

REGULATION
on the peculiarities of organization and implementation of voting by mail

Chapter I. General provisions

1. This Regulation establishes the peculiarities of the organization and conduct of voting by mail by citizens of the Republic of Moldova with the right to vote abroad, as well as the responsibilities of electoral bodies and other entities involved in the organization of this process.

2. The purpose of this Regulation is to detail the electoral procedures for preliminary registration for voting by mail; the preparation of voters' lists and electoral materials related to the exercise of voting by mail; the securing of the process of voting by mail; the transmission, reception, storing, and ensuring of integrity of the electoral materials used in the process of voting by mail; as well as the procedures for counting, tabulation, and centralizing the results of voting by mail.

3. This Regulation shall apply to citizens of the Republic of Moldova who are in the territory of the United States of America, Canada, the Kingdom of Norway, the Kingdom of Sweden, the Republic of Finland, and the Republic of Iceland during the elections for the position of President of the Republic of Moldova and the republican referendum of 20 October 2024.

4. For the purpose of clarity and fluidity of the text, as well as in order not to load the text with masculine/feminine doublets, the nouns used in this Regulation have the form of generic masculine and bear an inclusive/nonsexist character.

5. For the purposes of this Regulation, the following terms shall be defined:

security label – adhesive label used to seal depersonalized inner envelopes;

voting period – period starting with reception by the voter of voting materials and ending with reception by the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau of envelopes with ballot papers no later than 18:00 local time of the host country on the Thursday before election day;

envelope with materials for voting – envelope sent to the voter for the exercise of voting by mail, containing the materials provided for in Article 22 of Law no. 109/2024 on the partial implementation of voting by mail;

personalized outer envelope – envelope sent to the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau by the voter, containing the blank of the declaration on abstention from multiple voting and on confirmation of the exercise of the right to vote in secret and the depersonalized inner envelope with the ballot paper;

depersonalized inner envelope – envelope containing the ballot paper, without voter identification data;

registration system – application intended for preliminary registration of voters, including for voting by mail;

information subsystem for voting by mail – part of the State Automated Information System

“Elections” used for record-keeping of envelopes, ballot papers, as well as automated generation of voting-by-mail voters’ lists.

6. Personal data collected as a result of registration for voting by mail shall be processed by authorized persons of electoral bodies in accordance with legislation on the protection of personal data, exclusively for the purpose of organizing and conducting elections.

Chapter II. Procedure of preliminary registration for voting by mail

Section 1. Conditions for the procedure of preliminary registration for voting by mail

7. Citizens of the Republic of Moldova with the right to vote who will be abroad during the voting period and choose to vote by mail shall be registered in advance through the official website of the Central Electoral Commission, according to the procedure described by this Regulation.

8. Registration for voting by mail is a mandatory procedure by which citizens of the Republic of Moldova with the right to vote notify the Central Electoral Commission of their intention to exercise their right to vote by mail.

9. The purpose of registration for voting by mail is to determine the number of voters who express their intention to vote this way, the number of polling stations necessary to be established for voting by mail, as well as to prepare voting-by-mail voters’ lists, determine the number of ballot papers and other electoral materials necessary for the organization of electoral procedures related to voting by mail, the quantity of electoral equipment.

10. Registration for voting by mail is available from the date of publication of the act setting the date of elections and up to 45 days before the date of elections. In case of the second round of presidential elections, initial records, including those cancelling registration, shall be maintained.

11. If a voter cancels registration within a term of up to 45 days before election day, he is entitled to make a new preliminary registration, but not later than the established deadline. If a voter renounces the intention to exercise his vote by mail, he has the right to cancel the preliminary registration no later than 25 days before election day.

Section 2. Procedure of preliminary registration for voting by mail

12. In order to register for voting by mail, the citizens of the Republic of Moldova shall enter the application “Preliminary Registration” (hereinafter – *the app*) on the official website www.alegator.md, administered by the Central Electoral Commission, or access the direct link <https://inregistrare.cec.md/>.

13. The initiation of the preliminary registration procedure is done by pressing the button “Online Registration” in the app mentioned in item 12.

14. After opening the electronic form, the person must follow these steps:

14.1. Fill in the spaces displayed (state identification number of the individual (IDNP), date of birth);

14.2. Tick the “anti-robot” box;

14.3. Press the “Verify Identity” button.

By pressing the “Verify Identity” button, the person is identified in the State Register of Voters.

15. After completing the steps described in item 13, the person shall proceed to the next

stage of the procedure:

- 15.1. Press the “New Registration” button.
 - 15.2. Indicate the locality and country where he will be during the voting period.
 - 15.3. Select the polling station where he/she wants to vote (in order of priority, or select the option with the locality indicated above). In case of lack of options to select the polling station, the voter indicates the locality and country where he will be on election day.
 - 15.4. Select the type of residence from abroad (permanent/temporary).
 - 15.5. Tick the option “I want to vote by mail”.
16. When accessing the option for voting by mail, fields with mailing address and contact details of the voter abroad are displayed. Some data of the mailing address will be pre-filled (country, territorial unit, locality/city), and the recipient will be indicated according to the identity document. The voter will fill in the required fields:
- 16.1. Postal code;
 - 16.2. The mailing address abroad to which the envelope with electoral materials for voting is to be sent;
 - 16.3. Contact telephone;
 - 16.4. Valid electronic address, at which he will be able to receive the message confirming registration, as well as other notifications or information of electoral nature.
17. The voter presses the “Register the application” button, and a message with the link to confirm the application for registration will be sent to the indicated electronic address.
18. Upon confirmation of the application for registration, the voter returns to the app, where he attaches a photo of his/her face taken simultaneously with the identity document confirming the right to vote, and presses the “Confirm declaration” button.
19. By confirming the declaration, the voter assumes the responsibility that the data he indicated are correct and truthful, as well as expresses his consent that they be processed by authorized persons within the Central Electoral Commission/electoral bodies. Through the declaration, the voter expresses his/her will to participate in the elections for which the app is activated, to be included in the voting-by-mail voters’ list, and to be excluded from the basic voters’ list.
20. The procedure of preliminary registration for voting by mail is considered completed only when the applicant has completed all the steps in the app, which is confirmed by a notification to the electronic address indicated by the voter.

Section 3. Verification of the application for registration for voting by mail.

21. The verification of the application for registration for voting by mail, including the identification of the voter remotely by digital means, shall be carried out no later than 25 days before the date of election by the Central Electoral Commission or the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad, after its establishment.
22. Voter identification remotely by digital means shall be carried out in accordance with the instruction approved by decision of the Central Electoral Commission.
23. If non-compliance is found in the verification process, the electoral body shall notify the voter in order to remedy it no later than 25 days before election day.
24. Upon acceptance of the application for registration for voting by mail, the voter’s data shall be entered in the voting-by-mail voters’ list, and the voter shall be notified of his inclusion in the list at the electronic address indicated by him.

25. Cases that constitute grounds for rejection of the application for registration for voting by mail are provided for in Article 17 para. (6) of Law no. 109/2024 on the partial implementation of voting by mail (hereinafter – *Law no. 109/2024*).

26. The application shall also be rejected if the identified non-compliances are not corrected by deadline. The applicant shall be notified about the rejection of the application for registration at the electronic address indicated in his application for registration.

27. The applicant may appeal against rejection of registration within 3 days of notification by submitting a preliminary application to the Central Electoral Commission, which shall be examined under the conditions provided in Section 1, Chapter XIII of Electoral Code no. 325/2022.

28. No later than 25 days before election day, the voter who registered for voting by mail may request the Central Electoral Commission or the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad to change the mailing address by submitting an application accompanied by confirmatory documents in this regard.

29. If, within the period provided for in item 11, the voter canceled registration for voting by mail or the application for registration was rejected, the voter may exercise his right to vote at any polling station abroad or at the corresponding polling station in the country, under the conditions of Article 78 of Electoral Code no. 325/2022. The voter shall be notified about it at the electronic address indicated in his application for registration.

Chapter III. Procedure of preparing, transmitting, verifying, and modifying voters' lists for voting by mail

Section 1. Procedure of preparing and transmitting voting-by-mail voters' lists

30. After the end of the registration period for voting by mail, based on the information in the app, the Central Electoral Commission shall prepare voting-by-mail voters' lists.

31. Voting-by-mail voters' lists shall be prepared per voting-by-mail polling station and shall comprise at least 30 and not more than 2,500 voters.

32. Voters shall be registered in the voters' list at the voting-by-mail polling station established in accordance with Article 13 of Law no. 109/2024, located in the premises of the diplomatic mission or consular office of the Republic of Moldova and, if necessary, in locations approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

33. Voters shall be assigned to the voting-by-mail polling station automatically by the information subsystem for voting by mail. If more than one voting-by-mail polling station is set up in the same premises, voters shall be assigned to the corresponding polling stations in alphabetical order, with proportional balancing of the number of voters per polling station.

34. Voting-by-mail voters' lists are electoral documents authenticated by the Central Electoral Commission by applying a special stamp, control signs, and/or signature of the chairperson of the Central Electoral Commission, in accordance with the provisions of this Regulation and the Regulation on the preparation, administration, dissemination, and updating of voters' lists, approved by Decision no. 1153/2023 of the Central Electoral Commission.

35. Voting-by-mail voters' lists, according to the model in Annex no. 1, shall be prepared in the Romanian language.

36. On the first page of the list form, the state coat of arms of the Republic of Moldova and the coat of arms of the Central Electoral Commission shall be printed. Control signs shall be applied to each page, and the current page number of the total pages of the list is to be indicated during counting.

37. The voting-by-mail voters' list shall include the following data:

37.1. Name and date of election;

37.2. Country, polling station number, and electoral district number;

37.3. Voter's last name, first name, year of birth (voters who turn 18 in the year in which elections are held, including those who turn 18 on the day of preliminary registration, shall also indicate the day and month of birth);

37.4. Mailing address indicated by the voter at the stage of registration for voting by mail;

37.5. State identification number (IDNP), serial number of the ID document;

37.6. Field for the signature of the member of the electoral bureau. In the case of presidential elections, the voters' list form shall contain two fields for signature;

37.7. The "Note" field, where one shall note:

37.7.1. Date and time of dispatch of the envelope with voting materials to the voter;

37.7.2. Date and time of reception by the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau of the personalized outer envelope or, as the case may be, mention shall be made about its non-reception within the prescribed period or about the return of envelopes with voting materials that were not received by the voter and were returned to the electoral bureau.

In the case of presidential elections, voters' lists shall contain two "Note" fields (for the first round and for the second round);

37.8. "Voting method" field. This field shall be filled only for voters who exercised their right to vote at another polling station.

38. At least 22 days before election day, based on the delivery and acceptance act according to the model in Annex no. 2, the Commission shall send the voting-by-mail voters' lists, in a single copy, to the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad. The voters' list shall be immediately sent to the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau, through the corresponding diplomatic mission or consular office, to ensure its verification by voters, representatives of electoral competitors / referendum participants, and observers.

39. Together with voters' lists, the Commission shall ensure the transmission under the same conditions of envelopes with/and materials for voting by mail, including ballot papers printed according to the procedure and deadlines provided in Article 21 of Law no. 109/2024.

Section 2. Verification and modification of voting-by-mail voters' lists

40. No later than the day immediately following the day of reception of voters' lists by the electoral bureau, they shall be made accessible in the premises of polling stations / diplomatic missions or consular offices, being provided the opportunity for voters, representatives of electoral competitors / participants in the referendum, and observers to review them and verify their correctness.

41. Voters shall be informed, by all available means of communication (official website of the Commission, social networks), about the possibility of verifying voters' lists at the premises of the electoral bureau / diplomatic mission or consular office. Voters can also check their data in the voters' lists, the number and address of the polling station to which they are assigned through the "Check yourself in the SRV" [State Registry of Voters] app, by accessing the direct link <https://verifica.cec.md>.

42. A voter may apply for exclusion from the voting-by-mail voters' list at least 3 days before election day.

43. The application for exclusion from the voting-by-mail voters' list shall be submitted to the Central Electoral Commission or electoral bureau after its establishment, according to the model in Annex no. 3, to which one shall attach, as the case may be, confirmatory documents in this regard that will also be attached to the voters' list.

44. The application for exclusion shall be examined by the electoral body within 24 hours, and the decision made about it may be appealed against under the conditions provided in Section 1, Chapter XIII of Electoral Code no. 325/2022.

45. The exclusion of a voter from the voters' list shall be carried out by drawing a line over his data. The electoral bureau, through the Central Electoral Commission, shall immediately communicate to the voter registered for voting by mail about any changes made in the voters' lists by electronic notification to his electronic address.

46. After making the changes, at least 2 days before election day, the voters' lists confirmed with the electronic signature of the chairperson of the Central Electoral Commission shall be made available to electoral bureaus in electronic format.

47. Access to voters' lists shall be allowed on the basis of a confidentiality declaration according to the model in Annex no. 17 to the Regulation on the preparation, administration, dissemination, and updating of voters' lists, approved by Decision no. 1153/2023 of the Central Electoral Commission.

48. For the second round of elections, the same voting-by-mail voters' lists shall be used as in the first round.

Chapter IV. Ballot papers and other electoral materials related to voting by mail

Section 1. Ballot papers for voting by mail

49. The procedure for approving the model and text of ballot papers for voting by mail is provided for in Article 20 of Law no. 109/2024, in conjunction, as the case may be, with Article 73 of Electoral Code no. 325/2022 and the Instruction on the approval of the model, printing, transmission, and keeping of ballot papers, approved by Decision no. 1212 of the Central Electoral Commission of 6 September 2023 (hereinafter – Instruction no. 1212/2023).

50. The number of ballot papers to be printed for voting by mail shall be established for each type of election no later than 22 days before election day by decision of the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad, and it shall correspond to the number of voters registered in voting-by-mail voters' lists.

51. The printing of ballot papers for voting by mail shall be ensured by the Central Electoral Commission. Provisions regarding the printing of ballot papers, set out in Chapter III of Instruction no. 1212/2023, shall also be properly applied to the printing of ballot papers for voting by mail, with the exceptions provided by Law no. 109/2024.

Section 2. Envelopes and other materials required for voting by mail

52. In the process of voting by mail, the following types of envelopes shall be used:

52.1. *Envelope with voting materials*, containing ballot papers and electoral materials provided for in Article 22 of Law no. 109/2024. In the case of holding several types of elections, the voter shall receive a single envelope with all ballot papers and electoral materials provided for in Article 22 of Law no. 109/2024.

52.2. *Personalized outer envelope(s)* bearing the last name and first name of the voter and his registration number in the voting-by-mail voters' list. Responsibility for writing the mentioned data about voters on the outer envelopes lies with the electoral bureau to which these voters are assigned, based on the data from voting-by-mail voters' lists. Depending on the specifics of postal services in the host country, the outer envelopes shall contain stamps or seals confirming the advance payment ensuring the return of the envelopes.

52.3. *Depersonalized inner envelope(s)*, in which the voter shall enter the completed ballot papers, sealing them with security labels received along with the other materials for voting. The number of depersonalized inner envelopes sent to the voter shall correspond to the number of elections held concurrently and/or to the number of election rounds that can be organized.

53. The Central Electoral Commission shall establish the model and the required number of envelopes for voting by mail depending on the type of election held and, as the case may be, shall ensure the purchase of services for printing (making) envelopes and other electoral materials for voting.

54. Information regarding the envelope model shall be made known to voters registered for voting by mail through all means of communication available and accessible to them.

55. The Central Electoral Commission shall ensure that the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureaus are equipped with security labels for sealing the depersonalized inner envelopes. In the envelope sealing procedure, security labels shall be used according to the model in the Instruction on ensuring the polling station infrastructure, approved by Decision no. 1186/2023 of the Central Electoral Commission (hereinafter – Instruction no. 1186/2023).

56. The set of materials for voting by mail shall also contain the blank of the declaration on abstention from multiple voting and the confirmation of the exercise of the right to vote in secret, according to the model in Annex no. 4. In the case of presidential elections, the voter shall complete and sign the blank of the declaration for each election round.

57. By completing and signing the blank of the declaration on abstention from multiple voting and confirmation of the voting in secret, the voter confirms that he is aware of the provisions on legal liability for violation of the principles of participation in voting in a secret and freely expressed way.

58. Detailed procedures of filling in the ballot paper, sealing and sending envelopes with ballot papers are provided for in the instruction approved by the Commission and made available to the voter in the envelope with voting materials.

59. Representatives of electoral competitors / participants in the referendum, observers, and voters have the right to get acquainted with the models of ballot papers and other materials necessary for voting by mail, under the conditions of ensuring personal data protection, at the premises of the Central Electoral Commission, the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad, and/or the respective precinct electoral bureau.

Section 3. Sending of ballot papers, envelopes, and other materials for voting by mail to electoral bureaus

60. The sending of ballot papers to electoral bureaus, together with envelopes and electoral materials necessary for voting by mail, provided for in Section 2 of this chapter, including voters' lists prepared according to Chapter III, shall begin no later than 20 days before election day.

61. Electoral materials referred to in items 52-56 shall be sent to the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureaus by the Central Electoral Commission through the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad / the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. With the exception of ballot papers, envelopes and electoral materials shall be transmitted based on the delivery and acceptance documents according to the model in Annex no. 5, being signed by each entity involved at each stage of delivery and acceptance.

62. Ballot papers shall be transmitted based on the delivery and acceptance act prepared according to the model in Annex no. 1 to Instruction no. 1212/2023.

63. Voting-by-mail voters' lists shall be transmitted according to the procedure and on the basis of acts provided for in items 38, 46, and 61.

64. Based on the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Central Electoral Commission shall ensure the equipping of voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureaus with the required number of stationary ballot boxes. When estimating the necessary number of stationary ballot boxes, the number of outer envelopes with ballot papers that are expected to be returned by voters and, respectively, the number of depersonalized inner envelopes shall be taken into account.

65. In addition to the electoral materials and equipment referred to in this chapter, the Central Electoral Commission shall estimate the needs and provide the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureaus with self-locking seals, security labels, laptops, and other equipment and materials necessary for the proper conduct of the voting process.

Chapter V. Reception of envelopes with materials for voting by mail. Voting period and procedure for filling in the ballot paper. Ensuring the security of the process of voting by mail

Section 1. The reception, verification, systematization of envelopes with materials for voting by mail by electoral bureaus and their dispatch to voters

66. According to Article 14 para. (1) lit. a) of Law no. 109/2024, the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau shall be responsible for verifying, systematizing, and sending electoral materials to voters, as well as for receiving and keeping them in conditions provided for in this Regulation and other applicable regulatory acts.

67. After receiving all the materials necessary for voting by mail, described in chapters III and IV, the respective precinct electoral bureau shall ensure the immediate verification of their integrity, as well as the quantitative correspondence of the copies transmitted according to delivery and acceptance documents. Any non-compliance found at this stage shall be noted in a verification act according to the model in Annex no. 6, which shall be brought to the attention of the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad and, where appropriate, to the Central Electoral Commission.

68. The integrity of electoral materials at all stages, starting with their transmission to electoral bureaus, including the security of the premises where they are kept, shall be ensured by the electoral officials of the respective electoral bureau.

69. Once electoral materials are received by electoral bureaus, as well as during the period of voting by mail and until the totalization of election results, the premises/spaces where these materials are kept shall be sealed/unsealed daily by the chairperson of the electoral bureau or, as the case may be, a member of the bureau designated for this purpose.

70. The electoral officials of electoral bureaus shall be responsible for the preservation and integrity of the electoral materials necessary for voting by mail that are in their management. Their loss/damage shall be immediately notified to the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad and, as the case may be, to the Central Electoral Commission. The fact of loss/damage shall be ascertained by the act prepared in accordance with Annex no. 7 and signed by members of the electoral body concerned.

71. Immediately after the completion of procedures of receiving and verifying electoral materials necessary for voting by mail, the precinct electoral bureau shall begin their systematization and packaging for delivery to voters.

72. The envelope(s) with materials for voting by mail shall be sent to voters at the mailing address indicated in the voting-by-mail voters' list. The order of dispatch shall be established giving priority as recipients to voters whose domicile is located the farthest from the premises of the electoral bureau or those access to whom through postal/courier services is more difficult/time-consuming.

73. The date and time of dispatch of the envelopes with materials for voting by mail, as well as the data of the contracted postal/courier service provider, shall be entered in the voting-by-mail voters' list. Information about the course of this procedure shall be notified daily to the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad and, where appropriate, to the Central Electoral Commission.

Section 2. Reception of envelopes with materials for voting by mail, the procedure for completing the ballot paper by voters and returning the sealed envelope(s) with the ballot paper(s) to electoral bureaus

74. The voter shall receive materials for voting according to the rules established by the contracted postal/courier service provider.

75. The voting period shall begin for each voter with reception by him of materials for voting and end with their return to the electoral bureau, which is to receive them no later than 18:00 local time of the host country on the Thursday before election day.

76. The ballot paper shall be completed by the voter so that the secrecy of vote is secured. The voter who exercises his vote by mail from the same mailing address as other voters, including family members, shall be responsible for ensuring the secrecy of his vote and for refraining from influencing the will of other voters.

77. The order of completing ballot paper(s), the procedure of sealing and sending the envelope(s) with the ballot paper(s) are provided in the instruction made available to the voter in the envelope(s) with materials for voting. It is the responsibility of the voter to follow the steps described and to observe exactly the order provided for in the instruction.

78. In case of failure to comply with the requirements of the instruction as a result of which it is found that the inner envelope is not properly sealed, is damaged in such a way that the secrecy of vote is not ensured, and/or the security label is missing, it is annulled by the electoral bureau.

79. The voter shall also complete and sign the blank of the declaration on abstention from multiple voting and confirmation of the exercise of the right to vote in secret. If the blank of the declaration was not completed and/or signed, as well as if it was not inserted in the returned outer envelope or was inserted in the depersonalized inner envelope, it shall be annulled by the electoral bureau.

80. A voter may vote for only one electoral competitor or one of the options in the referendum. To complete the ballot paper for voting by mail, the voter shall write a tick (a V-shape sign) with a pen inside only one circle in the ballot paper.

81. The ballot paper cannot be declared invalid if the tick was written several times in one box or because the tick was written outside the circle in the box or on the electoral competitor's sign or symbol, if the voter's choice is clear.

82. After completing the voting procedure, the voter shall send the envelope(s) with the ballot paper(s) to the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau. When returning the envelope(s), the voter must take into account that they are to arrive at the electoral bureau within the deadline

set in Article 23 para. (1) of Law no. 109/2024. Otherwise, the envelope(s) received by the electoral bureau after the expiry of the deadline shall be annulled.

83. The voter shall return to the electoral bureau the sealed envelopes with the ballot paper(s) through the post office or courier, in accordance with the instructions sent to him with the envelope and materials necessary for voting by mail.

84. The voter may use, on his own responsibility, the faster services of another postal or courier service provider authorized in the host country, but the costs for these services shall be borne by the voter.

85. In the case of presidential elections, the voter shall complete the documents related to the first round of elections and send them to the electoral bureau within the given deadline. The set of documents required for participation in the second round remains with the voter, who shall complete it and send it under the same conditions only in case the second round is set to be held.

86. If a voter registered to vote by mail, as well as if he voted by mail and returned the envelope(s) to the electoral bureau, upon his presentation at a polling station, the respective precinct electoral bureau shall issue to him, once, one ballot paper. In this case, the same procedure as described in item 92 shall apply.

Section 3. Reception of envelopes with materials for voting by mail by the precinct electoral bureau. Ensuring the security of the process of voting by mail

87. The reception of outer envelopes by voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureaus shall end 3 days before election day, i.e. on the Thursday before election day, no later than 18:00 local time of the host country.

88. The electoral bureau shall decide on extending, by no more than two hours, the deadline for receiving envelopes with ballot papers if postal or courier service providers have informed that electoral materials are to be delivered. The District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad and the Central Electoral Commission shall be informed about the extension.

89. The chairperson of the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau shall declare the end of voting after the expiry of the deadlines provided for in items 87 and 88, and the envelopes received after the end of voting shall be annulled.

90. The reception of envelopes shall be ensured by the electoral officials of the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau according to the pre-established schedule and procedure, and shall be approved by the members of the electoral body, about which the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad and the Central Electoral Commission shall be informed.

91. If a voter was sent the envelope with a ballot paper, but the outer envelope was not received by the electoral bureau until the expiration of the deadlines indicated in items 87 and 88, the electoral bureau shall notify the voter about this fact by message sent to the electronic address indicated by the voter. Notification shall be equivalent to declaring the ballot paper sent by the bureau as annulled and shall be duly processed by the electoral bureau.

92. In the case described in item 91, the voter shall be excluded from the voting-by-mail voters' list and can exercise his right to vote at any polling station abroad, under the conditions of Article 78 para. (3) lit. e) of Electoral Code no. 325/2022, in compliance with Article 25 para. (4) of Law no. 109/2024.

93. The procedure described in items 91 and 92 shall also apply to situations where envelopes, for objective reasons, could not be delivered to voters and were returned to the precinct electoral bureau.

94. The electoral bureau shall ensure the counting and processing of information on the record-keeping of received envelopes with ballot papers, including their preservation and security until election day under the conditions of Article 26 para. (3) of Law no. 109/2024.

95. For the preservation of envelopes with ballot papers, the electoral bureau shall be equipped with stationary ballot boxes under the conditions of item 64, according to the model shown in Figure no. 5 of Instruction no. 1186/2023. The stationary ballot boxes shall be secured by sealing under the conditions of items 32 and 33 of Instruction no. 1186/2023.

96. During the voting period, as well as immediately after its conclusion and the processing of information on the record-keeping of received envelopes with ballot papers, the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau, including through the Central Electoral Commission and the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad, shall ensure that the information on the delivered materials for voting by mail, the changes made in the text of the ballot papers, the voting-by-mail voters' lists, the received outer envelopes, as well as those not received and, respectively, the annulled envelopes is made public. The public shall be informed through all available means of communication, ensuring at the same time the notification of voters who exercise their vote by mail at the electronic address indicated by them.

Chapter VI. Counting and tabulation of results of voting by mail

Section 1. Ensuring the security and realization of the process of counting votes by mail

97. The voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau shall start counting votes on Sunday, after the closure of all polling stations in the host country.

98. Before starting the ballot counting procedure, members of the bureau shall arrange a space for counting of votes, provided with a sufficient number of tables so that the counting process is visible to all members of the precinct electoral bureau and all persons authorized to attend the electoral operations who are present during the procedure.

99. Paper nameplates shall be placed on the desks intended for vote counting specifying the names of electoral competitors or, in the case of referendum, saying "YES" and "NO" according to the referendum options.

100. Before opening the ballot boxes with outer envelopes, members of the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau shall check the integrity of seals affixed on the ballot boxes in the presence of persons authorized to attend electoral operations. If a seal is damaged or there are obvious signs that the ballot box had been opened or envelopes with ballot papers had been extracted from it, an ascertaining report shall be prepared, which shall be attached to the minutes on the vote counting results. At the same time, the sealing of the ballot boxes in which the inner envelopes are to be placed shall be ensured, under the conditions of items 32 and 33 of Instruction no. 1186/2023.

101. After unsealing the ballot boxes with outer envelopes, they shall be turned over on the tables where the counting and verification of their contents is to be carried out.

102. The chairperson of the electoral bureau shall verify in the "Elections" State Automated Information System whether there are documented cases in which voters who voted by mail also cast their vote at a polling station, of which all members of the bureau shall be informed, an appropriate note being entered in the voting-by-mail voters' lists, under the heading "Voting method".

103. Envelopes sent by voters who also exercised their right to vote at the polling station shall be excluded. These envelopes shall be sealed separately and deemed annulled, and this fact

shall be recorded in the minutes on the vote counting results prepared by the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau, with the corresponding entry under the heading “Number of unused and annulled ballot papers”. At the same time, the results of the counting of these envelopes shall be contrasted with the data entered in the voters’ list under the conditions of item 102.

104. Precinct electoral bureaus shall check data on the number of outer envelopes with materials for voting by mail that were not returned to them by voters or those that were returned beyond the deadline set for the voting period, as well as those that could not be delivered to voters and were returned to the precinct electoral bureau. The data thus verified shall be recorded in the minutes on the vote counting results / report of the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau.

105. After recording the results of counting the outer envelopes extracted from the stationary ballot box(es), the members of the electoral bureau shall open them and check their interior under the conditions of Article 27 para. (5) of Law no. 109/2024.

106. The procedure of counting ballot papers and completing the minutes on the vote counting results shall be carried out in accordance with the instruction approved by the Central Electoral Commission for this purpose.

107. The chairperson of the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau shall keep records of important events that take place during the period of voting by mail and during the counting of votes and shall briefly describe them in the report of the electoral bureau. The report shall contain a brief presentation of the activities carried out by the bureau to ensure voting by mail and, as the case may be, of the requests and appeals regarding the actions of the precinct electoral bureau and the decisions adopted by the bureau based on them. The chairperson shall sign the report and give the other members of the precinct electoral bureau the opportunity to make comments and additions to the report in writing. At the request of bureau members, persons authorized to attend electoral operations, or any voter, the chairperson shall note their comments and objections concerning the procedure of voting by mail in a document to be attached to the report of the precinct electoral bureau.

108. The minutes on the vote counting results and the report prepared by the voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureau shall be transmitted under the same conditions as established in Article 83 para. (7) of Electoral Code no. 325/2022.

Section 3. Centralization of results of voting by mail

109. After receiving the minutes and reports of voting-by-mail precinct electoral bureaus, the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad shall centralize the results of voting by mail in accordance with Article 84 and, respectively, Article 85 of Electoral Code no. 325/2022.

110. The District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad shall record the results of voting by mail in separate minutes signed by all its members. A member of the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad cannot refuse to sign the minutes, and in case of disagreement with them, he can express his dissenting opinion in writing, which shall be attached to the minutes. The refusal of a member of the electoral council to sign the minutes on voting results shall have no influence. The refusal of a member of the electoral council and other reasons for the absence of the signature shall be mentioned in the report of the District Electoral Council. Copies of the minutes on the results of voting by mail, authenticated by the chairperson of the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad, shall be necessarily handed over to persons authorized to assist in electoral operations.

111. The chairperson of the District Electoral Council shall prepare a separate report of the council based on the written record of activities carried out by the council to ensure the exercise of voting by mail, approved by decision of the District Electoral Council. The report shall contain a brief presentation of the requests and appeals concerning the actions/inactions of the council and precinct electoral bureaus and of the decisions adopted to ensure the exercise of voting by mail. The chairperson shall sign the report and give the other members of the council the opportunity to make comments and additions to the report in writing. Applications and appeals shall be attached to the report.

112. Within the term established in Article 84 para. (4) of Electoral Code no. 325/2022, the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad shall submit to the Central Electoral Commission the minutes and the report, as well as the electoral documents specified in item 109.

113. Decisions approving the minutes on the results of voting and/or the report on the activity of the precinct electoral bureau and/or of the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad may be challenged under Chapter XIII of Electoral Code no. 325/2022 and the Regulation on the procedure for examining appeals during the electoral period, approved by Decision no. 1128/2023 of the Central Electoral Commission.

114. Based on the data presented by the District Electoral Council for Polling Stations Abroad, the Central Electoral Commission shall include the centralized results of voting by mail in the minutes on the results of voting in the country, under the conditions of Article 85 of Electoral Code no. 325/2022, as well as in the report on election results.

115. In cases of electoral fraud or if one finds circumstances and/or violations that could influence election results and/or question the conformity of their organization in good conditions, the Central Electoral Commission, based on evidentiary materials, shall propose to the Constitutional Court to declare the nullity or invalidation of the voting results in the polling station(s) where voting by mail was organized.

Section 3. Preservation of electoral documents related to the exercise of voting by mail

116. Electoral documents (materials) related to voting by mail shall be kept in accordance with the provisions of Article 87 of Electoral Code no. 325/2022.

Chapter VII. Legal liability

117. Violation of the provisions of the regulatory framework concerning the partial implementation of voting by mail shall entail administrative, civil, contravention, and criminal liability.