



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

LOCAL ELECTIONS

2 June 2024

ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report



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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following an invitation to observe the 2 June 2024 local elections, and in accordance with its mandate, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) established an Election Observation Mission (EOM) on 30 April. The ODIHR EOM assessed the compliance of the election processes with OSCE commitments and other standards for democratic elections, as well as domestic legislation.

In its Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions issued on 3 June, the ODIHR EOM concluded that the elections “were well-administered, offering voters a wide range of political alternatives, but concerns about widespread pressure on public sector employees, misuse of public resources and media bias in favour of the ruling coalition negatively impacted the process. Contestants could campaign freely but the continued dominance of the ruling party, and fragmentation of the opposition reduced the competitiveness of these elections. The electoral legal framework provides an adequate basis for the conduct of democratic elections, however, further reforms are needed to address outstanding ODIHR recommendations. Despite measures introduced to address concerns over alleged organized voter migration in previous elections, which contributed to reducing tensions in the run-up to these elections, many stakeholders considered these insufficient and expressed a general lack of confidence in the accuracy of the voter register. The diverse media landscape is highly polarized and provided selective coverage, prioritizing the national agenda over local issues, limiting the amount of essential information on local elections available to voters; cases of intimidation against journalists were of concern. Election day proceeded smoothly overall but was negatively affected by issues related to the secrecy of the vote, numerous procedural problems, claims of pressure and vote buying, and isolated instances of violence. The vote count and tabulation were assessed positively overall.”

On 3 April 2024, the Speaker of parliament called elections for the Belgrade City Assembly, after its failure to form a majority following the 2023 local elections. On 26 April, in response to demands of the opposition and following extensive talks between parliamentary groups, the Speaker called local elections for another 89 local assemblies for the same date. Part of the opposition boycotted the elections, while others chose to participate.

The electoral legal framework forms an adequate basis for the conduct of democratic elections. The 2022 amendments addressed a number of prior ODIHR recommendations, but several key recommendations, including those related to ensuring a level playing field, measures to prevent the misuse of administrative resources, oversight of media and campaign finance, candidate registration, and an effective dispute resolution process, are yet to be implemented. Moreover, the legal framework contains several gaps and inconsistencies which negatively impact its effectiveness. Prior to elections, a new parliamentary working group, composed of representatives from ruling and opposition parties, as well as civil society, was established to address all previous ODIHR recommendations. Despite holding several meetings, no draft proposal was agreed upon before election day.

The 2 June local elections were managed by a two-tiered election administration comprising 90 Local Election Commissions (LECs) and 4,455 Polling Boards (PBs). The Republic Election Commission (REC) has limited competence for local elections. Despite the condensed timeframe, LECs administered the elections professionally and overall met legal deadlines, but there were instances of

¹ The English version of this report is the only official document. An unofficial translation is available in Serbian.

diverging interpretations of the electoral legislation. LECs published most decisions in a timely manner, increasing transparency. While LECs organized the elections efficiently, their dependence on the local administrations, dominated by the ruling coalition, potentially made them susceptible to political influence and decreased trust among opposition stakeholders. The ODIHR EOM assessed the trainings of PB members as adequate, but members' attendance was not mandatory, despite a previous ODIHR recommendation, and participation was low. The scope of voter education was limited, focusing on information on voting modalities and contestants.

Some 4.21 million voters were eligible to vote in these elections. Citizens fully deprived of legal capacity by a court decision did not have the right to vote, at odds with international standards. Many ODIHR EOM interlocutors expressed a general lack of confidence in the accuracy of the Unified Voter Register (UVR), citing allegations of deceased voters records in the UVR and of voter migration during past elections, as well as cases of voters included with a false address in the UVR for these elections. In response to demands of opposition parties and civil society organizations (CSOs), the Law on the UVR was amended on 10 May, and voters were registered to vote in these elections according to their place of residence as of 3 July 2023. The Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Governance (MPALSG) granted the parliamentary working group the possibility to monitor the implementation of the amendment but the conditions provided by the MPALSG did not allow for meaningful scrutiny.

Political parties and coalitions, or groups of citizens could submit candidate lists to LECs, supported by signatures. LECs registered a total of 483 candidate lists in an overall inclusive manner, but the process was negatively impacted by concerns of confidentiality in the handling of voters' support signatures, difficulties in accessing certifying authorities, and uncertainty due to the recent legal amendments to the Law on the UVR. Although the law prescribes a 40 per cent gender quota for candidate lists, with strict placement criteria, some LECs registered lists that did not fully comply with these requirements. Contrary to international good practice and previous ODIHR recommendations, a voter may sign in support of only one candidate list.

The fundamental freedoms of expression and assembly were respected, but the dominance of the ruling party and fragmentation of the opposition reduced the competitiveness of elections. Voters were offered a wide range of voting options representing a broad spectrum of political opinions. However, the ambivalence of the opposition regarding its participation in the elections, the use of diverse names and numbers for opposition lists, allegedly registered intentionally to confuse voters, affected voters' ability to make a fully informed choice. Widespread allegations of pressure on public sector employees and misuse of public resources, raised concerns about voters' ability to make a choice free from undue pressure, provided undue advantage to the ruling party and coalition, and blurred the line between state and the party, challenging OSCE commitments.

Despite a slight increase in the number of women in parliament following the last elections, women remain underrepresented in parliament and other decision-making positions. Women currently hold 10 of the 31 ministerial positions in the government, some mayoral positions, and 94 of the 250 seats in parliament, including the speaker. In the election administration, women held 45 per cent of LEC chairperson positions and made up about 45 per cent of LEC members of the standing composition and 41 per cent of the extended composition. Women candidates had limited visibility, and the campaign rarely addressed issues related to gender equality.

Legislative shortcomings and the limited enforcement of the regulatory framework diminished transparency and accountability of campaign finances and undermined a level playing field. A number of previous ODIHR recommendations remain unaddressed, including those related to the ceiling for donations from legal entities, which remain high, and the lack of an expenditure limit, leading to disparities among contestants and resulting in potentially undue influence on voters due to excessive spending. Contestants' interim campaign finance reports were published by the Agency for

Prevention of Corruption (APC) in a timely manner but did not cover the last two weeks of the campaign. The law allows the APC to publish its conclusions on contestants' interim and final campaign finance reports after 120 days, not in line with international good practice.

The media environment is lively yet polarized. Media freedom is systemically challenged by political and economic interests impacting content diversity, media ownership concentration, and inconsistent legislation enforcement. Concerns over threats to journalists, strategic lawsuits and impunity for crimes against them remain. ODIHR EOM media monitoring showed the prioritization of national agendas over local issues, limiting voters' access to information. Nationwide media often aired pre-recorded campaign material from political parties, overshadowing editorial content. Public and private national broadcasters primarily focused on the president, government, and ruling parties, granting limited access to the opposition mainly in the last ten days before the elections, or often marginalizing and negatively framing the opposition. The Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media monitored eight broadcasters but did not issue any findings or responded to related complaints before election day.

The Constitution and the law recognize national minorities and foresee special measures to ensure their political participation and representation. Over 100 national minority lists were registered for the elections in 53 local government units. The criteria for election commissions to determine whether a candidate list represents a national minority do not prevent abuse. Many ODIHR EOM interlocutors alleged that several lists were registered as representing national minorities to gain representation more easily, to nominate members in election commissions and to obtain public funding.

The law provides for expedient dispute resolution, but additional safeguards are needed to ensure full access to effective remedy. While the legal framework provides broad legal standing to list submitters, it limits legal standing of other interested parties depending on the subject matter, contrary to OSCE commitments and international standards. The REC maintained a database of complaints filed with LECs and courts, contributing to transparency, which was, however, diminished by a lack of public courts hearings; many ODIHR EOM interlocutors professed a lack of trust in the impartiality of the adjudicating bodies. Prior to election day, 180 complaints had been uploaded to the REC website, most related to the registration of candidate lists. Out of 29 appeals to Higher Courts, the courts upheld the LECs' decisions in 20 cases and overturned two cases.

The law provides for unhindered citizen and international observation of all stages of the electoral process. Two civil society organizations deployed observers to Belgrade, Niš, and Novi Sad. While these organizations reported no difficulties acquiring accreditations or in observing on election day, earlier discrediting statements about citizen observers by state authorities and pro-government media raised concerns about citizen observers' ability to conduct their activities free from intimidation.

Election day proceeded smoothly overall but was negatively affected by issues related to the secrecy of the vote, procedural problems, claims of pressure and vote buying, and isolated instances of violence. The opening process was assessed positively in 41 of the 45 polling stations observed as opening procedures were generally followed. ODIHR EOM observers assessed voting negatively in 7 per cent of polling stations observed, with negative assessments attributed to procedural shortcomings and frequent breaches of the secrecy of the vote, including due to the layout of the polling stations. ODIHR EOM observers also noted several instances of serious irregularities, including cases of vote buying and pressure on voters, as well as procedural violations, including group voting and proxy voting. The counting process was negatively assessed in 10 of the 46 vote counts observed, mainly due to lack of adherence to prescribed procedures and procedural errors or omissions, at times significant. Tabulation was assessed positively in all but three observations, with negative assessments attributed to lack of transparency as a result of the layout of the tabulation premises.

This report offers a number of recommendations to support efforts to bring elections in Serbia closer in line with OSCE commitments and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections to which they have committed. Priority recommendations relate to the legal framework, the election administration, voter registration, candidate registration, the fight against electoral and campaign violations including abuse of public office and pressure on voters, campaign finance, the media, and election dispute resolution. ODIHR stands ready to assist the authorities to further improve the electoral process and to address the recommendations contained in this and previous reports.

II. INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Following an invitation to observe the 2 June 2024 local elections and in accordance with its mandate, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) established an Election Observation Mission (EOM) on 30 April. The mission, led by Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, consisted of a 12-member core team based in Belgrade and 18 long-term observers deployed on 8 May to 8 locations around the country. Core team members and long-term observers came from 20 OSCE participating States. The ODIHR EOM remained in country until 10 June. On election day, 126 observers from 28 countries were deployed. Women constituted 46 per cent of observers. ODIHR has endorsed the 2005 Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation.

The ODIHR EOM assessed the compliance of the election processes with OSCE commitments and other standards and obligations for democratic elections, as well as domestic legislation. This final report follows a Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions, which was released on 3 June 2024.²

The ODIHR EOM wishes to thank the authorities of the Republic of Serbia for the invitation to observe the elections, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Local Election Commissions around the country for providing accreditation documents and for their assistance. The ODIHR EOM also expresses its appreciation to other state institutions, political parties, candidates, media, civil society organizations (CSOs), international community representatives, and other interlocutors for sharing their views and for their co-operation.

III. BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

On 3 April 2024, the Speaker of parliament called elections for the Belgrade City Assembly, following its failure to form a majority after the 2023 elections.³ On 26 April, the Speaker also called elections for 89 assemblies where local elections had not been held in December 2023. These elections were called after extensive talks between parliamentary groups, in response to demands of opposition parties to hold local elections across Serbia on the same day, along with implementation of all previous ODIHR recommendations.⁴ These elections were conducted to elect councillors for the capital Belgrade and 14 other cities, 52 municipalities, and 23 city municipalities.

² See previous [ODIHR election reports on Serbia](#).

³ Following the December local 2023 elections, the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) won 49 of the 110 seats in the Belgrade City Assembly, falling short of a majority; by the legal deadline of 3 March, there was no quorum in the Assembly.

⁴ Initially, the opposition demanded local elections for autumn 2024, which would have necessitated a constitutional amendment to postpone elections of local councils last elected in June 2020. On 23 April, the law was amended to allow for elections in the 89 municipalities on 2 June instead of 21 June, when their mandate would expire.

The political landscape is shaped by the continued dominance of the ruling Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) and President Aleksandar Vučić, fragmentation of the opposition, entrenched polarization, and frequent early elections.⁵ In the 17 December 2023 early parliamentary elections, the SNS-led coalition won 129 of the 250 seats in the parliament.⁶ The opposition coalition ‘Serbia Against Violence’ (SPN) received 65 seats, the highest number of seats won by an opposition coalition since 2012.⁷ On 1 May, the SNS formed a governing coalition with the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) and three of the 12 MPs elected from national minority lists.

The last local elections across Serbia, held on 21 June 2020, were boycotted by most of the opposition, resulting in SNS victories in the majority of municipalities. In December 2023, concurrently with the early parliamentary elections, early local elections were held for 65 of the 174 cities, municipalities, and city municipalities, and the Belgrade City Assembly, following the sudden and simultaneous resignation of mayors elected on SNS tickets.⁸ After the announcement of the election results, SPN alleged organized voter migration to Belgrade and held large-scale protests.⁹

In April 2024, in a welcome step towards an inclusive dialogue, the Speaker of parliament invited all parliamentary groups and three CSOs to hold discussions within the parliament, with the stated aim to implement previous ODIHR recommendations.¹⁰ The opposition requested setting up a commission to audit the voter register, increased coverage of the opposition by the public broadcaster, and the holding of local elections in the municipalities where local elections had not been held in December 2023.¹¹ On 19 April, the SPN coalition partners failed to agree on joint participation in the elections.¹² Some opposition parties claimed that the election conditions did not ensure equality of opportunity and decided to boycott, while others chose to participate to avoid being excluded from municipal assemblies and election commissions. As a result, opposition lists varied across municipalities, featuring different parties. Subsequently, the opposition demanded that voters who changed their residence within the last 12 months vote in the place of their previous residence; legal amendments on 10 May addressed this for changes of residence within the last 11 months (see *Voter Registration*).

The Speaker of parliament and 93 of the 250 MPs are women (37.6 per cent), a slight increase from the previous convocation, but women remain underrepresented in parliament and other decision-making positions, except in the judiciary.¹³ A deputy prime minister and 9 of the 31 ministers in the

⁵ The 17 December 2023 early parliamentary elections were the third parliamentary elections in less than four years, and the sixth since 2012.

⁶ Since 2012, the SNS has won three presidential and majority on six parliamentary elections.

⁷ SPN comprised the Justice and Freedom Party (SSP), Peoples’ Movement of Serbia (NPS), Green-left Front (ZLF), Don’t Let Belgrade Drown, Ecological Uprising (EU), Democratic Party (DS), Movement of Free Citizens (PSG), Serbia Centre (SRCE), Together (Zajedno), Movement for Reversal (PZP), United Trade Unions (SLOGA), and the New Face of Serbia (NLS). In addition, the NADA coalition, comprising the New Democratic Party of Serbia (New DSS) and the Movement for the Restoration of the Kingdom of Serbia (POKS), won 13 seats, Voice of the People – 13, and national minority list – 12. The Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) won 18 seats.

⁸ Article 1 of the LLE stipulates that councilors shall be elected for a term of four years. Section 6 of the [Venice Commission Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters](#) states: “Elections must be held at regular intervals.”

⁹ In December 2023, for the Belgrade City Assembly, SNS obtained 39.08 per cent of votes, SPN –34.63, NADA –6.00, We – the Voice of the People –5.38 per cent, SPS –4.75. SPN participated with one or two separate lists in each municipality and also with diverse names of the lists. In 2023, the ODIHR EOM observed only the early parliamentary elections.

¹⁰ SRCE and SSP discontinued their participation after decision to hold remaining local elections together with the Belgrade local elections. The New DSS withdrew after the Head of the European Union Delegation and the United States Ambassador were also invited to the discussions in the parliament.

¹¹ The [proposal](#) of the opposition requested “a Commission composed of representatives of the government, the opposition and relevant civil society organizations, which will have the authority to carry out continuous supervision, control and audit of the voter register to align it with reality”.

¹² Mainly, SSP and SRCE opted for boycott, particularly in Belgrade, but decided to participate in the elections in Vojvodina and some other municipalities.

¹³ See the World Economic Forum, 2023 Gender Gap [Report](#) and the [UNDP Table 5: Gender Inequality Index](#).

new government are women (32 per cent). On the local level, before these local elections women accounted for 13.3 per cent of the mayors and presidents of municipalities and for 37.6 per cent of the members of local assemblies. In the judiciary, 70.5 per cent of the judges are women, with six of the 11 judges of the Constitutional Court, including the president, 77.5 per cent in the Supreme Court of Cassation, and 48.7 per cent of public prosecutors. In 2021, new Law on Gender Equality and a National Strategy for Gender Equality for 2021-2030 were adopted, however, efforts by the authorities to promote women's participation have not yet been sufficient.¹⁴

Authorities at all levels should undertake comprehensive efforts to promote women's active participation in public and political life. Additional mechanisms and incentives should be established to encourage political parties to promote women's participation in political life, increase their visibility during electoral campaigns and advance their role in politics.

IV. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Serbia is party to international and regional instruments related to democratic elections.¹⁵ Local elections are primarily regulated by the 2022 Law on Local Elections (LLE) and the 2022 Law on the Election of Members of Parliament (LEMP), which applies to matters not specifically regulated by the LLE.¹⁶

The legal framework forms an adequate basis for the conduct of democratic elections, however, several key ODIHR recommendations are yet to be addressed, including those related to measures to prevent the misuse of administrative resources, separation between the official functions and campaign activities, oversight of media and campaign finance, candidate registration, and an effective dispute resolution process. Moreover, several gaps and inconsistencies adversely impact its effectiveness.¹⁷ While LEMP provisions apply for matters not regulated by the LLE, the respective LEMP provisions might not always allow for their effective implementation in local elections, creating legal uncertainty.¹⁸

¹⁴ The 2023 Country Report of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights mentioned a positive trend in women's political participation; however, the report also noted persistent and deeply rooted patriarchal stereotypes that continue to hinder the advancement of women's rights and gender equality'.

¹⁵ Including the [1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights \(ICCPR\)](#), the [1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women](#), the [1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#), the [2003 Convention against Corruption](#), the [2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#), and the [1950 European Convention on Human Rights](#).

¹⁶ Decisions and instructions of the Republic Electoral Commission (REC) may also apply to local elections. Other applicable legislation includes the 2009 Law on the Unified Voter Register (LUVR), the 2019 Law on Prevention of Corruption (LPC), the 2009 Law on Political Parties, the 2009 Law on Administrative Disputes, the 2016 Law on Administrative Procedures, and the 2005 Criminal Code.

¹⁷ The Law on the Constitutional Court allows the court to annul election results partially or fully but does not specify the grounds. The LLE prescribes a 72-hour period for filing complaints, while the LEMP, regulating candidate registration complaints, sets a 48-hour deadline. While the LLE specifies grounds for mandatory results invalidation and for cases where results cannot be established, it additionally lists 'serious errors', allowing Local Election Commissions (LECs) to either correct or invalidate polling station results, creating a possibility for arbitrary and inconsistent decisions. The law lacks clear and objective criteria for eligibility to submit national minority lists and granting the minority status to candidate lists.

¹⁸ Media regulations lack guidance for their application to local elections, and public service media did not provide free airtime to electoral contestants (see *Media*). The LEMP stipulates that ballots should be printed in the printing house of the "Official Gazette" public enterprise; however, in practice, this was not done by some LECs. Most LECs decided to print ballot papers in number equal to the total number of voters, as stated in the LEMP, while the Bečej, Čačak, and Svilajnac LECs printed reserve ballot papers, as foreseen by the LLE. The LEMP provides for the establishment of an *ad hoc* Committee for Campaign Oversight within the National Assembly, but it is not clear if such a body should be established for local elections.

The election-related legislation was significantly revised in 2022, when a number of prior ODIHR recommendations were addressed. It has remained largely unchanged since then, and ongoing efforts for a further reform of the legal framework are curtailed by the frequency of early elections. In March 2024, the government-led inter-agency Working Group on Co-ordination and Follow-up of the Implementation of ODIHR Recommendations temporarily resumed under the caretaker government and prepared amendments to election-related laws, but these were not tabled in parliament. On 29 April, a new parliamentary Working Group for the Improvement of the Electoral Process, including representatives from the ruling and opposition parties, as well as civil society, was established to prepare amendments addressing all previous ODIHR recommendations.¹⁹ The deadline for proposing measures relevant to these local elections expired on 20 May. However, SNS representatives argued that more time was needed and the working group did not act upon any draft proposals by that date.²⁰

For these elections, the LLE was amended to allow for the holding of local elections on 2 June, simultaneously with the Belgrade City Assembly elections, and the Law on the Unified Voter Register (LUVR) was amended in relation to changes to voters' residence (see *Voter Registration*).²¹ While the decision to amend the LUVR was based on a political agreement to address opposition demands concerning allegations of organized voter migration related to the 2023 Belgrade City Assembly elections, these late changes created confusion among implementing stakeholders and resulted in inconsistent application of the newly amended provisions.

Local councillors are elected for four-year terms through a proportional representation system with closed lists. Lists that receive over 3 per cent of all votes cast in the respective local self-government unit qualify for seats; lists representing national minorities are exempt from this threshold requirement.²²

To ensure proper and consistent implementation of the legal framework, election-related legislation should be harmonized, and any legislative amendments should be adopted sufficiently in advance of the next elections and based on inclusive and transparent process. Consideration could be given to consolidation of election legislation.

V. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

The 2 June local elections were managed by a two-tiered election administration, comprising 90 Local Election Commissions (LECs), one in each territorial-administrative unit where elections were held, as well as 4,455 Polling Boards (PBs), one for each polling station. The Republic Election Commission (REC) has limited competence for local elections.²³

¹⁹ The parliamentary working group was composed of 18 members, including 12 representing parliamentary groups, 3 from minority parties outside of these groups, and 3 from civil society, including the chairperson. The working group held two sessions in total, with the second session lasting five days.

²⁰ Twenty-five proposals were submitted, mostly by civil society, and these were related to media, prevention of misuse of state resources by public officials, the Unified Voter Register (UVR), campaign finance, and deadlines for the Constitutional Court decisions regarding election complaints.

²¹ On 9 and 16 May, two initiatives were submitted to the Constitutional Court challenging the constitutionality of the amendments. In one case, the initiator argued that LLE amendments unconstitutionally shortened the campaign period and prevented equal participation in the campaign. The other case argued that the LLE amendments shorten the mandates of councillors elected in previous elections and that the LUVR amendments are discriminatory as they do not apply to voters who are candidates in electoral lists that were submitted prior to the amendment entering into force. The cases were assigned to judges after election day.

²² If no electoral list passes this threshold, then all lists that received votes participate in the distribution of seats.

²³ In practice, the REC for these elections carried out activities related to the training of election officials and voter information and made available its website for the publication of LEC decisions, complaints, and election results.

LECs are composed of a chairperson and regular members, as well as their respective substitutes, and operate in a standing and an extended composition.²⁴ The LECs' standing composition, comprising members nominated by political groups represented in the respective local assemblies, was extended by members nominated by electoral contestants.²⁵ From 16 to 31 May, LEC members could participate in online trainings provided by the REC, covering the LEC mandate and technical aspects of their work.

While the law requires equitable gender representation and inclusion of persons with disabilities when nominating LEC members, this was not proactively implemented. The ODIHR EOM observed that women held 45 per cent of LEC chairperson positions and made up about 45 per cent of LEC members of the standing composition and 41 per cent of the extended composition.

Most ODIHR EOM interlocutors expressed confidence in the technical capacities of LECs, but some questioned their impartiality as LECs were located in local administration premises and supported by staff from local administrations which are dominated by the ruling coalition, potentially politicizing LECs and decreasing trust among the opposition. Despite the condensed timeframe, LECs generally met legal deadlines and administered the elections professionally.

In several instances, LECs had diverging interpretations of the electoral legislation. These included the printing of ballot papers, the manner of publishing information online and of designating polling stations, the publication of final voter numbers and of the number of requests for mobile voting, residency requirements for candidates, and the publication of preliminary results. Given the very limited role of the REC in these elections, there was no institution that would have ensured uniform interpretation and implementation of the rules.

To ensure consistency in implementation of elections and enhance the professional capacity of the election administration, further guidance on application of the rules could be extended to a single institution.

LECs published most of their decisions online in a timely manner, increasing transparency.²⁶ The Belgrade City Election Commission (CEC) held regular sessions which were made available on *YouTube*, a transparency measure welcomed by citizen observer organizations. The ODIHR EOM observed ten sessions of the Belgrade CEC; documentation was shared beforehand with all CEC members and observers, but during the sessions topics on the agenda were voted on without much discussion on the substance. While the Belgrade CEC announced its sessions in advance, the absence of timely information about sessions of other LECs hindered the presence of observers and other stakeholders.

To increase the transparency of LEC activities, LEC sessions should be publicly announced well in advance, and all members should be provided with timely and comprehensive information about the agenda of upcoming sessions, including all relevant background material.

²⁴ LECs have broad competences in the organization of local elections which include publishing an election calendar and voter registration data, registering candidate lists, appointing polling boards and designating polling stations, determining the ballot design and printing ballots, distributing election material, adjudicating complaints, including on annulment of voting, and establishing results.

²⁵ In its permanent composition, each LEC has between 7 and 13 members, depending on the number of registered voters in the respective territorial-administrative unit. The respective local assembly has to appoint the LEC in its standing composition within six months of its constitution. The term of office of the standing composition ends when the next local assembly appoints a new standing composition. Members of the extended composition can be appointed once the nominating list is registered; the law does not specify when their term ends.

²⁶ While most LECs published decisions on the REC website, some LECs published all or some of their decisions on the respective municipality website.

PBs in the standing composition were composed of a chairperson and two regular members, appointed by LECs based on the proposals of political groups represented in the respective local assemblies. PBs were extended by members nominated by contestants. While training was not mandatory for PB members, the REC, in response to a previous ODIHR recommendation, launched in-person training for potential PB members immediately after the call for the Belgrade City Assembly elections.²⁷ ODIHR EOM observers assessed training as adequate but noted overall low participation.

Most LECs designated polling stations within the legal deadline, in premises proposed by local administrations.²⁸ To prevent overcrowding and to address a previous ODIHR recommendation, the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government (MPALSG) advised local authorities to limit the number of voters per polling station to 1,800. This led to an increase in the number of polling stations mostly in Belgrade, Niš, and Novi Sad.²⁹ Although the law stipulates that polling stations must be independently accessible for voters with disabilities, the electoral participation of voters with disabilities remained a concern (see *Election Day*).³⁰

The election administration undertook limited voter education efforts. The Belgrade CEC released two voter information spots, supported by sign language interpretation, which were aired by national broadcasters. On 21 May, the REC launched a voter information campaign related to voting modalities and presenting contestants on its website and *Instagram* channel.

To increase public awareness on voting rights, the election administration should develop and implement a comprehensive and targeted voter education programme on voters' rights, including the secrecy of the vote and the importance of keeping residence data up to date.

VI. VOTER REGISTRATION

Citizens of at least 18 years old on election day have the right to vote, except those fully deprived of legal capacity by a court decision. The disenfranchisement of voters based on intellectual and psychosocial disabilities is at odds with international standards.³¹

²⁷ Initially, the REC trained about 5,600 persons nominated by the SNS and the SPS-JS in Belgrade; other political parties did not respond to the REC's invitation. After local elections were called in another 89 local self-government units, the REC certified additional trainers to be able to offer training to all PB members; about 25,000 PB members were trained in the two weeks before election day.

²⁸ The LECs in Aleksinac, Novi Bečej, and Preševo did not adopt a decision to designate polling stations for the 2 June elections, arguing that there had been no changes from previous elections.

²⁹ There were 67 additional polling stations in Belgrade compared to the December 2023 elections, 21 in Niš, and 15 in Novi Sad.

³⁰ Article 57 of the LEMP states that “[the] polling station shall be designated in such a way as to be accessible to voters and to enable them to vote without difficulty”. According to [REC data](#) related to the 2023 elections, 94.9 per cent of regular polling stations were located on the ground floor, but only 48.6 per cent were located in a building with a fully accessible entrance. Besides an improved accessibility of polling stations, civil society organizations (CSOs) that advocate for political rights of persons with disabilities (PwD) have called for increased support during voting for persons with less visible disabilities, training of PB members on the rights of PwD during voting, enabling blind and visually impaired persons to vote independently through the use of Braille templates, as well as integration of PwD within the election administration. See the [recommendations](#) published by the [Academic Inclusive Association](#).

³¹ Article 29 of the 2006 [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (CRPD), which has been signed and ratified by Serbia, requires States Parties to “guarantee to persons with disabilities political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others”. Paragraph 9.4 of the 2013 [CRPD Committee's Communication No. 4/2011](#) states that “an exclusion of the right to vote on the basis of a perceived or actual psychosocial or intellectual disability, including a restriction pursuant to an individualized assessment, constitutes discrimination on the basis of disability”.

Voter registration is passive. In local elections, voters are allowed to vote based on their permanent residence.³² The MPALSG maintains the Unified Voter Register (UVR), a permanent electronic database based on the civil register held by the Ministry of Interior (MoI). Citizens can consult the names and surnames of voters assigned to their polling station online.³³ Starting from April 2024, the MPALSG increased the frequency of publishing of the number of voters per territorial-administrative unit from quarterly to monthly. According to the Speaker of Parliament, this change was implemented as a direct result of the parliamentary dialogue on the improvement of election conditions and the implementation of ODIHR recommendations. The MPALSG only published current figures; past data was not available. The voter registration data published by the MPALSG were inadequate for effective verification and scrutiny of the UVR.³⁴

To increase public confidence in the accuracy of voter lists, the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Governance should publish voter registration data that are sufficiently detailed to allow for a meaningful verification of the accuracy of voter numbers.

Many ODIHR EOM interlocutors expressed a general lack of confidence in the accuracy of the UVR, based on allegations of deceased voters still recorded in the UVR and of voter migration during past electoral processes, as well as cases of voters included with a false address in the UVR for the 2 June local elections.³⁵ The long-standing ODIHR recommendation to conduct an audit of the UVR was discussed in the parliamentary working group, but no agreement was found before election day.³⁶

To improve voter list accuracy and enhance public trust, the authorities should facilitate a full audit of the Unified Voter Register and the civil register, undertaken by independent experts and with the participation of relevant stakeholders, including representatives of relevant ministries, political parties and civil society.

On 10 May, in response to demands of opposition parties and CSOs, the LUVR was amended to address credible allegations of organized voter migration related to the December 2023 Belgrade City Assembly elections. Following this, voters were included in the voter lists for the 2 June local elections according to their place of residence as of 3 July 2023. According to the MPALSG, 52,313 voters were reassigned to their old address, including 12,554 voters who were reassigned to territorial-

³² On 19 April 2024, the MPALSG published an [Instruction for the Implementation of the LUVR](#) with a provision introducing the possibility of voting from a temporary residence in local elections, not in line with LLE provisions which require permanent residence. Following criticism in the parliamentary working group, the provision was amended on 10 May. However, during the short time period in which it was valid, 465 Belgrade voters were assigned to vote from a temporary residence for either the City Assembly or for the city municipality assembly elections; these changes were not undone by the MPALSG. As these voters were included on voter lists of different polling stations for the two parallel elections taking place in Belgrade, they were *de facto* disenfranchised to vote in one of these elections.

³³ The MPALSG maintained a dedicated [website](#) for such citizen requests.

³⁴ The UVR contains the following information for each voter: name, surname, patronymic, 13-digit unique citizen identification number (JMBG), date and place of birth, gender, and the permanent residence address. Citing data protection concerns, the MPALSG only published names and surnames of voters, which does not allow for a clear identification.

³⁵ The ODIHR EOM LTOs received numerous reports of cases of invitations to vote being sent to citizens unknown to the residents of the respective addresses in Belgrade-Lazarevac, Belgrade-Palilula, New Belgrade, Niš, Novi Sad, and Raška. The ODIHR EOM also received credible reports of large numbers of voters being registered in buildings in Belgrade-Savski Venac and Belgrade-Voždovac that were either still under construction or inadequate to accommodate such a high number of voters.

³⁶ On 12 April 2024, CRTA [proposed](#) forming a commission with members from the ruling coalition, opposition, and CSOs, appointed by the National Assembly. This commission would access relevant databases of the MPALSG and MoI to conduct analyses, including the MoI data on population movements and consistency with UVR data, statistical parameters of UVR movements, the process of updating and authorization of changes to the UVR, and access to the UVR operating system and servers. On 23 April, the Speaker of Parliament's proposal, which aligned with CRTA's objectives and tasks, but offering a weaker mandate and legal status, was rejected by the working group.

administrative units where no elections were held this time. While some ODIHR EOM interlocutors initially welcomed the step as a measure to restore a degree of confidence in the UVR, many voiced concerns about its implementation so close to election day, the impact on the registration of candidate lists (see *Candidate Registration*), and the disenfranchisement of some voters. The MPALSG had agreed to give members of the parliamentary working group the possibility to monitor the implementation of the amendment. However, the conditions provided by the MPALSG for this verification did not allow for meaningful scrutiny, as the time was too short, and the data made available was not verifiable.³⁷

Voters could request corrections of their voter registration data at their local administration from the call for elections until closure of the UVR on 17 May 2024. As of that date, 4,208,658 voters were eligible to vote in the territorial-administrative units where elections were held on 2 June. From 18 to 29 May, voters could request changes directly at the MPALSG, which issued decisions on changes to LECs on a daily basis until 29 May.³⁸

By law, mobile voting could be requested by sick, elderly, or disabled voters, or by other persons on their behalf, until 11:00 hrs. on election day. According to data published by LECs, the proportion of voters who requested mobile voting was well above average in several territorial-administrative units.³⁹ The provisions in place lacked safeguards against misuse, as neither written consent from the voter nor authorization for those submitting a request on behalf of another voter were required.

To protect voter's right to a free and secret ballot and in order to avoid misuse, the legal provisions concerning mobile voting should be strengthened, including by requiring a declaration of consent when requesting mobile voting on behalf of another person.

VII. CANDIDATE REGISTRATION

Citizens eligible to vote had the right to stand for councillor in their registered territorial-administrative unit. Political parties and coalitions, or groups of citizens could submit candidate lists to LECs, supported by signatures from eligible voters, certified by public notaries, municipal authorities, or courts.⁴⁰ Independent candidates cannot stand, contrary to OSCE commitments and other international standards.⁴¹ ODIHR EOM interlocutors in several territorial-administrative units reported that voters were reluctant to sign in support of opposition lists due to confidentiality concerns

³⁷ Several working group members noted that the initial agreement with the MPALSG foresaw access to the civil register and the UVR using four search criteria (name, patronymic, family name, and address). However, only a subset of the civil register including 52,313 voters was provided, without clarity of how it was established. Voters found in the subset could then be searched in the UVR based on their unique citizens number (JMBG) to verify that the reassignment to the previous address had been undertaken. The data provided by the MPALSG to the ODIHR EOM did not allow for comprehensive analysis of the implementation of the legal amendment. During the report writing, MPALSG informed the ODIHR EOM that the Ministry of Internal Affairs was the only institution responsible for compiling the data needed to verify voter registration data to assess the implementation of the legal amendment.

³⁸ By law, LECs should publish final voter numbers; however, by 2 June, only 75 out of 90 had done so.

³⁹ Sixty-one out of 90 LECs published the number of mobile voting requests received before election day. While mobile voting was requested on average for 1.29 per cent of voters in these territorial-administrative units, the numbers were significantly higher in some places, for example in Svrljig (4.72 per cent), Pećinci (4.35 per cent), Opovo (4.09 per cent), Raška (3.15 per cent), and Šid (3.04 per cent).

⁴⁰ The number of required signatures is determined by the number of registered voters in the respective territorial-administrative unit and ranges from 200 in a unit with a maximum of 20,000 registered voters to 3,000 signatures in a unit with more than 500,000 registered voters.

⁴¹ Paragraph 7.5 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document provides that participating States will “respect the right of citizens to seek political or public office, individually or as representatives of political parties or organisations, without discrimination”. Paragraph 15 of the 1996 General Comment No. 25 to Article 25 of the ICCPR provides that “Persons who are otherwise eligible to stand for election should not be excluded by unreasonable or discriminatory requirements such as education, residence or descent, or by reason of political affiliation”.

and possible negative consequences.⁴² Some opposition interlocutors reported difficulties in accessing public authorities to get their support signatures certified.⁴³ Contrary to international good practice and previous ODIHR recommendations, a voter may sign in support of only one candidate list.⁴⁴

Measures should be taken to avoid pressure on voters, guarantee data protection, and prevent obstruction in collecting support signatures; such measures could include the use of e-government tools for the collection of support signatures.

By law, the name of a candidate list may feature the name of a prominent figure, the so-called ‘list leader’, who does not necessarily have to be among the candidates (see also *Campaign Environment and Election Dispute Resolution*). Lists had to comply with a 40 per cent gender quota, requiring at least two out of every five candidates to be from the less represented gender; however, some LECs registered lists that did not comply with these legal requirements.⁴⁵ In some other cases, LECs changed their decision after receiving complaints.⁴⁶

The 10 May amendment of the LUVR which changed residency requirements for voters specified that it did not apply to candidates running in the 2 June elections, but this exemption did not cover the full candidate registration period.⁴⁷ Due to uncertainty in the implementation of the amendment, LECs in New Belgrade and Novi Sad initially rejected some candidate lists but reversed their decisions later on. In Valjevo, the LEC rejected one candidate list for not complying with the residency requirement.

LECs received registration requests for candidate lists until 12 May. Any omissions in the submitted documents which did not constitute grounds for rejection could be rectified within 48 hours. In line with legal deadlines, LECs published the ‘collective’ list of contestants for their local self-government unit by 18 May. LECs registered between three and 14 lists each, with a total of 483 lists competing in these local elections. While LECs registered candidate lists in an overall inclusive manner, the process was negatively impacted by concerns about confidentiality in the handling of voters’ support signatures, difficulties in accessing certifying authorities, and uncertainty due to recent legal amendments.

⁴² Such concerns were recorded in Požarevac and Subotica. ODIHR EOM observers reported cases of voters being intimidated for signing in support of an opposition list in Gornji Milanovac and Raška.

⁴³ ODIHR EOM LTOs received allegations about the issue in Belgrade-Čukarica, Belgrade-Rakovica, Belgrade-Savski Venac, Belgrade-Voždovac, Belgrade-Vračar, Čačak, Novi Sad, and Srbobran. According to the authorities, as shown by the public reports, sufficient number of notaries was available.

⁴⁴ Paragraph 196 of the [2020 ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines on Political Party Regulation](#) recommends that “a requirement that a citizen be allowed to sign in support of only one party should be avoided, as such a regulation would affect his/her right to freedom of association”.

⁴⁵ Eight LECs (Aleksinac, Bačka Palanka, Bečej, Belgrade-Lazarevac, Bosilegrad, Čajetina, Sjenica, and Valjevo) registered SNS lists that did not comply with the 40 per cent quota, and at least seven LECs (Bačka Topola, Belgrade-Rakovica, Belgrade-Surčin, Kovin, Šid, Sombor, and Vrbas) registered SNS lists that did not fully meet the placement requirement. At least four LECs (Belgrade-Barajevo, Čoka, Irig, and Šid) registered opposition lists that did not comply with the 40 per cent quota, and at least two LECs (Belgrade-Palilula and Raška) registered opposition lists that did not fully meet the placement requirement.

⁴⁶ The Ivanjica LEC annulled a list for not meeting the gender quota. The Belgrade-Voždovac LEC registered a previously rejected list following a complaint. While the Valjevo LEC registered a list which did not meet the gender quota, after a complaint, the LEC declared that the list was compliant after one candidate changed residence. The Belgrade-Vračar LEC rejected a list for not meeting the gender quota but registered it after receiving a complaint; the Higher Court overturned the decision due to non-compliance with the gender quota.

⁴⁷ The LUVR amendment stated that the new provision on permanent residence did not apply to voters who were candidates on lists submitted before 11 May, the date of the entry into force of the amendment. The candidate registration period ended on 12 May.

VIII. CAMPAIGN ENVIRONMENT

Fundamental freedoms of expression and assembly were respected, and voters were offered a wide range of voting options representing a broad spectrum of political opinions.⁴⁸ However, dominance of the ruling party and fragmentation of the opposition reduced the competitiveness of elections. The opposition was ambivalent about its participation in the elections and used diverse names for their lists, which were also awarded different ordinal numbers on the ballot in each municipality. In addition, several lists had similar-sounding names, including some which were allegedly registered intentionally to confuse voters.⁴⁹ These issues, compounded by limited media coverage of the elections and the opposition, may have affected voters' ability to make an informed choice.⁵⁰

Public officials may perform a function in a political party and participate in its activities, if this does not jeopardize their public function and is not prohibited by law.⁵¹ During 30 days before election day, media may not report on the inauguration of public infrastructure projects if public officials who are also candidates for local assemblies participate in such events, and ODIHR EOM media noted instances that appeared to deviate from this provision.⁵² In practice, these campaign regulations did not ensure separation of the state and the party and equality of opportunity for contestants, contrary to previous ODIHR recommendations.

Some campaign practices blurred the line between state and party, at odds with paragraph 5.4 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document, and provided an undue advantage to the ruling party.⁵³ The incumbent President Aleksandar Vučić stepped down as president of the SNS in 2023; however, all

⁴⁸ Contestants could start campaigning from the call of elections. Campaign activities and the publication of opinion polls are prohibited during the last 48 hours prior to the opening of the polls and until the closing of polling stations on election day.

⁴⁹ For instance, several lists of Groups of Citizens named "Against Violence" in Apatin, Bački Petrovac, Beočin, Kikinda, Stara Pazova, and Žabalj could be confused with opposition lists with similar names; the lists We – the Strength of the People and We – the Voice of the People, the opposition list *Kreni-Promeni* and Russian minority lists *Pokreni Promene* in Belgrade-Grocka, Belgrade-Lazarevac, Belgrade-Surčin and the citizen group list *Pokrenimo-Okrenimo-Promenimo* in Belgrade-Zemun; Kikinda Against Violence – Milorad Miki Aleksić vs. Coalition *Biram Borbu–Biram Kikinda* (Miroslav Miki Aleksić) vs. Coalition I Choose Change – United Opposition of Kikinda.

⁵⁰ Paragraph 12 of UN Human Right Committee's [General Comment 25](#) on Article 25 of the ICCPR calls on States Parties to take positive measures to enable voters to make an informed choice. Further, Guideline I.3.3.1.b of the Venice Commission [Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters](#) notes that "state authorities [...] must [...] enable voters to know the lists and candidates standing for election, for example through appropriate posting".

⁵¹ Public officials may not use public resources for the promotion of political parties and candidates, and they may not promote a party during meetings in which they participate as public officials. Public officials, except for members of parliament, provincial and local assemblies are required to inform the public, on every occasion, whether they express the position of the public authority or the political party.

⁵² For example, on 18 May, *TV Prva* and *TV Happy* covered an event where Siniša Mali, Minister of Finance and candidate for the Belgrade City Assembly and for Belgrade-Zvezdara municipality, presented plans for new museums to be built or reconstructed in Belgrade. On 13 May, Mr. Mali and President Vučić visited the works at the EXPO 2027 site (*TV Pink*). On 20 May, Mr. Mali announced the completion of pile installation for the EXPO complex and the start of work on the National Stadium (*RTSI, TV Prva*). On 22 May, Mr. Mali said a new factory in Čačak, which will employ 800 people, will soon have its foundation stone laid (*TV Galaksija 32*). On 25 May, Milun Todorović, mayor of Čačak and candidate for reelection, attended the opening of a museum and discussed new openings (*TV Prva*).

⁵³ Paragraph 5.4 of the 1990 [OSCE Copenhagen Document](#) calls for "a clear separation between the State and political parties". Paragraph 7.7 requires OSCE participating States "to ensure that law and public policy work to permit political campaigning to be conducted in a fair and free atmosphere in which neither administrative action, violence nor intimidation bars the parties and the candidates from freely presenting their views and qualifications, or prevents the voters from learning and discussing them or from casting their vote free of fear of retribution".

SNS lists across the country bore his name.⁵⁴ The President and leading government officials featured prominently on campaign billboards, in television spots, and in campaign meetings, while they also received extensive media coverage promoting their achievements, including on national issues and meetings with foreign dignitaries.⁵⁵ Most city lampposts in Belgrade featured a variation of the city's coat of arms with the president's name and the SNS list number.

In line with OSCE commitments, measures should be taken to ensure the separation of the state and party and the impartiality of the public administration during the campaign.

The ODIHR EOM received widespread allegations about pressure on public employees, including those with temporary employment contracts, to attend public events and campaign meetings and to vote for the ruling SNS, raising concerns about the ability of voters to cast their votes free of fear of retribution.⁵⁶ A significant number of candidates on SNS lists holding senior positions in public institutions and companies allegedly misused their office to influence the voting choices of public employees and other voters;⁵⁷ abuse of public office to promote a candidacy runs contrary to international standards.⁵⁸ Several interlocutors referred to “capillary voting”, whereby each public employee is required to secure a number of votes among family and friends. Interlocutors also informed the ODIHR EOM about cases of vote buying, particularly of vulnerable groups, and the trading of medical services to voters by candidates who were in management positions in public health institutions.⁵⁹

To prevent abuse of public office and pressure on public employees and other voters, holders of senior management positions in public institutions and public companies should be required by law to temporarily resign from office in order to run as candidates, in line with international standards.

⁵⁴ The CSO FERKA and opposition MPs initiated a complaint, with the aim to submit it to the Constitutional Court, claiming that the president violated the Constitution due to the use of his name on the SNS coalition lists. The SNS noted that the name of the DS list for the 2008 local elections was European Belgrade – Boris Tadić, featuring the name of the then-president.

⁵⁵ Including visits of the President of the People's Republic of China, officials from the United States of America, the European Union, Ukraine, the Russian Federation and other countries, and the President's speeches at the United Nations General Assembly and his diplomatic activity to prevent the adoption of the UN General Assembly resolution establishing an International Day of Remembrance for the Genocide in Srebrenica.

⁵⁶ Cases of pressure on public employees were reported to the ODIHR EOM in Belgrade, Čačak, Kikinda, Niš, Novi Sad, Raška, Sombor, Subotica, Vršac, and Zrenjanin. Paragraph 19 of the UN Human Right Committee's [General Comment 25](#) on Article 25 of the ICCPR states: “Persons entitled to vote must be free to vote for any candidate for election and for or against any proposal submitted to referendum or plebiscite, and free to support or to oppose government, without undue influence or coercion of any kind which may distort or inhibit the free expression of the elector's will. Voters should be able to form opinions independently, free of violence or threat of violence, compulsion, inducement or manipulative interference of any kind”. See also paragraph 7.7 of the [1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document](#).

⁵⁷ Including high-ranking employees of Social Security Services, health centres, public utility companies, and the School and Kindergarten Administration.

⁵⁸ Paragraph 16 of the UN Human Right Committee's [General Comment 25](#) on Article 25 of the ICCPR states: “If there are reasonable grounds for regarding certain elective offices as incompatible with tenure of specific positions (e.g. the judiciary, high ranking military office, public service) measures to avoid conflict of interest should not unduly limit the rights protected by paragraph b”. In [Brike v. Latvia](#) (2000), the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) ruled that the candidate ineligibility of civil servants constituted a proportionate response to the requirement that the civil service be independent. In [Gitonas and Others v. Greece](#) (1997) the ECtHR noted that: “Disqualification served a dual purpose that was essential for proper functioning and upholding of democratic regimes, namely ensuring that candidates of different political persuasions enjoyed equal means of influence and protecting the electorate from pressure from holders of public office.” See also ECtHR case [Ahmed and Others v. the United Kingdom](#) (1998).

⁵⁹ Voters were allegedly offered, among others, cash and food packages featuring the name of the president. ODIHR EOM observers received allegations of vote buying in Bačka Topola, Bela Crkva, Belgrade-Grocka, Belgrade-Palilula, Čačak, Kikinda, Subotica, and Zrenjanin. Allegations were made about “VIP lists” for surgeries, chemotherapies, free medical check-ups and other medical services. For instance, in Zrenjanin, ODIHR EOM interlocutors alleged that the hospital waiting lists and appointments for chemotherapies is traded for votes.

After the call of elections, several municipalities, including the interim Belgrade City authority, offered social welfare programmes, raising concerns about misuse of state resources.⁶⁰ Such practices run contrary to international good practices.⁶¹

To prevent misuse of state resources, consideration could be given to prohibiting the announcement and implementation of extraordinary social welfare programmes and public infrastructure projects after the call of elections.

The campaign picked up after the end of candidate registration but overall remained low-key, with limited paid advertising, with the exception of the SNS campaign which was prominent across the country. Traditional in-person campaign activities included campaign stands, small meetings, billposting, distribution of leaflets and party paraphernalia, and door-to-door canvassing. Some print campaign materials, including those calling for a boycott, did not feature the imprints required by law. The law does not require authorities to designate public stands where contestants can place their campaign posters, which were posted in public and private premises.

To enable voters to make an informed choice, the authorities could consider designating public stands or other places where contestants can post their posters.

While contestants held a limited number of rallies, some contestants did not campaign; many ODIHR EOM interlocutors alleged that these lists did not have a genuine intention to contest the elections but sought to nominate members in election commissions, in order to affect their decision-making.

Campaign topics included the local infrastructure, schools, environmental issues, and corruption, while in Belgrade, the lucrative public tenders for infrastructure projects ahead of EXPO 2027 also featured. The political discourse, both online and offline, was overshadowed by national issues, with the incumbents promoting their diplomatic efforts pertaining to Kosovo,⁶² the UN draft Resolution on Srebrenica, and keeping a geopolitical balance. Opposition actors also focused on the election conditions and the need to enhance the integrity of the election process. The tone of the campaign became increasingly negative closer to election day.

The campaign featured few women politicians, and had limited focus on gender equality, youth, and persons with disabilities. In the observed campaign events, women accounted for 37 per cent of the speakers and around half of the audience.⁶³

Campaigning on social networks is not regulated. Contestants were active on social networks, including *Facebook*, *X*, and *Instagram*, promoting their electoral programmes through videos and posts.⁶⁴ Those calling for a boycott continued to criticize the president and the authorities using the

⁶⁰ The Belgrade City administration widely placed billboards advertising payments of RSD 20,000 (EUR 171) for each child in grammar school or high school and free access to municipal swimming pools and organized two-month-long free cultural activities, which is not usual practice. Other municipalities placed posters advertising free English-language and computer classes for the elderly and youth and free trips.

⁶¹ Paragraph II. B. 1.3 of the Venice Commission Joint [Guidelines](#) for Preventing and Responding to the Misuse of Administrative Resources During Electoral Processes recommends that “no major announcements linked to or aimed at creating a favourable perception towards a given party or candidate should occur during campaigns”.

⁶² All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text should be understood in full compliance with the United Nations Security Council [Resolution](#) 1244.

⁶³ The ODIHR EOM observed 16 campaign events of 8 lists and endorsing parties and movements in 7 locations.

⁶⁴ According to the Facebook Ad Library, from the calling of elections to 31 May, contestants spent approximately EUR 113,000 on advertising, with some EUR 78,000 by the SNS, around EUR 14,000 by the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians, and some EUR 7,000 by the *Biram* coalition. Two organizations, *Pristojna Srbija* and *Ponosna Srbija*, spent some EUR 12,000 reposting SNS-produced content praising its achievements and criticizing the opposition.

same tools.⁶⁵ Between 1 May and election day, the *Facebook* and *X* accounts of eight actors from the ruling SNS had jointly the highest level of online engagement (some one million interactions). The accounts of the 12 most prominent opposition actors jointly had 228,000 interactions. The ODIHR EOM noted at least one instance of disinformation, namely a deep fake video featuring a panel discussion on TV, used to discredit a candidate for mayor of Belgrade. Campaign and partisan posts were noted on some official social network accounts of public institutions, including mayors and municipalities, raising concerns about misuse of state resources in the campaign.⁶⁶

The law should clearly regulate online campaigning, including by public institutions and officials. Responsible oversight institution should be mandated to monitor contestants and other stakeholders in the campaign, and equipped with effective and proportionate sanctioning mechanisms for violations.

IX. CAMPAIGN FINANCE

Campaign financing is primarily regulated by the 2022 Law on Financing Political Activities (LFPA) and the 2019 Law on Prevention of Corruption (last amended in 2022). Previous outstanding ODIHR recommendations relate to campaign expenditure limits, rules on campaigning by third parties, effective oversight mechanism, a system of dissuasive sanctions, and effective disbursement of public funds. Overall, the legislative shortcomings and the limited enforcement of the regulatory framework diminish transparency and accountability of campaign finances and undermine a level playing field.

Political parties represented in parliament or in local self-government units are entitled to annual public funding in proportion to their results in the previous elections; this funding can also be used for campaigns, and many parties did so by transferring the regular funds to their campaign finance account. Submitters of electoral lists also get public funding for campaigning.⁶⁷ Public funding is allocated proportionally to all contestants who obtain at least 1 per cent of the votes. Contestants may receive a 40 per cent advance, if they submit a deposit equal to the amount of the first instalment. Contrary to a previous ODIHR recommendation, the disbursement of public funding is not contingent on verifying lawful campaign financing.

Contestants may finance their campaign activities through monetary and in-kind donations, membership fees, their own funds, credits, and loans; donations from various other sources are prohibited.⁶⁸ The ceiling for donations from legal entities remains high, not in line with a previous ODIHR recommendation.⁶⁹ Most ODIHR EOM interlocutors reported that regular party funds, rather

⁶⁵ The ODIHR EOM monitored the social network presence of major contestants, party leaders, and selected municipalities. The Mission conducted a qualitative analysis to identify hate speech, inflammatory language or derogatory comments, or presence of disinformation narratives.

⁶⁶ Transparency Serbia filed several complaints to the APC which were rejected. The law prescribes warnings, fines imposed by the APC, and dismissal of public officials pursuant to court proceedings.

⁶⁷ This amounts to 0.07 per cent of tax revenues of the annual budget of the respective local self-government unit. Contestants had to declare their intention to receive public funds with the respective LECs. The total amount of public funding allocated for the Belgrade City Assembly elections was around RSD 76 million (EUR 638,400). Forty per cent of that amount was distributed equally among the 14 registered lists in the first instalment.

⁶⁸ Donations from anonymous, foreign, and state-funded sources, non-profit organizations, trade unions and religious organizations, the gaming industry, or through third parties are prohibited. Legal or natural persons with public procurement contracts may not donate during the validity of the contract and for a period of two years after the contract's termination.

⁶⁹ The donation ceiling for individuals and legal entities is 10 and 30 average monthly salaries, respectively. In election years, these limits double, with the ceiling for legal entities reaching RSD 5,647,500 (around EUR 48,000) for 2024. The average monthly salary was RSD 86,007. Donations exceeding one average monthly salary must be disclosed on the website of the list submitter, within eight days of receipt. See the 2022 ODIHR and Venice Commission [Joint Opinion](#) on the Constitutional and Legal Framework Governing the Functioning of Democratic Institutions.

than donations, are the main source of campaign funds and that donors are hesitant to make campaign donations, due to fear of repercussions.⁷⁰

Contrary to a long-standing ODIHR recommendation, there is not expenditure limit, leading to disparities among contestants and resulting in potentially undue influence on voters due to excessive spending.⁷¹

To prevent undue influence on the voters, reasonable campaign expenditure limits should be introduced and consideration should be given to lowering the ceiling for donations from legal entities.

The Agency for Prevention of Corruption (APC) is mandated to oversee political finance and prevent the misuse of state resources. By law, interim campaign finance reports were due on 26 May, covering the period from the call of elections until 15 days prior to election day. Although these reports were published on the APC website, the reporting period left most of the campaign finances unreported;⁷² furthermore, the timing of the submission and publication of the reports diminishes the possibility of public scrutiny.

To enhance transparency and the information available to voters, the interim campaign finance reporting period should be extended to include the period closer to election day.

The law requires each political subject/entity to submit an interim and a final campaign finance report. Based on the interpretation provided by the APC, each contestant was required to have a separate bank account for each self-government unit campaign and submit a separate report, totaling 483 bank accounts and corresponding reports for those elections. However, the majority of contestants informed the ODIHR EOM that most of their income and campaign expenditure was centralized.⁷³ By 1 June, some 300 interim campaign finance reports had been published on the APC website, while the APC informed the ODIHR EOM that some contestants did not submit interim reports.

To increase transparency, consideration could be given to submitting income and expenditure reports by contestants for all-self-government unit campaigns through a single dedicated bank account.

Final campaign finance reports were due 30 days after the publication of the final election results. The APC is only required to publish its conclusions on interim and final campaign finance reports within 120 days after submission, reducing transparency. Despite a previous ODIHR recommendation, there are no sanctions for inaccurate reporting.⁷⁴

For these elections, the APC deployed 44 field monitors to collect data on campaign expenditures, including election materials, rallies, and the Internet. Several ODIHR EOM interlocutors voiced a

⁷⁰ The LFPA prescribes that donors may be subject to tax controls but lacks clear criteria for such controls, potentially discouraging donations.

⁷¹ For instance, the expenditure by the SNS on paid TV advertising was estimated to amount to EUR 7 million. See Article 9 of the Recommendation [Rec\(2003\)4](#) of the Committee of Ministers to states on common rules against corruption in the funding of political parties and electoral campaigns.

⁷² Upon a complaint from Transparency Serbia, alleging that the SNS did not report a number of expenditures during the reporting period, the APC stated that they will only look into these after election day, during the review of the preliminary and final reports.

⁷³ Most contestants informed the ODIHR EOM that they used their regular party funding; payments for campaign consultants and TV advertising were centralized.

⁷⁴ Paragraph 272 of the 2020 [ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines on Political Party Regulation](#) states that sanctions “should be applied against political parties found to be in violation of relevant laws and regulations and should be dissuasive in nature. Moreover, in addition to being enforceable, sanctions must at all times be objective, effective, and proportionate to the specific violation”.

lack of trust in the APC, due to limited efforts undertaken by the agency to address alleged violations proactively.⁷⁵

The Anti-Corruption Agency should be legally obliged to proactively identify violations during election campaigns, in a timely manner.

X. MEDIA

A. MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

The election campaign unfolded in a lively yet polarized media environment, marked by systemic challenges to media freedom. Numerous media outlets compete in a relatively small advertising market, many constrained by financial fragility. Recent legislative changes to the Law on Public Information and Media aim to enhance transparency and fairness in public funding of media projects. However, the new policies are not fully implemented yet.⁷⁶ Television dominates the media market and remains the primary source of news, while online media has overtaken print media. Content diversity is hindered by political and economic influences, and media outlets reflect the strong polarization in society.⁷⁷

Public service media, national *Radio-Television of Serbia (RTS)* and regional *Radio-Television of Vojvodina (RTV)*, are mainly funded by license fees. The members of public-service media managing boards are appointed by the Regulatory Authority of Electronic Media (REM) for a five-year term. In 2022, the REM renewed the terrestrial licenses for commercial televisions *TV Pink*, *TV Happy*, *TV Prva*, and *TV B92*, while the allocation of a fifth license has been pending since December 2022.⁷⁸ Consequently, television channels critical of the government and the ruling party remain available only through cable operators, often with limited reach.

Long-standing concerns related to the media include threats and intimidations of journalists, impunity for crimes against them, strategic lawsuits against investigative journalism, media ownership concentration, and inconsistent enforcement of legislation. Journalist associations and international organizations expressed serious concerns about attacks on journalists before and during election

⁷⁵ On 18 March 2024, the UN Human Rights Committee, in its concluding observations on the [fourth periodic review](#), expressed regrets about the lack of information provided by Serbia on mechanisms guaranteeing the independence of the Agency and about the lack of information provided on cases involving corruption by high-public officials, and recommended strengthening the mandate and independence of the APC.

⁷⁶ Legislative changes introduced, *inter alia*, a Unique Information System for tracking and monitoring co-financed projects, mandatory public reporting, and external evaluations. On 13 May, the Ministry of Information and Telecommunications [disclosed](#) that 42 local governments failed to launch legally required public tenders for media projects. Some local media voiced concerns to the ODIHR EOM regarding the opaque allocation of public funds, which may result in reduced critical coverage to avoid losing such funds. In addition, many ODIHR EOM interlocutors stated that public funding for media should prioritize quality journalism.

⁷⁷ According to [Freedom House's Nations in Transit](#), the rating of independent media dropped from 4.00 in 2014 to 2.75 in 2024. In Reporters Without Borders's 2024 [World Press Freedom Index](#), Serbia ranked 98th out of 180 countries, down from 54th in 2014.

⁷⁸ In 2022, the REM launched a tender for a fifth license but failed to meet the decision deadline. In response to protests and a lawsuit from applicants, the REM unilaterally suspended the process and stated that no license would be issued while the court dispute was ongoing. The European Commission in its [Serbia 2023 Report](#) noted that the fifth license "has still not been awarded, without credible justification".

day.⁷⁹ ODIHR EOM interlocutors noted that a deteriorating media environment leads to self-censorship in critical coverage and tabloid-style journalism.⁸⁰

Authorities should condemn attacks on journalists, implement measures to protect them, and prevent impunity through independent, timely investigations to bring perpetrators to justice. Additional steps should be taken to shield media workers from abusive defamation lawsuits by promptly dismissing baseless cases, awarding legal costs and damages, and imposing deterrent penalties on those who initiate such proceedings.

B. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE MEDIA AND OVERSIGHT

The legal framework generally provides a sound framework to enable and protect freedom of expression and media freedom. Despite amendments adopted to align with EU legislation, the October 2023 legislative changes to media laws have raised some concerns among journalist associations. These concerns stem from the failure to mandate a new election of REM Council members despite a revised appointment mechanism, the absence of provisions enforcing ethical standards for media receiving public funding, and provisions allowing for state co-ownership of private media.⁸¹

Under the Law on Electronic Media, audio-visual service providers should ensure fair representation of contestants and must adhere to regulations such as banning political advertising outside election periods, publishing political advertising tariffs before the campaign, providing non-discriminatory election coverage, clearly labelling election programmes, and disclosing detailed opinion poll methodologies.

On 7 May, the REM approved a new Rulebook for election media coverage, which took effect on 18 May, only two weeks before the elections. The regulations remained mostly unchanged from the previous elections.⁸² Positively, the Rulebook now applies to all broadcasters, not just public service

⁷⁹ On 30 May, the Safe Journalists Network, MFRR partners, and the Coalition for Media Freedom [condemned](#) ongoing pressures and attacks on journalists in Serbia, following a recent attack in Belgrade and strategic lawsuits against investigative reporters. The Mapping Media Freedom portal [reported](#) a physical assault on a journalist while covering events on election day in Novi Sad. The Council of Europe [Safety of Journalists Platform](#) recorded eight active alerts in 2024, including attacks on journalists' physical safety (3), harassment (3), detention (1), and impunity (1). While the 2023 report from the Permanent Working Group for Safety of Journalists [indicates](#) slight improvements in assaults and processed cases, in early 2024, the Independent Association of Journalists of Serbia [recorded](#) 52 attacks and an increase in strategic lawsuits against journalists. The [fourth periodic report](#) on Serbia by the UN Human Rights Committee expressed concerns "about the reported rise in intimidation, smear campaigns and attacks on human rights defenders, activists, opposition leaders, and journalists, including by means of strategic and unwarranted lawsuits". Paragraph 23 of the 2011 [General Comment 34](#) on 'Article 19 of the ICCPR calls for all attacks on journalists to be "vigorously investigated in a timely fashion and the perpetrators prosecuted"'.

⁸⁰ The [2023 Report](#) on the state of media freedom and the safety of journalists in Serbia conducted by the European Federation of Journalists in collaboration with the Journalists Association of Serbia (UNS) and the Independent Journalists Association of Serbia (NUNS) revealed that over half of Serbian journalists experienced self-censorship. On 7 June, the Court of Appeal in Belgrade upheld a verdict against the Crime and Corruption Research Network (KRIK) investigative news portal for violating the presumption of innocence of a man on trial for organizing a criminal group. KRIK [alleges](#) that these lawsuits, including 16 ongoing cases, are Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPP) aimed at pressuring the media.

⁸¹ While acknowledging legislative improvements with the 2023 amendments to media laws, the European Commission in its [2023 Report](#) stated that "the legislative process was not finalised fully in line with the EU acquis and European standards" and that "limited progress was made in the reporting period" regarding freedom of expression. The Media Freedom Rapid Response [expressed concern](#) over a provision that could facilitate the return to state co-ownership of private media, diverging from the 2020 Media Strategy adopted by the government.

⁸² On 5 April, the REM held a [public hearing](#) to review 15 regulations and the Rulebook for election coverage.

media. The REM did not issue its 2024 monitoring plan or a specific plan for the 2 June elections.⁸³ On 3 June, the day after the elections, the REM held an emergency session to request that the Constitutional Court assess the constitutionality of a provision in the Law on Electronic Media which mandates the dismissal of its members by 4 November 2024.

The REM oversaw media compliance with the laws, acting only upon complaints. During the election period, it received several media-related complaints but did not publicly respond prior to election day. The REM systematically monitored eight broadcasters along others if it received complaints but did not release its findings before the elections. This indicated ongoing problems in effectively overseeing media coverage and providing timely remedies for possible violations. Many ODIHR EOM interlocutors expressed lack of confidence in the REM.

The independence and effectiveness of the Regulatory Authority of Electronic Media should be strengthened, with clearly defined responsibilities during campaign periods. Efforts should be made to enhance compliance with legal deadlines, address complaints efficiently, ensure efficient media monitoring, and maintain transparency in its operations.

C. ODIHR EOM MEDIA MONITORING

ODIHR EOM media monitoring showed that nationwide media mostly focused on national, regional and international issues, with marginal local coverage.⁸⁴ ODIHR EOM interlocutors noted that a few local media outlets covered the local elections. Nationwide media frequently broadcast pre-recorded campaign material from political parties, overshadowing editorial content and not always clearly distinguishing it from news content. This practice undermines the watchdog role of the media and contradicts professional standards.⁸⁵ The media published price lists for paid political advertisement, offering discounts benefitting those who could buy more ads. Only paid ads from the ruling parties were broadcast in the monitored media.⁸⁶ Overall, nationwide media extensively covered the activities of the president and the government, further tilting the playing field.

To foster the media's watchdog role, media outlets should exercise their editorial freedom and refrain from using material produced by political parties in news and information programmes.

The public service media *RTS* and *RTV* did not provide free airtime to electoral contestants. *RTS* and the REM informed the ODIHR EOM that they do not consider the obligation to provide free airtime applicable to the current local elections, arguing the impracticality of presenting all parties and coalitions in local elections.⁸⁷ However, on 28 May, *RTS1* aired an electoral debate featuring four representatives from major competing lists in Belgrade and, from 20 May, broadcast some interviews with major candidates in Belgrade, Čačak, Požarevac, Sremska Mitrovica, and Zrenjanin. Regrettably, *RTS1* did not grant media access to candidates from the large cities of Niš and Novi Sad.

⁸³ The Law on Electronic Media requires the REM to adopt its annual supervisory plan by 20 December of the previous year and update it within ten days of the calling of elections. The REM informed the ODIHR EOM that the new law's adoption in November 2023 left insufficient time to implement these plans.

⁸⁴ Between 6 May and 2 June, the ODIHR EOM monitored the political coverage of six television channels with national terrestrial coverage (*RTS1*, *RTV1*, *TV Pink*, *TV Happy*, *TV Prva*, and *TV B92*), daily between 18:00 and 24:00 hrs., and the prime-time news programmes of two cable television channels (*NI* and *Nova S*).

⁸⁵ The Council of Europe Recommendation [CM/Rec \(2007\)15](#) on measures concerning media coverage of election campaigns, in paragraph I.3, recommends member states to “ensure that there is an effective and manifest separation between the exercise of control of media and decision making as regards media content and the exercise of political authority or influence”.

⁸⁶ The SNS-led coalition purchased 8 hours and 53 minutes. The monitored cable TV channels *NI* and *Nova S* chose not to broadcast paid political advertisement.

⁸⁷ The LEMP and REM Rulebook on election media coverage reiterates that public service media must present all electoral lists in free and equal airtime slots. Additionally, the Law on Public Service Media defines public interest to include “free and equal presentation of political parties, coalitions and candidates with confirmed electoral lists for republican, provincial or local elections during the election campaign”.

Overall, *RTSI* allocated most coverage to the president (30 per cent) and the national government (26 per cent), mostly in a neutral tone. The SNS-led coalition received 18 per cent of often positive coverage, while opposition parties received 24 per cent, neutral or positive in tone. *RTV* offered mostly neutral coverage to the president (21 per cent), the national government (37 per cent) and the regional government (12 per cent), with opposition parties receiving a combined 8 per cent of neutral or positive coverage.⁸⁸

Monitored private broadcasters showed different patterns. *Pink TV* devoted 37 per cent of mostly positive coverage to the president, 19 per cent to the national government, 33 per cent to the SNS-led coalition, and 7 per cent to opposition parties, largely negative in tone. *Happy TV* and *TV B91* provided extensive and often positive coverage of the president (37 and 65 per cent, respectively), the national government (24 and 14 per cent), and the SNS-led coalition (34 and 16 per cent), with less than 5 per cent given to opposition parties. *TV Prva* devoted mostly positive coverage to the president (36 per cent), the national government (15 per cent), and the SNS-led coalition (30 per cent), with 8 per cent going to all opposition parties combined. Conversely, *NI* and *Nova S* provided substantial coverage of opposition parties (37 and 62 per cent, respectively), in a generally neutral tone, with limited and critical coverage of the president (15 and 5 per cent), the national government (9 and 15 per cent), and the SNS-led coalition (24 and 13 per cent). Women in politics received minimal media coverage, averaging 10 per cent across the monitored media, reflecting their marginalization in political life.

XI. PARTICIPATION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

The Constitution and the law recognize national minorities and guarantee their rights. There are currently 24 registered National Minority Councils. Of the 121 registered political parties, 72 represent national minorities.⁸⁹ In the current parliament, 12 MPs were elected from national minority lists, and some other MPs who are members of national minorities were elected with mainstream parties. Three members of the new government belong to national minorities, as do several mayors, nominated both by minority lists and by mainstream parties.⁹⁰

The law foresees special measures to ensure political participation and representation of national minorities. Namely, candidate lists representing national minorities need a lower number of support signatures to register and a lower number of votes to receive public funding and are exempt from the three per cent threshold. In practice, the bigger national minorities are able to gain representation without these preferential terms. The law prescribes that in municipalities where a national minority accounts for over 15 per cent of the local population, the ballots and electoral documents must also be produced in the language of the respective minority.

⁸⁸ Within the opposition parties, *RTSI* devoted 7 per cent of its coverage to *Biram*, 5 per cent to *Kreni-Promeni* and to *We - the Strength of the People*, 4 per cent to *United for Free Novi Sad*, and 1 per cent to *We - the Voice of the People*. *RTV* allocated 3 per cent to *United for Free Novi Sad*, 2 per cent to *Biram*, and 1 per cent to *Kreni-Promeni*.

⁸⁹ The Bosniak minority is represented by 13 parties, the Albanian, Roma, Russian and Slovak minorities by 7 parties each, the Hungarians by 6, Bulgarians and Vlachs by 4 parties each, Macedonians and Bunjevci by 3 parties each, the Croat, Rusyn, Montenegrin, Romanian and Greek minorities by 2 parties each, and the Gorani by 1 party.

⁹⁰ Including the mayor of Novi Pazar (Social Democratic Party; SDP), the presidents of the municipalities of Ada (SNS), Bačka Topola (Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians), Bosilegrad (Bulgarian party “That we are – Vladimir Zaharijev”), Bujanovac (DS), Dimitrovgrad (SNS), Kanjiža (SVM/VMSZ), Kovačica (SNS), Preševo (Alternative for Change), Senta (SVM/VMSZ), Sjenica (SDP), Tutin (“Tutin in First Place”), and Žagubica (SNS).

Over 100 national minority lists were registered for 53 of the 90 contests.⁹¹ Of these, 27 lists in 24 municipalities were registered as representing the Hungarian minority, 13 lists in 11 municipalities – the Russian minority and 8 lists in 2 municipalities – the Albanian minority. Four of the 14 lists in Belgrade City represented national minorities, as did 2 of the 11 lists in Niš City and 3 of the 14 lists in Novi Sad.

The legal criteria for election commissions to determine whether a candidate list represents a national minority do not prevent misuse of these provisions and related benefits.⁹² Many ODIHR EOM interlocutors noted that several lists registered as representing national minorities did not aim to promote representation of a national minority but to gain representation more easily, to nominate members in election commissions and to obtain public funding. Some national minority lists were registered in municipalities without any or with very few members of the relevant minority.⁹³ In some municipalities, candidates of a national minority list were elected without passing the threshold, which had a decisive impact on the election results.⁹⁴

Consideration should be given to reviewing the preferential terms for the registration and representation of lists representing national minorities.

XII. ELECTION DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The law provides for expedient dispute resolution, but additional safeguards are required to ensure full access to effective remedy.⁹⁵ Complaints against decisions, actions, or inactions of the election administration are handled by the LECs, whose decisions may be appealed to the Higher Courts.⁹⁶ The law contains scattered provisions on dispute resolution; it provides broad legal standing to list submitters, while the possibility for other interested parties to file complaints depends on the subject matter.⁹⁷ Citizen observers can only complain about their right to observe the printing and handover

⁹¹ Including in Belgrade City and eight Belgrade city municipalities, Niš City and five Niš city municipalities, Ada, Apatin, Bač, Bačka Palanka, Bačka Topola, Bački Petrovac, Bečej, Bosilegrad, Bujanovac, Čačak, Čoka, Jagodina, Kanjiža, Kikinda, Kovačica, Kovin, Mali Idjoš, Nova Varoš, Nova Crnja, Novi Bečej, Novi Kneževac, Novi Sad, Opov, Odžaci, Pančevo, Plandište, Pozarevac, Preševo, Ruma, Senta, Sjenica, Sombor, Srbobran, Sremska Mitrovica, Subotica, Svrlijig, Temerin, Tutin, Valjevo, Vrbas, Vršac, Zrenjanin, Žitište.

⁹² Pursuant to Articles 137 and 138 of the LEMP, the election commission may seek the opinion of the competent national minority council on whether a candidate list qualifies as a national minority list. Only a political party of a national minority or a coalition national minority parties can submit national minority lists. A list is denied this status if the carrier or a candidate is known to be a member of another non-minority political party, or if other circumstances undoubtedly indicate an intention to circumvent the law.

⁹³ For instance, both Russian and Slovak minority lists were registered in Niš city, with 121 Russians and 38 Slovaks; in Jagodina, with 27 Russians and 7 Slovaks. In Valjevo, with 34 Russians, the Russian Party and European Green Party, both registered as Russian minority parties, won one seat each, with 723 votes (1.91 per cent) and 737 votes (1.95 per cent), respectively. In Čačak, with 70 Russians, the Russian party list won a seat with 488 votes (1.06 per cent). See the 2022 population census results [by ethnic affiliation across the country](#) and [by municipality and city](#).

⁹⁴ The number of votes cast for a national minority list is increased by 35 per cent, if it does not pass the three per cent threshold. Due to this “boost”, a candidate of the Russian Party in Niš City was elected with 1,224 votes (1.10 per cent) and joined the SNS in forming a narrow majority.

⁹⁵ The deadlines for filing and resolving complaints range between two and three days; appeals must be filed within three days, with the appeal body having three days to decide.

⁹⁶ The 2022 amendments to the LLE transferred the responsibility for handling appeals related to local elections from the Administrative Court to the Higher Courts whose jurisdiction includes the respective local self-government unit.

⁹⁷ Voters can file complaints against decisions on candidate lists, the appointment of LEC members in the extended composition and PB members, and against decisions on the LEC general report on the election results. At the polling stations, voters can only file complaints in case of violation of their voting rights. The right to file complaints at the polling station on irregularities is only granted to list submitters. Political parties can file complaints against the decisions on the appointment of LEC members in the extended composition, while councillor groups can file complaints against the appointment of PB members in the standing composition.

of ballots. Furthermore, complainants can appeal LECs' rejections or dismissals of complaints, but appeals against decisions granting complaints are limited to direct violations of the complainant's legal interests. Limitations on the types of cases that can be brought by stakeholders are contrary to OSCE commitments and international standards.⁹⁸

To improve the dispute resolution system, consideration should be given to broad the legal standing to allow stakeholders, including citizen observers, to challenge all decisions, actions, and inactions of election commissions, in line with international standards.

Most LECs reviewed complaints in public sessions. Holding a public hearing is at the discretion of the courts, and Higher Courts adjudicated appeals in closed sessions. Lack of transparent decision-making is at odds with international standards and good practice, and with previous ODIHR recommendations.⁹⁹ The Constitutional Court has jurisdiction when the competence of the other court is not determined and can annul the election results if irregularities significantly impacted the results. Some ODIHR EOM interlocutors reported that the jurisdiction of the court is not clear.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, the law does not list the grounds for such annulment and the court is not bound by expedited deadlines, negatively impacting timely dispute resolution.¹⁰¹ Some cases from previous elections are still pending at the Constitutional Court.¹⁰² Many ODIHR EOM interlocutors professed a lack of trust in the impartiality of the adjudicating bodies.

The courts handling election-related cases should hold oral public hearings, and the law should define the clear jurisdiction and deadlines for the Constitutional Court in election-related matters.

The REC maintained a public database of complaints filed with LECs and courts, contributing to transparency. Some ODIHR EOM interlocutors reported difficulties in filing complaints due to the limited working hours of LECs or non-availability of LEC members at the administration facilities, and the law lacks clarity if complaints can be filed electronically.

Prior to election day, 180 complaints had been uploaded to the REC website, mostly related to the registration of candidate lists; 78 of these argued that the use of President Vučić's name on the SNS-led coalitions' candidate lists is incompatible with his constitutional role and constitutes a conflict of

⁹⁸ Paragraph 5.10 of the [1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document](#) states that everyone shall have an effective means of redress against administrative decisions, so as to guarantee respect for fundamental rights and ensure legal integrity. Article 2.3(a) of the ICCPR states that "any person whose rights or freedoms as herein recognized are violated shall have an effective remedy...". Guideline II.3.3.3.f of the Venice Commission's [Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters](#) provides that "all candidates and all voters registered in the constituency concerned must be entitled to appeal".

⁹⁹ Higher Courts apply the Law on Civil Procedures for proceedings initiated by an appeal. Paragraph 12 of the 1990 [OSCE Copenhagen Document](#) provides that "proceedings may only be held in camera in the circumstances prescribed by law and consistent with obligations under international law and international commitments". Paragraph 100 of the Explanatory Report of the Venice Commission's [Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters](#) states: "The appeal procedure should be of a judicial nature, in the sense that the right of the appellants to proceedings in which both parties are heard should be safeguarded".

¹⁰⁰ The ODIHR EOM was informed that legal amendments to the legislation are being prepared to address the issue.

¹⁰¹ Guideline II.3.3.g of the Venice Commission's [Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters](#) provides that "time-limits for lodging and deciding appeals must be short (three to five days for each at first instance)". Paragraph 95 of the Code's Explanatory Report states: "It is, however, permissible to grant a little more time to Supreme and Constitutional Courts for their rulings".

¹⁰² The Constitutional Court informed the ODIHR EOM that it has approximately 41,000 pending cases and is currently composed of 11 judges (out of 15 foreseen by the Constitution). Some 15 cases related to previous elections are pending, including appeals against the results. The court informed the ODIHR EOM that it is not publishing original appeals and may only publish some decisions it considered on merits.

interest; all of these complaints were rejected as unsubstantiated.¹⁰³ Some complaints were related to the newly adopted provisions in the LUVR and some LECs provided varied interpretation of these provisions.¹⁰⁴ The remaining complaints related to gender quota requirements, alleged forgery of support signatures, and the granting of national minority status to candidate lists.¹⁰⁵ Most cases were rejected as unsubstantiated or were pending.¹⁰⁶ Out of 29 appeals to the Higher Courts, the courts upheld the LECs' decisions in 20 cases and overturned two cases.¹⁰⁷ The Supreme Public Prosecutor reported receiving eight complaints related to vote buying; some cases related to the last election were still pending during local elections.¹⁰⁸ Some ODIHR EOM interlocutors reported a lack of proper investigation by the police.

The APC receives complaints against misuse of public resources and office by public officials and political entities in campaigns and violations of campaign-finance regulations.¹⁰⁹ While the APC can also review cases *ex officio*, many ODIHR EOM interlocutors noted that it does not proactively investigate violations. Under the LFPA, the deadlines for adjudicating complaints are unclear.¹¹⁰ The APC can issue warnings and has exclusive power to refer cases to the Misdemeanour Court. Despite previous ODIHR recommendations, some APC decisions related to reports against public officials cannot be appealed as they are adopted as 'notifications' rather than administrative decisions.¹¹¹

Up to election day, the APC received 60 complaints, including some 30 against public officials for the use of state resources.¹¹² Some complaints argued that the SNS violated the LFPA by offering free legal services or Serbian classes, donating wheelchairs, or using state resources to promote the party. The APC decided on 30 complaints, rejecting 15 as unsubstantiated; 15 complaints were

¹⁰³ The majority of these complaints were filed according to the same template, which was a part of the campaign of the civil society organization FERKA (Campaign for Fair Elections), calling on citizens to file complaints related to this issue. The majority of LECs noted that the use of the president's name did not violate any provisions of the LLE and LEMP, and that LECs' competences regarding decisions on candidate registration are exhausted by applying the LLE and LEMP; LECs argued that they are not competent to determine the compliance of the legal provisions governing election procedures with the Constitution.

¹⁰⁴ These argued that some candidates in the lists submitted on 11 and 12 May were not eligible to stand as they did not have permanent residency in the respective locality. The LEC in New Belgrade rejected the list of "Biram New Belgrade" following such a complaint, but the LEC in Sombor allowed for rectification of deficiencies in the "Biram Sombor Without Violence" candidate list.

¹⁰⁵ In these cases, LECs stated that they do not check the authenticity of signatures.

¹⁰⁶ Thirty cases were dismissed on technical grounds as incomplete, untimely or submitted by unauthorized persons. Twenty complaints were upheld. At the time of writing this report, four cases were still pending or decisions had not been uploaded to the REC website.

¹⁰⁷ The Belgrade Higher Court overturned the decision of the Belgrade-Vračar LEC registering a candidate list due to the lack of compliance with the gender quota and residency requirements. The Niš Higher Court overturned the decision of the Svrlijig LEC to reject a candidate list; in its decision, LEC had argued that voters were misled and their supporting signatures had been collected in error. The court stated that LEC's explanation lacked legal basis.

¹⁰⁸ Three of these were dismissed, and in other cases more information was requested. For prior elections, the Public Prosecutor Office reported 125 cases, many of which are still pending, including cases related to giving and accepting bribes.

¹⁰⁹ The APC reviews cases in closed sessions as it is not required by law to hold public sessions. Decisions of the APC related to campaign finance violations under the LFPA may be appealed to the Administrative Court; however, the court has no expedited deadline to decide on such cases.

¹¹⁰ In general, the APC has five days to decide on complaints. By law, the APC must notify the political entity against which proceedings are initiated within 24 hours of receiving a complaint. However, the deadline on deciding complaints is counted from the moment contestants are notified of the proceedings against them. In addition, the APC may request information from state bodies, banks, legal and natural persons, who are required to forward requested information within three days, which may further prolong the process.

¹¹¹ Paragraph 5.10 of the 1990 [OSCE Copenhagen Document](#) states that "everyone will have an effective means of redress against administrative decisions", and paragraph 5.11 states that "administrative decisions [...] should be fully justifiable".

¹¹² The APC informed the ODIHR EOM that four cases were rejected as unsubstantiated; in one case it imposed a measure against one public official after confirming a violation of the law; in other proceedings, the information about the outcome can only be made available to the public after notifying the parties in those proceedings.

upheld. The APC issued 14 warnings to the SNS, including ordering the party to remove posts on social networks regarding humanitarian activities such as offering free legal aid services and Serbian language classes, or the distribution of humanitarian packages, and warned the SNS not to share activities of public officials on their social media accounts. Some of the decisions that included warnings on the removal of the posts were made after elections. Despite a prior ODIHR recommendation, under the LPC, APC decisions are published only after the conclusion of the administrative appeal process.¹¹³

The law should be amended to require the Anti-Corruption Agency to issue all decisions in a formal format that can be subject to judicial review. Furthermore, the legislation should establish expedited deadlines for the entire dispute resolution process concerning campaign finance violations, including deadlines for the courts.

XIII. ELECTION OBSERVATION

The LEMP provides for unhindered citizen and international observation of all stages of the electoral process.¹¹⁴ CSOs registered with a statutory purpose related to elections may nominate observers until seven days before election day. Only one citizen observer from the same entity may be present at a given election commission or polling station at the same time. In an inclusive process, the City Election Commissions of Belgrade, Niš, and Novi Sad accredited citizen observers from the Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA) and the Center for Free Elections and Democracy (CeSID).¹¹⁵ International observers could request accreditation up to ten days before election day.¹¹⁶

The ODIHR EOM was informed by several interlocutors of a climate of pressure and a diminishing space for civic activities. After the December 2023 elections, CRTA had published reports pointing towards organized voter migration related to the Belgrade City Assembly elections. Following these publications, state authorities and pro-government media accused CRTA of destabilizing the country's constitutional order, which raised concerns about citizen observers' ability to conduct their activities free from intimidation.¹¹⁷ This is contrary to OSCE commitments and international good practice.¹¹⁸

¹¹³ The law provides that only information that a procedure has been initiated against a public official shall be available to the public. In the APC's interpretation, this provision requires it to provide information upon request.

¹¹⁴ The LLE does not regulate accreditation of observers but states that "provisions of the Law governing the election of Members of Parliament shall accordingly apply to local elections in matters not specifically regulated by this Law". Under the LEMP, the REC is charged with accrediting observers.

¹¹⁵ A total of 1,591 citizen observers were accredited in Belgrade, 89 in Niš, and 122 in Novi Sad. CRTA observed the campaign period and election preparations with a team of 15 long-term observers and 10 media monitors. On election day, CRTA deployed observers to 450 polling stations in Belgrade. CeSID deployed observers to 547 polling stations in Belgrade, Niš, and Novi Sad and also conducted a parallel vote tabulation.

¹¹⁶ The City Election Commissions of Belgrade, Niš, and Novi Sad overall issued 59 accreditations to representatives of foreign embassies and international NGOs, besides ODIHR EOM observers.

¹¹⁷ UN Special Rapporteurs have flagged their "profound concern regarding the widespread discrediting statements and smear campaigns against election observers raising concern about potential fraud in Serbia, including by the highest-ranking politicians of the country". See the [Communication](#) sent to the Government of Serbia on 20 February 2024 by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion, and the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association. The European Commission's [2023 Report](#) noted "verbal attacks and smear campaigns against CSOs".

¹¹⁸ Paragraph 8 of the 1990 [OSCE Copenhagen Document](#) states that "the participating States consider that the presence of observers, both foreign and domestic, can enhance the electoral process for States in which elections are taking place".

Authorities should guarantee adequate conditions for citizen observers to conduct their activities in an environment free from pressure and intimidation, in line with Serbia's international commitments.

XIV. ELECTION DAY

Election day proceeded smoothly overall but was negatively affected by issues related to the secrecy of the vote, numerous procedural problems, claims of pressure on voters and vote buying, and isolated instances of violence. Media reporting and viral social network posts on election day expressing distrust in the integrity of the election process may have impacted voter turnout, which was 47,99 per cent.¹¹⁹

On election day, the ODIHR EOM visited polling stations in 76 territorial-administrative units. Opening was observed in 45 polling stations, voting in 512 polling stations, and counting in 46 polling stations. Tabulation was observed in the premises of 43 LECs. Women constituted 54 per cent of PB members in polling stations observed and chaired 45 per cent of PBs observed.

A. OPENING AND VOTING

The polling stations observed generally opened on time, and the opening process was assessed positively in 41 of the 45 polling stations observed. Opening procedures were generally followed, but ODIHR EOM observers reported several instances of procedural errors, including five instances in which the PB chairperson did not show to everybody present that the ballot box was empty, and ten cases in which the ballot box was not sealed properly.

ODIHR EOM observers assessed voting negatively in 7 per cent of polling stations observed, a high number which is of concern. Negative assessments were attributed to procedural shortcomings and numerous problems with the secrecy of the vote. In 12 per cent of polling stations observed, the layout did not ensure secrecy of the vote, while the design and placement of polling booths did not ensure the secrecy of the vote in 9 and 22 per cent, respectively. In addition, in 22 per cent of polling stations observed, not all voters marked their ballot in secrecy, and in 6 per cent, secrecy was compromised by ballots that were not folded properly. ODIHR EOM observers reported seven cases of voters taking photos of their ballots.

To ensure the secrecy of the vote, the layout of polling stations and the design and placement of voting screens should be improved.

ODIHR EOM observers noted several instances of serious irregularities, including cases of vote buying and pressure on voters. They reported campaign material or activities in the immediate proximity of 8 polling stations, tension outside 2 polling stations, and signs of pressure or intimidation of voters from outside 4 polling stations. ODIHR EOM observers reported six cases of vote buying.¹²⁰ In 2 per cent of polling stations observed, attempts to influence voters who to vote for were noted, and in 2 per cent, people other than PB members were keeping track of voters who had voted.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Based on turnout figures published by LECs; the REC did not publish overall turnout figures. Turnout was 46.12 per cent in Belgrade (down from 58.77 per cent in the December 2023 elections), 49.10 per cent in Niš (58.03 per cent in 2023) and in 49.27 per cent in Novi Sad (59.76 per cent in 2023).

¹²⁰ ODIHR EOM observers reported indications of vote buying outside polling stations from Belgrade-Obrenovac, Belgrade-Palilula, Belgrade-Rakovica, Beočin, and Niš-Medijana.

¹²¹ Three days after election day, [16 CSOs submitted a request](#) to the Commissioner for the Protection of Personal Data to launch an investigation based on "the suspicion that voter data from the Unified Voter Register was made available to the Serbian Progressive Party and other parties". The request was based on observations by these CSOs of parallel voter lists with detailed voter data being handled by SNS activists on election day. The ODIHR EOM received evidence of such a parallel voter list from a polling station in Novi Sad which contained detailed

Inking procedures, an important safeguard against multiple voting, were not always respected. In 10 per cent of polling stations observed, not all voters were checked for traces of indelible ink, and in 6 per cent, not all voters were marked with ink before receiving a ballot. In 4 per cent of polling stations observed, voters' identity documents were not always checked, and in 2 per cent, not all voters signed the voter list. In 17 per cent of polling stations observed, one or more voters were turned away because they were not on the voter list of that polling station or could not produce a valid ID. In 50 per cent of the observed polling stations, voters were not always given instructions on how to vote. Additional procedural violations noted by ODIHR EOM observers included group voting (15 per cent) and proxy voting (1 per cent). In 18 per cent of polling stations observed, the ballot boxes were not properly sealed. ODIHR EOM observers noted in 1 per cent of polling stations observed that the same person was assisting numerous voters.

The layout of the polling station was not adequate for voting in 7 per cent of observations, and overcrowding was noted in 3 per cent of observations. Despite the legal requirement that polling stations be accessible for voters with disabilities, 60 per cent of the polling stations where voting was observed did not provide for independent access for voters with physical disabilities, and in 18 per cent, the interior layout was not suitable for such voters.

Further efforts should be made to improve the accessibility of polling stations, including by giving voters with reduced mobility or visual impairments the possibility to choose to vote at dedicated polling stations equipped for such voters.

Extended PB members were present in 99 per cent of polling stations observed. Citizen observers were present in 43 per cent of polling stations in Niš, Novi Sad and Belgrade.¹²² Unauthorized persons were identified in 1 per cent of polling stations observed. ODIHR EOM observers reported only one case of a non-PB member interfering in the work of the PB.

The Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office informed the ODIHR EOM that criminal complaints had been submitted against 15 individuals to the prosecutor's offices regarding alleged vote buying, abuse of the right to vote, and prevention of voting.¹²³ Some ten complaints were submitted to the Novi Bečej LEC by the *Biram* coalition, alleging vote buying and abuse of mobile voting requests; those cases were dismissed on technical grounds.

Throughout election day, there were numerous claims that SNS call centers, frequently located in public property such as the Banjica Sports Centre in Belgrade-Voždovac and the Novi Sad Fair, were being used to call on voters to vote, by either enticing or pressuring them. While the use of call centers is not against the law, such practices potentially result in voter intimidation, at odds with international commitments.¹²⁴ The Novi Sad Fair call centre was vandalized during a physical clash following an attack by opposition activists. Physical altercations between activists of opposing political camps

notes on voters, for example whether they were expected to vote before 12:00hrs, had been given a 'gift' or were strongly opposed to the SNS.

¹²² Citizen observers were present in 2 out of 23 observed polling stations in Niš, in 4 out of 12 observed polling stations in Novi Sad, and 93 out of 196 observed polling stations in Belgrade. Overall, citizen observers were present in 20 per cent of polling station observed by the ODIHR EOM.

¹²³ Eight complaints were submitted by CRTA regarding alleged vote buying in Belgrade-Obrenovac, Belgrade-Palilula, Belgrade-Zvezdara, New Belgrade, and Vršac, and carousel voting in Belgrade-Rakovica. At the time of writing this report, all cases were pending.

¹²⁴ Paragraph 19 of the UN Human Right Committee's [General Comment 25](#) on Article 25 of the ICCPR states: "Persons entitled to vote must be free to vote for any candidate for election and for or against any proposal submitted to referendum or plebiscite, and free to support or to oppose government, without undue influence or coercion of any kind which may distort or inhibit the free expression of the elector's will. Voters should be able to form opinions independently, free of violence or threat of violence, compulsion, inducement or manipulative interference of any kind." See also paragraph 7.7 of the 1990 [OSCE Copenhagen Document](#).

were also reported from other places. These incidents and allegations about voting irregularities were extensively reported by pro-opposition media.

B. CLOSING AND COUNTING

The majority of the 46 vote counts observed by ODIHR EOM observers were assessed positively, with no instances of tension or disruptions reported. However, the ODIHR EOM assessed the counting negatively in 10 polling stations observed, due to lack of adherence to prescribed procedures and procedural errors or omissions, at times significant. Fourteen PBs did not count all signatures on the voter list before opening the ballot box. In 5 counts, ballots were not counted accurately, and in 1 count ODIHR EOM observers noted evidence of falsification of the results. During nine counts, not everybody present could clearly see the marks on each ballot. The determination of ballot validity was not in line with the law in 3 cases, and not consistent in 4 cases. In addition, ODIHR EOM observers reported other significant procedural errors or omissions from nine counts. In 10 counts, the PB had problems reconciling the results in the results protocol, 6 protocols had been pre-signed, and in 6 cases not all PB members signed the protocol. Eleven PBs did not post a copy of the protocol at the polling station entrance as required, negatively impacting transparency.

To ensure consistent application of election day procedures, standardized mandatory training could be considered for all Polling Board members as well as for prospective members, including those of the extended composition.

C. TABULATION AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS

Tabulation was assessed positively in all but three reports submitted by ODIHR EOM observers, most of whom described it as efficient and well-organized. Negative assessments were mainly due to a lack of transparency as a result of the layout of the tabulation premises. In one LEC, ODIHR EOM observers were not allowed to follow all stages of the tabulation process. In two out of the 43 LECs visited during tabulation, there were no representatives of the opposition present. Citizen observers were present in five out of the 42 LECs where tabulation was observed. ODIHR EOM observers reported from 15 LECs that one or more PB protocols contained discrepancies, necessitating corrections of minor errors by the LEC. In three LECs, IT issues led to delays in the results tabulation process.¹²⁵

The REC started posting scans of results protocols of individual polling stations at around 20:30 hrs. on election night, contributing to transparency. Most LECs published preliminary results of processed polling stations within 24 hours on the REC website.¹²⁶ Final results were published by LECs starting from 5 June.¹²⁷

XV. POST-ELECTION DAY DEVELOPMENTS

After the closing of polling stations, President Vučić announced the victory of the SNS-led coalition and its Hungarian partners in 85 of the 90 contests. The President announced the election results from the SNS offices, further blurring the distinction between state and party.

¹²⁵ IT issues were reported from LECs in Bačka Palanka, Belgrade-Zemun, and Sopot.

¹²⁶ According to the LLE, LECs should establish preliminary results for all polling stations that have been processed within 24 hours following the closing of polling stations. Sixty-nine out of 90 LECs published preliminary results in the evening of 2 June or on 3 June, while 10 LECs published them on 4 June. The remaining 11 LECs did not publish preliminary results online.

¹²⁷ Fifty-eight out of 90 LECs published final results within the deadline of 96 hours established in the LLE. This deadline is extended in case of requests for recounts, complaints, or annulment of polling stations leading to repeat elections.

Three new political actors, *Kreni-Promeni*/Savo Manojlović, Group of Citizens/Dr. Dragan Milić and Guardians of Stari Grad/Marko Bastać were the runners-up in Belgrade City, Niš City and Belgrade-Stari Grad, respectively.¹²⁸ In Niš City, New Belgrade, Belgrade-Stari Grad, and Belgrade-Vračar, the SNS won by a small margin.

After election day, some 245 complaints were submitted to LECs across the country. Of these, some 130 requested annulments of PS results, citing, *inter alia*, violations of secrecy of the vote, vote buying, correction to protocols at a later stage, or violations of election-day procedures.¹²⁹ The Novi Sad LEC rejected 66 such complaints submitted by United for Novi Sad, noting that the listed irregularities did not constitute grounds for annulment. Several complaints asking for annulment in Sjenica due to alleged falsification of votes and signatures were also rejected as unsubstantiated. The remaining complaints requesting annulments were dismissed on technical grounds or rejected due to lack of evidence.¹³⁰

Inspection of election materials, including ballots, voter lists and results protocols, may be requested by list submitters within five days following election day; in addition, a list submitter who according to the preliminary results won more than 2 per cent can request a sample control of results protocols from at most 5 per cent of polling stations.¹³¹ Between 4 and 7 June, recounts were conducted for 83 polling stations in 10 LECs, leading to minor changes in the results of these polling stations.¹³² Five LECs annulled the results of 10 polling stations and scheduled repeat elections.¹³³ Overall, LECs dealt with requests for recounts and annulments according to legal provisions. However, in Belgrade-Vračar, New Belgrade, and Niš, where the results were very close, *Biram* interlocutors claimed that LECs had unlawfully altered the results protocols, resulting in a loss of mandates for the opposition and a subsequent majority for the ruling coalition.¹³⁴

Forty-four complaints submitted by *Kreni-Promeni* with the New Belgrade LEC requested the inspection of election material and subsequent corrections to the results protocols. All of them were rejected as unsubstantiated, noting that the protocols had been checked during the handover of election materials, or that no objections had been filed at the respective polling stations. Several complaints were submitted to the Niš CEC, requesting corrections to protocols following an inspection of materials from polling stations where valid ballots had been incorrectly declared invalid;

¹²⁸ *Kreni-Promeni* obtained 122,898 votes in Belgrade City (17.71 per cent), Group of Citizens Dr. Milić, 27,209 votes in Niš City (20 per cent), and Guardians of Stari Grad/Marko Bastać 3,873 votes in Belgrade-Stari Grad (16.35 per cent).

¹²⁹ Voting may be challenged by list submitters within 72 hours from the closing of the polling station on the grounds of any irregularities, or by voters who were unlawfully prevented from voting or whose right to a free and secret ballot was violated. Voters and list submitters may also challenge the general report of results within 72 hours of the publication of the general report.

¹³⁰ One complaint submitted with the Vršac LEC alleged intimidation of employees working at public companies. The complaint was rejected on merits as the alleged irregularities do not constitute grounds for annulment. The Higher Court dismissed an appeal on the case as untimely.

¹³¹ If a control from more than 5 per cent of polling stations was requested, the control is to be performed for the polling stations with the highest number of registered voters.

¹³² Recounts were conducted in Arilje, Bečej, Belgrade City, Belgrade-Stari Grad, Belgrade-Vračar, Belgrade-Zvezdara, New Belgrade, Bujanovac, Čačak, and Vršac.

¹³³ LECs in Bujanovac, Ivanjica, Niš-Crveni Krst, Niš-Medijana, and Sjenica annulled the results of 10 polling stations and scheduled repeat elections for 13, 16, and 26 June; the Niš-Crveni Krst LEC revoked its decision following a complaint. Reasons for annulment were that no control sheet was found in the ballot box, the polling station results protocol or the certificates for mobile voting were not signed, the PB had allowed a voter who was not on the voter list to vote, the number of ballots in the ballot box was higher than the number of signatures on the voter list (because the PB had by mistake inserted the mobile votes from a different polling station into their ballot box), or because voting had been suspended and not been resumed.

¹³⁴ The Belgrade-Vračar LEC published corrected versions of the results protocols from polling stations 43 and 56 in which four votes had been added in each case to list number 3 (Vračar to the people of Vračar) without further explanation.

following the dismissal of those cases by the Niš CEC, the Niš Higher Court overturned these decisions stating that the CEC had disregarded complaints due to simple technical mistakes.

XVI. RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations, as contained throughout the text, are offered with a view to enhance the conduct of elections in Serbia and to support efforts to bring them fully in line with OSCE commitments and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections to which they have committed. These recommendations should be read in conjunction with prior ODIHR recommendations which remain to be addressed.¹³⁵ ODIHR stands ready to assist the authorities of Serbia to further improve the electoral process and to address the recommendations contained in this and previous reports.

A. PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In line with OSCE commitments, measures should be taken to ensure the separation of the state and party and the impartiality of the public administration during the campaign.
2. To ensure proper and consistent implementation of the legal framework, election-related legislation should be harmonized, and any legislative amendments should be adopted sufficiently in advance of the next elections and based on inclusive and transparent process. Consideration could be given to consolidation of election legislation.
3. To improve voter list accuracy and enhance public trust, the authorities should facilitate a full audit of the Unified Voter Register and the civil register, undertaken by independent experts and with the participation of relevant stakeholders, including representatives of relevant ministries, political parties and civil society.
4. To increase public confidence in the accuracy of voter lists, the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Governance should publish voter registration data that are sufficiently detailed to allow for a meaningful verification of the accuracy of voter numbers.
5. Authorities should condemn attacks on journalists, implement measures to protect them, and prevent impunity through independent, timely investigations to bring perpetrators to justice. Additional steps should be taken to shield media workers from abusive defamation lawsuits by promptly dismissing baseless cases, awarding legal costs and damages, and imposing deterrent penalties on those who initiate such proceedings.
6. To prevent undue influence on the voters, reasonable campaign expenditure limits should be introduced and consideration should be given to lowering the ceiling for donations from legal entities.

¹³⁵ According to paragraph 25 of the 1999 OSCE Istanbul Document, OSCE participating States committed themselves “to follow up promptly the ODIHR’s election assessment and recommendations”. The follow-up of prior recommendations is assessed by ODIHR as follows: The recommendation 26 from the [final report on the 2022 presidential and early parliamentary elections](#) is fully implemented. No recommendations from the 2022 final report or from the [final report on the 2023 early parliamentary elections](#) are mostly implemented. The recommendations 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 20, and 23 from the 2022 final report and recommendations 2, 3, 10, 13, 18, and 23 from the 2023 final report are partially implemented. See also the [ODIHR Electoral Recommendations Database](#).

7. The courts handling election-related cases should hold oral public hearings, and the law should define the clear jurisdiction and deadlines for the Constitutional Court in election-related matters.
8. To ensure consistency in implementation of elections and enhance the professional capacity of the election administration, further guidance on application of the rules could be extended to a single institution.

B. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

9. Authorities at all levels should undertake comprehensive efforts to promote women's active participation in public and political life. Additional mechanisms and incentives should be established to encourage political parties to promote women's participation in political life, increase their visibility during electoral campaigns and advance their role in politics.

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

10. To increase public awareness on voting rights, the election administration should develop and implement a comprehensive and targeted voter education programme on voters' rights, including the secrecy of the vote and the importance of keeping residence data up to date.
11. To increase the transparency of LEC activities, LEC sessions should be publicly announced well in advance, and all members should be provided with timely and comprehensive information about the agenda of upcoming sessions, including all relevant background material.

VOTER REGISTRATION

12. To protect voter's right to a free and secret ballot and in order to avoid misuse, the legal provisions concerning mobile voting should be strengthened, including by requiring a declaration of consent when requesting mobile voting on behalf of another person.

CANDIDATE REGISTRATION

13. Measures should be taken to avoid pressure on voters, guarantee data protection, and prevent obstruction in collecting support signatures; such measures could include the use of e-government tools for the collection of support signatures.

CAMPAIGN ENVIRONMENT

14. To prevent misuse of state resources, consideration could be given to prohibiting the announcement and implementation of extraordinary social welfare programmes and public infrastructure projects after the call of elections.
15. The law should clearly regulate online campaigning, including by public institutions and officials. Responsible oversight institution should be mandated to monitor contestants and other stakeholders in the campaign, and equipped with effective and proportionate sanctioning mechanisms for violations.
16. To prevent abuse of public office and pressure on public employees and other voters, holders of senior management positions in public institutions and public companies should be required

by law to temporarily resign from office in order to run as candidates, in line with international standards.

17. To enable voters to make an informed choice, the authorities could consider designating public stands or other places where contestants can post their posters.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

18. To enhance transparency and the information available to voters, the interim campaign finance reporting period should be extended to include the period closer to election day.
19. To increase transparency, consideration could be given to submitting income and expenditure reports by contestants for all-self-government unit campaigns through a single dedicated bank account.
20. The Anti-Corruption Agency should be legally obliged to proactively identify violations during election campaigns, in a timely manner.

MEDIA

21. The independence and effectiveness of the Regulatory Authority of Electronic Media should be strengthened, with clearly defined responsibilities during campaign periods. Efforts should be made to enhance compliance with legal deadlines, address complaints efficiently, ensure efficient media monitoring, and maintain transparency in its operations.
22. To foster the media's watchdog role, media outlets should exercise their editorial freedom and refrain from using material produced by political parties in news and information programmes.

PARTICIPATION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

23. Consideration should be given to reviewing the preferential terms for the registration and representation of lists representing national minorities.

ELECTION DISPUTE RESOLUTION

24. To improve the dispute resolution system, consideration should be given to broaden the legal standing to allow stakeholders, including citizen observers, to challenge all decisions, actions, and inactions of election commissions, in line with international standards.
25. The law should be amended to require the Anti-Corruption Agency to issue all decisions in a formal format that can be subject to judicial review. Furthermore, the legislation should establish expedited deadlines for the entire dispute resolution process concerning campaign finance violations, including deadlines for the courts.

ELECTION OBSERVATION

26. Authorities should guarantee adequate conditions for citizen observers to conduct their activities in an environment free from pressure and intimidation, in line with Serbia's international commitments.

ELECTION DAY

27. To ensure consistent application of election day procedures, standardized mandatory training could be considered for all Polling Board members as well as for prospective members, including those of the extended composition.
28. To ensure the secrecy of the vote, the layout of polling stations and the design and placement of voting screens should be improved.
29. Further efforts should be made to improve the accessibility of polling stations, including by giving voters with reduced mobility or visual impairments the possibility to choose to vote at dedicated polling stations equipped for such voters.

ANNEX I: ELECTION RESULTS

Number of registered voters	4,205,809	%
Number of voters who voted	2,018,355	47,99
Number of valid votes	1,963,848	
Number of invalid votes	48,787	2.42

I.2 Belgrade City Assembly

Number of voters in the voter register	1,602,150
Number of voters who voted/turnout	738,883 (46.12 per cent)
Number of invalid ballots	13,950 (1.90 per cent)
Number of valid ballots	720,096 (98.10 per cent)

Ballot Number	Candidate List	Number of Votes	Percentage	Mandates
1.	Aleksandar Vučić – Belgrade tomorrow	387,326	52.77	64
2.	Russian Party – Serbs and Russians brothers forever!	8,509	1.16	1
3.	Group of Citizens “Pops, this is for you – Petar Đurić“	5,485	0.75	0
4.	Group of Citizens – For Green Belgrade – When, if not now – Dr. Dejan Žujović	8,485	1.16	0
5.	1 of 5 million – Belgrade Front – Rhythm of the City, Dušan Teodosijević mayor	6,567	0.89	0
6.	We choose Belgrade – Dobrica Veselinović – Miloš Pavlović (Green-Left Front, Don’t Let Belgrade Drown, People’s Movement of Serbia, Democratic Party, Ecological Uprising – Čuta, Movement of Free Citizens. New Face of Serbia)	89,430	12.18	14
7.	“We the strength of the people, prof. Dr. Branimir Nestorović“	59,805	8.15	10
8.	People’s List – Key for Victory (People’s Party – Vladimir Gajić, New Serbia – Velimir Ilić, Movement I live for Serbia – Dr. Jovana Stojković)	4,213	0.57	0
9.	BELGRADE OUR CITY (coalition “Strenght“ – Bosniak Civic Party (BGS); Vlach People’s Party (VNS); Alliance of Yugoslavs (SJ); Alliance for Future and Development (SBR); Party of Montenegrins (SCG); Civic Party of the Greek of Serbia – (GSGS))	2,311	0.31	0
10.	Roma Union of Serbia – For Belgrade	3,325	0.45	0
11.	Belgrade is World – Party of Justice and Reconciliation (SPP)– Usame Zukorlić	974	0.13	0
12.	Savo Manojlović PhD – I am also Belgrade – Kreni-Promeni	129,868	17.69	21
13.	Saša Radulović – Enough is enough (DJB) – Solution for Change	6,887	0.94	0
14.	We – the voice from the people	6,911	0.94	0

I.3 Niš City Assembly

Number of voters in the voter register	226,268
Number of voters who voted/turnout	111,112 (49.10 per cent)
Number of invalid ballots	1,875 (1.69 per cent)
Number of valid ballots	109,237 (98.31 per cent)

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Ballot Number	Candidate List	Number of Votes	Percentage	Mandates
1.	Aleksandar Vučić – Niš tomorrow	49,230	44.31	30
2.	We choose Niš – Đorđe Stanković (NPS, DS, ZLF, PSG)	17,914	16.12	10
3.	United – Hope for Niš – Miodrag Stanković (NDSS, NS, SDS, DJB, DUR)	4,307	3.88	2
4.	Group of citizens “Dr. Dragan Milić”	27,211	24.49	16
5.	Russian Party – Russian and Niš in the heart! – Tihomir Perić	1,223	1.10	1
6.	Bojan Avramović – We are not giving Niš	796	0.72	0
7.	For our Niš – Petar Bogičević – coalition Strenght	597	0.54	0
8.	Savo Manojlović, PhD – I am also Niš – Go-Change	4,371	3.93	2
9.	United for the village and the city – Let’s be clear	637	0.57	0
10.	Voice of the people is strength of the people	712	0.64	0
11.	Niš, our city – Branislav Bane Jovanović – New Face of Serbia – Miloš Parandilović	2,239	2.02	0

I.4 Novi Sad City Assembly

Number of voters in the voter register	339,233
Number of voters who voted/turnout	167,135 (49.27 per cent)
Number of invalid ballots	3,610 (2.16 per cent)
Number of valid ballots	163,437 (97.84 per cent)

Ballot Number	Candidate List	Number of Votes	Percentage	Mandates
1.	Aleksandar Vučić – Novi Sad tomorrow	87,791	52.55	45
2.	Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians – Dr. Baling Pastor	2,062	1.23	1
3.	Russian Party – Russians and Serbs brothers forever!	1,223	0.73	0
4.	Truth – Adaviera - Ivana Vujasin	1,063	0.64	0
5.	A completely different story – city to the citizens	1,461	0.87	0
6.	For real things support Gari	717	0.43	0
7.	Novi Sad Capitol of Vojvodina – Movement Autonomy – Aleksandar Odžić	1,386	0.83	0
8.	KRENI PROMENI- Savo Manojlović, PhD I am also Novi Sad	16,723	10.01	8
9.	I love Novi Sad (Dveri, NS, Movement I live for Serbia)	1,747	1.05	0
10.	Slovak Democratic League – Želimir Privizer	359	0.21	0
11.	United for free Novi Sad (NDSS, POKS, SSP, NPS, DS, SRCE, PSG, ZLF, Ecological uprising – Čuta, PZP, Bravo, LSV)	40,541	24.27	21
12.	Heroes – Miša Bačulov	6,332	3.79	3
13.	Pops, this is for you – Petar Đurić	565	0.34	0
14.	Saša Radulović – DJB – Solution for Change	1,467	0.88	0

I.5 Other Cities, City Municipalities, and Municipalities

City/ Municipality	Turnout (per cent)	First-placed contestant	Percentage of votes	Second-placed Contestant	Percentage of votes
Ada	53.15	Aleksandar Vučić – Ada tomorrow	61.52	Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	32.17
Aleksinac	39.10	Aleksandar Vučić – Aleksinac tomorrow	60.44	Group of Citizens Awakening	16.04

City/ Municipality	Turnout (per cent)	First-placed contestant	Percentage of votes	Second-placed Contestant	Percentage of votes
Alibunar	49.35	Aleksandar Vučić – Alibunar tomorrow	67.37	For Free Alibunar Party of Freedom and Justice	17.25
Apatin	46.35	Aleksandar Vučić – Apatin tomorrow	68.71	Perica Popić – Apatin, wake up	16.10
Arilje	42.03	Aleksandar Vučić – Arilje tomorrow	50.74	United for Arilje (DS, NPS, NLS)	22.85
Bač	57.79	Aleksandar Vučić – Bač tomorrow	58.78	My Bač! Freedom for All! Zdravko Vulil Đade	27.82
Bačka Palanka	48.79	Aleksandar Vučić – Bačka Palanka tomorrow	65.56	United Opposition of Bačka Palanka Choose better (NPS, SSP, DS, NDSS, ZLF, NLS)	17.26
Bačka Topola	49.72	Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	53.36	Aleksandar Vučić – Bačka Topola tomorrow	36.76
Bački Petrovac	49.83	Aleksandar Vučić – Bački Petrovac tomorrow	61.29	BIRAM– United opposition Bački Petrovac (SSP, NPS, POKS)	26.02
Bečež	51.71	Aleksandar Vučić – Bečež tomorrow	56.59	Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	23.46
Bela Crkva	51.06	Aleksandar Vučić – Bela Crkva tomorrow	65.27	Movement for Bela Crkva – Sandra Ristić	15.64
Belgrade- Barajevo	48.45	Aleksandar Vučić – Barajevo tomorrow	69.73	BIRAM Barajevo – Bogdan Marinković (ZLF, Don't Let Belgrade Drown, NPS, DS, Ecological Uprising – Ćuta, PSG, NLS)	19.07
Belgrade- Čukarica	45.30	Aleksandar Vučić – Čukarica tomorrow	54.47	BIRAM Čukarica – Stevan Banjac (ZLF, Don't Let Belgrade Drown, NPS, DS, Ecological Uprising – Ćuta, PSG, NLS)	31.91
Belgrade-Grocka	42.58	Aleksandar Vučić – Grocka tomorrow	69.51	BIRAM Grocka – Nemanja Todorović (ZLF, Don't Let Belgrade Drown, NPS, DS, Ecological Uprising – Ćuta, PSG, NLS)	13.66
Belgrade- Lazarevac	59.18	Aleksandar Vučić – Lazarevac tomorrow	56.34	KRENI PROMENI Savo Manojlović, PhD – I am also Lazarevac	14.63
Belgrade- Mladenovac	52.53	Aleksandar Vučić – Mladenovac tomorrow	62.78	Agreement for Mladenovac (Initiative Green overview, Eco team Mladenovac, Alliance for Revival Mladenovac, Initiative Mladenovac our thing, Association of Citizens Romano glaso)	13.02
Belgrade-New Belgrade	47.52	Aleksandar Vučić – New Belgrade tomorrow	46.48	KRENI PROMENI Savo Manojlović, PhD – I am also New Belgrade	26.37
Belgrade- Obrenovac	49.92	Aleksandar Vučić – Obrenovac tomorrow	66.40	Group of Citizens for our Obrenovac – Heart of resistance, voice of change – Đorđe Janjić	16.18
Belgrade-Palilula	40.83	Aleksandar Vučić – Palilula tomorrow	57.54	BIRAM Palilula	23.86

City/ Municipality	Turnout (per cent)	First-placed contestant	Percentage of votes	Second-placed Contestant	Percentage of votes
Belgrade-Rakovica	45.51	Aleksandar Vučić – Rakovica tomorrow	55.35	BIRAM Rakovica – Dušan Pavlović (ZLF, Don't Let Belgrade Drown, NPS, DS, Ecological Uprising – Ćuta, PSG, NLS)	27.64
Belgrade-Savski Venac	44.39	Aleksandar Vučić – Savski Venac tomorrow	44.23	We choose Savski Venac – prof. Dr. Snežana Rakić (ZLF, Don't Let Belgrade Drown, NPS, DS, Ecological Uprising – Ćuta, PSG, NLS)	41.17
Belgrade-Sopot	49.55	Aleksandar Vučić – Sopot tomorrow	65.29	Together for our Sopot	27.83
Belgrade-Stari Grad	44.28	BIRAM Stari Grad – Radomir Lazović (ZLF, Don't Let Belgrade Drown, NPS, DS, Ecological Uprising – Ćuta, PSG, NLS)	37.01	Aleksandar Vučić – Stari Grad tomorrow	34.79
Belgrade-Surčin	51.67	Aleksandar Vučić – Surčin tomorrow	71.66	BIRAM Surčin – Vojislav Janošević (ZLF, Don't Let Belgrade Drown, NPS, DS, Ecological Uprising – Ćuta, PSG, NLS)	14.09
Belgrade- Voždovac	45.85	Aleksandar Vučić – Voždovac tomorrow	53.94	KRENI PROMENI Savo Manojlović, PhD – I am also Voždovac	22.28
Belgrade-Vračar	47.10	BIRAM Vračar – Miloš Pavlović (ZLF, Don't Let Belgrade Drown, NPS, DS, Ecological Uprising – Ćuta, PSG, NLS)	41.52	Aleksandar Vučić – Vračar tomorrow	38.16
Belgrade-Zemun	45.82	Aleksandar Vučić – Zemun tomorrow	55.70	KRENI PROMENI Savo Manojlović, PhD – I am also Zemun – I am also Batajnica – Milan Ljutovac	21.88
Belgrade- Zvezdara	43.13	Aleksandar Vučić – Zvezdara tomorrow	48.81	BIRAM Zvezdara – Marina Mijatović (ZLF, Don't Let Belgrade Drown, NPS, DS, Ecological Uprising – Ćuta, PSG, NLS)	29.15
Beočin	60.19	Aleksandar Vučić – Beočin tomorrow	81.30	Beočin against violence – I choose to fight Miroslav Aleksić	10.42
Boljevac	60.78	Aleksandar Vučić – Boljevac tomorrow	76.07	Alternative for Boljevac – Boljevac has better	11.74
Bosilegrad	68.19	Aleksandar Vučić– Bosilegrad tomorrow	92.63	We can too	3.35
Bujanovac	43.70	Front for Changes – Driton Rexhepi	18.56	Aleksandar Vučić – Bujanovac tomorrow	17.48
Čačak	47.99	Aleksandar Vučić – Čačak tomorrow	50.25	Ivan V. Čalović Truth and Honor	15.05
Čajetina	65.28	Milan Stamatović – Healthy Serbia	55.99	Group of citizens – Our people for our place – Marko Pantović	24.12
Čoka	54.77	Aleksandar Vučić – Čoka tomorrow	55.67	Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	32.97

City/ Municipality	Turnout (per cent)	First-placed contestant	Percentage of votes	Second-placed Contestant	Percentage of votes
Gornji Milanovac	50.52	Aleksandar Vučić – Gornji Milanovac tomorrow	49.81	UZINAT – We don't betray the local – Dr. Tatjana Milošević	21.22
Jagodina	46.35	Dragan Marković Palma – United Serbia – Ivica Dačić – SPS For domestic Jagodina	58.64	Aleksandar Vučić – Jagodina tomorrow	26.23
Indija	54.37	Aleksandar Vučić – Indija tomorrow	56.46	Group of Citizens – Strahinja Jovanović – Yes, it can be better	25.24
Irig	51.38	Aleksandar Vučić – Irig tomorrow	78.51	For our most beautiful municipality!...	12.64
Ivanjica	43.62	Aleksandar Vučić – Ivanjica tomorrow	54.40	We choose to fight for Ivanjica – Miroslav Miki Aleksić – People's Movement of Serbia	22.06
Kanjiža	47.60	Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	63.98	Aleksandar Vučić – Kanjiža tomorrow	28.20
Kikinda	50.03	Aleksandar Vučić – Kikinda tomorrow	66.13	Coalition Choose Change – United opposition of Kikinda – Mirko Šoć	14.45
Kovačica	47.08	Aleksandar Vučić – Kovačica tomorrow	65.63	United opposition of the Municipality of Kovačica – I choose to fight (DS, LSV, NPS)	27.33
Kovin	48.54	Aleksandar Vučić – Kovin tomorrow	71.24	Move on for Kovin – Srđan Vukša	17.92
Mali Idoš	60.12	Aleksandar Vučić – Mali Idoš tomorrow	50.97	Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	41.93
Niš-Crveni Krst	47.34	Aleksandar Vučić – Crveni Krst tomorrow	54.64	Group of citizens Dr. Dragan Milić	14.58
Niš-Medijana	51.59	Aleksandar Vučić – Medijana tomorrow	38.42	Group of citizens Dr. Dragan Milić	27.77
Niš-Niška Banja	53.63	Aleksandar Vučić – Niška Banja tomorrow	61.19	Group of citizens Dr. Dragan Milić	19.61
Niš-Palilula	46.21	Aleksandar Vučić – Palilula tomorrow	47.60	Group of citizens Dr. Dragan Milić	23.45
Niš-Pantelej	48.27	Aleksandar Vučić – Pantelej tomorrow	46.83	Group of citizens Dr. Dragan Milić	22.51
Nova Crnja	62.83	Aleksandar Vučić – Nova Crnja tomorrow	73.66	Group of citizens – To know order	12.75
Nova Varoš	60.81	Aleksandar Vučić – Nova Varoš tomorrow	50.08	Unanimously for Nova Varoš (DS, Dveri, NDSS, POKS)	19.74
Novi Bečej	53.39	Aleksandar Vučić – Novi Bečej tomorrow	52.96	Aleksandar Vulin – Movement of Socialists – PS – Ivica Milankov	18.37
Novi Kneževac	55.04	Aleksandar Vučić – Novi Kneževac tomorrow	57.17	Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	29.59
Odžaci	47.85	Aleksandar Vučić – Odžaci tomorrow	80.87	Odžaci against violence – Dr. vet. med. Milovan Stanković – Vesna Rogač	13.15
Opovo	51.70	Aleksandar Vučić – Opovo tomorrow	86.03	Russian Party – Serbs and Russians brothers forever!	8.01
Pančevo	48.14	Aleksandar Vučić – Pančevo tomorrow	64.95	Pančevo against violence – BIRAM (NPS, DS, ZLF, LSV, PSG)	15.50
Pećinci	78.24	Aleksandar Vučić – Pećinci tomorrow	82.36	Pećinci against violence	7.65

City/ Municipality	Turnout (per cent)	First-placed contestant	Percentage of votes	Second-placed Contestant	Percentage of votes
Plandište	53.40	Aleksandar Vučić – Plandište tomorrow	61.10	Lawyer Lukić Danilo – To the victory for a better municipality of Plandište	19.77
Požarevac	46.71	Aleksandar Vučić– Požarevac tomorrow	64.31	BIRAM BORBU – Požarevac (NPS, DS, NS)	11.68
Požarevac- Kostolac	54.60	Aleksandar Vučić – Kostolac tomorrow	58.47	More belongs to Kostolac and our villages	8.92
Preševo	34.31	Party for Democratic Action – Ardita Sinani	27.30	Democratic Party of Albanians – Dr. Ragmi Mustafa	21.76
Raška	58.89	Aleksandar Vučić – Raška tomorrow	72.54	Group of Citizens Raška to the people of Raška- Bojan Radulović	17.37
Ruma	51.73	Aleksandar Vučić – Ruma tomorrow	70.55	Ruma against violence	13.22
Senta	43.43	Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	44.11	Aleksandar Vučić – Senta tomorrow	29.89
Šid	51.82	Aleksandar Vučić – Šid tomorrow	72.40	United opposition – Vote for Changes (NDSS, SSP, Dveri)	23.87
Sjenica	48.83	Trust of Mufti, president Munib – Usame Zukorlić	21.29	SDA Sandžak – Dr. Sulejman Ugljanin	20.05
Sombor	43.81	Aleksandar Vučić – Sombor tomorrow	66.68	I choose Sombor without violence	18.76
Srbobran	60.37	Aleksandar Vučić – Srbobran tomorrow	64.46	Group of Citizens – Let’s Liberate Srbobran	15.12
Sremska Mitrovica	50.33	Aleksandar Vučić – SremskaMitrovica tomorrow	60.22	Group of citizens – City for all of us	21.09
Sremski Karlovci	49.69	Aleksandar Vučić – Sremski Karlovci tomorrow	50.46	Group of Citizens – List of Karlovci – Dr. Ivan Stijepović	27.16
Stara Pazova	46.65	Aleksandar Vučić – Stara Pazova tomorrow	64.20	It’s possible (SRCE, ZLF, NDSS, NPS, Choice for our municipality – Milan Turanjanin, NLS, Ecological Uprising – Ćuta)	11.57
Subotica	41.83	Aleksandar Vučić – Subotica tomorrow	49.36	Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians	26.26
Surdulica	67.55	Aleksandar Vučić – Surdulica tomorrow	86.00	United opposition – We can and we must do better – for the salvation of Surdulica	6.52
Svilajnac	43.42	Aleksandar Vučić – Svilajnac tomorrow	76.53	Dr. Tatjana Toskić Lalović – For a better Svilajnac	12.82
Svrljig	63.06	We know each other – Milija Miletić	42.28	Aleksandar Vučić – Svrljig tomorrow	34.57
Temerin	48.68	Aleksandar Vučić – Temerin tomorrow	59.80	United opposition for Temerin – Dr. Tanja Radovanović (DS, NLS, NDSS, POKS)	17.05
Titel	57.67	Aleksandar Vučić – Titel tomorrow	72.68	“For our villages”	11.45
Tutin	44.04	SDA Sandžak – Dr. Sulejman Ugljanin	45.48	Trust of Mufti for proud Tutin – Usame Zukorlić	15.74
Užice	49.09	Aleksandar Vučić – Užice tomorrow	45.50	Užice to have a future	14.57

City/ Municipality	Turnout (per cent)	First-placed contestant	Percentage of votes	Second-placed Contestant	Percentage of votes
Valjevo	50.61	Aleksandar Vučić – Valjevo tomorrow	55.32	Awakening – United Valjevo can	32.83
Vrbas	54.77	Aleksandar Vučić – Vrbas tomorrow	61.69	Group of citizens “Let’s liberate Vrbas today”	26.80
Vrnjačka Banja	57.22	Aleksandar Vučić – Vrnjačka Banja tomorrow	72.35	I am also Vrnjačka Banja – BIRAM BORBU– Radosav Pejović	17.12
Vršac	46.43	Aleksandar Vučić – Vršac tomorrow	66.86	Vršac deserves better	26.61
Žabalj	57.84	Aleksandar Vučić – Žabalj tomorrow	81.48	United opposition of Žabalj – BIRAM BORBU	11.14
Žitište	55.01	Aleksandar Vučić – Žitište tomorrow	64.68	United for the municipality of Žitište	18.60
Zrenjanin	47.01	Aleksandar Vučić – Zrenjanin tomorrow	57.98	Both water and freedom – HOPE – United opposition of Zrenjanin	17.15

Source: LEC decisions and results protocols, as posted on the [REC website](#)

ANNEX II: LIST OF OBSERVERS IN THE ODIHR ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION

ODIHR EOM Short-term Observers

Amadeus Nikolaus Faltheiner	Austria
Elshan Asgarov	Azerbaijan
Yegana Hajiyeva	Azerbaijan
Sanja Sekulic	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Jari Huuhtanen	Finland
Elina Niinimäki	Finland
Ville Nurmi	Finland
Noora Simola	Finland
Robin Alex Brunet	France
Marie D'Arenberg	France
Laura Gallet	France
Vincent Godbillon	France
Mathilde Henry	France
Nadia Jurzac	France
Bertrand Remy	France
Thierry Tardy	France
Pascale Trimbach	France
Benedicte Williams	France
Miriam Beringmeier	Germany
Christiane Buck	Germany
Anita Deppe	Germany
Frank Fischer	Germany
Viktor Fleisch	Germany
Alice Halsdorfer	Germany
Reinhard Hesse	Germany
Rainer Höchst	Germany
Jutta Krause	Germany
Josef Lehleiter	Germany
Daphné Lucas	Germany
Sebastian Niessen	Germany
Reinhold Osterhus	Germany
Karl Pammer	Germany
Hans-Heinrich Rieser	Germany
Andrea Schmelz Prof Dr	Germany
Marlies Temme	Germany
Peter Vogl	Germany
Jürgen Wayand	Germany
Joachim Wenz	Germany
Juergen Wintermeier	Germany
Fergus Gleeson	Ireland
Brian Macmahon	Ireland
Klair O'Brien	Ireland
Robert Adams	Italy
Sara Formisano	Italy
Fabio Ratto Trabucco	Italy
Chiara Steindler	Italy

Natasja Nikolic	Netherlands
Tanja Van De Linde	Netherlands
Bennie Vriesema	Netherlands
Servatius Wiemers	Netherlands
Kjire Delov	North Macedonia
Rolf Christian Ranheim	Norway
Trude Remme	Norway
Linda Sabina Helen Lindblad	Sweden
Mårten Löfberg	Sweden
Per Erik Martin Norbergh	Sweden
Claes Herman Enzio Pile	Sweden
Victor Giovanni Rojas Camargo	Sweden
Manne Olof Oscar Wängborg	Sweden
Michele Calastri	Switzerland
Thomas Holzer	Switzerland
Anita Streule	Switzerland
Jeanne Vu Van	Switzerland
Fiona Anderson	United Kingdom
Sophie Donszelmann	United Kingdom
Dally Hakem	United Kingdom
Cristina Teodora Hurduiala	United Kingdom
Maximilian James	United Kingdom
Alice Mazzola	United Kingdom
Anthony Barilla	United States of America
Matthew Becker	United States of America
Eugene Belousof	United States of America
Carol Bender	United States of America
Carl Bevelhymmer	United States of America
Zsofia Budai	United States of America
Suanne Buggy	United States of America
Brian Burke	United States of America
Margaret (Peg) Clement	United States of America
David Cook	United States of America
Elijah Herrman	United States of America
Gregoire Houel	United States of America
Adaure Iwuh	United States of America
Haley Klausmeyer	United States of America
Helen Kornblum	United States of America
Nicholas La Strada	United States of America
Arthur Piszczatowski	United States of America
Ginette Prophete	United States of America
Callie Starn	United States of America
Cara Stern	United States of America
Annee Tara	United States of America
Wilson Von Kessler	United States of America
Carol Wahl	United States of America

ODIHR EOM Long-term Observers

Iryna Shuliankova	Belarus
Adnan Habul	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Dita Bicanovska	Czech Republic
Alexandre Benz	France
Véronique Lasserre-Fy	France
Rodolphe Oberle	France
Jana Bürgers	Germany
Christian Konrad	Germany
Liudmila Blinova	Lithuania
Munkhnaran Bayarlkhagva	Mongolia
Catharina Appel	Netherlands
Camilla Michalsen	Norway
Mario Barfus	Switzerland
Akinola Akinsanya	United Kingdom
Paul Wesson	United Kingdom
Michael Eldred	United States
Katherine Long	United States
Mitchell Polman	United States

ODIHR EOM Core Team

Ambassador Lamberto Zannier	Italy	Head of Mission
Mariam Tabatadze	Georgia	
Kerstin Dokter	Germany	
Stefan Krause	Germany	
Elissavet Karagiannidou	Greece	
Laszlo Belagyi	Hungary	
Giuseppe Milazzo	Italy	
Ahmad Rasuli	Kyrgyzstan	
Nadine Haas	Luxembourg	
Max Bader	Netherlands	
Pawel Jurczak	Poland	
Firuza Garibshoeva	Tajikistan	

ABOUT ODIHR

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is OSCE's principal institution to assist participating States "to ensure full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, to abide by the rule of law, to promote principles of democracy and (...) to build, strengthen and protect democratic institutions, as well as promote tolerance throughout society" (1992 Helsinki Summit Document). This is referred to as the OSCE human dimension.

ODIHR, based in Warsaw (Poland) was created as the Office for Free Elections at the 1990 Paris Summit and started operating in May 1991. One year later, the name of the Office was changed to reflect an expanded mandate to include human rights and democratization. Today it employs over 150 staff.

ODIHR is the lead agency in Europe in the field of **election observation**. Every year, it co-ordinates and organizes the deployment of thousands of observers to assess whether elections in the OSCE region are conducted in line with OSCE commitments, other international obligations and standards for democratic elections and with national legislation. Its unique methodology provides an in-depth insight into the electoral process in its entirety. Through assistance projects, ODIHR helps participating States to improve their electoral framework.

The Office's **democratization** activities include: rule of law, legislative support, democratic governance, migration and freedom of movement, and gender equality. ODIHR implements a number of targeted assistance programmes annually, seeking to develop democratic structures.

ODIHR also assists participating States' in fulfilling their obligations to promote and protect **human rights and fundamental freedoms** consistent with OSCE human dimension commitments. This is achieved by working with a variety of partners to foster collaboration, build capacity and provide expertise in thematic areas, including human rights in the fight against terrorism, enhancing the human rights protection of trafficked people, human rights education and training, human rights monitoring and reporting, and women's human rights and security.

Within the field of **tolerance and non-discrimination**, ODIHR provides support to the participating States in strengthening their response to hate crimes and incidents of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance. ODIHR's activities related to tolerance and non-discrimination are focused on the following areas: legislation; law enforcement training; monitoring, reporting on, and following up on responses to hate-motivated crimes and incidents; as well as educational activities to promote tolerance, respect, and mutual understanding.

ODIHR provides advice to participating States on their policies on **Roma and Sinti**. It promotes capacity-building and networking among Roma and Sinti communities, and encourages the participation of Roma and Sinti representatives in policy-making bodies.

All ODIHR activities are carried out in close co-ordination and co-operation with OSCE participating States, OSCE institutions and field operations, as well as with other international organizations.

More information is available on the ODIHR website (www.osce.org/odihr).