



ELECTION ADMINISTRATION
OF GEORGIA

**DEVELOPMENT AND
ACHIEVEMENTS**

2016

ABOUT THE ELECTION ADMINISTRATION OF GEORGIA

The Election Administration (EA) of Georgia is an independent administrative body. EA ensures the conduct of elections of the President of Georgia, the Parliament of Georgia, local self-government representative body – Sakrebulo, and a local self-government executive body – Mayor/Gamgebeli, as well as referenda and plebiscites within the whole territory of Georgia.

THE ELECTION ADMINISTRATION OF GEORGIA IS COMPOSED OF:

- ✓ Central Election Commission (CEC) and its apparatus
- ✓ Supreme Election Commission of Autonomous Republic of Adjara (SEC) and its apparatus
- ✓ District Election Commissions (76 DEC)s
- ✓ Precinct Election Commissions (3634 PECs were created for the Parliamentary Elections of October 8, 2016)

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 aims to: provide equally accessible electoral services; ensure integrity of electoral process; ensure high level of trust within the society; continuously act innovatively and develop initiatives oriented toward the improvement of the electoral environment; continuously work to increase management effectiveness and the professional capacity of the election administration.



DECLARED GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE EA:

INDEPENDENCE

Election Administration is an independent institution, which operates within the legal framework and free from political influence.

TRANSPARENCY

Election Administration ensures transparency of its work and accessibility of information to voters and electoral stakeholders.

PROFESSIONALISM

Election Administration conducts its activities through qualified, competent human workforce.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Election Administration is accountable for its actions and reports to voters and relevant institutions on a regular basis.

INCLUSIVENESS

Election Administration ensures creation of an inclusive electoral environment.

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

EA is the well-developed public institution and based on the modern principles of management, which has clearly defined objectives and priorities. It serves as an independent arbiter, ensures equally accessible electoral services for everyone and disseminates election knowledge and education.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Functions are effectively distributed among the CEC structural units. The human resources are being developed and professional capacities are raised. There is an established system of attracting highly qualified staff and the system of evaluation. Training courses for raising the qualification are conducted for the CEC staff and the members of the DEC and PEC on a regular basis.

CERTIFICATION OF THE ELECTION ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS

EA conducts certification exams using an electronic testing method and issues certificates of the election administration officials.

In 2015-2016 five exams were conducted and 1127 citizens were awarded with the relevant certificates.

IMPROVEMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE

EA widely utilizes new technologies in election processes. The CEC has created an electronic program – Election Processes Management Systems (EPMS), which helps the CEC to process information together with 73 DEC. EPMS ensures information of a large capacity to be reflected and managed within the unified system. It also ensures quick processing of election results, which gives the possibility to timely release preliminary results of elections.

In 2015, the CEC was awarded with the International Electoral Award for developing and establishing EPMS.

The CEC has established an electronic correspondence system (eDocument), which allowed the CEC to replace hard copy documents with the electronic versions. Using the special program an electronic archive was created.

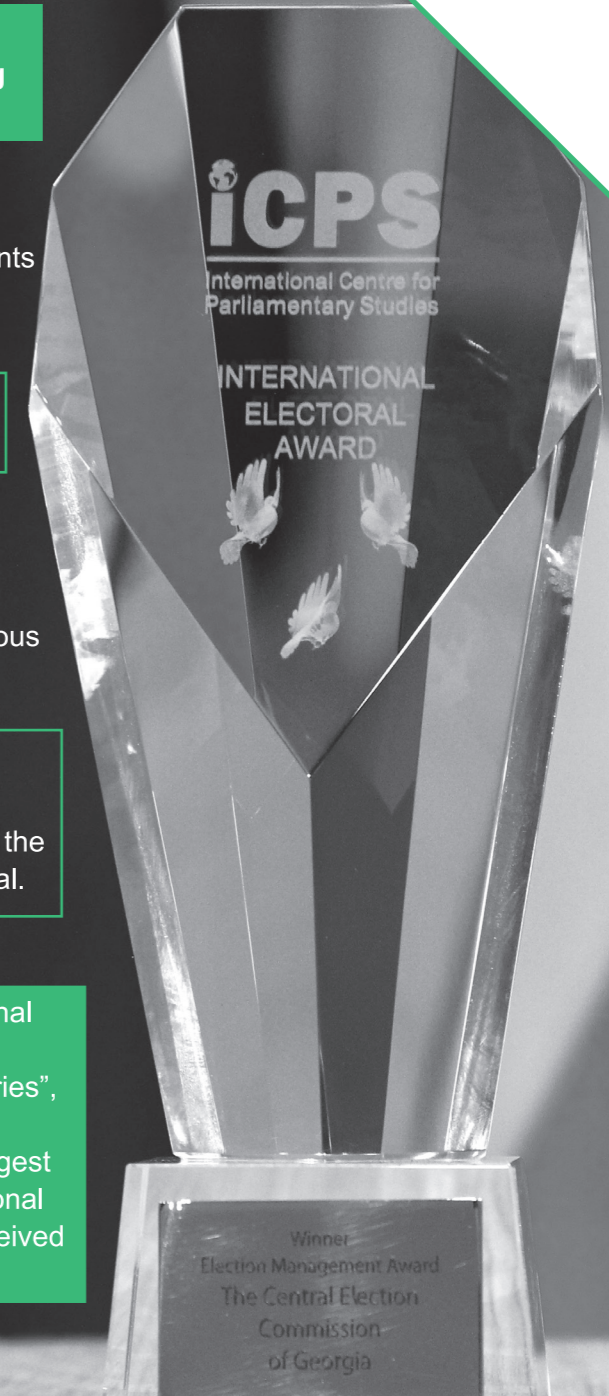
60 276 documents of 7 types can be searched in the archive

POSITIONING AS A REGIONAL LEADER

EA has emerged as a regional leader and its representatives carry out consultation/expert services on the basis of the invitation from various election administrations.

By the initiative and organization of the CEC 3 international conferences were conducted in Georgia. During 2015-2016, representatives of the EA participated in 54 international events in total.

According to the EU-funded survey “National Anticorruption Systems Assessment in Europe’s Eastern Partnership Countries”, compared to the 2011 survey, the CEC has demonstrated the biggest progress in terms of institutional development and has received excellent evaluation.



ELECTION ENVIRONMENT

ELECTORAL INTEGRITY MANAGEMENT

The CEC has elaborated Electoral Integrity Management Plan, which will enable the EA to classify electoral risks and define action strategy for effective management of election processes. The plan was elaborated in cooperation with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).

IMPROVING LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURES

The majority of the CEC suggested amendments to the election legislation were considered and adopted by the Parliament of Georgia. Many technical legal gaps were improved and specified by the amendments.

For the uniform perception and application of the electoral processes, the CEC suggests electoral stakeholders the guidelines, jointly elaborated with the civic sector on election disputes, uniform practice of electoral sanctions and administrative resources.

PROCESS OF BOUNDARY DELIMITATION

For the 2016 Parliamentary Elections, the CEC defined boundaries of 30 single-mandate majoritarian election districts on the basis of the amended legislation and considering the international principles of the vote equality. The process of boundary delimitation was carried out publicly with the involvement of the international, local organizations and the representatives of civil sector and political parties.

The CEC initiated and prepared electronic maps of 73 majoritarian election districts and conveyed to the political parties.

STANDING WORKING GROUPS

For supporting inclusive election environment and effective cooperation with electoral stakeholders standing working groups operate at the CEC and involve international organizations, diplomatic missions accredited in Georgia, local civic organizations, political party, media and other state agency representatives as participants.

The following working groups are established at the CEC:

- ✓ Working Group on Voters with Disabilities
- ✓ Working Group on Ethnic Minority issues
- ✓ Technical Working Group (TWG)
- ✓ Gender Equality Council

DISSEMINATION OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

EA ensures unimpeded dissemination and accessibility of public information. All significant election related information is available at the CEC official web-page including statistical data on election expenditures and political party/ election subject financing.

In 2015 the CEC and the Center of Electoral Systems Development, Reforms and Trainings (CEC Training Center) were awarded with a special certificate by the Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI) for securing 100 percent accessibility of public information

LEARNING PROGRAMS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

For ensuring civil participation in election processes and capacity building of electoral stakeholders, EA conducts special training courses for the representatives of observer organisations, election subjects, media, local self-governing bodies and the representatives of the penitentiary system.

In 2016, in cooperation with the NGOs which gained funding within the grant announcement, the trainings were conducted for more than 1500 representatives of 23 political parties, 11 qualified and 12 non-qualified election subjects.



SUPPORTING INCLUSIVE ELECTION ENVIRONMENT

ETHNIC MINORITY VOTERS

Equal election environment is created for the ethnic minority voters. All key election related documentation is translated in ethnic minority languages (Azerbaijani, Armenian) and informational video clips are also available for ethnic minority voters. The CEC call center also delivers services for ethnic minority voters in Azerbaijani and Armenian languages.

SUPPORTING GENDER EQUALITY

EA is guided by the Gender Policy Document, it recognizes gender equality as a priority and considers gender equality aspects in its activities. The CEC supports equal conditions for men and women to realize their rights and freedom and promotes active participation of women. The CEC processes gender disaggregated data which is accessible to all stakeholders.

GRANT PRIORITIES

In order to increase civil participation in electoral processes, raise civil awareness, inform voters, develop capacity of political parties and ensure inclusive election environment, the CEC defines priorities for the grant competition and the CEC Training Center issues grants for the civil society organizations.

WEBPAGE

The CEC developed a new, user-friendly webpage, which meets informational and international standards and is suitable for the various portable devices: mobile phones and so called tabs. The special "Android" application gives an opportunity to access the webpage and verify the personal data in the unified voters' list via mobile phone/tab devices.

In addition to delivering comprehensive information, the webpage gives a possibility to:

- ✓ Verify personal data in the unified voters' list (voters.cec.gov.ge) and find respective election precinct
- ✓ Find geographical coordinates of election precincts on the interactive map (map.cec.gov.ge)
- ✓ Access election dispute database (sachivrebi.cec.gov.ge), which contains information regarding the complaints and legal decisions on election related issues
- ✓ Find statistical data on gender representation and participation



VOTERS WITH DISABILITIES VISUALLY IMPAIRED VOTERS

- ✓ A new CEC web-page is fully adapted for the **visually impaired voters**. The voters can access audio version of the information on voting procedures and candidates
- ✓ All election precincts are equipped with magnifying sheets

VOTERS USING WHEELCHAIR

- ✓ Information on adapted election precincts is available on the CEC official website
- ✓ Some election precincts are equipped with the special voting booths
- ✓ In case of need, there is possibility to equip election precincts with mobile (temporary) ramps

HEARING IMPAIRED VOTERS

- ✓ Video clips are accompanied with sign language
- ✓ CEC news briefings are translated in sign language
- ✓ Poster on E-day procedures is placed in every election precinct

CEC INFORMATION CENTER

The CEC informational center ensures delivering information to voters and election stakeholders. Communication is available through:

- ✓ Phone service (2 51 00 51)
- ✓ Online chat via webpage
- ✓ Free call from abroad via webpage
- ✓ SMS

VOTER AND CIVIC EDUCATION

EA implements educational projects for various target groups.

INNOVATIVE PROJECTS

Electoral Development Schools – 10 day learning course first piloted in 2015 was implemented in 10 municipalities; in 2016 the project was expanded and covered 20 municipalities. In total, 1080 youth at the age of 17-25 took part in the learning course.

Elections and Young Voter – implemented in 22 municipalities in the mountainous and ethnic minority regions. 2591 students from 148 public schools participated in the project.

Courses for Election Administrators – implemented in 22 municipalities in the mountainous regions and regions densely populated with ethnic minority voters. 997 participants including 445 from 11 ethnic minority municipalities participated in the project.

STUDY COURSES FOR STUDENTS

Law Clinic – the project includes law faculty students as participants. Since the project was launched, 179 students participated in it.

Learning Course in Election Law – is being implemented in 19 high education institutions and since it was launched, 3317 students have taken part in the course.

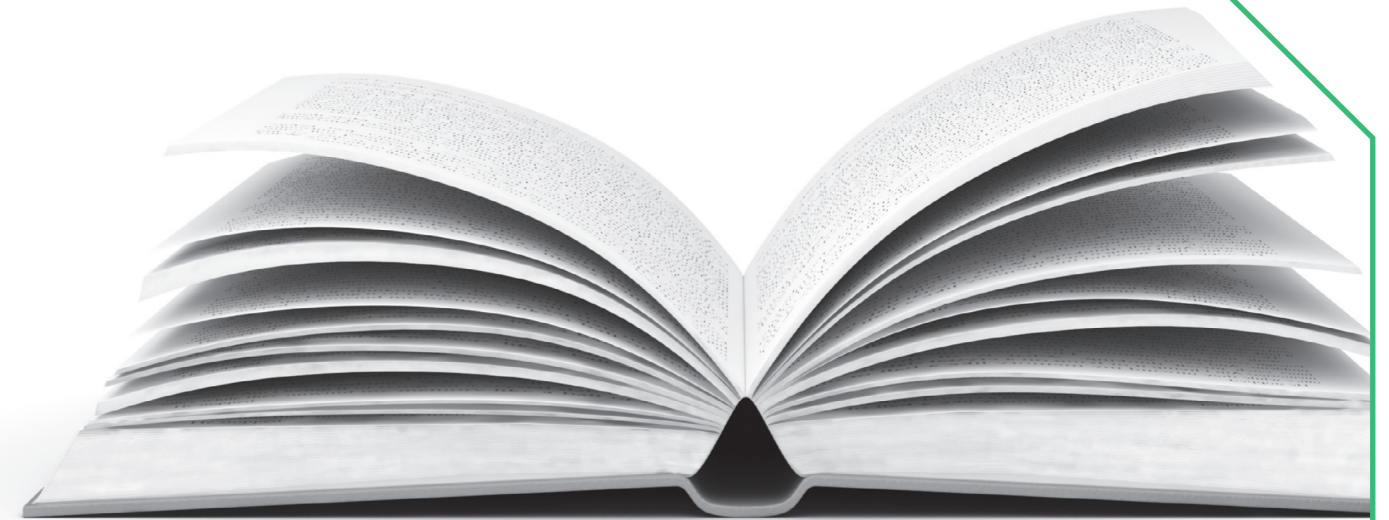
Informed Young Voter – training/seminar – “Youth and the Importance of Youth Participation in Elections” was attended by 1065 students of high education institutions in 2015-2016.

Electoral Civic Education Project – two week learning course implemented in SOS Children’s Villages in Tbilisi and Kutaisi in 2015. 42 youth placed in orphanages and in alternative places of children care participated in the course.

SUPPORTING WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE

Learning Course for Women Candidates – in order to support women engagement in electoral processes, two-day learning course was conducted for the potential women candidates in January and August of 2016. 99 women took part in the learning course.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS ARE IMPLEMENTED BY THE CEC TRAINING CENTER



DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM

A Distance Learning Program is available on the CEC’s and the CEC Training Center’s webpages. The program gives opportunity to get acquainted with the E-day procedures and work of the PECs. The integrated testing gives possibility to check the obtained knowledge in electoral field.

SUPPORTING INTERNAL ELECTIONS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN GEORGIA

EA supports organization of internal elections of the public school council members. A specially elaborated training program “Elections of the Public School Council Members and E-day procedures” was attended by 153 representatives of educational resource center.



CEC

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