

# Moldova

Last update:	17 november 2020
Population:	4,035,736 million (United Nations 2020 est.)
Prime minister:	Ion Chicu
President:	Maia Sandu
Governemental type:	Republic
Ruling coalition:	Socialist-Liberal Coalition: Socialist Party and Now Platform (ACUM)
Last election:	1 November 2020 (Presidential elections)
Next election:	2023 (Parliamentary elections)
Sister parties:	Democratic Party of Moldova

Moldova is one of the poorest countries in Europe. Unemployment is high and the country is heavily dependent on remittances from thousands of Moldovans working abroad. A large part of the Moldovan population is Romanian-speaking, although there are also Russian and Ukrainian minorities. The communists were the ruling party in the former Soviet state from 1998 until 2009. Since 2009, Moldova became a more pro-Western state. Moldova currently aspires to join the European Union; the country has implemented the first three-year Action Plan within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and has signed a far-reaching Association Agreement with the EU in 2014 that came into force on July 1st 2016.

## Political Situation

Moldova has experienced some political crises over the past few years, which have caused instability and mistrust of the population in the authorities.

The recent parliamentary elections caused the country to tumble in a political crisis. In the parliamentary elections held on 24 February 2019, four parties came out on top: the Socialists, followed by the Democratic Party (PDM), then the ACUM electoral bloc made up of the Dignity and Truth Platform Party (DA) and the Party of Action and Solidarity (PAS), and finally the Şor (the party of a convicted oligarch). None had a majority so what ensued was months of negotiations, with no one sitting down to the negotiating table until several high-profile officials from the EU, US and Russian Federation visited the Socialist and ACUM leaders. Moreover, this election was the first one that was held under a parallel voting system instead of the closed-list proportional system that was used in previous elections.

The ACUM and Socialist formed an unlikely alliance to block the PDM and its powerful tycoon reclaiming power. The PDM reacted ferociously, using its power to stop the coalition from taking office. The PDM used the constitutional court to temporarily strip President Dodon from his power, appointing PDM's Pavel Filip as President. Filip issued a decree which dissolved parliament and called for early elections on September the 6th. Lawmakers in parliament declared that Moldova's state and legal institutions had been seized by oligarchs, demanding the resignation of several top officials. After a long stalemate, the PDM resigned from power on 14 June. Vice president of PDM, Vladimir Cebotari, stated that the PDM stepped down to avoid escalation. Dodon called the resignation an important victory, urging the constitutional court to accept the decision, warning that he would ask parliament to replace the court's judges if it failed to do so. The USA, EU and Russia all expressed their support for the new government, which is formed by an unlikely alliance. On June 15, prime minister Sandu said that the new government aimed to improve ties with the EU but that the country was also open to boosting economic and trade cooperation with Russia. The current coalition is an unstable one with lots of conflicting interests, but also a historic one since it was able to successfully challenge the iron grip of the oligarch backed DMP party. The next parliamentary election is supposed to be held in 2023.

On 1 November 2020, presidential elections were held. After some candidates failed registration or withdrew from the race, there were eight participants left, backed by different political parties. Maia Sandu, former prime minister and pro-European, from the Party of Actions and Solidarity (PAS) ended on the first place with around 36% of the votes and incumbent president Igor Dodon, backed by Russia, running as independent with support of the PSRM, ended second with just under 33%. However, since the president has to be chosen with an absolute majority, Sandu and Dodon had to run in a second round, which took place on 15

November. This time, Sandu was the clear winner by obtaining around 58% of the votes, against 42% for Dodon, and therefore becoming the first female president of Moldova.

### **Gender**

In the parliamentary elections of 2014, the percentage of women candidates came up to 32 per cent. 21 women were elected to parliament, which totals to 20.79 per cent of the parliament. Although women are still underrepresented in Moldovan politics, this marks a slight increase of representation from the general elections of 2010, when only 19 (18.8 per cent) women were elected to parliament. Liberals turned out to be the worst at promoting women, while Communists promoted the most female candidates. In 2020, the Moldovans elected their first female president, which signs to a continuous improvement in gender equality in the country's political landscape.

Across Moldova, women are underrepresented as voters and in leading positions in the government, politics, business and civil society – despite their proven abilities as leaders and agents of change, and their right to participate equally in democratic governance. Women's representation in Moldovan politics and decision-making is below international benchmarks. Women belonging to certain minority groups appear to face discriminatory practices that affect their free access to public space. The Law on Ensuring Equality, which came in at the beginning of 2013, does not include sexual orientation, gender identity, or state of health as grounds for discrimination. The OSCE Gender Advisor noted that the law preventing domestic violence is poorly implemented in practice. Human trafficking remains a serious problem as well. The country is a major source for women and girls trafficked abroad for forced prostitution, mainly to Russia and other parts of the former Soviet Union, Turkey, Romania, Southeast Europe, the Middle East, and the European Union.

## **Elections**

### **Electoral system**

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

The Moldovan president is elected by the people for a duration of four years. Election outcomes are only valid when a minimum of one third of the registered voters cast their ballots. There are three ways in which a candidate can be nominated: through a political party, an electoral coalition or as an independent. To become president, the participant has to obtain an absolute majority of the votes. This means that at least half of the voters have to cast their ballots for one person. If this requirement is not met, a second round with the winner and runner up is held, two weeks after the initial vote. The candidate with the most votes in this round wins the elections.

Presidential candidates have to be at least 40 years of age and be able to speak Romanian, which is the country's state language. In addition, he or she has to have lived in Moldova for a minimum of 10 years.

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## **Parliamentary Elections**

On 24 February 2019 parliamentary elections were held in Moldova. The results were confirmed on 9 March. Voter turnout was low with only 49 per cent of the people turning up to vote. The elections resulted in a victory for the Socialist Party which gained 35 seats of the 101 in total. The Democratic Party came second with 30 seats, followed by the ACUM coalition with 26 seats. The Şor Party entered the parliament for the first time, gaining 7 seats in total. The elections resulted in a historical loss for the Liberal and Communist party; both didn't reach the 6 per cent threshold thus failing to enter parliament.

## Election results

Party	% of the votes	National Seats	Constituency Seats	Total Seats
Party of Socialists	31.15%	18	17	35
ACUM coalition	26.84%	14	12	26
Democratic Party of Moldova	23.62%	13	17	30
Şor Party	8.32%	5	2	7
Party of Communists	3.75%	0	0	0
Our Party	2.95%	0	0	0
Liberal Party	1.25%	0	0	0
Anti-Maffia Popular Movement Party	0.61%	0	-	0
Democracy at Home	0.32%	0	0	0
Party of Regions	0.26%	0	-	0
National Liberal Party	0.24%	0	0	0
Ecologist Green Party	0.23%	0	0	0
Hope Professionals' Movement Party	0.20%	0	0	0
People's Will Party	0.19%	0	-	0
Motherland Party	0.07%	0	-	0
Independents	-	-	3	3
Invalid Votes	40,861			
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,457,220</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>101</b>
Voter turnout	2,959,143	49.24%		

The election results caused a political crisis, with both the ACUM and Socialist party not willing to work together with the Democratic party. None had a majority so what ensued was months of negotiations, with no one sitting down at the negotiating table. The ACUM and Socialist party differ on many grounds, but after consultation with EU and Russian officials, they were able to form a coalition. This coalition was determined to stop the Democratic party, which they allege is backed by oligarchs, from getting into the office once again. The PDM reacted ferociously, using its power to stop the coalition from taking office. The PDM used the constitutional court to temporarily strip President Dodon from his power, appointing PDM's Pavel Filip as President. Filip issued a decree which dissolved parliament and called for early elections on September the 6th. After a long stalemate, the PDM resigned from power on 14 June. On June 15, prime minister Sandu (PAS) said that the new government aimed to improve ties with the EU but that the country was also open to boosting economic and trade cooperation with Russia.

## The fall of the Sandu government

Maia Sandu and her cabinet were inaugurated in the middle of the constitutional crisis on June 8th 2019, after months of negotiations. After the election, no party obtained an outright majority, thus making it necessary to form a coalition of two of the three biggest parties in order to gain a majority and elect a prime minister. This, however, proved very difficult. According to the Moldovan constitution, a new government needs to be formed no longer than 90 days after the results of the election are validated (in this case this happened on the 9th of March). When on June 7th a government had yet to be formed, the Constitutional Court decided that new elections should be held because still no government was formed 90 days after the election (24th of February). This triggered the formation of a coalition. ACUM platform and the Socialist party came to an agreement in which Sandu was to become prime minister and form the government. The leader of the Socialist party, Zinaida Greceanii, would become the speaker, leaving the Democratic Party, who felt betrayed, out. However, the Constitutional Court ruled this new government as unconstitutional and urged President Igor Dodon to dissolve it. President Dodon refused to dissolve the government because according to the constitution, the 90-day deadline was met. In response, the deputy of the Democratic Party, Sergiu Sirbu, filed a request to the Constitutional Court to dismiss President Dodon for his inability to dissolve the government. Since the Constitutional Court is considered to be under the influence of the Democratic Party (led by oligarch Vladimir Plahotniuc), the request was granted on the 9th of June. President Dodon was removed from his position and replaced by prime minister Pavel Filip. Filip then dissolved the government and announced that early elections would be held on September 6th.

The coalition called the decision of Filip illegal and refused to step down. This effectively meant that Moldova had two governments

that worked parallel to each other. On June 14th, just 5 days after his appointment, Filip decided to step down from the government to create political stability, but he still demanded new elections and refused to acknowledge the Sandu government. The day after on the 15th of June, the Constitutional Court decided to repeal their decisions that triggered the crisis. Vladimir Plahotniuc, the leader of the Democratic Party, reportedly fled the country a day earlier. President Dodon was reinstated as President of Moldova, with Sandu as prime minister. On the 20th of June the president of the Constitutional Court, Mihai Poalelungi, resigned from office followed by an entire group of constitutional court judges on the 16th of June. Dodon and Sandu stated that they would restore the integrity of the Constitutional Court by electing independent judges.

However, the government was ousted on the 12th of November of the same year after a vote of no confidence. The government was replaced by a government lead by Ion Chicu. The reason Sandu's government collapsed was to do with the draft law assumed by the government. This, to delegate a part of its plenary powers to the prime minister, proposing a shortlist with candidates for the Prosecutor General's position. President Dodon stated that by doing this the ACUM bloc violated the agreement made with the PSRM which clearly stipulated that the applicants for the position of Prosecutor General are selected by an expert committee.

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## Presidential Elections

On 15 November 2020, in the second round of the presidential elections, Maia Sandu was elected new Head of State. Pro-European Sandu, former prime minister, obtained around 58% of the votes against 42% for incumbent president Igor Dodon, who was openly supported by Russia. Due to Sandu being pro-European and Dodon being pro-Russia, these elections were often branded as a competition between West and East, reflecting the division in views of Moldovans as to which direction the country should lean to improve its impoverished conditions. Sandu is a former World Bank economist and made clear she wants to counter corruption and encourage national businesses. In addition, she promised to ensure more financial assistance from the European Union, a big contrast to Dodon's strategy securing loans from the Kremlin. Even though Sandu's win can be seen as a defeat for Moscow, Russian president Putin still congratulated her. Also, a Kremlin spokesman stated Russia hopes to establish a working relationship with the new Moldovan Head of state.

## Social Democratic Parties

### Democratic Party of Moldova (PDM)

Party Leader: Pavel Filip

Number of seats: 30

<http://www.pdm.md>

The PDM was founded in 1998 as the continuation of the Movement for a Democratic and Prosperous Moldova, and is currently led by Pavel Filip, prime minister from 2016 to 2019 and incumbent president for 5 days during Moldova's constitutional crisis. The Democratic Party is a member of the Socialist International and the Party of European Socialists.

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

On 10 February 2010, the Democratic Party of Moldova (PDM) and the Social Liberal Party (PSL) officially merged under the slogan "We Come to Build". The opposition parties formed a new democratic party through the disbandment of the PSL, which was

then absorbed into the PDM. The renewed PDM continued under its old name and pledged to work “for the affirmation of the Republic of Moldova as an independent, unitary and democratic state, based on the rule of law and integrated in the united family of European democracies”. The PDM thus supports the integration of Moldova into the EU and NATO. Since the parliamentary election of April 2009, the PDM is a member of the Alliance for European Integration (AEI) coalition in the Moldova parliament. After that, it became a member of the pro-EU three-party coalition cabinet under Lurie Leanca.

On January 14th 2016 Pavel Filip, delegated by the PDM and backed by the new parliamentary majority (57 votes), became the new candidate for the prime minister position. During the VIIIth Congress in December 2016 then party leader Marian Lupu announced his resignation. The main task of the VIIIth Congress became the appointment of new leadership for the party. Vladimir Plahotniuc was elected for the position of chairman and received unanimous supportive votes of delegates at the congress. Plahotniuc states that he would focus on the modernisation of the party and transform it into a party that promotes citizens' interests rather than geopolitical ones. At the same time, Pavel Filip was elected deputy chairman.

On March 10th 2017, the 14 former Communist MPs who formed the Social Democratic Platform for Moldova (SDPM) joined the parliamentary faction of the Democratic Party. This step strengthened the parliamentary majority, making PDM the largest political group in parliament.

During the 2019 parliamentary election, PDM received 23.6% of the votes, winning 30 seats in parliament. This made the party the second largest. However, a constitutional crisis followed the election which resulted in PDM leader Plahotniuc to flee. After Plahotniuc fled, 6 MPs left the Democratic Party and formed a political group called 'Pro Moldova' which is run by the godson of Plahotniuc, the ex-speaker of parliament, Andrian Candu.

## Other Parties

### Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova (PSRM)

Party Leader: Zinaida Greceanii

Number of seats: 35

<http://www.socialistii.md>

In June 1997 the Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova (PSRM) was founded by members of the Socialist Party of Moldova. As the title says, the PSRM is a socialist political party. Veronica Abramciuc and Eduard Smirnov were elected as the first co-chairs of the party. In 2011, Igor Dodon, former member of the Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova, joined the PSRM and was shortly after that chosen as chairman. The PSRM won the parliamentary elections of 2014 with over 20 percent of the votes. However, the party was not able to join a coalition government due to a pro-EU coalition that was formed, while the PSRM preferred to develop closer ties with Russia. In the 2019 parliamentary elections, the party won again, obtaining more than 30% of the votes, equalling to 35 seats. However, this time, the faction did decide to form a coalition with the pro-European ACUM alliance.

### Party of Action and Solidarity (PAS)

Party Leader: Maia Sandu

Number of seats: 26 (together with DA in ACUM Electoral Bloc)

[unpasentru.md](http://unpasentru.md)

The Party of Action and Solidarity is led by Maia Sandu. The party began a platform called "In step with Maia Sandu" which evolved into the PAS. The PAS is considered to be pro-European and promotes the New Liberalism doctrine.

In 2017 the PAS joined the the European People's Party (EPP) together with the Dignity and Truth Platform party (PPDA). The PAS has joined the PPDA in the ACUM alliance which is a liberal-populist alliance, focused on EU integration and anti-corruption. The ACUM surprised everyone by forming a coalition with the pro-Russian Socialist party, in order to stop the ruling PDM party from

getting into office once again.

#### Dignity and Truth Platform Party (PPDA or DA)

Party Leader: Andrei Năstase  
Number of seats: 26 (together with PAS in ACUM Electoral Bloc)  
<https://platformada.md>

The PPDA was formed on 24 February 2015, after an initial group that consisted of 14 people, including journalists, analysts, and social activists, announced the creation of a movement they called the Dignity and Truth Platform. The stated purpose of this movement was to serve as a government watchdog. The Platform has organized meetings in which people have expressed their dissatisfaction with the government. Almost one year after the protests, the leaders of the Platform decided to create a new political party. The party is pro-European and wants to restrict the power and influence of oligarchs in Moldova. It joined the ACUM alliance with PAS, which later formed a coalition with the Socialist Party. PPDA's party leader is Andrei Năstase.

#### Șor Party (Republican Socio-Political Movement Equality )

Party Leader: Ilan Șor  
Number of seats: 7  
[www.partidulsor.md](http://www.partidulsor.md)

The Șor Party was founded in 1998 by Valey Klymenko, but it only entered the parliament in 2019 for the first time. The faction has seven MPs after receiving 8,32% of the votes. Their ideology is based on social conservatism, Moldovan identity and support for establishing a welfare state. The party is considered to be pro-Russian but foremost nationalistic.

#### Liberal Reformists Party (PLR)

Party Leader: Ion Hadârcă  
Number of seats: 0  
<http://www.plr.md>

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

On 21 June 2013, a General Meeting of the Liberal Party Reform Council took place, in which they adopted a decision to create a new political party with liberal doctrine. In July and August 2013, the reformists collected over 14.000 signatures, enough to register a party. On 1 August 2013, the first meeting of the Council of Founding of the Liberal Reformists Party took place in Chisinau.

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

#### Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova (PLDM)

Party Leader: Viorel Cibotaru  
Number of seats: 0  
<http://www.pldm.md>

The Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova (PLDM) is a centre-right political party. The party's founding congress was held on 8 December 2007 and Vlad Filat was elected as its president. In their statements, the 53 initiative group members acknowledged the

profound crisis in the Republic of Moldova and the inability of political parties to face the situation. The PLDM emerged as a capable alternative to start the process of moral reorganisation of the political class, rebirth and modernisation of the country and re-establishment of the society back on its natural track of democratic development.

The party attracted a large number of prominent members of the civil society and in the parliamentary elections of July 2009, the PLDM obtained 16.57 percent of the votes. In the early parliamentary elections of November 2010 the PLDM doubled its results, obtaining 32.2 percent of the votes (32 deputies).

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

## Biographies

### Igor Dodon

Former President

Igor Dodon (1975) is the former leader of the Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova and the current president of the country. He studied economics at the Agricultural State University of Moldova and received a doctorate in 1998 from the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova. In the period from 1997 to 2005, he worked as an assistant professor and lecturer in the academic field.

In 2005, Dodon switched to politics when he became Associate Minister of Trade and Economics. After that, he held several other ministerial positions. Till 2011, he was a member of the Party of Communists, which he left hoping that a deal could be worked out with the ruling Alliance of European Integration to elect a president and end the constitutional crisis that had dragged on since the resignation of Vladimir Voronin in 2009. From 2011 until his election as President, he was a member of the Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova.

During the 2020 presidential elections, he lost to Maia Sandu, obtaining around 42% of the votes in the second round.

He is married and has three children.

### Ion Chicu

Prime Minister

Ion Chicu is a Moldovan politician who has been the Prime Minister of Moldova since November 2019, following the ousting of the Sandu Cabinet led by Maia Sandu in a motion of no confidence by the Parliament of Moldova. At the time of his appointment, he was described by President Igor Dodon as "a technocrat, a professional who has not been in any political party", although Chicu did serve as an advisor to President Dodon. The day after, he was introduced to a new Cabinet of Ministers by President Dodon, which included Victor Gaiciuc as defence minister and Pavel Voicu as interior minister. On 20 November, he went to Moscow on his first working visit, where he held talks with Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev.

### Maia Sandu

President

Maia Sandu (born 24 May 1972) is the former Prime Minister of Moldova. Sandu was Minister of Education from 2012 to 2015 and member of Parliament of Moldova from 2014 to 2015 and in 2019. In 2015 she launched the "In Step with Sandu" platform which later became PAS. Sandu has been the president of the PAS since 2016. She was defeated by Igor Dodon in the 2016 presidential elections.

While serving as Minister of Education, Maia Sandu was accused of paying an exaggerated sum of money for 1,200 security cameras made in China for the bacalaureate exams. A charge has been issued against her but was later dropped.

Sandu became prime-minister on the 8th of June 2019, but her government fell only 5 months later on the 12th of November 2019 after a vote of no confidence. 63 MPs out of 101 backed the no-confidence vote. She was succeeded by Ion Chicu.

During the 2020 presidential elections, Maia Sandu ran for the second time. After the first round did not result in a clear winner, she had to partake in a second round with incumbent president Dodon. Contrary to four years earlier, she won the elections with almost 58% of the votes.

### Andrei Năstase

Deputy Prime Minister

Andrei Năstase (born 6 August 1975) is as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs since 8 June 2019. Năstase has been the leader of Dignity and Truth Platform Party (PPDA) since 2015. In early 2015, Năstase, along with several opinion leaders, journalists, lawyers, political scientists, ambassadors, and others, participated at the foundation of the Civic Platform Dignity and Truth.

Năstase is married to Angela Năstase and has three children. As a lawyer, he is known for defending various domestic and foreign investors in national and international courts, such as the German company Unistar, but also those of businessmen Viorel and Victor Topa. This has attracted considerable criticism, as the two have been convicted by the Moldovan Justice for blackmail, embezzlement, money laundering and forgery of documents, and has earned him the nickname "The Man of *Țopas*".

### Pavel Filip

Leader of the Democratic Party

Pavel Filip (1966) is currently the leader of the Democratic Party. From 2011 he served as Minister of Informational Technologies and Communications. On 14 January 2016, Pavel Filip was appointed as a candidate for the position of prime minister. The Pavel Filip's government was voted and invested in office despite popular protests held on January 20, 2016 after 16 PM, with the vote of 57 deputies out of 101, went on without finalising the presentation of the government programme and skipping the questions and answers part. This, because of the SPRM MPs' protest that held with the parliamentary tribune blocking, generating a scandal.

From June 9 to June 15, during 2019 Moldovan constitutional crisis, Pavel Filip was acting president of Moldova.

He is married and has two children.

### Mihai Ghimpu

Former President of Moldova

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

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

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

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



Voronin resigned. He remained the country's president until 28 December 2010.

Mihai Ghimpu is married.

### Vladimir Plahotniuc

Former leader of the Democratic Party

Vladimir Plahotniuc was born on 1 January 1966. He is currently the leader of the Democratic Party of Moldova (PDM). He is also a successful businessman and politician with several degrees. He has an MBA from the technical university of Moldova and a Bachelor of Law from the University of European Studies of Moldova. Two of his biggest business ventures were as an executive with Petrom Moldova, a Romanian owned oil and gas producer. He was also chairman of the Victoriabank, one of the biggest commercial banks in Moldova. He furthermore owns two of Moldova's largest television broadcasters: prime and TV2 plus and is said to own more.

Plahotniuc started his political career at the Democratic Party in 2009, initially by supporting the party financially. Following this, he was elected to the previous parliament in 2010 to quickly become the first deputy speaker. Eventually, when the ruling coalition collapsed, he had to resign and left the parliament in 2013. He was nevertheless elected again as a member of the parliament in 2014, to resign again in 2015 "to focus his political activity on reforming the party". In 2016, he was proposed by the Democratic Party to be the new prime minister, though this was rejected by the president. Eventually, he was elected as the chairman of the Democratic Party of Moldova. After his party resigned following a long stalemate between the ACUM-Socialist coalition, Plahotniuc fled the country and resigned from his position as leader of the Democratic party.

He has been accused of corruption and other criminal activities in his past on several occasions, but no substantial proof has ever been presented and he has claimed the rumours are distributed by his (business) rivals.

### Vladimir Voronin

Former President of Moldova and current leader of the Communist Party

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

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

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

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

Vladimir Voronin is married and has two children.

### Viorel Cibotaru

Chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova

Viorel Cibotaru was born in 1958 and studied journalism at the Moldova State University, writing his dissertation on philology. After his studies, he worked as a journalist, first for newspapers and subsequently for the Foreign Relations department of the Ministry of Defense. In the period from February to July 2015, he served as the Minister of Defense of Moldova, and in 2016 assumed the position of Chairman for the Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova.

## Source

### Political situation:

- [OSW](#)
- [Reuters](#)
- [New Eastern Europe](#)
- [BBC](#)
- [Sofia Globe](#)

### General information:

- [Balkan Insight 1](#)
- [Balkan Insight 2](#)
- [BBC Country Profile](#)
- [BBC News](#)
- [Carnegie Moscow Center](#)
- [Central Europe Review](#)
- [CIA World Factbook](#)
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- [EU External Relations](#)
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