

Promo-LEX found insufficiently prepared polling stations in Moldova and many expenses not reflected in the financial statements of the election candidates



The Promo-LEX Observation Mission of the Elections of 30 October 2016 states in [Report No 4](#) that it found insufficiently prepared polling stations in Moldova, gaps in the voter registry, the use of administrative resources for electoral purposes, cases that may be regarded as the offering of electoral gifts, and expenses not reflected in the financial statements of election candidates. The report covers the monitoring period between 5 October and 27 October 2016.

Promo-LEX states in the monitoring report that Moldova's laws create unfair conditions for candidates to the position of President of the Republic of Moldova and believes that it is necessary to adjust the legal framework so that all election candidates have a level playing field, because the late validation of certain election candidates may put some parties and election candidates at a disadvantage during the campaign.

Promo-LEX observers found at least 7 cases that may be regarded as the offering of electoral gifts: Igor Dodon (PPPSRM) – 3 cases; Inna Popenco (PPMSPR) – 2; Dumitru Ciubașenco (PPPN) – 1; Andrei Năstase (PPPDA) – 1.

The observers visited 1,817 polling stations. They noted a lack of equipment in 63 precincts, a lack of Internet access in 587 cases, a lack of a telephone connection in 606 cases, a lack of fire protection in 757 cases, insufficient illumination in 316 cases, a lack of computers in 468 cases, a lack of heating in 735 cases, a lack of access for persons with physical impairments in 1132 cases and a lack of special tools for people with visual impairments in 1191 cases. Promo-LEX observers reported two cases when, at the time of their visit, the polling stations did not meet the minimum conditions for the voting process.

In addition, on 19 October 2016 between 3.00 pm and 5.00 pm, Promo-LEX observers contacted a sample of 207 polling stations by telephone. At the time of the telephone survey, 144 polling stations did not answer the phone, which accounts for 69.6 % of the total number of polling stations contacted. This was the same error rate as found by Promo-LEX Association during the general local elections of 14 (28) June 2015 (64% or 136 cases) and the parliamentary elections of 30 November 2014 (63% or 133 cases).

Promo-LEX observers noted at least 11 cases of smear campaigns

against election candidates, which affected: Andrei Năstase (PPDA), Maia Sandu (PPAS) and the PPPN leader Renato Usatîi. At the same time, 10 cases of vandalism of billboards and mobile advertisements were noted. The affected contestants: Marian Lupu (PDM) – 4 cases; Inna Popenco (PPMSPR) – 2; Mihai Ghimpu (PL) – 2; Igor Dodon (PPSRM) – 1 and Maia Sandu (PPAS) – 1.

Promo-LEX Observation Mission notes the continuation of the tendency to use administrative resources to promote candidates or potential candidates. Promo-LEX observers reported at least 21 cases of candidates/potential candidates using administrative resources for electoral purposes during this period: Marian Lupu (PDM) – 13 cases; Mihai Ghimpu (PL) – 6 cases; Igor Dodon (PPSRM) – 1 case; Iurie Leancă (PPPEM) – 1 case.

In addition, Lupu Marian, Ghimpu Mihai, Leancă Iurie, Dodon Igor, Radu Silvia and Popenco Inna had electoral posters displayed in prohibited places, such as: fences, poles, gates, bus stations.

The funding sources of the electoral candidates are the following: financial donations from 1,511 individuals (for 8 election candidates) totaling MDL 27,246,860, financial donations from 9 legal entities amounting to MDL 4,971,261.05 for 4 election candidates (Iurie Leancă/PPPEM, Dumitru Ciubaşenco/PPPN, Maia Sandu/PPAS, Inna Popenco/MSPRR) and in-kind donations amounting to MDL 756,086 for 4 election candidates (Maia Sandu/PPAS, Igor Dodon/PPSRM, Inna Popenco/MSPRR, Dumitru Ciubaşenco/PPPN).

The Promo-LEX Mission's analysis established 4 categories of donations: "very large" – over 1 million MDL (Silvia Radu/IC – 1 donor; Dumitru Ciubaşenco/PPPN – 1 donor; Inna Popenco/MSPRR – 1 donor), "large" – from 75 thousand to 1 million MDL (Mihai Ghimpu/PL – 6 donors; Silvia Radu/IC – 1 donor; Inna Popenco/MSPRR – 2 donors; Dumitru Ciubaşenco/PPPN – 3 donors;

Iurie Leancă/PPPPEM – 2 donors; Maia Sandu/PPPAS – 1 donor), “medium” – from 60 thousand MDL to 75 thousand MDL (Marian Lupu/PDM – 24 donors; Igor Dodon/PPPSRM – 2 donors; Iurie Leancă/PPPPEM – 3 donors; Valeriu Ghilețchi/IC – 1 donor) and “other donations” – up to 60 thousand MDL: (Marian Lupu/PDM – 1018 donors; Dumitru Ciubașenco/PPPN – 254 donors; Iurie Leancă/PPPPEM – 73 donors; Igor Dodon/PPPSRM – 123 donors; Mihai Ghimpu/PL – 1 donor; Maia Sandu/PPPAS – 1 donor).

Promo-LEX finds that a large share of candidates’ expenses were for “advertising”. Thus, 97.05% of all expenses were reported as advertising expenses, followed by 1.05% for the use of transportation vehicles, 1.04% for organizing meetings and events, 0.22% for consultants, 0.18% for additional maintenance costs, 0.08% for the delegation or secondment of people (volunteers/observers) and 0.38% for other expenses.

At the same time, Promo-LEX observers found a group of expenses that was not reflected in the financial statements. Observers reported that 10 election candidates leased 167 offices in 35 district capitals, Chisinau and Balti municipalities and ATUG, but only 3 of them reported such expenses in their statements submitted to CEC. We also found that 10 election candidates used communication services during the first 2 weeks of election campaigning, but only one election contestant (Marian Lupu) reported such expenses.

Promo-LEX observers reported the use of vehicles for electoral trips within RM by at least 10 election candidates, but only 4 election candidates reported such expenses in their statements submitted to CEC.

According to Promo-LEX observers, 9 election candidates fully or partially omitted reporting expenses for promotional materials in their reports on the funding of their election campaigns submitted to CEC. We state here that, up to 14 October 2016, the Observation Mission has noted the presence of online advertisements: paid Facebook advertisements and

online banners on a number of portals. Only 3 election candidates (Marian Lupu, Dumitru Ciubașenco, Inna Popenco) reported expenses exceeding the estimates made by Promo-LEX Mission.

See the Report [here](#).

Promo-LEX Observation Mission consists of 42 long-term observers who will monitor the electoral process in all constituencies of the Republic of Moldova during 31 August – 30 November 2016. On the election day, Promo-LEX will delegate a short-term observer in each polling station of the country. Promo-LEX EOM will also perform the Parallel Vote Tabulation in all polling stations. The Mission will monitor the electoral process in about 47 PS open abroad. The observers involved in the monitoring process sign the Code of Conduct of the Promo-LEX Independent National Observer, assuming the commitment to act efficiently, in good faith and in a non-partisan manner. The activity of all observers is coordinated by a central team consisting of 37 persons.

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