

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



Election Day Observation Results by 14:00

By 14:00^[1], based on reports by GYLA observers, electoral procedures on all observed polling stations are timely and there are no substantial violations. However, there are negative tendencies, related to charged environment and control over voters' will.

By now, there are cases of physical confrontation at various polling stations of Zugdidi electoral district and adjacent territories. Incidents have occurred at polling stations #9, #87, #95 and #97. GYLA considers that such incidents alienate

voters and negatively affects the free expression of voters' will.

Mobilization of coordinators and supporters near the polling stations also negatively affects the free expression of voters' will. They are either counting voters on a distance or make photo-video recordings in the process of voters' arrival to the polling station. Such cases were revealed by GYLA observers in Zugdidi district, polling stations #1 and #4. Although those cases do not represent violation, but they cause discomfort to the voters and creates the feeling of being controlled. Such negative incidents repeat the tendency of the previous elections and has been assessed negatively by both local[2] and international[3] observer missions. The statements made by one of the leaders of the ruling party, Kakha Kaladze, are particularly concerning.[4]

Vote secrecy is being violated in Tskaltubo, where electronic vote count testing is underway. According to the information, provided by GYLA observers, there were a number of technical problems with ballot scanner. In order to resolve the problem, it is necessary to remove the ballot from the equipment, during which it is possible to identify the choice of the voter.

It is notable that in the majority of the polling stations, there is a large number of persons with the observer status, which is a challenge for the election administration. Administration must ensure fair distribution of observer space, in such a way, to prevent obstructing the voting process for the voters.

By now, GYLA observers submitted 5 complaints in Zugdidi district:

- #73 and #75 polling stations – violation of the casting of lots (refusal to participate, refusal to perform allotted duties);
- #10 and #32 polling stations – violation of the voting procedures (voter from the mobile list has voted at the polling station, taking envelope into the booth);
- #108 polling station – presence of unauthorized person at the polling stations ([redacted] or live reporter of Imedi TV was allowed inside the polling station – at the moment, the problem is resolved);

By now, GYLA observers submitted 1 complaint in Marneuli district:

- #83 polling station – repeated voting (inked person has voted twice).

GYLA Observation Mission on the Election Day

GYLA is observing the May 19/2019 Parliament ☐ By-Elections in the Mtatsminda majoritarian district; Mayor ☐ Extraordinary Elections in Mtatsminda, Marneuli, Zugdidi and Khulo districts, as well as Interim Elections of Tskaltubo and Ozurgeti Municipality Councils. GYLA has total 50 observers deployed.

Static observers are deployed in 22 electoral precincts throughout Georgia. GYLA is observing in 6 districts through 17 mobile groups and 7 district observers. GYLA emphasizes both compliance with electoral procedures (opening, voting and summary procedures at the polling station), as well as the developments surrounding the polling stations on the adjacent territories. When revealing violations, GYLA interferes with strategic litigation mechanism at the district election commissions and in the courts.

On the election day, GYLA is operating the special hotline, allowing citizens to obtain legal consultations regarding the electoral procedures.

GYLA is also operating the hotline for journalists and media organizations, where they can receive useful information and legal consultations regarding elections, violations and the ways to respond to them.

The hotline number is: 032 2 18 26 30

Next Press Conference will be held on May 19: at 20:00. On May 20, GYLA will summarize the observation at 12:00.

On May 19, monitoring mission was made possible with the financial support of the Open Society Georgia Foundations (OSGF). The opinions reflected in this statement are sole responsibility of GYLA and may not reflect those of the donor.

[1] Document may not reflect the cases that occurred before 14:00, in cases when GYLA is in the process of verification of the information or has not received the information yet;

[2] 2018 Presidential Election/Second Round evaluation, GYLA website, available at: <https://gyla.ge/ge/post/2018-tslis-saprezidento-archevnebis-meore-turis-kentchisyris-dghis-shefaseba#sthash.yVyBws10.eYGbo74L.dpbs>, updated: 19.05.2019.

[3] Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Georgia, Presidential Elections 2018/28 October and 28 November, OSCE/ODIHR International Observation Mission, final report, Warsaw, 2019/February 28, page 58;

[4] Kakha Kaladze – აქვს უფლება მიმართოს პოლიციას და მოგვითხროს, თუ რა მოხდა, როდესაც მედიის წარმომადგენლებს უფლება არ ჰქონდათ შეიჭრათ სასაარჩევნო ცენტრებში. Don't be scared of journalists, you have a right to do this – Kakha Kaladze, Interpressnews, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/547224-kaxa-kalaze-minda-mivmarto-qvela-koordinators-vinc-siebit-dgas-ubnebz-nu-sheushindebit-zhurnalists-tkven-amis-upleba-gakvt/>, updated: 19.05.2019.