



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

EARLY PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
4 DECEMBER 2016

OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission
Final Report



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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following an invitation from the authorities of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) deployed an Election Observation Mission (EOM) for the 4 December 2016 early presidential election. The OSCE/ODIHR EOM assessed compliance of the electoral process with OSCE commitments, other international obligations and standards for democratic elections, as well as national legislation. For election day, the OSCE/ODIHR EOM deployed 193 observers from 32 countries.

The Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions issued on 5 December 2016 concluded that “the 4 December presidential election underscored the need of comprehensive reform to address long-standing systemic shortcomings. The legal framework is not conducive to holding democratic elections. The election administration undertook measures to enhance the transparency of its work and prepared efficiently for the election. The dominant position of state actors and limits on fundamental freedoms undermine political pluralism and led to a campaign devoid of genuine competition. Media covered the election in a highly restrictive and controlled environment, and the dissemination of a state-defined narrative did not allow voters to receive an alternative viewpoint. Significant irregularities were noted on election day, including indications of ballot box stuffing and widespread proxy voting, despite a concerted campaign to address the latter. Election commissions faced difficulties in completing the results protocols”.

The presidential election is regulated by a multitude of laws and Central Election Commission (CEC) resolutions. Recent legal amendments addressed some previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendations, mainly of a technical nature. Most other long-standing key recommendations have not yet been addressed. Overall, the legal framework places undue limitations on fundamental freedoms of expression, association and assembly, and is restrictively implemented.

Election commissions, led by the CEC, efficiently administered operational aspects during the pre-election period and met all legal deadlines. The CEC held open sessions and promptly published its resolutions, thus contributing to the transparency of the process. Important procedures related to election day and the tabulation of results were left unregulated. The CEC conducted a comprehensive voter awareness campaign through state and private media, including against proxy voting.

Four party-nominated candidates, including the prime minister who was serving as the acting president, contested the election. The law does not provide for independent candidates and additionally some candidate eligibility requirements are contrary to international obligations, including those related to residency, language proficiency and past criminal convictions. In a positive step, the number of supporting signatures required for candidate registration was lowered from five to one per cent of voters nationwide, thus reducing an obstacle on the right to stand.

¹ The English version of this report is the only official document. An unofficial translation is available in Uzbek and Russian.

The campaign lacked competitiveness and voters were not presented with a genuine choice of political alternatives. Candidates refrained from challenging each other's platforms and government policies. The campaign was held in a highly regulated environment and was characterized by an ostensible homogeneity of materials and events of the four candidates. Campaign activities of the Liberal Democratic Party of Uzbekistan candidate blurred the line between party and State in contravention to paragraph 5.4 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document.

Around 20.5 million voters were registered to vote, including some 12,000 abroad. The absence of a centralized voter register and the possibility of registration on election day make it difficult to ensure that voters were included in only one voter list and voted only once. The lack of safeguards against multiple registration and voting potentially undermined the integrity of the electoral process.

The legislation stringently defines campaign coverage. Each candidate was granted free time and space within national and regional state media, which markedly exceeded editorial output. Uniform and repetitive reports on candidates' activities were consistently featured in a positive tone while election-related editorial output of state and private media was scant. Access to national and international analytical and critical websites continued to be blocked. Consequently, the public was shielded from a genuine exchange of political ideas, which effectively limited voters' ability to make an informed choice.

For presidential elections, parties fielding a candidate each receive an equal amount of public funding for campaign-related expenses. Campaign finance transparency is limited by the lack of a requirement for public disclosure of expenditures and pre-election reporting by contestants. Private funding to parties or candidates for campaigning is prohibited, which is an undue limitation on citizens' ability to financially support their preferred contestant.

The election dispute resolution process is regulated by several laws and CEC resolutions, which results in a lack of coherence. The law does not provide for requests for recounts or the invalidation of results, thus limiting effective remedy on key aspects of the electoral process. Overall, the existing mechanisms to manage election complaints and appeals do not provide for a transparent and accountable system of dispute resolution.

National minorities enjoy full political rights under the Constitution. Campaign materials were available in three minority languages. The CEC produced most election-related material, including ballots, in Uzbek, Russian and Karakalpak languages. State-owned newspapers with a nationwide reach provided candidates with free print space for campaign messages in Uzbek, Russian, Tajik and Kazakh. Language or identity issues did not feature in the campaign.

Despite constitutional guarantees of equality, women remain under-represented in elected and executive office. The election administration had a more balanced gender representation, with women comprising some 36 and 47 per cent of the District and Precinct Election Commission members, respectively. Of the sixteen CEC members, two are women. None of the four presidential candidates were women.

The law allows observers from parties and international organisations. Non-partisan citizen observation is not provided for, which lessens transparency and public confidence and is at odds with OSCE commitments. Authorities accredited 548 international and over 37,000 party observers.

On election day, the voting process was assessed negatively in 12 per cent of observations, with observers noting serious irregularities inconsistent with national legislation and OSCE commitments,

including proxy voting and indications of ballot box stuffing. Observations confirmed that safeguards to prevent multiple voting were absent.

Almost two-thirds of vote counts observed were assessed negatively. Reconciliation procedures were not followed in more than half of polling stations observed, including not cancelling unused ballots. Polling staff faced serious challenges in completing and reconciling the results protocols that often had to be amended during tabulation. Significant violations indicated that an honest count, as required by the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document, could not be guaranteed.

Tabulation lacked transparency at the district and central levels. The CEC published on its website the total number of registered voters and number of valid votes cast for each candidate, but did not publish results disaggregated by district and polling station. A copy of the final CEC protocol was also not published.

This report offers a number of recommendations to support efforts to bring elections in Uzbekistan in line with OSCE commitments and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections. The OSCE/ODIHR stands ready to assist the authorities to improve the electoral process and to address the recommendations contained in this and previous reports.

II. INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Following an invitation from the authorities of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and based on the recommendations of a Needs Assessment Mission conducted from 11 to 13 October, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) established an Election Observation Mission (EOM) on 2 November to observe the 4 December 2016 early presidential election.² The EOM, headed by Ambassador Peter Tejler, consisted of 15 experts based in Tashkent and 20 long-term observers deployed throughout the country.

On election day, the OSCE/ODIHR EOM deployed 192 observers from 32 countries. Voting was observed in 833 of 9,383 polling stations, counting in 81 polling stations and tabulation in all 14 District Election Commissions (DECs). The OSCE/ODIHR EOM remained in Uzbekistan until 15 December to follow post-election developments.

The OSCE/ODIHR EOM assessed compliance of the electoral process with OSCE commitments and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections and with national legislation. This final report follows a Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions, which was released at a press conference in Tashkent on 5 December.

The OSCE/ODIHR EOM wishes to thank the authorities for the invitation to observe the election and the Central Election Commission (CEC), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs including its Mission to the OSCE and other authorities for their assistance and co-operation. It also expresses its appreciation to the representatives of political parties, civil society, media, the international community and other interlocutors for sharing their views. The OSCE/ODIHR EOM also expresses its gratitude to the OSCE Project Co-ordinator for its support.

² See [all previous OSCE/ODIHR reports on Uzbekistan](#).

III. BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

The CEC announced the 4 December early presidential election on 9 September, a week after Uzbekistan's first president, Islam Karimov, passed away in office. Stressing the need for stability and public security, on 8 September, the *Oliy Majlis* (parliament) appointed Prime Minister Shavkat Mirziyoyev as acting president during a joint session of its two chambers. The Senate Chairperson, who, according to the Constitution should assume interim presidential functions, ceded the role to the prime minister citing his many years of experience in government.

The election marked an important transition for Uzbekistan after 25 years of independence under one head of state.³ The political system concentrates most decision-making and executive powers in the office of the president, who shares legislative power with the parliament, thus raising concerns about the effective separation of powers.⁴ All directly elected seats in parliament (135 of 150) are held by the only four registered political parties that formed consensus behind the late president's policy line and claimed to represent distinct segments of the electorate.⁵ Despite attempts, no new political party has been registered since 2003, potentially challenging paragraph 7.6 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document.⁶

According to many OSCE/ODIHR EOM interlocutors, independent civil society organizations also encounter undue challenges attempting to register their legal status or in being active in public life.⁷ Independent journalists and human rights defenders continue to operate in an environment characterized by restrictions on fundamental freedoms and may face prosecution.⁸ Genuine organized

³ Islam Karimov, the last First Secretary of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan from 1989 and President of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic from 1990, was first elected president of an independent Uzbekistan in 1991. The Constitution came into force in 1992. A 1995 referendum extended his first term until 2000, when he won his second term and another referendum extended the presidential term from five to seven years – a step subsequently reversed by parliament in 2011. He was re-elected to his third term in 2007 (under the terms of the revised constitution that preserved a limit of two consecutive presidential terms) and to his fourth term in 2015.

⁴ The president has the right to issue binding decrees and initiate and veto draft laws or provisions thereof. Furthermore, the president nominates the prime minister (upon a proposal by the political party that holds the highest number of seats in parliament) and the chairpersons of the Senate and the Board of the Central Bank, as well as the chairpersons and the judges of the country's top three courts (Constitutional, Supreme and Higher Economic Court); approves the Cabinet of Ministers; appoints and dismisses (with the *Oliy Majlis*' approval) the prosecutor general, the chairperson of the National Security Service, the Chamber of Accounts and judges of other courts as well as regional *Khokims* (governors) (nominated by the prime minister).

⁵ The remaining 15 seats are elected by delegates of the Ecological Movement of Uzbekistan.

⁶ Representatives of *Birlik* informed the OSCE/ODIHR EOM of repeatedly having applied for registration as a political party in 2003, which was denied on formalistic grounds. Paragraph 7.6 refers to "the right of individuals and groups to establish, in full freedom, their own political parties or other political organizations and provide such political parties and organizations with the necessary legal guarantees to enable them to compete with each other on a basis of equal treatment before the law and by the authorities." See also Paragraph 26 of the 1996 United Nations Human Rights Committee General Comment No. 25 to the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

⁷ Undue restrictions also affect international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), especially those active in the area of human rights. For instance, Human Rights Watch has sought to re-open its office in Uzbekistan since it was closed down in 2011.

⁸ The United Nations Special Rapporteur's January 2016 [Report on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders](#) expressed "concern at the numerous human rights activists, independent journalists and dissidents who remain in prison on politically motivated charges". In its concluding remarks, the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHCR) examination of Uzbekistan's fourth periodic report in July 2015 evoked "consistent reports of harassment, surveillance, arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture and ill-treatment by security forces and prosecutions on trumped-up charges of independent journalists, government critics, human rights defenders and other activists, in retaliation for their work".

political opposition is absent, while several opposition figures either remain in prison or are in exile.⁹

Disproportionate or discriminatory legal restrictions on the freedom of association should be eliminated. In addition, restrictions on activities of civil society organizations should also be reviewed and amended to comply with paragraphs 9.3 and 10.3 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document and the ICCPR.

Many OSCE/ODIHR EOM interlocutors viewed the election as an opportunity to demonstrate the country's commitment to political and economic reform. The pre-election discourse emphasized a demand for both continuity and greater government accountability.

IV. ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The president is directly elected by popular vote for a five-year term. Where two candidates compete, the one who obtains more votes is elected. If there is only one or more than two candidates, the one who obtains more than 50 per cent of the total number of votes cast is elected in the first round. If no candidate obtains the required amount of votes, a second round between the two leading candidates takes place within one month and the candidate who obtains most votes is elected. There is a voter turnout requirement of 33 per cent for the first round, but none for a potential second round. There is a constitutional limit of two consecutive terms.

The presidential election is primarily regulated by the Constitution, the Law on Election of the President (PEL), the Law on the Central Election Commission (Law on the CEC), the Law on Guarantees of Suffrage to Citizens (Law on Suffrage) and a multitude of other legal acts.¹⁰ Provisions on several aspects of the electoral process are dispersed throughout laws and CEC resolutions impairing the coherence of the legislation.¹¹ Moreover, several issues are regulated by CEC resolutions rather than primary laws, which does not ensure legal certainty.¹² The legislation contains gaps, ambiguities and inconsistencies.¹³ In December 2015, following the last presidential election, some amendments were introduced to the PEL, the Law on the CEC and other election-related laws.¹⁴ Namely, in line with previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendations, the number of supporting signatures required for candidate registration was lowered from five to one per cent of voters nationwide, and an obligation was introduced for the CEC to publish its resolutions on its website. In addition, legal provisions on campaigning and early voting were elaborated.¹⁵ However, most OSCE/ODIHR recommendations, including those pertaining to fundamental freedoms, remain unaddressed.

⁹ Shortly before the election, one individual classified as a prisoner of conscience by international human rights organisations was released before the end of his recently extended sentence.

¹⁰ Applicable legislation also includes the laws on Political Parties, on Financing of Political Parties and on Applications of Citizens as well as relevant provisions of the Criminal Code and the Code of Administrative Responsibility.

¹¹ For instance: provisions on suffrage rights are repeated in the Law on Suffrage and the PEL; early voting is covered in the PEL, the Law on Suffrage and CEC Resolutions 739 and 750; campaign regulation is addressed in the PEL, the Law on Suffrage and CEC Resolution 743.

¹² For instance, campaign finance is regulated by CEC Resolution 733, while the PEL contains a general provision on the subject.

¹³ See sections on *Campaign Finance, Complaints and Appeals* and *Election Day*.

¹⁴ Amendments introduced to the Law on Political Parties and the Law on Financing of Political Parties are not applicable to presidential elections.

¹⁵ The establishment of polling stations in pre-trial detention centres, introduced by a CEC resolution in 2014, was included in the PEL in 2015.

To ensure legal certainty, key aspects of the electoral process should be regulated by primary laws adopted by parliament. CEC resolutions should further clarify issues already regulated by laws. To ensure coherence of the legislation, consideration should be given to harmonizing legal provisions, including through a unified election code.

Legal shortcomings include undue limitations on fundamental freedoms that allow for overly restrictive and arbitrary implementation.¹⁶ Limitations on the freedom of assembly include disruption by law enforcement and sanctioning of participants, including fines and imprisonment of up to three years.¹⁷ Limitations on the freedom of association include cumbersome requirements for registering political parties and civil society organisations. State authorities are further given wide discretionary powers for denial of registration and deregistration. In 2015 and 2016, disproportionate and unreasonable legal and administrative impediments on the work of civil society organisations were further increased.¹⁸ In addition, the burdensome procedure for foreign funding of civil society organisations was further complicated.¹⁹ Limitations on the freedom of expression include numerous criminal and administrative offences that include disproportionate sanctions, including imprisonment for up to five years, as well as reported cases of surveillance, harassment and ill-treatment of human rights activists by law enforcement.²⁰ Overall, the electoral legal framework, coupled with a restrictive implementation, does not comply with international commitments and is not conducive to conducting democratic elections.

All relevant laws and decrees should be reviewed and amended to ensure that any restrictions on fundamental freedoms of assembly, association and expression have the character of exception, are imposed only when necessary in line with democratic principles, are proportionate with a legitimate aim and are not applied in an arbitrary and overly restrictive manner.

V. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

The election was administered by the CEC, 14 DECs and 9,383 Precinct Election Commissions (PECs).²¹ The CEC is a permanent body, while DEC and PECs are formed for each election. Election commissions were well-resourced and overall efficiently prepared technical aspects of the election, meeting all legal deadlines.

Sixteen members of the CEC, including two women, were appointed for an indefinite term by parliament, based on regional council proposals. The CEC held four sessions during the OSCE/ODIHR EOM's observation, which were open to and attended by international and party observers and the

¹⁶ See the [UNHRC Concluding Observations on the fourth Periodic Report of Uzbekistan, August 2015](#).

¹⁷ There is no law on public assemblies. Public assemblies are regulated by the Cabinet of Ministers Resolution 205 "On measures for further improvement of the order of organizing and holding mass events" and by the Criminal Code.

¹⁸ For instance, based on the Ministry of Justice Order No. 117 of 4 June 2015, NGO representatives required permission by the Ministry of Justice for business trips abroad, for holding seminars and meetings in Uzbekistan, for inviting foreigners and approval of the content of the print and audiovisual materials of NGOs.

¹⁹ Foreign funding of NGOs requires approval by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and the Banking Commission. This requirement was introduced by amendments to the Law on Non-Governmental, Non-Commercial Organisations (NNOs) of 25 April 2016, and the Ministry of Justice Order No. 2802 on foreign funding of NNOs of 15 June 2016.

²⁰ UNHRC Concluding Observations on the fourth Periodic Report of Uzbekistan, August 2015.

²¹ Including 44 out-of-country polling stations established in diplomatic missions in 36 countries; 226 in military compounds and 11 in pre-trial detention centres. The number of DEC corresponds to the number of electoral districts established in the 12 regions, the Republic of Karakalpakstan and the city of Tashkent. There are three exclaves, two in the Kyrgyz Republic covered by Ferghana DEC and one in the Republic of Tajikistan covered by Namangan DEC.

media. To enhance transparency of communication within the election administration, the CEC conducted three sessions as live videoconferences with all 14 DEC.

Following the call for the early presidential election, the CEC adopted and posted on its website 60 decisions, covering various aspects of the electoral process. Instructions on some technical aspects were elaborated in detail, but other key aspects related to counting and the tabulation of results were left unregulated.²² The election administration did not take a proactive approach in addressing the existing gaps in the legislation.

The law should be amended to include clear, well-sequenced procedures and safeguards related to counting and tabulation. On the basis of the law, the CEC should elaborate step-by-step instructions for lower-level commissions.

In a welcome step, the CEC passed a regulation addressing persons with disabilities to facilitate their independent participation in the election.²³ In addition, as a first time initiative, the CEC printed some ballots in Braille. Although commendable, the distinguishing feature of these ballots raises concerns regarding the secrecy of the vote. Similarly, ballots for early voters were identified as such, leaving another possibility for compromised vote secrecy.²⁴

To ensure the secrecy of the vote, ballot design should preclude any discernible association between a ballot and a specific voter.

The CEC formed DEC from nominees selected by the deputies of city and regional *kengashes* (councils). DEC formed PEC based on recommendations of the councils; the former receive nominations from *mahallas*.²⁵ Women comprised 36.8 and 47 per cent of DEC and PEC members, respectively.²⁶ Members of political parties, candidates and their proxies cannot serve on election commissions; the only criterion for membership in lower-level commissions in the law is reputation. Often PEC members concurrently worked in *mahalla* committees or were employees of institutions co-located with polling stations.²⁷ In many instances, PEC chairpersons were also the heads of institutions

²² For instance, verification procedure of PEC protocols by DEC, criteria for assessing whether protocols are invalid or incorrect, procedures on DEC tabulation and on recounts.

²³ According to CEC Resolution 773, all polling stations were to be equipped with ramps to facilitate access of voters with wheelchairs. Separate voting booths were also to be provided. According to the CEC, there are over 39,000 voters with visual impairments.

²⁴ Voters who were away from their polling station on election day could vote between 24 November and 2 December. They had to apply in writing, indicating the reason for their absence without needing to provide supporting documentation.

²⁵ *Mahallas* are traditional Uzbek community structures that regulate the everyday life of a settlement and serve to link the state and the community. Among other aspects, they are a primary source of social services for community residents. Their role was formalized in the 1993 Law on the Institutions of Self-Government of the Citizens (*Mahalla Law*). Violations of *mahalla* committee decisions are legally punishable. According to some scholars, the role of the *Mahallas* as an organ of civil society rather than an instrument of government remains disputed.

²⁶ No DEC was chaired by a woman, although approximately half of the deputy positions were held by women. More than half of the PECs observed during opening, voting and counting were chaired by men.

²⁷ Furthermore, in Bukhara and Tashkent regions, the OSCE/ODIHR EOM reported that PEC members were also deputies in *kengashes*. Article 99 of the Constitution, states: “the *Kengashes* of people’s deputies, directed by *khokims*, are the representative bodies of authority in regions, districts, cities and towns”; Article 102 states: “*Khokim* of region, district, city and town shall serve as the head of the representative and executive authorities of his relevant territory.”

where the polling station was located, and some PEC members were also their subordinates, which potentially discourages dissent and challenges their ability to make independent decisions.²⁸

Measures to safeguard the independence of election commissions should be taken, in particular to address potential conflict of interests when hierarchical employment relations are replicated in the composition of PECs.

The CEC launched its training programme for all PEC members on 1 November. A second set of training sessions, with a focus on election day procedures, was organised during 20-30 November. The CEC, jointly with media and several state-supported public associations, conducted a comprehensive voter awareness campaign, including against proxy voting. Some televised spots were in sign language.

VI. VOTER REGISTRATION

The right to vote is granted to citizens from 18 years of age. Voters declared mentally incompetent or serving a prison sentence, irrespective of the severity of the crime, are ineligible to vote, while those in pre-trial detention centres are eligible. Blanket suffrage restrictions based on mental disability or convictions are at odds with OSCE commitments and other international standards.²⁹

The restriction of suffrage rights for citizens serving prison terms, regardless of the severity of the crime, should be reconsidered to ensure proportionality between the limitation imposed and the severity of the offence. The blanket restrictions on suffrage rights of persons with mental disabilities should be reconsidered or decided on a case-by-case basis, depending on specific circumstances. The authorities should consider ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Voter registration is passive and managed locally. There is no centralized voter register.³⁰ Voters are registered based on their permanent or temporary place of residence. By law, a voter may be included only in one voter list. The law requires PECs to compile voter lists based on data provided by local executive authorities (*khokimyats*). However, in several regions, the OSCE/ODIHR EOM observed that voter lists were compiled by *mahallas* without the participation of *khokimyats* and based on various sources of data, including *mahalla* registers of residents and voters lists used in previous elections.³¹ Inconsistency in the compilation of voter lists does not safeguard against multiple registrations.

²⁸ Paragraph 20 of General Comment No. 25 to Article 25 of the ICCPR requires that “[a]n independent electoral authority should be established to supervise the electoral process and to ensure that it is conducted fairly, impartially and in accordance with established laws which are compatible with the Covenant.” Under Article 19.2(j) of the 2002 Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Convention on the Standards of Democratic Elections, Electoral Rights and Freedoms (2002 CIS Convention), the State parties undertook an obligation “to ensure creation of independent impartial election bodies, which organize the conduct of democratic, free, fair, genuine and periodic elections [...]”

²⁹ Article 29 of the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities requires states to “guarantee to persons with disabilities political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others”. Paragraph 7.3 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document states that the participating States will “guarantee universal and equal suffrage to adult citizens,” whereas paragraph 24 provides that “[a]ny restriction on rights and freedoms must ... be strictly proportionate to the aim of that law”. See also Paragraph 14 of General Comment No. 25 to Article 25 of the ICCPR and section I.1.1.1.d.iii. of the [2002 Council of Europe’s Venice Commission Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters](#) (Code of Good Practice).

³⁰ The OSCE/ODIHR EOM was informed of ongoing reform aimed to introduce a centralized digital voter register by 2018.

³¹ Instances were reported to the OSCE/ODIHR EOM in Jizzakh, Qashqadaryo Region, Samarkand and Tashkent Region.

Consideration could be given to developing a centralized voter register that is regularly updated and allows for crosschecks. Procedures for producing voter lists should be clearly defined and applied in a uniform manner.

Voter lists in regular polling stations were printed and posted for public scrutiny by 19 November, and by 2 December in special polling stations.³² Voters could verify their records and request amendments from their PECs.³³ The OSCE/ODIHR EOM observed that few voters used this opportunity. The authorities conducted a door-to-door voter verification campaign. The final number of in-country voters was 20,461,805 as per information on the CEC website following the election.³⁴

Despite a previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendation, the law provides for voter registration on election day. Voters can be added to an annex to the main voter list based on identification and proof of residence.³⁵

Consideration could be given to removing the possibility for voters to register on election day to avoid the possibility of multiple voting. Should election day registration be retained, additional entries should be permitted only in accordance with a clearly defined procedure subject to judicial control.

The CEC did not publish any data on the number of voters added or removed from the voter lists during the public scrutiny period or added to voter lists on election day. The absence of official figures lessened the transparency of the voter registration process.

To enhance transparency, the CEC should be legally required to publish disaggregated information by DEC and PEC on the total number of voters registered prior to and on election day

Voters residing abroad could vote at out-of-country polling stations. The CEC announced some 12,000 out-of-country voters, despite at least some one million citizens having emigrated since 2000.³⁶

VII. CANDIDATE REGISTRATION

Uzbek citizens who are at least 35 years old, have resided in the country for at least 10 years prior to election day and have full command of the Uzbek language, are eligible to stand. Individuals convicted of intentional crimes, those under criminal investigation and professional clergy of religious organizations are ineligible. Candidates can only be nominated by political parties, and independent

³² Voter lists for military bases, healthcare institutions, pre-trial detention centres and diplomatic missions are based on the data provided by heads of these institutions. Service personnel and members of their families residing outside of military units are included into lists at their respective PECs.

³³ PEC decisions and appeals against those decisions at the corresponding district court have to be made within 24 hours, while complaints filed a day prior to or on election day must be reviewed immediately.

³⁴ Prior to the verification process, the CEC noted the preliminary number of in-country voters was 21,435,009, based on data provided by the State Statistics Committee.

³⁵ CEC Resolution 739 states that a PEC that has registered a voter on election day is obliged to notify the PEC of the voter's permanent residence to avoid multiple entries. Section I.1.2.iv. of the Code of Good Practice states that "there should be an administrative procedure – subject to judicial control – or a judicial procedure, allowing for the registration of a voter who was not registered; the registration should not take place at the polling station on election day."

³⁶ As reported by the State Statistics Committee.

candidates are not permitted.³⁷ Criteria regarding the length of residency and language proficiency, as well as a blanket restriction for anyone convicted of a crime are not in line with international obligations and standards.³⁸ Moreover, excluding individuals who are still to stand before a court is contrary to the principle of presumption of innocence.³⁹

Restrictions on the right to be elected that conflict with OSCE commitments and other international standards should be removed from the legal framework. Independent candidates should be allowed to stand for presidential elections.

A registered political party may nominate one candidate after having held its national congress.⁴⁰ Applications for the registration of candidates must include supporting signatures.⁴¹ Positively, and in line with a previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendation, the number of signatures required was lowered from five to one per cent of voters nationwide, thus reducing an obstacle on the right to stand.⁴² Despite a past OSCE/ODIHR recommendation, voters could support only one prospective candidate, which negatively affects political pluralism and does not follow international good practice.⁴³

The CEC registered four prospective candidates, each nominated by one of the four registered parties: Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Liberal Democratic Party of Uzbekistan (LDPU); Xatamjon Ketmonov, People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan (PDPU); Narimon Umarov, Social Democratic Party of Uzbekistan *Adolat*; and Sarvar Otamuratov, Democratic Party of Uzbekistan *Milliy Tiklanish*.

³⁷ Paragraphs 7.3 and 7.5 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document provides that participating States will guarantee equal suffrage and the right of citizens to seek political or public office individually or as representatives of political parties, without discrimination. Article 25 (b) of the ICCPR states that "Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions: (b) To vote and to be elected." Article 3.4 of the 2002 CIS Convention states that "every citizen should have equal legal possibilities to propose him/herself as a candidate in elections".

³⁸ Paragraph 15 of General Comment No. 25 to Article 25 of the ICCPR states that "any restrictions on the right to stand for election ... must be justifiable on objective and reasonable criteria. Persons who are otherwise eligible to stand for election should not be excluded by unreasonable or discriminatory requirements such as education, residence..." See also section I.1.1.d.iii. of the Code of Good Practice, which states that the proportionality principle must be observed when depriving an individual of the right to be elected. Article 2.b of the 2002 CIS Convention states that "The right of a citizen to elect and be elected ... shall be given effect without any limitations of discriminatory nature on the basis of gender, language, religion or faith, political or other beliefs..." See also paragraph 24 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document, which provides that any restrictions on rights must be "strictly proportionate to the aim of the law".

³⁹ Paragraph 5.19 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document states that "everyone will be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law".

⁴⁰ A political party must be registered with the Ministry of Justice at least six months prior to the announcement of the election and with the CEC at least 70 days before election day.

⁴¹ Parties also needed to submit a decision of the party's congress on its nomination of a candidate, the minutes of the party congress confirming its decision accompanied by the candidate's party membership certificate, personal details, and the candidate's written consent to run.

⁴² Parties had to collect signatures from at least 1 per cent of the total number of voters nationwide representing at least 8 of 14 regions – around 214,000 signatures. In addition, no more than eight per cent of the signatures may come from any one territorial unit. Signatures could be collected at the place of work, service, study, residence and other places, where campaigning and collection of signatures is not prohibited. All candidates collected signatures from all 14 regions.

⁴³ Paragraph 77 of [the 2010 OSCE/ODIHR and Council of Europe Venice Commission Guidelines on Political Party Regulation](#) states that "in order to enhance pluralism and freedom of association, legislation should not limit a citizen to signing a supporting list for only one party".

VIII. ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The official election campaign started on 30 October and ended at midnight on 2 December. It took place in a highly regulated environment and in a context of restrictions on fundamental freedoms of association, expression and assembly, which significantly narrowed the public space for the conduct of democratic elections.⁴⁴ Specifically, a one-month advance authorization requirement for holding public assemblies unduly restricts the right to assemble.⁴⁵

Electoral stakeholders should be able to exercise their right to assemble during an election, including during the pre-election and post-election periods. The law should be amended to require a simple notification rather than an authorization procedure.

The campaign was moderately visible and conducted primarily through billboards, posters and a series of formalistic meetings with voters; virtually no street rallies, door-to-door campaigning or smaller gatherings were observed. The campaign was characterized by an ostensible homogeneity of the four candidates' materials and events. The election administration allocated 642 billboards and granted equal access to 36 electronic monitors to each candidate, and displayed standardized sets of candidate information posters.⁴⁶ The four parties chose to produce a uniform array of campaign materials. Each party printed programme booklets with an equal overall number of pages: candidates who produced booklets containing a higher number of pages printed fewer copies.

The candidates held a comparable number of meetings with voters: one in each administrative unit, while their proxies held more.⁴⁷ These were organized with the help of the election administration and attendance was generally by invitation only.⁴⁸ For the first time, these gatherings were tele-beamed live within each region to reach wider audiences. The OSCE/ODIHR EOM noted an orchestrated and routinized nature of many of these lacklustre events, during which candidates presented their parties' platforms and often delivered responses to seemingly pre-crafted questions from the audience.⁴⁹ The LDPU candidate, who has served as the prime minister since 2003 and acting president since September, delivered a more dynamic campaign message overall complete with concrete policy proposals.⁵⁰ Candidates stopped holding events during the last week before election day.

Despite the introduction in 2015 of provisions for candidate debates, the contestants chose not to deliberate in public and as a rule did not engage with each other's programmes or challenge their records of achievements. In their speeches, contestants refrained from voicing criticism of the

⁴⁴ Paragraph 12 of General Comment No. 25 to Article 25 of the ICCPR states that "freedom of expression, assembly and association are essential conditions for the effective exercise of the right to vote and must be fully protected...".

⁴⁵ Paragraph 9.2 of the Copenhagen Document states that "everyone will have the right of peaceful assembly and demonstration." See also paragraphs 118-121 of the 2010 [OSCE/ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly](#).

⁴⁶ Tashkent city authorities decided to allocate an additional 25 billboards to each candidate's campaign.

⁴⁷ Each candidate was entitled to up to 15 proxies to aid in campaigning, with most choosing 14 (1 per region).

⁴⁸ Observed by the OSCE/ODIHR EOM in Jizzakh, Karakalpakstan, Namangan, Navoi, and Samarkand regions, as well as in Tashkent city.

⁴⁹ Observed by the OSCE/ODIHR EOM in Bukhara, Karshi, Namangan, Samarkand regions and Tashkent city. Several observer teams noted that most campaign speeches did not address the issues directly affecting regional and local communities.

⁵⁰ Several isolated cases of other candidates' more vivid meetings were noted, for instance an *Adolat* meeting in Bukhara, *Milliy Tiklanish* event in Ferghana and PDPU in Karshi.

government or state policies.⁵¹ Although four candidates stood in the election, the campaign lacked competitiveness and voters were not presented with a genuine choice of political alternatives.

The four political parties operated reception centres for citizen complaints; however, the LDPU candidate used the website of the office of the prime minister to invite the public to forward grievances through different channels, including local LDPU branch offices.⁵² He subsequently attracted wide attention with a *Facebook* page that showcased some of the issues resolved by state institutions.⁵³ Although local dignitaries participated in all candidates' events, this was especially pronounced in the case of the LDPU candidate.⁵⁴ Moreover, the prevalent campaign discourse stressed continuity and stability during the unprecedented transition of power, thus benefiting the campaign of the LDPU candidate. These instances blurred the line between party and State in contravention of paragraph 5.4 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document.⁵⁵

Authorities should implement mechanisms to ensure a clear separation between the State and party to prevent candidates from using the advantage of their office for electoral purposes. In addition, an effective sanctioning mechanism against the misuse of administrative resources should be established.

Similarly to local *mahalla* representatives, several state-supported public associations, including the *Kamolot* youth movement and Women's Committee of Uzbekistan, conducted a campaign to encourage voter turnout.⁵⁶ Several contestants reached out to women voters in their speeches and women were generally well-represented in attendance at the 31 campaign events observed by the OSCE/ODIHR EOM. Three candidates registered a small number of women proxies; the LDPU candidate had none.⁵⁷

IX. CAMPAIGN FINANCE

Party and campaign finances are regulated by the Law on Financing of Political Parties, the PEL and a CEC resolution.⁵⁸ Parliamentary political parties are granted annual public funding proportionally to the votes they obtained in the last parliamentary elections.⁵⁹ In addition, they may receive donations from citizens and legal entities registered in Uzbekistan. The total annual amount of donations by a

⁵¹ The content of candidates' campaign messages is subject to a number of legal restrictions.

⁵² International Crisis Group reported that some 50,000 petitions were filed in the first three weeks after the reception centre was opened on 25 September.

⁵³ During his 24 November campaign speech in Tashkent city, the LDPU candidate stated that more than 170,000 complaints were received, of which some 70 per cent had been resolved.

⁵⁴ On 24 November, the LDPU's campaign event in Tashkent city was attended by several government officials, regional and municipal leaders as well as the leaders of key religious communities, heads of main national minority cultural centres, as well as a high number of prominent entertainment and sport personalities.

⁵⁵ Paragraph 5.4 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document mandates "a clear separation between the State and political parties; in particular, political parties will not be merged with the State".

⁵⁶ Observed by the OSCE/ODIHR EOM in Bukhara, Jizzakh, Karshi, Namangan and Tashkent regions, as well as in Tashkent city.

⁵⁷ The PDPU candidate registered 3 women among his 15 proxies, while the *Milliy Tiklanish* and *Adolat* contestants registered 4 and 5 women, respectively.

⁵⁸ In addition, the Law on Financing of Political Parties regulates the annual funding of political parties as well as campaign finance for parliamentary elections.

⁵⁹ The total annual public funding of political parties amounts to two per cent of the minimum wage multiplied by the number of voters during the last parliamentary elections: approximately 63 billion Uzbekistani Som (UZS) equal to some EUR 19 million, distributed to the four parties proportionally to the number of seats held in parliament. According to the official rate, 1 EUR equals approximately 3,400 UZS. This rate does not correspond to the market rate, which is up to three times higher.

single citizen or a legal entity may not exceed UZS 750 million (EUR 220,000).⁶⁰ Donations from foreign or anonymous sources, international organizations, or state and religious institutions are prohibited.

During an election year, parties nominating candidates receive additional public funding for campaign-related expenses. Each party received approximately UZS 1 billion (EUR 294,000) as well as cost-free use of meeting premises, space for campaign materials and media coverage. Private funding to parties or candidates for campaigning is prohibited, which is an undue limitation of the voters' ability to financially support their preferred contestant.⁶¹ Instead, private funds may be donated to the CEC, which distributes them equally to contestants. No such funds were donated during this election.

To enable voters to support their preferred contestant, consideration should be given to permitting direct private funding to a candidate's campaign.

Political parties are required to publish annual reports on their income, expenditures and assets as well as to submit them to the Chamber of Accounts and the Ministry of Justice. The oversight authorities' conclusions are not published. Both the conclusions and party annual reports are submitted to the Legislative Chamber of parliament, which reviews them in a public session in the presence of invited media and interested organizations.

Parties are required to publish their campaign finance income in party newspapers and on the party website within one month following the publication of election results. Parties are also required to submit to the CEC, within 20 days following the publication of results, reports on their campaign expenditures in a prescribed template, but are not required to publish these reports. The CEC has to submit financial information on the cost of administering the election and campaign expenditures to the Chamber of Accounts within 50 days of the publication of results. The lack of a requirement of parties to publish their expenditures and the CEC and the Chamber of Accounts to publish their conclusions undermines the transparency of campaign finance.⁶²

To enhance transparency, consideration should be given to introducing legal requirements for periodic, timely and transparent reporting on campaign income and expenditures, including prior to election day. In addition, oversight authorities should be required to publish their conclusions. Effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions for breach of campaign finance regulations could be introduced.

⁶⁰ The donation ceiling set by the law is five thousand fold the minimum wage.

⁶¹ See paragraph 170 of the 2010 OSCE/ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines on Political Party Regulation related to private financial contributions. Article 1 of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers Recommendation Rec(2003)4 to member states on common rules against corruption in the funding of political parties and electoral campaigns states that: "the state and its citizens are both entitled to support political parties".

⁶² See paragraphs 198 and 205 of the 2010 OSCE/ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines on Political Party Regulations, which recommend that "states should require political parties to keep records of all direct and in-kind contributions given to all political parties and candidates in the electoral period. Such records should be available for public review and must be in line with the pre-determined expenditure limit". In addition, "Transparency in reporting requires the timely publication of parties' financial reports".

X. MEDIA

A. MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

Freedom of expression and the right to access information are constitutionally protected, yet unduly restricted by primary legislation, which contains broad definitions of criminal offences, including slander, defamation and libel. These definitions also extend to online content. Media are held liable for the “trustworthiness” of disseminated information, which may prevent them from fully and genuinely covering the campaign. Moreover, intermediaries are held liable for third-party content hosted on their platforms, contrary to recommendations to participating States by the OSCE Representative for Freedom of Media (RFoM).⁶³

Criminal defamation provisions protecting the reputation of candidates during an election as well as general provisions on insult, libel and the dissemination of false information should be repealed and replaced with reasonable and proportional civil sanctions.

Furthermore, primary legislation governing licensing for both online and offline media is opaque. There are several government-controlled entities, which monitor and control the media and generally state actors are instrumental in retribution against critical publications, including online.⁶⁴

The Press and Information Agency (PIA), whose head is appointed by the president, can initiate the suspension of media on broadly worded grounds, while the Ministry for Development of Information Technologies and Communications (MDITC) is mandated to consolidate the state’s oversight of online media and information technologies. There is a Monitoring Centre and an Expert Commission on Information and Mass Communication; both institutions analyse online and offline content and are ambiguously composed and governed. The composition of those institutions is not publicly available and mechanisms for their accountability unknown. As such, the system lacks safeguards against the misuse of administrative powers concerning these institutions. OSCE/ODIHR EOM interlocutors were unable to clarify neither which institutions can request to block and/or remove content, nor the procedure for such requests. The legal framework and its implementation induce an environment of self-censorship, including online, and fall short of international standards for freedom of expression, most notably Article 19 of the ICCPR.⁶⁵

Legislation governing media should provide clear and exhaustive criteria for the denial of registration, suspension of media outlets, and content removal and the blocking of online national and international media should be established and consistently and transparently applied by an independent regulatory body. All such decisions should be publicly available.

⁶³ The [RFoM Communiqué 1/2016, 29 January 2016](#), notes: “Excessive and disproportionate provisions regarding content takedown and intermediaries’ liability create a clear risk of transferring regulation and adjudication of Internet freedom rights to private actors and should be avoided”.

⁶⁴ On 20 May, the Tashkent Economic Court revoked the license of Uzbekistan’s oldest newspaper, *Noviy Vek*, widely perceived for reasons of balanced reporting. The PIA stated that the newspaper consistently violated four different laws. A local journalist in Jizzakh was sentenced to two months in prison for giving an interview to the BBC in November 2015.

⁶⁵ Paragraph 13 of the 2011 General Comment No. 34 to Article 19 of the ICCPR states that “a free, uncensored and unhindered...media is essential in any society to ensure freedom of opinion and expression and enjoyment of other Convention rights”. See also paragraph 43: “Any restrictions on the operation of websites, blogs or any other internet-based information dissemination system ... are only permissible to the extent that they are compatible with paragraph 3”.

The requirement to register online information dissemination platforms, including blogs, as media outlets should be lifted and the regulatory framework governing online communication should be brought in line with relevant international standards.

The state-owned National Television and Radio Company (NTRC) reproduces output from government-controlled news agencies and is the primary source for political news.⁶⁶ Private national and regional media rely on the same agencies for their content thereby resulting in a state-defined and self-referential media narrative.⁶⁷ Some online outlets have sought to challenge the traditional media's selective approach to covering domestic events, including with reference to the election. However, given that all such websites operate from abroad and base their news reports primarily on citizen journalism, they are unable to conduct impartial and editorial fact-checking. International news media are not accredited to report in Uzbekistan. Access to news sites, hosted by Uzbek journalists living in exile, as well as to numerous international websites containing analytical and/or critical reports remains blocked.⁶⁸ Thus, even though more than 1,400 outlets operate in Uzbekistan, voters remain largely isolated from alternative viewpoints.

B. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The PEL and CEC regulations stringently define the form and content of campaign coverage, binding both state and private media to allocate equal coverage to all presidential candidates within editorial materials. A CEC regulation granted each candidate ample free airtime and space within national and regional state media.⁶⁹ Contestants could also purchase airtime or space on an equal basis. Defamation of a candidate's dignity is a criminal offence punishable by up to three years of imprisonment.⁷⁰ The CEC and DEC's oversaw the media's compliance on national and provincial levels, respectively. The MDITC and the PIA conducted monitoring of media content. The OSCE/ODIHR EOM was neither granted access to the monitoring facility nor provided with the possibility to assess the methodology employed by the MDITC or the PIA.

C. MEDIA MONITORING FINDINGS

The OSCE/ODIHR EOM monitored a selection of media with national and regional reach.⁷¹ Monitored commercial outlets sold exactly the same amount of airtime/space to each of the four political parties –

⁶⁶ The NTRC's head is appointed by the president; it has offices in regional capitals and includes a total of 26 broadcasters, each with a defined target-audience and a distinct thematic focus.

⁶⁷ All OSCE/ODIHR EOM long-term observers reported that local media was dominated by state outlets, exclusively relying on information provided by state institutions and state-supported public associations.

⁶⁸ For example, websites are inaccessible for the BBC Uzbek service, Radio Free Europa Uzbek service, and Eurasianet. OSCE/ODIHR EOM interlocutors representing regulatory bodies were unable to clarify the procedure and criteria applied to block a website. The total number of blocked/filtered websites and cases of content removal are not made public.

⁶⁹ CEC Regulation 764 establishes the order of the candidates and allocation of free airtime/space within the state media. Each candidate was granted approximately 1 hour of free airtime on 2 national state TV channels daily, and a total of approximately 8 hours per candidate on 13 regional broadcasters; the daily free print advertisement space was uniformly distributed in 5 national and in 30 regional newspapers.

⁷⁰ Paragraph 47 of the 2011 CCPR General Comment No. 34 to Article 19 of the ICCPR states that "defamation laws must be crafted with care to ensure that they do not serve, in practice, to stifle freedom of expression... States parties should consider the decriminalization of defamation and, in any case, the application of the criminal law should only be countenanced in the most serious of cases and imprisonment is never an appropriate penalty".

⁷¹ Monitored media during primetime hours included the state-owned TV *O'zbekiston*, *Yoshlar*, *Toshkent* and private *UzReport TV*; state radio *O'zbekiston*; state newspapers *Narodnoe Slovo*, *Pravda Vostoka*, *Halak So'zi* and the commercial publication *Darakachi*.

37 minutes to each party on *UzReport TV* and four pages to the DPU, LDPU and SDPU in *Darakchi*.⁷² Strict adherence to the equality principle was also observed in regards to the distribution of free airtime with each candidate receiving 5 hours and 15 minutes on *O'zbekistan* and *Yoshlar* during the monitoring period, exactly as prescribed by a CEC regulation. Time allotted to free and paid campaign ads markedly exceeded editorial content on all monitored broadcast media.⁷³ In addition, in print media, free political advertisement exceeded the space allocated to news.⁷⁴ In those paid or free materials, none of the candidates challenged others' standpoints.

The absence of pluralism was even more pronounced in editorial programmes. State media and leading private outlets signed binding contracts with the CEC, thus reinforcing the uniform campaign coverage in editorial output. At the regional level, DEC's oversaw local media election coverage by imposing adherence to a full equality in candidate campaign coverage.⁷⁵ The election administration also compelled media to report on voter awareness campaigns conducted by state-supported public associations.⁷⁶

The national broadcaster's news segments exemplified the principle of formalistic equal coverage by airing uniform and repetitive block reports on candidates' campaign activities. Each candidate was allotted from 18 to 22 per cent of the total time dedicated to political actors in news segments across all monitored broadcasters. Each candidate's direct speech was strictly confined to his campaign address, constituting between 18 and 25 per cent of the total time allocated to political actors' direct speech within news programmes. The tone of news reports for all candidates was exclusively positive. There were no analytical programmes or issue-oriented interviews subjecting contestants' platforms to critical views during the monitoring period. Furthermore, similarly worded reports on all candidates' campaign platforms were featured in national and regional print media.⁷⁷ The country's most read commercial publication, *Darakchi*, did not devote any editorial material to the candidates. As a result, media effectively reinforced the lacklustre nature of the campaign thereby underscoring the absence of a genuine competition.

An overlap between party and State was apparent in the media's reporting on candidates' records in office, which a CEC regulation does not define as campaigning. Such reports reinforced the LDPU candidate's advantage as he was portrayed as the only candidate who can guarantee continuity and implement the late president's policies. Other candidates were generally presented as parliamentarians, not political leaders. Reports on candidates' records constituted between 19 and 75 per cent of the time allotted to political communication in news slots and were devoid of critical assessment of any candidates' public service accomplishments. Overall, the public was shielded from a genuine political

⁷² The PDPU purchased one page.

⁷³ On *O'zbekistan*, free airtime constituted 40 per cent, news 29 per cent; on *Yoshlar*, 57 per cent versus 29 per cent; on *Toshkent*, 50 per cent versus 9 per cent; on radio *O'zbekistan*, 77 per cent versus 12 per cent; on *UzReport TV*, 20 per cent was allotted to adds and 18 per cent to the news.

⁷⁴ In *Narodnoe Slovo*, free space constituted 54 per cent, news 30 per cent in *Halak So'zi* 56 per cent versus 31 per cent and in *Pravda Vostoka* 66 per cent versus 26 per cent.

⁷⁵ For example, in Namangan, the DEC forced those parties that produced less advertisement material for print media to increase the amount; in Nukus, the DEC compelled print media to use the same fonts for all parties.

⁷⁶ Such campaigns were conducted countrywide under rigorous CEC guidance with the three-fold aim of educating the population on legal amendments introduced for the early presidential election, raising voter turnout and emphasising the importance of the electoral process in sustaining the country's stability.

⁷⁷ Observed by the OSCE/ODIHR EOM in Andijan, Bukhara, Ferghana, Namangan, Jizzakh, Syrdarya, and Tashkent.

debate, which effectively compromised voters' ability to make an informed choice.⁷⁸

On average, media devoted some eight per cent of its primetime programming to female political actors. State-owned television *Toshkent* and the private *UzReport TV* were positive exceptions with 21 and 19 per cent, respectively, of the coverage allotted to female politicians. Further positive was the use of civic education programmes in media aimed at encouraging women's turnout.

XI. PARTICIPATION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

The Constitution provides for equal rights and freedoms without discrimination by sex, race, nationality, language, religion, social origin, convictions, individual and social status and mandates respectful attitude toward languages, customs and traditions of other nationalities. The Constitution also provides for the representation of officials from Karakalpakstan in the parliament, Cabinet of Ministers and the Constitutional Court.

Uzbekistan is a multi-ethnic country, with ethnic Uzbeks constituting approximately 82.5 per cent of the population. The State Statistics Committee informed the OSCE/ODIHR EOM that as of 2016 other sizeable ethnic communities included: Tajiks 4.7 per cent, Kazakhs 2.5 per cent, Russians 2.4 per cent and Karakalpaks 2.0 per cent.⁷⁹ Karakalpaks predominantly reside in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, which also includes areas with a high concentration of ethnic Uzbeks, Turkmens and Kazakhs.⁸⁰ The Law on the State Language reiterates that Uzbek is the official language, but adds that "questions relating to the use of language in the Republic of Karakalpakstan shall also be determined by the legislation of the Republic of Karakalpakstan".

Positively, the CEC produced most election-related information and polling material, including ballots, in Uzbek, Russian and Karakalpak languages.⁸¹ Neither voter information nor ballots were printed in other minority languages that are broadly used in certain electoral districts. While this did not cause serious discontent among communities, the practice does not correspond to OSCE commitments and international standards.⁸² State-owned newspapers with a nationwide reach provided candidates with free space for campaign messages in Uzbek, Russian, Tajik and Kazakh.⁸³

In addition to Russian and Karakalpak languages, consideration should be given to providing voter information and election materials in other minority languages, especially in areas with concentrations of those minority communities.

⁷⁸ Paragraph 25 of General Comment No. 25 to Article 25 of the ICCPR states: "In order to ensure the full enjoyment of rights protected by Article 25, the free communication of information and ideas about public and political issues between citizens, candidates and elected representatives is essential. This implies a free press and other media able to comment on public issues without censorship or restraint". Paragraph 13 of General Comment No. 34 to Article 19 of the ICCPR states: "The public also has a corresponding right to receive media output".

⁷⁹ The last official census was conducted in 1989.

⁸⁰ According to the State Statistics Committee: in Karakalpakstan, Uzbeks make up 39 per cent, Karakalpaks 36.8 per cent, Kazakhs 16.8 per cent and Turkmens 5.3 per cent.

⁸¹ The Russian language does not have an official status in Uzbekistan.

⁸² Paragraph 32.5 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document states that "persons belonging to national minorities have the right to [...] to disseminate, have access to and exchange information in their mother tongue". Paragraph 12 of General Comment No. 25 to Article 25 of the ICCPR states that "information and materials about voting should be available in minority languages".

⁸³ State owned national newspapers *Narodnoe slovo*, *Ovozi Tojik* and *Nurli Jol*.

Notwithstanding the multi-ethnic composition of the society, issues related to inter-ethnic relations, integration and role of national minorities in the country or the Republic of Karakalpakstan neither featured in candidate platforms nor addressed by any candidate. No cases of discrimination on ethnic grounds related to the electoral process were reported to or observed by the OSCE/ODIHR EOM.

XII. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

The election dispute resolution mechanism is regulated by several laws and CEC resolutions and contains several gaps, ambiguities and inconsistencies.⁸⁴ Overall, there is a hierarchical structure as complaints against decisions, actions and inactions of election commissions may be filed with higher-level commissions. Appeals of PEC and DEC decisions are filed with the district courts, whereas CEC decisions may be challenged at the Supreme Court.

The law states that every citizen may file a complaint at the court and that the CEC hears reports from election commissions, political parties, state and local authorities and NGOs. It is unclear who can file complaints to DEC and PEC and on which issues. On election day, PECs are not required by law to maintain a complaint log and it is unclear whether voters, observers and PEC members may file written complaints about voting, counting and tabulation irregularities. This is not in line with international good practice, which prescribes that every voter should have the right to file a complaint to election commissions and the courts on every aspect of the electoral process.⁸⁵

The law does not prescribe deadlines for filing complaints and appeals to elections commissions. As a rule, election commissions and courts must decide on complaints within three days.⁸⁶ Complaints filed during the last six days prior to election day must be reviewed immediately. In contrast to complaints filed with courts, those submitted to election commissions do not require a public hearing with the presence of the parties concerned.⁸⁷ The CEC may invalidate an election, totally or partially. A CEC decision invalidating the election may only be appealed by candidates and should be filed to the Supreme Court within ten days following the publication of the election results. The law does not provide for requests for recounts or for the invalidation of results and therefore does not provide effective remedy on key aspects of the electoral process as per international good practice.⁸⁸

The OSCE/ODIHR EOM was not made aware of any formal complaints filed with PECs, DEC and the courts prior to, on or after election day. The CEC informed the OSCE/ODIHR EOM that it received 129 written applications, including 60 unrelated to the election, with the majority on simple inquiries

⁸⁴ The laws include the PEL, the Law on Suffrage, Chapter V of the Code of Administrative Responsibility and the Law on Applications of Citizens.

⁸⁵ Paragraphs II.3.3.d. and II.3.3.f. of the Code of Good Practice state that “The appeal body must have authority in particular over such matters as the right to vote– including electoral registers – and eligibility, the validity of candidatures, proper observance of election campaign rules and the outcome of the elections” and “All candidates and all voters registered in the constituency concerned must be entitled to appeal. A reasonable quorum may be imposed for appeals by voters on the results of elections.”

⁸⁶ Positively, for this election, a CEC resolution reduced from five to three days the deadline for PECs and DEC to adjudicate on complaints.

⁸⁷ Paragraph II.3.3.h. of the Code of Good Practice notes that “The applicant’s right to a hearing involving both parties must be protected”.

⁸⁸ Paragraph II.3.3.e. of the Code of Good Practice states that “The appeal body must have authority to annul elections where irregularities may have affected the outcome. It must be possible to annul the entire election or merely the results for one constituency or one polling station. In the event of annulment, a new election must be called in the area concerned”.

related to the election.⁸⁹ In addition, the CEC received 347 telephone inquiries of a similar nature, of which 102 were unrelated to the election.⁹⁰ The CEC does not collect information on complaints filed to DEC, PECs and the courts, which undermines its supervisory role. The CEC maintains a handwritten register of received complaints and inquiries, and does not publish any information pertaining to these matters. Both the CEC and the Ombudsman's Office operated hotlines for receiving election-related complaints and telephone inquiries. The latter announced that it received 746 telephone inquiries related to the election.⁹¹ Overall, the existing mechanisms to manage election complaints and appeals do not provide for a transparent and accountable system of dispute resolution.

To provide effective legal redress, the law should be amended to prescribe that every voter, party, candidate and observer may file a complaint on every aspect of the electoral process, including requests for recounts and the invalidation of election results, and prescribe a reasonable deadline for filing such complaints.

XIII. ELECTION OBSERVATION

Citizen observation is not provided for in the law contrary to OSCE commitments and despite previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendations.⁹² This lessens transparency and public confidence in the electoral process and is at odds with OSCE commitments.

To enhance transparency and in accordance with OSCE commitments, the law should explicitly provide for non-partisan citizen election observation at all stages of the electoral process.

Political party and international observers may observe all stages of the electoral process and receive copies of results protocols. Each political party was entitled to have one observer per polling station. According to the CEC, DEC accredited 37,352 party agents, including 9,339 each from the LDPU and DPU *Milli Tiklanish*, and 9,337 each from the SDPU *Adolat* and the PDPU.

Only international observers are entitled to conduct press conferences and give interviews. The CEC accredited some 548 international observers from 46 countries.⁹³

XIV. ELECTION DAY

On election day, serious procedural violations were observed during voting, counting and tabulation. On election day, the OSCE/ODIHR EOM observed opening in 84 polling stations, voting in 833 polling stations, counting in 81 polling stations and tabulation in all 14 DEC.

⁸⁹ Twenty were on supporting and meeting candidates, 2 on out-of country voting, 1 on voting with a temporary residence permit, 1 on early voting and 44 on other election-related issues.

⁹⁰ Including 53 on early voting, 31 on voting with temporary residence permit, 18 on supporting and meeting candidates, 11 on out-of country voting and 120 on other election-related issues.

⁹¹ Including 158 on campaigning, 141 on voter registration, 132 on early voting, 129 requests for mobile voting, 84 on documents required for voting, 61 on no receipt of a voting invitation and 27 on family voting.

⁹² The Independent Institute for Monitoring the Formation of Civil Society (IIMFC) informed the OSCE/ODIHR EOM of its election observation activities. The IIMFC was founded in 2003 by a number of government supported NGOs and public institutions; 70 per cent of its budget is derived from the state.

⁹³ Including the OSCE/ODIHR, the Association of World Election Bodies, the CIS, the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and representatives of foreign governments, election commissions, and diplomatic missions to Uzbekistan.

Party observers were present in most polling stations observed. The highest number of such observers was noted during voting with a relatively lower number during opening, counting and tabulation. In several cases, party observers reported they were employed as teachers in the same school where the polling station was located. This potentially raises questions regarding their independence vis-à-vis commissioners.⁹⁴ In addition, party observers appeared largely passive and indifferent to systematic procedural violations.

A. OPENING AND VOTING

Most polling stations opened on time and were well-equipped with all necessary materials. Opening was assessed positively in 75 of 84 observations, although in around half of polling stations observed, PECs did not announce the number of ballots received. While unauthorized persons were noted in 19 cases, observers reported interference in only 5 instances.

Voting was assessed negatively in 12 per cent of observations, which indicates significant violations. The most widespread irregularity reported by OSCE/ODIHR EOM observers was PECs not respecting safeguards to prevent multiple and proxy voting despite a concerted CEC campaign to address these malpractices. OSCE/ODIHR EOM observers witnessed proxy voting in six per cent of polling stations observed, while multiple or group voting was each observed in three per cent of polling stations.⁹⁵

To enhance integrity of the electoral process, more robust efforts are needed to address electoral fraud both through a continued awareness campaign targeting a general audience as well as specific groups such as political parties, polling staff and local authorities. Effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions against electoral fraud should be considered.

Proxy voting was often reflected in seemingly identical signatures on voter lists, as reported in 33 per cent of observations. In eight per cent of polling stations observed, voter identification was not consistently checked and in five per cent of observations voters were allowed to vote without identification; both of these indicate possible multiple voting.⁹⁶ Furthermore, observers reported that ballot boxes were not properly sealed in 5 per cent of polling stations, and indications of ballot box stuffing were noted in 18 cases, which is considerable. These violations raise serious questions about the overall integrity of the process and challenge the equality of the vote as required by paragraph 7.3 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document.

Unauthorized persons were present in 27 per cent of polling stations observed, often performing the duties of PEC members, and in 6 per cent of observations, interfered with or directed the work of PECs. At some polling stations, *mahalla* activists kept a record of voters and reported to the OSCE/ODIHR EOM that they would contact individuals who had not voted. This, coupled with observations of voters showing their marked ballots to persons inside the polling station (16 cases), could indicate that voters were compelled or influenced to vote (as reported in 22 observations).

The legal framework should clearly stipulate authorized persons who are permitted inside a polling station and authorities should consider mechanisms to ensure that unauthorized persons are neither permitted inside polling stations nor interfere in the work of polling staff.

⁹⁴ Many PEC members were teachers; PEC chairpersons were often headmasters of the school.

⁹⁵ Paragraph 21 of General Comment No. 25 to Article 25 of the ICCPR requires that: "The principle of one person, one vote must apply." See also paragraph 7.3 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document.

⁹⁶ In several instances, the OSCE/ODIHR EOM witnessed voters providing only invitation cards.

B. COUNTING

Counting was assessed considerably more negatively than voting with 46 observations noting serious violations. Significant violations indicated that an honest count, as required by paragraph 7.4 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document, was not ensured.

Serious procedural errors and omissions were noted in just over half of observations (42 cases), and commission members failed to adhere both to the sequence of procedures (49 cases) as well as to the necessary safeguards for ensuring an honest count. The sequence for ballot reconciliation was not followed, namely PEC members did not count or cancel unused ballots, in 21 and 36 cases, respectively. In 46 counts observed, PECs did not establish the number of ballots issued based on signatures in the voter lists, and in approximately three quarters of polling stations observed, they did not cross-check control equations prior to opening the boxes. In around half of the counts observed, observers noted that the procedure for processing voter lists was not respected, and in more than half of the cases, PECs did not announce the number of signatures in the voter lists, contrary to legal requirements.

Following the opening of boxes, OSCE/ODIHR EOM observers reported that in over one third of cases, the number of signatures on voter lists did not match the number of ballots in the ballot box. During counting, OSCE/ODIHR EOM observers noted indications of ballot box stuffing in 19 polling stations. These shortcomings raise considerable questions over the integrity of the election day process.

Transparency was negatively affected in approximately three quarters of counts observed as not all persons present could see the voter's mark on the ballot. OSCE/ODIHR EOM observers reported that PECs determined the validity of votes in an inconsistent and unreasonable manner in 18 and 27 counts, respectively. Observers reported that even though the will of the voter was clear on the ballot, some PECs invalidated ballots that contained any mark other than the one prescribed by the law.

The will of the voter should be respected and not be subject to interpretation by PEC members based on the type of mark on the ballot. The law should be amended to eliminate the arbitrary invalidation of ballots.

In half of the polling stations observed, PECs had difficulties in completing results protocols either due to their lack of understanding the procedures or a disregard for legal requirements. In 13 observations, OSCE/ODIHR EOM observers concluded that PECs deliberately falsified voter list entries, results or protocols. The OSCE/ODIHR EOM received 92 PEC results protocols, 26 of which were correctly completed. In the remaining 66 protocols, figures did not reconcile due to discrepancies between the number of ballots received by the PEC and the number of valid, invalid and unused ballots. PEC protocols were displayed in under half of the observations, limiting transparency. The law does not require PECs to publicly display results protocols.

C. TABULATION AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS

The PEL contains no description of the procedures for tabulating polling results. The OSCE/ODIHR EOM followed the handover and tabulation of PEC results protocols on election night and the period thereafter in all 14 DECs. The process was assessed negatively in eight cases. The tabulation process in the majority of DECs was expeditiously conducted. The process lacked procedural accuracy and transparency. A lack of transparency was often reported due to observers' limited view of procedures, restricted observation, and a lack of co-operation by some DECs.

In approximately one quarter of observations, PECs completed their protocols at the DEC premises or changed results protocols without a formal decision of the DEC, contrary to the law. In one of five observations, protocols did not reconcile. In many cases observed, DEC accepted PEC protocols without verifying whether figures in the protocols reconciled. Regrettably, DEC tally sheets (detailed summary sheets) reflecting results from all respective PECs were not available for public scrutiny and were treated by DEC as an internal document. Providing voters as well as other stakeholders with the opportunity to track vote counts from individual polling stations through the respective DEC would have further contributed to transparency and enhanced confidence in the process.

The CEC reported voter turnout of 87.8 per cent shortly after the closing of polls. It announced preliminary results on 5 December and approved final results on 9 December. The CEC published on its website the total number of registered voters, number of voters who voted and number of valid votes cast for each candidate with percentile figures. However, the CEC did not publish neither a detailed disaggregated data by polling stations nor a copy of the final CEC protocol.⁹⁷

To enhance transparency and confidence in the election results, preliminary and final results should be published immediately by the CEC on its website disaggregated by district and polling station. Furthermore, allowing public scrutiny of DEC tally sheets could further enhance stakeholder confidence.

XV. RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations as contained throughout the text are offered with a view to further enhance the conduct of elections in Uzbekistan and to support efforts to bring them fully in line with OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections. These recommendations should be read in conjunction with past OSCE/ODIHR recommendations that have not yet been addressed. The OSCE/ODIHR stands ready to assist the authorities of Uzbekistan to further improve the electoral process and to address the recommendations contained in this and previous reports.⁹⁸

A. PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Disproportionate or discriminatory legal restrictions on the freedom of association should be eliminated. In addition, restrictions on activities of civil society organizations should also be reviewed and amended to comply with the ICCPR and paragraphs 9.3 and 10.3 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document.
2. To ensure legal certainty, key aspects of the electoral process should be regulated by primary laws adopted by parliament. CEC resolutions should further clarify issues already regulated by laws. To ensure coherence of the legislation, consideration should be given to harmonizing legal provisions, including through a unified election code
3. All relevant laws and decrees should be reviewed and amended to ensure that any restrictions on fundamental freedoms of assembly, association and expression have the character of

⁹⁷ Paragraph 19 of the 2011 General Comment No. 34 to Article 19 of the ICCPR states that “State parties should proactively put in public domain Government information of public interest. State parties should make every effort to ensure easy, prompt, effective and practical access to such information”.

⁹⁸ In paragraph 25 of the 1999 OSCE Istanbul Document, OSCE participating States committed themselves “to follow up promptly the ODIHR’s election assessment and recommendations”.

exception, are imposed only when necessary in line with democratic principles, are proportionate with a legitimate aim and are not applied in an arbitrary and overly restrictive manner.

4. Restrictions on the right to be elected which conflict with OSCE commitments and other international standards should be removed from the legal framework. Self-nominated candidates should be allowed to stand for presidential elections.
5. Authorities should implement mechanisms to ensure a clear separation between the State and party to prevent candidates from using the advantage of their office for electoral purposes. In addition, an effective sanctioning mechanism against the misuse of administrative resources should be established.
6. Criminal defamation provisions protecting the reputation of candidates during an election, as well as general provisions on insult, libel and the dissemination of false information should be repealed and replaced with reasonable and proportional civil sanctions.
7. Legislation governing media should provide clear and exhaustive criteria for the denial of registration, suspension of media outlets, and content removal and the blocking of online national and international media should be established and consistently and transparently applied by an independent regulatory body. All such decisions should be publicly available.
8. To provide effective legal redress, the law should be amended to prescribe that every voter, party, candidate and observer may file a complaint on every aspect of the electoral process, including requests for recounts and the invalidation of election results, and prescribe a reasonable deadline for filing such complaints.
9. To enhance transparency and in accordance with OSCE commitments, the law should explicitly provide for non-partisan citizen election observation at all stages of the electoral process.
10. To enhance integrity of the electoral process, more robust efforts are needed to address electoral fraud both through a continued awareness campaign targeting a general audience as well as specific groups such as political parties, poll workers, youth, women and local authorities. Effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions against electoral fraud should be considered.

B. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Election Administration

11. The law should be amended to include clear, well-sequenced procedures and safeguards related to counting and tabulation. On the basis of the law, the CEC should elaborate step-by-step instructions for lower-level commissions.
12. To ensure the secrecy of the vote, ballot design should preclude any discernible association between a ballot and a specific voter.

Voter Registration

13. The restriction of suffrage rights for citizens serving prison terms regardless of the severity of the crime should be reconsidered to ensure proportionality between the limitation imposed and

the severity of the offence. The blanket restrictions on suffrage rights of persons with mental disabilities should be reconsidered or decided on a case-by-case basis, depending on specific circumstances. The authorities should consider ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

14. Consideration could be given to developing a centralized voter register that is regularly updated and allows for crosschecks. Procedures for producing voter lists should be clearly defined and applied in a uniform manner.
15. Consideration could be given to removing the possibility for voters to register on election day to avoid the possibility of multiple voting. Should election day registration be retained, additional entries should be permitted only in accordance with a clearly defined procedure subject to judicial control.
16. To enhance transparency, the CEC should be legally required to publish disaggregated information by DEC and PEC on the total number of registered voters prior to election day as well as those registering on election day.

Election Campaign

17. Electoral stakeholders should be able to exercise their right to assemble during an election, including during the pre-election and post-election periods. The law should be amended to require a simple notification rather than an authorization procedure

Campaign Finance

18. To enable voters to support their preferred contestant, consideration should be given to permitting direct private funding to a candidate's campaign.
19. To enhance transparency, consideration should be given to introducing legal requirements for periodic, timely and transparent reporting on campaign income and expenditures, including prior to election day. In addition, oversight authorities should be required to publish their conclusions. Effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions for breach of campaign finance regulations could be introduced.

Media

20. The requirement to register online information dissemination platforms, including blogs, as media outlets should be lifted and the regulatory framework governing online communication should be brought in line with relevant international standards.

Participation of National Minorities

21. In addition to Russian and Karakalpak languages, consideration should be given to providing voter information and election materials in other minority languages, especially in areas with concentrations of those minority communities.

Election Day and Announcement of Results

22. The legal framework should clearly stipulate authorized persons who are permitted inside a polling station and authorities should consider mechanisms to ensure that unauthorized persons are neither permitted inside polling stations nor interfere in the work of polling staff.
23. The will of the voter should be respected and not be subject to interpretation by PEC members based on the type of mark on the ballot. The law should be amended to eliminate the arbitrary invalidation of ballots.
24. To enhance transparency and confidence in the election results, preliminary and final results should be published immediately by the CEC on its website disaggregated by district and polling station. Furthermore, allowing public scrutiny of DEC tally sheets could further enhance stakeholder confidence.

ANNEX I: FINAL ELECTION RESULTS⁹⁹

Total number of registered voters	20,461,805
Total number of voters who voted	17,951,667
Total Number of valid votes	17,16,938
Turnout (percentage)	87.73

Candidate	Valid votes	%
Shavkat Mirziyoyev	15,906,724	88.61
Xatamjon Ketmonov	669,187	3.73
Narimon Umarov	619,972	3.46
Sarvar Otamuratov	421,055	2.35

⁹⁹ As per information provided by the CEC from its website.

ANNEX II: LIST OF OBSERVERS IN THE OSCE/ODIHR EOM

OSCE/ODIHR EOM Short-term Observers

Dita BICANOVSKA	Czech Republic
Ales JAKUBEC	Czech Republic
Jana ZAVODNIKOVA	Czech Republic
Rasmus Fonnesbæk ANDERSEN	Denmark
Ib Kok HANSEN	Denmark
Peder Beyerholm LARSEN	Denmark
Merete LAUBJERG	Denmark
Kirsten Pia Borkfelt MOGENSEN	Denmark
Niels Erik NIELSEN	Denmark
Grete SKOV	Denmark
Erik THAU-KNUDSEN	Denmark
Kerstin MAHLAPUU	Estonia
Ly METSIS	Estonia
Hannu Uolevi ELFVENGREN	Finland
Salla NAZARENKO	Finland
Marjut SAVOLAINEN	Finland
Mathieu BOULEGUE	France
Adriana DOMAGALA	France
Irène KETOFF	France
Pascal SALAGNAC	France
Valerie Florence ADAMS	Germany
Sabine Elisabeth Margarete ALCK	Germany
Friedhelm BALTES-MEYER ZU NATRUP, DR	Germany
Melanie BREITER	Germany
Kerstin DOKTER	Germany
Maria Irene FELLMANN	Germany
Brigitte HEUER	Germany
Renate Eleonore HOLZAPFEL	Germany
Rainer Werner KLEFFEL	Germany
Jan KRETZSCHMAR	Germany
Wolfgang Dietmar LICHTER	Germany
Hans Christian LOESEKE	Germany
Wolfgang MATTKE	Germany
Christina MüSCHEN	Germany
Faik Yanki PüRSÜN	Germany
Eckart ROHDE	Germany
Christine ROSENBERGER	Germany
Oliver SCHEEL	Germany
Siegfried SCHULZ	Germany
Jan-Marius TILLMANN	Germany

Anne UHLIG	Germany
Martin WOLFF	Germany
Dóra LUTZER	Hungary
Lívia TRESTYÁNSZKY	Hungary
Adrienne BOYLE	Ireland
Marie CROSS	Ireland
Terence Duffy	Ireland
Vincent Pearse MC Corley	Ireland
Eimear O'Casey	Ireland
Audrey RYAN	Ireland
Francesco BRUSCOLI	Italy
Alberto LAMPASONA	Italy
Marco MARSILI	Italy
Arianna SCIONE	Italy
Antonia SCIONE	Italy
Azamat ALDAMZHAROV	Kazakhstan
Nurbolat ALIMBAYEV	Kazakhstan
Arnur BAYAKENOV	Kazakhstan
Zhandos BUKHBANTAYEV	Kazakhstan
Rustem JAMANKULOV	Kazakhstan
Ilyas KARSAKOV	Kazakhstan
Ilyas KURMANOV	Kazakhstan
Daniyar NURALDINOV	Kazakhstan
Nurzhan RAKHMETOV	Kazakhstan
Zhenis UMBETOV	Kazakhstan
Harijs BATRAGS	Latvia
Arve BØRSTAD	Norway
Elise Luhr DIETRICHSON	Norway
Kristine HØYLAND	Norway
Frank Ronny JOHANSEN	Norway
Marte Bogen SINDERUD	Norway
Lisa Knatterud WOLD	Norway
Marta DABROWSKA	Poland
Dorota KROLAK	Poland
Anna KRZYSZTOFIK	Poland
Mircea LAMATIC	Romania
Sorin Vasile MOLDOVAN	Romania
Ayrat ABDULLIN	Russian Federation
Enver AKHMEDOV	Russian Federation
Andrey ALEKSEEV	Russian Federation
Vladimir ANDRIANOV	Russian Federation
Ruslan ARUTIUNOV	Russian Federation
Sergey BABURKIN	Russian Federation
Dmitry BAGDULIN	Russian Federation

Alexander BEDRITSKIY	Russian Federation
Alexander BORISOV	Russian Federation
Mikhail BOROVKOV	Russian Federation
Natalia BRONNIKOVA	Russian Federation
Alexey DOROVSKIKH	Russian Federation
Varvara DRONOVA	Russian Federation
Rafael GEVORKYAN	Russian Federation
Alena GUDKOVA	Russian Federation
Alexander IGNATOV	Russian Federation
Dzhalil KIEKBAEV	Russian Federation
Mikhail KOKOREV	Russian Federation
Ekaterina KOPYLOVA	Russian Federation
Mariia KOROTINA	Russian Federation
Anna KOZINA	Russian Federation
Eldar KURBANOV	Russian Federation
Dmitry MAKAROV	Russian Federation
Mikhail MARKOVETS	Russian Federation
Alexey NOVOSELOV	Russian Federation
Konstantin OSIPOV	Russian Federation
Larisa POLUSHINA	Russian Federation
Alexandr ROGOV	Russian Federation
Igor SHAKTAR-OOL	Russian Federation
Yury SHAPOVALOV	Russian Federation
Evhenii TEREKHIN	Russian Federation
Svyatoslav TERENCEV	Russian Federation
Ksenia VERKHOLANTSEVA	Russian Federation
Iulia VOROBEOVA	Russian Federation
Petr YAKHMENEV	Russian Federation
Alina ZOLOTAREVA	Russian Federation
Iza TRSAR	Slovenia
Raphaël BERGER	Switzerland
Francine JOHN	Switzerland
Zarah SCHMIDT	Switzerland
Alexandra VON ARX	Switzerland
Mehmet Munis DIRIK	Turkey
Abebayo ADETONA	United Kingdom
Fiona Diana ANDERSON	United Kingdom
Norma DE LA CRUZ	United Kingdom
Jayne FLANNERY	United Kingdom
Emily Sarah FRADGLEY	United Kingdom
Dominic Rupert David HOWELL	United Kingdom
Jan LASOCKI	United Kingdom
Christopher Stuart LEVICK	United Kingdom
Kate MALLINSON	United Kingdom

Andrew MCENTEE	United Kingdom
Sarah Louise MURRELL	United Kingdom
Mark PASCOE	United Kingdom
Richard WOOD	United Kingdom
Robert BALANOFF	United States
Andral BRATTON	United States
Barbara CATES	United States
Jeffrey CHINN	United States
Eric FEY	United States
Olivier Chen GARAUD	United States
Kenneth HILL	United States
Ernest Milton JONES	United States
Mary Kay JUDY	United States
Claire KAISER	United States
David KUENNEN	United States
Melinda Marie LORD	United States
Nancy LUBIN	United States
Michael MOZUR	United States
Thambydurai (Kumar) MUTHUKUMARASWAMY	United States
Emily ROME	United States
Lauren SKOMPINSKI	United States
Daniel YASTISHOCK	United States

LONG-TERM OBSERVERS

OSCE/ODIHR EOM Core Team

Ambassador Peter TEJLER	Head of Mission	Sweden
Hanna EFREMENKO		Belarus
Ivan TSIKOTA		Belarus
Vedrana HALILOVIĆ		Croatia
Kakha INAISHVILI		Georgia
Lela TSAAVA		Georgia
Elissavet KARAGIANNIDOU		Greece
Inta LASE		Latvia
Jurga LUKŠAITĖ-ROEHLING		Lithuania
Valeriu MIJA		Moldova
Malgorzata GRABOWSKA		Poland
Katarzyna JANKI-KOWALCZYK		Poland
Przemysław LASKOWSKI		Poland
Stefan SZWED		Poland
Andrey KHANJIN		Russian Federation
Ranko VUKČEVIĆ		Serbia
Robert BYSTRICKY		Slovakia

Anders ERIKSSON
Polyna LEMOS

Sweden
United Kingdom

OSCE/ODIHR EOM Long-term Observers

Andrei KRASNYANSKY
Tomas TRAMPOTA
Mette SELCHAU
Henrik WESTERBY
Alain Bruno Claude CHABOD
Gottfried BRAMER
Hartwig Guntram Hans KABOTH
Anne RENNSCHMID
Michael John VERLING
Agatha Maria Johanna DE WIT
Toril LUND
Igor CHAMOV
Yulia KUDENEEVA
Aleksandr PASHEDKO
Vsevolod PEREVOZCHIKOV
Diana Franca FERRARI
Alexander Newton ANDERSON
Gillian Elisabeth GLOYER
Shane Kyung AHN
Robert Iverson PAULLIN

Belarus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Denmark
France
Germany
Germany
Germany
Ireland
Netherlands
Norway
Russian Federation
Russian Federation
Russian Federation
Russian Federation
Switzerland
United Kingdom
United Kingdom
United States
United States

ABOUT THE OSCE/ODIHR

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) is the OSCE's principal institution to assist participating States "to ensure full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, to abide by the rule of law, to promote principles of democracy and (...) to build, strengthen and protect democratic institutions, as well as promote tolerance throughout society" (1992 Helsinki Summit Document). This is referred to as the OSCE human dimension.

The OSCE/ODIHR, based in Warsaw (Poland) was created as the Office for Free Elections at the 1990 Paris Summit and started operating in May 1991. One year later, the name of the Office was changed to reflect an expanded mandate to include human rights and democratization. Today it employs over 130 staff.

The OSCE/ODIHR is the lead agency in Europe in the field of **election observation**. Every year, it coordinates and organizes the deployment of thousands of observers to assess whether elections in the OSCE region are conducted in line with OSCE Commitments, other international standards for democratic elections and national legislation. Its unique methodology provides an in-depth insight into the electoral process in its entirety. Through assistance projects, the OSCE/ODIHR helps participating States to improve their electoral framework.

The Office's **democratization** activities include: rule of law, legislative support, democratic governance, migration and freedom of movement, and gender equality. The OSCE/ODIHR implements a number of targeted assistance programmes annually, seeking to develop democratic structures.

The OSCE/ODIHR also assists participating States' in fulfilling their obligations to promote and protect **human rights** and fundamental freedoms consistent with OSCE human dimension commitments. This is achieved by working with a variety of partners to foster collaboration, build capacity and provide expertise in thematic areas including human rights in the fight against terrorism, enhancing the human rights protection of trafficked persons, human rights education and training, human rights monitoring and reporting, and women's human rights and security.

Within the field of **tolerance** and **non-discrimination**, the OSCE/ODIHR provides support to the participating States in strengthening their response to hate crimes and incidents of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance. The OSCE/ODIHR's activities related to tolerance and non-discrimination are focused on the following areas: legislation; law enforcement training; monitoring, reporting on, and following up on responses to hate-motivated crimes and incidents; as well as educational activities to promote tolerance, respect, and mutual understanding.

The OSCE/ODIHR provides advice to participating States on their policies on **Roma and Sinti**. It promotes capacity-building and networking among Roma and Sinti communities, and encourages the participation of Roma and Sinti representatives in policy-making bodies.

All ODIHR activities are carried out in close co-ordination and co-operation with OSCE participating States, OSCE institutions and field operations, as well as with other international organizations.

More information is available on the ODIHR website (www.osce.org/odihr).