

Moldova's parliament has dismissed the government of Vlad Filat

Kamil Całus, Parlament Mołdawii odwołał rząd Vlada Filata

On 5 March, the Moldovan parliament passed a no-confidence vote on Prime Minister Vlad Filat's cabinet, thanks to the combined votes of the Communist Party, the Democratic Party (PD) and the group of independent MPs gathered around Igor Dodon. The Liberal Party (PL) – which had been the other member (with the PD) of the now-defunct Alliance for European Integration (AIE) coalition – abstained from the vote. According to the constitution, within three days the Prime Minister must present the president a declaration of the cabinet's resignation. At the same time, the head of state will propose a new candidate for PM to the parliament. Immediately after the vote of no confidence in the government, the leader of the PD, Marian Lupu, called upon his former coalition partners to start talks on a new coalition agreement. On 6 March, the Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova (LDPM) announced that it would propose its leader, Vlad Filat, for the post of the head of government. However, the leaders of the PD and PL declared that Filat would not obtain the support of their parties. If the parliament twice fails to accept either of the two candidates within 45 days, the President will have the right to dissolve it.

Commentary

- This latest political crisis, which the Prime Minister initiated, was aimed at reinforcing the LDPM's stance towards its coalition partners, by allowing LDPM members to occupy the positions of Attorney-General and the head of the National Anti-Corruption Centre. However in the current situation, the Prime Minister will be forced to make concessions to the PD in order to recreate the coalition, and so will be unable to fully achieve his intended goal.
- The PD decided to support the Communist's proposal to dismiss the government, but its goal is unlikely to be the holding of early elections, in which it would most likely obtain poor results. It therefore seems that by dismissing the government, the PD wanted to ensure a better position for itself when negotiating a new coalition agreement, realising that its position will be crucial. At the moment, there are two possible scenarios. The first would see the restoration of the previous coalition under new conditions, as holding new elections would be risky for all three of the former partners. A possible coalition between the PD and the Communists is very unlikely (together they can muster 49 of the 101

seats in parliament). However, due to the PD and LP's strong opposition to the re-election of Prime Minister Filat, we should also take into account a second scenario, namely the failure of the talks and the calling of early elections. The results would be difficult to predict, as the LDPM and the Communists enjoy similar levels of support (according to the latest available polls, from the end of last year, both stand at about 25-30%).

- Despite the opposition of the PD and LP, President Nicolae Timofti is most likely once again to entrust Filat with the mission of forming a government. Currently there is no other candidate on the Moldovan political scene with sufficiently strong political backing. If Filat's candidature is twice refused by the parliament, the constitution gives the president the right (but not the obligation) to call new elections. In this situation, power in the country will temporarily be held by the previous cabinet.
- The current government crisis in Moldova may adversely affect the negotiations it has just finalised with the EU on the Association Agreement, as well as the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) which is part of the agreement. These documents are planned to be initialled at the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius scheduled for November. However, this would be unlikely in the absence of any agreement on forming a government, and the subsequent calling of early elections.