

## **The Ombudsman has received 67 emergency calls regarding the Referendum**

As of now, the Ombudsman has received 67 emergency calls regarding election violations, based on which the Rapid Response Department has made visits to the problematic polling stations to get information on possible violations. Overall, 31 visits have been made, and some of the cases have been solved through consultations, or the issues have been recorded and proceedings have been initiated.

The received calls mainly covered such issues as hindering the work of journalists, observers and of committee members (11 cases), inappropriate organization of electoral process (3 cases), inaccuracies in voter lists and double voting (9 cases), overcrowding in the polling stations (2 cases), unlawful detention of citizens (7 cases), ballot-stuffing (6 cases), election bribes (2 cases), issues related to putting stamps on passports (7 cases), issues during calculating the votes, particularly, the termination of the process of calculating the votes (5 cases), hindering the work of the committee members during the process of calculating the votes (11 cases), inconsistency between the preliminary and final calculations of the votes. (4 cases).

Due to the intervention of the Staff of the Ombudsman, 8 cases on hindering the work of journalists, observers and of committee members have been regulated, 7 inaccuracies in voter lists have been corrected, 3 persons out of 7 have been released from detention, as well as 3 cases have been solved on the spot. In addition to that, the organization of electoral process has been regulated in 2 polling stations. During the process of calculating the votes, 3 cases of terminating the calculation process and hindering the work of the committee members were prevented. Furthermore, 3 cases out of 4 regarding the inconsistency of calculations, have been regulated. As far as the case on the permission to vote with a biometric passport is concerned, after the intervention of the representative from the Ombudsman's Office materials have been prepared and the case of beating the committee member has been reported to the Police.

During the upcoming days the Ombudsman will consistently continue to investigate the violations based on the information received from the emergency calls, through carrying out a detailed and comprehensive investigation. It is necessary that all the offenders are held liable.

During the upcoming days the Ombudsman will present its summary assessment regarding the Referendum 2015, after having concluded the information received from the monitoring groups, after having studied the available video materials and the media publications, as well as after having received reasoned explanations from state bodies,.

**Office of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia**