

## Online Symposium on Elections in times of Epidemic

5 May 2020



### Elections postponed, held, on schedule

- Worldwide (source: International [IDEA](#))
  - 52 countries and territories to postpone
  - 19 decided to hold
    - Out of which 9 have already held national elections or referendums
- ACEEEO Members
  - Postponed – North Macedonia (nat. elec.); Serbia (nat. elec.); (+ nat. ref. – Armenia, Russia, + loc.)
  - On schedule – Poland

## Elections postponed, held, on schedule

- ACEEEO Members – later this year

30 August	Belarus	Presidential
October	Georgia	Parliamentary
October	Montenegro	Parliamentary
4 October	Kyrgyzstan	Parliamentary
11 and 25 October	Lithuania	Parliamentary
23 December	Croatia	Parliamentary
late 2020	Moldova	Presidential
late 2020 or 2021	Romania	Parliamentary
2020	Ukraine	Local

## To be held, or not to be held - competing considerations

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Periodic elections               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fundamental rights involved</li> <li>• Political accountability, democratic process</li> <li>• Avoiding the threat of politically motivated decision</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Health considerations</li> <li>▫ Legitimacy – high turnout</li> <li>▫ Trust – feasibility</li> <li>▫ Stability of electoral law               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-year freezing period (Code of Good Practice...)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
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## To be held, or not to be held - some key challenges

- Integrity of electoral legislation
  - Involving key stakeholders in the process
- Turnout
  - Preserving legitimacy
  - Avoiding discrimination
  - Keeping feasibility – polling station workers
- Health considerations
  - Preserving public health
- Informing voters
  - Comprehensive, concise and timely information
  - Campaign
- Preparation of election officials

## ACEEEO Recommendations

- Decision-makers in the electoral field should weigh-up carefully the dangers and risks of holding or postponing elections. All relevant stakeholders should be included in the process and given the necessary information.
- All relevant stakeholders of the electoral process need to constantly monitor the international scientific and electoral dialogue.

## ACEEEO Recommendations

- In case elections are held
  - Special attention needs to be paid to upholding the voter turnout, especially with regard to those groups that are limited the most in accessing the ballot.
  - Special voting arrangements should be introduced only if the necessary infrastructural prerequisites are met, and the process should take into consideration the factors of cost, participation, efficiency, trust and security (IFES).
  - Special health routines and protocols needs to be adopted.
  - Voters and other participants of the process needs to receive concise and up to date information
  - Fake news should be effectively combated.
  - If change of the electoral legislation is needed, all relevant stakeholders should be involved in a meaningful debate.

## ACEEEO Recommendations

- In case elections are postponed
  - All relevant stakeholders, especially the public should be informed on the legal basis of, and reasons for postponing the elections.
  - Public authorities and politicians need to give explicit commitment that postponed elections are held as soon as possible.
  - EMBs and election professionals should use the delay to design epidemic protocol, in case the situation lasts longer than expected, and elections cannot be postponed any further.

**Thank You!**

