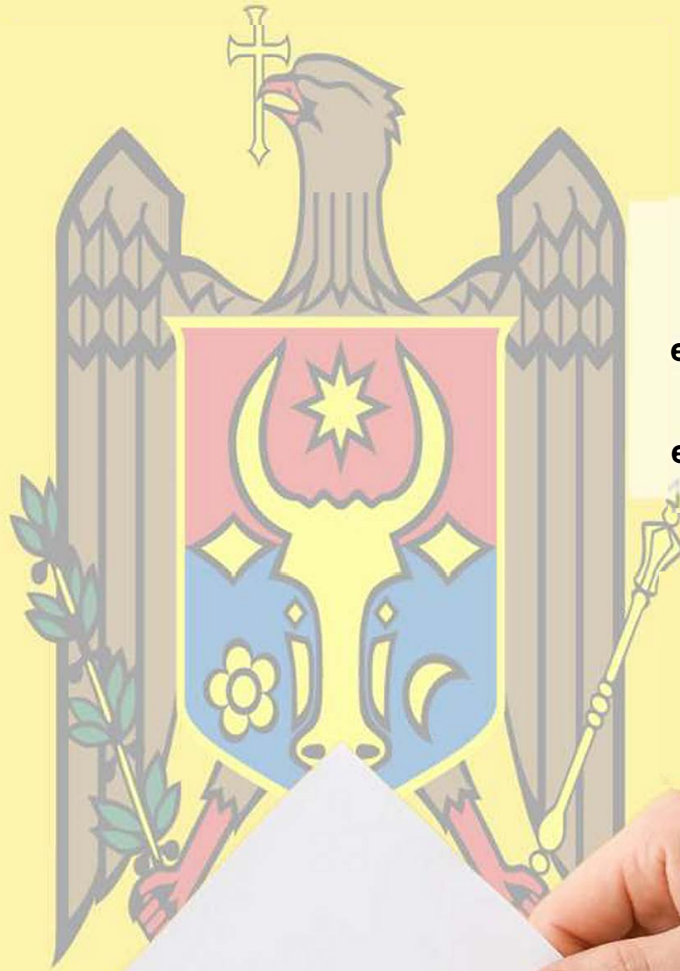
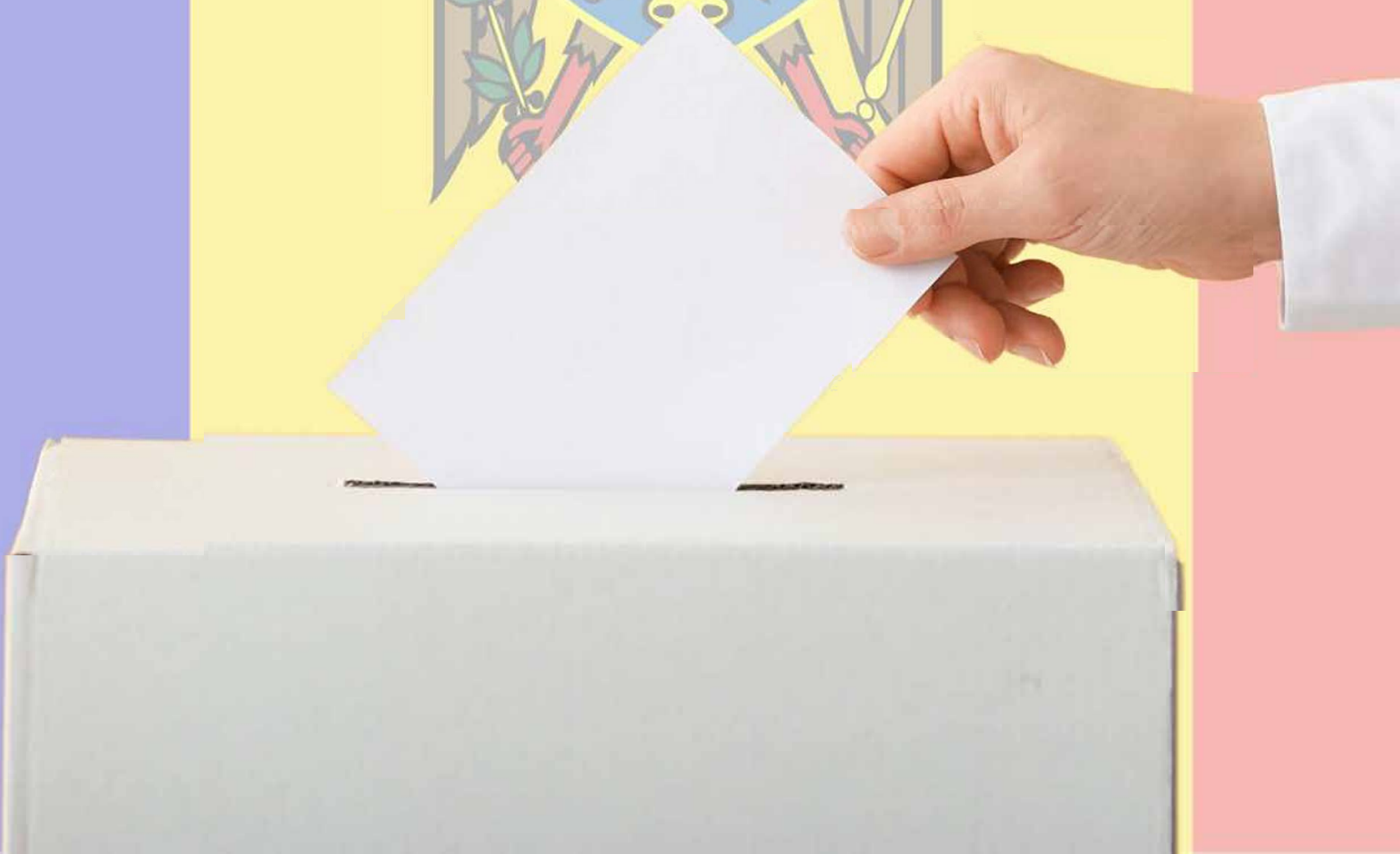


# The results of the second round of local elections in the Republic of Moldova



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## Analysis of the Second Round of Local Elections in the Republic of Moldova

On November 19, 2023, the second round of the general local elections was held in 273 localities of the Republic of Moldova, with a voter turnout of 36.73%, according to the Central Electoral Commission (CEC)<sup>1</sup>.

According to preliminary data, the Action and Solidarity Party (PAS) won in 66 of the 273 localities where the second round of voting took place. The Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova (PSRM) comes second with 41 seats, followed by the European Social Democratic Party (PSDE) with 30 mayoralties. In addition, 22 mayoralties were won by the Party for the Development and Consolidation of Moldova (PDCM), while the "Renaissance" Party won 17 mayoralties and the Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova (PLDM) 11. Independent candidates were successful in 32 localities. In total, after the two rounds of elections, the Action and Solidarity Party won the most mayoral seats, 291 in total, followed by the Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova with 144 elected, 116 independent candidates and the European Social Democratic Party with 103 mayors<sup>2</sup>.

In the second round of local elections in Moldova, voters in four municipalities were called to the polls to elect their mayor. As a result, in the municipality of Balti, the candidate of "Our" Party, Alexandr Petkov, won the mayoralty with 59.63% of the votes, defeating the Socialist candidate Maxim Moroșan (PSRM), who obtained 40.37% of the votes<sup>3</sup>. It should be noted that Arina Corshicova, who came second in the first round of elections in Balti, supported by fugitive oligarch Ilan Shor, was excluded from the second round of elections for "electoral irregularities". In the municipality of Edinet, Constantin Cojocari of the League of Towns and Municipalities was elected mayor with 51.64% of the vote, beating his opponent, Oleg Sanduleac of the PSRM, who won 48.36% of the vote. In Ungheni municipality, Vitalie Vrabie, an independent candidate, won the mayor's office with 57.58% of the total votes, while his opponent, Dionisie Ternovschi from PAS, got 42.42% of the votes. In Comrat, former (new) mayor Sergei Anastasov won the election with 58.52% of the vote against Nicolai Dudoglo, in a contest in which both candidates declared having no political backing.

Regarding the situation in other major cities, in Calarasi, PAS candidate Victor Ambroci won the mayoralty with 58.91%, while in Nisporeni, PAS representative Dan Negel won

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<sup>1</sup> Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova, *About 314 thousand voters participated in the second round of general local elections*, November 19, 2023, available at: [https://a.cec.md/ro/circa-314-mii-de-alegatori-au-participat-la-turul-2781\\_108085.html](https://a.cec.md/ro/circa-314-mii-de-alegatori-au-participat-la-turul-2781_108085.html).

<sup>2</sup> *Local Elections 2023*, November 19, 2023, available at: [https://alegeri.md/w/Pagina\\_principal%C4%83](https://alegeri.md/w/Pagina_principal%C4%83).

<sup>3</sup> Radio Chisinau, *Alexandr Petkov became mayor in Balti with a turnout of only 25%*, November 20, 2023, available at: <https://radiochisinau.md/alexandr-petkov-a-devenit-primar-in-balti-cu-o-prezenta-la-urne-de-numai-25prc---188882.html>.

the mayoralty with 50.30%. In Floresti, Iurie Gangan (PSRM) won the election with almost 59%, beating PAS's Eugeniu Gustoi, who won with 41%. In the southern region, in Cantemir, Roman Ciubaciuc of "Partidul Nostru" won with over 65% of the vote, beating Anatolie Coval of PAS, who polled around 35%.

At the same time, PAS and the National Alternative Movement Party, led by the re-elected mayor of Chisinau, Ion Ceban, shared two mayoral seats each in the eight suburbs of Chisinau where local elections were held in the second round. The Coalition for Unity and Welfare, the PSRM and the Platform for Dignity and Truth party each won in one locality, while an independent candidate was elected in one suburb. In the other ten suburbs of Chisinau, mayors were elected in the first round. On November 5, PAS won three mayoralties and MAN won in two localities. The People's Will Party, the Liberal Party and the Liberal Democratic Party each won one mayoral seat. Two other seats were won by two independent candidates<sup>4</sup>.

## Conclusions

Following the two rounds of local elections in the Republic of Moldova, it can be seen that the ruling party remains a consistent electoral choice, having obtained the highest number of votes in 19 districts of the country and secured 357 district councilors and over 3000 local councilors.

However, PAS suffered defeats in all 11 municipalities of the Republic of Moldova, an unsatisfactory result for a party that is the only consolidated pro-European option. This shows a significant erosion of electoral support for PAS, a lack of convincing local leaders and the party's inability to find allies and avoid political isolation. It is predictable that in many local councils PAS will be isolated, unable to generate majorities in these councils.

The results of these elections should force PAS to rethink its political strategy in view of the 2024 presidential elections, giving up relying exclusively on its own performance and starting to consider developing alliances that would allow it to expand its electoral base in the event of a second round of presidential elections. This is almost certain, given that the problems of governance caused by the pandemic, war, energy prices and inflation have also affected people's confidence in President Maia Sandu, not just in the executive she supports.

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<sup>4</sup> IPN, *Who won the mayoralties in eight suburbs of Chisinau municipality*, November 20, 2023, available at: [https://www.ipn.md/ro/cine-a-castigat-primariile-in-opt-suburbii-ale-municipiului-8012\\_1100916.html](https://www.ipn.md/ro/cine-a-castigat-primariile-in-opt-suburbii-ale-municipiului-8012_1100916.html).

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