



Moldova

Last update:	9 October 2013
Author:	
Population:	3.559 million (World Bank 2013 est.)
Prime minister:	Iurie Leanca (since April 2013)
President:	Nicolae Timofti (since March 2012)
Governemental type:	Republic
Ruling coalition:	Liberal–Democratic Party of Moldova, Liberal Party, Democratic Party of Moldova
Last election:	Parliamentary 28 November 2010
Next election:	Parliamentary 2014
Sister parties:	Democratic Party of Moldova (full member)



Moldova is one of the poorest countries in Europe, unemployment is high, and the country is heavily dependent upon remittances from thousands of Moldovans working abroad. A large part of the Moldovan population is Romanian-speaking, although there are also Russian and Ukrainian minorities. The communists had been the ruling party in the former Soviet state from 1998 until 2009. Since 2009 Moldova became more pro-western. Moldova currently aspires to join the European Union, and has implemented the first three-year Action Plan within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). However, the possibility that Moldova becomes a serious candidate to be a European member state is slim. This is partly due to the deterrent political cooperation within the government and the most dominant and urgent domestic conflict over the pro-Russian breakaway region Transnistria that must be resolved before Moldova can strengthen its ties with the European Union.

POLITICAL SITUATION

On February 13th 2013, Moldovan Prime Minister Vlad Filat announced that his Liberal–Democratic Party of Moldova (LDPM) was withdrawing from the 2010 coalition agreement from which the pro-Western Alliance for European Integration (AIE) was established. Filat stated that corruption was hampering the government's ability to act and demanded that a new coalition agreement be signed. At the same time, prosecutors launched criminal investigations into three government ministers implicated in corruption scandals. Filat stressed, however, that he did not want early elections or a coalition with the Communists and that his aim was to renegotiate the coalition agreement with its current members. On March 5th the Communists, previously just looking from the outside in, unexpectedly filed a motion for a vote of no confidence against the government of Vlad Filat. Supported by the PCRM, the Democrats and independent deputies, the motion was passed and the cabinet of Vlad Filat was dismissed.

On 22 April the Constitutional Court of Moldova decided that the decree on the 10th of April by President Nicolae Timofti to designate Vlad Filat as a candidate for the position of Prime Minister was unconstitutional because the former Government was dismissed on suspicion of corruption by a censure motion. The court decision meant that Filat could not run for prime minister, and that President Nicolae Timofti was to appoint another person to form the new cabinet. The court also decided that the president has the obligation to appoint an acting premier other than Filat from the members of the government whose integrity has not been damaged, after the dismissal of the government on March 5th.

On April 23th President Timofti nominated a new acting Prime Minister: Iurie Leanca, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and asked him to form a new cabinet. A pro-EU three-party coalition cabinet has been formed on May 30th with Iurie Leanca as Prime Minister. The coalition is made up of PLDM, the Liberal Reformists Party (PLR) and the Democratic Party (PDM).



This political crisis in Moldova has undermined the prospect of Moldova signing an association agreement with the European Union and a visa-free travel agreement at the Eastern Partnership summit in Vilnius at November 2013. The new coalition has planned to keep Moldova on its European integration track and continuing the reforms started by the Filat government.

Constitutional referendum 2010

As the political deadlock continued on 5 September 2010 Moldova's citizens were asked in a referendum whether Moldova's president should be elected by popular vote in the future. The turnout of the referendum, however, was not enough for it to pass. According to the Moldovan Central Election Commission 30.29 percent eligible voters cast their votes, while 33.33 percent was needed in order for the referendum to be valid. In accordance with Moldovan regulation, interim president Mihai Ghimpu dissolved the parliament and called for early parliamentary elections on 21 November 2010. Ghimpu blamed the low turnout on the Communist Party, which called for a boycott of the vote. The pro-Western AIE was hoping for a positive outcome of the referendum. In the run-up to the vote the coalition had campaigned for the change as a way to break the political deadlock that left Moldova without a full-fledged president for 18 months.

Gender

In 2009 the female labour force in Moldova was 49.90 per cent, according to a 2010 World Bank report. After the parliamentary elections of November 2010, 19 seats out of a total of 101 seats in parliament were allocated to women, making up 18.8%.

Generally, due to the low legal minimum age for women to get married (16 years), a 2004 United Nations report estimated that 12 per cent of girls between 15 and 19 years of age were married, divorced or widowed. The law treats men and women equally with regard to inheritance and parental authority and guarantees women's financial independence. However, inequalities are often in practice.

The physical integrity of Moldovan women is poorly protected. Violence against women, including domestic violence, is widespread. In most cases, the perpetrator is the husband or partner, but fathers and fathers-in-law are also known to be abusive. An estimated one-third of murders in Moldova are committed by the victim's husband.

Trafficking of women is a serious problem; it is estimated that Moldovan women account for a large share of prostitutes in Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the Middle East. These women are often beaten and reduced to a form of slavery.

ELECTIONS

Electoral system

Moldova is a parliamentary representative democratic republic. According to its Constitution, the parliament is the supreme representative organ and the single legislative authority of the state. The parliament is an unicameral assembly with 101 seats whose members are elected by proportional representation every four years. To enter the Moldovan Parliament, independent candidates must obtain 3% of the total number of votes. The political parties must pass a 6% threshold, and the electoral blocs that consist of two parties at least 9%. The electoral blocs consisting of more than two political parties must receive at least 12% of the votes. The "lost votes" of the parties that did not pass the threshold are subsequently distributed proportionally among those who did.

The President (head of state) is elected by the Parliament for a four-year term, and is limited to two terms. To be



elected as president at least three fifths of the MPs, or 61 deputies, must vote in favour of the candidate. If the parliament cannot agree about a presidential candidate, the parliament must be dissolved and early elections must be held.

Presidential Elections 2012

On 16 March 2012 Nicolae Timofti was elected as the new president of Moldova. His election ended a 917-day political deadlock where the members of the Moldovan parliament could not manage to agree on a new president. The parliament elected Timofti with 62 votes out of 101 (with 61 needed). Although the Chairman of the Supreme Council of Magistrates is not a member of any party, his candidacy was put forward by the Alliance for European Integration (AEI) consisting of pro-democratic, pro-European parties (Democratic Party, Liberal Party and Liberal Democratic Party). The Communist opposition boycotted the vote, while a small socialist fraction of three MPs led by former Communist Igor Dodon and independent MP Mihai Godea made the necessary majority possible. Finally Timofti, a former judge and a politically neutral candidate, received 62 votes from the MPs, and thereby passed the prescribed three-fifth majority to be elected as president.

Local elections June 2011

On 5 June 2011 local elections were held in Moldova. About 900 candidates fought for mayoral seats and heads of other local bodies, in an election that was seen as a test for the pro-European Alliance for European Integration (AEI) that was put back in power in November 2010 following parliamentary elections. The turnout was reported to be more than 54 percent.

In the race for mayor of capital Chisinau a second round was needed. Eventually on 19 June, 50.55% voted for the liberal Dorin Chirtoaca, while 49.45% voted for Communist Party candidate Igor Dodon. Thereby the Liberal Party's candidate Dorin became Chisinau mayor.

Overall, the communist Party fared well in the first round of voting in the local elections, becoming second in the regional assemblies after the Liberal-Democratic Party. However, in the second round of elections of city and village mayors on 19 June, the three parties of the ruling Alliance for European Integration got most mandates of governors. 156 representatives of the PLDM became mayors, 133 representatives of the PDM, 86 of the PCRM, and 78 of the LP. The rest of local governors are representatives of other parties and independent candidates. In the elections of local councils, the parties of the ruling AEI gained the majority in 27 of the 33 local councils.

Moldovan political scientist Octavian Ticu said that the results show how divided the country remains. "The Communists are not gone. In fact, all the victories of the ruling alliance have been hard-fought, and the transformation of Moldova is an arduous process."

According to international observers from the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Moldova's local elections largely met OSCE and Council of Europe commitments. However, the observers noted that remaining legal, administrative and regulatory issues need to be further considered in order to ensure continued progress. Also Moldova's run-off elections provided equitable conditions for contestants, but confirmed the need to consolidate progress, the OSCE stated in a press release.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES

Democratic Party of Moldova (PDM)

Party leader: Marian Lupu

www.pdm.md



The PDM was founded in 1998 as the continuation of the Movement for a Democratic and Prosperous Moldova, and is currently led by Marian Lupu, between 2010 and March 2012 the acting president of Moldova. The Democratic Party is a member of the Socialist International and the Party of European Socialists.

The ideology of the PDM is based on international social–democratic values of freedom, equality, solidarity, democracy, respect for civil rights, human dignity, social justice, the unacceptability of all forms of discrimination and social partnership. In the Democratic Party’s program the priorities are the creation of optimal conditions for the activity of civil structures, the modernization of the social protection systems in accordance with European standards and requirements. Also the creation of an effective system of income redistribution, reform of trade unions and the international recognition and consolidation of Moldova’s permanent neutrality are key objectives.

On 10 February 2010, the Democratic Party of Moldova (PDM) and the Social Liberal Party (PSL) officially merged under the slogan “We Come to Build.” The opposition parties formed a new democratic party through the disbandment of the PSL, which was then absorbed into the PDM. The renewed PDM continued under its old name, and pledged to work “for the affirmation of the Republic of Moldova as an independent, unitary and democratic state, based on the rule of law and integrated in the united family of European democracies.” The PDM thus supports the integration of Moldova into the EU and NATO. Since the parliamentary election of April 2009, the PDM is a member of the Alliance for European Integration (AEI) coalition in the Moldova parliament. After that it became a member of the pro–EU three–party coalition cabinet under Iurie Leanca.

OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES

Party of Communists of Republic of Moldova (PCRM)

Party leader: Vladimir Voronin

<http://www.pcrm.md>

International affiliation: Party of European Left

The PCRM is the only communist party to have held a majority in government in the post–Soviet states. It was the ruling political party in Moldova from 1998 until 2009. Currently it is the main opposition party.

The PCRM was registered as a political party in 1994, and is the successor of the Communist party before the Soviet Union disintegrated. The then Communist party was outlawed by the government in August 1991, several months before the official independence of Moldova. After the Communist party was legalised again by the Parliament on 7 September 1993, the PCM was reborn as the Party of Communists.

The goals the PCRM has outlined for Moldova do not have a traditional communistic character; and include things like economic modernisation, European integration, the consolidation of the society and a new quality of life. Under Vladimir Voronin the PCRM privatized several state–owned industries.

Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova (PLDM)

Party leader: Vlad Filat

<http://www.pldm.md>

The Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova (PLDM) is a centre–right political party. The Party’s Founding Congress was held on 8 December 2007 and Vlad Filat was elected as its president. In their statements, the 53 initiative group members acknowledged the profound crisis in the Republic of Moldova and the inability of political parties to face the situation. The PLDM emerged as a capable alternative to start the process of moral reorganization of the political class, rebirth and modernization of the country and reestablishment of the society back on its natural track of democratic development.



The party attracted a large number of prominent members of the civil society and at the parliamentary elections of 29 July 2009 the PLDM obtained 16.57 % of the votes. At the early parliamentary elections of 28 November 2010 the PLDM doubled its results, obtaining 32.2% of the votes, 32 deputies.

The strategic programmatic goal set by this party is the reconstruction and modernization of the Republic of Moldova, as well as the establishment of rule-of-law state and efficient market economy. In its program, the Liberal Democratic Party aims at becoming the main driver for overcoming economic, social and civilization gaps.

Liberal Party (PL)

Party leader: Mihai Ghimpu

<http://www.pl.md>

The Liberal Party was created at the unifying Congress of March 24th 2002, on the basis of the merger of the Party of Rebirth and Reconciliation of Moldova (1995); the National Peasant Christian-Democratic Party (1993) and the Social Liberal Union "Force of Moldova".

It is a conservative liberal party.

The Liberal Party has centred its program on the liberal doctrine and on the most recent neo-liberal achievements. The Liberal Party is largely represented in the local public administrations and has Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen at the Councils of the territorial units of grade II, thousands of local counsellors, hundreds of mayors, etc. After the July 2009 parliamentary election, the party became a coalition partner within the Alliance for European Integration. In the parliamentary elections in November 2010 it gained 9,96% of the votes.

Liberal Reformists Party (PLR)

Party leader: Ion Hadârcă

<http://www.plr.md>

The Liberal Reformists Party was formed on 12 April 2013 after the reformist Liberals separated themselves of the Liberal Party (LP). The PLR first started as a Liberal Party Reform Council (CRPL), a pro-government faction within the Liberal Party calling for reform of the party. The council pleaded for holding a party's extraordinary congress and replacement of its leadership. Its seven MPs were subsequently ejected from the LP and then agreed to enter a new coalition, called the Pro-European Coalition with the Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova and the Democratic Party of Moldova on 30 May 2013.

On 21 June 2013 a General Meeting of the Liberal Party Reform Council took place, which adopted a decision to create a new political party with liberal doctrine. In the period July 2013 - August 2013 the reformists collected over 14 thousands signatures, enough to register a party. On 1 August 2013 the first meeting of the Council of Founding of the Liberal Reformists Party took place in Chisinau.

The party's symbol is the graphic image of a blue eagle on a white background that has 12 golden stars of different sizes arranged in a circle on its wing. The Liberal reformers are determined to give Moldova the chance to achieve all the national political, social and economic desiderata and the options stipulated in the Declaration of Independence of August 27, 1991. The PLR is staged on the right political wing and is based on the liberal doctrine and pro-European and pro-Romanian visions.

People's Christian Democratic Party (CDPP)

Leader: Iurie Rosca

www.cdpp.md

International Affiliations: full member of Christian Democratic International (CDI) and observer member of the



European People's Party (EPP); youth organisation is a member of Youth European People's Party.

Created in May 1989, the CDPP fought against Communism and for the fall of the USSR. Since then, the party has remained an influential player in Moldovan politics. In 2005 the CDPP voted for the re-election of the Communist president Vladimir Voronin and Iurie Rosca became the Parliament's vice-president. This was a major change of course for the CDPP, which for 15 years was ardently anti-Communist. It is the successor of the Democratic Movement of Moldova (1988-1989), Popular Front of Moldova (1989-1992), and the Christian Democratic Popular Front (1992-1999). In March 2005, the party became an observer member of the European People's Party (EPP). The party is a full member of the European Christian Political Movement (ECPM).

The CDPP is a major propagator of the Euro-Atlantic integration of Moldova.

Ecologist party of Moldova "Green Alliance" (PEM-AVE)
Leader: Vladimir Braga
International Affiliation: European Green Party (observer)

The party was created in 1992 and has participated in all elections in Moldova but has never succeeded to gain seats in parliament or representation in local government. It has a clear green ideology, on the example of many other Green European parties.

BIOGRAPHIES

Nicolae Timofti
President of Moldova

On 16 March 2012 Nicolae Timofti (1948), a senior judge, was elected President of Moldova, ending nearly three years of political stalemate. Mr Timofti is politically independent, has never been involved in politics and has 36 years of experience as a judge.

Born in the village of Ciutulesti, Timofti graduated from the law department of Chisinau State University in 1972 and spent two years in the Soviet Army before beginning his career as a judge in 1976. After only four years on the bench, he was appointed to the Supreme Court of the Soviet Republic of Moldavia. After independence (1990), he served five years on the Chisinau Appellate Court. In 2005, he was appointed to the Higher Judicial Chamber. In 2011 he was named Chairman of the Supreme Council of Magistrates.

In an address to parliament before his election, he strongly supported the aspirations of Prime Minister Vlad Filat's government for European integration but also promised to be an apolitical president. Timofti stressed that Moldova must "become a bridge between West and East." On the Transdnistria frozen conflict Timofti said that "only strengthening trust between the two banks of the Dniestr will help the reintegration of the country." Concerning internal affairs, he named reforming the judiciary, saying "An independent judiciary is the key to the successful development of a country".

Moldova had no full-time president since Vladimir Voronin, a Communist, resigned in September 2009. The opposition Communists boycotted the vote in which Mr Timofti was elected.

The question of the presidential term still remains. Some leaders of the AEI stated that Timofti can hold the position of president for four years, but also until the end of the current parliament's term, which ends in 2014.

Iurie Leanca
Prime Minister of Moldova



Iurie Leanca was born on 20 October 1963 in Cimislia, Republic of Moldova. In the period of 1981–1986 he studied and graduated from the State Institute of International Relations in Moscow (MGIMO).

In 1986 Leanca joined the Moldovan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the period of 1993–1997 he served as the Minister–Counselor at the Embassy of Moldova to the United States of America. In 1998 he was appointed as Ambassador at large for European Integration. In 1998–1999 he served as the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and in 1999 to 2001 as the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In the period of 2001 – 2005 Leanca was the Vice Chairman of ASCOM Company. From 2005 to 2007 he was the Senior Adviser to the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. In 2005–2009 he served as the Deputy President of the Foreign Policy Association. In 2009 he was an elected member of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova. In 2009 he was appointed as the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration. Since May 2013 Leanca is the Prime Minister of Moldova.

Vladimir Filat
Former Prime Minister of Moldova

Vladimir Filat was born on 6 May 1969, in the village of Lăpușna. In 1994, he obtained his university degree in law at the University of Alexandru Ioan Cuza in Iași. Between 1994 and 1998 Filat was an entrepreneur and started conducting several businesses in Romania. He became the general director of the Department of Privatization and State Property Administration at the Ministry of Economy and Reform in 1998. for one year. In 1999, Filat became Minister of State.

From 1997 to 2007, Filat was member of the Democratic party of Moldova (PDM). In 2000, he was elected vice–president of the PDM. Five years later, he was elected MP on the list of the PDM in the 2005 general elections.

Filat left the PDM in September 2007, after he ran for mayor in the 2007 local election but gained few votes. In December that year, he became the President of the Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova. On 25 September, 2009, Filat was appointed Prime Minister. On March 2013 his cabinet was dismissed and he was succeeded by Iurie Leanca.

Vladimir Filat is married and has two children.

Mihai Ghimpu
Former President of Moldova and current leader of the Liberal Party (LP)

Mihai Ghimpu was born on 19 November 1951 in Chișinău. In 1978, he graduated from the Department of Law at the Chișinău State University. He worked as a lawyer from 1978 to 1990. He also headed legal departments of several state enterprises and worked as a judge at the Chișinău's Râncani District Court.

In late 1980's, Ghimpu joined the Democratic Movement. In 1989, he was one of the founders of the movement's successors, the Popular Front of Moldova – known as one of the leading political forces in the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic (MSSR) – which was later succeeded by the Christian–Democratic People's Party.

Ghimpu was elected Member of Parliament on the list of the Popular Front in 1990. In the Parliamentary elections four years later, he was elected as a representative for the Bloc of Intellectuals. In 1997, Ghimpu was elected Chairman of the Party of Reform – the current Liberal Party. Between 2007 and 2009, he was member of the Chișinău Municipality Council.



During the early Parliamentary vote in July 2009, he was re-elected MP. A month later, on 28 August, he was elected Speaker of Parliament. Ghimpu became Moldova's acting President on 11 September, 2009, after former (Communist) President Vladimir Voronin resigned, until 28 December 2010.

Mihai Ghimpu is married. He speaks Romanian, Russian and French.

Marian Lupu
Leader of the Democratic Party (PDM) of Moldova

Marian Lupu was born on 20 June 1966, in the Balti municipality. His family moved to Chisinau when he was six years old. In 1987, he graduated with honors from the Faculty of Commerce and Economy at the Moldovan State University and obtained his PhD in Economics in 1991, at the Plekhanov Russian Academy of Economics in Moscow.

In 1991, Lupu started working at the Ministry of Economy in the External Economic Relations' department. From 1992–2000, Lupu was also the executive Director of the EU's TACIS–Moldova Program, which aimed to promote the transition to a market economy and to reinforce democracy and the rule of law in Eastern European partner states.

On May 24, 2001, the government assigned Lupu Deputy Minister of Economy in the Communist Cabinet of Vasile Petru Tarlev. On 5 August, 2003, his position was upgraded to Minister of Economy by then acting President Vladimir Voronin. Lupu held this position until March 2005, when he was elected Member of Parliament (MP) on the list of the Party of Communists (PCRM). In the same month, he was elected the Parliament's Chairman, after the Communists won yet another election. Lupu held this post until May 2009.

In December, 2008, President Voronin excluded Lupu from the Supreme Security Council – a consultative body which analyzes the activity of Ministries in the field of national security and presents recommendations to the President. Lupu left the PCRM just before the Parliament would try to elect the country's next president for the second time on the 3rd of June 2009, saying it was impossible to reform the structure of the PCRM from within. Lupu then joined the Democratic Party of Moldova (PDM) on 15 June, 2009. On 19 July he was elected its chairman. Ten days later, he was elected MP on the list of the PDM in the July general elections.

After the democratic opposition won the early poll, Lupu together with Vlad Filat, Mihai Ghimpu and Serafim Urechea created the "Alliance for European Integration" coalition on 8 August 2009. Lupu was the only opposition Presidential candidate in the Presidential race for the first and second round, after Vladimir Voronin resigned the post on 11 September 2009. The Parliament, however, failed to elect the President. As Parliament Speaker Lupu was thus acting President until Nicolae Timofti was elected on 16 March 2012.

Marian Lupu is married and has two children. He speaks Romanian, French, English and Russian.

Vladimir Voronin
Former President of Moldova and current leader of the Communist Party

Vladimir Voronin was born on May 25, 1941, in the village Corjova. Although he has a 'Russian' name, his origin is ethnic Romanian. Voronin graduated from the Co-operative College in Chisinau in 1961, and from the Union Institute for Food Industry in 1971. In 1983 Voronin finished the Academy of Social Sciences of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and in 1991 he graduated from the Academy of Internal Affairs of the Soviet Union.

Between 1966 and 1971, Voronin held different positions, including director of different bread factories. In the following ten years, he worked in the state administration of the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic (MSSR). From 1983, he was an inspector and the vice-director of the Organization Section of the Central Committee of the Moldovan branch of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Between 1988 and 1990 Voronin was Minister of Internal Affairs in the MSSR.



In 1993, Voronin obtained a new position, becoming the Co-President of the Organizational Committee for the creation of the Party of Communists of Moldova (PCRM). The Communist party was banned between 1991 and 1993 and Voronin played a central role in reviving it. Voronin was elected Chairman of the PCRM in 1994. In the general elections in March 1998, he was elected MP and parliamentary leader of the PCRM. One year later, the acting President of Moldova – Petru Lucinschi – nominated Voronin as Prime Minister. The nomination did, however, was not supported by the majority of the Parliament. Voronin was re-elected MP in the general elections in February, 2001. That year, on 4 April, Voronin was elected President of Moldova and was re-elected in the Presidential elections in 2005.

In the Parliamentary elections held on 5 April 2009, the PCRM finished with 60 seats, which was one seat short to elect a President. After Voronin retained his seat as interim President and was elected Speaker of Parliament, massive demonstrations broke out to protest the election outcome. In the early Parliamentary elections held in July 2009, the PCRM lost its Parliamentary majority. Voronin then decided to resign as President and left this post on 11 September 2009.

Vladimir Voronin is married and has two children.