

Promo-LEX observers' intimidations and electoral violations continue



Promo-LEX ascertains an increasing trend of using administrative resources for electoral purposes, as well as the fact that some electoral candidates have resorted to discriminatory messages. Moreover, intimidation of Association's observers in the territory has also been amplified.

During the monitoring period (January 23 – February 5), the Observation Mission revealed cases of electoral gift offering, placement of electoral advertisements in unauthorized places and unreported expenses amounting to hundreds of thousands of lei. Some candidates have been subjected to intimidation and violence, and at least 2158 conflicts in the State Electoral Register (SER) remain unresolved.

The Promo-LEX Observation Mission continues to be intimidated

The Promo-LEX OM repeatedly emphasizes the cases of its territorial observers' intimidation. Out of the total of 5 reported incidents, in three cases, Promo-LEX observers have been intimidated by representatives of local governments, in one case, by the supporters of an electoral competitor, and in another case, an LTO has informally found out from reliable sources about the fact that the cars used by Promo-LEX observers are monitored by the police at the request of the SIS.

Electoral candidates continue to use administrative resources for electoral purposes and offer electoral gifts

At the beginning of electoral campaign, the Promo-LEX OM ascertained a six-fold increase in the number of identified electoral events (607), compared to the previous reporting period. Of these, 38% fall for the PSRM, 26% for the PDM, 14% for the PPS and 11% for the Electoral Bloc ACUM: Platform DA and PAS.

The number of cases that can be qualified as misuse of administrative resources is also increasing, reaching at least 85 cases. In 45 of them the PDM is concerned, in 33 cases – the PSRM, the PN and the Electoral Bloc ACUM: Platform DA and PAS – 3 cases each, and the PCRM – 1 case.

Promo-LEX observers reported at least 4 cases that can be qualified as offering of electoral gifts: in 3 cases the PPS is concerned, and in one case, the PSRM.

There have been cases of inconsistent use of electoral advertising: one case of advertising that does not comply with the requirements for advertising materials (the PDM) and 17 cases of placement of advertising in unauthorized places (the PSRM – 6, the PDM – 5, the PPS – 3, ACUM Bloc – 2, the PCRM – 1).

Additionally, there have been reported six cases of intimidation / violence against electoral candidates. In three of these, the candidates of ACUM Bloc were targeted, in 2 cases – the PDM and in one case- the PSRM.

Women and independent candidates are in the minority in this election again

15 candidates have registered in the national constituency (NC) for the parliamentary elections of February 24, 2019. Even though the minimum representation rate of 40% for both genders has been respected by all the competitors, women candidates do not occupy leading positions.

322 electoral candidates have registered in 51 single member constituencies (SMC). Of these, 265 (82%) have been nominated by parties and blocs, and 57 (18%) are independent candidates. Only 20% (66) of candidates registered in SMCs are women, and 80% (256) are men.

The highest rejection rate for competitors' registration has been recorded among independent candidates: at least 15 applications for registration of 72 submitted have been denied (21% of registration files have been rejected).

Quality of electoral lists may be affected by unresolved conflicts persisting the SER

The Promo-LEX OM is concerned about the large number of unresolved conflicts in the State Electoral Register (SER). Thus, when electoral lists were printed, at least 2,158 conflicts identified by 100 registrars of the 279 interviewed remained unresolved.

Likewise, the Promo-LEX OM considers that the current approach used by the CEC to assign registrars tasks, regardless of the number of voters handled by them, is at least ineffective.

Electoral conflicts and litigation

During the monitored period, 7 complaints have been filed within the SMCC, and 36 with the CEC. Most of these (30) have been filed against the SMCC, and one against the CC President, most of which target the SMCC no.48 (4), SMCC no.4 (3) and SMCC no.5 (3). Five appeals have been filed against the actions/ inactions of electoral competitors, of which 2 against the PSRM and two against the PDM. Most complaints concerned the registration / non-registration of electoral competitors (25).

During the monitored period, candidates filed 7 electoral petitions with the courts of the first instance, two contestations and five appeals to the Court of Appeal. Another five appeals have been filed with the Supreme Court of Justice.

Electoral campaign marked by hatred and discrimination

During the reference period, Promo-LEX continued to monitor case of hate speech and incitement to discrimination. On the basis of information reported by observers, at least 5 cases where electoral competitors generated discriminatory messages or other forms of intolerance in public space have been identified, of which, in 3 cases, the PSRM candidates are concerned; the PCRM and ACUM Bloc each in 1 case.

On the other hand, ACUM Bloc has been targeted by hate speech 5 times, the PSRM – twice; the PDM – twice and the PPS – once.

Analyzing the situation in terms of types of hatred expressed, we notice that most of the cases – at least 7 – use sexist prejudices and perpetuate gender stereotypes in the society.

Unreported expenditures amount to at least 826,473 lei

According to our findings, by February 1, 2019, none of the candidates representing the following political parties: the MPSN, PVE, PVP, MPA, PL and the PPDA presented either the financial report or the commitment to incur no expenses. Only

one independent candidate out of the 38, who did not report financial reports, (I.C. Maxim Uvarov) informed the CEC about his non-expenditure commitment.

In the period of 25 January – 1 February 2019, the total amount of financial means accumulated and reported to the CEC by the electoral candidates reached 23,304,522 lei and the amount of expenditures -19,210,582 lei. The highest share of reported spending – 95% falls for advertising and promotional materials, followed by spending on events and meetings – 3%, transportation costs- 1% and 1% falls for other expenses.

The Promo-LEX OM estimated total unreported expenses of at least 828,423 lei. Thus, the PSRM failed to report at least 668,407 lei, the PN -70,050 lei, the PDM-52,440 lei, the PRM – 1,950 lei, the PL – 1,950 lei, the PPDA – 975 lei, the PCRM – 700 lei, I.C. Leonid Macari – 5,384 lei, I.C. Valeriu Ghilechi – 3,901 lei, I.C. Gheorghe Furdui – 5,023 lei, I.C. Bobeica Gheorghe – 7,159 lei, I.C. Aricov Gheorghe – 3,000 lei, I.C. Ceboatarescu Dumitru – 2,865 lei, I.C. Calin Vieru – 3,749 lei, I.C. Alexandru Bujoreanu – 870 lei.

The full report can be accessed [here](#).

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