



August 17 • Bolivia

# Bolivia General Election 2025

## Background

On August 17, Bolivia will hold general elections to elect the President, Vice President, and members of the Chamber of Deputies and the Chamber of Senators. A runoff will be held between the two leading presidential candidates on October 18, should no candidate obtain a majority of the votes or a ten-point margin.

Bolivia has experienced significant political turmoil since its 2019 general election, which triggered widespread unrest following the controversial victory of Evo Morales. Accusations of electoral fraud were raised by opposition leaders and international observers, including the Organization of American States, which identified irregularities in the election process. This sparked nationwide violent protests, including civic organizations, opposition members, university students, and activist groups, demanding new elections.

The 2025 elections are taking place amid deep political polarization and economic challenges. Former President Morales remains a central figure after being barred from running, but continues to claim candidacy, prompting violent protests. Recent demonstrations have led to casualties and frequent road blockades, with further protest activity **probable** as the election approaches. Political instability is likely to escalate, particularly if the election outcome is disputed or requires a runoff.

## Analysis

### Threats and Risks

## Protests and Violent Clashes

Demonstrations by pro-Morales supporters have increased since Morales was officially barred from running in November 2024. Protests, particularly in major cities such as La Paz and Cochabamba, have frequently escalated into violent confrontations with officials and counter-protesters. Several of these incidents have resulted in deaths, injuries, and the use of crowd-control measures such as tear gas. Departments where the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) party has secured the majority of electoral votes in recent elections, including La Paz, Oruro, Potosi, Cochabamba and Chuquisaca, are more likely to experience protests, due to Morales' historical ties to the party.

## Road Blockades and Supply Chain Impact

Road blockades are **probable** in the event of protests. Pro-Morales supporters have repeatedly organized blockades along national highways and urban areas, causing significant disruptions to supply chains and the transportation of goods, particularly fuel. These disruptions have caused multiday delivery delays, with estimated losses of USD 50 billion per day. In 2024, officials projected exports would drop from USD 10 billion to as low as USD 8.5 billion due to blockades, negatively affecting foreign exchange. A majority of these blockades have occurred in Cochabamba, where Morales boasts a strong support base. In June, key roads in central and southern Bolivia were blocked, including main routes into La Paz and those connecting Cochabamba with Santa Cruz. Some blockades involved the use of small explosives. Critical infrastructure, such as airports and government buildings, will face elevated risks, as they have frequently been targeted amid ongoing political unrest. In June, Morales supporters seized the Chimoré International Airport in Cochabamba, causing damage to its infrastructure.

## Polling Disruptions and Voter Intimidation

On election day, it is possible that strategic road blockades or targeted sabotage could disrupt voting. In 2019, several polling locations were singled out, with protesters in the cities of Tarija and Sucre setting fire to vote count stations and burning ballot boxes. Although this violence mainly occurred after the vote, it is possible that polling locations, election workers, or key constituencies may become targets before or during the official voting period, causing disruptions. Campaign events are also likely targets. In July, protesters violently disrupted political events in Caranavi, La Paz and Yapacani, Santa Cruz. Additionally, Morales has preemptively labelled the voting process **"fraudulent"** and **"illegitimate"**,

calling on his supporters to spoil their ballots and initiate a “null vote.” In the case of a successful null vote, the likelihood of demonstrations and blockades may increase further.

## Coup D'état

Although **unlikely**, another coup attempt remains possible given Bolivia's history and current instability. The 2024 failed coup has set a precedent and a new attempt - whether led by military factions, political actors, or mobilized Morales supporters - remains a risk, especially if the election outcome is disputed. Such an event could trigger protests, political violence, and widespread road blockades. Related scenarios may include political figures alleging a coup attempt or electoral fraud to mobilize supporters for prolonged protests. Following his resignation in 2019, Morales accused the armed forces of staging a “coup”, prompting demonstrations from his supporters.

## Samdesk Incidents

- **June 26, 2024:** Coup attempt thwarted in Bolivia. At least 8 injured in protest
- **October 27, 2024:** Assassination attempt targets former President Evo Morales in Cochabamba, Bolivia
- **October 29, 2024:** Pro-Morales protesters injure at least 13 officers in Mairana, Bolivia
- **November 1, 2024:** Reports of armed Morales supporters take control of military facility, holding soldiers captive near Cochabamba, Bolivia
- **May 16, 2025:** Pro-Morales protesters clash with police in La Paz

## Major Actors

### Former President Evo Morales

- Served as president of Bolivia from 2006 to 2019 and is currently barred from seeking re-election after reaching the constitutional term limit

### President Luis Arce

- Current president since 2020 and former Minister of Economy under Morales, leading the Movement for Socialism (MAS) party

### Former President Jeanine Áñez

- Interim president in 2019 after Morales' resignation, later sentenced to ten years in prison for allegedly seizing power unconstitutionally

**Samuel Doria Medina**

- Businessman and National Unity Front leader, running in the 2025 election and currently leading the polls

**Jorge Quiroga**

- Former president from 2001 to 2002 and vice president, now a 2025 Liberty Alliance candidate polling in second place

**General Juan José Zúñiga**

- Former army general who led a failed coup attempt against President Arce in 2024

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**Stream Suggestions**

Topics

- ✓ Flash Alerts
- ✓ Emergency and Safety
- ✓ Geopolitics
- ✓ Infrastructure
- ✓ Election Safety

Locations

La Paz, El Alto, Cochabamba, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Oruro, Sucre, Potosi

Incident filters

- Planned Protest
- Public Safety Incident
- Public Disruption
- Blockade
- Coup

Keywords (Optional)

- Morales
- Arce
- manifestaciones
- protestas
- elecciones

Key Dates

**May-June:** Pro-Morales protests across Bolivia result in violent clashes with state forces and counter-protesters, resulting in the death of at least four first responders

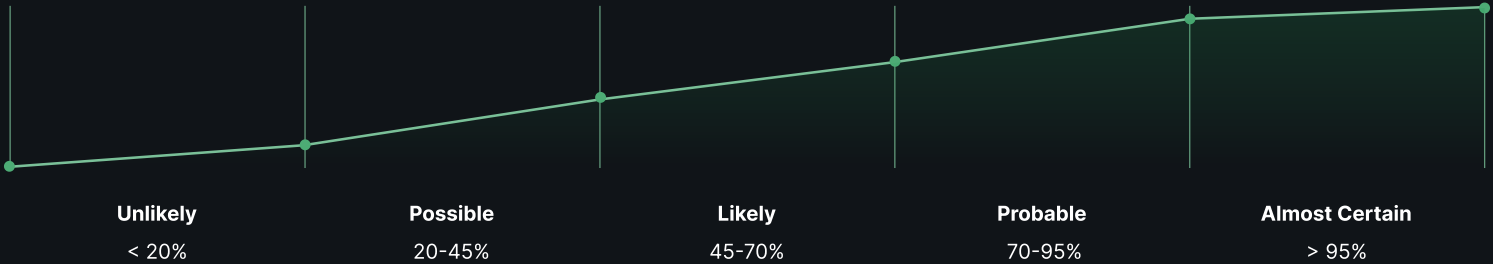
**August 17:** First round of presidential voting

**October 19:** Runoff election scheduled if no majority or ten-point margin

PDF Version

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What we mean when we say:



Resources

## X List

Twitter/X list

## Sources

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