

Options and Considerations for Changing the Electoral System in Moldova

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1991: Two Round System

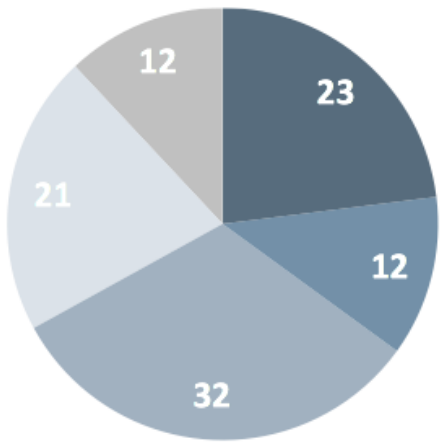
1993: Proportional Rep.

- ✓ Nation-wide district
- ✓ Equality formula
- ✓ Closed lists
- ✓ Legal threshold
- ✓ Out of country voting
- ✓ Independent candidates
- ✓ Women representation



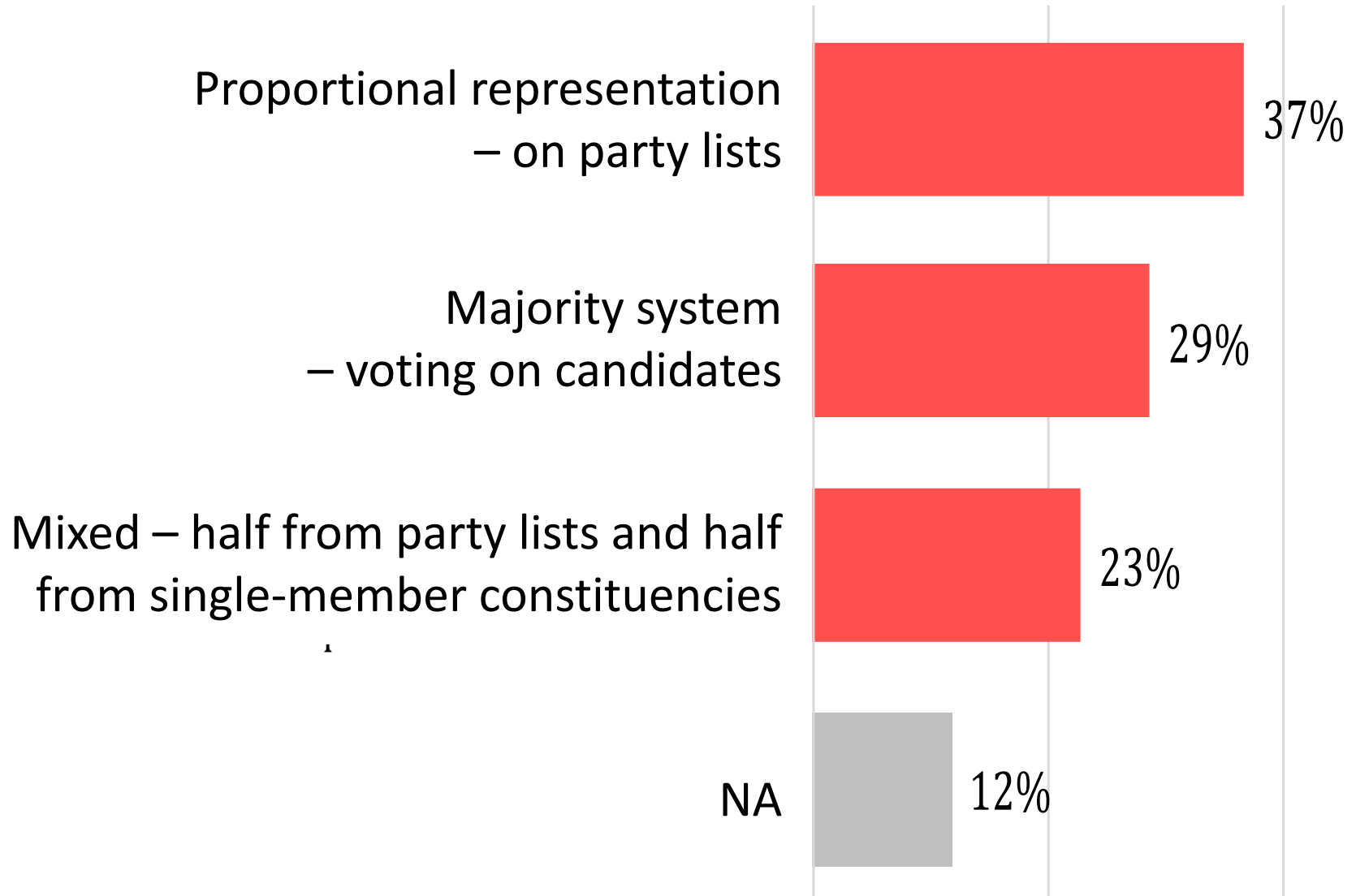
- ▲ Political pluralism
- ▲ Sound political fluidity
- ▲ Relative government stability
- ▲ Multi-ethnic/cultural interests
- ▲ Women representation
- ▲ Transnistria & diaspora voting
- ▼ Voter-MP relations
- ▼ Voter involvement in MP selection
- ▼ Popular dissatisfaction w/political class
- ▼ Access for independent candidates

Popular perception on electoral system



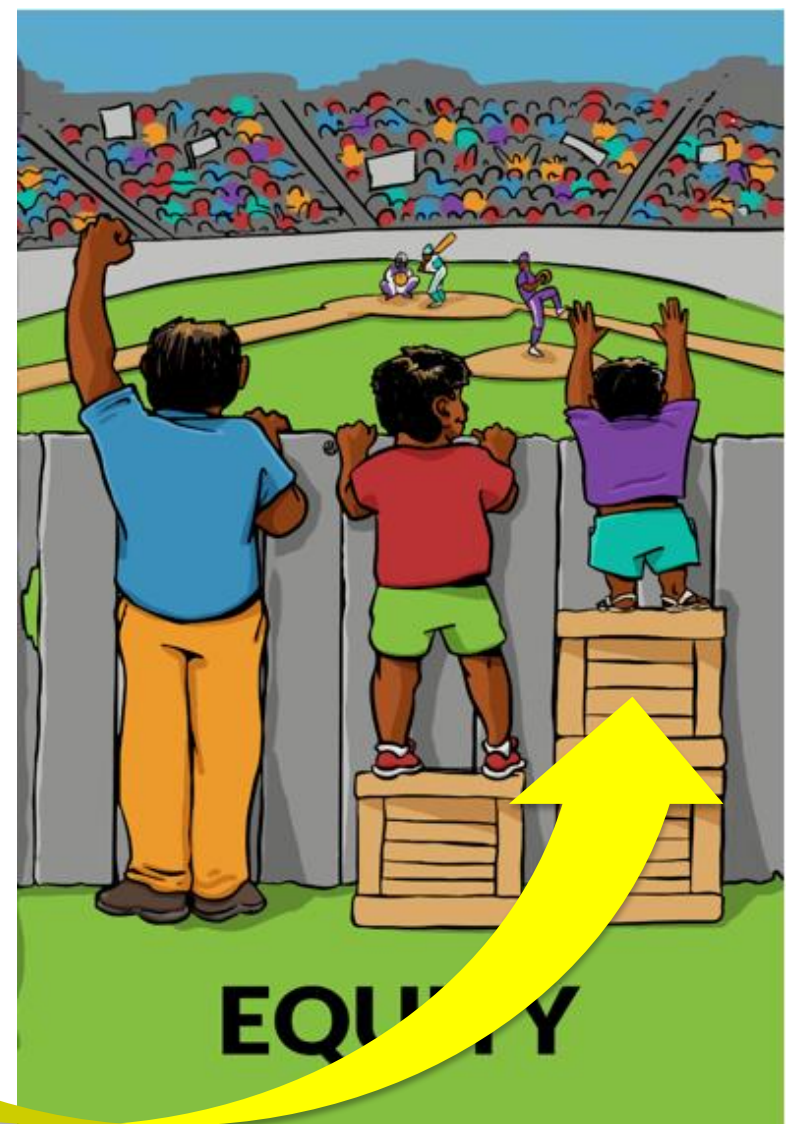
- Maintain the current proportional system
- Modify current system by introducing open list
- Change to majority system
- Change to mixed system
- NA

Popular perception on electoral system



**40%
quota**

EQUALITY



IF all political parties introduced a zipping strategy...
M – F – M – F – M – F – M – F – M – F

48

Today = 23

32

IF all political parties zipped by a 33% strategy...
M – M – F – M – M – F – M – M – F – M – M – F

**40%
quota**

1979 Elections

Party / Alliance	Votes	Votes [%]	Mandates	Mandates [%]
Conservative	13,697,923	43,9%	339	53,38%
Labor	11,532,218	36,9%	269	42,36%
Social Dem. – Liberals	4,313,804	13,8%	11	1,73%

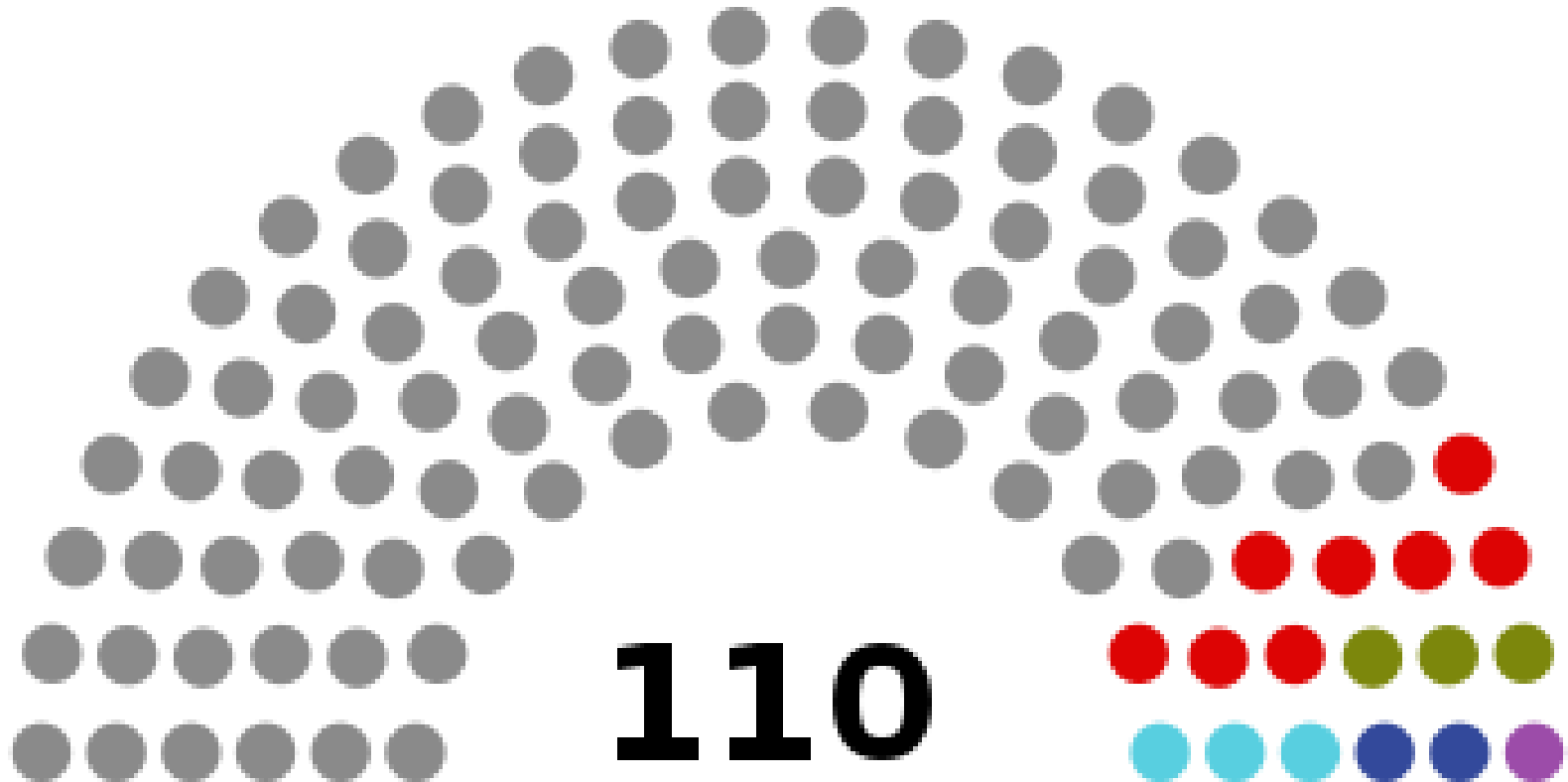
1983 Elections

Party / Alliance	Votes	Votes [%]	Mandates	Mandates [%]
Conservative	13,012,316	42,4%	397	62,51%
Labor	8,456,934	27,6%	209	32,91%
Social Dem. – Liberals	7,780,949	25,4%	23	3,62%

2015 Elections

Party	Number of votes	Percentage of votes	Number of seats	Percentage of seats
Conservative	11,334,920	36.9%	331	50.92%
Labor	9,347,326	30.4%	232	35.69%
UKIP	3,881,129	12.6%	1	0.15%
Liberal Democrat	2,415,888	7.9%	8	1.23%
Scottish National	1,454,436	4.7%	56	8.61%

2016 Elections



Independent candidates = 67% votes and 85% of the seats

Party	Votes received in 2014 [%]	Seats received in 2014	Seats received in 2014 [%]	Seats received in FPTP (simulation)	Seats received in FPTP (simulation) [%]
PSRM	21.14%	25	24.75%	44	▲ 44%
PLDM	19.51%	23	22.77%	27	▲ 27%
PCRM	18.09%	21	20.79%	16	▼ 16%
PDM	16.12%	19	18.81%	8	▼ 8%
PL	9.14%	13	12.87%	5	▼ 5%

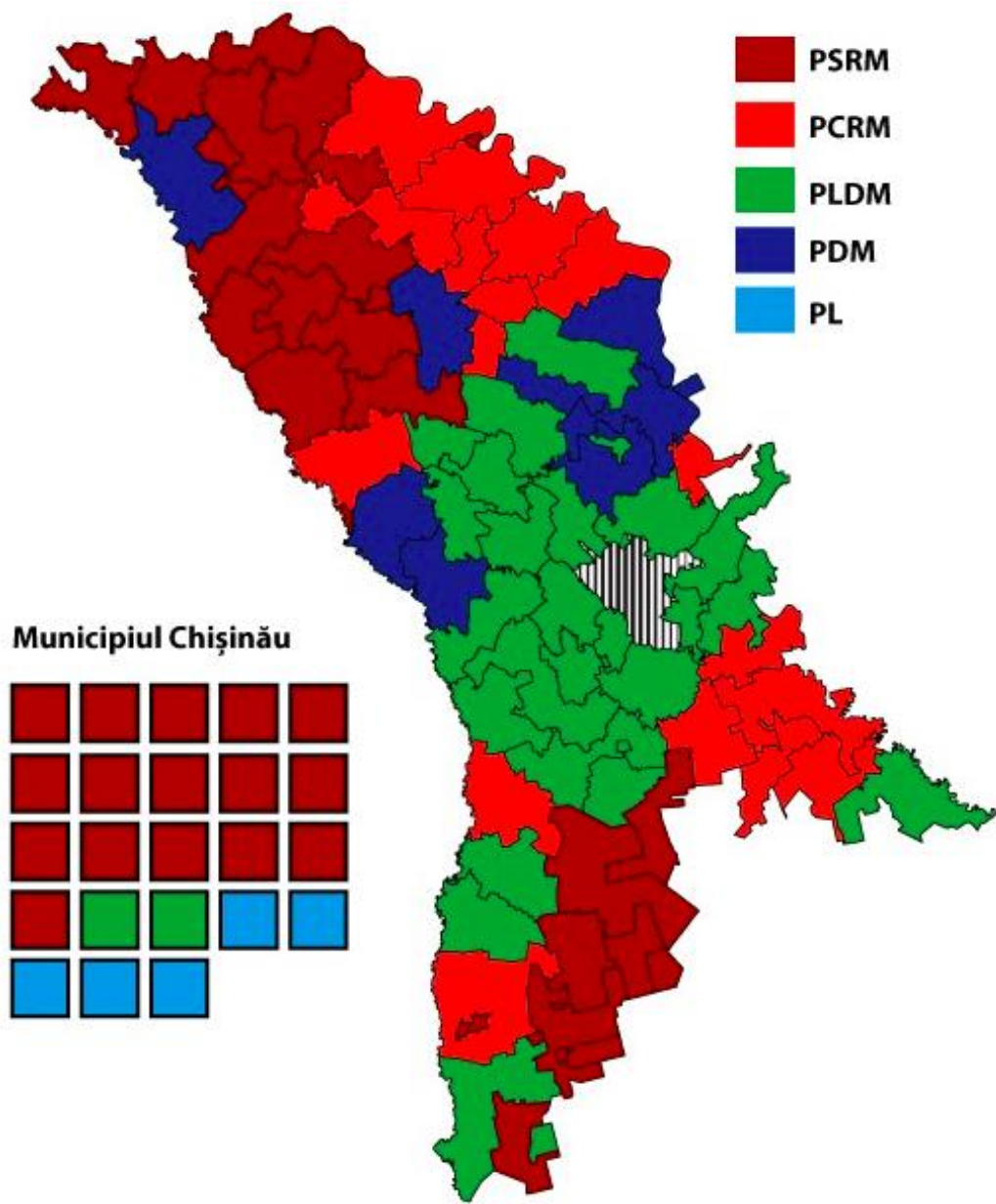
PSRM: Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova

PLDM: Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova

PCRM: Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova

PDM: Democratic Party of Moldova

PL: Liberal Party

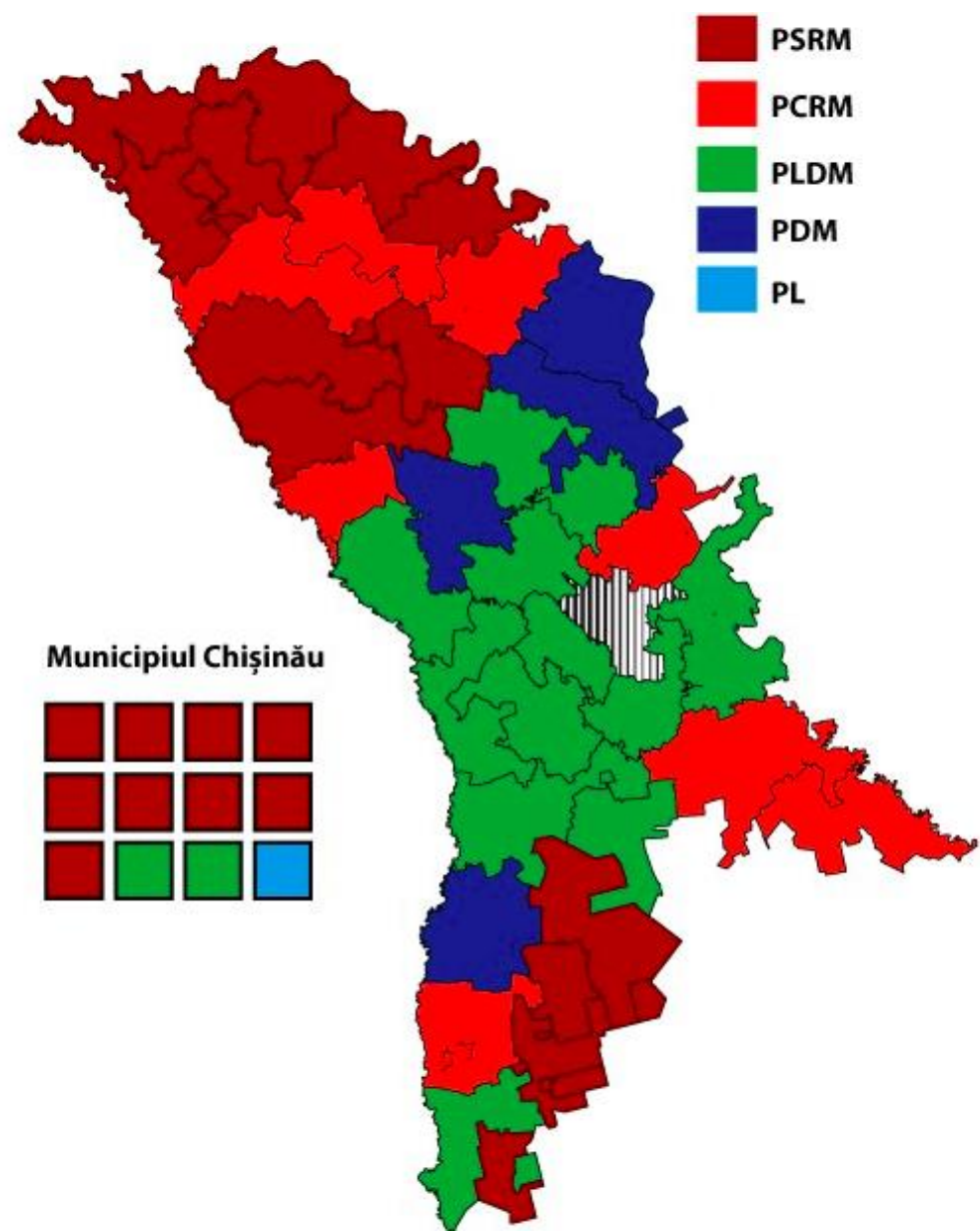


ADVANTAGES

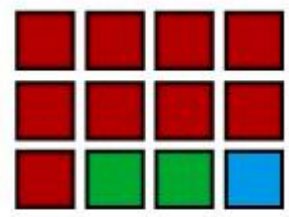
- ✓ MP-voter relations
- ✓ Representation of communities
- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Independent candidates
- ✓ Voter education

DISADVANTAGES

- ✓ Boundary delimitation
- ✓ Fair representation
- ✓ Representation of women
- ✓ Minority representation
- ✓ In-country mobility
- ✓ The Transnistria challenge
- ✓ Out of country voting
- ✓ The “Gagauzia Syndrom”
- ✓ By-elections
- ✓ Governance impact – local issues vs. national priorities
- ✓ Costs



Municipiul Chişinău



Mixed Parallel – simulation results

Party	Votes received in 2014 [%]	Seats received in 2014	Seats received in 2014 [%]	Seats received in Mixed Parallel (simulation)	Seats received in Mixed Parallel (simulation) [%]
PSRM	21.14%	25	24.75%	36	▲ 36%
PLDM	19.51%	23	22.77%	26	▲ 26%
PCRM	18.09%	21	20.79%	18	▼ 18%
PDM	16.12%	19	18.81%	13	▼ 13%
PL	9.14%	13	12.87%	7	▼ 7%

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ADVANTAGES

DISADVANTAGES

A mixed parallel system will have some of the same advantages and disadvantages of the majoritarian and the proportional systems, respectively – given that the system simply combines the two. Examples...

- ✓ Fair representation
- ✓ Voter-MP relations

- ✓ Two types of MPs

Mixed Parallel vs. Mixed Member Proportional

Germany, 2013

Party/ Alliance	Votes in FTPT [%]	Seats won through FPTP	Votes on lists [%]	Seats won on lists	Total seats	Total seats [%]
CDU/CSU	45.3%	236	41.5%	75	311	49,28%
Social Democrat	29.4%	58	25.7%	135	193	30,5%
Left	8.2%	4	8.6%	60	64	10,41%
Green	7.3%	1	8.4%	62	63	9,98%

Russian Federation, 2016

Party/ Alliance	Votes in FTPT [%]	Seats won through FPTP	Votes on lists [%]	Seats won on lists	Total seats	Total seats [%]
United Russia	50.12%	203	54.20%	140	343	76,22%
Communist	12.93%	7	13.34%	35	42	9,33%
Liberal Dem.	10.09%	5	13.14%	34	39	8,66%
A Just Russia	10.00%	7	6.22%	16	23	5,11%

Mixed Parallel

	PSRM	PLDM	PCRM	PDM	PL
percentage of votes	21.14%	19.51%	18.09%	16.12%	9.14%
Seats – simulation	36	26	18	13	7
Percentage of seats – simulation	36.00%	26.00%	18.00%	13.00%	7.00%
Percentage of seats – current	24.75%	22.77%	20.79%	18.81%	12.87%
Seats – actual	25	23	21	19	13

Mixed Proportional (with compensation)

	PSRM	PLDM	PCRM	PDM	PL
percentage of votes	21.14%	19.51%	18.09%	16.12%	9.14%
Seats – simulation	25	23	21	19	12
Percentage of seats – simulation	25.00%	23.00%	21.00%	19.00%	12.00%
Percentage of seats – current	24.75%	22.77%	20.79%	18.81%	12.87%
Seats – actual	25	23	21	19	13

PR in multimember districts – simulation results

Party	Votes received in 2014 [%]	Seats received in 2014	Seats received in 2014 [%]	Seats received in PR/MMDs w/no nat.dist. (simulation)	Seats received in PR/MMDs w/nat. dist. (simulation)
PSRM	21.14%	25	24.75%	27	25
PLDM	19.51%	23	22.77%	24	23
PCRM	18.09%	21	20.79%	23	22
PDM	16.12%	19	18.81%	17	19
PL	9.14%	13	12.87%	9	11

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ADVANTAGES

- ✓ Maintains fair representation
- ✓ Enhanced MP-voter relations
- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ No by-elections
- ✓ Representation of regions
- ✓ Independent candidates

DISADVANTAGES

- ✓ Representation of minorities and women
- ✓ The Transnistria challenge
- ✓ Out of country voting

Major changes to electoral system design may have profound impact on political life and democratic consolidation. In Moldova, it is unclear what would be the result from making a full-blown reform from one system to another. Careful analysis and discussions around potential unintended consequences has not yet taken place. Policy-makers ought to be aware of the risks associated with “getting it wrong”.

Minor changes, on the other hand, may offer an avenue for addressing key problems as experienced under existing rules.

To enhance voter-MP relations

- **Open list system** whereby parties establish a priority list of candidates but where voters can make real impact on the rank-ordering and hence influence who accesses parliament.
- A set of **multimember districts** ought to be established. The establishment of districts should take account for existing administrative structures.

To protect proportionality of outcomes

→ **The legal threshold for political parties** should be reduced – to 3 or 4 percent – for single parties. In line with traditions in Moldova, incremental threshold may be used for party blocks.

→ **The legal threshold for independent candidates** should be removed. A natural threshold – resulting from other mathematical properties (electoral formula, district magnitude) of the electoral system – should apply. I.e. provided that an independent candidate receives voting support surpassing the required quota, as per the formula in place, he/she ought to be considered elected.

→ The effect of a **two-tier system** ought to be explored to guarantee proportionality of the results at the national level.

To ensure equal access

→ Electoral system reform efforts, including adjustments to the existing PR system in use, must pay attention to how changes might interact with the recently introduced **40 percent quota rule**. In conjunction with other changes, lawmakers might do well to already now strengthen the provisions – e.g. by applying the 40 percent quota to every five spots on the party lists – to ensure positive impact from head on.

→ Provided that Moldova changes the system by which representatives are elected to parliament, the issue of **minority** representation ought to be carefully monitored.

To promote meaningful participation

→ Provided that electoral reform entails the division of the country into electoral districts, one solution for Moldova is to establish separate electoral districts or constituencies for **citizen abroad**. One important aspect to consider is how many representatives should represent people living abroad. Considerations must take into account the number of persons living abroad (to secure an equal vote) but balance this against the fact that these persons are not experiencing the outcome of the vote on a daily basis (as compared to persons actually living in the country).

→ Provided that electoral reform entails the division of the country into electoral districts, policy-makers ought to explore the possibility for Moldova's Parliament to operate with **vacant seats**.

Electoral system reform can “nudge” or “tweak” political systems and processes in the right direction...

... but electoral system reform is not the solution to all ills...

Floor crossing

Political corruption

Free & independent media

Trust in institutions & processes

Politization/oligarchization of institutions

Quality of political leadership

Thanks!

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