



**ISFED**

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR  
FAIR ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRACY

**Press Release**

**28 October, 2018**

### **Voting process and Voter Turnout by 15:00**

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 information about voter turnout as of 12:00 and any violations that have been reported by this time.

### **Key Findings**

ISFED observers identified an important trend of party activists' attempt to influence voters' will outside the stations, specifically in the way of writing down the information of which voters came to the station. There was one case where voters were being mobilized through mini-buses. At this moment, ISFED's observers identified similar incidents at 40 polling stations. Mobilized activists are mostly representatives of the Georgian Dream, however in certain election districts representatives of the United National Movement are also mobilized outside of polling stations.

Restriction of observers' rights were observed at certain polling stations. In other cases violations were mostly of procedural character. One case of physical confrontation was also observed.

At the moment of the statement ISFED has filed **35** complaints at the Precinct Electoral Commissions (PECs) and **27** complaints filed at the District Electoral Commissions (DECs).

### **Voter Turnout by 12:00 (PVT Results)**

According to ISFED, voter turnout by 12:00 is **16.0%**, (with a margin of error of +/-0.5 %), which is slightly lower compared to 2013 Presidential Elections when voter turnout by 12:00 was **17.2%**.

In Tbilisi, the voter turnout was **13.2%**, (with a margin of error (+/-0.4%)) while turnout at noon during 2013 Presidential election was **15.8%**.

In regions (except of Tbilisi) voter turnout was **17.1%** (with a margin of error +/-0.5 %) whereas in 2013 Presidential Elections voter turnout by 12:00 in regions was 17.7%.

PVT analysis allows us to calculate the average time it takes for a polling station to process a voter. According to the information recorded by the PECs, in **92.0%** of polling stations, the commission processed, on average, one voter or less per minute, while in **7.8 %** of polling stations the commission processed 1-2 voters per minute and in **0.2%** of polling stations - more than 2 voters per minute.

## **Violations**

As of now, ISFED observers have reported following violations:

### **Alleged attempt to influence the voters' will**

- At the polling station **#2, #5, #29** and **#31** of the election district **#54** (Tkibuli), activists representing Salome Zurabichvili and “Georgian Dream” are checking voters at the station with their lists. The incidents are taking place both: outside of the polling stations and also inside the building, where the station is located. At one of the polling stations members of the Municipal Assembly representing the “Georgian Dream” were present. The incident of verbal confrontation was identified between the representatives of the “Georgian Dream” and “European Georgia”.
- Mobilization of party activists/representatives and so-called “coordinators” continues near polling stations. At this moment similar incidents were identified at the polling station **#3** and **#5** of the election district **#50** (Sachkhere); at the polling station **#45** of the election district **#17** (Telavi).
- At the polling station **#4** and **#5** of the election district **#35** (Khashuri), and at the polling station **#29** of the election district **#49** (Terjola), representatives of the “Georgian Dream” are mobilized and are checking which voters arrive at the stations.
- At the polling station **#38** of the election district **#60** (Ozurgeti), voters were brought by mini-vans to the polling station, allegedly this was organized by the representatives of the “Georgian Dream”.
- At the polling station **#8** of the election district **#14** (Dedoplistskaro), three women are standing in front of the polling station with notebooks and lists. When asked by an observer who they are representing, one of them answered that she represents campaign of Salome Zurabichvili. They are writing down which voters arrive at the polling stations.
- At the polling station **#9** election district **#11** representative of “Industry will save Georgia” allegedly received a call from a coordinator who was standing outside of the polling station, and was told that at that moment 90 voters had arrived and 70 of them are “theirs”. Also, the coordinator expressed his/her worries regarding low turn-out.
- At the polling stations **#48, #77, #78** and **#26** of the election district **#79** (Batumi) and polling station **#47** of the election district **#51** (Zestaponi) people are mobilized in front of polling stations. Allegedly among these people are representatives of the “Georgian Dream” and the “United National Movement”.
- At the polling stations **#31, #81, #66, #23, #48** of the election district **#79** (Batumi) cases were observed where representatives of the “United National Movement” were standing with the commission member responsible for managing the line of voters waiting to vote and were checking the voters' identity documentations in the database by online application.

### **Cases of verbal and physical confrontation:**

- At the polling station **#9** of the election district **#79** (Batumi) case of confrontation was observed between the representatives of the “United National Movement” (Murman Dumbadze, Levan Antadze and Levan Vashalomidze) and a “Georgian Dream” coordinator. Specifically, the

coordinator of the “Georgian Dream” was in his car, when representatives of the “United National Movement” approached him and started recording a video of alleged voter checking. Coordinator of “Georgian Dream” expressed protest against recording and snatched an accreditation from one of the representatives of the “United National Movement”, this incident was followed by verbal confrontation. Later, while giving a statement to the police, the coordinator of the “Georgian Dream” stated that representative of the “United National Movement” hit his foot at the car, but later, changed his statement and said that not only the representative of the “United National Movement” hit the car, but also assaulted him physically. The incident does not have any other witnesses.

### **Limiting the rights of observers**

- At the polling station #56 of the election district #5 (Isani), authorized persons at the station were restricted in their ability to take photo and video. The incident was resolved after the ISFED observer pointed out the problem.
- At the polling stations #15 and #72 of the election district #22 (Marneuli), the two chairs of the Commission unlawfully restricted the observer’s right to record a video.

### **Violation of inking procedure**

- At the polling station #12 of the election district #4 (Krtsanisi), the commission member responsible for managing the line of voters failed to check the ink of two voters.
- At the polling station #9 of the election district #65 (Martvili), the commission member responsible for managing the line of voters allowed a person already inked to cast a vote.

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

- At the polling station #35 of the election district #1 (Mtatsminda), the registrar gave two ballot papers to the voter, consequently the number of issued ballot papers will be more than signatures in the voting list.
- At the polling station #20 of the election district #49 (Terjola), during the count of signatures the registrar found out that number of issued ballot papers is one figure more than signatures in the voting list.
- At the polling station #19 of the election district #67 (Zugdidi), registrar verified five ballot paper with signature and a stamp in advance. The incident was stopped after observer pointed it out.
- At the polling station #6 of the election district #58 (Tskaltubo) the registrar failed to verify the ballot paper with signature and stamp, the voter noticed the incident only after entering in the cabin. The ballot paper was properly verified after voter asked the registrar to do so.
- At the polling station #20 of the election district #59 (Kutaisi), voter placed the ballot paper into the ballot box without an envelope.

### **Presence of unauthorized persons at the polling station**

- At the polling station #30 of the election district #11 (Sagaredjo), unauthorized persons were present. Incident was resolved after chair asked them to leave the station.
- At the polling station #13 of the election district #22 (Marneuli), there was case of confrontation between the member of the Municipality Assembly, Ali Muradov and an observer. Allegedly the Ali Muradov threatened the observer and the members of the commission. According to one of the observers, Ali Muradov was saying “You will see who am I after 8pm.”

## Error in the voters list

- At the polling station #3 of the election district #8 (Didube), four persons who believed they were registered at that polling station, were not in the voting list and consequently did not manage to cast a vote.

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 reminds voters to have one of the following documents with them to be able to participate in the elections: Georgian citizen ID card and Passport of a citizen of Georgia.**

ISFED calls upon all eligible voters in Georgia to go to the polls and express their free will by voting in favor of a candidate of their choice.

ISFED reminds voters that voting is secret and pressure on voters and control of free will is a criminal offense.

**ISFED will release its next statement at 19:00**

*ISFED Observation Mission is made possible with the generous support from the American people, by financial support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The Election Day mission is also supported by the Federal Foreign Office of Germany and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The views expressed in this statement belong solely to the International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy and may not necessarily reflect the views of USAID, the United States Government, the Federal Republic of Germany, or NED.*

