

**Continuous training of members of precinct election commissions:  
Russian experience  
Presentation by Sergey DANILENKO, Member of the CEC of Russia at  
the conference of the AOECE  
(September 9-11, Chisinau)**

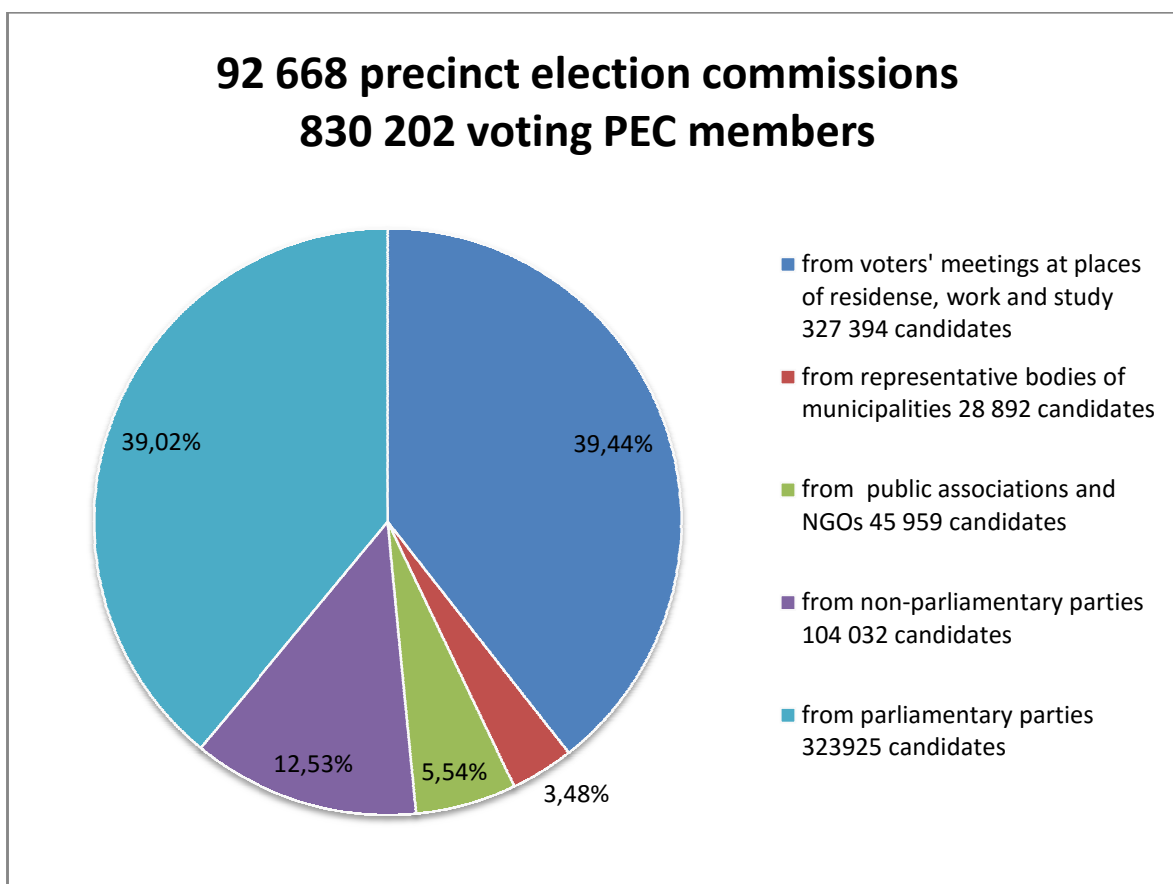
Ladies and Gentlemen!

In accordance with the amendments to the Federal Law “On Political Parties” and the Federal Law “On Basic Guarantees of Electoral Rights and the Right of the Citizens of the Russian Federation to Participate in a Referendum” in the first half of 2013 92 668 precinct election commissions (PEC) with 5 years mandate were formed in the Russian Federation. According to the federal legislation the reserve of station commissions has been organized with the aim of the timely filling of vacancies.

Throughout the terms of powers polling stations commissions formed on a regular basis hold elections of all levels.

In total 830 202 members have been appointed to precinct election commissions.

427 957 members of polling stations commissions have been appointed at the suggestion of 46 political parties. 323 925 (39,02%) of them have been proposed by the parliamentary political parties represented at the State Duma of the Russian Federation, 104 032 (12,53%) members of the station commissions were proposed by unparliamentary parties.



45 959 members of PECs (5,54%) have been appointed at the suggestion of other public associations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), 28 892 candidates (3,48%) were proposed by the representative bodies of municipalities, 327 394 (39,44%) – by the voters' meetings at places of residence, work, service and study.

This principle of commissions' organization is a must due to the complexity of the electoral process, subjected to the federal structure of the Russian Federation and presence of the prominent segment of the regional legislation. Frequently, on the single voting day a voter puts 5-9 bulletins into the ballotbox at the elections in different regulatory bodies and local self-government. Proportional, single and multi systems are used. There exist such institutes as voting at home (out of the building for elections), for ill people and invalids, early voting and absentee voting in Russian election legislation.

All members of these commissions should be aware of minimum knowledge in the field of election law and follow the election procedures.

The great attention is paid to the questions of professional training of PSC members and reserves of their structures in the Russian Federation.

Nowadays the activity of election commissions in the field of members training and reserve of their structures is made according to the concept of election commissions members' training and other participants of the electoral (referendum) process in the Russian Federation and a single set of training activities of election commissions and to other participants in the electoral (referendum) process in the Russian Federation in 2015. The implementation of these programmes is made by "Russian Election Technologies Training Centre at the Central Electoral Commission of the Russian Federation". Electoral commissions of the Russian Federation subjects have the relevant plans of training activities.

Training activities for members of the polling station commissions and reserve of their structures are identified in the annual work plans of the polling commissions of the Russian Federation subjects to improve the legal culture of the participants of the electoral process and training of election organizers as well as in the relevant sections of the regional calendar plans of activities on preparing and holding the elections on the unified voting days.

In the aim of implementing training activities of election commissions of the Russian Federation subjects the federal budget, allocated for joint activities for improving voters' legal awareness and election and referendum organizers' training as well as regional budgets of the Russian Federation subjects are used.

Mainly the commissions members' and their reserve structures' training is passed according to the model program " Legal fundamentals of the electoral process and organization work of the district election commission", developed by CEC of Russia and Russian Election Technologies Training Centre and its adapted regional versions where lectures and practical classes are included.

In the process of organizing and conducting the training of electoral commissions of the Russian Federation subjects under the conducting training activities actively interact with higher educational establishments of the regions,

including organizing at the site of the universities training the members of the commissions, attracting faculty to conduct classes on the basis of superior election commissions or specialized training centres, as well as participating in joint development of teaching materials.

Special attention should be paid to the issued by the Electoral Commission of Stavropol region in conjunction with Stavropol State Agrarian University the manual “Conflict management in the electoral process” for members of election commissions. This innovation turned very popular.

Under the training implementation of the commissions members various forms (full-time, telecommuting, remote, and full-time-self-preparation) and training-lectures-lectures, debates, seminars (webinars), seminars-meetings, seminars and briefings, round tables, video conferencing, business games, master classes and trainings are used.

Among the innovations in the process of preparing the election organizers, it may be noted that in many Russian Federation subjects educational activities take place on the basis of specially established training centers in electoral commissions, allowing training electoral commissions both internally and remotely, using modern information technologies, as well as to ensure the reproduction and distribution of a large number of teaching materials on the Internet.

In addition, in the shape of preparation for elections on single vote days electoral commissions use actively information resources-training complex of the Russian election technologies training centre at the CEC of Russia, including the training of Internet portal that hosts the curricula and programmes for election organizers, normative acts in the field of electoral law and the electoral process, educational and other literature for frames of electoral commissions at various levels and other participants in the electoral process.

The most wide-spread form of remote training of electoral commissions' members is the organization of training sessions using video-conference technology.

Internet-themed webinars are another effective distance form of training that provides the wide coverage of listeners. They are organized by the election commissions in the

Such a form as online counseling through Internet sites of the portal State automated system “Elections” and specialized training Internet sites, as well as special software is used as an additional tool to improve professional skills of the members.

One of the perspective directions of the distance training development of the election organizers is to create special educational Internet portals with a possibility of electoral commissions filling, use, and keeping the training content, tests, and methodological materials in various formats.

It should be noted that in subjects of the Russian Federation on the training results special electronic testing programme, hosted on the sites of CEC of Russia, Russian Election Technologies Training Centre at CEC of Russia and on Internet portals of regional electoral commissions are held. Electronic testing is conducted in the full-time mode using computer technology as well.

Under testing remotely to identify listeners and incorporating of the obtained results provides a separate registration for login test, where personal data is requested, including the position in the system of election commissions of the Russian Federation and personal e-mail address, after which a listener is given an individual password.

Most training activities in preparation for a single vote days are held in the traditional form - face-to-face. Training activities for commissions' members takes place on the basis of superior election commissions and educational sites, organized directly in areas of Republics, Krai and regions, in the form of visiting interterritorial group training sessions

Work analysis of the election commissions on organization and conducting of a full-time study shows that practical training sessions are the most effective things.

In this regard, practical training experience deserves attention in the form of business games to engineered situations, actually encountered in the preparations for the elections, as well as at the polling stations on vote day.

Electoral Commissions of the Russian Federation subjects produce and circulate their own didactic, methodological, information and reference materials, working notebooks of precinct commissions, both in print and electronically.

A work notebook of the local election Commission is a traditional form of methodological development, published by the Federal, regional and major municipal elections.

Working notebooks contain explanations of certain issues of the organization and insurance of commissions' activities and action in problem situations that can arise during the voting process, votes count and vote results.

During the training activities election commissions use training videos produced by Russian Election Technologies Training Centre of CEC of Russia including: "Organization of the voting and summarizing its results at the polling station", "Business game for nomination and registration of candidates" "Business game in early voting" "Business game for propaganda and information", "Interaction of electoral commissions with law enforcement bodies in ensuring the electoral rights of citizens".

A great number of the elections commission has prepared the training video films where the stages of the electoral process in details are opened.

In order to reach the necessary level of effectiveness of the training in the Russian Federation the continuous learning process of polling station commissions' members and reserve their formulations during the electoral campaigns during the election period is being held. The best form of education is organizing lectures on topics related to system status and powers of the election commissions, the election process, election information, transparency in the activity of election commissions, the legal responsibility of participants in the electoral process.

In the run-up to elections 80.3 percent of the appointed members of the polling station commissions took part in the training on the unified vote day dated on September 13, 2015

Thus, the innovation of the electoral legislation on the formation of the Russian Federation subjects of the polling station commissions and reserve of their compositions for a term of 5 years is historically significant and unique in world practice that allows us to create truly professional formulations of station commissions, that have more qualitative level to hold elections at all levels.