

Methodology for the assessment of current state and development of democracy in Moldova

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Project

The methodology was created within the initiative **“Supporting democracy, independence and transparency of key public institutions in Moldova”**, implemented by IDIS "Viitorul", in partnership with the Institute for Economic and Social Reforms in Slovakia (INEKO). The initiative is implemented during October 2019 – March 2021 and it is financially supported by the Official Development Assistance of the Slovak Republic (SlovakAid). It aims to support public debate about current state of democracy in Moldova, to strengthen the independence of key regulatory and judiciary institutions, and to increase transparency and support implementation of anti-corruption measures in state-owned companies and local governments in Moldova.

Objective

Supporting public debate about current state of democracy in Moldova based on available data, results of a survey among key personalities, focus groups, and results of a representative public opinion poll.

Activities

1. October – December 2019: Preparation of research on current state and development of democracy in Moldova. Identification of research methods, target groups (local experts, emigrants, students, business people, general public), survey questions, ways of realization and timing. Writing and publishing an electronic methodology document of at least 15 pages.
2. January 2020 – April 2020: Realization of research on current state and development of democracy in Moldova: desk research, survey among at least 40 local experts, internet survey among emigrants, at least 5 focus groups among students and/or business people, and public opinion poll. Writing a draft document summarizing research results.
3. March 2020 – June 2020: Writing and publishing an electronic Report on current state and development of democracy in Moldova; document of at least 25 pages summarizing the research

results. Informing media via press report, the goal is to have at least 40 media releases.

4. **June 2020: Organizing a conference in Chisinau** with at least 50 participants informing about a Report on current state and development of democracy in Moldova as well as about results of transparency evaluation of local governments (municipalities and regions) – awarding the most transparent local governments.
5. September 2020 – March 2021: Realization of at least 10 lectures for students of secondary and tertiary schools informing about current state and development of democracy in Moldova.

Timeline

	2019			2020												2021			
Activity/Month	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	Responsible
Preparation of research methodology	X	X	X																INEKO+IDIS
Realization of research				X	X	X	X												IDIS
- Desk research				X	X	X													IDIS
- Survey among at least 40 local experts				X	X														IDIS
- Internet survey among emigrants				X	X	X													IDIS
- Focus groups among students and/or business people				X	X	X													IDIS
- Public opinion poll					X	X													IDIS, agency
- Summarizing research results							X												IDIS
Writing Report on democracy						X	X	X	X										IDIS
Publishing report, conference in Chisinau									X										IDIS-INEKO
Lectures for students												X	X	X	X	X	X	X	P

Detailed timeline of research activities

	January 2020				February 2020				March 2020				April 2020			
Activity/Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Desk research	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
- Data collection (local + international)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
- Writing the report																
Survey among at least 40 local experts	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x								
- Elaborating the survey questionnaire	x	x														
- Launching the survey			x													
- Closing the survey						x										
- Processing results							x	x								
Internet survey among emigrants	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
- Elaborating the survey questionnaire	x	x														
- Launching the survey			x													
- Closing the survey										x						
- Processing results											x	x				
Focus groups among students and/or business people	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
- 1 st focus group			x													
- 2 nd focus group					x											
- 3 rd focus group							x									
- 4 th focus group									x							
- 5 th focus group											x					
- Writing the report											x	x				
Public opinion poll					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
- Elaborating the survey questionnaire					x	x										
- Launching the survey							x									
- Closing the survey										x						
- Processing results											x	x				
Summarizing research results													x	x	x	x
- Writing the report													x	x	x	x

Methodology

Desk research

- Description of political landscape – political parties and their voters
- History of parliamentary elections and respective results

- Domestic and international indicators of quality of democracy in Moldova – description of overall results as well as specific indicators, trends over time, comparison with neighboring countries if possible
 - Public opinion surveys
 - Economist Intelligence Unit: Democracy Index¹
 - Freedom House²
 - Democracy Ranking Association³
 - Etc.

Survey among local experts

- Word/Excel questionnaire distributed via emails
- Experts: Well respected and non-partisan opinion leaders
 - Journalists, NGO experts, sociologists, economists, business people
 - List of experts to be addressed:
 1. Arcadie Barbăroșie, Institute of Public Policy
 2. Ion Manole, Promo-LEX
 3. Vladislav Gribincea, CRJM
 4. Igor Boțan, ADEPT
 5. Adrian Lupușor/Sergiu Gaibu, Expert-Grup
 6. Veaceslav Negruță, TI Moldova,
 7. Elena Varta, ONG „CPR Moldova”
 8. Valeriu Pașa, expert, ONG „Comunitatea watchdog”
 9. Viorel Cibotaru, director European Institute for Political Studies in Moldova
 10. Viorel Gîrbu, economic expert
 11. Svetoslav Mihalachi, economic expert
 12. Emil Guțu, expert, fost membru al Consiliului Concurenței
 13. Galina Bostan, ONG „Centrul de Analiză și Prevenire a Corupției”
 14. Radik York, German Economic Team – GET Moldova

¹ <https://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index>

² <https://freedomhouse.org/>

³ <http://democracyranking.org/wordpress/>

15. Vitalie Călugăreanu, jurnalist, Deutsche Welle
16. Ion Preașca, jurnalist, Moldstreet.md și Rise Moldova
17. Ion Mazur, jurnalist, Asociația Presei Independente,
18. Cornelia Cozonac, jurnalist, Centrul de Investigații Jurnalistice
19. Alina Radu, jurnalist, Ziarul de Gardă,
20. Liliana Barbaroșie/Vasile Botnaru, Radio Europa Liberă
21. Alexandru Musteață, Fundația Soros Moldova
22. Sorin Mereacre, director Fundația Est-Europeana
23. Iulian Groza, Institutul Politici și Reforme Europene
24. Zina Adam, manager de proiect Migration and Local Development (MiDL, PNUD)
25. Alexandru Coica – The European Association for Local Democracy
26. Viorel Furdui – Congres of Local Administration of Moldova (CALM)
27. Vasile Cantaraji, CBS Axa,
28. Mila Malairău, AmCham Moldova
29. Sergiu Harea, Chamber of Commerce and Industry
30. Mariana Rufa, European Business Association
31. Ana Groza, director Asociația Investitorilor Străini,
32. Alexandru Solvan, politolog FRIȘPA, Universitatea de Stat din Moldova
33. Ion Tighineanu, academician, Academia de Științe
34. Iuliana Dragalin, Universitatea Liberă Independentă din Moldova
35. Gheorghe Turcanu, Academia de Studii Economice
36. Serghei Portarescu, director MACIP – ASEM,
37. Vitalie Voznoi, ONG „Orașul meu”
38. Mark Tcaciuc, Partidul Acțiunii Comune „Congresul Civic”
39. Oazu Nantoi, European People’s Party
40. Dorin Chirtoaca, Liberal Party
41. Dumitru Albulesa, International Association of Car Carriers of Moldova (AITA)
42. Natalia Calenic, Chambers of Commerce and Industry
43. Eugen Datco The Union of Carriers and Roads (The Union of Carriers and Roads)
44. Natalia Lypskaya, Asociația de transportatori din Moldova (AEM-TRANS)
45. Carolina Linte, Asociația de procesori de lapte

- Motivational introduction to the questionnaire: Who and why is running the survey, how would answers be used, guarantee of anonymity of individual answers, guarantee of total anonymity upon request
- Questions:
 1. Please, write your name:
 2. Do you agree that your name will be published in the list of respondents to this survey?
 - Yes
 - No
 3. How would you assess quality of democracy in following countries? Please, write number from -3 to +3 to every country, where -3 means very low quality and +3 means very high quality.
 - Moldova:
 - Romania:
 - Ukraine:
 - Russia:
 4. How has quality of democracy in Moldova changed over past 5 years? Please, write number from -3 to +3, where -3 means substantially worsened and +3 means substantially improved.
 - Change in quality of democracy in Moldova over past 5 years:
 5. How would you assess contribution of following political parties to quality of democracy in Moldova? Please, write number from -3 to +3, where -3 means very negative contribution and +3 means very positive contribution.
 - Social Party of Republic of Moldova (PSRM)
 - The Action and Solidarity Party (PAS)
 - Democratic Party of Moldova (PDM)
 - Political Party "Dignity and Truth Platform" (PPDA)

- Sor Party PSOR
- Our Party Partidul Nostru
- Liberal Democratic Party PLDM

6. How would you assess contribution of following institutions to quality of democracy in Moldova? Please, write number from -3 to +3, where -3 means very negative contribution and +3 means very positive contribution.

- Current government:
- Current National Parliament:
- Current President:
- Prosecutor office:
- Police:
- Courts:
- Private media:
- Public media:
- NGOs:

7. How would you assess the impact of following events happening over past 5 years on the quality of democracy in Moldova? Please, write number from -3 to +3, where -3 means very negative impact and +3 means very positive impact.

- Results of parliamentary elections in year 2019:
- Defraud of savings in private banks:
- Dismissal of the government under Maia Sandu
- Other:

8. How would you assess the functioning of following factors with regards to the quality of democracy in Moldova? Please, write number from -3 to +3, where -3 means not functioning at all and +3 means very good functioning.

- Fight against corruption:
- Media freedom:
- Quality of NGOs:

- Fair political competition:
- Independent regulatory and public watchdog institutions:
- Rule of law (quality of courts, police and prosecutors):
- Engagement of citizens in public affairs:
- Protecting national minorities:
- Protecting human rights:
- Stability and comprehensibility of legislation:
- Politicians working in public benefit:

9. Why do you think many people vote for authoritative, non-democratic leaders? Please, write number from -3 to +3, where -3 means that you totally disagree and +3 means that you totally agree.

- People distrust democracy and democratic leaders:
- People believe authoritative leaders will bring order and stability:
- People believe authoritative leaders will increase their standard of living:
- People are disoriented and search for easy solutions:
- Because of populism – authoritative politicians are good liars:
- People do not have choice, there is no real democratic alternative among politicians:
- People do not have enough information about democratic leaders:

10. What would help to improve quality of democracy in Moldova in short time? Please, write number from -3 to +3, where -3 means that you totally disagree and +3 means that you totally agree.

- Trustful investigation of banking defraud and other corruption cases:
- Better monitoring and informing public about corruption cases:
- Publishing of detailed declarations of property of leading politicians and public officials:
- Regular and public fact-checking of key politicians:
- Other:

11. What would help to improve quality of democracy in Moldova in long-time? Please, write number from -3 to +3, where -3 mean that you totally disagree and +3 means that you totally agree.

- Better education about democracy at schools:
- More independent media:
- More honest people engaged in public affairs:
- More independent regulatory and public watchdog institutions (including courts, police, prosecutors):
- Higher economic growth:
- Removing poverty:
- Entering the EU:

Survey among emigrants

- Survey Monkey questionnaire distributed via emails and Facebook
- Motivational introduction to the questionnaire: Who and why is running the survey, how would answers be used, guarantee of anonymity
- Questions:
 1. Please, write your name:
 2. Your age:
 3. Which countries have you lived in since you left Moldova?
 4. How long have you been abroad?
 5. Why did you move abroad? Please, choose appropriate answers (multiple choices possible).
 - To have better work opportunities
 - To have better education opportunities
 - To live in more democratic country

- To live in less corrupt country
- To live in country with higher standard of living
- To escape poverty
- To help my family

6. Do you plan to come back to Moldova and live here?

- Yes, sure
- Rather yes
- Rather no
- Not at all

7. Under what circumstances would you come back to Moldova? Please, choose appropriate answers (multiple choices possible).

- If it changed to standard democratic country with low corruption
- If I found well-paid job there
- If there was higher standard of living
- If it entered the EU
- If I saw positive perspectives of its development
- Other:

8. How would you assess quality of democracy in following countries? Please, write number from -3 to +3 to every country, where -3 means very low quality and +3 means very high quality.

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- Romania:
- Ukraine:
- Russia:

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- Current President:
- Prosecutor office:
- Police:
- Courts:
- Private media:
- Public media:
- NGOs:

12. How would you assess the impact of following events happening over past 5 years on the quality of democracy in Moldova? Please, write number from -3 to +3, where -3 means very negative impact and +3 means very positive impact.

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- Media freedom:
- Quality of NGOs:
- Fair political competition:
- Independent regulatory and public watchdog institutions:
- Rule of law (quality of courts, police and prosecutors):
- Engagement of citizens in public affairs:
- Protecting national minorities:
- Protecting human rights:
- Stability and comprehensibility of legislation:
- Politicians working in public benefit:

14. Why do you think many people vote for authoritative, non-democratic leaders? Please, write number from -3 to +3, where -3 means that you totally disagree and +3 means that you totally agree.

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- People believe authoritative leaders will increase their standard of living:
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- Better monitoring and informing public about corruption cases:
- Publishing of detailed declarations of property of leading politicians and public officials:
- Regular and public fact-checking of key politicians:
- Other:

16. What would help to improve quality of democracy in Moldova in long-time? Please, write number from -3 to +3, where -3 means that you totally disagree and +3 means that you totally agree.

- Better education about democracy at schools:
- More independent media:
- More honest people engaged in public affairs:
- More independent regulatory and public watchdog institutions (including courts, police, prosecutors):
- Higher economic growth:
- Removing poverty:
- Entering the EU:

Focus groups

There will be 5 focus groups: in Cahul, Balti and 3 in Chisinau. The focus groups will be organized according to three different methodologies:

Those in Cahul and Balti will be organized in two phases:

At the first phase will be invited 40 people and will be asked to answer a questionnaire with two questions:

1. In their opinion, the elections in Moldova are free and correct? Answer YES/NO.
2. In their opinion, the country is ruled according to people's will? Answer YES/NO.

At the second phase 7 people will be selected based on the answer received in the first phase.

1. In Cahul, people who represent „democracy pillar” (who answered YES at both questions) will be selected
2. In Balti, dissatisfied people (who answered NO at both questions) will be selected

In Chisinau, 2 focus groups will be organized in a usual way and the third focus group will be selected based on their previous answers.

1. Democracy pillars (YES/YES)
 2. Disappointed (YES/NO)
 3. Spectators (NO/YES)
 4. Dissatisfied (NO/NO)
- Students at secondary and/or tertiary schools to be addressed:
 - State University of Moldova (USM)
 - Academy of Economic Science of Moldova (ASEM)
 - International Free University of Moldova (ULIM)
 - Technical University of Moldova
 - Agrarian University of Moldova
 - Chisinau College of Finance and Banking
 - Chisinau College of Technology
 - Chisinau Road College
 - Republican College of Microelectronics and Computer Engineering
 - Teachers College A. Mateevich
 - Business leaders to be addressed:
 - Igor Krapivca, Club of Business Leaders “Timpul”
 - Veaceslav Cunev, Chairman of Association of Private IT companies
 - Mila Malairau, Amcham
 - Mariana Rufa, European Business Association
 - Ana Groza, Foreign Investment Associations
 - Natalia Calenic, CCI
 - Mihai Manoli, National Business Agenda

- Topics for questions:
 - Quality of democracy in Moldova compared to neighbors
 - Trend in Moldova over past 5 years
 - What is working well and what is not
 - Why people vote for non-democratic leaders
 - What would help in short/long-time
 - For business leaders: Quality of business climate (pros and cons)

Public opinion poll

- Representative, organized by a CBS-AXA sociological company:
- Questions
 1. How would you assess quality of democracy in following countries? Please, write number from -3 to +3 to every country, where -3 means very low quality and +3 means very high quality.
 - Moldova:
 - Romania:
 - Ukraine:
 - Russia:
 2. How has quality of democracy in Moldova changed over past 5 years? Please, write number from -3 to +3, where -3 means substantially worsened and +3 means substantially improved.
 - Change in quality of democracy in Moldova over past 5 years:
 3. How do you think quality of democracy contributes to quality of life of people?
 - It is crucial
 - It is important
 - It is rather important
 - It is rather not important

- It is not important
- It has no relevance

4. How would you assess contribution of following institutions to quality of democracy in Moldova? Please, write number from -3 to +3, where -3 means very negative contribution and +3 means very positive contribution.

- Current government:
- Current National Parliament:
- Current President:
- Prosecutor office:
- Police:
- Courts:
- Private media:
- Public media:
- NGOs:

5. What do you think would be good for Moldova?

- More honest people engaged in politics and public affairs
- More independent institutions (police, courts, media)
- Entering the EU
- Removing democracy and installing dictatorship
- Stronger leader with more competences
- Return to communism
- Other:

Summarizing research results

- Writing an electronic Report on current state and development of democracy in Moldova (document of at least 25 pages)