
PRESS RELEASE

ODIHR opens election observation mission in Albania

TIRANA, 19 March 2021 – The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) today opened an observation mission for the 25 April parliamentary elections in Albania, following an invitation from the country's authorities.

The mission is led by Ambassador Urszula Gacek and consists of a core team of 12 election experts, based in Tirana, and 24 long-term observers who will be deployed throughout the country from 26 March.

The mission will assess the elections for their compliance with OSCE commitments and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections, as well as with national legislation. Observers will closely monitor the voter registration process, campaign activities, the work of the election administration and relevant governmental bodies, election-related legislation and its implementation, and the resolution of election-related disputes. As part of the observation, the mission will also monitor the media coverage of the campaign.

Meetings with numerous representatives of state authorities, political parties, civil society, the media and the international community form an integral part of the observation.

Due to the continued health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic across the OSCE region and the related travel restrictions, ODIHR is not able to deploy short-term observers ahead of the 25 April elections as originally planned. The format of the observation activity has therefore been adjusted to a Limited Election Observation Mission (LEOM), which will include long-term observers based around the country. While mission members will visit a limited number of polling stations on election day, there will not be any systematic observation of voting, counting or tabulation of results.

On election day itself, the ODIHR observation mission will join efforts with delegations from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

An interim report will be published to update the public and media during the course of the observation. The day after the elections, a statement of preliminary findings will be presented at a press conference. A final report summing up the observation and making recommendations for improvements will be published approximately two months after the end of the election process.

The ODIHR Observation Mission and the OSCE Presence in Albania operate separately under their respective mandates. For further information, please visit: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/albania>.

Media contacts:

Kira Kalinina, media analyst, at Kira.Kalinina@odihr.al or +355 68 394 2987

or

Katya Andrusz, ODIHR spokesperson, at: katya.andrusz@odihr.pl or +48 609 522 266

For PDF attachments or links to sources of further information, please visit: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/481585>