

Programs aimed at improving the electoral processes

11.02.14

Interview with the Deputy Chairman of the Central Electoral Commission

Yeghishe Arzumanyan

- Mr. Arzumanyan, CEC has activated work with the candidates to the members of the electoral commissions recently, professional trainings are held more often. What is the reason?

- The Central Electoral Commission is a state body which organizes the elections and implements control of legitimacy of the elections, as well as, organizes and holds professional trainings of the elections, establishes procedure of organizing trainings and issuing a qualification. In this connection to master fully the requirements of the legislation, for right orientation in different situations occurring during the elections, the improvement of the abilities of the member of the precinct electoral commission as a main guarantee of organizing and holding proper elections is always in the centre of our special attention. I have to say that the requirement of the 42 Article of the Electoral Code is to involve those citizens in the electoral commissions who pass the professional trainings and receive the corresponding qualification. All the members of the electoral commissions should have the corresponding abilities, experience and dedication in the issue of following the elections providing fairness, impartiality, independence, transparency and professionalism. After the professional trainings tests are organized in the results of which qualification certificates are issued. In August of 2013 the acting procedure has made some technical and organizational amendments with the aim of correcting some gaps which occur in practice during the organization of trainings and improving the existing procedures.

- During a year, how often do you organize these trainings and who can participate?

- For the first time in our republic such trainings were organized in 2010, on the eve of national elections. Later they bore a periodic nature. Twice a year we organize such trainings. Qualification certificates are issued for three-year term. NKR citizens having right to vote and be included in the electoral commissions can participate in the trainings.

Deputies of the National Assembly, judges, ministers and their deputies, heads of regional administrations, majors and community heads, employees of the National Security Service, Police, Ministry of Defense, Prosecutor's Office, the banking sector, persons convicted of crimes of the NKR Criminal Code can not participate in the trainings. Taking into account the proposals of the Territorial Electoral Commissions in 2013 the schedule of the organization of the trainings has been approved, the distribution according to the zones has been implemented. The trainings have been organized and held publicly, the process have been regularly illustrated by mass media.

- What were the previous year's figures?

In 2013 the professional trainings passed in three phases, moreover, all the regions of the republic were included. 2085 citizens having right of voting have participated in the trainings and have issued qualification certificates, the highest number of listeners have been registered in November: 1233 citizens of 142 communities have participated, 562 of which (45,6%) have higher education, 321 (26%)- secondary specialized education, 350 (28,4%)- secondary education. According to party membership 943 persons (76,5%) are non party, 177 (14,4%) are members of ADP, 76 (6,2%) are of "Azat Hayrenik", 36 (2,9%) are of ARF. 82,6% of qualified are employees. Female representatives are more active in our

work (59,9%).According to the age 30,2% of the citizens are at the age of 18-35,42,3% are of 36-50 and 27,6% are over 50. From 2011 to 2013 2872 citizens have participated in the professional trainings and issued qualification certificates (413 citizens in 2011, 374 in 2012 and 2085 in 2013), which allows all the precinct electoral commissions form according to the theses of the Electoral Code.

-Are new participants often registered in the trainings?

- In general, all the elections organized in the NKR differ in their democracy, transparency and a high level of organization, this is mainly due to the nature of our law-abiding citizens. It is welcomed and joyful that not only the voters are active, but also those who want to organize them in place, those who are well aware, that the conduct of democratic elections depends not only on a thorough and valid electoral code, but on the faithful implementation of the electoral legislation. Last year 351 listeners participated in the trainings for the first time, it lets us suppose that almost one third of the precinct electoral commissions will be formed from new members during the preparation and conduct of the elections.

Year by year trainings organized by us are also being improved in terms of content.

After each training the shortcomings and gaps having been noticed during the organization and conduct of them are analyzed thoroughly in order to exclude them in the future.

It should be noted that the trainings conducted in the previous year by the lecturers were held by the analyzes of disputes, articles containing some ambiguity of the Electoral Code, episodes often occurring in practice, in which the participants took part in actively.

- The necessity of making amendments in the Electoral Code was spoken about previously.

The Electoral Code of our republic mainly corresponds to the international standards and includes solutions to almost all the situations of the electoral process but there are some points giving bases of ambiguity.

With this aim a package of recommendations around the amendments are being made in the NKR Electoral Code which will be submitted to public discussion after being finished.

Noune Hayrapetyan