



Sarajevo Declaration on Electoral Access for Persons with Disabilities and Persons belonging to Minorities

*(Conclusions of ACEEEO's 21st Annual Conference in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina,
13-15 September 2012)*

Bearing in mind that the Association of European Election Officials, also known as ACEEEO, is dedicated to promoting professional election administration to safeguard universal suffrage,

Reaffirming that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees all persons the right to freely choose their government and to vote by secret ballot in periodic and genuine elections,

Considering that persons with physical, sensory, intellectual and psychosocial disabilities are guaranteed full access to political and electoral processes in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities,

Emphasizing the recent actions of the European Court of Human Rights and noting the adoption in 2011 by the Venice Commission of the Revised Interpretive Declaration of the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters on the Participation of People with Disabilities in Elections,

Recognizing that the human rights of persons belonging to minorities have been and continue to be strongly affirmed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities adopted in 1992, and documents adopted in the framework of Council of Europe and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, above all Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of 1995 and Copenhagen Document from 1993,

Taking into account that in the 21st century that persons with disabilities, and persons belonging to minorities continue to suffer discrimination and face challenges in realizing their full electoral and political rights,

Now, therefore, the Association of European Election Officials and the participants of the 2012 Sarajevo Conference urge countries to take the following actions:



Article 1.

1. All democratic states must guarantee full electoral and political rights for persons with disabilities in keeping with the universal and regional documents on the rights of the persons with disabilities.
2. Governments and electoral management bodies must work together to ensure that persons with disabilities have full access to the electoral and political process including the right to vote, as well as to seek and serve in public office.
3. To develop fully accessible and inclusive polling stations, materials and information and voter friendly voting systems, electoral management bodies and disabled persons organizations are urged to work together to facilitate the right to vote by secret ballot for citizens with disabilities.

Article 2.

1. The rights of persons belonging to minorities to full electoral and political rights shall be guaranteed in keeping with the universal and regional documents on the rights of persons belonging to minorities.
2. Electoral management bodies are urged to cooperate with minority communities in their countries to promote full electoral and political participation by persons belonging to minorities including the right to vote by secret ballot and to seek and serve in public office.
3. To develop accessible polling stations and voter friendly voting systems, electoral management bodies are urged to work in coordination with minority communities.