



KOMITETI SHQIPTAR I HELSINKIT ALBANIAN HELSINKI COMMITTEE

Tirana, April 26, 2021

INTERIM REPORT

On some findings and preliminary conclusions from the observation of some aspects of the electoral process, in the context of the parliamentary elections of April 25, 2021

The Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC) is a non-profit organization, whose mission is to contribute to respect for human rights, strengthening the rule of law, and the conduct of free and fair elections, in keeping with the constitution and international acts applicable in the Republic of Albania. Evaluating the exercise of the right to elect and be elected as a fundamental constitutional right, AHC has monitored electoral processes realized in our country since 1996.

To monitor the electoral process of the Parliamentary Elections of 2021, AHC engaged 206 short-term and long-term observers, accredited by the CEC, in 14 municipalities of the country, namely in Tirana, Durrës, Elbasan, Korça, Vlora, Fier, Shkodra, Malësi e Madhe, Dibra, Lezha, Pogradec, Berat, Kukës, and Gjirokastra.

On April 23, 2021, AHC published an interim report related to aspects of the pre-electoral¹ process, with the focus on electoral reform, the establishment and activity of the Central Election Commission (CEC), voter lists, diaspora vote, electoral campaign, and the prohibition of the use of state resources, incidents and denunciations about vote-buying, the integrity of candidates for MP and decriminalization, as well as aspects of the establishment and functioning of the Commissions of Election Administration Zones (CEAZ) and Voting Center Commissions (VCC).

This report reflects some of the findings and preliminary conclusions from the observation of the electoral process, the voting and counting process, in the 14 municipalities in question.

The observation was conducted in the context of the implementation of two initiatives, namely, “I participate! My voice, my vote matters,” supported financially by the European Union and “Toward better integrity of candidates, for Free and Fair Elections,” supported by the Federal Republic of Germany.

In a condensed manner, the monitoring of some important aspects of the pre-election process, voting day, and counting, it results that:

- **Vote Counting Groups (VCG)**

The establishment of the Vote Counting Groups (VCG) in some cases was accompanied by problems and delays, without respecting the requirements of article 95 of the Electoral Code. Based on monitoring of CEAZs on 21.04.2021, it results that in CEAZ no. 35 in Tirana, the VCGs were not established. In Vlora, there were cases where the VCGs were not established, namely CEAZ no. 84 and no. 86, due to political conflict between the LSI and PDIU, regarding

¹ https://ahc.org.al/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Raport-Paraprak-per-Procesin-Parazjedhor_Monitorimi-KShH_23-Prill-2021.pdf



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the appointment of the fourth representative in keeping with article 96 of the EC. The process was also accompanied by delays, whereby among monitored CEAZs, CEAZ no. 83 in Vlora, CEAZ no. 66 in Berat, and CEAZ no. 81 in Gjirokastra were established between one and five days beyond the legal deadline.²

The delayed submission of proposals for the appointment of VCG members by electoral subjects caused delays and the creation of groups with partial membership.³ Thus, in CEAZ no. 81 in Gjirokastra, proposals for members were submitted five days late. Local coordinators report that the appointed members had higher education.

During the monitoring of the VCGs, there was limitation of access for AHC observers in CEAZ no. 35 in Tirana and CEAZ no. 48 in Elbasan, whose members did not allow observers to review the Protocol Book or CEAZ decisions, in violation of article 7 of the Electoral Code (EC).

1. Electoral Silence

Based on the monitoring of CEAZs conducted on April 24, 2021, it was noticed that electoral silence was observed partially in the monitored municipalities. Violations of article 77 of the EC on electoral silence were noted in some municipalities, namely Dibra,⁴ Elbasan, Vlora, Pogradec, and Tirana, where there was distribution of leaflets, posters, and propaganda materials almost everywhere in the city, in public and private institutions; and electoral offices that remained open. On the other hand, it is reported that the local media respected fully provisions of article 77 of the EC on electoral silence.

Meanwhile, there is no decision by the CEC for fining subjects that violated electoral silence, pursuant to article 174 of the EC.

During the period of electoral silence, AHC observers tested public opinion and met with citizens on the street to listen to their evaluations of the environment around the 2021 parliamentary elections, mainly in the municipalities of Dibra, Pogradec, Malësie e Madhe, Berat, and Lezha. The result of these interviews indicates that the majority of citizens would participate on voting day. Also, about 15% of these individuals (although this is not a representative sample) stated that themselves or their relatives were promised material compensation in exchange of the vote and they were intimidated to vote for a certain party/candidate. Furthermore, the high number of individuals who expressed confidence that elections would be accompanied with incidents (about 60%) remained disturbing. Fortunately, this was minimal during voting day.

2. Distribution of electoral materials

The Electoral Code envisages that the CEC sends electoral materials to the CEAZs no later than 3 days before election day. Based on the monitoring, this deadline was respected by the CEC for

² In CEAZ 83 in Vlora, the decision for the establishment of the VCG was made on 19.04.2021, and in CEAZ no. 66 in Berat, the decision was made on 16.04.2021

³ VCGs were established with 4 members, with the majority of monitored CEAZs respecting provisions of articles 95 and 96 on the political affiliation of members, except for CEAZ no. 843 and 86 in Vlora.

⁴ Candidate for MP Xh. Mziu reacted in social media (on April 24) to accusations by political opponents about his statement that he was prosecuted for by the Dibra prosecution office.



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the CEAZs in the monitored municipalities. The distribution of cameras and Electronic Identification Equipment (EIE) was realized separately from other materials, due to the specifics of transportation and installation, per special CEC instructions.

Article 100 of the EC envisages that materials should be distributed from CEAZs to VCCs under their jurisdiction up to 15 hours ahead of the start of voting, or 16:00 of April 24. For a large part of CEAZs, this deadline was not respected.⁵ Delays in distribution of materials varied between 1 and 5 hours from the deadline. The reason was mainly the lack of effective coordination between CEAZ members, changes to their membership, delays in the appointment and replacement of commissioners, etc.⁶

The distribution of electoral materials in some cases, in CEAZ no. 35 in Tirana, CEAZ no. 1 in Malësi e Madhe, and CEAZs. No. 65 and 66 in Berat, was done by private vehicles of the VCC members, without distinguishing marks, such as relevant logos,⁷ and not accompanied by police officers who were present in VCs only at the time of acceptance of materials. All monitored VCs are observed by State Police officers. Monitoring of observers in Gjirokastra was limited by police officers, in violation of article 7 of the EC, claiming that at the time of monitoring, the process of preparation of the relevant VCs had not been concluded.⁸ Restrictions were noticed also in CEAZ no. 40 in Tirana, where obtaining information was refused, claiming that members were very busy; in CEAZ no. 34, observers were obstructed and were refused information.

During the distribution process, anti-COVID measures and regulations were not respected, mainly in terms of wearing masks or keeping a distance. During the assumption of materials by the CEAZ, we noticed as a problem the lack of operators to take over cameras, especially in monitored CEAZs in Dibra and Lezha municipalities.

3. Voting

a) General environment and Public Order

During the voting process, the situation was reported calm and without incidents, unlike the pre-election environment that had an aggravating trend before the day of electoral silence.

Based on monitoring of the media and observers, State Police appears to have managed with the necessary vigilance and attention the situation of public order and security as well as duties assigned by the Electoral Code, especially cases when VCCs requested police assistance when order or orderly conduct of the voting may have been affected. However, it is positive that summoning state police officers only took place in exclusive cases and was applied as a last

⁵ Namely, the distribution by CEAZ no. 12 and no. 13 in Lezha to the respective VCCs concluded about 17:00-17:45, in CEAZ no. 1 in Malësi e Madhe, the process concluded at 18:00, CEAZ no. 69 in Pogradec, distribution continued until the later hours of the night, in Elbasan CEAZs no. 47, 48, 49, and 50, distribution continued until 20:30; in CEAZ no. 4 in Shkodra, by 19:30 of April 24, electoral materials were not distributed for at least two voting centers, in CEAZ no. 31 in Tirana, distribution began after 15:00, which makes respect for the legal deadline difficult.

⁶ The practice for distributing materials by VCCs was initially to supply VCs that are remote, mainly in the villages, and then those in urban centers.

⁷ Although members verbally stated that the vehicles were authorized.

⁸ VC 4254, VC 42541, VC 43542, and VC 4248



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resort, a positive indicator of the management of the situation by VCCs themselves when there were attempts to block the voting process, in cases of emotional reactions by party observers, etc.

b) Voter sensitization and participation in voting

One of the main objectives of the initiative of the AHC consisted in addressing the level of mistrust of Albanian citizens, encouraging a closer and regular engagement of them in political processes linked with exercising the right to vote. In cooperation with Civil Rights Defenders, the Institute for Political Studies, and 4 active local organizations in Tirana, Shkodra, Elbasan, and Durrës, a series of awareness campaigns were conducted to contribute modestly to higher voter turnout in the Parliamentary Elections of April 25.

AHC views as a very important aspect the considerable participation of voters at the national level at 47.94%, according to data reported by the CEC. The figures reported on voter turnout are a positive indicator in terms of increased voter confidence in the right to vote and the democratic institution of elections.

c) AHC observers' access to observation

AHC engaged a total of 206 observers, of which 185 monitored 424 Voting Centers.

Overall, observers' access to the monitored VCs was complete and without obstacles. AHC observers played a proactive role in presenting written remarks to Voting Center Commissions and, in some cases, these contributed positively to the prevention of irregularities highlighted during the voting process.

Regrettably, we found that in some cases their written remarks were not protocolled by the VCCs, using unfounded arguments or there were sporadic cases of intimidation and pressure on AHC observers. In VC 0316/1 in Shkodra, the observer was intimidated and asked to leave. In VC 3026 in Fier, the VCC member asked the observer not to report problems with photographing of votes. In VC 2374/1, the VCC member opposed the keeping of a process-verbal for the AHC observer's written remark.

d) Engagement of the Central Election Commission

AHC finds that the State Election Commissioner, as the representative of the CEC, played a proactive role during the voting day, informing media and the public regularly. From the first hours of the morning, the Commissioner brought to the attention of electoral subjects, representatives of the public administration, and the broader public, the obligation to respect electoral silence. At the conclusion of the voting process, the CEC reminded subjects to not rush to announce results and demonstrate respect for the electoral administration bodies that are responsible for this process. Also, the Commissioner conducted several public appearances regarding key moments of the election administration process, including clarifying public opinion on which VCs had problems with EIEs and how voting in these VCs functioned. It is positive that the CEC official website enabled access in real time to information regarding voter turnout and vote counting results.



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In the early hours of the day, AHC notified the CEC about some irregularities from monitoring the voting process. In fact, the CEC highlights the need for an added structure for effective communication with NPO observers, although we hope that the presented conclusions will have been useful to the CEC for necessary guidance to CEAZs and VCCs.

e) Start of voting

In the 14 municipalities that are the subject of this monitoring, we find that the majority of Voting Centers (VCs) did not have considerable delays in starting the voting process. There were delays of 20-35 minutes, with the reason being the lack of electricity,⁹ technical problems with the functioning of the EIE (electronic identification) equipment,¹⁰ lack of efficiency in training on the use of this equipment,¹¹ delays/absence of members¹² and operators,¹³ delays in the preparation of premises, non-functioning of cameras, etc. At the start of the voting day, there were reports of cases whereby VCC members do not conduct actions according to the required order, allowing voters to exercise their right to vote before marking their finger with indelible ink.¹⁴ Delays in VC activity were caused also by dismissals/replacement of members from the early hours of the morning.¹⁵ The change of some VCs in Lezha Municipality due to damages by the earthquake of sites selected as VCs caused confusion among voters.¹⁶ AHC conveyed this concern to the CEC earlier.¹⁷

f) Anti-COVID measures

The protocols “On anti-COVID19 measures during the electoral process and voting day”¹⁸ was not applied rigorously in the monitored VCCs. It was especially found that not all VCs were placed on the first floor of the buildings, did not have the necessary doors or windows that guarantee sufficient airing, in accordance with measures against the spread of COVID-19. Also, observers regularly signaled that anti-COVID19 measures (wearing a mask, distancing) were not applied responsibly and rigorously by VCC members and voters.

g) Electronic election infrastructure

AHC notes that in spite of measures taken by the CEC for the establishment and functioning of electronic election infrastructure, this process dictated the need for earlier management while the economic cost was considerable.

⁹ VC 3269 of Berat Municipality, voting began half an hour late due to this reason

¹⁰ VC 32871 (Berat Municipality), VC 0735 (Berat Municipality), VC 3889 (Pogradec Municipality), VC 3907/1 and 3907 (Pogradec Municipality), VC 1411 (Durrës Municipality), VC 14113 (Durrës Municipality), VC 1429/2 (Durrës Municipality), VC 4447 (Vlora Municipality)

¹¹ VC 3889 (Pogradec Municipality)

¹² VC 3908 (Pogradec Municipality), VC 3907 (Pogradec Municipality), VC 0712/1, 0731 and 0742 (Lezha Municipality)

¹³ VC 1381 (Durrës Municipality)

¹⁴ VC 3669 (Fier Municipality)

¹⁵ At VC no. 2307 (Elbasan Municipality) and VC 4258 (Gjirokastra Municipality), a VCC member was replaced by CEAZ decision. At VC 0254/1 (Shkodra Municipality), a VCC member was dismissed and replaced after one hour.

¹⁶ VC no. 07121 and 07091 (Lezha Municipality)

¹⁷ Letter no. 284 prot., 09.04.2021

¹⁸ Approved by the Institute of Public Health and Instruction no. 11, dated 24.04.2021 of the State Commissioner of Elections.



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The use of the EIE system in this electoral process, in our opinion, found VCC members unprepared. The greatest delays were caused by the non-functioning of this system in some of the VCs in the monitored municipalities, which caused suspension of the process, queues of voters, and the restoration of the manual voter identification process.¹⁹ As a result of the application of electronic or biometric voter identification, we found that VCCs did not follow a unified practice in respecting required procedures for voting envisaged in article 105 of the Electoral Code, such as crossing out the voter's name on the voter list or the signature of the voter next to their name on the list.²⁰ Also, it was observed that in some VCs, voters were not marked with ink or it was not checked in advance whether they were marked with ink, before a ballot was given to them. VC members justified this by saying in an unfounded manner because these procedures would no longer be necessary due to the digitalization of the process.

In AHC's view, the CEC should have taken measures to inform in advance the VCs about handling the situation in case of failure of EIE malfunctioning. Although the CEC said it had a plan B, at the moment of unjust interferences in the system created by this institution, observation in the field indicated that the VCs did not have any such plans and there was confusion among VCC members.

A flagrant case was reported by the observer in VC no. 3889/1 in Pogradec Municipality, in which it was found that the EIE used by the operator reflected data also in the mobile phone of the observer of a political subject.

In a repeated manner, EIE did not allow for the reading of voters' finger prints, mainly the elderly, causing obstacles for them. These were resolved through manual procedures that guaranteed these voters the right to vote.²¹

h) Presence of unauthorized persons inside and outside VCs

With the amendments to article 109 of the EC, adding paragraphs 6 and 7, we find that the presence of unauthorized people is not allowed not only inside VC premises, but nor outside.

During the voting process, AHC observers reported continuously the presence of unauthorized people who guided or accompanied voters to the VCs.²² It is a problem that VCC members rarely took measures to remove unauthorized people from VC premises by notifying police officers, claiming that they are only responsible for order inside the VC, in violation of paragraphs 6 and 7 of Article 109 of the EC.

Also, in the presence of some VCs in the Municipalities of Lezha,²³ Berat,²⁴ Pogradec,²⁵ Dibra,²⁶ and Malësi e Madhe,²⁷ Tirana, and Shkodra,²⁸ there was a presence of people unauthorized by

¹⁹ VCs 1411, 1411/3, 1429/2 (Durrës Municipality)

²⁰ Problems encountered in: VC 1498, 1460 (Durrës Municipality), VC 0274, 0260 (Shkodra Municipality), VC 1767, 2002, 1804 (Tirana Municipality), VC 4507/1 (Vlora Municipality), VC 0260 (Shkodra Municipality), and massively in Berat VCs at VC 3920/1, VC 3291, VC 3292, VC 3279, VC 3280, and VC 3281/1.

²¹ VC 3891/2 (Pogradec Municipality), VC 0734 (Lezha Municipality), VC 1460 (Durrës Municipality).

²² VC 255/1, 259 (Shkodra Municipality), VC 1844 (Tirana Municipality), VC 3026/1 (Fier Municipality), VC 4313/1 (Gjirokastra Municipality)

²³ VC 0734/1 (Lezha Municipality)

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the CEC, as observers of political subjects that accompany voters to the secret booth or write down names of voters when these names or the numbers on the list are read by VC members.²⁹

The use of printed badges instead of the model approved by the CEC was noticed in two cases of political subjects' observers, whose badges were signed by the CEAZ chair.³⁰ The presence of State Police officers was noticed outside VCs throughout the duration of the voting process, but no incidents were encountered.

i) Family voting

With regard to the prohibition of family voting, AHC observers highlighted that Commission members were unclear and not sufficiently guided about procedures and referred wrongly to article 108 of the EC in some cases, regarding voting with aides (assisted) for voters with disabilities. Thus, during monitoring, there were regular reports of voting of family members together at the same time.³¹ The election administration in some cases reacted itself about not allowing family voting in a repeated manner,³² and in some cases, attempts at family voting were prevented by the submission of written remarks by AHC observers. Problems were reported with the refusal of commission members to accept and protocol written remarks about family voting at VCs 1157 and 1144 (Dibra Municipality), in violation of article 7 of the EC.

j) Procedures for voters who cannot vote on their own

In all municipalities, there were cases of assistance offered to exercise the right to vote to persons who, due to physical disabilities, could not vote themselves. In general, in such situations, VCC members acted in accordance with legal provisions of article 108. However, there were cases of VCCs allowing the provision of assistance by a person who is not part of the voter list where the assisted person is registered, allowing a person helping more than one person, or failure to document in the protocol book the voter' providing assistance. In some cases, when such statements were not available, they were noted in relevant process-verbal.

k) Vote secrecy

There have been cases where voters violated the principle of secrecy of the vote by disclosing their vote while folding the ballot or communicated it loudly.³³ Also there was added attention in observers' reporting of photographing of votes, which makes voters penalty responsible according to article 327 of the Criminal Code. Prohibition of the use of telephones for voters was

²⁴ VC 3291/1 and VC 3295 (Berat Municipality)

²⁵ VC 3889/1 (Pogradec Municipality)

²⁶ VC 1143/1 (Dibra Municipality)

²⁷ VC 0493 (Malësi e Madhe Municipality)

²⁸ VC 1767/1, 1856, 1728 Tirana Municipality, VC 0250, 260 Shkodra Municipality

²⁹ VC 4238 (Gjirokastër Municipality)

³⁰ VC 0712/1 and 0709/1 (Lezha Municipality)

³¹ VC 3889 and 3908 (Pogradec Municipality and VC 1143, 1149, 1144, 1157 (Dibra Municipality, VC 1411/2, 1489/1, 1449/2 (Durrës Municipality), VC 4235 (Gjirokastra Municipality), VC 1724 (Tirana Municipality), VC 364/1 (Korça Municipality), VC 0255/1, 260 (Shkodra Municipality)

³² VC 361 (Korça Municipality)

³³ VC 3636/1, 3660, 4510 Korça Municipality, VC 2374 Elbasan Municipality, VC 2355 Durrës Municipality



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in CEC's attention while the State Election Commissioner, during the day of electoral silence, offered his errands to the public.³⁴

AHC was alerted to the use of mobile phones and attempts of photographing of votes in some voting centers in Pogradec, Dibra, Tirana, Fier, and Vlora.³⁵ In these cases, the practice pursued was not unified, citizens were advised verbally or VCC members sequestered the said phone. Not in all cases of photographing were ballots considered invalid and voters were given another ballot. The intervention of police was sought in such cases in Tirana Municipality (VC 1767) and Vlora (VC 4498/1), where according to remarks by the observer of a political subject, police officers obtained the data of a person and asked for the process-verbal by the VCC chairperson as evidence.

l) Voting process in Institutions for the Execution of Penal Decisions

The subject of AHC's monitoring was also the special VCs established in four Institutions for the Execution of Penal Decisions (prisons), namely ShënKoll, Reç (Malësi e Madhe), Durrës, and Drenovë (Korça). The participation of citizens deprived of their liberty statistically remains to be evaluated at a later moment, but it is notable that in IEPD Reç, with 373 voters with the right to vote, 56 detainees (about 15%) had voted until 13:20.

At VC of IEPD Shënkoll, voting started at 07:00 while in IEPD Reç and Durrës, there were delays due to failure to prepare electoral materials and the VC on time. The situation in these VCs was calm, without incidents, and no presence of Prison Police officers in internal premises of the VC. There were no evident cases of intimidation or influence on citizens deprived of their liberty to influence their will.

For both VCs in IEPD Reç and Malësi e Madhe, about 20 pre-trial detainees appeared with judicial decisions to vote (due to inaccuracies or deficiencies of the voter lists). During the process, there was a written remark by the observer in IEPD Durrës regarding failure to note the ID number. In part of the cases, it was noted that prisoners did not have information about new rules for the manner of voting.

m) Closing of the voting process

In the overwhelming majority of VCs, the voting process closed within the legal deadline envisaged in the Electoral Code, at 19:00. In some VCs, it was reported that the deadline was not respected by VCCs (whether there were or not voters in queues or to enable VCC members to vote), while delays were maximally 1 hour long as a result of the close of the voting.³⁶

The close of the voting process is reported by observers to have taken place in respect of procedures envisaged in articles 113 onward of the EC, except for cases as in VC 2002, Tirana Municipality, where there was a mismatch between the number of voters who voted and unused

³⁴ <http://www.panorama.com.al/mos-u-paraqitni-me-telefona-ne-qendrat-e-votimit-kreu-i-kqz-paralajmeron-votuesit-do-konsiderohet-tentative-per/>

³⁵ VC 3889 and 3891/2 (Pogradec Municipality), VC 1157 (Dibra Municipality), VC 1845/3 (Tirana Municipality), VC 4498/1 (Vlora Municipality)

³⁶ VC 3016 Fier Municipality (19:50), VC 260 (20:03), VC 259/1 (19:40); VC 259 (19:36) Shkodra Municipality, VC 4440 Vlora Municipality (19:35), VC 0633 (20:01), VC 0648, VC 0649 (19:47) Kukës Municipality



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ballots. Transportation vehicles for the transport of ballot boxes were accompanied by police officers, the VCC secretary and member. Only in VC 3890 (Pogradec Municipality), the ballot box was damaged after being sealed by the ZEAC chair.

4. Vote counting

After the closing of the voting process for the parliamentary elections of April 25, 2021, AHC monitored 21 Vote Counting Sites (VCSs) in 14 Municipalities. The legal provision of article 114 of the EC about the arrival to VCSs of ballot boxes of all VCs under the EAZ jurisdiction, within 3 hours from the close of voting, generally was not applied. The exception is EAZ no. 11 in Kukës Municipality, EAZ no. 59 Fier Municipality, EAZ no. 73 Korça Municipality, which completed the process for the delivery of ballot boxes within the legal deadline envisaged in the legal provision.

As in the past, AHC notes that the election administration tasked with counting votes is trained in an inappropriate time, only hours before the counting process begins, creating premises for inadequate knowledge of electoral legislation. Also, training before the counting and the fact that VCGs work for extended hours especially during the night creates problems in terms of the pace of the vote counting process and focus of VCG members.

Concretely, for all municipalities, we find that about 1 hour before the start of the counting, the training of VCG members was carried out, in an accelerated manner, which questions the quality and efficiency of training. This was reflected in some cases in the lack of clarity and confusion among VCG members, especially about categorizing a vote as invalid (EAZ 69 and 79 Pogradec). There were problems in EAZ no. 48 in Elbasan where appointments of VCG members had not been done until the ballot boxes were delivered, in violation of article 95 of the EC.

Among the monitored VCSs in the 14 respective municipalities, EAZ no. 18 in Dibra Municipality was the first to start counting at 00:00. Meanwhile, training began considerably late in EAZ no. 21 and no. 24, Durrës Municipality (respectively at 03:23 and 03:55).

The counting process began at a normal pace but then was slowed down due to commissioners getting tired. Thus, in EAZ no. 73 in Korça Municipality, 1 box was counted in one hour. Also, there were cases of interruptions of the process with brief intervals of time while in EAZ no. 39 in Tirana Municipality, the process was suspended to resume at 13:00, which in AHC's opinion, is a relatively long break time that slows down the counting process.

A large number of political subjects' accredited observers was noticed and they also submitted remarks to VCGs. It is worth noting the fact that the VCS are very crowded and the protocols for COVID19 measures are not respected rigorously. AHC observers report that ballots go very fast through the monitor, which makes it difficult to have adequate visual access for observers. However, in spite fast passage through the monitor, exposing the ballots clearly is satisfactory.