

Quick update on the referendum

8th August 2016

- **Official comments from the Election Commission** late Sunday said that with 94% of the votes counted, 61.4% of them indicated an approval for the military-drafted constitution, while the rest of the 38.6% voted 'no'. The turnout was about 55% of the 50.2 million people eligible to vote, similar to the turnout ratio seen in past ballots. The final result is expected to be out in the next few days.
- **There is a clear implication in all of this:** With the likely passing of the referendum to make the military-drafted constitution legal, the next step of holding a democratic election late next year is now in sight. However, observers have commented that a wholly-appointed Senate and other unelected bodies will now have a say over Thai politics, and would also likely result in weak coalition administration.
- **Despite the existence of mass-media criticisms and other pockets of domestic rejections** of the draft by opposition parties, the >60% vote mandate seen suggests that there is indeed a general satisfaction by the people with the governance by the junta over the last few years. This sense of approval is reinforced especially when the Thais on the street reportedly had little knowledge of the lengthy constitution content as campaigning was disallowed.

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