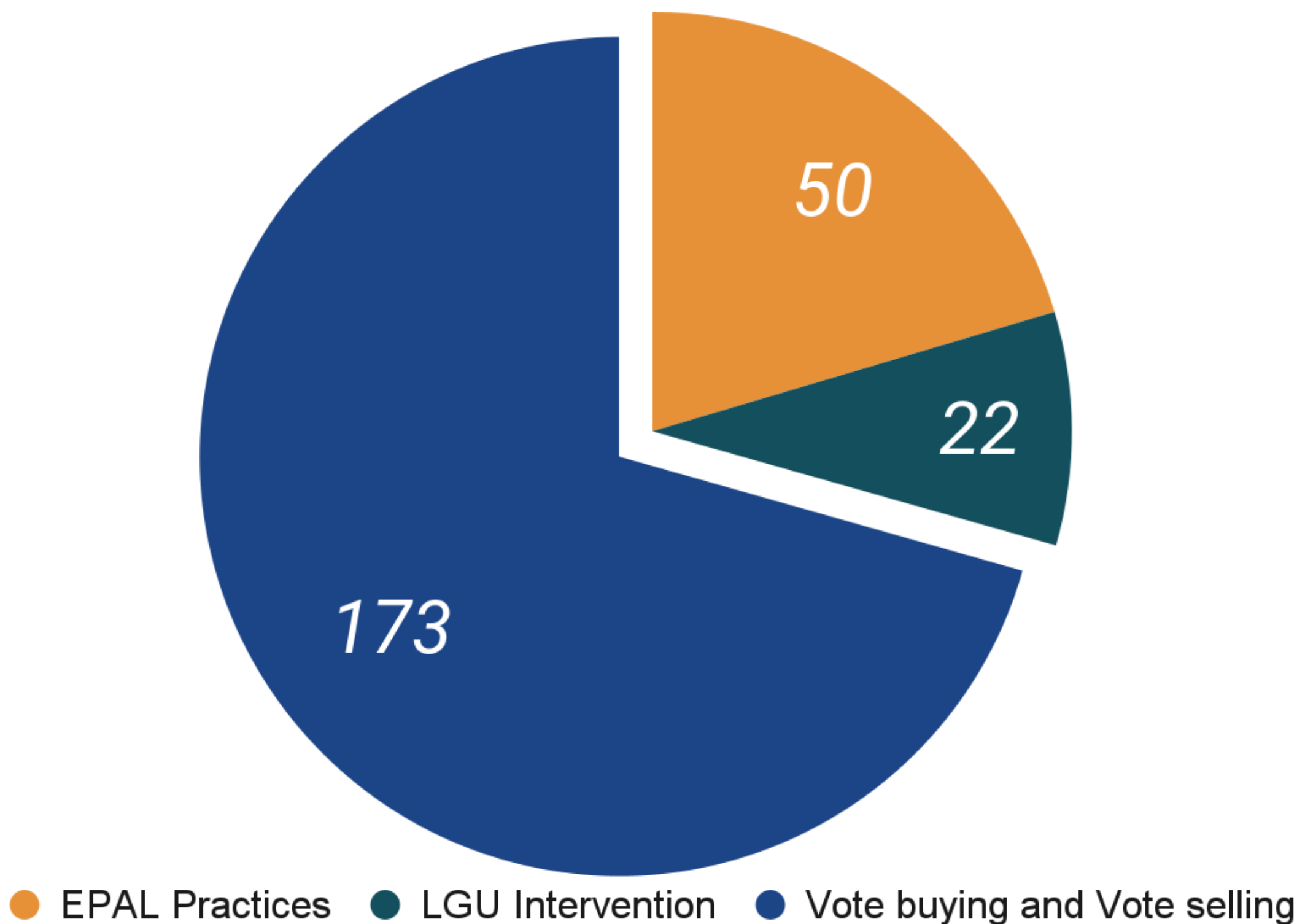


Summary

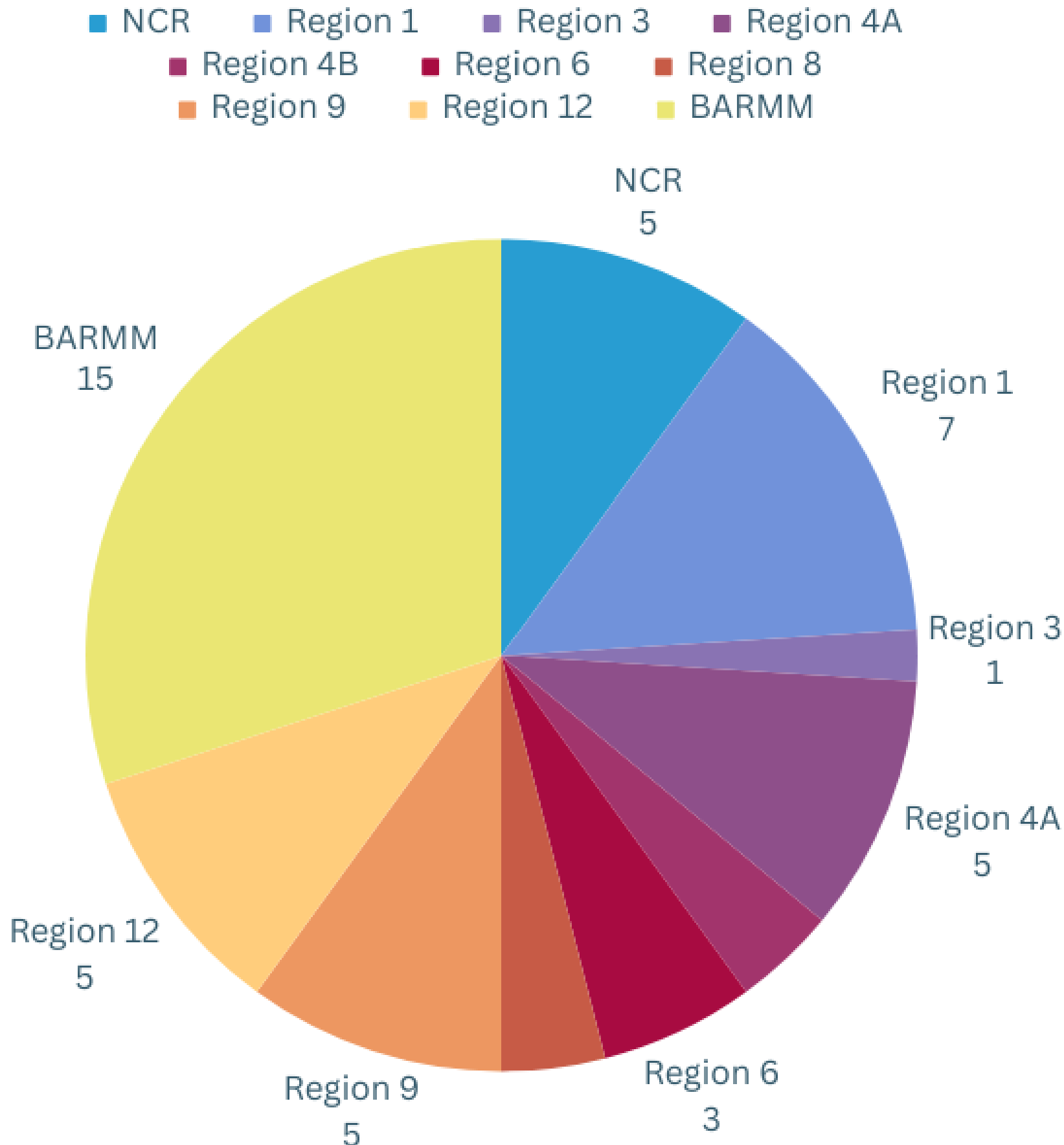


For the 2023 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections, LENTE focused on documenting the following ASR incidents for ease of monitoring:

- **EPAL Watch**—the colloquial term EPAL denotes incumbent politicians who intrude into domains beyond their purview, seeking undue recognition or association with endeavors unrelated to their official responsibilities.
- **LGU Intervention**—These contemplate incidents where elected local government officials use local government resources to endorse the candidacy of barangay candidates.
- **Barangay Activities**—these reports involve a gamut of incidents which spanned from the day preceding the campaign period to the post-election phase. Notwithstanding this classification, ASR was actually committed through multi-layered ways; in other words, the ASR documented incidents are not necessarily strictly in any of these classifications. The reporting on Barangay Activities closely aligns with COMELEC’s, Kontra Bigay. As of December 2023, LENTE has collected a total of 253 reports from August 2023 onwards related to instances of ASR. The figure displays the trend in the reporting incidents depending on the specific phases of the election period.

EPAL Watch reports received in particular areas monitored by the Coalitions. In 9 regions, namely NCR, Dagupan for Region 1, Bulacan for Region 3, Laguna for Region 4A, Puerto Princesa for Region 4B, Iloilo for Region 6, Ormoc for Region 8, General Santos for Region 12, and Lanao del Sur, Tawi-tawi, and Basilan.

EPAL WATCH REPORT



Analysis and Recommendation: Governance, democracy, and elections are three inextricably and intimately linked concepts. Competitive elections are vital for a thriving democracy because they are the most formal way to extract political accountability. In this connection, competitive elections have two interrelated components. First, is the equalization of access to opportunities to public service, that is, running for public office should not have a high barrier to entry—it is for this same reason too that the Philippine Constitution only has minimal requirements insofar as running for public office is concerned. Second, competitive elections entails ensuring a level playing field and much of the existing policy regulations already deal with this particular component—these are campaign finance, prohibited acts under Section 261 of the Omnibus Elections Code, regulation of campaign posters, time-space media regulation, etc. The wisdom behind competitive elections is to democratize political power so that public office would not be the preserve of the professional and the wealthy

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