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**TRILATERAL CONFERENCE ON
ELECTORAL SYSTEMS CANADA,
ESTADOS UNIDOS AND MEXICO**

CIVIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

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CIVIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

1. FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVES AND CRITERIA FOR THE CIVIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS.

1.1 Criteria.

1.1.1 Civic education and the citizen's electoral and political rights.

One of the attributions of the Board of Electoral Training and Civic Education has is to orient "all citizens in the exercise of their electoral and political rights, as well as in the compliance of their electoral and political obligations" (Institutions and Electoral Proceedings Federal Code, Art. 96, d).

Voting during elections constitutes a citizen's right and obligation. In virtue of this, the Executive Board has prepared and proposed civic educational programs, whos implementation, provides citizens with the adequate preparation to vote as the law requires.

It is also obligation of Mexican citizens to integrate the polling place steering board under the terms established by COFIPE. By legal mandate, it also corresponds to the Executive Board of Electoral Training and Civic Education to prepare all citizens for the adequate compliance of such duty.

Additionally, the 1993 electoral reform introduced in the legislature the exclusive right of Mexican citizens to participate as observers of all electoral activities. In that regard, the General Council of the Federal Electoral Institute agreed this past 28 of February that, in order for the observers to better comply with their activities, their training could be taught either by the IFE or by electoral observers organizations, taking always in consideration all guidelines and precepts dictated by the institute and always under its supervision. And of course, our Executive Booard would collaborate in the training courses for electoral observers.

1.1.2 Civic education and political culture.

Civic education should be understood as an instrument for the promotion of democratic political culture. By the same token, political culture is understood as the array of values, beliefs, sentiments, information and expectations by which the citizens and social groups define their position and attitude before matters of public interest and the political system in which they are expressed and decided.

1.2. Objectives.

1.2.1. General Objective.

To stimulate a greater participation of the citizenry, at a political and electoral level, and to warrant the preparation of the balloting citizens selected by ballot for their appropriate performance as officers of the steering board of the polling places.

1.2.2. Specific Objectives.

- A) To promote and strengthen democratic values.
- B) To sensitize the citizenry about the importance of their vote and of their cooperation in the organization of the electoral proceedings.
- C) To prepare citizens selected by ballot to correctly perform as officers of the steering boards of the polling places.
- D) To make citizens aware of the proceedings in order for them to exercise their right to vote.
- E) To establish linkage with institutions and persons related with research and diffusion of the democratic political culture.

2. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMS AND SUBSTANTIVE ACTIONS.

2.1. Production and diffusion of materials.

- A) Creation of guides and educational materials, printed and audiovisual, to be used for the preparation of citizens selected by ballot that will perform as officers of the steering boards of the polling places.
- B) Production of radio and audiovisual spots, as well as printed materials such as national ephemerides, three folds, pamphlets and posters, all referring to the principles and values of democracy. It should be noted that in the near future materials about democratic culture addressed to infants and youngsters will be published.
- C) Production of several promotional gadgets like pencils, pens, book markers, etc. with messages promoting to vote.

For their national distribution we have IFE's coast to coast network, through the Local and District Boards of Electoral Training and Civic Education. The production of the different messages on civic education has been programmed according to the following stages of diffusion: sensitizing of democratic values; inducement of the citizenry to develop an informed electoral participation (both as citizens selected by ballot to perform as officers of the polling places, as well as simply voting citizens); and lastly, a direct invitation to the citizen to cast his or her vote.

2.2. Organization of activities.

- A) Design and implementation of courses for members at large of Local and District Executive Boards, citizen counselors, electoral training staff and citizens selected by ballot.

Design and implementation of the courses is subject to the immediate objective of preparing different participants in the electoral process so that they become familiar with all its stages and procedures as established by law, specially during election day. Our Executive Board proposed the strategy, in its schedules and contents, that seemed ideal to attain such purpose. It should be noted that the process of selection of the citizens that receive the votes at the polling places originates in the double balloting process. By agreement of the General Council of the IFE, it was determined, randomly, that the citizens performing as officers of the polling places would be summoned among those born in November and later months, if necessary. Based on the intensive campaign to influence citizenry, it is expected to have a decisive participation of selected citizens in the electoral training courses given by the institute.

- B) To organize civic events geared to consolidate democratic values among infants and youngsters.

Numerous events of this kind have been held, with satisfying results. Last year about 3.500 events were held throughout the 300 electoral districts. These activities have short, medium and long term objectives with the intention of implanting democratic practices among infants and youngsters. By presently working to shape up citizens that are more participative and are more identified with democratic values, some of the effects of this program will come about in the future.

It should be noted here that different social games of chance have been produced and are soon to be distributed. They are intended to keep children and adults in permanent contact with all the notions and values of a democratic culture, under the guise of entertainment and amusement.

- C) To organize rounds of conferences and debating forums about electoral and political issues.

These conferences and debate forums about electoral and political subjects were developed to provide the citizenry with objective information about the electoral process and democratic institutions. Resorting to outstanding specialists, we are attempting to stimulate people's interest in electoral and political matters.

2.3. Research activities.

A) Diagnosis on political culture in Mexico.

This Executive Board is permanently developing a research program on national political culture, with the purpose of gathering objective information that allows us to precisely delineate all needs and social requirements in regards to civic education.

B) To reach agreements with different institutions and agencies to accomplish all objectives planned.

Interinstitutional relationships have been basically oriented to the implementation of networks to obtain and exchange information on the different agencies that develop programs on this matter. At the same time, efforts were made to establish links with institutions (mainly educational) in order to obtain a multiplier effect of the diffusion programs.

3. AUTHORITIES OR INSTITUTIONS THAT CONCUR IN THE FORMULATION AND EXECUTION OF CIVIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS.

3.1. Executive Board of Electoral Training and Civic Education.

3.1.1. Electoral Training Board.

3.1.2. Civic Education and Political Culture Board.

3.1.3. Board of Documental Services and Technical Support.

3.2. Coordination of Program Implementation and Follow-up.

3.3. Executive Local Boards.

3.3.1. Executive District Boards.