

Elections



Relations with key political actors in BiH are vital for the successful implementation of the Mission's political and programmatic objectives and remain at the top of the Mission's priorities. Through the Political Outreach and Elections Unit, the Mission monitors political and other relevant activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region, assessing trends that might affect the political/security situation and their impact on the Mission's mandate implementation.

The Unit assists in formulating the Mission's responses to complex, controversial and sensitive political and operational issues, and leads the execution of appropriate action. Through regular meetings with key political actors and State, entity 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 continues to support the CEC BiH, relevant institutions and civil society organizations (CSOs) to further align legislation and practice with OSCE commitments and key international standards, and to encourage the full implementation of related legislation and ODIHR recommendations.

Strengthening the Integrity of Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Mission continues to support the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina (CEC BiH) in enhancing the integrity and transparency of elections and in strengthening the technical capacities of election administration.

The Mission's electoral assistance focuses on four key pillars:

- Capacity building of election administration;
- Introduction of election technologies;
- Voter outreach and public awareness; and
- Strengthening institutions responsible for resolving electoral disputes and preventing and addressing election fraud.

Through the extra-budgetary project "Improving the Integrity of the 2024 and 2026 Electoral Processes in BiH in Line with ODIHR Recommendations and International Standards" (the Project), implemented with the support of international donors, the Mission and the CEC BiH have achieved important milestones.

During 2024 and 2025, the Mission supported several rounds of trainings of over 500 members of Municipal Election Commissions, over 220 controllers of election results

and over 4300 Presidents and Deputy Presidents of Polling Station Committees. The Mission has also supported production of manuals for training of MECs and PSCs.

For the first time in Bosnia and Herzegovina, biometric verification and identification of voters were piloted during the 2024 Local Elections at all 138 polling stations in Brčko District BiH. The Mission organized comprehensive training for biometric device operators and voting simulations for citizens, ensuring a smooth and transparent piloting process. This initiative represents a crucial step towards the nationwide introduction of biometric technologies for the 2026 General Elections, as well as a major capacity-building achievement for the CEC BiH and election administration.

With the support of the UK Government, the Mission has also assisted the CEC BiH in upgrading its IT applications for the online registration of political entities, by-mail voters, and election observers ahead of the 2026 elections. In addition, the Mission

supported the development of an IT application for the online recruitment of Polling Station Committee (PSC) members. These digital tools significantly reduce opportunities for electoral fraud, minimize human error, lower administrative costs and workload, and enhance overall transparency of the electoral process.

Building on ODIHR's recommendations, the Mission has sustained its engagement in voter outreach activities of CEC BiH to modernize them and make them more systematic and efficient. The Mission continues to support CEC BiH's voter outreach efforts, including mobilizing citizens to vote, organizing media outreach campaigns, hosting CEC Open Days for first-time voters (FTV) and marginalized groups, and facilitating public debates among political party candidates.

Another important component of the project focuses on raising public awareness about electoral fraud, improving coordination among bodies handling electoral disputes, and strengthening understanding, reporting, and prosecution of electoral offences in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Together, these efforts contribute to a more credible, transparent, and accountable electoral environment in the country.

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 to encourage the full implementation of related legislation and ODIHR recommendations.

For more information, scan the QR code.



OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Fra Andela Zvizdovića 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

Follow OSCE Mission to BiH

