



Moldova – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 7 February 2011

Up to date information regarding the position of the communist party in Moldova. Information on the current political situation in Moldova.

A report from the Russian news agency *ITAR-TASS* states:

“Moldova has been unstable since last spring, when the opposition displeased with the victory of the Party of Communists, which had been in office for eight years, started protests. The protests developed into riots and attacks on the parliament and the presidential residence. The chief of state has not been elected since then. The opposition blocked the election last spring, and the Party of Communists boycotted the presidential election in July. Four parties – the Party of Communists, the Liberal Democratic Party, the Democratic Party and the Liberal Party – won the parliamentary election in November with 42, 32, 15 and 12 seats correspondingly. It takes 61 votes to elect the president. If the presidential election fails again, the parliament will be dismissed.” (ITAR-TASS (6 February 2011) *Moldovan parliament starts spring session on February 10*)

A report from the *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* states:

“In April 2009, Moldova, a former Soviet republic sandwiched between Romania and Ukraine, earned short-lived attention for post-election street riots that some dubbed a Twitter revolution. This brief eruption of popular discontent led some to expect another 'color revolution' along the lines of those in Georgia in 2003 and Ukraine in 2004, both of which ushered in unwaveringly pro-Western governments and attracted immediate support from Washington and Brussels. While the riots in Moldova did not lead to an immediate change of government -- and had little to do with Twitter -- they did mark the beginning of the end for a generation of Moldovan ruling elites brought up in the Soviet system. Since that time, Moldova has held two national elections, and a European-oriented coalition of parties has gained votes and seats in parliament both times. In fact, since the disputed April 2009 elections, the parliamentary balance of power has shifted from a strong old-guard majority, with then-President Vladimir Voronin's Communist Party holding 60 of 101 seats, to a 59-seat majority for the Alliance for European Integration (AEI) following elections in November. The alliance's three constituent parties range from conservative-nationalist to pragmatic-centrist, but all agree that Moldova's future lies in closer cultural, institutional and trade ties with Europe.” (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (3 February 2011) *Moldova's Revolution in Slow Motion*)

An *Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe* report on the November 2010 elections in Moldova states:

“The elections became necessary following an extended political stalemate in which two consecutive parliaments elected in 2009 were unable to elect a president of the Republic and were dissolved. The sharp divisions in the parliament spilled over into the election campaign, which was sometimes polarized, with some candidates using inflammatory language and messages. Much of the campaign was low key, but it became increasingly active as election day approached. There were several isolated

instances of election-related threats and intimidation, but the campaign atmosphere was peaceful overall.” (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (29 November 2010) *Republic of Moldova, Early Parliamentary Elections, 28 November 2010: Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions*, p.1)

In a section titled “Campaign Environment” this report states:

“The campaign around the country was generally peaceful. It was initially low key but increased in intensity as election day approached. Most campaigning was via the media, although parties also held hundreds of meetings and small rallies, distributed leaflets and campaigned door-to-door. Large rallies – drawing several hundred or more people – were generally held in the regions only when leaders of major parties visited. Campaign events often featured concerts or entertainment. Another aspect of the campaign was the use of the internet, including social networking sites. Party billboards and posters were prominent across the country, including many electronic billboards in Chisinau. The EC stipulates that electoral advertising is restricted to designated places, but OSCE/ODIHR observers noted that allocation of those places was not sufficient for all political contestants to display their electoral materials. Many posters were torn down, defaced or plastered over, leading to a multitude of complaints.” (ibid, pp. 6-7)

This section of the report refers to allegations of intimidation as follows:

“Several isolated instances of election-related threats and intimidation were confirmed. The claim by a PCRM candidate that he was abducted received widespread publicity; the circumstances of the case remained unclear as of election day. Other incidents most often involved threats to persons campaigning door-to-door or distributing electoral materials. Several parties complained that their activists or supporters faced pressure or intimidation.” (ibid, p.7)

A report from the *Eurasia Daily Monitor* which refers to the performance of the Communist Party in the November 2010 elections states:

“Moldova’s Communist Party has won yet again a solid plurality in the parliamentary elections held on November 28. The party chairman, former head of state (2001-2009) Vladimir Voronin led the campaign this time from the opposition, against heavy odds. With all in-country votes counted by midday on November 29, the communists took a distant first place at 40.5 percent of the votes cast, and 44 seats in the 101-seat parliament.” (Eurasia Daily Monitor, Volume: 7 Issue: 212 (29 November 2010) *Communists Win Solid Plurality in Moldova’s Elections Again*)

A *Financial Times* report states:

“Moldova’s parliament has approved a new western-leaning government that aims to set the desperately poor former Soviet republic on a path to closer European integration. The three-party Alliance for European Integration endorsed prime minister Vlad Filat’s new cabinet but opposition Communists refused to take part in Friday’s vote, signalling the continuation of a political stand-off. Mr Filat first became prime minister in September 2009 but his wide-ranging reform agenda became bogged down because the coalition lacked sufficient votes to elect a president. A general election last November again failed to produce a decisive outcome after the alliance won 59 seats in the 101-seat assembly – enough to form another government but two votes short of the total required to nominate a president. Moldova has suffered a political stalemate since April 2009, when a disputed election

won by the Communist party led to violent protests on the streets of the capital Chisinau. The result was reversed in July of that year when fresh elections brought the pro-western alliance to power.” (Financial Times (14 January 2011) *Moldova approves western-leaning government*)

A *Balkan Insight* report states:

“The month of disputed coalition talks in former Soviet republic of Moldova ended late last week when the Parliament approved a new West-leaning government which has the integration into the European Union as its main goal. Vlad Filat, 41, will continue to serve as prime minister, a job he held during the previous government. Snap elections on November 28 gave the ruling pro-Western coalition more seats in parliament than its rival, the Communist Party, although only three of the four parties in the coalition passed the threshold to return to parliament.” (Balkan Insight (17 January 2011) *Moldova Has New Government, But Old Problems Remain*)

In a paragraph headed “Outlook and Implications” an *IHS Global Insight* report states:

“Moldova's pro-EU government is facing uncertain times. The AEI has a fighting chance to elect its own president--unlike in the previous parliament where it had to win over eight votes from the Communists, the reformists now only need to persuade two members of the Communist opposition to cross the party line. However, the Communists have proven to be disciplined in their voting pattern and have a strong leadership, making the AEI's task difficult. While Lupu remains a divisive figure, he also remains one of the key figures of the AEI, and is unlikely to take a back seat. The coming weeks are to prove challenging to the reformist coalition as it will fight not only for its candidate's election as a president but more importantly for the ultimate survival of the AEI government. Should the reformist parties fail to gather 61 votes and all Communist deputies boycott the presidential elections twice, this will trigger yet another extra-term parliamentary election which can be held only in 11 months.” (IHS Global Insight (17 January 2011) *Pro-EU Parties Form Coalition in Moldova But Concerns Remain over Political Stalemate*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

References

Balkan Insight (17 January 2011) *Moldova Has New Government, But Old Problems Remain*

<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/moldova-has-new-government-but-old-problems-remain#>

(Accessed 7 February 2011)

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (3 February 2011) *Moldova's Revolution in Slow Motion*

<http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=42521>

(Accessed 7 February 2011)

Eurasia Daily Monitor, Volume: 7 Issue: 212 (29 November 2010) *Communists Win Solid Plurality in Moldova's Elections Again*
http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=37212&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=27&cHash=e7bd091648
(Accessed 7 February 2011)

Financial Times (14 January 2011) *Moldova approves western-leaning government*
<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e2a075b4-1ffb-11e0-a6fb-00144feab49a.html#axzz1DHhZHTYu>
(Accessed 7 February 2011)

IHS Global Insight (17 January 2011) *Pro-EU Parties Form Coalition in Moldova But Concerns Remain over Political Stalemate*
<http://www.lexisnexis.com>
(Accessed 7 February 2011)
This is a subscription database

ITAR-TASS (6 February 2011) *Moldovan parliament starts spring session on February 10*
<http://www.itar-tass.com/eng/level2.html?NewsID=15928511&PageNum=0>
(Accessed 7 February 2011)

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (29 November 2010) *Republic of Moldova, Early Parliamentary Elections, 28 November 2010: Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions*
http://www.ecoi.net/file_upload/1788_1291404151_47945-en.pdf
(Accessed 7 February 2011)

Sources Consulted

ADEPT
Amnesty International
BBC News
Electronic Immigration Network
European Country of Origin Information Network
Google
Human Rights Watch
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
International Crisis Group
Lexis Nexis
Moldova Azi
Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database
UK Home Office