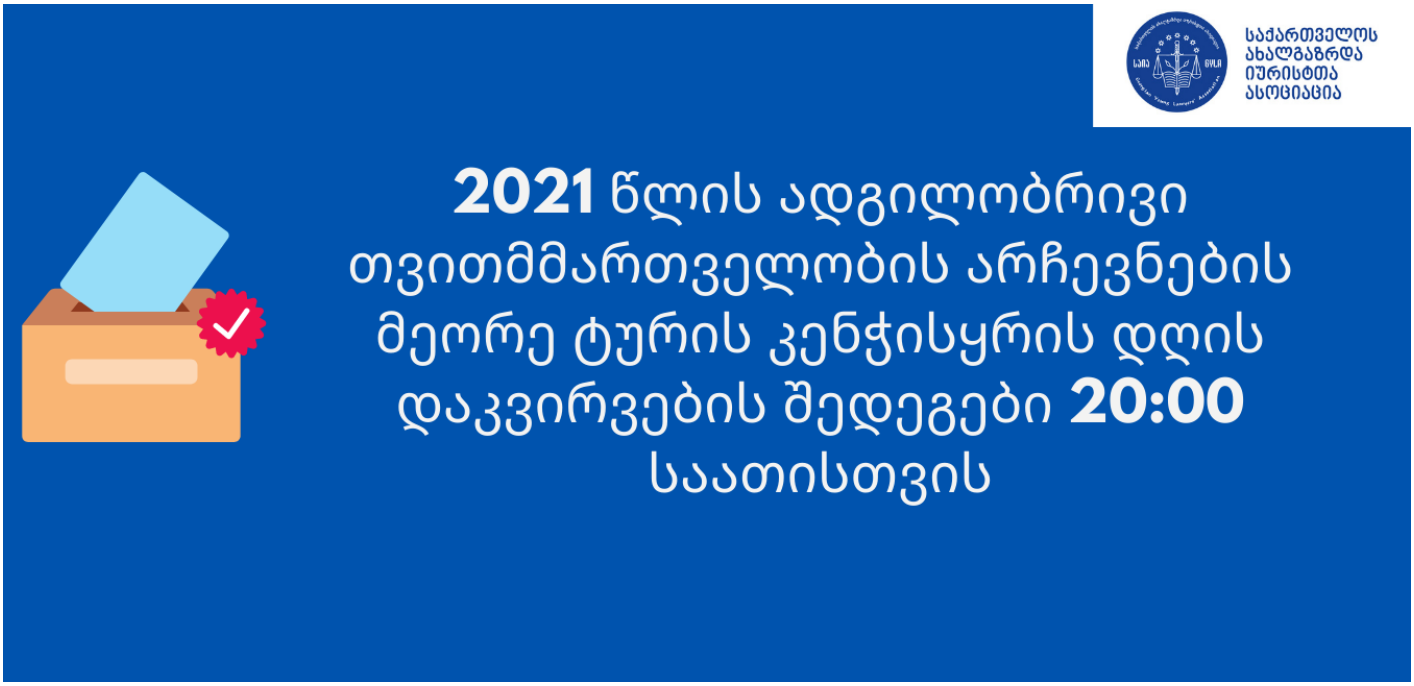

RESULTS OF 2021 SELF-GOVERNMENT ELECTION OBSERVATION OF THE POLLING DAY AS OF 8PM

Georgian Young Lawyers' Association, within the framework of the Short-Term Observation (STO) Mission, provides the public with information about the main findings during a second round of the local self-government elections as of 8 PM. Based on the information collected by the GYLA's observers, we address the issues related to the closing of polling stations and the beginning of the vote counting, as well as the tendencies observed in and around the polling stations in the second part of Election Day.

During the second part of the voting day, an intensified tension hindered the voting process in several polling stations. In Zugdidi #21, #53, #103, Rustavi #16, Isani #81 and #62, Batumi #49 precincts, chairs of election commissions were not able to handle this situation. Consequently, on certain occasions, it became necessary to call the police. In Isani #62 precinct the tension even led to a confrontation between the officials.

The procedural violations identified during the voting are as follows:

- At Samgori #94 precinct, the voter did not open the door to the commission members accompanying the mobile ballot box after he had been handed over the ballot envelope. Therefore, it was not possible to identify who had signed and voted on the ballot paper. Moreover, the voter placed the list for voters of the mobile ballot box in the envelope, which was thrown into the ballot box by the commission members. After returning to the polling station, the commission members had to open the mobile ballot box in order to remove the list. Thus, the integrity of the seal was lost.
- At Senaki #14 polling station, according to the GYLA observer, the voter signed at the wrong place during the registration. The registrar closed the list immediately and refused to show the list to the voter. The voter entered the booth and despite the resistance, managed to place a filled ballot in the ballot box.
- At Rustavi #75 polling station, an already-inked voter tried to cast his/her ballot.
- At Rustavi #8 polling station, the registrar was recording the queue numbers of the voters.
- At Batumi #91 precinct, a case of control over the will of voters by the chair of the commission has been recorded. In particular, the chair asked the registrars to track and call the voters who did not show up at the polling station.
- At Zugdidi #55 polling station, a voter took a photo of the ballot paper, which he/she then showed to the polling station’s one of the cleaning service staff members.
- In Samgori #28 polling station, photo/video recording has been conducted in a way that it made possible to identify the voter.
- At Senaki #25 polling station, a voter, who was also observing the voting process, publicly voted on the ballot paper. The members of the commission did not respond accordingly.
- At Zugdidi #29 precinct, two representatives of the observing organization “Public Union first from Georgia” were present at the precinct. They claimed to be representatives of OSCE. Despite the several remarks of the GYLA observer, the chair of the commission permitted both of them to stay at the polling station.
- At Batumi #89 and Gldani #28 violations of the inking rules have been identified.

In Gldani #31 precinct, GYLA observers noticed that Elene Khoshtaria was present as

an observer of the local observer organization (“VPN Georgia”). The fact that Ms. Khoshtaria is a state official, excludes her from the possibility of granting her this status. In order to respond to this incident, GYLA will appeal to the Central Election Commission with the request to revoke her the status of the election observer.

In some cases, COVID-19 regulations were violated, specifically in Vake #18, #40, #53, #56, #64, and #77 precincts, observers did not have their temperature measured.

Interference in the activities of the observers still persists. Such cases were reported in Zugdidi #18, #29 and #78 precincts.

As of 8 PM, considering the identified violations, GYLA`s observers had filed 32 complaints and recorded 13 remarks.

Short-Term Observation (STO) Mission of Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association (GYLA) on Election Day

Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association Short-Term Observation (STO) Mission during the second round of the Local Self-Government Elections on October 30 consists of 300 observers in distinct and precinct election commissions covering 9 municipalities across the country.

On Election Day, GYLA operates a hotline number for the citizens, which enables them to receive legal consultations as well as any information regarding electoral procedures, violations on the polling day, and the ways of responding to them.

The hotline number is: 577 36 15 20

GYLA will hold three press conferences regarding the process of Election Day observation at the NGO Media Center during the day. The press conferences will be held at 12:00, 16:30, and 21:00. On October 31, at 12 PM, GYLA will finalize its observation findings for the second round of the elections.

GYLA's monitoring mission on the voting day of the Local-self Government elections was made possible with the funding of the British Embassy and Open Society Georgia Foundation (OSGF). The opinions expressed in the statement are those of the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association and its content may not express the views of the donor organization.