



Final report of the international election observer organization *Home Together* on the monitoring mission of the Georgian parliamentary elections from October 31, 2020

We are a non-governmental Organization *Home Together*, (Gemeinsam Zuhause e.V.) registered in Germany with the aim to contribute strengthening civil society and democratic development in Georgia.

We acted as international observer organization and monitored parliamentary elections from October 31, 2020.

In our role as international observer, our team consisted of 172 Observers in Georgia and foreign countries, viz., Germany, Austria, Belgium, Sweden, France, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Greece, Poland, Turkey, and Ukraine.

Within the monitoring mission, our organization detected numerous irregularities in pre-election period, on the election day as well as in post-election period. We consider the blocking of the system for electronic registration of observers for foreign IP addresses and the hindering the registration of observers with foreign citizenship as particularly heavy, serious, and systemic violations by the Central Election Commission (CEC). We interpret these violations as a barrier specifically created by the Central Election Commission for international observer organizations. These and other barriers mentioned in our report significantly hindered our work and endangered the preparation of our monitoring mission.

In addition, we see as a violation of neutrality and data protection regulation the fact that the Central Election Commission passed on our email address to the election subject *Georgian Dream*, as right after the registration process, *Georgian Dream* started to send us several times a day the so called *GD Weekly Election Bulletin* and *Ad-hoc Daily Chronicle* – the propagandistic editions often containing incorrect information. The major aim of these editions most likely systematically forwarded also to other international observer organizations is to disinform the international society and to split and polarize the society in Georgia.



Following serious and often systemic violations were also determined by our observers:

- Discrepancy between the numbers of registered voters and available ballot papers
- Problems with the voter lists
- Violation of voting secrecy
- Political agitation on the polling stations
- Influence on the will of the voters
- Violation of the observer rights
- Violation of the marking rules

It is worth mentioning that according to the precinct-level summary protocols opposition parties won convincingly on 13 of 15 polling stations in Georgia and on 19 of 19 foreign polling stations, where our observers continuously monitored elections during election day. However, the results published by the CEC give a completely different picture. Although due to the small number of polling stations monitored by our observers, it is difficult to extrapolate the results observed on these polling stations to the whole Georgia, due to the systemic nature of the violations there are many questions and reasonable doubts about the legitimacy of the election results.

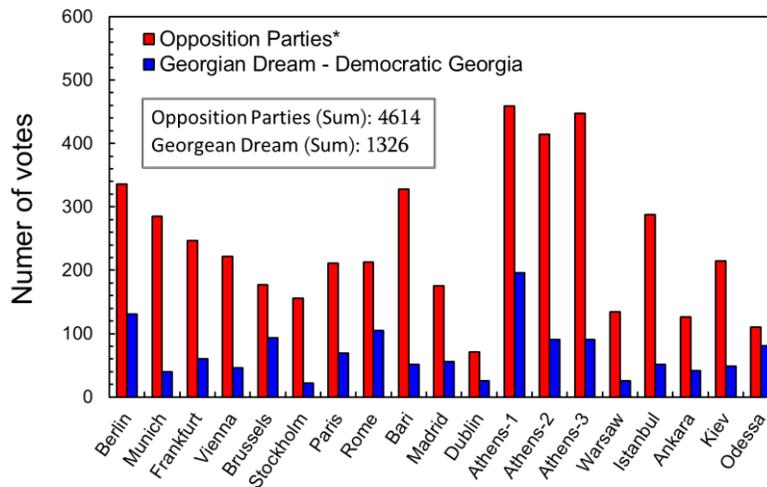
Based on the analyses of the election environment and violations determined by our observers, we cannot assess the parliamentary elections from October 31, 2020 as free, competitive and fair. The creation of the barriers for observers, the violation of their rights, the imbalance between the number of ballots received and the number of registered voters, serious problems with voter lists, the influence on the will of the voters, the violation of voting secrecy, and political agitation on the polling stations are not in line with the election principles accepted universally in the democratic world. Furthermore, the serious and heavy violations accompanied these elections further degraded the voter confidence in the Central Election Commission, which could have a negative impact on the future elections.

Please find below detailed information on the election results and election process provided by our observers from Georgian and foreign polling stations.



1. Election results from polling stations, where our organization monitored the elections.

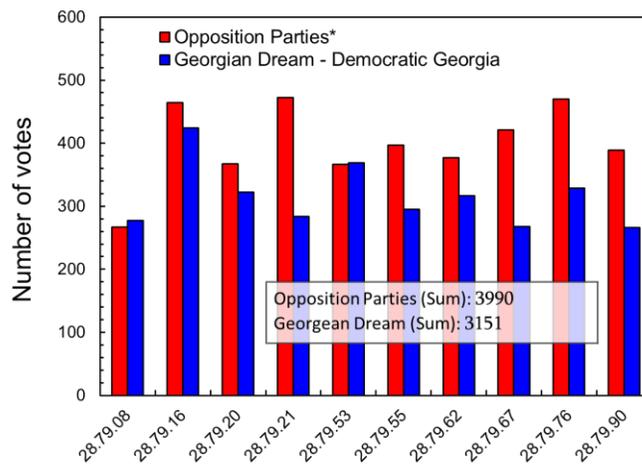
1.1 Foreign polling stations



Foreign polling stations

Figure 1. Distribution of votes depending on the foreign polling stations where our organization monitored election.

1.2 Polling stations of Batumi



Polling stations of Batumi

Figure 2. Distribution of votes depending on the polling stations of Batumi where our organization monitored election.



1.3 Polling stations of Akhmeta

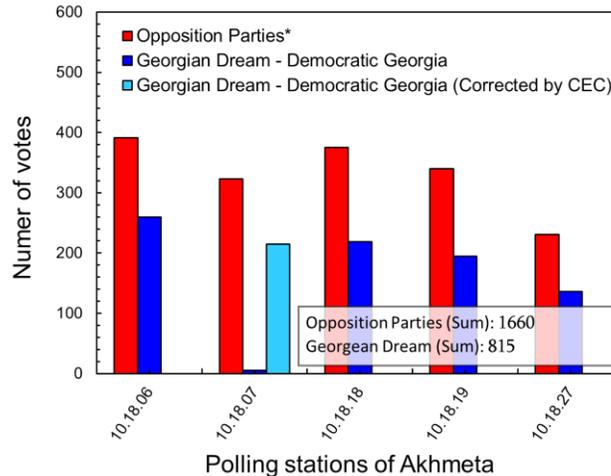


Figure 3. Distribution of votes depending on the polling stations of Akhmeta where our organization monitored election.

* The opposition parties comprise following parties and election blocks: Nr. 2 “Bakradze, Ugulava, Bokeria - European Georgia - Movement for Freedom”, Nr. 5. Block “United National Movement - United Opposition “Strength in Unity”, Nr. 10. “Shalva Natelashvili - Labour Party of Georgia”, Nr. 17 “Irakli Okruashvili - Victorious Georgia”, Nr. 24 “Aleko Elisashvili - The Citizens”, Nr. 27. Block “Giorgi Vashadze - Strategy Agmashenebeli”, Nr. 36 “Girchi”, Nr. 56 “Lelo - Mamuka Khazaradze”.

2. The irregularities determined by our monitoring mission

We determined different types of irregularities.

2.1 The irregularities determined in pre-election period

During the preparation of our mission, we determined **irregularities, problems, and barriers** by Central Election Commission (CEC) regarding the electronic registration system, which significantly hindered our work and endangered the preparation of our monitoring mission:

- The website of the system for electronic registration of observers for which we had an official permission was inaccessible from foreign countries and blocked for foreign IP addresses. The access to this page was granted to us by the CEC with one week delay only after our numerous requests and only from one IP address. These restrictions were mentioned neither on the CEC website nor in the contract on the definition of the rules and conditions for electronic communication, which we signed together with the CEC.



- The System for electronic registration of observers worked with serious shortcomings. Major problems were regarding the registration of observers with foreign citizenship. This feature did not work and was activated also only after our repeated requests.
 - ⇒ **We interpret these violations as barriers of systemic nature specifically created by the CEC for international observer organizations.**
- There were also problems in the accessibility of the voter lists. Despite our request and applications, the CEC did not provide us the unified list of voters registered in Georgia.
- We also identified problems regarding the supply of the observers in foreign polling stations with the special color-coded covers for name badges. Despite the promises of the CEC that all observers in foreign polling stations could receive these covers for badges in the days before the elections, these covers were not sent to foreign polling stations. This problem became known only one day before elections.

2.2 The irregularities determined on the election day

- **Delayed opening of the election polling station**
 - Paris, polling station Nr. 42
- **Procedural irregularities**
 - At the polling station Nr. 23.59.111 in Kutaisi, the ballot papers were not stamped.
 - At the polling stations Nr. 28 in Bari (Italy) and Nr. 27 in Rome (Italy), the functions between precinct commission members were not distributed by ballot.
 - At the polling station Nr. 19 in Madrid (Spain), before start of the elections, the ballot box was erroneously sealed with the sealing designated for the sealing of the ballot box hole.
- **Discrepancy between the numbers of registered voters and available ballot papers and envelopes**
 - At all polling stations in Georgia and in foreign countries, the number of available ballot papers and envelopes was generally lower than the number of registered voters. At the polling station Nr. 27 in Rome (Italy), the number of ballot papers and envelopes was higher compared to the number of registered voters (1147 voters, 2012 ballot papers). These irregularities were documented by complaints and were fixed in record book. These irregularities showed also a systemic character.
- **Problems with the voter lists**
 - At the foreign polling stations (Nr. 28 in Bari, Italy, Nr. 14 in Berlin, Germany, Nr. 15 in Frankfurt, Germany, Nr. 12 in Brussels, Belgium) numerous voters were not in the voter list despite their statement that they performed the consulate registration or they got the confirmation from consulate by phone that they are already registered.



- At the polling station Nr. 14 in Berlin (Germany), dead person was in the voter list.
- The people found in the COVID-infected list voted at the polling station Nr. 28.79.21 in Batumi.
- **Extended procedures of vote counting**
 - For unclear reasons, the process of vote counting was extended at several polling stations in Batumi.
- **Shutdown of electricity on the polling station**
 - At the polling stations Nr. 26.66.15 and Nr. 26.66.16 in Khobi, Mingrelia region, the electricity turned off unexpectedly.
- **Violation of voting secrecy**
 - At the polling station Nr. 28.79.20 in Batumi, the polling booths were installed in the middle of the polling room and it was possible to see the voters from the back side.
 - In Kutaisi, the polling station Nr. 23.59.111 was installed in the hall with mirror walls and it was possible to see the voters in the polling booths from the back side.
 - At the polling station Nr. 07.09.12 in Tbilisi, the voters loudly fixed their choice after voting and called the number “41” of the election subject *Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia* which was addressed to the members of the precinct election commission. This was a clear violation of the voting secrecy and an agitation on the polling station and can be assessed as suspicion of manipulation of the voters.
- **Political agitation on the polling stations and influence on the will of the voters**
 - In village Zemo Alvani, region Akhmeta, the polling station Nr. 10.18.06 was directly in the front of the headquarters of the election subject *Nr. 41 Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia*, where the agitation banners were placed.
 - At the polling station Nr. 23.59.116 in Kutaisi, a man wearing a T-shirt with the symbols of the election subject *Nr. 41 Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia* was able to move freely at the polling station and was allowed to vote.
 - The agitators of the election subject *Nr. 41 Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia* were constantly sitting at the entrance of the polling station Nr. 23.59.106 in Kutaisi, carrying out party agitation, controlling the voters and influencing them. Despite numerous warnings, they did not leave the polling station area.
- **Violation of the observer rights**
 - At the polling station Nr. 27 in Rome (Italy), observers were not allowed to enter the polling station
 - Two our international observers were not allowed to enter simultaneously the pooling station Nr. 23.59.108 in Kutaisi



- At the polling station Nr. 14 in Berlin (Germany), our observers were prohibited to make video. Our observers were hindered by the members of the precinct election commission to perform the monitoring of the election process. Furthermore, our observers were often insulted as well as threatened by the members of the precinct election commission to banish them from the polling station.
- At all polling stations in Batumi, our observers were also hindered by the members of the precinct election commissions to perform the monitoring of the election process. The members of the precinct election commissions tried to convince our observers to leave the polling station after polling station closing and before starting of vote counting procedures. Furthermore, our observers were often insulted as well as threatened by the members of the precinct election commissions to banish them from the polling station.
- At the polling station Nr. 28 in Bari (Italy), the precinct election commission barred observer from writing a complaint
- At the polling station Nr. 28.79.20 in Batumi, observers protesting the violation regarding the fact that the voters appearing in the list of mobile ballot box were allowed to vote, were banished by police from the polling station for obstructing allegedly the election process.
- At the polling station in Mtatsminda, Tbilisi, observer was banished for the protesting the violation.
- At the polling station Nr. 07.09.12 in Nadzaladevi, Tbilisi, observer was prohibited to accompany the mobile ballot box. Only after repeated persistent requests, he was allowed to accompany the mobile ballot box together with two members of the precinct election commission.

After analysis of these cases, we can conclude that the violations of the observer rights showed also systemic character.

- **Violation of the marking rules**

- At the polling stations Nr. 10.18.07 and Nr. 10.18.27 in Zemo Alvani, Akhmeta, the voters supporting the block *Nr. 5 United National Movement – United Opposition “Strength in Unity”* were marked before they were checked in the list of voters. Checking the list often showed that these voters were not on the list and had to vote at another polling station, which was impossible because they had already been marked by violation of the rules. A similar case took place at the polling station Nr. 05.06.106 in Samgori, Tbilisi.
- At the polling station Nr. 28.79.90 in Batumi, already marked voter was allowed to vote.



- **Violation of the ballot paper canceling rules**
 - At the polling station Nr. 27 in Rome (Italy), the precinct election commission annulled the ballot papers on the pretext that the voting was made with a dark colored pen.
- **Physical violence**
 - At the polling station Nr. 28 in Bari (Italy), chairman of the precinct election commission punched the voter.
- **Filming of the materials containing personal information**
 - At the polling station Nr. 14 in Berlin (Germany), a media representative from the “Berliner Telegraph” was filming the materials containing personal information. Therefore a complaint was written. In addition, the same person invited people at the polling station to discussions of political content.

2.3 The irregularities determined in post-election period

- **Violation of the observer rights**
 - On November 5, 2020, our observer was arrested in the front of the Nr. 3 Saburtalo district election commission building in Tbilisi, demanding to attend a session of the Saburtalo district election commission. Against him the violence was applied by the police without any reason. Although he repeatedly explained to police that he was an international observer, he was only released after a few calls made by police to their chiefs. This fact is a gross violation of the observer rights.

February 16, 2021.