

# Parliamentary Support



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 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, 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 and live-streamed sessions.

## 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 will be replicated at the State level, with a focus on amending the BiH Parliamentary Assembly's Rules of Procedure (RoPs) to include public outreach. 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 monitors relevant parliamentary sessions and issues thematic reports on the work of committees, with special focus on public outreach and citizen participation. The Mission addresses the identified issues and builds on existing achievements by supporting interinstitutional 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.

## Law on Parliamentary Oversight

The Mission, in co-operation with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, supported the drafting and adoption of the BiH Law on Parliamentary Oversight, adopted by the BiH Parliamentary Assembly in April 2018, which represents the first such piece of legislation in the region. This Law enables the Parliamentary Assembly to exert a more effective oversight over the government, including all ministries and state executive structures. Specifically, the Law

prescribes clear procedures in cases of negative audits and introduces minor offences and fines to secure the presence of responsible individuals and witnesses in cases of inquiries before the Parliamentary Assembly. The Mission works on the oversight function of the legislatures by supporting development of the Rulebook for implementing the Law on Parliamentary Oversight and through associated thematic public events. Stronger legislative oversight should increase the efficiency of the Executive in implementing reforms and position parliaments as the bodies overseeing the ministries' work.

## 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, Law on the Prevention of Conflict of Interest, Law on Financing of Political Parties, Law on Associations and Foundations in Brčko District, and Law on Local Self-Governance. The amendment of internal regulations and RoPs is supported to regulate citizens' initiatives as an integral part of legislative deliberation. The Mission works on developing strategic plans such as the Strategic Plan of the Secretariats, Communication, and Information Technology Strategies, and the Rulebook on International Activities. In addition, the Mission supports the organization of public debates which encourage citizens' participation in the development of reforms, and their promotion in co-operation 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.

## 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 regulations, such as the BiH Law on Financing Political Parties, Rulebook on the BiH Law on Parliamentary Oversight, and strengthening their outreach to BiH citizens.

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