

Terms of Reference

HEAD OF MISSION

Background:

ODIHR is the leading agency in Europe in the field of election observation. It co-ordinates and organizes the deployment of several observation missions with thousands of observers every year to assess the compliance of elections in OSCE participating States in line with OSCE commitments, other international obligations and standards for democratic elections, as well as national legislation. Its unique methodology provides an in-depth insight into all elements of an electoral process, and permits to make concrete recommendations to further improve electoral processes. Further details of the organization can be found at www.osce.org/odihhr.

Objective:

Under the overall direction of the ODIHR Director and in close co-ordination with the ODIHR Election Department, the Head of Mission (HoM) leads international observers deployed within the ODIHR election observation framework and oversees all observation related activities.

Main Tasks:¹

Electoral Expertise

- Acquire knowledge of the election law and other relevant legislation and regulations of the country where the election mission is deployed;
- Acquire knowledge of the political and electoral situation in the country;
- Become familiar with the ODIHR election observation methodology reflected in the relevant ODIHR publications; and
- Acquire knowledge of OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections.

Management/Co-ordination

- Lead the core team members and the long and short-term observers (if applicable) of the ODIHR election mission;
- Lead the deployment of international observers;
- Preside over briefings and de-briefings of international observers;
- Oversee, lead and co-ordinate all observation duties in accordance with the established ODIHR election observation methodology;
- Ensure a professional working environment for all mission members;
- Establish and maintain contact with the authorities, election administration, main political parties, candidates, civil society, diplomatic community and international organizations; and
- Organize briefings for the diplomatic community, international organizations and parliamentary delegations, as required.

Security

- Ensure the implementation of safety and security measures for all mission members and observers in co-operation with the Security Expert and/or Operations Expert and/or ODIHR Logistics and Security Officer; and
- Co-ordinate the mission's Crisis Management Team together with Deputy Head of Mission, Security Expert, Operations Expert and Long-term Observer Co-ordinator.

¹ These apply to all types of ODIHR observation related activities (Election Observation Missions, Limited Election Observation Missions, Election Assessment Missions, and Election Expert Teams). Some of the tasks, however, particularly due to the absence of long and short-term observers, are not applicable to Limited Election Observation Missions, Election Assessment Missions and/or Election Expert Teams.

Public Statements and Documents

- Request advance approval by the ODIHR Director or his/her designated representative for all written public statements and representations, other than on routine matters not related to policy, issued by and on behalf of the mission; and
- Organize the work of the mission in dealing with the media in accordance with the following Guidelines for HoMs:
 1. The ODIHR's general approach towards the media is characterized by transparency and openness, recognizing the media's legitimate interest in the work of missions. In addition, good relations with the media contribute to the ODIHR's general objective of increasing its visibility and raising its profile in the media and among the general public.
 2. HoMs are encouraged to explain the mission's mandate, work and structure to the public, including by giving interviews to the print and electronic media in the run-up to elections.
 3. Within their responsibility, HoMs may also touch upon the significance of an election within the country's or region's broader political and security framework, as well as preliminary findings of the mission already published in interim reports or law reviews. In doing so, HoMs must exercise sound political judgment.

Gender Issues

- Ensure mainstreaming of gender aspects into all activities of the mission; and
- Analyze women's participation in the electoral process, working closely with the Gender Analyst, if applicable, the other mission analysts and the Long-term Observer Co-ordinator.

National Minority Issues

- Analyze national minority participation in the electoral process, working closely with dedicated analyst, if applicable, the other mission analysts and the Long-term Observer Co-ordinator.

Disability Issues

- Analyze the participation of persons with disabilities in the electoral process, working closely with the dedicated analyst, if applicable, the other mission analysts and the Long-term Observer Co-ordinator.

Reporting

- Oversee the preparation of all mission reports.

Requirements:

- Advanced university degree in international relations, law, political science, social science, management business administration or related field;
- At least ten to twelve years of relevant experience in government, international organizations, preferably with the OSCE, and/or diplomatic missions/embassies, with extensive comparative election observation or assistance experience, or election management experience;
- Management skills, including ability to manage human and financial resources;
- Leadership and negotiations skills;
- Excellent analytical skills;
- Ability to work under pressure in a sensitive political environment;
- Demonstrated ability to work as a member of a team composed of individuals of different cultural and political backgrounds, while maintaining impartiality and objectivity;
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English with knowledge of election related terminology. Knowledge of local language(s) is an asset;
- Previous experience or knowledge of the current situation in the country is desirable;
- Computer literacy;
- Demonstrated gender awareness and sensitivity, and an ability to integrate a gender perspective into tasks and activities;
- Abide by the ODIHR Observer [Code of Conduct](#) and the [Guide on the OSCE Policy against Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination](#), as well as [data protection responsibilities](#) when processing the personal data of mission participants; and
- Remain available for consultation (by phone or email) until the mission Final Report is published.

Deliverables:

- Draft Interim Reports;
- Draft Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions (“Preliminary Statement”);
- Draft Post-election Press Release;
- Delivery of the Preliminary Statement in conjunction with parliamentary observers (where applicable) during a press conference;
- Draft Final Report prepared in consultation with the Deputy Head of the Mission in accordance with the guidelines provided and according to the timeframe agreed with the ODIHR Election Adviser.
- Management of human resources of the election mission in efficient manner according to relevant OSCE policies;
- Participation in recruitment of support staff to core team, including signing the interview report; and
- Certification and evaluation of work performed by support staff under direct supervision.