



**ISFED**

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR  
FAIR ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRACY

**Press Release**

**28 October, 2018**

## **Voting Process and Closing of Polling Station**

The International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED) is monitoring the October 28, 2018 Presidential Elections in all electoral districts around Georgia. ISFED Observation Mission consists of **800** short-term observers deployed at precincts, **73** observers deployed at district electoral commissions and **78** mobile groups. PVT and Incident Centers are operating in the central office staffed with **15** operators and **10** lawyers.

ISFED's observation of the Presidential Elections is based on the Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) methodology, which enables us to timely detect violations, systematically evaluate the entire Election Day process and verify the accuracy of the official election results.

In this statement, ISFED presents its assessment of the voting process and closing of polling stations based on the information provided by **99.0%** of PVT observers.

### **Key Findings**

Based on the analysis of the information received through PVT, ISFED concludes that the voting process was mostly conducted without significant violations. However, throughout the voting process different kinds of procedural violations were reported, such as **limiting the rights of observers; violation of inking procedure; procedural violations related to ballot papers; presence of unauthorized persons at the polling station; errors related to the voters list; voting instead of another person; campaigning at the polling station. Also separate cases of verbal and physical violations were identified.**

During the Election Day ISFED observers identified the disturbing trend of mobilization of party activists nearby polling stations, who were noting which voters went to the stations. These cases might have a negative effect on the expression of the voters' free will and might be perceived by voters as indirect pressure on them. This kind of method was mostly used by activists of the Georgian Dream. However, in certain election districts similar activities by representatives of the "United National Movement", as well as "European Georgia" were observed. ISFED observers also identified several cases of Georgian Dream activists campaigning and demanding voters to bring more supporters. There were also cases where representatives of some non-governmental organizations were using similar tactics.

At this time, ISFED observers have filed **61** complaints with Precinct Electoral Commissions (PECs) and **62** complaints with District Electoral Commissions (DECs).

### **Detailed Information from the PVT**

- At **99.7%** of polling stations in Georgia, voters cast their ballots using proper voter identification. This figure is almost identical to the 2013 Presidential Elections (98%).
- Inking was always properly checked at **97.1%** of polling stations, which is an improvement compared to the 2013 Presidential Elections, when inking was checked at 94.4% of polling stations.

- At **99.1%** of polling stations, the ballot papers were properly validated with a signature and seal. This figure is not different from 2013 Presidential Elections (99.1%).
- At **98.6%** of polling stations, voters were always properly inked. This figure is not statistically significantly different from 2013 Presidential Elections when voters were properly inked at 97.4% of polling stations.
- The secrecy of vote was always ensured at **98.6%** of the polling stations. This figure is slightly improved compared to 2013 Presidential Elections (96.4%).
- Different cases of physical pressure or threats during the voting process were identified at **0.8%** of the polling stations.

## **Violations**

After 17:00 ISFED's observers reported following violations:

### **Limitation of observers' rights**

- At the polling station **#93** of the election district **#10** (Gldani), the observer was not allowed to register a complaint by the secretary of the Commission.

### **Violation of secrecy of vote**

- At the polling station **#4** of the election district **#38** (Adigeni), the voter casted a vote outside of the booth, despite the fact that he/she was pointed not to do so by the Chair.

### **Campaigning at the polling station**

- At the polling station **#11** of the election district **#12** (Gurjaani), the observer of the "Former Prisoners for Human Rights" was campaigning and urging the voters to vote for the candidate of the "Georgian Dream".
- At the polling station **#91** of the election district **#3** (Saburtalo), the member of the Commission was making political statements.

### **Procedural violations related to ballot papers**

- At the polling station **#91** of the election district **#3** (Saburtalo), the voter placed a ballot paper in the ballot box without an envelope.
- At the polling station **#34** of the election district **#37** (Akhalsikhe), after counting of signatures by the registrar, it was discovered that number of issued ballot papers was one figure more than signatures.
- At the polling station **#102** of the election district **#79** (Batumi), the registrar issued one more ballot papers to the voter.
- At the polling station **#37** of the election district **#83** (Khelvachauri), 41 voters were able to cast a vote using mobile ballot box. Members of the Commission accompanying the ballot box were issued 50 ballot papers. After completion of casting of votes, members of the Commission brought back 8 ballot papers, instead of nine.

### **Inadequate handling of electoral documentation**

- At the polling stations **#6** and **#25** of the election district **#52** (Baghdati), voters who were voting through mobile ballot box were not indicated in any of the registrars' voting lists.

- At the polling station #86 of the election district #67 (Zugdidi), the secretary of the Commission changed data in the demonstration protocol.

### **Errors related to the voters list**

- At the polling station #36 of the election district #67 (Zugdidi), the voter found a signature in the voting list alongside his/her name.
- At the polling station #54 of the election district #8 (Didube), the members of the Commission accompanying the mobile ballot box have taken the special list alongside with the mobile ballot box list, the incident was revealed only after the mobile ballot box was brought back at the station.
- At the polling station #45 of the election district #67 (Zugdidi), the family member of a voter, was allowed to cast a vote instead of the registered voter by the member of the Commission accompanying the mobile ballot box.
- At the polling station #93 of the election district #10 (Gldani), the registrar failed to put their signature in the list.

### **Interruption of the work of election commission**

- Case of verbal confrontation was reported between the Chair of the Vake District Electoral Commission, Tamaz Poladashvili and the representative of the “United National Movement”, Konstantine Ioseliani. The latter was recording a video of the ongoing process at the district, with a few persons accompanying him. As the chair of the DEC said, they could not identify these persons, as they did not present adequate accreditation. After their arrival, a verbal confrontation between the Chair and Konstantine Ioseliani was going in the corridor of the building where DEC is situated. The Chair forced these persons out of the PEC’s building, however, the representative of the “Civil Platform – New Georgia” at the Vake District Electoral Commission, David Nebieridze did not obey to the decision of the Chair, who consequently, called the police. The police then removed the David Nebieridze from the building.

ISFED allows citizens to follow the election process online via Elections Portal – [www.electionsportal.ge](http://www.electionsportal.ge), where election violations are immediately posted on the elections map. In addition, anyone can report violation of the electoral process by sending a text to a toll-free number **90039**.

ISFED will announce information regarding the results after completion of counting of votes, summing up the results and analysis of received information.

### **ISFED will issue next statement tomorrow, 29 October**

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