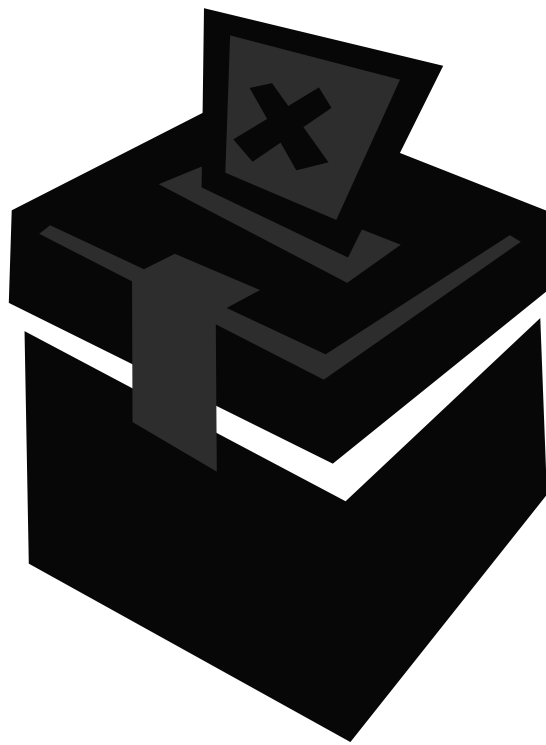


## Analysis of the Results of the Presidential Elections of the 2005 and 2009 of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Why the outcome of the elections of the 12th June 2009 cannot be considered as legitimated?



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## Executive Summary

In the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) the requirements for an election to be free and fair is missing. The following limiting factors give rise to an election process with a high probability of bias and/or fraud.

- A lack of equal rights for the citizens,
- Restrictions are posed on nascent political parties,
- Limited access to the media,
- The Guardian Council (GC) acting as a filter whilst ratifying the candidates,
- The interference by the Supreme Leader and the armed forces in the electoral process,
- Fraudulent interventions of the state institutions via the Elections Executive favoring a particular candidate.

The analysis of the official polling results in 2005 and 2009 leads to the following conclusions:

- Voting pattern of the Iranian in many provinces and in the rural areas is predominantly driven by ethnicity.
- The high turnout of the voters (85% in 2009 versus 60% in 2005) as a result of the mobilization of the “silent” citizens usually leads to reformist and moderate candidates to be elected.
- There is no indication that the votes of this group must end up in Ahmadinejad basket.
- The alleged extreme increase of Ahmadinejad votes (up to 1000% as against the results of 2005 presidential elections) does not correspond with the economic and social records after 4 years of his administration.
- There are significant indications that the figures are almost certainly manipulated ineptly and engineered by a group lacking any care for propriety. Just as two examples, at least in two provinces the participation of voters was more than 100% of the eligible citizens. Furthermore in the province of Lorestan more than 10% of the ballot boxes have totals being exactly multiples of 100 ( e.g. 21 boxes with 700 votes, 20 boxes with 800, 6 boxes with 1500, etc.)

## Introduction:

The totally unexpected outcome of the recent presidential elections in the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) and the ensuing political earthquake as its aftermath motivated many observers to launch analytical studies to make sense of and to verify the results.

Several approaches were reported:

- A pure theoretical analysis based on the official election data <sup>1</sup>
- An empirical analysis of the data <sup>2</sup>
- A factor by factor analysis of the political environment before, during and after polling and an empirical analysis of the official polling data

This paper applies the latter method considering the situation on the political ground and then attempts to analyse the turnout figures published officially by the government of the IRI.

The political analysis is based on the statements of three opposition candidates, the announcements of the official institutions of the IRI (<sup>3,4,5,6</sup>) as well as the monitoring of the political events by the authors of this paper.

**Political environment:** Some of the most crucial prerequisites of a free and fair election are the following:

1. Equal rights for all citizens.
2. Freedom of speech and expression of opinions.
3. Freedom to build parties, unions, NGOs etc.
4. Freedom of having / having access to press and media.
5. Each citizen has to be potentially eligible to nominate him/herself as a candidate to be elected.
6. Competitiveness of the election shall be guaranteed.
7. The voting procedure shall be free and fair, assuring the secrecy of the individual votes.
8. The counting of the votes has to be performed under supervision of the representatives of all candidates.

The elections in the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) have never been free and fair. However before the current (10th period) presidential election two components of the above mentioned prerequisites were to some extent

respected: The candidates who had been preselected by the Guardian Council, competed in an environment of more or less irregularities but the counting of the votes was carried out to a tolerable standard of fairness.

During the current presidential election the IRI leadership has broken with this tradition and eliminated the last legitimate vestiges of the election process.

The following paragraphs, explain crucial aspects of the current presidential elections with a view to show why the recent election results most probably do not reflect the will of a majority of voters, but that almost certainly, we are faced with a huge fraud and vote rigging.

### **The situation as it seemed prior to the election campaigns;-**

#### **Lack of Equal Rights:**

In the IRI citizens do not have equal rights to participate as candidates in the electoral procedure. There is discrimination on the basis of gender, religious minorities and secular citizens. More over there is also discrimination within the Shia communities between those who are tightly aligned with Ayatollah Khamenei and the rest of the Muslims.

#### **Restriction for Building Political Parties etc.**

With the exception of the opposition candidate Mr. Karoubi the remaining main opposition parties and candidates are either considered as illegal or are living in a purgatorial state between legality and illegality.

#### **Lack of Access to Media:**

They have no access to state controlled mass media like newspapers, TV and radio broadcasting. Hundreds of the reformist newspapers and publications are forbidden and closed. Communication via the internet is also severely controlled and restricted, either by direct prosecution of the bloggers, by filtering web sites or by reducing the bandwidth for internet communication. It is not allowed to organize rallies, meetings or demonstrations.

#### **Lack of the Right to Apply for Candidacy- Filtering by Guardian Council:**

Of the approximately 500 citizens (including 30 women) applying for the candidacy for president only 4 applicants were selected by the Guardian Council (GC). The supreme leader Mr. Khamenei has frequently backed the government of Mr. Ahmadinejad. The Guardian Council responsible for the supervision of electoral processes consists of 12 members, six clerics nominated by the Supreme Leader directly, and 6 lawyers chosen by the Head of the IRI Judiciary (a Supreme Leader appointee in his own right) to be approved by the parliament. In other words, all members of the Guardian Council are directly or indirectly linked to the Supreme Leader. Moreover, not only repeated interventions were observed by several GC clerics in favor of Ahmadinejad but two members had been given concurrent responsibilities in his cabinet - Mr. Elham as Justice Minister and spokesman and Mr. Azizi as vice-president.<sup>7</sup>

Thus it can be easily envisaged that the GC is strongly biased in favor of Mr. Ahmadinejad and has acted in a partisan manner.

### **Involvement of the Military Institutions:**

Contrary to the IRI constitution which forbids any involvement by the military institutions in the political affairs of the country, in the course of the recent elections the military forces of the Revolutionary Guard (Pasdaran), paramilitary forces of Basij, as well as intelligence forces increasingly took direct actions.

In the weeks leading to the elections, Mr. Ahmadinejad mobilized the large financial resources of his government to distribute money (from the *beit-ul-maal* or the public treasure) among his supporters to secure their support.

### **Preparation for fraud:**

Crucial changes within the interior ministry were reported suggesting that the government was preparing for fraudulent practices during the forthcoming elections. On this occasion the less reliable officers were replaced with the followers of Mr. Ahmadinejad (replacement of the interior minister and appointment of Mr. Sadegh Mahsouli, a close ally of Mr. Ahmadinejad from the Revolutionary Guard).

### **During the campaign**

#### **Biased Media**

The abuse of government and public resources for the propaganda in favor of Mr. Ahmadinejad was widely reported. The partisan support of the national radio and TV broadcasting organization in favor of Ahmadinejad continued until the last moments of the election campaign.

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#### **Support by Supreme Leader**

Ahadinejad repeatedly enjoyed the support of supreme leader and the high ranking officers of the Revolutionary Guards both of which are legally forbidden.

This propaganda was over and above the repeatedly publicized support of Ahmadinejad by the Supreme Leader as well as the high ranking officers of the Revolutionary Guards. Interestingly, all such actions are forbidden under the election regulation of the IRI.

## **Irregularities**

### **Admission card for representatives of candidates:**

The ministries of interior staff refused or hesitated to issue admission cards for the representative of the candidates which would have allowed them access the ballot collection sites.

In one stated case, the election management staff of Mr. Karoubi asked for 3100 admission cards for its representatives overseeing the polling procedure in ballot centers in Teheran. Only a few of them received the admission card on time<sup>8</sup>.

In the case of the candidate Mr. Mousavi<sup>9</sup> his request for the issuance of admission cards for his representatives was either neglected or the cards were issued with the wrong names. In a large number of cases, the pictures of female representatives were attached to the cards of their male colleagues and vice versa thus denying them access to the polling stations. Furthermore it was reported that in numerous cases the admission cards of the observers for one candidate were sent to the observers of another creating a confusing situation which was never resolved due to the shortage of time until the start day of the elections.

### **Polling Coupons, Amassed but not Available**

Although the national registration office had announced the number of citizens eligible to vote in the presidential elections as 46,200,000, the government amassed 59,600,000 ballots. An additional 2.5 million coupons had been printed without any serial numbers<sup>10, 11</sup>.

Amazingly in spite of this fact, a shortage of electoral coupons was observed in many regions of the country including Tabriz, Shiraz and North- West- and East-Teheran in the first hours of the polling.

### **Voting and Counting**

According to the election law the ballot boxes have to be inspected prior to the being sealed by the representatives of the candidates. This indispensable requirement was not fulfilled in the majority of the polling stations. Thus thousands of the representatives of Mr. Mousavi were not allowed to fulfill their most important role as observers. According to Mr. Mousavi, in many cases the number of the admission cards allocated to his representatives did not correspond with the number of ballot boxes to be inspected so the access by thousands of his observers was denied in this manner as well<sup>12</sup>.

The total number of mobile ballot boxes was remarkably high at 14,000<sup>13, 14</sup>. These were used even in locations where the distance to the standing ballot boxes was some ten meters. The vast majority of the mobile ballot boxes were not observed by the candidates' representatives opening the door for further fraud

According to Mr. Mousavi, the representatives of the candidates were not allowed to participate in the procedure of registering the results of counting at the majority of the ballot boxes, thus denying them any possibility to verify the results.

Finally, in order to disturb the communication between the representatives with their centers, the short message service (SMS) as the only means for their communication was interrupted in the entire country.

All three candidates, Mr. Mousavi, Mr. Karoubi and Mr. Rezai have announced that they do not have any hint how the final count of the votes was calculated with the total absence of any representatives on behalf of the candidates. Apparently, this final decision was made in a room inside the interior ministry in the presence of the Minister, Mr. Mahsouli, and Mr. Daneshjou, the head of the elections office plus a third unknown person.

At those few sites where the representatives of the candidates were allowed to act as observers, there was absolutely no correspondence between the reported results by the observers and those published officially<sup>15</sup>.

## **Discussion and comparison of the results**

### **The turn out of over 100%**

According to a conservative candidate Mr. Rezai, in 170 cities the percentages of voters reached 100% and more. Meanwhile in a broadcast by the Second Channel of the state TV, the spokesman of Guardian Council confirmed the same outcome but only for 50 cities. The official data published by the institutes of the IRI indicate that in two provinces Yazd and Mazandaran the turnout was higher than 100% and four more provinces around 95%<sup>16</sup>.

At least in the following 40 cities across the country the total turnout figures are between 100% and 140%:

Taft 141%, Mehriz 121%, Saddough 111%, Tabas 101%, Bafgh 100%, Ardestan 101%, Tiran 108%, Chadegan 120%, Khonsar 100%, Fereydounshahr 108%, Kouhrang 132%, Ardegan 104%, Sarbishe 105%, Ghaenat 101%, Bardaskan 102%, Chenaran 104%, Khalilabad 103%, Khavaf 104%, Rashtkhar 101%, Fariman 105%, Baghemalek 106%, Roudbar Jonoub 121%,

Ghaleganj 112%, Dana 127%, Behmayi 113%, Boyerahmad 105%, Bandargaz & Minoudasht 101%, Siyahkal 104%, Shaft 101%, Masal 104%, Delfan 110%, Selsele 112%, Nour 104%, Galougah 103%, Mahmoudabad 102%, Nekah&Ramsar 101%, Aboumousa 115%, Bandarlange 100%, Roudan 104%

## **Voting Pattern in the IRI:**

### **Consequence of higher participation**

During the last elections at national or regional levels it turned out that the higher the participation of the citizens the better the chance of reformist candidates.

For instance when the reformist President Khatami was elected in a landslide victory (with 70% of the votes) the participation was high at 80%.

On the other hand when Ahmadinejad was elected to the post of Tehran Mayor, only 15% of the eligible inhabitants of Tehran took part in the polling and his personal result was around 3% of the entire eligible vote.

Another example: The turnout figure for the presidential election in 2005 leading to the victory of Ahmadinejad was allegedly 60% nationwide<sup>17</sup>. This figure was in real terms, slightly lower than 50% but by manipulating the actual number of eligible voters it was engineered to appear as 60% of the total eligible population of the IRI.

### **Ethnic Effect**

The ethnic mix of the Iranian population has affected the election in the IRI.

During the past years the elections in the provinces have always shown a strong tendency to favor the ethnic candidates in their own ethnic territories.

Looking at the results of the 2005 presidential elections (table 2), whilst Ahmadinejad and Karoubi were competing in the provinces of Lorestan and the neighboring province of Kermanshah, the vote count for Mr. Karoubi, born in a city in Lorestan, was 53.9% and 33.3% respectively. The same figures for Mr. Ahmadinejad, not a native of the aforementioned provinces, were 8.5% and 9.3%. Speaking in absolute terms: While the vote count for Karoubi in Lorestan was reduced by a factor of almost 10 (from 440,247 to 44,036) regards 2005, the figure in favor of Ahmadinejad was increased by the factor 10 (69,710 to 677,829). This requires that all of the new voters (caused by the higher participation), plus the 2005 voters for conservatives and for Rafsanjani, plus almost 49% of the reformist voters must have cast their ballots in the basket of Ahmadinejad.

According to an analysis of Chatham House<sup>18</sup> in recent elections Ahmadinejad must have acquired in one third of the provinces the entire votes for conservatives, plus Rafsanjani, plus all new voters (due to higher turnout), plus 44% of the reformists votes which have been collected in 2005.

Such a swing of votes in general and from Karoubi in particular to Ahmadinejad is almost impossible under the prevailing ethnic tendencies given above.

Let us now consider the case of a little known candidate for the presidential elections of 2005, that of Mr. Mehralizadeh, a reformist candidate from Azerbaijan (West- and East-Azerbaijan and Ardebil, table 3, table 4 and table 5) having no support from reformist parties. His vote counts outside the provinces of his origin tended towards marginal figures (0.8% in Lorestan, 1.6% in Kermanshah and country wide 4.5%). But in his own home provinces Mr. Mehralizadeh had the highest share of the votes with regard to all other candidates (27.7% East-Azerbaijan, 19.3% West-Azerbaijan and 22.6% in Ardebil).

### **Province of Ardebil, a Specific Case Uttering the Effect of Ethnicity**

The significance of the ethnic-driven voting pattern is further emphasized if we look at the votes of Mr. Ahmadinejad in the province of Ardebil where he was a well-known person having been the provincial governor for 4 years (table 5). In the 2005 presidential elections Ahmadinejad earned just 6.9% of the province's votes compared with 22.6 in favor of the poorly known Azerbaijani candidate, namely Mr. Mehralizadeh who was an ethnic Azeri himself.

The voting patterns demonstrate the known strong ethnic tendency, especially for voters to vote for candidates of their ethnicity. This finding makes it implausible that Mr. Ahmadinejad has defeated Mr. Mousavi, the well-



known and famous son of Azerbaijan and prime minister of IRI during the eight hard years of the Iran-Iraq war, even in his own home provinces.

### **Overall Map of the Voting Pattern 2005**

Fig. 1 shows the distribution of the vote counts for Ahamdinejad and Karoubi in the course of 2005 presidential election in all provinces of Iran. It suggests that in the rural and periphery area where predominantly the ethnic minorities are living, the share of Karoubi is higher than that of Ahamdinejad. This fact contradicts the homogeneous distribution as well as the high level of the vote counts of Ahamdinejad across the country in 2009 elections.

The analysis of the data by the Chatham group (Ansari et. al.) questions also the credibility as well as the plausibility of the 2009 election figures published by interior ministry. In particular it questions:

- The turn out of 100% and more in at least two provinces and many more cities
- On the basis of the data from the elections 1997, 2001 and 2005 in the IRI it concludes: “That the countryside always votes for conservatives is a myth”
- The higher participation of the voters can not be considered as a reason for the alleged success of Ahmadinejad

### **Manufactured results?**

Taking as one example, the results of the 2009 presidential elections for the province of Lorestan, broken down to the individual ballot boxes, an amazing pattern emerges. In 126 out of 1212 ballot boxes the total figures are seemingly rounded to the multiples of hundred. That is to say, there are 21 ballot boxes with exactly 700 votes. Another 20 have 800 votes and a further 14 contain 900 whilst six other ballot boxes having exactly 1500 votes.

This pattern of "rounded" vote counts happens in more than 10 percent of the ballot boxes in Lorestan province, a highly improbable statistical occurrence. If we consider a statistically probable figure (for a randomly generated set of figures for the votes per ballot box) the probability of encountering numbers in multiples of 100 falls well below 1%. Now, compare this to the totals for the ballot boxes outside of Iran where we find none of the 69 corresponding ballot boxes totals being a multiple of 100 ( rounded figures as for Lorestan).

As a conclusion, it can be said that either the citizen in Lorestan cast their votes in groups of 100 individuals, which seems remote from reality or there is strong evidence that the figures have been created artificially.

### **Conclusion**

Taking all abovementioned fact and figures into account we conclude that the 2009 elections were

- Neither free nor fair
- Extremely manipulated
- The alleged turnout figures have been, with a high degree of confidence, plainly manufactured

PROVINCE KERMANSHAH:

PERD D	#OF VOES	AHMAD END	KARD LEI	MOLS AI	REZ A	MERRAZ AOH	RYSEN IN	MON	LARU AN	GHU BYE	ZA UD
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2005											
# OF VOTES	763,039	70,177	254,730			12,516	137,010	106,104	22,033	113,439	46,390
% OF VOTES		9.1	33.3			1.6	17.9	13.3	9.2	13.1	
2009											
# OF VOTES	969,313	573,563	10,793	70,177	11,253						13,610
% OF VOTES		59.3	1.1	33	1.1						

**Table 1:** Results of the presidential elections 2005 and 2009 <sup>(19,20)</sup> in the province Kermanshah in the western Iran. Mr. Ahamdinejad and Mr. Karoubi were candidates in both elections. The table shows a percentage increase of Ahamdinejad votes by a factor of 6.4 and in absolute counts by 503,391 votes and the drop of Karoubi vote counts by a factor 25. In other words, Ahmadinejad must have attracted at least all of the votes for conservatives, plus Rafsanjani plus all new votes due to the higher participation.

PROVINCE LORESTAN:

PERIOD	# OF VOTES	AHMAD NEND	KAROLI	MOLSAI	REZA	MHRALZ ADBI	RYSEN JIN	MOZ	LARU AN	GHU BAF	NAUD
2005 # OF VOTES	816,195	69,710	440,247			6,865	121,130	53,747	31,169	70,225	23,102
% OF VOTES		8.5	53.9			0.8	14.8	6.6	3.8	8.6	
2009 # OF VOTES	953,000	677,029	44,036	219,156	14,920						13,610
% OF VOTES		70.2	4.6	22.7	1.5						

**TABLE:** OFFICIAL RESULTS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 2005 AND 2009(,) IN THE PROVINCE LORESTAN THE **HOMEPROVINCE OF KAROLI** IN THE WEST OF IRAN. MR. AHMADINEJAD AND MR. KAROUBI WERE CANDIDATES IN BOTH ELECTIONS. WHILE THE NUMBER OF VOTES FOR KAROUBI WAS REDUCED BY A FACTOR OF ALMOST 10, THE FIGURE IN FAVOR OF AHMADINEJAD WAS INCREASED BY ALMOST THE SAME FACTOR 10. IT REQUIRES THAT ALL NEW VOTERS THE 2005 VOTERS FOR CONSERVATIVES, VOTERS FOR RAFTSANTANI AND ALMOST 4% OF REFORMER VOTERS MUST HAVE PLACED THEIR BALLOTS IN THE BASKET OF AHMADINEJAD.

PROVINCE EAST-AZERBAIJAN:

PERIOD	# OF VOTES	AHMAD NEND	KAROLI	MOLSAI	REZA	MHRALZ ADBI	RYSEN JIN	MON	LARU AN	GHU BAF	NAUD
2005 # OF VOTES	1,337,477	198,417	121,969			378,604	268,934	190,211	28,073	122,160	59,078
% OF VOTES		14.9	9.1			27.9	19.7	13.9	2.1	9.1	

2009 # OF VOTES	5,010,340	1,131,111	7,246	837,858	16,920					
% OF VOTES		22.6	0.4	16.3	0.3					

**TABLE 3: OFFICIAL RESULTS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 2005 AND 2009 ("05" & "09") IN THE PROVINCE EAST-ASERBAIJAN THE HOME PROVINCE OF MOUSAVI AND MEHRALVADEH IN THE NORTH-WEST OF IRAN. THIS PROVINCE IS THE HOME OF ETHNIC AZERI CITIZENS. HERE IS FOR ILLUSTRATION OF VOTERS BEHAVIOR REMARKABLE THAT IN 2005 THE POORLY KNOWN CANDIDATE MEHRALVADEH ATTRACTED THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF VOTES. BY 2009 HE HAD TWICE AS MANY VOTES AS AHMADINEJAD. THE FIGURE IN FAVOR OF AHMADINEJAD INCREASED BY A FACTOR 31 OR 93,894 VOTES COMPARED WITH 2005. IT MEANS THAT AHMADINEJAD MUST HAVE ATTRACTED THE ENTIRE VOTERS OF CONSERVATIVES AND RAFCANSANI PLUS 30% OF NEW VOTERS. IF WE TAKE THE VOTING BEHAVIOR OF THE CITIZENS OF THIS AZERI PROVINCE INTO ACCOUNT IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE THAT MOUSAVI, THE RENOWNED SON OF THIS PROVINCE, WOULD GET LESS THAN AHMADINEJAD.**

**PROVINCE WEST-ASERBAIJAN:**

PERIOD	# OF VOTES	AHMADINEJAD	KURDI	MOLSALEMI	REZAI	MEHRALVADEH	RAFCANSANI	MOUSAVI	LARIJANI	GHOLIBAF	MALUMUD
2005 # OF VOTES	843,806	75,319	99,766			163,091	131,323	1	146,943	141,289	
% OF VOTES		8.9	11.8			19.3	15.6	0.1	17.4	16.7	
2009 # OF VOTES	1,334,336	623,946	21,609	656,508	12,119						
% OF VOTES		46.8	1.6	49.2	0.9						

**TABLE: OFFICIAL RESULTS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 2005 AND 2009 ("05" & "09") IN THE PROVINCE WEST-ASERBAIJAN THE HOME PROVINCE OF MOUSAVI AND MEHRALVADEH IN THE NORTH-WEST OF IRAN. THIS PROVINCE IS THE HOME OF ETHNIC AZERI AND KURD CITIZENS. ILLUSTRATES THE THIS VOTERS BEHAVIOR IN THIS PROVINCE NOTABLE THAT IN 2005 THE POORLY KNOWN CANDIDATE MEHRALVADEH ATTRACTED THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF VOTES. BY 2009 HE HAD 22 TIMES MORE VOTES AS AHMADINEJAD. IN 2009 THE FIGURE IN FAVOR OF AHMADINEJAD INCREASED BY 130% OR 546,627 VOTES COMPARED WITH 2005. IT MEANS THAT AHMADINEJAD MUST HAVE ATTRACTED THE ENTIRE VOTERS OF CONSERVATIVES AND RAFCANSANI (A RIVAL OF AHMADINEJAD) PLUS 31% OF NEW VOTERS. IF WE TAKE THE VOTING BEHAVIOR OF THE CITIZENS OF THIS AZERI PROVINCE INTO ACCOUNT IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE THAT MOUSAVI, THE RENOWNED SON OF THIS PROVINCE, WOULD GET LESS THAN AHMADINEJAD. HOW SENSITIVE THE POLLING RESULTS ARE WITH REGARD TO THE ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE VOTERS, CAN BE OBSERVED IN THE SHARE OF MEHRALVADEH WHO ATTRACTED LESS VOTES IN WEST ASERBAIJAN WHICH HAS A MIXED POPULATION OF AZERI AND KURD ORIGIN THAN THE OTHER AZERI PROVINCES (EAST-ASERBAIJAN AND ARDEBIL (19.3%, 15.6%, 22.6%).**

**FROM ARDEBIL**

PERIOD	# OF VOTES	AHMADINEJAD	KURDI	MOLSALEMI	REZAI	MEHRALVADEH	RAFCANSANI	MOUSAVI	LARIJANI	GHOLIBAF	MALUMUD
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2005 #											
OF VOTES	492,114	34,090	53,906		111,463	93,490	67,134	7,766	106,272		
% OF VOTES		6.9	10.9		22.6	19.4	13.6	1.6	21.6		
2009 #											
OF VOTES	642,003	323,911	2,319	302,825	6,378						
% OF VOTES		50.8	0.4	17.2	1						

**TABLE:** OFFICIAL RESULTS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 2005 AND 2009 ("05" & "09") IN THE PROVINCE ARDEBIL WHICH IS ETHNICALLY A PART OF AZERBAIJAN THE **HOMELAND OF MUSAVAN AND MEHRALIZADEH** IN THE NORTHWEST OF IRAN. HERE THE RESULTS ARE SPECIFICALLY SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE AHMADINEJAD WAS FOR 4 YEARS GOVERNOR OF THIS PROVINCE, HENCE WELL KNOWN. MEHRALIZADEH WAS A REFORMER CANDIDATE, WHO WAS POORLY KNOWN AND NOT SUPPORTED BY REFORMIST PARTIES. NEVERTHELESS HIS ETHNIC ORIGIN WAS DECISIVE IN THE ATTRACTION OF VOTES. HIS SHARE OF THE VOTES WAS MORE THAN ANY OTHER CANDIDATE, LIKE THE FORMER PRESIDENT RAHSAFJANI, THE THEN HEAD OF THE RADIO AND TV BROADCASTING ORGANIZATION LARIJANI, AHMADINEJAD THE FORMER GOVERNOR AND THEN MAYOR OF TEHRAN IN THE LATTER CASE 33 TIMES MORE (MILBS TO 34,090). A COMPARISON OF THE RESULTS IN FAVOR OF AHMADINEJAD IN 2009 WITH THOSE IN 2005 SHOWS AN INCREDIBLE RISE OF ALMOST 1000.

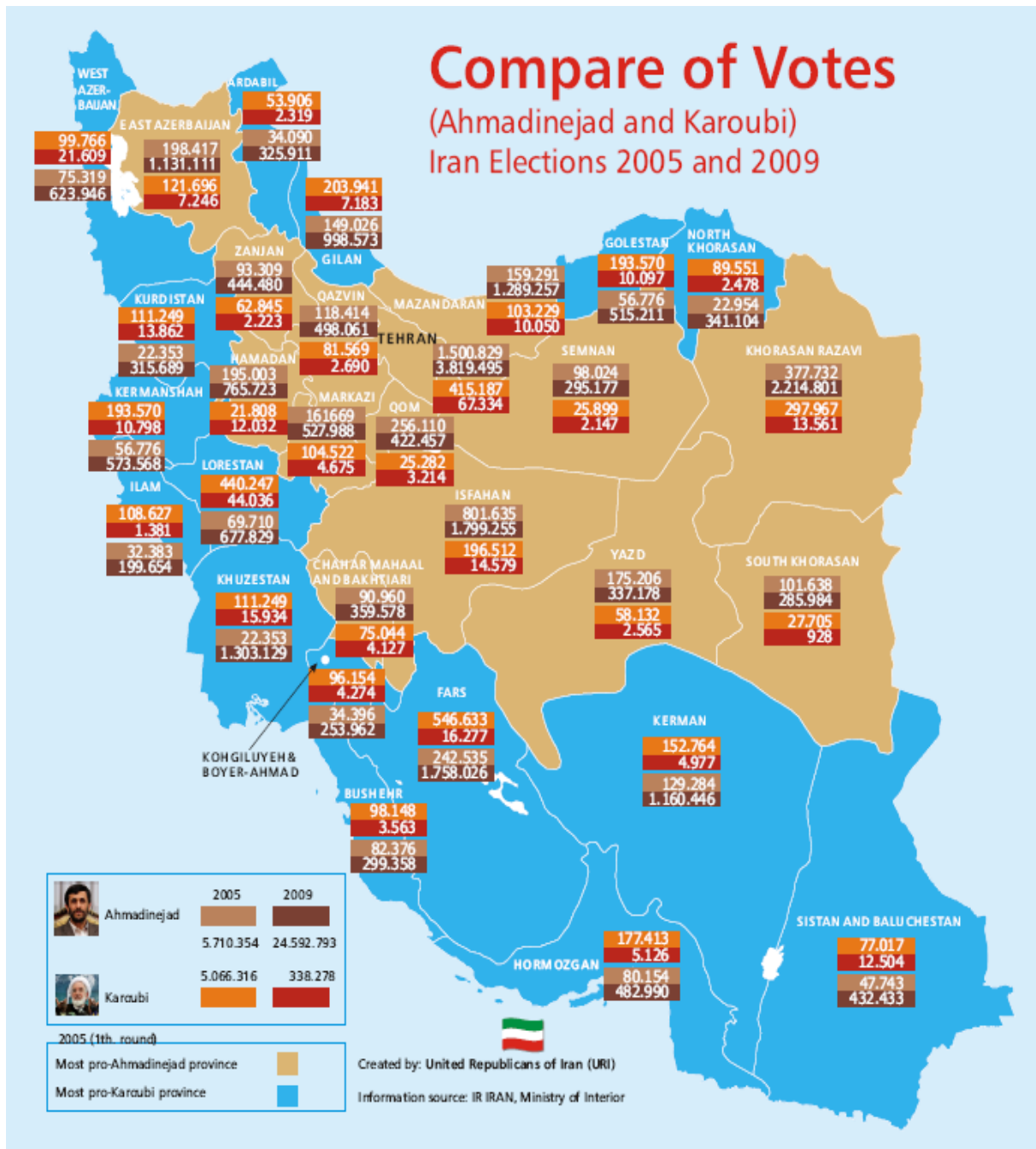


Fig. 1: Distribution of the vote counts for Ahmadinejad and Karoubi in the course of 2005 Presidential election in all provinces of Iran. It suggests that in the rural and periphery area where predominantly the ethnic minorities are living, the share of Karoubi is higher than that of Ahmadinejad. It contradicts the rather homogeneous distribution of the vote counts of Ahmadinejad at high level of 2009 elections.

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