

Election Observation Report by SILBA for the Parliamentary Election in Hungary on the 6th of April 2014.



FINDINGS FROM THE ELECTION OBSERVATION

On the 6th of April SILBA conducted an Election Observation Mission (EOM) on the parliamentary election in Hungary. The mission was short-term therefore the report of SILBA is based only on the events on election day and the EOM did not evaluate the preparations and the electoral campaign. The EOM consisted of 23 Danish and Hungarian observers divided into 7 teams and observed more than 80 polling stations in 15 districts.

The elections were carried out in a generally calm environment. There were no major irregularities in the areas where SILBA observers monitored the elections. The election lived up to relatively high democratic standards and we assess that the election went on freely.

Despite the overall positive impression, a number of systematic irregularities must be addressed:

- Several polling stations had only almost transparent curtains and the curtains were too small. This meant that some voters did not have the chance to vote secretly.
- Family voting was widespread and seemed accepted by election officials.
- It was the first time that it was possible to campaign on election day. On some polling stations there was uncertainty on how these rules were to be carried out. On several polling stations there was campaigning within 150 meters of the polling station.
- Some of the bigger polling stations were placed in small rooms which resulted in queues and crowded rooms. On station 10 in district 7 the closing procedure was delayed for one hour and 20 minutes due to the queue.
- A few places the voting officials did not allow our observers to move freely around, and even more places our observers were not allowed to take pictures. This being said, the general feeling was that the Hungarian election officials were warm and accommodating in their attitude towards our observers.
- The ballot box for disabled people were not introduced well enough for the election officials. They used it as an extra voting box.
- In general the vote counting was trustworthy, however a number of minor procedural mistakes demonstrate that there remains room for improvement and further training of election officials.

We would like to stress that the election went on well and without big democratic problems.

The report is available for the public on www.silba.dk

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Budapest, 7th of April 2013

SILBA Support Initiative for Liberty and Democracy (est. 1994) is a Danish NGO working towards supporting and promoting liberty and democracy in particularly the former Soviet republics, the Caucasus and South East European states. We focus on cross-organizational/cross-border activities. In addition to Election Observation Missions our activities consists of a wide variety of seminars and summer schools in our partner countries as well as lectures, information and advocacy work in Denmark.