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# **NEWSLETTER OF THE DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**



**EU – MOLDOVA:  
COOPERATION NEWS**

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# TABLE OF CONTENT

## 01

### MOBILITY AND PEOPLE

Team Europe supports the modernisation of the workspaces in VET schools	8
Enthusiasm and Perseverance at the "DemocraCity" Camp, organised with the EU support	10
Youth at Goian Detention Centre gain a shot at a better life through Vocational Training	12
Increasing academic mobility for students and university professors	14
Mentor lawyers trained on managing professional traineeships	15
Erasmus Days 2023 in Moldova: the reunion of newly selected Erasmus+ projects	16
The restoration works of the Chişinău Circus building continue, with the support of the EU and UNDP	18
Raşcov on the left bank of the Nistru River develops its tourism potential with EU and UNDP support	19
Safe hikes thanks to tourist signs installed with EU and UNDP support	20
The "Moldova Has a Voice" camps brought together young music enthusiasts from both banks of the Nistru river	21
Empowering Moldovan journalists: masterclasses boost investigative reporting skills	24
Capturing the spirit, resilience, and diversity of Moldova's population in a unique exhibition by 'Oameni si Kilometri'	26
European Union supports the International Organization for Migration in Moldova to assist third country nationals fleeing Ukraine	28
New opportunities for young people in Moldova with the EU assistance	30
Exploring best practices in Food Bank Management during a study visit in Italy	32

Exploring EU standards in urban transport: Chişinău delegation at Busworld 2023 exhibition	34
Exchange of experience for improving public transport system in Chişinău with the EU support	36
Specialists from the General Directorate of Urban Mobility and Municipal Transport Enterprises in Chişinău – trained on sustainable urban mobility	38
Edineţ city is on the road to smart city transformation with EU assistance	40
Month of European Film 2023 in Chişinău	42
Art Binds: an unforgettable experience dedicated to the third anniversary of Europe Café	44

## 02

## STRONGER SOCIETY

Marking the international day to counter hate speech with Equality body representatives	45
The impact of hatred on the victims' life was addressed at the Living Library during storytelling sessions	47
Collaborative efforts to better tackle racism in the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership regions with the support of the EU and Council of Europe	48
Council of Europe week was marked in the Republic of Moldova	49
Civil society organisations from the Eastern Partnership countries engaged in anti-corruption dialogue at Moldova's Regional Conference	51
Role of civil society organisations in the EU accession process – becoming more noticeable	53
Joint efforts in combating hate speech, sexism and other forms of gender-based violence in elections in the Republic of Moldova	55
The guide "Combating hate speech in the media in the Republic of Moldova" available now in English, Romanian and Russian	56
Changing the negative attitudes against LGBTI persons in the Republic of Moldova through cultural and artistic events	57
Anti-corruption good practices lab: civil society organisations from the Central Region visit organisations in the Northern Region	59



New information resources for civil society representatives and human rights defenders made available with EU support	60
Fifteen civil society organisations have strengthened their knowledge in monitoring and analysing budget expenses at both local and central levels	62
Twelfth meeting of the Civil Society Platform European Union - Republic of Moldova took place in September	64
The Mobile Team Social Service for persons with severe disabilities created in Strășeni with the EU support	66
An occupational therapy service for children with special needs launched in Chișinău	68
Upgraded training programme for new employees of the Regional integrated service for victims of sexual violence in Ungheni	70

## 03

## INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNMENT

The Plenary meeting of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice took place in Strasbourg	71
Moldovan governmental delegation learned about coordination mechanisms of the European integration process in North Macedonia and Serbia	72
Analytical report on translation needs and capacities of the Republic of Moldova in the EU Integration process – presented to relevant stakeholders	75
PILOT Census 2023: population participation in the 2024 national census is crucial for the effectiveness of Moldova's social and development policies	77
The EU and the Council of Europe launch a joint project supporting the justice reform in the Republic of Moldova	79
Support in improving the internal regulations of the Superior Council of Prosecutors regarding the selection of Inspectors and Head Inspector for the Inspectorate of Prosecutors	80
Large-scale workshop on implementation of the new Customs Code, organised with EU assistance	81
The EU High Level Advisers' team has extended in the area of justice and prosecution, and public finance management	83
Awareness raising campaign on public finance management strategy implementation, launched with EU support	84

The EU High Level Advisers' Mission is supporting an awareness raising campaign on paid internships in state institutions	86
EUBAM joins efforts of Moldova, Ukraine and Romania to enhance border crossing capacity on the Solidarity Lanes	87
Moldovan Customs Service and State Inspectorate extend cooperation to ensure product safety	88
The National Integrity Authority onboards a new approach in Quality Management for Moldova's public institutions	89
National Anti-Corruption Centre expands Anti-Corruption Volunteer team and unveils new identity	91
Twinning project "Improving spatial data services in the Republic of Moldova following EU standards" marks the end of its implementation	93

## 04

## ECONOMY AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Businesses developed by vulnerable families with the EU support: Maria from Condrătești, a mother of five, raises chickens in an incubator	95
Several hectares of vineyards in the Southern part of Moldova equipped with weather stations, thanks to the EU support	98
Modernisation of the local public infrastructure in Leova and Strășeni rayon with Team Europe support	100
EU4Accountability supports Moldova's European Integration through exchange of best practices with Romanian civil society and local authorities	102
"Poveste" – a new social enterprise created by a non-governmental organisation with the support of the European Union	104
The Social Businesses Tour organised in Moldova with the EU support	107
Awareness raising campaign in Briceni organised with EU support for the business community in regions on the new Customs Code	109
European Union provides 4 million euros for a new phase of its Confidence Building Measures Programme	110
The National LEADER Network Congress addresses the sustainability perspectives of the rural development in Moldova	112

# 05

## ENERGY RESILIENCE

- EU Green and Climate Diplomacy Weeks were marked in the Republic of Moldova during entire month of September 114
- The European Union has invested 500,000 euros in the installation of photovoltaic panels on five district hospitals 117
- With European Union support, over 1,000 students and teachers at the 'Dimitrie Cantemir' Theoretical Lyceum in Bălți municipality benefit from improved study conditions 119

# 06

## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

- The Delegation of the European Union, EU Member States and EU development partners mark the World Cleanup Day in the Republic of Moldova 121
- The Low Emissions Development Programme was approved, bringing Moldova one step closer towards a carbon-free economy 123
- Moldovan Government priorities in the field of green and circular economy outlined with the support of EU4Environment "Green Economy" 125
- Moldovan water experts got acquainted with EU best practices in water monitoring during a study visit to Vienna 126
- Trilateral Prut Declaration signed by the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine 127
- Municipalities in Moldova join forces at river basin level to improve water management 129

EU4Digital report: latest EU eCommerce updates, trends and cooperation opportunities	131
New EU4Digital broadband report: Eastern Partnership connectivity and digital improvement	133
New EU4Digital eCustoms activities expand Ukraine–Moldova–Romania trade potential	135
EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul - another young entrepreneur digitises his business thanks to EU support	137
EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul kicks off the third edition of Robotics and Programming courses	139
The second phase of the Digital Impact Cahul programme announces its beneficiaries: six projects selected for funding	141



## MOBILITY AND PEOPLE

### Team Europe supports the modernisation of the workspaces in VET schools

**Multifunctional sewing and seeder machines and a fermentation tank were provided to the Leova VET School, within the EU4Moldova: Local Communities programme, to modernize the school workshop for the development of professional skills.**

The action is a part of the programme objectives aiming at strengthening the Moldovan VET system. Quality studies within a strengthened educational system

with access to modern equipment for all young people represent the priorities of the programme, carried out by the Austrian Development Agency.



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The delivered items will allow the young students to develop their professional skills, thus facilitating the understanding of the requirements of the job according to the labour market demands.

Likewise, until 2025, the ADA will continue supporting the VET institutions with new equipment to improve the learning, teaching, and practice conditions.

The above-mentioned activity is performed within the EU4Moldova: Local Communities, a multi-donor programme financed by the European Union, and the governments of Germany, Austria, and Poland.



## Enthusiasm and Perseverance at the "DemocraCity" Camp, organised with the EU support

From August 1st to August 4th, 42 young people from 10 different localities of Moldova took part in the "DemocraCity" camp, which was held by Diaconia within HOPE project.

Here, the young participants had the opportunity to increase their critical understanding of children's rights and the participatory decision-making process. They also collaborated actively with each other, engaging in various personal development activities.

With enthusiasm and perseverance, the participants managed to harmoniously blend their free time with knowledge reinforcement. They formed friendships, learned new things, and actively engaged in various personal development activities.

*"In these wonderfully spent days, I've learned so many things. I really enjoyed the silence at the guesthouse; it helped us concentrate better during activities. The educators were fantastic. I'm passionate about art, and here I learned many useful things about photography. Now I know how to take better pictures. I participated in a workshop, and as a result, I feel more confident in my abilities. During our free time, we went to the pool and had fun. I've had unforgettable experiences here,"*

**said Andreea, a camp participant.**



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The camp's programme was comprehensive, allowing the young participants to gain valuable experiences and skills in children's rights, personal development, financial education, mobile photography.

For four days, the camp became a wonderful place where participants developed life skills, worked as a team, and achieved remarkable results. At the same time, the young people had a blast, savouring every moment spent with their fellow campers and facilitators.

*"A very good camp. I would gladly return here. The interactive games kept us engaged and helped us get to know each other. I listened with great interest to the financial education course. I think I'll start saving and try to manage my budget correctly,"*

**said Margareta, another camp participant.**

*"We had an intense and interesting programme. We learned to interact and communicate effectively with our colleagues and to avoid bullying situations. Even though there were only a few days, we had enough time to get to know each other and make friends. The photography course was particularly interesting to me. In the future, I'd like to buy a camera to take professional photos. I'm glad I had the opportunity to participate in this camp,"*

**said Sandu, another camp participant.**



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## Youth at Goian Detention Centre gain a shot at a better life through Vocational Training

The Regina Pacis Foundation has launched a vocational training course in September for the trade of plastering, which is attended by children and young people from the Goian Detention Centre for Minors and Youth.

The initiative aims to prepare young individuals for an effective reintegration into society, giving them the opportunity to build a successful career and secure a stable future after their release from detention.



The vocational course spans three months and is designed for a group of 10 incarcerated children and young adults who are offered the chance to develop skills and expertise in the field of plastering. This initiative is part of the strategic interventions of the Regina Pacis Foundation, which has been supporting young individuals at the Goian Detention Centre for a decade, offering professional courses, psychological counselling, and workshops focusing on intellectual preparation, life skills, communication development, relationship-building, and behaviour education.

**Cristina Varzari, the project coordinator at the Regina Pacis Foundation, stated,**

*"Supporting young people in situations of risk and difficulty is one of our top priorities. We are motivated to continue these projects due to the increased interest of young people in acquiring new skills. Thus, incarcerated youth have every chance of finding employment more easily upon their release."*



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The training includes both theoretical classes and practical internships, delivered through modern and innovative vocational training programs and supported by qualified specialists.

**Valentina Gușan, teacher at Vocational School No. 7, mentioned**

*"Detained students are curious, they always ask what they will learn next, and often, they come better prepared for lessons than students outside the detention centre."*

The graduation exam for the course consists of two stages: a written test and a practical assessment, following a procedure similar to vocational schools outside the correctional system. Successful completion of this exam grants students professional qualification certificates issued by the Ministry of Education and Research, which are recognized both nationally and internationally.

Cătălin, a student in the plastering course, is grateful for the opportunity to learn a trade behind bars. He, like many others, has dreams and hopes.

*"I want to go home, see my family again, get a job, and work like any ordinary person."*

The skills acquired will facilitate the reintegration of minors into society after their release from detention, particularly aiding their entry into the job market.

This initiative is part of the "HOPE - Holistic Child Protection Environment in Moldova" project, implemented by Caritas Austria with support from the European Union, the Austrian Development Agency, and Caritas Austria. Local partners, including the Regina Pacis Foundation, CCF Moldova - Child, Community, Family, and the Social Mission "Diaconia," collaborate to make this programme possible.



## Increasing academic mobility for students and university professors

In the period of 4-8 September 2023, a mission of international short term experts Annie Soriot and Julien Frémont was held in Moldova to support academic exchange programs for students and university professors. The activity was organised within the Project "*Enhance transparency, accountability of and access to the judiciary*

*system*", implemented by the Central Agency for Project Management in Lithuania and Expertise France, funded by the European Union. The mission aimed to gather information about students' and professors' academic mobility, as well as discuss the possibilities to enhance cooperation between academic institutions at international level.



Following the mission, the *Guidelines and recommendations on Mobility and Internationalisation* was developed by the international short-term experts. The Guideline includes recommendations on making calls for mobility transparent and promoting international activities to the community, as well as on identifying potential partners and negotiating and signing new agreements, including their monitoring. In addition, the role of international networks is addressed by the Guideline from the

perspective of choosing the academic mobility network to invest in and building own network or joining an alliance. At the same time, the Guideline is a valuable resource of examples of academic mobility programs for students, including PhD, as well as university professors.

The Guidelines can be used by all universities in Moldova to increase internationalisation, taking into account its own context and the stage of development of international activities within each institution.



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## Mentor lawyers trained on managing professional traineeships

On 11 October 2023, in the premises of the Lawyers' Training Centre two trainings for two groups of 15 participants each were held by the in the national short term expert Mark Segal. The activity was organised within the Project "*Enhance transparency, accountability of and access to the judiciary*

*system project*", implemented by the Central Agency for Project Management in Lithuania and Expertise France, funded by the European Union. The trainings aimed to enhance knowledge and capacities of mentor lawyers in organising the traineeship and mentoring the trainee lawyers.



During each training, participants acquired knowledge and developed skills on and discussed about the legal framework for traineeships, establishing traineeships, managing and implementing traineeships, monitoring and evaluating traineeships. The training was based on the *Recommendations for mentor lawyers: managing lawyers' professional traineeships*, document developed by Mark Segal for mentor lawyers. The recommendations refer to the legal framework for lawyer traineeships, establishment of the lawyer traineeships, in particular initial meetings and needs assessment (advocacy skills,

negotiation and mediation skills, case analysis, case planning, and legal reasoning skills, communication and consultation skills for working with clients, legal drafting skills, legal research skills, knowledge of the juridical and institutional/organisational framework, knowledge, understanding, and application of the ethical standards of the legal profession), as well as the individual traineeship plan, managing and implementing lawyer traineeships, and promoting skills development, evaluating lawyer traineeships and the performance of trainees.



# Erasmus Days 2023 in Moldova: the reunion of newly selected Erasmus+ projects

During this week, Moldova and the whole world celebrated Erasmus Day 2023, to highlight Europe's cultural diversity and the many learning opportunities, which Erasmus+ programme offers.

In this context, the National Erasmus+ Office in Moldova, in cooperation with the Delegation of the European Union and the Ministry of

Education and Research in the Republic of Moldova, have organised the **Reunion of the newly selected Erasmus+ projects 2023**. The event took place on October 5, 10 and 12, consecutively bringing together new Jean Monnet projects, as well as the capacity building in vocational education and training (CBVET) and capacity building projects in higher education projects (CBHE).



These meetings constituted a networking platform for experts, academic and administrative staff, but also representatives of civil society, the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research and the Ministry of Education and Research, in order to share their experiences and perspectives, and emphasizing the openness of our system towards international collaboration within Erasmus+ projects.

The year 2023 brought to educational institutions from the Republic of Moldova a record number of Erasmus+ projects. Thus, within this selection, we have six capacity building in higher education projects, three capacity building in the field of vocational education and training projects and four Jean Monnet projects.



Erasmus+ capacity building projects have a budget from 200 thousand to one million euros, and support international cooperation actions, based on multilateral partnerships between organisations active in the field of education. They support the relevance, quality, modernisation and adaptability of education in third countries not associated with the Erasmus+ programme, as the Republic of Moldova, for socioeconomic recovery, growth and prosperity. Jean Monnet projects, on the other hand, have a budget of 30 to 100 thousand euros, and aim to promote excellence in teaching and research in the field of European Union studies worldwide. Through this action, the European Commission aims to promote the dialogue between academia and decision-

makers, in particular, with the aim of strengthening the governance of EU policies.

It has to be noted that the Republic of Moldova Erasmus+ projects are implemented since 1994 on the dimension of higher education and youth. Starting from 2021, capacity building in the field of vocational education and training projects have become novelty for the Republic of Moldova within the Erasmus+ programme. Until now, thanks to the support of the Erasmus+ programme in the Republic of Moldova, the following results have been achieved: 83 Tempus projects, 30 capacity building in higher education projects, 5 capacity building in the field of vocational education and training projects and 31 Jean Monnet projects.



# The restoration works of the Chişinău Circus building continue, with the support of the EU and UNDP

The restoration of the Chişinău Circus roof has been ongoing for eight months now. These works, part of first stage of restoration and conservation efforts of the building,

are being carried out with the support of the European Union's Confidence Building Measures Programme, implemented by UNDP.



## Since March 2023, the following has been accomplished:

- » Replacement of the crown and lantern roof covering;
- » Rehabilitation of the support layer of the dome's covering;
- » Replacement of the drainage system for rainwater from the dome.

To make the building more energy-efficient, the old thermal insulation, based on glass wool, is being replaced with a new one based on basalt wool and lined with magnesium oxide panels. So, the Circus roof will meet energy efficiency requirements, and the new materials will also provide fire protection. At this stage, works are being carried out on three sectors: the dome covering, the terrace-type roof, and insulating the dome from the inside.

In the near future, the installation of the metal roof covering of the dome will be completed.

Another set of works part of the first phase of restoration and conservation, supported by the EU and UNDP, involve replacing the vitrified façade of the main building. So far, the old stained-glass windows on the upper levels have been removed, and the installation of new metal and aluminium profiles is set to begin.

The European Union, through the Confidence Building Measures Programme, implemented by UNDP, has allocated over €1,800,000 to cover the costs of detailed technical expertise, design, and repair/conservation works in the first phase.

For the next phases, the authorities of the Republic of Moldova are expected to attract funding, including from development partners.



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# Raşcov on the left bank of the Nistru River develops its tourism potential with EU and UNDP support

A team of researchers from the Archaeological Laboratory of the Taras Shevchenko University in Tiraspol has carried out a series of archaeological investigations at the ruins of the church of Raşcov on the left bank of the Nistru.

The archaeological research was carried out from 9 October to 15 November 2022. Subsequently, archaeologists, historians and architects combined field and office work to document the research in a monograph. On the occasion of the launch of this monograph, a scientific conference was organised on 28 September 2023, bringing together experts from both sides of the Nistru River.

Research has been carried out both outside and inside the church, uncovering a number of fascinating facts about the construction and history of this tourist attraction. The main objectives of the research were to identify the building layers of the church and to verify the existence of older structures in the same location, as well as to culturally and chronologically attribute these findings.

During the research project, a new archaeological site belonging to the Cucuteni-Tripolia archaeological community and the oldest Christian necropolis in the region dating from the 17th-18th centuries were discovered unexpectedly. In addition, remains were discovered - several teeth and small fragments of the lower jaw of an animal. They belonged to a young elephant of the genus *Mammuthus*, which lived in these parts about 100,000 years ago.

All the information and archaeological findings from the period of research have

These efforts were included in an ambitious project, "Historic Raşcov: research and conservation to improve tourism potential together". The project was supported by the European Union's "Confidence Building Measures" programme, implemented by UNDP.



been included in the monograph "Historical Raşcov". The results of this archaeological research make a significant contribution to the understanding of the history and cultural heritage of the village of Raşcov and the surrounding region. They can have a positive impact on the development of the tourism potential of the area, shedding light on the rich cultural and historical heritage of this place.

Previously, within the framework of the EU "Confidence Building Measures" programme implemented by UNDP, two local cultural heritage sites, namely the synagogue and the ruins of the church of Raşcov, were conserved and partially restored.





## Safe hikes thanks to tourist signs installed with EU and UNDP support

Six information boards and tourist signs have been placed in the nature reserves of Țîpova, Saharna and Iagorlic.

The signs were installed with the support of the EU "Confidence Building Measures" Programme, implemented by UNDP.



The information boards contain useful information for hikers, such as details about the reserve, the flora and fauna specific to the area, and signposts that guide tourists safely along the trails.

An ecotourism information centre has also been set up in the immediate vicinity of the Țîpova monastery. The centre is also open on Saturdays and Sundays and prior appointment is required for weekdays.

Signs and signposts give guides and tourists the rules of conduct in a nature reserve. It also promotes the idea of eco-friendly and sustainable tourism.

With support from the EU and UNDP, the Tourism Platform has also been set up, connecting tourism professionals on both sides of the Nistru River. Ten tour guides from both banks of the Nistru River have also been certified. A new specialization was included at the Academy of Economic Studies - related to destination management organisations.

At the same time, more than 444 tourist attractions on the left bank of the Nistru and 1060 - on the right bank of the Nistru were mapped.



## The "Moldova Has a Voice" camps brought together young music enthusiasts from both banks of the Nistru river

It was such a synergy!" That's what the 24 young people from both banks of the Nistru river, participants in the two editions of the "Moldova Has a Voice" camp, say in unison. The art camps were organised by Pasha Parfeni with the support of USAID Moldova, the European Union, and UNDP.

On both "Moldova Has a Voice" camps, professional music creators shared their

experiences and knowledge with young participants. Guided by three mentors – Pasha Parfeni, Dara, and Iuliana Parfeni – along with three other music producers, camp participants discovered the entire process of producing a song: how to convey a social message in a song, tips for the recording process, how to write lyrics when you miss inspiration.



***Born in Chişinău, Vlada Neagu, another participant, has been living in Romania for seven years, and this year she graduated from the National University of Music in Bucharest:***

*"At the artistic moment I am in now, I need to overcome some barriers and open up even*

*more to who I am and what I want to create, and this art camp provided exactly what I needed. I was used to my slower ballad-pop songs, with a lot of introspection, sometimes painful, and here I do absolutely everything – I sing any style, without barriers, without expectations, which is wonderful."*



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Artiom and Maxim are two young people from Tiraspol. Although Artiom is an actor, and Maxim is studying journalism, they both came to the art camp because they share the same hobby – music.

**Maxim says he studies journalism just to have more time to write and compose lyrics or music:**

*"I was missing something. I felt like my emotions and thoughts had run out, and here I had the chance to be selected for this camp. Everyone here is talented in their own way, and someone can inspire you in a certain way. It's important not to lose all the creative energy accumulated after this camp and to continue composing music and lyrics."*

**Dara is a mentor at the "Moldova Has a Voice" camps:**

*"That's how I work. I create music in teams, and I do it practically every day. Such an art camp would have helped me a lot at the beginning of my career."*

Even the creative camps have ended, the mentors continue to support the participants with recommendations.

*"Moldova needs a lot more music, considering how many talents it has. There are many more people who can launch into music; they just need a bit of confidence,"*

**says Dara.**

During the two "Moldova Has a Voice" art camps, approximately 30 songs were recorded.

These will go through the post-production and mastering process to reach a wider audience later on.



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# Empowering Moldovan journalists: masterclasses boost investigative reporting skills

In a concerted effort to strengthen investigative journalism in Moldova, 25 dedicated journalists recently participated in two masterclasses held during September and October. These educational sessions were led by investigative journalists, members of different international investigative journalist networks from Ukraine and Romania, and were made

possible through the support of the project "Strengthening the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Mechanisms in the Republic of Moldova" co-financed by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The project is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.



The primary aim of these masterclasses was to enhance the abilities of journalists to conduct better investigations for the reporting of corruption cases. This was done through teaching the methods of investigative reporting and the art of creating data visualizations to effectively communicate complex issues.

**During the masterclasses, the journalists gained significant expertise in multiple key areas. They learned how to:**

» **Unearth Corruption Secrets:** Participants acquired skills in uncovering corruption stories, learning how to select the right topics, plan investigations, and conduct thorough



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research using open-source intelligence (OSINT) tools.

» **Gather and Refine Data:** The journalists delved deep into the world of data, gaining extensive knowledge on how to gather and refine data effectively, a crucial aspect of comprehensive investigative reporting.

» **Stay Safe Online:** Cybersecurity took centre stage. The journalists learned basic cybersecurity techniques to protect themselves and their sources from digital threats, ensuring safety in their investigative endeavours.

» **Master Data Visualization:** Investigative journalists honed their ability to use data visualization tools to present their findings in an engaging and understandable way. This skill enables them to make complex data accessible to all.

» **Navigate the World of Mapping:** A special focus was given to mapping, where participants familiarized themselves with mapping principles, tools, and techniques. Mapping serves as a powerful tool for making sense of data and providing a visual narrative.

The participating journalists emerged from these masterclasses equipped with advanced investigative reporting skills. Following the masterclasses, a local network of investigative journalists was established. These capacity-building activities have significantly enhanced the quality of investigations and reports on corruption cases. They now produce in-depth investigative reports on corruption cases in specific high-risk sectors, with a special focus on corruption-sensitive areas such as education, public health, social assistance, and agri-food, all of which are of national and local interest. Through their efforts, investigative journalists raise public awareness, aiming to prevent corruption among citizens and to increase media coverage of corruption cases.



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# Capturing the spirit, resilience, and diversity of Moldova's population in a unique exhibition by 'Oameni și Kilometri'

"Realities in Portraits" is the title of the exhibition organised from September 30th to October 14th by the Association of Reporters "Oameni și Kilometri", with the support of the European Union, and under the coordination of Internews. The open-air exhibition, held in three cities (Chișinău, Bălți, and Cahul), showcased a diverse collection of 23 compelling portraits of people across Moldova who are facing challenges or sharing their inspiring successes. Each portrait serves as a narrative, whether it's about adoptions, autism, vanishing traditions, anorexia, infant/maternal mortality, theatre veterans, poverty, the Romani community, or a successful honey business, among other topics.



*"Photography is a very powerful tool of independent media, which is still relatively unexplored in the Republic of Moldova. Oameni și Kilometri uses photography to provide reality with imagery, power, and a visual path to inform and sensitize our readers and the public. A well-captured photograph can "touch" as beautifully as poetry. It is, therefore, more than just a means of information but also a means of promoting the art of photography in our community. Through the photography exhibition, we aimed to bring the stories of people, especially those left behind, into the hearts of as many people as possible. And we are confident that these stories have an impact,"*

**said Polina Cupcea, journalist and founder of Oameni și Kilometri.**

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established. These capacity-building activities have significantly enhanced the quality of investigations and reports on corruption cases. They now produce in-depth investigative reports on corruption cases in specific high-risk sectors, with a special focus on corruption-sensitive areas such as education, public health, social assistance, and agri-food, all of which are of national and local interest. Through their efforts, investigative journalists raise public awareness, aiming to prevent corruption among citizens and to increase media coverage of corruption cases.

*"Through an engaging photography project, a lasting partnership has been established between the City Hall of Cahul and the Association of Reporters "Oameni și Kilometri," which has been ongoing for about 4-5 years. The photos included in the project, of evident quality, were exhibited in the Horelor Square in Cahul. Considering the significance of this location, the high frequency of cultural*



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and social events held throughout the year in this square, and the number of people passing through the area, we believe that the project is advantageous both for the initiative's representatives and for the local authorities. The exhibition became an integral part of the city's layout, and it informed local residents about important realities of the country through an accessible artistic method suitable for various age groups. We consider the cultural, social, and political topics addressed in the photography exhibition to be current and relevant for raising awareness among fellow citizens about the importance of certain issues and the challenges facing society. It also serves to showcase individuals as sources of inspiration and beautiful experiences. Therefore, we will continue to support the project in the future and hope to achieve its objectives,"

**declared Tatiana Romaniuc,  
deputy mayor of Cahul.**



# European Union supports the International Organization for Migration in Moldova to assist third country nationals fleeing Ukraine

Third country Nationals (TCNs) fleeing Ukraine and their close Ukrainian family members are assisted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Moldova

in safe return and reintegration into country of origin, thanks to the support of the European Union.



Over 1,000 TCNs fleeing Ukraine, along with their children and spouse with Ukrainian citizenship, have received support for their safe return and reintegration into their respective countries of origin (CoO). This assistance was provided by the IOM Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) Team as part of the Humanitarian

Voluntary Return programme since the onset of the conflict in Ukraine, in February 2022. The demand for this type of assistance remains substantial, with 175 individuals receiving return support in the past two months, from September 1st to October 25th, 2023. Azerbaijan, Georgia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan are the main countries of origin of assisted people.



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In addition to the logistical organisation of the return process to the country of origin, the persons assisted by IOM Moldova are provided with various types of support in response to the needs identified during the screening process. Thus, during September 1st and October 25th, 159 people (128 adults, 31 children; 92 men, 67 women) benefited from accommodation and food assistance for the entire waiting period (1-3 nights) before the departure, and all 175 returnees traveling during these two months also received cash assistance.

### **Reintegration assistance**

In addition to providing support for TCNs fleeing Ukraine through the Voluntary Humanitarian Return programme, IOM Moldova also extends the reintegration

assistance to individuals facing various vulnerabilities, including health status, age, gender, family support and family composition, upon their return to their respective countries of origin. Reintegration assistance is facilitated through IOM missions in these countries and includes cash assistance and in-kind grants. The in-kind grant can be used to cover a wide range of services, such as livelihood, vocational training, professionalization, medical care, childcare, schooling, psychosocial support and more, while the cash grant is intended to cover immediate needs upon returning home, to their countries of origin. From February 2022, the IOM Moldova's AVR team, through coordination with IOM Missions, has provided cash support to 160 individuals, with 144 of them also benefiting from the in-kind reintegration grant.





# New opportunities for young people in Moldova with the EU assistance

The project "Moldova Youth Civil Society (MYCS): a Call for Stronger and Inclusive Youth Participation", co-funded by the

European Union, continues to empower and strengthen the capacities of young people and youth organisations in Moldova.



On October 6, a new meeting of the network of 12 youth/youth organisations that are part of the MYCS project took place, and on October 7, 15 youth initiative groups participated in the pitch of community development through youth engagement ideas - #space3.

The MYCS network meeting aimed to develop a series of joint advocacy actions in the youth field, giving to the representatives of youth organisations the opportunity to explore ways to influence processes and identify resources to make changes in their communities.

The present organisations, guided by facilitators, worked on mapping youth issues and gaps in youth policies implementation, identified common areas of interest and came up with ideas for joint advocacy initiatives.

Vlad Dumitrescu, facilitator from the Foundation for Civil Society Development from Bucharest, stressed the importance of organisational diagnosis, governance, financial aspects and the level of advocacy in organisations.

*"Many understand now the potential of advocacy and we will explore ways to motivate the participants to take action. Thus, the meeting was an exploratory one to contribute to the civil society ecosystem in Moldova and to identify relevant advocacy topics,"*

**he said.**

The concept of #space3 was launched in Moldova, following the model from Romania, representing the civil society space that supports civic engagement of young people at community level and cultivates active civil society youth through capacity building and empowerment.

In #space3, 10 community initiatives developed by young people will come up with solutions for community development and youth engagement in local communities.

60 initiative groups from across the country, made up of 16-22 year-olds, responded to the call for #space3. After a rigorous selection process and a series of working sessions



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with the remaining teams, 15 teams reached the pitching phase, of which 10 initiatives were selected for funding.

Irina Gutu, a community leader and student at the "Alexei Mateevici" High School in Donduşeni, who entered the #space3 race out of a desire to contribute to change in her community:

*Our project provides exactly what my community needs, with a focus on young people, empowering them and enabling them to identify, articulate and solve problems."*

**he said.**

Alexandru Ocrain, 16 y.o., from "Horizon" High School, Chişinău, represented the "Horizon" team, which focused on addressing the lack of STEM experience among high school students.

*"So many students don't have the STEM experience to apply to universities and colleges abroad. Respectively, we decided to offer such opportunities not only to "Horizon" High School students, but also to students outside of our school,"*

**explained the young man about his team's motivation to be part of #space3.**

The 10 selected initiatives will be funded with up to €2000 each and will run for 6 months, through participation and engagement of all young people in the community. In parallel, the initiative groups will receive support in the implementation process, collaboration with LPAs and identifying other local funding sources for the continuity of activities.

MYCS aims to strengthen the capacities of local civic actors in the youth field to provide inclusive and sustainable youth participation and empowerment programmes and services. More information about the project and its activities: [www.tdh.md/MYCS](http://www.tdh.md/MYCS)





# Exploring best practices in Food Bank Management during a study visit in Italy

From 17-20 September 2023, a delegation consisting of representatives from government institutions and project partners, conducted a study visit to the Federation of Food Banks in Italy. This initiative was carried out as part of the project "Partnerships for

Inclusive and Sustainable Social Canteen Services," funded by the European Union, co-financed and implemented by "Keystone Moldova", "CONCORDIA. Social Projects", and IRMS "Diaconia".



The purpose of the study visit was to gain on-site knowledge of best practices related to the activities of food banks, their collaboration with food donors and charitable organisations. The delegation visited Food Banks in the Lazio and Lombardy regions of Italy.

During the visit, the #Sticibo project was also presented. This project focuses on the recovery of prepared foods and unused products from school cafeterias, businesses, hotels, and restaurants.

The food recovered daily from these food service operators is then distributed to social services to assist those in need.

Furthermore, through the exchange of experiences with Italian specialists, it was aimed to document the tax regulations related to food donations for philanthropic purposes, Italy's experience in motivating the business sector to become an active partner of food banks, as well as the sanitary and veterinary practices applied in the food recovery and donation mechanism.



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*"During this visit, we had the opportunity to study models of good practices in preventing food waste implemented by our colleagues in Italy. We are confident that this approach will contribute to the development of an appropriate regulatory framework in accordance with the Law on Food Loss and Waste Prevention, which came into effect in the Republic of Moldova on May 25, 2023,"*

**said Oleg Paraschiv, Executive Director of the Food Bank in Moldova.**

The experience gained during the study visit will assist in the development of a related regulatory framework for the Law on Food Loss and Waste Prevention, as well as the implementation of new practices in providing food support services in the Republic of Moldova.

# Exploring EU standards in urban transport: Chişinău delegation at Busworld 2023 exhibition

From 7-11 October 2023, a delegation from Chişinău, consisting of representatives from the Chişinău City Hall, the Chişinău Electric Transport Authority, the Urban Bus Park Public Institution, and partners from Lublin, Poland, participated in the Busworld Europe 2023 exhibition held in Brussels, Belgium.

The 50th edition of the event took place this year in Brussels, Belgium, and is considered the most important global event dedicated

to buses, coaches, and their spare parts manufacturers. The Moldovan delegation representatives analysed and gained knowledge on key topics in the bus industry, including the transition to autonomous buses, digitalization, and services with reduced CO2 emissions, regulations regarding bus imports, and improving road safety through adapted infrastructure.



Experts from Chişinău had the opportunity to explore the future of urban transport. They analyzed innovations and trends in the field, thus staying up-to-date with the latest zero-carbon emission transportation

systems. Furthermore, delegation members acquainted themselves with the most renowned and innovative bus manufacturers, who excelled in design, comfort, energy efficiency, and safety.



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This year's global exhibition saw Romania presenting the first electric bus manufactured in the country. Our authorities had the chance to see how it operates and what the future plans of the Romanian company entail.

This globally significant event provided an appropriate framework for the exchange of expertise, where specialists from the Republic of Moldova had the opportunity to interact in the same place with international experts and representatives of bus manufacturers.



Current trends in public transport services aim to transform into an efficient, integrated, sustainable, and safe transport system. In order to achieve European environmental

protection and energy efficiency objectives, the majority of the exhibited means of transport are electric, intended to reduce energy consumption.



# Exchange of experience for improving public transport system in Chişinău with the EU support

From September 25th to September 29th, 2023, Chişinău hosted a delegation of experts in public transport and urban development from Lublin, Poland, within the "MOVE IT like Lublin" project, funded by the European Union and implemented by the Municipality of Chişinău. The purpose of the visit was to acquaint the Polish experts with the current state of the public transport

system in Chişinău and to share the best European practices in the field.

The delegation consisted of representatives from the Lublin Public Transport Authority (ZTM). They were invited to Chişinău with the aim of getting acquainted with the current situation of the urban public transport system and sharing the best European practices in the field.



The visit's agenda included a series of meetings with the Project Implementation Unit, the leadership of the Chişinău City Hall, and the General Directorate of Urban Mobility. Additionally, the delegation representatives had several meetings at the municipal enterprises: the Chişinău Electric Transport Authority and the Urban Bus Park. The experts from Lublin provided recommendations regarding opportunities to improve the current infrastructure, the potential expansion of the vehicle fleet, the implementation of an intelligent traffic

management system, the possibilities of installing informational panels at waiting stations, and the optimization of energy consumption of transport units.

Furthermore, discussions covered a wide range of topics related to the actions taken and planned within the "MOVE IT like Lublin" project, such as the development of "park and ride" parking lots, the establishment of a Traffic Monitoring Centre, the development of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for the city, and the introduction of an e-ticketing system in trolleybuses and buses in Chişinău.



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*"We are deeply grateful to our partners from Lublin for this exchange of experience. These days were extremely dynamic, with essential recommendations for the development of a more advanced, efficient, and environmentally friendly public transport system, one that successfully meets the needs of travellers and significantly contributes to improving the quality of life in the city.*

*Our common goal remains the same: to provide the most pleasant experience for travellers and to actively engage in the sustainable development of the city,"*

**emphasized Olga Lozan, the manager of the "MOVE IT like Lublin" project.**



# Specialists from the General Directorate of Urban Mobility and Municipal Transport Enterprises in Chişinău – trained on sustainable urban mobility

In order to enhance the institutional capacities of municipal authorities in managing and modernising urban public transport, while adhering to EU standards and practices in urban mobility, a group consisting of engineers, electronics

specialists, and experts from the General Directorate of Urban Mobility and Municipal Transport Enterprises conducted a new study visit from 15-20 October 2023, in the city of Lublin, Poland.



The purpose of this visit was to learn about the successful European practices in the field of public transport. The city of Lublin in Poland serves as a role model of the efficiency and quality of the public transport system, representing an example for similar development of the transport system in the city of Chişinău.

During their time in Lublin, specialists from

the General Directorate of Urban Mobility, the Chişinău Electric Transport Authority, and the Urban Bus Park participated in specialized training in the field of public transport and urban mobility, tested advanced transport system management systems, and visited the Lublin Public Transport Authority (ZTM), the municipal traffic monitoring centre, the Metropolitan Railway Station, and more.



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The experts from Lublin provided the delegation from Chişinău with essential information about the public transport infrastructure in the city, including charging stations, logistics resource management, and vehicle maintenance, presenting them with the latest innovations and implemented projects.

Furthermore, representatives from Chişinău, together with representatives from Lublin, shared their visions regarding the development of low-emission and zero-CO2 transport, considered the future of urban mobility.

## Edineț city is on the road to smart city transformation with EU assistance

In the city of Edineț, the successful implementation of intelligent technological solutions is underway to modernize the public lighting system and develop a public surveillance system.

The lighting will not only be modern but also intelligent, automatically adjusting the light intensity according to needs.



In Vasile Alecsandri Public Garden, the project to install a modern street lighting system has started successfully. The necessary underground works for the electrical power supply network have already been completed, and soon, galvanized metal poles will be installed to host LED lighting sources.

Additionally, two lighting poles will be installed at the city entrances, equipped with informative panels, environmental sensors, and cameras for reading vehicle license plates. Pedestrian crossings will have pedestrian lighting columns and surveillance cameras. This modern technology will

not only enhance safety but also provide additional amenities for Vasile Alecsandri Public Garden visitors.

Simultaneously, the modernization project has been expanded to Independence Street and Bucovina Highway in the city of Edineț. The estimated completion date for these works is at the beginning of December this year, demonstrating a commitment to improving the city's infrastructure and quality of life.

In addition, at the beginning of September, the installation works for intelligent traffic lights in the city of Edineț were initiated. The purpose of signaling these intersections is



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to enhance the safety of traffic participants, facilitate communication with public transport through the "Green Line" system, and provide adequate signaling and information for people with hearing and visual impairments. The system involves the use of sensors to detect and classify vehicles and identify pedestrians.

The city administration is also exploring the possibility of transforming Casa Mare Street in Vasile Alecsandri Public Garden into an innovative route that will efficiently connect the bus stops on Independence Street and Bucovina Highway. This route will be accessible to cyclists, pedestrians, and individuals with mobility disabilities, representing a significant step in the development of sustainable urban mobility.

In the modernization effort, waiting stations for public transportation have already been installed, and all of these stations will be equipped with information systems to provide updated data on the transport schedule and available routes. The 17 smart stations will also offer additional amenities, such as shelter from the weather and security cameras for passenger safety.

These initiatives aim to enhance traffic safety and improve the flow of vehicles in the city of Edineț, representing a significant development for the community and urban mobility.





## Month of European Film 2023 in Chişinău

Best European films produced in 2023 made their way to Chişinău. Marking a cinematic milestone, the Republic of Moldova welcomed one of Europe's leading film events, the "Month of European Film", for the very first time.

This integration meant that Chişinău joined the ranks of 45 European cities where audiences could immerse themselves in films that have graced international festivals such as Cannes, Berlin, and Locarno.

This includes illustrious titles like the recipient of this year's Palme d'Or at Cannes. Serving as the paramount European Union information center in Moldova, Europe Café took the helm as a co-organiser, inviting the local populace to delve into the richness of European culture and cinematic artistry. We invite you to learn more about the stories behind the five movies screened within the "Month of European Film".



The French dramatic thriller *Anatomy of a Fall*, directed by Justine Trieu, won the Palme d'Or at the 2023 Cannes Film Festival. The film is based on a screenplay by Justine Trieu and Arthur Harari. Actress Sandra Hüller played the role of a writer accused of her husband's death, who is trying to prove her innocence.

The Spanish drama *20,000 Species of Bees* was directed by Estibaliz Urresola Solaguren. She also wrote the script for the film. The film won the Silver Bear at the Berlin Film Festival

in 2023. This is the Spanish director's debut feature film and tells the story of eight-year-old Lucia, who is trying to define her identity. The role of the main character in this film was played by Sofia Otero. At the age of nine, the girl managed to win the prize for best actress at the Berlinale.

The Georgian film *Blackbird Blackberry* was awarded the Best Film Award at the Sarajevo Film Festival in 2023. The full-length feature film, directed by Elene Naveriani, introduces viewers to the story of



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48-year-old Etero from a remote Georgian village. A woman tries to find her way to happiness despite the prejudices of society.

Lithuanian director Maria Kavtaradze's romantic drama *Slow* won the Directing Award at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival. The script for the film was written by Maria Kavtaradze herself. The love story of dancer Elena and sign language interpreter Dovydas unfolds on the screen in front of the audience. Their couple's relationship debunks stereotypes and society's conventional ideas about what should happen between lovers.

Romanian director Radu Jude's film "Nu aștepta prea mult de la sfârșitul lumii" received the Special Jury Prize at the 2023 Locarno Film Festival.

The script for the joint Romanian-Croatian-French-Luxembourg film was written by Radu Jude himself. The main role in this black comedy was played by Ilinca Manolache. Her character is an employee of a multinational company who has to find heroes for a short promotional video about workplace safety in Bucharest.

The Month of European Film in Chișinău was organised at the initiative of the National Film Center of the Republic of Moldova in partnership with the "Strategic Communication and Support to Mass Media in the Republic of Moldova" project and Europe Café, financed by the European Union.



# Art Binds: an unforgettable experience dedicated to the third anniversary of Europe Café

Celebrating its three-year anniversary, Europe Café, in collaboration with Cartego Bookstore & Art Gallery, honoured local culture, emphasising the power of art in drawing Moldova nearer to Europe. Visitors to the main EU Information Centre were introduced to art in a distinctive manner through an exhibition that spotlighted artists from Moldova, each championing authenticity, diversity, and innovation.

The “Art Binds” exhibition brought to the fore 30 works from 14 local artists.

Guests of Europe Café encountered a blend of traditional and digital art pieces, each inviting them to dive deeper into the tales they told. The collection prominently featured artists from both sides of the Dniester River. These artists, with their acclaimed works, have not just made their mark in Moldova but have also ventured beyond its borders, exhibiting internationally. Their collective showcase is a testament to Moldova's rich tapestry of artistic diversity, transcending both literal and figurative boundaries.



Adding a touch of modernity, certain paintings were embedded with augmented reality capabilities. Visitors, using the ArtVive app – available for free download – could animate these artworks by simply scanning them with their smartphone cameras. Find out more information about the exhibition and future activities on [eu4moldova.eu/europe-cafe](http://eu4moldova.eu/europe-cafe).

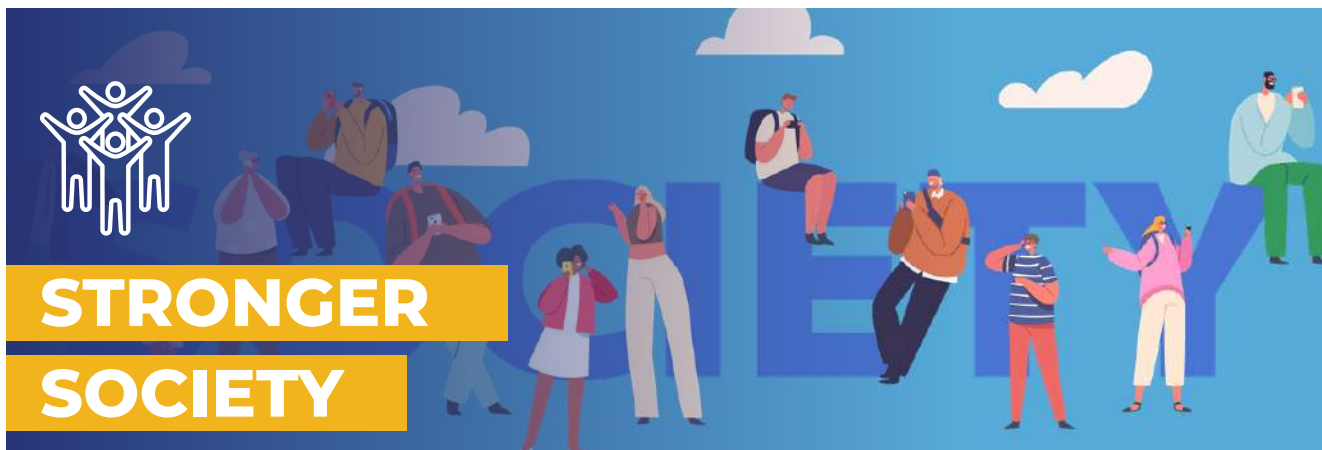
At Europe Café, our conviction is firm: art has the profound ability to connect individuals. We extend an open invitation for all to experience these unique artistic presentations at our information center.



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## Marking the international day to counter hate speech with Equality body representatives

The International Day for Countering Hate Speech was marked in Albania with a regional seminar, gathering representatives from equality bodies from the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe. This event aimed to address ways of dealing with individual redress of cases of discrimination,

hate speech and hate crimes, and facilitating access to justice for victims. It is organised as part of the co-operation the Council of Europe has established with the European Union, notably the [Horizontal Facility](#) and [Partnership for Good Governance](#) programs.



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The event was attended by the stakeholders from the Republic of Moldova, namely the Equality Council, the Ombudsperson's Office, who shared their experience on the topics addressed and exchanged the good practices, identifying at the same time common challenges and possibilities for future cooperation with counterparts from Eastern Partnership countries and Western Balkans on combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes.

The equality bodies have diverse mandates and are in the forefront to address individual cases of discrimination and hate speech in the local context, however, share similar challenges in addressing such phenomena in the society, and when offering redress. During the discussions, the seminar participants shared the common commitment to improve the countering of hate speech and exchanging among each other their good practices, while also identifying joint challenges in assisting victims of hate speech.

The [International Day for Countering Hate Speech](#) is marked every 18 June to raise awareness of the risks posed by hate speech to human rights, democracy and

the rule of law and take collective action to implement the principles of the Council of Europe Recommendation on Combating Hate Speech.

The [Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers Recommendation on Combating Hate Speech](#) is more relevant than ever, and its set of legal and non-legal measures calls for immediate action by national authorities, equality bodies, media, civil society, internet intermediaries, academia and other key stakeholders. Through a comprehensive and right-based approach, we can counter hate speech and promote a culture of human rights across Europe.

*This event was organised within the framework of European Union/Council of Europe Partnership for Good Governance III 2023-2026 project "PGG III – Promoting equality and non-discrimination: towards more resilient and inclusive societies" and the European Union/Council of Europe Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye III 2023-2026 action "Promoting equality and combating racism and intolerance in the Western Balkans".*

# The impact of hatred on the victims' life was addressed at the Living Library during storytelling sessions

In Chişinău a thematic event on raising awareness and combating discrimination was carried out in the context of Council of Europe week in the Republic of Moldova in the format of Living Library - the storytelling sessions that reflected cases and situations of discrimination and hatred against three vulnerable groups. Experiences and real stories were shared and presented by the following "Living Books":

» **Maria Scorodinschi** – a victim of domestic violence, who shared her life story about surviving hatred and violence since childhood. Maria has become a benchmark of the fight against domestic violence and has been included in the BBC's list of the 100 most inspirational women in the world.

» **Albina Ciuprin & Anhelina Culic** – shared their story regarding the prejudice against LGBTI people, based on their own experiences of discrimination and hatred on the criteria of sexual orientation.

» **Natalia Radiţa** – a Roma women who faced discrimination in relation to employment rights, but also confronted hate speech and intolerance as a candidate in local elections, on the motive of her ethnicity.

Following the storytelling sessions, the participants at the event - representatives of state authorities and civil society organisations in the anti-discrimination field, as well as of the international community in

the Republic of Moldova, had an exchange of impressions and views on the stories heard, focusing on the challenges that are to be addressed for preventing and combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes, possible solutions for improving relating responses mechanisms in the Republic of Moldova.

In conclusion of the Living Library, the importance of continuing and increasing cooperation of all relevant actors was highlighted, for the ultimate goal of a better protection of victims of discrimination, especially those from vulnerable groups in the Republic of Moldova.

*This event was organised in July 2023, in the framework of the of the project "Combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Republic of Moldova", part of the joint European Union and Council of Europe programme [Partnership for Good Governance](#), "co-funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe, and implemented by the Council of Europe.*





# Collaborative efforts to better tackle racism in the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership regions with the support of the EU and Council of Europe

A two-day seminar took place in Vlorë, Albania, to address the critical issue of combating racism and racial discrimination in the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership regions. The event aimed for representatives of both regions, in particular Beneficiaries on their path to EU membership, to exchange on best practices and harmonise their approach in combating discrimination, hatred and racism.

The event was attended by representatives from the Republic of Moldova, namely from the Equality Council, the People's Advocate and the Agency for Interethnic Relations, who shared their experience on the topics addressed and exchanged on good practices, identifying at the same time common challenges and possibilities for future cooperation with counterparts from Eastern Partnership countries and the Western Balkans, on combating racism and racial discrimination.



The seminar brought together more than 50 representatives from Governments and equality bodies. They discussed in particular their needs in view of the adaptation of local legislations and policies to align with European standards including the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan as well as relevant recommendations from the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance and other relevant standards.

Speakers from the European Union and Council of Europe presented tools and standards available in this area as well as concrete examples of initiatives to support beneficiaries including building institutional capacities, conducting legislative gap analyses, and providing support in drafting laws aligned with European standards.

They also stressed the importance of close co-operation among Beneficiaries, to promote equality, facilitate access to justice, education, and quality services for victims of hate speech and hate crime, with the ultimate goal of building a resilient society.

In this respect participants also agreed on the crucial role and impact of the civil society organisations in tackling discrimination, racism and hatred, as emphasized notably in the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan.

*This event was organised within the framework of European Union/Council of Europe Joint programmes [Partnership for Good Governance](#) and [Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye](#).*



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## Council of Europe week was marked in the Republic of Moldova

As a part of series activities marking the 28th anniversary of the country's accession to the Council of Europe and cooperation in the field of democracy, human rights and rule of law, the joint European Union and Council of Europe project “Combating discrimination,

*hate speech and hate crimes in the Republic of Moldova”* has organised, jointly with the General Police Inspectorate, a flash-mob aimed at raising awareness on fundamental rights and freedoms.



The cavalry squad of the National Inspectorate for Public Security participated in this activity, raising awareness about the need for equality and the importance of countering hatred, and promoting the message “Block the hatred. Share the love” among the general public.

The main aim of the project is to contribute to better protection of rights of vulnerable groups and minorities, as well as to build the capacity of state authorities, legal and law enforcement professionals, civil society, etc., to adapt domestic frameworks in line with European and international standards,

and to apply those standards to combat discrimination, hate speech and hate crime in the Republic of Moldova.

Cooperation with the General Police Inspectorate has a positive impact on the daily work of police officers but also on society as a whole. Capacity building activities and training for police officers contribute to reinforcing their skills in communicating with and guiding citizens when seeking remedies against discrimination, as well as in cases involving vulnerable groups that require handling tensions or violence.

Improvements in the field of promoting

equality and non-discrimination require awareness raising and cooperation of all relevant actors, from state authorities and institutions, law enforcement to civil society organisations and all citizens – this event, together with other activities organised within Council of Europe week, made one additional step forward in that direction.

*This action was organised in Chişinău on 14 July 2023, in the framework of the project that is part of the joint European Union and Council of Europe programme "[Partnership for Good Governance](#)"(PGG), an initiative for strengthening good governance in the Eastern Partnership region.*





# Civil society organisations from the Eastern Partnership countries engaged in anti-corruption dialogue at Moldova's Regional Conference

On the 4th and 5th of October, more than 60 representatives from civil society organisations (CSOs) based in Eastern Partnership countries convened in Bălți,

Moldova, to take part in a regional conference focusing on "The Role of Civil Society in Promoting Good Governance, Transparency, and Anti-Corruption Efforts".



During the two-day event, representatives of public authorities and civil society organisations discussed regional developments, progress, and the challenges faced in promoting democratic values. They delved deeply into how corruption impacts a state's resilience, the importance of transparency in decision-making, and the cooperation between civil society and authorities.

Within a dedicated panel for youth organisations, representatives from Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine engaged in a discussion centred on the important role of young people in preventing corruption. Throughout their dialogue, these delegates underscored several key conclusions and recommendations.

First and foremost, it became clear that corruption stands as a pressing concern among young people in all three countries – Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. Additionally, a unanimous consensus emerged regarding the significance of integrity in fostering robust and prosperous societies. Furthermore, the participants highlighted the critical role of transparency within the organisational processes and decision-making mechanisms of youth organisations. They stressed that transparency serves as an essential foundation for ensuring the effective operation of these vital institutions, fostering trust among stakeholders, and advancing their shared objectives.



First and foremost, it became clear that corruption stands as a pressing concern among young people in all three countries – Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. Additionally, a unanimous consensus emerged regarding the significance of integrity in fostering robust and prosperous societies. Furthermore, the participants highlighted the critical role of transparency within the organisational processes and decision-making mechanisms of youth organisations. They stressed that transparency serves as an essential foundation for ensuring the effective operation of these vital institutions, fostering trust among stakeholders, and advancing their shared objectives.

The participation of youth organisations was possible with the support of the EU4Youth project focused on Youth Engagement and Empowerment, which was launched in July 2023.

The conference was organised with the support of the projects ‘Strengthening Civil Society in the Eastern Partnership’ and ‘Strengthening the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Mechanisms in the Republic of Moldova’, co-funded by the European Union and Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and implemented by GIZ.

# Role of civil society organisations in the EU accession process – becoming more noticeable

On 26 October 2023, the EU-funded project “Support for structured policy dialogue, coordination of the implementation of the Association Agreement (AA) and enhancement of the legal approximation process for the Republic of Moldova”, at the initiative and in close cooperation with the State Chancellery, organised a roundtable

for civil society organisations with the topic: “EU accession negotiations and the role of civil society organisations”. The event was closely supported also by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration and EU Delegation in Moldova. It mobilised over 60 representatives of civil society organisations and state institutions, who took active part in the roundtable.



One of the 9 recommendations of the European Commission in its Avis on granting Moldova the candidate status refers to enhancing the involvement of civil society in decision-making processes at all levels.

The first part the roundtable sought to increase collective knowledge and provided insights on key aspects of the EU accession process of Moldova and the next steps in membership negotiations, with a focus

on the lessons learned from Slovenia, Montenegro and Serbia.

In the second part, the representatives of the State Chancellery made a presentation on the permanent consultative platforms of central public authorities, focusing on the challenges for meaningful CSO engagement in the public consultations and in the decision-making process.

The third part of the roundtable explored



the role of civil society in the EU accession process by focusing on the cases of Serbia and Montenegro, which have different mechanisms for CSOs involvement in the overall EU accession process, and in the activity of the 35 working groups responsible for negotiating the EU accession chapters, in particular.

The event envisions to become a catalyst for the discussions on boosting civic engagement in the EU integration of Moldova and joining efforts for increasing the capacity of a small public administration to deal with the complex tasks associated with the accession process, through enhanced transparency, increased visibility

and a feeling of ownership by civil society.

The exchange of views and experiences will help to identify best practices and directions for action to accelerate the more active participation of civil society organisations in the process of accession of the Republic of Moldova to the European Union.

The EU-funded project “Support for structured policy dialogue, coordination of the implementation of the Association Agreement (AA) and enhancement of the legal approximation process for the Republic of Moldova” aims at providing support to the authorities of the Republic of Moldova for advancing in the EU accession process.



# Joint efforts in combating hate speech, sexism and other forms of gender-based violence in elections in the Republic of Moldova

Over 60 people, representing electoral management bodies, local authorities, non-governmental organisations, anti-discrimination stakeholders, mass-media and potential voters gathered at a roundtable aimed at building a common platform for discussions on the importance of preventing and combating hate speech, sexism and other forms of gender-based violence ahead of electoral campaign for the 5 November 2023 General Local Elections.

At the roundtable, the latest instruments and methodologies developed by the Council of Europe were presented, such as: a Guide on preventing and combatting sexism at the local level in the Republic of Moldova, Methodology on monitoring sexist speech and behaviour in the traditional and new

(online) media in the Republic of Moldova, especially during electoral periods, a [Guide](#) for assessing and processing hate speech in media, the revised Code of Conduct for electoral competitors and media outlets, as well as awareness raising materials and videos on the impact of hatred, discrimination, and sexism during the electoral campaign.

The event participants agreed upon the importance of continuing cooperation and joining efforts in order to eradicate discrimination, hate speech, sexism and ensuring equal rights for all, as well as the same visibility, empowerment, responsibility and participation in the election process and beyond – in all spheres of private and public life.



*This event was organised by the Council of Europe and UN Women Moldova, in partnership with the Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova and financed by the European Union, Council of Europe and Sweden. The roundtable is part of a joint initiative of the EU/CoE project "[Combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Republic of Moldova](#)" (part of the joint European Union and Council of Europe programme [Partnership for Good Governance](#)), CoE project "[Improving electoral practices in the Republic of Moldova, Phase III](#)", and CoE Congress project "[Reinforcing the culture of dialogue and ethical open local governance in the Republic of Moldova](#)".*

# The guide “Combating hate speech in the media in the Republic of Moldova” available now in English, Romanian and Russian

An increasing number of cases of hate speech and discrimination in the public space and the media in the Republic of Moldova has been registered according to the monitoring reports of the non-governmental organisation PROMO-LEX Association.

The guide “Combating hate speech in the media in the Republic of Moldova” aims to assist the Audiovisual Council and the relevant authorities in the country, to identify cases of hate speech in the media environment and

combat effectively unacceptable forms of expression in the public domain, especially in audiovisual media services. This toolkit served as basis for the adoption of the methodology for monitoring hate speech by the Audiovisual Council of the Republic of Moldova, approved on 26 May 2023.

Read now the guide “Combating hate speech in the media in the Republic of Moldova” in [English](#), [Romanian](#) and [Russian](#).



*This publication was produced as part of the European Union and Council of Europe joint programme “Partnership for Good Governance”, co-funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe, and implemented by the Council of Europe.*



# Changing the negative attitudes against LGBTI persons in the Republic of Moldova through cultural and artistic events

The 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the Coming Out Day Fest, a thematic event to bring more awareness for improving the human rights situation of LGBTI persons in the Republic of Moldova was carried out, aiming to combat homophobia, transphobia and biphobia through artistic and cultural events.

The fest brought together LGBTI persons, including queer artists, and general public from the Republic of Moldova, for showing the life, values, and interests of LGBTI people, and for highlighting that hatred, prejudices and stereotypes have a negative impact on the right to non-discrimination of LGBTI persons, which is essential for safeguarding the human dignity of those targeted by hate speech and hate crimes.

The festival included a photo exhibition, the LGBT+ Film Festival, a public lesson on the history of queer representation on the Eastern Europe cinematography, exhibition of paintings, a book launch, all these activities having at the core the “Coming Out” subject. Along with this, a discussion between parents and LGBTI children took place, being facilitated by a specialised psychologist, focused on passing through Coming Out, and ways of more efficient mutual support among parents and children going through this process.



For the Council of Europe, the protection of the human rights of LGBTI persons in its member countries has always been one of the key priorities in the anti-discrimination domain. Cooperation activities of the Council of Europe stem from the recommendations of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), including the most recent Recommendation to stop intolerance and discrimination against

LGBTI persons, but also rely on the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights, interpreting the European Convention on Human Rights and on the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity.

As an important outcome of this activity, the Coming Out Day Fest made one step

forward in opening a common space for discussions, exchanges, and dialogue for the general public with LGBTI persons, by encouraging communication through the means of art and culture, for further prevention and combating discrimination in the Moldavian society. In this sense, the practical discussions, and activities to raise awareness in the framework of the festival, are significant for contributing to a better protection of the LGBTI community in the Republic of Moldova against discrimination and hatred.

*This event was organised during 06-11 October 2023, in cooperation with Genderdoc-M, with the support of the EU/CoE project "[Combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Republic of Moldova](#)" (part of the joint European Union and Council of Europe programme [Partnership for Good Governance](#)), and the [Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Unit](#).*



## Anti-corruption good practices lab: civil society organisations from the Central Region visit organisations in the Northern Region

15 civil society organisations (CSOs) working to prevent corruption at local level in the centre of the country continued their exchange of best practices on corruption prevention. This time they visited their colleagues in the Northern Region.

The visit was organised in the framework of the project "Strengthening the Rule of Law and Anti-corruption Mechanisms in the Republic of Moldova", co-financed by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ).



The project partner in the Central Development Region is the CONTACT Centre, which implements the project "Civil society against corruption".

The host organisations from the northern region were the public association "Agro-Cons" from the town of Drochia, the "Association of Business Women from Rural Sector" from the town of Rîșcani, and the public association "Millennium III" from the village of Chișcăreni, Sîngerei district.

During these meetings, the organisations shared their efforts to prevent corruption in

the northern region, the practices that have delivered results, but also the difficulties they have faced.

In the summer of 2023, the CONTACT Centre organised [another study visit for organisations from the Central Region which exchanged practices with organisations from the Southern Region](#).

It is worth mentioning that in 2022, 15 non-governmental organisations in the Central Region have initiated projects to prevent corruption at the local level. More details on these local projects can be found [here](#).



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# New information resources for civil society representatives and human rights defenders made available with EU support

What was the environment like for civil society organisations (CSOs) and Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in Moldova? Or what kind of attacks did they face last year? – The answers to these questions can be found in the publication [“Radiography of Attacks on Civil Society Organisations and Human Rights Defenders in the Republic of Moldova”](#), produced by the [Legal Resources Centre from Moldova \(LRCM\)](#). The aim of the radiography is to document the information and events that deteriorate the environment for CSOs and HRDs.

The efforts of monitoring and documenting the attacks were necessary in the context of many independent CSOs becoming the target of discrediting and denigrating actions, especially after they have supported reform processes. In this publication, the

LRCM team has presented, in chronological order, the attacks against nongovernmental organisations, media organisations and HRDs.

By attacks, the authors of the radiography refer to statements and actions of politicians, the publication of articles in certain media outlets of questionable reputation or public interventions, including online, which “portray the non-profit sector as organisations promoting the interests of foreign countries, serving the interests of political parties or wasting millions on useless reforms”. Attacks on the HRDs include mockery of their work, often expressed on social media, as well as image defamation or attempts to intimidate them into abandoning their civic stance and determination to promote fundamental human rights.



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The LRCM team has been conducting such analyses of attacks on CSOs and HRDs since 2016, and the current edition has been developed within the project "[Shields for Human Rights Defenders – Supporting Human Rights Defenders in the Republic of Moldova](#)", implemented by the LRCM in partnership with EcoContact Association and the International Commission of Jurists – European Institutions, with the financial support of the European Union.

Another useful information resource for CSOs and HRDs, created within the same project, is the [infographic on the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders](#).

It explains how a complaint can be submitted to the Special Rapporteur, what a complaint to the Special Rapporteur should include, how the complaint assessment process takes place and what the Special Rapporteur can do. Both resources, developed and made available online, are intended to help CSOs and citizens in general to understand the nature of the phenomenon of denigration of the civically and socially active people, as well as to learn more about the mechanisms for reporting human rights violations available at the level of UN structures.



# Fifteen civil society organisations have strengthened their knowledge in monitoring and analysing budget expenses at both local and central levels

From July to September 2023, 15 civil society organisations, beneficiaries of the "Civil Society for European Integration" project, participated in five thematic training sessions related to the monitoring and analysis of budget expenses. The training sessions aimed at enhancing the organisations' capacities to support and promote the alignment of budgetary priorities with the Europeanisation agenda at the national and local levels, as well as at increasing their involvement in the decision-making.

The training addressed the general concepts of civic participation in the budgetary process at both the local and central levels;

fundamental tools for budget monitoring; the role of advocacy; aligning the budgetary process with the Europeanisation agenda; and defining, deciphering and monitoring budget expenses in the social, economic and justice sectors.

The training focused on both theoretical and practical aspects. Participants had the opportunity to practice how to use data analysis tools for budgetary expenditures alongside subject-matter experts, and to analyse case studies from both the central and local levels. All of this was designed to contribute to a better understanding of the presented topics.





In their feedback and evaluation of the training sessions, participants highly appreciated the quality of the training (with an average rating of 4.6 out of 5). This indicates that the knowledge and skills acquired will be valuable and relevant for the current and future work of their organisations.

Representatives of the 15 civil society organisations, local partners of the project, have gained the necessary expertise to become more actively involved in the budgetary process and collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including local and central authorities, to formulate and advocate for the needs of the community and its citizens.

In the coming months, experts will mentor these organisations and will help them develop 30 analytical reports addressing the planning and execution of budget expenses in various areas, such as local and regional infrastructure projects and social services. They will provide concrete recommendations, promoting a transparent and efficient budgetary process, in line with the association agenda priorities.

*These training sessions were conducted as part of the "Civil Society for European Integration" project, funded by the European Union and co-financed by Friedrich Ebert Foundation. The project is implemented by Expert-Grup Independent Think Tank, as the main partner, in partnership with the Institute for European Policy and Reform, Institutum Virtutes Civilis NGO (IVC), and Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Moldova.*



## Twelfth meeting of the Civil Society Platform European Union - Republic of Moldova took place in September

On September 1, 2023, the twelfth meeting of the Civil Society Platform European Union - Republic of Moldova was held in Chişinău. During the Platform's meeting was discussed and evaluated the progress Moldova made in fulfilling the 9 recommendations of the European Commission for opening the accession negotiations to the EU.

The importance of joint efforts of all stakeholders was reiterated in order to fulfil the commitments undertaken in the field of justice and the fight against corruption, as well as to advance the implementation of all chapters of the Association Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova.



As a result of the debates, the members of the Civil Society Platform European Union - Republic of Moldova adopted a joint statement welcoming the progress of reforms by the authorities, and cooperation with EU institutions, but at the same time, reiterated the call on the Moldovan Government to invite civil society representatives to be part of the 35 working groups responsible for negotiating EU accession chapters and to intensify

cooperation with civil society in advancing the country on the European path. The declaration also includes recommendations to speed up the implementation process of the Association Agreement, one of the key recommendations being to accelerate the harmonisation of legislation with the EU acquis. The joint statement also calls on the Moldovan authorities to ensure a fair, equitable, and inclusive electoral process for the forthcoming local elections scheduled



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for November 2023 and encourages the Republic of Moldova to pursue with determination its reform agenda aimed at strengthening democracy and the rule of law.

The meetings of the Civil Society Platform European Union - Republic of Moldova represent an open dialogue and constructive interaction between representatives of civil society, authorities and European officials. The topics discussed during the twelfth meeting focused on progress and challenges in reforming the justice sector, implementing commitments on the human rights dimension, strengthening gender equality and combating violence against women, as well as assessing the progress made by the

Republic of Moldova in implementing the Association Agreement and the European Commission's recommendations on Moldova's accession to the European Union.

European officials expressed the European Union's continued strong support for Moldova's efforts to meet all the European Commission's recommendations. The exchange of views and experiences will help to identify best practices and directions for action to accelerate the opening of negotiations on Moldova's accession to the European Union.

More details about the event and the full statement presented at the event is available on: [euromonitor.md](https://euromonitor.md).





# The Mobile Team Social Service for persons with severe disabilities created in Strășeni with the EU support

At least 25 persons with severe and pronounced degrees of disability from Strășeni District benefit from monthly care and are consulted at home by the specialists of the Mobile Team social service founded with the support of the European Union and the Soros Foundation Moldova.

The Mobile Team includes a psychologist, a kinesiologist, and a social assistant who visit the beneficiaries regularly according to individual plans. Persons with disabilities are helped to improve their degree of personal autonomy and therefore to enhance their quality of life.



While attending the event, Alexei Buzu, Minister of Labor and Social Protection, emphasized the importance of the recently created service, mentioning that, due to it, voices of persons with disabilities are better heard.

*"The central authorities are civil society organisations' reliable partners in identifying the interventions necessary for developing better social services in the country. The Mobile Team service is an example in this context. All of us would like to have better and more accessible social services focused on their beneficiaries' needs."*

*"We remain eager to subsequently respond to any idea which will contribute to developing social services, improving living conditions, and vulnerable people's inclusion in Strășeni District,"*

***mentioned Alexei Buzu at the service launching event.***

The service was developed by the "Alianța pentru Dolna" Public Association and Strășeni General Department of Social Assistance which will keep financing and managing it.



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*“Strășeni District Council supported founding this service and identified the sources for its financing, as it was quite a necessary service for the district. We have 550 persons with severe and accentuated degrees of disability, and the Mobile Team is immensely useful, especially for the beneficiaries who reside in the localities far from the district centre,”*

**said Viorel Jordan, President of Strășeni District.**

The project “Civil Society Organisations Acting for Better Social Services” within which 40 social services are being developed in different localities of the Republic of Moldova lasts for 42 months, has a total budget of 3.375.000 Euros, and is financed by the European Union, co-financed and implemented by the Soros Foundation Moldova in partnership with Keystone Moldova and Institutum Virtutes Civilis PA.



# An occupational therapy service for children with special needs launched in Chişinău

An occupational therapy service and a multifunctional room for this service were launched at the Tony Hawks Center in Chişinău with the support of the European Union and the Soros Foundation Moldova. Occupational therapy includes a set of individualised activities and exercises which imply using assistive devices to help children with special needs to develop, to learn, to play, and to take part in daily activities, thus improving their chances to live an independent life.

An occupational therapy specialist uses the knowledge and techniques from several spheres, such as medicine, psychology, mental health, social assistance, ergonomics, and universal design, assesses children's cognitive and communication skills, sensory functions, their ability to organise and to regulate their behaviour, and their skills of adapting to various environments and situations. Depending on the assessment results, the therapy goals are set and an individualized intervention plan which consists of exercises, games, and other specific activities is drafted.



The Tony Hawks Centre specialists who will offer occupational therapy services were trained and guided by the international experts due to the project “Civil Society Organisations Acting for Better Social

Services” financed by the European Union, co-financed and implemented by the Soros Foundation Moldova in partnership with Keystone Moldova PI and Institutum Virtutes Civilis PA.



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*“The project for creating this service resulted from the need to expand the range of services intended for children with special needs and to improve their quality of life by facilitating their games and studies. We did not limit ourselves to focusing on medical recovery, but also came up with practical ideas for providing assistance in adapting to the environment and physical conditions, facilitating their mobility and travel, as well as physical and informational accessibility by using specific accommodations and equipment,”*

**paediatrician Diana Covalciuc, Director of the Tony Hawks Centre, said at the inauguration of the service.**

Occupational therapy services will be provided in a multifunctional room reconstructed and equipped with the support of several donors, including the Embassies of the United States and Great Britain in Chişinău, the International Women’s Club, the European Union, and the Soros Foundation Moldova.

The Occupational Therapy Service at the Tony Hawks Centre is one of the 40 social services created within the project “Civil Society Organisations Acting for Better Social Services” financed by the European Union, co-financed and implemented by the Soros Foundation Moldova in partnership with Keystone Moldova PI and Institutum Virtutes Civilis PA.



# Upgraded training programme for new employees of the Regional integrated service for victims of sexual violence in Ungheni

Between 13-20 October 2023, the upgraded training programme for new employees of the Regional Integrated Service for Victims of Sexual Violence in Ungheni was carried out.

For five days, the multidisciplinary team from Ungheni, consisting of lawyers, psychologists, and social workers, was trained on how to respond more effectively to cases of sexual violence, based on the needs of the victims.



During the training, the specialists had the opportunity to strengthen their knowledge on general notions and concepts related to the mechanism of gender-based violence, toxic masculinity, perceptions and stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men, different forms and causes of sexual violence, and the impact of this phenomenon on the community.

Together with the trainers, the specialists had the opportunity to clarify the organisational and functional procedures of the Regional Integrated Service, the duties of the members of the intervention team in cases of sexual violence, and the efficient cooperation with specialists from the social, medical, and legal sector.

The Regional Integrated Service for Victims of Sexual Violence was created with the financial support of the European Union and provides adult victims of sexual violence in the districts of Ungheni, Nisporeni, Călărași, Fălești, Telenești and Sîngerei with medical services, legal services, psychological counselling, legal counselling, and safe hearings.

The piloting of the Regional Integrated Service for Victims of Sexual Violence is carried out by the International Centre "La Strada Moldova", with the support of UN Women Moldova.



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# INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNMENT

## The Plenary meeting of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice took place in Strasbourg

The Plenary meeting of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) took place in Strasbourg on 15–16 June. The event provided the opportunity to the Project team and the Moldovan delegation to participate in person and be closer familiarised with the activities of the CEPEJ Secretariat and its Working

groups on such topics as evaluation of the efficiency and quality of judicial systems, judicial time management, Cyberjustice, backlog reduction and artificial intelligence with the participation of representatives of the members and observer states to the CEPEJ.



Republic of Moldova has been represented by the Secretary of State of the Ministry of Justice, the Director of the Agency for Court Administration and a member of the Superior Council of Magistracy, which allowed the project team to have additional

discussions on the ongoing implementation of the activities. The representatives of the Moldovan delegation also presented to the audience the current state of affairs in justice reform of the country.



# Moldovan governmental delegation learned about coordination mechanisms of the European integration process in North Macedonia and Serbia

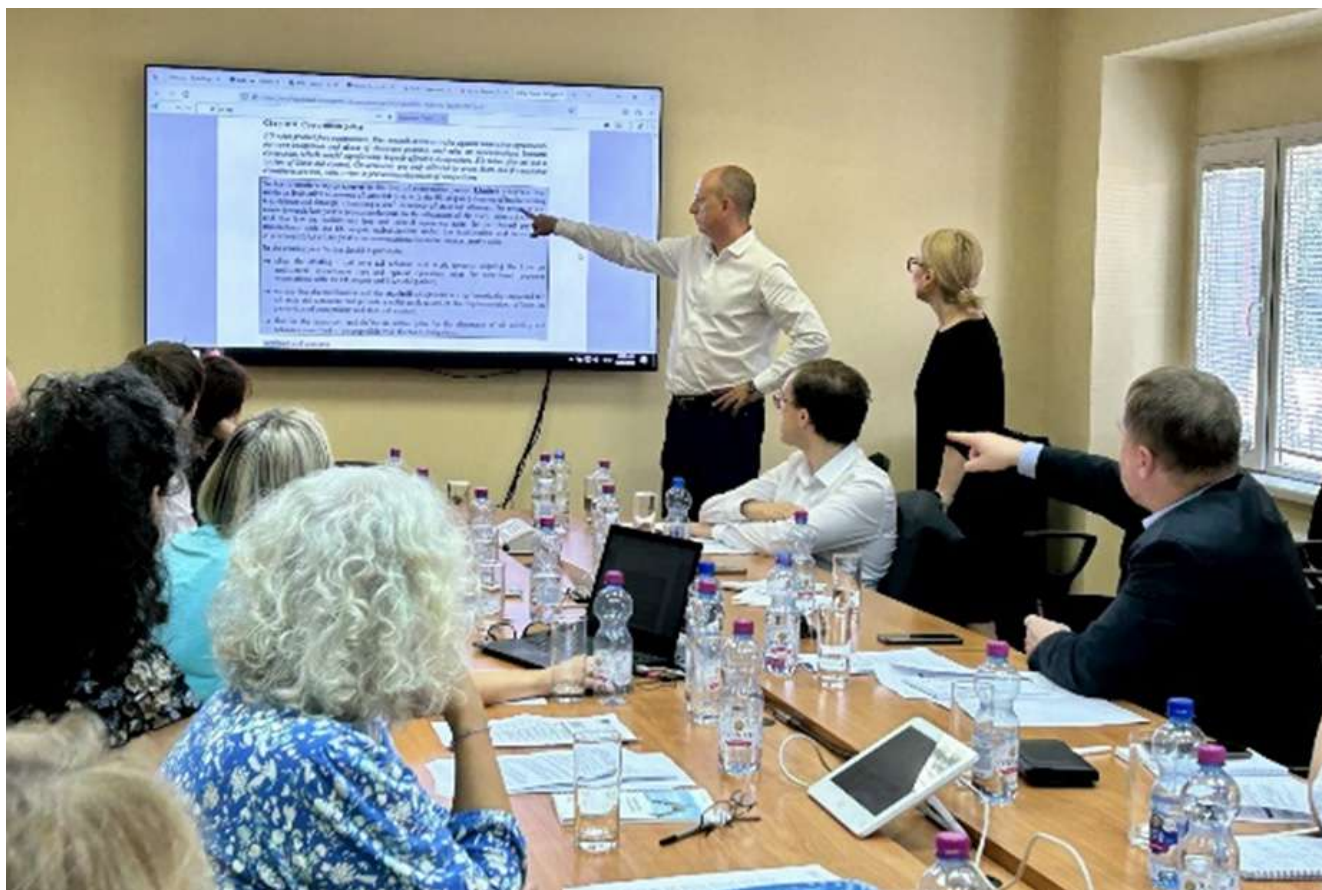
During 26-29 September 2023, the EU funded project: “Support for structured policy dialogue, coordination of the implementation of the Association Agreement and enhancement of the legal approximation process”, in close partnership

with the Centre for Legal Approximation from the State Chancellery, organised a study tour to the North Macedonia (Skopje) and Serbia (Belgrade) for Moldovan government representatives on EU integration process.



Fifteen representatives from State Chancellery, Centre for Legal Approximation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration and Ministry of Justice got acquainted in detail with the coordination mechanisms of the European integration process in North Macedonia and Serbia, their legal and institutional framework (main coordination institutions and their tasks, relations with other public authorities) and the process of accession negotiations, the experiences of the screening process as well as the negotiation structure and its competences.

Both selected countries are one step forward of Moldova. Serbia is in the middle of the negotiating process, while North Macedonia just started negotiations. Therefore, the opportunity to get first-hand information not only on how these two comparative countries are organised, but also about details on the next steps in accession process the Republic of Moldova will experience in the upcoming months, is very timely and will be very useful for the work of the public administration at the core of this processes.



The experience shared by both countries indicated that the process of European integration is a complex and extensive process that requires strong coordination in order to ensure consistency and efficiency in the implementation of obligations and requirements arising from the EU agenda. It specifically outlined the experience of all current and previous candidate countries

during their EU accession process, where EU coordination started within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, due to the huge amount of work related with internal reforms, tasks were later shifted to other special institution (Secretariat/Office for EU Affairs or Ministry for European Integration) dedicated exclusively to coordination of EU accession process, including negotiations.





EU Affairs or Ministry for European Integration) dedicated exclusively to coordination of EU accession process, including negotiations.

Other topics in this context included planning documents used for the transposition of the EU acquis, coordination of EU funds and development assistance, organisation of a centralized translation unit for the national legislation and other documents pertinent

to EU accession process into English, role of the mission to the EU in the accession process.

Discussions were held also regarding the role of the Parliament and the key need deriving from EU accession process to establish a specific standing committee for EU integration separated from the one responsible for foreign policy.



During the study tour, a special focus was put on the key role of civil society and other stakeholders (business community) in the EU accession process.

The delegation also met with representatives of the Transport Community, an international organisation active in mobility and transport with its seat in Belgrade, where Moldova has observer status, to discuss the potential support for aligning the transport system

with the EU transport acquis and preparing the way for full EU membership in the future.

The EU-funded project “Support for structured policy dialogue, coordination of the implementation of the Association Agreement (AA) and enhancement of the legal approximation process for the Republic of Moldova” aims at providing support to the authorities of the Republic of Moldova for advancing in the EU accession process.



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# Analytical report on translation needs and capacities of the Republic of Moldova in the EU Integration process – presented to relevant stakeholders

On 13 September 2023, the EU-funded project “Support for structured policy dialogue, coordination of the implementation of the Association Agreement (AA) and enhancement of the legal approximation process for the Republic of Moldova”, at the initiative and in close cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European

Integration, organised a roundtable on the topic: “Translation as a part of the legal approximation process”. The event was closely supported also by the State Chancellery and EU Delegation in Moldova. It mobilised over 50 representatives of state institutions and translation associations, who took active part in the roundtable.



As a result of Moldova’s candidate status to the EU membership, the Government established 35 working groups responsible for coordinating the EU accession chapters, started the preparation of the National Plan for Accession (NPA) and continues its efforts for approximation of the national legislation with EU Acquis.

Efficient transposition requires the proper and consistent use of EU terminology.

Additionally, even though Romanian is an official language of the EU and therefore Moldova does not have to engage in the huge effort of organising translation of the EU acquis, there is a growing need to organise translation of national legislation and other documents relevant for the European integration process into English.

In this regard, the roundtable presented the main findings and recommendations from the “Analytical report on translation needs and capacities of the Republic of Moldova in the EU Integration process”, prepared by the Project, aiming at facilitating the discussion on the establishment of a proper translation system.

For this purpose, an overview of the major requirements for quality translation was presented, with main issues to be addressed such as: organisation of the translation process, terminology development, human resources, quality assurance and IT support.

The roundtable explored the systems established and lessons learned in the EU member states during accession period as well as in some candidate countries.

A specific session was dedicated to the analysis of the current capacities and

situation in the Republic of Moldova with regards to internal/Government capacities as well as the translation market and to provide recommendations for establishing a system, institutional capacities and coordination of the translation process. Two options (centralized and decentralized) for establishing the translation unit in Moldova were presented and a step-by-step plan for organising the translation process.

Lively discussions followed the presentations, focusing mainly on specific advantages, disadvantages, preconditions and risks. The exchange of views and experiences will help to identify best practices and directions for action to establish an organised translation process of national legislation and other documents pertinent to EU accession process into English.



The EU-funded project “Support for structured policy dialogue, coordination of the implementation of the Association Agreement (AA) and enhancement of the

legal approximation process for the Republic of Moldova” aims at providing support to the authorities of the Republic of Moldova for advancing in the EU accession process.



# PILOT Census 2023: population participation in the 2024 national census is crucial for the effectiveness of Moldova's social and development policies

The pilot census involved approximately 22,000 households in 11 localities in the Republic of Moldova, according to the data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). 95% of respondents say that both the questions and the census process were explained to them in a clear and accessible way. These and other findings from the pilot

census were presented on 27 October, by the NBS at an event organised as part of the project "Support to the National Bureau of Statistics in the conduct of the 2024 Population and Housing Census", funded by the European Union and co-funded by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).



The pilot census is a key step in the preparation of the Population and Housing Census planned for 2024. In this context, the National Bureau of Statistics reiterated that the information collected in these national exercises is confidential and will be used strictly for statistical purposes. Representatives of the authorities and development partners urged the population to be receptive and participate in the 2024 census, stressing the crucial importance of ensuring that the 2024 census data correspond to the population reality. This data is essential for the effectiveness of

Moldova's social and economic development policies.

The pilot Population and Housing Census took place from 28 August to 10 October 2023, with data collected by enumerators through face-to-face interviews using tablets, with the CAPI (computer-assisted personal interview) method applied.

Among the challenges identified in the pilot census are reluctance of citizens, especially in urban areas, to participate in the census; too many questions in the questionnaire; hesitation to provide personal data from the



National Identity Card (ID) and employment information; difficulties in correctly determining the residence status of the census respondents (permanent residents or tenants); and insufficient qualified staff involved in the data collection process.

Thus, to improve the census process in line with international standards, the experts put forward several recommendations, including informing the population widely to increase confidence and the need for the census; hiring qualified staff and training them; optimizing data collection software; reviewing the content of questionnaires and others.

The purpose of the trial census is to assess the tools to be used in the data collection process and to prepare for the National Population and Housing Census, planned for 2024. Thus, during the pilot census the enumerators evaluated the functionality of the software, estimated the time needed to

conduct an interview, and assessed the level of readiness of the population to participate in the census.

Overall, the average length of a questionnaire was 20-40 minutes. About 7 out of 10 people said that the duration of the survey was reasonable. 33% of those who took part in the survey said that some questions were annoying.

The Census of Population and Housing is conducted every 10 years and is the most important national statistical exercise that provides the complete picture of the country. The data collected from the census will provide essential and quality information for the development of national and local public policies, both economic and social, necessary for human development.

The pilot census was conducted from state budget sources, co-financed by the European Union and the UN Population Fund.



# The European Union and the Council of Europe launch a joint project supporting the justice reform in the Republic of Moldova

On 17 October 2023 the European Union and Council of Europe joint project “Support to the Justice Reform in the Republic of Moldova”, was launched at a dedicated conference. In the framework of continued assistance to the authorities of the Republic of Moldova, the project will provide technical assistance to achieve increased independence, professionalism, and transparency in the judiciary and support the implementation of the justice reform in the Republic of Moldova in compliance with European standards and the country’s commitments.

The project will run until November 2026 with a budget of 2,7 million Euros.

The project beneficiaries are the Ministry of Justice, the Superior Council of Magistracy, the Superior Council of Prosecutors, the National Institute of Justice, and the Constitutional Court.

At the launching conference, the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova and the Council of Europe, together with representatives of the national authorities, international development partners as well as local civil society organisations, joined in panel discussions on various aspects related to the independence of the judiciary and the applicable European standards in the context of the ongoing reforms.



# Support in improving the internal regulations of the Superior Council of Prosecutors regarding the selection of Inspectors and Head Inspector for the Inspectorate of Prosecutors

The Council of Europe in cooperation with the Superior Council of Prosecutors organised expert consultation with the participation of members of the Superior Council of Prosecutors and the Council of Europe consultant Razvan Horatiu RADU. The objective of the event was to discuss

findings and recommendations provided in the assessment report of Mr RADU on the draft Regulation developed by the Superior Council of Prosecutors regarding the procedure for organising and conducting the competition for the selection of inspectors within the Inspectorate of Prosecutors.



*"...It appears that for the recruitment procedure a series of clear criteria are established regarding the principles of organisation and the way it is carried out with the related stages. Thus, the draft regulation stipulates the registration conditions, the deadlines, the method of conducting the interview, the transparency guarantees granted, the evaluation method and criteria, etc.*

*The recording of the interview and its display on the website of the Superior Council of Prosecutors represents additional [mechanism of] transparency. This also provides a factual basis in case there are any objections or challenges..."*

**stated Mr Radu in the above-mentioned assessment report.**

During the event, the members of the Superior Council of Prosecutors stated that they would consider the recommendations provided in the assessment report in the process of finalising and adopting the Regulation.

The expert consultation was organised on 5 October 2023, in the framework of the EU-CoE Project "Support to the Justice Reform in the Republic of Moldova".



## Large-scale workshop on implementation of the new Customs Code, organised with EU assistance

On the Customs Officer's Day, marked annually on September 4, over 180 employees of the Customs Service, as well as management of the Ministry of Finance, took part in the workshop "Raising awareness on Implementation of the new Customs Code", organised with the support of the EU High Level Advisers' Mission.

The event focused on the new Customs Code of the Republic of Moldova, adopted in August 2021, the objective of which is to standardise and harmonise the national customs legislation with that of the European Union. In order to raise awareness, the workshop focused on the comparative aspects between the current customs legislation and the new framework, which will enter into force on January 1, 2024.



Those present also learned about the new Communication Strategy of the Customs Service, developed with the support of the EU High Level Advisers' Mission, the main purpose of which is the development and implementation of efficient internal and

external communication channels and the consolidation of the Customs Service as an entity oriented towards the provision of high-quality, professional, reliable and impartial public services.

**During the event, the EU High Level Adviser on customs and tax policy, Rosario De Blasio emphasized:**

*"Today, with only a few months until the entry into force of the new Code, efforts are to be channelled to inform citizens and the business environment in details about all the benefits and innovations of the new legislation in the customs field, which include: improving the quality of services provided to economic agents, eliminating fees for customs procedures and deferring the payment of customs duties, increasing the level of data protection, reducing costs and delays related to the declaration of goods and reducing the risks of fraud and integrity incidents, through online monitoring of customs operations."*

The EU High Level Advisers' Mission will also support a series of information events organised jointly with the Customs Service in order to raise awareness on the implementation of the new Customs Code for its major stakeholders – the respective event marking the beginning of this process.



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## The EU High Level Advisers' team has extended in the area of justice and prosecution, and public finance management

In September and October, the EU HLA Mission team has been joined by two new members - Gabriela Scutea as EU HLA on Justice and Prosecution, and Janis Jankovskis – as EU HLA on Public Finance Management.



**Gabriela Scutea** is the former Prosecutor General of Romania, having served in this position since February 2020 until February 2023. She has previously held top positions in the Romanian Ministry of Justice (State Secretary) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Minister Counsellor – High Representative of the Ministry of Justice in the Relations with EU), as well as high level managerial positions in the Prosecutor's Office attached to the High Court of Cassation and Justice. Ms Scutea will provide policy advice to the Ministry of Justice and the Prosecutor General's Office.

**Janis Jankovskis**, of Latvia, has over 20 years of professional experience in PFM analysis, policy advice and capacity building support, out of which 16 years as key expert on programmes to support Ministries of Finance and Government entities in budget planning and the preparation of medium-term budget programmes in countries like Albania, Azerbaijan, North



Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and the Republic of Moldova. In his home country, Janis has held the position of head of Rural Structural Programmes Agency, and Adviser to Minister of Finance. In his current assignment, Mr Jankovskis will provide policy advice to the Ministry of Finance, and namely assisting in the implementation of the 2023-2030 Public Finance Management Development Strategy, including the design, monitoring and evaluation of the Annual Action Plans for its timely implementation.

With the new EU HLAs, the current Mission reached the number of 12. Details about each of the currently serving EU High Level Advisers can be found at <https://www.eu-advisers.md/ro/category/mission-2023-2025/eu-high-level-advisers/>.

The current mission started in January 2023 and will last until January 2025.



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## Awareness raising campaign on public finance management strategy implementation, launched with EU support

On 26 September, the Ministry of Finance jointly with the EU High Level Advisers' Mission, launched an awareness raising campaign comprising a series of workshops on the implementation of the Public Finance Management Strategy (PFMS) 2023 – 2030. The first event focused on the component "Tax and customs policies and revenue management", and brought together over 70 participants: representatives of the Ministry of Finance, the EU Delegation, business community, civil society, development partners, and media.

**In the opening of the event, Finance Minister Veronica Sireteanu stated that**

*"The Public Finance Management Strategy is the document that contains a comprehensive, consistent, and credible framework for improving the efficiency of public spending, fiscal discipline, debt sustainability, and public finance. In the next 8 years, the Strategy will form the basis for further progress and modernization in the field of public finance. The discussions we are launching today and that we are going to have on each of the Strategy's components show our openness towards your opinion and input."*



**The Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova, Jānis Mažeiks said:**

*“The PFM reform is undoubtedly crucial for the development of the acceding countries, and our experience has also shown that in order to create support for the PFM reform it is very important to keep institutions, citizens and civil society well informed about the necessary steps forward.”*

During the workshop, the EU HLA on Customs & Tax Policy, Rosario De Blasio spoke about the importance of the Public Finance Management Strategy as a strategic document aimed at increasing efficiency, performance and transparency in public finances, thus continuing the logical chain of reforms initiated and implemented over the last period, in the context of Moldova’s EU integration process. Referring to component “Tax and customs policies and revenue management”, the EU HLA underlined that tax and customs policies must be

oriented towards the creation of a national fiscal system integrated in the EU space, which guarantees that both citizens and businesses pay taxes in a simple, fair and correct way. A crucial achievement in this regard was the adoption of the new Customs Code, which will enter into force on 1 January 2024. The PFM Strategy will ensure further progress toward the EU integration objective, by promoting the alignment of the VAT and excise duties regulations to the EU Directives, introduction of efficient and well-targeted tax and customs simplifications and reduction of administrative costs for business and Governmental institutions.

The event marks the start of a seven-session awareness-raising campaign that will cover each of the seven components of the PFMS: Macroeconomic analysis and Budgetary framework, Budget development and planning, Budget execution, Accounting and reporting, Public Internal Financial Control, Tax and Customs Policies – Revenue administration, Public Procurement and Transparency in Public Finance.



# The EU High Level Advisers' Mission is supporting an awareness raising campaign on paid internships in state institutions

For the first time, the Government of the Republic of Moldova is launching the opportunity for students to undergo paid internships in state institutions – the State Chancellery, Presidential Administration, line ministries and agencies. In order to mediatise the initiative, several information events have been organised in some of the major universities – State University of Moldova, Academy of Economic Sciences and Free International University of Moldova. During the first event in the State University of Moldova, Irina Cruceru, Programme manager within the EU Delegation to the Republic of Moldova, mentioned the similar programme implemented by the EU High Level Advisers' Mission for two years in a

row, underlining its positive results – some of the graduates of the Programme being already employed in the civil service – and encouraging the young people to make use of this opportunity. The official noted that young talents are especially needed in the public administration now, when the country is undergoing a huge transformation on its path towards the EU accession.

Ana Calinici, State Secretary of the State Chancellery, provided details of the Programme, including its regulation, application and selection processes, available institutions to host the interns. A total of 30 interns are proposed to be selected for this first edition of the Government's Programme.



The EU High Level Advisers' Mission has ensured support for the awareness raising campaign of the Programme by producing the necessary information materials and taking part in the presentation events.

The promotion campaign culminated on October 27 with the official kick-off event, held in the Government house with the young

people selected for the Programme.

Three of the selected interns are graduates of the joint Internship Programme of the European Union and the Republic of Moldova of this year. We wish success to all the interns and reiterate the Mission's support for increasing administrative capacity in the Republic of Moldova.



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# EUBAM joins efforts of Moldova, Ukraine and Romania to enhance border crossing capacity on the Solidarity Lanes

On 24 October, the Head of EUBAM, Slawomir Pichor, took part in a trilateral meeting in Giurgiulești with senior officials from Moldova, Ukraine, and Romania's infrastructure ministries, along with customs and border services representatives.

The aim was to tackle the development of the Reni – Giurgiulești – Galați border crossing points (BCPs) and ways to enhance the capacity of the main road transport corridor from Ukraine through Moldova to Romania in the Lower Danube Region.



The authorities kicked off with a fact-finding visit at Reni BCP with an insightful overview by the Ukrainian side of the electronic queue system for trucks in Ukraine, facilitating border crossing, and plans for refurbishment and modernization of Reni BCP.

Further on, at Giurgiulești State Port, the delegations of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development of the Republic of Moldova chaired by the State Secretary in the Domain of Transport Mircea Păscăluță, the Deputy Minister for Community, Territories and Infrastructure Development of Ukraine Mr Serhii Derkach, and the State Secretary of

the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure of Romania Ionel Scioșteanu, led trilateral negotiations and discussions aimed at identifying operational solutions to enhance border crossing capacity. The participants also focused on various measures, leveraging the benefits of the common transit procedure and joint/coordinated control at the Ukraine – Moldova and Moldova – Romania borders.

The Head of EUBAM shared his insights on dispersing the queues at the border in Reni – Giurgiulești – Galați area and supporting the prompt supply chain, offering further EUBAM assistance on that matter.



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## Moldovan Customs Service and State Inspectorate extend cooperation to ensure product safety

On 2 October, a significant step was taken in safeguarding the safety of products entering the Republic of Moldova's market. The Moldovan Customs Service and the State Inspectorate for the Surveillance of Non-Food Products and Consumer Protection extended their Cooperation Action Plan.

This extension builds upon the groundwork laid earlier this year when EUBAM facilitated the original plan in January and its core objective is to strengthen partnerships and bolster safety measures for products entering the Moldovan market.



A pivotal moment during this journey was the unanimous approval of a pilot project focused on the import of toys at Chişinău 2 (formerly Cricova) internal customs post. Initially spanning six months and concluding on October 3rd, this pilot project stood out as a resounding success. Consequently, it has been extended to three additional internal customs posts.

This cooperative effort holds the promise of instilling a heightened sense of security among Moldovan citizens as consumers. Furthermore, it brings the Republic of Moldova one step closer to aligning with the stringent health and safety standards upheld by the European Union, in accordance with Moldova's commitments under the DCFTA (Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area).

# The National Integrity Authority onboards a new approach in Quality Management for Moldova's public institutions

In a landmark development, the National Integrity Authority (NIA) in Moldova has taken a significant step toward enhancing its operations and promoting transparency. Thanks to the European Union (EU) and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), who are co-financing this transformative project implemented by GIZ Moldova, NIA is now the first institution in Moldova to embrace the European Quality Management model - Common Assessment Framework (CAF).

The CAF model onboarding was conducted during July - September 2023 through a series of workshops and included a complex

self-assessment exercise facilitated by CAF experts. In the final stage, in late September 2023, NIA held a two-day final workshop to chart a course for its future. The workshop aimed to prioritize and develop an Action Plan for implementing the CAF, which will guide NIA's efforts in the coming years. This plan focuses on several key areas: performance management, communication and engagement of employees and interested parties, resource management, and the transparent capitalization of results. By adopting the principles in all abovementioned areas NIA is paving the way for improved efficiency and trust in its operations.





So, what is the CAF, and why is it such a big deal for NIA and the entire public sector in Moldova? The CAF is a user-friendly Total Quality Management model tailored for European public sector organisations. It puts a strong emphasis on leadership, throughout planning, and active involvement of staff to enhance organisational performance. At its core, the CAF encourages collaboration, efficient use of resources, and streamlined processes. It also conducts a comprehensive performance analysis, taking into account the unique responsibilities that public sector organisations have in serving the people.

With the developed Action Plan, NIA is gearing up for a transformative journey that will span the years 2024-2025. During this time, they will implement a series of activities aimed at making tangible improvements. NIA's commitment to this model not only sets them on a path to excellence but also positions them as a pioneer in Moldova.

This move is more than just a strategic decision, it is a testament to NIA's dedication to upholding the rule of law and combating corruption. By adopting the CAF, they are taking a proactive stance in their mission to ensure integrity, transparency, and accountability in their operations. NIA's efforts will serve as an example, demonstrating the positive impact of embracing best practices in public sector management.

In the Republic of Moldova, where integrity and accountability are the fundamental principles guiding our pursuit of the European path, NIA's pioneering efforts set a strong precedent. As they embark on this journey of self-improvement, they are not only elevating their own standards but also inspiring a brighter future for the entire public administration landscape in Moldova. This is a step forward that we can all celebrate, as it brings us closer to a more just, transparent, and accountable government.



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# National Anti-Corruption Centre expands Anti-Corruption Volunteer team and unveils new identity

The National Anti-Corruption Centre (NAC) recently welcomed 25 new anti-corruption volunteers dedicated to fighting corruption and promoting integrity. They will work on educational projects to help young people understand the importance of honesty and accountability in society.

During the event, the NAC introduced a fresh new look for its anti-corruption volunteers. The objective for a new visual identity for NAC anti-corruption volunteers is to create a credible, recognizable, and professionally designed identity that conveys trust, unity, and the purpose of fighting corruption while being engaging to inspire public support and involvement. This new identity, including logos and uniforms, was developed with the support of the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development through the project "Strengthening the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Mechanisms in the Republic of Moldova" implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

The European Union, the German Government, anti-corruption organisations,

and civil society are working together to make people aware of the harmful effects of corruption and how to combat it effectively. They believe that young people can play a vital role in promoting democracy.

The new anti-corruption volunteers at NAC are expected to lead the way in this mission. They will be actively involved in the country's efforts to ensure more transparency and accountability. They will inspire others to join the fight against corrupt practices and stand up for what's right.

In addition to the new look, the volunteers had their first training session on the NAC's functions. They even got to participate in a quiz to test their knowledge, with awards for the winners.

Since 2016, the NAC has been accepting volunteers and has received accreditation from the Ministry of Education and Research. In 2018, they began recruiting anti-corruption volunteers aged between 14-22 years, and now, in 2023, they have 74 active members, including two Ukrainian refugees, in their diverse and dedicated team.





*“The NAC is proud to have such committed individuals on board, and we are looking forward to the positive impact these volunteers will have in the ongoing battle against corruption.*

*Their dedication and hard work are sure to make Moldova a better place for everyone”, mentioned Mr. Ion Pruteanu, Head of Anti-corruption Education Direction at NAC.*



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# Twinning project “Improving spatial data services in the Republic of Moldova following EU standards” marks the end of its implementation

September and October months of 2023 brought the completion of the implementation of the Twinning project “Improving spatial data services in the Republic of Moldova following EU standards”, financed by the European Union.

The successful completion of the Twinning project “Improving spatial data services in the Republic of Moldova following EU standards” was marked by the final event, held on October 17, 2023 in Chişinău, Republic of Moldova. The project was implemented for 38 months, throughout the period September 2020 – October 2023.



The main beneficiary of the Twinning project was the Agency for Land Relations and Cadastre (ALRC) of the Republic of Moldova, while indirect beneficiaries were the Moldovan public institutions, academic environment and economic agents, which operate with spatial data in their daily activity. The EU MS partner institutions provided technical and professional assistance to ALRC in the process of harmonizing legislation with EU INSPIRE Directive and its associated Regulations/Implementing Rules, as well as ensured the strengthening of ALRC and other public entities’ institutional capacities in the field of national spatial data infrastructure (NSDI).

On the final event, Mr. Ivan Danii, General Director of the Moldovan Agency for Land Relations and Cadastre, expressed gratitude to the European Union Delegation in the Republic of Moldova for the continuous and

unconditional support it had provided to the Agency since the year 2014. He pointed out that impressive results were achieved, and all planned project activities were successfully implemented, despite all the global circumstances. Mr. Danii emphasized the great role that this EU-funded project played for the development of NSDI in the Republic of Moldova, as the best knowledge, experience and expertise were shared by the MS experts with a view to improve the quality of spatial data, develop network services, boost cooperation and build institutional capacities within the Moldovan public entities that are responsible for spatial data according to the NSDI-related legislation.

With a total number of 46 activities, the main project results were: NSDI legal framework was updated, and the strategic development documents were prepared. In parallel, with the support of MS experts, ALRC developed



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the NSDI geoportal, as a single access point to spatial data and conducted numerous training sessions in order to boost the professionalism of their colleagues from different ministries and agencies, who work with spatial data sets and services. Jointly with other Moldovan public institutions, ALRC implemented a pilot project to test and put into practice the spatial data standardization guidelines, developed by MS experts. For this pilot project, Ungheni area was selected both at municipal and district levels, as this city is part of the Programme “EU4Moldova: Focal Regions”, with the goal to achieve synergy between projects. In total, more than 60 central and local public entities, academic and private sector, participated in various capacity building and lifelong learning activities in the field of spatial data. By carrying out the mentioned activities, a stronger adaptation of work processes to European standards was made possible and the operational capacities of ALRC and other public entities were strengthened.

Additionally, the Moldovan Agency for Land Relations and Cadastre (ALRC) and Croatian State Geodetic Administration (SGA) signed on October 5, 2023, a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation for consolidating relationships and collaborating in the field of geodesy, mapping, spatial data infrastructure and cadastre.

In this regard, Ivan Danii, General Director of ALRC, and Antonio Šustić, Director General of SGA, signed the document, which reflects the commitment of both countries to further develop the partnership between the counterpart authorities and initiate actions to enhance cooperation and exchange of information in the field of spatial data, for the realization of joint projects, as well as the strengthening of each organisation.



The signatory parties have agreed to develop cooperation focused on the following areas: monitoring and evaluation of activities that have an impact on spatial data, coordination of workshops and seminars of common interest, development of project proposals and participation in projects, communication, sharing of good practices and information of common interest. Through the activities carried out, the two authorities will support each other and contribute to improving the quality of spatial data and increasing the efficiency in their management.



## ECONOMY AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

### Businesses developed by vulnerable families with the EU support: Maria from Condrătești, a mother of five, raises chickens in an incubator

Maria Caraman from the village of Condrătești, Ungheni district, has been raising chickens since childhood, an occupation she inherited from her parents and grandparents. In 2021, Maria started a business venture to generate income

for her family. Thanks to financial support and mentoring through the “EU4Moldova: Focal Regions” programme, funded by the European Union and implemented by UNDP and UNICEF, her family has a decent life at home.



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## From second-hand incubators to high-performance equipment

Maria is 50 years old and has been working as a career for older people in Italy for almost a year, but recently a longing for her five children and two grandchildren brought her back home. Here she decided to start her own business, investing the money she had earned abroad.

*"When I started the business, I invested a lot of money in old, used incubators that weren't very productive. The costs were too high and the income was too low. At one point, I thought about giving up everything and returning to Italy,"*

**Maria recalls.**

She decided to participate in trainings about small business creation organised with the support of the "EU4Moldova: Focal Regions" programme, organised by the Civic Education Association "Future Starts Today". During these trainings, Maria developed a business plan, which she submitted to a grant competition announced by the EU and UNDP. She was very happy when she learnt that she had succeeded.

The grant enabled Maria to purchase a large, high-performance incubator with a capacity of 300 eggs, which now helps her achieve higher productivity and save on energy consumption. Whereas with the old incubators she could only breed 350-400 chickens, the new incubator allows for 700.

*"I am very satisfied with this incubator. Compared to previous incubators, this one is much more economical. I pay less for electricity now. Before, when I worked with three small incubators, I used to pay about 500 lei for electricity. Now I have a larger hatchery and I pay about 300 lei per month. Thanks to it, I have more chickens,"*

**Maria adds with a smile.**

An electric shredder and a forage cutter were purchased with the funds from the mini-grant.

## Eco-friendly conditions for chickens and an expanding farm

The chickens are raised in ecologically clean conditions and are fed on grain, wheat, barley and soybeans, without any other feed additives. She now has more than 700 healthy chickens, which she sells in villages in the Ungheni district. Her son Chiril and grandson Matei help her with her daily chores.

*"My chickens have complete freedom and are raised in eco-friendly conditions in an open field. This is the secret of an eco-friendly business: the birds need water, feed and natural light to grow healthy. I sold all the chickens I had raised and used the proceeds to start building a house where I would raise chickens in the winter."*

## Assistance to low-income families

Another 12 low-income people – disadvantaged people, single-parent families and families with three or more children – from Ungheni district, Cula sub-region, received financial support and counselling to ensure a decent life. The assistance was provided by the EU and UNDP through the Civic Education Association "Future Starts Today".

*"We have endeavoured to develop this area. We focused on people's ability and willingness to get involved, to act, to do something to change their lives,"*

**says Constantin Stratulat, the association's president.**



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According to the study “Labour Market in Ungheni District”, developed with the support of the programme “EU4Moldova: Focal Regions”, about 30% of the district's population aged 15-64 is neither employed nor involved in migration processes.

The Civic Education Association “Future Starts Today” is one of four non-governmental organisations in Ungheni and Cahul to receive an EU-UNDP grant of up to €20,000 to help communities address a range of challenges they face.

The “EU4Moldova: Focal Regions” programme (2019-2024) supports smart, inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development of the Cahul and Ungheni regions to ensure a better quality of life for citizens. With a total budget of €23 million, the programme is funded by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).





# Several hectares of vineyards in the Southern part of Moldova equipped with weather stations, thanks to the EU support

Sergiu Tutovan, aged 59, is the president of the Table Grape Producers Association. This year, the members of the association

decided to participate in the Digital Impact programme, phase 1, and managed to obtain funding for the DigiVitis project.

*"The representatives of Startup City Cahul visited the vineyards several times and accepted our idea to offer us a grant for the procurement of weather stations and the software with which they work,"*

**said Sergiu Tutovan, president of the Association of Wine Producers Table grapes.**

Thus, the association received a grant worth MDL 780,000 within the Digital Impact programme. In total, eight weather stations were procured for eight companies from Cahul, Taraclia, Cantemir and Leova districts, which are part of the Association of Table Grape Producers.

*"The weather stations are controlled with the help of the mobile phone, through the application, and thanks to them we have a very high precision in data collection. Here we are talking about temperatures, precipitation, humidity, pests or the creation of optimal conditions for the germination of disease spores. If we talk about pests, traps are installed with a monitoring system and when there are too many, you get an alarm signal on your phone warning you that it's time to spray the vine",*

**Sergiu Tutovan also mentions.**



The President of the Association states that thanks to these stations, farmers save both time and money.

*"All the information comes to you in a timely manner on your phone, and you don't have to travel to the territory every day or every 2-3 hours. In this way, you can make operative decisions from a distance",*

**added the farmer.**



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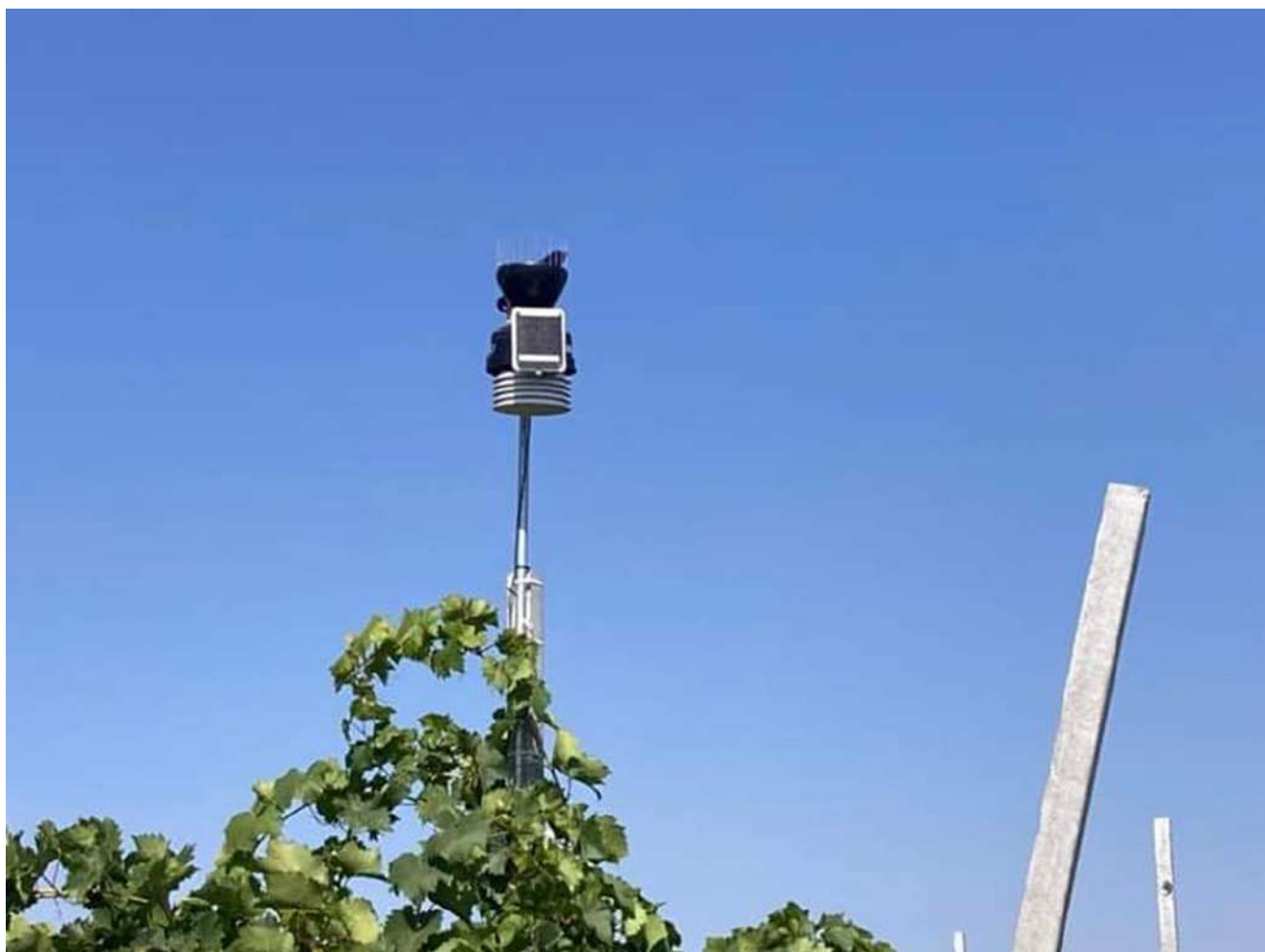


The President of the Table Grape Association believes that the EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul project brings many benefits to entrepreneurs in the south of the country, as without digitization and new technologies it is practically impossible to keep up with market demand, both in terms of quality and quantity.

Digital Impact is a programme that aims to support digitization initiatives in the south of the country. It had two phases, during which

12 projects were selected for financing, which have received or will receive a grant worth up to MDL 780,000. Each beneficiary of the programme contributed at least 20% of the total value of the project.

Digital Impact is accomplished by the Startup Moldova Foundation and is part of the EU4Moldova Project: Startup City Cahul, financed by the European Union and Sweden, implemented by ATIC.



# Modernisation of the local public infrastructure in Leova and Strășeni rayon with Team Europe support

The “EU4Moldova: Local Communities” programme records progress in improving local public infrastructure in two rayons.

In this context, the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the representatives of the local public authorities from the villages of Căpriana, Găleşti, Scoreni (Strășeni rayon), and the village of Hănăsenii-Noi, Sîrma and Vocational School (Leova rayon) discussed the peculiarities of projects detailed design for each locality.

The technical documentation completion precedes the series of meetings and discussions held between ADA representatives, the mayors of the beneficiary villages, and the contracting company assigned with the design of the project.

The needs of the localities, the degree of infrastructural development, the achievement of the maximum level of coverage of the needs, the sustainability, and the perspective of the connection with other future projects of the localities were taken into account by the designing company.

**Following the implementation of the outlined actions, the mentioned villages will benefit from:**

- » Extension and modernization of sewage networks,
- » Connecting several households to the networks;
- » Improving the sanitation systems and thus reducing the pollution with wastewater of the rivers and tributaries that cross the villages.



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The development and improvement of local public infrastructure are one of the objectives of the programme, actions that are consistent with the 2014-2030 Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy of the Republic of Moldova.

The EU4Moldova: Local Communities programme is financed by the European Union and the governments of Germany, Austria, and Poland, the Austrian Development Agency being responsible for implementing projects aimed at improving and developing local public infrastructure.





# EU4Accountability supports Moldova's European Integration through exchange of best practices with Romanian civil society and local authorities

In September and October, representatives of civil society and local authorities from ten districts of the Republic of Moldova - have organised few study visits to Iași, Sibiu and Botoșani (Romania), to exchange experiences and best practices in the field of participatory budgeting, community development and social responsibility thanks to the support of the European Union.

ALDA and GEN Moldova conducted a study visit in Iași to learn about the development

of social enterprises in Romania, its legal framework and cooperation with local authorities, and their social and economic impact. Local programs in the fields of social services, inclusion and integration of disadvantaged groups into the labour force, lobbying, advocacy, and funding for NGO development were presented to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Local Public Authorities (LPAs) from the Republic of Moldova to increase their knowledge in the field.



The visit to the Refugee Centre supported by Bethany Social Services Foundation, allowed for an active exchange of best practices with civil society representatives from Strășeni, Florești, Ștefan-Vodă and Cimișlia districts, who have been on the front line of the crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Participants discussed challenges of the integration services, psychological support and translation provided by volunteers at the centre, as well as the tailoring of support to the needs of beneficiaries.

The visit to Iasi County Council provided

insights with regard to the legislation and mechanisms of public funding of the non-governmental sector, as well as best practices of cross-border projects. Representatives of the Iasi Municipality emphasised the importance of developing partnerships at the local community level and shared examples of municipal programs that support youth and cultural projects. Participatory budgeting processes are managed by the Local Office for Participatory Democracy, which develops projects and works through the Iasi Neighbourhood Centres.



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Civil Society and Local Authorities representatives of Cahul, Comrat, Făleşti, Glodeni and Rîșcani conducted the study in Sibiu with the support of PIN Moldova and Moștenitorii association. During the visit to Marginimea Sibiului, the participants met with the district administration, the mayors of the region's communes and civic activists, who provided them with more information about local government and the tools they use to interact with society.

The Moldovan delegation was shown how the community is involved in the development of social, health, youth, sports, cultural and educational strategies. In addition to the traditional methods that allow the local administration to ensure transparency in decision-making, such as publishing the documents relevant to the decisions taken on the council's website, public

officials ensure a process of involving the population in public consultations through the Civic Consultative Council Platform, focus groups, public debates, as well as the mobile application Sibiu City App, which allows consultation with a large number of citizens. According to the authorities, this variety of interactive tools allows citizens to participate more actively in the process of elaborating development strategies.

During the visit to Botoșani, the delegation was welcomed by the Prefect of Botoșani County, Sorin Cornilă, who congratulated all the participants of this meeting for the realisation of this project and highly appreciated the cooperation between civil society representatives from both banks of the Prut, mentioning that it is a consolidated cooperation based on mutual understanding of common values.



These activities are carried out in the framework of *EU4Accountability - Empowered Civil Society for Increased Social Accountability in Moldova*, which aims to strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations in Moldova to better play their role as actors of governance and to increase the social accountability of local and central public administration in Moldova.

EU4Accountability runs from 2022-2024, is funded by the European Union, and is implemented by a consortium of three organisations: European Association for Local Democracy, European Partnership for Democracy and People in Need Moldova, extends to 10 districts (Cahul, Comrat, Cimișlia, Făleşti, Florești, Glodeni, Rîșcani, Strășeni, Ștefan Vodă, Telenești) and provides for a total budget of EUR 1.6 million.

## “Poveste” – a new social enterprise created by a non-governmental organisation with the support of the European Union

In the early summer of 2023, [10 non-governmental organisations received financial support from the European Union to create or develop 10 social enterprises across Moldova](#), including in the Transnistrian region.

The creation and development of social enterprises is the main objective of the

project “Harnessing the potential of civil society to promote and develop the social entrepreneurship in Moldova”, implemented by the East Europe Foundation in partnership with Contact Centre and Keystone Moldova, with the financial support of the European Union and co-funding from Sweden.



### **Speech therapy services, arts, handicrafts, school preparation for children from Anenii Noi**

In December 2022, the non-governmental organisation “The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification” opened a social enterprise “Children’s Development Centre – Poveste” in Anenii Noi.

Children aged 3 to 7 have access to speech therapy, arts, handicrafts, school preparation and many other personal development activities, and in order to provide opportunities for children from vulnerable families, including refugee children from Ukraine, all these services are provided free of charge by the social enterprise.



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Sabina Nadejdin is the manager of the new social enterprise. Sabina explains that the financial support they have received will help them to successfully set up and launch the new social enterprise, but as it is a business, they will find ways to generate the necessary income to continue the activity.

*“The town of Anenii Noi is large and parents from neighbouring towns find all the possibilities to come to us to provide these services to their children”,*

**adds Sabina.**

As of December 2022, 72 children have benefited from the centre’s services, and by the end of the year, the enterprise estimates that around 150 children will have benefited.

### **“There are not as many opportunities in Anenii Noi as in the capital”**

The goal for the coming years is to provide as many children as possible with the quality services they need.

*“There are not as many opportunities in Anenii Noi as for example in the capital, so we are also addressing a local social problem, increasing the number of employees and beneficiaries, and becoming known and appreciated for the quality of our services,”*

**says the social enterprise manager.**

### **“I want to be a role model for my children. I’m still learning at 47”**

After receiving grants for the creation of social enterprises, the 10 entities will follow a comprehensive training course to launch and develop their social enterprises.

In this context, the CONTACT Centre, as a partner of the project, organised the first training modules on the legal framework for social entrepreneurship and the development of a business plan.

Sabina Nadejdin was among the participants in these trainings.

*“In order for our business and enterprise to deliver results, impact and income, it is important to have an effective business plan. To know how to properly do business planning. Some of my colleagues have had such training, but I have not. And since I am also in charge of the new social enterprise, it is important to know to develop these services and also generate more income”,*

**says Sabina.**

Like Sabina, another 30 people from 10 non-commercial organisations who will be involved in the work of the newly created social enterprises receive training in this field.

Olesea Vulpe is one of the experts chosen to train the participants.

*Olesea Vulpe is one of the experts chosen to train the participants. "We have designed a 4-day programme for 2 categories of people: a group of people who already have a business plan and we want to help them develop it in order to have income and profit. The other group are people who have no experience in developing business plans, they are at the beginning of their journey, and we will help them understand what a plan is and how to develop it",*

**says the expert.**

As part of the training programme, some interesting and useful online tools for business plan development were also presented, allowing more people to access a business plan remotely. These tools, according to the experts, are widely used in Romania and have recently been introduced in our country.

The trainings are part of the project "Harnessing the potential of civil society to promote and develop the social entrepreneurship in Moldova", implemented by East Europe Foundation in partnership with Contact Centre and Keystone Moldova, with the financial support of the European Union and co-funding from Sweden.



## The Social Businesses Tour organised in Moldova with the EU support

The Republic of Moldova has social enterprises and businesses that can serve as an example for future entrepreneurs and civil society organisations seeking to contribute to the country's inclusive and sustainable economic development. In this regard, the CONTACT Centre, in partnership with the East European Foundation and the European Business Association, continued the national tour of social enterprises in 2023.

In the summer of 2023, 20 representatives of social enterprises and civil society organisations spent 2 days visiting the following social enterprises: The "Poveste" Children's Development Centre in the town of Anenii Noi (learn about [its history here](#)), the "Eco Life For You" social enterprise, the "Darul Albinelor" apiary in the village of Cimiseni, Criuleni district, the "Popasul Dacilor" social enterprise in Cobîlea, Şoldăneşti district and the "Ilinca Service" social enterprise in the town of Orhei.



### **"Ilinca Service" social enterprise from Orhei town**

"Ilinca Service" enterprise was founded by the non-governmental organisation "Christian Philanthropy", which operates in Orhei and is known for its philanthropic work and support activities for vulnerable groups in the community.

Since 2015, the organisation has provided educational services, socio-professional integration courses and personal development to over 300 women and men in the community. Another 50 homeless people are provided with the opportunity to shower, have a clean coat and sleep at night. It also provides services for female victims of violence and elderly people.



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In order to have the necessary resources to respond to the needs of the beneficiaries, the organisation has created a social enterprise called "Ilinca Service" which enables the community to learn how to sew and embroider a national coat. Within the social enterprise, 5 jobs have been created and more than 100 other people have received support for employment.

### **"Popasul Dacilor" social enterprise from Cobîlea, Șoldănești district**

Svetlana Mantea, founder of the NGO "Bella Getica", met us at the museum of the village of Cobîlea. The organisation aims to develop the community and create decent living conditions for the local people.

The museum hall can be used for conferences, and there are rooms for visitor accommodation, which provides a source of income for the organisation's services for local vulnerable people. "We have a social enterprise that provides free meals in winter for disabled people and pensioners. About 30-40 people receive a free hot lunch during the cold season," adds Svetlana. The social enterprise also provides food-on-demand services, which has enabled them to create 6 jobs for local people.

And they're not stopping there: in the future they plan to develop accommodation services for elderly people in the community, because they believe this is the only way to grow a community, by taking care of each other.



Following the visits, social entrepreneurs had the opportunity to establish some partnerships but also to gain inspiration to develop their own businesses.

The tour was organised as part of the project "Civil Society Contributes to the Inclusive

and Sustainable Economic Development of the Country" implemented by the East Europe Foundation in partnership with the CONTACT Centre and the European Business Association, with the financial support of the European Union and co-funding from Sweden.



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## Awareness raising campaign in Briceni organised with EU support for the business community in regions on the new Customs Code

Over 40 business people from the Northern regions of the country took part, on 24 October, in the first information session of the awareness raising campaign on provisions of the new Customs Code, implemented jointly by the Customs Service and the EU High Level Advisers' Mission.

During the event, specialists of the Customs Service and the EU High Level Advisers on Customs and Tax Policy, Rosario de Blasio, familiarised participants with information on customs control, customs regimes, customs value, origin of goods, customs revenues.

The changes that will be introduced once the new Customs Code enters into force, is a subject of interest for economic operators, residents of free economic zones, customs brokers and specialists in the field of customs, and the information sessions are organised to contribute to a better understanding of the implementation of the new provisions, but also for an exchange of information and opinions for improved services offered to the business environment.



During the session, the representatives of the Customs Service mentioned that with the harmonization of customs procedures with those of the EU, the business environment will have a range of benefits through the use of modern customs control tools and technologies, the interaction with customs officials being reduced, and a paperless

and fully automated activity system being implemented.

The information sessions will continue in Bălți (October 31), Cahul (November 2), Comrat (November 7), Ungheni (November 9), Căușeni (November 14) and Chișinău (November 16).



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# European Union provides 4 million euros for a new phase of its Confidence Building Measures Programme

The European Union continues its support for improved cooperation between communities on both banks of the Nistru river through joint initiatives involving local partners, civil society organisations (CSOs) and other stakeholders.

In line with the previous phases, the sixth iteration of the EU Confidence Building Measures (EU CBM) Programme, implemented by UNDP, will help connect communities across the river with an allocation of 4 million euros until the end of 2025, focusing on the following main components:

- I. Economic development and decent job creation;
- II. Enhanced cross-river thematic cooperation between civil society organisations from both banks;
- III. Community development and small-scale social infrastructure support;
- IV. Promotion of cultural heritage.

In addition, a fifth component on cross-river rapprochement in the health and social care sector will be launched soon with other implementing partners.



The EU CBM programme will contribute to improving the living conditions on the two riverbanks and consolidate cooperation for business development, enhancing

the competitiveness of small and micro enterprises. At least 50 jobs are expected to be generated through the project, in 20 SMEs (10 from each bank) that will be supported



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through capacity development and tailored business support opportunities.

Additionally, community development of 12 localities on both banks will be supported through capacity building and specialized advisory services and the implementation of at least six social infrastructure projects (around 92,000 euros each).

Approximately 40 CSOs from both banks will work on joint development projects addressing common needs of both banks' socio-economic development. Continued support will be offered to the six existing cross-river thematic CSOs platforms that were created in previous phases of the EU CBM programme (education, culture, sport, health, environment, and tourism) currently unite over 600 members – sector CSOs, professionals from both banks.

Under the cultural heritage component, four historical monuments sites on both banks

(with funding of around 74,000 euros each) of the Nistru river will be rehabilitated/conserved, becoming attractive touristic destinations for both local and foreign tourists.

Over the past 15 years of implementation of the EU Confidence Building Measures Programme, it has provided multidimensional support for business, health and environment projects, social infrastructure, civil society development, and cultural heritage.

Since 2009, the EU CBM programme has empowered 720 companies on both banks of the Nistru River, creating over 1,900 jobs. More than 125 social infrastructure projects have been completed, including repairs of schools, kindergartens, and cultural centres located on both sides, along with 12 projects dedicated to the preservation of cultural heritage through conservation and restoration efforts.



# The National LEADER Network Congress addresses the sustainability perspectives of the rural development in Moldova

On October 13, over 180 representatives of the Moldovan Local Action Groups (LAGs), national authorities and development partners supporting the LEADER approach in Moldova, including the EU and US Embassy, gathered at the 1st edition of the National LEADER Network Congress to address the challenges faced by the Moldovan rural communities and create synergies for future development opportunities. The event offered a platform for networking

and stimulated cooperation activity among key rural development actors, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry of Moldova (MAFI), the Agency for Intervention and Payments in Agriculture (AIPA), the National LEADER Network (NLN) and Moldovan LAGs. As such, the participants shared best practices and promoted successful initiatives implemented by LAGs, while also exploring innovative solutions for rural development.



During the event, LAG members engaged in interactive thematic workshops, addressing issues related to the institutional development of LAGs and the multi-funding approach for the implementation of Local Development Strategies (LDSs). LAGs explored opportunities to diversify

their partnerships and identify new funding sources through participation in various local and cross-border projects. At the same time, participants addressed the need for institutional development plans and digital instruments to ensure transparency and build the institutional memory of LAGs.



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The event offered an opportunity to share the main results of the LEADER Programme, managed by MAFI and AIPA, which up till June 2023 has supported the implementation of 632 local projects, thus highlighting the key role of the LEADER approach in boosting community development, fostering economic opportunities and preserving the cultural heritage in rural areas.

In this context, Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova announced about a new funding opportunity for 10 Moldovan LAGs, that will enable

them to benefit from development support in value of 500,000 EUR to become role models of the LEADER approach in Moldova. This activity will be implemented within the Rural Development Fund 3.0., as part of the “EU4Moldova: Local Communities” programme. By harnessing LAGs potential and supporting their professionalization, Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova aims to create a favourable environment for LAGs to sustain their commitment and dedicated implication in LEADER and the development of local communities.



To date, the LEADER approach in Moldova is implemented by 52 Local Action Groups covering 492 administrative-territorial units and 811 localities, which offer economic and social development opportunities for 1.14 people living in rural areas.

*The event was organised within the “EU4Moldova: Local Communities” programme, financed by the European Union, the German Federal Ministry for Economic*

*Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland – Polish aid; and jointly implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the Solidarity Fund PL (SFPL) in Moldova.*





**ENERGY**

**RESILIENCE**

## EU Green and Climate Diplomacy Weeks were marked in the Republic of Moldova during entire month of September

The **EU Green and Climate Diplomacy Weeks** were marked in the Republic of Moldova during **6-24 September 2023**. Formerly known as Climate Diplomacy Weeks, this year's theme was "**a global just energy transition**". Green Diplomacy Weeks focus on the global acceleration of the deployment of energy efficiency and renewables. Activities organised in this context aimed to demonstrate good practices for energy efficiency improvements and accelerated

renewables deployment. In addition, during this year's edition, the aim was to also promote gender equality by highlighting stories of women in the Republic of Moldova who are contributing to combatting climate change, energy saving actions and greening our planet. Hence, three of the social media posts showcased the participation and leadership of women and girls in promoting green diplomacy.



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Within EU Green and Diplomacy Weeks, four events were organised by the EU-funded projects. The initiative included an ample social media campaign reflecting significant topics such as combating climate change, protection of nature, healthier environment and so on.

One of the events organised within the framework of the Green Diplomacy Weeks was the festival "Sun Dă-i Fest". The festival was organised on 10 September, showcasing the sustainability in the Republic of Moldova. The event inspired thousands of people to tackle environmental issues and to use alternative energy sources with more determination.

Now in its 7th year, Sun Dă-i Fest 2023 was organised in the context of the EU Green Diplomacy Weeks, with the financial support of the European Union, by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and in partnership with the Ministry of Energy.

This year's edition of the festival brought together entrepreneurs, private and state-owned companies, public associations and sustainability enthusiasts to promote a cleaner, brighter and healthier world. At the event, participants had the opportunity to explore and experience countless aspects of sustainability, including alternative energies, reuse and resource saving.

"Last year, Europe, for the first time in its history, has produced more electricity from sun and wind than from gas said European Commission President Ms Ursula von der Leyen. We need an increased global action

and ambition in Limiting the temperature increase to 1.5°C in order to substantially reduce the impacts of climate change. Delivering a net-zero world by 2050, is the European Union's ultimate goal," said Solomon Ioannou, Programme Manager, Delegation of the European Union to Moldova.

The festival included award ceremonies for the winners of the EU-UNDP "Energy saving in images" competition and the contest of media articles on debunking myths in the energy sector. These competitions stimulated participants' involvement and creativity in the field of clean and sustainable energy.

Also, at the Sun Dă-i Fest, a sustainable energy alley was set up and an impressive exhibition that brought to the forefront the latest technologies and innovations in solar, wind, hydro and other green energy sources. Manufacturers of clean energy technologies demonstrated how photovoltaic panels, solar collectors, biomass boilers, geothermal pumps, etc. work. Participants interacted directly with experts and discovered concrete solutions to increase their energy efficiency and reduce their carbon footprint.

The fair with local craftspeople and producers, who exhibited for-sale decorative items, jewellery, paintings created from natural products and much more, gave visitors the opportunity to discover and support local organic products and to understand the importance of sustainable trade.



Sun Dă-i Fest ended with a live music concert by Dara, Felicia Dunaf, "Hotel Cosmos",

Satoshi, and the Romanian guest band "Om la Lună".





# The European Union has invested 500,000 euros in the installation of photovoltaic panels on five district hospitals

The European Union is investing 500,000 euros through UNDP for the installation of photovoltaic panels with a total capacity of

600 kW on the roofs of five hospitals. They are located in Florești, Nisporeni, Ștefan Vodă, Cahul and Călărași districts.



The installation of photovoltaic panels comes as a response to the energy crisis that the Republic of Moldova is going through and the high costs incurred by medical institutions.

The panels on the five hospitals will annually produce 780 MWh of green electricity, reduce hospital costs by over 20 million lei annually and reduce CO2 emissions by 437 tons annually.

*“The project will bring us savings, even up to 50% on electricity. We will redirect the saved money to the patients nutrition and better conditions for them. The beneficiary is not the hospital, but all the 6,000 patients who annually benefit from hospital medical assistance within the premises of the Ștefan Vodă district hospital. In addition, as a medical institution, it is important that we are environmentally friendly,”*

**said Victor Pelin, Acting Director of the Ștefan Vodă District Hospital.**

*“All the medical equipment in our institution is based on electricity. With the coming of the cold season, we will have a benefit, because the water is also heated by electricity. These panels will bring us a benefit, namely in reducing expenses on the electricity bill,”*

**says Nadejda Ulinici, Director of the Nisporeni District Hospital.**

In Nisporeni, 242 photovoltaic panels were installed, with a capacity of 140 kW.

The photovoltaic panels were installed with the support of the "Addressing the impacts of the energy crisis in the Republic of Moldova" programme, financed by the European Union and implemented by UNDP Moldova.

With a budget of €13 million allocated by the European Union, the programme "Addressing the impacts of the energy crisis in the Republic of Moldova", implemented by UNDP, has supported the creation of the platform [compensatii.gov.md](https://compensatii.gov.md) and will launch a campaign to replace old household appliances with new energy-efficient ones. The programme finances the installation of photovoltaic panels in households and

several hospitals, as well as the change of central heating systems in several blocks to more efficient horizontal distribution systems.

In addition, the programme provides support for the transposition of the EU's third energy package into both primary and secondary legislation, as well as the transposition of a number of directives and regulations of the "Clean Energy for All Europeans" package, which address the energy performance of buildings, renewable energy sources, energy efficiency, good governance and electricity market design.



## With European Union support, over 1,000 students and teachers at the 'Dimitrie Cantemir' Theoretical Lyceum in Bălți municipality benefit from improved study conditions

On 21 September 2023, the [inauguration of the European Union-funded project on increasing energy efficiency in the 'Dimitrie Cantemir' Theoretical Lyceum](#) took place in Bălți. The event took place in the context of

the EU Diplomacy Weeks for Climate and Green Energy, which run this year under the theme 'Building the future: green, renewable energy and equal opportunities'.



The high school was renovated and made energy efficient following the implementation of 11 investment measures, including thermal insulation of the building, rainwater collection and drainage installations, ventilation and fire protection systems, new sanitary inventory. Also access for

people with special needs was built and the institution's kitchen was modernized. The 25 units of photovoltaic panels installed will cover the school electricity consumption equivalent to the three months energy consumption during the winter season.





The total value of the 'Increasing Energy Efficiency of 'Dimitrie Cantemir' Theoretical Lyceum project in Bălți is around 24 million MDL, of which 23.8 million lei is EU funding and over 130 thousand lei – co-funding from the Bălți Municipality.

The investment measure, Increasing Energy Efficiency of 'Dimitrie Cantemir' Theoretical Lyceum in Bălți municipality' is funded by the

European Union and implemented by North RDA under the 'Construction of water supply and sanitation infrastructure as well as energy efficiency in public buildings' project. The project is funded by the European Union and implemented by the German Development Cooperation through GIZ (Moldova) in partnership with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development. The total budget of the project is 39.8 million Euro.



## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE



### The Delegation of the European Union, EU Member States and EU development partners mark the World Cleanup Day in the Republic of Moldova

The 2023 edition of the World Cleanup Day was joined by the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova and EU Member States, including representatives of EU institutions and EU development partners based in the country.

This year, the campaign started in the Republic of Moldova with a cleanup event in Oxentea village, located in Dubăsari raion, on

the bank of the Nistru river. More than 120 people signed up for cleaning up Oxentea. Upon the end of the event, altogether diplomats, employees, gymnasium students and the local residents cleaned up the local park in Oxentea, gathering dozens of sacks, having the collected garbage separated into paper, plastic, glass for further easier recycling.



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*“Cleaning up a village is as important as promoting a cleaner planet. This is why the European Union is doing both to protect the environment, generate less waste and less pollution. Today, in Oxentea, we all proved that with collective efforts we can change for better the place where we live, work or study. On this occasion, I invite everyone to support this initiative close to your home and engage together your families, friends and the whole community. Let’s make it a lifestyle, a useful habit!”*

**stated Jānis Mažeiks, Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova.**

The campaign dedicated to Cleanup Day in the Republic of Moldova is run by the National Environmental Centre (NEC) at the national level.

World Cleanup Day is an annual global social action programme aimed at combating the global mismanaged waste crisis, including the problem of marine debris. World Cleanup Day unites millions of volunteers, governments and organisations, in 197 countries and territories, to tackle the global mismanaged waste crisis and to help create a new, more sustainable world.





# The Low Emissions Development Programme was approved, bringing Moldova one step closer towards a carbon-free economy

The European Union and UNDP have supported the Government of the Republic of Moldova to develop its first ever Low Emissions Development Programme (LEDP). The Programme, which enters into force on 1 January 2024, systematizes

policies and sectoral action plans that aim to achieve emission reduction objectives of greenhouse gases exposed in the updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) reported in March 2020 to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNFCCC.



The NDC was also developed with the support of the European Union through the EU4Climate project, implemented by UNDP. The Republic of Moldova was the fourth country in the world to develop the updated NDC, committing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 70% compared to the reference year 1990.

**According to the Programme, by 2030, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are to be reduced compared to 1990:**

- » in the energy sector, with 81%;
- » in the transport sector, with 52%;

- » in the buildings sector, with 74%;
- » in the industrial sector, with 27%;
- » in the agricultural sector, with 44%;
- » in the waste sector, with 14%.

During 1990-2020, total GHG emissions in the Republic of Moldova decreased by approximately 69.8%, up to 13,662 Mt CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent, as a result of the economic crisis. After they dropped at the maximum peak in 2000, in the next 20 years the emissions increased by 24.6% and policy interventions are needed in every sector of the economy to reduce them.

Thus, the programme proposes the construction of 600 MW of wind and photovoltaic sources; generation of electricity and heating on biogas - 50 MW; reduction of energy losses in the transport and distribution system, etc.

In the transport sector, it is planned to electrify it and reduce the consumption of fossil fuels by 1%; in the building sector, the rehabilitation of over 5 million square meters of housing, the rehabilitation of heating systems, the installation of biomass thermal power needed heating by heat pumps.

To keep the planet in good living conditions, the countries have committed to keep global warming below 2°C, and for this, by the year 2050, the world is going to become climate neutral, that is, to remove as much CO2 from the atmosphere as it emits.

Joint global efforts are required to mitigate climate change, and the Republic of

Moldova, even if it is responsible for less than 1% of global GHG emissions, is an active participant in efforts to reduce global warming.

With a total budget of 8.8 million euros, the EU4Climate project is implementing during 2019-2023 and has the following components: (i) updating the National Contributions Determined to the Paris Agreement; (ii) the development of national low-emission development strategies towards the year 2050; (iii) introducing and strengthening the framework for monitoring, reporting, and verifying greenhouse gas emissions; (iv) alignment with the community acquis in the climate field; (v) integrating the climate dimension into sectoral policy documents, raising awareness and developing sectoral guidelines for the implementation of the Paris Agreement; (vi) attracting climate change investments; (vii) better climate change adaptation planning.



# Moldovan Government priorities in the field of green and circular economy outlined with the support of EU4Environment “Green Economy”

On 12 September 2023 took place the Meeting of the Inter-ministerial Working Group on the Promotion of Green and Circular Economy

in the Republic of Moldova, EU4Environment Green Economy National Implementation Committee.

The government priorities in the field of green and circular economy including those outlined in the draft Programme on the Promotion of Green and Circular Economy in the Republic of Moldova for the period 2024-2028, the review implementation of the EU4Environment in Moldova in 2023 and discussion of the EU4Environment activities in Moldova by the end of 2023 and follow-up were the objectives of the Meeting of the Inter-ministerial Working Group (WG) on the promotion of Green and Circular Economy.

Thus, the purpose of the Programme on the Promotion of Green and Circular Economy for the period of 2024-2028 is to accelerate the implementation of green economy principles and the adoption of the circular economy concept in the Republic of Moldova, in harmony with economic development and social welfare. The vision of the Programme consists in aligning with the ambitious objectives of the European Green Deal, with the priorities established by the National Development Strategy "European Moldova 2030" in the medium and long term, as well as with the draft Environmental Strategy for the period 2023-2030 and other relevant strategic documents. This implies the strategic orientation of the Republic of Moldova towards a sustainable development, characterized by sustainable economic growth, fair social development, generation of new jobs and responsibility towards the environment.



These meetings are supported by the EU-funded EU4Environment programme, as part of its Output 1.1 on “Green economy ownership, policy coherence and cross-sectorial coordination”, implemented by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). Thanks to the EU’s and UNEP’s support, the Inter-ministerial Working Group has recently marked 8 years of activity (2015-2023). The latest meeting of the WG/NIC took place on 17 February 2023. On July 10, 2023, was signed the joint Order of the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization and the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova which approved the new name, composition, and updated regulation of the WG.

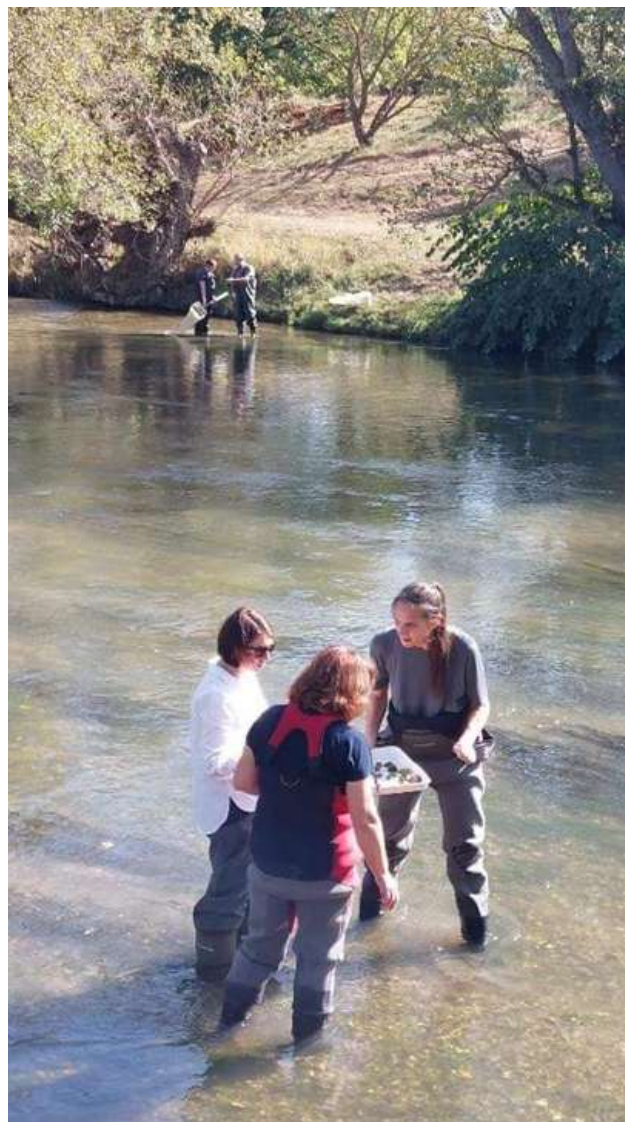


# Moldovan water experts got acquainted with EU best practices in water monitoring during a study visit to Vienna

How is water monitoring organised in the European Union and implemented in Austria? Which analytic procedures and reporting demands does the Water Framework Directive require? Which laboratory infrastructure is needed?

Managers and laboratory experts from the Moldovan Environmental Agency get answers to these questions on a study visit to Austria from October 2 to 5. The visit is organised by the Umweltbundesamt, the Environment Agency Austria (EAA) and Austrian Development Agency, in the framework of the EU4Environment Water Resources and Environmental data programme and includes excursions to sampling locations in the south of Vienna, as well as a training session at the DWS Hydro-Ökologie GmbH.

The aim of the study visit is to strengthen the knowledge on correct implementation of European water monitoring policies, giving insights into Austrian routines and practices and to provide trainings on the biological laboratory work. The programme includes meetings about national, local and international water data collection and reporting at the water management departments of the Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management and of the City of Vienna, as well as at the office of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR). In addition, Moldovan experts receive information on data handling, interpretation and storage.



*“Our know-how transfer helps EU Eastern Partner countries, such as the Republic of Moldova or Ukraine, to step-wise upgrade their water management for the EU Candidate status.*

*As our cooperation exists since 2016, we confirm clear progress at responsible institutions but also understand local challenges to achieve the reforms committed by each Government”,*

***explains Alexander Zinke from EEA, the leader of this EU programme.***



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# Trilateral Prut Declaration signed by the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine

On 20 October, the Trilateral Declaration on Cooperation on the Management of International Water Issues in the Prut River Basin between Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Romania was concluded on occasion of the International Conference "United for Justice. United for Nature" in Kyiv, Ukraine

Ms Iordanca-Rodica Iordanov, Minister of Environment of the Republic of Moldova, Mr Mircea Fechet, Minister of Environment, Water Resources and Forests of Romania and Mr Ruslan Strilets, Minister of Environment Protection and Natural Resources of Ukraine have signed the Declaration. European Union's Environment Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius was present at the event and welcomed the signature.

The Prut River is one of the three longest tributaries of the Danube River, along with the Sava and the Tisza rivers. Until it flows into the Danube, it crosses Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Romania, with a total basin area of 28,396 km<sup>2</sup>. Out for 953

km of the Prut River length, 711 km form a border between the Republic of Moldova and Romania, and 31 km of the river constitute the border between Romania and Ukraine.

## The Declaration strengthens transboundary cooperation on:

- » harmonization of the national management plans for the Prut river basin,
- » monitoring of shared waters
- » flood and drought management,
- » conservation of biodiversity,
- » early warning on accidental water pollution,
- » public participation and awareness raising,
- » joint implementation of the projects and programmes.



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A relevant working group will be created under the auspice of the ICPDR (International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River).

*"We are really pleased with this historic milestone achieved after a long period of political efforts. With this action the countries have recommitted to the principles of integrated water resources management in the transboundary aspect, as laid down*

*in the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention), the ICPDR, and the EU Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC",*

**said Tamara Kutonova from the Water Convention Secretariat.**

Development and signing of the Declaration was facilitated by the EU4Environment Water and Data programme.





## Municipalities in Moldova join forces at river basin level to improve water management

On Monday 25 September, the "Nirnova Basin Intercommunal Development Association" (ADI) was officially registered with the Moldovan authorities and presented at a press conference in the Moldovan Parliament on 17 October.

It is the result of several years of commitment and mobilisation by the mayors and Solidarity Water Europe (SWE), as well as the trust and support of the Moldovan national authorities and institutional partners (Artois Picardie Water Agency, Saint-Omer Urban Planning and Development Agency, French Embassy in Moldova, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation). This Intercommunal Development Association (ADI) is the first form of association of municipalities in the Republic of Moldova.

### **A first association of municipalities at the level of the Nirnova river basin.**

The Intercommunal Development Association (ADI) "Nirnova River Basin" is part of the ambitious reform process initiated by Moldova on the way to European Union integration. It aims to bring together all the communes of the river basin, comprising 30 villages located in the districts of Hîncești and Nisporeni (rayon), with a population of approximately 45,000 inhabitants, the majority of whom live in rural areas.

The member communities of the Association for the Development of Intercommunal Cooperation (ADI) are committed to jointly establishing water resource management in accordance with the principles of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), where water is a limited and vulnerable resource essential for sustaining life, the environment and development.



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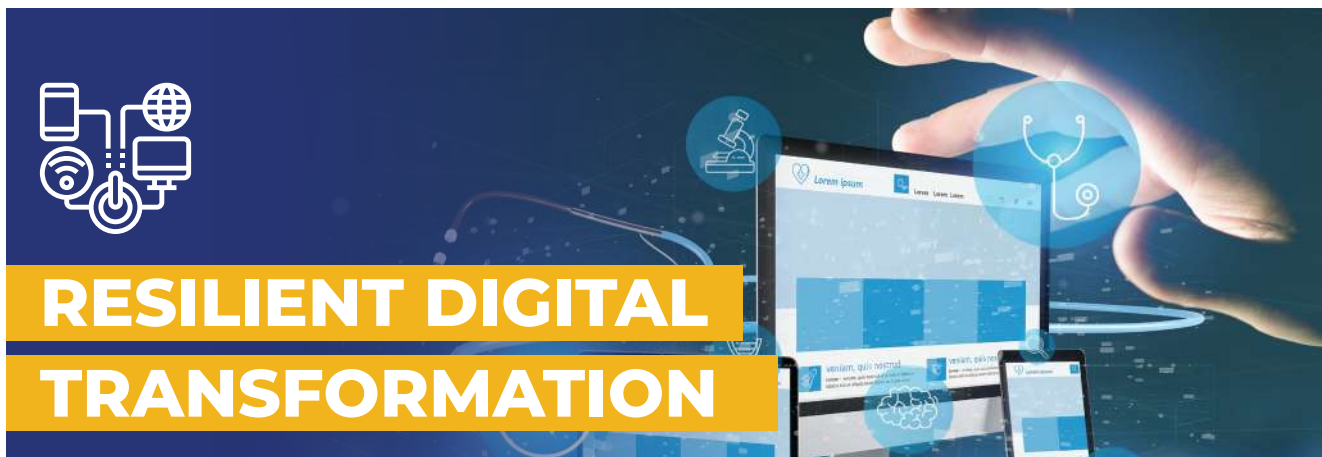
**The EU's support for water in Moldova has materialised through early cooperation with this group of municipalities.**

The EU4Environment Water and Data programme (since 2022) and the EU Water Initiative Plus project (2016-2021) have engaged at the level of the Intercommunal Development Association (ADI) in the Nirnova river basin, recognising that better water management requires management at the local level.

Under the EU Water Initiative Plus project, the development of a Master Plan for the Development of Water and Sanitation

Services, at that time unofficially associated with the Intercommunal Development Association (ADI) in the Nirnova River Basin, and the EU4Environment Water and Data programme, provided support to this Association for the selection of an operator for the water and sanitation services, particularly in the southern sub-basin, which benefited from investment and support for the incubation of three implementation measures related to the Master Plan for the Development of Water and Sanitation Services.





# RESILIENT DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

## EU4Digital report: latest EU eCommerce updates, trends and cooperation opportunities

EU4Digital Facility has published an updated report on the EU baseline for eCommerce in the Eastern Partnership (EaP). The report provides an overview of cross-border eCommerce in the European Union and EU

best practices and norms as a benchmark for assessing the Eastern partner countries' cross-border eCommerce. The report analyses three key areas – legal framework, standards and the eCommerce ecosystem.





The report was produced within the EU4Digital [eTrade](#) thematic area's eCommerce accelerator activities. These activities aim to harmonise cross-border eCommerce between the Eastern partner countries and the EU. The updated EU eCommerce baseline report identifies key aspects that are important for cross-border eCommerce harmonisation:

» In the **legislation area**: consumer and data protection, parcel delivery, Universal Postal Union (UPU) obligations, security of networks and information systems, geo-blocking, liability of online intermediaries and other areas.

» In the **standards area**: development of European standards, provided by the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN), quality of services, interoperability, electronic advanced data and digital customs pre-declarations on items. The report also covers key aspects of interoperability between CEN and UPU standards.

» In the **eCommerce ecosystem area**: cross-border supply chain, eCommerce marketplaces, taxation, payments, logistics.

## Awareness and next steps

In line with the EU eCommerce baseline report updates, the EU4Digital Facility hosted an online event in June 2023 to raise awareness of the topics and changes. In this event, meaningful insights into the evolving landscape of cross-border eCommerce were provided and collaboration opportunities with [eCommerce Europe](#) network were explored.

Overall, EU4Digital's updated EU eCommerce baseline report provides an insightful overview of important changes and challenges regarding the analysis, assessment and development of cross-border eCommerce Eastern partner countries. Recommendations are now being prepared for each country according to their current eCommerce status and the updated report.

The '[eCommerce Report: Analysis Report of the EU eCommerce Baseline in the Legal, Standard and eCommerce Ecosystem Areas](#)' document is available in the EU4Digital online [library](#).

For more information: [EU4Digital report: latest EU eCommerce updates, trends and cooperation opportunities - EU4Digital \(eufordigital.eu\)](#)

# New EU4Digital broadband report: Eastern Partnership connectivity and digital improvement

EU4Digital Facility has published a report on EU best practices in promoting competitive broadband. The report analyses case studies from five EU Member States, sharing experiences that Eastern partner countries may apply when monitoring broadband

market developments and implementing broadband policies. This work will enable EU4Digital and Eastern partner countries to realise digital connectivity targets that support key European Union policy regarding connectivity.



The [‘EU best practice report: promoting competitive broadband’](#) was developed in the EU4Digital Telecom Rules stream of activities. The analysis draws on experiences of broadband facilitation policies and best practices from Germany, France, Lithuania, Romania and Portugal. The report shows that, while the analysed EU Member States facilitate broadband developments based on uniform EU policy targets, their broadband facilitation policies differ based on each national situation.

Developing the report has been part of a wider effort to understand the state of play in the Eastern partner countries in terms of the availability of fixed and mobile broadband internet access services. Gaining this understanding has been a priority in the current, second phase of EU4Digital Facility. Understanding the existing situation is one of the essential first steps towards better connectivity in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) region.

## Towards better connectivity

Connectivity has been a key area of policy for bringing the European Union and Eastern partner countries closer together since the 2017 Eastern Partnership Summit. As set forth three years later in the [Joint Communication for Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020](#), investing in digital infrastructure is one of the key modes of physical connectivity that underpin economic development and the achievement of digital transformation in the Eastern Partnership. To realise digital connectivity targets, EU4Digital Facility has been cooperating closely with the Eastern partner countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine – since 2019. Together, EU4Digital and the Eastern partner countries promote and facilitate

affordable access to high-speed, secure and sustainable digital highways for citizens and businesses, in particular in remote or less densely populated areas.

To achieve better digital connectivity, it is essential to ensure that electronic communications markets offer competitive services to all citizens and businesses. For this purpose, EU4Digital will build on the new report by supporting Eastern partner countries' National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) in performing market analysis of electronic communications markets related to broadband.

More information: [New EU4Digital broadband report: Eastern Partnership connectivity and digital improvement - EU4Digital \(eufordigital.eu\)](#)





# New EU4Digital eCustoms activities expand Ukraine–Moldova–Romania trade potential



EU4Digital Facility kicked off new eCustoms pilot activities on 27 September 2023. The new pilots, between participating customs authorities of Ukraine, Moldova and Romania, build on previous successes. These pilots are part of a wider programme of EU4Digital [eTrade](#) activities to develop cross-border trade in the Eastern Partnership.

The new pilots feature trilateral eCustoms activities between the three countries. These pilots aim to strengthen customs-to-customs data exchanges and introduce advanced customs risk management processes, utilising existing IT solutions.

The previous eCustoms pilots between Moldova/Ukraine and Romania were bilateral. These were designed based on more than eleven years of experience in

using ‘[SEED](#)’, the Systematic Electronic Exchange of Data application in the Western Balkans. In March 2022, the [first eCustoms pilot](#) project tested data exchange between the Romanian Customs Authority and the Customs Service of the Republic of Moldova. This test involved empty trucks crossing the border between Leușeni (Moldova) and Albița (Romania). A similar [pilot in summer 2023](#) was conducted between the Romanian Customs Authority and the State Customs Service of Ukraine, with empty trucks traversing the Siret-Porubne border crossing point (BCP).

In the next phase of eCustoms pilot activities, the Customs Service of the Republic of Moldova, the State Customs Service of Ukraine and the Romanian Customs

Authority are all involved simultaneously. This will contribute to the facilitation of trade and streamlining of exports from Ukraine in the context of the Solidarity Lanes programme. As well as this trilateral pilot, the new activities will include further bilateral eCustoms pilots: Ukraine–Romania and Moldova–Romania.

**The geographic scope of the pilots includes several border crossing points connecting Ukraine and Moldova to the EU, namely:**

- » Porubne (Ukraine) – Siret (Romania)
- » Leușeni (Moldova) – Albița (Romania)
- » Reni (Ukraine) – Giurgiulești (Moldova) – Galați (Romania)

More information:

[New EU4Digital eCustoms activities expand Ukraine–Moldova–Romania trade potential - EU4Digital \(eufordigital.eu\)](https://eufordigital.eu)



# EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul - another young entrepreneur digitises his business thanks to EU support

Stepan Untilov is 31 years old and manages a family business specializing in the production and sale of custom furniture. In the winter of this year, the young man decided to participate in the Digital Upgrade programme, organised by EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul.



*"During these trainings, we noticed several opportunities to develop our internal processes, which would simplify our activity and increase our work speed. And in the end we understood that we can also have an online store with our products",*

**said Stepan Untilov.**

Following the training, Stepan applied to the small grants programme and received MDL 20,000 for the development of the online store. The young man says that he needed this site for Moldovans settled outside the country.

*"We see the online store as a collection point for online orders, because we noticed that there are requests from Moldovans abroad. With the clients who are from Moldova, we meet in the showroom, we demonstrate the works, but for those who live outside the country, we did not have a well-established mechanism",*

**says the entrepreneur.**



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Stepan says that thanks to the courses he attended, he became more responsible and manages his activities more efficiently.

*"The lessons were very interesting. We had tracker for our activities monitoring and for a week we had to complete the goals. In the following week, we are analysing which tasks we managed to complete and which backlogs we have",*

**said Stepan.**

According to the entrepreneur, the Startup City Cahul project plays an important role in the development of businesses in the south of the country.

*"I like that the representatives of Startup City Cahul really try to see the reality of our region and adapt the programs according to this reality,"*

**says the young man.**

Within the Digital Upgrade programme, for three months, representatives of SMEs in the Cahul region benefited from expertise and training from professionals, in order to understand the mechanisms underlying the growth of a successful business in the online environment and to develop the strategy of digital transformation of the business. Afterwards, entrepreneurs had the opportunity to apply for a small grant programme. Both Digital Upgrade and the small grants programme were carried out by EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul, a project implemented by ATIC with the financial support of the European Union in partnership with the Embassy of Sweden.



# EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul kicks off the third edition of Robotics and Programming courses

EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul started the third edition of Robotics and Programming courses for children and teenagers. During the lessons, children between the ages of 5 and 17 have the opportunity to develop their digital and engineering skills. Also, through fun practical lessons, students develop their creativity, logical thinking and learn to work in a team.

*"We are glad that there is interest from children and that we can contribute to the training of the next generation of specialists. Through such initiatives, Startup City Cahul aims to create new opportunities and develop the southern region of the country, because if the people here will be trained and acquire even small digital skills, over time, the economic potential of the region will be strengthened, as well",*

**said Rodica Negru, Deputy Project Director.**



### The new edition includes 6 courses:

- » Young Mechanic – 5- and 6-year-olds use LEGO® Education Sets as an effective tool for studying the elements of mechanics, building non-motorized devices and learning how the technologies around them work.
- » MILO – 7-9 year old students take their first steps in the field of robotics and assimilate the basics of Scratch and Code Blocks programming languages.
- » RoboMaker – 10-12 year olds learn to programme robots that perform 30 automated tasks, using sets of motors, sensors, a powerful controller, as well as Scratch and Python programming languages.
- » Programming and electronics – is a course for students aged between 13 and 17, in which they develop basic programming skills. They learn to develop security systems, Smart Home elements or autonomous cars.

» Graphic Design – 12-15 year old students study 3 indispensable tools for any designer: Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign.

» Web Development – children between the ages of 12 and 15 participate in the course. It involves creating a functional web page using HTML, CSS and JavaScript.

Lessons are taught by technology experts who help children learn the professions of the future. During the first two editions, over 350 children from the south of the country developed skills in Robotics and Programming courses. The courses are held by Startup City Cahul in partnership with Tekwill Academy Kids and take place at the "Inotek" Innovation Centre. The EU4Moldova project: Startup City Cahul is implemented by ATIC and financed by the European Union in partnership with the Swedish Embassy.



# The second phase of the Digital Impact Cahul programme announces its beneficiaries: six projects selected for funding

**DIGITAL IMPACT PROGRAM** CAHUL 2022-2024

**#FAZA2**



Six of the 11 initiatives that advanced to the second stage of the Digital Impact Cahul programme will benefit from digitalization grants. In the second phase, the programme aimed to support, through funding and mentoring, tech startups that need support to strengthen their ability to attract investments and that aim to make an impact for the Cahul region. Here are the beneficiaries and the field in which they operate:

- » Bend.dev (Sumboard Project) – involves an innovative solution that allows anyone, even those without IT knowledge, to create interactive analytical reports;
- » Euroalun (Project of digitization of agricultural companies in the Cahul region) – a project that will digitize at least 30 agricultural businesses in the

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region, covering 4 sectors of agriculture: fruits, wineries, vegetables and annual crops;

» Best of You (MEET & EAT Project) – an innovative solution for restaurants, designed to increase the speed and quality of service. Interactive digital menus will be developed, available in several languages;

» Rocketminds (GoBee Project) – consists of developing an innovative trading platform for the beekeeping industry. The main purpose of the platform is to facilitate and optimize the process of buying and selling bee products;


» Bloombrain (Bloomcoding Bootcamp Project) – aims to make a significant impact in the Cahul region by creating training and employment opportunities for more people at the digital coding school for children;

» Ecar Concept (Echarge Moldova Project) – involves the installation of two electric charging stations for cars and the development of an application for electric car drivers who can easily navigate information on the availability of charging stations in Cahul.

In the second phase of the programme, a total grant budget of MDL 3,900,000 is available. The selected companies benefit from financing worth no more than MDL 780,000 per project, and the digitization initiatives will be implemented in each case through third-party IT companies. At the same time, each beneficiary of the programme will contribute at least 20% of the total value of the digitization initiative.

"The Startup Moldova team assumes the responsibility of efficiently managing all aspects of the project. We will closely monitor the progress of the implementation and ensure that we have all the necessary resources to meet the set objectives. Through all these efforts and with our dedication, we aim to bring about a positive change and actively contribute to the development and prosperity of the Cahul region", said Artiom Pînzari, project coordinator at Startup Moldova.

The Digital Impact programme is carried out by Startup Moldova as part of the EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul project, financed by the European Union in partnership with Sweden and implemented by the National Association of ICT Companies (ATIC).



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