



## Cyber and Information Resilience Elections Network

IFES is committed to securing elections globally against cyberattacks and information manipulation and realizing the positive democratic potential of technology. In consultation with our partners and experts around the globe, IFES launched the Cyber and Information Resilience Elections Network (CIREN) to empower election management bodies (EMBs) to strengthen cybersecurity capabilities and resilience. CIREN establishes regional EMB networks for joint learning, coordinated defense, and innovative technical assistance.

### About CIREN

The capacity to conduct sophisticated cyber and disinformation attacks on elections is increasing at an alarming rate globally. In response to these trends, IFES launched CIREN to unite key technology partners, election commissions, and cybersecurity stakeholders to develop technical capabilities and regional coordination on Election Day and during sensitive pre- and post-election periods.

### Regional Resilience and Coordination

In 2023, IFES launched the inaugural CIREN cohort: Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, North Macedonia, and Ukraine. Held in Prague, the convening established a shared understanding of cybersecurity challenges and holistic strategies for strengthening regional coordination.

### Routine Strategic Knowledge Sharing

IFES hosts quarterly virtual working sessions on emerging trends and key issues. Each session features a keynote presentation and welcomes updates from technology partners. By establishing a consistent forum for exchanging information, expertise, and the pooling of resources, our aim is to foster innovation to shared challenges.

### Upcoming Programming: Convening in Prague

In December 2024, IFES plans to host an CIREN Eastern Europe cohort convening. Through practical exercises and experiential learning, participants will engage in activities such as developing security plans for biometric voter registration, as well as participating in scenario-based exercises to deepen trust and collaboration across sectors and government levels. The convening will cover crisis

communication and strategic messaging, equipping EMBs with the tools to reinforce public trust and transparency. By addressing potential threats and narratives surrounding technology without evidence of breach or failure, the event seeks to fortify democratic processes. Ultimately, these exercises and discussions will cultivate a shared understanding and comprehensive strategies that can serve as a blueprint for further iteration.

### Launch of the Asia Pacific Cohort

In September 2024, IFES will launch the second CIREN cohort. Democratic institutions are increasingly facing complex cybersecurity threats throughout the Asia Pacific region. By establishing a cohort of technical and managerial EMB participants, IFES aims to fortify practical cooperation and increased capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to rapidly evolving cyber and information threats.

### Planned Launch of the African Cohort

In 2025, CIREN will establish an African-based cohort to boost access to information on cyber threats and improve coordination among national and regional cybersecurity stakeholders.

### Technology Partners

#### Microsoft

Microsoft plays a vital role by providing technical expertise, resources, and support to enhance CIREN.

#### Google

Google's technical expertise and suite of tools are central to IFES' efforts to strengthen EMB capacity and resilience against cyber and information attacks.