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Sectoral Factsheet:

EU-funded initiatives on Water Supply and Sanitation in the Republic of Moldova



EU-Moldova

Stronger Together

EU-FUNDED INITIATIVES

The European Union is currently supporting the Republic of Moldova with 60 million euros in the area of Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS). The EU has also used its contribution to leverage an additional 74 million euros in loans and grants from the EBRD, EIB and Member States, bringing the total investments in ongoing WSS initiatives to 134 million euros. In addition, other EU-funded initiatives of 45 million euros, out of which EU contributed 15 million and leveraged 20 million from other donors, have recently been closed.

Together with key partners such as the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW), the EU has provided almost one million inhabitants with improved water supply and sanitation services. An additional 250,000 inhabitants are projected to benefit from the ongoing programmes in the next few years.

Chisinau Water Development Programme

ENPI/2014/353-786

Location: Chisinau

Duration: Dec. 2014 – Dec. 2022

Budget: Total over 60 million euro: EU investment 13.8 million, loans from EBRD and EIB 24 million each

Implementing partners: EBRD (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development)

The programme rehabilitates water supply and sewage collection systems and upgrades the sewage treatment. This is leading to improved living conditions and reduced health risks for the city population, and prevents the excessive exploitation of natural resources and environmental pollution.

Key results:

- **800,000 inhabitants** benefit from improved water supply and sewage services.
- Connection rates for individual households to water services has gone from 56 % in 2011 to **80.77 %** in 2019 in Chisinau.

Construction of Water Supply and Sanitation infrastructure as well as Energy Efficiency in Public buildings

ENI/2017/391-480

Location: Republic of Moldova

Duration: Dec. 2017 – Sep. 2022

Budget: 24 million euro for WSS (total budget for programme including EE is 39.8 million euro, plus an additional 3.5 million euro invested in a project to prepare the design)

Implementing partners: German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)

This Action will deliver 18 infrastructure in the sector of Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) as well as Energy Efficiency (EE) in Public buildings so to produce concrete and tangible results to citizens. This will also help the Regional Development Agencies (North, Centre and South) to reinforce their institutional and administrative capacities in the implementation of Regional Development Strategies.

Key results

Projection for end of the programme:

- **113,500 citizens** benefitting from improved water supply and sanitation services
- **104,600 citizens** benefitting from water services
- **1,700 citizens** benefitting from sanitation services
- **7,200 citizens** benefitting from both water and sanitation services

EU4Moldova: Clean Water for Cahul

ENI/2019/411-652 & ENI/2020/415-396

Location: Cahul and its neighbouring villages of Cotihana, Crihana Veche, Pascani and Manta

Duration: Jan. 2020 – Dec. 2024

Budget: EU contribution 13.9 million euro. Additionally, a grant of 23.5 million euro from Germany is provided for WSS infrastructure and equipment.

Implementing partners: Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) Germany

The initiative improves the living conditions of the population through a broader access to quality water supply and to sanitation and therefore the minimisation of health risks. The program also works with local actors to enhance the environmental protection and ensure smarter use of natural resources.

Key results

Projection for end of programme:

- **135,000 inhabitants** will benefit from water supply services
- **32,000 beneficiaries** of improved wastewater treatment

ONGOING PROGRAMMES

EU4Moldova: Focal Regions

ENI/2019/410-470

Location: Republic of Moldova, with particular focus on the areas of Ungheni and Cahul

Duration: Nov. 2019 – Nov. 2024

Budget: Around 1 million euro investment in WSS (total budget of programme is 23.3 million, EU contribution 22.8 million and UNDP contribution 0.5 million)

Implementing partners:
UNDP and UNICEF

The overall objective is to strengthen the economic, territorial and social cohesion in the Republic of Moldova through facilitating inclusive, sustainable and integrated local socio-economic growth and improving the standards of living of the citizens in the pilot focal regions

Key results:

- A **new water supply network** in Ungheni city, with a length of **over 1,600 meters**, provides safe drinking water to **more than 24,000 people**.
- The sewerage network was extended in the central area of Ungheni increasing the number of users by **at least 141**.

Edinet - Insights into tomorrow cities

NEAR-TS/2020/421-644

Location: Edinet

Duration: Mar. 2021 – Feb. 2025

Budget: 500,000 euro to WSS (total budget for program 4.1 million euro)

Implementing partners:
Edinet Municipality

WSS: One smart technical solution implemented and tested at small scale to optimize and improve water supply

Key results:

- Estimation for end of programme: **7,000 inhabitants** (5,000 from Edinet city and 2,000 from Cupcini city) are estimated to benefit from better quality water

PREVIOUS INITIATIVES

DEVRAM Part II Strengthening the water supply and sanitation infrastructure in rural areas focusing on safe wastewater disposal in Cantemir

ENI/2017/389-857

Location: City of Cantemir

Duration: Dec. 2017 – Dec. 2021

Budget: Total 8.7 million for WSS: EU contribution 6 million euro and ADA contribution 2.7 million euros (EU contributed 8.2 million euro for the whole programme including agri-food sector)

Implementing partners:
Austrian Development Agency (ADA)

WSS: construction and supervision for execution of the reconstruction works at the Waste Water Treatment Plant and sewerage system

Key results:

- A **new wastewater treatment plant** (WWTP) benefitting **5,420 inhabitants** has been built.
- A **new sewerage system** was constructed with a total length of approx. 21.2 km and three new modern wastewater pumping stations have been installed.
- Optimization works were implemented for the water supply system, which allows for a more efficient and sustainable operation and increases the pumping capacity of raw water **up to 60 m³/h**.

Water Utilities Development Programme in the Republic of Moldova

ENPI/2010/253-430

Location: Floresti and Soroca in the North, Hincesti and Orhei in the Centre, and Leova and Ciadar-Lunga in the South

Duration: Nov. 2010 – Nov. 2015

Budget: 30 million euro (EU contribution of 10 million has leveraged loans from EBRD and EIB of 10 million euro each)

Implementing partners:
Republic of Moldova

The programme reformed the water and wastewater utilities, created models of self-sustainable operators providing services at acceptable standards, and ensured efficiency of investment and operation costs at affordable tariffs for 6 utilities. It also developed the capacity within public institutions to prepare and supervise water supply and wastewater projects.

Key results:

- In total **153,543 beneficiaries** have been connected to the water network through the project

Rehabilitation of the water supply system in the Municipality of Nisporeni

ENPI/2010/251-612

Location: Towns of Nisporeni, Vărzărești, and Grozești

Duration: Nov. 2010 – Jul. 2016

Budget: Total 14.5 million euro, out of which EU contributed 4.7 million euro (Other donors were ADA, SDC, Ministry of Environment, Nisporeni Rayon Council, Municipalities of Nisporeni, Vărzărești, and Grozești)

Implementing partners:
Austrian Development Agency (ADA)

The Action provided sufficient and safe drinking water, created an institution capable to sustainably operate, manage and maintain the water supply infrastructure, as well as established balanced local water governance.

Key results:

- **More than 15,000 citizens** have benefitted from the new and comprehensive water supply systems delivered by this project

SYNERGIES WITH OTHER PROGRAMMES

Through cooperation with the Citizens' Empowerment in the Republic of Moldova programme (ENPI/2018/402-674), which the EU has invested 5 million euro in, citizens have participated in coordination meetings with several EU-funded infrastructure investments. This contributes to spreading awareness in communities on for example the issue of connecting households to the sewerage and the water network.

BACKGROUND

One of the key guiding documents in this area is the Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy 2014-2030 (previously 2014-2028) from the government of the Republic of Moldova.

While access to water supply services has significantly increased in the Republic of Moldova since the strategy was adopted, it remains a central challenge to sustainable development in the country. 60.6 percent of the population, equivalent to 2.1 million people, had access to water supply services in 2018. The geographical differences were nevertheless substantial, with access around 88.1 percent in the capital Chisinau, compared to 64.4 percent in the South, 49.7 percent in the Centre and 43.9 percent in the North.

Even fewer citizens are able to use sanitation services in the country. In 2018, the centralized sanitation systems covered around 1 million Moldovans, which corresponded to 29.3 percent of the inhabitants. The discrepancies between access in urban and rural areas stand in stark contrast, with 64.1 percent access among the urban citizens compared to only 2.8 percent among the rural. Apart from impacting the quality of life for the Moldovan population, the lack of sanitation infrastructure contributes to environmental pollution and contamination of water resources.

The government's Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy sets the ambitious target of providing access to water and sanitation services to 80 percent of the population in urban areas and 75 percent in rural areas by 2024. Around MDL 890 million has been budget to address this in the 2020-2022 national budgetary framework.¹

INEQUALITY IN ACCESS TO SERVICES

Apart from geographical differences, the access to water supply and sanitation (WSS) services in the Republic of Moldova also depends on income and disability inequalities, while gender inequality seem to have less effect. There are also notable ethnic dimensions regarding WSS coverage. The intra-community inequality (the difference between the proportion of households that state that a service is available in their community, compared to the proportion of households that use it) was measured at 17.2 percent for the Roma population, compared to 3.8 percent for the non-Roma population.²

OPPORTUNITIES

Improved access to water supply and sanitation (WSS) services will lead to reduced barriers to economic growth; contribute to a healthy and safe environment; and to improve the living standards and health of the Moldovan population.

There is also potential in the WSS sector to strengthen energy efficiency and water use efficiency, which is of key importance to improve water security and climate resilience in the country.³

Continued infrastructure investments in rural areas will decrease the inequality in access to WSS services particularly in regard to income inequality, as income levels are lower in the rural communities.⁴

CHALLENGES

There is a significant need for maintenance and rehabilitation of the WSS infrastructure, as a large share of it was constructed before the country's independence from the Soviet Union and is lacking in quality. A key part of this is ensuring a sufficient number of operational water and wastewater treatment plants. The infrastructure also needs to be expanded to reach a larger share of the population, as outlined above.

While the legal framework in the area of WSS has been improved, a key concern is the implementation and enforcement of laws. This includes improvements in data collection and quality controls of water supply resources.⁵

Another challenge is the establishment of the Dniester Hydropower Complex in Ukraine. Apart from impacts on the biodiversity in and around the Nistru River, the Hydropower Complex has also resulted in decreased and more unreliable water flows with changes in water temperature and sediments. This can have consequences for agriculture, tourism, food industry, and other businesses that rely on the Nistru River.⁶

¹ Government of the Republic of Moldova, Resolution No 442/2020

² Government of the Republic of Moldova, Resolution No 442/2020

³ The World Bank, 2021. Special Note, Moldova: Water Security and Future Outlook

⁴ Government of the Republic of Moldova, Resolution No 442/2020

⁵ OECD, 2021, An Outlook of Moldova's water policy journey to 2030

⁶ UNDP, 2021