



Annual Report on the Activities

of the Central Election

Commission of Georgia and LEPL

Electoral Systems Development,

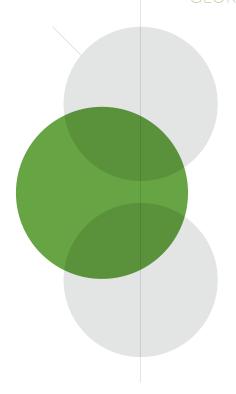
Reforms and Training Centre

2018

ELECTION

ADMINISTRATION OF

GEORGIA







Central Election Commission

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

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Dear Friends and Partners of Election Administration.

We present a report on the activities of the Central Election Administration of Georgia implemented in 2018. This year, the presidential election of Georgia was held by direct ballot for the last time according to the current constitution. This year for the first time in Georgian history, presidential elections were held in two rounds and it celebrated 100 years anniversary of the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Georgia. The first session of first Central Election Commission of Georgia was held on 22 November 1918. All employees of the election administration are proud to serve to the ideals of democracy and continue the work that began a century ago.

According to the assessment of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) Election Observation Mission, 28 October 2018 Presidential Election of Georgia were competitive and well-administered. Well-administering means well-conducted polling and vote counting processes. We served voters professionally, though, there are recommendations we will definitely consider. That is a future plan of election administration.

Election Administration's strategy is oriented on creating necessary services and offering those

services to voters and electoral stakeholders so they may participate in the electoral process without hindrance and exercise their will freely. In this view, the past year was the year of significant changes.

I would like to single out the novelties related to technological developments. For the first time in the electoral history of Georgia, electronic devices were piloted during vote counting process of May 13, By-elections of Zugdidi municipality. The special banner was created for young people on the CEC website and after scanning the QR code via a mobile application, they could access election-related information. The capacity of electronic registration was expanded and registration procedures were simplified due to the use of an online method for domestic observation organizations. Instant delivery of E-day incidents monitoring system was created and piloted by using short message system (SMS).

I consider it is important to develop the principles of electoral subjects' behavior during the campaign and agree on those standards. The process of the agreement was facilitated by the Central Election Commission with the support of the Government of Switzerland. "Ethical Principles" was developed with engagement of candidates of the presidential election of Georgia and representatives. Signatories of the document agree to protect Georgian legislation and to adhere to the principles of democratic governance and public interests, conduct their activity without any discrimination based on ethnic, religious, gender

or other affiliations, refuse to use any hate speech or statements that involve xenophobia or intimidation.

In 2018, similar to previous years, Election Administration was considering supporting the inclusive electoral environment as one of its important goals. And, we offered a number of services to ethnic minority people and persons with disabilities (PWD). A good illustration of it is the international award the CEC received for the introduction of successful practice. A positive experience of election administration of Georgia enabling blind voters to vote independently and privately by using special tactile ballot guide was internationally recognized.

Achievements of election administration are the result of selfless work and cooperation with electoral stakeholders. I would like to express my respect towards all electoral stakeholders for their contribution in the electoral process. Active participation of impartial observers, media and other interested parties is an important support to ensure transparency of the electoral process and the credibility.

The year of 2018 was significant for development, we faced new challenges, though, we managed to overcome them successfully and for which I would like to thank employees of election administration for their work and professionalism.

a. The

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 toward the improvement of the electoral environment.

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



International Recognition of the Election Administration

Innovative Practice 2019

In the framework of initiative (the Zero Project) of the Austrian organization - Essl Foundation, the CEC was awarded the nomination in "Innovative Practice" for implementation of a successful policy in the Election Administration of Georgia, namely, for the introduction of tactile ballot guide for blind voters.

10f C. Baxter Award 2017

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems presented Joe C. Baxter award to CEC Chairperson Tamar Zhvania for supporting the development of electoral processes.

International Electoral Awards 2013-2017

Within the framework of the International Electoral Affairs Symposium, organized by the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS), the CEC and the Training Centre received the following International Electoral Awards in different years:

International Electoral Award 2017

The CEC received awards in two nominations:

"Citizen Engagement" – for the innovative project "Talk to Voters";

"Electoral Conflict Management" – for implementing a project on election security.

International Electoral Award 2016

The CEC won the award in nomination – "Minority Participation".

Intednational Flectodal Avaard 2015

The CEC won the award in the nomination – "Election Management" for the innovative program "Election Process Management System EPMS".

International Electoral Award 2013

The Training Centre won the award in the nomination "First Voter" for the information-educational project implemented for the development of young voters' electoral culture.

CENTRAL ELECTION COMMISSION OF GEORGIA AND TRAINING CENTRE EXPRESS THEIR GRATITUDE FOR COOPERATION TOWARDS:



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

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





Council of Europe (CoE) for its financial support to implement various projects

The Venice Commission for expert assistance and close cooperation





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 Center for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS) for organizational and financial support of the 8th Annual Meeting of Election Management Bodies

Government of Switzerland for support in developing Ethical Principles for candidates of 28 October, 2018 Presidential Elections



In addition, the CEC is thankful to all the organizations and their representatives who participated in 2018 in the activities of the target groups created at the CEC and contributed to the improvement process of the electoral environment.

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

PREFACE

In 2018, the CEC, its Office 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 priorities of the Strategic and Annual Action Plans 2015-2019 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 CEC is guided by the declared action principles: Independence, transparency, professionalism, accountability, and inclusivity.

In 2018 election administration administered the following elections:

- Parliamentary By-elections of 8 October 2016, held through a majoritarian contest at N54 majoritarian electoral district on April 28, 2018;
- Sakrebulo By-elections of 21 October 2017 held through a majoritarian contest at N67.27
 Tsaishi community local majoritarian district of N67 Zugdidi electoral district on May 13, 2017;
- Election of President of Georgia 28 October 2018 (I and II rounds);
- Sakrebulo By-elections in Terjola and Samtredia municipalities of 21 October 2017, held through majoritarian election system at N49.18 Dzevri community of N49 Terjola electoral district and N54.01.04 Samtredia city's local majoritarian electoral district.

Domestic and international observer organizations monitored the electoral process of presidential election of Georgia. International observation missions assessed the election administration's work and competence mainly positively in their reports. The report of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) Election Observation Mission (EOM) assesses the work and competence of election administration largely positively and indicates that the election was competitive and professionally administered, namely, professionalism of election administration at all levels was evaluated positively as well as well-administered polling and vote counting processes. In addition to positive assessments, certain remarks and significant issues are reflected in the reports of observer organizations which require further work.

According to a public opinion¹ poll carried out by order of National Democratic Institute (NDI), population assessed 28 October 2018 Presidential Election of Georgia mainly positively and demonstrated considerably high trust towards the activity of election administration and the results counted. A vast majority of respondents reported that on E-day the polling stations were mostly well ordered and officials prepared, and the polling station was not too crowded.

The present report covers the activities implemented by the CEC and the Training Centre from January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018.

The survey carried out for National Democratic Institute (NDI) by CRRC-Georgia from December 6-20, 2018, through 2 205 face-to-face interviews with a nationwide representative sample of Georgia's adult population.

SHORT DESCRIPTION

STRATEGIC PILLAR 1: Institutional Strengthening

To ensure effective management, a reporting system was introduced in District Election Commissions (DEC); Internal audit was made in the Election Administration and the organization subordinated to the CEC state control. Audit of all important information systems existing in the CEC ownership was conducted in terms of security; the work was launched to receive international certificate ISO 9001:2015 quality management system; financial management instruction of district election commissions was renewed; a new practice of budget formation of district elections commissions was adopted; inventory of financial requirements and liabilities was carried out; 18 418 documents in electronic format were added to electronic archive program.

To improve human resources management, election administration representatives participated in 21 international conferences, trainings and working meetings, as well as observed elections as international observers in 10 countries; two certification exams of election administration officials were held and passed successfully by 194 persons; changes were made and registered political parties and domestic observer organizations registered at CEC, were able to access the list of persons who passed successfully the certification exams of election administration officials; a new training program was developed "Developing trainer's professional skills" upon which district election commissions' members were retrained.

To improve infrastructure, electronic election management system ("EPMS") was expanded; by this system, election administration ensured to reflect and manage a large volume of information related to the electoral process and its administration in a unified system; CEC

increased electronic registration capacity for the presidential election of Georgia. Besides electoral subjects who could appoint representatives of electoral subjects and members at all levels of election commissions, registered domestic observer organizations at their discretion could submit their applications for registration online; two new programs were created and adopted: court ruling on appointing the session and involvement of third parties and legal acts of district election commissions; instant delivery of E-day incidents monitoring system was set up and piloted on E-day.

In the training infrastructure of the CEC administrative building (Study Residential Complex), 18 training sessions were held in 12 directions, in which more than 1,000 participants took part; 30 DEC administrative buildings underwent capital / current repair.

To strengthen the image, 100 years anniversary of first democratic elections was widely celebrated. Activities were dedicated to 100 years anniversary of establishment of the first Democratic Republic of Georgia; information campaign "Talk to Voter" was carried out both in Georgia and abroad for Georgian citizens; for the first time, young people, having reached 18 years, based on their registration place, received the letter of CEC Chairperson on voting rights and importance of elections; the special banner was created for young people on the CEC website and after scanning the QR code via a mobile application, they could access election-related information; 8th Annual Meeting of Election Management Bodies was held in Georgia involving 21 EMBs, 10 international organizations, U.S. Embassy in Georgia and four vendor companies oriented on electoral technologies, totaling to 105 representatives.

STRATEGIC PILLAR 2: CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION

To develop civic and voter education, six educational projects were implemented, in which, a total of 9 342 persons participated. Specially trained district election commission (DEC) members and trainers of election administration carried out study course; as part of project "Electoral Administrator's Courses", a new study program was adopted "Specialized Program – Electoral Administrator Courses for potential DEC lawyers"; the area of implementation of educational projects regarding electoral civic education has expanded nationwide and covers all municipalities including areas populated by ethnic minorities and mountainous regions.

To develop electoral culture, the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoU) was signed between the Office of the Parliament of Georgia, the CEC Training Centre and 10 Educational Institutions of the State Entities. In the framework of MoU, the training was conducted for members of Parliament of Georgia and employees of its office, as well as, for representatives of executive bodies and the Ministry of Internal Affairs; innovative study module was created "Legislative mechanisms of electoral security and international standards", which was carried out for representatives of police, media, parties and domestic non-governmental organizations; a new educational-information project "Student Debate Club" was carried out; electoral library was founded; open door day was held nine times for representatives of various educational institutions and domestic non-governmental organizations.

To promote civil society involvement, according to CEC defined priorities, Training Centre conducted three grant competitions. In total, 68 projects of domestic non-governmental organizations were funded and budget of funding amounted to 2 381 571 GEL; to brief electoral stakeholders on election-related issues, meetings of the technical working group as well as working groups on ethnic minority and persons with disabilities (PWD) issues, were held at CEC.

STRATEGIC PILLAR 3: ELECTORAL ENVIRONMENT

To improve legal framework, draft legislative amendments to be implemented were prepared for presidential election of Georgia and submitted to Parliament of Georgia as proposals; due to amendments made to election legislation, three textbooks were updated: on administrative resources, electoral disputes and imposing disciplinary liability against precinct election commission members and about disciplinary liabilities' early removal (uniform practice document); "Training course legal writing and administrative proceedings on electoral disputes" was conducted for 224 representatives of 73 district election commissions.

To ensure electoral integrity, according to the Election Integrity Management Plan, Memorandum of Cooperation (MoU) was signed between the CEC and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) of Georgia regarding supporting the conduct of the voting process in a safe, peaceful and free environment on the Election Day; based on MoU signed between the Training Centre and the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, awareness raising and training course "Electoral security" was conducted. About 44 000 members from election commissions and 792 representatives from middle and senior-level management of criminal and patrol police underwent the course; distance learning program was developed and underwent by about 8,000 representatives of criminal and patrol police online; the CEC and 30 domestic observer organizations signed the Code of Conduct (Ethics) which was developed for the presidential election of Georgia.

For the first time for the presidential election of Georgia, with the agreement facilitated by the Central Election Commission and supported by the Government of Switzerland, presidential candidates and their representatives developed "Ethical Principles". Signatories of the document agree to respect Georgian legislation and to adhere to the principles of democratic governance and public interests, conduct their activity without any discrimination based on ethnic, religious, gender or other affiliations, refuse to use any hate speech or statements that involve xenophobia or intimidation.

To ensure inclusive electoral environment, for presidential election of Georgia, all election-related information and footage, including, special footage concerning accessible services, were translated into Armenian and Azerbaijani languages for ethnic minority voters. Armenian and Azerbaijani-speaking operators were serving ethnic minority voters at CEC Call Center.

CEC website is available to blind persons and persons with vision impairment, whereas Training Centre website is available to blind people; to inform persons with disabilities, special footage was prepared concerning accessible services for the presidential election of Georgia. The CEC prepared all footages with sign language were aired on central and regional TV stations; sign language interpreters were giving election-related information to deaf and hearing impaired voters through video call at the CEC Call Center. Manual on the etiquette of communication and protection of behavioural norms in relation with persons with disabilities was renewed. According to manual and for the first time, the footage involved blind, vision impaired, and deaf persons, as well as persons with limited mobility (wheelchair user) and having no upper limbs and beneficiaries of support.

To promote gender-balanced and equal environment, gender equality aspects of election administration were reflected in study modules of the educational projects including "Elections and young voter", "Electoral development school" and "Legal clinic" as well as in training programs for representatives of regional and central media outlets; International conference "Gender Equality in Elections – what more can be done by EMBs" was held involving seven election administrations, 13 international organizations, and four domestic non-governmental organizations, totaling to 45 participants; gender statistics were processed and released for presidential election of Georgia.

STRATEGIC PILLAR 4: ELECTORAL OPERATIONS

To organize/conduct elections, Election Administration led the election process in full compliance of the legislation and the schedule of approved election activities. Reports on conducted elections were submitted to Parliament of Georgia. Also, 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 10 times.

To raise qualification of the DEC and PEC Members, for the presidential election of Georgia, a new concept of trainings was developed, based on which new approaches including specialized programs and updated methodology in training were applied for election commission members; guidelines and visual materials were developed for electoral stakeholders and for DEC and PEC Members.

To publicise election results timely, for the first time in the history of Georgia, CEC carried out research-based pilot project during May 13 Sakrebulo By-elections of Zugdidi municipality. The pilot project envisioned the use of modern technologies on E-day for vote counting procedures. Data counted by electronic counting machines carried informational nature. Results of research of electoral process carried out by applying modern technologies was widely shared and discussed with representatives of political parties, as well as domestic and international organizations. Election Administration conducted informational campaign for electoral stakeholders and voters residing in Zugdidi municipality as well.

To provide stakeholders with timely and accurate election-related information, the CEC Call Center operates. Citizens used Call Center services 34 053 times; through complaint registry, interested persons were able to process complaint-related information, concrete disputes, and receive information regarding the decision of election commission/election commission chairperson as well as find court ruling on disputes.



STRATEGIC PILLAR 1: INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

GOAL 1. ENSURE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

Planning, Monitoring and Reporting of Election Administration's Activities

In the rule for planning, monitoring and reporting of the Election Administration's activities, changes were introduced prompting the adoption of the reporting system in district election commissions (DEC). Based on the rule, CEC and Training Centre representatives developed a study module on the rule of reporting, timeframes, and form of a report to be submitted. 143 officials from 73 DECs including 48 (34%) women and 95 (66%) men underwent the training.

Preparing/Submitting Reports

During the reporting period, based on the rule of planning, monitoring and reporting of the Election Administration's activities, nine structural units, Training Centre and 73 DECs presented their activity reports to CEC Chairperson. CEC leadership and members received the first quarter and second quarter reports of 2018 as well as consolidated annual reports from CEC structural units and Training Centre.

On 28 March, the CEC Chairperson presented the 2017 activity report of the Election Administration and Training Centre to 117 representatives of domestic and international NGOs, political parties, state agencies and media.



Presentation of 2017 Activity Report of Election Administration and Training Centre

According to election code, CEC presented four activity reports of elections held in 2018 to the Parliament of Georgia.

On 19 October, CEC Chairperson presented Interim Report of Presidential Election to about 80 representatives of domestic and international organizations, state entities and media, and on 23 October to 20 representatives of diplomatic corps accredited in Georgia and international organizations.

CEC submitted all reports are public and available at the CEC website.

Activity Plan of District Election Commissions

For the first time, CEC developed activity plan of district election commissions (DEC). The plan included activities to be implemented by DECs during non-election and election period. It is noteworthy, that DECs submitted their activity reports based on the plan.

Implementation of 2018 Action Plan of Election Administration and Discussion of 2019 Action Plan Project

According to CEC adopted practice and in cooperation with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), at the end of the reporting year, a working meeting was held where CEC officials and members, and heads of CEC structural units and Training Centre submitted final activity reports. Also, Action Plan 2019 draft of Election Administration was discussed. At the December 28 meeting, CEC approved Action Plan² 2019 of Election Administration.

CEC prepared the following documents/action plans and send them out to a number of institutions:

Parliament of Georgia

CEC draft budget proposal for 2019 which was approved by the Parliament decree N2526-II
of 13 June 2018.

Defence and Security Committee of Parliament of Georgia

 Information regarding activities of Election Administration to be implemented in 2018-2019 including improvement of electoral environment.

Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee of Parliament of Georgia

 Activity report of Election Administration in relation to recommendations issued by the Parliament of Georgia, by decree N1181-II of 30 June 2017.

The Human Rights Secretariat of Administration of Government of Georgia

- Report on the activities carried out by Election Administration in 2016-2017, in accordance with the Action Plan of the Government of Georgia on the Protection of Human Rights.
- Activities to be implemented in 2018-2020 within the competence of CEC, 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 Election Administration in 2015-2017 in accordance with the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); • Interim activity report of Election Administration in response to recommendations issued in the framework of the third cycle of Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

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

- Report of activities carried out by the Election Administration, in support of the involvement of ethnic minority voters (Roma people) in the electoral process;
- Activity report and State Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration and Action Plan for 2019 according to the Action Plan 2018 of Gender Equality Policy of Georgia.
- Action Plan on activities planned in 2018-2019 for residents of Pankisi Gorge.

Department of Persons with Disabilities of Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia

 Report on the activities carried out by Election Administration during Sakrebulo and Mayoral Elections of self-governing city/self-governing community of 21 October 2017 in support of inclusive electoral environment.

Ministry of Finance of Georgia

- Budget execution report 2017 of Election Administration;
- Quarterly reports 2018 of Election Administration;
- Basic Data and Directions (BDD) 2019-2022.

Revenue Service

Monthly information on distribution and income tax.

Statistics Office

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

Internal Audit of the Election Administration and the Organization Subordinate to the CEC State Control

During the reporting period, an audit was implemented in seven district election commissions as well as information security audit. On the initiative of CEC management, 24 workplace check/inspections were conducted due to applications/complaints and with regard to prevention of disciplinary misconduct.

Audit of All Important Information Systems in the CEC's Ownership in Terms of Security

To implement information technology security audit against all important information systems in the CEC ownership, critical systems were defined and breach of their integrity, confidentiality, and accessibility may harm effective work of Election Administration. Information systems were verified by relevant technological devices which is an accepted method for implementation of information systems audit. In order to eradicate the detected shortcomings, the CEC Chairperson was presented with recommendations in the form of an audit report.

Information Security

In order to ensure information security, the Information Security Council of Election Administration developed and presented the draft amendments to be implemented in the instruction "Selection of information systems and minimal requirements to be considered for their thereafter implementation" approved by CEC Chairperson to CEC officials.

Quality Management Systems and Certification in line with International Standard

A responsible working group³ was created at CEC for developing and adopting the Quality Management Systems and certification in line with international standard ISO 9001:2015. To conduct certification and control audits, market research was conducted and multiyear procurement (2018-2021) was agreed with the Ministry of Finance of Georgia.



Working group was created on the basis of N01-37 order of 4 March 2018 of CEC Chairperson.

The service was purchased through tender and on 13 September the agreement was signed with Supplier Company which considered the development and adoption of the Quality Management Systems in line with requirements of international standard ISO 9001:2015 for conducting certification and control audits.

On 29 November, the Coordination Council⁴ for Development and Implementation of Quality Management Systems was created at CEC, and their activity rule and powers were determined. In the frame of signed agreement, on 7 December, International expert-auditor conducted training "Quality Management Systems ISO 9001:2015" to members of CEC Quality Management Council.

Internal Communication between CEC and DECs

To improve internal communication, a demonstration version of the internal information portal (Intranet) was created at Election Administration. It is planned to activate the portal at full capacity from the first quarter of 2019.

Training for DEC Officials

On August 3-7, trainings were held for chairpersons and secretaries of District Election Commissions (DEC) at the Central Election Commission (CEC). Representatives of the CEC Legal, Registration and Administrative, Finance, Human Resources Management and Election Processes Management Departments conducted the training course. The training aimed to enhance internal communication between CEC and DEC, support the adoption of uniform working practice, reduce potential risks related to DEC activities and develop professional skills of DEC permanent members. Participants of the training familiarized with the following topics: amendments made to the Organic Law of Georgia "Election Code of Georgia", a new module for precinct election commission members "Election processes management", issues related to labor relations of elected members of DECs and of job incompatibility, case proceedings, online registration process, and effective financial management.

To improve case proceedings and registration procedures, information on proceedings and electoral registration processes were sent to DEC officials. Manuals⁵ on case proceedings and electoral registration process were developed for DECs as well as manuals on the use of electronic registration program for proxies of electoral subjects, observers and media organizations.

141 officials from 73 DECs participated in the training, including, 88 (62%) women and 53 (38%) men.

Financial Management, State Procurement, Accounting and Financial Reporting in District Election Commissions

To improve the effective financial and budgetary policies of the election administration and financial management in DECs, financial work of DECs, as well as remarks indicated in 2015-2016 report of State Audit Office, were examined for the period of 2017 Municipal Elections.

As a result of analysis and for implementation of the recommendations presented in the State Audit Report, a textbook-guideline "Financial management of DECs" was renewed. Legislative amendments implemented in state procurement sphere, updated forms of financial reports to be submitted by DECs were reflected in the document. Trainings were conducted for DEC Chairs, according to instruction. The instruction reflecting novelties concerning the existing regulations contributed to the reduction of misconduct / deficiencies and improving the financial management of DECs.

Renewed Rule for Funding District Election Commissions

In early 2018, financial work of district election commissions (DEC) was analyzed for 2017 Municipal Elections. Remarks indicated in DECs financial reports and in State Audit Office Report 2015-2016 with regard to DECs were considered.

To implement recommendations indicated in the State Audit Office Report, CEC amended instruction of DEC financial management, based on which, forms⁶ of financial reports to be submitted by DECs were renewed. Legislative amendments applied in state procurement sphere and implemented legislative amendments were reflected in the instruction. Based on the renewed instruction, trainings were conducted for DEC Chairs.

On the basis of edict N414 of the President of Georgia of July 1, 1999, on "Approval and enactment of the uniform rules of the case proceedings" of Organic Law of Georgia "Election Code of Georgia" and also on the basis of edict N01-113 of Chairperson of Central Election Commission of Georgia of August 24, 2016, on "Case proceedings of district election commissions".

⁶ CEC N247/2018 ordinance of September 15, 2018.

Approval of renewed form of reporting supported budget planning of DECs as well as improved monitoring of allocated finances by the CEC.

Accounting the Assets/Reserves of Election Administration

Accounting the assets/reserves of Election Administration was carried out in accordance with selective and compulsory inventory plans. Inventory of old type metal polling booths, transport facilities, financial requirements, and obligations was conducted. As part of financial requirements and inventory obligations, to cover the debt in connection with the activities to be implemented, the letters were sent to various entities. At the order of CEC Chairperson, financially responsible persons were defined. Results of inventory were submitted to CEC management. Inventory of financial documents is underway.

Election Expenses

Following April 28 Parliamentary By-elections and May 13 Sakrebulo By-elections of Zugdidi municipality, CEC analyzed expenses and based on the standard, prepared reports and placed them at the CEC website www.electioncosts.cec.gov.ge.

CEC Electronic Archive

To operate the unified database for enhancing institutional memory of Election Administration and preserve its permanent documentation, instead of converting 10 000 documents, as it was envisioned in the Action Plan, 18 418 documents were converted into electronic format and integrated into the electronic archive program. At present, 73 550 documents of the seven categories can be found in the electronic archive. For information see table (1).

TABLE 1.

Ν	Name of Document	Years of Issuing Document	Number of Document
ı	CEC decree	1995-2018	I 438
2	CEC ordinance	2000-2018	5 660
3	CEC Chairperson's ordinance	2001-2018	I 896
4	CEC Chairperson's order	2001-2018	9 516
5	CEC Secretary's ordinance	2006-2018	6 076
6	Protocol of CEC session	1999-2018	I 328
	Summary protocol of elections	2016 Parliamentary Election of Georgia	4 I49 (ongoing)
7		2014 Elections of Local Self-government Bodies	7 218
		2014 Mayoral Elections of Tbilisi City	I 307
		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	73 550

Employee Motivation and Satisfaction Research

On May 22-24, presentation of a three-year report of the research was held to encourage the CEC staff to engage in motivation and satisfaction of employees research. Compared to the year 2017, the number of employees participating in the study has increased but did not meet the required indicator (not less than 70% of the staff involved).

To reveal the level of CEC employee satisfaction and motivations, the survey was conducted through an anonymous questionnaire. In 2018, 37 (23%) employees from nine departments participated in the survey. 49% of employees assessed satisfaction in the workplace with 4.0 points out of 5.0 which means that they are satisfied. 76% of respondents assessed work motivation with 3.6 points which indicates that they are more motivated than neutral. Employees named the following motivations in the workplace: material incentives, relations with colleagues, working environment, recognition, promotion / career advancement, intangible encouragement, work, service achievements / successful projects.

GOAL 2. HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

A Plan to Retrain Employees

The training needs assessment was carried out to ensure continuous process of capacity development of election administration officials. As a consequence of needs identified, 2018 plan⁷ of employee development/trainings was developed. During the reporting period, six trainings were conducted in Georgia involving 81 employees, including 46 (57%) women and 35 (43%) men. For information on trainings conducted see table (2).

TABLE 2.

N	Training Name	Implementing Organization	Participant Structural Units
I	Official training course on mail server №Microsoft Course 20345-1A (Administering Microsoft Exchange Server 2016)		Voters List Formation and Informational Technologies Department
2	Training program active directory NMicrosoft Course 20742B (Server Software Module required for centralized management of computers)	- IT- Knowledge	
3	Effective communication and report preparations	Council of Europe European Academic Centre	All Structural Units of CEC Training Centre
4	English language learning course	CEC	All Structural Units of CEC Training Centre
5	Diplomatic protocol and business relations	Council of Europe European Academic Centre	CEC Members, All Structural Units of CEC Training Centre
6	Quality management system ISO 9001-2015	Ltd «Management Systems»	CEC Officials, All Structural Units of CEC

⁷ CEC Chairperson's order N01-22 of 1 February 2017.

Health Insurance of Election Administration Employees

In 2018, based on the research and will and the consent of the majority of the Election Administration (EA) employees, the insurance company "Global Benefits Georgia" was selected to insure EA employees and their families. The number of people insured totaled to 721, including 456 employees of EA and 265 their family members. It should be noted that employees pay their insurance from their own income.

Orientation Program "A Review of Election Procedures and General Training Course" for Newly Appointed/Selected Staff at Election Administration

According to the adopted system at CEC, eight orientation programs were conducted for new employees and interns selected in the contest. New employees familiarized with the working standards, procedures, code of ethics and internal regulation of the election administration. 93 new employees and interns including 59 (63%) women and 34 (37%) men took part in the orientation program.

The Training Centre implemented an orientation program "A Review of Election Procedures and General Training Course" for new staff and interns of the Election Administration. Participants got introduced with the following topics: history of elections in Georgia, electoral cycle, election administration and code of ethics, work of precinct and district election commissions and E-day procedures. Training Centre developed relevant study material for trainings which included electronic study program and practical exercises. The training was carried out with a combined methodology (verbal, practical, interactive). 12 new employees and interns participated in the training course, including, seven 58% women and five (42%) men.

Institute of Mentoring

Institute of Mentoring was adopted at CEC for professional experience sharing. During the reporting period, the rule of mentoring was developed and approved⁸.

Certification of the Election Administration Officials

To select qualified human resources for election administration, Training Centre conducted two certification exams of the election administration officials⁹. 2 521 tests were approved including 377 new tests for certification exams.

The tests with answer keys for preliminary public introduction was released at the CEC and the Training Center's websites. The tests included topics from Constitution of Georgia (600 questions), Organic Law of Georgia "Election Code of Georgia" (1800 questions), verbal part of general skills (100 questions) and mathematics (21 questions as sample).

Registration of applicants was carried out electronically in real time. 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 varied from the Constitution of Georgia (six questions) to 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, the applicant was handed over the certificate of election official on the spot.

To ensure accessibility of database of certified persons, Training Centre amended the regulation of certification of election officials, and in cooperation with the CEC, renewed registration program for certification exams. The renewed program enables the applicant of the exam to consent to issue his/her personal data by clicking at an additional button.

⁸ CEC Chairperson's order N01-162 of 18 December 2018.

⁹ 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".

To inform the population about the exam, the Training Centre ensured preparation of footage in Armenian and Azerbaijani languages and its placement at CEC and Training Centre's websites and social networks and airing in Public Broadcaster¹⁰. The footage was accompanied by sign language.

Two domestic non-governmental organizations "Public Advocacy" and "International Center for Democratic Initiatives" were registered to observe the exam.

The number of applicants for certification exams totaled to 2 315, of these 779 (34%) came at the exam and 194 (25%) participants passed the exam successfully, including, 127 (65%) women and 67 (35%) men. Of these 194 citizens who passed the test successfully, 165 have agreed to process and issue their personal data.





Certification Exam of Election Officials

Media and Communication Training for DEC Officials

On 20 September, Media and Communication Training was held for officials of District Election Commissions (DEC). Keti Maisuradze, IFES Chief of Party conducted the training. Ms Maisuradze spoke in detail about the TV interview and effective public speech, communication with media and rights of media representatives.

New Training Program "Developing Trainer's Professional Skills" for DEC Members

In the period of February 19- March 8, Training Centre carried out a new training program "Developing Trainer's Professional Skills". DEC members and employees of Election Processes Management Department familiarized with issues such as training planning and structure, program design, a methodology for training conduct, mechanisms of summarizing/assessing training, the technique to develop and use trainer's textbook/guide, professional and general skills of trainer and presentation skills.

The program was conducted in three stages and 108 members from 73 DECs took part in, including, 49 (45%) women and 59 (55%) men.

During April 23-25, 2018, Training Centre conducted the mentioned training program for members of the Supreme Election Commission of Autonomous Republic of Adjara and its office. I5 participants underwent training including 10 (67%) women and five (33%) men.

Training Course in "Legal Writing and Administrative Proceedings on Electoral Disputes" for DEC Members

On June 4-19, CEC and Training Centre in cooperation with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) conducted the training course "Legal Writing and Administrative Proceedings on Electoral Disputes".

Participants ranged from DEC chairs to deputy chairs and secretaries, as well as representatives of CEC Electoral Processes Management Department and Supreme Election Commission of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara. A combined method was used under the training, comprising electronic and practical training and envisaged the following topics: Legal writing; review of application/appeal and decision-making; prepare a decision with respect to administrative violations.

On the initiative of Training Centre, a new module on the management of emotions, difficult conversations, and conflict situations was developed and carried out by specialist at the invitation of Training Centre. Course in legal writing was conducted by the specialist at the invitation of IFES.

Total of 224 persons participated in the training course including 109 (49%) women and 115 (51%) men.

Conferences, Training Programs, Working Meetings and Observation Missions

In order to facilitate cooperation with the other countries' election administrations 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 (DECs) members, the Training Centre employees totaling to 17 persons, including eight (47%) women and nine (53%) men, took part in 21 international conferences and working meetings. For information please see table (3).

TABLE 3.

Date Theme Organizing Organization

23-24 January	Working meeting "Risk Management in Elections – Strengthening Resilience of Electoral Management Bodies"	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)/Sweden	
5-16 March	Training "Capacity Development in Election Management"	Government of India, Election Commission of India, India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM)/India	
10-11 April	Parliamentary Seminar on Misuse of Administrative Resources	The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), Venice Commission, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities/Albania	
8-10 April	Working Meeting "Elections to Peace"	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), Swiss Graduate Institute, Kofi Annan Foundation/ Switzerland	
16-17 April	International Conference "Promoting the Political Participation of Women with Disabilities"	OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR)	
19-20 April	15 th Annual Conference of Electoral Management Bodies "Security in Elections"	Minister of Local Government and Modernization of Norway, Venice Commission/ Norway	
25 April	I Ith EU-Georgia Human Rights Dialogue	European Union/Belgium	
3-6 May	Event dedicated to 100 th anniversary of Romania's Independence	Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania/ Romania	
The U.S. Georgia Strategic Partnership Commission's (SPC) Democracy and Governance Working Group Meeting		Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia	

28-31 May	I 6 th International Electoral Symposium	International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS), National Election Commission of Portugal/ Portugal		
18-28 June	International Course "Political Empowerment of Women"	Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation MASHAV/ Israel		
28 June	4 th Meeting of the EU Georgia Parliamentary Association Committee	European Union/Belgium		
26 July	Meeting of CEC Chairperson with Georgian Diaspora and representatives of diplomatic corps in Turkey	Consulate General of Georgia / Turkey		
5-10 August	Training Programme on "Capacity Development on Voter Registration"	Election Commission of India (ECI) and India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIDEM) /India		
18-25 August	Specialized Training Programme on ICT-based Election Management	Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB)/Republic of Korea		
5-7 September	27 th Annual Conference and General Assembly Meeting of the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO)	Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO) and Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Lithuania/ Lithuania		
10-21 September	Annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) of the participating states on implementation of OSCE human dimension commitments	The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ ODIHR)/Poland		
I-2 November	International Conference "Role of the Modern Technologies in Elections: Improvement of Standards, Public Trust" dedicated to the 25th Anniversary of the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan	The Central Election Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan / Republic of Kazakhstan		
28 November	Working Meeting on Countering the Misuse of Administrative Resources	Council of Europe, Venice Commission, Central Election Commission of the Republic of Moldova/ Republic of Moldova		
10 December	International Conference "Communication in Election Process and Transparency of Election Administration"	International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)/Ukraine		
2-14 December	Training "Capacity Development in Election Management"	Election Commission of India / India		

Employees of Election Administration and Training Centre monitored elections as international observers in 10 countries:

- Presidential Election in Azerbaijan;
- Parliamentary Election in Hungary;
- Presidential and Vice-presidential Elections in Colombia;
- Early Parliamentary Elections in Slovenia;
- 42nd General Elections of Ontario in Canada;
- Local Elections in the Republic of Korea;
- Elections of the President and Federal Congress of Mexico;
- Local Elections in Poland;
- Parliamentary Election in Lithuania;
- Early Elections to National Assembly in Armenia.

After participation in the observation missions, the participants presented reports describing the received experience, established business contacts and future recommendations. 21 employees participated in observation missions, including, nine (43%) women and 12 (57%) men.

GOAL 3. IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE

Modern Technologies in the Electoral Process

Deriving from the amendments made to the election code, CEC adopted the rule on appointing court sessions and involvement of third parties, receiving the court rulings and publicizing them on the CEC website. A new website was created ganchineba.cec.gov.ge where the relevant information was being published.

CEC took into account the recommendations of the international observer organizations on availability and publicity of decisions/legislative acts of District Election Commissions (DEC), and for Presidential Election, DEC session protocols and decisions upon their enforcement were published at the new CEC website which was specially created for these purposes.

Election Management Electronic System "EPMS"

During the reporting period, the CEC upgraded the Election Management Electronic System "EPMS". To ensure uninterrupted work of the system during April 28 Parliamentary By-elections and May 13 Sakrebulo By-elections of Zugdidi municipality and Presidential Election of Georgia, the following activities were carried out: during By-elections, addition of the modules for the appointment of district and precinct members by parties into electronic registration program prompted the creation of five modules; the following submodules of modules "Election subjects' management" and "Human resources" experienced the changes: "Registration", "Registered subjects", "Management of settings", "Precinct members". Information on online appointment was added to the first page of the module in order to simplify administering the appointment of DEC and PEC members. Making of domestic organizations 'observers' registration program prompted the creation of new modules in EPMS and six submodules were added to the system. Besides, two submodules were added to the "EPMS" to manage incident reports of E-day received from polling stations and additional two submodules for management of websites of DEC legislative acts and court rulings.

Saving a Large Amount of Data

The CEC in cooperation with companies "UGT" and "Huawei" purchased and installed the network attached storage (NAS) devices to update server. As a result of activities implemented, the capacity to store and duplicate existing information has improved in the CEC.

Online Registration Program

In 2018, CEC increased the capacity of the online registration program. In addition to registration of party-appointed proxies of electoral subjects and party members at all levels of election commissions, registered domestic observer organizations could also submit applications to appoint their observers and register them online.

CEC approved the submission of the applications, registration rules and terms for political parties to appoint commission members, parties/election blocs to appoint their representatives as well as for domestic observer organizations to appoint their observers online. The CEC also conducted trainings on how to use the online registration program for 24 domestic observer organizations and 150 members of 73 DECs.

After posting online a written notice that the documentation presented by electoral subjects for registration did not comply with legal requirements, the electoral subjects eliminated deficiencies through the online registration program. Besides, they familiarized with the documentation submitted to the CEC, CEC approved legal acts and information on the planned electoral activities.

It is noteworthy, that for the Election of President of Georgia, 19 parties appointed 1 354 representatives at the CEC and DECs and 62 502 representatives – at the PECs through the mentioned online registration program. 59 domestic observer organizations out of 62 (registered at the CEC) used the online registration program and appointed 47 960 observers at all levels of election commissions. Four authorized parties appointed 22 132 members at DECs and PECs through the online registration program.

Electronic Program of Planning and Reporting

To improve the process of planning, monitoring, and reporting, the CEC created an electronic program. By using this program, it is possible to develop strategic and annual action plans electronically as well as prepare/submit quarterly/annual reports of the activities prescribed by the action plan. It is planned to pilot the program in 2019.

A System against Cyber Attack

To minimize cyber-attacks, upgrade security systems, improve protective systems against non-sanctioned attacks, and prevent, certain changes were made in the existing configuration, and network and server monitoring system was adopted respectively. As a result of the implemented activity, the risk of violating the integrity of the information system is minimized.

Instant Delivery of E-Day Incidents and Monitoring System

For the presidential election of Georgia, CEC created and piloted instant delivery of E-day incidents and monitoring system via SMS from polling stations. The program was integrated into EPMS where relevant modules were added and the instruction created.

CEC Archive

Based on the recommendations of the CEC Internal Audit Department following the audit of the compliance and efficiency of the Registration and Administrative Department, CEC archive was equipped with refractory cabinets/stabilizers, as well as ion absorption device, and multifunctional scanners. The archival documents for permanent preservation have been placed in archival space and the relevant content and location description was made.

As a consequence of activity implemented, terms for storage of CEC archival documents are in line with norms required by the legislation.

Web-electronic Correspondence

In order to introduce the simplified service of requesting and receiving public information, CEC created a new version of web-electronic correspondence which is being piloted. By using this service, any citizen/organization may submit an application in electronic form and find information about the decisions made in real time.

Infrastructure of Election Administration

58 applications were submitted to the CEC on planning to repair the District Election Commissions' (DEC) administrative premises. Working group examined the situation on the spot in DECs and determined the priority of the works to be done. Also, the working group prepared the relevant cost estimates and gradually announced the tenders for the repair works.

25 electronic tenders were announced for repair works in DECs, and five agreements were signed through simplified procurement. Repair works are completed in 26 DECs and underway in four DECs. During the reporting period, a new building for Sighnaghi DEC was purchased and repair works are being completed. DEC reports indicate that due to repair works carried out, existing problems have been eradicated and working conditions have improved significantly.

To improve infrastructure, five infrastructural projects were implemented in CEC administrative building: rooms on the third floor of the building, session room on the fourth floor and the certification hall were rehabilitated. The heating system of the administrative building was renewed and special space for repair and inspection of computer equipment and devices was arranged on the seventh floor.

Set up of existing training infrastructure and procurement of all necessary inventory have been completed in CEC administrative building (on the fifth and six floors). 18 training sessions in 12 directions were conducted in the training infrastructure (study-residential complex) and was attended by 1075 participants.

Placing Polling Stations in Appropriate Buildings

On the initiative of CEC, three working meetings were held with entities¹¹ responsible for placing polling stations in appropriate buildings concerning defining/monitoring of compliance of adapted buildings/premises allocated for election purposes as well as the existing adapted buildings/premises with the standard.

With regard to adapting buildings/premises for election purposes, the following issues were identified: lack of classrooms at certain public schools, of 3141 public schools about 50% is damaged and ramp cannot be installed, and local-self government bodies lack sufficient financial resources for adapting stated-owned buildings/premises.

In connection with defining compliance of adapted buildings/premises with the standard, CEC in cooperation with domestic non-governmental organizations¹², developed a monitoring questionnaire. The questionnaire included the description of external perimeter of the building, entrance of the building, and the internal perimeter of the building. Also, video instruction was prepared. Through questionnaire a certain information was collected from responsible entities, though, a number of adapted buildings/premises in line with standard was not defined.

II Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia, Tbilisi City Hall and and Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia.

¹² Questionnaire of moniroting was prepared in cooperation with non-governmental organization "Accessible environment for everyone".

Additionally, CEC through the DECs collected information on adapted polling stations which was published at the CEC website. For presidential election of Georgia, I 268 (35%) polling stations (simple adaptation -512, ramp -756) out of 3 637 located in 73 DECs throughtout Georgia were adapted.

Material-technical Resources

During the reporting period, CEC initiated 13 requests for extension of administrative buildings or part of the building, in some cases, the extension of expired temporary premises, and submitted to the National Agency of State Property, as well as, to other municipalities. All initiated requests of the CEC were satisfied.

Old type metal polling booths, diesel-generator, 22 862 units of printed goods, 96 units listed on the CEC balance, various inventory and furniture damaged and unusable for further use, as well as, office equipment and installations of 1 117 types unusable for further use were handed over to the Service Agency of the Ministry of Finance.

Full description of CEC main storeroom and printing house was carried out prompting updating of the electronic accounting system of assets/reserves. At the order of CEC Chairperson, at each storeroom was appointed a materially liable person and relevant material liability agreements were signed.

Fueling of motor vehicles which are on the CEC balance was ensured, as well as timely response in case of insurance accidents and providing vehicles with technical services.

State Procurements

In 2018, as part of the state procurement plan, 101 electronic tenders were announced, including, 11 were not held, none of the participants of the seven tenders met the requirements of the tender, two tenders were suspended.

During the reporting period, one tender was appealed. Board of Disputes made a decision to satisfy the complaint. The savings generated from tenders amounted to 401 098 GEL.

CEC Printing House

These documents were printed in the CEC printing house in addition to other documentation:

- Voter lists and forms of lists, voter cards, assignments and tests for training of DEC and PEC members for April 28, Parliamentary By-elections of Georgia and Presidential Election (I and II rounds) of Georgia; the summary protocols of elections;
- Voter lists, assignments and tests for training of DEC and PEC members, summary protocols
 of elections for May 13 Sakrebulo By-elections of Zugdidi municipality;
- Materials for grant competition of the Training Centre;
- Materials for the Training Course "Legal Writing and Administrative Proceedings on Electoral Disputes";
- Materials for 8th Annual Meeting of Election Management Bodies.

GOAL 4. STRENGTHENING IMAGE

Image-Advertising Campaign

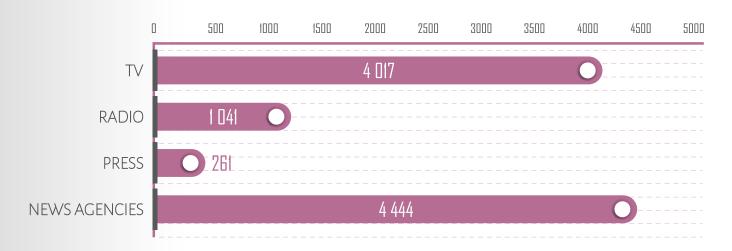
During the reporting period, the image-advertising concept of the organization was renewed. It aims at strengthening communication between election administration and voters, promotion of election administration activities, awareness raising and strengthening the image. In the framework of the concept noted, nine informational/image footages were prepared about CEC work including basic educational and specialized training programs, offered by the CEC and Training Centre to youth for supporting the development of electoral culture. Footages were aired on central, so on regional TV and radio stations. In addition, during the whole year, CEC and DEC representatives were participating in the TV and radio programs and informing people on important issues including activities carried out by CEC and other pressing issues.

During the reporting period, administering of the social networks of the CEC and CEC Chairperson was regularly maintained where all the novelties of election administration were published. The questions posed by users were timely replied and the number of questions has significantly increased during the year.

Media Monitoring

The CEC was monitoring daily the media news regarding CEC, and generally, political news of the country. Media monitoring was prepared on average twice a day and mailed to Commission Members and employees of the CEC office. Monitoring included about 70 Georgian news agencies, all leading print media outlets and news programs of TV stations as well as programs on political topics.

The CEC most frequently was mentioned by news agencies and on TV and less on Radio and Press.



100 Years Anniversary of First Democratic Elections

During the entire 2018, CEC according to the concept of activities developed in cooperation with Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, was holding and participating in the events dedicated to the 100 Years Anniversary of First Democratic Elections.

On May 26, CEC joined celebrations dedicated to 100 years anniversary of the establishment of first Democratic Republic of Georgia. CEC pavilion was set up in a special area on Rustaveli Avenue, in Tbilisi, displaying information about first universal democratic elections in Georgia. CEC representatives were informing people about elections and electoral history of Georgia. CEC Chairperson, Tamar Zhvania personally detailed viewers on Elections of Constituent Assembly. Visitors of CEC pavilion were awarded a publication "First Universal Democratic Elections in Independent Georgia".

Biographies of members of the first election commission were prepared and printed in Georgian and English and then placed in CEC library. Also, information concerning biographies is available at the CEC website¹³.

On November 22, CEC representatives together with students of Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Davit Aghmashenebeli University of Georgia, Kant's Academy and graduates of Electoral Development School, celebrated 100 years anniversary of the CEC. Tamar Zhvania, CEC Chairperson discussed the importance of elections with young people. Head of Department of the Center for Studies of the Democratic Republic of Georgia at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University Library, informed young people about the composition of the first election administration of Georgia, elections back then, and ongoing democratic processes. The youth visited photo-exhibition of biographies of the members of the first election commission.

Brochure "Election Administration 2018"

To inform the public, CEC prepared an informational brochure on the achievements and challenges of Election Administration (EA) of Georgia. The brochure reflected the key directions and priorities in terms of the development of EA, namely, informing voters, electoral and civic/educational programs, safe and accessible electoral environment, the advancement of new technologies and innovative services. The brochure also displayed information on first universal democratic elections held in independent Georgia and 100 years anniversary of the Central Election Commission of Georgia. The brochure was posted on the CEC website as well as 5 200 hard copies (5000 in Georgian and 200 copies in English) of the brochure were printed.

¹³ Please see history of elections of Georgia at the following link: http://history.cesko.ge/index.html.

Offer Consultation Mechanisms and Share Good Practice with Other Election Administrations

On June 25, within the study visit organized by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), officials of Central Election Commission (CEC) of Georgia and its Training Centre met with Moldovan and Mongolian delegations.

Election Administration of Georgia shared experience on financing political parties with representatives of Election Administration of Moldova and its Audit service, as well as representatives of Audit Service of Mongolia. Director of CEC Training Centre introduced its activities in terms of development and funding of political parties to participants.

Annual Meeting of Election Management Bodies

On February 28 – March 1, the 8th Annual Meeting of Election Management Bodies was held in Georgia on "Technologies and Innovations in Citizen's Engagement". The Central Election Commission of Georgia organized the meeting in cooperation with the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS) and International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).



Representatives of 21 EMBs , 10 international organizations , U.S. Embassy in Georgia and four vendor companies oriented on electoral technologies, totaling to 105 participants were present at the meeting. In 2018, for the first time, EMB representatives from Colombia, Tunisia, Ecuador, and Bangladesh joined the annual meeting.

Participants of the meeting discussed the following topics: innovative services and effective electoral procedures, electoral integrity, inclusive elections, involvement of stakeholders and effective communications, and electoral dispute resolution.

Participant countries: Bangladesh, Belarus, Bulgaria, Ecuador, Estonia, India, Jordan, Colombia, Kenia, Latvia, Mexico, Moldova, Pakistan, Romania, Republic of Korea, Georgia, Tunisia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan.

Participant international organizations: United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Eastern European Centre for Multiparty Democracy (EECMD), United Nations in Georgia (UN), The Delian Project - Canada, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR), Council of Europe (CoE), International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS), International Republican Institute (IRI), National Democratic Institute (NDI).

¹⁶ Vendor companies oriented on electoral technologies: Indra (Spain), Laxton Group (China), Smartmatic (the Netherlands), Voatz (U.S.).



International Working Meeting "Considering the Possibilities of Using Electoral Technologies in Electoral Process of Georgia"

On March 5, on the initiative of the CEC and Training Centre and in cooperation with International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS), international working meeting "Considering the possibilities of using electoral technologies in electoral process of Georgia" was held. I 48 representatives of state entities, political parties, international and domestic non-governmental organizations participated in

the working meeting.

During the working meeting, utilizing used technologies for improving vote counting process, voter biometric registration, safe, transparent and financially affordable elections, electronic voting and vote counting procedures, the role of technologies during the electronic vote counting process, were discussed.



In the framework of the event, international experts and representatives of vendor companies oriented on electoral technologies delivered presentations and demonstrated how modern technologies are used in practice. Participants received in-depth information on electoral technologies adopted in other countries throughout the world during the Q&A session.

Giorgi Sharabidze Deputy Chairperson of the CEC introduced participants to EA's experience, including technology projects for voter and stakeholder's engagement.

Participants of international conference, international experts and vendor companies oriented on electoral technologies: International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS), Brunel University London; vendor companies oriented on electoral technologies: Smartmatic (U.S.), Electoral Services International Inc. – ESI (Canada), Voatz (U.S.), Indra (Spain).

Social Campaigns

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

World Down Syndrome Day – CEC representatives participated in the activities dedicated to the World Down Syndrome Day and attended the conference "What I Bring to My Community" which concerned the existing challenges in terms of employment of the persons with disabilities. The CEC representatives also joined the campaign "LotsOfSocks".

Holly Easter – CEC and DEC representatives provided help to the socially vulnerable 19 families, including, socially vulnerable families living in Tserovani settlement for internally displaced persons and internally displaced families as a result of August 8 War.

International Day of Children – On International Day of Children, CEC representatives in cooperation with blood bank of M. Iashvili Medical Center donated blood for the children with leukemia.

The campaign "I Build Pegas" – CEC employees participated in the campaign concerning building Rehabilitation Center "Pegas" for Children and Adolescents with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Exhibition and Selling of Handmaid Items – CEC employees attended exhibition and selling of handmaid items prepared at social enterprise and organized by "Centre for Democratic Development and Initiatives"

Earth Day – Members of N39 Aspindza District Election Commission participated in the cleanup campaign in Aspindza municipality.

Christmas – New Year – Tamar Zhvania, CEC Chairperson, representatives of CEC structural units and DEC members presented New Year gifts to nine socially vulnerable families in Tbilisi and in regions.







STRATEGIC PILLAR 2: CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION

Goal 1. Implementation of Civic and Voter Educational Programs

Information campaign during election period

For Presidential Election, the CEC defined main priority areas for the information campaign. The areas involved informing voters and other electoral stakeholders and communication with media. The aim of the information campaign was to inform the citizens of Georgia 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.

For Presidential Election, the CEC prepared 17 TV and 10 audio ads that were broadcast by national and regional broadcasters, radio, as well as at five movie theatres. The CEC placed 63 advertising banners on the websites of national and regional news agencies and 17 outdoor banners.

The CEC published 13 informational statements. Three of them were about attempted discrediting the Election Administration and 10 were related to election registrations, and activities envisaged by the schedule and timeframes.

The CEC published 174 press-releases and five newsletters about the ongoing processes of the Election Administration (EA) on its web-site and social network. It is noteworthy, that during the Presidential Election, disinformation aimed at discrediting the Election Administration was widely disseminated through the social network.

During the election period, 37 news briefings were held at the CEC. Six news briefings were dedicated to disinformation about the Election Administration and 15 were about various procedural issues (registration of voters, composition of DECs and PECs, procedures and timeframes of registration of candidates, printing ballot papers, photo/video recording regulations, rules of election participation for the voters living abroad) and 16 news briefings were held on E-Day (I and II rounds) concerning the polling process, voter turnout and preliminary results.

On October 27, a day before the Presidential Elections, the CEC Chairperson held a conclusive news briefing, where she informed the public that the EA was ready to hold the elections with high professional standards and in line with the legislation. The CEC Chairperson called on voters to actively participate in the elections. She also called on all electoral stakeholders to respect public interests, act with a high sense of responsibility and adhere to the rule of law.

During the election period, the CEC officials, spokesperson, and other CEC representatives made approximately 100 comments about election activities, procedures, and other issues. 20 of them were response to false and unsubstantiated statements made about the EA and the CEC Chairperson.

Awareness Raising Training Course "Elections and Young Voter" for XI-XII Grade Students of Public Schools

The CEC and the Training Centre implemented awareness raising training course "Elections and Young Voter" in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia to raise civic awareness and civic responsibilities among young people. XI-XII grade students of public schools familiarized with important issues such as the history of elections and modern times, elections and democracy, electoral administration and electorate, and electoral stakeholders. At the end of the course, the students conducted the mock election, as part of which the winning slogan focusing on the protection of the environment was identified.

The project was implemented in 108 public schools of five self-governing cities and 1 857 youngsters took part in, including, 1 219 (66%) women and 638 (34%) men.

Education Semester Course "Electoral Law" at Higher Education Institutions

In framework of the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoU) signed between CEC, its Training Centre and Higher Education Institutions in Georgia, in 2018, Training Centre conducted study course in the field of electoral law to students of Law School, and students from Legal, Social Sciences, Business and Law Studies, Science and Art Faculties of Partner Higher Education Institutions. The course aimed at deepening the necessary professional knowledge of students in electoral law, developing their practical skills and raising their civic awareness. Training Centre prepared text-books and practical textbook along with electronic presentations.



In the framework of study course, students familiarized with the following issues: concept of elections, types of elections and election periodicity, electoral systems, sources and principles of Georgia's electoral law, electoral processes and electoral process management body, competences and workplace rules of election administration of Georgia, electoral stakeholders, voter

Mock Trial

registration, pre-election campaign (agitation), informational coverage of pre-election campaign, funding of elections, voting time and location, opening polling stations, procedures to be performed before voting, voting process, closing polling stations, summarization of voting results, summarization of voting and election results, electoral disputes, election of President of Georgia, election of Parliament of Georgia, election of Supreme Council of Adjara Autonomous Republic, elections of representative body of self-governing cities and self-governing communities — Sakrebulo, elections of mayors of self-governing cities (Gamgebeli of self-governing community), referendum, plebiscite.

As part of the program, during the period of June 2-12, mock trials were conducted involving Law faculty students.

The project was implemented at 13 higher education institutions¹⁸ with the participation of 633 students, including 390 (62%) female and 243 (38%) male students.

Information Course for Young Voter (Freshmen and Sophomore)

In the framework of the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoU) with Higher Education Institutions, CEC and Training Centre conducted information course "Informed young voter" in two stages to boost civic awareness of young voters as well as their active involvement in elections. Students tackled issues ranging from the concept of elections and its importance in the process of democratization of the country to international commitments and principles, the role of voter in the electoral processes, the role of electoral stakeholders in the electoral process during the presidential election of Georgia. Information course was implemented in the capital so in regions at 12 universities¹⁹ attended by 701 students, including, 523 (77%) women and 178 (23%) men.

Educational Project "Electoral Development School"

The CEC and the Training Centre, with support of the Council of Europe (CoE) and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), implemented another stage of project "Electoral Development School". In 2018, the project was implemented in 25 "Electoral Development Schools" in Tbilisi and 23 other municipalities²⁰, including, the areas densely populated by ethnic minorities and internally displaced people, as well as, in border regions/municipalities.

¹⁸ Gori State Teaching University, Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University, Guram Tavartkiladze Teaching University, Caucasus International University, Samtskhe-Javakheti State University, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli State University, Ilia State University, Grigol Robakidze State University, East European University, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi Open University, Davit Aghmashenebeli University of Georgia.

¹⁹ Program was carried out in 12 Higher Education Institutions: Guram Tavartkiladze Teaching University, Gori State Teaching University, Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli State University, East European University, Grigol Robakidze State University, Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani University, Samtskhe-Javakheti State University, Caucasus International University, Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, Sokhumi State University, Davit Aghmashenebeli University of Georgia, and Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University.

Tbilisi, Gurjaani, Sighnaghi, Telavi, Akhmeta, Rustavi, Gardabani, Marneuli, Dusheti, Gori, Akhalgori (Tserovani/IDPs settlement), Borjomi, Akhaltsikhe, Ambrolauri, Sachkhere, Zestaponi, Kutaisi, Samtredia, Ozurgeti, Senaki, Zugdidi, Poti, Batumi, Kobuleti.

The 10-day course offered to young citizens aged 18-24 the following topics: electoral systems, election administration, Elections of the Constituent Assembly, principles of democratic elections, elected bodies in Georgia, electoral stakeholders, transparency and accessibility of elections and gender equality.

CEC hired 33 successful graduates of the project for two months at the CEC Electoral Processes Management Department, of these 10 were hired in Tbilisi and 23 graduates received experience in DECs.

472 young people participated in the educational project, including, 311 (66%) women and 161 (34%) men.









Educational Project "Electoral Development School"

Educational Project "Election Administrator's Course"

The CEC and the Training Centre implemented a project "Election Administrator's Course" under a renewed concept that envisaged conducting tailored programs. The program aimed to raise civic awareness on electoral issues as well as to prepare qualified human resources for the Election Administration. As part of three-day training course for potential PEC members, participants studied the following topics: procedures to be implemented before voting, polling process, closing of a polling station, procedures to be implemented before opening a ballot box, opening of a ballot box, procedures to be performed before drawing up a summary protocol on voting results, drawing up a summary protocol on voting results, publicity of a summary protocol.

For the first time this year, the tailored program was offered to potential DEC lawyers. During the two-day information—educational course developed by Training Centre, students familiarized with the following topics: reasons for electoral disputes, identification of procedural risks at polling stations during the election day, administrative proceedings, organization and conduct of DEC sessions, preparation of decisions of DEC/DEC Chairperson on electoral disputes, a form of a statement of defense and other information.

The project "Election Administrator's Course" for potential PEC members, was carried out by 87 trainers retrained by Training Centre in Tbilisi and all municipalities. A total of 5 551 individuals participated in the course, including 4 470 (81%) women and 1 081 (19%) men. The project "Election Administrator's Course" for potential DEC lawyers was implemented in Tbilisi with the participation of 128 individuals, including 77 (60%) women and 51 (40%) men.

Informing Out-of-country Voters

During the reporting period, the CEC Chairperson in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Georgia, held meetings for the representatives of Georgian diaspora at Webster University, Athens, Greece, and the Center of Georgian Culture, Istanbul, Turkey. The events commemorated the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the First Democratic Republic of Georgia. The CEC Chairperson presented a photo exhibition "History of the Georgian Elections", informed the voters living abroad on the Georgian electoral systems, services available for them, Presidential Election of Georgia and the Election Administration.

A special banner was placed on the CEC website which included important information for the Georgian citizens residing abroad. Within the framework of the campaign, an informational flyer and video footages were prepared and posted with the support of MFA of Georgia.

The CEC posted a special video message of Tamar Zhvania the CEC Chairperson on the social network and official websites of the CEC and MFA of Georgia. In the above video message, she answered interesting questions of voters living abroad.

Information Campaign "Talk to Voters"

In 2018, information campaign "Talk to Voters" was run for citizens of Georgia living in the country as well as abroad. The campaign aimed to raise voter awareness with regard to the Election of President of Georgia, to improve voters' communication with the Election Administration and inform them on services offered.

The information campaign was implemented in two stages. During the first stage of the campaign (May-June), 335 members of 73 DECs and 400 volunteers held 263 meetings at municipality centers and public gathering places. Also, Chairpersons of 73 DECs organized 76 public meetings. The voters and stakeholders were informed on electoral rights, Presidential Election of Georgia, electoral process, history of elections and the Election Administration activities. I 681 interested persons participated in the meetings at DECs.

During the first stage of the campaign, information flyers were spread about the services offered by the Election Administration and the 100th anniversary of the First Democratic Elections.

During the second stage of the campaign (September-October), representatives of the Election Administration held 97 promotional events "Find Yourself – Find Your Polling Station" in Tbilisi and regions aiming to verify voters' personal data in the Unified Voters List.

As part of the campaign, the EA representatives helped citizens to check their data and locations of their polling stations using mobile phones, tablets, and quick payment terminals, and they distributed informational flyers and other CEC branded materials.







For the first time in 2018, a new initiative was introduced within the framework of this campaign in order to encourage the participation of young voters; first-time voters received a letter from the CEC Chairperson sent to their registration address.

For Presidential Election of Georgia (I and II rounds), representatives of the CEC and the Training Centre held 19 promotional events "Come to Elections". Also, open-air events "Election Umbrellas" were organized on the public holidays of Tbilisoba and Mtskhetoba. As part of the campaign, mock elections were held and citizens placed symbolic cards "I am an Active Citizen" in a ballot box.







Information Campaign "Talk to Voters"



GOAL 2. INCREASE LEVEL OF ELECTORAL CULTURE

Study Programs for Electoral Stakeholders

Memorandum of Cooperation

On May 3, on the initiative of Parliament of Georgia, Memorandum of Cooperation (MoU)²¹ was signed between Office of Parliament of Georgia, CEC Training Centre and 10 Educational Institutions of state entities. Signatories of the MoU agreed on the implementation of joint learning-educational projects, sharing resources and supporting preparing highly competent staff.

Political Party Capacity Building Programme

For supporting political party capacity building, at the decision of grant competition commission, CEC Training Centre funded 15 NGOs with 1 414 247.5 GEL. Training course for party representatives included the following issues: party structure, management and legal status, political culture in elections, debates and electoral ethics, equal opportunities of parties and candidates in the electoral process, mechanisms of public relations, role of party in ensuring safe electoral environment, internal party mechanisms for increasing women involvement, management of personnel and volunteers.

Training Centre as an in-kind contribution conducted training on the following modules: workplace rule of the election administration, organizing elections and polling day, reasons and technique for drawing up complaint/application, as well as supporting study program with sign language.

I 858 representatives of 44 political parties (18 qualified and 26 non-qualified parties) underwent information-educational program in 11 regions throughout Georgia.

²¹ Signatories of Memorandum: Training Centre, Public Defender's Office of Georgia, Levan Mikeladze Diplomatic Training and Research Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Davit Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia, Penitentiary and Probation Training Center (PPTC), Training Center of Justice of Georgia, Academy of the Ministry of Finance, Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration and Georgian Academy of Agricultural Sciences.

Trainings of Representatives of Local Self-governments and Regional Administrations

From August 24 through September 5, the CEC and the Training Centre conducted training "Role of local self-government bodies in the election process and prohibition of the use of administrative resources". The following issues were discussed at the training, namely the role of municipal authorities in the electoral processes, credibility of elections and the role of civil servants (restrictions applicable to civil servants), prohibition of abuse of office or official status, prohibition of the use of administrative resources, and prohibition of use of budgetary funds.

174 officials from all local self-government bodies - Sakrebulos, Executive Bodies - Mayoral Offices and Regional Administrations, including 105 (60%) women and 69 (40%) men participated in the training.

Working Meeting with Representatives of Executive Bodies

On September 6-7, CEC and Training Centre conducted working meeting with representatives of executive authorities, state sub-agencies, the State Audit Office, the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia and heads of the structural units in the field of law of State Security Service of Georgia, as well as representatives of Inter-agency Commission Secretariat at the Ministry of Justice. Participants of the meeting discussed the administrative resources, the prohibition of using budgetary funds and participation of public servants in pre-election agitation. Representatives of Inter-agency Commission Secretariat at the Ministry of Justice introduced the activities and powers of the Secretariat to participants.

25 public servants participated in the working meeting.

Study-information Meeting with Media Representatives

On October 2-7, CEC and Training Centre with support of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), conducted a study-information meeting with representatives of central and regional media outlets.

In the frame of the meeting, participants familiarized with the following issues: novelties in election legislation, the role of media in the electoral process, polling day and regulations concerning photo and video shooting, promoting the inclusive electoral environment and gender equality, and misuse of administrative resources. Representatives of the IFES and the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs informed journalists on a number of issues such as international standards of election safety, legislative mechanisms for ensuring the safe electoral environment, international experience in covering the elections, and main schemes of election coverage. Text-books developed by Training Centre were handed over to media representatives for the presidential election of Georgia.

21 representatives from 19 central media outlets, including, 18 (86%) women and 3 (14%) men participated in study-information meetings. Also, 61 representatives from regional media, namely, from 25 TV/Radio stations and 26 print/online media outlets, including 44 (72%) women and 17 (28%) men were present at the meetings.

Study-Information Meeting with Representatives of Domestic Observer Organizations

On September 19-21, representatives of CEC Training Centre, International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and Ministry of Internal Affairs, introduced representatives of domestic observer organizations registered for elections with amendments made to the election legislation and discussed the following topics: polling day and electoral operations management, powers of electoral stakeholders, basis and technique for drawing up E-day complaint/application, voter personal data protection, summarizing election results as well as legislative mechanisms for safe electoral environment and international standards of electoral safety.

49 representatives from domestic non-governmental organizations, including 26 (53%) women and 23 (47%) men participated in the study-information meetings.

Awareness-Raising and Training Course for Penitentiary System Employees

On October 15-16, CEC Training Centre in cooperation with the Training Center for Penitentiary and Probation System delivered awareness-raising and training course for the representatives of the Penitentiary System. Participants familiarized with the following issues: organizing election processes at detention and penitentiary facilities, the rule of posting agitation materials and informing accused, convicts having right to vote, procedures of voting at polling stations and via a mobile ballot box. Training participants received manuals developed by the CEC Training Centre and the Training Center for Penitentiary and Probation System Employees.

28 employees of the penitentiary system underwent awareness-raising and training course, including 7 (25%) women and 21 (75%) men.

Educational/Informational Meeting with Representatives of Electoral Subjects

On October 23-25, the CEC and the Training Centre with the support of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) conducted an educational/informational meeting with parties/initiative groups and representatives of presidential candidates registered for the Election of President of

Georgia. Participants familiarized with novelties of election legislation and reviewed the following issues: polling day and electoral operations management, powers of electoral stakeholders, basis and technique for drawing up E-day complaint/application, voter personal data protection and summarization of polling results.

Representatives of the IFES, the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia and the Training Centre introduced the legislative mechanisms of ensuring safe electoral environment and international standards of election safety to participants.

47 representatives of 14 electoral subjects participated in the educational/informational meeting, including 26 (49%) women and 23 (51%) men.

Activities for Promotion of Elections

Youth Debate - Club 2018

Competition "Youth Debate – Club 2018" was implemented in partnership with eight NGOs funded under the grant competition announced on February 8 and was aimed at raising awareness of young voters and promoting civic engagement in the electoral process.

Youth Debate - Club was implemented in three stages: group stage — eight teams took part in the contest and four winners were identified and debate topic was "Should be active suffrage allowed from the age of 16?" Semi-final - four group winners at group level confronted one another and debate topic was "Should active suffrage be mandatory?" Final — two groups having won the semi-final confronted one another — Non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entity Good Governance Institute and Non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) Rehabilitation and Development Charity Foundation "Tanaziari" and debate topic was "Is E-voting a good method?".

The jury identified a winning team. The jury was composed of officials of CEC, Training Centre, and Tbilisi DEC, as well as representatives of domestic and international NGOs. Rehabilitation and Development Charity Foundation "Tanaziari" team became the winner. Certificates were awarded to the participants.

Electoral Library

The electoral library was established at the CEC to create institutional memory of the Election Administration. The library contains electoral texts and materials reflecting the history of administration. International awards received by the CEC in various years are located in the library. With the establishment of electoral library, archiving of documents/artifacts of the exhibition and of library foundation and their protection was possible.

Open Door Day

During the reporting period, CEC held nine Open Door Days for representatives of various educational institutions and non-governmental organizations:

- I February for students of law faculty from Sokhumi State University on Global Elections
 Day;
- I I April and 29 May for students of "Kant's Academy";
- 16 May for representatives of "Youth Empowerment Lab";
- 25 May for representatives of "Centre for the Studies of Ethnicity and Multiculturalism";
- 26 June for representatives of "Good Governance Institute";
- 6 July for participants of the project of an organization "Georgian-European Educational Center";
- 22 November for students from of Tbilisi State University, Davit Aghmashenebeli University, Kant's Academy, and graduates of Electoral Development Schools;
- 13 December for students of the Civic Club of Niko Nikoladze School.

In the framework of the program, participants met with CEC Chairperson and other officials and familiarized with activities of structural units and Training Centre. Also, participants received information on implemented projects of election administration and on importance of elections as well as on organizing the electoral process. In addition, they participated in mock elections carried out by the Training Centre. The youth visited photo exhibition "Election History of Georgia" and electoral library at the CEC.











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Informational Campaign for Young Voters

In cooperation with 11 NGOs having won the grant competition announced on April 16, Training Centre representatives held meetings with young people in Tbilisi and regions²² for boosting active involvement of the youth aged 18-21 in presidential election of Georgia. At the meetings, young people received information on services offered by elections administration and voting rights. Also, mock elections were held to familiarize the youth with practical information.

Supporting the Conduct of Internal Elections at Various Organizations/Facilities

CEC within its powers provided 39 organizations with technical support for conducting elections and temporarily borrowed electoral inventory for these purposes.

²² Informational campaign was held in Tbilisi, Kakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Shida Kartli, Mtskheta Mtianeti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Imereti, Ratcha-Lechkhumi, and Kvemo Svaneti, Samegrelo, Zemo Svaneti, Guria and Adjara.

GOAL 3. SUPPORT CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT

Grant Competitions

For presidential election of Georgia, based on the ordinances of the CEC, three grant competitions were announced on 8 February 2018, 16 April and 17 July respectively. Based on the decision of the Grants Competition Commission, 68 projects of domestic non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were funded with a total funding of 2 381 571 GEL by Training Centre.

62 grant applications were submitted for **grant competition announced on 8 February.** Based on the decision of the Grants Competition Commission²³, 23 projects of domestic NGOs were funded with total funding of 1 653 018 GEL by Training Centre, which according to two priority directions defined²⁴ by the CEC were distributed as follows:

First Direction: Young voter and civic activity in the public-political (electoral) process. 44 applications were submitted in this direction and eight projects of domestic NGOs were funded with total funding of 238 770.50 GEL.

Second Direction: Capacity building of political parties. 18 applications were submitted in this direction and 15 projects of domestic NGOs were funded with total funding of 1 414 247.50 GEL.

Training Centre as an in-kind contribution, trained representatives of political parties in the process of grant projects implementation.

64 grant applications were submitted for **grant competition announced on 16 April.** Based on the decision of the Grants Competition Commission, 29 projects of domestic NGOs were funded with total funding of 545 761 GEL by Training Centre, which according to the three priority directions defined²⁵ by the CEC were distributed as follows:

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

²⁴ CEC N9/2018 ordinance of 22 January 2018

²⁵ CEC N93/2018 ordinance of 6 April 2018

First Direction: Informing voters for the presidential election of Georgia. I I projects of domestic NGOs were funded in this direction. The budget totaled to 208 156.5 GEL.

Second Direction: Support young voter awareness raising and increase civic engagement in the 2018 presidential election of Georgia. II projects of domestic NGOs were funded in this direction. The budget totaled to 208 310.1 GEL.

Third Direction: Support engagement of vulnerable groups and women in the presidential election of Georgia. Seven projects of domestic NGOs were funded in this direction. The budget totaled to 129 294.4 GEL.

Based on the Grant Competition Commission's decision of **grant competition announced on**17 July, the Training Centre financed projects in one direction defined²⁶ by the CEC:

Competition theme: Local broadcaster for informing voters and boosting their awareness.

35 applications were submitted regarding this topic and 16 projects of domestic NGOs were funded with total funding of 182 792 GEL.

Ensuring Budgetary Financing of Political Parties

To support political party development and create a healthy competitive political system, pursuant to the "Political Union of Citizens" of the Organic Law of Georgia, CEC and Training Centre ensured funding of political parties, including, to for imlpementation²⁷ of trainings, conferences, regional projects, voter civic and electoral educational projects and organize official visits. For information please see table (4).

²⁶ CEC N149/2018 ordinance of 13 July 2018

²⁷ For information on political parties/electoral subjects funding see CEC portal at the following link: https://funding.cec.gov.ge.

TABLE4.

N	Name of Political Union of Citizens	Funded by CEC	Funded by Foundation	In Total
1	Georgian Dream-Democratic Georgia	2 080 940	336 676	2417616
2	Free Democrats	512 196	168 340	680 536
3	Labour Party of Georgia	472 812	168 340	641 152
4	United National Movement	991 728	168 340	1 160 068
5	Christian-Conservative Party of Georgia	378 852	112 224	491 076
6	National-Democratic Party	390 428	112 224	502 652
7	European Georgia	1 036 128	168 340	I 204 468
8	Movement for Free Georgia	507 180	168 340	675 520
9	Democratic Movement – United Georgia	241 620	84 168	325 788
10	Free Georgia	87 024	28 056	115 080
11	Christian-Democratic Movement	241 620	83 260	324 880
12	Alliance of Patriots of Georgia	I 270 992	336 676	I 607 668
13	Union of Georgian Traditionalists	87 024	28 056	115 080
14	Tavisufleba – Zviad Gamsakhurdias Gza	87 024	28 056	115 080
15	Political Movement of Armed Veterans and Patriots of Georgia	87 024	28 056	115 080
16	New Christian-Democrats	87 024	28 056	115 080
17	Movement State for People	195 516	84 168	279 684
18	Civic Platform – New Georgia	195 516	84 168	279 684
19	Industry will Save Georgia	634 67	168 340	802 507

Meetings with CEC Working Groups

Technical Working Group

Six technical working group (TWG) meetings were held for informing electoral stakeholders at the CEC. In the context of the meetings, participants discussed projects and activities implemented in the field of elections. Regular meetings were held in cooperation with the European Union and United Nations Development Programme. Representatives of domestic non-governmental and international organizations, diplomatic corps accredited in Georgia working on electoral issues were participating in the meetings.

Working Group on Ethnic Minority Issues

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

- February 8 activities implemented by election administration to inform and engage ethnic minorities in 2017 Municipal Elections. 28 members of the working group attended the meeting;
- December 18 challenges and recommendations with regard to participation of ethnic minority voters in the presidential election of Georgia. 15 members of the working group attended the meeting.

Working Group on Issues Related to Persons with Disabilities

During the reporting period, four meetings of the working group on issues related with persons with disabilities (PWD) were held at CEC on the following topics:

- February 16 activities carried out by election administration to engage persons with disabilities in the electoral process. 22 members of the working group attended the meeting;
- May II discussion of possible legislative amendments for voters using wheelchair regarding accessibility of polling stations;
- October 17 meeting to present an interim report concerning activities of PWDs and about monitoring carried out by responsible entities for adapting polling stations in accordance with the standard, for the presidential election of Georgia. 25 members of the working group attended the meeting;
- December 17 challenges and recommendations with regard to participation of PWDs in the presidential election of Georgia. 17 members of the working group attended the meeting.





CEC created working groups meetings

Meeting with Domestic NGOs Regarding Legislative Proposals Submitted to Parliament of Georgia

On 5 April, CEC introduced the amendments to be made to Organic Law of Georgia "Election Code of Georgia" prepared by Election Administration to representatives of domestic NGOs. The document as the legislative proposals were submitted to the legislative body for further discussion. CEC Chairperson and other officials informed participants of the meeting on the necessity of the amendments and the need to improve the legislative framework.

Meetings with International Partners Held on the CEC Premises

Meeting with Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

On February 22, Tamar Zhvania, CEC Chairperson met with an ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, H.E. Mr Jos Douma. During the meeting, topics ranged from electoral process in Georgia to existing achievements, future challenges, and the cooperation between election administrations of Georgia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

CEC Chairperson detailed Ambassador concerning the 8th Annual Meeting of Election Management Bodies, its theme, and goals.

Meeting with Norwegian Helsinki Committee Representative

On May 7, Tamar Zhvania, CEC Chairperson and other officials met with Aage Borchgrevnik, advisor of Norwegian Helsinki Committee, partner organization of Human Rights Center. Activities to be implemented for the 2018 Presidential Election, new initiatives and services offered to voters and electoral stakeholders by Election Administration, were discussed at the meeting.

Meeting with Swiss Ambassador to Georgia

On July 19, Tamar Zhvania, CEC Chairperson met with H.E. Lukas Beglinger, Swiss Ambassador to Georgia. The electoral environment and preparation period for 2018 Presidential Election were discussed at the meeting. CEC Chairperson informed participants of the meeting about legislative amendments and those educational projects that are being carried out by Election Administration for informing and awareness raising of voters.

Meeting with U.S. Congressional Staff Delegation

On August 21, Tamar Zhvania, CEC Chairperson and other officials met with the U.S. Congressional Staff Delegation members officially visiting Georgia. Preparations for the 2018 Presidential Election was discussed at the meeting. CEC Chairperson introduced the educational projects, cooperation with international organizations, and the issues related to misuse of administrative resources to the delegation members.

Meeting with Representatives of International Donor Organizations and Diplomatic Corps On October 3, CEC Chairperson and other officials met with representatives of International Donor Organizations and Diplomatic Corps.

Representatives of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the International Republican Institute (IRI), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) the European Union (EU), as well as by representatives of embassies of Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Switzerland participated in the meeting. The meeting was highly interactive and tackled preparations for the presidential election.

Meeting Held with Chargé d'affaires of the U.S. Embassy

On September 17, Tamar Zhvania, CEC Chairperson and other officials met with Elizabeth Rood Chargé d'affaires in the U.S. Embassy in Georgia, Kristy Mordhost Political Officer in the U.S. Embassy in Georgia and Peter Wiebler Mission Director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Issues related to pre-election processes and activities implemented by election administration as well as ongoing activities were discussed at the meeting.

Meeting with Representatives of Multiparty Office – "Westminster Foundation for Democracy"

On November 9, CEC representatives met with representatives of Multiparty Office – "Westminster Foundation for Democracy".

During the meeting, activities carried out by election administration to ensure inclusive electoral environment and services offered to support the realization of voting rights of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Election Code of Georgia, and Strategic and Action plans of the EA were discussed.

The representatives of Multiparty Office – "Westminster Foundation for Democracy" shared their experiences at the meeting.

Meeting with Newly Elected President of International Foundation for Electoral Systems On December 6, Tamar Zhvania, CEC Chairperson met with the newly elected President of International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), Mr. Anthony Banbury, Keti Maisuradze, Chief

of Party of IFES Georgia and Keti Shubitidze, Program Officer, Europe and Eurasia. IFES President assessed the election administration's work positively and noted the success of CEC in administering the elections. In recent years, Election Administration of Georgia has significantly improved, according to him.

Meeting with the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires in Georgia

On November 21, Tamar Zhvania, CEC Chairperson met with the U.S. Ambassador Ross Wilson, Chargé d'Affaires in Georgia, Elizabeth Rood Deputy Chief of Mission, Kristy Mordhorst the U.S. Embassy Political Officer, and Director of the Office of Democracy, Governance and Social Development of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). During the meeting, preparations for the second round of the presidential election and ongoing electoral issues were discussed.



Meeting with the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires in Georgia

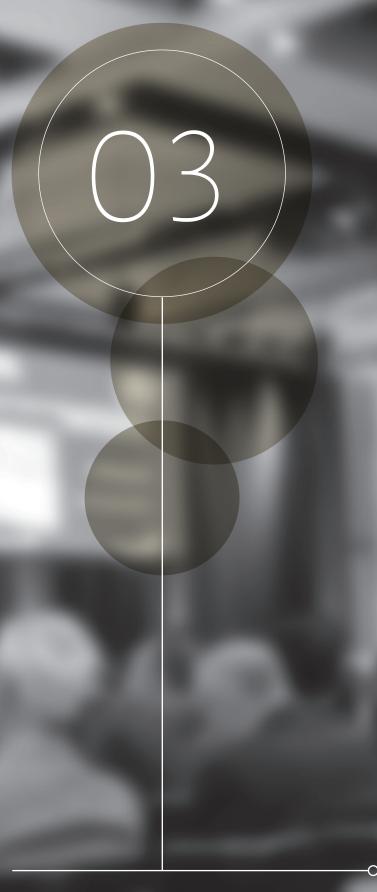


Meeting with U.S. Congressional Staff Delegation Members





Meeting with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities



STRATEGIC PILLAR 3:

Electoral Environment

STRATEGIC PILLAR 3: ELECTORAL ENVIRONMENT

GOAL 1. PARTICIPATION IN IMPROVING LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Legal Analysis of Conducted Elections and Recommendations

CEC studied and analyzed legislative acts drawn up by the DECs during 8 October 2017 Municipal Elections, as well as deficiencies revealed, and provided DECs with letters of CEC Chairperson indicating relevant remarks and ways to improve deficiencies along with future recommendations. Following the deficiencies identified, practical assignments were developed which were applied during the trainings conducted for DEC officials.

Analyzing Reports of Domestic and International Organizations on Conducted Elections

CEC studied reports of the domestic and international organizations on the 2017 Municipal Elections. For the presidential election of Georgia, CEC prepared draft amendments to be made to Organic Law of Georgia "Election Code of Georgia", "Political Union of Citizens" and "Local-self Government Code", with its explanatory notes and submitted to Parliament of Georgia as legislative proposals. The legislative body developed them as legislative initiatives and accepted most of the proposals submitted. Based on the amendments made:

- Start terms for elections/referendums, electoral activities and procedures were specified the terms will be calculated from the day when a relevant legal act issued on calling elections/referendum enters into force;
- Photo-video recording or processing of information or data that under the current code is
 not public information, is prohibited, except in cases, when such processing or recording is
 envisaged by the Election Code;

- The CEC was authorized to determine conditions for the premature exoneration of DEC and PEC members from a disciplinary liability by decree;
- For DEC and PEC members the term for disciplinary liability was defined as well as rules for premature exoneration from the discplinary violation;
- An election commission member can not be withdrawn on polling day and also the day after polling;
- An observer organization registered during the last general elections has a right to access the public version of voter lists available at CEC, DEC and PECs during the non-election period;
- To be included in the mobile ballot box list, voters have to provide their personal number;
- Instead of a statute/constituent document, domestic observer organizations will be registered based on excerpt from the Public Registry (noting person/persons having the power of administration/representation of the organisation);
- Electoral subjects can withdraw/replace their proxies any time, except a day before the election and on the election day;
- Press and mass media representatives are also obliged to submit the extract from Public Registry to get accreditation except foreign press and mass media and Georgian Public Broadcaster and Adjara TV and Radio of the Public Broadcaster;
- In order to simplify procedures, the control sheet will no longer contain information on registration address of the first voter and exact time the sheet was placed in the ballot box;
- A number of issues related to electoral disputes and persons authorized to submit complaints was clarified;
- Procedures and rules related to registration of candidates for presidential elections were determined.

Textbook on Dispute Resolution and Document of Uniform Practice

CEC in cooperation with International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and domestic non-governmental organizations, based on the amendments made to the law, renewed three important textbooks: administrative resources, electoral disputes, and imposing disciplinary penalties (document of uniform practice).

Mentioned documents were translated in English and were disseminated for electoral stakeholders. Also, by using the mentioned documents, various target groups were trained.

Running Training Programs on Legislative Issues and Electoral Disputes At All Levels of Election Administration

On October I-7, CEC held trainings on electoral issues for DEC chairs and lawyers in six regions. Participants of the training discussed the following issues: electoral disputes related to E-day, uniform practice of using disciplinary penalties, use of administrative resources, recommendations related to proceedings of complaints' registry and novelties of election legislation.

Chairs of 73 DECs, commissions' lawyers and some employees of the Electoral Processes Management Department underwent the training.

GOAL 2. ENSURE ELECTORAL INTEGRITY

Safe Electoral Process

The Election Administration ensures electoral integrity and credibility according to the Election Integrity Management Plan. Based on the plan, in order to ensure election security, memorandums of cooperation were signed.

Memorandum of Cooperation between the CEC and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) of Georgia

On September 13, CEC Chairperson and Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The document was developed in cooperation with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The parties agreed supporting polling process of the presidential election of Georgia in a safe, calm, and free environment the polling process in a; as part of MoU, joint training courses and working meetings were planned.



Memorandum of Cooperation between Training Centre and Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs

On September 27, director of Training Centre and rector of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) of Georgia concluded a Memorandum of Cooperation. The parties agreed that the Training Centre would develop awareness-raising and training program with regard to electoral safety for representatives of law enforcement agencies and members of election commissions. In the framework of the MoU, Training Centre and the MIA Academy offered awareness-raising and training programs on electoral security to electoral stakeholders.



Memorandum of Cooperation between Training Centre and Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs

Awareness Raising and Training Program for Representatives of Law Enforcement Agencies

In the framework of Memorandum of Cooperation (MoU) signed between Training Centre and the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) of Georgia, representatives of Training Centre, MIA Academy and International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES) conducted awareness raising and training course for representatives of law enforcement agencies during October 8-18 in the academy.

Participants familiarized with the following topics: the concept of electoral security and international standards, identifying security risks during the voting process at a polling station, risk prevention and effective communication between the Election Administration and law enforcement agencies, response mechanisms for ensuring safe and peaceful electoral environment, ensuring that elections are held in free and safe environment by the MIA; Manual for MIA officers during the election period (according to the Police Code of Ethics), classification of violations detected during the pre-election period and during elections and procedural norms for responding to such violations (administrative legal and criminal).

Awareness-raising training was also held for representatives of domestic observer organizations, electoral subjects, and the media.

About 44,000 members of election commissions and 792 members of middle and senior management of criminal and patrol police underwent the training module on electoral security.





Awareness Raising and Training Program for Representatives of Law Enforcement Agencies

Distance Learning Program for Representatives of Law Enforcement Agencies

The CEC Training Centre developed yet another additional mechanism – distance learning program for police to receive information on electoral security issues. The program is uploaded on the MIA Academy Electronic Training Portal and the Training Centre's website. About 8,000 officers from the Criminal and Patrol Police underwent the above-mentioned online course.

Election Administration of Georgia and Domestic Observer Organizations Signed the Code of Conduct (Ethics)

On October I, the CEC and 30 domestic observer organizations signed the Code of Conduct (Ethics) which was developed for the presidential election of Georgia between Election Administration (EA) of Georgia and domestic observer organizations. The mentioned document implied an agreement between the EA of Georgia and domestic observer organizations on the protection of professional and ethical norms. The signatories of the document agree to adhere to the rule of law, be impartial and objective and be guided by the internationally-recognized electoral standards during their work, which will support holding presidential elections in a fair and transparent environment.





Signing the Code of Conduct (Ethics)

"Ethical Principles" of Presidential Candidates of Georgia

On October 6, presentation of the document of "Ethical Principles" for the presidential candidates of Georgia was held, and along with the presidential candidates and their representatives, international organizations and diplomatic corps also attended the event. The document was developed by presidential candidates of Georgia and their representatives, and facilitated by the Central Election Commission with the support of the Government of Switzerland. For the first time in the electoral practice of Georgia, presidential candidates agreed on ethical principles and this initiative was facilitated by the CEC.

Signatories of the document agreed to abide by the legal framework of Georgia, to respect the rule of law, act in accordance with the constitution, laws, and principles of democratic rule and in the best interest of the society; Conduct the campaign without any discrimination based on political, ethnic, religious, gender or other affiliation; Refuse to use any hate speech, or statements that involve xenophobia or intimidation; Encourage peaceful campaign environment, refuse to use or call for violence. They also agreed that during Presidential Election Campaign, they would abstain from obstruction of campaign events and agitation of other contestants, abstain from dissemination of false information with the prior knowledge and conduct an inclusive election campaign with equal access for women, young people and vulnerable groups, refuse to use administrative resources, bribing voters or intimidating them, conduct debates based on substance, platform and plans, and refrain from personal insults.²⁸





"Ethical Principles" of Presidential Candidates of Georgia

GOAL 3. ENSURE AN INCLUSIVE ELECTORAL ENVIRONMENT

Informing Persons with Disabilities

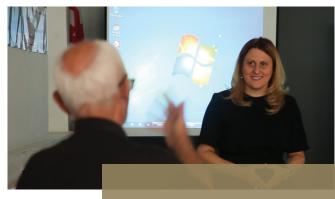
For the Presidential Election of Georgia, special video footage was prepared to inform persons with disabilities (PWDs) on available services²⁹. All footages prepared by the CEC were accompanied by sign language and broadcast by national and regional broadcasters. During the election period, CEC news briefings were accompanied by sign language. Information on electoral subjects and candidates registered for the elections was available at the CEC website. CEC Call Center Operators provided information on election issues to deaf and hearing impaired voters in sign language through a video call.

The CEC representatives held a meeting with deaf and hearing-impaired voters at the Union of the Deaf of Georgia and informed them on the possibility of video-call service at the CEC Call Center and checking personal data in the Unified List of Voters. Informational posters displaying the mentioned service was prepared in cooperation with the Union of the Deaf of Georgia and disseminated in the offices of Union of the Deaf throughout Georgia.

CEC website is accessible for blind and visually impaired people, while, Training Centre is accessible for blind voters.







Retraining the Election Administration Employees (Trainer, District/Precinct) for Supporting Inclusive Electoral Environment

The CEC and Training Centre updated the training guideline Etiquette of Communicating and the Protection of Behavioural Norms in Relation with Persons with Disabilities. Based on the guideline, for the first time, the footage was prepared with the participation³⁰ of blind, visually impaired, deaf, mobility impaired voters (wheel-chair users), voters missing upper limbs and beneficiaries of support. According to a new concept of training developed by the Training Centre in 2018, practical teaching component was added to the study program of election administration; it envisaged using the footage and guideline during the training of PEC members.

For presidential election of Georgia, 181 trainers of election administration underwent mentioned training, as well as 827 members of 73 district election commissions, 9 663 officials of 3 637 precinct election commissions and 25 355 PEC members. 30 minutes were allocated for covering the guideline Etiquette of Communicating and the Protection of Behavioural Norms in Relation with Persons with Disabilities.

Grant Projects for Informing PWDs

In 2018, CEC prioritized to fund under grant competition supporting participation of vulnerable groups, including PWDs in the electoral process. Based on the Grants Competition Commission, Training Centre funded three projects of domestic non-governmental organizations. The total amount of the budget was 65 457 GEL.

Services Available to PWDs in Polling Stations

On the Election Day of the President of Georgia (I and II rounds), the following services were available to PWDs in all polling stations: blind voters – tactile ballot guide; visually impaired voters – two magnifying sheets; deaf, hearing impaired and beneficiaries of support – poster displaying voting procedures; voters with limited mobility (wheelchair users) – special polling booth at I 268 adapted polling stations.

Informing Ethnic Minority Voters

For presidential election of Georgia, CEC prepared special footage about available services to ethnic minority voters which were translated into Azerbaijani and Armenian languages. 17 video footages prepared by CEC were translated into Azerbaijani and Armenian languages and aired on regional TV stations. CEC published information on available services and E-day procedures in Armenian-language newspaper "Vrastan" and Azerbaijani-language newspaper "Gurjistan".

At the CEC Call Center, Armenian and Azerbaijani-speaking operators informed interested persons on election issues in Armenian and Azerbaijani.

Armenian and Azerbaijani-speaking voters could verify their personal data in the unified list of voters at the CEC website in Armenian and Azerbaijani in the regions densely populated by ethnic minorities.

Election Documentation in Ethnic Minority Languages

In the regions densely populated by ethnic minorities, ballot paper, unified list of voters, the rule to fill in ballot and poster displaying polling were translated for Armenian and Azerbaijani-speaking voters in Georgian – Armenian and in Georgian – Azerbaijani and printed accordingly.

All necessary materials were translated and printed for Armenian and Azerbaijani-speaking members of precinct election commissions and posted on the CEC website under the banner of "Ethnic Minorities".

Grant Projects for Informing Ethnic Minorities

In 2018, CEC prioritized to fund under grant competition supporting participation of vulnerable groups, including ethnic minorities in the electoral process.

Based on the Grants Competition Commission, Training Centre funded 10 projects of domestic non-governmental organizations which were implemented in regions populated by ethnic minorities. The total amount of the budget was 219 062 GEL.

Meeting with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

On September 18, CEC Officials met with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. CEC Chairperson informed members of the delegation on the activities carried out by the Election Administration (EA) for supporting inclusive electoral environment, namely, information campaigns for ethnic minority voters, educational programs, services accessible on E-day, and availability of election documentation in Azerbaijani and Armenian for PEC members.

Council of National Minorities under the auspices of the Public Defender of Georgia presented Tolerance Advocate Award to Sophio Sitchinava, the Head of the CEC Coordination, Planning and Reporting Department for her contribution to the development of a culture of tolerance in Georgia.

GOAL 4. PROMOTE GENDER-BALANCED AND EQUAL ENVIRONMENT

Gender Equality Aspects in Educational Programs and Materials Developed by Election Administration

Training Centre ensured that gender aspects are reflected in the study modules of the following educational projects: "Elections and young voter", "Electoral development school", and "Legal clinic". For the 2018 elections, gender aspects of election administration were also reflected in training programs for representatives of regional and central media outlets.

International Conference "Promoting the Political Participation of Women with Disabilities"

On April 16-17, Chair of CEC Gender Equality Council participated in the international conference organized by OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) and presented CEC adapted website and discussed activities carried out by election administration of Georgia for ensuring independent participation of Persons with Disabilities in elections.

Training "Electoral Systems and Gender Quota" for Members of the Parliament of Georgia and Its Office Employees

On June 25-26, based on the memorandum signed between the Office of Parliament of Georgia and the CEC Training Centre, the training program was prepared and carried out for the members of the Parliament of Georgia and the office employees on "Electoral Systems and Gender Quota".

Participants of the training familiarized with the following issues: international electoral standards, electoral system elements and classification, electoral system principles and characteristics, general overview of the majoritarian electoral system, general overview of the proportional electoral system, general overview of the mixed electoral system, elections and gender policy, and gender quota. 18 participants from the Office of Parliament of Georgia underwent the training course.

International Conference "Gender Equality in Elections – What More Can Be Done by EMBs"

On July 11-12, on the initiative of CEC and with the support of the Council of Europe (CoE), 54 representatives³¹ from seven Election Management Bodies, 13 international organizations and four domestic observer organizations, as well as Assistant to the Prime Minister of Georgia on Human Rights and Gender Equality Issues, participated in the international conference. A number of issues including existing challenges with regard to women's political participation and contributing factors to their involvement, the role of election administration in ensuring gender parity, international commitments and women political representations in eastern European countries, were discussed at the conference.





International Conference "Gender Equality in Elections – What More Can Be Done by EMBs"

Seven EMBs: Georgia, Latvia, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Romania, Ukraine. 13 international organizations: Council of Europe, Eastern European Centre for Multiparty Democracy (EECMD), International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), International Republican Institute (IRI), National Democratic Institute (NDI), OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR), UN Women, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Women in Electoral Management (WEM International, the CEC is one of the co-founder of the organization), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Heinrich Boell Foundation. Four domestic non-governmental organizations: Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA), Gender Equality Network, Women's Information Center, Women's Political Resource Center.

International Program "Political Empowerment of Women"

On June 18-28, Secretary of CEC Gender Equality Council participated in the international program "Political Empowerment of Women" held within the framework of MASHAV, Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation. CEC representative underwent training on the following issues: identifying resistances in women's political life, developing resistance elimination strategies, women in Israel's politics and social organizations, also women encouragement and support their participation in public and political life. CEC representative introduced activities of Gender Equality Council of Election Administration of Georgia to participants of the course.

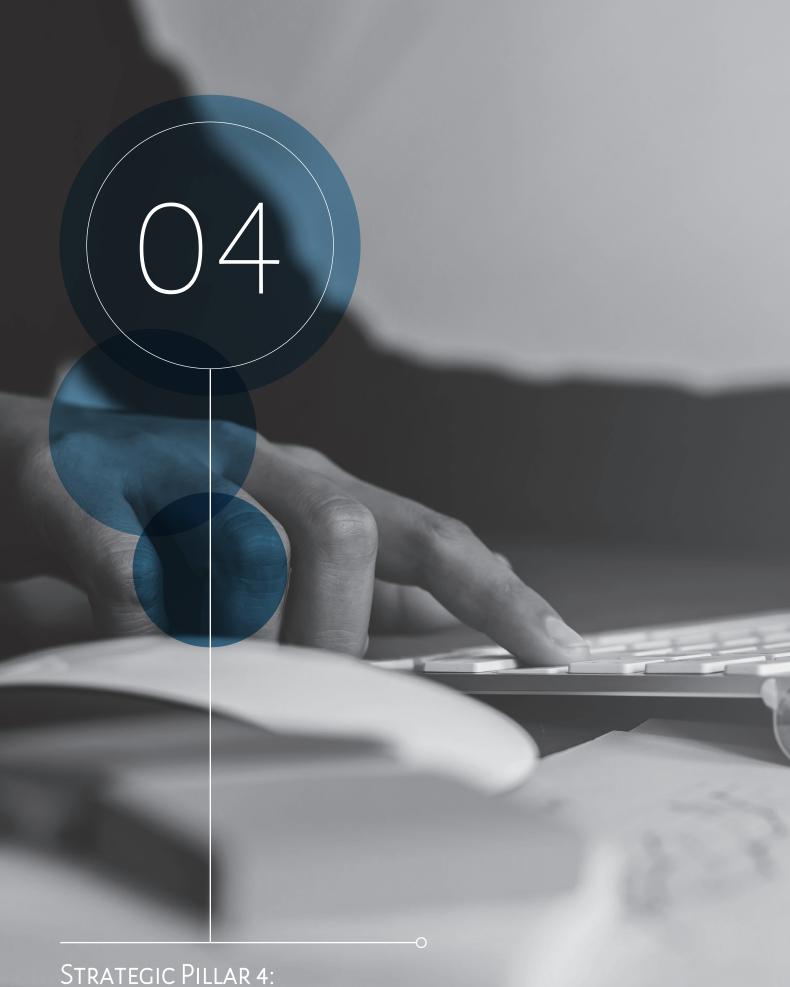
Considering and/or Supporting Gender Equality Issues during Grants Competitions

According to the gender equality policy document of the Election Administration, one of the priority areas for grants competition announced on April 16 was supporting the participation of vulnerable groups and women in the Presidential Elections. Four projects were funded under the call with a total amount of 72 774.4 GEL.

Processing Electoral Information in Gender Perspective

For the Election of President of Georgia (I and II rounds), the CEC processed gender statistics on the following issues: voters registered in the Unified List of Voters, turnout of the voters in the list, voters participating in the elections, candidates nominated by electoral subjects, observers, representatives of media and electoral subjects, composition of the election administration (CEC, electoral district, electoral precinct). The CEC posted the mentioned information under the banner "Gender Statistics" in Georgian and English languages on the CEC website.





STRATEGIC PILLAR 4:
ELECTORAL OPERATIONS

STRATEGIC PILLAR 4: ELECTORAL OPERATIONS

GOAL 1. ORGANIZING/CONDUCTING ELECTIONS

Election Administration conducted the following elections in 2018:

- 28 April Parliamentary By-Election of Georgia;
- 13 May Sakrebulo By-elections of Zugdidi municipality;
- 28 October and 28 November Election of President of Georgia (I and II rounds);
- 28 October Sakrebulo By-elections in Terjola and Samtredia electoral districts.

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

Necessary Inventory/Materials for Conduct of Elections

Based on the updated number of voters and current stocks, the CEC also approved the quantity/amount of goods and services to be purchased for the Presidential Election of Georgia. Equipment necessary for the elections was distributed to DECs in a centralized way.

A total of 389 contracts were signed during the election period, including – 32 (8%) electronic tenders; 49 (13%) consolidated tenders; 78 (20%) simplified procurements; 230 (59%) simplified procurements in accordance with paragraph 6 of the Article 52 of Organic Law of Georgia "Election Code of Georgia".

The following inventory was procured: uniforms for PEC members (63 598 GEL), badges for observers, electoral subjects and media representatives (168 974 GEL), envelopes of ballot papers (143 288 GEL), cartridges for PECs (55 741 GEL), inking liquid (112 030 GEL), multifunction printing equipment (100 940 GEL), polling booths (67 842 GEL), A4 size paper (129 050 GEL), off-set paper for a ballot (68 200 GEL), tablets for PECs (127 995 GEL) and electric heaters for PECs (55 590 GEL). In addition, important procurements were made for CEC printing house, namely, Xerox D136, 50 printers, 76 personal computers, 76 computer power supplies and 500 tablets.

Unified List of Voters

In 2018, according to the paragraph 5, Article 31 of the Organic Law of Georgia "Election Code of Georgia", the CEC processed the data (by integrating main and actual addresses with CEC database) provided by Public Services Development Agency (PSDA) of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia, Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Protection, Ministry of Defense of Georgia, Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Special Penitentiary Service of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia, State Security Service of Georgia, Intelligence Service of Georgia, Special State Protection Service of Georgia, Social Services Agency and other relevant agencies and formed the voter list. In 2018, the unified list of voters was updated 10 times:

- As of February I − 3 453 661 voters;
- For April 28 Parliamentary By-elections 48 072 (preliminary), 48 123 (final) voters;
- For May 13 Sakrebulo By-elections of Zugdidi municipality 2 823 (preliminary), 2 819 (final)
 voters;
- As of May I 3 456 363 voters. As of July I5 3 459 03 I voters;
- For First Round of Presidential Election of Georgia 3 503 113 (preliminary), 3 518 877 (final)
 voters, for Second Round of Presidential Election of Georgia 3 528 658 voters.

For presidential election of Georgia, applications of voters received from electoral districts were processed and given relevant status ("is abroad", "deceased") and change of polling station. Statistics based on the processed data of applications: I 186 applications - satisfied, I71 – rejected.

During the First and Second Rounds of Presidential Election of Georgia, 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 1 817 261 occasions; of these 1 778 705 times on the CEC website voters.cec. gov.ge, 17 439 times by quick payment terminal and 21 117 through Android and iOS apps.

GOAL 2. RAISING QUALIFICATION OF DISTRICT AND PRECINCT ELECTION COMMISSION MEMBERS

Study Programs for DEC and PEC Members

Training Centre trainers raised qualification of District Election Commission (DEC) and Precinct Election Commission (PEC) members for April 28 Parliamentary By-election of Georgia and May 13 By-elections of Zugdidi municipality.

During May 13 By-elections of Zugdidi municipality, CEC used a special device for voting and vote counting. PEC members underwent special training regarding the mentioned devices.

For the presidential election of Georgia, Training Centre developed a new concept of training which was discussed with members of the technical working group from international and domestic NGO. The concept envisaged training PEC members with tailored programs upon which PEC officials and the rest members (nine members) received knowledge within their competence. Practical exercises were developed, including, on challenging topics such as vote counting process and fill in summary protocol of election results.

On 4-25 September, Training Centre conducted Training of Trainers (ToT) for trainers of election administration. 15 retrained representatives conducted a study course for DEC members and 181 trainers for PEC members.

Trainers retrained by Training Centre for the First Round of Elections, conducted training courses in one stage for DEC members and in four stages for PEC members. Also, additional training courses were conducted for replaced (new) PEC members.

On October 22, the Training Centre conducted a training course for members of a special group. The special group to ensure exercising of universal suffrage of the citizens of Georgia serving at peacekeeping battalions of the armed forces of Georgia stationed in Afghanistan prepared and administered Presidential Election of Georgia at Bagram and Mazar-i-Sharif election precincts.





Trainings for District Election Commission Members

Distance Learning Program

For the presidential election of Georgia, Training Centre renewed distance learning program and placed it on the CEC website. The distance learning program enabled interested persons to receive information on E-day procedures, and workplace rule of the precinct election commission. Test assignments were integrated into the program.

Textbooks and Study Materials

For the presidential election of Georgia, Training Centre developed textbook guidelines and visual materials for electoral stakeholders and district and precinct election commission members. Training Centre in cooperation with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) translated them into Armenian and Azerbaijani and for international observer organizations into the English language. For information on the list of textbook guidelines and posters prepared for the presidential election of Georgia see table (5).

TABLE 5.

N	Name of Textbook Guideline and Poster	Language
I	Textbook guideline for district election commission members	Georgian/English
2	Textbook guideline for precinct election commission members	Georgian/English/Armenian/Azerbaijani
3	Election Day Procedures	Georgian/English
4	Guideline for PEC chairperson	Georgian/Armenian/Azerbaijani
5	Powers of PEC secretary on election day	Georgian/Armenian/Azerbaijani
6	Functions of the commission member responsible for regulating the flow of voters	Georgian/Armenian/Azerbaijani
7	Functions of the commission member acting as a registrar of voters	Georgian/Armenian/Azerbaijani
8	Functions of the supervisor of the ballot box and special envelopes	Georgian/Armenian/Azerbaijani
9	Functions of the commission member responsible for transporting the mobile ballot box	Georgian/Armenian/Azerbaijani
10	Handbook for representatives of local government bodies	Georgian
11	Handbook for media representatives	Georgian
12	Voter's card	Georgian/Armenian/Azerbaijani
13	Poster about sealing of electoral documentation	Georgian/Armenian/Azerbaijani
14	Training module "Election Security" for the members of precinct election commissions	Georgian/Armenian/Azerbaijani
15	Instruction of the etiquette of communicating and the protection of behavioural norms in relation with persons with disabilities	Georgian/Armenian/Azerbaijani
16	Photo-video shooting at polling stations	Georgian

GOAL 3. PUBLICISE ELECTION RESULTS TIMELY



CEC informed the public timely about preliminary and final results of all elections held in 2018.

- On April 29 at 01:30, during a special news briefing, CEC Spokesperson presented preliminary results of April 28 Parliamentary By-elections based on all polling stations;
- Preliminary results of May 13 Sakrebulo By-elections of Zugdidi municipality was publicized on E-day at 23:40 at the CEC website;
- Initially, CEC Chairperson presented preliminary results of the presidential election of Georgia based on 512 polling stations on October 29 at 01:00, and based on 3 703 polling stations at 10:30 at special news briefings. CEC Chairperson presented the first preliminary results of the second round of presidential election based on 1 181 polling stations on November 28 at 23:48 at special news briefings. CEC Spokesperson presented preliminary results based on 3 702 polling stations on November 29, at 11:00.

Using Modern Technologies in Voting and Vote Counting Process

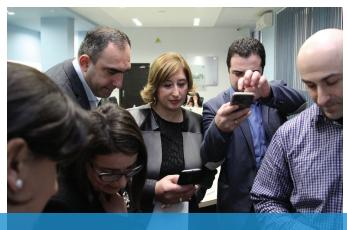
From 2017 CEC started working on a new initiative, namely, running for the first time in the electoral history of Georgia a research-based pilot project during elections. The project envisaged the use of modern technologies on E-day for electronic vote-counting. At first, Election Administration in order to show the capacity of modern technologies studied international good practice and held working meetings with representatives of international and domestic organizations and vendor companies oriented electoral technologies. Then, election administration prepared the 2019-2020 concept of electronic vote counting.

On March 3, during the meeting with Managing Director of the non-governmental organization "The Delian Project – Canada" held at the CEC, Managing Director described in detail the electronic tabulation of votes in Canada and the U.S. and also discussed advantages of using electronic vote counting device and its capacities. Participants of the meeting discussed the prospects of adopting this technology in Georgia and the development of the electoral process in this respect at the CEC. Election Administration in cooperation with the international organization "The Delian Project – Canada", for the first time applied electronic devices in vote counting process during May 13 Sakrebulo By-elections of Zugdidi municipality.

CEC defined the relevant procedure by decree. Electronic devices tabulated those ballots with absolute precision which were filled in by a vast majority of voters in line with relevant methodology. In addition, a number of voters marked the ballot traditionally and did not use the method of voting that would be compatible with electronic technologies. It is noteworthy, that votes tabulated by electronic devices are of informational nature and vote counting was carried out manually at each electoral precinct in accordance with the procedure defined by the legislation and was reflected in PEC summary protocols. Research results of the election process carried out with the use of modern technologies were shared and discussed with representatives of political parties and domestic and international organizations.

The awareness raising of the voters in connection with the use of electoral technologies as a pilot was no less important, and for which, effective promotional events were carried out by election administration for electoral stakeholders and for voters residing in Zugdidi municipality. A number of informational meetings were held at the CEC where CEC Chairperson detailed political parties participating in Sakrebulo By-elections of Zugdidi municipality, representatives of domestic and international organizations about goals of the pilot project of vote counting technology. In addition, the presentation of vote counting technology was held for representatives of non-governmental organizations.

Zugdidi District Election Commission Chair held meetings with voters concerning the use of new technologies in vote counting procedures and conducted mock elections in the vicinity of polling stations by applying electronic devices. Each voter along with voter's card was given the letter of CEC Chairperson regarding the pilot project and the use of electronic devices on E-day. Also, electoral procedures were explained through special informational poster as well as footage displayed at every electoral precinct.









Examining Capacities of Modern Technologies in Vote Counting Process

Goal 4. Provide Stakeholders with Timely and Accurate Election-Related Information

CEC Call Center

The Election Administration ensures accessibility of the election information for voters and electoral stakeholders. Also, it provides voters and relevant institutions with accurate electoral information in a timely manner. During the Elections, Call Center worked exceptionally efficiently informing the population in Georgian, English, Azerbaijani and Armenian and sign languages. A new service was offered for the Presidential Elections: users could leave a voice message during non-working hours and contact the center through an online chat both from and outside of Georgia.

For the Presidential Election, 23 persons were employed at the CEC Call Center, including three operators with disabilities, two Azerbaijani-speaking and two Armenian-speaking operators and two operators knowing the sign language. Operators underwent a special learning course.

The CEC Call Center received 34 053 requests, including 20 817 incoming calls, 8 841 online chats, I 144 outgoing calls, I 226 voice mails, 821 messages left during the non-working hour, 482 voice messages left during the non-working hour, 551 SMS, I 17 video call service for deaf and hearing-impaired voters.

Complaint Registry in District Election Commissions

Election Administration advanced the complaint registry, through which, interested persons could process the information on complaints, familiarized with the decision made by election commission/ election commission chair on the concrete complaint and search for court ruling concerning the complaint. Trainings were conducted for district election commissions for timely and accurate placement of information in the complaint registry.

Election Results and Other Public Statistical Data

CEC uses a special webpage http://results.cec.gov.ge/ to publicize election results. After the voting process is completed, the District Election Commissions (DECs) upload summary protocols drafted by the Precinct Election Commissions (PECs) in the Election Process Management System (EPMS). Upon receipt, each summary protocol was uploaded on the webpage. On Presidential Election day, summary protocols of election results were uploaded in the special electronic program. The process was livestreamed through a 360-degree video camera. Any interested party was able to observe online the process via www.youtube.com www.cesko.ge and www.facebook.com





CONCLUSION

Action Plan 2018 of the Election Administration envisages the implementation of 77 activities. These activities were mainly implemented in a professional and timely manner.

In the context of assessing indicators, 70 activities were implemented fully.

In 2018, the following four activities were implemented partially and their full implementation is planned in 2019:

- Develop, implement and certify the Quality Management System according to international standards;
- Improve the internal communication system between CEC and DECs during election and nonelection periods;
- Create the mentoring institute;
- Create the electronic program of planning and reporting.

Implementation of one activity was suspended:

Catalog for processing statistical data was set up, structural units responsible for data
collection were defined, and information on programmatic processing of statistical data was
collected. As a result of activities implemented, it was revealed, that most of statistical data
was already being processed through various electronic programs.

Two activities were not implemented:

- Due to the needs identified as a result of internal audit inspection, develop relevant recommendations and monitor their implementation.
- Selective inventory of main assets, stock, and long-term low-cost assets was not implemented due to the long election period of presidential elections. It is planned to be implemented in 2019.

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.

The CEC evaluated the process of organizing the elections and implementation of the Action Plan 2018 of the Election Administration. Based on the experience received, specific priority needs and activities to be implemented emerged which were reflected in the Action Plan 2019. In 2019, apart from the other important activities, the following novelties and changes are planned to be implemented:

Ensure Effective Management

Develop 2020-2023 Strategic Plan of Election Administration.

Human Resources Management

- Analyze the employment of CEC interns, certified persons as well as educational programs (Electoral Development School, Courses of Election Administrator)
- Renew and retrain trainers of Election Administration.

Use of Modern Technologies

Examination/implementation of the electronic management capacity of CEC sessions

Carry out Civic and Voter Educational Programs

Conduct a study course for public servants "Election campaign and administrative resources".

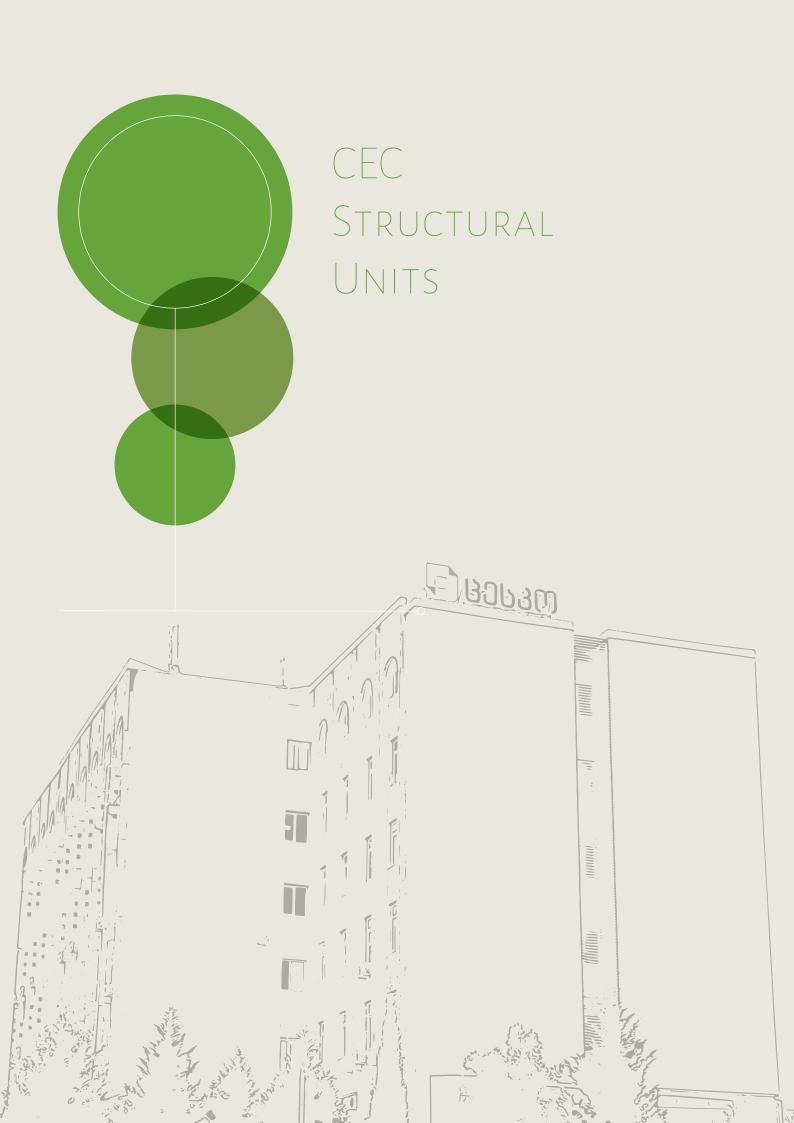
Cooperation with Stakeholders

 Institutional strengthening of the electoral capacity of domestic non-governmental organizations.

Ensure Inclusive Electoral Environment

- Conduct informational project "Youth Debate Club" for public school students residing in regions densely populated by ethnic minorities;
- Study/review possible legislative amendments with regard to Persons with Disabilities;
- Conduct gender audit;
- Create a new informational network to place election-related information processed in the context of gender.





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George Dzagania, Head of Department

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ANNUAL REPORT ON THE
ACTIVITIES OF THE CENTRAL
ELECTION COMMISSION OF
GEORGIA AND LEPL ELECTORAL
SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT,
REFORMS AND TRAINING CENTRE
2018



