



ISFED

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR
FAIR ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRACY

Press Release

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Voting Process and PVT Results

The International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED) was monitoring the May 19 by-elections and extraordinary elections through nearly 240 short-term observers and 10 mobile groups in all twelve electoral districts.

ISFED observers were represented at all electoral precincts in the electoral districts of Zugdidi, Marneuli and Mtatsminda, where they observed through the Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) methodology. The PVT allows immediate identification of violations, systemic evaluation of the Election Day process and verification of accuracy of official results.

ISFED presents information about the voting process and final PVT results.

Main findings

Based on the observation findings ISFED concludes that at majority of electoral precincts, the Election Day was mostly free from any major violations. However, the voting process progressed amid tension, especially in electoral districts of Zugdidi and Marneuli. At or near several electoral precincts, incidents of physical and verbal confrontation were found, which in some cases was accompanied by commotion at polling places and disruption of voting process. At some electoral precincts, ISFED observers' rights were violated, including at a polling station in Zugdidi where members of the commission attempted to pressure and physically assault ISFED observer. At some electoral precincts, ISFED observers also found incidents involving vote buying, illegal campaigning, violation of secrecy of vote, and presence of unauthorized individuals at polling stations.

Electoral precincts no.68 and no.84 of Marneuli were especially problematic. Several major violations were concentrated at these precincts, which in ISFED's view amounts to grounds for annulment of results at these precincts.

During counting of votes at some precincts clues were found on ballots and other papers inserted in envelopes together with ballots, apparently left by voters which likely has to do with attempts to control voters' free will.

At this time, ISFED has filed **46** complaints with PECs and **38** complaints with DEC.

Detailed Information Based on PVT Results

- At all (**100%**) polling stations in Mtatsminda, Marneuli and Zugdidi, voters participated in elections with appropriate documentation.
- At all (**100%**) polling stations of Mtatsminda, at **97.8%** of polling stations of Marneuli and at **99.1%** of polling stations of Zugdidi, inking was checked according to the rule prescribed by the law.

- At all (100%) polling stations of Mtatsminda and Marneuli and at 99.1% of polling stations of Zugdidi, ballots were adequately certified with a signature and a seal.
- At all (100%) polling stations of Mtatsminda and Zugdidi and at 96.6% of polling stations of Marneuli, voters were always inked.
- At all (100%) polling stations of Mtatsminda, at 94.4% of polling stations of Marneuli and at 96.3% of polling stations in Zugdidi, secrecy of ballot was ensured.

Final PVT Results

Based on the information received from its observers out of 100% of polling stations in Mtatsminda, Marneuli, and Zugdidi, ISFED is confident in the PVT results. Below are the list of candidates that received over 1% in each district.

Mtatsminda Electoral District

- #41 Vladimer Kakhadze, Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia – 41.0%
- #13 Shalva Shavgulidze, European Georgia – Free Democrats – 36.8%
- #42 Levan Ioseliani, independent – 6.5%
- #35 Germane Sabo, Girchi – 4.8%
- #45 Grigol Gegelia, independent – 3.1%
- #43 Koba Davitashvili, independent – 2.9%
- #44 Sophio Khorguani, independent – 2.6%

Marneuli Electoral District

- #41 Zaur Dargali, Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia – 78.6%
- #5 Agil Mustafaev, United National Movement – 11.5%
- #2 Akmamed Imamkuliev, European Georgia – 7.5%
- #42 Ali Badirov, independent – 1.2%

Zugdidi Electoral District

- #41 Giorgi Shengelia, Georgian Dream – Democratic Georgia – 54.2%
- #5 Sandra Elisabeth Roelofs, United National Movement – 42.8%

Violations

ISFED observers found the following types of violations:

Problematic electoral precincts

- At **Marneuli** electoral precinct no.68, the voting process proceeded with serious violations and ISFED observer was not allowed to monitor adequately. The process of registration of voters lacked transparency and registrars did not control voters' signature fields on voter lists. Voting cabins were located under the banister of the second floor, allowing different persons to watch voters that entered voting cabins from above. This amounts to violation of secrecy of vote. Same person voted multiple times. Due to seriousness of violations, ISFED demanded termination of voting at the precinct and imposition of disciplinary liability on commission members. ISFED believes the precinct results should be annulled.
- At **Marneuli** electoral precinct no.84, after voting ended, the power went out and unidentified individuals broke the ballot box, physical confrontation between commission members ensued.

After the power was restored, the commission inserted ballots back in the ballot-box and started counting of votes. ISFED demands invalidation of the precinct results.

Incidents of physical and verbal confrontation

- Individuals including DEC members assembled outside **Sagarejo** electoral precinct no.13 were drinking beer. At some point, a physical confrontation occurred between them, which was later defused.
- At **Zugdidi** electoral precinct no.33, commotion and noise was detected several times during the day. A representative of NGO *Free Zone* was expelled from the precinct. Later he returned, which was followed by noise once again. They called the police at the precinct, which disrupted the voting process. After some time, the representative of the NGO left the polling station. His demand for a protocol on expulsion of *Free Zone* representative was again followed by a confrontation and noise at the electoral precinct.
- At **Marneuli** electoral precinct no.2, the commission made a decision to expel the UNM representative from the polling station. Initially the commission members did not allow her to file a complaint about the expulsion, which is why for about an hour the voting process proceeded amid verbal confrontation and noise.

Vote buying

- Outside **Zugdidi** electoral precinct no.25, an observer of a public union *Georgia First* gave money to a voter.

Intimidation of observers and restriction of their rights

- After ISFED observer detected the vote-buying incident at **Zugdidi** electoral precinct no.25, the commission members became aggressive and made threats against her. One of the commission members attempted to physically assault the observer.
- At **Marneuli** electoral precinct no.21, a voter was trying to vote with someone else's ID card. After an observer pointed this out, the violation was eliminated. The commission secretary did not allow ISFED observer to file a remark in the log book about it. The commission chairperson did not react to violation of observer's right.

Restriction of the right to vote

- At **Zugdidi** electoral precinct no.78, commission members did not allow voters on the mobile ballot-box list to vote because due to their health issues they could not put their signatures on the voter list. This violates the electoral legislation.

Illegal campaigning

- At **Zugdidi** electoral precinct no.21, Davit Narmania was making political statements and expressing support for the ruling party. As a member of the *Georgian National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission*, he is prohibited from participating in electoral campaigning.

Violation of secrecy of vote

- At **Marneuli** electoral precinct no.5, in three cases voters took a photo of their ballots. After an observer reacted, they deleted the photos.
- At **Marneuli** electoral precinct no.44, three voters showed their ballots to individuals present at the polling station after voting.
- At **Zugdidi** electoral precinct no.80, five voters announced outside the voting cabin who they voted for.

Possible control of voters' will

- At **Zugdidi** electoral precinct no.54, in five different envelopes there were pieces of paper together with ballots with different clues and numbers on them. One of the sheets even had the voter's name on it. On all of these ballots, voters had cast their vote for the *Georgian Dream* candidate.
- At **Khulo** electoral precinct no.1, clues were left on three ballots, which is likely related attempted control of will of voters.

Violations related to voting through a mobile ballot-box

- At **Zugdidi** electoral precincts no.36 and no.46, voters (one at each precinct) included on the mobile ballot-box list voted at the polling station.
- At **Zugdidi** electoral precinct no.3, two voters that were on the mobile ballot-box list voted at the polling station.
- At **Marneuli** electoral district no.25, voters on the mobile ballot-box list were not appropriately marked on the table lists. After ISFED observer pointed this out, the commission eliminated the violation.

Interference with activities of an electoral commission

- At **Marneuli** electoral precinct no.24, a representative of the *European Georgia* was grossly interfering with and disrupting activities of the commission. After a number of warnings, the commission made a decision to expel the person from the precinct, however he refused to obey the decision and they called the police. The representative of the *European Georgia* was expelled from the polling station by the police force.

Disruption of voting process

- At **Zugdidi** electoral precinct no.78, the equipment for checking ink malfunctioned and they had to suspend the voting process for half an hour.

Damaging a ballot paper

- At **Zugdidi** electoral precinct no.83, a voter that exited a voting cabin tore up his ballot and took it with him. The commission could not eliminate the violation.

Possible mobilization of voters

- At **Zugdidi** electoral precinct no.14, a minibus with the so-called Abkhazian license plates was parked, with possibly inebriated voters in it.

Presence of unauthorized individuals at a precinct

- Several clergymen were present at **Zugdidi** electoral precincts no.5 and no.81, who were not authorized to enter the polling station because they did not have corresponding accreditation.

Procedural violations during voting

- At **Marneuli** electoral precinct no.47, a voter who was not registered at the precinct was allowed by the precinct commission to vote.
- At **Marneuli** electoral precinct no.9, the mobile ballot box had been tampered with. The PEC decided to hand the ballot box over to the DEC.
- At **Zugdidi** electoral precinct no.19, a registrar had two voters sign in fields that were meant for other voters.
- At **Zugdidi** electoral precinct no.33, number of ballots issued by registrars exceeded the number of signatures on the voter list by one.
- At **Khulo** electoral precinct no.1, the number of ballots exceeded the number of signatures by 6.

Procedural violations of vote counting

- At **Marneuli** electoral precinct no.41, the commission did not announce candidates during counting and sorted the ballots without announcing.
- At **Abastumani** electoral precinct no.2, PEC members opened ballot boxes before the voter lists were sealed and unused ballots were packaged.

Violations in the process of transferring materials to the district

- At **Marneuli DEC**, transfer of materials by electoral precincts lacked transparency. PECs have materials and documentations sealed in a single sack, while the district does not remove the seal from these sacks and does not certify the materials that are submitted.

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