



**STRONGER
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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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MOBILITY AND PEOPLE

Europe Day 2024 was marked in the Republic of Moldova under the theme: “Freedom, Peace, Prosperity – Europe is you!”

The European Union Delegation to the Republic of Moldova, together with the EU Member States’ Embassies marked Europe Day 2024 in several regions of the Republic of Moldova. The traditional European Village took place in Chişinău on 9 May and in Bălţi on 19 May, featuring educational, creative and interactive activities and lots of surprises for all generations!

Under the theme “Freedom, Peace, Prosperity – Europe is you!”, the events organised under the Europe Day 2024 umbrella highlighted the values and culture of the European Union, as well as the assistance provided by the EU and its Member States for the benefit of the citizens of the Republic of Moldova.



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In the capital, the European Village in Chişinău took place in the Great National Assembly Square on 9 May. The event was opened by President Maia Sandu and the European Commissioner for Budget and

Administration - Johannes Hahn. A flux of more than 14,000 people visited 18 EU Member States, which shared their cultural and culinary traditions.



More than 40 EU-funded projects providing assistance in various fields such as rural, economic and social development, informed the visitors about the activities carried out and who are or can become concrete beneficiaries of this assistance. In the evening, people enjoyed an exceptional concert featuring, in premiere, the Ambassador of the European Union to Moldova, Jānis Mažeiks, together with Cristofor Aldea-Teodorovici & Orchestra, singing live, followed by LUPIL lui Calancea, KALUSH Orchestra from Ukraine, Eurovision 2022 winners, and Satoshi.



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Residents throughout Moldova, particularly those in the Northern region, had the opportunity to visit the European Village organised on the occasion of Europe Day on 19 May, in the heart of Bălți. The event culminated with a remarkable concert by Paha Parfeni and Satoshi.

European cuisine was displayed in the European Village in both cities. The events also hosted a range of cultural and interactive activities for all ages. Whereas seniors enjoyed dances and sports activities.



Europe Day 2024 events were also organised in Cahul, Ungheni and other localities in cooperation with EU-funded projects, local

authorities, the network of Euroclubs and European Information Centres across the country.



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Moreover, the traditional European Film and Culture Festival took place during 1 - 31 May in various locations across the Republic of Moldova, including villages and towns. More

than 2,500 people had the opportunity to discover European films, dances, exhibitions and music.



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Model European Union: the first educational simulation exercise of the functioning of the EU took place in Chişinău

80 young people from 20 regions of Moldova and diaspora took part in the European Parliament simulation initiative – [Model EU Moldova](#). The event took place from 12 to 14 April in Chisinau, at the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova.

During three days of masterclasses, debates, talks and the final vote, the participants learnt what it means to be a Member of the European Parliament and to make decisions at the level of the European Union. They attended information sessions, studied real legislative proposals, proposed more than 40 amendments and voted in favour of laws.

The participants also had the opportunity to meet and discuss the role of youth in Moldova's European integration process with

the President of the Republic of Moldova, Maia Sandu; the Speaker of Parliament, Igor Grosu; the EU Ambassador in Chisinau, Jānis Mažeiks; and the Deputy Head of the German Embassy in Moldova, Peter Buschmann.

"Model European Union Moldova" was organised with financial support from the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), within the framework of the "EU4Youth: Youth Engagement and Empowerment" project, implemented by GIZ, in collaboration with the EU NEIGHBOURS east programme and the National Youth Council of Moldova. The event took place in the context of the European Year of Skills, to encourage young people to get involved in the decision-making process.



“My family. The European family” - a campaign that brings Moldovans closer

Launched on 2nd of May, the campaign “My family. The European family” reminds of the cruel reality of the not-so-distant past of the Republic of Moldova, but also of the advantages of European integration. The campaign was implemented at the initiative of the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE), the Institute for Strategic Initiatives (IPIS) and Europe Café, with the European Union (EU) funding. The objective of the campaign is to present to the citizens of the Republic of Moldova the advantages of European integration and the democratic values in general, as well as to fight the disinformation regarding European Union.

The central element of the campaign is the video that presents the story of an 83-year-old woman whose life and family were put to difficult trials.

The idea behind the campaign is to remind Moldovans what life was like in these lands, the dramas of this country, but also of the inhabitants who in the last 80 years have gone through many trials: from war and organised hunger, to deportations, isolation, poverty and illegal migration, tragedies that marked hundreds of thousands of people, destroyed lives and childhoods.



The chance offered by European integration, according to the authors of this campaign, is to be able to guard against possible isolation or limitations and to advance towards a society where fundamental rights are respected. The European integration of the country is today a guarantee for all families in the Republic of Moldova, the fact that they will be able to travel freely, they will be able to see each other, wherever they live.

For the heroine of the campaign, it is unimaginable a future in which Moldovans cannot travel, return home for the holidays, the borders are closed and “we cannot see each other”, or “fences between nations” are put up again and, in which families are separated by conflicts, wars or pandemics.

The Republic of Moldova is represented by its people, and the campaign’s messages are addressed to Moldovans from all corners of the world. The campaign emphasizes the fact that European integration targets everyone and brings benefits to each individual citizen, both for those living in the Republic of Moldova and in the diaspora.

The campaign was implemented during May and June 2024 and is an apolitical initiative, not associated with any political force or politician in particular. This represents the vision of the partner organisations regarding the future of the European integration of the Republic of Moldova and the optimal way to preserve our peace, prosperity and freedom.

The video can be watched here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mR5TTEaAMHo&t=9s>



European hospitals for the people of Moldova with EU, EIB and EBRD support. Technical design phase was launched

The Republic of Moldova is set to transform its healthcare sector, benefiting over a million people with advanced facilities. This vision is becoming a reality with significant support from the European Union, the European Investment Bank (EIB), and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The initiative targets the renovation of ten Republican hospitals for improved energy efficiency, promoting both infrastructural advancements and sustainability.

Technical design phase begun in four hospitals with anticipated energy savings:

Diomid Gherman Institute of Neurology and Neurosurgery (29.6%), Cardiology Institute (51.5%), Republican Diagnostic Medical Center (35.1%), and Psychiatry Clinical Hospital (50%). Specialists are developing processes for designing, constructing, and maintaining buildings to ensure they are safe, functional, efficient, and sustainable. Additionally, technical design companies have been preliminarily selected for four more hospitals: Oncological Institute, Timofei Moşneaga Republican Clinical Hospital, Emergency Medicine Institute, and Mother and Child Institute.



With assistance surpassing EUR 75 million, the EIB, EU, and EBRD aim to enhance the energy efficiency of public buildings across Moldova. Nine of the targeted hospitals are in Chisinau, with one in Balti.

By the end of 2026, these institutions are expected to meet European-quality healthcare standards, featuring advanced energy-efficient technologies and extensive internal renovations.



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"These initiatives are deeply important for us, as budgetary institutions we perpetually need funds to enhance healthcare facilities standards and the overall patient experience,"

mentioned Olga Pinteac, Chief Medical Assistant at the Institute of Emergency Medicine.

Thanks to the Moldova Energy Efficiency Project, energy consumption is projected to decrease dramatically, with estimated annual savings of EUR 2.8 million. Achieving approximately 40% less energy usage, Moldova will gain significant financial benefits, enhance energy security, and reduce CO2 emissions by 6600 tons per year—equivalent to the emissions from 26.4 million kilometers of car travel.

"Nearly half of the energy consumed in the Republic of Moldova is traced back to the building sector. Due to suboptimal energy efficiency, the cost of heating per square meter significantly surpasses that of the European Union. Our strategy to cut energy bills centers on enhancing the energy efficiency of buildings, with the public sector poised to lead this initiative,"

remarked Victor Parlicov, Minister of Energy of the Republic of Moldova.

This project is implemented by NTU International, Moldova's Energy Project Implementation Unit (MEPIU), working with the National Center for Sustainable Energy under the Ministry of Energy. The project is financed by the European Union, European Investment Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.



National Youth Agency of Moldova launched new official website – tineret.gov.md with the EU and German support

As of April, all information about the programmes and activities implemented by the National Youth Agency of Moldova can be accessed on the new website <https://tineret.gov.md/en/>.

This site is intended to become the main source of information for young people, youth workers, youth organisations, youth centres, youth councils, and students, providing direct access to information, contacts, publications, and opportunities for personal and professional development.

Through its user-friendly design and intuitive structure, the platform facilitates users' access to programmes implemented by the

National Youth Agency, a database of key structures and actors in the youth sector, events organised by the Agency and its partners, the latest news, and international opportunities.

The content is available in three languages – Romanian, Russian, and English.

The website tineret.gov.md was created with the financial support of the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) within the 'EU4Youth: Youth Engagement and Empowerment' project, implemented by GIZ.



tineret.gov.md



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National Youth Council of Moldova trains 20 young leaders in participatory decision-making with support from the EU and Germany

From 30 April to 2 May, the National Youth Council of Moldova organised the training 'Youth Participation in Decision Making', which was attended by 20 young people from different regions of the country.

The training took place over three days, offering participants the chance to learn about the significance of their involvement in decision-making processes, identify key issues, and develop effective advocacy strategies. The young participants engaged in interactive activities, case studies, and practical exercises, enhancing their understanding of their societal roles.

Following this training, participants will engage in follow-up activities within their communities to apply and expand upon their newly acquired knowledge and skills.

This activity is part of the grant received by the National Youth Council of Moldova. The funding opportunity is provided within the 'EU4Youth: Youth Engagement and Empowerment' project co-funded by the European Union and German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and implemented by GIZ.



Classical music echoed at the Tighina Fortress, this time in symphonic pop version

The summer edition of the "Symphonic Pop at the Fortress" concert brought together fans of classical music from both banks of the Nistru River. The Moldovan National Youth Orchestra (MNYO) concert was supported by the European Union through the Confidence Building Measures Programme, implemented by UNDP Moldova.

Every year, at the beginning of summer, symphonic concerts are organised in the Tighina Fortress (Bender). The initiative to organise the sixth edition belongs to the hosts. And because tradition is important, the weather outside and the flooding rain were no obstacle for the audience from all over the country.



"This is already our third symphony concert which we attend and each time we are delighted with the wonderful atmosphere and the varied repertoire. We are always surprised by the selection of new and interesting songs, which bring a freshness to each concert."

It is a real pleasure to attend such events, which, in addition to the exceptional musical quality, contribute significantly to the cultural development of our society. It's an amazing experience that we never miss,"

says Dina, a young woman from Tighina (Bender).



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MNYO concerts at the Tighina fortress are becoming popular, with sold out tickets in advance. On the evening of the concert, the 50 young musicians who took to the stage with soloists Felicia Dunaf, Stas Gonciar, Simona and Radu Dolgan created a spectacle by reinterpreting pop songs in a symphonic version.

"I come to Tighina (Bender) especially for the symphony concerts because the atmosphere here is special. The music performed by the artists and the orchestra is of exceptional quality and manages to transport me to a world of harmony and beauty. It's a real cultural refuge that I treasure,"

said Vladislava from Tiraspol.

Year after year, the MNYO concerts organised at the Tighina fortress bring thousands of people together in an open-air concert. This time, conductor Andriano Marian came with a unique symphonic music performance.

The concert "Symphonic Pop at the Fortress" was the sixth concert organised by MNYO with the support of the EU and UNDP. After the restoration and conservation carried out with the support of the EU Programme Confidence Building Measures, implemented by UNDP, the tourist potential of the Tighina Fortress has been further increased, with concerts and cultural events organised on the territory of the fortress ensuring sustainability.

The Confidence Building Measures Programme, funded by the European Union and implemented by UNDP, contributes to building trust between the inhabitants of both sides of the Nistru River by involving them in joint development projects.



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The first stage of the conservation and restoration works of the State Circus in Chişinău has been completed

With an investment of more than 2.2 million euros from the European Union through the "Confidence Building Measures" Programme implemented by UNDP, the first stage of the conservation and restoration works of the State Circus in Chişinău was completed.

After more than a year of works, the circus roof has been repaired and regained its former grandeur. Today, 100% of the dome has been completely replaced with a

European-made galvanised steel roofing with a 50-year guarantee. The flat roof surface is also completely rehabilitated and a new rain drainage system installed. The old insulation material under the roof has been replaced with new water and heat resistant mineral material. This will align the Circus roof structure with energy efficiency requirements, and the new materials will provide better fire protection.



More than 60 engineers, architects, and construction workers took part in the first phase of the conservation and restoration works. In this phase, the glazed facade of the main building was replaced and tempered glass doors and windows with high-quality heat-resistant profiles were installed. After completion of the European Union-funded works, the interiors of the Chişinău Circus are protected from the action of weather.

The funds granted by the European Union through the UNDP-implemented "Confidence Building Measures" Programme covered the costs for detailed technical expertise, technical design, and conservation and restoration works of roof/dome and glass windows.

For the next phases, the Moldovan authorities are expected to attract funding from national resources and from international development partners.



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The Circus of Chişinău is a building of outstanding architectural value, one of the highest examples of modern “brutalist” style world-wide, and since May 2022, the building has been included in the Register of State Protected Monuments. The restoration and conservation of the Circus is carried out in accordance with national and international standards.

Within the framework of the European Union Programme “Confidence Building Measures”, implemented by UNDP Moldova, restoration and conservation works are being carried out on 12 cultural-historical sites on both sides of the Nistru river, including two major flagship projects: the Circus in Chişinău and the Tighina (Bender) Fortress.

The Programme contributes to building trust between the inhabitants of both sides of the Nistru River by involving them in joint development projects.



A large-scale information campaign on internships in state institutions, carried out in April-May by the EU High Level Advisers' Mission

The third edition of the joint EU – Government of the Republic of Moldova Internship Programme, was officially launched on 16 April in the Academy of Economic Studies, and continued later in April in Balti

State University 'Alec Russo', Cahul State University 'B.P. Haşdeu' and State University of Moldova, with over 500 students attending the events. An online event for students from diaspora gathered over 1700 viewers.



The Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova, Dorin Recean, opened the event with an encouraging statement addressed to the young people:

"Moldova has talented and innovative young people, and I am happy to witness that more and more often they opt for a career in the public sector."

The young people start as interns in our Internship programme and then become members of the State Chancellery's or ministries' teams."

The speakers of the events shared their career stories, motivating young people to join the public administration. Among these were European and Moldovan officials, EU High Level Advisers, as well as graduates of the previous editions of the programme who already work in the public administration.

The Internship Programme edition this year is launched in the context of the European Year of Skills.



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65 young people will become interns of the third edition of the joint Internship Programme of the European Union and the Government of the Republic of Moldova

65 young people were selected, following a competitive process, to become interns of this year's edition of the joint Internship Programme of the European Union and the Government of the Republic of Moldova. The festive opening ceremony of the Programme took place today, at the Government House. The event also marked the launch of the second edition of the Government's Internship Programme, with 47 interns enrolled there.

In her address to the interns, the State Secretary of the State Chancellery emphasised that "the public service stands at the basis of European integration; the progress of the Republic of Moldova on the path of European integration depends a lot on the skills and capacities of the public administration."

The programme, with a duration of two months, involves working side by side with civil servants from the central public institutions, having the EU High Level Advisers as mentors – which will strengthen the young people's skills and subsequently increase their chances of employment. The programme also foresees regular trainings, seminars, workshops to consolidate the interns' theoretical and practical knowledge in the various sectors of the public administration in the context

of EU integration. The interns will receive a monthly allowance, the programme being fully financed by the European Union.

The finalists include students, master students and recent graduates from higher education institutions in the country and abroad – young people eager to start their careers in public institutions and contribute to the modernisation of the country.

The launch of the Programme was preceded by an extensive information campaign, carried out in four of the largest universities in the country, with the participation of over 500 students, but also online, for Moldovan students in the diaspora, watched by over 1700 young people. The programme is carried out on the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding, signed by the Government of the Republic of Moldova, the Council of Rectors and the EU High Level Advisers' Mission. Details about the Programme, the selection criteria, the procedure for submitting files are available at <https://www.eu-advisers.md/ro/internship/>.

Previous two editions of the Programme were successfully implemented in 2022 and 2023, resulting in some of its graduates already being employed in the public institutions. This year's edition is launched in the context of the European year of Skills.



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The National Volunteer Recruitment Campaign - Be Honest, Don't Copy!

Following the initiative of the Ministry of Education and Research to ensure the integrity of the national assessment process at the secondary school level (9th grade), the National Volunteer Recruitment Campaign - Be HONEST, Don't Copy! - was launched.

The integrity campaign has produced several notable outcomes. It has ensured equal conditions for all participants in the 9th grade graduation exams, creating a level playing field for students. This initiative has also significantly increased the integrity of the examination process, leading to a noticeable reduction in cases of cheating and corruption. Furthermore, the campaign has fostered a culture of honesty and integrity within the educational system, encouraging students to rely on their own knowledge rather than dishonest means.

Additionally, the campaign has promoted active civic participation in preventing corruption, contributing to the growth of a more correct and honest society.

The National Volunteer Recruitment Campaign - Be Honest, Don't Copy! is supported by the project "Strengthening the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Mechanisms in the Republic of Moldova," co-financed by the European Union, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and the UK Government. The implementing partners of the campaign are the Ministry of Education and Research and the National Agency for Curriculum and Assessment.



Three playgrounds renovated with the EU financial support

Playgrounds are the best place for children and their parents of different nationalities to play, make friends and socialize within the local community.

In the Republic of Moldova, the playground means more opportunities for Ukrainian refugees, third-country nationals and host communities to meet, interact and share valuable time.

In May and June 2024, three playgrounds were handed over by the European Union as part of the project “*Strengthening Moldova’s national capacities to ensure quality protection, education, health services and socio-economic opportunities for Ukrainian refugees*” implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the Republic of Moldova and funded by the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments of the European Commission.



On 2 May, the first IOM-renovated playground was handed over to Otaci during a ceremony hosted by Dmitrii Zavrotschii, Mayor of Otaci, Marcia Kammitisi, representative of the European Commission's Foreign

Policy Instruments Service, and the IOM representative.

On May 27, a renovated and equipped playground was delivered to a village in ATU Gagauzia, Comrat district.



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On 19 June, next to the reception center for refugees in the village of Popeasca, Stefan Voda district, the local community, the European Union and IOM Moldova celebrated the delivery of a new playground where Ukrainian, Roma and Moldovan children and their parents enjoyed the equipment, played ping-pong and practiced sports in the fitness area.

Since the center is located next to the Popeasca Gymnasium, the playground will also be frequented by students. The handover ceremony was attended by the mayor of the village of Popeasca, Ion Pădureț, the representative of the EU delegation, Marcia Kammitzi, the IOM Moldova's Chief of Mission, Lars Johan Lönnback, and many children and adults from the local community.

Two Moldovan Lyceums received sports and technical equipment donated by the European Union

In May 2024, the International Organization for Migration in the Republic of Moldova delivered sports equipment, uniforms, and technical equipment to the Lyceum Dimitrie Cantemir, in Rascani city, and the Constantin Popovici Lyceum in Nihoreni, Râșcani district, within a project generously funded by the European Union.

Natalia Chiperi, headmaster of the Lyceum Dimitrie Cantemir, said

"Now that the children have high quality sports equipment and really nice uniforms, they will represent our Lyceum at a higher level and will get better at competitions."



Lars Johan Lönnback, IOM Moldova's Chief of Mission, met the students and told them the story of the origin of the marathon, and encouraged to practice sports:

"I have already managed to run a marathon in the Republic of Moldova, and the next one will be in October, in Tbilisi."

Both mental and physical well-being can be developed and maintained by practicing sports and a healthy life, during all your life, tell your parents to follow your example."



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"The Ukrainians of the Râșcani district represent a resource for Moldovan society"

said Alina Guțul, headmaster of the Constantin Popovic Lyceum.

"The integration of Ukrainian children into Moldovan society passes through the formation of intellectual and physical ability, according to all modern educational policies. For this reason, we need modern technical equipment and sports equipment".

The handover event included a lesson and quizzes for students on the importance of sport for the general health of children.

"Sport has a positive impact on my life because it helps me develop both physically and emotionally. And I really like the new uniform",

said enthusiastically Denis, a student from Nihoreni.



12 youth organisations from across the country have drafted a joint advocacy call on improving the situation of young people in Moldova and will hand over to the authorities

25 young people from all over the country worked in June to develop an advocacy plan that implies public policy interventions and recommendations on youth well-being. These cover young people's psycho-emotional health, career guidance to increase young people's employability and sexual and reproductive health education.

Young people are part of the MYCS network - Moldova Youth Civil Society, which consists of 12 youth organisations from all over the country. They met, between June 17 and 20, at the Advocacy and Communication Camp for network members, where, guided

by the Partnerships for Development Center and the Youth Media Center, they learned how to develop an advocacy plan, as well as techniques and tools for public communication, for better participation at local level and dialogue with decision makers and for promoting more effectively strategies and solutions for the benefit of young people.

The participants carried out a comprehensive analysis of the situation of young people based on existing official data and identified a series of pressing issues young people face today that need to be tackled immediately.



Following this analysis, participants worked on a plan of interventions and public policy recommendations to alleviate the problems faced by young people. The interventions focused on the modification of the current legislative framework on the three areas - psycho-emotional well-being, vocational guidance and sexual education - as well as on information and education actions for society.

The *"Unique advocacy call of MYCS organisations on improving the situation of young people in Moldova"* is to be hand over to the relevant authorities in order for them to take action upon it.

After drafting the document, representatives of youth organisations learned how to present their communication strategies and tools in advocacy campaigns, how to tailor messages to the target audience and how to choose and use communication channels

effectively. They also learned more about the role of social networks in promoting advocacy messages and how to work with the media to make themselves more visible and heard.

The project *"MYCS: Moldova Youth Civil Society – a Call for Stronger and Inclusive Youth Participation"* runs between 2022-2024 and aims to strengthen the capacities of local youth civic actors to deliver inclusive and sustainable youth participation and empowerment programs and services.

The MYCS project is co-funded by the European Union and is implemented by Terre des hommes Moldova Foundation, in partnership with the Foundation for Civil Society Development (Romania) and the Partnership for Development Centre (Moldova). The Advocacy and Communication Camp was organised by the Youth Media Centre as part of the project.



“Gender Equality in STEM” – Summer school at the Technical University of Moldova

A summer school exploring the topics of gender equality and STEM was organised by the Technical University of Moldova from June 17 to 28. The summer school was dedicated to high school students, aged 15 to 19, and aimed at inspiring and encouraging girls to pursue a career in engineering, as well as promoting the importance of gender equality in STEM fields. It offered to its 50 participants a comprehensive experience, thanks to the theoretical and practical program, as well as through networking activities and visits to companies such as Moldcell, StarNet, Gilat Satellite Networks as well as the Moldovan Association of ICT companies (ATIC) and the Astronomical Observatory of the Technical University of Moldova. The activities were structured into several modules. Students attended workshops aimed at familiarising young people with the concept of gender equality and its importance in the field of electronics and telecommunications. They have also

designed and built electronic devices, such as remotely controlled lights, simple robots, or environmental sensors. A workshop on emergent technologies, exploring their potential and applications in everyday life and various industries was also organised.

“I was left with only positive impressions after this camp. I especially liked the practical workshops, I learned how to cut a cable, how to arrange wires, how electric motor circuits function. I learned a lot of interesting information during the company visits. The camp changed my perspective on STEM fields, sparking my interest in these fields.” mentioned Alexandra Volontir, a participant in the camp.

The summer school was carried out within the framework of the project "EVOLVE4GE – Accelerating Gender Equality by Empowering Women through Economic Opportunities, Combating Violence, and Gender-Sensitive Governance," funded by the European Union and implemented by UN Women Moldova.



Raisa Puscasu, the President's census enumerator: "It was a unique experience"

On the last evening of May, we had the opportunity to talk to Raisa Puscasu, a 35-year-old woman from Chisinau, who had the honour to interview President Maia Sandu for the 2024 Population and Housing Census. This is not only a special event, but also a proof of Raia's commitment and dedication to this important exercise for the country.



Raia is an example of dedication and resilience. Her experience as a reviewer not only helps her to contribute to the collection of essential data for the country's development, but also gives her the opportunity to grow personally and professionally.

Raisa doesn't work in statistics, but her studies in mathematics and computer science make her comfortable with data collection. She agreed to become a numerator, as it is an activity that allows her to combine her passion for numbers with a desire to socialise and contribute to the good of the community.

Raia is a census taker in the Buiucani sector of the capital, and her working day is full of challenges.

The enumerator starts her working day with optimism, but often she has had to face people's reticence.

"There are a lot of people who have fears, who are totally misinformed. We try to explain to them the purpose of the census, and most of the time we manage to reach a consensus to get them registered," she says. Despite the difficulties, she remains calm and determined. She is not discouraged even when she must return to the same address several times without success. "Some people just don't want to open the door. I hear footsteps up to the visor then silence... But still the number of receptive people is much higher. Just recently I had the honour to meet and „count" President Maia Sandu, who was very open and receptive, she even offered me a coffee, it was a unique experience",

she says proudly.

With a positive attitude, Raia continues to make a difference in her community, demonstrating that everyone matters and can make a difference in the country.

Raisa Puscasu is one of more than four thousand census takers, temporary employed by the National Bureau of Statistics to conduct the 2024 census from 8 April to 7 July.

The Population and Housing Census takes place with the support 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 Population and Housing Census is carried out every 10 years and is the most important national statistical exercise that provides a complete demographic 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 the development of the Republic of Moldova.



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A new EU-funded project: TRIMEDIA – Trustworthy Reporting, Impactful Media, Engaged Communities

For the public launch of the project **TRIMEDIA – Trustworthy Reporting, Impactful Media, Engaged Communities**, DW Akademie and the Association of Independent Press (API) brought together over 50 journalists from local and national media, as well as representatives of public authorities and international organisations. Starting with an interactive exercise which took them through an imaginative trip of journalistic hardships, the guests of the event found out about the goals of the TRIMEDIA project.

Specifically, the aim is to strengthen the capacities of the media community and of media consumers to produce and access quality information, and thus to increase the resilience of communities against disinformation. Olena Ponomarenko, program director for Moldova at DW Akademie, highlighted the value of the project's twofold approach: „*TRIMEDIA will contribute to a safer information ecosystem by supporting media, but also the audiences, who then will develop more responsible media consumption habits.*”



Thus, during May 2024-January 2026, DW Akademie and API will organise a series of activities centered around training and assisting the media as „watchdogs” of democratic changes, enabling an open public dialogue.

A distinct component of the project will focus on the production and dissemination of media and information literacy (MIL) content: a series of edutainment TV shows catering to elderly audiences in partnership with the public broadcaster Teleradio-Moldova, and

a comic series for youth that will be taken across the country in a „roadshow” format.

At the same time, journalists and newsrooms will benefit from a three-dimensional security training and assistance program. This will help them better face physical, digital and psychological threats, and will provide them with practical tools to this end. A dedicated helpline will be open to all the journalists wishing to address their psychological wellbeing.

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On a local level, Crisis Communication Chapters (CCC) will be created in the districts of Causeni and Soroca. The highly collaborative format will allow local authorities, civil society and media to create information packages for their communities.

All the while, local media will benefit from small grants. In the words of Petru Macovei, API's executive director, it

„will spur journalists to take up more topics of public interest, such as social cohesion, human rights, minorities or anti-corruption. Local communities should be better informed, and it will help improve our societal resilience.”

The project "**TRIMEDIA** – *Trustworthy Reporting, Impactful Media, Engaged Communities,*" is implemented by DW Akademie in partnership with the Association of Independent Press, with the financial support of the European Union and co-funded by the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).





Human Rights Defenders benefit of valuable information resources created with the support of the European Union

The access of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) to useful and necessary information resources for their work is facilitated thanks to new materials, created by the [Legal Resources Centre from Moldova \(LRCM\)](#) with the support of the European Union. The information materials, available online, are intended for all citizens who defend and promote human rights and those who are civically active, but can also serve as a guide for members of civil society or anyone interested in the field of human rights.

[The Brief Guide to Identifying, Assessing, Assisting and Monitoring Human Rights Defenders at Risk](#) is a publication that contains key information on international standards relevant to the work of HRDs and provides some benchmarks for mapping the situation of HRDs and the organisations that protect them. The guide also describes the basic steps for identifying HRDs, the risks faced by HRDs and/or their families, and the stages for monitoring HRDs' cases examined by the courts. Those who have taken on the role of HRD and the non-governmental

organisations that are committed to supporting them will also find in this guide useful information on how to report cases of intimidation or threats against HRDs, as well as how to document, analyse and assess cases of intimidation of people peacefully defending human rights.

Another useful informational resource is the infographic on [7 steps to cybersecurity for Human Rights Defenders \(...and not only\)](#). This material provides an overview of the potential risks that HRDs, but also activists or members of civil society may face, given the more sensitive nature of the work of some of them. The infographic includes various links to online platforms and tools to help HRDs to minimize and eliminate cybersecurity dangers. Among the tips available in the material developed by LRCM are those on creating strong passwords, multi-factor authentication for access to email, information storage or social media accounts, updating the operating systems of the devices used, and tips on how to securely connect to free Wi-Fi networks.



Both informative materials were created 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, with the financial support of the European Union.

This project is one of the few in the country that has raised awareness in society on the role of HRDs and emphasised the importance of the values that stem from the promotion and respect for human rights.

The environment for Human Rights Defenders improved thanks to an EU-funded project lasting more than three years

Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in the Republic of Moldova have become more resilient thanks to efforts to ensure and strengthen a favourable and safe environment for their activity, made possible through a project funded by the European Union. For more than three years, the [Legal Resources Centre from Moldova \(LRCM\)](#) in partnership with EcoContact Association and the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) have carried out information, capacity building and advocacy activities targeting HRDs and representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs).

The results of the project [“Shields for Human Rights Defenders – Supporting Human Rights Defenders in the Republic of Moldova”](#), were presented during a closing event held at the end of May and attended by representatives of the European Union,

implementing partners, as well as some HRDs who directly benefited from support through this project.

In total, 464 HRDs and 35 institutions were involved in training activities in the field of personal and digital security and participated in training sessions for environmental HRDs. The project provided legal assistance to individuals who have been summoned to court for defending or promoting human rights in the Republic of Moldova.

In parallel, an awareness-raising and information campaign on the Human Rights Defender concept was carried out through 16 information materials, dedicated to both the wider public and the HRDs. In addition, three guides for emergencies that HRDs may encounter and an action guide for environmental rights defenders were developed.



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At the project closing event, David Buerstedde, Political Officer at the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova, emphasised the EU's increased attention and support for the promotion and respect of human rights in our country. In his turn, Daniel Goinic, Programme Director at the LRCM, expressed his confidence that the efforts to strengthen an enabling environment for HRDs will not stop with the completion of this project and that other equally necessary initiatives in society will follow. Dumitru Cimpoieş, the young man who took on the role of HRD, spoke on behalf

of all those who were directly supported through the project and thanked for the legal assistance he received, which made him not feel alone in the situation he faced.

The event also included the presentation of the findings of the independent evaluation report of the project. The document states that the results achieved are promising, taking into account the budgetary limits of the project, and that the actions initiated need to be continued in order to maintain the positive trend of improving the environment for HRDs.



Building a more supportive and tolerant environment for LGBTI children

The international Felis conference 2024, organised by the NGO Genderdoc-M with support of the EU/Council of Europe joint project “Combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Republic of Moldova”, took place in Chisinau. It aimed to raise awareness on issues faced by LGBTI children. Accordingly, presentations and discussions focused on preventing bullying in schools, countering hate speech against

LGBTI teenagers, as well as on developing strategies to build a more supportive and tolerant environment for LGBTI children in schools by advancing reforms locally.

The event commemorated the Moldovan young transgender named Felis, who committed suicide in 2022 because of severe bullying and hatred that she faced, and to remember all the LGBTI individuals lost because of queerphobia



The conference brought together more than 130 participants - parents of LGBTI children, CSOs activists from all over the world, as well as representatives of anti-discrimination institutions and other relevant actors with expertise in the field of education and psychology from the Republic of Moldova. It provided a platform for exchange of experiences among parents, discussing challenges faced, promoting inclusion, ensuring adequate support and protection to those in need.

The protection of the human rights of LGBTI persons has always been one of the key priorities for the Council of Europe, and in this domain, good cooperation has been

established with civil society organisations in the Republic of Moldova. The joint efforts in supporting and protecting the human rights of LGBTI persons and other vulnerable groups shall be continued, taking into account relevant standards and examples of good practices at European and international level.

This activity was organised by Genderdoc-M with the support 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, in the framework of the project [Combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Republic of Moldova](#).

Exchange on anti-discrimination practices between institutions from Malta and the Republic of Moldova

Representatives of the national Equality Council and of the Advocate Office, led by heads of both institutions, Ian Feldman and Ceslav Panico, paid a visit to relevant Maltese counterparts on 16 and 17 April 2024, with the aim to learn from the experience of Maltese authorities in countering hatred and protecting the rights of vulnerable persons.

The visit started with a courtesy meeting with the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta, Hon. Anglu Farrugia, to discuss about the activities initiated by the Maltese Parliament aiming to become more accessible for citizens and respond to their needs, outlining examples in the area of children, youth, and elderly people protection.

Further, the delegation from the Republic of Moldova engaged in an exchange with the Parliamentary Ombudsman of Malta, Judge Emeritus Joseph Zammit McKeon and its team. The meeting focused on the implementation of European standards in preventing and combating discrimination, best practices and challenges related to institutions' mandates, successful cooperation between actors in the anti-discrimination field, including public authorities, civil society, academia and private sector.

Rhoda Garland, the Commissioner for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) and her team also welcomed the Moldovan delegation, sharing practices in assessing anti-discrimination legislation and policies and ensuring adequate protection for persons with disabilities, ensuring efficient



and accessible complaints mechanisms in cases of discrimination for blind, deaf and other marginalized persons, including monitoring observance and compliance of the rights of persons with mental disabilities.

A meeting was also held with Renee Laiviera, Commissioner & Acting Executive Director of the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality of Malta (NCPE). This was an opportunity to learn more about tools to respond to discrimination, in line with European standards, based on the NPCE experience at national level and discuss the main challenges in preventing and combating discrimination. As an important aspect, the preventive role was tackled, through improving awareness raising for a better protection of rights of vulnerable persons and groups.

During all meetings, the importance of joining efforts between the Equality bodies and Ombudsman institutions to prevent and combat discrimination and increase equality in society has been highlighted. In addition, the mutual understanding on challenges faced by anti-discrimination actors from different countries was underscored, and a range of opportunities for future cooperation were identified, which will enhance the capacities of institutions in Moldova to respond more effectively to discrimination issues.

The study visit was organised 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, in the framework of the project [Combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Republic of Moldova](#).



Advancing cooperation in combating hate speech, sexism, and other forms of gender-based violence ahead of presidential election

A roundtable organised on 26 April by the Council of Europe and European Union in partnership with the Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova and UN Women gathered over 50 participants representing political parties, media, national and local authorities, civil society, as well as individual citizens. The aim was to jointly address measures needed to tackle hate speech, gender-based intolerance and sexism during the election period, building on lessons learned in the context of the local general elections in autumn 2023.

"Any manifestations of hatred or intolerance directly contradict with the core values of the European Union - respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights. In collaboration with partners such as UN Women, the Council of Europe, the Audio Visual Council, and the Central Election Commission, the EU remains steadfast in its commitment to combat hate crimes, sexism, and gender-based violence. This commitment extends to the forthcoming Presidential Elections campaign in the Republic of Moldova and beyond",

mentioned Jānis Mažeiks, EU Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova.

At the opening of the event, Falk Lange, the Head of the Council of Europe Office in Chisinau, highlighted that:

"the Council of Europe's commitment to democratic values forms the departure point for our support to create an electoral environment free from discrimination and harmful rhetoric, in particular in the context of electoral campaigns. In this sense, through this event we aim to increase the level of understanding for the issues of hate speech, sexist speech and other forms of gender-based violence and to combat these phenomena in the upcoming electoral campaign for presidential elections."



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The discussions focused on the results of monitoring sexist behaviour and hate speech in audiovisual media during the 2023 local elections, on the forms of gender-based legal liability and tools and best practices to combat this phenomenon during the electoral period.

As an outcome of the event, participants agreed upon the importance of continuing cooperation and joining efforts in order to counter discrimination, hate speech, sexism and ensuring equal rights for all. The participants also agreed to safeguard the human dignity of those targeted by hate speech, and for ensuring that they are not excluded from the public debate, especially

in the context of the upcoming autumn Presidential election and the constitutional referendum on the EU future of the Republic of Moldova.

The event is part of a joint initiative of the CoE project [Improving electoral practices in the Republic of Moldova, Phase III](#), 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 Congress project [Reinforcing the culture of dialogue and ethical open local governance in the Republic of Moldova](#), CoE project [Enhancing diversity and equality in the Republic of Moldova](#).



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EU4Accountability culminates in first Civic Engagement Conference

The first edition of the Civic Engagement Conference served as a multi-stakeholder coordination platform on public participation and the implementation of the Law on Access to Public Interest Information. On June 5, the Civic Engagement Conference took place in Chisinau, marking an important milestone in the Republic of Moldova's

efforts to strengthen civic participation and accountability through the EU accession process. The event, organised within the framework of the EU4Accountability funded by the European Union, addressed the challenges of civic engagement and the role of citizens' participation in decision-making processes at the national and local levels.



The conference brought together representatives of public authorities, civil society organisations (CSOs), and civic initiatives to reflect on common strategies to improve the active participation of citizens throughout the political cycle. Participants engaged in discussions on tools for public participation, mechanisms for collaboration between authorities and civil society, and the impact of national transparency policies on local governance.

The conference featured two central debates. The first focused on the implementation of the laws on access to information and included contributions from Ana Calinici, State Secretary of the State Chancellery, Member of Parliament Olesea Stamate, Ion Bocan from the National Institute of Justice, and Nicolae Panfil from Promo-Lex. The second panel addressed the current challenges in the decision-making

process, the identification of priority actions, and the establishment of cooperation strategies between authorities and CSOs, with contributions from key actors from the government, local authorities, and civil society representatives.

Main issues discussed included the difficult access of local NGOs to national decision-making processes, lack of representativeness, an outdated law on transparency, and obstacles to the effectiveness of new cooperation platforms.

Conference participants also discussed the key challenges in the decision-making processes in the Republic of Moldova, highlighting obstacles such as limited resources and lack of direct communication with decision-makers, which hinders their ability to influence policies that affect communities.

Another critical issue discussed was the lack of representation of CSOs in decision-making institutions. Panellists highlighted the disconnect between governing institutions and the population, which leads to decisions that neglect the needs of marginalised groups and smaller communities, amplifying their voices in governance discussions.

Conference participants also discussed the effectiveness of new platforms for cooperation between civil society and different institutions. They proposed the establishment of more platforms for dialogue and cooperation while expressing concern about their effectiveness in addressing the fundamental issues of participatory governance. Participants also highlighted the need for these platforms to become inclusive, dynamic, and responsive to ensure meaningful civic engagement.

Moreover, representatives of the Center for Policy and Reforms (CPR Moldova) spoke about the establishment of a monitoring mechanism for the Law on Access to Information of Public Interest, coordinated with the Open Government Platform of the Republic of Moldova and the State Chancellery.

Best practices from the EU4Accountability, which supported capacity development of local authorities and CSO staff in the Republic of Moldova, enabling 59 CSOs to carry out small-scale projects in the field of civic engagement, participatory budgeting, and policy development, were also mentioned at the conference.



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, Cimislia, Falesti, Floresti, Glodeni, Riscani, Straseni, Stefan Voda, Telenesti) and provides for a total budget of EUR 1.6 million.

The European Union strengthens the International Organization for Migration's intervention for vulnerable Ukrainian refugees and third country nationals in the Republic of Moldova

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is providing assistance to Ukrainian refugees and third-country nationals who fled the Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and are currently residing in Moldova, within the Action "Addressing urgent humanitarian needs of the vulnerable refugees and third-country nationals in the Republic of Moldova" funded by the European Union.

The EU financial support of €1.2 million strengthens IOM's intervention in the

country by ensuring that vulnerable refugees and third-country nationals receive multi-purpose cash assistance and protection services until the end of 2024. This Action will specifically target the population at risk of falling outside humanitarian response efforts or social protection schemes, notably refugees and third-country nationals in the Transnistrian region and in rural areas of Moldova.



The vulnerable people who are eligible for financial support to purchase food and pay for healthcare expenses, hygiene items, rent, clothing and other basic needs are identified through advanced software. In addition, a standard vulnerability criteria scorecard was

developed in coordination with UNHCR and the Inter-Agency Cash Working Group.

The IOM Mobile Protection Teams provide individual protection assistance to vulnerable refugees and third-country nationals fleeing Ukraine, including those living far from



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urban centers or in rural areas. This type of assistance is based on the assessment of their needs, vulnerabilities, and protection risks. It includes legal advice, mental health assistance, one-time cash support to address urgent needs and referrals to regular pathways.

The Action is funded by the European Union, through the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations department (DG ECHO). It is implemented by IOM in close cooperation with relevant institutions and civil society organisations in the Republic of Moldova.

The European Union and its Member States are among the world's leading donors of humanitarian aid. Relief assistance is an

expression of European solidarity with people in need all around the world. It aims to save lives, prevent and alleviate human suffering, and safeguard the integrity and human dignity of populations affected by disasters and human-induced crises. Through the Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations of the European Commission, the European Union helps millions of victims of conflict and disasters every year. With headquarters in Brussels and a global network of field offices, the EU provides assistance to the most vulnerable people on the basis of humanitarian needs. For more information about DG ECHO, please access [European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations \(europea.eu\)](https://europea.eu)



Civil society resilience and media response to the war in Ukraine

Thanks to the support of the European Union, People in Need Moldova is assisting and empowering local civil society to cope with all the challenges that have arisen in the aftermath of the war in Ukraine.

Recently in Chisinau, we summed up our regional project "Civil Society Resilience and Media Response to the War in Ukraine". Under the project, 8 civil society organisations from the Republic of Moldova have provided people affected by the war with various types of assistance such as legal advice, psycho-emotional support, regular food distribution, and other basic needs.

At the same time, to build an informed, aware community ready to face information challenges, we offered media literacy

training to young and senior citizens from 12 districts of the country. As part of the project, we provided young people with training to distinguish fake news from the truth. This was possible thanks to the support of our local partners: the National Network of Local Youth Councils of Moldova and the Association of Librarians of the Republic of Moldova.

To find out more about the results of the project, both in the Republic of Moldova and in the other countries involved, please visit this interactive map.

The regional project has been implemented by the consortium led by People in Need, in partnership with the Prague Civil Society Center and the Netherlands Helsinki Committee and is funded by the European Union.



The EU-RM Civil Society Platform's message: committed to bolstering European integration and fighting misinformation within the 13th meeting of the Platform

On April 16, 2024, the 13th meeting of the EU-Moldova Civil Society Platform took place. During this event, the progress of the Republic of Moldova on the path of European integration was discussed, together with the main challenges (especially related to the justice system) and emergencies in terms of reforms, and the Chisinau authorities were encouraged to continue the dialogue with civil society organisations in with a view to promoting reforms, strengthening democratic institutions, fighting corruption and fighting disinformation.

"The civil society plays a crucial role in the journey of the Republic of Moldova towards EU.

Acknowledging this, we stress the importance of informing people about the benefits of EU integration, promoting ongoing reforms and fostering social cohesion. We appreciate civil society organisations for their active involvement and encourage them to continue supporting the Moldovan authorities in their reform efforts and in fighting misinformation. We also appreciate the Moldovan authorities for increasing the participation of civil society in decision-making processes and encourage a closer cooperation in accession negotiations. Only together, through joint efforts, we can we lead Moldova towards an European future,"

said Jānis Mažeiks, the Ambassador of the European Union in the Republic of Moldova.



A special emphasis was placed on the need to drive reforms on the dimension of consumer protection, considering the importance of this field for the safety of the population, but also for the development of a truly European economy where the rules of the market economy, fair competition and the promotion of honest business.

The joint statement, signed by representatives of civil society organisations, trade unions and employers' associations, in which the participants' assessments of the European integration process and the immediate priorities in this regard are presented, is available on the [euromonitor.md website](https://euromonitor.md).

The European Union – Republic of Moldova Civil Society Platform was established on the basis of Article 442 of the Association Agreement and is made up of representatives

of the EU civil society, including members of the European Economic and Social Committee, and representatives of the Moldovan civil society. It is a forum for meeting and exchanging views on issues related to the implementation of the Association Agreement, development challenges of the Republic of Moldova, etc.

The thirteenth meeting of the European Union – Republic of Moldova Civil Society Platform was held within the project "Civil Society for European Integration" project funded by the European Union and co-funded by Friedrich Ebert Foundation Moldova and implemented by Expert-Grup Independent Think Tank, as the main partner, in partnership with the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IEPR), NGO Institutum Virtutes Civilis (IVC) and Friedrich Ebert Foundation Moldova.



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Roundtable to discuss results of the new regional service for victims of sexual violence

On 25 April 2024, UN Women held a roundtable to discuss Moldova's first Regional Integrated Service for Victims of Sexual Violence, presenting results from its first six months of operation. The event brought together representatives of local and central public authorities, members of multidisciplinary teams, civil society, and the international community, demonstrating the importance of a coordinated and multisectoral response to violence.

Victims of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, face numerous challenges in Moldova, from fear of stigma to a lack of specialized services and other barriers to accessing justice. A 2018 survey by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe found that nearly 40 per cent of women in Moldova have experienced physical and/or sexual violence.

To eliminate these barriers, UN Women partnered with local public authorities and civil society to open Moldova's first Regional Integrated Service for Victims of Sexual Violence in March 2023. Funded by the European Union, the service is being

piloted in northwestern Moldova, covering the districts of Ungheni, Făleşti, Sîngerei, Călărași, Nisporeni and Telenești. It provides victims with access to specialized medical assistance, forensic expertise, psychosocial and legal support, and psychological assessment services all in one location.

During the first six months of operation, the service provided assistance to 23 victims, 17 of whom were from Ungheni district. The assisted cases included 13 cases of rape, one case of sexual assault, one case of online sexual violence, and eight cases of other forms of violence. In 47 per cent of cases, women received crisis assistance within the first four days of the crime being committed.

During the event, UN Women Moldova and La Strada International signed a new agreement ensuring the continuation of the Regional Integrated Service through the new project "EVOLVE4GE: Ending Violence, Expanding Livelihood Opportunities for Women and Accelerating Gender Governance in Moldova," launched by UN Women and funded by the European Union.



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INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNMENT

Enhancing Moldovan Government Capacity for EU Accession Negotiations

In a significant stride towards EU accession, the Moldovan Government has bolstered its preparation for the rigorous negotiation process through a series of thematic workshops and expert engagements facilitated by the EU-funded project “Support for structured policy dialogue, coordination of the implementation of the Association Agreement and enhancement of the legal

approximation process” for the Republic of Moldova (“EU AA Project”) throughout April-June 2024, in cooperation with the Bureau for European Integration. These initiatives were designed to enhance the country's capacity to meet the stringent requirements of EU membership, fostering a collaborative and well-informed approach to the accession process.



Workshop on Structuring Presentations for Bilateral Screening

The first workshop, held on April 13, provided critical insights into the objectives and organization of bilateral screening, particularly focusing on Cluster 1, which

includes Chapters 23 and 24 on democratic institutions, public administration reform (PAR), and economic criteria. Participants received practical guidance on structuring their presentations for the bilateral screening with the European Commission,



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emphasising key focus areas, the number of presentations, and the timing for each. This hands-on approach aimed to equip Moldovan officials with the skills needed to present their case effectively during the bilateral screening process.

During the event, Ms. Cristina Gherasimov, Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration, emphasised the importance of thorough preparation and strategic communication. The event, held in person and online, included participation of over 500 members of sectorial working groups coordinating EU integration efforts.

Knowledge Exchange with North Macedonia Expert Team

In another pivotal event, an expert team from North Macedonia visited Moldova for a two-day workshop organised on 18-19 June in partnership UNOPS. Hybrid connection organised by the Project allowed participation of over 500 members of sectorial working

groups coordinating EU integration efforts. Chaired by State Secretary Rodica Crudu, the workshop aimed to enhance networking, cooperation, and knowledge sharing, thereby accelerating Moldova's integration into the EU.

Participants from various national institutions attended, benefiting from the experience and lessons shared by members of North Macedonia's Secretariat for European Affairs. The North Macedonian team provided valuable insights into their screening process, the National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis, and the use of a digital platform for planning, coordination, monitoring, and reporting. This exchange of knowledge and know-how is expected to help Moldova address the challenges linked to the EU accession process, including adapting to the new accession methodology and negotiation framework, as well as preparation for the upcoming bilateral screening.



Networking Workshop: Planning the Next Steps in EU accession process following official start of the negotiations

To further solidify their preparedness, Moldovan officials, heads and secretaries of working groups coordinating the EU

integration process, participated in a networking workshop on June 28-29 focused on the latest developments in Moldova's EU accession process, namely the first Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) held on 25 June, marking the official start of the negotiations.

During the event, Ms. Cristina Gherasimov, Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration, emphasised the importance of teamwork, proper planning of time and resources, to ensure the target of achieving EU membership by 2030.

The workshop also highlighted the significance of interinstitutional coordination in the European integration process. Project experts presented the methodology of accession negotiations, discussing the differences introduced in the 2020 methodology compared to previous negotiations, legal approximation process, including the development of the National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis. The "Fundamentals first" principle was emphasised, along with the roles of various actors on the EU side.

Special guest Katerina Fatsea, new Enlargement Coordinator at the EU Delegation to Moldova, provided critical

insights and guidance on the process from the European Commission perspective. Concrete steps in the accession negotiations were outlined, covering the screening process, the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC), and the opening and closing of clusters and chapters. This comprehensive overview aimed to ensure that Moldovan officials are well-versed in the procedural aspects and decision-making processes of the EU accession negotiations.

By enhancing the capacity of the Moldovan Government through structured training, knowledge exchange, and strategic planning, the EU AA Project is playing a vital role in supporting Moldova's aspiration to join the European Union. The collaborative efforts and strengthened preparedness are expected to pave the way for a more efficient and effective negotiation process, ultimately bringing Moldova closer to achieving its EU membership goals.



Challenges ahead in consumer protection related activities

The Project: **“Support for structured policy dialog, coordination of implementation of the Association Agreement and enforcement of the legal approximation process”** provided support to the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalisation (MEDD) in transposition of the new EU Regulation on general product safety (Regulation 2023/988) into a new Moldovan law which will be soon sent to the Parliament for adoption with the following objectives:

- » ensuring the safety of all products, including those linked to new technologies
- » addressing challenges posed by the growth of online sales and in particular via online marketplaces;
- » ensuring a better enforcement of the rules and more efficient and even market surveillance;
- » improving the effectiveness of recalls of dangerous products in the hands of consumers.



Project continue with assisting also in the area of core consumer protection legislation where MEDD has a key role as a main consumer policy body on planning the legal approximation process of the EU consumer protection legislation and identifying the legal acts that are of the main priority in the process of accession.

Having in consideration the tasks arising from the EU-Moldova Association Agreement, status of the candidate country, ongoing screening process and official start of accession negotiations on June 25, 2024, Republic of Moldova opened a new strategic phase in relations with the EU on consumer protection.

The EU Regulation 2017/2394 on strong cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws is considered as very important in defining the administrative landscape of the institutions that need to cooperate on consumer protection in the Republic of Moldova.

The list of legislation and institutions with responsibilities on consumer protection are given in the Guidelines for harmonisation of consumer protection legislation of Republic of Moldova with the EU acquis, developed by the Project team and delivered to MEDD in the very first phase of cooperation regarding consumer protection.

The legislative acts of EU that were proposed in the Guidelines to become part of the new future Moldovan Law on consumer protection are related to:

- » better enforcement and modernisation of consumer protection rules,
- » unfair terms in consumer contracts,
- » consumer protection in the indication of the prices of products,
- » unfair business-to consumer commercial practices,
- » consumer rights (online contracts and out of door contracts),
- » digital rights,
- » contracts for the sale of goods,
- » misleading and comparative advertising, etc.

Over the recent decades, the EU adopted over 80 Directives that are related to consumers protection, some of them should be included in the new Moldova's consumer protection Law and the other should be part of the specific legislation. In the process of transposition, the legislator needs to take in consideration the role of the consumer as a weaker part of the market that needs a special protection and should be able to relatively easily find information and the manner in which they are protected. Therefore, the consumer protection rules must be transparent and understandable, therefore the project team provided a Concept of the consumer protection law, which was presented at a workshop.

Special project activity was dedicated to support MEDD in transposition of the **EU Directive 2020/1828 on representative actions** as a separate law. This Directive sets a number of minimum standards on representative actions for the protection of the collective interests of consumers. Project team prepared a first draft law transposing the directive and organised a

workshop with state bodies and institutions to discuss the relevance of the draft law and responsibilities of the public institutions and the role of NGO in the process of implementation. The development of NGOs for consumer protection remains a challenge for Moldova where also the civil sector needs to become part of the system for protection of consumers rights, to organise an advice office for informing, educating and protecting consumers, to represent their rights and safeguard their interest. This should be done with the state support as in EU member states.

Furthermore, the latest project activities were directed to support MEDD in developing a draft Strategy for consumer protection. The main objectives of the Strategy are focused on:

- » developing legislation for consumer protection,
- » strengthening market control and safety of products,
- » raising awareness for consumer rights,
- » support NGOs for consumer protection in representing their interests,
- » informing consumers and taking actions for out of court dispute resolutions,
- » administrative and court procedures.

The Republic of Moldova has several challenges in the upcoming period related to the Consumer protection. Adopting a Strategy is one of them, there is a need to take further steps in starting preparation of the new consumer protection law. Work on a new law on representative action, improve the legislation for consumer protection in financial services, improve the institutional capacities for consumer protection and support the NGOs position and activities remain tasks for the near future.

EUPM Moldova: Successful cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs continues within the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism

After the inclusion of the Republic of Moldova in the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism on 1st of January 2024, the cooperation between the EU and the country in the field of crisis management and civilian protection contributes to the development of the capabilities of the Moldovan authorities to adapt and be involved in international assistance emergency situations that can impact the Republic of Moldova.

This was the topic for the discussions between MIA Minister, Adrian Efros and the Head of EUPM Moldova, Cosmin Dinescu, held on **1 April at EUPM premises**, with a particular focus on how the country can **strengthen its relations with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, including participation in joint activities, exchange of information and use of potential internal and external resources.**



EUPM Moldova: Support at enhancing resilience to major risks and threats in Moldova

In April, EUPM Moldova organised a **strategic level seminar on strengthening the resilience of critical infrastructure and cybersecurity in Moldova**. The one-day seminar took place in Chişinău. The aim of the seminar was to ensure that Moldova's institutional competences and procedures are well established and coordinated among various security authorities, as well as to ensure resilience and preparedness for major risks and threats.

Strengthening the resilience of critical infrastructure ensures the provision of vital public services and state administration for society at large in the full range of crisis situations.

The seminar was organised in cooperation between EUPM, the Moldovan Ministry of the Internal Affairs, the Romanian Foreign Ministry and USAID. The seminar was attended by approximately 50 representatives from several Moldovan ministries and agencies, as well as EU entities and other like-minded donors.



EU Partnership Mission in the Republic of Moldova (EUPM) at 1st year Anniversary

This spring EUPM marked one year of existence and fruitful activity in the Republic of Moldova: on 24 April, one year since the

Council decision to create the first CSDP civilian mission in the country and on 22 May, the official launch of activity.



On this occasion, the High Representative and Vice-President of the European Commission, Josep Borrell, recalled his visit to Chişinău and highlighted our Mission's role: "I am glad that one year after I officially inaugurated the Mission's Chisinau Headquarters, the EU Partnership Mission to Moldova has become a reliable partner of the Moldovan Government. Unique in its mandate, this mission supports Moldova in directly addressing the changing nature of threats that the country is facing, notably strengthening the capacity to address the full scale of hybrid threats, including cyber-security and fighting disinformation. I thank all the mission's personnel, including the experts from 14 EU Member States, for

their efforts and dedication. The Republic of Moldova's security contributes to the EU's security."

A special message was also sent by the Secretary General of the European Union External Action Service, Stefano Sanino, in which he underlined EUPM having established itself as a reliable partner of the Moldovan Government, prioritising the needs of Moldovan institutions in order to help them achieve their ambitious goals. He warmly thanked the Moldovan authorities, who strongly supported the Mission deployment from day one, and expressed hope in continuing to develop the partnership together in the coming year.

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova, Dorin Recean, received a group of representatives of EUPM and sent a message of gratitude for our Mission's support in consolidating the crisis management capabilities of the country and in enhancing the resilience of national institutions to hybrid threats.

EUPM Head of Mission, Cosmin Dinescu, met the media representatives and other stakeholders in the Republic of Moldova and took stock of 1 year of achievements and successful partnership with the authorities of the country:

“When this mission was launched a year ago, the EU defined two main areas of operation - strengthening crisis management capabilities of the country and enhancing the resilience against hybrid threats. In these fields, we have started important projects together with the Moldovan government and achieved first successes, which are already building the desired increased resilience and preparedness of the security institutions of the country.



So, on our first anniversary we can proudly say that EUPM Moldova has achieved its objective of being a true and reliable partner for the security of the Republic of Moldova.”



CEPEJ involved in the evaluation and reporting on court performance and modernising the human resources policies of the judiciary in the Republic of Moldova

The Working Groups (WGs) to promote the coherence of reporting on court performance and on the optimisation of human resources policies of the judicial system in the Republic of Moldova, met in April and May 2024.

The first WG focused on the structure of the annual court performance reports, referring to the example of the 2023 report of the Comrat Court of Appeal with the view to define a model for all national courts. The participants were presented the ways the JUSTAT information system can be used in this context, the CEPEJ Backlog Reduction Tool, as well as proposals for the methodology of monitoring the courts' workload and distribution of resources.

In connection with the mandate of this WG, the Project team accompanied by a representative of the Agency for Court Administration conducted on 17 May a workshop on annual reporting with the representatives of Balti first instance and appellate courts.

The second WG discussed the methodology to assess judges' workload and to improve the work-life balance of courts' employees.

A series of meetings with representatives of the Superior Council of Prosecutors, General Prosecutors' Office, Ministry of Justice, and the Mediation Council were carried out, envisaging support to objectives of on-going justice reforms such as improving the internal management and the communication of the prosecution service and developing the recourse to mediation.

The activities were organised within the framework of the Project "Support to further modernisation of court management in the Republic of Moldova", co-funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe and implemented by the Council of Europe in their Partnership for Good Governance (2023-2027).



  EU-Moldova
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EU and Council of Europe supports the Financial Intelligence Unit of the Republic of Moldova to enhance strategic analysis function

The Council of Europe has organised, on 6 and 7 June 2024, a 2-day workshop on strategic analysis for the staff of the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) of the Republic of Moldova (operative and analytical departments). The primary goal of the workshop was to enhance the strategic analysis capabilities of FIU employees, a critical component in identifying and mitigating the risks of money laundering (ML) and terrorist financing (TF). The training sessions covered the use of specialised analytical tools, data interpretation techniques, development of high-quality strategic analysis products, and methods to enhance inter-agency cooperation and information sharing.

Council of Europe consultants provided expert-led discussions and practical exercises, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the strategic analysis processes. Key topics such as the intelligence cycle and risk-based approach in conducting strategic analysis were emphasised, with particular focus on the applicability to Moldova's specific context.

Participants engaged in dynamic group exercises and discussions, including through a simulation of a trade-based money laundering scheme, which underscored the identification of ML/FT typologies as a relevant aspect for strategic analysis products. The workshop concluded with a session on reporting and disseminating strategic analysis results for the use of reporting entities and law enforcement authorities, further solidifying the knowledge gained over the two days.

This event is part of the European Union and the 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, in the framework of the project on "Strengthening the Anti-Money Laundering and Asset Recovery Regime in the Republic of Moldova".



The Council of Europe organised expert consultations with the Superior Council of Magistracy on the issues of selection, evaluation, and promotion of judges

The Council of Europe organised online expert consultations with the Superior Council of Magistracy (SCM) to discuss conceptual aspects concerning the draft regulations of the SCM on selection, evaluation, and promotion of judges.

The discussions were facilitated by two international consultants of the Council of Europe: Đuro Sessa, Judge and former President of the Supreme Court of Croatia and President of the International Association of Judges, and Nina Betetto, Judge, former Vice-President of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Slovenia, former President of the Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE).

The event aimed at exchanging views and providing technical expertise via direct engagement to the members of the SCM working on the elaboration/revision of internal regulations related to the selection, promotion, and evaluation of judges. In response to questions and issues raised by the members of SCM, the international consultants of the Council of Europe shared insights and feedback in the light of relevant European standards and best practices.

The event was organised within the framework of the Joint Project of the European Union and Council of Europe "[Support to the Justice Reform in the Republic of Moldova](#)".



The 19th Congress of the Conference of European Constitutional Courts was held in Chişinău

The Congress was hosted by the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Moldova during 22-23 May 2024 in Chişinău, Republic of Moldova, within the framework of its Conference of European Constitutional Courts Presidency.

The Congress hosted more than 100 international participants, including presidents and judges of almost 40 European Constitutional Courts, observers, and high-level officials such as the President

of the European Court of Human Rights, Ms Siofra O'Leary and President of the Venice Commission, Ms Claire Bazy Malaurie. The discussions were focused on the topic: "Forms and Limits of Judicial Deference: the Case of Constitutional Courts".

The support was offered within the framework of the Joint Project of the European Union and the Council of Europe "Support to the Justice Reform in the Republic of Moldova".



Trainers of the National Institute of Justice benefitted from a training on Kirkpatrick's training evaluation model

On 23 May 2024, the Council of Europe organised a training on Kirkpatrick's training evaluation model and adult training methodology, in the view of contributing to the continuous improvement of the training programmes of the National Institute of Justice.

14 trainers of the National Institute of Justice benefitted from it. The training was delivered by two international consultants of the Council of Europe: Ms Ivana Roagna, professional lawyer, specialised human rights trainer, and former lawyer at the European Court of Human Rights, and Ms Otilia Pacurari, Institutional Capacity

Building and Training Expert, and member of the European Judicial Training Network.

The main objectives of the training were to gain practical knowledge of the different levels of assessment tools applied to assess participants' reactions to the training programmes as well as the knowledge and skills acquired by judges, prosecutors and judicial staff.

The training was organised within the framework of the Joint Project of the European Union and the Council of Europe "Support to the Justice Reform in the Republic of Moldova".



The Council of Europe supports the National Institute of Justice in the implementation of the EU TAIEX recommendations on continuous training

The Council of Europe has launched a complex activity to support the National Institute of Justice in the process of implementation of 2022 EU TAIEX recommendations concerning continuous training of judges and prosecutors. As part of this activity, representatives of the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the Superior Council of Magistracy, the Superior Council of Prosecutors, judges, prosecutors, as well as trainers of the NIJ, participated in consultation meetings with Ms Marina Naumovska, international consultant of the Council of Europe on 18-20 June 2024. Ms Naumovska also attended selected sessions of continuous training offered at the NIJ.

As a next step, based on the analysis and discussions on the concept, curriculum, and methodology of the continuous training offered at the NIJ for judges and prosecutors, targeted recommendations for improving different aspects of the continuous training in the light of the 2022 EU TAIEX report will be provided to the NIJ.

The activity is carried out within the framework of the joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe "[Support to the Justice Reform in the Republic of Moldova](#)".



The Council of Europe organised training on the administrative procedures for the Superior Council of Prosecutors

On 24-25 June 2024, the Council of Europe organised training on the administrative procedure for the Superior Council of Prosecutors (SCP). Members of the SCP and staff of its secretariat as well as representatives of the Prosecutorial Inspection (23 persons; 12 female/11 male) benefited from the training.

Two national consultants of the Council of Europe: Ms Elena Belei, university professor of law and trainer at the National Institute of Justice, and Ms Ina Jimbei, university professor of Civil Procedural Law, delivered the training.

During different sessions, the relevant aspects of the administrative procedure applied by the SCP as administrative authority were highlighted. The discussions were focused also on clarifying the interplay between special regulations related to the SCP and provisions of the framework law based on the peculiarity of the SCP's competences.

The training was organised within the framework of the joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe "Support to the Justice Reform in the Republic of Moldova".



European standards on minorities' protection at the centre of a training for legal professionals in the Republic of Moldova

A two days tailor-made training was organised in cooperation with the National Institute of Justice for 63 legal professionals from judicial institutions in the Republic of Moldova. The aim of the training was to enhance their knowledge and understanding of European standards on the protection of on ethnic, linguistic and sexual minorities, and for ensuring better access to justice for vulnerable persons.

Exchanges between the participants provided the opportunity to discuss the newest legal developments and ways to improve the legal redress in the Republic of Moldova, in line with the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights, and based on the recent Recommendation of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers [on combating hate speech](#), as well as other relevant standards and best practices in the field.

It was concluded that there is a need to establish a practice of systematic discussions on this subject in the Republic of Moldova, to update relevant actors on the standards and on the latest jurisprudence regularly, at the benefit of the vulnerable citizens in the country.

This event, organised on 6 and 7 June 2024, is 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, in the framework of the project "[Combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Republic of Moldova](#)".



Improving data collection on hate crimes in the Republic of Moldova

Key stakeholders from the Republic of Moldova responsible to collect data on hate crimes and discrimination gathered in Chisinau, to discuss the latest developments, main challenges, and further steps to improve the national system of data collection in line with European and international standards and best practices.

Participants highlighted the need to establish a platform for cooperation in achieving a more coherent and integrated approach in collecting data. This would ultimately contribute to improvement of the application of the anti-discrimination framework and raising the awareness on existing redress mechanisms to discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes.

The meeting was followed by a training for 42 operators of the Police database organised with the objective to improve the documentation and processing information related to bias-motivated offences.

Participants unanimously concluded that these activities are very important in ensuring continuous training and keeping up to date the operators in charge with data collection with new developments and providing good practices.

Both activities provided support to national beneficiaries, aiming to improve and harmonise data collection methods on hate crimes, following-up on the cooperation established in the framework of the Partnership for Good Governance programme in 2018.

These events are 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, in the framework of the project "[Combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Republic of Moldova](#)".



Improving dialogue between Police and the LGBTI community in the Republic of Moldova

A platform for dialogue was created between Police and civil society organisations that promote the rights of LGBTI community in the Republic of Moldova. The meeting brought together 21 officers of the General Police Inspectorate and 19 representatives of civil society organisations, in order to strengthen communication and build trust between Police and the LGBTI community.

Discussions focused on legal protection mechanisms to combat hate speech and hate crimes, as well as the challenges, stereotypes, prejudices, and obstacles faced by LGBTI persons in society. The difficulties experienced by LGBTI persons when addressing law enforcement officers were presented with the objective to encourage further the reporting of discrimination and bias-motivated offences.

The meeting highlighted the need for strategies that consider societal diversity and the experiences of those facing discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex characteristics.

The platform created during this meeting

will facilitate further exchanges in the future between the police and civil society organisations representing LGBTI persons on hate speech and hate crimes and provide solutions. The meeting also identified the need for further reforms in addressing discrimination and hate speech, along with continued awareness-raising initiatives to promote equal treatment and combat discrimination, stigmatisation and hatred.

The work of the Council of Europe in the Republic of Moldova on non-discrimination and hate speech relies on European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) recommendations, in particular [Recommendation No 17 on preventing and combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons](#), European Court of Human Rights case law and [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2010\)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity](#).

This event was organised in cooperation



with the General Police Inspectorate, Information Centre GENDERDOC-M, in the framework of the Council of Europe Action Plan for the Republic of Moldova for 2021-2024 and the projects: "[Enhancing diversity and equality in the Republic of Moldova](#)" funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands; „Promoting non-discrimination in the Republic of

Moldova" and the EU/Council of Europe project "[Combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Republic of Moldova](#)", 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.



Ensuring legal redress to hate speech and hate crime in line with European standards

In cooperation with the National Institute of Justice, 80 legal professionals from the Republic of Moldova participated in a two-day seminar aiming to promote experience of the involved actors and discuss possible improvements to legal redress responses to discrimination and hatred.

The seminar focused on European standards in addressing hate speech and hate crimes, based on the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights and covered topics

relevant to the identification of prejudice and stereotypes, as well as those relating to the various aspects relevant for the work with victims of hate speech.

Participants to this event highlighted the importance of further dialogue involving all professionals dealing with combating and prevention of hate speech and discrimination, as an important step forward for improving practice in this field.



This event is 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, in the framework of the project “[Combating discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Republic of Moldova](#)”.

Over 150 specialists from tax and customs fields, familiarised with latest developments in the sector, during large scale workshop organised with the EU support

The EU High Level Advisers' Mission jointly with "Monitorul Fiscal FISC.md" magazine, the Ministry of Finance and the State Tax Service organised a large-scale workshop dedicated to fiscal and customs news in the context of alignment of the national legislation to EU Directives.

The event brought together top management of the Ministry of Finance, State Tax Service, Customs Service, as well as representatives of the business environment, accounting and auditing professional associations, representatives of the banking system and other experts in the field.

In the opening of the first discussion panel, Finance Minister Petru Rotaru spoke about the Ministry's efforts to implement changes and innovations in the customs and tax fields, in order to align them with the directives of the European Union, thus highlighting the institutional commitment to the harmonisation of national legislation with the EU acquis. "Currently, the main focus is on the elaboration of the draft law on tax and customs policy for 2025, and the proposals received from all interested parties are of major importance, taking into account the impact of this law on the national economy and on the private sector", noted the Minister of Finance.



EU High Level Adviser on Customs and Tax Policy, Rosario De Blasio welcomed the efficient cooperation between the Ministry of Finance, Customs and Tax authorities, resulting in a large number of legal acts, standardised and aligned to the EU legislation, as well as in a permanent communication with the business associations and the general public. “The process of integration into the European Union requires consistency and a gradual approach. Moldova can already prepare itself for EU accession by implementing step by step the requirements foreseen in Chapter 16 of the EU Aquis – Taxation, and Chapter 29 – Customs Union,

which will bring mutual benefits for the negotiating parties – the European Union and the Republic of Moldova.”

Within three discussion panels, the participants addressed several important topics regarding the implementation of EU directives on VAT and excise duties, key aspects related to the functionality of the transfer pricing concept, advantages of the new Customs Code from the perspective of import-export operations, digital solutions as a tool for business efficiency, as well as reporting of financial accounts in the context of the automatic exchange of financial account information.



The role of corporate governance in ensuring a prudent and healthy administration of banks, discussed during a seminar organised by EU HLA Mission

The EU High Level Advisers' Mission, together with the National Bank of Moldova and the Association of Banks from Moldova, organised a seminar dedicated to the role of corporate governance in ensuring a prudent and healthy administration of banks.

Considering the crucial role that banks have in the development process of society, as well as the need to ensure a corporate governance that supports both the proper functioning of individual banks and the banking system as a whole, the EU High Level Adviser on Financial Services, Nicolae Grigore, delivered a detailed presentation with the aim of increasing the understanding of some major aspects regarding the assessment of the suitability of Management Board members and key positions holders.



The topic was established given the Management Board responsibility regarding the approval and supervision of the process of implementing a framework that ensures the effective assessment of the adequacy of the Board both at the individual and collective level.

More than 100 participants took part in the online seminar, including the Governor of

the National Bank of Moldova Anca Dragu, members of the executive management and relevant departments of the NBM, the Project Manager of the European Union Delegation in Moldova Josip Juric, as well as Management Board members of the banks licensed in the Republic of Moldova and representatives of the Moldovan Banks Association.

National Bank of Moldova staff learns best practices in prevention and fight against money laundering and terrorism financing

The EU High Level Advisers' Mission, together with the National Bank of Moldova organised, on 11 June, a seminar dedicated to the prevention and fight against money laundering and terrorism financing (AML/CFT). The event brought together over 20 participants, including the Governor of the National Bank of Moldova, Anca Dragu, members of the executive management and relevant departments of the NBM.

During the seminar, the EU High Level Adviser on Financial Services, Nicolae Grigore, presented the best practices of Central Banks in assessing the risks associated with money laundering and terrorism financing based on his extensive experience in the field. The essential aspects of assessing money laundering and terrorism financing

risks were covered, emphasising both the importance of adopting a risk-based approach and the necessity of an on-going AML/CFT risk assessment of the entities supervised by the Central Bank. Another topic of discussion was the procedure for establishing sanctions and supervisory measures to ensure their consistency and effectiveness.

The seminar represented a valuable opportunity for the exchange of best practices and support for the improvement of supervisory and regulatory policies and practices in the field of prevention and fight against money laundering and terrorism financing, emphasising the importance of dialogue and cooperation between experts and relevant institutions in this field.



The European Union and the International Labour Organization provide support for the reform and development of the labour market in Moldova

The European Union has allocated €2 million to reform key institutions regulating the labour market in the Republic of Moldova. The project “EU support to inclusive labour markets in the Republic of Moldova”, implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO), was launched today.

The two-year project aims to improve the access to better employment opportunities in the Republic of Moldova. The project launch conference took place during the joint visit to Moldova of the European Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, Nicolas Schmit, and ILO Director-General Gilbert Houngbo.

One of the objectives of the Project is to improve the performance of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MoLSP) and the National Employment Agency (NEA) to prevent and address exclusion from the labour market. This objective is designed to improve the institutional capacity of the MoLSP and NEA to meet the objectives set out in the Employment Policy Framework. The newly launched Project will include the diversification of employment services and programmes, the expansion of individualised service delivery, the improvement of the performance management system and the enhancement of the internal training system for NEA staff.



The Project also aims to enhance the capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MoLSP) and the State Labour Inspectorate (SLI) to improve working conditions and protect workers’ rights. The objective focuses on improving the SLI’s ability to fulfil its state audit mandate.

This includes reviewing the legal framework and internal policies, strategic planning of inspection visits, improving the training system for SLI staff, modernising SLI procedures and information system, working closely with social partners and providing material support.

  EU-Moldova
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The International Labour Organization will provide the necessary support in terms of advocacy, technical assistance, methodologies and relevant tools to ensure that the capacities of the NEA and SLI are strengthened in line with institutional assessments, as well as international labour standards and relevant ILO policy guidelines.

Figures show that almost 30% of young women and men in Moldova are in the NEET category (not in employment, education nor training).

In the Republic of Moldova, women's participation in the labour market is over 40%. This is a low indicator compared to the European Union, where the rate is over 70%. Due to stereotypes, women are subject to suspicious treatment when applying for jobs, and the gender pay gap in the country is around 16%.

In the Republic of Moldova, people with disabilities have difficulties in finding and keeping jobs and enjoying fair treatment compared to people without disabilities.

In 2023, only 15.8% of people with disabilities were officially employed. This is partly due to the limited knowledge of people with disabilities about their right to work and employment opportunities, limited access to rehabilitation, career guidance and vocational training, inaccessible infrastructure, low self-confidence of people with disabilities and reluctance of employers to offer jobs to this group of citizens.

The reform of key institutions such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and two public agencies under its authority, the National Employment Agency and the State Labour Inspectorate, is essential for the Government to implement coherent labour, employment and social protection policies, ensure labour market inclusion, safe working conditions and productive jobs.

The Project will focus its activities on improving the legal framework, policies and capacity to increase access to the labour market and improve working conditions in Moldova. It will also support the alignment of national labour and employment legislation with the EU acquis and ILO standards.



  EU-Moldova

Stronger Together

40 vehicles donated by the EU to the General Inspectorate of Police

On May 21, 2024, the European Union has donated 40 vehicles to the General Inspectorate of Police (GIP), as part of a project implemented by IOM Moldova, aimed at Supporting Protection, Transit, Voluntary and Informed Return, and Reintegration of Eastern Partnership Citizens and Third Country Nationals (TCNs) affected by the conflict in Ukraine.

This assistance will significantly enhance the operational capacity of GIP to respond to the needs of communities, ensuring efficient and timely assistance to both the local population and refugees. The vehicles will be utilised for patrolling and emergency response.



The European Union and Soros Moldova Foundation support the consumers protection framework in the Republic of Moldova as a key component of the association agenda and of the European integration process

The Independent Think-Tank “Expert-Grup”, in partnership with the European Union, Soros Moldova Foundation and the Institute for European Policies and Reforms, organised on April 30, the launching event of the project “Consolidation of Consumers Protection Framework in the Republic of

Moldova”. It is a project of major importance for Moldova since this area is indispensable for the assurance of a sound competition and a functional and fair market economy, but also considering the fact that consumers’ protection is a key-component for the European integration process.



The general objective of the project aims to increase the degree of understanding and application of consumers rights in the Republic of Moldova, which will be achieved based on two specific objectives.

The first specific objective refers to the strengthening of the capacities of the Government and of the authorities having competencies in the area of consumers rights’ protection for the enforcement of the relevant legal provisions and assurance of consumers rights’ protection.

The attainment of this specific objective will be mainly possible due to the technical assistance provided by the project experts’ team, that will allow the Government and the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization (MEDD) to accelerate the process of harmonisation to the EU acquis in the area of consumers rights’ protection and to improve the consumers rights’ protection framework. Besides, for the provision of consultancy to the consumers, both at the national level and also in the framework of



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the transborder conflicts, the project aims at the creation of the European Centre for Consumers Protection.

The second specific objective aims at the increased of the consumers' awareness of their rights and of the actions they may take in case of violation thereof. For the accomplishment of this objective, the consortium will support the implementation of an ample awareness-raising campaign on consumers rights. In addition to that, there will be five media organisations identified, that will be offered sub-grants for the production of journalistic investigations,

articles, radio and TV programs on topics related to consumers rights and actions to be taken in case of violation thereof. In addition to that, the European Centre for Consumers Protection will be created – an independent non-governmental organization that will promote and help the consumers claim their rights.

The project is implemented by the Independent Think-Tank Expert-Grup in partnership with the Institute for European Policies and Reforms and the Soros Moldova Foundation



Expert-Grup presented the conclusions and recommendations of its independent evaluation report of the piloting process of the population and housing census in the Republic of Moldova

The Independent Think-Tank Expert-Grup" organised on April 23, the round table "Population and housing census 2024: independent evaluation of the preparation and organization of the process" during which the main findings and recommendations of the report of the independent evaluation of the piloting process were presented of the 2024 population and housing census, developed by the "Expert-Grup".

In the period July-October 2023, with the support of the European Union, Expert-Grup acted as an independent observer during the

main activities related to the trial census: the finalisation of the questionnaires, the recruitment and training of temporary staff, the testing of the equipment and the data collection application, the activities to inform the population, etc. The aim was to evaluate the process of preparing and conducting the sample population and housing census and to come up with recommendations for improving the organization of the actual population and housing census from the year 2024.



Regarding the census subjects/variables, Expert-Grup checked whether the questionnaires contain mandatory questions according to international standards, whether they were consulted with users and adjusted following public consultations, whether questions for which sources already exist were removed or alternative data etc. and proposed shortening, rewording or omitting some questions that frequently caused negative reactions, as well as supplementing the instructions for reviewers with certain clarifications. In the chapter on recruitment and temporary staff, the team checked whether the employment requirements for supervisors and reviewers were reasonable and publicly announced, the recruitment of supervisors and reviewers was carried out locally through competition in the respective territories, etc. and made

recommendations regarding the skills and level of education required of managers and reviewers. Regarding the remuneration of temporary staff, it was checked whether it was dependent on performance, it was clear to the staff how and for what they would be remunerated, the reviewers were able to fully fulfil their tasks, etc. Key recommendations in this regard related to ensuring clarity for staff on remuneration conditions and when contracts should be signed.

The event was organised within the project "Monitoring the piloting of the Population and Housing Census 2024" implemented by the Independent Think-Tank "Expert-Grup" and financed by the European Union. It brought together experts, high-level representatives from public institutions, international organisations, academia and civil society.



Workshop on the first-ever renewables tenders for offering the status of large eligible producer

The EU-funded “Support the Moldovan Government in identifying and preparing projects linked to the implementation of the Association Agreement” (PPF) project supported the organisation of the Bidder’s Workshop on Renewables Tenders at the request of the Ministry of Energy. Held on 25 April 2024, the workshop aimed to inform

potential bidders about the legislative and normative framework to launch the first-ever tender for the supply of power stations with fixed price. It also provided a platform to present the key stages of the tendering procedure in addition to the estimated timeline (April to September 2024), for all interested parties attending the event.



The Ministry of Energy will select projects with a total capacity of 165 MW capacity of renewable energy, distributed according to technologies – 105 MW for wind installations and 60 MW for photovoltaic stations. Once installed these will cover 16% of the renewable energy consumption in the electricity mix of the country.

The workshop gathered over 70 participants from the Ministry of Energy, National Agency for Energy Regulation, Invest Moldova, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Moldova-France Chamber of Commerce and Industry, AmCham, EU-funded projects, commercial banks, energy providers and potential investors. During the event the participants engaged in an interactive discussion on the tender procedure.



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In her opening speech, State Secretary of Energy Carolina Novac thanked all actors involved in the elaboration of the amendments to the Government Decision no. 690/2018 on the “Regulation for tendering procedure for obtaining the status of large eligible producer” adopted on 24 April 2024. These amendments aim to increase the volume of local and international investments in renewable sources by providing a transparent and competitive tender approach. The national target is to reach the 27% renewables in the effective energy mix by 2030.

Solomon Ioannou, Project Manager from the EU Delegation to Moldova, congratulated Mrs. Novac’s team for achieving this important milestone. According to him, this is significant for three reasons: as a future EU member state, Moldova will be able to participate in a free and fair energy market;

it will become less dependent on Russian gas; and, of course, it will contribute to the EU’s ambition to become the first continent to decarbonise by 2050.

The Head of National Agency for Energy Regulation Alexandru Ursu and experts from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development provided detailed information on the tender procedure (admissibility and qualification criteria, bid security and performance guarantee, and bid evaluation) and the indicative roadmap.

This initiative reflects the Ministry of Energy’s ongoing commitment to promoting and facilitating the sustainable development of the renewable energy sector, providing a transparent and informative platform for all relevant actors involved in the energy transition.



Training on Public Finance Management in Moldova for State Chancellery

At the request of the State Chancellery, the EU-funded PPF project conducted a training course on Public Finance Management from 1 to 3 April 2024.

The training was attended by the State Chancellery officials from the directorates for External Assistance and European Funds Coordination; Strategic Planning; Policy Coordination and Project Management; and Relations with Parliament and Inter-institutional Coordination.

The training aimed to familiarise participants with key concepts and operational functions of PFM, and to explain the role and

importance of PFM in the context of the development process in Moldova.

The Training Course covers the standard PFM cycle: strategic planning, budget preparation, budget execution, accounting & reporting, external audit & legislative scrutiny, and policy review. The training was interactive with practical exercises adapted to the Moldovan PFM system, and active engagement by the State Chancellery participants.

The course was delivered by the PPF Project Team Leader, Yiannis Hadziyiannakis.



Training on the new Public Investment Project Appraisal Procedure continues

The EU-funded PPF project conducted the third training session to the central public authorities on the new Public Investment Project Appraisal Procedure. This session was specifically requested to provide training to the Ministry of Finance's Public Investment Directorate personnel.

This session was delivered from 10 to 12 April 2024 and was also attended by participants from the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Environment, National Office for the Implementation of Environmental Projects, as well as public authorities subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture

and Food Industry, namely Consolidated Agricultural Projects Management Unit, Scientific-Practical Institute of Horticulture and Food Technology, etc.

The Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development, among several participants, was also represented by the State Secretary Nicolai Mindra responsible for the road development sector. It is noted that the public investment budget of this Ministry constitutes around 73% of the total public investment budget of Moldova. While the road development alone consumes around 65% of the total public investment budget of Moldova.



The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, manages the second biggest public investment budget of Moldova, amounting MDL 85 million in the approved 2024 State Budget.

As before, the objective of the training was to introduce public authorities to the new procedure and enhance their understanding and skills in public investment project appraisal. This is essential for the effective implementation of Regulation 684/2022 and the Project Appraisal Instructions issued by MoF Order 104 in November 2023.

The PPF Project experts delivering the training session included Gnel Sedrakyan, Konstantinos Kyriakopoulos, Roman Ivanov, and Daniela Cotorobai. They covered in detail the eight eligibility criteria necessary for projects to qualify for inclusion in the 'Project Pipeline' of public investment projects, the appraisal scoring methodology, and presented a case study on a renewable energy project.



Central public authorities engage in training on the new Public Investment Project Appraisal Procedure

At the request of the Ministry of Finance's Public Investment Directorate, the EU-funded PPF project conducted a training course to the central public authorities on the new Public Investment Project Appraisal Procedure, to implement Regulation 684/2022.

Two separate sessions were delivered: the first was held from 26 to 28 March 2024 and was attended by participants from the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Internal

Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, Court of Accounts, etc.

The second session was delivered from 2 to 4 April 2024 to the Ministry of Infrastructure and regional Development, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Energy, Customs Service, State Chancellery, Tax Authority, Consolidated Unit for Implementation and Monitoring of Energy Projects, National Centre for Sustainable Energy, etc.



This training aimed at introducing the new procedure to the central public authorities and increase their understanding and skills in public investment project appraisal. This is essential for the effective implementation of Regulation 684 /2022, and the Project Appraisal Instructions issued by MoF Order 104 in November 2023.

In his address to the participants, Viorel Pana, Head of the Directorate of Public Investment at the Ministry of Finance, emphasised the critical role of the new public investment project appraisal procedure in improving the public investment planning. He welcomed feedback from participants and highlighted the collaborative nature of the training.

The PPF Project experts delivering the training session included, Gnel Sedrakyan, Konstantinos Kyriakopoulos, Leonidas Crisciunas, Roman Ivanov, Yiannis Hadziyiannakis and Daniela Cotorobai. They covered a range of topics, from the definition of investment and project design and appraisal, to a detailed examination of the appraisal procedure, scoring methodology, including a case study on a renewable energy project proposal.

To further support the implementation of the national objective to improve public investment management, the PPF Project team will continue to deliver training and on-the-job support to central public authorities.



Training on Public Investment Project Design and Appraisal for Nisporeni Local Public Authorities

The EU funded PPF Project conducted a training session on the design and appraisal of investment projects on 29 – 30 May 2024 to local government authorities from Nisporeni Rayon.

The training was delivered to officials from the Nisporeni Rayon Council and Nisporeni and Seliste municipalities.

The purpose of the training was to introduce the participants to good practice techniques in investment planning, and to put everything in the context of the newly established public investment planning framework

in Moldova, namely the Government of Moldova Regulation No. 684/2022 of 29 September 2022 and the Project Appraisal Instructions approved by MoF Order No. 104 of 22 November 2023.

The session was delivered by PPF Project experts Gnel Sedrakyan, Konstantinos Kyriakopoulos, and Daniela Cotorobai.

The PPF Project will further support the Nisporeni local authorities with the development of the regional investment plan. Activities are envisaged to commence shortly.



Moldova aligns the regulations on food safety to the standards of European Union with the assistance of the EU and UNIDO

UNIDO, under the EU-funded project, played a crucial role in providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture and agri-food industry. This assistance was aimed at helping Moldova align its national food safety regulations with EU Regulation 2017/625. The initiative is a significant part of Moldova's commitment to the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA)

and supports efforts to integrate into the European Union market.

EU Regulation 2017/625 is designed to establish a uniform framework of official controls and other official activities to ensure the application of food and feed law, animal health and welfare rules, plant health and plant protection products across the EU, and ensure safety and compliance.



Picture: www.ec.europa.eu

During this collaboration, the UNIDO team, led by an expert from the National Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Authority of Romania, held strategic meetings with key stakeholders, including ANSA, MAFI, and the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization (MEDD).

Following these constructive discussions, EU Regulation 2017/625 became Law No. 82/2024 on official controls in the agricultural and food sector passed in the second reading by Parliament on May 2024. It is anticipated to come into force before the end of 2026, marking a significant milestone in our journey towards aligning with EU standards.



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The project was pivotal in supporting the transposition of EU Regulation 2017/625. Expert guidance provided by the project facilitated the drafting and approval of the new Law on official controls by the Parliament. Furthermore, the project organised working group sessions, training, and consultancies, which were instrumental in establishing a specialised team dedicated to the transposition and implementation of EU Regulation 2017/625. These initiatives helped delineate roles and responsibilities and devise plans for future collaboration to ensure the effective implementation of this law.

Additionally, the engagement with stakeholders involved interactions with inspectors, national reference laboratories, and industry associations to gain valuable insights and address challenges in implementing new regulations.

This initiative marks a significant step towards aligning food safety regulations with EU standards. It signals the country's commitment to ensuring the health and well-being of its citizens and fostering trade harmonisation with the European Union.

"Improving standards compliance through increased national capacities for residue monitoring" is an EU-funded action that boasts an investment of EUR 1.5 million. This initiative is carried out by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), in collaboration with Moldova's public and private sectors. It aims to increase national capacities for residue monitoring in animal feed and products of animal origin (pesticides, veterinary medicine, contaminants and prohibited substances). The project will run from February 2023 to January 2026.



EUBAM-led MD-RO-UA Customs Group works to accelerate Ukrainian exports

Gathering at the Galati border crossing point (BCP) in Romania on 3 April, the EUBAM-led MD-RO-UA Regional Customs Coordination Group discussed strategies to ease transportation route congestion and expedite the movement of Ukrainian goods in the lower Danube region.

The meeting brought together top management from Moldovan, Romanian, and Ukrainian Customs Services, alongside the EU High-Level Adviser on Customs and Tax Policy in Moldova and representatives from the Moldovan National Food Safety Agency and the Ukrainian State Agency for Restoration and Infrastructure Development.



The Group received updates on the operational conditions of border crossings in all three countries and focused on implementing the Green Corridor concept in the lower Danube region to enhance the flow of goods, particularly Ukrainian exports. The triangle between three countries, traversing the southern part of Ukraine, Moldova and Romania and leading to the Constanta Port in Romania is part of this Green Corridor and is crucial for expediting trade.

Two key factors for supporting this progress are joint control between Ukraine and Moldova at the Reni-Giurgiulesti BCP and coordinated control between Moldova and Romania at Giurgiulesti-Galati BCP to enhance the efficiency of goods transportation. As regards the former, the Group agreed on a timeline for completing the administrative and physical preparations to ensure its operability by early June.



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"Our partner services are approaching a significant milestone in enhancing clearance capacity at Reni-Giurgiulesti BCP with top executives from Moldova and Romania reaffirming their dedication to further improvements in Giurgiulesti-Galati BCP. EUBAM's focus remains on supporting the swift implementation of these promising initiatives to bolster trade resilience and ensure smoother logistics,"

said the EUBAM's Head, Slawomir Pichor.

The MD-RO-UA Regional Customs Coordination Group supports the EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes. It convenes quarterly, to address traffic congestion issues for Ukrainian agricultural shipments. Comprising Customs Authorities from Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine, the group serves as a collaborative forum, engaging relevant institutions to streamline the transportation process.



EUBAM facilitates a strategic alliance between Moldova and Ukraine Police to tackle transborder crime

In a proactive move to counter transborder criminal activities, EUBAM brought together the police forces of Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova on 30 April for a dialogue between law enforcement agencies.

During the discussions, police professionals from the Main Directorate of the National Police in Odessa region and the General Police Inspectorate of Moldova discussed strategies to bolster cooperation, exchange vital contacts, and share expertise.

The primary focus was on combating the threats posed by drug and weapon trafficking, as well as the surge in human trafficking along the Moldova-Ukraine border due to Russia's unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine.

By fostering regional cooperation and implementing robust strategies, the collective efforts of both countries' police forces are anticipated to bring substantial benefits in the ongoing battle against transborder crime.



EUBAM welcomes launch of a full-fledged jointly operated border crossing point in Reni

On 16 May, Head of EUBAM Slawomir Pichor took part in the launch of the Reni (UA)-Giurgiulesti (MD) jointly operated border crossing point after its renovation by the Ukrainian authorities. The event took place during a ceremony attended by high level officials of Ukraine, Republic of Moldova, Romania, European Commission, and the United States in the frame of the multilateral meeting in the Quint format concerning the transit of grain products from Ukraine.

EUBAM has been a strong advocate for the jointly operated BCP Reni-Giurgiulesti in all aspects, underscoring its potential to improve traffic flow and enhance connectivity between Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, and Romania within the EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes initiative, particularly now, during these times of severe duress.

Within the EU-UA Solidarity Lanes initiative, the EU has allocated a staggering €11 million aimed at enhancing the efficiency of the Danube Corridor for both current and future demands.

“This border crossing point unites two countries and represents a very good example of cooperation between the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine and their readiness for enhancements in all customs and border processes. We are constantly supporting the EU-UA Solidarity Lanes in the Lower Danube region and are committed to this initiative. Also, we are glad to be part of these changes and help to make them part of routine on the way towards the European Union”

Slawomir Pichor said.



EU-Moldova

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ECONOMY AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Artisanal cheese or how taste sets the tone in a family business

Inspired by delicious food, the Cerneavschii family from the village of Gîsca, Transnistrian region has opened a workshop producing artisanal cheese.

Feodor and Olga Cerneavscaia returned to their hometown in 2011 because they couldn't deal with their homesickness and even the taste of the food wasn't "like home" either after nine years living abroad. Since then, in addition to their basic work, they've been looking for a family business idea.

That's how the artisanal cheese-making workshop was born. The business benefits from support of the European Union, offered through the Confidence Building Measures Programme, implemented by UNDP.

For more than a year now, Saturday and Sunday have also been working days dedicated to the artisanal cheese workshop.



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"There are two ways to have a healthy diet: either you earn a lot of money and you can afford it, or you prepare it by yourself. We chose the option of preparing it on our own and even making a profit out of it,"

mentions Olga Cerneavscaia.

The Cerneavschii family are self-confessed gourmets.

"I'm an accountant, my husband makes PVC windows, we had nothing to do with food technology and at the beginning, we trained in the kitchen. After that we understood that this process completely took us over, because it's a very creative process,"

notes Olga.

Her accounting experience was a great help in crafting a business plan, which she submitted to the competition launched by the EU Confidence Building Measures Programme, implemented by UNDP.

With the support of the EU, Olga received milk processing equipment worth €15,000. This is how the boiler, mixer, cooling tank, moulds, and other necessary tools made their appearance in the production workshop.

For each batch of cheese, the Cerneavschii family buys around 500-550 kg of milk from a small farmers' association in the region. On cheese production day, Olga takes care of every step, the first one being a calculation on paper. After the milk is pasteurised, the ingredients are added with great care, at precise intervals and in a well-established proportion.



"In our production, we only use natural products because we didn't want to make one more type of cheese out of the dozens. We have quite a few authentic and natural cheeses on sale, which is why we only use natural ingredients, natural colourings, which we add in minimal quantities, just to get the colour of the cheese that consumers are used to."

Olga buys the other ingredients such as natural ferments, lipase, coagulants from Italy. From all the milk used, the family Cerneavschii produces about 50 kilograms of artisanal cheese.

From setting up the production workshop to getting the cheese into shop windows was a long and demanding process. But since January 2024, the workshop has been producing cheese 2-3 times a month and it has been reaching shops in Tighina (Bender) and, more recently, Tiraspol.

"In our production we focus on Italian caciotta cheese. What makes it good? Its maturing period is short, caciotta can be eaten after the first five days of fermentation and as time goes by, its taste intensifies."

The rich yet smooth taste combines wonderfully with the various ingredients, leaving plenty of room for creativity, which Olga loves.



12 communities from both banks of Nistru will benefit from EU and UNDP support for local development initiatives

12 communities on both banks of the Nistru river have been selected to benefit from support for local development. They are: Holercani, Coșnița, Cârnațeni, Sănătăuca, Puhăcheni and Hârbovăț (on the right bank), as well as Rașcov, Gîsca, Teiul, Pervomaisc, Butor and Ternovca (on the left bank). Communities will be guided to involve the population in planning and monitoring local development. The support is provided by the European Union through the "Confidence Building Measures" programme implemented by UNDP.

The 12 selected localities will be guided by civil society organisations - the Alliance of the Hometown Associations and the Tiraspol Regional Development Agency, which signed a cooperation agreement on 24 May 2024.

For one year, the 12 communities will be assisted in identifying, formulating, planning, and implementing local initiatives.

Thus, by involving men and women, community members and diaspora in local development processes, financial and human potential will be harnessed, which

will contribute to improving the quality of life on both banks of the Nistru river and building trust.

"The village of Holercani is always looking for different opportunities to develop the locality in terms of infrastructure, as well as culture, sports and education domains and that is why we are here and we are very happy to have been selected. We are confident that this initiative will be to the benefit of the community,"

said Tudor Tanasev, mayor of Holercani village

"First of all, we get to know each other and learn from the experience of other communities. Why is such an initiative important? It's the only way to contribute to a better living of the community members and this motivates you to do more and better for your community",

says Marina Yaskova, representative of the CSO "Motivation" in Ternovca.



In the second phase, six infrastructure projects will be selected, three projects for each bank, which will be implemented with funding provided by the EU programme "Confidence Building Measures", implemented by UNDP.

By supporting these 12 localities, the European Union is continuing its support for improving cooperation between communities on both banks of the Nistru

river through joint projects involving local partners, civil society organisations and other stakeholders.

The "Confidence Building Measures" programme, funded by the European Union and implemented by UNDP, contributes to building trust between the inhabitants of both banks of the Nistru river by involving them in joint development projects.



The regional market in Colibași was developed and modernized with the support of the EU and UNDP Moldova

The regional market "Cu drag de Colibași", modernized with the support of the European Union and UNDP, was inaugurated on 17 June 2024. The market is available to all producers in the Cahul - Giurgiulești road section and its proximity to the national route is favourable for commercial transactions and contributes to increasing the income of local producers.

The works, worth more than €200,000, included the construction of an indoor and outdoor hall, landscaping and six rustic huts, installation of indoor and outdoor networks (water and sewerage, ventilation, electricity supply, etc.). The budget was covered by the "EU4Moldova: Focal regions", funded by the EU and implemented by UNDP and UNICEF, and from the contribution of the Colibași City Hall.



"With the support of the EU we have managed to improve the welfare of the inhabitants of the Lower Prut Meadow micro-region by providing a modern infrastructure for a market for both local and regional producers

and potential buyers of goods produced in the region. So, we will manage to boost the development of the local economy,"

said Ion Dolganiuc, Mayor of Colibași village.



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The modernization of the regional market aims to accelerate local economic development and create favourable conditions for local producers to sell their products at the local market. Now, more than 90 traders will sell their products at stalls and at least 28 vendors will sell dairy products, eggs, meat in specially arranged spaces in the hall. And local folk craftspeople will display their products in the six rustic houses set up.

"For us, people from Colibași, it is a great satisfaction to see a modern and attractive commercial market in our locality, which provides the necessary spaces for commercialization and thus we hope that we will have the possibility to earn a living, so as to support our families here at home,"

noted Elena Cojan, local producer.



Also, with EU and UNDP support, parking spaces were provided and access ramps were built for disabled people and parents with prams.

The works on the construction of the regional market "Cu drag de Colibași" took place between September 2022 and July 2023.

“EU4Moldova: Focal regions” programme (2019-2024) supports smart, inclusive, and sustainable socio-economic development in the Cahul and Ungheni regions to bring a better quality of life to citizens.

The programme has a total budget of €23 million, is financed by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).



Cooperation for efficiency in the provision of public services at local level – “Servcom Sud”

A new regional operator for the joint delivery of public services for management of waste, public domain and green spaces – “Servcom Sud” – has been established to provide services for 15 neighbouring communities in Cahul district with a total population of over 18,000 people. Thus, waste will be collected in containers and disposed of with specialised technology and stored in accordance with environmental protection standards, which will benefit people's health and the environment. The company will also maintain the roads and areas adjacent to public institutions.

The regional operator was created with the support of the programme “EU4Moldova: Focal regions”, funded by the EU and implemented by UNDP and UNICEF and with the contribution of the 9 partner municipalities administering 15 localities. As a first step, an Intermunicipal Council was set up, which received legal assistance to institutionalise inter-municipal cooperation. The decision was then approved by the local councils of the member communities.



Subsequently, with the support of the EU and UNDP, the newly created service provider received assistance to strengthen its institutional and operational capacity, amounting to more than €520,000.

“This project has a positive impact on the state of the environment and the health of the population in the localities, on the living conditions of the people, but also the conditions of activity at the companies in the region,”

said Nicolae Beju, Mayor of Zîrnești, at the inauguration event of the regional operator on 17 June 2024.

“Inhabitants of our localities will benefit from a change for the better in the appearance of our community. We hope that this form of cooperation will become an experience that can be replicated by other localities in the country and a model of good practices in raising awareness about the need for environmental protection at local, regional and global level,”

noted Elena Enachi, Mayor of Baurci-Moldoveni village.

With the support of the EU and UNDP, a vehicle hall was built and the regional operator's territory was landscaped.



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At the same time, 11 pieces of equipment were purchased for the provision of public services for the management of the public domain: bulldozer, mini excavator, autograder, tractor, trailer, branch chopper, side chopper for plant debris, front loader and 3 mini lawn mowers.

The purchased machines will be used to provide various types of services to citizens, such as grading, cleaning, resurfacing and snow removal, cleaning and digging drainage ditches and digging in hard-to-reach areas with mini-excavators. They will also be used for waste disposal, grass cutting in parks, squares and areas adjacent to public

institutions, as well as chopping and distributing dry branches from parks and authorised cuttings to vulnerable people.

The regional operator will also provide services to entrepreneurs in partner localities at a preferential rate. This will contribute to development of local economies and infrastructure.

To promote efficiency and increased coverage of local public services, the EU and UNDP have also supported two other public services in Ungheni in the field of solid waste and water supply and sanitation to move to an inter-municipal cooperation model.



Thus, more than 200,000 inhabitants from 24 localities in the Cahul region and 34 localities in the Ungheni region will be able to access improved public services. The three public services in Cahul and Ungheni that have adopted the inter-municipal cooperation model have received a total of €1 million from the European Union and €50,000 from France for infrastructure works, equipment and more.

Local representatives also learned from case studies in Romania and France, where such forms of cooperation bring added value and boost local economic development, making the engaged communities more attractive for entrepreneurial activity.

“EU4Moldova: Focal regions” programme (2019-2024) supports smart, inclusive, and sustainable socio-economic development in the Cahul and Ungheni regions to bring a better quality of life to citizens. The

programme has a total budget of €23 million, is financed by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).



Enhancing disaster-risk reduction and building socio-economic resilience in Anenii Noi raion

At the beginning of 2023, the STRIVE Consortium, composed of international NGOs Acted, REACH (a joint programme between Acted and IMPACT Initiatives) and Libraries Without Borders (BSF) launched a two-year project aiming to strengthen

the preparedness and resilience of communities in the Anenii Noi raion against natural and man-made disasters. This project is funded by Agence Française de Développement (AFD), and co-funded by USAID.



In the first phase of the project, Acted conducted disaster risk reduction (DRR) training for 26 local public authorities (LPAs) in Anenii Noi and trained 31 civil society organisations in disaster management and other specific topics. As a result of these trainings and individual consultations, a DRR strategy for Anenii

Noi Raion was developed, with a specific product for each locality/LPA within the district. A formal presentation of the adopted strategy took place on 26 June, 2024. The Consortium presented the key components and objectives of the strategy, highlighting collective efforts to build a more resilient Moldova.

Additionally, during the project, 31 civil society organisations received a set of five capacity-building trainings, including DRR training, followed by an opportunity to access 8 grants for the implementation of innovative ideas in their own communities.

In May 2024, grants were awarded to five organisations working on disaster risk reduction and three organisations working on social cohesion, protection and economic resilience.



The project “Local civil society contributes to the inclusive and sustainable economic development of the country” supported by the European Union and Sweden has been successfully completed

An inclusive economic development of the Republic of Moldova is not possible without irreversible transformations of the regions. Since 2021, the project “Local Civil Society Contributes to the Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Development of the Country” has focused on developing a favourable ecosystem for social entrepreneurship in the Republic of Moldova, based on the concept and philosophy that SMEs need strengthened capacities at all stages of development.

The project is centred on economic development in the regions, precisely,

because it emerged from an acute need for support, evident in statistics, signalled by the market, and especially, expected by young people. Thus, within the project, starting in 2021, six Business Hubs have been created to support regional companies.

Financial resources have been provided to civil society organisations for the creation of Business Hubs and support of their beneficiaries in Bălți, Orhei, Tiraspol, Comrat, and Chișinău, covering a total of 1,000 companies.



Small and medium enterprises are and have been accepted as the engine of economic growth and promotion of inclusive economic growth, which makes them essential for development. Especially in countries like Moldova, a candidate country for EU accession, companies need support to fully capitalise on this path, which comes with multiple opportunities for business.

Additionally, 15 social enterprises have been created and developed. These 15 social enterprises have employed 64 people from various disadvantaged categories, and the

social impact of the social enterprises is that 1,199 people have benefited from free or partially free services and products.

Thus, in the Republic of Moldova, there are already hundreds of success stories and worthy examples that reflect the influence of civil society on the sustainable development of the country. On the other hand, social entrepreneurship brings solutions based on collaborative, practical learning and co-creation, and by correcting social and economic imbalances.



In May, when the entire European continent celebrates peace, unity, and the unique model of the social market economy, a closing event of the project “Local Civil Society Contributes to the Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Development of the Country” took place. On May 16 2024, figures, stories, and models were brought to the public's attention on how social entrepreneurship

becomes a dimension of democracy, and how the regions of the Republic of Moldova can export stability.

Another result is that 10 non-governmental associations in Moldova, which created regional consortia to facilitate the inclusive employment in the labour market of people from disadvantaged categories, managed to consult 2,616 vulnerable

people and train 2,322 vulnerable people to facilitate their employment. The number of vulnerable people employed because of the consortium's assistance is 208, of which 86 are women.

Within the project, 10 Youth Entrepreneurship Funds were created, which offered 101 grants to young people to open or expand their business, of which 16 individuals are with disabilities. A total of 108 jobs were created.

In the three discussion panels, the final beneficiaries of the project spoke, who are

small and medium enterprises, vulnerable people employed in the labour market, NEET youth, and social enterprises.

The year 2021 will remain in collective memory and history as a turning point in terms of economic and social relations, and the project "Local Civil Society Contributes to the Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Development of the Country" synchronised with the need to identify a red thread of economic and mature sustainability for social businesses in the regions.



The East Europe Foundation, in partnership with the European Business Association and the Contact Center, are the ones who implemented the project. Its main objective is the economic development of the Republic of Moldova through the active involvement

of civil society and other stakeholders, taking into account the provisions of the Association Agreement with the European Union, which includes the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area.

Exploring business friendly certification to boost local economic development in Moldova

A pivotal roundtable discussion was held on 28 May, to explore the chances of Business Friendly Certification (BFC) in Moldova – a European tool for local economic development. The BFC is an international initiative, successfully implemented in Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Kosovo, which lead to 66 municipalities and cities being certified as business-friendly environments. The Certification goal is to recognise and promote examples of best practices, but also a competition among

LPAs in the country and the region in attracting new investments.

This event brought together key stakeholders and partners of the “EU4Moldova: Local Communities” programme including ministries, mayoralties from Edinet, Straseni, Leova, Comrat, and Soroca, rayonal councils and various development partners. The discussion aimed to explore how this transformative initiative could create a business-friendly environment and support LPAs in the Republic of Moldova to become more efficient and transparent



The roundtable highlighted the importance, opportunities, and success stories of Business Friendly Certification in Europe, drawing attention to the BFC South East Europe Programme. The programme, spearheaded by the National Alliance for Local Economic Development (NALED) from Serbia, has been a pioneering force in regional economic development.

Among the main mentioned benefits were the improved access of LPAs to international financing, the increase in the number of jobs, the development of infrastructure, the improvement of public services, the creation of online communication platforms and the simplification of administrative procedures.

The discussion was followed by a two-weeks long mission during which NALED assessed together with the local partners the applicability and readiness of the Moldovan system for local economic development. They will soon formulate a report and a set of recommendations on how to support entrepreneurship, ensure environmental protection and circular economy, improve digitalization of administrative procedure, support to local labour force etc.

The introduction of Business-Friendly Certification in Moldova is expected to bring long-term benefits, providing municipalities with a clear roadmap to foster a favourable business climate and adopt transparent local administrative practices.

The “EU4Moldova: Local Communities” programme remains dedicated to supporting sustainable local economic development, enhancing local governance, and fostering strong business environments in Moldovan localities.



Innovation and social responsibility in the agri-food industry through collaboration with the Food Bank

The subject of preventing food waste was discussed with representatives of the agri-food industry during two round tables with a similar topic "Innovation and social responsibility in the agri-food industry through collaboration with the Food Bank" organised in Chisinau on May 16 during the international exhibition "FOOD&DRINKS", and in Balti on June 13.

The events aimed to present best practices of partnership between the business sector and the Food Bank of Moldova, which facilitates the on time distribution of surplus food products to social canteens in the country and other organisations that support vulnerable people.

Ana Prasolov, project director at IP Keystone Moldova, emphasised the positive impact of these partnerships:

"More than 9000 people in need have benefited from the products recovered by the Food Bank in almost two years.

These figures illustrate not only the Bank's operational efficiency, but also the continuous need for expanding this model nationwide."

The event was attended by representatives of the Food Bank, entrepreneurs from the agri-food sector, representatives of central and local public authorities, as well as social canteen service providers.

In addition to the positive social impact, the fiscal and image benefits for agri-food companies that donate food instead of throwing it away, were highlighted. Participants also discussed new legislative changes aimed at preventing food waste and strengthening the collaboration between economic agents and the Food Bank.



"The changes introduced to the regulatory framework have been drafted following an extensive process of documentation and discussions with the business sector. Therefore the entrepreneurs will be motivated to donate surplus food products in time to charities rather than to dispose them of at the stage when they can no longer be consumed. Thus, from a fiscal point of view, we intend to equalise the donation of food products with its disposal",

specified Mr. Dumitru Dîrul, IRMS Diaconia's lawyer, during the event.

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 I.P. "Keystone Moldova", A.O. "Concordia. Social Projects", and I.R.M.S. "Diaconia".



The project "Sustainable actions for economic growth through tourism" was successfully implemented in Ungheni City

On Wednesday, June 19, 2024, the Cultural Multifunctional Center "Regina Maria" hosted the closing event of the "Sustainable actions for economic growth through tourism" project, implemented by the Ungheni City Hall in partnership with the PA "Regional Center for Sustainable Development", financed by the European Union within the Mayor for Economic Growth Program. The purpose of the activity was to inform the public about the results of the project's activities, joint initiatives and partnerships focused on capitalising on the tourist potential, promoting sustainable tourism in

the Ungheni region and the contribution it has to the economic development of the region, outlining the prospects for cooperation with twin cities in the field of tourism and strengthening the image of Ungheni as a destination of interest for domestic and international tourists.

Vitalie VRABIE, the mayor of Ungheni City mentioned that the project achieved all its objectives having a strong impact on the development of tourism in the Ungheni region and contributing to increasing the attractiveness and local economic growth.



Present at the event, Jan Demidovits-Mekelainen, Program Manager at the Delegation of the European Union in Moldova, congratulated the residents and the Ungheni municipality for the successful implementation of the project and noted that our country, and Ungheni

in particular, has big tourism potential that must be explored:

"We want people to come to the Republic of Moldova, to come to Ungheni region to explore its wide culture, traditions, wine, folk songs and dances, handicrafts - there are a lot to see and to do in Ungheni."



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He assured that the European Union will continue to support Republic of Moldova, to support the tourism industry, but also other important areas of development for a better life of the citizens.

During the final conference, discussion panels were held with topics on the role of clusters in the sustainable development of tourist destinations and cultural offers, the impact of folk crafts in tourism promotion, successful partnerships between institutions, the impact of international alliances on tourism development and digital transformation in tourism. Speakers at the panels, representatives of the Regional Tourist Cluster Ungheni 2030, the Ungheni Museum of History and Ethnography, the Ungheni Tourist Information Center, the "Regina Maria" Center, the "Rasia Cojocaru" School of Fine Arts, the District Department of Culture, public institutions locals, folk craftsmen, journalists, bloggers and vloggers, participants from the twin cities with video messages, shared the valuable experience they have in their fields of activity,

emphasising the importance of developing sustainable partnerships, creating synergies in tourism, valuing traditions and using the more innovative promotion tools. They also talked about the positive impressions and emotions they experienced participating in various activities carried out within the project.

On the occasion of the final event of the project, the "Rasia Cojocaru" School of Fine Arts organised an outdoor exhibition of works and art objects, with a ceramic painting workshop of the brand of the Ungheni region and some traditional symbols. At the same time, the "Regina Maria" Multifunctional Cultural Center made a pleasant surprise for the participants by involving them in singing the "Youth Hymn" together with the group of guitarists "UnFolk" and held a workshop making wooden medallions.

The project "Sustainable actions for economic growth through tourism" had a duration of 30 months with a total budget of 762,000 euros, of which 686,000 euros is a grant offered by the European Union.



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Moldova prepares for accessing EU single market and conducts comprehensive study on national quality infrastructure with the EU and UNIDO support

In preparation for accessing the European Union single market, Moldova successfully launched the study “Analysis of the capacities of NQIS institutions and the demand for their services from the meat, poultry, and dairy value chains in the Republic of Moldova” with the support of EU and UNIDO. The comprehensive state-of-the-art study, performed in the Republic of Moldova for the first time, provides an in-depth assessment of needs and demands for services of national quality infrastructure in the target

sectors with feasible recommendations. The study has multiple long-term implications for UNIDO, EU and other development partners, since the insights obtained from this study will bolster the development of action plans and roadmaps for respective value chains, therefore contributing to tailored support for Moldova to fulfil the provisions of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTA) and benefiting the key outcome – prepare for the European Union single market entry.



Entry into the EU market will economically benefit certain businesses and will serve as a powerful leverage for the distribution of highly technical knowledge and skills. Over the past years, Moldova has made significant advancements towards its aim of EU integration by ensuring standards and food safety compliance. However, more reforms are needed in order to develop and expand the capabilities of the National Soof Safety Agency (ANSA), and to assist the Moldovan business in gaining access to the EU market, which will benefit the national economy and national consumer safety in the future.

In this respect, the study analysed the global and EU market trends for target sectors, identified the relevant standards and regulations, assessed national capacities of meat, poultry, and dairy production, mapped and conducted performance analysis of the national quality infrastructure institutions. The study also provided feasible recommendations with substantial leverage points that will significantly

improve conformity capacities in Moldova in the long run, including on strengthening institutional capacities in the process of harmonisation with the EU requirements, effective enforcement of official control, strengthening the laboratory coordination, supporting programs in implementing quality standards, etc.

The report was produced in the framework of the project “Improving the standards compliance through increased national capacities for residue monitoring”, funded by the European Union and Germany through the UNIDO Trust Fund with a total budget of Euro 1.5 million and implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), with a duration of 2023 – 2026.

The full study in the English language is available [here](#).

The full study in the Romanian language is available [here](#).





Study and inspiration visit for mayors from Georgia and Azerbaijan

As part of the "City to City" program, a delegation consisting of mayors and experts from Georgia and Azerbaijan, alongside representatives from AEER, conducted a visit to the Republic of Moldova. This program is part of the "Covenant of Mayors-East" project, funded by the European Union, aimed at facilitating the exchange of best practices and collaboration in the field of energy and climate change adaptation among local authorities from the three countries.

The delegation visited the Chisinau City Hall, where they discussed the local strategy for attracting investments in the energy sector. Projects mentioned included the rehabilitation of 14 schools, 5 kindergartens, and 3 hospitals, financed by a 25 million euro loan from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).



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Additionally, SuperESCO projects are being prepared in collaboration with MESA and the National Center for Sustainable Energy. The visit continued to "Nikolai Gogol" Theoretical High School, where the delegation learned about the benefits of thermal rehabilitation supported by EBRD. They also visited ABS Recycling Moldova, discussing responsible waste management and the importance of recycling.

On the second day, the delegation visited the localities of Strășeni and Călărași. In Strășeni, Mayor Valentina Casian presented the transition from the Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) to the Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP). Discussions focused on energy efficiency and the use of renewable sources, including the thermal rehabilitation of residential buildings and the use of ESCO mechanisms. Additionally, Deputy Mayor Cristina Smolenschi presented the Vertical Gardens project.

In Călărași, Mayor Victor Ambroci guided the delegation through the "DoReMiCii" kindergarten, the first passive house project in Moldova, featuring extremely low energy costs due to innovative technologies. The visit also included the Specialized Sports School of Olympic Reserves and the Ethnographic Museum, where smart street lighting projects were discussed.

On the third day, the delegation visited the city of Cantemir, where Mayor Roman Ciubaciuc presented local energy projects, including the thermal rehabilitation of buildings and the use of renewable energy sources. The delegation was impressed by the biomass station using plant residues, unique in Moldova, and the implemented energy efficiency solutions. The day concluded with a visit to the Ethnographic Museum, where guests learned about local history and traditions.



#EUSEW2024 - the largest series of events dedicated to sustainable energy

The #EUSEW2024 events are successfully taking place in the signatory localities of the Covenant of Mayors for Energy and Climate. In Vorniceni, Vişniovca, Străşeni, Sireţi, Giurgiuleşti, Bălţi, Dîşcova, Cantemir, and beyond, various educational and recreational activities are being held to raise awareness among citizens about energy saving and the importance of energy efficiency.

For example, on June 23, 2024, the residents of Vorniceni enthusiastically participated in the "EcoEnergy" Bike Marathon, which has already become a tradition, to celebrate Energy Day. In Vişniovca, visibility materials for the Sustainable Energy Week events were handmade by a group of senior volunteers. During the workshop, Mayor Olga Pac presented the objectives of the Covenant and the commitments made by the locality to reduce CO2 levels, while the senior volunteers spent their time usefully and pleasantly.

In Străşeni, an informational workshop on waste management and modern composting technologies was held at the Town Hall. Participants learned about efficient waste management methods and were introduced to Bokashi composting technology, which allows for the composting of organic waste even in apartments.

In Sireţi, events were held continuously for more than a week, involving residents of all ages. Mayor Leonid Boaghe emphasised the importance of everyone's involvement in promoting renewable energy and preserving the environment.



In Giurgiuleşti, a series of activities took place throughout the European Sustainable Energy Week.

Children from the "Albinuța" Kindergarten received practical lessons about the environment, and students from the "M. Sadoveanu" High School visited the Eco Green Expo, where they learned about renewable energy sources and eco-friendly products.

In Dîșcova, children celebrated Energy Day for the second consecutive year, learning about energy efficiency and renewable energy through age-appropriate activities. In Cantemir, Energy Day was traditionally combined with Children's Day, featuring cycling races, outdoor games, and other interactive activities.

The #EUSEW2024 events will continue until mid-July 2024, aiming to inspire and educate communities, promoting a greener and more sustainable future.





ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE



Signatories of the Covenant of Mayors: Water Management in the context of climate change adaptation

For two days, over 40 representatives from municipalities that have signed the European initiative, the Covenant of Mayors for Energy and Climate, including mayors, deputy mayors, and local specialists, gathered to discuss climate change challenges and potential solutions, focusing on water resource management. This training session is part of the signatories' ongoing effort to implement Local Energy and Climate Plans.

On the first day, representatives from the Ministry of Environment provided presentations on the regulatory and legislative framework, while local and international experts shared best practices and innovative solutions. Participants learned how concrete measures can aid in climate change adaptation and the efficient and sustainable management of water resources.



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Previously, participants had benefited from training sessions dedicated to sustainable energy. Now, new opportunities are being offered to strengthen capacities in the field of climate change adaptation. The active participation of the signatories demonstrates a shared local commitment to adequately address climate challenges, ensuring a sustainable and resilient future.

On the second day, discussions focused on concrete infrastructure projects, innovative methods for wastewater recycling, and energy efficiency. Experts presented solutions that can be implemented at the local level to tackle climate challenges. Question and answer sessions allowed participants to ask specific questions and receive direct advice from specialists.



This event, organised within the framework of the COM-East III project in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, marks an important step in enhancing knowledge

about water resource management and climate change adaptation, demonstrating the strong commitment of local communities to a greener and more resilient future.



A wastewater treatment plant was built in Sculeni with the financial support of the EU

A wastewater treatment plant is now operational in Sculeni, Ungheni, providing improved access to sanitation services for 3,400 households, school and pre-school education and health care institutions, as well as over 100 entrepreneurs in the village and two other neighbouring localities: Buciumeni and Cioropcani.

The works worth more than €200,000 were carried out with the support of the "EU4Moldova: Focal regions", funded by the EU and implemented by UNDP and UNICEF and with the contribution of Sculeni town hall. A cyclic biological treatment plant and a wastewater pumping station with a siphoning and desilting plant were built and sewerage networks were installed.



"Access to the sewerage system means conditions for a dignified life. At the same time, it has a direct impact on the quality of the environment and makes it easier to attract investment, as we are becoming a destination for entrepreneurs, who have access to all utilities,"

said Sergiu Gușevati, mayor of Sculeni.

The treatment plant eliminates the negative health and environmental effects of wastewater discharges on surface and groundwater.

"Thanks to the EU and UNDP, we, the entrepreneurs operating in the locality, as well as those who want to open a business, have the opportunity to benefit from a public wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure, which ensures that we are able to comply with environmental requirements. With the provision of modern sanitation infrastructure, the potential for business expansion has also increased and we hope that this will improve the standard of living and the comfort and civilization of the inhabitants,"

said Călin Rica, a local entrepreneur.



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The construction works took place during September 2022 – October 2023.



“EU4Moldova: Focal regions” programme (2019-2024) supports smart, inclusive, and sustainable socio-economic development in the Cahul and Ungheni regions to bring a better quality of life to citizens.

The programme has a total budget of €23 million, is financed by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).



People in Buzduganii de Jos, Ungheni, have access to drinking water from a water supply system built with the financial support of the EU

More than 640 households and 20 entrepreneurs in the village of Buzduganii de Jos in the commune of Valea Mare, Ungheni district have now access to drinking water, thanks to a water system built with the support of the European Union and UNDP. This means that residents no longer have to fetch water from wells that do not necessarily meet public health standards.

The construction works worth more than 200,000 euros were carried out with the

support of the programme "EU4Moldova: Focal regions", funded by the EU and implemented by UNDP and UNICEF and with the contribution of the municipality of Valea Mare.

An artesian well, which extracts water from the water table, a water tower, which provides the necessary pressure in the network, was designed and a water supply network of about eight kilometres was built.

An artesian well, which extracts water from the water table, a water tower, which provides the necessary pressure in the network, was designed and a water supply network of about eight kilometres was built.



"The lack of a centralised water supply system in the village of Buzduganii de Jos has been a major problem for the inhabitants of the commune and for existing and potential entrepreneurs. The new infrastructure will help to ensure conditions for a decent living and create jobs in the village and increase the income of economic agents, which will generate additional revenues for the local budget,"

noted Alexei Antoci, mayor of Valea Mare.

The water supply has been long awaited by the inhabitants and entrepreneurs of Buzduganii de Jos, who will now have drinking water at the taps. At the same time, the construction of the water supply also has a positive impact on environmental protection. The artesian well and the water tower have been designed to minimise losses and prevent groundwater pollution.



"Both children and parents are very happy and satisfied with the new conditions in the kindergarten. I am glad that thanks to the EU support it has been possible to provide the children with a source of drinking water. Projects that provide investments to ensure better conditions for children are the ones that give you great emotions, because children are the future of the country,"

said Olga Manciu, director of the kindergarten "Romanita" in Buzduganii de Jos.

The works - from planning and design to execution and testing of the system - took place during March 2023 – March 2024.

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Pioneering Climate Justice Education in Moldova and the EU Neighbourhood

The “[1st European Cross-Regional School in Climate Justice and Human Rights](#)” took place from May 20 to 25 in the village of Burcuta, in the outskirts of Chisinau, the capital of Moldova.

The School is the flagship activity of the ongoing EU-funded project “[Development of Climate Justice and Human Rights Education at the Moldova State University \(MSU\)](#)” focused on setting up an Interdisciplinary Lab between the Faculties of Law and Biology by July 2025.

This innovative academic activity, the first of its kind in the region, was envisioned for students, human rights defenders, and civil servants from Moldova and the EU enlargement countries. Jointly organised by the Global Campus and the Moldova

State University - a member of the network since September 2023, the School was implemented under the umbrella of the GC Caucasus (Yerevan), and in a special collaboration with the two neighbouring regional hubs of GC Europe (Venice) and GC South East Europe (Sarajevo/Bologna).

The School gathered a highly heterogeneous and motivated group of 18 students, with different backgrounds and approaches to climate justice. They participated in a rich programme of events, classes, practical exercises, field and social activities led by academics, experts, practitioners and alumni from the GC participating universities and partners, among them Manfred Nowak, Zoi Aliozi, Rodica Iordanov, Justina Grigaraviciene, Pim Martens, Alma Midzic and Samentha Goethals.



An important highlight of the programme was the special session “Mobilizing for the Climate: a conversation with Vladimir Slivyak” which allowed participants to meet and discuss with the renowned activist, co-chairman of Ecodefense and 2021 Right Livelihood Laureate.

“Climate justice is a moral imperative, essential for making the world a better place for all its inhabitants, and embodies the principle of equity, requiring everyone to contribute according to their abilities”.

Hewan Tonini, School participant

All students have successfully and actively attended the School receiving a joint diploma by the Global Campus, GC Caucasus and the Moldova State University, while five of them have also opted to gain 5 ECTS after passing a final written exam.

The Spring School is an ambitious format that aims to create a legacy as an annual activity and incubator for innovative ideas, with the final goal of contributing solidly to a sustainable green transition in Moldova and the region.

The School was organised as part of the events for the celebration of the 2024 EU Day in Moldova. Consult the programme [here](#).



EU Green Week 2024 in the Republic of Moldova was marked to spread awareness about water quality

The 2024 EU Green Week was marked in the Republic of Moldova under #WaterWiseEU key topic, a robust initiative designed to ignite a dialogue on the present and future of water resources. The campaign aimed not only to raise awareness but also to catalyse collaborative efforts towards sustainable water management solutions.

The campaign encouraged a fresh perspective on water, emphasised its critical importance and the need for transformative action.

The 2024 EU Green Week in Moldova comprised a social media campaign and events in several regions of the country.



The campaign kicked off on International Environment Day with the ECO & GREEN EXPO 2024, on 5 June, which heralded the start of European Green Week. The exhibition featured a showcase of ECO technologies and environmental protection solutions, alongside innovations in eco-friendly businesses and alternative energy sources. Visitors explored exhibits focused on resource optimization, waste recycling, and a diverse array of eco-friendly products and services. The EU funded project "Covenant of Mayors" offered practical advice on energy consumption optimization

and environmental protection. Within EU Green Week, thanks to the support of the European Union, on 12 June, a water system was inaugurated, providing more than 640 households and 20 entrepreneurs in the village of Buzduganii de Jos in the commune of Valea Mare, Ungheni district with access to drinking water.

The construction works amounting to 200,000 euros were carried out by "EU4Moldova: Focal regions" programme, funded by the EU and implemented by UNDP and UNICEF and with the contribution of the municipality of Valea Mare.



Another event during EU Green Week was organised in Cahul district, where with the support of the European Union new regional operator “Servcom Sud” - was launched. The operator will provide public services for management of waste, public domain and green spaces for 15 neighbouring communities in Cahul district with a total population of over 18,000 people. Thus, waste will be collected in containers and disposed of with specialised technology and

stored in accordance with environmental protection standards, which will benefit people’s health and the environment.

In conclusion, the 2024 EU Green Week’s involvement in #WaterWiseEU marked a significant step towards addressing water challenges through awareness, collaboration, and sustainable practices. By embracing these principles, stakeholders are able to collectively safeguard water for future generations.





Moldova's cybersecurity: a continuous challenge tackled with the EU and Team Europe support

EUPM continues its support for the newly established **Agency for Cybersecurity of the Republic of Moldova**. This spring, EUPM continued to facilitate the exchange of

expertise and brought good EU practices to the country, as well as donated important IT equipment needed for the successful operationalisation and activity of the Agency.



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In this endeavour, an important partner is the **Romanian National Directorate for Cybersecurity**, whose leadership and experts visited in April the Agency for Cybersecurity, with EUPM support. The discussions facilitated the identification of a series of concrete actions in support of the Moldovan Agency for Cybersecurity, which are already being implemented.

Important steps were also taken by EUPM in the cooperation with other partners, such as the **Netherlands**, for implementing projects and activities in support of a more secure digital space in the Republic of Moldova.



Cahul and Ungheni – aspiring smart cities, with the financial support of the EU

Smart city initiatives in the Republic of Moldova, Romania, and the Czech Republic, which harness the potential of digital solutions to upgrade water supply and waste disposal facilities, streamline public transport networks, find more efficient ways to light and heat the buildings were the topics addressed on 28 May 2024 at a forum organised by the "EU4Moldova:

Focal Regions" programme, financed by the European Union and implemented by UNDP and UNICEF. The development of technologies opens up new opportunities for effective governance, for improving services offered to citizens and transforming cities into efficient, comfortable and sustainable environments, noted the participants at the forum.



Better urban mobility, intelligent management of resources (efficient water metering and control of water supply system management processes, monitoring and safety of sanitation services), public services delivery through one stop shops, digital education in preschool institutions, safe cities through the development of systems

of video monitoring, smart city platforms, intelligent public lighting are among the smart projects supported during 2019-2024 in Cahul and Ungheni by the European Union and UNDP. The total value of the investments amounts to over 1.8 million euros, including the contribution of local public authorities.

The smart city platforms for Cahul and Ungheni, that are being developed now, will include real-time video monitoring for road traffic, waste management and maintaining public order. Energy consumption monitoring and street lighting optimization systems will be implemented, along with efficient water metering. Public transport management will be improved through real-time visualisation of urban transport, while facilitating closer and more efficient interaction between local authorities and citizens, thus increasing community involvement.

The "Empowering smart cities in Moldova" forum brought together over 50 representatives of local public authorities from the Republic of Moldova and Romania, ICT experts, and organisations that campaign for digital inclusion and smart governance.

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

For more details about the programme's activities in Cahul and Ungheni regions, access www.eu4cahul.md and www.eu4ungheni.md.



EU supports Moldova–Ukraine–Romania cross-border trading through EU4Digital eCustoms testing



Trading with one's neighbours is important for any country. For Moldova and Ukraine, now that they are candidates to join the European Union, being able to trade easily with European countries is of increasing importance. However, the customs offices in these Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries and their mutual EU neighbour Romania are overloaded with cargo traffic – especially since the onset of war in Ukraine. This creates additional challenges and risks for these countries and their cross-border flow of goods. To address the problems, the EU is supporting the introduction and testing of the digital application SEED, in a new phase of EU4Digital eCustoms activities.

Cooperation plays a key role in simplifying cross-border trade processes and optimising customs procedures. The customs administrations of these three countries have been collaborating closely for several years, with EU4Digital support. EU4Digital experts facilitate more efficient interaction between the customs administrations by sharing knowledge and skills, and providing the Systematic Exchange of Electronic

Data (SEED) tool for automatically sharing customs data about vehicles and goods as they cross the border. As a result, it is expected to cut down processing times, lessen administrative work, increase the productivity of customs officials, increase data precision and openness – crucial for managing risks effectively – streamline freight traffic and, ultimately, allow faster border crossing times.

After several successful tests in which customs data was exchanged about empty trucks as they crossed a border between two of the countries, the partners are now advancing to a more comprehensive pilot that will involve loaded trucks and all three of the neighbouring customs authorities. In this latest phase of their cooperation, they will integrate and test the SEED application in their infrastructure and procedures at selected border crossing points (BCPs): Porubne (Ukraine) – Siret (Romania); Leuseni (Moldova) – Albița (Romania); and Reni (Ukraine) – Giurgiulești (Moldova) – Galați (Romania).

Igor Iurco, head of the Customs Control Division at the Customs Service of the Republic of Moldova, said that SEED had already been tested at the Leuseni BCP two years ago, but only for empty trucks. “The results of this test showed us certain benefits. Therefore, it was decided to proceed to the next stage to test the application both on empty trucks and on trucks carrying goods.” Ultimately, the aim of integrating the SEED application is to avoid complicating customs

control processes and instead to simplify and speed them up, or to help in making more thorough inspections when additional risks are identified. Moreover, the point of the EU4Digital eCustoms pilot project is also to promote deeper cooperation between the neighbouring customs authorities.

More: <https://eufordigital.eu/eu-supports-moldova-ukraine-romania-cross-border-trading-through-eu4digital-ecustoms-testing/>



EU4Digital Academy ‘eCommerce in EU Marketplaces’ – Moldova course now available

EU4Digital Facility is excited to announce that the [EU4Digital Academy](#) course ‘eCommerce in EU Marketplaces’ is now available for citizens and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Moldova. The online material is available [in English](#) and [in Romanian](#). EU4Digital invites all learners to enrol, whether you are starting your eCommerce journey with no prior knowledge or are already selling products online in Moldova and wish to expand into European Union (EU) marketplaces.

The new ‘eCommerce in EU Marketplaces’ materials have been designed specifically for learners in the Moldovan context. The course explains the major EU eCommerce marketplaces – such as Amazon, eBay and

eMAG – how to select the most suitable marketplace for your business, how to register and start selling, and how to navigate EU rules such as VAT and customs.

The launch of the Moldovan course through the EU4Digital Academy digital learning programme follows success with a [Ukraine-specific version](#) of the same course [in Ukrainian](#) and [in English](#); more than 250 learners enrolled in the Ukrainian course within the first two months.

Versions of the ‘eCommerce in EU Marketplaces’ course that are tailored for Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia will be launched by the EU4Digital Academy later in 2024.



All EU4Digital Academy course trainees will benefit from the opportunity to gain an EU-aligned micro-credential called a badge. Each badge can then be displayed on social media accounts or in a CV to serve as verifiable proof of your new skills and knowledge gained.

Further information: <https://eufordigital.eu/eu4digital-academy-ecommerce-in-eu-marketplaces-moldova-course-now-available/>

Successful cross-border authentication testing brings Armenia, Georgia and Moldova one step closer to aligned eTrust and eID standards

Public agencies from Armenia, Georgia and Moldova are one step closer to achieving cross-border electronic authentication from the standpoint of technical compatibility. The three countries have successfully tested connecting to foreign electronic services using their national electronic IDs (eIDs) as part of EU4Digital's cross-border electronic identification (eID) pilot activities between the Eastern Partner countries.

The software – called an [eIDAS-Node](#) – currently enables European Union Member States to communicate with their counterparts in a centralised or distributed fashion for cross-border authentication.

The EU's updated [EUDI regulation](#), previously known as the eIDAS regulation, facilitates secure cross-border transactions and aims to promote seamless digital services within the EU.

During the cross-border eID pilot, testing was successfully completed by the following country pairs: Armenia and Georgia; Armenia and Moldova; and Georgia and Moldova. The pilot programme emulates the EU's model but has been modified for local needs and capabilities.

Representatives from the Eastern partner countries have shared their experience and its value for their future plans:

While the eID pilot programme allows Eastern partner countries to test their technical interoperability, the EU4Digital eTrust stream is also working closely with EaP countries to develop a harmonised approach for mutual trust and recognition of not only eIDs but also trust services. For this purpose, EU4Digital has developed an eTrust and eID conceptual framework for applying EU eTrust practices in the context of the Eastern partner countries. This framework consists of:

- » a comparison of local legislation with the 2014 eIDAS regulation;
- » evaluating the level of assurance provided by given eID, a process which establishes the degree of certainty a service provider can have concerning the user's identity;
- » mutual recognition agreements between Eastern partner countries.



In the digital age, eID and eTrust services must be recognised within and reach beyond national borders. EU4Digital supports Eastern partner countries in their goal to unify cross-border access to digital services. By developing eTrust and cross-border

services in the digital economy, by making them safer, faster and cheaper, EU support through EU4Digital facilitates electronic transactions for businesses and citizens, resulting in a stronger, more dynamic economy and increased consumer trust.

Key milestone in Ukraine-Romania-Moldova EU4Digital eCustoms pilot project

The customs authorities of Ukraine, Moldova and Romania signed a trilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 29 April 2024, marking a key milestone in EU4Digital eCustoms activities and, ultimately, the smoother integration of Ukraine and Moldova in the European Union (EU) market. This agreement between the [State Customs Service of Ukraine](#), the [Romanian Customs Authority](#) and the [Customs Service of the Republic of Moldova](#) sets the stage for collaborative testing of cross-border data exchange, as part of the [EU4Digital Initiative](#) objectives to facilitate trade and extend the benefits of the EU's Digital Single Market to the Eastern partner countries.

Given that Ukraine and Moldova, as EU accession candidates, are actively working towards seamless integration into the EU market, which is also currently their principal trading ally, EU4Digital's eCustoms initiative is of particular relevance. Part of its eTrade thematic area, the EU4Digital Facility Phase II eCustoms activities focus on piloting mechanisms of data exchange between bordering customs administrations. These pilots respond to the interests of economic operators and take into account the need to simplify and harmonise customs procedures that aim to protect countries' economic and financial interests.



The new MoU is a critical development within the EU4Digital eCustoms activities, which already achieved a [bilateral data exchange between Ukraine and Romania](#) in 2023 as well as a [bilateral data exchange between Moldova and Romania](#) in 2022. The agreement paves the way for a three-way pilot project to test cross-border customs data exchange using the Systematic Exchange of Electronic Data (SEED) system.

Developed with EU support and tested for more than twelve years in the Western Balkans, SEED offers a digital platform that simplifies processes, reduces paperwork and enhances efficiency in the submission, processing and exchange of customs data.

To ensure progress in implementing the MoU provisions, on 20–24 May 2024, EU4Digital experts will provide technical training during visits to the border crossing points between:



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Siret in Romania and Porubne in Ukraine; Leuseni in Moldova and Albita in Romania; and between Reni in Ukraine, Giurgiulești in Moldova and Galați in Romania. The eCustoms pilot itself, planned for 10 June–12 July 2024, will focus on integrating the SEED application into the countries' customs operations, to prepare for testing the exchange of data regarding both empty and full trucks that will cross the borders.

These [trilateral EU4Digital eCustoms activities](#) aim to facilitate easier cross-border trade by simplifying customs processes

and boosting cooperation between Ukraine, Romania and Moldova. The initiative is expected to cut down on processing times, lessen administrative work and increase data precision and openness, which is crucial for managing risks effectively. Furthermore, the pilot will strengthen trust between the countries' customs administrations, setting the groundwork for ongoing collaboration and trade facilitation efforts.

Further information: <https://eufordigital.eu/key-milestone-in-ukraine-romania-moldova-eu4digital-ecustoms-pilot/>



New EU4Digital activity supports Eastern Partnership innovation clusters

EU4Digital Facility has launched a new framework for activities to support innovation clusters in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) region. These coalitions of start-ups, small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs), research and knowledge dissemination organisations, not-for-profits and other related economic actors stimulate

innovation, share knowledge and support collaboration, contributing to technological and economic development. EU4Digital's new innovation cluster activities are part of the ICT Innovation thematic area, which connects EaP and EU start-up ecosystems in line with the Facility's wider goals to harmonise the regions' digital markets.



The activity was officially launched during a kick-off event with the ICT Innovation expert network in January 2024. The new framework was elaborated after a review of best practices among innovation clusters in European Union (EU) countries. This helps to identify the current needs and capacity of existing and potential cluster management organisations to support digital innovations and potentially evolve into Digital Innovation Hubs in Eastern partner countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

The ICT Innovation stream has launched a call for EaP innovation clusters to participate in a survey to assess their capacities to support their members' innovation and digitalisation needs as well as inviting them to register for free-of-charge online training.

Further information: <https://eufordigital.eu/new-eu4digital-activity-supports-eastern-partnership-innovation-clusters/>

ICT investment opportunities highlighted in EU-Moldova investment event

EU4Digital Facility supported the European Commission in organising a Digital and ICT sector session during the 'EU-Moldova Private Sector Mobilisation Mission' launch event in Chisinau on 10 April 2024.

The launch event served as a platform to inform participants about various financial instruments provided by the European Union, intended to encourage investment and support the advancement of private sector businesses in Moldova.



Embodying the spirit of collaboration and economic progress, the launch event united more than 200 stakeholders including European officials, Moldova's governmental representatives, Moldovan and European companies, business associations and agencies, to explore investment opportunities in renewable energy, agri-food, as well as digital and ICT sectors.

The participants also identified which measures the public sector, EC and international partners could implement to incentivise investment decisions – such as continued efforts to grow and keep IT talent in the country as well as increasing the ease of doing business.

Further information: <https://eufordigital.eu/ict-investment-opportunities-highlighted-in-eu-moldova-investment-event/>

EU best practice report on 5G private networks development available for download

EU4Digital Facility experts have prepared the EU best practice report on the development of 5G private networks as part of the [Telecom Rules](#) stream of activities. The main objective of the report is to discuss business use-

cases for developing 5G private networks as well as to share experience gathered by the EU Member States on the allocation of frequencies.



The rise of 5G private networks presents the opportunity to connect millions of devices worldwide and the realisation of advanced projects across industries ranging from obtaining real-time diagnostic data in healthcare to smart energy, transportation, water and waste management.

The report discusses examples of 5G private network benefits in the automotive and industrial products industries, among others. Automotive companies aim to utilise the high speed and low latency of 5G to improve production efficiency and reduce downtime through real-time monitoring, while companies manufacturing industrial products are connecting local industrial

applications and leveraging the Internet of Things and AI for faster and more reliable networks, enhanced product quality and to build safer workplaces. Based on the findings of the report and inputs from the Eastern partner countries, EU4Digital will define country-specific priorities and initiatives to be implemented for 5G private networks developments.

The report is [available for download from this Library](#).

To find out more about EU4Digital Telecom Rules activities, visit our '[Explainers](#)' web content and view our short video '[This is Telecom Rules](#)', available in our [Library](#).

EU4Digital eTrust and eID framework: conceptual paper

To support the mutual recognition of electronic identity (eID) and trust services between the Eastern partner countries, the

EU4Digital Facility developed this eTrust and eID framework conceptual paper.



The framework uses the European Union's eIDAS regulation and other EU practices as the basis for common principles and requirements for eID and trust services that fit the Eastern partner countries' context. With this reference point, the framework proposes a structured approach for the mutual recognition of eID and trust services among the Eastern partner countries.

Designed to align with the Eastern partner countries' national legislative environments, the paper addresses the aim for regional harmonisation and cross-border use of digital identity means and trust services, targeting policymakers and stakeholders who are involved in digital transformation.

The document consists of the following parts:

- » Principles and components of the eTrust and eID framework;
- » Requirements and conditions for eID schemes and trust services, outlining suggested prerequisites for mutual recognition agreements;
- » Mutual recognition agreement process, containing the proposed steps to be taken throughout the whole lifecycle of the agreement.

This report was produced as part of the eTrust thematic area of EU4Digital Facility Phase II. To find out more, visit our 'Explainers' web content and view our short video 'This is eTrust', available in our online Library.

Over 3,000 people from the southern region benefited from Inotek's initiatives in its first year of activity

Inotek – EU Innovation Centre Cahul, launched with the support of the European Union and Sweden, celebrated one year of activity on May 17. The event brought together partners, beneficiaries and members of the local community to celebrate the achievements and significant impact of the Inotek centre in promoting innovation and digitization in the southern region of Moldova.

More than 3,000 people in the region, 51% of whom were girls and women, benefited from the 55 initiatives carried out under the Inotek umbrella in the first year of activity. The anniversary event brought to the fore the success stories of Inotek's beneficiaries, discussions on the results achieved and gave the partners the opportunity to reaffirm their shared commitment to building a prosperous future for the southern region.



Nicolae Mocanu, Administrator of the Inotek Foundation:

"One year of Inotek means over 3000 beneficiaries of the centre, 1000 students informed about IT trends, 1000 beneficiaries of community events, 400 children beneficiaries of robotics courses, over 1000 adults involved in

digital transformation and IT courses, 15 partnerships and an internship organised in partnership with Halley KM, numerous community events that we hold every month to help understand the vision of the centre and encourage as many young people and entrepreneurs as possible to contribute to regional development."



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**Evghenia Snitco, Program Coordinator,
Embassy of Sweden in the Republic of
Moldova:**

"Inotek is celebrating a year of activity, but we all understand that the road to this centre began four years ago, with the launch of the "EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul" project. In a year, we will already have a much larger space with 4 levels, with coworking spaces, a room for children and mothers who want to make a career during maternity. I think we will celebrate even bigger results next year."

Inotek was established in partnership with the "Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu" State University in Cahul, and during the first year of activity it managed to initiate and consolidate important collaborations with local public administration authorities, the private sector and development partners.

Through strategic efforts and interventions in key areas, Inotek supports the development of entrepreneurship in the southern region and is an active promoter of digital transformation in the public and private spheres. The events organised within the centre have become a tradition and an important platform for the transfer of knowledge and experience in current fields, offering the local community access to innovative practices and digital solutions, but also the opportunity to establish connections with experts and professionals from various fields.

Inotek prioritises the development of human capital in the region, facilitating access to quality education in the STEM field and offering training programs adjusted to labour market trends and requirements. More than 1,400 children, young people and adults in the region have benefited from Inotek's educational programs and developed their digital skills or acquired specific skills for new career directions.



In the near future, Inotek will continue and expand its interventions in key areas and strengthen its role of connecting the business environment, public authorities, educational institutions, civil society and the community to achieve important objectives of regional development and innovation.

Launched on May 17, 2023, with the support of the European Union and Sweden within the "EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul" project, implemented by the National Association of ICT Companies, Inotek is a modern and friendly space that offers access to advanced technologies, digital tools, training programs and entrepreneurship support initiatives.



Cahul Business Summit, third edition, opens new horizons for economic development and digital transformation of the region

On June 12, the third edition of the "Cahul Business Summit" event took place. The summit brought together more than 150 participants – entrepreneurs, young people, local and central public authorities, development partners, experts, representatives of associations, clusters and the academic community – to explore opportunities to accelerate the economic development and digital transformation of the region. During the event, the investment portfolios, grant opportunities for the Cahul region were presented, the results of digitization projects were exposed and ways of integrating digital solutions in business were illustrated. One of the central topics of the summit was the revival of the dairy

processing line in the municipality of Cahul. The Cahul Business Summit marked an important stage in the realisation of the commitment firmly assumed by local authorities, the business community and development partners: placing the southern region on the national and international map as a model of sustainable regional development, investment attractiveness and inter-community cooperation. The southern region has the potential to become a leader in innovation and digitization and can capitalise on important opportunities in the field of developing entrepreneurship, strengthening cross-border cooperation and amplifying the role of human capital in the transformation of the region.



Nicolae Dandiș, mayor of Cahul municipality:

"At the summit, we are talking about the interaction or relationship between the private and public sectors, including donors. For the private sector, this economic forum can bring about the realisation of some expectations, the participants can benefit from relevant information for their own business or they can explore the opportunities for starting a business or what are the support programs from the state."

Thomas Alveteg, Deputy Head of the Development Cooperation Section, Embassy of Sweden in the Republic of Moldova:

"My first meeting with the southern region took place in 2017 and I am impressed by how many positive changes have taken place since then."

Even the level of this event, the quality of the discussions held is a firm indicator of progress and alignment with EU standards. Sweden is a fervent supporter of digital development and we are happy to see the focus on the development of this area here in Cahul."

Aurica Butnari, Manager of economic development programmes, Delegation of the European Union:

"For more than 10 years, the European Union has offered support through various programs to the business environment of the Republic of Moldova, but also to local public authorities in order to economically develop communities in different regions."



EU-Moldova

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IT Career Expo Cahul: connections, knowledge, and opportunities for a successful career

More than 450 young people from the south of the country enthusiastically participated in IT Career Expo Cahul, an event dedicated to exploring career opportunities in the field of information technologies. Held at the State University "B. P. Haşdeu" from Cahul and the Inotek - EU Innovation Centre Cahul, the event brought together professionals in the field and young people interested in the evolution of this constantly expanding industry.

The event, which took place on April 3rd, gave attendees the opportunity to interact directly with industry representatives, learn

essential information about IT career paths, relevant study programs, job prospects and internship offers.

The IT Career Expo Cahul agenda included professional orientation sessions and workshops on current topics, moderated by professionals with extensive experience in IT companies. Participants had the opportunity to learn important details about the various roles and specialisations in the IT industry, the trends and demands of the labour market, as well as the resources and opportunities for training and professional development available.



The companies Halley KM, Solutii Magice, Draexlmaier, Fortal MD, Allied Testing, Amdaris, Starnet and Orange Systems have accepted the invitation to participate in the event and contribute to the career guidance of young people. The representatives of the IT industry communicated to the young

people the employment conditions, the job offers, the available internship opportunities, but also useful recommendations and advice regarding the clarification of career goals and the development of the necessary skills for the professions they aspire to.

During the IT Career Expo, young people had the opportunity to learn about the study programs in information technology, provided by higher education institutions and

those with dual training, to find out details about the admission process, the offer and the educational opportunities available.



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The event was organised by the National Association of ICT Companies (ATIC) in partnership with Inotek and took place with the support of the project "Strong Enterprises and Communities for Moldova", financed by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and co-financed by the Government Switzerland. The project is implemented by the German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ).

IT Career Expo Cahul was held with the support of the European Union and Sweden within the "EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul" Project and in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova, the National Youth Agency, the City Hall of Cahul and the State University "B. P. Haşdeu" from Cahul within the program "Cahul - Youth Capital 2024".

Students from southern Moldova, pioneers in innovation and social impact at the "Tekwill Junior Ambassadors" competition

In a global context where digital and transferable skills are becoming an essential condition for personal and professional affirmation, students in the Republic of Moldova are actively embracing technologies for opportunities to learn, grow and develop skills that will propel them towards a

promising future. It's possible through the Tekwill in Every School programme, an initiative that gives young people the tools and resources to develop the skills and motivations that will enable them to thrive in an ever-changing world.



The "Tekwill Junior Ambassadors" competition, held annually within the program, brings into the spotlight the impressive performances, creativity and innovative spirit of students from Moldova. The national stage of the current edition, held on June 8, brought together 400 students and teachers from all over the country.

Participants presented digital projects with social impact in eight competition categories: "Algorithm Programming in C/C++", "Web Design and Development", "Artificial Intelligence", "Emotional Intelligence in Communication", "Mobile Application Design and Development", "Video Storytelling", "Entrepreneurship", "Graphic Design".

In the southern region, the "Tekwill in Every School" programme and the "Tekwill Junior Ambassadors" competition are supported within the "EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul" project, implemented by the National Association of ICT Companies with the financial assistance provided by the European Union and Sweden. Both initiatives are part of a commitment to support the development of the region by providing access to quality STEM education and educational programs that encourage innovation and equip young people with essential skills for the future.


Among the projects developed in the competition by students from the southern region – Leova, Cantemir, Cahul and Taraclia – are artificial intelligence projects to improve the user experience in the online environment, mobile applications for local businesses and tourist attractions in the country such as the Cahul Land Museum, entrepreneurship projects, including in the field of IT service provision, health monitoring applications, web pages for local businesses in Cahul, but also public institutions.

Andrei Arseni is a student at the "Mihai Eminescu" Theoretical High School in the city of Leova and managed to obtain three prizes in the competition. The student took first place in the "Programming Algorithms in C/C++" category, second place in the "Web Design and Development" category and second place in the "Entrepreneurship" category.

"The Tekwill Junior Ambassadors competition was like a growth engine for me, teaching me that hard work and passion never go unrewarded."

The "Tekwill Junior Ambassadors" competition is organised by the National Association of ICT Companies and Tekwill within the national Program "Tekwill in Every School". The program is implemented in 489 educational institutions in the country in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova, with the outstanding support of development partners – the European Union, Sweden, the United States Agency for International Development, UNDP Moldova, UNICEF, UN Women, the Government of Japan.





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