

MONITORING ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGIES IN ELECTORAL PROCESSES



An NDI Guide for Political Parties and Civic Organizations
Vladimir Pran and Patrick Merloe

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AND CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

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ABOUT NDI

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 promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.

Democracy depends on legislatures that represent citizens and oversee the executive, independent judiciaries that safeguard the rule of law, political parties that are open and accountable, and elections in which voters freely choose their representatives in government. Acting as a catalyst for democratic development, NDI bolsters the institutions and processes that allow democracy to flourish.

Build Political and Civic Organizations: NDI helps build the stable, broad-based and well-organized institutions that form the foundation of a strong civic culture. Democracy depends on these mediating institutions—the voice of an informed citizenry, which link citizens to their government and to one another by providing avenues for participation in public policy.

Safeguard Elections: NDI promotes open and democratic elections. Political parties and governments have asked NDI to study electoral codes and to recommend improvements. The Institute also provides technical assistance for political parties and civic groups to conduct voter education campaigns and to organize election monitoring programs. NDI plays a leading role in international election observation and was an initiator and co-drafter of the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation. The Institute has organized international delegations to monitor elections in dozens of countries, helping to ensure that polling results reflect the will of the people.

Promote Openness and Accountability: NDI responds to requests from leaders of government, parliament, political parties and civic groups seeking advice on matters from legislative procedures to constituent service to the balance of civil-military relations in a democracy. NDI works to build legislatures and local governments that are professional, accountable, open and responsive to their citizens.

International cooperation is key to promoting democracy effectively and efficiently. It also conveys a deeper message to new and emerging democracies that while autocracies are inherently isolated and fearful of the outside world, democracies can count on international allies and an active support system. Headquartered in Washington D.C., with field offices in every region of the world, NDI complements the skills of its staff by enlisting volunteer experts from around the world, many of whom are veterans of democratic struggles in their own countries and share valuable perspectives on democratic development.

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This Guide was prepared by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) to assist political parties, civic organizations, journalists, election officials and others concerned with ensuring the integrity of elections and building confidence in electoral processes. The Guide reflects NDI's 20 years of experience in international election observation and in supporting the efforts of political parties and domestic nonpartisan election monitoring groups in more than 90 countries to promote electoral integrity and popular political participation.

The Institute supports the efforts of government and election officials who open electoral processes and build public confidence based on transparency, and NDI supports the efforts of political and civic activists, as well as journalists, to gain access to and to report on all elements of election processes, including those that employ electronic technologies. These efforts protect each citizen's right to democratic elections. The Institute appreciates the important work of international organizations to observe and to provide electoral assistance so that elections around the world may meet international standards. Many such organizations have taken increasing interest in helping ensure transparency for electronic technologies, which are being used more widely in elections. It has been NDI's privilege to work with many individuals in each of these sectors. We have learned from them and are inspired by their untiring efforts.

Vladimir Pran, former NDI Senior Program Manager in elections and political processes, and Patrick Merloe, NDI Senior Associate and Director of Electoral Programs, were the authors of this Guide. Vladimir concentrated on issues related to the selection of various electronic technologies, their applications and challenges presented for verification. Pat focused on the basis for seeking access (transparency) and various monitoring approaches. During his seven years with NDI, Vladimir worked with NDI partner organizations to verify vote tabulations, audit voter registries and conduct other efforts to promote electoral integrity in more than 15 countries. He was formerly a leading member of the Croatian civic organization GONG and in July 2007 became the Chief of Party for IFES's programs in the Palestinian Authority. Pat has observed election processes in numerous countries around the world during his almost

15 years with NDI, and has produced over a dozen publications on democratic elections, human rights and comparative law.

NDI benefited greatly from comments and suggestions concerning drafts of the Guide that were provided, in their personal capacities, by noted experts in the field of electronic technologies: Jarrett Blanc, Open Society Institute, USA; Robert Krimmer, Competence Center for Electronic Voting and Participation, Austria; Henri Snyers, Coordinator for Electronic Voting, Government of Belgium; and Melanie Volkamer, University of Passau, Germany. NDI also benefited greatly from comments and suggestions on the Guide that were provided, in their personal capacities, by election monitoring experts: David Carroll, of The Carter Center; Sean Dunne of the United Nations Office for Project Services, formerly with the UN Electoral Assistance Division; Armando Martinez-Valdes of the UN Electoral Assistance Division; and Gerald Mitchell of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. Former NDI Deputy Director for Asia Lawrence Lachmansingh, NDI Senior Advisor for Electoral Programs Richard L. Klein and NDI Programs Manager for Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Ian Schuler also provided valuable comments on the Guide.

Under the guidance of Pat Merloe, Joseph Scrofano, NDI Legal Projects Assistant in elections and political processes, prepared the appendices for the Guide. His contribution through legal research and analysis of relevant jurisprudence was a substantial contribution to the Guide.

Pat Merloe and Linda Patterson, NDI Program Officer in elections and political processes, were the editors of the Guide. Linda has worked on all elements of NDI election programs, with emphasis on international election observation and assisting domestic nonpartisan election monitoring efforts. NDI Program Officer Julia Brothers supported the authors and managed publication efforts for the Guide. Program Assistant Laura Grace and Intern Sam Bromell also assisted in the publication.

We hope that the Guide will be useful in addressing new challenges and opportunities posed by the use of electronic technologies in elections. These include access to decisions on whether to employ

electronic technologies, considerations as to which types of technologies to use, evaluations of what specific technologies will be purchased, and verifications of the integrity of the technologies before, during and after the respective processes are completed. NDI, of course, takes full responsibility for any weaknesses that appear in the Guide.

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Kenneth Wollack
President, NDI

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