



**PERMANENT MISSION OF MALTA
TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE,
THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

**1367th Meeting of the Permanent Council
On Parliamentary Elections in Malta, held on 26 March 2022**

**as delivered by Ambassador Natasha Meli Daudey
7 April 2022**

Mr Chair,

I thank you for the opportunity to share with participating States the outcome of the General Elections that were held in Malta on 26 March, won by the incumbent party – the Labour Party - with 55.11 percent of the vote. 85.5 percent of the Maltese population participated in the vote, thus registering once again one of the highest turnouts in Europe.

Although my delegation was unable to announce the date of these elections to the Permanent Council due to the unprecedented situation that impacted the agenda of our PC, ODIHR was duly invited to observe the elections as per our commitment under the Copenhagen Document.

Mr Chair,

At the outset allow me to express my deepest gratitude to ODIHR for their expertise and the excellent cooperation as well as for the establishment of a Needs Assessment Mission that recommended the deployment of an Election Expert Team (EET). Both Missions held meetings with officials from state and local institutions, members of the Electoral Commission, representatives of political parties, media, and civil society, as well as the resident international community. We welcome the report issued by the Needs Assessment Mission and look forward to receiving the report and recommendations of the Election Expert Mission.

We are pleased to inform that building on the recommendation submitted by ODIHR following its Election Observation Mission in 2017, this year's electoral process will introduce, for the first time a Gender Corrective Mechanism. Thanks to a legislation that was adopted in April 2021, this mechanism will allow for better representation of the under-represented gender. As a result of this mechanism, the level of representation of women in Parliament will increase from 13 to 40 percent.

We are also pleased to inform the Permanent Council of other new developments that were introduced in these general elections. Following the positive experience of the last European Parliament elections, the right to vote was extended to all citizens over the age of 16 years. Prior to this, only citizens over the age of 18 years had the right to vote. An electronic vote counting system was also introduced with success and resulted in a much earlier conclusion of the counting process.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, measures were taken to ensure those in mandatory quarantine could cast their vote in dedicated polling booths, thus ensuring the health and safety of all involved, while guaranteeing everyone the opportunity to exercise their right to vote. A part of the counting hall was also modified to allow for electronic counting of ballot papers received from these designated polling booths.

In conclusion, I express my country's commitment to continue working with the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, especially through follow-up work on their assessments and recommendations, which we look forward to receiving, with the ultimate aim of strengthening our electoral process, one of the bedrocks of democracy.

I kindly request that this statement is appended to the journal of the day.

Thank you.