

The Europe and Eurasia Report



MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK

September 2000

LOCAL ELECTIONS IN MACEDONIA

Overview of IFES Activities

In the weeks leading up to the first round of local elections held on 10 September, IFES engaged in an intensive effort to develop and implement a voter information campaign on behalf of the State Electoral Commission (SEC) and to assist the SEC in the production of a poll worker guidebook for use by polling station officials. Much of the effort was to overcome the reluctance on the part of some SEC members to take a proactive leadership role with respect to the municipal election commissions (MECs).

In addition, IFES continued its work with respect to assessing the voters' list, including a technical observation and analysis of the quality and accuracy of the list as well as a review of the legal and administrative framework for maintenance of the database and the updating of the list.

Performance of Electoral Commissions

The performance of electoral bodies was problematic. The OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission (EOM), in its Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions on the first round, found the following shortcomings in the preparation and conduct of the elections:

- vague and inconsistent provisions in the Law on Local Elections;
- a State Election Commission interpreting its mandate in an extremely restrictive manner and failing to issue binding regulations on vital issues;
- a severe shortage of funds available to municipalities to conduct the elections; and
- administrative measures initiated by the authorities selectively against a number of media critical of the government before Election Day.

The EOM issued similar findings at the conclusion of the second round of elections, held on 24 September.

While IFES assistance provided much-needed support to the SEC as it prepared for the elections, it is demonstrably clear that the problems with the electoral process in Macedonia are systemic and require longer-term institutional reform if they are to be diminished.

Development of a Guidebook for Pollworkers

Versions of a training manual were produced in the Macedonian, Albanian and English languages, and were used by the MECs, polling station officials and domestic and international monitors.

The IFES training program was primarily directed at the members of electoral boards (polling stations). IFES trained a core group of MEC members from 18 of the country's 123 municipalities. In the days leading up to the election, this core group offered training to the remainder of their colleagues at the MEC level.

IFES distributed manuals to the MECs in the Macedonian and Albanian languages for each of the country's nearly 3,000 polling stations. Informal surveys indicated that the vast majority of the country's polling stations had at least one copy of the manual available for use on Election Day. Despite this availability, major changes will be necessary if irregularities at the polling stations are to be significantly reduced in the future.

Voter Information Campaign Outlines Polling Procedures

The voter education campaign was developed in cooperation with, and approved by, the SEC. All media products were united by a logo and a slogan (*I am the vote. I decide for myself.*) and were produced in both the Macedonian and Albanian languages. Specific products included the following:

- leaflet explaining voting rights and the basics of the vot-

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IFES/Macedonia civic education project logo. The project was developed in partnership with the State Electoral Commission (SEC).

Elections

Governance

Civil Society

Rule of Law

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EUROPE

ACEEEO

Mott Foundation Funding

As the activities of the Association for Central and Eastern European Election Officials (ACEEEO) continue to grow, its Secretariat based in Budapest, Hungary must also increase its capacity. As a part of this capacity-building effort, the ACEEEO received funding from the C.S. Mott Foundation to hire a full time staff member. Since its inception, part-time individuals working on a pro bono basis have staffed the ACEEEO Secretariat. The full time paid staff member, Mr. Mate Radics, will focus his efforts on developing new initiatives for the Association. As part of his Secretariat training, Mr. Radics will spend three weeks at IFES in Washington, DC where he will work closely with IFES staff and attend courses outside of IFES to develop his fundraising and project management skills. IFES prepared for this visit by developing an agenda, arranging meetings, and making other logistical arrangements. Ongoing activities of the ACEEEO can be found at www.aceeoo.com.

ALBANIA

Pre-Election Activities

September was filled with pre-election activities in Albania and represented the period during which all of the major IFES initiatives with the Government of Albania came together. The month was hectic and challenging and in the end produced the result all involved partners sought- a relatively peaceful and fair campaign and election period. On balance, the process went well and IFES staff in Albania played an important role in ensuring that the new electoral code was properly applied and every Albanian voter had the opportunity to express his/her choice through the ballot box.

Election Preparation with the CEC

During September, IFES Albania Program Manager Dickson Bailey met daily with the Chair of the CEC, attended meetings of the CEC and frequently met with its individual members regarding their duties and responsibilities under the new electoral code. Other IFES international and national staff frequently met with CEC members as well. In addition, Mr. Bailey frequently met with representatives of political parties to deal with specific concerns they had regarding the election process and the list of voters. Mr. Bailey often facilitated resolution of issues and problems between the parties and the CEC, serving as a liaison between the international community and the CEC on specific issues such as the list of voters, voting procedures for election day, and the composition and chairpersons of local government and voting center election commissions (VCCs).

Through a special grant from the State Department of the

United States, IFES was able to assist the CEC in the purchase of a large amount of election supplies. These supplies including new transparent ballot boxes, voting screens, polling center signs, and other necessary materials. Enough material was purchased to cover the local government elections this fall and the national elections scheduled for the first half of the year 2001. IFES also provided direct assistance in the production of ballots (about 800 different configurations) on secure ballot paper.

Major Electoral Issues During Campaign Period

Major issues that developed during the campaign period include:

Administration and Management

Administration and management was one of the most significant issues that developed during the election period. Due to administrative and managerial weaknesses in the CEC, IFES became directly involved in the actual purchase of all supplies, arranging for banking procedures and receiving of goods. IFES leased equipment for the CEC during the pre-election period due to a lack of adequate facilities with which to carry out their responsibilities. In addition, IFES provided assistance to establish a local area network (LAN), ballot design, and ballot data base development.

Based on the experience of this election, IFES is preparing further recommendations on how the administration and management of the CEC can be strengthened in preparation for the national elections. Areas of specific concern include: delegation of authority and responsibility, clearer identification of job requirements and staffing needs, communication linkages, internal co-ordination of activities, record keeping, conduct of meetings and decision-making, and greater exposure to how elections are managed in other jurisdictions. Work on these issues will commence in November with an IFES sponsored retreat for the CEC.

Voter List and Voter ID Cards

Over the past several months the list of voters has been a continual concern. Assigning voters to proper polling units was extremely difficult and sometimes arbitrary due to a lack of street addresses and maps. In addition, following the door-to-door enumeration, the national authorities were unable to properly and completely verify the national list of voters to search for double entries. This problem was made more significant because of the high amount of internal migration that has occurred over the past five years and the outdated civil registry system. As a result, the final list for Election Day was significantly larger than it should have been given the demographic composition of the population.

The large number of unverified names was a major concern for the international community and political parties. However, the international community insisted that unverified names be included in the final list for voting day in order to

avoid leaving qualified voters off the list. A major focus of the CEC following the 1 October vote will be to further verify the names on the list and assign people to the correct polling units. IFES is preparing a set of recommendations for the CEC on how it can proceed on this issue.

The voter identification cards were printed on the basis of the preliminary list of voters which was not completely verified. As a result, the cards contained numerous errors in spelling of names and birth dates. This will require corrective action in the next few months as the electoral code requires that all voters have an identification card to be eligible to vote in the forthcoming national elections. Voter cards were available for 'pick up' for approximately three weeks during the election. About 30% of them had been picked up by voters prior to 29 September.

Voting Day Procedures

To deal with the large number of unverified names (approx. 400,000) the voter list was printed in two parts (Part A contained verified names and Part B contained unverified names). Against the advice of the international community, the CEC decided that any potential voter on the B list would have to go to the office of the Local Government Election Commission (LGEC) to obtain a certificate to allow them to vote. The decision also was in direct contravention of the new electoral code which enables people on the list to vote, with the voter card or another identification document issued by the civil registry office. IFES attempted to persuade the CEC to reverse its decision. A reversal finally occurred on 27 September, only after direct diplomatic representation to the Government of Albania by the Ambassador of the United States and OSCE.

Civic Education and Training

Civic education and training continued to be a major problem during the election period. While IFES put a great deal of resources into this area of activity, efforts were severely hampered by the CEC's failure to make timely decisions. As a consequence, television spots and manuals were often not fully effective. Nevertheless, IFES did produce a half hour video on voting procedures which was shown on 8 different national television stations before the election. In addition, IFES produced manuals for voting centers, posters on how to mark the ballot properly and get-out-the-vote materials, and printed over 6,000 copies of the new electoral code.

During the election period IFES also served as the coordinator of a number of national and international NGOs who undertook voter education activities including candidate debates, get-out-the-vote ads, and posters.

Election Monitors

Both the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the Council of Europe (CoE) sponsored international election monitors. IFES Project Manager Dick-

son Bailey met with them on a number of occasions providing information regarding the election process and issues. In addition to the 150 international monitors, the Albanian Society for a Democratic Culture and Albanian Helsinki Committee on Human Rights deployed another 1,500 domestic monitors.

Impact Summary

IFES has continued to play a substantive role in the election preparation process in Albania over the past 16 months. This role has involved advising on the writing of a new election code and election preparation in close consultation and collaboration with national authorities, political parties and the international community. Through this activity, IFES was able on many occasions to serve as an 'intermediary' between these groups providing technical guidance and support. In the highly polarized and acrimonious environment of Albanian politics, this was important in ensuring that the election could be held on 1 October and that the CEC was able to carry out its responsibilities under the new electoral code. Additional information on IFES' role during the past year can be found at www.ifes.al.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (BiH)

Civic Education Activities

Civic Education activities under Delivery Order 803 began in September. The elections, scheduled for 11 November, will cover five categories: national BiH Parliament, RS Assembly and Federation Parliament, RS presidency, and Cantonal Assemblies in the Federation. On 25 September, IFES staff assembled in the six area offices: Bihac, Bijeljina, Doboj, Livno, Zenica, and the new office in Visegrad. Preparations were made for three days of training, and then everyone traveled to Zenica.

The first day of training was devoted to the recent updated changes to the election rules and regulations. In addition to the proportional voting, introduced in the April municipal elections, preferential voting will also be used for the first time in the RS. The following morning was devoted to a presentation by Milan Zjajic, Legal Advisor to the OSCE Associate DG for Elections. He provided background information on the changes of the rules and regulations and the impact of the recent decision of the BiH Constitutional Court on future rules and regulations that must be implemented after both entities amend their respective constitutions per the court's decision. Luke Zahner, Spokesman for OSCE, discussed the new anti-corruption campaign presently underway by OSCE. After this session, the staff went home to prepare for the start of their fieldwork on Monday, except Visegrad, which will spend two days with the Bijeljina staff, learning and observing how GOGs are assembled and conducted in the field.

During the month of September, the IFES Civic Education

team completed many efforts that while project related were done without project funds. They provided a 2,000 KM (convertible marks) donation to the Zenica Public Library, which also serves as their Resource Center, to purchase library materials and 1,500 KM to purchase a second computer for the public's use. Ambassador Miller, in living up to his promise to return to the remote Vares local community of Ravne this summer, made the trip on 7 September. His visit, however, required coordination by IFES. Since this community has no telephone service and is one and a half hours from Zenica, Hika Seleskovic and Ed Morgan made an initial trip to the home of the local community leader only to find he was not home and had to return the next day to make certain residents would be present when the Ambassador arrived the following day for the lamb roast. Despite the cold and rainy weather, it was a success. Velko Miloev devoted many days to preparing the training materials and presentation on his own time in Sofia. This was done so that the project could start immediately upon the approval of the contract. In order to have a new staff in place in Visegrad, Nermin Nisic and Morgan made three trips to Visegrad, including one overnight stay, to recruit and interview candidates and identify appropriate office space for this staff. IFES staff in each office monitored the progress of contract negotiations with Morgan on a weekly basis to ensure that the existing office locations were not lost.

Association of Election Officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina (AEObiH)

MEC-MEC Consultations

The MEC-MEC Consultation project was kicked-off on 21 September in Sarajevo. Institutional Development Advisor (IDA) Jeppe Olsen and Program Manager (PM) Emin Novalic conducted a coordination and planning meeting with the MEC members who will be participating as "MEC-to-MEC Consultants" in the field. Fourteen of the sixteen members were present. A questionnaire was agreed on; and a plan for reporting, team visits, and municipalities to be visited was finalized.

The actual MEC-MEC consultations began in the field during the last week of September. On 27 September, Olsen met with MEC Trnovo (Federation) and MEC Trnovo (RS) while observing their MEC-to-MEC consultation activity. The team organizing and conducting the interviews of the MEC members did well. All of the interviews will be compiled in a final report in mid-October. The meeting in the two Trnovos concluded that these MECs are not expecting major problems regarding the November elections. Together they have less than 3000 voters. Both MECs appreciate the OSCE's efforts and the presence of international supervisors. Political parties are not attempting to influence the work of the MEC as they have in the past; however, they are still applying some pressure to MECs. One area in which they are applying pressure is the selection of Polling Station Committee personnel. Thus, the international presence will continue to be important

to the MECs. The MECs see no problems with distribution of notification cards and consider the notifications to be the most important piece of voter information. Large voter information functions, like roundtables, are difficult to conduct in these rural areas because people hardly gather for anything there. Both MECs have received material from the association but have not been involved in any activities.

Observation and Training

On 4 September, Novalic, Program Assistant/Interpreter (PI) Jasminka Joldic, and Olsen met with representatives of the Center for Civic Initiatives (CCI). CCI is gathering 250 NGOs from the entire BiH that will observe the General Elections. 5,400 observers will be observing the voting process in 2,600 polling stations. CCI will also monitor the work of the MECs in approximately 80% of municipalities in BiH. It was concluded that CCI would help the MECs in the dissemination of OSCE notifications to inform voters where their polling station is located. Representatives from CCI held a presentation during the IFES/AEOBiH train-the-trainers session regarding the rights and responsibilities of NGO observers in polling stations. The goal of this cooperation between the IFES/AEOBiH trainers and CCI is to avoid problems that have been experienced during past elections when some PSC Chairpersons did not allow domestic observers at polling stations. Representatives from AEOBiH will present AEOBiH activities during the NGO observers training sessions also.

IFES field Representative/Training Coordinator Beverly Hagerdon Thakur met with representatives of the PEC secretariat, USAID, and CCI to continue discussing possible roles for NGOs in regard to campaign monitoring and possible involvement in notification of violations. It was agreed that NGOs would be involved with monitoring but would not become actively engaged in notifying parties of violations. This responsibility currently lies with the OSCE election officers; however, it was proposed at the meeting that this could be a possible role for the MECs in the future. The AEOBiH was also encouraged to review the draft election law and give their proposals to OSCE and OHR, especially in regard to the chapters governing MECs and other levels of election commissions. Thakur will forward these proposals to the participants of the branch assembly meetings.

In September, plans were finalized for two election observation trips. They will take place 4-10 October; eight AEOBiH members will participate in each trip. Participants were invited to attend the briefing sessions prior to their departure on 4 October. They will also be asked to reconvene in Sarajevo seven days after their return in order to prepare a joint report and presentation about their experiences abroad. Program Coordinator Aleksandra Babic began making arrangements for the Slovenian observation trip, as the elections are set for 15 October. The Slovenian Embassy in Sarajevo communicated with the Slovenian Republic Election Commission

(REC), and it was confirmed that the AEOBiH is invited to send five of members to this observation program.

During September plans for hiring polling station committee trainers and conducting training seminars were solidified. Novalic contacted potential trainers of Polling Station Committees (PSC) to confirm their assignment and ascertain some personnel and logistical issues. Novalic, Olsen, and Nikola Jordanov—who was contracted to run the Polling Station Committee train the trainer program 8-10 September in Fojnica—met with the OSCE Professional Development Branch to discuss the content of the training program. The training program consisted of two components: trainings skills and PSC training planning.

Approximately 80 IFES and OSCE polling station committee trainers attended the seminar in Fojnica, whereas the total of nearly 350 AEOBiH members will attend branch assembly meetings in all four branches. Olsen, Novalic, and Babic spent the 25th of September in Fojnica to observe the OSCE train-the-trainer program. The training program went well, and most of the OSCE core trainers were happy with the trainers and their commitment to the task.

IFES Curriculum Consultant Antonia Dolar continued to draft materials for the AEOBiH elections course this month. The draft teaching manuals and schedules for Modules D & E have been distributed internally. Dolar has met with Ane Jaksic and her staff at the OSCE to discuss the content of training program Modules D and E in light of the fact that there is no current election law. The response to the overall concept was extremely favorable. Dolar also continued to read additional materials that might be incorporated as participant or instructor background reading. Finally, a schedule has been developed for the completion of the curriculum.

New Website

The design of the AEOBiH website as well as the documents to appear on it have been finalized. Olsen collected and



Ambassador Miller visits the remote Vares local community of Ravne.

wrote material for the web site. Jasmika Joldic has prepared several documents for the website: *Introductory Sheet, The Secretariat, Information Service, Training activities, Preferential System, Open List, Contact us, Statements (modified from Statute); Links; IFES/AEOBiH staff biographies*. Neven Jovanovic, an OSCE staff member, was contracted to develop the web site (www.aeobih.com.ba). The site contains information about AEOBiH, general election information and information relating to past elections and future elections, links to other election-related sites, and membership information.

Impact Summary

As the 11 November general elections near, preparations have increased: AEOBiH member have made trips to observe other elections; MEC to MEC Consultations began; the AEOBiH elections course materials are nearly complete; PSC training is taking place; and most importantly, the new Civic Education program was started. Also, AEOBiH has launched a new website to help its members as well as to inform the public on its activities. All of these activities will contribute to a smoother elections process. This can be seen by the confidence the MECs have displayed in their MEC to MEC consultations; they do not foresee any large problems.

MOLDOVA

NGO Working Group Convenes for Last Session

Throughout September, IFES and the Public Service Certification Commission continued to host sessions of the NGO Working Group. The working group was formed at the initiative of the Certification Commission and IFES to assist in the development of, support for, drafting, and design of amendments to the draft Law on Noncommercial Organizations with regards to the introduction of clear criteria for public service certification and procedures for regulating the activities of PBOs. This month discussions focused on transparency, accountability, and taxation. Among the final recommendations generated by the group were:

- Developing a communication infrastructure between government bodies and NGOs;
- Allowing businesses to provide assistance and services to NGOs at below-market prices;
- Granting NGOs the same preferences in renting public property, paying public utilities as institutions funded by the state budget;
- Eliminating preferential treatment of specific organizations to ensure equal treatment industry-wide; and
- Ensuring the viability of the Certification Commission by providing premises, equipment, funding, and a Secretariat.

The final study will be submitted for review to MP Ilya Trombitchi and Minister of Justice Valeria Sterbet. Once approved, the study will be published and distributed to NGOs and state officials at both the national and local level.

At the last session of the working group, Natalia Izdebschi, Chair of the NGO Working Group, expressed her gratitude to IFES for supporting a project that would strengthen the third sector in Moldova.

IFES' Cooperation with the Juridic Direction of Parliament

In September, IFES conducted two roundtables, which featured members of the Juridic Direction and other independent experts, to discuss the draft law on the election of the president by parliament. Several suggestions on how to improve the law were offered including:

- Specifying time frames for nominating candidates and withdrawing candidate registration;
- Allowing more flexibility in the process to afford the opportunity for observing all procedures;
- Including provisions to provide for the possibility of new elections;
- Preserving the voting procedure as detailed in the Electoral Code (stamp);
- Specifying the size of the special commission,
- Outlining procedures for designating members of the special commission, electing the chairman and secretary, and number of members necessary for voting;
- Requiring the same candidates to run in the second round;
- Stipulating that if only one candidate runs in the first round and fails to obtain the necessary number of votes, repeat elections, rather than a second round, would be conducted; and
- Stating that new elections would be conducted if the Constitutional Court invalidates the outcome of the election.

In addition to addressing the presidential election law, IFES and the Juridic Direction also focused their attention on proposed modifications to the Law on Local Public Administration. Although the current law affords special status to Chisinau Municipality, the authority of the municipal council is similar to that of a city or commune council. The amendments propose increasing the authority of Chisinau Municipal Council to that of a county council to better reflect its special designation. It has also been established that a permanent Bureau and Secretariat for the council and permitting it to convene as necessary to discuss municipal matters.

IFES Distributes Survey to Local Mayors

IFES/Moldova distributed 640 questionnaires to mayors in Moldova to gain a better understanding of their level of information and training needs. The questionnaire asked mayors to indicate their usual sources of information, employed methods of communication with their counterparts in other localities and constituents, and interest in regular publications on local public administration issues. To date, IFES has received responses from 30% of the mayors. Preliminary data suggests mayors do not have sufficient information to properly fulfill their responsibilities, they are interested in building partner-

ships with civic organizations, and would welcome a publication with a local governance focus.

IFES, LADOM Supports Observation Movement

On 21 September, IFES, with the League for the Defense of the Human Rights of Moldova (LADOM), conducted a training session for domestic observers, whom the Central Election Commission (CEC) invited to observe upcoming referenda in October. As participants had previous observation experience, the training focused on recent amendments to the Electoral Code, the new Observation Form, and reporting procedures.

The Electoral School Year Begins

The Electoral School opened on 14 September with more than 50 participants attending the first session, which was hosted by IFES and the NGO Stars of Europe. The session served as an orientation to familiarize students with the schedule, topics of discussion, and participating professors. This year's program has expanded to two weekly sessions in Chisinau in addition to a monthly session conducted outside the country's capital. Invitations were forwarded to the youth branches of all political parties.

On 28 September, IFES/Moldova, in conjunction with Stars of Europe, hosted another session of the School entitled "Political Leader and Manipulation." Over 60 participants attended the lecture delivered by Oleg Serebrian of the Free International University of Moldova and Corneliu Gurin of the Juridic Direction of Parliament.

Civic Voice on the Air and in Print

Early in September, IFES distributed the Romanian version of the most recent issue of *Civic Voice*. Recipients of the newsletter include mayors, parliament members, libraries, and representatives of NGOs, the mass media, and political parties.

On 28 September, ANTENNA C Chisinau Municipality Radio Station broadcast the first edition of this season's *Civic Voice* radio program. The program, which is produced by IFES/Moldova and LADOM, focused on the revocation of mayors and legal initiatives to amend electoral legislation. Vice-Chairman of the CEC Nicolae Televco was invited to comment on the debated issues.

IFES/Moldova on the Web

This month IFES/Moldova launched its web site, which can be accessed at www.ifes.md. The site contains information on programmatic activities, publications, legislation, and results.

Senior Project Coordinator Presents at IREX Conference

On 5 September IFES/Moldova Senior Project Coordinator Igor Botan delivered a presentation at the "Contemporary Issues" conference conducted by the International Research

and Exchange Council (IREX) and the U.S. Embassy in Moldova. Botan, who received a fellowship from IREX to conduct research in the U.S. this spring, spoke about political parties and electoral systems.

Impact Summary

The IFES/Public Service Certification Commission NGO Working Group generated a final study which includes recommendations to strengthen the draft law on non-commercial organizations to ensure the viability of impact-oriented domestic PBOs. The efforts of the working group contribute to the establishment of an appropriate legal framework governing the activity of NGOs. The recommendations clarify requirements of certification so that only organizations acting in the public's interest qualify for the benefits of certification. The results of the working group will be distributed to local public officials and NGO representatives so that they are aware of requirements and responsibilities.

IFES' ongoing cooperation with the Juridic Direction of Parliament assists in making sure that the legislative framework governing the electoral process is compliant with the Constitution, decisions of the Constitutional Court, and international standards. The recent modifications to the Constitution have required corresponding changes in the Electoral Code and the development of a new presidential election law. The regular roundtable discussions afford an opportunity for independent experts to evaluate current and proposed legislation and discuss the consequences of adoption and implementation. The resulting recommendations assist in strengthening the legislative framework so that the electoral process best represents the needs of the electorate.

IFES' ongoing cooperation with the Juridic Direction of Parliament assists in making sure that the legislative framework governing the electoral process is compliant with the Constitution, decisions of the Constitutional Court, and international standards. The recent modifications to the Constitution have required corresponding changes in the Electoral Code and the development of a new presidential election law. The regular roundtable discussions afford an opportunity for independent experts to evaluate current and proposed legislation and discuss the consequences of adoption and implementation. The resulting recommendations assist in strengthening the legislative framework so that the electoral process best represents the needs of the electorate.

Finally, IFES' participation in the Electoral School provides an opportunity for young members of political parties to learn the fundamentals of the political process. The School encourages the students informed participation in the electoral process as advocates, voters, and future candidates.

ЛОКАЛНИ ИЗБОРИ 2000, Република Македонија

ЧЕКОРИ ВО ГЛАСАЧКИОТ ПРОЦЕС

1. Морам да гласам лично. Таков е законот. Штом ќе влезам на избирачкото место, ќе ја подготвам мојата избирачка листина/карта.

2. Кога ќе дојдам до моето место и првпат ќе влезам од вратите на избирачкото место, ќе ја подготвам мојата избирачка листина/карта, а потоа ќе ја поставам во избирачката кутија.

3. Членот на избирачкото место ќе го заокружи редниот број пред моето име на Единствениот избирачки список. Потоа, ќе ми даде гласачко ливче за избор на градоначалник и гласачко ливче за избор на членови на советот на општината.

4. Гласачите во Скопје ќе фрлат 4 гласачки ливчиња, од кои 2 на градот Скопје (1 гласачко ливче за Советот на градот Скопје и 1 гласачко ливче на градоначалник), а два гласачки ливчиња за општината во која живеат (1 гласачко ливче за советот на општината и 1 гласачко ливче за градоначалник на општината).

5. Ќе треба да почкам на совесен параван на гласачко место. Според законот, тој го заокружува редниот број на моите избирачки ливчиња.

6. Штом ќе дојдам зад параванот, ќе го заокружам редниот број кој стои пред името и презимето на кандидатот за градоначалник. Судијата за кого ќе гласам ќе ја даде моја. На гласачкото ливче за советници, ќе го заокружам редниот број кој се појавува пред политичката партија, комисијата или групата гласачи, според кој избор.

7. Потоа, треба да го превртам саква гласачка ливче, за да ја заштитам тајноста на моето гласање.

8. Кога ќе ги ставам ливчињата, саква гласачка ливче, во означените гласачки кутии за саква од нив.

9. На крајот, членот на избирачкото место ќе стави ливчето во мојата избирачка листина/карта и ќе ми ја врати. Кога ќе завршам со гласањето, треба да влезам од гласачкото место.

Ми треба помош?
Доколку немам време да го заокружам редниот број на моите ливчиња или немам тешкотии при читањето на гласачките ливчиња, можам да го известам членот на избирачкото место дека ми треба помош. Може да ми помогне друг гласач. Но, задржете го избирачкиот одговор, претставниците на кандидатите и на градоначалникот. НЕ ИМА Е ДОЗВОЛЕНА да ми помогнат.

ДРЖАВНА ИЗБОРНА КОМИСИЈА

IFES/Macedonia voter education poster. The poster depicts each stage of the voting process.

“Macedonia” from page 1

- ing process;
- poster, designed for voters entering the polling stations, describing the steps in the voting process;
- television spots emphasizing the individual nature of the right to vote, and describing the steps in the voting process; and
- radio spots, which tied into the television spot.

Approximately 40 radio and television stations provided free airtime for the TV and radio spots. IFES distributed the leaflets throughout the country through newspapers and NGOs. Posters were delivered to the MECs by the SEC along with other official election materials.

IFES Conducts Analysis of Voter Registration Process

IFES performed an analysis of the law and interviewed key figures charged with the maintenance and control of the voters’ list. On the basis of this, IFES has identified inadequacies

in both the law and implementing procedures. Recommendations for change will be presented at an electoral seminar scheduled for November.

Impact Summary

The production of the training manual after great obstacles demonstrated to an often-reluctant SEC that it could indeed take on a leadership role with respect to lower level bodies. While IFES was not able to conduct the level of training it had hoped, manuals were delivered to polling stations throughout Macedonia and provided some guidance on the law. The voter information campaign demonstrated that basic information on elections could be presented in a creative and instructive way. Most important, however, IFES efforts have helped to identify key inadequacies in the law and administrative structures supporting the electoral system in Macedonia. It is hoped that this will set the stage for much-needed reforms.

ROMANIA

IFES Launches New Technical Assistance Program

In advance of the 26 November Presidential and Parliamentary elections in Romania, IFES began its Capacity Building for Electoral Administration program in September. Through this program, IFES will aid Romania in dealing with the challenges that it has been facing in its previously inefficient and unreliable electoral process. Because Romania has lacked a central, permanent regulatory body, there is no single entity charged with and accountable for the administration of elections; therefore, election results often lack credibility with Romanian constituencies. IFES is responding to these challenges with assistance in the areas of support for training for election officials, technical advising to the Central Election Bureau (CEB), and assistance in reforming the electoral legislation. The purpose of the assistance program is not only to provide immediate assistance necessary for the successful management of general elections in the fall but also to leave behind a cadre of trained individuals in the election commission structure, both at central and local levels, who will be prepared to serve as enumerators in any future registration efforts, conduct ongoing voter education, and administer elections in a professional manner.

IFES is implementing several targeted activities to achieve these goals. First, five local experts are advising the governmental experts who are drafting the legislation for the creation of a permanent election body: organizational structure and design, attributions, charter of the institution, and internal regulations. Secondly, a training manual on the election law is being developed for use as a tool by election officials at all levels. Additionally, the IFES election team is providing technical assistance and training to upgrade members' knowledge of the election law, to improve interpretation of the law's provisions, and to clarify the commission members' authority and responsibilities, both to the lower level election bureaus and to the CEB. This will promote a more professional, effective administration of the elections and will thereby increase citizen confidence in the democratic political process.

IFES Establishes Local Office and Sets Goals

The activities of the Capacity Building for Electoral Administration program began in mid-September with the formation of a partnership with the Romanian NGO Assistance Center for Nongovernmental Organizations (CENTRAS). The five local elections experts were identified by the IFES/CENTRAS staff. The group has had its first meeting with CENTRAS Executive Director Viorel Miscescu and IFES Consultant Dan Finn. The group has identified the project's target areas for election management assistance: Bacau (Moldavia), Bihar (Transylvania), and Balcea (Wallachia). These areas will serve as pilot regions that will hopefully be replicated in the rest of the country in the future.

IFES Consultant Dan Finn arrived in mid-September. Before beginning to meet with election officials and others, Finn spent a substantial amount of time reviewing documents including the Romanian Constitution and laws as well as reports on previous elections. In order to provide some guidance to the local specialists, he also drafted an issue paper on suggested areas for legislative amendments, organizational changes, and modifications of procedure. After completing these preparatory activities, Finn and Miscescu began setting up meetings with election officials to gather information on the current election legislation and past issues arisen in election administration.

Their first meeting was with the Honorable Lucian Mihai, Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court of Romania. The founding and make-up of the court were discussed at this meeting. One of the basic powers of the Court is ruling on all contests related to the Presidential elections. Under the law, decisions related to challenges to presidential candidacies must be decided within 48 hours. The decisions of the Court are both mandatory and binding as precedent. However, a decision of the Court related to the constitutionality of pending legislation can be overturned by the vote of a two-thirds absolute majority in Parliament reconfirming the legislation.

Mr. Mihai indicated his strong personal support for the formation of a permanent Central Election Bureau (BEC). He was sympathetic to the notion that judges are not always the most qualified individuals to perform the range of election administration functions; he was also supportive of the concept that Supreme Court judges might instead be assigned to a special appeals tribunal that would operate during election periods.

Miscescu and Finn also met at the Ministry of Public Office with Secretary of State Marian Parjol. Mr. Parjol was previously Prefect of Constanta district. He served as Secretary of the BEC during the 1992 and 1996 national elections. He has been promoted to be in operational control of the activities of the Central Technical Commission, formed by the government to support the BEC and other election commissions.

Mr. Parjol sees the formation of a permanent BEC (P-BEC) as not only possible but necessary. Mr. Parjol hoped that one objective of the CENTRAS/IFES program would be to identify problems in the elections process and to make recommendations to help the government address the issues for future elections. He stated that the BEC for the upcoming elections would be formed on 10 October and empanelled on 17 October.

Miscescu and Finn have also met with the Executive Director of the Pro Democracy Association (PDA) Violeta Bau to obtain this NGO's view of the past and future electoral process. Bau pointed out several areas that could use further improvement: communication between Internal Affairs and the pub-

lic regarding the voter registry, the accuracy of the Voters' List (VL), the resolution of election complaints, and an anticipated decrease in participation in the domestic observers program.

In advance of the November elections, IFES/CENTRAS plans to continue meeting with key players in Romanian government and institutions to continue gathering information on past and current election activities. An analysis of the findings on the frailties of Romanian election laws/system as well as a comparative analysis drawn up by using data from IFES Washington will be completed. It will be determined how IFES/CENTRAS can best go about assisting the Ministry of Public Office (MFP) in drafting an ordinance for the establishment of a permanent Central Election Bureau. IFES/CENTRAS will also meet with Romanian NGOs that will run advocacy campaigns in support of the changes in the election laws and/or monitor elections.

Impact Summary

IFES, with the launching of the new technical assistance program in Romania, identified and hired five local staff to assist with the implementation of assistance in three pilot areas. In the future, these could serve as models for the rest of the country in the development of an improved election process. IFES consultant Dan Finn arrived in Bucharest and completed a great deal of background work that will provide IFES with more information when meeting with election officials as well as provide direction to the local expert team. An issue paper was drafted for these purposes from the background information. Finn and Micescu have been meeting with election officials and NGOs to gather information that will determine the best way to continue with the program of providing election assistance and training individuals in the election commission structure.

UKRAINE

IFES, IREX, CEC to Conduct Mass Media Conference

In September, IFES initiated preparations for an international conference on the role of the mass media in the electoral process. In addition to IFES, the CEC and the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) Pro-Media will sponsor the one-day event, which is scheduled for 27 October. The tentative agenda includes time for presentation and discussion on issues ranging from sanctions for media violations to the responsibility of media to inform the electorate on legal and political matters.

Discussions with Agency for Legislative Initiatives

The domestic NGO Agency for Legislative Initiative approached IFES to support a series of roundtables for assistants to parliamentary deputies. The roundtables are tentatively scheduled for the early November, with the first discussion likely to focus on the status of political parties and constitutional majorities required for recognition.

Impact Summary

The upcoming media conference affords members of the CEC and media the opportunity to evaluate legislation and practices of the media during electoral campaigns. Specifically, the conference will allow participants to identify how to provide increased access to independent information on the candidates and process and ensure supervisory institutions have the authority and means to administer sanctions against organizations and individuals that commit violations.

YUGOSLAVIA (KOSOVO)

Elections Operations

With the 28 October elections fast approaching, IFES Kosovo activities in September focused on preparing the ballot, the final voters list, plans for counting and results, the review and inquiry process, training of Municipal Election Commissioners, polling supervisors, and domestic monitors. IFES also worked to ensure that the voters' list as well as the parties and candidates were meeting the standards expected of them.

Design of the ballot was approved by the Central Election Commission and sent to the printer. In each municipality, the ballot will list all certified political parties, coalitions, citizens' initiatives, and independent candidates. Next to each certified political party, coalition, and citizens' initiative, there will be a place where a voter may write in the number of one candidate within a political party, coalition, or citizens' initiative candidates' list. The location of the Counting Center was also finalized. Out-of-Kosovo ballots were been completed and delivered to International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Preparations for "Quick Check," the program that provides voters with another opportunity to check their information on the Final Voters' List (FVL), continued. One center per municipality will be opened. Should there be missing or incorrect information, they will have an opportunity to make corrections.

IFES Tabulation Advisor Liam Byrne has been supervising the set-up of the Counting and Results Center. If the adjudication procedure takes longer than anticipated, it will delay the final vote count. Byrne plans to minimize the delay caused by the adjudication process by conducting parallel operations. The results of the regular polling stations counts and counting center results will be recorded in the Results Center. The Results Center will be operating simultaneously with the counting of the other types of ballots. Data-entry of results from regular polling stations will commence on Sunday, 29 October, and will continue until all ballot results have been entered in the results program.

Review/Inquiry

IFES Senior Registration Advisor Christian Christensen continued to work on the allocation of polling stations and the

assignment of voters to these stations. At the time of this report, there estimated to be over 675,000 confirmed voters and over 1,100 polling stations.

During the last week of September, the Inquiry Unit completed its work, and all field centers were closed. Inquiry handed over approximately 300 cases to the Central Civil Registrar's office so that those applicants who have been denied civil and/or voters' registration can appeal their cases. Internally Displaced Persons from southern Serbia, immigrants, and persons who have not re-established themselves in Kosovo constitute the majority of the denials.

Database

IFES Database Specialist Fitzgerald Jean has been dedicated to the final clean-up of the registration database. The occurrence of an incorrect municipality name has been reduced to a negligible quantity. After the clean-up, the vast majority of requests from the CAC for correction became obsolete, and the others were entered into the database.

Domestic Capacity Building

During the month, the DCBD received 64 approved and 25 denied requests for accreditation from political parties and 20 approved and 3 denied requests from NGOs. DCBD continues to encourage domestic groups to observe the election process. In anticipation of a large number of observers, approximately 3,000 accreditation forms have been sent to OSCE Regional Centers, Field Offices, and Political Party Centers. The final design of the domestic observer badges and accompanying accreditation letters is underway. To prepare for the possibility that there will be large numbers of observers and prevent falsification, observer badges, and accreditation letters are being sent out for printing.

Special Needs Voting

The Special Needs Voting Program continues preparations to begin its operations on 9 October. An official briefing document explaining the program has been prepared, procedures have been finalized, staff has been hired, and training has been scheduled for 5-6 October. Five international and five local trainers from the Training Division will train the staff. Discussions continue with the OSCE Human Rights Department on how to conduct voting for those who qualify as homebound by fear. Special voting for these individuals will commence 9 October.

Public Information (PI)

The PI Division held its Elections Radio Roadshow in Gjakova on 23 September and in Suha Reka on 30 September. There were nearly 1,000 people in attendance in Gjakova. The Video Box bus made its premiere at the event; it provides a mobile video unit in which individuals have an opportunity to speak candidly about electoral issues and concerns. The results will be edited and aired on television every Sunday during the run-up to the elections.

PI aired an episode of "Kamera ne zgjedhje" (Camera on Elections) on 19 September. The theme of the program was "get informed—know what the different parties stand for before you make your choice." On 23 September, the 'Është për ty!' -Bus (It's about you!) made its initial visit; the team went to Gjakova to collect comments from young people regarding elections related topics. This first edition of 'Është për ty!' will be on RTK Sunday, 1 October.

IFES Media Advisor Charlotte Souibes is working on Media Guidelines for polling station supervisors and a FAQ sheet regarding elections. Souibes coordinated media events where IFES Senior Registration Advisor Jeff Fischer and OSCE Chief Legal Counsel Liz Hume presented an overview of the Election activities as well as a sample of voting scenarios on Election Day. Emphasis was put on the explanation of the conditional ballot voting process.

In cooperation with the UN Youth Department, PI is currently planning three projects for youths and students that will focus on civic rights and responsibilities; civic mandates, responsibilities, and their environment; and the promotion of civic engagement principles based on equality, tolerance, and non-violence.

Training

IFES Training Advisor Pauline Dion and Judy Thompson from the OSCE completed the MEC training manual. A seminar on training and presentation skills for the MEC was held and attended by all international and local trainers from all five regions and ethnic backgrounds. The seminar, which was presented by four of the trainers, covered various presentation techniques, planning, classroom management skills, teaching tips, ways of learning, and computer skills. The international trainers are highly satisfied with the training sessions that ended in mid-September.

The first draft of Polling and Counting Training Manual has been completed. IFES Training Advisor Pauline Dion added training exercises to the manual as well as answers to situations that can occur inside a Polling Station. Polling and counting "time and motion studies" were conducted on 20-21 September. International as well as local staff participated in these election-day simulations. The polling study consisted of a mock polling station with participants representing several different types of voters to ensure that proper procedures to deal with all types of voting situations are in place. Evaluations of queuing, security, and balloting procedures also took place. The counting study used several hundred mock ballots to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of counting procedures. Both exercises revealed what was most useful in operational instructions, and the appropriate corrections were brought to the training manual.

Training schedules for polling station commissions have been developed for every region. Training sessions will be con-

ducted 15-25 October. Due to the large number of people that need training, some regions will conduct sessions simultaneously.

Workshops focusing on women candidates were launched in early September. The Electoral Rules stipulate that each party, coalition, or citizens' initiative submit a candidate list that is composed of at least 30% women candidates. The program began with a Press Conference highlighting the ten workshops, their locations, topics to be covered, and international trainers engaged in this project. The training program addressed such issues as campaign finance, media relations, security, and compliance with the electoral rules. A total of ten workshops were held throughout Kosovo with approximately 500 women candidates taking part in the training.

Political Party Services (PPS)

PPS provided Election Services with all the approved candidates' lists, and they analyzed the details of over 70 candidates still on the candidates' list for Out-of-Kosovo voting for whom there was reasonable doubt about their eligibility. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis regarding which of these candidates will be removed before the In-Kosovo Candidates' Lists are drawn up.

During September, PPS also began conducting the second round of candidate verification checks. Copies of the latest databases of the Kosovo Police Service and the Kosovo Protection Corps were obtained and were used for this final check. PPS plans to deliver the final list to the Central Election Commission (CEC) at its meeting on 3 October. Arrangements have already been made to expedite the printing of the Candidates' Lists upon its approval from the CEC.

PPS has the responsibility of implementing Electoral Rule 2000/12, which imposes limits on campaign spending and requires political entities taking part in the election to disclose large donations. Due to the difficulties that were faced in complying, the Central Election Committee decided to extend the deadline by one week to 22 September. By 27 September, all 39 registered political entities had submitted their first financial disclosure in accordance with Electoral Rule 2000/12, Section 12.0. Since the last report there have been a few minor changes in the disclosure figures. To increase transparency of this information, the financial data is now available on the OSCE Kosovo Elections Website: <http://www.osce.org/kosovo/elections/fdisc.php3>

A special meeting of the Political Parties Consultative Forum (PPCF) meeting was held on 25 September. This meeting was held at the request of the parties so that any fears regarding the state of the Voters' List could be addressed. A detailed explanation was also given on how the system of Conditional Ballots will work on election day.

Political parties are now regularly holding campaign meet-

ings in towns and villages throughout Kosovo. In almost all cases, they are giving prior notice to the local CIVPOL office but not the required 96 hours notice. It is up to ECAC to take possible action against offending parties. On 27 September, the Director of Elections prohibited a meeting of the PDK in Fushë Kosovo/Kosovo Polje for security reasons.

CEC Secretariat

The CEC received a report from the Department of Elections on the implementation of Electoral Rule No. 2000/12 on Campaign Finance Disclosure and Spending Limits. They reported that the certified political parties, coalitions, and citizens' initiatives were making good faith efforts to comply with the disclosure requirements and that the Department of Elections was providing them with assistance and instruction.

Impact Summary

With elections only a month away, IFES began completing preparations in September and identifying what more needs to be accomplished. It is expected that ballots will be delivered 1 October while the final voters' list will be completed upon the conclusion of the "Quick Check" period. The Inquiry Unit completed its activities this month as well. Special needs voting is expected to start 9 October. Training began for polling and counting this month while the plans for counting and results are currently being drawn up. Final preparations are being completed in anticipation of the elections on 28 October.

YUGOSLAVIA (SERBIA)

Production of Election Observer Guidebook

In early September, in preparation for the briefing sessions for international election observers from Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia, IFES observation specialist Jim Heilman developed the main components of the training manual, known as the "Guidebook." The Guidebook included information on the political landscape in FRY, general principles of election observation, information on past fraudulent practices, discussion of observer conduct, detailed information on the relevant election laws and regulations, information on safety and security precautions, reporting requirements, and a review of the survey instruments or checklists that observers would be using to record their observations. Cooperating organizations and leaders of the observer delegations also made available several other election related materials that were deemed useful for the observers.

Briefing Sessions Held

As planned, training was conducted with each of the election observation delegations in their respective countries in advance of the elections between 17-22 September. The programs emphasized techniques for observing the various types of fraud that were predicted for the election as well as extra communications and personal security precautions the observers should take. According to verbal reports from pre-

senters and observers from each of the briefing sessions, the programs were worthwhile and presented valuable information. At the same time, presenters noted some disillusionment, particularly from the Bulgarian delegation, that the chances of obtaining credentials had become remote.

Accreditation Denied

None of the delegations received accreditation from the Yugoslav government to observe the elections. The probability of any or all of the delegations receiving accreditation was questionable from the beginning. The vagueness of the "offer" by Serbian authorities for foreign observers, volatile statements by Serb politicians concerning the governments of the three countries, and increasing harassment of advance teams by Serbian police all gave cause for reduced expectations that accreditation would be received. Furthermore, later statements by Yugoslav government spokespersons suggested that citizens of any countries that had been friendly towards the 1999 NATO bombing of Kosovo would not be welcome. All three countries fit that criterion. However, all necessary planning went forward. The only response received by any of the delegations was the denial of visas for the Slovak delegation. As a result, the Bulgarian and Romanian delegations disbanded on 23 September. The Slovak delegation followed suit on 24 September, election day.

Domestic Observation Efforts

The major domestic observer organization, CeSID, was denied observer accreditation and was publicly vilified and harassed by Serbian authorities for weeks before the election. In an attempt to defend against fraud, CeSID placed about 3,500 volunteers outside polling places – to monitor what they could and report on the posted results. The major opposition coalition – the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) – conducted a parallel vote count in about 300 selected polling places and used its polling board members to provide reports from as many other polling places as possible. Finally, in Kosovo KFOR soldiers were dispatched to the few polling places that were open in order to report on the total turnout of Kosovo voters.

Election Day Irregularities

Throughout election day, reports of irregularities filtered through from both CeSID and DOS. With no ability for independent verification, it was impossible to determine the degree to which these reports were true and accurate or were based on unfounded rumor. In general, it appeared that most of the expected types of fraudulent activity occurred, but in a more-or-less random fashion. It did not appear that any massive systematic fraudulent activities occurred on election day. Irregularities included:

- Marked ballots were allegedly mailed to some voters before Election Day.
- Company employees were given allegedly marked ballots and instructed to bring back blank ballots after they voted.

- Polling places opened early or late.
- DOS members were not allowed to be part of some polling boards.
- Opposition polling board members were not allowed in some polling places. In one report, the opposition members broke into the polling place to find the ballot box stuffed.
- CeSID observers outside the polling place were harassed by polling board members or police and, in some cases, forced to leave.
- Polling board members attempted to influence the voting.
- Voter lists were being altered.
- More than the required number of extra ballots for President were delivered to the polling board.
- Armed persons were inside and outside the polling place.
- People in line at poll closing were not permitted to vote.
- DOS members were not permitted to participate in the vote-counting.
- Results were not posted outside the polling place.

Deployment of Additional IFES Consultants

In addition to the Observation Specialist, two other IFES consultants were deployed to Budapest for short periods in September. The consultants worked with the Bulgarian and Slovak delegations to develop their deployment budgets, assisted with development of deployment plans for all three delegations, and assisted the delegations in developing media strategies for reporting on their delegation activities.

Impact Summary

Although none of the IFES-trained observers received accreditation and none observed the election, there were several positive outcomes of the September mission. Each of the participating delegations was responsible for its own operations and logistics, and as such, learned many skills transferable to other international observer missions. They also received more intensive training on election fraud practices than normally would be provided in an international mission. The international organizations involved in this effort were required to maximize coordination and expediency without the usual requisite MOUs, sub-grants, etc. On the whole, these organizations worked with exemplary cooperation under less-than-ideal circumstances. IFES is currently preparing a final report and a series of recommendations for future programming in Serbia based on the mission.

CAUCASUS/CENTRAL ASIA

ARMENIA

IFES Wins Four Year Civil Society Building Grant

On 29 September, IFES signed a 4-year cooperative agreement with the USAID Mission in Yerevan. The new cooperative agreement initiates IFES' "Citizens' Awareness and Par-

ticipation in Armenia” project.

IFES transition from election assistance to work in civil society building has been prompted by increasing evidence that while past elections have shown improvement, there is little understanding among the public of the role that citizens play in defending democracy over the long-term. Studies conducted by both IFES and USAID show that much of the population feels alienated from the political process. Citizens may understand the basic tenets of democracy, but they do not know the extent to which they can exercise their democratic rights, nor do they know how to act upon these rights.

The IFES “Citizens’ Awareness and Participation in Armenia” project seeks to address this lack of citizen participation and involvement in governance in three primary areas:

- **Direct Citizen Engagement.** IFES will recruit and train a cadre of local civic educators that will personally take the civic education experience to local communities.
- **Indigenous NGO Partner.** IFES has reached an agreement with the Women’s Republican Council, an Armenian non-governmental organization, to jointly implement components of the program through collaborative efforts and a sub-granting arrangement. The intent of this cooperation is threefold: To target messages to the women’s demographic, empower women to engage in public life through advocacy, and to fortify the leading role of an indigenous women’s organization as a respected source of public policy information and analysis.
- **Information Resources.** IFES and the Women’s Republican Council will cooperate to produce a wide range of information products. These include: public opinion polls; independent reports on community council meetings; a collection of reference, informational, and instructional materials; public service announcements, and; televised town hall forums, candidate call-in shows, and debates.

The IFES civil society project will be directed by Project Director Jeffrey Swedberg who has managed IFES activities in Armenia since January 2000. Other resident members of the project management team will include a Public Information and Outreach Specialist and a Civic Trainer. IFES anticipates fielding these positions in early November.

IFES Submits Study on Voter and Election Issues

In late September, IFES released a study entitled, “Public Attitudes Toward Political Life: Electoral Experience, Confidence in Leadership and Civic Participation in Armenia.” The study, conducted by IFES survey specialist Thomas Carson, Ph.D., and Gevork Poghosian, President of the Armenian Sociological Association, was based on the findings of eight focus groups carried out across Armenia. These focus groups sought to illicit citizen’s attitudes and feelings about their

leaders and institutions, their confidence in the electoral process, and their overall perceptions of the political and economic situation in Armenia today.

The IFES study analyzes comments from the 80 focus group participants, interviewed in May of this year. Many participants in the focus groups indicated that the ongoing economic and political instability in Armenia diminishes the hopes and aspirations of people of all ages in this fledgling democracy. Alarming, the study also reveals a “devaluation” of democratic values and the notion of democracy in the public consciousness.

While the study primarily focuses on the views of those who do not regularly vote in elections, the group discussions, and analysis of other survey data, do not necessarily indicate a decrease in electoral participation. Among those who do not vote, there is a widespread view that the current authorities manipulate elections and election results, often in ways not detected by international observers. The motivation for those that do participate in elections is often a negative reaction to current political life in Armenia. On a brighter note, the participants acknowledge that elections have improved in recent years in the way they are technically administered.

The IFES study indicates that corruption is an accepted part of life in Armenia that touches everyone. Few expect the authorities to address the problem as long as those in power are benefiting from it. With regard to civil society, the study participants acknowledged the existence and good intentions of the many NGOs that have been established in the past decade, but seemed unconvinced that the NGO sector will make a difference in improving their lives. Copies of the study in both English and Armenian are available in IFES/Washington.

Election Project Concludes

A 3-year cooperative agreement under which IFES provided assistance to the Armenian electoral process concluded on 21 September. No national elections are scheduled in Armenia until 2002, when local elections will be held. Current IFES/Armenia personnel and resources will now be dedicated to the civic awareness and participation project.

Impact Summary

As IFES concludes its electoral work for the time being, it can look back at period of relative improvement in election administration. The elections of 1995, 1996, were widely criticized for their irregularities and were seen by observers as not reflective of the will of the Armenian voter. The presidential elections of 1998 were also flawed, but seen as somewhat of an improvement. After the passage of the universal election code in 1999, observers continued to note improvements in elections. IFES concluded its program by focusing on certain ongoing administrative problems such as voter

lists.

With its new project of citizen participation, IFES can continue its record of building democracy during a non-election period. Like many post-Soviet, transitional societies, Armenia is hampered in its democratic development by the lack of a civic tradition. Recognizing that democracies cannot be created by election administration alone, IFES will apply the lessons of its five-year tenure in Armenia, and civil society building experience worldwide, to work toward a more transparent, accountable and responsive government.

AZERBAIJAN

Municipal Governance Civic Education Activity

In September, IFES/Azerbaijan completed a 10-week pilot phase of a municipal governance civic education program. The main components of the project were:

- to educate and inform common citizens through face-to-face meetings and distribution of IFES civic education brochures about municipal structures in Azerbaijan and about the roles and responsibilities of elected municipal councilors;
- to identify a select group of municipalities and to conduct a preliminary assessment of the progress of their work; and
- to collect information about the training needs of municipal members.

During the first phase of the municipal governance civic education activity, six IFES trained trainers traveled in pairs to meet with citizens in 64 communities in the Republic of Azerbaijan. Meetings were held with 15 to 50 citizens during each of the 64 community visits. The training teams covered the major regions of Azerbaijan—Baku, Guba, Ismaili, Shaki, Ganja, Tovuz, Shirvan, Astara, and Lenkoran. The IFES teams identified a strong need for the continuance of civic education programs directed toward common citizens because of the dearth of objective information available to the public about politics and governance. As municipal structures were unprecedented prior to the 1999 municipal elections, the people of Azerbaijan were uninformed about the role and responsibilities of local self-government.

Concurrent to the community citizens meetings, the IFES Project Manager, Elsie Chang, assessed 64 municipalities by meeting elected municipal officers. To uniformly gauge the development of the municipalities, IFES administered a questionnaire to assess the progress of municipal governments on such issues as establishing charters, developing municipal working groups, receiving municipal land and property, implementing taxation programs, and collecting tariffs.

In gathering information on municipal governments, it be-

came apparent that even elected municipal members are often unclear about their mandates, their municipal rights, and their responsibilities. Compounding the challenges faced by elected municipal members is the overlying parallel structure of Government of Azerbaijan appointed local Executive Authorities. An additional problem is the legislative framework of municipal laws that only give municipalities residual powers and unclear timelines as to when they may begin collecting municipal revenue.

On a positive note, during the first phase of the assessment, IFES identified a core group of municipal councilors that demonstrated initiative, innovation and determination to succeed in implementing true municipalities. IFES plans to continue assessing and assisting municipal structures and involving citizens in their communities. Technical assistance in the near future (Spring 2001) to this select group could create a critical mass of functioning municipalities in key regions of the country.

IFES Assists CEC for Parliamentary Elections

During September IFES continued its ongoing technical assistance to the CEC regarding the implementation of the newly adopted Law on the Elections to the Milli Majlis. IFES Election Administration Consultant Micheline Begin arrived in Baku mid-month to assist this activity, which will continue through the election scheduled for 5 November.

IFES provided recommendations to the CEC in keys areas, including: development of administrative procedures; adoption of regulations; participation of domestic and international observers; establishment of a uniform vote counting and results calculation system; creation of an election complaint adjudication process and ballot design, accountability, distribution and security. In conjunction with the CEC, IFES drafted an Election Day Guide for Precinct Election Commission Members for distribution to all polling stations in the Republic.

In addition to providing this targeted technical assistance, IFES continued to monitor the CEC's performance in promoting election integrity and transparency.

IFES and the CEC Collaborate on Voter Education

In mid-September, IFES Voter Education Consultant Amanda Weisbaum arrived to begin work on the IFES/CEC voter education campaign in support of the upcoming Parliamentary elections. This collaborative effort will include the production of both electronic and print materials to inform voters of election procedures under the newly enacted election law.

With the support of Internews through TV production assistance, six public service announcements are planned. Topics of the PSAs include, "Checking the Voters List"; "The Func-



Meeting in Baku of the IFES municipal governance civic education activity: Train the Trainers.

tion of the Milli Majlis (Parliament)”; “How to Use the Mobile Ballot Box”; “Steps in the Voting Process”; “You Will Receive Two Types of Ballots”; and “Go Out to Vote.”

Voter information print materials are also planned with the CEC. One pamphlet on the Milli Majlis functions and responsibilities was designed. Another pamphlet on general voting information and voter motivation will be produced in October. Information on “The Voting Procedures – Step by Step” will be produced in large poster format for use in the polling stations.

New IFES/Azerbaijan Project Manager

In September, Elsie Chang was named IFES/Azerbaijan Project Manager. In July and August as IFES Voter Education Specialist, Chang oversaw the successful implementation of the IFES Municipal Governance Civic Education Activity while also serving as interim Project Manager.

With over ten years experience in political development in transitional societies in Eastern Europe, Chang has demonstrated a strong commitment to the development democratic election systems. In Washington, DC in late September, Chang and IFES Program Officer/Caucasus, Michael Svetlik, briefed representatives of USAID, State Department and the Embassy of the Azerbaijan Republic on on-going IFES election support activities in Azerbaijan. In addition, Chang and Svetlik represented IFES at a democracy and human rights briefing for Ambassador Ross Wilson.

Impact Summary

With Parliamentary elections scheduled for 5 November, Azerbaijan has the opportunity to demonstrate its stated commitment to democratic elections. IFES/Azerbaijan continues to work on a national program of voter education in order to increase availability of information addressing democratic processes and issues, and to provide more unbiased public

information available to citizens. Technical assistance in election administration will also increase democratic standards and transparency in election administration process. Election officials will have developed greater expertise to administer relevant laws equitably and transparently which will promote public confidence in the democratic process. In addition, the IFES municipal governance civic education program will reinforce the impact of democracy and governance programs through direct face-to-face contact with elected municipal officials and citizens in Azerbaijan.

GEORGIA

Civic Education Program

Most of the preparatory work for undertaking the civic education program “Be an Active Citizen” was completed during September including liaison with the seven centers where the initial training will be undertaken in October.

The “Be an Active Citizen” program is aimed at encouraging citizens to become informed about issues such as democracy, citizenship, the role of local self-governance bodies and women’s rights in order to take a more active role in democratic life.

In October and November 2000, “Be an Active Citizen” will target 7 regional centers: Rustavi, Gori, Telavi, Kutaisi, Khashuri, Akhaltsikhe, and Borjomi. The program will be delivered in a series of coordinated training sessions with citizen groups composed of teachers, local representative body members, students and NGO representatives.

The program is structured so that participants attend an initial training day which will be based on small groups (no more than 20 participants) with an emphasis on discussion and interactive learning methods. A second session will be held a month later to re-inforce the ‘lessons learnt’ from the first session and from subsequent group activities (eg attending a local council ‘Sakrebulo’ meeting) and build on those experiences in attempting to address a local problem.

Members of these groups, once trained would, in turn, share their new knowledge and skills with their fellow citizens. The goal of the activity will be to develop a Civic Action Network, whereby members of existing civil society organizations can gain and subsequently disseminate information about local governance and civic responsibility.

During September, the selection of trainers was undertaken and the training of trainers program was finalized for delivery in October. The reference materials for the workshops were completed and printing arranged.

An essential part of this short program is the follow up and evaluation of the content and presentation style that is to be

undertaken at the end of each workshop and then again in November in order to assess the long term learning impact of the program.

IFES hopes the citizen-to-citizen distribution of information will counteract the sense of powerlessness that has tainted many Georgians' view of democracy, elections and democratic institutions.

Universal Election Code

During the month of September, Parliamentary leaders failed to come to agreement on the membership of a parliamentary election code working group. During the summer, there were indications that an election code working group composed of representatives of all political factions represented in Parliament would be announced in late August. This working group, once named, is expected to be tasked with addressing the need for a new universal election code that will bring Georgia's three separate election laws together under one unified code.

As part of the preparatory work being conducted by IFES/Georgia in anticipation of the formation of the working party, Mr Baratashvili took part in two discussion group meetings arranged by ICCC on 16 and 30 September. The meetings were attended by representatives of political parties and heads of NGOs: National Democratic Party (Bakuri Kardava), Socialist Party (Irakli Mindeli), Traditionalist Party (Irakli Melashvili), Political Bloc of Revival (Gocha Jojua), Independent member (Lado Sanikidze), ISFED (Nugzar Ivanidze), NDI (Mark Mullen). At the initial meeting every participant had 5 minutes to present the viewpoint of their organization and where they believed the shortcomings in the current election were. Some political party members abstained from participating in the meeting. Mr Baratashvili outlined the drawbacks in the current laws in relation to election administration and related issues, stressing the importance of including criminal responsibility in cases of election fraud. He also stressed that a co-coordinated approach from NGO groups of their recommendations would facilitate the work of the parliamentary working group and promote the unified code of election.

At the planning stage of the meeting it was decided to set the follow up meeting for 30 September to allow sufficient time for all participants to prepare their recommendations in a written format. It was a little disappointing that at the follow up meeting on 30 September only IFES/Georgia submitted their recommendations and an explanatory supporting paper in writing.

IFES continues to endeavor to be prepared to support as fully as possible the activities of the working group once it is established, providing technical legal assistance to the Parliament as it has done since 1997.

New Project Manager IFES/Georgia Commences Work

On 23 September, Silvana Puizina commenced work as the Project Manager for IFES/Georgia. Puizina has an extensive and long background in election management and administration with the Australian Electoral Commission. Her work in Australia has included projects related to practical applications and impacts of electoral law and extensive experience in public information programs.

Impact Statement

Through its civic education program 'Be an Active Citizen' IFES is endeavoring to promote knowledge about democracy and active participation to citizens in Georgia. Through the program IFES hopes to provide citizens with the necessary skills to attempt to effect change within their own communities within a democratic framework. IFES aims to establish a Citizens Network and to provide ongoing support and training to that network with the aim that the members of the network will then disseminate information about local governance and civic responsibility within their communities.

KAZAKHSTAN

IFES Conducts PEC Training Sessions

IFES conducted election administrator training in several Oblasts in preparation for presidential elections scheduled for 29 October. IFES trained a group of five core trainers early in September, and each core trainer was then assigned to a training partner, comprised of representatives of the Central Election Commission (CEC). The teams were then scheduled to travel to all Oblasts to train the chairman and secretary of every PEC throughout Kyrgyzstan. To assist the participants, IFES prepared a manual for core trainers and a procedural guidebook for members of the PEC. These training materials were available in the Kyrgyz, Russian and Uzbek languages. IFES Project Coordinator Galina Sergunina attended the PEC training session that was held in Balikchi (in the Issyk-kul area). Sergunina spoke about IFES manual, the role of observers and explained the procedure of counting of votes.

Civic Education Course Project in Kyrgyzstan

IFES/Kyrgyzstan and the educational advisory committee have continued the review and adaptation process of the IFES textbook for use in Kyrgyz secondary schools. During September, the committee has focused on the development of a teacher's manual and related civic education activities to accompany the textbook. The IFES advisory committee agreed to meet regularly to discuss adaptations to the core civics and democracy text. The project has in principle been accepted by the Ministry of Education, an agreement that IFES seeks to formalize through a Memorandum of Understanding.

Impact Summary

The goals of IFES programming in Kyrgyzstan during Sep-

tember included both the professionalization of the PECs and the transparency of the election process. IFES has focused on providing professional assistance to the PEC and CEC by providing election manuals and hands-on training. Following conditional Ministry of Education approval granted in September, IFES has proceeded with development of a civics and democracy textbook, a teacher's manual, activity resources and a teacher training program for pilot schools to be included in selected regions commencing as early as January 2001.

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TAJIKISTAN

Curriculum Development

Following the successful implementation of the IFES democracy textbook in secondary schools in Kazakhstan, IFES/Tajikistan has commenced similar activities to prepare the textbook for use in Tajikistani secondary schools. IFES Civic Education Specialist Lori Handrahan was present in September to begin initial planning for the project. As a result of Ms. Handrahan's work, IFES received a confirmation that the Scientific Research Institute of Pedagogy sent the IFES civic education proposal to the Ministry of Education along with a letter of support for the project. The Deputy Minister of Education, Mr. Abdulbashir Rahidov, confirmed that he had received positive feedback from Institute of Pedagogy. IFES will proceed with finalizing the details of the project with Ministry, at which time a local advisory committee will be convened to begin the textbook adaptation process.

Political Party Development Study Tour

IFES Political Party Development Specialist Phil Griffin traveled to Munich, Germany to begin preparations for a Political Party Tour in conjunction with the Marshall Center. The tour, which has been scheduled for mid-November, will focus on training participants how to use best management practices within their political parties and develop cooperative strategies with their regional branches. With this goal in mind, activities during the week-long tour will include classroom discussions on prioritizing regional issues and moving them to the national agenda, site visits to Bavarian Parliament and Marshall Center, and deliberations concerning problems facing political parties and the effective ways of their solutions.

Impact Summary

IFES is prepared to proceed with the civic education course project, as it represents an important contribution to democracy building at the grassroots level. With the support of the Scientific Research Institute of Pedagogy, IFES will aim to develop the civic education project, including a textbook on civics and democracy, a teacher's manual, activity resources and a teacher training program for pilot schools, commencing as early as January 2001. The political party study tour will increase the knowledge of regional political activists so that they are better able to expand the regional activities of their respective parties, advance regional issues of importance, better understand the dynamics of the relationship between national branches and regional branches of political parties and develop the skills of participants so that they may advance in party hierarchy.

UZBEKISTAN

Civic Education Course

Throughout September, IFES activities focused on preparing

the civic education course for introduction during the upcoming school year. While IFES submitted the Civics and Democracy textbook to the Ministry of Education in Tashkent for review in August, IFES has not yet been granted formal approval to proceed with the course. Should the text gain Ministerial approval, a formal Memorandum of Understanding will be concluded with the Ministry to formalize a working relationship on the project. Textbook adaptations continued in September to include material specific to the history, culture and sociological issues of Uzbekistan. IFES Project Coordinator Julia Dashkevich continued the editing process of material received from academic sources in Karakalpakstan.

IFES Project Manager Eil's Ward and Project Assistant Dmitry Shevkun met Gulandon Alimova, Director of the Republic Education Center (REC) in Tashkent, to discuss the process required for approval of the IFES textbook and civics and democracy course project. The REC is under the Ministry of Education and its function is primarily textbook production. It also works on teacher methodology and organizes courses and seminars for teachers, with a particular emphasis on teacher training. Alimova stressed that any textbook for secondary school students in Uzbekistan must include information on conflict resolution, extremism and ethnicity. While the formal approval process may take some time, IFES was encouraged by the optimism expressed by Ms. Alimova as to the merit of the project.

IFES/Uzbekistan News Bulletin Developed

IFES Project Assistant Dmitry Shevkun, assisted by Country Coordinator Julia Dashkevich, translated to Russian and Uzbek a news bulletin for IFES in Uzbekistan. The promotional bulletin is intended for distribution to local partners as well as other international NGOs as an information source on IFES activities. With IFES making new contacts daily with schools and regional NGO representatives, an updated brief overview of activities was required to familiarize potential partners with IFES' work mandate.

Impact Summary

As in the other Central Asian Republics, IFES programming in the area of civic education is a priority in Uzbekistan. Projects such as the civic education course and the Democracy Summer Camps will increase the understanding of and commitment to democracy among young citizens. The process of approval from the central Ministry of Education in Tashkent has not slowed down preparations for other civic education activities, and during the month of September IFES field staff met with representatives of schools and education-oriented NGOs in Uzbekistan to discuss ideas for introduction of the Student Action Committee project. IFES/Washington also hosted Mubarak Tashpulatova of the Public Education Center, along with a group of Central Asian education NGO representatives, to discuss the current situation with educational reform in Uzbekistan.



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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