**Voting with problems, turnout at 51 %**

At the press conference held at 23:00 hrs in Sarajevo, the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections “Pod Lupom” informed the public on the observers' access to the polls, opening of the polls, voting process and closing of the polls, and the critical incidents observed at the polling stations.

The Pod Lupom Coalition has today together with 85 civil society organizations and informal groups monitored the Election day deploying 2 600 citizens, non-partisan observers to the polls across the country.

98% of the Coalition’s observers were allowed unhindered access to the polling stations to which they were assigned. The problem with access was present at 59 polling stations, the majority of which were located in Doboj and Banja Luka. This problem was resolved in 51 cases, while in 8 cases the Coalition observers did not continue their observation. Initially, the observers were not allowed into the polling station under the pretense of inability to comply with the epidemiological measures; however, they were subsequently allowed the access. This tells us that the observers were not allowed the access because of arbitrary actions of the polling station committee.

In 87.5% of the cases, all members of the polling station committee were present at the polling stations at 6:00 hrs.

In 96% of the polling stations, it was observed that the polling stations were organized according to the Instruction on Operation of the Election Management Bodies on the Election Day in the Context of the Covid-19 Pandemic issued by the Central Election Commission of BiH.

It raises concerns that every third polling station in the country did not display the list of the polling station committee members with the name of the political subject for each member of the committee, even though this was an obligation.

Some shortage of election materials was recorded at 3.9% of the polls, while ballots were not hand-counted at 2.2% of the polls.

At 99.4% of the polling stations, the ballot box was shown to be empty prior to the opening of the polls.

Total of 83.3% of the polls were opened at 7:00 hrs, while the remaining polling stations opened after up to one-hour delay. Three polls opened after a delay of more than one hour: 103B017 in Vlasenica, 123B009 in Han Pijesak and 173A001 in Čapljina.

Secrecy of the voting was ensured at all polling stations; the voting booths were set up in a way that no one could see how other person voted. Secrecy of the voting was compromised in Prijedor, where voting booths were placed next to a window allowing others to see the voting process. The situation was resolved after this case was reported by one of the Coalition’s observers. Such situation was also recorded in Bratunac; however, it was resolved after observer’s reaction.

Until 22:30 hrs, total of 196 critical incidents were recorded. The vast majority of the critical incidents refer to not allowing the observers to monitor the election process (60), various types of voting irregularities (45), shortage of election materials (18).

Adding extra votes was recorded at the polling station 136A032 in Centar Sarajevo Municipality. The latest critical incidents relate to the vote counting process, i.e., pencils were observed at the vote counting desks in three polling stations -133A008 Novi Grad Sarajevo, Sanski Most and Tomislavgrad.

More than ten cases of family voting were registered at nine polling stations – in Trnovo FBiH, Maglaj, Srebrenik, Brčko District of BiH, Ilijaš, Gradačac, Živinice, Hadžići and Milići.

The polls closed mainly in line with the regulation. 98.9% of the polls closed at 19:15 hrs, while the remaining 0.8% closed with up to one-hour delay. At 2.3% of the polls that were not closed on time, the citizens lined up outside the polling stations at 19:00 hrs were not allowed to vote even though the regulations provide differently. At almost all polling stations, all members of the polling station committees were present at the closing time.

At 99.4% of the polls, Pod Lupom observers have unimpeded access to monitor the vote counting process.

This is the first time that the Pod Lupom Coalition monitors voter turnout. The registered voter turnout in the 2020 Local elections in BiH by 19:00 hrs was at 51% (margin of error+/- 1.07% on .95 confidence interval).

The Pod Lupom Coalition received around 100 citizens’ reports on election-day irregularities. The vast majority of these reports relate to inability of persons who tested positive for Covid-19 or persons in isolation to exercise their right to vote, reports from citizens who found out that they were registered to vote by mail without their knowledge, reports on promotional materials in the vicinity of a polling station, violations of election silence, reports on vote-buying or pressure on voters. It was reported that a voter in East Novo Sarajevo found out that someone had already signed next to his name on the excerpt from the Central Voters' Register.

Pod Lupom will present the information on the election-day process, determining of election results and preliminary assessment of the election day at a press conference scheduled for tomorrow (November 16, 2020) at 11:00 hrs, at Hotel Holiday in Sarajevo.