

MID TERM REPORT

Project Title:	Electoral Support to Moldova
Report starting date:	01 January 2009
Report end date:	31 December 2010
Implementing agency:	UNDP Moldova
Country:	Republic of Moldova

Index

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
2. PROJECT BACKGROUND, JUSTIFICATION AND STRATEGY	5
2.1 JUSTIFICATION FOR ASSISTANCE	5
2.2 STRATEGY	6
2.3 CHANGES TO THE ORIGINAL PROJECT DOCUMENT	7
2.3.1 Support in running of the 29 July Early Parliamentary Elections	8
3. PROJECT PROGRESS BY ACTIVITIES	10
3.1 ACTIVITY 1: STATE AUTOMATED INFORMATION SYSTEM “ELECTIONS”	10
3.1.1 Software development of SAISE delivered	10
3.1.2 Electronic Voter Register Software tested	10
3.1.3 Results Tabulation/Management System delivered	10
3.1.4 Complaints Input System delivered.....	11
3.1.5 Hardware platform for SAISE delivered.....	11
3.1.6 Transfer of technology and capacity to the CEC.....	11
3.1.7 Inter-Institutional Cooperation	13
3.2 ACTIVITY 2: OUT OF COUNTRY VOTING	13
3.2.1 OCV information campaign main accomplishments	14
3.2.2 OCV logistical support	17
3.3 ACTIVITY 3: INCREASED INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF CEC	18
3.3.1 Needs assessment conducted	18
3.3.2 BRIDGE Training Program partially delivered	19
3.3.3 A pool of national BRIDGE facilitators created	19
3.3.4 Post-election reviews	19
3.3.5 CEC Institutional Capacity partially developed	20
3.3.6 Institutional assessment and planning ahead	23
3.3.7 English language courses	23
3.3.8 Study trips/regional experience sharing.....	23
3.3.9 Study trips/regional experience sharing.....	24
3.4 ACTIVITY 4: INCREASED TRANSPARENCY OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS.....	24
3.4.1 CEC Voter Information Campaigns supported and greatly strengthened	24
3.4.2 PR for SAISE	25
3.4.3 Extensive CEC Communications/Media Center established and successfully launched	28
3.4.4 Increased trust and credibility of CEC.....	28
3.5 ACTIVITY 5: SUPPORT IN LEGAL MATTERS	28
4. CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS TAKEN	29
5. LESSONS LEARNED AND WAY FORWARD	30
APPENDIX A: VOTING OF MOLDOVANS ABROAD IN 2009 AND 2010 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS	34
APPENDIX B: 2010 POST ELECTION REVIEW WORKSHOP: CONCLUDING DOCUMENT	35
APPENDIX C: CEC SWOT ANALYSIS	37

Abbreviations

ACEEEO	– The Association of European Election Officials
BRIDGE	– Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (Modular professional development program with focus on electoral processes)
CEC	– Central Electoral Commission
CoE	– Council of Europe
DCA	– Department of Consular Affairs of MFAIE
EC	– European Commission
EMB	– Electoral Management Body
ESM	– Electoral Support to Moldova Project
EU	– European Union
EVR	– Electronic Voters Register
ICT	– Information and Communication Technology
IDEA	– International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IFES	– International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IOM	– International Organization for Migration
MFAEI	– Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration
NAM	– Needs Assessment Mission
OCV	– Out of Country Voting
SAISE	– State Automated Information System “Elections”
SIDA	– Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency
TA	– technical assistance
UN EAD/DPA	– United Nations Electoral Assistance Division/ Department of Political Affairs
UNDP	– United Nations Development Programme
USAID	– United States Agency for International Development

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prior to the inception of the ESM Project, two Needs Assessment Missions (NAMs) were conducted to gain a better understanding of how electoral support to Moldova could be modelled. The first one, in January 2008, was organized by the Electoral Assistance Division of the UN Department of Political Affairs and the Senior Electoral Assistance Advisor/Coordinator of the EC-UNDP Task Force on Electoral Assistance of the UNDP Brussels office. Based on the findings of the NAM, EAD/DPA recommended that the United Nations should provide electoral assistance to Moldova for the 2009 parliamentary elections, with the perspective to provide longer-term support throughout the entire electoral cycle expected to end in 2013. A second NAM was later carried out by the Joint EC-UNDP Task Force on Electoral Assistance (Brussels) and a representative of IOM (Geneva) on request of the UNDP Country Office in Moldova. The second mission partly targeted the facilitation of the mobilization of resources from the European Commission and partly the adaptation of the project document and of its budget, taking into consideration the latest developments related to the electoral events of 2009.

The ESM Project was during its first years financed by the European Union, the Moldovan Government, the UN Trust Fund for Electoral Assistance and UNDP, and implemented by UNDP and with IOM being responsible for the Out of Country Voting component. During the last two years the project has provided electoral assistance to the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) and other stakeholders. ESM was officially launched in 2008 for the duration of five years and with an initial budget of \$4.5 million. The key project focus areas included electronic voter registration, out of country voting, capacity development for electoral management bodies, media and public relations, and legal support. The need to improve the quality of the voter register became even more apparent after the earlier mentioned turbulent April 2009 elections.

With regard to the voter register, the ESM Project tackled this challenge, based on recommendations by earlier NAMs, by developing capacities within the CEC and its IT Department, coupled with a software solution for an electronic voter register (EVR). The EVR is one of the first and most important modules of the State Automated Informational System – “Elections” (SAISE), which may be explained as the technical vehicle that will allow for full digitalization of all Moldovan electoral processes in accordance with national legislation. The EVR has been piloted at four occasions in different parts of the country and has shown that it greatly improves the quality of the voting process in terms of transparency and credibility of the electoral bodies. A quality assurance study, made by an independent international expert in 2009, and by a Moldovan expert in 2010, suggested some changes but also ascertained that the system was up to best industry standards. To further increase the transparency and efficiency of the electoral process, the UNDP support allowed for live reporting of turnout results and a fast display of voting preferences after the closing of polling stations. The project, moreover, supplied a hardware platform for the CEC on which SAISE is planned to run¹. This is an important step in providing for the internet voting

¹ For out of country voting (OCV), the final module of SAISE foresees Internet voting. This is, however, based on the condition that previous SAISE modules are already working, out of which a fully functioning EVR would be the most important, and that the political context allows it. The ESM will advise and guide the CEC on this challenging path and expose it to international standards and best practices of other countries already using similar applications.

solutions as stipulated by Moldovan law. Taken together these measures aim to increase citizens' trust in the entire political system and make them more open to accept electoral outcomes.

Moldova's electoral vision, formulated in Law no. 101 on "Concept of the State Automated Information System Elections"², and manifested in the SAISE system, includes the full digitalization of its electoral processes based on an integrated ICT system which covers and automates the main electoral cycle elements.

While the SAISE system is prepared to allow for Internet voting, a system that could solve much of the problems with out of country voting and remove the need of keeping supplementary lists, this module will only be implemented when the political situation is stable, infrastructure for personal identification and hardware is in place, operators are trained and the population properly informed. Exit-polls have, furthermore, showed that voters are open to the new technology, but that there need to be more work done explaining the system and how personal data is stored and used. To continue this ambitious program high level advice and expertise will be required which the project through its onsite national and international advisors will provide.

There are finally strong reasons to believe that the support rendered to run voter information campaigns strongly increased turnout in both in- and out of country voting³. For the in-country voting in the November 2010 parliamentary elections turnout increased by almost five per cent, while total numbers of voters for out of country voting increased more than three times. Another very tangible result is that the building infrastructure of the CEC has improved greatly and can now receive journalists and public in a much more professional and welcoming manner. Procurement of necessary equipment and furniture to run a Continuous Training Center in Chisinau has also been established within CEC premises. This coupled with the fact that the CEC personnel have received considerable training, has all helped strengthen the electoral body's institutional capacity. A pool of trained BRIDGE accredited facilitators was established; able to run BRIDGE modules and cascade trainings locally.

Finally, the Project provided support to the Special Parliamentary Commission on Improvement of the Electoral Legislative Framework through support of two national consultants. Key changes into Electoral Code referred to incorporation of provisions on operation of the State Register of Voters (EVR), and establishment of Continuous Training Centre as of 2011. More clarity was brought into the legal provisions referring to media coverage during the elections campaign.

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND, JUSTIFICATION AND STRATEGY

2.1 JUSTIFICATION FOR ASSISTANCE

Based on the findings of two assessment missions, carried out by senior election experts from UNEAD/DPA (United Nations Electoral Assistance Division/Department of Political Affairs based in New York), Joint EC-UNDP Task Force on Electoral Assistance and IOM, it was recommended that the United Nations offer electoral assistance to Moldova for the 2009 parliamentary elections with a view to provide long-term support throughout the electoral cycle ending in 2013. The primary reasons for providing electoral assistance were:

² <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=328369>

³ It is here important to remember that the November 2010 parliamentary elections were preceded by three other major electoral events. Arguably this should have threatened to decrease, rather than increase, turnout.

- To support Moldova in its continued democratic transition;
- To assist the CEC in further developing its capacity to organize and conduct multi-party elections in accordance with international standards;
- To advise and assist the Moldovan political parties, government officials, and civil society organizations dedicated to creating favorable conditions for viable free and fair elections.

2.2 STRATEGY

The objective of electoral assistance in Moldova is to strengthen democracy in the country through increased transparency and participation of voters and all stakeholders in elections throughout the 2009-2013 electoral cycle. The project specific **objective** was formulated as:

Improved capacity of Electoral Management Bodies and all stakeholders to promote participation of voters and all stakeholders in elections throughout the 2009-2013 electoral cycles for strengthened democracy in Moldova.

The Electoral Support to Moldova (ESM) project aims to provide assistance in accordance with the “electoral cycle approach”⁴, where initial focus was on the 2009 elections but including a longer term involvement throughout the 2011 and 2013 electoral cycles. The “electoral cycle approach” to assistance has been developed by the UN/UNDP, European Commission and International IDEA⁵ and has now been officially adopted by UNDP and the EC for the implementation of their electoral assistance projects. In the last three years many electoral assistance projects managed by UNDP with EC contributions have followed this approach.

Of the three main groups associated as recipients of electoral support – electoral administration, civil society and political parties – civil society in Moldova is already receiving substantial support from various stakeholders such as SIDA, USAID, and Council of Europe on voter education initiatives and domestic election observation. Initiatives are, moreover, progressing offering support to all political parties in campaign methodologies through NDI and IRI. Substantial support has been regularly provided by USAID via IFES. The main needs in Moldova were therefore assessed in relation to the electoral administration, with the independent state agency, the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) as its highest organ.

The project aims at fair and equitable access of all voters, with special consideration to include vulnerable and marginalized group; i.e. people from rural areas, minorities, youths, elderly, women, and disabled. Furthermore, the project addresses the large Moldovan diaspora, which

⁴ The electoral cycle approach looks at the electoral process over time and seeks to engage with different actors and entry points throughout the cycle, rather than channeling substantial resources and technical support uniquely towards the delivery of a given electoral event, at intermittent and disconnected points in time. The adoption of the electoral cycle helps implement electoral assistance within the broader framework of democratic governance with a pro-active and strategic approach by “thinking ahead” at least five to ten years, rather than hastily reacting to each electoral event immediately before it occurs. The electoral cycle is divided into three broad phases – pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral – and at first glance it may seem that the post-electoral component is the shortest. In reality, this is the longest period of time and perhaps the ripest opportunity for addressing systemic issues such as legal reform, electoral management design and professionalization, party regulations, training of the media sector, as well as many other issues.

⁵ See EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance, the IDEA Handbook of Electoral Management and the UNDP Implementation Guide on Electoral Assistance all available at www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org

means that a special approach is needed for Out of Country Voting (OCV).⁶ The project, through specific activities carried out by IOM, is assisting CEC and the Ministry Foreign Affairs and European Integration in improving the management of elections outside the country and thus increase migrants' voter turnout in the elections.

The project moreover strives to coordinate technical assistance and act as the focal point for sharing of information in relation to the election technical assistance and the electoral processes as such: from the creation of an electronic voter register, to voter education, campaign period, observation, polling, counting, and certification of results. Together with the support on OCV, the aim is to make citizens more active in political processes and strengthen the electoral procedures. Subsequently, good governance would be improved and accountability of the government increased.

In order to fully see that the ESM activities are coordinated with all stakeholders, the project office maintains a matrix of support to/by different stakeholders in all electoral spheres, including those areas of support to civil society and political parties mentioned above.⁷ This includes maintenance of a website for sharing of the matrix and other pertinent information for the shared benefit of all stakeholders.

2.3 CHANGES TO THE ORIGINAL PROJECT DOCUMENT

The political developments of 2009 forced the project to deviate from its original work plan and focus on ad hoc support to the CEC and other stakeholders to help organise the second round of elections in July 2009. The ad hoc nature of requests expressed by the beneficiary (CEC) during the electoral events of April and July were forcing the project to react to imminent needs to support the organization of the July elections in favour of implementing the project as foreseen in the work plan. In this context the below activities had to be either cancelled or reduced during the implementation phase.

Cancelled

- Provision of international legal advice to the CEC. During the first half of 2009 the Project main beneficiary, the Central Electoral Commission of Moldova, mentioned that the need for an international Legal Advisor was not as relevant, as it seemed during the Project formulation stage. Due to this reason a Legal Advisor was not recruited.

Reduced

- The overall number of BRIDGE trainings, envisaged in 2008, were reduced due to the unforeseeable electoral campaigns in June and July 2009, referendum campaign in August and September 2010, and yet another electoral campaign in October and November 2010, which made running of BRIDGE trainings impossible during the summer and autumn of 2009 and during 2010;

⁶ It should be noted that a high number of Moldovan citizens reside abroad, under different legal status (400.000 to 600.000, according to different estimates).

⁷ The stakeholders include all interested international partners such as diplomatic missions, international organizations and NGOs, and domestic entities involved in elections such as NGOs, Ministry of Information Development, Ministry of Local Public Administration, Agency for Public Procurement, Centre for Special Telecommunications, media, and first and foremost the Central Electoral Commission of Moldova.

- The overall number of tracking polls, initially scheduled to take place three times a year, were reduced due to the fact that these polls could not be implemented for a considerable period of time due to two 2009 electoral campaigns, and two electoral events in 2010.

2.3.1 Support in running of the 29 July Early Parliamentary Elections

The Project was swiftly adjusted to respond to the urgent priorities and in an extremely short period of time has provided a comprehensive support to a number of key electoral processes related to the July early elections. In addition to activities outlined under the Activity 1, the following assistance was availed:

Compilation and Verification of Voters Lists

The voters' lists were reported as the major problem in the April elections hence in the 3 months in-between the two elections the projects emphasis was to do increase transparency and credibility of the election through a broad based public quality control of the lists.

In cooperation with the Council of Europe, the project supported the quality control process of the compilation and verification of voters list, through grants awarded to local NGOs - the Institute of Human Rights (IDOM) and Association of Legal Clinics:

- 61 IDOM monitors have undertaken an effort of monitoring over 33 Local Public Authorities (LPAs) and 2 municipalities work on lists compilation as well as held interviews (based on established questionnaires) with representatives of local public authorities.
- The Association of Legal Clinics conducted verification of the preliminary voters list from 14-20 July. The aim was to verify the lists at 200 polling stations through sampling of up to 100 addresses from the lists. The NGO captured information from the voter's lists and then verified this data through direct interview of the voter at their residence and checked the data from the lists with the data supplied through the interview.

The activities undertaken by IDOM and Association of Legal Clinics unveiled a considerable number of issues related to compilation and verification of voters lists, including absence in basic voter lists of voters entitled to be entered onto those lists, deceased people on the voters lists, multiple entries of the same voter in several voters lists, lack of voters lists on display prior to elections.

Within the same scope the project supported the CEC with electronic compilation of lists received from local authorities and production of an aggregated preliminary roll. The project has undertaken to extract the preliminary voter list information provided by the CEC into a database and to assist the CEC in running integrity tests on the lists – to mainly check against any possible double entry of voters and to sample the data for missing information. The exceptions found in this testing were returned to the Local Authorities by the CEC for action. As reported above, the CEC has received the lists in non-standard templates and formats. The software for importing the data has been reconfigured to manage the data from different formats.

Larger-scale Voter Information Campaign

The comprehensive civic education and voter information campaign started with the development of a concept in parallel with the production and broadcast of urgent procedure Public Service Announcements (PSAs), audio and audio-visual (Verification of Voters Lists, Getting a Certificate for absentee voting, Checklist on required IDs for voting, Declaration of domicile).

Once the campaign concept was approved by the CEC a strategy and action plan were developed in close coordination with all participants, donors and implementers, local and international. The approach was both motivational and incited people to vote. A very strong emphasis was put on calling on Moldovans voters to verify their presence on the voters list, in parallel with voter information ‘refreshers’ on where, how, when to vote, and ending in a strong motivation push to show up at the polls.

For the first time in Moldova, new communication systems were used by the CEC to complement classical PSAs (audio and audio visual) and print material (posters, leaflets etc) to mobilize voters through a large sms campaign, TV screens in all main supermarkets’ checkout counters, giant plasma screens outdoors and a CEC manned hotline (see Annex 4). The voteaza.md website, as mentioned earlier, could this time import results data from the CEC server, allowing journalists and citizens to be informed in real time on turn out figures and results as they were reported by the CEC.

The campaign included a larger number of international aid stakeholders under Project coordination and vision and helped increase the visibility of the CEC, highlight the importance of the re-run poll and boost the turn out, in and out of country.

Increased Transparency on the Election Day: additional activities through domestic observation

The following activities were planned and implemented for the Election Day:

- Development and implementation of the election results management system and its transfer to the IT department of CEC
- Provision of additional hardware for DEC’s in connection to running the results tabulation system
- Training for DEC’s in required to running the results tabulation system
- Display approved results on internet for access to media and the public
- Support the domestic observations by the Coalition 2009

Domestic Election Observation

To further increase the transparency of the elections the NGO LADOM was awarded a grant and conducted an election observation program through 4 regional coordinators, 62 Long Term Observers from 15 July and 1832 Short Term Observers on Election Day. Along the election observation, on Election Day LADOM conducted a parallel vote count where the observers called the results from their polling stations to their regional office that in their turn transmitted those to the HQ in Chisinau for release during the following day. The observation mission has unveiled a significant number of derogations from the electoral legislation, including cases of improper influence of PEB members over voter’s choice, corruption of voters, intimidation of some observers, and generally imperfect performance of PEB members. This project was co-funded by other donors, including SIDA through Eurasia and OSCE.

3. PROJECT PROGRESS by ACTIVITIES

3.1 ACTIVITY 1: STATE AUTOMATED INFORMATION SYSTEM “ELECTIONS”

3.1.1 Software development of SAISE delivered

The recruited ICT specialist developed a prototype for the electronic voter register that was presented to the CEC, the Ministry of Informational Development and the Centre for Special Telecommunications in June 2009. The prototype served to demonstrate the advantages of developing the electronic voter register (EVR) internally within the CEC rather than to outsource it, which creates a wide range of potential risks. These risks particularly relate to dependence on the procured company for changes and modification to the programme, and extremely high development costs.

The development of the pilot version of the EVR software was completed by November 2009. The software development of the State Automated Information System “Elections” (SAISE), including Electronic Voter Register and Results Tabulation module, was completed by June 2010. SAISE remains, however, an evolving system that needs to be adapted to the changing needs of the CEC. Finally, SAISE first-phase modules were developed and tested. CEC has formally approved developed modules.

3.1.2 Electronic Voter Register Software tested

The EVR went through six testing events: twice in several localities during partial local elections in Stefan Voda district in November 2009, twice in over ten localities during partial local elections in May 2010, and twice in the Central district of Chisinau (42 polling stations) during 2010 September referendum and 2010 November Early Parliamentary Elections. The developed and tested software returned positive results. The software was additionally tested by a renowned international quality assurance IT specialist, and a local quality assurance IT specialist.

It should be noted that all design, development, testing and implementation, was done in closest collaboration with CEC Head of IT Department before he resigned in early August 2010. Due to the IT Heads resignation, part of the capacity development had to be re-launched, especially on such crucial matters as vision, strategy and design of the SAISE system.

3.1.3 Results Tabulation/Management System delivered

The improvement of the Results Tabulation System, which is in operation during election night, was mentioned by the CEC as a priority in January 2009. At that moment the CEC did not have the IT skills to improve or support a results management system. Therefore, the previous practice of the CEC was to tender the development of a Results Management System to a private company. The results on election night were sent to the selected company by each DEC and then aggregated and sent to the CEC for public display on election night.

The Project recognized results management and reporting by the CEC on election night as an activity of high importance. A long-term approach was that the CEC should own and manage its own results tabulation system in order to enhance the perception of the integrity of the results, to make results more accessible and thus increase the transparency of results reporting to media and population at large.

For the 5 April Parliamentary elections the Project, in collaboration with Council of Europe and IFES, advised the CEC on operational aspects of the results tabulation system with a view to increase the transparency of the system for observers and media. The Project *inter alia* has ad-

vised to place the tabulation results on the CEC website, as soon as they became available, and to publicly display the print-outs of tabulation data entries at the DEC level, at the moment data was fed into the electronic tabulation system operated by the contracted company. The CEC demonstrated a high degree of transparency already in 2009 by prompt publication of both initial (5 April) and recount (15 April) tabulation data at its official web-site www.cec.md with a detailed breakdown by DEC and PEBs.

Based on agreement with the CEC, the ICT Specialist, within a very short timeframe, focused on reviewing and improving the results management system software previously used during 5 April elections. To enable operation of the system on 29 July, the Project rented 45 laptops for each DEC, which were used for input of results received from the PEBs on elections day and - night. Operation manuals were produced and training of the officials that managed and operated the system on elections day was organized. The system was set to ensure periodical publication of turnout and voting results, received through the results management system, at the www.voteaza.md web-site during the elections day and night. In the aftermath, many observers remarked the usefulness and high degree of transparency provided by the online publication of election results during elections night.

After adaptation of the electronic results tabulation system, it was used again in the 5 September 2010 referendum, and 28 November 2010 election, demonstrating high degree of speediness and transparency of the turnout and voting results.

3.1.4 Complaints Input System delivered

To digitalize tracking and processing of electoral complaints, a complaints input system module was developed and implemented during the period from July to September 2009. The module facilitates the administration of complaints by filing them by source (media, election regulations etc.) and will serve as a reference tool for future cases. The Legal Department of the CEC was trained by the CEC Head of IT in the use of the new system.

3.1.5 Hardware platform for SAISE delivered

Necessary hardware basis for SAISE operation has been delivered, including a fully reconstructed and conditioned server room, server equipment (including a powerful server, intrusion protection system, etc), network re-cabling up to par with most advanced standards.

3.1.6 Transfer of technology and capacity to the CEC

The developed modules, documentation and hardware have been transferred to the CEC. The CEC IT Team has operated three parliamentary elections, two partial local elections with re-runs on each, and one referendum. Scheduled and structured professional trainings could hardly be accomplished during the lifespan of the project especially not after finalization of all SAISE modules in June 2010. It should be noted that most of the capacity building and training before 3 August 2010 focused on the CEC Head of IT Department, who then was expected to cascade train his colleagues. This person resigned and thus interrupted the capacity building and handover process. The training and handover process was thus restarted and focussed on the four CEC IT consultants.

The departure of the CEC Head of IT left a gap in the developed capacity of the CEC. It turned out hard to fill this position in because this person was experienced, proactive in developing strategies to accomplish objectives, anticipated and resolved conflicts by pursuing mutually agreeable solutions, showed willingness for ownership and responsibility, and shared the vision and strategy of Law 101 Concept and SAISE. The replacement did unfortunately not fill the gap.

In spite of the above challenges UNDP did manage to conduct trainings on SAISE for five CEC IT Department staff. The IT Team was shown hands on how to set up the computer equipment, the networks, the intruder protection systems, the databases and general troubleshooting on the physical computer equipment and applications needed to run SAISE and the CEC intranet. UNDP further managed to train the CEC on the database setup and configuration, including its design and general maintenance. Some software development aspects were also addressed. Finally, the CEC IT Team put together a fault and enhancement list to be applied during elections. This list is used to train the IT Team in small steps on how to look for errors, how the different modules fit into the picture around the error, why the problem emerged and how to fix it. However, further support is needed before the CEC IT Team will be able to fully operate the SAISE system. The optimum time for these kinds of trainings would be during non-election campaign periods. Nevertheless, the CEC IT Team have a good understanding of the following:

- Preparation and set-up of CEC server room
- Preparation of the Internet connections
- Agreements and contracts
- Configuration of laptops
- How the results display in *Voteaza* functions
- How to support the Operators on Election Day on SAISE-related issues
- Conducting backups of SAISE, which should be done before-, the day after-, and one week after, election day.

The CEC IT Team should, moreover, have a good understanding on the **development side** of SAISE:

- The structure of the database
- The structure of the SAISE development environment
- The menu system
- The user security management module
- Parts of the result management system reporting

The CEC IT Team are able to setup and configure the hardware equipment used to run SAISE with a small amount of online help. They are able to setup most of the Applications with online help functions. The following is a summary of understanding of the **SAISE hardware**, as assessed by the Project ICT consultant:

full and comprehensive understanding	60%
fully able to (re-)install	90%
fully able to maintain	90%
fully able to operate	100%
fully able to update	100%
fully able to improve	90%
fully able to run the hardware system	80%

The CEC Software Development (SW) Team would likely not be able to make changes, fault finding or additions to the SAISE system under pressure. More time during a quiet period, such

as non-election campaign period, would be needed to take the CEC SW Team thoroughly through the different modules. The following is a summary of understanding of the **SAISE software development**, as assessed by the Project international ICT consultant:

full and comprehensive understanding	40%
fully able to (re-)install	90%
fully able to maintain	40%
fully able to operate development tools	90%
fully able to update	40%
fully able to improve	60%
fully able to and further develop the system	60%
fully able to do the above internally, without any external assistance	30%

3.1.7 Inter-Institutional Cooperation

The SAISE connects to other governmental structures such as the Population Registry and it is clear that these relationships need to be strengthened on all levels of the various departments. Long-term agreements should be created to facilitate quick changes on technical levels of the communication between SAISE, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT), Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and the Centre for Special Telecommunications (CST). To get these complex relations to work there are numerous issues that need to be addressed. These include, but are not limited to, that the importing mechanism is not working for various technical reasons on the side of MICT and that the voter allocation module is unable to determine the polling place for the voter because of ambiguous street names and different spelling formats. These, as well as other issues, must be resolved before CEC can attempt to print out correct voter lists from the ERV.

3.2 ACTIVITY 2: OUT OF COUNTRY VOTING

IOM, as implementer of the OCV project component, focused its activities on coordination of all necessary steps with UNDP, CEC and MFAEI with regard to the parliamentary elections in November 2010, based on proposals formulated by IOM and accepted by UNDP and EU during the summer of 2010. For this purpose IOM engaged in consultations with relevant stakeholders to get clarity on specific implications of the project which highly depended much on the final decision of the Moldovan Government on the number of additional polling stations abroad and of the personnel to be deployed abroad from the central MFAEI office for ensuring proper arrangements and operation of the polling stations during the elections.

In this regard the operation of the additional polling stations abroad during the constitutional referendum on 5 September 2010, which was supported by Council of Europe and EU, represented a test for proper arrangement of the respective operations during the forthcoming parliamentary elections.

IOM did not participate in the information campaign and logistical support to the MFAEI electoral operations abroad during the constitutional referendum. At the same time, in order to facilitate the understanding by Moldovans abroad of the nature, scope and goals of the referendum and to help them make an informed decision between proposed options, IOM widely distributed through the IOM network of Moldovan Diaspora all relevant information and promotional materials received from CEC and other partners.

After the referendum, IOM participated in the activities of the CEC civic education working group together with CEC, UNDP, CoE and IFES for the November 2010 parliamentary elections. The working group developed a thematic plan for the electoral information campaign, the main strategic ideas of the campaign, and commissioned a media company for developing the strategy of the campaign, as well as design and production of promotional materials. After the joint commissioning of the company by the working group and presentation of the info-campaign Strategy, IOM focused its work on defining the content and design of the promotional materials that would increase the level of OCV by informing and instructing Moldovans abroad on existing voting opportunities (polling stations).

The belated allocation of funds for the OCV related project activity in 2010, as well as limited resources allotted, did not allow for the arrangement of a comprehensive training for the consular staff assigned to Moldovan missions abroad based on the best international practice in the domains in line with a thorough assessment of the lessons learned from the last parliamentary elections in Moldova. In view of this, and in order to support the named activities and ensure the necessary level of understanding by the consular staff of the needs of the Moldovan migrants in different consular services, including facilitation of the voting abroad, as well as how to better communicate with the Moldovan diaspora and how to better protect the human rights of migrants by consular means, IOM has carried out the respective activities through a different EU funded IOM project – “Supporting the Implementation of the Development Component of the EU-Moldova Mobility Partnership Agreement (SIMP)”. For this purpose the SIMP project, in cooperation with the DCA of the MFAEI has arranged a Consular reunion in July 2010, during which relevant consular training was provided to most of the consular staff assigned to Moldovan missions abroad. The gathering of the consular staff during the reunion made also possible the specific electoral training of the consular staff by the CEC.

During the period November – December 2010, in line with the actions taken during preliminary phase of the project, the activity was focused on performing all project activities which targeted the consistent contribution to the efforts of the CEC and MFAEI to successful arrangement and facilitation of the OCV during early parliamentary elections of 28 November 2010.

For this purpose IOM, in collaboration with UNDP, CEC and MFAEI, has engaged in production and distribution of the promotional materials for OCV in line with the election media strategy developed within the joint UNDP-IOM ESM project, as well as in logistical support to the MFAEI in arranging and facilitation of the voting abroad through 75 polling stations in 30 countries around the world.

3.2.1 OCV information campaign main accomplishments

- a) 27,000 (20,000 in Romanian plus 7,000 in Russian) of booklets and the same number of leaflet calendars with the main information on OCV and addresses of the polling stations abroad (54,000 copies in total) have been produced. At the same time a bilingual poster on OCV was produced in 300 copies. The booklets and posters have been posted on www.iom.md web page which was advertized through the IOM Diaspora network (see images below).



- b) All Moldovan diplomatic missions abroad received the booklets, calendars and posters by express mail for further distribution in the destination countries, including locations of additional polling stations.
- c) The above mentioned materials have been also sent by express mail to Moldovan communities (Diaspora Associations) in the main countries of destination.
- d) The materials were also delivered for distribution at the Chisinau International Airport – 12,000 copies.
- e) 11,000 copies have been distributed to Moldovan citizens traveling abroad through a local distribution company at the Chisinau railway station and international routes of the Chisinau bus stations.
- f) A number of 7,000 copies have been provided to the Border Guard Service for distribution at the main international border check points to Moldovan citizens traveling abroad.
- g) Production of three electoral video spots (two motivational and one procedural for OCV), in Romanian and Russian languages respectively, have been covered from OCV project budget (see snapshots below).

Motivational video spot: Airport



Motivational video spot: Bus Station



Procedural video-spot



- h) All spots have been broadcasted by the CEC through national TV companies. In addition to this, one motivational and one procedural spot were broadcasted by IOM through Moldovan private companies with international satellite coverage (N4, EU TV and RTR) as well as through MIR TV company, which broadcasts to CIS countries, RAI News – in Italy and TVR International with broad international coverage.
- i) All video spots were also placed on IOM Moldova YouTube page⁸ as well as on Diaspora Facebook social network.
- j) Web banners of different sizes have been developed and placed on the websites of the main local media agencies (ProTV, Publika, UNIMEDIA, All Moldova) for publicizing the www.voteaza.md for OCV materials. The respective banners have been also placed by CEC on different other media web pages.
- k) All the mentioned links have been advertized through the IOM Diaspora e-mail network for as much as possible wider distribution to Moldovans abroad.
- l) In addition to this a motivational message, based on the OCV poster as a background accompanied by relevant web links in Romanian and Russian language, was developed and distributed through the IOM Diaspora e-mail network with the request for a follow up wide distribution (see image under 3.2.1 a). Project visibility items (110 sweaters and caps) acknowledging the CEC, MFAEI and main donor's and partners' contribution – EU, UNDP, CoE,

⁸ <http://www.youtube.com/iommoldova#p/c/0773B3F9AF9492A4>

and IOM, have been produced to be carried on by the MFA electoral staff abroad, the MFAEI local OCV electoral working group and by the local company which distributed the OCV promotional materials at the Chisinau railway station and international routes of the Chisinau bus stations (see below).



In addition to this, in line with the spirit of the project, IOM project staff participated in several OCV thematic shows of the TV Moldova International where the OCV project component was promoted along with the general motivational message to Moldovans abroad for a wide participation in November 2010 parliamentary elections.⁹

3.2.2 OCV logistical support

- a) IOM provided logistical support to the DCA of the MFAEI for better OCV management by covering the roundtrip travel, DSA, luggage, communication and local transportation expenses for 21 consular officers deployed in the additionally opened polling stations abroad from the country. The deployment of the respective consular officers have been crucial not only for ensuring the operation of the newly opened polling stations, but also for timely delivery of the ballot papers, stamps and necessary stationary to the Moldovan diplomatic missions for the rest of polling stations abroad. A significant challenge for MFAEI represented the opening and carrying out of the operations in four countries where Moldova does not have diplomatic presence (Canada, Cyprus, Ireland and Spain) and where polling stations for parliamentary elections have been opened for the first time.
- b) In addition, IOM supported the activity of an Election Working Group (11 persons) within the MFAEI which acted as Hotline for any inquiry on OCV coming from the consular staff responsible for activity of the polling stations abroad during the preparations and conduct of elections. More specifically, IOM provided equipment (lap-tops, workplace furniture, and consumables, along with project visibility items), and covered communication and refreshment (lunch and coffee-breaks) costs of the respective Working Group.

The OCV information campaign and all logistical arrangements for facilitation of OCV, especially targeting additional polling stations outside Moldovan diplomatic missions and consular offices, were meant to implicitly contribute to a higher voter turnout. Subsequently, the achieved out of country voter turnout during the November 2010 parliamentary elections has eloquently proved the efficiency of these efforts. In these elections 64,201 persons voted abroad, which represented a more than 3.6 times increase comparing to the last parliamentary elections as of 29

⁹ <http://www.youtube.com/user/iommoldova?feature=mhum#p/c/0/iEg54b2ij70>

July 2009 which counted 17,484 voters (see Appendix A for a comparative chart of OCV voter turnout). The CEC support during the whole parliamentary election campaign, including electoral training for the consular staff, as well as the full commitment and good collaboration of the Department of Consular Affairs of the MFAEI have decisively contributed to the success of the project efforts in full correspondence with the lessons learned from the last parliamentary elections in Moldova.

In line with the IOM coherent approach towards ensuring coordination and synergy between different IOM projects, a substantial contribution to the success of the OCV project component was brought by the IOM project “Supporting the Implementation of the Development Component of the EU-Moldova Mobility Partnership Agreement (SIMP)”. Through the respective project IOM supported the Department of Consular Affairs (DCA) in gathering of the consular staff in Chisinau during the Consular reunion in July 2010, thus making possible the electoral training of the consular staff by the CEC. In addition to this, during the consular reunion general consular training for the relevant staff on different consular services was provided, as well as how to better communicate with the Diaspora and Moldovan communities abroad. Through the SIMP project has been also supported the development of the electronic communication system of the DCA aiming at enhancing communication between the DCA and consular offices abroad as well as to a better communication between the respective consular offices and the Moldovan communities and citizens abroad. Such an enhancement has implicitly contributed to facilitating in the best possible way the participation of the Moldovans in the OCV during the 28 November 2010 parliamentary elections as well as during other forthcoming national electoral events.

As usual a crucial role in motivating the Moldovans abroad to participate in voting for parliamentary elections has been paid by the associations of Moldovans abroad. IOM project staff and the DCA were in permanent contact with these associations before, during, and after elections. At the request of IOM they distributed the information on the election subject that IOM had either produced or conveyed to them through other project partners, first of all CEC and MFAEI. The associations of Moldovans abroad, in collaboration with the DCA, have also provided regular staff for the newly established polling stations abroad as well as supported the identification of premises for the respective polling stations, thus bringing an effective and substantive contribution to facilitation of OCV and increased voter turnout.

3.3 ACTIVITY 3: INCREASED INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF CEC

3.3.1 Needs assessment conducted

Following the first Project electoral cycle (starting with the 5 April 2009 parliamentary elections), the Project made arrangements with International IDEA for a needs assessment mission by a certified BRIDGE trainer to be conducted in May 2009. The assessment aimed at designing appropriate professional development courses to be delivered later in the year and was conducted by an International IDEA consultant. The consultant identified the areas in need of further capacity development of the CEC and for which project support would be needed. The main recommendations for 2009 were:

- To conduct a post-election review in the immediate term after the elections
- To build CEC’s internal BRIDGE capacity by training and accreditation of the appropriate CEC staff through a BRIDGE “Train the Facilitator” (TtF) course and co-facilitated BRIDGE training sessions, supervised by a fully accredited external BRIDGE facilitator

- To adjust the training programme and to address the newly identified challenges and professional development needs that may have arisen through the review
- To run BRIDGE trainings in the priority areas of strategic and financial planning, electoral training, civic and voter education, elections and technology, electoral dispute resolution, pre-electoral activities, and polling, counting and results
- To support establishment of a Training Centre of the CEC that will offer ongoing professional development opportunities and operational trainings to electoral administrators

3.3.2 BRIDGE Training Program partially delivered

Despite multiple electoral events, the BRIDGE training program was partially delivered. Following BRIDGE Needs Assessment Mission in May 2009, a Train-the-Trainer (TtF) two-weeks-long course was conducted for 20 participants (16 CEC staff and members, and 4 staff of CEC partner organizations). This course was followed by Strategic and Financial Planning BRIDGE training course for CEC staff in March 2010 and Out-of-Country Voting and Civic Education training course for CEC and MFAEI staff in July 2010.

3.3.3 A pool of national BRIDGE facilitators created

Throughout the TtF course and subsequent thematic courses a pool of at least seven accredited national BRIDGE workshop facilitators were created. This number of fully trained and accredited BRIDGE workshop facilitators created a necessary pool inside the country for independent running of BRIDGE program.

3.3.4 Post-election reviews

Upon recommendation of the ESM project a post-election review was originally planned for the beginning of June 2009. However, due to early July Parliamentary elections, it was re-scheduled for October 2009. The overall exercise aimed at assessing the two electoral cycles of April and July 2009, identified lessons learned, put forward proposals to improve operations and provided the evaluation and proposed improvement of the election administration to outside election stakeholders (media, civil society, international organizations).

The post-election review, as agreed with the CEC and with inputs from IFES and Council of Europe, was organized and carried out by the project in several steps:

- Internal planning meeting (CEC + UNDP / IFES / CoE), 5 October 2009. This was an internal session with permanent CEC members, heads of CEC departments and the organizers to discuss the work agenda of the next event (post-election review retreat) and to focus on a number of relevant topics and issues related to past elections experiences
- Electoral management bodies post-election review retreat, 15-17 October 2009. The retreat functioned as a three day workshop bringing together representatives of the Election Management Bodies of all three levels (CEC, DEC and PEBs), representatives of the local authorities and Ministry of Informational Development, development partners, and international experts from organizations providing technical assistance to the CEC
- Post-election review conference for external stakeholders, 2-3 November 2009. This was a high level two-day international conference with participation of all electoral process stakeholders presenting the findings and recommendations for improving the electoral system, but it was also an important opportunity to receive

feedback from participants. Input from all attendees aimed to enable CEC to finalize its strategic plan for the coming years

The objectives of the exercises were met and identified a set of legal changes in all areas, including voter registration and information technologies; quality of the electoral process; civic/voter education; CEC management; processing of complaints and appeals during the electoral campaign; training of electoral officials; relations between CEC, observers, mass media and other stakeholders.

Following the 2010 electoral events another round of Post-Election Review activities were identified and started with a 20 December internal CEC workshop. The workshop identified a number of important priorities for further development, which may be found in Annex B.

3.3.5 CEC Institutional Capacity partially developed

A brief functional study of the CEC has shown that the institution is not ideally managed, which prevents it to perform to its full potential. The dissatisfaction with management and with salaries has triggered the resignation of at least one key staff (the ICT chief) and some more have signaled intention to follow. In the short term an empowerment of senior staff might help to get through the election period; in the long term a serious institutional reform has to be committed too by the CEC and the international community.

After the project is on the ground for almost two years it is evident that the capacity building component, the most important one has delivered the desired result only partially and has to be tackled strategically and forcefully on several levels. The detected shortcomings, listed below, are common in many Moldovan institutions and indeed are equal in many countries worldwide. They pose a serious obstacle on the sound management of an election commission but also have severely negative consequences on the credibility of elections.

- As many TA projects, the ESM project has a focus on the transfer of technical, election administration relevant skills, and not on the more important aspect of institution building. The technical skills are therefore transferred on individuals rather than the institution, which remain weak and vulnerable
- Very strong characters in the CEC and as a result the institution is rather led by personal charisma than by structured management
- Modern and best practices are not in place within the CEC
- The top down management style in the CEC is culturally entrenched and extremely hard to change
- With a new structure commissioners would lose power over the apparatus and thus would political parties nominating election commissioners lose influence over the CEC
- The CEC until now did not reach to draft a strategic plan, and strategic planning and long term thinking seem to be virtually absent

The two components of the CEC (the Commission and the Apparatus) are at least theoretically designed for both management efficiency and political balance. Their design matches the general principle in the structure of independent EMBs to have separate policy and implementation components. The relationship between these two components is always critical for the commission to remain both efficient and impartial/neutral. What is unique about the way that the Moldova CEC

functions is that the permanent members of the commission are intimately involved in the apparatus at the level of implementation. It appears that this arrangement has been driven by a lack of confidence in the structure and the well intentioned desire of the permanent members to take responsibility for the commissions operations. Generally speaking, this has been benign because the members are committed professionals. At the same time, this situation is untenable in the medium to long term because of two drawbacks:

- **Efficiency:** Organizational structures should have clear lines of authority and responsibility so that employees clearly understand who their supervisor is and who they report to. When the organizational hierarchy loses the confidence of the permanent members, who then take actions by getting involved in implementation, this confuses the employees who consequently have to balance responsibilities to their department heads as well as the three permanent members. Such a situation is untenable for both the employees and for the organization.
- **Impartiality and Neutrality:** By the nature of their appointment, members of electoral commissions often have political forces behind them. The Moldovan CEC is not designed to be an overtly political body, but nonetheless the structure must control for the potential that individual members may at times have partisan interests at heart.

The best way to control for these partisan interests is for the body to exercise authority solely as a body and not as individual members. When there is a practice of permanent members getting involved in implementation then there is the potential that the apparatus will become politicized instead of professional and neutral.

We are recommending in the medium term that those very CEC members must seek organizational reform and staffing which will allow the apparatus to implement policy independently of member involvement. There is plenty of evidence in EMBs around the world, that if individual members take responsibility or otherwise get involved in the day to day operations of the apparatus or the regions, this can have negative consequences on the organizational structure and hierarchy as well as potentially compromising the political independence of the EMB's functions. Such reform would free the permanent members of current implementation responsibilities and allow them to think strategically, design policy, to control for integrity, and maximize regional and international linkages. The CEC has strong leaders, but they should be free to focus on leading the institution through difficult political reforms rather than weigh it down by the minutia of implementation.

The crux of a successful relationship between a commission and its apparatus lies within the need to have someone who heads the apparatus taking full and complete responsibility for implementation. The role is similar to that of a general manager, i.e. to implement the policies of the board. This person should be the connection point between the two components. (Comparatively this is called the general secretary, the executive secretary, or the executive director, etc.). In the long term, this position must be filled by a strong professional leader who can take over implementation responsibility from the CEC members (Commissioners) and free them to focus on policy issues. This person must be non-partisan. S/he should attend all EMB plenary meetings

(e.g. as a non-voting board member) to ensure that all meetings have the benefit of advice on the practical operations of the EMB.

Organizational structure

It is clear that the organisational structure of the CEC is not optimal. There are two issues related to organisational structure. First, rationalisation of tasks – the division of labour is not equally distributed between different divisions and there seem to be some overlaps and unexplainable quirks. Second, reallocation of responsibility – the responsibility for the apparatus needs to be reallocated to the head of the apparatus and the department heads if and when there is a person/team of people in that position who are capable of such responsibility.

Management and budgeting

Through our discussions within and on the side of the BRIDGE needs assessment, the participants identified numerous examples of areas where more progressive management practices could improve efficiency. The CEC has a strong and professional staff, but good staff is worthless without good management. Hence, the core recommendation of this section is to conduct management training within the CEC aimed primarily at the heads of departments and senior staff. Some of this training can be conducted within the context of BRIDGE, but other options may be available.

Decentralised planning and decision making

Decentralised planning and management is known to improve effectiveness, quality, and staff ownership. It appears that decisions and planning processes in the CEC are currently pushed to far up in the hierarchy, that members and staff practice too much ‘hands-on’ management (micro-management), which discourage independent decision making at the level of the departments and staff. This can partially be a result of the crossed lines of responsibility discussed above and partially as a leftover from the Soviet-era command-and-control management practices. Members and senior staff should promote decentralised management, and encourage decision making at the lowest appropriate level. The same recommendation holds for decentralised planning and budgeting processes, so that those who implement also have a role in budgeting and planning. Budgeting should begin at the department level and be reconciled centrally. Budgets should equally be managed at the department level. Were this achieved it could dramatically improve budgeting processes and staff ownership, easing policy implementation.

Communication Systems

The commission must eventually move to a primarily electronic communication system, but substantial retraining will be required before employees can use email and electronic calendaring effectively. An electronic system will only work if computer literacy becomes a critical requirement for hiring and promotion at all levels within the organisation. A mixture of policy and training should be able to deal with this. It has been discussed with CEC that many governments are using an email and calendar system managed by ‘Google for Government’ for reasons of security and ease of use.¹⁰

Budget Insufficiency

¹⁰ <http://www.google.com/apps/intl/en/government/index.html>

Comparative data indicates that the CEC budget may not be sufficient to meet international standards. Budgets for electoral management in Western Europe are approximately \$2-3/voter while elections in Russia cost as much as \$7.50/voter. With approximately 1.5 million Moldovans voting we would expect the election budget in Moldova to total approximately \$3.75 - \$11.25 million. The reality, as we understand is much less. Moldova is a poor country, but high quality elections do cost money. In times of political instability, increased integrity costs may drive the budget higher, and technology is steadily driving up costs. An insufficient budget constrains all aspects of operations, and may compromise the credibility of the electoral process. These comparisons suggest that the CEC and its partners may have good justification for demanding a bigger share of the official state budget.

3.3.6 Institutional assessment and planning ahead

In December 2010 an institutional development specialist evaluated CEC and identified both strengths and shortcomings. Among the strengths were especially found the qualified commissioners and staff, operational plans for divisional departments, and trainings conducted. However, shortcomings were also found. Of these should be mentioned the need to make the electoral code less strict on operational details and allow for more flexibility through regulations, to establish clear management reporting lines, to provide all staff with job descriptions, and to review decision-making and move this to the most appropriate level and position. In order to come to terms with these problems and improve the institutional capacity of CEC, an action plan with clear indicators and outputs were compiled. The report together with the action plan will form the basis for the continued work to further develop the institutional capacity of CEC.

Currently the CEC has developed its action plan for next period that entails many of the recommendations and provisions of the institutional development plan worked out with the assistance of project experts. The action plan is placed on CEC website: www.cec.md

3.3.7 English language courses

To increase CEC staff's exposure to international elections management experiences and best practices, as of October 2009 the Project supported a course of English language for CEC officers. Around 20 CEC officers were beneficiaries of this course, divided into two groups. The course was taught twice a week for each of the two groups by the ACCELS/ACTR American Language Center (American Councils).

3.3.8 Study trips/regional experience sharing

To increase exposure of CEC officials and relevant CEC staff to international elections management experiences and best practices, the Project has supported a number of study trips and regional events:

- Study trip of CEC delegation and ICT Specialist to the Exhibition "Technological Equipment for Polling Stations" held in Moscow, on 7-11 October 2009.
- Study visit of the CEC Secretary and IT Specialist to the first EC-UNDP-IDEA Joint Thematic Workshop dedicated to Elections and Technology held in Brussels, on 30 November – 2 December 2009.
- ACEEEO meeting in Yerevan, Armenia in September 2009

These events expanded the knowledge of the CEC about the best electoral practices, in particular comparable IT solutions for management of elections, and as well increased the ESM project's visibility. The CEC, with project advice and support, won the ACEEEO half chairmanship for

2010. Such exposure to international experiences and best practices contributed to improvement of the quality of electoral management and implementation of IT solutions in Moldova.

3.3.9 Study trips/regional experience sharing

An outline of Continuous Training Centre has been developed during 2009-2010. The Project has provided the CEC with desktops and office furniture to start-up the Continuous Training Centre as of beginning of 2011. CEC has committed to provide the CTC with premises and staff. Towards the end of 2010 an institutional development consultant compiled a road map for setting up and running the CTC taking into account function, staffing, and timelines.

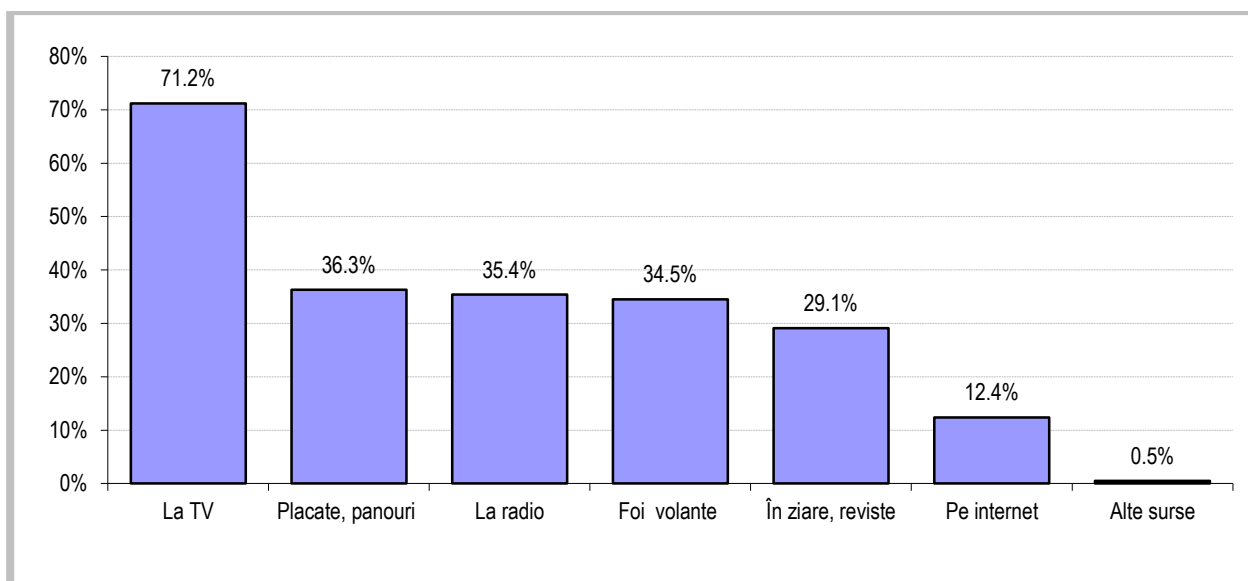
3.4 ACTIVITY 4: INCREASED TRANSPARENCY OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

3.4.1 CEC Voter Information Campaigns supported and greatly strengthened

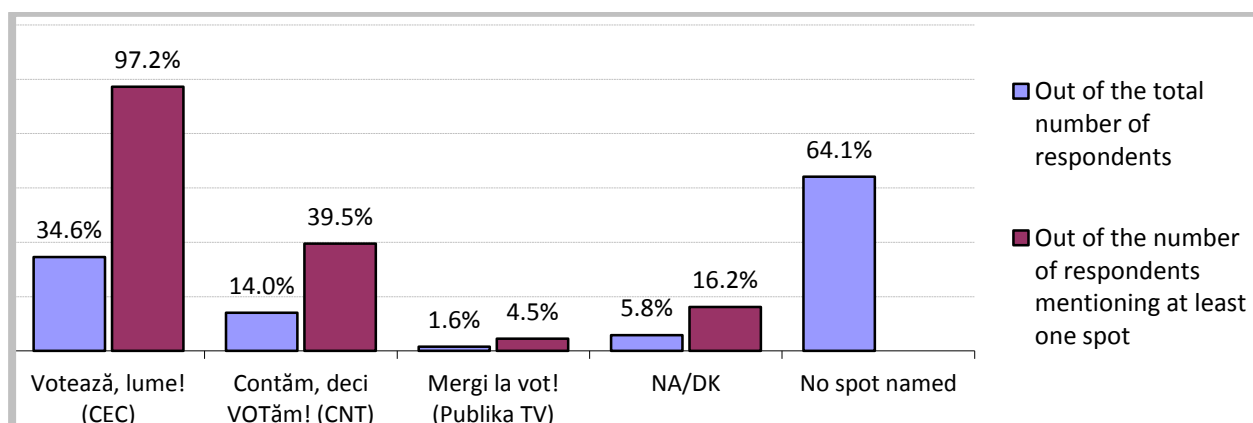
Three CEC Voter Information Campaigns around the parliamentary elections in 2009-2010 were supported and greatly strengthened by the Project. The ESM project has put in place, and made it a routine practice, careful voter information campaigns planning starting with the April 2009 elections. Targeted and pro-active campaigns able to reach out to larger groups of voters were consecutively designed and implemented with the direct advice and support of the ESM project. As a result of solid CEC voter information campaigns the voters' turnout during all the three parliamentary elections covered by the project was high. CEC was by the public simultaneously perceived as a dynamic and pro-active institution.

Under the supported voter information campaigns various audio-visual materials were produced, which included billboards, light boxes, posters, leaflets, internet banners, coasters, etc. A social network campaign was designed for the first time and an Internet competition to raise interest in elections organized.

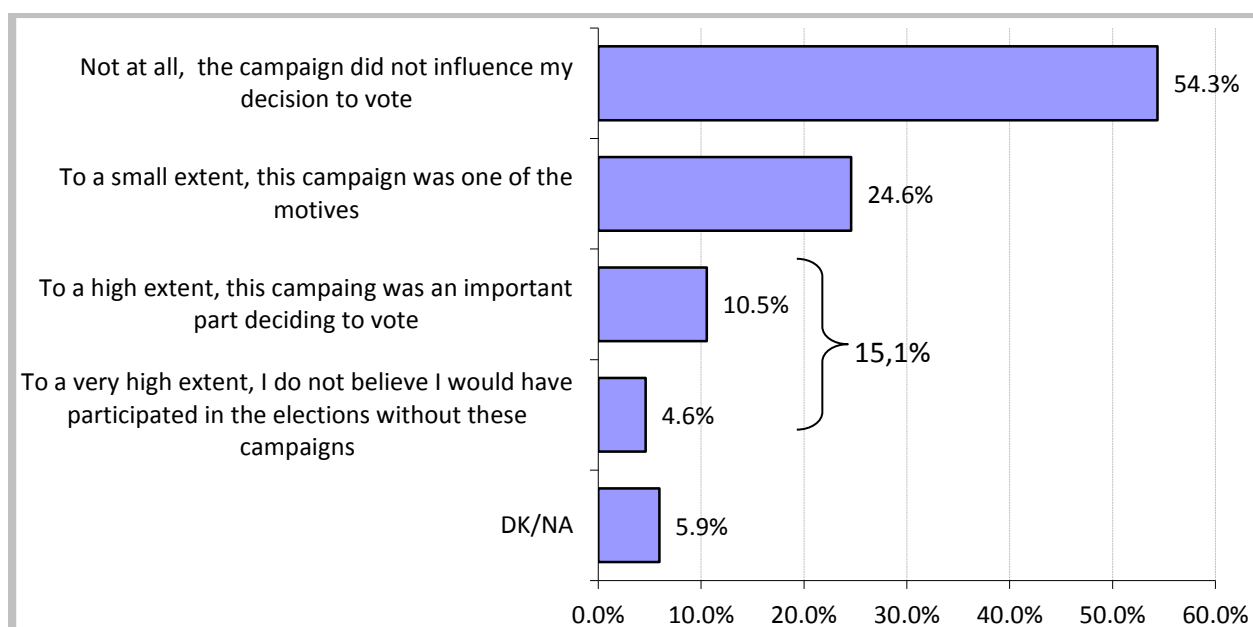
Results of the most recent country-wide independent opinion poll contracted by the Project show that the November 2010 CEC's voter information campaign supported was visible.



Instant and spontaneous recognition of CEC’s voter information campaign “Voteaza, lume!” is 34.6 percent among all the respondents, and 97.2 percent among respondents who recalled at least one video spot.



15.1 percent of all respondents told that the voter information campaign to a large or very large extent was an important motivator for reaching the decision to go to vote.



Overall the strategic and powerful voter information campaign assisted by the Project was an important instrument in ensuring and facilitating high voter turnout and procedurally informed vote throughout 2009 and 2010 electoral cycles.

3.4.2 PR for SAISE

The Project produced a base communication plan and strategy for the SAISE pilots, to serve as a building block for further SAISE related communication in coming years. SAISE is a highly technical process that needs to be carefully explained in order to ensure acceptance by all stakeholders of the democratization process in Moldova. The difficulty is to present messages that alleviate possible anxieties of different stakeholders with interlocking interests, answer their questions, and show how SAISE helps the Moldovan election administration meet international and EU standards. Furthermore, the communication strategy aims at gaining core stakeholders acceptance which in turn will become SAISE support in communicating positively to Moldovan

voters. Once those strategic goals are met, and acceptance by all stakeholders gained, Moldovan voters may vote according to much improved standards relating to the conduct of free and fair elections.

As a result of a first SWOT analysis (see Appendix B), key global messages are that SAISE:

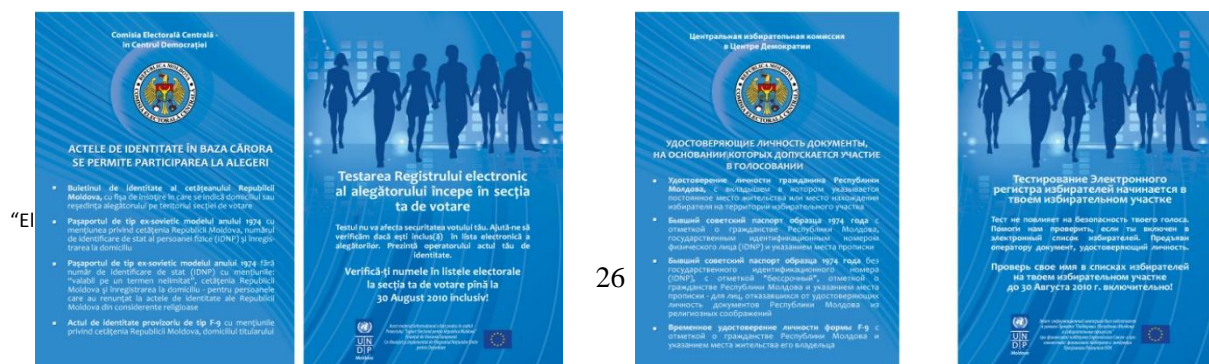
- Increases transparency and ensures ethical behavior in the electoral administration
- Provides a higher level of security for sensitive data
- Enhances accuracy of voters' lists, vote recording, vote counting and reporting of results
- Ensures individuals' data privacy
- Lowers the cost of elections
- Increases efficiency of the electoral management process
- Meets modern (EU for instance) electoral administration standards

The CEC SWOT analysis shows that, although the CEC is willing to communicate outwards, the lack of human resource capacity to staff the effort (a communication cell has to be established with clear reporting lines) the unstable political and electoral calendar resulting in an operational planning inhibition impacts external communication strategizing. Overall, and taking the SWOT findings into consideration, the external communication strategy of the SAISE Pilot intends to prevent reporting inaccuracies (media and/or NGOs), reach out to voters to explain SAISE, convince and mobilize support of all election stakeholders. The following materials have been used to run EVR voter information campaign in 2010:

Posters “Step by Step” and “Simple, Safe, Modern – EVR tested in your PEB” (Moldovan and Russian) have been put up in 43 PEBs in Chisinau Centru district, i.e. the pilot district, on 5 September 2010 and 28 November 2010:



80,000 leaflets “Your PEB has been chosen to test the EVR/Verify your name on VL/ID list to vote” (40,000 Moldovan, 40,000 Russian) have been dropped in all mail boxes in Centru district



of Chisinau:

In parallel to prepare the voters, communication through PR (interviews with CEC Secretary, press releases announcing the planned pilot and its location) reinforced the message related to the conduct of the pilot test. Several briefings on the pilot's aim and nature were organized by the Project and CEC to brief the media, NGOs and local and international observers on what to expect on election day in the Centru district and what to specifically observe. A set of FAQs (frequently asked questions) for media representatives, international and local observers and voters, a PowerPoint presentation and a backgrounder were produced in three languages (Moldovan, Russian and English) and distributed on CD-ROMs with other briefing materials prior to the election day. These documents were also posted online on the CEC Project Voter Education website Voteaza.md.

In order to assess the Centru voters' perception of the EVR pilot test an exit poll was commissioned ($n=850$). It showed again a strong support for the EVR, this time in a highly educated urban segment. For instance, to the question "are you satisfied with the procedure of testing the electronic voter register?" close to 90 percent of voters polled replied yes. To the question "do you think the electronic system of keeping records about voters will somehow affect your personal data?" close to 80 percent said no, which shows a higher level of trust in the system in urban areas (vs. 62 percent in the Stefan Voda district and 71 percent on the outskirts of Chisinau, Singera). This outlines the specific need for awareness raising of the EVR in rural areas. Based on the results from the poll the following recommendations are made regard to future communication of SAISE:

- Although the CEC has a neutral to good relationship with the media, there are major communication impediments, such as lack of funds and lack of capacity at the CEC for a national information campaign, which could result in voters exposed to more information about the SAISE Pilot than the classical information about the electoral event itself. Local media were and shall be the focus of media relations for SAISE, to anchor the event at the local level, as opposed to the national election.
- The CEC shall collaborate with several NGOs (Promo-LEX, Coalition 2009, East Europe Foundation, NDI, IRI, and all other networks), radio networks (regional/local) and TRM with regard to communicating SAISE out.
- Voters, political parties and candidates, and elections focused NGOs shall be core targets and mass media, political parties' supporters, opinion leaders, possibly church representatives are a secondary target of the external communication strategy.
- General communications vehicles shall include print material (posters, leaflets), press advisories (announcement), one on one CEC interviews, Photo Ops on election day, www.cec.md, postings on social platforms (Facebook, Youtube, Skype, blogs etc, depending on CEC human resources), activating local radio networks. Op Eds, signed by top CEC officials, could present the main aspects of SAISE in simple terms, publicizing exit polls and tracking polls results.

In order to gain acceptance by key stakeholders, which includes media, and local political party representatives, SAISE pilot briefing sessions shall be organized for reporters and politicians during the campaign. Higher level contacts, i.e. chief editors, political party leaders, should be held informally by the CEC Chairman and Secretary to present, brief and gain managerial acceptance of SAISE.

3.4.3 Extensive CEC Communications/Media Center established and successfully launched

The re-designing and planning of the larger Communications Center (Media Center appended with a Conference/Meeting Room, a dedicated Interview Room, and Citizens Information Desk) has been completed. The Media Center offers a wide range of services, including computers with Internet, printing/copying facilities, TV monitoring of four most popular national channels, access to high-quality video/audio signal from the CEC conference/meeting room through a pool-feed. The reconstructed Conference/Meeting Room as a result has a completely new design, modern and functional. A special area for media has been arranged, providing maximum comfort for both media and attending public. The new Interview Room is a separate room with a CEC banner, good lights, nice and functional ambiance for providing one-to-one interviews without being disturbed or interrupted. The Citizens Information Desk, equipped with a library of the basic elections-related informational materials, and desktops is designed to serve the needs of individuals looking for elections-related information.

All the above described facilities were very well received by CEC, media and public, contributing to the image of the CEC as a modern and dynamic institution.

3.4.4 Increased trust and credibility of CEC

As a result of advice and coaching provided by the Project's PR and Media Advisor throughout the more than two years of project activities, the CEC's public perception has been considerably improved and consolidated. The results of the most recent country-wide independent opinion poll contracted by the Project shows that:

- Since 2008 has the share of people who believe that elections run in the country were mostly or absolutely free and fair constantly grown from 31.8 percent (October 2008) to 47.6 percent (March 2009) to 49.5 percent (July 2009) to 51.5 percent (December 2010)
- Out of the spectrum of central public institutions and authorities is CEC the best known. Only 9 percent told that they did not know about the CEC, the next best state institutions are the Centre for Combating Economic Crimes and Corruption with 12 percent, and Border Guard with 17 percent. Likewise, 60 percent of respondents replied that they had trust in the CEC, the next most credible institutions being the Border Guard with 56 percent, Tourism Agency and National Bureau of Statistics with 43 percent.
- CEC's performance in various aspects of elections management is considered by 57 to 69 percent of those interviewed as good or very good

The ESM Project's contribution in 2008 to 2010 was crucial in building a positive public perception of the CEC as a modern and credible institution and promoter of democratic values in Moldova.

3.5 ACTIVITY 5: SUPPORT IN LEGAL MATTERS

The Project provided support to the Special Parliamentary Commission on Improvement of the Electoral Legislative Framework through support of two national consultants. The two consultants developed amendments into the Electoral Code during the first half of 2010, and then amendments into elections-adjacent legislation (Law on Local Public Administration, Code of

Administrative Contraventions, etc) during the second half of 2010, in close consultation with the CEC.

Key changes into Electoral Code referred to incorporation of provisions on operation of the State Register of Voters (EVR), and establishment of Continuous Training Centre as of 2011. More clarity was brought into the legal provisions referring to media coverage during the elections campaign.

The Special Parliamentary Commission appreciated this collaboration, mentioning that it was because of it that the quality of electoral legislative amendments was ensured. The CEC as well considered the legal support provided to the Special Parliamentary Commission as both useful and timely.

4. CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS TAKEN

Election support and technical assistance projects are, due to their political nature, challenging undertakings. The electoral events of 2009 showed the demand on the project's flexibility and adaptability. With hindsight it can be stated that the conceptualization of the project along the methodology of the election cycle approach with a long term perspective proved to be the right choice as all of the shortcomings of the elections, observed and reported by well reputed and knowledgeable domestic and international observer groups, showed that they can be only addressed through long term capacity development, a modernization of the VR system and continuous legal/electoral reform. However, ability to swiftly react to changing circumstances and needs was also critical.

Namely, due to the inconclusiveness of the April elections in terms of the elections of the president the project was compelled to react to the imminent needs to assist the CEC in the organization of a second election in 2009 in both programmatic and financial terms however did not lose track of the overall objective which it aims to.

The electoral code of the Republic of Moldova proves not to be very conducive for the preparation of elections and various laws actually are rendering the mandate of the CEC difficult. The problem of voter's list was emphasized however also the very tight deadlines on the establishment of election commissions on local level has a very negative impact on the administration of the polling day as election commission could not be properly trained which reflected negative on their performance. The election dispute resolution laws have put a large burden on the CEC which has neither the necessary legal competence nor the resources to have coped with the large number of complaints, the vast majority of them media related. The project has in the aftermath of the election brought these legal shortcomings to the attention of the parliamentary commission on the electoral code and it remains to be seen whether amendments in these directions will be made.

To support the authorities in the organization of the out of country voting exercise was difficult at best as the project could not find the necessary political will and interest on side of the Moldovan partners to implement the planned activities.

As already mentioned another major challenge was the repetition of the elections in April 2009 which and the impact the event had on the focus of the project. The direction of the project had to change from post-election mode which should emphasize on the lessons learned and the fur-

ther development of capacities, electoral administration and legal improvements, to another pre-election-election mode were ad hoc and high speed support is required by the partner. The project handled this challenge well as such support is taken care off in the methodology of the election cycle approach however must in the future concentrate its efforts on the CEC 's continuous preparedness to organize an election in any given deadline.

There was need to work on understanding of the partner organization – the CEC of project advice and benefits for the organization from such assistance. While this was not fully present at the beginning on the project, its improvement resulted in increased responsiveness of CEC. This was mainly due to the valuable support provided to the institution in critical times.

In Moldova, as in many transition countries the financial situation of election management body is dissatisfactory rendering it very dependent on international donors and technical assistant providers to execute their mandate to the full extend. This unfortunate fact has a negative impact on the overall capacity of the CEC particularly however in the case an early election is called for which no finances have been foreseen in the annual budget. This serious problem must be addressed on government level but also the CEC must become more pro-active and improve their strategic and financial planning.

Although the elections were well administered (in general terms, with the reported shortcomings) the CEC staff and leadership operated in crisis mode and on the very verge of their capacity. The further professionalization in every aspect of election administration from operations, voter registration, public affairs, training, and logistics to general management and organizations is paramount for the future of the credibility of the elections in Moldova.

5. LESSONS LEARNED AND WAY FORWARD

The ESM has identified several key areas where further support will be required:

Problem Area 1: Voter Registration

The electoral events of 2009 were generally confirmed as credible and the CEC attested to have performed their duties reasonably well. However, all observers mutually agreed that the low quality of the voter's lists in accuracy terms as well as compilation methodology terms was and is the source of all problems like double voting, reconciliation of results sheets, inflated lists which include dead underage and non residents. The non accuracy of the list and hence the question of credibility of the election is a direct result of the used methodology (defined by the law) to compile the lists on local level by local authorities who are ill-equipped, not willing or politically motivated to produce an accurate list.

The ESM together with the CEC took note of this problem and has developed a new ICT based methodology for the compilation of the lists which, provided the law 101 will be implemented, will dramatically improve the quality of the lists as it was proved in a pilot test in autumn 2009. According to the new ICT based methodology proposed in draft law 101 the new the compilation authority will shift from the local governments to the CEC and hence will erase a large number of error sources. *According to the concept of the law 101 the CEC will base the voter's lists on the data of the population registry (hosted by the Ministry for Information Technology and Communication) and will have ICT based automated systems in place to produce the voter's lists and assign voters to their respective polling station.*

The highly likely implementation of law 101 presents a huge challenge for the Government of Moldova. However, the political will and commitment of the CEC and the Government to follow this path will indeed change the electoral future of the Country.

The ESM in this regard will be the technical advisor and supporter of the CEC and the larger stakeholder community to implement this very important and ambitious project which will not only require the necessary finances but the full cooperation of the Moldovan and international stakeholders as the democratic future of the country is at stake. The compilation of a credible and inclusive voters list is the biggest problem in a large number of countries worldwide and many of them never were able to produce the vision and courage to tackle this problem with such a strong political commitment as the Moldovan decision makers.

If the above is implemented and supported by the project, the Moldovan authorities will:

- Increase transparency of displaying the Voter List electronically on Internet
- Reduce the chances of deceased and underage people voting
- Reduce the chances for multiple voting
- Reduce the chances of Out of Country people voting twice
- Reduce the number of Voters on the Supplementary Lists
- Increasing transparency and trust of voters in the electoral process by building the CEC's external communication, image and improvement of the institution's relationship with civil society.

These are the objectives on which the project aims to work in 2010 and beyond.

Problem Area 2 Institutional Capacity of the CEC

Although Observer reports talk about a professional and farsighted election commission a closer look from inside provides a different image. The ESM has over the last 2 years put large efforts in the development of institutional and human resources. However, as in many post-authoritarian countries, the desired change in institutional culture from an extreme and top-down individual management approach to an inclusive, communication based one could not yet been achieved. The goal of the project hence is to build the institution rather than their individuals and will target activities towards this objective.

The further enhancement of technical capacities of CEC staff (the secretariat) in all aspects and disciplines of election administration (such as: election operations, planning, public and media relations, legal affairs, election technology and ICT, logistics, etc) forms a key element of the project. The issues will be addressed within the larger framework of sound management and administration. In the light of the latter trainings and on site coaching and advice in HR management, internal communication, management practices, procurement, financial and office management will form a core of the projects intervention.

The need for stronger CEC in house capacities to deal with institutional and HR capacity development was detected and by the CEC and the project and communicated to the law makers who have reacted with the legal provision to establish a continuous training centre owned and financed by the CEC in Chisinau. The centre will cater for all training needs of the election administration and elections stakeholders (media, political parties, Ministries, etc.) and is conceived in

a later stage to also cater for regional trainings needs with a focus on the former soviet countries who share both language and equal problems in their election administration. The Project will support the CEC in the conceptualization and establishment of the training centre. Additional funding will be sought for such activity, including from the Government of Spain (through the GPECS initiative).

Problem Area 3: Out of country voting

The Out of Country Voting (OCV) has been identified as one of the key priorities by CEC and requires a special approach. It is difficult to consolidated figures of Moldovans abroad: estimates suggest figures varying from 400.000 to 700.000 of Moldovans living abroad under different status. Given the substantial proportion of migrants in the population, their inadequate participation in Moldovan elections influences the democratic process and prejudices good governance. Inadequate execution of the OCV was cited as a reason for low voter turnout among Moldovans abroad during the parliamentary elections of 2005. The participation of citizens residing abroad increased significantly – by 70% as compared to the 2005 figures when only 10,018 exercised their right to vote. Nevertheless, the voter turnout among Moldovans residing abroad is still very low.

The legal provision to grant Moldovan citizens abroad the right to vote in parliamentary elections puts the respective election management bodies foreseen to manage these event(s) namely CEC and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (MFAEI) in front of enormous operational and political challenges as out of country voting exercises are known to be extremely difficult to organize, high cost, poorly attended and their outcomes often challenged by political parties.

The countries political leaders and the government are highly emphasizing to improve the entire OCV element of the elections hence the project will be on the side of CEC and MFAEI to re-think approaches and procedures, train respective personnel and provide communications infrastructure to the polling sites abroad.

The project therefore will aim to support to the MFAEI and the CEC to better cope with the financial and operational challenges of out of country voting through targeted technical assistance to these institutions through operational advice, capacity building of relevant institutions and departments and activities related to public outreach and voters education.

Problem Area 4: Electoral legislation

The Parliament and Government of Moldova have changed the electoral legislation which now has to be implemented by the election administration and its partners. The law foresees paramount changes in the legislation in regard to voter registration in which the project will support the CEC to fulfill its legal obligation and more so will assist them to educate and build the confidence of the Moldovan electorate about these historic changes.

The project will assist the CEC to translate the new law provisions into administrative and operational procedures allowing for sound and timely execution of the legislation. The legal advice services will furthermore be extending if the need arises to cater for additional expertise in the resolution of electoral conflicts with which the CEC was overwhelmed in the past.

Problem Area 5: The full digitalization of the election process

Moldova's electoral vision includes the full digitalization of its electoral processes based on an integrated ICT system which covers and the main electoral cycle elements like the voter registration and voters list development, the allocation of voters to their respective polling stations, political party and candidates registration, observer accreditation, ballot paper production based on political party and candidates registry and finally electronic voting and internet voting

Such ambitious program would require high level advice and expertise which the project through its international advisors will provide. The ESM therefore shall further advice and guide the CEC on this challenging and not risk free path and will expose it to international standards and best practices developed in countries already using such systems.

APPENDIX A: VOTING OF MOLDOVANS ABROAD IN 2009 AND 2010 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

No.	Country	TOTAL		
		28/11/2010	29/07/2009	05/04/2009
1.	Austria	278	129	115
2.	Azerbaijan	54	26	31
3.	Belarus	98	72	35
4.	Belgium	773	423	405
5.	Bulgaria	212	74	124
6.	Canada*	1 736		
7.	Czech Republic	633	288	250
8.	China	28	19	24
9.	Cyprus*	192		
10.	Greece	2 496	1 205	1 080
11.	Switzerland	239	157	158
12.	Estonia	32	22	24
13.	France	2 246	1 591	1 338
14.	Germany	652	316	289
15.	Hungary	124	67	71
16.	Israel	508	236	119
17.	Italy	28 212	5 426	4 929
18.	Ireland*	1 152		
19.	Latvia	33	35	39
20.	Lithuania	70	20	15
21.	London	586	401	289
22.	Poland	83	79	109
23.	Portugal	3 642	757	1 191
24.	Romania	9 724	3 654	4 217
25.	Russian Federation	4 178	1 419	1 148
26.	Spain*	2 526		
27.	Sweden	69	39	46
28.	Turkey	249	137	203
29.	Ukraine	601	267	145
30.	USA	2 778	625	411
Total		64 201	17 484	16 805

*Countries where polling stations have been opened for the first time in 2010.

Note: The comparative chart illustrates the differences between both 2009 election rounds and 2010 elections in terms of voter turnout, including data from Canada, Cyprus, Ireland and Spain, where polling stations for Parliamentary elections have been opened for the first time).

APPENDIX B: 2010 POST ELECTION REVIEW WORK-SHOP: CONCLUDING DOCUMENT

20 December 2010, Leograd Conference & Convention Center

PRIORITIES

Having gone through a close post-election review the CEC and its development partners have identified the next priorities for 2011 and beyond:

- 1) Acknowledging the intrinsic value of the centralized Electronic Voter Register (EVR) for the transparency and credibility of the electoral process in Moldova, the entering into function of such Register and further management of Voters Lists need to be thoroughly reconsidered in the light of upcoming 2011 local elections, and time / institutional constraints imposed by the multiple 2010 electoral events.
- 2) The cooperation with the Ministry of Informational Technologies and Communications needs to be strengthened, as this institution shall play an instrumental and critical role in creating a systemic basis for the centralized EVR by:
 - Proactively ensuring the highest accuracy of the State Register of Population providing the database basis for EVR;
 - Urgently developing street and other geographical locations code naming system to enable operation of the voters auto-allocation module of the Electronic Register of Voters;
 - Establishing an effective feedback mechanism between the voters lists originating from the Electronic Register of Voters and double-checked for accuracy with the assistance of local public authorities.
- 3) Recognizing the value of timely and quality training for the electoral management bodies members, the Continuous Training Center by the CEC needs to be established early in 2011 to ensure timely and quality training for the electoral management bodies members for 2011 general local elections. Allocation of additional premises at the same CEC building for the Continuous Training Center is an important condition for full functionality of the Center.
- 4) Acknowledging the progress in electoral management technologies and the challenges of the past 5 years, a comprehensive institutional reform of the CEC needs to take place in 2011, including:
 - Strengthening institutional independence of the CEC by securing it with a separate and generous budget directly managed by the institution itself;
 - Establishing a clear vertical management structure within the CEC, whereby the staff of the CEC would only be managed by the Chief of Apparatus, reporting and accountable to the Commission *in corpore*;
 - Changing the legal status of the CEC staff allowing higher degree of flexibility in establishing staff salary scales to prevent high staff turnover in the key democracy-guaranteeing institution in the country.
- 5) The CEC institutional reform shall be closely accompanied by a comprehensive institutional capacity development and Apparatus strengthening program that takes into account lessons learned during the four major electoral exercises of the past two years, including the following areas:
 - General elections management;

- New and IT technologies in elections management;
- Management of Out-of-Country Voting;
- Civic education and Voter information;
- Electoral campaign finance monitoring;
- CEC human resources management;
- Decision-making delegation culture and best practices within the CEC.

A special training program shall be designed and implemented for the IT department of the CEC to enable full ownership and mastering of the State Automated Informational System “Elections”.

- 6) Further amendments into Electoral Code need to be introduced *inter alia*:
 - to eliminate existing internal contradictions;
 - to eliminate conflicts with other laws;
 - to eliminate unsuccessful practices (pre-registration);
 - to establish a standard numeric composition of 11 members for DEC;
 - to develop certain underdeveloped provisions (sanctions for elections-related violations);
 - to regulate better management of referendum.
- 7) Improvement of DEC training and appointment system (staffing with 11 members).
- 8) Further close cooperation and engagement of political parties and NGOs.
- 9) Handover and induction training to new CEC members.
- 10) Strengthening of close relations with international organizations with gradual transition towards less involvement of international organizations in technical assistance and its funding, once sustainability is achieved.

APPENDIX C: CEC SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
CEC is willing to communicate	Lack of HR capacity and staff	Elections (Referendum and General elections) can help develop communications tools	Political and electoral calendar volatile if not uncertain: operational planning inhibition impacts external communication strategizing
Media Center is expanding with the addition of a real press conference room and an interview room	Lack of strategic thinking	SAISE Pilot can be used as an image enhancement	NGOs watchdogs skepticism/critical of election administration
CEC Secretary is a strong communicator	Difficult IT training at the local level	Media Center plus Press Conference room and interview room can be used to strengthen CEC media relations	Political parties can politicize SAISE and discredit the CEC in the process.
CEC has a neutral to positive image in media	CEC needs to restructure its external communication division and assign clear tasks to staff	Media Corps and NGOs (if trained) can become an asset to reach CEC goals on SAISE	CEC unpreparedness in
SAISE is being implemented through Piloting	CEC reactive and not pro-active enough	CEC Media monitoring and tracking will improve CEC/media relations	
Website being restructured but slowly			
Exit polls show that voters are open to new technologies in election administration			