



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON IFES' 2006 PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

Azerbaijani citizens expressed their opinions on issues such as the economy, democratic institutions and women's rights in a survey conducted by IFES and funded by USAID. This is the fifth annual survey that IFES has conducted in the country since 2001. IFES Chief of Party, Dan Blessington, said the purpose of the survey is to track public opinion trends on a broad range of economic, political, and societal issues of interest to Azerbaijani citizens and the international community. Individual findings should be interpreted within the context of the survey as a whole.

“While individual findings are interesting, it's more important to realize that this information is always part of a broader trend,” said Blessington. “If interpreted correctly, this survey offers a compelling look at the institutions and issues that Azerbaijani citizens value.” Blessington further assured that “the survey was conducted independently by IFES, and that the government played no role in the conceptualization, drafting, implementation, or reporting processes.”

In addition to opinions on the socioeconomic and political situation in Azerbaijan, the report presents findings on citizens' interest and engagement in politics and elections; their opinions on democracy, local governance, and civil society; attitudes toward women's rights and perceptions and use of the media.

The SORĖU Social Studies Center conducted fieldwork for the IFES survey between November 17-December 20. 1,600 people were polled, with survey results representing a national distribution of Azerbaijan's population including roughly equal gender and urban/rural sampling. The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.75 percentage points. Public Opinion in Azerbaijan 2006 is available on the IFES Azerbaijan website at www.ifesaze.org.

IFES has received a number of questions on the survey since its release. The answers to these frequently asked questions may be found below.

1. Why did IFES use SorĖu to conduct the 2006 Public Opinion Survey?

IFES has contracted SorĖu to undertake its public opinion surveys since 2002, when SorĖu was selected in a competitive bidding process involving three other firms. IFES has continued working with SorĖu based on the high quality of work provided and on the organization's integrity. SorĖu conducts surveys for many multi-national clients, including the World Bank and the BBC. IFES believes SorĖu to be the most accomplished public opinion firm in Azerbaijan.

2. Was the government involved in the survey process?

The Government of Azerbaijan played no role in the conceptualization, drafting, implementation, or reporting of IFES' 2006 Public Opinion Survey. IFES believes SorĖu is a reputable firm that is non-partisan, and the survey was implemented without notifying or consulting ExComs or any other governmental bodies.

3. Is SorĖu connected to the government?

IFES is unaware of any connection between any employee or official of Sorğu and the government of Azerbaijan.

4. In which regions did IFES undertake the survey?

The survey was implemented in every region in Azerbaijan. Within each region, a combination of urban and rural settlements were selected at random to be included in the survey. In the case a region contained a large urban settlement, that settlement was automatically included in the survey.

5. How were people selected?

Survey participants were selected at random within each urban and rural settlement. Interviewers were provided with random starting points (houses or apartments) within the settlement and a random pattern was used to select the next household. Within each household the Kish method was used to randomly select an adult individual as a respondent. Interviews were conducted in person and only one interview is conducted per household. In the case a selected person declined to be interviewed or was unavailable on the day of interview, another randomly selected substitute from another household was selected as a respondent.

6. How was the quality of questions ensured?

Experts at IFES' Applied Research Center ensured the neutrality of the survey by making certain questions did not bias the responses of those interviewed. Before undertaking the survey, a pre-test of the survey was completed over the course of a week, to guarantee the neutrality of questions and identify any changes needed to better structure the survey.

Aside from the pre-test, Sorğu supervisors also conducted quality control to ensure (i) interviews took place, (ii) answers were given on select questions, and (iii) that proper sampling procedures were used in selecting the respondent for the survey. Sorğu has a staff of over 60 highly skilled interviewers who are fluent in both Azerbaijani and Russian – the two languages in which the survey was conducted.



This IFES press release is made possible through support provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development under the terms of Award No. 111-A-00-03-00013-00 (Election Administration Project in Azerbaijan).