

EPDE REPORT

WHEN ELECTION OFFICIALS BECOME FAKE OBSERVERS: PROTECTING EMB INTEGRITY FROM POLITICAL MISUSE

1. CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW

The European Platform for Democratic Elections has identified 29 current or former representatives of Election Management Bodies (EMB) who have participated in “fake” (politically biased) election observation activities in the OSCE region between March 2024 and October 2025. In elections lacking genuine competition, independent scrutiny, or basic democratic safeguards, they praised procedures, endorsed official results, or made statements that host authorities used to present the process as internationally recognized.¹

The involvement of EMB representatives in fake election observation is a more visible and increasingly systematic trend and undermines trust in those institutions that stand for the rules-based and transparent conduct of elections. EMB representatives were presented as “international observers” or “electoral experts,” although their visits were brief, no public methodology was available, and their conclusions went beyond what their limited activities could support.²

EPDE documented EMB-linked participants in Russia’s 2024 presidential and regional elections, Azerbaijan’s 2024 snap parliamentary election, the 2025 Belarusian presidential election, and Georgia’s 2025 local elections.³

The practice is now becoming more organized and internationally networked. Rather than relying solely on invitations to specific elections, the Kremlin, its ideological allies, and affiliated organizations are developing structures to recruit, convene, and deploy foreign officials on an ongoing basis. The clearest indication of this development was an international conference held in Moscow on April 14 and 15, 2026. According to the organizers, it brought together more than 150 participants from 60 countries. The conference led to the creation of the “International Association of Independent Electoral Experts”,

¹ EPDE Fake Observers Database: Missions, <https://www.fakeobservers.org/fake-election-observers/missions.html>

² EPDE Report: Undermining Institutions: How the Kremlin Involves International Election Management Bodies in Fake Observation Activities, <https://epde.org/reports/new-report-undermining-institutions-how-the-kremlin-involves-international-election-management-bodies-in-fake-observation-activities/>

³ EPDE Fake Observers Database: Missions, <https://www.fakeobservers.org/fake-election-observers/missions.html>

or the “International Association of Independent Political and Electoral Experts”, abbreviated IAIEE or IAPEE. The Association presents itself as an alternative platform for international electoral expertise. Its stated approach prioritizes state sovereignty, national interests, political traditions, and opposition to alleged foreign interference. Several individuals involved in the Association or its reported leadership have previously participated in fake observation missions, suggesting that the Association may be formalizing networks that previously operated through ad hoc invitations.⁴

This report is based on EPDE’s Fake Observers Database and additional open-source research. The accompanying list includes individuals with a documented current or former link to an EMB who meet EPDE’s methodology for identifying fake observers. Even without a formal mandate, host authorities and state-aligned media may use the individual’s title and affiliation to create the impression that a foreign electoral institution has endorsed the election. Inclusion on EPDE’s list does not, by itself, show that the relevant institution approved the visit or endorsed the individual’s statements. When authorization, financing, or the capacity in which a person participated cannot be established, this is treated as a limitation of the available evidence.

Professional cooperation among EMBs can strengthen electoral administration. However, in the absence of clear rules on authorization, transparency, and accountability, the same networks can confer systemic credibility on elections that do not meet democratic standards^{5,6}.

2. FAKE OBSERVERS

Politically biased or fake observation involves individuals or groups who present themselves as election observers or electoral experts but lack the independence, transparency, or methodology required for credible observation. Such activities may seek to legitimize elections that do not meet democratic standards or, in other contexts, spread unsupported allegations of fraud against well-administered elections. Fake observation is therefore not simply inexperienced or low-quality monitoring. It is a form of political messaging and information manipulation that creates the appearance of independent scrutiny.⁷

The use of an official position or institutional affiliation to amplify such statements is particularly relevant when the participant is linked to an election management body.⁸

EPDE identifies fake observers through a combination of three categories:

- 1) Independence and conflicts of interest
- 2) Methodology and proportionality of conclusions

⁴ Russian Election Monitor: Kremlin’s new fake electoral observation ecosystem: From domestic mimicry to global scaling, <https://russian-election-monitor.org/kremlins-new-fake-electoral-observation-ecosystem-from-domestic-mimicry-to-global-scaling/>

⁵ ODIHR’s election observation methodology, <https://odihr.osce.org/odihr/elections/methodology>

⁶ The Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and the Code of Conduct for International Election Observers, <https://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/declaration-principles-international-election-observation-and-code-conduct>

⁷ EPDE Fake Observers Database: Methodology, <https://www.fakeobservers.org/fake-election-observers/methodology.html>

⁸ EPDE Fake Observers Database: Methodology, <https://www.fakeobservers.org/fake-election-observers/methodology.html>

3) Transparency of financing, invitation and reporting

The operational model is often consistent: participants are invited by the host EMB, another state institution, a government-linked organization, or an intermediary. Their program consists primarily of official meetings and visits to selected election facilities or polling stations. They are then given access to state- or government-aligned media and issue immediate positive assessments, usually focusing on technical arrangements, voting technology, polling-station administration, or voter information, which are then reused, shared, and recycled by local state-affiliated media. These narrow observations are presented as evidence about the election as a whole, while little or no methodology, supporting data, or subsequent report is published.⁹

EPDE's assessment is based on documented conduct rather than on nationality, institutional affiliation, or participation in an election-related visit. As EPDE stated in its response to the Georgian CEC following the 2025 election, the relevant question is whether the participant's conclusions were independent, methodologically grounded, and proportionate to the activities conducted. When officials issue broad public assessments outside a recognized observation mission, particularly where credible long-term monitoring is absent, their institutional authority can be interpreted as professional validation of the overall process.¹⁰

EPDE also contacts individuals and institutions where statements, affiliations, or the capacity in which a person participated call for clarification. Exchanges with the election authorities of Georgia, Latvia, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Albania demonstrate this approach. EPDE prioritizes explaining the evidence and methodology behind a listing, distinguishes accreditation or technical access from credible observation, and invites extra information or a counterstatement. Where substantial evidence shows that an individual was misquoted or misrepresented, EPDE's methodology allows the record to be commented or the profile to be removed.

Technical exchanges, peer visits, and professional dialogue between EMBs are legitimate and often valuable. They become problematic when participants with institutional affiliations make public judgments about an entire electoral process without a clear mandate for non-biased observation, transparent methodology, sufficient access, or institutional authorization. Credible observation requires conclusions to reflect both the scope of the mission and the broader electoral environment.

3. INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF MEMBERS OF INTERNATIONAL EMBS

Representatives of election management bodies are exceptionally valuable to fake observation operations because they carry institutional authority, technical expertise, and an appearance of political neutrality. A commissioner, senior administrator, or EMB employee can be presented not simply as a foreign guest but as a professional counterpart capable of validating another country's electoral procedures. Their title can suggest indirect approval from a foreign election authority even where the

⁹ EPDE Report: Undermining Institutions: How the Kremlin Involves International Election Management Bodies in Fake Observation Activities, <https://epde.org/reports/new-report-undermining-institutions-how-the-kremlin-involves-international-election-management-bodies-in-fake-observation-activities/>

¹⁰ EPDE Statement: On Credible Election Observation and Institutional Responsibility: EPDE's Response to the CEC of Georgia, <https://www.fakeobservers.org/fake-election-observers/methodology.html>

individual has no mandate to represent it. This is especially useful when credible domestic or international observers are absent, restricted, or openly critical, which is almost always the case in non-democratic elections. Positive statements from EMB representatives allow host authorities to claim that their procedures have been endorsed by electoral professionals rather than partisan or ideological allies.

Institutional consequences

The central problem is not only that individual EMB representatives may make inaccurate or disproportionate statements. It is that the authority of election administrations is converted into a political resource for legitimizing undemocratic elections.

This can damage the credibility and objectivity of the affected EMB, weaken public faith in its work at home, and blur the distinction between legitimate technical cooperation and politically biased observation. It can also normalize a model in which the claim for “national sovereignty” replaces electoral rights and international commitments as the basis for assessment. EMBs associated with these networks may face wider reputational consequences, while genuine citizen and international observers risk being portrayed as partisan actors or instruments of foreign interference.

If left unaddressed, these developments will create an international infrastructure for producing professional-looking endorsements of manipulated elections. The response must therefore focus not only on individuals, but also on the institutional rules governing authorization, transparency, conflicts of interest, public statements, and accountability.

List of Identified EMBs (2024-2025) below.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Preventing the further institutionalization of fake observation necessitates coordinated action by national EMBs, parliaments, civil society, election experts and European institutions. The aim of these recommendations is not to restrict legitimate EMB cooperation, but to prevent electoral expertise from being misused to legitimise flawed elections.

1. National EMBs

EMBs should review and, where necessary, update their internal safeguards to cover written authorization, financing and conflict-of-interest disclosure, clear designation of personal or institutional capacity, limits on broad public assessments outside credible missions, and post-visit reporting. They should also promptly correct cases in which their name or an official’s title is misused. Professional cooperation among EMBs remains important but it must be based on transparency, impartiality, non-interference and shared democratic standards.

2. Council of Europe

The Venice Commission should bring the issue to the attention of the European Conference of Election Management Bodies that could develop additional guidance for EMB officials participating in foreign election-related visits. It should cover prior authorization, disclosure of financing and conflicts of

interest, clear designation of the participant's capacity, and limits on broad electoral assessments outside credible observation missions. Strict regulation of public communication should be applied to staff and elected members of EMB members similar to the rules that are applied to members of international election observation missions.

3. European Commission

Through the European Cooperation Network on Elections, ECNE, the Commission should develop a voluntary, common transparency protocol for international travel by EMB officials. This should include a standard authorization and disclosure template and a rapid verification mechanism for cases in which an official's affiliation is used to imply institutional endorsement of international elections.

The EU Commission should provide technical and financial support to EMBs and civil society being engaged in researching and containing fake election observation on a European and global level.

4. EU's global electoral assistance

The European Commission and the European External Action Service should explicitly integrate safeguards against fake observation into electoral assistance, technical cooperation, and institutional exchanges. Repeated participation by officials of partner institutions should trigger clarification, enhanced due diligence, and consideration in decisions on future support.

5. European Parliament

The Parliament should consistently apply and strengthen its existing procedure for individual unofficial election observation. MEPs participating outside a delegation authorized by the Conference of Presidents must not present their activities or conclusions as representing the European Parliament. The Co-Chairs of the EP's Democracy and Election Group should systematically review documented cases and, where appropriate, exclude those involved from official election observation delegations for the remainder of the parliamentary term. Possible breaches involving external support, Parliament resources, or financial disclosure should also be referred to under the applicable rules.

The European Parliament should continue its efforts to inform and encourage European national parliaments in the containment of fake election observation.

6. Civil society and election experts

Civil society and election experts should continue investigating and disclosing patterns of electoral disinformation and deepen professional exchange with other experts as anti-corruption, FIMI researchers and domestic election observers worldwide. Fake election observation is a part of a wider influence operation of anti-democratic forces aiming to undermine democratic institutions and integrity of EU's elections and should be treated as such.

List of Identified EMBs (2024-2025)

2025 - Belarus - Presidential Elections

In the presidential election held in Belarus on January 26, 2025, incumbent President Alexander Lukashenko secured his seventh term with over 87% of the vote. The election was widely criticized by international observers and opposition figures, who labeled it a sham due to the lack of genuine competition and suppression of dissent. The EPDE has exposed how over 90 politically biased “observers” who were deployed to whitewash this fraudulent election. The Lukashenka regime, notorious for systematic human rights abuses and repression of civil society, manufactured international legitimacy by inviting hand-picked “observers”—many with direct ties to authoritarian regimes, Kremlin-linked disinformation networks, or criminal investigations in their home countries. During the Presidential elections more than 1200 political prisoners have been arrested in Belarusian prisons. Among them Nobel prize winner Ales Bialiatski and three other leading independent election observers from the Human Rights organisation “Viasna”.

Mosotho Moepya

South Africa	Chairperson of the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC)
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“[...] Our mission to observe the presidential elections in Belarus took place without any restrictions. We had full access and the opportunity to visit polling stations, [...] as well as observe the vote counting and see the protocols. There are a large number of observers here. And we had the opportunity to witness the transparency and openness of the election [...]” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://belta.by/society/view/mezhdunarodnyj-nabljudatel-iz-juar-nazval-vpechatljajuschim-uroven-podgotovki-chlenov-izbirkomov-691859-2025/> (2025-03-20)

Nurlan Äbdirov

Kazakhstan	Chairman of the Central Election Commission of Kazakhstan since 2022
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“The elections were held legitimately, they were absolutely transparent, met all the requirements of international and Belarusian national legislation. They were held with a high turnout. In a free, transparent environment. With which I congratulate the people of Belarus [...]” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://belta.by/society/view/glava-tsik-kazahstana-vybory-prezidenta-belarusi-proshli-legitimno-oni-byli-absolutno-transparentny-691844-2025/> (2025-03-10)

Durrani Nisar Ahmed

Pakistan	Member of the Central Election Commission of Pakistan
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“In our country, the CEC has one chairman and four staff members. We are interested in your experience, and I am sure the election in Belarus will be as comfortable as possible for everyone: peaceful, honest, and open [...]”

Source link & date: <https://www.sb.by/en/participation-of-observers-from-pakistan-in-assessing-belarus-election-process-expands-horizons-of-c.html> (2025-03-18)

“[...] We are planning to visit polling stations in Minsk. I hope that the elections in Belarus will be as comfortable as possible for everyone and very successful [...] Today we met with the chairman of the CEC of Belarus, got acquainted with the work of the Central Election Commission. We hope that our stay here will be fruitful. [Translated from Russian]”

Source link & date: <https://belta.by/society/view/budem-poseschat-uchastki-v-minske-tsik-pakistana-o-monitoringe-vyborov-v-belarusi-691007-2025/> (2025-03-19)

Mohsen Eslami

Iran	Director General of the Iranian Electoral Commission
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“[...] The people of Belarus have demonstrated their strong will and determination to play their role in the future of the country by taking a broad part in the presidential elections,” Mohsen Eslami said. According to him, the security and transparency of the process allowed citizens to participate in the elections and register their votes in complete safety and without any tension. [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://belta.by/society/view/nabljudatel-iz-irana-belorusy-prodemonstrirovali-volju-i-reshimost-igrat-svoju-rol-v-buduschem-strany-691846-2025/> (2025-03-10)

Justice Priscilla Makanyara Chigumba

Zimbabwe	Chairperson of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
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“In accordance with the legal documents governing the organization of elections in the Republic of Belarus - the Constitution, the Electoral Code and other legal acts - we came to the conclusion that the preparation and conduct of the elections were held in full compliance with these legislative acts [...] [Translated from Russian]”

Source link & date: <https://belta.by/society/view/nabljudatel-iz-zimbabve-vybory-v-belarusi-prohodili-v-polnom-sootvetstvii-s-zakonom-691864-2025/> (2025-03-20)

Zayniddin Nizamkhodjaev

Uzbekistan	Chairperson of the Central Election Commission of Uzbekistan
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“Our preliminary observations indicate that early voting is proceeding normally. I was particularly surprised that young people are participating very actively. Voters are casting their ballots, taking advantage of the opportunity for early voting. Why are such statements coming from the West? I do not know what facts they are based on [...]” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://belta.by/society/view/pochemu-s-zapada-zvuchat-takie-zajavlenija-tsik-uzbekistana-o-rezoljutsii-evroparlamenta-po-belarusi-691162-2025/> (2025-03-10)

Ekrem Özübek

Turkey	Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Electoral Council of the Republic of Turkey
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“[...] We witnessed the election process at the polling stations. It was held openly and in a calm atmosphere. We also talked to members of the polling station commissions [...] We also talked to observers representing various political parties [...] they had not found any violations [...] We saw the use of interesting practices for people with disabilities [...] home voting was provided for people who could not visit the polling stations” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://belta.by/society/view/nabljudatel-iz-turtsii-vysokaja-javka-izbiratelej-na-vybory-v-belarusi-javnyj-priznak-demokratii-691849-2025/> (2025-03-11)

Ella Pamfilova

Russia	Chairperson of the Central Election Commission of Russia
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“I can say that everything complies with the law, everything is well organized. Colleagues who observed the early voting tell me about the high turnout, that the polling stations are well prepared [...]” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://belta.by/society/view/pamfilova-vybory-v-belarusi-horosho-organizovany-i-prohodjat-v-sootvetstvii-s-zakonodatelstvom-691015-2025/> (2025-03-10)

Olga Blago

Russia	Member of the Election Commission of Novosibirsk Oblast, Russia
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“We talked to national observers who were present at the polling stations and met with international observers. In our opinion, this openness allows us all to assess your elections as being held openly and

professionally [...] The premises are all well equipped, convenient for voters and observers. We have not observed any violations at the moment [...]" [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://belta.by/society/view/nabljudatel-iz-rossii-vybory-prezidenta-belarusi-prohodjat-otkryto-i-professionalno-691489-2025/> (2025-03-11)

Nurzhan Shaildabekova

Kyrgyz Republic	Former Chairperson of the Central Election Commission of Kyrgyzstan, Deputy Prime Minister
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"[...] Being at the polling stations, we, international observers, saw that the atmosphere of the elections is very calm. Citizens vote freely, the election commissions and the state have created all the conditions for free expression of will. At many polling stations, there is a festive atmosphere [...]" [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://belta.by/society/view/predsedatel-tsik-kyrgyzstana-na-vyborah-prezidenta-belarusi-sozdany-vse-uslovija-dlja-svobodnogo-691617-2025/> (2025-03-10)

"In particular, we saw measures aimed at inclusiveness. Special measures have also been taken for citizens with disabilities." [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://belta.by/society/view/predsedatel-tsik-kyrgyzstana-na-vyborah-prezidenta-belarusi-sozdany-vse-uslovija-dlja-svobodnogo-691617-2025/> (2025-03-10)

Aung Soe Win

Myanmar	Member on the Member of the Union Election Commission (UEC)
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"Thank you for inviting us as observers. When your elections are over, Myanmar will also have elections this year, and we want to invite you. Therefore, we want to see how everything is organized there [...]" [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://belta.by/society/view/nabljudatel-mijanme-interesen-opyt-provedeniya-prezidentskih-vyborov-v-belarusi-690981-2025/> (2025-03-18)

"Relations between Myanmar and Belarus are growing stronger, despite the long distances. [...] Myanmar is interested in the experience of holding the Presidential election in Belarus." [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://www.sb.by/en/chairman-of-belarus-central-election-commission-met-observers-from-myanmar.html> (2025-03-18)

2025 - Georgia - Local Elections

In the 2025 local elections in Georgia, media and official reports highlighted the presence of international observation delegations, including participants from Hungary, France, Poland, Italy, Malta, the United Kingdom, the United States, Belarus, and Uzbekistan. However, analysis of the coverage revealed several key issues: genuine citizen observers were absent for the first time in nearly two decades, and credible international monitoring was minimal and invited too late to be meaningful; many of the observers were politically biased “fake observers” who endorsed the official election process and reinforced narratives favorable to the ruling Georgian Dream party. Most of these observers were accredited via state bodies, minor organizations, or using irregular credentials, giving the appearance of legitimacy. Independent organizations concluded that fundamental conditions for free, fair, and competitive elections - including respect for rights, stability of electoral law, and procedural guarantees - were largely unmet, with reports of violent crackdowns on protests and restrictions on civil society further undermining credibility.

Erton Sinani

Albania	Chief-of-Staff at the Central Elections Commission of Albania
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“We visited several polling stations, and I can say with confidence that the Central Election Commission of Georgia is fully ensuring the smooth administration of the process. Judging by the faces of the voters, they are happy to take part in these important elections, as local self-government elections represent the future of the Georgian people.” [Translated from Georgian]

Source link & date: <https://www.imeri.ge/ge/video/205344/saertashoriso-damkvirveblebi-tvitmartvelobis-archevnebe> (2025-11-01)

“It should also be emphasized that the electronic technologies and verification devices are working properly and efficiently, without any flaws. It is clear that voters are well informed about the technology, which means that the Central Election Commission has carried out a timely and successful information campaign.” [Translated from Georgian]

Source link & date: <https://www.imeri.ge/ge/video/205344/saertashoriso-damkvirveblebi-tvitmartvelobis-archevnebe> (2025-11-01)

Vanja Bjelica-Prutina

Bosnia and Herzegovina	President of the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina since March 2020
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“The elections are going smoothly and voter turnout is very good. Voters are well informed about new election technologies and I think the Central Election Commission of Georgia has done an excellent job in

educating voters. ... The use of electronic technologies is also being implemented smoothly.” [Translated from Georgian]

Source link & date: <https://www.imedi.ge/ge/video/205344/saertashoriso-damkvirveblebi-tvitmmartvelobis-archevnebze> (2025-11-01)

Elena Baldovskaya

Belarus	Secretary of the Central Election Commission of Belarus
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“Elena Baldovskaya noted the calm atmosphere at the polling stations and the well-trained commission members, who provided comprehensive information about the voting procedure and the operation of the equipment. She also reported that voters had a positive attitude toward the use of new technologies during voting.” [Translated from Georgian]

Source link & date: <https://t.me/cikbelarus/3882> (2025-11-01)

2024 - Russia - Single Voting Day (Local & Regional Election)

Russia’s local elections in September 2024, concentrated on the so-called Single Voting Day, were marked by unprecedented restrictions on independent opposition, media, and election observers. To legitimize the elected politicians in the eyes of the Russian voters and international audiences, the Russian Central Election Commission invited multiple representatives of state election commissions to Moscow and St. Petersburg. All of them misused the authority of their institutions to lend legitimacy to these fraudulent elections. EPDE monitored the Russian media and other sources during the three election days and has noticed that Russia’s Central Electoral Commission invited six counterparts from five electoral institutions: SPR Election Commission of Malaysia; INE Instituto Nacional Electoral (Mexico); COMELEC Commission on Elections (Philippines); ECSL Electoral Commission (Sierra Leone); IEC Electoral Commission (South Africa). The group appeared first on September 6, 2024 in Moscow during a conference of Russia’s Central Electoral Commission, then on September 7 they traveled to St. Petersburg. The group visited at least one polling station in St. Petersburg on September 8, 2024.

Marisa Arlene Cabral Porchas

Mexico	Coordinator of International Affairs at Mexico’s Instituto Nacional Electoral
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“The electoral process in Russia is organized at a very high level. It is transparent and objective.” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://t.me/mediacenter2024/428> (2025-12-09)

“In Mexico we say: “The one who gets the most votes wins. And only the majority determines who wins.” The Central Election Commission does everything possible to ensure transparency of the electoral processes. The voice of every voter will be heard, we have no doubt about it.” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://t.me/mediacenter2024/428> (2025-12-09)

Marisa Arlene Cabral Porchas, coordinator of international cooperation at the National Electoral Council of Mexico, like others, noted the high level of organization of the electoral process in the Russian Federation, its transparency and objectivity. Porchas believes that the government’s efforts to ensure a high level of elections were “a guarantee of stability of the electoral process and a guarantee of compliance with democratic principles.” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://vecherka-spb.ru/2024/09/07/predstaviteli-inostrannikh-izbiratelnykh-organov-podelilis-vpechatleniyami-ot-rossiiskikh-elektoralnykh-protsesov> (2025-12-09)

Genesis Marquez Gatdula

Philippines	Director of the organisation department of the Commission on Elections of the Philippines
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“Genesis Marquez Gatdula, Director of the Organization Department of the Commission on Elections of the Philippines, noted the excellent work of the CEC and the Russian government, especially emphasizing the importance of involving youth in the electoral process. “The Russian authorities are successfully implementing the constitutionally guaranteed right of every person to vote in elections,” said Genesis Marques Gatdula.” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://vecherka-spb.ru/2024/09/07/predstaviteli-inostrannikh-izbiratelnykh-organov-podelilis-vpechatleniyami-ot-rossiiskikh-elektoralnykh-protsesov> (2025-12-09)

“Both the Central Election Commission and the Russian government are actively involving young people in the electoral process, and this is right, because young people are the future reserve.” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://t.me/mediacenter2024/428> (2025-12-09)

“The Russian authorities are successfully implementing the constitutionally guaranteed right of every person to vote in elections.” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://t.me/mediacenter2024/428> (2025-12-09)

Justice Mihlanga

South Africa	Employee of the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC)
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“Each polling station/plays a key role in the success of elections. Especially (I assume in this election) the engagement of youth is a positive example which other states should consider to look more into. We saw that many resources are available for voter education/information. All information is available and transparent such as access to protocols.” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://tvspb.ru/news/2024/09/8/mezhdunarodnye-eksperty-posetili-uchastkovye-izbirkomye-v-pushkinskom-rajone> (2025-12-09)

Alex Saffa

Sierra Leone	Executive Assistant at the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone (ECSL)
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“Alex Saffa, executive assistant to the chairperson of the National Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone, called the Russian electoral system one of the best he has seen in his practice. [...] “It is very impressive that voters in Russia have a choice of how to vote. If someone cannot come to the polling station, they can invite an election commission specialist to their home. This is convenient, especially for elderly people or those with disabilities,” added Alex Saffa.” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://vecherka-spb.ru/2024/09/07/predstaviteli-inostrannikh-izbiratelnykh-organov-podelilis-vpechatleniyami-ot-rossiiskikh-elektoralnykh-protsessov> (2025-12-09)

“The Russian electoral system is one of the best I have seen, and I have traveled a lot to different countries. We were very impressed with the work of the electoral system in Russia. We have a lot to learn from the Central Electoral Commission of the Russian Federation.” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://t.me/mediacenter2024/428> (2025-12-09)

“I was very impressed with the voter registration procedure. Russia has an entire automated system that collects and stores information about registered voters. This system can be trusted. In Africa, you have to declare yourself to get on the voter list. It is not as convenient as in your country.” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://t.me/mediacenter2024/428> (2025-12-09)

2024 - Russia - Presidential Elections

During the “presidential elections” held in Russia from 15-17 March 2024, Vladislav Davankov (“New People” party), Nikolay Kharitonov (Communist Party), Vladimir Putin, and Leonid Slutsky (Liberal-Democratic Party) competed for the presidency. Enabled to run yet again by controversial constitutional amendments effective 4 July 2020, Putin dominated the “elections” together with his controlled “opposition” excluding genuine opposition figures. These “elections” occurred under Putin’s regime control, both within Russia and illegally in occupied Ukrainian territories, including Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, ARC and Sevastopol. OSCE/ODIHR could not observe the elections due to a lack of invitation from the Russian Federation

Mathias Barthelemy Morouba

Central African Republic	President of the National Election Commission of the Central African Republic
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“We found these elections to be transparent, trustworthy and inclusive. Transparency is ensured by the governing bodies, in particular, through election agents,” he noted. [...] “We also saw that the voting took place on several levels in terms of inclusiveness. Every registered voter had the opportunity to vote remotely.”

Source link & date: <https://en.sputniknews.africa/20240318/mature-democracy--transparent-elections-african-observers-on-russian-presidential-vote-1065623405.html> (2024-08-14)

Ahmed Bandari

Egypt	Director of the Executive Body of the National Elections Authority of Egypt
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“Of course the first impression is of a well-organized, managed electoral process in the Russian Federation, as well as a large number of citizens registered in the voter database.” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://dzen.ru/video/watch/65f3f8eaf6ad8d2b712d500b?sid=169346569123353915> (2024-08-23)

Justice Priscilla Makanyara Chigumba

Zimbabwe	Chairperson of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
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“We found the general atmosphere to be conducive for elections. [...] It is our view that this is a clear sign of a mature democracy in which elections are not perceived as a life and death activity,” Chigumba said at the meeting. Chigumba also commended “the people of Russia for exercising their right to vote in a peaceful environment” and the CEC “for managing the election in an efficient and professional manner.”

Source link & date: <https://en.sputniknews.africa/20240318/mature-democracy--transparent-elections-african-observers-on-russian-presidential-vote-1065623405.html> (2024-09-03)

Mirlan Parkhanov

Kyrgyz Republic	Former Member Central Commission for Elections and Referendums, Head of the Department of Culture, Sport, Tourism and Youth at Bishkek City Council
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“The voting procedure for the Russian presidential elections in the Pskov region is open and transparent, with a high level of election organization. This was reported by international observer, director of the Eurasian Center for Competence and Employment, member of the youth council of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Mirlan Parkhanov, who came to the region from Kyrgyzstan.” [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://tass.ru/politika/20258325> (2024-08-25)

2024 - Azerbaijan - Snap Parliamentary Elections

In Azerbaijan's September 1, 2024, snap parliamentary election, the ruling New Azerbaijan Party, led by President Ilham Aliyev, narrowly maintained its majority with 68 out of 125 seats. Held early to avoid conflicting with COP29 in Baku, the election saw limited opposition with 44 seats won by "independents" broadly aligned with the regime. Voting extended to Nagorno-Karabakh for the first time since 1994, underscoring Azerbaijan's control of the region. Despite a peaceful election day, international observers highlighted a lack of democratic standards, with low voter turnout (37%) and substantial restrictions on political freedoms, media access, and independent observation. The EPDE and OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) criticized the election's credibility, noting extensive repression of opposition and the presence of fake observers. During the snap elections Anar Mammadli, award winner of the Vaclav Havel Human Rights Prize by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and three other independent citizen election observers were imprisoned for independent reporting on election fraud and the human rights situation in the country.

Kameliya Neykova

Bulgaria	Chairperson of the Central Election Commission of Bulgaria
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“Bulgarian CEC Chairperson Kameliya Neykova expressed her satisfaction with participating in the observation of the snap elections to the Milli Majlis and emphasized her commitment to actively monitoring the electoral processes. She said that the parliamentary elections were conducted excellently and noted the high voter turnout witnessed during her visits to several polling stations since morning.”

Source link & date: https://azertag.az/en/xeber/azerbajjans_cec_chairperson_meets_with_bulgarian_counterpart-3159074 (2024-09-01)

Baiba Veisa

Latvia	Vice-chairperson of the Central Election Commission of Latvia
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“All the stations I visited were equipped according to the law. My colleagues from the commission did not inform me about any violations of the law, and I myself did not observe them. Of course, I was happy to see a large number of young people in the city. [...] Our official delegations come to Azerbaijan quite often, and of course we expect delegations from Azerbaijan to come to Latvia as well.” [Translated from Azerbaijani]

Source link & date: https://azertag.az/xeber/baiba_veisa_fuzulide_sechiciler_sechki_menteqeleri_achilmamis_kuchede_novbeye_dururdu_video-3161466 (2024-10-31)

Counterstatement

EPDE has contacted Ms. Veisa for confirmation and the context of her quote. She replied her comments were factual with regard to the narrow scope of her observation and the lack of reported context may have presented her as validating the entire election process. She reiterated her strong support for democratic values and transparency. She stated that travel costs have been covered by the Latvian CEC, while local accommodation was covered by the local CEC “as per official invitation”.

Adilkhan Bizhanov

Kazakhstan	Chief expert at the International Cooperation Department of the Central Election Commission of Kazakhstan
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“He emphasized that all conditions have been created for voters in the polling stations: “All conditions have been created for voters. Activity is high, stations are equipped with web cameras.” [Translated from Azerbaijani]

Source link & date: <https://report.az/milli-meclis/tdt-musahide-missiyasinin-uzvu-vetendaslar-seckilerde-yukse-fealliq-numayis-etdirirler/> (2024-11-01)

Anar Dubanbayeva

Kyrgyz Republic	Member of the Central Election Commission of Kyrgyzstan
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“Since arriving in Azerbaijan, we have observed five polling stations. In these stations, we witnessed only a high level of organization. Voters are freely casting their ballots for their preferred candidates. We observed excellent organization in these elections.” [Translated from Azerbaijani]

Source link & date: <https://report.az/en/domestic-politics/kyrgyz-observer-voters-in-azerbaijan-freely-choose-their-preferred-candidates/> (2024-11-11)

Nurlan Kolchukeev

Kyrgyz Republic	Deputy Chairperson of the Central Election Commission of Kyrgyzstan
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“Voter lists are posted at all polling stations, and every voter can find their name on these lists. The presence of both party representatives and neutral observers, as well as the use of transparent ink by each voter during the voting process, are indicators of the transparency of these elections.” [Translated from Azerbaijani]

Source link & date: <https://report.az/en/domestic-politics/kyrgyzstan-s-cec-any-instances-of-electoral-fraud-in-azerbaijan-are-out-of-question/> (2024-11-11)

Igor Khalin

Russia	Chairperson of the Electoral Commission of the Tyumen region, Russia
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“I represent the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) mission from the Tyumen region of the Russian Federation. We have been in Azerbaijan since Friday. During this time, we have already managed to hold a meeting at the headquarters of the CIS mission, received questionnaires, recommendations on how to work at the polling station, and are operating in the city of Lankaran.”

Source link & date: <https://video.azertag.az/video/222810> (2024-09-01)

Ahmet Yener

Turkey	Chairperson of the Turkish High Election Board (electoral commission)
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“Parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan are held in an organized and transparent manner.” According to Anadolu Agency, this was stated by the chairman of the Supreme Electoral Council of Turkey Ahmet Yener, who has attended the snap parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan as an observer. [Translated from Russian]

Source link & date: <https://apa.az/secki-2024/qdiet-musahide-missiyasi-seckilerin-demokratik-standartlara-uygun-kecirildiyini-bildirib-863538> (2024-11-01)

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