

The Problems of the Development of the Educational System Reflected in the Electoral Platforms of the Candidates for the Position of President of the Republic of Moldova (the Ballot from October-November 2024)

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Relevance. In October - November 2024, were held presidential elections in the Republic of Moldova. 11 candidates entered the electoral race. Each of the 11 candidates presented to the electorate their electoral program in which they expressed their views on the important issues of contemporary Moldovan society, including the development of the education system in the Republic of Moldova. The purpose of the research is to examine the opinions of the candidates for the position of President of the Republic of Moldova regarding the development of education and research.

Results. The electoral competition was characterized by the absence of extensive electoral debates, with candidates focusing more on criticizing the government than on presenting their own visions and offering reliable solutions to existing problems and challenges. The candidates' electoral platforms were not related to the constitutional attributions of the President of the Republic of Moldova and abounded in populist promises.

Conclusions. In general, the electoral platforms of the candidates running for the position of President of the Republic of Moldova did not take into account, with some minor exceptions, the constitutional provisions regarding the powers of the President.

The contents of the platforms, slogans, and electoral declarations clearly aimed to promote the candidate's image and attract as many voters as possible.

Candidates in their electoral platforms and messages, at meetings with voters and in televised debates also took into account the accumulation of political advantages for the 2025 parliamentary elections.

The contents of the candidates' messages were declarative in nature and did not offer viable, reasoned and feasible solutions to the problems existing in Moldovan society.

Keywords: Republic of Moldova, presidential elections, electoral programs, education, research

Проблеми розвитку системи освіти, відображені у виборчих програмах кандидатів на посаду Президента Республіки Молдова (жовтень-листопад 2024 року)

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Актуальність. У жовтні - листопаді 2024 року в Республіці Молдова відбулися президентські вибори. У виборчу гонку взяли участь 11 кандидатів, двоє з яких вийшли до другого туру. Кожен з 11 кандидатів представив виборцям свою передвиборчу програму, в якій висловив свої погляди на важливі проблеми сучасного молдовського суспільства, включаючи розвиток системи освіти в Республіці Молдова. Метою статті є вивчення думок кандидатів на посаду Президента Республіки Молдова щодо розвитку освіти та наукових досліджень.

Результати. Виборча конкуренція характеризувалася відсутністю масштабних передвиборчих дебатів, кандидати зосереджувалися більше на критиці влади, ніж на представленні власного бачення та пропозиції надійних рішень існуючих проблем і викликів. Виборчі програми кандидатів не були пов'язані з конституційними повноваженнями Президента Республіки Молдова та ясніли популістськими обіцянками.

Висновки. Загалом виборчі майданчики кандидатів, які претендують на посаду президента Республіки Молдова, не враховували, за деякими незначними винятками, конституційних положень щодо повноважень президента. Зміст платформ, гасел та виборчих декларацій чітко спрямований на просування іміджу кандидата та залучення якомога більшої кількості виборців. Кандидати у своїх виборчих платформах і повідомленнях, на зустрічах з виборцями і теледебатах також враховували накопичення політичних переваг для парламентських виборів 2025 року. Зміст повідомлень кандидатів мав декларативний характер і не пропонував життєздатних, аргументованих і можливих рішень проблем, що існують в молдовському суспільстві. У виборчій кампанії на посаду президента Республіки Молдова не було жодних електоральних дебатів у справжньому розумінні цього терміну.

Ключові слова: Республіка Молдова, президентські вибори, виборчі програми, освіта, дослідження

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Introduction.

In the Republic of Moldova on October 20, 2024, took place the first round of elections for the position of President of the Republic of Moldova, which represented the fifth presidential election since the declaration of independence. For the participation in the presidential election on October 20, 2024, eleven electoral contestants from 13 initiative groups were registered, who collected signatures to support the candidates for the position of President of the Republic of Moldova. The registration of Igor Munteanu, the candidate of the Coalition for Unity and Welfare, was rejected due to an insufficient number of valid signatures, but Alexandru Arseni, designated by the citizens' assembly, did not submit the application to the Central Electoral Commission (Comisia Electorală Centrală, 2024).

For the elections to be declared valid, at least 1/3 of the number of voters registered on the electoral lists had to participate. The voting turnout in the first round was 51.68% of the total number of voters. In the second round have access the ex-prosecutor general Alexandr Stoianoglo and the acting President of the Republic of Moldova - Maia Sandu, who obtained the second mandate.

The purpose of the research is to elucidate the views of the candidates for the position of President of the Republic of Moldova regarding the development of the educational system in the country.

The data necessary for conducting the research were collected through the thematic analysis method, through which we identified the essential elements of the candidates' speeches regarding the development of the education system in the Republic of Moldova.

Analysis of the historiography of the problem.

Research on the electoral phenomenon in the Republic of Moldova was conducted by researchers from various fields, but primarily from the fields of law and political science. Professor Alexandru Arseni studied the theoretical aspects of the electoral process such as: the constitutional guarantee of the right to vote (Arseni, 2019), the role and importance of the electoral body as an exponent of the national sovereignty (Arseni, 2013), the legal consequences of election fraud (Arseni, 2018).

The scientific debate on the virtues and vices of presidential regimes versus parliamentary regimes has been a debate in political science for the past half century. Steven D. Roper examined the constitutional change of the Republic of Moldova in 2000 from a semi-presidential to a parliamentary regime and analyzed what the Moldovan case tells us about the nature of executive power. While Moldova has evolved from a semi-presidential to a parliamentary regime, the president is more powerful in the current regime than previous presidents who operated under a semi-presidential regime. The consolidation of the president's party in parliament, in St. D. Roper's view, explains the concentration of executive power more than constitutional prerogatives (Roper, 2008). William

Crowther (2011) researched the semi-presidential regime in the Republic of Moldova under the conditions of the imperfect transition to democracy.

In the contemporary world, where democracy and equal opportunities are fundamental values, the analysis of gender participation and representation in elections becomes essential. In Igor Soroceanu's opinion, the equitable representation of women and men in the electoral process is not only a fundamental rights issue but also influences the quality of governance and public policies (Soroceanu, 2024). The key dimensions of the political recruitment process and their impact on gender representation on candidate lists for elections were researched by Elena Studeneanschi (2017).

The electoral behavior of the population and PR, issues within electoral campaigns, were the subject of research conducted by Aurelia Peru-Balan (2020; 2021). Regarding the presidential elections of October 2024, the aforementioned author studied the interaction between political PR and political agenda-setting from the perspective of the presidential elections and the republican constitutional referendum that was organized on the same day as the presidential elections. A. Peru-Balan found that the interaction between political PR and the political media agenda-setting process can play a crucial role in creating a climate of opinion in an electoral context. The presidential initiative to organize a republican referendum on the subject of the Republic of Moldova's accession to the European Union became a widely publicized event in the Moldovan press. This initiative, which constitutes an element of political PR, had a strong impact on public opinion, and through the media, it managed to overlap the agenda of an electoral candidate with the public agenda of citizens. In this way, the interaction of the three types of agenda was achieved - the political agenda, the media agenda and the public agenda (Peru-Balan, 2024).

Researchers Ion Rusandu and Vladimir Sterpu studied the general post-electoral situation in the Republic of Moldova after the local elections of November 5, 2023, with reference to the events that took place at the national and international levels and their impact on internal affairs. The authors also presented some predictions regarding the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections in 2024 and 2025, drawing a parallel with the referendum on the European integration of the Republic of Moldova (Rusandu, & Sterpu, 2024).

In general, in the specialized literature, the issue of the parliamentary elections that took place in the fall of 2024 in the Republic of Moldova has not been sufficiently researched and elucidated. Both the electoral campaign and the organized debates focused more on criticizing the individual peculiarities of the electoral opponents than on advancing and promoting solutions to the existing problems in the Republic of Moldova. This particularity of the fall 2024 election has caused researchers to lose interest in this process. Given this particularity, I

considered it necessary to fill this gap in the specialized literature through this study that examines the opinions of candidates for the position of President of the Republic of Moldova regarding the issues of the state's educational policy.

Results.

1. The place and role of the President in the system of public authorities of the Republic of Moldova.

In order to understand the meaning and stake of the presidential elections in the Republic of Moldova, it is important to elucidate the place, role and margin of intervention of the President in the administration of public affairs in the country.

The President of the Republic of Moldova, according to constitutional provisions, is the guarantor of the sovereignty, national independence, unity and territorial integrity of the country. The competence of the President of the Republic of Moldova is summarized as follows:

A) Relationship with the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova. According to Article 84 of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, the President may take part in the work of the Parliament and may address messages to it regarding the main issues of the nation. In case of impossibility of forming the Government or blocking the procedure for adopting laws for 3 months, the President of the Republic of Moldova, after consulting the parliamentary factions, may dissolve the Parliament (Constituția Republicii Moldova, 1994, Article 85, paragraph 1). The President of the Republic of Moldova promulgates laws (Constituția Republicii Moldova, 1994, Article 93, paragraph 1).

B) Responsibilities in the field of foreign policy. The President of the Republic of Moldova conducts negotiations and takes part in negotiations, concludes international treaties on behalf of the Republic of Moldova. Upon the proposal of the Government, it accredits and recalls the diplomatic representatives of the Republic of Moldova and approves the establishment, dissolution or change of rank of diplomatic missions. Receives the letters of accreditation and recall of diplomatic representatives of other states in the Republic of Moldova (Constituția Republicii Moldova, 1994, Article 86).

C) Responsibilities in the field of defense. The President of the Republic of Moldova is the supreme commander of the armed forces and may declare, with the prior approval of Parliament, partial or general mobilization. In case of armed aggression directed against the country, the President of the Republic of Moldova takes measures to repel the aggression, declares a state of war and brings them to the attention of Parliament without delay. The President may also take other measures to ensure national security and public order, within the limits and under the conditions of the law (Constituția Republicii Moldova, 1994, Article 87).

D) Responsibilities of a legal, managerial and organizational nature. The President of the Republic of

Moldova also fulfills the following duties: a) confers decorations and honorary titles; b) confers supreme military ranks provided for by law; c) resolves issues of citizenship of the Republic of Moldova and grants political asylum; d) appoints to public positions, under the conditions provided by law; e) grants individual pardons; f) may ask the citizens to express their will on issues of national interest through a referendum; g) confers diplomatic ranks; h) confers higher degrees of classification to the workers of the prosecutor's office, judges and other categories of civil servants, in accordance with the law; i) suspends the acts of the Government, which contravene the legislation, until the final decision of the Constitutional Court is adopted; j) also exercises other responsibilities established by law (Constituția Republicii Moldova, 1994, Article 88).

The President of the country does not set the level or indexation coefficient of pensions, does not lead the construction of roads, hospitals or other infrastructure facilities, does not deal with public debt management, does not set fiscal or monetary policy objectives and measures, does not create jobs. The president can only draw the legislature's attention to these issues or make use of his right of legislative initiative, which does not necessarily mean that the initiatives will be supported (Soloviova, 2024, 1-2).

2. The problems of the educational system in the electoral programs of the candidates.

Between September 30 and October 6, 2024, the Laboratory of Cognitive Political Science (LCPS) of the Center for Political Research, International Relations and Security of the Institute for Legal, Political and Sociological Research of Moldova State University conducted qualitative research with the participation of 61 national and international experts entitled the Questionnaire on the reflection of current issues in the Republic of Moldova. The experts' answers to the question "What current problems in the Republic of Moldova do you consider should be reflected in the speech of the candidates in the presidential elections of October 20?" provided a picture of the essential problems of Moldovan society, which, in the experts' view, should have been topics of debate in the presidential election campaign in the Republic of Moldova. These are the following: economic situation – 18%, low standard of living – 16%, demographic crisis – 16%, energy crisis – 14%, foreign investment – 14%, wage increase – 9%, pension increase – 7%, European integration – 2%, national security – 2%, corruption – 1%, geopolitical orientation – 1%, climate change – 0% (Laboratory of Cognitive Political Science, 2024).

It is easy to see from the data presented above that the problems of developing the educational system in the Republic of Moldova, according to the opinion of the expert community, do not constitute a topic of public interest. The experts' opinion was confirmed by the electoral debates that took place.

Next, we present a brief analysis of the positions of the electoral competitors regarding the options for developing the educational system in the Republic of Moldova. The candidates' opinions on the subject under consideration were examined in the order in which they were registered by the Central Election Commission.

1. Alexandr Stoianoglo, Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova. The slogan promoted by A. Stoianoglo was: "Our goal is to become a territory of justice!" The candidate identified three priority areas around which future transformations should revolve. One of them, entitled „Technological modernization. Moldova must become a truly modern country”, also referred to the issues of the development of education and science (Stoianoglo, 2024).

The candidate started from the premise that a country, whose budget is made up of immigrant labor and not its own production, risks losing its intellectual and professional potential forever. Therefore, to stop the phenomenon, modern and efficient methodologies should, first of all, be applied in general education. In the Republic of Moldova, in his view, "there should not be a division between quality elitist education and education for ordinary people". All schools in the country should become the best, but the teacher should occupy the most important place in the hierarchy of civil servants (Stoianoglo, 2024).

Moldova, in his vision, has the potential to become a country with exclusive incentives for innovations and a territory for courageous testing of the most advanced technologies – from infrastructure to energy, from agriculture to crypto-banking. The candidate believed that it was precisely such a creative, dynamic, open to the world, attractive Moldova, including for the new generation, that could regain the most important thing – its future (Stoianoglo, 2024)!

The statements made in the electoral program were not accompanied by a plan or program of concrete activities that must be undertaken to achieve them.

2. Maia Sandu, Party of Action and Solidarity. Maia Sandu, the incumbent President of the Republic of Moldova, stated in her electoral platform that „focusing on people and their well-being” will underpin all her decisions and actions. That is why the candidate promised to place special emphasis on improving the health and education systems.

President Maia Sandu's education plan was prefaced by a presentation of the government's achievements in the field of education in quantitative terms. The candidate was aiming to support the following strategic objectives for the development of education:

1. Increasing the quality and access to preschool education by ensuring sufficient places in kindergartens and nurseries for all children and better conditions by increasing investments in the sector by at least 1 billion lei.

2. Expanding the Model Schools network from 35 to 90 institutions nationwide, ensuring high standards of

education for all children, by increasing the investment budget to 2 billion lei.

3. Ensuring healthy and free nutrition, at the expense of the state, for pupils in grades 1-9 (primary and secondary school).

4. Increasing the attractiveness and competitiveness of Moldovan universities by increasing teaching staff salaries and investing 1 billion lei in modernizing university infrastructure.

5. Increasing the average salary of teaching staff to the level of the average salary for the economy (Sandu, 2024).

In general, the objectives outlined are good, but they are within the competence of the Parliament and the Government and do not have direct tangency with the duties of the President of the Republic of Moldova.

3. Renato Usatii, Our Party. Our Party candidate Renato Usatii, in the field of education and research, aimed to achieve the following:

1. Restoration of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova.

2. Reopening of the State Agrarian University of Moldova.

3. Restoring professional-technical education for the training of qualified specialists.

4. Banning LGBT propaganda in schools (Usatii, 2024).

The candidate aimed to support youth and sports through an original method: 5% of the income, obtained from the sale of alcoholic and tobacco products, will be directed to the development of youth and sports (Usatii, 2024). The promises of candidate Renato Usatii can be qualified as populist, since they are not explained and the advantages of returning to the current situation are not presented until the merger of universities and the Academy of Sciences of Moldova is achieved.

4. Vasile Tarlev, Future of Moldova Party. Vasile Tarlev, the candidate of the Future of Moldova Party and the longest-serving prime minister in the recent history of the Republic in the fields of education, culture and sports, guided by the slogan quality education for all, aimed to achieve the following "basic measures":

- Improving the quality of education and modernizing the curriculum;

- Training of specialists for all fields of the national economy;

- Development of professional and technical education;

- Ensuring the accessibility of education through grants and scholarships;

- Reestablishment of the State Agrarian University of Moldova;

- Reestablishment of the Academy of Public Administration;

- Reestablishment of the State University of Physical Education and Sports;

- In-depth analysis of all closed educational

institutions and implementation of an effective action plan for their restoration;

- Introducing modern technologies and digital solutions into the educational process;
- Protecting and developing the field of Culture;
- Protecting and strengthening the field of Sports (Tarlev, 2024).

Candidate Vasile Tarlev stated in his electoral program that “science and innovation will take a new boost”, but for this he will take the following “basic measures”:

- Increased funding for projects and applied scientific research;
- Active implementation of innovations and information technologies;
- Attracting scientists in the implementation of projects to modernize the country;
- Stimulating the implementation of technological and scientific innovations in the Moldovan economy;
- Restoring the status of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova (Tarlev, 2024).

Like the previous candidate, the electoral platform of candidate Vasile Tarlev abounds in declaratory promises without justifying, arguing or explaining the necessity of the expected transformations. Most of those promises have no relation to the constitutional powers of the President of the Republic of Moldova.

5. Irina Vlah, independent candidate. In her electoral platform, the independent candidate, former Bashkan (Governor) of Gagauzia Irina Vlah, did not have any chapter dedicated to education or research. An exception can be considered the seventh part of her platform entitled The Economy is the Basis of Prosperity, where the candidate stated that the government has failed to cope with the country's development, but the economy has reached a deplorable state. Vlah stated in her electoral platform that the poor management of the governors “reduces the possibilities of the state to invest in infrastructure projects, to face social needs, to support culture, education, sports, etc.” (Vlah, 2024).

6. Ion Chicu, Party for Development and Consolidation of Moldova. In the electoral platform of the candidate of the Party for Development and Consolidation of Moldova for the position of President of the Republic of Moldova, Ion Chicu, a separate section is dedicated to ensuring the right to education for every child and young person in the country. The candidate started from the axiom that a „nation, that does not invest in education as a priority, cannot prosper in any other field and is doomed to extinction” (Chicu, 2024).

Since the proclamation of independence, according to I. Chicu, the greatest costs of the interminable transition have been borne by the fields of education, culture, research, health care and other priority branches for any people, and the intelligentsia has gradually been denied the role of promoter in the most important aspects of political and socio-economic life. According to the

candidate's opinion, restoring the prestige of intellectual professions and their authority „will bring back to the forefront the generally human values on which the level of civilization of a society depends” (Chicu, 2024).

The priorities of the candidate I. Chicu to achieve these objectives were:

- Ensuring the functioning of at least one primary education institution in every locality of the country. Creating sufficient conditions and capacities for enrolling children in educational institutions;

- The cancellation of the anti-reform of secondary and high school education, resulting in the exclusion of the mandatory study in schools of some fundamental subjects such as physics, chemistry, biology;

- Adequate motivation of teaching staff: increasing salaries, ensuring real access of young teachers to the “First Home” program, modernizing working conditions, simplifying bureaucratic aspects of teaching activity, implementing policies for adequate social and economic protection of teachers, promoting and stimulating employment in rural areas;

- Modernization and development of the infrastructure of educational institutions: provision of water and sewage, other networks and utilities; gymnasiums, laboratories for practical lessons; digital libraries; information technologies and communications in the educational process, etc.;

- Ensuring the quality nutrition of children in educational institutions and the application of new forms of insurance with food products and the implementation of rigorous control throughout the chain: from public procurement to the delivery of the finished product to children;

- Adapting the curriculum to social and economic trends and needs. Increasing the efficiency of university education, by strengthening university autonomy and the financial sustainability of these institutions, promoting accountability and transparency in higher education institutions, supporting the development of qualitative university study programs relevant to the needs of the national economy. Strengthening the capacities of the vocational education system: teaching staff, training conditions, relevant practical study programs, etc.;

- Revitalization and promotion of extracurricular educational activities: cultural-artistic and scientific education, civic education, sports, environmental protection, technological and informational education, road safety education, etc.;

- Ensuring an adequate level of public and private funding for research-development-innovation activities. Identifying priority areas, in which, this activity in Moldova would be focused, and which would provide us with a competitive advantage on the European research market;

- Reorienting policies in the scientific and innovation field towards increasing the competitiveness of the research and innovation system, based on the principle of the knowledge-based economy;

- Implementing programs to promote young researchers and encouraging the repatriation of the Moldovan scientific diaspora;

- Cancellation of the current government's irresponsible decision to absorb the State University of Physical Education and Sports (Chicu, 2024).

Candidate Ion Chicu's platform can be considered one of the most balanced and well-argued, compared to the other platforms analyzed, because the candidate managed to identify the real problems, facing the fields of education and research and analyze them in a constructive manner.

7. Andrei Năstase, independent candidate. Independent candidate Andrei Năstase started from the premise that youth education is a national priority. In order to stop the population exodus and the process of closing schools and universities and pursuing the goal of giving young people a chance to stay at home, it expects to allocate, if he will be elected, a minimum of 7% of the GDP for education to train in the country well-prepared young people, including in dual education. Andrei Năstase also pledged to be the guarantor of preserving traditional values: the traditional family, faith and ancestral customs (Năstase, 2024).

8. Octavian Ticu, Electoral bloc „Împreună” („Together”). Octavian Ticu, the candidate of the Electoral bloc „Împreună”, in the field of education, planned to treat education as a national priority and transform it into a national project, based on a unitary vision. O. Ticu opted for a rational modernization of the educational system because „not every foreign model of education or practice from abroad is necessarily good or suitable for the Republic of Moldova” (Țicu, 2024). It was expected to promote and implement policies that would solve the problem of lagging behind in national education and culture – a serious injustice to national security and identity.

In order to overcome this situation, several priorities were set:

- Motivating children to learn: modernized educational content and new teaching methods; increasing the quality of teaching, learning and assessment processes; emphasis on the balanced use of information technologies; emphasis on the practical side of learning;

- Equal opportunities for all students: free and wide access to educational services, lack of any discrimination;

- Investing in teaching staff: reforming the professional training system for teaching staff and creating an honest and transparent motivation system for them;

- Modernizing preschool education: ensuring adequate conditions for children, increasing access and introducing new educational methods in preschool institutions;

- Modernizing primary, secondary and high school education by stimulating, motivating and empowering pupils in terms of increasing their interest in studies. Active involvement of teachers in partnership with parents in making the learning process more efficient;

- Modernization of technical vocational education by ensuring a solid and efficient partnership between economic agents and technical vocational education institutions, continuing investments in the technical-material base, equipping with equipment and machinery, improving study conditions and student accommodation;

- Modernizing higher education by implementing a rigorous process of quality assurance and accreditation of higher education institutions, connecting the university environment with economic agents, research and innovation institutions. Internationalization of higher education will be one of the field's priorities (Țicu, 2024).

The candidate Octavian Ticu, active both in research and in higher education, was the candidate who knew these fields very well, and, first of all, the grievances of the employees in the respective fields. Therefore, the electoral platform he developed is one that focuses on the needs, problems, and areas for improvement of these two important areas for the development of the Republic of Moldova.

9. Victoria Furtuna, independent candidate. The electoral platform of independent candidate Victoria Furtuna, suggestively titled The Republic of Moldova in which I want to live, contained a chapter dedicated to education and science. The following priorities were outlined:

- Creation of a financing system for Start-ups in universities, which, for 10 years, must reach the top 10 taxpayers of the Republic of Moldova;

- Providing student credit cards based on the Hungarian model, which will be repaid from the salary after graduation, for 10 years, with 0% interest;

- Establishing a distance learning system for foreign students. This will contribute to increasing the income of universities and teachers from the sale of study hours;

- Inclusion of Financial Education and Public Management as subjects of study;

- Allocating 9% of the Gross Domestic Product to Education (Furtună, 2024).

The promises included in the electoral platform of the independent candidate Victoria Furtuna are original, but they are not explained, argued, and the necessary actions to be taken to ensure the achievement of the expected goals are not shown.

10. Tudor Ulianoschi, independent candidate. The electoral platform of the independent candidate for the position of President of the Republic of Moldova, Tudor Ulianoschi, contained a chapter entitled Quality Education. Modern Infrastructure for Kindergartens, Schools and Universities, where were listed the actions to be taken:

- Through the Economic Council, in addition to the country's president, the necessary funds will be identified for the renovation of all schools and kindergartens;

- Will convene the Association of Pedagogues of the Republic of Moldova, in order to initiate the process of changing textbooks, so that their content corresponds

to the school curriculum, adapted to realities, based on healthy, traditional family values, of the father and the mother, not of „parent 1” and „parent 2”;

- Will promote a draft law that will require a restructuring of the budget allocated to education and its redistribution to the modernization of first and second cycle educational institutions;

- Will insist on the reopening of the State Agrarian University of Moldova, saving the buildings and land of this institution, which is part of the history of our predominantly agrarian country;

- Will initiate the opening of sports performance academies, to enable future Olympic and world champions to train under normal conditions;

- Will insist that the name of the Ministry of Sports officially include Sports, Research and Innovations (Ulianoschi, 2024).

The visions of the independent candidate Tudor Ulianoschi in the field of education and research represent declarations of intent in case he becomes President. The respective statements have no direct bearing on the constitutional powers of the President of the Republic of Moldova and can be considered populist.

11. Natalia Morari, independent candidate. The chapter dedicated to education in the electoral platform of independent candidate Natalia Morari was suggestively titled Investments in the education system. The candidate considered that in the context of deep social division, intense exodus and high intention to leave among young people – the importance of consolidating the efficiency of the education system is a particularly important national necessity (Morari, 2024).

N. Morari planned to strengthen the capacities of the educational system through actions on two dimensions:

- Investments in the modernization of school institutions;

- Increasing the attractiveness of the teaching profession (Morari, 2024).

The candidate also intended to declare investments in the education system as a National Priority and committed himself to not allowing the closure of any kindergartens, schools and universities during his term; to promote the decision to link the Teacher's salary to the salaries of the Minister and the Deputy, so that the Minister's and Deputy's salary would not exceed the Teacher's salary by more than 2 times; to insist on a 25% increase in the salaries of beginning education specialists, who will be able to benefit from the mortgage program, with an interest rate of 1%, through which young specialists up to 45 years old will be able to purchase their first house and first car (Morari, 2024).

Thus, in the candidate's opinion, the shortage of staff in the education system will be effectively reduced and the relationships between educational institutions and the beneficiaries of their services will be rebuilt (Morari, 2024).

And the actions envisaged by candidate Natalia Morari

are not related to the constitutional powers of the President of the Republic of Moldova. The messages, developed and transmitted in the public space aimed to raise public awareness of the problems existing in the two areas and to gain as many followers and supporters as possible.

Discussions.

The content of the electoral programs in relation to the constitutional powers of the President of the Republic of Moldova has few tangents, some promises or intentions voiced by the candidates have no connection with the powers of the Head of State.

The populist messages launched in the electoral campaign are a demonstration of the immaturity of the political elite in the Republic of Moldova, of the misunderstanding of the role and importance of political leaders in the political, economic and social development of contemporary states.

Conclusions.

The presidential elections that held in October - November 2024 took place in a very complex political context and in conditions, where Russia attempted to undermine democratic institutions and electoral processes in the Republic of Moldova. The people of the Republic of Moldova resisted all challenges and exercised their democratic right to choose their own future and chose to follow a path aligned with Europe and Western democracies.

In general, the electoral platforms of the candidates engaged in the competition for the position of the President of the Republic of Moldova did not take into account, with some insignificant exceptions, the constitutional provisions regarding the President's powers. The contents of the platforms, slogans, and electoral declarations clearly aimed to promote the candidate's image and attract as many voters as possible.

Candidates for the position of the President of the Republic of Moldova in their electoral platforms and messages, at meetings with voters and in televised debates, took into account the accumulation of political advantages for the 2025 parliamentary elections. The contents of the candidates' messages were declarative in nature and did not offer viable, reasoned and feasible solutions to the problems existing in Moldovan society.

The problems of the development of the educational system were very little reflected in the electoral platforms of the candidates for the position of President of the Republic of Moldova. The role and importance of building a competitive educational system were not an important topic of electoral discussions and debates, which demonstrates the disinterest of Moldovan political leaders in this important field.

During the election campaign for the post of President of the Republic of Moldova, there were no election debates in the true sense of the word; they were replaced by unfounded accusations, personal attacks, suspicious statements, dubious analyses, verbal duels on the edge of common sense, etc.

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