



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

21 January 2007

OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Report



Warsaw
26 April 2007

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REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
21 January 2007

OSCE/ODIHR ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION FINAL REPORT

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 21 January 2007 Elections to the National Assembly in the Republic of Serbia were conducted in line with the OSCE Commitments and other standards for democratic elections. They provided a genuine opportunity for the citizens of Serbia to freely choose from a range of political platforms. The campaign was calm, and institutional checks and balances ensured that the election results were recorded accurately, transparently and in a timely manner.

Voting on election day was conducted in a peaceful and orderly fashion. The officials performed their tasks in a well-organized and professional manner, which contributed to the high level of confidence among the voters. The counting went smoothly and efficiently. Turnout exceeded pre-election predictions, and ultimately 60.56 per cent of the registered voters participated.

Twenty lists of political parties and coalitions were registered in an inclusive process providing voters with a broad spectrum of choices in a competitive electoral environment. Six lists were registered by parties and coalitions representing minorities. For the first time in recent years, Albanian minority parties contested national elections in Serbia. Official election information and documentation was also widely available in minority languages.

The campaign was vigorous and carried out in an unrestricted atmosphere. A diverse range of media provided voters with extensive information about the parties, the candidates and their campaign activities. Public broadcasters generally provided balanced coverage of the campaigns of the major parties. Election-related news coverage and advertising was predominantly positive in tone.

The Republic Election Commission (REC) conducted its work in an open and transparent manner. Each party, coalition, or group of citizens submitting a candidate list had the right to delegate one member and one deputy member to the “extended” composition of the REC and Polling Boards. This level of inclusiveness contributed to the general confidence of contestants in the administrative conduct of the elections.

The legal framework provides important safeguards that promote democratic election practices, ensure transparency and protect the secrecy of the vote. An important amendment to the Law on the Election of Representatives (LER), enacted in 2004, waived the five per cent threshold for parties and coalitions representing minorities, and resulted in their increased participation in these elections.

However, the LER contains a number of provisions that raise concern. It allows a party/coalition to choose which candidates from its list become members of parliament after the election, without regard to the order in which they were originally presented on its list. This results in voters not knowing which candidates are likely to be seated as a result of their support for a particular party or coalition. This provision has also consistently diminished the

potential positive effect of the requirement that every fourth candidate and no less than 30 per cent of the candidates appearing on the electoral list must belong to the less-represented gender.

Moreover, the law does not provide for intermediary election commissions between the REC and the Polling Boards. The REC has partially addressed this issue by creating municipal Working Groups (WGs). However, numerous complaints resulted from inconsistent appointment practices and the absence of uniform rules about their composition. Similar complaints were lodged regarding appointments to the permanent composition of Polling Boards, for which there is insufficient guidance. Currently, important provisions are not contained in the LER, but in regulations and guidelines of the REC.

The Republic Election Commission adopted Guidelines that lowered the election law's signature requirement in support of electoral lists of minority parties and coalitions from 10,000 to 3,000.¹ All formal complaints stating that a REC guideline must not circumvent the law were rejected by the Supreme Court.

The National Assembly did not form the Supervisory Board charged with monitoring and supervising pre-election campaign activities and the broadcast media, leaving a serious gap in the manner in which complaints and appeals were treated. In the absence of the Supervisory Board, complaints of this nature were filed with the Republic Broadcasting Agency; however, concerns were raised regarding the neutrality, transparency, and timeliness of the Agency's handling of these cases.

Some provisions of the LER require the dissolution of polling boards and the repeat of elections at polling stations on a number of grounds, including such that have no bearing on the legitimacy of the results. Repeat elections were held in six polling stations, however, their results had no impact on the allocation of mandates originally reported.

II. INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Following the recommendations of the OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission conducted in November 2006, the OSCE/ODIHR deployed a long-term Election Observation Mission on 17 December 2006 consisting of 12 experts and 16 long-term observers based in the capital and eight regional centers. Ambassador Geert-Hinrich Ahrens was the Head of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission.²

Observation of the election-day procedures was a joint undertaking of the International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) formed by the OSCE/ODIHR, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Minister Miguel Ángel Moratinos of Spain, appointed Mr. Göran Lenmarker, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and Head of the OSCE PA Delegation, as the Special Co-ordinator.

¹ Four of the six minority parties and coalitions registered for these elections with less than 10,000 signatures.

² All previous OSCE/ODIHR election observation reports for elections in the Republic of Serbia can be found at www.osce.org/odihhr.

Mr. Tadeusz Iwinski led the Delegation of the PACE. Mr. Assen Agov headed the NATO Parliamentary Delegation.

On election day, 308 short-term observers were deployed from 43 OSCE participating States, including 72 parliamentarians and staff from the OSCE PA, 23 parliamentarians and staff from PACE, and 13 parliamentarians and staff from the NATO PA. The International Election Observation Mission observed the polling and vote count in over 1,500 polling stations throughout the country, including some polling stations in Kosovo, and the transfer of protocols and election materials to 72 Municipal Working Groups where municipality-wide results were provisionally tabulated after the polls were closed.

The OSCE/ODIHR wishes to thank the authorities of the Republic of Serbia, the Republic Election Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and other state and local authorities for their assistance and cooperation. The OSCE/ODIHR also wishes to express appreciation to the OSCE Mission to Serbia, the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, and the Embassies of OSCE participating States in Belgrade for their support throughout the duration of the mission.

III. BACKGROUND

The Elections to the National Assembly in the Republic of Serbia on 21 January 2007 were of special significance because they were the first elections following the dissolution of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro and the referendum on the new Constitution of Serbia in October 2006. The dissolution of the State Union had a significant impact on the functioning of a number of state institutions including various ministries, councils and commissions. Therefore, the elections were called before the expiration of the four-year term of the former National Assembly, in keeping with the transitional provisions prescribed for the implementation of the new Constitution. These same transitional provisions also mandated the newly elected National Assembly to re-appoint a number of key officials of various institutions, including judges of the Supreme Court and Constitutional Court.

Moreover, these elections were held on the eve of the announcement of the proposal of Martti Ahtisaari, the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the future status process for Kosovo.

IV. THE ELECTION SYSTEM

The Constitution of Serbia establishes a unicameral National Assembly with 250 members. The members of the National Assembly are elected for a four-year term through a system of proportional representation in a single nationwide constituency. These elections were the first in which amendments introduced into the Law on the Election of Representatives in 2004 waived the five per cent threshold for parties and coalitions belonging to national minorities.

Neither the law nor the Guidelines of the Republic Election Commission provide criteria for defining a minority party or coalition. Other parties and coalitions have to pass the five per cent threshold in order to participate in the distribution of seats. In an Official Interpretation, the Republican Election Commission clarified that the threshold is calculated on the number of voters on the voter lists with regard to whom the ordinal numbers next to their names are

circled, indicating that they voted. Mandates are allocated to party and coalition candidate lists by means of the D'Hondt formula.

V. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Constitution of Serbia establishes a democratic framework that protects the rights of citizens to participate as voters and as candidates in a free election environment. In addition, the Law on Election of Representatives, as amended in May 2005, creates a reasonable foundation for the conduct of democratic elections. The law is also supplemented by numerous instructions, official interpretations, decisions, and guidelines issued by the Republic Election Commission.

The legal framework provides important safeguards that promote democratic election practices, ensure transparency and protect the secrecy of the vote. However, there remain a number of outstanding issues, most of which have been highlighted in previous OSCE/ODIHR reports³ as well as in the assessment of Serbia's laws and electoral administration undertaken jointly with the Venice Commission.⁴ Among the more serious remaining deficiencies in the law are:

- the failure to establish an interim level of electoral commissions between the Republic Electoral Commission and Polling Boards, and lack of clarity in the guidelines for the equitable appointment of permanent members of Polling Boards;
- questionable provisions that allow parties and coalitions to allocate elected parliamentary mandates to candidates from among their lists but without regard to the order in which candidates were presented to voters;
- failure to define criteria for filing as a minority party or coalition;
- lack of clarity for monitoring campaign finances and providing for equal access to the media;
- provisions that require the dissolution of polling boards and the repeat of elections at polling stations on numerous grounds, including those that have little consequence on the legitimacy of the results of the voting;
- omission of provisions regarding the participation of international or domestic observers;
- inadequate provisions for the settlement of election disputes and the protection of suffrage rights.

A. REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF THE REPUBLIC ELECTION COMMISSION

Through this election cycle, the Republic Election Commission devised numerous guidelines and decisions in an attempt to fill in the gaps where provisions of the law are silent or unclear. Such decisions and guidelines were adopted by a majority vote of the full membership of the Commission. In some instances, the formulation of these guidelines fostered political debates within the Commission, raised legitimate questions as to whether or

³ OSCE/ODIHR Final Report, Republic of Serbia, Serbia and Montenegro, Parliamentary Election, 28 December 2003, Warsaw, 27 February 2004; and OSCE/ODIHR Final Report, 20 February 2001 (http://www.osce.org/odihr/documents/reports/election_reports/yu/yu2000fin.pdf).

⁴ Joint Recommendations on the Laws on Parliamentary, Presidential and Local Elections and Electoral Administration in the Republic of Serbia, Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR, Adopted by the Venice Commission at its 66th Plenary Session (Venice, 17-18 March 2006)

not the body had overstepped its regulatory authority, and resulted in pursuit of recourse through the courts. Importantly, guidelines and decisions were in some cases criticized for usurping legislative prerogatives by expanding on the legal provisions, as in the case of the guidelines that reduced the signature requirements for minority parties. In other instances, REC decisions were used to side-step certain provisions of the law altogether. For example, in spite of provisions that require repeat elections to be held in polling stations where specific procedural or technical violations have occurred, in some instances, repeat elections were not called.

The use of regulations and guidelines in such a manner could potentially be subject to abuse in future elections, especially if politically motivated and intended to influence election results. It would be beneficial if lawmakers reviewed the regulations and decisions of the Commission to determine where their content should be addressed in law rather than being left to the Commission to decide independently.

B. ABSENCE OF INTERMEDIARY ELECTION ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES

The lack of provisions in the law instituting an intermediate level of election administration bodies between the REC and the Polling Boards continues to be a cause for concern. The absence of an intermediate tier of election administration creates logistical difficulties, places a significant burden on the central level of the election administration, and causes notable difficulties in effectively administering and guiding the election processes locally.

The REC attempted to address some of these issues in its guidelines by creating municipal Working Groups. However, the REC guidelines failed to clearly define the appointment criteria to be applied in determining the composition of the Working Groups, resulting in inconsistencies in the selection practices from one municipality to another. Aside from their logistical support duties, WGs were also tasked with proposing the nominees for the permanent composition of the Polling Boards, to be appointed by the REC. While the law is clear on the rights of competing parties and coalitions to be represented in the “extended” membership of the PBs, there is insufficient guidance relative to the appointment of their permanent members.

As a result, procedures for appointment varied from municipality to municipality. Some WGs selected nominees on the basis of the political composition of the relevant municipal councils, while others selected nominees from the lists of prior Polling Board members. Still others took nominees from the ranks of the unemployed. Numerous complaints were lodged with the REC by political parties claiming that they were under-represented in the membership of the WGs and the permanent composition of the Polling Boards. However, the absence of formal laws or regulations governing the participation by parties and coalitions on the WGs limited possibilities for legal challenges on the matter.

C. PARTY DISTRIBUTION AND CONTROL OF MANDATES

Article 84 of the LER allows a party or coalition to choose which candidates from its list become members of parliament after the elections. No regard need be given to the order in which the candidates were presented to voters before the election. This limits the transparency of the system and gives political parties a disproportionate level of control over candidates elected on their list. The current system results in voters not knowing which candidates are likely to be seated as a result of their support for a particular party or coalition.

This provision also diminishes the potential positive effect of the requirement that every fourth candidate and no less than 30 per cent of the candidates appearing on the electoral list must belong to the less-represented gender. Failure to extend these same provisions to the actual distribution of mandates reduces them to a mere formality for submitting a list.

In Serbia, parties and coalitions have traditionally been granted extraordinary control over the parliamentary mandates, even after they have been distributed to candidates. Previously, Article 88 of the LER had provided *inter alia* that the mandate of an elected member of parliament shall expire if she/he ceases to be a member of the political party or coalition on whose candidate list she/he was elected. This provision has been highlighted in previous assessments undertaken by OSCE/ODIHR as being inconsistent with the spirit of the 1990 Copenhagen Document of the OSCE, which underscores the principle that candidates who are duly installed in office should be permitted to remain in office until their terms expire. The Constitutional Court of Serbia ruled that this provision violated the Serbian Constitution and abolished it.

Nonetheless, the problem continues to exist. Article 102 of the newly adopted Constitution establishes that “a deputy shall be free to irrevocably put his/her term of office at the disposal to the political party upon which proposal he or she has been elected a deputy,” thus making deputies accountable to their parties rather than the voters. Many of the EOM’s interlocutors expressed concern that this provision of the new Constitution creates a potential for abuse as some parties could pressure their candidates to put their term of office at the disposal of the party, prior to being awarded their mandate.

D. PARTIES OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

There are distinctive advantages for filing as a minority party or coalition, including the waiver of the five per cent threshold for participating in the distribution of mandates. In addition, the REC guidelines reduced the number of signatures required in support of a minority party or coalition’s list from the mandatory 10,000 required by law to 3,000.

However, the LER does not contain a definition of a national minority party or the criteria by which a party qualifies for this special status. Nor does the law define the conditions under which a coalition can qualify as a minority coalition. These omissions fostered a debate among the REC members regarding potential future abuses by parties and coalitions seeking to gain access to the privileges prescribed for those representing national minorities.

E. DISSOLUTION OF POLLING BOARDS AND REPEAT ELECTIONS

The LER is unduly strict in identifying the kinds of mistakes or circumstances that will cause the dissolution of a Polling Board and the holding of repeat voting at a polling station. It is debatable whether in each case the specific grounds cited are of a sufficient nature as to bring the results into question. Among the fourteen grounds identified in the LER are such violations as the presence of campaign material within 50 meters of a polling station, a situation in which there is one more ballot in the ballot box than the number of ordinal numbers circled next to the names of voters who have voted, or technical errors on a protocol. Such restrictions leave no latitude for accommodating human error or the occasional procedural lapses that can occur. They also create opportunities for intentional abuse, and for the filing of frivolous complaints that delay the reporting of results and jeopardize public confidence in the process.

While requiring repeat elections at affected polling stations, the LER is not clear regarding the deadlines for their conduct or the implications of repeat polling regarding the reporting of preliminary and final results.

VI. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

The administrative structure for the organization of elections is highly centralized under the Republic Election Commission. Elections are administered by a two-tier administration consisting of the REC and Polling Boards assigned to serve voters at each polling station. The REC is a politically representative body appointed by the National Assembly for a four-year term. The Commission has permanent membership and extended membership. The initial permanent composition of the Commission includes the Chairperson and sixteen members, who reflect the party representation in the Assembly. In addition, a representative of the Republic Office of Statistics and an administrative secretary are also appointed to the permanent composition as non-voting members. The membership is extended with each successful submission of a party's or coalition's list of candidates, since each list is also entitled to appoint a member and deputy member. These members and deputies have the same rights to participate in the activities of the Commission as the permanent members, except for voting rights.

A. ESTABLISHMENT OF POLLING STATIONS AND POLLING BOARDS

The composition of Polling Boards has a similar structure. Each Board is comprised of a chairperson and two permanent members as well as a number of extended members from the parties/coalitions represented at the REC. In spite of the entitlement of each party and coalition to appoint its members and deputies, the average number of members appointed to a Polling Board was 27. Based on the EOMs observations, the average number of members present at a polling station on election day at any one time was 15. While this level of participation promotes transparency and the confidence of political participants in the process, the large size of the boards at times jeopardized the secrecy of voting and caused some confusion that resulted in occasional lapses in the voting procedures.

B. VOTER LISTS

Voter registration in Serbia is passive, and voter lists are compiled from data contained in the civil registry. The voter lists are maintained on a continuous basis by municipal authorities under the supervision of the Ministry of Public Administration and Self-Governance. The total number of voters for these elections was 6,652,105, reflecting an increase of 14,466 over the number registered for the referendum held in October 2006. The process of civil registration of inhabitants in the 22 municipalities in Kosovo in which polling stations were established was started anew in 2000. In these municipalities, 101,688 people were entered into the civil registry and were therefore eligible to vote in these elections. The rolls also included 31,370 voters abroad and 7,082 incarcerated voters.

Some parties questioned the correctness of the voter registration data, and the press reported on inaccuracies on the lists. However, the voter lists were open for public scrutiny for 55 days, which provided sufficient opportunities for voters and parties to proactively contribute to the correctness of the lists.

By law, electronic formats of the municipal rolls are to be linked in a unified, interconnected national electoral roll. However, the establishment of such a central voter register has not yet been accomplished. The lack of a centralized database had the consequence that military voters, who are added to the lists of the polling stations closest to their military installations, imprisoned voters, and voters abroad, are not removed from the lists for their regular polling stations. However, REC guidelines ensured that these duplicate entries were not included in the total number of voters. Officials acknowledged that there are difficulties in ensuring the accuracy of the lists, particularly in relation to the removal of names of voters who have died outside Serbia, and voters who do not register their changes of residency when they move from one municipality to another. The EOM was also informed that there are still significant numbers of Roma that are not entered in the civil registry, perhaps due to their own reluctance, with the consequence that they are also denied the electoral franchise.

C. REGISTRATION OF PARTIES AND COALITIONS

Twenty political parties and coalitions were registered for the elections involving 3,799 candidates. Their ballot position reflected the order in which they were registered, namely: 1. Democratic Party – Boris Tadić; 2. G17 Plus – Mlađan Dinkić; 3. Liberal Democratic Party/Civic Alliance of Serbia/Social Democratic Union/League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina – Čedomir Jovanović; 4. Serbian Radical Party – Vojislav Šešelj; 5. Democratic Party of Serbia/New Serbia – Vojislav Koštunica; 6. Movement Force of Serbia – Bogoljub Karić; 7. Serbian Renewal Movement – Vuk Drašković; 8. Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians – József Kasza; 9. Party of United Pensioners – Jovan Krkobabić, and Social-Democratic Party – Nebojša Čović; 10. Coalition List for Sandžak – Sulejman Ugljanin; 11. Socialist Party of Serbia; 12. Branko Pavlović – “Because it has to be better”; 13. Coalition “Vojvodina Parties” – Igor Kurjački; 14. Union of Roma in Serbia – Rajko Đurić; 15. Reformist Party – Aleksandar Višnjić; 16. Democratic Community of Serbia – Obren Joksimović; 17. Coalition of Albanians from the Preševo Valley; 18. Socialdemocracy – Nenad Vukasović; 19. Hungarian Unity – Andras Agoston, Pal Sandor; 20. Roma Party – Srđan Šajn.

Two parties were rejected on the basis that they had not provided a sufficient number of signatures. In both cases, the party was allowed 48 hours to overcome the deficiency and was only formally denied access to the ballot after that time had elapsed without resolution of the shortfall.

D. TABULATION AND REPORTING OF RESULTS

Responsibility for the tabulation of results does not rest with the REC. Tabulation is accomplished by the Republic Office of Statistics through its statisticians at the municipal level. The participation of the Office of Statistics in this effort is defined neither in the LER nor in guidelines of the REC. The procedures regulating the activities of the statisticians at municipality level and at the later stage of compilation of the nationwide result is outlined in internal rules defined by the Office, as are the audit controls used in ensuring the accuracy of polling station protocols. However, these guidelines are not on public record. Results by polling station were delivered to members of the REC, representatives of the registered lists, and the EOM.

VII. PARTICIPATION BY NATIONAL MINORITIES

According to the 2002 census, 17.14 per cent of Serbia's population identified themselves as non-Serbs, representing more than twenty ethnic and national minorities. Hungarians account for 3.91 per cent, Bosniaks 1.82 per cent, Roma 1.44 per cent, Croats 0.94 per cent, Montenegrins 0.92 per cent, Albanians 0.82 per cent (not including Kosovo), and Slovaks 0.79 per cent.⁵ Some minority communities are territorially concentrated to the extent that in some areas they constitute majority populations.

A. PROTECTION OF MINORITY RIGHTS

Minorities in Serbia generally enjoy rights in accordance with established international standards. Efforts have been made to fine-tune minority-related domestic legislation to improve inter-ethnic relations that were badly impaired during the last decade. Under the Constitution, the rights and freedoms of national minorities are guaranteed, including those related to political association, cultural institutions, education and access to information in their own languages, the right to elect and be elected to local authorities and the national government, and to engage in business and other activities.

National minorities are entitled to official use of their native languages within their municipalities or localities if they comprise 15 per cent of the local population. In fact, election material for the 2007 elections for the National Assembly was printed in Serbian and minority languages in 28 different combinations, depending on the region. According to provisions of law enacted in 2002, a member of the National Assembly belonging to a minority group that constitutes at least two per cent of the total population of Serbia, is also entitled to address the Assembly in his/her native language.

The law also provides for the establishment of National Minority Councils to give each minority a voice in promoting its cultural, language, education, and social interests. The formation of the Republic National Council for Minorities (RNCM) was delayed until after the adoption of the Declaration on Minorities in 2004. The Ministry for Minority Rights (State Union) has ceased to exist since the separation of Montenegro from Serbia. Currently, all the four-year terms of the members of the councils are slowly reaching their expiration of office. The National Minority Councils did not involve themselves in party activities or political campaigns for these elections.

B. MINORITY PARTIES AND COALITIONS

The abolishment of the threshold for parties representing national minorities, and the lowering of the candidate registration requirement to 3,000 signatures, had the effect of increasing minority participation in these elections.

Six parties and coalitions representing national minorities competed, including the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians - József Kasza; Coalition List for Sandžak - Sulejman Ugljanin, PhD; Union of Roma in Serbia – Rajko Đurić, PhD; Coalition of Albanians from the Preševo

⁵ 1.08per cent of Serbia's population identified themselves as Yugoslavs, 0.53per cent as Vlachs, 0.46per cent as Romanians, 0.35per cent as Macedonians, 0.27per cent as Bulgarians, 0.27per cent as Bunjevci, 0.26per cent as Muslims, 0.21per cent as Ruthenians, 0.07per cent as Slovenians, 0.07per cent as Ukrainians, 0.06per cent as Goranians, 0.05per cent as Germans, 0.03per cent as Russians, 0.03per cent as Czechs and 0.16per cent as other.

Valley; Hungarian Unity – Andras Agoston – Pal Sandor, PhD; and Roma Party – Srđan Šajn.

The entry of the Coalition of Albanians from the Preševo Valley represented the first participation by an Albanian party or coalition since 1997. However, a number of other Albanian parties from southern Serbia declined to participate in the elections, including the Albanian Party (DPA-PDSH) led by Ragmi Mustafa and the Movement for Democratic Progress (PDP) led by Jonuz Musliu. As in all recent elections in Serbia, Albanians in Kosovo chose not to take part in these elections.

In Sandžak, there were some concerns related to the fierce competition between two Bosniak contenders, Sulejman Ugljanin's Coalition List for Sandžak (in partnership with the Democratic Party of Serbia) and Rasim Ljajić's Sandžak's Democratic Party (which had joined the Democratic Party list).

The lists of non-minority based parties also included candidates belonging to national minorities. Minorities participated in the elections without hindrance and were represented in the Republic Election Commission, the Working Groups, and on the Polling Boards.

VIII. PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

According to the census, 51.4 per cent of the Serbian population is female. However, according to surveys women are underrepresented in politics and public life. Although Serbia's laws satisfy many of the requirements of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, there is general consensus among women's advocacy organizations, with whom the EOM met, that laws rarely go beyond a mere statement of equality, whereas implementation remains weak.

For the 2007 elections to the National Assembly, 1,257 women were put forward as candidates among the 20 electoral lists, comprising 33.09 per cent of the total number of candidates submitted. A number of parties including the Democratic Party, the Liberal Democratic Party, and the Civic Alliance of Serbia, established forums for gender equality within their party structures. Several parties promised to respect the gender quota in their distribution of mandates. Among them were the Liberal Democratic Party and G17 Plus. The Democratic Party also made general references to this goal without actually posing it as a firm commitment.

The combined efforts of the NGOs and some of the political participants in promoting better gender balance in the National Assembly rendered positive results with 20.4 per cent of the mandates going to women. Although the ultimate goal of 30 per cent or more was not achieved, the numbers represent a significant increase over the number of women in the outgoing Assembly.

IX. THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

In national elections since 2000, parties and civil movements with roots in the previous anti-Milošević Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) have achieved a level of popular support that exceeded that of parties with nationalist ideologies. For the 2007 elections the campaign

environment was characterized by some deep differences among the leading parties of the former DOS Coalition, leading to shifting political allegiances among those formerly grouped together in coalition against the Milošević regime.

The dominant topics in the campaign were social issues, the economy, anti-corruption, and EU integration. The future status of Kosovo remained an important issue underlying the strategies used in the political campaigns. However, the vibrant rhetoric on the issue of Kosovo that dominated the campaign during the referendum on the Constitution was de-emphasized in the campaign for these elections. Calls for the retention of Kosovo within Serbia were reflected in virtually every party's platform and were reiterated by some party leaders at party conventions and in some political speeches. Several party leaders visited Kosovo to campaign, including Mlađan Dinkić of G17 Plus, Ivica Dačić of Socialist Party of Serbia and, representing the Democratic Party of Serbia/New Serbia coalition, Velimir Ilić of New Serbia, and Vojislav Koštunica, Prime Minister and leader of the Democratic Party of Serbia.

All participants in the elections had unimpeded campaigning opportunities. The campaign was vibrant in Belgrade as well as regionally. Parties and candidates made use of media, organized street and in-door rallies and public events, appeared on billboards and posters, and distributed leaflets on the streets and door-to-door. The bigger parties and coalitions linked some major campaign events to the holiday calendar at the end of 2006 and beginning of 2007. Campaign material was frequently made available in minority languages. Party leaders traveled extensively to meet voters throughout the country. Except for a few negative messages emerging in the campaigns of some parties, the campaign was overall positive in tone.

X. THE MEDIA

Serbia has one of the most unregulated media markets in Europe. It has been estimated that Serbia has had, for some years, up to 1,500 media outlets, of which the majority were broadcast media. In early July 2005, in addition to the public service broadcaster, Radio-Television Serbia (RTS), there were 755 radio and television stations in Serbia.

Television is the most important medium, in terms of both market and audience share. From a population of close to 7.5 million in Serbia, about five million make up the usual daily television audience. Television is also the major source of information for the majority of the population. The evening RTS 1 news bulletin, *Dnevnik 2*, attracts the largest audience and is the only daily news program watched by more than 1 million viewers⁶. The leading commercial station, TV Pink, and the first channel of the public service broadcaster, RTS, compete for top audience ratings, leaving other commercial stations with national coverage far behind.⁷

Radio audiences show different preferences. Liberalized much earlier than television, and with innovative programming coming from the tradition of city-based Studio B and the youth station B92, radio has built up strong audiences for alternative programs.

⁶ On the last day prior to electoral silence, 18 January 2007, the RTS 1 news bulletin *Dnevnik 2* attracted 1.583370 citizens.

⁷ On 29 January 2007 the audience share during prime time broadcasting (19:00 – 22:59) was RTS 1 (33.7 per cent), Pink (26.9 per cent) and B92 (6.6 per cent).

Press circulation remains among the lowest in Europe, estimated at less than 100 copies sold per 1.000 inhabitants. Exact data on circulation or any other aspects of the publishing industry is not available, as most companies regard such information as confidential. The press market is diversified and has a long tradition of specialization in both content and variety. All of the newly established dailies in the past five years have been tabloids. The leading privately owned newspapers are: *Večernje Novosti*, *Blic*, *Politika*, *Danas* and *Kurir*.

A. LAWS GOVERNING THE CAMPAIGN AND THE MEDIA

The legal framework for the campaign in the media is governed by the LER. Articles 5 and 48, respectively, secure the right of citizens to be informed and the right of contestants to inform citizens about their programs and activities. Under the law, all radio and television stations are required to ensure equality in their information of the public about the parties and coalitions submitting electoral lists, and their candidates.

The Broadcasting Act (2002) regulates both public service and commercial media. It introduced a new licensing system, defined general program standards, regulated advertising and sponsorship, and introduced anti-concentration instruments. The Act, which has been amended four times since its original enactment, is yet to be fully implemented. Other relevant laws are the Public Information Law of 2003, which includes general provisions on media freedom and journalistic independence, and the Telecommunications Law, also enacted in 2003, which regulates the technical aspects of broadcasting. The 2004 Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance is intended to strengthen the role of the media by helping citizens to exercise their “right to know”.

B. THE REPUBLICAN BROADCASTING AGENCY (RBA)

The Broadcasting Act established the Republican Broadcasting Agency (RBA) charged *inter alia* with issuing licenses and monitoring broadcasters’ compliance with general program standards and special requirements set in their broadcast license contract. The Agency can issue warnings and temporarily or permanently revoke a broadcaster’s license. It also regulates the program content of the public service broadcaster (RTS) and appoints its managing board. However, a lack of transparency surrounding the work of the RBA and doubts about the neutrality of some of its members, as expressed by various interlocutors, undermine the credibility of this regulatory body.

On 16 November 2006, the RBA issued “General Binding Instructions to Radio and Television Stations (Broadcasters) Regarding the Conduct in the Pre-election Campaign for the 2007 Parliamentary Elections”. The Instructions request broadcasters, including the RTS, the Broadcasting Institution of Vojvodina (RTNS), radio and television stations of local and regional communities to provide free-of-charge broadcasting of the “promotion” by political parties, coalitions, and candidates participating in the election.

The RTS provided a balanced broadcasting of the promotion of all contestants as prescribed by the Broadcasting Act. However, the free airtime was offered only on RTS 2, a channel that has an audience share of less than 5 per cent, undermining the value of the free of charge

advertising devised to ensure greater equality in the presentation of smaller political parties.⁸ However, no complaints were filed with the RBA regarding the allocation of free airtime.

Article 78 of the Broadcasting Act and the General Binding Instructions provide that the public broadcasting services may not broadcast paid pre-election promotion. However, “promotion” is not clearly defined and RTS 1 was broadcasting paid, pre-produced campaign ads.

C. MEDIA MONITORING AND FINDINGS

From 22 December 2006 until the end of the campaign, the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission conducted quantitative and qualitative analyses of six hours of primetime broadcasts each day on three TV channels including public RTS 1, and private TV Pink and TV B92. In addition, five private newspapers were monitored – *Večernje Novosti*, *Blic*, *Politika*, *Danas* and *Kurir*.

The total amount of election-related coverage on television increased from 1 hour and 46 minutes on the first day of the media-monitoring to 10 hours and 46 minutes at the end of the campaign period. Likewise paid advertising increased from 40 minutes, or 38 per cent of election related coverage, to 5 hours and 13 minutes, or 48 per cent of the coverage.

The media monitoring data of the EOM indicate that the public service broadcaster RTS 1 provided a balanced coverage of the main political contestants. The Democratic Party received a coverage of 19 per cent, DSS 16 per cent, SRS 20 per cent, SPO 17 per cent, SPS 9 per cent, G17 Plus 8 per cent and LDP 5 per cent. The tone of the coverage of all contestants was overall positive (69 per cent) or neutral (19 per cent) although the Socialist Party of Serbia received coverage in a negative tone at 33 per cent. In contrast, private TV B92 dedicated the most time to DS (27 per cent), followed by G17 Plus (17 per cent). The tone was positive (65 per cent) or neutral (23 per cent) although the Serbian Radical Party and the Socialist Party of Serbia received coverage in a negative tone at 28 per cent and 22 per cent respectively. Private TV Pink covered the Serbian Radical Party in 26 per cent of the relevant time, the DS in 23 per cent and the DSS in 18 per cent; the tone of this coverage was positive.

These statistics do not include paid campaign advertising. However, paid advertising comprised a significant share of campaign information on the monitored channels. On TV Pink, 66 per cent of all election-related coverage involved paid advertising, on TV B92 - 31 per cent, and on RTS1 - 16 per cent. Although paid airtime was labeled as “paid promotion”, the sponsors were not identified.

The newspaper *Vecernje Novosti* dedicated 41 per cent of its space to DS and 19 per cent to DSS. *Blic* coverage of the campaign was slightly in favor of DS (39 per cent) and G17 Plus (20 per cent) with 17 per cent dedicated to DSS and only 3 per cent to the Serbian Radical Party. *Politika* slightly favored DS (30 per cent) while *Danas* provided a more balanced

⁸ During the broadcasting of the free-of-charge presentation of political parties and coalitions from 11 January to 18 January 2007 the audience share was from 1.2 per cent (presentation of the Roma Party – Šajn Srđan on 12 January at 20:00) up to 5.2 per cent (presentation of the Socialist Party of Serbia on 17 January 2007 at 21:00).

coverage of the campaign with 36 per cent for DS, 23 per cent for DSS, 9 per cent for G17 Plus, 9 per cent for LDP and 8 per cent for SPS and SPO.

The tabloid newspaper *Kurir* presented 55 per cent of the coverage dedicated to G17 Plus and 61 per cent of the coverage dedicated to LDP in a negative tone. The carrier of the list of LDP, Mr. Čedomir Jovanović, was attacked in an inflammatory language on the front page of this newspaper.

XI. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Article 94 of the LER provides that electoral complaints can be lodged by a voter, candidate or authorized persons submitting the nomination of a candidate list. Complaints are submitted to the REC, which has the power to take decisions by a majority vote of its full membership. All REC decisions on complaints can be appealed to the Supreme Court.

A. PRE-ELECTION COMPLAINTS

The REC reviewed all complaints in public sessions and decided each case by open voting. Debate on individual cases was vigorous. Two main categories of complaints were filed to the REC in the pre-election period. The first related to the REC's controversial guidelines that lowered the signature requirements for minority parties and coalitions to 3,000. The second category related to the composition of Working Groups and the permanent membership of Polling Boards. The OSCE/ODIHR EOM was advised that there were 22 complaints submitted to the Supreme Court of Serbia relative to decisions or regulations of the REC. In all but one of these pre-election cases, the Supreme Court upheld the decisions of the REC.

The Supreme Court of Serbia reviews all election-related complaints *in-camera*, where the complainant is not present. Some of these decisions will have a bearing on important aspects of the election process in future elections as well. In a decision dated 5 January 2007, the Supreme Court upheld the REC's regulation reducing the number of signatures required in support of a national minority's list. The court ruled that requiring 10,000 signatures would be contrary to international provisions on minority rights. It further stated that in order to ensure equality, the numerical strength of the national minority and its economic, social and other living conditions should be taken into account when determining the number of signatures required.

The Constitutional Court of Serbia also received four complaints, two of which related to the reduced signature requirement for minority parties. However, the Constitutional Court was unable to call sessions to hear any cases due to the recent retirement of its Chairman.

B. POST-ELECTION COMPLAINTS

Most of the complaints submitted to the REC after election day related to alleged improprieties in the conduct of voting at the polls. Many of these complaints were dismissed by the REC on technical grounds without being reviewed in substance. The most common reasons for dismissing complaints were their submission by a non-authorized person and their submission after the 24-hour deadline. Some complaints came from observer organizations under the respective organizations' names. However, the LER only allows such complaints

to come from voters, candidates, or submitters of nomination lists. This technicality marginalised the role of credible NGOs, some of whom went to great lengths to recruit, train and deploy observers all over the country.

While most of the complaints alleging improprieties at the polling stations were rejected, fourteen cases resulted in annulment of their results. Eight of the cases were raised by the Republic Statistics Office, which is the agency responsible for the tabulation of results. The agency recommended the annulment of the results at some of these polling stations on the basis that there were more ballots than ordinal numbers circled next to the names of persons who voted. In the second group it found that the numbers reported in the protocols were inconsistent.

Six other cases involved various improprieties including the prohibition of family relations among Polling Board members at two stations, which were only realized after election day, a case of proxy voting, the failure of a polling board to return the voter list with its election materials, a party's representative not being allowed to join the Polling Board and, at two sites, allegations that a voter's name had been listed twice on the voter list and the voter was allowed to vote more than once. In another of the challenged polling stations, the Polling Board had decided not to spray the fingers of voters or inspect identity documents.

The results at all fourteen stations were annulled by a majority vote of the REC; however, a majority vote could not be achieved in favor of holding repeat elections. The Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) filed a complaint against the REC's decision related to the eight cases brought by the Statistical Office, and in another vote the annulments of those results were canceled. However, it was also decided that the technical errors made the results unclear and therefore they should not be included in the nationwide results. No such formulation or administrative remedy is authorized in the law. The REC's decision was challenged in court. With regard to the eight cases raised by the Statistical Office, the Supreme Court ruled in its decision dated 28 January 2007 that the REC is not authorized to annul elections in polling stations *ex officio*, without a complaint being lodged.

With regard to the other six cases, the results were annulled but no repeat elections were called. The Serbian Radical Party filed a complaint regarding this decision to the Supreme Court. Their complaint was upheld and repeat elections took place on 8th February in Knjaževac (PS No.6), Senta (PS No.15), Šabac (PS No. 22), Vršac (PS No. 39), and Lipljan (Kosovo) (PS No. 7 and 17). Whereas the average turnout in these polling stations in the first round of elections had been 60 per cent, the turnout was 27.51 per cent in the repeat elections. The outcome of repeat voting had no impact on the allocation of mandates.

Although the REC's method of dealing with complaints was transparent and involved vigorous debates and discussions among its members, it appeared that some of the decision-making of the REC stemmed from negotiations and agreements made between them, rather than from the merit of complaints. For example, some parties also withdrew complaints they made to the REC, despite the fact that some of these were alleging serious irregularities. The Democratic Party withdrew over twenty such complaints, including a case where they alleged voters had been improperly added to the voter list on election day, and a case involving allegations that a polling board member had engaged in ballot stuffing.

C. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS REGARDING CAMPAIGNS IN THE BROADCAST MEDIA

Complaints directly related to the campaign in the broadcast media are to be directed to the Supervisory Board established by Article 99 of the LEC. The body is vested with responsibility for the general supervision of the campaign. However, the National Assembly failed to establish this body, reportedly because it was not able to establish a quorum. The absence of the Supervisory Board created a significant gap in the way complaints related to the campaign were dealt with. An early complaint was lodged with the REC regarding the failure of the National Assembly to appoint the Supervisory Board. However, the REC rejected the complaint on the basis that it was not within its competence.

In the absence of the Supervisory Board, the Republic Broadcasting Agency remained the only venue for election-related complaints in the broadcast media.

The EOM was denied access to information about most of the complaints filed at the RBA. Only a small sample selected by the RBA was made available for review. The Agency informed the EOM that it would only be dealing with complaints after elections, effectively eliminating the possibilities for any legal remedies before election day.

XII. DOMESTIC OBSERVERS

The LER does not provide specifically for international and domestic observers. However, under guidelines adopted by the REC, a total of 4,744 international and domestic observers were accredited to observe the elections. The non-governmental domestic observer organization, Center for Free Elections and Democracy (CeSID), deployed the largest group of 3,792 observers. CeSID also engaged in a nationwide get-out-the-vote campaign that involved mailing and distribution of 1.5 million flyers. In addition, the Youth Initiative for Human Rights, and the Roma Center for Strategy, Development and Democracy (an NGO from Lazarevac) also deployed 13 observers to monitor the polls.

XIII. ELECTION DAY OBSERVATIONS

On election day, the International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) observed procedures at over 1,500 polling stations throughout the country including Kosovo. Observation reports covered the conduct of the polls in 158 of the country's 183 municipalities. Poll opening procedures were observed in 131 polling stations, the counting in 98 stations, and 85 observation reports covered the transfer of materials and results to the Working Groups. In addition, 420 narrative reports were received and summarized.

The Election Day was calm and orderly, with the voting process assessed by IEOM observers as "very good" in 59 per cent of the sites visited and "good" in 38 per cent of polling stations observed. The process was described as generally transparent and efficiently conducted. Some irregularities were noted. In 17 per cent of the polling stations observed, observers reported that the secrecy of the vote was compromised by the inadequacy of the voting screens. In eight per cent of the stations visited, voters' IDs were not always checked, and in six per cent fingers were not consistently checked for evidence of ink. In approximately 10 per cent of the polling stations observed, IEOM observers noted that the arrangement of the polling stations, their size, the arrangement or location of booths, and the voting screens were

inadequate. Combined with the high number of people who are authorized to be in the polling stations, this at times caused overcrowding. Family and group voting appeared to be a widespread problem and was observed in 23 per cent of polling stations visited. Campaign material within a vicinity of 50 meters from the polling station were evident in three per cent of observations, notably in Zajecar, Vršac and Lazarevac. In six per cent of polling stations visited there were instances of voters being turned away because their names were not found on the voter lists.

Opening procedures presented some difficulties. In fourteen per cent of the stations visited the polls were not opened at 7:00. In 18 per cent of the sites, observers noted that the control sheet was not filled in, signed and inserted into the ballot box before it was sealed. In 14 per cent of the observations, the ballot box was not inspected and sealed in the presence of the first voter. At four per cent of the stations where the opening procedures were observed, operations were assessed as “bad.”

Closing and counting was assessed by IEOM observers as largely positive in 97 per cent of observations, although the procedure was not consistently followed. In 30 per cent of polling stations where the count was observed, the unused ballots were not counted and packed in the envelope before opening the ballot box. Observers noted that circled ordinal numbers in front of the names were either not counted at all or counted after the ballot count, at 12 per cent of the sites observed. In six per cent of counts observed, Polling Board members had difficulties with filling in the protocols. A copy of the protocol was displayed at a place available to the public in only nine per cent of the stations observed. In eight per cent of the cases, the Results Protocol was not signed by all the members of the Polling Board present. In 21 per cent of the sites, observers noted that special comments of Polling Board members were entered into the Protocol.

The conduct of the transfer of PB protocols to the Working Groups was assessed as good or very good in all 72 observations. However, in 24 per cent (20 cases), the protocol was not immediately submitted to a member of the WG; in one case, the WG did not check the required election materials. In nine per cent of the cases, the PB Result Protocol was not transferred to a computer file, while in eight per cent of the observations (five cases), the Result protocol was not checked against the control equations. Changes were introduced into the PB protocol in four cases, although in no case did the change involve a review of the counted ballots. In one case the handover protocol was not filled in and signed by the WG and the PB members, and in nine per cent of the observations, not all envelopes were packed and sealed.

In Kosovo, the five IEOM teams observing in and around Mitrovica, Gjilan, Štrpce and Gračanica reported a quiet and calm voting atmosphere and very good performance by the majority of Polling Boards. In Zvečan/Žitkovac observers noted that certain individual members of the Polling Board harassed some voters. In spite of a power shortage in Gjilan, polling continued by candlelight without interruption.

XIV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered for consideration by the authorities of the Republic of Serbia, in order to further consolidate overall improvements already made in the electoral process. Some recommendations reiterate issues from past OSCE/ODIHR Election

Observation Missions; others are based solely on specific findings of the IEOM during its observation of these elections.

A. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

1. The law should be amended to ensure that parties and coalitions determine and announce the order in which their candidates will be awarded mandates before the election, to ensure that voters are informed in advance of the candidates who are likely to be seated as a result of their support for a particular party or coalition.
2. The gender quota required for the submission of candidate lists should also apply to the distribution of mandates so as not to diminish the potential positive affect the quota was intended to achieve.
3. Lawmakers should review the 10,000-signature requirement related to the submission of electoral lists, and determine any difference in that number to be required of parties or coalitions qualifying for special status, including status as a minority party or coalition.
4. The law should define “minority party” and “minority coalition” as well as the criteria by which a party or coalition qualifies for this special status. The law should also be amended to resolve the question as to whether a group of citizens representing a national minority can qualify for the same privileges relative to the submission of electoral lists and distribution of mandates as a party or coalition.
5. The guidelines, official opinions, and decisions of the REC, and the opinions of the Supreme Court relative to challenges and complaints brought against REC-decisions, would benefit from a legislative review determining which issues should be addressed in the form of a law.
6. The rights of domestic and international non-partisan observers should be guaranteed in the law, and criteria for their accreditation should be defined in a manner that is not overly burdensome either on the election administration or the respective observer organization.
7. The manner in which the five per cent threshold is determined for the participation in the distribution of seats should be articulated by law rather than by an official interpretation of the REC. Consideration should be given to calculating the threshold based on the valid votes cast, rather than the circled ordinal numbers next to voters’ names on the voter list.
8. The reasons on which a Polling Board is to be dissolved and repeat voting to be conducted at a polling station should be reviewed thoroughly to remove overly strict provisions that cause undue delay in the reporting of final results. To the greatest degree possible, repeat voting should never be required except as a last resort under court order, after all administrative remedies have been exhausted. Administrative remedies should be authorized in law, including, for example, options for recounts and audits of polling station protocols.

B. ELECTION COMMISSION, WORKING GROUPS, AND POLLING BOARDS

9. The law should provide for intermediary electoral bodies between the REC and the Polling Boards. The legal establishment of such bodies would institute a formal chain of command, reduce logistical burdens on the REC, and provide an enhanced level of pluralism by formally providing for multi-party representation at all levels of the election administration.
10. Formal guidelines for the appointment of such intermediary bodies should be determined in the law, whether they are Working Groups or Election Commissions, and for the nomination and appointment of permanent members of Polling Boards. Such legal guidelines would promote consistency in their appointment across all municipalities.
11. The law should also define the grounds, circumstances, and deadlines under which parties and coalitions may appoint or change their extended members and deputy members on the REC, any intermediary body that might be established, or a Polling Board.
12. The role of the Republic Office of Statistics in the tabulation of results should be defined by law. Greater transparency should be given to the procedures regulating the process.

C. VOTER REGISTRATION

13. A single, unified voter register for the Republic should be created, in accordance with the law. The authorities should continue efforts to improve the quality of voter registers and to remove remaining deficiencies.
14. A new legislative framework, regulating voter registration and establishing a clear demarcation of responsibilities for maintenance of voter registers, should be introduced.
15. Consideration should be given to facilitating voter registration among the IDP community, the Roma IDP community in particular, and the Roma in general.

D. CAMPAIGN AND THE MEDIA

16. Guarantees should be put in place to ensure that at least a reasonable portion of the free-of-charge airtime is placed on RT1.
17. The term “promotion” should be clearly defined in the law. While political promotion material and advertising is labeled as “promotion,” the law should also require the identification of the sponsor who paid for it.

E. ELECTION DISPUTES

18. Appeals to the Supreme Court should be heard in public, and parties to the appeal should have a right to be in attendance and to present their cases directly or through their legal representatives.
19. The media Supervisory Board should be activated and in place for all future elections. Its absence impedes the orderly resolution of campaign- and media-related complaints during the pre-election period.

20. Deadlines should be established for the hearing and resolution of media-related complaints during the campaign period, in order to ensure that they are dealt with in a timely manner. Decisions related to such complaints should be made public.

F. ELECTION DAY

21. Polling station sites should be selected to ensure that their size and layout is suitable, not only for the number of voters to be served, but also to accommodate the sizeable Polling Boards. They should also offer unimpeded access to elderly and disabled voters.

22. The layout of the polling stations and the quality of the voter screens should be standardized in such a way as to better preserve the secrecy of the vote. Polling Board members should be proactive in their discouragement of “family” and “group” voting.

23. Formal training should be provided to the Polling Boards and instructional handbooks or checklists be made available to assist them in their work. Such measures would help to overcome lapses in the accomplishment of procedural requirements as were observed over the course of election day.

APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF ELECTION RESULTS

Electoral Lists In Order of Mandates Won	No. of Votes Won	No. of Mandates Won	per cent of Total Number of Seats in the National Assembly
SERBIAN RADICAL PARTY – DR. VOJISLAV ŠEŠELJ	1.152.105	81	32.40
DEMOCRATIC PARTY – BORIS TADIĆ	915.014	64	25.60
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF SERBIA - NEW SERBIA – DR. VOJISLAV KOŠTUNICA	666.889	47	18.80
G17 PLUS – MLAĐAN DINKIĆ	274.874	19	7.60
SOCIALIST PARTY OF SERBIA	227.304	16	6.40
LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY - CIVIC ALLIANCE OF SERBIA– SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC UNION - LEAGUE OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATS OF VOJVODINA – ČEDOMIR JOVANOVIĆ	214.028	15	6.00
ALLIANCE OF VOJVODINA HUNGARIANS – JOŽEF KASA	52.458	3	1.20
COALITION LIST FOR SANDŽAK - DR. SULEJMAN UGLJANIN	33.819	2	0.80
UNION OF ROMA IN SERBIA – DR. RAJKO ĐURIĆ	16.995	1	0.40
COALITION OF ALBANIANS FROM PREŠEVO VALLEY	16.972	1	0.40
ROMA PARTY – ŠAJN SRĐAN	14.568	1	0.40
SERBIAN RENEWAL MOVEMENT – VUK DRAŠKOVIĆ	134.023	0	0.00
PARTY OF UNITED PENSIONERS OF SERBIA (PUPS) AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDP) – DR. JOVAN KRKOBABIĆ AND DR. NEBOJŠA ČOVIĆ	125.232	0	0.00
SERBIAN STRENGTH MOVEMENT – BOGOLJUB KARIĆ	70.621	0	0.00
BRANKO PAVLOVIĆ “BECAUSE IT HAS TO BE BETTER”	15.709	0	0.00
COALITION OF HUNGARIAN UNITY – ANDRAS AGOSTON – DR PAL SANDOR	12.907	0	0.00
COALITION “VOJVODINA PARTIES” – Msc. IGOR KURJAČKI	7.349	0	0.00
DEMOCRATIC COMMUNITY OF SERBIA – DR. OBREN JOKSIMOVIĆ	5.438	0	0.00
SOCIALDEMOCRACY – NENAD VUKASOVIĆ	4.903	0	0.00
REFORMIST PARTY – DR ALEKSANDAR VIŠNJIĆ	1.879	0	0.00

ABOUT THE OSCE/ODIHR

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) is the 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.

The OSCE/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 130 staff.

The OSCE/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 standards for democratic elections and national legislation. Its unique methodology provides an in-depth insight into the electoral process in its entirety. Through assistance projects, the OSCE/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. The OSCE/ODIHR implements a number of targeted assistance programs annually, seeking to develop democratic structures.

The OSCE/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 persons, 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**, the OSCE/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. The OSCE/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.

The OSCE/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).