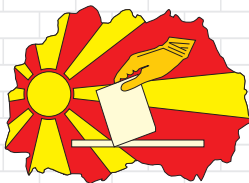


РЕПУБЛИКА СЕВЕРНА МАКЕДОНИЈА
ДРЖАВНА ИЗБОРНА КОМИСИЈА

REPUBLIKA E MAQEDONISË SË VERIUT
KOMISIONI SHTETËROR I ZGJEDHJEVE

THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA
STATE ELECTION COMMISSION



ИЗБОРИ 2021

ПРИРАЧНИК ЗА НАБЉУДУВАЊЕ НА ИЗБОРИТЕ 2021

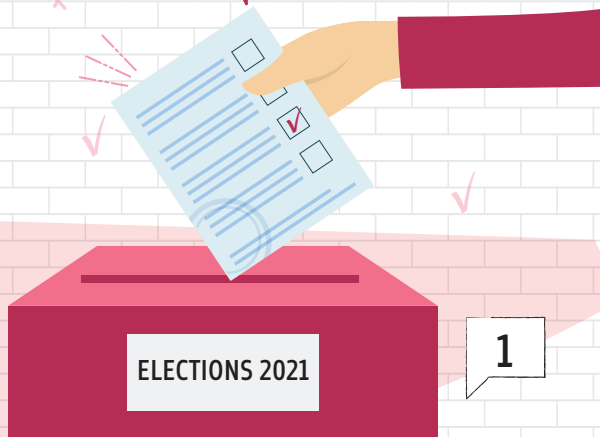
DORACAK PËR VËZHGININ E ZGJEDHJEVE 2021

ELECTION OBSERVATION HANDBOOK 2021

THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

ELECTION OBSERVATION HANDBOOK 2021



ELECTIONS 2021

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INTRODUCTION

✓ Election observation is an important task in supporting democratic development and international human rights. Expression of the will of the citizens at elections is a crucial aspect to the exercise of this right.

Given that election observation assesses the conduct of the election process, it can prevent human rights violations related to the election process through the presence and visibility of the observers.

✓ Election observation is not only considered a technical operation, as it can directly contribute to the promotion of universal human rights through factual reporting of identified problems, and providing recommendations to address them.

✓ Election observation in the Republic of North Macedonia is governed by the Electoral Code and the Code for Local Elections Observation.

1. ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND ELECTIONS FOR MAYORS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS OF MUNICIPALITIES AND THE CITY OF SKOPJE

Mayors of municipalities and the City of Skopje are elected under the majoritarian model. A one-third voter turnout is required to be elected mayor in the first round of voting, provided that the majority voted for one of the candidates.

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- ① If in the **first round of voting** none of the candidates receives the required majority, a second round of voting is arranged for the two candidates who received the most votes.
- ② **In the second round**, elected is the mayoral candidate who received more votes.
 - ✓ Council members are elected on the territory of the municipality, i.e. the City of Skopje, under the proportional model.
 - ✓ Council seats are distributed according to the D'Hondt method.

THE ELECTORAL CODE PROVIDES FOR THE FOLLOWING ELECTION MANAGEMENT BODIES (EMBs):

- The State Election Commission (SEC);
- The Municipal Election Commissions (80) (MECs) and the Election Commission of the City of Skopje;
- Electoral Boards (3480) (EB); and
- Special Electoral Boards (SEB), to conduct voting for COVID-19 positive voters in home quarantine and those ordered to self-isolate by a decision of the State Sanitary and Health Inspectorate. SEB is composed of 3 health professionals and representatives of political parties.

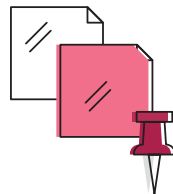
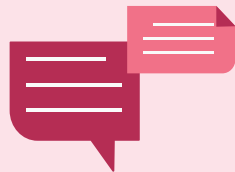


2. ELECTION OBSERVATION PRINCIPLES

ACCREDITED OBSERVERS are required to comply with the following principles:

- ✓ respect for sovereignty and international human rights;
- ✓ observance of the national laws and the authority of the EMBs;
- ✓ constant and strict maintenance of political impartiality;
- ✓ smooth implementation of electoral processes;
- ✓ appropriate identification;
- ✓ ensuring accuracy in observation and professionalism in providing conclusions;
- ✓ cooperation with other election observers;
- ✓ appropriate conduct;
- ✓ compliance with the Code for Election Observation and election procedures.

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3. ACCREDITED OBSERVERS

WHO CAN BE AN ACCREDITED OBSERVER?

- ✓ Domestic associations and foreign organizations, registered in accordance with the law, at least one year before Election Day, whose statutes include the principle.
- ✓ International organizations
- ✓ Representatives of foreign countries



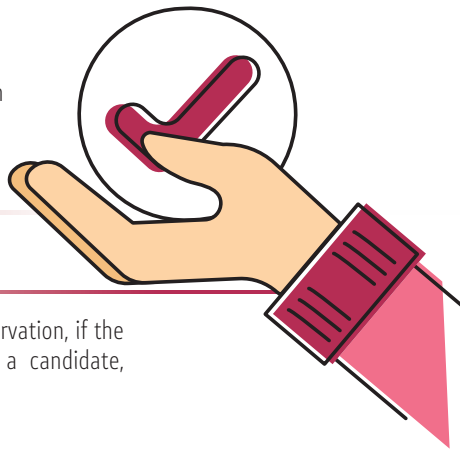
WHERE AND WHEN IS THE REQUEST FOR ACCREDITATION SUBMITTED?

The request for accreditation, along with the other required documents, shall be submitted to the SEC from the day of announcement of elections and **no later than ten days** before Election Day.

WHEN DOES THE SEC DECIDE ON THE REQUEST FOR ACCREDITATION?

The SEC shall issue an accreditation / observation authorization and prepare an identification badge within seven days of submission of the request

The election process can be monitored after the observation mandate and badge are issued by the SEC.



CAN THE ACCREDITATION BE REVOKED?

The SEC has the right to revoke the powers of observation, if the authorized subjects start expressing support for a candidate, party or coalition.

HOW IS AN ACCREDITED OBSERVER IDENTIFIED?

On visiting EMB facilities, the observers present:

- copy of the authorization;
- badge issued by the SEC ; and
- personal identification document.



WHAT CAN BE OBSERVED?

The work of the EMBs is public and accredited observers have the right to observe their work without prior notice.

Accredited observers can closely monitor the voter identification prior to voting and have the right to attend the handover of the election material and the determination of the situation prior to the vote, with due respect to the mandatory recommendations.

In case of any remarks on the work of the Electoral Board, accredited observers have the right to make an entry in the Logbook at the polling station.

THE ACCREDITED OBSERVER SHOULD:

- **Know and comply with the Electoral Code** provisions and adhere to the provisions that regulate the procedure for conduct of elections;
- **Be impartial in the performance** of his/her duties and refrain from expressing bias towards the EMBs;
- **Wear a badge** issued by the SEC/MEC, as well as a **personal identification document**;
- Base the conclusions on **documented and confirmed facts**.

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THE ACCREDITED OBSERVER SHOULD NOT:

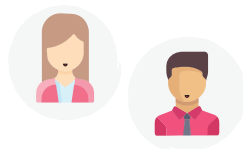
- **Influence in any way the procedure** on Election Day, as well as the vote counting procedure;
- **Wear party symbols or insignia**;
- **Give instructions** to the voters, election bodies, authorized representatives and authorized officials;
- **Influence the work and decisions** of the EMBs.



4. ELECTION DAY

WHO CAN BE PRESENT AT THE POLLING STATION?

- Voters;
- EB Members / Deputies;
- MEC Members / Deputies;
- SEC Members and SEC Secretariat; and
- Persons who have the right to observe the work of the EB.

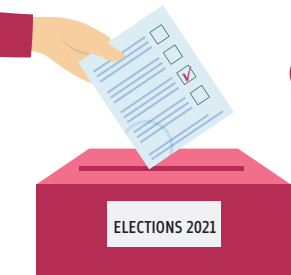


WHO CAN OBSERVE ELECTIONS?

- Accredited observers;
- Authorized representatives of list submitters;
- Accredited national and international journalists

WHAT IS OBLIGATORY FOR ALL PERSONS PRESENT AT THE POLLING STATION?

- From the moment of entering the polling station, during the voting and after the voting, one should wear personal protection for the face regardless the physical distance!
- To change the personal protection for face every 4 hours!
- To keep physical distance of 1 to 1.5 meters during the whole day!
- Often to wash or disinfect the hands!



4.1. VOTING

Voting in all polling stations across the country starts **at 07:00** and lasts without interruptions **until 19:00**.



4.2. THE RIGHT TO VOTE

The right to vote is acquired **at the age of 18** by every person who:

- Is in the Voter List Excerpt; and
- Is in possession of a valid personal identification document - identity card or passport.

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WHO IS NOT ALLOWED TO VOTE?

A person is not allowed to vote if:

- ✓ Is not on the Voter List;
- ✓ Does not possess a adequate identification document;
- ✓ If during the verification of the personal document and by using the technical equipment it is determined that the voter has previously voted;
- ✓ Refuses to identify himself/herself with a fingerprint or refuses to sign the Voter List excerpt.

REFUSES TO TAKE A BALLOT!!!

4.3. VOTER LIST

The Voter List is a public document, valid for the territory of the country.

4.4. VOTING PROCEDURE

The voting process may be divided into several stages, **TAKING PLACE IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER:**

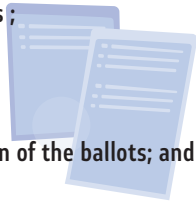
1. Verification of personal identification documents;



2. Biometric voter identification;



3. Verification and signing of Voter List excerpts;



4. Provision of the ballots; and

5. Voting behind the booth.



STEPS IN THE VOTING PROCEDURE

1. Voters approach **to vote one by one.**
2. When approaching to vote, the EB checks the voter's **personal identity.**
3. The voter proves the personal identity with a valid identification card or valid passport, i.e., identity card or passport whose validity has expired between the date when the elections were announced until the Election Day and with a fingerprint. As a valid passport is also considered a passport whose validity expired after 31 July 2020.



VOTE!
ELECTIONS 2021

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4. The voter will not be allowed to vote in the absence of an adequate document or if the fingerprint does not match the fingerprint in the electronic voter list, despite being listed in the Voter List.
5. The EB verifies that there **has been no prior voting.**

6. Verification of identity and whether the voter had voted before is made by taking a fingerprint from the voter's right hand index finger, through the voter biometric identification device. If the voter has no right index finger, a fingerprint from the left hand will be taken. If the voter is missing these two fingers, a fingerprint is taken from the next finger.

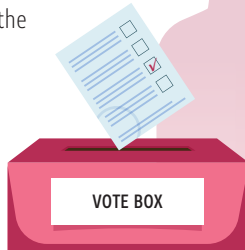
7. The image and the ordinal number in the voter list will appear on the screen, after which the voter signs in the Voter List.

8. The **voter receives ballots.**

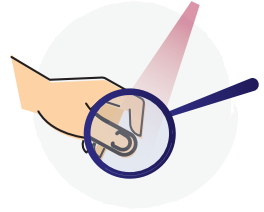
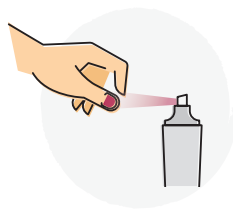
9. The voter votes **independently behind the voting screen.**

10. After voting, the voter places each ballot paper into the **designated ballot box.**

11. The voter **leaves the polling station.**



WHEN THE TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT IS NOT OPERATIONAL AND CANNOT BE REPLACED



(By exception, if the technical equipment is unable to match the fingerprints and the EB can verify the voter identity with a valid ID card or passport and determines that the voter has not previously voted via the signatures in the Voter List, an entry in the technical equipment is made by searching against the unique identification number (EMBG) and a fingerprint will be taken in order to protect the right to vote.)

In case the technical equipment is not operational and cannot be replaced, the voter verification is conducted with **UV lamp**. In this case, the voter **leaves a fingerprint** in a special column in the printed **Voter List excerpt**.

The State Election Commission decides on the manner of verification of voters, upon a previously written request of the Municipal Election Commission, based on a confirmation from a technical expert hired by the SEC that the technical equipment is not operational and cannot be replaced.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE VOTER AND PREVIOUS VOTING WITHOUT TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT:

- ✓ for home-bound voting;
- ✓ for voting at non-family care facilities;
- ✓ for voting of citizens in prisons, detention centers or home arrest;
- ✓ for voters in quarantine or self-isolation.



4.5. BANS AT THE POLLING STATION

FAMILY OR GROUP VOTING OR VOTING ON BEHALF OF ANOTHER IS PROHIBITED!



- **It is prohibited to take photos** of the ballot with a mobile phone or a camera!

- **Those who fail to comply** shall be removed from the polling station by the Electoral Board.

No one may come to the polling station armed, except the police, and only in cases when called by the Electoral Board and when it observes a serious disturbance of the peace and order.

This product is made in the frames of the Support to Electoral Reforms project of the Swiss Embassy/Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), implemented by IFES and NYCM. The views, opinions and the content expressed in this product do not necessarily reflect the ones of the donor, the project or the implementers.

