inhabitants, the polls opened at 7 a.m. (0600GMT) and will close at 4 p.m. (1500GMT).</p> |
| April 13, 2021 | <p>INEC News https://twitter.com/InecNews</p> | <p>- The INEC Observation Team, comprising Hon Chairman, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu, National Commissioners, Prof. Okechukwu Ibeanu, Dr Adekunle Ogunmola & 3 senior officials attend the post- election joint press briefing, organized by the Coalition of Election Observers.</p> |
| April 13, 2021 | <p>VOA News https://www.voanews.com/africa/early-results-benin-presidential-election-expected-favor-incumbent</p> | <p>Early Results of Benin Presidential Election Expected to Favor Incumbent.</p> <p>- The early results of the first round of Benin’s presidential election are expected Tuesday, with President Patrice Talon set to win a second five-year term amid accusations of election fraud.</p> <p>-Opposition leaders in the West African nation had called for a boycott of Sunday’s election, accusing Talon of pushing</p> |

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| | | <p>through election laws which disqualified his rivals or forcing them to leave the country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Talon’s supporters deny the claim of election fraud, citing an election official’s comment that the vote was mostly peaceful, with no major incidents, despite some deadly clashes leading up to the election. - An association of civil society groups said there were incidents of voters being threatened, harassed and intimidated based on reports from hundreds of elections observers who spoke to Agence France Presse. <p>To date, the government has not publicly responded to the allegations, saying only that it was satisfied with the election.</p> |
| <p>April 13, 2021</p> | <p>ABC News https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/benins-president-wins-election-preliminary-results-77053903</p> | <p>Benin’s president wins re-election in preliminary results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Electoral officials in Benin says that President Patrice Talon has been re-elected with a majority of votes cast in the presidential election. -COTONOU, Benin – President Patrice Talon has been re-elected with a majority of votes cast in Benin’s presidential election, according to provisional results released Tuesday by the national electoral commission. - Talon received more than 86.3% of the votes cast Sunday. Allasane Soumanou got about 11.3% and Corentin Kohou came in third with 2.3%, according to provisional results. |

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| | | <p>- Voter participation stood at about 50%, according to the electoral commission.</p> |
| <p>April 13, 2021</p> | <p>ALJAZEERA https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/4/13/benins-president-wins-re-election-with-86-official</p> | <p>Benin’s President Patrice Talon wins re-election with 86%</p> <p>-Electoral commission announces preliminary results of April 11 vote, says turnout stood at a little over 50 percent.</p> <p>-Benin’s electoral commission has declared incumbent Patrice Talon the winner of the country’s presidential election with 86 percent of the votes in the first round of a ballot boycotted by some opposition parties.</p> <p>-Talon, a cotton tycoon first elected in 2016, faced two rivals in Sunday’s poll, with most of his key opponents in exile or disqualified from running.</p> <p>-His opponents, Alassane Soumanou and Corentin Kohoue, got 11.29 and 2.25 percent respectively, according to provisional results announced by the commission on Tuesday. Turnout was about 50.17 percent.</p> <p>-Benin’s constitutional court must verify the final results.</p> <p>-This election was just folklore,” restaurant owner George Kpatchavi told AFP news agency. “We are not waiting for the results because they were already known in advance. After the elections, everything will return to order.”</p> <p>-An association of civil society groups, which deployed more than 1,400 election observers, said in its preliminary statement</p> |

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| | | on Sunday that “attempts to pressurize, intimidate, threaten, corrupt or harass voters were observed across the entire country”. |
| April 13, 2021 | INEC News https://twitter.com/search?q=INEC%20News&src=typed_query | <p>-President, Commission Electorale Nationale Autonome (CENA), Republic of Benin, Mr.Emmanuel Tiando has just announced the result of the Presidential Election held on 11th April 2021.</p> <p>INEC Chairman, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu and his team witnessed the event.</p> |
| April 16, 2021 | AA Africa https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/benin-court-validates-patrice-talon-s-election-victory/2210631 | <p>Benin court validates Patrice Talon’s election victory</p> <p>-Benin’s Constitutional Court on Thursday approved the provisional results of the April 11 presidential election, giving Patrice Talon a decisive victory against his two opponents.</p> <p>-Winning more than 86% of the vote, Talon dominated his competitors Alassane Soumanou with 11.29% and Corentin Kohoue with 02.35%.</p> <p>-The validation is provisional because the final decision will come after the processing of any admissible appeals within the next five days, the court said on national TV.</p> <p>-This is a formality of principle reported by the Constitutional Court. It also reported errors and irregularities found and corrected on the counting sheets.</p> |

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| | | <p>-However, these irregularities do not affect the “credibility, sincerity and transparency of the election,” said Joseph Djogbenou, the court’s president.</p> <p>-Shortly after the proclamation, Talon as president and his running mate Mariam Chabi Talata as vice president made speeches broadcast live on Facebook.</p> <p>“This vote is for me a signal of support for our common effort, a signal that together we can go even further,” Talon said.</p> <p>-He said he intends to continue the work accomplished during his first five years by installing “a new dynamic.”</p> |
| <p>April 16, 2021</p> | <p>BARRON’S https://www.barrons.com/articles/benin-court-clears-talon-s-re-election-as-rival-taken-into-custody-01618523414?tesla=y</p> | <p>Benin Court Clears Talon's Re-election As Rival Taken Into Custody</p> <p>-Benin's constitutional court approved President Patrice Talon's re-election on Thursday as associates of a key opposition figure said he was taken into custody by police following the weekend presidential vote.</p> <p>-Talon won 86.3 percent in Sunday's election that opposition leaders say they boycotted after a crackdown on the president's rivals left most of them exiled or disqualified from running in the ballot.</p> <p>-The West African nation's constitutional court said it had cleared the provisional election results giving Talon a victory</p> |

and any appeals could be made in the next five days before it approved a final tally.

-The court ruling came shortly before opposition figure, Joel Aivo, one of those barred from running in Sunday's election, was taken into custody by judicial police, close associates said. Aivo is expected to be appear in court on Friday, those sources said.

-Another Benin opposition leader who was barred from contesting Sunday's election was detained last month. Reckya Madougou was arrested on accusations she plotted to undermine the election with terrorist actions, a charge her lawyer dismissed as politically motivated.



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