



All-Ukrainian non-governmental organization
"Committee of voters of Ukraine"

FINDINGS

ACCORDING TO RESULTS OF OBSERVATION
BY CVU ON THE VOTING DAY
OCTOBER 25



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Key conclusions from the Election Day observation

On Voting Day, 1,500 official observers from the Committee of Voters, 350 journalists from CVU “Point of View”, and 200 observers from mobile groups worked at polling stations.

1. According to the CVU’s assessment, voting day at local elections largely met the standards of free and democratic elections. The vast majority of recorded violations did not substantially affect the election result.
2. Key problems on voting day included: illegal campaigning, the violation of anti-epidemic measures on voting day, non-admittance and hindering of observers, issues due to the lack of ballots and mistakes in the ballot texts, and conflicts connected with an opinion poll at polling stations.
3. On voting day, many cases of direct and indirect voter bribery took place, which could have a crucial impact on the voting results in several communities. The CVU received reports of voters who are not residents of certain communities being transported to other areas, in particular, PEC #650282 of Chernomorsk’e District in the Kherson Region. Two cases of voter transportation took place in Kostyantynivka and Novodmytrivka in the Donetsk Region. In Nikopol in the Dnipropetrovsk Region, voters were offered monetary remuneration for voting, about which CVU representatives informed the National Police. In Novomoskovsk in the Dnipropetrovsk Region, there was evidence detected of ballots being taken outside the polling station, which can indicate an attempt to organize the so-called “carousel” technology. In the Odesa Region, four buses were detained for taking part in organized financially-motivated voting in Belgorod-Dniester and Zatoka.
4. The CVU is concerned about the large-scale altering of electoral addresses, which led to active “electoral tourism,” and could influence citizens’ voting results. According to the CVU data, there was an abnormal increase in the number of voters in more than 20 communities. The largest increase occurred in Karolino-Bugaz UTC (United Territorial Community) of the Odesa Region, where the number of new voters increased by over 13%.
5. The CVU notes problems on the voting day with non-adherence to anti-epidemic regulations at polling stations. Violations included: noncompliance with social distancing requirements, a lack of personal protective equipment (masks, gloves), and the improper use of equipment for measuring voters’ temperature. Some stations were not supplied with the required equipment, and they organized voting individually, even at the heads of commissions’ own expense. In the commissions, conflicts arose about who should arrange for those with coronavirus to vote at their place of residence, and how this should take place. The CVU addressed the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine regarding the necessity of centralized procurement for personal protection equipment (masks, protective suits) and thermometers, as well as payment for technical staff who would clean stations for voting in the second round of elections.
6. As there were limits on the maximum number of people allowed on premises at the same time, significant queues appeared near and inside polling stations. As a result, some voters filled ballots outside polling booths (on polling boxes, on windowsills, etc.) which violated the secrecy of the ballot. Some polling stations announced breaks for cleaning. For example, the members of the PEC arranged a 15-minute break for sanitation at polling station #560951 in Rivne. A 30-minute break for cleaning was also announced at a polling station in Mykolaiv (#480981). The CVU states that gaps in the operation of polling stations on the voting day contradict the provisions of the Electoral Code of Ukraine.
7. A lack of comprehension of voting rules and new ballot template was a widespread problem on voting day. As a result, citizens often sought outside help for clarifications of details in filling in the ballot (including from commission members and observers).

8. CVU observers detected illegal campaigning on the eve of and on voting day. There were multiple cases of materials being shared that bore signs of campaigning, in all regions of Ukraine. On voting day, CVU observers informed about cases of citizens in many areas wearing so-called branded facial masks at polling stations. For example, in Rivne (PS #560978, #560965) voters at the station were wearing branded masks of the political party “Rivne Together,” having previously handed them out to citizens. In Kherson, a candidate for the mayor’s office arrived at the voting premises wearing a mask with the party emblem and placed a corresponding photo on his Facebook page. CVU observers note illegal campaigning via text message on voting day. For example, a message was received in Kamenetsk-Podolskiy, which read: “25 October – the only reliable choice – Fatherland.”

9. The provision of electoral rights of vulnerable groups of the population proved problematic. According to the CVU’s conclusions, the majority of polling stations are not equipped for the needs of vulnerable groups of citizens, which represents an obstacle to them exercising their rights to vote. The provisions of the Electoral Code of Ukraine created difficulties for voters who have lost their vision. The Electoral Code stipulates a prohibition of any photo or video recording of a ballot while filling it out. At the same time, visually-impaired voters can fill out their ballot without outside participation with the help of special apps.

10. The CVU detected cases of hindering observers’ work on the voting day (PS #480425, #051582, #120086). In some cases, the heads of commissions refused to admit observers, stating that at the station, limitations were in force regarding the number of people in the premises. In Rubizhne in the Luhansk Region, the head of the PEC attempted to prevent a CVU observer from entering the polling station, as, in his opinion, there were already many (17) observers who had registered at his precinct. This situation contradicts the Electoral Code of Ukraine. In some cases, police representatives carried out unusual functions, and interfered with the work of the CVU’s observers: at station #650762, police officers checked observers’ mandates and were present for voting; at station #650622, a policeman took photos of the observers’ passports and mandates.

11. Problems with ballots on voting day have seemingly become a tradition. Errors in the texts of ballots were detected in several stations while organizing voting. At station #350825 (Kirovohrad Region) 2,394 voters lost their votes through an error in the ballot, which had not been detected in due time. Due to a mistake while printing the ballots, the candidate lists from another district arrived at the station. This was only discovered around lunchtime on voting day. In Zakarpattia, 14,000 ballots (for the election of deputies in Mezhyrskia UTC) were mistakenly reprinted during the night before voting day.

12. The CVU’s observers informed noted violations of legislation and conflicts connected with the President’s poll taking place near polling stations. In Cherkasy (PS #711040), a PEC member was personally handing out the presidential poll forms in the polling station. She justified her actions by saying that the volunteers had asked her to conduct a questionnaire. In Berdyansk town (PS #650651), there were attempts to carry out the survey in the polling station premises. In Utkivka village of the Kharkiv Region, the survey was being held inside the polling station premises. During the questioning, there emerged a number of conflict situations between the voters and the interviewers. Some interviewers were campaigning and commenting on their opinions on the issues in the survey text, which provoked negative reactions from voters.

13. CVU observers note problems with the tabulation of votes. A frequent problem is that members of electoral commissions misunderstand the details of how to fill tabulation protocols at polling stations. This originates from the renewal of electoral registration. As a result, the CVU’s observers indicate that mistakes occur during the tabulation procedure and when completing the electoral documentation forms. This slows down the transmission of protocols for the TECs. For example, in Kropyvnytskyi town, only 15 PECs of 124 had filed their protocols to the town TEC as of the morning of 26 October. In Dnipro city, as of 11 am, protocols from 64 PECs of 465 had been filed; in Cherkasy, as of 11 am, around 15% of PEC protocols had been received. The CVU’s observers noted queues while filing the election documents. At some stations,

commission members detected errors in protocols immediately after starting the tabulation of votes (Rivne town, PS #560958, the surname of one candidate was not printed in the protocol).