

Promo-LEX finds a precarious situation in observing the working hours by electoral officials, failure to declare all the campaign expenses and involvement of foreign persons in electoral activities

Promo-LEX found new cases of misuse of administrative resources, as well as discriminatory messages generated by some electoral competitors. In this poll, female and independent candidates are in the minority again and undeclared financial resources are continuously used.

The Promo-LEX Observation Mission presented today, September 26, 2019, the Monitoring Report No. 3 for the general local elections and the new parliamentary elections of October 20, 2019. The report contains findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Mission for the monitored period (4- 24 September), the main observations include undermining the transparency of electoral campaign financing and cases of electoral gift offered by electoral competitors.



Misuse of administrative resources and involvement of foreign persons in electoral activities

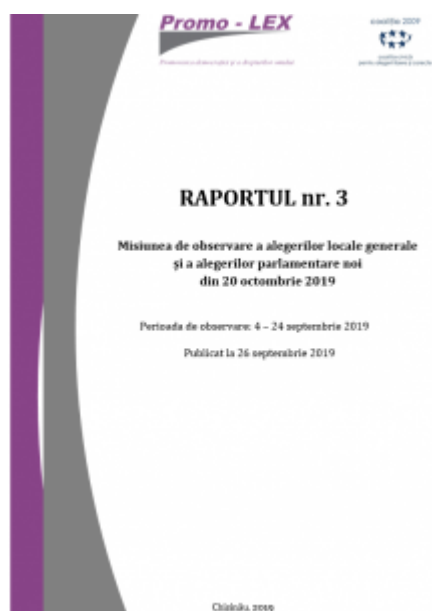
The Promo-LEX OM ascertained that compared to the previous reporting period, the number of activities to promote designated/ registered candidates increased by about four times, reaching a total of 158. Of these, 99 were carried out by the PSRM, 19 – by the PPS and 9 – by ACUM Bloc, etc. The most used types of activities were: distribution of informative materials and meetings with citizens.

There were reported at least 4 cases that can be qualified as offering of goods during the electoral period, of which three – in the context of general local elections and one – in that of the new parliamentary elections. Of these, the PN was targeted in two cases, the PPR – in one case, and the PUN in one case.

Misuse of administrative resources is also increasing in number, at least 5 cases being identified, 4 cases – the PSRM,

1 – the PPR. At the same time, candidates are continuously promoting themselves by claiming the merits for the projects implemented on public money, at least 8 cases of this kind being identified (7 – the PSRM, 1 – the PLDM).

Additionally, observers reported 4 cases, where the image of personalities from abroad were used to promote the candidates, all of them targeting the Romanian politician Traian Basescu and the PUN.



The Observation Mission ascertains actions that undermine the transparency of electoral campaign financing

In the period of 6- 20 September, 2019, the total volume of revenues declared by 7 competitors registered for the general local elections reached 9,910 132 lei and the amount of expenses reported by 5 of them – 2,487 103 lei; the final balance being – 7,423 029 lei. The major share of declared expenses falls for advertising – 74%, promotional materials – 12%, expenses for meetings and events – 8%, the use of transportation- 4%; other expenses – 2%.

Promo-LEX warns of situations that undermine the transparency of the financing of electoral campaign, such as the transfer of 5,59 million lei from the current account of the PSRM to the electoral one, without indicating who de facto made the contribution, or donations ranging from 5 to 15 thousand lei from some pensioners made in favor of the PPS and the PN.

We emphasize that 12 electoral competitors failed to fully reflect the expenses incurred in the period of 6-20 September, 2019, in particular: the PPS, PSRM, PDM, PN, USB, MSPFN, PUN, MPSN, MPA, PCRM, ACUM Bloc, PSE. Moreover, we find that electoral expenses are covered by means derived outside the electoral fund account by the PCRM, ACUM, MSPF, MPA, PSE. The total estimated unreported amount is at least 1,016,303 lei.

Differentiated approach to competitors during the registration process, which violates the principle of equal opportunities

The Promo-LEX OM informs the public of the cases qualified by the Mission as registration of competitors contrary to the legislation in force. In addition, we are witnessing differentiated approaches, which go against the principle of equal opportunities, with regard to competitors that committed the same type of infringement, some being registered, and others not, provided that the legislation does not provide for sanctioning those already registered. We refer to two aspects: registration of competitors who did not respect the gender quota (at least 30 cases – DEC II, 195 – DEC I) and registration of candidates based on designation minutes adopted before the legal term set (at least 6 cases registered).

In this poll, female and independent candidates are in the minority again

About 94% of the 2,430 files submitted for the mayoral offices are persons nominated by 23 parties / electoral blocs, and only 6% are independent candidates. Most candidates were nominated by the PSRM (611), the PDM (435) and ACUM Bloc (367).

Similarly, only 26% (632) of the 2430 candidates nominated for mayoral offices are women. For example, out of the 29 candidates nominated in the municipalities of Balti and Chisinau, there is only one woman (Chisinau).

The Promo-LEX OM warns against the registration of councilors contrary to the legislation in force with regard to gender quota. We found at least 30 cases in 21 DEC II and at least 195 cases in DEC I, in which the lists of councilor candidates were registered even if they did not comply with the provisions on gender quota.

Headquarters of DEC I closed during working hours and PSs from abroad constituted in the absence of information on the distribution mechanism

The Promo-LEX OM urges the CEC and DEC I to take a more active role in resolving appeals and notifications, including the five appeals and 3 applications / notifications submitted with reference to the general local elections.

We emphasize that in 22% of DEC I, visited by Promo-LEX observers, their headquarters were closed during the working hours. In 53% of DEC I, information on their membership was not publicly displayed and in 26% of DEC I, the work schedule was not displayed. As for the accessibility of DEC I headquarters, we certify that 56% of these are inaccessible, and 25% are partially accessible.

1,969 PSs have been set up for the organization and conduct of the general local elections of October 20, 2019. In the case of SMC no. 48 and 50, the Promo-LEX OM agrees with the decision of the authorities to establish a number of PSs comparable with that of the parliamentary elections of February 24, 2019, but it disapproves of the lack of information on the mechanism of distribution of PSs by states and settlements, as well as of the absence of statistical data that were at the basis of the decision.

Cases of hate speech and discrimination in electoral campaign

Based on the information reported by the monitors, we identified at least five cases in which electoral competitors generated discriminatory messages or other forms of

intolerance in the public space, of which: the PL – two cases, and ACUM, the PN and the PLDM one each.

On the other hand, the competitor targeted in hate speech is – the PPS candidate.

Analyzing the situation in terms of criteria underlying hate speech, we noticed that in two cases, gender prejudices and stereotypes were used, and in other two – prejudices related to people's ethnicity. Additionally, we identified a case involving intolerance to LGBT people and to people with mental disabilities, in one situation, incitement to violence was registered.

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

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