

Promo-LEX comes up with new insights on the local referendum on the dismissal of Chişinău Mayor and the local elections in 10 settlements

*19 November 2017
3:00 p.m.*

On Sunday, 19 November 2017, Promo-LEX Association issued the intermediary findings on the conduct of the local referendum on the dismissal of Chişinău Mayor and the local elections in 10 settlements throughout the country.

The Association's findings were made on the basis of the information communicated by observers from the polling stations (PS) who were accredited by electoral bodies.

Presence of advertising materials, electoral billboards and posters in the vicinity of the polling station (within the area of 100m from the PS) – 1 case

PS 232, Râşcani district of Chişinău. The following message was displayed on the panel located inside the PS: 'If you are a patriot, don't vote.'

Ballot boxes were not sealed in line with the legal procedures – 12 cases

PS 108, Buiucani, Chişinău. At 11.10 a.m. the Chairperson of the Electoral Office of the Polling Station (EOPS) brought one more seal (the 4th) for the ballot boxes.

PS 291, Ciorescu, Chişinău. The ballot boxes were sealed by

applying 2 seals on each of the 2 stationary ballot boxes and one seal on the mobile ballot box.

PS 245, Râșcani, Chișinău. Three ballot boxes in the PS had 2 seals each, the mobile ballot box – 2 seals. The chairperson did not do anything in this regard, in spite of the fact that there were still unused seals.

PS 230, Râșcani, Chișinău. There are 3 ballot boxes in the PS with 2 seals each and one ballot box with 3 seals applied.

PS 294, Râșcani, Chișinău. The Association found that both ballot boxes had only two seals each.

PS 297, Râșcani, Chișinău. There are 2 stationary ballot boxes. One of them is sealed with 2 seals, one ballot box is not used. The chairperson of EOPS stated that they received only 5 seals.

PS 252, Râșcani, Chișinău. Three ballot boxes are sealed with two seals each.

PS 253, Râșcani, Chișinău. Initially, the ballot boxes had: one – three seals, the other one – two. At the request of the Promo-LEX observer, one more seal was applied to the second ballot box.

PS 220, Râșcani, Chișinău. There are 4 ballot boxes in the EOPS, 3 – stationary and 1 – mobile. Out of those 3 stationary ballot boxes, one is in reserve and 2 ballot boxes were sealed with two seals each, respectively. The reason is the lack of seals.

PS 231, Râșcani, Chișinău. There were found 3 stationary ballot boxes and one mobile ballot box. All the stationary boxes were sealed only with 3 seals each. The reason invoked by the chairperson of OPS was that the District Mayoralty provided the PS with only 10 seals.

PS 238, Râșcani, Chișinău. Both stationary ballot boxes were

sealed with only 3 seals each.

PS 238, Stauceni, Chişinău. The 2 stationary ballot boxes were sealed with two seals each and that the mobile ballot box had only one seal. The chairperson of the OPS stated that he had only that number of seals.

Unjustified group voting (2 or more persons were in the voting booth) – 1 case

PS 190, Ciocana, Chişinău. Two persons entered in the same voting booth. The members of EOPS intervened, but they already have managed to apply the stamp 'voted'.

Electioneering or black PR within the perimeter and/or near the polling station to influence the voters – 2 cases

PS 71, Buiucani, Chişinău. A voter was electioneering in the polling station. The chairperson of the PS was verbally notified and she asked the voter to leave the PS.

PS 132, Center, Chişinău. An observer from the part of a participant in the referendum was discussing, within the PS, with a member of the commission about the achievements and failures of the General Mayor involved in the dismissal procedure.

Deficient operation of Elections Informational System SAIS – 2 cases

PS 168, Ciocana, Chişinău. The internet connection failed between 9.45 a.m. and 10.00 a.m. and as a result, the Elections Informational System SAIS did not function.

PS 168. Ciocana, Chişinău. A voter was registered in the SAIS program as having been voted. The lady insisted to vote and she was allowed to. She mentioned that she had the same problem during the Presidential election, when someone had voted instead of her.

Errors in the lists of voters – 10 cases

PS 276, Ciocana, Chişinău. The voter is indicated in the SAIS

database to have the right to vote, but he is not found in the printed lists of voters. The EOPS chairperson contacted the superior electoral bodies and she was allowed to vote and to be included on the additional list of voters.

PS 108, Buiucani, Chişinău. Two deceased persons were identified on the main lists of voters. Their children brought certificates of death to confirm the data. As a result, those persons were excluded from the lists.

PS 238, Stauceni, Chişinău. A voter with residence within the area of the polling station found that he was included neither on the lists of voters, nor in SAIS program when he wanted to find his name on the list of voters. The EOPS chairperson was notified and he was allowed to vote after being included on the additional voter list.

PS 105, Buiucani, Chişinău. A voter was included in Elections SAIS, but not on the main lists of voters. The chairperson allowed him/her to vote after including the person on the additional lists.

PS103, Buiucani, Chişinău. A citizen holding the residence on 59 Belinschi Street was usually voting at PS 101. He/she was not identified there and, as a result, he was directed to the PS 103, where he also was not found on the lists. The EOPS chairperson called to the District Mayoralty, but the problem was not solved and the citizen did not vote.

PS 248, Râşcani, Chişinău. A voter went to the polling station where she has always voted. She was identified in the Elections SAIS program, but not on the printed lists of voters. Thus, the EOPS chairperson told her to go to another polling station in the vicinity to see if she was registered there. After that she was proposed to vote on the additional voter list. The voter did not want to vote anymore.

PS 20, Botanica, Chişinău. When checking the voter list, a voter found that two unknown persons had their residence in

his apartment and were included on the main voter list.

PS 138, Center, Chişinău. A voter was found missing from the voter lists. He doesn't have his residence on the old address, and doesn't have any new residence/domicile (he is not registered on any address). As the voter insisted to vote, after EOPS chairperson had a discussion with CEC representatives, he was restricted the right to vote.

PS.265, Buiucani, Chişinău. A voter was found in SAIS database, but not on the printed lists of voters. Hence, he was included on the additional lists and voted.

PS.105, Buiucani, Chişinău. About 10 voters, who voted in PS 105 at the previous election, were not on the main lists of voters for the local referendum. These persons are included on the lists in other PS (according to the data provided by operators after checking). They left without voting, stating that they will not vote at all.

Photos of the ballot papers were taken – 2 cases

PS 158, Ciocana, Chişinău. A voter took a picture of his ballot paper after applying the "Voted" seal, the chairperson stopped him, asked to delete the picture, but he refused. They called the police to clarify the situation.

PS 111, Buiucani, Chişinău. A voter made a picture of her ballot paper, after applying the 'voted' stamp. She deleted the picture after the commission members and some observers insisted on it.

Voters' failure to understand the content of the question subjected to referendum – 7 cases

PS 87, Buiucani, Chişinău. A voter, while inside the polling station, was consulted for what option to vote. During the discussion, she shouted that he would vote 'pro'. After asking the commission members if he was voting correctly, they did not want to get involved. After this, he voted.

PS 58, Botanica, Chişinău. An elderly voter was upset for not understanding the question and asked the commission members to help her. She did not get the expected answer and tore the ballot paper. The chairwomen notified the police and prepared a protocol, according to the procedure. The lady did not want to vote any more and was walked out by the police officer.

PS 27, Botanica, Chişinău. A voter asked to he issued another ballot paper, as he had voted wrongly because the failed to understand the question. Because the EOPS chairperson was out, the voter tore the ballot paper. After the chairperson returned, the voter was issued another ballot paper, and a protocol was prepared for the torn ballot paper.

PS 315, Botanica, Chişinău. A voter wanted to get out of the PS with the ballot paper for consultations, because he did not understand the question, but was stopped by EOPS members.

PS 27, Botanica, Chişinău. Two persons entered the voting booth and tried to make a call. After being warned, they left the ballot papers on the table of commission members and stepped outside to make the phone call. After that they returned and voted.

PS 27, Botanica, Chişinău. A voter, after receiving the ballot paper, entered to booth and called someone to help her with selecting the option to vote for. She continues speaking on the phone even after being warned. The lady voted anyway.

PS 131, Center, Chişinău. A voter did not understand the meaning of words 'pro' and 'against'. He asked the EOPS members for an explanation. After their discussion, he voted.

Involvement, during the electoral process, of observers delegated by participants in the referendum – 2 cases

PS 190, Ciocana, Chişinău. A Russian-speaking voter was given a ballot paper in Romanian, but he was not bothered by this. An observer from a participant in the referendum intervened, asking why he was not issued a ballot paper in Russian,

because he might not understand some words.

PS 190, Ciocana, Chişinău. The voter asked where to apply the stamp. The observer of a participant in the referendum showed where to apply the stamp.

Others

PS 252, Râşcani, Chişinău. The observer was preventing other observers from monitoring the ballot box due to the fact that he was staying at approximately 2 meters distance from that ballot box. The Chairperson asked to keep the distance from the ballot box; at some point a conflict broke out.

PS 246, Râşcani, Chişinău. An attempt of voting without the loose leaf was noted. The fact that the loose leaf was missing was detected only after the voter signed in the lists of voters. After a fight with the EOPS members the voting process was restricted and the situation of the voter signing in the list of voters was included in a report.

PS 205, Râşcani, Chişinău. A ballot paper was damaged by a voter after voting. The voter intended to leave the PS with the damaged ballot paper but he was stopped by the EOPS Chairperson, who took that ballot paper and placed it in the ballot box.

PS 118, Center, Chişinău. An observer representing one of the Referendum participants was discussing with the EOPS members, which was disturbing the participants during the electoral process. When the EOPS Chairperson made a remark in that regard, the observer argued that he was not discussing the Referendum.

PS 53. Botanica, Chişinău. A person left the PS with the ballot paper and has never come back. There were too many voters and no measures were taken by anyone.

PS 216. Râşcani, Chişinău. A voter intended to have a look on the lists of voters in order to see if there was any person

with resident visa registered in her apartment. She was not allowed to. The Chairperson explained that this had to be done prior to the start of the elections; the voter raised some objections, which caused some tensions and, finally, left.

Promo-LEX Election Observation Mission

of the new local elections of 19 November 2017 concludes:

Involvement of EOPS members in electoral process – 2 cases

PS 19/24, Fundurii Noi village, Glodeni. The observer and the person with the right to consultative vote, representing one of the election candidates, asked and wrote down the voters' first and last names. When they did not succeed to collect them, they approached the EOPS Chairperson, who provided them this information. The same thing was done by another observer representing another election candidate.

PS 6/9, Berlinți village, Briceni. An EOPS member representing an election candidate together with the observer representing the same election candidate helped a senior to vote. Other EOPS members and observers did not react at all to this situation.

Presence of unauthorized persons inside or within 50m from the polling station – 3 cases

PS 19/24, Fundurii Noi village, Glodeni. Two district representatives of an election candidate entered the PS and had a 10-minute discussion with EOPS members and observers. 'Everything will hopefully be ok' was the main message. An EOPS member asked them to leave the PS. They first claimed to have the right to be inside the PS, but subsequently left and talked to some voters within the area of 50 m outside the PS.

PS 19/24, Fundurii Noi village, Glodeni. The observer saw how EOPS chairman, a EOPS member and a representative of the district authorities, who arrived by a Government vehicle, entered into an adjacent building, located at a distance of less than 50 meters from the PS, where they had discussed for

about 10 minutes.

PS 6/9, Berlinți village, Briceni. A group of 6 persons, together with the observer from a competitor, had some 15-20 minute discussions with voters, who voted in about 10 minutes. After this they left by car.

Errors in the lists of voters – 1 case

PS 7/63, Zârnești village, Cahul. A voter was found in Elections SAIS, but not on the main lists. He was included on the additional list.

Use, in the voting process, of ID cards that do not comply with the legal provisions – 2 cases

PS 20/40, Lăpușna village, Hâncești. A voter voted on the basis of a copy of his ID card, where the 'New Local Elections 19.11.2017' stamp was applied. Though an EOPS member intervened, the chairperson allowed, arguing that the voter was present in Elections SAIS.

Photos of the ballot papers taken – 1 case

PS 30/11, Căpriană village, Strășeni. Two cases of taking pictures of the ballot papers were found; in each case the EOPS chairperson warned the voters that taking pictures was prohibited, but did not use other measures.

Limited access for persons with special needs – 1 case

PS 30/11, Căpriană village, Strășeni. Two persons, representatives of an association for persons with disabilities brought with them about 7 beneficiaries, voters with physical and mental impairments, and helped them vote, including to apply the 'voted' stamp on the ballot papers. The PS is not accessible for persons with disabilities. A voter in a wheelchair had to be carried up about 5 steps, by hands, because there was no ramp.

Promo-LEX Observation Mission for the local referendum on the dismissal of Chișinău General Mayor is conducted during 4 October – 20 November 2017. The referendum is monitored by

five long-term observers, one medium-term observer and one regional coordinator, who are monitoring the electoral process in Chişinău constituency during 4 October – 20 November 2017. On the election day, Promo-LEX delegated a short-term observer in each polling station. The observers involved in the monitoring process signed the Code of Conduct of the Promo-LEX Independent National Observer, assuming the commitment to act efficiently, in good faith and in a non-partisan manner. The activity of all the observers is coordinated by the central team of the Association.

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