



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

**INFORMATION SHEET
REQUEST FOR SHORT-TERM OBSERVERS**

**NORTH MACEDONIA
LOCAL ELECTIONS
17 October 2021**

Following an official invitation from the national authorities of the Republic of North Macedonia to observe the 17 October local elections, and in accordance with its mandate, ODIHR has established an Election Observation Mission (EOM). Tana de Zulueta has been appointed Head of the ODIHR EOM. The mission consists of 13 core team members based in Skopje and 20 long-term observers (LTOs) deployed throughout the country. The core team and LTOs come from a total of 19 OSCE participating States.

ODIHR requests participating States to second 250 (two hundred and fifty) short-term observers (STOs) to observe voting, counting, and the tabulation of results. STOs will be deployed in multinational teams of two under a deployment plan prepared by the ODIHR EOM. In the interest of a broad and balanced representation among participating States, ODIHR requests that individual participating States nominate only up to 15 per cent of the total number of requested STOs. To ensure a better gender balance in its activities, ODIHR strongly encourages the OSCE participating States to second equal numbers of women and men as short-term observers.

The seconding States should confirm visa requirements for their STOs. If required, visas must be obtained at the nearest embassy or consulate of North Macedonia prior to arrival. Visas cannot be issued on arrival at Skopje International Airport.

To facilitate accreditation of observers through the State Election Commission (SEC) and the issuance of visas (if required), the ODIHR online mission registration form must be completed **no later than 30 September 2021.**

STOs are required to arrive in Skopje by Thursday, 14 October and depart (at the earliest) on Wednesday, 20 October. The STO schedule is provided below.

Given the possibility of second rounds of elections, participating States may expect a second request for short-term observers with a very short deadline for registration. Participating States are therefore encouraged to select observers for the potential second-round elections who already observed the first round on 17 October and thus will already be accredited.

Observers should strictly abide by the [Code of Conduct for ODIHR Observers](#) and the deployment plan prepared by the ODIHR EOM. Observers should also familiarize themselves with the [Guide on the OSCE Policy against Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination](#). The security and safety of observers is of the highest priority and will take precedence in EOM management, including the deployment plan. However, seconding States are required to ensure that their observers adhere to national rules and regulations related to entry, including with regard to potential requirements related to PCR testing and health insurance which covers the treatment of COVID-19 in North Macedonia. All observers will

receive security and Code of Conduct briefings upon arrival and are required to operate in accordance with security guidelines.

The working language of the EOM is English. All briefings and reporting will be in English, and all interpreters will work in local languages/English. All STOs must therefore have a good working knowledge of both written and spoken English.

ODIHR strongly encourages all observers to undertake the ODIHR comprehensive e-learning course for observers, available at www.odihrobserver.org.

STOs are requested to familiarize themselves with the ODIHR Election Observation Handbook, available online at www.osce.org/odihr/elections/68439.

STOs are kindly asked to refrain from commenting on mission-related issues via social media. In line with the [Code of Conduct for ODIHR Observers](#), media communications regarding the electoral process and the substance of observations should be made only by the Head of Mission, ODIHR Spokesperson, or other responsible ODIHR officials.

A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET IS AVAILABLE ON THE ODIHR WEBSITE AND SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ALL SECONDED STOs.

The ODIHR EOM Office is located in Skopje:

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Ul. Jordan Mijalkov 31

1000 Skopje, North Macedonia

Office telephone: + 389 2 5518109

e-mail: office@odihr.mk

website: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/north-macedonia/497338>

1. Deployment Timetable

STOs will be deployed according to the following schedule:

Mon	11 October	STO Briefing (Online)
Tue	12 October	STO Briefing (Online)
Thu	14 October	STO Arrival; handover of materials and equipment
Fri	15 October	Handover of materials and equipment; STO Deployment
Sat	16 October	Familiarization with Areas of Observation; Observation of Early Voting
Sun	17 October	Election Day
Mon	18 October	Observation of tabulation; STO return to Skopje, STO PCR testing
Tue	19 October	Return of equipment; STO PCR testing
Wed	20 October	STO Departure

STOs are kindly requested to adhere to the deployment timetable and attend the live online briefing.

The link for the online Zoom briefing will be communicated in due course through the respective seconding agency.

a) Briefing

Prior to departure from their home countries, STOs will be provided with an online briefing, which will include:

- code of conduct and professional working environment;
- political overview and campaign environment;
- voting, counting, and tabulation procedures;
- observation forms;
- security advisory, including COVID-19 precautions;
- logistical and financial arrangements.

STOs will also be provided with briefing materials which will include all necessary electoral and logistical information, as well as observation forms to complete during the observation of voting, counting, and tabulation.

b) Deployment

The ODIHR EOM will develop a deployment plan. STOs should strictly abide by the deployment plan and security instructions. STOs should not request special treatment with regard to deployment locations.

Regarding in-country travel organized by ODIHR, please note that **STOs are required to complete the standard OSCE Liability Release Form** and attach it to the online mission registration form by **30 September 2021**.

c) Debriefing

Due to safety considerations related to COVID-19, the ODIHR EOM will not organize an in-person debriefing for STOs. Instead, the EOM will provide an opportunity for STOs to express their main findings and share their conclusions with EOM members through electronic means. The EOM will hold a press conference on the day after the election to present its preliminary findings and conclusions. A comprehensive final report will be issued by ODIHR approximately two months after the electoral process has been completed, taking into account the findings of all observers.

2. Logistics and Security

a) Contact details

All logistical arrangements for the STOs will be organized by the EOM under the direction of:

Ranko Vukčević, Operations Expert

e-mail: ranko.vukcevic@odihr.mk; mobile phone: +389 72 443771

b) Transportation/Accommodation

All STOs will be met at Skopje International Airport (SKP) by an ODIHR EOM representative and transported to their accommodation. Transport and accommodation in Skopje and in the areas of observation will be arranged by the EOM.

IMPORTANT: Hotels in Skopje may require guests arriving/departing in the early morning hours to pay the full overnight rate.

For safety reasons, particularly in the current health environment, and to prevent problems with transportation, observers are expected to use the accommodation arranged for them by the

ODIHR EOM. The EOM will also make all arrangements for in-country travel to deployment areas and for on-site drivers, cars, and interpreters.

If ODIHR is not duly notified in advance, STOs or the respective OSCE seconding State will be charged for the cost, regardless of whether the accommodation provided is used. The EOM cannot provide airport transfers and in-city transportation for STOs who do not stay in the designated accommodation.

STOs will deploy from Skopje to the regions by bus or car. STO deployment will be planned in accordance with national regulations and the EOM's COVID-19 safety guidelines.

The ODIHR EOM will make necessary arrangements for the STOs to return to Skopje on Monday, 18 October, and will arrange accommodation in Skopje. The EOM will arrange transfers to the airport for all STOs.

c) Security

STOs must adhere to the [Code of Conduct for ODIHR Observers](#), as outlined in the ODIHR Election Observation Handbook and the [Guide on the OSCE Policy against Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination](#), as well as security instructions and national regulations related to the prevention of COVID-19.

A memo on security details for the STOs will be handed over to all observers upon arrival, including guidelines related to the procedures to promote the safe conduct of mission activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. STOs who do not stay in accommodation provided by the ODIHR EOM will not be covered by the mission's security arrangements.

d) Luggage/Essential Items

Due to potentially modest conditions in the regions, STOs are advised to bring with them the following items:

- appropriate attire for election day observation – business casual is recommended;
- personal protection equipment such as face masks and hand sanitizer (the ODIHR EOM will provide additional PPE with the STO briefing pack);
- torch/flashlight with spare battery;
- all necessary medication (case-specific);
- clothing (including for sleeping);
- electricity converters (if needed) – European style plug.

The ODIHR EOM strongly recommends that STOs, when travelling by air, put essential items into their hand luggage in case of the late arrival of their luggage in Skopje.

e) Communication

Each STO will be provided with a mobile phone and a local SIM card with credit for work-related usage. Please note that using mobile phones for international calls and SMSs should be avoided. Such usage is very expensive and will quickly deplete allocated phone credit.

f) Time zone/Flight bookings

North Macedonia is a one time-zone country. Local time in Skopje is GMT/UTC +2:00. Due to the limited number of scheduled flights to Skopje, the ODIHR EOM strongly encourages seconding States to make early flight bookings. To ensure operational flexibility, (e.g. in case of bad weather conditions), seconding States are advised to book changeable airline tickets.

3. Interpreters and Drivers

All observers will be organized in multinational teams of two persons under a deployment plan prepared by the ODIHR EOM. The ODIHR EOM will assist STO teams with finding drivers/cars and interpreters. Even in cases where one team member speaks local languages, it is necessary for the team to have an interpreter in order for both members of the team to have full access to complete and equal information as they carry out their observation duties.

4. Costs

It is projected that, while in-country, **each STO** will incur the following costs, although some STOs may not require the full amount indicated below:

Operational/Transportation cost	EUR
Airport transfers	40
In-Country Transportation (to and from deployment area)	80
Communication (SIM card/mobile phone/e-pen use)	70
Briefing costs (briefing, briefing pack, PPE, meals)	80
Estimated cost to be incurred by ODIHR on behalf of STOs	270 EUR
PCR test(s)	70
2 x Driver/car (EUR 35 per day @ maximum 4 days per observer)*	280
2 x Fuel (EUR 15 per day @ maximum 4 days per observer)*	120
Interpreter (EUR 35 per day @ maximum 4 days per observer)*	140
Accommodation (6 nights @ max EUR 120/per night)	720
Meals & Incidentals (approx. EUR 45 per day @ max 7 days)	315
Accommodation and meals for interpreter if needed (EUR 40 per night @ 3 nights per observer)*	120
Accommodation and meals for driver(s) if needed (EUR 40 per night and per driver @ 3 nights per observer)*	240
Costs paid directly by the observers	2,005 EUR
Total cost per observer:	2,275 EUR

* The two members of each STO team will share equally the cost of drivers and interpreters. The amount above, therefore, represents half of these costs (i.e. for each STO).

The total cost per observer is estimated at **EUR 2,275** (two thousand two hundred and seventy-five Euros), including **EUR 2,005** (two thousand and five Euros), which the seconding States should supply to each observer in cash prior to their departure to Skopje. **The ODIHR EOM is not able to validate or certify documents related to costs paid directly by the observers (receipts, invoices, contracts, etc.).**

EUR 270 (two hundred seventy Euros) is the projected cost per each STO to be incurred by ODIHR. After the closure of the EOM, each seconding State will be billed by ODIHR on the basis of total actual expenses incurred and the number of seconded STOs. Payment instructions will be provided to the seconding States with the final invoice.

All of the above costs should be paid in local currency or Euro. The Euro is widely exchangeable locally, although other currencies can also be exchanged. There are cash machines (ATMs) in Skopje and in some areas of deployment. Hotels in North Macedonia generally do not accept foreign currency and may not, especially outside of Skopje, accept credit cards. On rare occasions, STOs should be prepared to pay hotel bills outside of Skopje in cash and upon check-in. Travellers cheques must not be used. The currency unit is the *Denar* (MKD). The exchange rate is determined daily by the National Bank. The approximate exchange rate in September is EUR 1 \approx MKD 61.50; USD 1 \approx MKD 52.

5. Visas and Insurance

a) Visa

The seconding States should confirm visa requirements for their STOs. If required, visas must be obtained at the nearest embassy or consulate of North Macedonia prior to arrival. Visas cannot be issued on arrival at Skopje International Airport.

b) Insurance

STOs should ensure that they arrive with adequate health (including COVID-19), accidental/life disability, emergency/medical evacuation, property, theft, and accident insurance, as this will not be provided by ODIHR. **STOs must have a copy of their insurance policy with them, as well as two copies of the data page of their passport and the visa (if applicable).**

c) COVID related requirements

All STOs arriving in North Macedonia **must show proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or having recovered from COVID-19 in the past 45 days or a negative PCR test result that is no older than 72 hours.**

When in the country, STOs should follow applicable safety procedures, including those related to the use of PPE. Physical distancing of 2 meters must be observed. **STOs should be aware that according to national protocols and regulations, international observers who will be diagnosed with COVID-19 will be quarantined. The location of quarantine will be defined by local authorities.**

Prior to departure from Skopje, some STOs will be required to take a PCR test, regardless of vaccination status, depending on transit and destination requirements.

The current restrictions are subject to change depending on how the epidemiological situation evolves.

6. Registration and Accreditation Process

After receiving this Information Sheet, all OSCE participating States considering secondment are requested to inform ODIHR on the number of STOs (to the attention of Sylwia Zwolinska or Anna Krzysztofik; e-mail: sylwia.zwolinska@odihr.pl, anna.krzysztofik@odihr.pl) no later than 23 September 2021.

To be nominated by the seconding States, STOs are required to create a personal account in the Election Expert Database, fully complete their profile, and share it with their national focal point. The seconding States are requested to submit the names of proposed STOs using the Election Expert Database as soon as possible and no later than 23 September 2021; 17:00 (Warsaw Time).

In respect of in-country travel organized by ODIHR, please note that STOs are required to complete the standard OSCE Liability Release Form and attach it to the online mission registration form **by 30 September 2021**.

The seconding States which have not requested access to the Election Expert Database as a national Focal Point yet (Note Verbale 218/2017, 5 July 2017) or require additional guidance on the observers' registration process should contact Sylwia Zwolinska or Anna Krzysztofik; e-mail: sylwia.zwolinska@odihr.pl, anna.krzysztofik@odihr.pl.

For the purposes of accreditation of STOs with the State Election Commission of North Macedonia, the online mission registration form must be completed and supporting documents attached by the end of **30 September 2021**.

An official cover letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the seconding State or designated national focal point should be sent together with the list of STO names to the attention of Sylwia Zwolinska or Anna Krzysztofik (e-mail: sylwia.zwolinska@odihr.pl, anna.krzysztofik@odihr.pl) 30 September 2021.

<p style="text-align: center;">IN ORDER TO MAKE ALL LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS ON TIME, NO APPLICATIONS WILL BE CONSIDERED BY ODIHR UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES AFTER 30 SEPTEMBER 2021.</p>
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STOs must not have any concurrent commitments that could produce a conflict of interest with the ODIHR EOM.

ODIHR reserves the right to reject any candidate who is not capable of undertaking his/her activities in an impartial and objective manner and to withdraw accreditation in case of any serious breach of the [Code of Conduct for ODIHR Observers](#).

7. Other Information

Please note that all ODIHR election observation interim reports, preliminary statements, final reports, election laws, and reviews of election laws are available at the ODIHR website: www.osce.org/odihr/elections.

Specific information on the EOM is available on the EOM website: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/north-macedonia/497338>

All STOs will receive by e-mail a copy of the ODIHR EOM Observer Guide before their departure to Skopje.

Terms of Reference

SHORT-TERM OBSERVER

Background:

ODIHR is the leading agency in Europe in the field of election observation. It co-ordinates and organizes the deployment of numerous observation missions with thousands of observers every year to assess the compliance of elections in OSCE participating States in line with OSCE commitments, other international obligations and standards for democratic elections, as well as national legislation. Its unique methodology provides an in-depth insight into all elements of an electoral process and permits making concrete recommendations to further improve electoral processes.

Objective:

Under the guidance of the Head of Mission (HoM) and in close co-ordination with the Deputy Head of Mission (DHoM), assigned Long-term Observers (LTOs), and the ODIHR Election Department, the short-term observers (STOs) are deployed in multinational teams of two and are responsible for observing election day procedures in their assigned areas and reporting their findings accurately and efficiently to the mission headquarters.

Main Tasks:

Electoral Expertise

- Acquire detailed knowledge of the election law and procedures concerning election day;
- Acquire detailed knowledge of the electoral and political situation in the country; and
- Become familiar with the ODIHR election observation methodology for observing election day, as reflected in the relevant ODIHR publications; and
- Acquire knowledge of OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections.
- Attend and report on meetings of local election authorities, where requested;
- Attend and report on political rallies and campaign events, where requested;
- Attend and participate in any other relevant meetings with other election stakeholders necessary to cover issues deemed necessary by the HoM, DHoM and LTOs;
- Supervise the local support staff;
- Abide by the [Code of Conduct for ODIHR Election Observers](#), the [Guide on the OSCE Policy against Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination](#), and security instructions and deployment plan of the OSCE/ODIHR EOM, as well as [data protection responsibilities](#) when processing the personal data of local staff.

Reporting

- Prepare and submit regular reports to assess the close of the campaign, voting, counting and the tabulation of results.

Requirements:

- Experience in public administration, non-governmental organizations, and/or international organizations, preferably involved in observing and/or organizing election processes, is desirable.
- Knowledge of the country and surrounding region is desirable but not essential.
- Command of English language is essential. STOs must be prepared to read briefing materials, attend briefing and debriefing sessions, understand procedural instructions and complete forms accurately, all in English. Knowledge of local languages is desirable but not essential.
- Willingness and ability to work long hours in conditions which are sometimes difficult.
- Ability to work in a team and deal with difficult situations in a positive manner.

Deliverables:

- Regular reporting on the conduct of the elections in the area of deployment, as well as on any other issues covered during the mission.



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

LIABILITY RELEASE FORM

I, the undersigned, recognize that my participation in the event, named below, does not create an employment relationship between the OSCE and myself. The costs for my travel to, and participation in, the event are covered by the OSCE solely for my convenience and benefit. I accept all conditions of travel and further:

- a) release the OSCE and all of its officials, agents and consultants/experts from liability for loss, damage, injury, illness or death that may be sustained by me during such travel, and/or participation in the event, named below;
- b) agree for myself as well as for my dependants, heirs and estate to hold harmless the OSCE and its officials agents and consultants/experts from any claims or actions on account of any such loss, damage, injury, illness or death;
- c) agree to submit receipts and other relevant supporting documentation, evidencing that the funds have been used for the purpose for which they have been provided;
- d) agree to reimburse the OSCE all funds paid in advance, including but not limited to transportation costs, Daily Subsistence Allowances (DSAs) and Terminal Allowances (TAs) within fourteen (14) days of the cancellation should I not be able to travel as originally planned.
- e) Acknowledging that the proposed travel outlined in the ToR is to a region the WHO has designated as affected by COVID-19, agree to acquaint myself prior to travel with the latest information about the level of infection and preventative measures to take by consulting WHO's website at time of offer to be found at <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019> and to keep abreast of local developments in this regard and adhere to the guidelines provided by ODIHR for the duration of the assignment.
- f) agree that in the event that potential restrictive measures are imposed by state or local authorities due to the COVID-19 pandemic the OSCE shall not be liable for any such restrictive measures and may take such action as it considers, in its sole discretion, to be appropriate or necessary in the circumstances, including but not limited to reducing the risk to the safety and security of the undersigned

Name of event

Name of participant

Date(s) of event

Signature of participant

Venue of event

Date of Signature

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