

I Prevent misuse of public resources

This area is one of the most important ones for improving the electoral conditions in Serbia. In order to fulfil these recommendations, smaller amendments of the Law on Anti-Corruption Agency, Law on financing political activities and the Law on Public Enterprises are required and the change of the current practice of Anti-Corruption Agency. In the light of on-going drafting of the Anti-Corruption Law (new Law on Anti-Corruption Agency), now there is room to take into consideration these recommendations within the process of drawing up and adoption of the law. The draft of the revised Action plan for Chapter 23, provides for the adoption of the new law during the third quarter of 2019. Accordingly, the amendments could be realised before the next regular elections.

- Prohibit participation of local, provincial and national public officials in the pre-election campaign.
- Define which activities could be included in the costs of the election campaign.
- More precisely define the matter of public resources and appropriate sanctions in the event of their misuse during the campaign.
- Predict sanctions for the misuse of the property, names and activities of public enterprises for political purposes.
- Prohibit allocation of extraordinary budget and other public funds 30 days before, during and 30 days after the campaign.
- Prohibit any pressure to the employees in public enterprises and public administration concerning the support for political parties or candidates in the elections.
- Introduce the obligation of delivering periodical Anti-Corruption Agency reports on the costs of the election campaign during the campaign.
- Introduce short deadlines (no more than five days) for Anti-Corruption Agency decision on the complaints regarding the misuses during the campaign.
- Change the practice of Anti-Corruption Agency so it would act *ex officio* in order to protect the public interest.

Link to the analysis of the recommendations in this area: link.crt.a.rs/publicresources

II Ensure equal media representation

Voters have the right to be informed on the election choice and the behaviour of actors who will be voted, so as to be able to decide whom they will give their vote. It is necessary to guarantee equal representation in electronic media to all electoral lists and candidates. Main changes in this area shall be the amendments of the Law on Electronic Media, Rulebook on the obligations of audio-visual service providers during the pre-election campaign (currently repealed) and Rulebook on the manner of imposing measures to audio-visual service providers, as well as the former practice of Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media (REM).

- REM shall undertake to publish reports on media monitoring during the election campaign regularly.
- REM shall undertake to consider and decide on every complaint which refers to the violation of the general interest.
- REM shall undertake to reason any decision and submit the reasoning with the supervision office report included.
- Introduce the obligation of REM to make decisions on complaints within five days.
- Expand the scope of sanctions REM pronounces to the broadcasters that fail to comply with the rules during the campaign.
- It is required that the Rulebook on the obligations of audio-visual service providers during the pre-election campaign, repealed on 27 February 2019, should be put back into force, or timely replaced by adopting the new Rulebook.

Link to the analysis of the recommendations in this area: link.crt.a.rs/mediaequality

III Regain voters trust and make the election process more transparent

The citizens' lack of trust as regards the election system is growing year after year. In order to restore trust, it is necessary to improve transparency and openness of the entire election process and pay particular attention by working on serious deficiencies of the electoral roll. No legal amendments are required to realise these recommendations, yet to change previous practice of the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government (MDULS) and Republic Electoral Commission (RIK).

- Enable revision of the electoral roll for the appropriate sample under the international standards and recognised methodologies that would involve representatives of relevant institutions, Parliamentary political parties, civil society organisations and the academic and international community.
- Improve and make transparent supervision over the work of clerks who participate in the process of updating the electoral roll.
- Organise continual training for the employees who update the electoral roll.
- Launch broad public campaign so the citizens could check their data in the electoral roll.
- Make the procedure for changes in the electoral roll easily accessible and visible to the citizens.
- Broadcast live on the electoral commission website the process of calculating and processing of the results received.
- Publish all records on the work of the electoral committee.
- Publish all documents of the electoral committees which are essential for the electoral process, and broadcast live on website the Republic Electoral Commission sessions.
- Enable the presence of accredited observers to all the segments of electoral committees work.
- Organise a campaign to improve voters' knowledge on electoral rules and procedures.

Link to the analysis of the recommendations in this area: link.crtars/voterstrust

IV Protection of rights of voters

To increase legal certainty in the election process and to enable participants to protect their rights, the majority of recommendations require more complex actions and multiple legal amendments. However, by changing practice and with minor amendments to the Law on the election of members of the National Assembly, it will be possible to prevent most frequent types of misuse and increase the capacities of competent authorities to punish offences.

- Improve the protection of citizens' personal data to prevent electoral pressure.
- Prohibit the maintaining of parallel records at the polling station used to establish the identity of the voters.
- Enable citizens to inspect the electoral roll on the request and thus check if anyone voted instead of them.
- Extend possibilities of electoral committees and the Administrative Court for it to consider suggested evidence attached to the complaints.

Link to the analysis of the recommendations in this area: link.crtars/votersrights

V Improve electoral administration

Electoral administration should be moving to the direction of work professionalization. Although recommendations suggested by CRTA mostly require more extensive, systematic changes of the legal framework, until the next elections, it would be possible to start improving the electoral administration without legally amending yet supplementing the existing bylaws of the Republic Electoral Commission.

- Improve the organisation and content of training for electoral committees' members.
- Prohibit subsequent changes of the minutes on the work of electoral committees.

Link to the analysis of the recommendations in this area: link.crtars/electoraladmin

In order to improve the conditions until the following regular elections, it would be necessary to fulfil the sufficient number of recommendations for each of the five areas. You can find comprehensive CRTA recommendations for the improvement of electoral conditions at gradjaninastrazi.rs

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SERBIAN CITIZENS VIEWS OF THE ELECTIONS REGULARITY

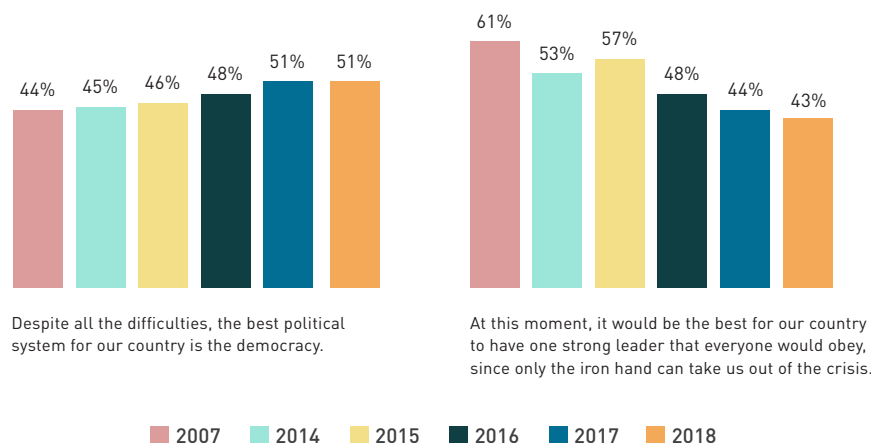
In 2018, in cooperation with Ipsos Strategic Marketing, for the sixth year in a row, CRTA has conducted a poll “Citizens participation in democratic processes in Serbia”. Field research was done from 17 until 26 October 2018, face-to-face at the respondent’s households, with a three-stage stratified random representative sample of 1022 respondents.

The research aims to establish the level of citizens of Serbia readiness to participate in the democratic processes. These processes include a series of different forms of civic participation, including initiation of and participation in various activities, electoral too, and views of democracy and fundamental democratic institutions. The results of this poll represent a specific representation of the democratic position of the society. Here we will present only those results that more directly refer to the election theme, and the more comprehensive findings of the research could be found on [CRTA](#) website.

Democracy and alternatives

Systematic growth trend of supporting democracy as the best system and a decline of support for the “iron hand” politics is being observed. For the first time, more than a half of citizens have supported democracy as the best possible system in 2017, and it was the first time that a higher percentage of citizens supporting the democracy was observed in comparison to those who believe that only an “iron hand” can help Serbia get out of the crisis. In 2018, this ratio remained the same. There is no difference between the generations as regards the support to the democracy, yet these differences are important concerning the politics of “iron hand”, especially between the eldest and the youngest citizens of Serbia. Only one-third of young citizens between 18 and 29 years of age believe that just a strong leader can get us out of the crisis. However, more than half of citizens over 60 years of age think this.

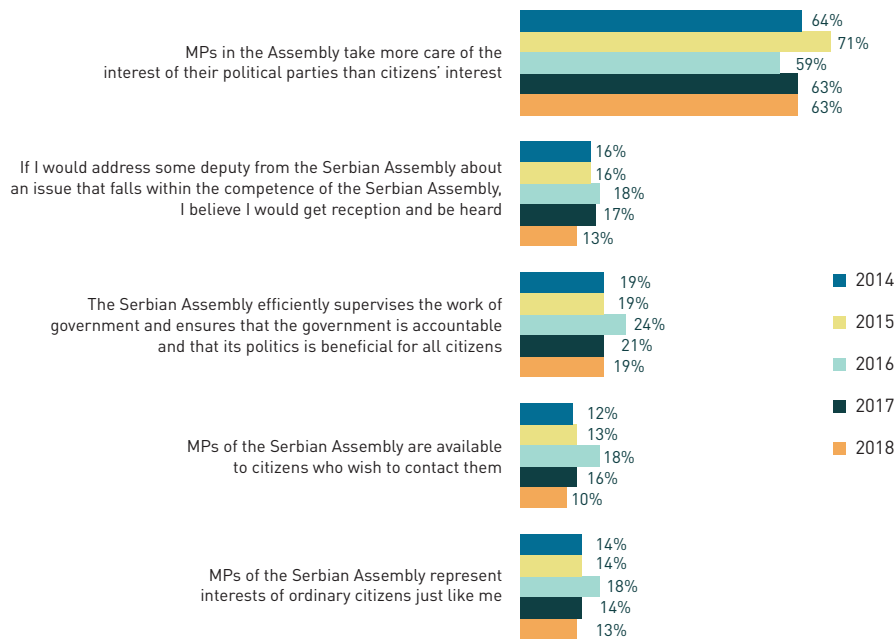
Chart 25: Support for the democracy or the “iron hand”? AGREE (Mostly + Completely)



Trust in democratic institutions

Confidence that MPs in the assembly represent the interest of the citizens is generally very low, and for the last two years, it is decreasing. Only 13% of citizens believe that MPs in the Assembly of Serbia represent the interests of ordinary citizens. Barely 19% believe that the Assembly successfully supervises the work of the government, taking account of government politics which is to be implemented for the benefit of all citizens. Only 10% believes that MPs are available to the citizens if they wish to contact them.

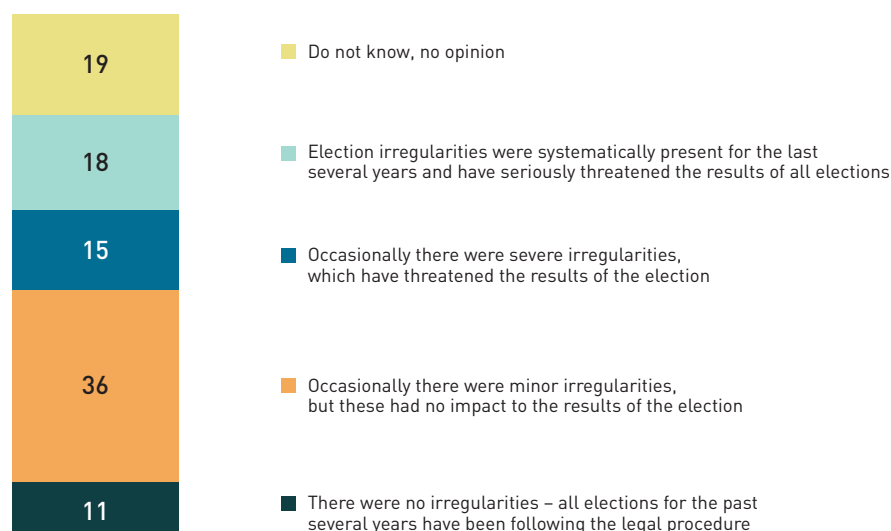
Chart 20: To what extent do you agree or do not agree with the following views of the Serbian Assembly in its present legislature?
% AGREE (Mostly + Completely)



Electoral irregularities

Over two-thirds of citizens believe that for the past several years there were irregularities in the electoral procedures. One-third of citizens believe that irregularities were so severe so that they endangered the results of the elections, and the other third believes that irregularities were minor and had no impact on the results. Only 11% of citizens believe there were no irregularities during the previous election processes. Majority of those who believe election had irregularities, also believe that these are present quite often, or even regularly for all elections, and these irregularities refer to the misuse of state resources (62%), unequal access to the media (54%), and pressure on the voters (54%).

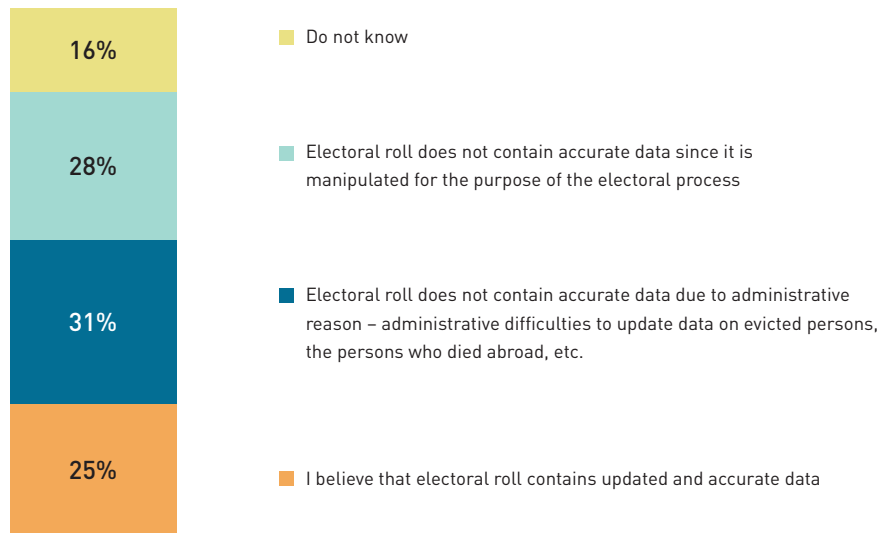
Chart 28: Generally, in your opinion, to what extent were the election process irregularities present for the past several years and how significant was their impact on the results of the election?



Electoral roll

There is not enough confidence that the single electoral roll is up-to-date and accurate. More than a half (59%) of citizens of Serbia believes that the electoral roll does not contain accurate data. Only every fourth citizen of Serbia is confident that the electoral roll is correct.

Chart 30: As you know, the electoral roll is an official database of all citizens with a right to vote, which is updated by the public authorities. What do you think about the electoral roll?



Supporting the improvement of electoral conditions

Majority of citizens would support the initiative for improvement of electoral conditions. Initiatives that would contribute to equal access to media, arranging of electoral rolls and control of public resources use, and the improvement of the electoral authorities work have obvious support among the citizens. Moreover, a high percentage of citizens believe that independent control of the electoral process is necessary (85%) and this percentage has increased in comparison to 2017 (75%).

Chart 34: How likely would you personally support following initiatives?

