



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

PORTUGAL

EARLY PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

18 May 2025

ODIHR Election Expert Team

Final Report



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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following an invitation to observe the 18 May 2025 early parliamentary elections, and in accordance with its mandate, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) deployed an Election Expert Team (EET). The ODIHR EET assessed the compliance of the electoral process with OSCE commitments and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections, as well as with national legislation, with the primary focus on the regulation of campaign finance and its implementation, conduct of election campaign including online, and the electoral participation of women.

The President called the 18 May early parliamentary elections upon consultations with parliamentary political parties, following a failed confidence vote requested by Prime Minister Luís Montenegro in the wake of allegations of conflict-of-interest breaches. These elections were the third consecutive snap elections since 2022 and the second in a row triggered by ethics-related concerns. The 230 members of the parliament were elected for a four-year term under a proportional system with closed candidate lists in 22 multi-member constituencies, 2 of which abroad.

The legal framework is conducive for democratic elections, however, gaps, repetitive and outdated provisions undermine legal certainty and coherence. The legal framework remains generally unchanged since last parliamentary elections. A number of prior ODIHR recommendations remain unaddressed, including those on transparency of election administration, gender disaggregated data, campaign finance reporting and oversight, measures to promote women's political participation. The law does not provide for election observation by citizen and international observers, contrary to OSCE commitments. A comprehensive review and consolidation of the legislation is necessary for clarity and legal effectiveness.

The decentralized election administration comprised of a three-tier structure of election administration and public institutions. Elections were conducted in an orderly manner and the timelines were respected. Voter information was qualitative and comprehensive, however the transparency of the work of the election administration was not uniformly insured, as the sessions of the National Election Commission (NEC) were not open to the public or the media, and the decisions were not published in a timely manner. All ODIHR EET interlocutors reported a high level of confidence in the integrity and professionalism of election administration at all levels.

Voter registration is passive; the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) maintains the voter register. For these elections, 9,265,493 voters were registered to vote in Portugal, and 1,584,722 abroad. ODIHR EET interlocutors did not raise concerns about the voter registration.

Early voting was conducted on 11 May; 314,859 participated. Voters permanently residing abroad could vote by post or in the diplomatic representations in their respective countries on 17 and 18 May.

¹ The English version of this report is the only official document. An unofficial translation is available in Portuguese.

Complaints appeared that voters in few countries had not received their ballots by post before the deadline, but the MIA claimed lack of control over the process abroad.

Fundamental freedoms were generally respected during the campaign. Candidates had ample possibilities to address voters and present their programmes on media, including during multiple debates. Journalists were generally able to report on the campaign. Numerous complaints, alleging violations of the duty of neutrality by public officials, submitted to the NEC, resulted in several warnings, content removals and one criminal investigation. Campaign topics featured government stability, immigration, and socio-economic issues. The campaign tone was marked by the far-right party's derogatory and inflammatory rhetoric against the Roma and immigrant communities, which led to several criminal cases. Efforts to engage persons with disabilities in electoral campaigns and political life remained insufficient, as the measures by political parties to provide voter information in accessible and diverse formats remained limited.

Online campaigning is not comprehensively regulated. The national regulatory authority on communications (ANACOM) reported to have established cooperation with major online social platforms and search engines. Relevant institutions took steps to mitigate and respond to disinformation, cyber security, and online threats. Contestants widely used social networking platforms for campaigning, but the messaging remained uniform and did not reflect diversity of platforms of their audiences. The negative content was limited, with aggressive or inflammatory rhetoric and disinformation, mostly about immigration and the Roma community, associated with the far-right. Fact-checkers identified the spread of false claims and disinformation, primarily false or out-of-context political content related to immigration.

The campaign finance legal framework is comprehensive, but a number of overlapping provisions undermine its consistency. ODIHR recommendations on campaign finance remain unaddressed, including on the introduction of interim campaign finance reporting, on proactive publication of institutional information of public interest, and on strengthening the institutional autonomy of the oversight agency. The Entity for Accounts and Political Financing (EAPF), the primary oversight institution, has limited human and institutional resources for effective and timely oversight. Some prior instances of failed compliance with campaign finance disclosure remained unsanctioned.

Women are underrepresented in political life. There are 77 women parliamentarians (33 per cent) elected in 2025, continuing the negative trend of declining women's participation. The political parties do not uniformly support women candidacies. In total, 10 lists registered by 7 contestants in 7 multi-member constituencies (MMCs) had fewer than 40 per cent of women candidates required by the parity law. The legal framework does not create incentives for promotion or facilitation of women's political participation. ODIHR EET interlocutors opined that the increasing harassment towards women politicians could discourage women candidates. The legislation does not create a sufficient preventive and sanctioning framework to curb violence against women in politics.

The election dispute resolution system is decentralised, involving various agencies. The deadlines for submission and resolution of election related complaints are not always in line with international good practice; there are no expedited deadlines for media-related complaints. The institutions responsible for election dispute resolutions generally adopted well-substantiated decisions, however, the timeliness of the resolution and publication of decisions were not uniformly ensured. Election results were not contested.

This report offers a number of recommendations to support efforts to bring elections in Portugal closer in line with OSCE commitments and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections. Priority recommendations focus on reviewing the legal framework to address various inconsistencies, regulating the work of election observers in line with OSCE commitments, ensuring

transparency of election administration's decision-making, introducing an interim campaign finance reporting, reforming the campaign finance oversight mechanism, providing accountability measures for gender-based violence and discrimination in politics, and ensuring effective legal remedy for media-related disputes. ODIHR stands ready to assist the authorities to further improve the electoral process and to address the recommendations contained in this and previous reports.

II. INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Following an invitation to observe the 18 May 2025 early parliamentary elections, in accordance with its mandate, and based on the conclusions of the Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) undertaken between 1 to 4 April 2025, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) deployed an Election Expert Team (EET).² The ODIHR EET consisting of four experts from four OSCE participating States was based in Lisbon between 4 and 22 May.

The electoral process was assessed for compliance with OSCE commitments, other international obligations and standards for democratic elections, as well as with national legislation. In line with ODIHR's methodology, the EET did not observe election-day proceedings in a systematic or comprehensive manner.

The ODIHR EET wishes to thank the authorities of Portugal for the invitation to observe, as well as to express gratitude to the representatives of public institutions, judicial bodies, political parties, media, civil society, and other interlocutors for sharing their views.

III. BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

Portugal is a semi-presidential republic, with legislative powers vested in the 230-member unicameral parliament (the Assembly of the Republic). The directly elected president is entitled, *inter alia*, to dissolve the parliament, call early elections, and appoint the prime minister upon consultations with all parliamentary political parties. Executive powers are exercised by the government.

Following the 10 March 2024 early parliamentary elections, nine political groups received representation in parliament.³ The Democratic Alliance (AD) coalition, led by the Prime Minister Luís Montenegro from the center-right Social Democratic Party (PSD), formed a minority government.⁴ After nearly a decade of being the entity forming the government, the center-left Socialist Party (PS) became the largest opposition party, while *Chega*, a far-right party, had the third largest representation, winning four times as many seats as in the 2022 elections.

Following consultations with parliamentary political parties and the Council of State, President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa dissolved the Assembly and called early elections for 18 May 2025. The announcement followed a failed confidence vote requested by Prime Minister Luís Montenegro in the wake of allegations of conflict-of-interest breaches.⁵ The confidence vote was proceeded by two unsuccessful

² See previous ODIHR election-related [reports](#) on Portugal.

³ In the 16th [legislature](#), the Social Democratic Party (PSD) got 78 seats, the Social Democratic Centre – People's Party (CDS-PP) – 2 seats; the Socialist Party (PS) – 78 seats, *Chega* – 50 seats, the Liberal Initiative (LI) – 8 seats, the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) – 4 seats, Left Bloc – 5 seats, *LIVRE* – 4 seats, and People-Animals-Nature (PAN) – 1 seat. Several other parties are represented in the legislative assemblies of the autonomous regions of Azores and Madeira.

⁴ The Democratic Alliance was composed of the PSD, the CDS-PP and the People's Monarchist Party (PPM).

⁵ The confidence vote was requested by the Prime Minister following the allegations of profits from public procurement contracts obtained by his family-owned business.

censure motions initiated by *Chega* and the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), and a proposal for a parliamentary commission of inquiry put forward by the PS.⁶ Prime Minister Luís Montenegro explained the confidence motion request with the need to clarify support for the government.⁷ The parliament was dissolved on 19 March.

The 18 May parliamentary elections were the third consecutive snap elections since 2022 and the second in a row triggered by public integrity concerns.⁸ The ODIHR EET interlocutors noted that the dissolution of parliament and the subsequent early elections were broadly perceived by the public as detrimental to reform efforts, financially burdensome, and harmful to institutional stability. They also pointed to a persistent lack of political will to duly separate the public governance from the private interests of the political establishment.

Following the 2024 legislative elections, women's representation in the Assembly of the Republic declined to 76 out of 230 seats, constituting 33.6 per cent of the total—a decrease of 10 seats from the previous term. In the outgoing government, women held 7 out of 17 ministerial positions, down from 9 in the prior cabinet. Women remain underrepresented in other elected and appointed positions. According to ODIHR EET interlocutors, cultural, institutional, and structural barriers continue to impede women's full participation in political life, underscoring the need for more effective implementation and enforcement of gender equality measures.

IV. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Parliamentary elections in Portugal are primarily regulated by the 1976 Constitution (reviewed in 2005), and the 1979 Law on Elections of the Parliament (election law, last updated in 2020). Other relevant laws include the 1978 Law on the National Election Commission, the 1988 Law on Posting Advertisement and Campaign Materials, the 1999 Law on Voter Registration, the 1999 Law on Campaign Principles and Neutrality of Public Entities, the 2003 Law on Political Parties, the 2006 Law on Parity, the 2013 Law on Financing of Political Parties and Election Campaigns, the 2015 Law on Journalistic Coverage in Campaign Period, as well as several laws regulating various levels of election administration and oversight entities, criminal and administrative laws. Portugal is a signatory to key international and regional instruments on democratic elections.⁹

The electoral legal framework is comprehensive and provides an adequate basis for conducting democratic elections; it remains stable and has not undergone major changes since last parliamentary

⁶ The commission of inquiry could not be established as the conditions could not be agreed upon.

⁷ When announcing the decision to request a confidence motion, the prime minister [explained](#) its necessity by the lack of clarity whether “as a result of the interventions of the largest opposition parties, [the] parliament gives the Government all the conditions to execute its programme”. Under Article 193 of the Constitution, the Government may ask the parliament to pass a confidence motion in relation to “a statement of general policy or to any matter of important national interest”. The failed motion of confidence ceases the mandates of the Government and the Prime Minister.

⁸ In 2023, the parliament was dissolved and early elections called for March 2024 due to the resignation of Prime Minister António Costa after it was reported that authorities including the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Public Security Office searched the official residence of the prime minister as well as other ministers and high-level state officials for their alleged involvement in a corruption case related to mining and energy concessions.

⁹ These include the [1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#), the [1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#), the [1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#), and the [2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#). At the regional level, Portugal is party to the [1950 European Convention on Human Rights](#) and the [1995 Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#). Portugal is also a member of the Council of Europe's European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) and the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO).

elections.¹⁰ However, the electoral laws would benefit from revision to eliminate outdated and repetitive provisions, which affect legal certainty and coherence.¹¹ Furthermore, modernisation of outdated measures would contribute to the democratic process.¹² A number of prior ODIHR recommendations remain unaddressed.¹³ These include the procedures on disenfranchisement of persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities; lack of public access to the sessions of the election administration; absence of disaggregated data on gender representation within election bodies; the absence of interim reporting and accessible information on campaign finance, of institutional reform on the oversight entity, and the need for consistent interpretation and implementation of legally prescribed measures promoting women's participation.

To address outstanding ODIHR recommendations as well as eliminate various inconsistencies and obsolete provisions, the legal framework should be comprehensively reviewed through an inclusive consultative process well before the next elections, in line with international standards and good practice.

While political parties' representatives may observe the polling, counting and tabulation procedures, the law does not provide for election observation by citizen and international observers, contrary to OSCE commitments.¹⁴ The absence of the provisions on election observation and restrictive interpretation is contrary to the OSCE commitments.¹⁵

Consideration should be given to amending the legislation to explicitly provide for the presence of citizen and international observers in line with the OSCE commitments. Observers should have full access to all stages of the electoral process.

The 230 members of the unicameral parliament are elected for a four-year term under the proportional system with closed candidate list from 22 multi-member constituencies (MMCs).¹⁶ The 226 MPs are elected from the 20 MMCs in Portugal that correspond to the administrative

¹⁰ The Law on Voter Registration was last amended in February 2024, introducing some digitalised features, including an automatic voter registration based on citizen card address, and the assignment of a unique identification number to each voter.

¹¹ Article 5.1 c) of the Law on the National Election Commission mentions that the NEC registers political party electoral coalitions, while this function is now with the Constitutional Court; same for reviewing campaign income and expenditures that was transferred to the Entity on Account and Political Financing (except for referendum). The provisions of the Law on Financing of Political Parties and Election Campaigns and Law on the Organization and Operation of the Entity on Accounts and Political Financing have recurring provisions about the composition of the Entity on Accounts and Political Financing (Articles 25 and 5, respectively).

¹² For instance, the candidate registration proceedings are fully paper based. The Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality recently assessed the impact of the law on gender parity, and identified, *inter alia*, that the cumbersome procedure for scrutinizing paper-based candidate lists compounded by the lack of time resulted in occasional omissions and mistakes. The election law requires courts to publish the final candidate lists on the court buildings without a digital publication requirement, failing to ensure transparency.

¹³ In 2021, a parliamentary Working Group for the Codification and Consolidation of Electoral Legislation was established, but its work did not result in legal amendments due to early elections. In paragraph 25 of the [1999 OSCE Istanbul Document](#), OSCE participating States committed themselves "to follow up promptly the ODIHR's election assessment and recommendations".

¹⁴ Paragraph 8 of the [1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document](#) stipulates that participating States will "invite observers from any other OSCE participating States and any appropriate private institutions and organizations who may wish to do so to observe the course of their national election proceedings, to the extent permitted by law".

¹⁵ Paragraph 8 of the [1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document](#) states that participating States will "invite observers from any other [O]SCE participating States and any appropriate private institutions and organizations who may wish to do so to observe the course of their national election proceedings, to the extent permitted by law".

¹⁶ These comprise 18 multi-member constituencies (MMCs) for mainland Portugal, one MMC each for the autonomous regions of the Azores and Madeira, and two constituencies for Portuguese citizens living abroad -one representing Europe and the other - the rest of the world.

districts.¹⁷ Four MPs are elected in two constituencies abroad. Several proposals to change the electoral system are pending in the parliament.¹⁸ In total, 4,759 candidates were registered on 331 district candidate lists of 18 parties and 3 coalitions to participate in 2025 early parliamentary elections.¹⁹

V. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Elections were administered by a three-tier structure of election administration and public institutions. The electoral administration was decentralized and included a permanent National Election Commission (NEC), 22 Tabulation Centre Commissions (TCCs) and 12,604 Polling Station Commissions (PSCs), which are formed ahead of each election.²⁰ The Ministry of Internal Administration (MIA), supported by 308 municipal governments and 3,092 civil parishes, oversaw the logistical and administrative aspects of the election process. The election administration adhered to the timelines and elections were conducted in an orderly manner. All ODIHR EET interlocutors shared a high level of confidence in the integrity and professionalism of election administration at all levels.

Eight members of the NEC are men, including the president, and four are women. Among the NEC staff, 12 members are women and 5 are men. The electoral law does not contain provisions on gender parity among electoral administration or on collecting gender-disaggregated data on its composition, contrary to a previous ODIHR recommendation and OSCE commitments.²¹

To promote gender equality and improve accessibility to gender-related data, consideration should be given to ensuring systematic collection and timely and comprehensive publication of disaggregated data on gender representation within the election administration at all levels.

The NEC held meetings twice a week, which were not open to the public, and the draft agendas were not published in advance. The meeting minutes were published online with a significant delay, undermining transparency.²² Positively, the NEC published high quality voter information materials on their website.

To ensure transparency and timely access to information, the election administration should consider opening its sessions to the public, publishing the draft agendas in advance of its sessions, and providing timely access to its decisions.

TCCs aggregated election results, adjudicated appeals against the PSCs, allocated mandates and published election results within each of the 22 MMCs. The in-country TCCs started their activities on 20 May and had to publish election results by 28 May. The PSCs ran the electoral operations at polling

¹⁷ On 23 March 2025, the NEC published an official distribution of seats among the MMCs based on data on registered voters provided by the Ministry of Internal Administration (MIA), as of December 31, 2024. The biggest number of seats were assigned to the MMC in Lisbon (48), followed by Porto (40), Braga and Setúbal (19 each), Aveiro (16) and the rest fewer than 10 seats, the smallest being the MMC in Portalegre (2 seats).

¹⁸ For example, [draft Law No 9/XVI/1](#),^a proposed to reduce the number of constituencies and create a national one, as well as several other similar proposals, for example by the [draft Law 10/XVI/1](#) and [draft Law 20/XVI/1](#).

¹⁹ According to the MIA, one candidate list was rejected in the Braga constituency. The PCTP/MRPP - Portuguese Communist Workers' Party appealed the decision of the Court of the Braga District, which rejected the list's registration due to late submission of all necessary documents. On 14 April, the Constitutional Court took a [decision](#) to dismiss the appeal.

²⁰ By law, each parish must have at least one polling station. Parishes with over 1,000 voters have multiple polling stations. The municipalities published the lists of the polling stations.

²¹ Paragraph 40.13 of the [1991 OSCE Moscow Document](#) commits participating States to "ensure the collection and analysis of data to assess adequately, monitor and improve the situation of women". See the 2024 ODIHR [toolkit on Election Administration Gender Audits](#).

²² The meeting minutes of 24 and 30 April were published on 13 May and those of 6 and 8 May, on 15 May.

stations. The MIA and the NEC provided quality information for the PSCs, including manuals on voting procedures. There was no training for the PSCs, as they were trained in 2024 and the materials were available online.²³

The MIA managed the centralized electronic voter registry and offered various information services on its portal, such as verifying voter registration status, locating polling stations, and accessing voter certificates, contributing to the transparency of the voter registration. The 9,265,493 voters were registered to vote in the country.²⁴ The 1,584,722 voters were registered to vote abroad.²⁵ The MIA operated the election results management system, used by the TCCs to upload all polling-station results, which provided real-time access to aggregated election results. The ODIHR EET interlocutors did not raise any concerns regarding election day proceedings and voter registration.

Election administration introduced certain measures to facilitate voting by persons with disabilities. The NEC produced videos on voting modalities for voters with visual impairments. Candidate lists and public notices in Braille were available in polling stations. However, the election administration websites were not coherently adapted to the varied needs of persons with disability. ODIHR EET interlocutors informed about inadequate accessibility of a considerable number of polling stations preventing independent access and voting. Furthermore, the requirement for some voters requesting assisted voting due to health conditions to undergo a medical examination on election day to obtain the disability confirmation for the polling boards was criticised by the ODIHR EET interlocutors as cumbersome and potentially discouraging voter participation.

Proactive measures should be taken to ensure full accessibility to and within polling stations for persons with various types of disabilities. Procedures for obtaining documentation for assisted voting should be substituted with a procedure allowing easy and fast access to the ballot.

On 11 May, an early voting at any polling station of voter's choice was available for those who registered via the MIA's electronic platform or by post from 4 to 8 May.²⁶ Voters permanently residing abroad could vote by post or in the diplomatic representations in their respective countries on 17 and 18 May.²⁷ 5,832 voters permanently residing abroad registered to vote in person. Of the total 1,578,890 voting kits sent to voters abroad, 352,642 ballots were received at the in-country tabulation centres by the 28 May deadline.²⁸ Some complaints appeared in the media that voters in few countries had not received their ballots by post before the deadline.²⁹ The MIA noted that it has no authority over the process, which is governed by procedures and approvals outside its remit.³⁰

²³ [The Manual for Polling Stations, the Guide on Electoral Procedures](#) and other material.

²⁴ The [data](#) was available on the MIA website.

²⁵ Almost 1 million in European countries and 631,673 elsewhere: Africa – 50,645, America – 464,360, Asia and Oceania – 116,668.

²⁶ From the 333,347 applicants, 314,859 voted early.

²⁷ There were 93 out-of-country polling stations, with 33 polling stations in the Europe constituency and 60 in the Outside-of-Europe constituency. Additionally, between 6 and 8 May, 10,790 voters temporarily residing abroad were entitled by law to vote in person at the diplomatic and consular representations.

²⁸ On 29 May, the [media](#) reported that some 113,000 votes were considered null and void (32.3 per cent), mainly due to the absence of the copy of an ID, required by the law.

²⁹ On 14 May, in [the article](#) of the national broadcaster RTP the Council of Portuguese Communities reported that, a few days before election day, there were still Portuguese people abroad who had not received their ballot papers to vote by post (for example, in Angola).

³⁰ The MIA explained that when early elections are called, the available time to complete procurement procedures was limited - typically between 55 and 60 days before election day. In the case of the parliamentary elections, the prior approval from the Court of Auditors is needed, which makes the procedure even more time-consuming. In addition, no specific rules and dates for early elections are in place.

The MIA, the NEC and various other state institutions co-ordinated through the National Electoral Co-operation Network established before elections. The National Cybersecurity Centre (CNCS) performed vulnerability assessments before the elections and set up a situation room to monitor potential risks.³¹ The CNCS reported that one cyber incident had been prevented before elections. On 13 May, the NEC issued a statement refuting false claims that online voting was being conducted, following the circulation of a fraudulent email containing a fake link to vote online; additionally, there was a cyberattack on the NEC's website several weeks before the elections.

VI. CAMPAIGN ENVIRONMENT

The official campaign period started 14 days and ended one day before election day, including online. During the official campaign the candidates gain additional entitlement to free airtime and advertising space; rules for equitable and indiscriminate media access and coverage of the election campaigns apply. Paid political campaign advertisement is prohibited, including online. The legislation provides for equal opportunities for all contestants, including equal allocation of public spaces for campaign purposes. Political parties may organize campaign rallies and distribute campaign materials.

Fundamental freedoms and the right to assembly were generally respected during the campaign. Some political parties reported to the ODIHR EET that their campaign posters were removed or defaced, with complaints to the NEC on obstruction of campaign activities.³² Several isolated incidents of campaign interruptions occurred, triggering criminal investigations by the prosecution.³³

The law provides for safeguards against misuse of office or public resources enforced two months prior to elections.³⁴ Several ODIHR EET interlocutors alleged that high-level government officials conflated campaign activities with official state events following the call of the elections.³⁵ The ODIHR EET was aware of 47 complaints to the NEC alleging violations of institutional advertising prohibitions, the duties of neutrality and impartiality for public entities.³⁶

³¹ The CNCS carried out several actions in support of the identification of possible vulnerabilities in the digital infrastructure of entities involved in the elections and implementing of the corrective measures. It also raised awareness among electoral actors and provided all parties with a circular on vulnerabilities identified within their system.

³² *Chega* filed one complaint, while CDU filed eight complaints.

³³ On 11 May, climate activists threw green powder on Rui Rocha, the leader of the *Iniciativa Liberal*, during a campaign event in Lisbon. Minor tensions occurred due to clashes of *Chega* campaign with demonstrations by groups of Roma protestors in Aveiro on 7 May, in Braga on 8 May, and in Viano de Castelo on 9 May. On election day, the president of one of the parish councils in Lisbon was reportedly slapped, pushed to the ground, and called a "friend of the monhés" outside of a polling station by an individual who called on voting for *Chega*.

³⁴ Public entities are under the duty of impartiality and neutrality during the campaign period. Candidates in public service shall suspend their functions during the election campaign. There are election-related restrictions on public procurement, bidding, infrastructural inaugurations, and advertising by public companies or contractors.

³⁵ On 31 March, Luis Montenegro, in his capacity of Prime Minister, [inaugurated](#) three health centres and highlighted his government's commitment to public-private partnerships in healthcare, aligning with the AD's campaign platform. The NEC issued a warning to the Government following a complaint filed by PS against the Government for alleged "instrumentalization of the state at the service of party interests" regarding a Council of Ministers [meeting](#) held at Mercado do Bolhão in Porto on 2 April. The Freedom Day celebrations at the Prime Minister's residence were also generally perceived as a campaign event.

³⁶ Of these, 35 complaints pertained to posts on institutional and private social media platforms, 5 - to the invitations by public entities and PSD to public events or ceremonies, 5 related to billboards with campaign content, 1 related to the dissemination of a minister's communication, 1 concerned the Prime Minister's visit to Porto. In 19 cases, the NEC requested removal of social media posts or billboards and/or recommended to refrain from such actions. One case was referred to the Prosecutor's Office.

Campaign activities included rallies, marches, distribution of party materials, door to door canvassing, and the use of free airtime for political advertising. Most parties indicated that their programmes had remained largely unchanged since 2024. Campaign topics focused on government stability, immigration, housing, taxation, healthcare, economy, public security, and other socio-economic issues. Labour rights also featured in the campaign, particularly in connection with strikes at the national railway company.³⁷ Allegations regarding Prime Minister Luís Montenegro's conflict of interest case, question of transparency, and the circumstances leading to the early elections were also featured in the campaign.³⁸ While the tone of the campaign was generally moderate, it lacked substantial debate and was marked by derogatory remarks.

The campaign tone was marked by the visible *Chega* outdoor and online campaign featuring derogatory and inflammatory rhetoric against the Roma and immigrant communities, which was of concern.³⁹ Some ODIHR EET interlocutors described *Chega*'s campaign as an attempt to manipulate long-standing social biases against the Roma community and to put the blame for social problems on the increasingly visible migrant population. Ten Roma civil society organizations filed complaints against *Chega* leader André Ventura for the use of hate speech in two videos posted on social media, and the Public Prosecutor's office initiated investigations.⁴⁰

Efforts to engage persons with disabilities in electoral campaigns and political life remained insufficient.⁴¹ The law does not provide for electoral quota for persons with disabilities, or incentives for political parties to ensure inclusion. Some parties undertook efforts to provide campaign information in accessible formats. All parliamentary parties posted official videos with subtitles on social media, and some parties provided audio, Braille, or easy-to-read versions of their manifestos.⁴² However, the websites of only two of the eight parliamentary parties and coalitions and one non-parliamentary party

³⁷ From 7 to 14 May, workers of the national railway company CP (*Comboios de Portugal*) [engaged](#) in a nationwide strike. Opposition parties criticized the [Government](#) for the [strikes](#) and its [response](#), while the Prime Minister [alleged](#) that the Government's negotiation efforts were unable to halt the strikes due to "political, partisan, and electoral influences". The Liberal Initiative also [insinuated](#) that the PCP and affiliated unions orchestrated the labour actions to influence the electoral outcome. Social media posts alleged that the strike's spokesperson was simultaneously a candidate for CDU/PCP, however, certified fact-checker Polígrafo, [debunked](#) the allegations.

³⁸ For example, Prime Minister's involvement in the *Spinumviva* company was discussed during the [4 May](#) and [5 May debates](#) involving the eight parliamentary forces.

³⁹ For example, a video falsely claiming that Portuguese passports are sold in India was reposted and amplified by André Ventura and *Chega* deputy Rita Matias, receiving 5,009 reactions and reposts on Instagram. The video was removed from TikTok after receiving 14,500 reactions and 1,468 reposts. After being hospitalized in the last week of the campaign, André Ventura [claimed](#) that his life could have been threatened by the Roma community if he were not granted a VIP room at Faro Hospital. In addition, head of the *Chega* parliamentary group Pedro Pinto claimed that members of the Roma community attempted to enter Ventura's hospital room which was publicly denied by the police.

⁴⁰ In one [video](#), André Ventura spoke about public housing constructed for Roma people and questioned why housing was built for them and not "normal people." In the second [video](#), Mr. Ventura disparaged a Court of Appeals decision reducing the sentence of Clóvis Abreu, a Roma man accused of aggravated homicide in the death of a police officer, from 14 to 6 years, claiming that minorities receive special treatment from the justice system.

⁴¹ Paragraph 41(1) and (2) of the [1991 OSCE Moscow Document](#) states that "The participating States decide to ensure protection of the human rights of persons with disabilities; to take steps to ensure the equal opportunity of such persons to participate fully in the life of their society." Article 29 (b)(i) of the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) states that States Parties shall undertake to "Promote actively an environment in which persons with disabilities can fully and effectively participate in public affairs...in the activities and administration of political parties." Article 38 of the [UN General Comment on Article 9: Accessibility \(CRPD/C/11/3\)](#) by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that "It is also important that political meetings and materials used and produced by political parties or individual candidates participating in public elections are accessible. If not, persons with disabilities are deprived of their right to participate in the political process in an equal manner".

⁴² Left Bloc provided their manifesto in simplified and Braille formats while *LIVRE* included an audio version of their manifesto on their website. *LIVRE* provided sign-language interpretation at rallies.

featured accessibility tools.⁴³ The platforms of all eight parliamentary parties and coalitions addressed issues related to accessibility and rights of persons with disabilities. Domestic associations on rights of persons with disabilities informed that political parties did not invest in campaign materials in adapted or accessible formats, which hindered access to campaign.

Contestants should be encouraged to make their campaign events, platforms, programmes, campaign materials and messages accessible to persons with various types of disabilities.

Both parliamentary and non-parliamentary parties participated in debates ahead of the elections, including those organised by the public broadcaster. One-on-one debates between leaders of parliamentary parties were also organized by several TV channels.⁴⁴ The organising of debates incurred several complaints, and contestants' criticism.⁴⁵ Both *Chega* and *LIVRE* filed complaints with the NEC and National Media Regulator (ERC) when Nuno Melo, leader of the CDS-PP, participated in the debates with *LIVRE*, PAN, and Left Bloc on behalf of the AD coalition instead of the incumbent Prime Minister.

Freedoms of the press and expression were generally respected during the campaign. Journalists were able to report on the campaign process. The anti-media rhetoric of the far-right party which influenced the overall media environment was also highlighted and remained of concern.⁴⁶ Some journalists underlined the challenge of reporting on *Chega's* campaign due to the prevalence of disinformation. Several ODIHR EET interlocutors noted that the media's disproportionate coverage of André Ventura and the *Chega* campaign served to legitimize the far-right party's narrative, such as the anti-immigration discourse.

Apart from one incident followed by an official complaint regarding a campaign silence violation, the ODIHR EET did not observe any significant breaches on 18 May.⁴⁷ However, due to lack of regulation for early voting, an intensified large scale voter outreach was visible, including on social media.⁴⁸

⁴³ The websites of the following parties include accessibility features: [Livre](#); [PAN](#); and [VOLT Portugal](#).

⁴⁴ One debate between Prime Minister Montenegro of PSD and Mr. Santos of the PS aired on three channels simultaneously and ran for 75 minutes. All other one-on-one debates ran for approximately 30 minutes each with 13 airing on one of RTP, SIC, or SVI and 15 airing on RTP3, SIC Notícias, and CNN Portugal. In line with the law, all eight parliamentary political forces were invited to participate in debates on TV and radio.

⁴⁵ One complaint by a citizen alleged the exclusion of R.I.R. from debates among parliamentary parties, despite them being the only non-parliamentary party fielding candidates in all electoral districts. The National Media Regulator (ERC) responded on the RIR's ineligibility, and their participation in the debate among non-parliamentary parties. One complaint alleged that PAN participated in the national debates without clarification that they did not have candidates in all districts; 3 complaints alleged partial coverage of the debates by *SIC Notícia*. One media outlet complained alleging violation of the right to pluralism due to being excluded from airing the debates. *Chega* complained arguing that the party's disadvantage by the scheduling and distribution of debates which were not proportionate to their results in the 2024 elections. The ERC decided that the debate programming followed the editorial criteria and did not contradict the principle of political and social representation of candidacies. See RTP for [comments](#) regarding media coverage of parties.

⁴⁶ On 1 May, the Union of Journalists [condemned](#) PSD MP Hugo Carneiro for threatening the freedom of the press for his requests for a police investigation to identify the source who leaked the information regarding companies engaged by *Spinumviva* that Prime Minister Luís Montenegro submitted to the Entity on Transparency. On 12 May, Rui Tavares of *Livre* [criticized](#) the Prime Minister for [statements](#) towards journalists asking about the *Spinumviva*.

⁴⁷ On 18 May, the NEC received a complaint when President of Madeira Government and PSD leader posted a video on Facebook encouraging voters to support AD, which was removed shortly. Numerous candidates made speeches encouraging voters to participate in the elections when casting their votes.

⁴⁸ The ODIHR EET observed that the PS and the AD intensified their voter appeals on social media, publishing specific messages addressed to citizens intending to vote early.

Online Campaign

The activities of online platforms and digital services are regulated by the European Union (EU) and national laws, including Digital Services Act (DSA), the 2005 Law on the National Media Regulator (ERC), the 2004 Electronic Communication Law and the statute of the national regulatory authority on communications (ANACOM).⁴⁹ Data protection is regulated by the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679, with the 2019 Law on the National Data Protection Commission (CNPd) and the implementation Guidelines No. 2019/1, constituting a solid framework for electoral purposes.⁵⁰ However, further national legislation is required to fully implement the EU law and to establish appropriate institutional implementation mechanisms for its effective implementation, as well as to address existing gaps.⁵¹ The regulation of online campaign would benefit from introduction of specific counter-disinformation measures balanced with safeguards for freedoms of expression.

Consideration should be given to providing additional regulations of online campaigning, including those equipping the national enforcement and oversight institutions with adequate mandate and toolkits to implement the EU and national regulation, as well as providing specific counter-disinformation measures balanced with safeguards for freedoms of expression.

ANACOM is in charge of co-operating with very large online social platforms (VLOPs) and very large online search engines (VLOSEs) under the EU DSA, and reported to have established pre-electoral communication with major VLOPs and VLOSEs. The NEC, ERC, ANACOM, and other state institutions took steps to mitigate and respond to disinformation, cyber security, and online threats while coordinating through the National Electoral Cooperation Network. Oversight activities and responses varied per institutional mandates, including social media monitoring partnerships or cybersecurity sensitization for political parties.⁵² Some institutions did not make information about their activities or findings publicly available in a timely manner, which diminished transparency and accountability.⁵³

⁴⁹ By [Decree-Law No. 20-B/2024](#), the ANACOM was appointed as the competent authority and the coordinator of digital services in Portugal together with the Regulatory Authority for Social Communication (in matters of social communication and other media content) and the General Inspectorate of Cultural Activities (in matters of copyright and related rights).

⁵⁰ In 2019, CNPD issued [guidelines](#) on processing of personal data in the context of electoral campaigns and political marketing, clarifying the scope, including profiling, microtargeting, and access to voter lists.

⁵¹ On 24 April 2024, the European Commission opened an [infringement procedure](#) against Portugal because the designated digital service coordinators were not granted the necessary powers, including to impose sanctions in for non-compliance. The [draft Law No. 32/XVI/1.^a](#) addresses this; however, it has not yet been enacted due to the early elections. EU infringement [procedures](#) against Portugal also relate to the failure to timely enact domestic regulation transposing the rules under the [Directive EU 2022/2555 \(NIS2\)](#) aimed at ensuring cybersecurity of network and information systems in critical infrastructure and services across the EU. Further legislative measures will be required with the entry into force of the European Union [Regulation 2024/900](#) on Transparency and Targeting of Political Advertising (EU TTPA). Activities by influencers are not comprehensively regulated.

⁵² The NEC [partnered](#) with MediaLab Research Laboratory of the Center for Research and Studies in Sociology (CIES) of the University Institute of Lisbon (ISCTE) and *Lusa* news agency “to identify and measure the impact of disinformation on the May legislative campaign” by monitoring candidate and parties and political advertising. Fact-checkers *Polígrafo*, *Público-Prova* dos Factos, and Observador-Fact Check checked content for misinformation. From 18 April to 18 May, the ERC [partnered](#) with Labcom – Communication Sciences Research Unit of the University of Beira Interior to analyze and identify “disinformation content published on social media in the context of the 2025 Legislative Elections.” The NEC also [established](#) a WhatsApp channel for citizens to report disinformation, suspicious content, or paid political advertising on social media.

⁵³ The UN General Assembly [2011 Resolution No. 66/163](#) reiterates that “transparency is a fundamental basis for free and fair elections, which contributes to the accountability of Governments to their citizens, which, in turn, is an underpinning of democratic societies”.

To promote transparency, institutions mandated to oversee the online environment, including election campaign, should ensure that information about oversight activities and findings are made publicly available in a timely manner.

Contestants widely used social networking platforms for campaigning, but the messaging on the profiles of the parties and party leaders monitored by the ODIHR EET remained uniform and did not reflect diversity of platforms of their audiences, except for some younger and *Chega* candidates who effectively adapted their content to the specific language and style of TikTok.⁵⁴ The tone of the campaign online was generally neutral or positive with content reflecting campaign topics offline. Lifestyle content, emotional appeals, and civic participation messages were widespread. Negative content was limited, with aggressive or inflammatory rhetoric and disinformation, mostly in relation to immigration and the Roma community, primarily associated with *Chega* accounts.

Fact-checkers identified the spread of false claims and disinformation on social media, primarily false or out-of-context political content.⁵⁵ Almost half of the identified false content pertained to immigration or immigrants. The NEC's disinformation monitoring partnership identified immigration, a key campaign topic for *Chega*, as the foremost topic of political discourse on social media⁵⁶ within the three overarching disinformation narratives, advanced by far-right figures.⁵⁷ The ERC initiated investigation into the circulation of unaccredited electoral opinion polls on social media with a potential to disinform voters, and reviewed two cases of potentially misleading information on *Chega* social networking accounts.⁵⁸ TikTok informed the ODIHR EET that it removed disinformation and AI-generated content, fake accounts, fake likes, and fake followers prior to the start of the official election campaign.⁵⁹ Some stakeholders indicated that such narratives were amplified at important moments of election campaign, including the pre-election silence, reaching considerable audience via reposted content dissemination, while the ODIHR EET monitoring established a trend towards positive and mobilising rhetoric in political online content as election day approached.⁶⁰

VII. CAMPAIGN FINANCE

Party and campaign financing is primarily regulated by the 2013 Law on Financing of Political Parties and Election Campaigns (LFPPEC) and the 2005 Law on the Organization and Functioning of the Entity on Political Finance and Accounts. The laws were not amended recently, thus leaving ODIHR

⁵⁴ The ODIHR EET monitored social media activity of 10 parties and coalitions, as well as 11 party leaders across four platforms: X, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok from 8 to 17 May.

⁵⁵ MediaLab monitored disinformation to notify VLOPs within the Rapid Response System under the European Commission's Code of Conduct against Disinformation and the Digital Services Act. Other fact-checking (such as [Polígrafo](#), [Prova dos factos](#), and [Fact Check](#)) were identifying disinformation online and offline. The content identified by *Polígrafo* included a fake poll, quotes falsely attributed to politicians or authors, false accusations or rumours, and a manipulated image.

⁵⁶ See *Lusa* news agency [report](#). *Lusa* news agency [published four articles regarding](#) disinformation around the 28 April blackout on the Iberian Peninsula and one regarding [immigrants](#) in Portugal based on Medialab's disinformation monitoring reports.

⁵⁷ The narratives included, *inter alia*, statements like "Portugal is being invaded", "Portugal is being Islamized", and that "50 years of democratic rule have meant 50 years of corruption".

⁵⁸ On 13 May, the ERC published a [statement](#) indicating polls from the *Sondelcerto* website were under investigation.

⁵⁹ Between 14 and 27 April, [TikTok](#) removed 275 content items, including disinformation and AI-generated content and removed "more than 45,000 fake accounts, more than 390,000 fake likes and 26,000 fake followers." TikTok informed the ODIHR EET and public of steps to assess and mitigate risks by sensitizing electoral institutions and stakeholders about the platform's policies and tools, launching an Electoral Center to disseminate election-related information, and removing fake accounts and content violating platform rules.

⁶⁰ See also the European Digital Media Observatory [Report](#) "Portuguese General Elections 2025: Information and Disinformation on Social Media".

recommendations unaddressed, including on the introduction of interim campaign finance reporting, proactive publication of information of public interest, and strengthening the institutional autonomy of the Entity for Accounts and Political Financing (EAPF). Overlapping and repetitive provisions and gaps in the two laws undermine the consistency and clarity of the regulation.⁶¹ The campaign finance reporting framework is not comprehensive and does not ensure transparency prior to elections, affecting the ability of voters to form informed opinion. Furthermore, the EAPF's limited capacity does not ensure integrity of political financing.

The political parties were content with the existing campaign finance regulation, including due to substantial public subsidies and ease of compliance. Other ODIHR EET interlocutors opined that the legal framework fails to establish an effective mechanism for ensuring financial accountability in politics, and therefore may require review.⁶²

A. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

The legal framework provides for direct and indirect public, and private campaign financing.⁶³ Political parties contesting elections may finance their campaign activities from the state subsidies for regular political activities and for election campaigns, the political parties' funds, from individual donations, and incomes from fundraising events.

Political parties' funds are comprised of membership fees and contributions from candidates, annual public subsidies, income generated from party assets, loans, and private donations. Annual public funding is allocated to parliamentary political parties and those with at least 50,000 votes in the last parliamentary elections, proportionally to the number of valid votes received.⁶⁴ Additionally, parties and coalitions that nominated candidates for at least half of the parliamentary seats and secured at least one mandate are eligible for the subsidy for campaign expenses.⁶⁵

An individual may donate EUR 13,000 annually for party activities and may transfer EUR 31,350 for election campaign, including loans and in-kind donations.⁶⁶ Foreign and anonymous donations, and donations from legal entities are forbidden. Fundraising on electronic platforms should comply with the law requirements allowing to identify the donor. However, candidates' contributions to their own parties are not subject to any specific limits, which may affect the level playing field.⁶⁷

⁶¹ For example, Article 15.4 of the LFPPEC and Article 17 of the Law on the Organization and Functioning of the Entity on Political Finance and Accounts determines the same duty of political parties to submit their campaign budget to the EPFA; the latter also has some additional duties for political parties such as a duty to inform the EPFA of electoral campaign actions and means. See also the *Disclosure and Oversight* sub-section.

⁶² Some ODIHR EET interlocutors voiced concerns regarding the lack of income transparency in case of large-scale fundraising activities organized by the political parties where donations are received in cash, for example annual music festivals, dinners or art auctions, as these may allow to circumvent the law (the law does not define "a fundraising event"). A prominent example is the annual music festival, "*Festa do Avante!*" organized by the Portuguese Communist Party. Due to its massive scale and commercial nature, the festival may generate significant income for the party which should be duly accounted for.

⁶³ Indirect public funding consisted of free airtime and public places for meetings.

⁶⁴ In 2024, some EUR 20 million was distributed to political parties as state subsidy.

⁶⁵ For the 2025 early parliamentary elections in total, EUR 10,450,000 will be [distributed](#) among eligible political parties, 20 per cent of which is equally distributed to the contesting parties and the remaining 80 per cent is distributed in proportion to the electoral results obtained. The reimbursement is paid 15 days after the publication of the official election results. The reimbursement cannot exceed the election expenditure and only 25 per cent of this may be used to compensate for expenses on outdoor publicity.

⁶⁶ These contributions must be made by check or bank transfer. In-kind donations must be evaluated in market prices. Donation of goods and services beyond market value is prohibited.

⁶⁷ The [ODIHR Handbook on Observation of Campaign Financing](#) states that "[l]egislation can also regulate whether candidates and parties are entitled to spend their own private funds, and set a limit." (p. 34).

Consideration could be given to introducing limits on candidates' contributions to their political parties.

Campaign expenses are limited to EUR 31,350 per registered candidate. All expenses incurred for campaign purposes within six months before election day are considered campaign costs and must be channelled through a dedicated bank account.⁶⁸ The use of party assets or the work of volunteers or supporters were not considered as campaign expenditures, even though they had to be accounted for. However, ODIHR EET interlocutors noted that some political parties use the staff of parliamentary groups to conduct election-related activities free of charge, avoiding the expenses and the need to account for them as part of the campaign expenditures.

Contestants had to submit their estimated non-binding campaign budgets to the EAPF 41 days before the election day.⁶⁹ The estimated campaign budgets were published online, however, some of the contestants did not comply with the requirement, limiting transparency.⁷⁰ According to the preliminary election campaign budgets, major political parties intended to invest in campaign planning, communication agencies, market research and rallies. The total planned campaign expenditures amounted to EUR 8.5 million. The majority of funding was to originate from the state subvention, and only 17 per cent of the sum was to derive from other sources. There is a considerable divergence between funding available to the established parliamentary parties and newer or small parties.⁷¹ This may distort the level playing field contrary to good practice.⁷²

To ensure equal opportunities in election campaigns, consideration could be given to providing additional campaign resources for new and small political parties, which may include additional public funding, subsidised airtime, and rules ensuring a balanced access to debates.

B. DISCLOSURE AND OVERSIGHT

The EAPF is the campaign finance oversight institution with the enforcement and sanctioning powers. The EAPF is appointed for a four-year term by the Constitutional Court (CC) and is composed of the president and two members, one of whom is an auditor.⁷³ The EAPF is assisted by administrative staff, but some vacancies remained due to financial constraints and inability to attract qualified professionals in advance to the 2025 election campaign, undermining the institution's ability to effectively exercise

⁶⁸ With the exception of expenses below the value of 1 social support index (IAS) (EUR 522.50), provided that their total does not exceed 2 per cent of the overall campaign spending limit.

⁶⁹ The reports on estimated budgets are published online, but in non-machine-readable format.

⁷⁰ According to the website of the Constitutional Court (EAPF section), *Alternativa Democrática Nacional (ADN)* and *Nós, Cidadãos!* did not submit the budgets and *Volt Portugal* submitted it one week after the deadline.

⁷¹ While the major political forces operate substantial finances designated for the election campaign (the Socialist Party - EUR 2,250,000 only from state subsidies, *Chega* – EUR 1,600,000 with 800,000 from state subsidy, 800,000 from contributions of political party, AD coalition – EUR 2,552,500 from state subsidy, 277,000 from contributions from political party, 25,000 from fundraising), some of political parties intended to campaign with very little or almost no resources (for example, Party of the Earth intended to campaign without any resources, Portuguese Workers' Communist Party with EUR 1,500 and React Include Recycle with EUR 2,000).

⁷² Paragraph 232 of the [2020 ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines on Political Party Regulation](#) states "[...]systems of funding should also aim to ensure that all parties, including opposition parties, small parties and new parties, are able to compete in elections in accordance with the principle of equal opportunities."

⁷³ By law, the members of the EPFA are elected by the Constitutional Court in a plenary session and must obtain a majority of eight votes. The list of candidates to be appointed as members of the EPFA is drawn up by the head of the Constitutional Court. It was shared with the ODIHR EET that the panel has no option but to vote for the whole list of candidates.

its mandate.⁷⁴ The EAPF is institutionally and financially dependent on the Constitutional Court, which is also the appellate instance to the Entity's decisions on annual and campaign reports.⁷⁵ The current organisational structure does not ensure institutional and financial independence of the EAPF, and as previously recommended by ODIHR, requires review.

To facilitate the capacity of the Entity on Political Finance and Accounts to perform its oversight role in an effective and timely manner, and to ensure a clear division between the oversight body and its appellate instance, consideration should be given to reviewing the organisational structure of the oversight mechanism, granting the Entity on Political Finance and Accounts institutional and financial autonomy and providing it with a legal basis to recruit its own permanent staff.

Contrary to a prior ODIHR recommendation and international good practice, there is no interim campaign finance disclosure, which affects the possibility for voters to form an informed choice prior to the elections.⁷⁶ Political parties had to appoint its financial representative and submit financial reports to the EAPF within 60 days after the payment of the subsidy regarding campaign expenses.⁷⁷ By law, the EAPF has 5 days to initiate the audit, 35 days to finalise it, and one year to adopt a decision, and its reports have to be published online. The lack of interim reporting, late final reporting and long verification deadlines undermine overall transparency and accountability of campaign financing, contrary to international standards and good practice.⁷⁸

To enhance the transparency of campaign finance and contribute to voters' informed choice, consideration should be given to introducing interim reporting prior to election day.

Consideration should be given to shortening the time limits for submission and verification of campaign finance reports to reflect international good practice.

For the 2025 early parliamentary elections the EAPF provided detailed manual with standardized forms for campaign finance reporting, requiring itemization of contributions and expenditures, including data

⁷⁴ In [2024](#), the EAPF employed 3 staff members from the Constitutional Court's staff list, 7 temporary staff members, 3 staff members on service commissions and 9 service providers. The 7 internal mobility procedures were opened for 9 senior technicians, but only 2 two staff members were recruited. [The 2024 Annual Activity Report](#) attributed the recruitment situation to the insufficient budgetary resources and the incompatibility of salary rates to the required technical skillsets; and underlined the increased difficulty the understaffing created to the EAPF's performance in view of the numerous early elections.

⁷⁵ The Constitutional Court provides the necessary administrative support for the EPFA's operations. All related costs are covered by the Constitutional Court's budget, with earmarked expenses for the Entity. The [2003 Council of Europe Recommendation Rec\(2003\)4 of the Committee of Ministers on Common Rules against Corruption in the Funding of Political Parties and Electoral Campaigns](#), part V(14)(a) states: "States should provide for independent monitoring in respect of the funding of political parties and electoral campaigns". According to Paragraph 268 of the [2020 ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines on Political Party Regulation](#), "legislation shall include guidelines on [...] what powers of investigation are granted to [the relevant supervisory] bodies, and the range of applicable sanctions. Generally, legislation should grant oversight agencies the ability to investigate and pursue potential violations... Adequate financing and resources are also necessary to ensure the proper functioning and operation of the oversight body."

⁷⁶ Paragraph 261 of the [2020 ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines on Political Party Regulation](#) states: "It is good practice to require the following reports: - initial reports before the campaign [...]; - reports providing oversight bodies and the public with preliminary information on campaign incomes and expenses of parties and candidates several days before election day; and – final reports after the election [...]"

⁷⁷ By law, the subsidy may be requested within 15 days after the declaration of the election results.

⁷⁸ Article 7.3 of the [2003 UN Convention Against Corruption](#) states: "[e]ach State Party shall also consider taking appropriate legislative and administrative measures, consistent with the objectives of this Convention and in accordance with the fundamental principles of its domestic law, to enhance transparency in the funding of candidatures for elected public office and, where applicable, the funding of political parties." Paragraph I.2.3.d of the [2002 Venice Commission Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters](#) states that "[p]olitical party, candidates, and election campaign funding must be transparent."

and amount for each transaction and supporting documents. The EAPF also maintained an online portal for the submission of the regular political party financing and campaign finance reports. The ODIHR EET interlocutors noted that campaign finance reports are not in the machine-readable format and some were illegible,⁷⁹ some reports from the 2024 parliamentary elections were not submitted;⁸⁰ and the Entity's decisions on the reports were made after considerable delays, curtailing transparency.

The EAPF enforces campaign finance regulations and may apply a wide variety of sanctions, depending on the nature of the violation, from fines to deregistration.⁸¹ The Public Prosecutor's Office is responsible for pursuing criminal offences, which may entail sanctions up to a three-year imprisonment, including for exceeding expenditure limits or using prohibited financial sources. ODIHR EET interlocutors noted that the oversight was weak, largely formal and sanctions were applied mostly for minor technical irregularities, and the decisions were not published timely.

VIII. ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

The principle of equality, including between women and men, is enshrined in the Constitution, defining equal, direct and active participation in politics as a fundamental instrument for the consolidation of the democratic system. The Law on Parity requires a minimum representation of 40 per cent of each gender on candidate lists and limits consecutive list placement of candidates of the same gender to 2. However, the insufficient detail and clarity of the law trigger inconsistent interpretation and implementation.⁸² As a result, the Law on Parity was not uniformly complied with during the 2025 elections, due to the lack of consistency in the judicial implementation of candidacy requirements, or the lack of contestants' political will to implement the law.⁸³ Several ODIHR EET interlocutors advocated for gender parity in candidate lists, the introduction of a zipper system, and ensuring half of all list carriers are women.⁸⁴

The registration of candidate lists should be based on a uniform interpretation of the legally prescribed measures for women's participation.

For the 2025 early parliamentary elections, the total of 2,221 women candidates (or 47 per cent) were nominated. Only 28 per cent of lists were led by women. Among parliamentary parties, CDU had the highest number of women (55 per cent) leading the candidate lists, BE and *LIVRE* had 41 per cent. Other parliamentary parties fielded significantly fewer women as heads of the lists.⁸⁵ Only few parties

⁷⁹ Paragraph 258 of the [2020 ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines on Political Party Regulation](#) states that "digitalizing information and submitting it to the regulatory body in its digitalized, easily searchable and reusable form can facilitate oversight and therefore minimize the need for paper-based procedures."

⁸⁰ *Ergue-te* and *Volt Portugal* did not submit the report and the report of *Nós, Cidadãos!* is missing.

⁸¹ A political party that fails to submit accounts for three consecutive years may face deregistration. For example, on 4 February 2025, the Constitutional Court decided to deregister the political party *Aliança* under the request of the Public Prosecutor for the failure to comply with the legal obligation to present accounts for the years 2020, 2021 and 2022. On 12 June 2025, it was [reported](#) that the Public Prosecutor's Office requested the deregistration of the *Ergue-te* party for failing to submit its accounts for the years 2019, 2020 and 2021.

⁸² For example, the law does not define whether these requirements apply to effective and substitute candidate lists. The NEC's [explanation](#) of the Law on Parity did not fully curb the misunderstanding.

⁸³ The district court in Faro constituency requested the PAN party to bring the candidate list in line with the legal requirement that not more than two candidates of the same gender are placed consecutively on the effective and substitute candidates lists cumulatively. However, the same court registered two other lists that had only 36 per cent of women candidates. In total, 10 lists [registered](#) by 7 contestants in 7 MMCs had fewer than 40 per cent of women candidates.

⁸⁴ The [2024 UN CEDAW General Recommendation 40](#) recommends parity between women and men in decision-making systems, both formal and informal. See [Written Submission to the Universal Periodic Review on the Portuguese Republic](#), delivered by the Portuguese Platform for Women's Rights, 8 April 2024.

⁸⁵ PS 32 per cent, PAN 29 per cent, AD and IL 27 per cent each, and *Chega* - 9 per cent.

have parity as part of their internal policies.⁸⁶ Most parties have informal practices related to the candidates' selection criteria, failing to address women's underrepresentation.⁸⁷ Two parliamentary parties, BE and PAN, are led by women.

To ensure political parties take meaningful steps towards achieving gender parity goals, financial and capacity building measures incentivising intra-party parity policies could be foreseen. These could include training and mentorship programmes for women candidates, resources to promote and support women candidates' campaigns and other capacity building measures.

Women are underrepresented in political life in Portugal. The number of women elected at the 2025 early parliamentary elections decreased, following the negative trend of the 2024 elections.⁸⁸ There are 77 women MPs in the new 230-seat parliament (33 per cent).⁸⁹ The number of women holding ministerial portfolios in the newly appointed government remains low, with 6 women among 16 ministers.⁹⁰ The political participation of women is lower at the local level with only 29 women mayors (9 per cent) in a total of 308 municipalities.

The law does not provide additional permanent or temporary measures to support and facilitate women candidates, and no means to prevent and combat political harassment, including in parliament.⁹¹ Many ODIHR EET interlocutors shared that women MPs from the left-wing parties were subjected to political harassment in the parliament, especially when advocating for certain policies, such as liberalization of the abortion law or LGBTI rights. ODIHR EET interlocutors stated that cyberviolence against women, in particular in politics, has been on the rise, and mentioned intersectional character of verbal attacks was also part of the parliamentary rhetoric.⁹²

To enhance women's participation in decision-making and in the electoral process, consideration should be given to establishing additional legal requirements to place women in leading positions on candidate lists.

Interlocutors criticized inaction of the parliamentary leadership and the lack of attempts to mitigate the scandals by invoking the freedom of expression in response to explicitly offensive behaviour towards women MPs. The Code of Conduct for the Members of the Parliament does not constitute an effective preventive tool for responding or curbing offensive and violent behaviour towards women MPs, as it fails to recognize sexism, misogyny and other forms of discrimination as violations and does not provide

⁸⁶ *LIVRE* applies 50 per cent gender parity with zipper system during party primaries. This rule also includes non-binary people.

⁸⁷ CEDAW Committee, [Concluding observations on the tenth periodic report of Portugal](#), 12 July 2022.

⁸⁸ In 2024, the representation of women decreased by 10 seats compared to the previous convocation, resulting in 76 women MPs (33 per cent).

⁸⁹ The parties with the highest percentage of women MPs are *LIVRE* with 50 per cent of MPs, the PS with 36 per cent, LI and CDU (Portuguese Communist Party – Ecologist Party 'The Greens') with 33 per cent each. Center-right AD has 32 per cent of MPs, while the right-wing *Chega* has 30 per cent of women MPs. The left-wing and center-left parties BE and PAN have one woman MP each.)

⁹⁰ Out of 17 ministers in the previous government, 7 were women.

⁹¹ See CEDAW Committee, [Concluding observations on the tenth periodic report of Portugal](#), CEDAW/C/PRT/CO/10, 12 July 2022.

⁹² Several women politicians from PS and CDU informed ODIHR EET that they had experienced cyberviolence concerning their advocacy for gender related policies. The PAN party leader Inês Sousa Real publicly [shared](#) that she was receiving death threats serious enough to involve the Public Prosecutor's Office. The Parliamentary Committee on Transparency concluded that *Chega* MP violated the Code of Conduct for Deputies by publishing the social media article targeting PS MP Isabel Moreira. *Chega* MPs were primarily mentioned for their intimidating and offensive behaviour. Two federations (Humanitas and the Portuguese Federation for Autism) supporting individuals with disabilities filed a [complaint](#) with the Public Prosecutor's Office after *Chega* MP Diva Ribeiro made disparaging remarks about the blind PS MP Ana Sofia Antunes.

for independent complaints and redress mechanisms.⁹³ ODIHR EET interlocutors stated that the increasing harassment towards women politicians and the lack of adequate preventive measures deters women's political participation.⁹⁴

To enforce zero tolerance of all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination in politics, consideration should be given to introducing provisions explicitly prohibiting offensive practices and creating an effective response and complaints mechanism. Effective and uniform implementation of the preventive framework should be ensured.

All parliamentary parties addressed the issue of violence against women and girls and domestic violence as part of their electoral programmes. Most of them highlighted labour market inequality, work-life balance and reproductive rights. While AD and PS particularly highlighted inequality between women and men and criticised existing gender inequalities, *Chega* promoted traditional family model, opposing “gender ideology” in policies and education. Several interlocutors noted *Chega*'s appropriation of the gender related topic of women's security for anti-immigration narrative. The CDU addressed women's rights mostly in the labour market and in the family; BE and *LIVRE* adopted feminist rhetoric.⁹⁵ PAN integrated gender equality and women's rights in its core policies.

IX. ELECTORAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The legal framework for election dispute resolution is not consolidated and creates a decentralised system, involving various agencies. The deadlines for submitting and deciding on complaints are short, from 24 to 48 hours, which is not in line with the international good practice.⁹⁶ The ODIHR EET interlocutors expressed their confidence in election dispute resolution.

Any voter registered at the polling station is entitled to submit written complaints regarding election proceedings, including vote count, to the PSCs, who decide by absolute majority of the members present, with the required substantiation. The TCCs reviews appeals, and shall decide on substance, in case of the PSCs' failure. Contrary to international standards, the TCCs' decisions on electoral disputes are not published, diminishing transparency.⁹⁷ The ODIHR EET was not made aware of any cases of missed deadlines by PSCs or TCCs.

The MIA local offices decide on voter registration complaints; the corresponding district courts serve as appeal bodies for the matter. According to the MIA, none of the 715 received and resolved complaints, were appealed.⁹⁸ Appeals against the rejection of a candidate list could be submitted to the

⁹³ The Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament to the Assembly of the Republic was adopted in 2019. See the [2021 ODIHR Guide for Parliaments in the OSCE Region](#).

⁹⁴ See CEDAW Committee, [Concluding observations on the tenth periodic report of Portugal](#), CEDAW/C/PRT/CO/10, 12 July 2022, recommendation to the State party to “implement temporary special measures to support women candidates for political and public office and urgently adopt a legal framework to prevent and combat political harassment.” See also ODIHR, Addressing Violence against Women in Politics in the OSCE Region: ODIHR Toolkit (2022), including specific [Tool 3](#) on political parties, p. 20.

⁹⁵ BE party leader Ms. Mortágua made a pre-election [speech](#) on 14 May about the role of women in politics.

⁹⁶ Paragraph II.3.3.g of the [2002 Venice Commission Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters](#) states, “[t]ime limits for lodging and deciding appeals must be short (three to five days for each at first instance)”. Article 95 of its Explanatory Report states “[t]ime limits must, however, be long enough to make an appeal possible, to guarantee the exercise of rights of defence and a reflected decision. [...] It is, however, permissible to grant a little more time to Supreme and Constitutional Courts for their rulings”.

⁹⁷ Paragraph 19 of the 2011 HRC [General Comment No. 34](#) to the ICCPR states that: “To give effect to the right of access to information, States parties should proactively put in the public domain Government information of public interest”.

⁹⁸ Those complaints were received between 1 January of 2024 and 31 March 2025, mostly regarding voting abroad.

judge who decided to deny the registration, hampering impartiality and creating a conflict of interests. Such decisions of the district courts were not published, but only communicated to the interested parties.⁹⁹

The NEC adjudicates complaints related to campaign, the equal treatment of voters and contestants during the campaign, and oversees the allocation of airtime and advertising spaces. From 19 March to 23 May, the NEC received 437 complaints, including 95 requests for opinion. Until 18 May, the NEC issued 103 decisions on complaints, primarily on those related to institutional advertising and breaches of duties of neutrality and impartiality.¹⁰⁰ Decisions were substantiated, however, the NEC published them in the meeting minutes with significant delays.¹⁰¹ From 27 March to 18 May, the NEC forwarded four cases to the Public Prosecutor, the information on the cases was made public only after the elections.¹⁰²

Decisions of electoral dispute resolution bodies should be made public in a timely manner.

The ERC decides on media-related complaints from interested parties; administrative courts review the ERC's decisions on appeal. The ERC may only apply sanctions for the violation of advertising rules.¹⁰³ While the ERC informed that election-related complaints were considered in an expedited manner, despite the lack of legal requirement, timely remedies were not always provided.¹⁰⁴ By election day, the ERC decided on 14 of 30 received complaints, with 12 published decisions; no violations were established.¹⁰⁵

Consideration should be given to providing an expedited timeframe, in line with the international good practice, for consideration of media-related complaints and appeals. The sanctioning mechanism available to the media regulator should be extended to ensure proportionate and dissuasive sanctions for all types of unlawful behaviour.

The Constitutional Court adjudicated complaints on the registration of coalitions, and reviewed appeals against the NEC and the TCCs. From 4 February to 19 May, the Constitutional Court decided on 21 disputes.¹⁰⁶ Most cases concerned internal party disputes, the registration of party coalitions, and their names. The decisions of the Constitutional Court were timely, detailed and reasoned. The Constitutional Court is entitled to invalidate election results, if the violations influenced the constituency results; the results may be contested within 24 hours after the announcement of the tabulated results, and the

⁹⁹ The ODIHR ETT received selected decisions from three out of four contacted district courts (Lisbon, Faro, Vila Real and Santarém).

¹⁰⁰ Most complaints were submitted by the political parties and primarily concerned alleged breaches of the ban on institutional advertising (37 complaints) and violations of neutrality and impartiality obligations (32 complaints). In 9 cases the NEC issued orders to remove the publications from social media or take down posters; in 2 cases the NEC found indications of potential criminal offenses and forwarded the cases to the competent Public Prosecutor's Office; and forwarded 4 complaints by citizens alleging discriminatory journalistic treatment or coverage during the electoral period to the ERC along with the Commission's opinion on the matter.

¹⁰¹ On election day, the last decision published in the NEC's website was from 8 May 2025. On 23 May, the published meeting minutes were until 18 May.

¹⁰² The cases concerned the complaint by the PS against the Minister of State and Finance, alleging a violation of neutrality and impartiality; and a complaint by *Chega* against a municipal council for obstructing the placement of billboards.

¹⁰³ The ERC's decisions on violations are binding and may entail fines ranging from EUR 15,000 to 75,000.

¹⁰⁴ The ERC took from 6 and 32 days to decide on a complaint. For example, a complaint by a citizen regarding the participation of PAN in the TV debates was submitted to the ERC on 19 April and was [decided](#) on 7 May.

¹⁰⁵ Of 30 complaints, 4 were filed by candidates, 1 – by a media outlet, and 25 – by citizens. Of the 14 decided cases, 5 pertained to violations of journalistic principles, 5 – to legal and ethical standards for journalism and broadcasters, 3 – to equal opportunity or proportionality of coverage, and 1 – to misleading political information. The ERC also rendered decisions on two cases initiated *ex officio* regarding misuse of social media content.

¹⁰⁶ Of which 8 were granted, 9 were dismissed on merits, and the remaining were found inadmissible.

Constitutional Court has 48 hours to decide. After the publication of final election results on the NEC website on 31 May, there were no cases of contesting the election results.

X. RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations, as contained throughout the text, are offered with a view to further enhance the conduct of elections in Portugal and to support efforts to bring them fully in line with OSCE commitments and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections. These recommendations should be read in conjunction with past ODIHR recommendations that remain to be addressed.¹⁰⁷ ODIHR stands ready to assist the authorities of Portugal to further improve the electoral process and to address the recommendations contained in this and previous reports.

A. PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To address outstanding ODIHR recommendations as well as eliminate various inconsistencies and obsolete provisions the legal framework should be comprehensively reviewed through an inclusive consultative process well before the next elections, in line with international standards and good practice.
2. Consideration should be given to amending the legislation to explicitly provide for the presence of citizen and international observers in line with the OSCE commitments. Observers should have full access to all stages of the electoral process.
3. To enforce zero tolerance of all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination in politics, consideration should be given to introducing provisions explicitly prohibiting offensive practices and creating an effective response and complaints mechanism. Effective and uniform implementation of the preventive framework should be ensured.
4. To enhance the transparency of campaign finance and contribute to voters' informed choice, consideration should be given to introducing interim reporting prior to election day.
5. To facilitate the capacity of the Entity on Political Finance and Accounts to perform its oversight role in an effective and timely manner, and to ensure a clear division between the oversight body and its appellate instance, consideration should be given to reviewing the organisational structure of the oversight mechanism, granting the Entity on Political Finance and Accounts institutional and financial autonomy and providing it with a legal basis to recruit its own permanent staff.
6. Decisions of electoral dispute resolution bodies should be made public in a timely manner.
7. Consideration should be given to providing an expedited timeframe, in line with the international good practice, for consideration of media-related complaints and appeals. The sanctioning mechanism available to the media regulator should be extended to ensure proportionate and dissuasive sanctions for all types of unlawful behaviour.

¹⁰⁷ In paragraph 25 of the [1999 OSCE Istanbul Document](#), OSCE participating States committed themselves “to follow up promptly the ODIHR’s election assessment and recommendations”. The follow-up of prior recommendations is assessed by the ODIHR EET as follows: recommendation 17 of the [Final Report](#) on the 2021 Presidential Election is partially implemented; recommendations 3, 7 and 10 of the [Final Report](#) on the 2022 early Parliamentary Elections are partially implemented. See also the ODIHR [electoral recommendations database](#).

B. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Election Administration

8. To promote gender equality and improve accessibility to gender-related data, consideration should be given to ensuring systematic collection and timely and comprehensive publication of disaggregated data on gender representation within the election administration at all levels.
9. To ensure transparency and timely access to information, the election administration should consider opening its sessions to the public, publishing the draft agendas in advance of its sessions, and providing timely access to its decisions.
10. Proactive measures should be taken to ensuring accessibility to and within the polling stations for persons with various types of disabilities. The procedures related to obtaining documents for assisted voting should be substituted with a procedure allowing easy and fast access to the ballot.

Campaign Environment

11. Contestants should be encouraged to make their campaign events, platforms, programmes, campaign materials and messages accessible to persons with various types of disabilities.
12. To ensure equal opportunities in election campaigns, consideration could be given to providing additional campaign resources for new and small political parties, which may include additional public funding, subsidised airtime, and rules ensuring a balanced access to debates.
13. Consideration should be given to providing additional regulations of online campaigning, including those equipping the national enforcement and oversight institutions with adequate mandate and toolkits to implement the EU and national regulation, as well as providing specific counter-disinformation measures balanced with safeguards for freedoms of expression.
14. To promote transparency, institutions mandated to oversee the online environment, including election campaign, should ensure that information about oversight activities and findings are made publicly available in a timely manner.

Campaign Finance

15. Consideration could be given to introducing limits on candidates' contributions to their political parties.
16. Consideration should be given to shortening the time limits for submission and verification of campaign finance reports to reflect international good practice.

Electoral participation of women

17. The registration of candidate lists should be based on a uniform interpretation of the legally prescribed measures for women's participation.
18. To ensure political parties take meaningful steps towards achieving gender parity goals, financial and capacity building measures incentivising intra-party parity policies could be foreseen. These

could include training and mentorship programmes for women candidates, resources to promote and support women candidates' campaigns and other capacity building measures.

19. To enhance women's participation in decision-making and in the electoral process, consideration should be given to establishing additional legal requirements to place women in leading positions on candidate lists.

ANNEX: FINAL RESULTS

ELECTION RESULTS¹⁰⁸

Contestants	Votes received	Percentage	Seats obtained
Coalition: Social Democratic Party – People’s Party	1,971,558	31.21	88
Socialist Party	1,442,194	22.83	58
<i>Chega</i>	1,437,881	22.76	60
Liberal Initiative	338,664	5.36	9
<i>LIVRE</i>	257,273	4.07	6
Coalition: Portuguese Communist Party – Ecologist Party ‘The Greens’	183,741	2.91	3
Left Bloc	125,710	1.99	1
PEOPLE-ANIMALS-NATURE	86,946	1.38	1
National Democratic Alternative	81,594	1.29	0
Coalition: Social Democratic Party – People’s Party – Monarchical People’s Party	36,879	0.58	3
Together for the People	20,911	0.33	1
React Include Recycle	13,852	0.22	0
<i>Volt Portugal</i>	12,256	0.19	0
Portuguese Workers’ Communist Party	11,942	0.19	0
New Right	11,942	0.16	0
Get Up	9,190	0.15	0
Social Liberal Party	7,322	0.12	0
Monarchical People’s Party	5,650	0.09	0
Us, Citizens!	3,312	0.05	0
Party of the Earth	471	0.01	0
Portuguese Workers’ Party	421	0.01	0
Blank ballots	87,598	1.39	
Invalid votes	172,379	2.73	
Registered voters	10,850,215		
Voters who voted	6,317,949	58.23	

¹⁰⁸ Data according to the results [published by the MIA](#).

ABOUT ODIHR

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is OSCE's principal institution to assist participating States "to ensure full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, to abide by the rule of law, to promote principles of democracy and (...) to build, strengthen and protect democratic institutions, as well as promote tolerance throughout society" (1992 Helsinki Summit Document). This is referred to as the OSCE human dimension.

ODIHR, based in Warsaw (Poland) was created as the Office for Free Elections at the 1990 Paris Summit and started operating in May 1991. One year later, the name of the Office was changed to reflect an expanded mandate to include human rights and democratization. Today it employs over 150 staff.

ODIHR is the lead agency in Europe in the field of **election observation**. Every year, it co-ordinates and organizes the deployment of thousands of observers to assess whether elections in the OSCE region are conducted in line with OSCE commitments, other international obligations and standards for democratic elections and with national legislation. Its unique methodology provides an in-depth insight into the electoral process in its entirety. Through assistance projects, ODIHR helps participating States to improve their electoral framework.

The Office's **democratization** activities include: rule of law, legislative support, democratic governance, migration and freedom of movement, and gender equality. ODIHR implements a number of targeted assistance programmes annually, seeking to develop democratic structures.

ODIHR also assists participating States' in fulfilling their obligations to promote and protect **human rights and fundamental freedoms** consistent with OSCE human dimension commitments. This is achieved by working with a variety of partners to foster collaboration, build capacity and provide expertise in thematic areas, including human rights in the fight against terrorism, enhancing the human rights protection of trafficked people, human rights education and training, human rights monitoring and reporting, and women's human rights and security.

Within the field of **tolerance** and **non-discrimination**, ODIHR provides support to the participating States in strengthening their response to hate crimes and incidents of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance. ODIHR's activities related to tolerance and non-discrimination are focused on the following areas: legislation; law enforcement training; monitoring, reporting on, and following up on responses to hate-motivated crimes and incidents; as well as educational activities to promote tolerance, respect, and mutual understanding.

ODIHR provides advice to participating States on their policies on **Roma and Sinti**. It promotes capacity-building and networking among Roma and Sinti communities, and encourages the participation of Roma and Sinti representatives in policy-making bodies.

All ODIHR activities are carried out in close co-ordination and co-operation with OSCE participating States, OSCE institutions and field operations, as well as with other international organizations.

More information is available on the ODIHR website (www.osce.org/odihr).