

First preliminary report on voting process abroad / National Constitutional Referendum



The “Promo-LEX” Association in partnership with “Moștenitorii” Association monitored the voting process in the constitutional referendum on September 5, 2010 at 40 polling stations located out of the Republic of Moldova*.

A number of shortcomings marked the voting process at the polling stations abroad monitored under this initiative:

A number of out-of-country polling stations were opened with delays and in breach of procedures. In the Italian town of Mestre, the polling station (PS) no.323 opened one hour and a quarter later than it should have, while the electoral bureau of that station had never assembled for a formal meeting until shortly before the start of the poll. The start of the vote was also delayed in Milan (PS no.356), Madrid (PS no.339), Santander (PS no.370), and Odessa (PS no.350).

In most of the monitored polling stations, there were members of the electoral bureaus who were not present at the opening hours. Such situations were registered at the polling stations in Greece, at some polling stations in Italy and Russia, and in Toulouse and Odessa.

Of particular concern was the presence of law-enforcement officers in the immediate vicinity of the polling places

abroad. For example, when the polling place no.338 opened in Moscow, there were 15 uniformed policemen outside the station (when the Romanian version of this report was first issued in the course of election day, the group of policemen had dispersed, but one or two were periodically reappearing). Similarly, 6 police officers were observed near the polling station hosted by the Moldovan Embassy in Athens, Greece. A police patrol was stationed outside the polling place in Madrid, Spain. The polling station in Turin was opened close to a police station. In most of the cases, it was the election officials who requested the presence of the law-enforcement officers, citing the need to ensure order and voters' safety, and in Madrid citing concerns of potential terrorist attacks.

In some cases, the members of the electoral bureaus had a very poor knowledge of the voting procedures. In Padua, Italy, two cases were registered where voting was allowed with an identity card (buletin de identitate). Most of the voters were entered on supplementary lists as the primary electoral rolls were imperfect. Some polling stations didn't have primary voter rolls at all. This was observed in Heraklion, Greece, and at both polling stations in Mestre, Italy.

In Russia, the packs of ballots destined for the polling station in Domodedovo were sent to the station in Mojaisk and vice-versa. Another faux pas happened with the electoral supplies destined for the polling stations in Bucharest and Lisbon.

In Italy, most of the polling stations didn't receive voting boxes, with two of them using cardboard boxes in stead. The same problem in Greece was solved in cooperation with the Greek public authorities, which offered polling booths and transparent boxes for the referendum.

* A number of 79 national observers monitored the voting process in the constitutional referendum at polling stations in Belgium (Brussels), the Czech Republic (Prague), Greece

(Athens, Heraklion, Thessaloniki), France (Paris, Toulouse), Germany (Berlin, Munich, Hamburg), Spain (Madrid, Santander), Portugal (Lisbon, Faro, Portimao), Romania (Bucharest – 2, Galați, Timișoara, Cluj, Iași), the Russian Federation (Moscow, Domdedovo, Mojaisk, St. Petersburg), Ukraine (Odessa), Italy (Rome – 2, Mestre – 2, Milan – 2, Padua – 2, Bologna -2, Parma, Turin, Verona, Naples).

This project is funded by the “Democracy Support Programme”, a joint initiative between the European Union and the Council of Europe

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