



# ANNUAL REPORT 2019

MARCH, 2020







ANNUAL REPORT ON  
THE ACTIVITIES OF  
THE ELECTION  
ADMINISTRATION OF  
GEORGIA AND LEPL  
ELECTORAL SYSTEMS  
DEVELOPMENT,  
REFORMS AND  
TRAINING CENTRE  
2019

MARCH, 2020

**Central Election Commission**

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This document is prepared on the basis of the reports presented by the structural units of the Central Election Commission (CEC) and Electoral Systems Development, Reforms and Training Centre (the Training Centre) – Legal Entity of Public Law.

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## A LETTER OF CHAIRPERSON OF CENTRAL ELECTION COMMISSION

Dear Friends and Partners of Election Administration,

We present a report on the activities of the Election Administration of Georgia and Electoral Systems Development, Reforms and Training Centre implemented in 2019.

In 2019, the Election Administration conducted By-elections of the Parliament of Georgia in one majoritarian election district, Extraordinary Mayoral Elections in five municipalities and Sakrebulo By-Elections in 11 municipalities. It is worth noting, that for the 2019 Extraordinary/By-elections, we expanded the capacity of the online registration program and offered the representatives of international observation and media organizations to implement the registration procedures through online method. At the same time, with the use of electronic electoral technologies, we successfully implemented the next stage of the electronic vote counting pilot project at eight election precincts of two electoral districts.

2019 was a significant year for summarizing the general elections of the previous year and planning the next 2020 election cycle. At the same time, the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan of the Election Administration expired this year. In 2019, with support of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), we developed a new Strategic Plan of the Election Administration for 2020-2023, based on the assessment of the past stages, summarizing the achieved results, as well as expectations of the stakeholders, recommendations of international organizations and new challenges.

It is noteworthy, that the implemented reforms and modern management methods have contributed to the introduction of a high standard quality management system at the Central Election Commission of Georgia (CEC). Compliance with the requirements of the international standard of the management system was confirmed by obtaining the ISO 9001:2015 certificate. I would like to emphasize that the Central Election Commission of Georgia is the first Election Administration among the Eastern Partnership countries to obtain an international quality management standard in the field of election management.

The CEC, within its competence, is constantly developing new initiatives to cooperate with the stakeholders and achieve effective outcomes. In order to have a clear vision on the opinions and suggestions of the representatives of civil

society organizations in relation to various issues, we offered them a new format of cooperation, “Discuss Together.” It is a new discussion platform created to exchange positions and talk about important electoral matters, with the aim of reconciling issues that may be implemented within the competence of the Election Administration to improve processes.

Promoting an inclusive electoral environment has been a major strategic priority for the Election Administration for years. For our work in this area, we received an international award in 2019 for “introducing a tactile ballot guide for blind voters”. We also received the certificate of appreciation for “successful cooperation with people with disabilities and supporting their employment”.



It should also be noted, that to promote a gender-balanced and equal environment, with the support of the Council of Europe (CoE), the CEC conducted a Gender Audit for the first time, which mainly positively assessed the measures taken in this regard. In addition, experts have issued recommendations that will facilitate strengthening the gender equality policy of the Election Administration.

One of the recognitions of our successful activities is that, with the full support of other countries' election administrations in 2019, the EA of Georgia became the President of the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO) and will lead the organization in 2020 for one year term.

In conclusion, I would like to note that, in 2019 we celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the First Universal Democratic Elections of independent Georgia. The degree of democracy in 1919 elections with its universality and level of political culture is the reason for our historical pride. Therefore, our future plans are constant improvement and development through protection of the principles and values of democratic elections.

**TAMAR ZHVANIA**

*Chairperson of the Central Election Commission*



# ELECTION ADMINISTRATION OF GEORGIA

The Election Administration of Georgia is an independent administrative body, which, within its authority, is free of any influence from other state bodies and acts according to the Constitution of Georgia, Organic Law of Georgia – “Election Code of Georgia” and other legislative acts.

## MISSION

To conduct impartial, transparent and professionally administered elections, as set forth by the legislation, and to create an environment where voters and electoral stakeholders can freely exercise their electoral rights.

## VISION

Election Administration provides equally accessible electoral services and integrity of the electoral process; enjoys a high level of trust within the society; continuously acts innovatively and develops initiatives oriented towards the improvement of the electoral environment.

Election Administration continuously works to increase management effectiveness and the professional capacity of the EA.

**Central Election Commission of Georgia and LEPL Electoral Systems Development, Reforms and Training Centre express their gratitude towards**



United States Agency for International Development (USAID)  
for financial support to implement various projects.

International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) for  
cooperation and significant contributions  
to implementing various projects.



International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) for  
cooperation and significant contributions to implementing  
various projects.

Canadian Non-Governmental International Organization  
“the DELIAN Project” for promoting implementation of the next  
stage of electronic vote counting pilot project during  
May 19, 2019 By-elections.



The European Union (EU) and the  
United Nations Development Program (UNDP)  
for their support of the Technical  
Working Group (TWG) activities in the CEC.



International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS)  
for organizational and financial support of the  
9<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Election Management Bodies.



*In addition, the CEC is thankful to all the organizations and their representatives who participated in 2019 in the activities of the target groups created at the CEC and contributed to the improvement of the electoral environment.*

*CEC also expresses its gratitude towards every employee of the Election Administration and the Training Centre for adhering to professional standards and ethical norms of election officials in their work.*

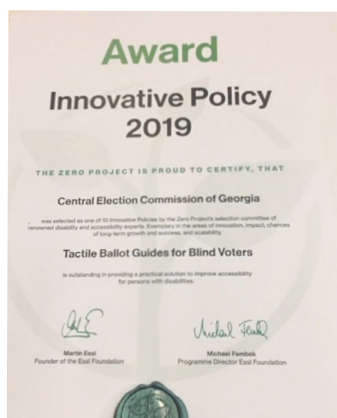
## DEVELOPMENT HISTORY



The reforms implemented over the years and modern management methods contributed to introduction of a quality management system at the CEC. Compliance with the requirements of the international standard of the management system was confirmed by obtaining the ISO 9001:2015 certificate.

The Central Election Commission of Georgia is the first election administration among the Eastern Partnership countries to receive the International Quality Management Standard – ISO 9001: 2015.

In 2019, the CEC became the President of the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO). Georgian Election Administration will lead the ACEEEO for one year term, accordingly, Georgia will host the next 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Association in 2020. The mentioned decision was made at the ACEEEO General Assembly Meeting.



Within the framework of the project (Zero Project) initiated by the Austrian organization – Essl Foundation, the CEC was awarded in the nomination “Innovative Practice 2019” for the successful practice in the Georgian election administration – introduction of a tactile ballot guide for blind voters.



On February 28, 2019, the “Anika” association presented a certificate of appreciation to the CEC for its support and successful cooperation in employment of persons with disabilities.

On May 3, 2019, the Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI) awarded the Training Centre with a special certificate for ensuring full-fledged access to public information in 2018.



In 2019, the CEC developed the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia. Vision, mission, values, as well as strategic pillars, goals and objectives were defined.

In 2019, the structure of the CEC was reorganized. On the basis of the Electoral Processes Management Department and the Voters' List Formation and Informational Technologies Department, the following three departments were established: Voters' List Formation and Electoral Processes Management Department, Department of Relations with Election Commissions and Electoral Information Technology Department. Also, changes were made to the name and function of the Internal Audit Department and it was established as the Internal Audit and Workforce Security Department. Due to the reorganization, the number of departments increased by one and became 10, while the number of divisions remained the same – 13. According to the changes, the number of staff was reduced by three and became 123.

In 2019, for the first time, the CEC, in cooperation with the Council of Europe (CoE), conducted a gender audit based on the methodology developed by the International Labor Organization (ILO). The audit included analysis of international and local legislation and election administration documents, interviews with staff and implementation of seminars.

In 2019, the following five educational projects were implemented with participation of 12 538 individuals:

**Elections and Young Voters** – 2 763 pupils of the XI-XII grades of 145 public schools in 64 municipalities participated in the project, including 457 pupils of the XI-XII grades of public schools in 12 municipalities densely populated by ethnic minorities;

**Election Law** – 635 students from 11 universities participated;

**Informed Young Voters** – 866 students from 12 universities participated;

**Electoral Development School** – 463 young people from 26 municipalities participated in the project;

**Courses for Election Administrator** – 8 356 individuals participated and 7 811 participants received certificates.

In 2019, the CEC offered representatives of the non-governmental sector a new initiative – “Discuss Together”. This is a new discussion platform created to exchange positions and discuss important election issues. Within this framework, five meetings were held at the CEC.



# PREFACE

In 2019, the Election Administration and LEPL Electoral Systems Development, Reforms and Training Centre (Training Centre) carried out their activities in accordance with the Organic Law of Georgia “Election Code of Georgia” and in compliance with the priorities of the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan and 2019 Annual Action Plan of the Election Administration. The priorities include institutional strengthening, civic and voter education, electoral environment, and electoral operations.

In the process of implementation of the activities, the Election Administration was guided by the declared action principles: independence, transparency, professionalism, accountability, and inclusivity.

On May 19, 2019, the Election Administration administered the following elections:

- Extraordinary Mayoral Elections in Marneuli, Zestaponi, Chiatura, Zugdidi and Khulo municipalities;
- Parliamentary By-elections of October 8, 2016 held at №1 majoritarian election district through a majoritarian election system;
- October 21, 2017 By-elections of the Representative Body of Municipality – Sakrebulo held through majoritarian election system at Sagarejo, Akhmeta, Adigeni, Zestaponi, Chiatura, Tkibuli, Tskaltubo and Ozurgeti municipalities.

On October 27, 2019, the Election Administration conducted October 21, 2017 By-elections of Representative Body of Municipality – Sakrebulo through majoritarian election system at Lagodekhi, Adigeni and Martvili municipalities.

According to the results of a public opinion poll<sup>1</sup> carried out by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and published in 2019, the population mainly positively assessed 28 October 2018 Presidential Election of Georgia. The respondents reported that on the E-day polling stations were mostly well-ordered (92%), officials were appropriately prepared (81%), polling stations were not too crowded (83%) and the environment was not oppressive/intimidating (90%). 78% of the respondents expressed positive and moderate attitude towards the CEC, while only 9% expressed negative attitude. With regard to the second round of the elections, 75% expressed positive and moderate attitude, while 15% expressed negative attitude.

The present report covers the activities implemented by the Election Administration of Georgia and the Training Centre from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019.

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1 The survey was carried out for National Democratic Institute (NDI) by CRRC-Georgia on December 6-20, 2018, through 2 205 face-to-face interviews throughout Georgia.

# SHORT DESCRIPTION

## Strategic Pillar 1: Institutional Strengthening

**To ensure effective management,** the Action Plan of the District Election Commissions (DEC) was developed and approved. On the basis of the plan the DECs submitted reports on the implemented activities. The Strategic Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia for 2020-2023 was developed and approved. CEC successfully went through the certification audit of international standard ISO 9001:2015. The mentioned audit confirmed that the quality management system of the CEC of Georgia is in full compliance with the requirements of ISO 9001:2015 international standard. Inventory of 1 625 accounts (cash documents) on the CEC balance was carried out. 12 811 documents in electronic format were added to the electronic archive program.

**To improve human resources management,** in 2016-2018, a survey of the participants in the internship program at the CEC was carried out. The interns evaluated the program as “good” and “very good”. A document of employment statistics analysis for 2016-2018 was elaborated for the certified persons and graduates of the educational programs – “Electoral Development School” and “Courses for Election Administrators “. According to the staff training plan, seven trainings were conducted with participation of 231 employees.

For May 19, 2019 By/Extraordinary Elections, 31 officials and lawyers of 12 District Election Commissions were retrained in legal writing and dispute resolution. Twenty representatives of the Election Administration were trained in media relations and acquired media spokesperson skills. A mentoring program was introduced at the CEC and eight mentors mentored 11 students. Two certification exams of election administration officials were held and 224 participants passed. It should be noted, that in 2019 a new examination center was opened at №59 Kutaisi District Election Commission. Representatives of the Election Administration and the Training Centre took part in 26 international events and 18 observation missions.

**To improve infrastructure,** capacities of the Election Process Management System (EPMS) were expanded; new modules and sub-modules were added to the program. For 2019 By/Extraordinary Elections, the CEC increased capacity of the online registration program. In addition to registration of party-appointed proxies of electoral subjects, party members at all levels of election commissions and registered observers

of domestic observer organizations, the media organizations and international observer organizations, registered at the CEC, could also submit applications to appoint their observers and register them online. An electronic planning and reporting program was created and launched in testing mode. The total value of public procurement in 2019 amounted to 1 528 329 GEL. Purchases made through electronic and consolidated tenders amounted to 771 217 GEL, while the value of contracts concluded through simplified procurement was 757 112 GEL. The number of tenders announced during the reporting period was 46, none of the tenders were appealed during the year, the savings generated as a result of the tenders amounted to 64 732 GEL.

**To strengthen the image,** the Communication Strategy of Election Administration was developed and implemented. In accordance with the strategy various activities were carried out during 2019. 100 years Anniversary of the First Democratic Elections was celebrated. Publication “Elections of Local Self-Government Bodies in the Democratic Republic of Georgia” – dedicated to Local Self-government Elections held in the Democratic Republic of Georgia was prepared and published. The CEC representatives took part in two consultation events and shared their experience with the Election Administration of Armenia.

9<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Election Management Bodies (EMBs) was held in Georgia. The main theme of the meeting was “Electoral Integrity: Cyber Security and the Reliability of Information in Digital Era”. 88 representatives of 19 EMBs, eight international organizations working on election issues, three vendor companies oriented on electoral technologies, the Embassies of the United States and Great Britain in Georgia participated in the conference. During the reporting period, representatives of the Election Administration organized and participated in seven social events.

## Strategic Pillar 2: Civic and Voter Education

**To develop civic and voter education**, five educational projects were implemented, in which a total of 12 538 persons participated. Specially trained DEC members and trainers of the Election Administration carried out the study courses. The educational projects were implemented in all municipalities, including the areas populated by ethnic minorities and mountainous regions. The information campaign “Talk to Voters” was carried out with updated concept. Within the framework of the campaign, a total of 2 331 citizens were interviewed. 39.55% of the respondents evaluated the activities of the Election Administration during 2018 Presidential Elections as “very good” and 37.58% – as “good”.

**To develop electoral culture**, the Training Centre implemented a new informational-educational course oriented on development of electoral capacities of local NGOs. 62 representatives of 34 local NGOs participated in the course. An informational meeting was held on the topic “Project Implementation Phases, Monitoring and Reporting”, which was attended by 43 representatives of 39 local NGOs. “Open Door Day” was held six times for representatives of various educational institutions and domestic non-governmental organizations.

**To promote civil society involvement**, according to the CEC defined priorities, the Training Centre conducted two grant competitions. In total, 86 projects of domestic non-governmental organizations were funded and the budget of funding amounted to 2 325 305,51 GEL. To brief electoral stakeholders on various election-related issues, meetings of the Technical Working Group (TWG) as well as working groups on the issues of ethnic minority and persons with disabilities (PWD), were held at the CEC. A new platform “Discuss Together” was created for discussion with representatives of the non-governmental sector. Within the framework of the platform, five meetings were held on various electoral issues.



### Strategic Pillar 3: Electoral Environment

**To improve legal framework,** a training course “Electoral Disputes” was conducted for 31 members of 12 District Election Commissions<sup>2</sup> (DECs), where May 19, 2019 By/Extraordinary Elections were held.

**To ensure inclusive electoral environment,** a draft amendment was prepared as a temporary measure and submitted to the Parliament of Georgia as a legislative proposal. According to the proposal wheelchair user voters were allowed to select one of the adapted precincts in an election district according to the place of registration on the basis of a preliminary application.

**To promote gender-balanced and equal environment,** for the first time in the Election Administration, a gender audit was conducted, which included an analysis of international and local legislation and the EA documents, interviews with the staff and implementation of seminars. Gender aspects were reflected in the training modules of three educational projects – “Elections and Young Voter”, “Electoral Development School” and one-semester study program “Election Law of Georgia”.

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2 12 District Election Commissions: №1 Mtatsminda, №11 Sagarejo, №18 Akhmeta, №22 Marneuli, №38 Adigeni, №51 Zestaponi, №56 Chiatura, №57 Tkibuli, №58 Tskaltubo, №60 Ozurgeti, №67 Zugdidi and №84 Khulo Commissions.

#### **Strategic Pillar 4: Electoral Operations**

**To organize/conduct May 19, 2019 By/Extraordinary Elections and October 27, 2019 By-elections**, the Election Administration led the election process in full compliance with the legislation and the approved schedule of electoral activities. Within the timeframes set by the law, the CEC submitted reports on conducted elections to the Parliament of Georgia. Besides, the reports were published on the CEC website. As a result of processed data derived from the responsible agencies prescribed by the legislation, the Unified List of Voters was updated 7 times.

**To publicise election results timely**, the CEC provided the public with the preliminary and final results of 2019 By/Extraordinary Elections in a timely manner. On May 19, 2019, voting and vote counting procedures were implemented by electronic devices for the By-elections of Sakrebulo held at local majoritarian election districts of №57.01.03 Tkibuli City in №57 Tkibuli election district and №58.04 Gumbra community in №58 Tskaltubo election district. The CEC Call Center operated at the CEC and citizens used the service on 4 538 occasions.

## STRATEGIC PILLAR 1: INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING







# STRATEGIC PILLAR 1: INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

## GOAL 1.1 ENSURE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

### **Activity 1.1.1 Revision/Improvement of the Rule for Planning, Monitoring and Reporting of the Election Administration Activities**

The Election Administration implements planning and reporting according to the rule for planning, monitoring and reporting of the activities. Since the electronic program for planning and reporting was created and launched in a testing mode at the CEC, it was necessary to make changes to this rule. However, due to the fact that the Election Administration developed a new Strategic Plan for 2020-2023 with a different structure during the reporting period, it became necessary to amend the version of the program that had already been elaborated. Consequently, the date to launch the program was changed. It was planned to launch the program and bring changes to the mentioned rule in 2020.

On November 14, 2019, a training was held on reporting issues. Due to the need, the planned activity was changed and instead of the representatives of the District Election Commissions, the employees of the Department of Relations with Election Commissions were trained. The participants discussed the following issues: the rule for planning, monitoring and reporting of the Election Administration, timeframes, structure, contents and form of submitting reports. The training was attended by 16 employees responsible for relations with the District Election Commissions, who in turn ensure that the training is conducted for the chairpersons of DEC's.

### **Activity 1.1.2 Preparing/Submitting Reports**

During the reporting period, based on the rule for planning, monitoring and reporting of the Election Administration activities, the CEC structural units, the Training Centre and 73 DEC's presented their activity reports to the CEC Chairperson. Based on the submitted reports, the CEC leadership and members received an annual report of 2018 and a consolidated quarterly report of 2019.



On April 12, 2019, the CEC Chairperson Tamar Zhvania presented 2018 Consolidated Report on the Activities of the Election Administration of Georgia and the Training Centre to 63 representatives of domestic NGOs and international organizations, political parties, state agencies and media.

In accordance with the Election Code, the CEC submitted to the Parliament of Georgia:

- Report of October 28, 2018 Election of President of Georgia;
- Report of May 19, 2019 Extraordinary/By-elections;
- Report of October 27, 2019 By-elections.

The CEC prepared and sent as information the following documents to the relevant institutions:

#### **Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee of Parliament of Georgia**

- Report on implementation of the recommendations issued for the CEC in accordance with the Article 16, Decree №3148-RS of the Parliament of Georgia of July 19, 2018 on the “Report of the Public Defender of Georgia on the Situation in Human Rights and Freedoms in Georgia for 2017”;
- Activity report of the Election Administration in relation to recommendations reflected in the “Report of the Public Defender of Georgia on the Situation in Human Rights and Freedoms in Georgia for 2018”.

#### **The Human Rights Secretariat of Administration of Government of Georgia**

- Interim Report 2018 on the activities carried out by the Election Administration in promotion of gender equality and implementation of the Action Plan, in accordance with the Action Plan of the Government of Georgia on the Protection of Human Rights.

#### **Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

- Report on the activities carried out by the Election Administration in 2014-2018, in accordance with the Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

#### **Office of the State Ministry of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality**

- Report on the activities carried out by the Election Administration in Pankisi Gorge in 2017-2018;

- Action Plan of activities planned by the Election Administration for 2019-2020 for the voters residing in Pankisi Gorge;
- Report on the activities carried out by the Election Administration in January-June and 2019 according to State Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration and Action Plan for 2019, also, the State Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration and Action Plan for 2020.

#### **Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia**

- Report on the activities carried out by the Election Administration in relation with the persons with disabilities (PWDs) in 2018;
- Report on the activities implemented in Pankisi Gorge in 2017-2018 in accordance with the State Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration and Action Plan (2017, 2018, 2019) and the report on the activities planned for the voters residing in Pankisi Gorge for 2019-2020;
- Report on the activities carried out by the Election Administration in January-June and in 2019 according to the State Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration and Action Plan for 2019.

#### **Ministry of Finance of Georgia**

- Budget execution reports of the Election Administration for 2018 and 2019;
- Consolidated financial report 2018 of the Election Administration.

#### **Revenue Service**

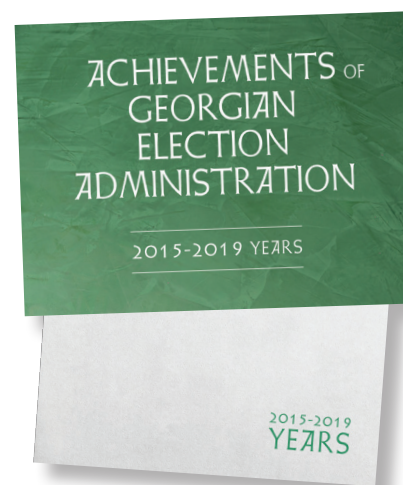
Monthly information on distribution and income tax.

#### **Statistics Office**

- Monthly information on the number of employees and the total sum of their remuneration, according to the regions.

### **Activity 1.1.3 Preparation of a Brochure on the Priorities and Activities of the Election Administration**

To inform the public on the achievements of the Election Administration of Georgia, the CEC prepares an information brochure each year. In 2019, the brochure was dedicated to the description of the results achieved by the Election Administration during the period of the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan. These results were: international recognition of the Election Administration of Georgia, institutional strengthening, civic and voter education, electoral environment and electoral operations.



### **Activity 1.1.4 Development of a Plan for the Activities of the District Election Commissions**

Based on the 2019 Action Plan of the Election Administration, an action plan for the DEC's was elaborated and approved by the order of the CEC Chairperson. The plan included the activities to be implemented by the DEC's both in the election and non-election periods. It is worth noting, that in accordance with the plan, the District Election Commissions submitted reports on the implemented activities to the CEC Chairperson.

### **Activity 1.1.5 Implementation of the Action Plan of the Current Year and Discussion of the Next Year's Draft Plan**

At the working meeting on November 29, 2019, the heads of the CEC Structural Units and the Training Centre presented summary reports on the implemented activities to the CEC leadership and members. On December 10-13, 2019, at the working meeting held in Tsinandali, Kakheti region, the drafts of the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan and the 2020 Action Plan were discussed. A field meeting was held in cooperation with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).

Unlike the 2019 Action Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia, structural and functional changes were made in the design of the 2020 Plan. As a short-term planning document, it is more oriented on implementation of strategic tasks. Outcome indicators of the strategic objectives, planned activities for their achievement, performance indicators for these activities, implementation timeframes, the structural units responsible for performing and reporting of the activities are clearly envisaged in this plan. The 2020 Action Plan for the Election Administration was approved by the CEC Decree №213/2019 of December 26, 2019.

### Activity 1.1.6 Development of the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan of the Election Administration

With participation of an expert of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the leading group for strategic planning of the Election Administration established by the order of the CEC Chairperson and led by the CEC Spokesperson Ana Mikeladze, elaborated the 2020-2023 Draft Strategic Plan, which determined the following five strategic priorities of the EA:

- Electoral culture and education;
- Electoral integrity and security;
- Electoral services and technology;
- Inclusive electoral environment;
- Effective management and institutional strengthening.

At the meeting on October 16, 2019, the CEC Chairperson Tamar Zhvania presented the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan to the representatives of local non-governmental and international organizations before approval. The CEC Chairperson provided the participants with detailed information on the Strategic Plan development process as well as on its priorities, goals and objectives. Prior to approval, the head of the strategic planning group introduced the draft of the new Strategic Plan to the members of the CEC working groups on the issues of ethnic minority and persons with disabilities (PWD).

The 2020-2023 Strategic Plan for the Election Administration of Georgia was approved by the CEC Decree №212/2019 of December 26, 2019.



*Presentation of the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia*

### **Activity 1.1.7 Implementation of Quality Management System**

In accordance with the requirements of the international standard ISO 9001:2015, the Coordination Council for Development and Implementation of Quality Management Systems at the CEC developed a quality management policy, quality management strategy program for 2019 and methodic guidelines.

According to the requirements of the international standard ISO 9001:2015, the Coordination Council for Development and Implementation of Quality Management Systems at the CEC performed all the work for the certification audit. 2019 Audit Plan and the report on management analysis were elaborated. A guidebook was approved. ISO internal audit was carried out with participation of Ltd Management Systems.

The CEC successfully went through the certification audit of the international standard ISO 9001:2015 conducted by the representatives of German certification body TÜV SÜDDEUTCHLAND AG (TÜV SÜD). The results of the mentioned audit confirmed the management system of the CEC was in compliance with the requirements of ISO 9001:2015 international standard and the CEC received the mentioned certificate.

### **Activity 1.1.8 Improvement of the Communication System between the CEC, District Election Commissions and Structural Units**

In order to improve the internal communication at the Election Administration, an electronic internal communication network – <http://hrportal.cec.gov.ge/> portal was created and launched in testing mode. The rule for the use of the portal and information placement was approved by the order of the CEC Chairperson. The mentioned portal will enable the Election Administration employees to get access to the information on planned events, educational programs, meetings, novelties related to public relations and human resource management, business processes and legal acts.

Since the portal was prepared, developed and launched in testing mode in December 2019, it was impossible to assess the effectiveness of information dissemination through the portal. Thus, the activities in this direction were not carried out comprehensively. As for identification of business processes at the DEC's, the implementation of these activities are transferred to and envisaged in the 2020 Action Plan.

### **Activity 1.1.9 Employee Motivation and Satisfaction Research**

On June 17-24, 2019, a research of motivation and satisfaction of employees was conducted at the CEC office. The study involved 66 employees of the CEC office, which is 43% of the whole staff. 56% of the participants assessed the overall work satisfaction. The average satisfaction level was determined with 3.8 points, which means that employees are more satisfied than dissatisfied.

The employees assessed the level of their work motivation. 74% of the staff participating in the research assessed their work motivation with 3.5 points which indicates that they are motivated. The employees named the following work motivators: workplace, relations with colleagues, performed work, material incentives, recognition, promotion/ career advancement, intangible incentives, work achievements/successful projects. Other motivators were also named: salary increases, business trips, participation in trainings and seminars.

### **Activity 1.1.10 Improvement of the Accounting System for Assets/Reserves of the Election Administration**

The Inventory Commission, established on the basis of the CEC Chairperson's order, accomplished inventory of 1 625 accounts (cash documents) on the CEC balance. This process was carried out in accordance with a selective and compulsory inventory plan. The results of the selective inventory were presented to the CEC Chairperson.

Work is underway to perform inventory of the material reserves and main assets on the CEC balance. In particular, the assets in the working rooms of the CEC administrative building were described. According to the mentioned order, the inventory process will be completed in May 2020.

### **Activity 1.1.11 Analysis of Election Expenses**

Following October 28, 2018 Election of President of Georgia and May 19, 2019 By/ Extraordinary Elections, the CEC analyzed expenses, prepared information based on the standard and placed it at the CEC website [www.electioncosts.cec.gov.ge](http://www.electioncosts.cec.gov.ge).

**Activities 1.1.12 and 1.1.14 Internal Audit of the Election Administration and the Organization Subordinate to the CEC State Control. Elaboration of the Appropriate Recommendations and Performance Monitoring**

An internal audit was conducted at eight District Election Commissions and the Training Centre. As a result, the final report was developed. Reports on the audit inspection, with recommendations, were submitted to the CEC leadership. Consideration of the recommendations and performance monitoring are scheduled for 2020. An internal audit plan for 2020 was also developed and submitted to the CEC Chairperson.

**Activity 1.1.13 Analysis of the Incidents Identified at the District Election Commissions and Election Precincts during the 2018 Elections**

To conduct an analysis of the incidents identified at the District Election Commissions and election precincts during the 2018 Elections of President of Georgia, a questionnaire was developed and sent to the DEC's to be filled in. Processing of the information received through the questionnaire from 45 District Election Commissions will be completed in 2020.

**CEC Electronic Archive**

To enhance institutional memory of the Election Administration and operate the unified database of permanent documentation, 12 811 documents were converted into electronic format and integrated into the electronic archive program. Taking into account the documentation added during the reporting period, 86 361 documents of the seven categories can be found in the electronic archive. For information see table (1).

Table 1.

N	NAME OF DOCUMENT	YEARS OF ISSUING DOCUMENT	NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS
1	CEC decree	1995-2019	1 450
2	CEC ordinance	2000-2019	5 875
3	CEC Chairperson’s ordinance	2001-2018	1 896
4	CEC Chairperson’s order	2001-2018	11 389
5	CEC Secretary’s ordinance	2006-2018	8 115
6	Protocol of CEC session	1999-2019	1 379
7	Summary protocol of elections	2017 Elections of Local Self-government Bodies	4 709
		2016 Parliamentary Elections of Georgia	6 821
		2014 Elections of Local Self-government Bodies	7 218
		2014 Mayoral Elections of Tbilisi City	2 519
		2014 Elections of Local Self-government Bodies	2 206
		2013 Presidential Election of Georgia	3 733
		2012 Parliamentary Election of Georgia	7 774
		2010 Elections of Local Self-government Bodies	6 002
		2010 Mayoral Elections of Tbilisi City	829
		2008 Parliamentary Election of Georgia	5 756
		2006 Elections of Local Self-government Bodies	6 188
		2004 Presidential Election of Georgia	2 502
In total		86 361	



## GOAL 1.2 DEVELOP HUMAN RESOURCES

### Activity 1.2.1 Analysis of the CEC Internship Employment

During the reporting period, a survey of individuals participating in the internship program at the CEC in 2016-2018 was conducted. Out of 57 interns, 43 took part in the survey. They assessed the internship program with a five-point scale. Average assessment was 4.65 points, which meant the interns evaluated the program as “very good”. The interns also evaluated usefulness of the program in terms of their professional and career development. The internship program was assessed with 4.42 points in this regard (very good evaluation).

According to the respondents, after the internship, 33 persons gained experience of working in the election field, 23 – in other fields. Six individuals participated in the training programs organized by the Election Administration.

The interns participating in the survey expressed the following desires with regard to improvement of the program in professional and career directions: more involvement in the activities of the structural units, increasing the internship period, offering a special course for interns, assessing the knowledge and experience gained by an intern.

It was identified, that out of 57 interns seven (12%) received a certificate of an election administration official.

In the context of a three-year period, the internship program at the CEC was evaluated positively. Though, despite this assessment, the recommendations were elaborated to suit the professional interests of interns, that will improve the internship program at the CEC.

### Activity 1.2.2 Analyses of Employment of Certified Persons and Educational Programs (Electoral Development School, Courses for Election Administrators)

The CEC and the Training Centre developed a database of certified persons and alumni of educational programs “Electoral Development School”, “Courses for Election Administrators” held in 2016-2018. On the basis of the database, the Training Centre elaborated a statistical analysis document for their employment at the Election Administration. The document included the information on 2016-2018 statistics of employment at the Election Administration for the certified persons and participants of educational programs according to the place of employment and the subject selecting/appointing, gender statistics of employment, employment cases according to the

programs, place of employment and the subject selecting/appointing. The Director of the Training Centre presented the results of the analysis to the CEC members and the heads of the structural units.

11153

Employment Statistics  
of Certified Persons and  
Graduates of Educational  
Programs at Election  
Administration in 2016-2018

27

**CENTRAL ELECTION COMMISSION**  
Persons employed in the position provided from the staff list – 16  
Contract employees – 11

609

**DISTRICT ELECTION COMMISSION**  
Elected/appointed commission members – 317  
Contract employees – 292

10 517

**PRECINCT ELECTION COMMISSION**  
Elected/appointed commission members



- New mechanisms were introduced to inform and communicate with voters. The information campaign "Talk to the Voters" supported to strengthen communication between the election administration and voters in Georgia and abroad.

### Activity 1.2.3 A Plan to Retrain Employees

The 2019 plan of development/trainings for the Election Administration staff, approved by the order of the CEC Chairperson, is based on the training needs analysis. According to the plan, the Election Administration employees participated in seven training courses:

- 4 participants – eHRMS training course;
- 5 participants – training course in state procurement;
- 9 participants – "Training Course in State Procurement", organized by the Training Center of the State Procurement Agency;
- 20 participants – computer skills improvement (Excel, Outlook);
- 149 participants – training in Election Process Management System (EPMS) – armasi.cec.gov.ge program, new modules and novelties;
- 24 participants – "Developing Trainer's Professional Skills";
- 20 participants – development of media spokesperson's skills.

Apart from the training envisaged by the plan, the CEC staff participated in the following trainings and learning programs:

- Training in "Effective Public Management", organized by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation and the Taxpayers' Union (employees of the Finance Department and Legal Department);
- Five-day international specialized course "Social Media, Election Campaign and Informed Voter" organized by the Mexican National Electoral Institute (INE) (employee of the Public Relations Department);

- Training course “Introduction to Electoral Technology and Cyber Hygiene; System Operation and Online Security Improvement” organized by the Regional Europe Office of the International Electoral Systems Foundation (IFES) and in cooperation with the TalTech-Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia (employee of the Legal Department);
- Training “Electronic Platform for Monitoring and Reporting of the Action Plan Implementation” (AP Monitoring) initiated by the Human Rights Secretariat of the Administration of the Government of Georgia and supported by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (employee of the Coordination, Planning and Reporting Department).

#### **Activity 1.2.4 Renewing and Retraining of the Trainers Team of the Election Administration**

In order to identify and develop potential trainers for implementation of electoral training programs, the Training Centre elaborated a special program “Developing Trainer’s Professional Skills”. Participants were selected from 63 municipalities. Based on the review of 233 applications, testing and interviewing results, 88 participants were selected for the training project. On April 1-10, 2019, a four-day training program was delivered, which envisaged the following:

- Specialized training bloc dedicated to matters involving the development of a trainer’s skills: training planning and structure; training program design; methodology for delivering a training; mechanisms for training summarization/evaluation; the technique for designing and using a trainer’s manual/guide; presentation delivery;
- Profiled training bloc dedicated to discussing/studying the following key issues: international standards for democratic elections and election guidelines, the role of electoral stakeholders, practical aspects of precinct election commissions work, procedural mechanisms to support the exercising of electoral rights by voters in the course of voting, the etiquette of communicating to voters with disabilities and the norms of conduct.

The trainings were delivered in 2 streams to 4 groups. 87 participants were retrained, including 70 (81%) women and 17 (19%) men. The participants who passed the training program successfully were enrolled in the reserve of trainers of the Election Administration.

### **Activity 1.2.5 Orientation Training Course “Review of Elections and General Course of Procedures” for Newly Appointed/Selected Staff at the Election Administration**

According to the adopted system at the CEC, two orientation courses - “Review of Elections and General Training Course of Procedures” were conducted for new employees and interns selected in the contest. In the framework of the project, the participants familiarized with the following issues: history of elections in Georgia, elective state bodies and electoral system, guidelines of democratic elections, the Election Administration structure and general review of its activities, priorities of the Election Administration activities through an election cycle, electoral stakeholders and their role. Thirty-one new employees and interns passed the mentioned training course. They also familiarized with the working standards, procedures, code of ethics and internal regulation of the EA.

Newly appointed employees were trained in the theoretical and practical issues concerning a user and the use of the electronic case management system (eDocument). They received a status of a user of the electronic case management system and were provided with a manual and instructions for the use of the automated case management system.

### **Activity 1.2.6. Training Course in Legal Writing for the Relevant Members of DEC**

On April 20, 2019, the CEC and the Training Centre held two meetings for the chairs, secretaries and lawyers of the District Election Commissions where the By/Extraordinary Elections were held. The meetings aimed at retraining the DEC members in the issues of legal writing and administrative proceedings of electoral disputes. All these responded to the recommendations of international and local observer organizations.

The participants of the meetings discussed the following issues: legal writing, decision-making related to application/appeal and the importance of substantiating the relevant legal acts.

The effectiveness of the trainings was reflected in the quality of the administrative proceedings conducted by the chairs of the commission/commissions and in the legal acts issued by them.

Thirty-one people participated in the meetings, including 15 (48%) women and 16 (52%) men.

**Activity 1.2.7 Training in Media Relations for the Relevant Members of DEC**

On December 4-5, 2019, in order to enhance interview delivery and effective communication, a seminar “Development of Media Spokesperson’s Skills” was held at the CEC. Due to the need, the planned activity was changed and instead of the representatives of the District Election Commissions, the seminar was delivered to the CEC staff. Natia Gotsadze, director of the PR Academy, conducted the training. During two days, the participants discussed important aspects of media relations and the art of public speech.

Twenty employees of the Election Administration took part in the seminar, including 3 (15%) women and 17 (85%) men.

**Activity 1.2.8 Trainings for the District Election Commissions on Case Management and Election Registrations**

To conduct training on the process of case management and election registrations for the DEC members, manual documents (instructions) and presentation materials were developed. The training was delivered to the chairs and secretaries of the District Election Commissions where By/Extraordinary Elections of May 19, 2019 were held.

Twenty-four individuals took part in the training, including 13 (54%) women and 11 (46%) men.

**Activity 1.2.9 Establishment of Institute of Mentoring**

To share professional experience, Institute of Mentoring was introduced at the CEC. The rule of mentoring was developed and approved. Based on the order of the CEC Chairperson, eight employees of the CEC staff were granted mentor status. They mentored 11 apprentices. On October 13, 2019, the mentors submitted interim reports on the activities performed to the CEC Chairperson. Besides, until January 20, 2020, the mentors had to submit the final reports for the evaluation of the 2019 Mentoring Program.

### Activity 1.2.10 Certification of the Election Administration Officials

On March 11-April 16 and October 21-December 5, 2019, to select qualified human resources for the Election Administration, the Training Centre conducted two certification exams<sup>3</sup> of the Election Administration officials. It is noteworthy, that in 2019 a new examination center was established at N59 Kutaisi District Election Commission for the purpose to improve the service. Thus, citizens had an opportunity to choose the examination center of Tbilisi, as well as, that of Kutaisi as a place to take the exam.

For the certification exams, the Training Centre prepared/approved the tests, which with answer keys were released at the websites of the CEC and the Training Centre for preliminary public introduction. For the exams, registration of applicants was carried out electronically <http://registration.cec.gov.ge/>.

The exams were conducted through the electronic testing method. Each person taking the test had to answer 30 questions that were generated randomly by the system. The test questions were prepared from the Constitution of Georgia (six questions), the Election Code of Georgia (17 questions), general skills – mathematics (five questions) and general skills – verbal (two questions). In case of receiving the passing 24 points, an applicant was handed over the certificate of election official on the spot.

The number of applicants for the certification exams totaled to 2 521. Of these, 828 (33%) came at the exam and 224 (29%) participants passed the exam successfully, including 173 (71%) women and 71 (29%) men.

### 1.2.11 Participation in Conferences, Working Meetings and Observation Missions

In order to facilitate cooperation with the Election Management Bodies of various countries and provide consultation services as well as share experience in election process management, members of the Central Election Commission (CEC), employees of its office, the District Election Commissions members and the Training Centre representatives participated in 26 international events, including three symposiums, seven conferences, six working meetings, nine training courses and one Committee meeting. For information, see the table (2).

3 The Training Centre conducts the certification exam according to subparagraph "e" of paragraph 3 of article 17 of Organic Law of Georgia "Election Code of Georgia".

**Table 2.**

DATE	THEME	ORGANIZING ORGANIZATION
January 27-30	17 <sup>th</sup> International Electoral Affairs Symposium and International Electoral Award	International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS) and Election Administration of Ghana/Ghana
February 20-22	Conference – “Independent Life and Political Involvement”, improving the inclusive environment for persons with disabilities	Essl Foundation/UN Office/ Austria
February 27	International conference “Voting rights of internally displaced persons at local level in Ukraine: Strengthening integration and grassroots democracy”	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe/Ukraine
May 14	Second annual forum of the Freedom House: “Media, Elections, and Participatory Democracy”	Freedom House/Moldova
May 14	OSCE Human Dimension Committee session; main topic – elections	OSCE/Austria
May 27-31	International specialized course “Social Media, Electoral Campaigns and Informed Voter”	Mexican National Electoral Institute (INE)/Mexico
June 5-7	Workshop – “Electoral Participation and Education for Democracy	Romanian Permanent Election Commission and Francophone Election Administration Network (RECEF)/ Romania
June 25-26	Training course – “Introduction to Electoral Technology and Cyber Hygiene (system operation and online security improvement)”	Europe Regional Office of International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and TalTech-Tallinn University of Technology/Estonia
June 27-28	16 <sup>th</sup> European EMB Conference – “Electoral Dispute Resolution”	Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, the State Commission for the Elections and Control of Political Parties Funding of the Slovak Republic and the Venice Commission/Slovak Republic

July 3-6	18 <sup>th</sup> International Symposium “Voter rights, minority rights, best practice of cooperation between electoral stakeholders, combatting misinformation, and existing challenges in terms of social media”	International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS) and Elections Commission of Maldives/Republic of Maldives
July 1-5	Study visit – “Information Technology and Election Management”	Council of Europe/Norway
July 3-12	International program – “Fostering Transparency in Political Finance”	Association of World Election Management Bodies (A-WEB)/ Republic of Korea
August 20 – September 2	International study program – “Gender equality and women empowerment: sharing good practices and experiences in Thailand”	Government of Kingdom of Thailand’s International Cooperation Agency (TICA)/ Kingdom of Thailand
September 2-4	4 <sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Association of World Election Management Bodies (A-WEB) and international conference – “Informational Technology in Elections and Initiatives and Challenges of Social Media”	Association of World Election Management Bodies (A-WEB) and Election Administration of India/India
September 10	International conference – “30 Years of Swiss Participation in International Election Observation Missions”	Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)/ Switzerland
September 16-17	OSCE’s Human Dimension Implementation Annual Meeting (HDIM) of OSCE participating states	OSCE/Poland
September 15-17	International Symposium – “Effective Use of Information Technologies in Elections – Transparency and Auditability”	Supreme Electoral Council of Turkey/Turkey
September 23-24	Working meeting of election experts	UN/Armenia
September 24-26	28 <sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Association of European Election Officials – “Judicial Protection of Electoral Rights and the Transparency of Elections”	Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO)/ Slovenia



October 22	Working meeting of election experts	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)/Sweden
October 1	International Seminar of the OSCE/ODIHR – “Election Observation and Electoral Dispute Resolution”	OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR)/Austria
October 21	Study Course “Introduction of Election Technologies and Cyber Hygiene”	International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)/ the Czech Republic
November 5-6	Peace Week – “Supporting political initiatives to prevent electoral violence”	Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), Kofi Annan Foundation/ Switzerland
November 18-19	Working meeting – “Disinformation a challenge to elections”	International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)/ the Czech Republic
December 2-6	Study course for long-term observers	OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR)/Republic of Serbia
December 9-13	Informational training course “Election Technologies and Cyber Hygiene”	International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)/ Estonia



*Participation of the Election Administration Employees in international visits*

Employees of the Election Administration and the Training Centre participated as observers in 18 international observation missions:

- Parliamentary elections and referendum in Moldova;
- Parliamentary elections in Estonia;
- Presidential election in Ukraine (including, the mission under the auspices of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR));
- Parliamentary elections in the Republic of Maldives;
- General elections in India;
- Presidential election and referendum in Lithuania;
- European Parliament elections in Hungary;
- European Parliament elections in Poland;
- Presidential elections in Kazakhstan;
- Early parliamentary elections in Ukraine (the mission under the auspices of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR));
- Early parliamentary elections in Ukraine;
- Parliamentary elections in Poland;
- General local and early parliamentary elections in Moldova;
- Parliamentary elections in Belarus;
- Parliamentary elections in Uzbekistan;
- Municipal elections in Azerbaijan;
- Presidential elections in Romania.

After participation in the observation missions, the participants presented reports describing the received experience, established business contacts and future recommendations. Thirty-two employees participated in the observation missions, including 15 (47%) women and 17 (53%) men.

In 44 visits organized abroad by the CEC and the Training Centre, a total of 49 representatives took part, including 24 (49%) women and 25 (51%) men.



## GOAL 1.3 IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE

### Activity 1.3.1 Development, Inclusion and Use of Modern Electronic Programs in the Electoral Processes

During 2019, the CEC created and/or updated several modern electronic programs, including the following:

- Test version of the electronic planning and reporting program;
- Automated human resource management system “www.ehrms.ge”;
- Android version of the software for population survey questionnaire developed within the framework of the information campaign “Talk to Voters”;
- Online registration program;
- Tracking system for the CEC staff attendance.

### Activity 1.3.2 Increasing Capacity of Online Registration Program

In 2019, the CEC increased the capacity of the online registration program. For May 19, 2019 By/Extraordinary Elections, apart from political unions and local observer organizations, the media organizations registered at the CEC could submit applications on accreditation of media representatives and register them through the online registration program. Also, for October 27, 2019 By-elections, the international observer organizations, registered at the CEC, could submit applications to appoint their observers and register them with the use of the mentioned program.

Instructions/rule for using the online registration program was elaborated. The CEC conducted trainings on the use of the new modules of the program for representatives of the press and mass information sources and one international observer organization registered at the CEC.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the online registration system, a survey of local observer organizations involved in the online registration system participating in 2019 By/Extraordinary Elections was conducted. The electronic questionnaire was filled in by 10 respondents. Based on the results analysis, interim assessments were prepared and the processes carried out to date were analyzed. Accordingly, the survey results will be used to monitor program performance and increase its capacities.

### **Activity 1.3.3 Upgrading Online Election Process Management System “EPMS”**

During the reporting period, the CEC increased the capacities of the online Election Process Management System “EPMS”. For May 19, 2019 By/Extraordinary Elections, the accreditation page ([medre.cec.gov.ge](http://medre.cec.gov.ge)) for media representatives was added to the online registration program. This caused the necessity to supplement new modules: “Media Representatives” and sub-modules “Registration of Media Organizations”, “Media Organizations”, “Management of Parameters”, “Management of Files”, “Media Representatives”.

Simultaneous holding of three types of elections on May 19, 2019 led to the need to change various modules of the election management system. The following modules and sub-modules were amended: “Management of Electoral Subjects”, “Registration of Majoritarian Candidates”, “Mayoral Candidates”, “Certificates”, “Human Resources”. In the submodule “Searching a Person” of the module “Human Resources”, an opportunity was added to search for the members of electoral districts and precincts appointed through the online registration. In the party registration module, editing function was added to “Receiver/Applicant of User/Password”.

Between February 25 and March 20, 149 members of the District Election Commissions were instructed on the use of the program.

For October 27, 2019 By-elections, the relevant new page ([inre.cec.gov.ge](http://inre.cec.gov.ge)) was developed in the Election Process Management System “EPMS”. A module for registration of international observer organizations was developed, that led to the need to add new modules: “International Observers” and sub-modules: “International Organization Registration”, “International Organizations”, “Management of Parameters”, “Management of Files”, “International Observers”.

### **Activity 1.3.4 Development of Electronic Planning and Reporting Program**

Work is underway to create the electronic planning and reporting program that will improve planning, monitoring and reporting processes at the CEC. Through the program, it will be possible to develop annual action plans electronically, as well as to prepare/submit quarterly/annual reports on the activities envisaged by the Action Plan.

In 2019, the working version of the program was tested and after eliminating the identified deficiencies, the program was submitted to the CEC leadership. Instructions for its usage were elaborated. The Strategic and Action Plans were uploaded in the program. However, due to developing the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia with different structure, the necessity emerged to amend the program. Full implementation of the program is scheduled for 2020.

#### **Activity 1.3.5 Study Possibilities/Introduce Electronic Management of the CEC Sessions**

In order to improve administration of the CEC sessions, manage, optimize and simplify the registration of the Central Election Commission members and the decision-making process of the Commission, work is underway at the CEC to develop an electronic registration program for the CEC sessions. In accordance with all the legal requirements<sup>4</sup> and based on the study of the international practice, a technical assignment was developed and a draft concept of the program was created as a result of consultations with software service companies. Within the framework of the infrastructure activities planned for 2020, the program will be implemented simultaneously with reconstruction process of the CEC session hall.

#### **Activity 1.3.6 Update System against Cyber Attack and its Licenses**

To minimize cyber-attacks, upgrade security systems, improve protective systems against non-sanctioned attacks, and prevent, the CEC held working meetings on information security policy and developed an action plan. To eliminate the weaknesses identified during scanning of the software systems, information on the electronic case management program was provided to the employees of the Analytical Service of the Ministry of Finance. Consequently, relevant work was jointly planned and performed. Deficiencies of the CEC official website were also identified and reported to the company responsible for the development and operation of the website.

In accordance with the procurement of goods/services envisaged in 2019 Annual Plan for State Procurement, licenses were purchased/extended for the system.

4 Relevant legal requirements of the Organic Law of Georgia "Election Code of Georgia" and the Decree №54/2015 issued by the Central of Election Commission of Georgia on November 25, 2015 "On the Approval of the Regulations of the Central Election Commission of Georgia"



### **Activity 1.3.7 Cooperation with Relevant State Agencies to Allocate Electoral Precincts**

On May 29, 2019, at the initiative of the CEC, a working meeting was held with the representatives of the following state agencies (responsible in accordance with the legislation): the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia, Tbilisi City Hall and the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia. At the meeting, possible legislative changes were discussed, concerning the possibility (temporary measure) for a wheelchair user voter to select one of the adapted precincts in an election district on the basis of a preliminary application, according to the place of registration. The recommendations expressed by the agencies participating were reflected in the draft legislative amendment as far as possible. It was also decided that the information on the adapted buildings would be requested after the amendment to the Organic Law of Georgia "Election Code of Georgia".

### **State Procurements**

In 2019, the total value of state procurement amounted to 1 528 329 GEL, including the contracts of 310 646 GEL concluded from the Reserve Fund for 2019 By/ Extraordinary Elections. Purchases of 771 217 GEL were made through electronic tenders and consolidated tenders, while the value of contracts concluded through simplified procurement was 757 112 GEL.

During the year, a total of 306 contracts were signed, including simplified procurement – 165, consolidated tender – 25, electronic tender – 36, tenders from the Reserve Fund – 80.

During the reporting period, the number of tenders announced was 46. Of these, 36 tenders were successful and contracts were concluded. In three cases none of the bidders met the requirements and the tenders ended with a negative result. Bargaining was not reached in seven cases. During 2019, none of the tenders was appealed.

The savings generated by the tenders amounted to 64 732 GEL.

In 2019, State Procurement Plan for 2020 was developed.

## GOAL 1.4 STRENGTHEN IMAGE

### Activity 1.4.1 Carry out Image/Advertisement Campaign

During the reporting period, the Communication Strategy of Election Administration was developed and implemented. Within the framework of the mentioned plan, campaigns were implemented for the CEC project “Electoral Development School” and for the information campaign “Talk to Voters”. In order to inform the public on both activities, relevant advertising/informational video clips were aired on the central TV stations. In addition, the mentioned video clips were posted on the CEC official website and social networks.

To raise public awareness on the history of the Georgian elections, an information campaign was launched on Facebook. Special posters were prepared and gradually posted on the social network. The posters included excerpts and interesting historical photos with relevant descriptions from the new publication of the Election Administration – “Local Self-Government Elections in the Democratic Republic of Georgia.” The CEC ensured that the media, stakeholders and the general public were informed on these activities through press releases, the Internet, social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube), as well as through direct contact with the media and all the interested parties.

During 2019, five videos and one audio clip were prepared by the CEC and aired on TV/radio stations.

### Activity 1.4.2 Organize an Event Dedicated to 100 Years Anniversary of First Democratic Elections

To celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First Universal Democratic Elections, the CEC representatives held an information campaign for the students of Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University and Georgian Technical University and detailed them on the first democratic elections. The CEC representatives handed the young people brochures – “First Universal Democratic Elections in Independent Georgia” and samples of ballot papers of that time, which were symbolically placed in the ballot box.

The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first universal democratic elections were celebrated at the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Election Management Bodies (EMBs). The CEC Chairperson briefed the participants on the election experience of independent Georgia and delivered a presentation – “100 Years Anniversary of the First Universal Democratic Elections in Independent Georgia”.

In addition, the conference participants received information on the mentioned elections in a specially arranged space in the hall.

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February 14 is a crucial day in the history of Georgian elections. This year the date especially reminds every citizen of the most important historical event related to the first universal democratic elections in our country.

On February 14, 15, and 16, 1919, the Georgian people participated in the general elections of the Constituent Assembly, that can be considered as the first important step towards the formation of a democratic society in Georgia. This major historical event occurred a century ago on this day. Exactly 100 years ago, our country managed to lay the foundation for the electoral culture, development and strengthening of which is still of great importance nowadays. We have frequently emphasized the quality of democracy in the 1919 elections and it is important to note that their fundamental principles were considered as an innovation for the world of that time. Electoral universality, active and passive suffrage of women and ethnic minorities are the main features that make these elections unique and highly progressive for the time.

Today, I would like to take back every citizen of Georgia for a few minutes at a turning point in the history, which laid the foundation for the democratic development of our society. I would like to remind them of those democratic values that are significant for a state and for which our country started fighting 100 years ago.

**TAMAR ZHVANIA, CEC CHAIRPERSON**

*Event dedicated to 100 years anniversary of the First Democratic Elections and organized for the students of Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University and Georgian Technical University.*



### Activity 1.4.3 Prepare Publication about Elections of Eroba Self-Governments and Khmosanis (Members) of City Councils of the Democratic Republic of Georgia

At the initiative of the CEC, in cooperation with Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), a publication – “Local Self-government Elections in the Democratic Republic of Georgia” was prepared and published in connection with the Local Self-government Elections in the Democratic Republic of Georgia. The publication covers 1918-1921 period.

On May 30, 2019, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University hosted a presentation attended by students, lecturers, the former CEC Chairpersons and representatives of political parties, local NGOs, international organizations, state agencies and media.

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From the materials presented in the publication, readers get a chance to familiarize with the reality of Georgia back then and evaluate how great the readiness and aspiration of Georgia was for democratic development and how important the democratic principles were laid in the first election processes. The self-government elections, which were held in 20 “mazras” and 26 towns across the country, carried unique electoral principles. Inclusiveness of elections, active and passive suffrage of women, as well as active involvement of ethnic minorities are those basic principles of democratic elections that emerged with the birth of elections in Georgia and are highly regarded in today’s electoral processes. This culture has been practiced in Georgia for a century.

**TAMAR ZHVANIA, CEC CHAIRPERSON**

*May 30, 2019, presentation of the publication “Local Self-Government Elections in the Democratic Republic of Georgia”*

#### **Activity 1.4.4 Offer Consultation Mechanisms and Share Good Practice with Other Election Administrations**

In 2019, CEC representatives participated in two consultation events and shared experience with the Armenian Election Administration.

On September 23-24, 2019, with the support of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and at the invitation of the Armenian Election Administration, the CEC delegation, led by Tamar Zhvania – the CEC Chairperson, participated in the consultation meeting in Yerevan, Armenia. The EA representatives shared their experience with Armenian colleagues on the process of strategic planning, electoral dispute resolution and institutional development. In the framework of the visit, the CEC delegation met with the Chairman of the CEC of Armenia and the commission members, Ms. Mihaela Stojkoska, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Electoral Support Project representatives and Jerome Leyraud, Country Director, IFES Armenia. Besides, the CEC officials shared experiences to the Parliament Members of Armenia and the representatives of parliamentary subcommittee on electoral reform. On December 16-17, 2019, within the framework of the UN Development Program “Election Support Project in Armenia”, representatives of the CEC and the Training Centre held consultation meetings with the delegation of the Armenian Election Administration. During the meetings, the parties talked about the process of discussing electoral disputes, organization of elections and new technologies in election process. To share experiences on the implementation of electoral training programs, the Director of the Training Centre introduced them to the strategic vision of the institution in relation with the importance of study component, as well as learning programs, proven methodology and training materials.

#### **Activity 1.4.5 Annual Meeting of Election Management Bodies**

On March 26-27, 2019, the CEC organized the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Election Management Bodies on “Electoral Integrity: Cyber Security and the Reliability of Information in Digital Era”. The meeting was organized in cooperation with the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS) and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and with financial support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Representatives of 19 EMBs, 10 international organizations working on election issues, three vendor companies oriented on electoral technologies, the embassies of the United States and Great Britain in Georgia, totaling to 88 participants were present at the meeting.

At the meeting, the CEC Chairperson delivered a presentation on the challenges the Georgian Election Administration faces – “Cyber Attack and Disinformation.”

The participants discussed the following issues: technological threats in the election process and their solutions, ensuring collection, processing and security of voter data, importance of cooperation between agencies for cyber security.



*Annual Meeting of Election Management Bodies*

### Activity 1.4.7 Organize Social Campaigns

During the reporting period, seven social campaigns were carried out:

- On March 22, 2019, the CEC representatives participated in the activities dedicated to the World Down Syndrome Day;
- On April 5, 2019, about 20 employees of the CEC office and a member of a District Election Commission donated their blood;
- On April 22, 2019, the CEC employees attended a charity exhibition and selling of handmade items, which was organized by the social enterprise “STUDIO 47” at the CEC administrative building. Within the framework of the exhibition and selling organized by the CEC and “Centre for Democratic Development and Initiatives”, the CEC staff purchased handmade items to help socially vulnerable people and PWDs;
- On April 26, 2019, the CEC Chairperson Tamar Zhvania and the Election Administration officials congratulated socially vulnerable families on the Easter Holiday. Representatives of the CEC structural units and District Election Commissions visited nine families in Tbilisi and regions and presented them with food products;
- On October 8, 2019, a blood donation campaign was held at the CEC in cooperation with LTD Natalia Kvantaliani Central Blood Bank. About 20 employees of the CEC and members District Election Commissions donated their blood;
- On September 29, 2019, the Election Administration staff joined the international social project “Tbilisi Marathon”, in which about 2,500 people participate each year;
- On December 27, 2019, the CEC Chairperson, representatives of the CEC and District Election Commissions (Kharagauli, Kobuleti, Kutaisi, Telavi, Rustavi, Samtredia, Senaki, Poti, Akhaltsikhe) participated in the social campaign prior New Year. By the decision of the CEC leadership, 19 families which were socially vulnerable or had many children were provided with food products.





*Election Administration staff participate in social campaigns*



## STRATEGIC PILLAR 2: CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION







# STRATEGIC PILLAR 2: CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION

## GOAL 2.1 IMPLEMENT CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

### Activity 2.1.1 Carry out Information Campaign

In 2019, the CEC defined the main priority areas for the information campaign: informing voters and other electoral stakeholders and communication with media. The information campaign aimed at informing the Georgian citizens both in the country and abroad on the activities of the Election Administration as well as services offered to the voters during the election period and on the Election Day.

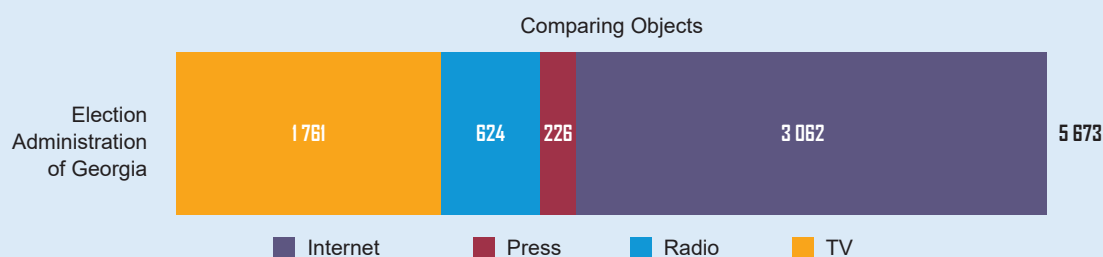
The main directions of the information campaign were to inform the public on May 19, 2019 By/Extraordinary Elections and October 27, 2019 By-elections. In relation with the mentioned elections, two videos and one audio clip were prepared, aired on the central and regional TV/radio stations. The clips were posted on the CEC official website, social networks and publicized by regional newspapers.

During 2019, in total, 22 briefings were held at the CEC, 231 press releases and 10 newsletters were published on the ongoing processes of the Election Administration (EA) on its website and social network. Information was prepared and posted on the website regarding the results of 51 CEC's sessions.

On a daily basis, the CEC monitored important political news in the media in relation with the Central Election Commission and the whole country. Media monitoring was conducted twice a day on average and sent to the CEC members and staff. The monitoring covered about 70 Georgian news agencies, all leading print media publications and television news programs, as well as the programs produced on political issues. The CEC, for the most part, was mentioned in the Internet and on TV and less frequently on the radio and in press. See the information on diagram (1).



Diagram 1.



### Activity 2.1.2 Informational-Learning Program for XI-XII Grade Students of Public Schools

On May 6-17, 2019, the CEC and the Training Centre, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia, conducted awareness raising training course “Elections and Young Voter” for XI-XII grade students of public schools. The study course was implemented by 111 trainers prepared by the CEC Training Centre.

The program aimed to raise awareness on elections, as well as civic responsibilities among young people. In accordance with the program concept, as a part of practical learning, the students of public schools familiarized with important issues such as elective state bodies and the history of elections in Georgia, the principles of conducting elections, gender equality (historical background, legal framework), the role of the Election Administration in elections and electoral stakeholders. At the end of the course, the students conducted the mock election, as part of which the winning slogan was identified. The participants received certificates.

The project was implemented in 145 public schools of 64 municipalities, including 24 public schools in 12 municipalities<sup>5</sup> populated by ethnic minorities. 2 763 students of XI-XII grades completed the learning course, including 457 students living in the regions populated by ethnic minorities.



Participants of the Training Course “Elections and Young Voter”



5 Sagarejo, Lagodekhi, Telavi, Gardabani, Marneuli, Bolnisi, Tetrtskaro, Dmanisi, Tsalka, Akhaltsikhe, Akhalkalaki, Ninotsminda.

### **Activity 2.1.3 Informational Project “Youth Debate Club” for Public School Students in the Regions Densely Populated with Ethnic Minorities**

The Training Centre renewed the concept of the training course “Elections and Young Voter”, in the framework of which debates were held for the first time this year with participation of XI-XII grade students of public schools. The topic of the debates was: “Should women be as involved in sports as men?”.

The project involved 457 students from 24 public schools located in 12 municipalities populated with ethnic minorities, including 164 students of XI-XII grades of Armenian and Azerbaijani sectors from nine public schools.

### **Activity 2.1.4 Education Semester Course “Electoral Law” at Higher Education Institutions**

During February 4 – June 30 and September 16 – December 31, 2019, within the framework of the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoU) signed with partner universities, author’s program of the Training Centre – “Electoral Law” was conducted. The study course was delivered at 11 higher education institutions<sup>6</sup>.

Within the scope of the project, Bachelor’s degree students from the faculties of Law, Political and Social Sciences, and Journalism familiarized with domestic regulations and discussed international electoral practices. To promote development of practical skills and enhancement of professional knowledge, at the end of the accredited educational course, the students of the Faculty of Law held mock trials.

In 2019, 635 students completed the course, of these, 392 (62%) were women and 243 (38.%) were men. The study course was conducted in the region populated by ethnic minorities (Akhaltsikhe University) with participation of 42 students.

6 11 higher education institutions: Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli State University, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, Gori State Teaching University, Samtskhe-Javakheti State University, Ilia State University, Grigol Robakidze State University, Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University, Caucasus International University, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Davit Aghmashenebeli University of Georgia, East European University.

### **Activity 2.1.5 Information Course for Young Voter (I and II Course)**

During May 2-31 and November 26-December 6, 2019, within the framework of Memorandum with Higher Education Institutions, the Training Centre representatives conducted information course “Informed Young Voter” in two stages. The project aimed to promote the topic of elections among young people, boost their civic awareness and inform them on the ways to exercise their voting rights fully. This in turn supports the active involvement of young voters in the elections.

Within the framework of two-hour seminars, the students of higher education institutions familiarized with the concept of elections and the role of voter in electoral processes. At the end of the meeting, the participants received certificates.

The information course was conducted at 12 universities<sup>7</sup> in the capital as well as in regions and was attended by 866 students, including 639 (74%) women and 227 (26%) men.

### **Activity 2.1.6 Educational Project “Electoral Development School”**

With support of the Council of Europe (CoE) and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the CEC and the Training Centre implemented another stage of the project “Electoral Development School”. In 2019, the project was implemented in Tbilisi and 25 municipalities<sup>8</sup>, including the areas densely populated by ethnic minorities and internally displaced people, as well as, border regions/ municipalities.

The study course for youth were conducted by 54 trainers retrained by the Training Centre, who are members of District Election Commissions at the same time.

<sup>7</sup> Seven universities in Tbilisi: Sulxan-Saba Orbeliani University, Caucasus International University, Guram Tavartkiladze Teaching University, Tbilisi Open University, Davit Aghmashenebeli University of Georgia, Ilia State University, Grigol Robakidze State University; five regional universities: Gori State Teaching University, Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli State University, Samtskhe-Javakheti State University, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University.

<sup>8</sup> Gurjaani, Signaghi, Telavi, Akhmeta, Rustavi, Gardabani, Marneuli, Dusheti, Akhlagori (Tserovani, IDP settlement), Gori, Khashuri, Borjomi, Akhaltsikhe, Ambrolauri, Sachkhere, Zestaponi, Samtredia, Khoni, Kutaisi, Ozurgeti, Senaki, Zugdidi, Poti, Batumi and Kobuleti.

Within the framework of the ten-day training course, the young people aged 18-24 familiarized with the following issues: election systems, the Election Administration activities, 1919 Elections of the Constituent Assembly, democratic electoral principles, elective bodies in Georgia, electoral stakeholders, gender equality, transparency and accessibility of elections.

Final report on the project implementation was submitted to the CEC Chairperson, and the financial report was submitted to the Council of Europe (CoE).

As usual, the Election Administration initiative to carry out the project caused great interest among the youth and 625 applicants registered for the training course. 589 young people enrolled in “Electoral Development Schools”. Of these, 463 received a certificate of successful completion of the full training course, including 296 (64%) women and 167 (36%) men. From three regions populated by ethnic minorities (Kvemo Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kakheti) and Akhmeta municipality, 62 young people passed the course and received certificates, including 36 (58%) women and 26 (42%) men.



*Educational Project “Electoral Development School”*

”

I think the topics you covered together and discussed at the Electoral Development School are important for the future development of our country. One of the goals of this school is to make young people, our graduates, active citizens oriented to development of this country. One of the major goals of this school is at least to raise your motivation to participate in the elections. Elections are an important step to start future political development of the country and I am confident you will be part of this very important process.

**TAMAR ZHVANIA, CEC CHAIRPERSON**

*July 26, 2019, meeting with the graduates of the “Electoral Development School”*

### **Activity 2.1.7 Educational Project “Courses for Election Administrator”: Profile Program for Potential Members of Precinct Election Commissions**

From July 1 to December 19, 2019, the CEC and the Training Centre conducted educational project “Courses for Election Administrator for Potential Members of Precinct Election Commissions”. The project aimed to raise civic awareness on electoral issues as well as to identify and prepare potential qualified human resources for the Election Administration. As part of three-day training course elaborated by the Training Centre, in the context of practical learning, the participants studied the procedures to be implemented on E-day and issues within the competence of a precinct election commission.

“Election Administrator’s Courses” were conducted by DEC members and trainers of the Election Administration retrained by the Training Centre. The study material of the project was translated into Armenian and Azerbaijani languages. The study program also included a training module on involvement of persons with disabilities in election processes.

The training of trainers was conducted in Tbilisi. 153 trainers were retrained, including 96 (63%) women and 57 (37%) men.



First stage of the educational project was implemented in 64 municipalities from September 25 to October 25, 2019, and the second stage – in eight municipalities<sup>9</sup> from November 25 through December 19, 2019.

Number of the contestants amounted to 11 987, including 9 445 (79%) women and 2 542 (21%) men. 8 356 people participated in the study course, of these, 7 751 participants received certificates, including 6 273 (81%) women and 1 478 (19%) men. As for the regions populated by ethnic minorities, the project was implemented in 12 municipalities and involved 1 437 individuals, including 873 (60.75%) women and 564 (39.25%) men.

### **Profile Program for Potential Lawyers of District Election Commissions**

On June 20-25, 2019, to develop qualified and skilled human resources within the Election Administration, the Training Centre conducted the study project “Courses for Election Administrators – Profile Program for Potential DEC Lawyers”. For the mentioned project, the Training Centre renewed the concept of the information training course, training program and materials. Participants were selected from 64 municipalities based on the preconditions and test results.

The information training course developed by the Training Centre was dedicated to the rule of administrative proceedings related to voting day applications/complaints. In the context of practical learning, the participants got acquainted with the following important topics: causes of electoral disputes, identifying procedural risks at polling stations on a voting day, administrative proceedings, organizing and holding DEC session, preparing DEC/DEC Chair decision on electoral disputes, counterclaim form and details.

The study course was conducted for three groups. Sixty participants were trained, including 38 (63%) women and 22 (37%) men.



*“Courses for Election Administrators” for potential lawyers*

9 Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Rustavi, Marneuli, Sagarejo, Gori, Zugdidi, Batumi.

### **Activity 2.1.8 Project “Talk to Voters”**

In 2019, the information campaign “Talk to Voters” was implemented under a renewed concept and aimed to enhance communication between the Election Administration and voters, inform citizens and increase electoral awareness.

Representatives of District Election Commissions (DEC) along with volunteers conducted meetings at the centers of municipalities, villages, at the places of public gathering and informed the citizens on elections and their voting rights, services and electoral/educational programs offered by the Election Administration. Within the framework of the campaign, public meetings with electoral stakeholders were held at 64 District Election Commissions. During the meetings, DEC chairpersons delivered the presentations about the elections conducted by the Election Administration in 2018 and electoral/educational programs planned for 2019.

During the meetings, representatives of the Election Administration conducted the survey of citizens, which was carried out with different methodology in 2019. Within the scope of the campaign, 2 331 voters were interviewed who evaluated the activities of the EA. 39.55% of the respondents evaluated the Election Administration performance during the last presidential election as “very good” and 37.58% – as “good”.

To inform the citizens on elections and the rights of voter, the representatives of District Election Commissions (DEC) along with volunteers held meetings in the municipalities where May 19, 2019 By/Extraordinary Elections were conducted. In April and May, meetings were carried out at the places of public gathering.

Within the campaign “Find yourself, Find your Election Precinct”, at the places of public gathering, the voters were offered the service to verify their and their family members’ data in the Unified List of Voters by using the innovative technologies.

Within the frames of public campaign “Know about your Electoral Rights”, members of the Precinct Election Commissions (PEC) distributed the information flyers.

The young people attaining electoral age – 18 years for the May 19 Elections, received the letter of the CEC Chairperson according to their registration addresses.

As part of the information campaign, for the first time this year, the Election Administration made a contribution to grant projects at the initiative of the Training Centre. This envisaged participation of DEC representatives in the information

meetings organized within the framework of grant projects and providing the project beneficiary citizens with information on elections. According to the Action Plan developed by the Training Centre in communication with local NGOs and District Election Commissions, 47 information meetings were held from May 2 to June 7, with participation of representatives of 32 District Election Commissions<sup>10</sup>. The Election Administration officials briefed the participants on the following issues: activities and authorities of District Election Commissions, inclusive electoral environment, technological innovations in election processes, services offered by the EA to voters, including the electoral/educational programs planned for 2019.

In addition, on May 19, 2019, during Sakrebulo By-elections at eight electoral precincts in Tkibuli and Tskaltubo, the District Election Commissions organized meetings with voters in relation to the electronic vote counting pilot project, where the rules of using the device were explained in detail to the participants. The members of the precinct election commissions and the CEC representatives were ready to help, if necessary, and to provide additional instruction to the voters. The CEC also ensured preparation of footage on the procedures and uploaded it on the CEC website and social networks. Apart from that, on the E-Day, the footage was publicly shown at those electoral precincts (near the polling station), where the pilot project was implemented.

Information on the campaign was periodically disseminated through regional media. A video was also prepared and aired on central TV stations and uploaded on the

CEC website and social networks.

Upon completion of the campaign, based on the information received from 73 district election commissions, a report “Talk to Voters” was elaborated and posted on the CEC website.



*Information campaign “Talk to Voters”*

<sup>10</sup> №1 Mtatsminda, №6 Samgori, №7 Chugureti, №9 Nadzaladevi, №12 Gurjaani, №14 Dedoplistskaro, №18 Akhmeta, №21 Gardabani, №22 Marneuli, №26 Tetritskaro, №27 Mtskheta, №28 Dusheti, №32 Gori, №35 Khashuri, №40 Akhalkalaki, №41 Ninotsminda, №43 Oni, №45 Tsageri, №47 Mestia, №50 Sachkhere, №51 Zestaponi, №56 Chiatura, №57 Tkibuli, №58 Tskaltubo, №59 Kutaisi, №60 Ozurgeti, №62 Chokhatauri, №67 Zugdidi, №70 Poti, №79 Batumi, №81 Kobuleti and №84 Khulo District Election Commissions.



## GOAL 2.2. INCREASE LEVEL OF ELECTORAL CULTURE

### **Activity 2.2.1 Conduct Learning Programs for Stakeholders**

On July 4-12, 2019, the Training Centre implemented a new information training course focused on the development of election capacities for local non-governmental organizations. Representatives of local NGOs, registered at the CEC as observers for the elections during 2016-2018, participated in the mentioned project.

The participants of the two-day information training course got acquainted with international practices of election assessment and discussed the following issues: the role of observer organizations in the electoral processes, electoral ethics and code of conduct of observer organizations, international standards and principles of election evaluation, election cycle and observation priorities, the role of observer organizations to ensure safe electoral environment, electoral disputes and their causes, international standards of electoral dispute resolution.

Three training sessions were held. 62 representatives of 34 local NGOs were trained, including 30 (48%) women and 32 (52%) men.

### **Activity 2.2.2 Institutional Strengthening of Electoral Capacities of Local NGOs**

On September 24-25, 2019, in order to enhance the capacities of local NGOs with regard to effective implementation of civic and electoral education projects, the Training Centre held an information meeting - "Project Implementation Phases, Monitoring and Reporting". On June 25, 2019, the representatives of local non-governmental organizations, funded by the Training Centre within the framework of grant competition, discussed the following issues: project implementation phases, chain of project outcomes, risk management, project monitoring system and reporting.

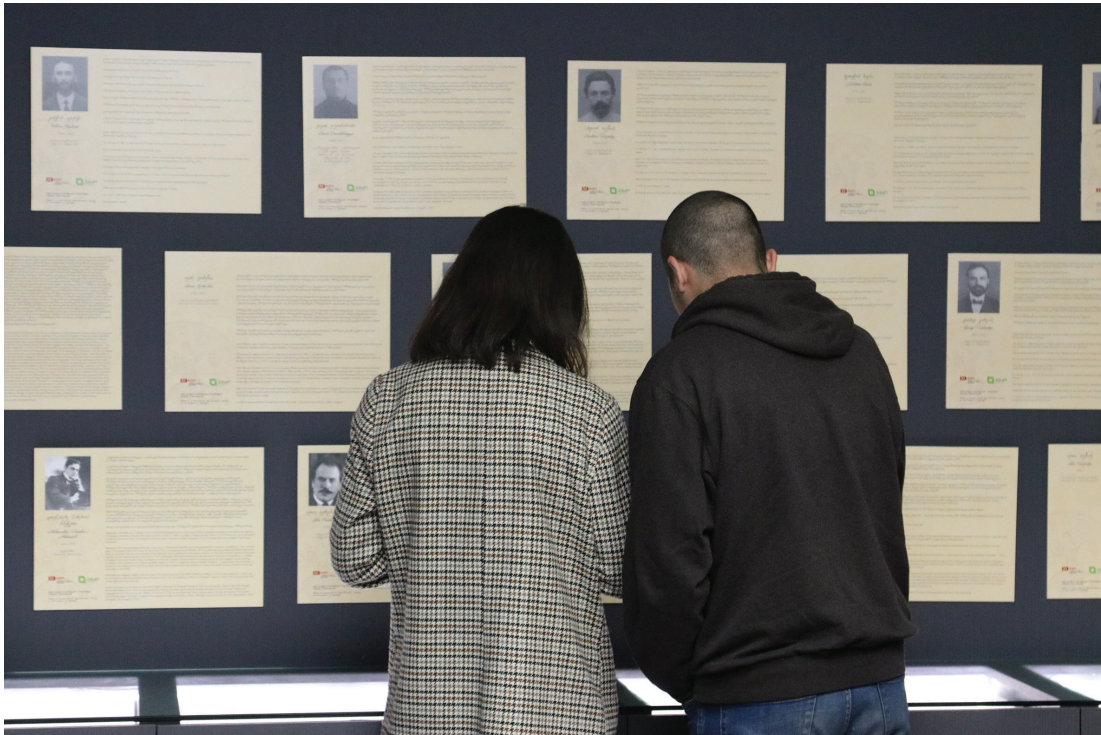
The meeting was attended by 43 representatives of 39 local NGOs, including 21 (49%) women and 22 (51%) men.

## Open Door Day

In order to raise awareness of young voters on electoral issues and promote elections, the CEC held six Open Door Days in 2019, namely:

- February 7, 2019 – on the occasion of the International Election Day, for the beneficiary students of the author's program of the Training Centre introduced at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University and Ilia State University. Twenty-one students participated, including 15 (71%) women and 6 (29%) men;
- April 10, 2019 – for students of Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, University of Georgia, Guram Tavartkiladze University and Georgian Technical University. Twelve students participated, including 8 (67%) women and 4 (33%) men;
- April 24, 2019 – for the students of Tbilisi Public School №64. Thirteen students participated, of these, 5 (38%) were female and 8 (62%) were male;
- May 9, 2019 – organized by the Independent Children and Students Union of Georgia for students of different higher education institutions;
- June 7, 2019 – for the youth participating in the project “Informed Youth for Inclusive Elections in Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda Municipalities” implemented by the organization “Multiethnic Resource-Centre of Civil Education Development”. Thirty-five young people participated, including 16 (46%) women and 19 (54%) men;
- November 22, 2019 – for students of Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. Eighteen students participated, of these, 13 (72%) were female and 5 (28%) were male.

Within the scope of the mentioned meetings, the young people met with the CEC leadership, who talked about the importance of elections and engagement of citizens in the electoral processes. Mock elections were held for the participants. In addition, they visited historical photo exhibition at the CEC and election library and familiarized with historical documents and existing materials.



*Open Door Days at the CEC*

## GOAL 2.3 PROMOTE CIVIL SOCIETY INVOLVEMENT

### Activity 2.3.1 Organize Grant Competitions

In accordance with the priority directions defined by the CEC, the Training Centre announced two grant competitions on February 18 and June 25, 2019. Based on the decisions of the Grant Competition Commission, 86 projects of local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were funded with a total funding of 2,325,305.51 GEL by the Training Centre.

63 grant applications were submitted for the **grant competition announced on February 18, 2019**. Based on the decision of the Grant Competition Commission<sup>11</sup>, the Training Centre funded 47 projects of local NGOs with total funding of 1,170,712.31 GEL, which, according to the funding defined by the CEC, were distributed in two priority directions as follows:

*First Direction:* informing voters on Parliamentary By-elections, By-elections of Representative Body of Municipality – Sakrebulo and Extraordinary Elections of Mayors of Municipalities to be held in May 2019. Twenty-nine grant projects were submitted through this direction, of these, 23 were funded. The budget of funding amounted to 452,948.26 GEL.

*Second Direction:* support the process of raising electoral awareness and civic culture among young voters. Thirty-four grant projects were submitted through this direction, of these, 24 were funded. The budget of funding amounted to 717,764.05 GEL.

In coordination with the winning local NGOs, the Training Centre and DEC representatives as an in-kind contribution, held information meetings for beneficiaries of the projects, including citizens representing ethnic minorities. The participants of the meetings received information on the activities of the Election Administration and services offered to voters, including the planned electoral/educational programs.

<sup>11</sup> Grants Competition Commission is composed of representatives with relevant experience from academia, international organizations, international non-governmental organizations and treasury/budgetary facilities.

Based on the decision of the Grant Competition Commission in relation with **the grant competition announced on June 25, 2019**, the Training Centre funded the projects in one direction defined by the CEC.

*Competition Topic:* voter education for development of electoral and civic culture. 55 grant applications were submitted on this topic. Based on the decision of the Grant Competition Commission, the Training Centre funded 39 local NGOs. The budget of funding amounted to 1,154,593.2 GEL.

In coordination with the grants competition winner NGOs, the Election Administration ensured contribution, within the scope of which DEC representatives conducted trainings for beneficiaries of the grant projects. This aimed at raising their electoral awareness on the following issues: guiding principles for democratic electoral process, voter engagement in different stages of electoral process and mechanisms to exercise the rights to voting, functions of the Election Administration and electoral stakeholders and their role to ensure the protection of voter's personal data, accessible communication channels between the EA and citizens. On September 16-19, 2019, the representatives of the Training Centre conducted the relevant instruction for the members of district election commissions.

### **Ensuring Budgetary Financing of Political Parties**

To support political party development and create a healthy competitive political system, pursuant to the Organic Law of Georgia on "Political Union of Citizens", the CEC and the Training Centre ensured funding of political parties. Among the others, this included funding of the Training Centre for implementation of trainings, conferences, business trips, regional projects, civic and electoral education projects for voters. For information, please, see table (3).

**Table 3.**

N	NAME OF POLITICAL UNION OF CITIZENS	FUNDED BY CEC	FUNDED BY TRAINING CENTRE
1	Georgian Dream-Democratic Georgia	2 081 040	336 676
2	Free Democrats	512 196	168 340
3	Labour Party of Georgia	472 812	168 340
4	United National Movement	991 728	168 340
5	Christian-Conservative Party of Georgia	378 852	112 224
6	National-Democratic Party	378 852	112 224
7	European Georgia	1 036 128	168 340
8	Movement for Free Georgia	507 176	168 340
9	Democratic Movement – United Georgia	241 620	84 168
10	Free Georgia	87 024	28 056
11	Christian-Democratic Movement	241 620	84 168
12	Alliance of Patriots of Georgia	1 270 992	336 676
13	Union of Georgian Traditionalists	87 024	28 056
14	Tavisufleba – Zviad Gamsakhurdias Gza	87 024	28 056
15	Political Movement of Armed Veterans and Patriots of Georgia	87 024	28 056
16	New Christian-Democrats	87 024	28 056
17	Movement State for People	195 512	84 168
18	Civic Platform – New Georgia	195 512	84 168
19	Industry will Save Georgia	600 000	168 340
<b>In Total</b>		<b>9 539 160</b>	<b>2 384 792</b>



## Activity 2.3.2 Meetings with CEC Working Groups

### Technical Working Group (TWG)

Three technical working group (TWG) meetings were held for informing electoral stakeholders at the CEC. In the context of the meetings, the TWG members discussed the activities carried out by the Election Administration, as well as the election projects implemented by other electoral stakeholders and ongoing electoral issues. Representatives of domestic and international organizations working on electoral issues and diplomatic corps accredited in Georgia participated in the meetings.

The meetings were attended by 40 participants, including 26 (65%) women and 14 (35%) men.



### Working Group on Ethnic Minority Issues

During the reporting period, the CEC held two meetings of the working group on ethnic minority issues on the following topics:

- May 3, 2019 – on the activities to be carried out to facilitate participation of ethnic minority voters in May 19, 2019 Mayoral By-elections in Marneuli municipality. The meeting was attended by 22 individuals, including 13 representatives of local non-governmental/international organizations, one representative of the state agency and eight – from the Election Administration.
- November 14, 2019 – on the introduction of the draft Strategic Plan 2020-2023 of the Election Administration of Georgia and the activities to be envisaged in the Action Plan 2020 of the Election Administration with regard to ethnic minorities voters. The meeting was attended by 23 individuals, including 12 representatives of local non-governmental/international organizations, two representatives of state agencies and nine – from the Election Administration.



### **Working Group on Issues Related to Persons with Disabilities**

During the reporting period, the CEC held two meetings of the working group on ethnic minority issues on the following topics:

- March 20, 2019 – discussion on possible legislative amendment prepared by the CEC with regard to the

opportunity of a wheelchair user person to select an adapted precinct in an election district. The meeting was attended by 25 individuals, including 12 representatives of local non-governmental/international organizations, two representatives of state agencies and eleven – from the Election Administration.

- November 12, 2019 – on the introduction of the draft Strategic Plan 2020-2023 of the Election Administration of Georgia and the activities to be envisaged in the Action Plan 2020 of the Election Administration with regard to persons with disabilities. The meeting was attended by 26 individuals, including 12 representatives of local non-governmental/international organizations, three representatives of state agencies and eleven – from the EA.

### **Standing Council for Gender Equality**

During the reporting period, one meeting of the Standing Council for Gender Equality was held, where the members of the Council discussed ways to implement the recommendations presented in the report on gender audit conducted at the CEC.

### **New Initiative of the CEC – “Discuss Together”**

In 2019, the CEC proposed an initiative “Discuss Together” to the representatives of civil society organizations (CSO), through which the parties could discuss and exchange positions on significant electoral issues. Within the framework of the common discussion platform, the officials of the Election Administration and civil society organizations discussed the issues that fall under the competence of the EA.

Representatives of non-governmental organizations, who were registered for the 2018 Presidential Election as observers and who also had joined the principles defined by the “2018 Code of Conduct of Election Administration and Local Observer Organizations” attended the meeting. Representatives of international and donor organizations working in the electoral field also participated in the working meeting.

During 2019, five meetings were held in this format, where the recommendations made by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODHIR) were discussed: composition of the Election Administration, discussion of electoral disputes led by the EA, secret ballot and use of administrative resources.

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Meetings held within the framework of the initiative were very important. The purpose of these meetings was, on the one hand, to make clear vision for the CEC on what civil society organizations (CSO) think about various problematic issues mentioned in the reports of the international observation missions. We mostly followed the recommendations of the OSCE/ODHIR. On the other hand, we, as the Election Administration, wanted to see what we could do within our competence.

**TAMAR ZHVANIA, CEC CHAIRPERSON**

*December 18, 2019, meeting in the format of the CEC initiative  
“Discuss Together”*



*Meeting with representatives of local non-governmental organizations within the scope of the CEC initiative  
“Discuss Together”*

## Meetings Held at the CEC

### Meeting with Representatives of Non-Governmental Sector

On January 23, 2019, with the initiative of local non-governmental organizations “Vocational Education and Qualified Personnel Training Employees and Students Trade Union of Georgia”, “Green Earth” and “Unanimity for Public Rights”, the CEC Chairperson Tamar Zhvania held a meeting with the representatives of these organizations. The meeting participants discussed the 2018 Presidential Election in Georgia.

### Meeting with the Representatives of Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland

Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Spokesperson of the CEC of Georgia met with representatives of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland. The meeting participants assessed the efficiency of signing the Principles of Ethics by the candidates participating in the 2018 presidential election. With the support of the Government of Switzerland, the CEC facilitated the process of the mentioned agreement.

### Presentation on Results of the Survey of National Democratic Institute (NDI) at CEC

On February 4, 2019, Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and members of the CEC held a meeting with Laura Thornton, a Resident Director of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) in Georgia. The meeting aimed to present results of the public opinion poll<sup>12</sup> in relation with 2018 Election of President of Georgia.

### Meeting with Representatives of the Council of Europe (CoE)

On March 11, 2019, Tamar Zhvania, Chairperson of the CEC of Georgia and Ana Mikeladze, the CEC Spokesperson met with the representatives of the Council of Europe (CoE) – Gennadiy Kosyak, Deputy Head of Electoral Assistance Division and Maia Jorjikia, Electoral Assistance Project Officer. The CEC Chairperson provided the CoE representatives with the information on those election districts where Elections of Sakrebulo, Parliamentary By-elections and Extraordinary Mayoral Elections were planned to be conducted.

### Meeting with Representatives of OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission

On March 21, 2019, Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of CEC met with representatives of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

12 At the order of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and with financial support of Great Britain (UK Aid), the Caucasus Research Resources Center (CRR) of Georgia conducted a survey on December 6-20, 2018, through 2 205 people face-to-face interviews with a nationwide representative sample.

(OSCE/ODIHR) Election Observation Mission. The meeting was held with Geert-Hinrich Ahrens, Head of OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission and Olex Lychkovakh, election expert. The participants discussed the recommendations outlined in the final report of the 2018 presidential election.

### **Meeting with Ambassador of European Union to Georgia**

On April 2, 2019, Tamar Zhvania, Chairperson of the CEC of Georgia met with Carl Hartzell, Ambassador of European Union to Georgia. Ms. Zhvania talked about the recommendations reflected in the report of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) and the new platform created at the CEC initiative – “Discuss Together”. During the meeting, the CEC Chairperson spoke about the educational projects, youth engagement in electoral processes and voter information campaign, which is constantly implemented by the CEC.

### **Meeting with Delegation of the Republic of Tunisia**

On June 13, 2019, CEC Chairperson Tamar Zhvania, held a meeting with the delegation of the Republic of Tunisia, which was composed of the parliamentary and non-parliamentary political party representatives. The meeting was organized by the Eastern European Center for Multiparty Democracy (EECMD). The CEC Chairperson briefed the members of the delegation on the activities of the Election Administration and the legislative framework. The CEC officials shared their experience with the delegation members on the following issues: the rule for composing election commissions, formation of the voters' list, activities implemented by the CEC in terms of increasing participation of PWDs and ethnic minorities in election processes, online registration program.

### **Meeting with Representatives of Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland**

On July 24, 2019, Tamar Zhvania, CEC Chairperson and Giorgi Sharabidze, Deputy Chairperson held a meeting with Sebastian Coquoz, Head of Elections and Democracy Program from the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland (FDFA), Armin Rieser, Human Security Adviser (FDFA) and Medea Turashvili, representative of the Embassy of Switzerland in Georgia. The parties discussed the successful experience of 2018, the perspectives of continuing cooperation with the Embassy of Switzerland and elaboration of ethical principles for election subjects for the upcoming elections. Tamar Zhvania provided the meeting participants with the information on the ongoing electoral reform process.

### **Meeting with Working Group for Women's Political Participation**

On July 12, 2019, the CEC leadership held a meeting with the members of the Working Group for Women's Political Participation. The group members presented their proposal on gender quotas and the legislative issues related to the gender quotation mechanism.



## STRATEGIC PILLAR 3: ELECTORAL ENVIRONMENT







# STRATEGIC PILLAR 3: ELECTORAL ENVIRONMENT

## GOAL 3.1 PARTICIPATE IN IMPROVEMENT OF LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In 2019, the CEC held 51 sessions and issued 990 legal acts, including:

- CEC decree – 40;
- CEC ordinance – 215.

The following documents were also issued:

- Ordinance of the CEC Chairperson – 22;
- Ordinance of the CEC Secretary – 663.

### **Activity 3.1.1 Legal Analysis of the Elections Conducted in 2018 and Recommendations**

The CEC studied legislative acts drawn up by the DEC's during October 28, 2018 Election of President of Georgia. Based on the study, the acts were analyzed and the deficiencies revealed were described. On the basis of this, letters of the CEC Chairperson were prepared with relevant remarks and future recommendations to improve deficiencies and sent to district election commissions. Following the analysis of the deficiencies identified, various practical assignments were developed which will be applied during the trainings conducted for DEC officials.

Draft amendments to the Organic Law of Georgia "Election Code of Georgia" were prepared. The package of legislative proposals was submitted to the Parliament of Georgia.

### **Activity 3.1.2 Analyzing the Reports of Local and International Organizations on October 28, 2018 Election of President of Georgia**

The CEC studied the recommendations in relation to October 28, 2018 Election of President of Georgia, which were issued according to the reports of the domestic and international observer organizations. The reports of the following organizations

were studied: international observation mission of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR), National Democratic Institute (NDI), as well as local observer organizations – the International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED), Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) and United Public Movement "Multinational Georgia" (PMMG).

### **Activity 3.1.4 Increasing Capacities for Administrative Proceedings Related to Disputes of CEC and District Election Commissions**

On April 20, 2019, in the training infrastructure of the CEC building, the CEC and the Training Centre held an information meeting for the Chairpersons, Secretaries and lawyers of the District Election Commissions, where May 19, 2019 By-elections were conducted. The meeting responded to the recommendations of international and local observer organizations and aimed to increase capacities for administrative proceedings related to the electoral disputes of District Election Commissions.

The meeting participants discussed the following issues: initiation of administrative proceedings related to applications/complaints on election day, preparation of District Election Commission decision on applications/complaints, organization of District Election Commission session, preparation of decisions on administrative violations. The participants also got acquainted with the results of analysis on the legal acts adopted/issued by District Election Commissions/chairs of commissions during 2018 presidential elections of Georgia and received relevant recommendations.

Thirty-one officials and lawyers of 12 District Election Commissions took part in the information meetings, including 15 (48%) women and 16 (52%) men.

### **Activity 3.1.6 Elaboration of Recommendation Document Reflecting the Analysis of Court Decisions on Electoral Disputes**

In order to analyze court decisions on electoral disputes, the decisions made by the common courts on electoral disputes were studied and analyzed, on the basis of which a recommendation document was prepared and submitted to the CEC leadership and members.

## GOAL 3.2 ENSURE ELECTORAL INTEGRITY

### Activity 3.2.1 Implementation Evaluation of the Election Integrity Management Plan

The Election Administration managed safety and integrity of elections in accordance with the Risk Management Plan of Election Integrity. The CEC Spokesperson Ana Mikeladze coordinated collection of information on the activities envisaged by the monitoring and evaluation plan of the mentioned plan. The CEC structural units and the Training Centre filled in the annex of the monitoring and evaluation plan of the Risk Management Plan of Election Integrity. The annex included information on the activities carried out for October 28, 2018 Election of President of Georgia.

## GOAL 3.3 ENSURE AN INCLUSIVE ELECTORAL ENVIRONMENT

### Activity 3.3.1 Retraining DEC members for Supporting Inclusive Electoral Environment and Adapted Polling Stations

In cooperation with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the CEC developed a draft instruction on “Promoting Independent Participation of Persons with Disabilities in Elections.” The instruction consists of the following chapters: introduction, concepts and terms, polling station, temporary rule for participation of wheel-chair voters in 2020 Parliamentary Elections, Etiquette of Communicating and the Protection of Behavioural Norms in Relation with Persons with Disabilities, procedure for participation of PWDs in elections and carrying out statistics on participation of PWDs in voting.

The draft training instruction reflects the legislative proposal concerning procedures for selection of polling stations by wheelchair users, though, the relevant change has not yet been implemented by the Parliament of Georgia. Based on the above, work on the draft instruction will be completed in 2020. As for the training of DEC members, the implementation of this activity depends on elaboration/approval of the training instruction.



### Activity 3.3.2 Study Possibilities of Legislative Amendments in Relation with PWDs

As a temporary measure, the CEC prepared a draft legislative amendment on a possibility for wheelchair user voters to select one of the available adapted precincts in an election district on the basis of a preliminary application, according to the place of registration. With regard to the mentioned topic, working meetings were held with the members of the CEC working group on the issues of persons with disabilities, as well as with representatives of the agencies responsible for the legislation. The final draft of the legislative amendment was sent to the members of the CEC working group. During preparation of the final draft, the CEC considered the recommendations presented at the meetings as far as possible. The draft legislative amendment, together with the relevant explanatory note, was submitted to the CEC for review and consideration. The legislative proposal has been submitted to the Parliament of Georgia.

## GOAL 3.4 PROMOTE GENDER-BALANCED AND EQUAL ENVIRONMENT

### Activity 3.4.1 Conduct Gender Audit

In 2019, in collaboration with the Council of Europe (CoE), a gender audit was conducted. CEC member Zurab Khrikadze, who is also the head of the Gender Equality Council of the Election Administration, coordinated the audit. The Gender Audit was conducted on the basis of the methodology developed by the International Labor Organization, which included analysis of international and local legislation and the Election Administration documents, interviews with staff and implementation of seminars.

On June 24, 2019, a working meeting was held, where certified facilitators presented a report on the research of Participatory Gender Audit to the CEC Chairperson, heads of the structural units and the director of the Training Centre and discussed the goals, tasks, conclusions and recommendations of the audit. Zurab Khrikadze delivered a presentation concerning CEC gender equality policy, its progress and challenges. The meeting participants tackled the methodology of gender audit and the Policy Action Plan on Gender Equality of the EA of Georgia.

### **Activity 3.4.2 Reflecting Gender Equality in Study Programs and Materials Developed by the CEC and the Training Centre**

The Training Centre ensured that gender issues were reflected in the training modules of the educational projects – “Elections and Young Voter”, “Electoral Development School” and one-semester study program “Election Law of Georgia”. During preparation of the study programs, goals and tasks of the Gender Equality Policy of the Election Administration were substantially taken into account.

### **Activity 3.4.3 New Information Resource to Place Electoral Information Processed in Gender Perspective**

In order to improve availability of the electoral information processed in gender perspective and administer the banner “Gender Statistics” on the CEC website, the CEC worked to create a portal for gender statistics. Spreadsheets (in Excel) were prepared, that could be processed in gender perspective according to the elections held in 2014-2019. The information that is processed in the CEC through the electronic program was also identified. Full implementation of the project is scheduled for 2020.

### **Seminar “Measures for Providing more Balanced Participation of Men and Women in Politics”**

On December 5, 2019, within the framework of the project “Reform of the Electoral Practice in Georgia”, the Council of Europe (CoE) conducted a seminar in cooperation with the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Georgia. The seminar – “Measures for Providing more Balanced Participation of Men and Women in Politics” was organized for representatives of political parties.

In her speech, Tamar Zhvania, CEC Chairperson focused on the CEC strategy and good practice concerning women’s political empowerment. She briefed the seminar participants on the main directions of the Gender Equality Policy of the Election Administration. The gender statistics produced by the Administration were presented by Zurab Khrikadze, a Member of the CEC Commission and the Head of the Gender Equality Council.

At the seminar, the international experts of the Council of Europe introduced the participants to the standards of the Council of Europe in gender perspective and the existing mechanisms for providing more balanced participation of men and women in politics.



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Today is a very important conference addressing gender equality with regard to women's equal participation. Working on gender issues has clearly shown that the role of political parties in terms of women's equal participation and political positions is crucial. It is also about sharing international experience.

**TAMAR ZHVANIA, CEC CHAIRPERSON**

*December 5, 2019, Seminar "Measures for Providing more Balanced Participation of Men and Women in Politics"*

This is a very good and important platform where the exchange of recommendations and opinions takes place in the direction of equal involvement of women and men. The domestic party policy of the political parties in this direction is also important.

**CRISTIAN URSE, HEAD OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE (COE) OFFICE IN GEORGIA**

*December 5, 2019, Seminar "Measures for Providing more Balanced Participation of Men and Women in Politics"*



Joint conference of the Council of Europe (CoE) and the CEC on gender issues

## STRATEGIC PILLAR 4: ELECTORAL OPERATIONS







# STRATEGIC PILLAR 4: ELECTORAL OPERATIONS

## GOAL 4.1. ORGANIZE/CONDUCT ELECTIONS

### Activity 4.1.1 Organize and Conduct By/Extraordinary Elections

In 2019, the Election Administration conducted the following elections:

- May 19, 2019 By/Extraordinary Elections
- October 27, 2019 By-elections

The Election Administration conducted the electoral process in full compliance with legislation and approved schedule of electoral activities. Within the timeframe defined by the legislation, the CEC submitted reports on conducted elections to the Parliament of Georgia. In addition, the reports were published on the CEC website<sup>13</sup>.

### Activity 4.1.2 Purchasing Necessary Inventory/Materials for Conduct of Elections

Based on the updated number of voters and current stocks, the CEC approved the quantity/amount of goods and services to be purchased to provide the 2019 elections with material resources. Equipment necessary for the elections was distributed in a centralized way to the District Election Commissions, where the elections were held.

In accordance with the finances allocated from the Reserve Fund of the Government of Georgia for May 19, 2019 By/Extraordinary Elections, a total of 71 contracts were signed during the election period and 9 contracts were signed for October 27, 2019 By-elections.

### Unified List of Voters

In 2019, according to the paragraph 5, Article 31 of the Organic Law of Georgia “Election Code of Georgia”, the CEC processed the data about voters (by integrating main and actual addresses with CEC database) provided by Public Services Development

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13 See the reports on the 2019 elections at the following link: <http://cesko.ge/geo/elections/2019>

Agency (PSDA) of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia, Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Protection, Social Services Agency and other relevant agencies and formed the voters' list. In 2019, the Unified List of Voters was updated 7 times. See the detailed information in table (4).

Table 4.

	NUMBER OF VOTERS	WOMEN	MEN
As of 01.02.2019	3 506 288	1 882 352	1 623 936
As of 01.05.2019	3 506 793	1 880 084	1 626 709
As of 15.07.2019	3 506 853	1 879 757	1 627 096
As of 01.11.2019	3 514 426	1 883 602	1 630 824
By-elections of Parliament of Georgia held on May 19, 2019	43 908	25 437	18 471
Extraordinary Elections of Mayors of Municipalities held on May 19, 2019	342 516	177 114	165 402
Sakrebulo By-elections held on May 19, 2019	21 413	11 477	9 936
By-elections of Parliament of Georgia (Second Round) held on May 19, 2019	43 909	25 432	18 477
Sakrebulo By-elections held on October 27, 2019	6 798	3 345	3 453

From January 1 to December 31, 2019, voters checked their and their families' data in the Unified List of Voters as well as the location of polling stations using services offered by the CEC on 4 107 310 occasions; of these 4 051 210 times on the CEC website voters.cec. gov.ge and 56 100 times – through Android and iOS operating system.



## GOAL 4.2. PUBLICIZE ELECTION RESULTS TIMELY

### Activity 4.2.1 Pilot on Possibility of Using Modern Technologies in Vote Counting on the Polling Day



On May 19, 2019, with support of the Canadian international non-governmental organization “The DELIAN Project”<sup>14</sup>, the Election Administration implemented the second pilot project on electronic voting and vote counting at eight election precincts in Tskaltubo and Tkibuli electoral districts. It should be noted, that in order to implement the project, “The DELIAN Project” presented the CEC eight devices for automated voting and counting, eight ballot boxes and an optical scanner of ballots. At

the CEC, Canadian technicians/consultants provided retraining for the CEC staff, as well as installation of technical facilities and testing of the system.



According to Article 185<sup>16</sup> of the Organic Law of Georgia “Election Code of Georgia”, the CEC was authorized to carry out certain procedures using electronic technology in electoral process during the transition period before the Parliamentary Elections. Based on the above and the experience of the first stage, the Election Administration developed new procedures to implement the next stage of the pilot project. Forms of ballot papers and special frame envelopes were elaborated. Tactile ballot guide was prepared for a blind voter.

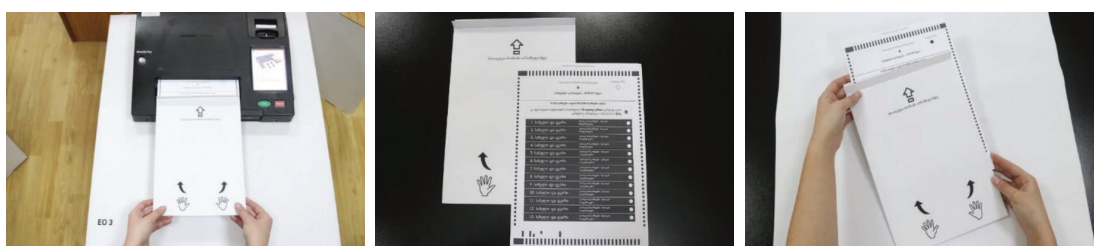
The CEC prepared and posted on the website a video instruction<sup>15</sup> for the pilot project on electronic voting and counting. On the E-day, the footage was displayed at the buildings of the precinct election commissions.





Representatives of the CEC and the Training Centre retrained the members of Tkibuli and Tskaltubo District and Precinct Election Commissions with regard to the new rule of voting and counting and the use of special automated voting and counting devices. Besides, the District Election Commissions organized meetings with voters at the places of public gathering and detailed them on the rule of using the automated voting and counting device. PEC members and the CEC representatives were ready to help and, if necessary, provide additional instruction for each voter. The CEC provided the representatives of political parties participating in the By-elections of Sakrebulo in Tkibuli and Tskaltubo Municipalities and local non-governmental and international organizations with the information about the pilot project on electronic vote counting. A practical staging was also held with participation of the attendees.

Unlike the first stage of the project, the main ballot box had the sections which were independent and were intended for valid and cancelled ballot papers. This substantially simplified the data verification process. As a result of evaluation of the first stage of the project, a new design of a ballot paper was developed for the pilot, the rule of using a ballot paper was elaborated, which minimized the probability of errors.



*Automated voting and counting device, ballot paper, special frame envelope of the main ballot box, special frame envelope of a mobile ballot box*

14 Delian project is a non-profit organization founded by Canadian election officials with the financial support of the Government of Canada and implements similar projects around the world. It is a member of the Clinton Global Initiative and a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact.

15 Video instruction is available on the following link: [http://cesko.ge/geo/video\\_gallery/show/1629/778](http://cesko.ge/geo/video_gallery/show/1629/778).

Ballot paper was placed in the ballot box through the device installed on the box. The electronic vote counting machine scanned the ballot paper and counted participants and votes, while the screen only showed the number of participants. The electronic vote counting machine independently processed and stored information and was not connected to either global or local network.

Electronic data sheets containing information on counted votes, which were printed from the automated vote counting machines, did not provide preliminary results of the election. It is important, that the results were calculated by the electronic vote counting machine with absolute precision. According to the legislation of the precinct election commissions, the results were manually calculated later and coincided with the electronic data. This actually confirmed the accuracy of the electronic vote counting and successful implementation of the pilot project.

For its appropriate use in the future, the pilot project on electronic vote counting will be evaluated with involvement of stakeholders and the general public after a detailed analysis of voter behavior and the electoral process.

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Elections conducted at three election precincts in Tsaishi during 2018, was a very valuable experience for the Election Administration. The first pilot revealed many positive aspects and the challenges which needed to be addressed at the second stage during the second pilot. Information we are sharing and offering now is based on the previously received experience. This pilot is still being implemented for the research and study purposes, since new challenges may emerge which should be considered within the future electoral process by all of us.

**TAMAR ZHVANIA, CEC CHAIRPERSON**

*May 8, 2019, meeting on the pilot project of electronic vote counting*

## GOAL 4.3 PROVIDE STAKEHOLDERS WITH ACCURATE INFORMATION ON ELECTIONS IN A TIMELY MANNER

### Activity 4.3.1 Publicize Statistical Data of Election Results

The CEC provided the public with preliminary and final results of all elections held in 2019 in a timely manner.

- On May 20, at 01:30 a.m. the CEC Chairperson first presented the preliminary results of the First Round of May 19, 2019 By/Extraordinary Elections. At 11:00 a.m. during a briefing, the CEC Spokesperson presented the preliminary results of the elections according to 410 polling stations. All briefings were carried out with sign language. On June 9, at 11:30 p.m. at special briefings, the CEC Chairperson presented the preliminary results of the Second Round according to all 31 polling stations;
- Publicizing of the preliminary results of October 27, 2019 By-elections started at 11:55 p.m. on October 27. On October 28, at 00:50 a.m. information on the preliminary results of Sakrebulo By-elections was posted on the CEC official website.

The CEC publicized the election results on a special webpage <http://results.cec.gov.ge/>. After the voting process was completed, the District Election Commissions (DECs) uploaded summary protocols drafted by the Precinct Election Commissions (PECs) in the Election Process Management System (EPMS). Upon receipt, summary protocol of each precinct election commission was uploaded on the webpage.

### CEC Call Center

The CEC timely provided the public and stakeholders with accurate information on the elections through the specially created formats. The information was also posted on the CEC official website in a proactive manner.

The CEC Call Center ensured that interested parties received the information on election issues. During 2019, the interested persons used the services of the CEC Call Center on 4 538 occasions, including: 2 366 incoming calls, 294 outgoing calls, 1 409 online chats, 190 sent messages, 256 questions and 23 voice messages answered during the non-working hour.

# CONCLUSION

Action Plan 2019 of the Election Administration envisaged the implementation of 68 activities. These activities were mainly implemented in a professional and timely manner. In the context of assessing indicators, 53 activities were implemented fully.

In 2019, the following 12 activities were partially implemented and their full implementation is planned in 2020:

- 1.1.1 Revision/improvement of the rule for planning, reporting and monitoring of the Election Administration activities (2020 Action Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia, Activity 5.1.3.1);
- 1.1.8 Improvement of the communication system between the CEC, District Election Commissions (DECs) and structural units (2020 Action Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia, Activity 5.1.5.1);
- 1.1.10 Improvement of the accounting system for assets/reserves of the Election Administration;
- 1.1.13 Analysis of the incidents identified at the District Election Commissions and Election Precincts during the 2018 Elections (2020 Action Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia, Activity 2.2.1.3);
- 1.1.14 Elaboration of the appropriate recommendations and performance monitoring based on the needs revealed during the internal audit (2020 Action Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia, Activity 5.1.4.5);
- 1.3.1 Development, inclusion and use of modern electronic programs in the electoral processes;
- 1.3.4 Development of electronic planning and reporting program (2020 Action Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia, Activity 5.1.3.1);
- 1.3.5 Study possibilities/introduce electronic management of the CEC sessions (2020 Action Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia, Activity 3.1.2.1);
- 1.3.7 Cooperation with relevant state agencies to allocate electoral precincts (2020 Action Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia, Activity 3.1.2.4);
- 3.2.1 Implementation evaluation of the Election Safety Plan;
- 3.3.1 Retraining DEC members for supporting inclusive electoral environment and adapted polling stations (2020 Action Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia, Activity 4.1.2.3);

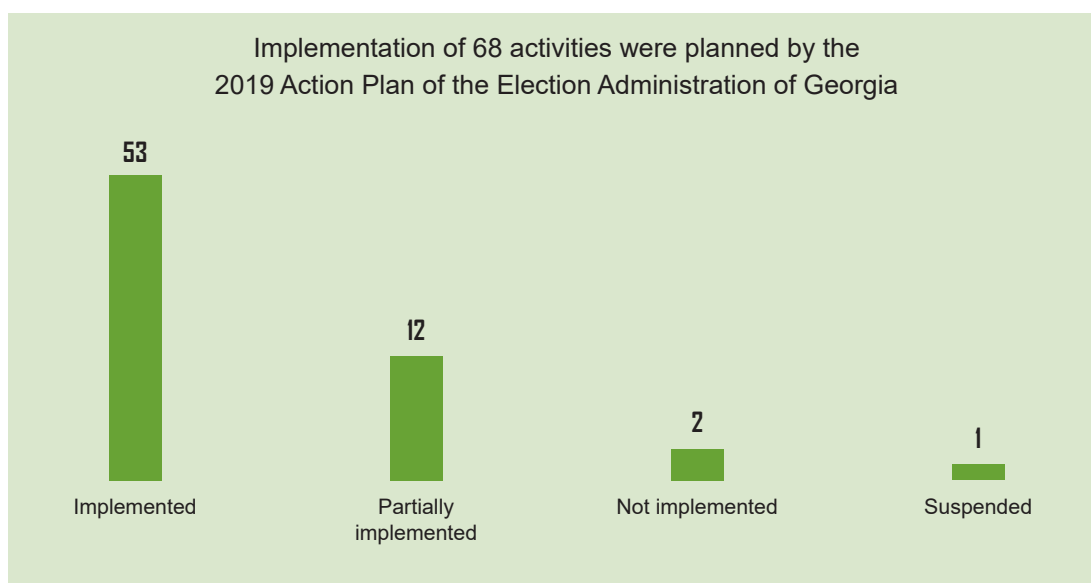
- 3.4.3 Create new information resource to place electoral information processed in gender perspective (2020 Action Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia, Activity 4.2.1.1).

**Two activities were not implemented:**

- 1.4.6 Implementation of projects and programs in cooperation with other Election Management Bodies (EMBs) and international organizations (reason: there was no request for implementation of projects and programs from other Election Management Bodies (EMBs) and international organizations);
- 3.1.3 Update the textbook on dispute resolution and document of uniform practice in compliance with the relevant legislative amendments (reason: there were no legislative amendments made during the reporting period).

**Implementation of one activity was suspended and postponed:**

- 2.2.3 Implementation of the training course “Election Campaign and Administrative Resources” for public servants (2020 Action Plan of the Election Administration of Georgia, Activity 1.1.2.1).



In addition to the implementation of the activities envisaged in the plan, the CEC structural units and the Training Centre implemented other activities that significantly supported processes of institutional strengthening of the Election Administration, civic and voter education, developing inclusive electoral environment and providing electoral stakeholders with accurate electoral information in a timely manner.



# CEC STRUCTURAL UNITS

## **Voters' List and Electoral Processes Management Department**

Giorgi Sekhniashvili, *Head of Department*

## **Legal Department**

George Dzagania, *Head of Department*

## **Registration and Administrative Department**

Elisabed Velidze, *Head of Department*

## **Public Relations Department**

Ketevan Dangadze, *Head of Department*

## **Finance Department**

Otar Buskivadze, *Head of Department*

## **Electoral Information Technology Department**

Kakhaber Zhamurashvili, *Head of Department*

## **Coordination, Planning and Reporting Department**

Sophio Sitchinava, *Head of Department*

## **Internal Audit and Workforce Security Department**

Valerian Maisuradze, *Head of Department*

## **Human Resources Management Department**

Giorgi Kalandarishvili, *Head of Department*

## **Department of Relations with Election Commissions**

Eka Tsabashvili, *Head of Department*

## **Spokesperson**

Ana Mikeladze

## **Advisors to Chairperson**

Tamaz Sharmanashvili

Avtandil Tsiskaridze

## **Information Security Manager**

Irakli Tvaliashvili

## **LEPL – Electoral Systems Development, Reforms and Training Centre**

Natia Zaalishvili, *Director of the Training Centre*



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# ANNUAL REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ELECTION ADMINISTRATION OF GEORGIA AND LEPL ELECTORAL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT, REFORMS AND TRAINING CENTRE 2019