

# Unified Final Report of Observations For the Elections in Bosnia and Hercegovina

The joint final report was made on the basis of original final reports from:

- League for Election Monitoring, Mostar
- Citizen's Monitoring of Elections, Banja Luka
- League for Election Monitoring, Tuzla
- Forum for Democracy, Sarajevo

**Members of the League for Election Monitoring, Mostar are:**

- Sparks of Life, Prozor-Rama
- Local Red Cross – Doljani, Jablanica
- Young Bridge, Mostar
- Under the Same Sun, Jablanica
- Friends, Kostajonica Konjic
- With Heart, Mostar
- Swiss House, Mostar
- Association of Citizen Pensioners, Konjic
- Association of Citizen Pensioners, Jablanica
- Union of Students, Mostar
- Women of Mostar
- Feet of Hope Bijelo Polje, Mostar
- Women of Konjic
- Centers for Civic Initiative

**Members of the coalition Citizen's Monitoring of Elections, Banja Luka are  
NGOs and informal groups of citizens from:**

## **Banja Luka:**

- Centers for Civic Initiative
- Helsinki Citizens' Assembly
- Women's Section – Army of Republika Srpska
- Union of Women of the City of Banja Luka
- United Women
- Association Krajina
- Golden Autumn
- Women's Action – Vidra
- Association MOST
- Association of Women-Duga
- Citizens' Esperanto Association La Mondo
- Group of citizens from community centers of Karanovic, Srpske Toplice and Rosulje

## **Bijeljina**

- Citizens' Voice
- Helsinki Board for Human Rights
- Women's Association "Hope"
- Golden Autumn

## **Celinac**

- Association of Women
- Group of citizens from the community centers of Josalka, Stara Dubrava and Branasci

## **Doboj**

- Citizens' Voice
- Golden Autumn
- Bona Vita
- Association of Teachers
- Our Children
- Vucjak Podnovlje

**Kozarska Dubica**

- Association of Women – Majka Knezopolijka
- Group of citizens from the community centers of Knezica, and Demirovac

**Laktasi**

- DOC
- Group of citizens from the community centers of Aleksandrovac, Trn and Maglajani

**Modrica**

- Buducnost (Future)
- Zdravo da ste

**Mrkonjic Grad**

- Youth Organization
- Group of citizens from the community centers of Bjelajci and Podbrdo

**Prijedor**

- Citizens' Voice
- Dobrotvor
- Sanus
- Zdravo da ste
- Golden Autumn
- Group of citizens from the community centers of Urije, Orlovci, Petrovo and Rakelici

**Ribnik-Srpski Kljuc**

- Youth Organization Krug

**Srpski Brod**

- Scout Squad Petar Kocic

**Srpski Sanski Most**

- Association of Women Lana

**Sipovo**

- Youth Organization
- Association of Women
- Group of Citizens

**Teslic**

- Youth Union

**Srbac**

- Group of citizens from the community centers of Kukulja

**Jezero**

- Group of Citizens

**Novi Grad**

- Group of citizens from the community centers of Dobrljin, Svodna, Rudica and Vodicevo

**Gradiska**

- Group of Citizens

**Kotor Varos**

- Group of citizens from the community center of Grabovica

**Derventa**

- Group of Citizens

**Samac**

- Group of Citizens

**Members of the League for Election Monitoring Tuzla are:**

- Land Mine Survivors' Network
- Muscular Dystrophy Association
- Cantonal Red Cross
- IVA
- War Military Invalids –Kalesija
- Union of Veterans, JOB- Kalesija
- Office for Human Rights, Youth Section "Y" Tuzla
- Association of Soldiers -Zivinice
- Forum of Women, Gracanica
- Serb Civic Council – GRP Tuzla
- Centers for Civic Initiatives

- Board of Women - UMBIT
- Association of Citizens for Development of Democratic Civil Society “Demokrat” –Stupari
- Center for Women, Dona Zar
- Association of Citizen Pensioners – Srebrenik
- Organization of Sehid Families and those of Fallen Soldiers
- Children’s Land
- Association of Pensioners Tuzla
- Association of Women – Tuzla
- Organization of War Military Invalids “Sons of Bosnia” – Lukavac
- BOSPO
- VESTA
- Forum of Citizens – Gradacac
- Red Cross –Srebrenik
- Organization of Demobilized Soldiers’ Tuzla
- Committee for Human Rights
- Organization of Women Bosniaks - Gracanica
- Organization of Civilian Invalids – Tuzla

**Members of the Forum for Democracy, Sarajevo are:**

- Union of Women - Zar
- Center for Peace
- Association of Pensioners of the Federation of BiH
- Association of Citizens, “Warm House”
- CIP
- Serb Civic Council –GPR, BiH
- IMC

**Our goals are:**

- Organization of election monitoring
- Reporting results of election monitoring
- Watching for violations of electoral rules and regulations
- Increasing trust in the electoral process
- Achieving general democratization
- Gathering NGOs to undertake concrete initiatives
- Increasing the public profile of NGOs and protecting the interests of members of NGOs
- Involving citizens who are not political party members in the process of democratization.
- Outreach to citizens to involve them in democratic changes.

**Principles of our work are:**

- Non-partisan and non-governmental action
- Non-profit status
- Responsibility and objectivity
- Transparency and independence
- Multiethnicity, and equality on the basis of sex, age and location
- Equality of NGOs in the process of election monitoring

**METHODS:**

Considering that, to strengthen democracy, it is necessary to involve as many NGOS and citizens as possible, we decided to organize citizen election monitoring. We invited all interested citizens and NGOs to participate, the leaders of which formed four election-monitoring groups in Mostar, Banja Luka, Tuzla and Sarajevo. Each coalition set up its own working groups with designated responsibilities, as follows: planning and recruiting, designing materials, coordinating and writing grant proposals, and outreach.

Individual NGOs, as well as the working groups, recruited volunteers. The coalitions created materials, including posters and brochures and held regional press conferences, at which we presented our project and invited citizens to join us.

Election monitors attended trainings at which they signed a pledge containing a code of conduct for monitors. The trainings were conducted by coordinators who were themselves previously trained by NDI-CCI. In addition to training the monitors, the coordinators were responsible for coordinating a certain number of polling stations as well as visiting those places, to ensure that everything was in place in the field. During training, volunteer-monitors received information on voting and counting and on aspects of these processes to which they should pay particular attention. The monitors studied a monitoring manual, which they also used to report what they saw. Thus prepared, and with badges indicating their affiliations with NGO monitoring groups, and OSCE accreditations the monitors went to the polling stations September 12th and 13th.

We managed to recruit 2479 volunteers-monitors who covered 865 polling stations throughout BiH. Our monitors were present in the majority of polling stations, working in two shifts. Coordinators visited polling stations where our monitors were present.

Two days after the closing of the polling stations each group held a press conference. They presented their preliminary reports and announced plans to prepare final regional reports and a national report for all of BiH.

## ACTIVITIES

### A. Table - Overview of Coverage of Municipalities by Regions

#### League for Election Monitoring , Mostar

Municipality	Number of Monitors	Number of Covered Polling Stations	Number of Polling Stations	Percentage of Coverage of Polling Stations
Konjic	59	28	32	88
Prozor-Rama	8	5	15	33
Jablinica	30	12	12	100
Mostar North	14	8	10	80
Mostar Old	33	18	18	100

Town				
Mostar South East	10	5	5	100
Mostar West	10	5	14	36
Mostar SouthWest	21	10	22	45
Mostar South	4	2	4	50
Mostar Central Zone	2	1	1	100
Caplina	19	10	21	48
Stolac	8	4	11	40
Citluk	0	0	10	0
Ravno	0	0	2	0
Neum	0	0	4	0
TOTAL	218	108	181	60

### **Citizen's Monitoring of Elections, Banja Luka**

Municipality	Number of Monitors	Number of Covered Polling Stations	Number of Polling Stations	Percentage of Polling Stations Covered
Banja Luka	240	67	73	92
Prijedor	127	39	43	91
Novi Grad	61	22	22	100
Kozarska Dubica	41	14	22	64
Srpski Sanski Most	17	3	3	100
Gradiska	68	21	40	52
Laktasi	19	4	14	28
Teslic	92	26	26	100
Celinac	24	9	9	100
Mrkonjic Grad	8	3	16	19
Jezero	4	1	1	100
Sipovo	27	9	9	100
Ribnik	7	6	7	86
Bijelina	77	35	35	100
Doboj	127	39	39	100
Modrica	49	17	17	100
Srpski Brod	33	10	10	100
Petrovo	14	5	5	100
Samac	27	15	15	100
TOTAL	1072	345	406	85

### League for Election Monitoring, Tuzla

Municipality	Number of Monitors	Number of Covered Polling Stations	Number of Polling Stations	Percentage of Polling Stations Covered
Tuzla	213	73	73	100
Lukavac	114	21	21	100
Gradacac	45	16	17	94
Zivinice	85	21	27	78
Kalesija	77	18	18	100
Teocak	10	3	3	100
Sapna	28	9	9	100
Gracanica	79	25	25	100
Doboj-Istok	17	6	6	100
Brcko	40	11	18	61
Celic	19	10	10	100
Kladanj	54	16	16	100
Srebrenik	62	18	18	100
Banovici	47	15	15	100
TOTAL	889	262	276	95

### Forum for Democracy, Sarajevo

Municipality	Number of Monitors	Number of Covered Polling Stations	Number of Polling Stations	Percentage of Polling Stations Covered
Stari Grad	50	25	37	68
Center	74	37	42	88
Novo Sarajevo	68	34	47	72
Novi Grad	72	36	50	72
Ilidja	18	9	14	64
Hadzici	8	5	14	29
Vogosca	10	5	13	39
Trnovo	0	0	7	0
Ilijas	0	0	16	0
TOTAL	300	150	210	62

### B. Monitors paid attention to the following:

- Illegal voting
- Persons unable to vote
- Fraud and pressure
- The process of voting and counting

- Timing of events in polling stations
- Other violations of electoral rules

## **SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS:**

The first thing our monitors observed was late delivery of the Final Voter Registers (FVRs) in all four regions. This often led to huge numbers of people voting by tendered ballot. In the 865 polling stations we covered, a total of 43,500 tendered ballots were cast. Final Voter Registers were also incomplete. Our monitors also observed a large number of invalid ballots, about 3000 in Hercegovina-Neretva canton, about 17,500 in the Banja Luka area, about 15,000 in Tuzla-Podrinje canton and about 12,000 in Sarajevo canton, a total of about 47,500.

We were surprised to see that a large number of people did not know how to mark the ballot. According to our monitors' reports, the number of people needing help was over 19,100. Our monitors observed political party propaganda inside and within 50 meters of polling places in all four regions. One quite serious type of violation observed by our monitors was cases of one person marking the ballot for a number of voters.

In certain polling stations we also saw serious violations of electoral rules during the counting process. This was especially pronounced in one polling station in Hercegovina-Neretva canton. We also observed incorrect of OSCE materials in Brcko, where candidate Vladimir Gojer was identified as an SDS candidate instead of as an SDP candidate.

In sum, our monitors' observations indicate that these incidents were isolated; thus, we conclude that they could not have greatly influenced the results of the elections. Our monitors did observe that international supervisors had insufficient training and information. They often failed to react to violations of electoral rules that our monitors observed, and to the actions of polling station chairpersons. Our monitors were dissatisfied with the use of pencils in the voting and counting. We were concerned that this allowed for manipulation of votes. A similar situation occurred during the process of sorting and counting in Sarajevo, when forms were filled out in pencil.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Organizers of the elections should simplify the ballots and methods for marking ballots. In other words, previous systems of marking ballots by circling or making an "x" was much more effective. Better education of voters is also needed to reduce the number of invalid ballots, as the number of invalid ballots in these elections was high. We also recommend that the Final Voter Registers be finalized as early as possible.
2. The flow of information inside the election-organizing system should be improved. Many polling station committees were not informed of the presence of domestic monitors, although all relevant authorities were eventually informed in time.

3. We point out the incompleteness and late arrival of the FVRs on the first day of elections. Organizers of the elections should do everything they can to ensure that FVRs are completed, in alphabetical order and delivered on time to polling stations.
4. If international supervisors are present at the next elections they should be well trained, authoritative and dedicated to ensuring free and fair elections.
5. Permanent electoral rules should be more specific, all materials related to the elections are uniform throughout BiH and all election materials should be printed one month early.
6. The deadline for filing complaints should be extended.
7. Pencils should not be used in the next elections.
8. The NGO sector should be more actively involved in creating electoral rules and regulations.

## **CONCLUSIONS:**

General opinion holds that the recent elections represent a step towards normalization of society. The fact that the election was held without major incidents indicates people's readiness to solve problems in a democratic way. Our involvement during the elections was necessary and important and achieved its purpose. Although the violations of election rules described above did not happen often enough to affect the fairness of the elections, some of them were very serious. We would like to believe that our involvement, which is explained through this report, will lead to better organization and conduct of future elections.