



Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Statement on commitment to gender equality

Being aware that the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), in Article 7 (Political and Public Life), requires States parties to take all possible measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country,

Recognizing that CEDAW requires States to ensure that women, as well as men, have the right to vote in all elections and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies, to participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof, to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government and to participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country,

Being aware of the need and importance of equal participation of women and men in public and political life,

Recognizing gender equality as one of the pillars of democracy, the principle and fundamental value of social and private life,

Recognizing that the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina requires all state bodies at all levels of government, and local self-government bodies, including the legislature, executive government and judiciary and political parties, should ensure and promote gender equality in governance, decision-making and representation.

Being aware that, despite the existence of an electoral quota of at least 40% of the underrepresented gender on the electoral lists, women in representative bodies at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina are underrepresented and make up 23.8%, which is below the European average,

Recognizing the need for additional commitment in the implementation of public policies in the field of gender equality, due to the different impact that certain aspects of social development may have on women and men and

Being aware of the fact that women face specific forms of gender-based discrimination

Dedicated to the fight against gender-based discrimination in the electoral process, political and public life -

We, members of the Central Election Commission, Secretariat's staff and other employees of the election administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina

D E C L A R E

that we will, in line with our competencies

1. Ensure the realization of a reasonable level of participation of women in decision-making bodies, as well as in the structures of executive, legislative and representative government by applying the law on gender equality in BiH in the process of work,
2. Apply the principle of equal gender representation of at least 40% of the underrepresented gender in the composition of the Central Election Commission, election commissions and polling stations, unless the body has three members,
3. Actively advocate for gender equality issues, expressing sincere commitment and serious intentions towards the inclusion of a gender perspective in the administrative regulations for the implementation of the Election Law of BiH,
4. Strive to make progress in the field of gender equality in the application of regulations, processes and procedures at all stages of the election process,
5. Include in the budget for the Central Election Commission of BiH funds for the promotion of women's participation in the electoral process, overcoming gender stereotypes and capacity building of political parties and both male/female candidates in terms of gender equality,
6. Show special caution, sensitivity and zero tolerance in its work and activities to sexist comments, hate speech or any other form of discrimination in public space, and especially during the election process, demonstrating commitment to the principle of non-discrimination,
7. Demonstrate readiness in the direction of amendments to the BiH Election Law in order to find a solution to the electoral design according to which the implementation of election results will achieve that at least 40% of the underrepresented gender is elected to representative bodies,
8. Demonstrate readiness to cooperate with relevant stakeholders in changing regulations in order to provide a gender quota for appointed representatives in the executive government, commissions, committees and other bodies,
9. Carefully consider and strive to implement the recommendations of the Concluding Observations of the UN CEDAW Committee on the Sixth Periodic Report of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the field of participation in political and public life, concerning the increase of the gender quota on electoral lists to 50%, replacement of the open list system with the Zipper-system and capacity building programs for women candidates on campaign skills and political leadership, especially for women facing intertwined forms of discrimination,

10. Persist and improve the keeping of gender-disaggregated statistics of election results, which will enable the generation of reports on gender equality in political life in BiH, as well as introduce the practice of publishing gender-disaggregated data in official results, reports, analysis and other published materials of the Central Election Commission of BiH,
11. Pay special attention to the use of gender-sensitive language in all regulations, ballot content, rules of procedure, election results, voter information, press releases, statements and all other information and materials necessary for the implementation of the BiH Election Law and information to the public,
12. Strive to greater and continuous representation of the topic of gender equality and prohibition of discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender characteristics, and other grounds, in the curriculum for education of members of election management bodies;
13. Strengthening partnerships and cooperation with institutional mechanisms for gender equality, non-governmental organizations, the media, academia, citizens as partners in the promotion of gender equality.

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Sarajevo, July 30, 2020

President

Željko Bakalar, Sgd.

Expressions used in the statement shall mean persons of both genders without any discrimination.