



SLOVAK LOCAL ELECTIONS DECEMBER 2006

The December local elections in Slovakia resulted in a significant increase both in the number of municipalities in which Roma ran as candidates and the number of Roma candidates elected to local office. This increase is in large part due to direct candidate training and recruitment by NDI and its program graduates, as well as the increased attention paid to the need for Roma political participation.

- At least 220 Roma local councilors were elected in 2006, as compared with 158 in 2002.
- Roma local councilors were elected in 95 municipalities, compared with 57 in 2002.
- The number of Roma candidates for local councils almost doubled from 756 in 2002 to 1,449 in 2006.
- The number of municipalities with Roma candidates nearly doubled from 188 in 2002 to 365 in 2006.
- The number of Roma mayors increased from 11 in 2002 to 19 in 2006; 4 were trained by NDI.
- 20 Roma were elected in large towns with a population greater than 5,000 compared to 13 in 2002. Of those elected, 9 were trained by NDI or its participants.
- There was an increase in the number of Roma elected in towns with a Roma population of less than 15 percent from 3 in 2002 to 10 in 2006.

In an effort to see more Roma enter politics, past and present program participants trained or provided assistance to 242 Roma candidates or non-Roma candidates with strong Roma policy platforms throughout central and eastern Slovakia; 56 were elected, including 9 mayors. Participants used the skills developed through NDI's program to train candidates on message development, constituent outreach, campaign strategy, and voter mobilization. The twelve past and present participants that ran in the local election challenged themselves to run in larger towns and municipalities with smaller Roma populations that had never before elected a Roma to office. While only one of these candidates was ultimately elected, others came close, even beating a former deputy prime minister, and all gained valuable campaign experience.