Process for the

Election of the Director-General

2026

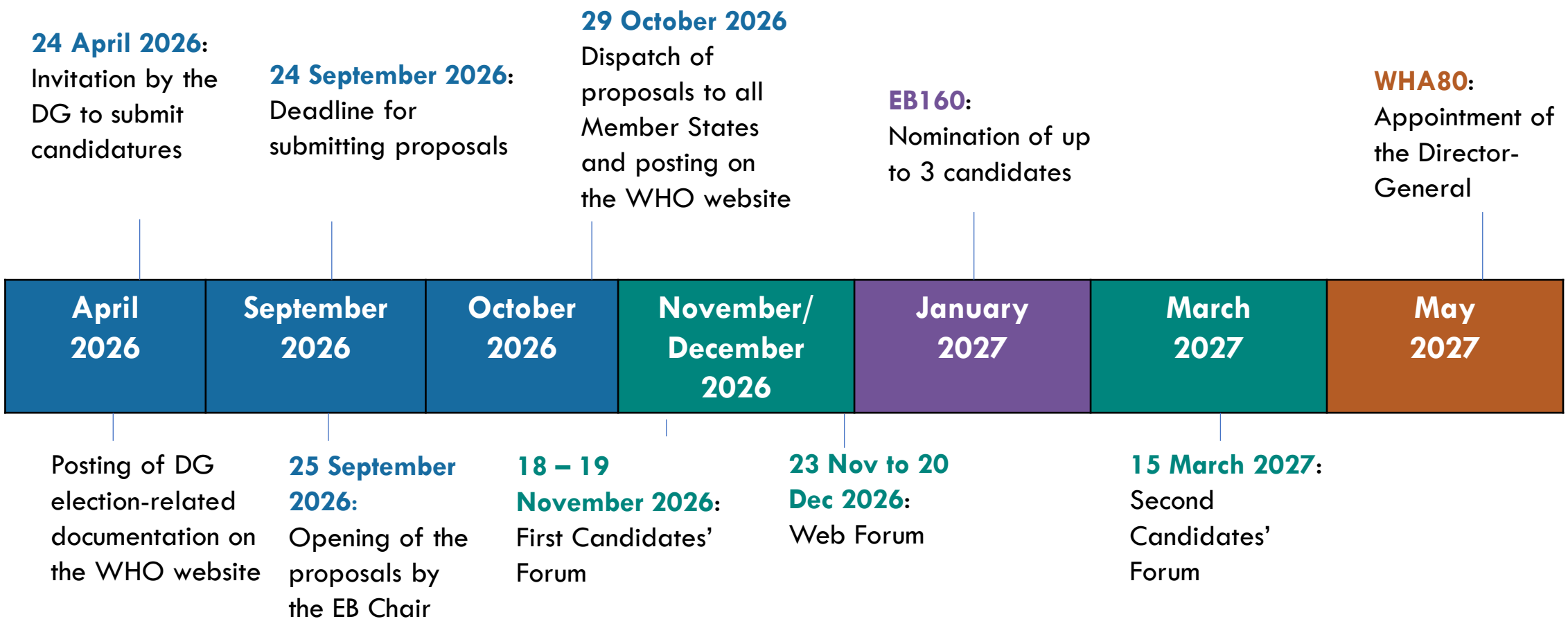
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2027

Member State Information Session

4 November 2026

DG Election Process: Timeline



DG Election Process: First Candidates' Forum

(18 and 19 November 2026)

- In Geneva on 18 and 19 November
- Non-decision-making platform for candidates to present themselves
- Interviews of candidates of 60 minutes:

up to10-minute presentations → up to 50-minute Q&A

Open to Member States and Associate Members, up to three persons per delegation in the Auditorium at any given time seated in regional blocks

Chaired by the EB Chair with the support of the EB officers and broadcast

Candidatures → **First & web forums** → EB160 nomination → Second forum → WHA80 appointment

DG Election Process: First Candidates' Forum – Q&A

(18 and 19 November 2026)

- All WHO Members receive color-coded tokens with the names of candidates
- Those wishing to ask a question insert the relevant color-coded token into their region's receptacle
- One color-coded token will be drawn from each region's receptacle. When all regions have asked one question, the remaining tokens will be pooled and drawn one at the time
- Members have up to 1 minute to ask a question. Multiple questions are not allowed
- Candidates have up to 3 minutes to reply
- Candidates attend their interview only

DG Election Process: Web Forum (November/December 2026)

- Password-protected IT platform for questions and answers
- Open to all Member States and candidates
- Runs from 23 November to 20 December
- First two weeks are for Q&A; last two weeks are for answers only
- The platform will remain available for read-only until the end of the election period

DG Election Process - EB160: Four Stages

1	2	3	4
Initial screening of candidates	Short-listing of five candidates	Interviews: presentation and questions from EB members	Nomination of up to three candidates from the short list

Consideration of proposals at private meetings, except for the interviews:

- Members of the Board, their alternates and advisers (up to three persons each)
- Member States not represented on the Board and Associate Members (one representative each - without the right to participate)
- Secretariat (essential staff only)

DG Election Process - EB160: Initial Screening

- To determine whether any candidate does not meet the criteria set by the Health Assembly in resolution WHA65.15:
    - *a strong technical background in a health field, including experience in public health; exposure to and extensive experience in international health; demonstrable leadership skills and experience; excellent communication and advocacy skills; demonstrable competence in organizational management; sensitivity to cultural, social and political differences; strong commitment to the mission and objectives of WHO; good health condition required of all staff members of the Organization.*
- Decision is taken by consensus
- The result of the medical examination of the candidates will be provided verbally by the Chairman of the Board

DG Election Process - EB160: Short-listing

- The short list will be composed of five candidates in accordance with decision EB100(7)
- Determined by successive secret ballots
- Members of the Board must vote for 5 candidates in the first round
- For each round, the candidate or candidates receiving the fewest votes, as well as any candidate not receiving a minimum proportion of the votes cast (set at 10 % of the ballot papers), is eliminated until the shortlist of 5 candidates is established
- In the case of a tie, which would otherwise lead to a short list of fewer than 5 names, a further ballot takes place between the tied candidates

DG Election Process - EB160: Short-listing – Steps (based on 7 candidates)

Secret ballot

7 candidates remain after initial screening. Members of the Board vote by secret ballot for 5 candidates in the first round.

Eliminations

After the first ballot, the candidate with the fewest votes (or two candidates in case of a tie for the lowest number of votes) is eliminated, as well as any candidate receiving less than 10% of the ballot papers cast.

Count

If 5 candidates remain, the shortlist is established. If more than 5 remain, a new ballot is held and the eliminations are repeated.

Tie check

If a tie would otherwise lead to a shortlist of fewer than 5 names, a further ballot takes place between the tied candidates.

→ Ballots continue until the shortlist of 5 candidates is established (decision EB100(7)).

1 Initial screening → **2 Short-listing** → 3 Interviews → 4 Nomination

DG Election Process - EB160: Scenarios 1a-1c (no tie)

Scenario 1
7 candidates
5 places on the short list
No tie for the fewest votes.

Scenario 1a | No tie, all above 10%: one elimination per ballot (7 → 6 → 5)



Ballot 1: 1 eliminated, 6 remain

Ballot 2: 1 eliminated

Scenario 1b | Two candidates below 10%: shortlist set in ballot 1 (7 → 5)



Ballot 1: F and G each receive less than 10% of the ballot papers cast.

Scenario 1c | One candidate with the fewest and below 10%: second ballot needed (7 → 6 → 5)



Ballot 1: only G eliminated (<10%), 6 remain

Ballot 2: F eliminated

Remaining / shortlisted

Eliminated

Letters A–G identify the seven candidates (illustration)

1 Initial screening → **2 Short-listing** → 3 Interviews → 4 Nomination

DG Election Process - EB160: Scenario 2a (tie)

Scenario 2

7 candidates

5 places on the short list

Two or more candidates tie for the fewest votes

Scenario 2a | Tie in ballot 1 between the two lowest: shortlist set at once (7 → 5)



Ballot 1: F and G tied for the fewest votes (all above 10%); eliminating both leaves exactly 5 names

Remaining / shortlisted

Eliminated

Tied for fewest votes

Letters A–G identify the seven candidates (illustration)

1 Initial screening → **2 Short-listing** → 3 Interviews → 4 Nomination

DG Election Process - EB160: Scenarios 2b and 2c (tie)

Scenario 2

7 candidates

5 places on the short list

Two or more candidates tie for the fewest votes.

Scenario 2b | Three-way tie in ballot 1: one eliminated, then a second ballot (7 → 6 → 5)

A B C D E F G → Further ballot: E, F, G: one out → Second ballot: 6 remaining: one out → Shortlist of 5

Ballot 1: E, F and G tied for the fewest votes (eliminating all three would leave only 4 names). A further ballot between the three candidates tying eliminates one; a second ballot with all remaining candidates (A–D and the two others) then eliminates one more, until the shortlist of 5 is established

Scenario 2c | One elimination in ballot 1, then a tie in ballot 2: further ballot (7 → 6 → 5)

A B C D E F G → A B C D E F G → Further ballot: E vs F → Shortlist of 5

Ballot 1: G eliminated (fewest votes)

Ballot 2: E and F tied for fewest

F eliminated

Remaining / shortlisted

Eliminated

Tied for fewest votes

Letters A–G identify the seven candidates (illustration)

1 Initial screening → **2 Short-listing** → 3 Interviews → 4 Nomination

DG Election Process - EB160: Interview modalities

- The order of the interviews is drawn by lot once the shortlist is determined
- Each interview will last not more than 60 minutes divided between:

an oral presentation of no more than 20 minutes → a question-and-answer session of no more than 40 minutes

Interviews are broadcast on WHO website

DG Election Process - EB160: Nomination

- The list of nominees will comprise up to three candidates
- It will be drawn up by secret ballot
- Members of the Board must vote for the number of candidates equal to the number of places to be filled, i.e. three candidates in the first ballot
- Candidates must secure a simple majority of the members present and voting

DG Election Process - EB160: Nomination

- If the number of candidates obtaining the required majority is less than the number of places to be filled, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated; and another ballot takes place between the candidates that have neither been elected nor eliminated. This will be repeated until the Board has nominated three candidates.
- If two candidates tie for the least number of votes, a separate ballot shall be held between them and the candidate receiving the least number of votes shall be eliminated.
- If more than three candidates secure a simple majority of the members present and voting in the first round of voting:
  - In line with previous practice, the interpretation set out in the Draft Standard Rules of Procedure for United Nations Conferences will be followed;
  - Those candidates, in a number not exceeding the number of places to be filled, obtaining in the first ballot a majority of the votes cast and the largest number of votes will be nominated.

DG Election Process - EB160: Nomination - Scenario 1

First ballot

Three candidates secure a simple majority of the members present and voting at the first ballot.

Majority reached



Candidate 1 Candidate 2 Candidate 3

3 candidates obtain a simple majority

Nominees

The list of nominees is established.

→ **Three candidates secure the majority at the first ballot: the list of nominees is established.**

1 Initial screening ➡ 2 Short-listing ➡ 3 Interviews ➡ **4 Nomination**

DG Election Process - EB160: Scenario 2 - Overview

First ballot

Fewer candidates obtain the required majority than there are places to be filled.

Elimination

The candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated.

If two candidates tie for the fewest votes, a separate ballot is held between them and the one with the fewest votes is eliminated.

Second ballot

Another ballot takes place between the candidates that have neither been elected nor eliminated.

The process is repeated until the Board has nominated three candidates.

DG Election Process - EB160: Nomination - Scenario 2 - Examples

Fewer than 3 candidates obtain the required majority

Example A

2 candidates have obtained the required majority

1st ballot



2 candidates obtain the required majority

Elimination



3 candidates remain: the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated.

2nd ballot



Another ballot takes place between the 2 remaining candidates for the last place to be filled and a candidate obtains the required majority. The list of three nominated candidates is established.

Example B

1 candidate has obtained the required majority

1st ballot



1 candidate obtains the required majority

Elimination



4 candidates remain: the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated. Here, two candidates tie for the fewest votes

Tie ballot



A separate ballot is held between the two tied candidates; the one receiving the fewest votes is eliminated

2nd ballot



Another ballot takes place between the 3 remaining candidates for the 2 places to be filled. Results: 1) two candidates obtain the required majority or 2) one candidate obtains the required majority and the candidate with the fewest vote is eliminated. In the latter case, a further ballot will be held involving the remaining candidate only.

Obtained the required majority | Remains in the race | Eliminated | Tied for fewest votes

1 Initial screening → 2 Short-listing → 3 Interviews → **4 Nomination**

DG Election Process - EB160: Nomination - Scenario 3

First round

More than three candidates secure a simple majority of the members present and voting

Practice

The interpretation set out in the Draft Standard Rules of Procedure for United Nations Conferences is followed

Tie

If two candidates tie for the largest number of votes in a way that would prevent the establishment of the nomination list, a separate ballot shall be held between them and the candidate receiving the least number of votes shall be eliminated.

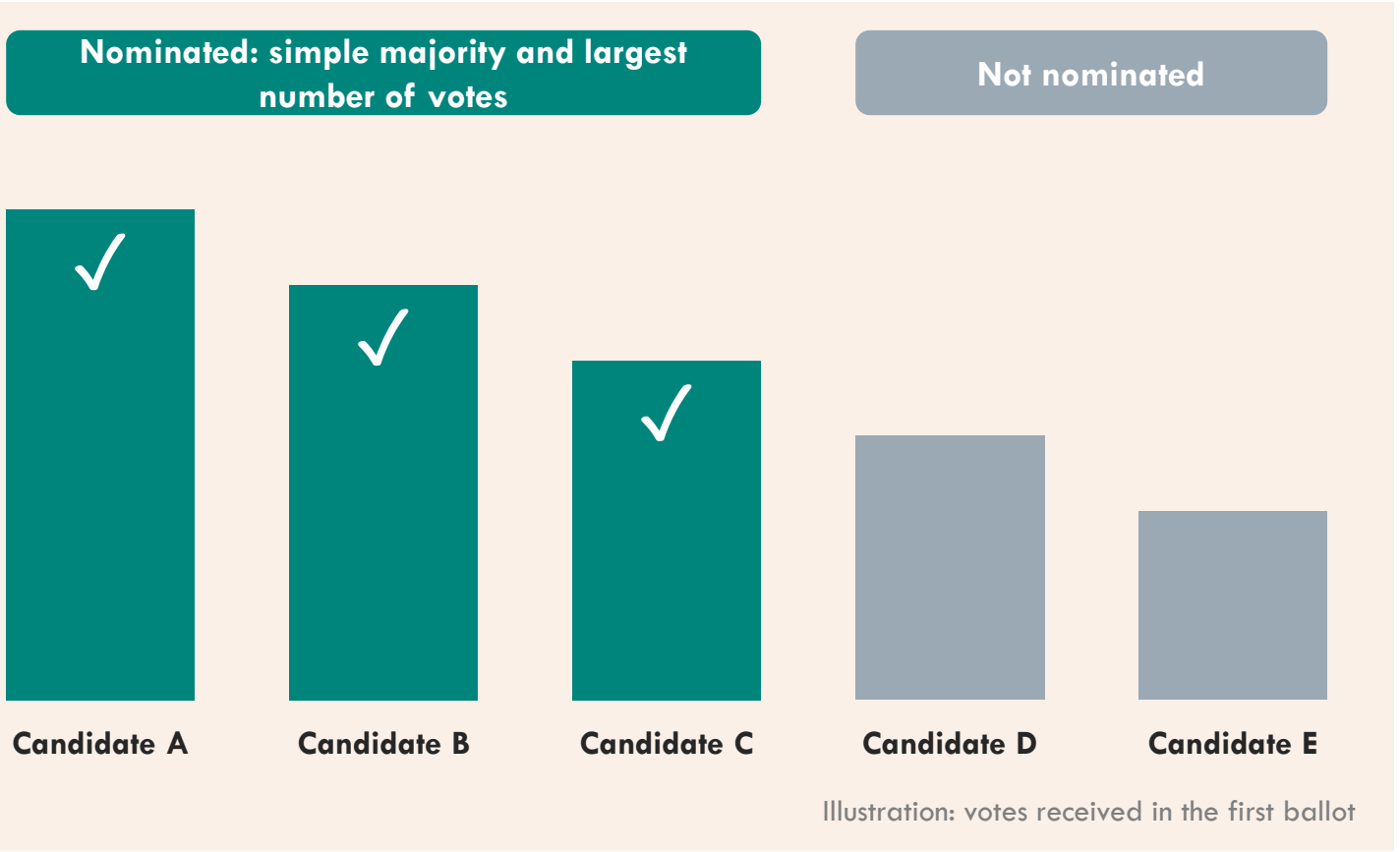


Illustration: votes received in the first ballot

→ Candidates obtaining a majority of the votes cast and the largest number of votes are nominated, up to the number of places to be filled.

1 Initial screening ➡ 2 Short-listing ➡ 3 Interviews ➡ **4 Nomination**

DG Election Process – EB160 Secret ballot

All EB members present in the room and wishing to vote can do so

1. The Chair appoints two tellers from among EB members' delegations before voting begins. The tellers` role is to discern and accurately record the intent of the voters
2. After the tellers have counted the votes with the support of the Legal Counsel, they will complete a voting record sheet
3. The Legal Counsel delivers the voting record sheet to the Chair
4. The Chair reports the results of the secret ballot to the Board, announcing the number of votes obtained by each candidate and who among the candidates was successful

DG Election Process - EB160: Candidate Pathway

Private meeting	Private meeting	Public meeting	Private meeting
1 Screening	**2 Shortlisting**	**3 Interview**	**4 Nomination**
WHA65.15 criteria Decision by consensus	Secret ballot Five candidates	Presentation and Q&A Up to 60 minutes	Secret ballot Up to three nominees
<u>Retained</u> Proceeds to shortlisting	<u>Retained</u> On the shortlist for interview		<u>Nominated</u> Goes forward to the WHA
<u>Not retained</u> Excluded at screening	<u>Not retained</u> Eliminated under the ballot rules		<u>Not nominated</u> No place on the final list

Summary of outcomes. Nomination may require further ballots before the final list is complete.

DG Election Process: Second Candidates' Forum (15 March 2027)

- To be held on 15 March 2027
- Non-decision-making platform for candidates to present themselves
- Format of the meeting will be discussed at EB160 in January 2027
- Open to Member States and Associate Members, chaired by the EB Chair with the support of the EB Officers, and broadcast

Candidatures ➡ First & web forums ➡ EB160 nomination ➡ **Second forum** ➡ WHA80 appointment

DG Election Process: Second Candidates' Forum - Potential Format

For consideration:

- Interactive debate involving all candidates simultaneously
- Moderated by individuals selected by the EB officers in accordance with the following principles:
  - Diversity of geographical representation, gender, age and professional backgrounds
  - Demonstrated experience in facilitating high-level fora
  - Strong understanding of current global health issues, including the mandate, functions and governance of WHO and the global health ecosystem
- Questions to be devised by the moderators

DG Election Process: Appointment by WHA80 (May 2027)

1. Consideration of nominations at a private meeting (except candidates' statements)
2. Candidates' statements (but no Q&A) before the vote for the appointment
3. Appointment by secret ballot
4. Contract of appointment to be approved by the WHA, and signed jointly by the DG and WHA President

Term of office: 5 years; eligible for reappointment once

Term starts: mid-August 2027

Candidatures ➡ First & web forums ➡ EB160 nomination ➡ Second forum ➡ **WHA80 appointment**

DG Election Process: Additional Information

- Information material, including a Handbook and a FAQ document, is available at the following link:

  https://www.who.int/about/governance/election-of-the-who-director-general/documents

- Please direct any additional inquiries related to the Director-General election process to the following:

  dgelection@who.int

THANK YOU