



## Second round of October 21, 2017 mayoral elections of self-governing city/self-governing community held on November 12, 2017

The voting process was conducted mainly in peaceful environment. The only exception was Khashuri, where the incident took place between the supporters of the ruling party Georgian Dream and independent candidate. The situation was quickly eased by police intervention, however the case should be investigated.

The issue of considering those bulletins valid where the voter has clearly indicated his/her will was identified in several precincts. Nakisrali precinct (Ozurgeti #59 precinct) should be particularly emphasized in this context, where disturbance was created during the vote counting process. The developments have left the impression

that after the results in favor of the independent candidate were revealed, there was an attempt to deliberately mess up the situation and annul the results groundlessly.

Vicious practice still continued at number of precincts on the E-day, as unidentified persons with lists (most likely party coordinators and activists) were still present outside the election precincts, who kept recording the voters at the polling station. Furthermore, the voters were transferred to the election precincts during the whole day via minibuses and vehicles.

Several cases were revealed when the number of issued bulletins exceeded by 2 the number of signatures of the voters at the same precincts (4 cases in total), the problems with mobile ballot boxes were also revealed on several precincts.

On the E-day GYLA observers have lodged **12 complaints at precincts, 12 complaints at election districts and 24 remarks as well.**

#### **The complaints lodged at districts are as follows:**

Borjomi -5

Ozurgeti - 4

Kazbegi - 3

#### **The complaints were lodged regarding the following violations:**

- Improper fulfilment of duty by the members of the election commission - 10 cases.
- Number of bulletins issued exceeded the number of signatures of the voters in

the list of voters – 4 cases

- Violations related to the mobile ballot boxes – 3
- Control of the voters' will – 10 cases
- Violation of secrecy of voting – 1 case
- Other improper fulfilment of duty by the members of the election commission – 2 cases

## **Vote counting and summing up the results**

### **Incident in Khashuri**

At the end of the day there was the confrontation between the supporters of independent mayoral candidate in Khashuri, Ramaz Nozadze and mayoral candidate of Georgian Dream.

According to our information, the supporters of Georgian Dream, who drove the vehicles around the city, threw torches at Ramaz Nozadze office. Following the incident Ramaz Nozadze supporters left the office and supporters of independent mayoral candidate, in total 3 persons, including one young woman were injured during the physical confrontation.

Based on independent candidate's headquarters information, several public servants employed in Khashuri self-government were participating in the incident.

The police arrived on site on time and managed to ease the situation. Police checked supporters of the independent candidate on alcoholic intoxication and filled in administrative offence report against one of them for driving in a state of alcoholic intoxication. However, according to the supporters of the independent mayoral candidate, the police have not checked on alcoholic intoxication the supporters of the Georgian Dream that participated in the incident.

GYLA studies the case.

We urged the law enforcement organs to investigate the mentioned case in timely manner, thoroughly and objectively. Furthermore, it is particularly significant to study the alleged participation of public servants in the mentioned incident and if confirmed, use legal measures against them envisaged by the law.

## **Other violations of vote counting process**

According to the information of our observer, the precinct election commission considered the bulletins invalid at **Ozurgeti #12 and #59 precincts** mistakenly, on which one candidate was marked in circle and the other was crossed by X.

Namely, at **Ozurgeti #59 precinct** the commission annulled 18 bulletins. Including 2 bulletins in favor of Georgian Dream mayoral candidate and 16 bulletins in favor of independent mayoral candidate. According to GYLA observer the commission annulled the mentioned bulletins mistakenly. GYLA lodged the complaint regarding the mentioned case. During the loud discussion of annulment issue the Chair felt bad. At the same time representatives of different observer organizations and media resources entered the precinct, part of which requested to annul the results of the

precinct results and interfered in commission activities.

**At Ozurgeti #12 precinct** the commission was planning to annul approximately 35 bulletins that clearly expressed the will of voter and their validity should have not become controversial.

On 12 bulletins out of abovementioned the choice was in favor of independent candidate and on approximately 5 bulletins – in favor of Georgian Dream mayoral candidate. The commission considered that the will of the voter was not expressed in such cases (the last name of one of the candidates was marked in circle and the other was crossed) and was to be annulled.

GYLA observer expressed the opinion regarding the annulled bulletins. Commission discussed the mentioned issue and considered the aforementioned bulletins as valid.

Up to 30 bulletins were annulled at **Ozurgeti #16 Precinct**. According to GYLA observer information, there were approximately 17 annulled bulletins that did not have signatures of the registering clerk on the back side. According to GYLA information, the choice on these mentioned 17 bulletins were made in favor of independent mayoral candidate.

### **Other violations revealed during the vote counting process**

Summary protocols taken by GYLA observer from the Kazbegi #3 precinct and the protocols of the same precinct uploaded on the CEC web-page were different. In the summary protocol taken by the GYLA observer from the precinct the date and time of

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drawing up the protocol was not indicated in the protocol.

GYLA observed second round of October 21, 2017 Mayoral elections of self-governing city/self-governing community held on November 12, 2017 in Kutaisi, Martvili, Ozurgeti, Khashuri, Borjomi and Kazbegi.

Static observers were placed in every election precinct of Khashuri, Borjomi, Ozurgeti and Kazbegi. We managed to observe problematic precincts and adjacent territories through mobile team in Martvili and Kutaisi districts.

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