

Useful
Relevant
Sustainable
Owned
For electoral co-operation



Toolkit for strategic
planning and prioritisation
of electoral co-operation

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DIVISION OF ELECTIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY
(DIRECTORATE GENERAL DEMOCRACY)

in co-operation with

ISIG - Institute of International Sociology of Gorizia

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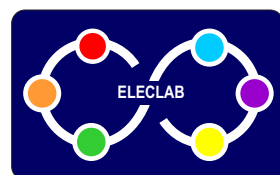
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Council of Europe methodology for electoral cooperation



Council of Europe Electoral Laboratory

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DIVISION OF ELECTIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY (DG DEMOCRACY)

The Division of Elections and Civil Society (Directorate General Democracy) at the Council of Europe provides advice and technical assistance to the member states on various aspects of elections, such as capacity building of electoral stakeholders and raising voter awareness.

In the field of capacity building, the Division of Elections and Civil Society works closely with election commissions to ensure that election commissioners are familiar with national election regulations and that they observe voters' rights when performing their duties. The division also works to enhance the capacities of other relevant electoral stakeholders, such as the bodies in charge of oversight of campaign and political party financing (for example, the State Audit Office of Georgia) or media coverage of election campaigns (such as the Audiovisual Council of the Republic of Moldova).

In this field, special attention is paid to enhancing the capacities of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in charge of domestic observation of elections (more than 5 000 domestic observers were trained ahead of the 2014 early presidential elections in Ukraine, for example). Furthermore, in order to guarantee access to information for domestic observers, an e-learning course with a certification based on two handbooks on report writing techniques and international standards in elections has been put at their disposal.

The division also contributes to raising awareness of the importance of participating in elections as voters and candidates. It assists national election administrations in developing voter education and information campaigns, with a special focus on women, first-time voters and persons belonging to national minorities (such as awareness-raising campaigns for first-time voters in Albania).

In addition, the technical assistance work has been carried out with a view to updating the Council of Europe Recommendation Rec(2004)11 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on legal, operational and technical standards for e-voting. At the 1289th Session of the Ministers' Deputies on 14 June 2017 the Committee of Ministers adopted a new Recommendation on standards for e-voting. The new Recommendation, CM/Rec(2017)5, which follows the previous Rec(2004)11, was developed to ensure that electronic voting complies with the principles of democratic elections, and is the only international standard on e-voting in existence to date.

The Council of Europe Electoral Laboratory (Eleclab) concentrates on the division's research and thematic work in order to innovate and produce useful and relevant guidelines in various areas of electoral matters ranging from primo voters, to better representation of women and modern strategic planning. Since 2019 the division has based its assistance and support activities in line with URSO methodology for electoral co-operation - Useful, Relevant, Sustainable and Owned. The URSO toolkit for strategic and co-operation planning is available online. Its primary audience is national electoral stakeholders who are continuously engaged in electoral reforms, in particular, central electoral commissions.

ISIG – INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGY GORIZIA

The Institute of International Sociology Gorizia (ISIG) is an independent research institute in the field of social sciences.

Founded in 1968 in Gorizia (Italy), ISIG envisages a future of peaceful relations fostered by international understanding, based on the acknowledgment of differences as resources.

ISIG carries out research at national and international levels, gathering knowledge on the problems arising from relations between states and ethnic groups and on the cultural, economic and social development of communities.

PREFACE

This toolkit for strategic planning and prioritisation of electoral co-operation provides concrete tools for public authorities to monitor and evaluate the implementation of electoral systems. It also guides electoral stakeholders step by step, while allowing for adaptation to national and local environments. This empowers users to use the Useful, Relevant, Sustained, Owned (URSO) paradigm independently and within context-specific practices and procedures.

It also offers modern, strategic planning that can be used as a model and adapted to the needs of a specific target audience.

The toolkit provides hands-on tools and practitioner-oriented guidelines that are useful, relevant and sustainable, and which ensure ownership by public authorities and practitioners who may wish to implement the URSO methodology.

The toolkit includes a chapter on the general indicators database, a repository of indicators that helps to assess electoral co-operation and implement effectively the European electoral performance index and electoral co-operation assessment with the aim of improving electoral processes and overall electoral systems.

Further on, the toolkit introduces the electoral co-operation assessment tool with the aim of increasing or strengthening electoral performance.

An important part of the toolkit is dedicated to step-by-step guidance for practitioners when implementing the URSO framework methodology for electoral co-operation, starting with an insight into context and needs analysis and the identification of objectives, which are followed by planning, defining priorities and implementation.

It also includes a continuous monitoring and evaluation mechanism, which goes beyond the electoral procedures of a specific electoral cycle, as an essential aspect of URSO strategic planning processes.

The toolkit concludes with training materials and three strategic plans which were carried out using the innovative URSO methodology for electoral co-operation: the Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova Strategic Plan for 2020-2023, the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training 2020-2023 Strategic Plan and the Central Election Commission of the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia Strategic Plan for 2020-2023.

With this toolkit, the Council of Europe hopes to contribute to further fostering electoral performance at national, regional and local levels and enhance the sustainability of public authorities' interventions in member states and beyond.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ECA – Electoral co-operation assessment

EEPI – European electoral performance index

GID – General indicators database

SWOT – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

URSO – Useful, relevant, sustainable and owned

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 RATIONALE AND AIMS OF THE TOOLKIT FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

The ultimate aim of this toolkit is to provide hands-on support to member states so that they can improve governance systems by fostering democratic electoral environments. Moreover, this toolkit aims to contribute to triggering a shift in mindset vis-à-vis the Council of Europe's role in overall electoral support to member states, that is from electoral assistance to electoral co-operation.

In order to do so, the new electoral co-operation framework aims to offer support to member states (to be understood as governments and civil society alike) that goes beyond standard assistance targeted at the procedures of a specific electoral cycle.

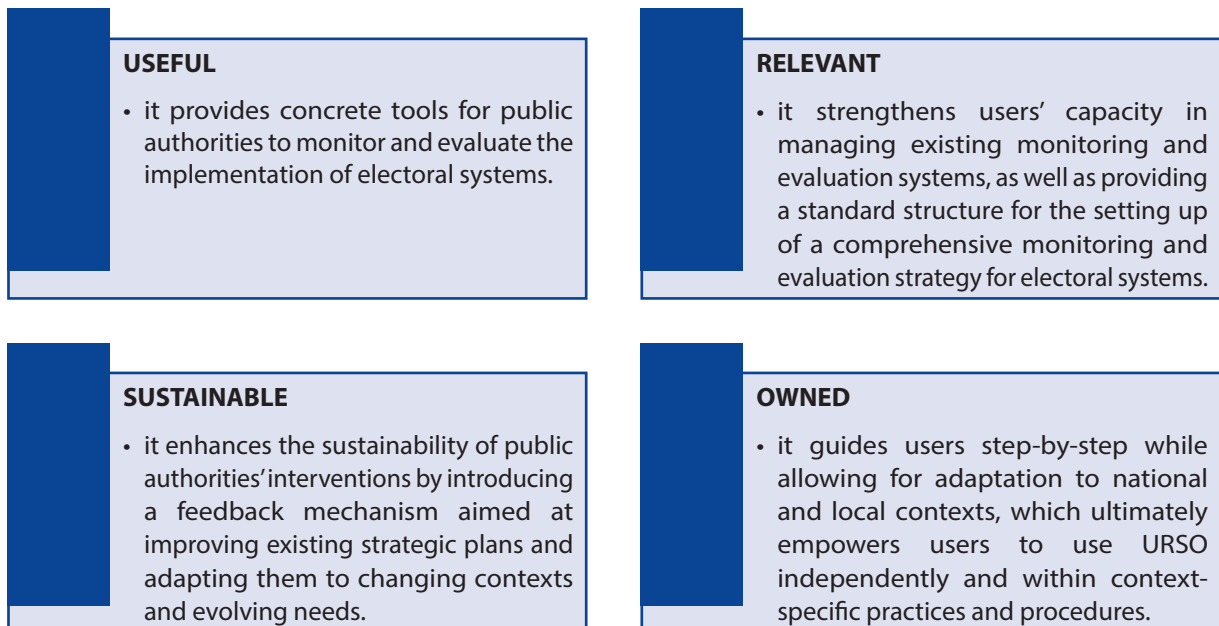
The new electoral co-operation framework will be based on a thorough understanding of the contexts of intervention, which considers overall electoral systems and electoral cultures of the areas of intervention (for example, member states, regions).

The methodological framework that will guarantee the operability of electoral co-operation draws inspiration from several of the Council of Europe's frameworks and tools, and especially the Organisation's URSO paradigm.

1.2 URSO PARADIGM FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

The URSO paradigm refers to the underlying values and principles that guide Council of Europe actions in designing and implementing tools and frameworks aimed at supporting member states to achieve better governance systems. The URSO paradigm also refers to fostering democratic environments, by providing hands-on tools and practitioner-oriented guidelines that are useful, relevant and sustainable and which ensure ownership by the public authorities and practitioners who may wish to implement the paradigm.

The key-elements of URSO are described in the figure below:



Chapter 2

FRAMEWORK METHODOLOGY FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION – THE PILLARS

The framework methodology for electoral co-operation implies strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation processes that are highly context-based and context-specific.

2.1 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESSES FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

Within the electoral co-operation framework, strategic planning¹ is understood as the process that enables the definition of a strategy or a direction based on a thorough understanding of a wider context, as well as of its constraints and available resources.

Electoral co-operation is deeply rooted in the understanding of specificities of local/national communities (such as stakeholder analysis, context analysis) on the one hand, and, on the other hand, in the integration of such specificities and insights within the strategies and plans that it aims to design and implement.

In the framework of electoral co-operation, strategic planning processes are applied both as concerns the design and implementation of the electoral co-operation per se (that is, potential Council of Europe interventions in collaboration with given member states), and in terms of drafting, implementing and monitoring strategic electoral plans (at regional and/or national level in given contexts/member states).

2.1.1 Context analysis – understanding needs and constraints so as to ensure URSO planning

The URSO paradigm for electoral co-operation is based on the assumption that, in order to ensure usefulness, relevance and sustainability and to promote the ownership of an intervention, there is a need for a thorough understanding of the context of intervention.

Generally, in the case of public interventions, the context implies:

- ▶ the features characterising the design and implementation of the intervention;
- ▶ the attitudes and perceptions of relevant actors for the intervention;
- ▶ the environment where the intervention takes place.

In terms of electoral co-operation, “context” refers both to internal features of the electoral system (that is, features directly describing the electoral system, as well as behaviour relating to and attitudes towards elections within society) and to features characterising overall societal dimensions that influence electoral performance and processes (that is, the overall societal characteristics in the country that influence the electoral system and its performance).

Analysing the context, outside the specific electoral settings, allows first for the identification of constraints and obstacles and, at a later stage of the analysis, it allows for the identification of related needs and solutions.

This analysis is crucial when setting valid strategic goals and objectives aimed at responding to the specificities of a given context, rather than complying with universal/general approaches that may hinder the planning process in terms of usefulness, relevance, sustainability, or ownership, for example.

1. The electoral co-operation framework draws on Toolkit IV on Strategic Municipal Planning and Performance Management at Local Level (Council of Europe, 2010) in the sense that it shares the community-oriented perspective. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/smp-strategic-municipal-planning/16807470ea>.

2.2 MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROCESSES FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION²

The electoral co-operation framework sets a continuous monitoring and evaluation mechanism, which goes beyond the electoral procedures of a specific electoral cycle, as an essential aspect of URSO strategic planning processes.

Such a mechanism aims to support:

- ▶ the Council of Europe in structuring and improving its electoral co-operation interventions – the work of the Division of Elections and Civil Society;
- ▶ member states in drafting strategies and related action plans which aim to foster electoral performance at national, regional and local levels.

Monitoring and evaluation processes are an integral part of strategic planning and reflect the life cycle of electoral co-operation:

1. a needs assessment and context analysis – to set strategic goals with relevant contexts (using tools such as the general indicators database (GID) and the electoral co-operation assessment (ECA));
2. plans of action (such as strategic electoral plans) – to respond to identified needs and incorporating monitoring and evaluation mechanisms;
3. monitoring and evaluation – to improve/modify implementation of plans of action (*in itinere* assessment), and to update/enrich the strategic direction of future electoral cycles.

Monitoring and evaluation processes imply the following phases:

- ▶ Phase 1 – *Ex ante* evaluation – setting the baseline for an intervention
 - The *ex ante* evaluation is performed at the beginning of a strategic planning process and it implies an understanding of the pre-existing situation (in terms of the electoral process, electoral system, overall societal environment, etc.).
 - Operationally, an *ex ante* evaluation is performed by analysing the results of the application of the ECA tool and it may take the form of a written report.
- ▶ Phase 2 – *In itinere* evaluation (or monitoring) – of a plan of action/strategic electoral plan
 - The monitoring processes of the plans of action/strategic electoral plans are implemented by means of output and outcome indicators, as identified in the strategic plan.
 - Operationally, monitoring implies collecting data on the implementation of the plan and checking compliance with set milestones, indicators, etc.
- ▶ Phase 3 – *Ex post* evaluation – Wind-up assessment of the intervention
 - Performed at the end of a specific intervention, a final evaluation is based on data gathered using the same process and tools used in the *ex ante* phase. Such data is then compared with the evaluation performed in the *ex ante* phase. *Ex post* evaluation also looks at the impact of the performed activity on a broader scale.
 - Operationally, an *ex post* evaluation is performed using the ECA tool.

2. For a full presentation of the methodology of monitoring and evaluation for electoral co-operation, see Appendix 4 – Monitoring and evaluation methodology.

Chapter 3

A CONTEXT-BASED APPROACH TO ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION – THE URSO PLANNING TOOLS³

The framework methodology for electoral co-operation foresees the creation of a multipurpose tool that is able to collect, systematise and assess data regarding both electoral processes and electoral contexts (that is, the system within which electoral processes operate). The framework methodology is based on the following components:

- ▶ the general indicators database (GID); and
- ▶ the electoral co-operation assessment (ECA).

Ultimately, the framework methodology for electoral co-operation represents the basis for setting up indexes, both at national and regional level, that will support the assessment of electoral performance in given areas by taking into consideration both the electoral process per se and the relevant electoral system from the perspective of a full electoral cycle.

3.1 THE GENERAL INDICATORS DATABASE – GID

The general indicators database (GID) is intended as a repository of indicators with which to assess electoral co-operation and as an easy-to-use companion for practitioners, policy makers and Council of Europe experts to implement effectively both the European electoral performance index (EEPI)⁴ and the ECA with the aim of improving both electoral processes and overall electoral systems.

The GID supports the implementation of the EEPI (which is based mostly on indicators related to the electoral process of a given member state) by focusing on the evolving interaction of the electoral process with the overall electoral system and incorporating elements (variables) of the system that might influence/impact electoral performance.

The GID is based on 300 indicators related to five different dimensions:

- ▶ institutional
- ▶ administrative
- ▶ social
- ▶ human capital
- ▶ economic.

These dimensions are divided into two groups:

- ▶ internal; and
- ▶ external.

3. For a full presentation of the URSO for electoral co-operation e-tool, see Appendix 3 – E-tool methodological note.

4. The Division of Elections and Civil Society within the Directorate General Democracy of the Council of Europe (DG II) provides advice and technical assistance to member states on several issues related to electoral processes. As part of such activity, the division designed the EEPI with the aim of identifying indicators able to measure the degree of compliance of member states with international and European standards for elections.

The following table presents the internal/external taxonomy for each of the dimensions above:

	INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
<i>Institutional</i>	dimensions referring mainly to the electoral process	dimensions pertaining to the overall electoral system
	refers to norms and principles regulating the electoral process	refers to norms and principles regulating the public affairs of a given context
<i>Administrative</i>	refers to practices and procedures of the electoral process	refers to processes and procedures of public authorities within a given context
<i>Social</i>	refers to the variables that describe the actors and target groups involved in the electoral process	refers to the variables that impact on the electoral performance in terms of awareness, inclusiveness, etc.
<i>Human capital</i>	refers to the capacities and/or knowledge that might impact/shape the electoral process	refers to the capacities and/or knowledge present within the population of a given context
<i>Economic</i>	refers to the financial resources that might impact/shape the electoral process	refers to the financial resources present within a given context

The GID indicators form the basis of the ECA variables.

3.2 ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION ASSESSMENT – ECA

The ECA is an assessment tool that supports users by means of an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), so as to identify priority areas of intervention aimed at increasing/strengthening electoral performance.

It reinforces the implementation of the EEPI by taking into consideration the context within which an electoral process operates.

The main purpose of the ECA is to identify the variables that impact positively or negatively on the electoral system in order to prioritise areas of intervention.

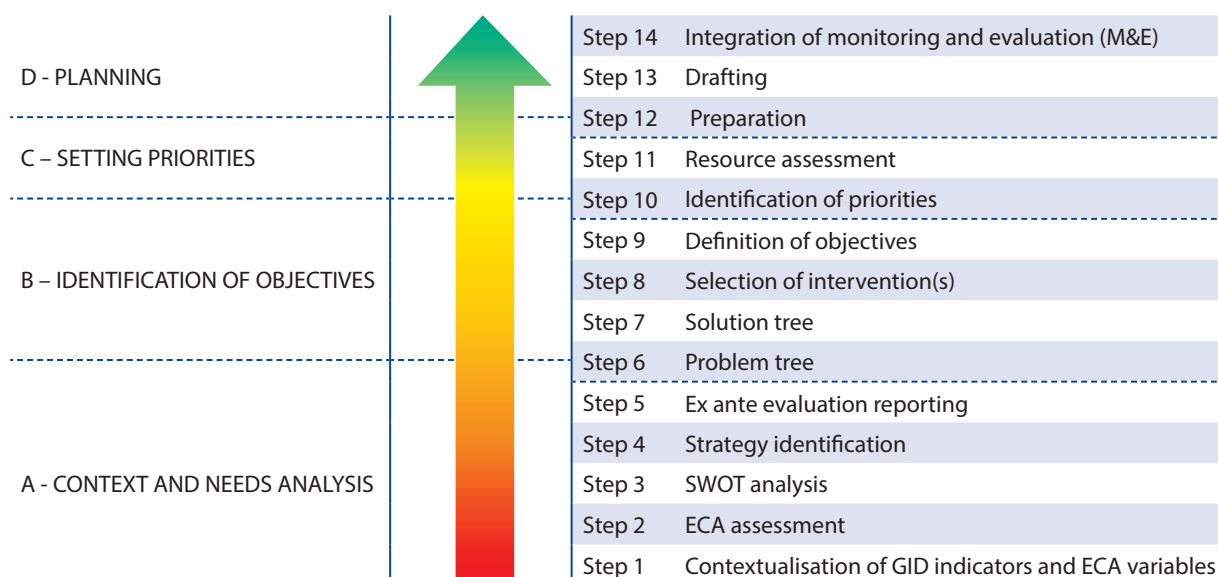
The ECA is intended as an assessment tool which takes users through the evaluation of both internal and external variables in order to assess the overall performance of the electoral system.

Based on the outcome of the assessment, users can determine the most effective intervention strategy. In fact, the application of the ECA tool will allow for the implementation of a SWOT analysis, which will contribute to the identification of relevant areas for possible intervention (that is, the analysis will give an indication of the potential positive and negative factors, both internal and external, to be either capitalised on or overcome, by a particular future intervention).

Chapter 4

ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION – A PRACTITIONER’S GUIDE

The following paragraphs are intended as a step-by-step guide for practitioners to help them set up and implement the URSO framework methodology for electoral co-operation.



4.1 CONTEXT AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

Prior to the planning of any intervention aimed at strengthening or increasing electoral performance in a given area, there is a need to adequately describe the status quo with regard to electoral performance. This implies a thorough observation of all the elements which describe and influence electoral performance.

Electoral performance is influenced by a number of features, classified for the purpose of this toolkit as follows:

- ▶ features inherent to the electoral system (such as legal and administrative procedures) of a given member state/in a given area;
- ▶ features inherent to the overall electoral culture within a given member state/area;
- ▶ external factors (social, economic, political, etc.) that may influence overall electoral performance.

In the framework methodology for electoral co-operation, the ECA tool is applied in order to describe and analyse the context at hand.

The following paragraphs detail the operational steps for a “context and needs analysis” as a basis for the development of a through description of the overall context.

4.1.1 STEP 1 – Contextualisation of GID indicators and ECA variables

In order to ensure the collection of relevant data in a given area/member state, the URSO electoral co-operation framework envisages a dedicated activity of adaptation of the GID and consequently of the ECA variables.

This will be run jointly by the Council of Europe experts (from the Division of Elections and Civil Society) and representatives of the local partner (such as central electoral commissions or other relevant electoral authorities).

The adaptation process will consist of a thorough review of the relevance of the indicators and variables for the context concerned (a participatory review of the indicators, in meetings/Skype calls, e-mails, for example).

4.1.2 STEP 2 – ECA assessment

Performing the ECA assessment implies data collection using the ECA tool.

The data collection process will be carried out jointly by the Council of Europe experts (from the Division of Elections and Civil Society) and representatives of the local partners involved in electoral co-operation (such as central electoral commissions or other relevant electoral authorities).

The URSO co-operation framework envisages the development of context-specific data collection processes, which aim to ensure:

- ▶ coherence with available resources (financial, human, etc.); and
- ▶ compliance with context requirements, etc.

To this end, the data collection process will be designed individually each time a new electoral co-operation procedure is activated. However, it must be stressed that the tool should collect data from key stakeholders within a particular context (namely, representatives of central electoral commissions and/or other electoral authorities).

The data collection process might imply:

- ▶ desk research activities, such as gathering secondary data for the purpose of the GID;
- ▶ conducting participatory meetings with relevant stakeholders (focus groups with members of the central electoral commissions, for example);
- ▶ interviewing expert stakeholders (by means of in-depth interviews with representatives of electoral authorities, for example);
- ▶ collecting data via surveys (such as online questionnaires distributed to expert groups within a given context).

Finally, performing the ECA assessment enables the identification of a general overview of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT).

4.1.3 STEP 3 – SWOT analysis

The overall SWOT analysis results (the first output of the ECA assessment) provides a preliminary representation of the electoral system under analysis in terms of the internal and external, positive and negative variables which affect it.

This step implies reviewing the overall SWOT analysis results:

- ▶ considering the operational variables (the second output of the ECA assessment) for each dimension so as to describe the “facts” that represent a given problem;
- ▶ identifying the components of both the electoral process and system which are susceptible to observation and measurement.

Operationally, this step may be implemented within an expert meeting/focus group/workshop with relevant stakeholders (such as local and or international experts, representatives of electoral authorities).

4.1.4 STEP 4 – Strategy identification

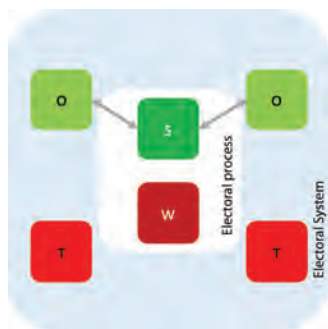
The visualisation of the ECA assessment, coupled with the summary of relevant operational variables, allows users to identify relevant strategic directions that will guide them in drafting the plan of action (that is, the strategic plan).

An action strategy needs to be drafted within the framework of a scenario which considers the present situation of a given context, while aiming to increase its overall (electoral) performance.

The chosen strategy, the one considered to be the most appropriate for a specific future target, is the primary tool used for action, and the general framework within which decisions are made.

The following strategies are intended as ideal type, standard models serving as a basis on which to build an action strategy based on the SWOT results:

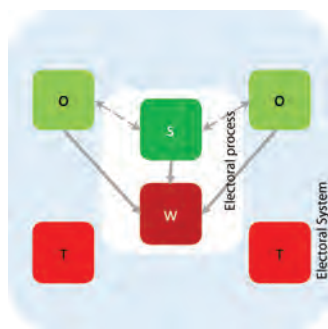
Strategy 1: strengthening strategy



This strategy is based on the strengthening of positive indicators, both internal and external to the electoral process, on the assumption that by so doing, negative factors will be lessened and bypassed, or absorbed by positive indicators.

Application of this strategy is suggested, where possible, in order to build on existing strong, stable strengths (S) and opportunities (O) and to stimulate the rest of the system, thus transforming or mitigating the weight of weaknesses (W) and threats (T).

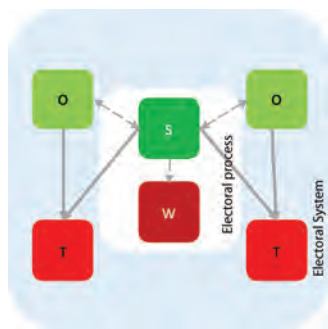
Strategy 2: overcoming strategy



This strategy is more cautious and systemic, and less expansionist than the first one. Applying a reverse logic, it acts on positive indicators (strengths and opportunities), in order to decrease, if not neutralise internal negative indicators (weaknesses). The aim of this strategy is to preserve and balance positive factors, thus preventing major internal fractures.

In addition to applying this strategy to a strategic plan that focuses on legal and institutional reforms, it is more generally appropriate where, together with evident and substantial obstacles, there are also sufficiently widespread strengths (S) and opportunities (O) to overcome the existing weaknesses (W).

Strategy 3: mobilising strategy for context control



This strategy emphasises the effect of strengths (S) and opportunities (O) on the negative (T) context, which poses serious challenges to the establishment of a positive system.

This strategy is appropriate where external threats (T) are so overwhelming or widespread that it becomes necessary to exploit strengths and opportunities in order to limit the influence of external threats (T).

4.1.5 STEP 5 – Ex ante evaluation reporting

The results of the ECA assessment also serve as a basis for the preparation of the *ex ante* evaluation. Operationally, the evaluation implies the drafting of a qualitative report.

4.2 IDENTIFICATION OF OBJECTIVES

The context analysis developed by means of the ECA tool results in the identification of possible objectives to be addressed within the strategic plan.

To this end, four steps are proposed, which ideally represent the meetings carried out by experts together with the relevant stakeholders.

4.2.1 STEP 6 – Problem tree

A problem tree is an easy-to-use tool which helps to provide an in-depth understanding of the components of a problem. This implies both:

- ▶ analysing identified problems in terms of causes, effects and potential connections; and
- ▶ clustering SWOT variables according to the chosen strategy (strengthening, overcoming or mobilising).

When analysing and clustering the SWOT variables, the following aspects should be considered:

- ▶ a focus on weaknesses to help identify the core problem;
- ▶ a focus on (remaining) weaknesses and threats so as to identify causes and effects;
- ▶ a focus on the operational variables for each dimension.

4.2.2 STEP 7 – Solution tree

A solution tree helps provide an in-depth understanding of the components of the possible solutions to identified problems. This step implies:

- ▶ analysing potential solutions and their effects so to identify possible objectives; and
- ▶ clustering SWOT variables (such as priorities) according to chosen strategy.

When analysing and clustering the SWOT variables, the following aspects should be considered:

- ▶ a focus on relevant strengths to identify the core objective;
- ▶ a focus on (remaining) strengths and opportunities to identify possible solutions;
- ▶ a focus on the operational variables for each dimension.

4.2.3 STEP 8 – Selection of Intervention(s)

Looking at the “branches” of both the problem and solution trees it is possible to start the identification of feasible/achievable objectives for the strategic plan. This step implies:

- ▶ choosing the most appropriate activities to be undertaken for each component identified;
 - in the process of identifying activities, particular attention should be paid to feasibility. In doing so, operational variables assessed as “positives” and “negatives” need to be considered;
- ▶ setting a logical hierarchy of sub-objectives that need to be achieved progressively in order to reach the set goal;
- ▶ looking for relevant operational variables dimension per dimension.

4.2.4 STEP 9 – Definition of objectives

Upon completion of the above steps, it is necessary to clearly define the identified objectives. To this end, it is recommended to follow the SMART criteria⁵ by ensuring that the description of each objective complies with the following checklist:

- ▶ Specific – targets a specific area for improvement.
- ▶ Measurable – quantifies or at least suggests an indicator of progress.
- ▶ Assignable – specifies who will do it.
- ▶ Realistic – states what results can realistically be achieved, given available resources.
- ▶ Time-related – specifies when the result(s) can be achieved.

5. Doran, G. T. (1981). “There’s a S.M.A.R.T. way to write management’s goals and objectives”, *Management Review*, 70 (11), pp. 35-36.

4.3 SETTING PRIORITIES

Once they have been defined, the SMART objectives should be then prioritised in order identify those that should be included in the strategic plan.

4.3.1 STEP 10 – Identification of priorities

Taking into account the information gathered during the process up to that point, objectives should be ordered firstly by the level of perceived urgency and importance.

4.3.2 STEP 11 – Resource assessment

The ordering of objectives should then be reviewed in terms of feasibility, that is, by assessing the available resources necessary for their achievement. This implies:

- ▶ assessing the cognitive resources available (the level of know-how available to reach the set objective);
- ▶ assessing the actual resources available (human, financial, material, etc.);
- ▶ assigning the resources for the implementation of the plan of action/strategic plan.

4.4 PLANNING

Drawing up the plan of action/strategic plan takes place on two levels: preparation and drafting. It is recommended that, as for the steps above, the following activities take place within the scope of a participatory workshop or meetings with relevant stakeholders.

4.4.1 Step 12 – Preparation

This step is concerned with the attribution of responsibilities and the expected outputs. This, in turn, implies the setting of an overall time frame based on the identification of the length of each activity. By so doing it is possible to establish the succession of interrelationships between activities. Each activity should then be clearly defined, including with reference to the necessary resources (human, technical, legal, financial, etc.). At the end of the process, by taking into consideration the insights relevant to the contextualisation of GID indicators and ECA variables, it is possible to identify and select the indicators needed to monitor and assess the performance of each activity.

The output of this preparation is a detailed GANTT chart.

4.4.2 Step 13 – Drafting

Once all the necessary information has been gathered, it is possible to draft the strategic plan, which should include the following:

- ▶ vision – focus on the envisaged features of the electoral system;
- ▶ mission – focus on the current operations and statutory mandate;
- ▶ overall objective – focus on the overall expected results;
- ▶ outcome – focus on the expected impact;
- ▶ outputs – focus on the immediate and concrete results (results which are directly achievable through implementation of the plan);
- ▶ work programme – focus on the activities planned for achieving the outputs, including references to monitoring and evaluation processes (see below).

4.4.3 Step 14 – Integration of monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

The strategic plan is intended as a practical tool contributing to the enhancement of the electoral performance. In order to determine the extent of such contribution it is necessary to establish a monitoring and evaluation mechanism.⁶ Based on the results of the *ex ante* evaluation, monitoring and evaluation should be considered

6. See Appendix 4 – Monitoring and evaluation methodology.

as a continuous, transversal task which is considered in the strategic plan but, more importantly, is embedded in the electoral system.

Setting up a monitoring and evaluation system implies the following:

- ▶ identifying indicators:
 - indicators are linked to objective-based planning and measure how the objectives, results and activities will be achieved.
- ▶ setting milestones:
 - milestones are specific points/events during the progress of implementation of the strategic plan.
- ▶ setting up data collection processes:
 - templates and deadlines for the collection of data for evaluation and monitoring.

4.5 IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC PLAN – NEXT STEPS FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

The implementation of the plan refers both to the electoral strategic plans (that is, member state level), and to the implementation of concrete actions related to the electoral co-operation between the Council of Europe and member states.

During the implementation phase of electoral co-operation, the monitoring and evaluation mechanism set up in the strategic plan will allow the constant checking of progress and compliance with the set milestones, objectives, etc.

The monitoring activities will imply:

- ▶ periodic data collection on set indicators;
- ▶ checking the compliance with set milestones;
- ▶ drawing up corrective interventions, if needed.

At the conclusion of the implementation phase, evaluation (*ex post*) activities will imply:

- ▶ data collection – using tools and indicators used for the baseline assessment/context analysis (GID indicators and ECA variables);
- ▶ data analysis – results are interpreted by looking at achievements, but also at the impact of the performed activity on a broader scale;
- ▶ report drafting – drafting the final evaluation report.

The *ex post* evaluation plays a crucial role in improving/modifying/adapting future interventions, which implies that once electoral co-operation is up and running, the *ex post* evaluation might represent, in fact, a solid platform for a baseline assessment in view of future interventions (that is, the cycle of strategic planning fostered by the electoral co-operation framework is not interrupted at the end of the electoral cycle, but rather expands and transforms, with benefits for future developments within a given electoral system.)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – GENERAL INDICATORS DATABASE

APPENDIX 2 – ECA ASSESSMENT – E-TOOL

APPENDIX 3 – E-TOOL METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

APPENDIX 4 – MONITORING AND EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

APPENDIX 5 – TRAINING MATERIAL

**APPENDIX 6 – CENTRAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF THE REPUBLIC
OF MOLDOVA STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2020-2023**

**APPENDIX 7 – CENTRE FOR CONTINUOUS ELECTORAL
TRAINING 2020-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN**

**APPENDIX 8 – CENTRAL ELECTION COMMISSION ATU GAGAUZIA
STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2020-2023**

USEFUL RELEVANT SUSTAINABLE OWNED FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX 1 – GENERAL INDICATORS DATABASE (GID)



Toolkit for strategic planning
and prioritisation
of electoral co-operation



APPENDIX 1 – GENERAL INDICATORS DATABASE (GID)

The general indicators database (GID) is intended as repository of indicators with which to assess electoral co-operation and as an easy-to-use companion for practitioners, policy makers and Council of Europe experts to implement effectively both the European electoral performance index (EEPI) and the ECA with the aim of improving both electoral processes and overall electoral systems.

The GID supports the implementation of the EEPI, which is based mostly on indicators related to the electoral process of a given member state, by focusing on the evolving interaction of the electoral process with the overall electoral system, and incorporating elements (variables) of the system that might influence/impact on electoral performance.

The GID is based on 300 indicators related to five dimensions:

- ▶ institutional
- ▶ administrative
- ▶ social
- ▶ human capital
- ▶ economic.

These dimensions are divided into two groups:

- ▶ internal - referring mainly to the electoral process; and
- ▶ external - pertaining to the overall electoral system.

The following table summarises the content of the GID repository.

#	Internal/External	Dimension	GID indicators	ECA variables
1	Internal	Institutional	61	30
2	Internal	Administrative	49	17
3	Internal	Social	15	6
4	Internal	Human capital	9	3
5	Internal	Economic	9	9
6	External	Institutional	19	11
7	External	Administrative	39	14
8	External	Social	45	26
9	External	Human capital	24	16
10	External	Economic	30	21

Browse through the following sheet to see GID indicators and ECA variables organised by dimension.

The database is optimised for pdf printing.

1 - INTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
1	The rules of the electoral law have a legislative rank	Clarity of the legal framework of electoral law(s)	Electoral Consciousness
2	The electoral law provides norms that guarantee democratic elections	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on democracy	Electoral Consciousness
3	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at guaranteeing the respect for human rights	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Electoral Consciousness
4	The electoral law foresees that legislative bodies are elected at intervals of less than five years	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on democracy	Electoral Consciousness
5	The electoral law foresees that at least one of the chambers of the national parliament is elected directly	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on democracy	Electoral Consciousness
6	The electoral law foresees that local assemblies are elected directly	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on democracy	Electoral Consciousness
7	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at protecting the right to freedom of expression	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of expression	Free Choice
8	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at protecting the right to freedom of the press	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of expression	Free Choice
9	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at protecting the right to freedom of movement within the country	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of movement	Free Choice
10	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at protecting the right to freedom of assembly and association for political purposes	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Free Choice
11	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at protecting the right to creating political parties	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Free Choice
12	The electoral law presents restrictions only under certain conditions of legal basis, public interest and proportionality	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Free Choice
13	The electoral law provides for the possibility of scrutiny of the steps of the electoral process by stakeholders (e.g. observers, voters)	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on transparency	Free Choice
14	National and international election observers have the opportunity to observe the elections during the three phases	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on transparency	Free Choice
15	The electoral law clearly defines any limitations to observers' activity	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on transparency	Free Choice
16	The electoral law foresees sanctions in case of electoral fraud	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on transparency	Free Choice
17	The electoral law ensures inclusiveness of national minorities	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on inclusiveness	Equality
18	The electoral law ensures inclusiveness of women	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on inclusiveness	Equality
19	The electoral law ensures appeal procedures	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on transparency	Accountability

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
20	The electoral law fights hate speech	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of expression	Free Choice
21	The electoral law applies equally to all parties, regardless of their size	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on inclusiveness	Accountability
22	The electoral law includes specific provisions regarding the establishment/existence of an impartial body which is competent for the application of the electoral law	Effectiveness of the legal framework on the establishment of the central electoral body	Electoral Consciousness
23	The electoral law includes specific provisions on the status of the managing body (in terms of legal status, independency and mandate)	Effectiveness of the legal framework on the status of the central electoral body	Electoral Consciousness
24	Political parties are equally or proportionally represented in the central electoral bodies	Representativeness provisions on the central electoral body composition	Accountability
25	Political parties are able to observe the work of the central electoral body	Transparency provisions on central electoral body activities	Accountability
26	The electoral law includes provisions guaranteeing non-partisan electoral divisions	Transparency and non-discriminatory provisions on electoral divisions establishment	Electoral Consciousness
27	The electoral law includes provisions guaranteeing that electoral divisions do not discriminate against minorities	Transparency and non-discriminatory provisions on electoral divisions establishment	Equality
28	The law provides for an independent mechanism of media control over electoral matters	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of expression	Free Choice
29	Changes to the lists of electors are possible before the poll, but not in the polling station	Accuracy provisions on establishment and implementation of voter registry and voters' lists	Participation
30	The electoral law clearly establishes the criteria allowing citizens to register on the electoral list	Inclusiveness provisions on voter registry and voters' lists	Participation
31	The electoral law clearly states the reasons why electors cannot register on voters' lists (e.g. proportionality principle, reasons related to mental health)	Transparency provisions on voter registry and voters' lists	Participation
32	The electoral law establishes the minimum age for voting	Integrity provisions on eligibility criteria for voters	Participation
33	The right to vote is acquired with the civil age of majority	Integrity provisions on eligibility criteria for voters	Participation
34	The law establishes the right to vote of citizens residing abroad	Integrity provisions on voter registry and voters' lists of citizens residing abroad	Participation
35	The electoral law includes provisions on the possibility for foreign residents to vote in local elections (possibility of length of residence requirement)	Integrity provisions on voter registry and voters' lists of citizens residing abroad	Participation
36	The residency requirement for access to the right to vote does not exceed six months for nationals concerning local or regional elections	Integrity provisions on voter registry and voters' lists of citizens residing abroad	Participation
37	The law recognises political parties from national minorities	Inclusiveness provisions allowing for political parties of national minorities	Participation
38	If the submission of candidatures is subject to a condition of signature, the law must not require the signature of more than 1% of the electorate	Inclusiveness provisions on candidatures submission	Participation
39	The minimum age for being a candidate is governed by a text	Inclusiveness provisions on candidatures submission	Participation
40	There are no restrictions for representatives of the opposition to register candidates	Inclusiveness provisions on candidatures submission	Participation

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
41	There are no restrictions for women to register as candidates	Inclusiveness provisions on candidatures submission targeting women	Participation
42	There are no restrictions for members of ethnic and national minorities to register as candidates	Inclusiveness provisions on candidatures submission targeting ethnic and national minorities	Participation
43	Legal means are in place to ensure a minimum percentage of each sex among the candidates	Inclusiveness provisions on candidatures submission targeting women	Participation
44	The electoral law guarantees the right of all parties to engage in campaigning activities	Equal opportunities provisions targeting campaigning activities	Equal opportunity
45	Public authorities are subject to a duty of neutrality during the election campaign (i.e. the financing of political parties and candidates, the electoral posters display and the right to demonstrate)	Equal opportunities provisions targeting media	Awareness raising
46	Representatives of political parties and/or candidates may observe the holding of the ballot	Transparency provisions on electoral rules	Electoral Consciousness
47	All citizens entitled to vote (i.e. electors) are given the possibility to vote	Inclusiveness provisions on electoral rules	Electoral Consciousness
48	The suffrage is free and individual	Integrity provisions on electoral rules	Electoral Consciousness
49	The law allows for the presence of members representing parties and candidates at polling stations	Transparency provisions on electoral rules	Electoral Consciousness
50	The number of votes is equal for all electors	Integrity provisions on electoral rules	Electoral Consciousness
51	The polling stations are accessible to all electors (e.g. no architectural barriers)	Inclusiveness provisions on electoral rules	Electoral Consciousness
52	The law guarantees for the secrecy of the vote	Integrity provisions on electoral rules	Electoral Consciousness
53	The counting of votes respects the integrity principle	Integrity provisions on electoral rules	Electoral Consciousness
54	The counting of votes respects the transparency principle	Transparency provisions on electoral rules	Electoral Consciousness
55	The law clearly states the parameters against which the correctness of the vote is verified	Accuracy provisions on electoral rules	Electoral Consciousness
56	The law provides the possibility for external observers to perform a parallel count of votes	Transparency provisions on electoral rules	Electoral Consciousness
57	The law regulates the process of transmitting results to the central/centralised electoral authorities/offices	Transparency provisions on electoral rules	Electoral Consciousness
58	The law provides for the establishment of an electoral appeals body	Transparency provisions on appeal procedures	Electoral Consciousness
59	The law guarantees the right of all electors to electoral appeal	Integrity provisions on appeal procedures	Electoral Consciousness
60	When the higher electoral commissions are appeal bodies, they must be able to overrule the decisions of the lower election commissions	Integrity provisions on appeal procedures	Electoral Consciousness
61	The appeals body in electoral matters must be able to annul the result of a ballot in case of major irregularity and require the organisation of a new ballot	Accuracy provisions on appeal procedures	Electoral Consciousness

2 - INTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE DIMENSION

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
1	The appeal procedure is simple	Inclusiveness measures on appeal procedures	Electoral Consciousness
2	The law clearly defines the appeal procedure (jurisdiction, responsibilities of the various bodies, quorum requirement)	Accuracy measures on appeal procedures	Electoral Consciousness
3	The appeal procedure envisages reasonable fines/ expenses	Accuracy measures on appeal procedures	Electoral Consciousness
4	The final instance of appeal in electoral matters is a court	Accuracy measures on appeal procedures	Electoral Consciousness
5	The appeal and decision-making deadlines for appeals must be three to five days in the first place	Accuracy measures on appeal procedures	Electoral Consciousness
6	The law guarantees the existence of a competent body to deal with any dispute concerning the electoral law	Integrity measures on appeal procedures	Electoral Consciousness
7	The rules regarding the submission of the candidatures are clearly stated (e.g. rules regarding the deadline)	Accuracy measures on candidatures submission	Participation
8	The rules of registration of candidates are published/available for consultation	Transparency measures on candidatures submission	Participation
9	The process of validation of applications is clear and transparent	Transparency measures on candidatures submission	Participation
10	The process of validation of applications must be completed before the start of the election campaign	Transparency measures on candidatures submission	Participation
11	The electoral rules/law clearly define the opening hours of polling stations	Accuracy measures on electoral rules / procedure	Electoral Consciousness
12	The opening and closing time are respected by polling stations	Accuracy measures on electoral rules / procedure	Electoral Consciousness
13	The electronic voting mechanism is reliable	Accuracy measures on electoral rules / procedure	Electoral Consciousness
14	The law clearly specifies the procedures for the identification of voters before the vote	Accuracy measures on electoral rules / procedure	Electoral Consciousness
15	The law provides for sanctioning measures in case of infringement of the procedures for identification of voters	Accuracy measures on electoral rules / procedure	Electoral Consciousness
16	The law provides clear rules regulating process of counting votes	Accuracy measures on electoral rules / procedure	Electoral Consciousness
17	The law provides clear indications related to the counting of void, blank and damaged ballots	Accuracy measures on electoral rules / procedure	Electoral Consciousness
18	The counting of void, blank and damaged ballots is done honestly and transparently	Accuracy measures on electoral rules / procedure	Electoral Consciousness
19	The two parameters taken into account to verify the correctness of the vote are the number of electors having voted (signatures) and the number of ballots in the ballot box	Accuracy measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness
20	The voting mechanism allows for different voting options (e.g. voting at the polling station, voting by proxy, postal voting)	Inclusiveness measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness
21	The voting mechanism allows for electronic voting	Inclusiveness measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness
22	The law provides specific measures for ensuring the access to vote of electors with motor disabilities	Inclusiveness measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness
23	The law provides specific measures for ensuring the access to vote of electors with sensory disabilities	Inclusiveness measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness
24	The secrecy of the vote is respected	Integrity measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
25	The security of the ballot box is assured	Integrity measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness
26	The electoral material is made available to the elector	Transparency measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness
27	The external observers perform parallel counts of votes	Transparency measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness
28	The results are transmitted directly, immediately and transparently to the centralising office	Transparency measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness
29	The minutes of meetings of lower electoral bodies are accessible	Transparency measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness
30	The lists of voters or non-voters are accessible	Transparency measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness
31	The results protocols on voting are subject to publicity	Transparency measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness
32	The final results are published within a maximum of five days following election day	Transparency measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness
33	National authorities take into consideration the reports of national and international election observers	Transparency measures on electoral rules / procedures	Electoral Consciousness
34	Electoral lists are established by means of a regular census	Accuracy measures on voter registry and voters' lists	Participation
35	The electoral lists are regularly updated with the names of citizens residing abroad	Accuracy measures on voter registry and voters' lists targeting citizens residing abroad	Participation
36	Citizens residing abroad are provided with the possibility to vote from abroad	Accuracy measures on voter registry and voters' lists targeting citizens residing abroad	Participation
37	Mechanisms are put in place to facilitate the registration of citizens on electoral lists	Inclusiveness measures on voter registry and voters' lists	Participation
38	The electoral law ensures the possibility of all electors to register on the lists of electors	Transparency measures on voter registry and voters' lists	Participation
39	Public authorities are obliged to guarantee and respect the neutrality of coverage by the audiovisual media	Equal opportunity measures targeting media coverage during election campaigns	Awareness raising
40	The electoral lists are perennial	Accuracy measures on voter registry and voters' lists	Participation
41	The electoral lists are updated regularly	Accuracy measures on voter registry and voters' lists	Participation
42	The electoral law includes specific provisions for the non-discrimination of national minorities	Inclusiveness measures targeting national minorities	Equality
43	The electoral law includes specific provisions guaranteeing the minimum percentage of 40% of women in parliament	Inclusiveness measures targeting women representation	Equality
44	The electoral law includes specific provisions guaranteeing the minimum percentage of 40% of women in the lower house of parliament of 40%	Inclusiveness measures targeting women representation	Equality
45	The electoral law includes provisions that establish a commission for electoral divisions formed by independent members	Integrity measures on electoral divisions	Electoral Consciousness
46	The electoral divisions take into account the opinion of a dedicated commission of independent members	Integrity measures on electoral divisions are established (based on independent assessment and procedures)	Electoral Consciousness
47	The electoral law includes provisions that ensure that new electoral divisions are carried out at least every 10 years	Integrity measures on electoral divisions are established (based on independent assessment and procedures)	Electoral Consciousness
48	The electoral law includes provisions that ensure the even distribution among constituencies (maximum 15% difference, without special circumstances)	Integrity measures on electoral divisions are established (based on independent assessment and procedures)	Electoral Consciousness
49	The electoral lists are published	Transparency measures on voter registry and voters' lists	Participation

3 - INTERNAL SOCIAL DIMENSION

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
1	The law foresees specific measures for raising electoral awareness among the population (e.g. importance of voting)	Electoral awareness-raising measures targeting the general population	Awareness raising
2	Specific programmes exist raising electoral awareness among the population in general	Electoral awareness-raising measures targeting the general population	Awareness raising
3	National authorities contribute to raising awareness on elections (e.g. by building specific platforms)	Electoral awareness-raising measures targeting the general population	Awareness raising
4	The law foresees specific measures for raising electoral awareness among specific target -groups (e.g. first-time voters, elderly citizens, minority groups)	Electoral awareness-raising measures targeting specific groups	Awareness raising
5	There are specific programmes for raising electoral awareness among first- time voters	Electoral awareness-raising measures targeting specific groups	Awareness raising
6	There are specific programmes for raising electoral awareness among elderly citizens	Electoral awareness-raising measures targeting specific groups	Awareness raising
7	There are specific programmes for raising electoral awareness among minority groups	Electoral awareness-raising measures targeting specific groups	Awareness raising
8	The electoral law includes provisions for the promotion of anti-fraud electoral behaviour	Awareness-raising measures targeting anti-fraud behaviours	Awareness raising
9	There are specific programmes for raising awareness so to prevent electoral fraud	Awareness-raising measures targeting anti-fraud electoral behaviours	Awareness raising
10	The expression of political pluralism is assured in the media	Inclusiveness measures ensuring political pluralism in the media	Equality
11	Public service media are independent	Inclusiveness measures ensuring political pluralism in the media	Free Choice
12	The process of selecting candidates within political parties is transparent	Integrity guarantee on candidate selection / proposal	Participation
13	Candidates within parties are not selected by top leadership	Integrity guarantee on candidate selection / proposal	Participation
14	The electoral law includes specific provisions on coverage of elections by audiovisual media	Equal opportunity measures targeting media coverage of election campaigns	Awareness raising
15	The provisions on coverage of elections by audiovisual media guarantee a balance between freedom of expression and equality of opportunities (i.e. either strict or proportional)	Equal opportunity measures targeting media coverage of election campaigns	Awareness raising

4 - INTERNAL HUMAN CAPITAL DIMENSION

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
1	The composition of the central electoral body ensures high levels of knowledge, capacity and expertise	Overall technical capacity of the central electoral body	Electoral Consciousness
2	The members of central electoral bodies receive electoral training on European standards	Overall technical capacity of the central electoral body	Electoral Consciousness
3	The members of central electoral bodies receive electoral training on new legislation at the national level	Overall technical capacity of the central electoral body	Electoral Consciousness
4	The electoral law foresees specific measures to increase knowledge about electoral procedures (e.g. electoral rights, guidelines on how to vote, when to vote)	Effectiveness of measures aiming to increase the knowledge of the electoral system and procedures among the population	Awareness raising
5	There are specific programmes set up that promote knowledge about electoral procedures (e.g. guidelines on how to vote, when to vote)	Effectiveness of measures aiming to increase the knowledge of the electoral system and procedures among the population	Awareness raising
6	The law foresees specific measures for increasing electoral knowledge among specific target groups (e.g. first-time voters, elderly citizens, minority groups)	Effectiveness of measures aiming to increase the knowledge of the electoral system and procedures targeting specific groups	Awareness raising
7	There are specific programmes for increasing electoral knowledge among first-time voters	Effectiveness of measures aiming to increase the knowledge of the electoral system and procedures targeting specific groups	Awareness raising
8	There are specific programmes for increasing electoral knowledge among first-time voters	Effectiveness of measures aiming to increase the knowledge of the electoral system and procedures targeting specific groups	Awareness raising
9	There are specific programmes for increasing electoral knowledge among minority groups	Effectiveness of measures aiming to increase the knowledge of the electoral system and procedures targeting specific groups	Awareness raising

5 - INTERNAL ECONOMIC DIMENSION

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
1	The electoral law foresees adequate financing to support the central electoral body in its activities beyond the electoral period	Measures targeting the availability of financial/economic resources throughout the election cycle for the activities of the central electoral body	Free Choice
2	The electoral law foresees adequate financing for awareness-raising programmes	Measures targeting the availability of financial/economic resources throughout the election cycle for awareness-raising activities	Free Choice
3	The electoral law foresees adequate financing for education and capacity-building activities on electoral procedures	Measures targeting the availability of financial/economic resources throughout the election cycle for capacity-building activities	Free Choice
4	The electoral law includes specific provisions for transparent financing of political parties	Transparency measures on political party financing	Free Choice
5	The electoral law includes specific provisions for transparent financing of election campaigns	Transparency measures on electoral campaign financing	Free Choice
6	The electoral law foresees a system of sanctions in the event of a breach of the financial rules	Integrity measures on electoral campaign financing	Free Choice
7	The law regulates the (maximum) threshold of expenses for the election campaign	Accuracy measures on electoral campaign financing	Free Choice
8	The law includes specific provisions regarding the (maximum) threshold of expenses for the election campaign in the area of advertising	Equal opportunity measures on electoral campaign financing	Free Choice
9	The law includes specific provisions for ensuring a minimum of access for candidates in the private media (television, radio and the press)	Equal opportunity measures on electoral campaign media coverage	Equal opportunity

6 - EXTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
1	As part of a defined consultation process, public authorities actively publicise plans and invite individual citizens, NGOs, businesses, local media and other groups to comment on these plans	Citizens are at the centre of public activity and they are involved in clearly defined ways in public life	Participation
2	Public authorities strive to improve regulations and practical arrangements concerning citizen participation in local public life	Citizens are at the centre of public activity and they are involved in clearly defined ways in public life	Participation
3	Citizens are consulted in the initial phase of the decision-making process	Citizens are at the centre of public activity and they are involved in clearly defined ways in public life	Participation
4	There are active programmes whereby elected representatives engage with citizens in decision making	Participation is built on the freedoms of expression, assembly and association	Participation
5	There are active programmes for encouraging individuals to take on elected representational roles	Participation is built on the freedoms of expression, assembly and association	Participation
6	Access to voting mechanisms ensure no groups are excluded or disadvantaged	All voices, including those of the less privileged and most vulnerable, are heard and taken into account in decision-making processes	Participation
7	There are active programmes to include those who are socially challenged in decision making	All voices, including those of the less privileged and most vulnerable, are heard and taken into account in decision-making processes	Participation
8	Public authorities keep appropriate records to ensure patterns can be identified and efficiency and effectiveness increased	There is always an honest attempt to mediate between various legitimate interests and to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interests of citizens and on how this can be achieved	Participation
9	Public authorities have introduced techniques for deliberative processes (deliberative hearing, citizens' jury, participation budgeting etc.)	There is always an honest attempt to mediate between various legitimate interests and to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interests of citizens and on how this can be achieved	Participation
10	The demographic composition of the bodies of elected officials represents the demographic composition of the society	Decisions are taken according to the will of the many, while the rights and legitimate interests of the few are respected	Representation
11	Public authorities comply with all applicable laws and regulations	Public authorities abide by the law and judicial decisions	Fairness
12	Public authorities publicly report any legal judicial decisions or sanctions for all offences that have been committed	Public authorities abide by the law and judicial decisions	Fairness
13	Rules and regulations are adopted in accordance with procedures provided for by law	Rules and regulations are adopted in accordance with procedures provided for by law and are enforced impartially	Fairness
14	Rules and regulations are enforced impartially	Rules and regulations are adopted in accordance with procedures provided for by law and are enforced impartially	Fairness
15	Public policies are decided taking into account the general welfare role of the state	The public good is placed before individual interests	Fairness
16	The public interest guides the allocation of budgetary resources of the public authorities	The public good is placed before individual interests	Fairness
17	Legal frameworks match international standards on civil and fundamental rights	There are detailed provisions for the enjoyment of civil and fundamental rights within the country	Inclusiveness
18	Legal frameworks match international standards on the freedom of association and of political association	The principles of freedom of association and of political association are foreseen	Freedom of association
19	Legal frameworks on mass media match international standards on civil and fundamental rights	The freedom of expression is reflected in laws regulating mass media	Freedom of expression

7 - EXTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE DIMENSION

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
1	Clear guidelines and procedures for public officials and elected representatives exist in all decision-making processes	Objectives, rules, structures, and procedures are adapted to the legitimate expectations and needs of citizens	Responsiveness
2	Public authorities ensure that all elected representatives have the interests of local people at heart	Objectives, rules, structures, and procedures are adapted to the legitimate expectations and needs of citizens	Responsiveness
3	An individual complaints procedure regarding the functioning of local public services and authorities, with response time targets, has been developed and implemented and there is evidence that it is being used	Public services are delivered, and requests and complaints are responded to within a reasonable timeframe	Responsiveness
4	Information relating to complaints regarding the activity of public authorities and responses to the complaints including any resulting change is made available to employees, elected representatives and citizens	Public services are delivered, and requests and complaints are responded to within a reasonable timeframe	Responsiveness
5	If changes in policy and service delivery are required, they are made in response to research, reports, consultations, complaints and other methods of input. The changes made are publicised.	Public services are delivered, and requests and complaints are responded to within a reasonable timeframe	Responsiveness
6	Changes in policy and service delivery are publicised	Public services are delivered, and requests and complaints are responded to within a reasonable timeframe	Transparency
7	Public authorities plan activities and budgets according to strategic guidance plans at a strategic and an operational level	Public authorities meet the agreed objectives	Efficiency and effectiveness
8	Performance information is regularly collected and reviewed by public authorities. Public authorities act to deal with gaps between expected and actual performance	Best possible use is made of the resources available	Efficiency and effectiveness
9	Public authorities develop and implement a performance management framework that cover all objectives, services and functions including appropriate indicators and reports regularly on performance and progress	Performance management frameworks are in place to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public services	Efficiency and effectiveness
10	Public authorities exchange good practices with other peer institutions so as to improve their efficiency and effectiveness	Performance management frameworks are in place to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public services	Efficiency and effectiveness
11	Public authorities develop strategic and operational evaluation documents for the evaluation of public policies	Performance management frameworks are in place to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public services	Efficiency and effectiveness
12	Public authorities take into account the results of in the evaluations for future public policies	Performance management frameworks are in place to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public services	Efficiency and effectiveness
13	Procedures, performance reports and information systems are independently audited and the results reported to the councillors	Audits are carried out at regular intervals to assess and improve performance of public services	Efficiency and effectiveness
14	All major services and functions are regularly reviewed at appropriate intervals, to evaluate their performance and impact	Audits are carried out at regular intervals to assess and improve performance of public services	Efficiency and effectiveness
15	Public authorities keep appropriate records to ensure patterns can be identified and efficiency and effectiveness increased	Audits are carried out at regular intervals to assess and improve performance of public services	Efficiency and effectiveness
16	Public authorities have a clear and well understood legal framework which is widely publicised	Decisions are taken and enforced in accordance with rules and regulations	Openness and Transparency
17	The legal framework of public authorities includes a clear decision making scheme of delegation, setting out who has the responsibility for taking each decision, and how decisions will be taken, enforced and publicised	Decisions are taken and enforced in accordance with rules and regulations	Openness and Transparency

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
18	Public authorities take and enforce decisions in an open and transparent, manner, which matches international standards of best practice	Decisions are taken and enforced in accordance with rules and regulations	Openness and Transparency
19	There is a process for appealing against decisions which is widely available and understood	Decisions are taken and enforced in accordance with rules and regulations	Openness and Transparency
20	The opposition has the right to introduce propositions, amendments, and interpellations	Decisions are taken and enforced in accordance with rules and regulations	Openness and Transparency
21	Public authorities ensure regular and easy contact between citizens and elected representatives	All information is publicly accessible (with the exception of cases with well-specified reasons as provided for by law, such as the protection of privacy or ensuring the fairness of procurement procedures)	Openness and Transparency
22	Public authorities actively inform the population	All information is publicly accessible (with the exception of cases with well-specified reasons as provided for by law, such as the protection of privacy or ensuring the fairness of procurement procedures)	Openness and Transparency
23	Meetings of public authorities are open to the public and media and agendas and documents are publicly available	All information is publicly accessible (with the exception of cases with well-specified reasons as provided for by law, such as the protection of privacy or ensuring the fairness of procurement procedures)	Openness and Transparency
24	Public authorities have work programmes that are based on inputs from citizens and elected representatives, and are publicised widely	Information on decisions, implementation of policies and results is made available to the public	Openness and Transparency
25	The elected representatives show openness towards the media, and a willingness to provide the media with information	Information on decisions, implementation of policies and results is made available to the public	Openness and Transparency
26	Codes of conduct specify the ethical standards expected of elected representatives and officials	There are effective measures to prevent and combat all forms of corruption within public authorities	Ethical conduct
27	Specific procedures have been adopted for decisions of public authorities in areas that are vulnerable to corruption, including procurement, selling municipal assets and awarding permits and licences	There are effective measures to prevent and combat all forms of corruption within public authorities	Ethical conduct
28	An annual review of anti-corruption arrangements within public authorities is undertaken, for example by internal or external audit	There are effective measures to prevent and combat all forms of corruption within public authorities	Ethical conduct
29	Personnel policies in public authorities require staff to be appointed, promoted and rewarded on merit, and/or disciplined only in accordance with approved procedures	There are effective measures to prevent and combat all forms of corruption within public authorities	Ethical conduct
30	Elected representatives and staff are required to declare any potential conflict of interest that could impact on decision taking and to abstain from taking part in relevant decision making	Conflicts of interest are declared in a timely manner and persons involved must abstain from taking part in relevant decisions	Ethical conduct
31	Public authorities ensure an effective and efficient procurement and use pre- set selection criteria	Conflicts of interest are declared in a timely manner and persons involved must abstain from taking part in relevant decisions	Ethical conduct
32	Public authorities ensure free access to public procurement documents and decisions with regard to the awarding of the contract	Conflicts of interest are declared in a timely manner and persons involved must abstain from taking part in relevant decisions	Ethical conduct
33	All decision makers are clear about their collective and individual responsibilities for the decisions they take and these are clearly set out in a legal framework and in their job descriptions	All decision makers, collective and individual, take responsibility for their decisions	Accountability
34	Public authorities publicise reports (at least annually) to account for the decisions they have taken	Decisions are reported on, explained and can be sanctioned	Accountability

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
35	The legal framework regulating public authorities includes details of reporting, explaining and sanctioning decisions which is well understood by elected representatives, officials and citizens	Decisions are reported on, explained and can be sanctioned	Accountability
36	Reports and other documents are accessible and available	Decisions are reported on, explained and can be sanctioned	Accountability
37	Public authorities have a transparent and independent audit arrangement, as set out in the legal framework	There are effective remedies for maladministration and actions of local authorities which infringe civil rights	Accountability
38	Auditors are clear who to hold to account for each decision and the relevant decision takers willingly present themselves for public scrutiny	There are effective remedies for maladministration and actions of local authorities which infringe civil rights	Accountability
39	Public authorities have a robust process as set out in the legal framework, to remedy against maladministration and against actions of local authorities which infringe civil rights, in accordance with rules, regulations and best practice	There are effective remedies for maladministration and actions of local authorities which infringe civil rights	Accountability

8 - EXTERNAL SOCIAL DIMENSION

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
1	Percentage of residents aged 65 years or above	Size / proportion of the elderly population	Inclusiveness
2	Percentage of residents under the minimum age for voting	Size / proportion of the youth population	Inclusiveness
3	Percentage of population that votes for the first time	Number of first-time voters	Inclusiveness
4	Percentage of women	Gender distribution within voting population	Inclusiveness
5	Percentage of men	Gender distribution within voting population	Inclusiveness
6	Percentage of the population that is part of a national minority	Size / proportion of the population that is part of a cultural minority	Inclusiveness
7	Percentage of the population that is not familiar with majority language and culture	Size / proportion of the population that is part of a cultural minority	Inclusiveness
8	Percentage of persons that have moved out of the country in the last 5 year	Size/proportion of the population that resides abroad	Inclusiveness
9	Percentage of persons that have moved to the country in the last 5 years	Size/proportion of the population that moved recently to the country (i.e. foreign residents)	Inclusiveness
10	Percentage of the population with motor disabilities	Size/proportion of the population with special needs	Inclusiveness
11	Percentage of the population with sensory disabilities	Size/proportion of the population with special needs	Inclusiveness
12	Percentage of residents who require assistance with daily tasks	Size/proportion of the population with special needs	Inclusiveness
13	Urbanisation rate	Size/proportion of the population living in urban areas	Inclusiveness
14	Urban average annual growth rate	Size/proportion of the population living in urban areas	Inclusiveness
15	Population density	Size/proportion of the population density	Inclusiveness
16	Population average annual growth rate	Population density	Inclusiveness
17	Social advocacy organisations per 1 000 population	Level of activity of the civil society	Participation
18	Civic organisations per 1 000 population	Level of activity of the civil society	Participation
19	Rate of citizens active within associative structures in the country	Size/proportion of the population actively engaged in civil society	Participation
20	Percentage of the population with telephone access	Size/proportion of the population with access to telephones	Participation
21	Internet providers/broadcasters per 1 000 population	Size / proportion of the population with access to internet	Participation
22	Private television, radio, and telecommunications broadcasters per 1 000 population	Size / proportion of the population with access to private audiovisual media channels	Participation
23	Public television, radio, and telecommunications broadcasters per 1 000 population	Size / proportion of the population with access to public audiovisual media channels	Participation
24	Number of national political parties	Presence of national political parties	Participation
25	Rate of membership of national political parties (i.e. number of citizens enrolled in political parties)	Size / proportion of the population actively involved in political life	Participation
26	Trend of the election's turnout (last three rounds of elections)	Participation in public life of the overall population	Participation
27	Women actively involved in political life	Participation of women in the public life	Participation

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
28	Influence of citizens on public political debates/ events	Participation in public life of the overall population	Participation
29	National political parties affiliated to international networks	Networking capacity of national political parties	Participation
30	Public authorities have a structured approach to innovation, research and development	New and efficient solutions to problems are sought and advantage is taken of modern methods of service provision	Innovation
31	Public authorities take action to identify and implement examples of good practice and new solutions	New and efficient solutions to problems are sought and advantage is taken of modern methods of service provision	Innovation
32	Public authorities are actively involved in the promotion of good- governance	New and efficient solutions to problems are sought and advantage is taken of modern methods of service provision	Innovation
33	Public authorities ensure that all different groups are involved and that anti- discrimination measures are put in the place in all policy areas	Within the local authority's sphere of influence, human rights are respected, protected and implemented, and discrimination on any grounds is combated	Inclusiveness
34	Public authorities take action to protect all citizens from discrimination and exclusion	Within the local authority's sphere of influence, human rights are respected, protected and implemented, and discrimination on any grounds is combated	Inclusiveness
35	Public authorities actively promote diversity and cohesion as being in the best interests of all citizens by making resources available, supporting and subsidising the activities of non-governmental actors, promoting dialogue	Cultural diversity is treated as an asset, and continuous efforts are made to ensure that all have a stake in the local community, identify with it and do not feel excluded	Inclusiveness
36	Public authorities have set clear objectives to improve social cohesion and maximise the potential of cultural diversity by encouraging greater intercultural mixing and interaction	Cultural diversity is treated as an asset, and continuous efforts are made to ensure that all have a stake in the local community, identify with it and do not feel excluded	Inclusiveness
37	Public authorities have in place individual plans for specific disadvantaged groups (i.e. a plan for self-sufficiency, a plan for the rights of the children and youth)	Cultural diversity is treated as an asset, and continuous efforts are made to ensure that all have a stake in the local community, identify with it and do not feel excluded	Inclusiveness
38	Public authorities ensure, together with all strategic partners, that the equality targets are embedded in and translated into strategies, spatial plans, and public service delivery	Cultural diversity is treated as an asset, and continuous efforts are made to ensure that all have a stake in the local community, identify with it and do not feel excluded	Inclusiveness
39	Public authorities have a structured approach to long term development	The needs of future generations are taken into account in current policies	Sustainability
40	The needs of the future generation are taken into account routinely in the planning process	The needs of future generations are taken into account in current policies	Sustainability
41	There is a general demonstrable high level commitment by politicians and senior management to achieving corporate sustainability	The needs of future generations are taken into account in current policies	Sustainability
42	Ensuring sustainability is an integral part of policy and strategy development, action planning and target setting within all departments, functions and service areas	The needs of future generations are taken into account in current policies	Sustainability
43	Specific resources and responsibility are assigned to mainstream sustainability	The needs of future generations are taken into account in current policies	Sustainability
44	There is a participatory approach to decision making for sustainable development	The needs of future generations are taken into account in current policies	Participation
45	There are active programmes whereby elected representatives engage with citizens in decision making	All citizens can have a voice in decision making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate bodies that represent their interests	Participation

9 - EXTERNAL HUMAN CAPITAL DIMENSION

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
1	Percentage of the population with at least a high school diploma	Educational level of the overall population	Awareness raising
2	Percentage of population with higher educational level	Educational level of the overall population	Awareness raising
3	Percentage of the eligible population (over 18 years of age) having completed or are in post-secondary education	Educational level of the overall population	Awareness raising
4	Percentage of women with at least a high school diploma	Educational level among women	Awareness raising
5	Percentage of persons with at least a high school diploma within minority groups	Educational level among minority groups	Awareness raising
6	Literacy rate (% of population over minimum voting age)	Ability to read and write among the active population	Awareness raising
7	Literacy rate (% of over 65)	Ability to read and write among the elderly population	Awareness raising
8	Literacy ratio (female to male)	Ability to read and write among women	Awareness raising
9	Literacy ratio (female to male)	Ability to read and write among men	Awareness raising
10	Distribution of the education levels within the country	Distribution of the education levels within the country	Awareness raising
11	Adult education and skills-training programs per 1 000 population	Presence of professional capacity-building/professional training programmes/lifelong learning for adult population	Awareness raising
12	Number of graduates of professional capacity-building/professional training programmes/lifelong learning courses in the last 5 years	Accessibility of lifelong learning programmes	Awareness raising
13	The Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI)	Population with digital competences	Awareness raising
14	Public authorities identify the skills needed to deliver services effectively and undertake a skills audit to identify any gaps as part of a strategic workforce plan	The professional skills of public authorities are continuously maintained and strengthened in order to improve their output and impact	Awareness raising
15	Public authorities operate/implement personal development plans for public officials and elected representatives	The professional skills of public authorities are continuously maintained and strengthened in order to improve their output and impact	Awareness raising
16	Arrangements are in place to reward good performance and improve poor performance within public authorities	Public officials are motivated to continuously improve their performance	Awareness raising
17	Public authorities have a recruitment and selection policy and procedures that are made public and implemented consistently	Public officials are motivated to continuously improve their performance	Awareness raising
18	Training plans are developed, implemented and monitored to ensure that training needs are fully met, and professional skills continually developed	Public officials are motivated to continuously improve their performance	Awareness raising
19	Public authorities review the implementation and outcomes of recruitment, training and promotion procedures and make necessary improvements	Public officials are motivated to continuously improve their performance	Awareness raising
20	Selection criteria in public authorities are defined for each post and communicated to all applicants. The criteria reflect the essential requirements of the job and do not exclude any social groups	Practical methods and procedures are created and used in order to transform skills into capacity and to produce better results	Awareness raising
21	Staff within public authorities receive regular appraisals of their performance and development as part of a systematic approach to performance appraisal and career development	Practical methods and procedures are created and used in order to transform skills into capacity and to produce better results	Awareness raising

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
22	Public authorities provide good “customer” care by ensuring that services are provided by knowledgeable and well-trained staff who understand the needs of their population	The professional skills of public authorities are continuously maintained and strengthened in order to improve their output and impact	Responsiveness
23	Level of knowledge on the legal framework and procedures among citizens	Knowledge on the legal framework and procedures among citizens	Awareness raising
24	Number of initiatives (e.g. governmental and/or non-governmental) promoting civic education among citizens	Presence of actors promoting civic education among citizens	Awareness raising

10 - EXTERNAL ECONOMIC DIMENSION

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
1	Percentage population living on less than US\$1 per day PPP	Size / proportion of the population living at risk or in absolute poverty	Accountability
2	Percentage of population dependent on the land for primary source of income	Size / proportion of the population involved in subsistence agriculture	Accountability
3	Ratio of skilled and unskilled workers	Ratio of skilled and unskilled workers	Accountability
4	GDP per capita	Overall economic health level of the country	Accountability
5	Per capita average income	Overall economic health level of the country	Accountability
6	Ratio of large to small businesses	Overall activity of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the country	Accountability
7	Number of large industry actors	Overall activity of large industry actors	Accountability
8	Percentage population that is employed	Size/proportion of the employed population	Accountability
9	Male labour force participation rate	Size/proportion of men active on the labour market	Accountability
10	Female labour force participation rate	Size/proportion of women active on the labour market	Accountability
11	Percentage of unemployment relative to the total labour force	Size/proportion of the unemployed population over 30 years of age	Accountability
12	Youth unemployment rate	Size/proportion of the population under 30 years old that is unemployed	Accountability
13	Rate of unemployment in the country over 30 years of age	Size/proportion of the unemployed population over 30 years of age	Accountability
14	Percentage of self-employed workers under 30 years of age	Size/proportion of self-employed workers under 30 years of age	Accountability
15	Percentage of self-employed workers	Size/proportion of self-employed workers that are women	Accountability
16	Main revenue sources within the country	Main sectors of productivity within the country	Accountability
17	International donors supporting national (electoral) initiatives	International donors supporting national (electoral) initiatives	Accountability
18	International donors supporting local development plans	International donors supporting local development plans	Accountability
19	Number of active funding programmes promoting civic education	Presence of funds for initiatives supporting civic education	Accountability
20	Percentage of non-governmental organisations /civil society organisations funded for the promotion of civic education in the last 5 years	Capacity of non-governmental organisations /civil society organisations to access funds dedicated to the promotion of civic education	Accountability
21	Elected officials are clear about the rationale and the basis for charges for services	Charges do not exceed the cost of services provided and do not reduce demand excessively, particularly in the case of important public services	Transparency
22	Standing financial instructions identify the financial responsibilities that apply to everyone working within public authorities	Prudence is observed by public authorities in financial management, including in the contracting and use of loans, in the estimation of resources, revenues and reserves, and in the use of exceptional revenue	Accountability
23	An internal audit function reviews financial transactions to ensure compliance with approved internal procedures	Prudence is observed by public authorities in financial management, including in the contracting and use of loans, in the estimation of resources, revenues and reserves, and in the use of exceptional revenue	Accountability

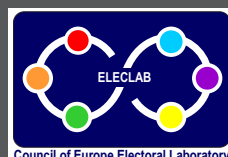
#	GID INDICATOR	ECA VARIABLE	ELECLAB PARAMETER
24	Regular reports are presented to officials and elected representatives comparing actual income and expenditure with budget	Prudence is observed by public authorities in financial management, including in the contracting and use of loans, in the estimation of resources, revenues and reserves, and in the use of exceptional revenue	Accountability
25	The accounts are audited by persons independent of the public authority	Prudence is observed by public authorities in financial management, including in the contracting and use of loans, in the estimation of resources, revenues and reserves, and in the use of exceptional revenue	Accountability
26	The external audits and the annual audits are made public	Prudence is observed by public authorities in financial management, including in the contracting and use of loans, in the estimation of resources, revenues and reserves, and in the use of exceptional revenue	Transparency
27	Annual and multiyear budgets are adopted before the start of the relevant period	Multi-annual budget plans are prepared by public authorities, with consultation of the public	Participation
28	The budget preparation process includes extensive consultation with external stakeholders	Multi-annual budget plans are prepared by public authorities, with consultation of the public	Participation
29	Approved budgets, tax rates and an annual report including information on service outputs and outcomes, are made publicly available	Multi-annual budget plans are prepared by public authorities, with consultation of the public	Participation
30	A summary of the budget and taxes is made available to all citizens	Multi-annual budget plans are prepared by public authorities, with consultation of the public	Transparency

USEFUL RELEVANT SUSTAINABLE OWNED FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX 2 - ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION ASSESSMENT - E-TOOL



Toolkit for strategic planning
and prioritisation
of electoral co-operation



APPENDIX 2 - ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION ASSESSMENT - E-TOOL

The ECA is an assessment tool that supports users by means of an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), so as to identify priority areas of intervention aimed at increasing/strengthening electoral performance.

It reinforces the implementation of the EEPI by taking into consideration the context within which an electoral process operates.

The main purpose of the ECA is to identify the variables that impact positively or negatively on the electoral system in order to prioritise areas of intervention.

The ECA is intended as an assessment tool which takes users through the evaluation of both internal and external variables in order to assess the overall performance of the electoral system.

Users are asked to evaluate the influence of the present state of the ECA variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”) on the overall electoral performance.

PHASE 1/10 - ASSESSING INTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL VARIABLES						
Please evaluate the influence of the present state of these variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”) on the overall electoral performance.		Extremely Negative	Negative	Not relevant	Positive	Extremely positive
1	Clarity of the legal framework of electoral law(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on democracy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of expression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of movement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on transparency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on inclusiveness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Effectiveness of the legal framework on the establishment of the central electoral body	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Effectiveness of the legal framework on the status of the central electoral body	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	Representativeness provisions on the central electoral body composition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	Transparency provisions on central electoral body activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	Transparency and non-discriminatory provisions on electoral divisions establishment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	Accuracy provisions on establishment and implementation of voter registry and voters’ lists	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	Inclusiveness provisions on voter registry and voters’ lists	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	Transparency provisions on voter registry and voters’ lists	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PHASE 1/10 - ASSESSING INTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL VARIABLES

Please evaluate the influence of the present state of these variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”) on the overall electoral performance.		Extremely Negative	Negative	Not relevant	Positive	Extremely positive
16	Integrity provisions on eligibility criteria for voters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17	Integrity provisions on voter registry and voters’ lists of citizens residing abroad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18	Inclusiveness provisions allowing for political parties of national minorities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19	Inclusiveness provisions on candidatures submission	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20	Inclusiveness provisions on candidatures submission targeting women	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21	Inclusiveness provisions on candidatures submission targeting ethnic and national minorities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22	Equal opportunities provisions targeting campaigning activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23	Equal opportunities provisions targeting media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24	Transparency provisions on electoral rules	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25	Inclusiveness provisions on electoral rules	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26	Integrity provisions on electoral rules	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27	Accuracy provisions on electoral rules	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28	Transparency provisions on appeal procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29	Integrity provisions on appeal procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30	Accuracy provisions on appeal procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PHASE 2/10 - ASSESSING INTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE VARIABLES

Please evaluate the influence of the present state of these variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”) on the overall electoral performance.		Extremely Negative	Negative	Not relevant	Positive	Extremely positive
1	Inclusiveness measures on appeal procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Accuracy measures on appeal procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Integrity measures on appeal procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Accuracy measures on candidature submission	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Transparency measures on candidature submission	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Accuracy measures on electoral rules / procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Inclusiveness measures on electoral rules / procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Integrity measures on electoral rules / procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Transparency measures on electoral rules / procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	Accuracy measures on voter registry and voters' lists	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	Accuracy measures on voter registry and voters' lists targeting citizens residing abroad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	Inclusiveness measures on voter registry and voters' lists	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	Transparency measures on voter registry and voters' lists	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	Equal opportunity measures targeting media coverage during election campaigns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	Inclusiveness measures targeting national minorities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16	Inclusiveness measures targeting women representation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17	Integrity measures on electoral divisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PHASE 3/10 - ASSESSING INTERNAL SOCIAL VARIABLES

Please evaluate the influence of the present state of these variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from "extremely negative" to "extremely positive") on the overall electoral performance.		Extremely Negative	Negative	Not relevant	Positive	Extremely positive
1	Electoral awareness-raising measures targeting the general population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Electoral awareness-raising measures targeting specific groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Awareness-raising measures targeting anti-fraud electoral behaviours	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Inclusiveness measures ensuring political pluralism in the media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Integrity guarantee on candidate selection / proposal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Equal opportunity measures targeting media coverage of election campaigns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PHASE 5/10 - ASSESSING INTERNAL HUMAN CAPITAL VARIABLES

Please evaluate the influence of the present state of these variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”) on the overall electoral performance.		Extremely Negative	Negative	Not relevant	Positive	Extremely positive
1	Overall technical capacity of the central electoral body	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Effectiveness of measures aiming to increase the knowledge of the electoral system and procedures among the population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Effectiveness of measures aiming to increase the knowledge of the electoral system and procedures targeting specific groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PHASE 5/10 - ASSESSING INTERNAL ECONOMIC VARIABLES

Please evaluate the influence of the present state of these variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”) on the overall electoral performance.		Extremely Negative	Negative	Not relevant	Positive	Extremely positive
1	Measures targeting the availability of financial/ economic resources throughout the election cycle for the operations of the central electoral body	○	○	●	○	○
2	Measures targeting the availability of financial/ economic resources throughout the election cycle for awareness-raising activities	○	○	●	○	○
3	Measures targeting the availability of financial/ economic resources throughout the election cycle for capacity-building activities	○	○	●	○	○
4	Transparency measures on political party financing	○	○	●	○	○
5	Transparency measures on electoral campaign financing	○	○	●	○	○
6	Integrity measures on electoral campaign financing	○	○	●	○	○
7	Accuracy measures on electoral campaign financing	○	○	●	○	○
8	Equal opportunity measures on electoral campaign financing	○	○	●	○	○
9	Equal opportunity measures on electoral campaign media coverage	○	○	●	○	○

PHASE 6/10 - ASSESSING EXTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL VARIABLES

Please evaluate the influence of the present state of these variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”) on the overall electoral performance.		Extremely Negative	Negative	Not relevant	Positive	Extremely positive
1	Citizens are at the centre of public activity and they are involved in clearly defined ways in public life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Participation is built on the freedoms of expression, assembly and association.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	All voices, including those of the less privileged and most vulnerable, are heard and taken into account in decision-making processes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	There is always an honest attempt to mediate between various legitimate interests and to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interests of citizens and on how this can be achieved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Decisions are taken according to the will of the many, while the rights and legitimate interests of the few are respected.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Public authorities abide by the law and judicial decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Rules and regulations are adopted in accordance with procedures provided for by law and are enforced impartially.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	The public good is placed before individual interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	There are detailed provisions for the enjoyment of civil and fundamental rights within the country.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	The principles of freedom of association and of political association are foreseen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	The freedom of expression is reflected in laws regulating mass media.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PHASE 7/10 - ASSESSING EXTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE VARIABLES

Please evaluate the influence of the present state of these variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”) on the overall electoral performance.		Extremely Negative	Negative	Not relevant	Positive	Extremely positive
1	Objectives, rules, structures, and procedures are adapted to the legitimate expectations and needs of citizens.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Public services are delivered, and requests and complaints are responded to within a reasonable timeframe.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Public authorities meet the agreed objectives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Best possible use is made of the resources available.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Performance management frameworks are in place so to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Audits are carried out at regular intervals to assess and improve performance of public services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Decisions are taken and enforced in accordance with rules and regulations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	All information is publicly accessible (with the exception of cases with well- specified reasons as provided for by law, such as the protection of privacy or ensuring the fairness of procurement procedures).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Information on decisions, implementation of policies and results is made available to the public.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	There are effective measures to prevent and combat all forms of corruption within public authorities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	Conflicts of interest are declared in a timely manner and persons involved must abstain from taking part in relevant decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	All decision makers, collective and individual, take responsibility for their decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	Decisions are reported on, explained and can be sanctioned.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	There are effective remedies for maladministration and actions of local authorities which infringe civil rights.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PHASE 8/10 - ASSESSING EXTERNAL SOCIAL VARIABLES

Please evaluate the influence of the present state of these variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”) on the overall electoral performance.		Extremely Negative	Negative	Not relevant	Positive	Extremely positive
1	Size / proportion of the elderly population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Size / proportion of the youth population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Amount of first-time voters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Gender distribution within voting population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Size / proportion of the population that is part of a cultural minority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Size / proportion of the population that resides abroad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Size / proportion of the population that moved recently to the country (i.e. foreign residents)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Size / proportion of the population with special needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Size / proportion of the population living in urban areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	Population density	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	Level of activity of the civil society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	Size / proportion of the population actively engaged in civil society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	Size / proportion of the population with access to telephones	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	Size / proportion of the population with access to internet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	Size / proportion of the population with access to private audiovisual media channels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16	Size / proportion of the population with access to public audiovisual media channels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17	Presence of national political parties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18	Population actively involved in the political life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19	Participation to public life of the overall population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20	Participation of women to the public life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21	Networking capacity of national political parties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22	New and efficient solutions to problems are sought and advantage is taken of modern methods of service provision.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23	Within the local authority’s sphere of influence, human rights are respected, protected and implemented, and discrimination on any grounds is combated.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PHASE 8/10 - ASSESSING EXTERNAL SOCIAL VARIABLES

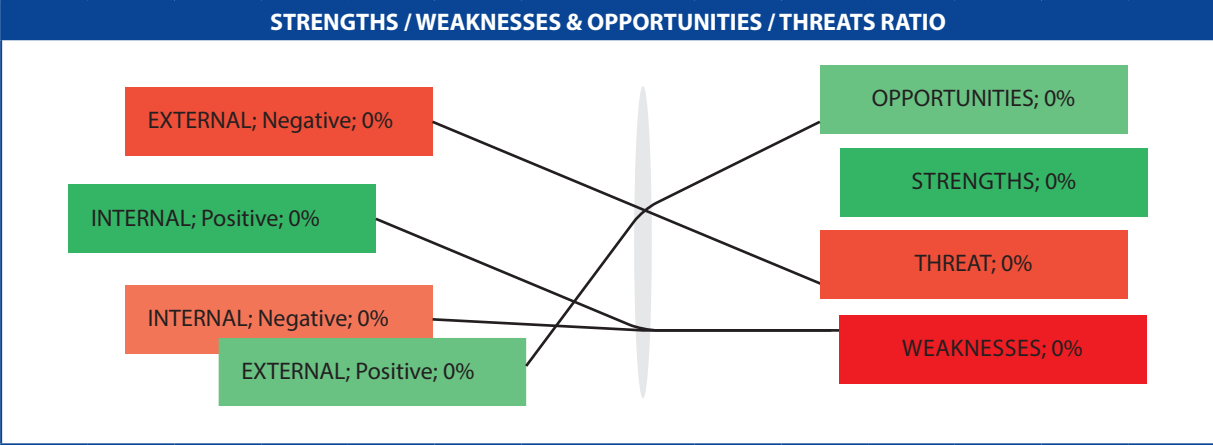
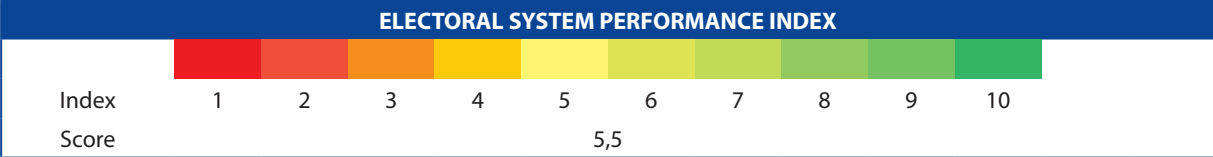
Please evaluate the influence of the present state of these variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”) on the overall electoral performance.		Extremely Negative	Negative	Not relevant	Positive	Extremely positive
24	Cultural diversity is treated as an asset, and continuous efforts are made to ensure that all have a stake in the local community, identify with it and do not feel excluded.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25	The needs of future generations are taken into account in current policies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26	All citizens can have a voice in decision making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate bodies that represent their interests.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PHASE 9/10 - ASSESSING EXTERNAL HUMAN CAPITAL VARIABLES

Please evaluate the influence of the present state of these variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”) on the overall electoral performance.		Extremely Negative	Negative	Not relevant	Positive	Extremely positive
1	Educational level of the overall population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Educational level among women	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Educational level among minority groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Ability to read and write among the active population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Ability to read and write among the elderly population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Ability to read and write among women	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Ability to read and write among men	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Distribution of the education levels within the country	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Presence of professional capacity-building/ professional training programmes/Lifelong Learning for adult population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	Accessibility of Lifelong Learning programmes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	Population with digital competences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	The professional skills of public authorities are continuously maintained and strengthened in order to improve their output and impact.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	Public officials are motivated to continuously improve their performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	Practical methods and procedures are created and used in order to transform skills into capacity and to produce better results.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	Knowledge on the legal framework and procedures among citizens.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16	Presence of actors promoting civic education among citizens.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PHASE 10/10 - ASSESSING EXTERNAL ECONOMIC VARIABLES

Please evaluate the influence of the present state of these variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”) on the overall electoral performance.		Extremely Negative	Negative	Not relevant	Positive	Extremely positive
1	Size / proportion of the population living at risk or in absolute poverty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Size / proportion of the population involved in subsistence agriculture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Ratio of skilled and unskilled workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Overall economic health level of the country	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Overall activity of SMEs in the country	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Overall activity of large industry actors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Size / proportion of the employed population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Size / proportion of the men active in the labour market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Size / proportion of the women active on the labour market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	Size / proportion of the unemployed population over 30 years of age	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	Size / proportion of the population under 30 years old that is unemployed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	Size / proportion of the self-employed workers under 30 years of age	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	Size / proportion of the self-employed workers that are women	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	Main sectors of productivity within the country	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	International donors supporting national (electoral) initiatives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16	International donors supporting local development plans.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17	Presence of funds for initiatives supporting civic education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18	Capacity of NGOs/CSOs to access funds dedicated to the promotion of civic education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19	Charges do not exceed the cost of services provided and do not reduce demand excessively, particularly in the case of important public services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20	Prudence is observed by public authorities in financial management, including in the contracting and use of loans, in the estimation of resources, revenues and reserves, and in the use of exceptional revenue.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21	Multi-annual budget plans are prepared by public authorities, with consultation of the public.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



#	INTERNAL - INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION	Variable Status
1	Clarity of the legal framework of electoral law(s)	---
2	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on democracy	---
3	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	---
4	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of expression	---
5	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of movement	---
6	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on transparency	---
7	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on inclusiveness	---
8	Effectiveness of the legal framework on the establishment of the central electoral body	---
9	Effectiveness of the legal framework on the status of the central electoral body	---
10	Representativeness provisions on the central electoral body composition	---
11	Transparency provisions on central electoral body activities	---
12	Transparency and non-discriminatory provisions on electoral divisions establishment	---
13	Accuracy provisions on voter registry and voters' lists accuracy in establishment and implementation	---
14	Inclusiveness provisions on voter registry and voters' lists	---
15	Transparency provisions on voter registry and voters' lists	---
16	Integrity provisions on eligibility criteria for voters	---
17	Integrity provisions on voter registry and voters' lists of citizens residing abroad	---
18	Inclusiveness provisions allowing for political parties of national minorities	---
19	Inclusiveness provisions on candidatures submission	---
20	Inclusiveness provisions on candidatures submission targeting women	---
21	Inclusiveness provisions on candidatures submission targeting ethnic and national minorities	---
22	Equal opportunities provisions targeting campaigning activities	---
23	Equal opportunities provisions targeting media	---
24	Transparency provisions on electoral rules	---
25	Inclusiveness provisions on electoral rules	---
26	Integrity provisions on electoral rules	---
27	Accuracy provisions on electoral rules	---
28	Transparency provisions on appeal procedures	---
29	Integrity provisions on appeal procedures	---
30	Accuracy provisions on appeal procedures	---

#	INTERNAL - ADMINISTRATIVE DIMENSION	Variable Status
1	Inclusiveness measures on appeal procedures	---
2	Accuracy measures on appeal procedures	---
3	Integrity measures on appeal procedures	---
4	Accuracy measures on candidatures submission	---
5	Transparency measures on candidatures submission	---
6	Accuracy measures on electoral rules / procedure	---
7	Inclusiveness measures on electoral rules / procedures	---
8	Integrity measures on electoral rules / procedures	---
9	Transparency measures on electoral rules / procedures	---
10	Accuracy measures on voter registry and voters; lists	---
11	Accuracy measures on voter registry and voters' lists targeting citizens residing abroad	---
12	Inclusiveness measures on voter registry and voters' lists	---
13	Transparency measures on voter registry and voters' lists	---
14	Equal opportunity measures targeting media coverage during election campaigns	---
15	Inclusiveness measures targeting national minorities	---
16	Inclusiveness measures targeting women representation	---
17	Integrity measures on electoral divisions	---

#	EXTERNAL - INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION	Variable Status
1	Citizens are at the centre of public activity and they are involved in clearly defined ways in public life.	---
2	Participation is built on the freedoms of expression, assembly and association.	---
3	All voices, including those of the less privileged and most vulnerable, are heard and taken into account in decision-making processes.	---
4	There is always an honest attempt to mediate between various legitimate interests and to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interests of	---
5	Decisions are taken according to the will of the many, while the rights and legitimate interests of the few are respected.	---
6	Public authorities abide by the law and judicial decisions.	---
7	Rules and regulations are adopted in accordance with procedures provided for by law and are enforced impartially.	---
8	The public good is placed before individual interests	---
9	There are detailed provisions for the enjoyment of civil and fundamental rights within the country.	---
10	The principles of freedom of association and of political association are foreseen.	---
11	The freedom of expression is reflected in laws regulating mass media.	---

#	EXTERNAL - ADMINISTRATIVE DIMENSION	Variable Status
1	Objectives, rules, structures, and procedures are adapted to the legitimate expectations and needs of citizens.	---
2	Public services are delivered, and requests and complaints are responded to within a reasonable timeframe.	---
3	Public authorities meet the agreed objectives.	---
4	Best possible use is made of the resources available.	---
5	Performance management frameworks are in place so to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public services.	---
6	Audits are carried out at regular intervals to assess and improve performance of public services.	---
7	Decisions are taken and enforced in accordance with rules and regulations.	---
8	All information is publicly accessible (with the exception of cases with well- specified reasons as provided for by law, such as the protection of privacy or	---
9	Information on decisions, implementation of policies and results is made available to the public.	---
10	There are effective measures to prevent and combat all forms of corruption within public authorities.	---
11	Conflicts of interest are declared in a timely manner and persons involved must abstain from taking part in relevant decisions.	---
12	All decision makers, collective and individual, take responsibility for their decisions.	---
13	Decisions are reported on, explained and can be sanctioned.	---
14	There are effective remedies for maladministration and actions of local authorities which infringe civil rights.	---

#	INTERNAL - SOCIAL DIMENSION	Variable Status
1	Electoral awareness-raising measures targeting the general population	---
2	Electoral awareness-raising measures targeting specific groups	---
3	Awareness-raising measures targeting anti-fraud electoral behaviours	---
4	Inclusiveness measures ensuring political pluralism in the media	---
5	Integrity guarantee on candidate selection / proposal	---
6	Equal opportunity measures targeting media coverage of election campaigns	---

#	EXTERNAL - SOCIAL DIMENSION	Variable Status
1	Size / proportion of the elderly population	---
2	Size / proportion of the youth population	---
3	Amount of first-time voters	---
4	Gender distribution within voting population	---
5	Size / proportion of the population that is part of a cultural minority	---
6	Size / proportion of the population that resides abroad	---
7	Size / proportion of the population that moved recently to the country (i.e. foreign residents)	---
8	Size / proportion of the population with special needs	---
9	Size / proportion of the population living in urban areas	---
10	Population density	---
11	Level of activity of the civil society	---
12	Size / proportion of the population actively engaged in civil society	---
13	Size / proportion of the population with access to telephones	---
14	Size / proportion of the population with access to internet	---
15	Size / proportion of the population with access to private audiovisual media channels	---
16	Size / proportion of the population with access to public audiovisual media channels	---
17	Presence of national political parties	---
18	Population actively involved in the political life	---
19	Participation to public life of the overall population	---
20	Participation of women in public life	---
21	Networking capacity of national political parties	---
22	New and efficient solutions to problems are sought and advantage is taken of modern methods of service provision.	---
23	Within the local authority's sphere of influence, human rights are respected, protected and implemented, and discrimination on any grounds is combated.	---
24	Cultural diversity is treated as an asset, and continuous efforts are made to ensure that all have a stake in the local community, identify with it and do not feel excluded.	---
25	The needs of future generations are taken into account in current policies.	---
26	All citizens can have a voice in decision making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate bodies that represent their interests.	---

#	INTERNAL - HUMAN CAPITAL DIMENSION	Variable Status
1	Overall technical capacity of the central electoral body	---
2	Effectiveness of measures aiming to increase the knowledge of the electoral system and procedures among the population	---
3	Effectiveness of measures aiming to increase the knowledge of the electoral system and procedures targeting specific groups	---

#	EXTERNAL - HUMAN CAPITAL	Variable Status
1	Educational level of the overall population	---
2	Educational level among women	---
3	Educational level among minority groups	---
4	Ability to read and write among the active population	---
5	Ability to read and write among the elderly population	---
6	Ability to read and write among women	---
7	Ability to read and write among men	---
8	Distribution of the education levels within the country	---
9	Presence of professional capacity-building/ professional training programmes/Lifelong Learning for adult population	---
10	Accessibility of Lifelong Learning programmes	---
11	Population with digital competences	---
12	The professional skills of public authorities are continuously maintained and strengthened in order to improve their output and impact.	---
13	Public officials are motivated to continuously improve their performance.	---
14	Practical methods and procedures are created and used in order to transform skills into capacity and to produce better results.	---
15	Knowledge on the legal framework and procedures among citizens.	---
16	Presence of actors promoting civic education among citizens.	---

#	INTERNAL - ECONOMIC DIMENSION	Variable Status
1	Measures targeting the availability of financial/economic resources throughout the election cycle for the operation of the central electoral body	---
2	Measures targeting the availability of financial/economic resources throughout the election cycle for awareness raising activities	---
3	Measures targeting the availability of financial/economic resources throughout the election cycle for capacity building activities	---
4	Transparency measures on political party financing	---
5	Transparency measures on electoral campaign financing	---
6	Integrity measures on electoral campaign financing	---
7	Accuracy measures on electoral campaign financing	---
8	Equal opportunity measures on electoral campaign financing	---
9	Equal opportunity measures on electoral campaign media coverage	---

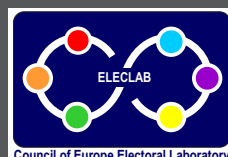
#	EXTERNAL - ECONOMIC DIMENSION	Variable Status
1	Size / proportion of the population living at risk or in absolute poverty	---
2	Size / proportion of the population involved in subsistence agriculture	---
3	Ratio of skilled and unskilled workers	---
4	Overall economic health level of the country	---
5	Overall activity of SME in the country	---
6	Overall activity of large industry actors	---
7	Size / proportion of the employed population	---
8	Size / proportion of the men active on the labour market	---
9	Size / proportion of the women active on the labour market	---
10	Size / proportion of the unemployed population over 30 years of age	---
11	Size / proportion of the population under 30 years old that is unemployed	---
12	Size / proportion of the self-employed workers under 30 years of age	---
13	Size / proportion of the self-employed workers that are women	---
14	Main sectors of productivity within the country	---
15	International donors supporting national (electoral) initiatives.	---
16	International donors supporting local development plans.	---
17	Presence of funds for initiatives supporting civic education	---
18	Capacity of NGOs/CSOs to access funds dedicated to the promotion of civic education	---
19	Charges do not exceed the cost of services provided and do not reduce demand excessively, particularly in the case of important public services.	---
20	Prudence is observed by public authorities in financial management, including in the contracting and use of loans, in the estimation of resources, revenues and reserves, and in	---
21	Multi-annual budget plans are prepared by public authorities, with consultation of the public.	---

USEFUL RELEVANT SUSTAINABLE OWNED FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX 3 – E-TOOL METHODOLOGICAL NOTE



Toolkit for strategic planning
and prioritisation
of electoral co-operation



APPENDIX 3 – **E-TOOL METHODOLOGICAL NOTE**

1. FRAMEWORK METHODOLOGY FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

The framework methodology for electoral co-operation foresees the creation of a multipurpose tool that is able to collect, systematise and assess data regarding both electoral processes and electoral contexts (that is, the system within which electoral processes operate). The framework methodology is based on the following components:

- ▶ general indicators database (GID); and
- ▶ electoral co-operation assessment (ECA).

Ultimately, the framework methodology for electoral co-operation represents the basis for setting up indexes, both at national and regional level, that will support the assessment of electoral performance in given areas by taking into consideration both the electoral process per se and the relevant electoral system, from the perspective a full electoral cycle.

1.1 THE GENERAL INDICATORS DATABASE – GID

The GID is intended as repository of indicators with which to assess electoral co-operation and as an easy-to-use companion for practitioners, policy makers and Council of Europe experts to implement effectively both the European electoral performance index (EEPI) and the ECA with the aim of improving both electoral processes and overall electoral systems.

The GID supports the implementation of the EEPI, which is based mostly on indicators related to the electoral process of a given member state, by focusing on the evolving interaction of the electoral process with the overall electoral system and incorporating elements (variables) of the system that might influence/impact electoral performance.

The GID is based on 300 indicators related to five dimensions:

- ▶ institutional
- ▶ administrative
- ▶ social
- ▶ human capital
- ▶ economic.

These dimensions are divided into two groups:

- ▶ internal; and
- ▶ external.

The following table presents the internal/external taxonomy for each of the dimensions above:

Table 1 – Internal/external taxonomy by dimension

	INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
<i>Institutional</i>	dimensions referring mainly to the electoral process	dimensions pertaining to the overall electoral system
	refers to norms and principles regulating the electoral process	refers to norms and principles regulating the public affairs of a given context
<i>Administrative</i>	refers to practices and procedures of the electoral process	refers to processes and procedures of public authorities within a given context
<i>Social</i>	refers to the variables that describe the actors and target groups involved in the electoral process	refers to the variables that impact on the electoral performance in terms of awareness, inclusiveness, etc.;
<i>Human capital</i>	refers to the capacities and/or knowledge that might impact/shape the electoral process	refers to the capacities and/or knowledge present within the population of a given context
<i>Economic</i>	refers to the financial resources that might impact/shape the electoral process	refers to the financial resources present within a given context

Whereas the GID indicators related to the internal dimensions (n. 143) are mostly extrapolated from the EEPI, the indicators pertaining to the external dimensions (n. 157) were identified by extensive literature review and with reference to Council of Europe standards on good governance and field work.⁷

Finally, the GID serves as the basis for the identification of the ECA variables (n. 153) (see below). Structured in an excel spreadsheet, the GID and ECA variables are presented dimension by dimension (one dimension per sheet), thus allowing for comparison, cross-checking and filtering.

The following table summarises the overall indicators organisation with the GID.

Table 2 – GID summary table

#	Internal/External	Dimension	GID indicators	ECA indicators
1	Internal	Institutional	61	30
2	Internal	Administrative	49	17
3	Internal	Social	15	6
4	Internal	Human capital	9	3
5	Internal	Economic	9	9
6	External	Institutional	19	11
7	External	Administrative	39	14
8	External	Social	45	26
9	External	Human capital	24	16
10	External	Economic	30	21

7. Literature review: Norris, P., Frank, R. W., Martínez i Coma, F. (2013), "Assessing the Quality of Elections", *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 24(4), October 2013, pp. 124-135.

Council of Europe: 12 Principles of good democratic governance - ELoGE Benchmarking Indicators.

EEPI – European electoral performance index.

Field work: EC/ISIG, (2015). D 2.2. *Project Report - Relative Social Vulnerability Index* – research work developed within the ECOSTRESS ECHO/SUB/2013/6714619.

Moreover, within the GID tables, a further category “ELECLAB PARAMETER” has been added, which represent the area of interventions by the Council of Europe Electoral Laboratory (Eleclab).

As an example, when looking at the performance of the institutional setting of the electoral process, users are operating within the sheet “1_INT_INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION” of the GID, where 61 GID indicators and 30 ECA variables are displayed.

GID INDICATOR		ECA INDICATOR	ELECLAB PARAMETER
1	The rules of the electoral law have a legislative rank	Clarity of the legal framework of electoral law(s)	Electoral Consciousness
2	The electoral law provides norms that guarantee democratic elections	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on democracy	Electoral Consciousness
3	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at guaranteeing the respect for human rights	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Electoral Consciousness
4	The electoral law foresees that legislative bodies are elected at intervals of less than five years	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on democracy	Electoral Consciousness
5	The electoral law foresees that at least one of the chambers of the national parliament is elected directly	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on democracy	Electoral Consciousness
6	The electoral law foresees that local assemblies are elected directly	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on democracy	Electoral Consciousness
7	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at protecting the right to freedom of expression	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of expression	Free Choice
8	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at protecting the right to freedom of the press	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of expression	Free Choice
9	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at protecting the right to freedom of movement within the country	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of movement	Free Choice
10	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at protecting the right to freedom of assembly and association for political purposes	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Free Choice
11	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at protecting the right to creating political parties	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Free Choice

Figure 1 – GID – Internal institutional dimension – Screenshot

By using the filter selector, users can browse through the list, grouping GID indicators by ECA variable or ELECLAB parameter. This allows for a fuller understanding of the ECA variable which will be assessed later. If, for instance, users are interested in knowing on which GID indicators the ECA variable “Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights” is composed, they can click on the ECA variable filter selector and choose to display only GID indicators pertaining to that variable only, see the screenshot below.

#	GID INDICATOR	ECA INDICATOR	ELECLAB PARAMETER
10	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at protecting the right to freedom of assembly and association for political purposes	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Free Choice
11	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at protecting the right to creating political parties	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Free Choice
12	The electoral law presents restrictions only under certain conditions of legal basis, public interest and proportionality	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Free Choice

Figure 2 - Filter by ECA variable- Screenshot

The GID indicators form the basis of the ECA variables.

1.2 ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION ASSESSMENT – ECA


The ECA is an assessment tool that helps users, by means of an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), so as to identify priority areas for intervention aimed at increasing/strengthening electoral performance.

It reinforces the implementation of the EEPI by taking into consideration the context within which an electoral process operates.


The main purpose of the ECA is to identify the variables that impact positively or negatively on the electoral system in order to prioritise areas of intervention.

The ECA is intended as an assessment tool, which takes users through the evaluation of both internal and external variables in order to assess the overall performance of the electoral system.

Users are asked to evaluate the influence of the present state of the ECA variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”) on the overall electoral performance. The assessment is performed by clicking on the chosen evaluation:



ECA - ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION ASSESSMENT



URSO for Electoral Co-operation Toolkit

PHASE 1/10 - ASSESSING INTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL VARIABLES						
Please evaluate the influence of the present state of these variables on the electoral system, identifying their impact (from “extremely negative” to “extremely positive”) on the overall electoral performance.		Extremely Negative	Negative	Not relevant	Positive	Extremely positive
1	Clarity of the legal framework of electoral law(s)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on democracy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of expression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of movement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on transparency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on inclusiveness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 3 – Evaluation sheet: an example

The evaluation is performed for all dimensions. Once all the variables in one dimension have been evaluated, users can click on the Next Step button to be redirected to the following dimension.

As displayed in the exemplificative figure below, at the end of the evaluation, users are presented with a graphic representation of the electoral system in terms of the internal and external positive and negative variables which affect it.

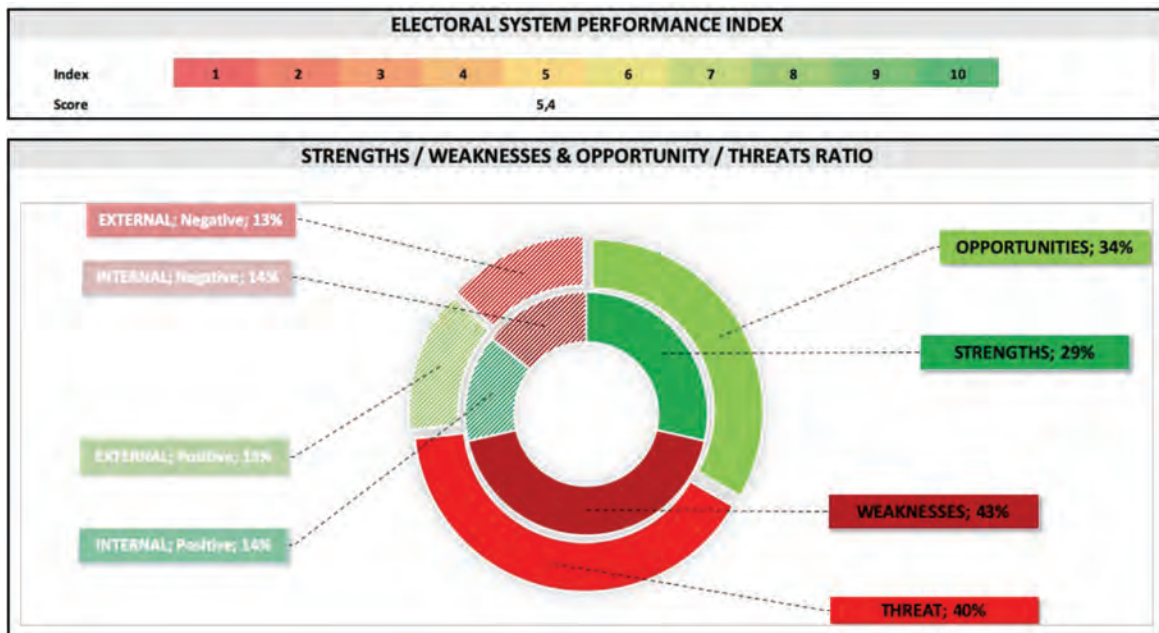


Figure 4 – Assessment results: an example

In the example above, the system performance is almost sufficient. In terms of internal dimensions, 29% of the assessed variable were considered as “strengths” (S) (variables – in dark green – with an extremely positive impact on the electoral process); 43% were considered as “weaknesses” (W) (variables – in dark red – with an extremely negative impact on the electoral process); 34% as “opportunities” (O) (variables – in light green – with an extremely positive impact on the electoral context); and 40% as “threats” (T) (variables – in light red – with an extremely negative impact on the electoral context). Moreover, the chart allows for the visualisation (shown with a striped background) of those variables which have a less marked impact, whether positive or negative, on both the electoral process and the electoral context.

Once the chart has been created, users can re-perform the assessment [Reassess](#) or view [View Operational Variables](#) a summary page showing the list of all operational variables (assessed variables), colour coded based on the outcome of the assessment.

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#	INTERNAL – INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION	Variable States	#	EXTERNAL – INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION	Variable States
1	Clarity of the legal framework of electoral law(s)	Weakness	1	Citizens are at the centre of public activity and they are involved in clearly defined ways in public life.	---
2	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on democracy	Weakness	2	Participation is built on the freedoms of expression, assembly and association.	---
3	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Opportunity	3	All voices, including those of the less privileged and most vulnerable, are heard and taken into account in decision-making processes.	---
4	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of expression	---	4	There is always an honest attempt to mediate between various legitimate interests and to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interests of	---
5	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of movement	Opportunity	5	Decisions are taken according to the will of the many, while the rights and legitimate interests of the few are respected.	---
6	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on transparency	Strength	6	Public authorities abide by the law and judicial decisions.	---
7	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on inclusiveness	Strength	7	Rules and regulations are adopted in accordance with procedures provided for by law and are enforced impartially.	---
8	Effectiveness of the legal framework on the establishment of the central electoral body	---	8	The public good is placed before individual interests.	---
9	Effectiveness of the legal framework on the status of the central electoral body	---	9	There are detailed provisions for the enjoyment of civil and fundamental rights within the country.	---
10	Representativeness provisions on the central electoral body composition	---	10	The principles of freedom of association and of political association are foreseen.	---
11	Transparency provisions on central electoral body activities	---	11	The freedom of expression is reflected in laws regulating mass-media.	---
12	Transparency and non-discriminatory provisions on electoral divisions establishment	---			
13	Accuracy provisions on voter registry and voters lists accuracy in establishment and implementation	---			
14	Inclusiveness provisions on voter registry and voters lists	---			
15	Transparency provisions on voter registry and voters lists	---			

Figure 5 – Colour coded summary of operational variables

Based on the outcome of assessment and thus on the ratio between SWOT variables, users can determine the most effective intervention strategy (see below).

The following paragraphs aim to illustrate the methodology that forms the basis of the ECA self- assessment tool.

1.2.1 Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats – Setting the strategy

The application of the ECA will allow for the implementation of a SWOT analysis, which will contribute to the identification of relevant areas for possible intervention (that is, the analysis will give an indication of the potential positive and negative factors, both internal and external, to be either capitalised or overcome, by means of future intervention).

The SWOT analysis is based on classification criteria for the evaluation of variables:

1. one is concerned with variables that are positive (strengths and opportunities) or negative (weaknesses and threats); while
2. the other identifies variables as either internal or external to a given context.

While the first set of indicators is self-explanatory, the second – in the case at hand – defines:

1. internal – variables and dimensions pertaining to data describing the electoral process of a given setting/ context; and
2. external – variables and dimensions pertaining to data describing the electoral system in a given setting/ context.

Measurement is carried out as follows:

1. each indicator is evaluated as “Extremely positive”, “Positive”, “Not relevant”, “Negative”, “Extremely negative” according to its impact on electoral performance;
2. a symbol is associated to each evaluation and modality: “++”, “+”, “±”, “-”, “--”;
3. an ordinal scale, formed by the numbers “2”, “1”, “0”, “-1”, “-2”, is then applied as a convention to each of these symbols.

Table 3 - SWOT measurement of indicators

Evaluation of intensity and modality	Symbol	Numeric value
Extremely positive	++	2
Positive	+	1
Not relevant	±	0
Negative	-	-1
Extremely negative	--	-2

1.2.2 SWOT analysis methodological process

The SWOT framework is based on detecting the dimensions and internal indicators of a given area, and the external indicators that refer to the existing policies, strategies, frameworks, networks, knowledge and behaviour, in order to subsequently measure the indicators, allowing them to be evaluated as positive or negative, according to their impact.

Some variables have a highly positive or negative impact; there are also variables which consist of existing indicators having a low impact, but which still influence the overall electoral performance in a given context/setting; and, finally, there is the neutral situation, where indicators of no relevance (that is, those having no impact), have no influence on the present scenario as outlined by SWOT analysis.

It is finally possible to define SWOT variables, and to redraw the previous table, in order to show a possible SWOT scenario:

Table 4 – SWOT variables

Measure of indicators	Internal	External
+ 2	Strengths (S)	Opportunities (O)
+ 1	positive	positive
0	non-relevant	non-relevant
- 1	negative	negative
- 2	Weaknesses (W)	Threats (T)

The data gathered are therefore:

1. assessed and given scores between -2 and +2 for each variable; and
2. by adding all scores for variables within a dimension, it is possible to achieve an overall value for each dimension;
3. the overall dimension value is readapted to a base 10 equivalent using the formula:
 $(x - m_r) * (10 - 1) / (M_r - m_r) + 1^8$, thus allowing for comparability.

Through this method of processing data, a SWOT analysis allows an assessment of electoral performance in a given context/setting and, at the same time, it helps to highlight any potential for improvement by capitalising on strengths (S) and opportunities (O), while considering the negative effects of weaknesses (W) and threats (T). Moreover, variables having a lower impact, whether positive or negative, internal or external, should also be considered in order to increase the overall level of performance of the electoral system.

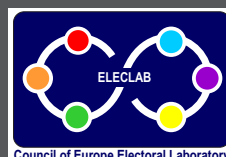
8. Where x = the sum of the variable values for each dimension; M = maximum; m= minimum; r= real; 10= theoretical maximum; 1=theoretical minimum a. In this formula the real minimum and maximum are calculated by multiplying the number of variables of each dimension by -2 (minimum SWOT score) and +2 (maximum SWOT score).

USEFUL RELEVANT SUSTAINABLE OWNED FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX 4 – MONITORING AND EVALUATION METHODOLOGY



Toolkit for strategic planning
and prioritisation
of electoral co-operation



APPENDIX 4 – MONITORING AND EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Why is evaluation needed?

*Monitoring and evaluation aim to provide the main parties with timely information about the progress, or lack thereof, in the production of outputs and the achievement of outcomes. This serves as a basis for decision making to improve the performance of the programme or project and to feed into the learning processes.*¹

According to the European Commission, “to evaluate a public intervention is to judge its value according to explicit criteria and on the basis of information specifically gathered and analysed”².

But why are evaluation processes a necessity for public sector organisations? Some of the main reasons for implementing evaluation processes are:³

- ▶ to verify the rationale of a public intervention (e.g. why is the public intervention structured as it is proposed?);
- ▶ to identify reproducible successes and/or failures not to be repeated (what lessons have been learned from this intervention?);
- ▶ to be accountable to citizens (giving citizens an account of the public intervention in terms of implementation, costs and results).

Evaluation processes are part of an accountable approach to public management. In this sense, evaluation processes may respond to a number of concerns, as follows:⁴

- ▶ to estimate as objectively as possible the effects of interventions on society and to understand the logics of their operation (that is, the cognitive aim);
- ▶ to assist policy makers and all stakeholders in making judgments about the value of such interventions (that is, the normative aim);
- ▶ to contribute substantially to the improvement of interventions by enlightening their different stakeholders on the meaning, conditions and consequences of their actions and decisions (that is, the instrumental aim).

A public organisation provides services to recipients, users and subordinates. If the people involved in a public action are satisfied with it, this is usually not enough to say that the action has been successful. On the contrary, public organisations often seek to produce far-reaching and global effects (such as “improvement in a competent and well-trained public administration”), which are not synonymous with the satisfaction of recipients. The evaluation makes it possible to know and judge all the effects of a specific public action.⁵

The evaluation gathers information into a coherent whole in order to increase the knowledge of those responsible about the social and economic realities within which public interventions operate. In addition, evaluation is an instrument for policy and operational decision making: its practical usefulness can be defined as linking the objectives, means, outcomes and effects of interventions with a view to improving effectiveness and efficiency.

Finally, the evaluation introduces the notion of value, and of value judgment, into administrative practices. This dimension, which can be described as political, gives the evaluation its originality.

1. UNDP (2003), “UNDP Programming Manual”, Chapter 4: Formulating programmes and projects, 18.
2. [To evaluate a public intervention is to judge its value according to explicit criteria and on the basis of information gathered and analysed (Translated from French by the authors)] Fonds structurels communautaires (1999), Évaluer les programmes socio-économiques. Conception et conduite d’une évaluation. Volume 1, Commission Européenne, 17 [Evaluating socio-economic programmes. Design and conduct of an evaluation. Volume 1, European Commission, 17 (Translated from French by the authors)].
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. 18.
5. Ibid. 19.

Analysing the basic definition of evaluation offered by the European Commission, its constituent elements need to be stressed, since they also provide the guidelines for actions to be planned and performed: “To evaluate a public intervention is to judge its value according to explicit criteria and on the basis of information specifically gathered and analysed”. That is to say that:

- ▶ evaluation is the formulation of a judgment;
- ▶ the judgment concerns the value of an intervention, that is, the value of an intentional action developed using specific resources in order to achieve a specific result;
- ▶ the judgment must be formulated using explicit, clearly stated criteria;
- ▶ the judgment must be formulated in relation to information systematically collected for the purposes of the evaluation.

This implies that a clear idea is needed about:

- ▶ the object of the evaluation, that is what has to be evaluated;
- ▶ the goal of the evaluation, that is what purpose it has to serve;
- ▶ the criteria, that is the value reference that will guide the formulation of the judgment;
- ▶ the process, that is the procedures needed to collect information.

1.1.1 Objects of evaluation

What is the focus of evaluation? Generally, when considering public interventions, four different objects (focuses) of the evaluation can be envisaged that depend on the level of complexity/spread of the evaluation.

The table below shows the potential objects of evaluation in public interventions, illustrating a concrete example related to the health-care system.

Table 1 - Objects of evaluation: an example on the health-care system⁶

Conceptual object of evaluation	Conceptual definition	Example – health-care system
<i>Service</i>	Provision of direct services to specific groups of users, carried out continuously by organised and stable structures, to meet well-identified needs.	The set of services/interventions provided by a specific hospital ward.
<i>Project(s)</i>	Defined sets of activities aimed at achieving specific goals over a given period of time by using certain resources and whose managerial responsibility is sufficiently identified.	A set of activities aimed at reducing the incidence of a specific disease in a fixed span of time.
<i>Programme</i>	Co-ordinated sets of actions/projects with defined operational goals, realised in a defined time span using specific resources.	National programmes aimed at erasing specific diseases, such as tuberculosis, polio, etc.
<i>Policy</i>	Intended as an overall plan/strategy including the overall goals and procedures of an organisation.	The implementation of a national health-care system.

6. The list in the table is not to be considered exhaustive. However, it represents the most important levels and objects which are applicable in most cases.

1.1.1.1 Objects of evaluation in the case of electoral co-operation

When considering the case of electoral co-operation, the following objects of evaluation might be identified:



Figure 1 – Objects of evaluation for electoral co-operation

For the purpose of this toolkit, “intervention” will be used as a general term that refers to both a service, a project and a programme, when discussing the evaluation processes in general.

It must be stressed that, at any level – service, project, programme, policy – and for any field of applicability (such as training programmes for local government, health-care systems, education systems) the methodology for evaluation remains conceptually the same, while indicators, criteria and implementation responsibilities have to be determined in accordance with the operational level.

1.1.2 Goals of evaluation

The evaluation of a public intervention may have several practical and political goals, such as:

- ▶ to decide on the merit of a public intervention;
- ▶ to improve a public intervention;
- ▶ to increase knowledge of the mechanisms that are generated by the implementation of a public intervention;
- ▶ to increase the learning ability of the actors involved in a public intervention.

1.1.2.1 Goals of evaluation in the case of electoral co-operation

When considering the framework for electoral co-operation of the Council of Europe (as a concrete example of public intervention), the evaluation processes may have the following practical and political goals:

- ▶ to decide on the merit of an intervention, jointly co-ordinated by the Council of Europe and local partners.
- ▶ to improve existing frameworks and tool implemented in a given context.
- ▶ to increase knowledge of the operating mechanisms of the electoral system in a given context.
- ▶ to increase the learning ability of players:
 - that is to increase the learning ability of all those who participated in the programme or were involved in it (that is, both the Council of Europe and the electoral authorities of the member state), through reflections on the actions performed and the consequences that have arisen, with specific reference to those who implemented the intervention.

1.1.3 Phases of evaluation

The life cycle of public intervention programmes usually goes through three crucial stages (namely, the planning, implementation and conclusion of the programme).

Ideally, the evaluation processes should be carried out for all three stages, as follows:

Table 2 – Evaluation within a training programme life cycle

Intervention life cycle	Evaluation phase	Goal
Planning/Design	Ex ante evaluation	Evaluation of the design of the public intervention, in order to estimate how well it could respond to the needs it has been designed for.
Implementation	In itinere evaluation (monitoring)	Monitoring of the operations related to the implementation of the public intervention, with the main purpose of providing information to improve the training programme during its implementation.
Conclusion	Ex post evaluation	Evaluation of the whole process of implementation of the public intervention, including, specific activities, the mechanisms at work in producing the results and also the merit of the results achieved.

1.1.3.1 Phases of the evaluation in the case of electoral co-operation

When considering the monitoring and evaluation of electoral co-operation, the following phases may be identified:

1.1.3.1.1 *Ex ante* evaluation – setting the baseline for an intervention

This should be performed before the electoral strategic planning begins in a given context/member state. *Ex ante* evaluation implies an understanding of the pre-existing situation (in terms of the electoral process, the electoral system, overall societal environment, etc.). Only once the pre-existing situation has been mapped is it then possible to evaluate the electoral performance in a given context.

1.1.3.1.2 *In itinere* evaluation (or monitoring) – implementing a plan of action

At member state level:

- ▶ it implies the structured collection of inputs related to the implementation of a plan of action that aims to increase electoral performance.

At Council of Europe level:

- ▶ it implies the structured collection of inputs related to the ongoing co-operation between the Division of Elections and Civil Society and the member state.

1.1.3.1.3 *Ex post* evaluation – Wind-up assessment of the intervention

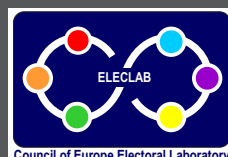
This should be performed at the end of a specific intervention. The final evaluation is based on the gathering of data using the same process and tools, which is then compared with the evaluation of the situation *ex ante* *ex post* evaluation also looks at the impact of the performed activity on a broader scale.

USEFUL RELEVANT SUSTAINABLE OWNED FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX 5 – TRAINING MATERIAL



Toolkit for strategic planning
and prioritisation
of electoral co-operation



APPENDIX 5 –
TRAINING MATERIAL

FRAMEWORK METHODOLOGY FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

- The framework methodology for electoral co-operation (FMEC) foresees the elaboration of a multipurpose tool that can collect, systematise and assess data regarding both:
 - electoral processes;
 - electoral contexts (i.e. the system within which electoral processes operate).

- FMEC components
 - General indicators database – GID
 - Electoral co-operation assessment – ECA.

Ultimately, the framework methodology for electoral co-operation represents the basis to **set up indexes**, both at national and regional level, that will support the **assessment of electoral performance**.

THE GENERAL INDICATORS DATABASE — GID

- The general indicators database (GID) is intended as repository of indicators with which to assess electoral co-operation and as an easy-to-use guide to implementing effectively both:
 - the European electoral performance index (EEPI); and
 - the ECA.
 - It aims at improving both electoral processes and overall electoral systems.
-
- The GID is based on 300 indicators related to five dimensions:
 1. institutional
 2. administrative
 3. social
 4. human capital
 5. economic
 - These dimensions are divided into two groups:
 - internal
 - external

GID - DESCRIBING THE CONTEXT – DIMENSIONS OF THE ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

INTERNAL (143)

dimensions referring mainly to the electoral process

INSTITUTIONAL

refers to norms and principles regulating the electoral process

ADMINISTRATIVE

refers to practices and procedures of the electoral process

SOCIAL

refers to the variables that describe the actors and target groups involved in the electoral process

HUMAN CAPITAL

refers to the capacities and/or knowledge that might impact/shape the electoral process

ECONOMIC impact/shape the electoral process

refers to the financial resources that might impact/shape the electoral process

EXTERNAL (157)

dimensions pertaining to the overall electoral system

refers to norms and principles regulating the public affairs of a given context

refers to processes and procedures of public authorities within a given context

refers to the variables that impact on the electoral performance in terms of awareness, inclusiveness, etc;

refers to the capacities and/or knowledge present within the population of a given context

refers to the financial resources present within a given context

Overall indicators organisation with the GID

#	Internal/External	Dimension	GID indicators	ECA indicators
1	Internal	Institutional	61	30
2	Internal	Administrative	49	17
3	Internal	Social	15	6
4	Internal	Human capital	9	3
5	Internal	Economic	9	9
6	External	Institutional	19	11
7	External	Administrative	39	14
8	External	Social	45	26
9	External	Human capital	24	16
10	External	Economic	30	21

- The GID serves as the basis for the identification of the ECA variables (n.153).
- Structured in an excel spreadsheet, the GID and ECA variables are presented dimension by dimension (one dimension per sheet), thus allowing for comparison, cross-checking and filtering.



URSO for Electoral Co-operation Toolkit

1 - INTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION

	GID INDICATOR	ECA INDICATOR	ELECLAB PARAMETER
10	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at protecting the right to freedom of assembly and association for political purposes	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Free Choice
11	The electoral law includes specific provisions aimed at protecting the right to creating political parties	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Free Choice
12	The electoral law presents restrictions only under certain conditions of legal basis, public interest and proportionality	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Free Choice

Using the GID: An example

- By using the filter selector, users can browse the list, grouping GID indicators by ECA variable or ELECLAB parameter.
- This allows for a fuller understanding of the ECA variable which will be later assessed.

ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION ASSESSMENT – ECA

- The ECA is an assessment tool that supports users by means of an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), so as to identify priority areas of intervention aimed at increasing/strengthening electoral performance.
- The main purpose of ECA is to identify the variables that impact positively or negatively on the electoral system in order to prioritise areas of intervention.
- The ECA is intended as an assessment tool which takes users through the evaluation of both internal and external variables in order to assess the overall performance of the electoral system.

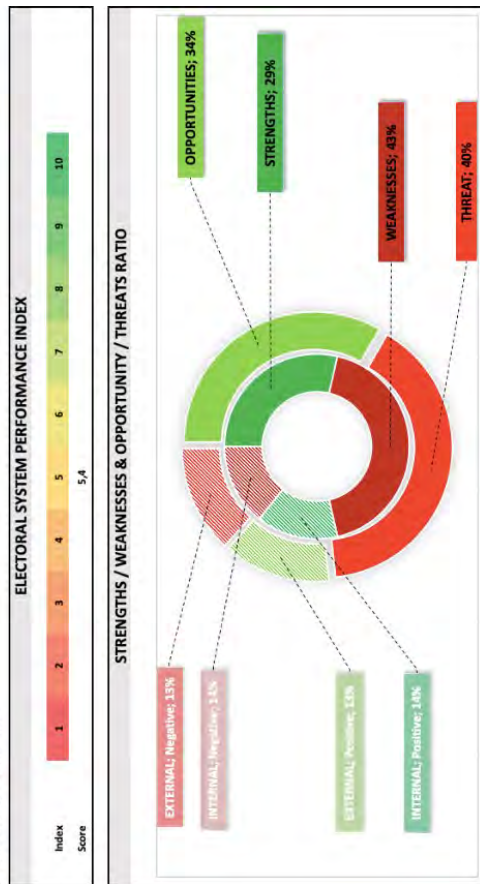
ENSD - Electoral Cooperation Unit

ECA - ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION ASSESSMENT

PHASE 1 (P1) - ASSESSING INTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL VARIABLES

Internal variables are those variables that are directly related to the internal functioning of the electoral system. They are those variables that are directly related to the internal functioning of the electoral system.

	Extremely negative	Negative	Not relevant	Positive	Extremely positive
1. Clarity of the legal framework of electoral laws	○	○	○	○	○
2. Compliance of the electoral law with international elections standards	○	○	○	○	○
3. Compliance of the electoral law with international elections standards on voters' rights	○	○	○	○	○
4. Compliance of the electoral law with international elections standards on freedom of expression	○	○	○	○	○
5. Compliance of the electoral law with international elections standards on freedom of movement	○	○	○	○	○
6. Compliance of the electoral law with international elections standards on transparency	○	○	○	○	○
7. Compliance of the electoral law with international elections standards on mechanisms	○	○	○	○	○



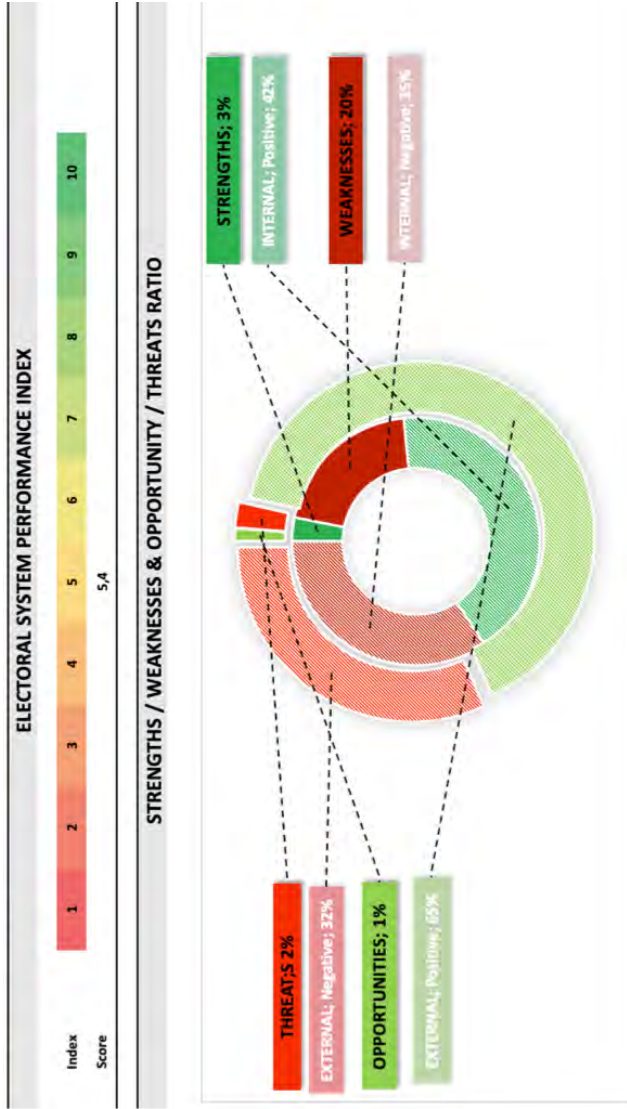
- At the end of the evaluation, users are presented with a graphic representation of the electoral systems in terms of the internal and external positive and negative variables which affect it.

ECA Results: overall assessment

Overall SWOT ANALYSIS RESULT

	INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
POSITIVE	S 2 [+27]	O 1 [+55]
NEGATIVE	W 13 [-22]	T 2 [-27]

- 149/153 variables identified as relevant
- 18/153 SWOT variables
 - Electoral processes characterised by weaknesses
 - Overall positive electoral system



Potential Strategic Directions



STRENGTHENING STRATEGY

Strengthening positives (both internal and external) so as to bypass the negatives



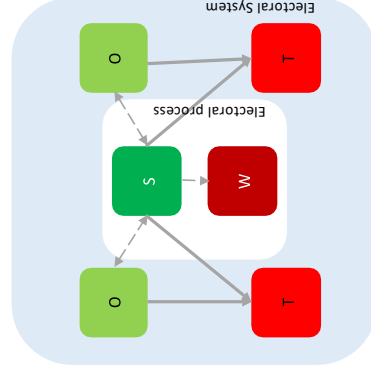
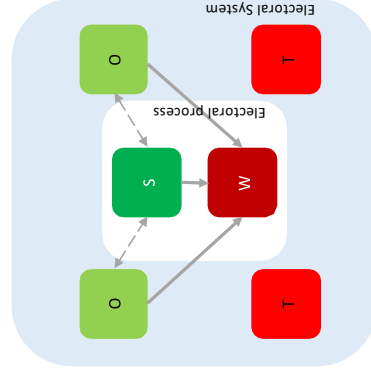
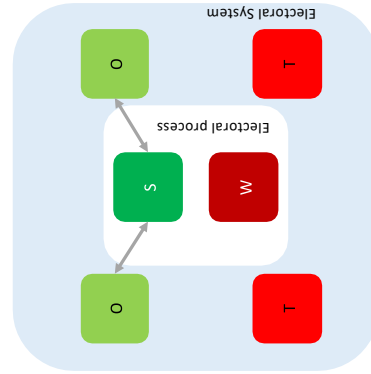
OVERCOMING STRATEGY

Capitalise on strengths and opportunities to decrease weaknesses



MOBILISATION STRATEGY

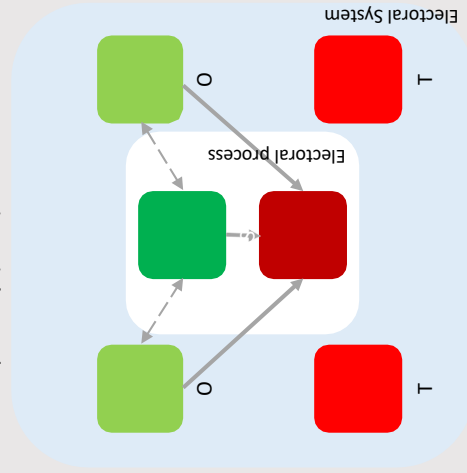
Capitalise on strengths and opportunities to limit threats





A deeper look at SWOT results

	INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
POSITIVE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Equal opportunities provisions targeting campaigning activities (22/1) 2. Transparency measures on candidature submission (5/2) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internation donors supporting national (electoral) initiatives (15/10)
NEGATIVE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effectiveness of the legal framework on the status of the central electoral body (1/9) 2. Accuracy provisions on voter registry and voters' lists accuracy in establishment and implementation (1/13) 3. Integrity provisions on voter registry and voters' lists of citizens residing abroad (1/17) 4. Inclusiveness provisions allowing for political parties of national minorities (1/18) 5. Integrity provisions on appeal procedures (1/29) 6. Accuracy provisions on appeal procedures (1/30) 7. Inclusiveness measures on appeal procedures (1/2) 8. Accuracy measures on voter registry and voters' lists (10/2) 9. Accuracy measures on voter registry and voters' lists targeting citizens residing abroad (11/2) 10. Inclusiveness measures on voter registry and voters' lists (12/2) <p>Equal opportunity measures targeting media coverage during election campaigns (14/2) Inclusiveness measures ensuring political pluralism in the media (4/3)</p> <p>Overall technical capacity of the central electoral body (1/4)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Citizens are at the centre of public activity and they are involved in clearly defined ways in public life (1/6) 2. Size / proportion of the population living at risk or in absolute poverty (1/10)



ECA Results – Focus on dimensions

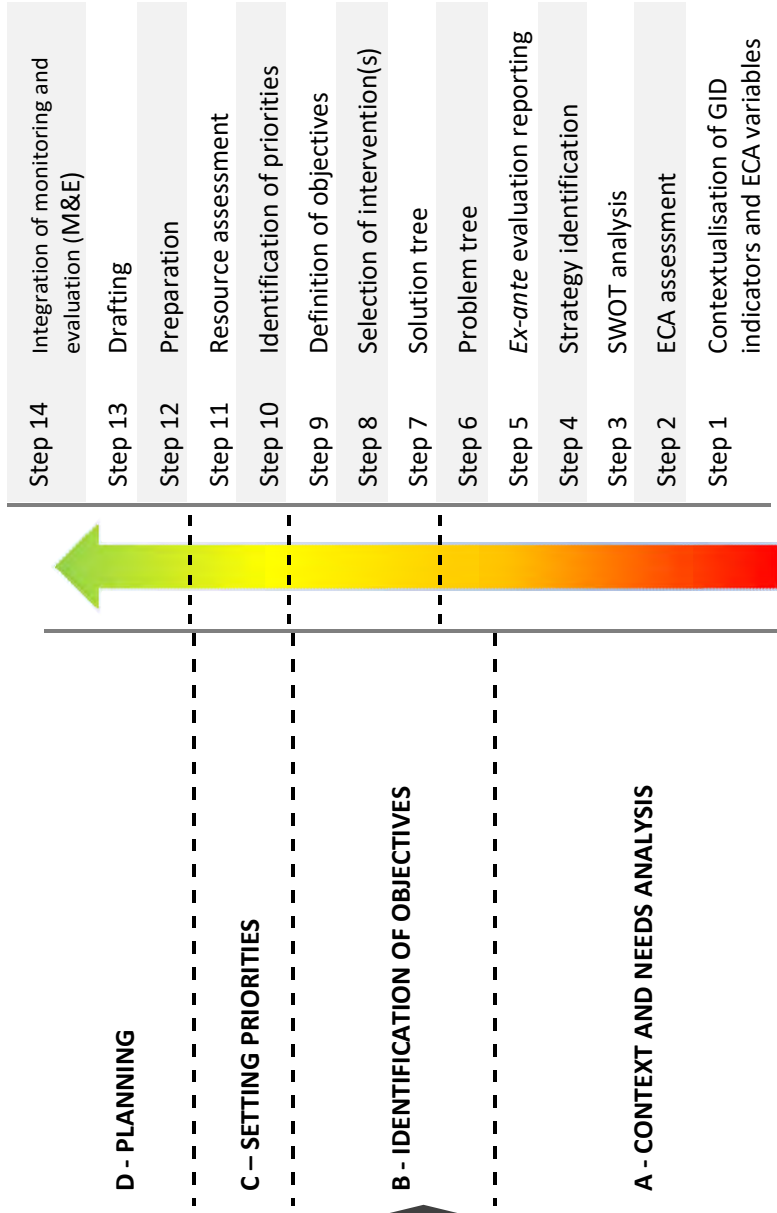
- For each dimension, the tool displays a list of all operational variables (i.e. assessed variables), colour-coded based on the outcome of the assessment.
- The analytical detail at dimension level serves as basis for clustering and strategic action planning.



URSO for Electoral Co-operation Toolkit

#	INTERNAL – INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION	Variable Status	EXTERNAL – INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION	Variable Status
1	Clarity of the legal framework of electoral law(s)	Weakness	Citizens are at the centre of public activity and they are involved in clearly defined ways in public life.	...
2	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on democracy	Weakness	Participation is built on the freedoms of expression, assembly and association.	...
3	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on human rights	Weakness	All voters, including those of the less privileged and most vulnerable, are heard and taken into account in decision-making processes.	...
4	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on inclusiveness	Strength	There is always an honest attempt to mediate between various legitimate interests and to reach a consensus that is acceptable to the majority.	...
5	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on freedom of movement	Strength	Decisions are taken according to the will of the majority, while the rights and legitimate interests of the few are respected.	...
6	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on transparency	Strength	Public authorities abide by the law and judicial decisions.	...
7	Compliance of the electoral law with international election standards on inclusiveness	Strength	Rules and regulations are adopted in accordance with procedures provided for by law and are enforced impartially.	...
8	Effectiveness of the legal framework on the establishment of the central electoral body	Strength	The public goods are placed before individual interests.	...
9	Effectiveness of the legal framework on the status of the central electoral body	Strength	There are detailed provisions for the enjoyment of civil and fundamental rights and freedoms.	...
10	Representativeness provisions on the central electoral body composition	Strength	The principles of freedom of association and of political association are foreseen.	...
11	Transparency provisions on central electoral body activities	Strength	The freedom of expression is reflected in laws regulating mass media.	...
12	Transparency and non-discrimination provisions on electoral divisions establishment	Strength		...
13	Accuracy provisions on voter registry and voters lists accuracy in establishment and implementation	Strength		...
14	Inclusiveness provisions on voter registry and voters lists	Strength		...
15	Transparency provisions on voter registry and voters lists	Strength		...

14 STEPS TO IMPLEMENT URSO FRAMEWORK METHODOLOGY



From SWOT analysis to setting the strategy



IDENTIFICATION OF
POSSIBLE OBJECTIVES



FROM OBJECTIVES TO
PRIORITIES



PLAN OF ACTION -
ELABORATION

B. OBJECTIVES IDENTIFICATION

- Objective:
 - It is the **expected outcome** of an action/a sequence of actions whose goal is to reduce the gap between the actual level and the acceptability threshold.
 - It is an achievable mean to face and resolve the problem(s) identified.
 - It must be concrete and specific (level, amount, threshold, etc.)



STEP 6 – Problem Tree



1. FOCUS on WEAKNESSES to IDENTIFY the core problem
2. FOCUS on (remaining) WEAKNESSES and THREATS to identify CAUSES and EFFECTS
3. FOCUS on the OPERATIONAL VARIABLES for each DIMENSION

1. CLEARLY DEFINE THE CORE PROBLEM

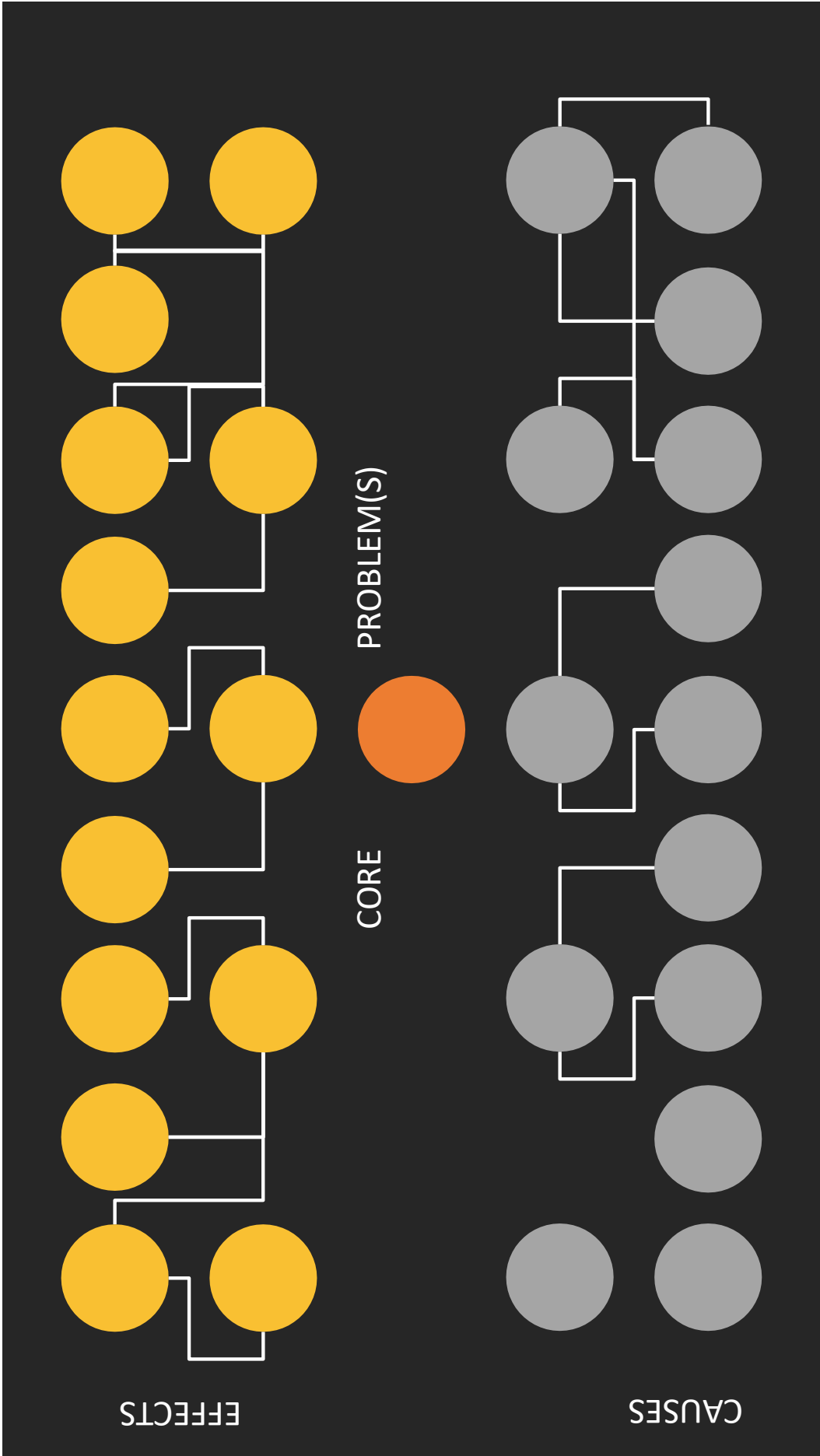
- What is the problem that requires immediate action?
- Why is it a priority? To whom?
- Is something being done already? By whom? How?
- Is it necessary to deploy INSTITUTIONAL – ADMINISTRATIVE – SOCIAL – HUMAN CAPITAL – ECONOMIC actions/reforms?

2. IDENTIFY ITS CAUSES

- Why did this problem arise now?
- Where does it come from? What is causing it?
- Is it linked to INSTITUTIONAL – ADMINISTRATIVE – SOCIAL – HUMAN CAPITAL – ECONOMIC dimensions?

3. IDENTIFY ITS EFFECTS

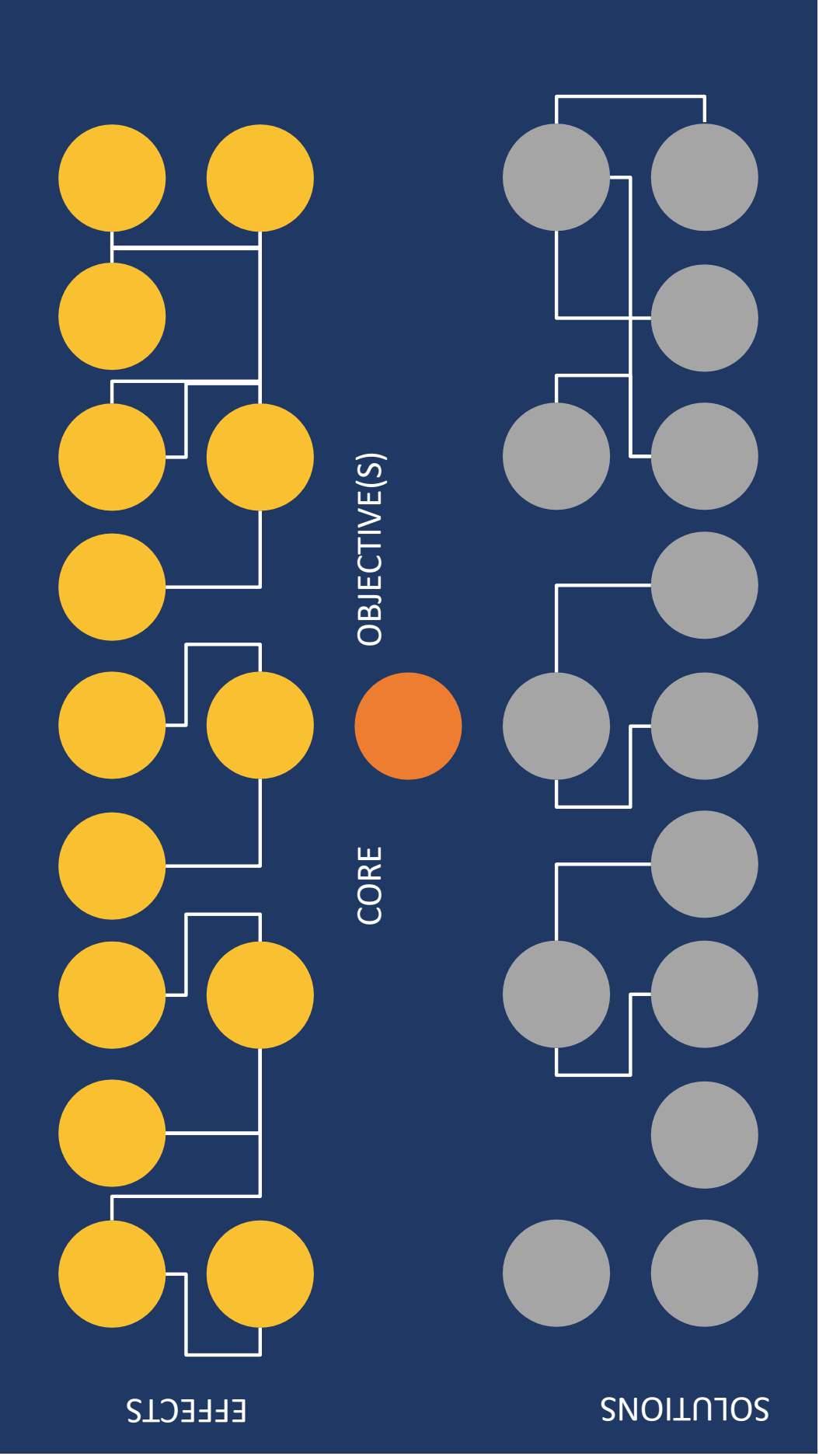
- Who is most affected? How? How much?
- What would happen if no solution is found?
- Which implications would there be on the INSTITUTIONAL – ADMINISTRATIVE – SOCIAL – HUMAN CAPITAL – ECONOMIC levels?

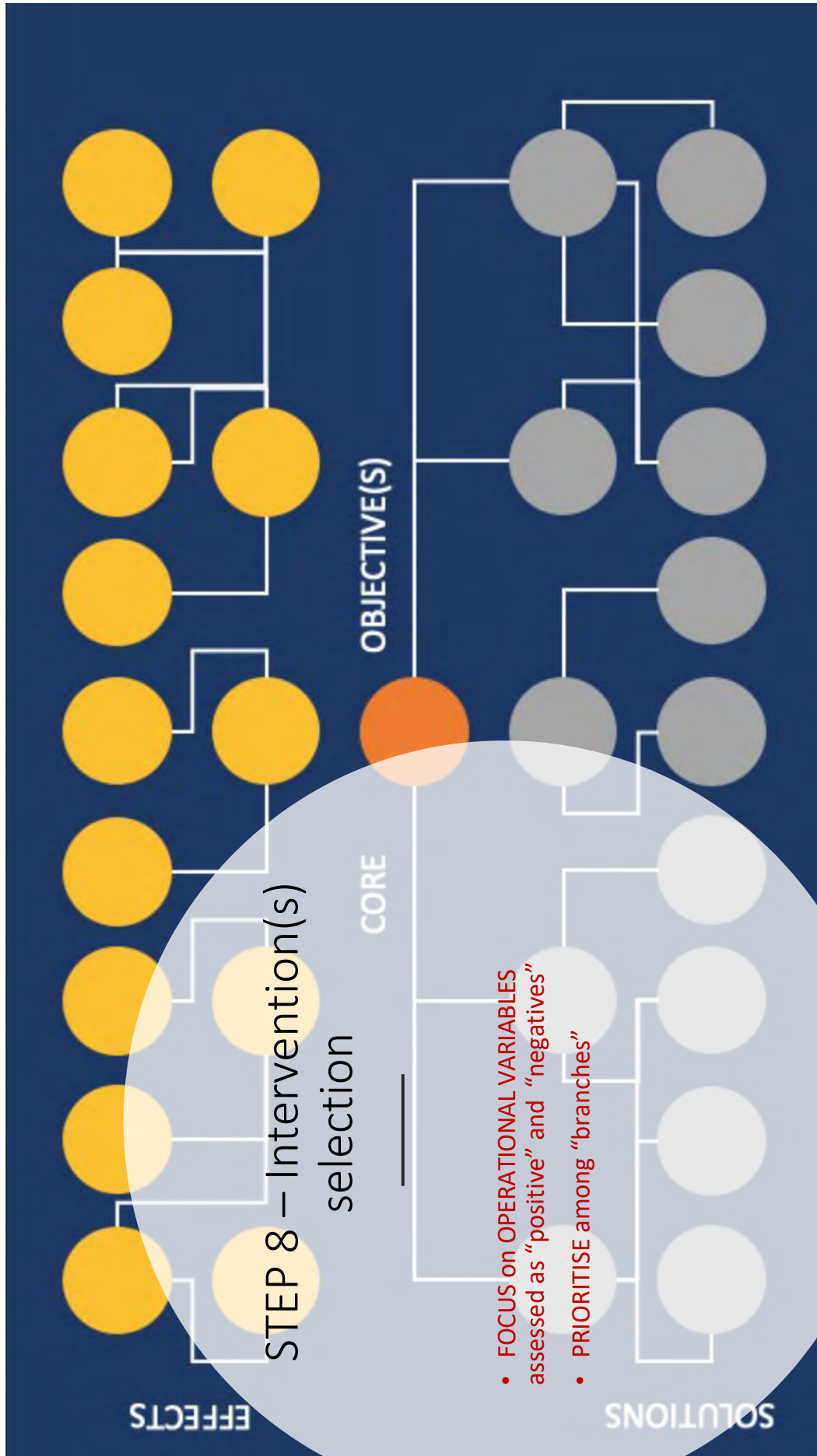


STEP 7 – Solutions Tree

1. FOCUS on RELEVANT STRENGTHS to IDENTIFY the core objective
2. FOCUS on (remaining) STRENGTHS and OPPORTUNITIES to identify possible SOLUTIONS
3. FOCUS on the OPERATIONAL VARIABLES for each DIMENSION

- Develop a solution tree
 - Reverse the negative statements in positive ones
 - Focus on means-end relations among objectives
-

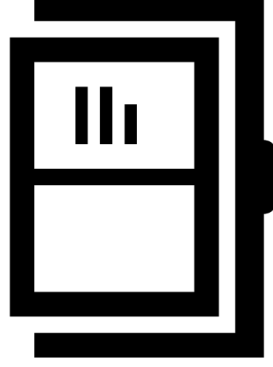
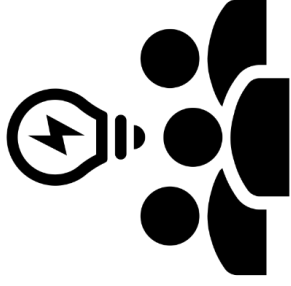
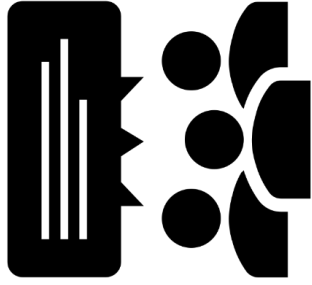




STEP 9 – Objectives

Definition

- **SPECIFIC**
 - Is the goal clear for everyone?
 - Does it answer the 5Ws?
- **MEASURABLE**
 - Is it possible to identify concrete criteria for measuring progress towards the attainment of the goal?
- **ATTAINABLE**
 - How can it be reached?
 - Do we have the right expertise /resources?
 - Is it realistic?
- **RELEVANT**
 - Does it address the core problem?
 - Do all stakeholders agree on it?
 - Is the right time now?
- **TIME-BOUND**
 - Is it possible to identify milestones?
 - Is it possible to set a realistic delivery date?



C. Priorities Setting



STEP 10

PRIORITIES IDENTIFICATION

Objectives are ordered by level of perceived “urgency” and “importance”



STEP 11

RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

Available cognitive resources are assessed.

Available concrete resources are assessed.

Resources are mobilised for the implementation of plans of action.

D. PLANNING

Planning of activities that are supposed to achieve the set objectives.

STEP 12 - PREPARATION



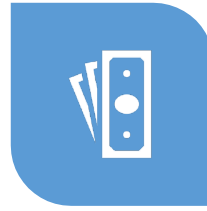
ATTRIBUTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND DEFINITION OF OUTPUTS (SETTING TARGETS)



OVERALL TIME FRAME AND LENGTH OF ACTIVITIES



SUCCESSION AND INTERRELATION OF ACTIVITIES



DEFINING RESOURCES (HUMAN, TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL)



IDENTIFYING AND SELECTING INDICATORS FOR MONITORING



GANTT CHART

STEP 13 - DRAFTING

1. **Vision** – focus on the broad envisaged features of the electoral system;
2. **Mission** – focus on the current operations and statutory mandate;
3. **Overall objective** – focus on the overall expected results;
4. **Outcome** – focus on the expected impact;
5. **Outputs** – focus on the immediate and concrete results (i.e. results which are achievable directly by the implementation of the plan);
6. **Work Programme** – focus on the activities planned to achieve the outputs, including references to monitoring and evaluation processes.



Ex ante evaluation

- It can have three different purposes, not mutually exclusive:
 - provisional assessment of the effects and impacts
 - to foresee the “scenario” at the end of the intervention and then direct the decisions of merit;
 - evaluation of the quality of the design and of the design of implementation strategy
 - to analyse the internal logic of the intervention (choice of objectives, actions to be implemented, modalities of implementation) and to judge how much it satisfies the identified needs
- evaluation for the selection of projects
 - to identify which, among several competing projects, will be better in achieving the given goals

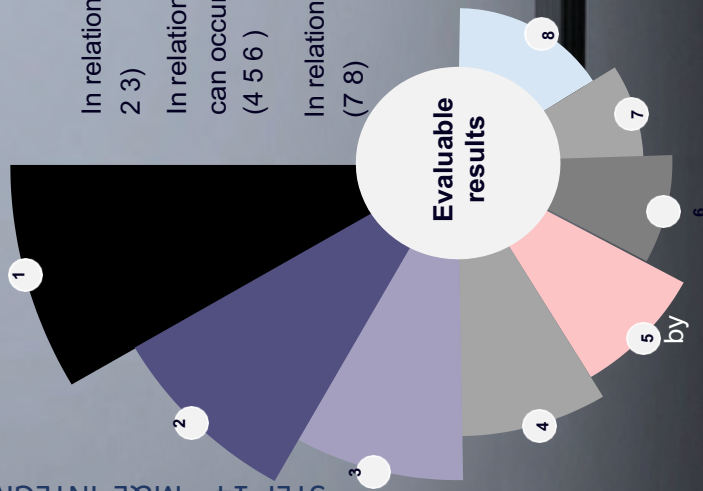
monitoring

In itinere evaluation

- Performed during the course of the intervention, in order to check its operation, implementation methods, the progress towards the achievement of the objectives, any unexpected effects.
- Two possible approaches, not mutually exclusive:
 - continuous, throughout the implementation of the intervention, formulating judgments based on the data collected with the monitoring and documentation activities
 - medium-term, in a precise moment, already foreseen by the design of the realisation of the intervention
- The main purpose is to provide information and judgments to improve the intervention during its implementation (formative evaluation)

Ex post evaluation

STEP 14 – M&E INTEGRATION



In relation to the contents (1
2 3)

In relation to the time when they
can occur
(4 5 6)

In relation to predictability
(7 8)

1

 Output (achievements) - what is "produced" using resources

3

 Impacts – more general consequences occurring in the context within which the intervention took place

5

 Latents – limited to the conclusion of the intervention, tend to increase over time

7

 expected (both positive and negative) – already covered the design phase

2

 Outcome (results) – benefits obtained from the beneficiaries and/or changes that occurred in the situation in which they intervened

4

 In the short term – they manifest themselves at the end of the intervention, but they could also run out quickly

6

 In the long term – they occur after a more or less long period from the end of the intervention

8

 unforeseen – unexpected consequences, not determinable a priori during the design phase, both positive (hidden blessings) and negative ones (perverse effects)

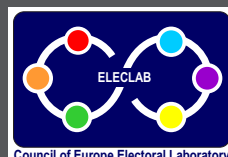
It intends to evaluate the entire intervention, its deployment, the mechanisms that have worked in producing the results and also the "merit" of the results obtained.

USEFUL RELEVANT SUSTAINABLE OWNED FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX 6 – CENTRAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2020-2023



Toolkit for strategic planning
and prioritisation
of electoral co-operation



APPENDIX 6 –
**CENTRAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA
STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2020-2023**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends of the Central Electoral Commission,

On behalf of the Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova, we are honored to present the Strategic Plan for 2020-2023 of the Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova. The experience of implementing the first two strategic plans demonstrated the importance of a unique and clear vision for the development of the electoral institution and of democracy as a whole.

The third strategic plan is based on three key elements: Electoral Services, Efficient Communication, and Professional Election officials. These three engines must be driven by People who are working within an Organizational Culture that is positive and open to innovations. There are many options for the further development of CEC, but we believe that these three dimensions represent the most our ambition, opportunities and challenges for the next four years.

In this Road map of the Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova we have described the vision related to CEC's future, as well as the ideas regarding the work we intend to do. We hope that the document will resonate with each of you as it does with us.

*Dr. Dorin Cimil
CEC President*

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CPA - Central Public Administration

LPA – Local Public Administration

PSA –Public Services Agency

EBPS –Electoral bureau of the polling station

DRB – Diaspora Relations Bureau

AC – Audiovisual Council

CEC - Central Electoral Commission

DEC I – First level District Electoral Council

DEC II – Second level District Electoral Council

CCET – Centre for Continuous Electoral Training

NAC –National Anticorruption Center

ADD – Analysis and Documentation Division

CPAMD – Communication, Public Affairs and Media Division

FED – Financial and Economic Division

LD – Legal Division

EMD – Election Management Division

ITVLMD - Information Technology and Voter List Management Division

MIA – Ministry of Internal Affairs

MJ – Ministry of Justice

UNDP - United Nations Development Programme

SRE – State Register of Electors

SAIS“Elections” – State Automatic Information System “Elections”

SIS – Security and Intelligence Service

PS – Polling Stations

INTRODUCTION

The strategy is the essential ingredient, the engine driving the institution's development efforts, and a thorough planning is fundamental.

The strategic planning process for 2020-2023 started in the middle of September, 2019 and is carried out according to an innovative methodology developed by the Division of Electoral Assistance (DG Democracy) of the Council of Europe in cooperation with Institute of International Sociology of Gorizia (ISIG) ¹. The objective of this exercise is to assess the current stage of development of the Central Electoral Commission and the electoral system and to establish the organization's strategic directions for the next 4 years. The Central Electoral Commission is assisted in the planning process by the Council of Europe experts.

According to the methodology, the strategic planning is carried out by:

I. Analyzing the context and necessities (contextualization of operational variables and indicators, evaluation of electoral cooperation, SWOT analysis, strategy identification)

II. Identifying the objectives (problem tree, solution tree, selection of intervention areas, objectives' establishment)

III. Establishing priorities (priorities' identification, assessment of the required resources)

IV. Planning (preparation, plan development, integration of the monitoring and evaluation component)

In the first stage, the operational variables EEC – Evaluation of Electoral Cooperation were assessed and contextualized. This is an evaluation tool which facilitates the SWOT² analysis and contributes to the identification of variables that have a positive or negative impact on the electoral system's overall performance and the areas of intervention in order to increase/consolidate the institutional performance. The bases of the EEC variables are the GID³ indicators. In order to evaluate and contextualize correctly, the electoral legal framework and other connected were revised, namely the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, the Electoral Code, the Audiovisual Media Services Code, the Law on Political Parties, the Law on Civil Service, the Law on Decision-Making Transparency, etc. Another important component in the documentation process was the analysis of relevant documents such as activity reports, reports of national and international observers on elections, opinion polls, statistics database of the Republic of Moldova, studies/researches on various relevant topics. In addition, interviews were conducted with key persons (chiefs and deputies, as the case may be) from the Central Electoral Commission apparatus, with former representatives with advisory voting rights, civil society representatives, and civil servants.

The impact of each operational variable on the electoral performance was assessed with "Very Positive", "Positive", "Irrelevant", "Negative" or "Very Negative" thus outlining in the end the strengths and weaknesses within the system and, on the other hand, the opportunities and threats from outside the system. The SWOT analysis describes the internal (Strengths) and external (Opportunities) elements that are useful for achieving the objectives and which are to be maintained / developed / exploited in order to increase the electoral performance. Moreover, the SWOT presents the internal (Weaknesses) and external (Threats) elements that are considered harmful for the achievement of the objectives and which must be neutralized through certain measures aimed at solving / overcoming / avoiding / minimizing the effects.

At this point in the process, the consolidation strategy was chosen as the main means of action and general framework for decision-making. It is based on the positive indicators building, both internal and external, assuming that the negative indicators will be removed, bypassed or absorbed by the positive ones.

1. ISIG is an independent institute for research in the area of social sciences established in Gorizia, Italy, in 1968.

2. SWOT - The SWOT analysis is a way of assessing the general state of an organization so that a strategic plan can be developed by taking into account its strengths, eliminating its weaknesses, effectively exploiting the opportunities that arise and which allows to counteract possible threats.

3. The General Indicators Database (GID) comprises 300 indicators grouped in 5 dimensions (institutional, administrative, social, human resources, economic), which, in turn, reflect the internal or external context.

During the next stage of the strategic planning process, a workshop was organized in which there were discussed the problems identified through the cause-effect-solution prism. This exercise ended with the formulation of 3 strategic pillars (areas of intervention) and strategic objectives. In order to successfully implement the strategic plan, the objectives and actions have been formulated in a clear, univocal way, aiming to be measurable and achievable during the four years included in the strategic plan. At the same time, there have been established the performance indicators that will be used to evaluate the plan and its implementation efforts.

An important stage of the strategic planning process is to consult it with all the stakeholders. This was done in accordance with the rigors of the Law on decision-making transparency.

1. ABOUT CENTRAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION

The year 1989 is marked by restructuring and transformation in the Moldovan society. The electoral system of the Republic of Moldova is beginning to experience deep reformatations aimed at laying the foundations for the rule of law. For eight years the Central Electoral Commission was organized ad-hoc, and its duties expired once the candidate elected as President of the Republic of Moldova took the oath.

The adoption of the Electoral Code on November 21, 1997 allowed the reunification of all the legislative acts related to presidential, parliamentary, and local elections and all the electoral procedures were unified. Based on the Electoral Code, the Central Electoral Commission was established as a state body with permanent status, for the organization and conduct of elections. The Commission's establishment was dictated by the need for a competent and specialized structure in the field of elections.

The permanent activity of the CEC allowed the increment of the quality and efficiency in the electoral process's management. The Commission consists of 9 members with a deliberative voting right for a 5-year mandate: one member is appointed by the President of the Republic of Moldova, the other 8 members are appointed by the Parliament, respecting the proportional representation of the majority and the opposition. The nominal composition of the Commission is confirmed by a parliamentary decision, with the vote of the majority of the elected MPs. CEC members are immovable and cannot be members of parties and other social-political organizations.

The Centre for Continuous Electoral Training by the Central Electoral Commission is an institution established by CEC and subordinated to it that is responsible for training all the election officials and other interested parties.

The Central Electoral Commission is assisted by an apparatus whose structure and the maximum number of employees are approved by the Commission. The staff of the apparatus is comprised of civil servants and contractual staff carrying out auxiliary activities. The structure of the CEC staff includes: six Divisions, three Autonomous Services and one Service that is part of a CEC Division.

As a body specialized in the electoral field, the Central Electoral Commission organizes all types of Elections and referendums; modernizes the electoral practice and contributes to the improvement of electoral legislation. At the same time, the Central Electoral Commission is the independent body that supervises and controls the financing of political parties and electoral campaigns.

2. STRATEGIC BASES OF CEC

VISION

An open, transparent and professional institution that is always prepared to carry out its duties at the highest level, ensuring an accessible electoral framework trusted by all the citizens.

MISSION

The mission of the Central Electoral Commission is to ensure optimal conditions so that all the citizens of the Republic of Moldova can freely exercise their constitutional right to elect and to be elected in free and fair elections.

FUNDAMENTAL VALUES



Diagram no.1 Fundamental values of the Central Electoral Commission

Integrity: The CEC will conduct its activity in a manner that is honest, sincere, and corresponding to the expectations of the parties participating in the electoral process, it will undertake all the reasonable measures to prevent ill-intended actions.

Independence: The CEC will carry out its duties and will make decision without influence or control from governmental institutions, political parties or third-party organizations, being of the conviction that independence is the necessary prerequisite for impartiality.

Impartiality: The CEC will carry out its duties outside any conflicts of interest, it will treat all the participants in the elections equitably without offering advantages to certain political trends or groups of interest.

Transparency: The CEC will always be open to all the parties participating in the electoral process, it will manifest a transparent and impartial attitude in the decision-making process and correctitude in all its actions.

Responsibility and professionalism: The CEC will take full responsibility for its actions and it will be accountable to the people of the Republic of Moldova and its partners, it will tend to ensure, through CCET, a staff that is well-trained, competent, confident, sensitive to the gender dimension and the specific necessities of various groups of people, it will undertake the best international practices.

Credibility: The CEC will try to gain the trust of all the citizens of the Republic of Moldova and international community through the quality of the services offered within the electoral process.

Open-mindedness: The CEC will be open-minded to the needs of voters and will take measures to make the electoral process accessible to all categories of citizens.

Innovation: The CEC will apply modern methods and technologies in order to improve the electoral process. In its activity, the CEC will always be oriented towards increasing its performance, which can surely be achieved through innovation.

Orientation toward citizens and inclusion: the institution's entire activity will be oriented towards the benefit of the public interest, it will build efficient relations with all voters, providing them with reliable, high standard services in compliance with the specific needs and interests of all categories of voters. The CEC will offer the citizens, political parties and other social political organizations, mass-media, and civil society multiple and equal opportunities to access information, consultation and participation, while ensuring the accessibility of its information and services.

3. REVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2016 - 2019

In the last four years, the Central Electoral Commission has implemented the Strategic Plan for 2016-2019. The planning exercise conducted in 2015 through internal efforts of CEC was based on the Commission's first strategic plan and continued the development directions established at the beginning. Thus, four out of the five strategic directions are kept in the generic formulation of the Strategic plan 2012-2015, namely:

1. A modern, efficient, and accessible electoral process
2. Credible election results
3. Self-conscious and informed voters
4. Consolidated institutional capacities.

Obviously, in the Strategic Plan 2016-2019 these directions gain new valences and other objectives are set in order to harness them. For example, the first strategic plan aimed at the establishment of the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training by the CEC with the status of public institution and obtaining the CEC's financial and logistical independence. In the second plan, these goals are no longer mentioned, because they have been achieved. The focus is on promoting the principles of quality and information security at all stages of the electoral management cycle, developing and implementing new technical solutions aimed at automating the electoral procedures, integrating efficient mechanisms for inclusion of people with disabilities in the electoral process, establishing new tools for continuous and effective communication with voters, including those in the diaspora, etc. At the same time, some objectives remain unfulfilled and are included in both the first and second strategic plans, for example the creation of permanent representations of the CEC throughout the country.

The fifth strategic direction established in 2016 was the supervision of the financing of political parties and electoral campaigns and it resulted from the amendments to the Electoral Code which made CEC responsible for the supervision of financing of political parties and electoral campaigns.

Although a final evaluation of the degree of implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Central Electoral Commission for 2016-2019 has not yet been made, it should be mentioned that the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Plan was carried out by both the Central Electoral Commission and Promo-Lex Association, both institutions presenting annual reports that are publicly available. A preliminary conclusion, based on their analysis, is that, most likely, some of the objectives which have either been partially achieved or have not been achieved will be resumed and developed in the Strategic Plan 2020-2023. Nevertheless, it is certain that the electoral authority has already a considerable positive practice of working under a strategic plan, and the annual activity plans are elaborated in accordance with it and come to support the implementation of the strategic objectives.

4. SWOT ANALYSIS

The SWOT analysis allows the Central Electoral Commission to identify and structure the essential content of the current process of strategic planning.

In fact, underlining the dimensions and variables that describe both positive and negative, internal and external factors of the Commission, the SWOT analysis serves as a tool to identify the actors, obligations, beneficiaries and stakeholders in the planning and management process.

The SWOT analysis is based on five dimensions, which, in turn, work both within the electoral process (internally) and society as a whole (externally). The dimensions and their field of application are explained in the following table.

DIMENSIONS	INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
INSTITUTIONAL	It refers to norms and principles that regulate the electoral process	It refers to norms and principles that regulate the public affairs in a given context
ADMINISTRATIVE	It refers to the measures and procedures specific to the electoral process	It refers to the processes and procedures specific to public authorities in a given context
SOCIAL	It refers to the variables that describe the participation of the actors and target groups in the electoral process	It refers to variables that have an impact on electoral performance related to awareness, inclusion, etc;
HUMAN RESOURCES	It refers to the capabilities and / or knowledge that could impact / shape the electoral process	It refers to the capacities and / or knowledge that exist among the population in a given context
ECONOMIC	It refers to the financial resources that could impact / shape the electoral process	It refers to financial resources existent in a given context

The SWOT analysis was performed using the electronic tool Evaluation of Electoral Cooperation (EEC) and highlighted the following SWOT variables (see the table below).

	INTERNAL (characteristics of the organization / system)	EXTERNAL (characteristics of the environment)
Useful for the achievement of the objectives	<p>Strengths</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The electoral legal framework is well defined, has a clear hierarchy and is codified (1/1)⁴ 2. The electoral legal framework corresponds to international standards in the area of democracy, human rights, transparency and inclusion (1/2, 1/3, 1/6, 1/7) 3. The legal provisions regarding the electoral rights of women are inclusive (1/20, 2/14) 4. The Central Electoral Commission is formed on the principle of proportional representation of the political forces' majority and opposition (1/10) 5. The Central Electoral Commission's activity is transparent (1/11) 6. The electoral procedures and the duties of all the participants on the day of elections are clear (2/6) 7. All electoral operations are transparent and open to observers and candidates' representatives (1/24, 2/9) 	<p>Opportunities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The national legislation offers the necessary framework for free association, including political (6/10) 2. The national legislation regulates and guarantees freedom of expression (6/11) 3. More than half of the population of the Republic of Moldova knows how to use the Internet (8/14) 4. The population's level of formal education is high (9/1) 5. There is considerable support for the electoral field provided by international development partners (10/15)

4. Here and in the entire table the reference is to the order number of operational variables from URSO methodology.

	INTERNAL (characteristics of the organization / system)	EXTERNAL (characteristics of the environment)
	6. The State Register of Electors and the Voter rolls are formed, updated and published in compliance with the principle of transparency (2/13) 7. There are information programs dedicated both to the general population and to various specific groups (3/1, 3/2)	
Harmful to the achievement of the objectives	Weaknesses <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The financial resources allotted to the Central Electoral Commission's activities in the period between elections are insufficient (5/1) 2. The ability of the Central Electoral Commission to control and monitor the finances of political parties and electoral campaigns is insufficient (5/4, 5/5, 5/6) 3. The data included in the voter rolls are imperfect, especially those of citizens living abroad and those on the left bank of the Dniester (2/10, 2/11) 4. Polling stations' accessibility is poor (2/7) 5. The legal regulation of the electoral disputes' solving process is imperfect (2/2) 6. Information programs dedicated to the general population and specific groups have a low impact (4/2, 4/3) 7. There are no campaigns for promoting the behaviour condemning electoral fraud (3/3) 8. Political pluralism in the media is at a low level (3/4) 	Threats <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The population of the Republic of Moldova is poor (10/1) 2. The economy of the Republic of Moldova is stagnant (10/4) 3. The process of public policies elaboration is rarely based on the interests, needs and expectations of citizens (6/4, 7/1) 4. There are deficiencies in respecting the human rights, including non-discrimination policies at national level (8/23) 5. The emigration trend is maintained at a high level (8/6) 6. The population's aging coefficient is constantly increasing (8/1) 7. The level of civic activism, the legal and political culture of the population are low (8/12, 8/19, 9/15) 8. The involvement of citizens in public life and in the decision-making process is reduced (6/1, 6/3) 9. Women remain under-represented in leadership positions (8/20) 10. The defective administration that harms the civil rights of citizens often remains unpunished (7/14) 11. The evaluation process of the civil servants' performance is inefficient (9/12)

Starting from the identified variables, we can further describe the positive and negative aspects of both the electoral process and the general environment.

4.1. CHARACTERIZATION OF THE INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

The Republic of Moldova is party to seven UN treaties on human rights, the most important for the CEC being: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Electoral Code, the related legislation and the normative framework approved by the CEC are based on and respect the international principles and standards in the field of elections, inclusion, non-discrimination, gender equality and freedom of association.

The electoral process is administered by an independent body, with the status of permanent institution. The CEC's way of formation ensures the proportional representation of the political forces' majority and opposition. This principle is also used in the formation of lower electoral bodies. At central level, the election official's benefit from stability in function ensuring the continuity of the activity and the institutional memory.

The CEC's activity and the electoral procedures are transparent for the general public and the media. There is a great opening for the process's modernization by digitizing most of the electoral process's stages and by undertaking new functions and responsibilities. Particular attention is paid to general information programs and those targeted to certain specific groups thus contributing to the formation of the electoral culture.

Since the establishment of a permanent Commission, the electoral process has seen a positive evolution demonstrated and recognized by similar institutions from other countries. The ISO certificates held by the CEC serve as proof of the international recognition of the quality and information security within the CEC.

A sensitive area remains the quality of voter rolls. Throughout several years, the CEC makes constant efforts to solve this issue by elaborating the State Register of Electors, establishing partnerships with other public institutions that have state registers that are relevant to the electoral process (State Register of Population, Register of Addresses) and attracting funds necessary for interconnections and elimination of errors in voter rolls. Two realities of the Moldovan society that exceed the CEC competences continue to affect the quality of the voter rolls - the large number of Moldovan citizens who live abroad without proper documentation and the existence of the frozen Transnistrian conflict.

A challenge for the society in general, but which appears on the daily agenda specifically during the electoral process, is the polling stations accessibility. The infrastructure's (in)accessibility concerns not only the persons with disabilities, but also other categories of the population with reduced mobility: elderly people, children, parents who have small children and carry them in a baby carriage or in their arms, pregnant women, cyclists, people with temporary disabilities. Thus, according to estimates, the number of people affected by the lack of accessibility conditions is three times higher than the number of people with disabilities.

The conducted SWOT analysis indicates that the internal environment of the organization / system has several positive and very positive points which must be used by the CEC in its further development. The description of the strengths and weaknesses of the electoral process can be seen in Annex no. 1 and Annex no. 2.

4.2 CHARACTERIZATION OF THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

Unlike the internal environment, the current socio-political and economic context is rather discouraging, offering few opportunities for development. Certainly the very high level of literacy and formal education and the high Internet penetration rate are evident opportunities for improving the electoral process and its automation. Also an opportunity is the considerable support from international partners for building democracy and integrity of elections. Major projects such as SAIS "Elections" have already been implemented, while others could be outlined in the foreseeable future.

Among the risk factors that threaten the electoral process and are harmful for the achievement of the CEC objectives are: poverty, economic stagnation, corruption, the trends of emigration and aging of the population. Put together, these factors generate a low level of civic activism, a rudimentary legal and political culture and a quasi-generalized disinterest in the democratic processes. The disillusionment of citizens in the institutions of the rule of law reflects negatively on the image and credibility of the electoral institution.

The reality described cannot be reshaped by the CEC, but in formulating the strategic objectives for the next four years it will consider the threats identified and described in detail in Annex no. 1 and Annex no. 2.

5. DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2020-2023

Based on the identified SWOT variables, at the present stage of institutional development of the Central Electoral Commission, the necessary intervention according to URSO methodology is the **Consolidation Strategy**. It is based on strengthening the positive indicators, both internal and external, assuming that, in this way, the negative indicators will be removed, bypassed or absorbed by the positive ones.

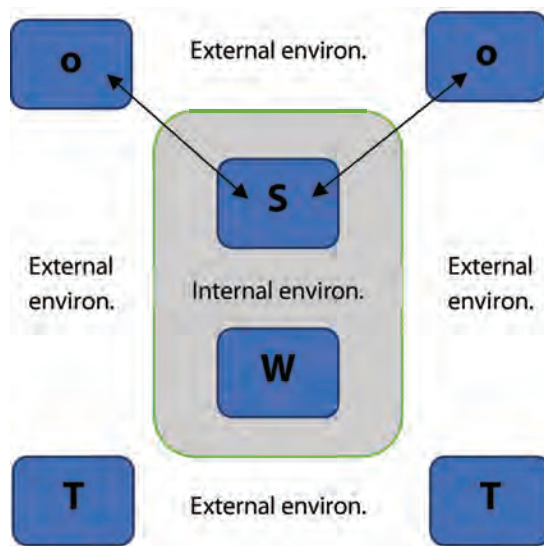


Diagram no. 2: Graphic representation of the consolidation strategy according to URSO methodology

Its application is suitable when it is possible to act on the basis of strengths (S) and opportunities (O) that are already large, strong and stable, so as to give a boost to the rest of the system, transforming or minimizing the weight of the few weaknesses (W) and Threats (T).

Below there is presented the ratio generated by the electronic tool for analyzing the EEC operational variables between the strengths and weaknesses on the internal dimension and between opportunities and threats on the external dimension, including the positive and negative aspects inside and outside the system.

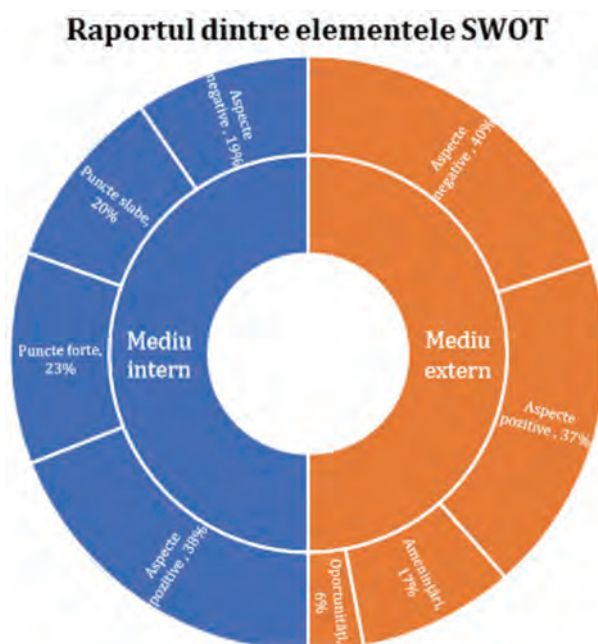


Diagram no. 3: Schematic representation of the strengths and weaknesses, of opportunities and threats of the CEC's environment of activity

As can be seen, the institutional side of the electoral system has more strengths / positives than weaknesses / negatives. At the same time, the unfavorable external environment rather endangers the electoral system than it offers development opportunities.

Based on the conclusions formulated following the SWOT analysis, there were identified the strategic pillars or the development directions of the Central Electoral Commission for the next 4 years.

5.1. THE STRATEGIC PILLARS OF THE CENTRAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION FOR 2020-2023

The purpose of a public institution is to work for and for the benefit of the citizens. In relation to the institution, they appear in a triple position - clients, taxpayers and beneficiaries of the offered services. The approach as provider-client in the public sector represents a form of social innovation and it is able to increase the quality of the carried out activities, on the one hand, and to keep the beneficiaries (citizens) satisfied with the results of the development and implementation of programs carried out by the public sector.

In correlation with this logic, three strategic pillars have been established for the Commission's activity during 2020-2023:

Pillar 1 Citizen Oriented Services

Goal: Impeccable provision of electoral services in compliance with the fundamental values of the Central Electoral Commission

Pillar 2 Involvement, Influence and Promotion

Goal: Development of communication and cooperation bridges with key actors in order to strengthen democracy, improve electoral practice and legislation, and reinforce the CEC as an authority that is credible on both national and international level and is beneficiary oriented.

Pillar 3 Performance and Organizational Culture

Goal: Developing an effective organization with a positive and clear culture

The table below presents the strategic objectives for each pillar.

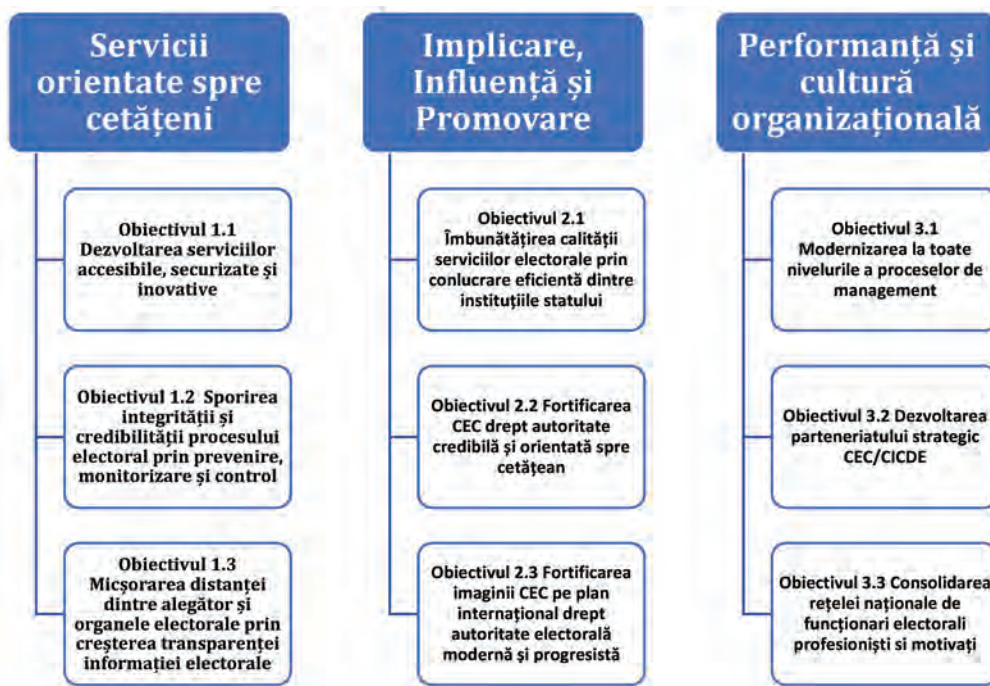


Diagram no.4: Strategic pillars and objectives of the Central Electoral Commission for 2020-2023

5.1.1. Citizen Oriented Services

The organization of elections in compliance with the legislation of the Republic of Moldova and with the good practices in the electoral field contributes decisively to a good climate in the society. All the Central Electoral Commission's activities are oriented towards the provision of quality services to voters, regardless of their age, sex, place of residence/domicile, ethnicity and other particularities. For the period 2020-2023, within this strategic pillar, the CEC has set the objective to approach the electoral services through the prism of its fundamental values: accessibility, security, innovation, integrity, credibility, transparency and orientation towards the citizen.

The new technologies are useful, flexible tools that can be adapted to the needs related to ensuring the right to elect and be elected. In order to improve the activity of the polling station bureaus, the CEC intends to enhance and extend some modules of the State Automatic Information System "Elections" and to automate the processes at polling station level.

Another innovative approach will be the implementation of Electoral Statistics Services through which the CEC could become in time a financially sustainable institution. The statistical data provided by the CEC are exclusive and useful for many stakeholders in analyzing the electoral, demographic, political and psychological phenomena. Potential beneficiaries include civil society, sociological companies, academic environment, other organizations specialized in political/social/economic research.

The activities aimed at increasing electoral inclusion concern all the groups with direct or indirect risk of exclusion, persons with special needs, voters from outside the country and from the left bank of Dniester, women and men.

The CEC's transparency will be raised to a new qualitative level by designing and implementing the Voter's Electoral Profile module. A personalized and secure information tool of each voter on the history of his participation in the electoral process, in various qualities: voter, electoral bodies member, donor for political parties and electoral candidates, observer, etc.

To the Integrity of the electoral process for the next strategic period 2020-2023 will contribute the reinforcing of the CEC's functions as an efficient body for supervising and controlling the political financing. Following the amendments made to the Electoral Code on August 15, 2019, as well as the related legislation on the political parties' financing, the Commission intends to assume the full prerogative of supervision and control of the financing of political parties and electoral campaigns. Particular attention will be paid to the implementation of the Financial Control module from SAIS "Elections". For the first time, the Commission will focus on encouraging anti-fraud behavior.

5.1.2 Involvement, Influence and Promotion

The main objective of this pillar is to develop communication and cooperation bridges with key actors in order to strengthen democracy, improve electoral practice and legislation, and reinforce the CEC as an authority that is credible on both national and international level and is beneficiary oriented.

Although the CEC is the supreme authority responsible for the implementation of the state's electoral policy, there is a series of other institutions with related duties without which the proper organization and conduct of the electoral process would be impossible. The role and place of the Parliament, institutions of the central and local administration, other state institutions that are stakeholders are presented in the Annex Stakeholders Analysis. The areas of cooperation and intervention that the CEC will focus on in the next period are: improving the normative framework, ensuring the financial sustainability of the CEC/CCET, monitoring the media, promoting electoral inclusion and anti-fraud behavior.

The main beneficiaries of the CEC services are the voters. This is why it is necessary to maintain a constant dialogue with them through thematic information campaigns, opinion polls on the performance of the CEC and CCET and the impact of the carried out activities.

In the CEC's external environment, special places are reserved for civil society organizations that either have the object of their activity the civic education, the promotion of human rights or the interests of certain categories of underrepresented persons, or are involved in observing the elections and thus contribute to the elections' transparency. Coordination of work agendas and the efforts' consolidation will surely lead to efficiency and mutual benefits.

The plan also includes the institutionalization of communication formats on different subjects with non-governmental organizations, political parties, journalists and development partners.

Besides communication and promotion of the CEC on national level, an important component is reinforcing the CEC's image on international level as a modern and progressive electoral authority. In this regard, CEC aims to develop the only International Association in which CEC/CCET are founding members - WEM-International. Its objective is to promote gender equality within electoral management bodies, and the CCET holds the organization's Secretariat. At the same time, emphasis is placed on the active participation of the CEC in regional and international electoral organizations such as ACEEEO and A-WEB.

5.1.3 Performance and Organizational Culture

The organizational culture of any institution is one of the greatest assets that represents a true way of life for the members of this ecosystem. The objective of this pillar is to develop an effective organization with a positive and clear culture.

As a service provider, the CEC must provide all election-related activities on time and accurately while the election officials of all levels, in their turn, must function as a whole in order to achieve results. Each CEC member and election official must recognize that values and behavior only make sense when they are the bases of the organization's success and are transposed into concrete actions.

By taking on the CEC values, each election official, starting with the EBPS members up to the President of the CEC, creates a positive experience for the people he communicates with. They, in their turn, will maintain the reputation, the CEC brand as an institution of the highest integrity and transparency with which it is easy to interact. Each must aim to live and respect the culture that the CEC has defined as essential to the organization's success.

In a society that is addicted to information and the complexity of social relations, knowledge seems to be the only power that guarantees social, economic and democratic progress that does not erode in time. The orientation towards the capture and assimilation of knowledge is for the CEC the confirmation of a certain functional maturity, in accordance with the essence of the information society to which it is connected.

A positive organizational culture can encourage change, while a negative one can hold it back. Currently, one of the strong positive cultural influences is the desire for professional development. In the next strategic period, while promoting change, the CEC will consolidate the institution's organizational culture. In this regard it is proposed: scanning the socio-psychological climate within the institution, diagnosing the efficiency of the professional training, evaluating the satisfaction concerning the working conditions, implementing measures aimed to increase the cohesion of the employees and establishing the individual and collective training courses.

The implementation of the knowledge management within the CEC is indissolubly connected to the CCET. For more than seven years, the training process of all the electoral subjects, especially the election officials is carried out effectively by the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training. Being a public institution, founded by the Central Electoral Commission, its main goal is to contribute to improving the electoral process through innovative training, research and civic education of all electoral actors.

Following a strategic period implemented in parallel with the CCET, it was noticed that the CEC and CCET successfully implemented information and electoral education programs, and at the same time, overlapping of competences and activities was also noticed. In the next strategic period, the CEC, together with the CCET, will work on eliminating these overlaps and improving communication between organizations.

A strategic objective that has not been achieved yet, but which is very important for the CEC, is the creation of permanent bodies throughout the country. Now, when the activity of the CEC has expanded and the electoral processes have become more complex, more than ever it is opportunely to discuss the establishment of permanent subdivisions and the consolidation of the professional, dedicated and certified network of election officials.

5.2. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES (IMPLEMENTATION PLAN)

Pillar 1 Services for Citizens

Goal: Providing impeccable electoral service in compliance with the fundamental value of the Central Electoral Commission

Objective 1.1 Develop accessible, secure and innovative services

No.	Strategic Activities	Tasks	Performance Indicators	Responsible for Implementation	Deadline	Source of Funding
1	Automation of polling stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop technical requirements for automation of polling stations ▶ Establish software systems for automation of PS ▶ Develop normative framework for automation of PS ▶ Pilot the system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed task agenda Developed software system Developed normative framework Piloted system 	Information Technology and Voter List Management Division Election Management Division Legal Division	T3 2020 T4 2022 T1 2023 T2 2023	State budget Foreign partners
2	Improvement of SAIS „Elections“	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Finish and launch the Register of Election officials (Version 2.0) ▶ Integrate and implement the State Register of Electors with the State Register of Mail Addresses ▶ Review the functionalities offered by the Module “Subscriber List Check-Out” ▶ Develop the Electronic Voting System ▶ Establish the electoral complaint management module ▶ Develop the Digital Communication/Promotion Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register of Election officials in work Registers Integrated and Implemented Task agenda on e-voting developed E-voting piloted Module “Complaints” developed Annual Communication Plans implemented at least 90% 	Information Technology and Voter List Management Division Election Management Division Communication, Public Affairs and Media Division	T4 2020 T4 2021 T4 2020 T4 2022 T4 2022 Annual T1	State budget Foreign partners

No.	Strategic Activities	Tasks	Performance Indicators	Responsible for Implementation	Deadline	Source of Funding
3	Increasing electoral inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Make CEC headquarters and communication channels more accessible ▶ Explore equipment/technologies/new voting procedures meant to increase access to electoral process ▶ Involve Diaspora in different stages of the electoral process ▶ Encourage voters from the left bank of Dniester River to take part in elections ▶ Promote gender equality through joint projects with the civil society ▶ Develop joint projects with the civil society to ensure an inclusive electoral process 	<p>CEC headquarters accessible</p> <p>Communication channels modernized</p> <p>Equipment/technologies tested and piloted</p> <p>Number of preliminary registered persons from abroad and left bank of Dniester River by 10%</p> <p>Number of suggestions/comments on improvement of electoral services issued by voters from the left bank of Dniester River and abroad</p> <p>Per two joint projects with the civil society designed to promote gender equality and disabled persons</p> <p>Statistics per categories of persons at risk of exclusion</p>	<p>Analysis and Documentation Division</p> <p>Communication, Public Affairs and Media Division</p> <p>Information Technology and Voter List Management Division</p> <p>Diaspora Associations</p> <p>Reintegration Policy Bureau</p> <p>Diaspora Relations Bureau</p>	<p>T2 2022</p> <p>T3 2020/ T1 2023</p> <p>Throughout the year</p> <p>Throughout the year</p> <p>Throughout the year</p> <p>Throughout the year</p>	<p>State budget</p> <p>Foreign partners</p>
4	Maintenance/extension of the Information Security and Quality Management Integrated System (SR EN ISO 9001:2015 and SR ISO/CEI 27001:2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Conduct internal audit missions ▶ Conduct external audit missions ▶ Obtain international recertification ▶ Review the possibility to extend certification to new domains 	<p>Number of internal audit and surveillance missions conducted</p> <p>Level of correspondence between the processes and actions conducted by CEC with ISO standard requirements</p> <p>Number of corrective actions proposed as compared to the number of gaps identified</p> <p>"Locviza 06-2020" column of Certificate No. 31034/14/R filled in</p> <p>"Locviza 06-2020" column of Certificate No. 284/14 filled in</p> <p>Amendments/ certifications obtained</p>	<p>Analysis and Documentation Division</p> <p>All CEC subdivisions</p>	<p>T2 year 1 and year 3 of implementation</p> <p>T3 year 1 and year 3 of implementation</p>	<p>State budget</p>

Objective 1.2 Increase integrity and credibility of electoral process through prevention, monitoring and control

No.	Strategic Activities	Tasks	Performance Indicators	Responsible for Implementation	Deadline	Source of Funding
1.	Consolidation of CEC monitoring and political funding control capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop methodological framework of activity of the Financial Control and Monitoring Division ▶ Implement the Financial Control module ▶ Conduct trainings for members of parties and treasurer 	<p>The Specialized Division established</p> <p>Normative framework developed</p> <p>Financial Control Module in work</p> <p>No. of trainings conducted for different categories of specialists</p> <p>At least 2 people from each group trained</p>	Financial and Economic Division Legal Division Information Technology and Voter List Management Division	T3 2020 T3 2020 Annual T2	State budget
2.	Encouragement of anti-fraud behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop proposals for improvement of normative framework on anti-fraud behaviour ▶ Develop the electoral anti-fraud guide ▶ Include the electoral anti-fraud component into information campaigns 	<p>No. of proposals developed and submitted to the Parliament vs No. of proposals adopted</p> <p>Electoral anti-fraud guide printed out</p> <p>At least 3 information actions conducted</p>	Communication, Public Affairs and Media Division Analysis and Documentation Division Legal Division	T2 2021 T4 2021 T1 2023	State budget

Objective 1.3 Decrease the distance between voters and electoral bodies by increasing transparency of elections

No.	Strategic Activities	Tasks	Performance Indicators	Responsible for Implementation	Deadline	Source of Funding
1.	Development of the Module "Profile of voters"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop technical requirements for the module "Profile of Voters" ▶ Establish software systems ▶ Implement the system 	<p>Task agenda developed</p> <p>Software system developed</p> <p>Software system implemented</p>	Information Technology and Voter List Management Division	T4 2021 T4 2022 T2 2023	State budget Foreign partners
2.	Development of election statistics services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Create the data base of statistics ▶ Develop a public platform on statistic reporting ▶ Integrate with the existing state platforms on statistic reporting ▶ Conduct gender-based audit upon completion of every national elections ▶ Develop annual communication plans on statistic information ▶ Promote services among NGOs, academic environment and voters 	<p>The data base of statistics created</p> <p>The platform developed</p> <p>The data base integrated</p> <p>Audit mission conducted and recommendations developed</p> <p>The communication plan implemented yearly at least 90%</p> <p>Scientific partnerships established</p>	Communication, Public Affairs and Media Division Analysis and Documentation Division Information Technology and Voter List Management Division	T3 2021 T3 2022 T2 2023 T1 2021/ T4 2023 Annual T1 Throughout the year	State budget Foreign partners

Pillar 2 Involvement, Influence and Promotion

Goal: Develop communication and cooperation bridges with key-actors to consolidate democracy, improve practice and electoral legislation and strengthen CEC as a credible authority at the national and international levels focused on beneficiaries

Objective 2.1 Improve the quality of electoral services by insuring effective cooperation among government institutions

No.	Strategic Activities	Tasks	Performance Indicators	Responsible for Implementation	Deadline	Source of Funding
1	Pro-active communication with the Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Give arguments on the need to submit proposals for: ▶ Establish permanent territorial electoral bodies ▶ Certify election officials in compliance with DEC requirements ▶ Assign the leadership of the DEC/ EBPS electoral body (chairperson and secretary), including from REC ▶ Fixed days for conducting ordinary elections (for general local elections, new local elections, presidential elections) ▶ Diversify the political party penalty system for violating the legislation on political funding and electoral campaigns ▶ Use a quota of the penalties set for political funding violations for the development of CEC's monitoring and control function ▶ Regulate the on-line information environment during the electoral period ▶ Institutionalize the approval by CEC of amendments to electoral legislation 	<p>Number of legislative proposals submitted vs adopted</p> <p>Number of meetings where the issues have been discussed</p>	<p>CEC members</p> <p>Legal Division</p> <p>Election Management Division</p>	<p>T4 2021</p> <p>T3 2020</p>	State budget

No.	Strategic Activities	Tasks	Performance Indicators	Responsible for Implementation	Deadline	Source of Funding
2	Regular cooperation with other governmental institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cooperate with the Ministry of Justice and National Anticorruption Center on legal framework improvement ▶ Promote, together with SCM, SCJ and NIJ, the specialization of the magistrates within the electoral body ▶ Cooperate with LPA to make polling stations more accessible ▶ Cooperate with PSA to improve voters' lists ▶ Identify solutions, together with the Ministry of Finance, for insuring competitive salaries for clerks of CEC, CCET and lower electoral bodies ▶ Identify solutions, together with the Ministry of Finance, to ensure CEC's financial sustainability ▶ Ensure cooperation among LPA/CPA/CEC/CCET in identifying solutions to making territorial election official's positions permanent ▶ Promote together with MIA, NAC the anti-fraud behavior ▶ Establish a partnership with the Audiovisual Council designed to promote the political pluralism of the media ▶ Cooperate with the Council for Preventing and Eliminating Discrimination and Ensuring Equality on social inclusion (based on gender, ethnic group, age) 	<p>No. of proposals vs solutions implemented</p> <p>Per one magistrate from each law court trained every year in the electoral domain increased by 5% as compared to 2019</p> <p>The importance of accessible polling stations increased by 5% as compared to 2019</p> <p>Number of errors in voters' lists decreased by 50% as compared to 2019</p> <p>The level of satisfaction of election officials on salary rate and working conditions increased by 15%</p> <p>The growth by 10% of the importance of initiatives funded from the state budget - the total amount of expenses for electoral activities</p> <p>No. of initiatives submitted to the Government and Parliament</p> <p>No. of joint activities/initiatives (anti-fraud, inclusion, political pluralism)</p>	<p>Election Management Division</p> <p>Legal Division</p> <p>Information Technology and Voter List Management Division</p> <p>Financial and Economic Division</p> <p>Communication, Public Affairs and Media Division</p> <p>CCET</p>	<p>T1 2021</p> <p>Annual T4</p> <p>Throughout the period under consideration</p> <p>Throughout the period under consideration</p> <p>T4 2020</p> <p>T3 2021</p> <p>T4 2021</p> <p>T2 2022</p> <p>T3 2020</p> <p>T2 2022</p>	<p>State budget</p>

Objectives 2.2 Strengthen CEC as a credible and citizen-oriented authority

No.	Strategic Activities	Tasks	Performance Indicators	Responsible for Implementation	Deadline	Source of Funding
1	Engagement of voters in the electoral process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Conduct a sociological research on efficiency of tools/methods of information per categories of voters ▶ Conduct specific information campaigns for underrepresented groups (diaspora, youth, underprivileged women, elderly, ethnic minorities, disabled persons) 	<p>Sociological research conducted</p> <p>3 information campaigns conducted</p> <p>Number of informed persons divided into categories</p> <p>Positive trend of the level of confidence in CEC</p>	Communication, Public Affairs and Media Division Analysis and Documentation Division	T2 2020 T4 2020/T1 2023/T4 2023	State budget Foreign partners
2	Extension of partnerships with civil society entities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cooperate to improve the normative framework ▶ Coordinate the work agenda to avoid overlapping of activities ▶ Analyze and implement, if necessary, the recommendations of national and international election observation missions 	<p>No of proposals submitted by the civil society to CEC's normative acts put to public consultations</p> <p>Workshops conducted twice a year with NGO members</p> <p>No of recommendations implemented vs formulated recommendations</p>	Legal Division Communication, Public Affairs and Media Division CCET Election Management Division	T4 2021 Twice a year After every election	State budget
3	Consolidation of dialogue with political parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Include topics of joint interest with political parties in the annual communication plan ▶ Promote initiatives, reforms, innovations, good practices among political parties 	<p>Workshops conducted twice a year (offline or another format)</p> <p>No of participants at workshops</p>	Election Management Division CCET	Annual T1 Twice a year	State budget
4	Promotion of electoral journalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Conduct off-line activities with the media ▶ Invite journalists to CEC's public events ▶ Take part in radio and TV broadcasts ▶ Monitor print and online media platforms 	<p>8 off-line activities with the media conducted</p> <p>No of journalists/media outlets which regular contact is maintained with</p> <p>No of invitations to journalistic events received vs invitations accepted by CEC</p> <p>Growth of number of news/articles about elections during the non-electoral period by 10%</p> <p>40 journalists specialized in electoral issues</p> <p>The importance of media institutions with journalists specialized in electoral issues – a total number of institutions registered</p>	Communication, Public Affairs and Media Division Election Management Division	Twice a year At every public event Based on invitation Permanent	State budget

No.	Strategic Activities	Tasks	Performance Indicators	Responsible for Implementation	Deadline	Source of Funding
5	Cooperation with development partners in different areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Diversify strategic partnerships ▶ Attract funds for different strategic domains ▶ Improve cooperation with foreign partners by creating the annual electoral assistance matrix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of partnerships established Increase financial aid from outside Electoral assistance matrix created 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEC management CCET management Communication, Public Affairs and Media Division 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throughout election period Throughout election period T4 Annual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State budget Foreign partners

Objective 2.3 Consolidate CEC's image at the international level as a modern and progressive electoral authority

No.	Strategic Activities	Tasks	Performance Indicators	Responsible for Implementation	Deadline	Source of Funding
1	Development of the International Association of Women in Electoral Management (WEM - International)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ promote WEM-International ▶ attract fund and human resources for WEM Secretariate ▶ develop partnerships for implementing projects within WEM-International 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of events designed to present the Association Secretariate in work No of projects developed vs No of projects implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEC Management CCET Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throughout the period under consideration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State budget Foreign partners
2	Active participation within regional and international electoral associations – ACEEEO, A-WEB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ actively participate in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - annual conferences - regional and international electoral events - election monitoring missions in member states 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of presentations/articles delivered within regional and international events Statistics of participants in regional/ international events divided based on gender criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEC Management CCET Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throughout the period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State budget Foreign partners

Pillar 3 Performance and organizational culture

Goal: Development of an effective organization with positive and clear culture

Objective 3.1 Modernize the management processes at all levels

No.	Strategic Activities	Tasks	Performance Indicators	Responsible for Implementation	Deadline	Source of Funding
1	Personnel audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ make an initial assessment of CEC's team synergy ▶ analyze the degree of acceptance of change ▶ perform the diagnosis of the social-psychologic climate of the institution ▶ assess the organizational culture ▶ analyze the personnel functional mobilities system at horizontal and vertical levels ▶ assess employees' motivation ▶ assess the level of maturity in the position and/or institution ▶ make the diagnosis of the efficiency of clerks' professional training ▶ assess the professional career development plans 	<p>Report on personnel audit</p> <p>Employee Experience Index (EEI Index)</p> <p>No of internal mobilities vs external engagement</p> <p>No of developed career plans</p> <p>No of successors, successors' development degree</p>	<p>Human resource Expert/specialist</p> <p>Human resource service</p>	T3 2020	<p>State budget</p> <p>Foreign partners</p>
2	Improvement of confort and efficiency of employees by improving working conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ formulate problems and solutions related to working conditions ▶ assess periodically employees' working conditions satisfaction 	<p>New/additional space identified</p> <p>Facilities provided (e.g. kitchen/canteen, break room/sports room, children's room, etc)</p> <p>Level of employees' working conditions satisfaction increased by 10%</p>	<p>Human resource service</p> <p>Financial and Economic Division</p>	<p>T3 2021</p> <p>T3 2020/ T3 2022</p>	<p>State budget</p>

No.	Strategic Activities	Tasks	Performance Indicators	Responsible for Implementation	Deadline	Source of Funding
3	Implementation of some measures for the development of personnel internal synergy, improvement of communication system, improvement of working environment and growth of solidarity within CEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ analyze recommendations of the report on personnel audit related to organizational culture, internal synergy and psychological climate within CEC ▶ identify necessary measures for the development of internal synergy of personnel, improve communication system, improve working environment and increase solidarity ▶ implement some specific measures of employees' cohesion growth (e.g. gathering sports teams/clubs of interests, organizing joint leisure activities, etc) 	<p>Recommendations formulated as part of A.1.1 on organizational culture, social-psychological environment, etc, vs implemented recommendations</p> <p>Internal communication Strategy developed</p> <p>Implementation report of internal communication Strategy</p>	Human Resource Service	T1 2021 T2 2021 Throughout the period under consideration	State budget
4	Establishment of a culture of training/continuous training during the entire activity, encouragement of good practice and exchange of nonformal experience among members and employees of CEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ analyze recommendations of the report on personnel audit related to efficiency of professional training of CEC clerks, personnel motivation and professional career development plans ▶ develop a career growth path of a CEC clerk ▶ develop professional development individual plans ▶ establish the annual training plans, within the limits of CCET's annual training budget for CEC members and clerks in identified areas of interest 	<p>Formulated recommendations as part of A.1.1 on management of knowledge vs implemented recommendations</p> <p>Facilities for learning/participation created</p> <p>Special funds allocated</p> <p>career growth path of a CEC clerk developed</p> <p>Principles of participation/assignment of members and clerks to documentation visits, exchange of experience/training approved</p>	Human resource service CCET	T1 2021 T2 2021 T2 2021 Annual T3	State budget Foreign partners
5	Consolidation of Internal Audit Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ establish the assessment methodology of the financial and risk management efficiency ▶ establish the assessment mechanisms of the process of planning, execution, monitoring and reporting within CEC and CCET 	<p>Certified professional in internal audit of public sector hired</p> <p>Assessment methodology of financial and risk management approved</p>	Financial and Economic Division Human resource service	T3 2021	State budget

No.	Strategic Activities	Tasks	Performance Indicators	Responsible for Implementation	Deadline	Source of Funding
6	Prevention and management of image crisis situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ develop a crisis communication plan, including specific messages ▶ make simulations to test the plan ▶ conduct media-coaching sessions for CEC management body 	<p>Communication plan developed and updated every year</p> <p>4 simulations conducted</p> <p>8 mediacoaching sessions conducted</p> <p>Profile of persons to benefit from media-coaching</p>	Communication, Public Affairs and Media Division	<p>Annual T1</p> <p>Annual T3 and before every electoral process</p> <p>Twice a year and before every electoral process</p>	<p>State budget</p> <p>Foreign partners</p>

Objective 3.2 Development of CEC/ CCET Strategic Partnership

No.	Strategic Activities	Tasks	Performance Indicators	Responsible for Implementation	Deadline	Source of Funding
1	Radiography of the existing CEC and CCET partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ assess the partnership according to the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - competencies - cross-institutional, personal communication - subordination relationships 	Identified discrepancies solved and managed	Persons identified by the CEC and CCET institutions management bodies	T3 2020	State budget
2	Improvement of cross-institutional cooperation in doing strategic tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ remove overlaps of competencies and activities of CEC and CCET subdivisions ▶ establish effective mechanisms of cooperation between CEC and CCET in the financial-bookkeeping area 	<p>Transfer of image from CEC to CCET and back</p> <p>Legal solutions for CCET's financial autonomy identified</p> <p>Mechanisms in the financial area implemented</p>	<p>Legal Division</p> <p>CEC's financial and economic Division</p> <p>Chief accountant of CCET</p>	T4 2020	State budget

Objective 3.3 Strengthen the national network of professional and motivated election officials

No.	Strategic Activities	Tasks	Performance Indicators	Responsible for Implementation	Deadline	Source of Funding
1	Establishment of permanent electoral bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ establish territorial centres ▶ include the communication with lower bodies in the communication strategy of CEC ▶ develop a career growth plan for the territorial election official ▶ institutionalize the motivation system of the territorial election official 	<p>Territorial centres established</p> <p>Communication strategy implemented at least 90%</p> <p>Types of facilities provided to territorial election officials</p> <p>No of motivated beneficiaries</p> <p>Career growth plan for territorial election official developed</p>	Legal Division Election Management Division CCET	T3 2022 T4 2022	State budget
2	Recruitment of EBPS/DEC members from political to professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ assign the leadership of DEC/EBPS electoral body (chairperson and secretary) exclusively from REC ▶ develop the Register of recalled/fired members ▶ develop the job description document for the leadership of EBPS/DEC electoral body 	<p>Register of recalled/fired members developed and updated after every electoral process</p> <p>Job description documents developed</p>	Election Management Division Human Resource Service	T4 2022 T1 2021 T3 2022	State budget

6. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, REPORTING AND ASSESSMENT

The strategic plan will start being implemented as soon as it is approved. The strategic plan represents the guidelines for CEC clerks and leadership on the development and approval of annual action plans. The annual report on the implementation of these plans will show the goals achievement progress.

The action plan (section 5.2 of the document) presents strategic activities, tasks, performance indicators, actors responsible for implementation, deadlines and sources of funding. Annex 2 shows the chronology of actions highlighted in the strategic plan. The innovative methodology developed by the Council of Europe which this strategic plan is based on shows an exhaustive approach to the electoral process and a transversal logical arrangement of pillars, goals, objectives and strategic activities. This fact requires from members and clerks of Central Electoral Commission a strong coordination throughout the entire implementation process of the action plan. The document is designed to clearly establish the direction of development of the Commission for 2020-2023. Also, it is characterized by the flexibility of the achievement of strategic objectives.

During the implementation period of the 2020-2023 strategic plan, CEC President will assign three team leaders corresponding to the three strategic pillars. They will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of goals described in each stated pillar and for gathering the information on the conducted activities. To be more concrete, leaders, with the support of responsible actors included in the strategic Plan, will:

1. develop annual activities necessary to achieve strategic goals and include them in CEC's annual Action Plan;
2. coordinate the implementation of activity, stipulated for every objective;
3. monitor the results in compliance with the performance indicators and deadlines;
4. identify obstacles, risks and take measures on time to prevent potential negative effects;
5. propose amendments to annual action plans, if necessary;
6. gather and sum up the necessary information on recorded results;
7. make the Management Analysis in compliance with ISO procedures within May-June every year.

Semi-annual reports on the results, with a content and standard format will be developed and submitted to the President, Deputy President and Secretary of CEC. They will be discussed during the evaluation meetings headed by CEC President. The discussions will focus on the following:

- ▶ discussion of results of implementation of goals and relevant activities;
- ▶ presentation of obstacles and difficulties encountered during the implementation process and identification of measures of preventing negative results;
- ▶ discussion of activities planned for the following semester of the year, by identifying possible risks and proposals for actions;
- ▶ if necessary, adjustment of activities of deadlines, accompanied by relevant arguments.

CEC President can decide whether to set occasional meetings (quarterly or monthly) to monitor some major objectives or all the objectives and activities. The occasional meetings will have the same format as the semestrial meetings.

The annual action plans based on this strategic plan by taking into consideration the progress and gaps of implementation will be approved in the month of December of the year before the year the plan is made for. The annual progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan will be assessed within the annual reports developed by summing up the reports of every team leader. The annual report will be presented at the meeting of the Central Electoral Commission for approval by the end of March the following year.

Seven months before the expiration date of the four-year planning period presented in the strategic plan under consideration, CEC President will start and launch a new strategic planning process to prepare a strategic plan for the following four years. The new planning process will focus on the assessment of performance and results recorded in the implementation of the 2020-2023 strategic plan.

Annex No.1:

DESCRIPTION OF GENERAL BACKGROUND THROUGH OPERATIONAL PARAMETERS

STRENGTHS OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

The electoral legal framework is well-defined, has a clear hierarchy and is codified (1/1). The electoral legal framework corresponds to international standards on democracy, human rights, transparency and inclusion (1/2, 1/3, 1/6, 1/7)

The electoral legislation of the Republic of Moldova complies with international standards on democracy and human rights. There is a clear codified hierarchy of the electoral legislation. According to article 38 of the Republic of Moldova's Constitution and the preamble of the Electoral Code, people's will represents the basis of the state power. This will is expressed through free elections that are conducted periodically, by means of universal, equal, direct, secret and free expression. These principles are highlighted in the national legislation stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966). The Parliament is elected through direct voting for a period of 4 years (art. 63 of the Republic of Moldova's Constitution and art. 79 of the Electoral Code). Article 112 of RM's Constitution states that public administration authorities are the elected local councils and mayors, and title IV of the Electoral Code sets the electoral process of these actors.

Given the description of the voting conditions and the rights to vote and be elected, as well as restrictions related to them, in 2018, the Constitutional Court declared article 13, paragraph 1 let. B of the Electoral Code (persons declared unable to vote through the final decision of the law court were denied the right to vote) non-constitutional. As a result, Parliament approved a new version of this article that connects the denial of the right to vote to a related final law court decision, thus adjusting the legislation to international recommendations and standards.

The electoral legislation complies with international standards in terms of freedom of speech. Thus:

- ▶ According to art. 52 of the Electoral Code, citizens of the Republic of Moldova, parties and other social-political organizations, electoral blocks, candidates and their right-hand persons have the right to discuss freely about all the aspects of the electoral agenda of adversaries, political, professional and personal skills of candidates, as well as do electioneering during meetings, rallies, meetings with voters, through means of mass information, by displaying electoral posters or by other forms of communication.
- ▶ Art. 69 paragraph 7 of the Code states that means of mass information have the right to cover elections and inform the public about elections without any interference on behalf of public authorities, candidates or other entities.
- ▶ CEC develops for every ballot Regulations on media coverage of elections and develops and submits a Code of Conduct – convention signed by candidates and representatives of media outlets on media coverage of electoral campaign without injuring candidates' dignity and image.
- ▶ Journalists in the Republic of Moldova do not need special accreditation to cover elections. This facilitates journalists' activity and helps them to get access and not have any restrictions.

In Moldova there is an independent media monitoring governmental body – Audiovisual Council – that controls and regulates responsibilities during the electoral period. However, national and international observers' reports reveal the lack of qualitative monitoring and radio networks' penalization capacity (objective and subjective). Print media, as well as on-line media, lacks full regulation and the existing norms do not meet the current information and technological standards.

The freedom of speech is regulated and guaranteed within the limits of the legislation. Also, there are no strict stipulations on hate speech.

Electoral legislation and the related legislation show the principle of non-discrimination and inclusion of women and national minorities in compliance with international standards in this domain. Both the Electoral Code, as well as Law No.294 as of 21.12.2007 on political parties does not prohibit the participation of legally-registered parties in elections, no matter their size, having a minimum of 4,000 founders.

The Central Electoral Commission is formed based on the principle of proportional representation of the political forces' majority and opposition (1/10)

The Electoral Code (art. 17, art. 19, art. 20) regulates CEC's legal status, composition and mandate of members. Art. 16, paragraph 1 of the Electoral Code shows that CEC is formed based on the following principle: one member is assigned by the President of the Republic of Moldova, the others 8 members are assigned by the Parliament, by respecting the proportional representation of the majority and opposition. This method is based on a general governing principle and mainly the one called *Checks and Balances* designed to remove the a person's/party's/political force's right of having absolute control over the decision-making process. Parties, other social-political organizations and electoral blocks taking part in elections can assign throughout the electoral campaign per one representative with the consultative voting right within the Central Electoral Commission, in the electoral body that registered them, as well as in the lower electoral bodies. Although some political parties have doubts about the independence of CEC's members de facto, there is no factual evidence to prove them.

The Central Electoral Commission's activity is transparent (1/11)

The compliance of legal electoral legislation with international standards of transparency can be assessed as positive. Transparency is ensured by publishing all CEC decisions, live streaming of all CEC's meetings, as well as the electoral and related normative framework (including the Law on transparency in the decision-making process). The Electoral Code shows that the Central Electoral Commission supports the transparency of electoral operations which helps the Commission gain the appreciation of media and population for that it does. CEC's meetings are open to all media representatives and to public. The decisions of the Central Electoral Commission are posted on CEC's official webpage within 24 hours after being approved, while normative decisions adopted during the electoral period and decisions on the financial reports are also published in the Official Monitor of the Republic of Moldova.

The vote counting steps described in regulations and didactic materials developed by CCET must be also transparent. The law stipulates the transmission of the results through the automatic system (SAIS Elections) on-line, as well as the transmission of original papers from EBPS to CCET and from CCET to CEC and law courts. Throughout the entire Election Day, any interested person can open CEC's web-page and follow online the voter turnout, including voters' profile per country and per every second level territorial administrative unit. After polling stations close, CEC offers online information on ballot papers processing and preliminary results of elections per country, as well as separately in every settlement.

Another important element that makes the electoral process transparent and credible is the election monitoring and observation process. According to the Electoral Code, observers can be accredited before the start of the electoral period and can work both, on the Election Day, as well as before and during the electoral campaign and after it finishes. The Electoral Code and CEC's Regulations on the Status of Observers and their Accreditation Procedure list the observers' rights and responsibilities. Also, the Regulations clearly define the restraints on the observation process during the electoral period, before and after it. After every ballot, all the national and international observers' reports are examined by CEC and CCET. Their recommendations are considered as an opportunity to improve the electoral process and trainings.

All electoral operations are transparent and open to observers and candidates' representatives (1/24, 2/9)

The representatives of candidates, media and observers are persons authorized to assist at the electoral operations and have access to all the phases of the process. On the Election Day, a copy of the protocol on the results of the vote counting process developed by the electoral bureau of the polling station is handed over to the representatives of candidates and observers. This will help them perform the parallel vote counting. Moreover, obviously, observers and representatives with the right to consultative vote can use the public communication tools such as: live mainstreaming of CEC meetings, posting the real voter turnout and the voting results on the Election Day.

The results of the voting process are transmitted through the State Automatic Information System „Elections” immediately after the protocol had been developed and can be viewed online inside CEC and on CEC's official web page. Thanks to the transmission of information via SAIS „Elections”, the preliminary results become known to the public within 24 hours since the end of elections.

Although the electoral process is in fact very transparent and open, the integrity of electoral materials and the secret of vote are still the basic principles of elections. The security of the ballot box is ensured by seals, video monitoring on the Election Day. The camera is installed in a place visited for all persons authorized to assist at the voting process (including observers, representatives of candidates and journalists). The only moment when the security of the ballot box could be in danger is the time when it is taken to the voters' home, but even in this case, the legislation states that the ballot box must be obligatorily accompanied by two members of EBPS. Observers and representatives of candidates are offered the possibility to accompany the mobile ballot box and use, if necessary, their own means of transportation. Throughout years, the Commission conducted a few actions of leveling and insurance of the integrity of the voting process in the polling station:

- ▶ It was approved the guidelines on the infrastructure of the polling station;
- ▶ It was purchased and offered equipment to all polling stations; the standard voting booth, the voting booth for disabled persons, mobile ballot boxes and blind stationary boxes can be well-sealed. Both, the booths and the ballot boxes guarantee the secret of the voter's vote and ensure the transparency of the process.

4. The electoral procedures and the duties of all the participants on the day of elections are clear (2/6)

The Election Day is described in both, the Electoral Code and CEC's Regulations (Regulations on the activity of electoral bureaus of polling stations, Regulations on the activity of the District Electoral Councils, Regulations on the accessibility of elections for disabled persons, Regulations on the Video Registration System in polling stations, etc.) and in CEC's Guidelines (Guidelines on the process of transmission and gathering of electoral information for conducting parliamentary and general local elections, Guidelines on the voting procedure with the mobile ballot box, Guidelines on the process of systematization, packing, sealing and transmission of electoral papers and materials after the closing of the polling stations, Guidelines on the methodology of using electoral seals during elections and referendums, etc.).

Election officials have clear responsibilities highlighted in the above legal norms and explained during trainings and in didactic materials developed and distributed to CCET. Other participants in the electoral process – observers, representatives with the right to vote of candidates and journalists – also have rights and obligations shown in the Electoral Code and CEC's Regulations. Also, CCET conducts specialized trainings for them, when required. Voters are informed about their rights and obligations on the Election Day through information and civic education campaigns conducted by CEC, CCET, nongovernmental associations, electoral candidates.

The legal provisions regarding the electoral rights of women are inclusive (1/20, 2/14)

Republic of Moldova has considerably progressed in terms of gender-based electoral legislation. All the legislative barriers on the registration of women-candidates for elections have been removed and a number of positive measures have been taken such as:

1. The compulsory double quota of nomination (40% of the candidate lists must be of another gender) and positioning (at least four candidates of a different gender for every ten places in the list of candidates at the parliamentary and local elections) (art. 46, paragraph 3 of the Electoral Code) ;
2. The small number of signatures necessary for the registration as an independent candidate as compared to the necessary number for the registration of men candidates (art. 86, paragraph 2, Electoral Code) ;
3. Providing a part of the public funding for political parties proportional to the number of women elected during parliamentary elections (7.5%) and local elections (7.5%) (art. 27 paragraph 1 of Law 294 as of 21.12.2007 on political parties).

Definitely, the double quota focused on nomination cannot guarantee the effective accession to Parliament or in local councils of any level of at least 40% of women, but it constitutes a solid base for continuing the gender equality promotion efforts.

The State Register of Electors and the Voter rolls are formed, updated and published in compliance with the principle of transparency (2/13)

Voters' rolls contain the names of all citizens with the right to vote living or having their residence visa on the territory of the polling station. The voter can be included only in one single voters' roll and can vote at one single polling station. The voter that has a house and a residence visa is registered in the voters' roll of the

polling station where he/she has the residence visa, within the validity period (art. 44, paragraph 1 Electoral Code). Voters' rolls are available inside the polling station and are also published on the web page of the Central Electoral Commission 20 days before the Election Day. They usually contain the name, surname and date of birth of every voter (art. 45 paragraph 1 of the Electoral Code).

Twenty days before the Election Day, voters and representatives of candidates can look through the voters' rolls both, inside the polling stations and on CEC's web page (art. 45, paragraph 2). For general local elections as of October 20, 2019, CEC offered the public 4 means of checking the data filled in the voters' rolls. CEC posted on its web page an interactive map with the mail addresses and contacts of every polling station and the voters' rolls for each of them. Moreover, in 2019, voters could find out the number of their polling station on QIWI Self Service Terminal System too.

There are information programs dedicated both to the general population and to various specific groups (3/1, 3/2)

One of CEC's duties, highlighted in art. 22 letter I of the Electoral Code, is the implementation of civic education programs and information programs of voters. These duties are translated into civic education campaigns conducted by CCET in partnering with CEC (e.g. "Democracy can be learned") and information campaigns conducted regularly by CEC and CCET starting with 2009 during the electoral period. In this process, the Ministry of Education and educational institutions, universities, local public authorities, libraries, as well as specialized NGOs, are taken as partners.

During elections, CEC and CCET conduct information and educational campaigns of some target groups. First-time voters usually receive invitations before elections and gifts in polling stations (magnets, bracelets, stickers, Republic of Moldova's Constitution). For minorities, information and mobilization materials and spots are developed in their native languages (Russian, Ukrainian, Gagauz, Romani). For blind persons, informing materials were printed out in Braille alphabet. Special measures were taken for underprivileged children (camps, trips). Voters from abroad are paid much attention in terms of information – videos are produced, informative materials are distributed at the border check points, etc. Also, the target group formed of old people is paid less attention to. During 2018-2019 CEC/CCET, with the support of UNDP, launched the small grant program encouraging 10 NGOs to reach different categories of persons such as: youth, elderly, minorities (Gagauz, Roma, Bulgarians), disabled persons (with mental or locomotion disorders), convicts, women victims of domestic violence.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The national legislation offers the necessary framework for free association, including political (6/10)

A participatory and responsible civil society focused on political and electoral processes brings benefits in the process of development, implementation and monitoring of reforms, activity plans, decision-making process, etc. An active civil society will examine the CEC's performance highlighting the deficiencies at legislation level and electoral practice and insisting on more responsibility and transparency.

The Constitution of the Republic of Moldova provides principles according to which citizens may freely associate in parties and other social-political organizations. There are several legal forms of non-commercial organizations, such as the public association, the trade union, the religious organization, the political party and the social-political organization, the philanthropic organization. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) can be established and conduct activities in any field that is not prohibited by law. CSOs are not obliged to coordinate their activity with public authorities, and establishing the associations' objectives and the ways of achieving the objectives is the competence of the founders and the internal management structures. The Public Services Agency (PSA) has no competence to review the objectives of the association; except for the cases expressly included in the legislation (e.g. obtaining information concerning all the aspects of the association's activity by the registration authority) the interference is inadmissible. Public associations can establish union associations, establish direct connections with organizations, networks or federations at international level or become their members.

In a similar manner, Law No. 294 as of 12.21.2007 on the political parties provides all the citizens' freedoms and guarantees for voluntary association in order to fulfill their political will.

Civil Society Organizations - public associations, foundations, parties, etc. - can serve as reliable partners for public institutions such as the Central Electoral Commission and can contribute to the growth of the population's legal, political and electoral culture and the conduct of democratic elections.

The national legislation regulates and guarantees freedom of expression (6/11)

Freedom of expression is one of the human rights provided by art. 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and reiterated in art. 32 of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova. The Supreme Law provides that any citizen is guaranteed freedom of thought, opinion, and freedom of expression in public by word, image or other possible means. Freedom of expression cannot prejudice the honor, dignity or right of another person to his/her own point of view.

Freedom of expression is also conducted through mass media. In this regard, it is worth noting the new Code of audiovisual media services, approved in October, 2018 following public debates and the expertise of the Council of Europe, EU and OSCE. The document provides a series of new regulations on the audiovisual communication principles, under which all media service providers must conduct their activity, including: freedom of expression, editorial independence, ensuring correct information, protection of minors and persons with disabilities, gender balance, protection of the national audiovisual space, ownership transparency, access to major important events, journalists protection, right to reply etc.

The population's level of formal education is high (9/1)

The number of persons with a minimum level of education "incomplete/secondary school" constitutes 91.1% of the total of persons aged 15 and over. The women registered performances at the level of higher and specialized secondary education, exceeding by 6.2 percentage points the share of men with the same level of training. The gap between the level of education of the urban and rural population is maintained. In the urban area, people with higher and specialized secondary level of education represent 51.3% of the total number of persons aged 15 years and over, in rural areas this level of education represents 22.9%. The increment in the population's general level of education has led to a reduction in the number of illiterate persons. Thus, illiteracy was practically eradicated in the country, the proportion of illiterate population decreased to 0.5% in 2014. 23% of the total number of women and 17.6% of the total number of men graduated at least the 1st cycle of University. An average level of education - high school/professional school - have 59.1% men and 55.6% women. A low level of training, that is to say at least secondary school, have 23.3% men and 21.4% women.

More than half of the population of the Republic of Moldova knows how to use the Internet (8/14)

According to the report of *The State of Broadband: Broadband catalyzing sustainable development September 2018*⁵, carried out by the UN Broadband Commission, 71% of Moldovans were using Internet in 2017. In the first quarter of 2019, the most significant market share, based on turnover - 70.3% - was owned by JSC "MOLDTELECOM". The companies "Starnet" and "Orange Moldova" held shares of 11.2% and 4.7% respectively, the rest of the providers shared together 13.8% of this market⁶.

There is considerable support for the electoral field provided by international development partners (10/15)

The international development partners provide continuous assistance in the electoral area to the Central Electoral Commission (technical assistance), Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (support in project implementation) and civil society organizations (support in project implementation). Thanks to the external financial assistance there was developed and implemented the State Automatic Information System "Elections", were conducted several information and civic education campaigns, as well as projects aimed at consolidating the institutional capacities, increasing the inclusion of the electoral process, supporting and promoting gender equality, etc.

5. https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/opb/pol/S-POL-BROADBAND.19-2018-PDF-E.pdf

6. <https://www.anrceti.md/news18052010>

WEAKNESSES OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

The financial resources allotted to the Central Electoral Commission's activities in the period between elections are insufficient (5/1)

The Central Electoral Commission, being an independent and autonomous budgetary authority, elaborates the draft budget in compliance with the provisions of art. 51 par. (5) of the Law on public finances and budgetary-fiscal responsibility no. 181 as of 07.25.2014. The budget proposals/projects are developed and presented according to the budget planning methodology, based on:

- a. the macroeconomic framework, the budgetary-fiscal policy, the sectoral policies, as well as the limits of inter-budgetary expenses/transfers, included in the medium-term budgetary framework;
- b. the performance achieved/undertaken within programs of the public authorities in the areas of competence;
- c. specific peculiarities included in the circular letter on the development of annual budgets.

The draft budget of the independent/autonomous budgetary authority is approved, with the advisory opinion of the Ministry of Finance, by this authority and is submitted to the Government, within the terms provided by the budgetary calendar, in order to be included in the draft state budget that will be submitted for adoption to the Parliament. The independent/autonomous budgetary authority shall submit to the Parliament, as the case may be, the objections to the draft budget approved by the Government for settling the differences.

It is to be mentioned that, as a rule, during the electoral period, the financing requests are accepted unconditionally and completely, but in the period between elections the financing depends in great part on the availability of financial resources in the state budget and is subject to austerity whenever it is considered necessary at public institutions level.

The ability of the Central Electoral Commission to control and monitor the finances of political parties and electoral campaigns is insufficient (5/4, 5/5, 5/6)

According to the Electoral Code and the provisions of Law 294 as of 12.21.2007 on political parties, the CEC is the authority entitled to supervise and control the financing of the political parties of the Republic of Moldova, which includes controlling both the financing of the political parties' ordinary activity, as well as of the electoral campaigns. Besides the CEC and the Court of Accounts (CA), in compliance with the provisions regulating its activity, it exercises control over the use of allowances received by the political parties from the state budget. The Electoral Code and other related laws (the Contraventional, Penal Code) establish rules imposing transparency in the financing of electoral campaigns (art. 43 Electoral Code) and certain sanctions⁷, but do not provide effective mechanisms of monitoring, control and the sanctioning in case of violations is rather formal. In 2018, the cross-institutional working group (NAC, CEC, Ministry of Finance, Court of Accounts, Ministry of Justice, Parliament, civil society) was organized in order to change the legal framework on the financing of political parties and electoral campaigns through the prism of establishing proportional liability for certain actions/facts, being an action of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Integrity and Anti-corruption Strategy 2017-2020. However, the results of the working group were not conclusive.

Another issue is that the CEC, being the body responsible for supervising the financing of political parties and election campaigns, does not have the authority, human and technical resources to conduct efficient supervision and monitoring. Therefore, its role is limited to checking the concordance between the reports of political parties and electoral competitors and the reports of banking transactions. At the same time, the CEC investigates only the cases that are the object of an appeal and does not conduct monitoring in the territory of the financing of the election campaign or the audit of the political parties.

The data included in the voter rolls are imperfect, especially those of citizens living abroad and those on the left bank of the Dniester (2/10, 2/11)

The voter rolls are permanent, based on official data from the State Register of Population and are updated regularly. The mechanism is clearly determined, but the accuracy of the data from the SRE depends in great part on the accuracy of the data in the State Register of Population, which still contains errors in addresses, deceased

7. For example, art. 48¹ of the Contraventional Code describes the penalties for violating the legislation on the management of political parties' finances and electoral funds.

persons and errors of identification data. According to art. 44, paragraph 10 of the Electoral Code, changes in the voter rolls may be requested by voters at the Central Electoral Commission or the electoral bureau no later than the day before the elections. On the day of elections, changes in the main rolls are not allowed, but the persons omitted for certain reasons from the main roll are included in the additional rolls and can vote.

The citizens of the Republic of Moldova who reside abroad benefit from full voting rights under the provisions of the Electoral Code. Diplomatic missions and consular offices are obliged to create conditions so that the citizens can freely exercise their electoral rights. The citizens from abroad can vote at polling stations within diplomatic and consular missions and also at extraterritorial stations. For the polling stations established outside the country, the voter rolls are created based on the data collected from the diplomatic missions and consular offices of the Republic of Moldova. The staff members of the diplomatic missions and consular offices, as well as their family members are included in the voter rolls (art. 44 par. 6 Electoral Code). An issue related to the development of voter rolls abroad is the large number of citizens of the Republic of Moldova who hold dual citizenship and set up their residence in another country on the basis of foreign identification documents.

In order to improve the quality of the voter rolls, there was established the procedure of preliminary registration through which the citizens of the Republic of Moldova with the right to vote, who on the day of the elections will be abroad, as well as those who reside in the localities on the left bank of Dniester, can register in advance and voluntary, using the official website www.alegator.md or by written request, individually or in group, submitted to the Central Electoral Commission and/or to the diplomatic missions, consular offices of the Republic of Moldova. The preliminary registration is not mandatory. The citizens who will be abroad on the day of the elections and who, for various reasons, have not registered themselves in advance can still exercise their right to vote by presenting themselves at any polling station set up outside the country. Voters can pre-register throughout the year, except for the last 45 days before the elections. The application of this procedure during the last national elections has shown that it is inefficient and only a small number of people register themselves.

Despite all the actions undertaken by the CEC, there is an inconsistency between the State Registers: Cadastre, State Register of Population, Register of Addresses, State Register of Electors, which makes it difficult to ensure interoperability between them and respectively affects the accuracy of the electoral registers data.

Polling stations' accessibility is poor (2/7)

The estimated number of persons with disabilities in the Republic of Moldova (2017) is 180.6 thousand persons out of which about 170 thousand are voters, which represents 5.1% of the total population⁸. Over 60% of the polling stations are inaccessible⁹ although they are situated in public buildings which, according to the legislation, should correspond to the accessibility standards. A study¹⁰ conducted in 2019, on a representative sample of 612 polling stations, shows that out of the total evaluated sections only 6 are accessible, 174 - partially accessible and 432 - inaccessible. This statistic is severe, considering that accessibility is one of the basic principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, but also a prerequisite for benefiting from other rights in various areas of life.

For persons with physical and sensory disabilities, the CEC undertakes a series of measures aimed at facilitating direct voting, for example the template envelope, the magnifying glasses, the adapted voting booth, the reasonable adaptation of the voting station's infrastructure. However, progress is modest. Voting mechanisms are limited, the main way being the direct and personal voting. The only option besides voting at the polling station, is voting where the person is (with the mobile ballot box).

The (in)accessibility of the infrastructure concerns not only the persons with disabilities, but also other categories of the population with reduced mobility: elderly people, children, parents who have young children and carry them in a baby carriage or in their arms, pregnant women, cyclists, people with temporary disabilities. Thus, according to estimates, the number of people affected by the lack of accessibility conditions is three times higher than the number of people with disabilities.

8. https://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/ro/home/library/effective_governance/acces-egal-pentru-toi-in-seciile-de-votare.html

9. <http://eef.md/index.php?pag=news&id=929&rid=1445&li=ro>

10. Equal acces for all to polling station. Assessing the accessibility conditions at the electoral bureaus of the polling stations from Chisinau and Balti cities, Edinet, Hancesti, Causeni districts and ATU Gagauzia (May, 2019), carried out by the INFONET Alliance and its partners, at the request of UNDP Moldova, https://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/ro/home/library/effective_governance/acces-egal-pentru-toi-in-seciile-de-votare.html

The legal regulation of the electoral disputes' solving process is imperfect (2/2)

The electoral disputes are solved in the courts of common law (art. 71 Electoral Code). There is no tribunal/court specialized exclusively in the electoral field. The Electoral Code expressly provides for the hierarchical way of contesting in the electoral bodies, as well as the competence of the courts in the matter of solving the appeals: the CEC decisions can only be appealed to the Court of Appeal, the rest of the actions concerning the right to vote, the actions/inactions of the electoral competitors at national level - are examined at the district courts within the territorial range of the electoral body that registered the competitor. The last court of appeal is the Supreme Court of Justice. According to art. 3 of the Law on the state tax, the examination and resolution of the appeals/requests in the electoral field is exempt from taxes, and the terms for examining the appeals in the first court generally vary between 24 hours and 5 days depending on the object of the appeal.

Articles 100 and 148 of the Electoral Code provide that the court responsible for validating the elections may declare the elections null if in the process of elections and/or counting of votes, there have been violations that influenced the results of the elections and the assignment of mandates. The Central Electoral Commission is the body that decides the conduct of repeated elections. In 2018, the invalidation of the results of the elections of the general mayor of Chisinau by the court and the lack of announcement of repeated elections by the CEC showed that the electoral legislation is not sufficiently clear in this situation. In the Decision no. 1713 as of 06.29.2018, the CEC noted that "the respective uncertain and contradictory regulations prejudice the principle of legal relations predictability, which is why the organization of repeated elections of the first round based on the current regulations distorts the uniform concept of the electoral norms related to the election of mayors". Partly, the problem was also generated by the formulation of the decision of the court by which the elections were completely annulled - round I and round II.

From the electoral authority's point of view, the appeal procedures are quite simple because the terms are restricted, the competences are clearly defined, the requirements concerning the submission/argumentation of an express request are provided in art. 71 par. 5 Electoral Code, Code of Civil Procedure, Administrative Code and in the CEC Regulation on the examination and settlement of appeals which also includes a model of appeal. At the same time, Promo-Lex, in the final report of the Observation Mission of Parliamentary Elections of February 24, 2019¹¹, draws attention to the fact that among the uncertainties of legal character identified by the OM Promo-LEX during the conduct of elections is the procedure for the appeals settlement on elections day, as well as in the process of counting and totalizing the results. According to the report regarding the settlement of appeals at least the following aspects need to be clarified: - the way of submitting and examining the appeals concerning the exercise of the right to vote or the administration of the elections, in the absence of the contestants, if the citizens vote in the electoral bureaus set up abroad; - the procedure for examining the appeals made on the day of the elections, which could not be filed in the court on the same day; - the competent body to examine the appeals concerning the elections administration, after the elections day; - the necessity or the lack of necessity to observe the preliminary procedure in case of submitting appeals concerning the administration of elections, after the elections day; - the deadline for the settlement of the appeals concerning the administration of the elections, after the election day, including the case of the appeal submission by voters who voted abroad considering the time zone differences.

The OSCE/ODIHR Elections Observation Mission, in the final report¹² on the parliamentary elections of February 24, 2019, also finds deficiencies related to the appeals: The process of settling the electoral disputes was negatively affected by the confusion concerning the bodies whose jurisdiction includes the complaints against the candidates. In particular, the jurisdiction regarding the examination of complaints concerning the misuse of state resources is unclear, because six different bodies have jurisdiction over these complaints. Depending on the factual situation of each complaint, it can be submitted to the CEC, DEC, the courts, police, prosecutor's office or the ACC. In some cases, the lack of clarity on the jurisdiction to examine complaints against candidates has affected the right to an effective settlement, contrary to OSCE commitments and other international standards. The OSCE/ODIHR Mission also noted that the Electoral Code does not have a clear procedure for submitting post-election appeals.

11. https://promolex.md/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Raportul_final_alegeri_parlamentare_2019.pdf

12. <http://alegeri.md/images/1/1c/Raport-final-osce-alegeri-parlamentare-2019.pdf>

Information programs dedicated to the general population and specific groups have a low impact (4/2, 4/3)

The Electoral Code¹³ establishes as an attribution of the CEC and CCET the preparation and implementation of information programs and civic education of the voters, offering for debate electoral issues to the media and the public. Programs of this kind exist and are carried out regularly. Although considerable efforts are being made and the programs carried out comply with the quality standards in the field, the surveys conducted by CEC and other organizations indicate a low level of electoral education among the population and a low visibility of CEC/CCET activities at national level. A big problem that could influence the efficiency of the information programs is the limited trust of the population in the Central Electoral Commission as an institution: 14% of the POB January 2019 respondents stated that they have some trust in the CEC, while 75.1% said they did not really trust or have no trust in the CEC¹⁴. At a low level is also the trust of citizens in the correctness of elections: 72.7% of the POB respondents said that they do not think that the elections in the Republic of Moldova are free and fair, and only 16% were convinced of this fact.

There are no campaigns for promoting the behavior condemning electoral fraud (3/3)

Anti-fraud regulations exist in both the Electoral Code, as well as in the Penal and Contraventional Code, but many norms remain interpretable and difficult to apply (e.g. art. 481 par. 1 of the Contraventional Code).

Currently, there are no broad and specialized programs to promote anti-fraud behavior. At the general local elections of October 20, 2019, for example, although the CEC elaborated and distributed for display in each polling station a poster with the actions prohibited on the day of the elections, there was no mention of the legal sanctions for the rules violation, information that would have increased the impact and efficiency of the poster. In the final report of the OSCE/ODIHR Observation Mission to the Parliamentary Elections of February 24, 2019, it is mentioned that the CEC could reflect on the possibility of better informing the stakeholders about the competence and procedures for submitting complaints and appeals, and this type of activity is part of the promotion of electoral anti-fraud behavior.

Political pluralism in the media is at a low level (3/4)

By law, the private and public media service providers are required to guarantee political pluralism, fair, balanced and impartial coverage of the campaign in all their broadcasts, and the Audiovisual Council (AC) is the regulatory body for media service providers. The AC has the competence to apply sanctions, following the monitoring conducted or based on the received complaints. The national public media services provider "Teleradio-Moldova" company and the regional public media services provider "Gagauziya Radio Televizionu" (GRT) company, according to their statutes, are independent and impartial, and the Supervisory Council of NAPI Teleradio-Moldova and the GRT administration respectively must monitor this fact. Based on the report of the ICJ/IPA on monitoring the media in the 2019 parliamentary elections, it appears that the national and regional public media generally respected the pluralism of opinion, but reflected in a predominantly positive tone the declared and undeclared official representatives of the government.

In reality, the working environment of the media is vulnerable, the editorial policy is influenced by the interests of the funders, and the media entities are systematically subjected to attacks by various social actors. The capacity of supervision, monitoring and sanctioning of the Audiovisual Council is reduced. In 2017-2018, the Republic of Moldova dropped 5 ranks from position 76 to 81 in the Press Freedom Index¹⁵. Often the expression of opinions is not without consequences. A large part of the Moldovan society demonstrates a low level of acceptance of critical opinions. The populist political forces use this state of affairs to attract the electorate and thus indirectly promote the culture of intolerance¹⁶.

13. Electoral Code, art 22 letters l, j, m and art. 27

14. http://ipp.md/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/BOP_02.2019-new.pdf

15. CSO METER: Assessing the environment in which civil society organizations operate in the Eastern Partnership countries, Chisinau, 2019 <https://promolex.md/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/CSO-Meter-Moldova-report-RO.pdf>

16. CSO METER: Assessing the environment in which civil society organizations operate in the Eastern Partnership countries, Chisinau, 2019 <https://promolex.md/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/CSO-Meter-Moldova-report-RO.pdf>

DEVELOPMENT THREATS

The population of the Republic of Moldova is poor (10/1). The economy of the Republic of Moldova is stagnant (10/4). The emigration trend is maintained at a high level (8/6). The population's aging coefficient is constantly increasing (8/1)

Since the declaration of independence, the Republic of Moldova has constantly faced social, economic, political and security issues, which have brought it to its current status as one of the poorest countries in Europe, according to the official per capita income. GDP per capita is USD 2,290, according to the NBS data of 2017, and for comparison GDP per capita in Romania is USD 26,500.

The instability and economic difficulties have generated, in the last decades, a constant emigration of the population, resulting in the departure of at least 22% of the citizens to seasonal work, to studies or the permanent living abroad. This phenomenon increases the number of the elderly, reaching the level of 20.8% of the population of the Republic of Moldova.

According to the results of the National Human Development Report 2015/2016, developed by the Institute for Development and Social Initiatives IDIS "Viitorul" and launched in June, 2017, the discrepancy between urban and rural areas at absolute poverty level is considerable - 19% people on the verge of poverty in villages vs. 5% in cities. The poorest persons spend the most on food, bills, which makes them vulnerable to economic shocks. Besides monetary inequalities, the most vulnerable groups - women, people with disabilities, the elderly, young people - are exposed to social inequalities, in the fields of education, health, access to quality services, participation.

These economic realities have a negative impact on the electoral process: low legal culture, voters who are easily bought and manipulated, a considerable number of voters outside the country (some who have left illegally, some without proper documentation), passive, disappointed and suspicious voters.

There are deficiencies in respecting the human rights, including non-discrimination policies at national level (8/23)

Even if the electoral system is inclusive and does not exclude or disadvantage any group of people, outside the electoral process there are no active programs to include socially disadvantaged persons in the decision-making process. Although the Republic of Moldova has ratified several international conventions to combat any form of discrimination, and in 2013 a Council for the Prevention and Elimination of Discrimination and Ensuring Equality was established, in reality, the anti-discrimination measures of different groups of people remain an important problem in society and affects the activity of the CEC and the electoral performance. An eloquent example are the buildings of public interest with inadequate infrastructure where, as a rule, polling stations are set up, which are therefore inaccessible to persons with disabilities. We can also mention here the underrepresentation of ethnic minorities and persons with special needs in the lists of candidates and in the elected bodies respectively.

The level of civic activism, the legal and political culture of the population are low (8/12, 8/19, 9/15). 8. The involvement of citizens in public life and in the decision-making process is low (6/1, 6/3)

Civic activism, legal and political culture imply people's openness to get associated in noncommercial organizations, participate in public meetings, engage in civic mobilization campaigns, sign petitions, take part in protests, participate in elections, monitor the fulfillment of electoral promises and react in case human rights are violated.

In the Republic of Moldova there are 1,9 CSOs per 1,000 citizens. 25% of them are active, which means that the rate of active citizens in the associative sector is low. The development of the civil society constituted throughout years the subject of a number of strategies approved by the Parliament (2009–2011, 2012–2015 and 2018–2020). At the local level, the need to establish a CSO or develop relationships between CSOs and the government is not understood by citizens or public authorities. The conclusion drawn from CSO METER is: The assessment of the activity of the civil society organizations from the Eastern Partnership countries, developed by Promo-Lex in 2019 is that cooperation between governmental institutions and CSO had more a formal character, had no efficiency and raised doubts about representativeness and transparency.

As for the voters' turnout, the situation is alarming. The participation quota in parliamentary elections has continuously decreased beginning with 1994 when there was recorded a turnout rate of 79,31%. The only exception was at the 2010 elections, when the turnout reached 63,37%. At the last parliamentary elections held on February 24, 2019, there was the lowest turnout rate recorded since the independence of the Republic

of Moldova which is only 50,57%. At the local elections, this level decreased from 60% in 1995 to 49% in 2015 and 41.68% in 2019 (Tour I).

The survey "Perceptions on human rights in the Republic of Moldova"¹⁷, conducted at the request of the Ombudsman's Office in 2018 shows a very low legal cultural background, people do not even know their rights and start getting informed about that only when one of their rights is violated.

The process of public policies elaboration is rarely based on the interests, needs and expectations of citizens (6/4, 7/1)

According to Law No. 239 as of 13.11.2008 on Transparency in Decision-Making Process public authorities must ask citizens, legally-established associations, other stakeholders regarding normative acts, administrative acts that can have a social, economic, environmental impact (on human rights, people's way of living, culture, health care and social care, local collectivities, public services). According to this law, citizens and associations will start being consulted as soon as the decision development is initiated. Legislation is not always applied properly. Therefore, the general perception is that citizens are not key actors of the public life. The consultation process is usually a formal one and when the departmental and LPA acts are issued, the above law, as well as Government Decision No. 967 as of 09.08.2016 on the mechanism of public consultation with the civil society in the decision-making process, is not respected.

Both, Law No. 768 as of 02.02.2000 on the status of the local elected candidate, as well as Law No. 39 as of 07.04.1994 on the status of Member of Parliament states that the elected officials must work for the citizens' sake. In reality, neither the legislation, nor the public authorities can ensure that elected candidates focus their activity on citizens/local communities. The society's perception regarding the development of the country¹⁸, as well as current public policies' quality, confirm this situation.

Women remain under-represented in leadership positions (8/20)

Women MPs in the Republic of Moldova's Parliament cover 26% (after parliamentary elections in 2019), while women in local elected positions cover 23% (according to the local general elections in 2015). At the global level, these indicators put us on the 66th place out of 200 states.

Over the past few years, the legal status of women has undoubtedly improved, but equality is far from being real. Although women have the same rights as men, they do not always have equal access to opportunities men have and they often cannot exercise their rights. The analysis of the situation in the Republic of Moldova in gender equality area, presented in different reports of the associative sector and Government, reveal the fact that the most challenging domains are: empowerment of women in the political, economical and social fields, as well as violence against women. Although the Government, civil society and international bodies implemented and supported a big amount of initiatives and projects designed to improve the situation in these fields, there is one more alarming situation recorded. According to men and women candidates' gender analysis for the 2019 local elections, made by the Center "Partnership for Development", voters still give preference to men for leading positions: the more important the leading position the higher the number of citizens preferring men for this position. For instance, 40,5% of respondents prefer men for the position of President of the country, and only 7,6% - want a woman for this position.

The defective administration that harms the civil rights of citizens often remains unpunished (7/14)

Only 10% of respondents of a survey conducted in 2018¹⁹ on human rights think they are well-informed about their rights. In such conditions, there are often cases of violation of human rights recorded in the country. The major problem occurs because of the defective activity of governmental institutions, which are forced by law to respect, promote and protect human rights. The control of the activity of public institutions is performed through superior institutions or through specialized bodies such as territorial offices of the State Chancellery

17. https://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/ro/home/library/effective_governance/percep_ii-asupra-drepturilor-omului-in-republica-moldova.html

18. 74,3% of respondents of the Public Opinion Barometer conducted in January-February 2019 claim that things in our country are on a wrong path http://ipp.md/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/BOP_02.2019-new.pdf

19. https://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/ro/home/library/effective_governance/percep_ii-asupra-drepturilor-omului-in-republica-moldova.html

and at the society's level through specialized NGOs or media. The civil society pays much attention only to few public authorities, especially the central ones. Periodically, their decisions and actions are put under research and public monitoring. The demands of appeal in administrative bodies are one of the solutions to the defective activities and violation of civil rights of citizens by the governmental institutions. Some of the most serious cases are disseminated by the media and this grows their chances to be solved. Public authorities do not post on their web pages the decisions of the law court certifying the defective administration and, if necessary, punishments received.

The evaluation process of the civil servants' performance is inefficient (9/12)

The evaluation of the civil servants' performances is conducted yearly according to Law no. 158 as of 07.04.2008 on the civil service and the status of the civil servant by comparing the results obtained during the evaluated period with the established objectives, based on the evaluation criteria. Although the law and evaluation methodology correspond to the standards in the field, the efficiency and impact of the process is minimal. It is difficult to assume that as a result of the evaluation, the quality of the services provided by the civil servant increases, and the degree of citizen satisfaction increases.

In general, we cannot talk about the consolidation and maintenance of a staff of professional, pro-active, honest civil servants, who put the citizen's interest before the personal interest, as long as the salary of a civil servant at local level is extremely low (on average 3500 MDL).

The evaluation of the civil servants' performances and quality reflects on the electoral process because a good part of the election officials are also civil servants, including those in the CEC apparatus.

Annex no.2:
STAKEHOLDERS ANALYSIS

Stakeholder	Profile/ description	The way the stakeholder interacts with the electoral process	The way the CEC interacts with the stakeholder
Citizens	<p>Today's and tomorrow's voters (including citizens under 18)</p> <p>Citizens who do not participate in the elections</p>	<p>Participate or abstain from participating in the election process as voters or candidates</p>	<p>The CEC encourages, informs and creates the necessary conditions so that all the citizens meeting the legal requirements can be able to vote/run for office</p>
Lower/ territorial electoral bodies	<p>District Electoral Council management (DEC)</p> <p>Electoral bureau of the polling station management (EBPS)</p> <p>Members of these bodies – election officials</p> <p>Operators of SAIS "Elections"</p> <p>Accountants</p>	<p>Administer the electoral process in a certain electoral district/polling station</p>	<p>The CEC is a hierarchically superior body, DEC and EBPS report to CEC and implement the CEC decisions.</p>
CCET	<p>CCET Director</p> <p>Members of CCET team</p> <p>CCET trainers</p>	<p>The CCET provides services of training, research and civic education to all the stakeholders of the electoral process (CEC, lower electoral bodies, political parties, journalists, civil society, etc). The CCET reports to the CEC.</p>	<p>The CEC is the CCET's founder and benefits from training services and civic education.</p> <p>The CEC allots financial resources to the CCET.</p>
Parliament of the Republic of Moldova	<p>101 MPs</p> <p>Specialized Commissions</p> <p>Parliament's Secretariat</p>	<p>Adopt and modify the electoral legislation</p> <p>Approve the CEC's nominal composition</p> <p>Conduct the CEC's parliamentary control</p>	<p>The CEC organizes parliamentary elections and initiates the validation of the mandates of MPs</p> <p>The CEC issues opinions and provides expertise on request for the amendment of the electoral legislation</p> <p>The CEC requests the legislation's interpretation</p> <p>The CEC reports to the Parliament</p>
Constitutional Court	<p>Judges</p>	<p>Confirm the legality of presidential and parliamentary elections</p> <p>Validate the mandate of the president of the country and the mandates of the MPs</p> <p>Declare the alternate candidates</p> <p>Control the constitutionality of the issues submitted to a referendum and present an opinion.</p> <p>Confirm/invalidate the results of the republican referendum</p>	<p>Present the set of documents necessary to confirm the results of the elections and validate the mandates of the MPs and the mandate of President of the Republic of Moldova.</p> <p>Prepare and remit the files for the lifting and assignment of the MP mandate</p> <p>Submits its decision and the proceedings on the results of the referendum</p>

Stakeholder	Profile/ description	The way the stakeholder interacts with the electoral process	The way the CEC interacts with the stakeholder
Courts of law	Judges Superior Council of Magistracy Presidents of the Courts of law	Solve electoral disputes Submits member for DEC II Confirm the legality of local elections and validate the mandates of local elected officials, as well as the alternate candidates lists	The lower bodies present the set of documents necessary for confirming the local elections' results and validating the mandates of councilors and mayors Participates in trials to which it is party
Central Public Administration	Government Ministry of Justice National Anticorruption Center Ministry of Internal Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Reintegration Policies Bureau Diaspora Relations Bureau Ministry of Finance	Develop methodological norms for public servants Carry out specific tasks within the country's electoral process Offer support in organizing the electoral process outside the country and on the left bank of Dniester	Cooperates with the aim to ensure the good organization of the electoral process Assigns specific tasks to various institutions Implements the Government policies in the field of human resources (recruitment, employment, promotion, evaluation, etc)
Other central bodies	Audiovisual Council Court of Accounts Security and Intelligence Service Public Services Agency National Regulatory Agency for Electronic Communications and Information Technology Information Technology and Cyber Security Service	Carry out specific tasks within the electoral process Have a defined role in the political financing process Monitor the parties' financing from the state budget Ensure the infrastructure for the smooth conduct of the electoral process	Cooperates with the aim to ensure the good organization of the electoral process Assigns specific tasks to various institutions

Stakeholder	Profile/ description	The way the stakeholder interacts with the electoral process	The way the CEC interacts with the stakeholder
Local Public Administration	<p>Mayors</p> <p>Secretaries of district/local Councils</p> <p>Recorders</p>	<p>Have specific tasks for preparing and updating the voter rolls</p> <p>Provide the necessary space and equipment for conducting the elections</p> <p>Appoint the members of DEC and EBPS</p>	<p>Cooperates during the process of organization and conduct of elections</p>
Service providers	<p>State-owned company "Radiocomunicatii"</p> <p>Electrical energy providers</p> <p>Internet and telephone services providers</p> <p>Printing houses</p>	<p>Provide specialized services for the smooth conduct of the electoral process</p>	<p>Provides services and establishes partnerships as the case may be</p>
Political parties	<p>Potential election officials appointed by political parties</p> <p>Accountants, treasurers</p> <p>Governing bodies of political parties</p> <p>Observers</p> <p>Parties' representatives with right of advisory vote</p> <p>Donors of political parties and electoral candidates</p>	<p>Submit DEC and EBPS members</p> <p>Participate in elections/conduct electoral campaigns</p> <p>Appoint candidates for the elections</p> <p>Submit observers, representatives with advisory voting rights and trusted persons</p> <p>Present information about members and donors</p> <p>Benefit from political financing</p> <p>Report to the CEC the revenues and expenses, including those related to the electoral period</p>	<p>Temporarily hires EBPS/DEC members submitted by the parliamentary political parties</p> <p>Supervises the financial reporting of political parties and electoral campaigns</p> <p>Develops and approves the normative acts necessary for the implementation and observance of the legislation on the financing of political parties and electoral campaigns</p> <p>Develops guidance documents (forms, guides, methodological norms) aiming to assist the financial activity and to train the political parties and the electoral competitors on their rights, obligations and responsibilities in the process of managing finances</p> <p>Examines the complaints concerning political financing</p>
Mass-media	<p>Journalists from written and on-line media, TV and radio</p> <p>Editors</p> <p>Bloggers</p>	<p>Act as interface between citizens/voters and the CEC</p>	<p>Provides electoral information of public interest</p> <p>Cooperates in order to inform promptly and increase electoral culture</p>

Stakeholder	Profile/ description	The way the stakeholder interacts with the electoral process	The way the CEC interacts with the stakeholder
Non-governmental organizations	NGOs management with activity in the field of human rights, democracy, civic education, good governance, elections, etc. Observers	Monitor the electoral process and inform the voters and other stakeholders about the findings and formulated recommendations Conduct civic and electoral education campaigns Implement projects aimed at increasing the rate of accessibility and inclusion of the electoral process	Provides all the necessary information for an efficient monitoring of electoral processes Takes into account the recommendations for the improvement of the electoral processes and legislation Establishes partnerships and conducts joint projects Provides expertise and advice in the field of electoral practice and legislation
Foreign partners, including development partners	Foreign development partners International specialized organizations (ACEEEO, WEM, A-WEB) Central electoral authorities from other countries	Cooperate in order to exchange experience, information and knowledge Provide a regional/international platform for the presentation of the latest trends in the electoral field and the enhancement of electoral practices Provide technical and financial assistance Implement projects involving one or more member states	Provides the necessary information for international research and analysis Promotes the CEC and the State of the Republic of Moldova on international level Provides good practices and electoral knowledge Undertakes international practice Benefits from electoral assistance programs Participates in electoral observation missions and other events

Annex no. 3:

CHRONOLOGICAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Pillar 1: Citizen Oriented Services

Goal: Impeccable provision of electoral services in compliance with the fundamental values of the Central Electoral Commission

Objective 1.1 Develop accessible, secure and innovative services

Strategic activity		2020		2021		2022		2023	
1.1.1.	Automation of polling stations								
	1.1.1.1. Develop technical requirements for automation of polling stations								
	1.1.1.2 Establish software systems for automation of PS								
	1.1.1.3 Develop normative framework for automation of PS								
	1.1.1.4 Pilot the system								
1.1.2.	Improvement of SALS "Elections"								
	1.1.2.1 Finish and launch the Register of Election officials (Version 2.0)								
	1.1.2.2 Integrate and implement the State Register of Electors with the State Register of Mail Addresses								
	1.1.2.3 Review the functionalities offered by the Module "Subscriber List Check-Out"								
	1.1.2.4 Develop the Electronic Voting System								
	1.1.2.5 Establish the electoral complaint management module								
	1.1.2.6 Develop the Digital Communication/Promotion Plan								
1.1.3.	Increasing electoral inclusion								
	1.1.3.1 Make CEC headquarters and communication channels more accessible								

Strategic activity		2020		2021		2022		2023	
	1.1.3.2 Explore equipment/technologies/new voting procedures meant to increase access to electoral process								
	1.1.3.3 Involve Diaspora in different stages of the electoral process								
	1.1.3.4 Encourage voters from the left bank of Dniester River to take part in elections								
	1.1.3.5 Promote gender equality through joint projects with the civil society								
	1.1.3.6 Develop joint projects with the civil society to ensure an inclusive electoral process								
1.1.4	Maintenance/extension of the Information Security and Quality Management Integrated System (SREN ISO 9001:2015 and SR ISO/CEI 27001:2013)								
	1.1.4.1 Conduct internal audit missions								
	1.1.4.1 Conduct external audit missions								
	1.1.4.1 Obtain international recertification								
	1.1.4.1 Review the possibility to extend certification to new domains								

Objective 1.2 Increase integrity and credibility of electoral process through prevention, monitoring and control

Strategic activity		2020		2021		2022		2023	
1.2.1.	Consolidation of CEC monitoring and political funding control capacities								
	1.2.1.1 Develop methodological framework of activity of the Financial Control and Monitoring Division								
	1.2.1.2 Develop the CEC capacities for monitoring and control of political financing								
	1.2.1.3 Implement the Financial Control module								

Strategic activity		2020			2021			2022			2023			
	1.2.1.4 Conduct trainings for parties representatives and treasurers													
1.2.2.	Encouragement of anti-fraud behavior													
	1.2.2.1 Develop proposals for improvement of normative framework on anti-fraud behavior													
	1.2.2.2 Develop the electoral anti-fraud guide													
	1.2.2.3 Include the electoral anti-fraud component into information campaigns													

Objective 1.3 Decrease the distance between voters and electoral bodies by increasing transparency of elections

Strategic activity		2020			2021			2022			2023			
1.3.1.	Development of the Module Electoral Profile of the Voter													
	1.3.1.1 Develop technical requirements for the module Electoral Profile of the Voter													
	1.3.1.1 Create softwares for the module Electoral Profile of the Voter													
	1.3.1.1 Implementation of the module Electoral Profile of the Voter													
1.3.2.	Development of election statistics services													
	1.3.2.1 Create the data base of statistics													
	1.3.2.2 Develop a public platform on statistic reporting													
	1.3.2.3 Integrate with the existing state platforms on statistic reporting													
	1.3.2.4 Conduct gender-based audit upon completion of every national elections													

	2020				2021				2022				2023			
	Strategic activity															
	1.3.2.5 Develop annual communication plans on statistic information															
	1.3.2.6 Promote services among NGOs, academic environment and voters															

Pillar 2: Involvement, Influence and Promotion

Goal: Development of communication and cooperation bridges with key actors in order to strengthen democracy, improve electoral practice and legislation, and reinforce the CEC as an authority that is credible on both national and international level and is beneficiary oriented

Obiectivul 2.1 Îmbunătățirea calității serviciilor electorale prin conlucrarea eficientă dintre instituțiile statului

	2020				2021				2022				2023			
	Strategic activity															
2.1.1.	Pro-active communication with the legislative															
	2.1.1.1 Give arguments on the need to submit proposals for:															
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Establish permanent territorial electoral bodies ▶ Mandatory certification of election officials at DEC level ▶ Appointment of the leadership of the DEC/EBPS electoral body (chairperson and secretary), including from REC ▶ Fixed dates for conducting ordinary elections (for general local elections, new local elections, presidential elections) ▶ Diversifying the political party penalty system for violating the legislation on political funding and electoral campaigns ▶ Using a quota of the penalties set for political funding violations for the development of CEC's monitoring and control function ▶ Regulating the on-line information environment during the electoral period 															
	2.1.1 Institutionalize the mechanism of mandatory approval by CEC of amendments to electoral legislation															
2.1.2.	Regular cooperation with other state institutions															
	2.1.2.1 Cooperate with the Ministry of Justice and National Anticorruption Center on legal framework improvement															

Strategic activity	2020			2021			2022			2023		
2.1.2.2 Promote, together with SCM, SCJ and NIJ, the specialization of the magistrates within the electoral body												
2.1.2.3 Cooperate with LPA to make polling stations more accessible												
2.1.2.4 Cooperate with PSA to improve voters' rolls												
2.1.2.5 Identify solutions, together with the Ministry of Finance, for ensuring competitive salaries for clerks of CEC, CCET and lower electoral bodies												
2.1.2.6 Identify solutions, together with the Ministry of Finance, to ensure CEC's financial sustainability												
2.1.2.7 Ensure cooperation among LPA/CPA/CEC/CCET in identifying solutions to make territorial election officials' positions permanent												
2.1.2.8 Promote together with MIA, NAC the anti-fraud behavior												
2.1.2.9 Establish a partnership with the Audiovisual Council designed to promote the political pluralism of the media												
2.1.2.10 Cooperate with the Council for Preventing and Eliminating Discrimination and Ensuring Equality on electoral inclusion (based on gender, ethnicity, age)												

Objectives 2.2 Strengthen CEC as a credible and citizen oriented authority

Strategic activity	2020			2021			2022			2023		
2.2.1. Engagement of voters in the electoral process												
2.2.1.1 Conduct a sociological research on efficiency of tools/methods of information per categories of voters												
2.2.1.2 Conduct specific information campaigns for underrepresented groups (diaspora, youth, underprivileged women, elderly, ethnic minorities, disabled persons)												

Strategic activity		2020				2021				2022				2023			
2.2.2.	Extension of partnerships with civil society																
	2.2.2.1 Cooperate to improve the normative framework																
	2.2.2.2 Coordinate the work agenda to avoid overlapping of activities																
	2.2.2.3 Analyze and implement, if necessary, the recommendations of national and international election observation missions																
2.2.3.	Consolidation of dialogue with political parties																
	2.2.3.1 Include topics of joint interest with political parties in the annual communication plan																
	2.2.3.2 Promote initiatives, reforms, innovations, good practices among political parties																
2.2.4.	Promotion of electoral journalism																
	2.2.4.1 Conduct off-line activities with the media																
	2.2.4.2 Invite journalists to CEC's public events																
	2.2.4.3 Take part in radio and TV broadcasts																
	2.2.4.4 Monitor print and online media platforms																
2.2.5.	Cooperation with development partners in different areas																
	2.2.5.1 Diversify strategic partnerships																
	2.2.5.2 Attract funds for different strategic domains																

Strategic activity	2020			2021			2022			2023		
2.2.5.3 Improve cooperation with foreign partners by creating the annual electoral assistance matrix												

Objective 2.3 Consolidate CEC's image at the international level as a modern and progressive electoral authority

Strategic activity	2020			2021			2022			2023		
2.3.1. Development of the International Association of Women in Electoral Management (WEM - International)												
2.3.1.1 Promote WEM-International												
2.3.1.2 Attract funds and human resources for WEM Secretariat												
2.3.1.3 Develop partnerships for implementing projects within WEM-International												
2.3.2. Active participation within regional and international electoral associations – ACEEEO, A-WEB												
2.3.2.1 Actively participate in:												
▶ annual conferences												
▶ regional and international electoral events												
▶ election monitoring missions in member states												

Pillar 3: Performance and Organizational Culture

Goal: Developing an effective organization with a positive and clear culture

Objective 3.1 Modernize the management processes at all levels

Strategic activity	2020			2021			2022			2023		
3.1.1. Personnel audit												
3.1.1.1 Make an initial assessment of CEC's team synergy												
3.1.1.2 Analyze the degree of acceptance of change												

Strategic activity		2020			2021			2022			2023		
	3.1.1.3 Perform the diagnosis of the social-psychological climate of the institution												
	3.1.1.4 Assess the organizational culture												
	3.1.1.5 Analyze the personnel functional mobility system at horizontal and vertical levels												
	3.1.1.6 Assess employees' motivation												
	3.1.1.7 Assess the level of maturity in the position and/or institution												
	3.1.1.8 Make the diagnosis of the efficiency of clerks' professional training												
	3.1.1.9 Assess the professional career development plans												
3.1.2.	Improvement of comfort and efficiency of employees by improving working conditions												
	3.1.2.1 Formulate problems and solutions related to working conditions												
	3.1.2.2 Assess periodically employees' working conditions satisfaction												
3.1.3.	Implementation of some measures for the development of personnel internal synergy, improvement of communication system, improvement of working environment and increment of solidarity within CEC												
	3.1.3.1 Analyze recommendations of the report on personnel audit related to organizational culture, internal synergy and psychological climate within CEC												
	3.1.3.2 Identify necessary measures for the development of internal synergy of personnel, improve communication system, improve working environment and increase solidarity												
	3.1.3.3 Implement some specific measures of employees' cohesion growth (e.g. gathering sports teams/clubs of interests, organizing joint leisure activities, etc)												

Strategic activity	2020				2021				2022				2023			
3.1.4. Establishment of a culture of training/continuous training during the entire activity, encouragement of good practice and exchange of informal experience among members and employees of CEC																
3.1.4.1 Analyze recommendations of the report on personnel audit related to efficiency of professional training of CEC clerks, personnel motivation and professional career development plans																
3.1.4.2 Develop a career growth path of a CEC clerk																
3.1.4.3 Develop professional development individual plans																
3.1.4.4 Establish the annual training plans, within the limits of CCET's annual training budget for CEC members and clerks in identified areas of interest																
3.1.5. Consolidation of Internal Audit Service																
3.1.5.1 Establish the assessment methodology of the financial and risk management efficiency																
3.1.5.2 Establish the assessment mechanisms of the process of planning, execution, monitoring and reporting within CEC and CCET																
3.1.6. Prevention and management of image crisis situations																
3.1.6.1 Develop a crisis communication plan, including specific messages																
3.1.6.2 Make simulations to test the plan																
3.1.6.3 Conduct media-coaching sessions for CEC management body																

Objective 3.2 Development of CEC/ CCET Strategic Partnership

Strategic activity	2020				2021				2022				2023			
3.2.1. Radiography of the existing CEC and CCET partnership																

Strategic activity		2020			2021			2022			2023		
	3.2.1.1 Assess the partnership according to the following criteria: ▶ competencies ▶ cross-institutional, personal communication ▶ subordination relationships												
3.2.1.	Improvement of cross-institutional cooperation in doing strategic tasks												
	3.2.1.1 Remove overlaps of competencies and activities of CEC and CCET subdivisions												
	3.2.1.2 Establish effective mechanisms of cooperation between CEC and CCET in the financial-bookkeeping area												

Objective 3.3 Strengthen the national network of professional and motivated election officials

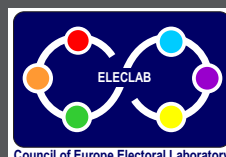
Strategic activity		2020			2021			2022			2023		
3.3.1.	Establishment of permanent electoral bodies												
	3.3.1.1 Establish territorial centers												
	3.3.1.2 Include the communication with lower bodies in the communication strategy of CEC												
	3.3.1.3 Develop a career growth plan for the territorial election official												
	3.3.1.4 Institutionalize the motivation system of the territorial election official												
3.3.2	Recruitment of EBPS/DEC members from political to professional												
	3.3.2.1 Assign the leadership of DEC/EBPS electoral body (chairperson and secretary) exclusively from REC												
	3.3.2.2 Develop the Register of recalled/fired members												
	3.3.2.3 Develop the job description document for the leadership of EBPS/DEC electoral body												

USEFUL RELEVANT SUSTAINABLE OWNED FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX 7 – CENTRE FOR CONTINUOUS ELECTORAL TRAINING 2020-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN



Toolkit for strategic planning
and prioritisation
of electoral co-operation





APPENDIX 7 –
**CENTRE FOR CONTINUOUS ELECTORAL TRAINING
2020-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN**

MESSAGE OF THE DIRECTOR

Dear friends of the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (CICDE),

We have the honour to introduce you, on behalf of CICDE, to the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan of the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training. This document is in line with the mission, vision and fundamental values of CICDE and reflects the current socio-political and economic background.

The Strategic Plan is built around three key elements: modern and quality services, institutional and functional strengthening and organisational communication. These strategic pillars will be strengthened simultaneously, in order to provide CICDE with durability, sustainability and a solid basis for the implementation of the most ambitious plans.

This plan is not just a technical document and a planning tool, it is a journey that CICDE embarked on for the next four years, an expression of its team's desiderata and of its vision of the future that we hope you share.

Director of CICDE

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

LPA – Local Public Administration

NAQAER – National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research

EOPS – Electoral Office of the Polling Station

CEC – Central Electoral Commission

ECC – Electoral Constituency Council

CICDE – Centre for Continuous Electoral Training

CoE – Council of Europe

CPEDEE – Council for Preventing and Eliminating Discrimination and Ensuring Equality

UN – United Nations

URSO – Useful, Relevant, Sustainable and Owned – a framework-methodology of the Council of Europe (Division for Electoral Assistance) underpinning the strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of Strategic Plan implementation

CSO – Civil Society Organisation

SRV – State Register of Voters

SAISE – State Automated Information System ‘Elections’

INTRODUCTION

Strategic planning is a systematic process whereby an institution determines certain essential priorities that will support it in achieving its mission alongside the developments in the environment that it works in. The Strategic Plan provides for the future steps and the objectives and stages that are expected to lead to their fulfilments, while also being an essential element and the engine driving CICDE's efforts to develop.

This is the second exercise of this type for the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training, having already developed and implemented the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan.

The strategic planning work focused on 2020-2023 was supported by the Council of Europe, using the innovative URSO methodology developed by the Elections and Civil Society Division (DG Democracy) of the Council of Europe, which breaks strategic planning down into several stages starting with a SWOT analysis based on GID indicators, ECA evaluation parameters/variables and ending with the evaluation and monitoring of strategic plan implementation. This exercise is meant to help assess the current development status of the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training and of the electoral system on the whole and to establish the institution's strategic directions for the next four years. The Centre for Continuous Electoral Training is supported in the planning process by experts from the Council of Europe.

According to the methodology, strategic planning involves:

I. Context and needs analysis (contextualisation of operational variables and indicators, electoral cooperation assessment, SWOT analysis, strategy establishment)

II. Objective setting (problem tree, solution tree, response area selection, objective establishment)

III. Prioritization (identification of priorities, assessment of required resources)

IV. Planning (plan drafting and development, integration of the evaluation and monitoring component)

The first stage consisted of assessing and contextualising the ECA (Electoral Cooperation Assessment) operational variables. This is an assessment tool facilitating the SWOT analysis¹ and helping identify variables that have a positive or negative impact on the general performance of the electoral system and on the response areas, with the ultimate purpose of strengthening institutional performance. ECA variables were underpinned by GID indicators². The legal and associated framework, namely the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, the Electoral Code, the Law on Political Parties, the Law on Transparent Decision-Making, etc. were analysed in order to make a correct assessment and contextualisation. An important part of documentation consisted of reviewing relevant documents such as performance reports, national and international observers' reports on elections, opinion polls, Moldova's statistical data base, studies/researches on a range of relevant topics.

The impact of every operational variable on electoral performance was assessed as 'Very positive', 'Positive', 'Irrelevant', 'Negative' or 'Very negative' having thus highlighted, on the one hand, strengths and weaknesses in the system, and, on the other hand, opportunities and threats from outside the system. The SWOT analysis framework provides a description of useful internal (Strengths) and external (Opportunities) elements that support the achievement of set objectives and that will have to be worked on/developed/harnessed in order to enhance electoral performance. The SWOT analysis also elucidates internal (Weaknesses) and external (Threats) elements that put at risk the achievement of set objectives and that need to be neutralised by implementing some response to address/overcome/avoid/mitigate their consequences.

At this point in the process, the consolidation strategy was selected as key response and general framework for decision-making. This strategy focuses on strengthening positive indicators – both internal and external ones, assuming that this would remove, bypass or eradicate the negatives indicators.

The next stage of strategic planning involved holding a workshop at which the identified issues were tackled through the lens of cause-effect-solution. This work resulted in identifying three strategic pillars (response areas) and the strategic objectives. To ensure the Strategic Plan is implemented successfully, the objectives and actions

1. SWOT – the SWOT analysis is a way to assess the general condition of an organisation to support the development of a strategic plan taking into account its strengths, addressing its weaknesses, tapping efficiently into opportunities and preventing potential threats.
2. The GID indicators data base comprises 300 indicators grouped into 5 dimensions (institutional, administrative, social, human resources, economic) which, in their turn reflect the internal or external context.

were worded in a clear and unambiguous way, making sure they are measurable and attainable during the four years covered by the strategic plan. Performance Indicators against which the plan and implementation efforts will be assessed were also established.

The consultations with all stakeholders over the plan represented an important stage of the strategic planning process. This work was carried out in compliance with the Law on Transparent Decision-Making.

1. ABOUT THE CENTRE FOR CONTINUOUS ELECTORAL TRAINING

According to Article 27 of the Electoral Code, the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training is a public institution founded by the Central Election Commission, which delivers specialised training courses for election officials at the request of political parties or other social-political organisations. Upon request, other subjects involved in the electoral process (observers, media, local public administration authorities, etc.) can also be trained.

The goal, powers and duties of CICDE are laid down in the Regulation of the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training, approved by CEC Decision No 1030 of 9 December 2011.

The responsibilities and specific activities of CICDE stipulated in the Regulation can be divided in four main groups:

1. Developing, organising, conducting and assessing training programs. Duties in this regard include tasks such as: estimating the training needs relevant to the electoral process and the roles and responsibilities of electoral officials; planning and developing training plans annually and upon need; drafting and developing generic and specific training programs, methodologies based on an analysis of electoral processes and regulations; organising, coordinating and conducting trainings; evaluating and monitoring trainings; developing – annually and upon need – reports on trainings, containing recommendations.
2. Developing policies and conducting research. Duties in this regard include tasks such as: analysing the implementation of the electoral process and regulations; drafting suggestions and recommendations within the scope of its area of expertise, to improve the electoral system and procedures; holding consultations and experience-sharing meetings; participating in election monitoring missions at home and abroad, and making a comparative analysis and summary of national and international experience in organising and conducting elections; developing teaching and informative materials, studies and research reports.
3. Communicating and raising awareness. Duties in this regard include tasks such as: analysing, drafting and disseminating teaching and informative materials; strengthening the electoral culture of electoral stakeholders by conducting campaigns and other tools for awareness-raising; organising conferences, seminars and other activities to raise awareness among different groups and communities; establishing and strengthening partnerships with national and international institutions.
4. Management duties have to do with planning, budget appropriations, management, public procurements, human resources, planning and management of funds from development partners, monitoring and reporting, as well as with other organisational tasks needed in the context of CICDE's work.

CICDE staff consists of 7 basic employees (director, deputy director, accountant, lead specialist and 3 senior specialists) and experts hired under provision of services agreements.

CICDE began its training work in August 2013 by training initially potential members of electoral bodies and then electoral officials appointed as members of electoral bodies established for the parliamentary elections (2014, 2019), presidential elections (2016), local general elections (2015), the new local elections (2013-2018), local (2013, 2014, 2017) and consultative (2019) referenda.

Electoral trainings were held for other groups of beneficiaries as well: registrars, SAISE operators, observers, party delegates, signature gatherers, judges, secretaries of local councils that have elections-related duties, treasurers, accountants, librarians, civil society organisations, etc. To provide quality training services, CICDE developed a broad portfolio containing training programs focused on the needs of the target groups.

Promoting participatory democracy is one of CICDE's aspirations. Therefore, several projects meant to increase the involvement of the younger generations, in particular, in decision-making were implemented. Thanks to the civic education events held under the 'Democracy can be learned!' heading and to the awareness-raising campaigns for the general public conducted in the context of elections, CICDE became more visible and known and it became a reference centre for training and raising awareness about electoral matters.

In its work, CICDE follows the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, the Electoral Code and other legislative and regulatory acts in force, regulations and guidelines approved by CEC, as well as international treaties that the Republic of Moldova is party to.

CICDE's executed budget for the last 4 years

Indicators	2016	2017	2018	2019
Staff expenditure	491851.59	461950.09	532377.04	612884.45
Services	618071.20	497184.27	431104.71	998589.72
Fixed assets	44000.00	89136.33	253527.26	83964.67
Goods and stock of current assets	112755.82	92171.71	83011.66	118831.25
TOTAL	1266678.61	1140442.40	1300020.67	1814270.09

Table 1. CICDE's executed budget for the last 4 years – main type of work (MDL)

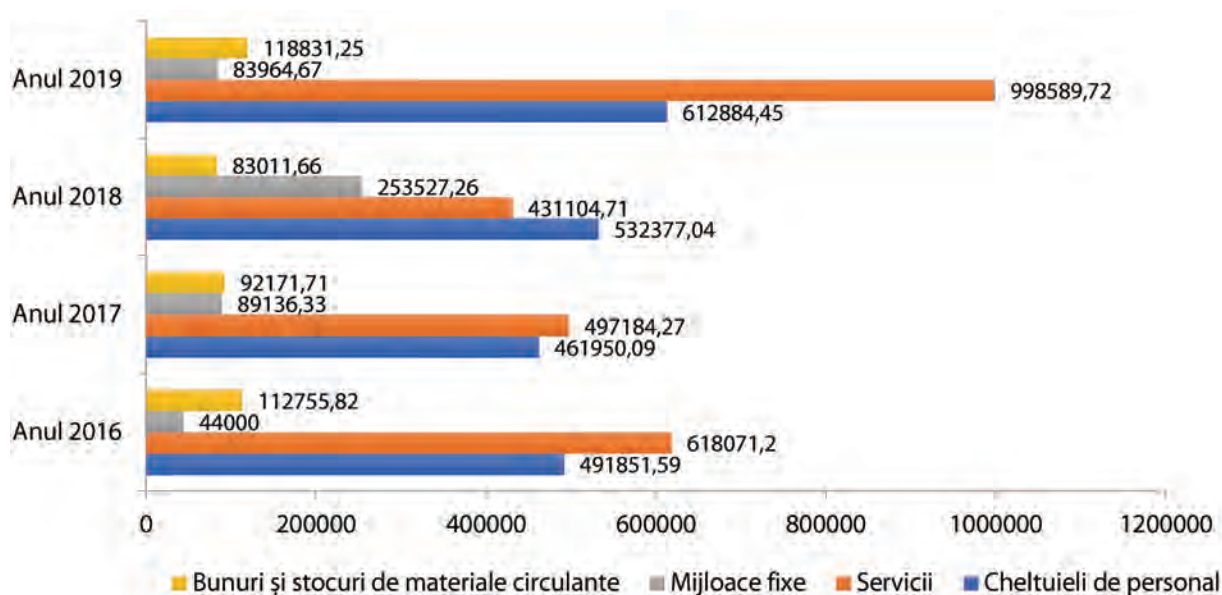


Chart 1. CICDE's executed budget for the last 4 years – main type of work (MDL)

Indicators	2016 Presidential elections	2017 New local elections and local referendum	2018 New local elections and beginning of the election period for parliamentary elections	2019 Parliamentary elections, general local elections
Staff expenditure	54753.37	53295.73	63732.47	184783.73
Services	1704684.89	395815.85	873810.66	4641857.05
Goods and stock of current assets	454408.67	4290	90051.62	1110906.81
TOTAL	2213846.93	453401.58	1027594.75	5937547.59

Table 2. CICDE's executed budget for the last 4 years – Elections (MDL)

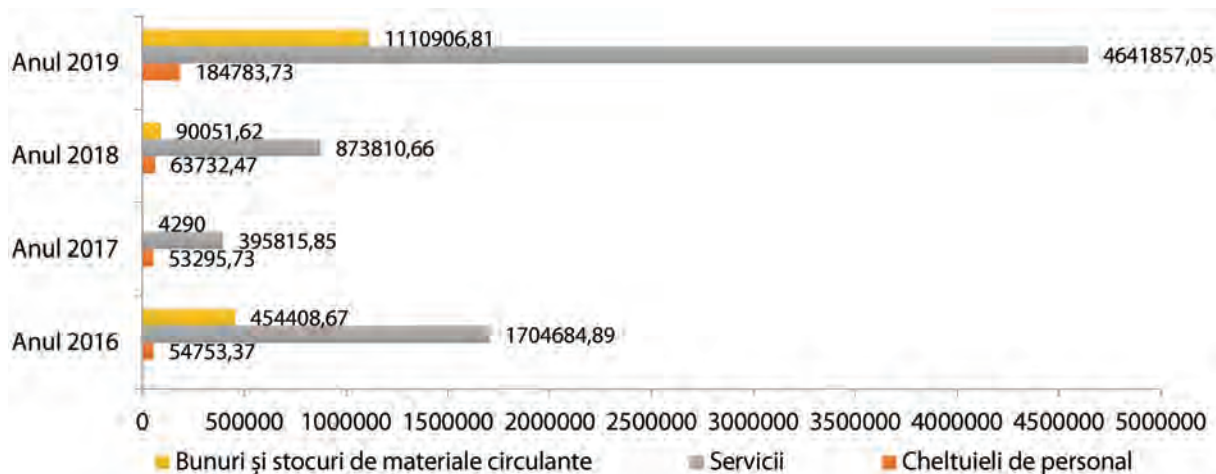


Chart 2. CICDE's executed budget for the last 4 years – Elections (MDL)

Indicators	2016	2017	2018	2019
Services	1286033.66	626223.32	2182963.57	801474.10
Fixed assets		12022	2500	55206.8
Goods and stock of current assets	67965.48	102876.25	225688.16	179873.00
TOTAL	1353999.14	741121.57	2411151.73	1036553.90

Table 3. CICDE's executed budget for the last 4 years – projects funded by international development partners (MDL)

Indicators	2016	2017	2018	2019
Services	-	104000.00	-	-
Goods and stock of current assets	-	95340.00	-	-
TOTAL	-	199340.00	-	-

Table 4. CICDE's executed budget based on financial resources earned out of provision of paid services in 2017 (MDL)

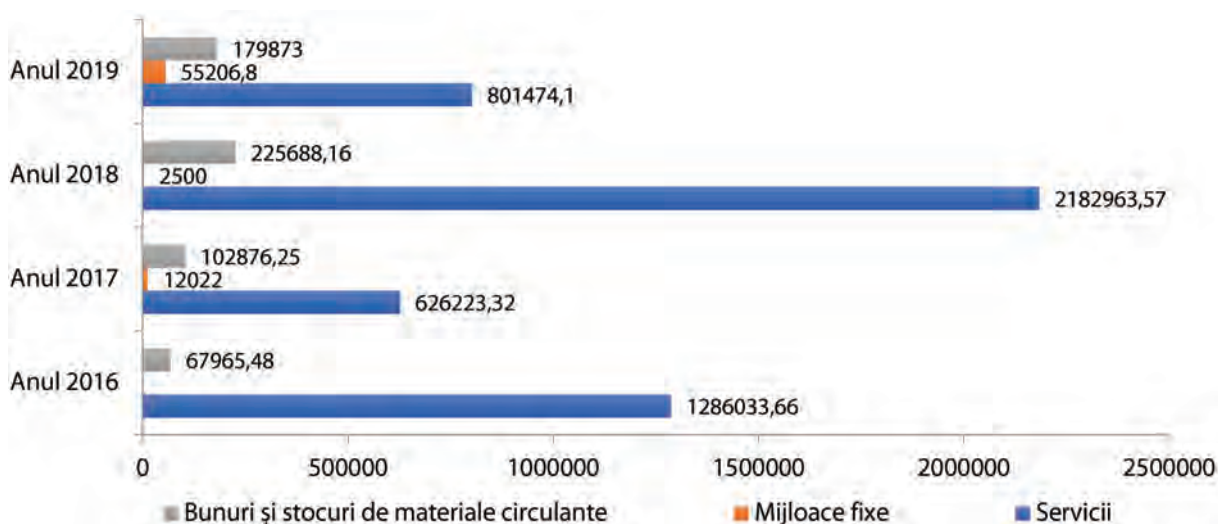


Chart 3. CICDE's executed budget for the last 4 years – projects funded by international development partners (MDL)

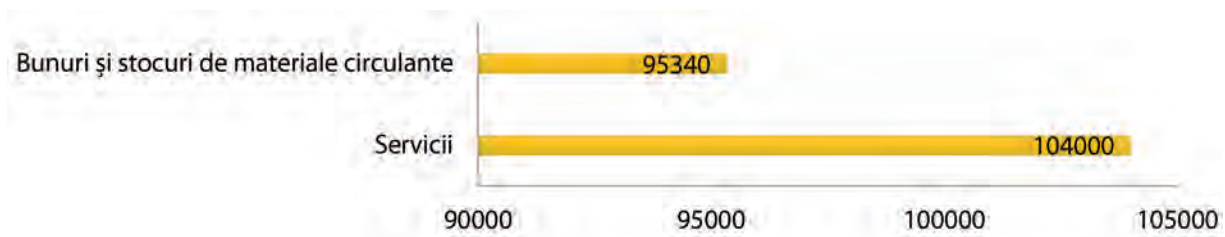


Chart 4. CICDE's executed budget based on financial resources earned out of provision of paid services in 2017 (MDL)

2. STRATEGIC BASICS

Our MISSION is to train, educate and research in order to allow citizens conduct and participate in elections, strengthening this way people's trust in democratic processes.

Our VISION: CICDE is an internationally recognized modern and flexible institution, providing high quality electoral training, civic education, research and consultancy services.

FUNDAMENTAL VALUES

Professionalism: Our services shall be provided professionally, applying innovative methods tailored to our beneficiaries' needs.

Impartiality: We shall be impartial in providing our services, while observing the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova and other relevant regulations in the area of expertise.

Inclusiveness: Our services shall be inclusive, tailored to the needs of all communities of the society that participate in the electoral process.

Integrity: We shall provide our services according to the criteria of integrity, professionalism, honesty, ethics and openness towards our beneficiaries.

Transparency: We shall provide our services in conditions of transparency and openness, while encouraging participation and responding to our beneficiaries' needs.

Innovation: We shall provide innovative and creative services, applying the best practices in the area of expertise.

Passion: We shall develop and provide our services with dedication and passion, to produce the best possible outcome.

Trust: We shall strengthen and maintain the trust our beneficiaries placed on us in terms of our commitments, by demonstrating accountability and being result-oriented.

3. 2016-2019 STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW

The first strategic plan of the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training covered the period of 2016-2019. Its focus was on setting a framework for the development of the services provided by CICDE.

This Plan was developed three years after CICDE was established. During those three years its strategic courses of development took shape:

1. Diverse and innovative training services in the area of participatory democracy organised at national and international level;
2. Transformation into a reference research centre at national and international level;
3. Development of CICDE as an acknowledged brand wider awareness-raising about participatory democracy;
4. Gathering and hiring a motivated professional team and trainers to work in an enabling environment.

This way, over the four years, CICDE focused its efforts on enlarging its training portfolio by widening its range of beneficiaries from different categories, concentrating not only on quantity, but on quality too, having also diversified the training methods that are more efficient.

During the reference period, the foundation for research at CICDE was laid, with CICDE having performed its first branded researches in the electoral field. The electronic library containing reports, studies, researches, periodicals etc. was launched for people interested in resources in the electoral field.

CICDE established itself nationally as a body specialising in electoral training and in providing civic education programs focused on promoting participatory democracy among the young generation in particular. Internationally, CICDE asserted itself as reference centre in the region, a role model and a valuable resources for other electoral authorities providing electoral training.

Having a professional team (basic employees and staff hired for an indefinite period) to carry out CICDE's work was and continues to be one of CICDE's development priorities. Considerable efforts were invested into this endeavour, but such efforts need to continue to be made particularly into sustaining the body of experts, trainers, coordinators etc.

On the whole, the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan underpinned CICDE's efforts to achieve its strategic objectives, the annual stock-taking of achievements having been reflected in CICDE's annual reports. The stock-taking exercise showed that certain activities underpinning the set objectives were either not implemented or partially implemented, which means that they will be taken into account for the next strategic plan so long as they prove to be relevant and necessary for the further development of CICDE.

With regards to the established strategic pillars, the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (CICDE) under the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) managed to implement during 2016-2019, the following:

- ▶ it continuously improved the training curricula for all target groups, at all elections, particularly following the modification of the electoral system, for the consultative republican referendum and for the new local elections;
- ▶ it enriched its training portfolio with topics on accessibility of polling stations, civic education, political party funding, women participation, librarians, civic education teachers, local coordinators of volunteers, leaders of student associations etc. CICDE has, at present, more than 20 training programs;
- ▶ it increased the number of beneficiaries of civic and electoral training programs and it put the limelight on the young people. With regards to the latter, it organised electoral camps for children, seminars in schools etc.;
- ▶ it implemented new electoral education methods, starting with E-Hub meetings, quizzes in the electoral field, voting process simulations for pupils' councils, conferences in the electoral field, electoral weekend schools etc.;
- ▶ in terms of civic education, it pioneered innovative awareness-raising and education methods never before implemented in the electoral field in Moldova;
- ▶ two classes of students, with more than 10 graduates, received a Master degree in 'Political and Electoral Management';
- ▶ CICDE was regarded as an example-setter and reference centre for the establishment of two other electoral training centres in other countries;
- ▶ it established an up-to-date library containing scientific papers in the electoral field.

To continue the implementation of activities partially implemented over the past years, CICDE will work on strengthening the team of trainers, improving financial stability by attracting additional funds and improving its research function, and on developing policies and consultancy services. Two other pieces of work that were only partially implemented so far are about continuing to hold the master's course and about refining the e-learning remote training platform while also developing some new programs for new beneficiaries.

4. SWOT ANALYSIS

The SWOT analysis enables the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training identify and organise the essential highlights of the current strategic planning process.

As the SWOT analysis brings forth the dimensions and variables describing the positive, negative, internal and external factors around CICDE, it is also a tool to identify stakeholders, obligations and beneficiaries involved in the planning and management process.

The SWOT Analysis is based on five dimensions that, in their turn, are related to the electoral process (i.e. internal) and to the society as a whole (i.e. external). The table below explains the dimensions and area of application.

DIMENSIONS	INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
INSTITUTIONAL	Related to rules and principles regulating the electoral process	Related to rules and principles regulating public affairs in a particular context
ADMINISTRATIVE	Related to measures and procedures typical of the electoral process	Related to the processes and procedures typical of the public authorities in a particular context
SOCIAL	Related to the variables describing the involvement of stakeholders and target groups in the electoral process	Related to the variables impacting electoral performance in terms of awareness, inclusion etc.
HUMAN RESOURCES	Related to the skills and/or knowledge that could impact/shape the electoral process	Related to the skills and/or knowledge the population has in a particular context
ECONOMIC	Related to the financial resources that could impact/shape the electoral process	Related to the financial resources available in a particular context

The SWOT Analysis was carried out using the Electoral Cooperation Assessment (ECA) electronic tool and it highlighted the SWOT variables detailed in the table below.

	INTERNAL (features of the organisation/system)	EXTERNAL (features of the environment)
Useful for achieving set objectives	<p>Strengths</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Centre for Continuous Electoral Training works transparently (1/11)³ Institutional capacity of the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (4/1) The electoral procedures and the duties of all participants, on the election day, are clear (2/6) There are awareness-raising programs both for the general population and for specific groups (3/1, 3/2) 	<p>Opportunities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> National legislation provides for the required framework allowing free association, including political association (6/10) National legislation regulates and guarantees the freedom of expression (6/11) More than half of Moldova's population is Internet literate, while the Internet network covers 100% of Moldova's territory (8/14) The level of formal education of the population is high (9/1) International development partners provide considerable support for the electoral field (10/15)

3. Here and all across the table references are made to the order number of operational variables as they appear in the URSO methodology.

	INTERNAL (features of the organisation/system)	EXTERNAL (features of the environment)
Hampering the achievement of set objectives	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The lack of effectiveness of the rules on the status of the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (1/9) 2. The funds for CICDE's work in between elections are insufficient (5/1) 3. The impact of awareness-raising programs targeting the general population and specific groups is low (4/2, 4/3) 	<p>Threats</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moldova's population is poor (10/1) 2. Moldova is a lower-middle-income economy (10/4) 3. Public policy development is rarely based on citizens' interests, needs and expectations (6/4, 7/1) 4. There are issues with observing human rights, including the national non-discrimination policies (8/23) 5. Emigration trends stay strong (8/6) 6. Population ageing coefficient keeps increasing (8/1) 7. The levels of civic activism, legal and political culture in the population are low (8/12, 8/19, 9/15) 8. Citizens' engagement in public life and decision-making is poor (6/1, 6/3) 9. Women stay under-represented in leadership positions (8/20) 10. The flawed administration that results in violating citizens' civil rights remains often unpunished (7/14) 11. Civil servant performance assessment is inefficient (9/12)

Taking these variables as a starting point, we can go on to detailing the positive and negative aspects of both the electoral process and of the environment, in general.

4.1 THE INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

The Republic of Moldova is party to seven UN treaties on human rights, the most important ones for CEC being the following: The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Electoral Code, related legislation and regulatory framework approved by CEC build on and observe the international standards and principles in the fields of elections, inclusion, non-discrimination, gender equality and freedom of association.

The electoral process is managed by an independent body having the status of permanent institution. Since the permanent Central Electoral Commission was established, the electoral process has seen a positive development proved and acknowledged by similar institutions from other countries.

One of CEC's achievements that ensures the specialised training of electoral officials and other stakeholders is the establishment of the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training – a transparent public institution that has made significant progress in electoral training, in implementing civic education programs, as well as in carrying out researches in the electoral field.

The trainings for electoral officials are conducted by CICDE after the electoral bodies are established, but since attendance is optional, few participants show up. The change of concept in 2014, whereby attending trainings became optional instead of compulsory as it used to be, resulted in a series of challenges for CICDE, in those instances, for example, where electoral officials wouldn't show up for the trainings, which meant for CICDE inefficient use of resources for logistics. The quality of electoral procedures is at high risk if the members of the electoral bodies are not trained. Therefore, we reiterate the need to include mandatory certification of electoral officials.

One of the statutory duties of CICDE is to boost the level of electoral culture among electoral stakeholders. This is a complex process that involves teaching civic education, accountability and encouraging involvement/participation in decision-making not only during the electoral period, but throughout the entire electoral cycle. CICDE will continue to invest resources into civic education programs in order to give Moldovan citizens the possibility to practice participatory democracy and to provide equal conditions for exercising their right to vote and to stand as a candidate.

To make training and civic education programs more accessible, it is necessary to apply certain innovative methods that will gradually replace the face-to-face trainings. Achieving this goal will involve upgrading CICDE's training platform, using available online platforms and promoting courses in such format.

CICDE's achievements are owed to its team of professionals that have a rich experience in the electoral field and thorough knowledge of the electoral law and procedures. Since 2013 and so far the number of CICDE's employees (7 people) did not change despite requests to increase it once CICDE's scope of work broadened. CICDE is also struggling with staff turnover due to insufficient remuneration. It is certain though that CICDE will manage to overcome challenges in implementing its planned work only if all required measures meant to solve its staffing issues are taken.

The conducted SWOT analysis showed that there are many positive and very positive aspects in the internal environment of CICDE/of the system that need to be tapped into by CICDE for its further development. The strengths and weaknesses of the electoral process are detailed in Annex 1.

4.2 THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

Unlike the internal environment, the current socio-political and economic context is rather disheartening, providing few development opportunities. For certain, the very high level of literacy and formal education and the high Internet penetration rate represent obvious opportunities for the improvement of the electoral process, including in terms of modernising civic education and training services by using new technologies. The considerable support provided by international development partners for the consolidation of democracy and integrity of elections is also an opportunity. Supporting the development of the electoral training concept in the Republic of Moldova is on the agenda of these partners.

Although the legal framework observes international standards, it is well worded and codified, describing clear hierarchical links, the rules of the game change frequently shortly before the electoral period begins. The Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters says⁴: *Rules which change frequently – and especially rules which are complicated – may confuse voters. Above all, voters may conclude, rightly or wrongly, that electoral law is simply a tool in the hands of the powerful, and that their own votes have little weight in deciding the results of elections.* These issues are also problematic for CICDE since the training programs are based on the law in force. Avoiding frequent changes or changes coming shortly before (at least one year) elections would be welcome.

Other risk factors threatening the electoral process and detrimental to achieving the objectives CICDE has set are the following: low level of civic activism, the legal and political culture of the population, poor participation of citizens in public life and in decision-making.

CICDE will take into account the peculiarities of the external environment to the electoral process when establishing its strategic objectives for the next four years.

4. [https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD\(2002\)023rev2-cor-rom](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD(2002)023rev2-cor-rom)

5. THE 2020-2023 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Considering the identified SWOT variables, what CICDE needs to do at this stage of institutional development according to the URSO methodology is to develop a consolidation strategy. This strategy focuses on strengthening positive indicators – both internal and external ones, assuming that this would remove, bypass or eradicate the negatives indicators.

The implementation of such a strategy is appropriate where it is possible to build on certain strengths (S) and opportunities (O) that are already big, strong and stable, and that would allow thus for giving momentum to the rest of the system, transforming or minimizing the weight of weaknesses (W) and threats (T) – see Chart 5.

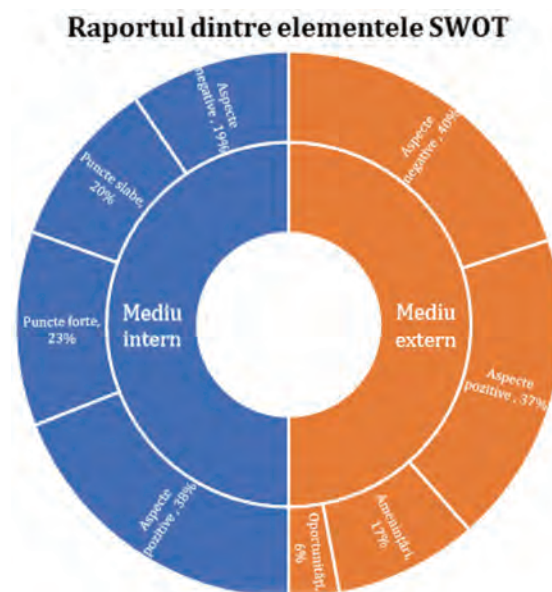


Chart 5. Graphical illustration of the consolidation strategy, based on URSO methodology

See below the report generated by the electronic tool used for analysing the ECA operational variables in terms of strengths and weaknesses for the internal dimension and opportunities and threats for the external dimension, including positive and negative aspects inside and outside the system (see Chart 6).

As one can see there are more strengths than weaknesses in the internal environment of the institution. The analysis showed that the actual socio-political and economic context (i.e. the external environment) is unfavourable and is rather a threat to the electoral system and not providing development opportunities.

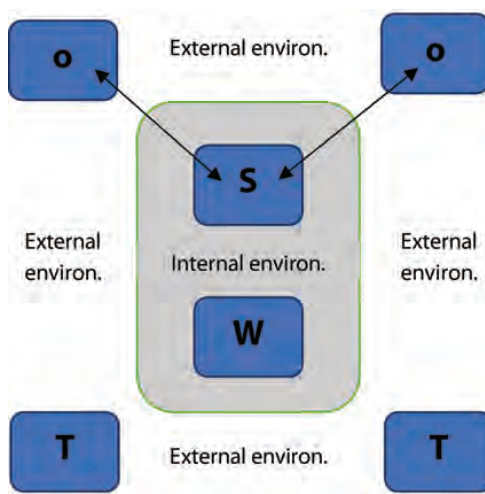


Chart 6. Diagrammatic drawing of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats for CICDE's development environment

The strategic pillars for the further development of the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training in the next four years are to be developed on the basis of conclusions drawn from the SWOT analysis.

5.1. CICDE'S STRATEGIC PILLARS FOR 2020-2023

Over the next four years, the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training will focus its development on building the capacity to provide resources to all beneficiaries, in order to train, inform and educate them in a way which would allow beneficiaries to fulfil their legal duties and exert constitutional electoral rights in line with the national and international standards. In order to carry out this important mission, CICDE will use modern and innovative tools that will streamline the training process and make it accessible and attractive for several categories of beneficiaries.

Three strategic pillars, seven implementation objectives and twenty-one main strategic activities (Formula 3/7/21) were planned for CICDE activity during 2020-2023 to achieve the above mentioned purpose.

- ▶ Pillar 1 Modern and quality services
- ▶ Pillar 2 Institutional and functional strengthening
- ▶ Pillar 3 Organisational communication

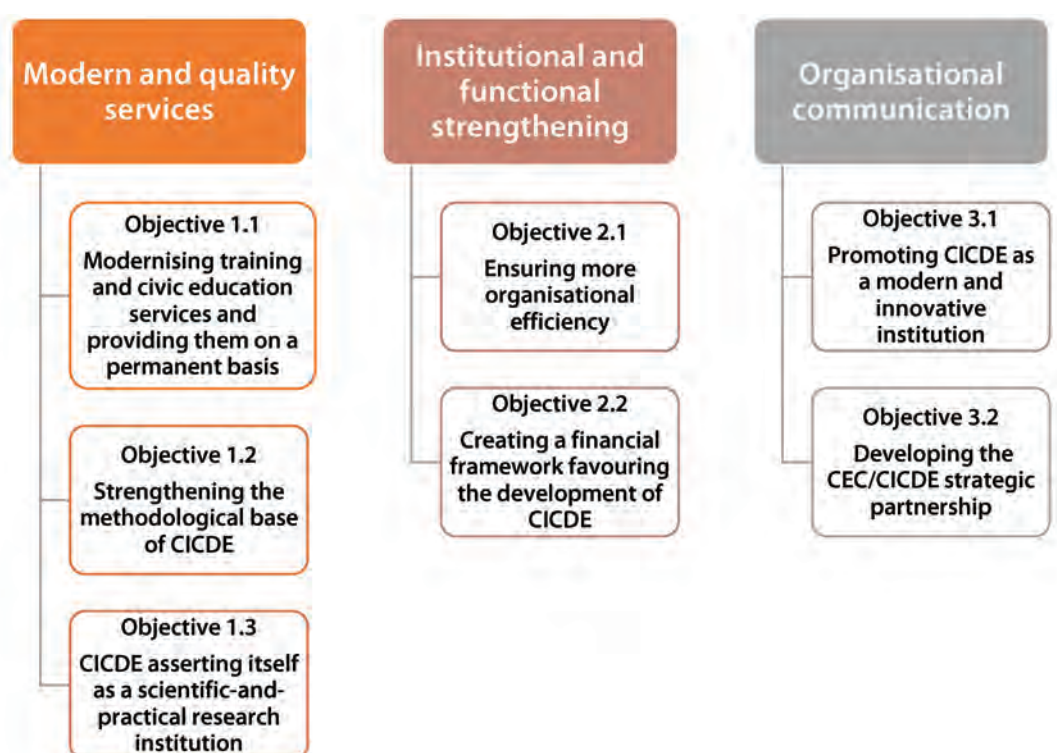


Chart 7. CICDE's pillars and strategic objectives for 2020-2023

5.1.1. Modern and quality services

Planned strategic concept:

When implementing its first strategic plan, CICDE focused its efforts on providing a broad range of services: training of electoral officials and other electoral stakeholders, disseminating information regarding elections as part of its work, implementing different electoral education programs and conducting some electoral researches based on available resources.

Having this experience as a basis, CICDE intends, in the near future, to channel its efforts into providing the following types of services, while applying a different approach and tools:

Permanent training and civic education services

To ensure the quality of the training and civic education process, CICDE will tailor its training programs to current needs, improve its curriculum and develop the portfolio of training courses and civic education programs. CICDE

intends to carry these out on a permanent basis and make them appear as attractive as possible. The permanent nature of these services will be ensured by setting up some on-going training courses for electoral officials and for other electoral stakeholders, underpinned by an efficient application procedure.

Digitalising trainings and civic education

CICDE intends to develop the remote training concept as it already has its own platform, only that it needs to be developed, modernised in a way as to do more blended and remote training than face-to-face training. This implies remodelling current courses and developing new ones using interactive tools. Civic education programs would also be subject to such an approach. They will also become more accessible once the new specialised module is developed on the CICDE platform.

Other innovative tools that will be used have to do with the mobile/SMART (Android/iOS) version of the remote training platform and with other digital mechanisms, such as ArcGIS etc.

CICDE also intends to develop and implement new educational products developed on various online platforms, which would then allow for holding webinars on elections and teaching civic education on a large scale.

Scientific-and-practical research and counselling services

CICDE intends to strengthen its electoral research capacity over 2020-2023. This will require creating the research laboratory concept at CICDE and developing the CICDE researcher library. Researches on electoral topics, based on first-source information, will be developed, published and made available.

An electoral research magazine will be produced, which will help advertise the CICDE research laboratory.

After a methodology is developed, followed by the electoral counselling products for different relevant stakeholders, the electoral counselling services will be listed on CICDE's 'menu' of services.

Purpose of pillar 1: Provide modern, on-going and beneficiary-centred training, civic education and research services

Impact level indicators:

- ▶ Quality of training, civic education and research service provided to citizens improved
- ▶ CICDE's methodological basis developed

Pillar 1 objectives	Expected outcomes	Outcome indicators
1.1 Modernising training and civic education services and providing them on a permanent basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Modern technologies used in training beneficiaries ▶ Concept of providing electoral training on a permanent basis introduced ▶ Certain trainings certified ▶ CICDE courses introduced in electoral stakeholder professional training programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Remote training platform www.e-learning.cicde.md modernised ▶ Mobile version of courses developed ▶ No of permanent trainings performed ▶ No of trainings certified ▶ No of beneficiaries of provided services
1.2. Strengthening the methodological base of CICDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Standardized system of training and civic education programs developed and implemented ▶ Quality control system for training and civic education services developed and implemented ▶ Methodological training and civic education resources of CICDE systematised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Standardisation system developed ▶ Programs adjusted to the standardisation system ▶ Guidelines developed ▶ Monitoring reports developed ▶ Training and civic education programs filed and archived ▶ Portfolio of training and civic education programs developed
1.3 CICDE asserting itself as a scientific-and-practical research institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Electoral research developed at CICDE ▶ Election consultancy concept developed ▶ CICDE researcher library developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Electoral researches developed, published and publicized ▶ CICDE magazine of electoral researches undertaken developed and published ▶ Election consultancy methodology developed

5.1.2. Institutional and functional strengthening

Planned strategic concept:

Implementing all activities CICDE intends to as regards trainings, civic education and electoral research, requires professional and skilled staff, as well as sufficient and wisely managed funds.

As regards human resources, CICDE will analyse the current organisational chart to work out required changes with the view to develop and approve a new organisational chart. Changes will also be made with regards to the temporary staff as a new trainer recruitment, accreditation and training (initial and on-going) system is to be implemented.

CICDE will continue to implement projects supported by external sources. For this purpose, it will sustain the dialogue with development partners to identify those areas that require financial coverage and that are on donors' agenda as well. To be able to implement and manage these projects efficiently, CICDE will develop dedicated internal regulations.

Purpose of pillar 2: *Take all internal measures necessary to ensure CICDE's capacity to conduct the proposed training, civic education and research work*

Impact level indicators:

- ▶ Organisational capacity strengthened
- ▶ Additional funds CICDE needs obtained

Pillar 2 objectives	Expected outcomes	Outcome indicators
1.1 Ensuring more organisational efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Internal structure of CICDE streamlined ▶ New trainer recruitment, accreditation and (initial and on-going) training system developed and implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ New CICDE organisational chart developed and approved ▶ Regulation developed and approved
1.2. Creating a financial framework favouring the development of CICDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Fundraising conducted ▶ List of CICDE programs promoted and training and election consultancy services provided to all stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Number of implemented projects ▶ Service agreements concluded and honoured ▶ Set of rules on work funded form additional resources developed

5.1.3 Organisational communication

Planned strategic concept:

Increasing visibility plays a key-role in ensuring demand in CICDE's services. For this, CICDE will use online and offline communication.

CICDE's website will be upgraded and information products will be posted on the website and social media, CICDE beneficiaries being thus informed quickly and comprehensively about its work and about how they can enjoy its services.

Constant collaboration with the local media by attending TV and radio shows, by inviting journalists to CICDE events, disseminating online and offline publications will contribute to visibility in the media.

CICDE will organise and participate in conferences, round tables and other elections-related events to promote electoral culture among the young.

In the near future partnerships will be set up with governmental institutions, the civil society (CSOs), international organisations in order to find areas of collaboration, and plan and conduct joint activities.

One of CICDE's priorities related to the implementation of this Strategic Plan will be to promote the permanence of lower-level electoral bodies and the certification of electoral officials. CICDE and CEC will talk to decision-makers about the legislative amendments required in this regard.

The CICDE/CEC partnership development will rely on efficient mechanisms for working together so as to avoid duplications of powers and activities carried out by CICDE and CEC units.

Purpose of pillar 3: Increase the visibility of the institution and set up strategic partnerships

Impact level indicators:

- ▶ Visibility of CICDE’s work ensured
- ▶ Strategic partnerships set up

Pillar 3 objectives	Expected outcomes	Outcome indicators
1.1 Promoting CICDE as a modern and innovative institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Visibility of CICDE's work raised ▶ Collaboration with media improved ▶ Strategic partnerships set up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Website updated and upgraded ▶ Awareness-raising and advertising products developed and disseminated ▶ Participation in events covered by the media ▶ Number of collaboration agreements concluded ▶ Joint activities undertaken
1.2. Developing the CEC/CICDE strategic partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ CEC and CICDE partnership strengthened ▶ Legal solutions for CICDE’s financial autonomy found 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ CEC/CICDE collaboration issues found and solved ▶ Effective mechanisms for CICDE’s financial autonomy implemented

5.2. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES (IMPLEMENTATION PLAN)

Pillar 1 Modern and quality services

Goal: Provide modern, on-going and beneficiary-centred training, civic education and research services

Objective 1.1 Modernising training and civic education services and providing them on a permanent basis

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
1.	Provide remote training and civic education services to electoral officials via www.e-learning.cicde.md platform (modernised and included in CICDE training programs)	Modernise the remote training platform www.e-learning.cicde.md Improve the current training courses for electoral officials and other electoral stakeholders, and develop new courses, upon need Create the mobile/SMART (Android/iOS) version of the remote training platform	The remote training platforms works, but does not meet any more the current technical and methodological requirements	Terms of References developed Platform modernised Courses improved; New courses developed	Remote training platform updated on the basis of the most recent technical solutions; can be accessed on computer, tablet or phone; new concept and methodology; regularly used for trainings or as a component of blended trainings	Deputy Director In charge of remote training at CICDE In charge of developing training and civic education programs at CICDE In charge of developing internal regulations In charge of communication and public relations at CICDE Communications, Public Relations and Media Division of CEC Deputy Director In charge of remote training at CICDE In charge of developing training and civic education programs at CICDE In charge of communication and public relations at CICDE Communications, Public Relations and Media Division of CEC	Q4 2021 Permanently	State budget Foreign partners

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
		Develop CICDE regulation on remote training		Terms of References developed Mobile version developed			Q4 2021	
		Develop and disseminate the user guidelines of the remote training platform		CICDE Regulation developed			Q4 2020	
		Train the electoral officials and other stakeholders on the remote training platform		User guidelines developed and disseminated			Q4 2021	
		Implement the concept of blended training and conduct trainings on the basis of this concept		At least 2000 individuals trained every year via the platform www.e-learning.cicde.md			Permanently	
		Develop civic education module(s) on the remote training platform www.e-learning.cicde.md		10% annual increase of the number of electoral officials trained via the remote training platform www.e-learning.cicde.md				
				No of seminars organised				

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
		Promote training and civic education modules on the remote training platform		No of individuals trained on the basis of this concept Civic education module(s) developed and functional on the remote training platform			Permanently Q4 2021	
				The plan promoting the platform developed and approved No of promotion activities organised			Permanently	

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
2.	Digitalise the electoral education and training by developing and implementing newly developed products on different online platforms	Update/improve the existing educational products Develop the content and conduct webinars for different electoral stakeholders Develop the content and conduct electoral education programs on different online platforms Transform CICDE's website into an electoral education tool	Insufficient use of new technologies for electoral education and training	Educational products updated/improved (training courses/programs, civic education, etc.) Educational products (training courses/programs, civic education, etc.) developed At least 1 electoral webinar per semester At least 1 electoral education activity conducted online per semester No of visitors on CICDE's website No of individuals who know about and use CICDE's website	Electoral training and education provided continuously via different web mechanisms and platforms (Youtube, ArcGIS, www.cicde.md website, etc.)	Deputy Director In charge of remote training at CICDE In charge of developing training and civic education programs at CICDE CICDE trainers	Q2 2020 Permanently Permanently Permanently Permanently	State budget Foreign partners

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
3.	Provide on-going training for potential electoral officials and for those appointed as members of electoral bodies	<p>Conduct trainings for potential electoral officials: LPA and political party representatives, teachers, librarians</p> <p>Conduct all procedures needed to accredit the training courses (e.g. by NAQAER)</p> <p>Promote the inclusion of CICDE courses in the training program intended for public officials and other categories of potential electoral officials</p> <p>Train potential electoral officials appointed as members of electoral bodies and the representatives of CEC's secretariat</p>	Electoral officials are currently trained before the elections, this being insufficient	<p>No of seminars conducted</p> <p>No of training beneficiaries</p>	The training of electoral officials is provided continuously for potential and/or permanent electoral officials if the law is amended	CICDE coordinators CICDE trainers	<p>Permanently</p> <p>Annually</p>	State budget

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
4.	Provide on-going training and civic education for different categories of beneficiaries	<p>Develop and implement new mechanisms for potential participants in seminars and other activities to apply to courses</p> <p>Conduct all procedures needed to accredit the training courses (e.g. by NQAQR)</p> <p>Provide on-going training and civic education for different categories of beneficiaries (including training in political financing for political party representatives, treasurers, judges, prosecutors, prosecuting officers)</p>	<p>Training and civic education programs conducted upon need or upon the requests of interested beneficiaries; they are not on-going</p>	<p>No of mechanisms developed and implemented</p> <p>No of accredited courses</p> <p>No of seminars/activities conducted</p> <p>No of beneficiaries of training/civic education services</p> <p>Minimum 1 group identified and trained annually</p>	<p>Training and civic education programs are held continuously for certain categories of beneficiaries</p>	<p>Deputy Director</p> <p>In charge of developing training and civic education programs at CICDE</p> <p>CICDE coordinators</p> <p>CICDE trainers</p>	<p>Q4 2020</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Permanently</p>	<p>State budget</p> <p>Foreign partners</p>

Objective 1.2 Strengthening the methodological base of CICDE

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
1.	Improve and implement the standardisation system of training and civic education programs at CICDE	Update and adjust the training and civic education programs Develop CICDE's portfolio of training and civic education programs	CICDE's guidelines on developing and encoding the training programs need improvement and development	CICDE's guidelines on the standardisation system of training and civic education programs updated Programs adjusted to the developed standardisation system CICDE's portfolio of training and civic education programs developed	Curriculum of CICDE training and electoral education courses well structured and adjusted for internal and external use according to the updated guidelines	Deputy Director In charge of developing training and civic education programs at CICDE	Q3 2020	State budget
2.	Develop and implement the quality control system for training and civic education services	Develop the guidelines on the quality control system of CICDE training and civic education services Monitor the training and civic education activities and develop monitoring reports Assess the impact of training and civic education programs and make recommendations for them	The trainings are assessed on the basis of assessment questionnaires filled in by the participants on the basis of occasional monitoring	Guidelines developed Monitoring reports developed	Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) program developed and implemented	Deputy Director In charge of developing training and civic education programs at CICDE CICDE coordinators	Q4 2020 Q3 2020	State budget
							Permanently	

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
3.	Systematise CICDE's methodological resources for training and civic education	File and archive the existing training and civic education programs Develop CICDE's 'menu' of training and civic education programs	CICDE's training and civic education programs filed and archived according to CICDE's guidelines that need to be updated	Assessment reports developed Recommendations made Training and civic education programs filed and archived 'Menu' of training and civic education programs developed	System of filing and archiving training and civic education programs updated The 'menu' of training and civic education programs will be a useful tool for the potential beneficiaries	Deputy Director In charge of developing training and civic education programs at CICDE CICDE coordinators	Permanently Q3 2020 Annually	State budget

Objective 1.3 CICDE asserting itself as a consultancy and scientific-and-practical research institution

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
1.	Conduct electoral researches	Develop and approve the annual plan implementing the electoral researches Conduct researching activities under 'CICDE's research laboratory'	CICDE conducts researches only as part of the projects funded by international development partners	Annual plan developed and approved Implementation of the annual plan Electoral researches developed, published and publicized	Conduct research programs on a permanent basis	Director In charge of research work at CICDE	Q1, annually Permanently	State budget Foreign partners
2.	Publish CICDE electoral research magazine	Prepare articles for the magazine Publish and promote the magazine	The magazine is published occasionally and no more than once a year	Articles for the magazine prepared CICDE electoral research magazine developed and published semi-annually/ annually	CICDE magazine is developed and published on a permanent basis CICDE magazine is well known by the electoral stakeholders	In charge of research work at CICDE	Permanently Permanently	State budget Foreign partners
3.	Develop the theoretical and practical underpinnings of the election consultancy	Provide election consultancy services Develop election consultancy materials Develop the portfolio of projects and estimate the costs of election consultancy services and integrate it in the general CICDE program 'menu'	Election consultancy is provided sporadically, upon request	Minimum 3 election consultancy services provided Election consultancy materials developed Portfolio developed and approved	Permanent election consultancy based on CICDE researches	Deputy Director In charge of research work at CICDE	Q2, 2021 Permanently, once the methodology is approved Permanently, once the methodology is approved	State budget Foreign partners

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
4.	Develop CICDE researcher library	Purchase literature Subscribe to online scientific libraries	CICDE library is used occasionally	Minimum 10 specialised works purchased annually Minimum 2 new online resources subscribed to 10% increase in the number of CICDE library users	CICDE library is permanently used by CICDE beneficiaries	In charge of CICDE library	Permanently	State budget Foreign partners

Pillar 2 Institutional and functional strengthening

Goal: Take all internal measures necessary to ensure CICDE's capacity to conduct the proposed training, civic education and research work

Objective 2.1 Ensuring more organisational efficiency

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
1.	Streamline the internal structure and ensure the continuous development of CICDE team capacities	<p>Perform the organisational analysis and make recommendations regarding a new organisational chart and the number of CICDE employees</p> <p>Analyse CICDE status/ employees and the size of staffing lists and make recommendations</p> <p>Develop and submit for approval a new organisational chart</p>	<p>The roll-out of CICDE activities resulted in a number of new duties for employees; thus, a new organisational chart should be developed and the job descriptions of employees – reviewed</p>	<p>Analysis and recommendations made</p> <p>Analysis and recommendations made</p> <p>CICDE organisational chart developed and submitted for approval</p>	<p>Express and uniform distribution of CICDE employee duties; increased efficiency of CICDE work</p>	<p>Director Deputy Director In charge of HR at CICDE</p>	<p>Q2 2020</p> <p>Q4 2020</p> <p>Q4 2020</p>	State budget
2.	Institutionalise the collaboration with CICDE external employees	<p>Update/review the Trainer Register (who received initial training under ToT principle)</p> <p>Create the register of external employees attracted to perform activities other than training (not found in the Trainer Register)</p>	<p>There are a number of trainers who received initial training, but inactive</p> <p>Trainer turn-over</p>	<p>Trainer Register updated/reviewed</p> <p>Register developed</p>	<p>A team of active, motivated and professional trainers, including among permanent electoral officials</p>	<p>Director Deputy Director In charge of HR at CICDE</p>	<p>Q1 2020</p> <p>Q1 2020</p>	State budget

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
		<p>Develop and implement a new trainer recruitment, accreditation and (initial and on-going) training system:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and approve the Regulation on trainer recruitment, accreditation and training 2. Recruit the trainers on the basis of new rules 3. Accredite the current trainers and those recruited on the basis of new rules 4. Provide initial and on-going training for trainers according to the developed and approved Regulation <p>Identify and apply tools to retain and gain the loyalty of the trained trainers</p> <p>Promote the permanence of lower-level electoral bodies and the certification of electoral officials</p>	<p>Lower-level electoral bodies are established for each election, which does not allow the on-going training of electoral officials and to collaborate with them as trainers</p>	<p>Regulation developed and approved</p> <p>No of trainers recruited</p>			<p>Q4 2020</p> <p>Permanently</p>	

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
		<p>Develop and implement a new trainer recruitment, accreditation and (initial and on-going) training system:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and approve the Regulation on trainer recruitment, accreditation and training 2. Recruit the trainers on the basis of new rules 3. Accredite the current trainers and those recruited on the basis of new rules 4. Provide initial and on-going training for trainers according to the developed and approved Regulation <p>Identify and apply tools to retain and gain the loyalty of the trained trainers</p> <p>Promote the permanence of lower-level electoral bodies and the certification of electoral officials</p>		<p>No of trainers accredited</p> <p>No of initial and on-going trainings</p> <p>No of trainers who received initial training</p> <p>No of permanently active trainers vs total number of trainers trained and accredited</p> <p>No of publications, memos and presentations to promote the concept</p>			<p>Annually</p> <p>Permanently</p> <p>Q4 2023</p>	

Objective 2.2 Creating a financial framework favouring the development of CICDE

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
1.	Attract additional funds through technical assistance projects and paid services	<p>Develop and implement projects</p> <p>Promote the list of CICDE programs and provide training and election consultancy services to all stakeholders</p> <p>Create conditions for the effective management of additional funds</p> <p>Develop the portfolio of CICDE programs/courses and paid services</p>	<p>Current financial resources for basic activity are limited and mainly used to maintain the headquarters and pay salaries</p> <p>Activities and duties overlap, limited number of employees</p>	<p>Number of implemented projects</p> <p>Provision of services agreements concluded and honoured</p> <p>Minimum 1 paid service provided annually</p> <p>Develop a set of rules on work funded from additional resources</p>	<p>Financial resources are attracted for trainings (for groups of beneficiaries other than those who receive training funded from the state budget), civic education and research</p> <p>Clear delineation of activities and duties</p> <p>Portfolio of CICDE programs/courses developed and published</p>	<p>Director</p> <p>Deputy Director</p> <p>Lead accountant</p> <p>In charge of developing internal regulations</p>	<p>Permanently</p> <p>Permanently</p> <p>Q4 2020</p>	<p>Foreign partners</p> <p>State budget</p>
2.	Identify solutions together with CEC and the Ministry of Finance to ensure competitive salaries for CICDE employees	<p>Analyse the satisfaction of CICDE employees with the remuneration</p> <p>Analyse the legal framework on remuneration</p> <p>Analyse the opportunities to modify the staffing table</p> <p>Submit requests to relevant institutions</p>	<p>CICDE employees are remunerated according to Law No 270, but are not expressly mentioned in the annexes of the Law and are provisionally included in Annex H, which does not allow a proper/proportionate and competitive remuneration</p>	<p>Report on the satisfaction of CICDE employees with the remuneration</p> <p>No of requests</p>	<p>The satisfaction with the remuneration increased by 15%</p>	<p>Director</p> <p>Deputy Director</p> <p>Lead accountant</p> <p>Lawyer</p>	<p>Q1 2021</p>	<p>State budget</p>

Pillar 3. Proactive organisational communication

Goal: Increase the visibility of the institution and set up strategic partnerships

Objective 3.1 Promoting CICDE as a modern and innovative institution

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
1.	Organise conferences, round tables and other events	Develop and implement the annual plan of conferences, round tables and events on civic education organised by CICDE	CICDE is active in organising events. However, if its research work extends, CICDE will have to increase the number of events in order to promote the products developed	Plan developed and approved Minimum an electoral education/scientific-and-practical conference organised annually Minimum six electoral education events organised annually Civic education and scientific-and-practical products developed	The number of events organised by CICDE increased CICDE work promoted	Director In charge of communication and public relations at CICDE In charge according to the area of expertise	Q1, annually Permanently	State budget Foreign partners
2.	Participate in conferences, round tables and events at home and abroad	Develop and promote the key messages on CICDE's mission, vision and strategic objectives for the events Develop electoral education and scientific-and-practical products that can be presented at the events	To strengthen its visibility and set up strategic partnerships, CICDE needs to participate more often in events relevant to the electoral field	Participation in minimum 10 events annually Participation with presentation in minimum 5 events annually Civic education and scientific-and-practical products developed	The number of events attended by CICDE representatives increased CICDE vision, mission and objectives are promoted	Director In charge of communication and public relations at CICDE	Q1, annually Permanently	State budget Foreign partners

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
3.	Promote CICDE both online and offline	<p>Upgrade and continuously update CICDE's website</p> <p>Develop information products for the website and social media</p> <p>Develop products for offline promotion and information</p> <p>Collaborate constantly with the local media by attending TV and radio shows, by inviting journalists to CICDE events, disseminating online and offline publications</p>	<p>As the main tool for online promotion, CICDE website design, functionality and content need upgrade</p> <p>Visibility in the media stays low</p>	<p>Website upgraded and updated</p> <p>The views on the website increased by 20% annually</p> <p>The followers on social media increased by 20% annually</p> <p>At least one product published weekly</p> <p>CICDE promotion and information products developed</p> <p>Participation in events covered by the media, number of publications</p>	Increased visibility both online and offline	<p>Director</p> <p>In charge of communication and public relations at CICDE</p>	<p>Q4 2021</p> <p>Permanently</p> <p>Permanently</p> <p>Permanently</p>	<p>State budget</p> <p>Foreign partners</p>

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
4.	Strengthen relationships with governmental institutions, civil society and development partners	Set up partnerships with governmental institutions, the civil society (CSOs), international organisations Find areas of collaboration, plan and conduct joint activities	Partnerships with other institutions and organisations need to be set up to facilitate the organisation of trainings and of civic education activities for other beneficiaries	Collaboration agreements signed Number of joint activities/ initiatives conducted/ proposed	The category of beneficiaries was extended due to the set partnerships Planned activities were conducted	Director Deputy Director In charge of communication and public relations at CICDE	Permanently Permanently	State budget Foreign partners

Objective 3.2 Developing the CEC/CICDE strategic partnership

No	Strategic activities	Tasks	Current situation	Performance indicators	Final situation	In charge of implementation	Deadline	Funding source
1.	Analyse in depth the current CEC and CICDE partnership	Assess the partnership 1. in terms of duties/competences 2. in terms of inter-institutional, personal communication 3. in terms of subordinating and reporting relationships	Certain duties and activities overlap CICDE statute is vague and interpretable	Analysis report developed No of identified overlaps in terms of areas of work No of recommendations implemented	Check and reporting lines expressly established in internal regulatory acts	Individuals appointed by CEC and CICDE management	Q3 2020	State budget
2.	Improve the efficiency of inter-institutional cooperation when implementing strategic tasks	Analyse and implement the recommendations from activity 3.2.1. Avoid duplications of powers and activities carried out by CEC and CICDE units	Certain duties and activities overlap	% of implemented recommendations out of the total made Regulations of the activity of CEC and CICDE reviewed and adjusted	Recommendations analysed and implemented Competences clearly delineated in internal regulatory acts	CEC and CICDE CEC Legal Division	Q4 2020 Q1 2021	State budget

6. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, REPORTING AND ASSESSMENT

The Strategic Plan will be implemented immediately after its approval. The Strategic Plan guides CICDE staff in developing and approving the annual activity plans, and the annual reporting on their implementation shall be a proof of the progress in achieving the set objectives.

The implementation plan (section 5.2 in this document) consists of strategic activities, tasks, performance indicators, those in charge, deadlines for activity implementation, and their funding source. The innovative methodology of the Council of Europe which underpinned the development of this plan allowed an exhaustive approach of the electoral process and a cross-cutting logic between pillars, goals, objectives and strategic activities. The document was designed so as to clearly define CICDE's direction of development for 2020-2023, and concurrently allow some flexibility as regards the ways to achieve the strategic objectives.

During the implementation of the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan, CICDE Director shall assign three team leaders, corresponding to the three strategic pillars. They will be in charge of monitoring how the objectives under each pillar are implemented and of collecting information for reporting on the achievement of the activities undertaken. Specifically, the leaders, with the support of those in charge included in the Strategic Plan, will:

1. develop annual activities that are required for achieving strategic objectives and that will be included in CICDE Annual Activity Plan;
2. coordinate the implementation of activities according to each objective;
3. monitor the results according to performance indicators and deadlines;
4. identify obstacles, risks and take measures in a timely fashion to reduce the potentially negative effects;
5. propose adjustments to the annual activity plans, upon need;
6. collect and systematise the required information on the achieved progress.

Semi-annual reports on the results, having a standard content and format, shall be developed and submitted to CICDE Director. The former is to be discussed during assessment meetings led by CICDE Director, focusing on:

1. discussing the results of relevant activity and objective implementation;
2. presenting obstacles and difficulties during implementation, and identifying methods to solve and reduce the negative effects;
3. discussing the activities planned for the next semester, by identifying potential risks and proposal for actions;
4. upon need, adjusting the activities or deadlines, and presenting the relevant arguments for doing so.

CICDE Director may decide to convene occasional (quarterly or monthly) meetings to monitor certain priority objectives or all objectives and activities. The occasional meetings are similar to the semi-annual ones.

The annual activity plans developed on the basis of this strategic plan, while considering implementation progress and gaps, shall be approved in December in the year preceding the year for which the plan is approved. The annual progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan shall be assessed in the developed annual reports, by summarising the reports of each team leader. CICDE annual report shall be submitted to the Central Electoral Commission for approval by the end of next March and shall be published on the institution's website.

With seven months before the end of the four-year-planning period presented in this Strategic Plan, CICDE Director shall launch a new strategic planning process in order to prepare a strategic plan for the next four years. The assessment of the performance and of results obtained during the implementation of the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan shall underpin the new planning process.

Annex 1:

DESCRIPTION OF THE GENERAL BACKGROUND THROUGH THE LENS OF OPERATIONAL VARIABLES

STRENGTHS OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

CICDE works transparently (1/11)

The Centre for Continuous Electoral Training is a public institution¹ that provides services for the benefit and interest of citizens, the transparency being one of the fundamental values in relation to its beneficiaries.

The information on Centre's activity is shared on www.cicde.md, institution's page on social media and in the media.

The annual activity plans, annual training plans, reports on performed activities are available online for consultation. The stakeholders have the opportunity to register for trainings via the applications available on CICDE's website.

The draft Strategic Plan is subject to public consultation, so that the stakeholders make recommendations for its improvement (suggestions can be sent in written or expressed orally during a public event to this end).

CICDE also works transparently in the public procurement area, the latter taking place through the electronic public procurement platform (www.achizitii.md).

Institutional capacity of the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (4/1)

A qualified and professional staff undoubtedly represents the most valuable resource for an institution.

CICDE's staffing list, approved by CEC Decision No 1643 of 15 January 2013, has 7 positions, including management, finances and training. Since 2013 and so far the number of CICDE's employees did not change despite requests to increase it once CICDE's scope of work broadened.

Under these conditions, in order to achieve performance while fulfilling its statutory functions, CICDE decided to 'grow' a team with a strategic and innovative thinking. To ensure the accomplishment of this task, CICDE hired an experienced managerial team with progressive view and with a corporate culture that reformed the image of a classic public institution. CICDE team members are trained, take the initiative, are open and responsive and promote CICDE's vision and mission through all their actions.

It is paramount that the key staff of an institution providing information, training and expertise has the necessary qualification. This is why, during its activity, CICDE invested resources to provide its team members with knowledge in the electoral field, both at national and international levels, exchange of experiences, qualified assistance and mentoring in order to both fulfil independently and at a high level the duties according to the job description, and to provide a qualitative and competitive service on the Moldovan market of training and civic education services.

CICDE has professionals with a rich experience in the electoral field and thorough knowledge of the electoral law and procedures (including practitioners who worked at electoral bodies, who held elective positions, NGOs representatives, international organisations), and of the electoral training field, being BRIDGE accredited and accrediting trainers (BRIDGE – Building Resources in Democracy Governance and Elections).

In order to strengthen its institutional capacity, CICDE received assistance under the projects funded by international donors, thus increasing its qualification. Therefore, due to its attained achievements, CICDE election experts provided support and expertise for other similar institutions in Ukraine, Albania, Kazakhstan to set up and develop training centres.

For CICDE, the concept of 'staff' is not limited only to the 'staffing list', since the specific nature of institutional activity requires the engagement of a large number of trainers, experts, coordinators, operators, assistants for organising and conducting seminars, conducting researches in the electoral field, organising telephone helpline,

1. The legal provisions of the Law No 239 of 13 November 2008 on Transparent Decision-Making were applied.

civic education and information campaigns, etc. The nature of their work is broad, but the approach used for their selection, recruitment, initial and on-going training is similar. Even if they provide temporary services, CICDE takes all required measures to maintain a continuous contact with this group of persons, involving them in various activities and fostering a team spirit. CICDE trained more than 50 000 individuals and this is the merit of all for investment of time, effort, knowledge, professionalism and patience.

Though it has several fields of work, CICDE is usually identified by society as a public institution providing electoral training. This is why CICDE pays special attention to shape the image of its trainers, who represent the institution during the training activities.

Thus, CICDE trainers are, first of all, well trained in the electoral field, knowing the delivered subject, are apolitical, tolerant, with inclusive visions, gender-sensitive, and respectful. They deliver the same message to their beneficiaries due to a single methodology developed by CICDE.

Regardless of staff turnover, which is largely due to the economic aspect, CICDE relies on including into the institutional memory not only policies, programs, training materials, but also the values cultivated so far, approaches and strategies used within CICDE team, with trained beneficiaries, partner institutions, etc.

The electoral procedures and the duties of all participants, on the election day, are clear (2/6)

CICDE's main area of work is the training of electoral officials and of other electoral stakeholders in fulfilling their duties/exercising the rights and obligations provided by law. For CICDE to successfully carry out its mission, i.e. electoral stakeholders fulfil their duties showing professionalism and observing statutory limitations, there is need for a set of rules that fully deal with the legal procedures for the exercise of Moldovan citizens' right to vote, especially regarding the election day.

The Electoral Code has general provisions related to the procedures carried out during the election day, being detailed in the regulations and guidelines adopted by Central Electoral Commission. CEC's main task is to describe the electoral procedures in a language that is simple, clear, explicit and accessible for all electoral stakeholders, allowing no interpretation. The detailed nature of these regulations is a guarantee of their compliance, the electoral stakeholders having the opportunity to consult them as the occasion demands.

This is the message CICDE delivers during its training seminars, guiding the electoral officials and other electoral stakeholders to consult CEC's regulations and guidelines and find answers to questions which appear while fulfilling their duties. Thus, the training focuses on setting the challenges met during these procedures, and on achieving skills in conducting different electoral procedures during the election day (addressing issues, vote tabulation, filling in election documents, etc.). Moreover, on the basis of these regulations, CICDE develops different user-friendly teaching materials for electoral officials and other stakeholders, e.g. notebooks for the management of electoral offices of polling stations, chronologically describing the actions the Chair, Deputy Chair and Secretary need to take.

For these regulations to stay clear, it is necessary that all stakeholders take part in the approval of CEC regulations and guidelines, making proposals and recommendations both during public consultations, and latter on for amendment and addenda, upon need.

There are awareness-raising programs for the general population and for specific groups (3/1, 3/2)

One of the statutory duties of CICDE is to boost the level of electoral culture among electoral stakeholders. This is a complex process that involves providing information, teaching civic education, accountability and encouraging involvement/participation in decision-making not only during the electoral period, but throughout the entire electoral cycle.

By tapping into the advantage of having both first-source electoral information, and a methodology tailored to its target audience, CICDE joined the great effort Central Electoral Commission makes independently or along with national (civil society organisations, central and local public authorities, educational institutions, youth centers) and international partners (international organisations providing electoral assistance to Moldova).

CICDE and CEC organise complex awareness-raising campaigns with a number of beneficiaries during all elections, and civic education events/activities focusing on relevant topics and on particular target groups (pupils, students, librarians, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, etc.) between the elections. These may be public lessons, discussion clubs, offline events, electoral schools, quizzes in the electoral field, conferences, simulations, etc.

CICDE will continue to invest resources into civic education programs in order to give Moldovan citizens the possibility to practice participatory democracy and to provide equal conditions for exercising their right to vote and to stand as a candidate.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

National legislation provides for the required framework allowing free association, including political association (6/10)

Freedom of association is the right to establish, join and refuse to join an association. At international level, the right of association is guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and by the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The Constitution of the Republic of Moldova divides the freedom of association into 2 components: freedom of establishing and joining trade unions and freedom of parties and socio-political organisations (Articles 41 and 42).

There is a number of legal forms of non-commercial organisations (NGO, trade union, religious organisation, political party and socio-political organisation, philanthropic organisation), their work being governed by the national legislation through special laws (Law No 837/1996 on NGOs, Law No 581/1999 on Foundations, Law No 294 of 21 December 2007 on Political Parties, etc.).

Civil society organisations (CSO) play a special role. The partnerships between CSOs and public authorities nurture an active engagement and the set up of responsibilities so that community problems are solved as effectively as possible.

The civil associations specialised in the electoral field, jointly with political parties and electoral bodies, help the conduct of democratic elections.

The political parties are one of the key beneficiaries of the services provided by CICDE. Therefore, CICDE trains the electoral officials appointed by political parties as members of electoral bodies, the representatives with right to consultative vote, observers, trusted persons of the electoral candidates, etc. A partnership with this key stakeholder enable the development of new training programs for different target groups, thus strengthening the political culture and the professionalism of members/affiliated individuals/individuals appointed by political parties.

Collaboration with civil society organisations favours the transfer of electoral knowledge and skills to different groups of persons represented by these associations. CICDE and CEC efforts do not overlap, but rather connect together to achieve common goals, and thus strengthening the electoral culture, civic responsibility and participatory democracy. The conduct of joint programs will increase the scope of CICDE beneficiaries, for whom the institution is a resource centre where they can get first-source electoral information.

National legislation regulates and guarantees the freedom of expression (6/11)

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. The same provisions are also enriched in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Article 10), and the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 19).

The freedom of opinion and expression and the freedom to create are provided for by Articles 32 and 33 of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova. Article 32 guarantees the freedom of opinion, stating that every citizen shall be guaranteed the freedom of thought and opinion, as well as the freedom of expression in public by way of word, image or any other means possible. Similarly, Article 33 of the Constitution guarantees the freedom to create, stipulating that creative work shall not be subject to censorship. There is also a number of legislative acts governing the media work. They state that the freedom of expression, the right to free communication of information by media institutions, and the right to full and true information are guaranteed by the law. Law No 64 of 23 April 2010 on Freedom of Expression explicitly regulates the freedom of expression. It guarantees the right to freedom of expression, by seeking, receiving, imparting information and ideas².

2. Promo-LEX Association, *Report on Freedom of Expression in the Transnistrian Region of the Republic of Moldova. 2016 Retrospective.* https://promolex.md/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Lib-de-expr-final-2.04.2017_publicat-www.pdf

An appropriate legal framework guarantees the observance of the right of expression both online and offline, especially during election campaigns. The mechanisms protecting this right intervene when it is violated.

The level of formal education of the population is high (9/1)

The results of 2014 Population Census show a positive trend in the evolution of education and literacy level of people aged 15 and above.

The number of persons with a minimum education level – ‘incomplete secondary education’ represents 91.1% of persons aged 15 and above, compared with 86.6% in 2004. A share of 7.6% of population had primary education, and 1.3% had no primary education, compared with 10.1% and 3.3%, respectively, in 2004. Women registered performance in higher education and vocational training level, exceeding the share of men with the same education by 6.2 p.p.

The increase in the general education level of the population resulted in a reduction in the number of illiterate people. Thus, the illiteracy in the country was practically eradicated, and the share of illiterate people decreased from 1.1% in 2004 down to 0.5% in 2014³.

These statistics show that there are preconditions to integrate the population of Moldova in both formal and non-formal on-going training. During its trainings, CICDE uses learning strategies tailored to the needs of the adults, so that they acquire competences and skills, thus enjoying an increased professional success and performance (in case of electoral officials and other groups of persons that must fulfil duties expressly provided for the law). As far as the youth goes, CICDE uses age-specific, interactive methods/techniques/tactics so that the former assimilates the information during the civic education programs.

More than half of Moldova’s population is Internet literate, while the Internet network covers 100% of Moldova’s territory (8/14)

According to the statistics published by the National Regulatory Agency for Electronic Communications and Information Technology (NRAECIT)⁴, in the first quarter of 2018, the number of mobile of mobile broadband users increased by 2.8% compared to the end of 2017 and exceeded 2 million 497.7 thousand, while penetration rate per 100 Moldovan inhabitants reached 70.3%.

Thus, Moldova’s population can benefit from the advantages of an information society, such as the remote training, due to a high Internet access rate. This perspective will allow CICDE to use e-learning courses on a large scale, as an alternative to the current ‘face-to-face’ training.

International development partners provide considerable support for the electoral field (10/15)

The international development partners have the electoral assistance meant to improve the democratic processes in Moldova on their agenda. Therefore, they provide support in order to make sure Moldovan citizens exercise their right to vote according to international electoral standards.

The international development partners provide technical assistance for the Central Electoral Commission in order to implement IT solutions in elections (SAISE development and implementation), increase the access to electoral process for all citizens, conduct awareness-raising and civic education campaigns, etc.

By implementing projects funded by external partners, CICDE was able to strengthen its institutional capacity, develop the research component, and conduct new training programs for various beneficiaries.

The international development partners and civil society organisations provide financial support in order to monitor elections, increase the access to electoral process, inform citizens, etc.

CICDE will further identify those areas where projects supported by international development partners can be implemented, depending on the strategic courses underpinned by this plan.

3. <http://statistica.gov.md/newsview.php?l=ro&idc=168&id=5583&parent=0>

4. <https://www.anrceti.md/news25052018>

WEAKNESSES OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

The lack of effectiveness of the rules on the status of the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (1/9)

The Centre for Continuous Electoral Training is a public institution founded by CEC in response to the need to ensure transparency, people's trust in the electoral process of Moldova, by strengthening the professionalism of electoral officials and of other stakeholders.

CICDE status is governed by the Electoral Code, with detailed provisions in CICDE's Regulation, approved by CEC Decision No 1030 of 9 December 2011.

Article 26¹ (Article 27 in the current wording of the Electoral Code), which regulates CICDE's work, was added by Law No 119 of 18 June 2010 Amending and Supplementing the Electoral Code.

So far, this Article experienced two amendments:

- ▶ Law No 18 of 6 March 2014 Amending and Supplementing the Electoral Code amended paragraph 1 providing for the mandatory certification of electoral officials.

The Electoral Code stipulated that the Centre is the institution that conducts specialised training for electoral officials. Upon request, other subjects involved in the electoral process (political parties, observers, media, local public administration authorities, etc.) can also be trained. By interpreting this provision, it is clear that the trainings for the members of electoral bodies are compulsory, while those for other electoral stakeholders are optional, upon their express request. This legal provision was established to make sure that electoral officials know the legal framework on the organisation and conduct of elections, and gain competences for performing electoral procedures. Therefore, the individuals appointed by authorised subjects to be part of electoral bodies (electoral constituency councils and electoral offices of the polling stations) were required to hold a professional qualification certificate issued by CICDE as a result of participating in the training seminar and passing the knowledge assessment test.

The advantage of CICDE trainings is the first-source information and the use of an efficient methodology for adult training characterised by the detachment from lecture-types trainings involving a high number of participants, covering only theoretical topics and with a missing interaction between the trainer and the trainees. The transition to such a training format required significant efforts. However, its efficacy was proved by other countries where training centres already existed, and by piloting this methodology by CEC within a narrower framework, with the support of international organisations.

In August 2013, CICDE started to train potential electoral officials who were to be part of electoral bodies in order to organise and conduct the parliamentary elections of 30 November 2014. However, the amendment introduced by Law No 18 of 6 March 2014 changed dramatically the concept and outcome of this activity. Thus, the training of electoral officials is not mandatory and takes place upon the request of political parties and of other socio-political organisations.

The radical change of concept was purely a political decision that remained unchanged despite the submission to the Parliament of proposals to make CICDE's electoral training mandatory again.

Below are some negative impacts of this legal provision:

1. CICDE conducts training seminars for the electoral officials after the electoral bodies are established, but since attendance is optional, few participants show up (e.g. a share of 24% attendance was registered at the trainings conducted for electoral officials from electoral offices of the polling stations for the 2018 new local elections).
2. Training logistics is prepared for an estimated number of participants, according to the training plan and within the approved budget. If electoral officials do not show up for the trainings, this means an inefficient use of resources, because teaching materials are already printed, and the transportation and training services are provided irrespective of the number of participants who show up for the training on that day.
3. Due to the fact that they fail to attend the trainings, thus not being informed about the latest legal amendments and not having the opportunity to practice the conduct of certain electoral procedures (e.g. vote tabulation), the electoral officials make mistakes in their work, compromise the activity of an electoral body and question the quality of CICDE's training, because in such cases it is not always investigated if an individual received or not CICDE's training.

Civil society organisations monitoring democratic processes in the Republic of Moldova qualify this situation as the biggest challenge for CICDE, posing a serious threat to the quality of electoral procedures. Therefore, they reiterate the need to include mandatory certification of electoral officials⁵.

The Centre for Continuous Electoral Training will continue its efforts to implement this amendment, this being without doubt one of its strategic objectives for the next four years.

- ▶ Law No 36 of 9 April 2015 Amending and Supplementing Certain Legislative Acts replaced the phrase 'Centre for Continuous Electoral Training is an unit of the Central Electoral Commission' with 'Centre for Continuous Electoral Training is a public institution founded by the Central Electoral Commission'.

This amendment did not change the status, by actually corrected the mistake made in 2010 version, CICDE being from the beginning a separate public institution (separate legal entity). According to CICDE Regulation, the Centre is subordinated to CEC, but is not a unit of the Commission (as CEC Departments or Services are), which leads to different legal consequences.

This confusion led not only to inaccurate formulations, for instance in the monitoring reports of international organisations (which consult the applicable Electoral Code during their drafting), but also to the difficulty to show its own identity, CICDE being identified with the Central Electoral Commission, despite the fact that they do have different missions, though they combine their efforts in certain areas such as awareness-raising and civic education.

As regards the subordination to CEC, CICDE did not encountered difficulties, this being more of a coordination in order to achieve common objectives/activities (coordination of trainings for certain beneficiaries, of the content of teaching materials, etc.), except CICDE's budget execution. As a level-II public institution (CICDE's budget being included into CEC's budget), all procedures related to CICDE's budget are carried out through the Central Election Commission, which sometimes led to delays in making payments for goods and services.

Note that Article 1 of the Electoral Code provides for 'Centre for Continuous Electoral Training' the definition of 'specialised unit, established within the Central Electoral Commission'.

A challenging issue for CICDE is the fact that Law No 270 of 23 November 2018 on Unitary Salary System in the Budgetary Sector has no annex that would expressly regulate the remuneration of CICDE's staff (all 7 positions of the permanent staff, as well as the position of trainer are in different annexes). In addition, the remuneration coefficient (set according to the remuneration scale) for these positions is very low and thus the basic salary calculated for each position is not attractive. As a consequence, CICDE is struggling with staff turnover, and a better remuneration is the best solution for retention, even if investments are made in initial and on-going training of the staff members.

The funds for CICDE's work in between elections are insufficient (5/1)

The Centre for Continuous Electoral Training is funded both from the budget of the Central Electoral Commission, and from the technical/financial assistance provided by international organisations, foreign and national donors.

CICDE develops and submits the draft budget to the Central Electoral Commission to be included in its draft budget developed under Article 51 (5) of the Law No 181 of 25 July 2014 on Public Finance and Budgetary and Fiscal Accountability. CEC's draft is approved by CEC with the advisory endorsement of the Ministry of Finance and then submitted to the Government within the time-frame envisaged by the budget calendar, in order to be included in the draft state budget that is to be submitted to the Parliament for adoption.

CICDE's budget for the organisation and conduct of elections is separated from the annual budget for CICDE's current work. The later is intended mainly for the remuneration of CICDE's permanent staff and for making payments for goods and services required for headquarters' maintenance. The limited funds for CICDE's current work (MDL 4.7 million in 2013, then 1.3 million during 2014-2018 and 2.1 million in 2019) create the following situation: the part of the budget that remains for conducting training, awareness-raising, civic education and research activities is insufficient.

Basically, CICDE's management had to attract funds from international organisations in order to fulfil its statutory duties. By implementing projects funded by external donors, CICDE managed to conduct activities for various

5. *Promo-LEX Association*, Report on the Implementation of the Central Electoral Commission and Centre for Continuous Electoral Training Strategic Plans. 2018 Retrospective
https://promolex.md/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Raport-Promo-LEX_CEC_CICDE_06.06.2019.pdf

target-groups: librarians, judges, observers, journalists, political parties, youth, etc. Thus, CICDE received 39% of funds from external donors in 2014 and up to 60% in 2015.

The provision of paid services would be a solution for attracting funds into the institution's budget. CICDE had a similar experience in 2017 (conducted trainings at the request of a political parties), but the budget procedures created difficulties in using those funds. In this context, a future objective of CICDE will be to adopt all measures needed to increase the rate of providing such services and to identify effective solutions for collection and reasonable distribution of these funds.

The impact of awareness-raising programs targeting the general population and specific groups is low (4/2, 4/3)

According to the Electoral Code⁶, CEC and CICDE have the duty to develop and implement civic education programs and programs on increasing voters' awareness, and offer for debates election-related information to media and to general public. Such programs exist and are conducted regularly. Though considerable efforts are made and the conducted programs meet the relevant quality standards, the surveys conducted by CEC and other organisations show a low level of electoral education in the population and a low visibility of CEC/CICDE's work at national level. A big issue that could influence the effectiveness of awareness-raising programs is people's limited trust in the Central Electoral Commission as an institution: 14% of the respondents in the POB conducted in January 2019 reported some trust in CEC, while 75.1% reported little or no trust in CEC⁷. People's trust in the fairness of the elections is also low: 72.7% of POB respondents stated they do not think that elections in the Republic of Moldova are free and fair and only 16% were convinced about this.

THREATS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Moldova is a lower-middle-income economy (10/4). Emigration trends stay strong (8/6). Population ageing coefficient keeps increasing (8/1)

The recent evolutions of the economy show that the Republic of Moldova will be further qualified as a 'poor' country.

Given the low volume of remittances and even lower domestic and external demand, the economic growth will slow down during 2019-2021 and will reach historic values. The GDP annual growth rates of 4% push back the convergence with Central and Eastern Europe countries per capita by several decades. An increasing number of Moldovan households receive their main income from activities that are not linked directly to the performance of the national economy and labour productivity. Nowadays, over 60% of households have either pensions or remittances from abroad as their income. The consumption of households accounts for 40% of the regional average in Central and Eastern Europe⁸. Such a model can hardly 'survive' in the long run, and the inability to accelerate and diversify the economy ordains the population to low standards of living.

The poor economic situation resulted into a decrease in the number of Moldovan citizens (2.68 million citizens, i.e. a decrease by about 190 000 people since 2014), and the ageing of population is the most obvious demographic trend (20.8% of the total number of population⁹).

Migration is a very intense phenomenon in the Republic of Moldova. The last five years experienced an impressive number of immigrants (most of them immigrants who came back) and emigrants. Thus, in 2017, about 110 000 immigrants came back in Moldova and about 160 000 emigrants left the country, thus forming a negative net migration of about 50 000 individuals in that year¹⁰.

The economic and social context creates preconditions for a low electoral culture among the citizens of the RM, characterised by the lack of interest in the voting process, vulnerability to electoral corruption acts, low voter turnout among individuals aged 18-40, etc.

6. Electoral Code, Article 22, letters l), j), m) and Article 27

7. http://ipp.md/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/BOP_02.2019-new.pdf

8. https://www.expert-grup.org/media/k2/attachments/Raport_2019_ro_compilat.pdf

9. <http://statistica.gov.md/newsview.php?l=ro&idc=168&id=6472>

10. <http://statistica.gov.md/newsview.php?l=ro&idc=168&id=6416>

There are issues with observing human rights, including the national non-discrimination policies (8/23)

The results of a study conducted in 2018 prove that although the Republic of Moldova has taken important steps towards increasing the tolerance towards vulnerable groups, stereotypes and prejudices still persist towards certain groups. This is what those 247 complaints submitted in 2018 to the Council for Preventing and Eliminating Discrimination and Ensuring Equality speak about. Thus, individuals were discriminated on grounds of age (status of pensioner), sex, disability (health status), political affiliation, opinion, etc. A certain fact is that the incidence of cases of discrimination is much higher than the number of those reported, given that the relevant institution is relatively young and the rate of addressability among those discriminated is quite low. The main recommendation in order to improve the existing situation is to amend and supplement the legislation to remove the discriminatory acts, apply this regulatory framework and educate the society in order to increase the tolerance towards certain vulnerable and marginalised groups.

CEC and CICDE take important measures to improve the accessibility of the electoral system, but certain situations such as: under-representation of ethnic minorities and of people with special needs in the list of candidates and in the elected bodies, inaccessibility of polling station premises for people with disabilities, are beyond their competence and area of influence. Nonetheless, they will continue to make efforts to determine the decision makers to remedy the situation so that Moldovan citizens exercise their right to vote and to stand as a candidate in equal conditions.

The levels of civic activism, legal and political culture in the population are low (8/12, 8/19, 9/15). Citizens' engagement in public life and decision-making is poor (6/1, 6/3)

In the Republic of Moldova, though citizens are concerned about political topics, the level of participation in public activities is quite low. This passivity can be explained by the small number of NGOs that operate actively in the field (especially in villages), the low level of trust in parties and decision makers, insufficient knowledge about the decision-making process, etc. There is a causal connection between the level of trust and the level of well-being in a society. This shows that the more the population trusts the authorities, the better the latter meets the needs and solves the problems faced by communities and ensure a better redistribution of the resources that exist in a community, in a village.

The degree of involvement is much lower among vulnerable groups, which reveals that there are specific barriers against participation – Roma people, people with disabilities and young people start rarely or not at all discussions about politics and do not watch media shows on this topic. Despite the high willingness to participate, young people still have a relatively low participation¹¹.

An indicator of low civic activism of the citizens of RM is also the participation in parliamentary elections, which has been decreasing a lot since 1994, when the voter turnout 79.31%. Since the declaration of independence of the Republic of Moldova, the lowest participation was registered during the Parliamentary Elections of 24 February 2019, i.e. 50.57%. The participation rate in local elections also decreased, from 60% in 1995 to 49% in 2015 and 41.68% in 2019 (first round).

Public policy development is rarely based on citizens' interests, needs and expectations (6/4, 7/1)

The Republic of Moldova has a regulatory framework dedicated to the decision-making transparency – Law No 239 of 13 November 2008 on Transparency in the Decision-Making. However, many of the provisions of this regulatory act are interpretable and the public authorities apply them with deficiencies. For instance, the deadline of at least 15 working days set for the submission of recommendations on draft decisions provides the public authorities with the opportunity to set unjustified short deadlines and thus, to limit the participation of stakeholders in the decision-making.

11. East Europe Foundation in partnership with 'Partnership for Development' Center, *Index of Social Cohesion, 2019, Republic of Moldova* http://www.progen.md/files/4553_cpd_indexul_coeziunii_sociale_final.pdf

According to certain independent reports, several official websites of public authorities did not have special fields for decision-making transparency. Also, only certain public authorities published on their official websites the internal rules on the information, consultation and participation in the decision-making and adopting process. Not all draft decisions are made public and many of them are published without the date or the deadline for submitting the commentaries being indicated. Most of the public authorities fail to publish on their official websites the summary of the recommendations received and of the decisions made on the commentaries of the stakeholders¹². This conveys a false impression about citizen participation in the decision-making process.

Citizens that are disappointed with such a system will not show civic activism, which impacts directly their participation in elections and requires more efforts of CICDE and CEC in order to conduct different awareness-raising campaigns aimed to promote the electoral participation.

Women stay under-represented in leadership positions (8/20)

In the Republic of Moldova, women have a higher share in total population, with a ratio of 100 women to 93 men. Women share among employed population is almost the same as that of men. Employed women have higher level of education than men: 27.4% of them have high education and 16.8% – secondary specialised education, while among men these indicators are 22.0% and 9.7%, respectively. Nonetheless, the statistics show that 58.0% of managers of all levels are men and 42.0% – women. As regards the managers of economic and social organisations, the gender disparities are more pronounced. Thus, the ratio between men and women is 1 to 4 (27.3% women compared to 72.7% men), regardless the ownership type of the organisation.

Most of the decision-making positions are held by men and women stay underrepresented in decision-making positions. The participation of women in the decision-making process at parliamentary level reveals a share of 21.8% among women at the beginning of 2018 and 26% in 2019, while at European level – 30.5% and at global – 24.0%¹³. At local level, about 21.8% of the mayors in RM are women.

The analysis of these statistics allows us to say that despite the latest legislative amendments and the changes in the society, women continue to face difficulties in accessing leadership positions even if they show initiative in this respect. The researches conducted show that voters prefer men for elective positions, that is, the more important the leadership position is, the more citizens prefer a man in this position¹⁴.

The Centre for Continuous Electoral Training promotes the participation of women as candidates for elections and their election in leadership positions of electoral bodies and the current trends determines the fact that CICDE will continue to implement projects in this regard.

The flawed administration that results in violating citizens' civil rights remains often unpunished (7/14)

According to the Report on the observance of human rights and freedoms in the Republic of Moldova in 2018¹⁵, the situation in the field of human rights did not improve and in certain fields got worse.

According to a study¹⁶ conducted in 2016, the representatives of different state institutions are those who most of all violate the human rights, that paradoxically should support citizens when their rights are violated.

Although the law has the necessary legal leverages to prevent the abuses and restore the violated rights, unfortunately they do not work in most of the cases.

12. 2018-2020 Civil Society Development Strategy

<http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=375430>

13. <http://statistica.gov.md/newsview.php?l=ro&idc=168&id=6288>

14. Partnership for Development Center, *WOMEN REMAIN UNDERREPRESENTED! Gender analysis of candidates for 2019 local elections* http://www.progen.md/files/2967_analysisselectionsge_final.pdf

15. Ombudsperson, *Report on the observance of human rights and freedoms in the Republic of Moldova in 2018* <http://ombudsman.md/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/RAPRT18RORED.pdf>

16. Ombudsperson's Office and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Study. Perceptions of Human Rights in the Republic of Moldova, 2016* https://www.undp.org/content/dam/unct/moldova/docs/pub/ro-raport_do_final_pentru_tipar.pdf

One of the reasons is the low addressability of citizens when their rights are violated, preferring to search consolation at their relatives, friends, which does not solve the problem. On the other hand, those who decide to use their right to petitioning do not always meet their purpose.

The petitions that challenge an act, a decision, an action or an inaction of an administrative body or of an official who violated the legitimate rights and interests of petitioners are filed with the higher-level body of first instance. The petitions that challenge the decisions of the organisations that do not have their own hierarchically higher bodies, as well as the decisions made by district authorities and by mayoralties of towns that are subordinated to republican authorities, are filed with the administrative courts. This mechanism, which should theoretically work, is often avoided due to its inefficiency. Thus, the higher-level bodies, in most of the cases, maintain the acts/decisions of lower-level bodies, and the provisions of the administrative court are difficult to implement given the fact that the power in our country was historically considered infallible. Thus, the justice continues to offer more protection to the defendant authority rather than protect the rights and freedoms of the injured party in administrative disputes. As a result, the state is held liable in a dispute with an individual only if the case law of the European Court of Human Rights initiates such a proceeding when the public authorities of the Republic of Moldova violate the rights of individuals¹⁷.

Under these conditions, for CICDE, as a public institution, is difficult to maintain a high level of trust of the population, which is quite low in general.

Civil servant performance assessment is inefficient (9/12)

In Moldova, the civil servant performance assessment is governed by the Law No 158-XVI of 4 July 2008 on Civil Service and the Status of Civil Servants and by the Regulation on Civil Servant Performance Assessment, the purpose of which is to regulate the organisation and carrying out of annual civil servant performance assessment. According to the law, civil servant performance assessment is performed by comparing the results achieved during the assessed period against the established objectives, on the basis of assessment criteria.

The performances of 129 (out of 13 783) civil servants or 0.9% were rated as 'satisfactory' and 3 persons – 'unsatisfactory' for the performance assessment in 2016. The performance of most civil servants (99.1%¹⁸) was rated as 'very good' and 'good'. The high percentage of civil servants who got a 'very good' shows tendency to distort the performance assessment system, since according to human resources management practice, the percentage could be from 5 to 20%¹⁹.

The fact that there are several issues affecting public services is proof enough of the fact that the civil servant performance assessment system is not efficient as it would have been impossible to have a flawed system given the hypothesis that all those involved fulfil their duties to the best of their abilities.

One of the factors contributing to this situation is definitely the insufficient remuneration of civil servants, as the payroll system is not adjusted to the changing economic conditions. Therefore, the professionalism, performance and integrity of civil servants are affected.

Civil servants participate in organising the elections either by being members of the permanent and provisional electoral bodies or by being assigned duties in the electoral area. It is certain though that civil servant performance assessment impacts also the way in which they fulfil their duties in the electoral area against standards, practices and values.

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17. Mihail Diaconu, *Essence and Value of Administrative Cases in a Democratic Society*, National Law Magazine, No 9/2011 https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag_file/58-60_Esenta_si_valoarea_contenciosului_administrative_intr-o_societate_democratica.pdf
 18. State Chancellery of the Republic of Moldova, *2016 Report on Civil Service and Civil Servant's Status*. <https://cancelaria.gov.md/sites/default/files/document/attachments/raport-1158-2016.pdf>
 19. <https://cancelaria.gov.md/ro/apc/propuneri-pentru-modernizarea-serviciului-public>

Annex 2:
STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Stakeholders	Profile	Interaction with the electoral process	Interaction between CICDE and stakeholders
Citizens of the Republic of Moldova	Voters (different target groups) Future voters (young people)	Beneficiaries targeted by awareness-raising and civic education campaigns	CICDE advocates participatory democracy by developing electoral culture among the citizens of the Republic of Moldova by sharing relevant information and calling to accountability when it comes to casting one's vote
Central Election Commission	Chair and members of CEC Heads of units CEC administration	Founder of CICDE Beneficiaries of training services	Cooperation and coordination in planning an implementing CICDE's work Budget planning and execution Systematic reporting on work done
Lower-level electoral bodies	Management of the Electoral Constituency Councils (ECCs) Management of Electoral Offices of Polling Stations (EOPS) Members of these bodies – electoral officials SAISE operators ECC accountants	Beneficiaries of training services	Periodic needs reviews Participation in/consultation on developing training programs, teaching materials or on improving the existing ones
Trainers, coordinators	Trainers Coordinators	Implementers of training, civic education programs and of awareness-raising campaigns dedicated to different target groups	Initial and on-going training of trainers Cooperation and involvement at all stages in organising and conducting trainings Cooperation in assessing the needs and impact of training programs
Central Public Administration	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Ministry of Education, Culture and Research and the management of its subordinate institutions	They provide support for organising the training of staff of EOPS from abroad Support for organising trainings and civic education activities in education institutions, youth centres	Working together to train electoral officials Working together to train and raise the awareness of young people

Stakeholders	Profile	Interaction with the electoral process	Interaction between CICDE and stakeholders
Local Public Administration	Mayors Secretaries of district/local councils Registrars	Logistics for trainings Beneficiaries of training services	Needs assessment Participation in/consultation on developing training programs or improving the existing ones Training the secretaries of local councils, registrars
National Institute of Justice Courts	Judges	They validate elections They settle electoral disputes They appoint ECC members	Providing dedicated trainings for judges related to their duties in the electoral area
Political parties	Electoral officials appointed by political parties Accountants, treasurers The management bodies of political parties Regional coordinators Observers Jurists Party delegates Youth/women organisations	Beneficiaries of training services	Needs assessment Holding trainings Participation in/consultation on developing training programs or improving the existing ones
Non-governmental organisations	Members of NGOs working in areas like human rights, democracy, good governance, elections, etc. Observers	Beneficiaries of CICDE services Partners in shared services	Needs assessment Participation in/consultation on developing new training services or products or on improving the existing ones Implementing the training/civic education programs in conditions of partnership Monitoring the implementation of the strategic plan

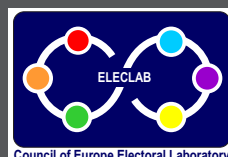
Stakeholders	Profile	Interaction with the electoral process	Interaction between CICDE and stakeholders
Development partners	Foreign development partners Similar training centres from other countries Central electoral authorities from other countries	Partners Potential beneficiaries of training and research services	Establishing partnerships Implementing projects funded by foreign donors Developing training/research programs upon request
Media	Journalists working in the print media, online, TV and radio media Editors Bloggers	Promoters of CICDE's services Beneficiaries of training services	Raising the awareness of the general public about CICDE's work Participating in awareness-raising, etc. Training journalists
Vendors of goods and services	Vendors of internet services, mobile telephony, transportation services, etc. Printing companies	Delivering goods/services for the logistics of events held by CICDE	Procurement of required goods/services

USEFUL RELEVANT SUSTAINABLE OWNED FOR ELECTORAL CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX 8 – CENTRAL ELECTION COMMISSION ATU GAGAUZIA STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2020-2023



Toolkit for strategic planning
and prioritisation
of electoral co-operation



APPENDIX 8 –
**CENTRAL ELECTION COMMISSION ATU GAGAUZIA
STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2020-2023**

Unofficial translation

ABBREVIATIONS

RM	The Republic of Moldova
ATU Gagauzia/ Gagauzia/ Autonomy	Autonomous Territorial Unit Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri)
Law on Special Legal Status of Gagauzia	Law № 344-XIII of 23.12.1994 on special legal status of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri)
Electoral Code	The Republic of Moldova Code of Elections, enacted by Law № 1381-XIII of 21.11.1997
Establishment on Gagauzia	Establishment on Gagauzia, Basic Law of Gagauzia, adopted by People's Assembly of Gagauzia on May 14 th , 1998, Law № 28-XXXI/I of 05.06.1998
Electoral Code of ATU Gagauzia	Electoral Code of ATU Gagauzia, adopted by the Law of ATU Gagauzia № 60 -XXVII/V of 31. 07. 2015
Bashkan/ Governor of Gagauzia	Governor of the Autonomous Territorial Unit Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri)
PAG	People's Assembly of Gagauzia (Halk Toplusu)
CEC	Central Election Commission Republic of Moldova
CECG	Central Election Commission ATU Gagauzia
CCET	Centre for Continuous Electoral Training by the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Moldova
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
SRP	State Register of Population
SDP	Strategic Development Plan
TVRB	TV and Radio Board
GID	General Index Database (GID) - general database of indicators designed to measure selective cooperation
ECA	ELECTORAL COOPERATION ASSESSMENT (ECA) - it is an electoral collaboration assessment tool
SWOT	Strategic planning method, which consists in identifying factors of the internal and external environment and dividing them into four categories S trengths, W eaknesses, O pportunities, T hreats
MM	Mass Media

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. VISION AND VALUES

Basic vision of the CEC Gagauzia is to be one of sufficiently independent, impartial and resistant to the constantly changing external environment highest electoral authority of Gagauzia, which the state authorities of the Republic of Moldova and Gagauzia, residents of Gagauzia and the international community recognize as effective, meeting all needs, expectations and challenges.

Values of the CEC Gagauzia are the basic principles by which the Commission is guided in its daily activities and in making all decisions. The following values provide the legal, institutional and ethical basis for any work or decisions made on behalf of and within the framework of the CEC Gagauzia.

- ▶ **Independence.** Undertaking a unique role, independence in activities is necessary to ensure integrity and credibility, as well as to build public confidence in the activities of the CEC Gagauzia. In this regard, the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia makes decisions without influence or control by third parties.
- ▶ **Impartiality.** The Central Election Commission of Gagauzia fulfills its duties without giving advantages to any political groups or other persons involved in the electoral field.
- ▶ **Openness.** The CEC Gagauzia is open in its activities to all parties involved in the electoral process.
- ▶ **Professional excellence, development of skills and abilities.** The events held by the CEC Gagauzia must be consistent and of high quality in accordance with best practices and international standards, therefore the CEC Gagauzia is constantly developing, improving and provides employees with opportunities and prerequisites for improving professional skills and abilities.
- ▶ **Respect.** The CEC Gagauzia appreciates the differences / uniqueness of individuals and the diversity of opinions and options that they bring to the institution.

1.2. MISSION

Mission of CEC Gagauzia is to provide citizens of the Republic of Moldova living in the territory of the ATU Gagauzia with conditions for the unhindered exercise of their constitutional right to elect and be elected by preparing, organizing and conducting free and fair elections of deputies of the People's Assembly of Gagauzia (Halk Toplusu); Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia, corresponding to international standards in the field of suffrage.

1.3. STRATEGY

In order to fully fulfill the mission set for ourselves and achieve the level of development when the Central Election Commission, as an independent governing body, can effectively manage the entire electoral process and the complete electoral cycle, this strategic plan for the Central Election Commission for the next 4 years has been developed. With support of the Council of Europe, a group of local experts on strategic planning was organized. The group gathered in meetings, analyzed the current state of affairs in the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia, and discussed the issues of the influence of internal and external factors on activities of the electoral body and the electoral system as a whole.

As a result of the work done, the Strategy of Central Election Commission was prepared. The Strategy is the main development planning document of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia, which describes and analyzes the situation in the electoral sphere as a whole, determines the prospects and strategic development goals for the period until 2023. The strategy also determines tools and mechanisms for achieving the goals and solving problems, and predicts the expected effect of the implementation of measures provided for in it. The strategy is developed on the basis of provisions of the current legislation on electoral law of the Republic of Moldova and the ATU Gagauzia, and in accordance with the new URSO (Useful, Relevant, Sustainable and Ownership) methodology developed by the Council of Europe Division of Elections and Civil Society (DG DEMOCRACY) in cooperation with the Institute of International Sociology of Gorizia, Italy (ISIG).

According to this methodology, a SWOT analysis was obtained as follows. The operational variables ECA - Electoral cooperation assessment, clustered around 5 dimensions (institutional, administrative, social, human resources, economic), and based on their impact on electoral system and electoral processes, to internal or external

variables, were evaluated and contextualized. Moreover, each ECA variable was based on indicators from the General Index Database (GID), consisting of 300 indicators grouped by the 5 above - mentioned parameters.

The impact of each operational variable on election results and the electoral system was evaluated using the ratings "Extremely Positive", "Positive", "Not Relevant", "Negative" or "Extremely Negative". Using the URSO tool, which identified variables that have a very positive and very negative impact on the overall efficiency of the electoral system and intervened areas to enhance institutional effectiveness, the SWOT-analysis was generated.

It must be noted that the development of the plan took into account international and national best practices in the electoral sphere of recent years, the recommendations set out in the reports of observers who took part in monitoring the elections of the Bashkan of Gagauzia and deputies of the People's Assembly, static data and real perceptions of the situation in the electoral sphere and in the public sphere.

As a result of the undertaken work, 6 strategic achievable objectives were identified that are to be solved by the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia over the next 4 years, including some in cooperation with national and regional governments:

Objective № 1. *Strengthening the status and potential of the CEC Gagauzia.*

Objective № 2. *Ensuring a modern, efficient, transparent and reliable election process.*

Objective № 3. *Harmonization of legislation of the RM and legislation of Gagauzia regulating the electoral system and processes.*

Objective № 4. *Ensuring access to electoral processes.*

Objective № 5. *Ensuring equal right to freedom of speech in the media in the electoral framework.*

Objective № 6. *Active participation of the population in the electoral processes.*

Achievement of most of the strategic objectives set by the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia is impossible without interaction, first of all, with the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Moldova, as well as with CICDE under the CEC of the Republic of Moldova. In this regard, cooperation in matters of harmonization of legislation, and in matters of access by CEC Gagauzia to the information system of the CEC RM, would increase the level of organization of processes of preparation to and conducting Gagauz elections, which would ultimately contribute to the implementation by CEC of Gagauzia missions entrusted to it.

2. CURRENT SITUATION

2.1. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The legal status of the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova of July 29, 1994, in Article 111, as well as in the Law of the Republic of Moldova No. 344-XIII of December 23, 1994 On the Special Legal Status of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri), which establishes that the ATU Gagauzia independently, within its competence, resolves issues of political, economic and cultural nature in the interests of the entire population. Thus, two fundamental acts that enshrine the status of autonomy for the region stipulate that in the territory of the autonomous territorial unit of Gagauzia all rights and freedoms provided by Law and the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova are guaranteed. Similar provisions are contained in Article 5 of the Establishment on Gagauzia No. 28-XXX / 1 dated 05.06.1998. The provisions of part (3) of Article 111 of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova stipulate that in the autonomous territorial unit of Gagauzia there are representative and executive bodies created in accordance with the law.

The representative body in accordance with Article 8 of the Law On the special legal status of Gagauzia is the People's Assembly of Gagauzia (Halk Topluşu), the competence of which includes the adoption of local laws in the areas provided for by the above law and the resolution of other important issues in the interests of the Autonomy, including calling, organizing and holding elections of deputies to the People's Assembly of Gagauzia, approval of the composition of the Central Election Commission for the conduct of elections; calling for elections to local public authorities of Gagauzia, holding a local referendum on issues within the competence of Gagauzia.

Thus, in accordance with the provisions of Article 111 of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova and the aforementioned Law No. 344-XIII, in Gagauzia representatives to regional bodies are elected in accordance with the requirements of local laws adopted by the People's Assembly of Gagauzia, and the election process is regulated by the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia, created by the same representative body of the Autonomy. In addition, it should be noted that the CEC Gagauzia is a body that acts autonomously and independently from the CEC of the Republic of Moldova.

Local laws governing elections in the territory of the ATU of Gagauzia were adopted for the first time in 1998 and 1999. During this period 3 Laws: "On Elections to People's Assembly (Halk Topluşu) of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri)" No. 25-XXV / I of January 15, 1998, "On Elections of Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri)" No. 32-XXXIII / I of September 11, 1998 and "On Electoral Bodies of Gagauzia" No. 35-XXXVII / I of January 26, 1999 were adopted. In reality, mentioned laws often provided for both special conditions and procedures, as well as conflicting provisions. For example:

- ▶ The Law On Elections of Governor of Gagauzia established in part (5) of Article 19 that the term of the CEC Gagauzia's authority is "during the period of election campaign";
- ▶ The Law On Elections to People's Assembly stipulated in part (5) of Article 20 that the term of office of the CEC Gagauzia is "5 years";
- ▶ The Law On Electoral Bodies stipulated in part (6) that the term of office of the CEC Gagauzia is "4 years". Moreover, in fact, the CEC of Gagauzia was formed only for a certain period before elections to People's Assembly or elections of Governor of Gagauzia, and its composition changed completely before each election. So it was in the case of all elections of the Governor (1995, 1999, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2015) and elections to People's Assembly (1995, 1999, 2003, 2008, 2012). The absence of the status of a permanent body, and its formation simultaneously with the appointment of the election date, negatively affected the process of preparing and organizing the elections, since there was no institutional documentation and practice in organizing and conducting the elections, no instruction was given to persons working in the electoral field; the launch of election procedures was delayed; there was no auxiliary professional apparatus, etc.

In addition, legal conflicts were related not only to the term of office / status of the central electoral body, but also to the provisions on the recall of members of this body. According to Article 23 of the Law On Elections to People's Assembly and Article 22 of the Law On Elections of Governor, CEC Gagauzia members could be removed from their posts if they violated the statutory restrictions, or in the case of "committing acts incompatible with their status". At the same time, the recall could be carried out by the bodies that submitted their candidatures, as well as by their own colleagues from the CEC Gagauzia, by making an appropriate decision by the majority of the members of the commission. At the same time, the Law On Electoral Bodies of Gagauzia stipulated, in Article 7, that recall of the CEC members could only be carried out by a decision of the Court of Appeals .

Undoubtedly, such regulation provided a higher level of independence and impartiality of the activities of members of the central election body and the commission as a whole than in the first two laws, however, the presence of inconsistencies between the provisions of the 3 mentioned laws still allowed different interpretations and different applications.

It should also be noted that changes to these laws were often made on the eve of elections, and the provisions relating to other elections remained unchanged. At the same time, there was a significant lag in the pace of adaptation of the electoral legislation of Gagauzia to the changes that were periodically introduced into the electoral legislation of the Republic of Moldova.

All these problems have led to the need to standardize regional legislation, to bring uniformity in the application of the provisions governing the activities of the central electoral body during elections to People's Assembly, elections for the post of Bashkan of Gagauzia, and during periods not covered by elections, as well as the election process itself in Autonomy.

Thus, the codification of the rules of the electoral law, and the adoption of the new Electoral Code of the ATU Gagauzia No. 60-XXVII / V of July 31, 2015 made it possible to solve a number of problems that arose both during the regional elections and after them, and, most importantly, granted a permanent status to the central electoral body.

And all 3 above-mentioned laws have lost their force with the entry into force of the Electoral Code No. 60-XXVII / V of July 31, 2015.

2.2. CEC ATU GAGAUZIA

According to Articles 16-17 of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia No. 60-XXVII / V of July 31, 2015, Central Election Commission of Gagauzia is a permanent body of the ATU Gagauzia and a legal entity, has its own budget, bank account and seal with the coat of arms Gagauzia.

The Election Commission of Gagauzia consists of nine members appointed for 5 years. At the same time, the Electoral Code establishes that only 2 members of the CECG: the chairman and the secretary work and act continuously, on an exempted basis, and the remaining members of the Central Election Commission are convened by its chairman as necessary.

Three candidates to the CEC Gagauzia are nominated by People's Assembly of Gagauzia, three are proposed by Governor of Gagauzia and the Executive Committee of Gagauzia, and three are proposed by the judiciary. At the same time, the judicial offices of the Court of the municipality Comrat, located in Comrat, Chadyr-Lunga and Vulcanesti propose one candidate at the general meetings of judges. And candidatures for the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia from the People's Assembly of Gagauzia, the Head of Gagauzia and the Executive Committee of Gagauzia are put forward at meetings by a majority of votes of elected deputies or members of the Executive Committee, respectively. The staff of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia is approved by a resolution of the People's Assembly of Gagauzia, which is adopted by a majority of the votes. It should be noted that the candidates proposed by the courts, Governor of Gagauzia and the Executive Committee of Gagauzia to the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia cannot be rejected by the People's Assembly of Gagauzia, provided that they comply with the requirements of the Electoral Code. Similar principles for the formation of the Commission can be considered consistent with international criteria that require the creation of independent and impartial electoral bodies¹.

The Electoral Code clearly defines that the composition of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia may include persons who are citizens of the Republic of Moldova, permanently residing in the territory of the ATU Gagauzia, who have an impeccable reputation and the qualities necessary for electoral activities.

In addition, members of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia:

- a) cannot be members of parties and other socio-political organizations;
- b) do not have the right to participate in political activities;
- c) cannot make statements in support of electoral candidates or directed against them;

1. Venice Commission Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters, 2002

- d) cannot promote the activities carried out by electoral competitors, except in cases of fulfillment of powers stipulated by the Electoral Code.

The election legislation also provides for the procedure for the removal of a member of the CECG, as well as an exhaustive list of grounds for applying the removal procedure. In particular, Article 21 of the Electoral Code establishes that a member of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia is removed from office by the body that appointed him through the court (Court of Appeals Comrat) in the case:

- a) the issuance of a final judgment against him for conviction of a crime;
- b) moving to a permanent place of residence outside the ATU Gagauzia and (or) losing citizenship of the Republic of Moldova;
- c) the establishment of a final judicial decision of limited legal capacity or incapacity;
- d) gross violation of the norms of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, the Code of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri), and the law of the Republic of Moldova “On the special legal status of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri)”, as well as the norms of the Electoral Code;
- e) being in an incompatibility position as established by the final ascertaining act.
- f) in case of non-compliance with the conditions stipulated by part (2) of Article 20 of the Electoral Code of the ATU Gagauzia (indicated in the previous paragraph).

Dismissal procedure of a member of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia only by the court, indicates the degree of protection and stability of the functions of the members of the Central Election Commission, and, consequently, guarantees of independence in decision-making.

According to Article 24 of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia, the activities of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia are financed from the budget of the ATU Gagauzia. The financial requirements for supporting the activities of the CECG are annually submitted to People’s Assembly, together with the conclusion of the Executive Committee. The budget of the Central Election Commission is approved by the People’s Assembly of Gagauzia in accordance with the conditions established by the budgetary framework. In its activities, the CECG uses the help and support of the apparatus, the structure and composition of which is approved by the institution. These requirements are aimed at ensuring the functional and financial independence of the CECG.

2.3. SWOT- ANALYSIS

The SWOT analysis allowed the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia to identify and structure the main content and status of the current strategic planning process. In addition to those characteristics of the URSO methodology, which identifies aspects and variables that describe the positive and negative, internal and external factors of the CEC specified in clause 1.3. of this strategy, the SWOT analysis serves as a tool to identify participants, beneficiaries and stakeholders in the planning and management processes.

The SWOT analysis is based on a comprehensive assessment of aspects (factors) of the functioning environment of the CECG and the activities of society, which affect the electoral processes of the entire electoral system, both internally and externally.

A more detailed description of the aspects (factors) and their scope are described in the following table.

ASPECTS	INTERNAL (related, mostly, to the electoral processes)	EXTERNAL (characterizing the whole electoral field)
INSTITUTIONAL	referring to norms and principles regulating the electoral process	referring to norms and principles regulating the public affairs of a given context
ADMINISTRATIVE	referring to measures and procedures of the electoral process	referring to processes and procedures of public authorities within a given context
SOCIAL	referring to the variables that describe the involved actors and target groups in the electoral process	referring to the variables that impact on the electoral performance in terms of awareness, inclusiveness, etc;
HUMAN CAPITAL	referring to the capacities and/or knowledge that might impact/shape the electoral process	referring to the capacities and/or knowledge present within the population of a given context
ECONOMIC	referring to the financial resources that might impact/shape the electoral process	referring to the financial resources present within a given context

The SWOT analysis was performed using the electronic tool “Evaluation of Election Co-operation” (ECA) with the following SWOT variables highlighted.

INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
<p>Strengths</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Electoral law is consistent with international electoral standards of democracy and transparency. 1/2 , 1/6 2. The activities of the Central Election Commission are transparent. 1/11 3. Electoral law provides for equal opportunities for all parties to participate in the election campaign. 1/22 4. Equal opportunities for candidates guaranteed during the election campaign. 1/23 	<p>Opportunities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The majority of the population has access to telephones and the Internet. 8/13 , 8/14 2. The population has access to private audiovisual media channels. 8/15
<p>Weaknesses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Electoral law is not clear enough. 1/1 2. The status of the Central electoral body of the ATU Gagauzia is not consolidated at the national level. 1/9 3. There is no information system ensuring accuracy in the voter register and voter lists. 2/10 , 1/13 , 2/12 4. There is no voting mechanism for people outside the ATU Gagauzia. 1/17 , 2/11 5. The principles of freedom of association and political association are envisaged by law, but the right of national minorities to create their own political parties is not fixed. 1/18 , 6/2 , 6/10 6. Access to the electoral process is not fully ensured for all persons. 1/25 7. The provisions on appeal procedures are not clear enough. 2/1 , 2/3 8. The mechanism for verifying signature sheets when submitting candidatures is not clear. 2/5 9. Measures to ensure equal opportunities for media coverage during election campaigns are not respected. 2/14 10. Lack of specificity in the submission of candidates to the district election councils. 2/17 11. Population-oriented awareness-raising activities in general are inadequate. 3/1 12. Low level of political pluralism within the media. 3/4 13. The overall technical capacity of the central electoral body is weak. 4/1 	<p>Threats</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are no programs for involving citizens in public life, decisions, implementation of policies and the results of activities by authorities are not always provided to the public and the needs of future generations are not taken into account in the developed policies. 6/1 , 7/9 2. Poor quality information provided by the media. 6/11 3. Majority of population living in poverty. 10/1 4. Support for electoral initiatives by international partners is not significant. 10/15

2.3.1. POSITIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS (STRENGTHS)

2.3.1.1. Electoral law meets international electoral standards for democracy and transparency 1/2, 1/6

According to Article 5 of Establishment on Gagauzia, the rights and freedoms of man and citizen are recognized and guaranteed in the ATU of Gagauzia in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, the Code of Law, generally accepted principles and norms of international law. In addition, the local Electoral Code enshrines the rules guaranteeing democratic elections. So part (1) of Article 2 of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia establishes that citizens of the Republic of Moldova permanently residing in the territory of the ATU Gagauzia participate in elections and in referendum **voting on the basis of universal electoral legislation, equal and**

direct secret and free voting. According to part (2) of Article 2 of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia, participation in elections is voluntary. The Electoral Code also provides:

- ▶ **universal suffrage** - citizens of the Republic of Moldova permanently residing in the territory of the ATU of Gagauzia have the right to elect and be elected **regardless of race, nationality, ethnic origin, language, religion, gender, views, political affiliation, property status or social origin,**
- ▶ **equal suffrage** – in the voting each voter has only one vote. Each vote has the same legal force,
- ▶ **direct suffrage** - each voter participates in direct voting and personally votes. Voting for other people is not allowed,
- ▶ **free voting** - no one has the right to exert pressure on voters, force them to participate or not participate in elections, as well as affect the freedom of expression of voters,
- ▶ **secret ballot** - influence on the will of the voter and control over his will are not allowed.

Articles 8 and 14 of the Law on the Special Legal Status of Gagauzia state that Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia and deputies of People's Assembly of Gagauzia are elected on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage, by secret and free vote for a term of four years. This provision is also enshrined in the Electoral Code of Gagauzia in part (1) of Article 74 and part (1) of Article 94. In addition, the election of the above officials is held by the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia, whose mandate is five years. After this period, the composition of the commission is re-elected. If the powers of the Central Election Commission expire during the election period, they are rightfully extended until the end of this period and the subsequent assumption of office of new members, but not more than 90 days.

The Electoral Code of Gagauzia also provides for the possibility of controlling the stages of the electoral process by interested parties. Thus, according to Article 63, at the request of electoral candidates, the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia or, if necessary, the district election council accredits an observer to observe the elections at polling stations. Upon request, the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia accredits representatives of international organizations, foreign governments and non-governmental organizations, as well as representatives of the diplomatic corps and international organizations accredited in the Republic of Moldova as observers, and registers their translators and stenographers.

By the decision of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia at the district election councils, representatives of qualified public associations from the Republic of Moldova and ATU Gagauzia can be accredited as observers, who, according to their charters, are involved in the protection of human rights and democratic values. Accredited observers have the right to attend all electoral operations, at all meetings of the electoral bodies, including election day, without interfering with the electoral process or other electoral operations, as well as inform the chairman of the electoral body of any violations.

Part (9) of Article 63 of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia states that observers can receive accreditation immediately after the announcement of the election date. Observers may conduct their activities both on election day and before, during and after the end of the election campaign.

For example, 49 international observers took part in the monitoring of the elections of Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri) dated June 30, 2019. They were from France, Italy, the Kingdom, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, Poland, Azerbaijan, Hungary, Slovakia, Estonia, Lithuania, Romania, the USA, Sweden, Turkey, 347 representatives with deliberative vote and election observers, 143 observers from non-governmental public organizations of the Republic of Moldova, representing 4 public organizations: PA "Pilgrim Demo", PA "TinerED", PA "Za russkii lazik", NGO "Vesta".

All applications for accreditation filed with the CEC were approved, and no one was denied accreditation².

At the same time, the Electoral Code of Gagauzia provides for liability for violation of the provisions of the Electoral Code and other legislative acts related to elections that impede the free exercise of citizens' electoral rights. Clause 2 of Article 70 establishes the right of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia and the district electoral council to apply sanctions for violation of the electoral law by candidates, electoral candidates or to demand the cancellation of their registration.

2. Report of the Central Election Commission on the results of the elections of Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri) June 30, 2019, approved by the Decision No. 466/101 of July 02, 2019 of CECG.
<https://www.mskgagauzia.md/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/otchet-tsik-v-apel-vybory-bashkana-30-iyunya.pdf>

At the same time, sanctions for violation of the electoral law, which contain formulations for violations or offenses, are provided for by the Criminal Code and the Code of the Republic of Moldova on offenses and are applied by the police, prosecutors and judicial authorities.

2.3.1.2. The activities of the Central Election Commission are transparent 1/11

According to part (1) of article 15 of the Electoral Code, electoral candidates during the election campaign may appoint to the electoral bodies that registered them, as well as lower-level electoral bodies one representative with an advisory vote. Parties and other socio-political organizations, electoral blocs and electoral associations participating in the elections may appoint a representative with an advisory vote in the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia during the election campaign.

In Articles 18 and 19, the Electoral Code also stipulates that all meetings by the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia are open to the media and the public. Notification of a meeting is made 48 hours before it begins, with the exception of meetings during the election period, when, due to the urgent need to resolve any issues, a shorter reasonable time is allotted for the announcement of the meeting. The Central Election Commission ensures that election-related activities are carried out transparently and that the media and the public can evaluate the actions of the commission. Pursuant to these provisions, the CECG invites electoral candidates and accredited observers to meetings by sending out information about the date and time of the meeting via telephone or email. Moreover, all meetings of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia on election day are broadcast online on the official website of the CEC.

Subsequently, the resolutions adopted by the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia are published and posted on the official website³ of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia within 24 hours, followed by publication in the Official Gazette of Gagauzia “EKSPRES-KANON”.

2.3.1.3. Equal opportunities are guaranteed to candidates during the election campaign (i.e. financing of political parties and candidates, coverage of elections, participation in election campaigns) 1/22, 1/23

Article 46 of the Electoral Code stipulates that electoral opponents participate in the election campaign on equal terms, have equal rights to use mass media, including radio and television, financed from the budget. All electoral candidates in de jure elections are given equal opportunities for the logistical and financial support of the election campaign.

At the same time, Article 37 of the Electoral Code provides for the mandatory establishment by the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia of **the maximum amount of money that can be transferred to the electoral fund of a competitor in elections**. On September 24, 2016, Decree No. 11/5 of the CEC Gagauzia approved the Regulation on the financing of an electoral campaign, in which, as a basis for calculating the maximum amount of money, **a coefficient multiplied by the number of voters in the constituency in which the elections are held was adopted**. So, in the elections of Bashkan in 2019 by the Decree of the CEC Gagauzia No. 325/74 of April 24, 2019, the specified coefficient was set at 40 lei per one voter. Nevertheless, the establishment of the funding limit by the electoral authority in the absence of clear legislative consolidation in the Electoral Code of Gagauzia of criteria for evaluating its determination leads to various insinuations and doubts about the objectivity of the decision regarding the funding limit of the election campaign.

At the same time, according to Article 37 of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia, it is forbidden to finance and materially support in any other form election campaigns in Gagauzia by budget-financed organizations, foreign citizens and citizens of the Republic of Moldova who have not reached the age of 18; by anonymous persons; charitable and religious, as well as trade union organizations, as well as individuals and legal entities registered outside the ATU Gagauzia. Violations of these provisions are grounds for canceling the registration of a candidate for election. In addition, competitors are prohibited from using administrative resources (public property and funds) during the election campaign.

The electoral legislation of ATU Gagauzia provides for an equal number of proxies for each electoral competitor who can be registered by the CEC Gagauzia at the proposal of competitors in each constituency to assist them in conducting the election campaign (in conducting agitation for them and representing their interests in relations with public authorities, voters and election councils).

3. <https://www.mskgagauzia.md/>

Election councils, precinct election bureaus and local public authorities are obliged to provide the opportunity to competitors to hold meetings with voters on equal terms and conditions. Local public administration authorities are obliged to determine within three days from the day the election period begins the minimum of specially designated places for posting election campaigns, as well as to determine the minimum space for meetings with voters. At the same time, the places for posters provided to the electoral candidates must be equivalent.

In addition, the Electoral Code of Gagauzia in Article 64 provides that, when covering the election process, the media are obliged to ensure equal conditions for all registered candidates, competitors, political parties, socio-political associations and electoral blocs registered in the relevant electoral bodies of Gagauzia to conduct an election campaign. All published and broadcast mass media in Gagauzia are obliged to provide both free and paid airtime (broadcasting organizations) and print space (periodicals) to independent candidates, competitors, parties and socio-political associations, electoral blocs registered to participate in elections by the relevant electoral bodies of Gagauzia.

The mass media distributed and broadcast in the territory of the ATU Gagauzia, when informing voters about the election campaign of a candidate, are not allowed to give preference to any candidate, including by the time of coverage of his election activities, the amount of print space allocated to such messages, to provide cases stipulated by law, free airtime and not refuse to provide paid airtime in the event that other candidates have such airtime provided without charge different candidates different amount of payment for the provision of air time, print space, equal to the volume and other parameters. Also, the electoral law establishes that the social status and (or) the positions of candidates cannot serve as a basis for a privileged attitude.

2.3.2. NEGATIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS (WEAKNESSES).

2.3.2.1. Electoral law is not clear enough 1/1

The current Electoral Code of ATU Gagauzia contains Section V “Local Elections”. However, in fact, general local elections in the territory of Gagauzia are held not by the Central Election Commission and not in accordance with the provisions of local law, but by the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Moldova, through the second-level district council created by it, in accordance with the national legislation on elections, namely the Electoral Code of the Republic of Moldova. While the Law of the Republic of Moldova “On the special legal status of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri)”, the authority to call for elections to the local public administration bodies of the ATU of Gagauzia is vested in the PAG. So, in accordance with Article 12, part (3), paragraph d) of the Law of the Republic of Moldova “On the special legal status of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri)”, the competence of the People’s Assembly of Gagauzia includes: d) *the appointment, organization and conduct of elections of deputies to People’s Assembly and approval of the composition of Central Election Commission for the conduct of elections; **the appointment of elections to the local public authorities of Gagauzia.*** Similar provisions are enshrined in Article 51, paragraph 12 of the Establishment on Gagauzia.

At the same time, in accordance with Article 133 of the Electoral Code of the Republic of Moldova, the date of general or early local elections **is set by a resolution of the Parliament.** And, the date of re-voting, new and partial elections is set by **the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Moldova** in accordance with the Code.

Whereas, in accordance with Article 120 of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia, the date of local elections in the territory of the ATU Gagauzia **is set by the People’s Assembly of Gagauzia** by adoption of a resolution. And the date of re-voting, new and partial elections **is set by the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia** in accordance with the provisions of this Code.

Article 130 (3) of the Electoral Code of the Republic of Moldova stipulates that in administrative-territorial entities with special status local elections are held in accordance with the provisions of this Code and documents adopted by the representative bodies of the respective administrative-territorial entities. However, the local elections in the territory of ATU Gagauzia include: elections of Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri); elections of deputies of the People’s Assembly of Gagauzia; elections to local public authorities, including a referendum, in cases established by law. At the same time, the Electoral Code of the Republic of Moldova does not contain provisions on the election of Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia and the deputies of the PAG. Moreover, there is no procedure for appealing against decisions of the electoral bodies, including the consideration of complaints on the election of Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia and the deputies of the PAG. As there is no reference norm that prescribes the application of the legislation of the ATU Gagauzia to the courts when considering complaints and approving election results. The Electoral Code of Gagauzia, in particular, Articles 66-69, provide for the procedure

for considering complaints regarding the organization and conduct of elections. At the same time, the Code does not stipulate a time limit for applying to a court. As a result, the courts are forced to apply the terms laid down in the norms of the Administrative Code, which are much longer and different from the norms of the electoral law.

2.3.2.2. The status of the central electoral body of ATU Gagauzia is not consolidated at the national level 1/9

As mentioned above, the People's Assembly of Gagauzia, in accordance with the provisions of Article 12, part (3), paragraph d) of the Law of the Republic of Moldova "On the special legal status of Gagauzia (Gagauz Yeri)" and Article 51, paragraph 12 of the Establishment on Gagauzia, is empowered to appoint, organize and conduct elections of deputies to the People's Assembly; **approve the composition of the Central Election Commission** for the conduct of elections and the appointment of elections to the local public authorities of Gagauzia.

On July 31, 2015, the People's Assembly of Gagauzia adopted the Electoral Code No. 60-XXVII / V. In order to organize and conduct local elections, the system of electoral bodies of Gagauzia includes the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia, district electoral councils and precinct election bureaus. At the same time, in accordance with the provisions of Article 16 paragraph (7) of the Electoral Code, the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia is **a permanent state body** of the ATU Gagauzia and a legal entity with its own budget, bank account and seal with the coat of arms of Gagauzia.

The positions of the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Secretary of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia are equated to occupying a responsible public post (Article 17, part (7) of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia). The staff of the apparatus of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia consists of civil servants who are subject to the provisions of the Law of the Republic of Moldova "On public office and the status of civil servant" No. 158-XVI of July 4, 2008 (Article 23, part (2) of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia).

Another Law of the Republic of Moldova "On the Status of Persons Executing senior Government Positions" No. 199 of July 16, 2010 establishes legal regulation of the status and activities of these individuals and gives their complete list, including on the territory of the Autonomy. But this law does not regulate and does not fix the rights of the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Secretary of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia, since they are not on the list of persons holding senior government posts.

The staff of the apparatus of the Central Election Commission was also not reflected in the Law of the Republic of Moldova "On public office and the status of civil servant" No. 158-XVI of 04.07.2008 and is not on the list of public authorities subject to the law.

Moreover, the status of members of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia was not reflected in the classification of posts in the public sector and was not fixed in the Law of the Republic of Moldova "On the Unified System of Remuneration in the Public Sphere" No. 270 of 11/23/2018.

2.3.2.3 There is no information system ensuring accuracy in the voter register and voter lists 2/10, 1/13, 2/12

The procedure for compiling, checking, updating voters' lists is established in Chapter 5, Articles 38-40 of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia. So part 1 of Article 38 establishes that the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia, in cooperation with the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Moldova, on the basis of the State Register of Voters of the Republic of Moldova created by the latter, compiles the official Voters' Register of ATU Gagauzia, which is the official legal basis for the subsequent correct drafting of Gagauzia voters' lists.

However, despite the consolidation of this provision in the legislation of the ATU Gagauzia, this norm is not feasible, since the corresponding amendments to the legislation of the Republic of Moldova, which would provide access by the CEC of Gagauzia to the voters' register of Gagauzia, or in general to the state information system "Elections", are not proposed and introduced.

Given this circumstance (the impossibility of fulfilling part (1) of Article 38 of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia), the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia approved the Regulation on the Compilation, Administration and Updating of the Official Voters' Register of ATU Gagauzia⁴, which stipulated that the creation of the Register is

4. Regulation on the Compilation, Administration and Updating of the Official Voters' Register of ATU Gagauzia adopted by the Decision of the CECG №323/74 of 24. 04. 2019 http://vestigagauzii.md/images/Arhiv_PDF/EKSPRES-KANON%20%E2%84%9661-66%2001.12.2016.pdf

based on data on voters of the Republic Moldova, registered in the territory of ATU Gagauzia, transferred to the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia annually, during the first quarter, but no later than 01 April, by the local public authorities of Gagauzia, which specify the lists of voters at the place of permanent residence of the latter. These norms were taken as a derogation from part (1) of Article 38 of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia, however, the Central Election Commission found that these norms are valid only until the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia receives official data on voters of the Republic of Moldova registered in the territory of the ATU Gagauzia from the State Register of Voters of the Republic of Moldova .

Thus, the voters' lists in the last elections of Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia were compiled for each district by local authorities on the basis of the voters' lists of the last parliamentary elections in Moldova of February 24, 2019, by eliminating the dead⁵ from them, in this regard, the whole process of compiling of voters' lists in Gagauzia can only be partially controlled by the CEC Gagauzia, while the check cannot cover the whole spectrum of needs regarding the correctness of electoral lists.

2.3.2.4. There is no voting mechanism for people outside the ATU Gagauzia 1/17, 2/11

Although the law provides for the right of the CEC Gagauzia to petition the central authorities to open polling stations outside of Gagauzia and the Republic of Moldova for citizens, who permanently reside in the territory of the ATU Gagauzia, however are outside the Autonomy and the Republic of Moldova on the Election Day. However, neither the legislation of the Republic of Moldova nor of the ATU Gagauzia provide a mechanism for opening polling stations outside of Gagauzia or foreign polling stations during the election of Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia or deputies to the People's Assembly of Gagauzia. Also there is no mechanism for registering citizens of Gagauzia living outside Gagauzia or the Republic of Moldova. The legislation of Gagauzia does not provide for the possibility of voting for these citizens.

Attempts to establish polling stations abroad, in accordance with the provisions of the Electoral Law, were made by the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia during the elections of the Bashkan of Gagauzia in 2019. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova was sent a request to open polling stations outside the Republic of Moldova. This was answered by the impossibility of opening them with reference to the Convention on the Rights and Obligations of States, adopted in 1933 in Montevideo. The Minister of Foreign Affairs argued that the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia lacks sovereignty and the legal status of a subject to international law.

2.3.2.5. The principles of freedom of association and political association are not provided 1/18, 6/2, 6/10

National legislation allows for the creation of parties, including those of national minorities, but this is impossible in practice, since at the time of the establishment of a party, its members must live in at least half of the second-level administrative and territorial units of the Republic of Moldova and have at least 120 members in each of specified administrative units.

The principles of voluntary association are largely consistent with international standards. But the legislation of the Republic of Moldova does not provide for principles or criteria for the political unification of national minorities. In Moldova, it is almost impossible to register a new political party that would represent the interests of one region or one national minority. And although the law does not directly prohibit such formations, the procedure for registering a party at the initiative of groups created at the place of residence is practically impossible. The fact is that the existing registration form excludes the principle of representation at the place of residence due to the need to obtain signatures of residents of other territorial-administrative units. Thus, both central and regional parties must meet the same requirements. Clause d) of part (1) of Article 8 of the Law on Political Parties⁶ requires that at the time of filing an application for registration, it must be consisted of residents of at least half of the second-level administrative-territorial units from the whole country (i.e. 50% of 32 districts), while from each of the areas should be at least 120 members. Whereas in **the Guidelines and Explanatory Report on Legislation on Political Parties: some specific issues adopted by the Venice Commission** at its 58th plenary

5. PILGRIM- DEMO INTERIM REPORT "REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GAGAUZIA, ELECTIONS OF BASHKAN, JUNE 30, 2019" <http://alegeri.md/images/2/28/Raport-interimar-pilgrim-demo-bascan-2019-ru.pdf>

6. Law of the Republic of Moldova "On Political Parties" No. 294-XVI of December 21, 2007, published in Monitorul Oficial al RM (No.42-44 / 119 of 02.29.2008)

session (Venice, 12-13 March 2004)⁷ it is established that “Registration as a necessary step for recognition of an association as a political party, for a party’s participation in general elections or for public financing of a party does not per se amount to a violation of rights protected under Articles 11 and 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Any requirements in relation to registration, however, must be such as are ‘necessary in a democratic society’ and proportionate to the objective sought to be achieved by the measures in question. **Countries applying registration procedures to political parties should refrain from imposing excessive requirements for territorial representation of political parties as well as for minimum membership.** According to the findings of the Venice Commission, reflected in the Code of Good Practice in the field of Political Parties, “state authorities should not restrict the right to form political parties at the national, regional or local level.⁸ The creation of a political party, even on the basis of racial or ethnic criteria, cannot be prohibited (according to article 3 (7) of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms), with the exception of cases noted in article 11.2 of the Convention or threatening statehood.⁹ The Framework Convention for the Protection of the Rights of National Minorities in Article 7 provides for freedom of association. The OSCE Oslo recommendations of February 1998 also note the right to association - “All persons, including persons belonging to national minorities, have the right to establish and manage their own non-governmental organizations, associations and institutions.

These entities may use the language(s) of their choosing. The State may not discriminate against these entities on the basis of language nor shall it unduly restrict the right of these entities to seek sources of funding from the State budget, international sources or the private sector”

Article 7 of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities¹⁰ requires that “respect for the right of every person belonging to a national minority to freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression [opinion] ...” be ensured. In addition, the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities states that “persons belonging to minorities can exercise their rights, including the rights set forth in this Declaration, both individually and collectively with other members of his group without any discrimination ”(Article 3, paragraph 1). These tools fully guarantee the right to form political parties and to join all members of minority groups within the jurisdiction of the state.

Despite the ratification by the Republic of Moldova all of the above-mentioned international acts, the conditions imposed by the legislation for registering parties still do not allow national minorities living in the Republic of Moldova to create their (regional) parties, as well as those who would like to create a political union at the level of district, for example, or to promote the interests of only its region at the national level.

2.3.2.6. Access to the election process 1/25 not fully ensured

Most polling stations are inaccessible to voters. As a rule, voting takes place in public buildings, such as schools, cultural clubs and city halls. Such buildings, by themselves, should be accessible to persons with disabilities.

Moreover, back in 2012, at the legislative level, the obligation for local public administration authorities and business entities, regardless of their form of ownership was established requiring to equip social infrastructure facilities so that they could be used by persons with disabilities. At the same time, it is clearly defined that social facilities should be provided with access roads and equipped according to provisions of existing regulations and documents in this field. If, for technical reasons, social facilities cannot be equipped for the convenience of persons with disabilities in compliance with current standards, local public authorities, public associations and legal entities of public or private law should take appropriate measures to reasonably adapt these facilities to the needs of persons with disabilities.¹¹ Despite this, today most of the social facilities of Gagauzia are not equipped in accordance with the provisions of the current legislation on the rights of persons with special needs. Those facilities that are equipped with ramps, which to a small extent facilitate access to various public services and processes for persons with disabilities.

7. Unofficial translation of extracts from the Regulation and the explanatory note of the Venice Commission Report on Legislation on Political Party: Some Specific Issues (2004)

8. Unofficial translation of extracts from the Regulation and the explanatory note of the Venice Commission Report on Legislation on Political Party: Some Specific Issues (2004)

9. Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, ratified by the Republic of Moldova by Decree of the Parliament No. 1298-XIII of 07.24.1997

10. Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, ratified by the Parliament by Decree 1001-XIII of 22.10.1996.

11. Law of the Republic of Moldova “On Social Integration of Persons with Disabilities” No. 60 of 03/30/2012 MO № 155-159 dated 07/27/2012

The INFONET Alliance and its partners commissioned by UNDP Moldova in the framework of the project “Strengthening Democracy in Moldova through Inclusive and Transparent Elections”, implemented by UNDP Moldova and funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Kingdom Embassy in Chisinau through the Good Governance Fund and the Embassy of Netherlands through the Matra Program, in the framework of which the audit of polling stations, including in the territory of the ATU Gagauzia, was performed to determine their accessibility for persons with disabilities. According to the results of the analysis of 72 polling stations, only 2 (3%) of the polling stations were found to be accessible, and 12 (17%) of the polling stations were partially accessible.¹²

Thus, there are still many shortcomings associated with the premises for voting (for example, the lack of ramps, elevators, handrails, thresholds, etc.), in addition, there are problems associated with the lack of auxiliary means (sensory aids for the use of electoral bulletins that allow the use of braille or sensory symbols to identify candidates as blind and to ensure the confidentiality of their voting, etc.)

At the same time, there is also no methodology for assessing the conformity of polling stations, their material and technical equipment to the needs of persons with disabilities, which would establish a checklist of everything necessary for polling stations to ensure the accessibility of all elements of polling stations, including parking lots, sidewalks, entrances, corridors and the internal premises of the polling station.

2.3.2.7. The provisions on appeal procedures are not clear enough 2/1, 2/3

The Electoral Code of Gagauzia, in particular, Article 21 of the Part (6-7), Article 108 in part (2) and Article 110 provides that the Appeal Court Comrat is competent to approve the election results in the territory of Gagauzia and to consider complaints related to the elections. While in Articles 47 and 61 of the Establishment on Gagauzia it is established that the results of the election of deputies of the PAG and Governor (Bashkan) of Gagauzia are approved by the Tribunal of Gagauzia, which actually does not exist and the appeal procedure, which is used in practice, corresponds to the legislation of the Republic of Moldova, which provides for appeal in two instances: in the appeal (Appeal Court Comrat) and in cassation (Higher Trial Court of the Republic of Moldova).

At the same time, disputes related to the electoral law are considered in the courts of the country, not located in the territory of the ATU Gagauzia, by judges who do not know the specifics of the legislation of the Autonomy, which leads to a violation of substantive and procedural law when making decisions.

2.3.2.8. The mechanism for verifying signature collecting lists when submitting candidates is not clear 2/5

In accordance with Article 43 paragraph (6) of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia, signature collecting lists drawn up before the date of the nomination of candidates, as well as collected by persons not specified in part (2) of Article 42 of the Electoral Code and not signed by signature collector, or not certified by the seal of the local public authority are considered invalid. Signatures from signature collecting lists recognized as fake or duplicate are also considered invalid.

However, the current law does not determine how to verify fake signatures, both at the legislative and technical levels. There is no tool (computer programs) and a mechanism for identifying re-signatures in signature collecting lists, not to mention fake signatures. The above mentioned problems result in numerous complaints and litigations related to the refusal of the election authorities to register candidates for elections in connection with the establishment, for subjective reasons, of fake or duplicate voter signatures in the provided signature collecting lists.

2.3.2.9. Equal opportunities for media coverage during election campaigns 2/14

As previously noted, the Electoral Code of Gagauzia in Article 64 provides that, when covering the election process, the media are obliged to provide equal conditions for campaigning to all registered candidates, competitors, political parties, socio-political associations and electoral blocs registered in the corresponding electoral bodies of Gagauzia. At the same time, it is not allowed to give preference to any candidate, including in terms of coverage of his/her election activities, the amount of print space allocated to such messages, to provide

12. https://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/ro/home/library/effective_governance/acces-egal-pentru-toi-in-seciile-de-votare.html

free airtime in cases provided for by law and not to refuse in providing paid airtime in case if other candidates are provided with such airtime, or to unequally charge different candidates for different airtime and print space, equal in volume and other parameters.

In order to ensure objective, impartial media coverage of election campaigns, the CEC approves for the election period the Regulation on media coverage of the election campaign. The regulation defines the procedure for providing airtime for free or for a fee for campaign advertising, organization of election debates and the principles of coverage of an election campaign by television and radio organizations, print media, on the Internet and by mobile phone.

On the territory of the ATU Gagauzia there are broadcasting organizations with broadcast licenses issued by the authorities of Gagauzia, and not by the Television and Radio Board of the Republic of Moldova. At the same time, there is no authority to monitor compliance with the conditions of the issued licenses and conduct monitoring established by law, including at the request of stakeholders. Also, there are no sanctions established by law and, accordingly, no ascertaining body for their application.

As a result, providers of audiovisual media services, realizing that the application of sanctions is impossible, due to the lack of a competent authority, in the 2019 elections of the Bashkan of Gagauzia allowed themselves not to comply with the provisions of the electoral law and the publishing declaration, by not providing individual candidates with airtime, including on a fee basis. Example is one of the resolutions issued by the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia on the establishment of a violation by the PBC GRT №397/89 of 07.06.2019¹³. At the same time, this decision was sent to the TVRB of the Republic of Moldova, which, in turn, refused to consider a violation of the electoral legislation of Gagauzia by the provider of audiovisual media services, referring to the limited competence of the provisions of the Electoral Code of the Republic of Moldova. The consideration of complaints on the basis of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia by the TVRB of the Republic of Moldova, in spite of the broadcasting licenses issued by them, was regarded as exceeding their own competence.

2.3.2.10. Lack of specificity in the nomination of candidates to the District Election Councils 2/17

In accordance with part (9) of Article 29 of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia, lists of candidates for members of Precinct Election Bureaus are submitted by Local Council. Moreover, according to Article 27 of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia, candidates for members of the District Election Council are nominated by local public authorities. If in the first case it is specifically determined that candidatures for the Bureau are presented by Local Councils, then in the case of District Councils, the above norm is not sufficient, accurate, as a result, there is a non-uniform application of this provision. Since local public administration bodies, according to Law No. 436,¹⁴ are the Mayor, the Local Council, the District Chairperson and the District Council, everyone has the right to equally represent the candidates of District Election Councils. At the same time, the above procedure for the nomination of candidates does not ensure the independence of members of the electoral bodies, since they are offered only by local public administration authorities and in case of nomination by the Mayor or the District Chairperson, the sole representation of the entire composition of the Bureau.

In addition, both of the above norms contain provisions that in case of not timely nomination or insufficient nomination of candidates by Local Councils and local public authorities to the precinct Election Bureau and District Election Council, respectively, the missing number of members of the District Election Council is replenished by the Central Election Commission Gagauzia from the Register of election officials¹⁵, maintained by CECG¹⁶. At the same time, it is determined with which functions the position of a member of the District Election Council or a District Bureau is not compatible. However, the legislation does not provide for a provision that would not allow a proposal by local public authorities to the electoral bodies of persons who had previously been excluded from the list of the register of election officials for violation of the electoral law.

13. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NQtQSEqOXr5xl7t2u-A2rYtloGrFbvq8/view>

14. The Law of the Republic of Moldova "On Local Public Administration" No. 436 dated December 28, 2009. MO No. 32-35 dated 03/09/2007

15. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bqCR73MDBsP2LA9nVGtn2RyClpwRemPC/view>

16. Paragraph g) Part (1) Article 25 of the Electoral Code ATU Gagauzia № 60-XXVII/V of 31.07.2015

2.3.2.11. Population-oriented awareness-raising measures for the whole population are generally insufficient 3/1

During the election period, the Central Election Commission organizes and conducts awareness-raising campaigns. Materials are being developed aimed at increasing the interest of voters to take part in voting, as well as informing about the election process. Materials are distributed / posted in all constituencies, polling stations, mayoralities, and other public places. **Various trainings are organized to inform the public of the practical skills necessary for the correct and lawful exercise of their suffrage**, the need to manifest their electoral activity and civic responsibility. The CEC Gagauzia creates audio clips telling about the need to vote and why it is worth going to the polls, as well as informational videos of a training nature.

On the official website of the CEC Gagauzia, in social networks, on the websites of information and / or news portals, news about important aspects of the electoral processes, including those related to the activities of the electoral bodies, information banners of an informational and motivational nature, etc. are posted.

However, such events are organized only during the elections, and after the election and pre-election periods, no information companies are held due to the lack of a sufficient number of qualified personnel on a regular basis at the CECG.

2.3.2.12. Low level of political pluralism in the media 3/4

Article 6 of the Law of the ATU Gagauzia on Television and Radio Broadcasting No. 66-XXXI / V of March 01, 2016 stipulates that in order to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms when broadcasting and relaying software systems, political and social pluralism, cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious diversity, informing, educating and entertaining the public shall be observed. In order to promote and facilitate pluralism in expressing opinions and positions, broadcasting organizations are required to objectively, balancedly and impartially cover election campaigns. The concepts of coverage of election campaigns by broadcasting organizations are approved by the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia in strict accordance with the current legislation of the ATU Gagauzia.

But despite the legislative consolidation, broadcasting organizations located in the territory of the ATU of Gagauzia, during the period of election campaigns, as well as during the organization and conduct of election debates, do not observe the principle of pluralism, thereby giving preference to one or another candidate.

Experts of the Venice Commission note that: "Pluralism is guaranteed when there are many autonomous and independent media institutions at the national, regional and local levels, thus providing a variety of media with content that reflects different political and cultural points of view."¹⁷

At the same time, it should be noted that broadcasting organizations located in the territory of ATU Gagauzia are private mass media, and only the Public Broadcasting Company GRT is financed mainly from the budget of ATU Gagauzia.

However, a violation of the principle of pluralism is widespread both in public television and radio GRT, as well as in private broadcasting organizations.

All this can be clearly observed during the election period. So, as an example, one can cite the coverage of the election campaign for the elections of the Bashkan of Gagauzia on June 30, 2019 by the Public Broadcasting Company GRT. As election observers noted, for the entire period of the election campaign at GRT, there was a publishing policy aimed at presenting in a negative light and criticizing one of the candidates for the post of Bashkan of Gagauzia.

Observers noted that in 18 thematic programs in which politicians, activists and other citizens participated, including some videos that were aired at that time, this candidate was criticized severely, while presenters and program editors did not care about pluralism of opinions¹⁸.

This may lead to a loss of confidence in the media and adversely affect the prospects for democratic transformation in the region. At the same time, the body regulating and responsible for the control and licensing of private

17. [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=cdl-pi\(2016\)011-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=cdl-pi(2016)011-e) , Compilation of Venice Commission opinions and reports concerning freedom of expression and media, Strasbourg, 19 September 2016

18. PILGRIM- DEMO FINAL REPORT "REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GAGAUZIA, ELECTIONS OF BASHKAN, JUNE 30, 2019

broadcast media in the territory of Gagauzia, as well as the guarantor of public interests, as mentioned above, does not exist.

2.3.2.13. The overall potential of the Central Electoral Body is weak 4/1

A SWOT analysis showed that the technical capacity of the Central Election Commission is currently quite weak. At the same time, it should be noted that the CEC Gagauzia is a relatively recently created body (exists as a permanent body of public law since 2015), and its potential is constantly developing and expanding. Despite this, a number of problems interfere with the functioning of the Central Electoral Body in full:

- ▶ insufficient number of employees of the apparatus: CEC Gagauzia should have a staff of professional workers who would be active in the inter-electoral periods;
- ▶ the professionalism of the members and employees of the CEC Gagauzia: the knowledge of the CECG members and election officials regarding the electoral field management technologies in the pre-election and post-election periods is insufficient, there is a lack of training according to European standards in the electoral field, and monitoring of changes in the legislation of the Republic of Moldova, including electoral legislation and under administrative law;
- ▶ lack of technical equipment: in particular, there is no automated information system for instant information exchange between electoral bodies of different levels. Such a system would ensure the transparency of the electoral process, respecting the secrecy of the vote; access to the electoral process of all voters, including those outside the ATU of Gagauzia and the Republic of Moldova, promptness in obtaining reliable information about the participation of voters in the vote, as well as the publication of the results of voting and summing up the preliminary results of voting, statistical processing and analysis of the results of elections and referenda and etc.

2.3.3. POSITIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM (OPPORTUNITIES)

2.3.3.1. Most of the population has access to phones and the Internet. 8/13 8/14

Access to telephones is a positive factor. The penetration rate of mobiles in Gagauzia is high. Phone is used to call potential candidates, voters, members of electoral bodies, access to information, etc.

The number of Internet providers is enough, to cover the entire territory of Gagauzia by Internet services. The percentage of the population with Internet access is increasing every year. In 2017, 71% of the population of the Republic of Moldova¹⁹ used the Internet. Anyone can have internet access for a fee. In addition, libraries in all communities have PCs for the public with free internet access.

2.3.3.2. The population has access to private audiovisual media channels. 8/15

The population has access to alternative opinions, which may differ from the position / information disseminated by official / state media. So, according to the General Department of Construction and Infrastructure of Gagauzia, 11 private organizations providing broadcasting services in the territory of Gagauzia are registered in the territory of ATU Gagauzia. Private media are controlled by private individuals and, as a rule, are not controlled by the authorities or its individual representatives. The only public radio broadcaster operating in the territory of ATU Gagauzia is GRT, financed mainly from the budget of Gagauzia.

2.3.4. NEGATIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM (THREATS)

2.3.4.1. There are no programs to engage citizens in public life, information on decisions, implementation of policies and on performance is not always provided to the public 6/1 , 7/9

In this area, as in many others, civil society is an important element of the democratic process. In this regard, the detachment of citizens from participation in the public life of the region becomes a problem.

19. Report "The Status of Broadband: Broadband Catalyzing Sustainable Development," September 2018, prepared by the UN Broadband Commission.

On the one hand, there is a lack of measures to involve citizens in public life, and on the other hand, there is a low activity and interest of the population itself and, in particular, of public organizations.

It should be noted that in 2017, requirements for transparency in decision-making were included in the regulations of People's Assembly and Executive Committee of Gagauzia²⁰. So these administrative acts were supplemented by provisions that oblige the authorities of Gagauzia to inform the public about the initiation of the development of a decision; make draft decisions and related materials available to interested parties; provide equal opportunities for the participation of citizens, associations created in accordance with the law, other interested parties in the decision-making process; hold consultations with citizens, associations created in accordance with the law, other interested parties; consider the recommendations of citizens, associations created in accordance with the law, other interested parties in the process of developing draft decisions; inform the public about decisions made.

In pursuance of these provisions, the authorities of the ATU Gagauzia began to publish draft decrees, laws and decisions on their official websites. Despite the significant progress achieved in the application of legislation on transparency of the decision-making process, the analysis shows that this activity is still in its infancy, and a significant part of the acts and plans are still being adopted without following this procedure. It is also common practice to adopt projects during meetings of the Executive Committee and the People's Assembly of Gagauzia urgently, without prior informing and consulting interested parties.

In addition, the official websites of the authorities of the ATU Gagauzia do not meet the requirements for them today in terms of transparency and the possibility of taking part in the discussion of draft administrative acts. There are no headings on the official websites where you could leave your feedback on the project, or a complaint about certain actions of representatives of state bodies, as well as evaluate the activities of the authorities of Gagauzia

At the same time, there are no special programs at the regional level for involving citizens in public affairs management, and there are no legislative provisions that would oblige elected persons to submit reports at least upon completion of the mandate.

Over the past 4 years, apart from the current Bashkan, who periodically reported on the work done during the implementation of the first mandate of 2015-2019, none of the elected officials of Gagauzia presented their activities to the public in an elected position, as a result, citizens were not able to analyze the activities their chosen ones (deputies of the PAG, mayors, advisers in local councils), and to evaluate their work and draw certain conclusions for themselves, including from elections perspective.

All these internal factors, as well as such external aspects as: gaps in the education system regarding the formation of democratic citizenship; the level of socio-economic development and, as a result, the lack of an active and interested in public participation population, the lack of constant transport links between the center and the periphery directly affect the involvement of citizens in the processes of managing the region and making decisions.

2.3.4.2. Poor quality information provided by the media 6/11

Freedom of expression is enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. In accordance with these international acts, everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This fundamental right includes freedom to have opinions without interference from public authorities and regardless of state borders, as well as freedom to seek, receive and disseminate information and ideas by any means and regardless of state borders, either orally, in writing, in print or in art, or by any other ways of your choice.

The Constitution of the Republic of Moldova and the Establishment on Gagauzia proclaim this fundamental right to freedom of opinion and expression, enshrining in article 32 of the Constitution and article 26 of the Establishment on Gagauzia.

Part (11) of Article 64 of the Electoral Code of Gagauzia establishes that the media have the right to reflect the election results and inform the public about all electoral aspects without any interference from government bodies, election candidates (candidates) or other organizations, in compliance with conditions established by the provisions of this Code. Also, the coverage of the election process can be carried out by any organization of the media regardless of ownership, territory of distribution of their products and any other circumstances.

20. <https://halktoplushu.md/index.php/zakonodatelstvo-ato/zakony-ato-gagauziya/1969-zakon-14-ot-10-noyabrya-2017-goda-o-vnesenii-izmenenij-i-dopolnenij-v-nekotorye-zakonodatelnye-akty>

Thus, the legal framework for the media complies with international standards in the field of civil and fundamental rights, the legislation provides for freedom of speech and allows criticizing authorities or discussing issues of public interest.

However, neither the national legislation nor the legislation of ATU Gagauzia provide for any mandatory requirements for the implementation of the profession of a journalist and ethical requirements in the work of a journalist. This is no less important, since the exercise of freedom of speech also imposes obligations and responsibilities, as it can be associated with certain formalities, conditions, restrictions or sanctions that are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public order, in order to prevent unrest or crime, to protect health and morality, to protect the reputation or rights of others, to prevent the disclosure of information confidentiality, or the credibility and impartiality of justice.

The right to express an opinion is fundamental in the constitutional system of the Republic of Moldova. At the same time, this right is capable of substantially infringing on the rights of other persons²¹, therefore, part (2) of Article 32 of the Constitution states that "*Freedom of expression should not prejudice the honor, dignity or the right of another person to have their own views*," therefore professionalism, as one of the requirements, must be taken into account when hiring a journalist or improving his qualifications. The lack of elementary knowledge in the field of electoral law or ethical standards on the part of individual journalists leads to the dissemination of distorted or poor-quality information, which misleads the public, including international observers, who follow the course of elections in Gagauzia, as well as damage the honor and dignity of only candidates, but also other interested parties.

2.3.4.3. Most of the population lives in poverty 10/1

According to the NSB, the average monthly income per person of the statistical Region of the South (data on the ATU Gagauzia are not collected) in 2017 was 1984.1 lei (about 99_ euros per day)²². At the same time, the average monthly expenses of the population amounted to 2,003 lei. These indicators indicate a low standard of living. And to be poor means to be deprived of basic human rights to realize one's own capabilities (including in the electoral sphere) and access to the resources necessary to ensure a decent standard of living.

In addition, poverty is associated with unemployment, and unemployment is by no means a mobilizing factor for the political activity of citizens, since the lack of work, and as a result of income and stability, is detrimental to social security. The inability to find a job for a long period of time can cause social apathy, distrust of the authorities.

People in search of income are forced to leave the borders of their state, and in the absence of an alternative vote allowing the exercise of suffrage, being outside the ATU Gagauzia, most of the active population falls out of the election process, and as a result from the management of public affairs.

2.3.4.4. International donor support for electoral initiatives is not significant 10/15

In 2016, under the Bashkan of Gagauzia a Coordination Council was created, which included representatives of the autonomy authorities, as well as representatives of international partners located in the Republic of Moldova. The aim was to closer cooperate and attract necessary support for the development and implementation of various programs in Gagauzia.

Nevertheless, over the past 5 years, with the support of UNDP in Moldova and the Council of Europe, the following short-term projects have been implemented to support the CEC Gagauzia:

UNDP in Moldova:

- ▶ In 2015, during the Bashkan elections in Moldova, the UNDP presented the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia 4 computers and 2 printers.
- ▶ In 2016, during the election of deputies of the PAG in Moldova, the UNDP printed all educational information material.
- ▶ In 2019, braille stencils were made for the visually impaired and magnifying glasses were donated for each polling station;

21. Decision of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Moldova No. 12 of June 4, 2013 on the control of the constitutionality of certain provisions regarding the prohibition of communist symbols and the propaganda of totalitarian ideologies (Appeal No. 33a / 2012), §92

22. Publicatia "Statistica Teritoriala – 2018" <http://statistica.gov.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=4290>

- ▶ A small grants project was implemented with the participation of 2 public organizations that conducted an information campaign among young people, including in educational institutions; in order to promote the CECG logo, T-shirts, folder bags, pens with the CECG logo were manufactured by the UNDP.

Council of Europe:

- ▶ 5 sets of laptops and 5 printers for district election councils, 9 tablets for CECG members, a shredder, a television, a conference system for the CECG meeting room were purchased.
- ▶ Information materials of a motivational and educational nature were produced at the elections of Bashkan in 2019.
- ▶ Funded the creation and maintenance of the official site of the CECG, organized the participation of 2 members of the CECG at the seminar “Modern election technology” in Vienna (Austria).
- ▶ Seminars were held with the involvement of NGOs for members of Precinct Electoral Bureaus on the topic of ensuring free access for persons with disabilities to the electoral process.
- ▶ A project is currently being implemented with the participation of international and European experts to develop a strategy for the CECG.

Despite the above-mentioned completed projects, this support is not enough to solve many tasks and problems that the comparatively young central election agency faces in its existence.

2.4. PROBLEMS AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The following is a schematic SWOT analysis of ECA variables affecting the electoral system, both internally and externally, generated by the URSO electronic tool:



The above presented scheme clearly shows that the electoral processes in the ATU Gagauzia have more weaknesses and negative sides than strong and positive ones. In addition, based on an analysis of the external environment, it can be concluded that the socio-political and economic situation in the region also has a generally negative impact on the electoral system.

Thus, based on the identified SWOT variables, as a result of a prospective intervention, in accordance with the URSO methodology, a Mobilization Strategy is needed. This strategy emphasizes the influence of strengths and opportunities, which creates serious challenges to creating a positive system. In this case, it is the mobilization strategy that is applicable, since external threats are quite widespread, and therefore it is necessary to use strengths and opportunities in order to limit the influence of external threats.

In this regard, the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia has to solve the following objectives:

Objective № 1. Strengthening the status and potential of the CEC Gagauzia.

Strengthening the status and potential of the CEC of Gagauzia is a task, the implementation of which, implies legislative consolidation of the legal status of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia at the national level. It is also necessary to approve the new structure of the CEC apparatus, which would ensure the full functionality

of this body. To achieve the goal of strengthening the potential of the CEC, the continuous development of professional abilities of members and employees of the CEC apparatus will be required.

In order to increase the efficiency of the CEC and to apply best practices in the electoral sphere, cooperation relations with international organizations promoting human rights will be strengthened.

Objective № 2. Ensuring a modern, efficient, transparent and reliable electoral process.

A modern, efficient and transparent electoral process is one of the main tasks of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia for the next 4 years. For its implementation, it is proposed to introduce specific solutions to ensure transparency, efficiency and reliability of the electoral process, including access to state registers of the population and voters, and the development of new technical solutions to automate electoral procedure.

To accomplish this task, the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia will carry out a number of strategic actions, the implementation of which will significantly improve the electoral operations and increase the reliability of the election results held by the CEC.

Objective № 3. Harmonization of the legislation of the Republic of Moldova and the legislation of the ATU Gagauzia regulating the electoral system and processes.

Comprehensive electoral legislation, which provides the residents of the ATU Gagauzia with the right to elect and be elected in accordance with international standards of democracy, is an important factor affecting the reliability of election results.

In this regard, the commission will propose the creation of a working group that will identify existing shortcomings and gaps in the electoral legislation of the Republic of Moldova and the ATU Gagauzia, and will develop specific amendments to the electoral legislation in order to harmonize and improve it taking into account the best European practices.

The CEC Gagauzia, in turn, will ensure the introduction of the proposed amendments to the legislative initiative bodies for consideration and will ensure a direct control at all levels of the passage of bills - from the stage of their development to their adoption.

Objective № 4. Ensuring access to electoral processes.

Without the participation of all citizens, a country cannot become truly democratic, therefore ensuring access of citizens to the electoral processes is another task that must be solved by the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia. Speaking about ensuring access, in this particular case, it implies ensuring participation in the elections for two categories of citizens: residents of Gagauzia, living outside the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia and persons with special needs. As part of this task, it is proposed to develop a mechanism that will allow residents of Gagauzia located outside its borders to vote in the elections of Bashkan and deputies of the People's Assembly of Gagauzia. As for the second category of citizens - people with special needs, in this case, the CEC together with the public administration authorities will have to direct their efforts to ensure, first of all, physical access to the electoral authorities.

Objective № 5. Ensuring equal right to freedom of speech in the media in the electoral framework.

Pre-election campaigning is the stage of the electoral process, where the "will of the people" is formed before the people make their final choice. Therefore, it is very important that the media observe the principle of pluralism, of course, not only during the election period.

The media in a democratic society should, at a minimum, provide comprehensive and reliable information about both political and social processes, and about the candidates themselves or about their actions, so that citizens can make informed decisions and thereby participate in political processes. In this regard, in order to ensure compliance with pluralism of opinions and the full implementation of legislative provisions on media transparency, monitoring and control of the media broadcast is necessary. The Central Election Commission of

Gagauzia will hence have to develop a mechanism, the introduction of which will ensure equal rights to freedom of speech in the media during the election period.

Objective № 6. Active participation of the population in the electoral processes.

No one has the right to control the will of the voter, to force him to come to the polling station. But the more actively and consciously the population participates in the elections, the sooner and better the complex problems in the country are resolved, the more stable is the economic, social, and political development. In addition, the active participation of the population in the elections is able to solve such an important problem in Gagauzia as the high threshold for voter turnout, as provided by law.

Thus, the CEC Gagauzia intends to focus on the civic education of the inhabitants of the Autonomy, including the younger generation, as well as on raising the awareness of voters in the inter-electoral period.

3. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The strategic plan for development of the Central Election Commission is based on the existing problems identified and described above and presents the specific strategic tasks facing the CEC of Gagauzia, as well as relevant actions that need to be implemented in the next 4 years.

Actions	Deadlines	Results
Objective 1. Strengthening the status and potential of the CEC of the ATU Gagauzia		
<p>1.1. Proposal to create a working group of representatives of authorities of the Republic of Moldova and ATU Gagauzia, as well as experts in the field of electoral law to develop provisions regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ consolidation of the status of members of the CEC Gagauzia at the national level in the Law on the Status of Persons Performing Responsible Government Positions, regarding the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson of the CEC Gagauzia, in the Laws “On the State Position and the Status of Public Servant” No. 158, “On the Unified Classifier of Public Positions” No. 155 regarding the apparatus of the CEC Gagauzia; ▶ the establishment in the Law “On the Unified System of Remuneration in the Budget Sphere” No. 270 corresponding classes, levels, and levels of remuneration for members of the CEC Gagauzia and its staff; <p>1.2. Further training of members and staff of the CEC Gagauzia in the CEC RM and in its apparatus;</p> <p>1.3. Revision of the CEC Gagauzia staffing table in order to implement the functions assigned to it more effectively;</p> <p>1.4. Development and / or adaptation of training programs for employees of the electoral sphere of Gagauzia in CCET based on the electoral legislation of both the Republic of Moldova and the ATU Gagauzia;</p> <p>1.5. Training of employees of the electoral sphere of Gagauzia at the base of CCET;</p> <p>1.6. Initiation of participation in the Coordination Council under the Bashkan of Gagauzia;</p> <p>1.7. Coordination of NGO activities on the implementation of projects in the field of electoral law in the territory of the ATU Gagauzia together with the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia;</p> <p>1.8. Equipping electoral bodies with office equipment and software products aimed at ensuring transparency and security of the election process, accumulation and processing of data bank.</p>	<p>Till the end of 2020</p> <p>Years 2020-2022</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Till the end of 2020</p> <p>First –second quarters 2020</p> <p>Annually during the third quarter</p> <p>Permanently</p> <p>Permanently</p> <p>When required or permanently</p>	<p>1. Created working group to improve legislation;</p> <p>2. The developed draft laws on amendments to the legislation of the Republic of Moldova regarding the consolidation of the status of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia;</p> <p>3. Adoption by the PAG of the developed draft laws as a legislative initiative and / or submission by Governor of Gagauzia through the Government and / or deputies of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova of the indicated legislative initiatives to the Parliament.</p> <p>4. The adoption by the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova of the introduced legislative initiatives.</p> <p>5. The presence of professional and qualified personnel in the CEC Gagauzia, able to make decisions promptly;</p> <p>6. The increase in the number of staff of the CEC Gagauzia, the approved staffing table;</p> <p>7. Developed programs and programs approved by the CEC Gagauzia for the training of electoral officials;</p> <p>8. The number of trained electoral officials;</p> <p>9. The number of letters, official appeals, meetings with donors at which the problems of the CEC of Gagauzia and the issues of the need for support were discussed;</p> <p>10. The number of projects / programs implemented by international partners in support of the electoral sphere of Gagauzia;</p> <p>11. The consent of international partners to include in the contracts concluded with NGOs concerning the implementation of electoral projects in the ATU Gagauzia, conditions for coordinating the activities of NGOs with the CEC Gagauzia;</p> <p>12. The number of premises of electoral bodies, equipped with the necessary equipment (laptops, faxes, printers, etc.)</p>
Objective 2. Ensuring a modern, efficient, transparent and reliable electoral process.		

Actions	Deadlines	Results
<p>2.1. Development of own automated information system for automating the processes of preparing, conducting, summarizing the results of elections and referenda in ATU Gagauzia;</p> <p>2.2. Gaining access to the State Automated Information System of the Republic of Moldova "Elections" for verification of persons included in the voters' register with the Gagauzia voters' register;</p> <p>2.3. Obtaining access to the State Register of Population by initiating amendments to the corresponding provision in order to organize access by the CEC to the data of the population living in the territory of Gagauzia;</p> <p>2.4. Gaining access to the State Voters' Register by initiating amendments to the Regulation on the State Voters' Register, approved by the Decree of the CEC of the Republic of Moldova No. 2974 of 11/19/2014, on assigning the status of registrar to the CEC Gagauzia.</p> <p>2.5. Developing own voters' register based on the data provided.</p>	<p>Years 2020-2022</p> <p>Years 2021-2023</p>	<p>1. Developed proposals on gaining access to the SRP, State Automated Information System "Elections" and the voters' register;</p> <p>2. Adopted amendments to the legislation providing full access to the State Automated Information System "Elections" and the voters' register;</p> <p>3. Own automated system;</p> <p>4. Own voters' register.</p>
<p>Objective 3. Harmonization of the legislation of the Republic of Moldova and the legislation of the ATU Gagauzia regulating the electoral system and processes.</p>		
<p>3.1. In the framework of the working group, which will be created to develop specific provisions in the current legislation, to consider issues regarding:</p> <p>A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ inclusion in the Electoral Code of the Republic of Moldova of a separate section with a reference to the mandatory application by all state authorities, public institutions, enterprises, organizations and individuals (regardless of ownership), of the electoral legislation of Gagauzia during the elections of Governor of Gagauzia; Deputies of the People's Assembly of Gagauzia; ▶ delimitation of competencies for the conduct of elections to local public authorities in the territory of ATU Gagauzia; ▶ defining the CEC of Gagauzia in the Electoral Code as body performing the functions of the District Council in the territory of the ATU Gagauzia for the period of republican election campaigns; ▶ inclusion in the Electoral Code of the Republic of Moldova of provisions on the approval of election results in the territory of the ATU Gagauzia, as well as consideration of complaints related to the elections of Gagauzia by the Appeal Court Comrat in accordance with the electoral legislation of the ATU Gagauzia; <p>B)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ unification of the provisions of the ATU Gagauzia legislation regarding the judicial system. ▶ development of a mechanism and program for verifying the authenticity of signatures in signature collecting lists; ▶ specification of provisions regarding bodies competent to represent candidates for members of district councils; 	<p>Years 2020-2022</p> <p>Years 2020-2021</p>	<p>1. The number of developed proposals and decisions aimed at subjects of legislative initiative related to the improvement of legislation;</p> <p>2. Developed draft laws on amendments to the Electoral Code of the Republic of Moldova;</p> <p>3. The adoption by the PAG of the developed draft laws as a legislative initiative and / or the submission by the Governor of Gagauzia through the Government, and / or the deputies of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova of these projects to the Parliament.</p> <p>4. The adoption by the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova of the introduced legislative initiatives.</p> <p>5. Legislation governing signature verification;</p> <p>6. Developed program and mechanism for verifying the authenticity of voter signatures in signature collecting lists;</p>

Actions	Deadlines	Results
<p>3.2. Appeal to the authorized bodies having the right of legislative initiative in the PAG / to the deputies of the Parliament /Governor of Gagauzia, as a member of the Government with a proposal to introduce draft laws / regulations of the Republic of Moldova and ATU Gagauzia, developed by the working group in Parliament for consideration.</p>	<p>Years 2020-2023</p>	
<p>Objective 4. Ensuring access to electoral processes.</p>		
<p>4.1. As part of the working groups' activities to improve legislation, to develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ a mechanism that allows citizens of RM living in Gagauzia, however temporarily not in Gagauzia to vote at polling stations outside Gagauzia, in large cities of the Republic of Moldova in elections of the Governor of Gagauzia; ▶ a mechanism providing the right to Gagauzia residents outside the Republic of Moldova to elect in Gagauz elections; ▶ taking into account the best European practices, making proposal to amend the legislation on political parties on the possibility of creating national minorities' parties, while the principle of territoriality, as the main requirement, is replaced, for example, by ethnic origin as part of party members; <p>4.2. Development of a regulation establishing a mandatory list of equipment / construction and auxiliary items with which the buildings / premises of the electoral bodies must be equipped in order to be accessible to each voter, including for persons with special needs (during the elections of the Bashkan of Gagauzia and the deputies of the PAG);</p> <p>4.3. Submission of proposals to the local public authorities on establishing locations for polling stations for a 5-year period;</p> <p>4.4. Conducting an analysis of the compliance of each building / premises of the district council / polling station with the needs of persons with disabilities, elderly people, people with children in wheelchairs, etc.</p> <p>4.5. Submitting proposals on the inclusion in the budget of the ATU of Gagauzia and the corresponding local budgets of expenses related to providing access to polling stations (construction / installation of ramps, railings, lighting, etc.) together with a financial and economic justification.</p>	<p>Years 2020-2022</p> <p>Till the end of the third quarter 2020</p> <p>First half of the year 2020</p> <p>Third quarter 2020</p> <p>Annually till November</p>	<p>1. The created mechanism providing residents of Gagauzia living outside Gagauzia with the right to elect in Gagauz elections;</p> <p>2. The created mechanism providing residents of Gagauzia living outside the Republic of Moldova with the right to elect in the Gagauz elections;</p> <p>3. A draft law on amendments to the legislation on parties, developed and submitted to the subjects of legislative initiative, that will allow national minorities to create political parties;</p> <p>4. Number of local public administrations that have decided to establish the buildings / premises for District Election Councils and polling stations for a 5-year period;</p> <p>5. The developed and approved regulation on the checklist of objects and auxiliary items with which the premises of the electoral body should be equipped;</p> <p>6. Analysis' results;</p> <p>7. A proposal submitted to the Executive Committee of Gagauzia with a feasibility study on the need to equip the buildings / premises of the electoral bodies with everything required;</p> <p>8. The number of electoral premises equipped with the necessary structures and auxiliary means providing everyone with access to suffrage;</p> <p>9. Official CEC web pages tailored to the needs of persons with special needs;</p> <p>10. Amount of informational materials developed and distributed for groups with special needs.</p>

Actions	Deadlines	Results
Objective 5. Ensuring equal right to freedom of speech in the media in the electoral framework.		
<p>5.1. In the framework of the work of the working group, which will be created to harmonize and improve legislation, to consider issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ on the inclusion in the RM Code of Audiovisual Media Services of the provisions defining the cooperation between the CEC Gagauzia and the Television and Radio Board of Moldova in monitoring and controlling the coverage of election campaigns conducted on the basis of the Gagauz legislation, including the application of sanctions on broadcasting organizations for violation of the electoral law; ▶ to consider the possibility and expediency of including in the Electoral Code of the ATU Gagauzia provisions on the allocation of funds from the budget of the CEC to pay the minimum package of airtime directly to the media, to provide it on equal terms to all candidates; ▶ on reviewing the legislation of the region governing the activities of all types of media, and bringing it into line with national and international principles in this area; ▶ development of a methodology for monitoring pluralism in the media broadcasting in the territory of Gagauzia during the election campaign; <p>5.2. Creation of a technical service / council at the CEC of Gagauzia to monitor broadcasting of electoral broadcasts on the territory of the ATU Gagauzia and broadcasting organizations that do not have licenses issued by the TVRB, as well as to record cases of violation of the electoral law (development of a provision on the technical service);</p> <p>5.3. Conducting trainings for media representatives covering the election campaign conducted by the CEC of Gagauzia in order to increase the competence of journalists in the region and the republic in the field of electoral law.</p>	<p>Years 2020-2023</p> <p>Year 2021</p> <p>Annually</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals that would allow legalizing the activities of mass media operating in the territory of Gagauzia and improving legislation in this area; Legislative mechanism allowing the STR to monitor and control the media operating in the territory of ATU Gagauzia; The created and fixed mechanism allowing the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia to monitor the media during the electoral period in order to identify cases of violation of the electoral law and the principle of pluralism, and appeal to the TVRB of the RM for sanctions against violators; Developed and approved methodology for monitoring pluralism in the media; Created at the CEC technical service for monitoring the media during the election period; Number of seminars held for media representatives; The proportion of media representatives who took part in educational trainings for the media, compared with the total number of representatives operating in the territory of ATU Gagauzia.
Objective 6. Active participation of the population in the electoral processes		
<p>6.1. Development of an action plan to increase voter awareness during the inter-electoral period, targeted at different target groups (school students, young voters, the media, non-governmental organizations, persons with disabilities, etc.)</p> <p>6.2. Calculation of costs for the implementation of an action plan with the subsequent proposal for its inclusion in the budget for the corresponding year.</p> <p>6.3. Initiation of a revision in curriculum educational institutions on the subjects “Civic Education”, “Spiritual and Moral Education” and “Personality Development” with the aim of increasing the general consciousness of younger generation about participation in public life and the decision-making process, including in the electoral field;</p> <p>6.4. Making suggestions for inclusion meetings with representatives of the Central Election Commission and with elected officials of different levels in the school curriculum in order to popularize active and passive suffrage among younger generations;</p>	<p>Annually not later than February</p> <p>Annually till November</p> <p>Years 2020-2021</p> <p>Years 2020-2021</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The approved action plan to inform the public about the electoral processes; The number of events organized by the CEC Gagauzia: trainings, seminars, information campaigns, etc. for different target groups; Number of participants who took part in them (women, men, persons with disabilities); Media coverage of events; A proposal submitted to the General Department of Education of Gagauzia to revise the curriculum in order to include more topics related to suffrage in the program; Adopted legislative amendments providing for mandatory meetings with elected representatives and representatives of the CECG; Number of meetings held at educational institutions;

4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM

The Strategic Development Plan is implemented through the annual plan approved by the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia. This plan will include goals / objectives stipulated in the Strategic Development Plan, on the basis of which specific annual actions and results are formulated, the main tool for organizing the operational activities of the Central Election Commission and the basis for annual monitoring and evaluation of the plan.

Monitoring seeks to comply with the annual plan and identify the causes of possible failures, and also proposes corrective measures necessary to improve operational achievements. Monitoring can be carried out using the URSO methodology of the Council of Europe, and must confirm that certain annual activities are being implemented and give the expected results, or, if necessary, propose the necessary corrective measures for their further adoption.

Monitoring of activities and reporting will be carried out by the apparatus of the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia. The involvement of third parties for such monitoring and / or adjustment of plans will be decided by the Chairperson of the CECG in each individual case.

Reports will be annually compiled and submitted to the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia for approval.

The evaluation, which will be included in the Final Evaluation Report, will be implemented in the last year of implementation of the Strategic Development Plan and will be carried out with the involvement of international experts and local experts in the field of electoral law, who participated in the development of this strategy, as well as representatives of NGOs.

The purpose of this assessment is to provide the information necessary to finalize the Strategic Development Plan for the next planning period, as well as to identify obstacles that did not allow the implementation of specific strategic actions. The report on the final assessment will be approved by the Central Election Commission of Gagauzia and presented to the public.

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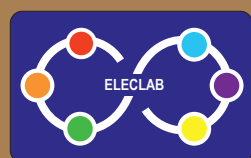
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