



## The National Parliamentary Transparency Initiative

Program implemented by **Association for Implementing Democracy** and funded by the **Embassy of the United States** and by the **Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Romania**



Federal Foreign Office

### PRESS RELEASE

**The Association for Implementing Democracy (AID Romania)** announces the launch of the **"National Parliamentary Transparency Initiative"**, a national parliamentary reform program funded by **the US Embassy in Romania** and by **the German Embassy in Romania**. The program will be implemented with the additional participation of several foreign embassies to Romania, representing EU member states. Specialized assistance will be provided by foreign Members of Parliament and experts (collaborators of AID) from the United States, United Kingdom, Finland and Germany.

In response to a weak level of trust of the citizens in the institution of the Parliament, the program will accelerate **the process of reforming the Romanian MPs**, by **enhancing their accountability** to citizens and **increasing the transparency of their activities and decisions**.

AID's initiative takes place subsequent to the implementation of a similar electoral reform program in 2004, which promoted **policy-oriented debates over the MPs/political parties programs** in the communities they represent, and, at the national level, through a national media campaign for the [Citizen's Electoral Guide](#), a guide describing the main policies proposed in the parliamentary political parties' electoral programs. The Guide was published by 93 local mass media partners. The 2004 program also enjoyed a sustained presence in the central mass media. AID is a nonpartisan organization, whose programs have enjoyed large participation of representatives from all parliamentary political parties.

In 2005-2006, AID shall establish **7 Policy Action Groups (PAG)**, pilot centers of the program in the following counties: **Argeş, Braşov, Calaraşi, Dolj, Olt, Vaslui, Valcea**. Starting in 2006, the program shall be implemented nationally. **The Policy Action Groups** have as members all MPs elected in each constituency (representatives of all parliamentary political parties or independent MPs), local non-governmental and mass media organizations, syndicates and business organizations. These mechanisms (PAGs) will establish a practice of consultation and communication between the elected representatives and civil society in each of the seven counties, with a view to enhancing the relationship between the MPs and their local constituencies; the program will develop the capacity of the local civic and mass media organizations to function as **watchdogs of MPs' activity** and it will support sustainable local development through stakeholder participation. Each Policy Action Group shall produce **"the MP's Agenda"**, a document which will identify development priorities for each county, as established through stakeholder consensus.

**Representatives of EU members states' Embassies in Romania** will participate as special guests at the quarterly meetings of the PAG groups, **to observe** the progress of Romania to meet the **"Copenhagen Criteria"** for EU membership.

In each of the seven counties AID will produce **Quarterly Monitoring Reports concerning the activity of each MP**. The reports will take into account the MPs' activity both at the national level – **within the Parliament**, and at the local level – **within the local constituency**, and with regards to the established **"MP's Agenda"**. **The Reports will be made public in the central and local mass media, and will be transmitted to Romanian and foreign institutions concerned with the reforming processes in Romania (international/European organizations and fora, foreign embassies etc)**. In order to strengthen the capacity of the political parties to analyze the activity of their MPs, AID shall transmit the reports to each political party's national executive fora. AID shall also create the **Guide to Monitoring the Activity of the Romanian MPs**, a necessary instrument providing tools of control over the MPs' efficiency and transparency, designed for citizens, NGOs and mass media organizations.

Throughout the program's implementation, AID shall ensure an unbiased approach and environment, facilitating the participation and expression of all stakeholders in the program activities.

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