



HR statement regarding Election Integrity Package - highlights

Today, I will do what was supposed to be done years ago and should be understood in a democracy: the guarantee of free, fair and democratic elections for all citizens of Bosnia Herzegovina. So I announce my decision to deliver changes to the Election Law of BiH, in line with my mandate, in support of this country's just-announced EU accession process, and most of all, for the people of this country.

For more than 15 years, Bosnia and Herzegovina has collected recommendations and observations about shortcomings in the electoral framework from the OSCE, ODIHR, the Council of Europe, and others. These recommendations have remained largely unimplemented.

These are very clear international democratic guidelines, and it should be an easy exercise to pass corresponding amendments. As is well known, the BiH authorities have not been successful.

(...)

Bosnia and Herzegovina can only be credible in its bid for European integration if it has institutions that are compliant with EU Standards. No country can become an EU member without accepting the collection of common rights and obligations that constitute the body of EU law. The conditions are set by the EU, not local politicians.

Elections are held in the interest of the people, not in the interest of the parties. Last year, I and other international partners of BiH advocated for these changes. As elections are only six months away, and changes to the election law must be implemented in time, and no local solution is in sight, I took care of it. I regret this, to be honest, as I share the view that domestic solutions are the best solutions. So now I deliver the integrity package, to create the necessary technical and organizational conditions for fair, transparent elections in which people can be sure that the result corresponds to their voting and not to the interests of some parties.

(...)

My decision does not touch the political substance of the electoral system in BiH. It refers to integrity matters to ensure that voters can freely express their preferences and see that their votes count. The amendments can be subject to further changes by the Parliament – it is welcome to improve the law if the Parliament sees the need.

(...)

And a well-intentioned piece of advice at the end: Some might complain about today's decision, but the matter is very simple – this strengthens the integrity of the electoral process for the sake of the citizens.

Anyone who does not want to accept the foundations of a democratic society robs people of this country's future and the chance to become part of the EU. So, I say to the citizens here, seize the opportunity, go out and vote and don't let anyone block your path to the future.

Related links:

[Election Integrity Package – General information](#)

[Decision Enacting the Law on Amendments to the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

[Statement by the Ambassadors of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board, 18 October 2023](#)