

Declaration on Security, Privacy and Integrity of elections

The participants of the 27th Annual Conference of the Association of European Election Officials (also known as ACEEEO) emphasize the importance of preserving and promoting the security, privacy and integrity of elections.

Elections are the starting points of the democratic process, and any failure of this institution can pose a threat to the whole democratic system. It is therefore of utmost importance to fulfil the democratic standards with regard to security, privacy and integrity of elections.

The participants of the Conference recognize that the digital age changed the environment of the elections to a great extent. Digital platforms have become part of everyday-life, which exposes security, privacy and integrity to new challenges. The new platforms brought in new stakeholders as well to the electoral arena. Cooperation between EMB's and these new stakeholders is inevitable in order to effectively guard the elections.

Based on these deliberations the recommendations of 27th Annual Conference of ACEEEO are the following:

- EMBs should be ready to apply the newest technology and to learn the most up to date methods in order to ensure security of the elections. State institutions should provide the necessary financial and technical support for this ever-evolving development.
- EMBs should be ready to exchange and gain knowledge with regard to security of elections as well. Best practices and possible threats should be shared among EMBs.
- Data collecting and processing pose a great threat to voter privacy. Social media networks need to impose strict and efficient measures to ensure the security and privacy of voters' data. EMBs need to be stringent when assessing whether these requirements are met.
- Ensuring voter privacy is especially a challenge in the digital age. EMB's and other stakeholders shall develop and apply norms and standards adapted to the growing threat posed by digital platforms.
- Education of voters is essential, especially with regard to voter privacy as well. The new media platforms require new attitudes and competences on behalf of the voters in order to keep the privacy of personal data.
- Integrity of elections is endangered by new threats in the digital age. This may result in growing distrust by voters towards elections and the main stakeholders. The trust in elections and the correspondent institutions needs to be promoted by EMBs and other relevant stakeholders.
- In the digital age integrity may not only be endangered by direct attacks against the electoral process, but also by the distribution of fake-news and by other techniques aiming to distort the digital perception by voters. EMBs should therefore apply a broad examination when assessing the dangers of the loss of integrity.