

# **Conclusions of Promo-LEX Observation Mission at the end of the campaign: Election contenders do not declare the actual spending for the campaign, and the number of violations is increasing at a worrisome pace**

*Promo-LEX Observation Mission (OM) launched the fifth monitoring report of the presidential election in the Republic of Moldova. Like in the previous reports, EOM found a number of problems, such as: use of administrative resources, intimidation and presence of hate speech and incitement to discrimination in the contenders' messages, electoral gifts, as well as involving religious cults in the election campaign of a candidate. Promo-LEX observers also found deceased persons and wrong addresses in lists of voters.*



## **Multiple violations on the last mile of the campaign**

Promo-LEX EOM found literally twice as many electoral activities compared to the first two weeks of campaign – 992. PSRM – a party that did not nominate any candidates, was found again to engage in the election campaign of Igor Dodon IC (52% of all of the candidate's activities).

Observers identified at least 24 cases that can be regarded as use of administrative resources, of which: 21 – Igor Dodon (IC) și 3 – Tudor Deliu (PLDM). At least two cases that can be regarded as voter corruption were reported and both of them involved candidate Igor Dodon (IC).

In this context, at least 52 cases reported where candidates were promoted by local elected officials: district presidents/deputy presidents or mayors/deputy mayors. The electioneering work was done while on leave, planned particularly during the election campaign period, without being registered with CEC as persons of trust.

At least six cases involving representatives of religious denominations in the election campaign of the candidate Igor Dodon (IC) were also reported.

According to observers' reports, at least nine cases of candidate intimidation or vandalizing their advertising materials were registered, 2 cases involving – Igor Dodon (IC), 2 cases – Maia Sandu (PAS), 2 cases – Renato Usatii (PN), and one case – Violeta Ivanov (PPS), Octavian Ticu (PUN) and Andrei Nastase (PPPDA) each.

### **Under-reported expenses and donations above the threshold for funds that may be transferred on the 'Electoral Fund' account**

According to the reports submitted to CEC, the revenues declared by election contenders for 10-23 October amount to MDL 6,027,149; of which MDL 996,772 are revenues in the form of free goods and services.

The mission estimated at least MDL 3,800,981 not reported by the following election contenders: Violeta Ivanov (PPS) – MDL 1,574,706; Igor Dodon (IC) – MDL 932,334; Andrei Nastase (PPPDA) – MDL 551,901; Maia Sandu (PAS) – MDL 288,176; Renato Usatii (PN) – MDL 291,226; Tudor Deliu (PLDM) – MDL 61,117; Octavian Ticu (PUN) – MDL 74,813; Dorin Chirtoaca (BE UNIREA) – MDL 26,708.

### **Electoral bodies' failure to comply with the required measures of protection**

According to Promo-LEX observers, not all DEC's conform to the restrictions imposed on activity amidst the pandemic: 8 (22%) councils do not have a register for monitoring the temperature of electoral officials; at least 18 DEC's (50%) do not take the visitors' temperature; while in other 5 DEC's (14%) the information on health protection rules amid pandemic is missing. Besides, as reported by observers, in at least 7 cases DEC's found shortages in the equipment for protection and prevention of the spread of COVID-19 infection, received from CEC.

Unfortunately, 776 (82%) of the electoral offices of polling stations (PEB's) were found not to comply with the protection

requirements in the context of pandemic.

## **The flaws of the Electoral and Administrative Codes limit the contenders' right to effective remedy**

According to observers, during the reference period one single complaint was submitted to CEC, which was settled by the deadline stated in the law. As for other six notifications, it seems that CEC has neither settled them, nor published any response.

With regards to litigation settlement, Promo-LEX EOM finds that the election contenders' right to effective remedy is affected due to the misalignment of the Electoral Code with the Administrative Code.

## **Limiting the observers' access to the voter lists**



Promo-LEX found non-compliance with the deadlines for submitting the voter lists to PEBs in at least 406 PEBs (42%) of the 947 visited. At the same time, note that about 20%

(184) of the polling stations visited by observers had a limited access to lists with full data on voters.

The most frequent errors found in lists are the following: presence of deceased persons (145 cases) and wrongful assignment of voters to another PS from the same or even from a different settlement (45 cases).

### **Less observers accredited compared with the Parliamentary election of 2019**

During the observation period, CEC accredited 1,153 (53%) observers and experts. A total of 2193 observers were accredited for the presidential election, specifically 1883 national observers, 299 international observers and 11 international electoral experts. Of the total number of national observers, Promo-LEX EOM accredited 1200 (64%). Compared to the Parliamentary election of 24 February 2019, the number of national observers dropped by 45%, and of international observers – by 60%.

### **Hate speech and incitement to discrimination**

We find a surge in hate speech by candidates and politicians, opinion leaders, journalists and citizens. At least 76 new cases were identified in the reference period alone – by 13 more than in the previous monitoring period.

Of these, candidate Renato Usatii (PN) used hate speech in 46 cases; Andrei Nastase (PPDA) – in three cases, Dorin Chirtoaca (BE UNIREA), Violeta Ivanov (PPS) and Igor Dodon (IC) – in one case each.

Other 15 cases of hate speech and/or incitement to discrimination involved 5 of the 8 candidates registered in the electoral race. Thus, Igor Dodon was targeted in 5 cases, Maia Sandu – in 4 cases, Violeta Ivanov – in 3 cases, Dorin Chirtoaca – in two cases, and Renato Usatii – in one case.

Seven new cases of hate speech against voters in general, and voters from the left bank of the Nistru river, in particular, were registered.

The Promo-LEX Association emphasises that the use of hate speech and incitement to discrimination in the public space and in the mass-media by candidates and their supporters amid election campaign harms not only the dignity of counter-candidates, by also that of people from particular social groups, including when prejudice and stereotypes are used or when people are incited to discrimination and violence.

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Find the full report [here](#).

*If there are any discrepancies between the text in Romanian and its translation, the provisions formulated in Romanian shall prevail.*

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