



**VOTERS'
EDUCATION
STRATEGY**

**FOR JUNE 30, 2019 LOCAL
GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS**

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PART ONE

1. Summary

Voters' Education Strategy for Local Government Elections of June 30, 2019, defines the goals and objectives regarding voters' information, education and awareness for local government elections of June 30, 2019 and the programs and tools needed in order to meet these goals.

The education and information of voters is a key element that guarantees the improvement of election process standards, that leads to a higher voters turnout, awareness about the value and importance of free and democratic voting. Through the election education programs, held outside the elections and during election period, the CEC aims to strengthen the election culture of citizens, increase public trust on the importance and power of the vote, and its correct administration by the election administration.

Implementation of effective and efficient programs for the information, awareness raising and education of voters, within a specific timeframe, is a complex process. By defining the programs and tools to be used, the specific actions and time of the implementation, the Central Election Commission aims to intensify voters' education activities for the local government elections of June 30, 2019, by reaching out to the citizens and by meeting their need for information. The success of the activities also depends on cooperation with third parties that are interested and can offer their contribution in this aspect.

The Voters' Education Strategy for Local Elections of June 30, 2019, also aims to:

Strengthen the interaction of the CEC with local or international organizations operating in the field of human rights, democracy and the elections. Coordination of activities, expertise, or support is considered as a success factor for the implementation of this Strategy.

Strengthening the cooperation between the CEC and other state institutions such as: Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, (Regional Educational Directorates), Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health and Social Protection. The activity of these institutions is related to certain social groups, which will be the focus of this Strategy.

1.1 Scope of the strategy

By aligning education, information and awareness-raising programs, the Voters' Education Strategy for June 30, 2019 Local Government Elections aims to strengthen the electoral culture of Albanian voters. The specific goal of the strategy is to find effective ways, means and forms of communication with the voters, with the following aims:

- ❖ Awareness of the importance and value of free and uninfluenced vote
- ❖ Dissemination of a comprehensive election information, ensuring access to all social groups (especially targeted target groups);
- ❖ Awareness of the importance and value of free and uninfluenced vote;
- ❖ Informing voters about election offenses and raising awareness regarding the consequences in cases of actions that violate the law;
- ❖ Raising awareness to condemn and report any act that infringes on the free and secret ballot.

1.2 Structure of the Strategy

The strategy is divided into three parts:

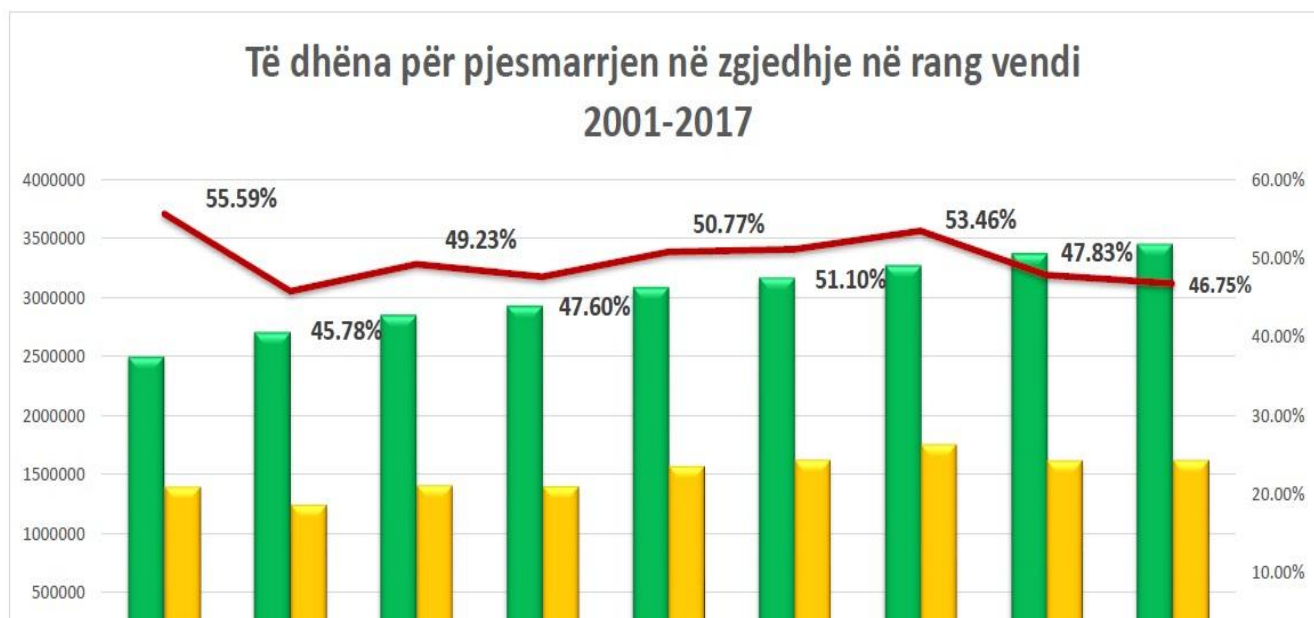
- **The first part**, based on the analysis of the situation, provides a brief overview of the goal, general features and challenges for its implementation.
- **The second part** identifies the programs that will be implemented by the CEC on the education, information and awareness of voters for 2019 local elections. This is the main part of the strategy as it elaborates specific timeframes for the activities of the CEC, focused on the voters.
- **The third part** presents the strategic action plan for the implementation of the programs introduced in the second part. It also presents the CEC relations with organizations that representing the interests of different stakeholders and with the organisations that interested in the application of voter education programs.

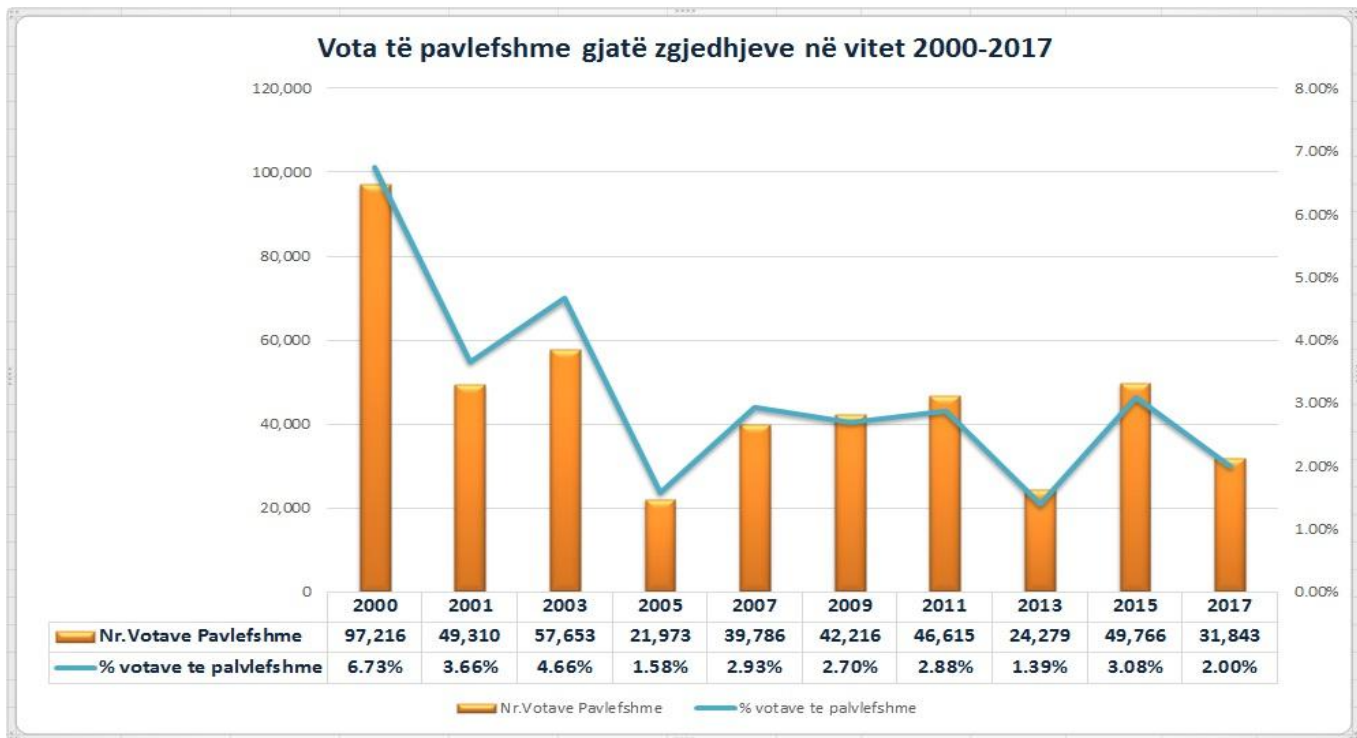
1.3 Analysis of the problem

The strategy on voters education is drafted based on the data and the problems identified in the previous election processes.

According to the data, the voters' turnout in the elections, during 2001-2017 period, has shown upward and downward trends.

This shows that in the reality where information and ways of communication change its dynamics, voters' education, especially prior to elections, takes on particular importance as it has a direct impact in increasing citizens' participation in elections.





For this reason, the drafting of a Strategy and Strategic Action Plan - based on which the programs and intensive activities of the CEC on the voters education for local elections of June 30, 2019 – will be built, aligned and implemented – is a guarantee that voters will be provided with all the information necessary on the election process. By finding efficient forms and tools, the aim is to increase citizen's awareness to participate in the elections and the exercise the right to vote in a free and uninfluenced manner.

Specific characteristic of target groups:

Women	Lower turnout in elections as compared to men; family voting;
Young people	Photographing of the vote; lack of information on penal proceedings;
Roma and Egyptians	Social conditions make these communities targets for vote buying; Problems in reading/comprehending the ballot paper due to illiteracy
National minorities	Preparing information on the elections process in the respective language;
People with different ability	Information on the elections process, by providing access in receiving information, especially on specific procedures related to the voting process.

Women in Elections: Amendments to 2015 Electoral Code made possible for the CEC to administer accurate data on women voters' turnout on country and regional level. A 'picture' of voters' turnout based on gender, shows that women voters' turnout is in lower figures compared to men. In the 2015 local elections : 47% voters were women and 53% voters were men. In parliamentary elections of 2017: 43% were women voters as compared to 47% men voters. In the general context, special attention needs to be paid to women voters in terms of turnout and the negative phenomenon of family voting.

Reports from various local and foreign organizations who observed June 21, 2015 and June 25, 2017 elections, found cases of family voting, a phenomenon that violates the right of women voters to express their free will.

For other voter groups such as young people- mainly first time voters, voters with disabilities, national minorities, Roma and Egyptians, there is no available data on their participation in the voting. However, observed behavior or facts serve as indicators to identify the issues on which to focus in relation to these groups.

The fact that during the election day in 2015 local elections and 2017 parliamentary elections, photos of ballot paper with notes on them, circulated in the social media (the comments were typically young people's comments), shows the approach on the secrecy of the vote by young people, since the use of smart phones and social networks is mainly attributed to them. Young people need to be informed that these actions, done "to be trendy", violate election standards and are subject to criminal offenses.

Following the law no. 96/2017 "On the Protection of National Minorities in the Republic of Albania", Article 15/4, the CEC shall adopt acts in order to inform national minorities of the electoral process in their respective languages. In order to meet this legal obligation, this Strategy determines the number and type of materials to be published in the language of Greek, Macedonian, Aromanian, Roma, Egyptian, Montenegrin, Bosnian, Serbian and Bulgarian minorities, in order to disseminate full information on the election process.

The social group with an increased focus is Roma and Egyptian community, for which specific projects will be implemented, based on the experience of the project implemented in 2017 elections and activities held during 2018, in order to be in line OSCE-ODIHR Recommendation " *The CEC and other stakeholders could organise comprehensive in-person voter education programmes tailored to the needs of the Roma and Egyptian communities.*"

Elections Criminal Offenses

The amendments to the Criminal Code shortly before 2017 parliamentary elections, which classified as criminal offense of acts / behaviors that were previously considered administrative offenses, was challenged for the CEC in terms of the time needed for information and awareness of the voters. Pursuant to OSCE-ODIHR Recommendation " Robust efforts are needed to address the persistent issue of vote-buying, both through a civic awareness campaign and prosecutions, in order to promote confidence in the electoral process", educational activities during 2018 focused particularly on

dissemination of information on election offenses through the delivery of educational sessions and the distribution of leaflets with a comprehensive information. During these sessions, mainly conducted with students, first time voters, women, Roma and Egyptian communities, it was found they lacked information on actions that alienate their will and constitute elements of the criminal offense. For this reason, the Strategy will focus on informing and raising awareness of voters, specifically targeting certain groups, for offenses that affect free elections and the democratic system of elections.

The focus shall be on all voters, especially target groups, to intensify the delivery of the messages through educational, awareness and electoral information projects, built in accordance with the specific nature and issues that were identified in the previous elections process for each group.

1.4 PRINCIPLES BASED ON WHICH STRATEGY DRAFTING AND ACTION PLAN IS BASED

The following principles are the basis for drafting the Strategy and Action Plan, and will also be in focus of the implementation during 2019 election year.

➤ **Principle of continuity**

The strategy will be based on the experience administered over the years by CEC election education programs developed by the CEC, findings from electoral surveys, which directly identify the voters' needs for information on election process. The strategy is based on the most efficient tools and means of dissemination of information, both in terms of education, awareness raising or election information.

➤ **Principle of institutional ownership**

The Strategy and Action Plan, which are materialized by drafting the programs outlined in this document, is based on the institutional, financial and human resources to be used for their implementation. The strategy will be budgeted based on the CEC budget for 2019 local elections and the legal donations. The Strategy and Action Plan will be a mechanism for gaining support and increasing the engagement of other partners on the education, information and awareness of voters throughout the electoral period, especially for the groups with specific needs. Responsibilities for implementing the strategy lie with the administrative structures of the Central Election Commission.

➤ **The principle of transparency and inclusiveness.**

The application of this principle aims at involving various stakeholders, local and foreign organizations, state institutions, which will offer their cooperation, contributions, expertise and donations.

➤ **A dynamic and real document**

The Strategy and Action Plan will be a dynamic document that can be tailored to the challenges that may emerge during the implementation process, also presented in the monitoring and evaluation reports.

1.5 Challenges of this strategy

SWOT analysis identifies the strong points which are a guarantee for success, the opportunities to be used, the weaknesses and threats, which might be considered as challenges of this Strategy:

Strengths

- ✓ Institutional experience in voters' education on an ongoing basis and during election period.
- ✓ Good co-operation with international organizations, non-governmental organizations that represent specific social groups, NGOs operating in the field of elections.
- ✓ A dedicated budget for the implementation of election education projects.
- ✓ Findings from surveys conducted with voters of specific target groups such as the elderly, women, young people, in order to come up with the most efficient ways of disseminating of information for these groups.
- ✓ Focus and commitment in voters election education, by state institutions operating in the field of education, or social affairs.
- ✓ Strengthening the administrative structure through the increase of human resources during election period

Weaknesses

- ✓ Limited capacities for the implementation of up-to-date educational projects
- ✓ Limited capacities in human resources and budget
- ✓ Limited capacity to use information technology for voters education, for creation and use of mobile applications. Lack of coordination between stakeholders
- ✓ Lack of coordination between state institutions and non-governmental organisations to establish common goals in voters education.
- ✓ Overlapping of programs of voters education with those of other stakeholders

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Contributions from international organisations on voters' education strategy, expertise and financial support ✓ Voluntary contribution from young people, the organisations who represent groups with specific needs. ✓ Readiness of the state institutions to be engaged, to contribute and align activities on election education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Great influx of election information during election period. ✓ Different tariffs of visual and written media ✓ Limitation in funds make it impossible to implement voters education programs in short and long term.

1.6 GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

Strategic Goal 1:

Increase voter turnout

Specific goals

- I. To make the voters aware of the importance of participation in election, as a way of exercising a constitutional and legitimate right in order to participate in the political life of the country
- II. To make the voters aware of the election law as an individual opportunity to influence in strengthening of democratic processes in the country

Strategic Goal 2:

Dissemination of comprehensive information on local government elections of June 30, 2019.

Specific Objectives:

- I. To inform voters about the local elections system, the candidates (mayors and municipal councils) and the number of seats for each local government unit, the administration of the electoral process.
- II. To Inform voters about the type of elections, voting hours, who is eligible to be elected and to elect, according to legal and constitutional provisions.

Strategic Goal 3:

Ensure that all voters are aware of their rights and obligations.

Specific Objectives:

- I. Increase the voter information regarding the duties in the electoral process: checking the name in the extract of on the election materials, the voter list, the steps to be taken to correct inaccuracies / missing name on the list.
- II. Inform the voter about the legal procedures for the correct process of the voting act, the voter's rights in the voting process.
- III. Inform the voter about the valid voter identification documents for the validity of the ID card regardless of the expiration date.

Strategic goal 4:

To make the voters aware of the importance of exercising the right to vote in a free, secret and uninfluenced manner, and condemning and reporting the penal offences in elections.

Specific Goals:

To make voters aware in order to evaluate the vote as an individual will and decision

- I. Awareness of the voters to condemn and report the negative phenomenon of vote buying, family voting, or illegal actions of election commissioners and voters.

- II.** To raise awareness and information about the penal consequences of legal violations during the election campaign and during the voting process, referring to the criminal offenses in elections, according to the definitions of the Criminal Code.

Strategic goal 5:

Educational, awareness, sensitizing and electoral information programs are tailored to the specific needs of targeted target groups for election education.

Specific Objectives:

- I.** Information and awareness for people with disabilities regarding the election process, their rights and obligations, voting procedures adapted to the type of disability.
- II.** National minorities are informed and sensitized in the relevant languages.
- III.** Young voters, first time voters and women voters are sensitized in order to increase participation in elections.
- IV.** Improve the dissemination of information on local elections of June 30, 2019 for Albanian citizens residing outside the territory of the country.

Strategic Goal 6:

Increase voters' confidence in the administration of the elections process.

Specific Objectives:

- I.** To make voters aware of the professionalism and impartiality of the CEC in the organization and administration of the electoral process.
- II.** Inform voters about the duties and responsibilities of the second and third tier election administration.

1.7 Strategy Focus

The entire CEC strategy on voters' education is dedicated to all voters, through general and specific projects for target groups.

The focus is to reach specific groups of voters, who need the educational, informative and awareness messages to be given in a tailored manner, paying special attention to them and by creating specific programs.

Groups for which specific education projects will be implemented:

- New voters / first time voters - voting is a new experience for them and serves as a starting point for creating an electoral culture;
- Women - a grouping whose right of vote is infringed, through family voting and other phenomena that alters their will and result in a low turnout.

- National Minorities - Providing information on the elections process in their national languages;
- People with disabilities - Creating access to to receive election information;
- Roma and Egyptians - Providing information on the electoral process in a simple language because they are a group that faces difficult economic and social conditions, they are in a very disadvantaged position, compared to the rest of the population, with a considerable number of population which is not educated.

PART II COMMUNICATION WITH VOTERS

Communicating with voters will be through various programs, combining education, information and awareness raising.

2.1 GENERAL PROGRAMS ON VOTERS EDUCATION

These programs will be implemented through means and tools that will make possible the dissemination of the election information throughout the territory of the country to all the Albanian voters.

- Visual Media (TV);
- Radio;
- portals/web/ written media. Internet navigation is already widely used;
- Activities organised in public places: displaying materials, setting up electoral information points, disseminating information and promotional materials;
- "Vote 2019" application – The use of "Vote 2017" application proved to be an efficient way for real-time information of voters regarding the electoral process and served as an opportunity for them to report illegal behavior / actions. Its use in 2019 elections would also increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the dissemination of election information to citizens, as well as create space / opportunity to report actions suspected as criminal offenses;
- The Internet, the CEC official website, social networks and so on. (Creating CEC domains on facebook, twitter or instagram would increase the voter's attention to navigate on this page).

2.1.1 General education program through audio-visual media and portals

The program will be implemented through, national and local television and radio and portals. This program foresees the broadcasting of different spots alternated, to convey information and messages to voters. The frequency of spot aired (according to the time schedules) increases as the election date approaches.

2.1.2 TV Spot I - Information & Awareness

This spot will inform voters about the election process: voting procedures, voter rights and duties, awareness to participate in the voting, aiming to create or improve an electoral culture to all voters. Messages that will be conveyed through this spot are:

- The purpose of voting;
- Checking the name on the voter list, actions to be taken to correct inaccuracies;
- ID documents valid for voting;
- Voting procedures.

This spot will have a duration of 40-45 seconds, and will be broadcast on televisions and portals during May 30-June 30, 2019 period.

2.1.3 Informative /awareness TV spot II on elections penal offences

This spot aims at informing and raising awareness of the voters in order to avoid the actions that constitute a criminal offense in the elections.

Through this spot, the aim is to inform and raise citizens' awareness regarding:

- Vote buying/selling;
- Giving or taking an ID documents to be used illegally in elections;
- Violation of voting secrecy;
- Voting more than once / voting on behalf of other people;
- Forging, distributing or damaging the election material.

This spot will have a duration of 40-45 seconds, and will be broadcast on televisions and portals for a 60-day period, May-June 2019. The two-month period of broadcasting this spot- one month before the start of the election campaign of electoral subjects, aims to increase awareness and voter awareness about actions that constitute a criminal offense in the elections and the sentence given in these cases.

This information and appeal for voters' awareness, disseminated through televisions as a tool for mass communication, is in line with the recommendations of OSCE-ODIHR *"Robust efforts are needed to address the persistent issue of vote-buying, both through a civic awareness campaign and prosecutions, in order to promote confidence in the electoral process"*.¹

2.1.4 Production and broadcasting of TV spots

The television spots will be produced by subjects that will be contracted for this purpose. The spots will be contemporary and convey the messages in a form easily understood by the voters, and complemented with the sign language for the blind voters. TV spots will be broadcast on televisions, national and local ones, as well as on the most visited portals, that have the best financial offers for broadcasting media plans.

In order for the information to reach a maximal number of voters, the broadcasting of television spots will target hour bands with a high audience. Broadcasting of TV and video spots will be done in an alternated way.

¹ Final report of OSCE/ODIHR mission for 2017 parliamentary elections, priority recommendations

1.1.5. Televisions

TV spots will be aired on the televisions that guarantee a geographic coverage in their broadcast and meet the following criteria:

1. Exercise regular legal activity (licensed by AMA);
2. Cover effectively the geographic territory provided for in the respective licence;
3. High viewer rating for informative, entertaining and educational programs;
4. Respect the rules of professional ethics in exercising their activity in the field of media;
5. Above 5 years of experience operating in the market;
6. Have the best financial offers and broadcasting media plan .

Considering the fact that local TVs have a high viewer rating in the respective territory and offer lower tariffs for broadcasting media plans, broadcasting the spots in these TVs will create the opportunity to increase the frequency of broadcasting TV spots, given the fact that they are local government elections.

The local TVs that meet the following criteria will be selected:

1. They operate their activity based on the law (licensed by AMA);
2. They provide an effective coverage by signal of the respective region;
3. High audience;
4. They follow the rules of professional ethics in running their media activity;
5. They have an experience of above 3 years in the market;
6. Have the best financial offers and broadcasting media plan .

2.1.6 Portals

The spots will also be published on the most visited portals, as a highly efficient means of mass communication with voters.

Options for online access are numerous, and Internet navigation is already a trend, especially from young people, who use it through their SMART phones. These spots will be released in the main marketing space, according to time schedules of TV and radio spots.

Spots will be posted in the portals that meet the following criteria:

1. Have the largest number of web clicks, verified through the Google Analytics applications and Alexa.com
2. They are declared in the National Registration Center, have regular legal activities and meet annual financial obligations with the Electronic Communications Authority (AKEP).
- 3.They have been operating in the market for at least the least two years (portals /webs are accessible during the last two years)
4. They have the best financial offers.

Broadcasting plan of spots in TV and portals:

MONTH	MAY					JUNE				
Week	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Broadcasting in % for the first spot						15%	15%	20%	25%	25%
Broadcasting in % for the second spot	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10 %	10%	10% portals.	10%

TV spots will also appear on TV screens installed in urban transportation. Their broadcasting will correspond to the same time the TV spots are aired in TV and on portals. Airing the spots in urban transport, is considered to be an efficient method with an the awareness / information impact on voters because of the high number of citizens usině the urban transport.

2.1.8 TV subtitles

In order to achieve a maximum efficiency in the dissemination of election information, the 2019 local elections information will also be broadcasted with television subtitles. This type of transmission has lower cost and continuous impact on voters. Subtitles are scheduled to be:

✚ TV subtitles I

Informing voters about voting hours, the purpose of voting, valid documents to vote.

✚ TV subtitles II

Information and awareness on vote buying. The aim is to increase civic accountability towards democratic vote and raise awareness that reporting vote buying is a civic obligation.

✚ TV subtitles III

Information and awareness in orden not to take/give the identification document for illegal use during the elections as well as punishing cases of forging or damaging the election material.

✚ TV subtitles IV

Informing and making citizens aware in orden not to take a photo of the vote, or document the way of voting in any way.

2.1.9 Preparing and broadcasting the TV subtitles

MONTH	MAY					JUNE				
WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
TV subtitles I		10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	15%	15%

TV subtitles II		10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	15%	15%
TV subtitles III		10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	15%	15%
TV subtitles IV		10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	15%	15%

The selection of the media, nacional or lokal one, will be based on the following criteria,:

- They run an activity based on the law (licensed by AMA);
- They provide an effective coverage as provided in the respective license;
- High audience;
- They follow the rules of professional ethics in running their media activity;
- They have an experience of above 5 years in the market;
- Have the best financial offers and broadcasting media plan .

TV spots will also be published on the CEC official website and on social networks Facebook, Youtube, Instagram.

2.1.10 Radio spots

Radio is one of the most important means of communication through which citizens receive information. Its programs are followed at home, in personal and public means of transport, bars, urban transport etc.

The broadcasting of three radio spots, in simple and understandable language in order to have a maximum effect, aims to avoid any confusion and unnecessary extra information.

❖ **Radio spot I, educational & awareness spot,** will convey messages on:

- The purpose of vote;
- Voting hours;
- Exercising the constitutional right of election, as a civic obligation;
- Increasing civic accountability on the value of vote;

The spot will have a duration of 30-40 seconds. Its complete version will be broadcasted on radio for a period of 30 days, from May-30 to June 30, 2019.

❖ **Radio spot II, informative spot** on the voters' rights and duties:

- Checking/verifying the name in the voters' list, actions to correct the inaccuracies;
- ID documents valid to vote;
- Voting procedures;

The spot will have a duration of 30-40 seconds and will be broadcasted on radio for a period of 30 days, from May-30 to June 30, 2019.

Radio spot III, informative/awareness on penal offences in elections:

This spot aims to inform and make the voters aware of the penal offences and the awareness of voters for election offenses and the degree of penalty:

This spot aims to inform and raise awareness of electoral offenses and the degree of punishment:

- Vote buying;
- Giving/ taking the ID and illegally use it in elections;
- Violation of the secrecy of vote;
- Voting more than once / voting in the name of other persons;
- Forging, distributing or damaging the election material.

This spot will have a duration of 30-40 seconds, and will be broadcast on the radio for a 60-day period, from May to June 30, 2019.

2.1.11 Realization and broadcasting of radio spots

The production of radio spots will be made in the technical studio according to the content of the themes defined.

It will be broadcasted on the radios that meet the following criteria:

- Run a regular professional activity;
- Effectively cover the entire territory of the country;
- Have a significant audience;
- They have a variety of programs;
- Respect the rules of professional ethics in exercising their media activity.
- More than 3 years of experience in their activity ;
- Have the best financial and media broadcasting offers.

Radio spots will be broadcasted on four radio stations (coverage of the entire territory), with the highest rating.

Radio spots will be broadcasted according to the following calendar:

MONTH	MAY					JUNE				
WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Broadcast of spot I dhe II					10%	10%	15 %	15%	25%	25%

Broadcast of spot III	10 %	10 %	10 %	10 %	10 %	10 %	10 %	10 %	10 %	10 %
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2.2 GENERAL PROGRAM OF EDUCATION, INFORMATION AND AWARENESS OF VOTERS THROUGH WRITTEN MATERIALS

Written materials make possible a better understanding of the message being communicated and also ensure the efficiency of communication with voters. The publications will be in different templates and their content will be essential to the important role of the voter in the electoral process, aiming at:

- To disseminate full election information on the election system, the number of mandates for municipal councils, candidates for mayors, the right to elect and be elected;
- Inform the voters about the conduct of a regular and effective election process;
- Raise voters' awareness of their role in the electoral process;
- Inform the voter about the legal consequences of actions in the case of an illegal attempt to alienate the will of the voter.

2.2.1 Flyers are materials that are individually used by the voter and through their structure and size many topics are addressed.

- ❖ **Flyer I** in a 85x400 format, practical for personal use, will provide a detailed information on the purpose of local government elections of June 30, 2019, who is eligible to be elected, the steps to be taken in case a voter finds that his name contains inaccuracies or is not included in the voters' list, the valid identification documents to vote.

Information on voting schedules, voting rights, voter's right to request a second ballot paper, the voter actions at the voting center from the moment a voter enters the voting center until the end of the voting, will be illustrated by pictures, in order to visualize what is explained in words. The leaflet will be produced in 40,000 copies.

- ❖ **Leaflet II** in A4 format, gives the opportunity to voters to receive a more comprehensive information related to elections. This leaflet will contain information about the local government elections, electoral subjects, how voters can get information on candidates for mayor and members of municipal councils, the allocation of seats, the right to elect and to be elected. In separate sections, key information will be addressed: voters' awareness about checking the name on the voter list, voter actions that may lead to the loss of the right to vote, violations and criminal offenses in elections. All of these messages that serve to the voter education to strengthen their trust in votes and its good administration, will be done in a language, form and graphic illustrations, easy to be understood the messages as easily as possible by the voters. The leaflet will be produced in 40,000 copies.

The fliers will be distributed in the following way:

- In election information desks opened during June;

- Direct meeting with the voters;
- Border crossing points, for the Albanian citizens living abroad;
- In VCs, CEAZs, REOs, during June 2019

2.2.2 Posters

Posters will be placed in all election premises, at their and entrances, such as: Regional Election Offices, CEAZ Headquarters, Voting Centers, with the aim of informing, educating and raising voter's awareness before the voting procedures and will be published in the printed media. Messages and information to be conveyed are:

- The purpose of voting;
- Election date, voting hours;
- Identification Documents valid for voting ;
- Voting procedures;
- Awareness of voters to participate in the polls;
- Increasing civic accountability about the regularity of the voting process;
- Confidentiality of the vote;
- Criminal offenses committed by voters or election commissioners

Posters will be divided into four types:

- Informative / educational on voting procedures - will illustrate in words and graphics, all the procedures followed by the voter in the voting center;
- Awareness to participate in elections - posters with awareness messages will be produced in four graphic concepts to influence clusters of young voters, women and the elderly, people with disabilities;
- Voter Information / awareness on election offenses; what is prohibited in the voting center, cases when the voter loses the right to vote;
- Informational / awareness-raising for election commissioners in case they fail to enforce the law - aiming at not only raising the awareness of the commissioners to avoid them, but at the same time affecting public confidence in the administration of the electoral process.

Quantity and way of application

Poster type	Quantity	Distribution	Publication
Informative/Educational On voting procedures	11000 postera	Në QV, KZAZ, ZRZ	Në gazeta
Awareness to participate in the voting (women,youth, the elderly, pople with disabilities (PAK)	16 500 postera	Në QV, KZAZ, ZRZ	Në gazeta
Informative/ Awareness Prohibited acts in VC penal offences	11000 postera	Në QV, KZAZ, ZRZ	Në gazeta
Informative/ Awareness On sanctions on election commissioners	6 000 postera	Në QV, KZAZ, VNV	

2.2.3 Written media

Written media still continues to be a window of communication with the voters. The posters will be published in newspapers (a full page in a newspaper -A3) during the last 30 days prior to elections. (May 30 - June 30).

The alternated publication of posters, given its educational, awareness and informative, sensitizing purpose, will aim to provide information on what is being voted, election date, voting hours, voting procedures and penal offences that violate free elections and the democratic system of elections. In all posters it is written the official address of the Central Elections Commission and the mobile application as sources of information on the elections process.

The posters will be published in the written media, which meet the following criteria:

- Run a regular legal activity (registered as legal entities);
- Has high circulation and high number of copies sold;
- Have a maximal geographical coverage;
- Have the best financial offerings.

2.3 GENERAL PROGRAM OF EDUCATION, INFORMATION AND AWARENESS OF VOTERS THROUGH PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Large posters and city lights will be posted in 12 districts for a period of 30 days, with the aim of raising awareness on participation in the voting and voters' information.

2.3.1 Billboards will be placed on the main national roads in the main cities (2 for each district) in 24 different locations, and each posting site has two sides of the poster. These big posters will be posted for a period of 30 days. Through graphics, messages will be given related to:

- ❖ Type of election, date and time of voting;
- ❖ Official Identification Documents Valid to Vote;
- ❖ Participation in voting through elections slogan and logo;
- ❖ Visiting the CEC website as a source of information on the electoral process.

2.3.1 City-lights 40 in number, will be displayed in 40 different cities across the country. It is planned that in 30 days, every city-light should have large posters on both sides. These posters will contain information on:

- ❖ the type of election
- ❖ eligible voters
- ❖ Date of elections, voting hours
- ❖ Calls to participation in the voting through the election slogan, the election logo;
- ❖ CEC web site, as source of information on the election process.

2.3.3 Promotional Materials

T shirts (2500), hats (500), pens (2 500), bags (2500), pins (2500), bracelets (2500), A5 notebooks (500). These promotional materials will have the election date stamped, election slogan and logo and the CEC. The aim is to bring the CEC closer to the voters, raise awareness and provide information about the local elections of June 30, 2019. They will be distributed to all voters who will visit 12 information centers and during the direct meetings of the CEC administration with the voters.

2.3.4 Election information points

As direct contact with the voters is the most efficient one, 12 Election Information Points will be set up throughout the country. Mobile information points will be located in the city center and will provide election information to all interested / passers, through educational and information materials, promotional material (leaflets, voter's manual). It is projected that 6 election information points will be placed in different areas of the capital each day, in order to disseminate election information to every zone in Tirana, from the center to its periphery. These information centers will be centered on areas with high citizen mobility and will cover the territories of the regions as follows:

Region	Tiranë	Shkodër Lezhë	Kukës Dibër	Durrës	Fier Vlorë	Gjirokastrë Korcë	Elbasan Berat
Number of information points	6	1	1	1	1	1	1

2.3.4/a) For the district of Tirana

Parashikohet që të ketë 6 qendra të informimit zgjedhor, në zonat ku ka frekuentimin më të lartë të popullsisë

- ❖ Bulevardi Dëshmorët e Kombit
- ❖ Në hyrje të Parkut të Liqenit Artificial
- ❖ Në qendrat tregtare
- ❖ Në pikat stacionet urbane, të linjave kryesore por edhe ato që lidhin Tiranën me fshatrat përreth.
- ❖ Në qendrat e qyteteve të Bashkisë Kavajë, Rrogozhinë dhe Vorë por edhe në zonat përreth;
- ❖ Pranë Universiteteve, në Qytetin Studenti, studentët janë me sezon provimesh;
- ❖ Në dy ditë të ndryshme përgjatë muajit të fundit përpara datës së zgjedhjeve mund të zhvillohen levizje me bicikleta nëpër Tiranë, të të rinjve që janë të angazhuar në këto pika të informimit zgjedhor. Ky projekt mund të realizohet në bashkëpunim me palë të treta (kompani që posedojnë biçikletat) të cilët mund të kontraktohen përmes një marrëveshje.

(Këto Pika të Informimit Zgjedhor do të jenë të organizuara cdo dy ditë në një vend të caktuar për tu rikthyer sërish në ditët e fundit të fushatës nga një ditë në zonat përkatëse)

2.3.4 / a) For the district of Tirana

Six election information centers are planned to be built in Tirana, in the most popular zones

- ❖ Dëshmorët e Kombit Boulevard
- ❖ At the entrance of the Artificial Lake Park
- ❖ In shopping centers
- ❖ At the bus stations, in the main lines but also those lines that link Tirana with the surrounding villages.
- ❖ In the city centers of the Municipality of Kavaja, Rrogozhinë and Vora, but also in the surrounding areas;
- ❖ Near the Universities, in the Student's Campus, during the students' examination terms;
- ❖ Bike rides can be organized in Tirana in to different days, during the last month before the elections, with young people who are engaged with the election information points. This project can be implemented in collaboration with third parties (bicycle companies) that can be contracted through an agreement.
(*These Election Information Points will be organized every to days in a specific zone, and will restart in the last days of the campaign, one day for each of the respective areas*).

2.3.4/b) For North and north-eastern zone of Albania

Two election information points are planned to be established in Shkodër-Lezhe district and Kukës-Diber Region. The Election Information Points in these regions will be focused on the most visited areas by citizens, - in the main boulevards of the cities (Municipalities of Fushë-Arrëz, Malësia e Madhe, Puka, Shkodra, Vau i Dejës, Kurbin, Lezha, Mirdita, Bulqizë, Diber, Klos, Mat, Kukës, Tropoja, Has). The voter information points will be positioned in the boulevards/centers of cities, especially in the afternoons, in hours where citizen's movement increases. Also, voter information points will also be available at universities.

2.3.4/c) Për zonën e qendrës, jugut dhe jug-lindjes së Shqipërisë.

Four information points are planned to be set up, respectively in the following regions:

- 1) Durrës; 2) Fier- Vlorë; 3) Gjirokastër-Korcë; 4) Elbasan –Berat.

The election information points in these regions will be concentrated in the zones with the greater density of movement – in the respective boulevards of the main cities (Municipalities of Durrës, Krujë, Shijak, Divjakë, Fier, Lushnjë, Mallakastër, Patos, Roskovec, Delvinë, Finiq, Himarë, Konispol, Sarandë, Selenicë, Vlorë, Dropull, Gjirokastër, Këlcyrë, Libohovë, Memaliaj, Përmet, Tepelenë, Devoll, Kolonjë, Korçë, Maliq, Pogradec, Pustec, Belsh, Cërrik, Elbasan, Gramsh, Librazhd, Peqin, Prrenjas, Berat, Kuçovë, Poliçan, Skrapar, Ura Vajgurore). The staff in these information centers will be employed based on service contracts.

The election information points in the boulevard –centers of the town, will be set up especially during the afternoon, where there is an increased number of citizens. The election information points, will be placed, according to the chart, in the beaches of Durres and at the main spots in the beaches of south.

The staff in the election point will be trained in order to answer all the citizens' questions related to elections.

2.4 PROJECT FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION

The publication of information and voters education materials on the CEC official website (and at CEC's Facebook social network) will be a way of communicating with voters, mostly young voters, most frequent users of this form of communication. In this context, the entire content of the general projects (spots, posters, leaflets) will be presented on the CEC official website in a visible place, in interactive form as a complete information package, and also, according to the plan, in the most visited portals. Any visitor to the CEC site can be informed about the opportunity to follow "on-line" all CEC meetings, in Albania and outside of the country, so that anyone who is interested, can understand the way the institution works, its legal responsibilities, and follow the dynamic developments of the election process, its administration and its results. This serves the CEC to increase the transparency of the activity and aims to promote public confidence in the way the process is administered.

2.5 ELECTION EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR SPECIAL VOTERS GROUPS

2.5.1 Direct meetings with voters

First time/ young voters/ national minorities/women (of different social levels), PAK:

Young voters education will be achieved through a special project targeted at this group of voters, which consists in organising meetings with the young people in high schools (matura students - first time voters) and university students. During these meetings, it will be explained in detailed and simple manner, essential notions related to elections, especially the role of young people in the process, and will be accompanied by voting simulation. During this session, election information will be disseminated through conversation modules, related to :

- Election system
- The right to elect and be elected
- Criminal Offenses in Elections
- Election issues which might be of interest for young people will be addressed in a "Question-Answer" session.

Dtë hartohet kalendari i takimeve me shtrirje sa më të gjerë, do të bashkëpunohet me Drejtoritë Rajonale Arsimore në Qarqe, Drejtoritë e Shkollave, Rejtoratet e Universiteteve. Synimi i këtij programi i do të jetë shtrirja e tij në zona rurale apo dhe zona të vogla urbane.

The calendar of meetings will be organised, with a broad coverage, in cooperation with the Regional Educational Directorates in the Districts, School Directorates, University Rectorates. The aim of this program will be to extend it to rural areas or small urban areas.

The method of implementation. The agenda of meetings will be prepared in consultation with the Regional Education Directorates in the Districts, Schools Principals' Offices.

Programs will be implemented during March-April-May-June. Young people will be provided with fliers and promotional material on elections.

2.5.2 Program for national minorities

For Greek, Macedonian, Aromanian, Roma, Egyptian, Montenegrin, Bosnian, Serbian and Bulgarian national minorities, the dissemination of electoral information and awareness messages on participation in elections will be done through posters and leaflets in their respective languages.

The fliers, with two templates, specified in item 2.2.1, will be produced in 3 000 copies in each language of national minorities, as follows : 1200 in the Greek language, 400 in Macedonian, 300 in Aromanian, 300 in Roma language, 200 in Egyptian language, 150 in Montenegrin, 150 in Bosnian, 150 in Serbian, 150 in Bulgarian language and will be distributed in the respective zones they are located. The data on the areas populated by national minorities will be based on the information provided by the Ministry of Interior. For the Boasnian, Bulgarian and Serbian minorities, the statistics will be provided by the Committee of National Minorities.

1	Fliers in Greek language	600 pieces format A4 600 pieces format 85x400	Vlorë, Gjirokastrë, Korçë
2	Fliers in Macedonian language	200 pieces format A4 200 pieces format 85x400	Diber, Korçë, Kukës
3	Fliers in Aromanian language	150 pieces format A4 150 pieces format 85x400	Korçë, Fier, Berat, Gjirokastrë
4	Fliers in Roma language	150 pieces format A4 150 pieces format 85x400	Tiranë, Fier, Korçë, Elbasan, Durrës
5	Fliers in Egyptian language	100 pieces format A4 100 pieces format 85x400	Korçë, Shkodër, Elbasan
6	Fliers in Montenegrin	75 pieces format A4 75 pieces format 85x400	Shkodër
7	Fliers in Boasnian language	75 pieces format A4 75 pieces format 85x400	
8	Fliers in Serbian language	75 pieces format A4 75 copë format 85x400	
9	Fliers in Bulgarian languages	75 pieces format A4 75 pieces format 85x400	

FLIERS IN THE LANGUAGE OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

The informational, educational, awareness posters will be produced also in the language of national minorities, according to the quantities specified in the below table and they will be posted in the voting centers located in the areas populated by the voters belonging to national minorities

POSTERS IN THE LANGUAGE OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

1	Posters in Greek language	2000	Vlorë, Gjirokastrë, Korçë
2	Posters in Macedonian language	300	Diber, Korçë, Kukës
3	Posters in Aromanian language	200	Korçë, Fier, Berat, Gjirokastrë

4	Posters in Roma language	200	Tiranë, Fier, Korçë, Elbasan, Durrës
5	Posters in Egyptian language	100	Korçë, Shkodër, Elbasan
6	Posters in Montenegrin language	100	Shkodër
7	Posters in Bosnian language	100	
8	Posters in Serbian language	100	
9	Posters in Bulgarian language	100	

Project implementation: Over the years, the CEC has consolidated its cooperation with organizations representing national minorities, the National Minority Committee. This cooperation will continue even for the implementation of this program, which consists in the translation of the materials into the respective languages, their distribution, and organising direct meetings with these groups of voters.

2.5.3 Educational Program on Roma and Egyptian community

Due to the economic and social problems, there sensitive issues related to the access of Roma and Egyptian community voters in the election process - such as lack of information, vote-buying, etc. Because of the socio-economic status, the creation and strengthening of the electoral culture in this target group is challenging and requires constant engagement, cooperation with various actors. In this regard, the CEC has started co-operation for the project "My vote Counts" of IRCA (Institute of Roma Culture in Albania), supported by NDI, which aims to contribute to the strengthening of democratic election processes. This project aims to promote the participation of Roma minority voters in elections, information and awareness on election offenses, with focus on vote buying.

Educational programs focused on this target group, have been designed. They are based on methodologies and tools for providing election information to uneducated voters, considering that this community is affected by illiteracy. The aim is raising awareness among community voters about:

- ✓ Voting as a decision-making process;
- ✓ the exercise of the right to vote, as an expression of individual will and in an unaffected manner.
- ✓ How failure to the exercise the right to vote and its influencing the vote by offering temporary benefits, affect their future
- ✓ Criminal offenses in the elections, the degree of punishment

The calendar of activities, prepared in cooperation with IRCA, foresees the delivery of election education sessions in all the areas where the community is located. During the educational sessions with the Roma and Egyptian community, voting procedures will be simulated to familiarize these voters with all the steps that are followed in this process. The implementation of this project will be based on the already consolidated experience in education of this group of voters: the project developed in 2017 parliamentary elections 2017, and election education sessions during 2018. The activities aim to meet OSCE / ODIHR recommendation

"The CEC and other actors can also organize more inclusive in-person voter education programs adapted to the needs of Roma and Egyptian national minorities".²

2.5.4 Information and awareness of people with disabilities (PAK)

The information and awareness of PAK requires the implementation of specific projects related to specific needs of this group of voters. The production of an informative and awareness spots for people with disabilities will inform this social group about the assistance to be received during the voting procedures and voting process, the procedures to be followed in this case, who can provide the assistance, the obligations of the assistant in order not to distort the will of PAK voter, the way of using models/masks with the braille alphabets. This spot will contain awareness messages in order to encourage the participation of voters with disabilities in the voting.

Production and broadcasting: The broadcasting of this spot in TVs and portals will be done by companies that will be contracted for this purpose, in cooperation with the representative organizations of PAK voters. The spot should convey the information in a simple and understandable way for the PAK voters. This spot will have a duration of 35-40 seconds and will be broadcasted in its full version, one month before the elections, from May 30 to June 30, 2019.

MONTH	MAY					JUNE				
WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Broadcasting of the spot (35-40 sec)					10%	15%	15%	20%	20%	20%

Engagement of PAK as temporary staff

The CEC cooperates with organizations that represent people with disabilities (PAK) in order to discuss and find the appropriate ways and forms to inform and overcome voting barriers for PAK voters. Based on the previous experiences in elections, PAK were employed as temporary staff and they proposed specific ideas on the education of this group of voters and the training of election commissioners to assist this category of voters. Therefore, even in these elections, people with disabilities will be employed in the Regional Election Offices, to follow different problems and refer these problems in order to be addressed in a quick and efficient manner.

2.5.5 Information and awareness program for women voters

A special TV spot will be produced that will address women's voters of all ages and professions, women in rural areas, and women, by sending messages regarding:

- Participation in the voting;
- Exercising the right to vote in a direct, free and uninfluenced manner;

² Final report of OSCE/ODIHR mission for 2017 parliamentary elections, recommendation 18.

- The negative phenomenon of family voting, the classic form of accompanying them in the secret booth and influencing their will / vote.

Methodology: The TV spot will be produced by the companies that will be contracted for this purpose. The spot should convey the message in a contemporary, direct form, and will have a duration of 35 seconds. Its complete version will be broadcasted one month before the election date, during the hour bands with the highest audience among this group.

Information and awareness for women through direct meetings and discussions

In order to convey information and messages dedicated to women voters, the CEC will cooperate with various NGOs active in the field of protection of women's rights, and which have ongoing important projects in this field. During these meetings, women are sensitized about participation in the voting and the importance of their vote. It is also emphasized the exercise of the right to vote in a direct, free and unaffected way, by raising their awareness in order not to allow anyone to alienate their will.

MONTH	MAY					JUNE				
WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Broadcasting of the spot (35 sec)					10%	10%	20%	20%	20%	20%

2.5.5 Program for Albanian citizens residing abroad

Election information for Albanian citizens residing outside the territory of the Republic of Albania will be done in cooperation with the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (diplomatic and consular service), representative organizations of Albanian communities residing abroad, Ministry of Interior (Border Police).

This cooperation aims to engage these institutions to distribute election information leaflets to Albanian citizens, and in the border crossing points, for citizens entering their country before the election date.

PART THREE Action Plan

3.1 ACTION PLAN schedules the actions to be taken to implement the strategy, based on the following table:

PROGRAM	ACTION	TIME SPAN
1		
EDUCATION,	Logo and Slogan of 2019 local elections	February 2019
	Drafting of scripts for the spots TV/subtitles/portals/ Radio	

INFORMATION AND AWARENESS OF THE VOTERS THROUGH AUDIO VISUAL MEDIA	Communication with the foreign organisations / AMA/TVSH/national and local media	
	Procurement procedures for the production of spots	February- March 2019
	Production of spots Adaption to the sign language	March- April 2019
	Selection of the media that will broadcast the spots	April 2019
	Broadcasting the spot on in TV/Radio/portals	May 1- June 30
	Broadcasting in TV/Radio/portals	May 30 – June 30 2019
2		
GENERAL PROGRAM OF EDUCATION, INFORMATION AND VOTER AWARENESS THROUGH PRINTED MATERIALS	Communicating with newspapers editors on publication fees Communication with NGOs focused on National Minorities and Translation of the scripts of Posters / Leaflets	March 2019
	Communication with Universities/ Faculty of Visual Art/Design, to engage the students for the graphic design of materials	February 2019
	Organising the procurement procedures for the production of materials	March 2019
	Production of materials	April 2019
	Distribution of fliers in border crossing points	May 2019

	Distribution of posters/ Establishing Election Information Points	June 2019
3		
GENERAL PROGRAM OF EDUCATION, INFORMATION AND VOTER AWARENESS THROUGH PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS	Preparing the content of the materials	February 2019
	Organising the procurement procedures for production, distribution and posting of materials	February-March 2019
	Production of materials	April 2019
	Distribution and posting of materials	May-June 2019
4		
MEETINGS WITH YOUNG VOTERS, WOMEN VOTERS VOTERS OF NATIONAL MINORITY	Cooperation of the CEC with the Institutions of that are directly or indirectly related to the elections process	February-March 2019
	Establishing contacts with representative NGOs, Regional Educational Directorates	Constant contact
	Drafting the agenda of the meetings in the CEC/schools/universities/cities	April 2019
	Meetings in schools/Universities/cities	April, May and June 2019

3.1.1 Cooperation of the CEC with institutions and organisations

The implementation of projects of voters' education strategy for 2019 local government elections, given their importance and scope, will aim to attract the maximal attention of international partners such as OSCE, EC, NDI, USAID, UN WOMEN, etc. whose assistance, through their technical expertise and financial contributions is a success factor.

Cooperation with:

- State institutions that have direct or indirect relation to the elections process such as the Ministry of Sports, Sports and Youth, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, etc;
- Civil society organizations, representatives of different social groups as well as other organizations acting in the field of elections, democracy, governance, justice and who are interested to cooperate in the implementation of voters' education projects, is appreciated, needed and is welcomed.

3.1.2 The budget for the implementation of the strategy

The budget for the implementation of the general and specific project of this strategy will be provided by the available funds from the state budget and election related donation from legal permissible sources.