

32nd SESSION

Report
CG32(2017)16final

Observation of local elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2 October 2016)

Monitoring Committee

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Summary

Upon invitation by the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Congress deployed a 32-member delegation – including twenty Congress members, two members of national associations and five members of the EU Committee of the Regions – to observe the local elections held on 2 October 2016. A pre-electoral visit was organised in Sarajevo from 7 to 9 September 2016. On Election Day, twelve Congress teams visited some 250 polling stations throughout the country.

The local elections on 2 October 2016 took place against a background of ethnic tensions following the 25 September 2016 referendum in Republika Srpska on the national day of the entity. Widespread political discourse focusing on ethnic issues including nationalistic attitudes was promoted during the electoral campaign.

¹Chamber of Local Authorities / R: Chamber of Regions
EPP/CCE: European People's Party Group in the Congress
SOC: Socialist Group
ILDG: Independent Liberal and Democratic Group
ECR: European Conservatives and Reformists Group
NR: Members not belonging to a political group of the Congress

Voting was held – with the exception of a few violent incidents – in a calm and orderly manner overall. The Congress notes improvements with regard to the system of “tendered ballots” that had been reformed prior to the elections as well as to the amendment to the Election Law that provides for a 40 per cent quota of the underrepresented gender on candidates’ lists for Municipal Councils.

The Congress recommendations include the recurring issue of quality of voters’ lists as the process of updating the lists needs to be improved and the situation of voters living de facto abroad should be clarified as out-of-the-country voting involves a higher risk of electoral fraud. Moreover, the lack of professionalism and the politicisation of the election administration remains a matter of concern and there is a clear need to reduce the influence of political parties, avoid trading in positions and overhaul the conditions of appointment and dismissal of members of commissions at all levels. More generally, transparency and integrity of the process should be reinforced by implementing existing legislation on electoral fraud and violations as well as misuse of administrative resources.

The Congress reaffirms the need for concrete measures to strengthen democracy at grassroots’ level in all entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this respect, the situation in the city of Mostar remains a major concern as no local elections could be held on 2 October 2016. It is critical to find a suitable and sustainable solution to the current deadlock affecting local democracy in Mostar.

RECOMMENDATION 399 (2017)²

1. Following the invitation by the President of the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to observe the local elections held in the country on 2 October 2016, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities refers to:

a. Article 2, paragraph 4 of the Committee of Ministers' Statutory Resolution (2000)1 on the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe;

b. the principles laid down in the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ETS No. 122) which was ratified by Bosnia and Herzegovina on 4 April 2000;

c. Congress Resolution 395(2015) on its Rules and Procedures.³

2. It reiterates the fact that genuinely democratic local and regional elections are part of a process to establish and maintain democratic governance and observation of political participation at territorial level is a key element in the Congress' role as guardian of democracy at local and regional level.

3. The Congress notes with satisfaction that the local elections on 2 October 2016 were held – with the exception of a few violent incidents – in a calm and orderly manner by and large, despite widespread political discourse focusing on ethnic issues including nationalistic attitudes.

4. It recognises that the electoral management was well-organised overall and – with some exception - transparent and efficient at all levels of administration. In particular, the implementation of the so-called “correct counting” procedure by municipal election commissions contributed to progress with regard to the reliability of the tabulation process.

5. It acknowledges that the revision of the system of so-called “tendered ballots” – both in terms of limitation of the categories of voters with access to this system and practical management – enabled the election administration to handle these ballots in a more transparent manner than in previous elections.

6. It welcomes the amendment to the Election Law with respect to a 40 per cent quota of the underrepresented gender on candidates' lists for Municipal Councils since this marks a significant progress for female participation in the elections at grassroots level.

7. However, it is concerned about the situation of local democracy in the City of Mostar where again no elections were held on 2 October, and calls upon all political stakeholders to find a suitable and sustainable solution to the current deadlock.

8. It also points to the remaining politicisation of the election administration and the alleged unlawful practices with regard to the composition of election commissions as matters of concern.

9. In light of the above, the Congress suggests further improvements be made in respect of the electoral legislation and the practical side of electoral management and therefore invites the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to:

a. revise the conditions of appointment and dismissal of members of polling stations commissions in order to avoid trading of positions on these commissions and achieve de-politicisation of the election administration;

2. Debated and adopted by the Congress on 30 March 2017, 3rd sitting (see Document [CG32\(2017\)16](#), explanatory memorandum), rapporteur: Stewart DICKSON, United Kingdom (R, ILDG).

3 See, in particular, Chapters XVIII and XIX on the practical organization of election observation missions and on the implementation of the post-electoral dialogue.

b. improve the quality and accuracy of voters lists by systematically verifying the actual permanent residence of voters and removing deceased voters from the lists;

c. ensure that female participation is de facto guaranteed and female mayors and councillors are given the opportunity to remain in office for the duration of the term they have been elected for;

d. improve the implementation of existing legislation on electoral fraud and violations of regulations related to campaign and party financing as well as to misuse of administrative resources in order to ensure that effective and appropriate sanctions are applied;

e. enhance the level playing field for all candidates, in particular by ensuring that all candidates can fairly access the media during the election campaign.

10. Furthermore, the Congress invites the Bosnian authorities to address the issue of voters residing de facto abroad but still registered on voters lists. In this respect, the Congress highlights the importance of a “genuine link” that should exist between the voters and the municipality where he/she cast his/her ballot as stated in Resolution 378(2015).

11. With regard to the lack of clear-cut responsibilities for and financial difficulties of local self-government units, the Congress reaffirms the need for concrete measures to strengthen democracy at grassroots level and to empower accountable and competent local elected representatives in all entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM⁴

1. Introduction

1. Following an invitation by the President of the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Ahmet ŠANTIĆ, dated 1 June 2016, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities observed the local elections held in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 2 October 2016⁵. These local elections were held after the adoption of amendments to the Election Law on 27 April 2016.

2. The election observation mission took place from 28 September to 3 October 2016 and comprised 32 members including twenty Congress members, two members of national associations, five members of the EU Committee of the Regions and Matej Gombosi, Congress' expert on observation of local and regional elections. Stewart Dickson (United Kingdom, ILDG) served as Head of the delegation and Rapporteur. On Election Day, 12 teams visited some 250 polling stations throughout the country and observed the voting as well as the counting process.

3. A pre-election visit was organised in Sarajevo from 7 to 9 September 2016. The delegation composed of four Congress' members, headed by Stewart Dickson (United Kingdom, ILDG) assessed the preparatory phase of the electoral process and the political climate prior to the elections.

4. Further details, programmes and deployment areas of the Congress' delegation as well as the preliminary conclusions presented at the press conference on 3 October 2016 in Sarajevo can be found in the appendices.

5. The following report focuses specifically on issues arising out of exchanges held with Congress' interlocutors in the context of the local elections held on 2 October 2016 and on observations made by the members of the delegation in the field on Election Day.

6. The Congress wishes to thank all those who met the delegation for their open and constructive dialogue. It thanks the Bosnia and Herzegovinian authorities as well as Toni Pavloski, acting Head of the Council of Europe Office in Sarajevo, and his team for their support in preparing the election observation mission.

2. Political and institutional context

7. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a federal state comprising two entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS)⁶. It also includes the Self Governing Brčko District that was granted a special status under international arbitration and through a Constitutional amendment adopted in 1999.⁷

8. Bosnia and Herzegovina has been granted the status of potential candidate to the EU in June 2003 and has signed a number of agreements with the EU since then. Most recently, a Stabilisation and Association Agreement was signed with the EU in 2008 and entered fully into force on 1 June 2015. On 15 February 2016, Bosnia and Herzegovina has submitted its official application to join the EU.⁸ On 20 September 2016 the Council of the European Union asked the EU Commission to prepare an opinion on the country's membership application.⁹

⁴ Prepared with the contribution of Matej Gombosi, International expert, Slovenia.

⁵ The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities has observed local elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1997, 1998, 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012.

⁶ Sarajevo is the Capital City of BiH and the Federation of BiH. The official Capital City of Republika Srpska is Istocno (East) Sarajevo, but de-facto Banja Luka serves as Capital City of the entity.

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⁸ <http://www.ohr.int/ohr-dept/legal/laws-of-bih/pdf/001%20%20Constitutions/BH/BH%20Amendment%20I%20to%20BH%20Constitution%2025-09.pdf>

⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/detailed-country-information/bosnia-herzegovina/index_en.htm

9. The institutional set-up at local level differs in both entities, including the competences and resources of local authorities. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided into 10 autonomous Cantons, which constitute the intermediate level of Local Self-Government. The lower level of Local Self-Government is composed of 78 Municipalities and Cities. In Republika Srpska, 63 Municipalities and Cities constitute the basic Local Self-Government Units. There is no intermediate level of Local Self-government in Republika Srpska. Cities in both entities can be divided into Municipalities.

10. As already identified through the monitoring of the implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-government, the complex territorial structure associated to the lack of clarity in competences leads to difficulties in decision-making at all levels and limits coherence and efficiency of policy-making and its implementation.¹⁰ In the absence of clear-cut responsibilities for local self-government, financial difficulties are a key issue and the Congress reaffirms the need for local authorities to receive sufficient financial resources commensurate with their powers and responsibilities. Overall, the situation of local and regional democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina did not really improve since the monitoring visit according to the Congress' interlocutors. According to the Venice Commission, there is still a clear need for constitutional reform which is "indispensable since present arrangements are neither efficient nor rational and lack democratic content."¹¹

11. In November 2016, new provisions of the law of Republika Srpska on Local Self-Government¹² entered into force.¹³ The changes included a decrease in local administration staff in proportion to the number of inhabitants. Moreover, the National Assembly of Republika Srpska was entrusted the right to dismiss Municipal Councils if they are not constituted within 6 months after the confirmation of election results. The law also included first steps in fostering financial autonomy of local authorities but a law dedicated to financing of local authorities in Republika Srpska was under consideration at that time.¹⁴

12. On 2 October 2016, local elections were held in regard to 131 Mayors of Municipalities and 10 City Mayors in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including 74 Municipal Councils and four City Councils in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as 57 Municipal Assemblies and six City Assemblies in the Republika Srpska. Additionally the elections of the Assembly of Brcko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina were scheduled on the same day.

13. The last local elections were held in Bosnia and Herzegovina in October 2012. In general, the Congress concluded that the 7 October 2012 local elections were well-prepared, conducted in an orderly manner and organised in accordance with the European standards for democratic elections. The Congress also concluded that "the recommendations made by the Congress on the observation of local elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 5 October 2008 [had] been largely implemented and led to improvements".¹⁵ However, the tendered ballot system and voters' registration procedures, political pervasion of Polling Station Commissions and assisted voting were still some of the issues to be addressed.

14. The situation of local democracy in the City of Mostar remained of particular concern in 2016.¹⁶ In 2010, the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina decided that the electoral law and the City Statute of Mostar had to be amended as voting rights were not equal for all voters living in Mostar.¹⁷ On-going negotiations between local political stakeholders over the necessary amendments did not

10 Recommendation 324 (2012)1, Local and regional democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, March 2012.

11 Opinion on the Constitutional situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the powers of the High Representative, European Commission for Democracy through Law, March 2005.

12 http://www.paragraf.ba/propisi-republike-srpske/zakon_o_lokalnoj_samoupravi.html

13 The law on Local Self-Government was initially adopted 2004 but was substantially amended in 2013. The amendments entered into force in 2016.

14 According to Lejla RESIC, Minister of Administration and Local-Self Government of Republika Sprska the Congress met in Sarajevo.

15 <http://bit.ly/22tPW19>

16 The 2012 report of the Congress' Monitoring Committee is available at: <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?p=&id=1919969&Site=COE&direct=true>

17 Amicus Curia Brief for the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina on certain provisions of the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina, of the Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of the Statute of the City of Mostar, European Commission for Democracy through Law, October 2010

lead to a favourable outcome since then, despite the involvement of the international community. No local elections have been organised in the City since 2008 and the former Mayor still administered current affairs without a City Council. On 2 October 2016, the absence of local elections in the City of Mostar affected approximately 100,000 voters.

a. Ethnicity in the General Framework for Peace

15. The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina – the so-called Dayton Agreement – was initialled in Dayton on 21 November 1995. It ended the war in Bosnia and established the principles and the legal structure of BiH including its division into two entities. The Dayton Agreement furthermore provided for the creation of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) and the Office of the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina¹⁸. The High Representative was given broad powers including imposing legislation and removing officials.¹⁹ Even though the initial mandate of the High Representative, Valentin INZKO, was to end in 2009, it was prolonged by the PIC. The High Representative also acts as the EU Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina.²⁰ Twenty years after the Dayton Agreement, some officials – in particular in Republika Srpska – regularly put in question the legitimacy of the Peace Treaty, the continued international supervision as well as the central state.^{21 22}

16. Ethnicity is a major factor in the political system of BiH and the political landscape is very much divided along ethnic lines. The so-called constituent peoples are Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats – the remaining ethnic groups are subsumed under the group of “Others”. The distribution of positions among the constituent peoples is a central element of the 1995 Dayton Agreement and the ethnic composition of the country needs to be reflected at all levels of public administration.^{23 24} In this context, a large part of the political debate focuses on issues related to ethnicity. According to some of the Congress’ interlocutors, political forces advocate in favour of strengthening the ethnic criterion notably by establishing ethnic quota in Parliament. The ethnic divide in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the lack of a crosscutting Bosnian identity remain therefore a matter of concern.

17. The ethnic criterion to stand for election has been judicially challenged several times on the ground that it is considered to be discriminatory. In 2009, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) made a decision related to “Sejdic and Finci cases vs. Bosnia and Herzegovina” and most recently on 9 June 2016, the ECHR made a similar decision in the case “Ilijaz Pilav vs. Bosnia and Herzegovina”. The applicants contested their ineligibility to stand for election, respectively to the House of Peoples and the Presidency of the country because they did not meet a combination of ethnic and residence requirements. The Court ruled in favour of the applicants, considering the respective Constitutional and legal provisions as discriminatory. The related Constitutional and legislative amendments are still awaited.

18. Of specific relevance for the local level is the judgment of the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina on Serbian representation in the City Council of Sarajevo. The Court decided that all three constituent peoples and others should be “given minimum guarantees for the participation on the City Council (each 20%) irrespective of the election results since that is the only way to respect the principle of constituent peoples in the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina”. The Court therefore declared the contested Statute of the City of Sarajevo unconstitutional, as it only granted Bosniaks and Croats a minimum participation and subsumed Serbs under “Others”. There is no constitutional imperative to a minimum representation of the Constituent Peoples in local representations, but when a City Statute enacts an ethnic quota, it must not be discriminatory against one of the ethnic groups.

18 <http://www.ohr.int/?lang=en>

19 http://www.ohr.int/?page_id=1161

20 <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/europe/balkans/bosnia-herzegovina/198-bosnias-incomplete-transition-between-dayton-and-europe.aspx>

21 Forty-ninth report of the High Representative for Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina – United Nations Security Council – April 2016

22 <https://epthinktank.eu/2014/01/09/republika-srpska/>

23 Amicus Curia Brief for the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina on certain provisions of the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina, of the Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of the Statute of the City of Mostar, European Commission for Democracy through Law, October 2010

24 As an example, the country has a three-member Presidency, including one Croat, one Bosniak and one Serb. The Presidency Chairperson rotates every eight months.

b. Referendum held in Republika Srpska on 25 September 2016

19. Long-standing tensions between Republika Srpska and the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina had been particularly stimulated in the last years and continuing statements by officials of Republika Srpska calling for secession had been recorded.²⁵ These statements included considerations over a referendum on the entity's status in 2018.²⁶

20. In 2015 already, the authorities of Republika Srpska decided to hold a referendum²⁷ on the legitimacy of international and state institutions with jurisdiction over Bosnia and Herzegovina in its entirety.²⁸ Despite the approval of the National Assembly and the Constitutional Court of Republika Srpska to hold the referendum on 15 November 2015, it was cancelled due to international pressure and an inner lack of consensus between Bosnian Serb parties.²⁹

21. In this context, in November 2015 the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina had declared the annual holiday of Republika Srpska unconstitutional as it was discriminatory against non-Serb residents of the entity³⁰. In disregard of the judgement, in July 2016, the National Assembly in Banja Luka decided to call for a referendum on that particular issue. Despite the temporary ban on the referendum approved by the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina in September 2016, the referendum was still held on 25 September 2016, a week ahead of the local elections. The turnout was of 55.67% and an overwhelming majority (99.81%) voted in favour of maintaining 9 January as the entity's National Day.

22. By holding such referendum against the ruling of the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the authorities of Republika Srpska made clear that they did not consider themselves bound by decisions made by state institutions with jurisdiction over Bosnia and Herzegovina in its entirety. The High Representative Valentin INZKO condemned the holding of such referendum, calling it a serious violation of the Peace Agreement and of the rule of law.³¹ However, he did not use any of his formal powers to intervene in this matter.

c. 2013 population census

23. One of the major long-term political issues in the country was the publication of the results of the 2013 population census. Indeed, in a country where ethnicity is fundamental to the building of the political system, the accuracy of the population census is critical. However, despite the fact that the Dayton Agreement specifically provided for a post-war census, the last census available was conducted in 1991.

24. A new population census was carried out in October 2013³² and the data gathered was to be initially released in February 2015. However, a methodological conflict between the statistical agencies of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its entities – and beyond those, political leaders – delayed the publication.³³ After continuing disagreement over the methodology, the Statistical Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina published the data in June 2016 without the consent of the Institute for Statistics of Republika Srpska. According to the final assessment of the International Monitoring Operation (IMO)³⁴ carried out in October 2016, the census was conducted in compliance with international standards and recommendations.³⁵

25 <http://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sc12353.doc.htm>

26 <http://www.ohr.int/?p=96460>

27 The question of the referendum was planned to be phrased as: "Do you support the unconstitutional and illegal imposition of laws by the High Representative of the international community and in particular the imposed law on the Court and the Prosecutor's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the implementation of their decisions in the territory of Republika Srpska?"

28 <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnian-serbs-set-date-for-disputed-referendum-09-25-2015>

29 <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnian-serb-leader-puts-controversial-referendum-on-hold--02-09-2016>

30 The National Day of Republika Srpska marks not only the anniversary of the foundation of the entity in 1991 but is also an Orthodox religious holiday, which is the basis of the ruling.

31 <http://www.ohr.int/?p=96512>

32 <http://www.popis2013.ba/index.php/en/>

33 <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/disputes-delay-publication-of-bosnia-census-11-04-2015>

34 Established by the European Commission in 2009 with representatives from Eurostat, European Commission Directorate-General NEAR, Council of Europe, United Nations Statistics Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and United Nations Population Fund.

25. The 2013 census had no effect on the 2016 elections as the Election Law still referred to the 1991 census. However, among other features, the published data illustrated a 19% drop in the overall population in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well drastic as changes in the ethnic composition of the entities. Bosniaks now form the majority with 50.1% of the population.³⁶

3. Electoral management

a. Legal framework and electoral system

26. Elections are primarily regulated by the Election Law on Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted in 2001. Amendments to the law were adopted in April 2016, only six months prior to the elections, thus challenging the Central Election Commission with regard to the implementation of the law.³⁷ The most important amendments adopted in 2016 included a gender quota of at least 40% of candidates from the underrepresented gender on candidates' lists. Special bank accounts for campaign financing were also made mandatory for all candidates. Additionally, amendments introduced provisions on special trainings for Presidents and Deputy Presidents of Polling Station Commissions as well as regulations as to the gender balance in these commissions. Despite these changes, civil society organisations considered that the issue of professionalization and de-politicisation of Polling Station Commissions was still a major issue in Bosnia and Herzegovina and needed further reform.³⁸

27. With regard to the electoral system, Mayors are directly elected by a simple majority first-past-the-post system (plurality system). However, in the Brčko District, East Sarajevo and the City of Sarajevo, Mayors are indirectly elected by the respective District Assembly and City Councils.

28. For Municipal Councils in all entities, the electoral system in use is the proportional representation in multi-member constituencies. There is a 3% threshold to participate in the process of allocation of seats. Mandates in Municipal Councils are then allocated to the candidates' lists according to the Saint-Laguë³⁹ method, which is a highest quotient method using successive quotients for each list.⁴⁰ Mandates won by a list are then distributed among candidates on the list. Mandates should be first distributed among candidates who individually received at least 10% of the votes, from the candidate who received the highest number of votes to the candidates who received the lowest number. If some mandates are still to be allocated to the same list, they are distributed among candidates who received less than 10% of the votes, according to their rank order on the list. All Municipal Councils of Municipalities which form a City elect a City Council through a proportional representation system.

b. Election administration bodies

29. The election administration is a three-level structure headed by the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) who was chaired by Ahmet ŠANTIĆ when the 2016 local elections were called.⁴¹ The election administration also includes Municipal Election Commissions (MECs) and Polling Station Commissions (PSCs).

30. The CEC is composed of seven members appointed for a seven-year term, including two Croats, two Bosniaks, two Serbs and one representative of the "Others". In 2016, only one of the seven members was a woman. The President is elected amongst members of the CEC: one Croat, one Bosniak, one Serb and one representative of the "Others" shall each serve as President on a rotating

35 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/electoral-assistance/-/final-assessment-of-the-international-monitoring-operation-for-the-2013-population-and-housing-census-in-bosnia-and-herzegovina>

36 The census of population, households and dwellings in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013 Final Results (2013 Population Census) published in June 2016 by the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is available at: <http://www.popis2013.ba/popis2013/doc/Popis2013prvolzdanje.pdf>

37 An unofficial consolidated version of the Election Law can be found at https://www.izbori.ba/Documents/documents/English/Laws/Election_Law_of_BiH-eng.pdf

38 <http://europa.ba/?p=42594>

39 The total number of votes received by parties becomes divided by an increasing divisor (1, 3, 5 etc.). The results (quotients) are ranked from highest to lowest number, which determines the sequence of the allocation of seats. This process is followed until all seats are allocated. The number of votes for an independent candidate is the quotient for that candidate.

40 Article 13.5 of the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina

41 Like other institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Central Electoral Commission Presidency functions on a rotating basis. Ahmet ŠANTIĆ is representing the Bosniak people

basis, once in seven years for a period of 21 months.⁴² MECs and PSCs are also required to be multi-ethnic, reflecting the representation of the Constituent Peoples and the “Others” in the respective electoral districts according to the last census.

31. According to most interlocutors of the Congress’ delegation, the Central Election Commission organised Election Day in an efficient and timely manner. However, late amendments to the Election Law as well as some unclear procedures created some uncertainties and challenged the election administration.

32. One of the new features of the election management was the implementation of a new procedure for the so-called “correct counting”. For the first time, Municipal Election Commissions were responsible for verifying the mathematical correctness of results forwarded to them by the Polling Station Commissions. This procedure was already enshrined in the Election Law of BiH but was never fully implemented by the CEC.⁴³ According to the CEC, it aimed at increasing the efficiency and transparency of tabulation as potential mistakes could be identified at an earlier stage in the process.

33. As in previous elections, politicisation of the election administration remained a major concern in 2016. The limited number of PSCs members in many polling stations (from 3 to 7 members) as well as the possibility to appoint and dismiss them at any time during the process lead to some manipulation. In particular, political contestants – who cannot, by law, have more than one representative per PSC – allegedly traded PSC positions in order to gain a *de facto* majority in some polling stations. Such unlawful practice could potentially influence vote counting and undermined the independence of the election administration. According to some of the Congress’ interlocutors, publishing the names of PSC members and regulating the conditions of their appointment and dismissal could reduce significantly the risk of such trading of positions.

c. Voter registration and voters lists

34. A total of 3,263,906 voters were registered in the Central Voters’ Register including 65,111 by-mail voters.⁴⁴ All BiH citizens registered in the Central Voters’ Register⁴⁵ had the right to vote in person in the Municipality of their permanent residence. Voters residing abroad were allowed to cast their ballot out of the country upon registration with the Central Election Commission but were also entitled to vote if in the country on Election Day. Polling stations were organised in diplomatic representations of Bosnia and Herzegovina abroad for about 25 000 voters.⁴⁶

35. The Central Voters’ Register is an electronic database recording data of all citizens who have the right to vote.⁴⁷ It is continuously updated from official records on permanent and temporary residence of citizens provided by different State institutions and maintained by the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The registration of voters was closed 45 days prior to Election Day.⁴⁸

36. The accuracy of voters’ lists remains a matter of concern in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In particular, a number of deceased voters were still included in the voters’ lists and discrepancies between the number of inhabitants given by the 2013 census and the number of voters who casted a ballot on 2 October 2016 rose questions in some Municipalities. The process of updating the lists still needs to be overhauled in order to guarantee their accuracy and limit the risk of manipulation.

37. The system of “tendered ballots” (also called “unconfirmed ballots”), which cause many difficulties with regard to the election management in previous elections, was reformed.⁴⁹ The system was indeed limited to two groups of voters on 2 October 2016: voters who initially registered to vote

42 Article 2.6 of the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina

43 Article 2.13 (7) of the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina

44 <https://www.izbori.ba/default.aspx?CategoryID=183&Lang=6&Id=1933>

45 With the exception of citizens serving a sentence imposed by a Court in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia or a Court of a foreign country.

46 According to the interlocutor from the CEC the Congress’ delegation met in Sarajevo during its mission.

47 Article 3.1 and 3.2 of the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina

48 Article 2 of the Rulebook on Maintaining and Using the Central Voters’ Register

49 The ballot paper is placed in a small unmarked envelope which is itself placed in a bigger envelope containing the identity details of the voter. The tendered ballots are counted separately after the voter’s voting rights are verified by the Central Election Commission.

out of the country but were actually in the country on Election Day and voters who could not be found on the voters' lists and were registered on a special voters' list upon presentation of a proof of residence. Moreover, the tendered ballots were not anymore in use in all polling stations but only in one polling station in each electoral district. The verification and counting of tendered ballots was also centralised in one counting center managed by the Central Election Commission in Sarajevo. The reform of the "tendered ballots" system had concrete positive impact on the overall election management. The Congress could observe on Election Day that voting in polling stations dedicated to tendered ballots ran smoothly overall.

38. However, the fact that voters residing de facto abroad could also vote in person in the country on Election Day brought risks of electoral fraud. Indeed, according to some Congress' interlocutors, out-of-the-country voting was organised through mail ballots, thus increasing the risk of personification and other kind of manipulation. Indeed, the CEC received reports on potential fraud related to out-of-the-country voting: stolen ID cards were allegedly used in neighbouring countries to request mail ballots. Therefore, the CEC transmitted some complaints to the Prosecutor General. However, the system does not include sufficient safeguards despite the implementation of measures to limit the risk of fraud.

39. Moreover, the right of voters residing abroad to vote in local elections – there is no regulation related to the duration of the stay abroad – is at odds with Congress' Recommendation on Electoral lists and voters' residing de facto abroad.⁵⁰ According to this Recommendation, the Congress highlights that a "genuine connection" must exist between voters and the country where he/she casts a ballot at local level.

40. Other cases of manipulation in voters' registration were reported to the Congress' delegation. The main reason why some political parties encouraged voters to register in other Municipalities is related to ethnicity. Moreover, as a results of the long-standing deadlock regarding elections in Mostar, the delegation heard that some political parties allegedly encouraged voters to register in Municipalities other than where they were actually residing, and in particular in areas close to Mostar.

41. The CEC informed the delegation that sanction and investigation procedures into irregularities or violations of the Election Law are an on-going issue. In general, investigations with regard to attempts of electoral fraud including vote buying are lengthy and undermine the effectiveness of the sanctioning mechanism. It was reported to the Congress' delegation that procedures related to irregularities that occurred during the 2014 general elections were still on-going.

d. Registration of parties and candidates

42. A total of 30,351 candidates have been registered for the 2 October 2016 local elections by 84 political parties and 59 coalitions. There were 330 independent candidates competing for the position of Mayor and 16 lists of independent candidates competing for Municipal Councils.⁵¹

43. In general, there are two steps in the process of candidates' registration for local elections.⁵² First, candidates had to certify their eligibility with the Central Election Commission. The criterion is to be recorded in the Central Voters' Register in the Municipality in which he/she is standing for office. Then, each candidates' list – be it a list from a political party or a list of independent candidates – had to register with the Central Election Commission by submitting signatures voters supporting its application and its bank account details for campaign financing. All candidates shall pay a deposit, which is to be refunded if the list wins more than 3% of the votes in the election for Municipal Councils and one third of the votes for Mayors.

44. Regarding female candidates, the situation differs according to the type of elections considered. A rise in the number of female candidates in mayoral races was reported: in 2016, 26 female candidates run for the position of Mayor, which is an increase compared to the 2012 local elections.⁵³ In the 2016 local elections, 238 candidates' lists out of 2,105 were led by women.

50 Recommendation 369 (2015) and Resolution 378 (2015) on Electoral lists and voters residing de facto abroad adopted by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities on 13 March 2015.

51 <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnian-electoral-commission-published-candidates-list>

52 Chapter 4 of the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina

53 In 2012, there were five women among 143 elected Mayors.

45. Regarding Municipal Councils, a gender quota prescribes a minimum of 40% of the underrepresented gender on each candidates' list. However, according to the Congress' interlocutors, the efficiency of the gender quota for the Municipal Councils was limited by the preferential voting system. Indeed, voters can choose to rank candidates on the list, thus undermining the chances of women candidates to be elected. Moreover, after the 2012 local elections, there were reports of elected women who resigned in exchange of another job and were replaced in office by men from their list.

46. Capacity building programmes were organised by various organisations for candidates from the Roma community and female candidates.⁵⁴ A pre-electoral assistance programme in view of the 2016 local elections was also implemented by the Council of Europe and aimed at enhancing the general participation of women in these elections and in particular as candidates.⁵⁵

e. Election observers

47. The electoral process was observed by a large number of international and citizen ("domestic") observers. According to the CEC almost 70,000 observers (including about 300 international observers) were present in the country on Election Day. The accreditation process was managed in a smooth and timely manner by the CEC.

48. The main organisation of citizen observers was a coalition of six NGOs called "Pod Lupom" ("Under the Magnifying Glass"). The NGO Pod Lupom already observed several elections in the country in the past. For the 2016 local elections, they had over 3,000 observers in the field on Election Day and 42 long-term observers monitoring the election campaign.

4. Campaign and media environment

a. Election campaign

49. The election campaign for the 2 October 2016 local elections started on 2 September and ended with a 24-hour silent period. Most of the campaign activities and communications were suspended and media stopped covering political and electoral campaign activities within a 24-hour period prior to Election Day.⁵⁶ It was also forbidden for them to release results of opinion polls within a 48-hour period.

50. In general, general issues overshadowed the local election campaign. Indeed, against the background of the referendum in Republika Srpska, local issues have been hardly discussed by the major political parties during the election campaign. Instead, ethnicity remained a very important issue during the election campaign in both the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Republika Srpska. At local level in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina though, new and/or small parties could still campaign on specific local issues.

51. Despite the presence of some independent candidates at local level, party affiliation – which generally reflects ethnicity – was still a very important feature regarding voters' choices. A large number of independent candidates were also said to be backed by major political parties.

54 In particular by the NGOs Romalen and One World Platform and by the Centrale Election Commission.

55 For more information, see <http://www.coe.int/en/web/electoral-assistance/bosnia-and-herzegovina>

56 Article 16.11 of the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina

b. Media

52. Despite the diversity of media in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the election campaign was very low-key. According to the NGO Association of BiH Journalists, only 11% of the media coverage was dedicated to the local elections in the last fifteen days of the election campaign. The coverage of the 2 October 2016 local elections was particularly low against the background of the referendum in Republika Srpska and news about the general political agenda.⁵⁷ Moreover, the media coverage dedicated to the local elections was very much focused on the mayoral races at the expense of other local elections. Debates between candidates were not organised by local and regional TV and radio stations and some media did not even report about local elections at all.⁵⁸

53. In a context of very limited transparency with regard to media ownership remains⁵⁹, pressures from media owners, religions and economic groups and political parties were reported during the election campaign. Moreover, authorities at all level, including at local level, allegedly subsidised some media in return for positive coverage during the election campaign.⁶⁰ Such pressures lead to the overrepresentation of some candidates as well as widespread self-censorship among journalists.

54. Moreover, one of the major issues for media in Bosnia and Herzegovina is their financial sustainability.⁶¹ The high number of media outlets creates a situation of saturation of the advertisement market, thus increasing the dependence on public financing.⁶² In this context, journalists face low salaries and high unemployment. Journalists are also targeted by threats, including criminal offenses.⁶³ The follow-up by the authorities to threats to media freedom and journalists was not systematic and efficient.⁶⁴

55. In June 2016, the public broadcaster BHRT announced that it has to stop broadcasting due to financial difficulties including a 5.5 billion debt to the European Broadcast Union (EBU). A short-term agreement with the EBU prevented the channel from shutting down. BHRT covered the election campaign in a more balanced manner than its privately owned counterparts despite these difficulties. However, the public broadcaster is exposed to direct political influence, in particular through political appointments to managerial positions according to some Congress' interlocutors.

56. In this context, social media were a key tool for candidates during the election campaign as conventional media were not accessible to all candidates and the local media environment was generally poor. However, cases of hate speech were reported and online campaigning was not monitored by the media regulatory agency.

c. Campaign financing

57. Campaign financing is mainly regulated by the Law on "Political party financing" adopted in November 2012⁶⁵ and the Election Law. All finance-related actions should be reported and an authorised person in charge of submitting reports and record-keeping shall be appointed by each political entity. The Central Election Commission is responsible for controlling campaign financing: it determines a ceiling of expenditures for campaign purposes in each constituency and regulates donations. The CEC also certifies financial reports from all electoral contestants after the elections.

58. Despite a very detailed regulation, campaign financing remains a critical issue in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In particular, the lack of transparency of political parties and campaign financing is a sensitive issue as the discrepancies in financial resources between candidates does not ensure the existence of a level playing field.

57 As a comparison, during the same period, 50% of the coverage was dedicated to the local elections in 2012.

58 According to the interlocutors from the Association of BiH Journalists the Congress' delegation met in Sarajevo during its mission.

59 Bosnia and Herzegovina 2015 EU Progress Report

60 According to the interlocutors from the Association of BiH Journalists the Congress' delegation met in Sarajevo during its mission.

61 Bosnia and Herzegovina 2015 EU Progress Report

62 Chapter on Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2016 Nations in Transit, Freedom House

63 Chapter on Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2016 Nations in Transit, Freedom House

64 2015 EU Progress Report for Bosnia and Herzegovina

65 <http://izbori.ba/Documents/documents/English/Laws/Lawonpoliticalpartyfinancing.pdf>

59. According to the NGO Pod Lupom, some cases of misuse of administrative resources were identified during the election campaign. In particular, local officials used public premises to organise rallies related to the campaign. Public employment was also a major issue in Bosnia and Herzegovina in a context of high unemployment. During the election campaign, numerous candidates promised jobs in exchange for votes. Moreover, public companies allegedly illegally donated money and other resources to some candidates. Despite the fact that donations by political parties' members are limited by law, party membership fees were also an alleged source of illegal campaign financing.⁶⁶

60. According to the Election Law, the Central Election Commission is expected to publish the declarations of assets of all candidates running in the elections.⁶⁷ Moreover, all elected officials have to fill in a declaration of assets at the beginning and at the end of their mandates in order to verify that being in office did not lead to undue personal enrichment. The publication of such information by the CEC was put into question because the Agency for Protection of Personal Data asked for the removal of some personal data from the declarations.⁶⁸

61. Vote-buying is also prohibited by law: candidates are not allowed to "promise any financial reward or other material gain with the purpose of gaining support of voters, or to threaten supporters of other political parties, coalitions, lists of independent candidates of independent candidates".⁶⁹ However, the Congress' delegation was made aware of cases of vote-buying before and on Election Day, in particular in the Roma community.

5. Election Day

62. On Election Day, twelve Congress teams were deployed throughout the country. The observers visited polling stations in different regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina including the municipalities of Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Tuzla, Srebrenica, Stolac, Goražde and the Brčko District. Overall, the Congress' observers were present in more than 250 Polling Stations.⁷⁰ Citizens observers – mostly from Pod Lupom – were also present in most polling stations visited by the Congress.

63. The Congress observers concluded that – with the exception of few violent incidents and some irregularities – voting took place in a calm and orderly manner, generally in line with international standards. With regard to the Central Election Commission, the delegation had the impression that these elections were prepared in a professional manner. By and large, Polling Station Commissions were, technically speaking, functioning properly and were able to manage the voting and counting processes in line with the regulations. Only some isolated cases of family voting and few late openings of polling stations were observed by the Congress' delegation. Moreover, despite the clear regulation, the use of mobile phones during polling was widespread.

64. The accessibility of polling stations for disabled people had not been improved since 2012 due to a lack of funds and many of the polling stations visited were not accessible for people with disabilities. Regulations to allow for mobile voting for voters who are homebound due to sickness, age or illness were in place.⁷¹ However, instances of voting outside polling stations still occurred, causing potential problems related to the integrity of the process.

65. Voters, in particular the elderly, had sometimes difficulties to understand the ballot. Cases of assisted voting in some cases without apparent need were also observed by the Congress' teams. Moreover, the secrecy of the vote was not always respected, often due to the lack of space in the polling stations. In addition, the Congress observers frequently saw groups of men loitering around outside polling stations allegedly with the purpose of buying votes on Election Day.

66 According to the interlocutors from the NGO Pod Lupom the Congress' delegation met in Sarajevo during its mission.

67 Election Law, article 15.7

68 <http://www.avaz.ba/clanak/248170/kovacevic-bez-zastite-licnih-podataka-nema-evropskih-integracija?url=clanak/248170/kovacevic-bez-zastite-licnih-podataka-nema-evropskih-integracija>

69 Article 7.3 of the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina

70 The deployment plan can be found in the appendix.

71 Election Law Article 3.14 and Rulebook on maintaining and using the central voters' registry 18.5

66. Despite the fact that polling was generally conducted in a calm and orderly manner, the Congress found regrettable that a few incidents in some places, as in Srebrenica and in Stolac, have cast a shadow on elections. As a result of the incidents, the CEC received a total of 207 requests for a recount. Votes were recounted in 54 polling stations, leading to changes in the results with regard to 16 mandates.⁷²

67. In Stolac, a polling station opened late due to conflicts and ambiguities over procedures between the members of the Polling Station Commission. Furthermore, a physical confrontation occurred between the Bosniak mayoral candidate and the Croat President of the Municipal Election Commission over alleged voting irregularities and polling station manipulation. This together with other irregularities resulted in the CEC decision to suspend the elections in Stolac.⁷³ On 3 November, the CEC started a process of establishing the responsibility for termination of the electoral process against members of the Municipal Election Commission, members of the Polling Station Commission and against six candidates for violations of the Election Law. It adopted sanctions against individual candidates and political parties for their involvement in the incidents.⁷⁴ The local elections in Stolac thus need to be repeated.⁷⁵

68. In Srebrenica Congress observers found a tense voting climate, mainly due to ethnic tensions between members of a Polling Station Commission, problems with ballot boxes as well as a broken seal. After Election Day, tensions continued particularly because of rumours over electoral fraud and the election of the first ethnic Serb Mayor of Srebrenica. The ballots from five polling stations were recounted at the main counting centre in Sarajevo, and results confirming the victory of the Bosnian Serb candidate arrived only two weeks after Election Day.⁷⁶

69. In the Brčko District, the CEC had to order a recount of votes in 20 polling stations where the number of votes for a candidate was larger than the number of votes for his party or larger than the number of signatures in the voters' lists.

6. Turnout and election results

70. The final results were confirmed by the CEC on 17 October 2016. According to the CEC⁷⁷, the turnout was 54,7% for the Mayoral elections and 54,6% for the Municipal Councils elections with around 6% of invalid ballots.

71. The Party of Democratic Action (SDA) won 34 mayoral positions and the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) won 33 of them. Both political parties were declared winners of these local elections, respectively in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Republika Srpska. A total of nine mayoral positions were won by independent candidates. Moreover, six women were elected Mayor including five in Republika Srpska and one in the Federation.

72. The electoral results in some of the Municipalities visited by the Congress' teams – including Sarajevo and Banja Luka – are presented in the appendices.

72 <http://www.inreformatator.ba/?p=20570>

73 50th Report of the High Representative for Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Secretary-General of the United Nations available at: <http://www.ohr.int/?p=96460>

74 An appeal to the decision of the CEC was still pending at the time the report was prepared.

75 However, at the time the report was prepared, no date was set for repeated local elections in Stolac.

76 An appeal to the decision to the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina was still pending at the time the report was prepared.

77 http://www.izbori.ba/rezultati_izbora_2016/?resId=13&langId=4#/8/0/0

7. Conclusions

73. The local elections held on 2 October 2016 in Bosnia and Herzegovina were held against the background of a challenging economic situation, continuing tensions between the central state of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska as well as a growing electoral fatigue among voters. In general, the elections were carried out in a calm and orderly manner with the exception of a few violent incidents and some irregularities.

74. The referendum held in Republika Srpska on 25 September diverted public attention during the electoral campaign. It reinforced political allegiance base in ethnic identity, including nationalistic attitudes, and overshadowed the local elections. Moreover, the campaign environment – and the media in particular – did not provide for a full level playing field at local level. In particular, female, independent and small parties' candidates were not able to campaign in a fair environment. Therefore, local issues and candidates were not sufficiently at the centre of the campaign, thus limiting the ability of voters to make informed choices.

75. With regard to the technical organisation of these elections, the Central Election Commission carried out preparations in a transparency and timely manner. The implementation of the so-called "correct counting" procedure by Municipal Election Commissions smoothed and reinforced the reliability of the tabulation process. Nevertheless, the politicisation of the election administration – in particular at the level of polling stations – raised questions with regard to its independence and impartiality. Alleged trading of positions within Polling Stations Commissions was a major issue in this respect and could undermine public confidence in the electoral process. Cases of violation of voting secrecy, vote buying and dubious assisted voting were also reported.

76. The accuracy of voters' lists remained a major issue in the 2016 local elections. Indeed, deceased voters could still be found on the lists and voters could allegedly register in another Municipality than the one they were actually residing in. Moreover, the system of so-called "tendered ballots", even though its use was limited to two categories of voters, lacked sufficient safeguards to ensure effective fraud control. With regard to voters residing de facto abroad, the arrangement in place in 2016 was still at odds with Congress Resolution 378(2015): it still did not ensure that a "genuine link" existed between the voters and the Municipality where he/she cast his/her ballot.

77. With regard to the overall situation of local democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is a need for concrete measures to strengthen democracy at grassroots' level and to empower accountable and competent local elected representatives in all entities.⁷⁸ Among the key challenges in this respect, the Congress identified the lack of clear-cut responsibilities for local self-government issues as well as financial difficulties and autonomy of local self-government units. Finally yet importantly, the continuing deadlock with regard to elections in the City of Mostar should be at the centre of attention of all political stakeholders in order to find a satisfying and sustainable solution as soon as possible.

78 As already stated in Congress Recommendation 324 (2012) Local and regional democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

APPENDIX I

General electoral results

All results are available online at http://www.izbori.ba/rezultati_izbora_2016/

	Mayors	Municipal Councils
Number of voters	3.179.720	3.266.448
Processed ballots	1.739.756 (54,7% turnout)	1.783.455 (54,6% turnout)
Valid ballots	1.635.602 (94%)	1.666.554 (93,4%)
Invalid ballots	104.154 (6%)	116.901 (6,6%)

Party	Mayors	
	Number	Percentage
SDA	34	24,46%
SNSD	33	23,74%
SDS	18	12,95%
HDZ BiH	17	12,23%
SDP	8	5,76%
DNS	5	3,6%
HDZ 1990	3	2,16%
SP	3	2,16%
A-SDA	1	0,72%
GS	1	0,72%
HSS	1	0,72%
Laburisti	1	0,72%
PDP	1	0,72%
Party for BiH	1	0,72%
SNS	1	0,72%
SRS	1	0,72%
Zavičajni socijaldemokrati	1	0,72%
Independent	9	6,47%
Sum	139	100%

Results in the main cities where local elections have been observed by the Congress' delegation on 2 October 2016

Banja Luka (Republika Srpska)

Candidates for Mayor	Number of votes	% of votes
IGOR RADOJIČIĆ - SAVEZ NEZAVISNIH SOCIJALDEMOKRATA - SNSD	56.173	56,51
DRAGAN ČAVIĆ - SAVEZ ZA PROMJENE-BANJA LUKA	39.670	39,91
SLAVKO ŽUPLJANIN - STRANKA SPAS	1.823	1,83
DUŠKO TADIĆ - PRVA STRANKA	1.740	1,75

Candidates' lists for the City Council	Number of votes	% of votes	Mandates
SAVEZ NEZAVISNIH SOCIJALDEMOKRATA - SNSD	31.419	34,35	11
NDP-DRAGAN ČAVIĆ	12.323	13,47	4
DNS-DEMOKRATSKI NARODNI SAVEZ	11.030	12,06	4
SOCIJALISTIČKA PARTIJA	9.521	10,41	3
SDS-SRPSKA DEMOKRATSKA STRANKA	8.872	9,70	3
PDP- PARTIJA DEMOKRATSKOG PROGRESA	7.199	7,87	3
UJEDINJENA SRPSKA	5.808	6,35	2
SDA/SBB/SBIH	1.180	1,29	
PARTIJA UJEDINJENIH PENZIONERA	835	0,91	
STRANKA SOCIJALNE SIGURNOSTI SRPSKIH BORACA-	751	0,82	

SNAGA NARODA			
STRANKA SPAS	460	0,50	
HRVATSKA KOALICIJA BANJALUKA HDZBIH-HDZ1990	459	0,50	
SRS-SRPSKA U SIGURNE RUKE	392	0,43	
DEMOKRATSKA FRONTA	231	0,25	
POVRATAK OTPISANIH	177	0,19	
ZAVIČAJNI SOCIJALDEMOKRATI - MILE MARČETA	175	0,19	
SNJEŽANA STANKOVIĆ	172	0,19	
PRVA STRANKA	155	0,17	
EKOLOŠKA PARTIJA REPUBLIKE SRPSKE	121	0,13	
BOGDAN MARJANOVIĆ	121	0,13	
A-SDA STRANKA DEMOKRATSKE AKTIVNOSTI	40	0,04	
LIBERALNA STRANKA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE-LS BIH	25	0,03	
NOVA PARTIJA	12	0,01	

Sarajevo (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Centar

Candidates for Mayor	Number of votes	% of votes
NEDŽAD AJNADŽIĆ - SDA/SBB	8.048	32,05
SAMER REŠIDAT - DEMOKRATSKA FRONTA	4.656	18,54
IGOR KAMOČAJI - SDP-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA PARTIJA BIH	3.598	14,33
DAMIR NIKŠIĆ - NEZAVISNI KANDIDAT	2.897	11,54
REUF BAJROVIĆ - GRAĐANSKI SAVEZ (GS)	2.625	10,45
ADMIR BUKVA - NAŠA STRANKA	1.876	7,47
VLASTIMIR MIJOVIĆ - NEZAVISNI KANDIDAT	979	3,90
SAFET BALTIĆ - BPS-SEFER HALILOVIĆ	315	1,25
AMER BEKAN - PRVA STRANKA	116	0,46

Candidates' lists for the City Council	Number of votes	% of votes	Mandates
SDA-STRANKA DEMOKRATSKE AKCIJE	6.861	27,79	10
NAŠA STRANKA	4.396	17,80	6
DEMOKRATSKA FRONTA	3.491	14,14	5
SDP-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA PARTIJA BIH	3.239	13,12	4
SBB - FAHRUDIN RADONČIĆ	2.284	9,25	3
STRANKA PENZIONERA / UMIROVLJENIKA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE	1.213	4,91	2
GRAĐANSKI SAVEZ (GS)	1.020	4,13	1
STRANKA ZA BOSNU I HERCEGOVINU	598	2,42	
BPS-SEFER HALILOVIĆ	447	1,81	
SDU BIH-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA UNIJA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE	365	1,48	
HDZ BIH - HRVATSKA DEMOKRATSKA ZAJEDNICA BIH	222	0,90	
USD BH UNIJA SOCIJALDEMOKRATA BH USD BH	219	0,89	
BOSS - BOSANSKA STRANKA-MIRNES AJANOVIĆ	208	0,84	
SAVEZ NEZAVISNIH SOCIJALDEMOKRATA - SNSD	65	0,26	
PRVA STRANKA	39	0,16	
LABURISTIČKA STRANKA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE LABURISTI BIH	25	0,10	

Novi Grad

Candidates for Mayor	Number of votes	% of votes
MIROSLAV DRLJAČA - SAVEZ NEZAVISNIH SOCIJALDEMOKRATA - SNSD	8.961	55,92
MILANKO MIHAJILICA - SAVEZ ZA PROMJENE-NOVI GRAD	7.063	44,08

Candidates' lists for the City Council	Number of votes	% of votes	Mandates
SAVEZ NEZAVISNIH SOCIJALDEMOKRATA - SNSD	5.607	34,87	9
SDS-SRPSKA DEMOKRATSKA STRANKA	1.908	11,86	3
DNS-DEMOKRATSKI NARODNI SAVEZ	1.627	10,12	3
SDA-STRANKA DEMOKRATSKE AKCIJE	1.598	9,94	3
PDP- PARTIJA DEMOKRATSKOG PROGRESA	1.030	6,41	2
NARODNI DEMOKRATSKI POKRET	972	6,04	2
SRPSKA RADIKALNA STRANKA REPUBLIKE SRPSKE	859	5,34	1
SDP-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA PARTIJA BIH	621	3,86	1
SOCIJALISTIČKA PARTIJA	599	3,72	1
EKOLOŠKA PARTIJA REPUBLIKE SRPSKE	491	3,05	1
A-SDA STRANKA DEMOKRATSKE AKTIVNOSTI	457	2,84	
SRS-SRPSKA U SIGURNE RUKE	267	1,66	
SBB - FAHRUDIN RADONČIĆ	28	0,17	
MILAN MARINČIĆ - NEOVISNI KANDIDAT	6	0,04	
DIJANA ĐUKANOVIĆ - NEZAVISNI KANDIDAT	4	0,02	
POVRATAK OTPISANIH	4	0,02	
LIBERALNA STRANKA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE-LS BIH	3	0,02	
USD BH UNIJA SOCIJALDEMOKRATA BH USD BH	0	0,00	

Novo Sarajevo

Candidates for Mayor	Number of votes	% of votes
NEDŽAD KOLDŽO - SDA/SBB	12.389	47,32
HASAN TANOVIĆ - DEMOKRATSKA FRONTA	5.181	19,79
SAMIR IMAMOVIĆ - NAŠA STRANKA	4.832	18,45
MIRSAD ČATIĆ - SDP-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA PARTIJA BIH	2.357	9,00
SAMIR ARNAUTOVIĆ - GRAĐANSKI SAVEZ (GS)	911	3,48
ENES KOMARICA - KOMUNISTIČKA PARTIJA	513	1,96

Candidates' lists for the City Council	Number of votes	% of votes	Mandates
SDA-STRANKA DEMOKRATSKE AKCIJE	6.755	25,99	9
NAŠA STRANKA	4.316	16,61	6
DEMOKRATSKA FRONTA	4.251	16,36	6
SBB - FAHRUDIN RADONČIĆ	3.114	11,98	4
SDP-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA PARTIJA BIH	2.585	9,95	3
STRANKA PENZIONERA / UMIROVLJENIKA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE	985	3,79	1
GRAĐANSKI SAVEZ (GS)	931	3,58	1
BPS-SEFER HALILOVIĆ	809	3,11	1
HDZ BIH - HRVATSKA DEMOKRATSKA ZAJEDNICA BIH	772	2,97	
SDU BIH-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA UNIJA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE	713	2,74	
STRANKA ZA BOSNU I HERCEGOVINU	304	1,17	

KOMUNISTIČKA PARTIJA	264	1,02	
PRVA STRANKA	149	0,57	
PDP- PARTIJA DEMOKRATSKOG PROGRESA	38	0,15	

Stari Grad

Candidates for Mayor	Number of votes	% of votes	
IBRAHIM HADŽIBAJRIĆ - NEZAVISNI KANDIDAT	10.104	55,49	
SUAD HANDANAGIĆ - SDA/SBB	5.326	29,25	
TARIK JAŽIĆ - NAŠA STRANKA	2.077	11,41	
HALID SOLAKOVIĆ - GRAĐANSKI SAVEZ (GS)	702	3,86	

Candidates' lists for the City Council	Number of votes	% of votes	Mandates
SDA-STRANKA DEMOKRATSKE AKCIJE	4.058	22,55	8
PRVA NEZAVISNA LISTA STARI GRAD	2.777	15,43	5
SDP-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA PARTIJA BIH	1.831	10,17	4
DEMOKRATSKA FRONTA	1.768	9,82	3
NAŠA STRANKA	1.415	7,86	3
SBB - FAHRUDIN RADONČIĆ	1.250	6,95	2
SAVEZ ZA STARI GRAD	1.178	6,55	2
GRAĐANSKA DEMOKRATSKA STRANKA BIH	782	4,35	2
GRAĐANSKI SAVEZ (GS)	731	4,06	1
BOSS - BOSANSKA STRANKA-MIRNES AJANOVIĆ	614	3,41	1
BPS-SEFER HALILOVIĆ	484	2,69	
STRANKA PENZIONERA / UMIROVLJENIKA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE	396	2,20	
STRANKA ZA BOSNU I HERCEGOVINU	313	1,74	
LIBERALNO DEMOKRATSKA STRANKA BIH	280	1,56	
SDU BIH-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA UNIJA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE	111	0,62	
PDP- PARTIJA DEMOKRATSKOG PROGRESA	8	0,04	

Tuzla (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Candidates for Mayor	Number of votes	% of votes	
JASMIN IMAMOVIĆ - SDP-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA PARTIJA BIH	24.636	48,86	
BAHRUDIN HADŽIEFENDIĆ - SDA/SBB	15.448	30,64	
ALEN GADŽO - DEMOKRATSKA FRONTA	4.907	9,73	
ZLATKO BERBIĆ - NEZAVISNI KANDIDAT	2.150	4,26	
AMIRA MALKOČEVIĆ - TUZLANSKA ALTERNATIVA	1.709	3,39	
ADNAN BURINA - NAŠA STRANKA	986	1,96	
ELMIR MUJKANOVIĆ - NEZAVISNI KANDIDAT	317	0,63	
NOVALIJA GAVRANOVIĆ - STRANKA ZA BOSNU I HERCEGOVINU	270	0,54	

Candidates' lists for the City Council	Number of votes	% of votes	Mandates
SDP-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA PARTIJA BIH	14.610	31,11	11
SDA-STRANKA DEMOKRATSKE AKCIJE	8.348	17,78	6
SBB - FAHRUDIN RADONČIĆ	4.829	10,28	4
TUZLANSKA ALTERNATIVA	4.598	9,79	3

HDZ BIH - HRVATSKA DEMOKRATSKA ZAJEDNICA BIH	2.952	6,29	2
DEMOKRATSKA FRONTA	2.760	5,88	2
BOSS - BOSANSKA STRANKA-MIRNES AJANOVIĆ	2.223	4,73	2
NAŠA STRANKA	1.402	2,99	
STRANKA ZA BOSNU I HERCEGOVINU	1.228	2,61	
GRAĐANSKA SNAGA	1.064	2,27	
BPS-SEFER HALILOVIĆ	789	1,68	
GLASAM ZA TUZLU	552	1,18	
NOVA BOSANSKOHERCEGOVAČKA PATRIOTSKA STRANKA	398	0,85	
A-SDA STRANKA DEMOKRATSKE AKTIVNOSTI	377	0,80	
STRANKA PENZIONERA / UMIROVLJENIKA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE	342	0,73	
SDU BIH-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA UNIJA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE	250	0,53	
MIRZA KARAĆ	116	0,25	
DEMOKRATSKA STRANKA INVALIDA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE	89	0,19	
SAVEZ NEZAVISNIH SOCIJALDEMOKRATA - SNSD	37	0,08	

District of Brčko

Candidates' lists for the District Council	Number of votes	% of votes	Mandates
KOALICIJA SDS-NDP	5.908	15,06	5
SAVEZ NEZAVISNIH SOCIJALDEMOKRATA - SNSD	5.512	14,05	4
SDA-STRANKA DEMOKRATSKE AKCIJE	4.989	12,72	4
HDZ BIH - HRVATSKA DEMOKRATSKA ZAJEDNICA BIH	3.940	10,04	3
BRČANSKI DEMOKRATSKI POKRET (BDP)	3.247	8,28	2
PDP-NS	2.754	7,02	2
HRVATSKA SELJAČKA STRANKA - BRAĆA RADIĆ BRČKO DISTRIKT BIH	2.335	5,95	2
SBB - FAHRUDIN RADONČIĆ	2.049	5,22	2
SDP-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA PARTIJA BIH	2.045	5,21	2
STRANKA ZA BOSNU I HERCEGOVINU	1.780	4,54	1
SOCIJALISTIČKA PARTIJA	1.773	4,52	1
DEMOKRATSKA FRONTA	1.312	3,34	1
POKRET ZA BOLJE BRČKO-ĐAPO MIRSAD	784	2,00	
SRS-SRPSKA U SIGURNE RUKE	173	0,44	
LIBERALNO DEMOKRATSKA STRANKA BIH	168	0,43	
SRPSKA NAPREDNA STRANKA	140	0,36	
PARTIJA UJEDINJENIH PENZIONERA	116	0,30	
SDU BIH-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA UNIJA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE	92	0,23	
BPS-SEFER HALILOVIĆ	53	0,14	
DNS-DEMOKRATSKI NARODNI SAVEZ	43	0,11	
DEMOKRATSKA STRANKA INVALIDA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE	5	0,01	
SAVEZ ZA NOVU POLITIKU	3	0,01	
USD BH UNIJA SOCIJALDEMOKRATA BH USD BH	3	0,01	

**Results in the cities where tensions have been observed by the Congress' delegation on
2 October 2016**

Srebrenica (Republika Srpska)

Candidates for Mayor	Number of votes	% of votes
MLADEN GRUJIČIĆ - ZAJEDNO ZA SREBRENICU	4.678	54,38
ĆAMIL DURAKOVIĆ - NEZAVISNI KANDIDAT	3.910	45,45
DESNICA RADIVOJEVIĆ - NEZAVISNI KANDIDAT	15	0,17

Candidates' lists for the City Council	Number of votes	% of votes	Mandates
SDA/SBB/SBIH	2.906	34,17	7
SAVEZ NEZAVISNIH SOCIJALDEMOKRATA - SNSD	1.991	23,41	5
SDS-SRPSKA DEMOKRATSKA STRANKA	1.038	12,20	2
DNS-DEMOKRATSKI NARODNI SAVEZ	697	8,20	2
SDP-SOCIJALDEMOKRATSKA PARTIJA BIH	674	7,92	2
SRS-SRPSKA U SIGURNE RUKE	269	3,16	1
PDP- PARTIJA DEMOKRATSKOG PROGRESA	261	3,07	1
POKRET ZA PREOKRET	260	3,06	1
DEMOKRATSKA FRONTA	254	2,99	
ZA BOLJU SREBRENICU NS I PUP	147	1,73	
SOCIJALISTIČKA PARTIJA	6	0,07	
EKOLOŠKA PARTIJA REPUBLIKE SRPSKE	1	0,01	
LIBERALNA STRANKA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE-LS BIH	1	0,01	
SAVEZ ZA NOVU POLITIKU	0	0,00	

Stolac (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina)

No information is available as the elections in Stolac should be repeated.

APPENDIX II

CONGRESS ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION
Local elections on 2 October 2016 in Bosnia and Herzegovina
Main Mission (28 September – 3 October 2016)
PROGRAMME

Wednesday, 28 September 2016

Various times **Arrival of the Congress Delegation in Sarajevo**

Thursday, 29 September 2016

- 07:45 – 8:15 Technical Briefing for the Delegation with the Congress' Secretariat, Hotel Europe, Conference Room 1
- 8:30 – 9:00 Background Briefing with **Mr Toni PAVLOSKI**, Acting Head of Office of the Council of Europe Office in BiH
 Venue: Hotel Europe, Conference Room 1
- 09:15 – 10:30 Meeting with **Ambassadors of relevant Council of Europe member States** in Bosnia and Herzegovina, **EU representatives in BiH** and representatives of the **US Embassy**
- **Mr. Armel T'KINT de ROODENBEKE**, First Secretary, French Embassy
 - **Ms. Guri RUSTEN**, Ambassador, Norwegian Embassy
 - Representative of the Turkish Embassy
 - Representative of the Greek Embassy
 - **Mr. Christian SEDAT**, Chargé d' Affaires, German Embassy
 - Representative of the Italian Embassy
 - **Mr. Matthew LAWSON**, Deputy Ambassador, UK Embassy
 - **Ms. Brooke SAHN**, Political section, US Embassy
- Venue: Hotel Europe, Conference Room 1
- [Coffee break]
- 11:00 – 12:00 Meeting with **Ms. Maja RIBAR**, Political Adviser and **Mr. Jan SNAIDAUF**, Head of Political and Economic Section of the EU Delegation to BiH, on the 2013 Census and its consequences for the 2016 local elections in BiH
 Venue: Hotel Europe, Conference Room 1
- Lunch break
- 14:00 – 15:00 Briefing with **Ms. Murisa MARIC**, member of the Strategic Board of the Coalition Pod Lupom and Director of organisation DON from Prijedor
 Venue: Hotel Europe, Conference Room 1

- 14.00 – 15:00 A sub-delegation to meet the President of the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, **Mr. Ahmet SANTIC** and Member of the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, **Ms. Irena HADZIABDIC**
Venue: CEC, Danijela Ozme Street, no. 7
- 15:30 – 16:30 A sub-delegation to meet with representatives of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia-Herzegovina, **Mr. Joeri MAAS**, Chief of Policy and Planning, and **Mr. Ahmed RIFATBEGOVIC**, Chief of Sarajevo Zone Unit and Political Advisor to the Head of the OSCE Mission to BiH
Venue: OSCE premises, UNITIC, Tower A
- 15:30 – 16:30 A sub-delegation to meet with the Director of the Institute for Public Administration of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, **Mr. Enver ISERIC**, on the situation of local self-government
Venue: Ministry of Justice of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Street Valtera Perica 15
- 17:00 – 18:00 Meeting with representatives of the media
- Centre of Investigative Reporting (CIN), **Mr. Aladin ABDAGIC**
- Association of BiH journalists (“BH Novinari”), **Ms. Borka RUDIC**
Venue: Hotel Europe, Conference Room 1
- 18:00 – 18:30 Debriefing for the Delegation with the Congress’ Secretariat
Venue: Hotel Europe, Conference Room 1

Friday, 30 September 2016

- 09:00 – 09:30 Morning Briefing for the Delegation with the Congress’ Secretariat
Venue: Hotel Europe, Conference Room 1
- 09:45 – 10:30 Briefing with representatives of the National Democratic Institute Office in Sarajevo, **Ms. Amna HADZIKADUNIC** and **Ms. Ajla KASUMOVIC**,
Venue: Hotel Europe, Conference Room 1
- [Coffee break]
- 11:00– 13:00 Briefing of the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the election observers from Embassies and International Organisations
Venue: Parliamentary Assembly of BiH, Trg BiH 1, technical entrance
- 13:30 – 15:00 Lunch break
- 15:30 – 16:00 Co-ordination Meeting for the deployment on E-Day with **Mr. Juhwan LEE**, Director of the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB)
Venue: Hotel Europe, Conference Room 1
- [Coffee break]
- 16:30 – 18:00 Technical briefing for Election Day with the Congress’ Secretariat and briefing with drivers and interpreters
Venue: Hotel Europe, Conference Room 1

Saturday, 1 October 2016

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|---------------|--|
| 10:00 – 12:00 | Meeting with two candidates from the Union for a Better Future of BiH for the 2016 local elections in Sarajevo
Venue: Hotel Europe, Conference Room 1 |
| Afternoon | Deployment of 7 Congress' teams from Sarajevo to Banja Luka, Srebrenica, Brcko, Jajce and Mostar
(See "Deployment plan") |

Sunday, 2 October 2016 – ELECTION DAY
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|-------------|--|
| Around 6:30 | Deployment of 5 Congress' teams from Sarajevo
(See "Deployment plan") |
| Midnight | Debriefing for the Congress teams
Meeting point: Hotel Europe, Lobby |

Monday, 3 October 2016

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|---------------|---|
| 12:00 | Press Conference to present preliminary conclusions with Mr. Stewart DICKSON , Head of Delegation and Mr. Adam BANASZAK , EU Committee of the Regions
Venue: Hotel Europe, Blue Atrium |
| 15:00 – 16:00 | Meeting of the Head of the Congress' Delegation and the Secretariat with the Acting Head of Office of the Council of Europe in BiH, Mr. Toni PAVLOSKI
Venue: Hotel Europe |

APPENDIX III

CONGRESS ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION
2 October 2016 Local elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina
Main Mission (28 September – 3 October 2016)
DELEGATION

Congress members

Mr Stewart DICKSON, United Kingdom (R, ILDG/GILD) - (Head of delegation and Rapporteur)

Mr Leo AADEL, Estonia (L, ILDG/GILD)
Ms Samira ALIYEVA, Azerbaijan (L, SOC)
Mr Mehmet AYDIN, Turkey (R, EPP-CCE/PPE-CCE)
Mr Vsevolod BELIKOV, Russian Federation (L, EPP-CCE/PPE-CCE)
Ms Carla DEJONGHE, Belgium (R, ILDG/GILD)
Mr Antonio EROI, Italy (L, EPP-CCE/PPE-CCE)
Mr Petros FILIPPOU, Greece (R, NR/NI)
Mr Linus FÖRSTER, Germany (R, SOC)
Ms Line Vennesland FRASER, Norway (L, ECR/CRE)
Mr Mario GAUCI, Malta (L, EPP-CCE/PPE-CCE)
Mr Gintautas GEGUZINSKAS, Lithuania (R, EPP-CCE/PPE-CCE)
Ms Mary HEGARTY, Ireland (L, EPP-CCE/PPE-CCE)
Mr Jaroslav HLINKA, Slovak Republic (L, ILDG/GILD)
Ms Lelia HUNZIKER, Switzerland (L, SOC)
Ms Nataliia IAKYMCHUK, Ukraine (L, ECR/CRE)
Mr David KATAMADZE, Georgia (L, EPP-CCE/PPE-CCE)
Mr Jean-Pierre LIOUVILLE, France (R, SOC)
Ms Breda PECAN, Slovenia (L, SOC)
Mr Saimir PLAKU, Albania (R, NR/NI)

Members of national Associations

Ms Adelina FARRICI, Association of Local Autonomy of Albania (ALAA)
Ms Daria ASLANOVA, Russian National Congress of Municipalities

EU Committee of the Regions

Mr Adam BANASZAK, Poland (ECR), Spokesperson
Mr Arnoldas ABRAMAVIČIUS, Lithuania (EPP)
Ms Mary FREEHILL, Ireland (PES)
Ms Jasna GABRIC, Slovenia (ALDE)
Mr Karim VAN OVERMEIRE, Belgium (EA)

Congress Secretariat

Ms Renate ZIKMUND, Head of Division, Local and Regional Election Observation
Ms Ségolène TAVEL, Officer, Local and Regional Election Observation
Mr Leonard CUSCOLECA, Officer, Local and Regional Election Observation
Ms Martine ROUDOLFF, Assistant, Local and Regional Election Observation
Ms Arwen THIERRY, Communication officer

Expert

Mr Matej GOMBOSI, Congress Expert on observation of local and regional elections

Council of Europe-Directorate of Communication

Mr Sandro WELTIN, photographer

APPENDIX IV

CONGRESS ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION
2 October 2016 Local elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina
DEPLOYMENT PLAN

Team	Area of deployment for E-Day
<u>Team 1</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Stewart DICKSON • Mr Matej GOMBOSI • Mr Adam BANASZAK • Ms Renate ZIKMUND 	Živinice, Tuzla, Zvornik, Sarajevo environs
<u>Team 2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Vsevolod BELIKOV • Ms Daria ASLANOVA • Mr Gintautas GEGUZINSKAS • Mr Arnoldas ABRAMAVICIUS 	Banja Luka, Prijedor, Kozarac, Ivanjska
<u>Team 3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Breda PECAN • Ms Jasna GABRIC 	Pale, Goražde, Foča, Srbinje, Trnovo, Sarajevo environs
<u>Team 4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Saimir PLAKU • Ms Adelina FARRICI • Ms Nataliia IAKYMCHUK • Mr Leonard CUSCOLECA 	Vlasenica, Bratunac, Srebrenica
<u>Team 5</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Mary HEGARTY • Ms Mary FREEHILL • Mr David KATAMADZE 	Zenica, Doboj
<u>Team 6:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Jean-Pierre LIOUVILLE • Ms Martine ROUDOLFF 	Sarajevo (including East Sarajevo plus environs)
<u>Team 7</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Antonio EROI • Mr Petros FILIPPOU 	Brčko, Bijeljina
<u>Team 8</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Samira ALIYEVA • Mr Mehmed AYDIN 	Jajce, Bosanski Petrovac, Travnik
<u>Team 9</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Linus FÖRSTER • Ms Lelia HUNZIKER • Ms Ségolène TAVEL 	Jajce, Donji Vakuf, Bugojno

Team	Area of deployment for E-Day
• Mr Sandro WELTIN	
<u>Team 10</u> • Mr Jaroslav HLINKA • Mr Leo AADEL	Ilidža, Konjic, Rama Uskoplje
<u>Team 11</u> • Ms Line VENNESLAND-FRASER • Mr Mario GAUCI	Jablanica, Konjic
<u>Team 12</u> • Ms Carla DEJONGHE • Mr Karim VAN OVERMEIRE	Stolac, Trebinje

APPENDIX V

Press release - CG024(2016)

Congress mission presents preliminary conclusions further to the observation of local elections held in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Sarajevo, 3 October 2016 - At a press conference in Sarajevo, Stewart Dickson (United Kingdom, ILDG), Head of the Congress Election Observation Mission, presented today the preliminary findings of the monitoring of the elections of mayors and council members held in Bosnia and Herzegovina on Sunday. With the exception of a few violent incidents and some irregularities, polling was carried out in a calm and orderly manner, generally in line with international standards, according to the Congress' Rapporteur. It was regrettable, however, that there were again no elections held in Mostar, due to unsuccessful negotiations between the political stakeholders. Moreover, the Rapporteur referred to recurring issues of elections in the country and the need to reform related, in particular, to the quality of voters' lists, the prevention of electoral fraud and the protection of secrecy of the vote.

The 32 member-delegation from the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe which included four members of the EU Committee of the Regions and their Spokesperson Adam Banaszak (Poland, ECR) visited some 150 polling stations throughout the country. Apart from a few regrettable incidents, notably in Srebrenica and Stolac, which have cast a shadow over the Election Day, polling was managed, by and large, effectively by the Polling Station Commissions. "With regard to the Central Election Commission, we had the impression that everything was done to prepare these elections professionally", Stewart Dickson added.

At the same time, there is need to improve the implementation of legal provisions and practical rules for elections according to the Congress observers who noticed, among other irregularities, the use of mobile phones during polling, instances of family voting and dubious cases of "assisted voting". Also, the secrecy of the vote was not always respected, often due to the lack of space in the polling stations, and the Congress teams heard allegations of vote-buying, not only in form of cash money but also other benefits.

With regard to further recurring issues of transversal importance, the Congress Rapporteur mentioned the quality of voters' lists and the fact that individuals remain on these lists who have already left the county many years ago and reside - de facto - abroad. "We acknowledge that the system of the so-called "tendered ballots" has been overhauled for these elections, nonetheless, we believe that only individuals who permanently reside in a specific municipality should decide on local matters, thus the voters' lists should be modified accordingly", Dickson underlined.

Another matter of concern was the level of transparency of procedures, in particular with regard to the vote counting. The Congress delegation welcomed the fact that the Central Election Commission has been advocating a new procedure for the so-called "correct counting" in case of doubtful results reported by polling stations. However, overall, the implementation of effective safeguards against any kind of manipulation during the counting needs to be addressed.

In respect of the overall situation of local democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Congress' delegation noticed that political allegiance - also at the local level - still is based on ethnic identity including nationalistic attitudes. There is lack of clear-cut responsibilities for local self-government issues, in particular at the level of the government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. A new law on local self-government is under way in Republika Srpska and the Congress will follow-up its consequences closely.

Recalling the international commitment to strengthen democracy, including at the grassroots' level, the EU Committee of the Regions Spokesperson Adam Banaszak pointed to the EU enlargement policy and the importance of the pre-accession instruments in order to assist the country for the further consolidation of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

"The fact that the Congress was the only international observer group to assess yesterday's elections is a proof of our firm conviction to stand by Bosnia and Herzegovina, also in the future", Dickson concluded.

The detailed Congress Report and Recommendation will be debated at the Plenary Session in March next year in Strasbourg.