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EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

ELECTION EVALUATION GUIDE

**Adopted by the Council for Democratic Elections
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	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION	3
A – General principles	3
B – Election evaluation guide.....	5
1. BEFORE POLLING DAY	6
A. Knowing the political backdrop to the elections	6
B. Knowledge of electoral law	7
1. Electoral rolls (registers).....	7
2. Candidatures.....	8
3. Organisation of the poll	8
4. Bodies monitoring the election procedure.....	10
5. Election campaign	10
2. POLLING DAY.....	12
A. Observation of polling stations during voting: (Questionnaire/Appendix I, CDL-AD(2005)013).....	12
B. Post-voting operations: counting of the votes; declaration of results (Questionnaire/Appendix II).....	14
3. THE NEXT DAY AND THE DAYS FOLLOWING THE POLL.....	15
A. Centralisation and declaration of the results	15
B. Possible appeals.....	15
C. Factors that may have influenced voting on polling day.....	15
D. General atmosphere the day after voting	15
E. Conclusions.....	16
PRACTICAL NOTE CONCERNING THE QUESTIONNAIRES	17
APPENDIX I: ELECTION OBSERVATION FORM FOR THE POLLING DAY (CDL-AD(2005)013)	19
APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE ON OBSERVATION OF THE VOTE COUNTING	21

Election Evaluation Guide

INTRODUCTION

A – General principles¹

Monitoring and evaluating elections is a hard, demanding task for observers who bear considerable responsibility vis-à-vis both the organisation they represent and the country which invites them to perform an observation mission.

The national authorities invite them to monitor an election as foreign observers, non-nationals of the country where the election is taking place, with the aim of proving that the electoral process is bona fide and in compliance with international standards, in particular those laid down in the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters. An observer must therefore show a positive commitment to these European standards, which it is his or her task to uphold in the field.

There must be no shadow of doubt as to an observation mission's objectivity. The bodies appointing the delegation should consequently ensure that the credibility of the mission's findings is not undermined by any potential ground for disqualifying a member or distrusting his or her judgment. Care should therefore be taken not to include nationals of a country with which the host country has an ongoing dispute (territorial, political or other).

As a general rule, several international organisations are present to observe elections. It is necessary to enter into contact with the other organisations in particular regarding:

- deployment of teams (assignment of responsibility for given polling stations and/or regions) so as to ensure the broadest possible coverage
- comparison of observations so as to ensure consistency of findings.

A fundamental principle is **non-interference** in the election process. The observers' task is not to make an immediate decision on any possible conflicts but to establish a report of the electoral process as a whole.

This means that observers must carry out their duties in accordance with the **laws and regulations of the country concerned and not their own national practices**. These laws and regulations must therefore be familiar to all observers.

To that end the body responsible for the mission will ensure that the observers are provided with accurate, concise documents on the country's political circumstances, its electoral law(s), the reports of earlier observation missions, the most recent recommendations addressed to the country and, more generally, any information needed to understand the situation in all its complexity.

¹*International observers are referred, for further particulars of their status, mission and demeanour to be maintained during the observation mission, to the "CODE OF CONDUCT FOR INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVERS" (ref. CDL-AD(205)036) and the Pledge to accompany the Code.*

The observation of elections is therefore not simply a matter of being present and observing how things go at the polling stations on election day, but should begin at least two days earlier.

The body responsible for the mission must take this significant preparatory work into account not only in the time-table and budget, but also in the choice of observers.

That body should also avoid accepting late invitations by national authorities:

- firstly, because a late invitation makes it difficult to set up a mission complying with the criteria set out here, and
- secondly, because it usually indicates a desire for international approval without any genuine will to co-operate.

The success of the observation mission also depends on the capabilities of local staff (normally chauffeurs and interpreters). The organisation dispatching the observation mission must take special care to recruit suitably qualified individuals and interpreters in particular should be given certain basic knowledge of the electoral procedures.

The mission's credibility indeed depends on

- the skills of the interpreters, who must be given strict instructions regarding the professional conduct required of them (adherence to what is actually said without nuancing statements with any personal opinion or "interpretation")
- the reliability of the chauffeurs (instances in which a driver phoned a polling station to give advance warning that the observers were on their way and lack of prudent driving have been reported).

Mention must also be made of a last consideration - relations with the media. In countries where democracy is only recent the media are very eager for information about the conduct of elections. There are also many local radio stations, who may wish to interview the observers.

The delegation's information policy must be determined from the outset, and all members must abide by it. Where it seems appropriate to organise a press conference, this should be held only once the team has a sufficiently complete picture of how the elections have been conducted to be able to draw valid conclusions.

At all events, the observers should not make personal statements to the press, even less on polling day itself.

B – Election evaluation guide

From a practical standpoint, with the above principles in mind, this document is divided into three parts corresponding to 3 stages:

- before polling day
- polling day
- after polling day.

For polling day itself , two questionnaires are proposed :

- QUESTIONNAIRE I for observation of polling stations in operation (1 copy of the questionnaire per office visited).
- QUESTIONNAIRE II for the closure of voting and counting of the votes: observation of closure and counting in a polling station (1 questionnaire per team).

The BEFORE and AFTER polling day guides are intended to be used for the preliminary meetings between all (or part) of the observer delegation and leading national political figures, representatives of the political parties, the central electoral commission etc.

In some cases the list of matters to be taken into consideration may not cover all local particularities and it therefore does not claim to include all the questions that should be put. What it does contain is the essential points that constitute **universal, equal, free, secret and direct** suffrage as defined by the “Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters”.

Lastly, it must be pointed out that the mission's observations cannot be of any statistical or scientific significance, since the number of polling stations visited will always be small compared with the scale of the entire election exercise country-wide.

1. BEFORE POLLING DAY

Knowledge of the political context, electoral law and practical arrangements laid down for the conduct of elections is a pre-condition for a strict and impartial observation that will respect national sovereignty.

One factor that can prevent errors or misplaced interference is a thorough acquaintance with electoral law. Knowing the political issues at stake in the election can help to reveal possible irregularities and any exertion of pressure and so to ensure the most relevant observations.

The questions in this chapter are designed to help the observer group do its job properly by getting a basic idea of how the voting is being organised.

Whilst it is imperative that observers participate in the “Before Polling Day” meetings, should it not be possible due to organisational restraints or other justified reasons for all observers to take part in the meetings and thus in collecting the information mentioned, observers will be briefed about the points raised in the questionnaire (either orally or by means of a summary document).

A. Knowing the political backdrop to the elections

The aim of the questions below is to help observers understand the general and political context of the elections and so prepare themselves for observation targeted according to the risks.

- Are the elections being held on the normal date?
- If not, why are they being held?
- Is there any particular issue at stake other than renewal of mandates on expiry of the normal term of office? (E.g. a planned amendment or reform of the constitution, a national issue in the case of local elections, special situation of a minority, etc)
- What political forces are contending?
In this connection, note must be taken of the list of competing political parties, movements and coalitions and of the place occupied by each of them in national political life. This is essential in order to assess pluralism in the composition of the electoral commissions and to monitor the conduct of the voting. Observers must pay attention to certain small parties or movements which may be fronts for large governing parties and which are only there to provide an illusion of pluralism.
- Was it possible to meet them?
Meeting the national leaders of political parties is useful for understanding the issues and assessing the risks of tension and fraud at the polling stations.

After arrival of the observers on site, meetings can be organised in addition with local officials of the political parties or with candidates in the case of local elections. By publicising the presence of observers, such meetings can help polling to proceed smoothly. However, during such meetings an eye must be kept on the risks of manipulation and exploitation of the observers, who must strictly observe attention to neutrality.²

B. Knowledge of electoral law

The electoral law (or sometimes laws) sets the legal framework and procedures for the poll. A thorough acquaintance with all the relevant legislation is necessary if the voting process is to be judged according to national conditions and not from the viewpoint of observers' experience in their own countries.

1. Electoral rolls (registers)

Information about electoral rolls enables the universality of the poll to be measured.

- Procedures for drawing up the rolls:
 - Are the rolls permanent?
 - Who is responsible for preparing them?
 - How are voters distributed among the polling stations according to their place of residence?
 - How and where does the electorate living abroad vote?
 - What checks are made to prevent multiple entries?
- Any discrimination (social, racial etc) in drawing up the rolls, particularly with respect to minorities (conditions as to nationality, period of presence, residence, ...)
- Publication of electoral rolls:
 - Are the rolls made available to voters to check that they are included?
 - Have the political parties and/or candidates access to the rolls?
- Procedures for making corrections to the rolls (including on polling day?)
 - Can a voter who has been omitted from the roll get the roll corrected?
 - How and within what period? Is this period adequate?
 - Are there supplementary electoral rolls at the polling stations?
 - Who prepares them?
 - What documents are necessary to make corrections to the rolls ?
- Are there any reports of problems concerning these matters? If so, what problems³ (nature of problem, source,⁴ ...).

²*Experience teaches us that some local politicians may be tempted, for example, to have themselves photographed with the observers in order subsequently to claim the support of the observers and, over and above them, of the Organisation observing the elections!*

³*Knowledge of the problems that arose during previous elections is rich in lessons for the observers in that it enables them to "target" their observations and possibly to note progress made at national level.*

⁴*Knowledge of the sources is important because it enables the quality of the evidence to be assessed in the final report and the fairly frequent attempts to manipulate the observers to be frustrated!*

2. Candidatures

This point allows voters' **equality of access** to elective office to be measured.

- Who can stand for election?
- What are the conditions for standing for election?
 - Sponsorship (who can act as a sponsor?)
 - Right to put forward candidates (only recognised political parties or coalitions, for example, may put forward candidates)
 - Is candidature subject to the deposit of a guarantee? If so, what is the amount? Is this amount not excessive in the light of the country's economic conditions and the poll?⁵
- In the event of a second round of voting, what are the conditions for a candidate to continue to stand in that round? Do these seem reasonable and compatible with the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters?
- Have any problems been reported regarding these questions? If so, what problems? (nature of problem, ...).

3. Organisation of the poll

The questions in this paragraph enable **on-the-spot observations to be prepared** on polling day.

- What voting system is used for the elections?
- How are the electoral commissions for the polling stations composed? Is pluralism respected?
- Does electoral legislation provide for the presence of representatives of the political parties and/or of candidates qualified to monitor the process as a whole?
- Are other observers (eg NGOs) authorised to monitor the process? What are the procedures for approving them (and are these procedures transparent)?
- Ballot papers:
 - Are they simple and easy to understand?
 - Are they printed in the various minority languages?
 - Can they be understood by persons unable to read? (eg presence of a logo)⁶
- Voting by the military:
 - Do the military have the right to vote?

⁵We are aware of certain countries where, in order to stand as a town councillor at local elections, the guarantee represented several months of an average salary! This is clearly a disguised form of suffrage based on property/wealth qualifications.

⁶This is a very sensitive question in certain countries where several languages are in daily use and/or where many people are unable to read. Difficulties in reading/understanding ballot papers may lead to a not always disinterested offer of assistance with voting!

- How is voting organised? (electoral rolls, practical arrangements)
- Where do the military vote? In town? In their barracks? In their home municipality?
- In the case of voting in barracks:
 - What is the membership of the electoral commission? Civilians? Military?
 - Is it possible for civilian observers and representatives of the parties/candidates to be present?
 - For local elections, is the municipality military vote liable to sway the result or to reach the percentage required for elections to be deemed valid?⁷
- Voting by sick and infirm persons: voting arrangements:
 - Who decides on the procedure to be used? What are the time limits for applications?
 - "Mobile" ballot box?⁸ Who collects the votes?
 - Proxy vote, postal vote, other methods?
 - How is the secrecy and genuineness of personal voting ensured in such cases?
 - Do the arrangements prevent fraud?
- Voting arrangements for those living in fear
- Counting the votes
 - Who counts the votes?
 - Are the votes counted in public?
 - Who decides whether a ballot paper is valid or spoilt and are there any regulations to determine whether a vote is valid or not?
 - Foreign votes?
 - In what cases does the law provide that a ballot paper is spoilt?
 - Are these cases not too strict and/or categorical?⁹
- Declaring the results:
 - Who is responsible for declaring the results of the polling station?
 - Where does the declaration take place?
 - Does the law require the results to be posted at the door of the polling station?
 - What results are officially announced? The number of votes scored by each list or candidate? In each constituency? Or merely those elected without any details of the scores obtained?
- Have problems with these questions been reported? If so, what problems? (nature, source, ...).

⁷The "soldiers' vote" is liable to influence the results in large garrison towns.

⁸This procedure is frequently employed in the CIS countries and former Yugoslavia. The box in question is transported by members of the electoral commission to the homes of housebound persons in order to collect their votes.

⁹Our attention has been drawn to cases where the fact that the cross indicating the chosen candidate extends a few millimetres outside the box provided on the ballot paper has invalidated the vote. It is clear that this punctiliousness has nothing to do with any difficulty in interpreting the voter's intention! It is useful in these cases to know the rule in order to judge the conduct of the vote count at the polling stations and later, in the final report on the election, to call the national authorities' attention to this difficulty if necessary.

4. Bodies monitoring the election procedure

The monitoring bodies play an essential role in the conduct of the poll, particularly in safeguarding the poll's **pluralism, equality and legality**. A meeting between the observer delegation and the central electoral commission is indispensable.

For local elections, it is also essential to have a meeting with the local electoral commission before polling day.

- Central electoral commission:
 - How is it composed? Who appoints the members?
 - Is it permanent? Ad hoc?
 - What is its members' political allegiance?
 - Is its membership based on the principle of pluralism?
 - What are its powers? particularly regarding appeals?
 - On what basis does it take decisions (majority, unanimity, consensus, etc.)?
 - Do you consider the commission to be competent and impartial?

- Local electoral commissions:
 - How are they composed? Who appoints the members?
 - Is the membership of these commissions based on the principle of pluralism?
 - Do you consider the commissions to be impartial?
 - In the case of local elections, are these commissions competent to hear appeals?
 - Have the members received a basic grounding in electoral legislation?

- Electoral commissions of the polling stations:
 - How are these commissions composed? Who appoints the members?
 - Is the membership of these commissions based on the principle of pluralism?
 - Do you consider the commission to be impartial?
 - Have members received a basic grounding in electoral legislation?

- Appeals:
 - Who may lodge an appeal?
 - What is the competent body?
 - What are the conditions for appeals?
 - What are the consequences of an appeal?

- Have problems regarding these questions been reported during previous polls? If so, what problems? (nature, ...).

5. Election campaign

For understandable material reasons (impossibility of being present several weeks before the elections unless long term observers are appointed, inability to follow the campaign on the radio and TV or in the press through ignorance of the language), observers seldom have a chance to observe the election campaign.

Nevertheless, the modalities of the election campaign are an important element in assessing whether the contest between the candidates is **fair, honest and equal**.

Observers can obtain a useful idea of the campaign:

- by getting to know the rules in force (do they ensure that the competing candidates/parties are on an equal footing?);
 - by collecting statements from candidates and party officials and interviewing voters, as well as observers already present in the country (embassies, international organisations etc).
 - by observing the published electoral propaganda material (e.g. posters etc) of individual candidates or political parties.
-
- What are the rules governing the election campaign?
 - What is the duration of the campaign?
 - What is allowed or forbidden?
 - Is it permissible to put up posters in public places? On what conditions?
 - Are public meetings permitted? On what conditions?
 - Is the campaign publicly funded? Is such funding equitable?
 - Are the cost and funding of the campaign regulated and supervised? (ceiling on expenditure, origin of funds, ...)
 - What are the guarantees to ensure freedom of expression and assembly for parties and candidates?
 - Is there any check that access to the media (press, radio, TV), especially the publicly-owned media, is equitable? Who performs this check? How impartial is the supervisory body?
 - Have any problems been reported:
 - regarding the conduct of the campaign?
 - regarding the use of unauthorised public resources?
 - other problems ...
 - Sources.

2. POLLING DAY

Observation on polling day represents the high point of the observation process. It is in the field that observers will see the legislation being actually applied and be able to measure the gap between theory (the law) and practice (the law's implementation).

Observers must bear in mind that the purpose of observation is to **establish that local law is properly applied** and not to enforce the law of some other country. If local law proves inadequate or inappropriate, the final report to the national authorities will indicate proposals for improving the quality of the poll. In no case will any "adaptation" of that law be suggested by the on-site teams.

Observers must likewise be aware that their job is to **observe** and in no circumstances to intervene in the process at any level, even at a polling station. At the very most, they may suggest discreetly to the returning officer that he refer to the electoral law on some point which it appears is not being applied (sometimes through ignorance).

The observer teams will go to a polling station before polling starts in order to check the layout of the station selected and monitor the procedures for starting the poll.

They will do the same for the close of voting, for which they will select a station (perhaps one of those observed during the day and judged sensitive) in order to be present at the formal close of voting and at the counting of the votes until the declaration of the results (if this is provided for by law) or at the arrival of the ballot papers and results at the local electoral commission.

Observers have two different questionnaires:

- *questionnaires in quantity* for the observations of polling stations carried out during the day (*opening included*). In other words, observers have at their disposal sufficient copies of the questionnaire for observation of the voting itself (it is better to provide an adequate number, including spare copies of the questionnaire, in case of questionnaires being crossed out);
- one for the counting operations, since the observers observe only one polling station as regards counting (provide a spare copy).

When voting is spread over several days, **a specific report will be drawn up** concerning the provisional-closure operations carried out and the security measures taken to protect the previous day's ballot papers from interference.

A. Observation of polling stations during voting: (Questionnaire/Appendix I, CDL-AD(2005)013)

As many questionnaires as polling stations visited

This questionnaire was devised jointly by the Council for Democratic Elections (Venice Commission) and OSCE-ODIHR. It is thus identical for Council of Europe and OSCE observation teams, each organisation being able to "personalise" the questionnaire according to the type of ballot and according to the electoral law in force.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to place observations on a formal footing (with a view to on-the-spot or subsequent statistical processing).

It is also to be used for the first polling station visited (opening of the voting)

Content of the questionnaire:

A. 1. Identification details: of the observers and polling station (according to the codification assigned by the organisation),

B. Time spent at the polling station,

C. Number of registered voters and number of voters at the time of the visit,¹⁰

D. Elements for assessing the polling station's external features (campaign material, accessibility),

E. Inside the polling station: any election material, intimidation, influencing of the constituents' vote, atmosphere (possible tension), ...

F. Presence of unauthorised persons in the polling station (police, military, ...),

G. Presence of national observers (under the provisions of the national Electoral Code),

H. Presence of the regulation electoral material,

I. Voting procedure – irregularities found.

It will be recalled that in many countries *newly opened up to democracy*, the weight of habits and traditions *may* obstruct the immediate application of the law, *particularly in some rural areas*.

For example, *family voting continues to be encountered in many countries, sometimes for reasons related to illiteracy*.

- Observers should endeavour to assess the facts found having regard to the local situation and to the **real influence of these facts on the sincerity and secrecy of the ballot, as well as the influence on voters**.
- However, this should not prevent the observation mission from noting these aspects as necessitating improvement in future.

Observers should also indicate the elements likely to influence or to exert pressure on voters.

J. Official remedies: have the observers been informed of remedies as to the voting procedures in this polling station?

¹⁰This point is an important one: it enables the accuracy of the figure for voter participation declared by the authorities to be checked at the end of the day.

K. Evaluation: this question is intended to evaluate comprehensively the electoral commission members' and the voters' understanding of the voting procedures, awarding a mark from 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good).

L. Appraisal of the entire conduct of operations in the polling station, awarding a mark from 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good).

In addition to this outline questionnaire, observers may witness, or have brought to their attention by voters, incidents or breaches of the electoral law.

*These elements will be the subject of **additional written reports** indicating as exactly as possible the facts or the elements found by or reported to the observers. Alleged facts can be suspect! These will be taken into consideration with all due caution.*

Observers should verify the identity of the person reporting the facts. They should also take care to exercise caution in their interpretation; operations involving the manipulation of international observers are sometimes discovered!

B. Post-voting operations: counting of the votes; declaration of results (Questionnaire/Appendix II)

1 questionnaire per observer team

The aim of this questionnaire is to evaluate:

- Compliance with the law when counting the votes,
- Electoral commission members' familiarity with electoral law,
- Fair distribution of tasks among members of the commission: representatives of the authorities/party in power must not monopolise all tasks,
- Calm and concentration shown during the count,¹¹
- Problems encountered with regard to the validity of ballot papers,¹²
- Compliance with the rules on publicising the results,
- The possibility of dealing with subsequent disputes (keeping of ballot papers and reconciliation of the number of ballot papers).

This questionnaire includes the same general identification and appraisal elements as the previous questionnaires.

¹¹Hurried counting may be a sign of a desire to conceal "tampering" with ballot papers from the observers.

¹²See footnote 9 above (§ B 3: Organisation of the poll) concerning sometimes excessive punctiliousness on this point. The observers' findings in the field and the number of spoilt papers can serve as arguments for a recommendation to the authorities in the final observation report.

3. THE NEXT DAY AND THE DAYS FOLLOWING THE POLL

The observation mission must schedule a meeting with the other international and domestic organisations that observed the elections for the day following the poll. This will make it possible to compare and crosscheck observations in such a way as to bolster up (or tone down) the mission's initial findings.

One of the problems frequently encountered during the observations of elections is the delay in declaring the results.

This delay may be due to material factors (no reliable telephone or facsimile links, no interlinked data system etc).

It may, however, hide other reasons (of a political nature), such as the governing party's difficulty in admitting a defeat in the elections, or even an attempt to rig the results.

A reading of the press on the day after the elections will also help the observers to supplement their impressions, particularly regarding the development of the situation in the country after the elections.

A. Centralisation and declaration of the results

- Forwarding of the results to the central electoral commission:
 - How was the centralisation of results conducted?
 - Is the process reliable?

- Declaration of the final results:
 - Who declared the final results?
 - How long after the polling stations closed?
 - Does this time frame appear reasonable (bearing in mind the local communication and transport situation)?

B. Possible appeals

- Are the observers aware of any appeals?
- Who originated the appeals?
- What grounds were put forward?

C. Factors that may have influenced voting on polling day

- Were "exit polls" published on the day of the elections?
- Does the delegation have the impression that this may have influenced voting?

D. General atmosphere the day after voting

- What is the view of the different political parties and the government about the conduct of the elections?
- What is the general feeling of the observers about the conduct of the elections?

E. Conclusions

- Do the observers consider that the elections were held in accordance with the democratic criteria laid down in the “Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters”?

- What recommendations does the observer body wish to make to the national authorities for improving the conduct of the next elections?
 - In the legislative field
 - As regards practical arrangements
 - As regards training of members of electoral commissions
 - And, at a more general level, to increase compliance with the “Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters”.

PRACTICAL NOTE CONCERNING THE QUESTIONNAIRES

The questionnaires were drawn up in conformity with point 11.ii.c of Resolution 1320 (2003) of the Parliamentary Assembly which requested the Venice Commission to draft “as soon as possible, a computerized questionnaire, setting out in a practical form the general principles of the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters,¹³ which would give the observer delegations a better overview of the electoral situation”. Recommendation 124 (2003) of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (point 8.b.ii) adopts a similar approach.

Co-operation between the Council of Europe (Venice Commission) and OSCE/ODIHR enabled these two organisations to draw up a joint questionnaire for the polling day (see questionnaire 1 below).

The observation is organised in 3 stages, before, during and after the polling day.

STAGE 1: Before polling day

The questions for this stage do not need a more rigid form: it is an operating guide for use by the observer body for its interviews prior to observation as such on polling day.

The replies will not be the subject of data processing but will be used for the final observation report and enable the delegation to propose possible adaptations to the electoral law or its implementation through recommendations to the national authorities.

STAGE 2: The polling day

Two questionnaires are at the disposal of the teams:

QUESTIONNAIRE 1: Observation of polling stations (joint questionnaire by ODIHR/Council of Europe)

This questionnaire is made available in as many copies as are needed (10 to 20 per team according to local polling conditions and each team's geographical coverage).

It must be returned not later than the same evening (or, when conditions require, not later than the next morning) to the secretariat of the observation body for statistical processing.

Technical modifications to the layout may be made to facilitate data processing.

QUESTIONNAIRE 2: Closure of polling stations

One copy of this questionnaire is given to each team, which must complete it.

¹³CDL-AD(2002)023rev.

A specimen of this questionnaire in operational form appears in the appendix (1 page, 2 sides).

Technical modifications in the layout may be made to facilitate data processing.

STAGE 3: After polling

This too (see Stage 1) is simply a guide to assist observation of the follow-up to the poll.

Questionnaires 1 and 2 will be treated by data processing immediately or later.

This processing will concern the election itself (highlighting strong and weak points).

It will also enable global statistical data to be put at the disposal of other Council of Europe bodies and the OSCE and provide material for future work.

APPENDIX I: ELECTION OBSERVATION FORM FOR THE POLLING DAY
(CDL-AD(2005)013)

Election Observation Form – Part ONE. EOM to _____ Date _____
--

Team number¹: **Form number²:**

A. Polling station id³:

Region: District: Polling station:

The Polling station is⁴: Rural: Urban: PS Chairperson: Male Female:

B. Time in Polling Station⁵ (24hrs clock):

Arrival time (hh:mm): : Departure time (hh:mm): :

C. Voters list⁶

How many voters are registered on the voters list?

How many voters have voted so far?

D. Outside the Polling Station

1. Are campaign materials present/visible outside the polling station?
2. Are campaign activities taking place in the vicinity of the polling station?
3. Is the Polling Station accessible for persons with disabilities?

Y	N	N/K

E. The Polling Station – Environment and Atmosphere⁷

4. Are campaign materials present/visible inside the Polling Station?
5. Observed any form of intimidation inside or outside the Polling Station?⁸
6. Observed attempt to influence voters how to vote?
7. Was there tension inside the Polling Station during the voting?
8. Were you given full access to the Polling Station?
9. Did you receive the necessary information from the polling station officials?

Y	N	N/K

¹A four digit code has already been used to identify the observer team. The two first gives the long term observers (LTO) area and the last two gives the unique team within the LTO area.

²A number should be entered when the form arrives at the HQ (could also be entered before handing out to the observers but this is rather time consuming).

³This classic three-part identification is necessary. The form is based on a number of tables and can therefore easily be modified (in this case: place cursor in the ID box(es) and then split the box to the number of figures needed). Acronyms of course differ from country to country, and must be changed. Commissions never consist of more than three levels.

⁴Change or add: the Chairman of the polling station is: Male / Female. Place cursor in the last box and press 'TAB'.

⁵To be used for calculation of turn out figures.

⁶Below are two questions which can always be asked about the voters list. The form is based on a number of tables and can therefore easily be modified (place cursor in the last box and press 'TAB'), the same questions can also be asked about additional voters list and mobile list.

⁷There are no questions about number of polling station officials and party agents because this differs a lot from country to country. A question about Domestic observers could be added under section F, but then the heading would have to be changed.

⁸Two questions about 'Overcrowded PS' are asked, see questions 20. Cross-check.

F. Unauthorised persons⁹

10. Are unauthorised person/s present? If, **YES**, to question 10, who?

- Police Military Security Local authorities Other

Y	N	N/K

G. Domestic Observers

11. Are domestic election observers present? If, **YES**, to question 11, who?

- NGO Political Party/Candidates Other

Y	N	N/K

H. Election material¹⁰

12. Were all necessary election materials present? If, **NO**, to question 12, which?

- Voters list/s Ballot boxe/s Polling booths Ballot papers Protocols Ink Other

Y	N	N/K

I. Procedures: Irregularities observed¹¹

13. Was the secrecy of the vote ensured?
 14. Did you observe voters being handed more than one ballot (*multiple voting*)?
 15. Did you observe voters receiving ballots for other persons (*proxy voting*)?
 16. Did you observe voters voting in groups (*family voting*)?
 17. Did you observe voters using pre-marked ballots (*carousel voting*)?
 18. Did you observe the same person "assisting" numerous voters?
 19. Anyone denied the right to vote for inappropriate reasons?
 20. Was the process seriously hampered by overcrowding or disorganisation?
 21. Was the ballot box(es) sealed properly?

Y	N	N/K

J. Official complaints

22. Have official complaints been noted?

Y	N	N/K

K. Evaluation¹²

(5=very good – 1=very poor)

23. How do you rate the PEC members' understanding of voting procedures?
 24. How do you rate most voters' understanding of voting procedures?

5	4	3	2	1	N/K

L. Overall Assessment (4=very good, 3=good, 2=bad, 1=very bad)

25. How do you rate the conduct of voting at this polling station?

4	3	2	1	N/K

⁹The categories can be changed/deleted depending on the situation and what is stated in the law.

¹⁰The categories can be changed/deleted depending on the situation and what is stated in the law.

¹¹Process questions that always can be asked. Not law dependent.

¹²These two questions can be asked even if the full process is covered on this first page. These two questions should also always be separated from the 'Overall assessment' made by the observers (not always the case in observation missions). It is therefore useful for them to be on the first page.

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE ON OBSERVATION OF THE VOTE COUNTING

Name of observers: _____	Team Number: I ____ I
Polling station: Municipality: _____ Station Name: _____	Station Number: I ____ I
Time of arrival at the station: _____	Time of leaving the station: _____

Close of voting announced by the Chairman at the planned time? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

If not, why not?

At the close of voting were voters still present who were unable to vote? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Persons Present:

Electoral commission of the polling station at full strength at the close of polling? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Party representatives/candidates admitted to the room after the official close of polling? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Are they in a position to see the counting process?

Public (electors) admitted? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Were there any unauthorised persons in the polling station after the close of poll? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Counting Operations:

Are unused/spoilt ballots counted and then segregated? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Are the number of ballots issued counted, and the number recorded? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Are the seals on the ballot box intact prior to opening? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Are the members of the polling station familiar with the procedures? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Does counting take place calmly? I _ I YES / I _ I NO Or somewhat hurriedly: I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Are the procedures stipulated by the electoral law complied with? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Are unused ballot papers placed under seal? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Were there any pens/pencils on the counting table? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Were ballots in stacks or bundles inside the ballot box? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Were the ballots counted face down? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Did the Chairperson announce the number of regular ballots? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Were regular ballots sorted into piles for each party/candidate? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Were separate piles made for invalid and unmarked ballots? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Were the undecided ballots reviewed by the Chairperson, and the polling station commission? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Did you follow the whole counting process at this polling station? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Spoilt ballot papers:

Is the decision to invalidate a ballot paper taken in accordance with the electoral law? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Is it made transparently (paper shown to delegates, observers, ...)? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Does the number of spoilt papers seem to you to be ... I _ I excessive? / I _ I normal? ? [] nearly nil ?

Principal grounds for invalidating a ballot paper: _____

Do you consider them justified? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Declaration of results:

Are the results of voting declared clearly (according to the electoral law)? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Are the results posted at the door of the polling station in accordance with the electoral law? I _ I YES / I _ I NO

Overall assessment of the quality of counting at the polling station:

Very Good	Quite good	Rather poor	Very Poor
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