



IFES supports citizens' right to participate in free and fair elections. Our independent expertise strengthens electoral systems and builds local capacity to promote sustainable democracy.



Voters cast ballots during Armenia's December 2018 snap elections.

For more information, please visit www.IFES.org/Armenia.

IFES in Armenia

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) is currently working in Armenia under a four-year assistance agreement "Strengthening Electoral Processes and Political Accountability in Armenia" (SEPPA), funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Project activities aim to promote the integrity of elections through electoral reform and professional development of election administration and to foster broader citizen engagement in elections and political processes.

At the request of USAID, IFES re-established itself in Armenia in June 2018 following a sudden, peaceful change in power. Under the Rapid Response initiative "Strengthening Armenia's Political Transition" (SAPT), IFES provided immediate assistance to the rapidly unfolding process of political transition and electoral reform ushered in by the street protests in April 2018 and the appointment of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

During SAPT, IFES worked with the new government and civil society organizations (CSOs) to recommend amendments to the Election Code and assess the capacity of the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) to administer early elections. IFES was the only organization in Armenia to provide immediate electoral support to the CEC for the preparation and conduct of the snap municipal elections in Yerevan that followed the unexpected self-dissolution of the Yerevan City Council of Elders. IFES-led assistance activities for the September 23, 2018, City Council elections in Yerevan included training of 4,750 poll workers and implementation of a voter education and motivation campaign. IFES also commissioned anti-vote selling and voter participation public service announcements (PSAs) and co-financed the printing of anti-vote buying billboards.

Later in the year, IFES provided critical support to the CEC as it prepared for snap parliamentary elections scheduled for December 9, 2018, following the resignation of the prime minister and the dissolution of Parliament. For these elections IFES trained more than 16,000 poll workers throughout the country, representing nearly 80 percent of all Precinct Election Commission officers. Via the training polling officials received updated instructional workbooks augmented by hands-on situational and case study practice. Further, IFES supported the CEC's voter education efforts in the lead-up to the election via the production and airing of multiple PSAs featuring motivational and anti-vote buying messages. Both international and citizen observer groups positively evaluated the performance of poll workers on Election Day as well as the overall election atmosphere.

In the post-election period, IFES has been working with local partners in the new government and National Assembly, as well as with nongovernmental organization partners, to advance the ongoing political transformation in Armenia by reinforcing the capacities of the election administration, improving the legal framework governing the elections, enhancing transparency of political finance, promoting election justice and engaging youth in civic activism.

Through a series of direct engagement initiatives, IFES has been supporting the CEC in building its operational capacity to conduct technically sound elections. IFES has also engaged with the judiciary to improve electoral litigation through a peer-to-peer dialogue between European magistrates and Armenian judges. It will be soon piloting a Democracy and Citizenship course for students at select universities. Working with the Parliament, political parties and CSOs, IFES is actively promoting an inclusive electoral framework reform process.

Via its on-site presence, strategic outreach to government, political parties, CSOs, international donors and other assistance providers, and regular communication with the United States Embassy and USAID, IFES has positioned itself to be a key, nonpartisan international interlocutor in Armenia offering comparative, international good practices as the new authorities forge a path toward democratic elections and governance amid a challenging domestic and geopolitical environment.