

REGULATION
on the accessibility of the electoral process for persons with disabilities

Chapter I. General provisions

1. This Regulation establishes requirements for the accessibility of premises of polling stations and access ways to the premises of polling stations, the responsibilities of central and local public authorities, electoral competitors, media outlets, civil society, and other subjects involved in the electoral process related to securing electoral rights for persons with disabilities.

2. For the purpose of clarity and fluidity of the text, as well as in order not to load the text with masculine/feminine doublets, the terms naming functions used in this Regulation have the form of generic masculine and bear an inclusive/nonsexist character.

3. Electoral bodies shall organize electoral processes so that persons with disabilities have access to the voting process.

4. Electoral bodies shall apply a universal design of electoral documents and materials.

5. Electoral bodies shall secure the right of persons with disabilities to assisted voting under the conditions of the Electoral Code, so that their right to cast their vote is not limited.

6. The expressions and notions below, used in this Regulation, shall have the following meaning:

accessibility of the electoral process – the ability and level of ease with which all persons, including those with disabilities, can use electoral services, and it is related to the measures taken by all entities involved in the electoral process to adapt spaces, equipment, devices, printing products, information systems, and the like to enable persons to easily handle them, to read without straining their eyes, to perceive, understand, and intuitively navigate the web;

thermal comfort – condition in which the minimum and maximum temperature limits are observed to maintain the thermal balance of the human body;

tactile and/or contrasting marking – guidance system consisting of protuberances of contrasting color against the background on which they are placed, or of reflective or contrasting color marks applied to vertical or horizontal surfaces, which improve perception and enable the blind and the visually impaired to move indoors/outdoors;

7. In order to secure accessibility in the electoral process for persons with disabilities, electoral bodies shall be guided by the following principles:

1) *principle of reasonable adaptation* of polling stations, which involves necessary and appropriate adjustments to enable persons with disabilities to exercise, on an equal basis with others, their right to choose in the electoral process;

2) *principle of express regulation* of the right of persons with disabilities to freely form opinions about electoral competitors (free access to information);

3) *principle of safety and health protection* at the workplace of persons with disabilities in electoral bodies;

4) *principle of equal rights*, which consists in providing special conditions and means for overcoming barriers to enable persons with disabilities to effectively exercise their electoral rights;

5) *principle of guaranteeing free expression of will in elections*, according to which, at the request of a person with disability, he or she shall be provided with assistance equipment and/or help in the voting booth by an accompanying person chosen by him or her, who cannot be one of the members of the precinct electoral bureau, accredited persons, or candidates.

8. The Central Electoral Commission shall promote the non-restriction of persons with disabilities in electoral rights.

9. Access to the premises of electoral bodies, including access to work in electoral bodies, shall be unhindered and non-discriminatory for persons with disabilities.

10. Electoral bodies shall stimulate the recruitment of persons with disabilities in their work and guarantee them health protection and workplace safety.

11. Subjects with the right to nominate members for the establishment of district electoral councils and precinct electoral bureaus shall promote the nomination of persons with disabilities for membership in them.

12. Electoral bodies, together with local public authorities, shall ensure reasonable adaptation of polling stations so that persons with disabilities, elderly people, including groups with reduced mobility, can move without difficulty inside them.

13. The Central Electoral Commission shall monitor the premises of polling stations in terms of their accessibility for persons with disabilities.

14. Electoral competitors and media outlets shall use special technical means of information, accessible for persons with disabilities.

15. The Central Electoral Commission, as far as possible, shall provide persons with disabilities with special equipment and devices (pattern envelope for ballot papers, rulers, lamps, magnifiers, etc.), to facilitate their unassisted exercise of the right to vote.

16. The Commission's official communications (live broadcasts on election day, including for the announcement of results, as well as at other important events) shall be translated, as far as possible, into sign language.

Chapter II. Accessibility requirements for the premises of polling stations and access ways to the premises of polling stations

17. When establishing the location of the polling station, the local public authority shall comply with accessibility requirements for all types of disability (locomotor, hearing, visual, psychosocial, etc.). Accessibility requirements for the premises of polling stations and roads in the immediate vicinity refer to unimpeded and safe access for persons with different types of disability to participate in the voting process.

18. The representatives of local public authorities, together with the chairpersons of electoral bodies, shall assess the accessibility of the buildings hosting polling stations, according to the questionnaire in the annex.

19. Local public authorities, within the limits of their competence, shall provide premises that are accessible or, where appropriate, partially accessible to persons with disabilities, as required by this Regulation and by the Instruction on ensuring the infrastructure of polling stations, approved by the Central Electoral Commission.

20. If the premises of polling stations do not meet requirements of accessibility for persons with disabilities, public administration authorities, together with the societies and public associations of persons with disabilities, shall take measures to ensure the reasonable adaptation of the existing premises to the needs of persons with disabilities.

21. Accessibility requirements for the premises of polling stations shall refer to the following elements in particular:

- 1) access towards and into the building;

- 2) vestibules, turnstiles, interior doors;
- 3) traffic ways inside the building (corridors, hallways, stairs, ramps, elevators);
- 4) restroom facilities;
- 5) the area where the voting process is organized.

22. The ramp at the entrance or inside the premises of a polling station shall be deemed accessible if it cumulatively meets the simple majority of criteria set out in items 17-26 of the questionnaire in the annex.

23. In order to reasonably adapt the premises of a polling station and make them accessible, at the entrance where there are steps and no ramp or slope with a convenient angle of inclination, removable ramps shall be temporarily used.

24. Exterior doors and doors inside the building shall be deemed accessible if they cumulatively meet the simple majority of criteria set out in items 9-12 and 30-31 of the questionnaire in the annex. In order to reasonably adapt the entrance and make it accessible, turnstiles and other rotating barriers shall be removed for the period of activity of the electoral body.

25. Corridors and restroom facilities shall be deemed accessible if they meet cumulatively the simple majority of criteria set out in items 27 and 35-40 of the questionnaire in the annex.

26. For voters, markings in the form of guide arrows shall be applied inside the polling station at eye level (1.50 m – 1.75 m).

27. When arranging polling station premises, members of the electoral bureau shall ensure compliance with the following conditions:

- 1) the free space between pieces of furniture and electoral equipment must be wide enough for persons who move in a wheelchair or use other devices (walking frames, crutches, etc.);
- 2) in front of the areas where the table of the members of the precinct electoral bureau is located, there must remain a space with a diameter of at least 1.4 m, necessary for handling a wheelchair or other support devices;
- 3) the floor must not be slippery or uneven, and tactile and/or contrasting markings that guide persons with visual impairments must be applied on it.

28. The road to the polling station must allow the movement of persons who use wheelchair or other devices (walking frames, crutches, etc.). Road accessibility is determined among other things by the existence or absence of tactile and/or contrasting markings to guide persons with visual impairments.

29. When establishing the premises of polling stations, one shall take into account, among other things, the accessibility of curbs, roads to pedestrian crossings, parking lots, and the distance from public transport stops.

Chapter III. Responsibilities of public administration authorities, electoral competitors, media outlets, and civil society in ensuring electoral rights for persons with disabilities

30. Specialized central public administration authorities, together with local public authorities, shall keep records on the number of persons with disabilities, the degree and type of disability, making sure that this information is updated and presented at the request of the Central Electoral Commission.

31. Electoral competitors shall be responsible for respecting the principle of non-discrimination of persons with disabilities in political advertising and electoral campaigning.

32. Electoral competitors are recommended to inform voters using communication methods accessible to persons with disabilities (e.g. texts written or pronounced in a simple language that is easy to understand), including alternative modes of communication (Braille system, sound variant, sign language, etc.).

33. Persons with disabilities shall be guaranteed unhindered and non-discriminatory right to be nominated as candidates and to participate pro-actively in the electoral process.

34. During the electoral period, media outlets and members of civil society shall ensure the observance of the electoral rights of persons with disabilities, as well as the access of the state to information about statistics on social inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Chapter IV. Special provisions

35. Electoral rules shall be interpreted and implemented in such a way as to prioritize access to electoral rights for persons with disabilities.

36. The Centre for Continuous Electoral Training, in partnership with the public associations of persons with disabilities, shall train the members of electoral bodies on ensuring the accessibility of the electoral process for persons with disabilities.

Model of questionnaire for the assessment of accessibility of polling station premises

Questionnaire for the assessment of accessibility of polling station premises

Locality: _____;
(name of locality) *(municipality, district)*

Polling station address: _____;

no.	Criteria for assessing the polling station premises	Answer	
		YES	NO
<i>Access ways to the polling station premises</i>			
1.	Is the road to the polling station accessible (asphalted, paved, easily practicable)?		
2.	Is the road to the polling station without potholes or bumps?		
3.	Is the curb separating the roadway from the pavement a maximum of 2 cm high?	The height of the curbs is _____ cm.	
4.	Are there tactile or contrasting markings at the junction of the roadway to the pavement?		
5.	Is there accessible parking near the polling station?		
6.	Is there space near the polling station for the arrangement of at least one parking space for persons with disabilities?		
7.	If there is parking, is the portion of the road from the parking lot to the entrance to the building accessible?		
8.	If public transport runs in the area close to the polling station, is the distance from the stop to the entrance of the polling station less than 500 m?		
<i>Polling station premises</i>			
9.	Is the exterior door of the polling station at least 90 cm wide, including double doors? * If there are several doors, the dimensions of each of them shall be indicated.	The width of the door is ____ cm.	
10.	The threshold at the entrance to the polling station is no more than 2.5 cm?		
11.	Is there a minimum 1.20 m x 1.20 m platform or sufficient space to ensure wheelchair maneuver in front of the exterior		

	door of the polling station?		
12.	Does the exterior door of the polling station have actuators that are simple and without the risk of locking (sensors, easy-to-open handles)?		
13.	Is the entrance to the polling station without a threshold?		
		The threshold has a height of ___ cm.	
14.	Does the threshold have tactile or contrasting markings on it?		
15.	Is the entrance to the polling station without steps?		
		Number of steps - _____ Step height - ___ cm Step width - ___ cm Step length - ___ cm	
16.	Do the steps have tactile or contrasting markings on them?		
17.	If there are steps at the entrance to the polling station, is an access ramp installed?		
18.	If the polling station is in the basement or on the 2 nd or higher level of the building, are there access ramps or an elevator to get upstairs?		
Parameters of the access ramp: length of ramp _____ cm; width of ramp _____ cm. The ramp is made of _____ (paving, metal, wood, metal rails)			
19.	Does the access ramp have a slope angle of no more than 8% or 5°?		
		Indicate the slope angle __%	
20.	Is the width of the access ramp 90 cm – 1 m?		
21.	Does the access ramp have horizontal support bars on both sides at a height of not more than 90 cm?		
22.	Is the surface of the access ramp non-slip (does not allow slipping)?		
23.	If the access ramp exceeds 4 m in length, is there a rest area every 4 m?		
24.	Does the ramp have handrails?		
		* If yes, indicate how many there are – one or two. Height of the lower handrails – _____ cm	
25.	If there is a removable access ramp, is it installed correctly so as to maintain stability?		
26.	If there is a removable access ramp, does it have a slope angle of not more than 8% or 5°?		

27.	If there are corridors in the premises of the polling station, do they have tactile or contrasting markings and are at least 1.2 m wide?		
28.	If there are corridors in the premises of the polling station, is the floor surface accessible?		
29.	If there is an interior door, is it at least 90 cm, including double doors? * If there are several doors, the dimensions of each of them shall be indicated.		
		The width of the door is ____ cm	
30.	Are the doors inside the polling station without a threshold? * If there are several thresholds, the dimensions of each of them shall be indicated.		
		Threshold height - ____.	
31.	Does the door threshold have tactile or contrasting markings on it?		
32.	Is the interior of the polling station illuminated enough?		
33.	Can an additional light source be placed/installed in the voting booth intended for persons with disabilities?		
34.	Is thermal comfort maintained at the polling station? In the period of 16 April to 15 October: between 23 and 26°C. In the period of 16 October to 15 April: between 20 and 24°C.		
<i>Restroom facilities</i>			
35.	Is there a restroom facility in the building?		
36.	Is the restroom facility equipped with handrails and markings?		
37.	Is the restroom facility on the ground floor?		
38.	Is the width of the restroom facility door 90 cm?		
39.	Is the restroom facility door without a threshold?		
40.	Does the threshold have tactile or contrasting markings on it? Size of the restroom facility (cm x cm.): ____x____ Stall door, width: ____ cm Stall size (cm x cm): ____x____		

Proposals to make polling stations accessible: _____

Date " ____ " _____ 20__

(last name, first name)

(signature)

Conferring degree of accessibility according to the score obtained

For each affirmative answer, the polling station premises get one point. According to the score given, the polling station premises shall fit into the following degrees of accessibility:

- 40-30 points – the polling station is **accessible**
- 29-22 points – the polling station is **partially accessible**
- 21-0 points – the polling station is **not accessible**.