



Moldova Local Elections 2019

Following an official invitation from the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Moldova to observe the General Local Elections of 20 October 2019, the European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO) deployed an International Election Observing Mission. The mission was composed of 5 members of Core Team, based in Chisinau and 8 long term observers, deployed in four multinational teams of two based in Chisinau, Balti, Orhei, and Comrat. The mission was headed by Mr. Dritan Taulla.

The Core Team has been established since the beginning of the election period, and the long-term observers have been deployed on September 26th. ENEMO monitored, assessed and reported on the main findings related to observing of the overall political and electoral environment, conduct of election management bodies, campaigning, gender equity, voting and counting processes, electoral dispute resolutions and other crucial aspects of the process, in line with previously developed and internationally recognized methodology.

October 13th - ENEMO published The First Interim Report



ENEMO International Election Observation Mission

General Local Elections, 20 October - Moldova 2019

INTERIM REPORT
20 September - 11 October 2019

13 October 2019

The legal framework generally provides conditions for conducting competitive and democratic elections. ENEMO positively assesses recent amendments to the Electoral Code, and observes an overall competitive and calm campaign environment. However, despite most aspects of the process being administered in a transparent manner, shortcomings in the electoral legislation remain unaddressed and several candidates were denied registration, due to minor formal errors and varying interpretations of the law.

On 15 September 2019, the European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO) deployed an International Election Observing Mission (IEOM) to Moldova to observe the upcoming General Local Elections of 20 October 2019. These are the 7th general local elections held in Moldova, since the country gained independence, and the third Moldovan elections being observed by ENEMO¹.

In addition to the 5 Core Team members based in Chisinau, ENEMO has accredited 8 Long term observers (LTOs) and deployed them in teams of two in Chisinau, Balti, Orhei, and Comrat on 26 September. The Mission is headed by Dritan Taulla. The IEOM's scope is to observe the local elections and will not be observing systematically the parliamentary elections that are to be held in four single member constituencies at the same date as the local elections. However, selected aspects of the process for the parliamentary elections, that might affect the local elections will be noted and reported on. Moreover, the IEOM will not engage additional short-term observers and, as a result, will not be conducting a comprehensive observation of the voting and counting process on election day. However, long term observers and core team members will form a

¹ENEMO has observed the 2016 Presidential Elections and the 2019 Parliamentary Elections. Reports are available at the [urlpage of 252380](https://www.enemo.eu/en/page/252380)

On October 13th ENEMO IEOM to Moldova published First Interim report that covers the period from 20th September – 11th October. ENEMO concluded that overall, the legal framework, if implemented in good faith, ensures the conditions for holding of democratic elections. A number of loopholes and shortcomings in the electoral law were addressed through legal amendments adopted in August 2019. The recent amendments clarify ambiguities in the law, bring the legislation more in line with international standards and best practices for democratic elections, and fulfill previous ENEMO and other international and domestic stakeholders' recommendations. However, it should be noted that adopting them slightly more than two months before the election day is not a good practice, as it affects the stability of the law.

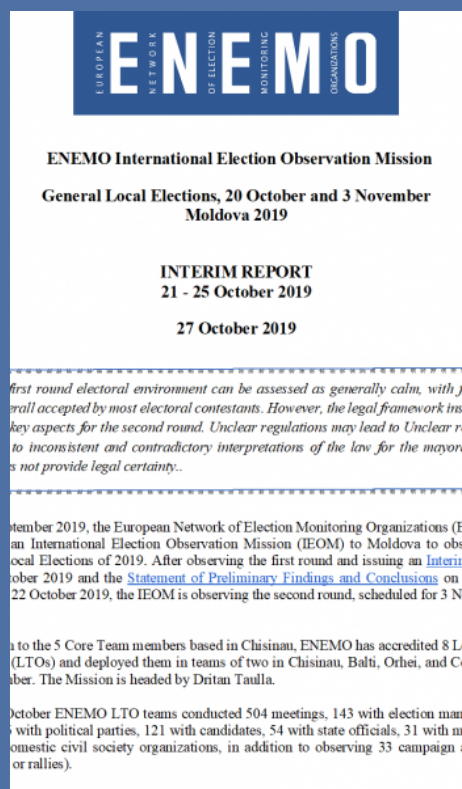
October 22nd-ENEMO organized press conference to present its Preliminary Statement

Until Election Day, ENEMO LTO teams conducted 386 meetings, 112 with election management bodies, 64 with political parties, 95 with candidates, 45 with state officials, 25 with media and 45 with domestic civil society organizations, in addition to observing 33 campaign activities (meetings or rallies). The IEOM did not engage additional short-term observers. However, long term observers and core team members formed five teams that observed 70 polling stations on election day.

Preliminary Report also concludes that elections were held in a calm and generally competitive environment, despite legal shortcomings in the Electoral Code. Excessive requirements in the law for registration of self-nominated candidates are at odds with international standards, and concerns could be raised regarding inconsistent grounds for rejection of independent candidates, which may have affected the principle of equal opportunity.



October 27th ENEMO published Second Interim Report



On October 27th ENEMO IEOM to Moldova published Second Interim report that covers the period from 21 – 25 October. Topic of the Second Report was second round of the mayoral elections. ENEMO stated that the second round for the election of mayors is vaguely regulated in the Electoral Code, leaving some key aspects unaddressed. ENEMO notes that this lack of clarity in provisions leaves space for inconsistent and contradictory interpretation of the law and possible misuse of legislative gaps. ENEMO also raises concerns regarding allegations of misuse of administrative resources which were ongoing according to observers, namely the involvement of mayor office workers and independent candidates using their official positions to influence the election campaign, as well as the use of mayoral property and resources for campaigning. ENEMO also notes that resolving election related complaints after Election Day, which the CEC did on 22 October, is a practice that should be avoided, since it undermines potential sanctions for breach of the electoral legislation. Moreover, ENEMO reiterates that not updating the online registry of complaints and appeals received by the CEC is a practice that damages transparency of the electoral process and limits the right to information of the public.

November 5th – ENEMO organized press conference to present it's second Preliminary Report



This Second Preliminary Statement is based on ENEMO observers' findings from the day after the first round election day (21st September) until the day after the second round election day (4th November). The Statement should be considered in conjunction with the Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions on the first round, issued on 22nd October. On 3rd November 2019, a second round of elections was held in 384 localities throughout Moldova, to elect mayoral candidates that did not gather over half of the votes cast in the first round. The preliminary voter turnout for the second round as announced by the CEC was 40.34 percent. According to information from the CEC on preliminary results, out of 384 elected mayors in the second round, 335 represented political parties/blocs, and 49 mayors were elected as self-nominated candidates; 84 out of 384 elected mayors are women (21.9 percent). Election Day was, overall, calm and peaceful. The management of the polling process and conduct of PECs was assessed positively in the majority of observed polling stations, despite isolated cases of campaigning in the vicinity of polling stations, a few malfunctions in SAIS-E (State Automated Information System "Elections"), instances of violations of the secrecy of the vote, lack of transparency at a few polling stations and DEC observed, and other minor incidents not affecting the overall legitimacy of the process or results. ENEMO notes that preliminary results were overall accepted by electoral contestants following election day, including through public statements by high state officials. The CEC worked in a collegial manner, held regular public sessions and its decisions were overall published on its website in a timely manner, in line with the law. The Commission operated in accordance with its mandate, and its performance during the period between the first and second rounds was mostly efficient and overall transparent. However, ENEMO notes that some key election data were not readily available. Despite the campaign unfolding in an overall free environment, concerns should be raised regarding multiple instances of "black PR" and negative campaigning targeted at candidates, especially on social media, in the form of hate speech, discreditation, and verbal attacks, which sharply increased in the second round.

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