

EXPERT ELECTORAL

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Reports, synthesis and briefings

- The 23rd Annual Conference of the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO)



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WOMEN IN ELECTIONS AND PUBLIC LIFE: THE ROMANIAN TREND

Ana Maria Pătru

President of the Permanent Electoral Authority



I invite you to exercise our imagination a little bit. Let us imagine that all that surrounds us would be just a half of it. Half a table to gather round, half a house to live in, half a tree.

Now imagine the world without women. How do you think it would be? It is a sad image, isn't it gentlemen? Now imagine the world only with women. Also a sad image, isn't it ladies?

Our world is in harmony only if men and women together exist and function as two halves of a singularity.

We all know that in many countries, unfortunately still many, one of the two halves, the feminine one, is just a quarter or even less. And we also know that no democratic society can function in a healthy manner if the political system and the public life are built on such an imbalance.

To ensure this vital gender balance means to eliminate the causes that generate imbalance. If it is about discrimination, lack of regulations, disinterest of the political parties and authorities, then we can intervene by public policies.

But what can we do when the women's under-representation is generated by wrong mentality and education? What should we do when women themselves think they are not good for certain jobs and just resign in a cultural and social paradigm of discrimination?

Education in school and family, the prejudgements and mentality of a patriarchal society made them to distrust themselves and their chances. They lack the courage to compete with men and consider themselves not to be good for some areas traditionally assigned to men.

We need women in politics, in public administration, in Parliament, in business, in financial institutions in the same way we need men in education, culture, health system or other social areas.

We are all here electoral experts and it is natural to talk about gender imbalance regarding women's participation in political life and electoral processes. The level of women's involvement in elections reflects the mentality, the cultural level and the state of mind of a people.

In this matter, Romania is no exception from the European pattern, being under the average regarding the women's involvement.

During the 50 years of totalitarian political regime, woman's emancipation and equality of opportunity were only used as communist propaganda clichés. After the December 1989 Revolution, women started to gain access and make a name for themselves in business, mass-media and even politics.

A survey conducted by the Permanent

Electoral Authority shows that the women's presence in Parliament at present is twice as high as it was right after the fall of the communist regime, but it is twice as low as the average of 27% in European Union member states.

The lowest representation of women in the Romanian Parliament was of only 3,7% between 1992 and 1996, representing 18 seats.

I have to stress out that in 2012 Parliamentary elections, the largest number of women candidates was in Bucharest. No woman ran as an independent candidate.

Although they are few in number, the women in the Romanian Parliament have overpassed their men colleagues in activity volume, fact shown by the parliamentary activity index. A recent study shows that the 65 women in Parliament have been more active than the 509 men in Parliament by 40%. Practically, the 11,5% women have a parliamentary activity index of 34, while the 88,5% men have a parliamentary activity index of 24, although there is no woman group leader.

Within the Senate, the difference is rather spectacular: the 11 women senators have proved to be by 78% more active than the 159 male senators. Within the Chamber of Deputies, the 54 women deputies were by 2% more active than the 330 men.

What does this difference between women and men in the Romanian Parliament prove? There is no need for the women to be equal in number with the men in order to prove their efficiency and competence.

The statistics I have just shown should encourage women to run in a larger number at the Parliamentary elections. Still, at the 2012 Parliamentary elections, only 340 women candidates were enlisted, representing 13,8% of the 2451 candidates. Only 20% of the women candidates were elected.

Two out of three students from the political science superior studies in Romania are women. Their dream of a political career ends just after they graduate. Political parties prefer male candidates because they are credited from the very beginning of having more chances in elections. The few women that are enlisted as candidates usually run for un-eligible seats.

As shown before, women are under-represented in our national Parliament. We have a positive situation regarding Romanian women representatives to the European Parliament.

Following this year European elections, 10 out of the 32 Romanian representatives to the European Parliament are women, meaning over 31% and close enough to the average of 35,9% of women euro-deputies. Two of the Romanian women representatives were elected vice-presidents of the European Parliament, being nominated by the group they are part of.

The most obvious gender imbalance is found within the elected local public administration officials.

Following the 2012 local elections, only 116 women became mayors. It means that only 3 out of 100 mayors is a woman, representing 3,64%.

Some of the women mayors have been re-elected with a significant majority of votes. There is a woman mayor with 4 consecutive mandates. All these show that the members of the community were pleased by their former activity. Women re-elected as mayors proved to be hard-working, well organised and to know how to fight for the well-being of their community.

In conclusion, we can say that women's representation in the structures elected by direct vote in Romania is quite reduced.

The judiciary system of Romania holds the first rank in women participation. Women of the High Court of Justice hold 85% of the judges' seats.

That makes Romania one of the top European Countries in this matter.

The gender imbalance was visibly reduced in the Romanian public central administration. According to the online database of the European Commission, in 2012 women held 51% of decision-making positions in central public administration in Romania, much over the general average of 33% at the European Union level. It is also true we are talking about the middle management level, because the top management positions are still held by men.

As stated before, we can fight against the gender discrimination by new regulations, institutional instruments, public policies and even by imposing sanctions or administrative penalties. But mentalities and pre-judgements perpetuated in time and accepted even by women are the most difficult to fight against.

Romania, as a European Union member state, improved its internal regulations and now it has the necessary means to sanction any kind of discrimination, including the gender one.

But all these are not enough to ensure the gender balance.

We need joint efforts of all society factors in order to change peoples' perceptions, demeanours and behaviours.

Increasing the rate of women's participation in elections is a major concern and also a challenge for the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania. In the spring of this year we organised the international workshop „**Women's participation in elections**”. I had the joy to ascertain that this topic gained the interest of electoral management bodies, elections experts and civil society representatives from all over the world.

The main aim of the workshop was to offer the possibility of a wide exchange of experiences. From this point of view we succeeded in having a picture of women's participation in election on many continents. Those of you who participated in the workshop could observe how concerned some countries are about women's discrimination and how deep the need is for an intervention with clear solutions. We can find them together by learning from each other, by following success stories and by taking concrete actions in order to encourage women's participation in elections.

We established then that EMB's can and must take measures in order to convince women to be involved in a larger number in elections, both as candidates and as voters. It is important to underline that a major step forward to increasing women's role in elections is their presence at polls. It is not normal that in a democratic society women don't exercise their right to vote while other women, from many countries, still fight to earn this right. The same way as it is not normal that women, although outnumber the men, are under-represented as elected officials.

The main conclusion of the workshop organised by PEA was that a balanced participation of women in elections and in decision-making political positions is a mandatory attribute to any democracy. Achieving this balance should become a „must do” for the government and for the leaders of those organisations that play a major role in protecting and consolidating the democracy. EMB's can determine the political parties to accept a women quota of enlisted candidates, by new regulations regarding the financing of the political parties or even by a new electoral law. For example, the Romanian law has a provision

that allows an increased public subsidy according to the number of seats gained by women candidates.

PEA intends to carry out a sustained campaign in order to stimulate women participation in elections. Our primary goal is to make women aware of the critical importance of elections and of the role they could play no matter how they get involved: voters, candidates, election officials or observers.

In my opinion, the EMB's can play a decisive role in sustaining public policies to encourage the women's participation in elections. A higher presence of women in decision making political positions will encourage other women to strongly rise from the ranks in public life. It will also send a message of opening to other fields less accessible for women now.

I advanced an initiative to both A.C.E.E.E.O. Executive Board and General Assembly through which we should call up our EMB's to a long term campaign of eliminating the gender imbalance and promoting women in politics. I truly hope that we will have a positive feed-back on this initiative at our next meeting.

ORGANISATION OF ELECTIONS BY AN IMPARTIAL BODY THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE¹

Pierre Garrone

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Abstract

Organisation of elections by an impartial body is a crucial aspect of elections held in conformity with international standards. This has been underlined in the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights and developed by the Venice Commission in the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters as well as in opinions on national legislation. Impartiality of the electoral management bodies implies balance in their composition as well as professionalism. In order to ensure public confidence in the electoral process, impartiality must be understood in relation with independence, transparency, and accountability.

Keywords: *electoral management bodies, electoral commissions, right to free elections, pre-conditions of democratic elections, impartiality, Council of Europe, European Court of Human Rights, Venice Commission, Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters.*

Abstract

Organizarea alegerilor de către o organizație imparțială este un aspect crucial pentru desfășurarea alegerilor în conformitate cu standardele internaționale. Acest lucru a fost subliniat în jurisprudența Curții Europene a Drepturilor Omului și dezvoltat de către

Comisia de la Veneția în Codul bunelor practici în materie electorală, precum și în rapoartele cu privire la legislația națională. Imparțialitatea organismelor de management electoral presupune echilibru în modul în care sunt constituite lor, precum și profesionalism. Pentru a asigura încrederea publică în procesul electoral, imparțialitate trebuie să fie înțeleasă în legătură cu independența, transparența și responsabilitatea.

Keywords: *organisme de management electoral, comisii electorale, dreptul la alegeri libere, pre-condiții ale alegerilor democratice, imparțialitate, Consiliul Europei, Curtea Europeană a Drepturilor Omului, Comisia de la Veneția, Codul bunelor practici în materie electorală.*

I. Introduction

Organisation of elections by an impartial body is a crucial aspect of elections held in conformity with international standards. It is one of the most essential procedural pre-conditions of democratic elections, which ensure the regularity of the electoral process as well as the confidence of the public.

While not addressing the issue explicitly, Article 3 of the First Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights ("Protocol 1"), which guarantees the right to free elections, can only be effective if it is interpreted as implying that elections have to be organised impartially. This has been recognised by the European Court of Human Rights and the two prominent cases in the field will be addressed in chapter II.

The case-law of the Strasbourg Court is however still at its early stage. That is why the third (and most detailed) chapter of this report will be dedicated to the Venice Commission's contribution.

The Venice Commission (or European Commission for Democracy through Law, hereafter: „the Commission”) is the Council of Europe's body in charge of constitutional matters, including electoral ones. The Commission has now dealt for more than two decades with international standards of elections and assessment of election legislation. The Commission developed guidelines on organisation of elections by an impartial body in the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters. Due to the importance of the matter, it also addresses the issue of the composition of electoral management bodies in each opinion in the field of elections: experience of the drafting process of electoral legislation shows that this is one of the most debated issues, if not the most debated one, at least in countries where trust in the regularity of the electoral process is still limited. It also shows that there is no straightforward or universal solution, in particular when good faith is not as high as it could be expected. That is why the Venice Commission does not advise for a specific composition of the election administration but comments on the possible advantages and disadvantages of the proposed solutions. This will be developed below.

II. The case-law of the European Court of Human Rights

The European Court of Human Rights did not have to address directly the conformity of rules on the composition of election commissions with Article 3 Protocol 1. However, at two occasions at least, it had to deal with this issue, albeit in a broader context.

The leading cases are *Georgian Labour Party v. Georgia*² and *Grosaru v. Romania*³.

A. The first case concerned the Georgian repeat parliamentary election of 28 March 2004, following the „Rose Revolution”. In its application before the European Court on Human Rights, the Georgian Labour Party complained about a violation of Article 3 of the Protocol through, *inter alia*, the presidential control over electoral commissions at all levels. The President of the Republic was already entitled to appoint five out of fifteen members of the Central Electoral Commission. „[U]nder another important amendment made on 28 November 2003, that is immediately after the „Rose Revolution” and specifically for the

purposes of the repeat parliamentary election of 28 March 2004, the chairman of the CEC was also to be appointed by the President. The President thus gained the right to nominate directly six out of the fifteen CEC members, including the Chairman, while another two members were representatives of a pro-presidential party. Moreover, the composition of the DEC and PECs was similar to that of the CEC.”⁴

The Court came to the conclusion that „there is no uniform system for the composition and functioning of electoral administrative bodies in Europe. The Contracting States should indeed be granted a margin of appreciation in the sphere of organising their electoral administrations, as long as the chosen system provides for conditions which ensure 'the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of their legislature'...”⁵. We understand such a statement as meaning that the mere composition - and functioning - of electoral management bodies is no sufficient condition for stating that there was a violation of Article 3 Protocol 1. Such cases should however be very rare. So the Court should focus on the practical circumstances of the case, as it did in the case under consideration as follows.

„105. The Court observes that five members out of the fifteen-member boards of the electoral commissions at every level, as well as their chairmen, were either directly or indirectly appointed by the President of Georgia. In addition, under Article 128 § 5, at least one member of those electoral commissions was a representative of the President's [...] party [...]. Pro-presidential forces thus had a relative majority vis-à-vis the representatives of other political parties in electoral commissions at every level.

106. Although there can be no ideal or uniform system to guarantee checks and balances between the different State powers within a body of electoral administration, the Court considers that a proportion of seven members out of fifteen-member electoral commissions, including the chairmen who have the casting votes (Article 22 § 8 of the EC) and are appointed by the President of Georgia and his party, is particularly high in comparison to other legal orders in Europe (see also the opinion of the Venice Commission in this regard, paragraph 48 above).

107. Furthermore, so long as the presidential party [...] was simultaneously

running in the repeat parliamentary election, the Court does not find it implausible that other candidate parties, including the applicant party, might have been placed in an unfavourable position by the presidential majority in the electoral administration. The Government's argument that, once appointed to office, the members of the electoral commissions had to quit their respective political parties or to suspend their membership, is not reassuring in this regard. The Court is not convinced that a party's representative to an electoral commission, whom that party has most likely nominated because of his or her loyalty to its values and discipline, would necessarily and immediately become an independent and impartially thinking civil servant just by virtue of filing a formal declaration to that end.

[...]

109. [...] The Court cannot find a violation of Article 3 of Protocol No. 1 solely on the basis of the allegation, no matter how plausible it is, that the system created possibilities for electoral fraud; instead, the applicant party should have submitted evidence of specific incidents of alleged violations.

110. With due regard to the above, the Court concludes that the contested composition of electoral commissions at all levels indeed lacked sufficient checks and balances against the President's power and that those commissions could hardly enjoy independence from the outside political pressure. However, in the absence of any proof of particular acts of abuse of power or electoral fraud committed within the electoral commissions to the applicant party's detriment, no breach of the latter's right to stand for election can be established.

111. There has accordingly been no violation of Article 3 of Protocol No. 1."

In short, the Court applies self-restraint and leaves a wide margin of appreciation to member states. An unbalanced composition of election commissions does not constitute in itself a violation of Article 3 Protocol 1, even if it goes against their independence from political pressure. However, it might be an element leading to the finding of a violation if corroborating evidence were found that the results did not fully ensure free expression of the voter's wishes.

B. The circumstances of the *Grosaru* case were more specific, since it concerned the

election to special seats allocated to national minorities in Romania.

The applicable legislation provided that „[l]egally constituted organisations of citizens belonging to a single national minority which fail to obtain at least one seat in the Chamber of Deputies or the Senate are entitled, jointly, to one seat in the Chamber of Deputies, in accordance with Article 59 § 2 of the Constitution, provided that their share of the vote is at least 5% of the average number of validly cast votes at national level for the election of a deputy". Such organisations are allowed to submit the same list in several constituencies. Concerning the allocation of the seat of the Italian minority, the Central Electoral Office interpreted the legislation in the sense that the seat be allocated to the Italian organisation having secured the largest number of votes in a single constituency, even if it had obtained less votes than another organisation nationally. National legislation was unclear on that issue and the Court found that it did not, at the material time, satisfy the requirements of precision laid down in its case-law.

The point which interests us most here is however the composition of the bodies which dealt with the validation of the results, including on appeal. The case was dealt with by the Central Electoral Office and then submitted to the Chamber of Deputies Validation Commission. Whereas the latter included of course elected politicians, the former was composed of seven judges of the Supreme Court of Justice and sixteen representatives of the parties, political groupings and coalitions participating in the elections. The number of appointees of each party, grouping or coalition depended on its number of constituency lists.

This led the Court to state that „an individual whose appointment as an MP has been rejected has legitimate grounds to fear that the large majority of members of the body having examined the lawfulness of the elections, more specifically the members representing the other political parties of the Central Electoral Office, may have an interest contrary to his own. The rules of composition of that body, made up of a large number of members representing political parties, do not therefore appear to be such as to provide a sufficient guarantee of impartiality. The same conclusion holds good a fortiori for the Chamber of Deputies Validation Commission.”⁹

We understand the *Grosaru* judgment as not addressing the composition of the election administration in principle. The case focused on complaints and appeals and the Court underlined that there should be an appeal to a court of law in the last instance. This is corroborated by the fact that the judgment quotes the Venice Commission Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters, which provides that „[i]n any case, final appeal to a court must be possible” and compares national post-electoral system of appeals, underlining that the practice of most member states is to allow an appeal to a court of law. It cannot therefore be inferred from it that a partisan composition of the electoral commissions would *per se* go against impartiality of the electoral management body: this was not the issue at stake.

In brief, international case-law on impartiality of electoral management bodies has still to be developed.

It may be interesting to note that we did not find any information on *national case-law* on the conformity of the rules on the composition of election management bodies with superior law (including the Constitution): this does not mean that it does not exist at all, but at least that it is not easily accessible. This might be explained by the extreme political sensitivity of the issue: electoral actors would tend to consider that it may only be settled at political level and would then not even raise it before courts.

III. The Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters: principles and implementation

A. Principles

The main reference document of the Council of Europe in the electoral field is the *Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters*. It was drafted by the Venice Commission. The Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe approved it, and the Committee of Ministers supported it in a declaration adopted at ministerial level. It is regularly quoted by the European Court of Human Rights when dealing with Article 3 Protocol 1.

The Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters defines the main standards of the European electoral heritage. First, the standards

are the main international principles of democratic elections: universal, equal, free, secret and direct suffrage, as well as frequency of elections. These rules cannot however be applied out of context. A number of conditions are necessary for implementing them: respect for human rights, particularly in the political field, an effective system of appeal *and organisation of elections by an impartial body*. The Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters defines the organisation of elections by an impartial body as follows:

„3.1. Organisation of elections by an impartial body

a. An impartial body must be in charge of applying electoral law.

b. Where there is no longstanding tradition of administrative authorities' independence from those holding political power, independent, impartial electoral commissions must be set up at all levels, from the national level to polling station level.

c. The central electoral commission must be permanent in nature.

d. It should include:

i. at least one member of the judiciary

ii. representatives of parties already in parliament or having scored at least a given percentage of the vote; these persons must be qualified in electoral matters.

It may include:

iii. a representative of the Ministry of the Interior;

iv. representatives of national minorities.

e. Political parties must be equally represented on electoral commissions or must be able to observe the work of the impartial body. Equality may be construed strictly or on a proportional basis [...].

f. The bodies appointing members of electoral commissions must not be free to dismiss them at will.

g. Members of electoral commissions must receive standard training.

h. It is desirable that electoral commissions take decisions by a qualified majority or by consensus.”

B. How to implement these principles? The practice of the Venice Commission

The explanatory report underlines that „[o]nly transparency, impartiality and independence from politically motivated manipulation will ensure proper administration

of the election process, from the pre-election period to the end of the processing of results”¹³. It makes clear that rules that could appear as merely technical are intended at implementing *three basic principles: transparency, independence and impartiality*. Transparency is an important factor for ensuring confidence in the process.¹⁴

Transparency implies in particular that „[t]he meetings of the central electoral commission should be open to everyone, including the media [...]. Any computer rooms, telephone links, faxes, scanners, etc. should be open to inspection”.¹⁵ More broadly, „[t]ransparency means that nothing related to the election process can be qualified as 'confidential' or 'secret'. The election administration should ensure that all election related information is made public in a timely manner [...]. Such information includes all acts of the election administration bodies throughout the process, and timely and accurate announcement of preliminary and final results”. Transparency also applies to the complaints and appeals procedure before election commissions.¹⁶

Functional *independence* of election management bodies from the executive power is not an end in itself, but a way to ensure impartiality.

„In states where the administrative authorities have a long-standing tradition of independence from the political authorities, the civil service applies electoral law without being subjected to political pressures. It is therefore both normal and acceptable for elections to be organised by administrative authorities, and supervised by the Ministry of the Interior.

However, in states with little experience of organising pluralist elections, there is too great a risk of government's pushing the administrative authorities to do what it wants. This applies both to central and local government - even when the latter is controlled by the national opposition.

This is why *independent, impartial electoral commissions* must be set up from the national level to polling station level to ensure that elections are properly conducted, or at least remove serious suspicions of irregularity.”¹⁷

Before addressing the issue of the composition of election commissions, it has to be noted that their independence also implies that their members are not the mere delegates of those who appointed them, be they the

executive branch of government, or a political party. This may of course be difficult to ensure but legislation may provide some help.

Appointing central electoral commissions for life would be a drastic solution, which is unknown in Europe at least. It appears more feasible to forbid bodies appointing members of electoral commissions to dismiss them at will.¹⁸ This issue has been dealt with by the Venice Commission in a number of opinions. It made clear that „[t]he possibility of removing members of election commissions at will also goes against... proper organisation of elections by competent bodies. In particular, the removal of members of election commissions at the last moment or even a few weeks in advance of elections very much jeopardises efforts made to train them.”¹⁹ This was confirmed in an opinion concerning Bulgaria, where the Commission considered dismissal at will as contrary to the requirements of independence and neutrality; it has to be noted that, between the submission of the law to the expertise of the Venice Commission and the adoption of its opinion, the Constitutional Court had held these provisions unconstitutional on the ground that they would seriously undermine the independence of the election administration.²⁰ This implies that members of an election commission should only be dismissed for failure to fulfil the members' legal duties imposed by the law;²¹ such failure should be defined in a clear and restrictive way, in order to avoid abuses.²² „[V]ague references to 'acts discrediting the commission', for example, are not sufficient”.²³

Independence does not mean that the election administrators should not be members of or affiliated in any way with any political party or interest. „First, [...] the mere fact of affiliation with a political interest is not sufficient to assume that the respective individual is ready to act in a politically biased and unprofessional manner. Second, there have been a number of occasions when election administrators who have declared that they are not affiliated with any political interest have been observed to perform their duties in a politically biased manner, favouring most often the incumbents”.²⁴

Independence and *impartiality* in the narrow sense are strongly interrelated. Let us now deal more specifically with impartiality.

It must be reminded, that, even if Article 6 ECHR is not applicable to electoral matters, the

principles governing impartiality are not fundamentally different. Not only subjective impartiality, but also objective impartiality has to be ensured. The main say according to which „justice must not only be done, it must also be seen to be done” is therefore applicable.²⁵ This is a question of confidence, and confidence is absolutely crucial in the electoral field.

Balance in the composition of the election commissions and *professionalism* will not ensure personal independence of their members, but greatly contribute to impartiality.

Contrary to general practice which focuses on the composition of elections commissions, let us start with *professionalism*. It is a truism to say that well-managed elections need competent election administrators, but it is unfortunately none to say that professionalism means competence. There is a trend – in particular by the executive branch of power – to consider professionalism as a synonym of non-politicisation, or rather of excluding the involvement of political parties in the designation of the members of election commissions. This leads to propose – allegedly well-trained – civil servants as election administrators. The principle of election commissions’ independence from the administration is circumvented. Impartiality is in danger, and trust in the electoral process still more.

The Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters makes clear that the members of the CEC must be qualified in electoral matters. They „should be legal experts, political scientists, mathematicians or other people with a good understanding of electoral issues”.²⁶ The CEC should include a member of the judiciary, or at least another independent legal expert.²⁷ Requirements should of course be less strict at lower levels.²⁸

Professionalism is essential to independence and impartiality. It is a way to ensure them, since unprofessional electoral administrators are not in a position to work effectively and independently. „Members of central electoral commissions should be legal experts, political scientists, mathematicians or other people with a good understanding of electoral issues.”²⁹ More generally, the importance of standardised training at all levels of election administration, including for members appointed by political parties, has to be underlined.³⁰ „What really matters is whether the election administrators – individually and as

a body – apply the law in a professional manner ensuring equal treatment of electoral contestants”.³¹ Last minute appointment or replacement of election commissioners, apart from being problematic from the point of view of impartiality, strongly goes against the requirement of professionalism.

The *balanced composition* of election commissions is absolutely crucial in order to ensure their impartiality. „The composition of a central electoral commission can give rise to debate and become the key political issue in the drafting of an electoral law”.³² This is so true that it still happens to hear that those who count the votes determine the result of the election, not those who cast their vote. Such statement may look as a joke but it is not always completely away from reality. This does not only concern the CEC but also lower commissions, which play a major role during the vote, the counting and the transmission of results.

If in an ideal world fully impartial electoral administrators would be easy to find, in real life this is much more difficult. Political *balance* in the appointment is therefore a good step towards impartiality.

In its opinions, the Venice Commission regularly insists on political balance in the composition of election commissions, in particular of central election commissions. For example, in a recent opinion, it expressed concern vis-à-vis „the lack of nominating guarantees for pluralism, inclusiveness, and balance” in a draft law, which suppressed the proportional representation of parties in the nominations to the Central Election Commission (CEC), leaving in practice to the parliamentary majority the possibility to appoint the whole CEC.³³ Another system provided for one third of the CEC to be appointed by the lower chamber of Parliament, from candidates proposed by factions in Parliament, one third by the higher chamber and one third by the President. The Commission considered that except in the case of the five members appointed by the lower chamber, there were no sufficient guarantees of the pluralistic composition of the Central Electoral Commission.³⁴

The assessment of the balance in the composition of election commissions cannot take place *in abstracto*: the specific situation of the country has to be taken into account.

For example, a system in which an equal number of seats was allocated to the majority

party in parliament, the minority parties and „independent” deputies appeared *prima facie* as balanced, but experience showed that nominees of “independent” deputies and of some minority parties voted in line with government's appointees. The leadership of the commissions is also crucial: the monopolisation of the chairs by the ruling party goes against inclusiveness and confidence.³⁵

The electoral results of the parties may be taken into account when allocating seats in election commissions, but this should not lead to the possibility for those appointed by the electoral majority to take all decisions on their own.³⁶

In a moving political environment, limitation of representation in the election commissions to parliamentary parties could appear as a way to ensure the *status quo*. That is why the principle of equity may impose the involvement of non-parliamentary parties in the nomination process.³⁷

How is balance in the composition a tool in favour of impartiality? It is true that it will not ensure independence or impartiality of individual members by itself. However, in the absence of a clear majority which is in a position to impose its point of view, arbitrary decisions will be much more difficult to adopt. That is why the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters considers it „desirable that electoral commissions take decisions by a qualified majority or by consensus”,³⁸ consensus being preferable when it does not impede the functioning of the commission. The need for consensus or a qualified majority can be limited to the most important decisions, as is the case in a number of states. Moreover, „the main value of setting up a CEC based on multiparty representation is to provide key electoral contestants with close access to the process with a view to strengthening public confidence and transparency”.³⁹

In other words, balance in the composition of election commissions is no panacea. It helps avoiding one-sided politicisation, but does not exclude politicisation as such. Even if it increases confidence of the political parties in the process, it may lead to deadlocks. Personal impartiality and independence are necessary and no piece of legislation is in a position to ensure them. When political nomination does not lead to the expected result, „[s]everal options may be considered to reduce political polarisation,

including increasing the number of nominating bodies, inviting different public institutions to nominate representatives, including a member of the judiciary or independent members from the civil society (e.g. nominated by universities). This could improve the efficiency of the election administration and help reaching consensus”.⁴⁰

In short, there is no miracle solution, be it in the composition or the mode of operation of election commissions, which will ensure their impartiality. Specific rules may however be of much help. Moreover, the situation of each country has to be assessed on the basis of its specific situation, including the political environment, and practice. This implies that shortcomings or, on the contrary, successes in the organisation of elections have to be taken into account when assessing the need for legislative reforms.

At any rate, „a *broad political agreement* on the type and composition of the central election administration body has the potential to enhance trust in the administration of elections, and boost public confidence in the entire process”.⁴¹ Practice has of course to follow the hopes raised by the agreement. Professionalism, transparency, consistency and absence of political bias should lead to general recognition of the work done by political stakeholders and the public at large.⁴²

A principle which is often forgotten when dealing with performance of election administration is *accountability*. It is however a very strong incentive to act in conformity with the law. This means that violations of electoral legislation be sanctioned and that complaints and appeals procedures be effective.⁴³

The issue of complaints and appeals will not be developed here in detail, but it has to be made clear that electoral law, like every piece of legislation, is mere *lex imperfecta* in the absence of effective remedies for its implementation. While a final appeal to a court must be possible, a first appeal to an election commission is often a good solution, since it should help simplifying the procedure and since election commissioners are specialists of electoral law.⁴⁴

C. Stability of the composition of election commissions

The Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters states:

„The fundamental elements of electoral law, in particular the electoral system proper

membership of electoral commissions and the drawing of constituency boundaries, should not be open to amendment less than one year before an election, or should be written in the constitution or at a level higher than ordinary law.”⁴⁵

The Venice Commission made however clear that:

„1. The principle according to which the fundamental elements of electoral law should not be open to amendment less than one year prior to an election does not take precedence over the other principles of the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters.

2. It should not be invoked to maintain a situation contrary to the standards of the European electoral heritage, or to prevent the implementation of recommendations by international organisations.”⁴⁶

In other words, the proximity of an election is no reason to avoid implementation of recommendations by international organisations. Stating the contrary would encourage authorities to delay electoral reform up to less than one year before the election, and then to say that it is too late.

It may be noted that, when addressing the already quoted *Georgian Labour Party* case, the European Court of Human Rights recognised that the last minute change of the electoral legislation could have been problematic, albeit only when addressing the issue of the registration of voters⁴⁷ and not the change in the composition of election commissions (the revised legislation had enabled the President of the Republic to appoint the President of the Central Electoral Commission in addition to five other members). The Court considered that, due to the very specific „post-revolutionary” situation, a change of the rules on voter registration one month before elections was admissible. In our opinion, if addressed in the light of the Venice Commission recommendations, the modification of the composition of election commissions could have been more disputable, since it would have been more difficult to justify on the basis of the circumstances. Since the Court did not consider the unbalanced composition of an election management body as a violation of Article 3 Protocol 1, it is however doubtful that it would do so with a last minute change in the election administration – but such elements have to be taken into consideration when assessing the overall conformity with Article 3 Protocol 1.

IV. Conclusion

The importance of impartiality of electoral management bodies does not need any more to be underlined. It has been recognised at international level, not least by the European Court of Human Rights and in the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters drafted by the Venice Commission, which is supported by the statutory bodies of the Council of Europe.

There is however no exclusive way of implementing such a fundamental element of the European electoral heritage. The issue cannot be seen in isolation and has to be located into its context. This means that, despite its obvious importance, the balance in the composition of election commissions is not the only relevant issue. Impartiality cannot be thought without professionalism. It is closely related to independence, transparency, and accountability. Stability in the composition of election commissions - when balanced - should also increase professionalism and confidence. Moreover, the overall national context cannot be left aside.

The legislator is therefore responsible for adopting legislation which ensures impartiality, and also confidence in this impartiality. Inclusiveness and transparency in the process of drafting electoral legislation can make an important contribution in this context.⁴⁸ However, whatever the legislative provisions and even the political commitment, personal competence and integrity of members of election management bodies will always stay inescapable requirements.

NOTES:

1. The opinions expressed in this article are the responsibility of the author and do not commit the Council of Europe.

2. Application No. 9104/04, 8 July 2008.

3. Application No. 78039/01, 2 March 2010.

4. *Georgian Labour Party v. Georgia*, par. 97.

5. *Georgian Labour Party v. Georgia*, par. 103.

6. Application No. 78039/01, 2 March 2010.

7. Article 4.1 of Law no. 68/1992 of 15 July 1992, quoted at par. 18.

8. Article 24 of Law no. 68/1992 of 15 July 1992, quoted at par. 18.

9. *Grosaru v. Romania*, par. 54.

10. CDL-AD(2002)023rev, par. II.3.3.a.

11. CDL-AD(2002)023rev, available at <http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD%282002%29023rev-e>.

12. II.3.1.

13. CDL-AD(2002)023rev, par. 68.

14. Cf. Recommendation Rec(2004)11 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on legal, operational and technical standards for e-voting, Appendix I, B.I.: transparency is considered as the first procedural safeguard.

15. CDL-AD(2002)023rev, par. 81.

16. Nikolai Vulchanov, Organisation of Elections by an Impartial Body, *in* European Electoral Heritage – 10 Years of the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters, Science and technique of democracy No. 50, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg 2013, pp. 25-37, 27.

17. CDL-AD(2002)023rev, par. 69-71.

18. *Ibid.*, II.3.1.f.

19. Joint Opinion on the Electoral Law and the Electoral Practice of Albania (CDL-AD(2011)042), at [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2011\)042-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2011)042-e), par. 18ff, 22.

20. Joint Opinion on the Election Code of Bulgaria (CDL-AD(2011)013), available at [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD\(2011\)013-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD(2011)013-e), par. 31.

21. Joint Opinion on the Electoral Code of the Republic of Albania by the Venice Commission and the OSCE/ODIHR (CDL-AD(2009)005), available at [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2009\)005-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2009)005-e), par. 71; CDL-AD(2011)042, par. 50.

22. CDL-AD(2009)005, par. 59.

23. CDL-AD(2002)023rev, par. 77.

24. Vulchanov, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

25. *See*, amongst numerous cases, ECtHR, *de Cubber v. Belgium*, application 9186/80, 26 October 1984, par. 26; *Micallef v. Malta*, application 17056/06, 15 October 2009, par. 98.

26. CDL-AD(2002)023rev, par. 83.

27. CDL-AD(2002)023rev, II.3.1.d, par. 75; cf. Code of Good Practice on Referendums, CDL-AD(2007)008rev, available at [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2007\)008rev-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2007)008rev-e), II.3.1.d.

28. Vulchanov, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

29. CDL-AD(2002)023rev, par. 83.

30. *Ibid.*, II.3.1.g. and par. 84.

31. Vulchanov, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

32. CDL-AD(2002)023rev, par. 74.

33. Joint Opinion on the draft electoral code of Bulgaria (CDL-AD(2014)001), available at [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD\(2014\)001-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD(2014)001-e), par. 35.

34. Opinion on the Federal Law on the Election of the Deputies of the State Duma of the Russian Federation (CDL-AD(2012)002), available at [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2012\)002-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2012)002-e), par. 34-36.

35. Joint Final Assessment of the Electoral Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (CDL(2003)054), available at [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL\(2003\)054-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL(2003)054-e), par. 20 ff; Joint Recommendations on the Electoral Law and the Electoral Administration in Azerbaijan (CDL-AD(2004)016rev), available at [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2004\)016rev-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2004)016rev-e), par. 9-12.

36. CDL-AD(2002)023rev, par. 75.

37. Joint Opinion on draft amendments to legislation on the election of people's deputies of Ukraine (CDL-AD(2013)026), available at

[http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2013\)026-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2013)026-e), par. 31.

38. CDL-AD(2002)023rev, II.3.1.c.

39. Vulchanov, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

40. Joint Opinion on the Electoral Law and the Electoral Practice of Albania (CDL-AD(2011)042), available at [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2011\)042-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2011)042-e), par. 18ff, 22.

41. Vulchanov, *op. cit.*, p. 33 (emphasis added).

42. Cf. Vulchanov, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

43. Cf. Vulchanov, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28.

44. On how to ensure an effective system of appeal, see in particular CDL-AD(2002)023rev, II.3.3. Developments on the issue can be found in the following publication: Supervising Electoral Processes, Science and Technique of Democracy No. 48, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg 2010. See in particular Srdjan Darmanovic, Electoral disputes – Procedural aspects (pp. 11-16) and Pierre Garrone, Electoral disputes – Substantive aspects (pp. 17-27).

45. CDL-AD(2002)023rev, II.2.B

46. Interpretative Declaration on the Stability of Electoral Law, CDL-AD(2005)043, II.1-2.

47. *Georgian Labour Party v. Georgia*, application No. 9104/04, 8 July 2008, par. 88-89.

48. The Venice Commission regularly addresses the issue of inclusiveness (and transparency) in the process of drafting electoral legislation. See, e.g., Joint Opinion on the draft Law amending the electoral legislation of Moldova, (CDL-AD(2014)003), available at [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2014\)003-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2014)003-e), par. 19; Joint Opinion on the draft Election Code of Bulgaria (CDL-AD(2014)001), at [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2014\)001-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2014)001-e), par. 11, 82.

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- Joint Opinion on the Electoral Code of the Republic of Albania by the Venice Commission and the OSCE / ODIHR (CDL - AD (2 0 0 9) 0 0 5) , at [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2009\)005-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2009)005-e).
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CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY IN LATIN AMERICA

AN INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

The present essay aims to analyse the evolution of democracy in Latin America, using as a starting point the electoral organs and their role in the processes of regional consolidation. Through an institutional overview focusing on the transformations within the organisms of electoral administration, on their functions and responsibilities, this analysis will concern the strengthening of democracy in Latin America as a regional experience expressed in periods of transition, growth and consolidation. Thus, the history of our societies is recovered as the substrate which yielded novel ethical and political notions, which today are consistent with the social conformity of the current stability of the Latin American governments which are looking for complete civic responsibility.

Keywords: *Latin America, democracy, transition, consolidation of democracy, organisms of electoral administration.*

Abstract

Prezentul eseu își propune să analizeze evoluția democrației în America Latină,

folosind ca punct de plecare organismele electorale și rolul lor în procesul de consolidare regională. Printr-o privire de ansamblu asupra structurii instituționale, concentrându-ne pe transformările din cadrul organismelor de management electoral, pe funcțiile și responsabilitățile lor, această analiză își propune să se refere la consolidarea democrației în America Latină ca o experiență regională exprimată în perioade de tranziție, creștere economică și consolidare. Astfel, istoria societăților noastre este înțeleasă ca substrat pentru noi noțiuni etice și politice, care în prezent sunt în concordanță cu conformitatea socială a stabilității guvernelor actuale din America Latină, care sunt în căutarea responsabilității civice complete.

Cuvinte cheie: *America Latină, democrație, tranziție, consolidarea democrației, organisme de management electoral.*

1. Introduction

The importance of the organs of electoral administration is strictly bound, though not as the only component, to the development and the democratic consolidation of our respective countries. Specifically, Latin America has counted on institutional strengthening as the road via which the democratic politics have been established in the region, a road sustained by constructing norms and organisms with a democratic spirit. It is this trajectory which, throughout the paragraphs to follow, appears as part of a historic itinerary and proof of the democratic transformation on the continent.

Democracy in Latin America came here to stay, and for a long time. It was a long and tough fight led by generations of Latin Americans, to finally arrive to a regime of

liberties, opportunities and to greater equality and justice.

The democratization process started in the 1980s has favoured the electoral theme, in order to enhance the construction of democracy. Today, Latin America is better equipped than ever to continue developing and perfecting its goal, democracy. Voters participate in elections in higher numbers and more often; the electoral parties exercise their rights while maintaining a close bond to society; at the same time, great work has been put into constructing norms and electoral institutions which have permitted the consolidation and continuity of political plurality.

All that came before has helped to consolidate a democratic stability unprecedented within the region. The crises faced after the resignation of 10 presidents, between the year 2000 and the present moment, have all been resolved through juridical mechanisms established in conformity to the law and in agreement with the wishes of the political representations elected democratically. The repressive actions resulting from institutional instability present in the 1960s and 1970s cannot find their place anymore in this new reality.

The adversaries of Latin American democracy seem to be an assembly of goals and imperfections stemming from its evolution, which are also characteristic of regimes based on liberty and democratic political representation.

In accordance with Hans Kelsen, it was in the 18th century that the trigger of democracy, as an ideal, transformed into a political premise¹. In Latin America, this democratic ideal was based on a fight for human rights, a complex fight which has given a boost to the political agenda in a time of constant difficulties. And yet, democracy found its cause by looking always in the possible world, the ideal towards which it aspires.

For this reason, the Latin American experience is an intrinsic one, born from its own realities and from the times it is living. It has been, and continues to be, a process closely bound to the great democratic ideal, but which is being moulded through the objects, people, situations and the very nature of every nation in the region. It is this dichotomy which needs to be present in our minds, when reflecting about the goals and advancements of democracy, understanding and separating the

incommensurability of both realities, of the ideas and of the world where day by day such ideals are being constructed.

From an international standpoint, the consolidation of democracy is one of the most significant international phenomena of the 20th century, with the most important changes having occurred especially during the past 25 years of the past century; this was possible thanks to the disappearance of totalitarian regimes and authorities that had emerged after World War II.

In the 1970s, a phenomenon started to emerge in Occidental Europe (Spain, Portugal, Greece) and it expanded in a generalised form basically throughout the entire world. At the same time, democracy expanded due to different structural factors with economic and social character, as well as through conjuncture circumstances, such as the end of the Cold War.

Alexis de Tocqueville, in his classical book *Democracy in America*, noted that in the world of the 19th century a great democratic revolution was being prepared². From 1973 to 2009, approximately 155 countries made the transition towards electoral democracy. Currently, there are about 180 countries that have constructed electoral laws so they can choose their organisms of power democratically. Since 2000, only 11 countries in the world have not held elections, and from 213 countries recognised by the UN, 200 have regulations in place to hold elections for at least one purpose³.

In 1977, this phenomenon in Latin America was depicted like this: only three countries were recognised as fully democratic: Costa Rica, Colombia and Venezuela; the majority of countries in the region were living under authoritarian regimes. By 2014, that is 37 years later, practically all countries have chosen democracy as the method for acceding to political representation via free, transparent, periodic elections. Although none of the democracies is perfect, this tendency demonstrates the advances and the political direction towards which Latin America has shifted. Whereas before power was disputed through force and war, today contemporary democratic regimes are built through voting and political action, albeit not without imperfections.

The popular vote has radically transformed the conditions for defining who

needs to govern our countries. It is through voting that a new face has been given to the geography of power in the region; pluralism is part of the everyday politics and it is expressed through political parties and elections. For this, countries in the region seek to create institutions and electoral practices which guarantee the highest independence and autonomy in the face of various power groups.

For this reason we can identify three big moments in the democratic transition in Latin America, which will be presented in continuation in a brief and rather superficial manner. These transitions have to do with an institutional construction of democracy, which separates its substantive perspective from the procedural one; the consolidation of the electoral organisms is only one part of this democratic development. Thus, although every stage has been a cumulus of knowledge and practices specific to each distinct country, here, for practical reasons, we only present them in an abbreviated manner, as an overview of the whole region.

2. The process of transition towards democracy

The process of transition towards democracy in Latin America coincides with the explanation of Samuel H. Huntington about the third wave of democratization⁴ initiated in 1974, going from Europe to Asia and Latin America. In a general form, such transition has been marked by social and cultural aspects which eroded the authoritarian aspects of the regimes of those times; in a particular form, this movement started the procedures for institutional and normative orientations aimed not only at enhancing democracy, but also the respect towards political and social rights of the citizens. In this regard, the emergence or consolidation of the electoral authorities was of great support in making the process more relevant.

The objective of this essay is precisely to highlight the role that these organisms have occupied in the transition and to present the evolution of these organisms in the light of the requirements which were imposed upon them by the political and social context.

Thus, we need to start by defining what we understand by electoral authority. In

accordance with the Manual of IDEA International: "An Electoral Authority is an organisation or body which was created with the purpose of, and is legally responsible for managing one or more elements which are essential for the progress of the elections and that of the instruments of direct democracy - such as referendums, civic initiatives or plebiscites - if these are part of the legal framework."⁵

Starting from this conception the general functions of these bodies are recognised: a) to observe that the rights of all voters are respected; b) to manage the candidacies of all political parties; c) to administrate the organisation of events where people can exercise their right to vote; d) to manage the preparations for the vote counting process; e) the actual counting of the votes. Other specific functions may be acquired by an electoral authority depending of its structure and legal framing, such as: the electoral registry; the delimitation of circumscriptions; the elaboration of materials for the day of the elections; the training of staff and civic education; supervising electoral campaigns; monitoring the media; resolving electoral disputes.⁶

The periods of transition for the electoral organisms have been, generally, defined by the social aspiration of defining new forms to which the political power could adhere. That is, by consolidating and enhancing its actors (political parties, electoral organisms, associations of the civil society etc.); by greater civic participation; a more intense electoral dispute and, in general, the development of electoral processes that were more complex and competitive. This naturally led to the consolidation of political parties and made them more professional – with regards to their function and main responsibilities – mainly relating to infrastructure for the development of elections.

A common factor is constituted, in the first place, by the efforts of the international community regarding this issue (efforts which are also in the process of being expanded), with the goal of making the emerging democracies stable and legitimate, through electoral observation.

During this first effort, the support of international organisations such as the United Nations through the Electoral Assistance

Division, the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights, the Centre for Electoral Promotion and Assistance and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, among others, have offered the bases for the development of novel methodology used to observe and strengthen the electoral processes in Latin America and in the world. In time, these programs of observation have been greatly supported by the organisms themselves, which regarded them as mechanisms of international cooperation aimed at giving elections higher certainty.

At the same time, this first period or process is characterised by the creation and strengthening of the electoral infrastructure with respect to the electoral cycle in itself. This first moment focuses the attention on the development of specific themes such as the electoral registry, the division of territories, the mechanisms of electoral organisation related to logistics and materials, but also a basic scheme of transmitting results, also preliminary results in many cases.

In the case of Mexico, it was precisely through the electoral reforms that an organism with autonomy was formed and, later, a fully independent one, which led to the consolidation of the said mechanisms. The creation of the Electoral Federal Institute required that the newly born electoral apparatus of the country was given an electoral structure.

Once the institutional mechanisms from which the electoral process is born reached a point of sufficient maturity, the requirements of the citizens led to new processes of consolidation in which the next two processes tend to be interconnected in time as dynamic processes of execution.

3. The process of democratization and consolidation

This period is fully characterised by the augmentation of the democratic character and the transition towards more extensive ways of exercising the civic rights.

In general, the society's demands focus on the professionalization of the electoral administrative organs, but also of the political parties. In this sense, the priority is given to the training of the electoral civil servants as a means of consolidation at the administrative level.

The tendency, with the passage of time, has been to conform the electoral independent authorities, which have as an objective, precisely, the professionalization of electoral structures in various ways. In general, we could say that there are three types of electoral organisms, according to their function:

a) The Independent Model: elections are organised through an electoral organism, which has independence and autonomy from the executive, legislative and judicial powers. It is made of a body of civil servants specialized on electoral material.

b) The Governmental Model: elections are organised through the executive power, by some Ministry or local authority.

c) The Mix Model: made from two organs, generally, one independent and aimed at supervising the electoral process, the other governmental with organizational function and in charge of electoral administration.⁷

Now, we can make a small recap of how the electoral organisms in Latin America are formed, from the perspective of the electoral administration. Without going into specifics, it can be noticed that today the dominant model is the independent one.

(See Table 1)

Moreover, work is done from a legal standpoint on the prerogatives of the political parties; especially the topic of access to the media of communication becomes a transcendental element for the consolidation of political associations. As Daniel Zovatto signals: „...as much as civic participation and the mobilisation of society are enhanced, without serious and trustworthy parties it is hard to imagine that effective governments can be formed.”⁸

Around these legal transformations, political transformations emerge in which the mass parties lose their vigour when faced with the new civic forms of expression. At the same time, the political extremes develop a new relevance, as a consequence of the new conditions of the competency, conditions which allowed a greater generalised political plurality. Subsequently, this will generate new goals, which will be the basis for the third and last process of development of democracy in Latin America, that of the guarantee in the conditions of competency.

Amongst other themes developed during this stage, there is that of the amplification of political rights. For this, the themes of civic education and promotion of democracy have become vital exercises for inclusion of the political and electoral systems in the region. It is common to observe efforts for reaching a higher representation in distinct governmental orders from minority groups previously excluded. For this, the electoral organs have also played a key role by taking the elections in the most distant areas of the country, inaccessible and without good communication means, and some organisms even incorporated within their managerial teams representatives from these groups, mainly, from the indigenous original groups.

It is evident that there was a strong general urge to underscore the role of women in politics and, when it comes to elections, there was no exception. It can be said, from this perspective, that the process of strengthening had to do, or was obliged to do with the openness towards and the assimilation of a democratic culture which was shared, to put it in general terms. If the anterior stage was characterised by the development of electoral infrastructure, it can be said that this stage is defined by the formation of a superdemocratic structure in a society every time more open.

Concomitant to these changes, new demands appeared starting from the requests of citizens, which opened a new phase focused on reaching higher equity in competency and stronger political parties derived from all of that which came beforehand.

4. Process of in-depth exploration and equity in competency

This stage was separated from the one above in order to put greater emphasis on the transformations which happened in this sense, given that these have represented the greater part of the electoral reforms in recent years; however, we need to note that the said transformations are profoundly linked to the processes of amplification and consolidation of democracy seen in the second chapter.

There are three main themes related to the vigilance of equity in the electoral processes, themes which are directly linked to the lives of the political parties.

The first theme is that of financing;

although not present throughout Latin America, by comparison, there generally are regulations more and more strict and well defined regarding the attribution of public funds and, on the other hand, regarding the regulation of private funding to control the flux of great capital. The goal of these restrictions is to diminish the differences between the economic power of some parties, as well as to limit the access to money coming from organised crime.

The second theme is the supervision of funds and expenses. Together with the big financial controls, vigilance mechanisms have been developed for operation and campaign costs for political parties, which shed even more uncertainty over the destiny of public resources directed towards parties. The themes of transparency and accountability have been attracted, in many cases, by the electoral organ itself, which ensures parties act according to these two principles. At the same time, control mechanisms have been established, together with follow-up, regarding the quantity and content of the propaganda (especially on the radio and television) to ensure electoral integrity.

In Mexico, the electoral reform of 2007-2008 made a step in this direction in the sense that, given that it was especially directed to reconsider the terms of the electoral competency when it comes to financing and access to ways of communicating, advocating for a more just and equitable electoral race. Thus, in 2013-2014 a new reform was taken to completion – of recent application – through which the National Electoral Institute was born to replace IFE, with the goal of turning the former organism into an entity with national attributions. The finality of the said transition is to consolidate the electoral processes on all levels, establishing novel mechanisms of financial and audit control.

Finally, a tendency has been observed when it comes to institutional consolidation in terms of electoral justice, trying to offer a common ground of guarantees for all the political and social actors on electoral matters. For this, more and more organisms have been developed, specialised on the vigilance of electoral processes, organisms one can appeal to in case of any irregularity.

Likewise, as an accompanying process, national and international electoral observation has been maintained as a scheme of guarantees over the electoral cycle reinforced by regional

organs, which have developed great work in this respect.

In a schematic and succinct manner, this essay was meant to underscore the evolution and importance that the electoral organisms have had in the development of democracy from the specific case of Latin America. A much more just exercise should go deeper into the specific characteristics of the region throughout the development of each one of the electoral organs and their context; however, the intention was to show a general experience which is, grosso modo, shared within the region. One has to remember that these processes were not general, or linear on the continent, but they have gone, in each country and within each context, through their own processes of advancement and regression which have consolidated in a particular manner each electoral authority.

5. Final considerations

I conclude these pages with a general reflexion over the enormous importance of the transition towards democracy that Latin America has experienced over the past few decades, during which time the electoral organs have been an indisputable actor, always present.

The totalitarian regimes of the past century lost their validity because they were incapable of observing and assimilating the changes already occurring in the Latin American society, a society which stopped counting on violence to build a better future. The societies every time more diverse and linked found ways to count on a different construction; this road was the salvation of politics, which were based on the right of everybody to live in peace and liberty.

Elections, in this scenario, played a central role in the democratic transition, in a different form in every country, but all of them going on the route of peacemaking through voting. The great beneficiary and the center of the new democratic politics was the citizen, builder of the new sovereign power through the vote which gives life to the political parties.

For this reason, the majority of Latin American countries have realised profound legal and institutional transformations, with the purpose of protecting the rights of the citizens when it comes to voting and to participate in exercising the political power through the parties, becoming the origin of legitimisation of power through voting and participation.

The nature of electoral organs in this

democratic era contains an element which is mainly ethical, aimed at dignifying the power of the citizens. As Michilini says: „The concept of human dignity is an exclusively ethical expression”⁹, and this implies the absolute respect towards the liberty of people to decide in the public life, but also in the private one. For this reason, the responsibility of electoral organs, today, is much greater than in the past; the core of the work of our institutions relies on maintaining the general conditions for exercising our civilian character fully, through voting.

For all these reasons and on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Romanian Permanent Electoral Authority, we recognise its work in the consolidation of the democracy in its country and, most of all, we applaud the daily efforts of all its employees to guarantee freedom and justice in the daily lives of millions of Romanian citizens who enjoy a political stability shielded by national institutions. In particular, we recognise the merits of its president, Ms. Ana Maria Pătru, for her constant efforts to establish international connections which lead to the cooperation and consolidation of our democratic regimes.

NOTES:

1. Cf. Hans Kelsen. *Esencia y valor de la democracia*. España, Editorial Guadarrama, 1977, p. 11-25.
2. Alexis de Tocqueville, *La Democracia en América*, Madrid, ED. Trotta, pp. 1360.
3. Informe de la Comisión Global sobre elecciones, democracia y seguridad, *Profundizando la democracia: Una estrategia para mejorar la integridad electoral en el mundo*, Kofi Annan Foundation-IDEA Internacional, pp. 14-19.
4. Samuel P. Huntington, *La tercera ola*, Buenos Aires, Paidós, 1994.
5. Alan Wall, Andrew Ellis, Ayman Ayoub, et. al., *Electoral Management Design: The International IDEA Handbook*, Stockholm, 2006, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, p. 5.
6. Fernando Barrientos, *Gestión electoral comparada y confianza en las elecciones en América Latina*, México, D.F., INAP, 2011, p. 67.
7. Daniel Zovatto, *La regulación jurídica de los partidos de los partidos políticos en América Latina*. <http://biblio.juridicas.unam.mx/libros/7/3168/5.pdf>
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.
9. Dorando, J. Michilini, „Dignidad humana en Kant y Habermas” in *Revista Estudios de Filosofía Práctica e Historia de las Ideas*, Vol. 12, Num. 1, July 2010, pp. 41-49.

Table 1. Type of Electoral Bodies in Latin America

Country	Electoral authority	Model
Argentina	National Electoral Chamber National Electoral Direction (Ministry of Interior)	Mix
Antigua and Barbuda	Electoral Commission	Independent
Bolivia	Supreme Electoral Tribunal	Independent
Chile	Electoral Service of Chile	Independent
Colombia	National Electoral Council	Independent
Costa Rica	Supreme Electoral Tribunal	Independent
Ecuador	National Electoral Council	Independent
El Salvador	Supreme Electoral Tribunal	Independent
Guatemala	Supreme Electoral Tribunal	Independent
Honduras	Supreme Electoral Tribunal	Independent
Mexico	National Electoral Institute	Independent
Nicaragua	Supreme Electoral Council	Independent
Panama	Electoral Tribunal	Independent
Paraguay	Superior Court for Electoral Justice	Independent
Dominican Republic	Central Electoral Board	Independent
Uruguay	Electoral Court	Independent
Venezuela	National Electoral Council	Independent

Source: Made by author with information from Alan Wall, Andrew Ellis, Ayman Ayoub, et. all, *Electoral Management Design: The International IDEA Handbook* (Alan Wall, Andrew Ellis, Ayman Ayoub, et. al., *op. cit.*, pp. 304-323)

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Manuel Carrillo is the author of various collaborations on electoral matters, among which his involvement in the book “Dinero y Contienda Politico-Electoral, reto de la democracia”, published by IFE and the Fund for Economic Culture; as well as the second edition of the Electoral Dictionary, edited by IIDH-CAPEL. He took part in several missions of electoral observation, technical assistance and he promoted the cooperation and participation of Mexico in the international electoral system.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ELECTION MANAGEMENT BODIES

12 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AND THE ROLE OF THE CENTRAL ELECTION COMMISSION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Irena Hadžiabdić

Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina



Abstract

In its 12 years of existence the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina has positioned itself as an inevitable factor that recommends improvements and manages the process in its full capacity and it serves as a model to other institutions. From an institution that had problems in preparing the 2002 Elections it has grown into a stable, competent institution, which enjoys confidence and has a clear mission and vision, as well as the development strategy.

The key factors that contributed to its development are: good working base thanks to the OSCE experience in conduct of elections and its assistance in the first years of transition; implementation of recommendations from the OSCE/ODIHR and from other organizations that observed elections, which served as a foundation to initiate improvements; legislative solutions that enabled Commission to become a permanent body, completely professionally dedicated with a mandate of seven years and possibility of re-election; introduction of high professional, expert, ethical and moral standards for the members of the Commission, and establishing and nurturing proactive international cooperation.

Keywords: *permanent election management body, successful transition, legislative solutions, high standards for members of the Commission, proactive international cooperation.*

Abstract

În cei 12 ani de existență Comisia Electorală Centrală a Bosniei și Herțegovinei s-a poziționat ca un factor inevitabil care recomandă îmbunătățiri și gestionează procesul electoral în capacitatea sa deplină și servește drept model pentru alte instituții. De la o instituție care a avut probleme în pregătirea alegerilor din 2002, aceasta a crescut într-o instituție stabilă, competentă, care se bucură de încredere și are o misiune și viziune clară, precum și strategie de dezvoltare.

Factorii cheie care au contribuit la dezvoltarea ei sunt: o bază bună de lucru datorată experienței OSCE în desfășurarea alegerilor și asistența de care a beneficiat în primii ani de tranziție; punerea în aplicare a recomandărilor din partea OSCE/ODIHR și de la alte organizații care observă alegeri, care a servit ca o fundație pentru a iniția îmbunătățiri; soluții legislative care au permis Comisiei să devină un organism permanent, complet dedicat profesional, cu un mandat de șapte ani și posibilitate de realegere; introducerea unor standarde ridicate din punct de vedere profesional, al expertizei, etice și morale pentru membrii Comisiei, și stabilirea și cultivarea cooperării proactive internaționale.

Cuvinte cheie: *organism permanent de gestionare a alegerilor, tranziție de succes, soluții legislative, standarde ridicate pentru membrii Comisiei, cooperare proactivă internațională.*

The Venice Commission, as the leading institution for all legal election-related issues, has in its guidelines Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters¹, pointed out five basic principles of electoral heritage as being an indispensable condition for democratic elections. Therefore, the states are obligated to sublimate the principles into their Electoral Codes. Furthermore the explanation to the Code has a set of procedural warranties necessary for application of these five principles, strongly underlining the importance of election management bodies, which, through their independence, safeguard correct conduct of the elections.

The importance of the election management bodies' role and their significance in the overall electoral process is thus accentuated.

The manual of the Electoral Institute (International IDEA) "Electoral Management Design" is completely dedicated to the election management bodies and to the issues: who organizes the elections, role and the importance of election management bodies, functions and responsibilities of the election management bodies, etc. Regardless of which of three known models of these bodies conduct the elections (independent bodies, government bodies or mixed election management bodies), they are all tasked to conduct elections highly observing election integrity, etiquette, independence and professional standards.²

The question arises of whether conduct of elections is merely respecting electoral rules during organization of preparatory activities for the elections, primarily focusing to sum up and publish the results, or it could be taken a step further – such as active role of the election management bodies, which become one of the critical factors for improving elections.

The example of the Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina confirms that in a relatively short time period an election management body, whose role in the beginning was merely to conduct the election, has evolved into a significant promoter of the democratic election process. Today, members of this election management body are permanently professionally engaged on the analysis and consideration of the possibilities to overcome problems, legislative shortcomings and to get the public interested in its projects.

The General Framework Peace Agreement in BiH has in its Annex III

(Elections) provided a framework for preparation, monitoring and the conduct of general and local elections, and the mandate for the conduct of first post-war elections in BiH in 1996 was delegated to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).³ Nevertheless, its involvement was extended until 2001, since harmonization and adopting of the BiH Election Law was not following desired dynamics.

Adoption of the BiH Election Law in 2001 has created conditions and legal framework to have the competences of the election process transferred to BiH, and the OSCE continued to have an advisory role.

This moment was the main turning point in determining the role and the character of the BiH Election Commission. The first BiH Election Commission was appointed by a decision of the High Representative to BiH on November 16, 2001 and had seven members (three representing the constituent people, one representing "Others" and three international members (Head of the OSCE Mission, Deputy Head of the OSCE Mission, and the High Representative to BiH or persons authorized by him). The Election Law defined the mandate, role and competences of the Election Commission as an independent election management body at all levels of authority in BiH that coordinates and controls the work of the lower level election management bodies. This body also has a Secretariat as an administrative and professional-technical body that provides services to the voters, citizens, political parties and other participants in the election process.

Since 2006 when the international members left the commission, the Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina changed the name to the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Its competences are defined in Article 2.9 of the BiH Election Law and include: co-ordination, oversight and regulation of the lawful operation of all election commissions and Polling Station Committees; issuing administrative Regulations for the implementation of this law; issuing decision to hold the direct elections in BiH, as provided by this Law; proposing budget for the Central Election Commission of BiH and reporting on its spending; being responsible for accuracy, update and overall integrity of the Central Voters Register for the territory of BiH; ensuring the statistical records

on election participants and constituencies; certifying the participation of political parties, coalitions, lists of independent candidates and independent candidates for all levels of direct elections in BiH; verifying and certifying the lists of candidates and the candidates for all levels of direct and indirect elections in BiH; being responsible for the timely printing, distribution and security of ballots and forms for all levels of direct elections in BiH; defining the contents and the form of the ballot for all levels of direct elections in BiH; determining and verifying election results for all direct and indirect elections covered by this Law, certifying that elections were conducted in accordance with this Law and publishing the results of all direct and indirect elections covered by this Law; issuing certificates to persons who receive mandates at all levels of direct and indirect elections in BiH; notifying an election commission or Polling Station Committee or any other competent authority responsible for the conduct of elections that it does not comply with or violates a provision of the law and order the remedial action required to be taken by the competent body; publicizing all Rules of Procedure, Regulations and election results of the direct and indirect elections in BiH covered by this Law, voter information and all other information necessary for the implementation of this law and all electoral laws, in the Official Gazettes and the media, both inside and outside BiH as appropriate.⁴

Nevertheless, the beginning of the BiH Election Commission's work and first elections it conducted in 2002 showed that since its establishment it was necessary to resolve several important issues. First issue was related to the financial funds from the BiH budget, and until this moment the funds were provided by the OSCE. Without the funds, the obligations set forth by the BiH Election Law could not be met. Second important issue referred to establishment of the BiH Court as a second-instance body for providing legal protection in the election process and the election right's protection system.

In the period of transition the Election Commission faces many unknowns and unsolved questions in the election preparation phase. In its documents from that period the Election Commission had indicated which prerequisites need to be met by the BiH government institution in order for this election management body to successfully plan

elections.⁵ The Secretariat of the BiH Election Commission had only 13 employees managed by the Secretary General, and all the employees were still paid by the OSCE.

The focus of preparation the BiH Election Commission placed on appointing lower level election management bodies and two regulations that were adopted at the time: The Rulebook on Central Voters Register and Voters' Registration and the Rulebook on Certification of Political Parties, Independent Candidates, Coalitions and Lists of Independent Candidates. "By realizing this very complex task, the BiH Election Commission met all legally prescribed preconditions to start election process on April 18 in accordance with the dynamics and deadlines set forth by the Election Law and the BiH Election Commission's regulations."⁶

Nevertheless, already two years later, the Annual Working Report of the Commission had showed that the international members of the Commission were only acting as supervisors with the purpose of transferring "ownership" over entire election process and,their work, by their choice, was of such character as to ensure uninterrupted and efficient work of the BiH Election Commission, as an institution of the BiH [...] leaving over the active role to the domestic members of the Election Commission."⁷

In 2004 the BiH Parliamentary Assembly adopted two laws and entrusted the BiH Election Commission with the mandate to implement the Law on Conflict of Interests in the BiH Government Institutions⁸ and the Law on Political Party Financing.⁹

In accordance with its competences the Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina has in its report on implementation of the laws under its jurisdiction, for the first time, given recommendations to the Parliamentary Assembly for improvement not only of preparation and conduct of the election, but also of other two laws whose implementation was entrusted to the Commission by the BiH Parliamentary Assembly. The recommendations were aimed at achieving higher efficiency, high quality organization and implementation of the elections.¹⁰ The process was still burdened by difficulties as lack of staff in the Department for audit of political party financing, and the need of their education and professional training also arose.¹¹

Already in 2006 the Central Election

Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina has taken more active role, distancing from the status issues and paying more attention to the tasks that directly relate to solving the problems regarding the election system itself. "Analyzing activities in 2006 we are giving the following recommendations:to have more precise and functional procedure for solving the problems of: a) procedure for electing national minorities in the municipalities....., b) procedure of electing municipal mayors – to level preferential and majority election system, c) to solve other issues that require action and which will be underlined by the BiH Central Election Commission in the process of preparation of changes and addenda to the Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina".¹²

The members of the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina actively participated in all working groups for preparation of draft laws and regulations, and they became part of the working groups appointed by the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is in this period exactly, and upon initiative of the BiH Central Election Commission¹³, that most significant reform in the election process had happened. Instead of the active voters' registration system, which was in force until then, the system of passive registration was introduced in 2006, while active registration has been kept only for voters outside of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is still the case today. The advantages of the new system relate to linking together the records on voters into an integrated process, to have more efficient voters' registration, to eliminate duplicate data, to get higher accuracy and integrity of the voters' lists, and to continuously control number of the voters. Also, this change opened the road to a new project, the so-called "polling station designation in the passive registration system"¹⁴ which was enabled by assigning addresses from the records on voters' permanent place of residence.

This technological novelty greatly increased number of voters registered in the Central Voters' Register, since the number of voters in 2006 was higher for 442.817 voters when compared to the elections held in 2004, thus the goal of this measure was entirely met.¹⁵

The path to improvement of the election process by using new information technologies was opened thanks to these initiatives of the BiH Election Commission.

At the same time more efforts and funds were directed towards education and professional training tailored to the needs of the employees (courses on elections, public financing, information technologies, project writing, stress and time management).¹⁶

During the non-election 2007 year the BiH Central Election Commission continued to collect and classify proposals for the changes and addenda to the laws under its competence that have been recorded during the sessions or that were identified during process of solving certain issues and problems, unclearly and insufficiently defined questions. The passive registration project in the same year had entered its second phase and its resolved three major requests¹⁷: **inclusiveness** of all citizens having the right to vote; **involvement**: no citizen with the right to vote was not excluded from the Central Voters' Register and **accuracy**: accurate and update information not including the citizens who do not have the right to vote. The most significant step in 2007 was initiation of the new project "Integrated Election Information System of Bosnia and Herzegovina" that foresees making of an integrated software solution for the entire election administration and connecting all data bases managed by the Commission.¹⁸

Along with conduct of local elections in 2008 additional efforts are invested in order to improve election process and to bring it closer to the processes of developed democratic countries. Members of the commission advocate for implementation of the solutions that will for the first time ensure guaranteed seats in the municipal council for representatives of national minorities.¹⁹

In the year 2009 more activities were done in order to better coordinate all national institutions, institutions of the entities and Brčko District of BiH aimed at high quality conduct of the elections.

The 2010 General Elections resulted in improvements: design of the ballot papers for by-mail voters were changed in comparison to the ballot papers used in the country aimed at preventing manipulations observed at the previous elections; strong voters' motivation campaign was conducted for the first time; voting at the consular-representation offices of BiH abroad was organized for the first time and for the first time municipal election commissions could deliver the election results electronically to the BiH Central Election

Commission.²⁰

During preparations for the General Elections, which will be held on October 12, 2014, the goal of the Commission was to achieve better control of the process, more efficient and accessible process, and to improve education of the election administration: better control and security of the process will be ensured by introducing new application for recording appeals, which will provide Commission a view of number of complaints in the field; new request regarding having identical signature on the application for out-of-country voters and signatures of support given to the political subject is introduced (the signature identical to the one on an identification document); there is also a new procedure of placing the seal on the colored bags, which are identical to the color of the ballot paper. Other novelties will provide more accessible and efficient process in regard to shortening the deadlines and more user-friendly polling material, and will also improve education of the election administration by introducing early training for future presidents of the polling station committees, and preparation of a video material for training of the polling station committees that will be available through the official web page of the Commission.

One of the strategic sub-goals of the BiH Central Election Commission is further introduction of information technologies in the election process thus increasing capability and capacity of election administration to implement its tasks. The Commission recognized that it is really important to continuously work on improving human, institutional and technological potentials. Therefore it decided, as one of 4²¹ countries, to be part of the International IDEA project "Election Risk Management Tool" that was designed as a tool for empowering all actors who are directly responsible for prevention and suppression of election related violence. This tool contains methodology and instrument for analyzing all relevant issues that could jeopardize election process, its planning and implementation.²²

In September of 2013 the BiH Central Election Commission adopted mid-term Strategic plan of the Commission for 2013-2016 that identified three strategic goals focusing on the most important areas of Commission's activities: modernization of the election administration, which encompasses

broad spectrum of sub-areas that need to be improved such as the legislative framework, information technology system, the Central Voters Register...; further development of cooperation with the key election actors and interested parties, and informing and educating the voters, as a carefully chosen goal.²³

Evolution of the BiH Central Election Commission showed that several elements influenced the current development stage of the Commission in which it is the motor power of the election process and initiator of all initiatives for improvement of election process. The following factors contributed the most:

- Good working base thanks to the OSCE experience in conduct of election and its assistance in the first years of transition.
- Special attention is given to recommendations of the OSCE/ODIHR and of other organizations that observed elections, and the recommendations were the foundation to initiate improvements.
- Legislative solutions that enabled Commission to become a permanent body, completely professionally dedicated with a mandate of seven years and possibility of re-election. In 2006 the Rulebook on procedure of conducting public invite and appointing members of the BiH Central Election Commission ensured appointment of a candidate having experience in conducting the elections and having the best professional, expert and ethical qualities and capabilities.
- Proactive international cooperation: Since 2004 the Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina has been investing a lot of efforts in establishing cooperation with the international organizations. At the conference of Association of Election Officials of Europe (ACEEEO) held in Tirana in September 2004, the Commission became member of this regional organization this opening the doors for further professionalization of the election actors through seminars, conferences and for exchange of good practice with other associations and international organization. Six years later the BiH Central Election Commission was elected chair of this organization. In 2011 the BiH Central Election Commission has through its membership in the ACEEEO got the opportunity to work on establishing the Association of World Election Bodies

(A-WEB), which was established in 2013. Today, the Commission, beside the membership in the A-WEB also has the seat in the Auditing and Oversight Board of the A-WEB.

Prior to the 2012 Local Elections the Commission organized educational seminars for delegations of the election commissions from several countries (Liberia, Afghanistan and Macedonia) who got the opportunity to get familiarized with the practice and election system of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Since then, Commission has been actively working on establishing closer cooperation with national election commissions of other countries aimed at exchange of experience and information on election systems and processes, and had signed Memorandums of cooperation with the election commissions of Malaysia, Russian Federation, and Ukraine. Also, a significant segment of the Commission's work is cooperation with the nongovernment organizations in the country on joint projects, and special cooperation is established with the Association of Election Officials in BiH (AEO BiH).²⁴

Thanks to these efforts the Commission has positioned itself as an inevitable factor that recommends improvements and manages the process in its full capacity and which can serve as a model to other institutions. From an institution that had problems in preparation of 2002 Elections it has grown into a stable, competent institution, which enjoys confidence²⁵ and has a clear mission and vision, as well as the development strategy.

NOTES:

1. Venice Commission, Code of good practice in electoral matters, Council of Europe, Venice, October 18-19, 2002, p.5.

2. Wall. A. *et. al.*, Electoral Management Design, the International IDEA Handbook, IDEA Publication Office Stockholm, 2006. p.27.

3. Article 2: OSCE's role, Annex 3 – Agreement on elections of the General Framework Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, http://www.oscebih.org/dejtonski_mirovni_sporazum/H/annex3.htm.

4. Election Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina („Official Gazette of BiH“, no. 23/01, 7/02, 9/02, 20/02, 25/02, 4/04, 20/04, 25/05, 52/05, 65/05, 77/05, 11/06, 24/06, 32/07, 33/08, 32/10, 18/13 and 7/14).

5. Election Commission of Bosnia and

Herzegovina, „Operations of the Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, preparation for the 2002 General Elections“, material for the coordination meeting, Sarajevo, March 20, 2002, p.2.

6. Ibid., p.2.

7. Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Annual Working Report of the BiH Election Commission for 2004, Sarajevo, Decembar 2004, p.109.

8. Official Gazette of BiH, number 16/02.

9. Official Gazette of BiH, number 20/04.

10. Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Annual working report for 2004, Sarajevo, December 2004, p. 109-113.

11. Ibid., p.112.

12. Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Annual working report for 2006, Sarajevo, March 2007, p.101.

13. Ibid., p. 13.

14. Ibid., p. 17.

15. Ibid., p. 15.

16. Ibid., p. 93.

17. Ibid., p. 56.

18. Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Annual working report for 2007, Sarajevo, March 2008, p.69.

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20. Hadžiabdić, I., Council of Europe and Norwegian Ministry of foreign affairs, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2010 General Elections Lessons Learnt, Strasbourg, April 2011, p.15.

21. Kenya, Columbia, Sri Lanka and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

22. Hadžiabdić, I. *et.al.*, How we used Election Risk Management Tool, BiH Central Election Commission, October 2012.

23. BiH Central Election Commission, Strategic plan of the BiH Central Election Commission with an Operational plan (July 2013- July 2016) adopted in September of 2013.

24. Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Annual working report for 2006, Sarajevo, March 2007, p.92.

25. OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission Report, 24 – 27 June, 2014; Warsaw, July 28, 2014.

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Irena Hadžiabdić graduated from the Belgrade Faculty of Law and she holds MSc in EU Policy, Law and Management from RGU, Aberdeen. Last 17 years she spent in the field of elections, first in OSCE, then as Executive Director of the IFES in BiH. Until 2007 she was Executive Director of the Association of Election Officials in BiH (AEOBiH). In 2007 appointed by the BiH Parliamentary Assembly as a member of the BiH Central Election Commission (BiH CEC).

From January 2010 to September 2011 she was President of the BiH CEC. She represents the BiH CEC at the Executive Board of the ACEEEEO and at the moment she chairs the Oversight and Audit Committee of the Association of world election bodies (A-WEB).

She observed and assessed elections in 14 countries with OSCE/ODIHR, IRI and NDI. In 2013 she received the international award for outstanding achievements in election management.

PRIMUL INDICE AGREGAT AL ACTIVITĂȚII PARLAMENTARE: CLASAMENTUL GRUPURILOR PARLAMENTARE ȘI AL PARLAMENTARILOR

**CELE 65 DE FEMEI PARLAMENTARE SUNT CU 40% MAI
ACTIVE DECÂT TOȚI CEI 509 BĂRBAȚI LUAȚI LA UN LOC
ÎN PARLAMENTUL ROMÂNIEI**

*Deputat, Lect. univ. dr. Andreea PAUL
Consilier parlamentar dr. Oana POPOVICI
Voluntar la Cabinetul parlamentar Alina STANCU*



Abstract

In the present paper, we propose for the first time a composite index for assessing the activity of Romanian Members of Parliament (MP): the Parliamentary Activity Index (PAI). We create this index based on the duties of the MPs. We are searching for the most active parliamentary group and MPs, taking also into account the gender bias. This index has two main advantages. First, the aggregated composition of PAI is based on all the available parliamentary instruments in the mandate starting in 2012 to present. Second, PAI is a useful tool for assessing the elected officials' activity in the Romanian Parliament. Also, PAI is efficient for constructing rankings and integrated analysis of the parliamentary activity for the parliamentary groups and for individual elected MPs by gender. We conclude that the opposition party is the most active one among the parliamentary groups and that the 65 women MPs are more active than their 509 male MPs.

Keywords: *Parliamentary Activity Index, gender politics, MPs, Romania.*

Abstract

În lucrarea de față, vă propunem în premiera un indicator agregat pentru evaluarea activității membrilor Parlamentului României (MP): Indicele Activității Parlamentare (IAP). Acest indicator a fost creat pornind de la atribuțiile membrilor Parlamentului. Astfel, am încercat să identificăm cel mai activ grup parlamentar, precum și pe cei mai implicați membri ai Legislativului, luând în considerare și apartenența de gen. Acest indice prezintă două avantaje principale. În primul rând, componența agregată a IAP are la bază toate instrumentele parlamentare disponibile în mandatul 2012 până în prezent. În al doilea rând, IAP este un instrument util pentru evaluarea activității membrilor aleși în Parlamentul României. De asemenea, IAP este eficient pentru alcătuirea de clasamente și pentru analiza integrată atât a activității grupurilor parlamentare, cât și fiecărui membru în parte, în funcție de apartenența de gen. Astfel, am tras concluzia ca partidele din opoziție au cele mai active grupări parlamentare, iar cele 65 de femei parlamentare sunt mai active decât cei 509 aleși de sex masculin.

Cuvinte cheie: *Index al activității parlamentare, politici de gen, parlamentari, România.*

1. Ce este indicele activității parlamentare?

Pentru monitorizarea activității parlamentare am creat pentru prima dată un

indice, cu ajutorul căruia am clasificat activitatea partidelor parlamentare și a deputaților și senatorilor în actualul mandat.

Indicele activității parlamentare (în continuare IAP) reprezintă un instrument de măsură a gradului de implicare și activitate politică a aleșilor poporului în activitățile curente ale forului legislativ al României.

În urma centralizării datelor statistice cantitative privind activitatea parlamentară de la inaugurarea prezentei legislaturi la 22 decembrie 2012 până la 11 iulie 2014, deci în cele 3 sesiuni parlamentare, am stabilit valoarea indicelui atât la nivel individual pentru fiecare parlamentar, cât și la nivelul grupurilor parlamentare. Analiza de față reprezintă a doua ediție a raportului asupra activității parlamentare; IAP a fost calculat pentru prima dată în decembrie 2013¹, la încheierea primelor două sesiuni parlamentare din actualul mandat. Ceea ce aduce nou din punct de vedere metodologic acest raport este structura rezultatelor în funcție de gen.

IAP este o completare la monitorizarea activității parlamentare pe care o face anual Institutul de Politici Publice (IPP) din 2005 până în prezent, în „Raportul de monitorizare: oglinda activității parlamentarilor”². IAP atașează fotografiei statistice publicate de IPP și analiza activității grupurilor parlamentare și a parlamentarilor în mod individual.

2. Metodologie

IAP reprezintă o medie ponderată a principalelor activități parlamentare, calculat după cum urmează:

$$IAP = IL * 30\% + LC * 25\% + DP * 20\% + ITP * 15\% + M * 10\%$$
, unde:

IL – inițiative legislative

LC – luări de cuvânt

DP – declarații politice

ITP – întrebări și interpelări

M – moțiuni

IAP la nivel individual este un indice cantitativ. Cea mai mare pondere în alcătuirea sa o au inițiativele legislative (în proporție de 30%), urmat de luările de cuvânt (25%), declarațiile politice (20%), întrebări și interpelări (15%) și moțiuni (10%). Ca limită metodologică, menționăm că nu am luat în calcul prezența parlamentarilor la ședințele de plen. În unele cazuri, valoarea foarte mare a IAP este rezultatul numărului mare de luări de

cuvânt al liderilor de grup, președinților și vicepreședinților de Cameră sau Senat, prin natura funcției deținute. Datele utilizate sunt oficiale, prezentate public pe pagina fiecărui parlamentar, pe site-ul Camerei Deputaților (www.cdep.ro) și al Senatului (www.senat.ro) la mijlocul lunii iulie 2014.

3. Rezultatele IAP la nivelul Camerei Deputaților și a Senatului

Pe baza formulei de mai sus, IAP pentru Camera Deputaților are o valoare medie de 24,57. Valoarea sugerează că, în medie, fiecare reprezentat al Camerei Deputaților a avut până la 11 iulie 2014 câte 25 de inițiative legislative, 45 de luări de cuvânt, 16 declarații politice, 16 întrebări și interpelări și 3 moțiuni semnate.

Față de primele două sesiuni parlamentare, IAP a crescut cu 57,5% la finalul celor 3 sesiuni parlamentare, în timp ce numărul deputaților a scăzut de la 407 la 404.

IAP mediu pentru Senat este de 25,14 ceea ce înseamnă că fiecare senator al României a avut în medie câte 23 de inițiative legislative, 54 de luări de cuvânt, 7 declarații politice, 23 de întrebări și interpelări și 0 moțiuni semnate.

Față de primele două sesiuni parlamentare, IAP a crescut cu 67,6% la finalul celor 3 sesiuni parlamentare, în timp ce numărul senatorilor a scăzut de la 173 la 170.

4. Rezultatele IAP la nivelul grupurilor parlamentare

PDL se situează pe primul loc în topul grupurilor parlamentare și în a doua ediție în care am elaborat IAP, cu o valoare medie de 38,52.

La polul opus, UDMR, grupul parlamentarilor neafiliați și cel al minorităților se află în categoria celor mai puțin active grupuri parlamentare, cu cele mai scăzute niveluri ale IAP, la finalul primelor 3 sesiuni parlamentare.

(A se vedea Tabelul 1)

PDL a înregistrat o creștere de 62,6% în prezent față de primele două sesiuni parlamentare, cu toate că numărul parlamentarilor din grupul PDL s-a diminuat semnificativ.

Numărul deputaților a scăzut de la 47 în primele 2 sesiuni la 36 la momentul actual, iar cel al senatorilor s-a diminuat de la 23 la sfârșitul lunii decembrie 2013 la 19 în prezent. La PC este aceeași situație: grupul a înregistrat o creștere de 89,5% a IAP, chiar dacă au plecat 3 deputați; în prezent sunt numai 15 deputați PC. În schimb, numărul de senatori a rămas același.

IAP al PP-DD a crescut cu 53,5%, cea mai mică creștere dintre toate grupurile parlamentare. Una dintre explicațiile pentru această situație este plecarea a 10 deputați (în prezent PP-DD mai are 15 deputați) și a înjumătățirii numărului de senatori (numai 4 senatori în prezent).

În cazul PSD, creșterea cu 61,7% a IAP se datorează majorării numărului de deputați: de la 171 deputați în primele 2 sesiuni parlamentare, azi grupul PSD are 184 deputați. De asemenea, numărul de senatori a crescut de la 75 la 77 în prezent.

IAP al PNL a crescut cu 101,45%, cu toate că au plecat 17 deputați (de la 100 deputați în decembrie 2013 astăzi mai sunt 83 deputați PNL) și 5 senatori (din cei 50 senatori la sfârșitul primelor două sesiuni parlamentare au mai rămas 45 senatori la momentul actual). Creșterea IAP al PNL este o consecință directă a trecerii partidului în opoziție.

IAP al UDMR a crescut cu 131,95%. UDMR este singurul partid care a rămas constant în ceea ce privește numărul de deputați (18) și de senatori (8).

Grupul neafiliaților a crescut cu 100,9% ca urmare a creșterii de aproape 4 ori a numărului de deputați neafiliați (de la 10 deputați în primele 2 sesiuni, la 36 de deputați la finalul celor 3 sesiuni parlamentare). În cazul senatorilor avem o situație similară: de la niciun senator neafiliat în decembrie 2013, acum numărăm 9 senatori neafiliați.

Grupul minorităților a crescut cel mai mult, cu 208,14% cu toate că numărul deputaților a scăzut cu o persoană, la 17 deputați.

De asemenea, analizând fiecare dintre indicatorii luați în calcul la alcătuirea IAP observăm că PDL se menține pentru al doilea an consecutiv ca cel mai harnic grup parlamentar, depășind media în cazul tuturor celor 5 indici luați în calcul.

(A se vedea Tabelul 2)

5. Principalele rezultate la nivelul parlamentarilor

a) Topul parlamentarilor pe sexe

Femeile din Parlamentul României sunt cu 40% mai active decât bărbații, cu un IAP de 33,87 față de cel al partenerilor bărbați, de 24,21. Mai mult, femeile nu sunt nici lideri de grup, astfel încât nivelul IAP să fie crescut artificial ca urmare a luărilor de cuvânt.

(A se vedea Tabelul 3)

Cele 54 de deputate sunt cu 2,32% mai active decât cei 330 de deputați, iar cele 11 senatoare sunt cu 78,31% mai active decât cei 159 de senatori.

Cele mai active deputate sunt Andreea Paul (PDL, IAP – 84,7), Ana Birchall (PSD, IAP – 73,4) și Claudia Boghicevici (PDL, IAP – 68,1).

(A se vedea Tabelul 4)

Anexa 1 prezintă topul celor mai active 15 femei din Camera Deputaților.

Cele mai active senatoare sunt Cristiana Anghel (PC, IAP – 142,6), Doina Federovici (PSD, IAP – 96,8) și Gabriela Firea (PSD, IAP – 54,6), conform tabelului 4. Anexa 2 prezintă topul celor mai active 15 femei din Senat.

b) Topul celor mai activi parlamentari

Pe baza IAP am calculat topul celor mai activi 15 parlamentari din ambele camere ale Parlamentului.

(A se vedea Tabelul 5)

Valoarea superioară a IAP în cazul ocupanților locurilor 1 și 3 este dată de numărul foarte ridicat de luări de cuvânt ale Președintelui Camerei Deputaților Valeriu Zgonea (4.062 luări de cuvânt) și ale lui Viorel Hrebenciuc (1295 luări de cuvânt), vicepreședinte al Camerei Deputaților, care, împreună, au luat cuvântul de peste 1,24 ori mai des decât ceilalți 182 deputați PSD luați împreună. Menționăm că acești deputați nu au avut nicio declarație politică, nicio întrebare sau interpelare și nicio moțiune semnată. Prin urmare, cei mai „vorbăreți” aleși ai poporului, adică parlamentarii cu cele mai multe luări de cuvânt,

sunt deputații PSD Valeriu Zgonea și Viorel Hrebenciuc. Tudor Ciuhodaru este cel mai activ parlamentar cu 95 inițiative legislative, 718 luări de cuvânt, 613 declarații politice, 125 întrebări și interpelări și 9 moțiuni semnate.

În Anexa 3 este prezentat topul celor mai activi 15 parlamentari din Camera Deputaților, iar Anexa 4 prezintă topul celor mai activi 15 parlamentari din Senat.

c) Topul celor mai puțin activi parlamentari

Cea mai mică valoare observată a IAP este de 0,25 și este dată de o singură luare de cuvânt a deputaților, fără niciun alt fel de activitate parlamentară (Tabel 6). Unica luare de cuvânt reprezintă jurământul obligatoriu al fiecărui deputat de la începutul mandatului. IAP de 0,25 a fost obținut de doi deputați PSD și un senator PC. 8 deputați și senatori au un IAP mai mic de 1, adică au cel mult două inițiative legislative sau luări de cuvânt. În anexa 5 este prezentat topul primilor 15 parlamentari cu cel mai scăzut IAP.

(A se vedea Tabelul 6)

6. Concluzii

IAP este un instrument util pentru a atrage atenția asupra activității depuse de aleșii poporului în Parlamentul României. De asemenea, face posibilă analiza comparativă a activității grupurilor parlamentare și la nivel individual, dar și în funcție de genul aleșilor noștri.

Pe baza IAP, putem trage următoarele concluzii:

1. Cele 65 de femei sunt cu 40% mai active decât cei 509 bărbați din Parlamentul României.

Femeile din Parlamentul României au un IAP de aproape 34, față de cel al partenerilor bărbați, de peste 24, chiar dacă nicio femeie nu este lider de grup parlamentar. Cele 54 de deputate sunt cu peste 2% mai active decât cei 330 de deputați, iar cele 11 senatoare sunt de cu peste 78% mai active decât cei 159 de senatori.

2. Cei 170 de senatori sunt cu 2,3% mai activi decât cei 404 deputați.

IAP pentru Camera Deputaților are o valoare medie de 24,57. IAP a crescut cu 57,5%

în prezent față de rezultate obținute în urma primelor două sesiuni parlamentare. IAP mediu pentru Senat este de 25,14. IAP a crescut cu 67,6% la finalul celor 3 sesiuni parlamentare față de rezultatele obținute în urma primelor două sesiuni parlamentare.

3. Cel mai „harnic” grup parlamentar rămâne PDL și la a doua ediție a elaborării acestui raport, cu o creștere a IAP cu 62,5%, deși numărul de parlamentari PDL s-a redus cu 15 persoane față de anul trecut.

Clasamentul celor 574 de parlamentari este prezentat integral în articolul „*Puține, dar mult mai performante: cele 65 de femei parlamentare sunt cu 40% mai eficiente decât toți cei 509 bărbați luați la un loc în Parlamentul României*”, disponibil la <http://www.andreeapaul.ro/blog/2014/07/putin-e-dar-mult-mai-harnice-cele-65-de-femei-parlamentare-sunt-cu-40-mai-active-decat-toti-cei-509-barbati-luati-la-un-loc-in-parlamentul-romaniei/>.

NOTE:

1. Andreea Paul, „Cine a fost mai harnic în Parlamentul României în primul an al acestui mandat? Vezi cine sunt cei mai leneși parlamentari”, articol disponibil la <http://www.andreeapaul.ro/blog/2013/12/raport-cu-privire-la-activismul-parlamentar-in-mandatul-actual/> și Agerpres.

2. Disponibil aici: http://www.ipp.ro/library/raport%201%20an_2013_final.pdf.

Tabel 1. Topul grupurilor parlamentare în funcție de valoarea IAP

Nr. crt.	Grup parlamentar	La încheierea primelor două sesiuni parlamentare (decembrie 2013)	La încheierea celor 3 sesiuni parlamentare (iulie 2014)	Creștere, %
1	PDL	23,7	38,52	62,53
2	PC	19,8	37,52	89,49
3	PP-DD	18,9	29,01	53,49
4	PSD	15,9	25,71	61,70
5	PNL	11	22,16	101,45
6	UDMR	8,2	19,02	131,95
7	Parlamentari neafiliați	6,7	13,46	100,90
8	Grupul minorităților	4,3	13,25	208,14

*IAP al grupurilor parlamentare reprezintă media aritmetică dintre IAP ponderat pentru Camera Deputaților și IAP ponderat pentru Senat al grupurilor respective.

Sursa: calcule ale autorilor; iulie 2014

Tabel 2. Topul grupurilor parlamentare pe categorii de indici la sfârșitul celor 3 sesiuni parlamentare

Categorie: Partide:	Inițiative legislative	Luări de cuvânt	Declarații politice	Întrebări și interpelări	Semnături pe moțiuni
PDL	25	88,9	17,5	31,2	6,3
PP-DD	25,9	77,6	25,5	32,4	3,9
PC	23,5	60,2	15,1	25,9	0,04
PSD	26,1	50,8	10,8	19,9	0,3
PNL	23,1	33,2	9,1	12,4	0,95
UDMR	18,4	25	2,2	7	0
Neafiliați	19,2	38,9	12,2	26,52	2,5
Medie	23,95	49,4	11,43	19,5	1,26

*Valorile finale reprezintă media aritmetică dintre valorile medii ponderate ale fiecărui grup pentru ambele camere ale Parlamentului, cu excepția Grupului Minorităților, care nu au reprezentanți în Senat.

**Cu galben sunt marcate valorile superioare, iar cu gri valorile inferioare.

Sursa: calcule ale autorilor; iulie 2014.

Tabel 3. Valoarea IAP în funcție de gen

	Sex	Inițiative legislative	Luări de cuvânt	Decl. politice	Întrebări și interpelări	Semnături pe moțiuni	IAP	Nr. parl.
Camera Dep.	B	24.74	47.03	14.63	14.42	2.32	24.5	350
	F	27.02	32.74	23.46	24.7	3.8	25.07	54
Senat	B	22.25	50.05	6.52	22.92	0	23.93	159
	F	31.73	106.91	11.82	27.1	0	42.67	11
Medie	B	23.49	48.54	10.57	18.67	1.16	24.21	
	F	29.37	69.82	17.64	25.9	1.9	33.87	

Sursa: calcule ale autorilor; iulie 2014.

Tabel 4. Topul celor mai active deputate și senatoare

Prenume/Nume	Grup parlamentar	Indicele activității parlamentare
Top 3 - cele mai active deputate		
Maria-Andreea PAUL	PDL	84.7
Ana BIRCHALL	PSD	73.4
Claudia BOGHICEVICI	PDL	68.1
Top 3 - cele mai active senatoare		
Cristiana-Irina ANGHEL	PC	142.6
Doina-Elena FEDEROVICI	PSD	96.8
Gabriela FIREA	PSD	54.6

Sursa: calcule ale autorilor; iulie 2014.

Tabel 5. Topul celor mai activi 15 parlamentari după valoarea IAP

Nr. crt.	Prenume/ Nume	Grup parlamentar	Indicele activității parlamentare
1	Valeriu Ștefan Zgonea	PSD	1020
2	Tudor Ciuhodaru	PP-DD	350,25
3	Viorel Hrebenciuc	PSD	325,55
4	Dumitru Oprea	PDL	270,9
5	Ioan Oltean	PDL	194
6	Cristiana-Irina Anghel	PC	142,6
7	Florin-Costin Pâslaru	PSD	132,05
8	Miron Tudor Mitrea	PSD	131,8
9	Marian Neacșu	PSD	129,7
10	Puiu Hașotti	PNL	103,45
11	Tinel Gheorghe	PDL	102,75
12	Doina-Elena Federovici	PSD	96,8
13	Darius-Bogdan Vâlcov	PSD	96,55
14	Liviu-Marian Pop	PSD	89,5
15	Dan-Ștefan Motreanu	PNL	89,5

Sursa: calcule ale autorilor; iulie 2014.

Tabel 6. Topul parlamentarilor cu cel mai scăzut IAP

Nr. crt.	Nume	Grup parlamentar	Indicele activității parlamentare
1	Alfred-Laurentiu-Antonio MIHAI	PC	0,25
2	Oana NICULESCU-MIZIL ȘTEFĂNESCU TOHME	PSD	0,25
3	Petru-Sorin MARICA	PSD	0,25

Sursa: calcule ale autorilor; iulie 2014.

ANEXA 1

Topul celor mai active 15 femei parlamentare după valoarea IAP din Camera Deputaților

Nr. crt.	Prenume/ Nume	Grup parlamentar	Indicele activității parlamentare
1	Maria-Andreea PAUL	PDL	84,7
2	Ana BIRCHALL	PSD	73,4
3	Claudia BOGHICEVICI	PDL	68,1
4	Cornelia NEGRUȚ	PC	58,5
5	Camelia-Margareta BOGDĂNICI	Neafiliat	55,2
6	Marioara NISTOR	PSD	48,75
7	Eleonora-Carmen HĂRĂU	PNL	48,5
8	Liliana CIOBANU	PP-DD	48,15
9	Sanda-Maria ARDELEANU	PDL	44,35
10	Raluca TURCAN	PDL	37,4
11	Manuela MITREA	PSD	37
12	Cristina NICHITA	PSD	36,2
13	Natalia-Elena INTOTERO	PSD	34,15
14	Violeta TUDORIE	PSD	33,1
15	Liliana MINCĂ	PP-DD	32,5

Sursa: calcule ale autorilor; iulie 2014.

ANEXA 2

Topul celor mai active 15 femei parlamentare după valoarea IAP din Senat

Nr. crt.	Prenume/ Nume	Grup parlamentar	Indicele activității parlamentare
1	Cristiana-Irina ANGHEL	PC	142,6
2	Doina-Elena FEDEROVICI	PSD	96,8
3	Gabriela FIREA	PSD	54,6
4	Doina SILISTRU	PSD	48,7
5	Gabriela CREȚU	PSD	35,75
6	Ecaterina ANDRONESCU	PSD	30,4
7	Anca-Daniela BOAGIU	PDL	22,15
8	Doina-Anca TUDOR	PNL	18,1
9	Mihaela POPA	PNL	12,55
10	Florina-Ruxandra JIPA	PSD	4,4
11	Mariana CÂMPEANU	PNL	3,35

Sursa: calcule ale autorilor; iulie 2014.

ANEXA 3

Topul celor mai activi 15 parlamentari din Camera Deputaților

Nr. crt.	Prenume/ Nume	Grup parlamentar	Indicele activității parlamentare
1	Valeriu Ștefan ZGONEA	PSD	1020
2	Tudor CIUHODARU	PP-DD	350,25
3	Viorel HREBENCIUC	PSD	325,55
4	Ioan OLTEAN	PDL	194
5	Florin-Costin PÂSLARU	PSD	132,05
6	Miron Tudor MITREA	PSD	131,8
7	Marian NEACȘU	PSD	129,7
8	Tinel GHEORGHE	PDL	102,75
9	Dan-Ștefan MOTREANU	PNL	89,05
10	Liviu-Bogdan CIUCĂ	PC	86,1
11	Maria-Andreea PAUL	PDL	84,7
12	Florin GHEORGHE	Neafiliat	77,75
13	Mircea-Nicu TOADER	PDL	75,45
14	Ana BIRCHALL	PSD	73,4
15	Ovidiu-Cristian IANE	PSD	70,9

Sursa: calcule ale autorilor; iulie 2014.

ANEXA 4
Topul celor mai activi 15 parlamentari din Senat

Nr. crt.	Prenume/ Nume	Grup parlamentar	Indicele activității parlamentare
1	Dumitru OPREA	PDL	270,9
2	Cristiana-Irina ANGHEL	PC	142,6
3	Puiu HAȘOTTI	PNL	103,45
4	Doina-Elena FEDEROVICI	PSD	96,8
5	Darius-Bogdan VÂLCOV	PSD	96,55
6	Liviu-Marian POP	PSD	89,5
7	Ilie SÂRBU	PSD	83,3
8	Alexandru PEREȘ	PDL	80,85
9	Haralambie VOCHIȚOIU	PSD	73,15
10	Alexandru CORDOȘ	PSD	68
11	Tudor BARBU	PNL	65,65
12	Nicolae Vlad POPA	PDL	61,35
13	Vasile-Cosmin NICULA	PSD	60,9
14	Gheorghe SAGHIAN	PSD	59,85
15	Ionel AGRIGOROAIE	PP-DD	59,3

Sursa: calcule ale autorilor, iulie 2014.

ANEXA 5
Topul primilor 15 parlamentari cu cel mai scăzut IAP

Nr. crt.	Nume	Grup parlamentar	Indicele activității parlamentare
1	Alfred-Laurentiu-Antonio MIHAI	PC	0,25
2	Oana NICULESCU-MIZIL ȘTEFĂNESCU TOHME	PSD	0,25
3	Petru-Sorin MARICA	PSD	0,25
4	Ilie NĂSTASE	PC	0,5
5	Sebastian-Aurelian GHIȚĂ	PSD	0,5
6	Andrei Daniel GHEORGHE	PNL	0,55
7	Adrian Constantin SIMIONESCU	PSD	0,85
8	Florica BÎRSĂȘTEANU	PSD	0,85
9	Rovana PLUMB	PSD	1,15
10	Laura MARIN	PSD	1,15
11	Nicolae BĂNICIOIU	PSD	1,4
12	Ioan MIHĂILĂ	PSD	1,65
13	Constantin NIȚĂ	PSD	1,85
14	Eugen-Orlando TEODOROVICI	PSD	2,2
15	Irinel Ioan STATIVĂ	PSD	2,35

Sursa: calcule ale autorilor, iulie 2014.

THE POOR QUALITY OF THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS AND THE ABSENTEEISM IN ROMANIAN NATIONAL ELECTIONS AFTER 2000

Dumitriu-Tătăranu Alexandra Cristina

Abstract

The electoral campaigns become more and more frothy, the ideology being replaced with the personal life of the opponents. The left and the right deliver almost the same messages to the electors, messages centred on how bad is the opponent candidate not on what the party or the candidate want do if the elections are won.

This could be perceived by the electors as a weak point of the politics and may determine them not vote in the elections. What I want to show in this paper is that exist a strong correlation between the quality of the electoral campaigns and the decision to participate in elections.

Keywords: *electoral communication, propaganda, turnout, absenteeism.*

Abstract

Campaniile electorale devin din ce în ce mai spumoase, ideologia fiind înlocuită cu viața personală a adversarilor. Stânga și dreapta comunică aproape aceleași mesaje către alegători, mesaje centrate pe cât de negativ este candidatul advers, nu pe ceea ce partidul sau candidatul vrea să facă în cazul în care câștigă alegerile.

Acest lucru ar putea fi perceput de alegători ca un punct slab al politicii și i-ar putea determina să nu voteze în cadrul alegerilor. Ceea ce vreau să arăt în acest articol este faptul că există o corelație puternică între calitatea campaniilor electorale și a deciziei de a participa la alegeri.

Cuvinte cheie: *comunicare electorală, propagandă, prezența la vot, absenteeism.*

Political and electoral communication

Political communication is a term difficult to define, since it is based on concepts already with overloaded sense, whose manifestations are multidimensional: communication and politics.²

Political communication subsumes election speeches and meetings, presentation of political programs, interviews with officials on matters of public interest, electoral surveys, dissemination of press releases, press conferences, motions of censure, exercising the vote right, etc.

Like any social phenomenon, political communication intersects with other social facts, most of them complex and difficult to analyze. For example, the right to vote is a form of political communication - by applying a stamp on the ballot, the citizen transmit information about their electoral preferences. In some cases it transcends political communication, because when a citizen votes, it contributes to the creation of institutional fact, delegating his power to a political actor (candidate, party or alliance).

Electoral communication can be understood as an essential part of the political communication. It focuses especially on the process of persuading the electorate during the electoral campaigns. Jacques Gerstle identifies the fundamentals of electoral communication starrng from observations of voters behavior closer to the moment of the elections. The author notes that the current trend is to transform politics into a permanent electoral campaign.²

The message should be a quintessence of the political program and at the same time, it must be attractive, catchy, compelling and coherent. The overall message of an election campaign consists of all messages punctual, positive or negative, the candidate (party or individual) transmitted. For its construction,

should be taken into account the party agenda and the public agenda.

In a campaign, what really matters, is the credibility of the message source and the target group. A credible message should be disseminated by a trustful person and should be adapted to the target people we want to persuade.

The speech is an indicator of how a player uses a language, be it conversational, administrative or scientific, and various media to express a position on what is communicated. The speech highlights how an actor or an institution uses language in a social situation characterized by norms, values, rituals, social practices and types of images. If we taken into account the contents of the electoral discourse, as an intrinsic part of electoral communication, we find a „depoliticization“ of the political speech.³

An important dimension of political communication should be the ideological dimension. Ideological component covers the basic ideas on which an actor makes in relation to the style and type of government that they propose.

The concept of political communication is replaced often nowadays with the concept of political marketing, but the two concepts are not entirely interchangeable. Philippe J. Maarek defines political marketing as a scientifically form of political communication, which involves the design and use of strategies and techniques for winning elections⁴, while Bogdan Teodorescu defines it as a set of techniques that aims to adapt the image of a candidate by voters concerned candidate's knowledge of a large number of voters and create differences between the candidate and his opponents.⁵

Political propaganda in electoral context

The meaning of the term propaganda has religious origins, being used for the first time in relation with the Roman Catholic Church, more specific in relation with the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (Congregation of Propaganda Fide), a Roman Catholic Cardinals organization founded in 1622.

The recently sense of the term is related with the communication field, the term defining a communication act designed to influence the thinking, the emotions and the actions of a group by selecting and careful handling

information.

The term reached negative significance especially in the Communist Eve. The way in which communists authorities used to communicate legitimate the negative perception regarding propaganda. In communists system the propaganda was a hardcore element, it was used in theatre plays, radio, cinema, media, education and literature with the goal to create a new Soviet man and proletarian culture.

The electoral campaign is an unique context in which political communication is made. The electoral campaign is a time when political parties have as major goals disseminating messages to people on the one hand and attracting a large number of voters on the other hand.

Political communication is a mediated type of communication, a huge part of the information being recieved through media.

Besides media is our main source of information regarding political issues, mass media is often accused that influence people opinion and is quite partisan. The way in which media reflects reality has a lot of consequences like absenteeism or the diminution of the political debates between candidates.⁶

Studies shown that television discourages individuals reflection because they receive information already processed. By submitting systematically political information, television has become the main medium for communication both electoral and governmental turning into what Robert Denton called „teledemocracy“. He believes teledemocracy is responsible for spreading cynicism and lack of political participation.⁷

A journalist can influence public opinion through the interpretation and fragmentation of information. Today we observe a profound alienation of political life, generated mainly by media, which shown systematically the mistakes made by political leaders, fact that determined the electors to lose the trust in democratic institutions and to ignore political activities.

The main problem that brings modern communication is the emergence of partisan media, both classical and new media. Even traditional media tends to have a partisan attitude, some TV channels becoming real partners for one of the competitors. A more serious problem is the spread in the media of a highly populist discourse.

Methodology

Research objectives and hypotesis

In this reasearch I want to show that the quality of electoral campaigns affect the turnout. I decide to study this topic because we are very closer to presidential elections and the campaign seems to be one of the worst after 1989. The last electoral campaigns seemed like a big circus, the relevant information disseminated being related to the private life of the opponent or being centred on defaming the oponents.

I decide to analyze this issue in a qualitative way because i'm interested to discover not necessarily the magnitude of the phenomenon but the causes that are behind the decision to miss the elections.

The starting assumption is that people choose not to go to the polls due to the poor quality of election campaigns, through it understanding worst candidates, poor messages, agresivity of the candidates.

The hypothesis i take into account are:

H1. The turnout is influenced by party leaders behaviour during the electoral campaingns.

H2. The turnout is influenced by the degree of information of electors and by the informational means they use.

H3. The turnout is influenced by the poor quality of the electoral campaigns.

Instruments

As research method I decide to used semi-structured interview because this type of interview allows greater flexibility of the dialogue between interviewer and interviewee. Given the theme of the paper I believe that this type of interview will allow me to get more clear information on the issue of absenteeism from voting because I can interfere, if is necessary, with clarifying questions during the interview. The interview grid will use open-ended questions that allow the respondent to provide the largest possible amount of information on the issue of absenteeism.

After the interviews I'll use content analysis to identify regularities in the answers given by individuals, regularities that would help to confirm or refute the hypothesis which I have defined.

Methodology

Due to the decision to analyze the issue of absenteeism from a qualitative perspective I haven't set an exact number of interviews that I'll realize for the research part of the paper. The number of interviews conducted will depend on the answers that will give me the interviewed subjects.

The respondent profile that I had in mind for this research is: person entitled to vote that didn't participate at vote due to reasons not related to individual issues such as lack of time or specific problems health.

The sampling was unprobabilistic, mainly convenience sampling, the participants being selected primarily on the basis of willingness to participate in research and secondary through snowball sampling (the selected participants were asked to indicate persons interested to participate to a research regarding electoral behavior).

The interview grid that I built have 4 dimensions: turnout and current political situation, campaign information and media consumption, absenteeism culprits and socio-demographic data.

The sample consisted of 15 subjects, 8 women and 7 men aged over 18 who do not constantly go to vote. Subjects in the sample were predominantly from urban areas but there are some persons from rural areas. Subjects had different levels of education, most of them having higher education. The average age of the sample was 36.9 years.

Results and discutions

Hypothesis 1

For the first hypothesis taken into account (The turnout is influenced by party leaders behaviour during the electoral campaigns) I asked during the interviews the next question "Many times politicians are accused of falsehood during electoral campaigns. Have you noticed over time different behaviors of political leaders during electoral campaign periods compared to normal periods? Do these behaviors influencing the voters voting option?"

According to the respondents the behavior of the candidates and party leaders change drastically during the campaigns.

Most of the respondents have noticed a growing of the interest of the politicians for voters problems ("Return to electors - the politicians are more desperate and remember that electors exist", „The politicians are more active and sensitive to the topics related to electors and are more interested to recruit new voters“, „The politicians are more interested to get under the skin of voters and convince them that they will get better than before“, „When campaigns begin all the politicians go to the country side to find if we have or no a problem, what we want, what we miss“, „Increased interest for voters. All the politicians remember that voters exist and come to speak with them about their problems“).

From these answers it is clear that the disappointment and lack of interest in voting are the result of the incorrect way in which politicians understand how to lead the country. The answers suggest that voters problems are visible only during the campaign and go along with it and the vote. Interest is strictly „commercial“ - politicians sell a product (election program), and people are buying it through voting.

The politicians goal seems to be strictly obtain sufficient votes to ensure the access to power, the interest for voters being a trap used to mislead them and make them believe that their voice really matters.

Hypothesis 2

For the second hypothesis taken into account (The turnout is influenced by the degree of information of electors and by the informational means they use) I asked during the interviews the next questions:

- Since 1989 and until now have followed the elections before the elections?
- What media have followed during the election campaigns?
- During electoral campaigns increase the interest about the candidates, political programs, rules of conduct of elections in detriment of other everyday topics. What is your opinion about the coverage of electoral subjects in relations with the other subjects.
- Televisions generally choose different coverage strategies for certain topics in their program according to their type. Consider that there were thematic differences between the political programs

broadcast by generalist channels and that broadcasted by thematic channels (news channels)?

Many respondents said they watched electoral campaigns but not consistently and not very deep, the repetitiveness of certain responses suggesting that we can speak of certain patterns in terms of pursuing electoral campaigns. The most common responses were „I watched campaigns but not very detailed“, „Yes, but very little“, „Yes but not very detailed“, „Vague“, „Yes but occasional and not very careful.“

What we can observe is that both subjects, that whom vote and that whom miss the vote pursue the electoral campaigns. From this we can deduce that there is a degree of interest in politics and in the elections but the existing options don't lead voters to transform this interest, with varying degrees of intensity, in turnout.

Mass media is the main source of information during the electoral campaigns, other frequently-used sources being the campaign materials distributed by political parties.

Analyzing the responses provided by the interviewees we notice that most of the subjects choose as informational sources the media and the campaign materials.

Men tend to be informed in a higher proportion than women about candidates campaign programs.

The general trend is to use as the main source of information media, which raises a number of issues if we think about how, for example televisions cover the issues related to politics. Some subjects during the interviews indicated that among the factors that have led to not vote is television performance during the campaigns.

Regarding how the media covers the events of the campaign, most respondents indicated that the media pays too much attention to the campaign at the expense of other subjects on the agenda. The most common answers were „excessive coverage“, „Great, are too many issues of electoral propaganda“, „Mass media campaigns granted exaggerated interest“.

Some respondents stated that this trend has begun to emerge mainly after 2000, with the advent of news televisions („Mass media was more sober up for election until 2000. Propaganda was not as intense as now „I think that during the campaigns are put in the shade

some „hot” topics because they may affect politicians”). Respondents indicated that during the campaign media discourse know a huge radicalization („Politicians bring the hot topics on the agenda in order to influence people in a certain direction”), rapes and robberies become unfavorite topics and are replaced with visits into territory („Well, I think it's a flare-up coverage of the visits into territory made by politicians, of the campaign rallies, of the political programs and of the opinion polls. During the campaigns the interest move from murders and rapes to visit into territory and electoral alms”).

We notice that the answers given by subjects are distributed on two levels of intensity of the perception: some subjects declared that media cover excessively the events related with electoral campaign, while others declared that the coverage given to topics related to the campaign was very high.

Perception that the coverage of events related to campaign was excessive has rather a negative connotation because it suggests a saturation of the respondents in relation to a particular theme. This saturation can be dangerous on one hand because it can weaken the viewers interest in the subject discussed, in this case the electoral campaign, and secondly because it may raise some questions to those who inform through the media.

During the interviews some subjects indicated that excessive coverage of campaign topics is used just to divert public attention from the real problems facing society, issues that if it would be discussed would generate problems for politicians. Basically these responses suggest that the media seems to sustain politicians rather than pursue objective information to voters in context of electoral campaign.

Next I was interested to know if people see differences between the way in which generalist channels, the way in which televisions treats electoral campaigns and how they reflect the realities of these times has changed considerably with the advent of news channels somewhere around 2000-2002. Some respondents indicated that in time television became much less weighted in reflecting campaigns realities, many of them showing an openly partisanship towards a political camp or another.

Hypothesis 3

For the third hypothesis taken into account (The turnout is influenced by the poor quality of the electoral campaigns I asked during the interviews the next questions:

- Political parties usually send in electoral races two types of candidates: candidates known by voters and new candidates. Do you appreciate that over time there have been candidates more visibles than their opponents?
- Many specialists say that political messages are becoming more and more tenuous. Consider that existed over time damages in the quality of the messages sent by the candidates? Which do you think is causing of the damage and how this influencing the voters voting option?
- During the electoral campaigns politicians take into account many issues for debate. What themes remember to have prevailed in the elections that you followed?

Regarding the visibility and the awareness of the candidates we noticed that voters perceive strong differences between the candidates, some of them being more visible than others („Definitely. At all elections we have over 20 candidates but are visible maximum 5-6 of them”, „There are always some candidates that are more visible than others”), but the causes are different („[Are candidates more visible] because they are promoted by a party or because they have some personal characteristics”, „Those with experience in politics and part of a great party known at a national level”, „Depends, some candidates are visible because of their eccentricity”, „Are best known the candidates that offer buckets or alms to poor people”).

The responses given by subjects reveals as potential cause of absenteeism the political profile of the candidates. Most of them indicated that the number of candidates is large and only a quarter of them are visible and able to be elected. The candidates not supported by a political party or supported by a little party have weak chances to be elected, while the candidates suported by a huge party have strong chances to be elected.

Voters consider the quality of the candidates as a decisive factor in establishing a voting option. They indicate that there are differences between the candidates, and we can't speak of equality between party and

independent candidates. Seniority in politics is another factor that limits the range of options of the electors because it encourages the promotion of certain persons that have strategic positions in the party than the promotion of persons with some experience or political view.

Regarding the quality of the messages the respondents perceive a considerable damage caused by low educational level of the population („I think the main reason is the educational level of the population. When you have a majority of the electorate with 4 classes and from country side, you send barbaric messages. You don't need to prove anything: you manipulate emotionally and it's ok.”) or by the lack pressure of the citizens on politicians („I think the lack of attitude of the population. As long as we don't revolt the low quality of the messages won't be perceived as a problem). Respondents suggested that the majority of current campaign messages contain too many lies („The messages are the same for 25 years. Will be better than before, we will give job, things that attract poor people”), not have political content („No more political message, only private life, kinship, who slept with who”, „No more political messages only electoral circus”).

The low quality of the messages may be seen as a consequence of how media covers the elements of the campaign. As I indicated previously, the subjects presented in media are prevalent non-political topics.

The content of the messages appear to be centered in the view of respondents on non political elements, the prevalent topics being that related with the negative campaign such as scandals and personal attacks. The campaigns are builded focusing on the distruction of the opponents rather than on a ideological programme, or on a set of elements united in a strategic vision on certain socio-economical field. The central spindle of the messages is the cancan or the denigration of the opponents, the ideological themes being a rarity. People think that the ideological themes are used only because of the external pressures imposed by European Union.

Conclusions

Based on the information gathered as a result of the interviews each one of the three hypotheses of the research is validated. We can

see that people perceive that the quality of the campaign may affect the turnout seriously. Responsibles for the weak quality of the campaigns seems to be both media and politicians because they tend to cooperate in misleading the electors.

A huge role seems to have mass media that have obviously partisane attitudes, fact that influence the way in which some topics are covered. The partisanship tend to be more detectable in the case of news channels that many times have a political holding that impose what is broadcasted and what isn't broadcasted. Media have a huge role also because is the main source of information regarding the electoral campaigns.

Another factor that influence the quality of the campaign are leaders behavior that generally change during the electoral campaign. The politicians become more and more interested in what displease the potential voters and pretend to have the best solutions for the problems raised by them.

The quality of the messages seems to be the most important problem, a problem sustained by the low educational level of the population and by the media that broadcast especially scandals, personal attacks and acts of defamation of the opponents.

Regarding the quality of the candidates the respondents sustain that the winner are not necessarily the best of the candidates but those sustained by an important party, those who have a privilegiated position in a party or those who activate for a long period of time in the political field.

In conclusion we could say that the quality of the electoral campaigns affect the turnout, voters deciding to miss the election due to the disappointment against the political class.

NOTES

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ANNEX

Interview grid

Q1. Since 1989 and until now have followed the campaigns before the elections?

Q2. What media have followed during the election campaigns?

Q3. During electoral campaigns increase the interest about the candidates, political programs, rules of conduct of elections in detriment of other everyday topics. What is your opinion about the coverage of electoral subjects in relation with the over subjects?

Q4. Many times politicians are accused of falsehood during electoral campaigns. Have you noticed over time different behaviors of political leaders during electoral campaign periods compared to normal periods? Do these behaviors influence the voters voting option?

Q5. Political parties usually send in electoral races two types of candidates: candidates known by voters and new candidates. Do you appreciate that over time there have been candidates more visibles than their opponents?

Q6. During the electoral campaigns politicians take into account many issues for debate. What themes remember to have prevailed in the elections that you followed?

Q7. Many specialists say that political messages are becoming more and more tenuous. Consider that existed over time damages in the quality of the messages sent by the candidates? Which do you think is causing of the damage and how this influencing the voters voting option?

Q8. Televisions generally choose different coverage strategies for certain topics in their program according to their type. Consider that there were thematic differences between the political programs broadcast by generalist channels and that broadcasted by thematic channels (news channels)?

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Dumitriu-Tătăranu Alexandra Cristina graduated the Master Government and Society at SNSPA Bucharest and she is intrested in electoral behaviour in Romania, electoral communication in Romania, civic participation in Romania, the influence of European Union in the national politics of member states, the decline of ideologies in Romania, the image of Romania in foreign countries, the rights of minorities in Romania.

RAPOARTE, SINTEZE ȘI INFORMĂRI

REPORTS, SYNTHESIS AND BRIEFINGS

OPENING SPEECH OF THE PERMANENT ELECTORAL AUTHORITY'S PRESIDENT, ANA MARIA PĂTRU, AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE 23RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ACEEEE



Ladies and gentlemen, dear guests,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to Romania to the 23rd Annual Conference of the Association of European Election Officials. I am very happy to see that this event succeeded in gaining interest of electoral officials from all over the world.

We are more than honoured to host the 23rd Annual Conference of ACEEEO in the same year the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania celebrates 10 years of life. This is an anniversary year for Romania as well as for other ACEEEO member states from the Central and Eastern Europe.

2014 has marked a quarter of a century since the communist political regimes fall and the first steps towards democracy were taken. One of these first steps was to organize free and fair elections, marking the beginning of the electoral reform.

Another step forward was to set up independent electoral management bodies, proving that electoral matters are not reduced only to organizing and managing elections. Electoral management represents an intense and permanent activity before, during and after

elections.

In its 10 years of activity, the Permanent Electoral Authority has always expressed its engagement in supporting other states' efforts in organizing free and fair elections and has chosen to facilitate connections, to build synergies and to generate joint projects.

The final goal of these projects is to promote democracy and reliable elections. The main topics on the agenda of this year Conference are „Participation of women in electoral process and public life” and „Electoral management – How to plan a general election”.

For the first topic I have to admit that I have a soft spot and not only because I am a woman holding key positions both at both national and international level. I strongly believe that no nation can develop unless it fully uses all its human capital. And women are human resources that should not be neglected.

Gender imbalance represents a matter of concern not only for the electoral management bodies, but also for the NGOs and the law-making factors.

Both PEA and ACEEEO truly believe that all individuals, men and women, have the right to equally take part in political life at all levels,



as voters, candidates, electoral officials and civil society representatives. Equal participation of women in politics and government is essential to build and sustain democracy.

The second topic is a generous one, being very large and practical. The complexity and special skills necessary for electoral management require an institution to be responsible for electoral activities.

It is our job to plan reliable general elections. In order to be reliable, the electoral administration must be impartial, non-political and have the institutional capacity for organizing free and fair elections.

The way of planning general elections includes responsibilities and specific issues, external partners, financing issues, training, communication, voting (in polling stations or from abroad), candidates, observers and electoral integrity.

In many countries, the electoral management body has the responsibility for political finance management, mainly including public and private funding, limits of expenditures, regulations and transparency. Planning a general election often proves to be a hard rock for electoral management bodies and other public institutions involved in organizing the elections.

I know we all come across financial, logistical, legislative or human resources problems in planning a general election. That is why I am looking forward to hearing other

viewpoints and to seeing if they align or uncover more useful practices.

And there is one thing I am sure of: no effort is too big, no work is too hard, no expense is too high when it comes to democracy. And the Romanian people know this better: in December 1989 we paid the price of democracy with many lives.

I look forward to learning more about your experience and expertise in these matters and I hope we will have a fruitful Conference.

THE 23RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN ELECTION OFFICIALS (ACEEEO)



The 23rd Annual Conference of the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO), held in Bucharest on 5-6 September, ended with the adoption of the two declarations relating to the themes debated: “Women's participation in elections and in public life” and “Planning a general election”.

In relation to women's participation in electoral processes, ACEEEO reaffirm their support for the principle of equal opportunities for women and men and combating gender discrimination. In this regard, ACEEEO recommends to the electoral bodies to cooperate with Governments and political parties to promote legal and institutional mechanisms to ensure gender balance. Also, the electoral bodies should contribute to informing and educating women in terms of their electoral rights, is also stipulated in the Declaration of the ACEEEO.

As regards the planning of the general elections, the Declaration adopted at the Conference of ACEEEO points out that good planning is the key to free and fair elections. Electoral officials gathered in Bucharest believe that the electoral bodies must plan, at least annually, strategic actions, those related to the organization and conduct of electoral processes, as well as those aimed at informing and educating the electorate.

The 23rd ACEEEO Annual Conference gathered in Bucharest nearly 200 election officials and representatives of prestigious international organizations in the field of elections.

I. PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN ELECTORAL PROCESS AND PUBLIC LIFE

Although the suffrage of women has been recognized worldwide in the 20th century, and the most important international and regional human rights documents declare that right to vote, right to stand for the election and right to take part in public life should be ensured to women on equal terms, this group of the society faces discrimination also in our days.

The main field of this discrimination is the taking part in the work of the Parliament and other directly elected representative bodies. According to the last published OSCE results, in the OSCE region the portion of women representatives in the lower chambers is 24,4%. However, more and more countries introduce legal means to increase legal participation in politics like for example quotas or similar rules. The first step for the development in this field is identifying discriminatory laws, policies and practices, and the 23rd Annual Conference of ACEEEO gave an opportunity for that as well



as getting familiar with best practices.

Right to vote of women should also be ensured without discrimination and electoral management bodies play a crucial role also in this field when preparing an electoral process, informing voters, organising trainings for the lower-level electoral management bodies and poll workers. Finally, it is also inevitable to have women in the electoral bodies and in other election-related organisations.

The above mentioned development can be conducted only with a strong cooperation among the law-making bodies, electoral management bodies, women rights non-governmental organisations, political parties and other electoral stakeholders.

II. PLANNING OF A GENERAL ELECTION

General elections are certainly the most complex project that a state organ should implement in a country. In a relatively short period the electoral management bodies have to plan, operate and monitor plenty of different activities from the boundary delimitation, voter registration, establishing the polling committees, election training, voter education, registration of candidates, setting up the polling stations, ensuring the condition for a legal, safe casting of votes till the vote counting, results transmission and handling legal remedies.

During the whole process, legal, administrative, logistical, IT, financial and communicational tasks are conducted simultaneously. The basis for this is the accurate, careful and detailed planning.

What are the best methods for the planning? Can the usual means, approaches,

definitions of general project management used also for this form of planning? How can IT operations support this planning process? Can workload be decreased by accurate planning? What are the main monitoring points and the best monitoring methods? How could main errors of the process be eliminated? Participants of the conference were able to get an answer among others to these questions and contribute to the discussion with their own experiences.

AGENDA

4 September 2014 (Thursday) Day 0

9.00 – 17.00 Registration

11.00 – 15.00 SIDE EVENT (in cooperation with Association of World Election Bodies) Global and regional trends in electoral management

Chair: Mr. Zsolt Szolnoki, Secretary General, ACEEO

Dr. Jung Ae Jang, System Manager, A-WEB

Moderator: Mr. Richard W. Soudriette, President, Center for Diplomacy and Democracy

Speakers: Mr. Kazimierz W. Czaplicki, Secretary, State Election Commission of Poland

Ms. Ilona Tip, Operations Director, Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of Democracy in Africa (EISA)

Ms. Elizabeth Jenny Okello, Commissioner, Election Commission, Uganda

Ms. Bushra Abu Shahout, Director of Policies and Institutional Development, Independent Election Commission of Jordan

Mr. Manuel Carillo, Chief of Staff,
International Affairs Unit, Instituto Nacional
Electoral, Mexico

12.30 – 13.30 Lunch

15.30 – 16.30 EXECUTIVE BOARD
MEETING (for ACEEEO Executive Board
members only)

17.00 – 19.00 ACEEEO GENERAL
ASSEMBLY MEETING

19.00 – Dinner

5 September 2014 (Friday) Day 1

8.30 – Registration

9.00 – 10.30 OFFICIAL OPENING OF
CONFERENCE AND THE EXHIBITION

Chair: Ms. Ana Maria Pătru, President of
ACEEEO, Chairperson of Permanent Electoral
Authority

Representative of the
President/Parliament of Romania (TBC)

Mr. William J. Hybl, Vice Chairman of the
Board, IFES

Mr. Kim Yong-Hi, Secretary General, A-
WEB

Mr. Zsolt Szolnoki, Secretary General,
ACEEEO

10.30 – 10.45 Group photo

10.45 – 11.15 Press Conference, visiting
of the exhibition

11.15 – 13.15 PLENARY SESSION I.

Participation of women in electoral
process and public life

Chair: Mr. Bill Sweeney, President/CEO,
IFES

Ms. Amaya Ubeda de Torres, Legal
Officer, Venice Commission

Ms. Ana Maria Pătru, ACEEEO
President, President, Permanent Electoral
Authority of Romania

Mr. Tuigunaaly Abdraimov, Chairman,
Central Election Commission of Kyrgyzstan

Mrs. Lefterije Luzi, Chairperson, Central
Election Commission of Albania

Ms. Tamar Zhvania, Chairperson, Central
Election Commission of Georgia

Mrs. Irena Hadžiabdić, Member, Central
Election Commission of Bosnia and
Herzegovina

Vendor presentation

13.15 – 14.30 Lunch

14.30 – 16.30 PLENARY SESSION II.

Planning of a general election

Chair: Mr. Branko Hrvatin, Chairman,
State Election Commission of Croatia

Ms. Nicola Schmidt, Deputy Head,
Election Department, OSCE/ODIHR

Mr. Tadjoudine Ali-Diabacte, Deputy
Director, United Nations Electoral Assistance
Division

Mr. Andrey V. Baranov, Director,
International Institute of Monitoring
Democracy Development, IPA CIS Member
Nations

Mr. Dan Vlaicu, Vice-President,
Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania

Mr. Pedro Colmenares Soto, Deputy
Director General, Internal Policy and Electoral
Processes, Ministry of the Interior, Spain

Mr. Subhi Jakupi, Vice-President, State
Election Commission of Macedonia

Vendor presentation

16.30 – 16.45 Coffee Break

16.45 – 18.00 ROUND-TABLE FOR
MEMBERS ABOUT THE EXPERIENCES
ON THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY
ELECTIONS

Chair: Mr. Arnis Cimdars, Chairman,
Central Election Commission of Latvia

Moderator: Mr. Tibor Vaszi, Policy
Officer, DG Justice, European Commission

Mr. Kazimierz W. Czaplicki, Secretary,
State Election Commission of Poland

Mr. Dušan Vučko, Director, State
Election Commission of Slovenia

Mr. Branko Hrvatin, Chairman, State
Election Commission of Croatia

Ms. Ivilina Aleksieva, Chairperson,
Central Election Commission of Bulgaria

Ms. Ana Maria Pătru, Chairperson,
Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania

Mr. Zenonas Vaigauskas, Chairman,
Central Election Commission of Lithuania

6 September 2016 (Saturday) Day 2

9.00 – 12.00 WORKSHOPS

**A. Participation of women in electoral
process and public life**

Chair: Dr. Iurie Ciocan, Chairman,
Central Election Commission of Moldova

Moderators: Mr. Cristian Alexandru
Leahu, Head of Legislation, Parliament Liaison
and Election Dispute Resolution Department,
PEA Romania; Dr. Márta Dezső, Senior Legal
Adviser, ACEEEO

Keynote speakers:

Ms. Rumbidzai Kandawasvika-Nhundu,
Senior Programme Manager, International
IDEA

Ms. Nasima Zamani, Programme Director, Future Leaders' Organization

Dr. Alenka Verbole, Senior Democratization Officer, OSCE Presence in Albania

B. Planning of a general election

Chair: Mr. Zenonas Vaigauskas, Chairman, Central Election Commission of Lithuania

Moderators: Mr. Tiberiu Csaba Kovacs, Secretary General, PEA Romania; Mr. István Zsuffa, Programme Director, ACEEEO

Keynote speakers:

Mr. Gregor Wenda, Deputy Head of Department, Federal Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Austria - Directorate-General of Legal Affairs – Department III/6 - Electoral Affairs

Mr. Terry Ismael Tselane, Vice Chairperson, Electoral Commission of South Africa

Mr. Jenő Szép, Expert, ACEEEO

Mr. Jean-Pierre Kingsley, honorary member of ACEEEO

Mr. Manuel Carillo, Chief of Staff, International Affairs Unit, Instituto Nacional Electoral, Mexico

12.00 – 12.30 Visiting the exhibition hall

12.30 – 14.00 Summary of workshops, recapitulation speeches, conference findings.

Official closing of the 23rd Conference

Chair: Mr. Zsolt Szolnoki, Secretary General, ACEEEO

Mr. Richard W. Soudriette, President, Center for Diplomacy and Democracy

Mr. Cristian Alexandru Leahu, Head of Legislation, Parliament Liaison and Election

Dispute Resolution Department, PEA Romania and Dr. Márta Dezső, Senior Legal Adviser, ACEEEO

Mr. Tiberiu Csaba Kovacs, Secretary General, PEA Romania and Mr. István Zsuffa, Programme Director, ACEEEO

Ms. Ana Maria Pătru, President of ACEEEO, Chairperson of Permanent Electoral Authority

14.00 – 15.00 Lunch

16.00 – Cultural programme and farewell dinner

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



TUIGUNAALY ABDRAIMOV

Chairman,
Central Election Commission of Kyrgyzstan



ANDREY V. BARANOV

Director,
International Institute of Monitoring Democracy
Development, IPA
CIS Member Nations



BUSHRA ABU SHAHOUT

Director,
Policies and Institutional Development,
Independent Election
Commission of Jordan



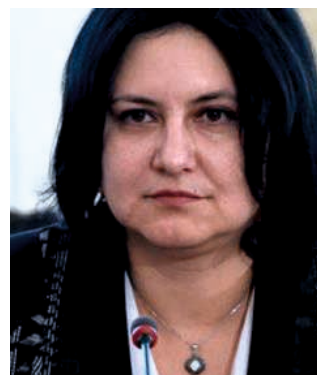
MANUEL CARILLO

Chief of Staff,
International Affairs Unit, Instituto Nacional
Electoral, Mexico



ARNIS CIMDARS

Chairman,
Central Election Commission, Latvia



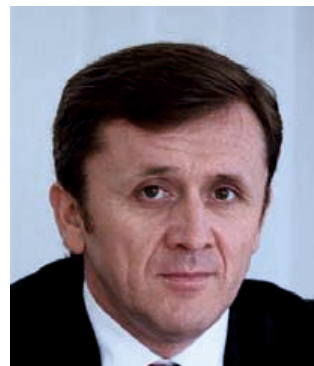
IVILINA ALEKSIEVA

Chairperson,
Central Election Commission of the Republic of
Bulgaria



TADJOUDINE ALI-DIABACTÉE

Deputy Director,
United Nations Electoral Assistance Division



IURIE CIOCAN

Chairman,
Central Electoral Commission of the Republic,
Moldova



PEDRO COLMENARES SOTO

Deputy Director General,
Internal Policy and Electoral Processes, Ministry
of the Interior, Spain



BRANKO HRVATIN

Chairman,
State Election Commission, Croatia



KAZIMIERZ W. CZAPLICKI

Secretary of the National Electoral Office,
Poland



WILLIAM J. HYBL

Chairman,
U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy



MÁRTA DEZSŐ

Senior Legal Adviser,
ACEEEO



SUBHI JAKUPI

Vice-President,
State Election Commission of Macedonia



IRENA HADŽIABDIĆ

Member,
Central Election Commission, Bosnia and
Herzegovina



JUNG-AE JANG

System Manager,
Association of World Election Bodies



RUMBIDZAI KANDAWASVIKA-NHUNDU

Senior Programme Manager,
International IDEA



CRISTIAN ALEXANDRU LEAHU

Head of Legislation, Parliament Liaison and Election
Dispute Resolution Department,
PEA Romania



KIM YONG-HI

Executive Secretary, A-WEB; Deputy Secretary General,
NEC National Election Commission of the Republic Of Korea



LETERIJE LUZI

Chairperson,
Central Election Commission of Albania



JEAN-PIERRE KINGSLEY

Honorary Member,
ACEEEO



ELIZABETH JENNY OKELLO

Member,
Election Commission of Uganda



CSABA TIBERIU KOVACS

Secretary General,
Permanent Electoral Authority, Romania



ANA MARIA PĂTRU

President, ACEEEO,
President, Permanent Electoral Authority, Romania



NICOLA SCHMIDT

Deputy Head,
Election Department, OSCE/ODIHR



ZSOLT SZOLNOKI

Secretary General,
ACEEEO



RICHARD W. SOUDRIETTE

President,
Center for Diplomacy and Democracy



ILONA TIP

Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of
Democracy in Africa (EISA)



WILLIAM (BILL) SWEENEY

President, CEO,
IFES



TERRY ISMAEL TSELANE

Member,
Electoral Commission of South Africa



JENŐ SZÉP

Expert,
ACEEEO



AMAYA UBEDA DE TORRES

Legal Officer,
Venice Commission



ZENONAS VAIGAUSKAS

Chairman,
Central Electoral Committee, Lithuania



DUŠAN VUČKO

Director,
State Election Commission of Slovenia



TIBOR VASZI

Policy Officer,
DG Justice, European Commission



GREGOR WENDA

Deputy Head of Department,
Federal Ministry of Interior of the Republic of
Austria - Directorate-General of Legal Affairs -
Electoral Affairs



ALENKA VERBOLE

Senior Democratization Officer,
OSCE Presence in Albania



NASIMA ZAMANI

Programme Director,
Future Leaders' Organization



DAN VLAICU

Vice-President,
Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania



TAMAR ZHVANIA

Chairperson,
Central Election Commission of Georgia



ISTVÁN ZSUFFA

Program Director,
ACEEEO

UN DECENIU ÎN SLUJBA DEMOCRAȚIEI



Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă, instituție de referință a statului român, sărbătorește în 2014 un deceniu de activitate. Deși numără puțini ani de existență, AEP a reușit să-și atingă toate obiectivele și să se achite cu succes de misiunea pentru care a fost creată: aceea de a organiza alegeri libere și corecte și de a asigura transparența în finanțarea partidelor politice și a campaniilor electorale.

În cei zece ani de activitate, Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă a gestionat toate alegerile și referendumurile naționale din această perioadă, dar și numeroasele alegeri parțiale și referendumuri locale.

Cu fiecare scrutin pe care l-a administrat, AEP a dovedit că este un mecanism vital în angrenajul democrației: toate procesele electorale s-au desfășurat corect și transparent, cu respectarea standardelor și practicelor europene în materie. Din acest punct de vedere, putem spune că AEP a contribuit decisiv la consolidarea democrației și a statului de drept.

După fiecare scrutin, Autoritatea a identificat sursa unor disfuncționalități și a adus corecții, fie prin inițierea unor modificări legislative, fie prin implementarea unor proceduri și aplicații mai eficiente. Însăși reorganizarea internă a AEP, în 2013, este o dovadă a capacității și determinării acestei instituții de a se adapta din mers provocărilor interne în materie de alegeri și referendum, precum și exigențelor electorale ale Uniunii Europene.

Prin tot ceea ce a întreprins în acești ani, Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă a avut ca obiectiv permanent creșterea participării alegătorilor la vot. Iar aceasta este posibilă numai dacă cetățenii sunt bine informați și dacă au încredere în transparența și corectitudinea alegerilor. În acest sens, AEP a făcut în 2014 un pas uriaș, prin realizarea Registrului electoral,

prima bază de date electronică în care sunt cuprinși toți cetățenii români cu drept de vot.

Acest sistem informatic, creat la inițiativa și cu resursele proprii ale AEP, este un model de bune practici pentru multe state din Europa și din lume. Registrul Electoral este o radiografie a electoratului român, dar și un instrument de lucru pentru primari și pentru alegători. Accesând www.registrulelectoral.ro, alegătorii pot verifica dacă sunt înscriși și pot afla la ce secție de votare sunt arondați. Administrarea Registrului electoral de către AEP și actualizarea lui de către primari pun capăt controverselor legate de numărul alegătorilor și simplifică operațiunile de întocmire a listelor electorale.

Întreaga activitate a AEP este guvernată de principiul transparenței și al respectului pentru cei pe care îi încurajează, la fiecare scrutin, să-și exercite dreptul de vot. Aceasta este rațiunea pentru care Autoritatea comunică toate informațiile de interes pe Website-ul instituției. Portalul www.roaep.ro, relansat într-o versiune acoperitoare și structurat pe mai multe secțiuni, este nu doar cartea de vizită a instituției, ci și un instrument de lucru pentru actorii implicați în procesele electorale și o sursă de documentare pentru specialiștii domeniului.

Preocuparea Autorității pentru informarea și educarea cetățenilor cu drept de vot s-a materializat în numeroase parteneriate cu diverse categorii speciale de alegători și în campanii de popularizare a drepturilor electorale și de combatere a oricărei forme de discriminare.

Pentru AEP, alegerile sau referendumurile sunt doar evenimente periodice ale domeniului său de competență, activitatea instituției este însă una la fel de intensă și între scrutine.

Atunci construiește strategii, inițiază sau corectează reglementări în domeniul electoral, desfășoară acțiuni de control, proiectează și implementează campanii de informare și educare a electoratului, dezvoltă relații cu organisme internaționale de profil.

Deși a apărut pe un teren viran, Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă a atins un înalt nivel de expertiză, pe care, iată, acum îl poate împărtăși și altor țări. AEP se bucură de recunoașterea internațională a organismelor similare. În 2013, Autoritatea a preluat președinția Asociației Oficialilor Electorali Europeni, a cărei Conferință Internațională a găzduit-o anul acesta la București, în perioada 5-6 septembrie. Tot anul trecut, instituția a devenit membru al Asociației Mondială a Organismelor Electorale (A-WEB) și, prin președintele AEP, semnatară a Cartei A-WEB. Prestigiul de care Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă se bucură în plan extern arată că această instituție este un adevărat vector de imagine al României.

AEP își propune ca în următorul deceniu de activitate să definitiveze modernizarea sistemului electoral românesc. Pentru aceasta, AEP a inițiat două proiecte ambițioase: informatizarea secțiilor de votare și unificarea legislației specifice într-un Cod electoral. Ambele presupun conlucrare cu decidenții politici.

Informatizarea secțiilor de votare va contribui la eficientizarea și acuratețea proceselor electorale. AEP a experimentat această aplicație, în 2010 și în 2011, printr-un proiect pilot, cu ocazia unor alegeri parlamentare parțiale, iar rezultatele arată că acesta poate fi extins la nivel național. Principala menire a acestei măsuri este să prevină manipularea voturilor, nu să o constate după ce fraudele au avut deja loc. Implementarea acestui proiect național va spori încrederea cetățenilor și a actorilor politici în procesele electorale din țara noastră și, implicit, va îmbunătăți rata de participare la vot.

Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă consideră că o adevărată modernizare sistemului electoral presupune elaborarea unui Cod electoral, care să permită implementarea unui tipar unitar pentru toate tipurile de alegeri, ceea ce ar fi un câștig și pentru alegători, și pentru organizatorii alegerilor.

Beneficiarii tuturor demersurilor Autorității Electorale Permanente sunt cetățenii cu drept de vot. Iar AEP are responsabilitatea de

a le asigura cadrul democratic în care aceștia să decidă liber, având garanția că în ziua alegerilor egalitatea dintre ei este matematic garantată: 1 alegător = 1 vot.

INTERVIEWS ON THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PERMANENT ELECTORAL AUTHORITY AND ON THE 23RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF ACEEEO

ANA MARIA PĂTRU



**President of ACEEEO
President of the Permanent Electoral
Authority, Romania**

„In its 10 years of activity, the Permanent Electoral Authority has always expressed its engagement in supporting other states' efforts in organizing free and fair elections and has chosen to facilitate connections, to build synergies and to generate joint projects. There is one thing I am sure of: no effort is too big, no work is too hard, no expense is too high when it comes to democracy. And the Romanian people know this better: in December 1989 we paid the price of democracy with many lives.“

PAUL DEGREGORIO



**Senior Advisor, Association of World
Election Bodies
Former Chairman, US Election Assistance
Commission**

„My first visit in Romania was in 1995, when I came here to do an assessment for the elections, for the International Foundation for Electoral Systems and I've been back to Romania eight times. I've seen the evolution of this country, in the economy and in the election field. And the Permanent Electoral Authority it's come a long way from the 1990 in very beginning until ten years ago when they founded Permanent Electoral Authority and now it's seen as a model for the whole world, because they run free and fair and transparent elections. People recognize Romania as a model, the Chairman, the members of PEA are recognised experts from around the world. Certainly, the importance of women in political society and in field of elections – that's one of the themes of this conference.“

WILLIAM (BILL) SWEENEY

**President, CEO,
IFES**

ABDUL JABAL SAPAND

Chairperson Afghanistan

TAMAR ZHVANIA

Chairperson

Central Election Commission of Georgia

„This conference was a remarkable achievement and a celebration of 10 years of successful elections' administration and the strength for democracy and the ballot here, in Romania. That is an important achievement particularly in this trouble time in the European region where we have such challenges going on to democracy in countries such as Ukraine. All of us are here is solidarity for the idea of democracy and all of us are here to celebrate a decade of very proud, successful, professional election administration by the Romanians. The organization of this conference has been superb.“

„I feel better here. It is well organized, and a very tight and good management and the high hospitality. I think that the important thing is the networking among the European, the Asian, and all other countries that has representations here and they can exchange ideas and they can share the efforts and abilities and the new experiences they got from practicing the democracy. I think this is much important to know about the efforts of each other and they can share it and they can network in the world.“

„The anniversary and the 23rd Annual Conference of ACEEEEO here in Romania is very exciting because of lots of electoral workers, practitioners, EMBs members, they retaining this conference and they are informing each other of our experiences. This is a very good opportunity for exchange experiences and the topic of this conference is like extremely important because the women participation in political and in electoral process is one of the important matters I think we need to discuss.“

RICHARD W. SOUDRIETTE

**President,
Centre for Diplomacy and Democracy**

KIM YONG-HI

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„It is my great pleasure to be here at the 23rd Annual Conference of ACEEEO. This is particularly important for me because I was one of the organisers and I've been involved in organization since 1991. So I've been to almost all of the conferences and I have to tell you that I think this was the best opening session and this is the largest conference that ACEEEO has had. The most important message coming out from this conference is related to the two themes. The first theme is the rights of women, women have to be respected, not only in terms of voting, but also to be able to run and participate as candidates. And this is a basic fundamental human right that all people should have regardless their gender. So I think that this is an important topic that conference addresses this year. The second topic is the importance of planning in terms of future election processes.“

„I think that this conference is very well prepared from Romania. Since last year Ana Maria Pătru is the President of ACEEEO and she has a good and strong passion to improve good practices and ACEEEO and A-WEB improves good relations. I appreciate her role in improving good relations between ACEEEO and A-WEB!“

„Now, as the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania celebrates its 10th year anniversary, the PEA invited ACEEEO members and other conference participants to join them and celebrate ten years anniversary of PEA. We had the General Assembly meeting and now we are discussing two very interesting topics, how women can increase their participation into democratic processes and how planning is important in elections. This is one of the largest ACEEEO conferences we had!“

CALL FOR PAPERS

„ELECTORAL EXPERT” REVIEW

The Electoral Expert Review, published by the Permanent Electoral Authority, invites stakeholders and those interested to contribute in publishing scientific articles related to the electoral field and to areas such as: human rights, political science, legal and administrative domain. Regarding the next edition of the “Electoral Expert” review, the editorial board welcomes articles with interdisciplinary character that have not been, or are not be published in other journals, reviews or scientific symposium volumes.

The authors may submit proposals for articles directly to the following address: expert.electoral@roaep.ro.

The “Electoral Expert” review is a quarterly publication of studies, researches and analyses related to the elections field. The editorial project Electoral Expert Review appears in a European context in which articles and scientific research aimed at various aspects of national and European electoral processes are increasing in the last two decades, but it appears a small number of magazines and journals academic assemble them in a publication focused on the electoral field.

With an interdisciplinary and applied character, the publication aims at a wide audience, this being first ensured by distributing our journal to the Romanian Parliament, the Government and other institutions from the central and local government, to the most important public libraries, universities, the media, other institutions of academia and NGO's. Secondly, the Electoral Expert Review can be found in electronic format in Romanian, this will be completed by one translated in to English, giving it an international character.

The 8th edition of the Electoral Expert Review will be published with the following general topic: *The need for a unitary electoral legislation and / or an Electoral Code in modern democracies* (deadline for submitting the articles: **1st of December**).

Indications and text formatting requirements:

- ✓ Submitted articles may cover theoretical studies, case studies or research that have not been published or submitted for other publications or part of the proceedings of scientific conferences. Submitted articles should be original.
- ✓ We recommend that submitted articles should be between 4000 and 6000 words in length (bibliography and footnotes included).
- ✓ Manuscripts must be accompanied by an abstract. The abstract must have between 100 and 150 words (Times New Roman, 12, italic). After each abstract the author must mention the keywords. We recommend that the articles submitted should be accompanied by a brief presentation of the author / authors (name, institutional or / and academic affiliation, brief research activity and published papers, e-mail address).
- ✓ The preferred working language of Electoral Expert Review is English.
- ✓ Main text of the manuscript: Times New Roman, 12, justified, 1.5 line spacing options. Page setup: A4 with 2.5 cm margins. Titles: Times New Roman, 14, bold. Subtitles: Times New Roman, 12, bold. Footnotes: Times New Roman, 10, justified.
- ✓ All figures, tables and photos must be clear and sharp. The tables should be numbered consecutively in Arabic numbers. The number and the title of each table should be written above it, using Times New Roman, 12, bold. The number and the title of each figure or photo should be written under it, using Times New Roman, 10, bold.
- ✓ Abbreviations and acronyms will be explained the first time they appear in the text.
- ✓ Quotations and references should be made using the Harvard or European system (only one of them will be used in the manuscript).
- ✓ Internet references should be quoted with the whole link and the date in which it was accessed.

For additional information you can contact us at: expert.electoral@roaep.ro

CALL FOR PAPERS „ELECTORAL EXPERT” REVIEW

Revista „Expert electoral”, editată de Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă, primește spre publicare articole științifice aferente domeniului electoral precum și din domenii conexe cum ar fi drepturile omului, științe politice, științe juridice și administrative, adică articole cu caracter interdisciplinar și care nu au fost sau nu urmează a fi valorificate prin publicare la alte reviste sau volume ale unor simpozioane științifice.

În următorul număr al publicației vom aborda subiecte legate necesitatea unei legislații electorale unitare și / sau a unui Cod electoral în democrațiile moderne.

Autorii pot transmite propunerile de articole pentru Nr. 4 (8) /2014 al revistei Expert Electoral la adresa de mail: expert.electoral@roaep.ro, termenul limită fiind 1 decembrie 2014.

Revista „Expert electoral” este o publicație trimestrială de studii, cercetări și analize cu tematică electorală. Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă a inițiat editarea acestei reviste cu scopul de a crea o platformă de dezbateră a subiectelor referitoare la reglementarea și administrarea proceselor electorale.

PORTALUL ELECTORAL WWW.ROAEP.RO

Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă a lansat în luna martie 2013 o nouă versiune a paginii sale de web www.roaep.ro.

Noul www.roaep.ro a fost gândit ca un portal electoral modern în spațiul căruia publicul să găsească toate informațiile privind procesele electorale, atât cele desfășurate, cât și cele în curs de desfășurare sau care urmează să aibă loc.

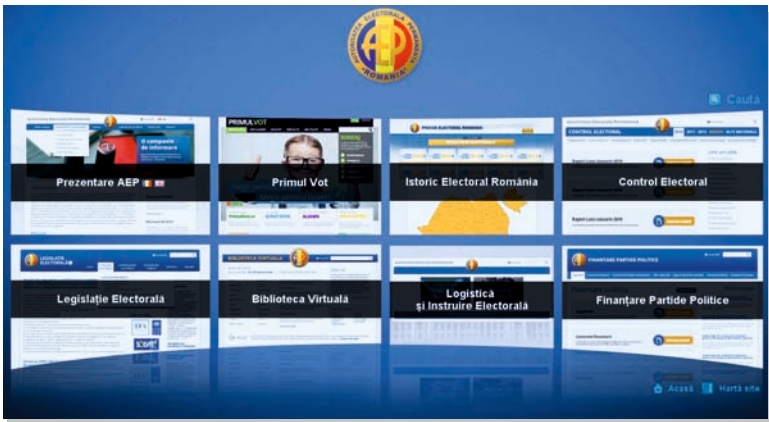
Secțiunea **LEGISLAȚIE ELECTORALĂ** conține actele normative în vigoare care guvernează procesele electorale, dar și proiecte pentru îmbunătățirea, perfecționarea și armonizarea cu acquis-ul comunitar, a cadrului legislativ electoral românesc.



Secțiunea **ISTORIC ELECTORAL** cuprinde date referitoare la toate alegerile și referendumurile din România începând cu anul 1990. De asemenea, înglobează site-urile Birourilor Electorale Centrale începând cu anul 2007.

Secțiunea **FINANȚARE PARTIDE POLITICE** include informații privind aplicarea legii finanțării activității partidelor politice și a campaniilor electorale, date despre alocarea subvențiilor partidelor politice, dar și îndrumarea partidelor politice sau a candidaților independenți privind legalitatea finanțării.

LOGISTICA ȘI INSTRUIREA ELECTORALĂ reprezintă două coordonate importante ale AEP. Secțiunea prezintă atât elemente de logistică



electorală, cât și materiale necesare instruirii actorilor implicați în procesul electoral.

De asemenea, secțiunea **CONTROL ELECTORAL** conține date despre acțiunile de control privind îndeplinirea atribuțiilor legale în materie electorală de către autoritățile administrației publice.

BIBLIOTECA VIRTUALĂ a fost concepută ca o secțiune de resurse documentare electorale dedicată persoanelor cu preocupări în domeniu, specialiști din mediul academic, universitar, societatea-civilă sau mass-media.

PRIMUL VOT este o secțiune dedicată tinerilor care împlinesc 18 ani și pentru care următoarele alegeri reprezintă ocazia de a-și exercita pentru prima dată drepturile electorale.





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