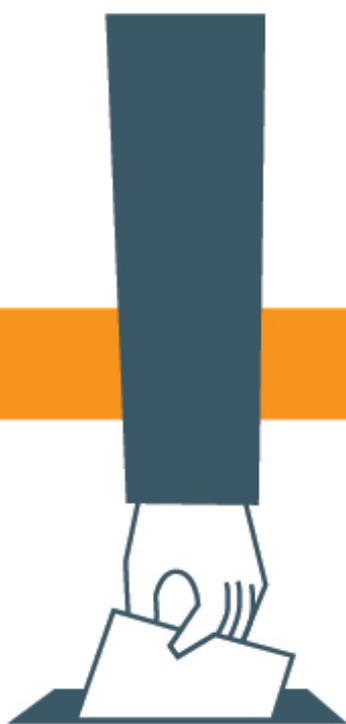


Belgrade elections 2018

**PRELIMINARY
OBSERVATION
REPORT**

ON THE ELECTION DAY



March 4th 2018



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PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

The election of the Councillors for the Assembly of the City of Belgrade was held in Belgrade as one electoral unit by implementing the proportionate electoral system. On the day of the election, on 4th March, the total number of 1.606.931 voters were able to vote on 1.185 polling stations in Belgrade.

The preliminary report of the CRTA observation mission focuses on the **quality of the procedure on the electoral day** and it is based on information gathered from 906 accredited and trained short-term observers, allocated on 453 random and representative sample polling stations as well as from 50 mobile teams which observed electoral events outside the polling stations in all Belgrade municipalities. **The evaluation of the overall quality of the electoral process** in the elections of the Councillors for the Assembly of the City of Belgrade in 2018 will be presented in the **final report of the CRTA observation mission**.

The quality of election process on the Election Day was not in line with international standards for free and fair elections. Serious breaches of electoral procedures were recorded at eight percent of polling stations. In comparison with 2017 presidential and 2016 parliamentary elections, the percentage of recorded irregularities at polling stations is higher.

According to the results gathered from 453 sample polling stations in the election of the Councillors for the Assembly of the City of Belgrade on 4th March 2018, 51% of voters registered in the electoral roll voted, with the statistical error of +/- 0.4 %. Only four electoral lists have passed the threshold: the list "Aleksandar Vucic – Zato sto volimo Beograd" – 44,96 percent, the list led by Dragan Djilas – 19 percent, the list led by Aleksandar Sapic – 8,88 percent and coalition SPS-Jedinstvena Srbija – 6,11 percent. Considering percentages of votes for two lists that won majority of votes, the abovementioned eight percent of recorded irregularities have not fundamentally influenced their election results, but have rather had higher influence on election results of lists that won lower number of votes, however not in the percentage that could bring them closer to pass the threshold. A total number of votes for lists that have not passed the threshold is 19,5 percent, which means that around 160 thousand of citizens who voted in Belgrade elections will remain without representatives in the Belgrade City Council.

On the day of the election of the Councillors for the Assembly of the City of Belgrade, polling stations were opened mostly in accordance with prescribed procedures.

During the day, observers recorded irregularities such as keeping parallel records of voters out of the electoral roll on the polling station, the use of mobile phones and taking photographs of voters, the lack of checklists in electoral boxes at the beginning of the voting, the surplus of ballots in the box in comparison with the number of voters who have voted, voting without identity papers, failure to verify voters' identity papers, failure to use the spray and violation of the secrecy of voting.

There were irregularities outside the polling stations as well – law violations in one percent of observed polling stations. Those irregularities refer to campaigns run within less than 50 m away from the polling station. Also, in seven percent of the polling stations there were irregularities in front of the polling stations such as keeping records of voters and bringing groups of voters to the polling station. Such occurrences have not been regulated by the law and can be interpreted in different ways – as the good organisation within the party itself, but they can also point to the pressure being made on voters.

In three cases, the safety of CRTA observers was endangered. One case happened on the polling station number

1 in Novi Beograd, the other one happened on the polling station number 60 on Zvezdara and the third one happened on the polling station number 10 in Sopot.

On three polling stations, at first CRTA observers were not allowed to attend the procedure of counting votes right after the closure of polling stations. In all three polling stations, after half an hour, observers were allowed to attend the procedure after all. However, due to this situation, observers were not able to report on the validity of results from those polling stations because they had not attended one part of the procedure of counting votes.

CRTA observation mission continues observing the processes after the electoral day. In the days following the announcement of official results of the City Electoral Commission (CEC), CRTA will publish the final report on the analysis of the electoral process, as well as concrete recommendations for its improvement.

ELECTORAL LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Elections for the Councillors for the Assembly of the City of Belgrade take place in Belgrade as one electoral unit by implementing the proportionate electoral system. On the day of the election, the total number of 1.606.931 voters were able to vote on 1.185 polling stations in Belgrade.

The election for the Councillors for the Assembly of the City of Belgrade is regulated primarily by the Law on Local Elections, whereas the issues which have not been explicitly regulated by this Law, are regulated by the Law on the Election of Members of Parliament. Besides legal acts, there are other relevant regulations such as subordinate legislation acts of the City Electoral Commission (CEC), which thoroughly regulate the electoral process and the electoral day itself – *Instructions on Implementing Elections for the Councillors for the Assembly of the City of Belgrade* and *Rules on the Work of Polling Station Committees for the Implementation of Elections for the Councillors for the Assembly of the City of Belgrade*.

In accordance with the Instruction, the authorities responsible for the implementation of elections are the City Electoral Commission and polling station committees. The authorities responsible for the implementation of elections work in permanent and extended composition. The members of the extended authorities responsible for the implementation of elections, who are defined in accordance with the Law on Local Elections, are determined by the City Electoral Commission based on notifications made by submitters of announced electoral lists. Members of the authorities responsible for the implementation of elections and their deputies can only be the citizens with an electoral right and the place of residence in the territory of the city of Belgrade. According to the law, permanent polling station committees consist of the Chairman and four members. On the other hand, 20 electoral lists had a right to their own member of the extended polling station committee.

CRTA ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION “CITIZENS ON WATCH”

HOW DO WE MONITOR THE ELECTION PROCESS

The Centre for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA) is monitoring the entire electoral process for the election of the Councillors for the Assembly of the City of Belgrade 2018.

PRE-ELECTION PERIOD

During this period, CRTA election observation mission team of long-term observers assessed several aspects of the electoral process before the actual Election Day: election campaign (general information related to the campaign; major topics addressed in the campaign; general campaign climate; possible frauds and major violations of election laws during the campaign), the performance of the election administration, the use of public resources in the campaign and the reporting of the media about the candidates and the campaign.

Our election observation methodology is based on the highest international election observation standards (*The Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation*¹, the *Code of Conduct for International Election Observers*, the *Declaration of Global Principles for Nonpartisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organisations*² and the *Code of Conduct for Nonpartisan Citizen Election Observers*), which enabled the reporting on the quality of the actual electoral process.

ELECTION DAY – March 4th 2018

On Election Day, CRTA election observation mission focused on observing the quality of the actual Election Day processes. CRTA election observation mission short-term observers were deployed to representative random sample of 453 polling stations. Our mobile teams observed the occurrences outside the polling stations in all municipalities in Belgrade. Representatives of CRTA election observation mission monitored the work of the City Electoral Commission.

Observers were present at the polling stations from the preparations to open the polls until all polling boards announced election results for their respective polling stations, thereby providing full insight into all occurrences at the polling stations on Election Day.

POST-ELECTION PERIOD

After the Election Day, the CRTA observation mission monitors the work of the City Electoral Commission until it declares official election results. CRTA also observes the resolution of the potential electoral complaints about the performance of polling boards and the City Electoral Commission.

¹ <https://www.ndi.org/dop>

² <https://www.ndi.org/DoGP>

BASIC FINDINGS OF THE LONG-TERM OBSERVATION

Considering the invested resources, the amount of the national media attention and the involvement of the Republic state officials in the campaign, the campaign for Belgrade elections, even though they are local elections, had the atmosphere of the national elections. Many of the irregularities in 2018 are nothing new, but the fact that they were not resolved in the past led to the fact that the electoral campaign was not completely in accordance with the free and fair election standards. Ignoring recommendations of different domestic and international election observers for many years has, in this pre-election campaign, led to the obvious involvement of state officials, abuse of public resources, media inequality and unethical and unprofessional reporting of influential media.

After a month of work “behind the closed door” and 18 sessions, the City Electoral Commission (CEC) issued an accreditation to domestic observers for the observation of the election administration work. Decisions made by the CEC in this period were in accordance with the existing legal and sublegal electoral regulations. However, the existing regulations, again, did not secure the integrity of the electoral process, which was accompanied by a series of controversies in the case of electoral lists “Belovgrad”, “NOPO” and “Dosta je bilo pljačke, korupcije i lopovluka – Radulović Milorad” (“Enough with Thefts, Corruption and Thievery – Radulovic Milorad”).

The cases of the involvement of state officials in the campaign were the most obvious form of abuse of public resources; it has also been noted that, in many cases, a political party takes all credit for the results of public institutions. Both the city and the republic officials were involved in the campaign, as well most of the ministers, the Prime Minister and the President of the Republic of Serbia. CRTA observation mission has submitted 35 complaints to the Anti-Corruption Agency for different cases: from the involvement of state officials in political campaigning, abuse of public resources, conducting prohibited activities by political subjects, to four complaints addressed to different inspections (utility inspection and inspection in charge for education). There have also been cases of abuse of public enterprises for the purposes of a political campaign. There have been cases of different cultural and entertaining events organised by city municipalities, with the covert goal of promoting a certain electoral list.

The Belgrade election campaign has been marked by the media inequality between the position and the opposition even though the disproportion decreased by the end of the campaign from four times bigger presence in the media to two times bigger presence. The tone of articles referring to the opposition was mostly neutral, whereas the tone of articles referring to the ruling parties was mostly biased. The opposition representatives most frequently verbally attacked current city officials but also one another. Representatives of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), as the party which most frequently verbally attacks its political opponents, mostly verbally attacked Dragan Djilas, Aleksandar Sapic, Sasa Jankovic, Vuk Jeremic and Dragan Sutanovac.

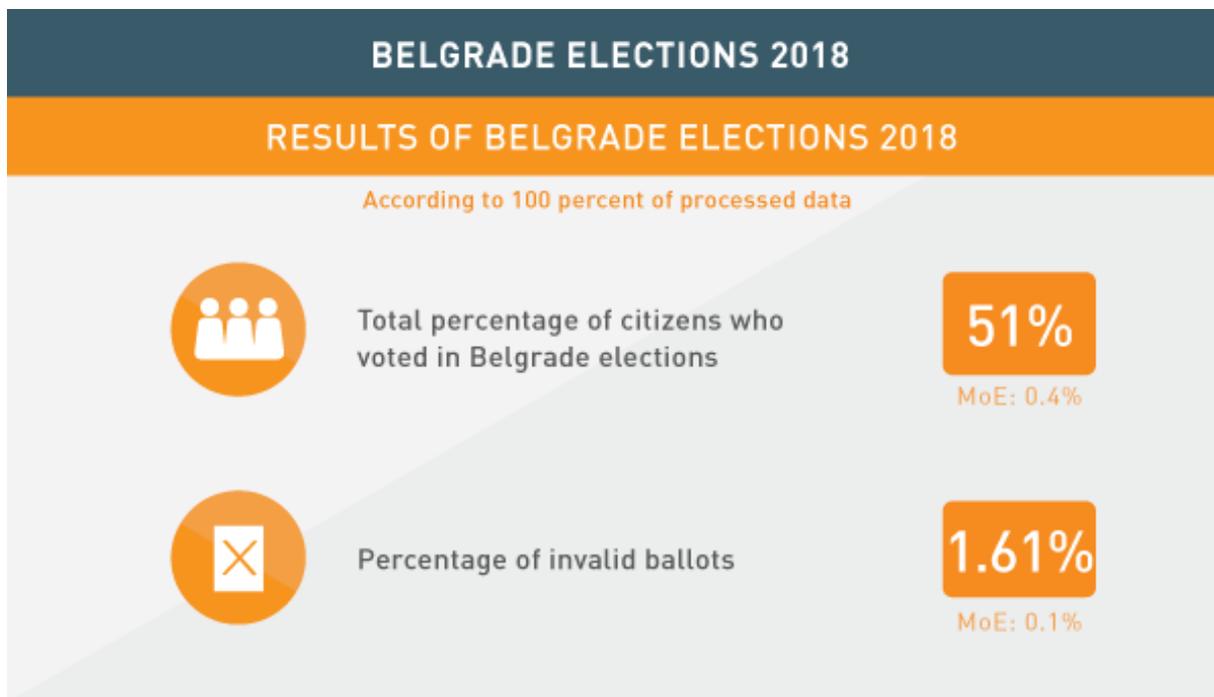
Negative aspect of the Belgrade election campaign also includes cases of the prohibition of the political campaign in public premises and the cases of intimidation. “The living wall”, which means surrounding the political opponent during campaign activities with the aim of provoking an incident, was noted on several occasions and is an unprecedented form of pressure on electoral process activists.

THE ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTORAL DAY PROCESS

TURNOUT AND RESULTS

In accordance with the CEC decision on determining and publishing the final number of voters in Belgrade, adopted on the CEC 28th session held on 2nd March 2018, the final number of voters in Belgrade on 2nd March 2018 was 1.606.931 and they were distributed on 1.185 polling stations.

Based on results gathered from 453 sample polling stations during the elections for the Councillors for the Assembly for the City of Belgrade, held on 4th March 2018, 51% of voters registered in the electoral roll voted, with the statistical error of +/- 0.4 %.



BELGRADE ELECTIONS 2018

RESULTS OF BELGRADE ELECTIONS 2018

According to 100 percent of processed data

1. ALEKSANDAR VUČIĆ – Zato što volimo Beograd!	44,96%	MoE: 0,95%
2. Dragan Đilas – Beograd odlučuje, ljudi pobeđuju!	19%	MoE: 0,57%
3. ALEKSANDAR ŠAPIĆ – GRADONAČELNIK	8,88%	MoE: 0,46%
4. IVICA DAČIĆ – SPS, DRAGAN MARKOVIĆ PALMA – JS	6,11%	MoE: 0,16%
5. DOSTA JE BILO I DVERI – DA OVI ODU, A DA SE ONI NE VRATE	3,92%	MoE: 0,1%
6. INICIJATIVA NE DAVIMO BEOGRAD	3,45%	MoE: 0,2%
7. Dr VOJISLAV ŠEŠELJ – SRPSKA RADIKALNA STRANKA	2,39%	MoE: 0,1%
8. Ljubiša Preletačević BELI – Zato što volimo BELOVGRAD	2,3%	MoE: 0,1%

BELGRADE ELECTIONS 2018

RESULTS OF BELGRADE ELECTIONS 2018

According to 100 percent of processed data

9. DA OSLOBODIMO BEOGRAD – DS, SDS, Nova stranka, ZEP – Zeleni	2,18%	MoE: 0,1%
10. DR MILOŠ JOVANOVIĆ – DEMOKRATSKA STRANKA SRBIJE	1,1%	MoE: 0,1%
11. Beograd ima snage – ZAVETNICI	0,64%	MoE: 0,1%
12. PREDRAG MARKOVIĆ – POKRET OBNOVE KRALJEVINE SRBIJE	0,52%	MoE: 0,1%
13. „Šta radite bre – Marko Bastać”	0,51%	MoE: 0,1%
14. ZELENA STRANKA SRBIJE	0,43%	MoE: 0,1%
15. RUSKA STRANKA – MILE MILOŠEVIĆ	0,38%	MoE: 0,14%
16. ZELENA STRANKA – Kakav Beograd želiš? Misli	0,33%	MoE: 0,1%

BELGRADE ELECTIONS 2018

RESULTS OF BELGRADE ELECTIONS 2018

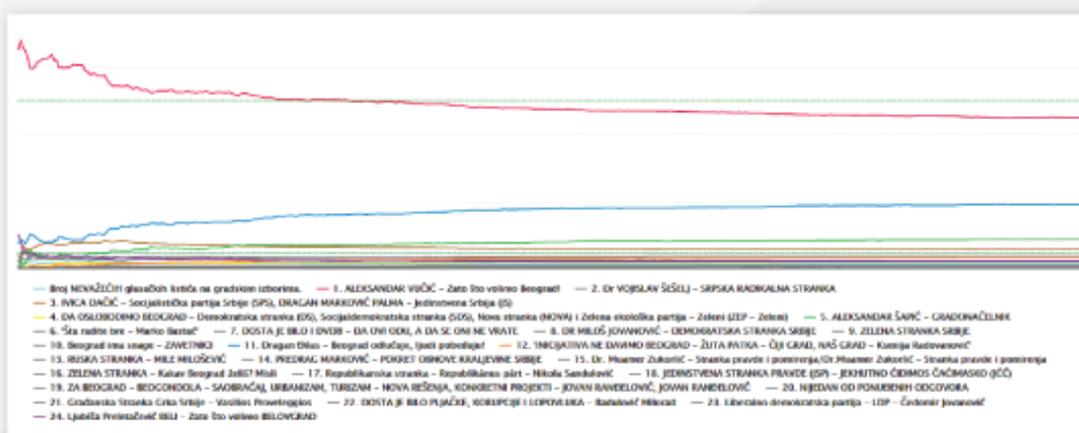
According to 100 percent of processed data

17. Liberalno demokratska partija – LDP – Čedomir Jovanović	0.24%	MoE: 0.1%
18. NIJEDAN OD PONUĐENIH ODGOVORA	0.2%	MoE: 0.1%
19. Građanska Stranka Grka Srbije – Vasilios Proveleggios	0.19%	MoE: 0.1%
20. Dr. Muamer Zukorlić – Stranka pravde i pomirenja	0.18%	MoE: 0.1%
21. DOSTA JE BILO PLJAČKE, KORUPCIJE I LOPOVLUKA – Radulović Milorad	0.17%	MoE: 0.1%
22. Republikanska stranka – Nikola Sandulović	0.14%	MoE: 0.1%
23. JEDINSTVENA STRANKA PRAVDE	0.1%	MoE: 0.1%
24. ZA BEOGRAD – BEOGONDOLA – JOVAN RANĐELOVIĆ	0.1%	OR: 0.1%

Based on the convergence curve which represents the changing of voting results in the real time while receiving data from random and representative sample stations, it can be concluded that the projected results of the CRTA observation mission “Citizens on Watch” were stable and reliable.

BELGRADE ELECTIONS 2018

CONVERGENCE GRAPH FOR ELECTION RESULTS ON 100% PROCESSED SAMPLE



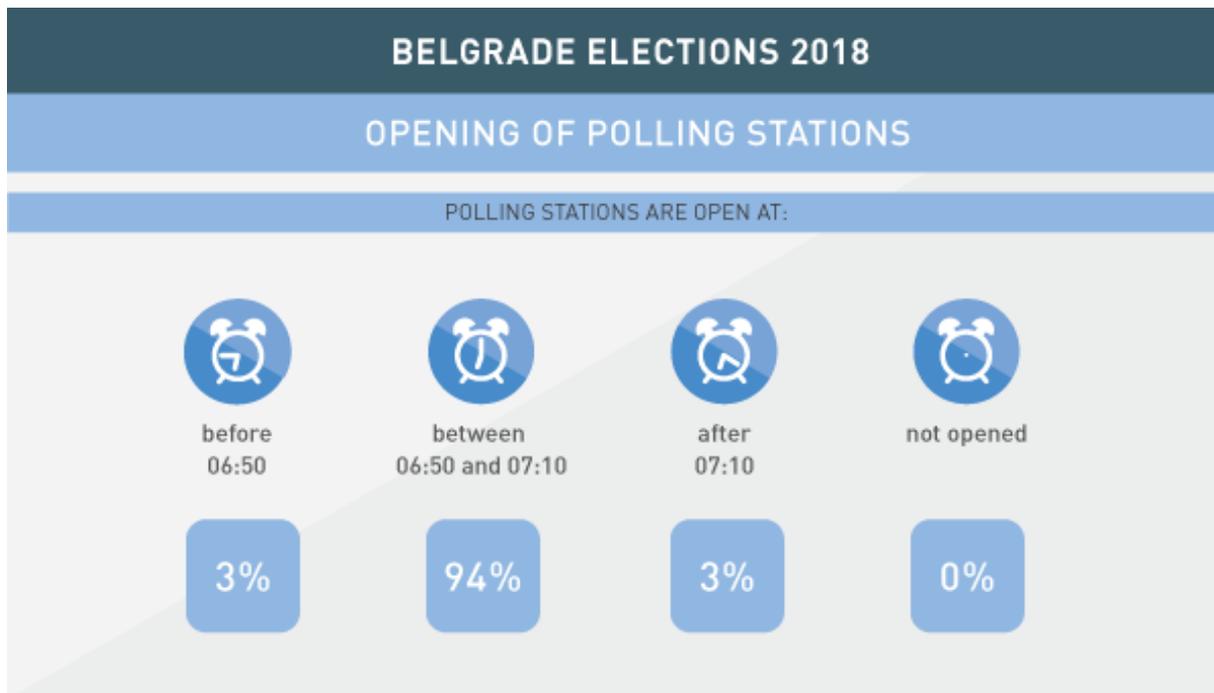
Knowing that only four lists have reached the census, i.e. the total percentage of votes for the lists which did not reach the census is 19.5%, it can be concluded that about 160.000 voters who voted in these elections have not got their own representative in the Assembly of the City of Belgrade.

OPENING OF POLLING STATIONS

On the day of the election of the Councillors for the Assembly of the City of Belgrade, polling stations were opened mostly in accordance with prescribed procedures.

Ninety-four percent of the polling stations were opened on time, three percent of the polling stations were opened before the opening time and three percent of them were opened with a slight delay. There were no cases in which a polling station was not opened at all.

Polling stations opened with a delay shorter than one hour are PS 5 Obrenovac, PS 33 Savski Venac, PS 5 Rakovica, PS 42 Zvezdara, PS 7 Palilula, PS 32 Grocka, PS 58 Zemun, PS 45 Zvezdara, PS 13 Lazarevac, PS 4 Novi Beograd, PS 49 Vracar, PS 30 Zemun, PS 30 Zemun, PS 27 Cukarica, PS 61 Novi Beograd, PS 19 Novi Beograd and PS 22 Zemun. One of the reasons for a delayed opening of the polling stations is the fact that the polling station committees needed more time to determine the state and number of the electoral material which had been taken over.

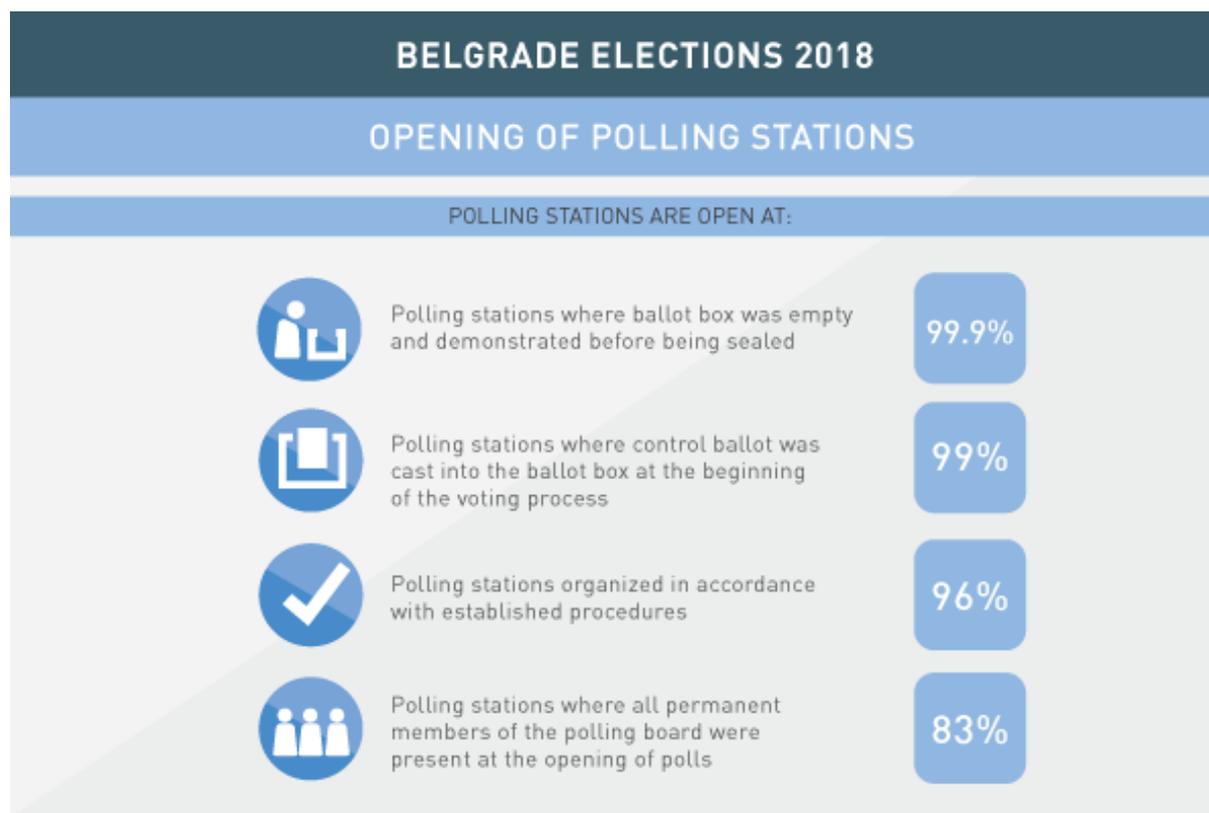


According to the observers distributed in 453 random and representative sample polling stations, bags with electoral material were secured with bag safety ties when received in 99% of the polling stations. According to the observers, there was one incident in PS 90 in Novi Beograd where the bag with ballots was opened. There was a discrepancy between the electoral material and the report on the reception of the electoral material on the following polling stations: PS 18 Vracar, PS 17 Savski Venac, PS 106 Palilula, PS 31 Vracar, PS 49 Rakovica, PS 9 Mladenovac, PS 43 Zemun and PS 6 Cukarica.

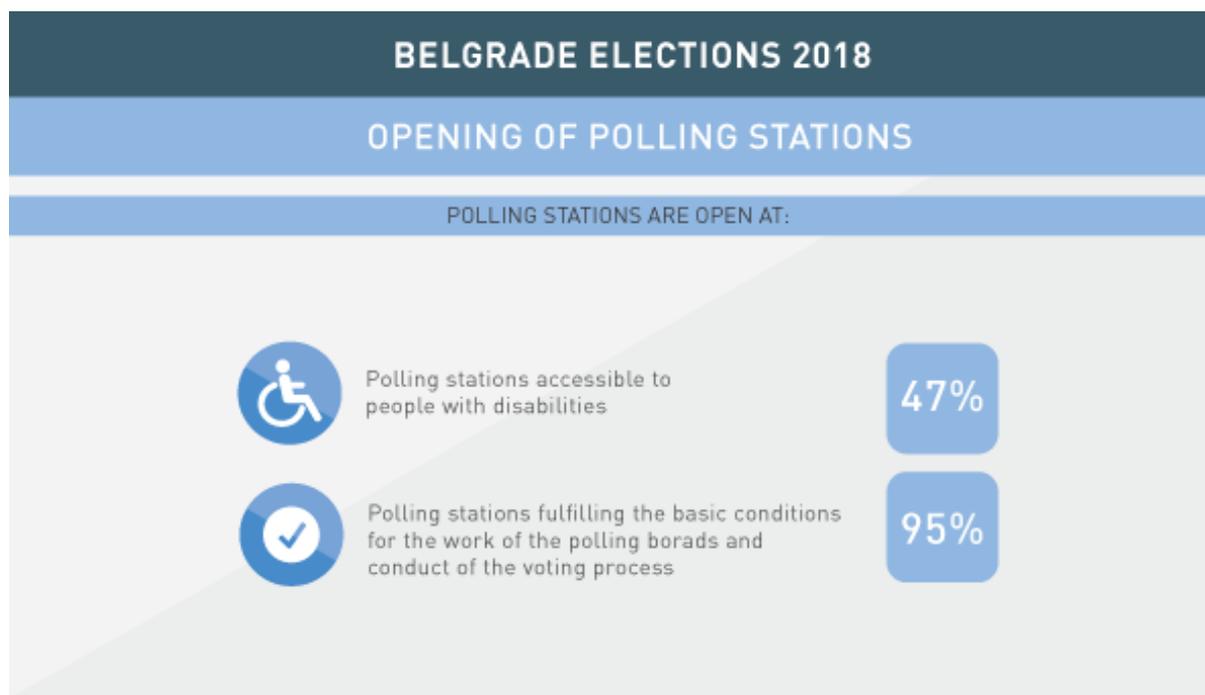
In less than one percent of the polling stations, there was no checklist in the electoral box at the very beginning of the voting.

On 96% of the polling stations in Belgrade everything was prepared in accordance with prescribed procedures and on 95% of the polling stations conditions for the work of the polling station committees were appropriate. On 89% of the polling stations all activities were recorded in the minutes on the work of the polling station committee, whereas the opening of 83% of the polling stations was attended by all permanent members of the polling station committee.

When the first voter came to vote, the procedure for the verification of the electoral box (the checklist procedure) was not followed on three polling stations. Polling stations where the procedure for the verification of the validity of the electoral box was not followed are 19 Cukarica, 68 Zvezdara and 75 Palilula.



On 53% of the polling stations in Belgrade, there was no access for disabled persons.



THE PROCESS OF VOTING

During the day of the election for the Councillors for the Assembly of the City of Belgrade, 51% of the citizens registered in the electoral roll voted. The statistical error was +/- 0.4 %.

The problem with the electoral roll recurred at the local elections in Belgrade – on 37% of the polling stations there were between one and five cases of voters who could not be found in the electoral roll, whereas on one percent of the polling stations there were more than six such cases.

By 4 p.m., irregularities were recorded on six percent of polling stations. Those irregularities included keeping parallel records of voters outside the electoral roll on the polling station itself, the use of mobile phones and taking photographs of the voters, failure to insert the checklist in the electoral box at the beginning of the voting, failure to use the spray, failure to verify the identity papers of voters, voting without identity papers as well as the violation of the secrecy of voting.

BELGRADE ELECTIONS 2018

VOTING PROCESS BY 16:00



Polling stations where observers were restricted to monitor the voting process or access information about the voting process

0%



Polling stations with irregularities that could influence voting results

6%

From 4 p.m. until 7 p.m. there was an increase in the number of irregularities on the polling stations from six to eight percent. Considering the number of votes won by two electoral lists with the largest number of votes, these irregularities could not have fundamentally affected the results, whereas they affected more the parties which won a smaller number of votes.

There were also irregularities outside the polling stations – the violation of the law on one percent of the observed polling stations. Those irregularities refer to campaigns run within less than 50 m away from the polling station. Also, in seven percent of the polling stations there were irregularities in front of the polling stations such as keeping records of voters and bringing groups of voters to the polling station. Such occurrences have not been regulated by the law and can be interpreted in different ways – as the good organisation within the party itself, but they can also point to the pressure being made on voters.

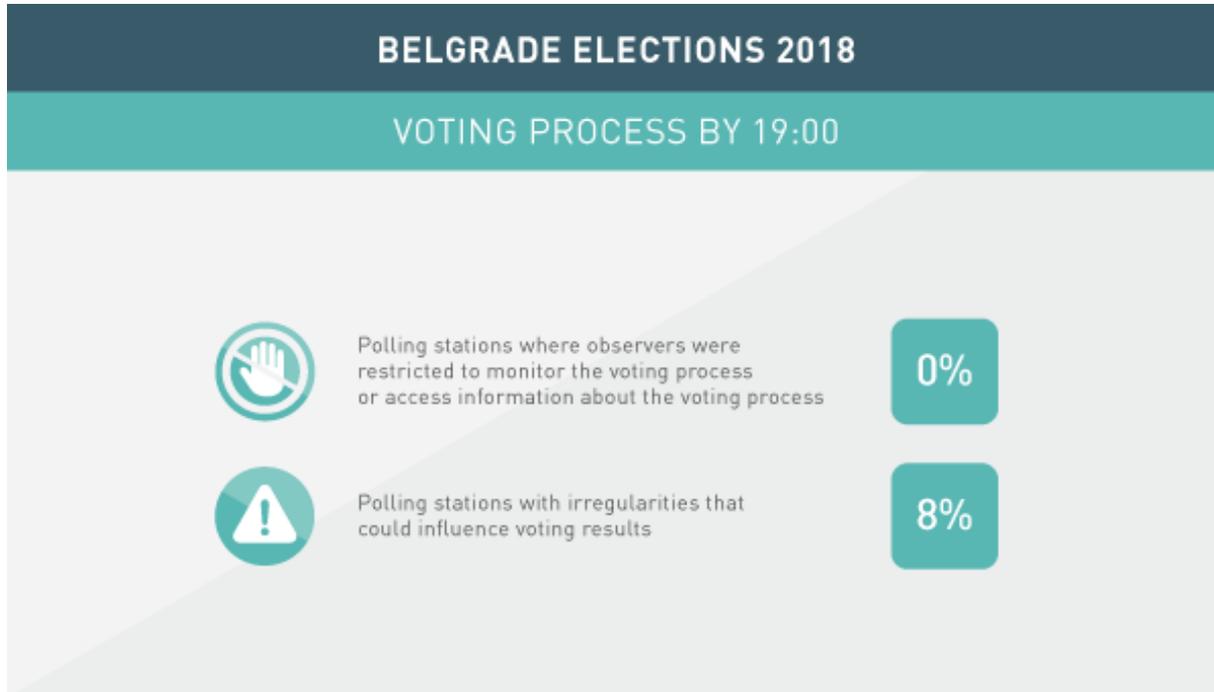
There is also a case of a parallel record of the turnout of the voters kept by the members of the polling station committees on the following polling stations: PS 125 Palilula, PS 28 Barajevo, PS 41 Rakovica, PS 60 Zvezdara, PS 47 Rakovica, PS 11 Grocka, PS 23 Palilula, PS 40 Novi Beograd, PS 122 Palilula, PS 34 Zvezdara, PS 66 Zvezdara, PS 25 Surcin, PS 57 Rakovica, PS 4 Mladenovac and PS 22 Vozdovac. Apart from keeping records of voters who voted on polling stations, there were similar cases in front of the polling stations PS 1 Novi Beograd, PS 25 Surcin and PS 47 Rakovica.

Irregularities known as “The Bulgarian Train” were seen on polling stations 1 Vozdovac, 74 Zemun, 93 Palilula and 12 Savski Venac.

Irregularities in terms of voters voting outside the polling station were noted on PS 42 Stari Grad, PS 69 Zemun and PS 48 Novi Beograd and they include open envelopes with voting confirmations and ballots.

The observation mission also recorded the case where ballots were photographed on 10 polling stations, either behind election booth curtains or publicly, in front of the members of the polling station committees.

During the election day, observers recorded individual cases of voting without verification and determining the identity of voters in the territories of the city municipalities of Vozdovac, Zemun, Stari Grad, Grocka, Novi Beograd, Barajevo, Vracar and Palilula. They are isolated cases and not a frequent phenomenon on polling stations.



In three cases, the safety of CRTA observers was endangered. There were cases of verbal as well as physical attacks on the observers on polling stations 1 in Novi Beograd, 60 on Zvezdara and 10 in Sopot.

The incident in front of the polling station in Novi Beograd happened when an unknown man physically attacked a member of the mobile team of the CRTA observation mission while observing what was going on in front of the polling station. The attack took place when CRTA observers tried to document keeping records of the voters in front of the polling station and possible purchase of votes. An unknown man and a woman, who had lists with them, first attacked verbally two members of the mobile CRTA team, then the man hit CRTA observer on the head and finally he spilled Coca Cola on both of them. CRTA observers were not severely injured and the report was reported to the police.

The other incident happened on the polling station on Zvezdara when CRTA observer discovered that there was a parallel list of voters on the polling station, which is contrary to the electoral procedure. When the observer tried to get additional information from the members of the polling station committee, they were visibly distressed and started shouting which was followed by a commotion. After that, CRTA observer abandoned the polling station because he thought his safety was endangered.

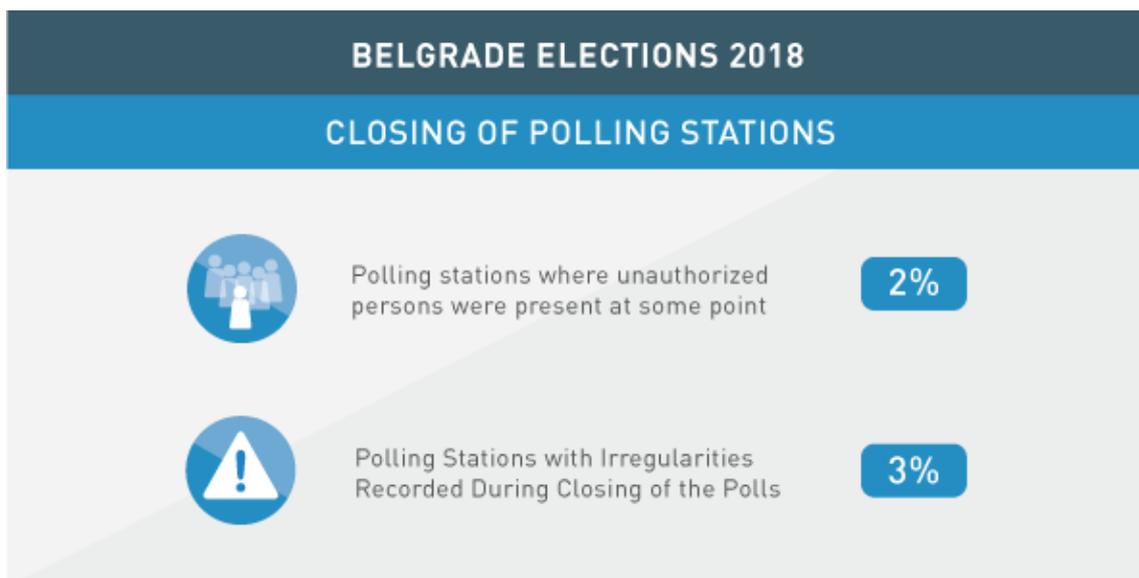
On the polling station number 10 in Sopot, while talking with members of the polling station committee, the deputy of the Chairman of the polling station committee said that “observers present on the polling station (CRTA and “Odbrana izborne volje gradjana” (“Defence of Citizens’ Electoral Will”)) will be slapped on the face if their observation causes the annulment of the voting on the polling station“. Then photos were taken of the

observers by the deputy of the Chairman of the polling station committee. After this, he apologised to the observers who resumed observing the voting process on the polling station.

THE PROCESS OF CLOSING POLLING STATIONS AND COUNTING THE VOTES

On three polling stations, CRTA observers were not allowed to attend the procedure of counting votes after the closure of polling stations. Such cases were recorded on polling stations 1 Zemun, 20 Rakovica and 30 Grocka. This was the first time that CRTA observation mission faced cases where representatives of the polling station committees insisted that observers did not have the right to attend the procedure of counting the votes and determining the results of the elections. On two polling stations, after half an hour, observers were allowed to attend the procedure after all. However, due to this situation, observers were not able to report on the validity of results from those polling stations because they had not attended one part of the procedure of counting votes.

On two percent of the polling stations there were unauthorised persons and on three percent of the polling stations there were irregularities when the polling stations were being closed.



At the moment of closing down the polling stations, CRTA observers recorded irregularities referring to discrepancies between calculation and logical operations (surplus of ballots in the electoral box) on polling stations PS 23 Savski Venac, PS 21 Stari Grad, PS 64 Novi Beograd and PS 37 Stari Grad. On the polling station 56 Novi Beograd, the observer recorded the case of irregular classification of valid and invalid ballots.

On these polling stations, observers were told by the Chairman of the polling station committee to leave the polling station and then, after the CEC President had intervened, they were told to return to the polling stations. Since the integrity of the observation methodology was violated, these polling stations were excluded from the sample for further processing.

ABOUT CRTA

CRTA is a civil society organisation, which together with citizens engages in an effort for improved transparency and accountability of institutions and officials, through overview and scrutiny of their work. While being a champion of social responsibility principles, the CRTA develops various mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating openness of institutions and accountability of government officials, relying primarily on new technologies and innovative technological solutions. The CRTA researches and educates citizens and decision-makers about the concept of transparency and accountability and urges for the application of these principles as the fundamental values in a democratic society.

CRTA observed snap parliamentary elections in 2016 and presidential elections 2017, as well as municipal election in Zaječar in 2017. The findings of long-term observation undertaken by CRTA observation mission about the extraordinary parliamentary election in 2016 were confirmed in the final report of the OEBS/ODIHR international observation mission, whereas the projections and the results on Election Day were also confirmed by the Republic Electoral Commission.

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