



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE Permanent Council No. 1279 Vienna, 3 September 2020

#### **EU Statement on the Parliamentary Elections in Montenegro**

On 30 August 2020, the people of Montenegro voted in parliamentary elections in an orderly manner. Local and international observers, accredited by the State Electoral Commission, reported that these elections were held in a democratic manner and with high voter turnout in spite of COVID-related restrictions.

The OSCE/ODIHR Observer Mission assessed in a preliminary statement that the elections were competitive, however they took place in a highly polarized environment. Contestants were able to convey their messages, but the ruling party had undue advantage through state resources and dominant media coverage. We note that although the elections were run transparently and efficiently, the State Election Commission should be more assertive in its regulatory role.

We call upon Montenegro to continue engaging in electoral reform and improve the process, as the legal framework remained unchanged since the last parliamentary elections, with the exception of the rules on campaign financing.

We look forward to working with a new parliament and the government of Montenegro in the country's steady path towards EU accession as Montenegro is at the forefront of this process. We again encourage Montenegro to continue with its political and economic reform process, as well as with the consolidation of the rule of law.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA align themselves with this statement.

\* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.