TO THE PRESS Sarajevo, September 15, 2018

**THE COALITION „POD LUPOM“ – SPECIAL PRESS RELEASE**

**CRIMINAL ACT: Registered Cases of Misuse of Personal Data for the Purpose of Voting by Mail**

*The Coalition “Pod lupom”, which implements citizen, non-partisan observation of elections in BiH, published a special press release concerning a number of registered cases of misuse of personal data for the purpose of voting by mail.*

The Coalition for free and fair elections “Pod lupom” registered a number of citizens’ reports about misuse of their personal data for the purpose of voting by mail in the upcoming 2018 General Elections, without their knowledge.

This is a criminal act according to the criminal legislation of BiH and the Coalition is calling on the responsible bodies to react, to carry out extensive investigation and to impose sanctions on both the perpetrator and the instructor of such operations.

''We call on the Central Election Commission of BiH to publish voters’ register of all those egistered for voting by mail, electoral areas for which they are voting and countries from which they are voting “as soon as possible,” while ensuring protection of personal data”, said Dario Jovanović, director of the Coalition “Pod lupom”.

“Pod lupom” calls on all BiH citizens, regardless of whether they have residence in BiH or in some other country to check where they are registered to vote by using the link on the CEC's web page <https://bit.ly/2rEodRf>. Any potential abuse of personal data can be reported to the CEC and Pod lupom.

More than 77,000 voters are registered for voting by mail in the upcoming election, which is the highest number yet.  The Coalition says that misuse of personal data is not the only registered irregularity concerning voting by mail. In May and June, there were several fake profiles and prize contests of big retail chains in the country, which asked citizens to provide copies of both sides of their ID cards as a condition for competing. Such operations are believed to be connected to potential election fraud.

Also, there were numerous cases of political party activists pressuring BiH citizens in neighboring Serbia to register for voting by mail, cases where students from BiH in the Serbian town of Novi Sad were offered money in exchange for their personal data and registration for voting by mail on their behalf, massive political party campaign for voting by mail in other countries.

In addition, the Central Election Commission already rejected 9,000 applications for voting by mail due to numerous reasons .Some citizens even received wrong ballots for some levels of government for voting by mail.

''All this implies that there are intentional manipulations to influence the election results. The only ones who have an interest in something like this are political actors registered for running in the election, and those who instructed such operations and conducted these crimes should be sought among them," said Vehid Sehic, the President of the Coalition’s Strategic Board.

The Coalition “Pod lupom” reminds all BiH citizens that they can report irregularities ahead of the election or on Election Day with a call to the toll- free number 080 05 05 05 or on the [www.podlupom.org](http://podlupom.org/v2/) website.

The Coalition ''Pod lupom''