

# Key findings of the observation of the Local Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2024.

Coalition for Free and Fair Elections "Pod lupom"



## General assessment of the Local Elections in BiH 2024.

- The 2024 local elections in BiH were generally successfully conducted, with recorded cases of violations of election rules, isolated incidents, and challenges in the voting and counting processes.
- The integrity of elections was improved through amendments to the BiH Election Law (28 recommendations of the Coalition "Under Scrutiny" were fully or partially implemented).
- The testing of new technologies was judged extremely successful.

## PRE-ELECTION PERIOD



- The election campaign was more peaceful and local topics were discussed to a greater extent in the campaign (at 90.7% of the observed pre-election rallies).
- Amendments to the Electoral Law of BiH brought positive changes, including the ban on premature campaigning, more precise regulations on the abuse of public funds and resources, a significant increase in monetary sanctions and the improvement of election administration, with an emphasis on the election of presidents/deputy presidents of election committees.
- 1,367 potential election irregularities were recorded in the pre-election period, the key ones being: premature campaigning and paid advertising during the ban, misuse of public funds and irregularities in the formation of election committees.

## ELECTION DAY



- The election day took place in the largest number of polling stations in accordance with the election rules, and the testing of new technologies was successfully implemented.
- The process of voting and counting votes at regular polling stations where new technologies were not piloted was rated worse compared to previous elections (possibility of influencing the election result at 3.8% of polling stations).
- 149 critical situations (serious violations) were recorded on the election day, such as irregularities in the voting process, lack of election materials, prohibition of observation and pressure on voters, all of which were successfully resolved, and 74 remarks in the minutes of the work of the election committees.
- Repetitions of "traditional" election irregularities such as family voting, returning voters from polling stations because they are not on the Statement from the CBS and abuse of voting assistance were recorded.
- Observed extreme values: in 3.8% of BM, a turnout greater than 75% was recorded, while in 8.3% of BM, more than 10% of invalid ballots for the assembly/council were recorded.



10 years of operation of the Coalition "Pod lupom"



22 observation missions in BiH



150,000+ people directly participated in the activities of the Coalition



16,000+ engaged observers



60,000+ educated pupils and students



# Key findings of the observation of the Local Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2024.

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**1480**

reports of irregularities received

**159**

sanctions imposed

Every tenth report results in a fine

**859,500 KM**

in total imposed sanctions

**442**

reports submitted by the Coalition "Pod lupom"

**88**

sanctions imposed based on reports from the Coalition

35 financial sanctions

53 decisions by which 59 persons were removed from election committees

**162,500 KM**

in total imposed sanctions based on the reports of the Coalition "Pod lupom"

**269**

still not considered (some submitted in July 2024)

**3,000 KM**

minimum sanction for a political subject

**30,000 KM**

maximum sanction for a political subject

**15,000 KM**

maximum sanction for the candidate

**5,405 KM**

is the average amount of the sanction imposed by the CEC of BiH

Average multiple offenders could be sanctioned up to 12 times the amounts prescribed by the Election Law of BiH

Although sanctions began to be imposed more often, they do not have a deterrent character

## NEW TECHNOLOGIES



- Several new election technologies were piloted in the 2024 Local Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina: ballot scanners and results transmission, electronic voter identification and video surveillance at the polling station.
- The piloting of the ballot scanners was rated successful at 97.9% of observed BMs, where the process of voting and counting votes was better compared to regular BMs, with an average scanning time of both ballots of 44.9 seconds and an average result transfer time for both levels (with preferential votes) of 92.6 seconds.
- Electronic voter identification was successfully tested on election day - the percentage of voters who were successfully identified using the new technology was 96.6% (311 out of 322 voters who voted on average at the polling station).

## POST-ELECTION PERIOD



- The Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina passed orders on the recount of ballots for a total of 186 BM, and rejected the requests of the Coalition "Under Scrutiny" for the counting of ballots for 442 BM and votes by mail in 3 basic electoral units.
- Failure to comply with new legal provisions on the display of party propaganda material in certain municipalities and cities.
- Juggling the electoral will of citizens and political games with assigned mandates (261 relinquishment of mandates).

## PROTECTION OF ELECTION RIGHTS



- A 4.5 times higher number of reports of election irregularities and more pronounced sanctions were observed.
- Insufficient sanctions for electoral irregularities that are not of a deterrent nature or the absence of sanctions for proven electoral irregularities.
- Absence of a priority selection system for dealing with reports of electoral irregularities and uneven sanctioning practices - especially multiple offenders who are not punished progressively and with the strictest sanctions.

# Recommendations for improving the electoral process in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Coalition for Free and Fair Elections "Pod lupom"

## PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE ELECTION PROCESS



**INTRODUCE NEW  
TECHNOLOGIES TO ALL  
VOTING PLACES**



**ADEQUATELY SANCTION  
ELECTORAL IRREGULARITIES**



**PUBLICLY ANNOUNCE THE  
CENTRAL VOTER LIST**



**CREATE A BASE OF NON-PARTY  
PRESIDENTS AND DEPUTY  
VOTERS COMMITTEE**



**SIMPLIFY THE ACCREDITATION  
PROCESS OF OBSERVERS**

1

### **INTRODUCE NEW ELECTION TECHNOLOGIES AT ALL POLLING POINTS**

Introduce electronic voter identification and ballot scanners at all polling stations for the 2026 BiH General Election.

2

### **SANCTION ALL ELECTION IRREGULARITIES TIMELY AND ADEQUATELY**

All proven electoral irregularities must be sanctioned (pressure on voters, misuse of public funds and resources, irregularities in voting and manipulations during vote counting). Multiple offenders must be progressively punished in order to deter them from violating election rules with the most severe sanctions.

3

### **PUBLICLY ANNOUNCE THE CENTRAL VOTER LIST**

Extracts from the Central Voters' List should be publicly published and available to all citizens on the website of the Central Election Commission of BiH, as required by the Election Law of BiH, in accordance with the principles of protection of citizens' personal data. The central voter list should be revised periodically by the electoral bodies, that is, by the competent institutions.

4

### **CREATE A BASE OF TRAINED NON-PARTY CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENTS AND DEPUTY PRESIDENTS OF ELECTION BOARDS**

Non-partisan presidents of election committees and their deputies should be elected and trained in the non-election period, starting in 2025, in order to establish a base of non-partisan persons as potential presidents and deputy presidents of election committees.

5

### **SIMPLIFY THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS OF NON-PARTY ELECTION OBSERVERS**

The process of accreditation of non-party observers (observers of citizens' associations) should be simplified and allow them easier access to polling stations in such a way that the identification of accredited non-party observers is carried out at polling stations based on the list of accredited observers delivered in a timely manner by the Central Election Commission of BiH, and the previous accreditations should be abolished or redesigned and taken over at polling stations when observers approach a certain polling station.



# Recommendations for improving the electoral process in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Coalition for Free and Fair Elections "Pod lupom"

## OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE ELECTION PROCESS

54

fully or partially implemented recommendations of the Coalition "Pod lupom" for the improvement of the electoral process in BiH so far

42

recommendations after the 2024 Local Elections

for legislative authorities  
for the courts, prosecutor's offices and the police  
for election administration

You can find all the findings and recommendations of the Coalition "Pod lupom" in the Final Report on the civil, non-partisan observation of the 2024 local elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the link: <https://podlupom.org/biblioteka/izvjestaji-o-posmatranju-izbora/finalni-izvjestaj-o-gradanskim-nestranackom-posmatranju-lokalnih-izbora-2024-godine-u-bih/>



## FOR LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITIES



Ensure the inclusiveness and transparency of the electoral reform in BiH through government institutions, implement the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, as well as the Constitutional Court of BiH, encourage gender equality and improve the Electoral Law of BiH. Also, it is necessary to introduce deadlines for the formation of authorities at all levels, revise electoral units and depoliticize the electoral process, as far as possible under the current circumstances.

## FOR ELECTION ADMINISTRATION



The Central Electoral Commission of BiH should more effectively deal with reports of electoral irregularities and violations of the provisions of the BiH Election Law, in accordance with its competences, increase transparency and improve the training of the election administration. It is also necessary to sanction observed abuses and ensure better supervision of the work of local election commissions.

## FOR THE COURTS, PROSECUTOR'S OFFICES AND THE POLICE



Process electoral irregularities and crimes committed in the electoral process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, prevent pressure on voters and increase the transparency of information on objections and appeals submitted to the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## NEW TECHNOLOGIES



Given that over 100,000 citizens signed a petition for the introduction of new electoral technologies, and that 83% of citizens support their introduction on election day, it is necessary to secure financial resources in time, prepare the implementation of electronic voter identification and ballot scanning, and provide education and equipment maintenance.

## OTHER TECHNICAL ASPECTS



Ensure accessibility to all polling stations for persons with disabilities, improve technical support during elections and increase public availability of aggregated results.