

Media and political elections

Media Expert, election observation and electoral assistance missions

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International organisations including, *inter alia*, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Commonwealth, regularly deploy Election Observation Missions (EOMs) in order to observe the whole electoral process as a way of gauging the state of democratic development in a given country at a particular time. At the same time, international support to election processes is provided by a number of organisations – namely the United Nations Development Programmes, the European Union, and the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) - through Election Assistance Missions (EAMs) with the aim of sustaining electoral systems, processes and institutions.

Assistance to electoral processes and election observation are complementary activities. Election assistance may be defined as the technical or material support given to the electoral process. It may imply professional help to establish a legal framework for the elections. It may also take the form of a general input to the national electoral body, such as providing voting material and equipment, or helping in the registration of political parties and the registration of voters. It may also imply support to NGOs and civil society in areas such as voter and civic education or training of domestic observers, as well as support to the media monitoring and training of journalists, while the election observation is the political complement to election assistance. Its main goals are fostering the basis for a credible and inclusive electoral process so to enhance public confidence and participation, deterring frauds, strengthening the respect for human rights, and contributing to conflict resolution. Election observation involves the assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of an electoral process and the presentation of recommendations that will provide an important basis for identifying areas where further assistance after the elections may be required.

Experts from the Osservatorio di Pavia have been involved in election assistance and observation since 1997, mainly as media and campaign experts. During the course, they will use their personal experience to illustrate the developments in both areas of activity, international standards and best practices informing election campaigns and media coverage of elections while providing a comprehensive overview of the lessons learned.

The course will be divided into two parts of 10 hours each. All sections will include specific examples, case studies and workshops. Each module will include a final question and answer session.

Section A – Election Assistance Missions (EAMs):

- International commitments and the principles of international election assistance.
- Structure and tasks of EAMs.
- Setting up an effective EAMs project: from identification to evaluation, institutional strengthening and capacity development.
- The link between election observation and electoral assistance.
- Role of the media expert within an election assistance mission and types of assistance.
- Workshop on EAMs.

Section B – Election Observation Missions (EOMs):

- International commitments and the principles of international election observation.
- Structure and mandate of EOMs.
- The role of the media analyst within an election observation mission.
- Assessing the regulatory framework for the media and election coverage.
- Assessing the media landscape: freedom of the media and freedom to campaign.
- Monitoring media coverage: an overview of the main methodological tools.
- Workshop on EOMs.

Students will be required to prepare a short essay at the end of the course regarding the key topics discussed over the modules.

Other information

The duration of the course is three days (20 hours) and its language is English. It does not require previous technical knowledge on the subject, therefore it is open and suitable for anyone who has an interest in development cooperation in the area of democratic governance and/or electoral administration, election observation, electoral assistance, parliamentary support, justice sector reform and civic education. A good knowledge of English is required for all participants.

The course will be delivered by trainers of the Osservatorio di Pavia. The Osservatorio di Pavia is an institute of research specialised in media analysis at both theoretical and empirical level. The institute is an independent non-profit organisation. Its main objective is the safeguard of social, cultural and political pluralism in the field of mass media through the elaboration of research methodologies and analysis applied to media studies. The Osservatorio di Pavia works in collaboration with the University of Pavia; in partnership, they developed a quantitative/qualitative methodology for the observation and analysis of political communication in the mass media. This methodological effort has led to a long-term co-operation with Rai - the Italian public service broadcasting - for which the Osservatorio di Pavia has been carrying out media monitoring activities since 1994. The Parliamentary Commission on RAI uses for its formal duties data produced by the Osservatorio di Pavia. The institute is also engaged in a wide range of researches on specific areas of mass communication, including gender, cultural diversity, and protection of minors. Within this frame of activity, the institute includes a market and brands research department. In addition to the experience achieved at national level, the Osservatorio di Pavia has gained international credit as a major centre of media analysis. Since 1997, the institute cooperates with a number of international organisations in the context of capacity building and technical assistance activities related to the field of elections.

The trainers of the course will be part of the team of experts of the Osservatorio di Pavia with relevant experience in international elections and media analysis.

The course on Media and political elections will be held at the University of Pavia, within the Political Science Faculty (Corso Strada Nuova, 65 - 27100 Pavia, Italy) and will take place on 31 March, 1 April, and 2 April 2016, from 9:00 am to 17:00.

The course will be activated on request minimum 5 participants.

Cost of the course

There are two different fees applicable for the course:

- Internal students (all the students of the University of Pavia): 200 EUR – VAT included.
- External participants (all other applicants): 400 EUR – VAT included.

Applications

To apply, please fill-in the [online form](#), include a CV, and send it to the Osservatorio di Pavia at: cares@osservatorio.it

Payments shall be made either directly at the Osservatorio di Pavia premises (Via Roma, 10 – 27100 Pavia), Monday to Friday, from 14:30 to 17:00 hours, or through bank transfer:

CARES Scl Banca Popolare Commercio e Industria
ABI: 05048; CAB 11302
Account number: 000000019696; SWIFT: POCIITM1XXX
IBAN: IT02S0504811302000000019696.

Applicants are asked to state clearly the full name of the applicant and the reason for payment (Media and political elections course). They are asked also to send a copy of the bank transfer receipt either via fax (+39-0382-307028) or by email (cares@osservatorio.it) to the Osservatorio di Pavia in order to complete the enrolment procedure.

For further information, please write to cares@osservatorio.it