



**Inclusion of people with disabilities and women  
in the electoral process  
Challenges and achievements  
ALBANIAN CASE**

*Presented by:*

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# Voters with disabilities in inclusive voting



- Legal framework
  - Constitution of Albania
  - The UN Convention "On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" ratified by the Parliament
  - Electoral Code
- Voters with disabilities
  - 2013 : Blind Voters = 8466 ; Para-Tetra = 6176 ; 3225 Voting Centers
  - 2015 : Blind Voters = 4445 ; Para-Tetra = 2427; 1764 Voting Centers (Data collected by CEC until now)

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# Challenges- dedication and commitment of the CEC to face them



Nr.	QV	fraksion	Vendndodhja e &adresa QV-se	Kati ku ndodhet QV ne objekt	Ambjenti	te verber	para - tetraplegjik
1	3576/000022	0	Pronovik shk. 9 vjecare	Kati 1	Publik	BLIND PEOPLE 1	4
2	3577/000022	0	Polican shk. mekanike	Kati 2 SECOND FLOR	Publik	14	4

Example of information provided by local government

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## Challenges- dedication and commitment of the CEC to face them



- CEC in 2013 built a database on the quantity and locations where voters with disability vote;
- Over 90% of the voting centers located in public buildings, were not provided with ramps and even parking places near them;
- Limited financial opportunities of CEC to resolve these problem;
- Permanent solutions instead of temporary solutions;
- Request of CEC to use ground floors of buildings for voters with disabilities;
- Special training for the election commissioners to assist voters with disability to enter the polling station;

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## Lessons learnt - CEC in action



- Lack of institutional will in securing the right to vote for people with disabilities;
- Last-minute solutions in avoiding barriers for people with disabilities in the electoral process;
- The Technical Roundtable organized by CEC

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## Key recommendations for improvements to the Electoral Code



1. Determination as mandatory provisions of local government to ensure supportive infrastructure in every polling station, monitored by the CEC.
2. Determining the provisions of the sanctions against local government, in case of non compliance to guarantee the conditions for the voting rights by persons with disabilities;
3. To express the right to vote for people with intellectual disabilities;
4. To define the institutional division of responsibilities so there is no room for procedural abuses.
5. Albanian Parliament should consider and makes part of the process of changes in the Electoral Code the interested Group representatives of persons with disabilities, who, because of their experience and expertise can provide legal and technical solutions.

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# Preparation for the local elections of 21 June 2015



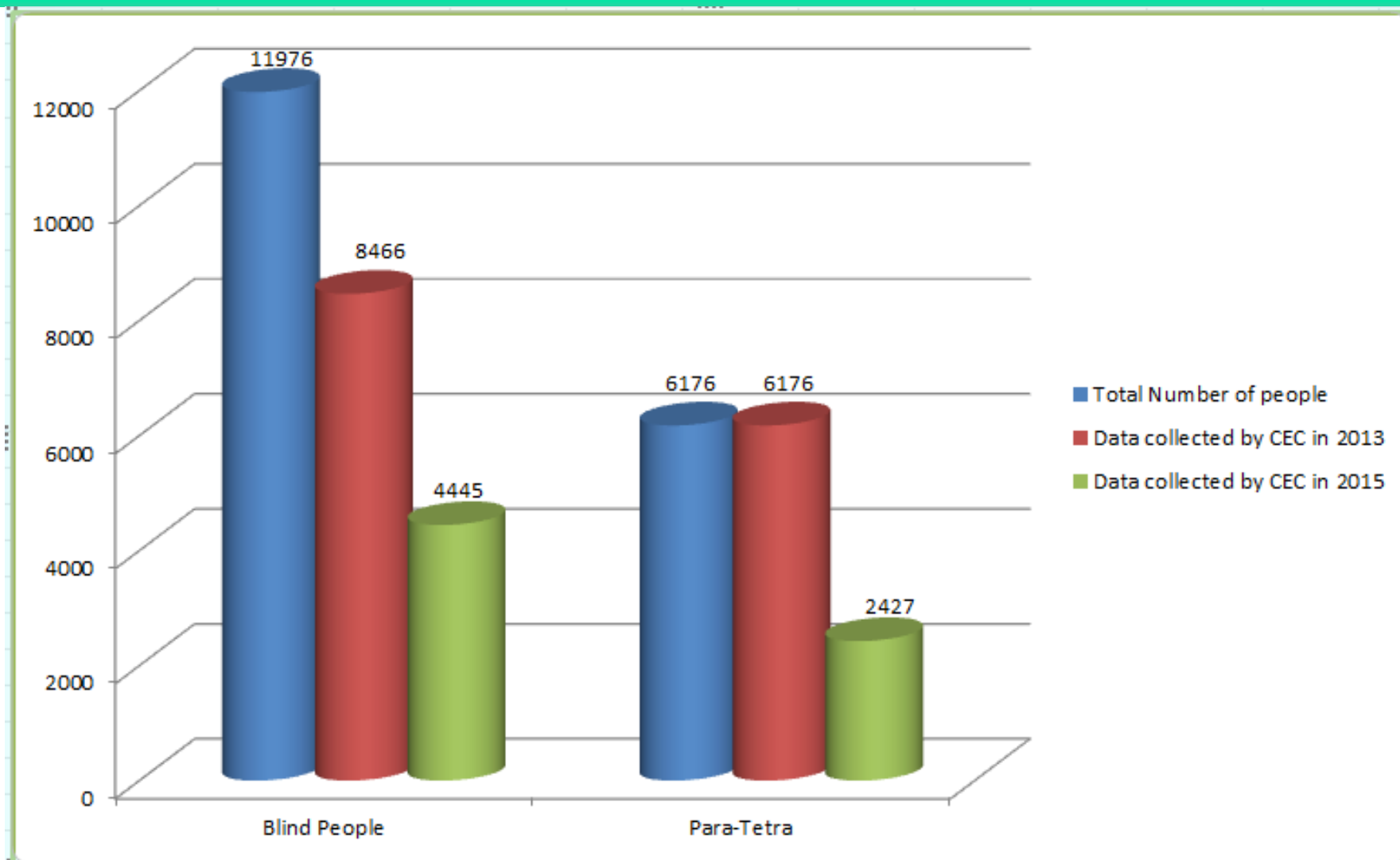
- CEC requires institutional attention to take measures for suitability of public facilities to:
  1. Ministry of Education
  2. Ministry of Health
  3. Ministry of Social Welfare
- CEC keeps permanent contact with representatives of interested groups with disabled persons;
- The identification of the companies that can offer the production of the masks for blind voters within the time constraints, difficulties or "unexpected" incident that the process can bring.

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# Preparation for the local elections of 21 June 2015



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# Voters with disabilities as part of Election Administration of 2015



CEC will engage people with disabilities:

1. In 24 Electoral Offices up to 12 regions of the country;
2. For educational campaign (involve them in expressing ideas for the production of education materials);
3. TV campaigns for education and sensitization of voters, using sign language.

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# Gender equality in the election processes 2009-2011-2013



- The Electoral Code of 2008, determined the gender quota as an obligation for political parties:
  1. For political elections
    - To have a woman on the first three names on the list and /or
    - 30% of the composition of the list.
  2. For local elections
    - One of at least three names for each list of candidates submitted for the local government councils should belong to each gender.
    - Failure to meet gender quota, for each list of candidates, was penalized by a fine, which was approximately 213 euros.

## Results:

- In the political elections of 2009, women representation in the Parliament were 23 seats or 16.4%;
- In the local elections of 2011, 30.64% of 6807 lists of candidates submitted by 54 political parties, did not meet the gender criteria;
- Only 14 out of the 872 candidates for local mayors were women

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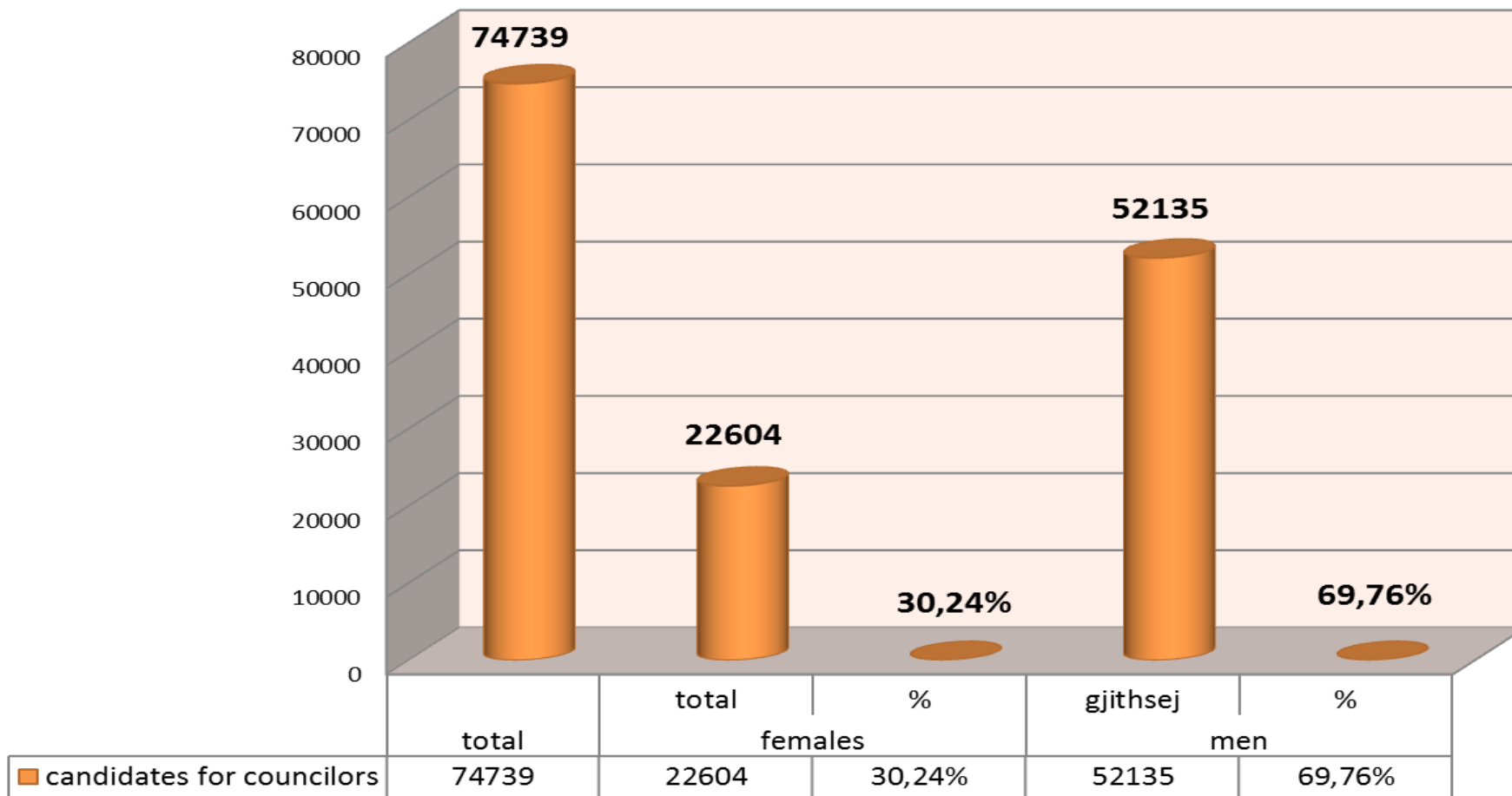
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# Gender equality in the election process of 2011



Candidates (men and women) for Local Assamblies in Local Elections 2011



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# Gender equality in the election process of 2013



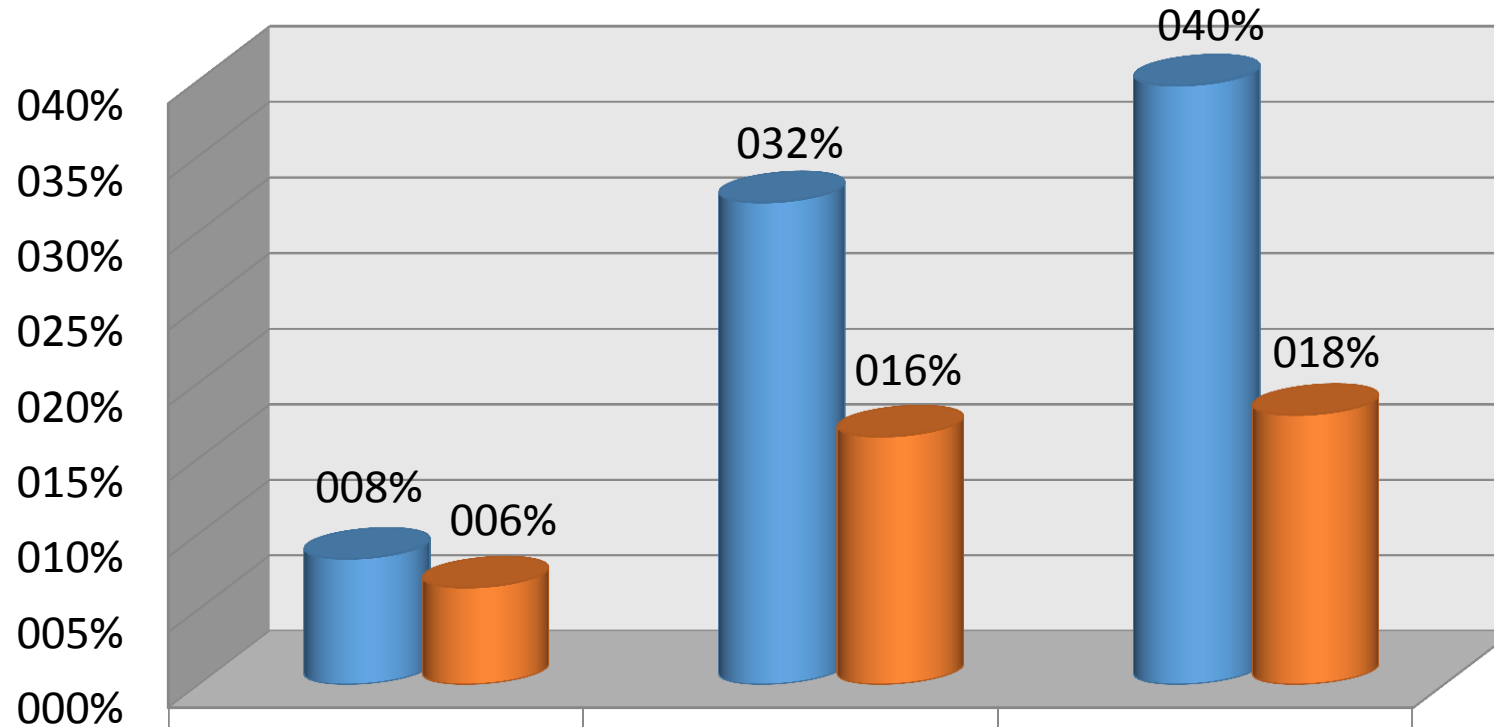
- Amendments to the Electoral Code in 2012 :
  - Weakened the gender quota;
  - The legal guarantee mechanism for the gender quota weakened much more.
- The result in 2013 political election:
  - The parties included women in the bottom of the lists of candidates;
  - 25 women received the mandates, or 17.86% of the seats in the Parliament.
  - Resignation of some MP women due to the “political games”.



# Gender equality in the election processes 2009-2013



Percentage



	% females 2005	% females 2009	% females 2013
■ Candidates for MP	008%	032%	040%
■ MP elected	006%	016%	018%

## Gender Quota Effect

No gender quota requirement for 2005 Electoral Code

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## Lessons learnt – CEC in action



- The application of gender quotas gives great effects for women's representation in elected bodies;
- Political parties didn't list a woman in every three names on the list voluntarily;
- The attitudes/will of Political parties make implementation of the quota almost impossible;
- Gender equality should be carefully monitored at every step of the cycle process, such as:
  1. Policy proposals for election administration;
  2. Media coverage of women's campaign.

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# The proactive role of CEC, in strengthening the electoral law to respect gender quotas



- The Technical Workshop organized by CEC;
- The conclusions of the Technical Workshop sent by CEC as a package of proposals to the Parliament consisted of:
  - The Electoral Code should clearly define the obligation for political parties in political elections as well as in local one :
  - At least three names throughout the multi-name list must belong to the less represented gender.
  - Setting the sanction of lists' refusal in the event of failure of gender criteria.
- The same technical recommendations of CEC, have also been addressed to Parliament by MP Alliance of Women.
- For local elections of 21 June 2015, political parties are publicly showing willingness to provide appropriate and deserved spaces to women in the electoral race.

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**THANK YOU!**

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