



YUCOM

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IDENTIFIED IRREGULARITIES THREATEN THE DEMOCRATIC ELECTORAL PROCESS

Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights – YUCOM hereby appeals to the authorities in Serbia, with the aim of protecting democratic order and the rule of law, to investigate all reported cases that point to electoral irregularities, both in the pre-election period and on the elections day, especially those pertaining to criminal acts regarding the election process and right of citizens to freely vote.

Namely, as an organization that deals with defending human rights and protecting the legal state and democratic values, YUCOM has been monitoring pre-election events in Serbia, as well as the election process itself on 2 April 2017.

During the electoral campaign, there was a noticeable abuse of media space that led to an unequal representation of presidential candidates, which robbed the public of their right to receive equal and balanced information on presidential candidates. In addition, using an unfair campaign, citizens were often misinformed about the opinions of the presidential candidates, i.e. their programs. The inactivity of the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media only increased the inequality of participants in the race for presidency, while citizens were being sent a message that this regulatory body does not care about their rights to timely, correct and unbiased information.

Based on direct examination, as official presidential election observers, we identified numerous irregularities in a large number of polling stations in Belgrade, from disorderly voters lists, voters missing on voters lists, transfer of designated polling station outside of the voter's place of residence, as well as many other irregularities such as the lack of adherence to formal rules of procedure (spray used before checking if the voter is on the list), which prevented a certain number of citizens from using their voting right. The lack of readiness and willingness among citizens to report these irregularities points to the fact that they do not



have faith in institutions that should act on their complaints.

Concurrently, as we have not received any of the requested information on the training of fulltime members of election boards, and field experience showed improper preparation and an unprofessional attitude towards the rights of citizens, the issue of responsibility for these errors remains open.

Apart from the abovementioned, a large number of citizens addressed us regarding their voting rights being violated when they were not allowed to vote in their residence abroad, despite submitting a timely request. A number of citizens also noticed, by examining the unified voters list, that deceased family members had as their polling stations places where they never lived, usually on the territory of Kosovo.

While expecting a response from the Republic Electoral Commission on the submitted complaints regarding electoral irregularities, the Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights would like to highlight that democratic elections are a condition for achieving the rule of law, and as such invites authorities to react urgently and halt the collapse of the legal state, as well as halting the support and justification of actions that represent a massive breach of fundamental human rights.

Belgrade, 4 April 2017.



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