

DECISION

of the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan
on the summarize of the Early Presidential Elections of the Republic of Azerbaijan,
held on February 7, 2024 and the submission of the voting results protocol of the
Central Election Commission and relevant documents
to the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Azerbaijan

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan declared the Early Presidential Elections of the Republic of Azerbaijan on December 7, 2023 by Order No 4193, the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan (hereinafter referred to as -CEC) appointed the Early Presidential Elections to February 7, 2024 by Decision 7/15 dated 8 December 2023 pursuant to Article 179.2 of the Election Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (hereinafter referred to as – Election Code) and the Order.

CEC has focused on free, fair and transparent conduct of these elections held for the first time within the atmosphere of full restoration of the territorial integrity and state sovereignty of the country.

The processes of updating the voters' list, awareness-raising of all electoral stakeholders including voters, nomination and registration of presidential candidates, creating opportunities for election campaigning on the basis of equal conditions, ensuring free and unhindered conditions for the activities of observers and media representatives related to the organization of voting on election day and other activities, which are important stages of the electoral process were carried out consistently, systematically and in an organized manner in accordance with the requirements of the Election Code.

All the activities related to the preparation and conduct of the elections were carried out timely and effectively in a manner established by law, a large-scale projects covering different election stakeholders were organized for voters and the members of lower election commissions and the implementation of the projects was held in close cooperation with relevant structures. A total of 8 video clips and audio produced by the CEC on the call to participate in the voting, informing voters of the voting day, search of the name in the voters' list, voting based on the supplementary voter list, use of de-registration cards and voting procedures were regularly broadcasted on TV and radio channels, as well as on social media.

Subsequent measures had been taken for the update of voters' list within the timeframe and manner as defined in the Election Code. Voters were facilitated to check their names in the voters' list through the relevant system on the CEC website, to contact the hotlines or to address via an online application form related to any irregularities. Therewith, within the framework of the co-project, "ASAN service" centers added a new functional division on relevant smart monitors by ensuring innovative solution, which turned a developed tool for the citizenship to check their entries in the voters' lists and to define their polling station.

After the elections started, 17 applicants submitted relevant documents to the Central Election Commission for participation as candidates in the Presidential elections, and signature sheets were issued to them upon the verification of their candidacies. Only 7 applicants of the verified nominees returned the signature sheets and the documents attached and their candidacies were registered. The candidacies of 5 were nominated by political parties and 2 participated in the elections on their own initiatives.

The process of examination of the candidates' documents was carried out transparently for all the interested persons and was fully open to the public. Authorized representatives of presidential candidates and political parties, representatives of international observation missions and media representatives had the opportunity to monitor the processes directly and get familiarized with the documents at any time.

The registered candidates were provided with equal conditions, comprehensive and wide opportunities for freely communicating their election platforms to voters. By the decision of the Central Election Commission, 6 hours a week (3 hours on television, 3 hours on radio) free airtime, which is 2 times higher than stipulated by law, was allocated on the Public Broadcasting Company, along with free space for publication in the newspapers "Azerbaijan", "Khalg Gazeti", "Respublika" and "Bakinsky rabochiy." For the purpose of paid campaigning, price offers from 44 media structures were submitted to the CEC. A total of 281 free venues - 139 outdoor and 142 indoor venues were allocated on 125 electoral constituencies to conduct meetings of registered candidates and political parties whose candidates were registered with voters at the preliminary stage in cities and districts of the country. Furthermore, in order to provide wider opportunities, about 4,500 additional venues were delivered to the disposal of the campaign subjects, covering mostly, the residential settlements of the country. The data on the addresses of all these places had been publicized on different sources including the CEC webpage. Candidates and political parties, the candidate of which has been registered held meetings with their electorate in the foregoing places free of charge without the requirement of permit, by only informing the relevant Constituency Election Commission in advance. The subjects of pre-election campaign used all these opportunities and equal conditions created by the CEC freely and independently.

Ensuring further the transparency in elections has always been focused on and webcams in these elections, meeting high technical parameters, provided a clearer visual effect through an updated surveillance system and allowed monitoring the voting process at 1,000 polling stations covering the entire geography of the country from beginning to end, uninterruptedly and directly without having to register through the internet. 790 international observers representing 72 competent international organizations and 89 countries took part in the observation of the Presidential elections. At the same time, 217 representatives from 110 leading foreign media entities of the world, also more than 90 000 local observers after being provided with relevant badges by CEC and Con.ECs observed the elections. More than 51,000 observers from 19 political parties, including 5 political parties whose presidential candidates were registered and candidates who participated in the elections on their own initiative, actively participated in the observation of the elections. Furthermore, about 7,000 observers from 83 non-governmental organizations, civil society institutions and public

associations actively joined the election observation. At the same time, the “exit poll” was conducted by 3 specialized organizations, 1 of which arranged its activities together with a foreign partner. Based on the observations conducted, the elections attended by thousands of observers were assessed by them as a free, fair and modern-day process.

Since the start of the election competition, CEC received only 1 complaint, in connection with which appropriate measures were promptly taken. On the voting day when voters demonstrated high activity and during the election process, there were no complaints about any violations filed to CEC. As usual, the inquiries of voters regarding different issues on the preparation and conduct of the elections, addressed to the CEC electronic hotlines were responded immediately and the necessary steps were promptly taken.

The voting in the country started at 08.00 a.m. on E-Day and 6537 polling stations, 6319 of which permanent, 218 temporary were at the disposal of voters to express their will. The data on voter turnout by means of special software was transmitted directly to the Central Election Commission through the State Automated Information System 5 times during the Election Day and posted on the Commission's website. Following the closure of the polling stations on the voting day, continuous counting of votes was carried out and preliminary protocol data of Precinct Election Commissions were promptly posted on the CEC website and within a few hours, based on received data from the absolute majority of polling stations, preliminary voting results were delivered to the public.

Like all other voters, vulnerable groups of voters have also been focused by CEC and various traditional projects had been implemented in this field. Visually impaired voters were able to exercise their constitutional rights without anyone's assistance on Election Day, using a Braille-based stencils that displayed information on the ballot. To ensure the free movement of voters with limited mobility, in 2042 polling stations where the need for installing ramps had been defined, wide opportunities were created for this group of voters to come to the polling station independently. As part of the CEC voter education program, all videos were produced with subtitles, thus playing a significant role in awareness-raising of hearing-impaired voters.

For the official determination of the electoral returns, all the relevant documents were transferred from lower election commissions to CEC within the timeframe and in accordance with the procedure established by law. Therewith, the protocols of Constituency Election Commissions on the voting results and the documents attached to them were fairly and comprehensively examined.

Also on Election Day, information available through different sources, even on online platforms, was studied as widely and comprehensively as possible, using various alternative resources, as well as images via the webcams installed at polling stations.

As a result of the investigations conducted, law violations were revealed that did not allow determining the will of the voters, namely in PEC №38 of Ganja-Samukh-Goranboy ConEC №41, in PECs №7 and №27 of Gusar ConEC №61, in PEC № 9 of Salyan-Bilasvar-Neftchala ConEC №65, in PEC № 2 of Sabirabad-Shirvan ConEC № 68, in PECs №7 and №31 of Lankaran city ConEC №77, in PEC №6 of Goychay-Agdash ConEC №92, in PEC №2 of Barda ConEC №99, in PEC №1 of Sheki city

ConEC №114 and in PEC №6 of Sheki rural №115. The Commission decided to invalidate the results of voting in these polling stations and to dismiss the Precinct Election Commissions of these polling stations.

Pursuant to Article 203.1 of the Election Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Central Election Commission shall finalize the Presidential Elections within the timeframe defined in the legislation upon the consideration of the data included in the Protocol and summarizing the information of the Con.EC protocols and shall submit the relevant documents for the approval of the election results to the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Azerbaijan as in compliance with Article 102 of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Pursuant to Article 203.5 of the Election Code, the protocol on the results of the Presidential Elections shall be published within 24 hours upon being signed.

Taking the above-mentioned as a basis, pursuant to Article 102 of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Articles 19.4, 19.14, 28.2, 28.4, 203.203.3 and 203.5 of the Election Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Central Election Commission **d e c i d e s**:

1. As a result of the investigations regarding the finalization of the Early Presidential Elections of the Republic of Azerbaijan held on February 7, 2024, the law violations found out the voting results which did not allow to determine the voters' in PEC №38 of Ganja-Samukh-Goranboy ConEC №41, in PECs №7 and №27 of Gusar ConEC №61, in PEC № 9 of Salyan-Bilasuvar-Neftchala ConEC №65, in PEC № 2 of Sabirabad-Shirvan ConEC № 68, in PECs №7 and №31 of Lankaran city ConEC №77, in PEC №6 of Goychay-Agdash ConEC №92, in PEC №2 of Barda ConEC №99, in PEC №1 of Sheki city ConEC №114 and in PEC №6 of Sheki rural №115, the voting results in those polling stations shall be invalidated.

2. The PEC №38 of Ganja-Samukh-Goranboy ConEC №41, in PECs №7 and №27 of Gusar ConEC №61, in PEC № 9 of Salyan-Bilasuvar-Neftchala ConEC №65, in PEC № 2 of Sabirabad-Shirvan ConEC № 68, in PECs №7 and №31 of Lankaran city ConEC №77, in PEC №6 of Goychay-Agdash ConEC №92, in PEC №2 of Barda ConEC №99, in PEC №1 of Sheki city ConEC №114 and in PEC №6 of Sheki rural №115 shall be dismissed.

3. The protocol of the Central Election Commission on the election results of the early Presidential elections, held on February 7, 2024 shall be compiled.

4. The Protocol of the Central Election Commission on the voting results of the early Presidential elections, held on February 7, 2024 shall be approved and the elections shall be finalized.

5. The CEC protocol on the voting results of the early Presidential elections, held on February 7, 2024 and relevant documents shall be submitted to the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the approval of the election results.

6. The CEC protocol on the voting results of the early Presidential elections, held on February 7, 2024 shall be published within 24 hours upon being signed (Attached).

7. The Decision shall be enforced upon its publication.

Chairman Mazahir Panahov

Secretary Arifa Mukhtarova

Secretary Mikayil Rahimov