

Observers: Kyrgyzstan's parliamentary elections efficiently run but stifled by restrictions



Claude Haagen delivers the post-election statement in Bishkek, 1 December 2025

A joint OSCE PA, OSCE/ODIHR, and PACE observation mission concluded that, while technically well-prepared, the 30 November parliamentary elections in Kyrgyzstan were undermined by an overly restrictive environment that limited candidate outreach, voter information, and public engagement, ultimately hindering fully informed and competitive democratic choice.

"These elections were conducted under a fundamentally reformed framework that was amended repeatedly throughout 2025, introducing changes to almost all core components of the process and falling short of a number of international standards," said Claude Haagen, Special Co-ordinator and leader of the short-term observer mission in a statement in Bishkek on Monday. "Such far-reaching reforms, adopted shortly before election day and without addressing almost all previous recommendations, created challenges for transparency, stability, and voters' ability to make fully informed choices."

Election day was assessed generally positively, but vote

counting saw significant irregularities. The campaign was highly restrictive, leading to low voter engagement. Despite constitutional protections, freedoms are increasingly limited; new media laws reduced pluralism, while state media focused only on procedures. The introduction of one reserved seat per district for the underrepresented gender was welcomed, though observers emphasized that additional measures are needed for meaningful representation.

"The introduction of a gender quota in these elections is a welcome and important first step toward improving the position of the underrepresented gender and strengthening women's participation in political life," said Monika Zajkova, Head of the OSCE PA delegation. "Meaningful representation is achieved through sustained support, an enabling environment, and equal access to public life."

Civil society participation was severely curtailed by funding restrictions and new rules classifying election observation by foreign-funded organizations as political activity, requiring them to register as "foreign representatives." Consequently, only two domestic observers were accredited.

The international election observation totalled 359 observers, composed of 72 from the OSCE PA, 269 deployed by ODIHR, led by Tamás Meszerics, and 18 from PACE, led by Georgios Stamatis.

OSCE PA Bureau meets ahead of the Ministerial Council in Vienna



The OSCE PA Bureau meets in Vienna, 3 Dec. 2025

Members of the OSCE PA Bureau met on Wednesday in Vienna, hosted by the Austrian Parliament, to discuss the future of the OSCE and the Assembly's priorities ahead of the 32nd Ministerial Council. In this 50th-anniversary year of the

Helsinki Final Act, members agreed on the need to reinvigorate the organization and make it relevant again.

The Bureau focused in particular on strengthening the Organization's effectiveness amid growing instability in the OSCE area, emphasizing the role of parliamentarians in advancing dialogue and engagement. Members discussed the Assembly's support efforts for Ukraine in the face of Russia's war of aggression and also discussed the situation in Georgia.

Ambassador Miodrag Pančeski, the OSCE PA's Special Representative in Vienna, also briefed the Bureau on developments related to the Ministerial Council taking place on 4-5 December.

OSCE PA launches first 'School Dialogue' in Italy to enhance teen online safety

On 27 November, the OSCE PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism (CCT) launched its first "School Dialogue" at Scuola Secondaria Don Bosco in Pordenone, Italy. This initiative seeks to strengthen education's role in preventing youth radicalization to violent extremism by empowering teenagers with tools for safe digital navigation and channeling their perspectives into actionable policy recommendations.

The dialogue brought together more than 110 students, educators, and local leaders, including Vice-Chair of the OSCE PA CCT Emanuele Loperfido (Italy), Police Commissioner Giuseppe Solimene, Pordenone Mayor Alessandro Basso, Deputy Commissioner Michela Sambuchi, School Principal Francesca Del Puppo, Next Wave CEO Cecilia Polizzi, and OSCE PA Senior Advisor Marco Bonabello.

Participants engaged in interactive group sessions led by teachers, where students shared personal digital experiences and brainstormed strategies to promote protection, critical



The OSCE PA's School Dialogue in Pordenone, Italy, 27 Nov. 2025

thinking, and collaboration among schools, families, and authorities. Discussions centered on online safety, digital respect, the dangers of hate speech, and the responsibilities of institutions in building resilient online communities.

The event yielded concrete outcomes, with students' proposals set to be compiled into recommendations for OSCE PA policy. Looking ahead, similar dialogues are planned in The Netherlands, Montenegro, and other OSCE participating States, aiming to integrate youth insights into broader counter-violent extremism strategies.