

Promo-LEX: The Last Findings on the 2015 General Local Elections are Worrying

7.00 pm, 14 June 2015 // Chisinau

Until 7:00 pm, over 1400 Promo-LEX observers recorded a number of worrying cases of electoral process violation. Such as the following: sabotaging the voting process, buying votes, intimidating voters, etc. Promo-LEX observers did not finish their work with the closing of polling stations, they continued to monitor the vote counting process.

A summary on the quality of the electoral process and some statistics on the conduct of the General Local Elections (at the national level and in Chisinau, Balti and Comrat municipalities).

Polling Stations (PSs) Infrastructure on the Elections Day

- Four PSs (PS 18 and 56, Floresti d.; PS 40, Zaicana v., Criuleni d.; PS 52, Onesti v., Hancesti d.) do not have safe boxes;
- PSs 167 and 168, Chisinau mun. had not have Internet connection for 1 hour 30 minutes;
- PS 33, Iscalau v., Falesti d., due to a power outage the polling station remained without electricity between 1:00 pm and 2:09 pm. Nevertheless, both the voting process and recording in the State Registry of Voters (SRV) continued;
- PS 17, Ciulucani v., Telenesti d., did not have electricity between 4:15 pm and 5.20 pm Both the voting process and recording in the SRV continued.
- In five PSs (PSs 13, 16, 47, Floresti d.; PS 18, Sarbesti

v., Floresti d.; PS 52, Onesti v., Hancesti d., PS 8, Causeni d.) the voting booths are located too close to each other, which does not guarantee secret voting;

– In seven PSs (PSs 16, 42, 31, 29, 48, Floresti d.; PS 18, Sarbesti v., Floresti d.) the mobile ballot boxes are sealed only on one side;

– PSs 1 and 17, Rezina d., the standing ballot box is sealed only with two seals;

– PS 8, Carnatenii Noi v., Causeni d., the mobile ballot box did not have the seals applied fully. At the request of the Promo-LEX observer, the seals were strengthened.

Taking the Ballot Paper out of the Polling Station

– PSs 7 and 42, Balti mun., some voters tried to take the ballot papers out of the PS, but they were stopped; the police prepared a protocol on this case.

Electioneering on the Voting Day

Promo-LEX observers found six cases of electioneering:

- PS 52, Pepeni v., Sangerei d., an election contestant for the position of mayor suggested to a person to vote for him;
- PS 2, Cocieri v., Dubăsari d., the director of the Republican Rehabilitation Center for War Invalids is electioneering for an election contestant;
- PS 44, Saptebani v., Rascani d., an election candidate running for the mayor's office had engaged for one hour in electioneering activities in the vicinity of the PS;

– PS 7, Balti mun., after two persons received ballot papers, one of them shouted out loud the need to vote for a certain election contestant;

– PS 16, Causeni d., an election candidate running for the

position of councilor was engaged in electioneering activities;

– PS 42, Balti mun., an election contestant running for the position of municipal councilor had spent 40 minutes at the PS door to talk to people coming to vote.

Location Electoral Advertising in Close Proximity to PS

– Electoral advertising at a lower distance than 100m from the PS was found in PS 34, Causeni d. and PS 35, Anenii Noi d.

Voting on the Basis of Inappropriate Documents

- PS 255, Chisinau mun. and PS 24, Hancesti d., several cases of voting without the loose leaf of the ID card were found.
- PS 24 Hancesti, three persons voted without the loose leaf. Subsequently, two persons came back to have the “Voted” stamp applied in the loose leafs of their ID cards, and for the third person it was decided to have the stamp applied when the PS members would travel with the mobile ballot box.

Entry of Several Persons in the Voting Booths

– PS 40, Chisinau mun., two cases were found when two voters entered the same voting booth.

Transportation of Voters

Promo-LEX observers found organized transportation of voters in at least 12 PSs:

– PS 13, Donduşeni, the brother of an election contestant to the position of mayor has transported the whole day voters to the PS by his own car (Registration number DN AL 844);

– PS 15, Surchiceni v., Causeni d, an election contestant transported voters to the PS by a Toyota car (Registration

number A 678 BC);

- PS 276, Bacioi v., Chisinau mun., voters were transported four times by a BMW car (registration number C MX 975);
- PS 2, Cocieri v., Dubăsari d., one party member transported voters to the PS by the ambulance care (registration number C AS 618). Over 10 trips were made, transporting over 100 persons;
- PS 36, Mihailovca v., Cimislia d., an election contestant running for the position of district councillor transported at least eight voters to the PS by a Renault car (registration number CM AM 544);
- PS 36, Mihailovca v., Cimislia d., another election contestant running for the position of mayor ensured the transportation of at least 10 voters to the PS by a car (registration number CM AN 378);
- PS 2, Cocieri v., Dubăsari d., the brother of an election contestant to the position of mayor transported about 40 persons to the PS by a Dacia Logan car (registration number DB AI 019);
- PS 29, Cotul Morii v., Hancesti d., the supported of a party transported voters;
- PS 6, ATUG, three supporters of an election contestant for the position of mayor of Comrat mun. brought about 30 voters to the PS by two cars and a bus;
- PS 16, Causeni d., an election candidate running for the position of local councilor brought at least six voters to the PS;
- PS 16, Ciutulești v., Floresti d., an election candidate running for the position of mayor transported voters to the PS;

- PS 52, Moscovei v., Cahul d., brought about 20 voters to the PS by a bus running on a public itinerary;
- PS 20, Lalova v., Rezina d., an election candidate running for the position of mayor transported at least 20 people to the PS by his personal car (CH CQZ 585).

Lists of Voters

- PS 21, Chisinau mun., on the lists of voters some persons were found to be registered on a non-existing address – 48 Independentei St., ap. 0;
- PS 245, Chisinau mun., the lists of voters did not contain all of the voters' addresses from the coverage area of the PS;
- PS 266, Chisinau mun., 15 voters domiciled in Chisinau mun., 26 Valea Babei St. voted on additional lists;
- PS 3, Corjova v., Dubăsari d., there were 1091 persons on the main lists, and 376 persons on the additional lists, as of 5:00 pm. It was found that people domiciled in Dubăsari t. also voted in this PS. 37 deceased persons were also found on the main lists of voters at this PS.

Electioneering by EOPS Members

- PS 136, Chisinau mun., one EOPS member showed to a person which election contestant to vote for;
- PS 136, Chisinau mun., one EOPS electioneered for an election contestant. The Municipal Electoral Council (MEC) filed a notification to CEC to exclude the respective person from the EOPS membership.
- PS 297, Stauceni v., Chisinau mun., a EOPS member asked a person to vote for any election contestant, except for one party;
- PS 27, Farladeni v., Causeni d., the PS chairman accompanied

an elderly person to the voting booth and suggested to vote for a certain election contestant;

– PS 16, Ciutulești v., Floresti d., the EOPS chairman entered the voting booth together with the voter. He also had left the PS for 15-20 minutes and was replaced by his daughter.

People voting in PS were do not have a domicile or residence

▪ PS 7, Cahul t., 43 requests to vote were made by voters hospitalized in the rayon hospital. The EOPS chairman stated that, inadvertently, he allowed about 20 people to vote, though they did not have their residence in the area covered by the PS;

– PS 74, Zastanca v., Soroca d., 10 voters with their residence in Chisinau mun. were allowed to vote on additional lists;

– PS 23, Branza v., Cahul d, was voted was mentioned as “person with a special status”. After consultations with CEC members, the EOPS chairman allowed him to vote on the additional lists.

Registry of Voters

– PS 192, Chisinau mun., 808 voters are recorded in the SRV, whole the lists of voters contained only 80.

Electioneering by Observers

– PS 253, Codru t., Chisinau mun., the observer of an election contestant discussed with an elderly person and suggested to vote for a certain election contestant;

– PS 194, Chisinau mun., the observer of an election contestant helped a voter with disabilities to apply the “Voted” stamp in the ballot paper.

Procedural Violations by Observers

- PS 115, Chisinau mun., the observer of an election contestant helped a voter to exercise his right to vote;
- PS 245, Chisinau mun., two voters entered simultaneously the voting booth, as one of them had low vision. The observer of an election contestant bullied the voters, in response to which one of them crumpled the ballot paper and threw it to the box.

Sabotaging the Voting Process

- PSs 45 and 21, Ialoveni d., two supporters of an election contestant were persuading people not to participate in the voting.

Buying the Votes

- PS 29, Cotul Morii v., Hancesti d., a supporter of an election contestant offered MDL 50 and alcoholic beverages to voters;
- PS 37, Plop Stiubei v., Causeni d., within an area of 30 meters from the PS, the members of a party distributed parcels to voters from his car (EMY-999). Besides, some voters would eat some food directly from the trunk of the same car;
- PS 8, ATUG, at the entry in school No 6, where the PS is located, a person representing an election contestant offered money to vote. At the request of EOPS members, he stepped away;
- 16, Ciutulești v., Floresti d., the candidate of an election contestant running for the position of mayor electioneered and served voters with alcoholic beverages.

Violation of the Procedure of Voting by Mobile Ballot Box

- PS 19, Coteala v., Briceni d., EOPS members left with

the mobile ballot box at 10.30 am and returned at 3.30 pm. Before coming to the PS, they took the mobile box to the Mayor's Office, and later brought it back to the PS. The observers also noticed broken seals under the table of EOPS members. When asked for clarifications, the members threw away the seals and avoided providing an answer.

Application of the "Voted" stamp instead of "Elections 14.06.2015"

– PS 52, Sangerei d., in about 450-500 cases, the round stamp "Voted" was applied on the loose leaf of ID cards, instead of the rectangular stamp "Elections 14.06.2015".

Sales of Alcoholic Beverages in Close Proximity to PS

– Alcoholic beverages were sold in the close proximity to three PSs (PSs 13, 56, Floresti d.; PS 19, Baurci, v., Causeni d.).

– An outlet selling alcoholic beverages is located within an area of 15-20 meters from PS 32, Balti mun.

– Alcoholic beverages are sold at a distance of 30 from PS 119, Chisinau mun.

Intimidation of Voters

– PS 34, Speia v., Anenii Noi d., an electoral candidate running for the position of local councillor forcedly put two voters into a car and on the way to the PS threatened them with physical violence or putting their houses on fire unless they voted for a certain party.

Violation of the Secret Voting Principle

– PSs 188 and 189, Chisinau mun., the observer of an election contestant asked voters who they had voted for.

Incidents

Promo-LEX observers found electoral incidents in four PSs:

- PS 13, Criuleni d., an election candidate running for the position of district councillor was insulted and threatened with physical violence by another candidate to the position of local councillor. They called the police;
- PS 15, Orhei d., a drunk person entered the polling station and started to shout that representatives of an election contestant offered him MDL 100 to vote. The sector police was contacted, who asked the voter to leave the premises;
- PS 21, Cimislia, a person came to vote together with his friend, who also wanted to vote but had his domicile in a different settlement. An EOPS member reproached the voter for bringing his friend and hit him in the back. The voter fell down and hit himself. This case is under police investigation;
- PS 32, Saharna v., Rezina d., a candidate to the position of mayor argued with another candidate to the same position.

Annulment of the Ballot Paper

- PS 33, Calarasi d., one ballot paper was annulled because it was found in the voting booth. A protocol was developed with regards to this case.

Taking a Picture of the Ballot Papers

- PS 2, Nisporeni t., a voter made a picture of the stamped ballot paper, while in the voting booth;
- PS 14, Rezina d., a voter tried to make a picture of his ballot paper. The sector policeman was invited, and that person had to write explanations. However, no protocol was developed on this case.

Complaints

Promo-LEX observers found that in at least seven PSs representatives of election candidates filed complaints:

- 2 complaints were filed in PS 57. One operator saw a voter with a cap with the electoral signs of a party. When asked to take the cap off, he insulted verbally the operator and even intended to apply physical force. Another representative of an election contestant filed a complaint against the actions of a voter, who made a picture of his ballot paper;
- A candidate to the position of mayor filed a complaint against ECC 1/11 Gratiesti, Chisinau mun., because his logo was not included in the ballot paper.
- PS 22, Edinet d., an election candidate filed a complaint with ECC II of Edinet, asking to annul the votes from the mobile ballot box from ECC 1, Branzeni v., which were given to the Psycho-Neorologic Institution, arguing that the observers do not have access to the electoral documents for the mobile ballot box;
- Level-one ECC of Stauceni v., Chisinau mun., one voter filed a complaint against the activity of EOPS 297, Stauceni v., Chisinau mun. The reason is that a EOPS member told the voter for vote for any candidate, except for one party;
- PS 37, Tabaniv., Briceni d., citizens filed six complaints. The PS chairman put them in the table drawer without signing them, claiming that he would sign them later;
- Level-two ECC from Drochia t., a candidate to the position of mayor made a complaint, arguing that people are brought to Drochia to record their residence/domicile in the town. Such actions were carried out by people dressed with the insignia of an election contestant;
- PS 15, Orhei d., the observers of another contestant filed a complaints because a drunk person entered the polling station and started to shout that representatives of an election

contestant offered him MDL 100 to vote.

Violation of the Right to Vote

– PS 46, Tocuz v., one voter, who took a picture of ballot papers, was not allowed to put them in the ballot box. The ballot papers were annulled and new ballot papers were not offered.

Election Fraud cases

– PS 7, Causenii Vechi v., Causeni d., a voter came to the PS with an elderly person, claiming it was his grandmother, and voted instead of her.

Limitation of Mass-Media Rights

– PS 74, Chisinau mun., a newspaper reporter was not allowed to shoot inside the PS.

Introduction of Inappropriate Materials in the Ballot Box

– PS 4, Orhei t., a case was recorded, when a voter came out of the voting booth with three ballot papers and a piece of paper, which he put in the ballot box. A protocol was developed with regards to this case.

In addition, you can find in the annexed documents, statistics on the electoral process till 7:00 pm, collected from the whole territory of the Republic of Moldova (based on a representative sample, consisting of 600 PS), as well as from Chisinau, Balti and Comrat municipalities.

Tomorrow, 15 June, 10:00 am, Promo-LEX Association will hold the next press briefing to present statistical data on the quality of the electoral process throughout the Republic of Moldova on the basis of a representative sample, consisting of 600 PS, as well as the results of parallel vote tabulation in Chisinau, Balti and Comrat municipalities.

Promo-LEX Observation Mission declares itself to be neutral and equidistant towards the election candidates, it is not an investigation body and does not assume the express obligation to support the observers' findings by evidence.

The General Local Elections of 14 (28) June 2015 are monitored by Promo-LEX Association under its Monitoring Democratic Processes Program. The Observation Mission is part of the activities carried out by the civil society under the aegis of the Civic Coalition for Free and Fair Elections.

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The opinions presented in the press release belong to authors and do not necessarily reflect the donors' view.

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