

Promo- LEX publicly launches the Observation Mission for the Presidential Elections to be held on November 1, 2020 in the Republic of Moldova

The Promo-LEX Association publicly launched, on August 26, 2020, the Observation Mission (OM) for the Presidential Elections of November 1, 2020. The Mission presented its first Report on the monitoring of the pre-election period (21 May – 25 August 2020).



Promo-LEX monitors found that the current pre-election period is characterized by an evident impact of the pandemic

on the efficiency of the governmental policies and such socio-political trends as frequent change of political affiliation, especially within parliamentary parties, and return of geopolitical issues to electoral agenda.

Promo-LEX recommends to the CEC to take a pro-active stand and to settle, within the limits of its competence, the referrals, the Constitutional Court sent to it in the presidential elections of 2016.

Four years after the confirmation of election results and the validation of the mandate of President of the Republic of Moldova in 2016, the Parliament, in the opinion of Promo-LEX, managed to fully settle one and to partially resolve two of a total of six referrals of the Constitutional Court.

We consider that by virtue of the powers granted to it by the legal framework, the CEC in its capacity of a body responsible for the organization of elections and issuance of mandatory normative acts, can partially settle, within the limits of its own competence, the referrals of the Constitutional Court. Technical solutions can be issued with regard to such issues as: organized transportation of voters in the context of suspicions of electoral frauds, involvement of religious denominations in election campaigns, examination of appeals after the election day.

The number of voters in the Republic of Moldova continues to increase

Although since 1999, the Republic of Moldova has been registering a negative rate of natural increase of population (RNI), the number of voters in the State Register of Voters (SRV) continues to increase, albeit at a slower rate compared to the previous years. According to the SRV, as of August 1, 2020, the number of voters was 3,286,304, which is by 410 more compared to the same period in 2019.

The increase in the total number of voters is mainly due to the growth of the number of voters with no domicile or residence and of those registered in the Transnistrian region, given that the number of voters in the other ATUs of the Republic of Moldova, as a whole, is declining.

Some parties nominated their candidates ahead of time, while others took credit for activities carried out at public expense

The Promo-LEX OM has found that, the PPPDA, PAS, PUN and MPU performed activities that can be qualified as early nomination of candidates. Additionally, the observers reported political campaigns with a potential electoral impact in the case of at least five political players – PRO Moldova, the PN, PAS, PUN, MPU, while in the case of the current President and two parties – the PSRM and the PPS – activities that can be qualified as taking credit for actions performed at public expense have been reported.

Pre-registration of voters affected by the lack of explicit regulations

With regard to the manner the CEC managed the pre-registration procedure, Promo-LEX OM considers that the importance and value of the procedure is greatly affected by the lack of certainty that all prior registrations submitted will be taken into account. We emphasize that the difference in numbers of prior registrations submitted in the previous elections by voters from the Transnistrian region and those from abroad, undermines the objectivity and veracity of the data. Moreover, the lack of explicit regulation of pre-registrations in paper format, including collective claims, also affects the pre-registration procedure.

Promo-LEX warns about the need to adjust the normative framework for election campaign funding

In the context of presidential elections, the Observation Mission also emphasizes the need to adjust some aspects of the normative framework of the CEC to the changes made in electoral legislation. We also note that Initiative Groups (IGs) do not appear in the Criminal and Contravention Codes as subjects to sanction, as well as the need to harmonize the

sanctions described in the Contravention Code with those of the Criminal Code, in accordance with the guidelines of the Venice Commission.

It should be mentioned that at the request of Promo-LEX, the CEC issued accreditations for the first 69 national observers.

The Observation Mission also monitors the phenomenon of hate speech present in the discourses of electoral competitors.

The OM identified, based on the monitored sources of information, cases of hate speech, the subjects who use hate speech in their electoral messages and those who are affected by this type of discourse.

In the context of Presidential Elections of November 1, 2020, the Promo-LEX Association will carry out a voter information and voter education campaign to raise the awareness of Moldovan citizens entitled to vote. The campaign will include 25 debates broadcast by TV and radio stations; creation and dissemination of a video spot; an online apolitical information and voter mobilization campaign, as well as grants for projects to promote participation in elections.

The Observation Mission for the Presidential Elections of November 1, 2020 in the Republic of Moldova is carried out by the Promo-LEX Association with the financial support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the "Democracy, Transparency and Accountability" Program. The "hate speech" component is supported by the Department of Justice and Human Rights under Soros-Moldova Foundation through the "Strengthening a Platform for the Development of Human Rights Activism and Education in the Republic of Moldova – stage III" Project.

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

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