



Expert Assessment of Short-term Election Observation Mission to 14 June 2015 Local Elections in Moldova carried out by the International Elections Study Center (IESC)

General information on observation

On 12 June 2015, the International Elections Study Center (IESC) in partnership with the European Platform for Democratic Elections (EPDE) and Moldavian NGO Promo-Lex deployed an international expert mission to Local Elections in Moldova that were held on June 14, 2015. The mission was composed of 20 experts, who observed the election processes on the Election Day at more than 100 polling stations located in different regions of the Republic of Moldova. Due to the limited observation timeframe, this report encompasses mostly just some aspects of the electoral legislation and procedures, as well as their application on the Polling Day.

Observation results

Local Elections in Moldova were held in the competitive environment, as there were numerous observers certified by the candidates present at polling stations.

Observers have noted a general improvement of the electronic registration and the Internet, compared with the Parliamentary Elections in 2014. However some voters were missing in the electronic register, though they did not change their place of residence. Nevertheless, as a result of changed boundaries of some PECs, voters did not know which one to go to for voting. It should be also noted, that there was insufficient number of signs for PECs.

The Election Law provides detailed procedure for registering voters on the supplementary electoral rolls and stipulates sufficient safeguards against multiple voting. Voters shall be registered on the supplementary electoral rolls on the Election Day if a person proves that he is registered at the particular PEC or he might submit a document proving the voting right at the particular polling station. However, in Orhei town there was a case of unsatisfactory performance of commission members working at voters identification table: slow service, people are not allowed to enter the premises, they had to remain at the entrance in the heat.

In some cases, the election procedures were applied in different ways at different polling stations. Obviously, this has happened due to the insufficient training of PEC members that is carried out by the Continuous Training Centre. At some polling stations we were not allowed taking pictures or making any video recording (Chisinau PEC Nos. 1-110 and 1-184; Glodeani PEC No. 19-4; Orhei PEC No. 25-6). At PECs, protocols were processed in different ways while opening polling stations.

Observers paid attention to the selected polling premises and access to it. A number of polling stations were not accessible to persons with disabilities, their secrecy of vote was disrespected. There is no training for disabled people using special means facilitating voting.

On the Election Day, at some PECs the campaigning material was still present. Such cases were

reported at the following polling stations: Orhei PEC No. 25-6, Glodeani PEC No. 19-4, Ryshkany PEC No. 27-3, Balti PEC No. 14-2. In addition, at the PEC No. 1-272 Vadul lui Voda the pictures of some candidates were posted next to the voting booths (of teachers working at the school where the PEC was located). It is worth noting that when we have drawn the attention to the campaign materials at the polling stations Cahul PEC No. 1-141 and Drochia PEC No. 14-4, the chairmen immediately removed campaigning materials posted next to the premises of polling station.

At the polling station located in the village of Buteni PEC No. 20-14 observers reported busing of voters initiated by one of the candidates.

In overall, observers noticed a fairly high level of interest among civil society organizations in the public control over the electoral process. Civilian observers were present at each visited polling station.

Taking into consideration the electoral procedures and observation experience on the Election Day, IESC experts share the following recommendations:

1. To develop a uniform template for candidates' and parties' information that is mandatory in the polling premises;
2. To specify the procedure for removal of campaigning materials near the polling stations on the Election Day;
3. To amend the provisions and instructions by entitling observers to take pictures and make video recording and inform all PECs about it;
4. To provision that the number of voters should be respected when selecting the premises for a polling station;
5. To facilitate premises for polling stations accessible to voters with disabilities;
6. To instruct precinct election commissions to maintain the stamps located in the voting booths that the stamps would not get dry;
7. To introduce the mandatory protocol printed on a large format paper presenting voting results at each polling station and post it in a location accessible to observers;
8. To engage more intensively in drawing voters attention to a set of documents conditioning polling by adding the list of those documents to the voter invitation card;
9. To carry out a feasibility study on suffrage for persons who are temporary registered at a certain district, including students (the students had no right to vote at their place of residence and during the summer holidays they as well had no opportunity to vote at the place of temporary registration where they study, so this time most of the students have been deprived of voting rights in the election);
10. To eliminate a possibility to issue a ballot paper, bypassing the stage of ID verification carried out by the operators;
11. To improve the illumination at the PECs at least while carrying out vote count;
12. To oblige the PEC chairmen to announce to those present the beginning and the results of each step and procedure taken during the vote count.