



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

INFORMATION SHEET REQUEST FOR SHORT-TERM OBSERVERS

MID-TERM CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 8 November 2022

Following an official invitation from the authorities of the United States of America to observe the 8 November mid-term congressional elections, and in accordance with its mandate, ODIHR has established an Election Observation Mission (EOM). The mission consists of 17 core team members based in Washington, D.C. and 40 long-term observers (LTOs) to be deployed throughout the country from 5 October. The core team and LTOs come from a total of 27 OSCE participating States.

ODIHR requests participating States to second 400 (four hundred) short-term observers (STOs) to observe voting, counting, and the tabulation of results. STOs will be deployed in multinational teams of two, under a deployment plan prepared by the ODIHR EOM. In the interest of a broad and balanced representation among participating States, ODIHR requests that individual participating States nominate only up to 15 per cent of the total number of requested STOs.

To ensure a better gender balance in its activities, ODIHR strongly encourages the OSCE participating States to second equal numbers of women and men as short-term observers.

Seconding States should confirm visa requirements for their STOs. If required, visas should be obtained at the nearest embassy or consulate of the United States of America prior to arrival.

To facilitate the issuance of visas (if required), the OSCE/ODIHR online registration form must be completed **no later than 3 October 2022**. All STOs are required to arrive in Washington D.C. **by Saturday 5 November** and depart (at the earliest) on **Friday 11 November** in the morning. The STO activity schedule is provided below.

Observers should strictly abide by the [Code of Conduct for ODIHR Observers](#) and the deployment plan prepared by the ODIHR EOM. Observers should also familiarize themselves with the [Guide on the OSCE Policy against Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination](#). The security and safety of observers is of the highest priority and will take precedence in EOM management, including the deployment plan. However, seconding States are required to ensure that their observers adhere to national rules and regulations related to entry, including with regard to potential requirements related to vaccination, PCR testing and health insurance which covers the treatment of COVID-19 in the United States of America. All observers will receive security and Code of Conduct briefings upon arrival and are required to operate in accordance with security guidelines.

The working language of the EOM is English. All briefings and reporting will be in English. All STOs must therefore have a good working knowledge of both written and spoken English.

ODIHR strongly encourages all observers to undertake the ODIHR comprehensive e-learning course for observers, available at www.odihrobserver.org.

STOs are requested to familiarize themselves with the ODIHR Election Observation Handbook, available online at www.osce.org/odihr/elections/68439.

STOs are kindly asked to refrain from commenting on mission related issues via social media. In line with the [Code of Conduct for ODIHR Observers](#), media communications regarding the electoral process and the substance of observations should be made only by the Head of Mission, ODIHR Spokesperson, or other responsible ODIHR officials.

A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET IS AVAILABLE ON THE ODIHR WEBSITE AND SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ALL SECONDED STOs.

The ODIHR EOM Office will be located in Washington, D.C. and the exact address shared at a later date.

e-mail: office@odihr.us

website: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/usa/521509>

1. Deployment Timetable

STOs will be deployed according to the following schedule:

Wed	2 November	STO briefing day I (Online via ZOOM)
Thu	3 November	STO briefing day II (Online via ZOOM)
Sat	5 November	STO arrival / Equipment distribution
Sun	6 November	STO deployment / Equipment distribution
Mon	7 November	Familiarization with areas of observation
Tue	8 November	Election Day
Wed	9 November	Observation of tabulation / Some STO return to Washington, D.C.
Thu	10 November	STO return to Washington, D.C.; return of equipment; PCR tests
Fri	11 November	STO Departure

STOs are kindly reminded to adhere to the deployment timetable and attend the briefing.

a) Briefing

Before deployment, STOs will receive an in-depth briefing, which will include:

- code of conduct and professional working environment;
- overview of the country, political, campaign and the media environment;
- voting, counting, and tabulation procedures;
- observation forms;
- security advisory, including COVID-19 precautions;
- logistical and financial arrangements.

STOs will also be provided with briefing materials, which will include all necessary electoral and logistical information, as well as observation forms to complete during the observation of voting, counting, and tabulation.

b) Deployment

The ODIHR EOM will develop a deployment plan. STOs should strictly abide by the deployment plan and security instructions. STOs should not request special treatment with regard to deployment locations.

In respect of in-country travel organized by ODIHR, please note that **STOs are required to complete the standard OSCE Liability Release Form** and attach it to the on-line mission registration form by **3 October 2022**.

c) Debriefing

A debriefing for STOs will be organized after the elections to provide an opportunity for STOs to express their main findings and share their conclusions with EOM members through the mission evaluation form provided in the observation booklet or through other means. The exact timing of a debriefing session will be communicated to the STOs by the ODIHR EOM Core Team at a later date. The EOM will hold a press conference on the day after the elections to present its preliminary findings and conclusions. A comprehensive final report will be issued by ODIHR approximately two months after the electoral process has been completed, taking into account the findings of all observers.

2. Logistics and Security

a) Contact details

All logistical arrangements for the STOs will be organized by the EOM under the direction of:

Ahmad Rasuli, Operations Expert
e-mail: ahmad.rasuli@odihr.us

b) Transportation/Accommodation

All STOs will be met at the airport of their arrival in Washington, D.C. by an ODIHR EOM representative and transported to their accommodation. Transport and accommodation in Washington, D.C. and in the areas of observation will be arranged by the EOM. **Due to the limited availability of accommodation in Washington D.C. and the observation areas, STOs should be aware that double occupancy per room of observers of the same gender is possible.**

IMPORTANT: Hotels in Washington, D.C. will require guests arriving/departing in the early morning hours to pay the full overnight rate.

For safety reasons, particularly in the current health environment, and to prevent problems with transportation, observers are expected to use the accommodation arranged for them by the ODIHR EOM. The EOM will make all necessary arrangements for car rental for STOs to be available at the arrival of the airport in the Area of Observation. As no interpreters and drivers will be provided by ODIHR, STOs are expected to drive in their designated Area of Observation.

Should any of the observers choose not to stay in the accommodation arranged by the ODIHR EOM, the seconding States should indicate this while registering on-line. **If ODIHR is not duly notified in advance, STOs or the respective OSCE seconding State will be charged for the cost, regardless of whether the accommodation provided is used.** The EOM cannot provide airport transfers and in-city transportation for STOs who do not stay in the designated accommodation.

STOs will deploy from Washington, D.C. to the Areas of Observation by plane, or car. STO deployment will be planned in accordance with national regulations and the EOM's COVID-19 safety guidelines.

IMPORTANT: Please note that no interpreters, drivers or assistants will be provided by ODIHR. Thus, the STOs are expected to fluently speak English and shall be **licensed, able, and willing to drive** a vehicle with automatic transmission. **All STOs should submit copies of valid driver license when submitting their on-line registration form. All STOs should verify the format of acceptable driver license in the United States.**

The ODIHR EOM will make necessary arrangements for the STOs to return to Washington, D.C. on 10 November and will arrange accommodation in Washington, D.C. The EOM will arrange transfers to the airport for all STOs from ODIHR designated accommodation.

c) Security

STOs must adhere to the [Code of Conduct for ODIHR Observers](#), as outlined in the ODIHR Election Observation Handbook, and the [Guide on the OSCE Policy against Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination](#), as well as security instructions and national regulations related to the prevention of COVID-19.

A memo on security details for the STOs will be provided to all observers, including guidelines related to the procedures to promote the safe conduct of mission activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. **STOs who do not stay in accommodation provided by the ODIHR EOM will not be covered by the mission's security arrangements.**

d) Luggage/Essential Items

Due to potential modest conditions in the regions, STOs are advised to bring with them the following items:

- appropriate attire for election day observation, business casual is recommended;
- personal protection equipment such as face masks, and hand sanitizer (the ODIHR EOM will provide additional PPE with the STO briefing pack);
- torch/flashlight with spare battery;
- all necessary medication (case-specific);
- electricity converters (if needed), United States style plug.

The ODIHR EOM strongly recommends that STOs, when travelling by air, put essential items into their hand luggage, in case of the late arrival of their luggage in Washington, D.C.

e) Communication

Each STO will be provided with a mobile phone and a local SIM card with credit for work-related usage. Within each team, one member will have use of a smartphone and the other member will have use of a traditional mobile phone. Please note that using phones for international calls and SMSs should be avoided. Such usage is very expensive and will quickly deplete the allocated phone credit.

f) Time zone/Flight bookings

The United States of America has four time zones. The local time in Washington, D.C. is GMT/UTC -5:00. The ODIHR EOM strongly encourages seconding States to make early flight bookings. To ensure operational flexibility, (e.g. in case of bad weather conditions), seconding States are advised to book changeable airline tickets.

3. Interpreters and Drivers

No interpreters will be provided by the OSCE/ODIHR, thus the STOs are expected to fluently speak English. The ODIHR EOM will provide information on car rental for each STO team. Therefore, all STOs shall possess a valid driver's license, be able, and willing to drive a vehicle with automatic transmission.

4. Costs

Please note that the final cost will depend on the total number of observers. The projection below is based on the calculation of requested number of seconded STOs

It is projected that, while in the country, **each STO** will incur the following costs, although some STOs may not require the full amount indicated below:

Operational/Transportation cost	EUR
Airport transfers	250
In-country transportation (to and from deployment area)	1,000
Communication (SIM card/mobile phone/e-pen use)	150
Briefing costs (briefing, briefing pack, PPE, , shipment)	500
Estimated cost to be incurred by ODIHR on behalf of STOs	1,900EUR
PCR test	60
Vehicle rental (EUR 100 per day @ maximum 5 days per observer)*	500
Fuel (EUR 40 per day @ maximum 5 days per observer)*	200
Accommodation (6 nights @ max EUR 300/per night)	1,800
Meals & incidentals (EUR 100 per day @ maximum 7 days)	700
Costs paid directly by the observers	3,260 EUR
Total cost per observer:	5,160 EUR

* The two members of each STO team will share equally the cost of drivers and interpreters. The amount above therefore represents half of these costs (i.e. for each STO).

The total cost per observer is estimated at **EUR 5,160** (five thousand one hundred sixty Euros), including **EUR 3,260**(three thousand two hundred sixty Euros) which the seconding States should supply to each observer in cash prior to their departure to Washington, D.C. **The ODIHR EOM is not able to validate or certify documents related to costs paid directly by the observers (receipts, invoices, contracts, etc.).**

EUR 1,900 (one thousand nine hundred Euros) is the projected cost per each STO to be incurred by ODIHR. After closure of the EOM, each seconding State will be billed by ODIHR on the

basis of total actual expenses incurred and the number of seconded STOs. Payment instructions will be provided to the seconding States with the final invoice.

All of the above costs should be paid in the US dollars. The number of exchange offices is very limited in Washington, D.C. Should participating States provide STOs with cash, the funds must be provided in the US dollars. Cash machines (ATMs) are widely available in Washington, D.C. and in cities around the country, but do not dispense Euro. Hotels in the United States of America do not accept foreign currency for payment. Credit cards are accepted in all hotels. The local currency is the United States Dollar (USD). The exchange rate is currently fixed at: 1 EUR = 1 USD, 1 USD = 0.87 GBP.

5. Visas and Insurance

a) Visa

Seconding States should confirm visa requirements for their STOs. If required, visas must be obtained at the nearest embassy or consulate of the United States of America prior to arrival.

b) Insurance

STOs should ensure that they arrive with adequate health (including COVID-19), accidental/life disability, emergency/medical evacuation, property, theft, and accident insurance, as this will not be provided by ODIHR. **STOs must have a copy of their insurance policy with them, as well as two copies of the data page of their passport and the visa (if applicable).**

c) COVID related requirements

Currently, COVID-19 travel restrictions are still in place in the United States of America and travellers must show proof of being fully vaccinated with the primary series of an accepted COVID-19 vaccine before boarding their flights to the United States of America. All focal points and STOs are advised to check entry requirements, including the list of accepted COVID-19 vaccines, prior to departure. All focal points are advised that changes with regard to the COVID related requirements may occur with little notice. Keep in mind that airline and transit country requirements may differ, and they may require a PCR test and/or vaccination certificate to board the plane or for transit.

While in the country, STOs should follow all applicable national protocols and regulations as well as ODIHR safety procedures, including those related to the use of PPE.

Prior to departure from Washington, D.C., some STOs may be required to take a PCR test, regardless of vaccination status, depending upon transit airport, destination, seconding agency, and airline requirements.

6. Registration Process

After receiving this Information Sheet, all OSCE participating States considering secondment are requested to inform ODIHR on the number of STOs (to the attention of Sylwia Zwolinska or Anna Krzysztofik; e-mail: sylwia.zwolinska@odihr.pl, anna.krzysztofik@odihr.pl) no later than 27 September 2022.

To be nominated by the seconding States, STOs are required to create a personal account in the [Election Expert Database](#), fully complete their profile, and share it with their national focal point. The seconding States are requested to submit the names of proposed STOs using the Election Expert Database as soon as possible and no later than 27 September 2022; 17:00 (Warsaw Time).

After the nomination deadline, ODIHR will consider the overall number of nominations received and confirm the final numbers it is in a position to receive from each seconding State and, subsequently, enable the focal point to proceed with the on-line registration.

In respect of in-country travel organized by ODIHR, please note that STOs are required to complete the standard OSCE Liability Release Form and attach it to the on-line mission registration form **by 3 October 2022**.

The seconding States which have not requested access to the Election Expert Database as a national Focal Point yet or require additional guidance on the observers' registration process should contact Sylwia Zwolinska or Anna Krzysztofik; e-mail: sylwia.zwolinska@odihr.pl, anna.krzysztofik@odihr.pl.

An official cover letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the seconding State or designated national focal point should be sent together with the list of STO names to the attention of Sylwia Zwolinska or Anna Krzysztofik (e-mail: sylwia.zwolinska@odihr.pl, anna.krzysztofik@odihr.pl) by **3 October 2022**.

IN ORDER TO MAKE ALL LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS ON TIME, NO APPLICATIONS WILL BE CONSIDERED BY ODIHR UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES AFTER 3 OCTOBER 2022.

STOs must not have any concurrent commitments that could produce a conflict of interest with the ODIHR EOM.

ODIHR reserves the right to reject any candidate who is not capable of undertaking his/her activities in an impartial and objective manner, and to withdraw accreditation in case of any serious breach of the [Code of Conduct for ODIHR Observers](#).

7. Other Information

Please note that all ODIHR election observation interim reports, preliminary statements, final reports, election laws, and reviews of election laws are available at the ODIHR website: www.osce.org/odihr/elections.

Specific information on the EOM is available on the EOM website: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/usa/521509>

All STOs will receive by email a copy of the ODIHR EOM Observer Guide before their departure to Washington, D.C..

Terms of Reference

SHORT-TERM OBSERVER

Background:

ODIHR is the leading agency in Europe in the field of election observation. It co-ordinates and organizes the deployment of numerous observation missions with thousands of observers every year to assess the compliance of elections in OSCE participating States in line with OSCE commitments, other international obligations and standards for democratic elections, as well as national legislation. Its unique methodology provides an in-depth insight into all elements of an electoral process, and permits making concrete recommendations to further improve electoral processes.

Objective:

Under the guidance of the Head of Mission (HoM) and in close co-ordination with the Deputy Head of Mission (DHoM), assigned Long-term Observers (LTOs), and the ODIHR Election Department, the short-term observers (STOs) are deployed in multinational teams of two and are responsible for observing election day procedures in their assigned areas and reporting their findings accurately and efficiently to the mission headquarters.

Main Tasks:

Electoral Expertise

- Acquire detailed knowledge of the election law and procedures concerning election day;
- Acquire detailed knowledge of the electoral and political situation in the country;
- Become familiar with the ODIHR election observation methodology for observing election day, as reflected in the relevant ODIHR publications;
- Acquire knowledge of OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections.
- Attend and report on meetings of local election authorities, where requested;
- Attend and report on political rallies and campaign events, where requested;
- Attend and participate in any other relevant meetings with other election stakeholders necessary to cover issues deemed necessary by the HoM, DHoM and LTOs;
- Supervise the local support staff;
- Abide by the [Code of Conduct for ODIHR Election Observers](#), the [Guide on the OSCE Policy against Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination](#), and security instructions and deployment plan of the OSCE/ODIHR EOM, as well as [data protection responsibilities](#) when processing the personal data of local staff.

Reporting

- Prepare and submit regular reports to assess the close of the campaign, voting, counting and the tabulation of results.

Requirements:

- Experience in public administration, non-governmental organizations, and/or international organizations, preferably involved in observing and/or organizing election processes, is desirable.
- Knowledge of the country and surrounding region is desirable but not essential.
- Command of English language is essential. STOs must be prepared to read briefing materials, attend briefing and de-briefing sessions, understand procedural instructions and complete forms accurately, all in English. Knowledge of local languages is desirable but not essential.
- Willingness and ability to work long hours in conditions which are sometimes difficult.
- Ability to work in a team and deal with difficult situations in a positive manner.

Deliverables:

- Regular reporting on the conduct of the elections in the area of deployment, as well as on any other issues covered during the mission.



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LIABILITY RELEASE FORM

I, the undersigned, recognize that my participation in the event, named below, does not create an employment relationship between the OSCE and myself. The costs for my travel to, and participation in, the event are covered by the OSCE solely for my convenience and benefit. I accept all conditions of travel and further:

- a) release the OSCE and all of its officials, agents and consultants/experts from liability for loss, damage, injury, illness or death that may be sustained by me during such travel, and/or participation in the event, named below;
- b) agree for myself as well as for my dependants, heirs and estate to hold harmless the OSCE and its officials agents and consultants/experts from any claims or actions on account of any such loss, damage, injury, illness or death;
- c) agree to submit receipts and other relevant supporting documentation, evidencing that the funds have been used for the purpose for which they have been provided;
- d) agree to reimburse the OSCE all funds paid in advance, including but not limited to transportation costs, Daily Subsistence Allowances (DSAs) and Terminal Allowances (TAs) within fourteen (14) days of the cancellation should I not be able to travel as originally planned.
- e) Acknowledging that the proposed travel outlined in the ToR is to a region the WHO has designated as affected by COVID-19, agree to acquaint myself prior to travel with the latest information about the level of infection and preventative measures to take by consulting WHO's website at time of offer to be found at <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019> and to keep abreast of local developments in this regard and adhere to the guidelines provided by ODIHR for the duration of the assignment.
- f) agree that in the event that potential restrictive measures are imposed by state or local authorities due to the COVID-19 pandemic the OSCE shall not be liable for any such restrictive measures and may take such action as it considers, in its sole discretion, to be appropriate or necessary in the circumstances, including but not limited to reducing the risk to the safety and security of the undersigned

Name of event

Name of participant

Date(s) of event

Signature of participant

Venue of event

Date of Signature



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