

Research and contributions on a proposal to digitize funding activities of political parties and electoral campaigns in the Permanent Electoral Authority

Dragomir Adrian-Viorel

PhD. University Politehnica of Bucharestm

adrian_dragomir1980@yahoo.com

Abstract. Start The financing of political parties and election campaigns is a strategic issue for representatives of Romanian political organizations and the Permanent Electoral Authority (PEA). As a matter of intense debate in the public sphere in the past few years, the financing of political parties and election campaigns have become more important in the context of Romania's long-term supervision by international agencies responsible for the fight against corruption. n this regard, the PEA strives to harmonize legislation with international standards for financing of political parties and election campaigns, and develop methods for controlling income and expenditures used for election activities, including here, the current work and campaigns of political organizations The specific work during the period shows that it is one of the institutions actively involved in the improvement of constituencies through digitization and innovation, and is in line with international recommendations in this field.

Keywords. "funding of political parties and electoral campaigns", digitization, innovation, transparency, technology

Introduction

The potential of the information society (the impact of the establishment of the information age is for the modern era what they meant chronologically for humanity, the discovery of fire, iron, oil, etc.) is constantly growing due to technological development and multiple access routes. In this context, the development of the information systems security activity in good conditions requires the existence of a functioning IT system.

Other The main definition of democracy highlights the importance of developing a political regime that is based on the will of the people, respecting the principles of the universal vote and the sovereignty of the people. The basis of the new theory of modern democracy is supported by the management style that brings the expected results and good governance of the state by respecting citizens' fundamental freedoms and rights. The appearance of corruption in the political environment, generated by a variety of interests and amplified by the lack of transparency and legislation, creates for any democratic state the "domino effect", in the sense that it will rapidly expand, as a chain reaction, to all fields of activity, that represent the fundamental pillars of society.

Political corruption, including all categories of corruption, is seen in all European countries as a barrier to the smooth running of the entire electoral process and a factor that diminishes the confidence of investors, partners and collaborators in all fields of activity.

The country's image is severely affected, which leads to increased monitoring by international bodies and fora, whose reporting destabilizes credibility in socio-economic and political terms. International relations are also heavily affected.

Taking over the political power of electoral contenders who have fraudulently conducted their election campaign, with income from unjustifiable sources or who are themselves subject to corruption is dangerous in terms of subsequent support for interest groups that have contributed financial resources. As these interest groups are active in different fields of activity, the phenomenon is becoming difficult to control over time and the likelihood of corruption being eradicated is much reduced.

There are justified questions of strategic importance to any country. Who will want to develop strategic partnerships with a state where the functional apparatus cannot manage corruption properly? What investors will be attracted by a highly destabilized financial market and a vulnerable political environment? What regional union will be interested in the integration of a state that cannot defend its citizens? What will be the degree of confidence of international creditors? In this unfavorable context, all state-level decision-makers will have to step up efforts to prevent and combat corruption and will bear the pressure coming from unreliable citizens, on the other hand, from international monitoring and control bodies.

There is a strong link between the political and economic fields. Corruption in the political field is directly affecting citizens' lives, affecting their fundamental rights and freedoms. Beyond creating a strong democratic deficit, we can highlight the increase in poverty and the emergence of significant imbalances between the social classes. For example, unsustainable government spending generated by various interests results in a rapid increase in inflation that affects citizens' purchasing power and thus their living standards.

The political groups must understand that the development of correct conduct and without compromise is to the benefit of all. The reform of the electoral system at the level of all EU Member States is based on the same common denominator: reducing corruption and increasing transparency across all aspects of the electoral field, from funding political parties and electoral campaigns to management decisions of decision-makers responsible for planning, organizing and coordinating specific activities. The entire activity of political parties is appreciated during election campaigns, and the results can be seen and appreciated according to the number of people who have exercised their right to vote. No political group wants poor results at the end of the election campaign. Therefore, both representatives and members of a political party must promote transparency and fight corruption by all possible means, so as to benefit from all the further benefits generated by internal and international support. One important aspect is the trust of citizens in political formations, which can be affected in the long term if these bodies do not prove that they promote ethical and democratic values.

The political culture in any society or country has a significant influence on the drafting of laws that will be in force in the domain of the financing of political parties. If, in general, the level of enforcement and compliance is precarious in a given country, then it is unlikely that the rules on the financing of political parties will be an exception to this rule.

Political parties need adequate funding to carry out their basic functions, both during and between campaign periods, to be able to carry out their current activity. Taking into account the principle of party funding, it can be said that regulating party funding is essential to ensure that political parties are independent of donors and to ensure that political parties can compete

under the principle of equal opportunity. It is also necessary to ensure the transparency of political financing.

Generally viewed, the principles of funding political parties and electoral campaigns are an expression of international trends in funding and how democratic values are promoted in the rule of law. Although they do not bear a specific classification or are not related to certain limits, the importance of the principles in the field of political party funding can be considered to lie from the use of key issues, such as parameters within which the financing aspects fall into the political field; directions to which the actions and decisions of stakeholders and directly concerned are directed; the set of major orientations they reflect in line with international culture.

Based on the recommendations of international experts from different recognized organizations for their efforts to combat corruption, participants in the funding of political parties will be able to take steps to help create a political commitment that is in line with the public interest, a commitment that must be centered on promoting reform of political funding to ensure that corruption is reduced and transparency is increased, to strengthen the rule of law.

In Romania the principles of financing political parties are specified in Law No. 334/2006 on the financing of political party activities and election activities was reissued, subsequently amended and supplemented, and the implementation of the No. 334/2006 on the financing of political activities was approved in the Government Decision No. 10/2016. The method of Law No. 2006 regulates the activities of political parties and electioneering activities. The financing of political parties and election campaigns is a matter of strategic interest both for the institution responsible for this field in Romania, namely the Permanent Electoral Authority, and for the representatives of political organizations in our country. In recent years, this issue has aroused fierce controversy. In the context of long-term supervision of Romania by the international agencies responsible for the fight against corruption, the domain of the financing of political parties and election campaigns have become much more important.

The end of the year 2003 and the beginning of 2004 were the most important moments when Romania began to further promote democratic values and strive to increase transparency in the national strategic field. By signing the United Nations Convention against Corruption in December 2003 and ratifying the Convention through Law No. 365/2004, Romania assumed a series of responsibilities, such as promoting effective practices to prevent and combat corruption and strengthening the state machinery to improve the ability to assess corruption regularly. Legal instruments and administrative measures to determine their suitability to prevent and combat corruption, strengthen inter-institutional cooperation mechanisms to combat corruption at the local, regional and international levels, and develop the ability to participate in international projects aimed at achieving corruption to prevent corruption.

Later, integration into the European region along with democratic and legislative reforms led to the need to adopt a national anti-corruption strategy to make Romania one of the countries that promote democracy and European values. These values include ethics, transparency, fairness, equal opportunities in the field of activity, and the non-existence of any form of discrimination.

The year 2010 was a reference year in the field of elections. Romania's assessment report on the transparency of funding for political parties surprised the overall situation in dealing with the transparency of funding for political organizations. The report was held in Strasbourg through the Anti-Corruption Group of Nations (GRECO) in 2010, at the 49th plenary meeting. The report outlines the overall situation of the political financing system, taking into account both public and private funds, and is within the legal scope of the obligations and responsibilities of all parties involved. The GRECO report finally put forward 13

recommendations that need to be implemented to show Romania's concern for improving the transparency of the election financing system. Since 2010, Romania has been continuously monitoring the implementation of GRECO recommendations.

However, despite continuous efforts to implement all international recommendations and significant progress in the areas of election funding and control, there are still some areas that are considered vulnerable, and recommendations are considered partially implemented or unimplemented, as in the latest GRECO's compliance report adopted in March 2017.

The ethics, integrity, and transparency of the day-to-day activities of political organizations and election campaigns are the principled activities of Law No. 334/2006 on political party activities and election financing.

To prevent fragility and corruption risks in the financing of political parties and election campaigns, this guide will focus on these principles, both from the perspective that the application of the rules should facilitate compliance and from the fact that practical examples have been adopted and presented in the preparation process. The practices identified at the national or international level and outlined in the best practices guide for party fundraising will be illustrative and help prevent illegal practices by promoting the ethical, integrity, and professional conduct of stakeholders. Obviously, in this case, more attention can be paid to "informal control work", thereby significantly limiting the negative impact of potential corruption facts and ideas.

More attention can be made to "deformalizing control work" in this setting, limiting the detrimental impacts of possibly corrupt facts and thinking.

In this context, the Permanent Electoral Authority, through its efforts to harmonize legislation with international standards on the financing of political parties and electoral campaigns, as well as to develop how control over income and expenditure intended for electoral activities is exercised, including here the current work of political formations and the specific work during electoral, has made a significant contribution, shows that it is one of the institutions that actively participate in improving the electoral area, by international recommendations.

Good practices in the fields of political party fundraising and electoral campaigns that have been identified at a national or worldwide level can help to prevent illegal practices by encouraging stakeholders to act ethically, honestly, and professionally. More attention can be made to "deformalizing control work" in this setting, limiting the detrimental impacts of possibly corrupt facts and thinking.

In this perspective, the Permanent Electoral Authority, through its efforts to align legislation with global standards on the funding of political parties and electoral campaigns, including even to evolve how control over income and spending intended for electoral activities is exerted, including on this the current work of political formations and the specific work during electoral, has made significant progress, following the international organization recommendation.

The Romanian Government adopted the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (SNA) 2016-2020, which aims to "promote integrity by rigorously applying the regulatory and institutional framework to prevent corruption in Romania, as part of an integrity plan developed based on risk and internal managerial control standards," implying that a set of general objectives with the same coherence have been adopted. The Permanent Electoral Authority has made and will continue to make efforts to accomplish the particular target 3.5 in terms of efficiency and effectiveness to contribute to the attainment of the strategic objectives. The national anti-corruption strategy 2016-2020 aims to improve the integrity, reduce

vulnerabilities, and reduce corruption risks in the funding of political parties and election campaigns.

The Permanent Electoral Authority is an established constitutional institution with general jurisdiction in electoral matters, with the main provisions on its mission, organization and specialized apparatus, as well as the powers exercised, established by Law No. 208/2015 on the Election of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies and the Organization and Operation of the PEA, republished, as amended and supplemented from time to time. According to Article 100 of this law, the main task of the PEA is to "ensure the organization and conduct of elections and referendums, as well as the financing of political parties and electoral campaigns, following the Constitution, the law and international and European standards in this area", which has weaknesses, According to Government Decision no. 583/2016 on the adoption of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy for 2016-2020, the sets of performance indicators, risks associated with the objectives and measures of the Strategy and the sources of verification, the inventory of institutional transparency and corruption prevention measures, the evaluation indicators and the standards for the publication of public interest information.