



FIRST STEPS IN THE LIFE OF THE VOTER:

Mock elections in youth education: methodological guide



ERSTE Stiftung



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“FIRST STEPS IN THE LIFE OF THE VOTER: MOCK ELECTIONS IN YOUTH EDUCATION: METHODOLOGICAL GUIDE” (supplemented and updated edition)

These methodological guidelines are designed for local electoral advisers, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions and other stakeholders interested in the electoral education in the Republic of Moldova, and contain methodological guidance with specific handouts and exercises that can be used in the mock election exercises conducted in target communities within the Pro-DEM Project.

The Pro-DEM Project “Increasing Participation of Young and First Time Voters (YFTV) in the Republic of Moldova in Democratic Processes by Enhancing Their Attitude Towards Elections” is implemented by Hilfswerk Austria International in partnership with the PA Mostenitorii and PA Speranta, funded by Austrian Development Agency (ADA) with funds of Austrian Development Cooperation and with the support of ERSTE Foundation, Austria.

This Guide aims at providing methodological and information support both to electoral advisers and to all other persons interested in the project.

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Hilfswerk Austria in the Republic of Moldova

Str. Alexandru cel Bun 85,
MD-2012, mun. Chisinau
Republic of Moldova
Tel/fax +373 22 21 25 41
Email: info@hwa.md
www.hilfswerk-austria.md

Hilfswerk Austria International

Grünbergstrasse 15/2/5,
1120 Vienna, Austria
Tel: +43 1 40 57 500-150, Fax: -600
Mobile: +43 676 87 87 60 620
office@hwa.or.at
www.hilfswerk.at/international/

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ABBREVIATIONS

PEB	Precinct Electoral Bureau
CEC	Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova
DEC	District Electoral Council
HWA	Hilfswerk Austria International
Pro-DEM	Project “Increasing Participation of Young and First Time Voters (YFTV) in the Republic of Moldova in Democratic Processes by Enhancing Their Attitude Towards Elections”



GLOSSARY

- “Voter”** refers to a citizen of the Republic of Moldova eligible to vote.
- “Elections”** unless specified otherwise, refers to the election of members of the Parliament and the local public administration bodies, or conducting a referendum. An election also entails the actions of citizens, parties and other socio-political organisations, electoral blocs, electoral bodies and other state bodies concerning the preparation of voters’ lists, the nomination and registration of candidates, pre-electoral campaigning, voting and tabulation of results, as well as other election-related actions under current laws.
- “General elections”** refers to any type of elections conducted on one day indicated in a decree establishing the date of elections throughout the territory of the Republic of Moldova.
- “Early elections”** refers to the elections of the elective body in the event of mandate’s ending before the scheduled end of the term, or a territorial-administrative reorganization.
- “Precinct Electoral Bureau”** refers to a temporary electoral body, established by the district electoral council no later than 25 days before the election day.
- “Electoral campaign”** refers to the time period allowed for activities aimed at persuading the voters to cast their votes for one or another candidate, commenting for each candidate on the same day he/she is registered with the Central Electoral Commission or district electoral councils, and ending on the day of his/her exclusion from election process or on election day.
- “Candidate”** refers to an individual who runs for an elective public position on behalf of parties, other socio-political organisations, or electoral blocs.
- “Complaint”** refers to a request to cancel or revise an act, a decision, or an action.
- “Central Electoral Commission”** refers to an independent state body, established for carrying out electoral policies for the purpose of good conducts of elections, monitoring and control or enforcement of legal provisions on financing of political parties and electoral campaigns.
- “District electoral councils”** refers to temporary electoral bodies, established by the Central Electoral Commission by 50 days prior to elections.
- “Electoral right”** refers to a citizen’s constitutional right to elect, to be elected and to vote on the most important issues of the state and the society and/or issues of special local interest.

“Domicile”	refers to a person’s permanent place of residence, confirmed in their Identity Card.
“Statement of residence”	refers to a procedure through which citizens with a right to vote declare their place of residence on the day of election.
“Electoral official”	refers to an individual who acts or acted under the provisions of the Electoral Code as a member of the district electoral council or the precinct electoral bureau.
“Voters’ lists”	refers to the lists of citizens with the right to vote who have a domicile and/or are residing within a precinct.
“Supplementary voters’ list”	refers to a voters’ list drawn up by the electoral body, where persons who were not entered in the main voters’ lists are included.
“Electoral bodies”	refers to bodies organizing elections of the members of the Parliament, of the President of the Republic of Moldova, and the local public administration bodies, or conducting a referendum.
“Registry of electoral officials”	refers to a system of registration (personal database) at the national level of electoral officials, drawn up by the Central Electoral Commission, which includes information on the officials’ names/surnames, year of birth, profession, position, employer, contact telephone number, domicile, the person/body who appointed them, and, when they participate in elections, the date of elections and their position within the electoral bodies.
“Residence”	refers to a person’s temporary place of residence, confirmed in their Identity Card;
“Revocation”	refers to withdrawal of the mandate of an individual holding an elective public position by a court’s decision and by local referendum (in situations involving a mayor).



PROJECT AND PUBLICATION OVERVIEW

Throughout the past years, the concept “free and fair elections” is increasingly used, especially in the countries going through the process of democratisation. Although there is no universal definition of specific elements comprised by this concept, generally speaking, elections are considered to be “free and fair” when they are conducted in compliance with the legal provisions and when the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens are observed, including the right to freely vote, in secret with no pressure; to have access to information on the ballot and to have freedom of expression and reunion.

In any elections, it is necessary to educate the voters so that all citizens with the right to vote acknowledge the choice they are going to make. For a ballot to be democratic the voters shall be sufficiently informed to vote pursuant to the law, exercising efficiently their right to vote.

In general, the notion *voter's education* is used to describe the dissemination of information, materials and programmes aimed at raising voters' awareness about voting peculiarities and mechanisms for a specific ballot. Voters' education implies also their acknowledgment of the importance and impact of participating in elections.

It is unquestionable that awareness raising and civic education programmes targeting the Moldovan voters increase the incidence of free and informed voting. The age group that requires encouragement, motivation to vote consists of young people, especially those who vote for the first time. Young voters are those aged 18 – 25 years. As the right to vote is exercised by the young people who reached the age of 18 years, electoral education should be started earlier, at 15 – 16 years of age.

Young people aged 15-20 years are the target group of the **Pro-DEM Project** “Increasing Participation of Young and First Time Voters (YFTV) in the Republic of Moldova in Democratic Processes by Enhancing Their Attitude Towards Elections,” implemented by Hilfswerk Austria International in partnership with the PA Mostenitorii and PA Speranta, funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) with funds of Austrian Development Cooperation and with the support of ERSTE Foundation, Austria (period of implementation 1 August 2016 -31 July 2018).

Project's **overall objective** is to empower and motivate young people in 8 communities from Moldova to actively participate in the decision-making process in their communities, by taking part in upcoming elections, enhancing the knowledge and

awareness of the first-time voters, local administration and local CSOs in election mechanisms and procedures.

Project activities were structured on distinct components, each with a logical structure and specific objectives.

Thus, at project initiation stage the survey on “The Attitude of Young People from the Republic of Moldova Towards the Electoral Process” was conducted in 8 communities participating in the project and in 3 neighbouring communities, between 16 December 2016 and 23 January 2017. The survey was carried out by the iData Company and aimed at finding the needs and concerns of the target communities, determine the extent to which young people know about and are interested in the voting process, the level of their information about the electoral process and perceptions about various socio-economic and political phenomena at the local and national levels. Hence, the survey included an opinion poll with 423 questionnaires for the young people aged 16 - 20 years, while the qualitative study included four focus groups with young people from the surveyed districts/municipalities.

The survey highlighted the duality of the youth’s attitude towards the electoral process. On one hand, there is a very low level of confidence in state institutions at the central level: Government, Parliament, and political parties. On the other hand, young people demonstrate an increased interest in taking part in elections (77% of respondents). One of the main arguments is that their vote counts and also the fact that they are concerned about their communities.

The transformation of this interest into reality - the effective participation of young people in elections - will certainly be favoured by the implementation of civic education programmes, calling for the engagement of young people in mock elections: their positioning as candidates, who have to identify community problems and provide solutions to them, but also as voters – by exercising their right to vote. Electoral advisers in all communities participating in the project will have the task to guide the young people through the activities, by providing them informational and methodological support, encouraging the collaboration amongst young people and civil society organizations (CSOs) and local public administration (LPAs).

This **publication**, which is a methodological guide for project participants, especially for local electoral advisers, contains a description of the steps and the algorithm for conducting the mock election exercise, as well as information materials for each stage of the mock elections.

CHAPTER I



ELECTORAL PROCESS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Section 1:

**Types of Elections Conducted in Moldova.
Notion of Electoral System.**

Elections are the most effective and democratic way of representing all citizens in the institutions of government, through which people convey the public power to their representatives. The will of the people represents the basis of the state power, and this will is expressed through free elections, taking place periodically through universal, equal, direct, secret and freely expressed voices.

The organisation and conduct of elections in Moldova is governed by the following acts:

- Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, adopted on 29 July 1994 and its subsequent amendments;
- International and regional treaties ratified by Moldova on the electoral segment;
- Electoral Code¹ of the Republic of Moldova adopted on 21 November 1997 and its subsequent amendments, bringing together all legislative acts on presidential, parliamentary and local elections, with unified electoral procedures;
- Other laws adopted by the Moldovan Parliament with provisions referring to the electoral field; regulations and instructions adopted by the Central Electoral Commission.

On 23 May 1991, by a decision of the 12th Supreme Soviet of the SSR of Moldova, the former Soviet Union Republic - SSRM, was renamed into the Republic of Moldova, and the Supreme Soviet became the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova. On 23 June 1990, the Parliament adopted the Declaration of Sovereignty, and on 27 August 1991 – the Declaration of Independence of the Republic of Moldova.

On 12 October 1993, the Parliament of the 12th term was self-dissolved, but not before setting up the date for the early parliamentary elections for 27 February 1994. Also, a new electoral law was adopted, which replaced the majority electoral system with the proportional one and reduced the number of MPs down to 104 persons. Subsequently, according to Article 60, paragraph (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, adopted on 29 July 1994, the number of seats in the Parliament was reduced to 101.

The following types of general elections are currently taking place in Moldova:

- Parliamentary – where Members of the Parliament are elected;
- Local - where local councillors and mayors are elected;
- Presidential - until 2000, the President of the Republic of Moldova was elected by direct vote, and starting with 2000, the Head of State was elected by the Parliament. In 2016, following the revival of some provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, presidential elections took place, and the President of the Republic of Moldova was elected by direct vote.

¹ The Electoral Code of the Republic of Moldova published in the Official Gazette No 81 of 08.12.1997. A total of 54 laws on amending and supplementing a number of legislative acts, which also referred to amendments of certain provisions in the Electoral Code, have been adopted since it came into force.



- Regional elections (this includes elections in the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia)

Regional elections are conducted on the territory of the Autonomous-Territorial Unit Gagauzia (ATU Gagauzia) to elect the members of the People's Assembly and the Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia. Such elections are organised and conducted in compliance with the Law on Specific Legal Statute of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri) and with the normative acts of ATU Gagauzia².

As a rule, general elections are conducted regularly, every four years, when the mandate of authorities elected previously expires. If the mandate of the elected authorities expires before the term, early elections may take place, which are conducted according to similar rules.

Examples of early elections in the Republic of Moldova:

- On 25 February 2001, early parliamentary elections took place in Moldova after the deputies did not reach a consensus on the election of the Head of State in December 2000.
- On 29 July 2009, early parliamentary elections took place in Moldova following the dissolution of the Parliament elected on 5 April 2009, due to the failure to elect the President of the Republic of Moldova.
- On 28 November 2010, early parliamentary elections were held in Moldova as a result of the dissolution of the Parliament elected on 29 July 2009, because members of the legislative did not elect the President of the Republic of Moldova.

The most important issues of the state and society may be subject to a referendum, which is organised and conducted according to the provisions of the Electoral Code. The *Republican* Referendum represents a ballot by which the people have the possibility to express their opinion and, in this way, contribute directly to the resolution of issues. The Republican Referenda can be of three types: constitutional, legislative and consultative. To consult with citizens on local issues of high interests a *Local* Referendum can be conducted — this is a ballot on issues under the competence of Local Public Authorities (LPAs), which are of great importance for the corresponding locality, as well as Mayor's revocation.

² The People's Assembly of Gagauzia adopted the Electoral Code of Gagauzia No. 60-XXVII/V of 30 June 2015.

Examples of referenda in the Republic of Moldova:

- A Constitutional Referendum, whereby the voters expressed their opinion on the direct election of the Head of State, was held for the first time ever in Moldova on 5 September 2010. The voters were asked to answer the following question “Would you agree with the Constitutional amendment, which would allow the election of the President of the Republic of Moldova by the entire population?”, voting for one of the proposed options: “Yes (for)” or “No (against)”. This Referendum was not validated due to low voter turnout. Only 30.29% of citizens with the right to vote out of the required minimum of 1/3 of citizens included in the voter lists turned out.
- Also, several local referenda were held in some localities on the revocation of the mayor (21 October 2012, 7 July 2013, 29 December 2013, 11 May 2014, 15 June 2014, 30 October 2016).

Section 2: Electoral Rights

Citizens exercise sovereignty through the right to vote and are called to exercise their electoral rights enshrined in the Constitution: the right to elect and to be elected, the right to recall.

The right to elect³ is a fundamental right of citizens of the Republic of Moldova who have reached the age of 18, except for those legally deprived of this right as prescribed by the law: have not reached the age of 18, are declared incapable to exercise their vote by a final decision of a court of law, are sentenced to deprivation of freedom by a final ruling for serious and particularly serious criminal cases.

In exercising the right to vote, the following principles of participation in the elections have to be observed:

- *Universality of voting*: realisation of electoral rights does not depend on gender, race, nationality, language, social origin, position held or exercised, type of activity, religion, political aspirations, residence, wealth or other criteria or circumstances.
- *Equality of elections*. All citizens participate in elections under a level playing field. This principle is ensured by granting all voters equal possibilities from the legal standpoint, beginning with the nomination of candidates, participation in the electoral campaign and voting.
- *Equality of voting* shall be ensured, above all, by including the voter in just one List of Voters of one constituency, so that he/she can take part in electing the corresponding body just once. Every voter is entitled to one vote in one election. All votes have equal legal effect (Art.4 of the Electoral Code of the RM).
- *Direct Voting* means that the Moldovan citizens with the right to vote express personally their electoral options, their will during the elections of any level without any interference of individuals or officials. Every voter shall vote in elections personally. Voting on behalf of other individuals is prohibited by Article 5 of the

³ Constitution of the Republic of Moldova dated 29.07.1994, Art.38 (2).



Electoral Code of the RM). Hence, the right to vote shall be exercised by the voter personally without mandating another person, even if the latter is a family member.

- *Secret voting.* Voting under secret conditions means excluding any control exercised by any public bodies or civil servants, representatives of political parties and movements or citizens over the manner how a voter has expressed his/her electoral will. “Voting in elections ... is secret. Therefore, any possibility to control a voter’s will shall be excluded” (Art.6 of the Electoral Code of the RM). Precinct Electoral Bureaus shall be responsible for organizing voting, ensuring the secret expression of the voters’ will (Art.52 of the Electoral Code of the RM).
- *Freedom to express the electoral opinion.* This is a principle that grants the citizen with the right to vote the possibility to decide independently on the utility and necessity of his/her participation in elections. No one has the right to exert any pressure on a voter to make him/her vote or not, nor to prevent him/her from expressing his/her will (Art. 7 of the Electoral Code of the RM).

All Moldovan citizens who meet the requirements set for the right to vote shall enjoy **the Right to be elected**⁴ with some peculiarities depending on the type of ballot to which they participate as candidates in terms of age (for the President of the RM - 40 years, for the position of a mayor - 25 years, as deputies and local councillors - 18 years). Military personnel in active service, people convicted to deprivation of freedom by a final court decision and servicing their sentence in prison, as well as people with unsettled criminal records for offences committed with intent; citizens who are not entitled to be members of political parties due to the position they hold cannot be elected.

Section 3:

Electoral Management Bodies. Structure and Responsibilities

In terms of the functional organization, the independent electoral management model is applied in Moldova: the higher body organizing and conducting elections is independent from other powers in the state.

The system of electoral bodies in Moldova is organized in three levels: the Central Electoral Commission, District Electoral Councils and Precinct Electoral Bureaus. Within the electoral bodies system, control is top-down, and reporting is bottom-up.

The Central Electoral Commission (CEC) is the hierarchically superior body with permanent activity, established to implement electoral policies, to organize and conduct elections.

The Central Electoral Commission consists of 9 members: 1 member is appointed by the President of the Republic of Moldova, and other 8 members by the Parlia-

⁴ Constitution of the Republic of Moldova dated 29.07.1994, Art.38 (3).

ment, observing a proportional representation of the majority and of the opposition. The nominal composition of the Commission is approved by Decision of Parliament with a vote of the majority of elected deputies.

The competence and responsibilities of the Central Electoral Commission are regulated by the Electoral Code, as well as by the normative acts issued by the CEC.

The Central Electoral Commission has the following responsibilities:

- oversees the implementation of the Electoral Code and other laws with provisions related to the exercise of the electoral rights and to the conduct of elections;
- develops regulations and instructions to improve electoral procedures, as well as issues decisions on the activity of electoral bodies, electoral procedures, organisation and conduct of elections and technical-administrative issues;
- coordinates the activity of all administration bodies to prepare for and conduct elections, according to the Electoral Code;
- implements programmes of civic education and develops programmes on increasing voter awareness during electoral periods;
- provides consultations to public associations interested in conducting civic education campaigns during electoral periods;
- disseminates information about electoral subjects to the mass media and the public at large, as well as information on the conduct of elections and administrative practice applied in this regard;
- ensures compilation and verification of voters lists by co-operating with central and local public authorities, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, and with diplomatic missions and consular offices;
- considers communications from public authority bodies on issues concerning the preparation and conduct of elections;
- considers applications and appeals of decisions and actions of district electoral councils and precinct electoral bureaus, and adopts enforceable decisions thereupon;
- analyses electoral frauds, including allegations of fraud, alleged in past, current or future elections and takes preventive anti-fraud measures. Also, notifies public authorities on the need to consider issues related to compliance with current electoral legislation;
- collects information about citizen participation in elections, sums up preliminary results and makes public the final results, sums up the results of elections in the entire country and, if necessary, submits a report on the results of elections to the Constitutional Court.



District Electoral Councils:

- a) supervise the implementation of the Electoral Code and other laws containing provisions regarding the conduct of elections;
- b) establish precinct electoral bureaus and supervise their activity; train its members, inform the public about the voting procedures and promote the importance of voting;
- c) distribute allotted financial funds among precinct electoral bureaus;
- d) examine communication of local public administration bodies, directors of enterprises, institutions and organizations regarding administration and conduct of elections;
- e) ensure the supply of templates of electoral lists and minutes and voting ballots, etc. to precinct electoral bureaus;
- f) in local elections, register independent candidates and lists of candidates from political parties and other socio-political organizations, of electoral blocs, and make public information about the former;
- g) in local elections, ensure public access to declarations of candidates on income and property;
- h) adopt decisions on detachment from permanent employment for the members of the first level electoral councils and precinct electoral bureaus for the period of their work within these councils and bureaus, propose the detachment from permanent employment of the members of the second level electoral councils;
- i) sum up the results of the elections in the district, and submit the respective acts to the Central Electoral Commission and ensure the publication of the results of the voting in the local press;
- j) collect information from the precinct electoral bureaus about citizen participation in elections, sum up the preliminary results of the elections and submit them to the Central Electoral Commission;
- k) consider applications and complaints about decisions and actions taken by precinct electoral bureaus and adopt enforceable decisions on them;
- l) take other actions related to the organization and conduct of elections.

District electoral councils and precinct electoral bureaus are subordinate electoral bodies and are established for the organization and conduct of specific elections (referenda) – ad-hoc established bodies, with non-permanent activity.

In the case of local elections and referenda, members of the electoral bodies are proposed by the local councils and parties represented in the Parliament, while in the case of parliamentary, presidential elections, national referenda and local general elections, members of the electoral bodies are appointed by courts of law, local councils and parties represented in the Parliament. In all cases, if there are no proposals from the subjects listed above, or the number of members is not sufficient, the Central Electoral Commission supplements the composition of these bodies with persons from the Register of Electoral Officials.

At least 55 days before elections, the CEC creates electoral districts corresponding to the borders of the second level territorial-administrative units of the Republic of Moldova, and of the autonomous territorial unit of Gagauzia, and Chisinau and Balti municipalities. At least 50 days before elections, it creates district electoral councils, consisting of an odd number of members, at least 7 and no more than 11. Of these members, at least three of them must have completed higher legal education or public administration education.

In *local elections* and *referenda*, 40 days before the elections, electoral councils of the second level establish town (municipality), sector, village (communal) district electoral councils – the electoral councils of the first level (7 - 11 members). The respective districts are established 45 days before elections.

Precincts are established by district electoral councils in localities, based on the recommendation of mayors of towns (municipalities), districts and villages (communes), no later than 35 days before elections, and count between 30 and 3,000 voters.

Precinct electoral bureaus are established by the district electoral councils no later than 25 days before the elections, and consist of an odd number of members, of at least 5 and maximum 11 persons.



Precinct Electoral Bureaus:

- a) keep the lists of voters, ensure the integrity of voters' lists and of the ballot forms;
- b) examine requests related to mistakes in voters' lists, make necessary changes in them, and issue absentee vote certificate to voters who will be away from their place of domicile on the election day;
- c) prepare supplementary lists of voters and include those voting on absentee vote certificates, as well as voters who, for various reasons were not entered in the main lists of voters;
- d) notify the public residing within the precinct about the election day and the location of the polling station, prepare the polling station premises for voting and install ballot boxes and voting booths; organise voting on the election day, and ensure public order on the premises of the polling station;
- e) sum up election results in the precinct, complete minutes and reports and submit them, along with all ballots, to the district electoral council;
- f) consider applications and complaints regarding election administration and voting procedures, and adopt decisions in that regards, copies of which shall be attached to the report of the bureau;
- g) provide the district electoral council with data regarding citizen participation in elections, as well as data required to sum up preliminary election results;
- h) ensure that voters, observers and candidates have access to information from the State Registry of Voters and to the lists of voters;
- i) exercise other responsibilities according to the Electoral Code.

As a rule, district electoral councils and precinct electoral bureaus cease their activity immediately after submitting documents on the results of elections to the Central Electoral Commission and, where necessary, to the court.

The Central Electoral Commission and electoral councils are assisted in their activity by a speciality apparatus.

The training of electoral officials, as well as of other electoral actors, is carried out by the Centre for Continuous Training on Elections, an institution created by the Central Electoral Commission on the basis of Art. 26¹ of the Electoral Code.

Section 4:

General Information for Voters about the Voting Procedure**Who?**

Citizens with the right to vote⁵ shall exercise their universal, equal, direct, secret and freely expressed vote under general conditions on organising of voting prescribed by the Electoral Code (Art. 50-55).

**When?**

The Parliament of Moldova shall schedule the day of *presidential, parliamentary, general local and anticipated/early elections, of republican referenda* by issuing a decision at least 60 days prior to the day of elections.

The Central Electoral Commission shall schedule the day of elections in case of *new, partial local elections* and of *local referenda* at least 60 days prior to the day of elections.

Elections are conducted during one day only, i.e. on Sunday or in any other day stated in the act of scheduling the day of elections, on the territory of the whole country or on the territory of the corresponding locality.

People shall vote on the day of elections from 07.00 through 21.00. The Precinct Electoral Bureau shall inform the public about the time and place of voting no later than 10 days prior to the day of elections.

**Where?**

Voting shall take place at the polling station – a venue specially arranged with tables where the ballot papers are being issued, with booths for secret voting and ballot boxes.

The right to vote shall be cast at the polling station within the perimeter of which the voter has his/her domicile, except for the cases covered expressly by law.

If the voter has both domicile and place of residence within the residence validity term, he/she shall vote in the settlement where he/she resides.

⁵ See Section 2: Electoral rights.



In case of presidential and parliamentary elections:

Citizens of the RM living abroad can vote on the day of elections at polling stations opened abroad, regardless of their status on the territory of the respective country.

Pupils, students with the right to vote who are enrolled by education institutions located in a locality where they have no domicile or residence registration may vote at any polling station opened in that locality, provided they have complied with the following requirements:

- a) to submit the ID card with the accompanying slip;
- b) to submit student/pupil ID issued by the education institution from the corresponding locality;
- c) to fill in and sign a statement of sole responsibility by which they refrain from multiple voting, being aware of criminal liability if they infringe this obligation.

People who on the day of elections are in a different locality than the one where they have the domicile or residence, have two options:

- to require the Precinct Electoral Bureau on the territory of which they have their domicile/residence a certificate with the right to vote on which basis they would be able to vote in any polling station throughout the territory of the Republic of Moldova;
- to submit a statement to the local public administration body of the locality where he/she would like to vote (30 days prior to the day of elections).



What are the documents that can be used to vote?



Voting is done on the basis of the following documents:

- a) an ID card of a Moldovan citizen with the accompanying slip, which certifies the domicile or residence of the voter on the territory of polling station;
- b) a temporary ID card with the mentions regarding Moldovan citizenship and holder's domicile;
- c) foreign passport, seaman's book in case of parliamentary, presidential elections and republican referenda, at polling stations established abroad;
- d) service cards for military personnel in active service, cards issued by the Civil Service Centre for people in active civil service.



What is a List of Voters?



*Lists of Voters*⁶, prepared on the basis of the State Register of Voters, are the lists comprising the names of all citizens with the right to vote who have the domicile or residence in the radius covered by a polling station (main lists of voters).

A voter may be registered in one list of voters and with one polling station.

Supplementary List of Voters – a List of Voters prepared by the Precinct Electoral Bureau on the day of elections, comprising the names of people who have not been registered in the main Lists of Voters.

The *List for voting at the place of staying* shall be prepared by the Precinct Electoral Bureau on the basis of a written application submitted by people who due to health or other ground reasons cannot visit the polling station⁷.

Voter verification in the List of Voters

Voters shall have the opportunity to get acquainted with the Lists of Voters and verify their accuracy. Voters may ask the Precinct Electoral Bureau to correct the data comprised by a List of Voters (no earlier than 20 days prior to the day of elections and no later than on the day before the elections) by filing a written application accompanied by supporting documents. Verification may be done also on-line⁸.



What are the voting steps?



Step 1.



Present your ID card to the Operator. The latter shall verify in the State Automated Information System “Elections” (SAISE), using the Module “Voters’ Turnout” if you are assigned to the corresponding polling station and if you have not voted previously at another polling station during the same elections.

⁶ A model of the main List of Voters to be used during the election simulation exercise is included in Annex 1 to this Guide.

⁷ The Precinct Electoral Bureau shall appoint, upon the voter’s written application, two members of the bureau who shall go to the place where the voter is located, carrying with them a mobile ballot box and all the necessary materials, and let him/her vote. The written applications can be submitted no earlier than two weeks before the day of election and no later than one day before the day of election, by 18:00. Written applications may be submitted also on the day of elections by 15:00 if they are accompanied by a Medical Certificate.

⁸ <https://verifica.cec.md>

**Step 2.**

Present your ID card to a member of the Precinct Electoral Bureau.

Step 3.

Sign in the List of Voters near your last name and get a ballot paper from the member of the Precinct Electoral Bureau.

You shall be registered in an additional List of Voters:

- if your name was omitted from the main List of Voters and you prove, using your ID card, that your domicile is in the radius covered by the corresponding polling station;
- if you vote on the basis of a Certificate for the right to vote (the Certificate shall be kept by the Precinct Electoral Bureau and be attached to the supplementary list);
- if you have no registration at your domicile or residence.

Step 4.

When due to ground reasons you are not able to cast a vote independently, you have the right to invite to the booth an accompanying person selected by you who would help you vote. The accompanying person can be a member of the Precinct Electoral Bureau, an Observer or a representative of an electoral candidate.

Step 5.

Apply the stamp “Voted” within the circle of the quadrilateral where the name of electoral candidate you would like to vote for is printed. The circles of the other quadrilateral shall remain blank. Do not stay too long in the booth.

ATTENTION!

If you filled in the ballot paper erroneously, but did not insert it into the ballot box, you may ask to be issued once a new ballot paper. The erroneous ballot paper shall be cancelled, having made a mention in the special List of Voters and in the Protocol on Voting.

Step 6.

Fold the ballot paper and insert it into the ballot box⁹.

CHAPTER II



THE MOCK ELECTION EXERCISE



The mock elections concept was for the first time developed in the United States, in 1940; this is an efficient tool for informing and preparing the young generation to participate in the voting. In this way, a young person becomes aware of the importance of exercising this constitutional right and at the same time realizes the impact of non-participation in electoral events.

The mock election exercise allows participants to be positioned in different roles, so that electoral processes are analysed from different perspectives, which favours a full information and analysis of the roles of all electoral actors.

This chapter briefly describes the main stages of the mock election exercise, as well as its algorithm, providing a clear picture of the overall project framework and impact on the parties involved in the project.

Objectives of the Mock Election Exercise:

1. Develop active listening and critical thinking skills of the participants in the electoral process/who are entitled to vote;
2. Build motivation and raise awareness amongst youths to take active part in the decision-making process at the community level.

Section 1: **Stages of the Exercise**

Stage 1.

Raising awareness at the community level about the implementation of the *mock election exercise* (talking to the local youth community, i.e., young people, local youth organizations, management of educational institutions, local public administration, non-governmental organizations, community services addressed to young people) and building youth initiative groups.

Duration: 7-10 days (timing may vary from one community to another).

At this first stage of the mock election exercise implementation, ***local electoral advisers*** trained on the implementation of this methodology, have several tasks:

- To present the project to the young people and other members of the targeted community;
- To describe the approach and opportunities provided to the youth within this project;
- To encourage youth to initiate two *youth initiative groups* for the purpose of the project;
- To encourage youth to play the role of *members of the Precinct Electoral Bureau*;

- To decide together with the initiative groups, school management, local public administration, as appropriate, the day/date for the mock election exercise in their community;
- To identify together with the parties involved in the project a hall/conference room to be used for the mock election exercise (with minimum capacity of 80-100 seats);
- To inform the project team about the progress made during this stage, as well as about the date when the exercise will be organized in the community.

The role of local electoral advisers is to provide assistance and guidance to the *youth initiative groups*, as well as to the *members of the Precinct Electoral Bureau* to implement their tasks according to the project.

Note: A number of 2-3 groups shall be created in the smaller localities, and 4-6 groups in the bigger localities. Each youth initiative group shall have not more than 10 members, while the *Precinct Electoral Bureau* can have between 5 and 11 members.



Youth initiative groups – local electoral advisers need to assist both groups to identify challenges/problems faced by their community. From the list of various problems identified, advisers should guide groups to pick one problem. Based on this problem, each group needs to identify a solution to it and elaborate a campaign (similar to an electoral campaign) to promote it amongst community members. Thus, each of the group will produce and promote an *electoral message*.

Local electoral advisers shall provide support at all stages of this part of the exercise, so that at the end of this phase, each group has the following minimum:

- a team leader;
- a clear/articulate *electoral message*;
- promotional materials (posters, fliers, etc.)

The *Precinct Electoral Bureau* - this group shall be supported and guided by local electoral advisers throughout the entire process. This group is responsible for making all the necessary arrangements that an electoral bureau would do: preparing the voter lists, sending invitations to voting, arranging the polling station, organizing the voting process, as well as summing up the results of elections (vote counting and filling in electoral documents).

In order to organize the activity of the Precinct Electoral Bureau on the day of elections, members of the bureau shall meet a day before the mock election exercise to assign the roles and go over their tasks for the election day. Also, members shall set up the polling station and prepare all the materials they will need to organize the voting.



Stage 2.

Mock Election Exercise

Duration: 3 hours (timing may vary from one community to another, depending on the number of voters).

This stage prepares the ground for two basic activities: *public debates and voting*.

Youth initiative groups will conduct the public debate. The local electoral adviser announces the purpose of debates - thus, *motivating the community-youth to get involved in participatory decision-making at the local level*.

Algorithm for Public Debates

- a) *The local electoral adviser* announces the topic, key purpose, rules, and the main stages of the activity, as well as introduces the members of the two youth initiative groups to the public (3-5 min.);
- b) *A representative of the Youth Initiative Group No 1* shares the key message/electoral message (5-6 min.);
- c) *A representative of the Youth Initiative Group No 2* shares the key message/electoral message (5-6 min.);
- d) *The local electoral adviser* gives the floor to the community members/public to ask questions to representatives of the *youth initiative groups*;
- e) Supporters of the *youth initiative groups* are also given a chance to share their mini-speeches to support their favourite youth initiative group;
- f) Meantime, members of the youth initiative groups have to prepare at least one question for their opponent group (4 min.);
- g) *A representative of the Youth Initiative Group No 1* addresses a question/s to the opponent group (2-3 min.);
- h) *A representative of the Youth Initiative Group No 2* addresses a question/s to the opponent group (2-3 min.);
- i) *The local electoral adviser* provides the public with the opportunity to address questions as well. It is recommended that the public is encouraged to address questions to both groups (6 min.);
- j) *The local electoral adviser* gives the public time for short interventions, max. 30 seconds (4 min.);
- k) Final speech of the *representative of the Youth Initiative Group No 1* (2 min.);
- l) Final speech of the *representative of the Youth Initiative Group No 2* (2 min.).

Note: This is a tentative distribution of time and it may be subject to changes depending on the situation. Debates shall take not more than 60 minutes. It is important for the local electoral adviser to follow the time and to intervene when necessary.



At the end of debates, the local electoral adviser shall invite representatives of the community/public to express their position/choice by voting: which of the solutions presented by the youth initiative groups should be given priority? The local electoral adviser announces the voting procedure and members of the Precinct Electoral Bureau (3-5 persons).

The Voting Procedure

Duration: depending on the number of participants in the voting. When estimating the time to be allocated for this activity, it should be taken into account that each voter needs about 2 minutes to vote.

The voting process shall be organized in line with instructions provided by the local electoral adviser within the training session for the persons who shall fulfil the duties of the Precinct Electoral Bureau members.

The voting procedure shall consist of two steps:

1. The demonstrative part, where a few specific situations on the voting shall be presented, with comments by the moderator and with public participation.
2. All voters-members of the community express their right to vote.

Data Processing and Announcing Results

Duration: approximately 30 minutes.

Members of the Precinct Electoral Bureau shall count the votes following the steps preliminarily announced by the local electoral adviser.

The chairperson of the electoral bureau shall announce the results of the voting.

The local electoral adviser draws conclusions following the mock election exercise, highlighting the two major achievements: *involvement of the youth in the identification of community's problems and solutions to them and participation of young people in the voting.*



Section 2: Mock Election Algorithm

Activity I.

A Prosperous Community

Objectives:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- a) identify the main problems in their community;
- b) classify the identified problems according to some criteria, i.e. economic, social, behaviour, etc.;
- c) get actively involved in identifying solutions to these problems through the activity of the *youth initiative groups*.

Local electoral advisers shall present the project, as well as the main aspects of the Mock Elections exercise during meetings with young people, teachers, parents, local public administration, non-governmental organizations, community services for the youth, etc. They shall make sure that the main objectives, activities, desired impact and opportunities provided by this exercise are clearly presented to everyone. This exercise may be hosted by the school, mayoralty, house of culture, youth centre, etc.

Identification of problems and setting up the youth initiative groups

Young people, local public administration, non-governmental organisations, community services for the youth and other interested stakeholders shall be invited to a joint meeting.

Step 1.



Local electoral adviser shall present:

- The main objectives of this exercise;
- Expected results;
- Importance and role of the youth initiative groups in solving community problems.

Step 2.



Identification and formulation of the community problems

The main focus of this step is the correct and clear formulation of the community based problems.

Usually, young people tend to formulate problems too general or they identify too complex problems, for which solutions cannot be applied

by the community members (not related to their competence). For instance, the issues of migration, low salaries, are often identified by the young people, but they require interventions at the level of policies, legal framework and others, which young people from the community cannot change on their own.

Suggestions for local electoral advisers: Ask young people to do a free writing activity by continuing the following sentence: *“I love my native village/town because...”* Ask them to work in pairs. If time allows, ideas from each pair can be shared in the whole group.

The local electoral adviser shall then ask participants to think about the kind of problems their community has. All ideas shall be noted down on a flipchart paper.

Each participant shall then come to the board/flipchart and mark the three problems that he/she would like to be solved in the community. The local electoral adviser shall make a summary by counting the number of marks per each problem. The three problems with the most of the votes shall be announced.

Step 3.



After the main three problems have been identified by the participants, they can proceed to describing and analysing several solutions for them. They shall do this by providing specific examples, suggestions and recommendations.

The following questions can be used to facilitate discussions on the main problems identified:

1. What is the top-priority problem?
2. Why has this problem not been solved yet?
3. What kind of resources, i.e. financial or/and human, are needed to solve this problem?
4. Which of the presented ideas/solutions may contribute to solving this problem?
5. What kind of risks may appear while solving it?
6. What actions can be taken to avoid or minimize the risks?
7. What changes might occur at the community level once the problem is solved?

Suggestions for local electoral advisers: The adviser writes the three selected problems on the board/poster. Each person signs up for the problem he/she would like to identify solutions for.



The maximum number of participants who may sign up for a problem is seven. If there are more than 21 participants interested to take part in this activity, the local electoral adviser shall form three equal teams.

The local electoral adviser shall bring into discussion the main activities to be implemented/organized as part of this project and shall provide a brief explanation on the main responsibilities of participants involved.

Keeping up a high level of motivation amongst members of the youth initiative groups, as well as monitoring their activity. The local electoral adviser shall monitor the activity of the created groups. Several meetings might have to be conducted until the work of the groups starts going smoothly (at least 2-3 meetings a week, lasting for at least one hour each). The readiness of the students to do this kind of work may vary from one community to another. Some groups need much more support than others. Other groups need external assistance at various stages starting with the division of roles and responsibilities and ending with the formulation of the *electoral message*.

Attention! Youth initiative groups representatives should be informed about the fact that they are not competitors, but rather supporters of some community-based solutions. They have to also be aware of the fact that community members will vote not for the groups, but rather for the solutions proposed by the groups. The choice is determined by the way the community sees the solutions and the need for their implementation.



At the end of this activity, a **question and answer session** should be carried out to clarify all issues related to the tasks to be implemented by the members of the initiative groups.

Activity II.

How to Mobilize the Community (Young People) to Participate in Solving Local problems? Mock Election Exercise. Youth Initiative Groups Propose Solutions.

Objectives:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- a) Promote their solutions to the problems identified following electoral campaign strategies;
- b) Address/convince groups of supporters by bringing arguments in favour of identified solutions.

Step 1.

At this stage, the local electoral adviser shall explain to both groups the main steps of an electoral campaign conducted within this project.

An electoral campaign includes two stages:

- **Organizational stage**, when the initiative group is established, main objectives are clarified, problems and solutions to them are identified, and image and key message developing strategies are applied;
- **Promotional stage**, when both initiative groups apply their strategies for reaching out the community members to disseminate/share their electoral message.

Step 2.

Each initiative group presents a series of solutions that can be applied to address the community-based problems identified earlier. Members of both groups shall select the most relevant solutions and identify arguments, statistics and examples to justify them. Also, the initiative groups shall formulate their *electoral messages*.

Step 3.

Youth initiative groups shall determine the most efficient ways to communicate with their supporters vs. potential voters in the community. Participants can draw up a list of persons in the community they would like to address to.

Step 4.

Members of the initiative groups shall analyse carefully the main problems and solutions identified, arguments in their favour, profile of potential supporters vs. voters. The *electoral message* shall be structured in the form of a text (1-2 pages) and include a summary of all arguments identified by the team. Based on these, each initiative group shall draw up promotional materials.






Step 5.

Each *youth initiative group* shall choose a name that could be related to the solutions proposed by the group, so that the community members can easily associate the *electoral message* with the *group* and vice versa. The name and logo of a group shall be its distinctive elements.

Attention!

It is important to note that both groups should use colours and images in combinations that would avoid any possible association of a group with the symbols of political parties registered in Moldova according to the legislation in effect.



- Step 6.**  Once the *electoral message* and image-building elements of each youth initiative group have been clarified, groups can work on identifying the ways to reach out each *potential voter* in their community. In this regard, groups shall apply at least two strategies:
- Public speech
 - Electoral posters
 - On-line resources (social media)
- Step 7.**  At this stage, each youth initiative group shall draft a public speech. These public speeches shall be delivered within the mock election exercise in the community. Public speeches are the key instruments for promoting the messages of each group within the mock election exercise. Therefore, the main elements of a speech, i.e., the name and logo of the group, as well as a minimum text conveying the group's main idea, shall be included in the poster of each group.
- Step 8.**  This is the stage when the message is promoted in the community, and the youth initiative groups “recruit” their supporters and opponents. The campaign itself should be a positive one, in a way that the youth initiative groups do not attack/criticize each other in front of the community members.
- Step 9.**  At this stage, meetings with potential voters of each *youth initiative group* are organized. Each group shall present its message. Various promotion techniques can be applied in this regard: flash-mobs, “door-to-door” campaigns, posters/stickers (in authorized places), etc. Each of the two groups should have members responsible for the communication with the community, so that they can guarantee a sufficient number of voters participating in the mock election exercise in their community.
- Step 10.**  At this stage, 2-4 members from each youth initiative group have to prepare for the electoral message promotion stage within public debates (mock elections exercise).

Attention should be paid to the way in which speeches are understood by the people from outside the initiative groups. It is important to preliminarily test the message to see the degree to which it is clear and understandable.

Additionally, each initiative group has to draw up a list of possible questions for the “opponent” group. Also, each group may draw up a list of possible answers. One of the recommendations for this stage is to use audio and visual materials to make presentations more interesting and catchy for the public.

In addition to the above, each youth initiative group has to identify in advance their colleagues, friends from the community (supporters) to address a number of questions to the opponent group. These questions have to be first formulated by the groups, and then shared with the persons interested in addressing them. At the same time, it is important that each group identifies 1-2 opponents/supporters and makes a preliminary agreement with them: when the audience is invited to share a supporting message for its favourite group, these people will have to stand up and share in public their messages.

At the end of this activity, a question and answer session shall be organized to give participants the opportunity to clarify all the issues before moving forward to the mock election exercise.

Activity III.

Conducting the Mock Election Exercise

This stage includes two main activities: *public debates and voting*.

Objectives:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- a) Organize public debates sessions following the set algorithm;
- b) Simulate an election day according to the established requirements.

Preparation for the Public Debate

Once each group has identified its problem and solution, they start preparations for the public debate. These preparations are similar to a well-structured project with six key components.

Stage 1.

Identification and formulation of the problem



A correctly formulated problem will clearly describe the *gap between the expected results and the real situation*. If the expected results are clear, the problem will be identified much easier.

Often participants are not fully aware of the importance of this stage and this leads to wrong decision-making.

When referring to community-based problems, it should be clear that they represent *the difficult situation of a certain social group in the community, or of the entire community, and they require a solution*.



Members of the youth initiative groups should allocate sufficient time for the collection of relevant/correct information concerning the identified problem. They can collect statistics, photos, press articles, audio and video materials that may serve as arguments in favour of the identified solution.

Having collected this information, each group shall check if the initial formulation of the problem still corresponds to the reality. Later, they shall be able to determine the causes of the problem, which shall help them identify the most appropriate solution.

The first stage may last maximum 7-10 days, during which the following activities shall take place:

- Organise a meeting to identify the problem/s;
- Collect relevant vs. supporting information/evidence;
- Organize a meeting to present collected data and reformulate the problem, if needed.

Stage 2.

Identification of possible solutions



A *brainstorming* activity shall be organized at this stage, where participants can share their ideas about how to solve the problem. After compiling a list of possible solutions, participants shall then work on a more detailed description of these.

Both youth initiative groups will have to present not only **what** they are going to change in the community, but also to identify **who** can be involved in the implementation of this change, **how** will the change be made, and **what resources** are needed to make the change.

To describe the situation, participants need additional information: to analyse how similar problems have been solved in other communities, to identify resources and competences available in the community, to estimate implementation costs, etc.

The second stage may last one week. The following activities are recommended for this period:

- Organize a meeting to identify solution/s;
- Collect relevant vs. supporting information/evidence;
- Organize a meeting to present the collected data;
- Outline a solution implementation plan.

Stage 3.*Editing the text of the presentation*

All the collected information should be structured and framed into a maximum 6-minute speech. To have a comprehensive and persuasive speech, it is important to go through a checklist of helping questions (see the table included in *Public Debate Section*). If needed, the content of the speech should be revised.

Encourage participants to be creative, to incorporate these aspects into the speech and make sure it has maximum impact on the community/audience.

Stage 4.*Distribution of responsibilities amongst members of the youth initiative groups within the public debate*

At this stage, it is important to remind participants the main objectives of the *mock election exercise*. They need to understand that their task is to first of all focus on challenging the community members to discussions and, secondly, to promote their solution.

Youth initiative groups have to hold a joint meeting to share their speeches prepared for the public debate.

Members of both groups have to be aware of the kind of speeches and messages they are going to share with the audience within the mock election exercise. Therefore, both groups have to come to a common agreement regarding the way they are going to communicate their message to the public. Hence, several scenarios can be applied:

Situation 1. Both groups present *different problems*, and therefore, different solutions. Both groups have to provide clear arguments and reasons for the identified problems. Debates and questions shall definitively help the public to make a clear picture on the issues being presented and debated. The second group, while the first presents, has to challenge in a way or another the case discussed by the first group.

Situation 2. Both groups may come up with *the same problem*, but each of them has a different solution. Groups shall demonstrate a clear understanding of the situation/problem, and come up with arguments to support their approach, explaining why it is more efficient, i.e., simpler, cheaper, faster, with more positive effects, etc. Debates and questions shall help the public understand the efficiency of proposed solutions.

We recommend that during the preparation, local electoral advisers and participants establish together which of the two strategies shall be applied at the mock election exercise.



Stage 4 may take 1-3 meetings.

Youth Initiative Groups' Readiness Indexes:

- Groups have well-developed projects/speeches;
- Groups have sufficient proofs to support their project ideas;
- Groups are well-trained for debates (consider the importance of the problem, or, in case this is a common problem, they are capable to analyse the efficiency of the solution);
- Groups are aware about engaging the public in discussions on solutions to the identified problems.

Public Debates

In this phase, it is important to allow each group to demonstrate that their project is the most efficient and the solution proposed by them is the most efficient for the community as opposed to the solution of the other group.

Basic principles:

- Both groups have equal time allocated for the speech (no one has the right to dominate/monopolize the discussion);
- Both groups should be ready to speak on the spot and not rely only on the speeches prepared beforehand;
- The public shall be encouraged to ask questions and give arguments against the proposed solutions.

Participants and their responsibilities:

Youth initiative groups (2-4 members of each group) – shall present, according to a commonly agreed template, the problem and the solution; they will have to formulate questions to the opponent group; answer questions addressed by the public, the opponent group and the local electoral adviser.

The local electoral adviser gives the floor to participants, collects questions, oversees the rules and keeps the public interested in discussions.

The time-keeper ensures the equal time distribution for each group and uses cards to indicate the time left.

The public addresses questions to the two groups, expresses its opinions in the favour and/or against specific positions.

In the public debates, the youth initiative groups have to invite community members who are directly affected by the problem, community members who can contribute to solving the problem, community members who can make decisions on the implementation of the proposed solution/s.

Minimum resources required. Chairs and two tables - for the youth initiative groups to sit in front of the public; cards with numbers (showing the minutes left); a bell or a gong to signal the start and the end of speeches - to be used by the time-keeper; three supports/files; a timer (watch), flipchart and markers.

Hall/room setting. Tables and chairs for the youth initiative groups shall be placed in front of the public, and the local electoral adviser shall stand in the centre. During debates, the time-keeper shall sit in the first row opposite to the youth initiative groups line, so that the local electoral adviser and the two groups members can follow his/her signs.

The algorithm for the debate:

- a) *The local electoral adviser* announces the topic, key purpose, rules, and the main stages of the activity, as well as introduces the members of the two youth initiative groups to the public (3-5 min.);
- b) *A representative of the Youth Initiative Group No 1* shares the key message/electoral message (5-6 min.);
- c) *A representative of the Youth Initiative Group No 2* shares the key message/electoral message (5-6 min.);
- d) *The local electoral adviser* gives the floor to the community members/public to address questions to representatives of the *youth initiative groups*;
- e) Supporters of the *youth initiative groups* are also given a chance to share their mini-speeches to support their favourite youth initiative group;
- f) Meantime, members of the youth initiative groups have to prepare at least one question for their opponent group (4 min.);
- g) *A representative of the Youth Initiative Group No 1* addresses the question/s to the opponent group (2-3 min.);
- h) *A representative of the Youth Initiative Group No 2* addresses the question/s to the opponent group (2-3 min.);
- i) *The local electoral adviser* gives the floor to the public to also ask questions. It is recommended to encourage the public to address questions to both groups (6 min.);
- j) *The local electoral adviser* gives the *public* time for short interventions, max. 30 seconds (4 min.);
- k) Final speech of the *Youth Initiative Group No 1 representative* (2 min.);
- l) Final speech of the *Youth Initiative Group No 2 representative* (2 min.).

Note: This is a tentative distribution of time and it may vary depending on the situation. Debates shall not take longer than 60 minutes.





Suggestions for the youth initiative groups:

Listen carefully to the presentations of the opponent group. Note down ideas promoted by the other group and identify the weak points in their proposal/presentation. Here are a few tips:

- The proposed solution does not seem to eliminate the root of the problem, and therefore, the situation might remain unchanged;
- Community members in charge with this problem do not have the necessary competences to carry out the proposed task;
- Resources listed in the proposal are not sufficient to make this solution a real one for the community;
- Simpler and cheaper solutions are available.

At the end debates, the local electoral adviser invites representatives of the community/public to express their position/choice by voting: which of the solutions presented by the youth initiative groups should be given priority? The local electoral adviser announces the voting procedure and the members of the Precinct Electoral Bureau.

The Voting Procedure

Objectives:

- Develop active listening and critical thinking skills of participants in the electoral process/of those entitled to vote;
- Build motivation and raise awareness amongst citizens to take active part in the decision-making process at the community level.

Activity of the Precinct Electoral Bureau. Preparations for the Election Day

Information Session

The local electoral adviser shall organize an information session for those who will interpret the following roles of Precinct Electoral Bureau members:

- ✓ **Chairperson** (1 person) is in charge with the voting within the polling station and intervenes to solve difficult situations.
- ✓ **Deputy chairperson** (1 person) – in charge with the monitoring of the ballot box.
- ✓ **Secretary** (1 person) - in charge with filling in supplementary voter lists and the register of observers.
- ✓ **Operator** (2 persons) checks the ID cards of voters and finds them in the system of registration (database) of voters; returns the ID cards to voters and directs them to the electoral bureau member. Attention: Operators are not members of the electoral bureau and do not take part in the vote counting.
- ✓ **Member** (4 persons) checks the ID cards of voters, asks them to sign in the voter list, issues the ballot papers and returns the ID cards to voters.

Additionally, persons for the following roles shall be identified:

- ✓ Observer¹⁰ (1 person) – shall come into the polling station, find the chairperson and show his/her certificate of observer.

The chairperson shall direct the observer to the secretary to be registered in the register of observers.

The observer shall stay in the space organized for observers, from which he/she can observe the voting, without hindering the movement of voters.

- ✓ Media representative¹¹ (1 person) – shall come into the polling station and without talking to the chairperson and ask for his/her approval, shall start interviewing a voter.

The chairperson shall approach the reporter and ask him/her to conduct interviews with voters out of the polling station.

The reporter shall fight back, but in the end, he/she shall comply with the request.

- ✓ Voters (minimum 4 persons);

- A voter with visual impairments - shall ask a bureau member to accompany him/her in the polling booth and help him/her read the content of the ballot paper.

The chairperson shall explain that the bureau member cannot accompany him/her in the polling booth and shall suggest to make use of the magnifying glass available in the booth, or ask for the help of another person.

The voter shall ask another person to help him/her.

- A voter who marked incorrectly the ballot paper - shall ask for another ballot paper, as he/she marked incorrectly the originally issued one.

The bureau member shall ask the voter to return the incorrectly marked ballot paper in order to cancel it, then he/she shall issue another ballot paper.

- A voter who cannot find him/herself on the electoral list, although he/she is domiciled in the respective community - shall submit his/her ID to the operator to be checked.

The operator shall not find this voter in the system (assigned to this polling station), but when looking in his/her ID accompanying slip, he/she shall find out that this voter is resident on the territory of the polling station, therefore, he/she shall direct the voter to the secretary to be included in the supplementary list.

10 <http://www.cec.md/index.php?pag=news&id=1012&rid=18075&l=ro>

11 <http://www.cec.md/index.php?pag=news&id=1012&rid=16616&l=ro>



- A voter without ID card – shall approach the operator and explain that he/she forgot the ID card at home, but can show his/her driving licence instead, and his/her identity can also be confirmed by the electoral bureau secretary, who is his/her co-worker.

The operator shall explain that the driving licence is not a document based on which voting is allowed and shall recommend the voter to return with the ID card to exercises his/her right to vote.

Note for the local electoral adviser: The mock exercise shall be supplemented with other roles as well, depending on the general profile of participants, specific for each locality.



Presinct Electoral Bureau (PEB) activities until the day before elections

Following the information session of the electoral bureau members, they shall start implementing the assigned tasks. First of all, members shall convene in a meeting (preferably in the following two days after the information session) to establish the management bodies (this will ease the distribution of tasks) and to draft an activity plan for the election day. The activity plan must contain the following activities (the adviser shall further detail them within the information session and, as necessary, may attend this first meeting of the PEB):

- Draw up voter lists to include the information about the persons who are going to participate in elections, based on the template available in Annex No 1);
- Develop voter invitation cards (where appropriate), following the template in Annex No 2;
- Develop announcements (posters, billboards to ensure the presence of the community members to the mock election exercise), indicating the day of elections and the working hours of the polling station. A similar poster shall also be placed at the entrance to the polling station (within the premises the voting will take place);
- Develop information materials: posters with the steps on how to vote/steps on the counting of votes, which shall be placed in the hall where the voting will take place;
- Prepare the ballot papers, badges and table name cards, based on the templates in Annexes 3-6.

PEB activity on the day before elections

A day before the elections, the PEB members shall meet to discuss the last details about the preparation of the polling station for the election day. Up to this moment, all materials should be ready (voter lists, ballot papers, badges, name cards).

The PEB members shall set out the polling station (booths, ballot boxes, tables, chairs). For purposes of maintaining order at the polling station and avoiding a crowd of voters, the Precinct Electoral Bureau shall establish a path for the movement of voters, beginning with the entry to the tables where the ballots are handed out, then to the secret voting booths, and on to the ballot boxes. The boxes must be placed in such a way as when approaching them, the voters first shall enter the voting booths. Members of the electoral bureau shall go over their tasks for the election day. They shall distribute in advance the voter lists amongst them.

Computer operators, as well as other persons who have been assigned roles for the election day, shall also be invited to this meeting.

Voting

The local electoral adviser shall announce the end of debates, thank the initiative groups for their effort and announce the community members they have to express their vote for one of the initiative groups participating in the “election race.” The adviser shall mention that the voting procedure takes place according to a simplified algorithm, adjusted to the situation.

Voting shall follow the steps bellow (the local electoral adviser refers also to the poster available in the polling station, illustrating these steps):

Step 1.

The voter presents his/her ID card to the operator (according to the template in Annex No 6, preliminarily prepared by the electoral bureau member), to check his/her presence in the voter list.

Step 2.

The voter presents his/her ID card and signs in the voter list.

Step 3.

The bureau member issues the ballot paper to the voter.



Step 4.



The voter enters into the booth, applies the stamp “VOTED” within the circle near one of the names of the initiative groups.

Step 5.



The voter folds the ballot paper and inserts it into the ballot box.

Inform the public about the following: before proceeding directly to the voting procedure, a few special situations shall be considered. The local electoral adviser shall ask the public to suggest with various solutions to these situations, and in the end, shall present the correct solution.

Totalising the Elections. The Results of the Mock Election Exercise

Upon completion of voting the chairperson of the Precinct Electoral Bureau shall announce about voting closure and launch the procedure of counting of votes.

The votes shall be counted according to the following steps:

Step 1.



arrange the place to count the votes: a sufficient number of tables shall be put together so that all members of the Precinct Electoral Bureau could participate in counting of votes.

Step 2.



count the voters who were issued ballot papers and determine the number of voters included in the main list of voters and in the supplementary list of voters.

Step 3.



count the number of ballot papers from the ballot box.

Step 4.



count the number of valid ballot papers:

- arrange the plates with the name of those two initiative groups on the table;
- a member of the Precinct Electoral Bureau shall raise the paper ballot and show it to the members of the Precinct Electoral Bureau, scrutinise it and, if it is valid, announce for which candidate the vote has been cast;
- the ballot paper announced shall be placed near the plate with the name of the initiative group for which the vote has been validly cast;
- if the ballot paper is considered null, it shall be placed in the pile of null ballot papers;
- when all the ballot papers have been scrutinised, the ballot papers are separated and counted as per the agreed option;
- the number of validly cast ballot papers for each voting option shall be announced by the chairperson of the Precinct Electoral Bureau.

**Step 5.**

The chairperson of the Precinct Electoral Bureau shall announce the results of vote counting to all people present in the room.

The voting shall be followed by a short speech by the local electoral adviser. He/she shall hold the final speech, encouraging and thanking everyone who took part in this event.

Here is an example of a speech:

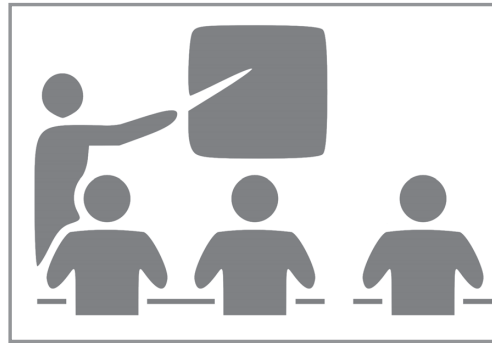
“Dear members of the community! Today, with all you here, taking part in the Mock Election Exercise, you have proven the important role the community plays in the solution of problems it faces. The youth groups have selected, analysed and presented solutions for two important problems in the community. By your common decision expressed through vote, you have given priority to the problem identified by “...”. This does not minimize the importance of the second problem, but it sets different terms for their solving. If your community has resources to address both problems in parallel, we will congratulate you and wish you good luck and mobilization of your resources. You have a great potential, and you should use it.

I congratulate you with your participation in the voting, which is a way for each of you to express civic position and a direct way you can participate and influence the decision-making process. I encourage you to be active, informed and mindful voters.”

Note for local electoral advisers: In your speech, avoid addressing direct appreciation and making references to persons with management positions, decision-making factors in your locality.



CHAPTER III



ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN



Section 1:

Electoral Programme

The electoral programme is a set of objectives and principles promoted by an electoral candidate in order to obtain voters' support.

The electoral programme can represent a list of steps to be fulfilled or objectives to be achieved if the given candidate wins the elections.

The electoral programme is promoted by the candidate in elections via a series of communication tools with the electorate: public debates, meetings with the electorate, speeches within various events, etc.

Section 2:

Symbols and Image Elements in an Electoral Campaign

The image of an electoral product comprises a set of symbols that, separately and all together, create certain positive associations for the voter.

According to one of the typologies, the following types of symbols exist:

- *symbols-ideas*;
- *symbols-actions (rituals)*;
- *symbols-objects*;
- *symbols-sounds*;
- *symbols-persons*.

Symbols-ideas are represented by programmes, messages, statements, slogans, mottos, leaders' remarks and neologisms. Actually, an idea or a word is transformed into a symbol if mythologized as form and content. For instance, the words-ideas "feminism," "feminist" became a symbol, because they promoted the myth of a "woman in power," "emancipated woman," "dominant woman."

Symbols-actions (rituals) are represented by meetings, manifestations, congresses, parades, presentations, sports events with the participation of political stakeholders, and other mass actions. The symbol-actions serve to mobilize and strengthen the electorate. The electoral actions with impact create a favourable psychological environment for massive enthusiasm and mobilization of people. Within these political rituals, people may show strong emotional reactions - joy, fear, hate, sadness - that make them prone to be influenced by the electoral candidate. Rituals create the impression of the "achievement" of some electoral promises, they "give life" to statements and slogans. At the same time, the ritualized political actions allow the identification of the members with the leader or the team, allow preserving the hierarchy within the group, party, state.

Symbols-objects - these are represented by heraldic, flags, initials, buildings, streets, monuments, etc. Their role is to identify with the events or electoral candidates. The imperial crown has always been an efficient symbol-object. The sword has been the symbol of power. The Statue of Freedom has become the symbol of American democracy, etc.

Symbol-sounds are represented by the anthem, fanfare, music slogan (jingle), patriotic songs, etc. Every people has its own songs that have become symbols of specific events and periods. The same as the state, parties tend to develop their own anthems, by which to mobilize their members.

Symbols-persons are represented by great leaders who have impressed the masses. Each state has a leader-symbol, its founder or hero of the nation (for instance, The Founding Fathers of the United Nations, Washington and Jefferson, are the symbol-persons of the American nation). With the globalization process, the symbol-persons are the personalities enjoying international popularity, regardless of the areas they come from.

The **Slogan** and the **Initials** are the main image elements in an electoral campaign.

The Slogan

Gabriel Thoveron, one of the famous researchers of political communication, highly appreciated the importance of statements-slogans in electoral campaigns. In his work *“Political Communication Today,”* the author emphasizes that “the slogan, representing the concise form of a platform, or an electoral programme, if repeated and especially, utilized with a certain dexterity, can do more than a doctrine.”

It is known that the number of people who read a Slogan is much higher than those who read the Electoral Message. Hence, we note the importance, sometimes decisive, a slogan may have in political communication.

Specialists in political communication assimilate the Slogan to a refrain of the electoral campaign. It must be original, easy to remember, musical and rhythmic and, especially, say something to remember. The slogan shall be out of the ordinary, in order to be perceived, to make the public pleased to repeat and memorize it.



The Logo

The Logo is one of the basic elements of the political image. Often, a well-chosen and designed logo can essentially contribute to increasing the number of voters. A logo must follow several requirements:

1. consists of as few elements as possible (no more than 2-3 elements);
2. is drawn easily and rapidly;
3. represents an object, an idea, a symbol accessible to the public (if the public is asking “what is this?”, it means the logo is not good);
4. represents an object/idea/symbol known to the public, that can be seen every day/frequently, thus creating permanent associations with the candidate;
5. represents an object/symbol with positive connotations, and it cannot be interpreted negatively or ridiculed;
6. is coherent with the idea, the message of the party/candidate;
7. is easily visible in miniatures, on the ballot paper (where, actually, the logo plays a decisive role);
8. the image of the logo is preserved in the black and white version;
9. has a design and colours that catch one’s attention;
10. is original, distinct from the logos of the other candidates.

Once designed, the logo shall go in pair with any electoral message, any material addressed to the media, presentation or manifestation of the candidate. A logo that is not promoted does not exist.

Section 3:

Political Message - Promotion Instruments and Strategies

An electoral campaign means organization and communication, and its main efforts are focused on developing an efficient electoral message and promoting it as actively as possible among voters.

Actually, to win, all campaigns shall repeatedly convey a convincing message, addressed to a sufficient number of well-determined voters. This is the “golden rule” of politics.

The process of conceiving a message comprises three stages:

1. The first stage of developing a message is marked by getting to know the public and the situation;
2. The second stage is about formulating the Message;
3. The third stage is about selecting ways of promoting it to the public.

1. Getting to know the public and the situation

As a rule, the electoral message is developed according to the specific situation in the region, but also to the specificity and expectations of the local public. Thus, at the first stage, the population groups in the region shall be studied, in order to identify their expectations and to select the voters who could be more sensible to the electoral offer of a candidate.

Identification of the target voters is required for two reasons:

- First of all, valuable resources of the campaign - time, money and activists - will be preserved.
- Secondly, a convincing message targeting namely these voters will be developed.

The fundamental conclusion in the preparation stage for the Message development is that the given message needs to reflect through its content, in the most direct way, the real situation in the region, specific problems encountered by people and their preferences of a psychological, social-economic and political nature.

A message perfectly fitting public's expectation has the best chance to be appreciated and voted in the elections.

2. Formulating a message

The electoral message is the "business card" of a party or candidate. The message informs the public about the ideas promoted by a candidate, solutions proposed by him/her and undertaken promises and commitments.

Specific ideas and topics are discussed within an electoral campaign. A topic is a specific problem that needs to be solved and the proposed solutions, while the Message is the way in which the public is informed about the totality of topics addressed in the electoral campaign. Hence, topics addressed in the Message represent the vocabulary of politics.

Selecting campaign topics is the most difficult decision in political marketing. An electoral message cannot contain several topics, as they will lose their value. Up to 4-5 electoral topics is the maximum a candidate should have. This explains the high requirement regarding these campaign topics.

To develop and formulate a Message, topics shall be selected based on the following criteria:

- **To be topical** (on the agenda);
- **To be a crucial concern** (relevant for the public, taking into account their specific issues);
- **To represent the opinion of a growing majority, or at least a stationary majority** (a consistent category of the electorate supports it);



- **To be distinct** (in contrast with what the other candidates support);
- **To be positively associated with the one who promotes it** (there is confidence in the capacity of the candidate to solve the tackled issue).

People will vote for the candidate who seems to have the best understanding of their concerns and who is the most qualified to solve them, and the winner will be the candidate with the best campaign topic, who remains the most consistent with it and explains it as clearly as possible.

The Message shall focus on the Basic Human Values:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| • Health | • Property |
| • Financial Security | • Social Security |
| • Order | • Ecology |
| • Family | • Fair Justice |
| • Better Jobs | • Human Rights |
| • Food | • Tolerance |
| • Education | |

Also, an Electoral Message should be:

- Clear, Concise, Coherent, Convincing and Credible (**the 5C Principle**)
- Logically structured and appealing
- Addressed to relevant groups of public
- Repeated over and over

Another recipe for the formulation of the Message is based on the following **AIDA Principle**:

A. Attention. Develop a beginning to catch the public’s attention, to make them listen to you;

I. Interest. Present the subject in such a way as to raise the public interest; treat a problem that has a direct impact on them and is relevant for the situation, concerns and problems of people;

D. Desire. Bring convincing arguments and examples by which you will excite the public, make it enthusiastic and determine it to want a change, an action, an involvement;

A. Action. Motivate the public for an Action. Finalize by formulating a concrete action plan or by a mobilizing appeal.

The famous French political consultant, Jacques Séguéla, claims that we all live in a society of meaning, imposing the observance of the 3S when formulating an Electoral Message:

- **Simplicity**, which says that a Message must be direct, appropriate and clear;

- *Spectacle*, because people always needs extravagance, beauty, emotions, all that a spectacle can give them; hence, a Message must have an attractive form;
- *Substance* on the content, value, efficient satisfaction of some needs, expectations and ideals; to convince, a Message needs to be full of substance.

This rule must be effectively observed and followed in an electoral campaign.

Ways of Advocating the Message

An electoral message has no value until it is made public. The electoral message starts working indeed and brings votes as soon as it was advocated amongst voters. Respectively, all campaigns shall use a significant part of resources for message advocating activities.

An efficient message shall reach to a maximum number of people or entities from the targeted public, shall have a meaning similar to the one the candidate is going to say, shall cover a timeframe as short as possible with minimum costs.

In the process of advocating the message, the main idea behind it is to focus on campaign topics and promote them. Voters can remember the message if they hear it several times in different formats and from different sources. The campaign message shall penetrate the voters' information filter. Therefore, it is important to identify from the very beginning the main information means to be used for the target electorate from the corresponding region.

Preferably, the message shall be communicated, as it was mentioned above, in a clear and concise format, but pretty frequently. A voter shall not make effort to understand what he/she is being said. Also, voters are impatient to listen to a long and detailed message. If we fail to communicate efficiently the message to voters in few minutes, we risk losing his/her attention and vote.

The following forms of contacts with the voters and promotion of the message and candidate may be used:

- keep permanent contact with own supporters;
- direct contact with the electorate: door-to-door;
- public speeches;
- distribution of informative materials;
- sending letters by categories (teachers, retired persons, young people);
- distribution of leaflets with efficient solutions for specific problems in the district/commune/village;
- entertainment actions (football match, concert);



- request of support from influential persons and opinion leaders from the region or from the capital (teachers, priests, artists, scientists, entrepreneurs, MPs and political leaders);
- request of support from influential persons and opinion leaders from the region or from the capital (associations, sports clubs, NGOs, etc.);
- discussions over coffee, at the bus station, at a village or district event, etc.;
- special events as an opportunity to promote the candidate and the message (e.g., Christmas, New Year, 1st of March, 8th of March, Easter, 1st of May, 1st of June, etc.)
- with the help of relatives, neighbours and friends;
- mass media (print, radio, TV);
- webpage, profiles on social networks: these communication tools started being frequently used over the recent period, when the number of Internet users increased significantly. These tools make communication possible with a large number of people, regardless of their location (especially, the Diaspora). Hence, candidates can share their electoral programme, disseminate announcements on the organization of various electoral events, or they can organize on-line conferences, live transmissions from events, etc.
- other activities, depending on the general profile of participants.

Public Speaking

When talking about the electoral framework, public speaking is one of the core means of persuasion. In general, any person who embarks on advocating an electoral message shall have appropriate oratorical skills. Also, this person shall know how to hold a public discourse.

The discourse effect is that due to direct contact with the voters, the latter may have the feeling that you are “one of them”, you are “their elected person”, you deal with their issues and interests, and you are among them.

Models to Structure the Speech

There are no recipes or magic formula to teach us how to structure a speech. Any speech has its specific way and it depends on the objectives it has. That is why, the approach and projection models are different. Still, there are several schemes that may be applied depending on the topics you treat and the public’s requests.

Model I



- Presentation of facts.
- Formulation of conclusions based on those facts.
- Calling to action.

Model II

- Presentation of a negative situation.
- Presentation of solutions to neutralize that evil.
- Calling upon cooperation to neutralize the evil.

Model III

- Drawing the attention on the circumstances.
- Presentation of the idea and solutions.
- Presentation of the arguments to support the promoted idea.
- Gaining the confidence (by examples, arguments and dialogue).
- Motivate people to follow you in achieving this idea.

Model IV

- Presentation of bad news.
- Presentation of good, alternative news; description of another situation in a positive way.

Model of an Electoral Speech (in six steps)**Step 1.**

Set contact with the audience, show them that “you are one of them,” of the same origin, you know their problems, you share the same concerns, and you have the same purpose.

Step 2.

Present the real situation of the community, describe the latest social-economic changes, problems and their negative effects.

Step 3.

Provide arguments for your message, present tangible figures and facts, bring two-three relevant examples. Bring examples from the community, with real people and concrete stories.

**Step 4.**

Point out the cause of these problems, explain why it is so hard to solve them, who and what hinders their efficient solution.

Step 5.

Offer solutions to overcome the described problems and show the audience that your solutions are realistic and you are able to stand against the situation. Refer to problems that had been solved due to your efforts or the efforts of your team/party. Endorse the obligation to keep your promises.

Step 6.

Describe a better future, develop a vision by which you will show the perspectives. Mention this is a common desire and only together you will be able to reach this goal. Call upon people's help, motivate them to go to vote and support you.

It was noted that speeches providing motivation and instructions in parallel with ideas are the most efficient ones. That is why, any electoral speech will indicate a voter what to do: on the election day, to find the candidate's logo and apply affix the "Voted" stamp on it.

Section 4:**Public Debates**

Public debates play a particularly important role in the process of democratic elections. The first best-known debates took place in the United States in 1858. Two candidates running for the office of senator for Illinois, Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln, debated about the role of slavery for the development of the US. Starting that year, public debates became a norm in the US electoral campaign. The important role of debates was illustrated extremely well by the dispute between Kennedy and Nixon in 1960.

As for the debates in the pre-university environment in Moldova, we note that this programme was initiated in 1994, by the National League of Preuniversity Debates, and this academic activity was taken over starting with 1998. Since 2002, an optional course on debates in the format Karl Popper, Policy (schools, high schools) and parliamentary (universities) is delivered in educational institutions.

The algorithm of debates suggested below aims at structuring the discussion between candidates and developing pro-active behaviour of the audience.

Basic principles:

1. Candidates have equal time allocated for the speech (no one has the right to dominate the discussion);
2. Candidates should be ready to speak on the spot, not relying only on the speeches prepared beforehand;
3. The audience shall be encouraged to formulate questions and give arguments.

Participants and their Responsibilities:

Electoral candidates (1 or 2 representatives of each group/party) - present the programme, according to an agreed model, address questions to opponents, answer questions from the public, opponents and moderator;

Local electoral adviser gives the floor to participants, collects questions, supervises the observance of principles, and keeps the public attention and interest;

Time-keeper makes sure equal time is given to each candidate and uses cards, a bell or a gong to inform about the used time;

The audience addresses questions to electoral candidates, shares opinions in favour or against electoral candidates.

Space setting. Electoral candidates shall sit in front of the public. The moderator shall stand in the centre. The time-keeper shall sit on the first row in the hall, so that his/her signs are visible to the moderator and candidates.

Minimum required resources. Chairs and two tables for candidates; cards with numbers for the time-keeper; a bell or a gong to signal the start and the end of a speech; 3 supports/files; a timer (watch), flipchart and markers.

The algorithm of debates.

- *3 minutes.* The local electoral adviser announces the purpose of the activity, stages, topic of the debate and introduces electoral candidates;
- *5-6 minutes.* Candidate 1 presents the programme;
- *5-6 minutes.* Candidate 2 presents the programme;
- *6 minutes.* The local electoral adviser gives the opportunity to the audience to address questions to candidates. Questions should be addressed preferably in turn to both candidates;
- *4 minutes.* Supporters have the opportunity to make brief speeches in favour of the presented programmes. Meantime, candidates prepare questions for their opponents;



- *4 minutes.* Electoral candidates address in turn one question each to their opponent;
- *6 minutes.* The local electoral adviser gives the opportunity to the audience to address questions to candidates. It is recommended that the audience is encouraged to address questions in turn to both candidates;
- *2 minutes.* The moderator gives the audience time for short reflections, opinions (max. 30 seconds);
- *1 minute.* Candidate 1 makes his/her final speech;
- *1 minute.* Candidate 2 makes his/her final speech;

Note: This is a tentative distribution of time and can be modified depending on the situation.



Tips for electoral candidates:

The speech for the programme presentation can follow the structure of the **Policy** debate model: it needs to contain the answers to 6 key questions:

- What is the problem?
- What needs to be done to solve the problem?
- Who should solve the problem?
- How should the problem be solved? (methods and activities)
- What are the costs of the solution?
- What direct and indirect benefits will be obtained following the solution of the problem?



What is the problem?



Describe the current situation in the community, emphasising the negative effects - who and how is affected by the identified problem. Refer to statistics, to articles in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, other legal acts. Try to identify the roots of the problem - this will help you bring arguments to the solution that will be proposed later.



What needs to be done to solve the problem?



Propose the solution. Provide reasons about how this solution will improve the situation.

**Who should solve the problem?**

List the main stakeholders to be involved in solving this problem. Give reasons why these persons or institutions are capable to improve the current situation.

**How should the problem be solved?**

Describe the main activities or methods to be implemented/applied to accomplish the general change objective. Prove that namely these activities/methods are possible with the involvement of the above-stated stakeholders.

**What are the costs of the solution?**

Assess and present the resources you need to implement the problem-solving activities. Describe the material, financial and human resources. Give reasons as to the need for the identified resources. As far as possible, describe also the sources of the required resources and prove their availability.

**What direct and indirect benefits will be obtained following the solution of the problem?**

Describe all possible benefits, thus demonstrating the improvement of the current situation. Present these benefits as compared with costs - they need to be higher than the used resources (material and human).

Be creative: organize all this information in the order that will have a maximum impact on the audience. You need to have the answers to questions, but their order may be changed.

Pay attention to opponents' presentation. Put down the presented ideas to identify the weak points in your opponents' programme. *Possible directions for disproving:*

- problem is not that important and may resolve itself;
- proposed solution is not relevant, hence, it cannot change the situation;
- proposed stakeholders do not have the required expertise to implement the planned activities;
- estimated resources are not sufficient for the implementation of the planned activities;
- costs/expenses of resources will exceed the amount of obtained benefits;
- simpler and cheaper solutions are available.



To disprove, you can use one or several directions. Remember, any denial of opponents' ideas must be substantiated!

Consider that the lack of eye contact with the audience (when the speaker reads the text) has a negative impact on the impression the audience is making about the content of your presentation. You have the right to use notes, in order to keep the structure of your speech and present some statistics. Make sure all your notes are clear; you should better write them in block letters and in a size large enough for you to read from a distance of 50-60 cm. Organize your text to have one separate block of information on a page. For instance, the answers to the six questions should be written on six separate sheets of paper.

Tips for local electoral advisers:

Prepare in advance a card with the algorithm of debates. Ask the audience to react jointly. Possible situations:

- ask the audience to give a round of applause after introducing the candidates;
- at the end of a speech, ask those who have been impressed by the shared programme to express their emotions by applauding;
- ask for another round of applause at the end of final speeches.

Pay attention to candidates' presentations. Put down their shared ideas to identify the weak points in their programme. Prepare questions to direct the debate.

After the speech, ask the audience to address questions. You may suggest the audience to consult for a minute with their colleagues present in the meeting hall. Be patient: people need time to reflect and formulate questions.

Keep an eye on the time-keeper's signs. These will help you follow the principles of debates and time rules.

Intervene in case there is a risk for the debate to turn into a fight. One simple technique: stand in between the opponents in a way that your body becomes an obstacle for their eyes.

Say thank you for each speech, question, reply. Be flexible.

CHAPTER IV



RESPONSIBILITY FOR ELECTORAL PROMISES



The citizens' role is not limited to electing the president, deputies, councillors or mayors. Citizens want to permanently be in touch with their representatives, to communicate them about their opinions, desires, and even to put pressure on them, within the limits of the law, of course, when taking decisions with direct impact on both their and community interests.

But, once vested with a responsible position, the elected officials can allow themselves to neglect both permanent communication with their voters, and honouring their electoral promises. In such situations, citizens may express their disapproval with the behaviour of the given authorities by sending complaints (petitions), picketing the institution's premises, organising protest meetings, press conferences to criticise the activity of the elected officials through other legal procedures as well.



What is a Participative Democracy?

It is known that while exercising their duties, the elected persons have two possibilities:

- a) to discuss all the subjects on their agenda, to approve laws and to make decisions as to these subjects, without consulting the citizens;
- b) before making a decision, to consult the citizens or at least to discuss with them about some of the subjects on the agenda.

Option b. is called **participatory democracy**. In other words, a participatory democracy means that, although the elected persons are empowered to make decisions for the community or the electorate they represent, they shall do it only after consulting with the citizens, of at least with some groups of citizens.

These consultations may be done both by means of discussions during the community meetings, and by so-called local referenda, where citizens may clearly express their position on a specific issue.



What is Public Participation?

The concept of public participation is founded on the need to consult citizens and express their opinions regarding the adopted decisions at different levels and that affect them in a way or another. In a sound community, citizens participate in the decision-making process of public interest, getting informed about the problems that affect them, soliciting the authorities to take measures they consider to be needed and participating effectively in the practical implementation of the adopted decisions.



How to Motivate an Elected Person, an Authority to Stimulate the Public Participation and Actively Communicate with Citizens?

All electoral candidates should understand that a citizen neglected today will sanction the locally or nationally elected person by his/her vote *tomorrow*. Thus, to be correct and efficient, the elected persons shall involve citizens in the decision-making process, by their public consultation and participation.

The elected persons shall be motivated to discuss with citizens and be aware about the fact that communication with citizens means obtaining the following advantages:

- **important information may be received directly from the source.** When an authority or an institution wants to get to know about the state of affairs in a specific area under its responsibility, in order to make some changes, it is obvious that the persons related to this area are the best ones to provide such information.
- **people are much more involved to support decisions and programmes in the fulfilment of which they participated.** On one hand, they understand the corresponding decisions and programmes and, on the other hand, they are emotionally involved and want them to be a success.
- **citizen's participation may ensure a more active involvement of citizens in the community.** For instance, if you consult the citizens when deciding on conducting repair works in the school, they will be more motivated to contribute to this action on voluntary basis or in different terms.
- **people engage more actively in the community.** When people participate in the local administration, they feel more responsible for the way different public services operate and are maintained, and, finally, for the way the community looks like. In this case, they will behave more carefully and treat their locality as "their own."
- **consulting the citizens may ensure public support even for less popular decisions.** Consulting citizens regarding the solution of a problem means that people understand the advantages and disadvantages of different solutions and accept the final solution, all together with its disadvantages. It may be about a higher tax or increased costs for specific services, etc.
- **finally, the participation of citizens may increase the electoral support.** A deputy, mayor or councillor who showed interest in the opinion of citizens regarding different problems and that he/she takes into account the things they believe, will always be appreciated and, correspondingly, citizens will vote that person.



What is a Public Meeting and How to Organize it?

Public meetings

Public meetings are the most flexible and functional forms to share information between the locally or nationally elected persons and the citizens. While an opinion poll implies specific costs and sometimes you will need to hire experts, a public



meeting may be organized at lower costs and by anybody of those elected at the local level.

A public meeting may be held with a relatively limited number of participants – an official person and several citizens – or with a large number of participants and several dozens or even hundreds of citizens. In a public meeting, official representatives have the opportunity to:

1. launch a process of consulting citizens regarding a decision-making or solving a problem;
2. inform or educate the public about a problem;
3. find out people's opinion about the problems they face and collect their ideas about how to solve them or adopting specific decisions;
4. debate with citizens on advantages and disadvantages of specific issues.

The main advantage offered by the organization of a public meeting is, as it was mentioned before, that the elected persons have the opportunity to directly communicate with citizens, to clarify misunderstandings, convince citizens and encourage a proactive attitude from them.

It is very important that these official persons understand that they shall not involve in a public meeting unless they are prepared to use the outcomes. If citizens think that no actions resulted from their discussions, the future meetings will be seriously affected and citizens' trust will diminish even more.

Organizing public meetings

To succeed within a public meeting, several **important aspects** should be taken into consideration:

Preparing the meeting:

- The venue should be easily accessible and neutral, if this is possible.
- The venue capacity should correspond to the expected number of participants. It would be better if, finally, there are rather not enough seats (chairs), than too many and not occupied. The best situation is when it is possible to bring chairs from other rooms, in case there are not enough chairs and in the meeting hall.
- Any equipment and materials needed for the meeting should be available (sound device, microphones, paper etc.)

Preparations related to human resources:

- Meeting must have a moderator. As a rule, this should be a neutral person respected by the community. Irrespective of who is the moderator, this person should be capable to keep discussions on the subject and make participants observe the time limits. Also, he/she should be authoritarian and flexible. Most often, even if the subject is a specific one, citizens will want to discuss about all kind of

problems. The moderator shall possess the capacity to keep the discussions on the subject without frustrating the audience.

- Before the meeting, the moderator should be explained very clearly the purpose of the meeting and the points towards which he/she shall direct the discussion.
- Apart from the moderator, other persons from the organizers shall be also present in the meeting hall. One or more representatives of the organizers shall meet the participants, guide them to their seats and ensure order in the hall. Also, a person should count participants, eventually register their names. This will be helpful when organising new meetings.

Planning the meeting:

A planning meeting should be held on the eve to establish the plan for the next day and to delegate responsibilities to the team members:

- Study and discuss all legal aspects related to organization (groups or persons who should be notified about the event, and arrangements to be followed).
- Organizers should announce in advance about the meeting, inviting all those interested to participate. They also need to make sure that groups with a special interest in the debated issue have been notified about the meeting. Usually, such events should be made public through announcements posted on the mayoralty's informative board, in schools, and close to visible and populated places. The announcement shall be precise and accessible to the general public.
- Beside the compulsory data (about the place and date of the event), the announcement shall also include the list of subjects to be debated, provide information about who can participate and how, describe the role of the audience, explain the purpose of the meeting and the expected outcome.
- Determine logistics and required materials.
- Set the agenda: Who will make the presentations? Time allocated for each presentation? Time allocated for questions and comments from the public? How long will the event last?
- Establish basic rules, such as: How to lead the meeting? How much time is allocated to speakers, interventions? All these rules need to be flexible enough, to satisfy the needs of participants, but at the same time, they need to be strict enough, to maintain the order and a civilized atmosphere. Nobody should be allowed to dominate the discussion, neither the representatives of authorities, nor the citizens; these rules shall ensure that all opinions are expressed in a fair way.

Conducting the meeting:

- The meeting should be opened by the most important official person. This conveys a double signal: the problem is important and officials listen to people's opinion. The speaker shall explain in his/her opening speech the purpose of the meeting and how the obtained information will be used. Further on, the moderator shall take over.
- The moderator shall announce the ground rules of the meeting: time allocated to each speaker, whether each speaker should introduce him/herself.



- During the meeting, the moderator shall keep discussions to the point and make sure nobody is allowed to exceed the time limits, and if this is the case, he/she shall politely interrupt the speaker.
- At the end of the meeting, the moderator shall summarize the most important aspects of the discussion and any conclusions drawn.

Recording of information:

- When entering the meeting hall, each participant shall be asked to write on a list his/her name to be contacted later.
- Proposals made and decisions adopted also should be registered.
- Also, it is important to register the outstanding issues.

Group meetings

In a citizen consultation process, it can be concluded that discussions with certain categories of persons need to be conducted in a more structured and professional way. These are the cases when meetings in small groups or “group interviews” may be conducted.

These are interactive meetings, facilitated, with small groups of people. The moderator shall lead the discussion through a set of questions related to a specific subject. Participation in such meetings is based on the invitation and only those invited can attend. There can be between 7 and 15 participants, with a specific professional background or group of interests (for instance, teachers, farmers, pensioners, etc.).

This type of meetings is useful to:

- help establish priorities in a specific sector or to test priorities proposed by officials;
- determine the attitudes that might affect the success or failure of a project;
- consult the opinions of a certain category of people concerning a specific issue.

Annex No 1

Electoral List (Main and Supplementary) Template for the Mock Election Exercise (A4 format)

No	Name, surname of voter	Signature
1.		
2.		

Annex No 2

Invitation to Vote Template (A8 format)

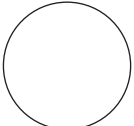
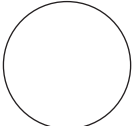
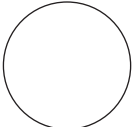
<p>To Mrs/Mr _____</p> <p>On Sunday, _____, the Mock <i>day, month, year</i></p> <p>Election Exercise will take place on the following address _____, starting at _____.</p> <p><i>Precinct Electoral Bureau</i></p>	<p>To Mrs/Mr _____</p> <p>On Sunday, _____, the Mock <i>day, month, year</i></p> <p>Election Exercise will take place on the following address _____, starting at _____.</p> <p><i>Precinct Electoral Bureau</i></p>
<p>To Mrs/Mr _____</p> <p>On Sunday, _____, the Mock <i>day, month, year</i></p> <p>Election Exercise will take place on the following address _____, starting at _____.</p> <p><i>Precinct Electoral Bureau</i></p>	<p>To Mrs/Mr _____</p> <p>On Sunday, _____, the Mock <i>day, month, year</i></p> <p>Election Exercise will take place on the following address _____, starting at _____.</p> <p><i>Precinct Electoral Bureau</i></p>



Annex No 3

Ballot Paper Template
(A5 or A6 depending on the number of youth initiative groups)

MOCK ELECTION EXERCISE **BALLOT PAPER**

	INITIATIVE GROUP NO 1	
	INITIATIVE GROUP NO 2	
	INITIATIVE GROUP NO 3	

Annex No 4

Templates for Badges and Table Name Cards for Members of the Precinct Electoral Bureau

(badges shall be 95 x 55 mm, and table name cards shall be in the A6 format)

Chairperson	Deputy Chairperson	Secretary	Member 1	Member 2
Member 3	Member 4	Operator 1	Operator 2	

Annex No 5

Identity Card Template for the Mock Election Exercise

IDENTITY CARD	IDENTITY CARD
Name, surname _____	Name, surname _____
IDENTITY CARD	IDENTITY CARD
Name, surname _____	Name, surname _____



Annex No 6

Template of Table Name Card for Candidates (nameplate, A6 format)

CANDIDATE: INITIATIVE GROUP NO 1	CANDIDATE: INITIATIVE GROUP NO 2
CANDIDATE: INITIATIVE GROUP NO 3	CANDIDATE: INITIATIVE GROUP NO 4

Annex No 7

Information Support: Political regimes

A political regime is a specific form of political system organisation and operation, especially the manner of state bodies setting and acting with respect to citizens.

Over the years, there were many attempts to classify the political regimes. In antiquity, the description and typology of political regimes tried to respond to an ideal need or rather to an ideal projection: searching for good governance. Aristotle distinguished regimes based on common interest and those that tackled only personal interests of those in power. Depending on the number of such governing people who exercised their authority/power, Aristotle suggested three symmetrical pairs of political regimes: royalty/tyranny, aristocracy/oligarchy, constitutional government/democracy.

Another classification attempt belongs to Montesquieu who envisaged the monarchic regime (he preferred), the despotic regime and the republican regime.

Modern lawyers label political regimes following the internal relations/rapports among different institutional bodies: power separation regimes, power overlapping regimes, power collaboration regimes.

Nowadays, the most spread classification of political regimes is the following: democratic regimes, dictatorial regimes and authoritarian regimes.

Authoritarian regimes

This category comprises those regimes where violence and arbitrary decisions rule, i.e. despotism, Bonapartism, populism, and fascism. The borders of authoritarianism are obscure/vague, the term suggesting forms of governance that today are perceived as totalitarian: dictatorship, tyranny.

Authoritarianism is frequently conceived as an antidote intended to fight democracy imperfections, being favoured by difficulties encountered in the process of instituting democracy in societies with no representative tradition, egalitarian principles, openness to dialogue and tolerance, and which do not give credit to persons' freedoms and citizen's rights. Authoritarian regimes evolve in societies where political convulsions and crises, ideological "closed-shops" and conservative or radical cultural template affix their stamp on political equilibrium.

Criteria for defining the political authoritarianism:

- a) limited electoral competition; political life becomes the object of severe oversight exercised by the ruling authority, which sometimes may lead to disappearance of political pluralism, imprisonment and even physical liquidation of opponents. The possibility of governance variability is removed. The elections as they are enrolled do not threaten the position of the ruling Patron who is based on clientelist relations and clan solidarity.
- b) blocking the information; in its relations with Media, the ruling power uses the authoritarian regime of pressure and censorship. Authoritarianism does not imply overall cancellation of plurality of social and cultural practices; it rather tries to ensure external public order and facade unanimity, agreeing the indifference and apathy of most citizens.
- c) maintaining the state-society discrepancy; unlike the totalitarian regimes, the authoritarian ones do not call into question the differentiation relation between the state and civil society. Authoritarian regimes accommodate themselves to the social structures in place, allowing just a minor degree of peripheral empowerment (for churches, business environments, local administration, private life). Instead, all pluralistic entities (trade-unions, political parties, associations) are kept under tight control, recruiting regime-faithful elites from such entities.

Authoritarian configurations:

- a) patrimonialism is a way of domination where the governance of large collectivises is done according to a domestic model, under the patrimony authority of a sovereign/patron that confuses his/her own assets with the state assets (e.g. old regime monarchy, oriental despotisms). There is a modern "neopatrimonialism", especially in the Islamic world (e.g. Emirates from the Gulf). The Patron has the monopoly to allocate positions, statuses and symbolic values at his/her discretion.
- b) clientelist oligarchies are defined by three elements: patriarchal management of state by several reinforced families – big landowners; affective relations of loyalty;



citizens become the clients of a political Patron; camouflaging the power through manipulated and corrupted electoral practices (e.g. the caudillos regime in Latin America).

- c) Bonapartist Caesarism had as archetypes the regime of Napoleon the 3rd in France and the governance of Bismarck in Germany in the second half of the 19th Century. Bonapartism added the dictatorship of economic liberalism. It occurs especially in historical transition situations. It is used by the plebiscitary vote. Bonapartism characteristics are as follows: absolute primacy of the Executive under the aegis of a lifelong Leader, mobilising the nationalist or imperial values, the will to guide the modernisation from the “top”;
- d) populist regimes are distinct from Bonapartism by exulting the primacy of people’s will, by frequent recourse to charismatic praises of national unity (e.g. Boulangism in France during the ’80s of the 19th Century, Peronism in Argentina). Populism is developed under clientelistic systems that seek to control internal migrations of poor peasants towards large metropolitan areas, feeding frustrations and resentments of “small” against the “big”, of poor against the rich.

Totalitarian regimes

The term of totalitarianism belongs to Benito Mussolini (fascist Duke of Italy during 1921-1943), but got roots later due to political analyses of American researches during the 4th, 5th and 6th decades of the past Century.

The criteria for defining totalitarianism: an official doctrine covering all aspects of human beings’ existence and to which, as presumed, all members adhere; a mass political party, having a unique hierarchy, being led by a charismatic leader and composed of unconditionally faithful militants; a monopoly of power over the armed forces; a monopoly of power over the means of production; a system of Police terrorist power underpinned by the monopoly of violence and political propaganda.

The totalitarian political order comprises the following elements:

- a) the Supreme Leader (Führer, Duke, Big Chairman: Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Mao, Ceausescu) is not a simple despot having discretionary, absolute power; he is the soul and the guarantor of movement that he inspires. He is infallible, omnipotent, and omniscient. He builds up and maintains the cult of personality. His personalised power is in lieu of law.
- b) single and mass political party, based on an exclusivist ideology becomes a bureaucratic apparatus of national level, multi-branched, with a multitude of organisational structures;
- c) political Police is omnipresent, disciplined and secret. It is tasked to chase/hunt objective enemies designated by ideological criteria by the Power (Jews, well-offs, agents of imperialism, etc.). Cultivates a climate of generalized fear and suspicion and is based on an “army” of whistleblowers and informants. Develops punitive networks and prison “industries” (GULAG in Soviet Russia, concentration camps KZ in Nazi Germany).

d) citizens are pawns of the totalitarian mechanism; they become, voluntarily or involuntarily, accomplice of totalitarian power. Totalitarianism takes up the civil society and models arbitrarily human behaviours. Totalitarian order is instituted with the support of mass conditioned by Police terror.

Democratic regimes

The term “democracy” is known throughout the world, although a more concise definition is difficult to make. The fact that this term originates from Greek Language, being translated as “domination of people”, does not help us much, as the socio-political situation changed since antiquity, while we do not understand exactly what this thing should mean.

As an ordinary meaning, democracy represents a form of state organisation and management, where the power comes from people and where the people exercise the power either directly or indirectly.

However, it is not an ideal state and social order. As Aristotle mentioned during his era, democracy may evolve in a corrupt form of governance of the majority, when the latter pursues its own interests rather than common interests.

Over the history, it has been demonstrated that only democracy may create a constitutional, social and political order that guarantees the rule of law and human dignity.

To be fair and functional, in a democracy laws, not people, shall rule. The laws shall be developed as per the norms in force and notified to people so that they can get acquainted with them and comply with. There can be no question about secret laws. The rule of law has close links with democracy.

In modern era, the antique democratic ideas found reflection in illuminist theories, especially in theories on freedom and equality. Theories of J. J. Rousseau on people’s sovereignty as a unique and inalienable right were based in this way. The USA is the first modern and democratic country. In Europe, the French Revolution brought the first state established on democratic principles.

In the contemporary era, the majority of developed countries, especially the Western countries, have at their foundation a democratic system of governance, which proved to be the most favourable for economic and social development. Nowadays, democracy seems to be kind of universal religion of humanity, being accepted either for the reason that it ensures peace required for economic trades or because it is the only political form where those in power are peacefully removed from governance. In light of the above, democracy is placed somewhere in between anarchy and dictatorship. It offers as much freedom as possible, and as much order as necessary.



Democracy offers each citizen the right to participate in electing the country leadership and to be elected in country leadership. Unlike antique democracy, which was a direct democracy due to the fortress dimensions, the modern democracy is representative. People are represented by a certain number of persons who exercise the power function for a certain defined timeframe. When the latter expires, they can be replaced by other persons.

In a democracy, the power is therefore designated by general, equal, free, secret and direct elections. Those who are elected have a time-limited mandate. Elections are democratic only when there are several options available. A simple confirmation, when there is only one proposal and voters are forced to choose between “Yes” and “No,” such elections are not truthful as people do not have several options to choose from. Freedom and diversity of opinions, the right to free information, protection of minorities and free opposition are the core premises for democratic elections.

Under the representative system, contemporary countries may have ***Parliamentary and Non-Parliamentary Democracy***. In the first case, the Parliament is the location of national sovereignty. It is elected through people’s votes and shall represent them. Besides the budget adoption, the Parliament is assigned with two paramount functions, namely developing and approving laws, and exercising control over the Executive, the latter being held accountable to Parliamentarians (MPs). Such a system has been adopted by Germany and Italy, for instance.

In a non-parliamentary – presidential democracy or in a semi-presidential democracy the Legislature does not validate nor controls directly the Executive. The USA adopted such form of democracy, where presidents, who combine the functions of the state head and government head, do not depend at all on the vote of confidence of Congress; House of Representatives and Senate cannot impose the President to resign. The President is elected by the people and is accountable directly to the people.

These fundamental types of setting democratic countries enable us to see the differences in greater details. The differences in terms of national traditions and the existence of social peculiarities, which differ from one country to another, make democracy to be a task of modernity, which occurs in many forms. The acknowledgment of principle that the state power comes from the people (not from a socially privileged class or group) opens myriads of ways and possibilities for distinct materialisation of democracy at the level of countries that practice it. Therefore, democracy represents a special task for all nations in any time of the history.

Democracy has never been a finalised status of things; it is constantly improving and evolves as long as the conscience of country population evolves.

Annex 8

Observers. Rights and Obligations

Observers are persons with the right to vote, authorised in the established manner, who may represent domestic, foreign or international organisations/entities, and have the mission to monitor the way how elections are organised and unrolled. Observers cannot be election candidates, members of electoral management body and representatives of electoral competitors.

Observers can be:

- **national**, Moldovan citizens – representatives of qualified public associations of the Republic of Moldova or representatives of electoral competitors, accredited by electoral management bodies as per the provisions of the Electoral Code;
- **international** representatives of international organisations, of governments of foreign countries and of foreign NGOs, as well as international experts in the electoral area, accredited by the Central Electoral Commission.

Observers' Rights and Obligations

Observers shall have the right to:

- attend all meetings of electoral management bodies, with no right to get involved in the process, be present upon checking, sealing and opening ballot boxes, when counting and totalising the votes, during operations related to the list of voters, ballot papers, certificates for the right to vote, upon preparing protocols totalising the results of elections;
- notify the chairperson of the electoral management body about any irregularities observed during elections;
- have access to all information on elections, to the lists of voters, protocols prepared by electoral management bodies;
- get copies of protocols prepared by the electoral management body;
- attend meetings of electoral competitors/ participants referendum with voters, with no right to get involved in the process;
- following the notification of the electoral management body chairperson, make video and audio records, take photographs of the electoral process, without jeopardising the voting confidentiality and security;
- upon need, be accompanied by an interpreter, who will not interfere in the electoral process or in other electoral actions carried out by electoral management bodies;
- undertake other actions that do not contravene the Electoral Code, the present Regulation, the legislation in force;
- international Observers have the right to solicit, where appropriate, assistance from the Observers' Protocol Office;



- National (local) Observers may file a notification on revealed irregularities to be considered by the chairperson of the electoral management body, having informed the author of the notification on the decision made.”;

Observers are required:

- to be impartial in exercising their obligations and refrain from expressing their personal opinions or preferences regarding certain electoral competitors/ referendum participants or regarding certain issues occurring during elections;
- to fulfil their obligations in a correct manner, to refrain from interfering in the process of elections, in procedures carried out on the day of elections or in the process of counting the votes;
- to carry the card issued by the electoral management body and, upon the request of any stakeholder, to present it and confirm that the person accompanying him/her is an interpreter; the latter shall present his/her ID card;
- to carry no symbols belonging to electoral competitors/referendum participants, including objects or apparel of certain colour that identifies an electoral competitor/ referendum participant;
- to give no guidelines or to take no action that contravenes the decisions taken by electoral management bodies;
- to fill in the statistical form on the polling station he/she supervised;
- until the closure of the polling station, to refrain from any public comments, including in the presence of Media representatives or of other stakeholders on the observations he/she has made;
- to know and comply with the Moldovan legislation in force and with the provisions of this Regulation;
- to comply with the provisions of Law No. 133 dated 8 July 2011 on protecting personal data.

Annex 9

Rights of Voters with Special Needs

Inclusion of people with visual impairment in decision-making in the Republic of Moldova and Romania through direct and secret vote.

The Project “***Promoting the Model on Inclusion of People with Visual impairment in Decision-Making in the Republic of Moldova and Romania by Direct and Secret Vote***” was funded by the Government of Romania and UNDP Moldova and implemented by Hilfswerk Austria in the Republic of Moldova and by the Euroregional Centre for Democracy (CED), Timisoara, Romania during 2010-2011. The Project tackled an extremely important topic, both for the Republic of Moldova and Romania: the issue of inclusion of people with visual impairment in decision-making.

According to the official data, nowadays there are circa 10,000 people with visual impairment in Moldova, of whom 4,000 are blind (source: Association of Blind People of the Republic of Moldova) and their number increases with 300-350 persons per annum. As the number of voters with visual impairment is low, politicians are not interested in the blind electorate or pretend they “do not see them.” At the same time, people with visual impairment make a category of citizens with high awareness level in the area of politics; moreover, they are facing, even more often, with the issues of the community the future elected persons are getting prepared to “shepherd,” i.e. potholes on streets/roads, traffic lights with no audio signal, lack of jobs for people with visual impairment, etc.

According to the legal norms, both in Romania and in the Republic of Moldova, the voter who due to ground reasons, ascertained by the chairperson of the precinct electoral bureau, is not able to vote independently, shall have the right to call for an attendant, selected by him/her, into the booth to help him/her vote. This means that a person with visual impairment may select an attendant who would guide him/her in the booth how to vote; but, from the other hand, the attendant may have an impact on how the person with visual impairment would vote.

However, above all, the most severe issue encountered by voters with visual impairment is the mentality that should be changed in a community that seeks to be European; for the society to evolve harmoniously, the majority shall create favourable conditions for deprived groups to exercise their fundamental rights.

The Project intervention was focused on sensitising public opinion on this issue on both banks of Prut River and piloting a model for the inclusion of people with visual impairments in decision-making through direct and secret vote in partnership with



profile organisations from the Republic of Moldova and Timis and Caras Severin Counties of Romania.

A wide range of round-tables and debates were conducted during the Project implementation attended by representatives of profile organisations, Media, electoral management bodies, and LPAs to identify concrete solutions to ensure the declared rights of people with visual impairment.

✓ **Testing (piloting) secret and direct voting for people with visual impairment during the anticipated Parliamentary Elections held in the Republic of Moldova on 28 November 2010.**

- *Jointly with the CEC Moldova, developing the draft Decision on testing the voting of people with visual impairment.*

CEC Decision No. 3854 on testing direct and secret vote of people with visual impairment during the anticipated Parliamentary Elections held on 28 November 2010 at polling station No. 151, Chisinau Municipality Constituency No. 1, Central Sector.

- *Identifying a polling station to pilot the vote;*
 - *Organising an information workshop for members of polling station No. 151, partners, donors and for the community of people with visual impairment on voting “Pas cu Pas”/“Step by step”;*
 - *Developing audio information material (in Romanian and Russian) comprising basic notions and guidelines on conducting elections to be broadcasted on 26 November 2010 by Radio House.*
- ✓ Working on the development of an electronic register of voters with visual impairment from the Republic of Moldova;
- ✓ Reviewing the current situation in terms of participation of people with visual impairment in decision-making in the Republic of Moldova and Romania, and identifying the main obstacles (administrative, legislative, etc., as well as those regarding organisation);
- ✓ Conducting a survey addressed to electoral competitors in Moldova regarding the opinion of political formations on ensuring direct and secret vote of people with visual impairment;
- ✓ Identifying international best practices and experience comprising methods and techniques on organising elections for the community of people with visual impairment;
- ✓ Sensitising public opinion on equal rights of people with visual impairment in decision-making.

Annex No 10

Information on the Pro-Dem Project Donors and Partners

PROJECT DONORS:

**Austrian Development Agency in RM**

Str. A.Mateevici 23-A,
MD-2009 Mun. Chisinau
022739370
022796940
chisinau@ada.gv.at

Austrian Development Agency (ADA)

Zelinkagasse 2
1010 Vienna
Tel: +43 1 90399 – 0
<http://www.entwicklung.at/en/>

The Austrian Development Agency (ADA), the operational unit of Austrian Development Cooperation, plans, finances and supports programmes and projects in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, as well as in South-Eastern and Eastern Europe. ADA funds about 650 projects and programmes annually with a total of EUR 500 million to improve living conditions in developing countries. Together with the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (MFA), partner countries, public institutions, civil-society organisations and businesses, ADA seeks to ensure that sustainable development works to the benefit of all people in Africa, Asia, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe as well as in the Caribbean. Personnel in 13 coordination offices make sure that ADA operations are in line with national development goals and the needs of the local population and those funds are put to the best possible use.

Combating poverty, ensuring peace and preserving the environment are the three major concerns of Austrian Development Agency (ADA). ADA concentrates on the following themes: education, human security, human rights and migration, water, energy and food security, as well as private sector and development.

The Republic of Moldova has been a priority country of Austrian Development Cooperation since 2004. Austria's cooperation with the country is based on its bilateral country strategy for 2016-2020 and the EU Strategic Framework. The Coordination Office for Technical Cooperation with Austria was set up in Chisinau in 2005.

To date, more than 30 projects, worth around EUR 29.5 Mio, have been implemented in Moldova, with the support of the Austrian assistance. It concentrates its activities on projects in priority areas, such as good governance, strengthening of institutional capacities, water supply, environmental protection, economic development and employment promotion, vocational training, etc.

**ERSTE Stiftung****ERSTE Stiftung****DIE ERSTE österreichische Spar-Casse Privatstiftung**

Am Belvedere 1, 1100 Vienna, Austria

Phone +43 (0)50 100 15100

Fax +43 (0)50 100 11094

E-Mail: office@erstestiftung.org

The ERSTE Foundation operates in the Central and South-Eastern Europe. Its mission dates back from the 19th century, when the savings banks idea came up. It supports social participation and involvement of civil society; its objective is to bring people together and to provide information about the recent history of a region that has experienced dramatic changes since 1989. This is an active foundation developing its own projects within three programmes: Social Development, Culture and Europe.

Social Development

The Foundation encourages the development of an inclusive, dignified and fair society, where nobody is left behind. In this regard, the Foundation has developed two complementary strategies of social intervention: the integration of individuals and groups who live on the margins of the society and research into social change. Its activities create fair prospects for people in difficult social conditions and situations of extreme need with regard to education and social participation.

Culture

The programme for culture is particularly targeting on international projects and implies research activities focused on the visual arts from the 1960s to the present day. Culture is considered a driving force for a democratic society, as it has the ability to forge links between diverse linguistic and geographical regions. Activities with artistic strategies create an experimental playing field for utopias and for proposals beyond the feasibility of everyday politics, as well as for exploring the possibilities of various artistic approaches. Hence, the programme for culture promotes independent projects and those engaged in the cultural sector by providing them with resources and cross-border contacts that are not embedded within state institutions, including with the view to stop the so-called brain drain.

Europe

The Foundation promotes the process of European integration by providing a platform for exchanging ideas, knowledge and initiatives. European citizens are encouraged to live according to common values, to freely share ideas, to work together and to learn from one another. Projects are focused on establishing a lively culture of dialogue. In an environment insisting on differences, we enable people to experience feelings of solidarity, connection and cooperation. Projects anticipate the reality of a unified Europe and convey the potential of the common union, in particular in those countries where, at present, EU programmes cannot yet be implemented. One of the focus of this programme is on activities with the youth, programmes for journalists and debates about the future of Europe.

Pro-Dem Project Implementers and Partners

IMPLEMENTERS



Hilfswerk Austria International

Grünbergstrasse 15/2/5
1120 Vienna
Tel: +43 1 40 57 500
office@hwa.or.at

Hilfswerk Austria in the Republic of Moldova

Str. Alexandru cel Bun 85
MD 2012, mun. Chisinau
Tel: +373 22 21 25 41
Email: info@hwa.md

Hilfswerk Austria International (HWA) is one of Austria's leading non-profit, non-party and cross-denominational organizations with its headquarters in Vienna, Austria. It provides both long-term international development assistance as well as humanitarian aid for victims of conflicts and environmental disasters. Its particular strategic focus is on long-term capacity development of the most vulnerable population sectors, i.e. women, children and ethnic minorities, in terms of organizational and institutional development.

HWA has been implementing emergency relief projects, humanitarian aid and sustainable development projects in Africa, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, South and South East Asia and South-Eastern Europe since 1978. HWA strives for structural poverty alleviation in its programmes and projects which are implemented in close cooperation with 12 local HWA mission offices and local civil society organisations. HWA's mission is to combat poverty and hardship in developing countries through the promotion of economic and social development intended to lead to a process of sustained economic management and growth, linked to structural and social change.

In terms of humanitarian aid the purpose of the organization is to provide immediate relief in emergencies and countries of transition, focusing on health and social care, especially after natural catastrophes, in war- and famine-stricken regions, and in regions affected by sustained major economic depression.

With projects all over the world, HWA has gained extensive experience in supporting people with various cultural, social and political backgrounds on national and regional levels. At present, HWA implements about 60 development and relief projects in about 22 countries.



The Representation of HWA in Moldova (HWA Moldova), is a branch office of Hilfswerk Austria International, present in the Republic of Moldova since 2001 - is a non-governmental, non-party and non-profit organization contributing to raising the living standards by providing sustainable assistance in the field of economic development and social protection in a non-bureaucratic, professional and direct to the destination approach to the socially vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of population in Moldova.

HWA Moldova is promoting a wide spectrum of projects in particular:

- Promoting democratic values and peace initiatives
- Raising living standards and eradicating poverty
- Creating better education and employment opportunities
- Respecting human rights without discrimination
- Increasing civic engagement level of citizens
- Providing assistance to people in need

PARTNERS

Public Association Speranta



MD-3420, Republic of Moldova
r. Hancesti, c. Carpineni,
str. Independentei 19,
Tel. 026928911
mob. 069788504
Email: libalan@yandex.ru

The Public Association Speranta was established in 2001 in the Commune of Carpineni, District of Hincesti. This is a non-profit, non-governmental and apolitical organisation with the mission to promote the sustainable development process at the local and regional levels by providing information, training and consultation services to LPAs and representatives of the civil society, as well as by promoting citizen involvement in the decision-making process and mobilization of internal and external resources to facilitate self-affirmation and a better integration in a society in transition.

Services provided by the Public Association Speranta:

- Training (trainings, workshops, seminars, working meetings, etc.);
- General and specialized consultancy (working techniques, methodology, mechanisms, instruments);
- Individual consultancy;
- Facilitation in mobilising the community, organizing events, conducting activities;
- Facilitation in organizational development;
- Information (information sessions, forums, round tables, conferences);
- Technical assistance (recommendations, templates of forms, presentation of good practices);
- Monitoring and participatory assessment.

Over the last 10 years, the Public Association Speranta implemented several environment projects at the local level, with the support of foreign and national donors, and has independent management experience, as well as partner experience within national projects.

**Public Association Mostenitorii**

MD-3112, 38/4, Pushkin Str., office 413,
Balti Municipality, Republic of Moldova
Tel/fax 0373 231 75011

The Public Association Mostenitorii was established in 1996 as a special institution aiming at ensuring the implementation of democratic principles in youth's life. Since 1998, the association was registered with the Ministry of Justice as an organization working at the national level.

Its **mission** is to facilitate the citizen engagement process, primarily the youth, from the Northern region of the country in the social life, by providing information, consultancy, training and assistance services.

Goals and Objectives of the organization:

- Discover and develop youth's creation potential;
- Promote democratic values, defend human rights through various projects and programmes;
- Stimulate creative activities and youth participation in solving problems related to the development of the local public administration field;
- Create conditions for improving situation of women in the society;
- Establish collaboration connections with the youth from Moldova and from abroad with the view to develop and promote a youth exchange concepts capable of meeting young people's interests;
- Promote a healthy lifestyle among the youth;
- Support young people from socially vulnerable families;
- Promote and implement lifelong learning concept;
- Contribute to restoring the natural balance, to developing an environmentally friendly vision and awareness of citizens;
- Support the civil society development.

Until now, more than 50 projects targeting young people, civil servants, teachers, etc., were developed and implemented with the support of international funders and local economic operators.

The Public Association Mostenitorii is a founding member of the National Youth Council of Moldova (CNTM). International partnerships: POLAND: Terra Humana Foundation, Warsaw, Forum Wschodnie Foundation, Skopanie; ROMANIA: DJST Sibiu, DJST Botosani, INDECO Association, Iasi, Bios Association, Pascani, Car-Pates Ecotouristic Club; UKRAINE: Tovaristvo Lva, Lviv, Molodii Ruh, Cernauti; FRANCE: POLICULTURE Association, Ponteves.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1) The Constitution of the Republic of Moldova of 29.07.1994
- 2) Electoral Code of the Republic of Moldova Nr. 1381 of 21.11.1997, published in the Official Gazette no. 81 of 08.12.1997
- 3) Regulation on the activity of the polling station electoral bureaus, approved by the Hot. CEC no. 2689 of 7 October 2014
- 4) Lia Sclifos, Veronica Crețu, Dorian Furtună, Serghei Lîsenco, „Methodological guide on decision-making at the local level”, Chișinău, 2009
- 5) www.cec.md
- 6) www.cicde.md
- 7) www.e-democracy.md



USEFUL LINKS:

National electoral resources:

- Center for Continuing Education in the Electoral Field www.cicde.md
- Association for Participatory Democracy "ADEPT" www.e-democracy.md
- Promo-LEX Association www.promolex.md
- Institute for Public Policy www.ipp.md

International Electoral Resources:

- Council of Europe <http://www.coe.md/index.php?lang=en>
- Electoral Resources The Association of Election Officials in Europe - www.aceeeo.org
- BRIDGE - <http://bridge-project.org/>
- The International Foundation for Electoral Systems - www.ifes.org
- The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance - www.idea.int
- Expert Forum www.expertforum.ro

National electoral authorities:

- Central Electoral Commission www.cec.md

International election authorities

- Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania - www.roaep.ro
- Central Electoral Commission of the Russian Federation - www.cikrf.ru
- Central Electoral Commission of Ukraine - www.cvk.gov.ua

