European Commission
United Nations Development Programme
International IDEA

In collaboration with
International Organization for Migration
Canadian International Development Agency
Organization of American States

IOM and Electoral Support. Out of Country Voting and the case of Bosnia

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Presentation Plan

● IOM and **Migration Management**: why is IOM involved in Electoral Support?

● IOM’s experience in Elections: OCV BOSNIA 1996

● IOM’s engagement in Electoral Support: the **Election Support Unit** its scope and operational modalities
What is IOM?

How did it begin?
an international organization, founded at a conference in Brussels on 5 December 1951 to help resolve the problems of the huge numbers of people – “surplus population” – in Europe who were displaced or unemployed and needing to move following the war.
IOM’s 16 Funding Members

- Australia
- Austria
- Belgium
- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Canada
- Chile
- Federal Republic of Germany
- France
- Greece
- Italy
- Luxembourg
- The Netherlands
- Switzerland
- Turkey
- United States of America
Today IOM has...

- **125** Member States.
- **90** observers including **16** States and **74** global and regional IGOs and NGOs
- More than **420** offices at present in more than **120** States
- Approximately **5,600** operational staff at present, almost entirely in the field.
- More than **1,770** active projects
- Operational budget of approx **1.1 billion**
What is IOM for?

Mission Statement

“IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society”
What does IOM do?

**Migration and Development**
- Return of Qualified Nationals
- Exchange of Expertise
- Remittances/Money Transfers
- Overseas Communities
- Micro credit Schemes
- Targeted Assistance
- Brain Drain and Gain

**Facilitating Migration**
- Workers and Professionals
- Students and Trainees
- Family Reunification
- Recruitment and Placement
- Documentation
- Language Training
- Cultural Orientation
- Consular Services

**Regulating Migration**
- Systems for Visa, Entry & Stay
- Border Management
- Technology Applications
- Assisted Return and Reintegration
- Counter-trafficking
- Counter-smuggling
- Stranded Migrants

**Forced Migration**
- Asylum and Refugees
- Resettlement
- Repatriation
- Internally Displaced Persons
- Transition and Recovery
- Former Combatants
- Claims and Compensation
- Elections and Referenda

**Cross-cutting Activities**
- Technical Cooperation and Capacity Building
- Migrants’ Rights and International Migration Law
- Data and Research
- Policy Debate and Guidance
- Regional and International Cooperation
- Public Information and Education
- Migration Health
- Gender Dimension
- Integration and Reintegration
Why is IOM involved in Electoral Support?
IOM believes that the promotion of **fair elections** and democratic institutions can play an important role in **enhancing migration management**, encouraging **popular participation** and engagement in a country’s political future and social and economic development, **stabilizing communities** and reducing the potential for future large-scale population displacement and consequent instability.
The **Election Support Unit (ESU)** is responsible for the planning, coordination and oversight of all election processes dealt by IOM.

The Unit provides support to Governments as part of their efforts to expand the access of migrant communities and vulnerable populations to democratic electoral process in their countries or territories of origin.
Support to Electoral Process: How?

Support to European Observation Missions

Capacity Development for EU and Domestic Election Observers (NEEDS w/ International IDEA, Internews, EISA, Chapel)

Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

Enfranchisement of Displaced Population

Out of Country Voting
Support to EU Election Observation Missions

Support for the human rights of migrants, and democratization in third countries

• Since 2001, IOM has been actively involved in supporting in 35 EU Election Observation Missions (EU EOMs) worldwide.

• Often implemented in regions with very sensitive security situations or consist of large-scale elections involving complex logistical arrangements.

• Close cooperation building on the EU priority to promote human rights and democratization in its relations with third countries.
Strengthening the countries ability to conduct external voting programs and strengthen ties with their Diaspora through their diplomatic and consular missions abroad.

**Capacity development** mechanisms and **technical support** include:

• Voter awareness and voter education campaign (normally targeting displaced electorates).

• Upgrading and standardizing information systems.

• Training/Support of Consular Officers.
Support to enfranchisement of displaced populations

• Two technical cooperation projects:
  - **PEP - Participatory Elections:**
    - Aims at identifying obligations, standards, and best practices concerning the political rights of displaced populations in post-conflict elections.
  - **PRESS - Political Rights and Enfranchisement System Strengthening:**
    - Aims at further developing international, regional, and national capacity to enfranchise migrants and assist Election Management Bodies, and other international and national stakeholders.

• Assessment missions, studies, analyses on best practices for each country have been published with recommendations to national and international stakeholders.
Out-of Country Voting

Providing access to voting to the Diaspora

• Supports the inclusion of migrant communities, refugees or displaced populations, into democratic electoral processes in their countries/territories of origin.

• Allows them to become active participants in the electoral process and to be represented in the civil and political life at home.

• Encourages them to maintain links with their home communities while enabling them to participate in the creation of an environment to which they may return safely and resume productive socio-economic lives.

• Empowers those otherwise disenfranchised to elect preferred local and national representatives reducing the effects of ethnic conflicts.
Out-of Country Voting

BOSNIA 1996

- OSCE organized elections
- Refugees Elections Steering Group (RESG)
- IOM “operational arm” of the RESG
Out-of Country Voting

BOSNIA 1996

- IOM organized offices in
  - 17 sub offices in host Countries
  - 20 Coordination Offices
  - 21 IOM Missions worldwide involved
- 637,990 People Registered
- 394,174 Persons voted (62.5%)
- Votes received from 56 countries
Challenges of Electoral Support

Security Constraints
Complex Logistical Arrangements
Lack of institutional memory
Bureaucracy of host countries
High turn over of professional staff
Tight deadlines and short timeframe between preparedness and implementation
Lack of adequate infrastructure
ESU: Why?

Consolidate institutional memory

Policy Guidance/harmonization and coordination

Standardized response and best practices

Coordination with different partners for sustainability of results

Proactive vs. Reactive approach
Thank you!