



The CEC decision overlooks interests of Georgian citizens

The Central Election Commission did not take into account calls of NGOs and [scheduled](#) the election runoff for a weekday, on November 28.

Although the electoral legislation allows holding of elections on a weekday, which is then declared a holiday, the decision is unacceptable and inexpedient.

The CEC made the decision by overlooking interests of Georgian citizens residing abroad and their right to participate elections and created an artificial obstacle for them by scheduling elections for a weekday. To reduce the harm caused by the problem that it created, the CEC has [extended](#) voting time until 24:00. However, it is unlikely that extension of the voting time will help voters that study or work and have to travel to a different city to vote.

Additionally, by adopting such regulation the CEC acted outside the scope of its powers and violated the Election Code of Georgia because the Code clearly stipulates that polling stations should be closed at 20:00, except to allow voters standing in the line at the polling station to cast a ballot. The law does not allow any other exceptions.

In addition to Georgian citizens residing abroad, it is highly likely that voters who live away from their place of registration as a result of internal migration will also face problems because they will not be able to leave and come back in one day.

Same concerns were [raised](#) by representatives of opposition parties about scheduling of Election Day for a weekday. We must also note that based on results of the first round, majority of votes cast at polling stations created abroad were in favor of the opposition presidential candidate.

We believe that the CEC has not provided a credible argument to justify scheduling of the election for a weekday. The reason why the election needed to be scheduled for November 28 is unclear.

Additionally, before the runoff date was announced by the CEC, it was [mentioned](#) by Tbilisi Mayor Kakha Kaladze. Before that, two speakers at the meeting held by the movement I Defend Liberty in Telavi [announced](#) that the runoff would be held on November 28. These facts possibly indicate that the ruling party and its supporters knew about the runoff date before the CEC officially made the decision. These facts have created suspicions and speculations among a certain part of the society about political bias of the CEC members, which negatively affects the reputation of the electoral administration.

Scheduling the runoff for a weekday prevents certain groups of voters from participating in elections and exercising their constitutional right. This contradicts the purpose of the electoral administration to ensure fair, equal and universally accessible

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electoral environment. The electoral administration should serve and protect interests of every Georgian citizen, however, in the case in question, we believe that the CEC has failed to accomplish this task.