



18 June 2021

INTERIM REPORT

On the Snap Elections to the RA National Assembly (Observation Period: June 7-16, 2021)

Observation Results

The observation mission “Akanates” (Eyewitness) launched its activities on 1 May 2021. The observations for the period between 1 May and 7 June are summarised in the Preliminary Report of the mission¹. This report contains the observation information from June 7, the start of the pre-election campaign defined by the RA Electoral Code, to June 16, covering the election administration process. The monitoring data include the activities of the Central Electoral Commission (CEC), Regional Electoral Commissions, local self-government bodies, campaigning, use of administrative resources, hate speech, etc.

Electoral Commissions

Central Electoral Commission

During the pre-election campaign of the 2021 snap elections to the RA National Assembly, from June 7 to June 16, 2021, the CEC convened six sittings, in three of which issues related to organising the snap elections to the National Assembly were discussed, while three considered the applications by individuals political parties and the motions of the Prosecutor’s Office within the framework of organising the snap elections to the National Assembly. The last three sittings on 11 June and 12 June 12 were not broadcast, and their videos were not been posted on the CEC website, presumably in order to maintain the pre-investigation secret, because motions of the Prosecutor’s Office were considered during the said sittings.

The CEC sittings continued to be held in an atmosphere of consensus and unanimous voting. As previously, no issue was discussed among the members of the Commission, nor any member of the Commission voted against the proposed draft decision.

The launch of a new CEC website is welcome. The general impression is that it is more user-friendly and can effectively ensure the transparency and accountability of electoral processes. A special section on the website is allocated for presenting the activities of the Regional Electoral Commissions (although it does not

¹ <https://transparency.am/hy/news/view/3287>



contain complete information yet). However, it should be noted that much of the information on the site is still presented in PDF format rather than “open data format”, which makes data analysis difficult.

Pursuant to the Electoral Code of the Republic of Armenia, political parties (alliances of parties) participating in elections may submit their pre-election programs in an electronic format established by the CEC, for posting on the CEC website². At the moment only the pre-election programs of four parties participating in the NA elections are published on the website: “Republic”, “Homeland of Armenians”, “Rise” and “National-Democratic Axis”. Given that 12 of the parties and alliances do not have an official website, it can be said that their ideology and programs are not properly accessible to voters.

Registration of observation missions

There are a number of problems in the process of registering observer organisations.

Pursuant to Article 30/1/2 of the Electoral Code of the Republic of Armenia, Armenian non-governmental organisations whose charter objectives included, for at least one year preceding the day of calling elections, matters related to democracy and protection of human rights, and which do not support the candidates or the political parties running in elections, shall have the right to carry out observation missions. When registering, the CEC checks the charter goals of the organisations but does not check their support of political parties and candidates. The CEC may also not reveal the match between the lists of political candidates and observers.

Pursuant to Article 31/4/ of the RA Electoral Code, the CEC may reject an application for accreditation of observers if the charter goals of the non-governmental organisation do not meet the requirements of Article 30/1/2 of the Code. Albeit one pre-condition for accreditation is that an observer organisation shall not support candidates or parties running in the elections, it is not included in the exhaustive list of grounds for rejecting an observer organisation’s application. This means that, pursuant to Article 31 of the Electoral Code, the CEC cannot reject an organisation’s application even if the organisation is actively campaigning.

Additionally, the Electoral Code of the RA does not provide for the procedure and grounds for depriving a local observer organisation of the right to an observation mission, in the event of campaign by a local observer organization or support of any candidate or party participating in the elections, after the accreditation of its observers.

As a result of these gaps, a case was disclosed, for example, where the “Federation of Youth Clubs” youth NGO was registered with the CEC to carry out an observation mission, while its head was also included in the list of candidates of the “Bright Armenia” Party³.

² RA Electoral Code, Article 8/4.

³ <https://www.elections.am/Elections/Parliamentary>



Regional Electoral Commissions

During the pre-election campaign period, eight sessions of Regional Electoral Commissions were observed by observers. They went on normally, without incidents or violations. The observations showed that the female members of the Regional Commissions were actively involved in the decision-making processes. The cooperation of the Regional Electoral Commissions with the observers was mostly assessed as open and constructive, without obstacles.

Three cases were recorded where the Regional Commissions were not provided with sufficient conditions for effective work. In particular, Regional Electoral Commission No. 1 has poor facilities and Regional Electoral Commission No. 6 has insufficient furniture and equipment. Due to lack of adequate space, Regional Electoral Commission No. 21 had to store the ballots in the the school hall in another building, from where the ballots will be distributed among 57 Precinct Electoral Commissions⁴.

During the reporting period, three complaints were submitted to Regional Electoral Commissions in connection with the campaign posters posted in violation of the provisions of the law.

In the first case, Commission No. 13 rejected the application of the Head of “Ararat” Water Users Association (an MP candidate of “My Step” Alliance in the 2018 parliamentary elections) on removing the pre-election poster of “Armenia” alliance from the wall of the WUA’s administrative office building. The ground for the refusal was that “Armenia” alliance had a campaign office in the building the WUA office is renting on which, according to the law, a poster of up to 6 square metres can be placed.

In the second case, the Regional Commission No. 27 upheld the complaint of the head of Kotayk Province branch of “Civil Contract” (CP) Party to remove the campaign poster of “I Have Honour” Alliance posted in Kasakh community in a place not stipulated by law. The Regional Electoral Commission gave the Alliance one day to eliminate the violation and demanded that Kasakh community leader has the poster removed immediately. Both “I Have Honor” Alliance and the community leader ignored the demand of the Commission, and the poster has not been removed to this day. It should be noted that Anna Mkrtychyan, daughter of Kasakh community leader Ara Mkrtychyan, is the 3rd candidate on the list of “I Have Honor” Alliance⁵.

In the third case Regional Electoral Commission No. 27, based on a resident’s application, made a decision to remove the 8 posters of the CP party posted in Charentsavan in places not stipulated by the law. The Party was given one day to eliminate the violations. At the same time, the Regional Commission applied to

⁴ According to the representative of the Regional Electoral Commission, this solution has been agreed upon with the CEC, and the police are on duty, to ensure the safety of the ballots.

⁵ It should be noted that the community leader Ara Mkrtychyan stood out in a number of scandalous stories over the recent years. <https://hetq.am/hy/article/110817>



Charentsavan community leader, demanding to immediately remove the posters posted in violation of the law. However, not all posters have been removed so far.

Independence of Regional Electoral Commissions

The observation of “Akanates” (Eyewitness) revealed a factual distortion of the principles of the activities of Regional Electoral Commissions, which puts their independence at risk. Specifically, the Electoral Code of the Republic of Armenia stipulates a three-tier system of electoral commissions⁶, each of which must be independent in the exercise of its powers, and any interference in their activities shall be prohibited⁷. At the same time, the Code stipulates the obligation of the Regional Electoral Commission to enter the voting results in a polling station into the computer, which, however, according to the decision of the CEC, is performed by the CEC staff who are registered as civil servants and whose job descriptions specify the residence of the respective PEC as their workplace⁸. Such organisation of the electoral process is not lawful; it creates risks in terms of ensuring the independence of a Regional Electoral Commission and for a possible influence on the implementation of its functions.

Training of Precinct Electoral Commissions

With the joint efforts of the CEC and the International Fund for Electoral Systems (IFES), training courses for PEC members were conducted since 6 June. “Eyewitness” observed 80 of such courses, in which 1,566 commission members participated. The quality of 90% of the courses was assessed by the observers as “good” and “high”.

Pre-election Campaign

In accordance with the Electoral Code, on 7 June 2021 the pre-election campaign was officially launched for the snap elections to the National Assembly of the RA and will last until 24:00, 18 June. As distinct from the period before 6 June, during this period there are rules ensuring equal competition for political forces and financial transparency requirements⁹.

Dissemination of Campaign Materials

During the pre-election campaign period numerous cases were recorded in connection with the placement of campaign materials in places not stipulated/prohibited by the law. In particular, the posters were posted on street lamp posts, in bus stops (outside the billboards owned by advertising companies), on apartment buildings (not only on the owner’s balcony and windows), at shopping malls, on public transport and taxis,

⁶ RA Electoral Code, Article 36.

⁷ RA Electoral Code, Article 73/2.

⁸ Decision No. 96-N, point 2 of RA Central Electoral Commission dated 11.03.2017.

⁹ RA Electoral Code, Article 19/1.



etc.¹⁰ Such violations were reported to have been committed by “Civil Contract”, “Democratic Party of Armenia”, “Republic”, “Bright Armenia”, “Prosperous Armenia”, “United Homeland”, “Homeland of Armenians” parties, as well as by “Armenia”, “I Have Honour”, “Free Homeland” and “Babajanyan-Shirinyan” alliances. The poster of the CP Party at the entrance¹¹ of the building of the “National Gallery of Armenia” SNCO, as well as the three-dimensional light projection of the slogan of the same party upon the building of the RA Government attracted special attention¹².

The Electoral Code of the Republic of Armenia stipulates that the printed campaigning materials shall include information on the client, the publishing organization and the number of copies¹³. The required data were missing from the observed printed campaign materials of “Civil Contract”, “National-Democratic Axis”, “Democratic Armenia”, “Prosperous Armenia”, “Citizen’s Decision”, Social Democratic, “National Agenda”, “Bright Armenia”, “Armenian National Congress”, “Republic” “Armenia is Our Home”, “5165 National Conservative Movement” parties and “Hayastan” and “Free Homeland” alliances.

During the official campaign period the distribution of printed materials that are not directly related to the campaign but indirectly affect the campaign is still problematic.

During the election campaign, posters, printed and other materials with an area exceeding 5 square metres that were recognised by the CEC as associated with the pre-election campaign are subject to removal. Posters, printed and other materials with an area of up to 5 square metres recognised as associated with the pre-election campaign, posters, printed and other materials considered to be associated with the pre-election campaign are subject to elimination if their costs are not included in the pre-election fund in the stated manner. A campaign poster, campaign printed and other materials posted in violation of the provisions of the Electoral Code shall be removed by the community leader (no deadline is specified), with the support of the police as necessary¹⁴.

Campaign Materials associated with the Pre-Election Campaign

During the period of the election campaign, posters with the image of the book “Life and Freedom” by Robert Kocharyan and the poster of “Tigran Arzakantsyan” Charitable Foundation exceeding an area of 5 square metres and recognised by the CEC as associated with the campaign, continue to be displayed on outdoor billboards across Armenia¹⁵.

¹⁰ RA Electoral Code, Article 21/2.

¹¹ https://drive.google.com/file/d/10gH4WNrrFLVONu6xH1dql_rtZA-2cbXw/view?usp=sharing

¹² <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EkNvVpUKQs1mepCVt7hyJlbCLiYwqw8K/view?usp=sharing>;
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/180Zyta6BR3zQQyiEAYe4zlwNmdbMzKUH/view?usp=sharing>

¹³ RA Electoral Code, Article 21/10.

¹⁴ RA Electoral Code, Article 21/9.

¹⁵ During the pre-election campaign the observers did not record posters with Ara Abrahamyan’s picture, however, we cannot confirm that they were completely or partially removed.



In response to the verdict of the RA Administrative Court¹⁶, by which the CEC decision on recognising the poster with the image of Robert Kocharyan's book "Life and Freedom", exceeding an area of 5 square metres was recognised as associated with the pre-election campaign was repealed on grounds that the decision was not substantiated, on 8 June 2021 the CEC initiated another proceeding on the same issue on its own initiative and passed a decision, this time with a detailed legal substantiation¹⁷. This decision of the CEC was again appealed by R. Kocharyan in Administrative Court. The appeal was satisfied on grounds of impossibility of repassing an intervening administrative act on the same issue¹⁸.

In the case of Tigran Arzakantsyan, the RA CEC, by its decision No. A-133 dated 10 June 2021, declared invalid the latter's registration as an MP candidate on the electoral list of the "Democratic Party of Armenia"¹⁹. Tigran Arzakantsyan appealed this decision of the Central Electoral Commission in Administrative Court, which at the 14 June sitting decided to reject T. Arzakantsyan's complaint against the CEC²⁰. Despite the verdict of the Administrative Court, Tigran Arzakantsyan stated that he continues to actively participate in the pre-election campaign and to support the "Democratic Party of Armenia"²¹: the posters of his charitable foundation continue to remain in their places.

Damaging Campaign Materials

In addition to violations of the rules for dissemination of campaign materials, observers also recorded cases of torn and damaged campaign materials ("Civil Contract", "Bright Armenia", "Armenian National Congress", "Prosperous Armenia", "Republic", "Democratic Party of Armenia", "National-Democratic Axis", Liberal Party" and "Armenia", "Shirinyan-Babajanyan Democrats" and "I Have Honour" Alliances).

Election Campaign Offices of Parties and Party Alliances

Along with observing the process of dissemination of campaign materials, the observers of the mission also observed the pre-election events of the parties and party alliances and visited the pre-election campaign offices.

In total, the observers visited 351 campaign offices in Yerevan and in the provinces. There were several episodes when the observers were denied access to the campaign office or were not provided with information about parties or party campaigns for various reasons, including:

- The staff of "Prosperous Armenia" Party office in Chambarak did not allow the observer to enter.

¹⁶ <https://medialab.am/161496/>

¹⁷ https://res.elections.am/images/Decisions/08.06.2021/21.128_A.pdf

¹⁸ http://datalex.am/?app=AppCaseSearch&page=default&tab=administrative#full_info

¹⁹ https://res.elections.am/images/Decisions/10.06.2021/21.133_A.pdf

²⁰ https://res.elections.am/images/Decisions/10.06.2021/21.133_A.pdf

²¹ <https://hetq.am/hy/article/132182>



- In Kapan offices of “Armenia” Alliance and “I Have Honour” Alliance people were tense towards the observers and refused to answer their questions.
- In Spitak several young people in “Armenia” Alliance tried to block the entrance to the office and prevent the observer from entering. Moreover, the representative of the office Samvel Khoyetsyan (formerly Head of the Spitak Regional Division of the Social Security Service of the RA Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) showed aggressive behaviour towards the observer.
- The office of “Armenia” Alliance in Kentron administrative district of Yerevan receives the visitors well at first, but the attitude changes dramatically when they learn that he/she is an observer. At best, they answer that they do not have the time, and they have the right to refuse to communicate with an observer. At worst, they aggressively labeled the observers as “Soros proponents”, “destroyers of the country” and “it is all your doings”.

Monitoring of Pre-Election Events

During the pre-election period “Akanates” observed more than 200 pre-election events in the city of Yerevan and in all provinces. During the events, the observers noticed the participation of officials (including governors, community leaders, deputy mayors, etc.), mainly during working hours, as well as the presence representatives of schools and culture centres. Such cases were observed during 39 events: 25 were organized by the CP party, 13 by “Armenia” Alliance and one by “I Have Honour” Alliance.

According to observations, the pre-election events of the upcoming elections were marked by less programmatic discussions and more intense personalised criticism, accusations, as well as calls for hatred and violence.

Illegal Use of Administrative Resources and Means of Influence

Abuse of administrative resources is the action of civil servants as well as the ruling parties and candidates to use the material resources (including financial resources and access to public infrastructure) and the intangible resources, office and connections to influence the outcome of elections.

During the election campaign, the observers of “Eyewitness” observed numerous manifestations of abuse of administrative resources, coercion to participate in or refuse to participate in rallies and obstruction of the exercise of the voter’s free will.

- On 7 June the employees of the Utilities Department of Abovyan Municipality were forced to take part in campaign event of “Prosperous Armenia” Party’s taking place in the park in front of the Municipality.
- The teachers of Noratus and Karmirgyugh schools were directed by the regional administration to participate in the rally organised by the CP Party rally in Gavar.

- On 7 June the Mayor of the town of Kajaran Manvel Paramazyan was engaged in campaigning during working hours, speaking during the campaign of “Armenia” Alliance²².
- Employees of a kindergarten, an art school, the Municipality and Kajaran Zangezour Copper Molybdenum Combine were forced to take part in the 7 June rally of “Armenia” Alliance.
- On 7 June, in Agarak and Meghri, the employees of the kindergarten, “Areviq” art school and the Municipality of Meghri community were compelled to attend the campaign event of “Armenia” Alliance.
- On 8 June Gor Asryan, Deputy Governor of Lori Province, visited Katnaghbyur and Urasar villages of Stepanavan consolidated community during working hours, in order to campaign for the CP Party. He had a meeting of a campaign nature with the teachers and other residents in the school hall, asking the pupils who had not yet finished their lessons at that time out of the school building. There is no fact about the Deputy Governor being on vacation.
- On 9 June 9, by the decision of Goris deputy mayor Irina Yolyan, 115 residents were provided with financial assistance in the amount of AMD 6,130,000 from the community budget²³. The list of beneficiaries, besides residents of Goris, includes also residents of Tegah and Tatev communities. It is noteworthy that the volumes of financial aid in the community have sharply increased compared to the previous quarters.
- On June 10, in Tegah community of Syunik region, employees of the community hall were present at the pre-election event of “I Have Honour” Alliance which takes place during working hours.
- On 11 June Hayk Chobanyan, Minister of High-Tech Industry, took part in Nikol Pashinyan’s campaign visit to Berd²⁴, but there is no fact that he was on vacation.
- On 11 June “Tavush” WUA refueled their employees’ cars at the expense of the company, so they be present at Nikol Pashinyan’s visit. One condition was that the employees had to take at least one person with them.
- On 12 June the Director of the Stepanavan station of the ENA “Debet” branch forced the employees to participate in the rally of “Armenia” Alliance, as well as to collect votes in favour of the same. Moreover, the employees who did not vote were threatened with dismissal.
- On 12 June the Director of the ENA Tashir station too forced the employees to attend the meeting of Armenia” Alliance and threatened to dismiss the employees who would take part in the meeting of the CP Party.
- On 12 June the heads of “Gazprom Armenia” CJSC’s Stepanavan and Tashir regional stations forced their employees to participate in rally of “Armenia” Alliance. The employees of Tashir station were also forbidden to participate in the rallies held by the CP Party on 10 June.

²² [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n7jyBVV_VT8?t=85, 1:25 - 4:15](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n7jyBVV_VT8?t=85,1:25-4:15)

²³ <http://www.goriscity.am/Pages/DocFlow/Default.aspx?a=v&q=3fb0d4f5-6781-497c-a025-9d5ecb972327><http://www.goriscity.am/Pages/DocFlow/Default.aspx?a=v&q=7b72cd6f-f061-424d-8fb0-4f2d3cf76c46>

²⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/1378368079150250/videos/1993629677460427>



- On June 12, the employees of “AAB Project” LLC which is repairing the Alaverdi-Akhtala section of the road, were sent to the town of Vanadzor with the threat of dismissal, to participate in the pre-election meeting of “Armenia” Alliance.
- The director of “Alyonushka” kindergarten of Arzni community made its employees to participate in Pashinyan’s visit to Arzni on 13 June. The Director threatened to fire one of the employees who had not been able to participate in the meeting due to the long distance.
- On 16 June a letter was sent from Lori Regional Administration to the schools of the Province communicating that the Regional Administration could provide transportation if the school staffs wished to participate in the June 17 rally of the “Civil Contract” Party in Yerevan. The letter especially encouraged to distribute the communication among school staffs.

Publications of campaigning nature on the official Facebook pages of public institutions also constitute an abuse of administrative resources. A similar case was reported, for example, in Norashen community of Ararat Province whose official Facebook page published the schedule of N. Pashinyan’s regional visits²⁵. Posts were also made in support of N. Pashinyan on the official Facebook pages of Kindergarten No. 2 in Armavir and Vedi Medical Centre but these were removed after a while. The Facebook page run by the employees of Sisian Municipality is actively used in the online campaign in favour of “Armenia” Alliance²⁶.

A matter of special concern are the administrative resources used during the campaign of the acting Prime Minister of the RA Armenia N. Pashinyan, such as the accompanying officials, their office cars and the police forces.

Bribes and “Charity”

During the pre-election campaign, “Eyewitness” reported several cases of bribery, charity or promises of such, in particular:

- At Armavir campaign office of the “Democratic Party of Armenia” an individual filed an application to Tigran Arzakantsyan and promised to elect this party in exchange for financial assistance.
- Aramays Aproyan, an MP candidate on the electoral list of “Prosperous Armenia” Party’s Gavar regional office, bribed the voters with food to vote for his party. The bribe was food packages worth 7,000 drams each²⁷.

²⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/100043947723847/posts/34923959988495>

²⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/Sisian.info/>

²⁷ www.azatutyun.am/a/31303910.html



In addition to the above-mentioned verified cases, during the visits to different communities, the observers were presented with cases of bribery by the residents, which, however, could not be verified, confirmed or denied. Such cases include:

1. According to the residents of Spitak community, “Armenia” Alliance registers new employees in Spitak Water Company and pay them money without them doing any work. The residents also mention that the Director of the Spitak Water Company is a supporter of “Armenia” Alliance.
2. A group of residents from Spitak mentioned that the employees of the campaign office of “Armenia” Alliance make home visits and take passport data for money, distributing bribes.
3. The employees of the Spitak Poultry Farm belonging to Arkady Hambardzumyan, a member of the Republican Party of Armenia and former MP, are forced to vote for “I Have Honour” Alliance. Stanislav Hambardzumyan, Arkady Hambardzumyan’s son, is among the candidates of “I Have Honour” Alliance.
4. According to the residents of Stepanavan, “Armenia” Alliance has rented a house, from where they bring and take goods by truck once every two days.

Financing of Campaigns

The political parties and alliances of parties participating in the snap elections to the RA National Assembly shall cover a number of campaign-related expenses (media campaign, rent of halls and premises, preparation of campaign posters, printed and other materials, installation and acquisition) from the pre-election fund²⁸. The inflows and expenses are subject to declaring. According to the Electoral Code, the rent of campaign offices, utility costs, salaries of employees and transport costs are not subject to declaring.

The Electoral Code of the Republic of Armenia specifically regulates the conditions of equal distribution of billboards exceeding an area of 5 square metres and the transparency of expenses, which will presumably be included in the reports on the use of the fund’s resources.

For posters with an area of less than 5 square metres, the legislation only defines the principle of non-discriminatory and non-partisan distribution of billboards; it does not regulate distribution procedures and rules, which significantly complicates the control over both compliance with this requirement and actual costs incurred. Thus, it is possible for a company that owns billboards with an area of less than 5 square metres to provide them to its preferred candidate, by rejecting or offering a higher price to others, as well as make a deal with the candidates by misrepresenting the actual quantities and costs.

“Eyewitness” made a number of inquiries to the RA Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure, leaders of 24 urban communities and advertising companies, about the number, area, addresses and prices of billboards. No response was received from the said Ministry; 16 out of 24 community authorities responded

²⁸ RA Electoral Code, Article 27/1.



to the inquiries, and some advertising companies referred to the list of addresses of companies holding posters exceeding an area 5 square metres published on the CEC website²⁹ or refused to provide information³⁰.

In addition to the campaign materials of parties and alliances, posters indirectly influencing the campaign should be emphasised, in particular the posters with the image of Robert Kocharyan's book "Life and Freedom" and the poster of "Tigran Arzakantsyan" Charitable Foundation (mainly with an area of 18 square metres) which are both associated with the campaign. About 200 posters were noted by the mission observers in Yerevan and in the provinces. In this case, based on the market value of a billboard with such area (at least AMD 100,000)³¹, campaign expenses of at least AMD 20,000,000 are not declared.

During the pre-election campaign period the mission observers visited 351 campaign offices Yerevan and in all provinces, including:

- 21% – "Civil Contract" Party offices;
- 7% – "I Have Honour" Alliance (Pativ Unem Dashink) offices;
- 5% – "Bright Armenia" Party offices;
- 15% – "Prosperous Armenia" Party offices;
- 29% – "Armenia" alliance offices, etc.

According to the information received from the representatives of campaign offices, about 56% of the such offices are renting their premises, about 22% are premises/offices provided free of charge by a party supporter or member, and 5% are owned by the party. According to the estimates of the observers, the total renting cost of the offices visited is at least AMD 27,000,000 which is in fact not subject to declaring.

Additionally, observers recorded over 500 employees and over 4,200 volunteers of the offices. The following approaches were applied to calculate the financial costs of these categories of persons:

- For the employees the remuneration is 189,716 AMD, the average monthly nominal salary in Armenia as published by the RA Statistical Committee in 2020³².
- For the volunteers, the remuneration can be assessed at half the RA minimum salary – 34,000 AMD³³ (or unpaid work).

²⁹ <https://res.elections.am/images/doc/vahanak20.06.21.xlsx>

³⁰ It is noteworthy that in the case of private companies, Article 9 of the RA Law "On Freedom of Information" (provision of the required information within 5 days) does not apply.

³¹ The average market value of the poster with an area of 18 square meters was calculated at AMD 140,040, based on the list and prices of posters submitted to the CEC by "EGA" LLC. The company submitted a proposal for 120 billboards in Yerevan and in the provinces.

³² <https://armstat.am/am/?nid=12&id=08001>

³³ RA Law "On Minimum Salary", Article 1.



Comparing the calculations based on the data received from the observers' observations and from campaign offices, it can be noted that the expenses of the observed parties and alliances on human resources (500 employees and 4,200 volunteers) amount to about AMD 237,658,000. In this regard, it should be noted that the mission sent a request to all parties and alliances participating in the elections, requesting information on the number of campaign offices, grounds of use (for example, party ownership, rental, free of charge use), addresses, number of employees and volunteers and their remuneration.

The calculated number is not complete and may differ from the real picture, however, the number obtained indicates that huge financial resources are spent on human resources, which are left out of the declarations.

In addition to the above costs, there are also expenses made by third parties. For example, anonymous videos are spread that campaign in favour of certain forces. Due to the lack of regulation, these expenses are neither disclosed nor published.

Hate Speech

During the pre-election campaign, hate speech heated up significantly. "Civil Contract" Party and "Armenia" Alliance stood out in particular. 60% of the residents of over 150 communities visited by the observers reported that the rival parties were campaigning by spreading hostility.

Impolite language, swear words, degrading and humiliating vocabulary have been in extensive use ("one without a homeland" "traitor of the nation"³⁴, "a clown and a jester"³⁵, "madman"³⁶, "chief of trash"³⁷, "robber", "immoral"³⁸, "alcoholic"³⁹, "a savage escaped from the jungle"⁴⁰, "animals from a cage transporting bandar-log monkeys"⁴¹, etc.), including by persons holding a public office or aspiring to a seat of an MP.

Threats have intensified, especially from the "Civil Contract" Party, "Armenia" Alliance and "I Have Honour" Alliance, with an expectation of mutually settling a score. Threats were used such as "there will be a vendetta!"⁴², "there will be a civil revenge, a vendetta and a massacre of personnel"⁴³, "all criminal garbage will lie on the asphalt of Agarak"⁴⁴, "this hammer will land on your empty heads through law and

³⁴ <https://fb.watch/6baxw1qvmG>

³⁵ https://fb.watch/6bc-xk_vcg/

³⁶ <https://fb.watch/6bbWcP4Zbb>

³⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/pativunenk/posts/123338879922066>

³⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXmknUoFONc?t=80,1:20-hg>

³⁹ <https://fb.watch/6bamC1nzdy>, <https://fb.watch/6barkJmsCw>

⁴⁰ <https://fb.watch/6bddAK3hIF>

⁴¹ <https://fb.watch/6bcb5HgAX->

⁴² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOdQyFjQW_A

⁴³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPsTd2ouTBY>

⁴⁴ <https://civic.am/politics/8434--.html>



dictatorship”⁴⁵, “I am going to publish facts about him and his family”⁴⁶, “let him present a fact; if he does not, I will slaughter him”⁴⁷, “we must have a cudgel in our hands, so that whoever comes with a hammer, we hit them on the head”⁴⁸. Hate and hostility speech is especially condemnable in the speeches of the acting RA Prime Minister and other acting high-ranking officials. During the rallies, the acting Prime Minister of the RA demonstratively uses a hammer which, in a tense atmosphere, multiplies the associations with the threat of use of force.

The atmosphere of hatred is further fueled by campaign by third, often anonymous persons.

In addition to threats against political rivals, one of the political forces (“Armenia” Alliance) has repeatedly disseminated hate speech against civil society organizations, labeling them as “proponents of Soros”⁴⁹ and directly threatening to restrict democratic and civil liberties by banning or restricting the activities of NGOs funded by international institutions⁵⁰.

⁴⁵ <https://civic.am/politics/8465--.html>

⁴⁶ <https://hetq.am/hy/article/131897>

⁴⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXmknUoFONc?t=80>, from 1:20

⁴⁸ <https://medialab.am/163693/>

⁴⁹ <https://fb.watch/6bbpZ8ASFs/>

⁵⁰ https://iravaban.net/336129.html?fbclid=IwAR3u0A9B1ybPLJpQRO0JTZvPRH_qKZHYaqKdqH-3bNxpMqZkrejLGphmcY0