



2018 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN BIH

THE SECOND PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE LONG-TERM OBSERVATION OF ELECTIONS AND OBSERVATION OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

(July 23 – October 1, 2018)

October 2018

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1. Summary of the Report

General assessment of the pre-election period

A record high number of electoral irregularities has been recorded since the Coalition started the election observation activities (in 2014). One gets the impression that political parties in this country do as they wish and that the law does not apply to them, like it applies to ordinary citizens. This is enabled by sluggishness of the election and investigation authorities in eliminating and processing electoral irregularities.

Coalition's observers registered hundreds of cases of electoral irregularities, such as illegitimate pressure on voters, vote buying, threats of workplace firing or offers of new employment in exchange for a vote, misuse of public resources for the purpose of the campaign, voters registers not being up to date in some municipalities, illicit trading of places on the polling station committees, prohibited paid political advertising prior to the start of the campaign (three times more than during the 2016 Local elections), and other types of irregularities.

In addition, the Coalition received many reports from citizens concerning various irregularities and election fraud. Having in mind that there were far more electoral irregularities, we can assess that the pre-election period in BiH was, to say the least, chaotic.

Coalition's observers reported on the alleged trading of positions on the polling station committees in 35 municipalities. The Election Law of BiH prescribes that political subjects certified to participate in the elections may have only one representative in the polling station committee. The main goal of tampering with places within polling station committees is to manipulate the will of voters.

The most concerning is a massive misuse of citizens' personal data for the purpose of registering to vote by mail, without their knowledge. Several hundreds of similar cases were registered, and they were forwarded subsequently to the competent Prosecutor's Office by the Election Commission. The enormous increase in the number of voters registered to vote by mail, especially in some municipalities and towns in BiH, surely is a signal for the competent authorities to deal thoroughly with this problem.

At pre-election rallies, various types of irregularities in the election campaign were registered in as many as 227 cases. Messages were mainly about pre-election promises, however, what also marked the campaign were mutual accusations and political subjects' passing the buck, which was often on the verge of inappropriate language and distaste.

Unfortunately, there were also specific calls to violence or discrimination against some individuals and groups, which should also be treated seriously by the competent authorities. The most notable example is the pre-election rally in Gacko, during which the President of RS, Milorad Dodik, the candidate for the Presidency of BiH in the 2018 General Elections, publicly threatened citizens that they would get fired if they voted for SDS. Equally concerning are open calls and messages encouraging the examples of the violations of the law, misuse of public office and resources and mockery of citizens.

Deepening of inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic divisions, instilling fear of other and different remains to be the main characteristic of the election campaigns and programs in BiH. It is disappointing that political subjects that are currently in power or that were in power during the previous mandates, are still not able to look to the future, to offer prospects to BiH citizens and to provide specific solutions to the many accumulated problems.

With some slight deviations in the implementation of the electoral preliminary activities, the election authorities at the local level for the most part carried out adequately the preparations for administration of elections. However, the events regarding the BiH CEC and incidents in some municipalities undermine citizens' confidence in the election authorities.

All that has been said is one reason more for citizens to get out and vote in the greatest number possible and sanction the instructors and perpetrators of the electoral irregularities and violations of the law. Citizens' votes on the Election day will be protected by a large number of domestic and international non-partisan election observers, which ultimately, along with a responsible work of individuals who participate in organization and administration of elections, observance of law and election regulations, can ensure that the election results are a true expression of the will of citizens. Citizens should know that on Election Day they can vote freely and wisely in a voting booth, because there is no way that any political subject can find out how they voted, regardless of what the political subjects claim or what forms of pressure they use.

Election campaign

- Various types of electoral irregularities were registered in as many as 227 cases.
- Events that were exclusive for party activists and fans of political parties marked the electoral campaign during the September 7 – October 1, which is an obvious change compared to the previous election campaigns.
- The topics that dominated during the election campaign were: economy and public finances at 232 pre-election events (64% of events), public services (healthcare, education, culture, social care, etc.) at 212 events (58%) and infrastructure and construction works at 201 events (55%).

- Messages were mainly about pre-election promises, however, what also marked the campaign were mutual accusations and political subjects' passing the buck, which was often on the verge of inappropriate language and distaste
- Unfortunately, deepening of inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic divisions and instilling fear of other and different remains to be the main characteristic of the election campaign.
- Misuse of official vehicles and/or security personnel for the purpose of the campaign of political subjects was registered in as many as 153 cases.
- The leaders in misusing government vehicle or security personnel for the benefits of the campaign were Milorad Dodik (30 times), Željka Cvijanović (28 times), Mladen Ivanić (20 times), Bakir Izetbegović (10 times), and Mirko Šarović and Petar Đokić (9 times each).
- 65 cases of prohibited activities of the political subjects were registered during the pre-election events.
- At three (3) pre-election events, weapons were carried and shown at a political rally and/or in the immediate vicinity.

Electoral irregularities

- **A record high number of electoral irregularities has been recorded since the Coalition started election observation activities (in 2014).** One gets the impression that political parties in this country do as they wish and that the law does not apply to them, like it applies to ordinary citizens.
- The most concerning is a massive **misuse of citizens' personal data for the purpose of registering to vote by mail**, without their knowledge. Several hundreds of similar cases were registered, and they were forwarded subsequently to the competent Prosecutor's Office by the Election Commission.
- There were cases of illegitimate pressure on voters, vote buying, threats of workplace firing or offers of new employment in exchange for a vote, misuse of public resources for the purpose of the campaign, voters registers not being up to date in some municipalities, illicit trading of positions on the polling station committees, prohibited paid political advertising prior to the start of the campaign (three times more than during the 2016 Local elections), and other types of irregularities.

The work of electoral authorities

- CEC's regular activities include monitoring and fulfilling certain obligations anticipated in the Election calendar and observance of the deadlines.
- During the previous period, several cases rocked the BiH CEC, which shook public confidence in the work of this authority.
- The majority of local election commissions carry out adequate preparations for administration of elections.
- All local election commissions operate in full capacity.

- It was recorded that election commissions in 12 municipalities failed to meet gender requirements in accordance with the law.
- It was noted that 11 election commissions faced problems in their work which, according to them, included inadequate work premises and poor equipment.
The vast majority of local election commissions designated the number and type of polling stations by the deadline set (August 3), while 9 of them failed to do so.
- 21 municipal/town election commissions failed to assign positions on the polling station committees to political subjects by August 8 – they failed to carry out the draw for members of the polling station committees thereby violating the deadline for this activity.
- In more than a half of municipalities and towns in BiH political subjects failed to deliver their proposals of members of the polling station committees by August 15, which was also the deadline.
- Local election commissions received 29 complaints, of which 28 pertain to General Elections, while one complaint concerns the selection of members of the Local Ward Council.

The Media, civil society and the citizens

- The Coalition “Pod lupom” condemns in the harshest terms the attacks on journalists and calls on investigation authorities to identify and sanction the perpetrators and instructors of these actions. Without freedom of the press there will be no free or fair elections.
- In four cases, Coalition's observers reported pressure and attacks to which they were subjected.
- The cases of attempted negative influence on the freedom of assembly and expression of citizens' will.

About the 2018 General Elections

- 2018 General Elections will take place on Sunday, October 7, 2018, for six levels, i.e. bodies of authorities.
- The BiH CEC certified 69 political parties, 34 independent candidates, 36 coalitions and more than 7,500 candidates for participation in elections.
- 3,352,933 citizens registered in the Central Voters Register as of August 23, 2018 have the right to vote on October 7. Total 77, 814 voters were registered to vote outside of BiH (voting by mail).
- Some novelties will be introduced in the 2018 General Elections. A positive example is introducing the requirement to disclose names and surnames of members of the polling station committees with information about affiliation to political subjects, which aims to prevent illicit trading of positions on the polling station committees, introduction of translucent ballot boxes to prevent ballot theft and improve transparency of the election process, to lower the height of voting booths to prevent family voting, taking photographs and ballot theft. These changes implemented 3 out of 10 Coalition's priority recommendations for better elections that pertained to CEC.

- A negative example is the increase of the inter-party threshold to 20%, which practically means that BiH citizens will vote on de facto closed lists for the first time in 18 years.

2. Long-term election observation

2.1. Observation of election campaign

From September 7 to October 1, observers of the election campaign visited and reported on 363 promotional events of the political subjects.

Various types of electoral irregularities at pre-election rallies were registered in as many as 227 cases. Messages were mainly about pre-election promises, however, what also marked the campaign were mutual accusations and political subjects' passing the buck, which was often on the verge of inappropriate language and distaste.

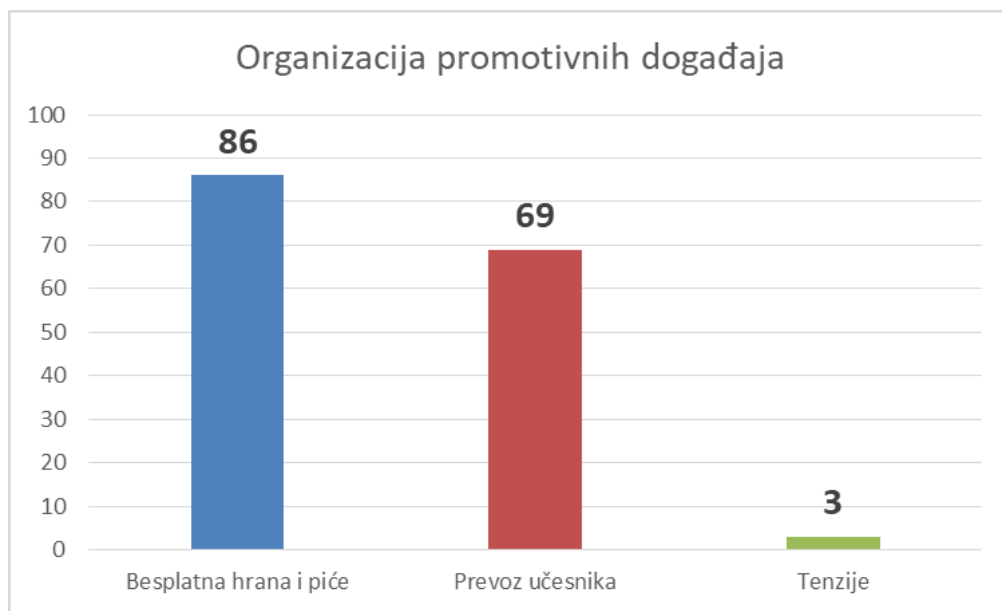
Unfortunately, there were also some specific calls to violence or discrimination against some individuals and groups, which should also be treated seriously by the competent investigation and judicial authorities as well as by the election authorities. Equally concerning are open calls and messages encouraging violations of the law, misuse of public office and resources and mockery of citizens.

2.1.1. Organization of promotional events of political subjects

Observers of the election campaign reported on 363 promotional events of political subjects over the course of the election campaign (as of October 1, 2018).

Many events were not announced in advance and were promoted in local communities, and citizens were not invited massively to visit pre-election rallies. Closed-type events for party activists and fans of political subjects marked the start of the campaign, which is an evident change compared to the previous election campaigns. Pre-election rallies and similar events intensified in the second part of the campaign.

Free distribution of food and drinks to participants was observed at 86 pre-election rallies (24%) and free bus transport was organized to participants of 69 events (19%). Tensions were observed at three pre-election rallies, the SNSD rally in Gradiska on September 12 due to a small number of visitors, the DNS rally in Sokolac on September 27 because two drunk persons disturbed the rally and police had to react, and the HDZ 1990 rally in Kupres on September 28 with open messages of hatred and animosity toward HDZ BiH.



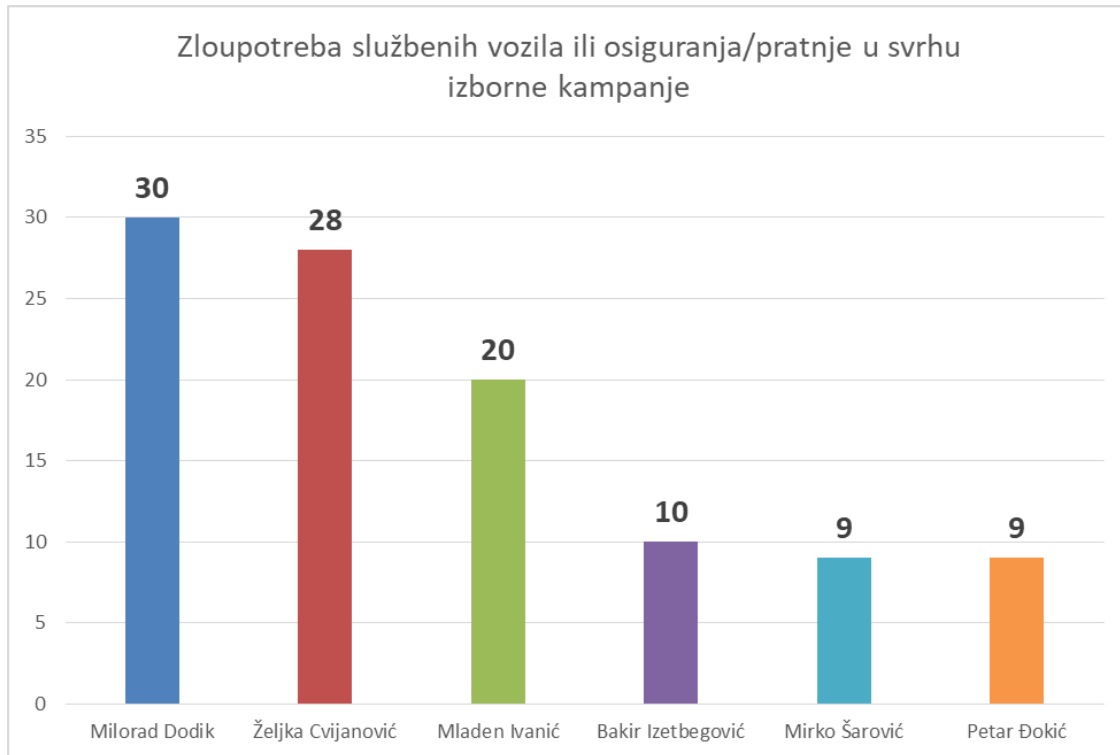
2.1.2. Irregularities in the election campaign

Various types of irregularities were recorded in as many as 227 cases. The greatest number of the electoral irregularities pertained to misuse of public resources and public office -- the use of official vehicles and security personnel for the purpose of the campaigns of political subjects.

2.1.2.1. Misuse of official vehicles and security personnel

Misuse of official vehicles and/or security personnel for the purpose of the campaign of political subjects was registered in as many as 153 cases. 83 cases pertain to the misuse of official vehicles, while 70 cases involved the misuse of security personnel.

The person with the largest number of cases involving the misuse of official vehicles is Milorad Dodik (30 times, of which 3 times involved the misuse of a helicopter belonging to the Helicopter Service of Republika Srpska intended for emergency, medical transport and special operations of the RS Ministry of Interior); Željka Cvijanović (28 times); Mladen Ivanić (20 times); Bakir Izetbegović (10 times); and Mirko Šarović and Petar Đokić (9 times each).



2.1.2.2. Prohibited activities

65 cases of prohibited activities of political subjects were registered during the pre-election events. The largest number of cases pertain to inappropriate language—use of language that may lead to or incite violence or spread of hatred (31 cases), placing ads and posters inside or on the buildings of authorities, public companies, public institutions and local wards or on public roads and property, which is prohibited (23 cases).

Seven (7) pre-election rallies organized during the work hours were attended by public officials (work days, SNSD in Dobož, Nevesinje and Petrovo between 9 am and 3 pm; SDA in Mostar at 11 am; DNS in Dobož at 9 am; SDS in Dobož at 10 am; and United Srpska in Dobož at 9 am).

It is alarming that weapons were carried and shown at three political rallies and/or in the vicinity (the SNSD rally in Banja Luka on September 7; the SDS rally in Sokolac on September 17, and the rally of the Alliance for Victory in Banja Luka on September 18).

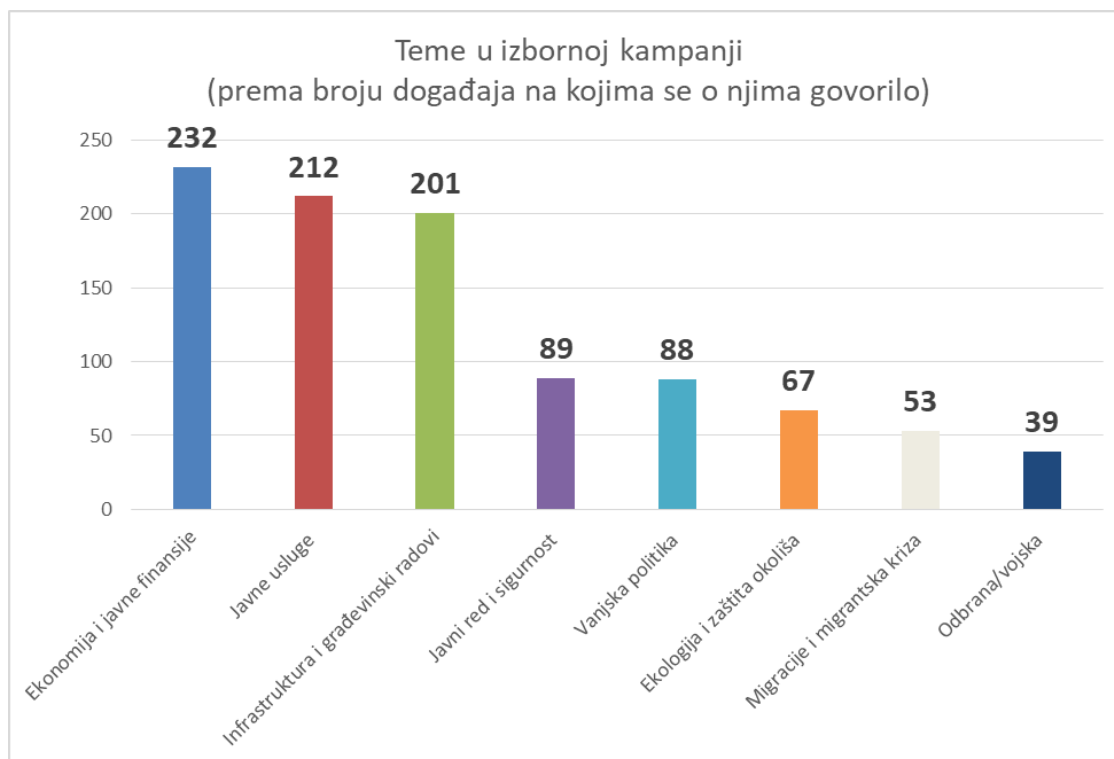


2.1.3. Topics in the election campaign

The topics that dominated the election campaign mostly addressed competences of the state, entity and cantonal levels of government, which is not hard to imagine given that the scope of competence is extremely broad and diverse, and the pre-election rallies mostly presented the candidates for higher government levels.

The topics that dominated during the election campaign were: economy and public finances, as the topic that was present at 232 pre-election events (64% of events); public services (healthcare, education, culture, social care, etc.) as the topic that was present at 212 events (58%); and infrastructure and construction works as the topic that was present at 201 events (55%).

The topics least discussed at pre-election rallies were: public order and safety (89 events or 25%); foreign policy (88 events or 24%); ecology and environment protection (67 events or 18%); migrations and the migrant crisis (53 events or 15%) and defense/military (39 events or 11%).



2.2. Electoral irregularities

Coalition's observers registered hundreds of cases of electoral irregularities such as illegitimate pressure on voters, vote buying, threats of workplace firing or offers of new employment in exchange for a vote, misuse of public resources for the purpose of the campaign, voters' registers not being up to date in some municipalities, illicit trading of positions on the polling station committees, prohibited paid political advertising prior to the start of the campaign (three times more than during the 2016 Local elections), and other types of irregularities. In addition, the Coalition received many reports from citizens about various types of irregularities and election fraud. Having in mind that there were far more electoral irregularities, we can assess that the pre-election period in BiH was, to say the least, chaotic.

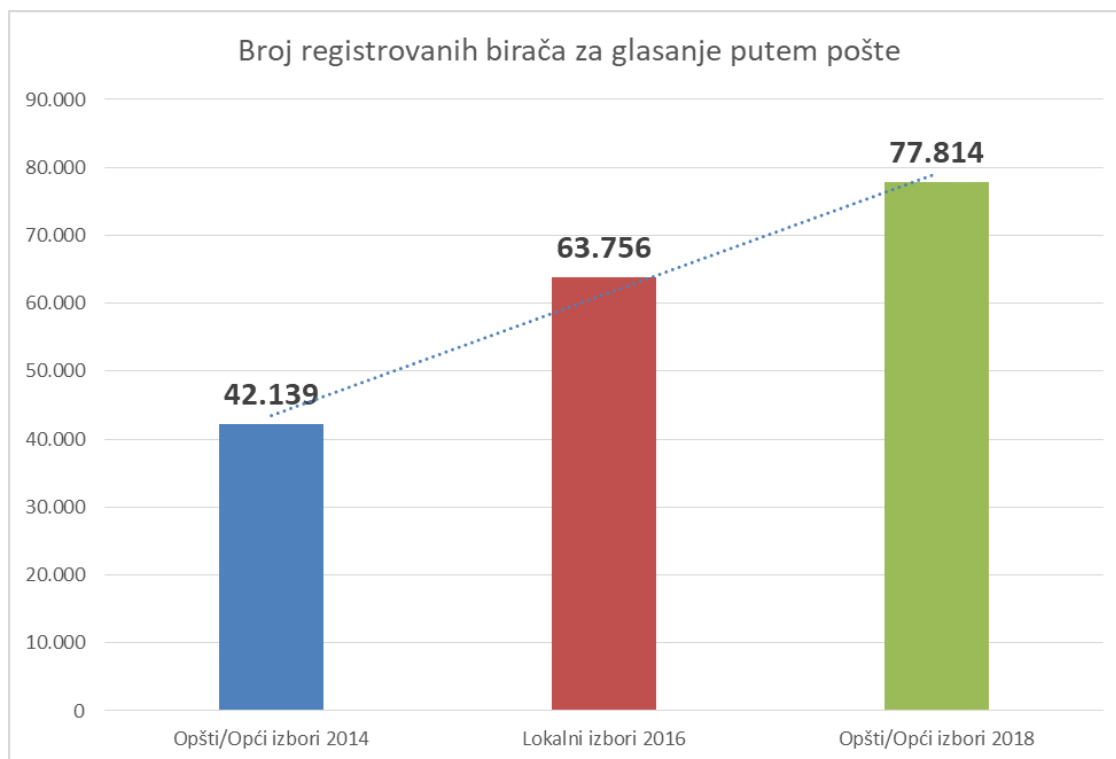
Most concerning is a massive misuse of citizens' personal data for the purpose of registering to vote by mail, without their knowledge. Several hundreds of similar cases were registered, and they were forwarded subsequently to the competent Prosecutor's Office by the Election Commission. The enormous increase in the number of voters registered to vote by mail, especially in some municipalities and towns in BiH, surely is a signal for the competent authorities to deal thoroughly with this problem. Unfortunately, the competent authorities in this case reacted slowly and the solution to this problem is still not in sight.

2.2.1. Misuse of personal data for the purpose of registration of voters to vote by mail

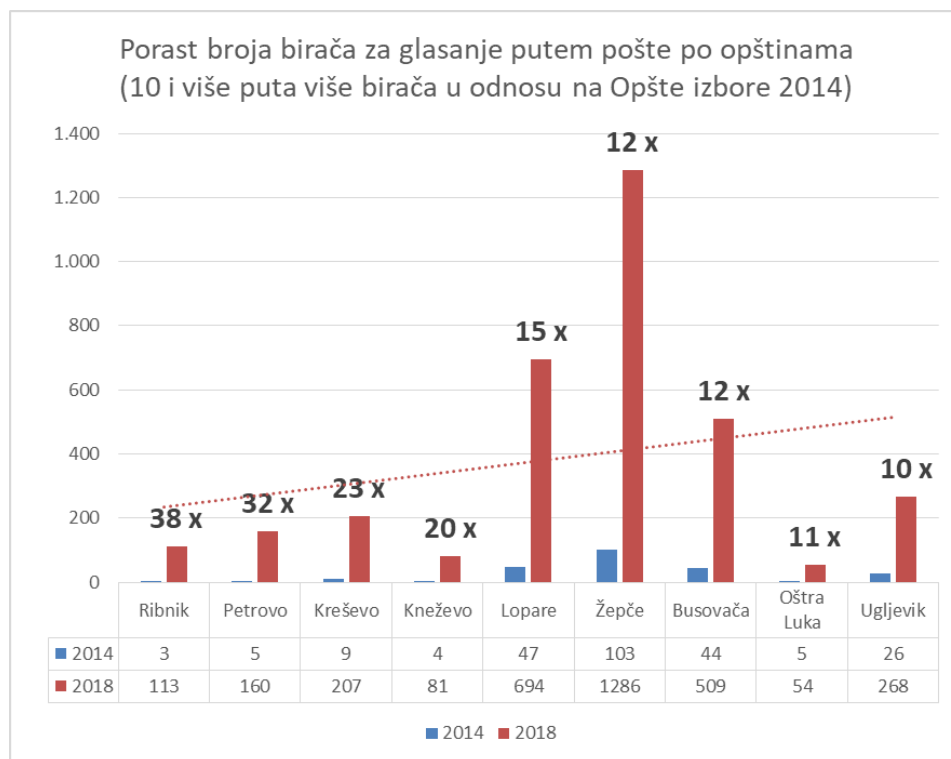
Almost 78, 000 voters are registered to vote by mail in the upcoming General Elections, which is the highest number ever in elections in BiH. CEC disapproved more than 9,000 applications for voting by mail on different grounds. Due to technical error, some citizens received wrong ballots for some levels of government for voting by mail.

The Central Election Commission of BiH (CEC) registered 400 cases of misuse of personal data and identity theft for the purpose of registering to vote by mail without the knowledge of the citizens. CEC forwarded the reports to the competent Prosecutor's Office, since this is a criminal act.

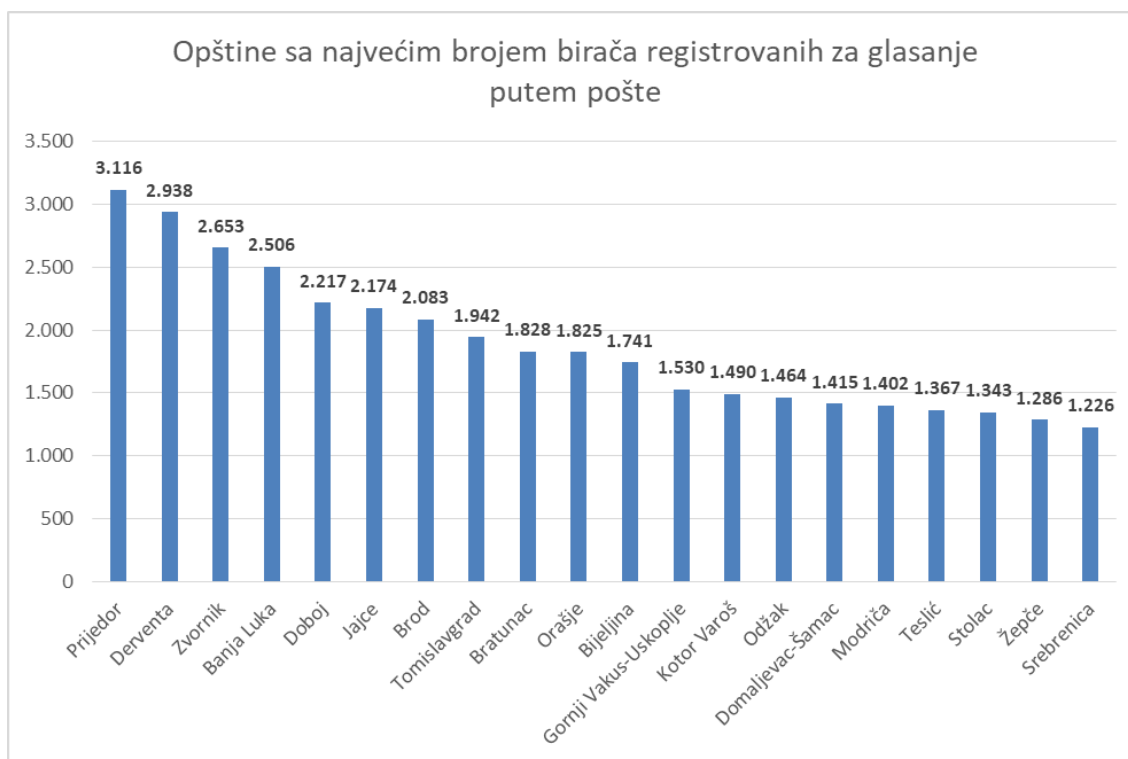
The Coalition Pod lupom received dozens of reports from citizens about the misuse of their personal data for the purpose of registering to vote by mail. The most notable example is the anonymous report from a group of persons from Lopare municipality saying that they personally participated in electoral fraud as instructed and under pressure from political subjects. Lopare is one of the most drastic examples of an enormous increase in the number of voters registered to vote by mail. The number of voters registered to vote by mail in Lopare municipality is greater by 15 times (more than 1,400%) compared to the 2014 General Elections – from 47 to 694 registered voters. Also, reports are coming from citizens in Vlasenica municipality. In total, in the two listed examples, it is more than 400 new cases of personal data misuse for the purpose of fake registrations for voting by mail. The number of voters registered to vote by mail almost doubled compared to the 2014 General Elections. Eventually, this number may very well affect the results of the elections.



A significant increase in the number of voters registered to vote by mail occurred in some municipalities and towns in BiH. Thus, the number of voters registered vote by mail in the 2018 General Elections compared to the 2014 General Elections increased: in Ribnik by almost 38 times, in Petrovo by 32 times, in Kresevo by 23 times, in Knezevo by 20 times and in Lopare by 15 times. An overview of the municipalities in which the number of voters registered for the 2018 General Elections increased by 10 times or more compared to the 2014 General Elections is presented below.



The greatest number of voters registered to vote by mail in the 2018 General Elections is registered in the following municipalities in BiH: Prijedor, Derventa, Zvornik, Banja Luka, Doboj, Jajce, Brod, Tomislavgrad, Bratunac and Orašje. An overview of the 20 municipalities/towns with the highest number of voters registered to vote by mail is in the chart below.



Personal data misuse for the purpose of voting by mail is not the only registered irregularity pertaining to voting by mail. In May and June, there were cases of 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. These profiles are believed to be connected to potential election fraud.

Also, there were numerous cases of political party activists pressuring BiH citizens in Croatia and Serbia to register to vote by mail, 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 partisan campaigns for voting by mail in other countries (Austria, Germany and Sweden).

All this implies that there is intentional manipulation of the electoral process to influence the result of the election. The only ones who have an interest in something like this are political subjects registered for running in the election, and those who instructed and perpetrated such operations criminal acts should be sought among them. It is concerning that the problem escalated and that it is impossible to control it.

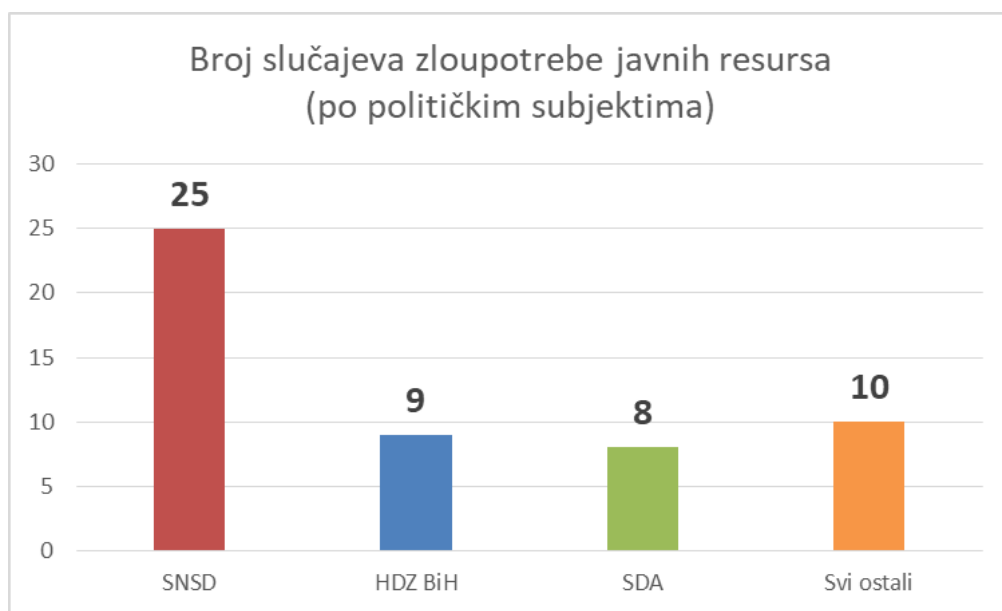
Unfortunately, voting by mail has been compromised and it is necessary to consider certain, perhaps even drastic, steps prior to the Election Day. Introducing additional security mechanisms to control the vote-by-mail ballots, such as cooperation with investigation and police authorities in other countries to determine the real legal residence of citizens registered to vote by mail outside BiH or to annual the voting-by-mail option are some realistic options that should be considered immediately.

2.2.2. Misuse of public resources and public office for the purpose of the campaign

Misuse of public resources and/or public office for the purpose of the campaign refers to misuse of public budget and other public funds and misuse of public companies and appointed public office functions by political subjects or individuals running in the elections. Almost always, the misuse of public resources occur by those who enter the race for various levels of government from the position of government.

76 cases of the misuse of public budgets, citizens' money, for the purpose of the campaign of certain political subjects. Of the total number, 52 cases (68%) refer to the misuse of public budgets, public companies or public office, and 24 cases (32%) refer to intensified public works across municipalities and towns in BiH.

Of 52 registered cases involving the misuse of public budgets, public companies or public office, the largest number of cases relates to: SNSD (25), HDZ BiH (9), SDA (8), DNS, PDA and SDS (2 each) then ASDA, Naša stranka, SDP and SP (1 case each), and the listed cases involving the misuse occur mostly in Republika Srpska.



It was registered that the Republika Srpska Government announced the increase of salaries in the health sector and the increase of pensions. One-time assistance was paid to all pensioners in Republika Srpska in amount of 100 KM. Besides, the RS Government decreased the tax base for calculation of salaries in RS and as a result all workers in RS received a salary increase (around 30 KM increase on the average salary in RS). These are blatant examples of cases involving the misuse of public budgets and powers by holders of public office.

Unfortunately, it is not regulated or prohibited in BiH to carry out such actions during the pre-election period, while in some countries it is prohibited to increase salaries in the public sector, social benefits, to introduce new social categories, to increase public spending on public works, new employment in public sector, etc., 60-90 days prior to elections.

As for other cases in this segment, there was open influence on the recruitment of interns in public companies through participation in the RS Government program. This unlawful influence was revealed in a form of a letter with the SNSD letterhead. The SNSD Berkovici misused a bus owned by Public Company Hidroelektrane na Trebišnjici (Hydroelectric Power Plan on river Trebisnjica) to organize an outing for SNSD's activists. Public Company "Putevi RS" (Roads RS), whose acting director Nenad Nešić is also the President of the DNS Regional Board used public funds to pave the courtyards of the Democratic People Alliance activists. Vlado Đajić, General Director of the RS University Clinical Center in Banja Luka and Gorsn Selak, Director of the Correctional Facility Banja Luka misused public office and supported publicly SNSD and SP and their candidates for the upcoming elections. The DNS Regional Office Opening in Banja Luka and Manjača was attended by public officials employed in the RS Government and National Assembly during the work hours. Secretary of the Pale Municipal Election Commission, Bozidar Novaković was noticed at the SDS regional meeting in Pale Municipality. Public promotion of the Socialist Party candidates was carried out at Public company Pošte Srpske in Bratunac.

Competitions for new employment were registered at the state level. Massive recruitment was also registered in some cantons in the Federation of BiH, for example, through the Program of co-financing and self-employment of persons up to 35 years of age in Sarajevo Canton.

Prime minister of the Federation of BiH Fadil Novalić sent out a letter to the pensioners in the Federation of BiH several days prior to the elections, explaining what has been done for the pensioners from the perspective of the FBiH government and calling on the pensioner population to vote for the political subject and candidates that he himself represents.

24 registered cases involving intensified public works across BiH during the pre-election period occurred in Banja Luka, Bijeljina, Bratunac, Gracanica, Ilijas, Kalesija, Kresevo, Kupres FBiH, Lopare, Osmaci, Pale RS, Prozor-Rama, Teocak, Tomislavgrad and Ugljevik.

Six (6) reports relate to SNSD, 5 to SDS, 3 to HDZ and current Mayor of Kalesija Municipality and the candidate of the Independent BiH list Sead Džafić, 2 to HDZ BiH, SDA and SDP and 1 to DNS. These cases most frequently include intensified construction works on public roads, water networks, building new objects and ceremonies for launching or completing public works in some municipalities and towns.

2.2.3. Illicit trading of positions on the polling station committees

The Election Law of BiH prescribes that the political subjects certified to participate in the elections may have only one representative on the polling station committee. Despite this clear provision, political subjects often reach to various means to have as many places as they can on polling station committees trading the places and/or paying for the places to those political

subjects that do not have an interest in having their members appointed to the polling station committees in a particular constituency. Dominance of one political subject and/or its cooperation with other members of the polling station committee aims to manipulate the election results in the polling stations. Coalition's observers reported about information and allegations of trading of places on the polling station committees in 34 municipalities/towns in BiH. It is about the following municipalities: Banjaluka, Bosanska Krupa, Bosansko Grahovo, Bratunac, Brčko Distrikt BiH, Busovača, Čelinac, Dobož, Dobož Istok, Goražde, Gračanica, Gradačac, Ilijaš, Istočna Ilidža, Istočno Novo Sarajevo, Kalesija, Kakanj, Livno, Mostar, Odžak, Petrovo, Prijedor, Rogatica, Rudo, Srebrenik, Srebrenica, Stari Grad Sarajevo, Stolac, Tešanj, Višegrad, Vitez, Zavidovići, Zenica and Živinice.

In Dobož, the independent candidate for the President of Republika Srpska Vojin Pavlović said that he would file a complaint with the Central Election Commission of BiH and Police Station Bratunac against SDS in Dobož for harassment and offers of money for positions on the polling station committees in the upcoming elections.¹

The Coalition Pod lupom sent to the BiH CEC the reports with evidence that trading of positions on the polling station committees occurred for the electorates in Konjic and Vitez. In the event of Konjic, CEC passed a decision to remove the person from the list of members of the polling station committee on the basis of being a candidate in the 2016 Local elections and not on the basis of the evident trading of positions on the polling station committees. In the case of Vitez, the Coalition has no findings of whether CEC undertook any actions in response to the report.

2.2.4. Illegitimate pressure on voters and vote buying

Coalition's observers reported 40 cases of illegitimate pressure on voters and/or vote buying. In addition, citizens reported additional 37 cases in which they personally witnessed this illegitimate pressure. Political parties that were reported for exerting illegitimate pressure on voters and for vote buying include: DNS, HDZ BiH, Mirsad Hadžikadić, Independent BiH List, NSRzB, SBB, SDA, SDP, SDS, SNSD, PDA and Socialist Party (SP).

During the rally in Gacko, SNSD's leader Milorad Dodik threatened that all those who vote for candidates of the Alliance for Victory would be fired. Also, the RS Government secured one-time financial assistance to pensioners and the president of Republika Srpska Milorad Dodik told publicly that this would help pensioners to get out and vote for SNSD. These are the cases of open threats and intimidation of citizens in the elections in BiH that have not been registered previously.

Employees in public and private companies experience threats of firing and intimidations on a daily basis if they do not vote for a certain political party.

¹ <http://dobojski.info/drustvo-i-politika/politika/item/22559-dobož-optužuje-sds-za-prodaju-mjesta-u-birackim-odborima>

Employees of "Vodovod" a.d. Banjaluka are under pressure to vote for SNSD. The Company's Acting Director Zoran Popović (the Chief of the SNSD Caucus in the City's Assembly) organizes closed meetings on the upcoming elections, as the only topic. The employees who are currently employed on the basis of contract of service have been told that if they wish to have permanent contracts they need to become members of the party and secure 50 votes; those who wish to extend contracts of service must secure 20 votes and those who choose not to become members but want to keep their current jobs must secure 5 votes. Also, employees are pressured to visit the SNSD pre-election rallies.

Free medical examinations for citizens are also organized. Dr. Vlado Đajić organizes free medical examinations in his private practice while SNSD's members are found at the front door distributing the promotional materials and calling on citizens to vote for SNSD in the upcoming elections.

Children at the Pediatrics Department of the Tuzla University Clinical Center of Tuzla received packages and "Certificates for Bravery" from members of the Movement for Democratic Action. The Certificate showed the PDA Tuzla official stamp and the message "Loved by your aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters from the PDA Tuzla".

Even though they are illicit, pressure on voters and vote buying in BiH elections have already become the usual practice as some of Bosniaks returnees witnessed lately in Zvornik. Information from August 30, 2018, says that the cost of a vote for Milorad Dodik, the current President of Republika Srpska, President of SNSD and a candidate for the Serb member of the Presidency of BiH is 70 BAM KM in Zvornik. Several Bosniaks returnees to Zvornik confirmed this information, under the condition of staying anonymous due to fear of retaliation.

Employees of Nova Banka in Banja Luka, whose President of the Management Board Milan Radovic is also the vice-president of DNS, were handed lists which they had to fill out with information such as name, surname, Local Ward to which they belong, a number of household members, along with a requirement to vote for DNS on Election Day. Also, the employees were instructed to take photos of the ballot. They were threatened that they would face consequences if they did not vote for DNS or the candidates of the coalition parties in the areas in which DNS does not have its candidates.

DNS Pale launched a project „Register of families with no working members”. SDS responded to this DNS's activity believing that DNS wants to obtain personal information of citizens to create records for the party by manipulating this vulnerable category of population.

During several weeks, representatives of SDS in Banja Luka paid house calls to their members bringing presents, which they promoted publicly on Facebook (<https://bit.ly/2MMvniil>).

Citizens in Breza received job offers in exchange for their votes. Promises range from “ bag on a doorstep”, donation of livestock to livestock farmers, to the promise that young people will get

jobs in their field of study through volunteering, etc.). In addition, there was a case of distribution of parcels to citizens with SDA logotype, and cases of donation of school supplies to students in Eastern Novo Sarajevo by an SDS candidate and to students in Dobož by the City Branch of the Socialist Party (SP) in Dobož. In these two cases, young minors were used for the purpose of the campaigns of the political subjects SDS and SP, which is prohibited.

2.2.5. Accuracy of the Central Voters Register (CBS)

The registration of voters in BiH has been passive since 2006, while the active registration is still in place for the voters, who vote outside Bosnia and Herzegovina. Total 3,352,933² of voters were registered in the Central Voters Register as of August 23, 2018. Refugees and persons who live abroad temporarily have the right to vote outside BiH. The deadline for registering to vote outside BiH was July 24, after which the BiH CEC registered 77,814 voters. The BiH CEC disapproved requests for voting outside BiH for total 9,098 voters on different grounds. Most of the requests were disapproved on the basis of a lack of a valid proof of identity (3,490), a lack of a proof of residence in BiH (2,349), and registration of multiple persons from the same address (1,358).

Accuracy of the Voters Register has been one of the issues ever since the 2016 Local elections because of the presence of a substantial number of deceased people on the voters register. The BiH CEC undertook certain steps to resolve this problem ahead of the 2018 elections, however, even though CEC is responsible for accuracy and updatedness of the register it is difficult to keep the register up-to-date without collaboration of other competent bodies in the chain of command. More than 5,000 deceased persons were deleted from the register as of May 8, when the Elections were called. Yet, there are still indications that the register contains a number of persons over the age of 100 (more than 8,000 persons) and who should have been deleted from the voters register.

In the case of the increased number of voters in electorates, Ravno Municipality registered a 5% increase compared to the total population in this municipality. The suspicion was raised about accuracy of the voters register in 22³ municipalities, mostly because of the presence of a certain number of deceased persons on the voter register.

2.2.6. Premature election campaign

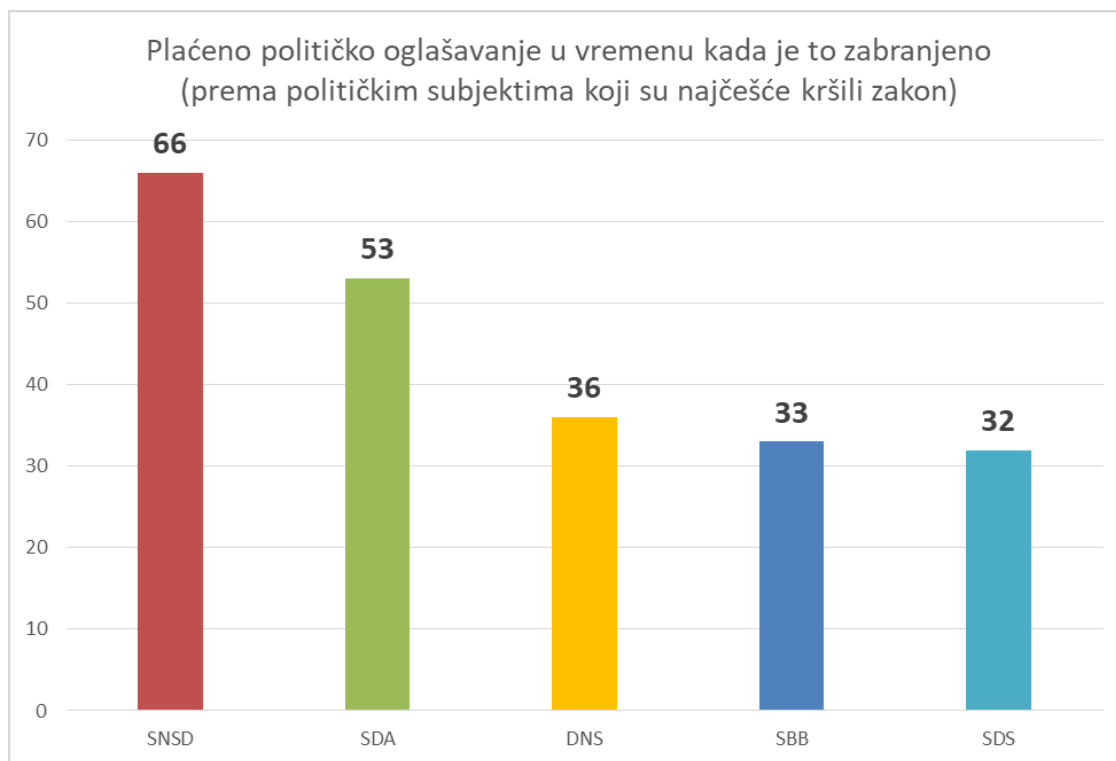
The Election Law of BiH defines the election campaign as a period starting 30 days prior to Election Day during which the political subjects inform the voters about their programs and candidates for the forthcoming elections. Election campaign for the 2018 General elections started on September 7, 2018. Any form of paid political advertising and pre-election activities

² Total number of voters in the Federation of BiH is 2,092,336; total number of voters in Republika Srpska is 1,260,597.

³ Domaljevac-Šamac, Donji Žabar, Pelagićevo, Banovići, Ključ, Ilijaš (around 140 deceased persons on the registry), Bosanska Krupa, Ravno, Vitez, Sapna, Odžak, Kalesija, Čapljina, Stolac, Stari Grad Sarajevo, Orašje, Donji Žabar, Živinice, Mostar, Ilijaš, Travnik, and Banja Luka where SDP expressed suspicion about accuracy of the voters register.

of the political subjects shall not be allowed except for the holding of internal gatherings of authorities and statutory bodies of the political subjects within the period between the day when elections are announced and the day of official start of the election campaign.

Yet, as in the previous election cycles, a considerable number of political subjects launch their activities, which can fall under prohibited election campaign. Coalition's observers registered 436 cases of premature election campaign carried out by 33 political subjects. The leaders in the number of premature campaign activities are the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) with 66 registered cases, followed by the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) with 53 cases, Democratic People's Alliance (DNS) with 36 cases, the Alliance for Better Future (SBB) with 32 documented cases. The cases refer mostly to paid advertisements on social networks and organization of public events (meetings, forums) to promote a political subject and/or candidate for the elections. The overview of the registered cases is attached to this Report.



The number of documented cases of premature election campaigns is three times higher compared to the 2016 Local elections. Unfortunately, sanctions for the prohibited premature election campaign are continually missing.

2.2.7. Irregularities reported to the Coalition Pod lupom

During the election period, the Coalition Pod lupom receives reports from citizens, representatives of political subjects, nongovernmental organizations and other interested parties via Coalition's web page or the toll-free number. Until the time of publication of this report, the

Coalition received 88 reports that are electoral irregularities in the opinion of those who reported them. The Coalition also received reports concerning personal data misuse for the purpose of voting by mail. The reported irregularities refer to the following: bribery (21 reports); premature election campaign (19 reports), voters register (16 reports), election campaign (10 reports), voting outside the country (6 reports with a considerable number of individual reports⁴); appointment of polling station committees (2 reports), hate speech (1 report); category “other” (12 reports). The Coalition Pod lupom analyses all reports and sends them, when applicable, to the competent authorities for further processing and informs citizens about their rights especially in the field of their suffrage and personal data misuse for the purpose of voting by mail.

2.2.8. Other irregularities

With respect to irregularities that cannot be classified under any previous categories, there was a case in which some highly positioned candidates of the political subject Democratic Front (DF) signed the contract on material relations between the Democratic Front (DF) and its candidates for all levels of executive and legislative government. This contract specifies that if a candidate leaves or is expelled from the party or joins the Caucus of another political subject and/or becomes an independent candidate during his/her elected office he/she is liable to pay the amount of 50 000 KM to party's account. These contracts are not democratic because mandate belongs to an individual not the party.

The Coalition Pod lupom also received a report about fake accreditations for alleged controllers of the work of the polling station committees on behalf of the Delegation of European Union in BiH. The concerning part of this phenomenon was the fact that those who instructed the making of these fake accreditations have intention to present themselves on Election Day as representatives of the international community.

2.3. The work of election authorities

With some smaller deviations in implementation of the preliminary activities and registered cases of violations of the election deadlines by CEC and local election commissions, the election authorities at the local level mostly adequately conducted the preparations for election administration. However, the events concerning the BiH CEC and incidents in some municipalities undermine citizens' confidence in election administration.

2.3.1. The Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina BiH (1)

The BiH Central Election Commission (CEC) is responsible to organize and to conduct elections.

⁴ Vlasenica Municipality: misuse of personal data for 34 persons, with statements of persons claiming that their data were misused; Lopare Municipality: a report filed anonymously by a group of persons because of the fear of retaliation – they personally participated in electoral fraud in which, as they claim, between 350 and 400 out of 694 voters registered to vote by mail are falsely registered, i.e. their personal data was misused.

On 8 May 2018, the BiH CEC passed a Decision on the announcement of the 2018 General Elections in BiH. Since the day of the announcement of the election, the BiH CEC held 42 sessions.

Recently, several cases shook the public confidence in the work of CEC. In February 2018, the working material of CEC concerning a potential model for filling the House of People of the FBiH Parliament after the Constitutional Court repealed the provisions of the Election Law referring to the case leaked in the public. Even though this was the working material, some media and political leaders saw it as an attempt to impose unconstitutional and discriminatory solution to this issue. However, the biggest harm inflicted on CEC's reputation is the fact that the working material leaked in the public, which can be seen also as an internal political or some other conflict that damages the credibility and public's confidence in this institution. In April 2018, some information emerged in the public about disappearance of 35.8 tons of paper procured for printing of ballot papers. The BiH CEC denied these allegations while appearing confused and providing contradictory information that failed to explain to the public the situation regarding the "disappeared" paper.

Some political subjects took advantage of the situation to bring into question regularity of the October elections. Currently, the Special Investigation and Protection Agency of BiH by order of the Prosecutor's Office of BiH is carrying out the investigation into the disappearance of dozens of tons of paper from CEC's warehouse. The last so-called affair regarding the work of CEC BiH occurred at the session on September 27, when a new president was elected during a turbulent session. Even though it was expected to elect the Serb representative, who did not perform this duty during the mandate, another Serb representative who previously performed this duty was elected despite the provision in the Election Law saying that this duty can be performed only once during the mandate. The injured party, the member the Election Commission, announced his complaint with the Court of BiH. Until the moment of publication of this report, we cannot verify if such complaint has been filed.

In implementing its regular activities, the BiH CEC mostly monitors and carries out the obligations set forth in the electoral calendar. In 19⁵ basic election units, the election commissions did not receive the overview of the political subjects certified by CEC by August 5, 2018, which was the deadline.

In addition to novelties and improvements with respect to organization of Election Day (point 3.2 of this Report), in the 2018 elections, the BiH CEC approached more seriously to the training of presidents and members of the polling stations and members of municipal/town election commissions. This was done by creating a *Uniform methodology for preparing a plan and program of training for members of the polling station committees in BiH*, and the supporting

⁵Brčko Distrikt BiH, Čapljina, Centar Sarajevo, Grude, Hadžići, Ljubuški, Neum, Novi Grad Sarajevo, Novo Sarajevo, Sanski Most, Šekovići, Široki Brijeg, Stolac, Vareš, Velika Kladuša, Zavidovići, Zenica, Žepče and Živinice

implementing documents. This methodology anticipates a unified training for members of municipal/town election commissions and members of the polling station committees as well as an exam after completion of the training. The exam for members of the polling station committees is foreseen to take place five days after the training while municipal/town election commissions are required to conduct additional training for presidents of the polling station committees and their deputies. Successful completion of the exams is a requirement for all members of the polling station committees prior to their employment on Election Day.

Coalition's observers participated in a regional, mandatory education for presidents and members of municipal/town commissions in Sarajevo, which was organized by CEC BiH, and which was assessed by the observers as a well-organized and beneficial education.

2.3.2. Local election commissions (143)

2.3.2.1. Composition and work of local election commissions

While observing the pre-election period of the 2014 General Elections, the Coalition noted that even though local election commissions worked in line with the Election Law and procedures, their work was not systematically organized, and it often happened that sessions were unannounced and without agenda, etc. CEC recognized the same and in May 2016 adopted the *Instruction on method of work and reporting of the election commission of a basic constituency in BiH*, which more closely regulated the work of the local election commissions. Among other things, the Instruction set forth the adoption of Rules of Procedure by local election commissions, which was fully observed by all local election commissions in BiH. The Instruction also envisions that local election commissions may appoint secretary and/or technical secretary, which was done by 69 (48%) local election commissions, which is likely to contribute to the quality of election administration in their areas. The majority of local election commissions carried out adequate preparations for elections. From July 23 to October 1, 2018, local election commissions held 889 sessions.

All member of the local election commissions were present at 767 sessions or 86.27% of the total 889 sessions, while all members were not present at 122 sessions. Besides, a number of telephone sessions took place.

All local election commissions operate in full capacity. The composition of the election commissions, according to the provisions of the Election Law BiH and Law on Gender Equality, must reflect gender representation of at least 40% of underrepresented gender, which was observed in 91.6% of local election commissions. It was recorded that election commissions in 12 municipalities⁶ did not meet the gender requirement.

⁶ Bosanski Petrovac, Bosansko Grahovo, Domaljevac - Šamac, Glamoč, Krupa na Uni, Kupres (RS), Novi Grad Sarajevo, Novo Sarajevo, Petrovac, Široki Brijeg, Stolac and Zvornik.

Government at the local level is required to secure conditions for the work of the election commissions. In terms of the working conditions of the election commissions of the basic constituency, it was registered that 11 elections commissions⁷ faced problems in their work, such as inadequate premises or equipment.

Coalition's observers report that the Voters Register Centers in all municipalities/towns are available to the citizens, except in Ključ, where the Municipal Election Commission assumed respective duties and in Bosansko Grahovo, where a person was not appointed as a substitute for a worker on sick leave.

2.3.2.2. Observance of deadlines

One of the election commissions' requirements is to designate number and type of the polling stations by the deadline set in the calendar of electoral activities. The vast majority of local election commission designated the number and type of the polling stations by August 3, while 9⁸ of them failed to do so.

With regards to observance of other deadlines set forth in the electoral calendar, 21⁹ municipal/town election commissions failed to assign the positions on polling station committees to the political subjects by August 8. In other words, they failed to carry out a draw for members of the polling station committees thus violating the deadline of this activity. Some of them claimed that they received approval from the BiH CEC to prolong the draw. In more than a half of municipalities and towns in BiH, the political subjects failed to submit their proposals for members of the polling station committees by August 15. According to information from these election commissions, the BiH CEC prolonged the deadline to August 20. This situation raises a question of why there are deadlines if they are violated without any consequences or prolonged by CEC's decision, which then affects other activities of the local election commissions.

The deadline for the training of the polling station committee members is October 5, 2018. Until the time of publication of this Report, 120 LECs completed the training for all members of the polling station committees; the training is ongoing in 22 municipalities and the plan is to complete the training before the deadline, while information is missing for one municipality. Coalition's observers participated in 111 training sessions for the polling station committee members, which they assessed with the average grade – good-very good.

During the reporting period that covers 10 weeks of reporting, Coalition's observers learned that 29 objections were filed with local election commissions, of which 28 address the General Elections and one refers to the appointment of the members of the Local Ward Council.

⁷ Election commissions in Bosansko Grahovo, Donji Žabar, Glamoč, Eastern Mostar, Livno, Maglaj, Pelagićevo, Ribnik, Sokolac, Usora and Vukosavlje.

⁸ Čapljina, Čitluk, Gračanica, Ilijaš, Ljubinje, Mrkonjić grad, Novi Grad Sarajevo, Novo Sarajevo and Velika Kladuša.

⁹ Election commissions in Berkovići, Bosansko Grahovo, Busovača, Čelić, Doboju Jug, Dobretići, Donji Žabar, Drvar, Eastern Mostar, Jajce, Kreševo, Kupres (RS), Milići, Novi Grad, Ribnik, Srbac, Teočak, Tešanj, Tomislavgrad, Usora and Vogošća.

Coalition's observers have mostly positive experiences in working with local election commission. Some problems in communication with observers (which mainly concern the failures to provide notice of sessions) were reported in only 14 out of 143 local election commissions.

2.4. The Media, Civil Society and the Citizens

2.4.1. Media reporting

The long-term observers of the Coalition Pod lupom monitored the reporting of local and regional media. The observers registered cases of reporting bias in the media that mostly, either positively or negatively report on certain political subjects and convey inappropriate language of public office holders or candidates for the elections.

There were 58 cases of potential hate speech, inciting ethnic, religious, racial and other intolerance, inflammatory rhetoric, inappropriate symbols or calls to violence.

The observers from 10 municipalities reported that the media were under pressure from public officials and/or political subjects. It is about the following municipalities: Grude, Istočna Ilidža, Istočno Novo Sarajevo, Mostar, Novi Grad Sarajevo, Petrovo, Stari Grad Sarajevo, Velika Kladuša, Zenica and Žepče.

Most troubling are the attacks on journalist in August or earlier during the year. The attempt to murder the BN TV reporter Vladimir Kovačević is the most drastic example of attack on the freedom of media. Journalist Mira Kostović and her husband were threatened by the Acting Director of the Public Company Putevi RS and president of the DNS Regional Board Nenad Nešić. The Coalition Pod lupom in the harshest terms condemns the attacks on journalists and calls on the investigation authorities to sanction the instructors and perpetrators of these crimes. There are no free and fair elections without freedom of the media.

On September 7, the Coalition Pod lupom and its partners BH Journalists and Boram Agency started monitoring the media reporting that would cover 30 media outlets and 40 days of media reporting, including 30 days of the election campaign and additional 10 days after the election day. The first preliminary media monitoring report was presented on September 26 at the press conference in Sarajevo. More detailed findings will be presented as part of the Final Report on media monitoring, which will be presented in November.

2.4.2. Civil society and citizens

Coalition's observers reported four cases of pressure and attacks to which they were exposed. The latest example points to arrogance of BiH politicians who think they are untouchable.

On September 26, 2018, Coalition's observer visited the HDZ BiH pre-election rally in Tomislavgrad, at the primary school in Seonice. He was photographed upon arrival. The photograph got to the former long-term observer of the Coalition Pod lupom who forwarded the photo to the current observer. At the end of the rally, the observer noticed that the current minister of finance in Canton 10 Government (Livno), Stipan Šarac arrived at the event in the official vehicle. The observer photographed the vehicle as evidence of misuse of public resources for the purpose of the election campaign.

A day later, on September 27, the same observer visited the HDZ BiH pre-election rally in Tomislavgrad, at the Primary School in Eminovo Selo. The observer introduced himself as the observer of the Pod lupom Coalition. Soon after that, the current Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport in Canton 10 (Livno) Petar Galić (the HDZ BiH candidate for the House of Representatives of FBiH Parliament from Constituency 12) threatened him saying that he would have broken his phone at yesterday's event if he had seen him taking a photo of his official vehicle. He pointed to the direction of the official vehicle and said "Take the photo now if you dare".

Verbal attacks on Coalition's volunteers occurred during street activities in Banja Luka and Eastern Novo Sarajevo (supporters of Soros, you destroyed this country, you will be expelled, your end will come soon). In August, the Pod Lupom posters were destroyed ten minutes after being displayed in Tomislavgrad.

The Pod lupom Coalition will do everything to protect its observers in the field. Once again, we call on political subjects and citizens to adhere to the law and refrain from any kind of pressure on the Pod lupom observers. We call on public office holders to adhere to the election rules.

There were attempts of negative impact on the freedom of assembly and expression of citizens' will. Milorad Dodik, the President of Republika Srpska on several occasions emphasized that the freedom of assembly and expression of citizens' will who are gathered around the "Justice for David" group should be inhibited because the group is illegal, and he disapproved of citizens gathering to show support to the badly beaten BN TV reporter Vladimir Kovačević.

On Friday, August 17, 2018, the police attempted to ban citizens' rally, which was not related to elections but to the local issue regarding the construction of a mini hydroelectric power plan Kruščica in Vitez municipality. It is known that there was an incident there last year on August 24 after the special police forces of Central Bosnia Canton apprehended several persons who protested against the construction of the mini hydroelectric power plant. Several persons were injured too.

3. About the 2018 General Elections

3.1. Brief information about the 2018 General Elections

The 2018 General Elections in BiH will take place on Sunday, October 7, 2018 for the following levels of authority:

- Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- National Assembly of Republic Srpska;
- President and Vice President of Republika Srpska; and
- Assemblies of Cantons in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As laid down by the law, the electoral system in BiH is a combination of electoral systems, i.e., depending on the body that is being elected, we distinguish:

- System of simple majority;
- System of an-open list proportional representation.

The system of simple majority is used in electing:

- Members of the Presidency of BiH (from constituent peoples);
- Election of President and Vice Presidents of Republika Srpska (one president and two vice presidents from constituent peoples).

The system of an-open list proportional representation is used in electing the following:

- House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH (42 members);
- House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (98 members)
- National Assembly of Republika Srpska (83 members)
- Cantonal assemblies in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (10 assemblies)

The BIH CEC certified 69 political subjects, 34 independent candidates, 36 coalitions and over 7,500 candidates for participation in the elections. 3,352,933¹⁰ citizens of BiH, who were registered in the Central Voters Register as of August 23, 2018, will have the right to vote on October 7.

77,814 voters are registered to vote outside Bosnia and Herzegovina.

3.2. What are some novelties that we can expect in 2018 elections?

¹⁰ Total number of voters in the Federation of BiH is 2,092,336; total number of voters in Republika Srpska is 1,260,597.

In the 2018 elections there will be several novelties concerning the organization of Election Day and/or Election-Day procedures. The BiH CEC passed a Decision to introduce a translucent ballot box, to reduce the height of voting booths and to disclose publicly the names of members of the polling station committees including the political subject that appointed them. These are 3 out of 10 Coalitions recommendations for better elections concerning the changes to the Election Law of BiH.

In order to prevent misuse of pens used by the polling station committees on Election Day, the Rules on a method of implementing the elections in the part concerning the filling out of the forms in a polling station was modified. The modification implies the use of a red-ink pen for filling out the forms at the polling station, while voting is done with a blue-ink pen.

However, Coalition's report on the 2016 local election provides a set of recommendations for improvement of the electoral process. Among other things, the Coalition especially advocated for introduction of translucent ballot boxes for all government levels to prevent certain types of irregularities concerning the voting process and to increase the already shaken public's confidence in administration of elections on Election Day. Further on, reducing the height of voting booths to the level at which the secrecy of voting will be protected but any irregularities during the voting process (taking photos, multiple voters in a booth, taking out and/or replacing ballots) would be prevented. In order to reveal illicit trading of positions on the polling station committees, the Coalition advocated for a public disclosure of names and surnames of all members of the polling station committees including the information on the appointing political subject so that other political subjects, observers and citizens have insights into the composition of the polling station committees and the opportunity to react toward the election administration authorities if they observe that trading of positions on polling station committees has occurred. In Coalition's opinion the novelties and changes are positive steps toward improving the election process.

Moreover, changes and amendments to the Election Law of BiH in April 2016 adopted some retrograde changes regarding the increase of intra-party threshold for winning a mandate. According to the changes, the intra-party threshold for local elections i.e. election to representative bodies at the local level was raised from 5% to 10%. This threshold for the General elections was raised from 5% to 20%. In Coalition's opinion these changes imply closed candidate lists, i.e. reduction of voters' influence on the election of their representatives into representative/ legislative bodies, while increasing the influence of political parties on selection of personnel that will be elected. These changes are also in disharmony with the standards of good practice and recommendations of the Venice Commission regarding the intra-party threshold, where a moderate threshold is considered to be every threshold within 5-10% range, while those lists with a 15% threshold or above are in fact considered to be closed list.¹¹

4. Methodology of the long-term election observation

¹¹ [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD\(2015\)001-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD(2015)001-e)

The Coalition Pod lupom observes the overall electoral process in BiH – all phases of the electoral process since the day the elections are announced until the implementation of the election results and formation of government. Therefore, the Coalition organizes long-term election observation to observe the overall electoral process and to be able to provide a complete picture of a broad spectrum of election-related activities, not only of Election Day.

The Coalition Pod lupom monitors the 2018 General Elections in BiH through 7 regional offices and 63 long-term observers in the field who cover all basic constituencies in BiH, 143 of them. The long-term observers monitor the work and sessions of all municipal/town election commissions, the activities anticipated in the electoral calendar and observance of deadlines and electoral irregularities and they educate Election-Day observers, more than 5000 of them. The long-term observers report on their activities on a weekly basis, and to date they sent 1,430 regular reports on key findings regarding their observations. The long-term observers' reports are the backbone of this preliminary report.

As of September, the Coalition has additional 42 observers in the field. They are responsible to monitor the promotional activities of political subjects within a 30-day period of the election campaign and to report on the election campaign. To date, the observers of the election campaign visited 363 pre-election rallies of political subjects.

Besides monitoring the work of municipal/town election commissions, the Coalition also monitors the work of the BiH CEC, which has been Coalition's regular activity since Coalition's formation in 2014.

5. About the Coalition Pod lupom

The Coalition for free and fair elections – Pod lupom was formed in May 2014 with the goal to implement the project of citizen, nonpartisan observation of the 2014 General elections. The Coalition is composed of six¹² BiH nongovernmental organizations. Its primary activity is to observe elections. So far, the Coalition observed the 2014 General Elections and the 2016 Local elections, early elections in eight municipalities, the first elections in the newly formed municipality Stanari and the recall procedure for the mayor of Lukavac municipality. More than 5,500 observers were hired in all of the mentioned elections. In addition, the Coalition conducts research and produces international comparative analysis, monitors sessions of the Central Election Commission of BiH, organizes roundtable meetings and conferences bringing together representatives of executive and legislative authorities, election administration officials, international and academic community, as well as representatives of the media and civil society. The Coalition implements education and training for young first-time voters in order to motivate

¹² Centers for Civic Initiatives, Citizens' Association "Democracy-Organizing-progress", Prijedor (DON Prijedor), Institute for Development of Youth and Community "Perpetuum Mobile" Banja Luka, Center for Civic Cooperation Livno (CGS Livno), Incubator of social innovations "Munja" (Munja Inkubator) and Forum of Tuzla Citizens (FGT Tuzla)

and encourage them to take active part in the election process. 30,000 young people across BiH were educated through this activity.

Since 2016, the Coalition Pod lupom has implemented media monitoring in election process in cooperation with the Association BH Journalists and BORAM Agency.

Coalition's activities during the pre-election period focus on monitoring the work of the election authorities, voter registration process, (pre)election campaigns of political subjects, reporting and responding to irregularities. Nonpartisan, citizen observers will be the backbone of monitoring on Election Day. They will report objectively and timely about the election process. During the post-election period, the Coalition monitors objections and complaints about the election process, formation of newly elected bodies of authority in BiH and the Coalition will provide recommendations in the form of a report to advocate for improvement of the legal framework and electoral legislation in BiH.

The activities of the Coalition are implemented through a three-year project BASE (eng abbr. Building Accountability and System in Elections). The BASE project is funded by the European Union (EU), while additional funding was provided by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The overall goal of the BASE project is to contribute to improving the quality of the election process in BiH, in line with international standards and best practices, encouraging active participation of citizens in the observation of elections and advocating for improvements of the electoral legislation.



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