



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on the Presidential Elections in Kyrgyzstan

The European Union welcomes the orderly and well-administered Presidential election of 10 January 2021 in the Kyrgyz Republic, especially in light of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. We commend the good cooperation of the Kyrgyz authorities with ODIHR Election Observation Mission.

According to the preliminary findings and conclusions of ODIHR's election observation, there was, however, an uneven playing field for the candidates, abuse of administrative resources and violations of campaigning procedures. Voter turnout was also low. The Kyrgyz authorities should further improve national legislation on elections by implementing the recommendations of the ODIHR.

The Presidential election is an important step to return the country to political stability. As a long-standing partner, the European Union remains committed to supporting the Kyrgyz Republic in promoting social and economic development, good governance, the rule of law, and the fight against corruption. The EU encourages the President-elect to work with all parts of society and further strengthen the Kyrgyz Republic's universal obligations towards human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as implementation of its international and OSCE commitments.

In the referendum on the future political system, which took place as well on 10 January, Kyrgyz voters supported the introduction of a presidential model of governance. Given the low turnout in this far-reaching referendum, it is particularly

important that ongoing discussions on the country's new constitution should be inclusive and transparent. The review of the draft constitution by the Venice Commission can inform and animate these discussions. The new constitution must ensure that the Presidential system continues to fully respect democratic principles, in line with the Kyrgyz Republic's international and OSCE commitments.

The EU calls for the Parliamentary elections to follow as soon as possible and that a date is fixed so parties can prepare their campaigns. To this end, the EU encourages further cooperation with ODIHR and recalls that inclusiveness and pluralism must be respected, including by maintaining a dialogue with civil society.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE and GEORGIA align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.