

MOLDOVA

Polity5 regime codes:

fac	scode	polity	pers	bmon	bday	byear	emon	eday	eyear	exrec	exconst	polcomp
1X	MLD	5	3	8	27	1991	8	26	1994	7	5	7
1Xa	MLD	7	7	8	27	1994	4	6	2001	7	7	7
1Xb	MLD	8	4	4	7	2001	3	5	2005	8	7	7
1O	MLD	9	14	3	6	2005	99	99	9999	8	7	9

PITF Problem Events:

- 1) 03/92-12/92 (ETH 03/92-12/92)

1X) Date of Change to Factional-Democratic: August 27, 1991 (independence)

Brief Explanation of Change To:

Political reforms in the Soviet Union allowed the formation of the Popular Front of Moldova (PFM), a nationalist political movement dominated by ethnic-Rumanians, in May 1989. On February 25, 1990, the Soviet republic held its first open elections to the Supreme Soviet, wherein the PFM won a majority of votes. The new government was faced with separatist claims by the ethnic-Gagauz and Russian-speaking territories in late 1990, which declared themselves the Gagauz and Dniestr Moldovan Republics, respectively. As a result of the general disintegration of the Soviet Union, Moldova declared its independence on August 27, 1991. In December 1991, Mircea Snegur, an ethnic-Rumanian nationalist, was elected president. Politics since independence has been characterized by a sharp division between supporters of cultural and political ties to Romania, on one side, and Russia, on the other.

Identify Main Factions:

- *Moldovan Nationalists* — This group is comprised mainly of ethnic-Rumanians. Supporters of Moldovan nationalism initially favored unification with Romania; however, the threatened secession of the industrial Dnestr region and the failure to win support in parliament for a referendum on unification, induced the nationalists to promote Moldovan nationalism as a hedge against closer relations with Russia. Leadership of this faction shifted from the Rumanian-nationalist Mircea Snegur to the Moldovan-nationalist Petru Lucinschi with the 1996 presidential election.
- *Pro-Russia* — This faction, represented by the Communist Party of Moldova (CPM) since that party's legalization in September 1993 (until its shift in policy in 2005), has supported closer cultural, economic, and political ties with Russia. Efforts by President Voronin (CPM) to reintroduce compulsory Russian-language lessons in schools sparked large-scale street protests in January and February 2002.

Ethnic War: March 1992 – December 1992

Tensions between the Moldovan central government, controlled by ethnic-Rumanians, and the nominally independent Gagauz and Dniestr republics escalated into an armed conflict, the Trans-Dniestrian War, in March 1992. The insurgency, supported by Ukrainian and Russian armed forces, subsided in December 1992 after July negotiations between Boris Yeltsin and Mircea Snegur produced a cease-fire and de facto regional autonomy. The agreement called for a Joint Control Commission (JCC) to oversee a buffer zone between the Republic of Moldova and the disputed territory of Trans-Dniestria.

1Xa) August 27, 1994 (new constitution) – Parliament initiated constitutional reforms created a mixed presidential-parliamentary republic, weakening the president vis-à-vis the prime minister and Parliament, and granted special autonomous status to the Dniestr and Gagauz regions. The new constitution was approved by the legislature on July 28, 1994, and came into force on August 27, 1994. President Lucinschi, who took office in January 1997, made several attempts to increase executive authority in order to override the factionalism that characterized legislative politics, including public appeals, but these initiatives were repeatedly blocked.

1Xb) April 7, 2001 (inauguration of president) – In 1999, the Parliament, reacting to President Lucinschi's attempts to strengthen the presidency, passed a constitutional amendment over the president's veto defining Moldova as a parliamentary republic and changing the presidential election process from a direct election to an indirect election requiring a three-fifths majority of parliament. In December 2000 the legislature was unable to elect a new president under these changed rules, although Communist Party (PCRM) candidate Vladimir Voronin, leader of the pro-Russian faction, polled first in all three rounds of voting, ultimately falling short of victory by two votes on December 21. President Lucinschi, acting in accordance with the constitution and with the support of the Constitutional Court, announced the dissolution of parliament and called for early general elections to be held on February 25, 2001. The Communist Party won 70 of 101 seats in the election, which was described as free and fair by international observers. The new parliament elected Vladimir Voronin as president on April 4, 2001, and he was sworn in on April 7.

1O) Date of Change from Factional-Democratic: March 6, 2005 (legislative elections)

Brief Explanation of Change From:

Politics in Moldova have been characterized largely by a very fluid party structure wherein parties emerge, combine, dissolve, and/or transform on a regular basis. With its (re)emergence in 1993, the Communist Party of Moldova (CPM) has been one of the few enduring parties in Moldova. The CPM had originally promoted closer ties with Russia but in the run up to 2005 parliamentary elections, it shifted its orientation to favor closer ties with the European Union in response to falling popular support for Russia and its apparent intransigence concerning reintegration of the Dnestr region. As a result of its reorientation, the CPM was able to retain its simple majority in parliament (56 of 104 seats) but fell below the 60% threshold needed to ensure its ability to decide the presidency.