



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

MONGOLIA

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

28 June 2024

ODIHR Election Observation Mission
Final Report



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
II. INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	4
III. BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT	4
IV. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM	6
V. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION.....	8
VI. VOTING TECHNOLOGIES	9
VII. VOTER REGISTRATION.....	10
VIII. PARTY AND CANDIDATE REGISTRATION.....	12
IX. ELECTION CAMPAIGN.....	13
X. CAMPAIGN FINANCE.....	16
XI. MEDIA	18
A. MEDIA ENVIRONMENT	18
B. LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK	18
C. MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN.....	20
XII. ELECTION OBSERVATION.....	20
XIII. ELECTION DISPUTE RESOLUTION	21
XIV. ELECTION DAY	22
A. OPENING AND VOTING	22
B. COUNTING AND TABULATION	24
XV. POST-ELECTION DAY DEVELOPMENTS	24
XVI. RECOMMENDATIONS	25
A. PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS	25
B. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS.....	26
ANNEX I: FINAL ELECTION RESULTS	28
ANNEX II: LIST OF OBSERVERS IN THE INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION.....	31
ABOUT ODIHR	36

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following an invitation from the authorities of Mongolia, and in line with its mandate, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) deployed an Election Observation Mission (EOM) for the 28 June 2024 parliamentary elections. For the short-term election observation around election day, the ODIHR EOM was joined by the delegation of the European Parliament to form an International Election Observation Mission (IEOM). The IEOM assessed the compliance of the electoral process with OSCE commitments, other international obligations and standards for democratic elections, and with national legislation.

In its Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions issued on 29 June, the IEOM concluded that the “elections were well-administered, but competitiveness was negatively affected by the lack of a level playing field. The legal framework was adequate for conducting democratic elections but needed further alignment with international standards on fundamental rights and freedoms. The election administration enjoyed high public confidence and worked professionally, including by implementing a comprehensive voter information programme. Contestants could campaign freely despite several restrictions, including on social networks, but the short official campaign favoured the well-established parties with substantial resources. Further, a series of salary and social benefit increases close to the elections provided an undue advantage to the ruling party. While stakeholders had confidence in the voter list’s inclusiveness, concerns were raised about the ability of some voters, including mine workers, to vote on election day. Media coverage was extensive but limited in news programmes and analytical reporting, with bias in favour of the ruling party, which further hindered the voters’ ability to make informed choices. On election day, the polling process was smooth and orderly, and election results were reported swiftly and transparently after the automatic vote count; however, non-adherence to ballot reconciliation and vote-count verification procedures in a number of polling stations negatively affected the process.”

The parliamentary elections took place following significant constitutional amendments in May 2023, which increased the size of the parliament from 76 to 126 members and introduced a mixed electoral system, aiming to enhance the parliament’s strength and diversity. The ruling Mongolian People’s Party (MPP) has dominated the political landscape since the democratic transition in the early 1990s and ruled continuously for the past eight years. The elections were held against a backdrop of high-profile corruption cases and economic hardship faced by the rural herder population and residents of economically deprived areas of the capital. Youth electoral disengagement was a concern despite positive attitudes towards democracy and active political and civic participation.

The 78 members of the parliament (MPs) are elected by majority vote in 13 majoritarian districts, while the remaining 48 MPs are elected by proportional representation in a single, nationwide constituency. The law provides for various criteria for the delineation of districts; however, they significantly deviate in the size of the electorate, negatively affecting the equality of the vote, contrary to international standards and OSCE commitments. The legal framework is adequate for conducting democratic elections, but further improvements are needed with regard to fundamental rights and freedoms. The 2023 legal changes include positive developments such as those related to political party funding and increased gender quotas for candidates and party executive bodies. However, several longstanding

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

ODIHR recommendations remain unaddressed, including those related to voting and candidacy rights, freedom of speech and media, and deadlines for election dispute resolution by the courts.

The General Election Commission (GEC) worked in a professional manner and generally met legal deadlines. Most ODIHR EOM interlocutors expressed trust in the election administration and underlined its efforts to work in an impartial and transparent manner, but further efforts could increase the transparency of its work. The EOM was largely not invited to the GEC and lower-level commissions' sessions, and the session minutes were not published, which reduced transparency. The GEC and the Territorial Election Commissions (TECs) implemented a comprehensive voter information campaign, including for young voters, using online platforms, traditional media, and in-person outreach. The legal framework and other measures mostly ensured that voters with physical disabilities could exercise their right to vote independently and secretly, but many polling stations remain inaccessible.

All polling stations are equipped with electronic vote-counting equipment (VCE) that operates offline on election day and connects to a network only after the vote count is completed to transmit preliminary results to the GEC. While some election stakeholders expressed doubts about the accuracy of the machine-based vote count, these concerns were not substantiated with specific evidence. To enhance transparency, the GEC conducted public testing of the vote-counting equipment in the presence of contestants, civil society, and media in the days leading up to the election. Despite a previous ODIHR recommendation, the law does not envisage a possibility for detailed, independent verification of the VCE hardware and software.

Approximately 2.2 million voters were registered. Voter lists are extracted from the continuously updated national population database managed by the General Authority for State Registration (GASR). Ahead of the elections, some 136,000 citizens verified their registration status, and around 8,000 voters requested corrections, of which most cited that one or more unknown individuals were registered at their address. Some ODIHR EOM interlocutors asserted that a number of voters might have been pressured by employers, months ahead of the elections, to shift their registration between constituencies to influence vote outcomes. While ODIHR EOM interlocutors generally expressed trust in the inclusiveness of the voter register, they underlined concerns about the lack of transparency by the GASR in providing data on the re-registration of voters.

The legislation imposes several excessive restrictions on the right to stand for election, including financial and legal capacity conditions. Political parties, as prospective contestants, must obtain approval from the State Audit Office (SAO) for their platforms' compliance with long-term development policies and national security concepts, a requirement that could limit freedom of opinion and expression and stifle political pluralism. On 10 June, the GEC announced that 19 political parties and two coalitions, with a total of 1,336 candidates, were registered for both races, including 42 independent majoritarian candidates. While the GEC conducted candidate registration in accordance with procedures and allowed for corrections of submitted applications, several candidacy restrictions and stringent eligibility requirements raised concerns about overall inclusiveness.

Contestants could campaign freely, but the subdued campaign lacked a level playing field. Established parties had a clear advantage in conducting in-person campaigning across the large electoral districts during the short campaign period, while smaller parties relied on social networks and volunteers. Online campaigning was restricted to websites and social network accounts registered with the TECs, which could lead to curtailing the political debate and limiting freedom of speech, at odds with international standards. In the lead-up to the elections, the government implemented salary and social benefit programmes promoted by a number of state officials and featured prominently in the ruling party's campaign, which blurred the line between party and state, at odds with OSCE commitments. Numerous allegations of pressure on civil servants and public employees to support the ruling party raised concerns

about the voters' ability to choose free from undue pressure. An isolated violent incident resulted in the tragic death of a district party head.

The SAO oversees campaign finance and sets maximum spending limits based on constituency size and voter demographics. Several ODIHR EOM interlocutors considered these limits too high, favouring well-established parliamentary parties and financially strong party-nominated candidates. Although the SAO is legally mandated to monitor campaign funding and spending, it did not engage in monitoring activities, undermining the effectiveness of the legal provisions and accountability of parties. The SAO lacks enforcement authority and transfers information on violations to other authorities. Overall, the legal framework for campaign finance lacks an effective mechanism of oversight and preventative sanctions.

Despite constitutional guarantees for gender equality, women remain underrepresented in political life due to persistent gender stereotypes and limited resources available to prospective and current policy-makers who are women. Women are well-represented at the lower levels of election administration; however, their representation at the TEC level is minimal, and only one GEC member is a woman. Of the 1,336 candidates registered for both races, 519 were women. Although they campaigned actively nationwide, messages specifically targeting women were mostly absent. The newly elected parliament saw an increase in women's representation, rising from 17 per cent to 25 per cent.

The media sector is pluralistic despite a relatively small advertising market, but political affiliations and economic constraints undermine the editorial independence of many media outlets. The Mongolian National Broadcaster (MNB) enjoys relatively high popularity, and in the run-up to elections, it provided free airtime to candidates and hosted numerous debates, although not during primetime. However, the lack of investigative and analytical reporting and restrictions on the amount of news coverage hindered voters' ability to make informed choices. Media monitoring during the campaign revealed that MNB and several privately-owned television (TV) channels displayed a noticeable preference toward the ruling party. The reintroduction of legal provisions against the dissemination of false information in 2020 has led to the prosecution of several journalists. In general, the legal framework and its enforcement stifle investigative journalism, lead to self-censorship, and adversely affect public discourse.

The law provides for citizen and international observation. Political parties and coalitions can also appoint observers to polling locations. To facilitate the registration of citizen observers for these elections, the GEC required them to register on the digital platform to observe at specific precincts. Nevertheless, additional documentation was requested by the PECs to register citizen observers, which unnecessarily complicated the accreditation process. The Coalition for Fair Elections observed voter registration, campaigning, campaign finance and the use of technologies in elections.

There is no expedited procedure for adjudicating election-related cases by the courts; instead, the general deadlines for administrative procedures apply. The courts strive to resolve election-related cases expeditiously, but since the deadlines are not aligned with the election calendar, they undermine the effectiveness of legal remedies. In the pre-election period, 15 cases were filed with the Administrative Court of Appeals on party and candidate registration. Five were deemed inadmissible, and in five of the ten adjudicated cases, the court overturned the GEC's decision allowing those candidates to register, most of them halfway through the election campaign. After the announcement of the results, the GEC received some 20 complaints and requests, mostly challenging the threshold for seat allocation and requesting from the GEC information that was already available publicly.

The election day was calm and orderly, with polling procedures largely followed. However, the layout of polling stations, positioning of voting equipment, and overcrowding in some areas compromised

secrecy. The official PEC results were promptly counted and transferred to the GEC's central server. However, closing and manual vote-counting procedures were not followed in a number of cases, which led the IEOM observers to assess this process more negatively. Despite previous ODIHR recommendations, the final results published by the GEC were not disaggregated by polling station and included only votes cast, omitting details on registered voters, voter turnout per polling station, and other relevant polling data, thereby reducing the transparency of election results.

This report offers a number of recommendations to support efforts to bring elections in Mongolia closer in line with OSCE commitments and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections. Priority recommendations relate to initiating legislative amendments to further align the electoral process with international standards, the conduct of manual counting, third-party verification of the vote counting system, misuse of administrative resources, sanctions for campaign finance violations, criminal provisions related to the dissemination of false information, timeliness and effectiveness of legal remedy and disputes regarding election results. ODIHR stands ready to assist the authorities in addressing the recommendations contained in this and previous reports.

II. INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Following an invitation to observe the 28 June 2024 parliamentary elections, and in accordance with its mandate, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) deployed an Election Observation Mission (EOM) on 21 May. The EOM, led by Ambassador Jennifer Brush, consisted of a 13-member core team based in Ulaanbaatar and 18 long-term observers (LTOs) deployed on 28 May to 8 locations across the country. The ODIHR EOM remained in the country until 9 July.

For election day, the ODIHR EOM was joined by the 13-member delegation from the European Parliament (EP) to form an International Election Observation Mission (IEOM). Tomáš Zdechovský headed the EP delegation. Institutions taking part in the IEOM have endorsed the 2005 Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation. The IEOM deployed 191 observers from 30 OSCE participating States on election day, including 178 long-term and short-term observers by ODIHR and a 13-member delegation from the EP. Forty-seven per cent of the IEOM observers were women.

The IEOM assessed the compliance of the electoral process with OSCE commitments, other international obligations and standards for democratic elections, and with national legislation. This final report follows a Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions that was released on 29 June.²

The ODIHR EOM wishes to thank the authorities of Mongolia for the invitation to observe the elections, as well as the General Election Commission (GEC) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their assistance. It also wishes to express its appreciation to other state institutions, the judiciary, political parties, media and civil society organizations, as well as the international community representatives for sharing their views and for their co-operation.

III. BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

The parliamentary elections were announced on 28 December 2023, following constitutional amendments in May 2023 that expanded the parliament and introduced a mixed electoral system, with a declared aim to strengthen diversity and representation.³ The ruling Mongolian People's Party (MPP)

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

³ The constitutional amendment increased the number of MPs from 76 to 126, and the electoral system was changed from a purely majoritarian to a mixed system.

has dominated the political landscape since the country's independence. Over the past eight years, the MPP has secured an absolute majority in the last two parliamentary elections and further consolidated its power by winning the presidency in 2021.⁴ The second-largest parliamentary party, the Democratic Party (DP), has faced significant internal divisions, including in the lead-up to these elections.

In recent years, corruption has been one of the most prominent topics in the public discourse, with several new claims of misconduct involving high-level officials emerging ahead of these elections.⁵ In April 2022, demonstrations against corruption and the government's perceived ineffectiveness took place, followed by larger protests in December 2022 after a corruption scheme related to coal exports was exposed. In response, the authorities established a parliamentary investigative committee, arrested several high-level officials and members of parliament (MPs), and amended the criminal code with stricter sanctions for offences related to corruption.

The harsh winters of 2023 and 2024 exacerbated the economic hardship for the rural herder population and residents of several economically deprived areas of the capital with limited infrastructure. In April 2024, parliament adopted new legislation in an expedited manner aimed at supporting the sustainable livestock industry. Many ODIHR EOM interlocutors criticized the bypassing of the standard legislative process and raised concerns that ruling party campaigners were using the new provisions to promote their party.

Stakeholders' concerns regarding the independence of the judiciary and the pressure on journalists remained ahead of these elections.⁶ In recent years, civil society organizations operated with limited financial and human resources, faced insufficient state support, and encountered weak levels of public participation.⁷

Women remained underrepresented in political life and decision-making positions despite legal provisions against discrimination. In the outgoing parliament, there were 13 out of 76 women (17 per cent), only 3 out of 22 ministers were women (14 per cent), and only one woman governor out of 22. According to most ODIHR EOM interlocutors, persistent gender stereotypes and limited resources available to prospective and current policy-makers who are women continue to impose barriers to women's participation in political life.

Several ODIHR EOM interlocutors described the political disengagement of youth as a potential concern.⁸ Despite a growing disillusionment with political parties among young voters, attitudes

⁴ In the 2020 parliamentary elections, the MPP secured 62 seats, the Democratic Party (DP) won 11 seats, and a single seat was won by Our Coalition and the Right Person Electorate Coalition each, and by an independent candidate. The HUN party holds one seat in coalition with Social Democratic Party and Justice Party as Right Person Electorate Coalition. Ahead of the elections, all 22 ministers, and 14 out of 21 governors were from the MPP.

⁵ These include a scandal related to the alleged misallocation of student loans revealed in May 2023, the procurement of 1,000 buses for public transportation in Ulaanbaatar and the alleged misappropriation of funds in June 2023, as well as the [forfeiture complaint](#) filed by the U.S. Department of Justice in March 2024, alleging that the former prime minister and MP in the outgoing parliament, Mr. Sukhbaatar Batbold, had purchased apartments in New York City from embezzled state funds totalling USD 14 million (approximately EUR 12.9 million in June 2024).

⁶ See the 2023 [U.N. Preliminary Observations from the Special Rapporteur on Independence of Judges and Lawyers](#).

⁷ The [International Center for Not-for-profit Law \(ICNL\)](#) highlights the need to consolidate and harmonize the laws to safeguard the growing civil society sector. The [2024 Civil Society Report](#) by Transparency International Mongolia notes restrictions on civic space, reduced access to budget documents, limited public engagement in legislative processes and that the 2021 Law on Human Rights Defenders remains unimplemented.

⁸ By 2024, Mongolia's youth [comprised](#) 13.4 per cent of the population.

towards the democratic system remain largely positive. Notably, Mongolia ranks high in terms of political and civic youth participation.⁹

IV. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Mongolia is a party to major international and legal instruments pertaining to the conduct of democratic elections.¹⁰ The primary legislation regulating the parliamentary elections comprises the 1992 Constitution, the 2019 Parliamentary Elections Law (PEL), the 2006 Law on the Central Election Body, and the 2011 Law on the Automated System of Elections, all of which were last amended in 2023. Additionally, the new Law on Political Parties was enacted in 2023.¹¹ While the legal framework is generally adequate for conducting democratic elections, further improvements are needed to enhance the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, and suffrage rights, and to improve the provisions on the conduct of election campaign, including in the media, and dispute resolution.

The latest amendments to the PEL largely reflect the constitutional changes that have, *inter alia*, modified the electoral system. The PEL introduced several new elements, including voting abroad in parliamentary elections, procedures for registration of political parties and coalitions as electoral contestants, procedures for voter list maintenance and updates, and numerous other changes. Positively, the amendments allow parties formed after the announcement of elections to nominate candidates and increase gender quotas for candidates. However, the law still imposes undue restrictions on voting rights and freedom of speech, alongside several gaps and vague provisions.¹² Several longstanding ODIHR recommendations remain unaddressed, including those pertaining to the restrictions on voting rights, limitations on freedom of speech and media freedoms, and the deadlines for the resolution of election-related cases by the judiciary.

The new Law on Political Parties, which came into force on 1 January 2024, introduced several changes, including public funding for parties that obtained at least one per cent of the votes in the last parliamentary elections, in line with international good practice.¹³ Positively, the law also establishes gender and diversity requirements for participation in the parties' executive bodies, as well as in their policies and activities. Additionally, a financial incentive is provided for parties that nominate women candidates above the gender quota required by the PEL.

However, the Law on Political Parties contains several overly prescriptive provisions on the structure and internal organization of political parties and imposes restrictions on party membership, which is allowed only to eligible voters.¹⁴ It also excludes 'core civil servants', a term which is not precisely

⁹ Mongolia is ranked 24th out of 183 countries in the [2023 Global Youth Development Index](#). See also the [2022 survey](#) conducted by the Center for Insights in Survey Research.

¹⁰ Including the [1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights \(ICCPR\)](#), [1979 Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\)](#), [2003 Convention Against Corruption \(CAC\)](#), and [2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#).

¹¹ The applicable legislation also includes the 2015 Criminal Code, the 2017 Code of Criminal Procedure, the 2016 Code of Administrative Procedure, the 2017 Law on Offences, the 1992 Law on the Constitutional Court, the 2021 Law on Courts, the 2016 Law on Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the 2006 Law on Anti-corruption.

¹² For example, the law lacks a legal provision that would establish a procedure in case of a discrepancy arising from the mandatory manual count of ballots, as well as detailed provisions on deregistration of candidates, and on election dispute resolution.

¹³ At least 50 per cent of public funds must support specific purposes: promoting political participation of women, elders, youth and persons with disabilities; educating party members and the public; advancing democracy, human rights, policy development internal democracy.

¹⁴ See paragraphs 35 – 38 of the 2022 [Joint ODIHR and Venice Commission Opinion on the draft Law on Political Parties that recommend review and removal of the restrictions to form and support political parties](#).

defined by law and may potentially affect a broad category of civil servants.¹⁵ This challenges the possibility of associating freely, which is at odds with international standards.¹⁶ In addition, the law is overly detailed in matters of contents of the charter, functioning and decision-making process. It further establishes the incompatibility of the party by law and platform with the Constitution and other laws as grounds for refusal of registration.¹⁷ Moreover, no legal remedy is foreseen in case of denial of registration of a party by the Supreme Court.¹⁸

To effectively guarantee the freedom of association, political pluralism and autonomy of political parties, legislation should be amended to remove unnecessary restrictions on party membership and internal organization of the parties.

To strengthen the right to effective legal redress, consideration should be given to amending the legislation to allow for a legal remedy in cases of party registration denial.

Seventy-eight MPs are elected by majority vote in 13 majoritarian districts, and 48 MPs by proportional representation in a single, nationwide constituency.¹⁹ Each majoritarian district elects a different number of MPs through a plurality-at-large (block voting) system, in which voters must cast as many preferences as there are seats. Although the parliament's resolution to establish the electoral districts did not detail the selection criteria, the PEL mandates that the creation of districts must consider population size, territorial dimensions, and administrative divisions. Currently, 11 of the 13 electoral districts present deviations exceeding 15 per cent from the average number of voters, with four Ulaanbaatar districts exceeding 50 per cent. This disparity challenges the equality of the vote across electoral districts and is contrary to OSCE commitments and good electoral practice, as well as a prior ODIHR recommendation.²⁰

¹⁵ See article 5.3 of the Law on Political Parties. See also paragraph 50 of the [Joint ODIHR and Venice Commission Opinion on the draft Law on Political Parties which states that](#) “the term ‘core civil servant’ should be clarified in the Draft Law by specifying the type of public officials prohibited from membership in political parties or by cross-referencing the relevant legislation”.

¹⁶ Paragraph 7.6 of the [1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document](#) commits participating States to provide “the necessary legal guarantees to enable [electoral contestants] to compete with each other on a basis of equal treatment before the law and by the authorities”. Article 25 of the [ICCPR](#) protects the right of every citizen to take part in the conduct of public affairs. Paragraph 26 of 1996 [General Comment 25](#) to Article 25 of the ICCPR states that “membership in parties play a significant role in the conduct of public affairs and the election process. States should ensure that, in their internal management, political parties respect the applicable provisions of article 25 in order to enable citizens to exercise their rights thereunder.” See also the [2022 Joint ODIHR and Venice Commission Opinion on the Draft Law on Political Parties](#).

¹⁷ See paragraph 116 of the 2020 ODIHR and Venice Commission [Joint Guidelines on Political Party Regulation](#): “a political party must be able to promote a change in the law or the legal or constitutional structures of the state, on two conditions: first, the means used to that end must be legal and democratic; second, the change proposed must be compatible with fundamental democratic principles”.

¹⁸ As the decision to deny party registration on the deficiencies in adhering to registration procedures is, in essence, an administrative decision, it should be noted that paragraph 5.10 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document foresees that “everyone will have an effective means of redress against administrative decisions, so as to guarantee respect for fundamental rights and ensure legal integrity”. See paragraphs 154-155 of the 2020 ODIHR and Venice Commission [Joint Guidelines on Political Party Regulation](#): “Overall, state control over political parties should remain at a minimum, and should be limited to what is necessary in a democratic society [...] In sum, any political or other excessive state control over activities of political parties, such as membership, number and frequency of party congresses and meetings, operation of territorial branches and subdivisions, should be avoided”.

¹⁹ The number of majoritarian constituencies was reduced from 29 to 13.

²⁰ Paragraph 7.3 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document requires that states provide equal suffrage to adult citizens. Paragraph I.2.2.iv of the 2002 Venice Commission's [Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters](#) (Code of Good Practice) recommends that the “permissible departure from the norm should not be more than 10%, and should certainly not exceed 15% except in special circumstances”.

As previously recommended, the law should establish a reasonable, legally binding maximum deviation from the average number of voters per electoral district, aimed at achieving equality of the vote, with due consideration given to preserving community boundaries.

V. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Elections are administered by a four-tiered election administration. The GEC is a permanent body composed of nine members, only one of whom is a woman. The GEC members are civil servants appointed for six-year terms and may not be members of political parties. Five members are nominated by the parliament, while the president and the Supreme Court each nominate two members.²¹ The GEC has a wide range of responsibilities in administering the elections, including appointment of the lower-level commissions, registration of candidates, designing and producing ballots, tabulation of results, and the implementation and maintenance of the automated counting system. The GEC worked in an impartial and professional manner and generally met legal deadlines.

By 29 April, the GEC established 22 Territorial Election Commissions (TECs) in the provinces (*aimags*) and 339 District Election Commissions (DECs).²² The formation of all 2,198 Precinct Election Commissions (PECs) was delayed beyond the 14 May legal deadline due to the introduction of the GEC's digital platform for PEC registration; however, their work was not affected.²³ Women are well-represented in the DECs and PECs, comprising around 76 per cent of all electoral staff, but at the TEC level, only 9 per cent of the commissioners are women. The PEC members had to complete an online training course and be certified through the online platform to be able to serve. DECs organized additional in-person training for the PECs, primarily focusing on election-day procedures.

Most ODIHR EOM interlocutors expressed trust in the work of the election administration at all levels and highlighted its efforts to work in an impartial and transparent manner, but further efforts could increase the transparency of its work. The GEC posted its decisions and regulations on its website and disseminated voter education and information materials. However, the sessions of the GEC and lower-level commissions were not publicly announced. While the GEC meeting minutes were published, the minutes of the lower-level commissions were not. In the run-up to the elections, the GEC has held two in-person sessions and three online sessions.²⁴

To enhance transparency and access to information of public interest, election commissions at all levels should hold open meetings with sufficient public notice and agendas, decisions, and minutes published in a timely and consistent manner.

The GEC implemented a comprehensive nationwide voter information campaign, including on election-day procedures, explanations of the electoral system, and guidance on marking ballots. A brochure with voter information was distributed to all households by the GEC, while TECs, DECs and PECs held

²¹ The current members of GEC were appointed in 2020 with two replacements in January 2024 due to resignations.

²² A separate commission was established within the MFA for out-of-country voting, with 47 PECs set up at the diplomatic representations in 37 countries. Voters abroad voted only for the proportional race.

²³ The platform, *e-election.mn*, is used for registration, online training and certification of election administration officials at all levels, as well as registration of candidates and citizen observers.

²⁴ The GEC holds irregular sessions in order to formalize its decisions and it informs on its actions post-factum through press releases. The ODIHR EOM has been invited to observe only one in-person session. The ODIHR EOM observers were mostly not notified about the lower-level election commission sessions, and when occasionally invited, they received last-minute notices.

demonstrations of election-day procedures.²⁵ To address young voters' disinterest in elections, many ODIHR EOM interlocutors highlighted the need for proactive civic and voter education.

The law guarantees the right to vote by secret ballot and independently for persons with disabilities, in line with international standards and obligations. The law mandates that each polling station must have at least one booth equipped for voters requiring wheelchair access. Additionally, voters with disabilities can request assistance from another eligible voter of their choice. To enable independent voting for voters with visual impairments, the GEC provided Braille ballot frames and magnifying glasses. Voter information videos with sign language interpretation were broadcast on public and private media and posted on the GEC website and social networks. The GEC website is adapted for persons with visual impairments; however, it can be improved further to be fully compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).²⁶

VI. VOTING TECHNOLOGIES

Since 2012, all polling stations are equipped with electronic vote-counting equipment (VCE).²⁷ The VCE operates offline on election day and is physically connected to a network only after completion of the vote count when preliminary results are transmitted to the GEC via a terrestrial or satellite internet connection.

Some election stakeholders expressed concerns to the ODIHR EOM regarding the use of electronic devices for the vote count, but they could not describe mechanisms or disclose evidence of potential manipulation of the official results through these machines, including for prior elections. To enhance transparency and public understanding of the VCE, the GEC tested the equipment closer to election day in the presence of contestants, civil society representatives, and media. These representatives were also entitled to conduct independent testing, which was broadcast live by several media outlets. In addition, testing was also conducted in some PECs around the country two days before election day. All public testing of the VCE at the central and PEC level was limited to the use of test ballots with randomly selected devices.

The GEC produced two separate ballots, one for the proportional and one for the majoritarian race. All polling stations were equipped with electronic devices for combined scanning, counting, and storing of ballots. Polling stations serving more than 1,700 voters were provided with two devices to mitigate long queues and overcrowding. To increase trust in the machine vote count, amendments to the PEL introduced manual counting of ballots in all polling stations following the machine count, an approach that was already implemented in the 2021 presidential election, which is regulated by a separate law. While the PEL stipulates that the machine-counted results are the official results, the law does not contain clear provisions on procedures for manual counting or for managing discrepancies between the machine and manual counts.

To avoid legal and procedural uncertainties, clear procedures for the conduct of manual counting should be developed, outlining the necessary steps to be performed. Additionally, the law should contain provisions addressing potential discrepancies between the electronic and manual vote counts.

²⁵ TECs worked with local broadcasters, online media and social networks for this purpose and in collaborated with regional CSOs to disseminate voter information to women and young voters (TECs in Govi-Altai, Övörkhangaï, Khovd, Uvs and Darkhan-Uul).

²⁶ The [WCAG](#) are part of a series of web accessibility guidelines published by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), the main international standards organization for the internet.

²⁷ Specifically, with [ImageCast Precinct](#) optical scan tabulators developed by Dominion Voting Systems.

Despite previous ODIHR recommendations, the law does not provide for the conduct of independent verification and certification of the system by the election stakeholders that are not part of the government, which could increase the transparency of the system and thus mitigate any concerns regarding security and accuracy. The lack of access to independent verification is contrary to the established international good practice.²⁸ All equipment was verified and certified solely by a working group comprising state institutions in co-operation with the GEC.²⁹ There were no pre-election and post-election independent audits of the system, and cases of technical glitches and eventual discrepancies with the manual count were not documented.³⁰

To increase confidence in the use of election technologies in the vote count, the possibility for independent verification and audit of the equipment and software should be clearly defined in the law.

VII. VOTER REGISTRATION

All citizens at least 18 years of age on election day have the right to vote, except persons deprived of legal capacity by a court decision and those serving a prison sentence, irrespective of the gravity of the crime committed. Both of these restrictions are contrary to international obligations and prior ODIHR recommendations.³¹

All restrictions on voting rights on the basis of intellectual disability should be removed, and the blanket deprivation of voting rights of citizens serving prison sentences should be revised in line with international obligations.

Voter lists are extracted from the continuously updated national population database managed by the General Authority for State Registration (GASR). Voters are identified using their biometric data, including photos and fingerprint records, which are automatically checked against voter's fingerprints at the time of voting.³² The amendments to PEL require the voter identification devices at the polling stations to be connected to the central server of the GASR which prevents cases of double voting and allows for voters to be directed to the correct polling station in case of a mistake. In general, ODIHR EOM interlocutors expressed trust in the inclusiveness of the voter lists. However, concerns regarding the lack of detailed data per *aimag* on voters' movements from one location to another and overall transparency of the GASR were raised as a concern by a number of ODIHR EOM interlocutors.

²⁸ Paragraph 33 of the [2017 Recommendation of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers to member States on standards for e-voting](#) provides that components of the e-voting system shall be disclosed for verification and certification purposes. Paragraph 37 further stipulates that "Before an e-voting system is introduced and at appropriate intervals thereafter, and in particular after any significant changes are made to the system, an independent and competent body shall evaluate the compliance of the e-voting system and of any information and communication technology (ICT) component with the technical requirements. This may take the form of formal certification or other appropriate control."

²⁹ These include the GEC, the General Intelligence Agency and the Ministry of Digital Development and Communications.

³⁰ See paragraph 39 of the [2017 Recommendation of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers to member States on standards for e-voting](#) which states that "The e-voting system shall be auditable. The audit system shall be open and comprehensive, and actively report on potential issues and threats".

³¹ Paragraph 7.3 of the [1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document](#) calls on participating States to "guarantee universal and equal suffrage to adult citizens", while paragraph 24 provides that restrictions on rights and freedoms must be "strictly proportionate to the aim of the law". Article 12 of the [CRPD](#) provides for the equal recognition of persons with disabilities before the law. Article 29 requires States to "guarantee to persons with disabilities political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others." Paragraph 48 of the [2022 General Comment #1 to Article 12 of the CRPD](#) states that "a person's decision-making ability cannot be a justification for any exclusion of persons with disabilities from exercising [...] the right to vote [and] the right to stand for election".

³² In case there is a mismatch between the fingerprints, the voter is not allowed to vote. However, if an age-related degradation of fingerprints is suspected, voters are identified using their ID cards.

Preliminary voter lists were published on the GASR website on 1 April for voter verification, and on 25 June, GASR announced there were 2,224,233 eligible voters on the final voter lists.³³ Voters could verify their data online and, following the 2023 legal amendments, verify the records of all persons registered at their address. Additionally, registration data could also be verified at the PECs from 3 to 25 June, and voters could request corrections until 14 days before the elections. Upon request by several contestants, GASR provided all contesting political parties with copies of the preliminary and final voter lists in an electronic format on 8 and 25 June, respectively.

ODIHR EOM received several reports from voters stating that one or more unknown citizens were registered at their addresses.³⁴ GASR informed that during the public scrutiny period, 136,000 citizens verified their registration status, and approximately 8,000 voters requested corrections, of which 82 per cent indicated that unknown persons registered at their address and requested their removal.³⁵ The GASR explained to the ODIHR EOM that, in many cases, it is impossible to contact the citizens and inform them about the need to be removed because they are not in the country or their location is unknown. In the cases of lack of notification to the voter, GASR cannot proceed with the removal or re-registration of the voters to their correct addresses.

Changes in citizens' residence records, which constitute the basis for voter allocation to precincts, are allowed up to 60 days before election day.³⁶ Some ODIHR EOM interlocutors asserted that there had been persistent pressure on several voters in the last two years by their employers, who were planning to run as candidates, to transfer their voter registration to the constituencies where they would be running in an attempt to secure their votes. The GASR informed the ODIHR EOM that there had been some 70,000 civic re-registrations in recent months, mostly within Ulaanbaatar but possibly to a different electoral district.³⁷ Several political parties requested a breakdown of the number of re-registrations, but the GASR declined to provide such information, citing considerations related to the protection of personal data, which, however, limited the overall transparency related to voter registration.

To increase the transparency of the voter registration process and trust in the accuracy of the voter register, the General Authority for State Registration could consider publishing more data on re-registrations, broken down by localities, rather than summarising only per region.

Several ODIHR EOM interlocutors expressed concerns about whether certain categories of voters, particularly mine workers and seasonal workers, would be able to leave their place of work to vote on election day at the place of their registration. Although there is a legal obligation for employers to provide their employees with the opportunity to vote, in reality, it is difficult for the voters to return and vote at their place of origin due to the large distances and, in some cases, the nature of their work which does not allow them to be absent.³⁸ Some election stakeholders requested the GEC to facilitate the voting for these categories of voters, including by organizing transportation, despite the lack of legal basis to do so, and the GEC did not engage or organize any transportation of voters.

³³ For these elections, a total of 13,095 voters were registered to vote in one of the Mongolian diplomatic missions abroad.

³⁴ Most of the cases related to multiple people registered at one address were reported in the capital city.

³⁵ GASR procedures for removing persons from address registration require an investigation and notification, as the removal also automatically revokes access to state services and the voter lists.

³⁶ Election officials, police officers, representatives of the civil registration office, and IT personnel who have duties on election day can request to vote in the PECs where they serve until 14 days before elections.

³⁷ For the period from 1 January to 29 April 2024, 42,750 people changed their address registration within the capital; 9,420 moved from the capital to the *aimags*; 11,389 moved from the *aimags* to the capital; and 6,512 changed their address between *aimags*.

³⁸ In case of non-compliance of the employer, the fines for individuals and legal entities is respectively MNT 10,000 (approximately EUR 2.7 in June 2024) and MNT 100,000 (approximately EUR 27.4).

VIII. PARTY AND CANDIDATE REGISTRATION

Eligible voters aged 25 or older may stand as candidates. Although some undue restrictions have been removed from the electoral law in 2023, several excessive limitations on candidacy rights remain. Citizens are ineligible to stand as candidates if they have court-established debts or overdue taxes or if a company where a candidate owns more than 51 per cent of shares has overdue taxes. Those serving a criminal sentence and those who have been convicted by a court for a crime of corruption or abuse of power are also ineligible. Additionally, certain categories of civil servants, including the managers of legal entities owned fully or partially by the state or local government authorities, must resign from these positions before 1 January of the election year if they wish to run for office. These restrictions do not align with the OSCE commitments and international standards on the right to be elected.³⁹

As previously recommended, the law should be amended to repeal disqualification to stand on the basis of overdue debts and taxes, and a criminal record. Public employees wishing to run for office should not be required to resign from their posts until the start of the candidate registration period.

To be formally registered as a political party, the law requires the support of at least 801 founding party members, submitted to the Supreme Court along with a range of other documents, such as the party's founding charter and list of assets. However, the Supreme Court informed the ODIHR EOM that it is their policy to accept lists of only exactly 801 members.⁴⁰ Such practice appears to constitute a *contra legem* interpretation and may effectively restrict the right of association.

Political parties and coalitions must declare their intention to participate in the elections to the GEC no later than 60 days before election day. Furthermore, all contestants must submit their election platforms to the State Audit Office (SAO), which examines if the platforms comply with Mongolia's long-term development policy, if their budget proposals align with the Law on Fiscal Stability and if they are compatible with the concept of national security.⁴¹ These restrictions are not in line with international standards and good electoral practice.⁴²

To ensure that political plurality is exercised without unnecessary restrictions, and in line with international standards, the requirement for contestants' electoral platforms to adhere to specific policy-based criteria should be reconsidered.

Political parties and coalitions registered to participate in the elections could nominate candidates within seven days, starting from 14 May. Independent candidates could be nominated within the same period,

³⁹ Paragraph 15 of the 1996 UNHRC [General Comment No. 25](#) to Article 25 of the [ICCPR](#) states 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". 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 without discrimination. Further, paragraph 24 provides that restrictions on rights and freedoms must be "strictly proportionate to the aim of the law".

⁴⁰ If the list contains more than 801 names, it is sent back to be shortened. Further, all entries are checked, and if a single entry is shown to be erroneous, the list is sent back for corrections.

⁴¹ Development policies are drafted by the government and submitted by parliament. The government's long-term policy is incorporated in its [Vision 2050](#) programme, adopted in May 2020. The SAO issues a statement on compliance for each contestant no less than 60 days prior to election day, which they must submit to the GEC.

⁴² Article 19.1 and 19.2 of the [1996 ICCPR](#) state that "Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference" and that "Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers". See paragraph 43 of the [2020 Joint ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines on Political Party Regulation](#), which posits that "[i]t is of paramount importance that political parties and their members have the right to participate in political and public debate, regardless of whether the position taken by them is in line with government policy or advocates for legal or societal change or is unpopular or offensive to some groups".

but each had to submit exactly 801 support signatures to be registered. The legislation mandates that at least 30 per cent of all candidates nominated by parties must be of each gender and that every other candidate on the proportional party lists must be of a different gender.⁴³ While this ensures parity on the proportional lists and represents an overall positive development, the parties are free to nominate many more men than women on majoritarian lists. Apart from the DP, MPP, and Motherland Party, all other contestants nominated more women candidates than required by the gender quota.

Parties and coalitions may nominate up to as many candidates as mandates are available in each district. Each candidate may be listed only once, either in the proportional race or in a majoritarian constituency. On 10 June, the GEC announced that 19 political parties, two coalitions and 1,336 candidates (817 men and 519 women) were registered for the majoritarian and proportional races. Forty-two independent candidates were registered for the majoritarian race. Eleven candidates did not meet the registration criteria and were denied registration on various grounds.⁴⁴ Of these, five were registered through court decisions following successful challenges. While the GEC conducted candidate registration by adhering to existing procedures and allowed for correction of the submitted applications as necessary, several candidacy restrictions and excessive eligibility requirements call into question overall inclusiveness.

Recent amendments to the legal framework encourage political parties to include persons with disabilities on candidate lists by providing financial incentives. According to the Mongolian National Association for Wheelchair Users, four candidates with disabilities were registered, one as a majoritarian candidate and three for the proportional race.

IX. ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The official campaign commenced on 10 June, 18 days before the elections, and concluded 24 hours before election day. The law does not permit prospective candidates to campaign before the official campaign period. However, the incumbent MPs may promote themselves as elected representatives despite their intention to run or already being in the process of registering as candidates. Many ODIHR EOM interlocutors noted that the MPs and high-level government officials had intensively campaigned in the months leading up to the elections, as the law allows for it. Overall, established parties had considerable advantages in campaigning across the newly created large electoral districts within the very short campaign period. The campaign regulations are highly prescriptive, defining permissible activities and limiting the number and type of campaign staff, facilities and vehicles per electoral precinct. The law also prohibits calls for boycotts or publishing political opinion polls in the election year until after the elections.

The law should be amended to establish a less restrictive framework for conducting campaign activities and to provide all electoral contestants with equal conditions for campaigning in both the pre-electoral and the official campaign period.

Overall, contestants campaigned freely and without interference, but the campaign lacked a level playing field.⁴⁵ Although generally subdued, the campaign was marred by a violent incident on 15 June,

⁴³ The law also stipulates that, from the 2028 parliamentary elections, the minimum gender participation on candidate lists will be increased to at least 40 per cent of each gender.

⁴⁴ Three candidates had overdue tax debts, three candidates had incomplete documentation, four candidates were members of parties other than the ones that nominated them, and one candidate, a civil servant, did not resign from their position by 1 January 2024.

⁴⁵ The DP reported to the ODIHR EOM that on 2 June contracted members of its public relations team had been detained, but were released the same day. On 18 June, the DP branch in Ulaanbaatar's Songino Khaikhan municipal district announced that their planned campaign events would be cancelled "to ensure the security of campaigners and voters".

resulting in the tragic death of a district party head of the DP during a scuffle with a campaign staffer of the Minister of Defence, Gүrsediin Saikhanbayar, who was an MPP candidate. DP alleged that the murder was politically motivated and called for the resignation of the prime minister and the minister of defence.⁴⁶ On 25 June, police raided the headquarters of the National Alliance in response to allegations of illegal campaign activities, including operating a ‘troll farm’ at their campaign headquarters, with individuals paid to comment and post online about political rivals to influence voters.⁴⁷

The parliamentary parties held larger campaign events in provincial centres and conducted active door-to-door campaigning nationwide, particularly in some regions.⁴⁸ Smaller parties focused on outreach through social networks and localized campaigns. Contestants exchanged mutual accusations of corruption but also discussed broad national topics such as economic development, infrastructure and the environment. The MPP emphasized its achievements and recently introduced government programmes, while the DP primarily criticized the ruling party’s ineffective governance. Along with the HUN party and the National Alliance, the DP called for limiting social welfare spending and promoting a more liberal market economy.

Many ODIHR EOM interlocutors alleged widespread vote-buying, claiming that voters were offered goods or cash.⁴⁹ Expectations for vote buying were voiced especially by opposition representatives, accusing mainly MPP of the practice.

There are no requirements for the separation of official duties and candidacy, and the law lacks adequate safeguards to prevent officeholders from using state resources in their campaigns.⁵⁰ Public officials, including governors and mayors, campaigned actively across the country.⁵¹ In the lead-up to the elections, the government implemented salary and social benefit increases and one-time payments, which were promoted by state officials and featured prominently in the MPP’s campaign.⁵² These

⁴⁶ The prime minister subsequently met with the chairperson of DP to offer condolences. The MPP also submitted a request to GEC to withdraw the candidacy of Mr. Saikhanbayar; however, the GEC denied this request as there is no formal mechanism for withdrawal.

⁴⁷ Following the raid, on the same day, the GEC submitted a letter to the National Police Agency stating that any such search is prohibited without the permission of the GEC if there is no evidence of crime at the scene. The police stated that of 148 electioneers at the campaign office, only 2 were registered with the GEC, that fake social media accounts were used for election-related activities at the premises, and that investigations are still on-going.

⁴⁸ ODIHR EOM has observed 50 campaign events, of which 31 featured women speakers, 46 of these events were accessible to persons with physical disabilities and, although required by law, only one event included sign-language interpretation.

⁴⁹ ODIHR EOM received reports from such allegations in Dornod, Khovd, Orkhon, Ömnögovi, Ulaanbaatar, and Zavkhan.

⁵⁰ The Law on Civil Service requires those in the public administration and the special state service to refrain from political party activities. On 10 June, the Civil Service Council of Mongolia issued a [notice](#) with a code of conduct in connection to the elections, calling on civil servants to refrain from participating in political activities, maintain neutrality, and not involve their subordinates in political activities.

⁵¹ ODIHR EOM observed governors or mayors actively take part in the campaign of MPP in Ömnögovi, Övörkhangai, Ulaanbaatar, and Zavkhan, and of DP in Ulaanbaatar.

⁵² In January, *Erdenes Tavan Tolgoi*, a state-owned joint-stock company allocated shares to 893,432 children born after 2012. The salary of public transport drivers in Ulaanbaatar was increased effective 1 March. On 20 March 2024, the government [increased](#) pensions by MNT 100,000 (approximately EUR 27) and on 27 March, it [increased](#) civil servants’ salaries. On 19 April, parliament adopted a law in an expedited manner to create a Sovereign Wealth Fund, which would receive 34 per cent of dividends from certain strategic mining deposits. On 24 April, the government [introduced](#) a new loan programme aimed at supporting herders and allocating MNT 5 trillion (approximately EUR 1.4 billion) from the state budget, an unforeseen spending for the year. The Ulaanbaatar municipal budget was amended in 2024 to include a raise in wages for employees of the Landscaping Services Company, effective 1 June.

practices blurred the line between party and state, providing an undue advantage to the ruling party, at odds with OSCE commitments.⁵³

Numerous allegations were made by the ODIHR EOM interlocutors of pressure on civil servants and public employees to support and conduct campaign activities on behalf of the ruling party and to attend campaign events.⁵⁴ These raised significant concerns about the voters' ability to choose free from undue pressure.⁵⁵

The law should clearly define and prohibit the use of administrative resources and the pressure on public employees for campaigning and provide for a clear separation between the official responsibilities of public officials and their canvassing activities. Authorities should take proactive steps to prevent and address any misuse or related violations.

Most political parties stated that a significant portion of their campaigning would be conducted on Facebook. Online campaigning is restricted to websites and social network accounts registered by the TECs. However, restricting campaigning solely to registered individuals may have the effect of curtailing political debate and thus limiting freedom of opinion and expression, at odds with international standards.⁵⁶ Defamation, slander of candidates, and false information are also prohibited on social networks. The PEL provides for monitoring and oversight of online campaigns by the Communications Regulatory Commission (CRC) in co-operation with other state institutions. However, while the CRC reacted based on complaints or signals it received from the police, there was no effective monitoring of the online campaign content.⁵⁷

Political contestants actively shared content from campaign events, held live press conferences, and promoted individual candidates on their Facebook accounts.⁵⁸ Overall, the tone of the posted content was neutral and focused on the economy, corruption, regional development, and social issues. The DP, National Alliance and MPP were the most active in publishing content and generated the most

⁵³ Paragraph 5.4 of the [1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document](#) provides for “a clear separation between State and political parties”. Paragraph II. B. 1.1 of the [2016 Joint ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines for Preventing and Responding to the Misuse of Administrative Resources During Electoral Processes](#) stipulates that “the legal framework should provide effective mechanisms for prohibiting public authorities from taking unfair advantages of their positions by holding official public events for electoral campaigning purposes.”

⁵⁴ Multiple reports of alleged pressure on civil servants or of civil servants enlisted in canvassing and of targeted MPP campaign events for civil servants during working hours were made to the ODIHR EOM in Darkhan-Uul, Dornod, Dornogovi, Khovd, Övörkhangaï, Ulaanbaatar, and Zavkhan.

⁵⁵ Paragraph 7.7 of the [1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document](#) enshrines that votes should be able to participate in the elections freely, without being exposed to violence, intimidation or fear of retribution. See also paragraphs 252 – 254 of the [2020 Joint ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines on Political Party Regulation](#).

⁵⁶ By law, campaigning can be conducted by a candidate, aide to a candidate, election manager, or an electioneer. Paragraph 20 of the 2011 UNHRC [General Comment No. 34](#) to Article 19 of the [ICCPR](#) states that “The free communication of information and ideas about public and political issues between citizens, candidates and elected representatives is essential.” In addition, paragraph 37 states that “Among restrictions on political discourse that have given the Committee cause for concern are the prohibition of door-to-door canvassing, restrictions on the number and type of written materials that may be distributed during election campaigns, blocking access during election periods to sources, including local and international media, of political commentary, and limiting access of opposition parties and politicians to media outlets”.

⁵⁷ In case of a violation of the election law, upon recommendation from the police or intelligence agency, the CRC can request the removal of content or the blocking of social network accounts. However, the responsibility for content removal or blocking lies with the social network platform.

⁵⁸ From 29 May until the start of the official campaign period, the ODIHR EOM followed the accounts of 25 political parties and coalitions, and key politicians and other stakeholders on Facebook. For the official campaign period, the ODIHR EOM followed a total of 30 accounts: 9 parties or coalitions, and 21 candidates and political actors.

engagement.⁵⁹ During the campaign, the tone of the posts remained overwhelmingly neutral across all registered profiles. Several opposition parties met by ODIHR EOM alleged that organized campaigns attempted to discredit them on Facebook, including through disinformation.

Several parties, including the DP, HUN party, and Civic Unification Participation Party, called for increased political representation of women. Although women candidates campaigned actively across the country, messages geared towards women were mostly absent, and most campaign events were dominated by men.⁶⁰

X. CAMPAIGN FINANCE

Election campaigns may be financed through private donations from individuals and legal entities as well as from party and candidate assets. All transactions must be conducted through a designated bank account registered with the SAO.

Individual donations are limited to MNT 10 million (approximately EUR 2,750 in June 2024), and legal entities can donate MNT 30 million (approximately EUR 8,250). The names of citizens donating over MNT 1 million (approximately EUR 275) and legal entities donating more than MNT 2 million (approximately EUR 550) must be published by the SAO. In-kind donations of goods or services are permitted and valued at market price, counting towards the donation limits. The law establishes the list of impermissible donations.⁶¹ Donations from prohibited sources must be returned to the donor, and failure to do so constitutes grounds for the de-registration of a candidate. However, this can only be enforced before election day, reducing the effectiveness in case the violation is not immediately detected.

The SAO oversees campaign finance and sets the campaign spending limits using a methodology approved by the GEC that considers the size of constituencies and the location and number of households and voters. For these elections, each party or coalition could spend up to MNT 6.4 billion (approximately EUR 1.7 million). Depending on the district, candidates could spend between MNT 0.9 billion and MNT 1.5 billion (approximately EUR 244,000 and EUR 407,000, respectively). Several ODIHR EOM interlocutors regarded these ceilings as too high, disproportionately favouring the well-established parliamentary parties with greater resources. The PEL grants the SAO the authority to monitor campaign funding and spending independently or in co-operation with other authorities however, it did not engage in any fact-finding or monitoring activities, which is not in line with good electoral practice.⁶² A recent amendment to the PEL gives civil society organizations (CSOs) registered with the GEC the right to scrutinize expense reports and relevant documents and to conduct independent

⁵⁹ During the official campaign period, among the parties and coalitions, the DP published the most individual posts (323) followed by the MPP (304) and the National Alliance (287). The National Alliance ranked highest (339,709) in terms of engagement on the individual posts of political party or coalition profiles, followed by the MPP (175,097), the DP (108,094), and the HUN Party (106,988). Overall, the largest share of posts included text and video (43 per cent), followed by those with only text (30 per cent), and those with photo and text (26 per cent).

⁶⁰ Of the 50 campaign events observed by the ODIHR EOM, 31 featured women speakers, with a total of 57 women speakers compared to 200 men speakers. In the observed campaign events, the average participation rate of women in the audience was 56 per cent.

⁶¹ Including from foreigners, international organizations, state or local authorities, stateless persons, minors, entities with tax debts, trade unions, religious organizations, and entities established less than one year ago.

⁶² The SAO has regional offices in every *aimag* and in the capital. Paragraph 276 of the [2020 Joint ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines for Political Party Regulation](#) recommend that “To ensure substantive supervision, monitoring should be conducted at the central and local levels”.

monitoring.⁶³ Regardless, the lack of efficient oversight by the SAO diminished the effectiveness of the legal provisions and the accountability of parties.⁶⁴

The law limits online campaign expenditures to 15 per cent of total campaign spending; however, the SAO does not monitor or investigate spending on social networks. During the official campaign period, the accounts that spent the most on paid advertisement on Facebook were that of the third-party pro-MPP account Ard Tumniy Yalalt, the account of MPP candidate and Minister of Culture Nomin Chinbat, and MPP candidate Batshugar Enkhbayar.⁶⁵ According to the parties' interim financial reports submitted to the SAO, the MPP spent the highest amount on social networks, followed by the HUN party and the National Alliance.⁶⁶

The State Audit Office should fully exercise its mandate established by the law and conduct meaningful monitoring of campaign funding and spending, including utilizing its regional offices to collect data.

Addressing a previous ODIHR recommendation, since the 2020 parliamentary elections, contestants are required to submit an interim report on donations and expenses to the SAO three days before election day, which the SAO then publishes.⁶⁷ On 26 June, the SAO published interim reports of 969 majoritarian candidates, including 42 independent candidates, as well as two coalitions and 19 parties. However, information for five political parties was missing as they did not submit reports.⁶⁸ In addition, there were irregularities concerning 163 candidates, as 113 candidates did not submit any data, while the remaining 50 submitted only one report, either on income or expenses. The CSO Youth Policy Watch reported discrepancies in some financial reports with regard to income, expenses and balances. Final campaign finance reports, audited by certified private auditors, are due 45 days after elections for political parties and 30 days for independent candidates. The SAO has no authority to enforce sanctions for violations; instead, it transfers information to other authorities.⁶⁹ Overall, despite previous ODIHR recommendations, the campaign finance framework lacks an effective oversight mechanism and dissuasive sanctions.⁷⁰

To enhance transparency and ensure accountability, the campaign finance framework should be strengthened, and a mechanism for comprehensive and proportionate sanctions for campaign finance violations should be established and enforced.

⁶³ [Youth Policy Watch](#) is the only CSO that conducts evaluation of campaign finance.

⁶⁴ See Paragraph 278 of the [2020 Joint ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines on Political Party Regulation](#), which, among other aspects, recommends that the supervisory authority should have the power to “monitor accounts and conduct audits of financial reports submitted by parties and candidates.”

⁶⁵ According to data from [Meta Ad Library](#), between 10 and 27 June, the account *Ard Tumniy Yalalt* spent up to EUR 49,026; followed by Nomin Chinbat with up to EUR 46,841; MPP candidate Batshugar Enkhbayar with up to EUR 35,750; and the MPP with up to EUR 35,347. The official accounts of the HUN party spent up to EUR 27,260; the DP up to EUR 19,794; and the National Alliance up to EUR 4,257.

⁶⁶ In their [interim reports](#) published on the website of the SAO, parties reported the following expenditures on social media: MPP reported EUR 122,669; HUN party reported EUR 62,810; National Alliance reported EUR 49,869; the Civil Will Green Party EUR 4,347; the DP reported EUR 450; and the New United Coalition reported no expenditures on social networks.

⁶⁷ The law specifies neither the urgency nor a deadline for the SAO to publish the reports.

⁶⁸ These parties are the Liberal Democratic Party of Mongolia, the Motherland Party, the Republican Party, the Mongolian Social Democratic Party and the United Patriots Party. The People's Majority Governance Party submitted candidates' report instead of party's report.

⁶⁹ To the State Inspector of Taxation related to donor eligibility, the Ministry of Finance related to campaign finance reporting and the Central Bank related to opening, managing and closing the bank account.

⁷⁰ 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”.

XI. MEDIA

A. MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

Mongolia has a pluralistic media environment with more than 400 outlets. High internet usage enhances the role of social networks, which, alongside television (TV), serve as primary sources of information. Many ODIHR EOM interlocutors noted a decline in press freedoms and highlighted the lack of economic sustainability of the media outlets and compromised professional and ethical standards, which have led to low public trust.⁷¹ Most privately owned media compete for a limited advertising market, remaining financially dependent on their owners. The public Mongolian National Broadcaster (MNB), comprising five TV channels and three radio stations, enjoys relatively high popularity, partly due to its status as a traditional media source.⁷² Its funding largely relies on the state budget, which is decided and approved annually by the government and ruling majority, contrary to international commitments to public media's legal and financial independence.⁷³

According to several ODIHR EOM interlocutors, many media outlets are politically affiliated, while numerous owners of other media do not consider media as their core business; rather, they use media as a tool for political leverage to protect their economic interests. Additionally, a contracts-based system is believed to be widely used among journalists, essentially involving payments for favourable editorial content.

B. LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The Constitution guarantees freedom of expression, and further legislation provides for a detailed media framework. Defamation was decriminalized in 2017. However, the provision prosecuting the dissemination of false information remained in the election legislation, and it was re-introduced to the Criminal Code in 2020.⁷⁴ Criminal liability for defamation is at odds with international standards.⁷⁵

According to some ODIHR EOM interlocutors, during the election period, at least seven journalists are currently facing investigations based on complaints from government agencies, senior politicians and civil servants.⁷⁶ The legal framework and its enforcement stifle investigative journalism, leading to self-censorship and creating a chilling effect on critical political and social discourse in general.

⁷¹ According to the [2024 Press Freedom Index](#) by Reporters Without Borders, the press freedom ranking dropped 21 places from 109 out of 180 countries.

⁷² The public broadcaster is governed by the Law on Public Radio and Television, which foresees its editorial independence. Its national council is composed of 15 members, seven nominated by the parliament, four by the president and four by the government, serving six-year terms.

⁷³ See paragraph 16 of the 2011 [General Comment No. 34](#) to the [ICCPR](#), which requires States to guarantee the independence and editorial freedom of public media and to provide for sustainable funding.

⁷⁴ Art. 13.14 of the Criminal Code states, "In case of dissemination of obviously false information that insults person's honour, dignity and business reputation of the legal entity distributed through social media, a fine equal from 450 to 1,350 units shall be imposed or shall be sentenced to 240 to 720 hours of community service, or right to travel shall be restricted for a period of one to three months." Art. 14.8 of the Criminal Code prosecutes the dissemination of false information during elections, which can lead to up to two years in prison. In addition, Art. 35.3 of PEL prohibits defamation, damage of reputation, as well as publishing of false information about a candidate.

⁷⁵ Paragraph 47 of [the 2011 General Comment No 34](#) to the [ICCPR](#) notes that "States parties should consider the decriminalization of defamation and, in any case, the application of the criminal law should only be countenanced in the most serious of cases and imprisonment is never an appropriate penalty".

⁷⁶ The editor-in-chief of one of the most popular online news sites [zarig.mn](#) who was detained in December 2023 on accusations of spreading false information, was released in February 2024 and kept under house arrest since. On 19 July 2024, she was convicted of spreading false information, tax evasion, money laundering, revealing personal secrets and illegal acquisition of state secrets and sentenced to four years and nine months in prison.

Criminal provisions related to the dissemination of false information, including those explicitly targeting elections, should be repealed. Disproportionate sanctions for libel that may unduly restrict freedom of expression should be revised.

The PEL, supplemented by the CRC regulations, stipulates, in a rather prescriptive manner, the conduct of election campaigns in both broadcast media and on the internet. Paid political content is permitted only on private broadcasters, up to a total of 60 minutes a day.⁷⁷ Regrettably, the law imposes restrictions on news reporting, limiting the daily news coverage to five minutes per contestant. The MNB is required to provide free airtime on an equal basis, granting 15 minutes to each contestant during the campaign, in addition to the free airtime dedicated to debates.

Since the start of the official campaign period on 10 June, a total of 55 debates featuring numerous candidates from both races have taken place. The schedule, approved by the CRC, included three debates each day broadcast simultaneously on MNB TV and radio. Overall, the MNB complied with the requirement to provide candidates with free airtime. However, the impact and effectiveness of these debates in informing voters remains questionable, as most were aired outside of prime time.⁷⁸ Out of 304 participants in the debates organized by the MNB, 24 per cent were women.

The law could be amended to remove the overall ceiling on news coverage related to contestants. Public broadcasters' campaign programming should aim to provide diverse and innovative formats that ensure compliance with legal requirements for equal access while at the same time offering voters informative coverage.

Oversight of broadcast and online media is shared among multiple bodies, including the GEC, but predominantly, the CRC and the Authority for Fair Competition and Consumer Protection (AFCCP) are the responsible entities.⁷⁹ The law grants extensive sanctioning powers to the CRC, including the authority to suspend both offline and online media. However, the CRC informed the ODIHR EOM that it intended to act mainly in an advisory capacity. During the campaign period, the CRC issued warnings to 27 broadcasters (21 TV channels and 6 radio stations). However, the CRC took no further action either prior to or after election day.⁸⁰ The AFCCP did not provide any official information regarding media-related campaign complaints. Regrettably, there are no provisions for a unified channel for lodging media-related complaints. The ODIHR EOM was informed that such complaints could be filed with the CRC, AFCCP or GEC, but also with the first-instance court or the police. The overlapping and not clearly delineated competencies related to supervision and adjudication of complaints hinder effective and timely access to legal remedy.

Consideration should be given to consolidating media oversight and the handling of media-related complaints under a single, independent regulatory body equipped with transparent methodologies and sufficient resources to ensure timely and effective enforcement of legal requirements for impartial coverage.

⁷⁷ A total of 125 broadcast media outlets, including 83 TV channels and 42 radio stations, as well as 245 online media outlets, were registered by the GEC to sell political advertisements.

⁷⁸ Debates were broadcast each day at 10:00, 14:00 and 17:50. Each debate featured up to five guests, selected through a lottery conducted by the MNB on 8 June, and focused on two topics from amongst 102 pre-determined topics. The final set of debates (five debates with six to seven participants each) on 26 June, started at 16:00 and lasted for four hours. Private *Tenger TV* aired daily debates, paid for by the contestants, during evening prime time (starting at 21:00), which attracted higher viewership. According to the CRC data, a total of 85 debates were held.

⁷⁹ The CRC monitored broadcasters' compliance with the limits on paid advertisements. It also monitored the online content, particularly the dissemination of false information. The AFCCP, through an external contractor, monitored compliance with the news coverage time ceiling but did not assess the content.

⁸⁰ See [the CRC final campaign monitoring report](#), issued on 7 July 2024.

C. MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN [ACCESS DETAILED INFORMATION](#)

On 1 June, the ODIHR EOM commenced its media monitoring of major Mongolian outlets.⁸¹ Before the start of the election campaign, most broadcasters provided extensive coverage of the authorities, with the tone being either neutral or positive. During the campaign, most of the monitored media focused on the coverage of the largest political parties, particularly the MPP and DP.

The ODIHR EOM monitoring revealed a lack of independent editorial policy, as news coverage often mirrored paid political advertisements, suggesting that the content was supplied by political parties. Limited news coverage, along with minimal investigative and analytical reporting, hindered voters' ability to make informed decisions. The public MNB TV had a noticeable preference towards the MPP during the official campaign. MNB allocated 37 per cent of its new coverage to the MPP, with the coverage being overwhelmingly positive and neutral.

Consideration should be given to strengthening the independence of the public broadcaster to prevent political favouritism, with an aim to ensure an impartial and diverse editorial line, as well as accurate and unbiased reporting.

A similar approach was adopted by several other monitored TV channels. Most notably, TV 9, owned by the former president Mr. Enkhbayar Nambar, and Mongol TV, co-owned by the current Minister of Culture, Ms. Nomin Chinbat, allocated 68 and 50 per cent of their coverage to the MPP, respectively, with a predominantly positive tone. While NTV provided a critical reflection of the ruling MPP, the Eagle News channel offered a balanced coverage of the major contestants.

Most monitored online media outlets allocated the largest portion of their relevant political and election-related coverage to the MPP, ranging from 23 to 42 per cent, and all of them presented the ruling party in a positive or neutral manner. On the other hand, *itoim.mn* adopted a more critical approach towards MPP and gave the most coverage to the DP (39 per cent). In the other monitored online media, DP received between 12 and 33 per cent of mostly neutral coverage.

The under-representation of women in public and political life was reflected in the news coverage.⁸² Portion of women candidates in the monitored TV channels ranged from 9 to 35 per cent, while in the monitored online media, it ranged from 9 to 19 per cent of their election and political coverage.

XII. ELECTION OBSERVATION

The law provides for citizen and international election observation and for authorized representatives of electoral contestants to observe elections. The law limits the number of observers to two per organization per polling station and prohibits civil servants from observing elections. Political parties and coalitions can also appoint observers to polling locations.

The Civil Society Coalition for Fair Elections co-ordinated efforts of a group of CSOs to observe voter registration, the election campaign, including on social networks, the campaign financing and the use

⁸¹ This included public MNB (both TV and radio), private TV channels *Eagle TV, Mongol TV, NTV, TV9* and *TV25*, and online sources *eguur.mn, gogo.mn, ikon.mn, itoim.mn, news.mn, zarig.mn*. The monitoring assessed the coverage of the contestants and other political entities, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods, focusing on prime-time TV programming as well as political and election-related content in the online media.

⁸² Paragraph 99 of the [2022 Joint ODIHR and Venice Commission Opinion on the Draft Law on Political Parties](#) recommends introducing provisions to provide minimum media coverage requirements for women candidates.

of technologies in elections.⁸³ The GEC accredited a total of 259 international observers, and it reported that a total of 300 civil society observers and approximately 29,000 political party and candidate observers were registered at the PEC level.⁸⁴

To facilitate the registration of citizen observers for these elections, the GEC required them to register on the digital platform to observe at specific precincts. Nevertheless, additional documentation was requested by the PECs to register citizen observers, which unnecessarily complicated the accreditation process.

To facilitate unimpeded access and reduce organizational challenges for citizen observer groups, the election authorities could consider removing the requirement to register for each polling station separately.

XIII. ELECTION DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Judicial and election management bodies deal with election disputes, depending on the subject of the complaint. Complaints against decisions of lower-level election commissions are submitted to the respective higher-level commission. Complaints against decisions of the GEC are lodged with the Administrative Court of Appeals at the first instance and with the Supreme Court at the final instance. Complaints regarding GEC decisions on election results can be filed with the Constitutional Court by any citizen. Election-related administrative and criminal offences are investigated by the police and adjudicated by district courts. Some ODIHR EOM interlocutors reiterated the persistent lack of public trust in the independence of the judiciary.⁸⁵

There is no expedited procedure for adjudicating election-related cases by the courts. The Law on Procedure of the Administrative Court stipulates a 30-day period for the court to render a decision, extendable by an additional ten days. The Supreme Court is mandated to adjudicate appeals within 21 days. Additionally, the PEL includes a provision that contradicts provisions of other laws, stating that entities authorized to adjudicate election-related complaints must reach a decision within the election year. Even though, in practice, the courts generally strive to resolve election-related cases within a few days, the deadlines for electoral dispute resolution are not aligned with the election calendar, despite a previous ODIHR recommendation.⁸⁶ Consequently, the deadlines do not ensure the timeliness and, therefore, the effectiveness of legal remedy.

Since the start of the election year and until 23 July, 1,263 complaints related to election offences have been filed with the police. Of these, 789 concerned administrative offences, and 474 pertained to criminal offences. The majority of reports on criminal offences were dismissed; 8 per cent (32 cases) were transferred to other authorities, and 5 per cent (19 cases) cases were opened and were under

⁸³ The coalition was composed of Voter Education Centre, Mongolian Information Development Association (MIDAS), Fact Checking, Youth Policy Watch and Global International, and was co-ordinated by the Open Society Forum. The coalition deployed 280 stationary observers on election day in 140 polling stations in Ulaanbaatar and 25 observers in 12 different *aimags*.

⁸⁴ The GEC accredited a total of 259 international observers from 40 countries deployed by 21 organizations. In addition, the GEC extended direct invitations and accredited an additional 68 international observers from various international organizations and foreign diplomatic missions in Mongolia.

⁸⁵ See the [2023 Preliminary Observations](#) of the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers raising concerns about the lack of trust in the judiciary and the use of social networks to disparage judges, including by holders of public office. The 2022 report on [Perceptions of Corruption in Law Enforcement](#) by the Independent Authority Against Corruption includes findings that the courts and the prosecutor's office are perceived among the worst institutions in terms of corruption.

⁸⁶ See also paragraph II.3.3.3 and, in particular, subparagraph II.3.3.3.g of the 2002 Venice Commission's [Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters](#), which recommends an effective and expeditious legal remedy.

investigation. According to the National Police Agency, 56 per cent of the complaints on criminal offences were related to the dissemination of false reports during the elections, and 27 per cent were related to vote-buying. Complaints on administrative offences pertained mostly to campaign methods not prescribed by law and the destruction of election materials.

In the pre-election period, 15 cases related to party and candidate registration were filed with the Administrative Court of Appeals. Five of these cases were deemed inadmissible. Out of the ten adjudicated cases, the court overturned the GEC's decision in five instances, allowing those candidates to run. Four of these cases were decided upon after the start of the election campaign, with the latest decision issued on 16 June. None of the above 15 cases was appealed at the Supreme Court.

To ensure a timely and effective legal remedy, the legislation should be amended to establish deadlines for the resolution of electoral disputes that are both reasonable and aligned with the election calendar.

After the announcement of the results, the GEC received some 20 complaints, mostly pertaining to determining the threshold of votes required for allocation of seats and requesting information already published on the GEC website. On 2 July, the Truth and Accuracy Party submitted a petition to the Constitutional Court alleging that provisions of the PEL requiring a certain threshold for allocation of seats to political parties and coalitions violate the Constitution. Additionally, they claimed that the GEC should have allocated a seat to the party on the basis of the votes obtained, regardless of the percentage. After the elections, on 17 July, the chairperson of the political party, who is the petitioner, informed the ODIHR EOM that the Constitutional Court did not issue a decision on whether to initiate a process by the time of the finalization of election results.⁸⁷

Disputes regarding election results should be resolved in a timely manner. To ensure legal certainty, relevant disputes must be adjudicated before the General Election Commission submits results to the parliament and before the elected members are sworn in.

XIV. ELECTION DAY

The election day proceeded calmly and orderly across the country. While polling procedures were largely followed, the process, in some instances, was negatively affected by the layout of polling stations, the positioning of the VCE, and overcrowding, compromising the secrecy of the vote. The GEC regularly published turnout data throughout the day and started posting the election results soon after polls closed, contributing to transparency. Voter turnout was reported at 69.3 per cent. The official vote count was automatic, with data instantly transferred to the GEC central server. However, the PECs' adherence to procedures deteriorated considerably in relation to the closing procedures and the manual vote count verification, which in some cases did not conclude on election night.

Opening was observed in 75 polling stations and voting was observed in 650 polling stations across the country. Counting was observed in 64 polling stations, and the ODIHR EOM observers also followed the tabulation at the GEC.

A. OPENING AND VOTING

Most polling stations opened on time or with slight delays. Opening procedures were assessed positively in 69 out of 75 observations, highlighting the generally uniform application of procedures.

⁸⁷ According to Article 21.2 of the Law on Procedure of the Constitutional Court, the Court member who receives petitions and information concerning a breach of the Constitution from citizens shall carry out the initial examination within 14 days and deliver a decision on whether or not to initiate a process.

Exceptionally, the PEC members did not show that the ballot boxes were empty before sealing them in five instances.

The IEOM observers assessed the voting process positively in 98 per cent of the polling stations, describing the process as well-organized and smooth. However, the polling station layout was not conducive for voting in secrecy in 14 per cent of observations, particularly in the capital, due to overcrowding noted by observers in 10 per cent of polling stations and in some of those cases, individual voters or PEC members staying too close to the VCE.⁸⁸ In 22 per cent of observations, the IEOM observers noted a large number of voters queuing outside the polling stations. Some technical issues with the VCEs were noted in seven per cent of the polling stations, which led to minor delays and, in some cases, led to replacing the VCEs.

Poll workers were overwhelmingly women; they constituted 85 per cent of PEC members at the polling stations observed and 78 per cent of PEC chairpersons. Political party and candidate observers were reported in 99 per cent of observations, contributing to transparency.⁸⁹ However, in nine per cent of cases, observers did not have a clear view of procedures. Citizen observers were present in 12 per cent of polling stations, mostly in the capital. The IEOM observers remarked on a significant presence of police officers posted at the polling stations (36 per cent).⁹⁰ While the law does not forbid their presence and even prescribes a responsibility for the police officers to guard the election materials even during voting and counting, there were a few isolated cases of police interfering in the process.

The authorities could consider restricting police presence inside polling stations, allowing entry only when invited by the PEC during an incident. At a minimum, a code of conduct to specify the roles and responsibilities of police officers at polling stations should be developed to ensure the role of police is fulfilled effectively and without a potential for interference.

Polling procedures were generally followed, but in 14 per cent of cases, voters did not pass the fingerprint check with the scan on record. According to various election officials, this mainly affected older voters due to the age-related degradation of fingerprints; these voters were identified with ID cards as per procedures. Family voting was reported in 6 per cent of polling stations observed, mostly in rural areas. In seven per cent of observations, some voters were allowed to vote without presenting an ID card after being identified through the fingerprint scan, as required by procedures. In 18 per cent of polling stations, the IEOM observers noted that some voters were re-directed upon arrival to the polling station where they were actually registered.

The IEOM observers did not report any serious irregularities or electoral malpractice. In some cases, party agents photographed the screens displaying voters' photos at the time of voter identification, potentially undermining voters' privacy.

Although the GEC took measures to facilitate the participation of voters with disabilities, including providing magnifying glasses at more than 98 per cent of polling stations and Braille templates at 93 per cent for voters with visual impairments, only 40 per cent of polling stations were suitable for independent access by voters with physical disabilities.

⁸⁸ Persons staying close to the ballot box could see the ballots being cast, as voters frequently inserted them face-up, thereby potentially revealing their choices.

⁸⁹ DP was present in 97, MPP in 96, HUN in 41 and National Alliance in 30 per cent of polling stations observed.

⁹⁰ According to the 2017 [ODIHR Guidelines for Public Security Providers in Elections](#), page 51, the “[g]ood practice notes that a police presence inside polling stations is generally prohibited and envisaged only upon the request of the respective election official to restore order or react to specific incidents”.

B. COUNTING AND TABULATION

The GEC regularly released turnout data, contributing to transparency. The data was disaggregated by constituencies and *aimags*, as well as by voters' age and gender. All polling stations closed on time, and the final voter turnout was reported at 69.3 per cent, with notably lower turnout among younger voters, particularly those aged 18 to 19 (61.3 and 63 per cent of male and female voters, respectively), 20 to 24 (49.6 and 43.7 per cent of male and female voters, respectively) and the 25 to 29 age group (52.1 and 61.5 per cent of male and female voters) demonstrating a certain level of disengagement among younger voters. Turnout among women was eight percentage points higher than among men.

After the polls closed, the GEC started presenting the preliminary results data for each constituency and contestant, which was not disaggregated by polling stations. While the tabulation of the preliminary results was broadly broadcast from the GEC tabulation centre and published by the media, the GEC did not publish preliminary results on its website. Despite a previous ODIHR recommendation, the final results published by the GEC on 29 and 30 June included only the demographic data on the votes cast, without further details on registered voters, voter turnout per polling station, or additional polling data, such as the number of received and spoilt ballots. The publication of results is not regulated by law, but by the GEC's own initiative.

To ensure transparency, the General Election Commission should be required by law to promptly publish both preliminary and final results, disaggregated by polling station, on its website. For meaningful scrutiny of the election results, the published results should include all relevant information, including the number of registered voters, votes cast for each candidate, blank votes, and the number of received and spoiled ballots.

XV. POST-ELECTION DAY DEVELOPMENTS

The post-election environment remained calm, with no contestant publicly questioning the election results. However, following the announcement of the preliminary results, leaders of several opposition parties, including the DP, National Alliance, and the Civic Unification Participation Party, alleged widespread election-related violations by the ruling party in their statements and, in turn, MPP accused the DP of vote buying and other violations of the election law.⁹¹

Based on the final results published by GEC, the MPP secured the majority in parliament, winning 68 seats. The DP won 42 seats, the HUN party 8 seats, while both the National Alliance and the Civil Will Green Party won 4 seats each. The newly elected parliament includes an increase in the number of women represented, from 13 out of 76 (17 per cent) to 32 out of 126 (25 per cent). Following a public call by Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene on opposition parties to join the government, the prime minister appointed members of the new government on 10 July, with 12 ministers from the MPP, 8 ministers from the DP, and 2 from the HUN party, with a total of 3 women ministers out of the 22. The National Alliance and the Civil Will Green Party became the two opposition parties in the parliament.

⁹¹ After polls closed on election day, the DP alleged numerous violations of the election law during the campaign period. The leader of the National Alliance claimed that the ruling party exercised absolute control over law enforcement bodies and used the police to hinder the coalition's campaign, and the Civic Unification Participation Party listed a number of alleged election violations, including intimidation of voters, vote-buying, and pressure on civil servants. On the same day, the Head of the Party Development Department of MPP alleged a number of election law violations by DP, including vote buying.

XVI. RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations, as contained throughout the text, are offered with a view to further enhance the conduct of elections in Mongolia and to support efforts to bring them fully in line with OSCE commitments and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections. These recommendations should be read in conjunction with past ODIHR recommendations that remain to be addressed.⁹² The legislative reforms should be undertaken well in advance of elections and through inclusive consultations, including with civil society. ODIHR stands ready to assist the authorities of Mongolia in further improving the electoral process and addressing recommendations contained in this and previous reports.

A. PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To avoid legal and procedural uncertainties, clear procedures for the conduct of manual counting should be developed, outlining the necessary steps to be performed. Additionally, the law should contain provisions addressing potential discrepancies between the electronic and manual vote counts.
2. All restrictions on voting rights on the basis of intellectual disability should be removed, and the blanket deprivation of voting rights of citizens serving prison sentences should be revised in line with international obligations.
3. The law should clearly define and prohibit the use of administrative resources and the pressure on public employees for campaigning and provide for a clear separation between the official responsibilities of public officials and their canvassing activities. Authorities should take proactive steps to prevent and address any misuse or related violations.
4. To enhance transparency and ensure accountability, the campaign finance framework should be strengthened, and a mechanism for comprehensive and proportionate sanctions for campaign finance violations should be established and enforced.
5. Criminal provisions related to the dissemination of false information, including those explicitly targeting elections, should be repealed. Disproportionate sanctions for libel that may unduly restrict freedom of expression should be revised.
6. To ensure a timely and effective legal remedy, the legislation should be amended to establish deadlines for the resolution of electoral disputes that are both reasonable and aligned with the election calendar.
7. Disputes regarding election results should be resolved in a timely manner. To ensure legal certainty, relevant disputes must be adjudicated before the General Election Commission submits results to the parliament and before the elected members are sworn in.

⁹² In paragraph 25 of the [1999 OSCE Istanbul Document](#), all 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 the ODIHR EOM as follows: recommendations 8, 11, 14, 17, 18 and 28 from the final report of the 2016 parliamentary elections and recommendations 10 and 12 from the final report of the 2017 presidential election are fully implemented. Recommendations 1, 9, 10 and 27 from the final report of the 2016 parliamentary elections and recommendation 2 from the 2017 presidential election are mostly implemented. Recommendations 3, 5, 15 and 26 from the final report of the 2016 parliamentary elections; recommendations 3, 19, 22, 23, 27 and 28 from the final report of the 2017 presidential election and recommendations 1, 9, 14, 21, 24, 25 and 27 from the final report of the 2021 presidential election are partially implemented. See also the [ODIHR Electoral Recommendations Database](#).

B. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Legal framework and Electoral System

8. To effectively guarantee the freedom of association, political pluralism and autonomy of political parties, legislation should be amended to remove unnecessary restrictions on party membership and internal organization of the parties.
9. *To strengthen the right to effective legal redress, consideration should be given to amending the legislation to allow for a legal remedy in cases of party registration denial.*
10. As previously recommended, the law should establish a reasonable, legally binding maximum deviation from the average number of voters per electoral district, aimed at achieving equality of the vote, with due consideration given to preserving community boundaries.

Election administration

11. To enhance transparency and access to information of public interest, election commissions at all levels should hold open meetings with sufficient public notice and agendas, decisions, and minutes published in a timely and consistent manner.

Voting Technologies

12. To increase confidence in the use of election technologies in the vote count, the possibility for independent verification and audit of the equipment and software should be clearly defined in the law.

Voter Registration

13. To increase the transparency of the voter registration process and trust in the accuracy of the voter register, the General Authority for State Registration could consider publishing more data on re-registrations, broken down by localities, rather than summarising only per region.

Candidate Registration

14. As previously recommended, the law should be amended to repeal disqualification to stand on the basis of overdue debts and taxes, and a criminal record. Public employees wishing to run for office should not be required to resign from their posts until the start of the candidate registration period.
15. To ensure that political plurality is exercised without unnecessary restrictions, and in line with international standards, the requirement for contestants' electoral platforms to adhere to specific policy-based criteria should be reconsidered.

Election campaign

16. The law should be amended to establish a less restrictive framework for conducting campaign activities and to provide all electoral contestants with equal conditions for campaigning in both the pre-electoral and the official campaign period.

Campaign finance

17. The State Audit Office should fully exercise its mandate established by the law and conduct meaningful monitoring of campaign funding and spending, including utilizing its regional offices to collect data.

Media

18. The authorities and other election stakeholders should enhance public awareness to address concerns about strategic lawsuits aimed at preventing and intimidating critical media from participating in public discourse.
19. The law could be amended to remove the overall ceiling on news coverage related to contestants. Public broadcasters' campaign programming should aim to provide diverse and innovative formats that ensure compliance with legal requirements for equal access while at the same time offering voters informative coverage.
20. Consideration should be given to consolidating media oversight and the handling of media-related complaints under a single, independent regulatory body equipped with transparent methodologies and sufficient resources to ensure timely and effective enforcement of legal requirements for impartial coverage.
21. Consideration should be given to strengthening the independence of the public broadcaster to prevent political favouritism, with an aim to ensure an impartial and diverse editorial line, as well as accurate and unbiased reporting.

Election Observation

22. To facilitate unimpeded access and reduce organizational challenges for citizen observer groups, the election authorities could consider removing the requirement to register for each polling station separately.

Election day

23. The authorities could consider restricting police presence inside polling stations, allowing entry only when invited by the PEC during an incident. At a minimum, a code of conduct to specify the roles and responsibilities of police officers at polling stations should be developed to ensure the role of police is fulfilled effectively and without a potential for interference.
24. To ensure transparency, the General Election Commission should be required by law to promptly publish both preliminary and final results, disaggregated by polling station, on its website. For meaningful scrutiny of the election results, the published results should include all relevant information, including the number of registered voters, votes cast for each candidate, blank votes, and the number of received and spoiled ballots.

ANNEX I: FINAL ELECTION RESULTS⁹³

TURNOUT

	Total Number	Percentage
Registered voters	2,089,935	100%
Ballots / Turnout	1,459,830	69.85%
Valid ballots	1,455,188	99.68% (Out of all ballots cast)
Blank ballots	4,642	0.32% (Out of all ballots cast)

MAJORITARIAN RACE

Elected Candidate	Party Affiliation	Number of Votes	Percentage
Constituency 1			
Altangerel Oyunsaykhan	DP	66,656	52.2%
Ganbaatar Saynkhoo	DP	61,824	48.4%
Battsetseg Batmonkh	MPP	60,610	47.5%
Monkhtulga Purevbaatar	DP	60,059	47.0%
Ganbat Dashdondog	DP	58,263	45.6%
Temuulen Ganzorig	MPP	58,228	45.6%
Khosbayar Ganbat	DP	56,612	44.3%
Zhargalsaikhan Damdinsuren	DP	56,177	44.0%
Tsogtbaatar Davaa	DP	55,935	43.8%
Constituency 2			
Byambatsogt Sanda	MPP	79,826	56.6%
Tsogtgerel Odon	DP	75,927	53.8%
Amarbayasgalan Dashzeveg	MPP	74,199	52.6%
Purevdorzh Bokhchuluun	DP	74,152	52.6%
Choizhilsuren Battogtokh	MPP	73,280	52.0%
Tuvshin Banzragch	DP	68,829	49.5%
Amgalanbaatar Ochirbat	DP	67,597	47.9%
Zayaabal Batzhargal	MPP	67,321	47.7%
Mendsaikhan Zagdzhav	MPP	66,594	47.2%
Bolormaa Enkhbat	MPP	64,838	46.0%
Constituency 3			
Zhangabyl Khazhekber	MPP	25,138	54.4%
Aubakir Tileukhan	MPP	23,772	51.5%
Beisen Bulan	DP	21,454	46.4%
Constituency 4			
Battulga Khaltmaa	DP	60,933	47.4%
Enkh-Amgalan Luvsantseren	MPP	50,728	46.4%
Batlut Damba	MPP	58,657	45.6%

⁹³ Data according to the final results published by the GEC.

Bat-Erdene Bat-Olziy	MPP	53,474	41.6%
Uuriyntuyaa Dorzhsuren	MPP	51,805	40.3%
Monkhbaatar Lkhagva	MPP	49,182	38.2%
Bat-Erdene Tserenpil	MPP	47,557	37.0%
Constituency 5			
Zhavkhlan Bold	MPP	62,898	48.9%
Tuvaan Tsevegдорз	DP	60,644	47.2%
Batbayar Dalay	DP	53,903	41.9%
Enkhbayar Zhadamba	MPP	53,306	41.5%
Tulga Buyaa	MPP	50,017	38.9%
Damdinnyam Gongor	MPP	49,307	38.4%
Erdenebold Sukhbaatar	DP	47,892	37.3%
Lundeg Surenhav	MPP	46,712	36.4%
Undram Chinbat	MPP	44,925	35.0%
Batzhargal Zhigzhid	MPP	44,775	34.8%
Constituency 6			
Oyun-Erdene Luvsannamsrai	MPP	55,469	56.4%
Badamsuren Myagmarsuren	MPP	46,667	47.5%
Iderbat Tsagaankhuu	MPP	45,777	46.5%
Otgonbayar Ukhnaa	MPP	43,724	44.5%
Soronzonbold Lkhagvasuren	MPP	43,400	44.1%
Byambasuren Shinebayar	DP	43,047	43.8%
Gankhuleg Mongontsog	MPP	42,248	43.0%
Constituency 7			
Seddorzh Renchinbyamba	DP	41,428	46.2%
Delgersaikhan Borkhuu	MPP	39,331	43.8%
Naranbaatar Nanzad	MPP	37,134	41.4%
Monkhbayasgalan Luvsanbyambaa	DP	37,019	41.2%
Monkhbat Tsagaankhuu	DP	36,433	40.6%
Erdenburen Ravzhikh	DP	36,379	40.3%
Ganbaatar Gombo	DP	35,629	39.7%
Constituency 8			
Chinburen Zhigzhidsuren	MPP	58,854	34.1%
Enkhbayar Battomor	MPP	56,247	32.6%
Naranbayar Purevsuren	HUN	53,358	30.9%
Bat-Amgalan Enkhtaivan	MPP	52,872	30.6%
Bulgantuyaa Khurelbaatar	MPP	51,214	29.6%
Constituency 9			
Zolzhargal Zhargalsaikhan	HUN	39,771	38.1%
Gankhuyag Khassur	MPP	39,012	37.4%
Ganbaatar Zhambal	MPP	28,414	27.2%
Constituency 10			

Uchral Nyam-Osor	MPP	67,107	53.1%
Batnairamdal Otgonshar	MPP	43,261	34.2%
Baatarkhuu Tsende	DP	36,540	28.9%
Batsumberel Natsagdorzh	MPP	34,261	27.1%
Tsogtbaatar Damdin	MPP	32,907	26.0%
Bolormaa Khokhkhuu	DP	32,279	25.6%
Constituency 11			
Batshugar Enkhbayar	MPP	58,914	42.4%
Altankhuyar Novor	DP	53,659	38.6%
Altanshagai Narantsetseg	MPP	48,527	33.7%
Saynzorig Purevzhav	MPP	46,833	33.7%
Nomin Chinbat	MPP	44,187	31.8%
Constituency 12			
Monkhsaikhan Togtmol	MPP	45,396	39.3%
Lodoisambuu Chuluubileg	DP	40,937	35.5%
Aldarzhavkhlan Zhukov	MPP	40,915	35.4%
Constituency 13			
Amarsaikhan Sainbuyan	MPP	16,539	52.5%
Sandag-Ochir Tsende	MPP	12,347	39.2%

PROPORTIONAL RACE

Party/Coalition	Votes cast	Percentage	Votes allocated from parties and coalitions that did not pass the threshold	Total votes	Seats
MPP	509,482	35.01%	+41,577	551,059	18
DP	438,506	30.13%	+41,577	480,083	16
HUN Party	151,111	10.38%	+41,577	192,688	6
National Alliance	75,196	5.17%	+41,577	116,773	4
Civil Will Green Party	73,006	5.02%	+41,577	114,583	4

TOTAL SEATS

Party/Coalition	Constituency	Proportional	Total
MPP	50	18	68
DP	26	16	42
HUN Party	2	6	8
National Alliance	0	4	4
Civil Will Green Party	0	4	4

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

European Parliament

Tomáš	Zdechovský	Czech Republic	Head of Delegation
Marina	Graser Lasic	Croatia	EP Secretariat
Jaak	Madison	Estonia	MEP
Fabio Massimo	Castaldo	Italy	MEP
Ignazio	Corrao	Italy	MEP
Niccolò	Rinaldi	Italy	EP Secretariat
Monia	Albertini	Italy	Staff of Delegation
Tessel Dian Joel	Giele	Netherlands	Staff of Delegation
Robert	Biedroń	Poland	MEP
Ryszard	Czarnecki	Poland	MEP
Anna	Kaczmarek	Poland	Staff of Delegation
Leopoldo	López Gil	Spain	MEP
Gonzalo	De Mendoza	Spain	EP Secretariat

ODIHR EOM Long-term Observers

Dhimiter	Gjodede	Albania
Susanne	Giendl	Austria
Miroslav	Brozman	Czech Republic
Anne	Poulsen	Denmark
Catherine	Iffly	France
Pascale	Le Hel	France
Natalie	Krieger	Germany
Thomas	Leszke	Germany
Suhail	Ahmad	Ireland
Francesca	Calvi Giancristofaro	Italy
Aidos	Kenzhebayev	Kazakhstan
Agatha Maria Johanna	de Wit	Netherlands
Andreas	Aabel	Norway
Nicolay	Paus	Norway
Andrey	Ostvald	Russian Federation
Aleksandr	Studenikin	Russian Federation
Ewa Helena Christina	Jacobsson	Sweden
Astrid	Nunez	Sweden

ODIHR EOM Short-term Observers

Dominik	Rastinger	Austria
Hannah Yolanda	Scheller	Austria
Heinrich	Hirsch	Austria
Lenka	Audy	Czech Republic
Lucie	Štěpánková	Czech Republic
Zaneta	Vencourova	Czech Republic
Vardan	Khachatryan	Czech Republic
Lukáš	Janeček	Czech Republic

Klaus	Koenig	Denmark
Astrid Viktoria	Torp-Pedersen	Denmark
Lise	Thorsen	Denmark
Inge	Jensen	Denmark
Rosangela	de Jesus das Neves	Denmark
Christian	Andersen	Denmark
Hilda	Casier	Denmark
Erik	Nielsen	Denmark
Kahina	Hadid	Denmark
Inger Marie	Vennize	Denmark
Ivika	Enula	Estonia
Petteri	Londen	Finland
Hanna	Vuokko	Finland
Tommi	Jämsä	Finland
Maria	Vaittinen	Finland
Maria	Vaittinen	Finland
Jasmine	Salhab	France
Sebastien	Peyrouse	France
Matthias	Clerc	France
Gael	Dupont-Ferrier	France
Jessica	Berthereau	France
Anais	Fiault	France
Julien	Paupert	France
Dominika	Eichstaedt	Germany
Pavel	Utitz	Germany
Magdalena	Metzler	Germany
Eva	Gmelin	Germany
Melanie	Breiter	Germany
Leonard	Pledl	Germany
Malte	Seebens	Germany
Johannes	Dopffel	Germany
Lisa	Becker	Germany
Gerda Elisabeth Charlotte	Dopheide	Germany
Lars	Gerold	Germany
Oliver	Fritz	Germany
Jakob	Preuss	Germany
Eckart	Rohde	Germany
Anca	Stan	Germany
Bartosz	Walenda	Germany
Karola Claudia	Machalett	Germany
Susanne	Theilmann	Germany
Annelie	Koschella	Germany
Maxim	Menschenin	Germany
Ulrike	Dässler	Germany
Tina	Mede-Karpenstein	Germany
Johanna	Berger	Germany
Arnim	Stauth	Germany
Rainer	Otter	Germany
Julia Marieke	Gellermann	Germany
Cornelia	Nauck	Germany

Werner	Klinger	Germany
Hans-Heinrich	Schneider	Germany
Udo	Weber	Germany
Péter	Gáspár	Hungary
Eilís	Ward	Ireland
Ruth	Moralee	Ireland
Michael	O'Shea	Ireland
Terence	Duffy	Ireland
Audrey	Ryan	Ireland
Peter	Carroll	Ireland
Anne	Marlborough	Ireland
Diego	Lazarich	Italy
Enrica	Brancaleoni	Italy
Federica	Raimondo	Italy
Wilhelmina	Theuws	Netherlands
Anass	Bendrif	Netherlands
Anne-Mischa	van Schouwenburg	Netherlands
Laurens	Teule	Netherlands
Mari	Hagen	Norway
Børge Røssaak	Nilsen	Norway
Nils Gunnar	Songstad	Norway
Gro	Tjore	Norway
Stefan	Hejnowicz	Poland
Alexandru Dan	Vasc	Romania
Claudia-Iolanda	Butnaru	Romania
Vitalii	Fadeev	Russian Federation
Aleksandr	Fediakov	Russian Federation
Andrei	Glushchenko	Russian Federation
Nadezhda	Obukhova	Russian Federation
Ekaterina	Chirkina	Russian Federation
Mariia	Toporikova	Russian Federation
Dmitrii	Iakimets	Russian Federation
Diana	Ainetdinova	Russian Federation
Aleksei	Sinegubov	Russian Federation
Mikhail	Zaitsev	Russian Federation
Inna	Tarysheva	Russian Federation
Anna	Kovalchuk	Russian Federation
Mariia	Astakhova	Russian Federation
Kristina	Bogdanova	Russian Federation
Vera	Duganova	Russian Federation
Denis	Podolskii	Russian Federation
Viktor	Evseev	Russian Federation
Ivan	Zavorin	Russian Federation
Anton	Postigov	Russian Federation
Elena	Balandina	Russian Federation
Konstantin	Pakhorukov	Russian Federation
Natalia	Minakova	Russian Federation
Ilia	Baranov	Russian Federation
Anton	Revutskii	Russian Federation
Ekaterina	Gorbatova	Russian Federation

Valeriia	Bulva	Russian Federation
Alexander	Bedritskiy	Russian Federation
Alexander	Konkov	Russian Federation
Vsevolod	Perevozchikov	Russian Federation
Ivan	Fetisov	Russian Federation
Elena	Satiukova	Russian Federation
Mikhail	Stepykin	Russian Federation
Leili	Rustamova	Russian Federation
Arina	Androsova	Russian Federation
Egor	Baburin	Russian Federation
Andrei	Borodin	Russian Federation
Dmitrii	Makarov	Russian Federation
Alena	Konovalenko	Russian Federation
Anatoly	Ivanov	Russian Federation
Tatiana	Syatchikhina	Russian Federation
Iñaki	Garcia-Blanco	Spain
Olga	Martin Gonzalez	Spain
Klas Henrik Max	Kettnaker	Sweden
Lisa	Westholm	Sweden
Sofia Leila	Zitouni	Sweden
Karl Johan Sebastian	Eklund	Sweden
Anna Elisabeth	Enarsson	Sweden
Helena Birgitta	Munther	Sweden
Pär Olof Daniel	Olsson	Sweden
Emma Kristina Sofia	Sandahl	Sweden
Carolina	Hamma	Sweden
Sophia Ingrid Amanda	Tuwesdotter	Sweden
Alessandro	Bartolini	Sweden
Hanna	Norell	Sweden
Peter Mattias	Goldmann	Sweden
Carl Fredrik Bertil	von Essen	Sweden
Karin Susanna	Fält	Sweden
Kristina Ingrid Sofia	Ulgemo	Sweden
Gabriella	Ingerstad	Sweden
André	Nilén	Sweden
Bengt Jonas	Frykman	Sweden
David	Dunsmore	United States
Degee	Wilhelm	United States
Melody	Shekari	United States
William	Baker	United States
Michael	Paarlberg	United States
Lori	Renee Cloutier	United States
John	Conard	United States
Murodilla	Alimbaev	Uzbekistan

ODIHR EOM Core Team Members

Jennifer	Brush	United States	Head of Mission
Vania	Anguelova	Bulgaria	
Marianna	Skopa	Greece	
Julia	Manchin	Hungary	
Slaviša	Kotlaja	Montenegro	
Robert	Lech	Poland	
Tomasz	Jańczy	Poland	
Michał	Ostańkiewicz	Poland	
Ranko	Vukčević	Serbia	
Maja	Sandić	Serbia	
Ivan	Godársky	Slovakia	
Andreas	Roth	Sweden	
Farrukh	Juraqulov	Tajikistan	

ABOUT ODIHR

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (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.

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 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 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**, 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