International Organization for Migration

External Voting & Enfranchisement of Displaced Populations

Francesca Marzatico
Paulo Marques

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Aim

- Introducing core principles and basic concepts associated with the external voting and enfranchisement of displaced electorates.

- Providing overview of policy and operational decisions to be taken in order to set up External Voting Operations and to enfranchise displaced electorates.

- Providing overview of main methods of external voting operations.
IOM Engagement

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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY/TERRITORY</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>ELECTION TYPE</th>
<th># PEOPLE REGISTERED</th>
<th># PEOPLE VOTED</th>
<th># AND OFFICES LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Bosnia and Herzegovina  | 1996 | National and Cantonal Elections      | 637,990            | 551,881       | 4 main offices  
17 sub offices  
20 Coordination Offices  
21 IOM Missions worldwide involved  
Votes received from 56 countries |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina  | 1997 | Municipal Elections                  | 408,607            | 301,161       | 5 Main Offices  
Votes received from 58 countries |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina  | 1997 | National Assembly Elections in Republika Srpska | 200,480            | 121,633       | 3 Main Offices  
Votes received from 50 countries |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina  | 1998 | General Elections                    | 314,783            | 193,000       | 3 Main Offices  
2 Operational Offices  
Votes received from 56 countries |
| East Timor              | 1999 | Popular Consultation                 | 6220               | 6,004         | 4 Main Coordination Offices  
5 Country Representatives  
Votes received from 5 countries  
Territory |
| Kosovo                  | 2000 | Municipal Elections                  | 39,386             | 22,442        | 6 Main Offices  
5 Voter Information Offices in IOM missions  
Votes Received from 35 countries |
| Kosovo                  | 2001 | Assembly Elections                   | 145,142            | 80,653        | 6 Main Offices  
1 Liaison Office  
5 Voter Information Offices in IOM missions  
Votes received from 36 Countries |
| Afghanistan             | 2004 | Presidential Elections               | 737,776            | 846,776       | 4 Main Regional Offices  
8 Field Offices in Pakistan  
7 Field Offices in Iran |
| Iraq                    | 2005 | Transitional National Assembly Elections | 279,785            | 265,148       | 14 Country Offices worldwide  
Operations in 36 Cities  
Votes received from 14 countries |
| Ecuador (Observation Mission) | 2007 | National Constituent Assembly Elections | 152,180            | 39,698        | 9 Observer missions to Ecuador Consulates  
Votes received from 5 countries |
The Election Support Unit (ESU) is responsible for the planning, coordination and oversight of all election processes dealt with 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.
External Voting

- Definition
- Who is entitled
- Access to political rights
- Legal Framework
- Guiding Principles
- Methods of External Voting
- The Process
“[...] procedures which enable some or all electors of a country who are temporarily or permanently abroad to exercise their voting rights from outside the national territory”

*Voting from abroad - The international IDEA Handbook*
External Voting

Who?

• Migrant Workers
• Forced Migrants

• Individuals of professional groups working abroad for their country (diplomatic staff, public officials, armed forces)

• All other citizens leaving abroad
Enfranchisement of Displaced Population

Allows IDPs and Refugees to participate to the democratic process in their countries.
Access to Political Rights

Inclusion of migrant communities, refugees and IDPs into electoral process

• Allows them to become active participants of and to be represented in the civil and political life of their home community

• Encourages them to maintain links with their home communities

• Enables them to return safely and resume productive socio-economic lives
External Voting

Legal Framework

• Peace agreements
• Constitution
• Electoral law
• Administrative regulations
External Voting

Guiding Principles

• Fair
• Free
• Transparent
• Accountable
• Confidential
• Secret
External Voting

Methods

• Embassy Registration and Voting

• By Mail Registration and Voting

• In Person Registration and Voting

• Simultaneous Registration and Polling
External Voting

The Process

- In line with the electoral process in country
- Design operational plan + time-frame
- Establish comprehensive support system (ITC, logistic etc)
- Inform all potential voters, media and observers
- Fair and sufficiently publicized system for complaints
External Voting

The Process

• Pre-election assessment
• Agreement
• Office Structure
• Time-frame
• Evaluation
Questions?
Workshop
External Voting

The Process

• Pre-election assessment
• Agreement
• Office Structure
• Time-frame
• Evaluation
External Voting
The Process
How does it start?

- Electoral Management Bodies
- International Organizations working in the post conflict situations
External Voting
The Process

Pre-election assessment

Identifies **needs** and constraints for conducting free and fair elections in host country
External Voting
The Process
Pre-election assessment

It will include *inter alia*

- **Size** of the electorate
- **Ethnic and geographic distribution** of the electorate, including *gender, education* and *language*
- **Legal, educational, social situation** and **status** of migrants
- **Security situation** in the host countries
External Voting
The Process
Agreement

Defines the activities to be implemented in OCV

e.g. registration; voting; provision of ITC; training for temporary staff; voter education
External Voting
The Process
Office Structure
Depends on the kind and size of program to be implemented

• Liaison Office with the EMB

• External Voting Headquarters

• Country Offices to coordinate and oversee operations
External Voting
The Process

Evaluation

- **Number** of potential voters
- **Geographical distribution** of the potential voters
- **Timeframe**
- **Attitudes** towards electoral results
THANK YOU!