

Post-Soviet Governance Between Democracy and Authoritarianism. The case of Republic of Moldova

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Paper structure:

1. The context in which post-Soviet governance occurs
2. Electoral Governance Networks in Moldova
3. Analysis of the relationship Party-Electorate
4. Linking Political Parties and Governance Networks



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Research „puzzle”

- How do governance networks (particularly electoral governance networks) function in the post-Soviet Republic of Moldova?
- How to apply the network mode governance in the activities of political parties?

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Objective

- Identification of a linking point between Political Parties and Governance Networks

- Involvement of Political Parties in Electoral Governance networks

- An increase of the level of the Political Parties accountability through mutual responsabilization

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Concepts used

- Governance (Stoker, 2000; Pierre, 2000; Kooiman, 2003)
- Post-Soviet Governance
- Network Governance (Sorensen & Torfing, 2007)
- Electoral Governance (Mozaffar & Schedler, 2002)
- Accountability (O'Donnell, 1994; Schedler, 1999)

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Methodology

- Observation methods
- Secondary data analysis
- Personal Interviews

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Methodology

Observation methods: participation in the activities of the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections

- National electoral observer
- Offering periodic assistance with drafting Coalition's reports on the monitoring of the electoral campaign
- Monitoring the reaction of the CEC to the reported irregularities

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Methodology

Secondary data analysis

- Analysis of documents produced by the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections (charter, minutes, periodic electoral monitoring reports, etc., final evaluation reports)

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Methodology

•**Personal Interviews** with representatives of the major political parties (PCRM, PLDM, PL, PD, AMN, MAE, PPR), based on a focused interview (non-schedule-structured interview) containing 16 questions grouped in 5 sub-topics covering two larger themes: The relationship between the political party and its voters and Involvement of the Party in Governance Networks.

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Why Moldova?

Despite a series of deficiencies with regard to its democratic records, Moldova appears to be the only state in the post-Soviet area where transfers of power took place NOT through "colored revolutions" or "successions" but through elections (despite the variable degrees of fairness of these elections)

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Why „post-Soviet Governance“?

Preference is given to this term (as opposed to the „transition“ term) because it offers a dynamic picture of a political system in a process of defining itself.

This term helps avoid the blurred notion of „transition“ that often mistakenly implies a linear movement away from dictatorship towards democracy.

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Why „post-Soviet Governance“?

The use of the post-Soviet Governance concept is also motivated by the fact that it eventually becomes easier to evaluate the named process, as opposed to evaluating the „transition“ process, based on the assessment of such components as the number of institutions, bureaucratic structures (hierarchies vs. decentralization), horizontal networks, etc. (John, 2001)

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Governance defined

- A concern with governing, achieving collective action in the realm of public affairs, in the conditions when it is not possible to recourse to the authority of the state (Stoker, 2000)
- Capacity of the governing systems to coordinate policy and solve public problems in a complex context (Pierre, 2000)
- A totality of interactions in which public and private actors aim to solve public problems or create opportunities while attending to a set of institutional rules and establishing a normative set for joint action (Kooiman, 2003)

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Post-Soviet Governance as a multilevelled process

- Gradual dismantlement of the soviet bureaucracies
- Decentralisation of the decision making process
- Development of governance networks
- Development of accountability mechanisms
- Change of political culture patterns towards those favoring participation

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Post-Soviet Governance concept

The concept of post-Soviet governance accounts for the following elements:

- Soviet capital heritage
- a systemic dichotomy of democratic processes within undemocratic setting
- a governance process

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Elements of Post-Soviet Governance

- Human capital
 - soviet trained work-force accustomed with a centralized decision making system (Marin, 2004), having no democratic policy making background – however „learning democracy as they go“
 - Corruption, personalistic politics, mutual blackmail interdependence of actors (blackmail-control)
- Social capital
 - Clientelistic networks based on relationships of kinship and interest – these being active as long as there is an potential gain involved (Vareaghin, 2004)
- Economic capital
 - Concentrated within a narrow group of people, with low legitimacy due to obscure origins

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Systemic oscilations

Pluralism by default (Way, 2002) / Feckless pluralism (Carothers, 2002):

a multitude of political parties, relatively fair elections, and alternation in power
low political participation of citizens outside the electoral cycle



The Power *Vertikal* / Dominant Power Politics (Carothers, 2002)

One party / family / leader dominates the entire political process, disappearance of the difference between the state and the ruling group

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Network Governance

The goal of governing the society in a more decentered way while containing or even reducing the inefficient bureaucratic apparatus inherited from the soviet period required for an involvement of the wide mass of citizens, however the low level of political activism and the impermeable nature of political parties has not facilitated the accomplishment of this goal

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Governance networks defined

Governance networks are defined as a horizontal articulation of interdependent but operationally autonomous actors who interact through negotiations within a relatively institutionalized framework of rules and norms in order to facilitate self-regulating policy making and contribute to the production of public value (Sorensen & Torfing, 2007)

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Governance Networks in Moldova

Governance networks in Moldova appear in response to the risks presented by the systemic oscillations between pluralism and authoritarian practices.

Governance networks are found in such domains as: **corruption reduction and prevention (AAC), rural development (CDER), local economic development (DEL), electoral administration (Coalition 2005, Coalition 2009)**

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Governance Networks in Moldova

Governance networks in Moldova represent in fact the concentration of the non-political, i.e. party unaffiliated energies from the civil society with primary goals of:

- development of advocacy / policy making groups;
- developing and consolidating local initiatives;
- establishment of additional horizontal accountability institutions to compensate for the deficit of accountability within the system.

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Network Governance Case Studies

The case studies are focused on the analysis of electoral governance networks **Coalition for Free and Fair Elections** – Coalition 2005, and Coalition 2009 – informal networks of non-governmental organizations created to compensate for the lack of democratic and accountable governance of the electoral process from the part of state institutions as well as in response to the undemocratic conduct from the part of the political parties themselves.

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Coalition for Free and Fair Elections

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coalition 2005 - 193 members - Civic education and voter awareness - Media monitoring and strengthening - Election monitoring - Exit-poll - Quick count/ Paralel Vote Tabulation - 11 grants / 11 NGO recipients | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coalition 2009 - 75 members - <u>3 regional branches</u> - Civic and voter education - Media monitoring - Election observation - Legal assistance - Quick count/ Paralel Vote Tabulation - <u>23 grants / 20 NGO recipients</u> |
|---|---|

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Coalition for Free and Fair Elections & Electoral Governance

On the rule application level:

- campaign monitoring;
- elections observation;
- voter education;
- vote counting and reporting;
- campaign evaluation and reporting

Rule making:

- charter for free and fair elections
- Additional activities:**
- Mass-media monitoring;
- Electoral consultancy;
- Legal assistance to voters and electoral contestants;
- Exit-poll

1. Evaluates the fairness of the electoral process
2. Assesses the credibility of the elections
3. Confirms/questions the legitimacy of the elected bodies
- 4. Responsibilization of the Political Actors**

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Coalition for Free and Fair Elections & Political Parties

The current incompatibility with the political parties is due to:

- need to avoid being accused of political sympathies or support (from the point of view of the Coalition)
- overload during the campaign (from the point of view of political parties)

However: Political Parties demonstrated good knowledge of Coalition's programs and reports, despite the critical nature of these reports to some political parties

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Network Governance Case Studies

The Coalitions for Free and Fair Elections (both in 2005 and 2009) have ultimately taken the role of co-governing body of the electoral process (in parallel with the CEC) serving as watchdog and referee between political parties and also as a horizontal accountability agent.

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