



# SERBIA PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WATCH

## Preliminary Results

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### **Labus and Kostunica advance to second round. Seselj finishes a strong third.**

According to preliminary reports of the Center for Free Elections and Democracy (CeSID), voters in Serbia's first democratic presidential elections went to the polls on a rainy Sunday and voted to send Vojislav Kostunica (31%) and Miroljub Labus (27%) to a second round of elections on October 13. CeSID reports a strong third place showing for Serbian Radical Party (SRS) leader Vojislav Seselj (23%). The Republic Election Commission (RIK) is due to announce official results by 8 pm, Thursday, October 3.

While support for Seselj exceeded what had been predicted in polls, it should be noted that he received nearly half the votes in the first and second round of rerun elections for his 1997 presidency bid. While the present political context is quite different than the 1997 election, the Radical Party coupled with the Socialist Party, still maintains a sizeable and loyal electorate.

Turnout was between 55-60%, which satisfied a legal requirement for a 50% voter turnout for the elections to be valid. Inclement weather, rain throughout the country and snow in the south western region of Sandzak, may have impacted the turnout. While encouraged by the Prime Minister of Albania Fatos Nano and Party of Democratic Action leader Riza Halimi, turnout among ethnic Albanian voters in southern Serbia was minimal.

Voter turnout was low in Kosovo as not all of the 268 polling stations (107,972 registered voters) in Serb areas were confirmed opened. During election day, the RIK reported that voting proceeded without major problems in the municipalities of Kosovska Mitrovica, Zvecan, Zubin Potok, Leposavic, and Vucitrn.

Commenting on the election results, NDI Serbia Director Paul Rowland, said in Saturday's edition of the New York Times that, "*People don't feel that they're voting for anything momentous like they did two years ago.*"

### **Presidential Elections 2002**

On September 29, voters throughout Serbia went to the polls to elect a president. This election, which will likely be decided in a second round on October 13 will replace Milan Milutinovic, elected in 1997 and since indicted by The Hague War crimes Tribunal (ICTY) for his alleged involvement in war crimes in Kosovo. This presidential election marked the first time that Serbian citizens were able to choose between two or more democratic options for president.

NDI representatives in Belgrade are maintaining contact with candidates and activists trained in NDI's Political Party Program, and with the Institute's civic partner, the Center for Free Elections and Democracy (CeSID), as it conducts a non-partisan election monitoring initiative. This fourth NDI election update provides preliminary results of the first round of elections. Leading to the second round of elections on October 13, NDI will provide regular updates.

*NDI's Serbia program is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.*

### *Kostunica*

According to V.I.P. news, Kostunica commented on the election results, saying that “Extremism is usually attributed to Seselj, but extremism is also the attempt of uncriticized acceptance of the position of international financial institutions, without consideration of the social situation in the country and non-existent legal framework.” This message, clearly directed at the Labus reform efforts as Deputy Prime Minister of Yugoslavia, sets the stage for the second round of elections in which voters will choose between the two.

### *Labus*

According to BETA News, Labus said after voting that, “Serbia is one big family that is voting for its future today and I am sure that it will make the best choice.” After initial reports of returns, the Deputy Prime Minister of Yugoslavia was pleased with the result and said in V.I.P. News that, “I started with nothing and received almost one million votes, and this is a great success for me.”

Labus reiterated his challenge to Kostunica to debate on issues related to the election. In the past weeks, Kostunica said that he would face his second round challenger in a debate.

Vojislav Seselj has yet to comment on the preliminary election results.

### **Republic Election Commission**

According to the RIK, 6,555,405 people were eligible to vote. The Election Commission announced that there were 8,634 polling stations opened on election day, including 268 polling stations in Kosovo.

Election regulations provide for all claims of election law violation or electoral irregularities to be reported to the RIK by 8:00 pm on September 30. The RIK is

required to submit a ruling within 48 hours, subject to appeal to the Supreme Court of Serbia. Thus far, no such claims have been made, but minor claims of violations can be expected. The Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) stated on election day that the broadcast of the Serbian government’s “Proud of Serbia” advertising campaign was a violation of the media silence period. This campaign is an effort by the Serbian government to highlight its achievements since 2000.

### **Election Monitoring**

NDI’s local civic partner, the Center for Free Elections and Democracy (CeSID), fielded 11,000 monitors throughout the country and provided reports on voter turnout and irregularities throughout the day.

CeSID also conducted a parallel vote tabulation and was the first to announce preliminary election results at 10:00 pm on election night. CeSID will issue a comprehensive statement on the electoral process after the second round of elections on October 13.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) fielded 200 monitors for the election throughout the country. The OSCE announced its preliminary assessment on September 30 to be found on the OSCE Mission to FRY web page: <http://www.osce.org/yugoslavia/>. Five NDI staff participated in election day monitoring proceedings through the OSCE in Ruma, Irig and Sabac. Serbian political party trainers working with NDI also provided a network throughout the country and phoned reports of developments throughout the day to NDI’s Belgrade office.

<b>UNOFFICIAL ELECTION RESULTS</b>					
<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Central Belgrade w/o Belgrade</b>	<b>Belgrade</b>	<b>Vojvodina</b>	<b>Kosovo</b>
<i>Vojislav Kostunica</i> , President of Yugoslavia, Leader of the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) <a href="http://www.znasrbija.org">www.znasrbija.org</a>	<b>31.2%</b>	33.4%	38.3%	21.1%	26%
<i>Miroljub Labus</i> , Deputy Prime Minister of Yugoslavia Prominent Member of G17 Plus <a href="http://www.labus.org.yu">www.labus.org.yu</a>	<b>27.7%</b>	21.4%	31.6%	38.3%	4.4%
<i>Vojislav Seselj</i> , Leader of the Serbian Radical Party (SRS), MP in the Serbian Parliament	<b>22.5%</b>	21.6%	18%	26.4%	57.2%
Vuk Draskovic, Leader of the Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO) <a href="http://www.spo.org.yu/">http://www.spo.org.yu/</a>	<b>4.5%</b>	6.5%	2.5%	2.4%	2.8%
Borislav Pelevic, Leader of the Serbian Unity Party (SSJ) and Serbian MP	<b>3.9%</b>	5.4%	2.1%	2.6%	2%
Velimir “Bata” Zivojinovic Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS)	<b>3.2%</b>	3.6%	2.7%	3%	2.5%
Nebojsa Pavkovic, Group of Citizens	<b>2%</b>	2.7%	1.1%	1.5%	1.5%
Branislav Ivkovic, Group of Citizens: SPS - Return to the Base <a href="http://www.spskongres.co.yu">www.spskongres.co.yu</a>	<b>1.1%</b>	1.5%	0.7%	0.8%	0.9%
Vuk Obradovic, Leader of Socialdemocracy <a href="http://www.socijaldemokratija.org.yu">www.socijaldemokratija.org.yu</a>	<b>0.7%</b>	0.9%	0.5%	0.7%	0.7%
Tomislav Lalosevic, Group of Citizens <a href="http://www.serbianpresident.com">www.serbianpresident.com</a>	<b>0.7%</b>	0.6%	0.4%	0.9%	0.4%
Dragan Radenovic, “Society of Free Citizens” <a href="http://www.predsednik.org">www.predsednik.org</a>	<b>0.2%</b>	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%
<b>Turnout</b>	<b>55.7%</b>	55.3%	55.9%	57%	46.5%

## NDI IN SERBIA

With funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), NDI has supported democratization efforts in Serbia since 1997. NDI/Serbia works in the areas of governance, parliamentary development, non-partisan election monitoring, and political party building to bolster the institutions and practices that allow democracy to flourish. In preparation for these elections, NDI has provided training for democratically oriented political parties throughout Serbia. NDI continues to work with elected officials at various levels of government and in political parties, as well as with civic groups and special constituencies such as women and youth, to assist them in furthering the reform process.

<b>Key Dates in Election Timetable</b>	
September 30	Complaints of irregularities must be submitted to the RIK
October 2	RIK must rule on complaints of irregularities or breach of the election law.
October 3	Official election results must be published in the Official Gazette by 8:00 pm.
October 4	Interested parties may examine ballots and election material.
October 13	Second round of election

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) is a nonprofit organization working to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide. Calling on a global network of volunteer experts, NDI provides practical assistance to civic and political leaders advancing democratic values, practices and institutions. NDI works with democrats in every region of the world to build political and civic organizations, safeguard elections, and to promote citizen participation, openness, and accountability in government. In Central and Eastern Europe, NDI conducts programs in Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and Slovakia. For more information on NDI's Serbia programs, please contact Paul Rowland or Damian Murphy at NDI's Belgrade office at +381 11 361 2942 or Edmund Rhoads at NDI's Washington office at 202-728-5500.