

STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

**STRATEGIC PLAN**  
FOR THE PERIOD 2021 – 2024

The Strategic Plan of the State Election Commission for the period 2021-2024 was developed in the frames of the project „Support to Electoral Reforms“ of the Swiss Embassy in North Macedonia, implemented by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and The National Youth Council of Macedonia (NYCM). The opinions and content presented in this document do not reflect the opinions of the donor, project, or implementing partners.

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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The State Election Commission (SEC) is an expert, professional, independent institution whose work is guided by the Constitution, existing laws, and generally accepted international standards and conventions. In keeping with global trends, the SEC is introducing new election technologies in order to provide all electoral stakeholders equal access to their voting rights, as well as to ensure successful conduct of elections.

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the SEC continued its focused work and developed a Draft Strategic Plan for the period 2021–2024. Building upon previous strategic plans, this Plan represents an important roadmap for SEC's long-term directions, goals, and activities. Aware of the challenges ahead, SEC President and its members prepared a strategic plan that purports to address all pending issues against a framework of universal norms and principles.

The Strategic Plan 2021-2024 is a result of concerted efforts, discussions and suggestions of electoral stakeholders, made towards organizing fair and free democratic elections. The main goal of this Plan is to set up a four-year strategic framework that will work towards advancing SEC's work by maintaining a credible electoral system, continued improvements of the election process and continued support to all election participants in the exercise of their voting rights.

To achieve this, electoral stakeholders have identified seven priority areas for improvement: secondary legislation and its effective implementation; methods and procedures for voter register maintenance; efficient activities of election management bodies; citizen awareness, knowledge and trust in the election process; knowledge and skills of the election administration in executing electoral tasks; SEC internal organization and functioning; and integrating gender aspects in SEC activities.

We hope that the successful implementation of this Plan will contribute to the conduct of fair, credible and democratic elections, with due respect to democratic rights.

State Election Commission  
President  
Prof. Dr. Aleksandar Dashtevski



## **VISION of the State Election Commission**

The State Election Commission, as an expert, professional and independent institution, is governed in its work by the Constitution, the laws and the generally accepted international standards, conventions, and good electoral practices. In line with international trends, the SEC introduces new technologies to improve the election process. Through efficient and effective conduct of elections, the SEC ensures that all stakeholders have equal access to exercise their voting rights.

## **MISSION of the State Election Commission**

The State Election Commission guarantees equal, universal, and direct right to vote, exercised at free elections by secret vote, and provides equal conditions for all election participants. Through successful conduct of elections, the State Election Commission lays the foundations of democracy and contributes to increased trust in the election process and democratization of the institutions of the Republic of North Macedonia.

## **ADHERENCE to the Constitution and other laws**

In its operations, the SEC applies the Constitution, statutory law, and sub-statutory instruments of the Republic of North Macedonia, and complies with international standards and good electoral practices.

### **Members of the State Election Commission**

**Aleksandar Dashtevski** – President

**Ditmire Shehu** – Vice President

**Boris Kondarko** – member

**Oliver Ristovski** – member

**Radica Risteska** – member

**Boban Stojanoski** – member

**Krenar Loga** – member

# INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Plan of the State Election Commission (hereinafter referred to as the SEC) covers the period 2021–2024 and represents a roadmap that guides the work of the SEC by setting strategic directions, goals and activities defined therein.

While the complex circumstances and challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic affected the development of the Plan, they did not affect the participatory nature of the process.

The SEC President and its members, as well as staff of the SEC Secretariat, actively participated in the preparation of this document including by:

- Review of the achieved results, fulfillment of the commitments and activities outlined in the previous Strategic Plan
- Participation in a one-day workshop (November 2020) to review the mission, vision, and values of the SEC, conduct a SWOT analysis and revise the strategic priorities
- Participation in a two-day workshop (25 and 26 February 2021) in which the strategic priorities were finalized and a new, additional strategic priority was agreed, along with strategic goals and activities that will lead to the fulfillment of these priorities. In addition, indicators that will measure the success of these activities were revised and agreed at the same workshop
- Provision of additional inputs for the preparation of the draft version of the Strategic Plan

The result of the activities listed above is this Strategic Plan, which details the methods and actions for implementation of SEC's four-year strategy.



## GOAL OF SEC'S STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 2021-2024

The main goal of the Strategic Plan is to set a medium-term four-year strategy to advance the work of the SEC by maintaining a credible election system, continued improvement of the election process and continued support to election participants to exercise their voting rights. In doing so, the SEC will continue to operate in accordance with international standards and good practices for the conduct of quality electoral processes, safeguard its professionalism and independence, strengthen its capacities, increase public awareness, and ensure gender mainstreaming in all areas of responsibility.

To achieve this, the SEC Strategic Plan for 2021–2024 contains the following seven priorities, closely aligned with the mission, vision and focus of the SEC:

- 1.** Improved quality of secondary legislation and its efficient application
- 2.** Improved methods and procedures for voter register maintenance
- 3.** Improved efficiency of election management bodies
- 4.** Increased citizens' awareness, knowledge, and trust in the election process
- 5.** Improved knowledge and skills of the election administration
- 6.** Improved internal organization and functioning of the SEC
- 7.** Integrated gender aspects in SEC activities



# OVERVIEW OF PRIORITIES AND GOALS

## FOR THE PERIOD 2021-2024

### PRIORITY 1

#### IMPROVED QUALITY OF SECONDARY LEGISLATION AND ITS EFFICIENT APPLICATION

Clear and precise procedures for official actions by the Commission will be established by improving the quality of secondary (sub-statutory) legislation adopted by the SEC. Its application will improve the efficiency, functionality, and quality of the work of the SEC, enhance transparency, public awareness, and accountability, as well as strengthen the professionalism, impartiality, and depoliticization of SEC's work. This will increase the trust of the public and the electoral stakeholders in the SEC and the election process.

Enhancing the quality of sub-statutory instruments and their effective implementation is a priority that will contribute to improving the work of election management bodies. The systematization of regulations and development of a register for each type of elections will improve compliance with sub-statutory instruments and their timely revision and amendment, making them more accessible and applicable for all participants in the election process.

To achieve this priority, the SEC set the following goals:

- Goal 1.1** Improved procedure for enactment of sub-statutory instruments by the SEC
- Goal 1.2** Systematization of election legislation, making it more accessible and applicable for all participants in the election process



## PRIORITY 2

### IMPROVED METHODS AND PROCEDURES FOR VOTER REGISTER MAINTENANCE

Improved methods and procedures for maintenance of the voter register will facilitate a full takeover of the voter register by the SEC. Despite the legal requirement that the voter register is maintained by the SEC, its organizational-technical and methodological processing rests with the State Statistical Office, mandated to do so by Article 194 paragraph 2 of the Electoral Code.

The development of a special software solution for voter data management (VIMS) is in the final stage; this will integrate all of SEC's activities and efforts to further enhance the accuracy of data in the voter register.

The SEC is solely responsible for maintaining the voter register and voting rights, and is mandated to continuously improve the process and methods of maintenance. In addition, the exchange of information with other institutions will contribute to enhanced accuracy of the voter register, which will effectively result in strengthening the trust of the general public and election participants in the voter register and in the overall election process.

To achieve this priority, the SEC set the following goal:

**Goal 2.1** Established system for keeping records of eligible voters and maintenance of the voter register

## PRIORITY 3

### IMPROVED EFFICIENCY OF ELECTION MANAGEMENT BODIES

Improving the efficiency of the election management bodies will have a direct impact on the efficiency of the election process itself. This will be primarily achieved by improving the process of handover, receipt and storage of ballots and election materials, standardization of election materials, improving the services provided to the SEC during elections, as well as by strengthening coordination and communication with lower-level election bodies and SEC regional offices and branches.

To achieve this priority, the SEC set the following goal:

- Goal 3.1** Improving the process of handover, receipt and storage of ballots and election materials
- Goal 3.2** Improving the quality and efficiency of services provided to the SEC during elections
- Goal 3.3** Strengthening the coordination and communication with lower-level election bodies and SEC regional offices

## PRIORITY 4

### STRENGTHENED CITIZENS' AWARENESS, KNOWLEDGE AND TRUST IN THE ELECTION PROCESS

Citizens' awareness, knowledge and trust in the election process is of crucial importance to SEC. Increasing citizens' awareness about the importance of their participation in elections gives greater legitimacy to the democratic processes in the country, derived from voting (formation of a government, election of a president of the Republic). Increased knowledge about the election process enables the citizens to familiarize with their rights and duties, as well as with the procedures and functioning of the election management bodies. These, in turn, would lead to prevention of potential irregularities and difficulties arising from insufficient understanding of the process. Advanced citizens' awareness and knowledge will also contribute to increasing their trust in the SEC.

To achieve this priority, the SEC set the following goals:

- Goal 4.1** Development of new citizen and voter education programs
- Goal 4.2** Application of new techniques and methods for citizen and voter education



## PRIORITY 5

### IMPROVED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF THE ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Improved knowledge and skills of the election administration will ensure consistent compliance with provisions of the Electoral Code. The election administration will be able to respond in a timely manner to possible challenges before, during and after elections.

By achieving this priority, the SEC expects to have a strengthened pool of trainers with appropriate level of skills and knowledge to educate the entire election administration (over 36,000 people) in a very short period of time, through a uniform comprehensive training.

To achieve this priority, the SEC set the following goals:

- Goal 5.1** Improved programs, techniques, and methods for education of the election administration
- Goal 5.2** Continued professional development of educators/trainers

## PRIORITY 6

### IMPROVED INTERNAL ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONING OF THE SEC

Improvement of the internal organization and functioning of the SEC is a necessary requirement for smooth implementation of SEC's Mission. For this reason, the sixth priority aims to improve the organizational structure and allocation of tasks and responsibilities within the SEC Secretariat by introducing internal procedures for key work processes, regulating the work of auxiliary bodies, and introducing a methodological approach to human resources management that will also improve internal management of the SEC. These will be supported by adequate improvements of ICT infrastructure and introduction of security standards.

To achieve this priority, the SEC set the following goals:

- Goal 6.1** Improved organizational structure and allocation of responsibilities in the SEC Secretariat

- Goal 6.2** Introduction of a management system for the SEC Secretariat during an election process
- Goal 6.3** Improved SEC internal management and horizontal and vertical communication
- Goal 6.4** Improved ICT infrastructure, network and interoperable systems, and ICT system security
- Goal 6.5** A modern process for planning, managing, and reporting on SEC's financial resources

## PRIORITY 7

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### INTEGRATION OF GENDER ASPECTS IN SEC ACTIVITIES

International practices show that an election commission that integrates aspects of gender equality into its work can play an important role in increasing women's participation in election processes. For the SEC, inclusion of gender aspects and integration of gender-sensitive practices are a novelty, being introduced for the first time with this Strategic Plan as an expression of the institution's readiness and commitment to work towards their realization.

To achieve this priority, the SEC set the following goals:

- Goal 7.1** Integration of gender aspects into SEC's internal functioning
- Goal 7.2** Integration of gender aspects into SEC's election activities



# OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND INDICATORS

FOR THE PERIOD 2021-2024

PRIORITY 1 – IMPROVED QUALITY OF SECONDARY LEGISLATION AND ITS EFFICIENT APPLICATION		
GOAL	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS
<b>Goal 1.1</b> Improving the procedure for enactment of sub-statutory instruments by the SEC	1.1.1 Establishing a system for evaluation of applicability of sub-statutory instruments	<i>1.1.1.1 Procedure/methodology for evaluation of applicability of sub-statutory instruments developed and enacted</i>
		<i>1.1.1.2 Staff training on implementing the procedure for evaluation of applicability of sub-statutory instruments delivered</i>
	1.1.2 Increasing transparency, inclusivity, and efficiency of SEC's procedure for enactment of sub-statutory instruments	<i>1.1.2.1 Number of consultations held with stakeholders</i>
		<i>1.1.2.2 Number of election forms and templates made available to the public, including to political parties, civil society, and voters (via SEC website, electronic distribution, information through media, education etc.)</i>
	1.1.3 Continued monitoring of statutory instruments, revision and amendment	<i>1.1.3.1 Number of amended sub-statutory instruments</i>
		<i>1.1.3.2 Number of supplemented sub-statutory instruments</i>
<i>1.1.3.3 Number of amended and supplemented sub-statutory instruments</i>		
<b>Goal 1.2</b> Systematizing electoral legislation and facilitating its application for all election participants	1.2.1 Applicability review of instruments	<i>1.2.1.1 Number of reviews performed</i>
	1.2.2 Development of a register by type of election	<i>1.2.2.1 Register developed</i>
	1.2.3 Facilitating access to electoral regulations for election participants	<i>1.2.3.1 Comprehensive and up-to-date database of regulations established</i>
		<i>1.2.3.2 Functional electronic tool for browsing and easy access to electoral regulations created</i>

**PRIORITY 2 – IMPROVED METHODS AND PROCEDURES FOR VOTER REGISTER MAINTENANCE**

GOAL	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS
<p><b>Goal 2.1</b> Establishing a record-keeping system for eligible voters and maintenance of the voter register</p>	<p>2.1.1 Creating a functional information system for organizational-technical and methodological processing of the voter register and electronic management of data on voters, polling stations, and electoral districts</p>	<p>2.1.1.1 <i>Information system for organizational-technical and methodological processing of the voter register put in place for the next election</i></p>
		<p>2.1.1.2 <i>Number of instructional training events on use of the system for SEC staff</i></p>
	<p>2.1.2 Harmonization of sub-statutory instruments related to updating of the voter register</p>	<p>2.1.2.1 <i>Number of harmonized sub-statutory instruments</i></p>
	<p>2.1.3 Creating conditions for data exchange with relevant institutions within the interoperability system</p>	<p>2.1.3.1 <i>Number of signed memoranda of cooperation regarding data exchange with other institutions within the interoperability system</i></p>
	<p>2.1.4 Improving out-of-country voter registration procedures and systems</p>	<p>2.1.4.1 <i>Procedure for out-of-country voter registration improved in accordance with the established system for organizational-technical and methodological processing of the voter register</i></p>



### PRIORITY 3 – IMPROVED EFFICIENCY OF ELECTION MANAGEMENT BODIES

GOAL	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS
<b>Goal 3.1</b> Improving the process of handover, receipt and storage of ballots and election materials	3.1.1 Establishing written procedures for handover of election materials from SEC to MEC, MEC to EB and vice-versa; MEC to SEC	<i>3.1.1.1 Number of procedures developed</i>
<b>Goal 3.2</b> Improving quality and efficiency of services provided to the SEC during elections	3.2.1 Timely and transparent procurement	<i>3.2.1.1 Number of direct-negotiation procurement procedures without opening public call</i>
<b>Goal 3.3</b> Strengthening the coordination and communication with lower-level election bodies and SEC regional offices	3.3.1 Defining a procedure – using an instruction or guideline – for communication between the SEC with MEC and EBs	<i>3.3.1.1 Communication procedure established</i>



**PRIORITY 4 – IMPROVED CITIZENS’ AWARENESS, KNOWLEDGE AND TRUST IN THE ELECTION PROCESS**

GOAL	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS
<p><b>Goal 4.1</b> Developing new programs, techniques, and methods for citizen and voter education</p>	4.1.1 Improving programs for citizen and voter education, including programs adapted to special categories of voters	4.1.1.1 Improved citizen and voter education programs on voting procedures and exercise of voting rights
		4.1.1.2 Improved education programs for special categories of voters
	4.1.2 Certifying citizen education and information campaigns	4.1.2.1 Number of certified campaigns
	4.1.3 Developing pre-election information campaigns for direct communication with the public and broadcasting in relevant media	4.1.3.1 Number of pre-election citizen and voter information campaigns
		4.1.3.2 Number of media broadcasting the campaigns
		4.1.3.3 Number of information materials developed for voters
		4.1.3.4 Number of materials developed for special groups of voters
		4.1.3.5 Number of materials distributed
		4.1.3.6 Number of videos developed
		4.1.3.7 Number of simulations developed
	4.1.4 Creating a campaign for strengthening citizens’ trust in the voter register and their cooperation in the maintenance and updating of the voter register	4.1.4.1 Number of campaigns carried out
		4.1.4.2 Percentage of citizens with increased trust in the SEC
		4.1.4.3 Number of media broadcasting the campaigns
		4.1.4.4 Number of briefings/ presentations with target groups on voter register issues



**PRIORITY 4 – IMPROVED CITIZENS’ AWARENESS, KNOWLEDGE AND TRUST IN THE ELECTION PROCESS**

GOAL	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS
<p><b>Goal 4.2</b> Using new techniques and methods for citizen and voter education</p>	<p>4.2.1 Improving information materials for education of citizens (video recordings, posters, leaflets etc.)</p>	<p>4.2.1.1 <i>Number of disseminated education and information materials</i></p>
		<p>4.2.1.2 <i>Number of media where education and information materials are disseminated</i></p>
		<p>4.2.1.3 <i>Percentage of survey respondents who expressed favorable opinions about the information/education materials</i></p>
	<p>4.2.2 Creating and regular updating of electronic pages and interactive networks (Facebook, Twitter) during elections and in-between elections;</p>	<p>4.2.2.1 <i>Number of posts on SEC Facebook page on a weekly basis during election period</i></p>
		<p>4.2.2.2 <i>Number of posts on SEC Twitter page on a weekly basis during election period</i></p>
		<p>4.2.2.3 <i>Number of posts on the SEC Facebook page on a weekly basis during in-between elections period</i></p>
		<p>4.2.2.4 <i>Number of posts on the SEC Twitter page on a weekly basis during a period in-between elections</i></p>
	<p>4.2.3 Creating and periodic publication of electronic newsletter on SEC activities;</p>	<p>4.2.3.1 <i>Number of electronic newsletters about activities of the SEC published per year</i></p>

**PRIORITY 5 –IMPROVED ELECTION ADMINISTRATION’S KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN CONDUCTING ELECTIONS**

GOAL	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS
<p><b>Goal 5.1</b> Improving programs, techniques and methods for education of the election administration</p>	5.1.1 Updating the programs for education of the electoral administration	<i>5.1.1.1 Number of adopted citizen and voter education programs</i>
	5.1.2 Improving the education materials for the election administration (manual, video manual, presentations, online courses, etc.)	<i>5.1.2.1 Number of adopted education materials for the election administration</i>
		<i>5.1.2.2 Percentage of survey respondents who expressed the most favorable opinion about the education materials</i>
	5.1.3 Introducing creative tools for interactive and individualized continued education of the election administration (e.g. webinar, online tests)	<i>5.1.3.1 Number of creative educational tools put into use</i>
		<i>5.1.3.2 Number of developed, adopted, and published webinars on the SEC website</i>
<i>5.1.3.3 Number of users of the new online solutions</i>		
5.1.4 Certification of training programs delivered by the SEC to members of lower-level election bodies	<i>5.1.4.1 Number of certified training programs put into use for education of election bodies</i>	
<p><b>Goal 5.2</b> Continuing professional development of educators</p>	5.2.1 Conducting training for educators	<i>5.2.1.1 Number of implemented training events for educators</i>
	5.2.2 Improving the program for training and advanced training of educators	<i>5.2.2.1 Improved program for continued training of educators created before the next election</i>
		<i>5.2.2.2 Improved program for advanced continued training of educators created before the next election</i>
	5.2.3 Using the BRIDGE (Building Resources in Democracy, Governance, and Elections) methodology in delivering continued training for educators	<i>5.2.3.1 Number of educator training events carried out using the BRIDGE methodology</i>



**PRIORITY 6 – IMPROVED INTERNAL ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONING OF SEC**

GOAL	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS
<p><b>Goal 6.1</b> Improving the organizational structure and allocation of responsibilities in the SEC Secretariat</p>	6.1.1 Enactment and implementation of internal procedures for operational processes	<i>6.1.1.1 ISO 9001:2015 quality standard introduced</i>
	<p><b>Goal 6.2</b> Introducing management system for the Secretariat during an election process</p>	6.2.1 Introducing methodological approach to planning and managing human resources
<i>6.2.1.2 Annual employment plans enacted in accordance with established methodology.</i>		
6.2.2 Training needs assessment and conducting functional programs for specialized staff training		<i>6.2.2.1 Training needs assessment carried out and updated on an annual basis</i>
		<i>6.2.2.2 Identified internal and external opportunities and financial resources for participation and/or organization of specialized training</i>

**PRIORITY 6 – IMPROVED INTERNAL ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONING OF SEC**

GOAL	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS
<p><b>Goal 6.3</b> Improving the internal management and horizontal and vertical communication</p>	<p>6.3.1 Enactment and effective implementation of new Rules of Procedure for the SEC</p>	<p><i>6.3.1.1 New Rules of Procedure adopted for the SEC</i></p>
	<p>6.3.2 Developing a system for vertical and horizontal communication and information exchange among the staff, according to established internal procedures and standards</p>	<p><i>6.3.2.1 Improved system for electronic document management</i></p>
	<p>6.3.3 Implementing the strategic and annual work plans for internal audit in the SEC</p>	<p><i>6.3.3.1 Number of reports from audits carried out in accordance with the adopted annual auditing plans in the SEC</i></p>
		<p><i>6.3.3.2 Percentage of implemented recommendations</i></p>
	<p>6.3.4 Developing a clear employee incentive and recognition system</p>	<p><i>6.3.4.1 Employee incentive mechanisms established and implemented</i></p>
		<p><i>6.3.4.2 Employee incentive mechanisms implemented annually during an election process</i></p>



## PRIORITY 7 – INTEGRATION OF GENDER ASPECT IN SEC ACTIVITIES

GOAL	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Goal 7.1</b> Integration of gender aspects into the SEC's internal functioning</p>	7.1.1 Adopting an action plan for gender equality	<i>7.1.1.1 Gender equality action plan adopted</i>
	7.1.2 Gender sensitization and training for improving gender awareness	<i>7.1.2.1 Number of training events carried out</i>
		<i>7.1.2.2 Percentage of staff trained</i>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Goal 7.2</b> Integration of gender aspects into the SEC's election activities</p>	7.1.3 Adopting an equal opportunity policy	<i>7.1.3.1 Equal opportunity policy adopted</i>
	7.2.1 Presenting gender-disaggregated data about the election process (voters, candidates, elected candidates)	<i>7.2.1.1 Number of data categories presented disaggregated by gender</i>
		7.2.2 Adoption of a communication strategy for incorporation of gender aspects

# FRAMEWORK AND MECHANISMS FOR MONITORING AND REVISING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

In order to be able to monitor the achievement of the goals set in the Strategic Plan in a continuous and efficient manner, aside from defining goals and activities, as well as indicators and annual benchmarks for activities at the strategic level, the SEC will develop detailed annual operational plans and activities with specific goals.

This approach includes the following monitoring and evaluation activities:

- Annual reports on implementation of activities listed in the Strategic Plan from the SEC sectors and departments, submitted to the stand-alone Department for Strategic Planning and Analysis. .
- Annual plans, which the SEC departments responsible for implementing the relevant priorities of the Strategic Plan will submit to the Department for Strategic Planning and Analysis at the end of each year (in December). The annual plans consist of activities that the SEC departments plan to implement during the following year as a result of the Action Plans under the Strategic Plan, with specific timeframes and cooperating stakeholders.
- Annual report from the Department for Strategic Planning and Analysis, submitted to the SEC, reflecting the implementation of the activities in the Strategic Plan and the proposed activities that the SEC departments plan to implement during the following year.

The methodology for revision of the Strategic Plan will facilitate revisions of the action plans and proposals for priority measures in accordance with the recommendations and needs. This will entail:

- Methodology and timeframes for development of the second Operational Plan for 2022.
- Methods for consulting the progress in view of the reports of the European Union and other international organizations, prepared by the

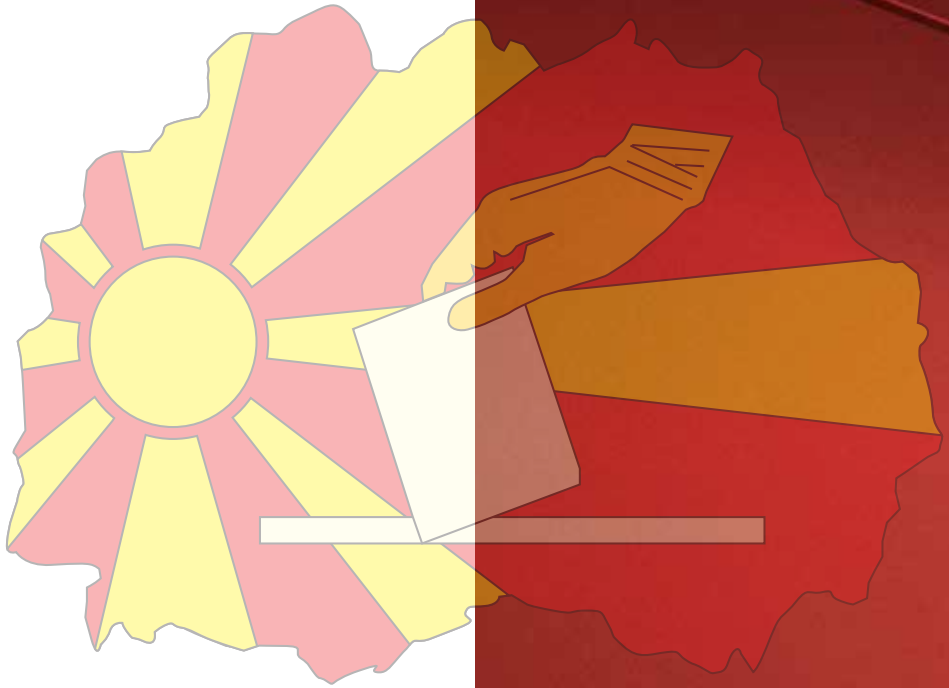


Sector for Legal and Normative Affairs and the Department for Strategic Planning and Analysis, by developing a template for the format and content of the annual reports for implementation of the Strategic Plan measures.

- Annual evaluations and analyses of the assessment of the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Evaluation of the implementation of the Strategic Plan will be conducted once a year by a team nominated by SEC members, in cooperation with SEC's Secretary General. The results of the evaluation will include an analysis of the rate of implementation, information on achieved goals and recommendations for modification or adjustment of the operational plans. The reports and plans will be made available on the SEC website.





ADDENDA



# OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF THE SEC

## OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF THE SEC

In fulfilling its statutory duties and competencies, the SEC engages in nurturing partnership and cooperation in accordance with the Electoral Code, based on trust among all stakeholders in the election process, especially:

- The Ministry of Finance approves funding for carrying out elections and referendums, as well as for regular activities of the SEC.
- The Ministry of Justice, specifically the local offices of the Ministry of Justice and the Registry of Births, Marriages and Deaths, play an important role in collecting signatures for candidates and conducting public inspection of the voter list.
- The Ministry of Internal Affairs submits data for compilation of the voter list during regular update, and when elections are called. During elections, it also provides safety and security in the distribution of ballots and other election materials, secures polling stations, maintains public order and peace, and secures the transport of ballots and other sensitive election material from/to MECs to/from the SEC.
- The Ministry of Information Society and Administration submits a list of employees in the public and state administration that serves as basis for selecting members of election management bodies (MECs and EBs), and is also in charge of maintaining the Central Electronic Population Register.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is engaged in the organization of out-of-country voting by provision of premises and technical support of the voting process in diplomatic and consular offices, distribution of materials, collection of signatures, public inspection of the voter list, voter registration. The State Commission for Prevention of Corruption reviews and publishes financial reports submitted by political parties.
- The State Statistical Office provides assistance and support in the methodological - technical data processing for compilation of the voter list and assigns voters to polling stations.
- The State Audit Office audits financial reports of political parties and publishes them on its website.

- The Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services enacts a methodology for monitoring election-related media advertising through radio and television program services during election processes, and monitors media programming.
- The units of local self-government provide material and technical conditions for the work of the MECs, payment of financial reimbursement for MEC and EB members' work in local elections.
- The media in general and the public broadcasting service MRT in particular, are mandated by law to broadcast information of public character. The media broadcast timely informative and educational audio and video clips concerning: descriptions of polling stations, procedure for inspection of the voter register, citizens' rights, and protection of voting rights, voting procedure and other matters as determined by the SEC.
- The Administrative Court, a second-instance authority which receives data from the SEC for the purpose of adjudicating appeals concerning protection of voting rights and election irregularities.
- Political parties submit nominations for election board members, and registration of candidates during elections. They may also file complaints and appeals concerning the election process.
- Civic organizations submit applications for accreditation of election observers and commit to compliance with election observation rules.
- International organizations and institutions of which the SEC is a member - Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO), exchange of information with the OSCE/ODIHR, the Venice Commission and others.



## TARGET GROUPS

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- Election management bodies:
  - Municipal Election Commissions (MEC)
  - Election Commission of the City of Skopje and
  - Election Boards (EB)
- Citizens who have the right to vote
- Special categories of persons (youth, vulnerable groups, women, residents of rural or less developed areas, persons with disabilities etc.)
- Political parties
- NGOs and civic organizations involved in election-related activities
- International observers
- Domestic and international media representatives
- International community present in the country

## VALUES REPRESENTED BY THE SEC

### Independence

The work of the SEC is independent and autonomous. It was established by the Electoral Code. The funding for the SEC's operations is provided from the budget of the Republic of North Macedonia and is placed at the independent disposal of the SEC. The President, the Vice President and the members of the SEC are appointed by the Assembly with a two-thirds majority vote of the total number of Representatives. Secretariat is established to perform professional, administrative, organizational, and technical work of the SEC.

### Expertise and professionalism

SEC members are appointed in accordance with the Electoral Code. The staff of the SEC Secretariat has the status of civil servants. The work of the SEC is based on the following principles:

- constitutionality and lawfulness,
- transparency,
- responsibility,
- accountability,
- independence,
- impartiality.

The work of the SEC is governed by the Constitution, laws (statutes) and generally accepted international standards, conventions, and good electoral practices. SEC members and the Secretariat act separately and independently. As the highest electoral authority, the SEC ensures lawful preparation and conduct of elections in accordance with the Electoral Code, and supervises the work of lower election management bodies.



## Transparency

The work of the SEC is transparent and open to the public. SEC sessions are public and are broadcast live on the SEC Facebook and YouTube channel. The SEC uses all available means to inform the public, citizens, and participants in the election process through audio and print media and online tools, as well as direct communication. The SEC submits election reports to the Assembly of the RNM and publishes them on its website [www.sec.mk](http://www.sec.mk).

## Impartiality

The SEC makes its decisions independently, impartially, according to established facts, pursuant to the statutory provisions and sub-statutory instruments. The SEC undertakes and implements all required actions and activities necessary for lawful decision making in a responsible and timely manner.

## Responsibility

The SEC regularly conducts self-evaluation to gather inputs to improve the election process. This increases its efficiency and effectiveness, and helps overcome possible irregularities. When organizing elections, the SEC also applies generally accepted standards, conventions on electoral matters, and international good practices.

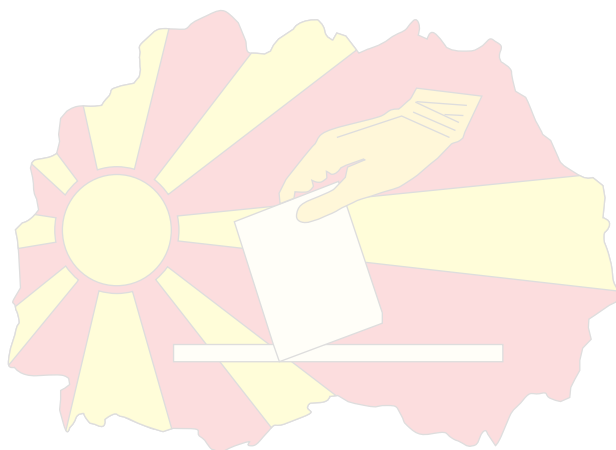
## Inclusiveness

The work of the SEC is public and open to all participants and observers in the election process. In creating its policies, the SEC cooperates with other state bodies and domestic institutions, international institutions and organizations, and the non-governmental and civil sector, in order to ensure inclusiveness in the process.

## LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF THE SEC

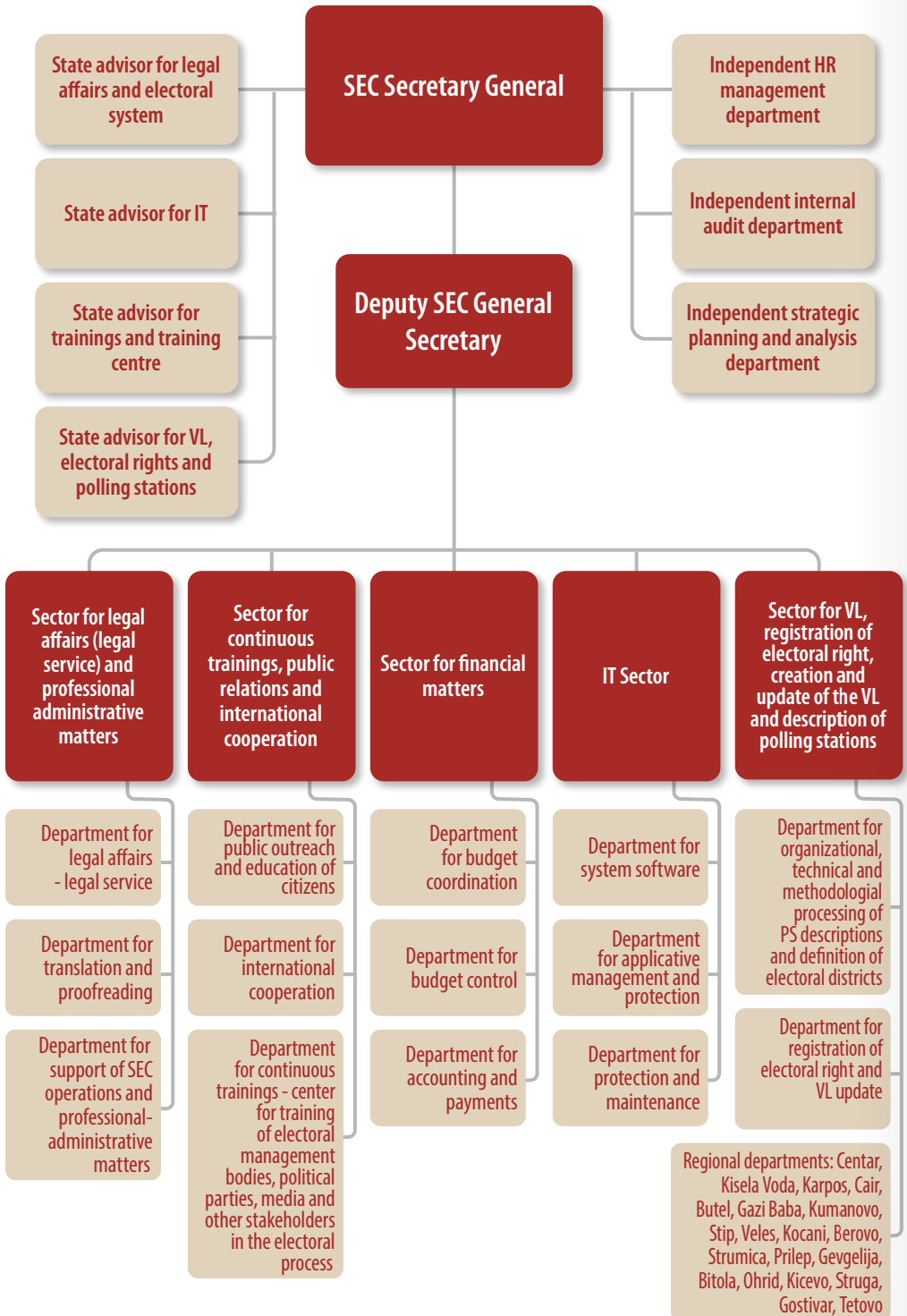
Pursuant to Article 31 paragraph 2 item 27 of the Electoral Code ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 40/06, 136/08, 148/08, 155/08, 163/08, 44/11, 51/11, 54/11, 142/12, 31/13, 34/13, 14/14, 30/14, 196/15, 35/16, 97/16, 99/16, 136/16, 142/16, 67/17, 125/17, 35/18, 99/18, 140/18, 208/18, 27/19 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 98/19 and 42/20) the State Election Commission has:

- A Rulebook on the Internal Organization and Domain of Work of the State Election Commission's Professional Service, no. 01-135/1 dated 14.03.2008, no.02-3991/1 dated 14.09.2009, no.02-3991/8 dated 22.12.2009, 01-297/1 dated 22.02.2011 and 04-2903/2 dated 07.11.2019;
- A Rulebook on Systematization of Job Positions in the State Election Commission's Professional Service, no. 01-1534/1 dated 15.10.2015 and
- A Rulebook Modifying and Amending the Rulebook on the Systematization of Job Positions in the State Election Commission's Professional Service, no. 01-219/1 dated 26.01.2016 and 04-2903/3 dated 07.11.2019. This Rulebook regulates and describes job positions of administrative (state) servants and auxiliary - technical personnel distributed by organizational unit in accordance with the Rulebook on Internal Organization of the State Election Commission's Secretariat:



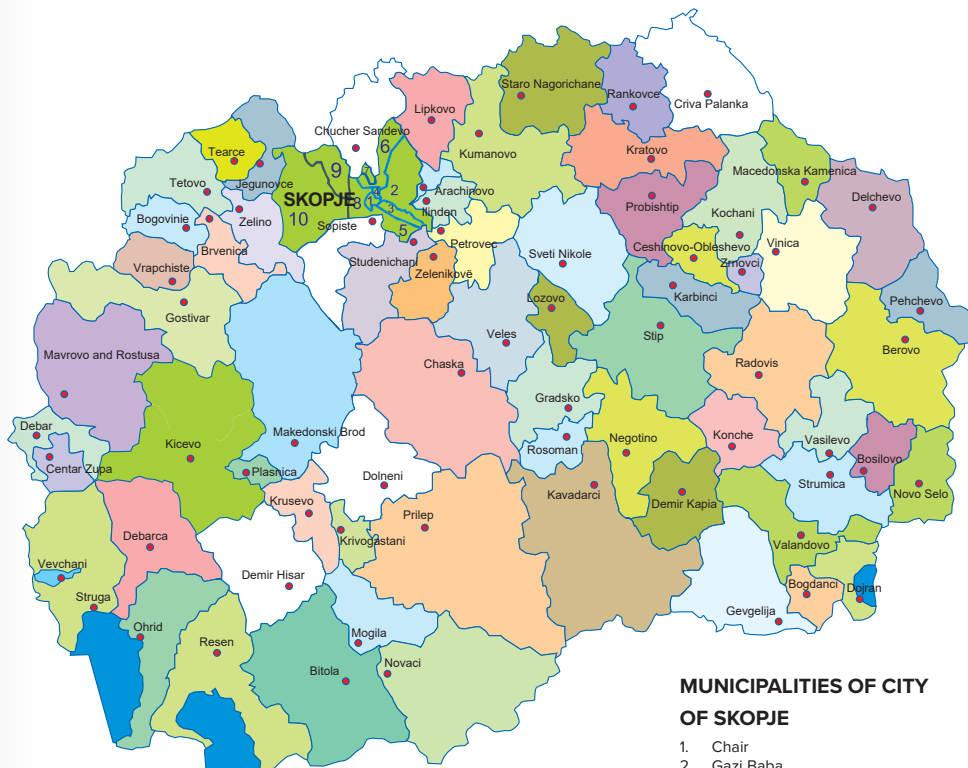


## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE OF THE SEC





The SEC headquarters (HQ) employs 37 administrative servants with indefinite term of employment and 3 with fixed-term employment until 31.12.2021, while the regional offices and branches have 62 administrative servants with indefinite term of employment.



**MAP OF THE SEC REGIONAL OFFICES AND BRANCHES**

**LIST OF THE SEC REGIONAL OFFICES AND BRANCHES:**

1. Regional office Centar and branch in Aerodrom, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Centar and Aerodrom,
2. Regional office Kisela Voda and branch in Zelenikovo, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Kisela Voda, Sopishte, Studenicani and Zelenikovo,
3. Regional office Karposhand branches in Gjorche Petrov and Saraj, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Karposh, Gjorche Petrov and Saraj,



4. Regional office Chair, having jurisdiction over the Municipality of Chair,
5. Regional office Butel and branch in Shuto Orizari, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Butel, Shuto Orizari and Chucer Sandevo,
6. Regional office Gazi Baba and branches in Arachinovo and Petrovec, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Gazi Baba, Arachinovo, Ilinden and Petrovec
7. Regional office Kumanovo and branches in Kriva Palanka, Kratovo and Lipkovo, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Kumanovo, Kriva Palanka, Kratovo, Staro Nagorichane, Rankovci and Lipkovo,
8. Regional office Shtip and branches in Sveti Nikole and Probishtip, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Shtip, Sveti Nikole, Probishtip, Karbinci and Lozovo,
9. Regional office Veles and branches in Kavadarci and Negotino, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Veles, Cashka, Gradsko, Kavadarci, Rosoman, Negotino and Demir Kapija,
10. Regional office Kochani and branch in Vinica, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Kochani, Vinica, Ceshinovo – Obleshevo and Zrnovci,
11. Regional office Berovo and branch in Delchevo, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Berovo, Pehcevo, Delchevo and Makedonska Kamenica,
12. Regional office Strumica and branch in Radovish, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Strumica, Vasilevo, Bosilovo, Novo Selo, Radovish and Konce,
13. Regional office Prilep and branch in Krushevo, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Prilep, Krushevo, Krivogashtani and Dolneni,
14. Regional office Gevgelija and branch in Valandovo, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Gevgelija, Valandovo, Dojran and Bogdanci,
15. Regional office Bitola and branches in Resen and Demir Hisar, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Bitola, Resen, Demir Hisar, Mogila and Novaci,
16. Regional department Ohrid having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Ohrid and Debarca
17. Regional office Kichevo and office branch in the Municipality of Makedonski Brod, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Kichevo, Makedonski Brod and Plasnica,
18. Regional office Struga and office branch in the Municipality of Debar, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Struga, Debar, Vevchani and Centar Zhupa,

19. Regional office Gostivar and branches in Vrapchiste and Mavrovo and Rostuse, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Gostivar, Vrapchiste and Mavrovo and Rostuse,

20. Regional office Tetovo and branches in Jegunovce and Bogovinje, having jurisdiction over the municipalities: Tetovo, Bogovinje, Brvenica, Zhelino, Tearce and Jegunovce.

No. \_\_\_\_\_  
17. 03. 2021

**State Election Commission**  
**President**  
**Aleksandar Dashevski**

