

**EUROPEAN DIALOGUE AND DEMOCRACY
ASSOCIATION (EDDA) ELECTION
OBSERVATION MISSION**



**FINAL REPORT
MOLDOVA
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS
29 SEPTEMBER 2025**

INTRODUCTIONARY REMARKS

From the 23rd to the 29th of September, the European Dialogue and Democracy Association (EDDA) conducted a short-term election observation mission (EOM) to monitor the 2025 Parliamentary elections in Moldova, held on the 28th of September 2025. This marked EDDA's first election observation mission in the country.

The mission consisted of 25 observers, including three coordinators. EDDA's observers visited polling stations across Chisinau, Orhei, Anenii Noi, Hincesti, and Straseni, as well as polling stations established in Chisinau for voters from Transnistria. In addition, representatives observed mobile voting procedures at institutions and private residences.

Given the inherent limitations of a short-term election observation, such as timeframe, number of observers, and polling stations visited, EDDA concludes that the elections were conducted in an overall free and fair manner, though not without shortcomings. It is important to emphasise that all observations were made on election day, the 28th of September 2025.

PREPARATORY MEETINGS AND METHODOLOGY

To gain a deeper understanding of Moldova's political landscape ahead of the elections, EDDA's delegation met with several key organisations. Prior to departure, the delegation

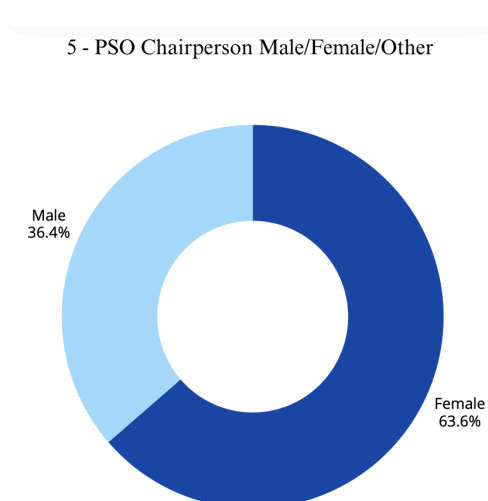
consulted Professor Helge Blakkisrud for historical context. In Moldova, meetings were held with the Institute for Policies and European Reforms (IPRE), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), the Norwegian Embassy Office, and Promo-LEX. EDDA extends its gratitude to these organisations for their valuable insights.

EDDA's election observation mission utilized the Vote Monitor application developed by Commit Global to ensure systematic and efficient data collection on election day. The observation forms were revised from previous missions following a thorough review of Moldova's Electoral Code. Observers received internal training sessions, as well as a preparatory meeting with Commit Global, during which representatives demonstrated the functionalities of the Vote Monitor app and addressed questions from the delegation. Prior to deployment, all EDDA observers also completed the OSCE/ODIHR comprehensive e-learning course for election observers.

On election day, the observers were deployed in pairs, each accompanied by a local interpreter. In total, 11 teams conducted observations in 9 to 13 polling stations, dedicating a minimum of 30 minutes to each location to ensure thorough coverage

OPENING PROCEDURES

The Short-Term Observers (STOs) monitored the opening procedures in 11 urban polling stations across Chişinău. In all but one case, the required election materials were present at the time of opening. The single exception concerned a polling station missing an official stamp for stamping the ballot papers at opening hour, as well as information for voters in minority languages.



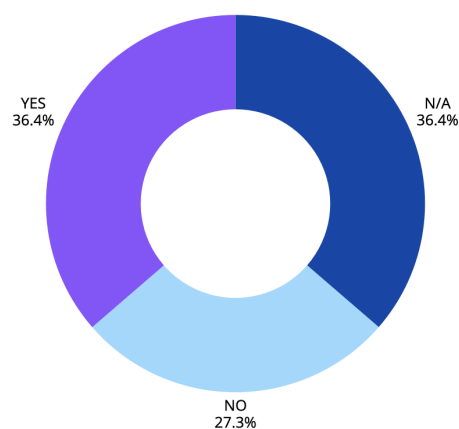
All polling stations opened on time, with the exception of one that began voting at 07:07, seven minutes later than the scheduled opening. Women chaired 63.6% of the polling stations observed. In total, women made up 72.8% of all PSOs at the polling stations observed when they opened.

On a four-point scale, where 4 represents “very good”, 3 represents “good”, 2 represents “bad” and 1 “very bad”, the overall assessment of the opening procedures yielded a mean score of 3.7. Thus,

opening procedures in 9 out of the 11 polling stations observed where judged to be very good. The few deviations from the top score included one polling station rated 3/4 and another rated 2/4. In the latter case, observers were instructed by the Chairperson to sit, remain seated, and voters were allowed to enter the premises prior to 07:00.

In two cases, the layout of the polling station did not ensure a clear or logical voting flow. In only four cases, observers witnessed the chairperson setting up and activating the video camera together with the designated operator. As elaborated later in this report, a general uncertainty regarding the operation of cameras was noted.

8a - Did the chairperson set up and activate the video camera together with the nominated operator?



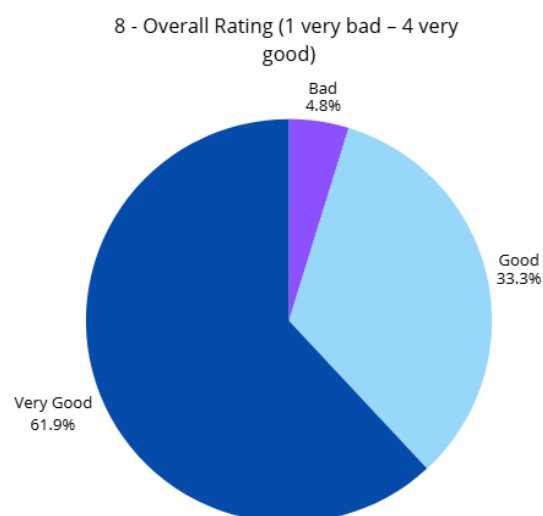
With respect to the presence of unauthorized persons, one observation team reported military personnel standing near the polling station for an extended period, while another noted police officers taking photographs inside the station. In one case, the ballot box was inadequately sealed, as the seal was too loose.

Apart from these isolated deviations, the overall conduct of the opening process was observed to be calm, well-organized, and orderly. In the majority of polling stations observed, procedures were implemented in accordance with regulations and to a generally high standard, with no signs of tension or unrest.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

On election day, STOs observed 106 polling stations, 73.5% urban, 26.5% rural, and conducted one extended observation of mobile voting. In total, 1,198 polling station officials (PSO) were observed across all polling stations. The gender balance among appointed PSOs was notably female-dominated, with 77.5% women and 22.5% men. Overall, the voting process was positively evaluated, with 61.9% of polling stations receiving very good overall ratings.

Chairpersons and PSOs performed well overall, with 94.3% assessed as adequately trained and demonstrated good compliance with key integrity measures. For example, observers reported few to none campaign materials or activity in or around the polling stations. The exceptions being EU-flags inside the polling stations on three occasions. Minor technical issues were noted in two stations where computers temporarily failed but resumed functioning shortly after. While the process largely adhered to good practices, observers also identified recurring issues, detailed below.



Accessibility

In 55.6% polling stations access was considered challenging for persons with disabilities. Although 86.8% of polling stations were situated on the ground floor, this did not always translate into full accessibility. In some cases, wheelchair ramps were available, but poorly designed. Additional obstacles were observed inside several buildings, including small internal staircases and narrow doors, and restricted pathways.

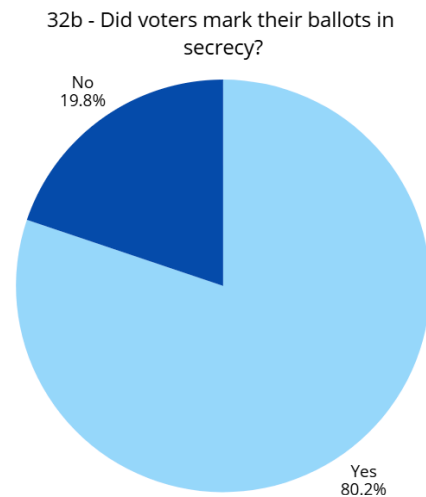
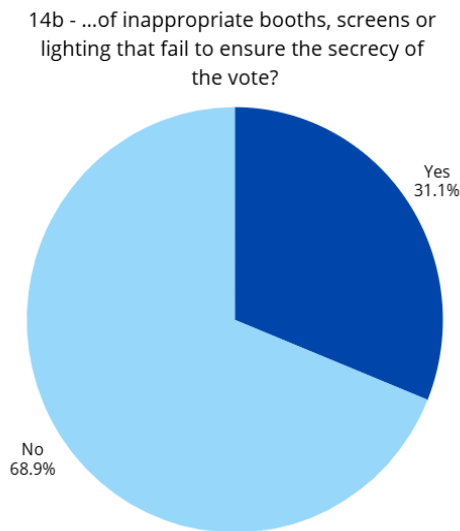
Election material

a lack of essential voting information was observed in around one in ten polling stations. This includes missing posters and instructions guiding voters through the process. Furthermore, election materials in minority languages were available in 70.0% of the polling stations observed. In most polling stations, ballot papers were available in both Romanian and Russian, although several had only a limited number of Russian versions, while a few provided ballot papers exclusively in Romanian. PSOs explained that ballot papers in minority languages were available only upon request, as no minority voters were expected in their electoral districts.

Presence of police

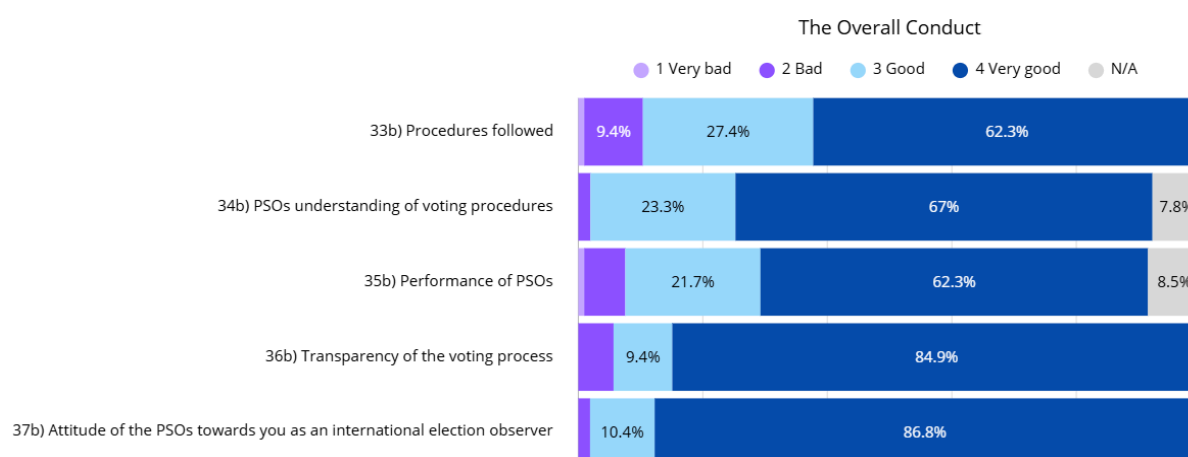
Observers reported a visible police presence near most polling stations. In general, they behaved professionally and non-intrusive. However, in 17,9% of the observed polling stations, police were observed acting more actively than required. Inside some polling stations, officers were seen walking around or conversing with PSOs. On three separate occasions, observers were approached by police outside polling stations and questioned about the purpose of their visit. In another case, an observer team was escorted out of a polling station by the chairperson and referred to the police officer stationed outside. Police

were also present during the observation of a mobile ballot box. At one location, a police car driving in front of a polling station broadcast messages via loudspeaker urging citizens “not to sell their vote.”



Voting procedure

As previously noted, the performance of chairpersons and PSOs was generally assessed as satisfactory. However, the secrecy of vote was breached or at risk in nearly 19.8% of the polling stations observed. This outcome stemmed from four main factors identified during the observation. Firstly, the placement of the polling booths allowed visibility of how voters marked their ballots. In a total of 13 observed polling stations, observers appeared to have an angle of view of how voters marked their ballots. Secondly, a recurring challenge was the lack of clear instruction on how to fold ballots. Voters were observed folding their ballots outside the booths while revealing their choice of vote. Thirdly, security cameras intended to monitor the ballot box were sometimes positioned in a way that captured more than intended. During one observation, PSOs realized that the camera had not been turned on. Lastly, family voting was indicated and observed in 34.9% of the polling stations, this for the most part children joining their parents throughout the voting process. On the other hand, failure to follow assisted voting procedures were recorded in 47.1% of the polling stations. Individuals were in these observations allowed to accompany or assist voters inside the booths without showing identification. Assistance from the PSOs was generally in the form of providing magnifiers.



CLOSING PROCEDURES

The closing procedures were conducted in polling stations in Chişinău. The observers reported that the process was consistently transparent and followed the prescribed procedures. The teams moved to 11 polling stations in Chişinău, where they conducted general observations, as well as observed the closing procedures of said polling stations.

The overall assessment of the closing procedures yielded a mean score of 3.45. Thus, closing procedures in 7 out of the 11 polling stations observed were judged to be very good. One polling station was deemed very poor, with observers told by the Chairperson that the responsibilities of the PSOs were more important than their observations and instructed to stay at one end of the room during ballot counting. The Chairperson failed to maintain order during the counting process, leading to disorder and a lack of transparency, and the PSOs' overall performance was unsatisfactory.

The serial numbers of the seals were not entered into the protocol at three polling stations. Signed protocols were not found in the stationary ballot box at two polling stations. At a third polling station, the STOs could only confirm that the signed protocol was found in its mobile ballot box. The observers confirmed that the number of votes was announced and entered into the protocols at 9 of the 11 polling stations. In 9 of 11 polling stations, the observers were able to clearly see all aspects of the counting, including marks on ballots.

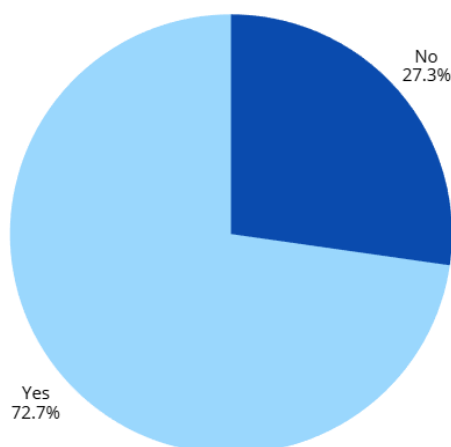
The ballots marked with votes from the party Moldova Mare, which was barred from participating in the elections, were to be counted and entered into the protocol together with

other spoiled ballots. Spoiled and unused ballots were to be sealed and bundled separately. This was the case in 10 of the polling stations. However, in one polling station, the STOs observed that the ballots marked with Moldova Mare were not entered into the protocol, and that spoiled and unused ballots that had been separated were placed into one pile and bundled together.

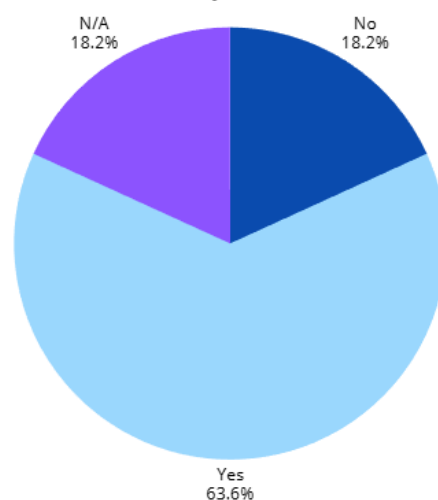
In four polling stations, the observers were not able to confirm or deny whether the stamps used in the polling booths were collected, counted and transmitted to the chairperson. A local observer was involved during the first count of the ballots at one polling station, but was told off by the chairperson. In 90.9% of cases, the PSOs appeared to understand and adhere to the required procedures. In two polling stations, the ballots were not counted in an orderly and secure manner, and ballots from the mobile ballot boxes were placed on top of a heap together with all the other ballots.

In two cases, disputes and complaints were not solved in a satisfactory manner. Official counting records were noted and completed, and political parties, candidates, representatives, and other domestic observers were able to obtain official copies of the protocol in 10 of the 11 polling stations. At 7 of the 11 polling stations, the observers could confirm that the results were posted publicly and/or transparently in the polling station. At two polling stations, the observers were kept at too great a distance to see marked ballots and how they were sorted. In one case, the STOs saw indications of dishonest counting or reporting and indications of insecure storage of unsealed ballots. At three polling stations, PSOs were disturbed when counting ballots. In one polling station, a police officer was making noise with his mobile phone while PSOs were counting. Furthermore, in the of the polling stations, the transparency of the counting process was not satisfactory.

43c - Was the transparency of the counting process satisfactory?



4c - Was the signed protocol found in the stationary ballot box?



CONCLUDING REMARKS

Based on a limited number of observations on the 28th of September 2025, the European Dialogue and Democracy Association (EDDA) concludes that the parliamentary elections in Moldova were conducted in a generally transparent, free, and fair manner. The overall conduct of the voting process was calm, well-organized, and orderly. In most observed polling stations, procedures were carried out to a high standard, and polling staff acted professionally and in line with established regulations.

While EDDA's delegation did not observe indications of election fraud, certain shortcomings were noted. Breaches of voting secrecy occurred in over one-third of observed polling stations, including instances where voters displayed their ballots, or of unregulated assisted voting. Accessibility remained a challenge in more than half of the polling stations, primarily due to physical barriers such as the lack of ramps.

In over 10% of cases, there was also uncertainty regarding the placement and purpose of security cameras, raising concerns about the protection of the secrecy of the vote. Furthermore, the presence of police officers and (partisan) observers was, in certain cases, overly assertive.

Overall, EDDA's delegation found, based on its limited number of observations, that the election process largely reflected the will of the voters and adhered broadly to international standards, while noting that improvements to accessibility, the protection of voting secrecy, and clearer guidance on camera use could further strengthen future electoral processes.

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