



# NATIONAL DEBATE ON ELECTORAL REFORMS IN NORTH MACEDONIA

Deliberative Polling on the Advantages and Disadvantages of Different Reforms to the Electoral System

European Policy Institute - Skopje  
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# 1. INTRODUCTION/QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Elections are one of the key characteristics of modern representative parliamentary democracies. They are a tool that enables people to select representatives that create policies which affect them on a day-to-day basis. Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of the democratic society, where the interests of the citizens are rightfully represented and accounted for.

Article 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia states that the sovereignty of the country derives from and belongs to the citizens, where governing is exercised through democratically elected representatives, be it through a referendum or other forms of direct expression of their will, such as elections<sup>1</sup>.

There are many different electoral systems and models and there is not one right way to implement elections, given the different electoral systems have their advantages and disadvantages. While the electoral system choice is in its essence a political process, there are a set of established principles that serve as guidance for countries when designing their electoral system, given its impact to the wider political and institutional framework<sup>2</sup>. Whatever system a country chooses, it is important that it ensure free and fair elections, reflecting the society and the interests of the electorate, as well as to ensure adequate representation of all groups.

## 1.1. Why is there a need for an open, broad dialogue with citizens about electoral reforms in the Republic of North Macedonia?

Similar to many reform processes, the electoral reforms are most often driven by the interests of the political parties and the elite groups, whose interests tend to solidify around the electoral system once chosen, responding to the incentives thereof. While electoral reforms have been conducted continuously in the country, more often than not they are conducted in light of upcoming elections, limiting the space and time for an inclusive, transparent public debate. This results with partially informed public and confusion as to why some reforms are needed or how they will influence the electoral process and the results of the elections. Consequently, the reforms might influence on how candidates present themselves and how accountable to the citizens they might be to the, as well as the future policy making and governing in the country. At the same time, it is important to note that electoral reforms can arise or be initiated by the society (be it through non-governmental organizations, interest groups, citizens, etc), to address issues pertaining representation, accountability, stability of Government and so on.

Ordinary citizens, whose lives will be significantly affected by electoral processes and results need to be properly informed on the consequences of electoral systems in relation to the principles of representation (geographical, ideological, gender, minority), inclusiveness, fairness and equality of votes, and other related issues of importance for the policy making and governing in general. It is why voters' education is tremendously important.

This National Debate on Electoral Reforms aims to shed light on the possible outcomes of the changes in electoral model, by bridging the gap of fragmented and non-inclusive dialogue on electoral reforms. In addition, it aims to increase the involvement of the citizens in the upcoming reform of the electoral system, through an inclusive, objective dialogue with relevant experts and decision makers.

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<sup>1</sup> "Official Gazette of Republic of Macedonia" N. 1/92, 31/98, 91/01, 84/03, 107/05, 3/09, 49/11, 6/19 and 36/19

<sup>2</sup> International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2005) *Electoral System Design: Overview of the New International IDEA Handbook*, International IDEA

## 1.2. What is the purpose of this document?

It is important to note that in these materials and for the purpose of this Deliberative Polling, **the focus is only on parliamentary elections**. This document is a summary of the four discussion topics of the Deliberative Polling event. The document provides:

1. General, theoretical information about elections and electoral systems, including the different types and models;
2. Background on the electoral system in North Macedonia with specific focus on the four discussion points: number of electoral districts, type of lists, out-of-country voting and registration of voters;
3. Information about different models and options (i.e. possible reforms) regarding the four topics, by presenting the arguments in favor and against each of the option/reform.

While there are many aspects of electoral systems and different election models across the world, due to time constraints, the focus of the debate - and thus this document - is on the number of electoral districts, the types of lists, out-of-country voting and registration of voters, as four major topics related to the electoral reforms in North Macedonia in the past few years. While the document does not present all possible policy approaches and arguments in favor and against the options provided for each of the topics, it serves as a basis for stimulating these discussions. You are welcome to discuss the arguments in favor and against that are present in this document, and also bring in your own arguments to further the deliberations. Arguments regarding alternative paths are more than welcome.

## 1.3. Is the information provided in this document balanced and unbiased?

In preparing this document, it was very important that the provided information was objective, balanced, and unbiased. We have consulted with leading experts with differing perspectives on the topics and drafted the document with the help of our partners. The people who reviewed the document for balance and accuracy are:

1. Ms. Besa Arifi
2. Ms. Elena B. Stavreska
3. Mr. Jovan Ananiev
4. Ms. Renata Deskoska Trenevaska
5. Mr. Veli Kreci
6. Mr. Denis Preshova

## 2. ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

Electoral system, in its essence, is a set of rules that helps translate the votes cast by voters into number of seats won by political parties or candidates. There is no ideal electoral system and the choice of model depends on a number of factors as well as the goals that a country wants to achieve, which sometimes can be contradictory to one another or mutually excluding. While there are a number of important variables that determine the electoral system in a broader meaning, three elements are key – the electoral formula (the type of electoral system), the mathematical formula (how votes are calculated) and the type of ballot (the candidates list). There are a lot of different variations to the electoral system, but the most common way to group them is to look into how proportional they are, i.e. to see how closely they translate the votes into seats. In that sense,

we differentiate between plurality/majority system, semi-proportional system, proportional system and mixed system<sup>3</sup>.

## 2.1. Plurality/Majority system

PAs per the majoritarian system, in order to be elected, candidates must receive a majority of the total number of votes casted. Usually, this system uses single-member districts, where votes are cast for candidates, rather than political parties<sup>4</sup>. Some of the sub-systems require an absolute majority of votes, whereas other a simple (relative) majority. The two most common majoritarian systems are the **first past the post** (FPTP) and the **alternative vote (AV)**. In the FPTP system, the winning candidate should gain more votes than any other, regardless of whether it wins an absolute majority of the casted votes. In the AV system, the winning candidate should receive an absolute majority of the casted votes, i.e. more than 50%. While the FPTP is considered simple and easy to understand by voters, AV provides more options to voters, since they can rank the candidates on the ballot, as per their preferences.

## 2.2. Proportional System

The idea behind the proportional system (PR) is to ensure that parties/candidates receive a number of seats that is proportional to the portion of votes they have gained – for example, if party A receives 40% of the votes, it would get 40% of the mandates/seats. This system requires multi-member districts, whereas the number of districts is irrelevant – there can be multiple districts, or the entire territory of a country can be one district. There are three main variables that important under PR – the mathematical formula used to translate votes into seats, the size of the districts and the required threshold for representation. The greater the number of representatives to be elected from a district, and the lower the required threshold for representation in the legislature, the more proportional the electoral system will be, and smaller parties will have greater chance of gaining representation<sup>5</sup>. In terms of the mathematical formula, seats are divided either by means of highest average, or largest remainder. The most frequently used formulas are the **Hare quota**, the **d'Hondt formula** and the **Sainte-lague formula**. Since the types of electoral formula falls out of the scope of this Deliberative Polling event, they are not discussed in this document. However, the d'Hondt formula is explained in the next chapter, as it is currently used in North Macedonia.

### Types of PR systems

The most popular PR systems are the **list PR** and the **single transferable vote (STV)**.

In **list PR proportional systems**, parties or independent groups present a list of candidates for a multi-member district to the electorate, for which they receive a proportion of seats/mandates based on the votes they gained. This is the most commonly used electoral system. There are variations of list PR systems, including based on the type of lists/ballots.

Closed lists are those where parties/independent groups pre-determine the order of candidates on their list, hence the higher a candidate is on the list, the bigger the chances of that candidate winning a seat/mandate. Hence, in closed list PR systems, voters cast their vote for a

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<sup>3</sup> International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2005) *Electoral System Design: Overview of the New International IDEA Handbook*, International IDEA

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

party/independent group, and have no say with respect to specific candidates. In most of the countries with List PR systems, the lists are closed.

Open list PR systems are those where in addition to voting for a political party, voters can also influence the order of the candidates by making individual preferences. It is important to note that open list systems can differ in their level of “openness”, ranging from fully open lists where the absolute number of votes a candidate wins determines whether a seat is won, to relatively closed, where a candidate needs to get a full quota of votes in order to win a seat. Based on the method of voting, there can be as many types of open list PR systems as there are countries that use it. In that sense, in some countries voters can be required first to vote for a list first and only then for candidate(s). In other countries, the open list system is more centered to the candidate, meaning that the voters can usually vote for one to three candidate(s), and very rarely for more than three. There are also countries that combine these two elements, or enable voters to vote for candidates from different parties/independent organizations<sup>6</sup>.

Free lists PR systems are those where voters are given as many votes as seats to be filled and they can either give them to candidates from the same party, or give them to candidates from different parties. Free lists are used in very few countries in the world and they provide bigger control to the voter than any other type of lists.

**The STV system** uses preferential voting in multi-member districts, which means that voters can rank the candidates as per their order of preference. However, where the STV system is used, the ranking is mostly optional, meaning that they can mark only one candidate, without ranking all candidates<sup>7</sup>. Due to the possibility for ranking candidates, this system provides better chances for popular independent candidates, than the list-PR system. In the STV system, the calculation of seats is done using the Hare quota formula.

### 2.3. Mixed system

The mixed system combines elements from both the plurality/majority system and the PR system, i.e. there are two electoral systems running in parallel, that use different formulas to produce the results of an election. The three most common types of mixed systems are the **single non-transferable vote** (SNTV), the **parallel system** and the **mixed-member PR system**.

In the **SNTV** sub-system, voters have one vote, even though there are several seats to be filled. Hence, the seats are filled by the candidates that win the most votes. For example, if there are 3 seats, they are filled by the first three candidates that have won the most votes. The **parallel system** is similar to the mixed-member PR in that two systems are used (list PR and usually plurality/majority), with the difference being that the proportional lists do not compensate for any disproportionality within the majoritarian districts<sup>8</sup>. Hence, this form of mixed system yields less proportional allocation of seats/mandates than the mixed-member PR. The **mixed-member PR system combines** characteristics of both the majoritarian and PR systems – one part of seats/mandates are allocated using a plurality/majority method, most commonly in single – member districts, whereas the remaining seats/mandates are allocated through list PR. In this

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<sup>6</sup> Wall, Alan (2021) *Open List Proportional Representation: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

<sup>7</sup> International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2005) *Electoral System Design: Overview of the New International IDEA Handbook*, International IDEA

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

system, the list PR system makes up for the disproportionality caused by the results from the single-member districts<sup>9</sup>.

#### 2.4. Out of country voting

Out of country voting, or external voting is defined as “procedures which enable some or all electors of a country who are temporarily or permanently outside the country to exercise their voting rights from outside the national territory”<sup>10</sup>.

Voting rights in democratic societies are at the core of the political rights of people, yet voting from abroad remains a highly divisive question, especially regarding what electoral system should be applied, how this should be organized, who should be eligible to vote, what should the modalities of voting be. It is also important to differentiate between out-of-country voting models based on where the votes go - whether they are counted in separate, out-of-country electoral districts, or if they are added to the votes received in in-country districts, as per the last place of residency in the home country of each expatriate. Much like the rest of the issues related to the electoral system, there is no one right way to design and organize out-of-country voting, it is up to every country to decide on it. Most often, voters abroad can participate at election on national level, i.e. presidential and/or parliamentary elections.

While ensuring non-residents the right to vote it is considered European practice that all EU Member states countries have adopted, there are countries in the world that do not organize out-of-country voting. From the 216 states and territories around the world, 125 states and territories allow people living abroad to vote in legislative elections, and 88 allow out-of-country voting in presidential elections. Overall, about 73% of states and territories had adopted some form of OCV by 2020<sup>11</sup>.

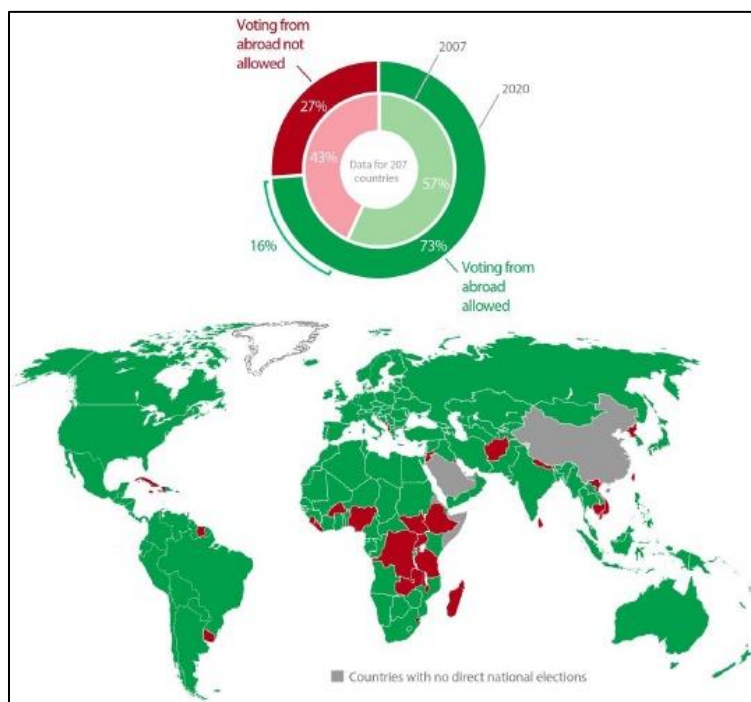
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<sup>9</sup> International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2005) *Electoral System Design: Overview of the New International IDEA Handbook*, International IDEA

<sup>10</sup> International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2007), *Voting from Abroad: The International IDEA Handbook*, International IDEA

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

Picture 1: States that have adopted voting from abroad



Source: International IDEA, Voting from Abroad Database, 2020, <https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voting-abroad>

### 3. ELECTORAL SYSTEM OF NORTH MACEDONIA

North Macedonia has a multi-party system, with a total of 57 currently registered political parties<sup>12</sup>. Given the multi-ethnic character of the country, there are also political parties that represent the interests of specific ethnic groups. The political parties can compete on parliamentary elections for members of Parliament, local elections for mayors and members of municipal councils, and presidential elections.

The legislative framework also allows for independent candidates to compete on elections. Submitting a candidature is preceded by a collection of a specific number of signatures (as envisaged in the Electoral Code), either from voters or from MPs, depending on who is submitting the candidature on behalf of the independent candidate(s). The signatures are collected in branch offices of the State Electoral Commission (SEC) and the procedure is determined in a Rulebook adopted by the SEC.

Whilst regular presidential elections are held every five years, regular local and parliamentary elections are held every four years. However, due to the political instability in the country and often due to political calculations, early elections are frequent.

Since the proclamation of independence, there have been numerous elections organized in the country, using different electoral systems:

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<sup>12</sup> As per the data provided by the Agency for protection of the right for free access to public information. See <https://aspi.mk/imateli/8/>

- 1990 – **Parliamentary elections** (majoritarian electoral system, 120 single-member electoral districts)
- 1994 – Presidential elections and **Parliamentary elections** (majoritarian electoral system, 120 single-member electoral districts)
- 1996 – Local elections
- 1998 – **Parliamentary elections** (mixed/parallel electoral system – 85 MPs elected from 85 single-member districts and 35 MPs elected through a proportional system using the d'Hondt formula, in one electoral district)
- 1999 – Presidential elections
- 2000 – Local elections
- 2002 – **Parliamentary elections** (proportional electoral system, 6 multi-member districts)
- 2005 – Local Elections
- 2006 – **Parliamentary elections** (proportional electoral system, 6 multi-member districts)
- 2008 – **Early Parliamentary elections** (proportional electoral system, 6 multi-member districts)
- 2009 – Presidential elections and Local elections
- 2011 – **Early Parliamentary elections** (proportional electoral system, 6 multi-member districts in country, 3 single-member districts out-of-country)
- 2013 – Local elections
- 2014 – Presidential elections and **Early Parliamentary elections** (proportional electoral system, 6 multi-member districts in country, 3 single-member districts out-of-country)
- 2016 – **Early Parliamentary elections** (proportional electoral system, 6 multi-member districts in country, 1 multi-member districts out-of-country)
- 2017 – Local Elections
- 2019 – Presidential Elections
- 2020 – **Early Parliamentary elections** (proportional electoral system, 6 multi-member districts in country, 1 multi-member districts out-of-country)
- 2021 – Local elections

Since 2002, the parliamentary electoral system in North Macedonia is proportional, with closed candidate lists. 120 MPs are elected in six electoral districts and results are calculated using **the d'Hondt formula**. Up to three additional MPs are elected through out-of-country voting<sup>13</sup>, in one electoral district<sup>14</sup>. From the in-country voting, 20 MPs are selected from each of six electoral districts. Further details about the electoral districts, the out-of-country voting, the types of lists and the Voters' Registry are provided in chapters that follow.

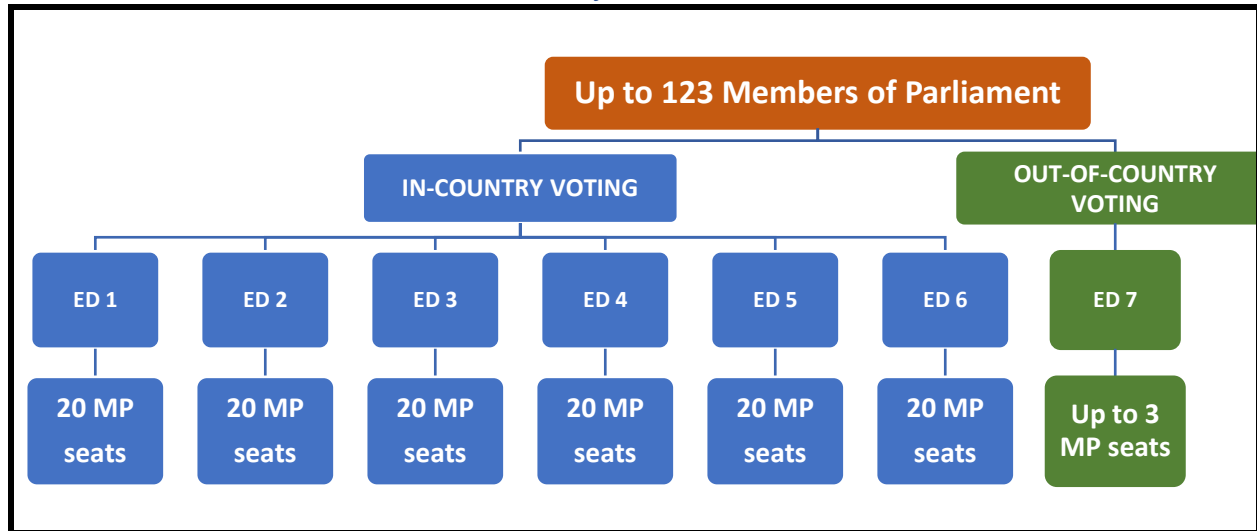
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<sup>13</sup> Since 2011

<sup>14</sup> Since 2015



Picture 2: Election of MPs in North Macedonia



The D'Hondt formula used to calculate seats based on the votes casted for each candidate list in North Macedonia follows the method of the highest average. The total number of votes of each party is repeatedly divided by a common divisor (1, 2, 3...etc), where each division results with an average. The candidates list with the highest average is awarded the first seat/mandate. The second highest average is awarded the second seat, etc. (until all seats/mandates are filled). This formula allows a distribution of seats according to an order of precedence. While this method has a relatively low proportionality in terms of allocation of seats compared to other formulas (for example Hare or Saint Lague), it minimizes the number of votes left aside, so that remaining votes are represented proportionally.<sup>15</sup> At the same time, (depending on other factors such as constituency size and number of seats for example) it tends to reinforce the advantage of the electoral lists gaining higher numbers of votes to the detriment of those that get fewer votes. Today, the d'Hondt method is the most commonly used method across countries for calculating seats.

<sup>15</sup> Medzihorsky, Juraj (2019) *Rethinking the D'Hondt method*. Political Research Exchange, 1:1, 1-5.

Table 1: Simulation for allocation of eight seats with three parties

Party	Party A	Party B	Party c
Votes received	10 000	6 000	1 500
Divisor	10 000	6 000	1 500
1	10 000	6 000	1 500
2	5 000	3 000	750
3	3 333	2 000	500
4	2 500	1500	
5	2000	1200	
6	1667	1000	
7	1428	857	
Total number of seats/mandates won	5	3	0

Despite the big number of political parties, the majority of the small parties run on elections with a pre-electoral coalition, usually led by one of the two major political parties – the Social-democratic Union of North Macedonia (SDSM) or the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization, Democratic Party for Macedonian Unity (VMRO DPMNE), in order to increase their chances of being represented in Parliament

North Macedonia is a consociational democracy, which, among other key elements, is characterized by the formation of a grand coalition government that represents the different ethnic groups<sup>16</sup>. In practice, this means that post-electoral coalitions are formed between one of the two biggest Macedonian parties (that usually wins the overall biggest number of seats), and one (or more) of the Albanian parties. An interesting development in the coalition forming happened in 2020, when the first pre-electoral governing coalition between a Macedonian and one of the biggest Albanian parties was agreed prior to the 2020 parliamentary elections, where the SDSM coalitioned with the ethnic Albanian party BESA.

### 3.1. Electoral reforms in North Macedonia

Within the EU accession process, electoral reforms are implemented under the umbrella of democratic reforms. Although the country continuously conducts electoral reforms, key reforms are most often implemented before elections. This section provides a brief overview of the major electoral reforms implemented in the last five parliamentary electoral cycles (2008 – today).

In general, the Electoral Code is frequently amended, most notably prior to elections, in view of addressing various recommendations by the OSCE/ODIHR and the Venice Commission. However, this is not considered a good practice as per the international standards given “it affects timely and consistent implementation of the law”.<sup>17</sup> What is more, even though the provisions from the Electoral Code affect every citizen, the process of adopting new or amending the existing electoral legislation over the years has been largely non-inclusive, making electoral reforms almost an exclusive subject to political negotiations between the major political parties.

<sup>16</sup> Lijphard, Arend (1975). *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands*. University of California Press.

<sup>17</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. (2011). *Early Parliamentary Elections 5 June 2011. OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report* (pp.1). Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

After the 2006 enactment of the Electoral Code, several laws were amended to consolidate the legislative framework related to elections, yet the legislative framework was still considered fragmented and in need of further consolidating<sup>18</sup>. The State Election Commission (SEC) was established as a permanent body, composed of seven members with a five-year mandate, tasked to oversee the preparation of elections.

Out-of-country voting was introduced for the first time in 2011. The out-of-country elections were conducted according to the majoritarian system, in three electoral districts: Electoral District 7 – Europe and Africa, Electoral District 8 – North and South America, and Electoral District 9 – Australia and Asia. In 2015, the three districts were merged into one, where up to three MPs are elected according to the proportional system. If enough voters register to vote and elections do take place, the election of these MPs is conditional on winning the minimum number of votes required to win a seat in one of the six in-country districts.

As per the high-level political negotiations for the implementation of the Przino Agreement for resolving the political crisis triggered by the illegal interception of communications, the Electoral Code underwent another round of amendments prior to the 2016 early parliamentary elections. The number of SEC members increased from seven to nine - three expert members and six members elected upon proposals from the four biggest political parties in the country. Additionally, the quota for representation of women on the parliamentary candidate lists was increased from 30% to 40%. This set of amendments also introduced the formation of a so-called Caretaker Government, established 100 days before elections, tasked to ensure the conducting of free and fair democratic parliamentary elections.

The legal stability was undermined yet again prior to the 2020 early parliamentary elections, with substantial revisions of the Electoral Code and “ad hoc regulations enacted during the state of emergency [due to the COVID19 pandemic]” that addressed OSCE/ODIHR recommendations only partially.<sup>19</sup>

Throughout the years, many of the reforms conducted referred to the Voter Lists, as well. The SEC was given the responsibility for updating and maintaining the Voter Lists in 2011, a competence previously held by the Ministry of Justice. A thorough review of the Voter Lists was conducted prior to the 2016 elections, through cross-checking of several data sets and field-checks, which resulted with limited number of deletions of voters<sup>20</sup>. Once the Central Population Register<sup>21</sup> was established, it became one of the two main sources for the updating and maintaining of Voters Lists. However, the Register couldn't be used for the 2020 early parliamentary elections, due to incomplete data<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. (2008). *Early Parliamentary Elections 1 June 2008. OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report*. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

<sup>19</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. (2020). *Early Parliamentary Elections 15 July 2020. OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report (pp.1)*. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

<sup>20</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. (2016). *Early Parliamentary Elections 11 December 2016. OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report*. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

<sup>21</sup> “Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia” N. 98/19

<sup>22</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. (2020). *Early Parliamentary Elections 15 July 2020. OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report (pp.1)*. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

## 4. CHALLENGES AND KEY IDENTIFIED ISSUES IN NORTH MACEDONIA

To this day, despite continuous electoral reforms, several challenges to the electoral system remain. This chapter offers an overview of the main recommendations from the OSCE - ODIHR Special Election Assessment Mission reports, issued after each of the last five parliamentary elections in the country, referring to the topics of discussion in this deliberative polling event.

Discussions on further electoral reforms between the political parties are ongoing even today, with efforts to implement outstanding OSCE-ODIHR and Venice Commission recommendations. Perhaps more importantly, the discussions on further reforms to the electoral model include transforming the country into a single electoral district in lieu of the current six electoral districts and the introduction of open lists instead of the current closed list system. In the next part of the materials, we discuss the possible electoral reforms, introducing arguments against and in favor of the options presented.

### 4.1. Number of electoral districts

#### State of play

The electoral reform from 2002 introduced six electoral districts on the territory of the country. As mentioned above, each of these districts are multi-seat, meaning that 20 MPs are elected from each electoral district. There is no electoral threshold. The number of voters per electoral district can be maximum +/- 5% from the average number of voters in the electoral district<sup>23</sup>. While the districts do not correspond to the existing administrative units, they follow the territorial boundaries of municipalities. Changes to the electoral districts were introduced in 2020, where the amendments to the Electoral Code envisaged moving two municipalities - Debar and Mavrovo-Rostushe - from electoral district six to district five. However, the amendments did not envisage changes to the electoral districts three and four, despite deviation in excess of the legal limit<sup>24</sup>.

#### Possible reform options

In 2021, smaller governing parties put forward a joint initiative in the Parliament for changes in the electoral system, calling for one electoral district/constituency instead of the current six, with no electoral threshold. However, discussions on whether there will be an electoral threshold (and what this threshold will be) if the entire country is considered one electoral district are still ongoing.

It should be noted that there are several possible reform options. One of them is restructuring the current geographical boundaries of the electoral districts, or changing the number of the electoral districts. In that sense, some of the proposals by the political parties are to reduce the number of districts from six to three, or increase it from six to eight – as per the statistical regions in the country. However, given the time constrains and in order to ensure a more focused discussion, for this event we focus only on two reform options that have been dominating the public debate:

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<sup>23</sup> “Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” N. 40/06, 136/08, 148/08, 155/08, 163/08, 44/11, 51/11, 54/11, 142/12, 31/13, 34/13, 14/14, 30/14, 196/15, 35/16, 97/16, 99/16, 136/16, 142/16, 67/17,125/17,35/18, 99/18,140/18, 208/18, 27/19 and “Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia” N. 98/19, 42/20, 74/21 and 215/21

<sup>24</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. (2020). *Early Parliamentary Elections 15 July 2020. OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report*. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

(1) a status quo – the territory of the country remains divided in six electoral districts and (2) the entire territory as one electoral district.

In practice, having the entire territory of the country considered as one electoral district means that all 120 members of Parliament will be elected from the same electoral district. The votes casted in the entire country would be added up and mandates for each political party will be calculated using the d'Hondt formula.

This can be considered a major reform, and while there is no right or wrong option, expert opinions are divided on which model would be more suitable for the country. While some argue that proportional model with six electoral districts is better, others argue that proportional model with one electoral district would be more representative of the country as a whole. Despite conflicting arguments, the main goal in deciding on the model should be ensuring all citizens feel adequately represented in the Parliament, as per their votes. This would mean that each party should get a number of seats in Parliaments that corresponds to the support they received on the elections.

The arguments in favor and the arguments against the two options are presented in the table below.

OPTION	ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR	ARGUMENTS AGAINST
THERE ARE SIX ELECTORAL DISTRICTS IN NORTH MACEDONIA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Practice has shown that multiple electoral districts contribute to more stable governing coalitions, since smaller parties tend to coalition with bigger parties prior to elections..</li> <li>2. Electoral districts can improve the accountability of representatives to their voters. In North Macedonia, the list holders are usually politicians that are popular in the district where they run for election, which provides voters a chance to identify with them and form a closer bond.</li> <li>3. Multiple electoral districts can ensure broader geographic and community representation in the Assembly, if the candidates on the lists at a specific district are residents from the same district.</li> <li>4. Independent lists and candidates may have better chances to compete on elections in multiple electoral districts if their potential electorate is geographically concentrated. In this case, it</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Smaller parties, citizens' lists and independent initiatives are at disadvantage - winning more votes overall (in total, from all voting districts) than a different party/initiative does not necessarily mean winning an MP seat, given votes in a specific electoral district can be insufficient for earning an MP seat. In addition, this can put geographically dispersed minorities at risk of not being represented.</li> <li>2. – According to the current model in North Macedonia, the number of MPs elected in each electoral district is not proportional to the number of residents in the electoral districts. In other words, both the electoral district with the lowest number of voters and that with the highest number of votes elect the same number of MPs (20).</li> <li>3. Multiple electoral districts bring the danger of purposeful defining of the electoral district boundaries (gerrymandering), to ensure advantage or disadvantage for a particular party or community.</li> </ol>

	<p>would be easier to mobilize voters and collect the number of necessary signatures in a 'smaller territory', rather than it would be on the territory of the entire county.</p>	
<p>THE ENTIRE TERRITORY OF NORTH MACEDONIA IS SINGLE ELECTORAL DISTRICT</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Smaller parties will have higher chances of being represented in the Parliament in single electoral district, given that fewer votes are needed for one party to win an MP seat. This can be especially good for smaller (ethnic) communities. It means that smaller parties will not necessarily need to form pre-electoral coalitions with larger parties, but rather run with their own program on the elections.</li> <li>2. One electoral district might encourage more citizens to vote, given that the number of MPs will be divided proportionally to the number of votes received in total, in the entire country. On the long run, this can improve the voting culture in the country and consequently the overall turnout on Election Day.</li> <li>3. One electoral district can contribute towards increasing the number of parties represented in the Parliament. In the case of North Macedonia, this can result with less polarization of the political culture between the two biggest parties in the country.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In multiethnic societies, single electoral district can result with disproportionate division of MP seats vis-à-vis the population, if the voting culture differs significantly between ethnic communities, or if the obstacles to voting differ across communities.</li> <li>2. In electoral systems with one electoral district, countries usually establish a legal threshold (a minimum % of votes needed for getting one MP seat), in order to ensure stability in Parliament. However, it is not easy to determine the threshold as it can be considered discriminatory for the some of the small(est) parties, and it often results with "wasted/lost" votes (votes that are cast for a party that does not end up winning MP seats).</li> <li>3. Comes with the risk of small radical parties entering the Parliament, which in the case of our country can contribute to more blockages of the work of Parliament and enacting of key legislation (for example through filibustering or submitting a high number of amendments).</li> <li>4. Single Electoral District can bring the danger of over-centralizing the politics in the country, given it would be more beneficial (and perhaps easier) to try to gain more votes in bigger cities (for example Skopje) and as a result smaller towns and regions can end up being underrepresented in the Parliament.</li> <li>5. Single electoral district can lead to weaker territorial representation</li> </ol>

		and weaker voter-representative link.
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## 4.2. Candidate lists for Members of Parliament

### State of Play

Candidate lists were introduced in the electoral system of North Macedonia in 2002, when the electoral system switched from majoritarian to proportional. The candidate lists have always been of a closed type. This means that the political parties that run on elections prepare and submit to the State Electoral Commission a list of candidates for MPs in a pre-determined order, for each electoral district. Therefore, citizens cannot express their preference for specific candidates, but instead cast their vote for the entire list offered by the party they choose to support on elections. However, it is worth noting that political parties do not compose their lists “randomly”. Since their purpose is to attract as many voters as possible, the political parties usually conduct polls to determine the popularity of their candidates across the electoral district, to ensure that the lists they submit correspond (more or less) to the candidate preferences of citizens.

It is important to mention that gender quotas for representation of women on the candidate lists were introduced in the country’s electoral legislation in 2006. Until 2015, this quota stood at 30% of the total number of candidates on all lists, after which amendments to the Electoral Code introduced a higher quote, stipulating there should be at least 40% of women on every list, with at least one in every three positions reserved for the less represented gender (women), and additionally at least one in every ten positions on the list should be a woman<sup>25</sup>.

### Possible reform options

As explained in Chapter 2, there are various types of open list systems that a country can choose from. Similar to the decision on the number of electoral districts, there is not one size fits all in this case, either. Two major differences in switching from closed to open lists will undoubtedly be raising the level of the intra-party democracy and giving voters an influence not just over deciding which party gets the most seats in Parliament, but over deciding who gets to sit in those seats, too<sup>26</sup>. However, giving voters influence over the choice of individuals might come at the cost of gender balance, since open lists do not have gender quotas (compared to the current legal provision with a mandatory quota for the less represented gender).

So far, the public discourse on open list has been very limited, with little to no information on the political parties’ preferred types of open lists. One general practice when introducing open lists is considered to be going slowly, i.e. starting with the least complicated type of open lists - open lists with one preference, where the voters first vote for the party they favor, and then from the list they choose a candidate that they believe should get a seat.

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<sup>25</sup> “Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” N. 40/06, 136/08, 148/08, 155/08, 163/08, 44/11, 51/11, 54/11, 142/12, 31/13, 34/13, 14/14, 30/14, 196/15, 35/16, 97/16, 99/16, 136/16, 142/16, 67/17,125/17,35/18, 99/18,140/18, 208/18, 27/19 and “Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia” N. 98/19, 42/20, 74/21 and 215/21

<sup>26</sup> Blumenau, Jack, Eggers, Andy, Hangartner, Dominik and Hix, Simon (2016) *Open/closed list and party choice: experimental evidence from the UK*. British Journal of Political Science.

The arguments in favor and the arguments against the two options are presented in the table below. It should be noted that the arguments related to open lists do not refer to any of the sub-types of open list systems (or the different levels of “openness”), but are rather characteristics that apply to open lists in general. However, it is also important to recall that the most common type of open lists are those where voters can only give from one to three preferential votes for candidates, i.e. voters cannot vote for as many candidates as there are MP seats to fill in the electoral district. Nonetheless, despite the differences in the implementation among the various open list systems and their technical details, the general strengths and weaknesses are the same<sup>27</sup>.

OPTION	ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR	ARGUMENTS AGAINST
<p>THE LISTS FOR CANDIDATES FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ARE CLOSED LISTS</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Closed lists are more practical – experience has shown that many voters care more about the party rather than the candidates. Voters don’t have to follow election campaigns for each and every candidate, but rather focus on the overall program of the party.</li> <li>2. Despite the fact that party-lists are pre-determined, parties tend to select candidates that are already the most popular in each of the districts they run in, based on previous polling with the citizens.</li> <li>3. Representation of disadvantaged groups such as women and minorities is easier to ensure under pre-determined, closed party-lists.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Voters cannot express their preference for a specific candidate nor can they influence the selection of MPs, so MP seats are distributed based on the party ranking of candidates, i.e. the higher the candidate is on the list, the more likely they will be elected an MP.</li> <li>2. MPs tend to be more loyal to the party than to their electorate, since it is the party that determines their place on the list.</li> <li>3. Sometimes it can happen that even though a candidate is very popular among the electorate it is still not placed high enough on the list (increasing their chances to get elected as an MP), due to internal party dynamics.</li> </ol>
<p>THE LISTS FOR CANDIDATES FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ARE OPEN LISTS</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Open lists are more democratic than closed lists since they enable voters to directly choose the individuals that become MPs - the candidates with the most individual votes are elected. It gives voters the feeling that they are more in control of who represents them.</li> <li>2. The candidates for MPs will gain more independence from their party leader, which on the</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Voting ballots will be too long which can significantly increase the voting time (longer waiting lines, etc). It can also discourage citizens to go out and vote, since the voting process may seem too complicated. Additionally, it may result with a lot of invalid ballots, due to mistakes in the voting by citizens that are not educated well enough on the rules for voting with open lists.</li> <li>2. Even if the lists are fully open, it is arguable how much of a difference</li> </ol>

<sup>27</sup> International Foundation for Electoral Systems (2009) *Proportional Representation Open List Electoral Systems in Europe*. Election Issues, Paper 1.



	<p>long run can contribute to weakening of the partocracy, reducing party centralization and reducing the power of party leaders, essentially improving the inner-party democracy.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Open lists can make elected MPs to feel more accountable to their electorate, contributing to a more accountable legislative branch and a better quality of governance.</li> <li>4. Depending on other factors (such as electoral model and electoral threshold) open lists can provide smaller parties (not those in pre-election coalition) and independent lists and candidates a better chance for a meaningful competition.</li> <li>5. Parties and independent lists will move towards presenting more of their candidates during the electoral campaign, instead of focusing only on the first candidate on the list</li> </ol>	<p>it is going to make for voters. Practice has shown that in many semi-open lists and open lists systems, voters tend to choose either the more popular candidates, or candidates that are already at the top/upper part of the list. It can also happen that candidates end up only voting for the party and not at all for candidates.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Introducing open lists will require a significant voter education campaigns, not only on how to vote, but also on understanding how votes are counted and MP seats are allocated. For example, depending on the threshold (if any) of votes needed for allocating an MP seat, open lists can produce counter-intuitive results (Why does a candidate with less votes than an opponent get awarded a seat?).</li> <li>4. Open lists can lead to intra-party conflict given that candidates from the same party are competing with each other for votes.</li> <li>5. In order to attract more voters, parties can use prominent individuals as candidates, which can give up their seat upon being elected.</li> </ol>
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### 4.3. Out-of-country voting

#### State of Play

As of 2015, the out-of-country voting is conducted in one electoral district (Europe, Africa, North and South America, Australia and Asia), where up to three Members of Parliament are elected according to the proportional system. As per the Electoral Code, the election of these MPs is as follows:

- The first MP is elected if the candidates list got at least as many votes as MP elected with the least number of votes in the electoral districts in country, during the last Parliamentary elections.
- The second MP is elected if the candidates list got at least twice the number of votes than the MP elected with the least number of votes in the electoral districts in country, during the last Parliamentary elections.
- The third MP is elected if the candidates list got at least three times the number of votes than the MP elected with the least number of votes in the electoral districts in country, during the last Parliamentary elections.

As per the Electoral Code, citizens who are 18 or above, have last registered residency in North Macedonia, hold a Macedonian passport, and on election day temporarily reside abroad for a period longer than three months or temporarily work abroad for more than a year, are eligible to vote.

Compared to the passive registration of in-country voters, out-of-country voters have to register for voting prior to elections. A minimum of 10 voters need to register in order for voting to take place in a diplomatic-consular representation. Registration is required ahead of each elections and voting is allowed only in-person, which albeit being the most commonly used method globally, remains limited given the number and location of diplomatic and consular offices where out-of-country voting can take place. The Electoral Code stipulates that the external voting takes place on the day before the in-country elections. Given the relatively small density of the diplomatic representation network of the country, the short time window for voting and the repeated need of registration additionally contribute to lower turnout. During the 2020 elections, there was no voting of the diaspora since fewer voters than required in total have registered – the required threshold of 6534 registered voters<sup>28</sup>, established based on the 2016 parliamentary elections, was not met.

As for the in-country voting, electoral boards are established for out-of-country voting, as well. These electoral boards in the Diplomatic-consular office (DCO) are comprised of a president and four members, each with their deputy. The president and the deputy president are diplomats, whereas the biggest opposition and the biggest governing party each propose two members and their deputies.

#### Possible reform options

The right to vote is a constitutionally guaranteed right for every citizen of North Macedonia, thus the debate on whether non-residents should vote out-of-country or not is a rather sensitive one, given their relationship with the state changes when they leave the territory of their home country,

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<sup>28</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. (2020). *Early Parliamentary Elections 15 July 2020. OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report*. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

especially for a prolonged period of time<sup>29</sup>. However, economic relations between the non-residents and their home country remain strong very often, which is why this element must be accounted for. In addition, as Macedonian citizens, the foreign policy of the country impacts them and they are dependent on the country's protection. Nevertheless, countries accounting for the administrative and financial costs for organizing out-of-country voting should also be considered.

Intuitively, there are only two answers to the question of whether non-residents should have the right to vote out-of-country – yes or no. At the same time, there are different modalities that are in play, if the country opts for out-of-country voting, i.e. the number of districts, the number of MP seats, the formula for distribution of votes, the mode of voting, etc.

Given previous experience in the country with out-of-country voting, for the purposes of this deliberative polling event we present three options: (1) a status quo, i.e. non-residents can vote in one electoral district and elect up to three MPs; (2) non-residents can vote in one electoral district and elect one MP; and (3) there is no out-of-country voting at all.

The arguments in favor and the arguments against the three options are presented in the table below. It should be noted that the arguments in favor and against that refer to the first option are also valid for the second option, as both options presuppose that out-of-country voting will take place. The arguments presented for the second option focus on the pros and cons of electing only one, instead of three MPs.

OPTION	ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR	ARGUMENTS AGAINST
NON-RESIDENTS VOTE AND ELECT UP TO 3 MPs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Every person holding a Macedonian citizenship can exercise their constitutionally granted right to vote, regardless of the fact that it lives in or out of the home country.</li> <li>2. Non-residents have the chance to be represented in Parliament and influence on issues important to them, such as services provided by their home country (for example issuing of passports and other documents).</li> <li>3. Non-residents send a significant amount of financial resources back home, which is why the country should strengthen its ties with them. Moreover, some non-residents still have their business at home or some type of financial investments, thus they have a</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The number of registered voters and actual voters from the diaspora is decreasing from one election to another, while the costs for organizing elections in the diaspora remain high.</li> <li>2. Non-residents often do not share the same issues with the residents and do not pay taxes in their home country</li> <li>3. It is difficult to organize it since there is no accurate data on non-residents. Even though non-residents must register to vote prior to elections, in order for voting to take place, at least 10 citizens are required to register to vote in one Diplomatic-Consular Place. In the event less than 10 people register, they cannot exercise their right to vote.</li> <li>4. Leaves space for partisan quarrels and 'buying of votes' in order to win the diaspora votes.</li> </ol>

<sup>29</sup> Collyer, Michael and Vathi, Zana (2007) *Patterns of Extra-territorial Voting* (working paper). Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalization and Poverty.

	<p>real interest in national tax-paying legislation and policy-making at home, despite not living in the country, and should be able to exercise their right to vote.</p> <p>4. Shorter-term non-residents will still be able to exercise their right to affect the future policy making in their country, which will affect them upon their return to the home country. non-residents.</p>	
<p>NON-RESIDENTS VOTE AND ELECTS ONE MP SEAT</p>	<p>1. Non-resident citizens exercise their right to vote. They get to be represented in the Parliament by an MP, yet their vote will not significantly influence the outcome of the elections as per the votes of the resident voters.</p>	<p>1. It would be difficult for one MP to represent the entire diaspora, given the interests of non-residents can vary based on their geographic location. Since MPs should maintain regular contact with their electorate, time and resources can be a big constrain in this scenario.</p>
<p>NON-RESIDENTS DO NOT VOTE</p>	<p>1. Costs from the budget dedicated to organizing the elections are significantly reduced.</p> <p>2. Long-term non-residents are naturally less engaged in and informed about the politics in their home country and may lack the information necessary to make a sound decision on the day of elections and the responsibility to exercise the choice wisely, since they would not be directly affected. Therefore the decision making should be left to residents, as they are more likely to bear the political consequences.</p> <p>3. The mandates won by political parties from out-of-country voting can be decisive for which party forms a Government, if the in-country results yield a very similar number of mandates between two dominating parties. In these cases, it is questionable</p>	<p>1. Comparative experiences from the region have shown that non-residents predominantly support right-wing, conservative parties which often use these votes to create additional tension between political parties.</p> <p>2. The abolition of voting in the diaspora can potentially cause the emerging of new lines of division among citizens living in-country and abroad (along ethnic, religious, party lines)</p> <p>3. The constitutionally guaranteed right to vote cannot be exercised by every Macedonian citizen.</p> <p>4. Non-residents form political and economic communities and use them for lobbying and advocacy for their home country in the institutions of the countries they reside. Taking away their voting rights can decrease their lobbying and advocacy efforts.</p> <p>5. In addition to long-term non-residents, shorter-term non-residents will also be stripped of</p>

	<p>whether non-resident citizens should decide for the governing that applies to resident citizens.</p> <p>4. Not all political parties have enough resources to campaign and mobilize out-of-country voters, hence bigger parties (with more resources) have a significant advantage over the smaller parties.</p>	<p>their right to affect the future policy making in their country</p>
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#### 4.4. Registration of voters

##### State of Play

Under current legislation, the Voters' List is maintained and updated by the State Electoral Commission and is based on the data from the Register of citizens (Civil Registry) and, since 2019, on the Central Population Register. This means that the registration of in-country voters is passive, i.e. all eligible voters are registered in the list by cross-checking of relevant data sets. The Voters' List contains all citizens of the country that have turned 18 on the day of the elections and that are residents in the country. Information for those citizens that are temporarily residing in a foreign country for the purposes of work or studying that have a valid residency on the territory of North Macedonia, which have not registered to vote in a Diplomatic-Consular Office (DCO) are contained in a separate Voter Lists. Citizens who are temporarily employed or residing abroad during the elections and have registered for out-of-country voting at the DCOs or the consular offices are not included in the Voter Lists used for voting in North Macedonia<sup>30</sup>.

Every citizen eligible to vote can check the accuracy of their data in the Voters List, either online or at the State Election Commission's offices, prior to Election Day, as Voters List is updated prior to each election cycle. If the voter is not in the List and has a valid ID/passport, they can submit a request to be added in the List, either online or at the State Election Commission's offices. Political parties can also point to irregularities in the data.

On Election Day, voters have to present a valid ID on Election Day in order to be able to vote. Fingerprint identification of voters was introduced for the local elections in 2021, where each voter had their identity checked via fingerprint and ID check.

##### Possible reform options

An alternative to the passive voters' registration is the active voters' registration. In practice, this would mean that in order for eligible citizens to be able to vote, they must register themselves prior to elections, within specific deadlines and following specific procedures, pre-determined by relevant authorities. There are different ways to organize the active registration of voters, but given the country already uses a specific system for active registration of voters for out-of-country voting, the same can be applied to in-country elections, or modified as per the possibilities and available

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<sup>30</sup> "Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" N. 40/06, 136/08, 148/08, 155/08, 163/08, 44/11, 51/11, 54/11, 142/12, 31/13, 34/13, 14/14, 30/14, 196/15, 35/16, 97/16, 99/16, 136/16, 142/16, 67/17, 125/17, 35/18, 99/18, 140/18, 208/18, 27/19 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" N. 98/19, 42/20, 74/21 and 215/21

resources (technical, financial, etc.) The arguments in favor and the arguments against the two options are presented in the table below.

OPTION	ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR	ARGUMENTS AGAINST
<p>VOTERS HAVE TO REGISTER THEMSELVES IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO VOTE</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active voter registration ensures that everyone entitled to vote can do so, while preventing ineligible persons from voting (for example deceased or permanently emigrated people) and multiple voting by the same individual.</li> <li>2. The rise of information technology makes it easier to design a well-functioning system for online registration of voters, which is easy to access and less time-consuming. An added value for North Macedonia is the existing National Population Register that can serve as the basis for cross-check of data.</li> <li>3. It limits the possibilities for electoral fraud and buying of votes, which has been found during several elections in the past, in North Macedonia. Therefore, active registration of voters can contribute to more credible elections in the future, and increase confidence in the electoral process and the outcome thereof.</li> <li>4. If active registration is mandatory for a person to be able to exercise their right to vote, it can provide significant, relevant data as to the voting climate in the country, which can then be used for evidence based educational campaigns</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active registration of voters requires citizen initiative, hence this system can leave out many who would otherwise be eligible to vote, especially if there are high levels of voter apathy or low levels of voter education.</li> <li>2. Inconveniently designed system for active registration of voters can put certain groups of people at a disadvantage. For example, If access to registration offices is difficult, it may be time consuming for people with long working hours. If hours of operation are limited, women with small children or those without easy access to transportation (elderly or disabled) may be discouraged from registering. If the system only enables electronic registration, it is a risk for citizens that are either not very technologically savvy, or have no access to IT equipment.</li> <li>3. The complexity of active voter registration means compiling and maintaining accurate lists of virtually all adult citizens in a country and their places of residence, therefore it will require strong administrative capacities (most probably involving a variety of local and national authorities) and financial resources (it is often the most costly part of the elections).</li> <li>4. It will require a lot of time and financial resources for communication and educational campaigns for voters across the country.</li> <li>5. Political parties can exercise pressure on their members to register to vote, or can abuse the</li> </ol>

		procedure and register voters on their behalf.
<p>VOTERS DO NOT HAVE TO REGISTER THEMSELVES TO VOTE, THE VOTERS LIST IS PREPARED BY THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSION (STATUS QUO)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. State-initiated systems for voter registration are more likely to ensure that all eligible voters are registered (if administered well), but it does not guarantee high turnout.</li> <li>2. No additional administrative and financial resources will be spent to educate citizens on the changes in the means of registration for voting.</li> <li>3. Even if people that want to vote but did not manage to register themselves due to various reasons, will still be able to exercise their right to vote.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Data registers from the different institutions are often non-compatible and therefore cross-referencing of data is problematic. In the event of a status quo scenario, there are no guarantees that the Voters' List will be 'cleaned up' to ensure only citizens that are eligible to vote are on the list and that the data is correct.</li> <li>2. Frequent (often early) elections in North Macedonia require updated, accurate data for the citizens, in order to ensure an updated Voters' list, based on data from various institutions. Practice has shown that albeit legal obligations for providing latest, accurate data, governing parties can (ab)use this for their interests, hence there delimiting the guarantees for the accuracy of the Voters List.</li> </ol>