

Violations found by Promo-LEX Association on the eve of the local referendum on the dismissal of Chişinău General Mayor and the new local elections in 10 settlements

On 17 November 2017, Promo-LEX Association published the second [report](#) of the Observation Mission for the local referendum on the dismissal of Chişinău General Mayor and the new local elections of 19 November 2017.

Legal deviations were found in the electoral process both in Chişinău, and in the 10 settlements where new local elections will be held on 19 November, this year: town of Sângera-Chişinău, township of Berlinţi-Briceni, township of Zărneşti-Cahul, township of Plopi-Cantemir, township of Stefanesti-Floresti, village of Fundurii Noi-Glodeni, township of Lapusna-Hâncesti, township of Sărăteni-Leova, village of Căpriană-Străşeni, township of Ghiliceni-Teleneşti.

Expenditures of the participants in the Chişinău referendum – more transparent

Promo-LEX observers noticed a better reporting on TV, printed media, radio and online advertising and it also found a deficient reporting on the promotional, outdoors and mobile materials, transport expenses and volunteer involvement.

On the other hand, during 28 October – 10 November 2017, the participants used funds that were not declared fully. They also failed to include certain expenditures in the reports submitted to the Central Electoral Commission (CEC). The non-reported expenditures amounted to about MDL 285,000.

4 times larger donations for PSRM

The local referendum on the dismissal of Chişinău General Mayor was supported by individuals only. Thus, The Liberal Party (PL) had 7 donors, who contributed with MDL 285,000; whereas The Socialist Party of Moldova (PSRM) had 15 times more donors (a total of 115), who contributed with about MDL 1,200,000 – 4 times more than in the case of the first participant. Moreover, the participants barely reached 11% of the threshold established by CEC (MDL 16,508,739.00).

Administrative resources used during the campaign

Both parties, competing in the Chisinau local referendum, organised meetings with voters during the working hours. Such meetings were held in healthcare facilities, educational and public institutions. Ten such cases were reported during the reporting period: PSRM – 4 cases, and PL – 6 cases. The [First Promo-LEX Report](#) found only one violation of this type, committed by PSRM.

Equipment of polling stations – satisfactory

The phone survey, made by Promo-LEX Association, revealed that most polling stations have the necessary conditions for their work – heating, Internet connection, and sufficient light.

Activity of electoral management bodies

The electoral management bodies worked according to the established timetable. However, about 20% of the visited electoral offices of the polling stations were not open during the working hours.

CEC adopted decisions regarding the receipt of financial statements, accreditation of observers, and changes to the membership of Chisinau Electoral Council. 453 Promo-LEX observers were accredited. In addition, 4 international observers were accredited (from Netherlands and Romania).

On the other hand, the complaints filed with regards to both the Chişinău referendum and the new local elections were

rejected by CEC.

Lack of clarity on how to vote on the basis of a Voting Rights Certificate

Promo-LEX found a lack of a clear definition of the procedure of voting on the basis of a Voting Rights Certificate, its role in the electoral process and who can vote under this procedure.

In general, voters may vote at the polling station in the vicinity of the address provided in the loose leaf of the ID card. However, the law allows people to vote also on the basis of a Voting Rights Certificate at local elections (in the same constituency) or at a local referendum. On the other hand, Promo-LEX noticed that CEC had allowed voting on the basis of such a certificate only to members of the electoral offices. Therefore, this opportunity will not be available to those who would like to vote at their workplace, but who are included in the list of voters at another polling station, close to their domicile or place of residence.

Paved pathways by a competitor in the new local elections

The law prohibits provision of any goods or services during the election campaign. However, a candidate from the Democratic Party of Moldova (PDM) contributed to the repair of the Postal Office, and to paving the pathways that go to the main road.

Other violations are related to displaying promotional materials on a gas pipe, while the law allows it only on the spaces provided by the authorities or private panels. Moreover, an independent candidate incurred expenditures without opening a 'Electoral Fund' bank account and without reporting to the relevant authority. Like in the case of the Chişinău referendum, some of the distributed leaflets did not state the name of the printing house and the number of the copies issued.

Hate speech

Promo-LEX Association draws the attention on elements of hate speech in competitors' messages. Thus, Promo-LEX recorded a number of messages containing elements of denigrating or hate speech. They mainly targeted Dorin Chirtoacă – in at least 5 cases, and one case the hate speech came from the respective person.

'Ieși la VOT!' ('Come and Vote!') Promo-LEX Campaign

Under the ['Ieși la vot!' campaign](#), the Association informed door to door about 3400 voters and organised debates with candidates to the position of mayors in the settlements where new local elections will take place.

[For more details please see the full version of the report.](#)

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