

# Parliamentary elections have neither been free nor fair for the Transnistrian region residents, Promo-LEX



Elections on April 5th 2009, conducted within the Transnistrian region, were characterized by obstacles created by the authorities in Tiraspol on one hand and negligence of the ensurance of the constitutional right to vote of citizens within this territory by the constitutional authorities on the other. This conclusion was reached by the experts at Promo-LEX , who have launched the [final report](#) on the electoral monitoring process in the Transnistrian region of Moldova during the 2009 parliamentary elections.

Promo-LEX holds the opinion that participation of citizens from the Transnistrian region is merely a formality, limited to the procedure for applying the “voted” stamp in the ballots and placing them in the ballot box. There were only ten polling stations open for the citizens of the Transnistrian region, located on the areas bordering land under the control of the constitutional authoritative bodies. This flagrantly violates the electoral code, which dictates that there must be more than 30 polling stations, with numbers of voters per station not exceeding 3,000. Moreover, the CEC (Central Electoral Commission) has published only 14,500 ballots for a total of approx. 223,580 potential voters, thus excluding from the beginning the possibility to vote of 209,080 voters from this territory, which is more than 8% of the total numbers of

voters in Moldova. In this context, only 4042 persons from the Transnistrian region voted, which represents approximately 50% of the participants that had participated in the previous parliamentary elections.

“The conduct of democratic elections is not possible without respect for human rights, particularly the freedom of expression and press, freedom of movement within the country, freedom of assembly and freedom of association for political purposes. Parliamentary elections were carried out with multiple violations for the Transnistrian region inhabitants. There have been numerous reported cases of intimidation and persecution of the population from the Transnistrian region in order to determine their non-participation in the electoral voting. Thus, we can safely say that the voting was neither free nor fair,” states Pavel Postica, lawyer, Promo-LEX .

The Tiraspol administration stated categorically on behalf of the people against the participation in the vote, thus attempting to influence both the attitude of the people and the atmosphere in society. Thus, voters in the region have claimed three major obstacles to their participation in elections: the stamping of the sheet accompanying the ID document, rigorous control and registration at the check posts and their eventual registration by the regional secret services present at polling stations.

Promo-LEX declares that voters have not had the full opportunity to be informed about voting on April 5th, about the electoral candidates, and their electoral platforms. On one hand, the electoral candidates have not been forthcoming, being reported just few cases of electoral agitation and information of the population. On the other hand the media has not addressed issues related to the equidistant information of the population regarding the electoral process in Moldova. As a result, the influence of mass media sources from the region prevailed and led to an massive absence of inhabitants at the polling stations.

The post-election period, particularly after the protest in Chisinau, was marked by intensification of control at the check posts. Although there had been several threats made, there had not been registered cases of dismissal for those who had participated in the elections.

Promo-LEX experts recommend the implementation of specific actions in order to improve the voting process in Transnistria. These actions include: the modification of a series of provisions of the Electoral Code, including separate electoral offices for the Transnistrian region and the creation of optimal conditions to encourage citizens to participate more actively, allocating the funds necessary for the facilities, the opening of 500 polling stations within the Transnistrian region, ensuring the security for all polling stations, the provision of qualified legal assistance free from state and/or electoral candidates for those detained or persecuted by the representatives of the force structures in the Transnistrian region, investigation of all cases which have created obstacles to the exercise of electoral rights in the Transnistrian region and the punishment under the law for all those guilty.

Association "Promo-LEX " is a member of the Civic Coalition for Free and Fair Elections "Coalition 2009". The project is supported financially by the Eurasia Foundation from resources provided by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida/Asdi) and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

The complete version of this report in English can be accessed [here](#).

For further information please contact: Promo-LEX Association, Lawyer, Pavel Postica, tel (+373 22) 45 00 24, email: [info@promolex.md](mailto:info@promolex.md)