

Eurasian GNDEM Members Discuss Advancements in Parallel Vote Tabulations

From August 4-5, representatives from GNDEM members in Eurasia – the [International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy](#) (ISFED) in Georgia, [Civil Network OPORA](#) (OPORA) in Ukraine, [Promo-LEX](#) in Moldova, [Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability](#)(CRTA) in Serbia, and the [Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society](#) (Coalition) in Kyrgyzstan – gathered in Tbilisi, Georgia, along with the National Democratic Institute (NDI), for a regional workshop on advancements in Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT). The workshop focused on three main topics: ensuring quality observers, data collection and analysis, and communicating findings. Given the regional focus, leaders and experts from the five citizen observer groups and NDI tailored their presentations and discussions to specific advancements and challenges that countries in the region have experienced over time. Each session was accompanied by a discussion, where members could share their country and electoral specific experiences, and ask questions to improve their future election observation programs.

The two day workshop began with a presentation on how the [parallel vote tabulation](#) (PVT) methodology has evolved over the last 30 years including the accompanying changes in technology. In addition, challenges specific to the implementation of PVTs in the Eurasia region were discussed. Typically the goal of the PVT is to deter and detect potential election day irregularities. Due to this, election monitoring organizations face enormous time pressure as they race to release their assessment and projections before the Election Commission announces the official results. This is in contrast to other regions where the goal is to confirm the results and

to reduce the potential for violence. Participants also discussed the importance of recruiting quality observers and using pre- and post-training tests and the full-scale simulation to evaluate the observer's understanding of their form and reporting method.

✘ The second day focused on citizen observer groups' communication plans and data management. One presentation highlighted a recent case in Serbia where CRTA had a livestream of their election monitoring activities which included video from their call center, a live view of the PVT database and each of the press conferences. They also discussed the challenges of explaining the technical details of PVTs in a way that the general public can easily understand. Development of sophisticated PVT [databases](#) was also a priority for many organizations. A leading expert who has developed PVT databases for several countries around the world discussed the difficulty in developing a universal database, as each country's observation effort can be different.

Through this peer-to-peer workshop, participants were able to share best practices from recent elections, while others were able to look forward to using new methodologies and tools in upcoming electoral activities. The workshop allowed regional experts to collaborate and share experiences with one another, and fostered exchange and collaboration amongst organizations in Eurasia and Central and Eastern Europe. This type of exchange between regional peers not only increases the capacity of more nascent groups, but serves to further entrench norms and practices within the community of citizen observer groups working for electoral integrity in their countries. This model of peer-to-peer exchange can and should be replicated in other regions, with GNDEM members sharing their strengths, challenges and overall experiences with their regional colleagues, while also learning from other organizations and further strengthening election observation

activities.

More at: www.gndem.org