



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

28 September 2025

ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
II.	INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	5
III.	BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT	5
IV.	LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM.....	6
V.	ELECTION ADMINISTRATION.....	9
VI.	VOTER REGISTRATION	12
VII.	CANDIDATE REGISTRATION	13
VIII.	ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN.....	15
A.	ONLINE CAMPAIGN ENVIRONMENT	18
IX.	CAMPAIGN FINANCE.....	20
X.	MEDIA	23
A.	MEDIA ENVIRONMENT.....	23
B.	LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE MEDIA	25
C.	ODIHR EOM MEDIA MONITORING	27
XI.	ELECTION DISPUTE RESOLUTION	28
XII.	NATIONAL MINORITIES.....	30
XIII.	ELECTION OBSERVATION.....	31
XIV.	ELECTION DAY	31
XV.	POST-ELECTION DAYS DEVELOPMENTS	33
XVI.	RECOMMENDATIONS	34
A.	PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS.....	34
B.	OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	35
	ANNEX I: ELECTION RESULTS.....	37
	ANNEX II: LIST OF OBSERVERS IN THE INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION.....	38
	ABOUT ODIHR	47

**Republic of Moldova
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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following an invitation to observe the 28 September 2025 parliamentary elections, and in accordance with its mandate, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) established an Election Observation Mission (EOM) on 13 August. The ODIHR EOM assessed the compliance of the election processes with OSCE commitments and other standards for democratic elections, as well as domestic legislation. For election day, the ODIHR EOM was joined by delegations of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), and the European Parliament (EP) to form an International Election Observation Mission (IEOM).

In its Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions, the IEOM found that the “28 September 2025 parliamentary elections in Moldova were competitive and offered voters a clear choice among political alternatives but the process was marred by serious cases of foreign interference, illicit financing, cyber-attacks and widespread disinformation. The legal framework was strengthened to protect against election corruption and provides a sound basis for conducting democratic elections although legislative changes shortly before the elections impacted legal certainty. The election administration managed preparations professionally and efficiently. However, some decisions along partisan lines by the Central Election Commission (CEC) on contentious issues brought into question its impartiality. Decisions in the two days before elections on the ineligibility of two parties, based on allegations of illicit funding, limited their right to effective remedy. In a highly polarized environment contestants campaigned freely throughout the country. Despite law enforcement efforts, extensive vote buying schemes to influence voters were credibly identified. Extensive disinformation on social networks, partisan coverage in most media and limited investigative and analytical reporting, hindered voters’ ability to make an informed decision. Election day was well-prepared, orderly and transparent and the process assessed positively by IEOM observers.”

Framed by a polarised political environment and deep divisions between the ruling party and the opposition regarding the country’s geopolitical orientation, the 28 September elections were widely seen as decisive for Moldova’s continued European Union (EU) integration process. Elections were held against the backdrop of the war caused by the Russian Federation’s invasion of Ukraine, which posed significant challenges to the country’s security and economy. In the run up to the elections, the authorities faced an unprecedented set of hybrid attacks, including illicit financing, disinformation campaigns and cybersecurity incidents, identified as originating from the Russian Federation.

The legal framework provides a sound basis for conducting democratic elections, in line with international standards. Following the 2024 presidential election and referendum, a major revision through a new law introduced key improvements such as clearer definitions of electoral corruption, tougher penalties, and better regulation of campaign financing. In the law-making process, a number of ODIHR Urgent Opinion recommendations on the initial draft law were addressed, but a few key issues remain unresolved as do some ODIHR and Venice Commission recommendations on other aspects of the election process. The amendments further tightened Moldova’s already strict rules on party activity and deregistration which allowed a party’s temporary suspension during the campaign by a court decision without prior notice. While the reforms strengthened oversight of party activities, they also imposed certain strict conditions that fall short of international standards and could lead to disproportionate measures. Despite the legitimate aim of curbing abuses, frequent changes to the law,

¹ The English version of this report is the only official document. An unofficial translation is available in Romanian.

including shortly before these elections, undermined effective implementation, legal certainty and the stability of electoral legislation.

The CEC managed technical preparations for these elections professionally and efficiently, mostly respecting legal deadlines. The election administration at all levels was transparent in its work with sessions open to observers and the media, and CEC meetings streamed online. Overall, the election administration enjoyed stakeholder trust in its competency, efficiency and integrity. However, occasionally politically aligned decisions on contentious issues called into question its impartiality and independence. Some of these decisions related to the registration and de-registration of candidates and to the establishment of a lower number of polling stations in some countries abroad and for voters residing on left bank of the Nistru river (Transnistria) compared to previous election cycles, including the number of ballots printed for Transnistria. The CEC through its Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (CICDE) conducted extensive in-person seminars for most electoral officials involved. The PEB trainings observed by ODIHR EOM Long-Term Observers were well-organized and interactive.

The government digital infrastructure has been subject to cyberattacks ahead of the elections and cybersecurity in elections remains a serious concern. On 24 September, the Prime Minister announced that the country's infrastructure had faced more than 1,000 cyberattacks in 2025. Authorities introduced a risk-based framework to identify and mitigate threats, which strengthened resilience. The CEC's State Automated Information System 'Elections' (SAISE), which manages several applications, is now protected under the cyber security framework of the Information Technology and Cyber Security Service, alongside all government digital infrastructure to ensure a unified security approach. In the lead up to elections, and especially the week before, the CEC was the target of foreign based cyberattacks and disinformation campaigns, aimed at undermining its public credibility by amplifying false information.

No major issues were identified with the overall accuracy of the voter register. However, long-standing problems persist with entries for deceased persons, particularly for voters residing abroad or in Transnistria, as the mechanism for removing deceased citizens from the register depends on the initiative of the family in reporting such changes. Further, some voters lack a registered domicile or residence.

The CEC registered 4 electoral blocs, 15 political parties, and 4 independent candidates, from a wide political spectrum that offered voters a broad choice. At the same time, in considering some decisions, the CEC occasionally applied a formalistic and selective approach. Certain newly imposed candidate registration requirements were unduly burdensome and the pre-clearance of party eligibility by the Public Service Agency was not always clear. The decisions of the CEC and the Chişinău Court of Appeal (CCA) in the last days before the election to revoke two parties' eligibility (one appeal decided just a few hours before the closing of the polls), citing serious campaign and campaign finance violations, undermined the legal certainty of the electoral contestants' status and given the timing limited their right to seek effective remedy, at odds with international standards.

The campaign was competitive, and fundamental freedoms were generally respected. Contestants complemented traditional campaign methods with extensive use of social media, but the campaign was marred by hybrid attacks, including illicit funding and disinformation. An organised network, funded by foreign sources, coordinating targeted vote-buying schemes and disinformation campaigns, was credibly identified by the authorities and investigative journalists as originating from the Russian Federation. Proactive law enforcement efforts were seen to have a mitigating and deterring effect against vote buying. Some isolated instances of campaigning by PAS government officials may have blurred the line between party and State, contrary to OSCE commitments and good practice. Moreover, the participation of a few local mayors in the campaign in favour of the ruling party while in office as well as a few allegations of misuse of administrative resources at the local level were confirmed by ODIHR EOM observers.

Throughout the election period, unofficial campaigns conducted by inauthentic networks of accounts sometimes using AI generated videos, ‘troll farms’, and automated bots spread alarmist disinformation on social network platforms. State efforts against this were strengthened, with the authorities deploying a wide range of mechanisms and engaging a number of agencies to detect foreign interference and disinformation. Despite these considerable efforts to protect against information threats, the endemic nature of the challenge meant that the campaign was negatively affected by disinformation. The platforms’ responsiveness to notifications of harmful networks and narratives they received from state authorities and civil society organisations was deemed inadequate. Together with platform algorithms which promoted ‘echo-chambers’ and ‘filter bubbles’, this undermined the availability of reliable information for voters.

Moldova has a solid legal framework to promote women’s participation in decision-making, supported by international treaties. Many women hold leading positions, including the presidency, chairs of the Constitutional Court (CC), the CEC, and the Audio-visual Council. Women are well represented in lower levels of the election administration. However, despite electoral contestants meeting legal requirements for gender quotas on their lists, the new parliament includes fewer women, with representation reducing from 40 per cent in the previous legislature to 37 per cent. Women were participants in campaign events but were not given equal prominence at campaign rallies observed by ODIHR EOM Long-Term Observers.

National minorities comprise approximately 18 per cent of Moldova’s population. No systemic barriers were identified to the ability of national minorities to freely participate in the election process. At the same time, some issues require further attention, such as voter registration procedures for Roma. Minority candidates were present across political party lists, indicating no formal barriers to their participation. On election day, ballots in five minority languages were available where DEC’s had requested them.

Campaign finance regulations provided sufficient ground for transparency, accountability and integrity, and are largely in line with international standards. However, detailed regulation of the involvement of third parties in the campaign as well as clear guidelines for valuing in-kind contributions are lacking. Positively, contestants generally complied with their obligation to submit weekly and final campaign finance reports. The reports follow detailed templates requiring the disclosure of every single donation and having dedicated sections on online expenditure. The CEC published and thoroughly reviewed the reports, performed additional checks when necessary, and imposed appropriate sanctions of varying degrees. It thus played an effective role in contributing to transparency, despite having to rely on other state institutions due to its limited resources.

The media environment was diverse and pluralistic but constrained by a limited and shrinking advertising market. Many IEOM interlocutors reported an increase in intolerant speech and instances of intimidation and harassment of journalists, both in person and online, mainly from non-state actors. The ODIHR EOM’s media monitoring found broadcast media’s election coverage reflected a pluralistic but polarized media environment. The monitored media provided contestants with numerous opportunities to present their views and opinions through debates, talk shows, current affairs programs, and news coverage. However, the partisan coverage in most media outlets, combined with event-driven and statement-focused news narratives, limited investigative and analytical reporting, and extensive disinformation on social networks, significantly hindered voters’ ability to make well-informed decisions.

Electoral disputes were generally handled efficiently by the election administration and the courts within the prescribed deadlines. However, divergences in higher court decisions, demonstrated a lack of legal certainty on the application of some party eligibility requirements. The amended candidate registration deadline still did not guarantee the settling of disputes before the start of the campaign, limiting effective

remedy. Despite some progress in judicial reform, including an ongoing vetting process, public trust in the judiciary remains low. Acting upon a number of complaints submitted on election day, the CEC sanctioned with deprivation of public funding the Democracy at Home party for illegal and undeclared financing, a decision that was partially annulled by the CCA but ultimately upheld by the Supreme Court of Justice (SCJ). The CEC determined that the party had committed serious violations that would have warranted de-registration but, in line with the legal provisions, left the CC to decide upon this aspect when deciding on the legality of elections and on the validation of the mandates obtained by the party. The CC validated the results and all the mandates of the deputies.

The legal framework allows for citizen and international observation, and observation by contestant representatives, both in-country and abroad. The CEC accredited 2,496 citizen and 912 international observers, with Promo-LEX and the Union of Lawyers being the largest citizen groups. A new CEC regulation introduced additional accreditation requirements, including disclosure of organizational capacity and funding, aimed at preventing the misuse of the observer status. The registration of a high number of observers, both citizen and international contributed to the transparency of the process. The CEC denied accreditation to 16 prospective IEOM observers nominated by the Russian Federation, citing the opinion of the Security and Intelligence Services as the basis for its decision.

Election day was well organized. The opening and voting processes were assessed positively in the overwhelming majority of polling stations observed, with established procedures largely followed. While most voters marked their ballots in secrecy, the layout of polling stations and the placement of video cameras did not always ensure the secrecy of the vote. The few negative observations were mostly linked to unauthorized persons present at polling stations. Most observed polling stations were unsuitable for people with disabilities, with 65 per cent failing to provide for independent access and 26 per cent having a not suitable interior layout. A number of concerning security incidents took place. A large-scale cyberattack forced authorities to block the host.md platform, leaving about 4,000 websites offline on election day. A series of bomb threats were reported at some Precinct Electoral Bureaus (PEBs) in Moldova and abroad, as well as at bridges over the Nistru river, which caused temporary suspensions to the process and contributed to queues at the river crossings. The majority of vote counts and tabulation processes observed by the IEOM were also assessed positively and found to be well-organized overall, orderly and professional.

The CEC published preliminary results based on data from PEB protocols transmitted through the CEC's SAISE. The CEC promptly summarized the results within the legal timeframes. The results were published along with the spreadsheet of polling station-level results as well as scanned copies of all PEB protocols, contributing to transparency. On 5 October, the CEC published the results protocol and the next day it was submitted, together with the report on the conduct of the elections, to the CC for validation. On the same day, the CEC also allocated mandates to contestants that passed the threshold. While no complaints were officially filed contesting the election results or demanding recounts, the Patriotic Bloc questioned the results during the CC hearing. On 16 October, within the 10-day deadline prescribed by the law, the CC concluded that no violations had occurred and confirmed the results of the election, validating the mandates as presented by the CEC.

This report offers a number of recommendations to support efforts to bring elections in Moldova closer in line with OSCE commitments and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections to which it has committed. Priority recommendations relate to further reviewing the legal framework for elections, introducing legal provisions to better regulate candidate registration and prevent arbitrary de-registration, removing restrictions to the right to vote based on intellectual or psychosocial disability, preventing misuse of administrative resources and abuses of office, improving institutional arrangements to address foreign interference and illicit financing, and enhancing transparency of counter-disinformation efforts. ODIHR stands ready to assist the authorities to further improve the electoral process and to address the recommendations contained in this and previous reports.

II. INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Following an invitation to observe the 28 September 2025 parliamentary elections, and in accordance with its mandate, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) established an Election Observation Mission (EOM) on 13 August. The mission, led by Ambassador Jillian Stirk, consisted of a 17-member core team based in Chişinău and 30 long-term observers deployed on 22 August to 15 locations around the country. Core team members and long-term observers came from 24 OSCE participating States. The ODIHR EOM remained in country until 8 October.

For election day, the ODIHR EOM was joined by delegations of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), and the European Parliament (EP) to form an International Election Observation Mission (IEOM). Each of the institutions involved in the IEOM has endorsed the 2005 Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation. Paula Cardoso was appointed by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office as Special Co-ordinator and Leader of the OSCE short-term observer mission. Linnea Wickman headed the OSCE PA delegation. Chris Said headed the PACE delegation. Michael Gahler headed the EP delegation. On election day, 391 observers from 50 countries were deployed, including 245 observers by ODIHR, as well as a 108-member delegation from the OSCE PA, a 24-member delegation from the PACE and a 14-member delegation from the EP. Among IEOM observers, 46 per cent were women.

The ODIHR EOM assessed the compliance of the election processes with OSCE commitments and other standards for democratic elections, as well as domestic legislation. This final report follows the Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions which was released at a press conference in Chişinău on 29 September 2025.²

The ODIHR EOM wishes to thank the authorities of the Republic of Moldova for the invitation to observe the elections, and the Central Election Commission (CEC) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their assistance. The ODIHR EOM also expresses its appreciation to other state and local institutions, political parties, media and civil society organizations (CSOs), representatives of the international community and other interlocutors for sharing their views and for their co-operation.

III. BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

On 17 April 2025, the Speaker of the Parliament announced that regular parliamentary elections would be scheduled for 28 September. In the most recent snap parliamentary elections held in 2021, the Action and Solidarity Party (PAS) secured a majority with 63 out of 101 parliamentary seats.³ Under Moldova's semi-presidential system, the president appoints a prime minister in consultation with the parliament, to which the government is accountable.

Investigations into foreign interference and illegal campaign financing during the 2023 and 2024 local and presidential elections and constitutional referendum, as well as the November 2024 Constitutional Court (CC) ruling on the results, revealed an unprecedented scale of voter corruption in 2024 and underscored the need for stronger safeguards. Subsequent amendments to the legislation, along with coordinated efforts by law enforcement agencies to curb the use of illicit funding, shaped the pre-election environment.

² See previous [ODIHR election reports on Moldova](#).

³ The Bloc of Communists and Socialists won 32 seats, and the Şor Party won 6 seats. In June 2023, the Constitutional Court declared the Şor Party unconstitutional and ordered its removal from the register of parties. Five Şor Party members of the parliament (MPs) retained their mandates and sit as independent MPs, while the sixth seat remained vacant after Mr. Şor was stripped of his mandate, following his sentence to 15 years in prison for fraud and money laundering, in absentia in April 2023.

Framed by a polarised political environment and deep divisions between the ruling party and the opposition regarding the country's geopolitical orientation, the 28 September elections were widely regarded as decisive for Moldova's continued integration into the European Union (EU). Since 2022, Moldova has held EU candidate status. The government launched accession negotiations in 2023 and further embedded this objective into the Constitution in 2024. The war caused by the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine has posed significant challenges to the country's security and economy, resulting in high inflation, and in particular increased energy prices.

The governing party framed the elections as an existential choice between pursuing alignment and integration with the EU or risking the loss of sovereignty to the Russian Federation. The President and several government ministers and institutions warned the electorate about wide scale Russian interference aimed at securing a pro-Russian majority in parliament.⁴ Some opposition parties contended that these allegations served political purposes, asserting that the ruling party sought to dominate the pro-European agenda and emphasising that not all opposition parties hold pro-Russian positions. Others advocated for maintaining balanced relations with both the EU and Russia.

Moldova has a solid legal framework to promote women's participation in political life, supported by international treaties.⁵ Moldova has demonstrated its commitment to promoting gender equality and the protection of national minorities as outlined in the Constitution and the 2006 Law on Equal Opportunities. The outgoing parliament comprised 40 per cent women. Women occupy many high-ranking and decision-making positions, including those of the President and Chairs of the CEC and the CC. The electoral legal framework provides for the participation of women in elections on an equal basis, but does not provide special measures to assist and facilitate minority representation.⁶

IV. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Parliament's 101 seats were elected by proportional representation from closed party or bloc lists, or as independents. Thresholds of 5 and 7 percent of valid votes cast are in place for parties and electoral blocs, respectively.⁷ For independents, this threshold is 2 percent. There is an overall 40 percent gender quota for candidate lists, and a placement requirement that at least 4 of every 10 candidates be of the opposite gender. A minimum turnout requirement of one-third of registered voters is mandated.

The parliamentary elections were held under a revised legal framework that provides a sound basis for conducting democratic elections. Parliamentary elections are primarily regulated by the 1994 Constitution (last amended in 2024), the 2022 Electoral Code (last amended in 2025), and the 2007 Law on Political Parties (LPP). These are complemented by a set of regulations issued by the CEC, covering

⁴ President [Maia Sandu's speech](#) in the European Parliament on 9 September 2025, and in the [Joint Press Conference](#) with the leaders of France, Germany and Poland, on the occasion of the Independence Day on 27 August 2025.

⁵ Constitution (art.16), Law 6/2006-On Equal Opportunities. Additionally, gender quotas were introduced in 2016 and 2019, and then strengthened, requiring that, for every ten candidates, four be of the opposite gender.

⁶ Legislation includes the Constitution and the 2001 Law on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities and the Legal Status of their Organisations. Moldova is also a state party to the core international human rights treaties most relevant to minority rights, including the [1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#) (ICCPR), [1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#) (ICERD) and the [1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#). Moldova is a state party to the [Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#).

⁷ [ODIHR and the Council of Europe's Venice Commission](#) have previously noted that there is no automatic reason to set it to a higher value for electoral blocs.

a wide range of issues.⁸ Moldova is party to major international legal instruments related to democratic elections.⁹

These were the first parliamentary elections organised under the new Electoral Code of 2022. The legal framework has undergone frequent revisions by the parliament, with the 2022 Electoral Code amended 10 times since its entry into force in January 2023. Further changes resulted from two CC rulings declaring certain provisions of the Code unconstitutional.¹⁰

The 2022 Electoral Code and its subsequent amendments implemented many prior ODIHR and Venice Commission recommendations, including strengthening campaign finance regulations and oversight, allowing voters to sign in support of more than one contestant, clarifying candidate nomination procedures, and revising the process for nominating CEC members to enhance impartiality. Other ODIHR and Council of Europe recommendations on key issues remain outstanding; these include clearer and more comprehensive provisions on the misuse of administrative resources, removing limitations to suffrage rights for people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, the extension of campaign finance regulations to third parties and online activities, ensuring dispute resolution related to candidate registration is concluded before the start of the campaign, transparency of ownership of print and online media, and rules for contesting election results. Moreover, frequent changes to the law, including shortly prior to these elections, affected legal certainty and the stability of electoral legislation.¹¹

As previously recommended, the electoral legal framework should be reviewed to comprehensively address all outstanding ODIHR recommendations, in line with OSCE commitments and other international standards. Reform efforts should be undertaken well in advance of the next elections in an inclusive and transparent manner.

Shortly after a CC ruling confirming the 2024 presidential election and constitutional referendum results, the PAS parliamentary majority initiated an extensive draft law aimed at addressing electoral corruption

⁸ Other applicable legislation includes the 2002 Criminal Code and the 2008 Code on Contraventions, the 2018 Code on Audiovisual Media Services, the 2022 Law on Advertising, the 2011 Law on Personal Data Protection (which will be replaced starting 28.06.2026 by the new Law 195/2024), the 2000 Law on Citizenship, the 2001 Law on the Administrative-Territorial Organisation, the 2008 Law on Assemblies, and the 1994 Law on Special Legal Status of Găgăuzia. The CEC regulations of 2023 (some revised in 2025) cover most aspects of the electoral process, including candidate registration, voter lists, election campaigning, campaign financing, election disputes resolution.

⁹ Including, the ICCPR, ICERD, the [1979 Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#) (CEDAW), [2003 UN Convention Against Corruption](#), [2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (CRPD), [1950 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms](#) (ECHR), 1995 Framework Convention on National Minorities. In 2022 Moldova signed the Council of Europe's [Second Additional Protocol to the Cybercrime Convention](#), and in 2025 the [Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law](#). Moldova is a member of the Council of Europe's European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) and Group of States against Corruption (GRECO).

¹⁰ CC decision from 2023 on amendments to the legislation that barred members of parties previously found unconstitutional from being elected declared the ban too general, neglecting individual circumstances, and lacking effective remedies and guarantees against arbitrary decisions. Further to the 2023 decision, the parliament enacted the Law no. 280 on October 4, amending again the Electoral Code, in an attempt to implement narrower restrictions aligned with the Court's reasoning, but the CC [declared the law unconstitutional](#) on March 2024, citing disproportional limitations on electoral rights. In 2025, the Electoral Code was amended by Law 112 (22 May), Law 130 (29 May), and Law 100 (13 June), with the latter also amending the LPP. Law 109/2024 on postal voting was amended by Law 129 (29 May) to extend its application to the parliamentary elections and to include new countries.

¹¹ Paras II.B. 3 and 4 of the Venice Commission [Revised Interpretative Declaration on the Stability of the Electoral Law](#). Para. II.B.6 also prescribes that "once elections have been called, no amendments to electoral law should be made", whereas most of the recent amendments were adopted after April 17. See also paragraph 60 of the 2016 Venice Commission [Rule of Law Checklist](#).

and related issues.¹² The law was passed on 13 June 2025, introducing substantial amendments to 13 laws, including the Electoral Code, the LPP, the Criminal Code, and the Contravention Code. Opposition parties voted against these amendments. Although they were considered in an expedited manner, efforts were made to have an extensive public debate and seek input into the legislation.¹³ Some ODIHR EOM interlocutors expressed concerns about the meaningfulness of the consultations due to certain procedural shortcomings and the limited review time owing to the late dissemination of the draft amendments.¹⁴

Law 100/2025 aimed at strengthening Moldova's legal framework against electoral corruption by expanding the definition of passive and active corruption to include the promising of benefits to influence voters, thus addressing a broader range of corrupt practices. The legal framework related to campaigning was also improved by the introduction of a ban on early campaigning, the prohibition of misuse of charitable organizations for political gain, and the limiting of campaigning to only registered competitors with related administrative sanctions now imposed. In line with a prior ODIHR recommendation, the definition of independent candidates was further elaborated, requiring them to have resigned from any political party at least 70 days before election day in order to be recognized as such.¹⁵

Recent amendments contained in law 100/2025 addressed a few of the most recent ODIHR recommendations, including enhancing institutional capacity and coordination to combat vote-buying and illicit campaign financing, further defining independent candidates, and introducing explicit grounds for candidate registration refusal with an opportunity to correct certain deficiencies. However, despite some alignment with ODIHR Urgent Opinion recommendations, a number of key issues remain unresolved.¹⁶ These include certain terms in the criteria for banning successor parties and their definition, along with the party register requirement that might allow for subjective interpretation.¹⁷ The new obligation for parties to maintain and submit a party membership register to

¹² Draft Law 381 was submitted to parliament on 17 December 2024. An [urgent ODIHR Opinion on the Draft Law](#) was published on 29 April 2025. In addition, Law 130, amending the Electoral Code and LPP, was adopted on 29 May without public consultation.

¹³ The adoption process included two rounds of public consultations, engaged a diverse range of stakeholders (including ministries, state agencies, external experts, and civil society organizations) and took into consideration several amendments that were proposed. The final version, Law 100/2025, was adopted in a third reading with 55 PAS votes in favour and 21 votes against from the Bloc of Communist and Socialists.

¹⁴ See [ODIHR Urgent Opinion on the Draft Law 381/2025](#).

¹⁵ A data protection Law No 195 was enacted on 25 July 2024, scheduled to come into effect on 23 August 2026, aligned with the provisions of the [European General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#). The collection of identity documents and the publication of personal data on the internet will become illegal.

¹⁶ The amendments addressed a few [ODIHR Urgent Opinion](#) on Draft Law 381/2025 recommendations. For example, they removed Intelligence and Security Service (SIS) and CC involvement in party registration, reformulated certain rules and explicitly determined that decisions on successor parties will be taken by the Chişinău Court of Appeal (CCA) explicitly stated that minor irregularities cannot limit party activity and that parties must be notified and present at the CCA hearing, stipulated that media coverage of extremist content does not restrict legal journalism, specified that unregistered individuals cannot collect signatures. However, most other recommendations were not implemented, such as those referring to the use of suspension or banning of associations/parties only as a last resort, for clearly defined criminal acts linked to violence; protecting media freedom from overly broad laws that could block their work, prevent misuse of "extremism" laws; keep party restrictions narrow defined and evidence-based; apply proportionate sanctions; dissolve parties only in extreme cases; ensure transparent valuation of in-kind donations; allow spontaneous gatherings without prior notice; ensure surveillance follows legality, necessity, proportionality, with judicial oversight.

¹⁷ In the [Urgent Opinion](#) on Draft Law 381/2025, ODIHR recommended the revision of the provisions on successor parties to ensure clarity, legal certainty, and compliance with international standards. Specifically, it advised removing vague terms like "ties" and "substantial similarities" and instead establishing clear, objective, and narrowly defined criteria to determine when a party qualifies as a successor to one that has been banned. ODIHR also emphasized that any restrictions on successor parties should be based on concrete evidence and justified by a genuine threat to the constitutional order or democratic principles. Importantly, the evidentiary requirement has been addressed in the adopted law.

the CEC and Public Service Agency (PSA) was upheld by a recent CC ruling.¹⁸ However, failure to provide the required register can now result in a limitation of party activity, which appears disproportionate and falls short of international standards.¹⁹

Furthermore, the recent amendments tightened rules on party activity and deregistration that were already strict and, in some cases, broadly formulated. Notably, they introduced a ban on camouflaged blocs, but also on parties that are successors of those declared unconstitutional (see *Candidate Registration*).²⁰ Such measures have precedents in some European legal systems, but restrictions on political parties are permissible only in exceptional cases, must be a last resort, and must be narrowly defined, pursue a legitimate aim (such as protecting democratic order or fundamental rights), and be proportionate and necessary to safeguard democracy.²¹

V. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Parliamentary elections were administered by the CEC, 37 District Electoral Councils (DECs), and 2,274 Precinct Electoral Bureaus (PEBs), including 301 polling stations in 41 countries for out-of-country and postal voting.²² The CEC, a permanent body appointed in 2021 with a five-year term, consists of nine members: one nominated by the president and eight by parliament, proportional to party representation – five from the majority and three from the opposition. A new appointment mechanism intended to enhance institutional independence and impartiality, in line with a prior ODIHR recommendation, will be applied as of 2026.²³ Five CEC members, including the chairperson, are women.

DEC members (except the permanent chairperson) are nominated before each election by local councils, district courts, and parliamentary parties. PEBs are temporary bodies nominated by local councils and parliamentary parties. All election officials must be certified by the CEC.²⁴ Women made up 72 per cent of DEC members and 59 per cent of DEC chairpersons.

¹⁸ In a [decision](#) of 12 September 2025, the CC concluded that the obligation to maintain a register of party members and to periodically submit it to the competent authorities is in the interest of transparency and democracy and cannot, in itself, be considered a measure contrary the Constitution.

¹⁹ According to Article 11 of the [European Convention on Human Rights \(ECHR\)](#) and Article 22 of the ICCPR, any limitation imposed on the rights of political parties must be necessary in a democratic society, proportionate in nature and time, and effective in achieving its specified purpose. See also ODIHR Urgent Opinion and the [2020 ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines](#) on Political Party Regulation, para 50 “The need for restrictions shall be carefully weighed. The limitation chosen shall be proportionate and the least intrusive means to achieve the respective objective.” Further, the ODIHR and Venice Commission [Joint Opinion](#) on the Draft Electoral Code notes that “the grounds for de-registration of candidates should be reviewed, and these measures should apply as a last resort against only the most serious actions that cannot be remedied by any other means.”

²⁰ In line with a 2014 CC decision, which held that it was necessary to exclude the informal association between political parties that carry out joint electoral activities, without officially registering as an electoral bloc, these ‘camouflaged blocs’ are now banned.

²¹ See Articles 11 of the [ECHR](#) and 22 of the ICCPR. In [Ignatencu and the Romanian Communist Party v. Romania \(2020\)](#), the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) upheld the refusal to register a party seen as the successor to the former totalitarian Communist Party, finding the authorities’ reasons relevant, sufficient, and the measure proportionate. However, the Court reiterated that such drastic actions - like party dissolution or refusal of registration - are only justified in the most serious cases ([Herri Batasuna and Batasuna v. Spain, 2009](#), § 78; [Linkov v. the Czech Republic, 2006](#), § 45). See also [2020 OSCE/ODIHR and Venice Commission Guidelines](#) on Political Party Regulation.

²² Four PEBs out of 301 received postal votes from 10 countries: Australia, Canada, Finland, Iceland, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea, Sweden, and United States of America (USA).

²³ The new formula introduced by the 2022 Electoral Code comprises seven CEC members nominated one each by the president, the Ministry of Interior, the Superior Council of Magistracy, civil society, the parliamentary opposition, and two by the ruling party.

²⁴ Currently, according to Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (CICDE), there are 27,338 valid individual certificates. Between 10 April and 26 September 2025, CICDE conducted 565 exams: 383 in person and 182 in virtual examination rooms; 9,570 participants took the exam, with 7,764 passing (82.31 per cent).

The CEC managed technical preparations for these elections efficiently, mostly respecting legal deadlines. CEC sessions were announced in advance, open to observers and media, streamed live and available online. Decisions were published on the CEC website, mostly in a timely manner, thus enhancing transparency. However, the publication of session minutes came with significant delays, and many were not available. Some important regulations were also adopted or amended late leading, at times, to delays in trainings and the revision of the training materials for lower-level electoral bodies.²⁵

The election administration enjoyed the trust of most stakeholders in its integrity, competency and efficiency. CEC sessions were substantive, professional and collegial, and most decisions were adequately motivated and adopted by consensus. However, when contentious issues emerged, it often reached split decisions along party lines; this raised concerns about members' impartiality and independence. Some of these decisions related to the establishment of a lower number of polling stations in the Russian Federation and for voters residing on left bank of the Nistru river (Transnistria) compared to previous election cycles, including the number of ballots printed for Transnistria.

Based on past turnout, pre-registration, as well as information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the CEC opened 301 polling stations abroad.²⁶ The CEC also decided to establish 12 PEBs for voters from Transnistria, a significantly lower number compared to the 2024 presidential election when 30 PEBs were established. According to the CEC, the decision was largely based on voter participation during the last three elections. The Intelligence and Security Service (SIS) explained they recommended only 8 PEBs based on security and vote-buying concerns as well as past turnout data. On 9 September, the CEC approved a total of 23,500 ballots for the 12 Transnistrian PEBs, a reduction from 90,000 ballots in 2024. All three opposition CEC members issued a dissenting opinion on the decision, while citizen observer organizations like Promo-LEX noted in its reporting that the reduction of polling stations and ballots might have limited access of voters, resulted in long queues and discouraged participation.²⁷ Eventually, the CEC reported that on election day two Transnistrian PEBs ran out of ballots and voters were redirected to other PEBs.

On 25 September, the CEC decided upon the recommendation of the security services to relocate 5 of the 12 polling stations for voters from Transnistria to urban areas located at least 30 kilometres from the security zone.²⁸ Additionally, the exact addresses of the new polling stations were announced only on 26 September, two days before the elections, limiting voter information. All three opposition-appointed CEC members criticized the late notice given on the matter (circulated some 14 minutes before the CEC session in which it was considered) and issued a dissenting opinion claiming that longer

²⁵ For example, the regulation on observer accreditation was adopted two weeks after the start of the election period. The regulations on candidate nomination and registration as well as the one on candidate representatives were modified and approved on 10 July, i.e., four days before the start of the electoral period. Several regulations and instructions related to voter lists, election day procedures, mobile voting etc. also came late in the process.

²⁶ Among these, two PEBs opened in the Russian Federation, the same number as in the 2024 presidential election but down from 17 in the 2021 parliamentary elections for cited security reasons. The proposal from CEC's opposition members to establish five polling stations in Russian Federation (two in Moscow, and one in St. Petersburg, Yaroslavl and Surgut) was not approved.

²⁷ See [Promo-LEX Report no. 3](#) of the Observation Mission for the Parliamentary Elections of 28 September 2025 (29 August – 10 September 2025), p. 15.

²⁸ The General Inspectorate of Police (IGP) warned about serious security risks, including possible bomb threats and provocations on election day. Five PEBs from localities in Anenii Noi, Căușeni, and Dubăsari districts were moved to the cities of Anenii Noi, Căușeni, and Chișinău, while reserve sites were designated for other PEBs in the area. The IGP explained to the ODIHR EOM that emergency services must have full access to all polling stations, which was not ensured at the original locations of PEBs, which were within Security Zone, requiring clearance from United Control Commission.

travel distances of around 50 km might discourage voter turnout, creating risks of impeding their constitutional right to vote.²⁹

Consideration could be given to reviewing arrangements for voters residing in Transnistria, including the criteria for determining the number of polling stations and the distribution of ballots, as well as the location of voting premises, with a view to ensuring that security considerations are addressed while enabling these voters to effectively exercise their suffrage.

DECs and PEBs were formed within the legal deadline and provided with sufficient resources and logistical support from the authorities. Overall, DECs were professional and well-organized, and the DEC sessions attended by the ODIHR EOM Long-Term Observers (LTOs) were collegial. Contributing to transparency, DEC decisions were posted at the DEC premises, published on DEC Facebook pages, on the websites of the local administration, and of the CEC. However, two DECs (Găgăuzia and Taraclia) faced significant challenges in forming the full membership of some PEBs due to few party nominations. Following the deadline for establishing PEBs, the DECs made decisions to add lacking members. The CEC extended the certification deadline by an additional three weeks in order to accommodate the appointment of new members. When the formation had to be completed by the CEC, the integrity of the nominated members was verified and nominees were not selected in cases where they had been subject to investigations related to vote-buying.

In the lead-up to the elections, the government's digital infrastructure faced increased cyberattacks, making cybersecurity a key concern. With support from international partners, authorities introduced a risk-based framework to identify and mitigate threats. In addition, the CEC's State Automated Information System 'Elections' (SAISE), which manages several applications, is protected by the Information Technology and Cyber Security Service (STISC) to ensure a cohesive security framework. According to the CEC and STISC, the latter has no access to election data and only provides system security. However, some ODIHR EOM interlocutors questioned this information and claimed potential risks of data breaches. A new Cybersecurity Agency (CSA) has been established by government decree in December 2023 to oversee risk management, promoting best practices for cyber incident management and operating the national Computer Security Incident Response Team. In the election period, it was able to effectively identify and take down a fraudulent CEC website on a look-alike domain. In the lead up to elections, and especially the week before, the CEC was the target of disinformation campaigns, which aimed to undermine its public credibility.³⁰

The authorities could continue to build resistance into its cybersecurity strategies by hardening its infrastructure, allocating adequate human resources and training, and providing the public with sufficient information on cybersecurity efforts and responses; in this, transparent, well-rehearsed response processes, are essential.

The CEC through its Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (CICDE) conducted extensive in-person seminars for all DEC members and the majority of PEB members. The PEB trainings observed by ODIHR EOM LTOs were well-organized and interactive. Additionally, trainings were conducted for PEB operators, State Register of Voters (SRV) registrars, law-enforcement, civil society and media. The CEC and CICDE launched comprehensive voter education and information campaigns including podcasts, videos, and social media posts in Romanian, Russian, Gagauz, Bulgarian, Ukrainian and Roma with subtitles and sign language interpretation. The General Inspectorate of Police also launched an awareness campaign warning against electoral corruption and established a 'hotline' to report related cases.

²⁹ Alternative locations proposed by the opposition CEC members in Criuleni, Vadul lui Vodă, and Bulboacă were considered closer and better connected by transport routes, but were ultimately rejected by the majority because they remain within the Security Zone, and would face the same intervention constraints for emergency services.

³⁰ This included [disinformation](#) against the CEC chairperson, a documented [cyberattack](#), and a [disinformation campaign](#) about postal ballots.

VI. VOTER REGISTRATION

Moldova has passive voter registration, based on data extracted from the population register maintained by the PSA. The SRV is maintained and updated by the CEC daily. Every citizen over the age of 18 by election day is eligible to vote, except those deprived of the right to vote by a court decision on the basis of intellectual or psychosocial disability;³¹ this is at odds with international standards and prior ODIHR and Venice Commission recommendations.³²

As previously recommended, restrictions to the right to vote based on intellectual or psychosocial disability should be removed to ensure equal suffrage in accordance with international standards.

As of 1 September, the SRV included 3,299,396 voters, with 2,763,678 in the voter lists. 258,624 voters without domicile and residence, including those who emigrated abroad, and the 277,094 registered voters residing in Transnistria, were not included in the main voter lists but could be added to supplementary voter lists on the election day.³³

ODIHR EOM interlocutors did not raise significant concerns over the accuracy and inclusiveness of the voter register. However, long-standing problems persist with entries for deceased persons, including voters residing abroad or in Transnistria, as the mechanism for removing them from the SRV largely depends on families reporting such changes. Further, some voters lack a registered domicile or residence as well as identification documents; this particularly impacts the Roma population. While a unified address register was established in 2019, the CEC noted that some identification documents occasionally reflect outdated street names and addresses.

The authorities should further explore efforts to improve the accuracy of the voter lists by developing better mechanisms for removing records of deceased people from the voter register. These could comprise legally mandated and timely reporting or automatic transmission of death records from relevant institutions to the State Register of Voters.

Voters from abroad had the option of voluntary online pre-registration for in-person voting or obligatory pre-registration for postal voting. By the 14 August deadline, 16,145 requests had been sent for in-person voting at PEBs abroad and 2,606 for postal voting.³⁴ Some IEOM interlocutors, including the CEC, raised concern about the misuse of personal data; it was suggested that the personal data of voters were compromised through online tools linked to vote-buying schemes such as the Russian defence-affiliated Promsvyazbank, TAITO, and Telegram applications and used for pre-registration, particularly in connection with voters from the Russian Federation, which increased considerably during these elections.³⁵

³¹ As per the CEC, 635 people cannot participate in elections, based on a court decision, being under legal guardianship.

³² Articles 12 and 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) provide that “State Parties shall recognize that persons with disabilities enjoy legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life” and ensure their “right and opportunity [...] to vote and be elected”. Paragraph 48 of General Comment No. 1 to Article 12 of the CRPD states that “a person’s decision-making ability cannot be a justification for any exclusion of persons with disabilities from exercising [...] the right to vote [and] the right to stand for election”.

³³ A total of 342,244 voters voted by being added to the supplementary voter lists on election day. The Electoral Code provides for electronic verification of voter data on election day against the centralized register to safeguard against multiple voting.

³⁴ Eventually, the CEC confirmed the registration of 2,472 voters for postal voting.

³⁵ For these elections 13,000 voters pre-registered from the Russian Federation compared to 1,125 for last year’s presidential election. Some ODIHR EOM interlocutors suggested that the spike in numbers might be planned by advocates of more polling stations in Russian Federation.

The law ensures sufficient transparency and accessibility of voter lists, with the requirement for lists to be publicly displayed at PEBs no later than 8 September and the possibility of checking the lists online. Voters, representatives of contestants, and observers had the right to verify whether the data on voter lists was accurate and to submit requests for corrections to PEBs by 21 September. ODIHR EOM LTOs noted that voter lists were available at PEBs premises upon request but that voters' interest in checking their accuracy was low, also since verification is possible online.

VII. CANDIDATE REGISTRATION

Eligible voters have the right to be elected, with the exception of active military personnel, prisoners serving their sentence in the penitentiary system, persons whose active criminal records include crimes committed intentionally, and persons deprived of the right to hold positions of responsibility by a final court decision. Citizens can stand as candidates on party/bloc lists or independently. The nomination of candidates lasted from 20 June to 19 August. Independent candidates had to collect signatures from voters to support their nomination.³⁶

Recent legal amendments required political parties to submit lists of their central executive body members to the PSA by the start of the electoral period (14 July) to be considered eligible to run. By the same date, the CEC published the list of eligible contestants based on information received from the PSA. Of 66 officially registered parties, 39 were considered to be fully (25) or partially (14) eligible to compete. Following eligibility decisions of 6, this was further reduced to 33 parties.

ODIHR EOM interlocutors generally agreed with the PSA's eligibility clearances, citing inactivity of certain parties. Some, however, alleged selective application of the law and noted the short timeframes for submitting their information. Two parties, in particular, were affected by the new regulations requiring pre-clearance from the PSA. The Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova (PLDM) challenged the CEC's decision, which found the party ineligible due to documents being filed with the PSA after the legal deadline. While the CCA reversed this decision, the Supreme Court of Justice (SCJ) ultimately upheld it. In a second case, while initially being cleared by the PSA, the eligibility of the Modern Democratic Party of Moldova was later revoked by the PSA based on information provided by competent security authorities. This led them to be ultimately denied registration.

Based on the determination of the courts,³⁷ the registration of the Victory Bloc was rejected by the CEC and the activities of the four parties forming it, considered to be 'successor parties' were temporarily limited during the campaign without prior warning by a CCA decision dated 19 August, which was subsequently appealed.³⁸ The decision followed a motion filed by the Ministry of Justice to dissolve the parties as alleged successors to the unconstitutional Șor Party. The SCJ rejected the parties' appeal against this temporary restriction, which remains in place until a final decision by the CCA, which at the time of the writing of this report was still pending. Consequently, these parties were never registered.

³⁶ Male candidates had to submit a minimum 2,000 and a maximum 2,500 signatures while for female candidates, this number was 1,000 and 2,500, respectively. Independent candidates must not be, nor have been within 70 days before the election, members of any political party, nor should they have publicly supported any party during that period.

³⁷ The court determines the status of a 'successor party' by assessing its connections and substantial similarities with a party declared unconstitutional, if evidence shows that the new or registered party seeks to continue or resume the activities of the banned party.

³⁸ On 2 September, *Renastere*, Chance, Alternative and Salvation Force of Moldova and Victory Party challenged the constitutionality of certain new legal provisions related to the definition of successors of unconstitutional parties and the application of temporary measures limiting the activity of parties to the CC; its decision is pending. The precautionary measure of the temporary limitation of a party's activity was also challenged by the Heart of Moldova party during related court hearings and dismissed as inadmissible on 25 September by the CC.

By 19 August, the CEC received applications from 5 electoral blocs, 23 political parties and 20 independent candidates (only 7 of which returned their signature sheets). Of these, the CEC registered 4 electoral blocs, 15 political parties, and 4 independent candidates, offering voters a broad choice across the political spectrum. Political parties Centrist Union of Moldova, ‘For People, Nature and Animals’, *Moldova Mare*, and New Historical Option were rejected for failing to comply with the gender quota requirement, after some candidates were removed from their lists for not complying with registration regulations.³⁹

Deadlines for adjudication of disputes related to candidate registration were amended in 2025, in line with prior ODIHR recommendations; however, these still fail to provide for effective remedy, as they did not guarantee that such disputes were settled before the start of the campaign.⁴⁰ Among these cases, New Historical Option was added on 4 September on the basis of the CEC’s reconsideration following a CCA decision. On 5 September, following a SCJ ruling, *Moldova Mare* was registered by the CEC (see *Election Dispute Resolution*).

In considering these decisions, the CEC occasionally applied a formalistic and selective approach and did not always communicate clearly and in advance about correctable shortcomings. The CEC opined that, while it had provided guidance in some cases, it was not responsible for assisting contestants in properly filing their applications. Furthermore, certain newly imposed candidate registration requirements proved unduly burdensome. For example, the requirement for all candidates on the lists to appear in person at the CEC headquarters in Chişinău posed a particular challenge for those living outside Chişinău (and abroad); these requirements are at odds with the principle of equality of opportunity and the right to stand for election.⁴¹

To ensure equality of opportunities, the law and its implementation should ensure that candidates are always provided with an opportunity to address shortcomings in their applications, in line with international good practice. Unduly burdensome requirements such as in-person candidate registration should be reconsidered.

All registered lists complied with the legal gender quota and placement requirements. Approximately 43 per cent of the 1,403 candidates registered were women but only 3 of the 19 political entities that contested were led by a woman.

On 19 September, the Ministry of Justice requested the CCA to limit the activities of the Heart of Moldova (part of the Patriotic Bloc) for a period of 12 months,⁴² following a notification from the CEC citing alleged illegal financing of the party and ties to the unconstitutional Şor Party.⁴³ The CCA granted the Ministry of Justice’s request on 25 September. Consequently, on 26 September, the CEC excluded the Heart of Moldova candidates from the list of the Patriotic Bloc, requesting the revision of the

³⁹ By law, non-compliance with gender quota is one of the grounds for refusal of registration.

⁴⁰ All 9 SCJ appeals related to candidate registration were decided between 29 August and 11 September, last case.

⁴¹ Paragraph 7.5 of the [1990 Copenhagen Document](#) prescribes the participating States to “respect the right of citizens to seek political or public office, individually or as representatives of political parties or organizations, without discrimination”

⁴² According to Article 21 para (1) of the LPP, the activity of a political party may be limited if its actions cause serious harm to political pluralism or fundamental democratic principles and, according to para (5), during the period of limitation of the activity of a political party, it is prohibited from participating individually or jointly in elections. In addition, the Ministry of Justice also requested as a precautionary measure the temporary limitation of the activity until a CCA final decision on the merits, arguing that the party’s illegal activities posed a real and imminent risk of causing irreparable harm to democratic values and the rule of law.

⁴³ In addition, following a complaint from ALDE against the Heart of Moldova Party, the CEC concluded that, although it cannot conclusively confirm serious violations of financing rules by the Party Heart of Moldova or the Patriotic Bloc, reasonable suspicions remained regarding their funding. Therefore, the CEC issued a warning to the bloc as a preventive measure to ensure strict compliance with financing regulations, recognizing that while the exact amount of illegal funding is unclear, its presence is suspected. An in-depth financial control was ordered and the Ministry of Justice notified.

candidates list according to the gender quota requirement within 24 hours.⁴⁴ On 27 September, the SCJ upheld the CCA decision on appeal.⁴⁵

Further, on 26 September, following a complaint from the European Social Democratic Party (PSDE) and notifications from various law enforcement agencies and intelligence services, the CEC decided to cancel the registration of the *Moldova Mare* party. The notifications involved multiple assertions of serious violations, including the use of undeclared financial resources by the political party, foreign funding, voter bribery, and collaboration with parties considered successors of the unconstitutional Șor Party. The CEC also requested the Ministry of Justice to consider initiating procedures for restricting the party's activity. On election day, the appeal of the *Moldova Mare* party against the CEC decision was heard and rejected by both CCA and SCJ, a few hours before the closing of polls, maintaining the CEC decision excluding the party.⁴⁶ Given the timing, actions impacting the two parties' eligibility undermined the legal certainty of the electoral contestants' status and limited their right to seek effective remedy, at odds with international standards.⁴⁷

To safeguard the contestants' right to an effective remedy, legal provisions should be revised to ensure that sanctions with an irreversible effect on the exercise of political rights, including the right to be elected, are applied only when time allows for effective legal remedies or that their enforcement is suspended until the opportunity for appeal is exhausted. To prevent arbitrary de-registration of candidates, such decisions should be based on sound, relevant and sufficient evidence.

VIII. ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN

The official electoral campaign period began on 29 August and ended at midnight on 26 September, one day before election day. The campaign was competitive and fundamental freedoms of expression and assembly were generally respected. Except for a few isolated incidents, parties and candidates were able to convey their programmes to the electorate without restrictions.

As the law permits pre-electoral political activities that do not include explicit calls to vote, some parties made use of this provision by conducting various initiatives prior to the official campaign, which led to some complaints of early campaigning.⁴⁸ The ODIHR EOM also observed a few limited instances of breaches of the campaign silence period.

⁴⁴ Following this decision, the Patriotic Bloc excluded 30 candidates from its list, including 26 of Heart of Moldova. Additionally, four candidates were removed to comply with the gender quota.

⁴⁵ The [SCJ decision](#) rejected the appeal, upheld the CCA decision as well-founded and concluded that the information provided by the SIS according to which the party received about EUR1.2 million from the "criminal Șor organization" was well-founded, "since the source is a legally empowered institution to provide national-security data, and the seriousness of the acts demands judicial intervention." The SCJ also noted that for a provisional measure the standard of proof is not that of "beyond any doubt" (as in criminal proceedings) but of plausibility (appearance of right) and the danger demonstrated by serious, consistent evidence. "The corroborated information from the SIS, CNA, the Prosecutor's Office and the CEC (warning, a complex control mission, short deadlines for submitting the documents) depict a convergent picture of current risk to the electoral process."

⁴⁶ See the [CCA decision](#) and the [Supreme Court decision](#) from 28 September.

⁴⁷ See Art. 13 of the ECHR: "Right to an effective remedy: Everyone whose rights and freedoms as set forth in this Convention are violated shall have an effective remedy before a national authority notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity". Paragraph 5.10 of the 1990 Copenhagen Document calls on participating states to ensure that "everyone will have an effective means of redress against administrative decisions, so as to guarantee respect for fundamental rights and ensure legal integrity". ECtHR [Abil v. Azerbaijan](#) (5 March 2020) "in order to prevent arbitrary disqualification of candidates, the relevant domestic procedures should contain sufficient safeguards protecting the candidates from abusive and unsubstantiated allegations of electoral misconduct, and that decisions on disqualification should be based on sound, relevant and sufficient proof of such misconduct."

⁴⁸ For instance, the CEC received six complaints, five against PAS and one against the Heart of Moldova. The CEC rejected two complaints and readdressed four to the police for further investigation.

Campaign activities initially progressed slowly but gained momentum in the final weeks. PAS, the Patriotic Bloc, the Alternativa Bloc, Our Party (PN), Respect Moldova, the Coalition for Unity and Prosperity, Democracy at Home, PSDE, and *Moldova Mare* were among the most visible and active contestants. They primarily relied on rallies, indoor and outdoor community meetings, door-to-door canvassing, and the distribution of leaflets to engage voters. Several instances of unlawful dissemination of campaign materials were reported mostly by various contestants.⁴⁹ PAS centred its campaign on its declared achievements and its commitment to EU integration, while the opposition focused on criticism of the government, appeals to traditional values, promoting development, and some parties argued for closer ties with the Russian Federation. Issues such as foreign interference, corruption, and economic welfare also featured prominently in the campaign.

The rhetoric in election speeches escalated into verbal attacks on opponents and various accusations.⁵⁰ There were also several instances of intolerant and discriminatory language, primarily targeting LGBTQI community individuals with some narratives portraying support for the EU as a threat to national identity and traditional norms.⁵¹ ODIHR interlocutors also noted the involvement of clergy affiliated with the Moscow Patriarchate during the campaign, with attempts to influence voters through so-called traditional values and anti-EU rhetoric, which was also confirmed by several journalistic investigations.⁵²

The law forbids the use of administrative resources in the campaign, including public funds, transport, budget allocations, official powers, and state advertising for campaign purposes. Previous ODIHR recommendations on preventing the misuse of administrative resources were not fully addressed in the law, although the CEC published additional guidelines on the issue. Before the election period began, the government launched a EUR 254,300 national information campaign, entitled “Moldova Can” to promote pro-European policies that align with those featured in the PAS agenda. A few days ahead of the election period, the government revised the budget and announced that EUR 51 would be paid to 295,000 school students in each of the next two academic years, beginning in early September.⁵³ While this did not appear to violate the law, it may have provided an unfair electoral advantage and is not in line with international good practice.⁵⁴

Several high-ranking officials, including the Prime Minister, the Mayor of Chişinău, and government members, headed their party lists and actively participated in the campaign. One government member, as a PAS candidate, did not suspend his official duties at the start of the campaign, as required by law,

⁴⁹ For instance, on 5 September in Durlleşti, on 6 September in Chişinău, and on 12 September in Delacău, PAS posters were placed outside designated areas. As of 28 September, the CEC had received 31 complaints against PAS and referred them to the police. The latter received a total of 118 reports and imposed administrative sanctions in 23 cases.

⁵⁰ On 24 September, the Prime Minister Dorin Recean [called](#) on his opponents to publicly condemn and disassociate themselves from criminal groups, vote-buying and the Kremlin’s malign influence. This led to a complaint to the CEC and a formal warning for his statement. See also the [statement](#) of Igor Dodon accusing the government of preparing the country for war.

⁵¹ For example, on 3 September 2025, at a PN campaign event, calls for violence against the LGBTQI community were made. The party leader, Renato Usatii, appeared to endorse the suggestion and [promised](#) to ban and criminalise LGBTQI promotion. Videos of the exchange were posted on the PN’s Facebook page and Mr. Usatii’s YouTube channel but were removed several days later. See also Promo-LEX [report No.3](#).

⁵² See [telegram post](#) on the Orthodox religious Salt and Light channel calling to vote for the Patriotic Bloc from 26 September. See also the [Reuters](#) investigation on Russia’s recruitment of Orthodox priests to influence voters.

⁵³ See adjustments to the [State Budget](#) introduced on 18 June by amendments to Law [No. 188](#), allocating EUR 15.3 million for school students. See the [announcement](#) of 17 June by the President of Parliament, Igor Grosu, and the Minister of Education, Dan Perciun.

⁵⁴ See Paragraph II. B. 1.1 of the 2016 ODIHR and Venice Commission’s [Joint Guidelines](#) for Preventing and Responding to the Misuse of Administrative Resources during Electoral Processes, which states, the “legal framework should provide effective mechanisms for prohibiting public authorities from taking unfair advantage of their positions by ... the use of specific funds (state or local budget) as well as institutional resources.”

while another minister attended PAS campaign events in an official capacity.⁵⁵ These instances may have blurred the line between party and State, contrary to OSCE commitments and good practice.⁵⁶ There were also several allegations from both opposition and ruling parties regarding the potential misuse of administrative resources at the local level, where different parties hold political dominance, although many remained unsubstantiated. ODIHR EOM observers were able to cross check a few instances of misuse and noted a few local mayors participating in the campaign in favour of the ruling party while in office.⁵⁷

Additional legal safeguards should be considered and properly enforced to prevent contestants from misusing administrative resources, budgetary funds, official positions, and state-funded information messages for their own advantage during the electoral period. To prevent cases of abuse of office, consideration could be given to requiring the suspension of official duties for certain public officials upon registration as a candidate.

The campaign was marked by hybrid attacks, including illicit financing aimed at influencing voters' choices, disinformation, and cybersecurity incidents.⁵⁸ During the course of the election, particularly in the week preceding it, a series of credible, national and international journalistic investigations from outlets including the BBC and Bloomberg found that an organised network funded by foreign sources was co-ordinating targeted vote-buying schemes and disinformation campaigns.⁵⁹ The authorities identified the aforementioned attacks as originating from the Russian Federation and being facilitated by a coordinated network of supporters affiliated with Ilan Șor, which involved cryptocurrency and electronic cards connected to accounts at the Russian Promsvyazbank.⁶⁰

The joint efforts of the General Inspectorate of Police (IGP), the Prosecutor's Office for Combating Organised Crime and Special Cases, the National Anti-Corruption Centre (CNA), and the State Tax Service to prevent electoral corruption and the use of illegal funds were viewed by many ODIHR EOM interlocutors as effective. Their operational activities during the election period resulted in 848 searches, the detention of 122 individuals, 20 criminal cases and 46 preventative measures imposed.⁶¹ At the time of reporting, several investigations were still ongoing. The proactive and co-ordinated efforts of law enforcement agencies to warn of such interference contributed to mitigating the impact. ODIHR EOM LTOs reported that new, stricter penalties for electoral corruption were widely seen as a positive step and a strong deterrent against vote buying.

⁵⁵ On 7 September, Minister of Labour and Social Protection, Alexei Buzu, did not suspend his official duties after the start of the campaign. On 17 September, the CEC warned Minister of Environment, Sergiu Lazarencu, for breaching the regulation related to conflict of interest.

⁵⁶ Paragraph 5.4 of the 1990 OSCE [Copenhagen Document](#) calls for "a clear separation between the State and political parties". See also paragraph II. B. 1.1 of the 2016 ODIHR and Venice Commission [Joint Guidelines](#) on Preventing and Responding to the Misuse of Administrative Resources during electoral process.

⁵⁷ For instance, on 20 and 23 September, several village mayors in Cahul, Cantemir and Strășeni called to vote for PAS. Overall, 38 complaints regarding misuse of administrative resources were filed with the CEC, of which 31 were against PAS, 2 against the Alternativa Bloc, 3 against Our Party, 1 against the Cities and Communes League Party, and 1 against the Chișinău mayor's office. The CEC rejected 10 complaints, 15 were readdressed to the police, and 13 were pending.

⁵⁸ Reportedly, on 1 September, STISC warned about a series of cyberattacks on about 80 governmental systems, including public portals and websites. See the [statement](#) of the Prime Minister, Dorin Recean, from 24 September.

⁵⁹ See the investigation from [Bloomberg](#) published on 22 September and the [BBC report](#) from 21 September on Russian-funded fake news aimed at disrupting the election.

⁶⁰ According to the [information](#) from the chief of the IGP, schemes involving more than 138,000 accounts and transactions were identified since the 2024 presidential election and referendum. The schemes entailed the transfer of personal data and coordination of voters through dozens of groups on Telegram. On 6 August, the Minister of the Interior [warned](#) voters about the liabilities associated with using the TAITO application in conjunction with Telegram groups for electoral corruption in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

⁶¹ Data received from General Prosecutor's Office, IGP, and CNA for the period from 14 July to 13 October.

To respond effectively to large-scale instances of electoral corruption and illicit activities that influence voters' behaviour, the authorities should further support close co-ordination between the Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office, the National Anti-Corruption Centre and General Inspectorate of Police, and enhance their institutional capacity.

Women were actively involved in the elections as volunteers, participants, and electoral staff. However, only a few women were featured as key speakers at campaign events, and none of the contestants included policies promoting women's participation in their manifestos or campaign messages. The ODIHR EOM media monitoring found that in the news male candidates received twice more coverage, compared to female candidates. Many political parties placed a few women in electable positions on their lists. The new Parliament includes fewer women, with representation dropping from 40 per cent in the previous legislature to 37 per cent.

A. ONLINE CAMPAIGN ENVIRONMENT

Campaigning online remains largely unregulated for parties and platforms. The social media and messaging platforms used by candidates, primarily Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Telegram all operate from outside of the country, making them effectively beyond the control of the Moldovan authorities. The authorities informed the ODIHR EOM that they are in a weak position to negotiate with the social media platforms due to the size of the Moldovan market, the extraterritorial nature of the platforms' operations, and the scale of the online hybrid threats they faced.

Social networking platforms are widely used in Moldova and by the diaspora, and are the primary source of information for the majority of the population.⁶² Before the election, state authorities, CSOs and international donors increased their attempts to promote online media literacy and educate the public about the risks of disinformation and manipulative content.⁶³ During the campaign period, the Center for Strategic Communication and Countering Disinformation (StratCom Center), advised state bodies on their communication strategies. This followed a 'whole of society' resilience building approach used in a number of European countries, in which debunking and pre-bunking of disinformation was delegated to individual departments and to some CSOs.⁶⁴ The authorities and CSOs produced a range of public information campaigns warning of a general hybrid threat to the information space, which the authorities identified as coming from the Russian Federation, including state agencies, and a coordinated network of supporters affiliated with Ilan Șor.⁶⁵

Although government departments denied some stories to journalists, they rarely used social media, government websites, or publicly available briefings to counter specific disinformation narratives;⁶⁶ hence, voters did not have adequate access to some of the facts needed to assess claims of disinformation

⁶² According to [public surveys](#) (figure 35) the most used platforms are Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. Of the 89 per cent of people in the survey who use social media, 69 per cent accessed Facebook daily. The same figures for YouTube, TikTok and Instagram are 53, 45 and 30 per cent respectively. The messaging app Telegram is also widely used for political communication and information.

⁶³ These include the [Interministerial Plan for the Integration of Media and Information Literacy](#), which encourages media literacy programs in schools, largely relying on [CSOs](#) to implement teacher training and [support](#) from the Council of Europe to StratCom and the Audio-Visual Council.

⁶⁴ Some of the CSOs include [Veridica](#) and [StopFals!](#) along with media outlets.

⁶⁵ See for instance reporting by [ZDG](#) and [CJI](#). State officials of the Russian Federation and media, [particularly TASS](#) (the Russian Federation's state news agency), promoted an alarmist and false narrative from Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service claiming that the EU would "occupy Moldova", NATO intended to threaten Transnistria from Odesa, and "gross falsifications of electoral results would lead to Moldovans taking to the streets to defend their rights."

⁶⁶ For instance, disinformation implying that semi-annual national service call-up papers were related to the war in Ukraine were denied to the media, little or no information was available to the public on the Ministry of Defence website or social media channels. Other disinformation narratives included a deep-fake video which claimed that the cost of gas would be cut by 50 per cent in September. The CEC did refute several [false claims](#) about the election on its website.

for themselves. Despite considerable efforts to protect against information threats, the endemic nature of the challenge meant that the campaign was negatively affected by disinformation. While some journalists and CSOs provided important fact-checking services, some of the advertising campaigns by CSOs appeared to be directed against specific opposition parties and blocs, which may not have been in line with restrictions on third party campaign financing. Some opposition politicians criticized what they considered to be a weaponization of the counter-disinformation campaign, in which their opposition to the government was labelled as a ‘threat to peace’.⁶⁷

Multiple state agencies separately assessed and flagged disinformation and inauthentic social media posts and accounts to platforms; however, co-ordination between them did not appear to be comprehensive.⁶⁸ There was no commonly agreed definition of disinformation, nor criteria for identifying coordinated inauthentic behaviour or foreign information manipulation and interference in national legislation or guidelines to police and other state authorities. The authorities assessed the different platforms as each having inadequate responses to the around 1,000 ‘take down requests’ sent during the campaign, the majority of which were not acted upon.⁶⁹ There was no transparency on the reasons for the flag by the authorities and for rejection of the take down requests by the platforms. When take down requests were acted upon, it was often not in a timely manner, reducing the impact of removing disinformation.

Competent state agencies and ministries should ensure greater transparency and co-ordination in their efforts to counter disinformation and other forms of manipulative content. This could include public reporting of the ‘take down requests’ sent to the platforms and their outcome, as well as access to official and timely information to assist voters to independently assess potential disinformation.

In the online campaign, parties and blocs presented their programmes and campaign activities, at national and local levels with PAS, the Alternativa Bloc, and Our Party running over 400 paid campaign ads on Facebook.⁷⁰ The tone of the official online campaign was largely issue-based, mirroring the in-person and media campaigns, but with some instances of personalised attacks and inflammatory rhetoric aimed at discrediting opponents. Social media monitoring by the ODIHR EOM showed that the geo-political positioning of Moldova was one of the key campaign topics online, particularly for PAS, along with proposed economic and education policies, the performance of the government, and promotion of candidates’ public appearances.⁷¹

Beyond the formal online campaign, ODIHR EOM social media monitoring identified a far more extensive unofficial campaign of posts published by content creators, many of which appeared to be

⁶⁷ See, for instance, a post from independent candidate Olesia Stamate on [18 September](#), as well as statements by leading Alternativa candidates [Alexandru Stoianoglo](#) and [Ion Chicu](#).

⁶⁸ Shortly before the start of the campaign, the CEC, SIS, and the national police became the focal point for TikTok; the StratCom Center for Meta and Google; and the Audio-Visual Council for news videos on YouTube.

⁶⁹ TikTok released data on [16 September](#) indicating that they removed networks supporting pro-Russian opposition, which used a variety of coordinated inauthentic behaviours, including “likely commenting-for-hire schemes” from Bangladesh. It said that it prevented more than 2.2 million fake likes and 1.4 million fake follow requests, blocked more than 250,000 spam accounts from being created in Moldova and removed more than 100,000 fake accounts, 1.3 million fake likes, and 1.6 million fake followers. [Meta](#) (the parent company of Facebook and Instagram), [Google](#), [YouTube](#) (both owned by Alphabet), and [Telegram](#) did not provide data on any measures that they may have taken specific to the Moldovan elections. Meta, Alphabet and Telegram did not respond to requests by the ODIHR EOM for meetings, nor communicate publicly on Moldovan issues during the campaign. TikTok provided some information to the ODIHR EOM and also published information on its [electoral integrity](#) website.

⁷⁰ Alphabet did not provide public information on the spending on Google and YouTube by political parties during the campaign. TikTok does not permit political advertising.

⁷¹ PAS published 644 posts during the campaign assessed as pro-EU and 181 posts assessed as anti-Russia, the Alternativa Bloc had 163 pro-EU posts and 6 pro-Russia, whereas the Patriotic Bloc did not directly engage with this campaign theme, with no posts in favour of the EU, and 6 pro-Russia posts.

polarising and coordinated inauthentically across networks of newly created accounts.⁷² Some of these posts provided legitimate political opinion, albeit often with intemperate rhetoric, while others appeared to spread disinformation. These frequently used unlabelled and misleading deep-fake AI generated videos, ‘troll farms’, or automated bots to artificially boost engagement and reach, all of which are in breach of the platforms’ own terms and conditions. Some of these posts were removed by platforms prior to being flagged by CSOs, while others remained throughout the campaign.⁷³ The police reported to the ODIHR EOM that some of the disinformation was also amplified by advertising on Facebook. Most of the content that appeared to use deceptive methods, violating the platforms’ community standards, promoted anti-PAS, anti-EU and anti-NATO narratives.

Overall, divisive rhetoric from candidates and inauthentic networks spreading disinformation and inflammatory content had a negative impact on the reliability of information available to voters. This was exacerbated by platforms’ algorithms, which amplify emotional engagement and create ‘echo-chambers’ and ‘filter bubbles’.⁷⁴

Authorities should call on political parties and candidates to agree on a code of conduct establishing guidelines for online campaigning prior to the next elections. Based on international good practice and community standards of the main platforms, the code could clarify which campaign methods and network attributes are considered inauthentic.

IX. CAMPAIGN FINANCE

Campaign and political party finance are principally regulated by the Electoral Code and the Law on Political Parties, complemented by several CEC decisions and regulations.⁷⁵ These provide for sufficient grounds for transparency, accountability and integrity, and are largely in line with international standards. Positively, recent legal amendments partially addressed most previous ODIHR recommendations, including those calling for reviewing the legal framework to address illicit financing and the CEC’s role in oversight. Moreover, most GRECO recommendations on political financing transparency have been implemented.⁷⁶ These changes contributed to an overall better handling of the issues by the CEC. However, other long-standing ODIHR recommendations remain unaddressed, including on third-party financing and the valuation of in-kind contributions.

Campaign finance rules provide for a mixed system that allows for both public and private financing. Public funding consists primarily of monetary subsidies, complemented by interest-free loans, free broadcasting time and other forms of support (e.g. meeting venues provided by municipalities). Only political parties are entitled to monetary subsidies, for which 0.1 percent of state budget revenues are

⁷² These findings were corroborated by the more comprehensive social media monitoring by CSOs. EU funded European Digital Media Observatories ([FACT](#) and [BROD](#)), reported on disinformation and manipulative methods used throughout the campaign. Individual CSOs such as [Watchdog](#), [StopFals!](#), [Funky Citizens](#), and [Expert Forum](#) reported over 12,500 problematic posts, accounts and networks to the platforms. According to the CSOs, less than half of these were acted upon by the platforms, and generally not in a timely manner, although the platforms increased the speed of reaction near the end of the campaign. The European Commission facilitated weekly meetings from 1 September between the platforms and CSOs to exchange information.

⁷³ The community standards of [TikTok](#), [Meta](#) and [YouTube](#) prohibit these activities as damaging to electoral integrity. See also the CSO [Context’s](#) reporting of [disinformation](#) and [coordinated inauthentic behaviour](#).

⁷⁴ An echo chamber is a social environment of like-minded views, whereas a filter bubble is an algorithmically curated information sphere reinforcing existing preferences. See [Venice Commission](#) and the Directorate of Information Society and Action Against Crime of the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law (DGI) on Digital Technologies and Elections, paras 14, 30, 140.

⁷⁵ The legal framework consists, in particular, of Chapter V of the [Electoral Code](#) (Art. 50-59), Chapter VI of the [Law on Political Parties](#) (Art. 24-31), [CEC Regulation 1102/2023](#) on the financing of political party activities and [CEC Regulation 1185/2023](#) on the financing of initiative groups and electoral campaigns.

⁷⁶ The [2023 GRECO Evaluation report](#) (5th evaluation round) stated that “in the [...] Evaluation Round [dedicated to Party Funding] 88 per cent of recommendations were implemented (paragraph 9).

allocated every year and distributed according to previous elections results and the number of elected women and youth.⁷⁷ Most contestants opined that the amounts of the interest-free loans were too meagre to warrant applying (EUR 2,571 for parties and EUR 514 for independent candidates) and the CEC confirmed that only one contestant (New Historical Option Party) had applied.⁷⁸

Private funding for campaigning consists primarily of donations, which may be either monetary or in-kind (reported at average market value), in addition to political parties' own funds.⁷⁹ Different limits on donations apply to different types of donors.⁸⁰ Some contestants claimed legal entities were unwilling to donate due to perceived political consequences. Moreover, the law provides for a number of explicit funding prohibitions, including from public, foreign and anonymous sources. Recent amendments have further prohibited donations from legal entities with pending state debt.⁸¹ While third party financing remains prohibited, detailed regulation of the involvement of third parties in the campaign is still lacking. This is at odds with international good practice and previous ODIHR recommendations.⁸² Citizen observers reported several instances of third parties' involvement in the campaign and raised concern about this regulatory gap.⁸³

Campaign expenditure is limited to 0.1 percent of the state budget revenues (EUR 3,912,764). Recent legal amendments provide that, in addition to monetary expenses, in-kind contributions should also be included within this spending limit, while also requiring advance payment for all goods and services. Moreover, all campaign-related monetary transactions have to be made to and from a single bank account specifically opened for this purpose with the title "electoral fund". While few parties experienced delays in opening their bank accounts, one party (*Moldova Mare*) reported to ODIHR EOM that it was not able to open one at all. The CEC informed the ODIHR EOM that this was due to the international sanctions applied to the party's president.

⁷⁷ The [Law on Political Parties No. 294/2007](#) (Art. 27 (1)) provides that, annually, 0.1 percent of state budget revenues, excluding revenues with a special purpose, is dedicated to the financing of political parties. For 2025, the [State Budget Law No. 310/2024](#) (Art. 2 (j)) allocated a total of EUR 3,195,466. This amount is then distributed among political parties according to the following formula: 30 per cent in proportion to the performance obtained in parliamentary elections, 30 per cent in local elections, and 15 per cent in presidential elections; 7.5 per cent in proportion to the women elected in parliamentary elections and 7.5 per cent in local elections; 5 per cent in proportion to the young people (under 35) elected in parliamentary elections, and 5 per cent in local elections. Parties, contesting individually or as part of a bloc, may then use up to 70 percent of their state subvention for campaigning. [CEC Decision 3346/2025](#) set the following allocations for 2025: PAS (EUR 1,497,853); PSRM (EUR 654,885); PCRM (EUR 156,207); PN (EUR 155,775); PSDE (EUR 129,890); MAN (EUR 89,261); PDCM (EUR 87,392); PPDA (EUR 74,035). Other political parties receive less than 2 percent of the total amount.

⁷⁸ The detailed procedures for applying and reimbursing the loans are established by a Regulation adopted by Ministry of Finance under [Order No. 88/2023](#).

⁷⁹ The [Law on Political Parties](#) (Art. 24-25) provides that political parties may collect membership fees and obtain income by carrying out editorial activity, administering their property or carrying out "other activities that generate income", if not prohibited by law and expressly provided for in their statutes.

⁸⁰ The [Electoral Code](#) (Art. 57) provides that individuals can donate a maximum of 6 average monthly salaries (EUR 4,920) not exceeding 30 percent of their annual income, with that percentage reduced to 10 percent in the case of public officials and civil servants. Stricter limits apply to individuals whose only income is scholarships or social benefits, who may donate a maximum of 1 average monthly salary (EUR 820), with a recent amendment to the law limiting this further to not exceed 30 per cent the amount received from these sources. Legal entities may donate a maximum of 12 average monthly salaries (EUR 9,840), with the amendments also limiting this further to not exceed 30 percent of the entities' annual income.

⁸¹ A new provision in the Electoral Code (Art. 54 (5) d)), introduced by Law 100/2025, adds a prohibition from donating for "legal entities which, on the date of the donation, have arrears to the state budget, the state social insurance budget or to the mandatory healthcare insurance funds".

⁸² The [ODIHR and Venice Commission Joint Guidelines on Political Party Regulation](#) states, in paragraph 256, that "Third parties should be free to fundraise and express views on political issues as a means of free expression, and their activity should not be unconditionally prohibited. However, it is important that some forms of regulation, with comparable obligations and restrictions as apply to parties and party candidates, be extended to third parties that are involved in the campaign, to ensure transparency and accountability."

⁸³ See Promo-LEX Reports [No 1](#), [No 2](#), [No 3](#) and [No 4](#) of the Observation Mission for the Parliamentary Elections of 28 September 2025.

During the electoral campaign, all contestants had to submit weekly financial reports to the CEC as well as a final report no later than three days after election day. The reports follow detailed templates, requiring the disclosure of every single donation and having dedicated sections for online campaign expenses. While no ODIHR EOM interlocutor complained about the required frequency of reporting, most expressed frustration about the cumbersomeness of reporting in-kind contributions, especially volunteers' work. This was compounded by the lack of specific guidelines for the valuation of in-kind contributions, in spite of previous ODIHR recommendations. Moreover, the requirement to report candidates' work as in-kind contributions in the same manner as other volunteers is at odds with international good practice.⁸⁴

As previously recommended, the legal framework for campaign finance should be further strengthened to regulate in more detail the involvement of third parties and the valuation of in-kind contributions.

Contestants generally complied with the obligation to submit weekly reports, which were published on the CEC website within 24 hours, as legally required. The reports showed a diversity of both revenues and expenditures, with both public and private sources of income, and expenditure on traditional campaign materials (banners, leaflets), TV and radio advertisement as well as online advertisement. The total expenditure declared by all contestants combined amounted to EUR 2.7 million, of which PAS reported the highest spending at EUR 0.9 million (33 percent of the combined total), followed by Patriotic Bloc at EUR 0.5 million (19 percent), *Alternativa* Bloc at 0.4 million (15 percent) and Our Party at EUR 0.3 million (10 percent). These four contestants accounted for 77 percent of all spending. While having obtained enough votes to enter parliament, Democracy at Home Party reported a strikingly low amount of expenditure at EUR 10,474 (less than 0.4 percent).

The CEC is the body in charge of exercising oversight and has a wide scope of powers to perform controls and impose sanctions, upon complaints or *ex officio*. Recent amendments have expanded the type of financial checks that it may carry out as well as the scope of the sanctions, which may include the suspension of public funding from 6 months to 4 years in case of repeated offences. Given limited human resources, the CEC relied on other state institutions and international partners to support them, particularly with financial monitoring of online campaign advertisement. During the campaign and following the election, the CEC thoroughly analysed the weekly and final reports, carried out additional checks on a number of contestants,⁸⁵ and imposed a wide range of sanctions, from simple warnings, the deprivation of public funding, to the de-registration of contestants.⁸⁶ Overall, the CEC played an effective role, contributing to transparency.

⁸⁴ The [ODIHR and Venice Commission Joint Guidelines on Political Party Regulation](#) states, in paragraph 217, that “a distinction might be drawn between services for which a volunteer would not be paid in the regular course of his or her business and those for which the volunteer would be paid if the service were provided to other clients. Services provided gratis or at a sub-market price by individuals or legal persons for which the donor would expect to be paid by other clients should be counted as donations at their normal market value. Services voluntarily provided by those who would not normally expect to be paid might be regarded as individual political activity rather than as political contributions.”

⁸⁵ The CEC decided to perform additional checks on the Patriotic Bloc due to the fact that some candidates fell under international sanctions, on *Alternativa* Bloc due to the fact it received a high amount of cash donations within a limited timeframe and on Democracy at Home due to undeclared online campaign spending.

⁸⁶ Throughout the election period the CEC issued several warnings for slight delays in the submission of campaign finance reports or the provision of bank account information, along with requests for resubmission of reports and/or for provision of further information, while in parallel carrying out its controls. In some instances, it imposed harsher sanctions, such as fines requesting the payment to the state budget of funds unduly received from donations (when they exceeded the limits) or even the deprivation of public funding, which was imposed twice on Democracy at Home, for a total of 2 years, for prohibited foreign funding and for undeclared funding as well as on the constituent parties of the Bloc Union of the Nation (BUN), also twice, for a total of 12 months for repeatedly under-reporting of campaign expenses. *Moldova Mare* was de-registered on 26 September following a complaint from the PSDE and notifications from various law enforcement agencies and intelligence services with multiple assertions of serious violations (see *Candidate Registration*).

To ensure comprehensive and efficient campaign finance oversight, consideration could be given to further strengthening the oversight capacity of the CEC, including by providing the resources necessary to take ownership of the support provided by international partners.

X. MEDIA

A. MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

Although diverse, the media environment was increasingly constrained by a limited and shrinking advertising market. Social networks have emerged as the primary source of information, followed closely by television and, to a lesser extent, online news portals. In the absence of reliable audience research, media struggled to attract advertising revenue, which undermined their financial sustainability and increased dependence on owners, corporate interests and project-based donor funding.⁸⁷ This reliance on donor support became more precarious following the suspension of international assistance by key donors. This pressure was particularly acute for local media, contributing to the emergence of news deserts in several regions. To mitigate these risks, the Ministry of Culture established the Media Subsidy Fund, which provided grants of up to 2,000,000 MDL (approximately EUR 102,907) for short-term editorial projects, allocated by a seven-member Expert Council: four representing civil society and three nominated by the Government.⁸⁸ Despite this support mechanism, many national media outlets expressed reluctance to apply due to concerns about potential impacts on their editorial independence.

The media market underwent a significant overhaul during Moldova's 2022-2023 state of emergency, when the licenses of 12 broadcasters, allegedly affiliated with EU-sanctioned fugitives Vladimir Plahotniuc and Ilan Șor, were suspended on security and disinformation grounds. Shortly before the state of emergency ended, the parliament authorized the Council for the Promotion of Investment Projects of National Importance (CPIPNI) to suspend licenses without prior judicial review. Following the state of emergency, CPIPNI subsequently extended existing suspensions on the grounds of security and insufficient ownership transparency, suspending *Canal 5* and *Radio Maestro FM* in 2024. In 2025, it imposed a 60-day suspension on *TVC21* due to concerns about transparency of ownership.⁸⁹ The absence of prior judicial oversight and the broad criteria for suspension is contrary to international standards that require any restrictions on media freedom to be prescribed by law, necessary, and proportionate, with adequate judicial safeguards.⁹⁰

To safeguard freedom of expression, any suspension or withdrawal of broadcasting rights should only be imposed by an independent oversight body or by a court following serious and repeated violations

⁸⁷ This is approximately EUR 102,907 based on the exchange rate applicable in September (MLD 1 = EUR 0.05). The market [research](#) on broadcast media, conducted by the Audiovisual Council, found a 9.5 per cent decrease in broadcasters' advertising revenues in 2024 compared to 2023. It also noted that in 2024 international donors provided some 17 per cent of broadcasters' total revenue through grants.

⁸⁸ Established in August 2024, Moldova's Media Subsidy Fund allocates state funding for media coverage in defined key areas, including promoting Moldova's image, national values, and European integration. The first [allocation](#) in July 2025 distributed some EUR 232,000 among 15 outlets, although a media [investigation](#) alleged that four recipients had clear political affiliations. The second [allocation](#) of approximately EUR 340,000 among 8 outlets was finalized on 18 September 2025.

⁸⁹ Broadcast media are legally required to disclose their ultimate beneficial owners. The ownership of print and online media outlets remains opaque.

⁹⁰ The 2024 EU [Report](#) on the Republic of Moldova, called on the authorities to review and bring into line with EU and international standards the existing mechanism that allows suspension of broadcasting licenses of media outlets, which cannot prove their beneficial ownership. Previously, the Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that decisions to suspend licenses, effective from the date of adoption, without prior judicial oversight constituted unjustified interference with broadcasters' freedom of expression.

of legitimate content restrictions, and only after exhausting less-restrictive corrective measures. Decisions should be subject to effective judicial review procedures with suspensive effect.

As some broadcasters affected by license suspensions migrated to the less-regulated online space, in 2024, the SIS was empowered to block websites outside of a state of emergency.⁹¹ In the first 9 months of 2025, it ordered the blocking of over 85 websites on national security grounds, including 35 during this election campaign and 22 during the silence period on 27 September. Most blocking orders targeted multiple websites of the online TV service MD24 and the free IPTV service HaiTV, which provides access to MD24 and several Russian television channels, previously accused of disseminating disinformation.⁹² The lack of public access to official decisions on the blocking of websites and the absence of a consolidated register of blocked sites raised concerns over the transparency of the process.⁹³

The existing system of blocking informational websites should be amended, ensuring that content-specific restrictions are imposed solely by judicial authority based on objective, transparent criteria clearly established in law. To guarantee transparency and accountability in the process, all such decisions should be publicly disclosed with clear justification, maintained in an accessible registry, and subject to effective appeal mechanisms.

Many ODIHR interlocutors reported an increase in cases of intimidation and harassment of journalists and highlighted gaps in legal protections and institutional follow-up. Most such cases occurred online and originated from anonymous or non-state actors, including politicians from the Patriotic Bloc and *Alternativa* Bloc, as well as supporters of the Victory Bloc. In several cases, the Speaker of Parliament, also engaged in such a behaviour by labelling one journalist as a Russian sympathiser and accusing another from *Canal 5* of working for a propaganda outlet.⁹⁴ Prior to these cases, the Speaker had publicly condemned a series of assaults on journalists in April 2025 and announced forthcoming legal amendments to strengthen journalists' protections. Subsequently, on 10 July 2025, the parliament adopted amendments to the Contravention and Criminal Codes, which entered into force on 14 February 2026. These amendments introduce monetary and custodial penalties for hindering journalistic activity, including through intimidation, physical violence, or threats. While they may provide additional safeguards, their effectiveness will depend on consistent implementation, including timely investigations by competent authorities and access to effective remedy.

⁹¹ The amendments to the Law on the Intelligence and Security Service, which entered into force on 4 October 2025, provide more detailed definition of threats falling under SIS authority, including 'hybrid threats to the state [...] as well as hostile propaganda or disinformation campaigns that may undermine the constitutional order'.

⁹² Both services are reportedly [linked to Ilan Șor](#), with their digital infrastructure to the Russian state media ecosystem. On 15 July 2025, the European Union added one of MD24 main hosts Dmitri Buimistru to the list concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's destabilising activities for "intentionally engaging in coordinated information manipulation and interference by operating as a key propagandist on MD24, a Russia-based online TV channel created by Ilan Șor following license withdrawals from his previous stations for disseminating Russian disinformation."

⁹³ Paragraph 43 of the UN HRC [General Comment 34](#) to the ICCPR states that any restrictions on any internet websites should not violate freedom of expression, and that "permissible restrictions generally should be content-specific" while "generic bans on the operation of certain sites and systems" are not compatible with the principle of freedom of expression". Paragraph 70 of the 2011 [report](#) of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression calls upon States that block websites "to provide lists of blocked websites and full details regarding the necessity and justification for blocking each individual website. An explanation should also be provided on the affected websites as to why they have been blocked. Any determination on what content should be blocked must be undertaken by a competent judicial authority or a body which is independent of any political, commercial, or other unwarranted influences."

⁹⁴ On 16 September 2025, law enforcement authorities searched the offices of the *Trust Media* company, which operated two media outlets (*Canal 5* and *Primul în Moldova*) on tax evasion and money laundering charges.

B. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE MEDIA

The Constitution guarantees freedom of expression and prohibits censorship. Although the 2025 EU Annual Enlargement Report noted "good progress" in relation to legislative reforms concerning the media, it also emphasized that the legislative environment still needs to be aligned with the EU *acquis* and European standards, particularly highlighting the need for a new Law on Media.⁹⁵ The recent amendments to the Audiovisual Code, which entered into force on 21 August 2025, addressed several prior ODIHR recommendations by increasing civil society representation and decreasing parliamentary control over appointments and dismissals of the management of the national public TeleRadio-Moldova (TRM) and the media regulator Audiovisual Council (AVC). However, these amendments also revised the sanctioning system, granting the AVC broader discretion to set fines, allowing it to hold the deliberative parts of its sessions closed to the public, and removing one-term limits for members of the AVC and the TRM supervisory council.⁹⁶

Following the enactment of the Law on Access to Information of Public Interest in 2024, many ODIHR EOM interlocutors noted an improvement in responsiveness and cooperation by public authorities. Many ODIHR EOM interlocutors emphasized the need for additional reforms to further align the legal framework with EU standards, including through effective implementation of the European Media Freedom Act and the transposition of EU anti-SLAPP measures to protect journalists from unfounded civil defamation claims. Article 7 of the Law on Countering Extremist Activity, as amended in 2025, introduces broadly worded provisions that could allow the suspension and permanent closure of media outlets for vaguely defined *extremist* activity.⁹⁷

During the campaign, all media were obliged to ensure fair, balanced, and impartial coverage of the contestants. All national broadcasters interested in covering the campaign were to submit an election editorial policy declaration to the AVC, committing to offer free airtime to each contestant (5 minutes on television and 10 minutes on radio) and paid campaign advertisements, limited to 2 minutes per contestant per day. The AVC approved the declarations of 22 television and 12 radio stations.⁹⁸

While 14 contestants used free airtime, most television stations scheduled it outside peak viewership hours, limiting its reach.⁹⁹ The majority of political advertising in the broadcast media, was purchased

⁹⁵ See the European Commission [2025 report](#) for Moldova.

⁹⁶ The 2025 Venice Commission [Opinion](#) on the amendments noted that while the possibility of renewal of mandates "is not inherently incompatible with international legal standards, it may raise concerns regarding the independence of the office holder, particularly where the renewal process is controlled by the same body responsible for the original appointment."

⁹⁷ The ODIHR Urgent [Opinion](#) on Draft Law No. 381 called on Parliament to reconsider Article 7 of the Law "to avoid a risk of prohibitions being misused to illegitimately obstruct the work of independent media and journalists". Following the opinion, amendments introduced a clause stating that Article 7 "shall not impede the lawful activity of the media and journalists". This generic safeguard failed to address concerns about legal vagueness and provided no meaningful protection against arbitrary application.

⁹⁸ Initially, the AVC [rejected](#) the editorial policy declarations of 21 broadcasters; however, all except the Cimișlia-based *Radio Media* remedied their documentation issues during the three-day resubmission period. During the campaign, AVC monitoring found that 13 broadcasters with approved editorial policy declarations broadcast electoral information programs that were not included in those declarations. All these outlets received public warnings and/or fines, addressing this and other violations simultaneously. Additionally, the AVC imposed a fine on Comrat-based NTS and issued a public warning to Axial TV for broadcasting electoral content without submitting editorial policy declarations.

⁹⁹ In particular, *Moldova 1* broadcast 5-minute promotional spots between 13:45 and 14:20, *Jurnal TV* between 15:15 and 15:35, *Next TV* between 6:00 and 6:20, *ProTV Chișinău* between 13:54 and 14:10, *TV8* between 6:38 and 6:55. [Research](#) by the Independent Journalism Center found peak viewership hours in Moldova to be between 19:00 and 22:10. Previously, the Venice Commission had [recommended](#) that the Moldovan authorities guarantee "free airtime for all electoral contestants during prime time (for electoral advertising, election debates and broadcasting campaign meetings) and ensuring strict supervision."

by PAS.¹⁰⁰ It was joined in the last weeks of the campaign by the Patriotic Bloc, the *Alternativa* Bloc, Respect Moldova, the Moldovan Alliance, the Liberal Party, Our Party, Together Bloc, *Moldova Mare* and independent candidate Andrei Năstase, although to a lesser extent, as most contestants preferred to use the online environment. The electoral legislation holds the media responsible for the content of political advertisements, but not the contestants who produce them. This resulted in 18 television stations being sanctioned by the AVC for the content of political advertisements of PAS, the Patriotic Bloc, the Liberal Party and Our Party.¹⁰¹ This approach shifts primary responsibility from political actors to intermediaries, which could discourage broadcasters from carrying political ads.

To uphold the principle of freedom of expression during elections, the media should not be held liable for disseminating statements or content made directly by candidates, unless they have been specifically found to be unlawful by an independent and impartial court or regulatory body, or constitute incitement to violence, and the outlet had a genuine opportunity to prevent their dissemination.

Over 120 debates on 20 national and regional broadcasters provided a platform for contestants to present their views and share opinions, albeit with limited engagement with the program hosts, who often refrained from active participation. However, due to the large number of debates, contestants did not consistently appear, resulting in two-thirds of the debates having at least one contestant missing, while 16 had only one contestant present. The Democracy at Home party and Christian-Social Union of Moldova chose not to participate in debates.

During the campaign, the AVC was responsible for overseeing the compliance of broadcast media with electoral regulations and conducting continuous media monitoring. Although the AVC reportedly lacked sufficient funding and staff to carry out campaign monitoring, with assistance from a local civil society organization, it monitored all 22 television stations that submitted editorial declarations and published weekly reports, based on which, the AVC issued warnings to 21 television stations, followed by fines against 17 for multiple violations.¹⁰²

Specifically, AVC monitoring found that 18 television stations did not consistently label electoral content, as required by law, reportedly due to confusion regarding the labelling and what constitutes election-related content, in particular regarding public officials and events that occurred prior to the official start of the campaign. Other identified violations included irregularities in free and paid political advertisements, discriminatory behaviour of guests on talk shows, and failure to ensure balanced coverage of electoral contestants. The latter resulted in 12 television stations being fined and 6 more receiving official warnings for similar infractions. During the campaign silence period, violations of the silence provisions were identified on four broadcasters.

¹⁰⁰ The media monitoring of the campaign, conducted by the AVC, found that over 56 per cent of all political advertising in the broadcast media were purchased by PAS.

¹⁰¹ The free advertisement from the Patriotic Bloc, broadcast by six television stations, was filmed during the bloc's campaign launch at Căpriană Monastery and conflicted with Moldova's electoral framework, which prohibits the use of religious imagery for electoral purposes. The free advertisement from Our Party, which addressed alleged LGBT "propaganda" in schools and was ruled discriminatory by the AVC, was broadcast by 16 television stations. Nine television stations aired the advertisement of PAS, and three aired the Liberal Party's, both highlighted the alleged negative consequences of a potential transition of power to pro-Russian political parties, which, in the AVC's view, could instil fear in voters.

¹⁰² The fines were levied on a weekly basis for a combination of violations, followed by separate fines for violations of the silence period and another in connection with the media monitoring for failing to ensure fair, balanced, and impartial coverage of contestants. Overall, in relation to violations identified during the campaign, a total of 53,000 MDL was imposed on *TVC21*, followed by 34,000 MDL imposed on *Jurnal TV*, 32,000 MDL imposed on *GRT*, 23,000 MDL imposed on *ProTV Chişinău* and 18,000 MDL imposed on *Canal Regional*. The total amount of fines levied on the remaining 12 broadcasters ranged from 1,000 MDL to 12,000 MDL. Additionally, the AVC imposed a 5,000 MDL fine on Comrat-based *NTS* and issued a public warning to *Axial TV* for broadcasting electoral content without submitting editorial policy declarations.

C. ODIHR EOM MEDIA MONITORING

[ACCESS DETAILED INFORMATION](#)

Overall, the media provided contestants with numerous opportunities to present their views and opinions through debates, talk shows, current affairs programs, and news coverage. However, the partisan coverage in some media, combined with event- and statement-focused news narratives, limited investigative and analytical reporting, and extensive disinformation narratives on social networks, hindered voters' opportunities to make an informed choice.

ODIHR EOM media monitoring of the campaign concluded that while the Patriotic Bloc was the most visible election contestant, the majority of broadcasters displayed a partisan approach, either favouring or strongly criticising the bloc.¹⁰³ The public television channel *Moldova 1* was noticeably more critical, dedicating some 12 per cent of its election-related news coverage to the Patriotic Bloc, with either a neutral or negative tone. PAS and the *Alternativa* Bloc received 7 and 6 per cent of such coverage, respectively, mainly in a neutral tone, while the other contestants received between 1 and 3 per cent. *Moldova 1* largely refrained from producing in-house analytical or investigative programs, which would have assisted voters to navigate the complex political environment. Instead, the monitored talk shows on *Moldova 1* supported a pro-European narrative and highlighted the government's anti-corruption efforts, indirectly favouring PAS and reinforcing a critical framing of the Patriotic Bloc.

Private *Jurnal TV* and *TV8* demonstrated a more partisan stance by heavily criticizing the *Alternativa* and Patriotic Blocs in their news, talk shows, and satirical programs. *Jurnal TV* also indirectly promoted PAS through entertainment programmes.¹⁰⁴ Similarly, news on *ProTV Chişinău* displayed a more critical stance toward the Patriotic Bloc (17 per cent), and to a lesser extent, toward *Alternativa* Bloc (9 per cent) and PAS (9 per cent), providing all three a mix of neutral and negative coverage. The newscasts of *Cinema 1* primarily focused on the campaign events and statements of contestants, allocating about 12 per cent to PAS, followed by the Patriotic Bloc and *Alternativa* Bloc, each with around 6 per cent of neutral and positive coverage. *Cinema 1* also dedicated extensive news coverage, over 30 per cent, to the activities of the government, indirectly favouring PAS.

By contrast, private broadcaster *TVC21* dedicated one-third of its election-relevant news coverage to the Patriotic Bloc, 10 per cent to the *Alternativa* Bloc, and 6 per cent to Our Party, mainly positive or neutral in tone. PAS received 8 per cent, mainly in a neutral tone. Most guests on *TVC21*'s talk shows, mainly affiliated with the political opposition, aligned with the anti-PAS narrative established by the hosts. The Gagauzian public broadcaster (*GRT*) largely refrained from editorial coverage of contestants, focusing instead on electoral procedures and CEC activities. However, its journalists displayed a clearly anti-PAS stance in talk shows.

The online media outlets monitored by the ODIHR EOM also displayed distinct editorial alignments during the campaign period. *Ziarul de Gardă* provided multiple investigative reports on alleged Russian interference in elections and largely avoided critical coverage of PAS. *Unimedia* clearly supported the Patriotic Bloc and the *Alternativa* Bloc, while *Newsmaker* provided more diverse coverage of contestants, including analytical reports on political platforms and the financial statements of major

¹⁰³ Monitoring of the broadcast media focused on prime-time (18:00-00:00) coverage of the main channel of the national public broadcaster *Moldova 1*, the Gagauzian public broadcaster *GRT* (Romanian and Russian-language content), and private television channels *Cinema 1*, *Jurnal TV*, *ProTV Chişinău*, *TV8* and *TVC21*. The EOM also conducted qualitative analysis of news portals *newsmaker.md*, *noi.md*, *unimedia.info* and *zdg.md*.

¹⁰⁴ During the campaign, *Jurnal TV* broadcast several cultural programmes featuring violinist and conductor Nicolae Botgros and Olympic champion Anastasia Nichita, both PAS candidates. In the last two weeks of the campaign, *Jurnal TV* aired a 10-episode drama series titled "Plaha", centred on a fictionalized portrayal of Moldovan fugitive Vladimir Plahotniuc, his connections to organized crime, and members of the political establishment, whose names resembled those of Patriotic Bloc leaders. On 18 September, *Jurnal TV* began broadcasting voter mobilisation spots, featuring messages by hosts that resembled PAS campaign slogans.

contestants. *Noi.md* extensively promoted the Alliance of Moldovans and its leaders and to a lesser extent the Patriotic Bloc, and published a number of paid news items promoting Renato Usatîi.

XI. ELECTION DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The 2022 Electoral Code removed inconsistencies regarding the bodies responsible for resolving electoral disputes and established a complaint and appeal procedure generally aligned with international standards, ensuring judicial review, access to second instance review, and timely submission and adjudication. However, the legal framework still lacks provisions for the partial invalidation of election results, as well as clearly defined procedures and evidentiary requirements for challenging nationwide results, as previously recommended by ODIHR. Despite some progress with judicial reform, including an ongoing vetting process, public trust in the judiciary remains low.¹⁰⁵

Voters and contestants have the right to challenge all actions, inactions and decisions of election bodies and other contestants. Observers and members of the election administration can file complaints related to violations of their rights. In line with new legal amendments, the inadmissibility of a complaint is no longer decided by a plenary of the CEC but is notified through an act of the CEC chairperson.¹⁰⁶ Four such acts were contested at the CCA, who in one case decided in favour of the plaintiff and obliged the CEC to judge the case in the plenary on its merits.¹⁰⁷ The CEC taking the decision in plenary session rejected the complaint.

Deadlines for adjudication of disputes related to candidate registration were amended in 2025, in line with prior ODIHR recommendations. However, these still failed to provide for effective remedy, as they did not guarantee that such disputes were settled before the start of the campaign. Further, they negatively affected prospective candidates' opportunities to campaign on equal terms, at odds with paragraph 7.6 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document and despite prior ODIHR recommendation.¹⁰⁸

From the start of the electoral period from 14 July to 27 September, the CEC received 124 complaints and notifications related mainly to the misuse of administrative resources, the registration of candidates, alleged violations of campaign rules, illegal financing, and electoral corruption.¹⁰⁹ Overall, the CEC handled complaints in an efficient manner, as the majority of complaints received were published online and decisions were generally taken within the deadline although some were published with delay, limiting transparency. Only six complaints were accepted, and the CEC issued two warnings for illegal financing, two for the misuse of administrative resources, and two on party affiliation.¹¹⁰ The others were rejected as ungrounded, and more than 40 were referred to the police for further investigation.

¹⁰⁵ See [European Commission Report Moldova 2024](#), p. 5. Also, [UNDP survey in 2024](#) concluded that 45 per cent of respondents expressed little or no confidence, and only 11 per cent reported high levels of trust in the justice system. Progress was made in vetting and appointing top judges and prosecutors. Both judicial and prosecutorial councils are now fully operational, with most members appointed, including a new vetted Prosecutor General and initial Supreme Court appointments.

¹⁰⁶ Complaints or notifications for which the CEC considered it was not primarily competent were referred directly to the GPI, under the obligation to inform the CEC about the results of the related decision or investigation

¹⁰⁷ Candidate Irina Vlah filed a complaint with the CEC alleging the misuse of administrative resources by Prime Minister Dorin Recean. The CEC declared it inadmissible by an act of the Chairperson. The act was contested at the CCA who concluded that the CEC's response was superficial, failing to address key claims of electoral agitation and abuse of state resources, and ordered CEC to decide in plenary on the merits of the complaint. *Alternativa* Bloc and PAS filed similar complaints to CCA, who rejected them as ungrounded, decision upheld by the SCJ.

¹⁰⁸ All 9 SCJ appeals related to candidate registration were decided between 29 August and 11 September. n paragraph 7.6 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document, participating States committed to "provide ... political parties [...] with the necessary legal guarantees to enable them to compete with each other on a basis of equal treatment".

¹⁰⁹ The CEC tracks complaints, notifications and court cases in an [online registry](#), updated every few days.

¹¹⁰ Warnings issued to a PAS minister and to *Alternativa* candidate Ion Ceban for abuse of administrative resources were challenged at the CCA, who upheld CEC decision.

Most complaints were decided before election day. On election day 23 complaints were filed to the CEC mainly related to violations of the electoral silence period, illegal funding, transportation of voters in the diaspora, violation of campaign regulations and one complaint on the behaviour of a party representative at a polling station. Most were sent to the IGP for investigation and the rest were rejected with the exception of one, in which the CEC sanctioned the Democracy at Home party with deprivation of public funding for up to two years for illegal and undeclared campaign financing.¹¹¹ The sanctions were partially annulled by the CCA, but the SCJ later admitted the appeal of the CEC, maintaining the CEC decision imposing the sanctions. The CEC determined that the party had committed serious violations that would have warranted de-registration but, in line with the legal provisions, left the CC to decide upon this aspect when deciding on the legality of elections and on the validation of the mandates obtained by the party.¹¹² The CC validated the results and all the mandates of the deputies.

After election day, four complaints were filed by the party Democracy at Home against other electoral contestants for alleged illegal financing of online campaign activities and infringement of campaign regulations. Two others were related to an alleged camouflage bloc. All were rejected as ungrounded and contested in the courts but both the CCA and the SCJ maintained the CEC decisions.

Electoral disputes were generally handled efficiently by the courts and within the prescribed deadlines, although some decisions raised controversy. Fourteen CEC decisions denying candidate registration were challenged at the CCA. While 10 cases were rejected, 4 were accepted requiring the CEC to review the registration of the impacted contestants. Two decisions, however, were later reversed by the SCJ, while two were maintained,¹¹³ raising concerns over differing interpretations of legal provisions.¹¹⁴ In all other cases appealed, including regarding polling stations abroad, in Transnistria, and sanctions against an independent candidate, the SCJ maintained the CCA decisions dismissing such complaints.¹¹⁵ All decisions were motivated and published on the courts' website, although some with delay.¹¹⁶ While CCA sessions were public, the SCJ held closed hearings without the participation of the parties to the complaint, limiting transparency and contrary to international standards.¹¹⁷ However, 2023 legal

¹¹¹ Based on a complaint submitted by PAS and evidence from IGP, the CEC determined the party benefited from support from a coordinated network of inauthentic TikTok accounts, although the party reported no expenses on social networks, and from the involvement in its electoral campaign of a George Simion, the leader of the "Alliance for the Union of Romanians" Party in Romania, which is prohibited by law.

¹¹² See CEC [decision nr. 4140](#) of 3 October 2025.

¹¹³ The CCA decisions on New Historical Option Party and *Moldova Mare* were upheld by SCJ. However, in the case of *Moldova Mare* the SCJ initially overturned this decision, upholding the party's exclusion. Citing concerns over judicial impartiality of one of the judges of the panel, *Moldova Mare* requested a revision. A new SCJ panel accepted the request, reversed prior ruling, and ordered the CEC to register, stating that the CEC had wrongly rejected the party's registration due to not meeting the gender quota. The SCJ concluded that the CEC failed to notify the party of the deficiencies and did not ensure transparency in the administrative procedure, applying different treatment for *Moldova Mare* compared to a similar case of PSDE.

¹¹⁴ The CCA's decision ordering CEC to revise the registration of PDLM was overturned by the SCJ, who ruled in favour of CEC arguing that the CEC has executive function and must base its decisions solely on the data provided by the PSA regarding eligible political parties. PDLM leader condemned the decision and filed a complaint at the European Court of Human Rights for violation of the right to stand and access to justice. In a second case, while the CCA ordered CEC to register Centrist Union, the SCJ reversed the judgement, maintained CEC decision mainly on the ground that the resignation deadline imposed by the law to independents also applies to those nominated by parties, and concluded that this party was part of a "camouflage bloc", as some of its candidates didn't resign from other parties within the required 70 days. The CCA had previously maintained the contrary, citing that the deadline did not apply party candidates.

¹¹⁵ The courts concluded that in exercising their discretionary power per Electoral Code, Article 40(3), the CEC provided sufficient justification, outlining all relevant considerations and viewpoints within legal limits.

¹¹⁶ [General Comment 32](#) to the ICCPR states that "the publicity of hearings ensures the transparency of proceedings and thus provides an important safeguard for the interest of the individual and of society at large."

¹¹⁷ Paragraph 12 of the 1990 [OSCE Copenhagen Document](#) states that "proceedings may only be held in camera in circumstances prescribed by law and consistent with obligations under international laws and international commitments". See also paragraph 100 of the Explanatory Report of Venice Commission's Code of Good Practice, which states that "the appeal procedure should be of a judicial nature, in the sense that the right of the appellants to proceedings in which both parties are heard should be safeguarded".

amendments allowing audio and video recording of court hearings led to some SCJ hearings being published on YouTube, improving public access.

The CC is the only institution competent to decide on the legality and integrity of election results and decides on potential recount requests. Its activities are governed by a new law of 2025, with a high degree of alignment with international standards.¹¹⁸ The CC is composed of six members, nominated for a six-year mandate, renewable once. On August 17, following the expiration of the mandates of five members, five newly appointed judges were sworn in before the parliament.¹¹⁹ Although the new law considered the majority of the Venice Commission recommendations as well as broader international and constitutional principles and good practices, it did not include provisions to enshrine the principle of transparency in the nomination process for judges, which was a concern also for several ODIHR interlocutors.¹²⁰

XII. NATIONAL MINORITIES

National minorities comprise approximately 18 per cent of Moldova's population.¹²¹ No systemic barriers were identified to the ability of national minorities to freely participate in the election process. At the same time, some issues require further attention, such as voter registration procedures for Roma. Minority candidates were present across political party lists, indicating no formal barriers to their participation.

Positively, the law provides for ballots in minority languages upon request from DEC's. However, as most minorities consume information primarily in Russian or their minority language, their access to official electoral information in Romanian is limited due to the fact that the Russian version of the CEC website is not updated simultaneously with the Romanian one. As a result, minorities do not have immediate access to the full range of official electoral information.

The CEC printed ballots in five minority languages — Russian, Bulgarian, Gagauz, Romani and Ukrainian. At the same time, the CEC produced voter education materials and a promotional video in several minority languages to enhance inclusiveness.

Roma voters faced particular barriers in voter registration. Many of them lack a registered domicile or residence, which particularly impacts this population. Rural Roma often faced long travel distances to reach polling stations.

Minority candidates were present across party lists. According to ODIHR EOM interlocutors, members of national minority communities are more exposed to disinformation than the general population, as they predominantly consume Russian-language social media, particularly TikTok, where such content circulates widely. Media also reported that minority communities and other vulnerable groups were allegedly exploited for paid protests and disruptive activities.

¹¹⁸ See Venice Commission [Opinion](#) on the draft law on the Constitutional Court of March 2025.

¹¹⁹ Two were nominated by the parliament, two by the government, and one by the Superior Council of Magistracy (SCM). The sixth judge of the CC was appointed in 2023 by the SCM and her mandate will expire in 2029.

¹²⁰ See Venice Commission [Opinion](#), Draft Law on the Constitutional Court of March 2025, para 125 (c) recommending “To include in the Draft Law specific provisions to enshrine the principle of transparency in the nomination process for judges of the Constitutional Court, and to provide a more robust mechanism to guarantee the stability of the Constitutional Court's activity covering all grounds of termination of office of the judges of the Court.”

¹²¹ See the [2024 Population and Housing Census](#) conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova.

XIII. ELECTION OBSERVATION

The legal framework provides for observation of the electoral process by citizen and international observers, as well as representatives of contestants. Observers may be accredited to observe the election both in-country and abroad. For these elections, the CEC accredited 2,496 citizen and 912 international observers. Promo-LEX with 1,229 observers and the Union of Lawyers with 1,175 were the largest citizen observer groups. Both have deployed long-term observers throughout the country and published four interim reports during the electoral period.

A new CEC regulation required citizen and international observer organizations to submit information, including on their technical and human capacity, experience in election observation, and funding sources, in order to obtain accreditation. According to the CEC, this had been done with the intention of verifying credentials and preventing the misuse of the observer status. The new regulation also prohibited any action that could hinder the activity of the electoral body or jeopardise the voting process. The registration of a high number of observers, both citizen and international, contributed to the transparency of the process. However, the CEC refused to accredit 16 prospective IEOM observers nominated by the Russian Federation, citing an SIS opinion as the basis for its decision.

XIV. ELECTION DAY

Election day was well organized, despite a number of concerning security incidents. The CEC announced that turnout was 52.21 per cent and posted electoral information and preliminary results on its website in real time, contributing to transparency. Opening was observed in 143 polling stations and voting was observed in 1,314 polling stations across the country. Counting was observed in 122 polling stations, and the tabulation at 34 DEC. Women made up 86 per cent of PEB members, including 88 per cent of chairpersons. Positively, ballots in five minority languages were available where requested.

The opening process was assessed positively in all but 1 of the 143 observations. Opening procedures were largely followed in the overwhelming majority of PEBs, with IEOM observers reporting only isolated instances of minor procedural omissions.

While in the polling stations for Transnistrian voters observed by the IEOM the voting process proceeded generally without excessive queues or shortage of ballots, the CEC reported that two polling stations - 37/2 and 37/5 - ran out of ballots respectively at 20.35 and 18.36. The PEBs directed voters to other polling stations with sufficient ballots.

Voting was assessed positively in 99 per cent of the 1,314 polling stations observed (more than half of PEBs across the country), and the IEOM observers described the process as smooth, calm, and professional. The few negative assessments were mostly linked to unauthorized persons present at polling stations (32 reports), including police (11) and local officials (6). IEOM observers also reported a few instances of candidate representatives keeping track of voters who had voted.

Voter identification and electronic verification were efficient in the polling stations observed, with only isolated cases of SAISE malfunction (8 cases). In 11 per cent of polling stations observed, one or more voters were turned away or redirected to a different polling station, mostly because they were not on the voter list of that polling station or they lacked proper identification. The CEC and IGP registered 68 cases where voters were missing from main voter lists because they were marked as pre-registered for out-of-country voting (mostly in the Russian Federation), although some had never lived abroad, pointing to potential abuse of personal data by third parties, which is of concern.

Most voters marked their ballots in secrecy; however, the layout of the polling stations and the placement of the video camera did not always ensure the secrecy of the vote (6 per cent of observations).

The secrecy of the ballot was also compromised in 4 per cent of PEBs observed. IEOM observers reported that voters took or attempted to take pictures of their marked ballot in five cases observed; in one of such cases the PEB reported two voters to the police, and they were detained after being given opportunity to vote. Some instances of group voting were also observed (1 per cent of observations) and cases of seemingly identical signatures on the voter lists were reported (2 percent). In 3 per cent of PEBs observed, ballot boxes were not properly sealed.

To ensure the secrecy of the vote, as previously recommended further efforts should be made to allocate adequate premises for polling stations which would allow for better positioning of voting booths. Any use of video cameras in polling stations should ensure that the secrecy of the vote is protected.

Most observed polling stations were unsuitable for people with disabilities. Sixty-five per cent did not provide for independent access, and the interior layout was not suitable for voters with disabilities in 26 per cent of polling stations observed. Long queues of voters were noted outside 2 per cent of polling stations observed, and overcrowding inside 3 per cent.

As previously recommended, to ensure the participation of persons with disabilities, further efforts are needed from the authorities to facilitate independent access to and suitable layout in polling stations for voters with reduced mobility.

Candidate representatives were present in 99 per cent of polling stations observed and in 6 cases they were observed to be interfering in the work of PEBs. Citizen observers were present in 61 per cent of polling stations observed, contributing to transparency.

According to the Prime Minister, on the day before and on election day, Moldova's electoral infrastructure was targeted by multiple cyberattacks. These attempts focused on the CEC website and some polling stations abroad but were reportedly detected and neutralized in real time without disrupting the electoral process. A large-scale attack on election day also forced STISC to block the host.md platform, leaving about 4,000 websites offline.

Throughout the day, bomb threats were reported at some PEBs for voters from Transnistria (37/6, 37/10, 37/11, 34/14), in some of them repeatedly, as well as at bridges over the Nistru river. There was also a significant disinformation campaign purporting that many bridges were closed for construction; IEOM observers noted that this was not the case but long lines for vehicle movement were noted. The voting at the PEBs and movement over the bridges was suspended temporarily contributing to the long queues. Bomb threats were also reported at polling stations in Belgium, Italy, USA, Spain, and Romania.

The majority (113 of 122) of vote counts observed by the IEOM were assessed positively and observers assessed the counting as well-organized and transparent, overall. The IEOM evaluated the counting negatively in 9 polling stations observed, due to procedural errors or omissions. The PEB did not always establish the number of ballots issued by counting signatures on the voter lists (14 observations) or did not count the overall number of ballots found in the stationary ballot box (24 observations). In over one third of vote counts observed, the validity of disputed ballots was not decided by a vote of the PEB members, as required by law. In 19 counts, the PEBs had problems with reconciling the results in protocols, 15 protocols had been pre-signed and in 45 counts the PEB did not post the copy of the protocol at the PEB entrance, negatively impacting transparency. In 8 vote counts observed non-PEB officials were noted as interfering (contestant representatives 5, citizen observers 2, local officials 1).

Tabulation was observed in 34 of 36 DEC for in-country voting and assessed positively in all but 2 of them. Seven DEC were found by IEOM observers to be not adequate for the receipt of election materials from PEBs and had insufficient space and in four, not everybody had a clear view of the procedures. Some PEBs made technical mistakes in their protocols and other reports and were unclear due to late instructions on invalidating a withdrawn party's votes. The DEC required corrections, which

led to long queues outside tabulation rooms, creating tension and confusion among PEB members. Still, IEOM observers describe tabulation as generally orderly and professional.

To ensure efficient, accurate and transparent counting and tabulation processes, as previously recommended, further efforts are needed to increase the capacity of PEBs to follow procedures and to allocate adequate DEC premises.

Over the course of election day, IEOM observers noted 57 complaints filed at PEBs visited and 1 complaint at DEC observed. Four complaints were lodged at the CEC on election day, concerning violation of campaign silence and organized transportation of voters. All were rejected by the CEC as ungrounded. On election day, the IGP registered 99 reports concerning the photographing of ballots; in 66 cases, fines were levied.

The CEC published preliminary results based on data from PEB protocols transmitted through the SAISE system. The CEC promptly summarized the results within the legal timeframes. The results were published along with the spreadsheet of polling station-level results as well as scanned copies of all PEB protocols, contributing to transparency.¹²²

XV. POST-ELECTION DAYS DEVELOPMENTS

On 28 September, after the polling stations closed, one of the leaders of the Patriotic Bloc, Igor Dodon, accused the ruling party of fraud and refused to recognise the election results. He subsequently joined a small protest outside the CEC building, where he claimed victory. The following day, the bloc organised a protest in front of the parliament, announcing its intention to challenge the results. Later, Mr. Dodon informed the ODIHR EOM that he would recognise the results only after the final decision of the CC and would continue opposition activities within the parliament. None of the other contestants questioned the results.

In a post-election statement, the president of the outgoing parliament, Igor Grosu, thanked voters and state institutions, emphasising the importance of the victory despite the Russian Federation's attempts to spread disinformation and undermine the integrity of the elections. He further stated that EU integration remains the primary goal for the PAS majority in parliament, which will support the president in this path and advance new reforms.

On 5 October, the CEC published the protocol with the aggregated numbers of participants and votes cast for each contestant; the next day it was submitted, together with the report on the conduct of the elections, to the CC for validation. On the same day, the CEC also allocated mandates to contestants that passed the threshold. All the result protocols were sent to the CC on 6 October. No official complaints were filed contesting the election results, nor request for recounts.¹²³ As a consequence, on 16 October, within the 10 days deadline prescribed by the law, the Court concluded that no violations had occurred that could have significantly impacted the will of the voters in the parliamentary elections, confirmed the results of the election and validated the mandates of elected members of parliament as presented by the CEC following the tabulation of results.

¹²² See the scanned protocols and spreadsheet [here](#).

¹²³ During the Constitutional Court hearing on the validation of the election results, the Patriotic Bloc requested that the results not be validated due to several alleged violations, without submitting any evidence. All other electoral contestants who had been allocated mandates called for the validation of the results.

XVI. RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations, as contained throughout the text, are offered with a view to enhance the conduct of elections in the Republic of Moldova and to support efforts to bring them fully in line with OSCE commitments and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections to which they have committed. These recommendations should be read in conjunction with prior ODIHR recommendations which remain to be addressed.¹²⁴ ODIHR stands ready to assist the authorities of the Republic of Moldova to further improve the electoral process and to address the recommendations contained in this and previous reports.

A. PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. As previously recommended, the electoral legal framework should be reviewed to comprehensively address all outstanding ODIHR recommendations, in line with OSCE commitments and other international standards. Reform efforts should be undertaken well in advance of the next elections in an inclusive and transparent manner.
2. To safeguard the contestants' right to an effective remedy, legal provisions should be revised to ensure that sanctions with an irreversible effect on the exercise of political rights, including the right to be elected, are applied only when time allows for effective legal remedies or that their enforcement is suspended until the opportunity for appeal is exhausted. To prevent arbitrary de-registration of candidates, such decisions should be based on sound, relevant and sufficient evidence.
3. As previously recommended, restrictions to the right to vote based on intellectual or psychosocial disability should be removed to ensure equal suffrage in accordance with international standards.
4. To respond effectively to large-scale instances of electoral corruption and illicit activities that influence voters' behaviour, the authorities should further support close co-ordination between the Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office, the National Anti-Corruption Centre and General Inspectorate of Police, and enhance their institutional capacity.
5. Additional legal safeguards should be considered and properly enforced to prevent contestants from misusing administrative resources, budgetary funds, official positions, and state-funded information messages for their own advantage during the electoral period. To prevent cases of abuse of office, consideration could be given to requiring the suspension of official duties for certain public officials upon registration as a candidate.
6. Competent state agencies and ministries should ensure greater transparency and co-ordination in their efforts to counter disinformation and other forms of manipulative content. This could include public reporting of the 'take down requests' sent to the platforms and their outcome, as

¹²⁴ According to paragraph 25 of the 1999 [OSCE Istanbul Document](#), OSCE participating States committed themselves "to follow up promptly the ODIHR's election assessment and recommendations". The follow-up of prior recommendations is assessed by ODIHR as follows: recommendations 12, 13 and 18 from the final report on the [2021 parliamentary elections](#), recommendations 8, 10 and 12 from the final report on the [2023 local elections](#), and recommendations 10, 12 and 25 from the final report on the [2024 presidential election and constitutional referendum](#) are fully implemented. Recommendations 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 19 and 20 of the 2021 final report, recommendations 13, 14 and 26 from the 2023 final report, and recommendations 1 and 15 from the 2024 final report are mostly implemented. Recommendations 3, 9, 11, 14, 15 and 23 of the 2021 final report, recommendations 2, 6, 16, 17, 19, 24, 27 and 30 from the 2023 final report, and recommendations 4-6, 14, 16, 18 and 24 from the 2024 final report are partially implemented. See also the [ODIHR Electoral Recommendations Database](#).

well as access to official and timely information to assist voters to independently assess potential disinformation.

B. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Election Administration

7. Consideration could be given to reviewing arrangements for voters residing in Transnistria, including the criteria for determining the number of polling stations and the distribution of ballots, as well as the location of voting premises, with a view to ensuring that security considerations are addressed while enabling these voters to effectively exercise their suffrage.
8. The authorities could continue to build resistance into its cybersecurity strategies by hardening its infrastructure, allocating adequate human resources and training, and providing the public with sufficient information on cybersecurity efforts and responses; in this, transparent, well-rehearsed response processes, are essential.

Voter Registration

9. The authorities should further explore efforts to improve the accuracy of the voter lists by developing better mechanisms for removing records of deceased people from the voter register. These could comprise legally mandated and timely reporting or automatic transmission of death records from relevant institutions to the State Register of Voters.

Candidate Registration

10. To ensure equality of opportunities, the law and its implementation should ensure that candidates are always provided with an opportunity to address shortcomings in their applications, in line with international good practice. Unduly burdensome requirements such as in-person candidate registration should be reconsidered.

Electoral Campaign

11. Authorities should call on political parties and candidates to agree on a code of conduct establishing guidelines for online campaigning prior to the next elections. Based on international good practice and community standards of the main platforms, the code could clarify which campaign methods and network attributes are considered inauthentic.

Campaign Finance

12. As previously recommended, the legal framework for campaign finance should be further strengthened to regulate in more detail the involvement of third parties and the valuation of in-kind contributions.
13. To ensure comprehensive and efficient campaign finance oversight, consideration could be given to further strengthening the oversight capacity of the CEC, including by providing the resources necessary to take ownership of the support provided by international partners.

Media

14. To safeguard freedom of expression, any suspension or withdrawal of broadcasting rights should only be imposed by an independent oversight body or by a court following serious and repeated violations of legitimate content restrictions, and only after exhausting less-restrictive corrective measures. Decisions should be subject to effective judicial review procedures with suspensive effect.
15. The existing system of blocking informational websites should be amended, ensuring that content-specific restrictions are imposed solely by judicial authority based on objective, transparent criteria clearly established in law. To guarantee transparency and accountability in the process, all such decisions should be publicly disclosed with clear justification, maintained in an accessible registry, and subject to effective appeal mechanisms.
16. To uphold the principle of freedom of expression during elections, the media should not be held liable for disseminating statements or content made directly by candidates, unless they have been specifically found to be unlawful by an independent and impartial court or regulatory body, or constitute incitement to violence, and the outlet had a genuine opportunity to prevent their dissemination.

Election Day

17. To ensure the secrecy of the vote, as previously recommended further efforts should be made to allocate adequate premises for polling stations which would allow for better positioning of voting booths. Any use of video cameras in polling stations should ensure that the secrecy of the vote is protected.
18. As previously recommended, to ensure the participation of persons with disabilities, further efforts are needed from the authorities to facilitate independent access to and suitable layout in polling stations for voters with reduced mobility.
19. To ensure efficient, accurate and transparent counting and tabulation processes, as previously recommended, further efforts are needed to increase the capacity of PEBs to follow procedures and to allocate adequate DEC premises.

ANNEX I: ELECTION RESULTS

No. on ballot	Name of the Party/Electoral Bloc	Number of votes received	Number of mandates
1	Party of Action and Solidarity	792,557	55
1	Democracy at Home	88,679	6
3	Coalition for Unity and Welfare	13,314	-
4	Andrei Năstase, independent	13,420	-
5	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	3,576	-
6	Olesea Stamate, independent	5,257	-
7	European Social Democratic Party	15,060	-
8	National Moldovan Party	4,813	-
9	Patriotic Bloc of the Socialists, Communists, Heart and Future of Moldova	381,984	26
10	<i>Alternativa</i> Bloc	125,706	8
11	Respect Moldova Movement Party	10,144	-
12	Together Bloc	5,030	-
13	Cities and Communes League Party	6,120	-
14	Alliance for the Union of Romanians	1,604	-
15	Victoria Sanduța, independent	2,862	-
16	Alliance of Moldovans	3,509	-
17	<i>Moldova Mare</i>	withdrawn	-
18	Union of the Nation Bloc	797	-
19	New Historical Option	1,412	-
20	Liberal Party	1,591	-
21	Christian-Social Union of Moldova	1,837	-
22	Tatiana Crețu, independent	1,598	-
23	Our Party	97,852	6

Number of voters in the main voter lists	2,738,735
Number of voters in the additional list	342,244
Number of voters who received ballots	1,609,715
Number of voters who participated in the voting	1,609,579
Number of valid votes cast	1,578,722
Voter turnout	52.21%
Invalid ballots	30,857
Voters abroad	277,964
Voters residing in Transnistria	12,274

ANNEX II: LIST OF OBSERVERS IN THE INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION

ODIHR EOM Short-Term Observers

Sedanna	Margaryan	Armenia
Sasun	Hovhannisyan	Armenia
Iris	O'rourke	Austria
Dusica	Dukic	Austria
Lukas	Alexander	Austria
Gunther	Neumann	Austria
Yolanda	Scheller	Austria
Manfred	Aschaber	Austria
Chiara	Kastrun	Austria
Christoph	Rodler	Austria
Bruno Michael	Vandecasteele	Belgium
Julien	Colle	Belgium
Marie	Haeverans	Belgium
Leen	Nijs	Belgium
Niko	Vervoort	Belgium
Alexandra	Khoudokormoff	Belgium
Daniel	Ahmad	Canada
Edward	Tawil	Canada
Leona	Kunayová	Czech Republic
Adam	Drnovsky	Czech Republic
Eva	Karlikova	Czech Republic
Anna-Marie	Peroutková	Czech Republic
Jiri	Preclik	Czech Republic
Marta	Vacca Vesela	Czech Republic
Václav	Malina	Czech Republic
Blanka	Hrubá	Czech Republic
Jan	Faltys	Czech Republic
Lukas	Gjuric	Czech Republic
Zuzana	Kutišová	Czech Republic
Petr	Přebinda	Czech Republic
Tomas	Vlach	Czech Republic
Karin	Lišková	Czech Republic
Peter	Bohlbro	Denmark
Birte Torp	Pedersen	Denmark
Inge	Jensen	Denmark
Inge Merete	Hansen	Denmark
Claus	Wintop	Denmark
Jan	Haagensen	Denmark
Heiti	Mäemee	Estonia
Laura	Hassinen	Finland
Riitta	Känkänen	Finland
Riku	Rantanen	Finland
Johannes	Jauhiainen	Finland
Bradley	Reynolds	Finland
Philippe	Dardant	France
Paul	Ruotte	France

Olivier	Huyghe	France
Thomas	Mirman	France
Guillaume	Pilet	France
Anne	Maufrais	France
Maria	Popczyk	France
Alexandra	Richter	France
Jules	Bigot	France
Marek	Bazin	France
Lucile	Bardin	France
Zoé	De Nadai	France
Victoria	Dziwniel	France
Benedicte	Contamin	France
Marc Jean-Louis	Gruber	France
Maylis	Huard de Verneuil	France
Fischer	Frank	Germany
Daniel	Zipfel	Germany
Salih	Paksoy	Germany
Zoran	Vasic	Germany
Robert	Sperfeld	Germany
Birgit	Daiber	Germany
Adam	Teufel	Germany
Simon	Wallisch	Germany
Lena	Wittke	Germany
Monika	Benkler	Germany
Petra	Bornhoeft	Germany
Izabella Brigitta	Bosze	Germany
Timm	Buechner	Germany
Astrid	Ehle	Germany
Annelie	Koschella	Germany
Karin	Marmsoler	Germany
Alexandra	Dobolyi	Hungary
Terjék	Balázs	Hungary
Elza	Schönstein	Hungary
Katherine	Wille	Ireland
Alexander	Attwood	Ireland
Kieran	Lenihan	Ireland
Maria Theresa Patrice	Lucid	Ireland
Carolann	Minnock	Ireland
Patrick	Farrelly	Ireland
Seán	O'connor	Ireland
Eithne	Macdermott	Ireland
Claire	Vukcevic	Ireland
Paul	Brennan	Ireland
Charlotte	Coyle	Ireland
Mark	Finegan	Ireland
Michael	Gannon	Ireland
Fidelma	Healy Eames	Ireland
Pierluigi	Bolioli	Italy
Gilberto	Pelosi	Italy
Antonella	Simonetti	Italy
Teresa	Morandini	Italy

David	Capezzuto	Italy
Serena	Bonato	Italy
Alberto	Ribolla	Italy
Claudia	Bettiol	Italy
Janis	Ievins	Latvia
Dominyka	Dautaraite	Lithuania
Lina	Grige	Lithuania
Meilė	Vitkauskaitė	Lithuania
Tomas	Jenkelevic	Lithuania
Taras	Ivanec	Lithuania
Jonas	Mensonas	Lithuania
Karolis	Stanevicius	Lithuania
Henk	Graafland	Netherlands
Roxanne	Koenis	Netherlands
Ilse Charlotte	Helder	Netherlands
Alexander	Weissink	Netherlands
Tron	Gundersen	Norway
Per	Svartefoss	Norway
Lars Georg	Fordal	Norway
Hanne	Hanson	Norway
Kristin Taraldsrud	Hoff	Norway
Anne Christine	Kroepelien	Norway
Bergny	Ofstad	Norway
Camilla	Wedul	Norway
Joanna	Bagadzińska	Poland
Beata	Podgórska	Poland
Marek Wojciech	Marszałek	Poland
Maria Aleksandra	Pawłowska-pławińska	Poland
Ewa	Stasiek	Poland
Marta	Tomaszkiewicz	Poland
Robert	Rajczyk	Poland
Karolina	Świderska	Poland
Jarosław (Jarek) Marcin	Domański	Poland
Agnieszka	Hardej-Januszek	Poland
Jakub	Pilch	Poland
Jan	Gebert	Poland
Iwona	Zyman	Poland
Jakub	Pieńkowski	Poland
Natalia	Piotrowska	Poland
Krzysztof	Kolanowski	Poland
David	Crisóstomo	Portugal
Valentina	Crivat	Romania
Cristina	Chivu	Romania
Mihaela	Besliu	Romania
Mihai Stefan	Galai	Romania
Petra	Čadová	Slovakia
Lukas	Prvy	Slovakia
Michaela	Stranska	Slovakia
Marek	Brenčíč	Slovakia
Joel	Díaz Rodríguez	Spain
Carmen	Claudin Urondo	Spain

Mikel	Cordoba Gavin	Spain
Paula	Miquel Calvo	Spain
María	De la Fuente Rivas	Spain
Antoni	Canyelles Capellà	Spain
Maria del Mar	Martin Raba	Spain
Isabel	Menchon Lopez	Spain
Arnau	Rovira Muntada	Spain
Domenec	Ruiz Devesa	Spain
Rubén	Ruíz Ramas	Spain
Eduardo	Trillo de Martin-Pinillos	Spain
Syna	Ouattara	Sweden
Inger Maja Marianne	Aase	Sweden
Victor Peter	Gupta	Sweden
Stig Andreas	Johansson	Sweden
David	Kollberg	Sweden
Linda Virginia Matilda	Kotschack	Sweden
Emma Karin Victoria	Mihlzén	Sweden
Stina Ellen Karolin	Skansing Bergman	Sweden
Henrik Josef	Mungenast	Sweden
Erik	Asplund	Sweden
Charlotte	Bergendal Berggren	Sweden
Graham	Taylor	Sweden
Hanna Catarina	Högberg	Sweden
Mikaela Jenny Kristin	Christiansson	Sweden
Anna Ingrid Kristina	Envall	Sweden
Vera Sofia	Grass	Sweden
Johannes	Koeppel	Switzerland
Beat	Weber	Switzerland
Laura	Vogel	Switzerland
Michele	Calastri	Switzerland
Thomas	Holzer	Switzerland
Daniel	Bochsler	Switzerland
Laura Andrea	Merz	Switzerland
Mauro	Moruzzi	Switzerland
Hanna	Pahls	Switzerland
Stefan	Ziegler	Switzerland
Katharina	Imhof	Switzerland
Halyna	Bakhmatova	Ukraine
Michael	Cockle	United Kingdom
Raya	Corry-Fitton	United Kingdom
Anttoni James	Numminen	United Kingdom
Shaama	Malik	United Kingdom
Nirmala	Gopal	United Kingdom
Nadia	Zoubir	USA
Julie	Barker	USA
Sarah	Pilchick	USA
Eric	Rice	USA
Hannah	Lindahl	USA
Christopher	Shields	USA
Andriy	Shymonyak	USA
Douglas	Tremittiere	USA

Degee	Wilhelm	USA
James	Berk	USA
Mieczyslaw	Boduszynski	USA
Kyle	Bowers	USA
Aubrey	Hamilton	USA
Antonio	Lee	USA
Sofya	Orlosky	USA
Constance	Philipot	USA
Sohibjon	Olimjonov	Uzbekistan

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Josephine	Ebner	Austria
Jiří	Němec	Czech Republic
Julia	Hawlanová	Czech Republic
Poul	Svane	Denmark
Griselda	Rosenberg	Estonia
Tatu	Oksanen	Finland
Carita	Vastinesluoma	Finland
Eric	Mirguet	France
Pascale	Trimbach	France
Sarah	Lohschelder	Germany
Natalie	Krieger	Germany
Gudni	Bragason	Iceland
Andrew	Richardson	Ireland
Raffaele	Ditadi	Italy
Lucrezia	Aresi	Italy
Ricardas	Ramoska	Lithuania
Børge	Nilsen	Norway
Asgeir	Rustad	Norway
Zofia	Lutkiewicz	Poland
Bartłomiej	Zdaniuk	Poland
Vladimir	Mazalov	Russian Federation
Mikhail	Dimitriev	Russian Federation
Mats	Ekholm	Sweden
Ewa	Jacobsson	Sweden
Maja	Hürlimann	Switzerland
Annette	Keller	Switzerland
Mary	Brooksbank	United Kingdom
Alexander	Anderson	United Kingdom
Jessica	Nash	USA
Wilson	Von kessler	USA

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Rashad Shirinov	Shirinov		Azerbaijan
Aliaksandr	Chaliadzinski		Belarus
Igor	Bulić		Croatia
Czesław	Walek		Czech Republic

Kerstin	Dokter	Germany
Eleni	Ioannou	Greece
Zhenis	Bereshev	Kazakhstan
Dimash	Alzhanov	Kazakhstan
Slaviša	Kotlaja	Montenegro
Max	Bader	Netherlands
Beata	Martin-Rozumilowicz	Poland
Kamila	Kolinska	Poland
Michał	Ostańkowicz	Poland
Smaranda	Sandulescu	Romania
Loredana	Bertișan-Pop	Romania
Gonzalo	Jorro-Martinez	Spain
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Myagmartogtokh	Tumennasan	USA

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Iryna	Gerashchenko	Ukraine	MP
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Christine	Blower	United Kingdom	MP
Rosalie	Winterton	United Kingdom	MP
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Daniel	Gottfried	USA	Staff of Delegation
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European Parliament

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Ivana	Kiendl Kristo	Croatia	Secretariat
Ondrej	Madr	Czech Republic	Political Advisor
Villy	Søvndal	Denmark	MP
Hans	Neuhoff	Germany	MP
Ruth	Firmenich	Germany	MP
Marina	Graser Lasic	Germany	Secretariat
Raffaele	Luise	Italy	Secretariat
Isabel	Wiseler-Lima	Luxembourg	MP
Tessel	Giele	Netherlands	Political Advisor
Robert	Golanski	Poland	Political Advisor
Ana Catarina	Mendes	Portugal	MP
Dan	Barna	Romania	MP
Itziar	Munoa Salavierria	Spain	Political Advisor

ABOUT ODIHR

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is OSCE's principal institution to assist participating States "to ensure full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, to abide by the rule of law, to promote principles of democracy and (...) to build, strengthen and protect democratic institutions, as well as promote tolerance throughout society" (1992 Helsinki Summit Document). This is referred to as the OSCE human dimension.

ODIHR, based in Warsaw (Poland) was created as the Office for Free Elections at the 1990 Paris Summit and started operating in May 1991. One year later, the name of the Office was changed to reflect an expanded mandate to include human rights and democratization. Today it employs over 150 staff.

ODIHR is the lead agency in Europe in the field of **election observation**. Every year, it co-ordinates and organizes the deployment of thousands of observers to assess whether elections in the OSCE region are conducted in line with OSCE commitments, other international obligations and standards for democratic elections and with national legislation. Its unique methodology provides an in-depth insight into the electoral process in its entirety. Through assistance projects, ODIHR helps participating States to improve their electoral framework.

The Office's **democratization** activities include: rule of law, legislative support, democratic governance, migration and freedom of movement, and gender equality. ODIHR implements a number of targeted assistance programmes annually, seeking to develop democratic structures.

ODIHR also assists participating States' in fulfilling their obligations to promote and protect **human rights and fundamental freedoms** consistent with OSCE human dimension commitments. This is achieved by working with a variety of partners to foster collaboration, build capacity and provide expertise in thematic areas, including human rights in the fight against terrorism, enhancing the human rights protection of trafficked people, human rights education and training, human rights monitoring and reporting, and women's human rights and security.

Within the field of **tolerance and non-discrimination**, ODIHR provides support to the participating States in strengthening their response to hate crimes and incidents of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance. ODIHR's activities related to tolerance and non-discrimination are focused on the following areas: legislation; law enforcement training; monitoring, reporting on, and following up on responses to hate-motivated crimes and incidents; as well as educational activities to promote tolerance, respect, and mutual understanding.

ODIHR provides advice to participating States on their policies on **Roma and Sinti**. It promotes capacity-building and networking among Roma and Sinti communities and encourages the participation of Roma and Sinti representatives in policy-making bodies.

All ODIHR activities are carried out in close co-ordination and co-operation with OSCE participating States, OSCE institutions and field operations, as well as with other international organizations.

More information is available on the ODIHR website (www.osce.org/odihr).