

The Europe and Eurasia Report



MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK

May 2001

ELECTION LAW REFORM IN GEORGIA

As in many newly independent states of Europe and Eurasia, Georgian lawmakers have, over the past decade, sought to establish a system of democratic elections on the basis of individual election laws specific to elections for president, parliament and local councils. The main body of Georgian election law is contained in the Law on Parliamentary Elections, which includes general provisions for the conduct of all direct elections, in addition to guiding elections to Georgia's 235-seat Parliament. The Law on Presidential Elections and the Law on Elections of Sakrebulo govern presidential and local council elections respectively.

A lack of uniform procedures for key aspects of election operations and non-compliance with certain international election standards has frequently necessitated further election law development in Georgia. Parliament has sought to remedy these flaws by amending election laws in the months prior to the conduct of elections. Such a course of action was followed prior to the two most recent national elections. The Law on Parliamentary Elections and the Law on Presidential Elections were both amended only months before the conduct of parliamentary and presidential elections in 1999 and 2000. The reform process has thus been piecemeal and halting, as competing political interests have sought to achieve favorable changes to the legislation in the run-up to successive elections.

Unlike countries such as Armenia and Moldova, where Universal Election Codes now govern all national elections, expediency and political realities have not typically favored codification in Georgia. With local elections expected later this year, however, Georgia has recently embarked on the process of fashioning a comprehensive legislative framework for the conduct of elections. Local elections are expected to take place in either late October or early November, and it is hoped that a new unified code will be in place before then. There is also hope that the drafting process will represent a more balanced approach to reform.

Recent Push Toward Codification

Over the past decade, the impetus for reform of Georgia's election laws has come from both internal and external sources. Georgia's active and energetic non-governmental sector has played a major role in pushing forward substantive

reform. Since 1998, observation reports, technical legal analyses, and post-election reviews by domestic and international organizations have consistently called on the Parliament of Georgia to systematically redress shortcomings in existing election legislation through the creation of a unified election code.

The Parliament of Georgia heeded the call for codification in the summer of 1999 when it adopted amendments to the law on parliamentary elections. These amendments require the legislative body to pass a unified election code that will govern local, parliamentary and Presidential elections. The initial deadline was set for the end of the winter 2000 session, with an eye toward local council elections. Local elections are expected in late 2001 with the expiration of the councils three-year term.

In the months following the conduct of the April 2000 Presidential elections, Zurab Zhvania, the Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia, repeatedly stressed that a new election code to govern future elections would be a legislative priority. Despite Zhvania's public support for the development of a comprehensive election code, there was little enthusiasm or interest in election code development. As Parliament's winter 2000 session came to a close, it was obvious that the self-imposed deadline would not be met and the timeframe for

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Drafters of the Georgian Universal Election Code at work.

Elections

Governance

Civil Society

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EUROPE

ALBANIA

Initiatives

IFES Albania is engaged in two major initiatives with the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Albania. First, IFES serves as co chair of the Technical Working Group for the national Voter Registration Project. In addition, IFES provides direct financial, technical assistance (database, civic education and training), and administrative assistance to the CEC. IFES staff work directly with a national counterpart in each of these areas. Second, IFES provides support and expertise to the CEC for the administration of the national elections scheduled for 24 June 2001.

Voter Registration Project

In late April, the preliminary voter list was posted throughout Albania. The posting of the list marked the beginning of the public revision period. The revision period will end on 1 June. During the revision period, voters have been able to 'check the list' and make corrections to personal information or be added to the list if they are missing. Additionally, IFES and the CEC jointly sponsored an extensive civic education campaign to encourage people to check the list voluntarily. To assist voters, a nation-wide toll free number was installed at the data center to allow people to check the list by phone, and a copy of the list was posted on the CEC web site. In addition, to encourage the public to come forward to review the list, political parties had the right to bring forward missing names or incorrect information in two ways. First, parties were able to provide Local Election Commissions with a list of names and request the local commissions to physically verify that the persons were missing from the list in the electoral zone. Second, through a special decision of the National Assembly, special verification teams were able to review the civil registry information against the preliminary list to check for missing names. While final results of this work are not yet known, the public review of the list has been low. At this time, it would appear that the number of missing names is small.

Due to the way the voter list was originally constructed, there are a large number of potential duplicates on the national list. The removal of these potential duplicates has been a main focus of the revision period, but the job has been too formidable for local officials to accomplish easily and on time. Every effort is being made to ensure that duplicates (exact and potential) are removed from each polling unit and within each local commission area. However, due to the mobility of the population in recent years, removal of all potential duplicates within the national list is doubtful. To deal with this matter, the National Assembly amended the Electoral Code in mid-May to require people to be marked with ink as they cast their ballot on election day.

Election Preparations

May was a busy month for both the CEC and IFES. In addition to the voter registration program, a number of important decisions and activities were undertaken in preparation for the 24 June election:

- 100 new Zone Election Commissions (ZECs) were formed and training of the new commissioners was undertaken on 30 May;
- The CEC received confirmation of its election budget from the Government of Albania. Based on this information the CEC and IFES identified and placed orders for the necessary election supplies;
- A final plan for the civic education program for the election period was drafted and work was started on the production of posters, leaflets, radio and television advertisements and novelty items, designed to encourage people to check the list to know the location of their polling center and to be aware of the proper way of marking their ballot;
- A 28-minute training video for Voting Center Commissions (VCCs) was produced. This video will be broadcast on national television a number of times during the final week of the election;
- On behalf of the CEC, IFES prepared and published ZEC manuals, VCC manuals, and a book of sample forms to be used by both ZECs and VCCs;
- A total of 38 political parties and two party coalitions were registered with the CEC;
- Decisions by the CEC regarding the allocation of free radio and television time for the political parties were made along with the allocation of state funds to assist parties in the conduct of their election campaigns;
- Ballot design was approved by the CEC and a contract for the printing of the ballots was secured;
- A book of maps showing the boundaries of all 100 election zones along with a listing of the communities and number of voters in each zone was published and distributed by IFES on behalf of the CEC; and
- Through funding by IFES, the Council of Europe and the Albanian court system, the Magistrates School in Tirana conducted three weekend workshops for members of the judiciary on issues related to the settlement of election disputes and the method of conducting the recounting of ballots. Approximately 300 local members of the judiciary participated.

Also during the month of May, the National Democratic Institute and the Council of Europe conducted pre-election assessments. In both cases, the assessment teams commented on the calm political atmosphere in the lead up to the elections and encouraged the parties to continue to work to ensure the atmosphere does not change. Both teams noted that there was a need for immediate instructions from the CEC regarding the treatment of independent candidates and the allocation of seats through the proportional vote. This is a

difficult political issue. Instructions have been drafted by the CEC in consultation with IFES and circulated to the political parties. However, the CEC has delayed a decision on this matter and will not deal with it until early June.

In mid-May, the National Assembly approved a series of amendments to the Electoral Code. The most significant were (1) the requirement of the inking of the finger of voters, and (2) a special provision for individuals who can prove that they have been left off the voter list, to go to the Court of Record to obtain a certificate allowing them to vote up to 24 hours before the opening of the poll.

Impact Statement

IFES activities in the area of education and training have had a significant impact on the conduct of the voter revision period. Local commissions and the CEC have noted this impact. While IFES has attempted to have a more direct impact on the management of the national voter list database, success in that area is less clear. This continues to be a difficulty. Through the Voter Registration Project, civic education and training activities, and the purchase of election supplies, IFES has worked closely and co-operatively with the CEC on programmatic and administrative issues. Through this involvement, IFES has also helped strengthen the financial administration capabilities of the CEC.

IFES continues to work closely with the broader international community, especially the OSCE, on a number of political and election related issues.

BOSNIA AND HERZIGOVINA

IFES/AEOBiH Activities

Member Consultations

The AEOBiH Secretariat has planned field visits from 29 May through 21 June with all AEOBiH members from all four branches to allow the Secretariat to consult with MEC members. Through the consultations, the Secretariat will update members on the Association's latest activities and proposals for future educational opportunities, introduce members to the Elections Course, discuss the re-registration process and the use of tendered ballot information for tendered ballot voters, and describe IFES' involvement in the process of nationalizing the BiH elections. On a more administrative note, members will learn about procedures for elections to new AEOBiH bodies and about the new AEOBiH membership fee.

The Secretariat also plans to encourage Municipal Election Commissions to enter their 2002 election expenses into municipal budgets before municipal budget negotiations close in late July. MECs need to prepare a work plan for necessary funds and submit funding requests to municipal authorities for inclusion of election expenses in the budget. In order to get this message out, IFES/AEOBiH will also organize work-

shops for the September Branch Assembly meetings on drafting the work plans and requests. The consultations will reach all MECs represented in AEOBiH, the entire IFES/AEOBiH Secretariat staff, and, if possible, officials from the three MECs lacking AEOBiH members.

Conflict Resolution Training Continues

Seven AEOBiH members and two Secretariat staff members continued the conflict resolution training offered by the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution (CICR). In the latest sessions, participants studied mediation, negotiation, deep-rooted conflicts, and design of appropriate interventions. In the future, under the guidance of CICR trainers, these participants will train other AEOBiH members in the art of conflict resolution. In addition to the full conflict resolution courses planned, AEOBiH will also prepare a short seminar to be incorporated into the Elections Course.

Technical Series No. 1 Published

The first report in the AEOBiH Technical Series has been completed and distributed to AEOBiH members, municipal mayors, political parties, members of the media, and others. The publication is also available online at <www.aeobih.com.ba>.

Technical Series No. 1 summarizes recent BiH elections results and compares the 2000 results with the 1998 election, looking specifically at voter turn-out, out-of-country voting, absentee voting, and the use of tendered ballots. The publication also discusses recent changes to BiH election rules and regulations with particular attention to electoral features new to BiH citizens, including the open list, preferential system, and multi-member constituencies and compensatory seats. In addition, the report highlights the issues discussed during parliamentary debates on the draft election law.

Elections Course

In early May, twenty-three AEOBiH members attended the first round of the Elections Course to be led by the newly trained AEOBiH instructors. These instructors recently completed the first round of the course. Participants have thus far been pleased with the organization and instruction of the course, judging the instruction to be at a sufficiently advanced level. However, in an effort to continually improve the course content and organization, members of the AEOBiH Secretariat are currently revising and rearranging the materials to be handed out to participants.

Voters Registration and Re-registration Activities

The AEOBiH Secretariat has drafted a letter to all MECs in an effort to activate all available resources in the June voter registration and re-registration drive. Each MEC will be distributed materials addressing the need for the registration and re-registration of those voters who cast tendered ballots in the last elections. Those voters will need to visit the voter regis-

tration center to update their information in the voter register. The IFES/AEOBiH Secretariat will offer financial assistance and technical expertise to the twenty-four MECs facing the greatest number of tendered ballot voters.

Civic Education Activities

Citizens Guides

In May, the IFES civic education team reached a milestone with the delivery of the twentieth municipality Citizens' Guide. IFES has printed and is in the process of distributing 7,900 copies for each municipality. Thirty additional guides are expected to be completed by the end of July. IFES representatives have presented copies of the guides to mayors and other officials, many of whom provided assistance in the production of the guides. The Citizens' Guides have received positive reviews from both citizens and officials with many asking why such a publication was never produced before.

GAINs

IFES trainers continue to make progress with old GAINs and to open new ones. Each team expects to start twenty new GAINs by mid-July. In several of the new GAINs, IFES teams will assist local non-governmental organizations. For example, the NGO Uzor in Prnjavor wishes to design a strategic plan for municipal development through partnership of the public and private sectors in cooperation with municipal authorities. The organization wants to organize round tables, public meetings, and television and radio debates on this topic but needs funding and support from the municipality to proceed. At Uzor's request, IFES trainers will help the NGO gain the needed support and funding. In addition, civic education teams have helped youth NGOs Bonitet in Zvornik and Ecy in Pale to become officially registered with the local courts.

Meanwhile, an IFES team opened a new youth GAIN in Pelagicevo with a group of students who want student scholarships established but have thus far had their hopes stymied by the lack of necessary provisions in the municipality's statutes. The IFES team will help the students organize and advise them on how to make a request to municipality authorities for the adoption of the necessary regulations.

In addition to opening new GAINs, teams continue to successfully complete old GAINs. In Brod, the agricultural association had paid an oil company for oil but did not receive the oil. With IFES advice, the association addressed municipal authorities and in response received their oil. In addition, IFES trainers helped the association in its goal of developing agriculture in the municipality. In a meeting with municipal authorities, the association agreed to prepare a plan for agricultural development for the municipal department for economy. Thanks to the association's initiative, municipal authorities found a donor, Mercy Corps, to support their first agricultural project.

Impact Summary

Through the consultations with AEOBiH members scheduled throughout June, as well as other communications, IFES/AEOBiH is working to provide BiH with well-informed and prepared election officials. In particular, by using these consultations as an opportunity to discuss the voter re-registration process and the need to submit budget inclusion requests for election expenses, IFES/AEOBiH has ensured that vital administrative components of the election process will not be ignored.

The Citizens' Guides produced by IFES civic education teams will prove a vital asset to an active and informed citizenry. These guides provide citizens with the information needed to become involved in their communities and to assert their rights and needs to their governments. Through GAINS, IFES teams have continued to assist diverse groups of citizens in BiH to organize and pursue their goals effectively.

MACEDONIA

Political Background

May began and ended in violence, with both government security forces and rebels sustaining significant casualties. There were also numerous reports of civilian deaths, although the numbers of dead could not be determined with any confidence.

International efforts to promote a broad-based inter-ethnic coalition eventually bore fruit with the establishment of a Government of Political Unity on 13 May. The Ministries of Justice and Defense went to the opposition PDP and SDSM, respectively. This shaky structure came close to collapse in less than two weeks when the previously parallel political and military tracks of the current crisis intersected.

On 23 May, the leaders of the two main Albanian parties signed an agreement in Kosovo with the spokesman of the rebel National Liberation Army calling for dialogue on a number of issues. While a number of the points in the so-called "Prizren Agreement" were themselves considered objectionable, such as a proposal to create regionally based military units, the principal objection was the fact that the Albanian partners in the Macedonian government had "negotiated" with a group violently attacking the sovereignty of the Macedonian state. The agreement was immediately denounced in the strongest terms by the ethnic Macedonian leadership, including President Trajkovski and Prime Minister Georgievski. The Albanians were warned to denounce the agreement or risk being removed from the new government. The international community also reacted swiftly, publicly and uncompromisingly, to the unacceptability of bringing the NLA into the ongoing political discussion.

At month's end, after the intense involvement of the international community, the collapse of the government was

averted as the differences between the ethnic Albanians and ethnic Macedonians over the Prizren Agreement were papered over.

Review and Analysis of Electoral Laws

Before the unrest began in late February, a number of political parties had stated their desire to change the system by which Members of Parliament are elected. Indeed two parties had introduced proposals that would replace the current parallel system of representation to a purely proportional one. The Working Group on Electoral Reform, established in January of this year, also put forward a number of alternative proposals. Given the importance and complexity of this subject matter, IFES Macedonia prepared a publication entitled "A Practical Guide to Electoral System Design."

In early May, IFES distributed hundreds of copies of the guide to all registered political parties in Macedonia, as well as to NGOs, international organizations and others. The guide was produced to enable non-experts to understand the essential characteristics, goals, advantages and disadvantages of various electoral systems. The intent was to broaden the public discussion on this important issue, which is usually the exclusive preserve of political scientists and other electoral experts.

The larger political and military events, described above, overshadowed efforts at reforming election laws in May. The Working Group on Electoral Reform is a creature of the Ministry of Justice, established by former Minister Xhevdet Nasufi. As part of the deal establishing the Government of Political Unity, Minister Nasufi of DPA was replaced at mid-month by Idzet Mehmeti of the rival ethnic Albanian party, PDP.

Despite the transition at the Ministry of Justice, the Working Group has tentatively scheduled a "public discussion" for mid-June with the political parties on the drafts of two laws dealing with the voters' list and the election of Members of Parliament. These laws are of critical importance, as early parliamentary elections are anticipated. The Ministry of Justice has requested IFES to assist the Working Group in organizing the public discussion, which will include the participation of the political parties and local NGOs.

Impact Statement

The current agreement among the political parties calls for early elections no later than 27 January 2002. While the actual date of new elections remains uncertain, efforts at reform may ultimately collide with election preparations. This is particularly true with respect to any changes in the system by which Macedonia elects Members of Parliament. It is hoped that the above-described publication on electoral system design will contribute to the decision on whether or not to initiate changes to the current electoral system.

In the coming weeks, IFES will provide the Ministry of Justice and Working Group with assistance on its election reform efforts, while continuing to promote transparency in the process.

MOLDOVA

IFES & the Central Election Commission (CEC)

This month, IFES and the CEC have turned their attention to the possibility of local general elections later this year. The issue was discussed during a meeting of IFES' Senior Program Coordinator, Igor Botan, and Dumitru Nidelcu, Chairman of the Central Electoral Commission. Mr. Nidelcu confirmed that the draft law on administrative-territorial reform had been developed and that the new administration was intending to hold such elections this year.

In addition, the CEC asked IFES to assist in drafting amendments to the Electoral Code, which is to be reviewed by Parliament in the near future. The amendments were aimed at reconciling the Code with the new administrative structure. On 22 and 31 May, IFES and the CEC held roundtables to discuss several proposals to amend the Code. Amendments to 61 articles have been drafted. All of the amendments are to be incorporated in a single article and will be reviewed again by IFES and the CEC prior to submission to Parliament.

Supporting NGOs

On 15 May, IFES/Moldova, the Ministry of Justice and the Social Investment Fund (SIF) organized another seminar on "Public Benefit Status" in Soroca Judet. This was the final of a total of 8 seminars aimed at guiding NGOs seeking public benefit status through the certification process. Approximately 120 representatives of registered and unregistered NGOs, mayors and other public officers attended the seminar. The participants were instructed as to how local NGOs are registered, the process of public benefit certification, the importance of organizational transparency, and the benefits of establishing partnerships between public administration bodies and NGOs.

IFES continued to provide assistance to domestic NGOs. NGO Program Coordinator Ina Gutium aided an initiative group from Hincesti Village (Balti Judet) in completing the registration documents, including: bylaws, application forms, and financial statements. Similar assistance was provided to local NGOs from both Orhei and Ungheni Judets.

Electoral School

In May, IFES/Moldova completed its Electoral School lecture series, aimed at youth members of Moldova's political parties. The lectures were dedicated to the program of the newly installed government; the concept of lobbying; the democratic process and economic progress in China; and opposition movements. IFES/Moldova received many expressions of gratitude at the closure of this initiative.

*CDDP Activity**

With funding from the US Embassy, CDDP produced four Civic Voice radio shows, aired on ANTENNA C Chisinau Municipality Radio Station. These were the first of a planned 24 broadcasts (12 Romanian and 12 Russian) that will be aired each Thursday. The focus of the series is on ethnic tolerance in Moldova. Oleg Serebrian, a Moldovan political analyst, was the guest of the first show. Also featured in this series were representatives of the Department for Interethnic Relations, including Tatiana Stoianov, the Director of the Department. Issues covered included international standards, legislation on ethnic minorities, and the role of public officers in preventing interethnic conflicts.

Also this month, CDDP, together with 4 other domestic civic and human rights NGOs, worked to establish a Consortium focusing on socio-economic and cultural rights of disadvantaged Moldovans. NGO Program Coordinator Ina Gutium attended 5 roundtables scheduled to define the goals and structure of the Consortium. A proposal for funding of the Consortium and its activities was developed and will be submitted to NOVIB.

Impact Summary

With possible local elections on the horizon, IFES and the CEC have been working to draft amendments to the Electoral Code. The amendments are designed to address problems that arose during past elections and to synchronize the Code with newly developed laws. These efforts will help to ensure that this year's remaining elections exhibit the greatest possible level of administrative and legal coherence, and will help prepare the CEC for undertaking future initiatives of this sort without international assistance.

May marked the closure of IFES/Moldova's NGO training initiative. The series of 8 public benefit certification seminars assisted NGOs in preparing for new registration procedures and encouraged organizations to take advantage of the benefits of operating legitimately and officially. This project enhanced the capacity of NGOs to operate under formal regulations and to establish effective relations with state structures.

IFES/Moldova's domestic successor, CDDP, is moving forward with the implementation of several projects and is seeking to broaden its funding and programmatic base prior to the official handover in August. IFES is confident that CDDP is well-prepared to fulfill its mission in IFES' absence.

* The Center for the Development of Participatory Democracy (CDDP) is a registered Moldovan NGO that consists of current IFES/Moldova staff and an active board of directors. In August of 2001, CDDP will succeed IFES in its role as a non-partisan supporter of free and fair elections in Moldova. While some of CDDP's projects are funded by IFES, many are funded by direct grants to the organization from a variety of other sources.

ROMANIA

CENTRAS & PDA Promote Permanent Election Commission
 IFES' local partners in Romania, the Center for Assistance to Non-Governmental Organizations (CENTRAS), which IFES helped establish in 1995, and the Association for Democracy (PDA) have continued IFES' efforts to study and advocate the formation of a permanent election commission in Romania. This effort was launched in February with a USAID-funded roundtable sponsored by IFES and organized by CENTRAS and PDA.

At the roundtable, prominent representatives from Romanian NGOs, politics, legal system, and media discussed the importance of establishing a permanent electoral authority in Romania and debated various alternative structures, appointment procedures, and responsibilities for such a commission in Romania. Participants from the roundtable took a first substantial step toward setting up a permanent authority by sending a project presentation letter to Romanian President Ion Iliescu, Prime Minister Adrian Nastase, and other leaders.

CENTRAS and PDA published a report entitled "Study on Permanent Election Administration," which provides a comparative analysis of current electoral laws in other former communist countries and discusses the reasons for forming a permanent commission along with supporting evidence offered by several international electoral studies. The report also summarizes the ideas and conclusions that came out of the February roundtable.

As the report explains, electoral administration would become more efficient and professional with the creation of a permanent body. Currently, Romania relies on ad hoc bodies appointed only a few months before elections. As a result, election officials do not have the benefit of the experience and institutional memory that a permanent body would bring.

Impact Summary

By sponsoring the February workshop and supporting local NGO efforts to set up a permanent election commission in Romania, IFES has made a substantial contribution toward the professionalism and fairness of election administration in Romania.

YUGOSLAVIA (KOSOVO)

Preparations Continue for November 2001 Elections

Municipal Election Commission (MEC) chairpersons met in May to receive an update on electoral systems for the upcoming November province-wide elections. The chairpersons were called upon to take a more active role in the next election and discussed their new job description, the certification of political parties, the registration of candidates, the voter registration process, and the role of the Central Election Commission. Voter registration for the November election is to officially begin on August 1.

MEC Training Seminars Wrap-Up

IFES' capacity-building training seminars for MEC members, held since February for each of the five regions in Kosovo finished on 4 May, with a session on Electoral Management Bodies led by Azemina Vukovic of the Association of Election Officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina (AEOBiH). The last seminar was conducted entirely in the Bosniac language rather than with translation into Albanian, because the participants immediately began conversing with Vukovic in that language upon hearing her name. This allowed for more direct communication between teacher and students and left more time open for questions and answers.

Overall, these seminars have been rated as successful by trainers and members alike. Trainers reported higher than expected levels of interest and participation from MEC members, particularly considering many of these officials were learning these concepts for the first time. Attendance remained consistently satisfactory throughout the program, and a pleasant surprise came from the attendance of Serb MEC members. One member from Rahovec and one from Strpce attended all seminars. In addition, two Serbs from Svecan attended one seminar as well as the February conference in Pristina. It is hoped that those Serb MEC members will be able to serve as a contact into their community as the Central Election Commission completes the appointment of MEC members for the upcoming elections.

Impact Summary

The MEC training seminars have been a significant first step in the nationalization of election administration in Kosovo. The training that the MECs received from IFES have made the turnover of some responsibilities in the General Elections in November 2002 possible. The MECs saw tangible evidence of this turnover this month in their meeting to discuss their role in and preparations for these upcoming elections.

CAUCASUS

ARMENIA

IFES Civic Trainers Hit Full Stride

Two months after beginning their work as civic educators, IFES-Armenia's 16 trainers have now held over 100 dialogue groups, reaching over 2,200 citizens. Dialogue groups are meetings organized by IFES trainers to speak with citizens about their rights and responsibilities in a democracy. IFES trainers arrive prepared with printed informational material for distribution and spend up to an hour and a half with the groups talking about civic issues and answering questions. In May, IFES completed distribution of 4,000 guidebooks to the Armenian court system, providing the focus to most of

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UPCOMING EVENTS IN EUROPE AND EURASIA

18-19 July	Event:	Conference - "Party Leadership Skills and Strengthening Party Long-Term Planning"
	Location:	Dushanbe, Tajikistan
	Contact:	Phillip Griffin Acting Project Manager, IFES/Tajikistan E-mail: pgriffin@ifes.tajik.net
TBD August	Event:	Briefing and release of IFES/Armenia's 2001 Citizen Awareness and Participation Survey
	Location:	Yerevan, Armenia
	Contact:	Jeffrey Swedberg Project Manager, IFES/Armenia E-mail: jeff@ifes.am
14-16 October	Event:	ACEEEO Conference, "Transparent Election Campaign Financing in the 21 st Century"
	Location:	Brijuni, Croatia
	Contact:	Nathan Van Dusen Program Assistant, IFES/Washington E-mail: nvandusen@ifes.org
19-20 October	Event:	Conference, "Election Dispute Resolution: Judicial Authority and Independence"
	Location:	Sofia, Bulgaria
	Contact:	Nathan Van Dusen Program Assistant, IFES/Washington E-mail: nvandusen@ifes.org

MOU Provides Framework for Cooperation

In the weeks following the Bakuriani election code conference, IFES and its NGO partners worked diligently to seize upon the enthusiasm and energy arising from the conference proceedings. In mid-March, Gigi Tsereiteli, Chairman of the PWG, and Nugzar Ivanidze, Director of the International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy and a member of the NGOC, joined with IFES to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This MOU outlined the responsibilities of each organization and provided a transparent framework for the drafting of a new election code.

Under the framework of this tri-partite MOU, IFES facilitated weekly working sessions of the PWG and

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crafting a new election code was extended until the end of the spring 2001 session.

Beginning earlier this year, interest in developing a unified code was renewed, as IFES hosted an Election Code conference to lend further support to the codification effort. Attending the conference were members of Parliament, the Central Election Commission (CEC) and representatives of the NGO community working in the area of election law. International expertise was provided by IFES and OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

The conference sought primarily to establish a more collaborative atmosphere for the project. The Inter-Faction Parliamentary Working Group (PWG), which had recently been charged with developing draft legislation, and the NGO community were brought together to contemplate the development of the draft election code. IFES actively supported an open and inclusive drafting process, a process that would integrate numerous viewpoints. By encouraging Parliament to work collaboratively with non-governmental organizations it was also hoped that a draft election code would be produced that is reform oriented and acceptable to key election stakeholders across the political spectrum.

CNGO and providing technical support to the team of lawyers tasked with drafting the code. The team of drafting lawyers consisted of two lawyers representing the PWG and two lawyers representing the coalition of NGOs. In addition to facilitating the work of this group, IFES continued to collaborate closely with NDI, IRI, ODIHR and other domestic democracy organizations as drafting progressed.

With Parliament requesting that the drafting of the unified election code be complete by the end of May, the PWG, the coalition of NGOs, and the team of legal drafters developed an ambitious schedule in order to meet the deadline. Over a two-month period, the groups met to discuss and debate key areas of the law. Among the most contentious were:

- registration provisions and requirements for candidates and parties;
- integrity of the voter registry;
- membership on all levels of election commissions;
- authorities of election commissions;
- transparency of vote abulation and consolidation; and
- the system of adjudicating election complaints.

Election Code Takes Shape

During the month of April, a variety of election stakeholders met to provide commentary to the PWG and community of NGOs on key areas of the developing election code. Among the issues discussed during these sessions were: registration

requirements for candidates and parties; the composition and responsibilities of election commissions; rights of observers and party representatives; and various security and transparency mechanisms to imbue the election process with increased integrity.

In mid-May, as the draft election code neared completion, the team of lawyers representing the PWG and coalition of NGOs undertook a review of the legislation. This review process aimed to ensure that recommendations from the February conference and any progressive consultations with the working group and other interested parties had been considered and incorporated into the draft where appropriate.

Draft Election Code Under Discussion

In late May, the team of lawyers representing the PWG and coalition of NGOs completed drafting the Code. The draft includes alternative versions of various articles for consideration by the PWG. Beginning in June, the group will discuss the alternative articles. When the group cannot decide on the final content of a particular article, the alternative articles will remain in the draft and proceed to committee so as to stimulate further debate. A decision on the content of the final draft is expected by 15 June when the first reading of the draft legislation in Parliament is scheduled.

IFES is currently in the process of producing supporting documents for the election code to assist users in identifying key legislative changes compared to existing laws. These documents include:

- an explanatory letter that outlines the changes made as

compared to the provisions as they exist in the current election laws; and

- a corresponding table that cross references articles from the existing laws to the article where the subject is dealt with in the draft code.

IFES also plans to produce an analysis of the draft code to provide feedback on the draft and make a number of recommendations on matters including training of election officials and enhancements to polling day procedures. Arrangements are also in place for the printing of 2000 copies of the draft code for distribution to members of Parliament, the Chancellor, NGOs, political parties and citizens. Lastly, Election Code information sessions are planned for the first half of June to solicit public commentary on the draft law prior to and during the anticipated Parliamentary debate.

The author of this piece, Michael Svetlik, is Program Officer for IFES' projects in the Caucasus.

(Editor's note: As this report goes to press, Parliament has risen and will sit in extraordinary session beginning on or about 9 July. Two weeks of debate will be dedicated to the UEC, a reformed Law on Local Self-Governance and constitutional amendments.)



Members of the Parliamentary Interfaction Working Group (PWG) discuss provisions of the draft election code which will be presented to Parliament during its Spring 2001 session.



IFES trainer conducts dialogue group in Yerevan.

Armenia from page 7

the first round of dialogue group discussion. Most of the groups took place among teachers in schools, students at university libraries, workplaces, municipal council sessions, or sometimes people gathering outdoors.

To solidify IFES' presence in the regions, during the month of May, IFES signed leases for 6 satellite offices in the cities of Gyumri, Vanadzor, Echmiadzin, Ashtarak, Abovian, and Sevan. In addition, IFES signed a Memorandum of Understanding with its civic partner, the Women's Republican Council (WRC) who will occupy these regional offices with IFES.

Dialogue Turns into Action: A Success Story from Kotayk Region

During the month of May, an IFES initiated dialogue group in the Kotayk region began to turn dialogue into action and engage in advocacy. This exciting development took place as IFES civic trainers inspired and assisted residents of Goght village in solving a longstanding community problem. This citizen-led effort represents the first successful initiative to evolve from the 'dialogue to action' methodology that IFES

is currently employing in its Citizen's Awareness and Participation Project.

The problem addressed through community action in Goght village involved a land ownership dispute. According to Governmental decree No. 164 adopted in 1994, 600 hectares of pastureland (actually in the neighboring Ararat Region) were given to the Kotayk village for 10 years. Later, it was found that the Ararat Governor illegally gave this land to a private individual.

Following dialogue sessions in Goght in April, IFES civic trainers suggested that the village residents convene a village council meeting and write a letter to the Ararat Governor attaching a copy of Governmental decree No. 164 which IFES secured on the resident's behalf. The villagers followed the advice and, after sending a letter to the Governor of Ararat, the pastures were returned to the village.

IFES Vanadzor Team Hosts Candidate Debate

IFES/Armenia activities moved back into the electoral arena on May 17 with an IFES-sponsored Candidate Debate for the by-election to parliamentary deputy seat #49. The debate took place in the Stepan Zorian Museum in Vanadzor from 4:00 to 5:30. All four of the registered candidates were present: Aram Khachatryan (Communist), Zhorab Torrosian (Dashnak), Arsen Darbinian (Ind.) and Samvel Paplanian (Ind.) The debate was moderated by Edik Hovsepian, head of public affairs for the Lori Marzpetaran. 120 members of the audience were invited: 20 by each candidate, and 40 by IFES from the NGO community. The event was heavily covered by media agencies. Svetlana Minassian and Edgar Sargsian of IFES and Hasmik Jhamharian of the Women's Republican Council asked questions.

The debate format was based on guidelines published by the U.S.-based League of Women Voters and was approved by all the candidates before the debate. It took the form of questions asked by a panel member and posed to all four candidates. Each candidate was given a limit of 2 minutes per answer. Audience members were not allowed to ask questions. Candidates gave closing, but no opening, statements. On the whole, the format was designed to minimize any accusation of unfairness or unpredictability.

Panelists asked the following questions:

1. How would you, as a parliament deputy, cooperate with NGOs?
2. What is the role of civil society in maintaining a legal state?
3. What changes would you like to see in current legislation?
4. What steps would you take to reduce corruption?
5. With your authority, what can you, as a deputy, do about low salaries or pensions?

6. What could you do about unemployment?
7. What mechanism would you suggest to monitor the activities of parliamentary deputies?

Despite some grumbling by the audience regarding the actual questions, there were no accusations of unfairness or complaints about the format from the candidates. All candidates respected the time limit on answering questions and, despite some moments of audience-generated disruption, the debate kept to schedule. At times, the debate rose to a fairly high level, with candidates clearly distinguishing themselves from each other in their grasp of policy issues.

The next day, the IFES team conducted a dialogue group with 35 teachers (30 women) of School No. 28 in Vanadzor. The trainers distributed candidate profile brochures that were published by IFES for the by-elections. A member of the Regional Electoral Commission Hrant Matinian also participated.

An IFES "Open-Table"

On 13 May, IFES Armavir trainers, WRC Echmaidzin chapter chairwomen Astghik Manukian, together with three volunteers conducted an open table in Echmiadzin. The open table was located in the park next to the Mayor's office, where the IFES/WRC joint office is located. Materials presented on the table were the IFES brochure; Chemonics brochure "The Court System in Armenia"; 2 information pamphlets with excerpts from the Armenian Constitution chapter on human rights; information pamphlets on the Human Rights Commission in Armenia; the European Council; and a list of organizations providing free legal consulting. Around 200 copies from each of the materials were made on a colored paper (there were 400 IFES brochures).

Each person approaching the table received one set of all the materials with the IFES Armavir trainers' contact information. The IFES trainers and the WRC chairwoman explained the mission of the IFES project, the content of the materials, and received feedback from the citizens. There was great interest among the residents of the town and many asked for 2-3 copies for their neighbors and friends. In general, it is estimated that around 300 citizens received a set of materials and IFES brochures during the open table.

NGOs Ask for IFES Assistance in Making Legislative Comment

IFES trainers in the Aragatsotn region worked with an initiative group formed from a number of NGOs that wants to present their recommendations on the new draft law on NGOs. The instructors helped the initiative group formulate the recommendations. The initiative group plans to present its suggestions to members of parliament elected from Aragatsotn constituencies.

New Round of Training Will Focus on Advocacy Techniques

IFES/Armenia is preparing a second round of training for its 16 civic educators. This weeklong session will be held from June 10 through June 16, and will focus on the dynamics of moving from the information distribution of a dialogue group, to the more complex motivation of an initiative group that will undertake advocacy projects. Lessons learned from the dialogue groups and initial forays into advocacy and other activities during April and May will be scrutinized. Also, new publications will be given to IFES trainers for distribution, including documents on condominium law and on local self-governance.

Impact

IFES/Armenia trainers are starting to establish a well-known and steadfast presence in their communities. To date, IFES has held over 100 dialogue groups, reached over 2000 citizens, distributed a myriad of public information publications, and established 6 permanent satellite offices. The daily routine of holding dialogue groups is not only gaining the trust of citizens, but also giving IFES trainers the experience and confidence they need to begin motivating people from simply receiving information to using their new knowledge to effect change.

AZERBAIJAN

Second Phase of Civic Education Program Underway

Phase II of the IFES municipal governance civic education program was launched in May. This community-based civic education effort builds upon the two-and-a-half month pilot phase of the program undertaken last summer. As with the pilot phase, phase II aims to raise citizens' level of awareness of basic tenets of local self-government through face-to-face meetings in municipalities around the country.

IFES anticipates that over the coming weeks IFES municipal civic education teams will conduct at least 60 meetings with citizens, community-based organizations and local NGOs in municipalities. In the meetings and discussion sessions with citizens, IFES will distribute a brochure containing up-to-date information on the responsibilities of municipal councils and the important role that citizen participation plays in local governance. Trainers will discuss with citizens the content of this brochure and answer questions regarding local governance, civic activism and community development.

In late April, IFES civic education consultant Catherine Barnes traveled to Azerbaijan to begin planning and organizing this two-month civic education activity. Ms. Barnes is developing and implementing this activity with a group of 6 trainers. Three IFES-trainers who participated in the pilot phase were retained to work on Phase II, and an additional three new civic trainers were hired in early May.

On 14-18 May, Ms. Barnes conducted a week-long Training



An excerpt from IFES/Azerbaijan's civic education brochure.

of Trainers (TOT) to prepare these trainers to conduct citizens meetings to discuss the basic legal framework for municipalities and to share information about citizens' rights and obligations on the municipal level. The TOT provided trainees with information about presentation skills and adult learning techniques and sessions led by guest speakers from local and international NGOs working on issues about free media, human rights and democracy development in Azerbaijan. The guest speakers invited to present at the TOT included: Zahid Garalov, Member of Parliament and Chair of the Permanent Commission on Regional Issues, Mehdi Salem-Zadeh, Head of the Methodology Institute on Local Affairs, Barat Azizov, Project Manager for UMCOR, John Boit, Country Director for Internews in Azerbaijan, Eldar Ismayilov, Executive Director of "For the Sake of Civil Society," and Dr. Leila Yunus, Director of the Institute for Democracy and Peace.

In the execution of this phase of its municipal governance civic education activities, IFES is coordinating closely with the Government of Azerbaijan Milli Majlis and Ministry of Justice Methodology Institute to Support Municipalities in the implementation of the civic education activity. Phase II is expected to conclude in mid-June.

IFES Database About Select Municipalities in Azerbaijan

In late May, IFES/Washington program staff completed work on a municipal database using the information that was collected during last year's pilot study assessing 65 municipalities around the country. IFES envisages that the database will serve as a resource for other USAID partners, local and international NGOs working with municipalities, and interested embassies and donor organizations. After completion of the second round of civic education meetings in the municipalities, the database will be updated as necessary.

IFES Recommends that CEC Members Participate in UK Elections Observation

At the request of the British Embassy in Baku, IFES recommended that Mazahir Panahov, Chair, and Svetlana Gasimov, Deputy Chair of the Central Election Commission, be nominated to participate in a British Foreign Office sponsored Election Study Visit for the 7 June General Elections in the UK. The two CEC members will join other election officials from around the world to observe the balloting and counting processes on Election Day. A full program of activities and meetings will be scheduled by the Foreign Office in order to introduce the Azeri representatives to the British system of elections and to their counterparts in Britain's electoral bodies.

Following the return of the CEC delegation, IFES plans to work closely with Panahov and Gasimov to process the lessons learned from the observation of the British elections and discuss in detail how to promote further reform of the system of elections in Azerbaijan.

Impact Summary

IFES continues to provide technical assistance to the CEC by providing an objective and constructive assessment of the implementation of the Milli Majlis elections. Work on municipal development remains a key program for IFES in Azerbaijan. IFES met with key Government of Azerbaijan municipal leaders and elected municipal members to further the development of the municipal mandate in the country. In order to provide objective information about the municipal legal framework and levels of citizen involvement in their communities, IFES continues to conduct civic education activities.

GEORGIA

Unified Election Code Drafted

In late May, a team of lawyers representing the Parliamentary Inter-Faction Working Group (PWG) and a coalition of NGOs (CNGO), completed drafting a unified election code. The draft code combines Georgia's three election laws into one unified body of law. In anticipation of local elections later this year, adoption of the Code is expected before the end of Parliament's spring session on 30 June.

Over the past several months under a tri-partite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), IFES has provided technical assistance to the PWG and CNGO to promote the drafting of a unified election code in a transparent and inclusive manner. For more information on the assistance that IFES has provided to the legislative drafting process, please refer to this month's feature article.

In the coming weeks, IFES will produce and distribute 3000 copies of the draft law to members of Parliament, the Chancellery, NGOs, political parties and citizens. IFES will also produce an analysis of the draft code to provide Parliament with feedback on the legislation and to make a number of recommendations regarding matters such as mandatory training of election officials and enhancements to polling day procedures.

Draft UEC Information Sessions

During May a number of information sessions were arranged to discuss the progress and content of the draft unified election code. On 4 May a meeting attended by 35 representatives from the PWG, parties not represented in Parliament, the Central Election Commission (CEC), and NGOC was held in Tbilisi to discuss a number of key issues related to the unified election code.

Although it was planned to manage the discussion in smaller groups to enable as many ideas as possible to be canvassed, the participants strongly requested that given the diversity of the participants, the group undertake discussion as a whole group to ensure everyone heard all the viewpoints. At the close of the meeting written submissions addressing election administration issues were received from the Merab Kostava Society, Georgian National Front, Republican Party and the Ilia Chavchavadze Society.

IFES Legal Adviser Giorgi Baratashvili attended the IRI-sponsored Election Campaign Academy on 21 May to provide a briefing on the draft election code. On 23 May Baratashvili also attended a meeting of the Women's Forum to discuss the draft election code and how it proposed to address a number of gender issues. At this session, attendees discussed the possibility of including quotas of minimum number of women candidates on party lists. Several participants suggested that the Forum may wish to lobby the NGO community and members of Parliament (including the PWG) to try to find some sort of support base for the idea. The meeting ended in a resolution that a letter requesting consideration of their recommendation would be sent to members of the PWG.

IFES Conducts Civic Education Activities

In addition to its sustained support of the drafting of a unified



Over 50 teachers and local education administrators from different regions attend IFES/Georgia Civic Education workshop.



IFES/Georgia Election Code information session includes PWG, CNGO and parties not in Parliament.

election code, IFES remains actively involved in implementing civic education activities that promote broader understanding of democratic principles and values.

Workshop on “Civic Education in Schools”

From 10-13 May, IFES held a teacher’s workshop entitled “Civic Education in Schools” in Likani. Over 50 teachers and local education administrators (10 from each of Borjomi, Akhalstikhe, Khashuri, Kutaisi and Telavi) attended the workshop. The workshop focused on the following objectives:

- Familiarizing teachers with different kinds of civic activities and civic education programs for schools;
- Encouraging and motivating teachers and students to be actively involved in civics activities not just within their school, but also within the community as a whole;
- Promoting civic activities within schools;
- Establishing a teachers network to provide support and a medium for exchanging ideas;
- Developing action plans for implementing the program in their own schools.

IFES partnered informally with several other organizations that are currently working in the area of civic education. The partners assisted with the presentation of sessions at the workshop. Each made a valuable contribution to the workshop, adding different ideas and viewpoints to stimulate discussion and activities. Guest presenters included Levan Tsut-

skiridze of the Open Society Georgia Foundation; Rusudan Tkemaladze of the English Teachers Association of Georgia, Givi Mikanadze of the Tbilisi International Human Rights School, Maura Fulton of Peace Corps Georgia, and Albert Decie of IFES/Armenia.

Participants in the workshop were both positive and active, taking part in discussions and activities with a great deal of enthusiasm. Although the first day saw some skepticism expressed about just what, if anything, could be achieved, by the final day participants were positive and developing action plans that were achievable and realistic. One rule that had to be followed in developing the action plans was that any activities had to be funded and resourced from within the community.

Workshop participants were grouped according to region. This grouping facilitated closer working relations and networking across the schools within each region represented. At the conclusion of the conference, all workshop participants expressed a wish to conduct similar workshops within their own region to enable other teachers to become involved in developing community focused schools. IFES expects that networking across the entire group may be possible in future meetings and through exchanges of information via the IFES CEP Newsletter.

IFES Civic Education Coordinator, Maya Gogoladze, traveled to all regions in the last two weeks of May to undertake follow-up consultations with each teachers’ group. These visits were intended to ensure that the energy and enthusiasm generated at the workshop will be maintained and to assist the groups as they develop their action plans further and take the first steps towards implementing their plans.

Local Governance Roundtable in the Imereti Region

On 18 May, IFES sponsored and participated in the third of a series of roundtable discussions on local governance issues held in Terjoli in the Imereti region. This roundtable series is a part of IFES’ “Be an Active Citizen” civic education program, which seeks to encourage greater citizen awareness and community involvement. The first two were held in Kutaisi and Tkibuli.

IFES’ Maya Gogoladze acted as the facilitator for the roundtable discussion, which dealt with the role of public monitoring in the implementation of anti-corruption measures. To promote discussion and debate on this topic, guest presenters initially provided information about the existence and use of provisions of the Administrative Code, especially the Freedom of Information provisions and the Presidential Decree on Anti-Corruption Measures. Over thirty participants, drawn from Sakrebulo members, NGOs and community groups within the Kutaisi and Terjoli areas, took part in the discussion.

The main focus of the discussion was on the mechanisms by which citizens may be involved in the process of implementation of the anti-corruption program. In this discussion, IFES emphasized that citizen involvement is one of the most effective means of fighting corruption and promoting greater accountability among elected officials.

Discussion Group Formed in Khashuri

On 24 May, Gogoladze worked with the Khashuri citizens network to prepare for their first discussion group meeting. Thirty participants drawn from Sakrebulo (local councils), NGO groups and teachers attended the meeting. The group discussed ways to promote cooperation between Sakrebulo and citizens, and explored strategies for discussion and 'initiative' groups across the region with the objective of encouraging active citizenship. In a follow-up meeting held on 27 May, the same group of citizens met to develop a plan of action and brainstormed ideas for the training and practical support that would be needed to develop 'active citizens' across the region.

Information Sessions on Civic Education Activities

IFES also traveled to seven regions to promote the concept of an active civil society, meeting with NGOs and educators to explain the directions of our work. Gogoladze participated in two seminars to promote the objectives of our civic education program. The first event consisted in a short workshop to demonstrate our approach to the newly formed Coalition of NGOs in Kutaisi. In the second presentation, Gogoladze briefed Peace Corp volunteer trainees on all areas of IFES' work in Georgia, with a particular focus on civic education activities.

CEC and IFES Work to Update CEC Website

Throughout the month, IFES continued to assist the CEC in the development of an intranet facility and in the updating of the CEC website. For up-to-date information on preparations for the 24 June by-elections in Ozurgeti, please refer to the CEC website: <www.cec.gov.ge>.

IFES is providing the CEC with the necessary technical and financial support to contract a webmaster to develop a database management system for website updates which will enable future updates to be undertaken in a more timely fashion. As originally intended, the website aims to provide election administrators, political parties and voters with timely and relevant information on the election system and all election-related developments.

CEC Local Government Elections – Planning and Assistance

During May, IFES Consultant, George Sekhniashvili worked with senior management at the CEC as part of an ongoing consultation process. IFES and the CEC are seeking the most appropriate form of technical assistance that IFES can pro-

vide for both the forthcoming local government elections and longer term capacity building. With the agreement of senior management at the CEC, IFES has also engaged in meetings with each department within the CEC in order to clarify the functions of each department and to seek the views of staff on a number of issues related to staff development and organizational capacity.

Prior to beginning direct support of the fall local elections, IFES plans to renew its MOU with the CEC. Preparation of a new MOU will be drafted in close consultation with CEC management, which has expressed interest in a new agreement to underpin the work and cooperation between the two organizations.

Impact Summary

Throughout May, IFES continued to support the codification of Georgia's election laws. The transparent and collaborative method established for the drafting of the election code aims to increase public confidence in the law and consequently in the democratic process. Expanded popular participation in the public comment phase of the legislative drafting process is intended to promote broader acceptance of the Code by election stakeholders.

The IFES-organized roundtables and discussions in the Imereti Region and the Khashuri area promote cooperative action among elected leaders and participants of civil society by informing citizens about local governance and civic responsibility. The roundtables encourage open dialogue, stress community-based initiatives and strengthen accountability of elected leaders to their constituents. The teachers' workshop expanded civil society promotion by encouraging teachers and students to see their schools and themselves as a vital part of the community.

In focusing on teachers, IFES seeks to encourage and motivate teachers and students to be actively involved in civics activities not just within their schools, but within the community as a whole. This activity also provides teachers with ideas on how to teach the difficult concepts of active citizenship, to promote civics activities within their schools and to foster an ongoing teachers network for exchanging ideas.

IFES continues to work to improve the transparency of the CEC. An updated and expanded internet presence will bolster the CEC's accessibility and transparency by allowing citizens to obtain credible and useful information about Georgian elections, both past and future. In addition IFES has also worked closely with senior management and staff at the CEC to identify the most appropriate form of technical assistance and support that IFES can provide to the CEC for both the forthcoming local government elections and for the longer term capacity building of the CEC.

CENTRAL ASIA REPUBLICS

KAZAKHSTAN

SLGD: Preparation and Communication Bring Great Success for Student Local Government Day

After months of planning and hard work, IFES/Kazakhstan and partners conducted Student Local Day events in Atyrau and Pavlodar on May 16 and May 18, respectively. In Atyrau 23 students from 14 schools met with 21 representatives from 13 departments of government. In Pavlodar, 36 students from 12 schools met with 24 representatives from the Akimat, Kazakhstan's local government body. The SLGD events provided diverse examples of different local government roles in the community for students.

In Atyrau, students participated in activities that ranged from policing illegal fishing to assisting with court proceedings, while some students in Pavlodar attended a public meeting in the Akim's office and others performed research for the Department of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development. Newspapers in both cities have published the IFES Press Release about the SLGD. The Atyrau Akimat Public Affairs office informed Dina that the release ran in three local newspapers "Prikaspiyskaya Comunna," "Akjayik," and "Vecherniy Atyrau."

In each location participant feedback was positive and participants requested that even more time be allotted for the events next time. Some suggested to IFES/Kazakhstan Project Manager Bradley Austin that organizers extend the program to one week instead of one day of activities (though participant training preceded the actual one-day event). IFES attributes the almost seamless performance of the events to the massive preparation and organization undertaken by the staff and the cooperation by all participants.

The next phase of the program, during which IFES will analyze all of the student essays and officials' comments and publish them in local newspapers, will solidify the program for the communities. By giving the participants proper recognition IFES hopes that the event will attract more participants and drive the officials to repeat the program during the 2001 – 2002 school year.

Textbooks and Manuals: IFES Staff Focus On Written Documents to Support Programs

Because IFES/Kazakhstan believes that having effective and applicable written documents helps to supplement the curricula and activities of IFES' Civic Education Program, creating, translating, printing and distributing the documents are priorities for IFES. IFES/Kazakhstan continues to work in conjunction with its IFES/Kyrgyzstan sister office to edit the Civic Education textbook using ideas developed for a similar project in that country. Efforts also continue to create new

civic education-related documents and to find funds to print the textbook more extensively in the 2001 – 2002 school year.

As part of the coming Summer Democracy Camps for students, IFES signed an agreement to create a Student Action Committee manual with the Kazakhstani NGO, Association of Young Leaders. IFES also worked to develop a new teacher's manual and to translate all documents into Kazakh to increase their reach into the community.

Summer Democracy Camps

Preparations began for IFES' student-based Summer Democracy Camps in Kazakhstan. Dmitry Shevkun arrived from the IFES/Uzbekistan project to assist Project Manager Bradley Austin and Project Coordinator Marat Bigaliev in organizing the events, which will take place in Kakshetau (July) and Aktau (August). The camps will be modeled after previously successful camps conducted by IFES in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan. The camp will be designed for secondary school students, who will spend ten days studying the concepts and tenets of democracy and civic rights through interactive exercises.

Impact Summary

IFES/Kazakhstan made great strides in a new area of civic education in May by creating and strengthening relationships between local government officials and schools. The fertile ground that this creates is prepared for further development of civic education initiatives. The impact of the Student Local Government Day project was a positive influence on all the participants as demonstrated by the community reaction and requests for more time to expand the program.

The students not only learned how local government operates and affects their lives, but they also gained a new appreciation for how hard the officials work on their behalf. The officials received more than a day of free help; they gained a new appreciation for students' intelligence, dedication and insight into community issues. Lastly, the teachers now know that they have access to government officials. It is hoped that this newfound resource will be utilized and that students will work with them on future civic education lessons.

The complementary role that the textbook and manuals play to the activity programming will ensure a long-lasting impact on civic education in Kazakhstan. After introduction into IFES' programs they focus, augment and assist with the project work and over time they disseminate civic education as they pass from person to person.

KYRGYZSTAN

Teacher's Civic Education Pilot Review Seminar

IFES/Bishkek conducted a Teacher's Seminar to review the Civic Education Curriculum Development project following

the piloting of the draft of a textbook and teacher's manual in 22 schools during the spring semester. The seminar was attended by participating pilot-school teachers and the Minister of Education, Ms. Kamilya Sharshkeeva, who provided opening remarks. IFES Vice President for Programs, Juliana G. Pilon, as well as representatives from the Institute and Ministry of Education, the Soros Foundation and the Critical Thinking Laboratory attended the seminar. In addition, members from IFES' Textbook Committee in Bishkek took part.

IFES Project Manager Chedomir Flego moderated the event. IFES received many recommendations and suggestions for the improvement of the text both in style and content. The student text and teacher's manual are in the process of being revised following the recommendations of the seminar participants. The textbook covers over 24 lessons and student activities on the topics of civil society, democratic governance, human rights and civic and familial responsibility. The teacher's manual instructs teachers how to communicate the text to students and divide the textbook into 68 lessons that correspond with the Kyrgyzstani school year. The teachers' manual also includes instructions on leading activities and games that create an interactive learning experience, which will enhance student appreciation of the concepts presented in the seminars.

University Civic Education Project Begins

IFES has formed a committee to research and write a university civic education course. The committee decided that this course should be based on the successful IFES secondary textbook because the subject matter is readily adaptable to the tertiary level. The committee hopes to introduce the course into the college curriculum by winter 2002.

The project's proposal includes a CD-Rom-based "text" for students, which will be augmented by other web-based interactive learning. This course will be based on the latest civics education programs used by universities in the US and Europe. The committee formed by IFES will be discussing content and format issues as well as methodological approaches, as written material for the course is collected. At least one university has already agreed to pilot the course in its winter semester.

Democracy Summer Camps at Issyk-Kul, Osh

IFES has concluded arrangements with two local partners and developed programs of activities and a timeframe for the two IFES-sponsored student democracy summer camps. The committee has received a large number of applications and finalized selection of applicants based on the IFES (USAID) selection criteria. IFES will hold summer camps in the Kyrgyz State National University facility at Issyk-Kul in late June and at Mamakaeva, outside Osh, in mid-August. Both centers are considered safe, with appropriate facilities for stu-

dents. A draft program and agenda has been prepared and IFES is coordinating and training partners to implement the Camps.

Student Activities – Student Elections

IFES supported the conduct of democratic elections at the Kyrgyz Russian Slavonic University for the University Student Representative Council. IFES continued to assist a group of students, who were instrumental in planning the election and conducted training for the students in the democratic conduct and procedures of elections. IFES has received a great deal of support from the Deputy Rector of KRSU, who has arranged with all faculty heads to facilitate the conduct of student elections (with the assistance from IFES) in October 2001.

IFES will again host a refresher-training course in September for students who will form the university elections commission and precinct election commissions. The training will include instruction on specific election procedures and administration of the student elections code. Training for both the candidates and student media representatives is also planned.

Impact Summary

As the month of May came to a close, so did the school year and the pilot phase of IFES' textbook and course program. After considering the concerns and suggestion of teachers, who assisted with piloting the textbook in 22 schools, IFES is now prepared to make the necessary changes to improve the text and teacher's manual in time for the 2001-2002 school year. IFES staff will make final edits and re-translate the textbook into Russian and Kyrgyz for submission to the Ministry of Education for approval. Once the text is approved, IFES will commence printing with donor funding. An intensive teacher-training program will precede the expanded piloting period in August.

IFES has also commenced work on the university civic education project. An IFES committee has prepared a draft outline of the program, which includes upgrading the existing IFES secondary text and supplementing this with a CD-Rom-based learning format. IFES believes that with more technology-developed sources, students will be more engaged by the coursework as a whole. This will be an important first step in complementing current lecturing teaching methods with more interactive methods of study.

IFES has conducted election training for the students of KRSU and is confident there will be a first democratically-elected student representative council at the university in 2001. IFES will continue to promote democratic development of election processes at the local level including continuing to train schoolchildren and university students to run democratic elections.



Student meets with Local Education Minister as part of IFES' Student Local Government Day.

TAJIKISTAN

Final Student Local Government Day (SLGD) Held In Leninski Rayon

The third and final Student Local Government Day (SLGD) was held in Leninski Rayon on May 22. IFES Vice President for Programs, Juliana Pilon, observed the event as part of her visit to Tajikistan. 13 students (7 boys and 6 girls) participated and they observed 5 different government offices in action: Gorono (local education minister), Mayor, Prosecutor, Judge, and *Militsia*. SLGD was met with an enthusiastic reception by administrators, teachers and students.

The key to the success of this particular event was the cooperative relationship that existed between Gorono Ibronov and IFES. Mr. Ibronov provided support for the project from its beginning and followed through to the day of the actual event. An informal follow-up meeting on 23 May allowed him to express his enthusiasm for the SLGD program and to indicate that he is planning to adopt it for the next school year.

Civic Education Consultant Greg Stephenson and Program Assistant Moukim Mallaev traveled to Kurghan Teppa on 14 May, to Khojand on 16 May, and Leninski on 29 May, to conduct follow-up seminars to gain a further understanding of their Student Action Committee (SAC) and Student-Local

Government Day (SLGD) activities. Teachers and government officials who participated in these events were in attendance.

Professor Asherboi Imomov conducted the seminars as he guided the teachers through questionnaires, which were designed to solicit their opinions, comments, and suggestions, and to evaluate the performance of the SAC and SLGD activities. These evaluations will be analyzed for ideas on how to improve upon implementation of both SAC and SLGD programming. In addition, the teachers are to distribute questionnaires to the students who participated.

All questionnaires are to be returned to their respective Gorono offices one week after the seminar. Stephenson and Mallaev will pick them up on these dates. The data from the questionnaires will be translated into English.

Democracy Summer Camp

Civic Education Consultant Greg Stephenson and Program Assistant Moukim Mallaev traveled to Khojand 2-4 May to meet with the Hukumat and local NGOs to begin preparations for the Democracy Summer Camp (DSC). In total, IFES/Tajikistan met with 8 NGOs who have prior experience implementing civic education programs, and of these *Chasmai Hayot* was selected to be the primary partner for the DSC.

The other NGOs (*Fatkh, Association of Scientific Technical Intelligence, Shokhrud, Training Center, Women and Society, Center For Human Rights in the Sugd Oblast, and Doctors For Humanity*) will contribute to the DSC as trainers for the modules. The date for the DSC has been set for 27 July-5 August at Kairak Kum, a campsite that is 15 kilometers east from Khojand.

Civic Education Consultant Greg Stephenson and Program Assistant Moukim Mallaev met with Mr. Gairatov (Dushanbe Gorono) on 23 May to present the DSC idea to him. He readily accepted the proposal and pledged his full support for it. His department will be responsible for distributing the student applications to the 60 schools throughout Dushanbe. In addition, IFES/Tajikistan has decided to have the DSC for

Dushanbe at Karatag, which is located approximately 60 km east of Dushanbe.

The campsite provides quality areas for the teachers to conduct the seminars complete with desks and chairs. In addition to academic facilities, the campsite provides recreational amenities such as volleyball, soccer, basketball, and swimming. The dates for the Dushanbe Summer Camp at Karatag are 12-22 August.

Munich/Prague Political Party Training Tour

IFES Political Party Development Consultant Philip Griffin completed a training proposal through AED for a third country Political Party Training Tour for Tajik Women Political Leaders. The proposed tour will take place in Germany at the Bavarian Parliament and will also provide for 2-3 days programming at the German Marshall Center in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. Mr. Griffin had conversations with USAID Country Representative, Mike Harvey and USAID ODT Officer Dr. Greg Koldys and Dr. Roger Kangas at the German Marshall Center.

After Dr. Greg Koldys raised concerns about the lack of an Eastern European component in the training, Griffin explored the possibility of including training in Prague, Czech Republic. Following a conversation with Koldys, it was decided that a Prague, Czech Republic training component should be added. Mr. Griffin then had meetings with Niso Rasulova, Senior Program Specialist at AED, and Shamsiddin Karimov, AED Country Representative, to amend the training proposal. Mr. Griffin also had meetings with US Defense Attaché, David Martin, to discuss the proposed program and in particular the Marshall Center component. The Marshall Center and IFES will determine exact dates, with consultation from USAID and the U.S. Embassy.

Protocol from April PPD Conference Published in 4 Languages

PPD Consultant Philip Griffin and PPD Assistant Bahriddin Sharipov continued to do follow-on work for the Political Party Development Conference that was held on 3-4 April, 2001: "Political Parties, One year after the Election, Expanding the Role of Women and Youth in Politics." Mr. Griffin met with Daler Amonov of the 1st Tajik Press Club to receive a proposal on printing and distributing the protocol that came out of the conference, and at their second meeting, he received the publication based on the protocol signed at the conclusion of the Political Party Development Conference. This publication was printed in 4 languages: Tajik, Russian, Uzbek and English. 1st Tajik Press Club distributed the booklet for IFES and provided a final conference report. Griffin forwarded 5 copies in each language to IFES/DC for distribution.

Mediapolis and IFES Air Political Party TV Series in Isfara and Penjikent

IFES and its partner NGO, MEDIAPOLIS aired several episodes of the TV program "Society, Law and Democracy." These programs were filmed in Isfara and Penjikent and featured local political leaders and activists from the People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan, the Communist Party, the Islamic Renaissance Party, the Democratic Party, the Socialist Party as well as some citizen interviews. These were the latest TV programs in the series and a final content summary report was forwarded to IFES/DC. IFES also received a proposal from MEDIAPOLIS to film an additional 10 programs due to their immense popularity among viewers.

Impact Summary

IFES wrapped up its Student Local Government Day activities for the 2000-2001 school year on a positive note with the completion of its final event in Leninski district. The event was fully supported by the students and officials. Gorono Ibronov's pledge to independently continue the SLGD next year was a fine example of the activity's success and validates IFES' commitment to building self-sustainable programming. IFES also led seminars for participants in both SAC and SLGD activities. Participants in each activity will complete evaluative questionnaires, designed to aid IFES in improving the design and structure of these activities to better suit participants' needs.

The groundbreaking results from IFES' PPD conference in Tajikistan, "Political Parties One Year After the Election: Expanding the Role of Youth and Women in Politics," have continued to energize the political party development program. The success of the conference has been verified by the recent publication of the protocol in four languages by a local NGO. The protocol, which includes recommended courses of action to increase the role of youth and women within the parties, was signed by all party representatives who attended the conference.

IFES' enormously popular television series, "Society Law and Democracy," continued its successful run with the broadcast of its latest two installments. This program affords government party and opposition party representatives the opportunity to offer comments on local and national issues and present their political views to a wide audience on TBT, Tajik National Television. The working relationship between IFES and its local partner, MEDIAPOLIS, has been so successful that MEDIAPOLIS has expressed its desire to continue the partnership with another proposal for an additional ten programs.



MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK

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IFES provides technical assistance in the promotion of democracy worldwide and serves as a clearinghouse for information about democratic development and elections. Since its inception in 1987, the Foundation has worked in more than 100 countries. IFES activities are made possible, in part, by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

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