

# Elections



Relations with key political actors of BiH are of vital importance for the successful implementation of Mission's political and programmatic objectives and as such, remain at the top of the Mission's priorities. Through the Political Outreach and Elections Unit, the Mission is monitoring political and other relevant activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region and assesses trends which might affect the political/security situation and its political impact on the Mission's mandate implementation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Unit also assists in the formulation of the Mission's responses to complex, controversial and sensitive political and operational issues, and leads the execution of appropriate action. Through regular meetings with the most relevant political actors and State, entities and local level institutions, the Mission

preserves and further improves working relations with relevant BiH stakeholders. The initial focus of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (Mission) on conducting elections originated in the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement before related competencies were transferred to the Central Election Commission of Bosnia

and Herzegovina (CEC) in 2002. Since this landmark, the Mission continues to work on broader election-related initiatives. Guided by the recommendations of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the Council of Europe's Group of States Against Corruption (GRECO), the Mission supports the development of amendments to legislation related to elections and political party financing.

The Mission works with the CEC to bolster the integrity of the elections and to strengthen the technical capacities of the election administration, ensuring integrity and transparency.

With the support of the Mission and international donors, through an Extra-budgetary project "Supporting the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in conducting general elections in BiH in compliance with international standards on democratic elections", the Central Election Commission was able to introduce, for the first time, translucent ballot boxes during the 2018 General Elections. Furthermore, the Mission organized training for all Municipal Election Commission members on the use of election results reporting platforms and improved CEC software.

Most recently, with support of the US Mission to the OSCE and the UN, the Mission implemented an election-related Extra-budgetary Project titled "Improving the 2022 electoral process in BiH in line with the ODIHR recommendations". This aimed to improve the 2022 electoral process in BiH in a holistic manner, building the related capacities of, inter alia, the electoral administration, judiciary, police agencies, and citizens alike.

With the support of the U.S. Government, the Mission implemented a project supporting the CEC through the development of software for the online registration of by-mail voters, political parties and candidates, and election observers. Such applications significantly reduce the risk of fraud, limit human error, decrease costs and the workload of the CEC Secretariat, and substantially increase the transparency of the electoral process.

During the high-level political talks on electoral reform held in Neum and Sarajevo in January and March 2022, the Mission provided substantial support in discussions on amendments to the BiH Election Law. The Mission continues to work with partners at all levels to improve the integrity of voting and, above all, build citizens' trust in this crucial process.

The Mission will continue to support the CEC, relevant institutions and CSOs to further align legislation and practice with OSCE commitments and key international standards, and encourage the full implementation of related legislation and ODIHR recommendations.


Monitoring the judicial response to efforts to jeopardize the integrity of the election process.

In relation to the 2020 local elections and the 2022 general elections, the Mission utilized its extensive trial monitoring experience and capacity to monitor the criminal justice system's response to activities that had the potential to jeopardize the integrity of the election process. Key issues identified by the Mission include inefficient processing of reported cases; poor levels of co-operation amongst relevant actors, including an inclination to trivialize such crimes; inconsistent prosecutorial and judicial practices, including lenient sanctioning policies; and an inadequate system of data recording. These findings will serve as the basis of the Mission's related advocacy with the Central Election Commission and the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of BiH.



For more information, scan the QR code.



 **OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina**  
Fra Andela Zvizdovica 1, UNITIC Tower A  
71000 Sarajevo  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Tel: +387 33 952 100  
Fax: +387 33 442 479  
press.ba@osce.org  
www.osce.org/bih

