

APPEAL The Civic Coalition for Free and Fair Elections requests the Central Electoral Commission to ensure the operation of the video recording system throughout the Election Day

October 16, 2020

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requests the Central Electoral Commission to ensure the
operation of the
video recording system throughout the Election Day**

The signatory organizations, members of the Civic Coalition for Free and Fair Elections (CALC), request the Central Electoral Commission to:

- urgently ammend point 11 of the Regulation on the operation of the Video Recording System in the polling stations;*
- ensure the operation of the video recording cameras on the Election Day, starting with the preparations for the opening of the polling station and ending with the tabulation of voting results by PEB members.*

Presidential elections in the Republic of Moldova are to be

held on November 1, 2020. These elections will take place under specific conditions, caused by the national and/ or regional, and international (elections held abroad) sanitary and epidemiological restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the national level, we found that as of October 13, 2020, just two weeks before the start of presidential elections in the country, the National Extraordinary Commission for Public Health established “the red code” of emergency in public health in most administrative territorial units (except for Hincesti, Leovo and Soroca Districts)[\[1\]](#). Internationally, according to the data published by the World Health Organization[\[2\]](#), the spread of the new coronavirus infection (COVID-19) has entered a new phase, with the number of infected increasing daily, especially in Europe and Americas[\[3\]](#).

Therefore, we ascertain that the Presidential Elections of November 1, 2020 will be held under limited monitoring both by national and international missions, as well as by observers’ representing presidential candidates. In this regard, we note that the number of national and international observers who will be monitoring the conduct of the elections is significantly lower compared to previous national elections.

Thus, the presidential elections of 2016 were monitored by 3,096 national observers and, respectively, 562 international observers accredited by the CEC. The parliamentary elections of 2019 were attended by 3,389 national and, respectively, 776 international observers. At the same time, for the presidential elections of November 1, 2020, (as of October 15, 2020) the CEC accredited only 1,070 national observers representing public associations (32% of the total number of observers involved in 2019 elections) and only 139 international observers (17 % of the total number of observers involved in 2019 elections).

In addition, it should be reminded that the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has decided to modify the format of Election Observation Missions (EOM) in the Republic of Moldova, limiting the observation missions to long-term ones only[4]. This means that the EOM will not have short-term observers, who could represent the largest number of international observers and who would directly monitor the events of Election Day.

In conclusion, we consider that given the specific circumstances of this election and lack of observers in most of the polling stations, video monitoring of election operations throughout the day (from the preparations for the opening of the polling station until the tabulation of voting results by PEB members) can increase the transparency of electoral procedures on Election Day and help prevent or prove possible violations. **Accordingly, video monitoring of electoral procedures can help increase public confidence in the final results of the elections confirmed by electoral authorities.**

In light of the above mentioned, we ask the Central Electoral Commission to urgently operate the necessary amendments to *the Regulation on the operation of the video recording systems in polling stations* approved by the CEC Decision no. 2265 of February 8, 2019, providing for conducting video recording of electoral operations not only until the opening of the polling station and during the vote counting procedures, but throughout the Election Day (at least, [5] as it had been originally stated when the decision to purchase video equipment was made and accordingly, implemented the parliamentary elections of 2019).

The signatories of this Appeal believe that, *video monitoring of electoral operations throughout Election Day is substantiated by the following considerations:*

- *Increasing voters' confidence in the correctness of*

electoral operations carried out;

- *Increasing the responsibility of members of electoral bodies while performing electoral operations;*
 - *Reducing potential violations, electoral fraud within polling stations, as well as ensuring compliance with epidemiological rules imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic;*
 - *Availability of recorded video evidence in case of clashes, violations or filing complaints.*
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[1] National Extraordinary Commission for Public Health, [Decision](#) no. 34 of 13.10.2020

[2] [WHO](#) Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard

[3] [Press release](#) of the WHO on COVID-19 of October 12, 2020

[4] [The OSCE / ODIHR election observation mission](#) informed the Central Electoral Commission about the change in the format of the observation activity carried out in the Republic of Moldova.

[5] An additional alternative would be to broadcast live the electoral process in each polling station on the web platforms managed by the CEC.