

Counting Centers in Bosnia and Herzegovina

21 August 1996



Counting Centers in Bosnia and Herzegovina

21 August 1996

Table of Contents

1. Counting Center Organization	2
2. Counting Center Staffing	2
3. Movement and Storage of Ballots	3
4. Preparation for Mixing	4
5. Counting	4
6. Reporting Results	5
7. Complaints	6

I. Counting Center Organization

1.1 A Municipal Counting Center will count the ballot papers from all ordinary Polling Stations within the municipality and **all the** ballot papers coming in via the Sorting Center in Sarajevo.

1.2 The Local Election Commission (LEC), in consultation with the OSCE, will identify a suitable location for the Counting Center. The premises for the Counting Center must be large enough to efficiently meet the requirements for counting, with sufficient space to accommodate also observers, independent candidate representatives, and party representatives.

1.3 If no premises are available in the municipality for a Counting Center of the size needed to count the election in twenty-four hours, then a secondary Counting Center may be established. All the rules and regulations regarding Counting Center operation will apply to such a secondary Counting Center, except that results from that Counting Center will be forwarded to the primary Counting Center for inclusion on the Municipal Counting Results form.

1.4 The Chairman of the Counting Center is responsible for the proper conduct of the counting. The counting will be done by teams of Counting Committee Members and OSCE Supervisors under the scrutiny of party representatives, representatives of independent candidates, observers and other accredited persons.

2. Counting Center Staffing

2.1 The Local Election Commission in each municipality will appoint a Chairman and a Deputy Chairman for each Counting Center. Normally these positions will be filled by the Chairman of the Local Election Commission and another LEC member.

2.2 The total number of staff required for the Counting Center will vary depending on the population of the municipality, the size of the building available for counting, and the number of OSCE Supervisors available to assist in counting. All Counting Center workers must meet the "Requirements for Polling Station Committee Members" listed in the PEC Rules and Regulations, and must sign a "Declaration of Secrecy" (DSO2) (page 7).

2.3 A Counting Center should be of a size to count the election in 24 working hours. Committee Members should work in shifts so that the Counting Center remains open continuously.

2.4 One counting team of three persons can count 950 ballots per hour, therefore:

A small municipality of 10,000 voters will have 50,000 ballots and will require 6 counting teams (three teams per shift) to complete the count in 24 hours.

A large municipality of 90,000 voters will have 450,000 ballots and will require 40 counting teams (20 teams or sixty people per shift) to complete the count in 24 hours.

2.5 The OSCE Field Office will be aware of the number of Supervisors available to participate in the counting, and will assist the Local Election Commissions in determining appropriate Counting Center staffing levels.

3. Movement and Storage of Ballots

3.1 When polling is finished on election day at 19.00, all material at the Polling Station is accounted for, ballots are transferred from the ballot boxes to the ballot transport bags and all forms are completed. When this is done the ballot bags, voters lists, and tamper-proof envelopes containing application forms, unused ballot papers, spoiled and declined ballot papers and empty stubs are sent to the Counting Center. The following forms are used at Polling Stations and sent to the municipal Counting Center:

A) The Movement Forms - from Polling Station to Counting Center (PC 11 -PC 17, one for each election) (page 8) give information on ballot bag numbers, the number of voters listed in the poll book (number of voters that voted on Election day) and the number of tamper-proof envelopes containing unused, spoiled and declined ballots for each election.

B) Record of Seals - from Polling Station to Counting Center (PC2 I-27, one for each election) (page 9), giving numbers of the ballot bags (i.e. the seal numbers), and signatures of witnesses to placing the seals on the bags.

C) Chairman's Summary (PC30) (page IO). The form gives a record of received, unused, spoiled, declined and issued ballot papers during polling day for all five elections.

3.2 The Chairman receives the ballot bags at the Counting Center, checks the seals and the number of tamper-proof envelopes, and signs the "Movement Forms" (PC I 1 - I 7), and the "Record of Seals (PC2 I - 27). The Chairman remains at the Counting Center until the ballot bags from all municipality polling stations have been received. The ballot bags must be stored in a secure manner until the reconciliation.

3.3 It is anticipated that absentee ballots will arrive from the Sorting Center on 16 September (actual arrival times will be confirmed by the OSCE Field Election Officer). All absentee ballots will be delivered to the municipal Counting Center in one shipment. The shipment will be accompanied by a "Record of Seals" (SC01) (page I I) indicating the seal number of each tamper-proof bag and the signature of a witness to the sealing of the bag at the Sorting Center.

3.4 The Chairman of the Counting Center, Counting Center Committee Members, and OSCE Supervisors assigned to that Counting Center will be at the Counting Center or storage facility to receive the absentee ballot bags and check the seal numbers against the "Record of Seals" (SC01).

4. Preparation for Mixing

- 4.1 The aim of this procedure is to prepare the absentee ballots for mixing with **ordinary** ballots during the counting. The tamper-proof bags containing the absentee ballots are opened and the Inner Envelopes are sorted by color (election level).

4.2 The Inner **Envelopes** for each election level are counted and this number is recorded on the appropriate form "Opening Tamper-Proof Bags" (CC01 - **07**) (page 12). The Inner Envelopes are then opened. If there is no ballot in the Inner Envelope, more than one ballot in an Inner Envelope, or something other than a ballot in the Inner **Envelope**, that fact is recorded on the outside of the Inner Envelope and on Opening Tamper-Proof Bags form. The invalid Inner Envelopes, and their contents, are placed in the "Envelope for Invalid Inner Envelopes" (TP04) (page 13).

4.3 The absentee ballot papers are then roughly divided into a number of piles equal to the number of polling stations in the municipality and each of the piles is bound with a rubber band to form a separate packet.

4.4 All of the packets of ballot papers for an election level are placed in a ballot bag and that bag is sealed. If the bag is not clear a pen or marker is used to write the election level on the outside of the bag. When this procedure has been conducted for each election level the five bags of absentee ballots are stored under tight security until counting begins.

5. Counting

5.1 The Counting Center will begin counting as soon as possible after the absentee **ballots** arrive. The Chairman should admit officially accredited observers, party agents and agents of independent candidates, if present. Only one agent at a time for a particular candidate or a particular party is allowed in the Counting Center during the reconciliation and counting hours, but it does not have to be always the same agent. Each agent must present to the Chairman a properly endorsed copy of "Appointment of Agents - Declaration of Secrecy" (DS01), and must sign and date the secrecy pledge on the DS01 with the Chairman (or Deputy) as witness. Agents should be presented with "Party Agent Identification Labels".

5.2 Counting Committee Members will be divided into teams of three for a small work table. six for a large table.

5.3 On counting day each election is counted one at a time. The counts will take place in the following order:

- a) The Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- b) The House of Representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- c) The Presidency of the Republika Srpska or
The House of Representatives of the Federation
- d) National Assembly of the Republika Srpska or
The Cantonal Assembly of the Federation
- e) The Municipal Assembly.

5.4 Each counting team will unseal an ordinary ballot bag. The total number of ballot papers in the bag are determined by counting and that number is checked against the

Movement Forms (PC 11-17) and the Chairman's Summary (PC30). No effort is made at this point to sort the ballots by party or candidate.

5.5 The **Chairman** will unseal the appropriate absentee ballot bag for the election level being counted **and distribute one** packet of ballots to each **team**. The packet is **opened** and the absentee **ballots** are mixed **with** the ordinary ballots **in** the ballot bag. (This ensures that it will be impossible to tell difference between refugee votes, absentee votes and votes **from** ordinary Polling Stations.)

5.6 The **ballots** are sorted by parties and independent candidates. Ballot papers are invalid in the **following** cases:

- a) it is not filled in at all
- b) it is made out in a manner such that it is not certain for which political party or independent candidate the citizen intended to vote
- c) the names of new parties or candidates have been added
- d) the voter marked more than one party or independent candidate
- e) the voter signed the ballot
- f) the voter has marked a party that has not presented candidates.
- g) the voter has marked a party or independent candidate that has **withdrawn from** the election or been removed by the **Provisional** Election Commission

Invalid ballots should be placed in the "Envelope for Invalid Ballots" (TP05) (page 14).

5.7 If the ballot paper is of a different color (for a different election) than the election being counted it should be set aside. Misplaced ballots will be counted and added to the form "Municipal Counting Results" (CR1 I) (see page 15 for front, and 16 for the back of this form) after the preliminary count has been completed for all election levels.

5.8 The ballots are sorted by party or independent candidate and then counted. The results are recorded on a "Counting Team Form" (CR01) (page 17). As the counting continues the Chairman records the numbers from the Counting Team Forms on a "Tally Sheet" (CR2 I) (pages 18, 19, 20). The Tally Sheet is three A4 sheets long and has space to record the count from eight different teams. In large Counting Centers with more than eight counting teams additional forms CR2 I may be used to record team results. When all the ballot bags for a specific election have been counted the figures are totaled from the Tally Sheet(s), and then recorded on "Municipal Counting Results" (CR1 I).

6. Reporting Results

6.1 As each election is counted results are forwarded by the Counting Center to the designated OSCE Regional Center or Field Office. If possible, they should be reported by phone or fax. If this is not possible the results must be sent by road. Each Field Office forwards results to the appropriate Regional Center. The Regional Centers are to report to PEC **after** a certain number of reports are gathered. When all results have reached the PEC, the seats will be allocated and the preliminary results will be declared.

6.2 After all elections have been counted, misplaced ballots should be counted and results of this count added to the Municipal Counting Results (CR1 I). The Chairman should then fill

out the back of the Municipal Counting Results form, certifying the final result. The Chairman, Deputy Chairman, and an OSCE Supervisor then sign the form and it is forwarded to the OSCE Regional Center.

6.3 Ballot papers are placed in ballot bags marked with the municipality and election level, sealed, then stored in a secure location until they can be transported to the **OSCE Regional Center**.

6.4 According to Article 22 1 of the PEC **Rules** and Regulations:

*Announcement of the results of the election at all levels (municipality, canton, **entity** and state) shall be made by the Provisional Election Commission. The Commission shall also **verify** whether the election were valid and **certify** the results. **Official** publication of the results of the election will be made by the Chairman of the Provisional Election Commission, and shall be followed by complete publication of **all figures** in the **Official** Gazettes of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Federation and the Republika Srpska.*

6.5 The Provisional Election Commission is the sole authority for the issuance of electoral results. In no circumstances should any results of counting be announced by government authorities, Counting Centers, Field Offices, Regional Centers. **IFOR**, or any other person or Organization.

7. Complaints

Complaints concerning the counting process shall be submitted immediately to the Chairman of the Local Election Commission, which has to decide on the complaint within 24 hours. The Chairman will maintain a record of such complaints and decisions rendered. Complaints against the decisions of the Local Election Commission may be submitted to the Election Appeals Sub-Commission.

Form DS 02 DECLARATION OF SECRECY

Name of appointed Official: _____

Municipality: _____

Polling Station No: _____

Polling Station Location: _____

POSITION HELD (Please tick one box)					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chairman of Counting Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deputy Chairman of Counting Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	Member of Counting Center
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chairman of Polling Station	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deputy Chairman of Polling Station	<input type="checkbox"/>	Member of Polling Station

DECLARATION OF SECRECY

I, _____ ,
(Printed name of officer)

being an Officer do hereby declare that:

A) I shall not, without due authority, divulge to any other person any information made known to me in the course of my official duties concerning the personal affairs of any person; and

B) I shall keep secret and confidential any information made known to me relating to the Party for which any voter proposes to vote or has voted, or any such information of which I may come to learn.

Signature of Officer: _____

Witnessed by: _____

Date: _____

Form PC 21 RECORD OF SEAL NUMBERS	.	.
--	---	---

Municipality:	No:
Polling Station No:	
Polling Station Location:	

Election: The three-member Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina
--

Tamper Proof Bag No: (Seal number)	Signature by Witness at Polling Sttion to placing of seal

Remarks:

I hereby certify that the ballot box(es) listed above have been handed to the Chairman of Counting Election Committee in (municipality): My name: Signature:Date:
I hereby certify that the ballot box(es) listed above were received by me as Chairman of Counting Election Committee in (municipality): My name: Signature:Date:

Form PC 30 CHAIRMAN’S SUMMARY

Municipality:	No:
Polling Station No:	
Polling Station Location:	

		GOLD- coloured election	WHITE- coloured election	BLUE- coloured election	ORANGE- coloured election	GREY- coloured election	PURPLE- coloured election
1	EXTRA Ballot Papers Received (+)						
2	TOTAL Ballot Papers at start of the Polling Day						
3	UNUSED Ballot Papers at end of the Polling Day						
4	SPOILED Ballot Papers during the Polling Day						
5	DECLINED Ballot Papers during the Polling Day						
6	Ballot Papers ISSUED ORDINARY during the Polling Day (2 - 3 - 4 - 5=6)						

Signature of Chairman:	Date:
------------------------	-------

Signature of Agent(s): (if present)
--

Form SC 01 RECORD OF SEAL NUMBERS
--

From Sorting Centre to Counting Centre in (municipality): (Refugee and Absentee Ballots)

Tamper-proof Bag No: (Seal number)	Signature by Witness at Sorting Centre to placing of seal

I hereby certify that the tamper-proof bags listed above have been handed to the Chairman of Counting Election Committee in (municipality):	
My name:	Date:
Signature:	
I hereby certify that the tamper-proof bags listed above were received by me as Chairman of Counting Election Committee	
in (municipality):	
My name:	
Signature:	Date:

Municipality:No:

Election: The three-member Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Number of inner Envelopes	Empty Envelopes *	Envelopes with more than one Ballot *	Envelopes containing other than ballots *	Number of Ballot papers for the Count	Ballot papers sealed in Ballot Box
1	2	3	4	5	6

- 1 = number of inner envelopes, counted before opening the inner envelopes
- 2 = if the envelope is empty, write “EMPTY” on the envelope
- 3 = note on the envelope how many ballots in the envelope
- 4 = note on the envelope what you find
- 5 = ballot papers to be counted (column 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 = column 5)
- 6 = seal the box with unnumbered seals, and sign here

Remarks:

* Put 2 + 3 + 4 into tamper-proof envelope TP 04

Form TP 04 ENVELOPE FOR INVALID INNER ENVELOPES
--

M u n i c i p a l i t y :	No:
----------------------------------	------------

(X)	Election to: (PLEASE TICK ONE BOX)
	The three-member Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina
	The House of Representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina
	The Presidency of the Republika Srpska
	The National Assembly of the Republika Srpska
	The House of Representatives of the Federation
	The Cantonal Assemblies in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
	The Municipal Assemblies in Bosnia and Herzegovina

(X)	Tamper-proof Envelope contained:	Number:
	EMPTY Inner Envelopes	
	Inner Envelopes holding MORE THAN ONE ballot paper	
	Inner Envelopes holding OTHER THAN ballot paper	

Signature of Chairman:	Date:
Signatures of Party Agents: (if present)	

Form TP 05 ENVELOPE FOR INVALID BALLOT PAPERS

Municipality:	No:
---------------	-----

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Election to: (PLEASE TICK ONE BOX)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The three-member Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<input type="checkbox"/>	The House of Reuresentatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Presidency of the Republika Srpska
<input type="checkbox"/>	The National Assembly of the Republika Srpska
<input type="checkbox"/>	The House of Reuresentatives of the Federation
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Cantonal Assemblies in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Municipal Assemblies in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Number of INVALID ballot papers contained in this envelope	
--	--

Signature of Chairman:	Date:
Signatures of Party Agents: (if present)	

Form CR 11 MUNICIPAL COUNTING RESULTS

Municipality:	No:
----------------------	------------

Municipality:	No:
----------------------	------------

Election: The three-member Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

[illegible]

TOTAL VALID VOTES	
--------------------------	--

TOTAL INVALID VOTES	
----------------------------	--

TOTAL BALLOT PAPERS	

We hereby certify that the results from _____ are final:
(municipality)

Name of Chairman of Counting Election Committee:

(block letters)

Signature:

and his/her deputy Chairman:

(block letters)

Signature:

Witnessed by OSCE Supervisor:

Name: _____
(block letters)

Nationality: _____

Signature: _____

Form CR 01 COUNTING TEAM FORM

Municipality:No:Counting Team No:

Election: The three-member Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

No	Name of Political Party	Number of valid votes received

TOTAL VALID VOTES	
TOTAL INVALID VOTES	
TOTAL BALLOT PAPERS	

Name of the Leader of Counting Team: _____
(block letters)

Signature: _____

Form CR 21 TALLY SHEET

Municipality:	No:
----------------------	------------

Municipality:	No:
----------------------	------------

Election: The three-member Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

[illegible]

TOTAL VALID VOTES	
TOTAL INVALID VOTES	
TOTAL BALLOT PAPERS	

RESULTS FROM THE COUNTING TEAMS

Signatures: _____

(Deputy Chairman)

Witnessed by: _____ _____ (OSCE Supervisor)	_____ _____ (OSCE Supervisor)
--	-------------------------------------

(OSCE Supervisor)

[illegible]