# Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă

# EXPERT ELECTORAL

Nr. 1(13)/2016





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# 1(13)/2016

# Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă

Permanent Electoral Authority



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# PREȘEDINTELE AEP ANA MARIA PĂTRU: MĂ SIMT RESPONSABILĂ PENTRU FIECARE ALEGĂTOR CARE NU SE PREZINTĂ LA VOT

Ana Maria PĂTRU
Președintele Autorității Electorale Permanente



Interviu realizat de **Politic Scan** 

Ne aflăm în an electoral, ca atare și instituția pe care o conduceți devine de interes pentru foarte multă lume. Puțini știu însă cu ce se ocupă efectiv AEP.

A fost o perioadă în care cetățenii nu făceau distinctie între Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă și Biroul Electoral Central. Pentru mulți, AEP era o instituție care lucra doar în perioada alegerilor, fiind confundată cu Biroul Electoral Central. Un coleg de la o filială ne-a povestit că, fiind abordat deseori cu întrebarea "Ce faceti voi când nu sunt alegeri?", la un moment dat a răspuns astfel: "În primul trimestru, am purtat peste 1.300 de convorbiri telefonice, am trimis peste 1.200 de e-mailuri și am parcurs peste 19.000 km în teritoriu, cam de şase ori lungimea frontierelor României, am organizat 250 de activități de îndrumare și control la primării, am realizat opt controale privind finanțarea partidelor politice și a campaniilor electorale la filialele județene ale partidelor politice, am realizat cinci acțiuni de informare și educare în rândul cetățenilor și asta nu e tot."

Am dat acest exemplu pentru a scoate în evidență două aspecte: faptul că AEP nu

înseamnă doar structura centrală și conducerea acesteia și faptul că pregătirea și organizarea alegerilor începe, pentru AEP, cu mult înaintea anilor electorali.

Revenind la confuzia AEP - BEC, vreau să precizez că în ultimii ani percepția opiniei publice despre instituția noastră s-a schimbat. Electoratul a înțeles că atribuțiile noastre în materie de alegeri sunt de natură tehnică și organizatorică, deasupra oricăror interese partizane, și că suntem o instituție în slujba cetăteanului. Suntem partenerul cetățeanului, îl ajutăm să se informeze corect, îl îndrumăm să-și exercite drepturile electorale, îl încurajăm să se implice în procesele electorale. Obiectivul final al proiectelor noastre, fie că e vorba de Registrul electoral, de informatizarea secțiilor de votare sau de Corpul expertilor electorali, este câștigarea încrederii cetățenilor în puterea votului lor și în corectitudinea alegerilor.

Şi prin aceasta am răspuns parțial la întrebarea dumneavoastră. Sigur, AEP se ocupă cu multe alte aspecte, cum ar fi: finanțarea activității partidelor politice și a campaniilor electorale și controlul aferent

acestor activități, instruirea oficialilor electorali, administrarea Registrului electoral, a Registrului secțiilor de votare, crearea și gestionarea Corpului experților electorali.

# De ce în acest an se vorbește de AEP mai mult decât în alți ani electorali?

Ne aflăm într-un an electoral special, cu două rânduri de alegeri generale, care vor avea loc după alte reguli decât cele de până acum, ca urmare a modificărilor aduse legilor privind alegerile locale și cele parlamentare. E de înțeles interesul față de AEP, dat fiind faptul că prin noua legislație a căpătat atribuții sporite, în primul rând legate de gestionarea a două mari proiecte pe care eu le consider revoluționare: Sistemul informatic de monitorizare a prezenței la vot și de prevenire a votului ilegal și Corpul experților electorali.

De asemenea, ochii sunt ațintiți spre AEP și pentru că, începând din acest an electoral, instituția are un rol-cheie în finanțarea campaniilor electorale. După cum știți, campaniile electorale vor fi finanțate din bani publici, sumele cheltuite de candidați urmând a fi rambursate după alegeri de către AEP.

Autoritatea a devenit o instituție de interes și pentru românii din străinătate, după ce legiuitorul a introdus și instituția noastră în ecuația privind organizarea alegerilor parlamentare pentru românii din afara țării.

Reforma legislației electorale a schimbat regulile și a împărțit atât atribuțiile, cât și responsabilitățile. Pe lângă AEP și Guvern, angrenajul managementului electoral cuprinde numeroase alte instituții: Guvernul, Ministerul Afacerilor Externe, Ministerul Afacerilor Interne, STS, INS, Poșta Română, prefecți, primari.

Una dintre temele populare printre oamenii politici de azi este cea a accesului femeilor în funcții de conducere importante. Ana Maria Pătru este unul dintre exemplele reușite din acest punct de vedere. Cum este să fii femeie și să ai în responsabilitatea ta votul a milioane de oameni?

Tema este preocupantă la nivel mondial, de aceea este poate și atât de populară printre

femei. AEP a urmărit cu interes și îngrijorare evoluția participării femeilor la viața politică.

După ultimele alegeri parlamentare, cele din 2012, un studiu realizat de instituția noastră arăta că prezența femeilor în Parlament în 2012 era de 11,5% – de două ori mai mare decât în prima legislatură de după căderea comunismului, dar de două ori mai mică decât media de 24% din statele membre ale Uniunii Europene.

În 2014, an în care am deținut președinția Asociației Oficialilor Electorali Europeni (ACEEEO) și am organizat la București cea de-a 23-a Conferință a Asociației, tema dezbătută de cei peste 150 de invitați din 60 de țări a fost "Participarea femeilor în procesele electorale și în viața publică". AEP a pledat constant pentru egalitatea de gen în funcțiile publice și a reușit să influențeze decizia politică în privința bonusului financiar acordat partidelor politice care promovează femei în alegeri pe locuri eligibile.

Numirea mea de către Parlament în funcția de președinte al AEP este o dovadă că și în România se schimbă vechile mentalități. Cuantificând activitatea mea în cei patru ani la conducerea AEP, pot spune că aceasta confirmă cel puțin una dintre calitățile femeii: aceea de bun organizator. Am reuşit, în primul rând, să creez în jurul meu o echipă cu care am dus la îndeplinire atribuțiile AEP și am inițiat proiecte curajoase, care și-au dovedit în timp viabilitatea. În România s-a inoculat ideea că șeful unei instituții este însăși instituția. Eu nu sunt de acord cu această gândire, întrucât o instituție are o conducere vremelnică, dar ea este un organism unitar, al cărui succes depinde de toți cei care îl compun, fie că sunt referenți, consultanți, consilieri, directori sau demnitari. Împreună cu echipa, am dezvoltat structura teritorială a AEP, am inițiat proiectele despre care v-am vorbit, am elaborat strategii de comunicare cu electoratul și am făcut cunoscută în lume această instituție tânără, care în țară ba era confundată cu Biroul Electoral Central, ba era ignorată de-a dreptul. Vă aminteam mai devreme de faptul că am fost la conducerea ACEEEO, asociație internațională la care am aderat în anul 2004. La un an de la numirea mea în fruntea AEP, instituția a

devenit membru al Asociației Mondiale a Organismelor Electorale (A-WEB), a cărei președinție o voi deține timp de doi ani, începând cu 2017. AEP a reușit să câștige respectul unui organism internațional de referință pentru domeniul electoral — mă refer aici la Comisia de la Veneția, care, pentru prima dată în istoria activității sale, organizează anul acesta la București, în parteneriat cu AEP, cea de-a 13-a Conferință Europeană a Organismelor de Management Electoral.

Ca președinte al AEP, mă simt responsabilă pentru fiecare alegător care nu se prezintă la vot și mă întreb dacă AEP a făcut destul pentru a-i convinge pe toți cetățenii să își exercite acest drept fundamental. De aceea, prioritatea mea și a echipei AEP este informarea și educarea cetățenilor și cel mai important obiectiv este creșterea prezenței la vot.

## Care este relația clasei politice cu AEP? Care este relația AEP cu partidele politice și candidații?

AEP este o instituție de management electoral autonomă și independentă în raport cu clasa politică, ceea ce nu exclude o relație firească, constantă și corectă cu aceasta.

Cu partidele politice ne intersectăm prin natura atribuțiilor AEP, stabilite prin Legea nr. 334/2006 privind finanțarea activității partidelor politice și a campaniilor electorale. Relația noastră cu partidele politice se realizează prin intermediul mandatarilor financiari ai acestora. Noi acordăm partidelor subvenția de la bugetul de stat, controlăm finanțarea acestora și aplicăm sancțiuni. În anii electorali, interacțiunea AEP cu partidele politice și cu candidații independenți va fi mai intensă, deoarece legea prevede că Autoritatea rambursează acestora cheltuielile de campanie electorală, evident dacă sunt întrunite condițiile legale.

# Care sunt, din punctul de vedere al AEP, provocările anului electoral 2016?

Pentru AEP, marile provocări ale anului electoral 2016 sunt Sistemul informatic de monitorizare a prezenței la vot și de prevenire a votului ilegal și Corpul experților electorali. Sunt proiecte inițiate și gestionate de AEP și ele trebuie să fie funcționale la alegerile locale din 5 iunie. Încă de la sfârșitul anului trecut, am demarat campania de recrutare a operatorilor de calculator ai secțiilor de votare și a experților electorali. Avem zeci de mii de cereri, oamenii noștri lucrează la întreaga capacitate pentru procesarea acestora în termenele prevăzute de lege.

Noua lege pentru alegerea autorităților administrației publice locale a introdus Sistemul informatic de monitorizare a prezenței la vot și de prevenire a votului ilegal (SIMPV), cu aplicabilitate în premieră la alegerile locale din 5 iunie 2016. Informatizarea secțiilor de votare este un proiect inițiat de AEP și folosit cu succes în cadrul unui program-pilot la alegerile parlamentare parțiale din 2010 și 2011. Sistemul este implementat și gestionat de AEP, cu sprijinul Serviciului de Telecomunicații Speciale și al Institutului Național de Statistică, pe baza datelor și informațiilor din Registrul electoral, Registrul secțiilor de votare și din listele electorale complementare.

Utilizarea acestui sistem informatic face practic imposibile tentativele de fraudare prin vot multiplu și asigură o informare exactă, în timp real, cu privire la prezența la urne.

Corpul experților electorali este o altă provocare pentru AEP în anul electoral 2016. Introdus prin noua lege a alegerilor parlamentare, Corpul experților electorali reprezintă o bază de date creată și administrată de AEP, cuprinzând persoane care pot fi președinți ai birourilor electorale ale secțiilor de votare sau locțiitori ai acestora. Cei care vor îndeplini aceste funcții la alegeri vor fi desemnați de AEP, prin tragere la sorți computerizată.

Prin această modalitate, prerogativele privind desemnarea președinților birourilor electorale ale secțiilor de votare și a locțiitorilor acestora se transferă din sarcina primarilor și a prefecților în aceea a Autorității Electorale Permanente. O astfel de procedură va asigura profesionalizarea oficialilor electorali, va elimina orice suspiciune privind o eventuală politizare a acestor numiri și va asigura o mai mare transparență procesului electoral.

Admiterea în Corpul experților electorali se poate face pe bază de aviz, pentru persoanele care au mai deținut funcția de președinte al biroului electoral al secției de votare sau locțiitor al acestuia, și pe bază de examen, pentru cei care nu au îndeplinit anterior aceste funcții.

Votul prin corespondență este o altă premieră pentru sistemul electoral românesc. Parlamentul a adoptat o lege dedicată exclusiv votului prin corespondență și a stabilit ca acesta să fie utilizat doar la alegerile pentru Senat și Camera Deputaților din anul 2016. Potrivit acestui act normativ, Ministerul Afacerilor Externe și Compania Națională "Poșta Română" sunt instituțiile responsabile cu organizarea și desfășurarea procedurilor privind votul prin corespondență, iar AEP oferă sprijin tuturor instituțiilor implicate.

Legea prevede că pot vota prin corespondență doar cetățenii români cu domiciliul sau reședința legal stabilite în străinătate care se înscriu în Registrul electoral cu opțiunea pentru acest tip de vot. Perioada de înscriere începe în data de 1 aprilie 2016 și se încheie la două zile după începerea perioadei electorale pentru alegerile parlamentare.

Marele pariu al AEP în acest an pare a fi sistemul de informatizare a secțiilor de votare. Este acest proiect un pariu deja câștigat?

Pentru mine, care înțeleg pe deplin beneficiile acestui proiect, este un pariu câștigat, însă, pentru cetățeanul pe care îl simt încă sceptic, nu m-aș hazarda să-l declar câștigat decât după ce va trece primul test, cel al alegerilor locale din 5 iunie 2016. Prin acest proiect, bine implementat de Serviciul de Telecomunicații Speciale și AEP, îmi doresc să redăm cetățeanului încrederea că votul lui este în siguranță.

Vă așteptați ca cetățenii de rând să participe în alegeri și ca experți electorali și operatori de calculator ai birourilor electorale ale secțiilor de votare, nu numai ca votanți. În ce măsură acest gen de implicare a cetățenilor va influența alegerile?

Nu doar că ne așteptăm la acest gen de implicare a cetățenilor, este o certitudine

că la alegerile din acest an vor fi zeci de mii de cetățeni pe care îi veți regăsi în secțiile de votare ca operatori de calculator, președinți ai biroului electoral al secției de votare sau locțiitori ai acestora.

Implicarea lor în alegeri va conferi proceselor electorale un plus de transparență. Alegerile nu vor mai fi percepute ca apanaj exclusiv al autorităților, la care cetățeanul nu are altă atribuție decât de a introduce buletinul de vot în urnă. Implicarea cetățeanului în calitate de expert electoral sau operator de calculator în secția de votare este, până la urmă, o altă formă de manifestare democratică a poporului și o garanție suplimentară a corectitudinii și transparenței scrutinului, ceea ce va duce la creșterea încrederii electoratului în alegeri.

Ce a făcut AEP pentru a convinge cetățenii să se implice astfel în procesele electorale?

Am cerut sprijinul cetățenilor prin diferite mijloace, folosind toate canalele de care dispunem. Am realizat videoclipuri, ghiduri, pliante, postere, pe care le-am postat pe toate platformele de comunicare ale instituției (site-ul, pagina oficială de Facebook, canalul de Youtube, rețeaua Twitter) și le-am distribuit în țară, la primării, la sediile filialelor și birourilor noastre județene. Dar cel mai important demers din cadrul acestei campanii l-au constituit întâlnirile și discuțiile directe cu cetățenii din țară și din străinătate. Am mers și vom mai merge în centre universitare, întrucât pentru funcția de operator de calculator al sectiei de votare contăm mult pe sprijinul studenților, al tinerilor în general.

Facem apel la cetățeni să se înscrie în continuare pentru Corpul experților electorali și pentru poziția de operator de calculator, pentru că există încă destule localități unde înregistrăm deficit.

Legea permite cetățenilor să fie implicați în alegeri, să contribuie la democratizarea procesului electoral și sunt optimistă că, începând cu anul 2016, AEP va deveni principalul partener al cetățeanului în alegeri.

# CAMPANIA DE INFORMARE A CETĂŢENILOR ROMÂNI DIN STRĂINĂTATE PRIVIND EXERCITAREA DREPTULUI DE VOT LA ALEGERILE PARLAMENTARE DIN ANUL 2016

Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă (AEP) a demarat, încă de la finalul anului 2015, o amplă campanie de informare a cetățenilor români cu domiciliul sau reședința în străinătate cu privire la modalitățile pe care aceștia le au la dispoziție pentru a-și exercita dreptul de vot în cadrul alegerilor parlamentare de anul acesta. Campania are la bază intrarea în vigoare a Legii nr. 208/2015 privind alegerea Senatului și a Camerei Deputaților, precum și pentru organizarea și funcționarea Autorității Electorale Permanente și a Legii nr. 288/2015 privind votul prin corespondentă, precum și modificarea și completarea Legii nr. 208/2015 privind alegerea Senatului și a Camerei Deputaților, precum și pentru organizarea și funcționarea Autorității Electorale Permanente.

Pentru a asigura informarea corectă și oportună a românilor din afară țării în legătură cu variantele și procedurile de vot prevăzute de noua legislație, AEP a inițiat, în parteneriat cu Ministerul Afacerilor Externe (MAE), campania "Dialog cu diaspora".

# Calendarul sesiunilor de informare

Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă și-a propus un dialog direct cu românii din diaspora, pentru a-i putea sprijini cu maximă eficiență în toate demersurile legate de exercitarea drepturilor electorale. În acest scop, a fost stabilit un calendar al sesiunilor de informare a comunităților românești din afara granitelor asupra modificărilor legislative din domeniul electoral, în care sunt incluse localitățile din străinătate cu prezență românească semnificativă, respectiv: Madrid, Roma, Viena, Londra, Paris, Torino, Bruxelles, Frankfurt, Dublin, Milano, Bonn, München, Bologna, Brescia, Verona, Florența, Castellon, Barcelona, Coslada, Alcalade Henares, Getafe, Arganda del Rey, Mostoles, Chișinău. Cu ocazia acestor întâlniri, reprezentanții comuni-



tăților de români primesc de la oficialii AEP și un set de materiale tipărite: "Ghidul alegătorului român din străinătate", pliantele "Votezi. Expediezi. Contezi", "Expertul electoral" și "Operatorul de calculator în secția de votare".

Până în prezent, delegațiile AEP au avut sesiuni de informare cu reprezentanții comunităților de români din Viena, Madrid, Barcelona, München, Bonn, Bologna, Roma și Atena, în perioada imediat următoare fiind programate evenimente similare în Londra, Edinburgh și Leeds.

## Austria

Seria de întâlniri cu alegătorii români din afara țării, programate în cadrul campaniei de informare derulate de AEP și MAE în legătură cu exercitarea dreptului de vot la alegerile parlamentare de la sfârșitul acestui an, a debutat la **Viena**.

Președintele AEP, Ana Maria Pătru, alături de ministrul delegat pentru relațiile cu românii de pretutindeni, Dan Stoenescu, și de ambasadorul României la Viena, Bogdan



Mazuru, au participat în data de 11 februarie 2016 la o reuniune dedicată informării cetățenilor români din Austria pe tema variantelor și procedurilor de vot prevăzute de noua legislație electorală pentru alegerile parlamentare.

La întâlnirea găzduită de Ambasada României la Viena au participat reprezentanți ai comunității românești din Austria, ai presei de limbă română și ai clerului de origine română din această țară, precum și membri ai unor asociații românești.

Subiectul care a suscitat un interes major a fost cel legat de votul prin corespondență, variantă pe care cetățenii români cu drept de vot din străinătate o pot utiliza în premieră la alegerile parlamentare din acest an.

# Spania

În perioada 18 – 22 februarie 2016, o delegație a Autorității Electorale Permanente condusă de vicepreședintele instituției, Dan Vlaicu, s-a întâlnit cu reprezentanți ai mediului asociativ și ai comunității românești din **Madrid** și **Barcelona** pentru a discuta despre noile prevederi legislative din domeniul electoral, care vizează persoanele cu domiciliul sau reședința în străinătate.

## Germania

Timp de două zile – 27 și 28 februarie 2016 – președintele AEP, Ana Maria Pătru, și ministrul delegat pentru relațiile cu românii de pretutindeni, Dan Stoenescu, au avut discuții cu alegătorii români cu domiciliul sau reședința în Germania, în cadrul unor întâlniri găzduite de Consulatele Generale ale României din **München** și **Bonn**.

Întâlnirea cu oficialii AEP şi MAE le-a oferit reprezentanților comunităților de români din Germania ocazia de a primi lămuriri şi explicații pe tema modalităților şi procedurilor de vot valabile la alegerile pentru Senat şi Camera Deputaților, în contextul modificărilor aduse legislației în domeniu. Aceștia au solicitat informații detaliate privind înscrierea în Registrul electoral şi exercitarea dreptului de vot prin corespondență, prevederi introduse în premieră în legislație pentru românii din străinătate şi aplicabile la alegerile parlamentare din anul 2016.

Președintele AEP, Ana Maria Pătru, i-a încurajat pe participanții la discuții să distribuie comunității de români din Germania atât informațiile și explicațiile primite cu ocazia acestor întâlniri, cât și materialele tipărite.



### Italia

În perioada 3 – 6 martie, o delegație condusă de președintele AEP, Ana Maria Pătru, s-a aflat în Italia, fiind alcătuită din ministrul delegat pentru relațiile cu românii de pretutindeni, Dan Stoenescu, consilierul de stat Sandra Pralong, senatorul Viorel Badea, precum și deputații Mircea Lubanovici și Aurelian Mihai.

Seria întâlnirilor cu românii din Italia a fost inaugurată în data de 3 martie, la **Bologna**, unde reprezentanții instituțiilor din România au răspuns întrebărilor conaționalilor, încurajându-i să se implice în alegeri, atât ca votanți, cât și în calitate de experți electorali sau operatori de calculator ai secțiilor de votare.

Următorul moment important al deplasării delegației AEP l-a constituit întâlnirea organizată în data de 4 martie la Academia



di Romania, cu ambasadorul României la Roma, Dana Constantinescu, și consulii generali ai României la Bologna, Trieste și Torino. Președintele AEP a discutat cu diplomații români despre rolul și atribuțiile lor în organizarea și desfășurarea alegerilor parlamentare și i-a asigurat de colaborare deplină din partea Autorității în vederea atingerii obiectivului comun al unor alegeri transparente și corecte în diaspora.

Tot la **Roma**, oficialii români au avut ocazia să discute cu reprezentanții clerului de origine română din Italia, care și-au manifestat disponibilitatea de a facilita diseminarea informațiilor din domeniul electoral, furnizate de AEP, către enoriașii români.

În capitala Italiei a avut loc și întâlnirea delegației AEP cu peste 150 de concetățeni din peninsulă: lideri ai comunităților de români, reprezentanți ai clerului, ai presei românești din Italia sau simpli cetățeni.

Ultima zi a turneului de informare întreprins de demnitarii români în Italia, respectiv ziua de duminică, 6 martie 2016, a coincis cu "Sărbătoarea românilor", la care au participat peste opt mii de români, în cadrul

mai multor festivități tradiționale, dintre care una dedicată mărțișorului. Tinerii din delegația AEP au împărțit mii de pliante și broșuri realizate de AEP pentru informarea alegătorilor români din afara țării, iar președintele AEP a reiterat importanța exercitării de către cetățenii români din diaspora a dreptului de vot, subliniind disponibilitatea autorităților de resort de a face toate demersurile pentru a asigura transparența și corectitudinea derulării proceselor electorale.

Delegația AEP și-a încheiat deplasarea cu o vizită la Biserica Penticostală Betania, din Fonte Nuova, prilej cu care a discutat cu membri ai acestei comunități religioase de români despre votul de la alegerile parlamentare și despre posibilitatea de a se implica în alegeri ca experți electorali sau operatori de calculator ai secțiilor de votare.



### Grecia

La data de 18 martie, o delegație din cadrul Autorității Electorale Permanente s-a deplasat la **Atena** în vederea participării în cadrul unei reuniuni de lucru cu reprezentanți ai comunității românești din Grecia, cărora le-au fost expuse modalitățile și procedurile pentru exercitarea dreptului de vot de către românii cu domiciliul sau reședința în afara țării. Evenimentul a fost găzduit de Ambasada României la Atena.

Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă continuă campania de informare a cetățenilor români din străinătate cu privire la elementele de noutate de ordin legal și procedural care vizează exercitarea dreptului de vot, având convingerea că implicarea acestora în deciziile care privesc țara este nu doar benefică, ci și necesară.



# TRAINING ELECTORAL STAKEHOLDERS – THE NEED FOR A SPECIALIZED ELECTORAL EXPERTS' BODY: ROMANIA'S EXPERIENCE

Dan VLAICU former Vice President of the Permanent Electoral Authority (up to April 5, 2016)



#### Abstract:

Electoral administrators are faced with immense operational tasks in often challenging political environments. It is increasingly recognised that solid professional knowledge and skills are required to manage electoral processes effectively, especially in the context in which the international community is introducing global standards, and examples of best practice for effective and accountable elections management.

**Keywords:** Electoral Experts' Body, training programme, voter, qualified personnel

#### Abstract:

Managerii procesului electoral se confruntă cu sarcini operaționale importante în medii politice cu numeroase provocări. Se admite din ce în ce mai mult că, pentru ca un proces electoral să fie organizat eficient, este nevoie de cunoștințe și calificări profesionale solide, mai ales în contextul în care comunitatea internațională introduce standarde universale și exemple de bună practică pentru organizarea eficientă și responsabilă a alegerilor.

Cuvinte-cheie: Corpul experților electorali, program de formare, alegător, personal calificat

# What encompasses electoral training and who are its stakeholders?

Elections are huge, complex and costly events than cannot be organized and conducted without a large number of people who should be fully aware of their responsibilities in the electoral process. Furthermore, all these people are accountable to the law, whether they are permanent or temporary staff, which makes it a necessity for them to know and understand not only the legislation, but also the working practices and the new technology or processes introduced. In this context, training them in the areas mentioned is essential for a good organization and conduct of any electoral process.

Electoral administrators are faced with immense operational tasks in often challenging political environments. It is increasingly recognised that solid professional knowledge and skills are required to manage electoral processes effectively, especially in the context in which the international community is introducing global standards, and examples of best practice for effective and accountable elections management.

It is important to highlight that effective and proper training is built upon clearly defined needs, and that carefully developed training objectives must be established around those needs. More so, it is important to note that training is a very specific activity, which is different from education. While education focuses on learning about a subject, training focuses on learning how.

Training is a planned and organised activity for assisting participants to acquire skills and knowledge.

Fundamentally, training helps someone to do something better and the skills it develops are usually specific to a particular task. Therefore, the objectives in training are more specific than those in education. In training it is usually easier to state the goals

<sup>1</sup> Venice Commission, *Organisation of elections by an impartial body*, Science and technique of democracy collection, no. 41, Council of Europe Publishing, 2006.

in a clear and ultimately measurable form because the expected outcome is more easily defined.

But, as mentioned above, it is important to understand why there is a need for training, who are the stakeholders who would benefit from training in the electoral field and how training is conducted for different types of stakeholders.

The stakeholders of an Electoral Management Body are those individuals, groups and organizations that have an interest or "stake" in the EMB's operations. They can be classified either as primary stakeholders, who directly affect or are directly affected by the EMB's activities, policies and practices, or as secondary stakeholders, who have a looser connection with the EMB's activities.

Primary stakeholders usually include the following groups:

- political parties and candidates;
- EMB staff;
- the executive branch of government;
- legislatures;
- electoral dispute resolution bodies;
- the judicial system;
- election monitors and domestic and international election observers;
  - the media;
- the electorate voters and prospective voters;
  - civil society organizations;
- the donor community and electoral assistance agencies.

While this is an extensive list, for each country there are specific groups of stakeholders that EMBs target in order to provide training not only in the election period, but also between elections.

Before planning any training in the electoral field, an EMB has to identify, in accordance to its political and electoral system, the following:

- the people who are in need of electoral training;
- the skills and knowledge that different groups of stakeholders will acquire;
- how to deliver the training programme to various participants taking into account their preferences and the resources

available (human, material, financial resources and logistics);

• when and how often training for different groups should be conducted.

Furthermore, in accordance to the needs that different stakeholders have, the electoral management body has to employ different methods and techniques when designing the content of the training programme and how it is presented to the participants.

Taking all these aspects into consideration I will present the strategies, methods and techniques that the Permanent Electoral Authority employs in terms of training its electoral stakeholders.

# PEA's attributions in terms of training electoral stakeholders and how the training programme of the Permanent Electoral Authority was conducted up to now

The preparation, organization and conduct of the electoral process require a proper training of all the persons involved in the conduct of electoral operations, and also educating and informing the voters.

For this reason, training the persons with responsibilities in the organization and conduct of elections is one of the main tasks of the Permanent Electoral Authority (PEA). Thus, according to the law, the PEA elaborates and "organizes specific training programmes in electoral matters for the staff of the authorities and institutions with responsibilities in the organization of elections, for persons who may become members of the electoral bureaus and for computer operators in polling stations".

At the same time, in the exercise of its functions, such as education and information, the PEA develops and "implements programmes of information and training of the electors on the Romanian electoral system, and on the observance of the electoral deontology and ensures their popularisation."

As I stated previously, PEA has to respond to the needs of various groups who directly affect or are directly affected by our activities, policies and practices, and also for

those who have a looser connection with our activities.

Furthermore, depending on each type of stakeholders, PEA provides electoral training not only when elections are organized and conducted, but also in the period between elections, hence there are training programmes and sessions that have a permanent character, and others that have a temporary one (periodic training).

# A. Periodic training for electoral stakeholders

The Permanent Electoral Authority develops and conducts periodic training programmes for the following electoral stakeholders:

- members of the polling stations bureaus, mainly their presidents and vice-presidents;
- authorities and institutions with responsibilities in the organization and conduct of elections;
  - financial trustees of political parties;
  - international election observers;
- other EMBs in need of electoral assistance;
  - the media.
- 1. Training for members of the polling stations bureaus and for authorities and institutions with responsibilities in the organization and conduct of elections

Up to now, the bulk of periodic training programme takes place during an electoral process period. In Romania, the electoral period varies from 60 to 90 days, depending on the type of elections. The training programme is designed for members of the polling stations bureaus, mainly their presidents and vice-presidents, and for the authorities and institutions with responsibilities in the organization and conduct of elections.

Due to the fact that one of the key elements of an electoral process are the persons called upon to administer electoral procedures and operations, it is essential for

all electoral officials to act professionally, otherwise the entire process is disrupted.

The training programme of the Permanent Electoral Authority for the members of the polling stations bureaus is conducted regularly at national level and it is aimed at training and ensuring the professional development of the participants.

For example, during 2014, when in Romania were held elections for the members of the European Parliament and presidential ones, the training sessions PEA organized and conducted were as follows:

- 173 sessions for people who were eligible to become presidents and vice-presidents of electoral bureaus;
- 329 sessions for the presidents and vice-presidents of the polling stations bureaus (there were 37.064 persons trained for the European Parliament elections and 37.505 for the presidential ones);
- 114 sessions for mayors and secretaries of administrative-territorial units.

Through the national training programme of the members of the electoral bureaus we seek to familiarise the participants with knowing the unitary application of the regulatory framework and the specific activities of the organization and conduct of electoral processes, to help them develop the necessary skills for solving any issues that appear in the electoral process and, not in the least, to facilitate the access to specialized information in the electoral field.

For this programme the technique used is instructor-led training, where all sessions are conducted face to face with the participants. The methods used include a lecture component which addresses the topics mentioned previously, demonstrations and examples in regards to various aspects (e.g.: how to report the number of voters present in the poll, how to fill the statement of poll, how to establish if a ballot paper is null etc.) and questions and answers sessions.

The training materials used during these sessions are developed by the PEA and are available to each participant not only in print, but also in electronic format.

We develop and distribute for each electoral process during the national training programme the following materials:

- a manual regarding the regulations on the electoral process, which includes a detailed guide for the presidents and vicepresidents of the polling stations bureaus;
- posters containing information on the main electoral operations that take place in election day with step-by-step instructions for the presidents and vice-presidents of the polling station bureaus;
- flyers for every member of the polling station bureau with a check-list in regards to the electoral operations that take place in election day.

An important aspect that has to be highlighted is that the manual regarding the regulations on the electoral process is published in three versions: one that is solely in Romanian, another that is bilingual (Romanian-Hungarian) due to the fact that the largest ethnic minority is Hungarian, and a trilingual one (Romanian-English-French).

Complex by its magnitude, by the teaching and learning methods and materials used in the training that is made available to all participants, this programme subscribes to the goal of developing an electoral management system in accordance with democratic values which, through qualified personnel, has the purpose of forming and refining a body of electoral officials.

Another complex training programme that PEA conducts is that for the persons responsible to operate in the Electoral Registry. Although the Electoral Registry was used for the first time in the electoral processes conducted in 2014, the training programme started at the end of 2012.

Training participants in how to operate with the software application "Electoral Registry" was designed both for PEA staff and for representatives of municipalities and prefectures. At national level there were trained 6036 people from 3186 municipalities and 3044 people from 42 prefectures, which represents a participation of 95.54% nationwide for municipalities and 100% of the prefectures (Bucharest City Hall has not undergone training).

These training sessions were held at the end of 2012 and also in April 2013 and there were 251 in total. The techniques used were instructor-led sessions based on manuals developed by the PEA and computer-based training in which the participants learned how to use the application by working with different facilities that it provides.

Due to all these aspects and the length and complexity of these training programmes, there are numerous resources allotted by the PEA. Hence, these training programmes have the following characteristics:

- high financial costs;
- a great number of human resources, as these training programmes involve all PEA staff;
- various material resources and logistics.

Furthermore, because up to now there was no permanent body of electoral officials, the presidents and vice-presidents of the polling station bureau are a very heterogenic group in terms of education and experience in participating in other electoral processes.

In this context, a two hour training session with the average of 200 participants allows a limited accumulation of knowledge and skills.

Hence, while up to now the model used for organizing and conducting the training programme was satisfactory, we proposed and advocated during the electoral reform debate the development of a specialized body of electoral officials trained on a permanent basis.

# 2. Training the financial trustees of political parties

Another area of training of the PEA is the one for the financial trustees of the competitors in elections. The training sessions for financial trustees are organized in each electoral period, and seek to familiarize the participants with the following aspects:

- the legal requirements regarding funding of competitors;
- what is the maximum expenditures which may be incurred in the campaign and what are the legal provisions in terms of

donations that are made during the disclosure of the date of elections and the end of the electoral campaign;

- how to declare the election propaganda materials products, broken down by category;
- how to report the revenue and election expenses.

All these aspects are explained and exemplified during the instructor-led training sessions, and the participants are also being provided by the PEA with written materials, such as:

- guides for financial trustees that are adapted for each type of elections;
- models for various documents that financial trustees have to elaborate (donations form, model of monthly statement of expenditure by category, model of reports regarding the revenues and election expenses, etc.).

All these materials are also available in electronic format on PEA's portal.

It is also important to note that the number of training sessions depends on the number of participants. For example, in 2014 there was one training session organized for the elections for the European Parliament (17 participants), 18 for the partial local elections (89 participants), and one session for the presidential elections (24 participants).

## 3. Training international observers

The Permanent Electoral Authority offers training sessions for international observers from foreign EMBs for each electoral process.

In 2014, through the project "Support to Building Institutional Capacities of the Electoral Management Bodies and other concerned target groups in the Romanian ODA priority countries", PEA, in partnership with UNDP and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, conducted two electoral training programmes, one for the elections for the European Parliament (EP) and another for the presidential ones.

In the case of the first one, there was a seminary held on the topic of "Voter Registration", due to the fact that the IT



system 'Electoral Registry' was used for the first time in an electoral process in Romania. The participants were familiarized with the history of implementing the Electoral Register, its main features, the legal framework governing it, and they also participated in some practical demonstrations. Furthermore, they participated in a session on the legal framework of the EP elections in Romania and the rights and obligations for international observers. the presidential elections and the rights and obligations for international observers.

The second training was designed for the participants from the Seoul Metropolitan Branch of the National Electoral Commission in South Korea.

4. Training for other EMBs in electoral assistance programmes

Currently, the Permanent Electoral Authority is one of the most active EMB providing bilateral electoral assistance through ODA. It has a strategic vision for its international position, wanting to become a regional centre of electoral expertise and to serve as an electoral knowledge hub. It aims to share Romania's transitional experience as well as its own experience as a permanent electoral management body. Priority countries are from North Africa, in particular Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, from Eastern Europe, and also the MENA countries.



In regards to the programme for the presidential elections there were two trainings, one for each round of elections. For the first round, there were participants from Afghanistan, Georgia, Ukraine, Palestine, Iraq, Latvia, Albania, Moldova and a representative of International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). The training consisted of two seminaries, one on the topic of "Financing of political parties" and the other on "Women's participation in elections" and also a session on the legal framework for



The main topics that PEA has offered training for other EMBs are:

- EMB management and operations;
- voter registration and issues regarding Election Day, such as preparations, electoral procedures and operations, training, etc.;
  - women in elections;
  - democratic transitions;
- integrity issues including combating fraud.

# 5. Training programmes designed for the media

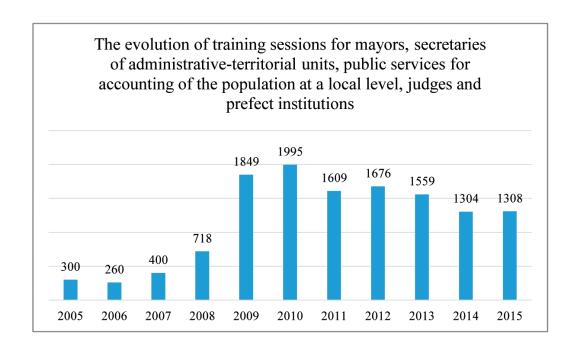
They are generally conducted in specific projects, such as "Electoral discourse without discrimination", developed by PEA in partnership with a national NGO and the National Council for Combating Discrimination. This project was implemented in 2014 and one of its main components were the training sessions organized for members of different media outlets in which they were taught how to present materials related to the electoral campaign and the stance of the competitors and how to moderate the public debates with the candidates in order to

prevent the social phenomena of hate-speech in the electoral campaigns. The training was aimed to familiarize the participants on how to prevent hate-speech in the 2014 electoral campaigns not only in terms of printed materials and videos, but also in the online content published by the media.

# B. Permanent training for electoral stakeholders

The electoral training which has a permanent character is being provided by the PEA on a constant basis to mayors, secretaries of administrative-territorial units, public services for accounting of the population at a local level, judges and prefect institutions.

These training sessions are conducted monthly at the local level by experts from the PEA's branches and county offices. The main topics of these training sessions concern the way these institutions fulfill their duties and responsibilities in the electoral field in accordance with the electoral law and PEA's instructions and decisions.



As we can see, the evolution of the permanent training increased since the

inception of PEA, and it is especially higher in electoral years.

Permanent training in the context of developing a specialized electoral experts' body and the appearance of a new group of stakeholders due to the introduction of computerisation of polling stations

As I previously stated, we respond to the needs of various stakeholders in terms of providing complex training programmes. As you can see, while we offer periodic and permanent training, each programme is shaped as such as to respond to various aspects: legal provisions, number of participants, participants' level of knowledge, specialized categories of stakeholders, etc.

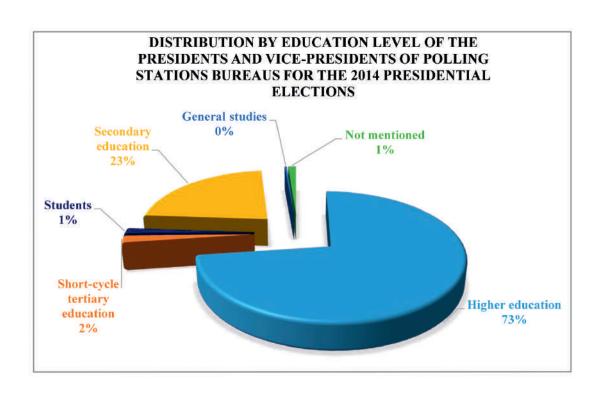
While up to now the majority of our training programmes were successful, we ascertained that the main training programme, which was designed for the electoral officials had several issues that needed to be remedied. These were as follows:

- it was organized using a lot of resources, especially financial and material ones;
- due to the electoral legislation that was in place up to 2015 the electoral officials could not form a specialized body, and they could not be trained on a permanent basis;

- it did not provide a sufficient timeframe for the participants to better accumulate knowledge and skills, due to the fact that one training session lasted an average of two hours;
- the trained groups were very large (about 200 participants) which was not conducive to the learning and evaluation processes;
- for each election the participants were a very heterogenic group in terms of education and experience in participating in other electoral processes.

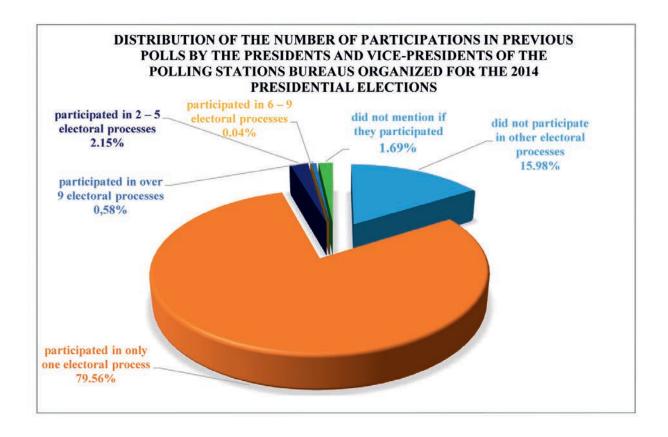
A very clear example for the last mentioned issue is the distribution of the electoral officials that were appointed for the 2014 presidential elections in terms of education and experience.

In terms of occupation/profession the largest share of persons proposed to be appointed presidents and vice-presidents of the polling stations bureaus was that of persons working in the legal field, namely 14.39%, followed by those in the field education, 11.54%. Furthermore, as shown in the first figure, 27% of the persons appointed presidents and vice-presidents of the polling stations bureaus did not have a higher level of education.



Another aspect is that of their experience in other electoral processes. While about 79.56% participated in only one

electoral process previously, 15.98% were presidents or vice-presidents of the polling stations bureaus for the first time.



Due to all these aspects, we advocated since 2012 the creation and development of a specialized body of electoral officials trained on a permanent basis. This issue was included in an Electoral Code that we proposed to the legislators. While this code was not adopted, in the context of the electoral reform started by the legislator at the beginning of 2015, we offered our experience and expertise in drafting the new electoral law. In this respect we advocated for several major issues, among which there was:

- 1. The creation of a specialized body of electoral officials trained on a permanent basis by a specialized centre for training created under PEA, namely the Electoral Experts' Body;
- 2. The computerisation of polling stations.

Hence, with our expertise, these important reforms were introduced in the new electoral law.

In regards to the creation of a specialized body of electoral officials trained on a permanent basis, starting from the beginning of 2016 we are developing and implementing a new training programme for electoral officials that has the following characteristics:

- a larger publicity and involvement of the participants, due to the national public information campaign begun at the end of 2015:
- a continuous character due to the fact that the training sessions are conducted periodically, not only during the electoral period, but also in between elections;
- it is more efficient, due to the fact that the groups of participants are smaller in size (a maximum of 40 participants);
- it is adaptable to the knowledge level of the participants in terms of curricula and materials developed;

• it is more complex in terms of training techniques used, due to the fact that besides the face to face instructor-led training there is an e-learning platform updated on a permanent basis;

• it provides a better evaluation of the participants, based on our own methodology.

Through these steps, we aim to have an improved training programme that will offer the participants an increased level of knowledge and skills accumulated in the electoral field.

In regards to the computerisation of polling station, it will be implemented for the 2016 electoral process.

In this context, there is a new group of stakeholders in need of training, namely the operators performing this task in the polling station. At the moment, their training programme is similar to the training programme for electoral officials.

## **Conclusions**

As we can all see, training is a major component required to manage electoral processes effectively and the work of an EMB in this context is extensive and complex. In order to offer professional knowledge and skills to various groups of stakeholders we have to find new solutions to possible training issues and implement them efficiently.

In our experience of over 10 years in training various groups of stakeholders, we have found that without the existence of permanent training programmes it is very difficult to train participants that are heterogeneous in terms of education, experience and profession.

Furthermore, in comparison to other models of training electoral officials, especially those specific to western democracies where the electoral officials are public servants that usually studied in the law field, our situation is very different, as I have previously exemplified.

In this situation we had to design and advocate a new training model, one where a new specialized body of electoral officials will be trained on a permanent basis using modern training techniques. Hence, the creation and development of the electoral experts' body.

At the same time, due to the computerisation of polling stations we have faced a new challenge in terms of training a new group of stakeholders, which is already proving successful.

All these changes are possible due to us advocating and proposing these changes since 2012, and especially during the 2015 electoral reform. More so, this was accomplished by presenting the legislators with a viable and efficient model of selecting, training and evaluating a new generation of specialized electoral officials.

### **About the author:**

Dan VLAICU was a board member of the Permanent Electoral Authority, holding the vice-president position since august 2012 until April 5, 2016. He graduated the Faculty of Political Science, University of Bucharest, and he is also trained in the electoral campaigns field by the National Democratic Institute of U.S.A., in financing projects, public marketing and development of capacities. His public career started in 1998 as a collaborator for the Romanian Government within the Prime Minister Office. During 2000 and 2004 he was analyst for the Romanian Association for Liberty and Democracy and also adviser of the Secretary General of National Liberal Party. Between 2004 and 2006 he held the Personal Counselor position of the Delegate Minister for Coordination of General Secretariat of Government and was elected as Local Counselor within the Local Council of District 5 of Bucharest. From 2006 to 2007 he was Personal Counselor of the Delegate Minister for Liaison with the Parliament and until 2009 he served as President of the National Authority for Consumer Protection.

# TRENDS AND PATTERN OF VOTING AND ELECTIONS IN LIBERIA

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#### Abstract:

In line with the 1986 revised constitution of the Republic of Liberia, like other countries all over the world, there is a time set by each nation to validate or reaffirm the mandate given by some officials in the administration of the governance processes of the state. Strict from the declaration of independence in 1847, Liberia's electioneering trends and pattern have been occasioned by the use of patronage and cash violence sponsored by the imperialist America in order to delude underprivileged electorates in casting their ballots in favor of the choices made by the imperialists and to the detriment of the society. There has never been a research into the area of the trend and pattern of

#### Abstract:

În conformitate cu constituția Republicii Liberia, revizuită în 1986, ca și în alte țări din întreaga lume, și aici există un termen stabilit de fiecare națiune pentru validarea sau ratificarea mandatului dat de unii oficiali pentru administrarea proceselor de guvernare a statului. Doar de la declararea independenței din 1847, tendinţa şi tiparul procesului electoral din Liberia au fost determinate de clientelism și de acte de violență sponsorizate de America imperialistă pentru a amăgi electoratul defavorizat să își acorde voturile în favoarea celor preferați de imperialiști și în detrimentul societății. Niciodată nu s-a realizat un studiu al tendinței și tiparului procesului electoral pentru a analiza cultura politică a electoratului

electioneering to study the political culture of the electorates in Liberia. However, the lone evidence pointing in that direction, which is not common in elections processes across the globe but noticeable in terms to underpin the relevance of electioneering in Liberia, is that the candidates and political parties supported by the imperialists never lose, more so, when the incumbent is a favorite of the imperialists in the election. Notwithstanding, the Senatorial bi-elections of 2014 draw on an irreversible reality when it witnessed a shift in the paradigm in the electoral process of Liberia. The son of Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf – the ninth richest President in Africa -, Robert Sirleaf, an independent candidate, lost to an opposition candidate, soccer legend ambassador George Weah, in what is recorded as the most disgraceful defeat ever in the senatorial race in the country (Front Page Africa, 2014). The electoral race and the elections were rated and generally considered free, fair and credible by the international community, including the imperialists. This leaves a leading puzzle as to what were the determining factors that led the electorate and voting trend in 2014 senatorial bi-elections to the manner in which they did? Using primary data from interviews and reviews of other works on Liberia's elections, this paper disentangles the dynamics that predisposed the trend and pattern of voters in 2014 senatorial bi-elections which can be used as a framework to construct an additional concrete view of Liberia voters and predict future elections.

**Keywords:** Liberia, electoral race, imperialists, Senatorial bi-elections, political trend

## Introduction

Electioneering enables voters to decide on their choices based on a number of factors which may include: desirability of the individual or a party's manifestoes, set of alternative choices before the voters, religious and cultural affiliations, ethnicity or a combination of other factors including personality of a contestant and sometimes pa-

liberian. Oricum, singura dovadă care ne indică această direcție, care nu este una obișnuită pentru procesele electorale din lume, dar este remarcabilă pentru că susține importanța procesului electoral în Liberia, este aceea că partidele politice și candidații imperialiștilor nu pierd niciodată, mai ales când deținătorul funcției este un favorit al imperialiștilor la alegerile respective. Cu toate acestea, alegerile senatoriale din 2014 au configurat o realitate ireversibilă pentru că s-a înregistrat o schimbare a paradigmei procesului electoral din Liberia. Fiul doamnei Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, al nouălea cel mai bogat președinte din Africa, candidat independent, a pierdut în fața unui candidat al opoziției, o legendă a fotbalului, George Weah, în ceea ce se poate considera cea mai rușinoasă înfrângere înregistrată în istoria competiției senatoriale din țară (Front Page Africa, 2014). Competiția electorală și alegerile au fost evaluate și considerate, în general, ca libere, cinstite și credibile de către comunitatea internațională, inclusiv de către imperialiști. Astfel se ajunge la o enigmă de primă importanță, și anume care au fost factorii determinanți care au orientat astfel electoratul și tendința de votare la alegerile senatoriale din 2014? Folosind informații de bază din interviuri și recenzii ale altor studii despre alegerile din Liberia, această lucrare clarifică situația care a creat tendința sau tiparul votării la alegerile senatoriale din 2014 și poate fi considerată ca un cadru pentru construirea unei imagini reale a alegătorilor din Liberia și pentru a prevedea alegerile viitoare.

Cuvinte-cheie: Liberia, competiție electorală, imperialiști, alegeri pentru Senat, tendința politică

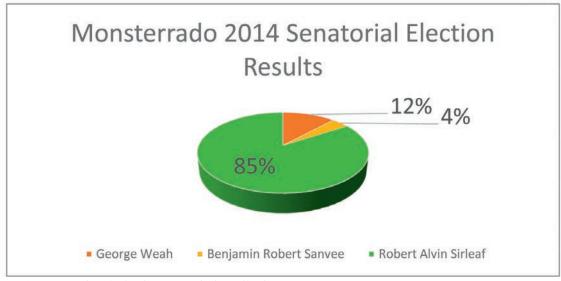
tronage among other factors. Electioneering is often referred to as power to determine the fate of the constants amidst options for a particular post, be it in the public or private domain. Holding constant all the mentioned variables spelled out constant, electioneering is certainly not tied to sets of programmes or to the personality of the contestants, let alone their parties of affiliations. The other

factors of suitability and appropriateness of the candidate or the party could play a crucial role in determining which of the choices set out before the voters is the most beneficial for the good of the society.

Time and again, election transcends just a period of canvasing or a movement when votes are casted, it is much more than the known ritual for a stated period, it rather lives with the electorate weeks, months or even years after the given election cycle (Schumpeter, 1976). Election therefore could simply be classified "as a pledge of allegiance and or a disaffection to a particular choice, a determination to change, signify an approval, influence a candidate or political party" (Afolabi, 2015). Hence, it goes without mention that for an election process to be deemed credible, a configuration of the process must be recorded in a manner that satisfies that election as credible. In the case of Liberia, palpable pattern of electoral engagement became eminent with the reform of the electoral laws and the adoption of policies that ensure transparency and accountability of the national election commission. There were discrepancies observed and recorded in the 2005 special presidential election, that ushered in the post conflict democratic government and other upsets were recorded in 2011 general elections, respectively. In the history of Liberia, a son of the incumbent President, failed in an election. Is this a reality, a fluke or an aberration? While one tries to grasp with

the answer to this question, there are certainly other puzzles agitating the minds of politicians, journalists, scholars, and even election practitioners: why did the President son lost in the election in the capital and some of the President's supported candidates won in other counties across the country? Why did ruling Unity Party Senate President lost in his county or why is opposition party - Liberty Party popular in a particular zone and not in others? Or why is the difference in numbers of votes so small, thus giving the Council for Democratic Change Party an edge over the ruling Unity Party? What are the determining factors responsible for this trend? The unpredictability of the questions above explains the behaviour of the voters and the voting process in Liberia. In the words of Mozaffar (2002) and Schedler (2002), this is sometimes referred to as the "certainty of uncertainties" in elections. Be what it may, electioneering itself, for one to make a definite and overwhelming statement, be exact and an accurate reflection of society is contingent on a number of factors bordering on acceptance of the election exercise, voters' turn-out and citizens' appreciation of the political and electoral processes. Therefore, an electoral process should be guided by empirical analysis of participation or, more appropriately, political participation of which trend of the Liberian electorate over time has declined (Daily Observer, 2014).

Figure 1



Source: National Election Commission Liberia (NEC)

# Conceptual Clarification of Political Trend and Pattern

## **Political Participation**

Regardless of the system of government, the trend of political participation is one among few political phenomena which occurs in all political societies, irrespective of the system of government. The degree or pace with which it occurs is not uniform in different societies. This does not mean that it occurs at similar pace or degree. As propagated by the democratic theorists, from Rousseau onwards, many scholars have urged or assumed that a proper system of government must provide opportunities for political involvement by the individuals in the society. In which case, the minimum condition that a governmental system must satisfy to qualify as democratic is the provision of an opportunity for the people to vote in periodic competitive elections (Birch, 2000). On the other hand, further opportunities and forms of political participation are highly desirable and can be achieved in a more democratized political environment.

Thus, the involvement of citizens in the political system or the public involvement in decision making is therefore put in simple terms as: "Political trend" (Riley et al. 2010). A set of rights and duties that involve formally organized civic and political activities, as pointed out, qualifies as political engagement. It includes voting or joining a political party (Munroe, 2002). The degree to which citizens exercise their right to engage in political activities is referred to as political trend. This is in terms of the political entities which emphasize the people, and the active engagement by citizens is vital for a healthy democracy and sustainable development (Falade, 2014). The existence of institutional engagements which permits society to take active part in the decision making process is what perceptibly differentiates a democracy from other systems of government (Schumpeter, 1976). Democracy cannot be inclusive, and sustainable development is impossible without active engagement by responsible citizens (Bauer, 2012).

Furthermore, political trend can take different forms thus the extents to which people participate in the political system differ among individuals, countries and regions. The six types of political trend identified by Falade (2010) are: Parochial participants – these people participate in politics occasionally. They vote or get involved in any other political activity only when it affects their personal interest. Voting specialists - these are the people that get eagerly engaged only in voting. Besides voting, they are not concerned about other political activities. Complete activists – they are highly involved in all political activities. They actively participate in voting, political campaign, community activities and make contact with public officials. For instance, three million people in Rome protested against the invasion of Iraq in 2003. The demonstration holds the record as the largest ever anti-war rally. The communalists – they get engaged in voting regularly, they also get involved in community affairs but they are not involved in political campaign activities. The campaigners – they are actively involved in political campaign but inactive in other community affairs. The inactives - these are the people that take no part in any political activity.

Again, in most authoritarian regimes, elections rarely offer the opportunity to change the existing regime. In societies like this, acts of voter abstention can provide meaningful signals of discontent and voter's preference (Roeder, 1989). Emphasis on citizens' participation through votes or voters turnout might not be sufficient when measuring political trend as studies have majorly shown. That relatively well-educated individuals conscious decision to ignore mandatory voting laws or destroy ballots in a country where there was no real choice between candidates has been revealed from studies on voting in the Soviet Union, for example, and suggests that non-voting was seen as an act of protest (Karklins, 1986). Blank and spoiled ballots were often interpreted as a form of protest against the authoritarian government in Brazil under military rule, which made compulsory voting

to lead to high turnout (Power and Roberts, 1995 as cited in Blaydes, 2006).

The German experience in 2009 is worthy of note, 134,015 Germans signed an e-petition to protest against the Act to Impede Access to Communication Networks, which aimed to block access to websites offering certain types of content, making it German's most successful e-petition till date (Bauer, 2012). Political trend and participation can be strengthened by promoting decentralization and creating inclusive structures in spite of the peculiarities in different societies. The latest means citizens have resorted to express their views continually and freely is through the 'new media' which in itself have helped to reduce scenarios of unwarranted victimization of government antagonists.

## **Electioneering Pattern**

The engagement of the electorates in electioneering pattern is most often reflected in casting of votes. From the stance of the western concept or developed democracies because this is usually a less costly and more conventional form of political pattern. This voting trend is often theoretically referred to as scientific diagnostics of the electioneering, which considers other components as prescient, constituencies, electorate districts within an election terrain. This provides the sociological explanation of the voters and choices that influence their pattern and trend, as well as the voting processes. In the argument of Onah (1997), voting is perhaps the simplest, cheapest and the most obvious of all these various forms of participation in the political process in a country. The invariably focus on the determinants of why people vote as they do and how they arrive at the decisions that drive their trend they make is explained in the analysis of voting patterns. Making choices on candidates or parties greatly varies, as well as what inspires voters to turn out for voting and factors they consider. As Shi (1999) opined, the behaviour of voters in Chinese local elections tends to be individualistic and is said to be informed by the plea to chastise officials of corrupt practices.

It is clearly seen that short-term and long-term patterns are shaped and influenced. However, not much conclusion can be drawn from what influences are to a particular election, Heywood (2007) asserted. These short-term influences include but are not limited to: the state of the economy which reflects the link between a government's popularity and economic variables such as unemployment, inflation and disposable income, public standing of party leaders and personality. Ideological concerns and the mass media are, on the other hand, major long-term influences. This knowledge of voting as well as academic and scientific study of the voting pattern (psephology) has been on the rise (Bartels, 2008, Heywood, 2007). The sociological model, often identified as School of Columbia, with the main reference to publication of books like: The People's Choice (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet, 1944), Voting (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee, 1954) and Personal Influence (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955). The central hypothesis of Lazarsfeld et al. is the voting pattern that is marked by the scientific study categorized into three major research schools.

The pattern that reflects the economic and social position of the group to which electorates belong is the sociological model that linked voting pattern to group membership, suggesting that electorates tend to adopt a voting trend that is influenced by their likes. The studies conducted by the Survey Research Centre at the University of Michigan during the 1948 U.S. presidential elections are the origin of the second model of Psychological model of voting pattern. The American Voter, a book written by Campbell, Converse Miller and Stokes (1960), includes the combined reports from the 1948, 1952 and 1956 presidential elections in USA. The stable and lasting relationship with a political party that does not necessarily translate into a concrete link, namely registration or consistently voting for this party, is the central concept of this model of partisanship, which is designed as a psychological affinity. As asserted by Hyman & Singer (1968), the manifestation of partisanship in voting is not a product of calculation influenced by factors

such as policies, personalities, campaigning and media coverage. In this view, voting is seen as a rational act, in the sense that individual electors are believed to decide their party preference on the basis of personal self-interest (Kimeyin & Romero, 2008). The third model, which is the rational choice model, tries to be distinct from previous theories/models as it gives an economic explanation to voting behaviour (Antunes, 2008).

Apart from the other two theories discussed, this is seen to be the factor that determines voters' preferences. It is considered that also determines the depth, consolidation and development of democracy in the Liberian society. This has been the engagement of the imperialists. In the Liberian society, voting is explained predominantly by factors such as clientelism, patronage, cash violence, personality, ethnicity and personal ties (Hyden and Leys, 1972 & Mozzafar et al., 2003). However, in other parts of the world, voting pattern can be explained by socio-structural, sociopsychological or rational choice models, at least for industrialized societies (Erdmann, 2007).

## **Statement of Problem**

From the declaration of independence in 1847, the noticeable case of Liberia electioneering trend and pattern has been occasioned by the use of patronage and cash violence, which are mostly sponsored by imperialist America to delude underprivileged electorate in casting their ballots in favor of the choices made by the Imperialists and to the detriment of the society. There has never been a research into the trend and pattern of electioneering to study the political culture of the Liberian voters. However, the lone evidence pointing to that direction, which is not common place in elections processes in Africa, but is noticeable in terms of its relevance to electioneering in Liberia, is that the imperialists candidates or political parties never lose, more so, when the incumbent president is an America's favorite in the ensuring election.

Notwithstanding, the senatorial bielections of 2014 draw on an irreversible reality when it witnessed a shift in the paradigm in the electoral process of Liberia. The son of Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf the ninth richest President in Africa -, Robert Sirleaf, an independent candidate, lost to an opposition candidate, soccer legend ambassador George Weah, in what is recorded as the most disgraceful defeat ever in the senatorial race in the country (The Inquirer News Paper, 2015). The electoral race and the elections were rated and generally adjured free, fair and credible by the international community, including the imperialists. This leaves a leading puzzle as to what were the determining factors that decided the electorates and voting trend in 2014 senatorial bi-elections? Using primary data from interviews and reviews of other literature on Liberia's 2014 senatorial bi-elections, the paper disentangles the dynamics that predisposed the trend and pattern of voters in 2014 senatorial bi-elections which could be used to construct an additional concrete view of Liberian voters and future election poll forecast.

Electioneering in Liberia has been often characterized by patronage, cash violence and fraud ridden (Afolabi, 2015; Saye, 2002). From the inception of the state, especially from independence, there has not been any empirical research into the political trend and voting pattern of Liberian electorates to establish the actual facts surrounding the electioneering. However, the only pattern noticeable, which is not reflective of the behavioral pattern of voters across the globe, is that the ruling party of Liberia never loses, especially when the incumbent is contesting the election. What has dominated discourses and scholarly works over the years was that inferences and perceived observations were often presented as empirical facts. Successive elections, especially voting from 1985 to 2005, have not also provided a solid platform to investigate and assess the voting pattern and political trend of the Liberian voters due to the fact that elections in 1997 were not free, fair and credible and therefore, not a

reflection of the wishes and votes of voters (Afolabi, 2011).

But the 2014 senatorial bi-elections witnessed lot of hitherto 'unthinkable' happenings in the electoral process which has made some people to adjure the 2014 elections as being a reflection of the true wishes of the Liberian people with contrary opinions expressed in other quarters (Punch, 2015). In any case, the son of the incumbent President lost, while opposition candidates won electoral contests and the elections were generally adjured free, fair and credible (The Front Page Africa, 2015; The Inquirer, 2015). Within the purview of the 2014 credible elections, the senatorial bi-elections took place among candidates fielded by registered political parties and independent candidates. The outcome of the elections showed that the son of the President of the ruling Unity Party (UP) lost to the opposition Congress for Democratic Change (CDC), thereby reducing his numerical strength in order to become a successor of his mother in the 2017 general and presidential elections.

The ruling party recorded some gains as well. But given the non-representation nature of politics and elections in Liberia as noted above, the question is: what were the intervening variables that determined participation and voting in the 2014 elections? This is more so, given that participation, in our view, is more encompassing and explanatory than voters turn out. With this question in mind, it is better to quickly state that more problematic was how to determine the voting behaviour pattern of Liberian voters and the associated factors responsible for that behaviour. This further begets more questions: what determined and influenced participation, voting behaviour and voters' decision during the 2014 senatorial bielections, given it outcome? Are the internal factors peculiar to the voters (this may vary from voter to voter or in a similar manner) or external factors that could vary from economic (vote buying/selling) to institutional (NEC), systemic (electoral rules/system), and social structure (class/ethnicity)? Is a pattern emerging or is just a narrative in transition? Finding answers to these questions is the task the research paper intends to unravel.

# Methodology

The study employed both secondary and primary data. Data were collected through participatory observation and interview methods. The researcher participated in the last election as a voter. Key questions were posed to 1000 registered voters in the four (4) geo-political zones that participated and voted in the 2014 senatorial bi-elections to determine what influenced their participation pattern and their voting trend preferences. 250 respondents from each zone were selected to have a balanced view across Liberia. While attention has focused on the senatorial bi-elections where the incumbent President son lost, it should also be noted that some incumbents in parties like Liberty Party and National Patriotic Party lost their seats as well, making it analytically interesting. Key respondents and stakeholders in the electoral process including officials of CSOs, party officials, NEC staff, security personnel and voters were interviewed to add information to the database. Additional data were sourced from other literature reviewed on the subject. The data collected was statistically analyzed.

# Background to the 2014 Elections

The 2014 senatorial bi-elections came as a result of a peace deal that was broken in 2003 which witnessed the end of the almost two decades of civil conflict between belligerent forces of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), led by Charles Gankay Taylor, and the Independent National Patriotic Front (INPFL), of Prince Y. Johnson, former Army General and now senator, Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), of the Seku Demateh Conneh and the remnant of the deformed Arm Forces of Liberia (AFL) of former President Samuel Kanyon Doe. The deal subsequently ushered in the democratic process of 2005 occasioned by the special elections which elected Africa's first female President, Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and

the subsequent 2011 general and presidential elections on a propitious symmetry. The 2005 special elections process amended the election laws of Liberia with the alteration of the terms of the senators to six and nine years respectively. The amendment allotted the senator of the junior category, the senator who wins with the less votes to a six years term while that of the senior category, the senator with the highest votes to a nine years term. This provision was made for maintaining institutional membrane for continuity in the Senate.

Given the historicity of Ebola virus disease, at the time of the scheduled 2014 senatorial bi-elections, there were calls from some elements of the ruling Unity Party for the postponement of the election. On the other hand, the opposition cited constitutional crisis that may arise, occasioned by the inability of the government to hold the election as scheduled because of the epidemic. The crisis would border on legitimacy of the government after the expiration of its constitutional mandate. In the midst of all these, suspicion and distrust were common. Also, this generated lots of arguments and counter arguments, most especially between the opposition political parties and the ruling party on the one hand and that of NEC and the rest of the parties on the other hand. The controversy revolves around what would happen in the event that the elections were not held on schedule? But that was just one of the problems that dogged the 2014 senatorial elections at the initial stage. Other problems surfaced, among which were voters' apathy, issue of voters fatigue occasioned by what is referred to as failure on the part of the government to deliver on its promises, citing water supply, electrification, jobs and the list goes on.

There were also internal parties' issues on the selection of candidates. The ruling party did not field candidates in Nimba to support the president's choice for the senatorial candidate in that part of the country. A similar thing was done in Monsterrado, to enable the ruling party to support the president's son as an independent candidate. This witnessed the party's candidate backing

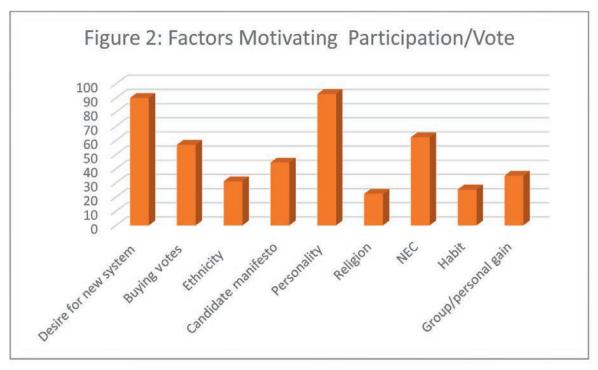
off at the last minute to give way for the party's support for the president's son, even though he was an independent candidate. Thus, the issue of a particular choice made by the ruling party became a major source of disagreement and tension between the protagonists and antagonists within the ruling party. Another dimension to the issue was that the antagonists feared that the president was trying to groom her son for the presidential election in 2017. Especially, were he to have won the Monsterrado senatorial race, all arrays would have pointed to the fact that he will succeed his mother at the end of her second term. It should be noted that the protagonist were interested more in the succession of the president and not in the senatorial bi-elections if the president's son was to position himself as a political conqueror and thus, better fit to replace his mother at the end of her second six years term for maximum benefit from a particular order that seems to favour the president and allow the 'bandwagon' effect that is likely to follow such order of elections and succession.

If the president's son had won the senatorial election, whichever party he would have joined in the 2017 forthcoming presidential elections, would likely influence the choice of voters in the subsequent elections, provided he is elected as President. However, in spite of the dilemma of elections, what the 2014 elections produced did not conform to the expected 'normal pattern' of the ruling party winning most, if not all the seats. The president's son lost to the opposition Congress for Democratic Change (CDC).

## **Data Presentation and Analysis**

The respondents were chosen based on their participation in the electoral processes, expertise of the issues of votes and voting pattern and interest in the electoral procedures. All the respondents interviewed were literate and able to articulate their positions on what motivated them to have participated and voted as well as on what influenced and determined their choice viz internal issues versus external issues. The basic simple question was: 'what influenced

and determined your vote and participation and the factors responsible for these'. Others questions complement the basic question. The figure below gives details of what the respondents believed influenced and determined their participation and vote.



Source: Field work, 2015

Most respondents including the ones surveyed through V-Dem agreed that the desire for new system or change was the most important factor which made them vote. For most of the respondents, the need for change was not limited to the Senate but they wanted to ensure that ruling Unity Party lost any competition for public office in Liberia. This would explain why there were upsets across the country both at national, regional and county levels. It also shows that the desire for change affected all parties as seen in Grand Bassa County where the Senate Pro-Temp lost to National Patriotic Party (NPP) of former Liberia President Charles Gankay Taylor, now serving a sentence for war crime charges. The same scenario was replicated in virtually all areas of the country. It is however surprising that ethnicity and religion played a less important role, given the tendency to see these variables as a key determinant in Liberian politics and electoral process (31% and 22.2%, respectively). Voting as a habit and a social factor was noted but was not significant because it was

not mentioned frequently as an important factor (15.3%). However, of significance is the role of vote buying, of personality, of personal/group gain factors as drivers of participation and vote determinant. On this point, most respondents interviewed agreed that the factors identified above worked for and against the major political parties and candidates. It is also instructive that all respondents agreed that all, especially the President's son, engaged in vote buying, enticement of voters, encourage/promise of personal/group gain and personality promotion at the expense of policy issues that should have dominated political discourse and serve as mobilization tool (vote buying 56.8%; personal/group gain 35%). This has served to reinforce the data collected by V-Dem survey on participation, and voting behaviour of Liberian (V-dem Data, 2014; Ham and Lindberg, 2014). However, it is significant that most of the respondents expressed high level of confidence in the national election commission (NEC) as a factor in participation, but not as a factor

in voting behaviour. According to some respondents interviewed:

My confidence in NEC to do the right thing and let my vote count is why I am out to vote. Even though not perfect, innovations including the card readers has inspired in me that my vote will count (Male, 46).

Unlike before, the (NEC) now makes me confident to cast my vote for whoever I want and I know that more than 70% that the vote would count with the way we now vote (Female, 56).

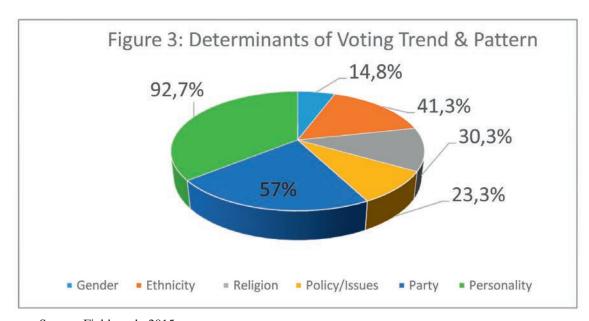
On what determines the choice of a candidate/party, the overwhelming answer was personality. Virtually all respondents (92.7% of those interviewed) maintained that their choice of candidates was based on the candidate's personality as opposed to policy or positional issues (Berelson et al., 1954; Kleppner et al., 1982; Kedar, 2005; Downs, 1957). Therefore, it is safe to argue that most Liberian voters mainly cast their ballots (vote) on the basis of emotions, styles and traits effects (internal characteristics) as opposed to issue effects, policy appeals and rational choice. This is

made more pungent by comments of some of the respondents:

I vote people who can deliver and are morally okay for me. Not somebody who will get at the capitol to buy big cars and engage in prostitution (Female, 48).

Which party? They are all the same (parties/politicians), however, the ruling party is seemingly more in this respect. But at least I can look at his/her character (candidates) and decide which one of them I will vote for (Male, 26).

But this is not to suggest that issues or policy positions do not matter as the figure below shows (23.3%). But as in most studies, personality or trait issues are more important to voters (Miller, Wattenberg and Malanchuk, 1986; Glass, 1985). This is in conformity with Cowen and Laakso as well as other scholars who have tried to explain what informs voters' choice and voting behaviour and distinguish between rational voters' choice and emotional voter's choice models (Cowen and Laakso, 1997; 2002; Grose and Globetti, 2007). See figure 3 below.



Source: Field work, 2015

Therefore, the role of personality or non-policy issues should be seen as important in determining and predicting voters behaviour in Liberia as well as when engaging poll projection. Whether Liberian voters predilection towards personality or non-policy issues in determining participation and who to vote in elections is beneficial or not is open to debate. What is clear is that a pattern of voting is emerging given

the obvious confidence of the electorate in the electoral and voting process which manifested eloquently in the 2014 senatorial elections.

## Conclusion

This paper has examined the issue of participation, voting trend and pattern of voting in Liberia's 2014 senatorial bi-elections. Critical appraisals of what vote is and what factors determine and influence voters' choice and vote were examined. Therefore, this paper is one of the few academic efforts made so far trying to disentangle varying reasons why people participate in the political and electoral process with focus on 2014 senatorial bi-elections in Liberia. The research findings support the existing viewpoints that most voters are more likely swayed by personality/non-policy issues in making their choice in the elections. Of course, this is based on the amount of nonpolicy issue information and perceived image(s) of the candidates on which basis the voters decide if, when and how to vote. The effects of this line of behaviour trend of the voters in the 2014 senatorial bi-elections is what caused so much upsets across the length and breadth of Liberia. Even the incidence of vote buying and widespread inducement reported didn't significantly affect voters' choice, as shown in our data. Also, the issues of religion and ethnicity did not play an important role, contrary to assumed positions and some literature. Therefore, it is safe to say that the democratization process is progressing and that the Liberian voters are getting increasingly sophisticated. But for us, voters' choice and sophistication is an emerging culture and reality could be turned around if the current reforms and innovation is stalled or reversed. This makes us to sound a word of caution here and this is why we see the current voting behaviour trend and pattern as a narrative in transition for now. We think these findings put us in the position to indicate a few things that are relevant for policy and research.

Therefore, further research is expected to critically investigate the impact of the class system and patronage of the imperialists in engaging fraudulent processes, votes buying. Yet, preliminary evidence from our study and commendations from political stakeholders show that the use of the external influence didn't undermine the credibility of the 2014 senatorial bi-elections. The argument therefore is: the observed downward slope in voters' turnout, majorly during the 2014 elections which is 44% compared to 54% in 2011 (see figure 1) could be a result of voters fatigue occasioned by the non-achievement of previous promises made before other elections. This means that other elections (i.e. 2005 and 2011) that had higher voters turnout might have been the result of high level of unchecked manipulations during election, which could be in form of unaccredited voting, multiple voting, etc.

In conclusion, we cannot help but notice that in many parts of Liberia, attitude is changing and more people are positive about elections and electoral process. We make haste to claim that in the next general elections, voters' choice will prevail and this will help in fostering credible elections in Liberia.

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George Tee FORPOH, PhD (fellow) is a researcher/evaluator, facilitator and an applied political economy development expert with strong data analysis and is a practicing knowledge management guru, with work experience in democracy/rights/governance, agriculture, education and health. Some of his specialized works include: designing and implementing program/project interventions, as well as developing innovative monitoring and evaluation systems to track real time performance. A system which incorporates quantitative and qualitative approaches and brings in geospatial analyses, where appropriate. He works with small and large data sets and analytically synthesizes different types of data in a visual manner in order to better interpret underlying reasons that explain the political and socio-economic behaviour of the society, in addition, synthesizing complex information and processes into coherent training programs that enable participants to quickly acquire skills to carry out actions in their communities. He is also skilled at combining political and economic phenomena with cultural approaches within the subregional, has a tracked record of drawing inferences on global perspective. In order to ensure articulation between local knowledge systems and those of the larger national and international spheres in today's complex development arenas, endeavors to follow small details which are translated in bigger pictures. He has worked extensively in participatory research approaches, bringing together actors ranging from senior government agents, civil society actors to local participants at the community level, which engenders inclusion, voice, participation of the minority, and persons with disabilities.

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# INNOVATION PROCESSES UNDERTAKEN BY THE PERMANENT ELECTORAL AUTHORITY OF ROMANIA

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#### Abstract:

In order to efficiently answer the desire to constantly improve the electoral process, the Permanent Electoral Authority has undergone a series of administrative and normative processes of change in accordance to the new public management tendecies of agentification, simplification, dematerialisation, depoliticisation, professionalisation, or transparency building. The article underlines the most important reforms undertaken by the institution in accordance to the fulfillment of these new public sector patterns.

**Keywords:** change processes, new public management, innovation

#### Abstract:

Pentru a răspunde eficient dorinței de a îmbunătăți constant procesul electoral, Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă a trecut printr-o serie de procese de schimbare administrative și normative în concordanță cu tendințele noului mangement public de diseminare a autorității, simplificare, dematerializare, depolitizare, profesionalizare sau edificare a transparenței. Articolul pune accentul pe cele mai importante reforme prin care a trecut instituția în spiritul realizării acestor noi modele ale sectorului public.

Cuvinte-cheie: procese de schimbare, noul management public, inovație

#### Introduction

The political, economical, social and technological challenges constantly provoke public sector organisations to resort to reform and innovation processes aimed at optimising their activity for an efficient answer to the citizens' needs. These evolutive processes are identified by scholars in the new public management spectrum of influence.

Over the past years, the Permanent Electoral Authority (PEA), the independent administrative institution with overall responsibility in the electoral field in Romania has undergone a series of reformative innovation processes aimed at improving electoral processes.

# Modern Change Tendencies of the Public Sector

The research literature underlines a series of evolutive tendencies of the public sector that emerged as a consequence of the new public management implementation. The new public management theory counteracts previous theories that regard shaping public organisations (such as the weberian state, the scientific management theory or the classical theory of administrative systems), pursuing a "transfer of business and management principles in the public sector".1

Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) accumulate the effects of projecting the private sector's values and principles in the public sector, beading the objectives of new public management reforms: emphasize on performance, quantification of the added value of the organisation, preferring small and specialised organisations, development of contract-based hierarchical relations, implementing marketing instruments in the public sector, or considering public service consumers as "clients".<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dreschler, W. (2010), *Public Administration in Times of Crisis*, The 18th NISPAcee Annual Conference, May 12 – 14, 2010, Warsaw, Poland, p. 17.

Thus, a new administrative culture is configured, focusing on adjusting public organisations to turn from politics to management, from pyramidal administrative systems to "chester" administrative systems, from a planned and hierarchical decisional process to a dichotomy between core activities and the operational services established, from an administration focused on the process to an administration focused on results, from a collective provision of public and social services to the flexible deliverance of particular services, from spending public finances to budget cuts, from owning to managing property.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, a clear demarcation from the ultrabureaucratic model theorised by Weber is noticeable. The idea of a total separation between the new public management theory and the weberian system is upheld by Percebois (2007) who underlines the idea that every difference between the doctrines arises from a different set of values, both facing contradictory opinions regarding the concepts of efficiency and equity in public administration.<sup>4</sup>

The new public management implementation is accomplished through legislative and institutional change processes. Change is defined as an action of "replacement, modification or transformation" of a process or phenomenon, with the purpose of increasing the overall performance of the organisation.<sup>5</sup>

The main vehicle of change is the legislative reform. The process of change (adaptation) of norms that regard administration can be regarded as an expression of a regulatory mechanism that simply adjusts real situations to the goals of the organisation. These settlements or adjustments of the juridical system of an

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Pollitt, C., Bouckaert, G. (2011), *Public Management Reform: A Comparative Analysis – New Public Management, Governance, and the Neo-Weberian State*, third edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Matei, Lucica (2006), *Management public*, second edition, Bucharest: Editura Economică, p. 131 – 132.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Percebois, L. (2007), Benefits without Drawbacks? Adverse or Complex Effects of Public Management Reforms, Presupuesto y Gasto Público 48/2007, p. 150.
 <sup>5</sup> Burduş, E., Căprărescu, G., Androniceanu, A. (2008), Managementul schimbării organizaționale, third edition, Bucharest: Editura Economică, p. 14.

organisation can arrise as a consequence of forecasting future challenges, as well as of encountering obstacles in the processes of the public sector, in general, or of one organisation, in particular.

Distinctively for the public law order, the law – administration relationship is a simbiotic one, decision-makers being forced to undergo processes of legislative change that steer the institutional framework, following a series of principles and recommendations for the adoption, amendment or repeal processes of legal norms, such as:<sup>6</sup>

- Clarity of roles competences, tasks and objectives of institutional actors involved in the process should be clear and transparent;
- Rejection of unjustified influences to provide trust in the regulatory activities, it is recommended to block any influence that is outward of the decisional process or that cannot bring an improvement;
- Responsibility and transparency in order to increase the legitimity of the institutional actors involved in these processes, as well as the decisions adopted by them;
- Taking on engagements the assumption of fulfilling quantitative and qualitative objectives to increase efficiency and effectiveness of processes;
- Adequate financing to prevent unjustified influences and to guarantee an improved quality of these processes;
- Evaluation of performance establishing control mechanisms for these activities in order to correct potential errors.

Numerous processes of adaptation of public organisations from Romania to external challenges are triggered by the process of Europeanization of public administration. The Europeanization is regarded by research literature as a projection of the globalisation process in the European environment, thus implying the adaptation of normative and administrative actions (depending on the European context), whereas European integration depicts the process through

which national actors (the public sector organisations of a member state) adopt the new European mechanisms and legal norms.<sup>7</sup>

Some of the core objectives of the Europeanization of public administrations in the member states of the Union derive from a series of principles underlined by the European Commission through the document European Governance – A white paper, principles such as openness of public institutions (through permanent communication in a manner accessible to a wide audience), participation (ensuring the participation of the civil society in the processes of elaboration and implementation of public policies, for a greater level of credibility from the civil society), responsibility (the competences of these organisms must be precise and clear in order to assume responsibility for actions and decisions undertaken), efficiency (policies must be efficient, with clear objectives, and the decisions must be adopted at the adequate level), coherence (policies must be coherent and easy to understand in order to eliminate implementation discrepancies).8

Edoardo Chiti (2015) investigates the changes appropriate to the new public management, identifying four major effects at the level of public administration of the European Union, such as the "agentification" of the public sector, the permanent reshaping of the institutional framework by competence readjustments, the centralisation of powers towards bodies with particular mission and tasks, as well as the accountability to coherently forecast the effects of every decision.<sup>9</sup>

Agentification can be regarded as the new public management process through which new public organisations are established, with specific mission

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> OECD (2014), *The Governance of Regulators*, OECD Publishing.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Matei, Lucica, Iancu, Diana Camelia (2009), Europenizarea administrației şi funcției publice, volumul I – Procese fundamentale ale europenizării administrației publice, second edition, Caiete Jean Monnet Collection, Bucharest: Editura Economică, p. 135.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> European Commission (2001), *European Governance – A White Paper*, COM (2001) 428 final, Brussels.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Chiti, E. (2015), In the Aftermath of the Crisis: The EU Administrative System between Impediments and Momentum, EUI Working Paper LAW 2015/13.

and goals, finding the public sector in a continuous decentralisation and recalibration of competences. These "agentified" bodies are granted a broad decisional power having the prerogatives to regulate and monitor a specific field of the public sector, as well as a high level of independence in the processes of elaboration and implementation of public policies placed in their spectrum of influence.

A recurring preocupation is embodied by the simplification processes. In order to provide an answer to possible daily pressures experienced by public organisations, the European Commission has launched *REFIT* (Regulatory Fitness and Performance Program), with the core task of assisting member states in establishing a more clear and efficient regulation.

In the context of REFIT, the Commission issued a communication that depicts its vision regarding simplification, providing a series of precise technical details regarding the instruments that can be used by regulatory bodies to deliver a greater normative "fitting", COM (2005) 535 final stipulating that simplification instruments that should have priority in application are:<sup>10</sup>

- 1. The repeal of irrelevant or obsolete normative documents, with regard to both the European legislation and the legislation of member states;
- 2. Codification of legislation, for a greater transparency;
- 3. Legislative review, in order to provide a clearer perspective for businesses regarding the regulations that steer their activity;
- 4. Replacement of directives with regulations for a more precise and effective aplication of legal norms;
- 5. Promoting e-government platforms for reducing the administrative burden.

<sup>10</sup> European Commission (2005), Communication of the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 25 October 2005 "Implementing the Community Lisbon programme: A strategy for the simplification of the regulatory environment", COM (2005) 535 final.

Thus, it is noticeable that when we speak of simplification seeking to achieve "regulatory fitting", we analyse these processes on a cyclical point of view, as normative changes reshape the activity of public organisations, which, in turn, will resort to normative changes for corrections of their activity.

The processes of depoliticisation and professionalisation of public sector organisms can be found at the crossroads between the new public management and the tendencies previously identified. Politicisation of public sector decisions poses a series of obstacles in the processes of public policies formulation and implementation, thus the manner in which a problem is considered a public problem, requiring action from administrative bodies, arises more profound questions regarding the nature of human knowledge and social development of that knowledge, as political lobbying of some entities or individuals is stronger than the will of the people<sup>11</sup>. Because of this, the new public management doctrine seeks depolitising public services by establishing a decisional process aimed at solving the real problems of our society.

Dematerialisation of public administration also represents a reform and innovation guideline for improving the activity of public administration. Numerous political documents, as well as the research literature analyze the continuous development of information technology in the public sector as a means of cost streamlining and bureaucratic simplification. The keyword of these documents is dematerialisation (reducing the number of written documents and the number of documents archived or managed on paper), but a greater attention is granted to the debureaucratisation and transparency building processes, as well as to the consultations with interested parties, via the new technical means.

Technical challenges can be analysed from two interconnected perspectives. Osborne and Brown (2005) explore a series

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Howlett M., Ramesh, M. (2004), *Studiul Politicilor Publice: cicluri și subsisteme ale politicilor*, Bucharest: Epigraf Publishing House, p. 121.

of challenges brought upon the public sector by the development of technology, examining them from two perspectives: the challenges brought forth by "hard" developments (such as the need to use information technology as a means of broadcasting for the civil society, public service deliverance, or the development organisational structures focused on the IT field) and "soft" developments (such as the development of new tasks both for the leadership level and the executional level)<sup>12</sup>.

# Reform Processes of the Romanian Electoral Field

From the theoretical analysis, we can observe evolutive processes of the public sector such as agentification, dematerialisation, simplification, transparency building, depoliticisation, professionalisation or cost streamlining.

The Permanent Electoral Authority, through its activity, has undergone a series of reform and innovation projects aimed at implementing these tendencies of public sector development in the activity of the institution and in its field of competence.

With regard to the public sector depoliticisation processes, PEA fulfills this goal by default, having the attribute of an independent administrative institution that operates in compliance with the principles of independence, impartiality, legality, transparency, efficiency, professionalism, accountability, sustainability, predictability and legitimacy, having its own structure composed of a specialized staff that cannot be part of political organisations or parties<sup>13</sup>.

Staff professionalisation, a core element of the new public management theory, is noticed in the activity of the Permanent Electoral Authority through its educational role. Thus, besides the voters training programs, the institution undergoes

<sup>12</sup> Osborne, S. P., Brown, K. (2005), *Managing Change and Innovation in Public Service Organizations*, New York: Routledge, p. 19.

activities targeting the continuous training of both its own specialized apparatus, and the personnel with attributes in the electoral sector from other public sector organisations, as well as representatives of political formations. Examples of such actions refer to training sessions with county prefects, mayors, persons authorised by mayors to operate in the Electoral Register, etc.

The general objectives of the activities deriving from the educational function reside in developing an electoral culture within society, contributing to an increase in social and political participation of citizens by representation in electoral bodies, to an increasing interest in elections, as well as to the professionalisation of public sector personnel, thus assuring a uniform application of legal provisions regarding organising and development of elections and political activities (http://www.roaep.ro/instruire/).

In order to enforce the uniformity and improvement of the activities and the legislation in the electoral field, PEA has established the Electoral Expert Review, providing a debate and knowledge sharing platform for information and findings in the field, gathering opinions and points of view issued by practitioners and researchers from the academic environment.

The tendencies of depoliticisation and professionalisation of the electoral process are also proven by the establishment of the Electoral Experts' Body, a permanent register of persons with the vocation to be designated presidents of the polling stations or their deputies. This register is established, managed and updated by the Permanent Electoral Authority.

The admission criteria for the Electoral Experts' Body assume their impartiality, a mandatory condition being the non-affiliation to a political organisation, as well as a high level of professionalism, as they will be accepted in the body either following the passing of an examination that assesses their electoral field competences, or on demand, if they had previously fulfilled the position of president of the polling station or his deputy and have not committed

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Law no. 208/2015 on election of Senate and Chamber of Deputies and for organization and functioning of the Permanent Electoral Authority.

contraventions regarding elections or referendums or have not committed serious errors in the operations of recording voting results in official minutes.

Given either the previous experience, or the capacity to pass an examination in the electoral domain, as well as the interdiction to be a member of a political organisation, this project of the PEA can be indicated as a clear step towards depoliticisation and professionalisation of the public sector and the electoral process.

As a consequence of the objectives to increase transparency and the level of knowledge of voters regarding the electoral process, the Permanent Electoral Authority has launched the "First Vote" project, via the portal www.primulvot.ro, aiming both to increase the participation of the youth in the electoral process and a fast and clear distribution of essential information regarding the conditions for exercising the right to vote and the types of electoral processes that Romanian citizens participate in.

Therefore, the users that visit the portal easily acknowledge the legal framework, the electoral system, the types of elections and the term of office of elected representatives, for every electoral process distinctively for the Romanian system. Through the portal, PEA offers the training possibility by accomplishing an internship within the institution.

The "First Vote" project achieved international recognition in December 2013, on the occasion of the Gala for International Election Awards, when it was awarded the First Time Voter Award.

Furthermore, the official page of the Permanent Electoral Authority launched on Facebook supports the institution's actions to increase the degree of civil education regarding its activity.

The large number of users on the social platform and the possibility to set up notifications from the sources that are of interest to users warrant that individuals that wish to be permanently informed regarding the activity of PEA or regarding electoral processes of Romania will be apprised with the institution's press releases, ongoing projects, organisation and conduct

of elections, normative changes, and so on. Such initiatives show the openness of the institution to dematerialisation processes, facilitating transposition of documents of public interest into the virtual environment.

An important project implemented by the Permanent Electoral Authority towards dematerialisation and improvement of electoral processes via the broader use of information technology is the System of Monitoring the Presence at the Vote and of Preventing Illegal Voting (SIMPV).

SIMPV is an innovative project for the Romanian electoral system which will be in practice for the first time at this year's local elections. PEA is responsible for the implementation of this project, based on the Electoral Register and the Polling Stations Register, being actively supported in this endeavor by the Special Telecommunications Service (STS) and the National Institute of Statistics.

SIMPV targets the real-time monitoring of the voting turnout, the identification of the attempts of multiple voting and the verification of the conditions for exercising the legal right to vote. Art. 85 par. 2 of Law 115/2015 for the election of local authorities regulates that every voter can exercise its right to vote only after being registered by a computer operator in The System of Monitoring the Presence at the Vote and of Preventing Illegal Voting.

Computer operators are Romanian citizens residing in Romania, who speak Romanian, are at least 18 years old at the time of designation, have full legal capacity, have completed compulsory education and have basic knowledge of information technology. They are recruited and trained by the Permanent Electoral Authority, with the participation of the Special Telecommunications Service.

By registering all the voters on SIMPV, the members of the precinct of the electoral bureau can immediately discover the position of the voter in the permanent or complementary electoral lists, as well as if he is assigned to another polling station, if he has his voting rights suspended, if he is underage at the time of elections or if he has previously

been registered in the system by another operator. The provisions of articles 387 and 393 of the Romanian Criminal Code stipulate that even the attempt of multiple voting is sanctioned. Thus, the system will play an essential part in preventing or identifying and sanctioning this kind of attempts.

Another project aimed at improving transparency and dematerializing the electoral process is the implementation of the Electoral Register by the Permanent Electoral Authority. The Electoral Register is a computer system through which the identification data of the Romanian citizens who have the right to vote and the information regarding their assignations at polling stations are registered and updated in a unified database. All the more, the citizens with the right to vote benefit from means of verifying the fairness of their data in the Electoral Register and can point to any errors, omissions or incorrect entries. All the more, they can check online the polling stations to which they are assigned.

Administrative and normative simplification is also supported by the activity of the Permanent Electoral Authority. Examples of simplification refer to the ease the voters can access the electoral legislation via the official website of PEA, the possibility to check online the polling stations to which a voter is assigned, as well as the possibility of e-mail registering of applications for the Electoral Experts' Body or for their designation as the computer operator of a polling station.

Postal voting is also an innovative project undertaken by the Permanent Electoral Authority and aimed to simplify. Through this project, Romanian citizens residing abroad will be able to express their right to vote by mail, with the benefit of still keeping the secrecy of voting and its freely expressed character. The simplified procedure that is available to all citizens with voting rights will ensure electoral processes better organized and conducted for the Romanian diaspora.

#### Conclusion

Evolutionary trends in the public sector in the Euro-Atlantic basin generate greater proximity to citizens' needs through innovative processes of change. These processes of reform and innovation have emerged as a result of implementing the principles and guidelines specific to the action doctrine of new public management. The Permanent Electoral Authority asserts itself as an institution of reference for analyzing the application of these evolutionary processes in the public sector in Romania through its undertaken activities and projects. These processes of agentification, simplification, dematerialisation, depoliticisation, professionalisation, transparency building and efficiency increasing of electoral processes in Romania contribute to the approach of the public administration in Romania to the consumer of public services, giving him the best conditions for the exercise of electoral rights and freedoms.

#### **About the author:**

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Having previously worked in the private sector, Octavian is now a parliamentary expert for the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania, as he has always been interested in studying and observing the evolution of electoral systems and regulations.

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# INVOLVING CITIZENS IN ELECTION ADMINISTRATION THE ROMANIAN ELECTORAL EXPERTS' BODY

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#### Abstract:

What are we looking for when we ask for the integrity of elections? Simply said, it is the feeling of each citizen that he or she is part of a fair and transparent electoral process and his or her vote is one of the thousands bricks building the democratic society.

One of the key elements in ensuring the public confidence in the results of the electoral processes is a professional conduct of the elections. Like many times before has been said, if citizens and candidates believe an election was unfair or poorly administered, they may not accept the outcome.

**Keywords:** Electoral Experts' Body, integrity of elections, polling station president, citizens' involvement, methodology of admission

The professional conduct of election by informed, trained and trusted officials, the establishment of the fragile equilibrium between political parties' interests and the impartiality required from the members of electoral bureaux, the prevention of misuse of the administrative resources by the state authorities in favor of a political party or

#### Abstract:

Ce căutăm atunci când cerem integritate în alegeri? Formulat simplu, este vorba de sentimentul fiecărui cetățean că el/ ea face parte dintr-un proces electoral corect și transparent și că votul lui/ei este una dintre sutele de cărămizi pe care se construiește societatea democratică.

Unul dintre elementele-cheie în asigurarea încrederii publice în rezultatele procesului electoral este organizarea cu profesionalism a alegerilor. Așa cum s-a mai spus de multe ori, dacă cetățenii și candidații cred că niște alegeri au fost inechitabile și organizate în mod necorespunzător, este posibil să nu accepte rezultatul acestora.

Cuvinte-cheie: Corpul experților electorali, integritate în alegeri, președinte al secției de votare, implicarea cetățenilor, procedura de admitere

candidate during the electoral campaigns, these are all inseparable conditions for a fair election.

In 2015, in the context of a major reform of the Romanian electoral framework, was created the Electoral Experts' Body. This body is formed by trained citizens who potentially are to be selected as *presidents* 

of the polling station electoral bureaux or their deputies.

The idea of directly involving citizens in the election administration is not new, we used it until 2015, but the legal solution used before had two major disadvantages, *the lack of time* and *the lack of continuity*.

Each election there are approximately 18,500 polling stations organized in Romania and almost 300 polling stations organized abroad. So for each electoral process the authorities had to select almost 40,000 people and train them in order to perform their duties as presidents and deputies of the polling stations electoral bureaux. The selection and training activities were performed only after the beginning of the electoral period, more precisely, the presidents of the polling stations electoral bureaux were selected 15 days prior to the election day and then trained.

So each electoral process we had to resolve the same problems. On one hand, we had a very short period of time allocated, according to the law, for training the citizens to become electoral officials.

On the other hand, we were confronted with the lack of continuity in their activity. In each electoral process we had new people involved, and this resulted often in an insufficient acknowledgement of the electoral laws and procedures.

After the presidential elections in 2014, the Permanent Electoral Authority included in the *Election Report* the proposal of creating **a permanent body** of electoral experts, aiming to bring together citizens interested to be directly involved in election administration. We believe this is one of the best opportunities to actively involve people in the democratic exercise of their political and electoral rights which are far more numerous than the right to vote and the right to be elected. Also the direct involvement in election management should increase the feeling of transparency, correctness and access of citizens to electoral process.

As a response to our initiative, the Parliament included in Law regarding

parliamentary elections<sup>1</sup>, recently adopted in 2015, provisions referring to creation and functioning of the Electoral Experts' Body. According to art. 120 of the law, the provisions regarding electoral experts are also applying to elections for president of Romania, local public authorities, European Parliament, national and local referendums.

# What is Electoral Experts' Body?

Electoral Experts' Body represents a permanent database containing persons who may be presidents of polling stations electoral bureaux within the country and abroad or their deputies. This database was created and it is managed by the Permanent Electoral Authority.

The person who will have the quality of electoral expert must meet general conditions referring to Romanian citizenship, written and spoken Romanian language, an appropriate health condition, completion of (at least) compulsory education. Of course, the electoral expert has to have the right to vote. There are also specific conditions aiming to ensure the impartiality and the moral conduct of the person entrusted to temporary hold a public office. The electoral expert has not to be a member of a political party and not to be criminally prosecuted or convicted.

The intention of the law was to conserve and use the already existing experience of electoral process management and also to constantly train new people. So admission to the Electoral Experts' Body is based on the favorable opinion given by the Permanent Electoral Authority after analyzing the previous work as president or deputy of the polling station bureau or, in the case of persons without previous experience, on an examination.

1. The person who held the position of president or deputy of polling station bureau *at least one election* must submit a written

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Law no. 208/2015 on election of Senate and Chamber of Deputies and for organization and functioning of the Permanent Electoral Authority.

application no later than 45 days before the election date. Admission is issued by the Department of organization of electoral processes within Permanent Electoral Authority, if the person:

- -fulfills the general legal requirements (has Romanian citizenship; knows Romanian language, both written and spoken; has the right to vote; has an appropriate health condition to fulfill this function; is not part of a political party; has completed at least compulsory education; is not criminally prosecuted or convicted). Verification of conditions' fulfillment is performed by analyzing the statement of the applicant, the identity card copy and the copy of the education diploma.
- did not commit minor offences in connection with elections or referendums while performing functions of president or deputy of a polling station electoral bureau.
   Verification is realized by analyzing the correspondence received by Permanent Electoral Authority from electoral bodies, as well as from other public authorities and institutions, regarding the establishment of minor offences in the electoral field.
- did not commit serious errors in the report ascertaining the election results.
   Verification is realized by analyzing the report ascertaining the election results, drafted and signed by the person requesting favorable opinion.
- has not been excluded from Electoral Experts' Body;
- has not retired from Electoral Experts' Body;
- submitted the application stating that he/she meets legal requirements and also a copy of the identity act and of the education diploma.

If the person does not meet legal requirements the Permanent Electoral Authority will issue a decision of rejection of the application for admission to Electoral Experts' Body.

2. A person may participate at the examination for admission into Electoral Experts' Body if he/she submitted a written request and:

- -fulfills the general legal requirements (has Romanian citizenship; knows Romanian language, both written and spoken; has the right to vote; has an appropriate health condition to fulfill this function; is not part of a political party; has completed at least compulsory education; is not criminally prosecuted or convicted). Verification of conditions' fulfillment is performed by analyzing the statement of the applicant, the identity card copy and the copy of the education diploma;
- has not exercised the functions of president or deputy of a polling station bureau or
- was excluded from Electoral Experts' Body, whether the exclusion took place more than three years before the examination;
- withdrew from the Electoral Experts' Body, if the withdrawal took place more than a year before the exam.

In order to clearly establish the procedure for admission, the Permanent Electoral Authority adopted **Decision** no. 11/2015 regarding the Methodology of admission in Electoral Experts' Body.

The admission in this case may take the form of a written exam held in an examination center or an online system exam, both forms having the objective to assess the following competencies:

- knowledge of legislation on voting rights and the application thereof;
- planning of electoral operations in polling stations;
  - registering the results of the vote.

Candidates who do not pass the admission exam can participate in a new written exam or in an online system exam scheduled by telephone or online, without further formalities.

# The Management of Electoral Expert's Body

The records maintained by the Permanent Electoral Authority regarding the Electoral Experts' Body include identification data of persons registered, such as: name, surname, personal identification number,

domicile, residence, occupation, profession, phone and e-mail.

The Permanent Electoral Authority shall make public, by posting on its website, the identification of persons registered in the Electoral Experts' Body, namely: name; surname; father's initial; residence – only the county and town or Bucharest district, where appropriate.

In the case of offenses committed on elections or referendums, as well as for committing serious errors in the record of voting results in the minutes, the Permanent Electoral Authority may issue a decision to exclude a person from the Electoral Experts' Body.

Withdrawal from Electoral Experts' Body is carried out based on written request by the electoral expert, within 5 days from the date of commencement of the electoral period.

Suspension from the Electoral Expert's Body is requested in writing by the electoral expert, no later than 30 days before election day, if they can't act as presidents of the polling station electoral bureaux or as deputy, during that election process.

# Selection and Training for Each Electoral Process

The road between being enlisted in the electoral experts database and holding the office of the president or deputy of a polling station electoral bureau has some additional steps.

The polling station electoral bureau has a mixt composition. On one hand, there are the president of the bureau and his/her deputy, selected, on a draw of lots basis, from the citizens enlisted in the electoral experts' database. On the other hand, there are 7 representatives of the political competitors (political parties and alliances, electoral alliances, organizations of national minorities).

Taking into consideration the high implication of the polling station electoral bureau members in the conduct of elections, all the Romanian electoral laws stipulate, as an additional measure in favor of a fair electoral process that candidates participating in elections, their husbands/wives and their relatives until the second grade cannot be members of the electoral bureau.

In the same context, according to art. 16 par. (16) of Law no. 208/2015, the electoral experts cannot participate in any way to electoral campaigns.

The request for the president of the electoral bureau and his/her deputy to be politically independent aims to ensure the equilibrium of decision-making process inside the bureau. The law encourages as much as possible magistrates and law graduates to be selected for this functions because in Romania the magistrates are highly respected in their communities and, according to the law, are impartial. Covering over 18,000 polling stations with magistrates is not possible, so the other criteria stipulated by the law refer to residing in that county, domicile or residence proximity to the polling station and the graduated studies.

The selection procedure is impartial and transparent. The Permanent Electoral Authority organizes a public computerized draw of lots at each county level, 15 days prior to the Election Day. This event is publicly announced 48 hours before. The results are published on the Permanent Electoral Authority's website, on the constituency electoral bureau's website and at the constituency electoral bureau establishment.

During the electoral period, additional training of the presidents and deputies of the polling station electoral bureaux will be organized by the prefects together with the Permanent Electoral Authority.

# The Fair and Impartial Conduct of Elections

Once selected and confirmed as a president or deputy of a polling station electoral bureau, the person will have to perform with professionalism and impartiality his/her duties stipulated by the electoral law. Together with the rest of the members of the electoral bureau, he/she will be involved in:

the final stage of election organization, including receiving and

inspecting the electoral materials used for voting (ballots, electoral lists, etc.),

- the election day, conducting the voting operation and keeping order in the polling station office and around it,
- the counting and establishment of the results procedures,
- the electoral dispute resolution, dealing with the complaints regarding the electoral bureau's activity.

The law stipulates that some of the actions specific to the pre-election day or election day can be performed only by the president/the deputy of a polling station electoral bureau.

In fact, all the major decisions affecting the voting operations are to be made by the president of the electoral bureau, starting with the opening of the polling station, then checking the state of electoral materials, approving the cases where a mobile ballot box is sent, preventing a voter from casting his vote twice, suspending the voting procedure, if necessary, taking measures for ensuring the good development of the voting process, announcing the end of voting time and closing the polling station, etc.

The president of the electoral bureau of the polling station shall be bound also to take the necessary measures for the proper conduct of the elections. His duties shall also

extend outside the building of the polling station, in the courtyard, at the entries into the courtyard, around the building, as well as in the streets and public squares, within a distance of 50 m. To keep order, the president of the electoral bureau of the polling station shall have at his disposal the necessary means of order, provided by the mayor and the prefect, together with the representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Currently we are actively involved in the activity of processing the written requests received from the persons wishing to become an electoral expert. We have received more than 24,000 application forms so far, 2,584 from persons who have never been involved in the conduct of elections. The necessary number for the next local authorities' elections in June 2016 is, as previously mentioned, around 40,000.

A national information campaign was organized and conducted by the Permanent Electoral Authority since September last year.

We are optimistic in believing that our citizens will join us in election administration, participating actively to the democratic life of the Romanian society, contributing directly to the conduct of a fair, transparent, impartial and **trusted electoral process.** 



# PROCESELE ELECTORALE ORGANIZATE ÎN ROMÂNIA – INTERES ȘI PERCEPȚIE

#### RAPORT DE CERCETARE

Bogdan FARTUŞNIC, consultant parlamentar

Biroul pentru documentare legislativă și relația cu Parlamentul Direcția legislație, legătura cu Parlamentul și contencios electoral

#### Introducere

Având în vedere caracterul electoral al anului 2016, care programează atât alegeri ale autorităților administrației publice locale, cât și alegeri pentru cele două Camere ale Parlamentului României, dar și responsabilitățile legale pe care le are în domeniu, Autoritatea Electorală din România a desfășurat în perioada noiembrie 2015 februarie 2016 cercetarea cu titlul Procesele electorale organizate în România – interes și percepție. Acest demers este al patrulea efectuat de Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă în ultimii cinci ani, precedentele având următoarele teme: Interesul tinerilor pentru viața politică - iunie 2011; Dimensiunea de gen a vieții politice din România - interes, *implicare*, discriminare<sup>1</sup> – martie 2014; Percepția și opinia tinerilor asupra proceselor electorale din România<sup>2</sup> – aprilie 2015.

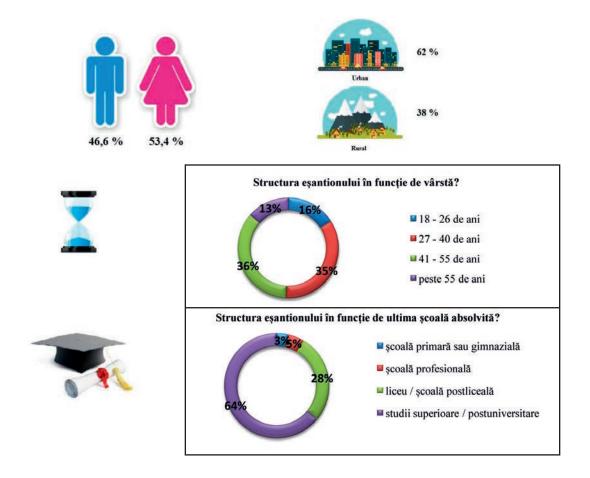
Obiectivele principale urmărite prin intermediul cercetării *Procesele electorale organizate în România – interes și percepție* au vizat colectarea unui set de informații privind opinia și percepția cetățenilor asupra subiectelor politice și a instituțiilor din administrația centrală și locală. De asemenea, s-a urmărit înregistrarea atât a unor informații utile în privința dorinței de implicare activă a cetățenilor în organizarea proceselor electorale, cât și a opiniilor acestora despre modul în care ar trebui realizată o campanie

Instrumentul de măsurare utilizat a fost un chestionar autoaplicat online sau personal, alcătuit din cinci întrebări cu variante de răspuns închise și o întrebare semideschisă (Anexa 1). Eșantionul cercetării a avut o dimensiune de 1.229 de persoane, 53,4% femei și 46,6% bărbați, provenind din toate județele țării, atât din mediul rural (37,8%), cât și din mediul urban (62,2%). Din punctul de vedere al structurii eșantionului în funcție de vârstă, categoria cel mai bine reprezentată este cea între 41 și 55 de ani (35,7%), urmată de categoria cuprinsă între 27 și 40 de ani (34,6%). Persoanele cu vârsta peste 55 de ani au reprezentat cea mai mică pondere în totalul eşantionului (13,6%). Efectuarea unei analize în funcție de nivelul de educație al persoanelor care compun esantionul arată o majoritate netă a categoriei cu studii superioare sau postuniversitare (64%). De asemenea, 27,5% dintre participanții la studiu au indicat drept ultimă școală absolvită liceul sau școala postliceală. Mai puțin de 10% dintre componenții esantionului fac parte din categoriile care desemnează nivelul de educație ca scoală primară, gimnazială sau profesională. Luând în calcul statisticile menționate, din punct de vedere sociodemografic, portretul-robot al participantului la cercetare cel mai comun regăsit în cadrul eşantionului este: femeie din mediul urban cu vârsta cuprinsă între 41 și 55 de ani, cu studii superioare sau postuniversitare.

de informare eficientă în vederea desfășurării unor alegeri. Răspunsurile participanților la studiu au fost culese prin efortul angajaților filialelor și birourilor județene ale Autorității Electorale Permanente.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Document disponibil la adresa: http://www.roaep. ro/prezentare/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Revista\_ Expert Electoral Nr 5.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Document disponibil la adresa: http://www.primulvot.ro/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Raport-pdf.pdf

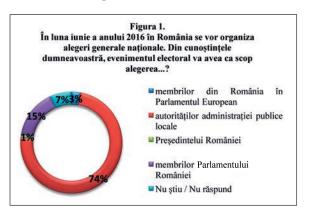


## Validarea, analizarea și interpretarea rezultatelor obținute

Înainte de realizarea analizei și interpretării rezultatelor, datele obținute în urma aplicării chestionarului au trecut printr-o etapă de validare în vederea asigurării faptului că informațiile culese sunt reprezentative din punct de vedere științific și că nu există probleme în ceea ce privește consistența internă a instrumentului de măsurare utilizat. A fost necesară verificarea validității de conținut și a fidelității prin consistentă internă a scalelor utilizate. Pentru aceasta am folosit coeficientul Cronbach's Alpha, precum și corelații între scorul sumativ si itemii care alcătuiesc scalele. Validitatea ne arată dacă instrumentul utilizat măsoară chiar elementele pe care am dorit să le măsoare. Rezultatele testelor efectuate au arătat că nu există probleme legate de validitatea de conținut și de fidelitatea scalelor utilizate (Anexa 2).

**La prima întrebare** inclusă în chestionar a fost obținut un procent covârșitor: 73,7% dintre respondenți au indicat corect

faptul că în luna iunie 2016 urmează să se organizeze alegeri pentru autoritățile administrației publice locale.



Acest nivel de cunoaștere cu adevărat foarte ridicat poate fi explicat prin cel puțin două moduri, care nu se exclud reciproc, funcționând mai degrabă într-o relație de tipul cauză-efect. Alegerile locale reprezintă în mod tradițional un moment important din punct de vedere electoral, atât pentru cetățenii care își desemnează reprezentanții a căror influență asupra traiului cotidian este cea mai însemnată, cât și pentru partidele politice, în vederea pregătirii pentru alegerile

parlamentare din toamna acestui an. Nivelul de mobilizare pe care îl declanșează alegerile locale poate fi ușor observat dacă ne uităm pe valorile prezenței la urne înregistrate în urmă cu patru ani, 56,26% la nivel național în cazul alegerilor locale din luna iunie 2012 și doar 41,76% la nivel național la alegerile parlamentare din luna decembrie a aceluiași an. Din acest motiv, comunicarea publică privind alegerile locale este foarte intensă în ultimele luni, dovadă fiind procentul foarte ridicat de persoane care au identificat corect următorul eveniment electoral care va avea loc în România.

Prin intermediul celei de-a doua întrebări incluse în chestionar s-au urmărit înregistrarea și măsurarea perceptiei respondenților asupra nivelului influenței exercitate de activitatea unor instituții publice din România asupra traiului cotidian. Trebuie subliniat faptul că dimensiunea cuantificată prin intermediul acestei întrebări se referă strict la percepția respondenților, având prin urmare calitate de opinie exprimată, nu de influență efectivă exercitată de instituțiile respective, măsurată din punct de vedere statistic. De asemenea, nu s-a urmărit măsurarea atitudinii pozitive sau negative a respondenților asupra activității instituțiilor incluse în studiu. Astfel, se observă că procentul persoanelor care consideră importantă și foarte importantă asupra traiului zilnic influența activității Parlamentului României, Guvernului României si a primăriei localității de domiciliu depășește 80%. În cazul singurei instituții externe menționate în studiu, Parlamentul European, procentul este mult mai redus, dar trece peste nivelul de 55%. O astfel de conștientizare a importanței pe care o exercită toate aceste instituții asupra traiului cotidian al cetățenilor reprezintă un pas corect în direcția consolidării unei societăți democratice. În momentul în care activitatea unei instituții publice este percepută ca fiind foarte importantă, atunci nivelul de responsabilizare crește, atât din partea electoratului care își votează reprezentanții, cât și din partea deținătorilor respectivelor poziții publice.

Instituția publică a cărei activitate este considerată a fi cea mai importantă este Guvernul României, 61,3% dintre participanții la studiu exprimând această opinie.

Trebuie însă subliniat faptul că, dintre instituțiile rezultate direct în urma unor alegeri, primăria localității de domiciliu acumulează cel mai mare procent în privința importanței activității asupra traiului cotidian, peste 60% dintre respondenți afirmând acest lucru. Percepția gradului de influență al diverselor instituții asupra traiului zilnic al cetățenilor este direct proporțională cu rata de participare la alegerile organizate pentru respectivele instituții. Observăm astfel un nivel ridicat de prezență la urne în cazul scrutinului pentru autoritățile administrației publice locale, urmat de alegerile pentru Parlamentul României și de un nivel mult mai scăzut în cazul alegerilor pentru Parlamentul European.

Tabelul 1. Frecvențele procentuale înregistrate la întrebarea "Cât de importantă considerați că este influența activității următoarelor instituții asupra traiului dumneavoastră zilnic?"

Nivel de importanță / Variabilă	Foarte importantă	Importantă	Puţin importantă	Deloc importantă	Nu știu / Nu răspund
Parlamentul României	50,9%	32%	9,2%	2,4%	5,5%
Guvernul României	61,3%	26,7%	5,9%	1,8%	4,3%
Primăria localității în care locuiți	60,4%	26,2%	7,3%	2,2%	3,9%
Parlamentul European	24,7%	33,8%	22,5%	9%	10%

Potrivit răspunsurilor înregistrate la întrebarea numărul trei din chestionar, televiziunea reprezintă cel mai utilizat mijloc de informare în masă asupra subiectelor politice atât la nivelul întregului eșantion, cât și în funcție de diversele categorii sociodemografice. Astfel, aproximativ 43% dintre respondenți afirmă că urmăresc zilnic la televizor știri și emisiuni politice, în timp ce subiectele politice din mass-media online, bloguri și site-uri de socializare sunt accesate zilnic doar de 28.2% dintre participanții la studiu. Dacă ne referim strict la categoria sociodemografică cu cea mai mare probabilitate să utilizeze frecvent mijloacele de informare virtuale, persoanele cu vârsta cuprinsă între 18 și 26 de ani din mediul urban, constatăm că 45,9% dintre acestea urmăresc cel puțin de câteva ori pe săptămână subiectele politice din mass-media online, în timp ce 60,7% dintre respondenții situați în aceeași categorie urmăresc cel puțin de câteva ori pe săptămână știri și emisiuni politice la televizor.

Pierderea constantă de audientă din partea presei scrise este vizibilă și în rezultatele obținute în cadrul cercetării de față, mass-media tipărită situându-se pe ultima poziție între mijloacele de comunicare în masă în privința informării pe teme politice a respondenților. Aproximativ 20% dintre participanți afirmă că nu citesc niciodată informații și comentarii politice din presa scrisă, în timp ce doar 18,7% declară că au acest obicei zilnic. Ponderea presei scrise ca importanță între mijloacele de comunicare în masă este mai redusă chiar și decât cea a radioului, 16,7% dintre respondenți afirmând că nu ascultă niciodată emisiuni de știri și comentarii politice, în timp ce, la polul opus, 20,7% declară că fac acest lucru zilnic.

Tabelul 2. Frecvențele procentuale înregistrate la întrebarea "În general cât de des...?"

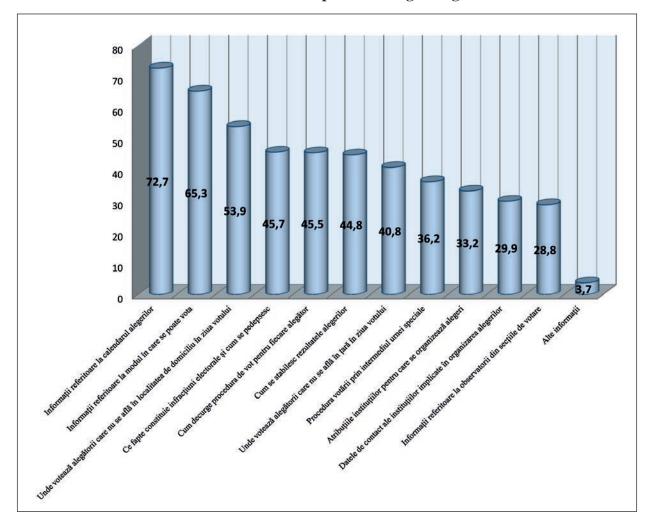
Periodicitate / Variabilă	Zilnic	De câteva ori pe săptămână	De câteva ori pe lună	De câteva ori pe an	Doar la alegeri	Deloc	Nu știu/ Nu răspund
vă uitați la știri și emisiuni politice la posturile TV	42,8%	31,7%	13,7%	4,7%	2,1%	4,1%	0,9%
ascultați emisiuni de știri și comentarii politice la radio	20,7%	22,5%	20,3%	12,5%	3,8%	16,7%	3,5%
citiți informații și comentarii politice din ziare	18,7%	22,8%	18,9%	13,1%	3,9%	19,2%	3,4%
citiți informații și comentarii politice pe internet (mass- media online, bloguri, site-uri de socializare etc.)	28,2%	23,4%	17,3%	9%	2,6%	16,2%	3,3%

Tabelul 3. Polarizarea	năcnuncunilon	la întroharea	În gonorol	aôt do dos 922
Tabelui 5. Polarizarea	raspunsuriior	ia muredarea ,	ın general	cat de des

Periodicitate / Variabilă	Cel puțin de câteva ori pe săptămână	Cel mult de câteva ori pe lună	Doar la alegeri sau deloc
vă uitați la știri și emisiuni politice la TV	74,5%	18,4%	6,2%
ascultați emisiuni de știri și comentarii politice la radio	43,2%	32,8%	20,5%
citiți informații și comentarii politice din ziare	41,5%	32%	23,1%
citiți informații și comentarii politice pe internet (mass-media online, bloguri, site-uri de socializare etc.)	51,6%	26,3%	18,8%

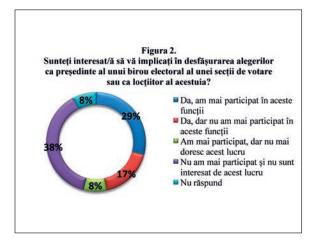
Prin intermediul întrebării numărul patru s-a urmărit înregistrarea tipului de informații pe care participanții la studiu ar dori să le găsească într-o campanie de informare realizată de Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă asupra unor alegeri organizate în

Tabelul 4. Frecvența procentuală a nominalizărilor la întrebarea "Vă rugăm să menționați informațiile pe care ați dori să le găsiți într-o campanie de informare realizată de Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă asupra unor alegeri organizate în România"



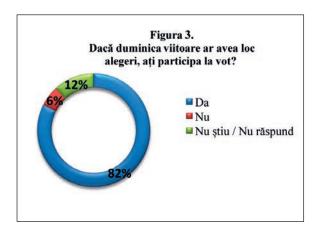
România. De subliniat faptul că întrebarea s-a referit la toate tipurile de alegeri în general, regăsindu-se astfel și categorii de informații care nu se aplică în cazul alegerilor locale (de exemplu: unde votează cetățenii români care nu se află în localitatea de domiciliu sau în țară în ziua votului). Cele mai multe opțiuni s-au îndreptat spre informațiile referitoare la calendarul alegerilor (data, intervalul orar în care se poate vota, durata campaniei electorale etc.), informațiile referitoare la modul în care se poate vota (documentele necesare, cum se poate afla secția de votare la care este arondat alegătorul etc.) și informațiile despre locul în care pot vota alegătorii care nu se află în localitatea de domiciliu în ziua votului. La polul opus, cele mai puţine nominalizări au fost înregistrate în cazul informațiilor referitoare la datele de contact ale institutiilor implicate în organizarea alegerilor și informațiilor referitoare la observatorii din sectiile de votare. A fost consemnat și un număr redus de solicitări pentru includerea altor tipuri de informații, cele mai multe dintre aceste mentiuni referindu-se la necesitatea unei informări mult mai detaliate asupra candidaților în alegeri, un curriculum vitae care să conțină experiența profesională și politică, informații despre existența unor eventuale probleme penale și orice alt tip de informații relevante pentru formarea unei opinii fundamentate înainte de acordarea votului. Deși această propunere ar putea fi binevenită pentru democrația din România, implementarea ei depinde în cea mai mare măsură de partidele politice, de instituțiile mass-media și de reprezentanții societății civile, Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă având un rol limitat de prevederile legale în această privintă.

La întrebarea cinci referitoare la interesul manifestat pentru implicarea în desfășurarea alegerilor în calitate de președinte al unui birou electoral al unei secții de votare sau ca locțiitor al acestuia, cei mai mulți respondenți (38,1%) au declarat că nu au mai participat în aceste funcții și nu sunt interesați de acest lucru în viitor. În același timp trebuie subliniat faptul că aproape jumătate dintre participanții la studiu (46,5%) au afirmat că sunt interesați de implicarea activă în



desfășurarea procesului electoral din funcțiile menționate, 29,3 % dintre ei menționând că au experiență anterioară în ocuparea acestor poziții. Rezultatele obținute în cadrul cercetării sunt susținute de numărul ridicat de cereri depuse de cetățeni pentru desemnarea ca oficiali în cadrul secțiilor de votare, până în data de 18 decembrie 2015 Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă consemnând un număr de 25.710 persoane care și-au exprimat dorința să participe la alegerile locale din luna iunie în calitate de operatori de calculator în cadrul unei secții de votare.

Întrebarea numărul șase s-a referit la intenția declarată de participare la un eventual scrutin, având astfel un caracter general și nefiind formulată în legătură strict cu alegerile locale din luna iunie 2016. La fel ca în cazul studiilor precedente efectuate de Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă, procentul persoanelor care declară că intenționează să-și exercite dreptul de vot în cazul desfășurării unor alegeri este foarte ridicat (82,5%). 11,6% dintre participanți au răspuns că nu știu sau nu vor să răspundă dacă intenționează



să se prezinte la urne, în timp ce doar aproximativ 6% au declarat în mod clar că nu doresc să participe la vot. Tendința de creștere a ratei de prezență la urne în România este confirmată de situația înregistrată la cele două evenimente electorale care au avut loc în anul 2014. La scrutinul pentru alegerea membrilor Parlamentului European organizat în luna mai 2014 în România s-a înregistrat cea mai mare prezență la urne (32,4%)3, comparativ cu precedentele momente electorale de acest tip din 2007 (29,5%) și 2009 (27,7%). În ciuda valorii procentuale care poate părea redusă, tara noastră a consemnat a cincea cea mai mare evoluție pozitivă (+ 4,7%) din Uniunea Europeană, comparativ cu alegerile din 2009. Doar în Lituania (+ 26,3%), Grecia (+7,4%), Suedia (+ 5,6%) și Germania (+ 4,8%) s-au consemnat evoluții pozitive ale prezenței la urne mai însemnate decât în țara noastră.4 O situație și mai elocventă s-a înregistrat cu ocazia alegerilor pentru Președintele României din luna noiembrie 2014, unde procentul de prezență de 64,1 înregistrat la turul secund din 16 noiembrie reprezintă cel mai mare nivel pentru acest tip de scrutin din anul 2000 până în prezent.

#### Concluzii și recomandări

✓ Nivelul de cunoaștere în rândul populației cu privire la faptul că în luna iunie se vor organiza alegeri locale este ridicat, prin urmare campania de informare ar trebui să se concentreze pe popularizarea datei exacte la care acestea vor avea loc.

✓ Indiferent de categoriile sociodemografice analizate, televiziunea rămâne principalul canal de comunicare în masă utilizat. Chiar dacă tinerii folosesc cu preponderență spațiul virtual, acesta nu este accesat cu prioritate pentru informare în privința subiectelor politice.

<sup>3</sup> Conform informațiilor disponibile la adresa: http://alegeri.roaep.ro/

✓ Informațiile obligatorii care trebuie introduse în viitoarele campanii de informare sunt: prezentarea clară, ușor de identificat a datei alegerilor, intervalul orar în care se poate vota, durata campaniei electorale și alte date referitoare la calendarul alegerilor, informații referitoare la modul în care se poate vota (documentele necesare, cum se poate afla secția de votare la care este arondat popularizarea sectiunii alegătorul prin publice a Registrului electoral), informații despre modul în care pot vota alegătorii care nu se află în localitatea de domiciliu în ziua alegerilor (acolo unde se aplică), informații asupra faptelor care constituie infracțiuni electorale și asupra felului în care se pedepsesc ele. Este preferabil ca atât în materialele printate, cât și în cele video informațiile să fie prezentate sub formă de infografic, pentru o accesibilitate cât mai mare din partea publicului-țintă.

✓ Procentul persoanelor care declară că intenționează să se prezinte la urne la următoarele alegeri este foarte ridicat, peste 82%, astfel că promovarea excesivă a mesajului privind mobilizarea prezenței la vot s-ar putea dovedi redundantă. În mod cert rata participării la urne care urmează să se înregistreze la viitoarele alegeri nu se va apropia de procentul sus-mentionat, dar, având în vedere caracterul special al alegerilor locale, este recomandabil ca mesajul principal să se concentreze și pe alte aspecte în afara promovării prezenței la vot. Un spațiu semnificativ în mesajele de informare trebuie ocupat de popularizarea cât mai eficientă a modificărilor recente survenite în legislația electorală.

✓ Campania prin care Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă a popularizat oportunitatea înscrierii în calitate de președinte, locțiitor sau operator de calculator în secțiile de votare trebuie continuată, având în vedere atât rezultatele obținute în cadrul prezentei cercetări, cât și numărul de persoane care și-au manifestat până în prezent interesul pentru ocuparea respectivelor poziții. Corpul experților electorali este o structură în continuă schimbare, fiind prin urmare necesară înscrierea constantă a unui număr cât mai mare de persoane.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Conform datelor disponibile la adresa: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-introduction-2014.html

#### Anexa 1. (Chestionarul utilizat)

Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă realizează un studiu privind interesul şi percepția cetățenilor asupra alegerilor organizate în România. Răspunsurile dumneavoastră vor rămâne confidențiale și vor fi folosite strict în scopuri știintifice. Vă multumim!

Vă rugăm să încercuiți varianta de răspuns care se potrivește opiniei dumneavoastră!

- **1.** În luna iunie a anului 2016 în România se vor organiza alegeri generale naționale. Din cunoștințele dumneavoastră, evenimentul electoral va avea ca scop alegerea...?
  - 1. membrilor din România în Parlamentul European
  - 2. autorităților administrației publice locale (primărie, consiliu local/județean)
  - 3. Președintelui României
  - 4. membrilor Parlamentului României
  - 5. Nu ştiu/Nu răspund
- **2.** Cât de importantă considerați că este influența activității următoarelor instituții asupra traiului dumneavoastră zilnic?

Instituție	Foarte importantă	Importantă	Puțin importantă	Deloc importantă	Nu ştiu/ Nu răspund
Parlamentul României	3	2	1	0	9
Guvernul României	3	2	1	0	9
Primăria localității	3	2	1	0	9
în care locuiți					
Parlamentul European	3	2	1	0	9

3.

În general cât de des?	Zilnic	De câteva ori pe săptămână	De câteva ori pe lună	De câteva ori pe an	Doar la alegeri	Deloc	Nu ştiu/ Nu răspund
vă uitați la știri	5	4	3	2	1	0	9
și emisiuni politice							
la posturile TV							
ascultați emisiuni	5	4	3	2	1	0	9
de știri și comentarii							
politice la radio							
citiți informații	5	4	3	2	1	0	9
și comentarii politice							
din ziare							
citiți informații	5	4	3	2	1	0	9
și comentarii politice							
pe internet (mass-media							
online, bloguri, site-uri							
de socializare etc.)							

4. Vă rugăm să menționați informațiile pe care ați dori să le găsiți într-o campanie de informare realizată de Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă asupra unor alegeri organizate în România? (puteți bifa oricâte răspunsuri doriți)

- Informații referitoare la calendarul alegerilor (data alegerilor, intervalul orar în care se poate vota, durata campaniei electorale etc.)
- Informații referitoare la modul în care se poate vota (documentele necesare, cum se poate afla secția de votare la care este arondat alegătorul etc.)
- Procedura votării prin intermediul urnei speciale
- Unde votează alegătorii care nu se află în localitatea de domiciliu în ziua votului
- Unde votează cetățenii români care nu se află în țară în ziua alegerilor
- Cum se stabilesc rezultatele alegerilor
- Ce fapte constituie infracțiuni electorale și cum se pedepsesc
- Informații referitoare la datele de contact ale instituțiilor implicate în organizarea alegerilor
- Informații referitoare la observatorii din secțiile de votare
- Cum trebuie să decurgă procedura de vot din secția de votare pentru fiecare alegător
- Atribuțiile instituțiilor pentru care se organizează alegeri
- 5. Sunteți interesat/ă să vă implicați în desfășurarea alegerilor ca președinte al unui birou electoral al unei secții de votare sau ca locțiitor al acestuia?
  - 1. Da, am mai participat în aceste funcții
  - 2. Da, dar nu am mai participat în aceste funcții
  - 3. Am mai participat, dar nu mai doresc acest lucru
  - 4. Nu am mai participat și nu sunt interesat de acest lucru
  - 9. Nu ştiu/Nu răspund
  - **6.** Dacă duminica viitoare ar avea loc alegeri, ați participa la vot?
  - 1. Da
- 2. Nu
- 9. Nu ştiu/Nu răspund

În final vă rugăm să ne oferiți câteva date despre dumneavoastră, pentru o mai bună clasificare a răspunsurilor:

Vârsta: 1. 18 – 26 de ani

2.27 - 40 de ani

3.41 - 55 de ani

4. peste 55 de ani

Mediul de rezidență: 1. Rural

2. Urban

Genul:

1. Masculin

2. Feminin

Ultima școală absolvită: 1. școală primară sau gimnazială

2. școală profesională

3. liceu/școală postliceală

4. studii superioare/postuniversitare

## Anexa 2. (Tabele testare SPSS)

## Correlations

		Parlamentul României	Scor sumativ
Parlamentul	Pearson	1	.843**
României	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1161	1092
Scor sumativ	Pearson Correlation	.843**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1092	1092

		Scor sumativ	Primăria
Scor sumativ	Pearson Correlation	1	.665**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1092	1092
Primăria	Pearson Correlation	.665**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1092	1181

		Scor sumativ	Guvernul României
Scor sumativ	Pearson Correlation	1	.808**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1092	1092
Guvernul României	Pearson Correlation	.808**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1092	1176

## Correlations

		Parlamentul României	Scor sumativ
Parlamentul	Pearson	1	.843**
României	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1161	1092
Scor sumativ	Pearson Correlation	.843**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1092	1092

		Scor sumativ	Primăria
Scor sumativ	Pearson Correlation	1	.665**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1092	1092
Primăria	Pearson Correlation	.665**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1092	1181

		Scor sumativ	Parlamentul European
Scor sumativ	Pearson Correlation	1	.800**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1092	1092
Parlamentul European	Pearson Correlation	.800**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1092	1106

# **Case Processing Summary**

		N	%
Cases	Valid	1092	88.9
	Excluded	137	11.1
	Total	1229	100.0

# **Reliability Statistics**

<u>Cronbach's</u> <u>Alpha</u>	N of Items
<u>.778</u>	<u>4</u>

#### **Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Parlamentul României	6.90	3.428	.704	.663
Guvernul României	6.76	3.709	.663	.691
Primăria	6.78	4.135	.439	.792
Parlamentul European	7.47	3.180	.569	.744

## **Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Parlamentul României	1161	0	3	2.39	.767
Guvernul României	1176	0	3	2.54	.697
Primăria	1181	0	3	2.51	.735
Parlamentul European	1106	0	3	1.82	.945
Valid N (listwise)	1092				

## Correlations

		Ştiri TV	Medie
Ştiri TV	Pearson Correlation	1	.725**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1218	1163
Medie	Pearson Correlation	.725**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1163	1163

		Medie	Știri radio
Medie	Pearson Correlation	1	.779**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1163	1163
Știri radio	Pearson Correlation	.779**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1163	1187

		Medie	Ştiri ziare
Medie	Pearson Correlation	1	.865**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1163	1163
Știri ziare	Pearson Correlation	.865**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1163	1188

# **Case Processing Summary**

		N	%
Cases	Valid	1163	94.6
	Excluded	66	5.4
	Total	1229	100.0

# **Reliability Statistics**

<u>Cronbach's</u> <u>Alpha</u>	N of Items
<u>.796</u>	4

#### **Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Știri TV	8.90	18.614	.569	.770
Știri radio	9.94	15.706	.580	.759
Ştiri ziare	10.04	13.988	.724	.682
Ştiri internet	9.68	15.413	.585	.758

## **Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Ştiri TV	1218	0	5	3.97	1.272
Știri radio	1187	0	5	2.94	1.713
Ştiri ziare	1188	0	5	2.81	1.750
Ştiri internet	1189	0	5	3.18	1.757
Valid N (listwise)	1163				

# PROCESUL DE INSTRUIRE A OPERATORILOR DE CALCULATOR AI BIROURILOR ELECTORALE ALE SECȚIILOR DE VOTARE DIN MUNICIPIUL BUCUREȘTI

Nicoleta GRIGORE Directorul Filialei București–Ilfov

**Dr. Octavian Mircea CHESARU**Expert parlamentar – Filiala București–Ilfov

#### Abstract:

Programul Autorității Electorale Permanente de informatizare a secțiilor de votare presupune, într-o primă fază, recrutarea și instruirea operatorilor de calculator. Filiala București—Ilfov a AEP desfășoară aceste acțiuni pentru secțiile de votare din municipiul București, iar experiența sesiunilor de instruire a indicat cele mai importante aspecte tehnice și legislative care trebuie detaliate de instructori pentru a oferi o pregătire cât mai bună a viitorilor operatori.

De asemenea, informațiile cumulate până la data de 1 martie 2016, în urma înregistrării cererilor și a desfășurării sesi-unilor de examinare și de instruire, permit formularea unor concluzii privind percepția față de SIMPV și gradul de implicare a societății românești în acest proiect.

Cuvinte-cheie: operator de calculator, informatizare, clivaj digital, instruire tehnică și legislativă

Sistemul informatic de monitorizare a prezenței la vot și de prevenire a votului ilegal (SIMPV) reprezintă un proiect inovativ de dematerializare (de informatizare) a procesului electoral pe care Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă îl implementează cu sprijinul Serviciului de Telecomunicații Speciale și al Institutului National de Statistică.

#### Abstract:

The programme initiated by the Permanent Electoral Authority for the computerisation of the polling stations implies, first, the enlistment and training of the computer operators. The Permanent Electoral Authority branch in Bucharest and Ilfov organizes these actions for the polling stations in Bucharest, and the experience of these training sessions showed the most important technical and legislative aspects that have to be elaborated by the instructors in order to provide the best training for the future computer operators.

Likewise, the information gathered up to March 1, 2016, after registering the applications and after the sessions for examining and training, allows us to draw some conclusions on how SIMPV is perceived and on how involved is the Romanian society in this project.

**Keywords:** computer operator, computerisation, digital split, technical and legislative training

Pentru a recruta cei 1.495 de operatori de calculator necesari pentru secțiile de votare din municipiul București, procesul de selecție și de instruire a acestora a fost demarat din luna ianuarie 2016, iar experiența acumulată de reprezentanții AEP în urma sesiunilor de examinare și de instruire organizate în București a permis optimizarea discursului

de instruire, precum și identificarea unor tipare cantitative recurente.

#### Procesul de recrutare a operatorilor de calculator

Persoanele care îndeplinesc condițiile legale pentru a deveni operatori de calculator, și anume: sunt cetățeni români, cu domiciliul în România, au vârsta de minimum 18 ani împliniți și capacitate deplină de exercițiu, au absolvit învățământul general obligatoriu și au cunoștințe de bază în domeniul tehnologiei informației, pot depune cereri direct sau prin poștă, la sediul Filialei București–Ilfov a AEP, precum și la prefect și primari, care redirecționează cererile către AEP.

Din analiza cererilor înaintate se pot face o serie de aprecieri statistice care relevă interesul societății față de proiect. În primul rând, observăm că aproximativ 54% dintre persoanele care au înaintat cereri sunt femei. Diferența redusă ca număr dintre cererile înaintate de persoanele de sex masculin și cele înaintate de persoanele de sex feminin indică o viziune societală care nu plasează această activitate ca fiind rezervată în exclusivitate uneia dintre aceste categorii.

De asemenea, se observă un interes crescut al tinerilor față de procesele electorale, aproximativ 40% dintre cereri fiind înaintate de persoane născute după 1990. Programele de educare și de informare desfășurate de AEP în ultimii ani au avut tendința de a responsabiliza noile generații, mobilizând tinerii pentru a lua parte activă la procesul electoral.

Semnatarii cererilor sunt contactați de reprezentanții AEP în vederea convocării acestora la sesiunile de examinare și de instruire desfășurate în parteneriat cu STS. Sesiunile de examinare sunt stabilite cu o săptămână înainte, practica specifică pentru municipiul București fiind de a organiza câte două sesiuni într-o zi de instruire, de la orele 10,00 și 13,00. Cu toate acestea, dovedind flexibilitate față de solicitările persoanelor care au înaintat cereri, sunt organizate și sesiuni de instruire începând cu ora 18,00 sau chiar în weekend.

Astfel, persoanele care nu pot lipsi de la locul de muncă pentru a fi evaluate și instruite beneficiază de posibilitatea participării la o sesiune de seară. Prin aceasta, reprezentanții Filialei București–Ilfov se asigură că toate persoanele care înaintează cereri au posibilitatea de a fi evaluate și instruite.

## Partea introductivă a sesiunilor și procesul de examinare

Sesiunile de examinare și de instruire sunt deschise de un reprezentant al AEP, care familiarizează cursanții cu obiectivele SIMPV. În cadrul acestei etape se preîntâmpină o întrebare recurentă la primele sesiuni de instruire, și anume dacă SIMPV are rolul de a împiedica alegătorii să voteze. Astfel, reprezentatul AEP subliniază că obiectivele sistemului sunt de a verifica îndeplinirea condițiilor legale pentru exercitarea dreptului la vot, monitorizarea în timp real a prezenței la vot, precum și prevenirea votului ilegal.

Odată familiarizați cu obiectivele SIMPV, cursanților li se explică procedurile de examinare, instruire și desemnare, experiența arătând că toate informațiile furnizate sunt suficiente pentru a demara sesiunea de examinare practică dirijată de reprezentantul STS.

Sesiunea de examinare vizează evaluarea unor competențe digitale minimale, precum operarea de bază a unui terminal (de tip tabletă), utilizarea unui browser de internet, completarea corectă a unui formular digital în vederea generării unui cont pe platforma de e-learning ILIAS și verificarea curierului de intrări al căsuței personale de e-mail.

Examinarea este considerată a fi de o dificultate redusă, garantând că persoanele admise la instruirea tehnică și legislativă pot deprinde rapid abilitatea de a opera în Aplicația Informatică pentru Verificarea Dreptului de Vot (ADV). Procentul de candidați respinși este unul redus (aproximativ 3,6% din numărul persoanelor convocate).

De asemenea, clivajul digital dintre generații se face remarcat în cazul celor respinși, aproximativ 87% dintre aceștia fiind trecuți de vârsta de 40 de ani, iar aproximativ 57% fiind trecuți de vârsta de 50 de ani.

Cu toate acestea, faptul că aproximativ 72% dintre persoanele care au înaintat cereri pentru a fi desemnate operatori de calculator au menționat că folosesc calculatorul în cadrul ocupației pe care o au e un indiciu că acest clivaj va fi treptat surmontat.

#### Sesiunea de instruire

Candidații declarați admiși participă, în continuare, la o sesiune de instruire realizată de reprezentanții AEP și STS. Experiența instruirilor a ajutat la optimizarea discursului instructorilor, aspectele legislative și aspectele tehnice fiind expuse secvențial, în mai multe etape.

Sesiunea de instruire este deschisă de către un reprezentant al AEP, care îi informează pe cursanți cu privire la verificările care trebuie parcurse în preziua votării, la ora 18,00, precum și în dimineața zilei de referință, la ora 6,00.

Reprezentantul STS prezintă, apoi, procesele de instalare a terminalului, de conectare la o sursă de internet, de autentificare în ADV și de verificare a conformității terminalului cu secția de votare. Cursanților li se aduc la cunoștință pașii de urmat în cazul apariției unor probleme, astfel încât sistemul să fie functional la ora deschiderii urnelor.

Înainte de a vedea cum operează efectiv ADV, reprezentantul AEP enumeră atribuțiile pe care operatorii de calculator le au potrivit Legii nr. 115/2015 pentru alegerea autorităților administrației publice locale, pentru modificarea Legii administrației publice locale nr. 215/2001, precum și pentru modificarea și completarea Legii nr. 393/ 2004 privind Statutul aleşilor locali şi Hotărârii AEP nr. 9/2015 pentru aprobarea normelor metodologice privind funcționarea Sistemului informatic de monitorizare a prezenței la vot și de prevenire a votului ilegal, selecția și desemnarea operatorilor de calculator ai birourilor electorale ale sectiilor de votare.

Pentru desfășurarea procesului electoral în cele mai bune condiții, se subliniază

că, indiferent de mesajul returnat de ADV după verificarea unui alegător, gestul operatorului trebuie să fie același, și anume să predea, de îndată, actul de identitate președintelui biroului electoral al secției de votare sau unui membru desemnat să-l asiste și să comunice mesajul, fără a-l interpreta. De asemenea, este expusă și relația de subordonare a operatorului de calculator față de președintele biroului electoral al secției de votare, acesta din urmă fiind singura persoană abilitată să ia decizii privind procesul de vot din respectiva secție de votare.

În aceeași ordine de idei, pentru că foarte mulți cursanți au ridicat întrebări privind rolul lor și al SIMPV, sunt subliniate importanța legală a sistemului și circuitul actului de identitate în secție. Reprezentantul AEP precizează că SIMPV nu este un proiect experimental utilizat în câteva secții de votare, așa cum îl considerau unii dintre cursanți. Din contră, cursanții află că, potrivit art. 85 alin. (2) al Legii nr. 115/2015, toate secțiile de votare vor avea un operator de calculator și niciun alegător nu-și poate exercita dreptul de vot fără a fi înscris în SIMPV de către operator.

După aceste precizări deosebit de importante, reprezentantul STS prezintă procedurile de introducere și de verificare în ADV ale datelor alegătorilor. Recurența unor întrebări din partea cursanților a impus ca reprezentanții AEP să intervină cu precizări privind dreptul de vot al cetățenilor din celelalte state membre ale Uniunii Europene sau privind procedurile legate de urna specială.

În ultima parte a instruirii, reprezentanții AEP și ai STS descriu procedurile de urmat în caz de disfuncționalitate a sistemului și subliniază importanța delogării din aplicație de fiecare dată când operatorul de calculator lasă terminalul nesupravegheat. Se subliniază, de asemenea, faptul că în situație de disfuncționalitate nu vor fi întrerupte nici procesul de vot și nici procesul de introducere a datelor în ADV.

# 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 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 academic magazines and journals assemble them in a publication focused on the electoral field.

With an interdisciplinary and applied character, firstly the publication aims at a wide audience, this being 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 academic institutions and NGOs. Secondly, the Electoral Expert Review can be found in electronic format in Romanian; this will be completed by one translated into English, giving it an international character.

The issues from 2016 of Electoral Expert Review will be published with the following general topics: **electoral reform, political financing, electoral system, voting methods, gender and elections, etc.** (deadline for submitting the articles: **30**th of June 2016).

#### **Indications and text formatting requirements:**

- ✓ Submitted articles may cover theoretical studies, case studies or researches that have not been published or submitted for other publications or part of the proceedings of scientific conferences. Submitted articles should be original.
- $\checkmark$  We recommend that submitted articles should be between 4,000 and 6,000 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: <a href="mailto:expert.electoral@roaep.ro">expert.electoral@roaep.ro</a>

# CALL FOR PAPERS REVISTA "EXPERT ELECTORAL"

Revista "Expert Electoral", editată de Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă, primește spre publicare articole științifice ce tratează teme din domeniul 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 în alte reviste sau volume ale unor simpozioane științifice.

Având în vedere necesitatea unei dezbateri publice reale pe tema îmbunătățirii şi uniformizării legislației electorale, intenționăm ca în următoarele numere ale publicației să abordăm subiecte precum: reforma electorală, finanțarea partidelor politice şi a campaniilor electorale, sisteme electorale, metode de vot, gen şi alegeri etc.

Autorii pot transmite propunerile de articole pentru nr. 2(14)/2016 al revistei "Expert Electoral" la adresa de e-mail: <a href="mailto:expert.electoral@roaep.ro">expert.electoral@roaep.ro</a>.

Termen limită de comunicare a lucrărilor: 30 iunie 2016.

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 dezbatere 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 că 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.





## **Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă** Str. Stavropoleos nr. 6, sector 3, București www.roaep.ro