



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

12 June 2010

OSCE/ODIHR NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSION REPORT

21-23 April 2010



Warsaw
11 May 2010

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I. INTRODUCTION

On 26 February 2010, in accordance with OSCE commitments, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic invited the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to observe the 12 June parliamentary elections. The OSCE/ODIHR undertook a Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) to Bratislava from 21 to 23 April 2010 which was composed of Ms. Nicola Schmidt, OSCE/ODIHR Senior Election Adviser, Ms. Lusine Badalyan, OSCE/ODIHR Election Adviser, and Mr. Roberto Montella, Program Officer with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

The purpose of the OSCE/ODIHR NAM was to assess the pre-election environment and the preparations undertaken for the parliamentary elections, and to make recommendations on a possible OSCE/ODIHR observation activity for these elections. The OSCE/ODIHR NAM met with various state officials, the election administration, representatives of political parties, the media, and civil society. A list of meetings is included as an annex to this report.

The OSCE/ODIHR would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its assistance and co-operation in organizing the NAM. The OSCE/ODIHR is also grateful to all interlocutors for having taken the time to meet with the NAM.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Council of the Slovak Republic (parliament) consists of 150 members, elected for four years on the basis of a proportional system from one nationwide constituency, with a preferential element. Political parties have to surpass a five per cent threshold for participating in the distribution of mandates.

The legal framework governing the parliamentary elections comprises the constitution, the election law and a number of other legal acts. A new election law was adopted in 2004 incorporating some previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendations, such as the introduction of the possibility to observe voting, counting and tabulation. The legislation provides voters with a wide range of options for exercising their suffrage, including absentee voting, postal voting and homebound voting.

The parliamentary elections are administered by a three-tiered election administration: a Central Election Commission (CEC), 50 District Election Commissions (DECs) and about 6,000 Precinct Election Commissions (PECs). They are all temporary bodies. Commission members are appointed by political parties running in the elections. The Ministry of Interior is primarily responsible for the organization of elections. It oversees preparations and technical aspects of the organization of elections and supports the work of the CEC.

Voter registration is decentralized. Municipalities are responsible for the compilation of voter registers based on the permanent residency register. Municipalities should ensure that voters can check their data and request changes or corrections.

Registered political parties can nominate candidate lists for parliamentary elections. The CEC has registered eighteen lists, offering voters a distinct choice between alternative political views. Political parties must pay an electoral deposit of 16,596 EUR, which is returned to a party or coalition that receives at least two per cent of valid votes. Contrary to OSCE commitments, individual candidates cannot stand in parliamentary elections.

The electoral campaign is largely unregulated. Political parties can start campaigning any time and there is no silence period. However, paid political advertisements can only be broadcast starting from 21 days before election day and opinion polls must not be published on election day until the end of voting.

There are no limits on campaign expenditure. Parties may receive donations and income from different sources, such as state contributions, membership fees, private donations, loans, credits, and profit from a company business. Political parties are required to submit interim and final reports on election-related expenses, as well as an annual report on party financing. However, some OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors stated that campaign financing lacks independent oversight and would benefit from more transparency. Concerns were expressed that parties do not provide full data on campaign financing in their reports.

Freedom of speech is protected by the constitution. The media environment is pluralistic with a wide variety of commercial and public broadcasters and print media. Public radio and public television, as well as private broadcasters should not allocate more than 30 minutes of paid political advertisement to each contesting party; in total this time should not exceed 10 hours for all electoral contestants. In addition public television and radio should allocate 10 hours for discussion programs. Political parties do not receive any other free airtime. Several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed concern about a perceived bias in the coverage of political parties and the government by the public broadcaster.

According to the Constitution, citizens belonging to national minorities or ethnic groups shall be guaranteed the rights to promote their culture, to disseminate and receive information in their mother tongue, to associate in national minority organizations, to establish and maintain educational and cultural institutions. Almost all OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors raised concerns about alleged vote buying in Roma communities and the use of the so-called “ethnic card” during the campaign that may negatively affect the campaign environment.

The electoral administration appears to enjoy broad confidence across the political spectrum. No OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors raised any concerns regarding the impartiality and professionalism of the election administration and their ability to organize the elections in an efficient manner. Furthermore, the Slovak authorities have considered a number of previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendations when changing the election law; however, a number of recommendations still remain unaddressed. A number of concerns were also expressed related to party and campaign financing, the campaign environment, the media and the participation of national minorities in elections. Many OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors indicated they would welcome an OSCE/ODIHR election-related activity and considered that such an activity would bring added value. In such circumstances, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends deploying an Election Assessment Mission to specifically look into the issues outlined in this report.

III. FINDINGS

A. BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

The National Council of the Slovak Republic (parliament) consists of 150 members, elected for four years. The head of state is the president, who is elected directly for five years and who appoints the prime minister. Most executive power lies with the prime minister, who is usually the leader of the winning party and who is responsible for forming a coalition in parliament.

Six political parties were elected to parliament in the June 2006 parliamentary elections. Direction – Social Democracy (SMER) received most votes, but not enough to form the government alone. SMER leader and current Prime Minister Robert Fico therefore formed a coalition with the Slovak National Party (SNS) and the People’s Party – Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS). Parties in opposition are the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union – Democratic Party (SDKU), Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK) and the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH).

According to opinion polls, two newly founded parties may enter parliament in addition to the current parliamentary parties. These recently established parties are Most-Hid (a split from the SMK) and Freedom and Solidarity (SaS).

OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors raised corruption as the main campaign issue. Opinions were expressed that the judiciary is considered the most corrupt branch of power and that courts are politicized. Other concerns were expressed about the use of ethnic stereotypes¹ in the campaign, instances of hate speech, and alleged vote buying in Roma communities which might negatively affect the campaign environment.

The OSCE/ODIHR observed the parliamentary elections in the Slovak Republic in 1998 and 2002.² It concluded that the 2002 parliamentary elections were “in compliance with the Slovak legislation and with OSCE commitments and standards for democratic elections”. The OSCE/ODIHR also provided a number of recommendations in its final reports, which set out ways in which the election process could be further improved. Some of the OSCE/ODIHR recommendations were implemented; others remain unaddressed.

B. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The legal framework governing the parliamentary elections primarily consists of the constitution (adopted in 1992 and amended in 1999) and the Law on Election to the National Council of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter, election law). The new election law was adopted in 2004 and amended several times since then, most recently in 2010. There are a number of other legal acts that regulate the elections.³

¹ This phenomenon is called the “ethnic card” in Slovak politics, which mostly refers to anti-Hungarian campaign dividing the Slovak citizens along nationality lines.

² Reports of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Missions to the Slovak Republic are available at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr-elections/14634.html>.

³ Act on Broadcasting and Retransmission, Act on Limitation of Expenditure of the Political Parties on Advertising before Election to the National Council, Act on Political Movements and Political Parties and others.

Members of parliament are elected in one nationwide constituency on the basis of proportional representation with a preferential element. Political parties have to collect at least five per cent of valid votes for participating in the distribution of mandates. Coalitions of two or three parties have to overcome a seven per cent threshold, and coalitions of four and more parties ten per cent. Besides selecting a party list, voters may also indicate preferences for particular candidates. They may choose a maximum of four candidates. Candidates who obtain at least three per cent of preferential votes are automatically elected. The remaining mandates are allocated to candidates in the order that they are listed on the ballot.

Addressing a previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendation, the election law stipulates who can be present in a polling station and observe voting and counting, as well as who can be present during the tabulation of the results at the District Election Commissions (DECs).⁴ However, the law does not provide details on the rights of observers and on accreditation procedure.

C. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Parliamentary elections are administered by a three-tiered election administration: a Central Election Commission (CEC), 50 DECs corresponding to administrative districts and about 6,000 Precinct Election Commissions (PECs).⁵ All three levels of the election administration are temporary bodies. The commissions are composed of equal numbers of representatives from each political party, political movement or coalition that is running in the elections. The chairperson and deputy chairperson of the election commissions are selected among all members by drawing lots at the first meeting. In addition to commission members nominated by political parties, an electoral officer who serves as an adviser is appointed to each commission.⁶ This officer has an advisory vote. Though the election law does not explicitly stipulate that the sessions of the CEC are open to the public, the CEC representatives assured the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that their meetings were open.

Due to the temporary nature of election administration bodies, the Ministry of Interior is primarily responsible for the organization of elections. The Ministry oversees preparations and technical organizational aspects and supports the work of the CEC. The Ministry shall set up an expert-administrative body for assisting the CEC to perform its tasks. It also prepares guidelines for election commissions.

The Statistical Office is responsible for processing and tabulating election results. It establishes summarization units in the CEC and in each DEC, providing personnel, hardware, and relevant software. The computer network connecting the CEC with DECs helps transfer the results in a timely and efficient manner. Preliminary results are continuously published on the website of the Statistical Office throughout the tabulation process. Addressing a previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendation, election results broken down by individual PECs are posted on its website.

The OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed full confidence in the professionalism and impartiality of election administration bodies. They raised no particular concerns regarding the technical preparations and conduct of these elections.

⁴ Members of the commissions, their electoral officers, members of higher level election commissions, voters, anyone who expressed interest in observing the voting and counting, as well as observers sent by international organizations.

⁵ Each PEC serves a maximum of 1,000 voters.

⁶ The electoral officer of the CEC is appointed and recalled by the Government, the electoral officer of the DEC by the head of the district administrative office, and the officer of the PEC by the mayor.

D. VOTER REGISTRATION

There are approximately 4.3 million registered voters in Slovakia. A citizen of the Slovak Republic who has permanent residence in the country and has the right to vote should be registered in a permanent voter register.

Voter registration is decentralized. Municipalities are responsible for the compilation of voter registers based on the permanent residency register. Municipalities should update the voter register and introduce changes based on the information received from state bodies or other municipalities, its own records, or results of complaints. Municipalities should ensure that voters have access to the register for checking their data. In case of inaccuracies or omissions, voters request changes or corrections. Voters with permanent residence in the Slovak Republic, but whose names are missing from the register, can be included in the register on election day upon presenting an identity card and proving residency.

Those who do not have permanent residence in the Slovak Republic are included in a special voter register at their own request.⁷ The special register is maintained by the municipality of the city Bratislava-Petrzalka. The mayor of this municipality should designate a polling station for voters included in the special voter register.

E. METHODS OF VOTING

Slovak legislation provides voters with a wide range of possibilities for exercising their suffrage, including absentee voting, postal voting and homebound voting. Voters have the possibility to request an absentee voting certificate, which will enable them to vote at a polling station in a location other than their place of permanent residence. The application for absentee voting shall be done in person or through a proxy. Voters who request an absentee voting certificate are temporarily deleted from the voter register⁸ and a relevant note is made in the voter register so as to avoid possible multiple voting. As an additional safeguard, the absentee certificates are provided to the municipalities by the Ministry of Interior and must include security features.

Voters can also cast their ballots by post. A postal vote can only be cast by: 1) voters who do not have permanent residence and who were registered in the special register, and 2) voters with permanent residence, who are abroad at the time of the elections and have submitted a request to vote by post to the municipality of their permanent residence.⁹ Voters send the envelopes containing their ballot to municipalities, which should in turn submit it to the respective PECs before the end of election day. The PEC should indicate in the voter register the voters who have cast a postal ballot.

Voting at home is allowed for serious health reasons at the request of the voter. A relevant note should be made in the voter register to avoid possible multiple voting.

⁷ The request should be submitted not later than 50 days before election day.

⁸ Such deletion is only for the specific period for voting with an absentee certificate.

⁹ Postal voting can be requested not later than 50 days before election day and relevant municipalities should send ballots and envelopes to voters not later than 35 days before election day. Only ballots received not later than the last working day before election day are counted.

F. REGISTRATION OF CANDIDATE LISTS

Registered political parties can nominate candidate lists for parliamentary elections.¹⁰ Political parties may form a coalition and submit a joint candidate list. Candidate lists of parties and coalitions should not include more than 150 candidates. Political parties must pay an electoral deposit of 16,596 EUR, which is returned to a party or coalition that receives at least 2 per cent of valid votes.

Eighteen political parties submitted candidate lists. On 23 March, the CEC registered all eighteen lists thus offering voters a distinct choice between alternative political views.¹¹ Individual candidates cannot stand for elections to the parliament, which is not in line with paragraph 7.5 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document.¹²

G. ELECTION CAMPAIGN, PARTY AND CAMPAIGN FINANCING

The election campaign is largely unregulated. The election law does not specify a date for the official start of the campaign. Political parties can start their campaigning any time. Recent amendments to the election law removed the 48-hour silence period before election day. However, paid political advertisements can only be broadcast starting from 21 days before election day and opinion polls must not be published on election day until the end of voting. Election posters at places specifically designated for that purpose by municipalities shall be posted not earlier than 21 days before election day.¹³

Most parties had already started campaigning at the time of the OSCE/ODIHR NAM with outdoor campaigning, meetings with voters, and placement of posters on commercial billboards and other places not designated specifically by municipalities. Some parties informed that they will not spend significant funds on political advertisement in electronic media during the campaign. There are no limits on campaign expenditure.

The financing of political parties is regulated by the Act on Political Movements and Political Parties. Parties may receive donations and income from different sources, such as state contributions, membership fees, private donations, loans, credits, and profit from a company business.¹⁴

Parties may receive three types of state funding:

- A political party or coalition that receives more than three per cent of the total number of valid votes is entitled to receive a state contribution for each vote received that is equal to one per cent of the national average salary for the calendar year preceding the year of elections.

¹⁰ The Ministry of Interior informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that about 50 parties and movements are registered in the Slovak Republic.

¹¹ The CEC informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that 2,401 candidates are included in candidate lists.

¹² In Paragraph 7.5 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document OSCE participating States commit to “respect the right of citizens to seek political or public office, individually or as representatives of political parties or organizations, without discrimination”.

¹³ Parties can purchase places for outdoor campaigning and there is no time restriction for posting billboards and posters at those places.

¹⁴ A political party may found a company or become a partner of a company. The activity of such a company can only be: the operation of a publishing house, manufacturing of objects for promotion of party activity, or organizing political events.

- Parties eligible for the first contribution (above-mentioned) should also receive a contribution for party activity equivalent to the first contribution.
- A political party is entitled to receive a yearly contribution for parliamentary seats. For each seat up to the first 20, the party receives 30 times the average salary. For every subsequent seat the party receives 20 times the average salary.

Parties also are allowed to receive private donations and free of charge services.¹⁵ Parties may accept neither donations nor free of charge services from state, municipalities, legal entities established by the state or municipality, non-profit organizations, foreign organizations, non-citizens, legal entities registered abroad, persons and entities for which the party cannot indicate the source of donation.

Parties are required to submit interim and final reports on election-related expenses. The interim report is submitted to the Ministry of Finance at least 21 days before election day.¹⁶ The Ministry of Finance shall publish the interim report on its website within seven days after receipt. A final report is submitted to the Ministry of Finance within 30 days after election day and also published.¹⁷ Besides interim and final reports on campaign financing, parties are required to submit annual reports to parliament every year by 30 April. In case a party fails to submit interim, final, or annual reports or fails to remedy identified deficiencies, the Ministry of Finance can impose a fine of 3,319 EUR.

Some OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors stated that campaign financing lacks independent oversight and would benefit from more transparency. Concerns were expressed that parties do not provide full data on campaign financing in their reports and that, for example, third parties often post anonymous posters, the expenditure for which is not included in the party report.

On 26 March 2010, the Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) adopted the third evaluation compliance report on the Slovak Republic where it was indicated that a number of recommendations on transparency of party funding have not been implemented. Among those are recommendations to require candidates to disclose all donations they have received in relation to their political activities; to introduce proportionate disclosure rules for expenditure incurred by entities outside the party structure, related directly or indirectly to the party, in connection with election campaigns; to ensure that the annual reports of political parties are easily accessible to the public and to establish a standardized format for the campaign and annual reports to be submitted by political parties; to provide a single body with a mandate and adequate resources to supervise and investigate party funding and election campaign finances and to ensure that this body is in a position to exercise its functions in an independent and impartial manner.¹⁸

¹⁵ There is no limit on private donations. Free of charge services include borrowing movable goods, such as cars for instance, or real estate, the difference between the regular purchase or leasing price of movable goods or real estate, the difference between the regular price of provision of a service and the agreed price to be paid.

¹⁶ The interim report covers a period between the day of announcement of elections and 30 days before election day.

¹⁷ The final report covers a period between the day of announcement of elections and election day.

¹⁸ See GRECO Third Evaluation Compliance Report at:
[http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/greco/evaluations/round3/GrecoRC3\(2010\)3_Slovakia_EN.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/greco/evaluations/round3/GrecoRC3(2010)3_Slovakia_EN.pdf).

H. MEDIA

Freedom of speech in Slovakia is guaranteed by the constitution. The media environment is pluralistic with a wide variety of commercial and public broadcasters as well as print media. The main television channels are the public television *Slovenská Televízia* (STV) and two private broadcasters with high viewership *Markiza*¹⁹ and *JOJ*. Four national daily newspapers compete in Slovakia print media market: the tabloid *Nový Čas*, the daily papers *Sme*, *Pravda* and *Plus 1 Deň*.

According to the law on Broadcasting and Retransmission, electronic media should ensure the universality of information and plurality of opinion, as well as objectivity and impartiality of news and current affairs programs. The activities of broadcasters during the electoral campaign are regulated by the election law. According to the law, public radio and public television, as well as private broadcasters should not allocate more than 30 minutes for paid political advertisement to each contesting party and in total for all contesting parties this time should not exceed 10 hours. The broadcaster should ensure clear designation of such programs by airing an announcement that it is a paid broadcast. In addition, public radio and television should allocate ten hours for discussion programs. Broadcasting of paid political advertisements shall begin 21 days before the election day.

Public television STV informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM that it plans to organize 9 round tables, dividing the 18 contesting political parties in 3 groups: one group including parliamentary parties and two groups including other parties according to their numbers on the ballot. Some non-parliamentary parties expressed concerns with regard to that decision. According to them it does not create equal opportunities for the debate for those parties who have the potential to enter parliament. Some OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed concerns regarding the impartiality of STV and its dependence on the ruling coalition, thus not fulfilling its role of public broadcaster.

The Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission²⁰ oversees operation of electronic media and is responsible for ensuring the objectivity and impartiality of news programs and current affair programs.²¹ Private broadcasters should submit to the Council a project for discussion programs during the election period. The Council can act upon complaint as well as upon its own initiative. Disputes concerning equality in the allocation, scheduling of political advertisements or participation in discussion programs should be resolved by the CEC.

The print media is self-regulated and have no restriction during the campaign period. In 2008 a new Press Act was adopted by parliament, which was criticized both by domestic and international organizations.²² The Press Act requires the print media to publish reactions to already published information regardless of whether the reaction is true or not.

¹⁹ *Markiza* is the leader in the Slovak electronic media market with the most viewership.

²⁰ The Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission consists of nine members appointed by the parliament.

²¹ According to the Act on Broadcasting and Retransmission.

²² The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Miklos Haraszti stated: "The present draft contains sections that would severely restrict editorial autonomy, and would thereby go against Slovakia's international commitments to protect media freedom". See the Statement by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media of 22 January 2008 at: <http://www.osce.org/item/29364.html>.

I. PARTICIPATION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

The Slovak Constitution stipulates that citizens belonging to national minorities or ethnic groups shall be guaranteed the rights to promote their culture, to disseminate and receive information in their mother tongue, to associate in national minority associations, and to establish and maintain educational and cultural institutions.

According to the 2001 census, 14.2 per cent of the Slovak population identified themselves as belonging to national minorities, out of which 9.7 per cent indentified as Hungarian, and 1.7 per cent as Roma. Other minorities include Czech and Rusyn or Ukrainian. Ethnic Hungarian political parties have been participating in political affairs since the 1990 elections. In the current parliament, the Hungarian party SMK is represented with 20 seats, and another Hungarian party Most-Hid is contesting the upcoming elections. According to official census data the Roma population comprises about 90,000 persons; however, there is a widely shared view that this number is underestimated. Unlike ethnic Hungarians, who have political representation and tend to vote for “Hungarian” parties, Roma are less involved in national politics. No parties representing Roma are running for the upcoming elections.

Almost all OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors raised concerns about alleged vote buying in Roma communities and the use of the so-called “ethnic card” during the campaign. Vote buying became widely discussed after the 2009 elections to the European Parliament and especially after the 2009 local elections where instances of vote buying were reported.

The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) issued its most recent assessment of Slovakia in March 2010. In the report among other things it is recommended that Slovakia “... continue to endeavour to combat prejudices against ethnic minorities and to improve relations between the general public and minority communities, in particular the Roma and Hungarians, with a view to promoting understanding and overcoming discriminatory attitudes. The Committee also recommends that the State party ensure the effective investigation and prosecution of all acts of political discourse against these minorities...”²³

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The electoral administration appears to enjoy broad confidence across the political spectrum. No OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors raised any concerns regarding the impartiality and professionalism of the election administration and their ability to organize the elections in an efficient manner. Furthermore, the Slovak authorities have considered a number of previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendations when changing the election law; however, a number of recommendations still remain unaddressed. A number of concerns were also expressed related to party and campaign financing, the campaign environment, the media and the participation of national minorities in elections. Many OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors indicated they would welcome an OSCE/ODIHR election-related activity and considered that such an activity would bring added value. In such circumstances, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends deploying an Election Assessment Mission to specifically look into the issues outlined in this report.

²³ The CERD report can be found at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cerd/cerds76.htm>.

ANNEX: LIST OF MEETINGS

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Veronika Lombardini, Director of Human Rights, Council of Europe, OSCE and Minorities Department

Martina Hrvolová, Human Rights Department

Ministry of Interior

Lívia Škultétyová, Director of the Department for the Elections and Referendum

Dušan Šveda, Director of the Department of Legislation of Public Administration

Statistical Office

Štefan Tóth, Director General of the Section of Methodology and IT

Mária Šimová, Head of the Elections Unit

Central Election Commission

Tatiana Janečková, Chairperson of the CEC

Zuzana Molnárová, Deputy Chairperson of the CEC

Christian-Democratic Movement (KDH)

Ladislav Marenčák, Secretary of KDH

Peter Mach, Member of the CEC

Direction – Social Democracy (SMER)

Katarína Neved'alová, Member of the European Parliament

Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK)

Karvai Sándor, International Secretary

Tamás Lorincz, Political Adviser

Party Most-Híd

Rudolf Chmel, Deputy Chair of the Party

László Nagy, Member of the Parliament, Member of Presidium of the Party

People's Party-Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS)

Barbora Straková, Deputy Chairperson

Freedom and Solidarity Party (SaS)

Jana Kiššová, General Manager

Lucia Nicholsonová, Team Leader

Slovak Democratic and Christian Union – Democratic Party (SDKÚ)

Martin Maruška, Spokesperson of Deputy Speaker of Parliament

Slovak National Party (SNS)

Štefan Zelník, Member of the Parliament

Vladislav Bachár, Adviser to the Minister of Economy

Anton Bonko, Adviser to the Member of the Parliament

Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission

Ľuboš Kukliš, Head of the Office

Barbora Paulínyová, Head of the Law Unit

Slovak Television (STV)

Ján Šmihula, Editor-in-Chief

František Kutlík, Head of Election Department, mediator

Markiza TV

Tibor Buza, Editor-in-Chief

SME newspaper

Matúš Kostolný, Editor-in-Chief

Fair-Play Alliance

Zuzana Wienk, Director

Institute for Public Affairs

Grigorij Mesežnikov, President

MEMO 98

Ivan Godársky, Media and Legal Consultant

Marek Mračka, Project Coordinator

Transparency International Slovakia

Gabriel Šipoš, Director