

Moldovan voters set for pivotal election

Moldova is holding its first direct vote for the presidency in more than two decades, set against a backdrop of political turmoil and with an electorate divided between pro-Europe and pro-Russia candidates



**REPUBLIC
OF MOLDOVA**

Population: 3.5m

Area: 33,800 square km

GDP: \$6.55 billion (2015)

Background: Gained independence from Soviet Union in 1991. Ruled since 2009 by string of weak, increasingly divided pro-Western coalitions, prompting surge in support for pro-Russian rivals

Recent events: Emergence of bank fraud scandal in 2015, costing over \$1bn – more than 12 percent of GDP. In wake of widespread protests, Moldovan leaders agree to direct elections for president – position normally decided by parliament

PRESIDENTIAL CONTENDERS*

● Pro-Russia

● Pro-Europe



Igor Dodon
Socialist Party



Maia Sandu
Action and Solidarity



Marian Lupu
Democratic Party

*Percentage figures from Oct 5 poll by International Republican Institute