

Общественное ЭО Обьединение **Public Association “Echo”**

Elections of Deputies of Majilis of the Parliament and Maslikhats of the Republic of Kazakhstan – 2012 Report on Assessment of Electoral Process

The Non-Government Organization "Echo" is a non-profit non-party organization. The organization aims to improve the activities of citizens of Kazakhstan in the sphere of management of affairs of the State. In 1999, the Organization was involved in observing the elections at all levels in Kazakhstan.

The members of NGO "Echo" understand that free and fair elections are the most important components of democracy, a means of raising the confidence of civil society in the political system. Hence, stirring up of the civil society and improvement of election system are the main goals of activity of the organization.

The organization is open for cooperation with national and international agencies. The activity of the organization is based on the principles of impartiality, transparency and professionalism.

The observation of the elections of deputies of Mazhilis of the Parliament and Maslikhats of the Republic of Kazakhstan was carried out in all 14 oblasts of Kazakhstan, both in cities and villages, as well as in the cities of Almaty and Astana. Monitoring was carried out from the day of election announcement. The organization and monitoring of elections involved 16 organizations. On the day of voting, observers visited more than 400 polling stations.

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The off-year elections of deputies of Mazhilis of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan¹ were announced for January 15, 2012 by President of the Republic on November 16, 2011, six days after the appeal of a group of parliament deputies to the President to dissolve Majilis and hold early elections. On the same day, November 16, the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan announced regular elections of deputies of Maslikhats for January 15².

In April 2011, Kazakhstan held early presidential elections. Already during the elections different assumptions about the pre-term parliamentary elections arose. In summer, the presidential adviser Y. Yertysbayev voiced their opinion that Majilis should be dissolved early to hold early parliamentary elections. "If the deputies will think about the country, future, people, modernization, President, and stability they can take such decision."

The address of a group of deputies of the Mazhilis of November 10, 2011 provided as an argument in favor of early elections predominantly assumptions but not objective reasons³.

The absence of a clear list of the causes of the early dissolution of Parliament creates possibility for carrying out early elections at the time most convenient for certain deputies groups.

With regard to the appointment of regular elections of deputies of the maslikhat, in accordance with the constitutional law "On Elections in the Republic of Kazakhstan", they should be announced not later than three months after the expiry of the term of powers of maslikhats, which is determined by the Constitution as five years. The early appointment of the elections is not defined. The powers of maslikhat shall start from the moment of opening of the first session and end with the first session of maslikhat of new convocation. The first session of newly elected maslikhat will be called by the Chairperson of the corresponding territorial Election Commission not later than thirty days from the day of registration of deputies of maslikhat.

Previous elections of deputies of the maslikhat were held on August 18, 2007, the first session took place in different maslikhats late in August - early in September, 2007. Consequently, the terms of office of maslikhats elected in 2007 have been reduced by approximately by seven months.

The major laws and regulations governing the electoral process in Kazakhstan are the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan (hereinafter - the Constitution) and the constitutional law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on elections in the Republic of Kazakhstan (hereinafter – the Law on the Election). After the parliamentary elections in 2007, which caused criticism from international observers and, in particular, the OSCE, the electoral legislation of the Republic practically has undergone no changes.

Since the appointment of the election, an amendment to ensure that at least two parties are present in the Parliament became effective in February 2009. Also, in February 2011, amendments had been adopted to ensure early presidential elections

At the same time such norms as the 7% barrier for a party to pass to the Parliament, principle of formation of election commissions, rights of observers and some other controversial rules were not changed.

Most of the observers concerned about legislative changes without broad public debate.

Nomination and Registration of Candidates

¹ Lower Chamber of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan

² Local representatives bodies

³ <http://www.parlam.kz/ru/mazhilis/news-details/id6723/1/1>

Election of 98 deputies of the Majilis shall be carried out on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage. Nine deputies of Majilis shall be elected by the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan.

The right of nomination of candidates to deputies of the Mazhilis to be elected based on party lists, belongs to political parties registered in the established order and, in the case of candidates to deputies of the Mazhilis to be elected by the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan – to the Council of the Assembly. The party has the right to include in the party lists only members of the party. In accordance with the electoral law, parties are forbidden to create electoral blocks, despite the fact that this right is guaranteed by the law of RK "On Political Parties".

In Kazakhstan, at the time of appointment of election, 10 political parties were registered. Despite the fact that in 2007, amendments to the law on political parties reducing the minimum number of members of the party from 50 thousand to 40 thousand were adopted, no new party has been registered, including the opposition party "Alga".

Also, the Communist Party of Kazakhstan (CPC) was unable to participate in the elections due to the suspension of its activities for 6 months by the Court of Justice of October 4, 2011 for participation of the leader of the party, G. Aldamzharov in the activities of the unregistered Association «Halyk Maidany».

Two other parties, the Democratic Party of Kazakhstan "Azat" and a nationwide social democratic party (NSDP) on October 24, 2009 united in the national social democratic party "Azat". But the process of unification has still not been completed, resulting in the fact that the party participated in the elections under the name of Nationwide Social Democratic Party.

Eight political parties of Kazakhstan, having the right of nomination, have put forward their party lists: Democratic Party of Kazakhstan "Ak Zhol", Democratic Party "Adilet", Social Democratic Party "Auy", Communist People's Party (CNP), Nationwide Social Democratic Party (NSDP), People's Democratic Party "Nur Otan", Party of Patriots (PP), and Party "Rukhaniat".

Nomination to deputies of the maslikhats is made by political parties, public associations, as well as citizens of Kazakhstan through self-nomination. Among the candidates to deputies of the maslikhats over 50% were self-nominators. Most candidates in the maslikhats have been nominated by the "Nur Otan" party, whose Charter does not allow membership of citizens nominating themselves without the consent of the party.

Total in Kazakhstan, according to the CEC, there are 1 539 865 members of political parties, representing only 16.55% of the total number of voters.

Parties may include in their party lists only members of the party; the mechanism of inclusion in party lists for the bulk of voters remains unclear. A possibility of self-nomination to deputies of the Mazhilis is absent. Thus, many voters were barred from the election of deputies of the Mazhilis as candidates despite the constitutional right to be elected.

High vote threshold for parties in Parliament (7%), high levels of required number of party members (40000) together makes representation of small groups in Parliament impossible, and the function to select the quantities is performed by major parties, trying to represent the interests of virtually all segments of the population neglecting ideological dimension.

NGO "Echo" believes that for better representation of different groups of population in Parliament, it is necessary to reduce the vote threshold to 1-3%, decrease the number of members required for party registration to 1-10 thousand and change the system of election of deputies of the Mazhilis to mixed one, with equal representation of Deputies, elected from constituencies and on party lists.

Appointment of off-year elections of deputies of Mazhilis of Parliament has reduced the time frame for preparing congresses, and as a result, it was not possible to provide full awareness and ensure the participation of the maximum number of members of parties in pre-election congresses. Given that there is no possibility of self-nomination of citizens as candidates to deputies of the Mazhilis, NGO "Echo" believes that it is necessary to educate citizens about the nomination on party lists and nomination mechanism in each party, as well as the need to organize regional congresses of political parties to discuss the proposals for nominating candidates.

Early announcement of elections of deputies of the maslikhat came as a surprise to many potential candidates, so they were not able to participate in the election for a variety of reasons. Among the reasons cited, for example, were a scheduled business trip, absence at the moment of free funds, and lack of time to mobilize human resources. The applicants candidates to maslikhats deputies complained that the lack of time for preparation to the elections did not allow studying carefully the electoral and related legislation, develop high-quality campaign, and engage qualified jurists for the preparation of documents and examination of disputes.

Problems for some candidates arose at the time of nomination. Thus, in some cases in precinct commissions in addition to the documents required from candidates they demanded to submit a certificate of no criminal record from the Public Prosecutor 's Office, biography in two languages, bank account opening information, list of proxies, and their applications.

The main reason for refusal or de-registration of candidates was the result of check by tax authorities of data declarations on income and property of the candidate or his or her spouse. Despite the fact that the law allows cancelling registration, in this case the observers have learnt about the facts questioning the fairness of such a rule.

First, different practices were applied in different regions and at different times. For example, the department for submission of declarations in Aktau was opened only on November 23. In Atyrau, candidates were initially demanded to deliver only declarations, and later - copies of all supporting documents. In addition, the observer has learnt that some candidates were given the opportunity to correct/add data in declarations, indicating unequal opportunities for candidates.

Secondly, there are ambiguities for completing declarations. There have been several cases when candidates were deregistered on the ground that they had not specified their share in social organizations, the founders of which they were, while social public organizations have no division by share (Atyrau, Almaty).

There were cases when errors were committed by the tax authorities and the organizations issuing the supporting documents. For example, in Taraz, a candidate indicated in its Declaration all his property, whereas the tax authorities identified the lack of land plot. In another case, the Bank made a mistake when issuing a notice of bank accounts held. There was a case when the pension fund issued different data to a candidate and the tax authority (Almaty).

In all cases, candidates were deregistered, and only in a few cases, candidates could reinstate themselves, losing time on campaigning.

Third, the differences in most cases constituted small amounts, suggesting unintended errors.

In many cases the cause of discrepancies was the old accounts that candidates thought to have been closed, and the balance of such accounts was often the amount equal to one dollar and below, and at times even negative. Several candidates did not account for which credit is repaid.

Fourthly, according to the electoral law, data in the declarations are verified within 15 days from the date of registration of the candidate. Bearing in mind that the party lists were registered in the period between 7 and 15 of December, verification of declarations of candidates was to be completed before the end of the month. However, the CEC only on 10 January adopted a decision on delisting 6 candidates of different parties based on the doubtful data of declarations.

Some candidates to deputies of the maslikhats also received information on deregistration in just a week before polling day, so not all managed to mobilize resources to appeal the decision in court. In addition, there were cases when the Court returned claims in connection with their incorrect registration to correct which also took some time.

It is not clear why it took so much time for the CEC and precinct electoral commissions (PEC) to make a decision on deregistration. The situation is aggravated by the fact that the appeal against decision takes time, and the introduction of changes into the ballot paper stops 2 days before polling day.

In many cases, candidates to deputies of the maslikhats were not invited to the meeting of the Commission, which was to discuss deregistration issues (Almaty oblast, Zhambyl oblast).

In addition, the process of checking declarations of candidates by the tax authorities was official secret and, therefore, not subject to monitoring. Therefore, it could not be ascertained whether the above cases were deliberate or accidental.

In the circumstances where there is no practice of general and regular filling of tax returns and lack of appropriate training, the discrepancies found should not become a reason for deregistration of the candidate. Candidates should be allowed to correct the data.

By the decision of the CEC, the party list of political party “Rukhaniyat” was deregistered. Former leader of the party A. Dzhaganova appealed to the Prosecutor's Office alleged violation of rules of nomination of the party list. The Attorney General's Office verified that these violations were confirmed. Based on the prosecutors' statement, the CEC de-registered the party list, and the party was withdrawn from the election.

Observers are concerned about the ease of withdrawal of parties and candidates from the election race and insist on carrying out deregistration through court only.

Observers are concerned about the following individual facts in the nomination and registration of candidates:

Lack of documentary evidence of reception of documents from a nominee;

The requirement of some PEC that the election fee be paid only through the Halyk Bank;

Accepting tax declarations only on an electronic medium (Rudny); and

Refusal to register a candidate on the ground that his ID does not have unique identification number – IIN (Taraz).

Pre-Election Campaign

According to the electoral law, the pre-election campaign is an activity designed to encourage voters to vote for or against a particular candidate or political party. The pre-election campaign begins after the end of the term of registration of candidates and ends at zero o'clock of local time the day prior to voting. Thus, the pre-election campaign on the election of deputies of the Mazhilis began on December 16, 2011 and ended on December 16, 2011 at 24.00 o'clock of local time. Such a difference in the time of election

campaign has given advantage to candidates to deputies of the maslikhats nominated by the party since the party began their canvassing campaign five days earlier.

The pre-election campaign is carried out through the mass media, dissemination of printed, audiovisual and other materials by carrying out public pre-election activities, as well as personal meetings of candidates and their proxies with voters.

Observers from all regions of Kazakhstan note that the political struggle started mainly between the candidates to deputies of the maslikhat. The interparty struggle was sluggish in nature. The most active canvassing campaign was carried out by the parties CNPK and "Nur Otan", and in the last two weeks the party "Ak Zhol" became more active. The rest of the election race was almost imperceptible. Several parties used social networks for the propaganda. The overall level of campaign remains low, aimed at recognition of party symbols rather than party ideas. Observers note that most parties appeared in the regions only for the period of elections. It was easier to find representatives of the party "Nur Otan", CNPK, "Ak Zhol" and NSDP. Meetings of candidates took place mainly with supporters. Except CNPK, no parties tried to attract undecided voters.

It should also be noted that after mass screening of candidates to deputies of the maslikhats in some districts there were only two candidates for elections to the maslikhats, of whom one was the so-called "technical" (nominal) candidate who did not carry out any canvassing but created an appearance of alternative (Kyzylorda oblast and Pavlodar oblast).

According to the election legislation, local executive bodies and local self-government bodies shall provide contractual premises for meetings with voters. Terms of providing premises should be uniform and equal for all candidates. The Electoral Commissions in conjunction with the local executive bodies and local self-government bodies make a schedule of meetings of candidates with voters in a dedicated room and publish it in the media.

On December 26, in Zhanazhol village of Kyzylorda Oblast a meeting of voters was to be held with two candidates from the precinct. However, the District Election Commission informed one of the candidates about cancellation of the meetings with voters because of the absence of the other candidate who at that time held meetings with voters in other villages.

In another case, in Kokshetau, the Chairperson of city Election Commission refused to sign the invoice of the candidate for renting the conference hall at the College of Culture, referring to the resolution of the Akimat of February 25, 2011 according to which the candidates may only use the conference hall of School No. 18 for meetings with voters. And only after the candidate appealed to the City Akimat, the dispute has been settled and all documents to rent space at the College of Culture were processed.

These cases indicate that members' of electoral commissions ignorance or their own interpretation of the laws may inhibit the election campaign.

Local executive bodies together with the relevant election commissions in all settlements identified sites for printed campaign materials of candidates and equipped them with boards. According to the law, the printed campaign materials shall be placed under conditions that ensure equal rights for all candidates. The law does not regulate how these terms must be respected. Because during these elections election materials were placed by both, the parties and the candidates for deputies of the maslikhats, the space on the boards was insufficient. In addition, a peak of campaign of different parties and candidates fell on different time and, as a result, the boards were almost completely pasted over by the materials of one party, the remaining parties and candidates having to place their materials in the places not designated for the election campaign. In almost all regions of Kazakhstan there have been noted the cases that campaign materials of some candidates were pasted over by campaign materials of other candidates. In Kokshetau, Akimat has allocated only three places for campaign materials. Of course, this number was insufficient to

cover all the voters of the city. Virtually, in all regions there have been recorded cases that campaign materials were placed in non-designated places: on the walls of buildings, power lines, doorway entrances of residential and industrial buildings.

Candidates are entitled to post printed campaign materials in other places only with consent of the owner of the corresponding facility. In this case, the law does not say anything about equal conditions for candidates. As a result, owners of private buildings allow posting up campaign materials one candidate and forbid others. Such a situation may cause unequal access to voters, especially in crowded areas. Thus, in Taraz, the owner of the shopping centre "Arzan" allowed only one party to post up campaign materials. The same applies to the access of agitator to private buildings. For example, in Karaganda, the parties "Ak Zhol" and CNPK complained that were not admitted to big enterprises for meetings with voters. Now almost any dissemination of propaganda leaflets and meetings with voters take place in private facilities, for example, markets, shopping centers, cooperatives of apartment owners (CAO), medium-sized and large enterprises. Check to ensure equal access for all candidates to observers is not possible because private structures refuse to provide this information, citing trade secrets. NGO "Echo" believes that each voter should take an independent decision on the meetings with one or another candidate, and candidates should have equal access to voters.

Special attention should be given to placing campaign materials on outdoor advertisement facilities such as banners, billboards, and light boxes. Candidates often complain that they are not allowed to place their materials on such facilities due to lack of vacant space. Perhaps, this is due to the heavy use of such facilities by the Central Election Commission to inform voters during the election period. It is therefore necessary that equal access of candidates to the outdoor advertising is also assured by law.

In addition, talks about placing campaign materials on outdoor advertising structures and lease of premises for meetings with voters are carried out most often orally or over telephone. And only after being refused, the candidates begin official correspondence, spending some time for it. Procedure for prior notification of all candidates on the terms of placing campaign materials, like the announcement in the media, would provide equal access of candidates under equal conditions and transparency of the procedure.

One of the problems faced by candidates of deputies of the maslikhats is receiving of state funds for campaigning and setting up of electoral funds. Thus, in the entire city of Almaty (37 precincts) only two people in the City Akimat filed documents from candidates to transfer state funds to them. Taraz city accountant told the observer that state funds for candidates were received only on January 10.

In Taldykorgan candidates till January 10 could not establish own electoral funds because banks were not ready to open special accounts by the reasons of absence of necessary forms.

Canvassing Campaign in Mass Media

According to the law on elections, the media must provide unbiased coverage of election campaign of candidates and political parties; refrain from publishing propaganda materials and other information known to discredit honor, dignity and business reputation of candidate or political party; allow such persons free publication of refutation in defense of honor, dignity and business reputation in the next issue of the printed edition on the same page, in the same volume and the same print or broadcast it over television or radio the same time, within twenty-four hours after the address.

Mass media are obliged to disseminate information on the activities to nominate all candidates and party lists and their registration by electoral commissions in equal volumes of printed area and airtime.

Practically, no media covered equally pre-election party congresses. Most often it was unintentional due to the lack or absence of journalists in the city where the congress was held.

Media monitoring indicates low interest of the media for elections. Mostly, the materials paid from electoral funds were published.

Parties were given the opportunity to participate in presidential debates broadcast on TV throughout the country. Unfortunately, the debates were broadcast in a record that has lost the attraction for voters. In addition, the limited format of debates has almost excluded the discussion and did not allow an ordinary person to understand the ideological differences between all participants in the electoral process.

Observers are concerned about the use of image advertising not paid from the election funds of candidates. In the regional media there appeared articles without direct campaigning, but in which candidates for elections to the maslikhats were mentioned as experts, or advertising articles on their merits in daily activities. For example, a spread in the newspaper "Avitrek Region" focuses on successful work of maslikhat showing people, some of whom are candidates. Or in the newspaper "Industrialnaya Karaganda" there was published an interview on emerging technologies with a businessman, who is a candidate.

Meanwhile, NGO "Echo" insists that any image advertising should be regarded as promotional products, because it promotes recognition of candidate.

Voters

According to the electoral legislation of Kazakhstan, an voter may be any citizen of the Republic who is over eighteen, regardless of origin, social, official and property status, sex, race, nationality, language, attitude to religion, convictions, place of residence or any other circumstances. Citizens recognized incapable by a court and those kept in the places of confinement on a court's sentence shall not take part in elections.

The population of Kazakhstan is about 16.6 million. According to the CEC, the number of voters on the lists amounted to 9 303 693 persons, 7 018 927 of whom or 75.4% participated in the elections. Despite such a high turnout, political activity in Kazakhstan remains on a low level.

Observers have conducted surveys among voters from which it is clear that many voters know poorly the political situation and are not familiar with the electoral programs of political parties. Interest of voters in the elections had been reduced due to the fact that the pre-election campaign coincided with the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of independence and the New Year holidays. Attention of voters had also been diverted by the events in Zhanaozen.

Interest in elections slightly increased after the New Year, but voters were more interested in candidates for election of deputies of local maslikhats than parties and their suggestions.

Most voters did not attend the meetings with candidates because they did not even know where and when these meetings were to be held.

Almost in all Universities on January 1 there began vacations, and students were going home. University management together with the electoral commissions organized the issuance of absentee ballots as students living in dormitories appeared on the voter lists at Hostels. Lists of students who intended to go on a vacation home were made. In accordance with these lists, students were issued absentee ballots. It is

notable that according to the electoral law, issue of absentee ballots to voters by precinct commissions begins 15 days before the ballot day. Many students began to leave earlier, 18-20 days before the polling day. However, most of the commissions having out-of-town students on the lists began issuing absentee ballots to students before the time prescribed by law. Despite the contradiction to law, students have not been deprived of their voting rights.

Special attention should be paid to the town of Zhanaozen where on December 17, 2011 the state of emergency (SE) for a period of 20 days was introduced. On January 4, 2012, the SE has been extended through January 31, 2012. The CEC appealed to the Constitutional Council (CC) with the question whether it would be possible to hold elections in the locality during the state of emergency. On January 6, the CC decided that the elections would not be held in Zhanaozen. According to the clarification, "Free expression of will of citizens during elections can be achieved only under the conditions ensuring security of citizens. However, under the state of emergency it would not be possible to achieve this goal". On the basis of the decision of the CC, the CEC adopted a decision "On the peculiarities of applying election laws during a state of emergency in Zhanaozen" according to which the election of deputies of the mazhilis in Zhanaozen would not be held and elections of deputies of the maslikhat would be postponed until further notice. On January 10, the President of Kazakhstan had vetoed the Decision of CC. The Constitutional Council was not able to overcome the veto of the President and adopted the relevant decision of January 11. CEC, in turn, reversed its decision, and the arrangements for elections in Zhanaozen were resumed.

On the one hand, the voters have retained the right to participate in the parliamentary elections. On the other, because of the non-establishment of the rule of law in Zhanaozen for a long time (6 January to 11 January) the period of canvassing campaign has been reduced, and canvassing activities under SE have been limited. In conjunction with the stress of the citizens it has made it impossible to focus on elections and fully understand the candidates.

Voter Lists

The basis for inclusion of a citizen of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the voter lists at a particular polling station is the fact of his residence in the territory of respective polling stations. The voter lists by place of residence are drawn up by a local executive body on the basis of information submitted by the bodies engaged in registration. Voter lists at each polling station shall be signed by the akim and shall be submitted under the Act to the relevant Election Commission twenty days before voting. The voter lists were delivered to Election Commissions in due time.

Territorial election commissions shall verify the voter lists at the corresponding polling station. This rule is practically fulfilled by all the commissions, but since the verification mechanism is not regulated, depending on the Commission, the verification of voter lists is carried out differently.

Most members of commissions carried out door-to-door campaigning, and on interviewing residents made corrections in the lists. But in some cases, to make changes in the lists, the members of commissions did not ask for supporting documents (Aktau, Almaty). So, based on the words of tenants, people could be excluded from the lists if they did not live at a particular address, though they had registration at that address.

Also there were cases of inclusion of voters in the lists on the ballot day without supporting documents (House Register) – Aktau.

In most cases the members of commissions did the work on verification of voter lists with all responsibility. So, there are cases when the members of commissions have complemented voter lists by including tenants of new houses located in the territory of the constituency (Aktau) or found in the lists a few dozen repeated voters (Astana).

15 days before the ballot day voters must be given an opportunity to check data in the voter lists. The survey of voters and members of the Commission has shown that a very small number of citizens seize this opportunity. The CEC website provided for citizens to know at what polling station they were voting. This service was carried out through sending of requests by e-mail with the indications of the voter. Unfortunately, this service was not available for all mail servers. So, e-mails sent from gmail.com and yahoo.com mail servers were blocked by the mail server of election commission. During 2007 parliamentary elections, the direct search based on the IIN or identity card at the CEC website was accessible for any Internet user. It should also be noted that the CEC in response to reports of observers eliminated problems with their server.

In addition, local authorities provided an opportunity for voters to know the address of their polling station on the phone.

The voter lists on these elections were composed quite well; however, there were some citizens who did not find themselves in the lists. In addition, the complaints coming from various regions were about the same errors in the voter's lists as were pointed out in the last elections, for example, misspelled name and inclusion of long ago dead people in the lists.

Observers have noted that on the day of elections polling stations did not register the voters not found in the voter lists. NGO "Echo" considers that the collection of data about such voters by election commissions will improve further work on the conformation of the lists.

NGO "Echo" considers it necessary to regulate in detail the procedure of confirmation of the voter lists by electoral precinct commissions and to organize appropriate training of members of election commissions.

Informing participants of the electoral process

The Central Election Commissions, commissions of other levels and local executive bodies have carried out a traditional work on voter education. In particular, they provided billboards informing about the date of the elections and calling to participate in them. Another type of billboards included a list of participants in the election of political parties. In addition, on TV there were broadcast videos inviting citizens to check their data in the voter lists. Printed invitations and text messages inviting to come for elections were sent to voters indicating the voting place.

As to the detailed information about the electoral process, the CEC publishes selected papers in state newspapers "Kazakhstanskaya Pravda" and "Egemen Kazakhstan". In addition, CEC makes available on its official website the normative legal acts on the election legislation, information on timing and holding of elections, as well as on the results of votes counting at the last elections. Unfortunately, the CEC does not publish on its website all resolutions and appendices to them. For example, the Resolution of CEC RK of August 19, 2010, No. 7/18 referred to by CEC in the memo to candidates, "Provisions on the Public Council for Consideration of Information Disputes" – Appendix to Regulation No 65/124 dated 07.12.2011; and "The Rules for Carrying Out of Political Debate" – Appendix to Regulation No. 2/155 of 09.01.2012 have not been published on the CEC website. Official CEC decisions have also not been published.

It has also not been reported on the results of the elections of deputies of the Mazhilis from the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan.

Previously, the CEC used to publish on its website information on the results of voting at each polling station. Now the CEC has abandoned the practice of publishing on its website detailed information relating to the elections.

Partial information about the electoral process within a region or district can only be found in local and regional mass media or through a request to the corresponding territorial election commission. Information on election commissions can be found also on the websites of the respective authorities.

NGO "Echo" believes that election is a process, which covers all citizens of Kazakhstan and, therefore, any election-related information should be as much as possible transparent and distributed by all possible means, especially through websites. In addition, a summary of all the important messages of the CEC targeted at voters and candidates as well as information on where the full text of such messages can be found must be broadcast on public television channels.

It is also necessary for each territorial commission in Oblast and the commissions of the cities of Almaty and Astana to create their own websites where they would place all information concerning elections at the level of oblast, in particular, the decisions of oblast, district and precinct commissions, lists of candidates for elections to maslikhats, lists of election commissions, and special information for candidates and voters. This would simplify access to information for all participants in the electoral process.

Apart from the election commissions, it was difficult to find information on back-up election activities of other State bodies. For example, when visiting the Court, observers tried to find out the schedule on the ballot day and the size of the State fee to be paid for a claim in court. Observers in different areas were given different answers. In particular, according to the answers of members of court, the beginning of work of courts on the ballot day varied from 8.00 a.m. to 10.00 a.m. and the end – from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. The size of State fee varied from 0 up to KZT 1MAI (minimum accounting index). In one court, on the question about the place of payment of registration fee it was advised to pay it in advance.

Election Commissions

Total in Kazakhstan the preparation and holding of elections involved 13 322 electoral commissions of all levels, employing 93 254 members.

The Central Election Commission is a permanent State body in charge of the unified system of election commissions of the Republic. CEC is formed of seven members: a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary and four members, of whom President appoints the Chairperson and two members of the CEC, and each of the Chambers of Parliament appoint two members of the Commission. CEC members are not required to represent any party. The current composition of the CEC was created in April 2010.

According to the electoral law, electoral commissions, except the CEC, are elected by the corresponding maslikhats based on proposals by political parties. Each political party has the right to be a candidate in the corresponding Election Commission. At the same time, political parties are entitled to submit nominations to the Electoral Commission who are not members of this political party. If proposals from political parties are not available, the Maslikhats shall elect the Election Commission at the suggestion of other public associations and higher election commissions.

If a member of the Commission for some reason is withdrawn from it, the higher electoral commission shall appoint a member of lower election commission instead of the withdrawn one for a period until the election of member of Election Commission by the maslikhat.

Maslikhats elected the members of the commissions in 2009. Since then, a considerable number of members of the commissions for various reasons have left their seats. Instead, the members have been appointed by higher election commissions. So, for example, of 3619 members of electoral commissions for Almaty around 1300 members have been appointed by higher commissions. Unfortunately, for the appointment of members of the commissions the proposals of political parties have not been taken into consideration.

Under the Law on Elections, political parties not represented in the election commissions shall have the right to forward their representatives there as non-voting members for a period of preparation and conduct of elections. According to the CEC, in electoral commissions there work 1869 such representatives. 1492 of them represent the opposition party NSDP.

In March 2011, the General Prosecutor of Kazakhstan gave clarification of the provisions of the electoral law, according to which participation in the work of the CEC of representatives of political parties with the right to vote is not provided for.

It should be noted that in 2007, when the same law applied the practice used was different. Thus, according to the CEC report of July 19, 2007, representatives of political parties were included in the Public Council for Consideration of Information Disputes during off-year elections of deputies of the Majilis and scheduled elections of deputies of the maslikhats of the Republic of Kazakhstan as non-voting members.

One more fact of concern to observers is the limitation of the dates for the delegation of non-voting representatives in election commissions.

CEC sent by facsimile messages to the central offices of political parties on the dates for delegation of non-voting representatives in the Electoral Commission. The message for unknown reasons had not gone to the NSDP. An official letter of the CEC was received by NSDP after the dates for delegation. The NSDP appealed to the CEC for the extension of time for delegation of representatives of political associations to precinct electoral commissions to January 15, i.e. the date of the election. Having considered the appeal, the CEC adopted Protocol decision on the extension of the term, but only till December 15.

Observers in this situation are concerned that the timing for the delegation of non-voting members is not provided for by the electoral law or any regulation of the CEC. These dates were not specified in the schedule of preparations and holding of off-year elections of the deputies of the Majilis. Neither there were any relevant publications at the CEC website and in the media.

In addition, the limits for the delegation of non-voting members, according to the head of the CEC, were due to the requirement of the electoral law to publish the composition of electoral commissions within 7 days from the date of appointment of the Electoral Commission. Observers note that the publications of the composition of election commissions released even after December 15, did not contain information on non-voting representatives of parties (newspaper "Vecherny Almaty", publication of January 5, 2012).

During their visits to polling stations, observers asked about party affiliation and party representation of members of the commissions.

Party representation in the commissions is still conventional and formal. The members of the commissions have shown lack of understanding of party representation in the commissions and consider it to be formality. Most often, the members of election commissions have a vague idea of what party they represent in the Commission. The vast majority of budgetary employees of parties constituting the election commissions by more than 50% and in some cases, 90-100%, are members of the party "Nur Otan" but in the commissions represent other parties. This picture has been observed everywhere, including major cities. The fact is that, under law, representatives of parties in the Electoral Commission do not have to be a party member. In the City election commission in Zyryanovsk observers were reported that two members of the Commission, members of the party "Nur Otan", represented the party "Adilet".

In addition, it is still not clear whether members of the party suspended by the decision of the Court can continue the work. Observers in almost all oblasts have noted presence of members of the Commission representing the Communist Party of Kazakhstan.

The Electoral Commission shall not be composed of employees of one organization. Nevertheless, observers noted instances when all members of the Commission worked in the same organization. For example, in Petropavlovsk, all members of the Electoral Commission No. 742 worked in the same school, and the Election Commission No. 720 – in the gymnasium “BEST”.

The most widespread cases were when six of the seven members of the Commission were employees of the same organization. This applies, first of all, to the precinct commissions located in schools, universities and health care facilities. Frequently, the seventh member of the commission also belonged to the education or healthcare system.

Observers asked members how they got to the Commission. In response, many answered that they were asked by acquaintances, asked by bosses, asked by the akimat. In Uralsk commissions, observers were reported that «school directors automatically become members of the commissions». Many members of the commissions that are employees of state-financed organizations complain about forced membership in the Commission. Especially unhappy were teachers, whose work in the Commission prevented them from the educational activities at the end of the academic term.

Observers are still concerned about poor knowledge of electoral legislation by the members of the commissions, in particular, the rights and obligations of both, their own, and other participants in the electoral process.

Training, according to the members of the commissions, was carried out in different ways. For example, members of the election commissions in Taraz reported that they studied independently by reading the electoral law. In Astana, all members of the commissions received special training; training in Kyzylorda was conducted centrally with trainers from Astana. In many commissions only the Chairperson and the Secretary of the Commission received training. As was reported at the precinct commissions in Karaganda, at the regular sessions of commission chairpersons and secretaries technical issues regarding elections were clarified. None of the members of the commissions reported on the training conducted by a political party.

The work of the commissions before the ballot day is constructed so that during the day only on-call member of the Commission is present. Periodically, sessions of the full staff are held to take the Commission's decisions.

The law does not regulate what decision the member of the Commission is entitled to take independently or by the common ballot at the session.

Due to the fact that in the vast majority of cases, more than half of the members of each Commission work in the same organization, and the Chairperson is most often a person holding an executive post in the organization, rigid hierarchical relationships are transferred from the work of the organization to the work of the Commission.

By law, the Chairperson shall have the following responsibilities: represents the interests of the Commission in a Court, convenes meetings of the Commission, registers observers and controls the number of voters at polling station at the time of voting, is responsible for the order, checks seals and seals the ballot boxes before voting, determines the members of the Commission, which shall issue a ballot paper, makes a mark in the list of voting at home, during the counting of votes shows to those present each ballot and reads the will of voters, announces the end of voting, reads out the results of counting and puts them down in the protocol, signs the protocol, and verifies the copies of protocol for

observers. That is, the Chairperson of the Election Commission should act as a moderator of processes at the polling station, but not a head of the Commission.

However, the members of the Commission have a vague idea about the process of taking a collective decision. Often the observers were reported that “everything is decided by the Chairperson”. When communicating with observers, members of the commissions are afraid to assume responsibility for providing any information without the prior approval of the Commission Chairperson.

Moreover, in one case, a member of the Commission was severely reprimanded by the Chairperson of the Commission for the provision of information to an observer. First of all, it is connected with extremely low professionalism of members of election commissions and second, as has been said, with the transfer of rigid hierarchical relationships from the place of common employment.

Interference in the work of electoral commissions is prohibited by law on elections and, therefore, constitutes a violation of the electoral legislation of the country. Meanwhile, many members of the Commission consider their activities accountable to local authorities. Almost all of the precinct commissions, according to their members, on the day of voting every two hours, reported the Akimats of turnout. In addition, members of the commissions called akimats reporting about visits by observers. Also in some cases Akimats (Karaganda) held briefing of the members of the commissions. Often territorial election commissions are located in the premises of akimats, for example the City Commission in Almaty. This makes it difficult to visit the Commission because first, Akimats have a pass entry system and creates the possibility of monitoring the activities of the commissions by Akimat.

In addition, in several cases, the observers were faced with the problem of access to the Electoral Commission on the grounds that the Commission did not at the time of the visit, have all of its members. This turned out to be due to the end of the accounting period, and it was difficult to find on-duty members of the commissions as they fulfilled their immediate duties at the place of work (Directors, head teachers, teachers and secretaries). In such cases, obtaining information was difficult and, sometimes, impossible.

Another case concerns the publication of false information. Precinct Election Commission No. 4 in Karaganda could not be found at the address specified in the newspaper "Industrialnaya Karaganda".

The existing practice of formation of the election commissions, a fixed number of members of the election commissions, the conventional character of remuneration for work and the violation of the basic requirement of voluntariness lead to the fact that members of Commission do their work formally without realizing its importance and understanding poorly the need for transparency.

The solution of these issues should be carried out with the close cooperation of the authorities and institutions of civil society, especially, political parties.

Observers

In 2007, as a result of changes in the constitutional Law on Elections, the rights of local observers in the Republic of Kazakhstan have been curtailed. If earlier observers had, among other things, a right to be present at all stages of the electoral process and obtain information in election commissions on the election campaign, in the current version of this law only international observers have such rights.

Local observers are now entitled to attend the sessions of election commissions and observe the election procedure on Election Day only.

Thus, the activities of commissions outside the sessions are out of control of observers, including changes in voter lists, issue of absentee ballots, reception of documents from candidates, and transfer of ballot

papers from higher commissions. In addition, according to the law, the members of commissions (district and precinct) are not required to notify observers of the date and time of the next session.

Observers must not interfere in the electoral process and impede the work of electoral commissions.

Observers shall have the right to draw the attention of the members of election commission to violations of the requirements of the electoral law, handing them the written statements, acts of violations, and receive the mark on the service. Unfortunately, such actions are considered by the members of the commissions as obstructing the work of the commissions or interference in the electoral process, threatening the observer with withdrawal from the polling station.

Observers experienced the following cases of restrictions:

- The members of the Commissions refuse to show the minutes of sessions of the Commission, the decisions of the Commission on the transfer and receipt of ballot papers, minutes of transfer and reception of absentee ballots, information on registered candidates, information on de- registration of candidates.
- The members of the Commissions refuse to provide information on the party representation, place of work, and the date and time of the session.

The members of the Commission are afraid to provide information without the permission of the Chairperson of Commission. There were cases when members of the Commission called a higher Commission to find out whether they could provide information.

Very often, the members of the Commission called, they said, "the boss" and reported visits by observers.

The attitude of Commission members to observers is also worth mentioning. In rare cases, it was benevolent, however, for the most part, wary, with suspicion and fear. There were cases of blatantly negative and even aggressive attitude towards observers. Most often this is due to a lack of understanding by Commission members of monitoring goals and the need for transparency as a guarantee of the integrity of electoral process.

Organization and Conduct of Voting

Under the current law, polling stations (PS) open at 6.00. At 7.00, following the necessary procedures, the voting process begins.

All polling stations visited by observers, had transparent ballot boxes, including portable, and booths for secret voting. In individual cases, the information on the polling stations was absent, or it was incomplete. Information about candidates placed at the polling stations had been executed in a uniform format. Sometimes information about candidates was placed in front of the entrance to a polling station, for example, in the hallway of school; there were cases when it was difficult for voters to get information because it was posted outside the entrance to the polling station or on the wall behind the members of the Electoral Commission.

In general, the equipment of polling stations complies with the requirements of the Law on Elections in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The ballot paper contains information in the Kazakh and Russian languages, and printed in hard copy with a reasonable degree of protection. It provides instruction for its filling out and specify the cases when a ballot will be declared invalid.

Observers note that commonly the Commission tried to comply with the procedural requirements of the legislation related to voting and the counting of votes. However, there is evidence that in all regions of the

country there were irregularities in the election procedures. One should be aware that compliance with the voting arrangements is aimed at avoiding falsification of election results. Thus, ignoring of the procedures requirements by the members of election commissions constitutes violation of the electoral legislation.

Voting

Facts preventing a vote without a reason provided for by law have not been observed.

In one case, it was refused to discharge hospital patients on Friday, January 13 on the grounds that they already were in the voter lists of the polling station located in the hospital (Almaty).

Coercion to vote for this or that candidate has not been recorded. But there were cases when voters were demanded to participate in voting. In Kokshetau, at the polling stations located in schools, supervising teachers marked pupils' parents in the voter lists.

At some polling stations located in schools, there were present workers of the schools that were not members of the commissions. For example, at PS No. 194 (school No. 105) of Almaty City, a head teacher of the school was present. As the Chairperson of the Commission said, she helped the commission members to carry out the work not related to the election, for example, prepare tea, or see voters to another polling station located in the same school.

There were cases when outsiders interfered in the work of the commissions. In the Kazalinski district of Kyzylorda region, Director of the Culture House where PS No. 56 was located did not let the observer in.

Ballot papers were issued to voters mostly in compliance with the procedures. Nevertheless, observers noted several instances of voting for family members and voting of two persons in the booth for secret vote. Although during the day, such cases were single, they occurred in all regions of Kazakhstan, both in villages and cities.

Observers recorded several instances of attempted voting by copies of the identity card and driving license. In all cases, in the presence of observers, members of the Commission refused to issue ballot papers to such voters. In Kostanai, observers noted that the ballot paper was issued to a voter without proper documents.

Particular attention should be paid to the voting procedure by absentee ballots. As already stated, absentee ballots have no continuous numbering. Under the rules approved by Decision of the CEC, absentee ballots shall be delivered to the polling station at the rate off 1 per cent of the total number of voters per station. Such rules do not provide, in certain cases, observance of electoral rights of voters. So, at some polling stations, voter lists include mostly students living in dorms. Observers noted the stations where absentee ballots were issued to 50-60% of voters in contravention of regulation. However, this allowed students who had left for vacation home during the election period to retain their right to vote.

When issuing absentee ballots, commission member must mark in the voter list the issue of absentee ballot, its serial number, and date of issue and certify it by his signature. The PS No 301 in Almaty had no such marking for absentee ballots.

In case of absentee voting, the voter is entered in the voter list accompanied by the absentee ballot. The ballot paper is issued to a person voting outside his constituency only on the elections of deputies of the Majilis.

In Aktau, at two polling stations there were noted the cases of issue of more than one ballot paper for voting by absentee ballot. Due the fact that almost all nonresident students were issued absentee ballots, on the voting day observers witnessed several occasions when the students, who stayed, voted by

absentee ballots at the place of registration. This situation is not governed by any rules, and members of the commissions in such cases behave at their own discretion, often issuing ballot papers. In Almaty, at PS No. 180, observers witnessed cases when students who had been issued absentee ballots, voted at the place of registration without returning absentee ballots.

Unfortunately, in the vast majority of cases, at the request of the members of the Commission, observers had to stay at distance from where they could not see the process of issuing ballot papers, compliance of documents, and marks in the voter lists. In particular, in the cities of Kyzylorda and Kokshetau, observers assumed the existence of multiple voting by the same people, but were unable to confirm or deny their assumptions by documentation in view of the above practices.

As to the obstruction of the observers' activity during the voting, the following types of violations can be mentioned:

- Non-admission to the polling station

Observers were not admitted to the polling stations for the following reasons:

- observers have no badge with the name of the organization (Kyzylorda);
- observers have not registered in advance at polling station or in Territorial Election Commission (Kyzylorda and Kyzylorda oblast, Shymkent, Almaty, Almaty oblast)
- alleged wrong-looking observer's certificate and editorial task of journalist (Almaty, Kyzylorda oblast, Almaty oblast)

After calls by observers to the oblast and territorial Commission or after clarification of the relevant article of election law, observers were admitted to the polling stations.

Removing observers

In Village of Saxaul of Kyzylorda oblast, PS No 35: observer was removed "for repeatedly standing up and walking on the polling station" after he pointed out the violation.

Taldykorgan, PS No. 88: journalist of the newspaper "Vecherny Almaty" was removed from the station for video filming because, according to the Chairperson, this hampered the electoral process.

A ban on photography and video filming

Observers were prohibited to record what was occurring at polling station (Pavlodar – PS Nos. 20, 29, village Bishkul of the North-Kazakhstan Oblast – PS No. 351, Karaganda – PS No. 423, Taldykorgan – PS No 882). In half of the cases after clarification of the law, observers were able to defend this right.

The main violations of the rights of observers, proxies and mass media on the Election Day concern the provision of location providing visibility of all of the voting procedures. Traditionally, in Kazakhstan observers are provided with specially designated places from which they can see well only voting booths and ballot boxes. In most cases, Chairperson of the Commission encourages and even obliges observers not to leave these places under threat of removal from the polling station. Walking on the polling station is often regarded as the violation of rules of conduct. At many polling stations, observers were not

allowed to stay close to the members of the Commission issuing ballot papers. Thus, the process of issuing ballots at most stations was not available for monitoring. Unfortunately, this practice is common in all oblasts of Kazakhstan.

In addition to the procedural shortcomings and violations, observers noted other shortcomings. In a few cases, the voting was hampered by several factors, such as loud music at the polling station site and lack of lighting. In Ust-Kamenogorsk at one of the stations visually impaired voters had to fill out ballot papers outside secret voting booths due to poor lighting.

Counting and transfer of protocols to higher commissions

Observance of procedures and transparency during the counting of votes is intended to ensure the expression of the will of voters. Unfortunately, almost all observers note poor knowledge of the procedures or disregard of them by the commissions. In part, this may be caused by the lack of clear step-by-step instructions. For example, the Law on the Election first describes how to lay out ballot papers and the procedure of opening ballot boxes and in the following paragraph - the procedures undertaken prior to the opening of ballot boxes. Moreover, the simultaneous holding of elections of the deputies of the Mazhilis and the Maslikhat has considerably complicated the vote counting procedure.

In particular, the following procedures have been violated:

- Refusal to count the number of voters who received ballot papers based on the lists (Aktau)
- Non-disclosure of the number of absentee ballots received by precinct elections commissions (Taldykorgan, Almaty)
- Refusal to show marks in the ballot paper and/or read the will of voters during the counting of votes (Karagandy, Kyzylorda)
- Simultaneous counting of votes for candidates (Kyzylorda).
- Refusal from selective demonstration of ballot papers from the pile for candidates (Karaganda)
- Location of observers not allowing them to see the expression of the will of the voters, as well as the actions of the members of the Commission at the time of spreading and counting of the ballots. (Karaganda, Zarechnoye of Kostanay oblast, Kyzylorda)
- Refusal to issue copies of the voting results report or refusal to certify the copies by the seal or signature (Kokshetau Almaty, Ust-Kamenogorsk)

Most unfavorable comments of observers were about the attempts to count votes without admission of observers.

In Karaganda at PS No. 425, during the final stage of counting of votes, the Chairperson asked observers to leave.

In Kyzylorda, members of precinct Election Commission No 330 were counting votes in a locked room separate from the observers.

In Kyzylorda, the Chairman of precinct election commission No. 189 withdrew the observers from the counting of votes because they "were not registered at the polling station, although registration of observers is the responsibility of Chairperson. However, a real reason for withdrawal was the request of observer to take away a pen during counting of votes.

In addition to the cases when observers were not allowed to count the votes or refused to issue a copy of the voting results report, in single instances observers were not allowed to accompany the transfer of the voting results report to the higher commission (Precinct Election Commission No. 128, village Sarykemer of Zhambyl oblast). No observer was able to escort the ballot papers to the higher commission in the same car.

Observers point out that the range of violations of electoral procedures and as well the hindering of observation is an evidence of the lack of understanding by many members of the commissions of the importance of the work of observers and suggests a low level of electoral culture.

Recommendations

Implementation of the following recommendations will help to improve significantly the electoral process in Kazakhstan:

1. Introduction into the law of a list of cases for early dissolution of Parliament.
2. Holding of elections of deputies of the Mazhilis and deputies of the Maslikhat at different times. This will give voters the opportunity to fully understand the candidates, as well as significantly simplify the work of electoral commissions, particularly during the counting of votes.
3. Determine the deadline range for election of deputies of the maslikhat.
4. Reduce the vote threshold for political parties in the Majilis to 1-3%, reduce the required the number of party members registered to 1-10 thousand, and change the system of election of deputies of the Mazhilis to mixed one, with equal representation of Deputies elected from constituencies and based on party lists. This measure would allow for better representation of different groups of population in Parliament.
5. Introduce new approaches to the training of members of the election commissions including, in addition to the explanation of the legal rules, also the explanation of purposes of these legal regulations, as well as the role of all participants in the electoral process, principles of interaction with observers and other participants in the electoral process. Training should be provided to all members of election commissions. Moreover, education must be transparent.
6. Revise the principle of formation of election commissions. The number of members of the commissions shall be in proportion to the number of voters at polling stations and be not less than the number of registered political parties.
7. Introduce into the law a rule prohibiting members of political parties to represent other parties in the commission.
8. Carry out the procedure of appointment of members of the commissions by higher commissions publicly to replace the retired members, taking into account the suggestions of political parties.
9. Define the scope of the rights and duties of non-voting party representatives in election commissions, as well as the rules for their nomination.
10. Extend the rights of local observers, including the right to observe all stages of the electoral process, the right to obtain information concerning the electoral process, and monitoring the issuance of bulletins.
11. Obligate election commissions to inform interested observers of regular sessions of the Commission.
12. Create websites of territorial election commissions in oblast for publishing all information pertinent to the electoral process within the oblast.
13. Disseminate all information pertinent to the elections by all possible means, especially through websites. This also applies to information related to the accompanying election activities of other government bodies, such as courts, Akimats, tax departments, etc. In addition, broadcast on

State television channels the summary of all of the important messages of the CEC, the target group being the voters and candidates, along with information on where to find the full text of the messages.

14. In the circumstances where there is no practice of General and regular filling out of tax returns and lack of appropriate training, discrepancies found during examination of tax declaration should not be a reason for the de-registration of candidate. Candidates should be allowed to correct the data.
15. Decision to de-register the candidate or the party list should be taken only through the courts.
16. Introduce a law norm that provides for equal access of the candidates to voters in private institutions. This also applies to posting election campaign materials.
17. Improve the quality of voter's lists to keep track of voters not found in the lists on the ballot day.
18. Introduce control of turnover of absentee ballots, including entering a line into the voter results report indicating the number of absentee voters. Issue to observers a list of serial numbers of absentee ballots based on which voters at a particular polling station vote.
19. To hold educational activities for people to explain the procedures for appeal in the courts, for tax filing, and other procedures related to elections.
20. Introduce the practice of video transmission of vote counting.

Partners

The following organizations were partners in the project:

1. Public Foundation "Center for development of local self-government" (Ust-Kamenogorsk)
2. Public Association "Molodezh kz" (Karaganda)
3. Public Association "Nashe pravo" (Kokshetau)
4. Public Foundation "Decenta" (Pavlodar)
5. Public Association "Raduga" (Kostanai)
6. Private Foundation "Center for NGO support Astana" (Astana)
7. Private Institution "Institute for development of local self-government" (Petropavlovsk)
8. Association of producers "Zaman" (Uralsk)
9. Association "Zholdas" (Shymkent)
10. "Taldykorgan regional center of democracy assistance" (Taldykorgan)
11. Public Foundation "Arlan" (Atyrau)
12. Public Association "Info+ Taraz" (Taraz)
13. Public Association "Arda" (Aktobe)
14. Public Association "Eco Mangystau" (Aktau)
15. Public Association "Kyzylorda center of democracy distribution" (Kyzylorda)
16. Public Foundation "Neovita" (Almaty)