

Parliamentary Support and Good Governance



By supporting activities aimed at increasing the capacity of executive and legislative structures to work in the interest of citizens, ensure legislative oversight, and assist the country to achieve its reform policy goals, the Mission contributes to promoting stability and reconciliation in BiH by developing systems of governance.

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina works on safeguarding the main principles of democratic governance at all levels of authority and ensuring that institutions and governments in Bosnia and Herzegovina adhere to good governance standards to ensure that they are responsive, transparent, effective, representative of and accountable to citizens.

Since 2001, the Mission has provided technical and professional expertise to BiH parliaments, assemblies, and local-level governmental bodies enabling them to deliver services to citizens in a timely, transparent, and equitable manner. The Mission encourages representative bodies to build capacities in order to

adopt high-quality legislation, enable citizens' participation, and co-operate with other parliaments in the region and further afield. In this context, the Mission organizes public events facilitating discussion on reform-related legislation, increasing accountability and public trust towards democratic institutions. The Mission works

closely with officials at all government levels to strengthen democratic progress in BiH. The Mission supports parliamentary outreach, co-operation between parliamentary working bodies, development and promotion of key legislation, modernizing legislative processes, and including civil society in decision-making processes.

The Mission supported BiH parliaments and assemblies in improving their organizational structures through establishing the required committees and services, introducing strategic planning and increasing transparency by means of informative websites, live-streamed sessions, and citizens' visits.

Inclusive planning with parliamentary leadership

The Mission works in synergy with parliamentary political leaderships to decide on the principles of co-operation and key joint activities.

This has resulted in the development of Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with entity parliaments and the Brčko District Assembly. This will ensure the transparency of their work, and encourage the participatory development of laws and inclusion of citizens in the decision-making process. The Mission pays special attention to strengthening of the key parliamentary functions, such as oversight that is exercised through the committee hearings with experts and representatives of civil society. The Mission also monitors the implementation of

the BiH Law on Parliamentary Oversight increasing thereby the efficiency of the Executive in implementing reforms and positioning parliaments as the bodies overseeing the ministries' work and providing recommendations for improvements.

The Mission monitors relevant parliamentary sessions and issues thematic reports on the work of parliaments, including how they function in crises and unexpected developments, such as during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Mission addresses the identified issues and builds on existing achievements by supporting inter-institutional and civic dialogue, effective legislative oversight, efficient functioning of government institutions, co-operation in implementing reforms, and by investing in the development of effective governance mechanisms to prevent corruption.

Election survey on perception of citizens on electoral process and support to free elections

The Mission monitors developments related to electoral reform in BiH and observes how citizens understand their role in the election processes. In 2021, the Mission implemented a statewide election survey on [Citizens' perceptions, experiences and opinions of elections in BiH](#). The purpose of the survey was to identify citizens' perceived role in the electoral processes, their experiences and understanding of elections, views on the importance of campaigns and voting, and their participation in politics in general. The research, conducted on a representative sample showed that around two-thirds of surveyed citizens fully or partially support amending the BiH Election Law and every fourth respondent was offered

money to vote for a party or a candidate. The Mission's report is intended to inform efforts aimed at reforming electoral legislation and practice, and raise awareness of citizens' view of the process.

The Mission co-operated with Pod lupom Coalition of NGOs focusing on strengthening the capacity of civil society to monitor elections and report on irregularities during local elections in 2020 and general elections in 2022 by providing training to over 800 citizens on efficient monitoring of election processes.

ODIHR assessment of legislative functioning in BiH

During 2020 and 2021, the Mission supported ODIHR to assess legislative functioning of parliaments and executive in BiH (focusing on state and entity government) and specifics of drafting laws, committee outreach, public hearings, rules of procedures, and gender aspects of laws. The findings suggest that strengthening of parliamentary oversight in the committees and adopting laws on oversight is necessary as well as improving the quality laws, for example by paying special attention to the rights of women, vulnerable and marginalized groups, mainstreaming gender and diversity in legislative process, and regulating deadlines in parliamentary procedure and involvement of the public. The Mission will use this assessment for planning and implementing future activities with BiH legislatures.

Strengthening outreach of the parliaments and parliamentary committees

The Mission strives to strengthen public outreach of BiH parliaments and parliamentary committees, primarily the committees for European

Integration, Human Rights, and the Constitutional-Legal Committee, by supporting the organization of public events that make reform-related processes more understandable. The Mission pays special attention to the inclusion of citizens and their co-operation with the committees on relevant legislation and regulations, as well as with local-level administrations and parliaments.

The Mission supports drafting or amending priority reform regulations such as the BiH Electoral Code, Laws on the Prevention of Conflict of Interest, Law on Associations and Foundations in Brčko District of BiH, and Laws on Local Self-Governance. The amendment of internal regulations and RoPs is supported to regulate citizens' initiatives in legislative deliberations. The Mission supported development of strategic plans for development of parliamentary secretariats and improvement of working processes. The Mission supports the organization of public events that encourage co-operation of parliaments with civil society.

Regional co-operation and bilateral exchanges

The Mission supports parliamentary co-operation and exchanges in the region and beyond, and improving transparency and outreach to citizens. By consolidating the capacities of officials, executives and services through the organization of in-country and regional capacity-building events, legislative and regulatory work is improved by integrating the best legislative practices identified. Significant regional parliamentary initiatives include meetings of female parliamentarians, aimed at bolstering the role of women in BiH politics and exchange of experience between parliamentary services, such as Information Technology (IT) that

focused on protecting legislative processes and sensitive information from cyber-attacks.

Support to cantonal governments and assemblies

The Mission organizes capacity-building trainings for officials and executives at the cantonal level aimed at supporting the participatory development of relevant regulations.

The Mission works on promoting and implementing good governance standards at the local level of government. Throughout 2022, the Mission organized over 50 events gathering representatives of 62 cantons and municipalities. The Mission organized those events based on GRECO recommendations and the Mission's evaluation of the implementation of the Code of Ethics (CoE) across the country, which revealed the need to upgrade or introduce and effectively enforce CoE rules and practices. The Mission developed a model CoE document that local governments and institutions can use to protect institutional integrity and improve the effectiveness of decision-making in representative bodies at the local level.



For more information, scan the QR code.

