

Findings of the Promo-LEX Observation Mission following the monitoring of the New Local Elections of November 21, 2021 Election Day



The Promo-LEX Observation Mission presents its main findings with regard to the opening and closing of the polling stations (PS), voting during the Election Day and incidents reported by observers during the monitoring of the new local elections of November 21, 2021. At the same time, we present the rapid vote counting results, conducted by Promo-LEX OM, in 15 settlements, where elections for the position of mayor were held.

The information was collected and reported by 28 static short-term observers (STOs), who monitored the electoral process in each of the polling stations set up in 14 level- one administrative units[1]. The elections in the municipality of Balti were observed by four mobile teams of two observers each that monitored all the 60 PSs set up.

During the election day, as a whole, the voting was organized efficiently and the process was smooth. About 18% of monitored PSs opened with insignificant delays. According to observers, the voting procedures were conducted in compliance with COVID-19 requirements in 89% of polling stations.

The Promo-LEX Observation Mission of the New Local Elections of November 21, 2021 finds that of the total of 18 notifications reported by Promo-LEX observers, 14 were processed as incidents, namely:

- intimidation of the Promo-LEX observer – 2 cases (PS 17/12, Falesti, Calinesti (by PAS representatives (1); by an unidentified person (1));
- unjustified presence of unauthorized persons inside the polling station or within 100 m of the PS – 2 cases (PS 16/11 Edinet, Cupcini (PAS-1, BESC-1), PS 17/12, Falesti, Calinesti (unidentified-1 case));
- unjustified cessation / suspension of voting process in the polling station – 1 case (PS 16/10, Edinet, Cupcini);
- interruption of the shooting of electoral operations during the voting day -1 case (PS 11/26, Cimislia, Hartop);
- availability of advertising materials on displays, electoral panels within 100 m of the polling station – 3 cases (PS 2/41, 2/57, PS 2/32 Balti municipality – BECS);
- ballot boxes were not sealed according to the legal procedures / broken / damaged or absence of seals on the ballot boxes – 1 case (PS 16/9, Edinet, Cupcini);

- deficiencies in electoral lists – 1 case (PS16 / 11 Edinet, Cupcini);
- photographing of ballots, other violations of the secrecy of the vote – 2 cases (PS 16/11 Edinet, Cupcini, PS 11/26, Cimislia, Hartop).
- deficiencies in the counting of ballot papers – 1 case (PS 17/12, Falesti, Calinesti).

Considering that the voter turnout exceeded 1/4 of the number of voters registered in the electoral lists, we find that the elections are valid in all 15 constituencies.

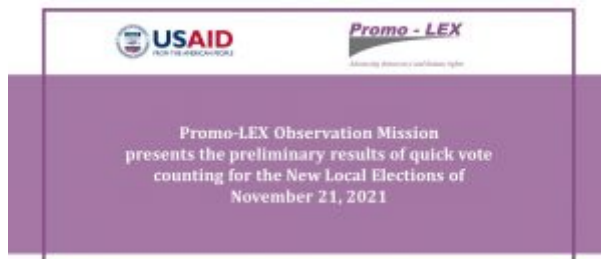
The closure of the observed PSs was held with no violations. The vote counting process carried out by the electoral bodies was generally quick and calm. However, in at least 7 PSs (19%), the members of the PEBs ignored the rule stating that in the counting process, the ballot paper must be displayed to all the other participants of the counting process by a single member of the bureau.

Traditionally, in these elections too, the Promo-LEX OM carried out a parallel vote counting. Out of the total number of 88 protocols collected, 36 were obtained directly from the Precinct Electoral Bureaus (PEBs) observed, and the other 52 (Balti constituency) were collected as they were submitted by the PEBs presidents to Constituency Electoral Council. The findings of Promo-LEX confirm the preliminary results established by the Central Electoral Commission. In the first round, mayors were elected in 9 settlements, and on December 5, 2021, the second round of elections will be organized in 6 other settlements.

N.	Settlement	Elected mayor	Preliminary results of the CEC	Promo-LEX preliminary results	Difference
1	Camenca village, Glodeni district	Postolachi Ala (PAS)	560 (70,00%)	560 (70,00%)	–
2	Palanca village, Stefan Voda district	Cozlovschi Dumitru (PAS)	359 (53,50%)	359 (53,50%)	–

3	Negureni village, Ungheni district	Uscatu Galina (PDM)	359 (53,34%)	359 (53,34%)	–
4	Hlinaia village, Edinet district	Ceban Tudor (PAS)	415 (55,18%)	415 (55,19%)	+0,01%
5	Calinesti village, Falesti district	Procopciuc Ala (IC)	495 (51,99%)	495 (52%)	+0,01%
6	Pirlita village, Falesti district	Neagu Sergiu (PAS)	768 (77,65%)	768 (77,65%)	–
7	Ucrainca commune, Causeni district	Macovei Tamara (PAS)	427 (80,72%)	427 (80,72%)	–
8	Iscalau commune, Falesti district	Boiciuc Alexandru (PPS)	609 (68,96%)	609 (68,97%)	+0,01%
9	Stefanesti village, Stefan Voda district	Bujorean Ruslan (BECS)	271 (59,82%)	271 (59,82%)	–

Details on the results of parallel vote counting in all 15 constituencies are contained in the presentation below.



The press release is prepared as part of the New Local Election Observation Mission of November 21, 2021, carried out by the Promo-LEX Association with the financial support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the “Democracy, Transparency and Accountability” Program.

The views expressed in the public reports and press releases of Promo-LEX are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the funders or partners. The content of this document may be subject to editorial revisions.

If there are discrepancies between the text in Romanian and its translation into another language, the provisions

established by the text in Romanian shall prevail.

For more information, please contact:

Elena Raileanu-Seremac,

Press officer of the Promo-LEX Association

GSM: 069895515

e-mail: elena.seremac@promolex.md

[\[1\]](#) Ucrainca commune and Opaci village (Causeni district), Hartop commune (Cimislia district), the town of Cupcini and Hlinaia village (Edinet district), Işcalau commune, Calinesti and Parliaa villages (Falesti district), Camenca commune (Glodeni district) Hancesti), Cneazevca commune (Leova district), Palanca and Ştefanesti villages (Stefan Voda district), Negurenii Vechi commune (Ungheni district).

Promo-LEX launches the Observation Mission of New Local Elections of 21 November 2021

✘ Promo-LEX Association launches today, 7 October 2021, the Observation Mission (OM) of New Local Elections of 21 November 2021[\[1\]](#). Electoral observation will cover the electoral period and the election day (including the second round in the communities where it will be held), and will be conducted by the central team, as well as 6 long-term observers (LTOs) and 30 short-term observers (STOs), deployed at local level.

Promo-LEX Observation Mission will monitor the electoral

campaign for compliance with the principles of democratic electoral processes and with the legal framework. Observers will monitor the activity of electoral bodies and other relevant institutions, the performance of electoral contenders and of political parties, including the funding of the electoral campaign. On the election day, we will monitor the opening and closing of polling stations, voting process, accessibility of offices, compliance with epidemiological rules, and ballot counting. Traditionally, Promo-LEX OM will perform the parallel vote tabulation. During this period, we will publish two press releases with the findings of Promo-LEX observers on the conduct of elections on the election day (including on the second round of election, if needed), and the monitoring outcomes and Observation Mission's conclusions will be presented in a report.

At the same time, based on the experience of monitoring the New Local Elections of 2018 and General Local Elections of 2019, Promo-LEX reminds about some constant problematic aspects found previously and that can be repeated during these elections, as well. Thus, we draw the attention of the legislator, electoral bodies and other relevant stakeholders on the need to ensure fair conditions at the stage of collecting signatures for the position of mayor in the case of independent candidates, and on the exaggerated number of signatures that need to be collected in candidate nominating petitions in order to be registered as a contender for the election of the mayor of Balti Municipality. At the same time, we reiterate the existence of an unfair attitude towards independent women candidates to the position of mayor, compared to independent women candidates to the position of MPs. We also find lack of clear regulations on voting arrangements for citizens with domicile and residence valid on the local election day, as well as on the beginning of the electoral campaign for the second round of election.

Promo-LEX is a non-governmental organisation with the richest

experience in national election monitoring. Since 2009, Promo-LEX has monitored 21 elections (local, parliamentary and presidential), involving over 16 thousand national observers. The purpose of Promo-LEX Observation Missions is to inform the public about the conduct of the campaign and to increase people's trust in the electoral process, contributing thus to free and fair elections in line with international standards and national law.

Promo-LEX Association carries out the Observation Mission for the New Local Elections with the financial support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Democracy, Transparency and Responsibility Program.

For more information, please contact:

Elena Răileanu-Seremac,

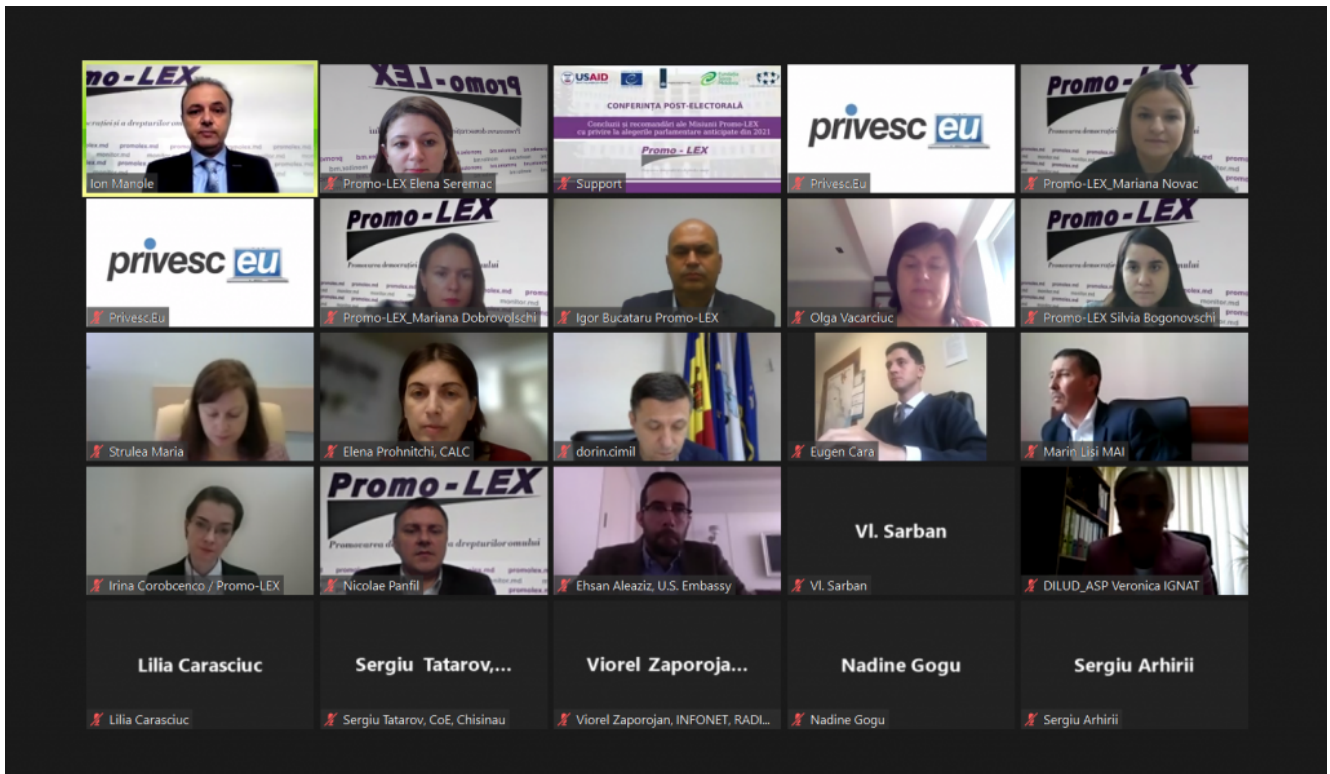
Communication Office at Promo-LEX Association

GSM: 069 89 55 15, e-mail: elena.seremac@promolex.md

[\[1\]](#) New local elections will be held on 21 November 2021 in 15 localities (Balti Municipality, Ucrainca commune and Opaci village, Causeni district, Hartop commune, Cimislia district, Cupcini town and Hlinaia village, Edinet district, Iscalau commune, Calinesti and Parlita villages, Falesti district, Camenca commune, Glodeni district, Balceana village, Hancesti district, Cneazevca commune, Leova district, Palanca and Stefanesti villages, Stefan Voda district, Negurenii Vechi commune, Ungheni district).

Early Parliamentary Elections of 11 July 2021: Promo-LEX Association conclusions and recommendations discussed during the Post-Election Conference on the Final Report of the Observation Mission

On 15 September 2021 – the International Day of Democracy, Promo-LEX Association organised the Post-Election Conference ‘Conclusions and Recommendations of Promo-LEX Observation Mission on early Parliamentary Elections of 11 July 2021’. The online event was attended by representatives of electoral bodies, other relevant institutions, electoral contenders and political parties, as well as civil society organisations, development partners of the Republic of Moldova, media, etc.



A series of problematic aspects related to the 10th Parliamentary elections since the declaration of Moldova's independence have been presented, emphasizing the findings and recommendations expressed by Promo-LEX experts and participants in the event. During the Post-Election Conference, the participants also discussed about the opportunity of initiating amendments to the Electoral Code and related laws.

Even if in 2019 the electoral law was amended and the country returned to the proportional system, ***the early Parliamentary Elections of 11 July 2021 were marked by some problems (for instance: misuse of administrative resources, failure to regulate the organised transportation of voters on the election day, lack of mechanisms to combat hate speech in electoral campaigns) which have perpetuated from one election to another.*** Regrettably, the Parliament failed to find solutions for these problems (*although a draft law – No 263 of 19.06.2020 was debated and passed in the first reading even before the 2020 Presidential elections*). In addition, new problems emerged, such as delay in funding the organisation and conduct of elections, **uncertainties** regarding the

establishment of polling stations for voters in the transnistrian region and abroad, superficial approach to solving electoral disputes, as well as ambiguities regarding the authenticity of the declarations of assets and interests filed by candidates for the position of Member of Parliament.

As a whole, ***the Central Electoral Commission activity was appreciated by Promo-LEX Observation Mission as efficient in terms of organising the election.*** Particularly, we would like to note that, despite the delay in fully funding the early elections, CEC managed to honour its obligations to election officials and other stakeholders involved in ensuring proper conduct of the elections. ***However***, when speaking about the decision-making process within CEC, ***the suspicions about alleged political interference with certain CEC decisions cannot be overlooked.*** The allegations refer especially to the establishment of polling stations in the transnistrian region and abroad – a process that was discontinuous, without any public consultations and without a sound rationale for the decisions taken. In this regard, we remind about the insufficient and inappropriate collaboration between CEC and MFAEI, as well as CEC's failure to take a responsible attitude towards the issue of organised transportation of voters on the election day.



On the other hand, ***the examination of complaints both by CEC and courts is still a problem of the electoral process in the Republic of Moldova.*** The large amount of rejected/returned complaints or

complaints declared inadmissible severely affects the level of confidence in the accuracy of procedures, both among contenders and the whole society. CEC did not approve any decision on the examined complaints, but only responded by letters. Thus, the complainants were deprived of their right to an effective remedy and the right to benefit from a process with the participation of both parties.

The monitoring of early Parliamentary Elections of 11 July 2021 confirmed again that hate speech is constantly present in public space and media in the Republic of Moldova.

Regrettably, we find that this phenomenon is still neither regulated, nor sanctioned.

During the electoral period 390 cases of hate speech and incitement to discrimination were identified, of which 299 cases were in electoral context. Criteria on which the hate speech and incitement to discrimination were based included mainly: political affiliation, sex/gender, sexual orientation/gender identity, age, opinion.

Another aspect monitored by Promo-LEX Association and discussed during the event referred **to low level of transparency of electoral campaign funding**. According to the presented report, about 32% (MDL 12,855,043) of total expenses of the electoral contenders were not reported to CEC. The most unreported expenses were related to printed and promotional materials (34%), followed by delegation/secondment of people (31%), offices (13%) and staff remuneration (11%).

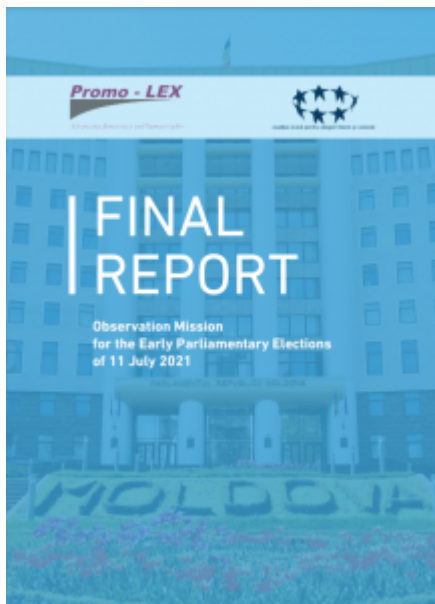
From the total unreported expenses, Promo-LEX found that, about 26% – can be assigned to BECS, 24% – to PPS, 12% – to PDM and PAS each, 7% – to BERU, 6% – to PPCC, 5% – to PPPDA, 3% – to PACE, 2% – to PUN, 1% – to AUR and PDCM each, and 1% – to other 10 electoral contenders.

The election day was calm, the voting process was organized efficiently, and most PSs were opened and closed according to

regulations. Parallel vote counting results conducted by Promo-LEX Association did not indicate major differences between CEC final data and Observation Mission final data.

However, during the election day observers noticed and reported a series of incidents that have already become 'traditional' for elections in the Republic of Moldova, such as: taking pictures of the ballot papers and other violations of secret of vote (108 cases); presence of advertising materials, electoral billboards and posters in the vicinity of the polling station (57 cases) and interruption of the video taping of the electoral procedures during the election day (53 cases). At the same time, suspicions around the offering of rewards (17) and organised voter transportation (29) were particularly related to the electoral process in the transnistrian region.

Overall, during the election day Promo-LEX observers reported 601 cases, 480 of which were qualified as incidents by the central team of the Observation Mission.



All findings and recommendations of Promo-LEX Association are included in the Final Report of the Observation Mission, which can be accessed [here](#).

This press release was prepared as part of the Election Observation Mission for the early Parliamentary Elections of 11 July 2021, conducted by Promo-LEX Association with the financial support of the United States Agency for

International Development (USAID) through the 'Democracy, Transparency and Responsibility' Program, of the Council of Europe through 'Support for civic observation of the 2021 Early Parliamentary Elections in the polling stations set up abroad' Project, as well as of the Netherlands Embassy Office in Chisinau through 'Support for informing citizens and civic observation of the 2021 Early Parliamentary Elections in the polling stations set up for voters from the transnistrian region'. 'Hate speech' component is supported by Justice and Human Rights Department of Soros Foundation Moldova through 'Strengthening a platform for the development of human rights activism and education in the Republic of Moldova – stage IV'.

The opinions set out in the public reports and press releases of Promo-LEX OM are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the view of funders or partners. The content of this document can be subject to editing.

For more information, please contact:

Elena Răileanu-Seremac, Communication Office at Promo-LEX Association

GSM: 069 89 55 15;

E-mail: elena.seremac@promolex.md

In 2020, the implementation of the 2016-2020 Police Development Strategy was marked by implementation

arrears and reaching a record level of citizens' confidence in the Police

The Promo-LEX Association presented today its Report no. 5 on Civic Monitoring of Police Reform in the Republic of Moldova. The document is an annual report, which presents a post-factum synthesis of the degree of implementation by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the General Inspectorate of Police of the objectives set out in the 2016-2020 Police Development Strategy and the Policy Matrix on implementation of the budget support for 2017 – 2020, provided by the European Union for the Police reform.



In 2020, the citizens' confidence in the Police continued to increase. Thus, according to [the Barometer of Public Opinion](#), in 2020 (the original deadline was 2019), the Police

reached the target of 41% of citizens' confidence, this indicator being set as an objective in the financing agreement for the implementation of the "Support for Police Reform" program, signed by the European Commission and the Government of the Republic of Moldova.

However, according to the Report presented by the Promo -LEX Association, 2020, similarly to the previous years, saw several achievements in the implementation of the Strategy, along with multiple unfulfilled or partially fulfilled sub-actions. Thus, out of a total of 31 sub - actions to be completed by the end of 2020, only 12 (38.7%) were fully implemented, another 12 were partially implemented (38.7%) and five sub - actions (16.1%) remained unfulfilled. Two sub-actions (6.5%) could not be evaluated due to the immeasurable indicators.

Most sub-actions (5) qualified by Promo -LEX as fulfilled are related to the achievement of Objective no. 4, namely "creating a modern police service in line with the best international and EU standards and practices, able to respond proactively and equally to the needs of citizens and society as a whole". The Promo -LEX Association welcomes the efforts made in order to ensure a reliable and efficient communication system for the operational purposes of the Police, as well as the endowment of specialized and territorial subdivisions with TETRA equipment.

At the same time, with regard to the arrears, we should mention the omission of the regionalization of the public procurement system within the Police, failure to approve the standard operational procedures and to train Police personnel for this purpose. Speaking of arrears, most unrealized sub-actions (3) were recorded in the implementation of Objective no. 1 of the Strategy, aimed at "consolidating the responsibility, efficiency, transparency and professionalism of the Police".

Following the approval of the Government Decision on the organization and operation of the GIP at the end of 2019, 2020 was a year of institutional reorganization of the GIP. Although new organizational structures of GIP subdivisions were approved, the decentralization of the activities of maintaining and ensuring public order at the level of territorial subdivisions of the Police was omitted. Thus, the lack of will to implement a real institutional reform, in line with the strategic commitments made, was one of the causes of the delays and arrears in the implementation of the reform. Additionally, the fulfilment of the commitments undertaken was influenced by the memorandum imposed on occupying vacant positions within the GIP and the MIA, as well by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Report no. 5 on Civic Monitoring of Police Reform can be found [here](#).

Report no. 5 and its public launch are carried out by the Promo-LEX Association within the “Civic Monitoring of Police Reform in the Republic of Moldova” project, implemented with the financial support of the European Union, co-founded by the USA Embassy in Chisinau and the East Europe Foundation from resources provided by Swidden.

The project “Civic Monitoring of Police Reform in the Republic of Moldova” highlights the role of civic oversight of non-governmental organizations during the implementation of reforms, as well as the right of citizens to participate in decision-making process. The general objective of the project is to consolidate the responsibility, efficiency and transparency of the Police reform in the Republic of Moldova.

For more information, please contact:

Elena Raileanu- Seremac, Communications Officer of the Promo-LEX Association; GSM: 069895515, e-mail: elena.seremac@promolex.md